

TICTOC

by Adam Neill

Adam Neill 2015

adam.neill@gmail.com

1 EXT. ATLANTIC COAST ROAD - DAY. 1

Tarmac blurring. Road markings flashing through frame. Hands on the wheel of a new-model Aston Martin DB9 as it accelerates out of a curve, passing slower cars, and opening up onto the straight. Cutting through the scenery; mountains on the left, surf on the right. Freedom.

2 EXT. SUBURBAN STREET. DAY. 2

A young boy, ten or so, on a BMX, skids up to the lens of an 90's-grade home video. It's YOUNG NICK. He stands talking to the camera, but we hear nothing as yet. Suddenly there's sound...

DAD

Wait, wait, wait. I forgot to turn on the sound.

MUM (VO)

Oh Paul!

YOUNG NICK laughs at his dad's lack of technical skills.

DAD

Do it again boy! You nailed it.

MUM (VO)

Don't make him do it again Paul...

DAD

He can do it. He can nail it again.

YOUNG NICK rides away some distance and then turns, ready to nail it again...

3 EXT. ATLANTIC COAST ROAD - DAY. 3

The road empties of other traffic as the Aston Martin heads towards Cape Point. The driver drops a gear and the car punches forward; eating the road and the vista ahead.

4 EXT. SUBURBAN STREET. DAY. 4

YOUNG NICK has turned his bike around and is getting ready to 'nail it again'.

DAD

Ok. 3 - 2 - 1 and action!

YOUNG NICK rides towards the camera, looking good and confident. He does a little skid and stops in front of the lens.

(CONTINUED)

YOUNG NICK
Hi there and welcome to...

Then he ticks. And ticks again. And again. He's trying to get the words out but his body and his brain are betraying him.

YOUNG NICK (cont'd)
To... the ... Grand ... Prix...
shit... shit...

Prominent in the verbal ticks is the rapidly repeated 'shit... shitty...shit... shit... shitty...', and we sense NICK's embarrassment as he fights to keep it under control.

YOUNG NICK (cont'd)
Sorry Dad...
shit...shitty...shit...

MUM (VO)
Turn it off Paul! Turn off now.

The camera drops away. We can still hear the verbal tick.

MUM (VO) (cont'd)
It's ok Nicky. It's ok.

5 TITLES AND MUSIC 5

TIC TOC

OVER:

6 EXT. DE WAAL DRIVE - DAY 6

The Aston sweeping down through the curves and views of the De Waal Drive urban freeway; bathed in sunlight and aspiration.

7 INT. ASTON MARTIN DEALERSHIP - DAY. 7

NICK, 30 something, clean-cut and well dressed, shakes the hand of the dealer. He takes his phone out of his pocket and answers as he nods a thanks to the DEALER. Like an overexcited child he is bubbly with enthusiasm...

NICK
Hey babe! No, I've just finished now. Yeah. But I couldn't just go round the block.
(laughs)
It was awesome. Totally awesome. As awesome as it was last time. And the time before.
(laughs)
Yes! Yes! And yes! In that order and then I'm going to buy you one
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NICK (cont'd)
 as well. What? Oh, I know you
 want one. Don't pretend you
 don't. What! A Porsche! If you
 want a Porsche you have to buy it
 yourself...

He reaches his current car, a sporty BMW, not bad, but not
 an Aston Martin.

NICK
 Yeah! I'm heading back now.
 Alan's going to kill me. Yeah. No
 it's only tomorrow. Yeah. Listen
 I love you and I'll see you at
 home later. Need anything? Cool.
 Love you.

He hangs up and drives into the traffic of the city.

8 INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - DAY 8

BING! A lift opens onto the reception foyer of
 'Booyesen-Mansoor-Dlamini Commercial Attorneys'. Nick
 strides out, a wink at the receptionist, down the
 corridor, nodding to colleagues as he goes, and in to his
 office.

9 INT. NICK'S OFFICE - DAY 9

ALAN; 30 something, keen eyes, a terrier, is waiting for
 him.

NICK
 Sorry! Sorry! Sorry! I was...

ALAN
 ...I know. It's ok. I've run
 through the presentation myself
 with Joe and Albert and they've
 suggested I should just do it
 myself.

NICK
 What! No way! What?

ALAN
 Yeah. Sorry guy. They said that
 it was too big a deal to mess up
 and they really need someone
 who's in the office. Someone
 who's all there for it.

NICK
 You... fff... oh! HA! HA! HA!
 Very funny. You know you should
 work on keeping this job because

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NICK (cont'd)
you don't have a career in comedy
if they fire you.

ALAN
Ha! I am without doubt the
funniest guy in this room. How
was the drive?

NICK
Out of sight!

ALAN
I don't see the fuss.

NICK
No imagination.

ALAN
Easy tiger. I have imagination.
I'd just rather save the money.

NICK
It's not about the money. It's
about hitting Partner and
rewarding myself with a big-ass
mo-fo pussy-magnet Bond-mobile.
Very simple concept.

Alan shakes his head.

NICK (cont'd)
Oh com'on! Are you telling me
that when we hit Partner you are
not going to head out and give
yourself a fat reward?

ALAN
No. I'm not saying that. I'm sure
I will. A nice dinner, a weekend
away with Jan somewhere...

NICK
A nice early night with some
cocoa and a light romance
novel... You know you are one of
the most relentless and respected
deal makers in this town? If some
of our clients heard you now
they'd wee themselves laughing
next time you threatened to walk
on a deal.

ALAN
And then I'd rip their balls off
and feed them back to them on a
skewer.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

Atta boy!

ALAN

But when I make partner, I make partner. That's all. I'll save the cash for a rainy day.

NICK

And the occasional bottle of very expensive whiskey.

ALAN

Oh, very, Very, VERY, expensive.

They both laugh.

10 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - EVENING

10

A modern, comfortable, open-plan man's pad with fine views of the city bowl. There are feminine touches here and there; a vase of flowers, a pastel jumper dropped over the back of a sofa and in fact we discover LAURA in the kitchen prepping food.

She's just into her thirties, hot in a standard kind of way, a well dressed, attractive young professional home from work. A glass of wine to hand and some music on in the background.

We watch her finish off cutting some vegetables, sipping some wine, then she slips off her trousers and pads to the couch in her work shirt and socks.

As she curls up on the couch we hear keys in the door. It's NICK.

NICK

Hey honey bunny! I'm home!

He drops his keys, his bag and leans over the couch to get a kiss.

LAURA

(laughing)

Honey Bunny! If that's what driving an Aston Martin turns you into then I think I might have to cancel.

NICK

(laughing)

Oh you love it! I know that behind that hardcore corporate veneer there's a honey bunny just waiting to get out.

He goes to the kitchen and gets a glass of wine.

(CONTINUED)

LAURA

You wish!

NICK

Cancel huh? You'd cancel me? I'd like to see you try!

LAURA

(snaps fingers)

Like that I'd do it! In a heartbeat! I wouldn't even look back.

NICK

You are cold beatch! Cold! I hope I never have to face you in a deal.

LAURA

Damn right! I'd eat you up.

NICK

Hoo-hoo! Would you now? I think I might like that.

He comes back through to the couch and sits down beside her.

NICK (cont'd)

But I think we both know that in a fair fight I would whup yo' ass!

LAURA

Would you now?

LAURA starts to tickle NICK.

LAURA (cont'd)

A fair fight. But don't you know there's no such thing as a fair fight...

NICK

No! Now stop... stop... you know I can't...

LAURA

Come on Nick. Whose ass you gonna whup?

NICK

(squirming ticklish)

No! Not fair! Not fair!

(CONTINUED)

LAURA
Who's the ass whuper now?

NICK
Nooo!

LAURA
Just say the words you know I
need to hear... who's the best?

NICK
Nooooo!

LAURA
Come on!

NICK
Aah! Alright! It's you! You are
the greatest. The hottest. The
best.

They collapse laughing into each other. A kiss.

LAURA
Are you feeling good for
tomorrow?

NICK
Yeah. Really good. A little
nervous. But in a good way.

LAURA
Alan?

NICK
He's my wing man. He's got that
glint in his eye.

LAURA
Is this the one?

NICK
Could be.

LAURA
Should be. You deserve it.

She disentangles herself from their embrace and goes
through to the kitchen.

NICK
I do, don't I.

LAURA
Don't get cocky. I'll make
dinner.

NICK as he sits up on the couch, savouring the prospect of his future. He reaches for his wine glass, sees his reflection in the window, gives himself a small 'salut', and takes a sip. Suddenly his arm gives a small sharp twitch. A splash of wine stains his shirt.

NICK
Ah dammit!

LAURA
(from kitchen)
What?

NICK
Spilled my wine. Damn!

LAURA
Get some salt. Doofus!

NICK goes through to the kitchen and finds salt to put on the stain.

NICK
I wanted this shirt for tomorrow
as well.

LAURA
But you wore it today.

NICK
I know. I wanted to go in there
smelling like a brand new Aston
Martin.

LAURA
You're a freak Nicholas Taylor.

NICK
Thank you.

LAURA
Get it off. Get it in the wash.

NICK strips off his shirt and exits.

11 EXT. LOCAL 7-11. EVENING.

11

As the shadows of evening cross the city we drop in to a local corner shop. Light spills onto the pavement, customers come and go. Through the general urban hubbub we start to discern more specific vocal yelps and phrases. Noticeable because they are a little too loud, a little out of control. They draw us in to the shop.

12

INT. LOCAL 7-11. EVENING.

12

A brightly lit corner store. Several aisles of shelves well stocked with urban essentials. At the front is DILIP, the owner of the store, and his MOTHER.

DILIP looks up as a particularly loud yelp emanates from one of the aisles. His mother's lips tighten with disapproval. DILIP looks to one of the monitors ranged behind the checkout. We see a man apparently looking at and selecting goods. At first nothing strange but then he twitches oddly, as if a surge of current has passed through him. And he gives a sharp little 'hup-hey' vocalisation. DILIP looks away, unconcerned.

We continue to hear the ticking vocalisations. Now coming nearer. DILIP'S MOTHER glances at DILIP and pulls back slightly from the counter.

Around the corner of an aisle appears CHRIS, 45, stocky, not unattractive, slightly paunchy. Like a middle aged biker without the beard. Probably handy in a fight though he wouldn't harm a soul out of choice. He is nonetheless, given his physical and vocal ticking, quite a character to encounter. He gathers a small selection of chocolates from near the checkout then looks up to see DILIP...

CHRIS

Coolie! Coo-ey! Coo-coo! Coolie!
Sorry. Hey Dilip.

DILIP

Hello Chris. How are you today?

CHRIS

As you see me. Sausages! Sorry.
Hello Mrs Dilip.

He gets no truck from DILIP'S MOTHER.

DILIP

That everything?

CHRIS

Yup. All good. Coolie. Coolie.
Hup-hey!

CHRIS puts his purchases on the counter but a physical tick flicks a couple of items up into the air and they land at his feet.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Whoops. Sausages. No they're not.
They're nuts. Show me you're
nuts. Lulululululu.

(CONTINUED)

DILIP'S MOTHER audibly clucks her disapproval as CHRIS appears from below the counter with the dropped goods. CHRIS is suddenly embarrassed.

CHRIS (cont'd)
Sorry. Sorry Mrs. Dilip...

DILIP
No problem. No problem.

The goods are rung up and change returned.

CHRIS
Uh here. Thanks. Hup hey. Have a good evening.

DILIP
Thanks. You too. Take it easy.

CHRIS nods shyly to DILIP'S MOTHER and heads out. We hear him ticking as he goes.

DILIP give's his mother a hard stare. She looks unashamedly back at him, clucks once then twirls a finger against her temple - 'loco!'.

DILIP sighs. Heads out into the store.

13 EXT. CAPE TOWN CITY PANORAMA. MORNING. 13

The sun comes up smoothly over the Hottentots Hollandse. The city bowl coming to life in its warm glow. Then, strangely, it seems to stop briefly then jumps ahead to where it should be. A tic. Then back to normal as we...

14 INT. NICK'S BATHROOM. MORNING. 14

NICK splashes on aftershave. LAURA comes in to hand him the 'lucky' shirt, now clean again and pressed. He smiles. They kiss. She holds his face in her hands.

LAURA
You're hot. They're not. You win.

NICK
I love you.

As he slips into the shirt we're conscious of the slightest twitch in his mouth. Nerves? Or nothing?

15 INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - DAY 15

NICK and ALAN walk across the office floor towards the glassed conference room. Colleagues look up and nod. Maybe a wink from one of the cocky ones. Everyone knows the deal is big. It's a ritual that has happened before and they're giving their guys energy and support.

In the conference room we can make out JOE DLAMINI and ALBERT MANSOOR chatting comfortably with 4 sharp suited clients.

16

INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - DAY

16

From inside the conference room we see our boys approach. Then they're in. Greetings are made and seats are taken.

NICK stays standing. ALAN sits nearby manning the laptop and projector.

NICK takes a confident pause. Takes in his audience. A breath. Then begins...

NICK

You're not happy. That's why you're here. You think that somehow this deal, this offer, is not in your interest. You think that by coming here today you're going to be able to walk away from this deal feeling good about yourselves... Maybe.

The Partners and Clients look a little taken aback by this. ALAN holds back a smile.

NICK (cont'd)

Because you're not absolutely sure are you? You're not entirely comfortable with that thinking. What if you're wrong? What if that nagging feeling at your gut level is not telling you to walk away? What if you're misreading, not seeing the truth in the numbers? What if your gut, your instinct of years in this business is telling you something else. It's telling you that this is the best deal you've ever made. The best. Ever.

He pauses again. ALAN looks on in admiration. The Partners nervous.

NICK (cont'd)

We all get nervous. Seriously. I'm not going to lie to you and say that I wasn't nervous about this deal. It's a big deal. If we weren't nervous it would mean it wasn't important to us. And it is. It is important to me.

(CONTINUED)

Suddenly NICK pulls a most curious face; his mouth spasms into a short grimace. Just once, but long enough that everyone notices. Curious glances. Is this part of the pitch?

NICK (cont'd)
And I know, that it's important
to you...

His mouth tics again. What the fuck? He covers by stretching his neck to one side.

NICK (cont'd)
Excuse me. Nerves!

He gets the laugh he needs. A glance from ALAN.

NICK (cont'd)
But here's the point. It's
because of the nerves that we
know that what we are here to do
is the right thing. The best
thing. For both companies.
Because it takes courage to be
here To be the ones who are
putting together a deal as big as
this. You came...

His mouth fires off again. Bigger and longer, forcing out a small noise.

NICK (cont'd)
I'm sorry. I think you came here
not because you are nervous. But
because you are courageous. You
came to have your courage
affirmed. Not your nerves
placated.

The tic hits again. And again. A ridiculous little sound accompanying it. Now the Clients are starting to look a little put off. Is he taking the piss? The Partners look alarmed.

ALAN steps in; the wing man.

ALAN
What Nick is calling on is
passion. His passion, this firms'
passion, your passion for seeing
this deal settled. And backing
that passion, fueling that
passion are the raw facts and
figures. May I...

He gestures, asking NICK if he can step in. It's done so smoothly it looks like it's been rehearsed. NICK sits.

ALAN (cont'd)
Nick, bring up the combined
projections for me please. Let's
remind ourselves how exciting
this really is...

NICK'S mouth twitches once, lightly, as he complies. We pull away from the conference room as ALAN take the presentation forward.

17 INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - DAY

17

From across the office floor we can see ALAN wrapping up the presentation in the conference room. He finishes and the Clients and Partners stand to applaud. There are handshakes all round. The Partners lead the clients from the room and away. NICK and ALAN wait until they are gone then they double over with relief. Hugs and high fives. They know they've bagged it.

As our guys step out of the conference room the office erupts with applause. ALAN and NICK acknowledge the acclaim. Big smiles all round, handshakes. They are the men.

In the background ALBERT MANSOOR steps out of one of the Executive offices.

MANSOOR
(calling)
Alan! ALAN! A moment please.

ALAN goes. A quick 'what the fuck?' between him and NICK.

NICK watches as two of the Clients step out of the office as well. They shake ALAN'S hand and MANSOOR leads them away and out with his hand resting on ALAN'S back.

The office calms again.

NICK'S mouth twitches.

18 INT. NICK'S CAR. EVENING.

18

NICK is driving home. He occasionally looks in his rear-view to check on his mouth. There's nothing but the faint echo of the twitch from earlier. He looks around him at other drivers. One is talking hands-free on the phone. She looks mad as she gesticulates and mouths silent words. Another pulls faces as he examines his nose hair in his mirror.

The traffic flows again. NICK is calmed, reassured by the quirks of the other drivers. It was just nerves. It's going to be ok.

LAURA has made a special effort for her returning hero. She's got some bubbly on ice. There's some fine looking steak laid out with vegetables, ready to be cooked. She herself is looking good; she's barefoot and dressed down. She's ready to celebrate NICK's success intimately.

She pads to the door as she hears the key turn and before NICK can say anything kisses him deep and long...

LAURA

Well, howdy... partner!

NICK

(kisses back)

Mmm. That is precisely what I needed.

LAURA

I thought it might be. I have to say that your kissing is just as good as it was before you made partner.

NICK

Hmm. Well maybe it will improve if I ever do make partner.

LAURA

Oh.

NICK

Yes. Not quite the day I was expecting.

LAURA

Oh Nick. I'm sorry.

NICK

Well no. Actually it's not as bad as...

LAURA

What happened. Did they walk on the deal?

NICK

No! No! Jesus! We bagged that. Like clubbing baby seals. No. It was... I don't know.

LAURA

(suddenly angry)

Well if they won't give you partner after that then maybe you should walk...

NICK
It's ok. It's ok.

LAURA
Sorry. I'm just pissed if they think they can just throw away your talent...

NICK
It wasn't that. It was... me.

LAURA
But you bagged the deal?

NICK
Let's sit down. I need a glass of something... oh wow you got bubbles! Awesome!

LAURA
I wanted to celebrate. I knew you'd nail it.

NICK pops the bubbly efficiently and pours two glasses.

NICK
Thank you.

They sip.

NICK (cont'd)
I love you.

LAURA
I love that you sealed the deal.

They go to kiss but as their lips touch NICK'S mouth tics.

LAURA (cont'd)
Woah! What the fuck is that?

NICK'S mouth sets off on a brief spate of tics.

NICK
(through the tics)
Ah! This is what I... Damn! This is what... kept happening today.

LAURA
(it's kind of funny)
What... what the hell is it?

NICK
It's like a nervous twitch. I... I don't know.

(CONTINUED)

LAURA
It's stopped.

NICK
Yeah. It comes and...

LAURA
It's back!

It has indeed kicked off again.

LAURA (cont'd)
(she's laughing at him)
Can't you control it?

NICK
I'm trying god dammit!

LAURA
Ok! Ok! Sorry. Try stretching
your mouth.

NICK
(he does)
Aaaah!

LAURA
There. That seems to work.

Indeed the ticking stops.

LAURA laughs.

NICK
It's not funny. That's what
happened in the presentation. I
had to sit down. Alan closed for
me.

LAURA
Oh Nick, I'm sorry. What did the
Partners say.

NICK
Nothing. It didn't matter. We got
the deal. They were happy.

LAURA
Yes. Exactly. That's what counts.

She turns to start the dinner.

LAURA (cont'd)
It's probably just nerves. It'll
go away.

Behind her NICK'S face tics into a wide mouth grimace that mirrors the stretch he just did. And his shoulder flicks up as well. Did LAURA notice? No.

NICK

I'm going to... shower... or something.

20

INT. DOCTORS' OFFICE. DAY.

20

NICK tics as he watches DOCTOR ALEXANDER indicating the small areas of interest on a range of brain scans stuck up on a light box. NICK listens, trying to comprehend, stay focused. His ticking is now persistent (though not continuous) and dedicated; a grimace and a shoulder/arm flick.

DOCTOR ALEXANDER

So what we think might be a cause is a chemical short across several neurons which creates a closed circuit, the 'tic'. Until the electrical signal spontaneously breaks the circuit and continues on the neural pathway.

DOCTOR ALEXANDER turns.

DOCTOR ALEXANDER (cont'd)

It's not common for this condition to return again in adulthood. But it is not unusual and is well documented. Do you remember it?

NICK

Hard to forget. I used to swear. Sometimes.

DOCTOR ALEXANDER

Well that might return. But it's not as common as everyone believes. What you have currently is more typical; grimaces, twitches... any noises?

NICK

Sometimes.

DOCTOR ALEXANDER

They tend to shift over time. The tics. Feed off surrounding stimuli. Very hard to predict what might come next. Onset can be rapid. Surprisingly so.

NICK is still. He's hearing but not really listening.

21 INT. OFFICE BATHROOM. MORNING. 21

NICK stands in front of a mirror. He is still.

His breath condenses on the mirror, obscuring him briefly, then clears.

He stares again.

Then his mouth flicks with a sudden grimace. He is still again. He watches. His mouth grimaces again. He is still again but now his eyes harden with the effort of consciously stopping the tic. He holds it off long enough for us to think he may be winning.

Then he tics again.

22 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT. DAY. 22

NICK stands while LAURA straightens his tie. He tics, making her job a little tricky but she smiles. She finishes the tie and makes to kiss him. He tics again and she pulls back. The moment is lost and he moves off. We rest on her face; disappointed and a little hurt.

23 INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - DAY 23

The lift opens. JOE DLAMINI and ALBERT MANSOOR step out. As they pass the Receptionist, she nods to them, picks up her phone, dials, no answer, dials another extension...

RECEPTIONIST

They're here.

(pause)

He didn't answer.

She hangs up.

24 INT. OFFICE BATHROOM. DAY. (CONT). 24

NICK splashes a little cold water on his face. ALAN puts his head around the door.

ALAN

Time to go. You ready?

NICK

Yes.

ALAN ducks out.

NICK dries his face, takes a last hard look at himself. He clamps his jaw; biting down on his tic.

25 INT. DOCTORS' OFFICE. DAY.(CONT.) 25

DOCTOR ALEXANDER
It recedes into the background in
most cases. Sometimes...

NICK
What's brought it back?

DOCTOR ALEXANDER
Hard to say. It's proven very
hard to isolate any triggers.
(pause)
We'll run some tests. See if
anything shows up as obvious.

NICK is silent.

26 INT. NICK'S OFFICE. DAY. 26

As NICK enters his office, ALAN is just coming out. ALAN
gives NICK a look.

ALAN
Just you. Apparently.

NICK, a little confused, crosses to his desk.

27 INT. DOCTORS' OFFICE. DAY. (CONT.) 27

DOCTOR ALEXANDER
Do you need me to write anything
explanatory for your work?

NICK shakes his head, stands to go.

NICK
No. No. It'll be fine.

DOCTOR ALEXANDER
I think that you'll find that you
will learn to manage the tics.
And I'm hopeful that in time,
perhaps given some rest, that it
will fade altogether.

28 INT. NICK'S OFFICE - DAY 28

Seated across from NICK are JOE DLAMINI and ALBERT
MANSOOR. Kind enough, but serious and businesslike.

There is a silence that has grown uncomfortable.

Eventually...

(CONTINUED)

JOE DLAMINI

Nick, there's nothing sinister in this. We just think it would be valuable for you to take time out and have this thing properly assessed.

NICK

I am doing that. I'm having tests. It's not stopping me from working. I mean it shouldn't. It won't.

JOE DLAMINI

Well that's good. Good to hear. I think, though, that you might find it easier on yourself to try and sort it all out without the stress of work...

NICK

I want to make partner here.

MANSOOR

We want you to get better Nick. We need you. We value you. Really. And part of that value is having you running at 100 percent.

JOE DLAMINI

I think also that we're all big enough people that we can see the problems we might face down the line when dealing with clients...

NICK

Ahh Jesus...

JOE DLAMINI

If you don't sort...

MANSOOR

(cutting in)

...But that is secondary. What we need is you fully recovered and focused. Take some time. Six months. You'll be on pay. See how you're doing at the end of that.

JOE DLAMINI

It shouldn't affect your Partnership potential. You've earned that right Nick. I'm sure the Board will see that when you've got this sorted.

(CONTINUED)

NICK makes to answer but stops short. He looks at the Partners.

He nods.

He tics.

The Partners say nothing.

29 INT. DOCTORS' OFFICE. DAY.

29

DOCTOR ALEXANDER sits across his desk from NICK. A beat before he takes a breath and speaks.

DOCTOR ALEXANDER

That's the best prognosis we can give you for this condition. It may get worse. It may improve. The tests show nothing conclusive.

(silence)

I strongly recommend you get some counseling around this. Even if just with a support group. This will be hard to adjust to. We'll continue the testing as necessary and I'll keep you abreast of any medical interventions I hear of.

(silence)

Mr. Taylor are you alright.

NICK

I'm fine. Thank you.

30 EXT. OFFICE CAR PARK. DAY.

30

NICK is walking away from his work.

He gets to his car. He glances across the surrounding cars of his colleagues.

Inserts the key. He opens his window. He pulls the seat belt across himself and clicks it in. He looks up. He closes the window.

He screams long and hard. We hear barely anything as we pull away, out across the rows of otherwise empty vehicles.

31 EXT. BUSTLING SIDE-WALK CAFE. AFTERNOON.

31

Off the empty sky of the previous we come down onto MARK, 30 something, kind eyes but a darkness somewhere there as well, sitting alone at a table. He peruses a menu.

Through the crowd we see CHRIS arriving, ticking merrily as he scans for MARK. He spots him and comes over.

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS
(sitting)
Howzit.

MARK nods.

CHRIS (cont'd)
(picking up the menu)
You ordered?

MARK shakes his head, grunts 'uh-uh'.

CHRIS (cont'd)
I'll have the usual. Gotta pee.

He drops the menu on the table, gets up and heads off to the toilet.

A waiter comes over.

WAITER
You ready to order?

MARK
Yup. I'll have a p-p-p-p-peice of
the chocolate c-c-c-c-c-cake.
Please.

Yes indeed. MARK has a serious, unrelenting stutter. He pushes through but it is totally in your face. The waiter is caught off guard.

WAITER
Uh. Ok. Anything else?

MARK
Yup. I'll ha-ha-have a pot of
t-t-t-tea. And the other g-g-guy
will ha-ha-ve a
m-m-m-milkshake...

WAITER
Cool. Flavour?

MARK
V-v-v-v...

WAITER
Vanilla. Is he eating?

MARK
C-c-c-c-carrot...

WAITER
Carrot cake.

(CONTINUED)

MARK
(slightly sharp)
Y-y-you guessed it. That's it.

The waiter goes. CHRIS returns, ticking away to the mild bemusement of some of the other patrons.

MARK (cont'd)
Poes.

CHRIS
Me or the waiter?

MARK
B-both of you. You do that everytime.

CHRIS
I'm not actually going for a pee
I'm watching from behind that pillar.

MARK
L-like I said.

CHRIS
Laughing my tits off.

MARK gives a small smile.

CHRIS (cont'd)
Good week?

MARK
Mmmm.

CHRIS
Oh. What's up?

MARK
A little d-d-down.

CHRIS
A little or a lot.

Silence.

CHRIS (cont'd)
Ah. Black dog?

MARK nods.

CHRIS (cont'd)
Shit. Sorry man. What set it off?

MARK

Other people. Like this poes...

The waiter returns with some napkins and cutlery and places them on the table.

CHRIS

Thanks.

(pauses)

That all?

MARK

L-l-l-lost a client.

CHRIS

Shit. Sorry man. A big one?

MARK

B-b-b-biggest.

A silence.

The waiter returns with the order. As he's placing it he now notices that MARK is ticking away. Starting to find these two a little freaky. MARK watches him.

WAITER

That's all? Enjoy it.

He goes. MARK and CHRIS start in on the drinks and cake.

CHRIS

Was it because of anything in particular?

MARK

N-n-no. Just said that they needed a company with m-m-more r-resources.

CHRIS

Like what? What more do they need.

MARK

I g-g-et it. I n-n-need a p-p-partner. I n-n-need to be able to share the load.

(silence)

B-b-but it's going to be a p-p-poes hard task to find one.

CHRIS

But you've got good standing. You've done some good deals. Good clients.

(CONTINUED)

MARK
One l-l-less of th-th-those.

CHRIS
Still.

MARK
Problem is m-m-me. P-p-people
find it difficult to s-s-see me
as head of a f-f-firm with a
f-f-future.

CHRIS
Because you are a prime-time
asshole?

MARK
(not laughing)
Yeah. That t-too.

CHRIS
(pause)
Sorry man. It'll come right. You
could always hire me.

MARK
I would rather p-p-ut a bullet in
each f-f-foot.

CHRIS
Thanks for your support.

They smile.

CHRIS (cont'd)
You going to be alright?

MARK
Yeah. F. I. N. E. F-f-ine. Now
where's that p-poes normal
waiter? N-n-now I want c-c-cake.

CHRIS gets up and mimics his own tic to draw the attention
of the waiter. MARK can't help but smile.

32 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT. EVENING.

32

In on NICK intently cutting zucchini into strips. LAURA
casual, drinking wine, chattering about her day. NICK is
concentrating hard but then his arm tics and he cuts his
finger.

NICK
Ow! Damn.

He grabs a strip of paper towel and compresses it on the
cut.

(CONTINUED)

LAURA

Here. Let me.

She puts down her glass down and goes to help.

NICK

(angry)

No. Leave it. I've got it.

LAURA

Nick! Don't get shitty with me.

NICK

I'm not... I'm sorry.

LAURA

It's ok. It's going to be ok.

NICK puts his good hand up to hide moist eyes.

NICK

Yeah. Yeah. Sorry. I'm fine is all I meant. It's ok.

LAURA

Don't be a baby.

NICK

I'm not crying.

LAURA

I mean about the partner thing. Don't go soft on me now. You deserve that partnership and this thing is just a brief pause before you get it.

NICK

We don't know that.

LAURA

Nick! Man up. You're going to beat this. It's not cancer. It's an affliction that's all.

NICK

It's a...

LAURA

You know what. Let's forget dinner. Let's go out.

NICK

What?

LAURA

Let's go out and blow off some steam.

NICK

In...

LAURA

You're not going in to work tomorrow. I'll take a sicky, I don't care. Let's go dancing!

NICK looks skeptical but he relents.

33

INT. NIGHTCLUB. NIGHT.

33

For a mid-week night the club is pretty buzzy. Couples are on the dance-floor, others are at the bar, some are in booths and at tables. It's upmarket place for young professionals with cash.

LAURA pulls NICK onto the floor. He's caught the buzz from her and is keen. They start to shake it out. They're enjoying it, dancing well and just having fun. NICK continues to tic and actually seems comfortable with it in the anonymity of the club where the flashing lights and bopping bodies make everyone look a little twitchy.

LAURA laughs and leans in to say something in NICKS ear. Then as part of her moves she throws in a little copy of his mouth and shoulder twitch. She laughs again. He smiles and dances. Doesn't get what she's doing at first. The music's pulsing. He tics and again LAURA copies him, throwing the tic into her dance moves. He looks at her curiously. He's starting to get it. She does it again. Laughs. He stops dancing. Stares at her. She laughs. Goes to kiss him. He walks away. She wasn't anticipating that. Goes after him.

The crowd closes over the gap in the dance floor and the music grooves on.

34

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

34

NICK sits on the couch looking at the cut in his finger. Behind him LAURA, in her dancing clothes, stuffs some clothes into a bag, picks up her phone and her keys. There's been a fight. A big one...

LAURA

If you need me to help you Nick, you call me. If you need me to nurse your ego, don't bother.

NICK

Thanks. And if I need someone to make fun of me, you'll be top of my list.

(CONTINUED)

LAURA

Fuck you Nicholas Taylor.

NICK reaches forward to his glass of red wine on the coffee table. His arm tics and he splashes wine on the table. He puts the glass carefully back down and watches as the spilled wine spreads and drips onto the floor.

LAURA watches this, waiting for a response. Nothing.

She turns and leaves. Slamming the door as she goes.

NICK gets up sharply as he's going to follow her. But instead he crosses to the window and watches as she exits the building and goes into the darkness.

We close on NICK's face reflected in the window until it blurs, flares and takes us into...

35

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT. DAY.

35

Several months later.

From the window (without NICK's reflection) we move through NICK'S apartment. We see that the kitchen is showing signs of the chaos that has now entered his world.

Several plates lie broken in a bucket, alongside a brush and dustpan. There are empty cans stacked beside the bin. On the counter is a small, neatly stacked pile of pizza and other food delivery boxes. There is only one other glass left on a shelf.

We hear the key in the front door. NICK enters. But this is a markedly different NICK. Unshaven, he looks tired and haunted.

As he closes the door behind him he breaths a sigh of relief. And he tics. His tic has grown in complexity. His facial grimace now a prelude to shoulder twitching and a hand lightly slapping his thigh. We might find it funny if we could see in any way that it was so for NICK. But we cannot. There is no humour for him in this.

His phone rings, he puts down his keys, his grocery bags, takes out his phone and looks at it. He stares at the screen until it stops ringing. He walks through to the kitchen, puts the phone on the counter, takes a glass and carefully pours himself a glass of water. He dials his voice service and listens on speaker.

VO LAURA

Nick? Nick! Oh. I thought you'd picked up. It's me.

(pause)

Nick I'm not sure what to say.

Anymore. You know I want to help

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VO LAURA (cont'd)

you. But I can't like this. I can't help if I'm not there. I mean I can't keep phoning. If you don't want to talk to me or see me, or anyone, that's fine. But at least have the guts to tell me. At least give me that respect.

(pause)

So this... I'm not going to call again. If you need me...

(preventing herself crying)

Please Nick. Please. I do love you. This is as hard on me as you think it is on you...

The call beeps out and we hear the automated voice of the message service; 'You have 1 unplayed message. To hear this message press 1...'

As the LAURA'S message plays out NICK lays out the fast-food he's bought.

One of the packets resists his efforts to open it. In frustration he takes up a sharp knife. We are suddenly conscious of how dangerous a knife is in the context of his tics.

He survives and gets the food into the microwave. He turns back to his phone and presses 1 to hear the next message.

VO ALAN

Ho! Nick! Howzit. Where you been?
I've been trying to call you.
Even came round to yours but no answer...

NICK presses a button; 'Message deleted. You have no more messages.' He stares at the phone.

The microwave pings, NICK picks up a kitchen towel and carefully takes the hot food out. He slips the steaming food onto one of his last plates and turns to get his glass of water. He tics and he flicks the hot food onto himself and the plate down hard on the kitchen counter. The plate smashes, the remaining food falling scalding onto his legs.

NICK

FUCK!

He drops the glass of water and slips, catching himself on the counter. He surveys the mess of food, crockery and glassware at his feet. His last plate is gone. His second last glass. And his dinner. He stares down the barrel of his future.

36

INT. COMMUNITY HALL. EARLY EVENING.

36

FADE back in on NICK'S face staring and the COUNSELOR'S cheery voice.

COUNSELOR

Alright everyone... welcome
welcome. Some new faces tonight.

A bright, clean, functional space. The group assembles in a loose circle of chairs. Some giving themselves a bit of space and distance from the circle of infectious energy of tics.

NICK has taken a chair well out of the group, against the wall. In his hand he has a pamphlet relating to the group and other services that sufferers might find useful.

The noise in the room is unique; chirps, growls, little shouts, and indistinct squeaks are punctuated with occasional exclamations.

Similarly the physical dynamic is unusual. Even unnerving. The tics seem to come in waves; one person setting off a chain reaction. The energy ebbs and flows.

The COUNSELOR finishes talking to one of the group, TERRY, who has a solid array of vocal and physical tics, and then turns to the group.

COUNSELOR (cont'd)

Hush now... hush...

(an old gag that gets a
laugh)

OK. Lets all stand. Good. Now
lets take a breath. Focus down on
a deep breath.

As the group follows her instruction there is a further settling but by no means silence. Mutters and chirps and physical tics still flutter through the group.

COUNSELOR (cont'd)

OK. And try to keep the eyes
closed.

A ripple of laughter through the group.

CHRIS

(ticking)

Fucking can't!

Laughter.

COUNSELOR

OK. Easy now. Now picture
yourself standing in a wide open

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

COUNSELOR (cont'd)
field. The breeze blows softly.
The field is full of bright green
grass and wild flowers. Feel the
grass brushing against your
legs...

TERRY
(ticking)
I'm up to my knees in cow shit!

CHRIS
(ticking)
Shithead!

COUNSELOR
Feel the sun on your face. Feel
the warmth of the sun go right
through your body.

ELAINE
(ticking)
I'm burning up inside.

CHRIS
(ticking)
Stupid bitch.

TERRY
(ticking)
Burn the witch.

COUNSELOR
Concentrate. And let that warmth
flow through you. Let it take
your stresses and worries and
embarrassments away with it. Let
yourself be clean, and clear.
Good. Good. Take a moment to
enjoy that.

The COUNSELOR moves to one of the group who has a
vigorously ticking arm. The COUNSELOR gently strokes the
arm a couple of times which seems to settle it, even if
just very temporarily.

COUNSELOR (cont'd)
OK. Great. Eyes open.

CHRIS
(ticking)
I CAN SEE!

COUNSELOR
(she sits)
So how has everyone been this
week?

(CONTINUED)

The momentary sense of calm releases into a general hubbub of ticking and genuine responses. A young man, S'BULILE, pipes up cheerfully.

S'BU
Hey I got a job!

General cheer at this news, also cut with some involuntary shout outs from the group.

COUNSELOR
That is fantastic S'bu. What is it?

S'BU
Design company. As a junior draughtsman.

COUNSELOR
Well done. So you better take one of these. New literature which hopefully clarifies the new guidelines for claiming benefits.

ELAINE
God I hope that it's better than the last ones. I still can't understand them.

COUNSELOR
I think it is. And I've also got some new guidelines for employers for those of you who are working.

S'BU
(with charming enthusiasm)
Like ME!

TERRY
(ticking)
Tea boy!
(acknowledging the insult)
Sorry S'bu.
(ticking)
Where's my pint.
(off tic)
Sorry. Fuck.

S'BU
(laughs)
No worries.
(pause)
(he pretends to tic)
Fucking honky.

General laughter. It's a gag only fellow sufferers could fully appreciate.

NICK sits in the background. He has not come any closer through all of this. He watches the group as they settle into further into the session, occasionally ticking 'quietly' by himself.

37 EXT. COMMUNITY CENTRE. EVENING. 37

The meeting has come to a close. NICK is first out the door and moving away quickly. He doesn't want to be associated. The others come out behind him as he makes his way onto the street. He passes MARK who has come to collect CHRIS. CHRIS, greeting MARK, notices NICK walking off into the night.

38 EXT. STREET. EVENING. 38

NICK walks away from the hall. Behind him we see CHRIS coming to catch up with him.

CHRIS
(calling)
Hey! Hey! Guy! Hey there!
(ticking)
Fucking poes! Stop or I'll shoot.

This gets NICK'S attention. He stops and turns.

NICK
I beg your pardon?

CHRIS
Sorry. It's the tic.

NICK
Uh huh.

CHRIS
You haven't been to the meeting before.

NICK
No.

CHRIS
New to the area?

NICK
No.

CHRIS
Oh. Oh! I see. How long have you...

NICK
5 months. Sorry is there something you wanted?

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS

No I just... you didn't seem too keen to be there tonight.

NICK

Yeah. Well. Who would.

CHRIS

Yeah.

(tics)

Bunch of FREAKS!

NICK

Yeah. No. I'm not.

(silence)

No. Really I was here because...

CHRIS

TV broke and the library is closed.

NICK

I have tourettes.

CHRIS

Really? I would never have guessed.

(tics)

Fucker! Fucker! Fucker! Fucker!

(slaps himself hard on the

forehead to control himself)

Sorry. Hup hey.

NICK

No worries.

CHRIS

So how are you holding up?

NICK

Fine.

CHRIS

Fucked up. Insecure. Neurotic.
And emotional. F. I. N. E. Fine.

NICK

Look...

CHRIS

Uh huh. So has anyone come around to talk you through this.

NICK

No. I don't need anything really.
I'm pretty much on top of it.

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS

I'm sure you are but you should have someone come round...

NICK

Well the Doctor has explained...

CHRIS

No not that. I mean the practical things.

NICK

I'm really coping fine thanks.

CHRIS

How many plates have you broken?

NICK

(a silence)

I...

CHRIS

Glasses?

NICK

Look...

CHRIS

(laughing)

And I'm guessing that there have been a couple of messy incidents whilst trying to piss. Hup hey.

NICK

OK. Look. Thanks for you help. But I would really rather that you left it alone. Thanks. And me. Thanks.

CHRIS

Why did you come tonight?

(silence)

You wanted to know if anyone else was as embarrassed and shocked by your behavior as you were?

(silence)

You wanted someone to tell you that it's going to get better? Or go away?

(silence)

It's not. And it might get worse.

NICK

Alright. Thanks for your time and concern. I'm going to go now.

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS
(noting the pamphlet NICK
still clutches in his hand)
My number is on the pamphlet.

NICK
I don't think I'll be...

CHRIS
Needing it. No. Maybe not.

NICK turns and walks away. Ticking as he goes down the lamp lit street. He puts the pamphlet into the pocket of his hoodie. CHRIS watches after him then calls out.

CHRIS (cont'd)
If it gets too much try singing!

This catches NICK slightly as he registers this weird instruction. But he keeps moving away down the lamp lit street.

CHRIS (cont'd)
(ticking)
Tra-la-la. Fuck! Fuck.
Poes. Hup hey.

39 INT. LARGE SUPERMARKET. DAY.

39

Wearing a hoodie NICK keeps his face buried deep in its shadow. He takes items and drops them in his trolley. He moves on. He tics unreservedly as he shops, drawing the attention of others in the aisle. He mumbles an occasional apology and moves on.

He stops at a freezer packed with pre-made meals.

At the far end of the aisle another shopper stops, looks for something. NICK glances as the shopper opens a freezer door. Shit! It's ALAN!

NICK turns and walks in the opposite direction. As he rounds the end of the aisle his arm tics, punching a display and scattering the packets. NICK doesn't stop; he's heading for the checkout.

The checkout is ahead of him. A YOUNG MOTHER and her precocious little boy pass the end of the aisle in front of him arguing about the purchase of a bright green plastic beach ball that the boy clutches in his hands. The argument escalates as they pass on. With a defiant shout boy throws the ball which bounces back across NICK'S aisle. NICK keeps moving.

Suddenly ALAN is there, right in front of him, the ball in his hand as he makes to return it to the mother and child. NICK almost hits him with the trolley. ALAN turns and looks straight at NICK.

(CONTINUED)

It's a bust.

ALAN
Nick? Nick! Hey man! Hi!

ALAN hands over the ball to the mother with a nod.

NICK
Hi. Alan. Hi. Sorry. Didn't see
you coming...

ALAN gives NICK a hug.

ALAN
Hey man! How are you? I tried to
call. I messaged.

NICK
Yeah. Sorry. I got them. I
just...

ALAN
No worries. How are you?

NICK
Uh.. yeah. Fine. Thanks.

NICK makes business for himself in his trolley - putting upright some cans that have toppled over.

NICK (cont'd)
I'm sorry I haven't been...

ALAN
Hey man, I understand. We all do.
We miss you at the office.

NICK
Thanks.

A totally awkward silence.

ALAN
So when can we expect you back?

NICK
Uh. No time soon.
(a small flat laugh)

A silence.

ALAN
Oh hey did you hear that I got
offered...

He peters out. NICK quietly picks it up...

NICK
A partnership.

ALAN
Yeah. I'm kind of amazed
actually.

NICK
It's great. Well done. You
deserve it.

ALAN
Thanks. I'll get the bump up in a
couple of months. Unless I mess
up! Hahaha!

NICK
I'm sure you'll do fine.

A silence. NICK looks down. He picks up another of the
toppled cans.

ALAN
Well. You've gotta get shopping.
So have I.

NICK
Yeah. Plenty to do.

ALAN
Look give me a call sometime.
Even just to hang out you know.
Catch a... a game or something.

NICK
Thanks Alan.

A beat. A nod from ALAN then he makes his way up the aisle
as NICK, ticking, watches him, then turns and heads for
the checkout.

40 EXT. STREET. DAY.

40

NICK makes his way home down a quiet suburban street. His
face still deep in the shadow of his hoodie. He carries
two shopping bags. He tics; a mixture of both his physical
and his verbal given freedom in the open air.

He notices two policemen ahead of him on the block.
They're on the beat, not a threat, but we sense the
tension rising in NICK as they approach.

The police are now aware of him, probably more concerned
about the hoodie than any tics but definitely noticing
him. They get closer. Closer. But they pass by. Nick
breathes a sigh of relief.

(CONTINUED)

And his tic explodes; a series of loud, unmistakable porcine snorts. They policemen stop, turn, and are back with him in an instant.

POLICEMAN 1
Excuse me sir, can we help you?

NICK
No, I'm sorry I...

NICKS arm lashes out and strikes POLICEMAN 1 squarely with one of the packets. The POLICEMAN 1 reels back and POLICEMAN 2 wastes no time in grabbing NICK and forcing him to the ground.

POLICEMAN 2
You are under arrest for striking an officer of the law. Do not move again or I will hurt you. Do you understand?

NICK, pinned to the ground, can do nothing and is betrayed by his affliction once more as another snort bursts from him.

41 INT. POLICE CELL. DAY. 41

NICK sits in a communal holding cell. Dejected. He tics.

He leans back against the wall and puts his hand in his hoodie pocket to try to still himself. What's this? He looks down. It's the pamphlet from the Tourettes support group. He stares at the number for the advice line written on the back. We see that the name listed next to the number is 'CHRIS'.

NICK takes a moment. He has no choice. He goes to the cell door.

NICK
Hello! Hello! I want to make a call.

42 EXT. NICK'S APARTMENT BLOCK. EVENING. 42

A taxi pulls up. NICK gets out. CHRIS leans over to the window.

CHRIS
You alright there?

NICK
Yeah. Fine.

CHRIS
F.I.N.E. Fucked up. Insecure. Neurotic and ...

NICK

I'm alright. OK. I'm alright.

CHRIS

Whoa. No need to get tetchy. I just sprang you from a night in the cells.

NICK

Look. Thanks. I really do appreciate it.

CHRIS

No problem. I can stick around. Come in for a cuppa. If you want.

NICK

No. No. Really. Please. I just want to be have some time to think things through.

CHRIS gives NICK a solid look. NICK walks away towards his apartment block.

CHRIS

(calling out)

Hey Nick! So it's agreed then; see you next week for your birthday.

NICK

(turns)

Umm... what? No, my birthday is in...

But the taxi pulls away and, with a cheery wave, CHRIS is gone.

NICK, alone outside the apartment building, watches him go.

43 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

43

A single lamp barely illuminates the apartment, serving only to highlight the chaos of the space. Like a strange, modern Dickensian set. We find NICK hunched at his desk, his laptop open, his hands in his lap. He is a million miles away as he stares at what he's holding; a bottle of pills.

NICK makes a decision. He opens the bottle and pours the pills out onto his table, some spilling across the keyboard. He looks at the screen. He looks back at the pills. His face hardens.

He reaches for the glass of water standing next to the laptop. He drinks. He stares at the pills.

44 EXT. NICK'S APARTMENT BLOCK. DAY. 44

Birdsong underscores the bright, clear day.

Closing in through an apartment window, we find NICK laid out on his couch. Still as a corpse. Eyes open and staring vacant at the ceiling. His face is darkened by thick beard stubble.

His intercom buzzes. And again. And again. And again.

We move closer in on his inert body until...

45 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT. DAY. 45

Suddenly there is a single, determined blast on a vuvuzela from outside. It cuts through the birdsong and the silence in the apartment.

NICK'S eyes flicker. They blink. He's alive.

The intercom buzzes firmly again.

NICK stirs. He gets up.

As we walk with him we notice that the desk still has the pills scattered across it and the laptop. The laptop is now dead. The glass of water is gone. It is standing empty on the kitchen counter surrounded by yet more cartons, cans and household detritus.

This is now the living space of someone who has not been out the door for several days.

The buzzer goes again. Insistent and determined until it is cut by NICK snatching it up.

NICK

Hello?

VO CHRIS

Nick! Nick! It's Chris. Happy Birthday! Come on down we're here to take you out for your birthday.

NICK

Uh... Chris. Um. Hi. Uh... It's not my birthday.

VO CHRIS

Oh but it very much is. We've got you a cake.

NICK

Look Chris. Thanks for this but really it's not my birthday.

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS

(laughs)

We're not going away until you
come down.

NICK

OK look Chris, actually I'm
getting a little pissed off here.
I really appreciate your kindness
but I don't want your help and I
really think...

Before he finishes NICK hears the sound of CHRIS singing,
and ticking, loudly out front of the apartment block.

CHRIS

Happy birthday to you... Happy
birthday to you... fucking
candles... Happy birthday dear
Nicholas...

NICK rushes to a window. Looks out. CHRIS is standing
boldly out front, wearing a ridiculous party hat and
holding a vuvuzela. Which he now blows.

NICK

Damnit! CHRIS! CHRIS!

CHRIS

Nick! Happy birthday. Come on
down.

NICK

No, Chris I'm not coming down...

CHRIS makes full use of the vuvuzela again.

CHRIS

Mark and I have got something
special planned for you.

NICK

It's not my...

Again the vuvuzela.

NICK (cont'd)

Oh for fuck sakes!

He turns away from the window and we see him go down his
hall way and out of his door.

46

INT. MARK'S VAN. DAY.

46

MARK drives, CHRIS rides shotgun and they are looking very pleased with themselves. NICK, seated in the back, is not happy. Wearing the tracksuit pants and t-shirt we saw him leave the flat in he clearly lost the battle of wills back at his flat.

The van is traveling along an open coast road. CHRIS and MARK chat away, enjoying the sights of the journey. It's both alarming and ghoulishly funny as CHRIS'S urge is sometimes to reach for the steering wheel or shout out terrifying things. MARK has a handle on it all though.

CHRIS
(ticking)
We're all going to die!

His arm stretches out towards the wheel. MARK slaps it away.

MARK
P-p-piss off you f-f-fucking nut.

CHRIS
(pulling his hand away)
Don't text while driving! It's lethal!

MARK
Shout if you need a t-tinkle.

No response from NICK.

CHRIS
Oooh yes. I could definitely do that.

MARK
Can you h-hold it until w-we g-g-get to the store?

CHRIS
You just said shout!

MARK
That was for N-N-Nick. You have to hold it.

CHRIS
Bastard.
(laughs)
If I wet the seat you've only yourself to blame.

(CONTINUED)

MARK
D-don't you d-d-dare.

NICK stays quiet. He ties his ticking arm more tightly into the seat belt.

47 EXT. COUNTRY STORE. DAY.

47

The van pulls in to a small country convenience store. One or two other cars. Hand painted signs indicate goods for sale; fishing tackle, live bait, hot pies, cold drinks.

The van stops, the men climb out and make their way over to the store.

NICK
(taking MARK'S arm)
Is this a good idea?
(off MARK'S look)
I mean all three of us going in.

MARK
We're not going to r-r-rob the place Nick. Just b-buy some goodies for your b-birthday...

NICK
It's not...

But MARK is gone and CHRIS is already through the door.

48 INT. COUNTRY STORE. DAY.

48

A neat little store. Tight rows of produce and consumables, alongside sections selling holidaying paraphernalia, as well as the road trip obligatories; cold drinks, biltong and ice creams.

Behind the till is the OWNER, an older woman, who is chatting to a LOCAL MAN of similar age who leans on the counter. Also in the shop is a MOTHER with her LITTLE GIRL of around 10 years. The girl peruses a small selection of toys while her mother shops.

CHRIS is already heading to the rear of the shop to the toilet.

CHRIS
Thanks.

OWNER
That's it. Straight through to the back.

MARK
(entering)
Ding dong! P-pussies in the well.

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS
(ticking response)
Touch my penis it's great! Hup
hey!

CHRIS exits. The OWNER and the LOCAL MAN aren't sure they heard right.

MARK
(smiling)
Hello. Lovely weather.

NICK comes in behind him. Hovers by the door.

MARK (cont'd)
Have you any c-c-cakes?

OWNER
No dear. But Milk tarts we do.

MARK
Very nice. W-W-Where w-w-will I
f-f-find them?

OWNER
In the fridge in that next aisle.

MARK
Are th-they f-f-f-f...
ffff... ffff... fuck it!
(slaps his forehead)

F-f-fresh today? Sorry. I have a
condition.

The OWNER and LOCAL MAN share a glance.

OWNER
Yes dear. Fresh today.

NICK stands at the door ticking. The OWNER and the LOCAL MAN stare at him. He tries a smile.

MARK
(calling out)
N-nick! Nick! Come and choose a
t-t-tart for your birthday.
(loudly - having fun)
F-f-fresh h-hot t-t-tart!

NICK takes the opportunity to move away from the stares of the two at the counter and moves to where the tarts are arrayed on a shelf. MARK has moved off and is hunting for charcoal and firelighters. We hear him muttering away in the aisles.

NICK stands staring at the tarts. He becomes aware of the LITTLE GIRL. She is staring at him.

(CONTINUED)

He looks back at her. She pulls a face like his facial tic. Then, with immaculate innocence, she smiles broadly at him.

Her MOTHER appears around the end of the aisle.

MOTHER
Cindy? Cindy? Oh there you are...

She sees NICK.

MOTHER (cont'd)
C'mon Cindy. Come away... come away from there. Let's go.

The MOTHER hustles out of the store. CINDY goes with her but doubles back quickly to give NICK another cheeky grin and pull another funny face. NICK can't help but smile. That's the reward she wanted... and she's gone.

CHRIS
(returning from his ablutions)
Right, the sump is drained. Let's blow. Blow me. Hup hey!

49 INT. MARK'S VAN. DAY.

49

The van enters a small seaside village.

NICK
Where exactly are we going?

MARK
A friend of ours. She has a small c-c-cottage.

NICK's attention is caught by the surreal sight of an elderly man in full evening dress with tails apparently conducting an invisible orchestra. Whilst conducting he flings pellets to what NICK now sees is a small herd of pigs in a backyard sty.

NICK
What the hell am I going to wear?

CHRIS
Don't worry. You can borrow some of my kit. I brought extra.

MARK
You'll like Angela. She's a b-bit of a s-s-surprise.

The van pulls in to the drive of a not insubstantial seaside cottage. It has a lived in feel; neat little garden and good vegetable patch, an old mountain bike resting against the wall, shuttered windows open and welcoming to the breeze.

The three men get out of the van. We become conscious of some comprehensive vocal ticking and copralalia coming from inside the cottage.

CHRIS
There she is.

MARK
Unmistakable.
(calling out)
Hey Angela!

CHRIS
Hey! Ho! You mad cow!

ANGELA
(from inside)
My favourite boys! Fat bastards!
Is that you?

A deep, warm laugh and ANGELA appears at the door. She is a force of nature. Or rather a force of humanity. Her tics are so comprehensive that they are almost an entirely distinct persona. It is mesmeric in its way, but also unnerving in its vigour. To be so afflicted must be deeply exhausting and challenging in a very fundamental way. But ANGELA survives triumphantly.

ANGELA (cont'd)
Haha! It is you!

She comes out of the cottage and embraces MARK.

ANGELA (cont'd)
(to CHRIS)
And you, you big hunk of man
meat. Come here to me!

At which one of ANGELA'S more unnerving tics - spitting - shows itself. She lands a squirt of spittle on CHRIS'S forehead. He wipes it off without even commenting and they hug warmly.

ANGELA (cont'd)
Whoops. Sorry Chris. So excited
to see you. Hahaha!
(spits again but off to the
side)
And you managed to bring your
friend!

(CONTINUED)

NICK recoils slightly.

ANGELA (cont'd)
You're very welcome! Very
welcome.
(ticking)
What a skinny fuck! Sorry.

She gives a reluctant NICK a hearty hug.

ANGELA (cont'd)
And happy birthday!

NICK
Uh... Thank you.

ANGELA
Come. In. Tea.

Walks them towards the cottage.

ANGELA (cont'd)
You boys going to fish?

MARK
We have the t-technology.

CHRIS
We just lack the skill!

They laugh warmly.

ANGELA
Well tonight we'll braai.
Whatever you catch with whatever
I've grown. Oh it is so good to
see you both.

ANGELA guides them with welcoming arms and copious ticking
in to the cottage.

51 EXT. BEACH. DAY.

51

It is late afternoon on a wide, long beach. The three men
are standing fishing. Lone bastions on the expanse of
sand.

Over the distant roar of the sea we hear an excited male
voice shrieking on the wind.

NICK
I've got one! SHIT! I've got one!
Fish! Fish!

Two of the distant figures drop their rods and rush
towards the third.

52

EXT. BEACH. DAY.

52

We catch the last flurry of the fish being captured.

CHRIS

Get the camera! Get the camera!

MARK rushes back to their kit. NICK, standing in the shallows, lifts a substantial fish from the water. CHRIS bobs around being useful. And offering advice.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Hold on to it. Good. Now get your hand under it. No not that one. The other one.

NICK

Grab the rod! GRAB the rod!

MARK

(returning)

OK! OK! Here we go. G-g-get out of the way C-C-C-C... fuck it!

(slaps his forehead)

Chris!

CHRIS

OK. OK.

MARK

That's it. L-lift it up.

NICK lifts the tale of the fish up horizontal and holds it out to the camera. It's an amateur's mistake. The fish flicks once, twice, is in the water... and is gone.

It happens so fast that the three are initially stunned to silence. Then NICK moves. He steps out of the waves and walks up the beach to the stash of their kit. As he gets there he rams the but of his rod into the sand. He hangs his head. Then he picks up the tackle bag and, with a yell, he flings it up the beach. But that's not enough. He picks up the cooler box. He winds it over his head and smashes it down onto the beach. He sits down on the sand. He takes a breath.

Nope; still not enough.

He gets up, grabs the cooler box, spins around to get up momentum and he flings it as far as he is able.

53 EXT. BEACH. DAY.

53

Moments later. From our initial distant vantage point we watch as the small figure of NICK continues his assault on the cooler box. Kicking, smashing and throwing it.

CHRIS and MARK are wise enough to simply stand watching.

All we hear is the wind and the waves.

54 EXT. ANGELA'S COTTAGE. NIGHT.

54

The warm glow of the fire near them and the soft light of paraffin storm lamps on the table reveals ANGELA, MARK, CHRIS, and NICK seated at a table having dinner. Some wine on the table to compliment the hearty (not fish) meal and lubricate the conversation.

We note that all the crockery and 'glassware' is in fact plastic. A mad symphony of eating, ticking and stutters.

ANGELA

We've all found that booze is not so great for the tics.

CHRIS

Well certainly in public it doesn't help. I'm less able to control them after a bit of booze.

MARK

Yes. Though this is a welcome t-t-treat. T-T-To let go and not worry about anyone w-watching.

CHRIS

Do you remember that time in that bar in town? That bloke who wound me in the head with the wheel spanner.

MARK

Shit. That was a t-t-terrible night.

ANGELA

Terrible. You were so lucky. Lucky that you had such a thick skull.

(the three of them chuckle warmly)

Are you still trying to suppress your tics?

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS

No. Not really. Maybe
subconsciously I do. I'm not as
brave as Mark.

MARK

Less bravery than c-c-complete
surrender...

ANGELA

Don't you believe it.
(turning to NICK)
It's the hardest thing I found,
fighting the urge to hide...

We notice that NICK has stopped eating. He is sitting
leaning out of the light, staring up at the night sky.

ANGELA (cont'd)

It's one of the big reasons that
I moved out here... Nick?

NICK is crying. He can hide his emotions no longer and the
tears are just flowing; quiet and unstoppable...

MARK

Ah m-mate. It's alright. It's
alright...

ANGELA

Don't worry about it pet. It's a
hell of a thing to come to terms
with.

NICK

(trying to pull himself
together)
I'm sorry. I'm OK. I'm OK. It's
the... Jesus! I'm sorry. I just
got a little overwhelmed that's
all.

CHRIS

Of course you did. Of course.
You'll be alright.

ANGELA

Take a deep breath.

NICK takes a deep breath. He gathers himself. Wipes his
eyes on his sleeve. ANGELA hands him a paper serviette.
There is a brief, magical moment of silence around the
table then NICK goes to eat but tics and sends his plate
with the remains of his dinner flying up and off into the
night.

(CONTINUED)

MARK

Wahey! There goes your
d-d-dinner.

NICK

Fuck it!

There is a brief tense moment but then NICK starts, followed in swift order by the others, to laugh. And laugh. And laugh. Tears rolling down their cheeks at the absurdity of it. It feels for the first time that NICK has dropped his guard and is starting to accept being part of the company of sufferers.

55

EXT. ANGELA'S COTTAGE. DAY.

55

Early morning. ANGELA is out in her vegetable garden. She gardens keenly despite the impositions of the tourettes.

NICK comes from the cottage bearing two mugs of tea.

NICK

Thank you for last night.

ANGELA

It's a pleasure. Tea? Lovely.
Thank you.

She takes the tea and sets it down. We note that the cup has a lid on it, like a travel mug, but this serves the purpose of preventing spills. NICK has a similar one.

NICK

(indicating the cup)
This is a great idea.

ANGELA

Yes. Saves on clothes washing.
I've often thought I should just
liquidise all my food and drink
it like this. But where's the fun
in that.

NICK

Ha. Yeah.
(pause)
You are... I mean you have...

ANGELA

A shed load of tics. Yes.

NICK

How do you cope?

ANGELA

Sometimes I don't.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

I'm sure. I... what I meant was don't you ever get tired. Of the inconvenience. Of the invasion. Of being tired.

ANGELA

Every day Nick. But I've found that the less I associate myself with the tourettes, the less power it has over me.

NICK

But you can't stop. You can't separate yourself. Walk away.

ANGELA

No. But it's about power. It's about not letting that other voice, that other thing have power over you.

NICK

Even though you can never get rid of it.

ANGELA

Especially because of that.

NICK

Did you ever think of suicide?

ANGELA

Yes. Twice seriously. But not since I made my peace with it. Now tourettes is not an enemy. But rather like a belligerent, irrepressible companion.

(pause)

It's not worth dying over.

(pause)

Everyone thinks of giving up. At some point. I mean not just us. People with no legs, no arms. No parents. No money. With cancer, or worse. People in grief. People who are alone. People who feel crowded. Hell, some people with all their limbs, in good health, a bunch of friends and all the money in the world sometimes think about killing themselves. It's what happens when real life gets in the way of having hope. If we lose sight of hope Nick then we're all fucked. That's just human. We're not unique in

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANGELA (cont'd)
that. And we have still got a lot
to hope for.

A silence settles between them.

ANGELA (cont'd)
Boys tell you the plan?

NICK
For?

ANGELA
Tonight. At the Double Duck. It's
karaoke night.

NICK
Jesus I don't think I'll
handle...

ANGELA
Ah yes. Don't have a choice. It's
a birthday tradition.

NICK
I...

ANGELA
Is this weekend. Trust us. And
you'll be coming to the karaoke.

ANGELA fixes him with a firm look.

ANGELA (cont'd)
Grab that hoe over there, and see
that empty patch? Dig that over
with some of that compost. We're
planting carrots.

56 INT. THE DOUBLE DUCK PUB. EVENING.

56

The pub is small and comfortable. It is full, but not
packed, with locals and the odd visitor. A sense that
'DONNA-DEES' Karaoke Night' is a well worn and welcome
monthly event in the village. The karaoke is operating but
no-one is singing just at the moment.

ANGELA, CHRIS, MARK and NICK sit up at the bar counter.
Respectively they are nursing white wine, a couple of
beers and a lime and soda.

MARK
(telling a joke)
So th-th-there he is with his
s-s-stool and his fishing rod and
a-a-a hole in the ice...

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS
(ticking)
... ice skating ring!

MARK
Oh you total b-b-bastard! You
always d-do that!

CHRIS
I can't help myself it's the
bloody tourettes!

NICK
What? What?

ANGELA
(laughing)
The punch line. The guy is trying
to fish in an ice skating ring.
Chris can't help himself; he
always blurts out the punch line.

NICK
From the tourettes?

CHRIS
Yep.

NICK
No way!

MARK
It's even w-worse when he tries
to play ch-ch-charades.

ANGELA
Oh Jesus! That's a total fucking
disaster!

NICK
(finding it very funny)
So, what, you always shout out
what the word is?

MARK
Yup. Never gets f-further than
the f-f-first syllable.

NICK
That's hilarious.

CHRIS
Yes. Thank you all for your
empathy and compassion.

(CONTINUED)

MARK

B-B-Bugger that! You ruined my
j-joke.

CHRIS

Isn't it time we got our guest
here up on the stage and singing?

NICK

Yeah, now that I am not doing.

CHRIS

Look at it this way; if you don't
then we leave you here and you
have to live with Angela.

ANGELA

Thanks. Asshole.

MARK

Haha! What d-do you want to sing?

NICK

I...

CHRIS

No problem we'll choose. Give us
the catalogue.

ANGELA slides the plastic-sleeved folder of available song
titles along the bar.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Right...

He flicks through the catalogue. ANGELA lays a reassuring
hand on NICK'S shoulder.

57

INT. THE DOUBLE DUCK PUB. EVENING.

57

A little later. On the stage we see MAD JOHN finishing off
a singular performance of Edith Piaf's 'Mon Manege a Moi'.
He finishes and bows deeply, formally, to the mildly
appreciative crowd.

CHRIS

Right. This is us. Come on.

NICK

No. I'm not ready. Can we just...

MARK

No. C-c-come on. You can d-do
this.

MARK and CHRIS both take an arm and gently but firmly help
the reluctant NICK from his bar stool.

(CONTINUED)

ANGELA

Go get 'em tiger!

She cheers enthusiastically. NICK is not looking inspired as he is led away.

58

INT. THE DOUBLE DUCK PUB. EVENING.

58

On the stage MARK arranges the microphone as CHRIS positions NICK in front of it, with them in support on either side.

CHRIS

Alright then. Here we go. Donna
Dee have you got us cued up? Then
hit it darling!

The song starts up. MARK and NICK are all over it. Of course their ticking lends it a particular flavour, especially from CHRIS as his vocal tics interject with the lyrics to add an absurd subtext.

NICK stands back. Completely overwhelmed. Even in his past life this would have been hard for him. Now? No way.

But CHRIS and MARK are insistent. CHRIS pulls him in closer to the microphone. MARK cajoles him...

MARK

Sing you s-s-silly b-bugger!

Reluctantly NICK mumbles a few lines. Then he tics. He retreats again. But CHRIS'S hand holds him and MARK sings enthusiastically in his ear. He sings again. And this time he kind of just keeps going; quietly keeps going through the ticks.

CHRIS throws an absurd tic in the middle of a line and all three find themselves chuckling and singing. NICK lets himself go a little and his voice strengthens.

He looks up. He realises that no one in the bar is really concerned with the mad performance he's a part of. He spots ANGELA who is cheering. He smiles and his voice strengthens, and strengthens and strengthens...

We see NICK sing and separate from his tics. They are there but he just sings through them, sings with them. He is slowly liberated. And it is glorious.

The song ends. NICK looks slightly stunned, as if waking from a trance. There is desultory clapping from the audience. ANGELA cheers. He grins at MARK and CHRIS. He turns back to the crowd. He smiles.

And he tics.

59 EXT. NICK'S APARTMENT BLOCK. DAY.

59

MARK's van pulls up. NICK clambers out. He's more subdued than the night previous at the 'Double Duck' but there is a small confidence returned to his demeanor. He pats the van and moves towards his apartment building.

CHRIS
(calling out)
Hey! Hey! Happy birthday!

NICK
(now kind of getting the
gag)
Thanks. Was a good one.

CHRIS
See you at session...

MARK
Yeah. D-d-don't be a
s-s-stranger.

The van pulls away with a wave from CHRIS. NICK watches them go, then turns to go in to his flat.

60 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT. DAY.

60

As before we hear the key in the door. But as we travel towards the it we are aware that NICK's apartment has had a comprehensive clean up. The kitchen is spotless, the lounge and desk are tidy, the laptop closed and arranged neatly. There is still one small bag of empty food cartons near the door, but tied neatly and ready to be taken out.

As NICK opens the door we catch him registering this miraculous clean up.

He closes the door. Drops his keys on the table and comes through. What the hell? Is this a dream? Some weird time lapse?

LAURA
Surprise!

She jumps out from around the corner.

NICK
JESUS! FUCK!

LAURA
(laughing)
Oh sorry! Sorry! I just wanted to
surprise you!

(CONTINUED)

NICK

Fuck! You certainly did that.
What the...

LAURA

Don't be pissed at me. I
remembered I had keys. I came
round, wanted to see you. You
weren't here. I started to clean
up. I couldn't help myself. I was
waiting for you...

NICK

When did you get here?

LAURA

Friday after work.

NICK

You've been here all weekend?

LAURA

Yes.

(pause)

Are you angry.

NICK

No... No. No I'm not. You just
gave me a hell of a fright.

LAURA

Sorry.

NICK

You cleaned up?

LAURA

Quite a task. Kept me busy.

NICK

Thanks.

LAURA

You mean that?

NICK

Yes. I do. Thanks.

A long silence. They're still; NICK taking in the
apartment, LAURA taking in NICK.

LAURA

Can we sit? I'd like to talk.

NICK

Sure.

(CONTINUED)

They move toward the couch. NICK passes the table. Notices the PILL BOTTLE, picks it up. Shakes it. It's full, the pills have been replaced. They share a look. He puts the bottle down.

They sit on the couch facing each other.

61

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT. DAY.

61

A little later. They have broken the ice.

NICK

I guess I should say sorry.

LAURA

No. For what?

NICK

For not returning your calls. For over reacting.

LAURA

You didn't over react. You reacted. To a shitty situation. And I didn't realise how big a thing it was. So I'm sorry.

NICK

(slightly teary)

Fuck. What a fuck up.

LAURA

It's ok. It's ok. The thing about us is that we're good at solving... things. Issues. It's what we do best.

NICK

Yeah. I guess. I'm not sure that work is going ever going to see it that way again.

LAURA

Have you spoken to them?

NICK

They called a week or so ago. Wanted to know if I was ready to come back in.

LAURA

That's positive...

NICK

I'm not sure. There was something in the tone.

(CONTINUED)

LAURA
Who called?

NICK
Dlamini.

LAURA
He wouldn't waste a call if it
was...

NICK
No. I just got the feeling he was
fishing for me to say I was done.

LAURA
And that is the reason you should
go back in there with your head
up and your expectations very
much intact.

NICK looks at her. Remembers why he liked this woman.
Smiles.

LAURA (cont'd)
Where were you?

NICK
This weekend?

LAURA
Yeah. I found the pills. I
thought you'd gone... For good.

NICK
Shit. Sorry. Dark days.

LAURA
I'm glad you didn't.
(pause)
So where did you go?

NICK
I... I got out of town. Some
friends... some guys I met at
this stupid support group. They
kind of hi-jacked me. Took me out
to this cottage up the coast.

LAURA
Good for them.

NICK
Yeah. There's this friend of
theirs out there. A chick. With
the most serious tourettes you
can imagine. Freaky actually.
Kind of...

(CONTINUED)

LAURA
Kind of?

NICK
Off-putting I guess. I don't
know. Anyway. They brought me
back.

LAURA
I'm glad.

A silence. They hold hands. LAURA looking at NICK. NICK
looking out the window.

NICK
(eventually)
What?

LAURA
When are you going back in to
work?

NICK
(breathes in)
I'll go in on Thursday. See what
they think.

LAURA
Can I stay?

NICK
(pause)
Sure. Of course.

She leans in and kisses him gently on the cheek.

62 INT. MARK'S OFFICES. DAY.

62

Reynolds Corporate is a small legal firm. Neat, in a leafy suburb. Business like. A couple of admin people and a researcher make up MARK's team. Only MARK has an office of his own.

Through his open door we see his SECRETARY hand him a folder, turn and come out. We slip in as MARK closes the door behind her.

Pan around a neat room. Some law books on shelves. A small, nondescript glass trophy, some random memorabilia. On the desk a scatter of papers. A busy area. Papers are on the floor as well, stacked in folders. A modern Scandinavian crime novel holds down one pile on the desk. A chunk of obscure metal ore holds down another.

We find MARK again. He's staring hard at the cover sheet in the folder he was given. He reads through it again. He walks to the window and sits on the sill. As he stares out the window we see tears in his eyes. He blinks and they run down his cheeks.

63

INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - DAY

63

Bing! The lift doors open and there is NICK. Fully suited. Fully shaved. Sharp as a pin. And gently ticking.

The front desk receptionist has changed, looks up as NICK enters.

RECEPTIONIST 2

Good Morning. Welcome to Booyesen Dlamini Mansoor. Who are you here to see?

NICK

Uh. Yes. I used to... um sorry. I'm here for a meeting with Joe and Albert.

(pause)

They're expecting me.

(pause)

Sorry. I'm Nick Taylor.

JOE DLAMINI

(coming in to the foyer)

Nick! Very good to see you back where you belong!

NICK

Hello Joe. Thank you. That's a very welcome... welcome.

They laugh.

JOE DLAMINI

Good. Come on through. How are you feeling.

With a nod to the receptionist DLAMINI leads NICK away into the office.

NICK

I'm feeling better. Thanks.

The receptionist dials a number as they walk away.

64

INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - DAY

64

A nondescript office away from the main centre of action. Not unpleasant; there has been some effort been made with a small sofa, low table and chairs at one end and an executive desk and chair at the other. But it's definitely a backroom.

NICK, DLAMINI and MANSOOR sit around the low table.

JOE DLAMINI
Shall I rustle up some tea?

NICK
Uh... I'm ok with water thanks.

MANSOOR
I'll have a glass too Joe.
Thanks.

JOE pours three glasses from a iced flask on the main desk. They sit.

MANSOOR (cont'd)
Thanks Joe. You know my mother said you should only drink water during the daytime. Nothing else.

JOE DLAMINI
Really?

MANSOOR
Lived to a hundred and one.

NICK
One can only hope.

JOE DLAMINI
I think I might have to have someone put a bullet in me before that. Maybe you Albert?

MANSOOR
(a small laugh)
Joe that's a terrible thing to say. Never mind the pain it would be in my ass to find a replacement.

They both chuckle.

MANSOOR (cont'd)
So Nick. It is really great that you've decided to come back in. What is the latest from your doctors.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

Thanks. Um well at this stage we're really looking at management. So it's less to do with the doctors and more to do with me finding a way to work with the tourettes.

JOE DLAMINI

Of course. Of course. And how are you finding that?

NICK

I'll be honest there are easy days and days when I... There'll be days when I won't be able to be at work. Here.

MANSOOR

Yes. Yes.

NICK

In a way it's still kind of new for me.

JOE DLAMINI

But you are getting help? Guidance. Something.

NICK

Absolutely. Support group. Other people with tourettes. Worse than me most of them...

MANSOOR

Ok. Ok. Nick we want to be honest with you too. We are still concerned for your well being. We don't want the efforts that you are making to be undone by being back here.

JOE DLAMINI

That said. We do want you back and you know that we very much value your presence here. We, along with the board, would like to offer you an Associate Partnership.

MANSOOR

For now. See how you go.

JOE DLAMINI

And we have created a position as the Head of Process and Data Research. You'll have a team of three to start.

(CONTINUED)

MANSOOR

And you'll report to us.
Directly. I like to think of it
as being the position at the
centre of our institutional
memory.

NICK

Right. Thanks. I just want to be
clear about the partnership...

MANSOOR

It's an Associate Partnership. We
haven't used it as a position for
ages. Not since we started the
company really.

JOE DLAMINI

We used it back then to bring
talent on board with the
anticipation of full partnership.

NICK

And the discretion to never have
to fill the partnership.

MANSOOR

We feel like in your case it
offers you a chance to ease in to
the added pressures of
partnership...

NICK

I'm not sure how succeeding in my
job any more than I have done so
far could be an added pressure.

JOE DLAMINI

(smiling, to MANSOOR)

There's the deal maker we've been
missing.

NICK

Joe, I don't need to be
flattered. Or coddled. I need to
be working.

MANSOOR

And that's why you're here Nick.
We don't expect you to sit around
doing nothing for your salary.
You'll be putting in the hours.
Believe me.

NICK

But you don't want me out front?

(CONTINUED)

JOE DLAMINI

Alright Nick. If we're at the table; no. We feel that your condition is a liability when dealing with clients and could compromise the nature and quality of the relationships.

MANSOOR

Though that's just our opinion. Not company policy.

JOE DLAMINI

But we also recognise that your experience and skills are invaluable in guiding others who will be interfacing with client.

MANSOOR

Possibly even more valuable...

NICK

Like Alan.

JOE DLAMINI

Is that what this is about?

MANSOOR

Alan is still in his probationary period as partner. We'll wave that for you in the light of your... Associates position.

NICK

(increasingly agitated)
It's not what it's about. It's about me still being the best damn deal maker in this firm and being...
(his tics start to take over)
denied... denied... the oppor...

His tics over-ride everything, becoming a strange, tight spasm that he can only break by taking several deep, controlling breaths.

The Partners look on. Eventually...

JOE DLAMINI

Nick. You ok?

NICK nods. Takes a careful sip of water.

JOE DLAMINI (cont'd)

We'd like you to take some time. Feel the new position out a bit.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOE DLAMINI (cont'd)
Let us have your thoughts on the
scope and responsibilities.

MANSOOR
I think, we think, that you can
make this an invaluable position
going forward. For the long term
future of this company.

NICK looks at them both. His breathing returning to
normal. He nods again.

65

INT. ASTON MARTIN DEALERSHIP - DAY.

65

LAURA is leading NICK by the hand across the showroom
floor. He's blindfolded. She's careful not to let him
touch the cars and guess where he is.

NICK
This is absurd baby!

LAURA
Hush. This is my special
surprise.

NICK
When can I...

LAURA
Just now. Nearly there.

NICK
It smells familiar...

LAURA
No breathing. No peeking!

NICK
Seriously? No breathing...

LAURA guides him towards the CAR SALES AGENT standing by
his desk in the middle of the showroom floor. She gives
the agent a nod...

CAR SALES AGENT
Good morning Mr. Taylor. It's
been some time.

NICK
Lebo? Is that you Lebo?

CAR SALES AGENT
I have something here for you.

LEBO takes NICK'S hand and presses a set of keys into his
palm.

(CONTINUED)

CAR SALES AGENT (cont'd)

I understand that congratulations are in order. A partner at Booyesen-Mansoor-Dlamini is always welcome here.

NICK, stunned, lifts the blindfold. LEBO stands smiling and indicating an Aston Martin DB9 just beside them. It is fucking gorgeous. LAURA stands watching NICK, holding her breath.

NICK looks dazedly at LEBO...

NICK

Associate Partner.

CAR SALES AGENT

I'm sorry?

LAURA

Oh Nick! Don't be silly. Do you like it?

NICK circles the car, speechless. Still trying to understand. He looks at LAURA.

NICK

You?

LAURA

Yes?

NICK

Bought it?

LAURA

You bought it. With a little help from your bank manager. You deserve it.

NICK

I...

He looks between the two of them.

CAR SALES AGENT

Why not take a seat Mr. Taylor? She's all yours. Ms. Green has arranged everything.

The reality starts to settle on NICK... he's bought an Aston! Holy shit! His grin breaks out as he opens the drivers side door and settles in to the seat. It is the most ecstatic thing he has ever experienced. The other two laugh with the infection of his grin.

(CONTINUED)

NICK lays his head back and laughs joyously as the reality of his ambition achieved sweeps over him. LAURA hops into the car beside him.

LAURA

Well come on then. Take me for a ride.

NICK

Do I really own this car?

LAURA

Yes. I love you.

NICK

I love you!

They kiss.

NICK gives her a look. Gives LEBO a look and a grin. Inserts the key and presses the start button. It's like he's having his prostate massaged. Pure, dirty, thrilling ecstasy.

LEBO goes to stand at the exit doors and ramp.

NICK is wanting to drive but the excitement of the moment has driven up the intensity of his ticks. He's suddenly struggling to take control of his hands on the wheel. He slaps the gear paddle once, twice and pops his foot off the break. The car lurches alarmingly forward.

LAURA

Woah! Easy tiger! Let's get out of the show room before you show her off...

NICK

Sorry. It's the excitement.

He takes a deep breath and tries again. This time it's smoother and he aims for the exit. His one hand is not behaving though and is flapping around a bit. LEBO is watching with increasing concern. He waves back thinking that's what NICK is doing.

They make it out the doors without incident, down the ramp with a couple of lurches and out into traffic. NICK'S head and hands are ticking away and LAURA briefly steadies the wheel. We watch as the car somewhat erratically heads down the street. Not really the Bond-style, tyres-screeching, off-into-the-sunset exit we were anticipating.

Within sight of the dealership the car pulls over. There is a pause. A bit of hooting from backed up traffic. Then NICK gets out of the drivers seat and slams the door. Stands cursing briefly then walks back up towards the dealership. Swearing and ticking as he comes.

66 INT. ASTON MARTIN DEALERSHIP - DAY.

66

NICK stands by the window of the dealership, looking out over the traffic. LAURA speaks with the CAR SALES AGENT.

CAR SALES AGENT

It's not a problem Ms. Green.
But... I do want to make it clear
that we will still consider the
car sold.

LAURA

I understand.

CAR SALES AGENT

Of course we will gladly keep it
safely here on the showroom floor
for Mr. Taylor. Until he's
feeling more confident in
collecting it.

LAURA

Thank you.

67 INT. MARK'S OFFICES. DAY.

67

MARK has assembled his staff. The mood is deeply somber as MARK finishes revealing the extent of his predicament.

MARK

... there is an uh-upside t-t-to
this news. If I c-c-c-an land, as
I have every intention of
d-d-d-doing, a new XXXX client
then this all g-g-goes away. And
wuh-wuh-wuh-we c-c-continue.

RESEARCHER

But if you don't...

MARK

(breathes in)
We go under.

There's a silence.

SECRETARY

Under?

MARK can't answer.

The SECRETARY begins to cry.

MARK

Juliet. It's g-g-going t-t-to
work out.

(CONTINUED)

SECRETARY

I'm too old to look for a new job...

She starts to sob. One of the other admin staff takes her by the shoulders. The staff move out of the office.

MARK

I'm s-s-so-so s-s-s-sorry. I'll let you n-n-n-know when th-th-there's news.

68

INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - DAY

68

NICK is sitting in his 'new' office. It's quiet. Away from the buzz of the open plan section there is only the hum of the neon lights. NICK is trying to get to grips with a file of spreadsheets, trying to pretend even to himself that he finds it interesting.

With a light knock, ALAN appears at the door.

ALAN

Hey. Associate Partner Taylor... owner of a new Aston Martin... king of the deal makers... you got a moment.

NICK

Hey. Yeah. Come on in.

ALAN brings a chair over to the desk.

NICK (cont'd)

What's up?

ALAN

Just courtesy calling. Checking on you buddy.

NICK

Huh. How'd you hear about the car?

ALAN

Laura called about it.

NICK

Oh?

ALAN

Yeah. She needed some paperwork sent over from HR. You like it?

NICK

She tell you what happened?

(CONTINUED)

ALAN
Uh... no. What?

NICK
Couldn't drive it.

ALAN
Couldn't?

NICK
The ticking. No control.

ALAN
Seriously?

NICK
Hm.

A silence.

ALAN
Still. Partner! We made it!

NICK
Associate.

ALAN
Good as...

NICK
What do you want Alan?

ALAN
I... I thought I'd check in on
you.

NICK
I'm not an invalid.

ALAN
No. I know but I just wanted to
see that you were feeling ok
about being back.

NICK
No. I'm not. I'm feeling shit
about being back. Because I'm not
back. Am I.

ALAN
Nick...

NICK
I'm in the back. Back of the
building. Back of beyond. In the
background...

(CONTINUED)

ALAN
C'mon buddy...

NICK stops. He looks at ALAN.

NICK
Sorry. It's harder than I thought
it would be.

ALAN
I get it.

NICK
What you working on?

ALAN
Huh?

NICK
What are you working on? If I
have to think about this bullshit
anymore I'm going to go out my
mind. What's on the table out
front?

ALAN
I... uh... nothing really at...

NICK
Seriously? Alan? Seriously?

ALAN
No... well...

NICK
What? You can't tell me? It's on
a project need to know? Fuck off
Alan. I cannot fucking believe
you.

ALAN
Jesus. Nick. No man it's not
that. It's... I'm still in my
probational period...

NICK
So you can't discuss what you're
working on with *me*?

ALAN
I. I've been explicitly requested
not to talk to anyone about my
current project. It's not just
you.

NICK

It is just me Alan. That's all there is in this room. You and me. And when you go then it is just me. Sitting here remembering what we used to do as a team. Remember that? And you won't let me help? Because you're watching your ass?

ALAN

Nick...

NICK

Actually no, you're right. Because now I remember that's how it was always; you watching your ass while I took the risks. What a team! Fuck.

ALAN

Nick...

NICK

You're the one who should be back here shoveling shit. Tell me! What is the fucking deal. Please. Shit.

ALAN

I'm sorry Nick. I can't.

Silence. ALAN goes. Quietly closes the door behind him.

NICK sits.

69 EXT. ANGELA'S COTTAGE. DAY.

69

MARK, alone in his van, pulls up. MARK gets out, a small hold-all in his hand. He knocks on the cottage door. Calls out...

MARK

Angie! Angie!

No reply. He tries the door, it's open, he enters. We follow him.

70 INT. ANGELA'S COTTAGE. DAY.

70

As Mark makes his way through the cottage we start to hear ANGELA ticking away to herself outside. The cottage interior is neat, comfortable and surprisingly modern, without any frills, or clutter. Nothing that could be broken. It's as if ANGELA keeps her external life clean and practical as a balance to her complex internal energies.

(CONTINUED)

MARK drops his bag on a sofa as he moves through to see ANGELA working away in the garden. He stands watching her for a moment. Smiles lightly as she lets off a particularly unusual or virulent tic. He steps out onto the stoep of the cottage...

MARK

Hey! You! With the f-f-fucking funny disease!

ANGELA straightens up with a whoop...

ANGELA

Wa-hey! You lovely bastard. I wasn't expecting you!

71 INT. ANGELA'S COTTAGE. EVENING.

71

ANGELA and MARK sit together on a sofa, looking out at the dying of the day.

MARK

For the first time in my life I feel completely at a loss.

ANGELA

Is it that bad? Surely...

MARK

It is. If I d-d-don't do something within the n-n-next c-c-couple of months, i-it's over. Fuck it.

ANGELA

(ticking)
Fuckitfuckitfuckit...

They both giggle a little at this absurd interruption.

ANGELA (cont'd)

Is there anything you could do. I mean what's the solution?

MARK

I need a big client. A client that holds the b-b-business together with a retainer. And th-then I c-can spend time pulling in other b-b-business.

ANGELA

Hmm.

A silence. The sun slipping away below the horizon.

(CONTINUED)

ANGELA (cont'd)
 (knowingly)
 And is there anything else that
 you wanted to talk about?

MARK
 Hmm?

ANGELA
 Anything else you wanted to get
 off your chest?

MARK
 (now in on the game)
 Oh. Hmmm. There might b-b-b-be.
 J-j-just one th-th-thing.

ANGELA
 Oh good! I was hoping there would
 be.

They both giggle. Naughty schoolchildren.

ANGELA makes the first move; a hand on MARK'S thigh.
 They've done this before but it still delights them. And
 all the more so because of its' absurdity; a stutterer and
 a tourettes sufferer getting it on.

And even as they get into it their afflictions bring a
 certain silliness to the act. There are spasms, tics and
 stutters that dog their intimacy all the way to climax
 but, in it's way, it is every bit and more than 'ordinary'
 coitus. A delightful, triumphant oddity of sexual
 congress...

72

INT. ANGELA'S COTTAGE. EVENING.

72

They are on the couch. The light has faded further, but
 they are enjoying the post-coital glow...

MARK
 Oh J-j-jesus th-th-that was good.

ANGELA
 (at first not ticking)
 Yes. That most certainly was.
 Thank you.

MARK
 N-n-n-n-n... (slaps himself)
 fuckit! Th-thank you.

They both laugh, relax in to each other. Then suddenly...

ANGELA
 (off goes the tick)
 NICK! NICK! NICK!

(CONTINUED)

MARK

Oh nice one. Shout out some other guys name...

ANGELA

No man. Nick. Your friend Nick.

MARK

More Chris's concern but what about him?

ANGELA

He's a guy you should have with you. As a partner.

MARK

What the f-f-fuck are you talking about? He's a b-b-banker isn't he?

ANGELA

You are a rude bastard aren't you?

MARK

What?

ANGELA

You didn't even know what he does.

MARK

Couldn't give a monkey's f-f-fuck. He's just some other t-t-ticking freak...

ANGELA

Don't be rude. He's a lawyer. A corporate lawyer. I think.

MARK

What?

ANGELA

Yeah. You dumb-ass. He's been on sick leave since the tourettes.

MARK

H-h-how do you know?

ANGELA

I spoke to him. You know like ordinary polite people do. Asked him about his life. Not just assume he didn't have one.

(CONTINUED)

MARK

I d-d-d-do n-n-not assume h-h-he has no life.

ANGELA

Yes. You are the absolute model of compassion.

MARK

And besides what the f-f-f-fuck? Are you suggesting we work together. He's got a j-j-job you said.

ANGELA

Maybe...

MARK

What d-does that m-mean?

ANGELA

It means maybe you should ask. Instead of sticking your head up your ass and hoping for a revelation.

MARK

(to self)

Hope is not a long term strategy...

ANGELA

Damn right. Nor is doing nothing.

That lands. MARK looks at ANGELA. She returns his look squarely. He nods. Shrugs.

73

INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - NIGHT

73

NICK is sitting in a chair with his feet up on the table. He stares at the ceiling. He's been staring at it since ALAN left.

In the corridor outside we can hear a vacuum cleaner. The door opens and a cleaner comes in, leaving her cleaning cart outside. The vacuum continues outside.

CLEANER 1

Ooh sorry Mister. I thought you was all gone home.

NICK looks across at her.

CLEANER 1 (cont'd)

We got to clean your office.

(CONTINUED)

She comes in and lightly dusts his desk, wipes down his chair, straightens it. She picks up the paper bin and comes across to collect the glass and water jug.

CLEANER 1 (cont'd)
You ok Mister?

NICK
What time is it?

CLEANER 1
Whasat you say?

NICK
What time is it?

CLEANER 1
It's past seven, almal'se weg...

NICK sits up. The CLEANER empties the paper bin into her cart, wipes the jug down, takes up a new glass. She comes back in with the bin, the jug and the glass.

CLEANER 1 (cont'd)
You working late?

NICK nods.

CLEANER 1 (cont'd)
Didn't you used to have that big office out front?

NICK nods.

CLEANER 1 (cont'd)
Sjoe.

She starts to leave.

CLEANER 1 (cont'd)
Now it belongs to that other Mister, the rooi-kop. Shame man.

She gets behind her cart.

CLEANER 1 (cont'd)
Go home to your wife Mister.
She'll make you feel right.

And she's gone, following the vacuum that recedes into the distance.

NICK sits in the growing silence.

Then he jumps up and walks out.

74 INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - NIGHT

74

NICK'S old office, only now with the name plate ALAN TISSOCK. Lights off, empty. NICK walks in, light spilling in from the main floor. Sound of distant vacuum. He stops in the doorway, glances back out. Closes the door. Crosses to the desk and turns on the lamp. He sits and opens the first folder on the desk. He reads.

75 EXT. BUSTLING SIDE-WALK CAFE - MORNING

75

MARK and CHRIS are sitting opposite each other. CHRIS ticking away while he eats breakfast. MARK drinks coffee.

CHRIS

I thought you knew.

MARK

No.

CHRIS

Well yeah. He works for some big firm... B..M..G or something. Hup hey.

MARK

BMD? B-b-booyesen Mansoor Dlamini?

CHRIS

Yeah. Sounds right.

MARK

Jesus.

CHRIS

They any good?

MARK

Yeah. Th-th-they think they're the best. And they m-might be.

CHRIS

Huh.

MARK

Well that's that then.

CHRIS

What's that?

MARK

He's n-not going t-t-to give up w-working for them to j-j-join me.

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS
He might. Why don't you ask him?

CHRIS suddenly stands and starts waving. MARK thinks it's a tick.

MARK
Sit down you t-tit.

CHRIS
NICK! Nick! Nick. Over here.

MARK turns round and realises that CHRIS is actually calling over NICK who is hovering, looking for them.

CHRIS (cont'd)
(sitting)
What a coincidence.

MARK
R-r-really?

CHRIS
(smiles)
You're not the only friend
Angie's got.

MARK
Oh I g-get it...

CHRIS
And she's not the only friend
you've got.

MARK
Sh-she tell y-you everything?

CHRIS
(pointed)
Everything... always. Nick!
Howzit.

NICK arrives at the table.

NICK
Hey Chris. Hi Mark.

MARK
H-h-hi.

They sit.

CHRIS
So how's being back at work?

NICK

Uh... it's... going ok. I guess.

CHRIS

That well?

A waiter comes over. He's the 'poes' waiter from scene 31.

WAITER

Anything for you?

NICK

(ticking, then manages...)
I'll have tea!

WAITER

(looks bemused)
Ceylon or rooibos?

NICK

(ticking, then...)
Rooibos!

WAITER

(slight smile)
Milk?

NICK

(head ticking)
Please.

WAITER

(smiling)
Is that a yes?

NICK

Yes.

CHRIS

And cream for me.

WAITER

(to MARK)
Anything more for you s-s-sir?

MARK

Seriously? Did you just...

WAITER

What...

CHRIS

It's ok. It's ok. Just bring the
tea and stuff. Hup-hey.

The WAITER goes, a smirk on his face.

(CONTINUED)

MARK

Y-y-you let him get away with that...

CHRIS

Who cares about him. He's a waiter.

MARK

He's a p-p-p-poes.

He spits out the last word so emphatically that they all laugh.

CHRIS

So Nick I have to admit that I got you here under slightly false pretences...

NICK

Oh?

CHRIS

Yeah. So it goes like this, our friend Mark here is in need of a partner. For his business.

NICK

What's your business?

MARK

I-i-i'm in corporate law.

There's a look between the three of them.

NICK

Huh. Which firm?

MARK

Mine. J-j-just me. Reynolds Corporate.

NICK

(amused)

You're a corporate lawyer?

MARK

Yeah. Like you.

NICK

Yeah. Except that I'm not.

CHRIS

Oh. I thought you told me...

(CONTINUED)

NICK

I used to be. Since the tourettes they've had me in a back room crunching paper. I'm not a lawyers' arsehole.

Silence. All of them acknowledging the shit deal dealt.

NICK (cont'd)

Anyway. What did you say you wanted?

MARK

I d-d-didn't but what I n-n-need is a p-partner who can c-close deals while I l-l-land clients.

NICK

How many clients do you have.

MARK

Well th-that's the thing. I need someone to...

NICK

How many clients?

MARK

One. On retainer. And some on ad hoc.

NICK is silent.

MARK (cont'd)

I had two others. B-big ones I mean. But they l-l-left me. Went for bigger firms...

NICK is silent.

MARK (cont'd)

But I realise that you'll w-w-want to s-s-stay at B-b-booyesen...

NICK

Fifty percent partnership.

MARK

W-what?

NICK

Fifty percent partnership straight up. No probation and no disbandment for five years.

(CONTINUED)

MARK
(laughs)
Uh... a-a-are you offering
yourself a j-j-job?

NICK
Take it or leave it.

MARK
Uh...

MARK looks at CHRIS. Looks at NICK. NICK game faces him
right back.

MARK (cont'd)
D-d-done. Y-y-you're on.

CHRIS
Hey! There we go! That's the way
to do it.

NICK and MARK shake hands.

The WAITER appears with the tea and the cream.

WAITER
There you go... oops... watch
yourself there...

He's making fun of the hand shaking as if it's a tic.

There's a look between the three guys.

The waiter makes to go.

NICK
Oh, sorry could I ask you for
a..hup hey!

NICK mimics a tick and flicks the bowl of cream into the
waiter's face. MARK is straight in on it; leaps up and
starts to pretend to wipe the mess but really just spreads
it around...

MARK
Oh! I am s-s-s-so s-s-sorry about
my handicapped f-f-friend.
Seriously c-c-can't take him
anywhere...

CHRIS
(smiling)
Oh this is going to be a
partnership to be wary of...

76 INT. MARK'S OFFICES. DAY. 76
 Mark and Nick discuss the details.

77 INT. BIG BUSINESS. DAY. 77
 Mark and Nick approach new client. Hand shakes all round.

78 INT. MARK'S OFFICES. DAY. 78
 Mark and Nick put their pitch / deal together.

79 INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - DAY 79
 Mark and Nick arrive for the deal.

80 INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - DAY 80
 Mark and Nick go head to head with Alan.

81 INT. BMD ATTORNEYS - DAY 81
 Mark and Nick win with the weirdest performance ever.

82 EXT. ATLANTIC COAST ROAD - DAY. 82

As at the start; the tarmac blurs, the scenery unfolds, the deep throated growl of the engine kicks up an octave as NICK'S Aston Martin punches forward. At first we hear but do not see the occupants.

MARK

Holy s-s-sugary sh-sh-shitballs!
 That's as g-good as g-g-getting a
 p-p-prostate examination.

NICK

I know, right! It's spiritual.

CHRIS

You know I gotta say I didn't
 think we could pull this off but
 here we are. Hup-hey!

MARK

Yes we are!

NICK

Floor it now. Out of the bend...

The Aston kicks forward again and reveals the guys in the car. CHRIS is perched in the back, NICK in the front passenger and MARK, his eyes shining with delight, is at the wheel.

(CONTINUED)

As the car moves ever more powerfully away the guys let out a rising cheer of sheer joy that beaks into delighted laughter. The Aston eats the road; into the sunlit horizon.

THE END.