

BOOTS ON THE GROUND

Written by

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© 02 October 2023

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EXT. AFGHANISTAN. HELMAND PROVINCE - MORNING

An Army patrol -15 men- make their way along a deserted sandy road running between seemingly empty houses. At the rear walk two Afghan policemen. All are clearly on their guard.

LANCE CORPORAL MAJIID 'MAZ' FAZOUD (22) is on point. Behind him, LANCE CORPORAL OWEN (22). Their eyes are everywhere. The atmosphere beyond tense.

SEAN
(hissing)
Maz! Maz!

MAZ
What?

SEAN
Are we there yet?

MAZ
(smiling - to himself)
Knobhead.

SUDDENLY a single shot slams into the wall above Sean. The patrol dives for whatever cover they can find.

SEAN
Jesus! D'you see that?

MAZ
(shouting)
Contact. Ten o'clock upstairs
window.

SGT PAUL BLACKBURN (28) points at the building.

SGT BLACKBURN
(shouting)
Get in there and clear that fucking
place.

MAZ and SEAN lay prone, their weapons fixed on the upstairs window as other members of the patrol run past. A grenade is thrown in. The second the explosion dies down, the door is kicked in and the soldiers enter. Maz follows. FAST.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS.

The patrol CRASH through the house. The upstairs room has been obliterated by the grenade but it is otherwise empty.

MAZ
Shit.
(into radio)
Charlie 1-1. House clear. No body.
(MORE)

MAZ (CONT'D)
(to soldiers)
OK lads, back on it.

EXT. HELMAND PROVINCE - MINUTES LATER.

Maz leaves the house followed by the other soldiers who entered the house. They immediately take up defensive positions.

SEAN
D'you see that Sir. Missed me by
bloody inches that did.

LIEUTENANT MALVEY (24) smiles. Nervous. His first patrol.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Don't worry. You get used to it.

Sgt Blackburn comes over to them.

SGT BLACKBURN
Best we get these moving boss.

FADE OUT

EXT. AFGHANISTAN. HELMAND PROVINCE. COMPOUND - DAY

A football falls from the sky and bounces on the floor. A group of excited Afghan children descend on it.

SUDDENLY, Sean rushes in, tackles one of the kids and expertly passes the ball to Maz who miss kicks it.

The kids steal the ball and head toward a makeshift goal. They dance around as Sean glares at Maz.

SEAN
For fuck's sake Maz! You're bloody
useless.

MAZ
I told you Asians don't play
football. It's too down-market for
us.

SEAN
What are this lot doing then?
Taking the piss?

MAZ
Cricket's our game.

SEAN

So why didn't you bring some gear
with you then you dopey twat?

The two of them stomp off toward the rest of the patrol who are sitting in the shade resting. Sean glances at Maz, they grin cheekily and sit either side of Sgt Blackburn who has his eyes closed.

MAZ

Sarge?

Sgt Blackburn visibly tenses but keeps his eyes shut.

SGT BLACKBURN

Sod off. Both of you.

SEAN

(to Maz)

That's not very nice. Ain't the
Sarge supposed to be our surrogate
mum when we're away from home?

MAZ

My mum don't talk to me like that.

SEAN

Mine neither. Don't it say
something in the Koran about
swearing?

MAZ

Dunno. I've got a copy in my pack.
Shall I have a look?

SEAN

You what? You brought the bloody
bible but not any cricket gear?
What the fuck?

MAZ

It's not the bible. It's the Koran.

SEAN

Same meat, different gravy. It's
all bollocks anyway.

SGT BLACKBURN

In all my fourteen years in the
Army, I've never known two more
irritating shits than you two.

MAZ

We only wanted to ask a simple
question Sarge.

SGT BLACKBURN

What? What the fuck do you want?

Maz glances at Sean. Laughing eyes. The glance says everything about their friendship. Best mates.

MAZ
(sulking)
Doesn't matter now.

SGT BLACKBURN
Jesus bloody wept!

The three of them settle into silence for a second or two.

SEAN
Sarge?

SGT BLACKBURN
It's like having bloody kids. What do you want now?

SEAN
I only wanted to ask if you'd be wanting any of that man love later.

Sgt Blackburn opens both eyes and sits bolt upright. Maz and Sean burst out laughing.

SGT BLACKBURN
I swear on all that is holy, you two are gonna...

SUDDENLY Sgt Blackburn glances around. Something is wrong.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
Bollocks. The kids have gone.
(shouting)
Everybody up. Let's go!

Sgt Blackburn jumps up and searches around. He spots Lt. Malvey asleep in a corner.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
Sean, get the boss. Maz, get on the blower and inform HQ that we're moving. If the kids have fucked off it means troubles nearby.

Sean and Maz are up and moving instantly. Professional soldiers.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
(shouting to everyone)
I said move. Come on!

CUT TO:

EXT. AFGHANISTAN. HELMAND PROVINCE - LATER

The patrol are moving again. TENSE. Maz on point. They move along the deserted street until they come to a stretch of open ground. Maz signals to the patrol to stop. They drop to their knees. Eyes nervously scanning the area.

Within seconds, Sgt Blackburn is beside Maz. He looks around.

SGT BLACKBURN

OK lets get some covering fire ready.

He turns and signals. The patrol move forward, into position. When they are ready, he signals to Sean.

Without a moments hesitation, Sean is up and running across the open ground. The patrol covering his every move.

WIDE ANGLE POV. RUNNING FORWARD. O.S. sounds: EQUIPMENT CLANKING, BOOTS RUNNING ON SAND, LOUD HEAVY BREATHING.

SUDDENLY, a young boy appears from the buildings opposite pushing a wheelbarrow. Sean drops instantly to the floor and rolls into a ditch by the side of the road.

He scans nervously around for anything that looks suspicious before turning his gaze to the approaching child.

SEAN

(into radio)

Charlie 1-1, Charlie 1-1. This is Charlie 1-7. I've got a kid approaching me pushing a fucking wheelbarrow.

(shouting)

Stop! Stop there!

EXT. HELMAND PATROL - CONTINUOUS

Sgt Blackburn stares intently through his binoculars at what is going on.

SGT BLACKBURN

(into radio)

We see him. Hold fast Charlie 1-7.

Across the road, Lt. Malvey is also watching on. The two glance nervously at each other. This is a worse case scenario.

Lt. Malvey turns and gestures to the two policemen. They saunter up and after a brief glance at the unfolding drama, one begins to walk briskly toward where Sean is lying.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
Charlie 1-1 Charlie 1-1. Friendly
approaching. Sit tight.

EXT. HELMAND PATROL. DITCH- CONTINUOUS

Sean is lying in the ditch. His weapon trained directly on
the approaching child. Sweat pours off him.

SEAN
(into radio)
Roger Charlie 1-1.
(to himself)
Like I have a fucking choice.

He hears footsteps approaching. A voice calling in Pashto.

POLICEMAN (O.C)
Stop. Stand still.

Sean doesn't divert his gaze for an instant. The child
continues to approach. The policeman suddenly stops.

POLICEMAN (O.C) (CONT'D)
I said stop you little shit. What
the fuck are you doing?

The child continues to approach.

EXT. HELMAND PATROL - CONTINUOUS

Sgt Blackburn, Lt. Malvey and Maz watch nervously as the
distance between the boy and Sean continues to close. Sgt
Blackburn glances around at the rest of the patrol who seem
to have been caught up in the drama.

He signals urgently to them. They snap back into battle mode.

SGT BLACKBURN
I don't like this. I don't like it
one bit.
(into radio)
Charlie 1-4 get onto HQ and get us
some support here. Fast.

MAZ
Let's just shoot the little
bastard.

SGT BLACKBURN
Tempting. But you're not the one
who'd be in the shit if all he's
got in there is fruit and veg.

MAZ
Who'd know? Or care?

SGT BLACKBURN
For fuck's sake. What's that copper
doing?

The policeman backs off. As the child continues to approach them he suddenly begins running back toward the patrol.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
Cunt!
(into radio)
Charlie 1-7, pull back, pull back.

EXT. HELMAND PATROL. DITCH -CONTINUOUS

Sean continues to aim his weapon at the approaching child. O.C we hear the policeman's footsteps receding until the only noise we can hear is the slow squeak of an un-oiled wheel. It gets increasingly louder. Then stops.

Sean slowly reaches for the transmit button. Suddenly, recognition flashes across his face.

SEAN
He's too close Sarge.

EXT. HELMAND PATROL - CONTINUOUS

Sgt Blackburn is staring through his binoculars.

SGT BLACKBURN
Charlie. Can you crawl? Or roll?

No answer.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
Shit.
(into radio)
Charlie 1-4, on me.

He drops the binoculars down as the policeman approaches.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
What the fuck are you doing?

POLICEMAN
Not good Sarge. Not good.

Sgt Blackburn looks across at Lt. Malvey. They exchange a few brief signals before Sgt Blackburn nods and turns back.

He signals the platoon and within seconds, they are kicking in doors and diving into the empty houses.

Sgt Blackburn and Maz remain huddled against the wall. They are joined by Charlie 1-4 who has the main radio with him.

CHARLIE 1-4

Two Mastiffs en route. ETA minutes
5 Sarge.

SGT BLACKBURN

I hope to fuck we've got that long.

INT. HOUSES - CONTINUOUS

MONTAGE of soldiers breaking through houses and taking up positions looking out over the dead ground. From various angles we see the boy with the wheelbarrow standing some ten metres in front of Sean. All weapons are trained in their direction.

EXT. HELMAND PATROL. DITCH -CONTINUOUS

Sean is still staring at the boy. Suddenly he begins to move forward until he is so close, Sean can no longer keep his rifle trained on him. Instead, the young soldier buries his face in the sand, waiting for the inevitable explosion.

FADE to black:

All we can hear is the slow squeaking of the wheel and Sean's increasingly desperate breathing. The squeaking stops again. Silence, then the rapid thumping of a heartbeat.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. HELMAND PATROL. WALL - CONTINUOUS

Sgt Blackburn and Maz watch anxiously as the child stands above Sean.

SGT BLACKBURN

(into radio)

Charlie 1-7, Charlie 1-7! Can
you...

SUDDENLY, the child and the wheelbarrow explode. Debris fills the air. Only when it begins to stop falling do the patrol look up to see a huge plume of dust where the boy once stood.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
(into radio)
Hold fast, hold fast! Watch and
wait! Watch and wait!

Sgt Blackburn stares anxiously through binoculars.

VOICE (O.C)
BRAVO, we have contact IED. One
down, one down. Request immediate
HELIVAC. Acknowledge over.
(beat)
Understood Bravo 2-7.
(to Sgt Blackburn)
There's a medical team with the
Mastiffs Sarge. Chopper is en
route.

MAZ
Sarge?

Sgt Blackburn lowers his binoculars and glances at Maz. They
acknowledge each other. Immediately, Maz drops his gear and
sprints up the road toward the dust cloud.

SGT BLACKBURN
(into radio)
First sign of anything, blast it to
fuck.

EXT. HELMAND PATROL. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

POV: Behind Maz, semi crouching, running up the road. He runs
into the dust cloud and stops. Unable to see clearly, he
glances around anxiously before spotting Sean.

One of his legs has been blown clean off, the other is
clearly badly damaged. He is bleeding heavily.

Maz crouches down beside him and checks for a pulse. Sean is
still alive. He rolls him over and begins undoing his
equipment.

MAZ
(desperate)
Sean it's me! Maz. Hang in there
mate.

SUDDENLY, a loud FIZZ. Then another. Maz looks up to see the
dust cloud has almost gone. Another FIZZ. MAZ dives to the
ground as gunfire comes at him.

EXT. HELMAND PATROL. WALL - CONTINUOUS

The patrol spring into action.

SGT BLACKBURN
(into radio)
Covering fire! Covering fire.

MONTAGE of the patrol blasting away at the compound opposite.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
(into radio)
Charlie 1-7, Charlie 1-7... Sean?
Maz?
(to Charlie 1-4)
Get some air support! Fast!

CHARLIE 1-4
(into radio)
BRAVO we have heavy enemy contact.
Urgent airstrike required on grid
reference *****. We have HELIVAC
en route to our locale. Repeat,
HELIVAC en route to locale. Please
acknowledge.
(beat)
Roger BRAVO 2-7.
(to Sgt Blackburn)
Two minutes Sarge.

MAYHEM. The patrol blast away at the enemy.

EXT. HELMAND PATROL. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Maz is lying beside Sean, desperately trying to undo his equipment as bullets continue to fizz past him. Eventually he manages it and pushes it to one side.

MAZ
(into radio)
Charlie 1-1. What's happening?

EXT. HELMAND PATROL. WALL - CONTINUOUS

SGT BLACKBURN
(into radio)
Charlie 1-3 we have incoming
airstrike in minutes 2. I repeat,
minutes 2. Can you hold position?

EXT. HELMAND PATROL. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Maz glances at Sean's legs. The areas is awash with blood. He pauses, choked.

MAZ
(into radio)
Negative Charlie 1-1. He needs help.

MAZ (CONT'D)
(to Sean)
Come on big man. Let's get you out of here.

Maz grabs his friends jacket and begins dragging him back up the road toward the patrol. A trail of blood marks their path.

EXT. HELMAND PATROL - CONTINUOUS

Sgt Blackburn and the patrol will Maz on as he drags Sean toward them. As they do so, their firing intensifies in a desperate attempt to suppress the enemy fire.

CHARLIE 1-4
(into radio)
Roger KILO 4-8. Be aware we have PAX 2, repeat PAX 2 in open ground.
(to Sgt Blackburn)
We have airstrike inbound.

Sgt Blackburn glances up. In the distance, two aircraft.

He glances across to Lt. Malvey and points toward them before returning his gaze to Maz who is clearly struggling.

SGT BLACKBURN
Fuck this.

Sgt Blackburn drops his gear and runs out to help him. Even as he does so, missiles SLAM into the compound opposite. As the buildings ERUPT Sgt Blackburn grabs hold of Sean's jacket and together, he and Maz drag him back toward the compound as behind them, the jets scream over.

Almost immediately rounds start fizzing past them again. SUDDENLY, Maz flies forward knocking Sgt Blackburn to the ground. Sgt Blackburn quickly recovers and continues moving. Dragging Sean with him.

Lt, Malvey runs out, grabs Maz and drags him to safety. Within seconds, the two injured soldiers are lying in the sand as their colleagues work frantically on them. Sgt Blackburn lies prone on the floor, a clearly scared Lt. Malvey is kneeling beside him. Both are gasping for breath.

They exchange knowing glances. Sgt Blackburn sits up. He pats the young officer on the shoulder and turns to Maz to see for the first time that the side of his face has been shattered by a round. DISMAY.

Behind them, two MASTIFFS pull up.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
Can I leave you to deal with the
medics boss?

Lt. Malvey nods. Sgt Blackburn grabs his weapon and with a final lingering glance at Sean and Maz, heads back to the firefight. As he leaves, the medical team arrive and begin working.

MEDIC
What've we got sir?

LT. MALVEY
One injured in IED blast. Multiple
injuries to legs. One gunshot wound
to head.

Even as they begin working on the two soldiers, we hear the THUMP, THUMP, THUMP of an approaching Chinook helicopter.

MEDIC
OK, let's get these out of here. I
need hands people.

The two soldiers are put on stretchers and moved back away from the carnage to where the helicopter is landing.

CRASH CUT TO:

MONTAGE of the two soldiers journey out. Include: Chinook helicopter, theatre scene, being put onto a CASEVAC aircraft and medical staff looking after them in-flight.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. RECEPTION - 48 HOURS LATER.

LT. SIMON GRACE (23)- enters reception with Sean's parents; PETE OWEN (45) and RACHEL OWEN (43). There is a clear urgency and nervousness about them.

They are met by a female NCO -CORPORAL SHELLY COOPER (24).

CPL COOPER
Mr and Mrs Owen. I'm Corporal
Cooper, part of the admin team
here. Please follow me.

Cpl Cooper leads them through a set of double doors.

RACHEL

Is he here?

CPL COOPER

Yes, he arrived about an hour ago.
He's in surgery now.

PETE

What can you tell us?

CPL COOPER

Nothing much I'm afraid. The
medical team will brief you as soon
as they can.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. WAITING ROOM - LATER

Lt. Grace and Pete Owen are standing looking out of the
window. Rachel is sitting, staring into space.

A surgeon -CAPTAIN STEPHEN BAKER (44)- enters. He is
accompanied by a nurse -KAY ROBSON (32). All eyes turn to
them. Rachel stands. ANXIOUS.

CAPTAIN BAKER

Mr and Mrs Owen, I'm Stephen Baker.
I've just come from your son.

RACHEL

How is he?

Captain Baker exchanges glances with Lt. Grace. Pete and
Rachel move closer together and clench hands.

CAPTAIN BAKER

He came through surgery OK and at
this stage, that's the most
important thing given the extent of
his injuries.

PETE

What, what exactly are his
injuries?

LT. GRACE

We've not had much of a brief sir.
Just that he was caught in an IED
incident.

Captain Baker sighs. He's done this enough times to know that
bluntness is the best way to do what he has to do.

CAPTAIN BAKER

His left leg was severed above the knee in the blast and damage to his right knee and lower leg was such that we had no choice but to amputate it. I'm sorry.

Pete and Rachel look at him. SHOCK.

PETE

Both legs?

CAPTAIN BAKER

I'm sorry. We did what we could.

PETE

But... Both legs?

CAPTAIN BAKER

Yes. I'm very sorry.

PETE

What else?

CAPTAIN BAKER

He has some minor abrasions to his hands and back but nothing too serious. We'll know more when we bring him round.

KAY

Would you like to see him?

Pete nods, resolute. Rachel struggles to keep control.

KAY (CONT'D)

I'll take you through. Please follow me.

Kay leads Rachel and Pete to the door. As they exit, they turn.

PETE

Thank you Doctor. Thanks for everything.

They exit. The Captain turns to Lt. Grace

CAPTAIN BAKER

I assume you're regimental liaison officer? Do we know what happened?

LT. GRACE

Wheelbarrow bomb sir. He was in a ditch right next to it when it went off.

CAPTAIN BAKER

Explains the injuries. Lucky boy,
his pack probably saved his life.
Lance Corporal Fazoud one of yours?

LT. GRACE

Yes sir. He was injured during the
extraction. How's he doing?

CAPTAIN BAKER

Not so good I'm afraid. He's got a
battle on his hands. Muslim isn't
he?

LT. GRACE

Yes. His parents are with him.

CAPTAIN BAKER

I best go and talk to them then.
What do the families know?

LT. GRACE

Very little at the moment. IED
incident, contact with enemy... the
usual.

CAPTAIN BAKER

Best way for now. Although it might
be an idea to let both families
know that they were together. Just
in case.

LT. GRACE

Of course sir.

CAPTAIN BAKER

OK, keep me informed will you.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - MINUTES LATER

Kay leads Rachel and Pete onto the ward.

KAY

Before I take you through, have you
ever been on an ICU before?

Pete and Rachel shake their heads. Kay smiles.

KAY (CONT'D)

It can be a bit daunting but
there's nothing to worry about.
Everything there is helping us keep
Sean comfortable. OK?

PETE

How's he doing?

KAY

He's doing fine. He's still sedated but if he remains stable he'll be brought round in the morning. Come on, I'll take you through.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - CONTINUOUS

Sean is lying on the bed connected to numerous machines. He has a tube leading down his throat. Unconscious.

Rachel sits and takes his hand.

RACHEL

Can he hear us?

KAY

Yes, of course.

RACHEL

Sean, it's mum. You're safe now.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. FAMILY KITCHEN - DAY

Rachel is making a drink. Lt. Grace enters.

LT. GRACE

Mrs Owen. How are you?

RACHEL

Having the time of my life. Coffee?

LT. GRACE

No thank you. I actually wanted a word with you and your husband.

RACHEL

Oh.. About what?

LT. GRACE

I have to brief you about something relating to what happened in Helmand.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. WAITING ROOM - LATER

Lt Grace is standing by the window. Pete and Rachel are sitting on the sofa holding hands. They look shocked.

PETE

So this Corporal...

LT. GRACE
Lance Corporal Fazoud.

PETE
He...
(beat)
He wasn't? I mean he...

LT. GRACE
No. He's critical. But he's hanging
on.

RACHEL
Thank god. And he's here? His
parents...?

LT GRACE
Yes.

RACHEL
Could I see them?

LT. GRACE
I'll see what I can do.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. HEAD TRAUMA UNIT - LATER

Kay leads Pete and Rachel onto the ward. As Kay speaks to the nurses, Rachel wanders forward. Her eyes fixed on a bed beside which sit a man and his wife. MAZ'S parents - SAMIR and AISHA FAZOUUD.

As she stares, a nurse walks over to the bed and speaks to them. Almost instantly, they stand and head toward where Rachel is standing. Kay introduces them. The two women embrace tearfully. The two men clasp hands.

RACHEL
How is he?

AISHA
They say he's stable. That's all
they can tell us at the moment.
It's in god's hand now. How is your
son? They told me about his... I'm
so sorry.

RACHEL
He's home. That's the main thing.

A young Asian woman -SALEEMA FAZOUUD (24) - and a young Asian man - year old AZEEM FAZOUUD (19)- enter the ward. Each is carrying two cups of tea. They approach.

SAMIR

Azeem and Saleema. This is Mr and Mrs Owen. Their son was with Majiid when...

PETE

I'm so sorry about your brother. You should be very proud of him.

SALEEMA

Thank you. We are.

Samir and Azeem exchange glances. The young man is clearly angry and there is a clear sense of awkwardness between them.

KAY

Well we should get back.

PETE

If there's anything we can do...

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - LATER

Rachel and Pete are sitting beside the bed.

PETE

(thoughtful)

What did you make of them earlier?

RACHEL

Who?

PETE

The Asian lot. The son looked a right stroppy bugger.

RACHEL

(snappy)

What d'you expect?

PETE

Alright. I was only saying.

(beat)

You know they're Muslims. The lieutenant told me.

RACHEL

So?

Captain Baker approaches. He has another doctor with him as well as Kay. Pete stands and shakes his hand.

CAPTAIN BAKER

So how are you baring up?

PETE

To be honest, some good news
wouldn't go amiss.

Captain Baker takes a chart and studies it for a second.

CAPTAIN BAKER

I think we're ready to bring him
round. If you could prep him
sister.

Rachel stands and takes Pete's hand as Kay begins fussing
around.

RACHEL

What's happening?

CAPTAIN BAKER

It's really nothing to worry about.
We're simply going to take him off
the anesthetic for a while to see
how he responds.

PETE

Will he be in pain?

CAPTAIN BAKER

Not at all.

KAY

It might be easier for you to wait
outside. Remember, the last time he
was conscious was in Helmand so
he'll be very disoriented.

Rachel grasps Pete's hand even tighter.

PETE

No. We want to be here.

KAY

That's fine. But you have to let us
do what we have to do OK?

(beat)

Don't worry. I'll look after him.

The second doctor moves forward and injects some fluid into
the drip feed.

The steady 'beep' of the heart monitor is the only sound as
they all stare intently at Sean. Suddenly, his eyes start to
flicker and his breathing becomes deeper.

Kay steps forward and takes Sean's hand.

KAY (CONT'D)

Sean...

(beat)

Sean...

Sean's eyes snap open. His breathing quickens.

KAY (CONT'D)

It's OK. Don't try to speak. You're in hospital and you have a tube down your throat helping you breath properly.

Sean begins to panic and struggle. His arm flaying around as if he's looking for something.

Rachel gasps in horror. The medics remain calm.

CAPTAIN BAKER

Let's put him back under please.

The second doctor steps forward and within seconds, Sean is calm.

CAPTAIN BAKER (CONT'D)

Don't worry. That was quite normal.

PETE

To you maybe.

KAY

Honestly, it's a good sign. It means he's on the mend.

RACHEL

Really?

KAY

Really. We'll take the tube out this afternoon which should make him more comfortable.

RACHEL

But what was all that thrashing around? Was he in pain?

KAY

(smiling)

He was trying to find his rifle.

CUT TO BLACK:

VOICES ARE MUFFLED. SEAN'S POV

KAY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Don't worry, it's quite normal.
He's still very confused.

PETE (V.O.)
Thank god. It was...

SEAN (V.O.)
Dad! Dad!!!

The voices fade to the point where they can barely be heard.

SEAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(desperate)
Dad!

SIMON (V.O.)
Oi, fuck face!

CUT TO:

EXT. WATFORD. MACDONALDS CAR PARK - EVENING

Sean's POV.

Young people gathered around parked cars. A few playing football in the distance.

SIMON GREEN (21) is leaning against a car.

SEAN (V.O.)
Si? Is that you?

Simon turns. He smiles.

SIMON
You daft twat. What was the last thing I said to you?

SEAN
Look after yourself.

SIMON
Exactly. You can't even do that properly.

A girl appears next to Simon. AMY COOK (19). She smiles.

AMY
What's he done?

SIMON
Only got himself blown up. Daft twat.

SEAN (V.O.)
I didn't do it on bloody purpose!

AMY
Did you get my letter?

SEAN (V.O.)
Yeah, course. I got it here.

POV: Sean Pulls the letter out of a pocket. He begins to read. Kisses, lipstick. A picture drops out.

Sean reaches for it but a hand grabs it first. Sean looks up. Maz is sitting next to him in combats, picture in his hand.

MAZ
This the bird then? She's fit.

SEAN (V.O.)
We're just mates, that's all.

MAZ
(laughing)
Yeah, it looks like it.

Maz hands the picture back. Sean stares at it. NOISE. Children laughing. Sean looks up. POV now back in the compound. Sgt Blackburn asleep, Maz running around playing football.

Maz turns. Half his head missing, blood all down his kit.

SEAN (V.O.)
(shouting - desperate)
Maz! Maz!

SFX: A whistling noise.

SEAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(shouting)
Incoming!

CUT TO BLACK:

EXT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL - DAYS LATER

Pete is sitting outside smoking. He looks flat. Samir sits beside him and lights a cigarette.

PETE
I'm starting to hate this bloody place.

SAMIR

Not me. I thank god for every day I
get to come here. When I'm here,
Majiid is alive. I dread the day...

Pete sighs. He stubs out his cigarette and lights another.

PETE

Allah's will 'eh?
(beat)
Sorry, I didn't mean... Just ignore
me. Bad day.

Pete holds out his hand. Samir takes it. As he does so, Azeem
appears.

SAMIR

Everything OK Azeem?

Azeem shrugs his shoulders. Angry.

AZEEM

I just needed some air. This
place...

PETE

I was just saying the same thing.

Azeem throws Pete a glare.

AZEEM

I best get back to my brother.

Azeem turns and heads back inside. Samir frowns then turns to
Pete.

PETE

Everything OK?

SAMIR

He's angry. Angry and confused.

PETE

About what?

SAMIR

Azeem sees things very differently
from Majiid and me. British and
Muslim go hand in hand for us. For
him...

PETE

Ah. That can't be easy. For you I
mean.

SAMIR

I tell him, religion doesn't kill
people, people kill people.

(MORE)

SAMIR (CONT'D)

(beat)

He doesn't listen. Not to me
anyway.

PETE

I don't do religion. You get
religion, you get war. You get war,
you get...

Pete gestures toward the hospital.

SAMIR

Have you not prayed for Sean?

Pete shakes his head.

PETE

I wish I had faith sometimes. Maybe
it'd help me get my head around all
this.

SAMIR

But you have prayed? Even silently?

Pete shrugs.

SAMIR (CONT'D)

Then you have faith. Just trust to
your god.

Pete looks up to see Lt. Grace approaching. Pete thumps Samir
on the shoulder.

PETE

You're a good man Samir.

(beat)

Football's a religion right?

SAMIR

So they say.

LT. GRACE

Everything OK gents?

PETE

Yeah. We're just setting the world
to rights.

LT. GRACE

Ah... Well I've been sent to fetch
you Mr. Owen. Your presence is
required.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - LATER.

Pete hurries into the ward. He stops in his tracks. Kay is standing next to the bed, Rachel sitting, talking to Sean.

PETE

Hello mate.

Sean half smiles. When he speaks, it is in a half whisper. He swallows constantly, each one painful.

SEAN

Alright dad.

Sean reaches for his throat. PANIC.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Where's my necklace?

KAY

You haven't had a necklace since you've been here.

SEAN

But it was here. I need it.

KAY

Don't try to talk for now. You need to relax.

SEAN

I need it.

KAY

It's OK, just relax. It'll probably be in your personal effects. We haven't got them yet but I promise, as soon as they get here...

SEAN

What happened? I can't remember...

PETE

It's OK. You're safe now. Don't worry about anything else.

SEAN

Just tell me.

Kay motions Pete away from the bed.

KAY

He'll have to find out sooner or later. It might as well be now. Just remember, it's a lot for him to absorb. No need to go into too much detail. Not for now.

PETE

What me? I can't!

KAY

Yes you can. You've got to.

They return to the bedside. Rachel stands, Pete sits and takes his sons hand. The two men stare at each other in silence for a second.

SEAN

Just spit it out dad. I gotta know.

FADE OUT.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. CORRIDOOR - LATER.

Rachel is sitting in the corridoor. Crying. People walk past her but she is lost in her own world.

AISHA

Rachel?

Rachel looks up to see Aisha standing above her. She smiles wryly and reaches up. Aisha takes her hand, smiles knowingly and sits down beside her.

They sit in silence.

FADE OUT.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - EVENING

The ward is quiet. Kay is checking the machines connected to Sean. She looks down to find him looking up at her.

KAY

How you doing?

SEAN

I dunno. Can't get my head around it all to be honest.

KAY

That's understandable. You've had quite a shock.

SEAN

Any news on Maz?

KAY

I'll give them a call in a minute
OK?

SEAN

Can I ask you something?

KAY

Your stuff's not here yet. I did chase it.

SEAN

It's not that. It seems stupid really but...

KAY

There's no such thing as a stupid question. Just stupid answers.

SEAN

My legs have gone right?

Kay puts her hand on his shoulder and nods.

SEAN (CONT'D)

So why does my foot itch like a bastard?

KAY

It's called Phantom limb syndrome. Your brain thinks your foot's still there.

SEAN

Oh. Well it's driving me bloody mental.

Kay moves to the end of the bed and lifts the sheet. She smiles at him as she pretends to scratch his foot.

KAY

How's that?

SEAN

Wrong foot.

Kay laughs and tucks the sheet back in.

KAY

I'll get you something.

SEAN

Can I ask you something else?

When Kay replies, her tone is gentle but firm.

KAY

Sean let's get a couple of things straight. Since you're going to be here for a while, we're going to be spending a lot of time together. Understand?

Sean turns his head to look at her.

KAY (CONT'D)

I don't do embarrassment, I've already seen you naked and at times you'll hate me with a passion.

(beat)

But everything we say or do is about making comfortable and getting you better. OK?

Sean nods and half smiles.

KAY (CONT'D)

So if you need anything at all or have a question, any question, no matter how stupid you think it is, you ask. And if we can't answer it, we'll find someone who can. Fair enough?

SEAN

Fair enough.

KAY

So?

Sean turns his gaze back to the ceiling.

SEAN

What the bloody hell am I going to do with no legs?

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. ICU - MORNING

Rachel is sitting with Sean. Asleep. Dreaming. Disturbed.

Rachel watches. ANXIOUS. She reaches out for his hand but pulls it back as he begins to thrash about. She becomes VISIBLY UPSET.

Kay appears. Professional. She checks his drugs, adjusts.

KAY

It's OK Sean, you're safe. You're in hospital.

Sean starts to relax as the drugs begin to act. Only then does Kay turn to Kay. She smiles. Reassurance.

KAY (CONT'D)

Come on. You look like you need some tea.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. ICU KITCHEN - LATER

Kay is making tea. Rachel stands beside her.

RACHEL

I don't know how you do it, working here. How do you cope?

KAY

Vodka, chocolate and meaningless sex.

Kay turns and hands Rachel a cup.

KAY (CONT'D)

Sorry, I didn't mean to be flippant. Standard nurses reaction. Truth is, I don't think about it. I love working here but I never take it home with me. Never have.

RACHEL

Maybe that's the secret.

KAY

But I have that luxury. It's not my son lying there. I don't know if I could do what you're having to do.

RACHEL

Honestly, I don't know how I am.

KAY

Listen, you've barely left this place since Sean got here. Why don't you take yourself out for a few hours? Do you the world of good.

RACHEL

I couldn't.

KAY

Course you could. Take Pete off for lunch somewhere and recharge your batteries.

EXT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL - LATER.

Pete and Rachel step out of a taxi. Rachel looks up at the hospital. Her heart sinks. Pete moves to put his arm around her but she pushes him away.

PETE

You OK love?

RACHEL

(angry)

No. I'm not OK. My son, my only child... I should never have let you talk him into joining up. Never.

PETE

It was his choice Rachel. You know it was.

RACHEL

You encouraged him.

PETE

Yes, I bloody did. Have you forgotten what a pain in the arse he was before the army?

RACHEL

I should have stopped him.

PETE

And what would have happened? More trouble, more police? Prison?

RACHEL

He was MY son!

PETE

He's still your son.

Rachel starts to speak but stops. Her eyes fixed on the entrance behind Pete. HORROR.

Lt. Grace appears with Samir, Aisha, Saleema and Azeem. They look crestfallen.

PETE (CONT'D)

(hushed)

Oh no. No.

Rachel walks across to meet them. Aisha in tears.

PETE (CONT'D)

What's happened?

SAMIR

He's gone.

Pete throws his arms around Samir. No words. He glances at Azeem. His eyes are BLAZING. Anger. Pete eyeballs Lt. Grace who gives an almost imperceptible shake of his head.

AZEEM

(brusque)

We need to go.

Azeem pulls out a mobile phone and begins to text.

LT. GRACE
The driver's waiting for you.

AZEEM
No. My uncle will fetch us.

SAMIR
(scolding)
That's enough Azeem.

A black staff car pulls up beside them. Lt. Grace opens the door as a police car pulls up behind it.

Azeem glares at both then after a look from his father, climbs in.

The family climb into the car. Before it can move, the police car pulls out, turns its blue lights on and hurries away. The staff car follows. FAST.

RACHEL
That poor family.

PETE
That's one angry kid.

RACHEL
(irritable)
He's just lost his brother for gods sake.

PETE
What's with the police car?

LT. GRACE
Standard practice. Just to make sure they get home as quickly as possible. Plus of course...

RACHEL
What?

LT. GRACE
The Fazoud's live in a shall we say, sensitive area.

RACHEL
I've no idea what you're on about.

PETE
Christ almighty woman! Don't you ever watch the news? D'you honestly think every Muslim is a fan of the army?

RACHEL

But it's the British army.

PETE

It's the white mans army. So you can imagine what they think of someone like Maz.

RACHEL

Don't be stupid.

LT. GRACE

I'm afraid your husband's right. I suspect the next few days are going to be tough for them. Especially tomorrow.

RACHEL

Why tomorrow?

Lt. Grace looks bemused.

LT. GRACE

Muslim tradition is to bury the body within 24 hours of death.

RACHEL

But he was a soldier. Isn't he supposed to have a military funeral?

LT. GRACE

The wishes of the family are paramount. I believe they've already made the arrangements.

PETE

So the question is, what do we tell Sean?

(beat)

He's going to have to know sooner or later.

LT. GRACE

That's something for the medics to decide. I'll talk to Captain Baker.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. ICU - LATER

Pete is sitting by the bed. Sean wakes.

PETE

You OK mate?

SEAN

I can't do this dad.

PETE
Can't do what?

PETE (CONT'D)
(angry)
This. Lying here day after fucking
day in bloody agony.

PETE (CONT'D)
I know son.

SEAN
(sarcastic)
Course you do.

PETE
We ain't really had a chance to
chat since...

SEAN
Since I got blown to fuck?

PETE
Since you came back. D'you wanna
talk about it?

Sean looks at Pete. Blank.

SEAN
Well I got sent to a shit hole of a
country full of scummy fucking
people and came back without any
legs.
(beat)
I think that about covers it.
(beat)
Maz should've left me in that posy
ditch.

Pete bristles.

PETE
Don't you dare say that.

SEAN
Why? What've I got to look forward
to? A poxy half-life. Fucking
Muslims.

Pete sits, glaring.

SEAN (CONT'D)
What?

PETE
And what about Maz? Was he just a
fucking Muslim?

Sean turns his gaze back to the ceiling but after a second, he turns back.

SEAN
Was? You said was.

Pete looks horrified. Then resigned.

PETE
Yes mate. I'm sorry.

Sean recoils. He breaks down. CRUSHED.

FADE OUT

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. RECEPTION - MORNING

Lt. Grace is on the phone. Cpl Cooper approaches. She hands him an envelope marked 'Confidential'.

LT. GRACE
(into phone)
I'll have to call you back.

He tears open the letter and reads. Smile.

FX: Phone.

LT. GRACE (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Yes sir, I'll bring them straight up. Before you go, there's something you should know.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL ICU. OFFICE - LATER

The door opens. Captain Baker enters. With him is Kay and FLIGHT LIEUTENANT ANDREA JONES (29). She is wearing nursing whites. Lt. Grace stands to attention. He hands Captain Baker the letter.

KAY
Pete, Rachel, this is Flight Lieutenant Jones.

FLT. LT JONES
Your son's coming onto my ward so we'll be taking over from Kay here.

PETE
Oh. When will that be?

CAPTAIN BAKER

Unfortunately, we have casualties inbound so he'll be moving this afternoon.

RACHEL

But...

KAY

Don't worry, we wouldn't move him if he wasn't ready.

FLT. LT JONES

And to be honest, given that he now knows about Lance Corporal Fazoud he'll actually be better off on the ward. We need to get his mind active.

Captain Baker hands Flt Lt Jones the letter.

CAPTAIN BAKER

More so because of this. I suspect given his religion, it'll be national news so the sooner the psych team get involved, the better.

LT. GRACE

Lance Corporal Fazoud has been put forward for the Military Cross.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. MILITARY WARD - AFTERNOON

The ward is full of servicemen. Most are amputee's but all are seriously injured.

A porter pushes a bed in. Sean. With him are Rachel & Pete. The porter pushes the bed into an empty cubicle then departs.

RACHEL

This is nice. Bit of proper light at last.

PETE

And some lads to keep you company.

Sean struggles to contain himself. Emotional. Flt. Lt Jones and Kay arrive.

KAY

Well Sean, time to hand you back to the Military. Flight Lieutenant Jones here will be in charge now.

(MORE)

KAY (CONT'D)

Don't forget, she's an officer so you can't cheek her like you did me.

SEAN

(choked)

Ma'am.

FLT LT JONES

(smiling)

It's Sister, not ma'am.

KAY

Don't worry, you've not seen the last of me yet. Be good! Mum and dad, could I have a quick word?

Rachel and Pete follow her out. Sean watches them go.

FLT LT JONES

So, let's get you settled shall we?

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Kay waits until the door closes.

KAY

How are you two?

Rachel and Pete glance at each other and clasp hands.

PETE

What did the captain mean about psychological issues? PTSD?

KAY

In a broad sense. You've obviously seen some of the mental impact already. Mood swings, emotional detachment and of course, he's racked with fear and guilt.

Rachel forces a smile.

KAY (CONT'D)

That's all fairly normal so please don't worry. The team here are the best in the business. He's in great hands.

(beat)

Now, from this point on Sean is effectively back in the military so things are going to be very different.

PETE

Rehabilitation you mean?

KAY

I don't mean for him, I mean for you. To be blunt, it's time for you to go home.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - LATER

Sean is lying in bed. Marine Wayne 'Doddsy' Dodds (23) arrives in his wheelchair and dumps his gear on the adjacent bed. He has his right leg missing below the knee and his right arm missing below the elbow.

DODDSY

How do neighbour. I'm Doddsy. So what's your story?

Sean turns his head away. Doddsy watches him for a second and smiles.

DODDSY (CONT'D)

No sweat mate.

He grabs something from his locker and wheels himself away.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - EARLY MORNING

The ward is in semi darkness. Quiet. Sean SNAPS awake. Anxious.

DODDSY

You OK mate?

Sean turns his head to find Doddsy staring at him.

DODDSY (CONT'D)

You were talking in your kip. You're Sean right?

Sean nods. A nurse appears, SARAH SMITH (20).

SARAH

Can't sleep you two?

DOODSY

He was rabbiting in his sleep.

SARAH

D'you want something to help you drop off. Or a cuppa?

Sean shakes his head.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Well if you change your mind, just
buzz.

Sarah heads back to her office. Sean glances at Doddsy and then rolls away from him.

EXT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - MORNING

The ward is still in half darkness. Sean is asleep.

Lights on. Sarah and another nurse emerge from a side room pushing a drugs trolley. Groans are heard from the various beds.

Sean wakes. He watches the nurses issuing medicines and looks around the ward as the various patients drag themselves awake.

SARAH

Good morning. I come baring gifts.

She places a small cup containing tablets on the table.

SARAH (CONT'D)

How you feeling?

SEAN

Like shit.

SARAH

Bit of a culture shock 'eh?

SEAN

It's like a bloody freak show.

Sarah raises an eyebrow but otherwise ignores the comment.

SARAH

The doctors will be round to see
you this morning. Until then,
you're to stay in bed OK.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - LATER

Captain Baker, Flt Lt Jones and a physio -LEE MORRIS (28)-
are standing besides Sean' bed. Captain Baker is examining
his wounds.

CAPTAIN BAKER

They're healing nicely. How are you
feeling young man?

SEAN

I've had better days... sir.

CAPTAIN BAKER.

Well let's get you started on some physio today. Quick word sister.

Flt Lt Jones follows Captain Baker up the ward.

LEE

(to Sean)

So Sean. Let's see what we can do about getting you fit again shall we?

Captain Baker stops by the entrance to the ward.

CAPTAIN BAKER

You know the circumstances here I assume?

FLT LT JONES

Yes sir.

CAPTAIN BAKER

The funeral is today I believe so it might be an idea to get a counsellor down here to talk to him as soon as.

(beat)

And let's get him properly briefed on what's going to happen whilst he's here. His mind will be all over the place at the moment.

FLT LT JONES

I'll ask Lt. Grace to speak to him as well sir.

Captain Baker nods and moves toward the exit.

CAPTAIN BAKER

Keep me informed will you?

FLT LT JONES

Of course sir.

INT. SUPERMARKET - LUNCHTIME

Rachel and Pete are shopping. They bump into Amy. FAMILIAR.

RACHEL

Hello Amy love.

AMY
(surprised)
Hello. How is he?

RACHEL
He's doing OK I think. We're going
to visit him at the weekend.

AMY
Well give him my love won't you.

RACHEL
Of course we will.

Amy continues on. Rachel stares after her.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
I always thought those two would
make a lovely couple.

PETE
They're mates, that's all.

Rachel becomes tearful.

RACHEL
I guess all that...

Pete takes her in his arms. Oblivious to others, she sobs.

PETE
Hey. Come on. One thing at a time
OK. One thing at a time.

FADE OUT:

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - LATER

Sean is lying in bed staring at the ceiling. A lunch tray sits untouched, on the table beside him. Doddsy approaches in an electric wheelchair. He grabs something from his locker and reverses his chair then moves forward again. This time closer. When he talks, it's in a hushed tone.

DODDSY
Listen, I heard what happened. I
had a similar... well, I know how
you feel OK?

Doddsy reverses out and heads off up the ward. As he leaves, Sean closes his eyes, clearly upset.

FADE TO BLACK:

The squeak of a wheel punctures the darkness. A voice calls out.

MAZ (O.C.)

Sean! Sean! Where the fuck are you?

Sean' eyes snap open.

EXT. HELMAND PROVINCE - MIDDAY

SEAN POV: Maz is standing close. In full combat gear, he is desperately looking for something. Around him, CHAOS. Bullets flying everywhere. Maz is totally oblivious to them.

SEAN

(Shouting)

I'm here Maz!

MAZ

Where? I can't see you!

SEAN

I'm fucking here! Right in front of you!

Maz begins walking toward Sean.

MAZ

Where are you?

SUDDENLY, a bullet hits Maz in the chest. Blood begins to ooze through his clothing but he carries on searching.

SEAN

(desperate)

I'm here!

Maz is standing almost on top of Sean. He stops, hands on hips as bullets begin to thump into his body. Each one causing a shudder and more blood.

MAZ

Well I can't bloody see you. Sod it.

Maz turns and begins to walk off.

SEAN

Maz! Don't leave me! Don't leave me!

Sean suddenly looks down and notices that he's holding a woman's hand.

GENTLE FEMALE VOICE (V.O)

Sean. Sean. You're having a bad dream. Time to wake up.

Sean opens his eyes to find Flt Lt Jones staring down at him.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - CONTINUOUS

FLT LT JONES
Back with us?

Sean nods and rubs his eyes.

FLT LT JONES (CONT'D)
There's someone here to see you.

Flt Lt Jones steps back to reveal Sgt Blackburn standing behind her. His arm is in a sling. He is visibly upset.

SGT BLACKBURN
How's my favourite pain in the arse then?

He sits down as Flt Lt Jones walks away.

SEAN
Sarge! What the bloody hell are you doing here?

Sgt Blackburn smiles. He lifts his arm to reveal his hand is heavily bandaged.

SGT BLACKBURN
Bloody missfire. Took two fingers off. Boss sent me home for a couple of weeks. Think he was sick of me moan...

Sgt Blackburn stops himself.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
All the lads send their best. Oh, and I got something for you.

Sgt Blackburn hands Sean a jiffy bag.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
It's your stuff. Wallet, keys. The lads took all the money.

SEAN
Figures.

Sean pulls open the bag and rummages around inside. He pulls out a silver necklace with a little silver horse on it. He holds it up and smiles. RELIEF.

SGT BLACKBURN
What's that?

SEAN
Me and Maz had one each. Two little boys...

Sean sniffs heavily, close to tears.

SEAN (CONT'D)

His dad used to sing it to him and his brother when they were little to teach 'em about looking after each other. He thought it'd be funny if we...

SGT BLACKBURN

Listen Sean...

SEAN

(Interrupting)

But instead, I fucked up and...

SGT BLACKBURN

You didn't fuck up and you ain't responsible. No one is. When the shit hits the fan, we do what we have to do and sometimes it works and sometimes it don't.

SEAN

But he only came out there 'cos...

SGT BLACKBURN

'Cos I sent him. And if I hadn't he'd have gone anyway. That was Maz.

SEAN

You should've just left me.

SGT BLACKBURN

We don't do that. You know we don't. Besides, if he'd have been out there, you'd have done exactly the same wouldn't you.

Sean shrugs his shoulders.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)

Course you would've. That's the way it is Sean. We all know that when we sign on the line. OK?

SEAN

I guess.

SGT BLACKBURN

It's the only way to think Sean. How else do you think guys like me and every other NCO and Officer carry on?

Sgt Blackburn smiles at him.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
Now, enough of all that bollocks.
What's the talent like here?

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - LATER

Lt. Grace enters. He sees Sgt Blackburn and heads across.

SGT BLACKBURN
Be with you in two shakes sir

LT. GRACE
How are things Lance Corporal Owen?

SEAN
Bit better thanks sir. The Sarge
has set me straight on a few
things.

LT. GRACE
Excellent.

SGT BLACKBURN
Just remember what I said OK? I'll
pop in again in a few days. You
need anything?

Sean shakes his head. Sgt Blackburn and Lt. Grace head off.
As they approach the door, Flt Lt Jones intercepts them.

FLT LT JONES
Everything OK?

SGT BLACKBURN
I dunno. It's like the spark's gone
out. Understandable I suppose.

LT. GRACE
I'm really sorry sister but we must
dash. We've a funeral to get to.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD. COMMON ROOM - LATER

A group of soldiers are sitting in the ward room watching the evening news. Some are playing cards. All have serious wounds of some kind, most have limbs missing.

Amongst them are Doddsy, SGT BARRY 'SPUD' MURPHY (30) both legs missing, GARY ADAMS (22) right leg missing, STEVE BUDD (20) left arm missing and MARK ALLEN (19) right arm missing.

Flt Lt Jones enters pushing Sean in a wheelchair. All eyes turn to them as she places Sean within sight of the TV. He looks decidedly nervous.

FLT LT JONES
Gentleman, may I Lance Corporal
Sean Owen.

They all acknowledge his arrival warmly.

BUDD
Ah, the FNG. I'm Steve. That's
spud, you know Doddsy, Gary and
that's Mark. Better known as Red
October 'cos he's always after a
sub. The rest aren't worth
bothering with.

Laughter. Abuse.

ALLEN
Oh that reminds me Steve, I've got
something for you.

Doddsy rummages around in his dressing gown pocket then pulls
out his hand. The fingers in the classic 'V' sign.

FLT LT JONES
(to Sean)
I'll leave you with this lot. Shout
if you need anything.

Flt Lt Jones exits

BUDD
Bloody hell. She gives me a stiffy.

SPUD
Hey. Show some respect. That's an
officer.

BUDD
Yeah, in the RAF. They don't count.

SPUD
I'll tell her that next time she's
about to jab you with something.
(to Sean)
How you doing fella?

Sean looks at him. BLANK.

SUDDENLY, the word 'Afghanistan' is heard. All eyes on the
TV. A report of an attack on a Taliban position includes film
of a soldier firing a heavy duty machine gun at the enemy.

BUDD
Five hundred rounds a fucking
minute. There you go you raghead
wankers. Have that.

The report is followed by an item about the funeral of Lance Corporal Majiid Fazoud. The item mentions his death whilst rescuing an injured colleague then the award of a posthumous Military Cross. Amongst the mourners Sean spots Lt. Grace and Sgt Blackburn.

SPUD

Shit, the MC. They don't give them away for fuck all.

DODDSY

Brave bastard.

ADAMS

They shouldn't have pakies in the Army.

DODDSY

Oh do fuck off.

ADAMS

Stands to reason. Can't trust 'em.

BUDD

How the fuck d'you make that out?

SPUD

He's just been given the MC for Christ's sake.

ADAMS

Look at all these fuckers in Syria and Iraq. Traitors, that's what they are. They should string the bastards up if they try to come back.

SPUD

I suggest you shut up sunshine.

ADAMS

Why? I'm entitled to my opinion.

Doddsy glances at Sean. He's fixated on the TV. Horrified.

DODDSY

You alright mate?

SEAN

(upset)

I didn't know it was today. No one told me it was today.

All eyes turn to Sean.

DODDSY

Knew what was today? Oh shit, was that your mate?

SEAN POV. The room begins to spin. Everything goes out of focus as the words of the TV report begin to echo in his head.

FLT LT JONES
(calling)
Sean, Sean.

He snaps back out to find Flt Lt Jones squatting in front of him. All eyes on the room are fixed on them.

FLT LT JONES (CONT'D)
Sean, are you with us?

SEAN
Yeah. I'm... I don't know what happened.

FLT LT JONES
It's OK. Come on, let's get you back to bed.

She stands and wheels him out of the room.

SPUD
Poor bastard. Come on, let's get the Xbox on.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - NIGHT

Sean is in his wheelchair. As he wheels along, we hear the steady squeaking of the wheel. He stops, it stops. He starts moving, it begins again.

He turns a corner and is suddenly in a graveyard. He wheels himself through the headstones until he is in front of one marked 'Lance Corporal Majiid Fazoud. Killed Helmand Province, Afghanistan 2014'

He stares at it for a second then hears a voice:

MAZ (O.C)
(Desperate)
Sean! Sean!

Sean looks around but can see no one.

SEAN
Where are you?

MAZ (O.C.)
(desperate)
In here!! It's dark Sean!

Horrified, Sean turns his gaze to the freshly dug grave.

MAZ (O.C.) (CONT'D)
(panicking)
Sean! Get me out, get me out!

Sean dives out of his chair and begins clawing at the ground.

SEAN
(urgent)
I'm coming Maz. I'm coming!

INT. MILITARY WARD - CONTINUOUS

The ward is in darkness. Sarah is standing over Sean rocking him gently. She has a hot cup of tea in her hand.

SARAH
(gentle)
Sean, Sean. Wake up. You're safe,
you're on the ward.

Sean snaps opens his eyes. FEAR.

SEAN
Jesus Christ. Sorry.

SARAH
Don't be silly. You back with us?

Sean nods. SHOCK flashes across his face. He pulls the blanket to him. EMBARRASSMENT. Sarah smiles. KNOWING.

SARAH (CONT'D)
You need clean sheets?

Sean nods. Sarah hands him her cup.

SARAH (CONT'D)
We can sort that out easily enough.
Here, take a mouthful of that. Do
you good.

Sean drags himself up and takes a mouthful. He grimaces.

SEAN
There's no sugar.

SARAH
(laughing)
That's 'cos it's my bloody tea!
Still, if you're starting to moan
you must be on the mend.

A buzzer sounds along the corridor. She is up instantly.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Let me sort this out then I'll get you those sheets.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD. COMMON ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Sean is sitting in a wheel chair staring at the TV. A few of the others are there. Some are reading, others playing cards. Doddsy enters. He looks deflated.

SPUD

Alright son. How was your trip into the outside world.

DODDSY

Weird. Felt like everyone was looking at me.

SPUD

We've all been there mate. Don't worry, you soon get used to it. Most people are cool really.

ADAMS

Apart from the odd Paki giving you snidey looks.

BUDD

Will you give it a fucking rest.

DODDSY

Yeah, enough with the Paki stuff for fuck's sake.

ADAMS

They do. Soon as they realise your cannon fodder they get all cocky.

DODDSY

(to Sean)

According to him every Asian is raving ISIS. He's a dick.

They continue to bicker. Sean slowly wheels himself toward the door until he is alongside Adams who is also in a chair.

SUDDENLY, Sean punches Adams full in the face. The others rush to pull them apart. CHAOS. Sean ENRAGED.

SEAN

You ever call anyone a Paki again and I'll rip your fuckin' head off. Got me?

ADAMS

You wanker! You broke my fuckin' nose.

Flt Lt Jones appears. Bristling. A nurse beside her.

FLT. LT JONES

What's going on?

SEAN

I mean it you cunt!

FLT. LT JONES

That's enough! Get Lance Corporal Owen back to his bed.

The nurse pulls Sean out. He continues to eyeball Adams.

ADAMS

That bastard broke my nose.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - EVENING

Sarah is taking over the shift from Flt Lt Jones.

FLT. LT JONES

I'd certainly keep them apart tonight.

SARAH

Yes sister. It might actually do him some good, lashing out. He's wound up like a top.

FLT. LT JONES

Tell that to Trooper Adams.

SARAH

Did you see that he had another nightmare last night? They actually seem to be getting worse.

FLT LT JONES

His parents are coming down at the weekend. Might be a good opportunity to get him out for some fresh air. Keep a close eye on him though.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - LATER

Sarah places a cup of tea beside Sean.

SARAH

There's sugar in that one Rocky.
(beat)
Call it a thanks. I think he's a
dick too.

Sean stares blankly after her as she leaves. Spud approaches.

SPUD

You OK fella?

Sean stares at him. Blank. He rubs his necklace.

SPUD (CONT'D)

Listen, talking helps. Honest, it
really does.

Sean turns his head away. Spud wheels himself backward then
stops. He turns back and goes to speak but stops himself.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD, OFFICE - MORNING

Flt. Lt Jones is at her desk. Knock. Sgt Blackburn enters.

SGT BLACKBURN

Morning ma'am. I believe Lt. Grace
spoke to you...

FLT. LT JONES

Ah, you must be Sgt Blackburn. Yes,
He said you'd be down. So you're
heading back then?

SGT BLACKBURN

Tomorrow. Just to see out the rest
of the tour and help organise the
withdrawal. Can't do much else with
this hand.

FLT. LT JONES

Well he's just doing some physio.
Could you give him ten minutes?

SGT BLACKBURN

Course. How's he doing?

FLT. LT JONES

He's having a tough time. I'm
actually hoping seeing you will
help.

EXT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL - LATER

Sean and Sgt Blackburn are sitting outside. Sean stares at the sky.

SGT BLACKBURN
It's gonna piss down in a minute.

SEAN
Good. I ain't seen rain in months.

SGT BLACKBURN
Me neither. But that sister'll kill me if you get wet. Come on.

SEAN
No. I wanna stay out here for a bit. It's doin' my head in in there.

SGT BLACKBURN
OK. Come to think of it, I've never been bollocked by a bird before.

SEAN
I have.

SGT BLACKBURN
Yeah, I heard. Silly sod.

Sean looks up as a group of Asian women walk past. Some are wearing head scarves. They are laughing and speaking in Hindi. Sean's face hardens as he watches them. Sgt Blackburn notices.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
They're not the enemy Sean.

SEAN
I never said they were.

SGT BLACKBURN
You thought it though.

Sean grunts.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
It's only natural. But remember, Maz was one of them.

They fall into silence.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)
D'you know how many lads I've lost in my time?

Sean looks at him. Shocked.

SGT BLACKBURN (CONT'D)

Six. Six lads. Then there's all the others.

SEAN

Like me you mean.

Sean returns his gaze to the floor. Sgt Blackburn does the same.

SGT BLACKBURN

So I know exactly what demons you've got fucking with your head.

(beat)

The blame game, the feeling sorry for yourself game, I'm an old hand at both. Well, half a hand anyway.

Rain begins to fall. Neither men flinch.

SEAN

So what do I do Sarge?

SGT BLACKBURN

You fight. You fight with every ounce of strength you've got.

SEAN

I don't know how.

SGT BLACKBURN

Then you find a way Sean. 'Cos if you don't, you're gonna go under and if you do that, it means it's all been a waste. A big fucking waste.

The two men sit in silence as rain falls.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. RECEPTION - AFTERNOON

Sean is sitting in a wheelchair. Dressed. Anxious. Rachel, Pete and Cpl Shelly Cooper are with him.

RACHEL

Where are we going?

CPL COOPER

Just local, for a bite to eat. I'll leave you to it obviously. You can take as long as you like.

PETE

Are you sure it's a good idea?

CPL COOPER

It's just to get Sean out of here
for a bit. Give him a bit of
normality.

SEAN

I am actually sat here.

CPL COOPER

Sorry.

INT. PUB/RESTAURANT - LATER

The three of them are at a table. A half eaten lunch in front
of Sean.

RACHEL

You OK love? You've hardly eaten
anything.

SEAN

I'd kill for a pint.

PETE

You know what the corporal said. No
alcohol. Even me and your mum are
on coke.

SEAN

Why bring me to a fucking pub then?

RACHEL

Sean!

SEAN

We might as well have gone through
the drive-thru at MacDonald's. At
least everyone wouldn't be looking
at me like I'm some kind of
cripple.

PETE

They're not.

SEAN

That bloke there just did it.

Sean glares at a man standing by the bar. He smiles back.

SEAN (CONT'D)

(to man)

What's your bloody problem?

RACHEL

Sean! Your embarrassing us.

Sean continues to glare at the man as he walks away. He downs the rest of his coke.

SEAN
Dick head.

Clearly upset, Rachel stands and heads for the toilet.

PETE
Go easy son. Your mothers only trying to help.

Sean grunts. He lifts his empty glass. Puts it down and then reaches across for Rachel's. He takes a mouth full.

SEAN
Jesus! How much vodka's in that?

Pete reaches across and takes it from him. He takes a mouthful and winces. Sean smiles.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Can I have some?

PETE
No you bloody can't.

Rachel returns and sits. Pete holds out the drink. She looks dumbstruck.

PETE (CONT'D)
(angry)
Vodka? For Christ's sake Rachel?
You promised.

RACHEL
(hissing)
I'm sorry.

SEAN
What's going on?

PETE
Your mother...

RACHEL
Pete! Don't you dare!

PETE
Your mothers been drinking a bit.

SEAN
Go mum. You got a bottle in your bag then?

Rachel looks sheepish. Pete glares.

PETE
Jesus Christ. I don't believe it. I
told you...

SEAN
Can I have some?

PETE
D'you think this is funny?

Sean is about to answer when Cpl Cooper arrives.

CPL COOPER
I'm sorry to interrupt, but I need
to get Sean back to the hospital.

PETE
What's wrong?

CPL COOPER
They just need him back.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - LATER

Pete pushes Sean into the ward. Flt. Lt Jones and Lt. Grace
are waiting with another officer -Lt. STEVE GIVENS (28). All
are in uniform. Sean looks at them, suddenly concerned.

SEAN
What's wrong?

LT. GIVENS
I'm afraid I have some bad news.
Sgt Blackburn. He was killed in
action yesterday.

SEAN
What?

LT. GIVENS
Sgt Blackburn...

SEAN
But he can't. He was... His hand.
He told me...

LT. GIVENS
He was hit during an assault on a
Taliban position. I'm sorry. I know
you were close.

Sean stares at him then collapses into tears.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - MORNING

Sean is in bed. Half asleep. An old man enters the ward, pushing a trolley carrying newspapers. One wheel squeaks. As he moves along the ward, Sean's sleep becomes increasingly disturbed.

As the trolley gets close, Sean turns his head to look at it. He sees the boy from Afghanistan pushing a wheelbarrow. His eyes SNAP open. PANIC. He tries to speak but can't. The squeaks continue. LOUDER.

SUDDENLY, he summons all of his energy and rolls off the bed. CRASHING to the floor.

SEAN
(shouting)
Get down! Get down!

Sean drags himself along, under the beds away from the squeaking. He thumps into the wall at the end of the bay and curls into a ball.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(shouting)
Get down! Get down!

CHAOS. A nurse comes running and kneels down beside him.

NURSE
Sean, Sean. It's OK. You're safe.

Flt. Lt Jones appears.

FLT. LT JONES
What happened?

NURSE
I don't know sister. I was dealing with...

FLT. LT JONES
Sean, it's me. Sister. It's OK.

Sean turns to look at her. Terrified. She smiles. He starts to relax.

FLT. LT JONES (CONT'D)
Let's get you back to bed shall we?

The nurse helps Sean into a wheelchair. He looks embarrassed as he is led back to bed.

The man with the trolley watches on. Shocked. Flt. Lt Jones looks at him.

FLT. LT JONES (CONT'D)
And I've told you before Mr.
Collins. Oil that bloody wheel.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD, COMMON ROOM - DAY

Sean sits in the corner staring into space. Doddsy and the others are talking.

DODDSY
I'd give my right arm...
(beat)
Oh hang on.

SPUD
Don't you ever get tired of that
joke?

DODDSY
Never. Anyway it's not like I'm a
bloody lizard and it's going to
grow back so I might as well make
the most of it.

SPUD
(feigning horror)
What? You mean I won't grow new
legs!

A nurse enters and begins to hand out mail. She drops one on Sean's lap. He stares at it.

DODDSY
My brother's such a wanker.

The others look at him. Doddsy holds up a trainer.

BUDD
Adidas Gazelles. Nice.

DODDSY
Yeah, except he's only sent one and
it's the bloody right one.

He lifts up his left leg.

DODDSY (CONT'D)
Smart arse. He knows I love my
trainers. I wonder if you can buy
just left ones?

SPUD
You should put a notice in the
paper. 'Wanted, Afghan vet. Must
have good sense of humour, no left
leg and trainer fetish'.

Sean screws up the unopened letter and drops it in the bin. He wheels himself out.

Spud wheels himself to the bin, takes the letter and puts it in his pocket.

BUDD
You not even gonna read it?

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - MINUTES LATER.

Sean has pulled himself into bed. Spud approaches. He drops the letter on the bed.

SPUD
Word from the wise. Don't dump mail
in the bin unless you want it
dissected by that lot.

Sean stares at it. BLANK. Spud sits there for a second then begins to back away.

SEAN
Thanks.

Spud stops.

SEAN (CONT'D)
It's just some bird. Fuck knows
what she wants.

SPUD
You not gonna find out?

Sean shakes his head.

SPUD (CONT'D)
Want me to?

Sean shakes his head. Spud nods. Reflective.

SPUD (CONT'D)
You wanna know the best piece of
advice anyone here ever gave me?
(beat)
'Life's either shit or shazaam'.

SEAN
What's that mean?

SPUD
Fucked if I know. But I've no
intention of my life being shit.

The two eyeball each other. Spud winks, Sean half smiles.

EXT. OWEN HOME - EVENING

Pete is standing outside the back door smoking. He spots some rubbish in the garden and walks over to pick it up.

PETE
Dirty bastards.

He wanders over to the dustbin and drops the rubbish in. As he does so, something catches his eye. He looks down and spots three empty vodka bottles hidden.

He looks angry then softens. He lights another cigarette.

INT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - MORNING

Sean is sitting in his wheelchair by his bed. He glances around then retrieves the letter from his locker.

A voice catches his attention. He looks up to see the back of an Asian male in Army uniform leaving ward. SHOCK.

SEAN
(to self)
Maz?
(shouting)
Maz! Maz!

Sean quickly wheels himself along the ward and bursts through of the doors.

EXT. SELLY OAK. MILITARY WARD - CONTINUOUS

Sean wheels himself after the man. FAST.

SEAN
Maz! It's me, Sean...

FLT.LT JONES (V.O.)
Sargent Maher!

The Asian soldier stops and turns. Sean stares at him. Crushed. He waves and turns away. Flt Lt Jones appears.

FLT. LT JONES
That's Sargent Maher. He used to be a patient here.

SEAN
I thought...

FLT. LT JONES
I know. Come on, let's get you back.

INT. OWEN HOME - MORNING

Rachel is on the phone.

RACHEL

I don't understand. What do you mean by closure?

(Beat)

But is that a good idea? I mean it could...

(Beat)

OK. So when?

INT. VEHICLE - MORNING

Sean, Rachel, Pete and Flt Lt Jones are in a vehicle being driven by Lt. Grace.

The mood is tense but Sean is calm. He holds his necklace.

LT. GRACE

Here we are.

FLT. LT JONES

Are you sure about this? It's not too late to turn back.

SEAN

No, I'm good sister. I gotta do this.

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The vehicle turns off the main road into a cemetery.

EXT. CEMETERY - MINUTES LATER

The party move along the road. Sean is being pushed along by Pete. He has a bunch of flowers and a regimental plaque on his lap.

Up ahead we see Mr. and Mrs. Fazoud. They are standing by Maz's grave which is perfectly tended.

As the party approach, the Fazoud's approach. They greet each other warmly. Samir shakes Sean's hand. Aisha bends down and embraces him.

AISHA

It's good to meet you at last.

SEAN

I had to come. He was...

Sean struggles. Emotional.

AISHA

Come on. I'll take you to see
Majiid.

Rachel and Aisha push the wheelchair along the path. Samir
and Pete wait.

SAMIR

I hope this gives him some peace.

PETE

So do we. How have things been for
you?

SAMIR

We get through one day at a time.
They say it gets easier but it
doesn't.

Aisha and Rachel return.

RACHEL

He asked for a moment.

Sean sits by the grave, staring at the headstone. He reaches
down and places the flowers and the plaque on the earth.

SEAN

Well mate, this wasn't in the plan
was it? We were supposed to be
invincible now look at us. Me with
no legs and you...

Sean fights back sobs.

SEAN (CONT'D)

I guess you know about the Sarge.
He came to see me before... He gave
me a bollocking. Told me to...

(beat)

I'm trying Maz. Honest. It's so
tough.

Sean breaks down again. As he sobs, Flt Lt Jones places her
hand on his shoulder.

FLT LT JONES

(gentle)

You ready?

Sean nods and she wheels him back toward the car.

EXT. CEMETERY - MINUTES LATER

The others are standing by the car. Flt Lt Jones and Sean arrive.

RACHEL
You OK son?

Sean nods and takes Aisha's hand. She smiles sadly.

SAMIR
Would you like to come back to the house?

LT. GRACE
We really should get him back.

SEAN
No, I'd like to. If that's OK.

EXT. THE FAZOUUD HOME - LATER

The two vehicles pull up outside the Fazouud home.

EXT. THE FAZOUUD HOME - MINUTES LATER

Sean is settling into his chair. Some youths pass and look at Sean and say something in Hindi. Samir and Aisha ignore them but Pete looks bemused.

INT. FAZOUUD HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER.

Sean is sitting in his chair drinking tea. The others are either standing or sitting at various points of the room.

Pete gestures to Samir who follows him into the kitchen.

INT. FAZOUUD HOUSE. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

PETE
Those lads outside. They said something.

SAMIR
It was nothing. They're young and stupid.

The back door opens. Azeem enters. He sees Pete. Shock. He glares. ANGRY.

AZEEM
What is he doing here?

SAMIR
They are guests in our home.

AZEEM
They? You mean?

Azeem burst through into the living room.

INT. FAZOUZ HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Azeem bursts in. All eyes turn to him. Sean is taken aback at the likeness with Maz. Azeem glares at Sean.

AZEEM
Murderer!

AISHA
Azeem!

Azeem, Aisha and Samir begin to argue loudly in Hindi. BIG SCENE. Samir slaps Azeem.

LT. GRACE
(in Hindi)
Stop! Stop this!

The argument continues. Lt Grace involved. Sean watches horrified. The language begins to echo around his head. PANIC ATTACK.

Flt Lt Jones sees his reaction and grabs the wheelchair, pulling him out of the room as the argument continues.

FADE OUT:

INT. VEHICLE - LATER

The car is in silence. Everyone deep in thought. Sean looks angry.

FLT. LT JONES
How come you speak Hindi?

LT. GRACE
My wife's Indian. Didn't you know?

SEAN
What did he say?

LT. GRACE
Pardon?

SEAN

Maz's brother. What did he say sir?

LT. GRACE

I'm not sure, I couldn't make it all out.

SEAN

You must have an idea.

Lt. Grace glances at Flt. Lt Jones. She shrugs.

LT. GRACE

He said Allah took Majiid to punish them.

PETE

Punish them? For what?

LT. GRACE

For Maz joining the British army.

The car falls into silence. Sean BURNS.

SEAN

Prick.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. MILITARY WARD - EVENING

Sean is sitting by the bed. Deep in thought.

SARAH

You OK? You look miles away.

SEAN

Just thinking about life as a window licker.

SARAH

(annoyed)

Really. Is that what you think?

SEAN

Pretty much.

FX: BUZZER. Sarah frowns and heads off.

INT. MILITARY WARD - LATER

Sean is still sitting by his bed. Sarah arrives and drops a scrap book on his lap.

SEAN

What's this?

SARAH

Look at it. Go on.

Sean opens the book. It's full of cuttings about achievements by ex-servicemen who have lost limbs. Sarah reaches down, flicks to an article and points at it.

SARAH (CONT'D)

That's my hubby. He lost both his legs in an IED, same as you.

(beat)

If I ever hear you call yourself a window licker again, I'll batter you senseless.

INT. SELLY OAK HOSPITAL. MILITARY WARD - MORNING

Sean is sitting in a wheelchair, fully dressed. Beside him are Rachel and Pete. Proud. His belongings are in bags next to him.

FLT LT JONES

So, that's you then. You've got all your meds?

SEAN

I reckon so sister.

FLT LT JONES

Good. Now get off my bloody ward.

They all smile. Lt. Grace appears.

LT. GRACE

Oh good I caught you. Next stop Headley Court then.

PETE

A few days at home first.

LT. GRACE

Well make sure you take it easy and don't do anything stupid. That's a direct order OK.

SEAN

Yes sir.

LT. GRACE

Come on. I'll walk down with you.

SEAN

(emotional)

Thanks sister. For everything.

FLT LT JONES

If you need anything, just call us
OK?

Flt Lt Jones watches them leave and smiles to herself.

INT. OWEN HOME. DINING ROOM - MORNING

The room is sparse. A single bed in one corner, a portable toilet in another corner

Sean looks at it. BLANK. Rachel and Pete stand behind him.

SEAN

It's like a bloody cell.

PETE

Well you can't exactly get upstairs mate. It's only temporary. Once the stairlift is...

SEAN

(interrupting)

Stairlift? What the fuck?

Rachel looks crushed. She turns and exits. Sean glances after her. He sighs.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Shit.

Pete puts his hand on shoulder. Sean DEFLATES.

INT. OWEN HOME. KITCHEN - DUSK

Rachel is in the kitchen with her sister, ANNE (42). They watch through the window. Sean in the garden with Pete (44) and his grandfather. Huddled round a BBQ.

ANNE

Look at them. Middle of bloody September. They must be freezing.

RACHEL

He likes the cold.

Brian (44) enters from the back and heads for the fridge. He takes three beers.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

He's had two already Brian.

BRIAN

Last one.

RACHEL

I know! I want him in soon.

Brian heads for the garden.

ANNE

So how's he been since he's been home?

RACHEL

Bored, frustrated, irritable. The mood swings are so fast. One extreme to the other, like flicking a switch.

ANNE

Understandable I suppose. Must be hard on you two as well.

Rachel grunts.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Have his mates been round?

RACHEL

Oh yes. They wanted to take him out.

ANNE

So why didn't you let them? Do him good.

RACHEL

That's what Pete said. It's too soon.

ANNE

You can't keep him locked up love. Might be just what he needs. He's 22 years old, not 42.

RACHEL

(angry)

And in case you hadn't noticed...

She stops. Close to tears. Anne moves forward and takes her hand. The door crashes open and Sean enters.

SEAN

What's up?

RACHEL

Nothing love. You OK?

SEAN

I need another slash.

ANNE

Beer in, urine out. You do know that?

SEAN

I'm gonna ask if they can make me some hollow legs at Headley.

RACHEL

Sean!

Sean grunts. He heads for his bedroom. Anne looks at her sister. CRUSHED.

ANNE

Why not let him go out with Si for a couple of hours. He'll look after him.

(beat)

And if he don't, I'll cut his bollocks off.

EXT. OWEN HOME. GARDEN - MINUTES LATER.

Sean wheels himself out. The garden is in shadow. Sean heads toward the others.

SUDDENLY, a shriek. FIREWORK. Sean looks up, TERROR. FX: LOUD BOOM

Sean throws himself to the floor and curls up into a ball.

INT. OWEN HOME. DINING ROOM - LATER

Sean is in bed. His eyes snap open. Disorientated.

GRANDFATHER

It's OK Sean. You had a bit of a turn. You're in bed.

Sean calms. He looks at his grandfather.

SEAN

Jesus fuck. I thought...

GRANDFATHER

Flashbacks. Yeah, I used to have them. D'you wanna talk about it?

Sean shakes his head.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)

Well if you ever do, you know...

Sean glares at his grandfather. ANGRY.

SEAN

What? That you was in Korea. That make you some kind of expert does it?

GRANDFATHER

I never meant...

SEAN

You wanna know about Afghanistan? You really wanna know? I'll tell you shall I? No, I'll fucking show you!

Sean throws the blankets off the bed and starts tearing at his dressings until his stumps are exposed.

SEAN (CONT'D)

There you go granddad. Some ten year old kid pushing a fucking wheelbarrow full of explosives did that.

GRANDFATHER

(upset)

I'm sorry, I didn't...

The door bursts open and Pete and Rachel enter. Sean, OBLIVIOUS to them.

SEAN

And d'you know why? 'cos I didn't have the bollocks to blow his fucking brains out like I should've.

Rachel leads her distraught father out. Sean glares. ENRAGED.

SEAN (CONT'D)

There, that's fucking Afghanistan! Happy now?

INT. OWEN HOME. KITCHEN - LATER

Pete enters. Rachel is staring out the window. She has a glass in front of her.

PETE

He's asleep.

Without looking at him, Rachel picks her glass up and empties it. He gently puts his hand on her shoulder.

RACHEL

I read something on the internet a few weeks ago. Some woman, just like me. Son injured. D'you know what she said?

Pete drops his hand away as Rachel pours herself another drink.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

She said her son hadn't been the only one to lose his legs.

(beat)

I never knew what she meant till now.

Pete stares at her for a second then exits. Rachel remains staring out the window. She downs her glass.

INT. OWEN HOME, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Sean snaps awake. PANIC. He frowns. Bed wet.

SEAN

Bollocks.

INT. OWEN HOME. KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER.

Sean is looking for food. He stares up at the food cupboards unable to reach them. He grabs a broom and uses that to try and open them but gives up.

He searches cupboards lower down and pulls out a bottle. BRANDY. He looks at it for a second then starts to gulp from it.

INT. OWEN HOME. DINING ROOM - MORNING

Sean is sitting in bed vomiting into a bowl held by Rachel. ANGRY.

RACHEL

Half a bottle of brandy! What the bloody hell were you thinking?

SEAN

Jesus, my head.

RACHEL

Yes, well don't expect any sympathy.

SEAN

You're one to bloody talk.

Rachel looks at him, taken aback.

SEAN (CONT'D)

I'm disabled, not blind.

(beat)

I don't blame you to be honest. If
I had to look after me I'd wanna be
pissed all the time.

Rachel glares at Sean. She dumps the bowl down in front of
him and storms out. Tearful.

Sean watches her go then vomits again.

INT. OWEN HOME. LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Rachel and Pete are watching TV.

FX: Doorbell.

INT. OWEN HOME. HALL - CONTINUOUS

Pete opens the front door to find Saleema. Shock.

SALEEMA

I need to talk to you.

INT. OWEN HOME. LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER.

The four of them are in the room.

SALEEMA

My parents have been so ashamed
since you visited. I've just come
to apologise for Azeem.

RACHEL

There's no need honestly. We
understand.

SEAN

I don't.

PETE

Sean!

SEAN

Well I don't. He called me a bloody murderer. Does that mean he thinks Maz... Cheeky bastard.

SALEEMA

I know it's no excuse, but Azeem's angry. He needs someone to blame.

SEAN

How about the little shit who blew me up? Or the wanker who blew his brothers brains out.

PETE

That's enough Sean.

SALEEMA

I agree with you Sean. But for someone like Azeem... there's a lot of pressure. These are confusing times for some young Muslims.

RACHEL

I'm sure he'll see sense in the end. Your parents are good and loving people.

SALEEMA

Yes, they are. I just hope that's enough.

EXT. OWEN HOME - EARLY EVENING.

Sean is sitting in the passenger seat of Simon's car. He is relaxed.

Pete and Rachel are standing by the open passenger door. She looks terrified.

RACHEL

Don't be out too long OK. And no drinking!

SIMON

Don't worry Mrs O. We're only going to MacDonald's to see the lads. I promise I'll look after him.

Rachel throws him a look to suggest he better had.

INT. SIMON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Simon pulls away then turns and grins at Sean.

SEAN
So where are we really going?

EXT. RED LION PUB - LATER.

Sean and Simon arrive at their local pub. A doorman stands by the entrance.

DOORMAN
Alright Sean. Heard you were back.
How you doin'?

SEAN
I'll be better once I've got a pint
in my hand.

The doorman hands Sean a ten pound note.

DOORMAN
Here, first one's on me. Good to
see you mate.

MONTAGE OF SEAN AND SIMON IN THE PUB CHATTING TO VARIOUS
PEOPLE. IT'S ALL VERY RELAXED. PEOPLE ARE GLAD TO SEE HIM.

INT. RED LION PUB - LATER.

Sean begins to fidget. He grabs Simons arm and pulls him down, whispering something in his ear. Simon, horrified.

SIMON
You're kidding! But how...?

SEAN
I don't bloody know. But I gotta
piss.

INT. RED LION. TOILET - MINUTES LATER

Simon is standing with the wheelchair outside a toilet cubicle. A loud FART is heard followed by giggling.

SIMON
For fuck's sake! That better not
stink or you're on your bloody own.

SEAN (O.C.)
(laughing)
Stop moaning and give me a hand.

A laughing Simon pushes open the door and within seconds, has lifted a still laughing Sean back into his wheelchair.

Sean wheels himself toward the sinks. As he does so, a man (early 20's) enters and trips over him. He staggers. Angry.

SIMON

Watch where you're goin' for fuck's sake. He's in a bloody chair.

The man glares angrily at Simon then at Sean. He turns away toward the urinal. Sean and Simon look at each other and shrug their shoulders.

Sean takes the back of the chair and turns Sean toward the door. The man mutters. Sean grabs the wheels. STOP.

SEAN

What d'you say?

MAN 1

What?

He turns from the urinal and quickly does his trousers up. Sean glares at him.

SEAN

You said somethin'. What was it?

MAN 1

I didn't say nothing.

SIMON

What'd he say?

The man heads for the door but Simon pushes him back.

SEAN

You got something to say, you say it to my fucking face.

STANDOFF. The door opens and another man enters. Man 1 smiles. Recognition.

MAN 1

I said 'fucking cripple'. You wanna make something of it?

INT. OWEN HOME - LATER

Pete opens the front door to find two policemen with Sean.

POLICEMAN

Yours I believe.

INT. OWEN HOME. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Sean in his chair. Contrite. Pete is sitting, Rachel pacing.

RACHEL
I'll bloody kill that Simon.

PETE
There's no harm done. The copper
said it was just a scuffle.

RACHEL
And what if one of them had have
had a knife?

SEAN
A knife! Wooooo....

RACHEL
I suppose you think you're funny.

SEAN
A few weeks ago I was getting
bloody shot at! You think some dick
with a blade...

PETE
(interrupting)
That's enough. Maybe we all need to
calm down a bit.

Rachel crumbles then storms out.

SEAN
(calling)
Mine's a double if you're asking!

PETE
Proud of yourself?

SEAN
Well for fuck's sake. I don't need
a baby sitter.

PETE
She's not a baby sitter, she's your
mother. Maybe you need to remember
that.

SEAN
Yeah, well I'll be out of your way
next week so she won't have to
worry will she.

Pete shakes his head and exits. Sean glares after him.

INT. OWEN HOME. BEDROOM - LATER

Rachel and Pete are asleep. They are woken up by the sound of crashing.

PETE
What the hell...

INT. OWEN HOME. DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Pete rushes into the room to find Sean smashing it up. He is wide eyed. Full of RAGE. Pete runs in and grabs him. TIGHT.

PETE
OK son, it's OK.

Sean struggles, violent. Pete grasps him tighter. Sean relaxes. They sit, peace.

EXT. OWEN HOME - EVENING.

Pete is helping Sean into Amy's car. Amy and Rachel are on the front path.

RACHEL
Thank you so much for doing this.
The poor sod's climbing the walls
and I didn't know who else to ask.

AMY
It's fine honestly. It's nice to
see him.

RACHEL
Just don't take him to any pubs.

AMY
MacDonald's and then home. I
promise.

Amy climbs into the car and they drive off.

RACHEL
I hope he behaves this time.

PETE
Well they can't get up to that
much.

Pete nods toward the fence. The wheelchair is leaning against it, folded. Pete smiles. SMUG.

RACHEL
You crafty bugger.

INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER.

Amy glances at him, sheepish. He catches the look. Smiles.

SEAN

It's OK. It's not like we were ever going to be some big romance or anything. Mind you, sending a bloke a dear John in intensive care is a bit brutal.

AMY

I never, you cheeky sod.

SEAN

So what's the goss then?

EXT. MACDONALDS CAR PARK - LATER.

Sean is sitting in the car. The door is open. People stand around chatting. He looks at Amy, talking to a group of girls. Suddenly, he starts to feel alone, remote. Anxious.

SIMON

Alright stumpy.

SEAN

Christ Si. You scared the shit out of me. Get my chair out the back will you?

Simon heads to the rear hatch.

SIMON

It ain't here.

SEAN

Bollocks. That's my old man, he's done that on purpose.

Simon looks around. Smiles. Cheeky.

SIMON

I got an idea.

EXT. MACDONALDS CAR PARK - MINUTES LATER.

Sean is sitting in a shopping trolley as Simon pushes him around talking to people. Amy spots them. ANGRY.

AMY

Sean! You promised. And as for you Si! His mum's gonna skin you alive.

SIMON

It weren't even our fault. Some
dick head gobbing off.

JASON (22) approaches. They shake hands.

JASON

Good to see you back mate.

SEAN

Yeah, the rests coming next week.

AMY

Don't talk like that! It's not
nice.

SEAN

Why not? If I can't take the piss
out of myself, who can?

Amy walks away. UPSET. Jason shrugs his shoulders and follows
her. Sean watches.

SEAN (CONT'D)

They together?

Simon puts his hand on Sean's shoulder. Knowing.

SIMON

Come on. There's something I've
always wanted to do.

INT. MACDONALDS - MINUTES LATER.

POV: through serving hatch. The server is holding a bag of
food and two drinks as Sean's head comes into view. They are
all roaring with laughter.

SEAN

Thanks mate. You got any ketchup?

EXT. MACDONALDS CAR PARK - LATER

The car park is busy. Sean is surrounded by a group. Talking
about Afghanistan.

STEVE

So, you get to kill anyone then
Sean?

SIMON

Don't ask him that for fuck's sake.

STEVE

Why not? It's just a question.

Simon and Steve begin to argue. Sean ignores them and looks around. He sees Amy with Jason and stares at them. ALONE.

SUDDENLY, Sean feels himself being pulled backwards and within seconds is being pushed at running pace up the road.

SEAN

What the fuck!!!

He turns to see a young woman -TASHA BOYD (26) pushing. She is laughing hysterically as she runs. Sean starts to laugh with her as he hangs until eventually, she stops and sits on a bench. Gasping for breath with her eyes closed as Sean watches.

TASHA

Oh god, that was funny.

She sits forward and opens her eyes to look at Sean who is rubbing his legs. Pain.

TASHA (CONT'D)

(horrified)

You've got no bloody legs!

(beat)

Oh shit. I'm so sorry! I didn't...

SEAN

(laughing)

Don't worry. It's OK.

TASHA

But...

SEAN

Really, it's cool. I'm just a bit sore that's all. It's like sitting on a bloody cheese grater!

(beat)

So just so I can tell the police later, who are you?

Tasha smiles. WARM.

TASHA

Well Cilla, my name's Tasha. I'm 24, single, I work in marketing and I live, well, just over there actually with a cat called thrush.

SEAN

Thrush? Is that because he's an irritating...

TASHA

No! It's because no one wanted him.
It was my ex's idea.

SEAN

So d'you often kidnap blokes
sitting in shopping trollies then?

TASHA

Not often. Just when they look like
they need rescuing.

SEAN

Did I?

TASHA

Well you're here aren't you? So,
the legs. I suppose I should ask...

SEAN

You don't have to.

TASHA

Sod you. I won't then.

Tasha leans forward and lifts the necklace around Sean's neck.

TASJA

That's pretty. Bit girlie though,
don't you think?

SEAN

My best mate brought it for me.

TASHA

(sarcastic)
Oh really?

SEAN

He died, in Afghanistan.

TASHA

Oh Christ. I'm so sorry. I'll just
stick both feet in my mouth shall
I?

(beat)

Oh shit. I did it again.

SEAN

Stop apologising woman.

TASHA

So I'm guessing Afghanistan, the
legs. Two and two.

SEAN

A solid four.

TASHA

Ah. So come on then, I can't call you soldier boy forever can I.

SEAN

I'm Sean.

TASHA

I could have guessed that.

SEAN

How?

TASHA

You look like a Sean.

SEAN

What does a Sean look like?

Tasha smiles.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Oh, ha bloody ha.

They sit in silence for a second.

SEAN (CONT'D)

So you going to take me back to MacDonald's then?

Tasha feigns deep thought.

TASHA

I don't think so. Not until I've finished with you anyway. Besides, it's only half ten.

SEAN

Oh shit. I should have been back hours ago. My mum will be freaking out.

TASHA

Give her a ring. Tell her you're with a grown up.

SEAN

I can't. My mates got my phone. No legs equals no pockets!

Tasha hands Sean her phone.

SEAN (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hi Dad.

(beat)

Yes I know, sorry. I lost track of time. I'm fine honest.

(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)

(beat)

No really, I'm OK.

He looks at Tasha and smiles. She smiles back. Warm, genuine.

SEAN (CONT'D)

(into phone)

No I'm not with Amy. I've been kidnapped. Could you come rescue me?

EXT. PARK BENCH - LATER.

Pete steps back from the car having just lifted Sean inside.

PETE

You sure you don't need a lift?

TASHA

No thanks. It's only 5 minutes.

Tasha leans in, takes a SELFIE of them both and kisses him on the cheek.

TASHA (CONT'D)

Take care of yourself soldier boy.

INT. HOME. SEAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Sean is lying in bed with his arms behind his head. An angry Rachel is standing in the doorway. Seething. Pete appears.

SEAN

You can't blame Amy mum. She was with her new bloke.

RACHEL

As for this daft bloody woman...

PETE

Leave him alone. He had fun and he ain't had much of that lately.

RACHEL

From the sound of it, it was other people having fun at his expense. Wheeling him around in a shopping trolley like a...

Rachel stops. Sean raises an eyebrow.

SEAN

Like a what? Like a cripple?

RACHEL

Child. And don't you dare accuse me
of ever thinking...

SEAN

(interrupting)

Jesus, give it a rest will you. I
got home in one piece didn't I?

Rachel turns and walks out. HURT. Pete looks at Sean and
shrugs. He exits. Sean leans back on his pillow.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Bollocks.

INT. OWEN HOME. STAIRS - EARLY MORNING

Pete comes down the stairs. The light is on in Sean's room.
He knocks and enters. Sean is lying in bed staring at the
ceiling.

PETE

You alright son? It's gone three.
You're not worried about Headley
Court are you?

Sean shakes his head. Pete closes the door.

PETE (CONT'D)

So what's up?

SEAN

Just thinking. Life, shit like
that.

PETE

If this is about what your mum
said, she was angry. She didn't
mean...

SEAN

But she's right dad.

PETE

Now you listen to me. You've had a
shit time, that's a fact. But
you've got your whole life...

SEAN

But I ain't have I. I ain't got my
life. I've got this life. This shit
life.

(beat)

D'you know what the real difference
is dad? It ain't me, it's everyone
else.

PETE

I don't get what you mean.

SEAN

Si and them don't see me no more, they see me with no legs. It changes everything. Every single fucking thing.

PETE

What, you think they feel sorry for you or something?

SEAN

I'm a novelty act.

PETE

That's not fair and it's not true.

SEAN

Yes it is. That bird Tasha made me realise it.

PETE

Why? What did she say?

SEAN

She never said anything. Funny thing is she was probably the first person who's treated me normally since...

(beat)

It's what I never did.

PETE

Sean, it's three o'clock in the morning and you're talking in riddles.

SEAN

Six months ago I'd have been all over a bird like that.

(beat)

How do you chat up a bird when half of you is missing?

Sean looks at Pete and half smiles.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Like I said, everything's changed.

Pete nods. CHOKED. He hugs his son than heads for the door.

PETE

Try and get some sleep OK? Big day tomorrow.

SEAN

Dad?

Pete turns to his son. Sean goes to speak. UPSET. He throws his dad a mock salute. Pete smiles then exits.

Pete pulls the door shut behind him. CHOKED. Rachel is standing, Tearful. He puts his fingers to his lips and points up the stairs but she shakes her head and sits down.

Pete smiles at her KNOWING and heads past her leaving her staring at the door. Thoughtful.

INT. OWEN HOME. STAIRS - MORNING

Rachel is asleep on the stairs. She jolts awake, walks slowly to the dining room door and eases it open.

Sean is still. She stares at him. Almost gasping with relief when he finally breathes. She watches. Deep in thought.

INT. OWEN HOME. KITCHEN - LATER

Rachel is washing up. FX: Telephone.

RACHEL

Hello.

INT. OWEN HOME. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sean watching TV. Rachel enters and holds out the phone.

RACHEL

It's your kidnapper.

INT. OWEN HOME. LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

In the background you can hear Sean laughing. Pete enters. He nods toward the dining room.

PETE

Who's he talking to?

RACHEL

(prickly)

That girl from last night. They've been talking for nearly an hour.

PETE
(smiling)
That's good. Trust me. It's good.

The phone clicks. Call ended. Rachel heads for the dining room.

INT. OWEN HOME. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

RACHEL
So?

SEAN
Any chance of a bacon sarnie? I'm starving.

RACHEL
Don't get smart.

Sean smiles and winks at her.

SEAN
Love you mum. Cuppa would be nice as well.

Rachel returns his smile and turns to exit.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Mum? Could you do something else for me?

RACHEL
What now?

SEAN
Stop drinking, OK?

Rachel fills up. Exits.

INT. HEADLEY COURT. WARD OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Sean is sitting opposite Sergeant Paula Morris (27). A nurse, she is filling in paperwork. She stops and looks up.

SGT MORRIS
I know Headley Court can be a bit overwhelming at first.

SEAN
I can't really get my head around actually being here.

SGT MORRIS
Being here? Or having to be here?

SEAN

Bit of both I guess.

SGT MORRIS

That's perfectly natural. Just think of it like any other military unit. That'll help.

DODDSY (O.C.)

Well bugger me! Hello mate!

Sean turns to see Doddsy standing in the open door. He is hobbling on stubbies (short artificial legs). Awkwardly. Sgt Morris stands and without a word, pushes the door to. SLAM.

DODDSY (O.C.) (CONT'D)

OW!

Sgt Morris smiles.

SGT MORRIS

You're not like him are you? I don't know if I could handle another one.

INT. HEADLEY COURT. WARD - AFTERNOON

An alcove of four neatly made bed-spaces. Shelves on three are covered in personal possessions. Sean is unpacking in the fourth as Doddsy watches. Chatting.

Two other men arrive. TROOPER ANDY MILLER (20) has prosthetic legs and left arm. CORPORAL CARL TANNER (25) (left leg and right foot missing) is in a chair. Doddsy makes the introductions. Sean watches as Andy takes off his arm and legs. He catches sight of Sean staring.

SEAN

I never seen anyone do that before.
Not close up anyway.

Andy hands one of his legs to Sean. He stares at it.

ANDY

They're yours actually. I'm just breaking them in for you.

Sean jolts. Shock. Doddsy and Carl laugh.

DODDSY

Give the poor bastard a chance.
He's not even unpacked yet.

ANDY

Sorry mate. Couldn't resist. So come on then, what's your story?

FADE OUT:

INT. HEADLEY COURT. WARD - LATER

The four men are sitting on their beds talking. Relaxed.

FX: PING. A text. Sean picks up his phone. Smiles.

DODDSY

Is that a bird?

CARL

First rule of Headley Sean. You gotta show everyone what your bird looks like.

SEAN

She's not my bird, just a mate.

ANDY

Yeah, that old bollocks. Come on.

Sean holds up the phone. The screen displays a full face picture of Tasha with a broad smile on her face.

DODDSY

Solid 8/10 that. Not a perv is she? Into the old amputee's?

Doddsy wiggles his legs about. Grinning.

ANDY

He's fucking horrible.

DODDSY

I wonder if they can fit a vibrators to my sockets. I'd be like a bloody sex machine.

CARL

The wank-o-nator.

The four men laugh. The banter continues.

FADE OUT:

INT. HEADLEY COURT, WARD - NIGHT

Sean jolts awake. Opposite him, Andy is having a nightmare. A nurse sits beside him. Talking gently.

Sean watches for a moment. The nurse turns and looks at him. She smiles and puts her finger to her lips.

Sean lays there watching. He rolls over and pulls his pillow over his head.

INT. HEADLEY COURT. SIDE WARD - MORNING

Sean has two 12" long stubbies fitted. He wiggles them.

DOC
How do they feel?

SEAN
OK I suppose. Feels weird having something there again.

DOC
It will do. You've only had a week of physio so you're lower body is still quite weak.

PROSTHETIST
Are they comfortable though.

SEAN
I guess so.

DOC
OK, we'll let's get you standing shall we.

The doc and the prosthetist lift Sean off the bench and place him between two parallel bars. He takes his weight on his arms.

DOC (CONT'D)
Remember this is the first time you'll have stood upright for a while so it's going to feel strange at first.

Sean gently lowers his full weight down then lifts again.

SEAN
Christ, they hurt like a bastard.

DOC
Could you try standing on your own?

Sean lowers himself again. He visibly winces.

SEAN
Shit.

Sean lifts himself up again.

PROSTHETIST

Don't worry. It's just the fit of the socket. We'll get that sorted.

DOC

Let's get you back up on the bench.

SEAN

Before you do that sir, my phones in my pocket there. Could someone take a picture for my folks?

Sean lowers himself down and feigns a huge beaming smile. The second a picture is taken he lifts himself up.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Holy fuck!

Sean is lifted back onto the bench and the stubbies removed. He looks dispirited.

PROSTHETIST

Don't worry. It's quite normal to have some soreness. We'll have you sprinting up and down the ward before you know it.

Sean takes the phone and sends the picture. Almost instantly:

FX: PING.

SCREEN: Tasha. OMFG! So proud of you. First dance all mine.
Xxxx

Sean smiles.

INT. HEADLEY COURT. WARD - LATER

Sean is asleep.

NURSE (O.C.)

Lance Corporal Owen!

Sean snaps awake. The nurse is standing at the end of his bed. Angry.

NURSE (CONT'D)

What the bloody hell are you doing on your bed at three o'clock in the afternoon?

Sean sits up. Disorientated.

SEAN

Sorry. I just...

NURSE

The sister wants to see you
immediately.

Sean swings himself round and reaches for his chair. It is perched on piles of books with the wheels missing. He looks bewildered. LAUGHTER. Doddsy, Andy and Carl appear.

NURSE (CONT'D)

(laughing)

I'm sorry. They made me do it.

SEAN

You wankers.

Doddsy clips the wheels back on. The others disperse.

DODDSY

You should've seen your face.

Doddsy clambers up onto his bed. An official looking envelope falls from his pocket.

SEAN

What's that?

Doddsy mood changes. FLAT.

DODDSY

My discharge letter. Fuckers are cutting me loose. S'OK. My shit to deal with.

SEAN

What you going to do?

DODDSY

Christ knows. Back home I suppose.

SEAN

You got family though.

DODDSY

None that give a toss about me.
That's why I joined up in the first place.

(beat)

Army's all I know Sean. I might as well just top myself

SEAN

Don't be bloody stupid.

DODDSY

Yeah, like you've never thought of it.

SEAN

Well yeah, but I couldn't do it.
I've not got the bottle. Besides...

DODDSY

(Flips- angry)

Don't give me all that guilt
bollocks right. I've done my
fucking bit and lost my legs to
prove it OK.

Sean climbs into his chair and begins wheeling himself away.

SEAN

I'm not having this conversation.
It's fucking stupid.

As he wheels himself past the office, Sgt Morris steps out.

SGT MORRIS

Everything OK?

SEAN

Yeah. Just need some fresh air.

INT. HEADLEY COURT. SIDE WARD - MORNING

Sean is back on his stobbies standing between the parallel
bars.

PROSTHETIST

Better?

SEAN

Much.

DOC

Try taking some steps.

Sean steps forward awkwardly.

DOC (CONT'D)

Good. Now turn around and walk
back.

Sean stands for a second.

SEAN

How the bloody hell do I turn
round?

INT. HEADLEY COURT. WARD - LATER

A beaming Sean walks onto the ward on his stubbies. He is using crutches but it is still clearly an effort.

The lads on the ward burst into applause. Doddsy smiles and pats his knee's as if calling a dog to him.

DODDSY

Come on boy! There's a good boy!

SEAN

Piss off!

MONTAGE OF SEAN EXERCISING, SWIMMING, DOING WEIGHTS AND WALKING.

INT. HEADLEY COURT. WARD - EVENING

Sean is sitting watching TV on a laptop. He has his stubbies on. A nurse approaches.

NURSE

Sean, you have a visitor.

Sean looks puzzled. He jumps down off his chair and walks toward the door.

INT. HEADLEY COURT. WARD - CONTINUOUS

Sean walks out to see Tasha standing at the end of the ward. He beams and walks toward her. She lets him walk all the way along the ward until she is actually looking down on him.

TASHA

I thought you'd be taller.

SEAN

And you're better looking in your picture.

Tasha drops to her knees. They embrace.

SEAN (CONT'D)

What the bloody hell are you doing here?

TASHA

I've come to bust you out.

SEAN

I bloody wish!

TASHA

Then your wish is about to come true young sir. I've spoken to the head warder and as long as I keep you handcuffed, you're all mine for two hours.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - LATER

Sean is in his wheelchair. Tasha arrives carrying a tray of coffee and cakes.

SEAN

I told you I didn't want any cake.

TASHA

Who says it's for you fatty?

SEAN

That's a bit harsh.

TASHA

Well having just had to push you from the car I don't think that's unreasonable.

SEAN

You ever considered a career as a carer? You're a natural.

TASHA

It has been said.

Sean smiles as he watches her eating.

TASHA (CONT'D)

What?

SEAN

Can I ask you something? Why did you kidnap me?

TASHA

Dunno. There was something about you.

SEAN

What, like a soul mate thing?

TASHA

I was thinking more kindred spirits. You looked a bit, lost.

SEAN

Lost? What's that mean?

TASHA

Never mind.

(Beat)

So come on then, what's the gossip?

SEAN

Bloody hell, where do I start. I've been asked to do Strictly Come Dancing.

TASHA

Best you get some dancing legs sorted out first.

SEAN

Funny you should say that. I'm actually getting some next week.

TASHA

Seriously? That's awesome!

SEAN

Actually, my regiment are back from Afghan next week so my medal ceremony will be coming up soon.

(beat)

Would you come?

TASHA

Me?

SEAN

Why not?

TASHA

Will I get to wear a posh frock?

INT. HEADLEY COURT. WARD - LATER

Tasha enters pushing Sean through the door with a crash.

SEAN

(laughing)

You're bloody rubbish.

TASHA

It's alright for you. You try...

Sean grabs the wheels and brings the wheelchair to an abrupt halt. Doddsy bed-space has been cleared. The shelves empty.

He looks at Carl who shrugs his shoulders. SAD.

CARL

Daft twat OD'd. They found him in a cupboard.

Sean begins to panic. Sgt Morris comes hurrying along.

SGT MORRIS

It's OK Sean. He'll be fine. He's just been moved to another ward where we can keep a proper eye on him for a while.

Sean stares at her for a second then collapses into tears.

INT. HEADLEY COURT. WARD - LATER

Sean is fast asleep. Tasha watches him for a second. She scribbles a note before exiting.

INT. HEADLEY COURT. WARD OFFICE - LATE

The ward sister is at her desk. Tasha sticks her head around the door.

TASHA

Just letting you know that he's asleep so I'm off.

SISTER

Thanks. Are you OK?

Tasha walks in and sits down. She looks deflated. UPSET.

TASHA

I'm not sure. I didn't realise he was so fragile. Is that normal?

SISTER

Sadly there's no normal. Some deal with things better than others.

TASHA

And which one is Sean?

SISTER

Only time will answer that I'm afraid.

Tasha nods and then stands. Still visibly upset, she exits.

INT. HEADLEY COURT. SIDE WARD - MORNING

Sean is sitting on the floor with his stubbies on. In front of him sits one of the female physio's. Another watches.

PHYSIO

OK. Can you stand up for me?

Sean rolls over onto his arm and pushes himself up until he is standing upright.

PHYSIO (CONT'D)

Now let's see you walk the length of the room and back.

Sean walks awkwardly to the end of the room and back. He only stops once he is standing in front of the physio. She holds up her hands and they high five.

PHYSIO (CONT'D)

Let's do this then.

The stubbies are replaced with two full size prosthetic legs.

PHROSTHETIST

How do they feel?

SEAN

Bizarre.

PHYSIO

D'you want to try standing?

Sean nods. He is soon standing upright, swaying gently as he holds onto the parallel bars

PHYSIO (CONT'D)

How's that? Bit weird?

SEAN

I'm sure I used to be taller.

Sean starts to get emotional. The physio steps forward and puts her arm around him.

PHYSIO

It's OK. It's natural for you to get a bit tearful.

Sean smiles and wipes his eyes.

SEAN

OK, you know what to do.

They all step aside. The physio takes his picture.

INT. HEADLEY COURT. WARD - LATER

Sean comes crashing through the doors in an electric powered wheelchair.

Sgt Morris comes bursting angrily out of her office.

SGT MORRIS
Lance Corporal Owen! How many times
do you have to be reminded that
this is a military establishment?

Sean glances over her shoulder as Tasha appears behind Sgt
Morris. SHOCK. She pulls a face at him. Laughs.

SGT MORRIS (CONT'D)
Is something funny?

SEAN
Sorry.

SGT MORRIS
Last chance Mr. Owen.
(beat)
Now I suggest you entertain your
visitor.

Sgt Morris returns to her office.

TASHA
Who's a naughty boy then? Loving
the wheels by the way.

SEAN
My new toy. So what the bloody hell
are you doing here?

Sean heads for his bed. Tasha follows.

TASHA
I had a client in Reigate so
thought I'd pop in on the way home.
So aside from upsetting the staff,
how've you been?

Sean pulls out his phone and shows her the photo of him
standing up on his new legs. She sits on the bed, staring at
it. SHOCK.

TASHA (CONT'D)
Oh my god!

She embraces him. TIGHT. Tearful.

TASHA (CONT'D)
I'm so proud of you.

Sean moves to kiss her. Tasha recoils. HORRIFIED.

TASHA (CONT'D)
What are you doing!!!

SEAN
Sorry. I Thought...

TASHA
Thought what?

SEAN
I don't know! Just that, well that
was what you wanted!

TASHA
Why? Why would you think that?

Tasha stands.

TASHA (CONT'D)
I should go.

SEAN
Why? Don't go Tasha. I'm sorry.

TASHA
Me too.

Tasha walks briskly off the ward. Sean watches. Bewildered.

EXT. HEADLEY COURT. CAR PARK - LATER

Sean is staring along the road. He picks up his phone and
calls. Answerphone.

SEAN
Shit.

DODDSY (O.C.)
What the fuck're you doing out
here?

Sean turns to find Doddsy behind him in his chair.

SEAN
I could ask you the same question.
Thought you'd be banged up.

DODDSY
Houdini ain't I.
(beat)
I like looking at the planes.
Wondering where they're going and
that.

SEAN
Wanna talk about it?

Doddsy shakes his head. NO. He lights a cigarette, inhales
deeply and returns his gaze to the sky. Smoke drifts skyward.

SEAN (CONT'D)

You know them things'll kill you.

DODDSY

If I can survive the ragheads and a gut full of morphine, Mister Marlboro here has no bloody chance.

(beat)

So what's up with you? You look like you lost a twenty and found fuck all.

SEAN

Woman trouble.

Doddsy bursts out laughing.

SEAN (CONT'D)

What's so funny?

DODDSY

You are you knob. All the shit you've been through and it's some bird that screws you up.

Doddsy notices the pained look on Sean's face.

DODDSY (CONT'D)

Christ. You have got it bad.

SEAN

(embarrassed)

Don't you ever think about...

DODDSY

Skirt? All the time mate. I'd shag you if you were better looking.

(beat)

One thing these last few days Sean, life's too short to let shit get in the way. Any shit.

SEAN

But...

DODDSY

But nothing. Ten years ago you and me, with injuries like these, we'd have been gravestones. Think about that.

Doddsy pats Sean on the shoulder and moves to leave.

DODDSY (CONT'D)

Think about that every day.

SEAN

Doddsy?

(beat)

You ever try that again and I swear, I'll finish you myself.

Doddsy holds out his fist and smiles. Sean bumps.

EXT. COLCHESTER GARRISON - MORNING

Families are gathering ahead of the medal ceremony. Sean is in his wheelchair and in full uniform. Pete and Rachel stand with him. Happy. Aisha, Samir and Saleema approach. They exchange greetings.

SAMIR

Sean, we have something we want to ask you. Majiid's Military Cross will be presented soon.

AISHA

We would like you to come to Buckingham Palace with us.

Sean is taken aback.

SEAN

I don't know. I mean, shouldn't his brother go?

A flash of pain crosses Samir's face.

SAMIR

He... he is angry. I don't think...

AISHA

At least promise us you will think about it. It would mean a great deal.

SEAN

Of course I will. But only if I can walk in. I owe him that.

MONTAGE OF THE PARADE. INCLUDES SEAN BEING PRESENTED WITH HIS MEDAL.

EXT. COLCHESTER GARRISON - LATER.

Sean wheels himself off the parade square to where Rachel and Pete are waiting. Hugs.

RACHEL

Well done. We're so proud of you Sean.

Lt Malvey approaches. He and Sean shake hands.

SEAN

How you doing sir?

LT. MALVEY

Not so bad. I hear you'll be rejoining us soon.

SEAN

Yes sir. They've found me a job in admin.

LT. MALVEY

Excellent.

Pete coughs.

SEAN

Oh sorry dad. Sir, my parents.

(beat)

Mum, dad, Lt Malvey. He was with us when...

FX: Ping. Text.

SCREEN: Tasha. You look very handsome. x

Sean stares at it for a second. Puzzled. He looks around and spots Tasha in the crowd. She waves. Sean excuses himself and heads toward her.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Well someone's in the shit. This is supposed to be a chav free zone.

TASHA

Cheeky twat. Actually, I was invited. Some bloke I know was getting a medal today.

She holds out her hand. He takes it and half smiles.

TASHA (CONT'D)

Can we go somewhere private? I have something I need to tell you.

INT. COLCHESTER GARRISON - MINUTES LATER

Tasha is sitting on a bench, Sean beside her in his chair. She looks uncomfortable. Nervous.

TASHA

I've rehearsed this speech in my head a million times and now I'm here, I don't know where to start.

SEAN

The beginning's traditional.

TASHA

But that's it, I don't even know the beginning.

Tasha stands and begins pacing.

SEAN

Look, if you're going to tell me you don't fancy me, you storming out kind of gave the game away.

TASHA

But that's the point Sean. I love you to bits, really I do.

SEAN

I love...

TASHA

(urgent-interrupting)
No! Don't say it. You mustn't.

SEAN

Why not? You're not making any sense Tasha. You tell me you...

TASHA

I can't love you Sean. At least not in the way you want me too.

SEAN

Is this because of my legs?

TASHA

What?

SEAN

You heard me.

Tasha sits down and reaches for his hand but he pulls it away. She reaches further and grabs it.

TASHA

You ever say anything like that to me again and I swear I will beat you to death.

SEAN

So what the bloody hell is wrong then? If it's not me, not the chair... just come out and say it.

Tasha smiles and lets out a chuckle.

SEAN (CONT'D)

What's so funny?

TASHA

Sorry, it's just you saying 'come out'. Quite ironic.

Sean stares into her eyes and she half-smiles. Reality dawns.

SEAN

You're a lezzzer?

TASHA

Nice bit of political correctness there cripple.

SEAN

But you can't be. You told me you've had boyfriends...

(beat)

Christ almighty. I never saw that one coming. Why didn't you tell me before?

TASHA

I was afraid.

SEAN

Of what?

TASHA

Of being judged I suppose.

SEAN

Why? It's nothing to be ashamed of.

TASHA

D'you think I don't know that?

SEAN

So why tell me now?

TASHA

Because of what happened.

SEAN

Eh? Me trying to kiss you turned you gay?

TASHA

Yeah, it works like that. There are special clubs where women you come into contact with become lesbians. Then they give us a badge.

SEAN

Don't take the piss.

TASHA

That afternoon when you tried to... well it freaked me out.

SEAN

Sorry.

TASHA

No! You mustn't be sorry. That's the point. It was my fault, I should have been honest with you.

SEAN

It's OK.

TASHA

No it's not. You're the bravest most amazing man I've ever met and all I've been is a coward and because of that, I put you in a terrible position.

SEAN

It doesn't matter, really.

TASHA

But it does. I've kept this secret for too long and it took almost losing you to give me the courage to understand that I mustn't do that any more. It's not fair to anyone, least of all myself.

Sean squeezes her hand.

TASHA (CONT'D)

So now you know.

(beat)

Well say something then. Even if it's piss off dyke.

Sean stares at her. Puzzled.

TASHA (CONT'D)

What?

SEAN

I'm just... Well I've never met a lesbian before and when I do it's... Well, it's you!

TASHA

I'm still me Sean.

SEAN

I know that you daft bint. It's just that... well it's... oh shit. How do I say this without pissing you off?

Tasha looks at him for a second then sits upright.

TASHA

You bloody perv.

SEAN

(laughing)

What do you expect? I mean, have you seen you? And the girl on girl thing... It's only natural I give it a bit of thought.

TASHA

(scowling)

Rule number one; don't ever think about me like that. Rule number two; don't ever ask me anything about my sex life OK?

SEAN

That's a bit selfish.

(beat)

Christ, If I tell Doddsy he'll explode.

TASHA

I mean it!

Sean looks up to see his parents approaching.

TASHA (CONT'D)

(nervous)

You won't say anything will you?

SEAN

Depends.

TASHA

On what?

SEAN

You got any pictures?

TASHA
(hissing)
You say a fucking word and I'll
slash your tyres!

Sean looks at her and grins cheekily. Tasha leans over and
kisses him on the lips.

TASHA (CONT'D)
Thanks.

SEAN
For what?

TASHA
For being my hero.

INT. CAR - LATER

Sean is deep in thought.

RACHEL
You OK Sean?

SEAN
Yeah. It's been a long day that's
all.

RACHEL
Well you did really well.
(beat)
Tasha's lovely isn't she.

SEAN
Yeah, she is.

Rachel looks over her shoulder and smiles.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Forget it mother dear. She's not my
type.

He returns his gaze to the window and smiles to himself.

INT. HEADLEY COURT. GYMNASIUM - MORNING

Sean is in the gym playing SITTING VOLLEYBALL. The game ends.
He collects his gear.

FX: Telephone.

SEAN
(into phone)
Hello. Of course I remember you.
(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)

How are...
(long beat)
Shit.

INT. TASHA'S CAR - EVENING

Tasha is driving.

SEAN

Thanks for doing this.

TASHA

So what exactly did she say?

SEAN

That Azeem's being a twat. Talking about this Jihadist shit, like he's been brainwashed.

TASHA

But what can you do?

SEAN

I don't know. But I've got to do something.

TASHA

Why?

SEAN

Because what he's doing, it's saying Maz died for no reason. His own brother. I'm not having that bollocks. No way.

EXT. TASHA'S CAR - LATER

Tasha and Sean are waiting. A car pulls up next to them. Saleema climbs out and walks over. She climbs into the back seat.

SALEEMA

I'm sorry for calling you. I didn't know what else to do.

SEAN

So what's going on?

SALEEMA

About a week ago, Azeem and my father had a huge row.

(MORE)

SALEEMA (CONT'D)

Azeem said that Majiid had shamed Allah and that the only way to redeem the family was to join the Jihad in Iraq.

SEAN

That's bullshit. How can he swallow all this crap when his own brother...

SALEEMA

I don't know. Some of his friends are so radical. They are dangerous.

SEAN

So what happened?

SALEEMA

My father threw him out. He was so ashamed. Then the other day, Azeem came back and apologised.

TASHA

But that's good isn't it?

SALEEMA

At first I thought so, but then I found this.

Saleema hands Sean a leaflet full of Jihadist rhetoric. Sean glares at it. ANGRY.

SEAN

Has your dad seen this?

SALEEMA

No! He would disown him. I can't lose another brother.

SEAN

You've got to show him. If you don't, I will.

SALEEMA

You can't. My mother...

SEAN

Saleema, if your brothers into this bollocks then pound to a pinch of shit your brother's up to something.

SALEEMA

But what?

SEAN

I dunno. What if he asks to go to the Palace?

(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)

Christ, do you realise what'd happen if was photographed inside Buck House with some kind of jihadist banner?

SALEEMA

Oh god! I never even thought...

SEAN

Well you bloody better 'cos I'm not going to let Maz's name be dragged into this shite. It's either your dad or the old bill.

SALEEMA

There may be another way.

INT. TASHA'S CAR - LATER

The car is parked outside a large electrical goods store. Azeem moves about inside, locking up.

TASHA

Are you sure this is a good idea?

SEAN

I just want to talk to him. That's all.

INT. TASHA'S CAR - MINUTES LATER

Tasha and Saleema are staring intently out of the window at Sean as he wheels himself across the car park. They look nervous.

TASHA

I feel like I'm at the pictures. Gun fight at the Dixon's Corral.

SALEEMA

I'm not sure if I'm terrified or excited!

EXT. CAR PARK - CONTINUOUS

Sean is sitting in his wheel chair in front of the double doors. The lights go out and a small group exit. Azeem sees Sean and stops in front of him. DISGUST.

Sean holds the leaflet up.

SEAN
What's this shit?

Azeem heads for his car. Sean follows. Determined.

Azeem unlocks his car and climbs in but before he can close the door Sean is beside him. Azeem starts the car.

AZEEM
If you don't move, I'll drive off.

SEAN
So you got nothing to say?

Azeem ignores Sean and just looks ahead. Sean pushes himself away from the car. He sneers.

SEAN.
Go on then. Fuck off you coward.

AZEEM
You what?

SEAN
You heard me. You're a fucking
coward. You haven't even got the
bollocks to...

Azeem jumps out of his car angrily. He towers over Sean.

INT. TASHA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Saleema grabs the door handle. Tasha takes hold of her shoulder.

TASHA
No. Let them sort it.

EXT. CAR PARK - CONTINUOUS

AZEEM
You call me that again!

SEAN
And what? You gonna take a pop at
me? Feel free mate. Don't let the
chair stop you.

Azeem stands over him. Seething.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Come on. According to you and your jihadist scum mates, I'm the enemy of Islam remember. So take your best shot.

Azeem glares at Sean, at breaking point. Sean laughs.

SEAN (CONT'D)

You're a fucking joke. Your brother would be ashamed of you.

Azeem shouts and lunges forward at Sean who instinctively grabs him and rolls him over. In an instant, Azeem is lying face down on the floor with Sean on top of him. Sean has Azeem's arm firmly up his back.

INT. TASHA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

TASHA

Oh shit!

Saleema and Tasha dive out of the car and run across the car park. Tasha suddenly slows and pulls Saleema back.

TASHA (CONT'D)

Wait!

CLOSE ON SEAN AND AZEEM.

When Sean talks, it's directly into Azeem's ear. Azeem struggles constantly.

SEAN

Listen to me you little bastard. Have you any idea what it's like to walk along a road and not know if you're about to get shot at or be blown to fuck?

AZEEM

Get off me!

SEAN

It's a fucking nightmare, that's what it is. Half the time you're so scared you can hardly breath.

Azeem struggles even more.

SEAN (CONT'D)

But you know how you do it? You look across that road and see your mates and you know that if the shit hits the fan, you're there for each other.

AZEEM
(sarcastic)
You're such a hero.

Sean pushes Azeem's head against the tarmac.

SEAN
You still don't get it do you?
(beat)
Your brothers the hero, not me. But
this jihadist shit ain't the Islam
he talked me about. Murdering women
and kids, it's fucking evil. What
sort of god...

AZEEM
You don't understand. You can't.

SEAN
No, and I don't wanna either.

Sean reaches up to his neck and pulls off his necklace. He drops it onto the floor right in front of Azeem's face. Azeem stares at the little silver horse.

SEAN (CONT'D)
He gave me that a week before we
went out there.

Azeem's eyes are fixed on it. WIDE.

SEAN (CONT'D)
You know what it means don't you?

Azeem nods.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Good. Because that's what your
brother died for. HIS family and
HIS religion. Not the fucked up
version of it you've fallen for.

Sean rolls off him and lies on his back. He turns to face Azeem who lifts up the necklace and squeezes it into his hand. Azeem rolls over onto his back. His eyes full of tears.

SEAN (CONT'D)
I don't give two shits what you
think about me, I don't even care
what you think about the army or
this country for that matter. But
your brother deserves better from
you than this crap. So does your
family.

Sean and Azeem look at each other. Sean holds out his hand. Azeem takes it.

FADE OUT.

EXT. BUCKINGHAM PALACE - MORNING

Caption - Two months later.

Tasha stands by the fence. She is dressed up to the nines. Beside her stands an empty wheelchair.

People begin to appear from the Palace. Amongst them the Fazoud family and Sean. Upright on his new legs.

After a brief word with the Fazoud's, he slowly begins making his way across toward the gate where Tasha waits. Tearful.

The journey is a long one and as Sean struggles to keep upright, people beside Tasha begin to take notice. When he almost stumbles, there is an audible gasp. He regains his balance and carries on.

Finally, he makes it to the gate. PAIN. He steps through and crumples into the chair. The people who have been watching him burst into spontaneous applause.

TASHA

Now you're just showing off.

SEAN

Not showing off. Just making a small payment on a debt.

(beat)

Come on. I need a pint.

Tasha begins pushing him up The Mall.

TASHA

So young Owen, what's next?

SEAN

What d'you mean?

TASHA

That was your goal, remember? So, you've been there, done that. Now what? Swim the channel, climb Everest, 2025?

SEAN

What?

TASHA

The Olympics you idiot.

SEAN

Yeah, I'm a sure thing for the 100 metres speed limping team.

TASHA

Don't get smart. Seriously though, I know you. You need something to aim for.

SEAN

I dunno. I've been so focussed on today I haven't really thought about after. Now I suppose it is after.

TASHA

And?

SEAN

And I haven't got a bloody clue.

TASHA

Don't worry. We'll think of something. Can't have you turning into some boring old git can we.

(beat)

Anyway, I've got a new foot joke.

SEAN

(laughing)

For Christ's sake. Don't you ever get bored?

TASHA

Never. Did you hear about the bloke born with two left feet? He was going on holiday so went out and brought some Flip Flips.

SEAN

You seriously need some new material. What do you get when you cross me with Christmas?

TASHA

Missingtoe!

They both laugh. The jokes continue as they walk.

FADE TO BLACK:

Caption: two years later.

EXT. SKI SLOPE - DAY

Sean is at the top of a ski slope. He is wearing ski clothing and sitting on a Monoski. A competition.

ANNOUNCER

And the next competitor is number
32, David Weldon.

Sean watches as another disabled skier moves forward. He busies himself, getting ready.

TASHA

Come on fatty, get your arse in
gear. You're next.

Sean turns to face Tasha. He smiles and holds out his fist. She bumps. Proud.

TASHA (CONT'D)

Go get 'em tiger.

Sean nods and walks toward the start. He snaps on his board then reaches into his clothing and pulls out his necklace, puts it to his lips then drops it back inside before pulling on his gloves.

ANNOUNCER

And next up is number 33, Sean
Owen.

He moves forward onto the start. Ready. Determined. Focussed.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Three-two-one.

The gun sounds. Sean starts his descent.

CUT TO BLACK:

END.