

# **SQUASH**

By

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**ONE**

THE CHANGING-ROOM OF A SQUASH CLUB. LOCKERS, BENCHES.  
RIGHT, A DOOR LEADS TO THE SHOWERS AND THE COURTS. LEFT, A  
DOOR LEADS TO THE STREET.

RYAN IS SITTING ON THE BENCH. WEARING SOILED SQUASH GEAR,  
RACQUET IN HIS HAND.

GREG COMES IN FROM THE SHOWERS. TOWEL ROUND HIS WAIST,  
FRESHLY SHOWERED. STARTS DRYING HIMSELF, GETTING DRESSED.

RYAN

Listen to this. The other day,  
Sacha's playing, right -

GREG

Are you having a shower or what?

RYAN

Got all her dolls out, and old Max  
comes along, poor little sod's  
only been walking a couple of  
weeks, knocks some of them over.  
'Be careful, dickhead' says Sacha.  
Can you believe it? Four years old  
- 'Be careful, dickhead'!

GREG

Get in the shower, Ryan!

RYAN

Karen was furious. 'She gets it  
from you!' You know what Sacha's  
like, right little madam, and to  
hear her coming out with this! I  
had to laugh.

GREG

Christopher's amazing, he sleeps  
right through. Anna, forget it,  
but Christopher - eighteen months  
and he sleeps right through.

RYAN  
Fucking kids, jesus.

GREG  
I'm hungry. What do you want to eat?

RYAN  
Max is brilliant, I love him to death, but Sacha - Sacha's something else.

GREG  
Kids change your life, Ryan, that's what they do.

RYAN  
Yeah, change your fucking life.

GREG  
How about pasta? Load up on carbohydrates. I'm running every morning now. Or we could try that new Vietnamese place.

RYAN  
I want you to do me a favour, Greg.

GREG  
Do me a favour and get in the shower!

RYAN  
I can't come.

GREG  
What?

RYAN  
I can't come and eat.

GREG  
What are you talking about?

RYAN  
Something's come up.

GREG  
Well thanks for letting me know!

RYAN  
I'm sorry, it's a last minute thing.

GREG  
(CHECKS WATCH)  
Deb will have eaten by now. Thanks a lot.

RYAN

Sorry mate.

GREG

What about a beer? You've got time for a beer.

RYAN

Not really.

GREG

Great! My one night out! Cheers, Ryan!

RYAN

You could still go and eat.

GREG

On my own? Joking! No, I'll get a takeaway.

RYAN

Okay, but eat it in the car.

GREG

What?

RYAN

That's the favour I wanted to ask you.

GREG

You want me to get a takeaway and eat it in the car, as a favour?

RYAN

Or go to the restaurant on your own.

GREG

Go to the restaurant on my own?

RYAN

Then you can go home and tell Deb that we played squash, then we went out and ate, you can tell her it was exactly like every Wednesday night, otherwise she might say something to Karen ... see?

GREG

Wait a minute, wait a minute.

RYAN

Alibi me, Greg. That's the favour.

GREG

Alibi you? Wait a minute -

RYAN

Okay, okay. Look. I've got to see this guy about some insurance policies. If you really want to know, one or two things, money things, have gone wrong, and I don't want Karen worrying about it.

GREG

Money things? What money things?

PAUSE.

RYAN

Okay. I didn't want to get into this, but the last few months I haven't been feeling too good. You know, dizzy spells, double vision, so I'm seeing this specialist, privately, and I don't want Karen worrying about it.

GREG

Christ, Ryan! Joking! You're seeing a specialist tonight? Half past eight on Wednesday night?

PAUSE.

RYAN

Okay, I've got to meet someone. This girl.

GREG

Oh great -

RYAN

Just don't -

GREG

Ryan, are you telling me -

RYAN

Will you just listen -

GREG

Christ Ryan!

RYAN

Just listen, will you?

GREG

I don't want to know.

RYAN  
Listen. This girl -

GREG  
I don't want to know, alright? I don't want to get into this, Ryan. This just shouldn't happen, I don't want to know about this, it shouldn't happen!

RYAN  
I'm in deep shit, Greg.

GREG  
Oh really. Oh really. Well that's your problem, isn't it?

RYAN  
I told her I wanted to knock it on the head. She went ape. She said if I didn't meet her tonight, to discuss the situation, she'd come round the house.

GREG  
What?

RYAN  
Tell Karen everything.

GREG  
Joking!

RYAN  
Deep, deep shit.

GREG  
What is she, a nutter?

RYAN  
I love my wife and my kids, Greg. You of all people should know how important that is to me -

GREG  
You love Karen.

RYAN  
You know I do.

GREG  
So you're not leaving Karen, you're not going off with this, this -

RYAN  
Fuck off, Greg!

GREG

Yeah, right. 'Fuck off Greg', very good, very typical if I may say so. So now I've got to lie to my wife who is friends with your wife - I'm friends with your wife for fuck's sake - we're all friends, you asshole!

RYAN

I know, I know -

GREG

And you shit on us all from a great height.

PAUSE.

GREG

So. This person, what is she? She works in your office, or what?

RYAN

In my office? Joking! Even I, even I would not be that stupid. I met her in the lift.

GREG

In the lift?

RYAN

I walked into the lift and there she was.

GREG

I don't want to know.

RYAN

Boom! Instant mutual attraction. Big time.

GREG

Jesus.

RYAN

The look she gave me.

GREG

You didn't, you didn't -

RYAN

No, a few days later.

(BEAT)

Although she might've, there and then, if I'd gone for it.

(BEAT)

Fucking a complete stranger in the lift, that's very much her sort of thing.

GREG  
God almighty.

RYAN  
Very much up her street.

GREG  
What is she, a complete nutter?

RYAN  
No, she's a retail analyst.

GREG  
Joking! Who with?

RYAN  
Schroeder's.

GREG  
Oh christ. You idiot.

RYAN  
You'd prefer she was with a bigger  
merchant bank?

GREG  
Oh no. Don't start, Ryan.

RYAN  
What? What?

GREG  
I mean it, Ryan. It won't work. I  
am very upset. I am upset for  
Karen. I am upset for Deb.

RYAN  
That's why I'm asking you to do me  
the favour. Because of Karen. And  
Deb.

(BEAT)  
Greg?

GREG  
How long has this been going on?

RYAN  
I don't know, where are we now,  
May? Three months.

GREG  
In the lift!

RYAN  
She introduced herself. We shook  
hands. She asked where I worked.



GREG

And?

RYAN

I told her, then she got out of the lift. Couple of weeks later, I'm at my desk, I get a package by courier. It's a box, right, a big box, lots of bubblewrap, then black tissue. I'm beginning to think it's a wind-up, then I find this thing.

GREG

Thing? What thing?

RYAN

This wossername, this chain, about ten inches long, with a sort of clamp attached to it. All silver, right, beautiful craftsmanship.

GREG

What is it?

RYAN

I know it's from her but I can't contact her can I, she knows where I work, I don't know where she works -

GREG

In the building, obviously -

RYAN

Not necessarily, and anyway, it's a big -

GREG

Okay okay. Anyway.

RYAN

Anyway. Guess what the next day is.

GREG

How should I know?

RYAN

Fourteenth of Feb.

GREG

So?

RYAN

Valentine's day.

GREG

Oh jesus. I don't want to know,  
okay?

RYAN

I get another package.

GREG

And?

RYAN

Even bigger. Lots of black tissue.  
I'm rooting around in it for  
hours, that tosser Maddox clocking  
me from his desk, and I finally  
pull out this ring -

GREG

A ring?

RYAN

Not that kind of ring, this is  
like an inch, an inch and a half  
in diameter, with a hinge and a  
clasp and it's covered in leather.  
Hand-stitched, lovely job. It  
takes me another hour to work out  
it goes with the wossername from  
yesterday.

GREG

It goes with the wossername?

RYAN

Yeah, the chain. It goes the other  
end to the clamp.

GREG

Jesus Ryan, what is it?

RYAN

And there's a card in the box.

GREG

A Valentine card?

RYAN

On one side it says 'Top or  
Bottom?', printed, small letters.

GREG

Top or bottom?

RYAN

'Top or Bottom question mark'. And  
on the other side, hand-written,  
'Exeter, 7.15'.

GREG  
'Top or Bottom question mark'?

RYAN  
So I went.

GREG  
Where? To Exeter?

RYAN  
To the bar in the Exeter Hotel. At seven-fifteen. I went three nights running, had a drink, went home. She turned up on the fourth night, sat next to me at the bar. What was the first thing she said to me?

GREG  
I don't want to know, Ryan.

RYAN  
She said -

GREG  
I don't want to know, Ryan!

RYAN  
She said 'Have you got it?'

PAUSE.

RYAN  
Meaning the wossername.

GREG  
I know what she meant, I'm not stupid!

RYAN  
Schroeder's keep a suite at the Exeter. For V.I.P.'s and out of town directors.

GREG  
Yeah, course they do.

RYAN  
Her boss let's her have the key if noone's using it.

GREG  
Course he does.

PAUSE.

GREG  
So, so what happened?

RYAN  
You don't want to know, Greg.

GREG  
You're right, I don't!

PAUSE.

RYAN  
Greg?  
(BEAT)  
Are you going to alibi me?

PAUSE.

RYAN  
Are you?

PAUSE.

RYAN  
Greg?

GREG  
You promised me -

RYAN  
I know, I know.

GREG  
Four years ago, you promised me -

RYAN  
I know -

GREG  
Here! In this exact spot!

RYAN  
This is different -

GREG  
You promised you would never ask  
me to do this again. Remember?

RYAN  
Course I remember -

GREG  
The aggravation, the grief -

RYAN  
That was different.

GREG  
How was that different?

RYAN

Obviously it was different! You alibied me then so I could see Karen! Who I was in love with! Who I married, for fuck's sake! You did it for me and Karen! Now I'm asking you to do it for me and Karen again, because I love her and I don't want to lose her! I was weak and stupid and now I'm totally fucked Greg, and I'm asking you to help me save my marriage and my family! I am asking you to save my life!

GREG

Because I remember what it was like, lying to Paula about you and Karen.

RYAN

Paula?

GREG

And now you're asking me to lie to Karen about, about -

RYAN

How can you bring Paula into this?

GREG

Okay, we know about Paula -

RYAN

Paula was a bitch -

GREG

We know about Paula -

RYAN

Paula? Paula was a lying, cheating, thieving bitch, Greg, she was a complete and total cunt!

GREG

She was pretty bad news, I grant you that -

RYAN

A total cunt!

GREG

She was pretty bad news -

RYAN

Even you didn't like her -

GREG

Paula had problems -

RYAN

And how you can compare that situation with this, how you can compare Karen and Paula with Karen and Leslie -

GREG

Leslie?

RYAN

How you can mention Paula in the same breath -

GREG

I can because never mind the circumstances Ryan, the bottom line is the same. Here we go again, you lying to your wife, me lying to my wife, round and round we go, and look what happened last time! Never mind your marriage, what about mine? Eh Ryan?

PAUSE.

RYAN

Are you going to do it, Greg?

(BEAT)

I'm asking you to save my fucking life, what more can I say?

(BEAT)

Are you going to alibi me, Greg, or what?

PAUSE.

RYAN

Greg?

**BLACKOUT**

**TWO**

RYAN IS CHANGING INTO HIS SQUASH GEAR. GREG ARRIVES WITH HIS SPORTS BAG AND BRIEFCASE.

RYAN  
Here he is.

GREG STARTS CHANGING.

RYAN  
A man staring defeat in the face.

GREG  
You reckon.

RYAN  
Big time.

PAUSE.

GREG  
So what happened?

RYAN  
Today I am unstoppable.

GREG  
So what happened? How did it go?

RYAN  
How did what go?

GREG  
How did it go last Wednesday,  
Ryan?

RYAN  
Talking of last Wednesday, I've  
got a bone to pick with you.

GREG  
What do you mean?

RYAN  
Karen comes up to me the other day  
and says 'I thought you said you  
and Greg went to the Italian on

Wednesday night'. I says 'Yeah, so?' She says 'Well Deb says you went to this new Vietnamese'.

GREG

You told Karen we went to the Italian?

RYAN

Yes, cos you said you wanted pasta!

GREG

I said, shall we have pasta or try the new Vietnamese.

RYAN

You said you wanted pasta!

GREG

Well I went to the Italian and it was full, so I went to the new Vietnamese.

RYAN

How am I supposed to know that, you dozy fucker? We, we went out to eat, right?

GREG

So what did you say?

RYAN

I said oh yeah, the new Vietnamese, I remember. I said, all those games of squash, all that ethnic cuisine, I couldn't tell one fucking night out with you from another.

GREG

Cheers, Ryan.

RYAN

I said the chicken satay was excellent.

GREG

They don't do chicken satay. That's Thai.

RYAN

Shit! You see? In my panic I broke the first rule of lying - do not embellish, do not elaborate. Let this be a lesson. Keep it simple. Next time we make sure we know where we fucking ate.



GREG

Next time? There isn't going to be a next time.

RYAN

I know. I'm just saying. For the sake of argument. Metaphorically speaking. In the future -

GREG

Ryan. There will be no 'in the future'.

RYAN

I know, I know.

PAUSE.

RYAN

I was just saying -

GREG

You haven't told me what happened last week.

RYAN

What, with Leslie?

GREG

Yes! I just want to know, have you sorted it?

RYAN

Are you alright, Greg?

GREG

Am I alright?

RYAN

You seem a little stressed, my man.

GREG

Well I haven't exactly had a great week Ryan, if you really want to know.

RYAN

You haven't?

GREG

Well what do you think? I've been worried.

RYAN

There's no need for you to worry, it's not your problem.

GREG

Well actually I think it is. What you do effects me. All week Deb kept asking me was I alright.

RYAN

She's brilliant, Deb. Good as gold.

GREG

Was I overworking again. Had I thought about going back on the anti-depressants. Jesus!

RYAN

You came off them?

GREG

Two years ago, Ryan!

RYAN

You never said.

GREG

Of course I did! During one of our nights out you can't remember!

RYAN

Maybe Deb's right, maybe you should go back on them.

GREG

Don't you start! I'm fine! I was fine until last week.

RYAN

Well you can relax now, eveything's okay.

GREG

It is?

RYAN

Yeah. I sorted the slag out a treat.

GREG

How? What happened?

RYAN

We met in Butlers, right, the wine bar across the square?

GREG

Butlers, right.

RYAN

We're downstairs in the cellar

bar, nice bottle of Sancerre, and she starts on about how she's not going to be dumped blah blah blah, so I tell her, if she gives me any grief, I'll go straight to her

boss, tell him she let me read this confidential report on a supermarket chain.

GREG

Jesus.

RYAN

She was somewhat taken aback.

GREG

She showed you a confidential report? Is she stupid or what?

RYAN

Of course she didn't show me a report!

GREG

She didn't?

RYAN

Course not! She's not fucking stupid! No, I went through her briefcase at the Exeter one night after she passed out.

GREG

Joking! What did she say to that?

RYAN

She loved it. She really got off on it. So then she fucked me.

GREG

Then she -

RYAN

There and then. One for the road.

RYAN

In Butler's?

GREG

In the cellar bar, yeah. We've got an alcove to ourselves, the alcove opposite is empty - the next one along is occupied, but they can't see us - so she shoves the table back, straddles me, boom, just like that, no knickers right, she never wears knickers, and I've got a hard-on because she's had my cock out under the table the whole

time, so boom, she's at me like an animal right, and over her shoulder I can see the stairs and the door to the kitchen, the kitchen's my main worry right, because we ordered a chicken liver salad and garlic bread fucking hours ago, so she's on top of me, pumping away, uh uh uh, but the alcove's small, every time she pumps, her arse catches the table, thumps it up against the wall, bam! and the bottle of the wine and the glasses are like wandering across the table, so it's uh, bam, then a glass goes, uh! bam! crash! then the other, uh! bam! crash!, then she comes, very quickly, cos this is what she really gets off on, 'Oh yes' she yells just as the bottle hits the floor, uh! bam! crash! oh yes! and then she's jumping off me, yanking her skirt down, just as this geezer from the next alcove pokes his head round and says 'Is everything alright in here?' 'Not bad' she says. Then the waiter finally turns up with the fucking food.

PAUSE.

GREG

Ryan -

RYAN

Anyway, I've just about sorted things, but there's still a few loose ends.

GREG

Ryan, Ryan -

RYAN

Greg, Greg.

GREG

I'm worried about you.

RYAN

Are you? That's nice.

GREG

You were going to sort her out, but you didn't, did you? You were, you were shagging her in the basement of some wine bar.

RYAN

Shagging? Shagging? 'Shagging' is totally inadequate, it comes nowhere near describing the experience.

GREG

I'm not particularly interested Ryan, at this particular moment in time, in whether or not I'm using the correct terminology.

RYAN

You should be interested, because if you listened, if you stopped to think, you would realise that this is not some slapper I met round the photocopier, this is a woman, a woman who pulls in a six-figure salary, a woman of passion -

GREG

You said to me -

RYAN

- a woman who is not afraid to confront her darker side -

GREG

You said to me ... darker side? What 'darker side'?

RYAN

You don't want to know, Greg.

GREG

'Confront her darker side'? Did she say that?

RYAN

I said it.

GREG

Because it doesn't sound like you.

RYAN

Bollocks.

GREG

What does it mean anyway, 'confront her darker side'?

RYAN

It doesn't matter, Greg. Forget it.

PAUSE.

GREG

Is it something to do with the  
wossername?

RYAN

What wossername?

GREG

The thing she gave you.

RYAN

Forget it, Greg. Go home, kiss the  
kids, have a meal with Deb.

GREG

Why do you do it, Ryan?

RYAN

Why do I do what?

GREG

Let's just forget it, okay? I  
can't help you anymore, Ryan.  
You're on your own.

PAUSE.

RYAN

You're right, it's probably better  
that way.

GREG

Right!

RYAN

Sort my own mess out.

GREG

That's exactly right.

RYAN

Not drag you into it.

GREG

I'll drink to that.

PAUSE.

RYAN

One thing I want to ask.

GREG

What?

RYAN

You and Deb.

GREG

What about me and Deb?

RYAN

Did you fuck her the first time  
you went out?

GREG

Jesus, Ryan!

RYAN

No, no, this is important.

GREG

Jesus -

RYAN

Did you?

GREG

No.

(BEAT)

The second time.

RYAN

So the second time you went out,  
where did you go, what did you do?  
Come on, I want the preamble.

GREG

For God's sake -

RYAN

This is important, Greg!

GREG

We went down the pub, then we to a  
party at Mickey Ifield's.

RYAN

Mickey Ifield. That tosser.

GREG

You were there with Paula.

RYAN

I'm not going to remember a party  
at Mickey Ifield's, am I?

GREG

We didn't stay long, 'bout an  
hour, then we went for a pizza, we  
went to that place on the  
Broadway, it's gone now -

RYAN

So you had a pizza -

GREG

We parked up outside for a bit,  
waiting for this track to finish

on the stereo -

RYAN

Listening to the stereo, okay -

GREG

Parked right outside, I couldn't believe it when I saw the space. I thought, that's an omen, that is.

RYAN

Of another space you're about to park in, got you.

GREG

What?

RYAN

So you and Deb're parked up outside the pizza place.

GREG

In my old 5-Series Beemer. Remember my old Beemer?

RYAN

Lovely old motor, that Beemer.

GREG

So then we went in and had a pizza.

RYAN

Right, nice bottle of red, leaning across the table, lot of eye contact, hands accidentally brush. Next thing you're leaving, hardly touched your pizzas -

GREG

We talked. We talked for hours. That was the thing, Deb was the first girl I ever really talked to. It was fantastic, I told her everything. About work, about school, about holidays when I was a kid, I wanted her to know everything -

RYAN

Everything, right -

GREG

And Deb told me about work, and her family -

RYAN

Jesus.



GREG

Her old man, you know the story  
there!

RYAN

Don't I just.

GREG

We could've talked all night -

RYAN

Deb's old man, you'd need all  
night -

GREG

But we suddenly realise we're the  
last in the restaurant, so I pay  
the bill -

RYAN

And it's all back to your place -

GREG

All back to my place - you  
remember my old flat off the  
Broadway -

RYAN

So you're back at your old flat,  
how about another drink blah blah,  
perfect, but you don't get round  
to even pouring it, because by now  
you're both really up for it, this  
is getting seriously urgent  
because you've both been thinking  
about it for hours, you know it's  
going to happen, so it starts as  
soon as you're indoors, the door  
closes, bam! and you're into it,  
coats off, stumbling down the  
hall, undoing buttons, zips,  
trousers round your ankles,  
fucking hell the relief, you've  
had a hard-on all night for fuck's  
sake, release that poor thing from  
captivity! Tell you what, you  
don't even make it to the bedroom-

GREG

No, we were both dying for a cup  
of tea -

RYAN

Cup of tea, right.

GREG

- so we went in the kitchen, and I  
put the kettle on -

RYAN

You dog.

GREG

I put the kettle on and, and ...

RYAN

And?

GREG

Deb kissed me.

RYAN

Then you had wild outrageous sex  
all over the kitchen.

GREG

Then I made the tea.

RYAN

You dog, you made the tea!

GREG

And Deb said 'Where's the  
bedroom?'

RYAN

Thank fuck one of you knew what to  
do.

PAUSE.

RYAN

Okay, and?

GREG

What do you think, Ryan? We went  
to bed and we ... made love.

RYAN

You 'made love'. How marvellous.  
You didn't sleep a wink all night,  
right?

GREG

Piss off, Ryan.

RYAN

Come on, what happened, what was  
it like?

GREG

What is this, Ryan? What's your  
problem, eh?

RYAN

This is important, what you did is  
important, it's my whole point,

Greg! Tell me what it was like!

GREG  
It was, it was ... nice.

RYAN  
'Nice'? It was 'nice'?

GREG  
Yes, nice! Now leave it, okay?

RYAN  
The first time, were you on top?  
Was there moaning and groaning or  
were you stumm? Did Deb come? Did  
she cry after she came, or laugh?  
Did you fuck her from behind or  
did you save that for a later  
date?

GREG  
Shut it, Ryan! You are totally out  
of order!

RYAN  
Okay, okay -

GREG  
Deb and I made love for the first  
time, we fell in love, alright?  
That's it, that's all you need to  
know.

RYAN  
Okay, okay, calm down. My point is  
this, what I'm trying to say is,  
you're going out with somebody for  
the first time -

GREG  
That's enough about me and Deb -

RYAN  
No, not you and Deb, jesus!  
Anyone, okay? Me, alright? I'm in  
a restaurant, I'm taking someone  
out -

GREG  
If this is you and wotserface in  
Butler's, I've heard that story -

RYAN  
No! Greg, look - jesus, this is  
impossible - someone, anyone, this  
unnamed couple, they're going out  
for the first time, they're in a  
restaurant say, they're really mad  
for it, right, really fancy the

socks off each other, what are they doing? They're talking, he's saying 'The thing about my job blah blah blah', she's saying 'Oh you're so right, the thing about my job blah blah blah'. 'You go skiing? So do I!' Then they pay the bill, and it's all back to his place, all back to her place. They get indoors, bam! it happens -

GREG

Here we go -

RYAN

This is fantastic, this is what they've been waiting for, kit off quick, in bed, naked, and they're fucking like snakes! He's going 'Jesus, jesus, jesus!' She's on top of him, really into it, 'Yes yes yes!' she's going! Now wait a minute. Hold on. Let's just step back and observe this situation. Let's ask ourselves, what the fuck is going on here?

GREG

I would've thought that was obvious.

RYAN

What's happened to these people? They're in a restaurant, she's saying 'What's your view on endowment mortgages', half an hour later, she's writhing about on top of him, 'Oh! Oh! Oh!'. 'I believe the creme brulee here is excellent' he says, then half an hour later 'Oh God, oh God, faster, faster!' I mean, is that weird or what? 'Yes, the creme brulee is excellent', 'Oh! Oh! Oh!' 'Would you care for another capuccino?' 'Yes, yes, yes!' 'Bill please, waiter ' 'Fuck me! Fuck me!'

GREG

Keep it down for God's sake -

GREG

You see? This is it, Greg.

RYAN

What is what?

RYAN

What has happened to these people.  
This is it.

(BEAT)

What has happened is ... They.  
Became. Different. People.

GREG

What?

RYAN

Two different people. Having sex,  
not having sex. Two different  
people, Greg!

PAUSE.

GREG

I'm worried about you, Ryan.

RYAN

Paula said to me 'You're a  
different person when we're doing  
it'. I said 'Yes! Isn't it great?'  
She said 'No, it frightens me'.  
That was the start of our  
problems.

GREG

You're the one with problems,  
Ryan.

RYAN

Paula was very hung-up about sex.  
Two different people, you see, but  
she wouldn't face up to it.

(BEAT)

That's my theory.

(BEAT)

I should write a book about it.

GREG

I wouldn't bother Ryan. It's not a  
theory, it's an excuse.

RYAN

You reckon.

GREG

What's more, it's rubbish. When  
Deb and I are doing it, when we're  
making love, she's her and I'm me!

RYAN

I'm very happy for you.

GREG

I mean we're the same people. I'm

doing it with the woman I love,  
and I want to be me while I'm  
doing it! That's the whole point,  
Ryan.

RYAN  
I'm sure you're right.

GREG  
Yeah, well ... two different  
people. If you're two different  
people Ryan, they're both prats.

RYAN  
You'd better help me then.

GREG  
I can't help you! How the hell can  
I help you?

RYAN  
Come with me tonight.

GREG  
Come with you where?

RYAN  
Come with me to the Exeter.

GREG  
Oh no. No way.

RYAN  
Please Greg.

GREG  
You must be joking.

RYAN  
Come with me. Half an hour, Greg.  
Just sit there while I say what I  
want to say.

GREG  
Oh she's going to love that, isn't  
she!

GREG IS PREPARING TO LEAVE.

RYAN  
What are you doing?

GREG  
I'm going home. I'm going home to  
see my wife and kids.

RYAN  
Thanks Greg.

GREG

You should go home too.

RYAN

Cheers mate.

GREG

Go home to Karen. Go home to Max  
and Sacha.

**BLACKOUT**

**THREE**

RYAN, IN HIS SQUASH GEAR, RACQUET IN HAND, SITS ON THE BENCH IN FRONT OF THE LOCKERS.

GREG ENTERS FROM THE STREET, DUMPS HIS BAG AND BRIEFCASE, STARTS CHANGING.

RYAN

A punctual man is a lonely man.

GREG

Sorry. There's murders at the office with this take-over.

RYAN

I suppose that's why you didn't return my calls.

GREG

Yeah, sorry about that.

RYAN

I called you at work, I called you at home. Half a dozen times!

GREG

I just said, we're in the middle of this take-over, I've not been home before ten once this week!

(BEAT)

Plus Christopher's been ill. Okay?

RYAN

Okay, no time for one phone call -

GREG

That's right.

RYAN

Hey. Listen. I am not one of your dopey mates from football. If I ring you half a dozen times, you cunt, it means I want to talk to you.

PAUSE.



RYAN  
Specially after you landed me  
right in it last week.

GREG  
Landed you right in it? How did I  
land you right in it?

RYAN  
You did a runner -

GREG  
Oh come on -

RYAN  
Made me look a right twat -

GREG  
Come for half an hour, you said.  
Just sit there while I talk to, to  
whatsit -

RYAN  
Leslie -

GREG  
- so we turn up at the Exeter and  
she's with, she's with -

RYAN  
Carol -

GREG  
- someone else, there's two of  
them sitting there!

RYAN  
I was suprised as you.

GREG  
Oh really.

RYAN  
Oh I see. I get it. That's what  
this is all about.

GREG  
What what is all about?

RYAN  
You think it was a set-up. You  
think I knew Carol was going to be  
there, right?

GREG  
Of course you knew.

RYAN

Thought I was trying to get you  
dubbed up with Carol, that's it,  
isn't it?

GREG

I'm not interested Ryan, one way  
or the other -

RYAN

Carol works for Whittakers, she  
runs their gilts operation, she  
pulls in seventy k before bonuses,  
drives a yellow Audi coupe with  
leather trim. Do you really think  
a woman like that is going to drag  
herself down the Exeter for a  
blind date with the likes of you?

GREG

It doesn't make any difference to  
me, one way or the other.

RYAN

You think I arranged it?

GREG

Whatever.

RYAN

So you walked out on us -

GREG

I didn't want to get involved,  
Ryan. I had to leave.

RYAN

Yeah, after an hour and a half,  
and three drinks -

GREG

Two drinks -

RYAN

- so it can't have been that bad.

GREG

I was waiting for the other one -

RYAN

Carol -

GREG

I was waiting for her to leave so  
you could say your bit to, to -

RYAN

Leslie! Her name's Leslie!

GREG  
But when it became obvious she  
wasn't going to leave -

RYAN  
Carol! Say her fucking name!

PAUSE.

RYAN  
Say it!

GREG  
Carol -

RYAN  
Carol didn't want to leave, she  
was having a good time until you  
left.

PAUSE.

GREG  
What did you tell Karen?

RYAN  
I told her we went out for a  
drink. What did you tell Deb?

GREG  
She didn't ask.

PAUSE.

RYAN  
Carol was worried about you. 'Is  
he alright?' she said. 'Was it  
something I said?'.  
(BEAT)  
Now is that a handsome woman or  
what? Eh? Talk about fit!  
(BEAT)  
Did you clock the legs? Fabulous  
legs!  
(BEAT)  
Big tits. The chest on her ...  
some might say too big, but I say  
too big is still not big enough.  
(BEAT)  
She liked you.

GREG  
Yeah, yeah.

RYAN  
'What a nice man' she said.

GREG  
A 'nice' man.

RYAN  
I must say, you played it  
beautifully.

GREG  
What do you mean?

RYAN  
Walking out like that. What a  
moody, unpredictable bloke you  
are, Greg. She was intrigued.  
(BEAT)  
She liked you.

PAUSE.

GREG  
I'm going home straight after  
we've played, Ryan.

RYAN  
Yeah?

GREG  
And I'm not going to alibi you.

RYAN  
You don't have to, Leslie's in  
Stuttgart.

GREG  
Tonight's our last game, Ryan.

RYAN  
Do what?

GREG  
I've been thinking about this a  
lot, and I reckon it's time to  
knock it on the head.

RYAN  
Knock what on the head?

GREG  
Squash on Wednesday nights.

RYAN  
Joking!

GREG  
This week's been a nightmare, what  
with work and Christopher, and  
Deb's just been fantastic, and ...  
and I suddenly realised that I've  
got something really ... I've got

something with Deb and the kids -

RYAN

What's this got to do with us  
playing squash?

GREG

Let's just give it a rest, okay?  
Don't ring me, don't come round. I  
don't want to talk to you 'til  
you've sorted yourself out. Work  
and home, that's all I want at the  
moment.

PAUSE.

RYAN

I can't give her up, Greg. The  
thought of giving her up, my gut's  
in knots, I'm gasping for breath.  
(BEAT)  
It feels like someone's turned the  
lights out.

PAUSE.

RYAN

So. We going to play squash or  
not?

PAUSE.

GREG

Give me a minute, will you?

RYAN EXITS RIGHT TO THE COURTS. GREG TAKES A MOBILE PHONE  
OUT OF HIS BAG. DIALS.

GREG

(INTO PHONE)

It's me.

(BEAT)

Yeah, we're about to go on court.

How is he?

(BEAT)

Good.

(BEAT)

Well, just give him half a spoon.

Remember what the doctor said -

(BEAT)

I know, I know, I'm sorry, I just  
get -

(BEAT)

Of course you are.

(BEAT)

Yes.

(BEAT)

Yes.

(BEAT)  
And give Anna a kiss from daddy.  
(BEAT)  
I'm going to have a shower and  
come straight home after the game.  
(BEAT)  
No, we're not, not tonight.  
Yeah, that would be nice. I'll  
pick up a bottle of wine.  
(BEAT)  
And Deb. I love you, okay?  
(BEAT)  
Okay, darling -  
(BEAT)  
Yeah, you too. 'Bye.

**BLACKOUT**

## FOUR

RYAN STANDS CENTRE-STAGE, WEARING SQUASH GEAR. THE REST OF THE STAGE IN DARKNESS.

RYAN

Listen, I've never had any trouble with sex, I mean I've had trouble after it, who hasn't, but I've never had any trouble getting it. It's talent right, and if you've got it, things happen. Look at Leslie. Walks in the lift, wallop, right between the eyes, she knew it, I knew it, the writing's on the wall, end of. Same with Karen.

We meet, one hour later we're fucking, she came immediately, like within a minute. She was embarrassed, she tried to hide it!

(BEAT)

Old Karen! What a star.

(BEAT)

Of course, at the time I was married to Paula, but that was good as over anyway, the whole thing was a fucking disaster. Paula! No such thing as a quickie with Paula, no way, if she didn't get a result, you had to start all over again. Hours, days would go by, me dripping with sweat, and the next day, my jaw aching so bad I could hardly eat, my tongue like someone had tried to rip it out at the roots, and as for the old chap!

PAUSE. RYAN TAKES HIS CHAIN-CLAMP-RING OUT, STICKS AN INDEX FINGER THROUGH THE RING, TWIRLS IT ROUND AND ROUND NONCHALANTLY.

RYAN

To this day I do not understand how I came to marry the one woman I had bad sex with. What's the use, it's too late now, it's over and done. So then there was Karen

... okay, me and Karen. It was great, best time of my life, great laughs, great sex, it was wild, we never stopped, but time passes and things change, but we still do it, I still fancy her, it's just different.

(BEAT)

Sometimes we're lying in bed, Karen's got her back to me, we're lying there half asleep, I'm curled around her right, and Karen has got a great bum, it's still a great bum two kids later, and Karen's bum has always given me the right horn. So we're lying there and sometimes I get a hard on, just lying there half asleep, so gradually I start fucking her - no foreplay, no preamble - from behind. So I start fucking her, and as I get into it I reach out with one hand and grab a handful of her hair and I push her away from me, and the harder I fuck her, the further I push her away.

(BEAT)

I don't think there is any other position where you can be so far from from the person you're fucking, we're only really touching in the one place, it's very impersonal, but that's the point, right? We're miles away from each other, in the dark, she's wherever she is, I'm wherever I am ... or whoever I am.

(BEAT)

I've always considered this one of our more interesting fucks.

**BLACKOUT**



## FIVE

GREG STANDS CENTRE-STAGE, WEARING A SUIT. THE REST OF THE STAGE IN DARKNESS.

GREG

I'd already had four long-term girlfriends by the time I met Deb and what I did with them was pretty much the same as what I did with Deb, not the same, obviously, because Deb's my wife, I love Deb.

(BEAT)

There was someone - I never went out with her - there was someone, when I was still living at home, who ... she lived with her mum a couple of streets away. Her mum was out a lot. I used to go round and see her after the pub. When I was between girlfriends. I never went round when I was going out with somebody. She wasn't very attractive, she was quite plain in fact, but she was very ... she liked ... doing things.

(BEAT)

I never went out with her. That was never on, she wasn't the sort of person I'd actually go out with.

(BEAT)

I was round there once and she asked me to take her out for a drink. Apparently it was her birthday. I made some excuse and went home.

(BEAT)

I feel quite bad about that actually, looking back on it. Quite ashamed.

PAUSE.

GREG

One night, about a year after we got married, I'm in bed with Deb, we're making love and I've had a few drinks, so I start doing something, I start doing something

a little different, and she says -  
very sharply - 'What do you think  
you're doing?'

PAUSE. GREG STICKS A HAND IN HIS POCKET. COMES OUT WITH A  
CHAIN IDENTICAL TO RYAN'S. FIDDLES WITH IT ABSENT-  
MINDEDLY.

GREG

And I can tell from the tone of  
her voice that I'm out of order,  
that's quite enough of that  
thankyou.

GREG REGISTERS THE CHAIN IN HIS HAND. LOOKS AROUND TO MAKE  
SURE NOBODY SAW IT. GUILTILY STUFFS IT BACK IN HIS POCKET.

GREG

So we carry on the same as usual,  
and one kid comes along, and we  
carry on the same as usual, and  
another kid comes along, and we  
carry on the same as usual -  
except not quite so often - and  
one night we're ... doing it, and  
one little corner of my mind goes  
off on this tangent about work -  
are interest rates coming down,  
something like that, Dave said  
there was a rumour the Bank of  
England was ... Dave! Now I'm  
thinking about Dave. And Dave's  
car! Dave's driving a new model  
Audi, I saw Driscoll six months  
ago about upgrading my car, six  
months and nothing's happened, I  
don't think Driscoll likes me,  
something he said last year, about  
my suit was it? Driscoll's suits,  
he spends a fortune, they never  
look right, always a size too  
small, cars, cars, back to cars,  
new model Audi, if Dave's got one,  
I should have one too, parity with  
Dave is essential, got to keep up!  
Yeah, cars, my old 5-Series  
Beemer, leather trim, walnut dash,  
lovely car, should've hung onto  
it, classic car, my dad loved that  
car, should've have seen his face  
when I rolled up in it, my poor  
old dad, what a life, redundancy,  
cancer, death, jesus christ what a  
life, never had a penny, never got  
ahead of the game, well that's not  
happening to me, not me pal, NOT  
ME PAL! NO FUCKING WAY!

PAUSE.

GREG

Well. The last thing I'm thinking about now is sex. I'm not even moving, just kneeling there between Deb's legs. I've completely lost it, it's gone. She's looking up at me. She says, she says 'Miss Nichol thinks Anna's not talking enough. Anna's vocabulary is below average'.

(BEAT)

'She thinks we should take Anna to see someone'.

PAUSE.

GREG

That was last summer. That was the last time we made love.

GREG IS CRYING.

LIGHTS COME UP. GREG IS BACK IN THE CHANGING-ROOM. RYAN COMES IN CARRYING HIS SPORTS BAG AND BRIEFCASE.

RYAN

Greg?

GREG TURNS AWAY FROM RYAN TO HIDE THE FACT HE'S BEEN CRYING.

RYAN

What are you doing here? Eh?

(BEAT)

You alright?

RYAN DROPS HIS BAGS, PUTS HIS ARM ROUND GREG'S SHOULDERS.

RYAN

You a bit down in the dumps?

GREG NODS.

RYAN

Feeling a bit blue?

GREG NODS.

RYAN

Everything alright at home?

GREG

Everything's fine. You still playing then?

RYAN

Yeah, me and John Sinclair.

GREG  
John Sinclair?

RYAN  
Little Johnny Sinclair. Handy  
player. Little terrier on the  
court, snapping at your heels.  
When I get home shattered, I tell  
Karen 'It's little Johnny  
Sinclair, he's run me ragged  
again'. He lacks your killer  
backhand though.

GREG  
Who's Johnny Sinclair?

RYAN  
Who's Johnny Sinclair? He's noone,  
Greg. He doesn't exist. He's a  
figment of my imagination, so I  
can get out of the house Wednesday  
nights.

(BEAT)  
You sure you're alright?

GREG  
I'm fine.

RYAN  
You know what? You're too hard on  
yourself.

GREG  
I'm fine.

RYAN  
Look at you. You're working what,  
ten, twelve hours a day?

GREG  
Bit knackered, that's all.

RYAN  
I bet you go in most Saturdays.

GREG  
Well, you know -

RYAN  
When you're not at work, you're at  
home. You've got two kids, two  
babies. Now that is work.

GREG  
You're not kidding -

RYAN  
When me and Karen have been round to your

place - now don't get me wrong, I think Deb is terrific, she's good as gold - but when we've been round, I couldn't help noticing, we couldn't help noticing, you don't half take the strain.

GREG

What do you mean?

RYAN

All I'm saying is, what does Deb do?

GREG

She works, she looks after the kids -

RYAN

I know, I know. All I'm saying is, there's no harm in asking yourself the question: does she do enough? Do you get the support you need?

PAUSE.

RYAN

You're a nice man, Greg, there's nothing wrong with that, but it means you don't always ask yourself the right questions.

PAUSE.

RYAN

Look at you. You're a good man. You've got a good job, you work hard. You've got a lovely family. You love them, you provide for them. You're a good husband and father. And you're miserable. Look at you.

PAUSE.

RYAN

Everybody likes you, Greg. Why don't you like you? Don't be so hard on yourself. Don't be afraid to ask yourself the question.

(BEAT)

I'm doing everything right, WHY AM I SO FUCKING MISERABLE?

PAUSE.

GREG

I'm alright.

RYAN  
I'm not saying you're not.

GREG  
Just going through a bad patch.

RYAN  
It happens to us all.

GREG  
You're alright.

RYAN  
Me? I'm not in a bad patch, I'm in  
a bad ... I'm in the fucking  
desert.

GREG  
You're alright, Ryan.

RYAN  
Yeah, I'm great, let's face it.

PAUSE.

RYAN  
Fancy a drink?

GREG  
Yes I do.

RYAN  
Fuckit, let's go and have a drink  
then. Where do you want to go?  
Pub? Wine bar? I'm easy.

GREG  
I don't mind.

RYAN  
Or the Exeter?

GREG  
The Exeter?

RYAN  
I don't mind, I'm easy. We could  
go to the Exeter. Vodka martinis  
at the Exeter, what do you reckon?

PAUSE.

RYAN  
The Exeter it is, then.  
(BEAT)  
Okay?

**BLACKOUT**

**SIX**

GREG AND RYAN SITTING ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE STAGE, AS FAR APART AS POSSIBLE. TALKING ON MOBILE PHONES. FACING AWAY FROM EACH OTHER.

GREG  
Industrial property -

RYAN  
Yeah, yeah, yeah -

GREG  
Industrial property, sweetheart. I explained before, it's a different timescale -

RYAN  
Blah blah blah -

GREG  
It's a whole new ballgame for us -

RYAN  
Listen, can you do me a favour -

GREG  
That's why Driscoll wants -

RYAN  
Say something different -

GREG  
That's why we've got to meet -

RYAN  
Say something I haven't heard before -

GREG  
So we can go through the proposal point by point -

RYAN  
Anything. Say something nice -

GREG  
It'll take as long as it takes -

RYAN  
Well, lie then -

GREG

It could take all night -

RYAN

Oh fuck off Karen -

GREG

No, no, I'm just saying -

RYAN

How many glasses of wine have you had?

GREG

It won't take all night, Deb -

RYAN

I don't believe you -

GREG

I was just saying it might -

RYAN

Because I can always tell, that's how -

GREG

But I'm sure it won't -

RYAN

Because you turn into a stropopy cow -

GREG

Alright, alright, this is what I'll do -

RYAN

What am I saying, you already are a stropopy cow -

GREG

I'll tell Driscoll I can't make it, okay -

RYAN

You turn into a right fucking bitch is what I mean -

GREG

- I'll say one of the kids is ill, so it'll just be Dave he briefs, so it'll just be Dave he takes to the meeting -

RYAN

Yeah, yeah, yeah, here we go -



GREG

So Dave will have the lead on this project -

RYAN

Blah blah blah -

GREG

You see? It's important for you and the kids as well -

RYAN

Charming language from one so young, if I may say so -

GREG

No, no, wait a minute, Deb -

RYAN

Will you just listen?

GREG

I'm trying to explain -

GREG AND RYAN TURN TO LOOK AT EACH OTHER, SHAKE THEIR HEADS, LOOK AWAY.

RYAN

Just listen -

GREG

I'm not having a go at your job -

RYAN

Jesus Karen, if you could hear yourself -

GREG

You work very hard, darling, I know that, and there's the kids, I know -

RYAN

Okay, okay -

GREG

It's a part-time job, sweetheart, the money's not -

RYAN

I know, I know -

GREG

I'm not always going on about the money -

RYAN

I open my mouth and it just comes out, babe -

GREG

Okay, tell you what, I'll pack in my job, alright, I'll be available for you and the kids twenty-four hours a day and we'll live on the wages of your fucking part-time fucking job, how's that?

RYAN

I know, I know. I'm sorry, alright?

GREG

Deb ... Deb, wait! Deb?

RYAN

Doll, don't have any more, okay? Are you listening?

GREG

I'm sorry, I'm sorry -

RYAN

Make that the last one, okay?

GREG

Please Deb -

RYAN

Give Sacha a kiss from me -

GREG

Look, I'm tired, don't take any notice -

RYAN

And Mad Max, give him one too -

GREG

Look, if we're not done by midnight, to hell with Driscoll, I'll leave anyway -

RYAN

Okay Karen, just remember what I said -

GREG

Say goodnight to Anna and Chris from Daddy -

RYAN

You too. Big kiss.

GREG  
Of course I do. You know I do.

RYAN  
Bye doll.

GREG  
Bye sweetheart.

**BLACKOUT**

**SEVEN**

GREG AND RYAN ENTER FROM THE STREET, TALKING. SUITS, BRIEFCASES, SPORTS BAGS. RYAN TAKES A SHEET OF PAPER OUT OF HIS BRIEFCASE, HANDS IT TO GREG. AS THEY CHANGE:

RYAN

Clock this.

GREG

'The European Council for Economic Strategy'. What's that?

RYAN

Fuck knows, but you write yourself a letter on it, sign some foreign name, Leslie posts it in Brussels.

PAUSE.

RYAN

Breakfast at home, you get a letter with a Brussels postmark. You open it, 'Oh no' you say, and shove it across the table to Deb. She reads it. 'Dear Mr James, you are invited to attend a special symposium blah blah blah'. 'Oh dear' you say, 'I suppose I'll have to go'. Two nights in Brussels Greg!

PAUSE.

RYAN

The idea being that you take Carol.

GREG

Yes, I did manage to work that out.

RYAN

I believe there are some excellent restaurants in Brussels.

GREG HANDS THE PAPER BACK TO RYAN.

GREG

I can't afford it, Ryan.

RYAN

Joking.

GREG

We want to move to a bigger house.  
We're cutting right back on  
everything this year.

RYAN

Everything alright with you and  
Deb, is it?

GREG

Yes, everything's fine, thankyou  
Ryan.

RYAN

Everything alright with you and  
old Carol?

PAUSE.

GREG

That particular situation is ...  
that particular situation is about  
to change.

RYAN

Meaning?

GREG

I'm going to tell her I can't see  
her anymore.

RYAN

Joking! I thought you two were  
having a great time!

PAUSE.

GREG

Look Ryan, I...  
(BEAT)  
I made a mistake.

RYAN

Greg, Greg -

GREG

I keep thinking about what I'm  
doing to Deb and the kids.

RYAN

Am I missing something here? What  
exactly are you doing to Deb and  
the kids?

GREG  
Forget it, Ryan.

RYAN  
No, really, tell me!

GREG  
Just forget it, this isn't the  
sort of thing I can discuss with  
you, Ryan.

RYAN  
What the fuck is that supposed to  
mean? You can discuss anything  
with me!

GREG  
Alright, I don't want to discuss  
it with you, okay?  
(BEAT)  
It's over, okay? The whole episode  
is closed. If you want to be a  
good mate, don't bring it up  
again, don't mention, don't  
mention ...

RYAN  
Say her fucking name, Greg.

GREG  
I don't want any of this mentioned  
again -

RYAN  
SAY HER FUCKING NAME, GREG!

GREG  
Carol.

RYAN  
What?

GREG  
CAROL!

PAUSE.

RYAN  
Okay, you and Carol, end of. You  
suit yourself.  
(BEAT)  
Personally I think you're out of  
your tiny mind, but still ...  
(BEAT)  
Maybe I'll take Carol to Brussels.  
(BEAT)  
I wouldn't mind getting my hands  
on old Carol in Brussels.  
(BEAT)

She's fit for it alright.  
(BEAT)  
She's a big girl.  
(BEAT)  
I would dearly love to see old  
Carol with her kit off.  
(BEAT)  
She's got one of those mouths.  
Don't you reckon?  
(BEAT)  
A very, very rude mouth.  
(BEAT)  
What's it like with old Carol?  
(BEAT)  
Eh?  
(BEAT)  
I bet she likes to take charge.  
(BEAT)  
With that rude mouth.  
(BEAT)  
Yeah.  
(BEAT)  
I bet it's gorgeous, having your  
cock sucked by old Carol.

GREG

Ryan.

RYAN

What?

GREG

Ryan, listen to me. You say one  
more thing about Carol, you say  
one more disrespectful word about  
her, I'm going to smash your face  
in. Smash it right fucking in, do  
you understand?

**BLACKOUT**

**EIGHT**

GREG SITS ON THE BENCH CENTRE-STAGE, FACING FRONT. JUST SHOWERED, A TOWEL ROUND HIS WAIST.

RYAN ENTERS FROM THE STREET. SUIT, BRIEFCASE.

RYAN  
What's up? What's going on?

PAUSE. RYAN DUMPS HIS BRIEFCASE.

RYAN  
You played somebody else?

GREG  
What?

RYAN  
You've had a shower.

GREG  
I needed a shower. So I had one.

PAUSE.

RYAN  
Fair enough.  
(BEAT)  
Good break, was it?

PAUSE.

GREG  
It was fine.

RYAN  
Kids enjoy it?

GREG  
Yes.

RYAN  
Deb enjoy it?

GREG  
Yes.



RYAN

Well, that's nice. Everybody enjoyed it. When did you get back?

GREG

Yesterday lunchtime.

RYAN

Yesterday lunchtime, right.

GREG

When you came in just now, I was thinking about Mickey Ifield.

RYAN

That tosser.

GREG

I was just thinking, we didn't treat him too well, did we?

RYAN

Well, he was a tosser, wasn't he?

GREG

Having parties in his flat. Drinking his booze. Making him drive us around. Looking back, I feel quite bad about it.

RYAN

Well, I don't. I couldn't give a flying fuck.

GREG

I wonder where Mickey Ifield is now. It would be interesting to meet him again.

RYAN

No it wouldn't.

(BEAT)

Are you alright?

GREG

What?

RYAN

Are you pissed or something?

GREG

I'm fine. Actually, I feel better than I've felt for a very long time.

RYAN

Well good for you. Just tell me one thing.

GREG

What?

RYAN

You came back from your holidays yesterday lunchtime, so where were you last night?

GREG

Why?

RYAN

Cos Deb was on the phone in the middle of the night, that's why! Asking did we know where you were! She was worried out of her mind!

PAUSE.

GREG

I was with Carol.

RYAN

Carol?

GREG

The last few months have been the worst of my life, Ryan -

RYAN

Fucking hell -

GREG

- trying to carry on as normal, and all the time wanting to be with Carol.

RYAN

Carol?

GREG

Ryan, this is completely different from anything that's ever happened to me -

RYAN

Stop, stop -

GREG

There are so many things I understand now -

RYAN

Just stop, will you? Out all night with Carol! Jesus, you fuckwit -

GREG

It's like a new perspective.  
Sitting here, looking back on  
everything from this new  
perspective -

RYAN

What happened on this holiday? You  
dive in the sea and bang your head  
on a rock or something?

GREG

It's so interesting, Ryan.

RYAN

Greg, listen to me. This is very  
important -

GREG

It's okay, Ryan. I knew you  
wouldn't understand -

RYAN

Oh I understand alright. I  
understand you've lost your tiny  
mind. Let's just hope it's  
temporary -

GREG

- and I was right.

RYAN

We can still salvage the  
situation, we can still sort  
something out here. You stayed out  
all night, that's all! Big fucking  
deal! Happens to everybody! I'll  
talk to Deb, I can do a number on  
Deb, pressure of work sort of  
thing, something's been going on  
at work, you didn't want to bother  
her with it, it's all sorted now -  
what? What's so funny?

GREG

You. Always looking for a way out.  
You never want to face up to  
anything, do you?

RYAN

Oh really? Well, I'm facing up to  
the fact that you are about to  
fuck up your life!

GREG

I don't want your help, Ryan.

RYAN

You may not want it, but you need

it alright!

GREG

Deb knows about Carol. I went round this morning and told her I was leaving her. I told her I wanted to be with Carol.

RYAN

Oh you fucking idiot.

GREG

I had to tell her.

RYAN

Oh jesus.

GREG

I can't lie to Deb. I can't keep secrets from Deb.

RYAN

You fucking idiot!

GREG

I told her everything. It was the only way. No more secrets from now on, Ryan.

RYAN

From now on, you're on your own! I can't help you now!

PAUSE.

RYAN

Everything? You told her everything?

GREG

I had to.

RYAN

Greg, what do you mean - 'everything'?

GREG

I mean everything. About Carol. How I met her. Where. When. Everything.

RYAN

You told Deb I was there when you met Carol?

GREG

Of course.

RYAN

Wait a - you told, you told Deb about - fuck me, Greg, you told Deb about Wednesday nights? You told her about Leslie?

GREG

You don't get it, do you? There's only one way out for you and that's lying. You lie and lie and lie and lie, and it makes things worse Ryan, not better, it poisons everything.

RYAN

Greg, have you really done this? Have you?

GREG

I talked for hours.

RYAN

God help me, you have.

GREG

All the stuff, all the shit I've been carrying around for years, it just dissappeared!

RYAN PICKS UP HIS BRIEFCASE, PUTS IT DOWN AGAIN. STANDS OVER GREG.

RYAN

You know what you've done? You know what you've done, you cunt?

GREG

I'm weightless!

RYAN

DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE?

RYAN RAISES HIS FIST. GREG LOOKS UP AT HIM, THEN CLOSES HIS EYES, WAITING SERENELY FOR THE BLOW TO FALL. RYAN LOWERS HIS FIST.

RYAN

You've killed me. I'm a dead man.

RYAN PICKS UP HIS BAGS, GOES TO EXIT, STOPS.

RYAN

You've killed me! YOU'VE KILLED MY WHOLE FUCKING LIFE!

RYAN EXITS. PAUSE. GREG STANDS, UNSTEADY ON HIS FEET. RAISES HIS ARMS.

GREG  
Weightless.

**BLACKOUT**

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