



By

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Series overview

It's essentially *Before Sunset*, set in real time, but between two of the most absurd and lost characters you'll meet. The entire series would take place over the course of a day in which Michael will get fired (with fantasy and flashback sequences that take the characters out of the office).

INT. OFFICE, DAY. CLOSE UP OF HANNAH'S FACE.

HANNAH

I watched this programme last night about a lady who had her arm ripped off by monkeys. You know how monkeys rip the roofs off cars at safari parks?

MICHAEL

Yeah?

HANNAH

It was like that, but with arms. The detail they went into... the sound of little monkey joy, flesh torn from flesh...

She tails off, looking disturbed.

HANNAH

Do you know what I was thinking the whole time I was watching? As I sat there, transfixed by those monkeys and their cute, determined but undeniably evil expressions? Do you know what I was focussing on?

Michael shakes his head, slightly traumatised.

HANNAH

I wasn't thinking 'poor woman'. I wasn't even thinking I'd rather be the monkey in this situation. I was actually *jealous* of this woman. Jealous of her. You know why?

He shakes his head again, significantly more traumatised.

HANNAH

She now has a conversation starter *for life*. Sure, she lost an arm and a half, but she'll never again have an awkward pause in conversation that she can't fill with:

[BRIGHT CHEERY, CONVERSATIONAL TONE]

"Did you know I once had my arms ripped off by monkeys?" "No I didn't, that's very interesting, you *must* tell me more about it!" "Ooh, tiny little bastards they were."

MICHAEL

Conversation starters don't seem to be your strong point...

HANNAH

I know, but I don't have the advantages the monkey-woman now has. I have this fear that everyone I talk to is standing there in judgement, and those first impressions of me will stick with them no matter what else I say. I keep thinking that if I can just get over those initial words, that first little block of conversation I'd be fine.

People could like me; people would love me. Bards would write songs about how fucking good I am at conversation. I'd do a conversational tour of the country, carried on the shoulders of Saturday night TV presenters as they chant the word "chat" in my honour.

Hannah lays her head on her keyboard, in exhaustion.

HANNAH

I wish I could be one of those people who can just blurt out an opinion you know...

CUT TO

EXT. PARK, DAY, SUN-DAPPLED

We see an old man, approach Hannah on a bench. He casually informs her:

OLD MAN

Cats are a shit version of dogs.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. OFFICE, DAY

HANNAH

(Desperate)

I'm even jealous of *racist* people who can blurt out *racist* opinions.

CUT TO

EXT. PARK, DAY, STILL DAPPLED

The old man approaches Hannah on the same bench. This time he informs her:

OLD MAN

Cats are a shit version of the Japanese.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. OFFICE, DAY

HANNAH

At least the racists have confidence. I can't even start a conversation about how nice it is outside, while some people can get away with a horrendous opinion about border control as an opening gambit. Christ, I'm actually jealous of the racists now.

She leans in, quiet.

It's got to the point that I've been rehearsing conversations about the weather. I've got a script for some scenarios, which I'm learning, like I'm the Tilda fucking Swinton of snow days. I keep thinking maybe if I can just get through that first little bit of weather nonsense I'll be fine.

Or just a few hours in the monkey enclosure smeared in mashed banana. I'd be set for life.

MICHAEL (V/O)

What was that programme called?

HANNAH (V/O)

I Can't High Five My Kids Because Monkeys Ripped Off My High Fiving Arm. Narrated by Danny Dyer.

MICHAEL (V/O)

Ah, the poor man's Morgan Freeman.

We see shots of lemurs, playing in the trees. Over the top we hear a Danny Dyer sound-alike.

DANNY DYER

Look at them fucking lemur monkeys. Fucking everywhere, they are. Lemur monkey slaaags.

We see a shot of David Attenborough or some other respected naturalist approaching the monkeys.

DANNY DYER

Look at this plum, going up to them like he's Charlie big-balls. Watch your back, son, these fucking lemur monkeys will rip yer arms off. Then who's going to high five yer fucking kids, you... you fucking muppet.

Title card "Episode 1: Lemur Monkeys"

We get a wider shot. Hannah and Michael are sat opposite each other in a mid-sized office. She looks fine; he looks like a pickled egg that's learned to drink.

There are a few people around, but it's quiet. Cleaners move through the office, watering a few shabby plants and emptying bins. Michael is moving around the items on his desk, frantic.

MICHAEL

How come every time the office is asked to move around I end up with a smaller desk?

(dramatic)

Where are my drawers? My drawers have gone.

Hannah pats a set of drawers next to her and makes an apologetic face.

HANNAH

She took them, she insisted on giving them to me. Said you're not the kind of worker who needs drawers.

MICHAEL

She said that? She said those words?

HANNAH

...She said you're not the kind of *man* who needs drawers.

HANNAH

You can keep them; as far as I'm concerned they're your drawers and I'm just their legal guardian.

MICHAEL

No no, I'm going to let you keep the drawers, but please... just do these two things. One: please... don't ever look in the drawers. At least until I've had a chance to go through them. And two can you put these scissors in there, all this is making me want to self harm.

Hannah laughs nervously, he doesn't laugh at all. He hands her the scissors. She goes to put them in the drawers but he makes an "ah-ah-ah" noise. She gets the idea, and places the scissors in the drawer whilst looking in the opposite direction.

MICHAEL

You know why it bothers me?

HANNAH

I've got all your stationery.

She pats the drawers, confident that's it.

MICHAEL

You know why it bothers me on today of all days?

She shakes her head.

MICHAEL

While you were watching the monkeys last night, I was watching this science program. You know the type, where Brian Cox does the voiceover in a hushed post-coital tone like he's just banged science and the cameras have been invited in for pillow talk?

HANNAH

(*UNSURE*)

Sure.

MICHAEL

Coxy was explaining this theory that the universe is so big and that time goes on so long that everything in the universe starts to repeat itself. Given enough time and space and random collisions this...

He gestures around the room.

MICHAEL

...This exact situation will repeat itself, somewhere out there in the depths of space. Only in some parts of the universe there'll be these slight differences. Like maybe young Petrov here...

Michael gestures to young Petrov, an unassuming man keeping his head down. The screen splits.

MICHAEL

...came in today in some trousers he's modified with scissors so that his balls hang out the bottom, coquettishly flapping around in the wind.

MICHAEL

I don't know what he's into.

Petrov is sat in his car modifying some trousers with scissors. Then he's in the office and wearing, with his private parts blurred out for the sake of the audience.

The screens join. Petrov looks over as Michael continues to flap his hand as a demonstration of what Petrov's balls are doing in the depths of space. Petrov doesn't like this inclusion in their conversation, but doesn't want to be caught out eavesdropping. You can see the panic in his eyes.

MICHAEL

And in most parts of the universe he's instantly arrested like the pervert he is, but in other parts - and here's where the theory gets interesting - in some parts of the universe it actually catches on. We all think his ball trousers are a great idea and it starts a fashion trend. Men are an easy sell; women have to adapt, wear a fake pair. For fashion. I get my balls out, Susan gets her balls out...

Susan also looks annoyed, but also doesn't want to look like she's eavesdropping. Michael is oblivious.

MICHAEL

...In that part of the universe Susan has ginormous balls, just huge things. Soon the whole planet has their balls out. Except for Ed Balls, and everyone wonders why he thinks he's so special.

Hannah cuts in quickly, putting an end to this.

HANNAH

Stephen Hawking's Theory of Universal Balls?

MICHAEL

It wasn't just about about testicles; I don't know why you're so fixated on that. The point of it is with this massive universe with all with all these incredible things going on, why do I have to live in the one where I had my drawers confiscated because I'm not even important enough in a fucking finance office to need drawer space. Hmm?

I'm going to have to keep my paper pad under my keyboard like this and develop RSI.

Michael puts his paper under his keyboard and begins to develop RSI.

I'm always in the most disappointing reality, you know? I could be the...

(Weakly)

MICHAEL

the big cheese... but in this part of the universe I'm gonna have to carry around my stapler in my shirt pocket like a fucking lunatic.

He puts his stapler into his shirt pocket, as he no longer has drawers or desk space.

MICHAEL

You know who else carries staplers around in their pockets?

Hannah is barely paying attention any more, and is checking her emails, clearly used to this kind of rant.

HANNAH

No, who?

Michael leans in, intense.

MICHAEL

Those Russian folk who staple their wangs to things at protest marches against Putin. And ok, I'm not saying carrying a stapler around in their pockets was what caused any of that, but with easy access to a stapler at all times of the day and regular bathroom breaks I suspect it's only a matter of time before even I get curious.

And then think of my reputation around the office. People saying, "oh, there goes that guy with his stapler in his pocket."

WHISPERED LOUDLY

"I hear his if you make even slight changes to his break time he rips out his stapler and, kerchunk, pins his chap to the staff room timesheet until you change it back."

Well, this:

He gestures to the drawers, and lack of stationary.

Just about confirms it. I knew they wanted me out, and I thought I was going to get fired in a climactic showdown...

Western cowboy showdown music plays briefly.

...but no, they must be playing the long game. Take away my furnishings until one day I get in here, stand in the middle of the office where my desk used to be until I realise I've been fired and leave... very clever...

Hannah gestures for him to shush, reads her screen.

HANNAH

Speak of the devil, just got an email from Claire. "As you are all aware I'll be conducting your annual reviews today, and so will be out of touch for most of the morning. Please try to maintain normal office order. *If* I find that normal office order is being broken, this *will* come up in your annual review. I would also like to note that your performance in your annual review will also be up for review. Regards, Claire".

MICHAEL

Fairly restrained of her. What was she yelling at you about earlier?

HANNAH

Oh you know. My attitude problem, and how it's affecting my invoicing.

MICHAEL

Jesus Christ.

HANNAH

Ten minutes, she shouted. She said my purchase orders are showing signs of passive aggression.

MICHAEL

10 minutes...That is utter... You ever heard of accumulated anger?

HANNAH

But it's all so unnecessary! Think how unimportant my work here is. If I didn't do my job, a few other people would have to fill in a tiny bit more paperwork. And a few others would fill in a bit less. That's it. So every time she shouts at me, in the grand scheme of things it's like a kid

yelling at an ant for doing a shit job of carrying a leaf. It's a leaf, you know? Who gives a shit? Why's she so fucking concerned about leaf transport? *Who is this child?*

Hannah regains self-awareness.

Sorry. What's accumulated anger?

Michael looks around, like he's about to reveal a big secret.

MICHAEL

I've got this theory the human brain can't comprehend the difference between people when you're angry. They all just start to mesh into one big ball of human that you're mad at for some reason.

MICHAEL describes his theory as a voiceover, as we watch what he describes: first the supermarket, then the car, then the kitchen.

Let's say you're having the worst day of your life. Some bigshot film producer told you your idea sucks at some meeting you thought was going to change your life. Maybe your Dad snuffed it, but it's fine, you can cope. But then some jerk at the supermarket takes way too long assessing the avocados and you just hate him, you inexplicably hate the prick beyond all reasonable levels. But you move on and now the car door won't open. By this time you're so wild, it feels like a conspiracy.

WE SEE CUT-AWAY MICHAEL MIME IN TIME WITH V/O MICHAEL

"Oh, you shitty car door, you're in cahoots with the avocado jerk in the supermarket."

And it carries on like this. You go through your day having tiny terrible interaction after tiny terrible interaction

We see Michael reverse into a barrier, spilling coffee onto his lap. As he steps out to assess the damage he sees a small dog urinating onto his tire while a couple, walking the dog, chuckle.

and building your anger and building your anger, not towards any specific thing, just towards this non-specific entity, towards the world in general..

INT. DINGY KITCHEN, NIGHT.

Then you get home and open up a bag of peas for your tea and they scatter everywhere.

Peas fly in slow motion, to dramatic operatic music.

It's not chaos, but there's upwards of twelve peas, each lying there on the floor, and that's it: you snap.

It's not their fault your film idea didn't pan out, and there's a knack to the car door. It's not their fault your girlfriend thinks you have anger issues. But the peas are lying there and they won't fight back.

In that moment your mind can't comprehend it's not them you're mad at. It can't even tell they aren't human. All it knows is you are livid at peas. So you give them a good dressing down, reel off a few facts about how shit peas are...

He has them lined up, Sergeant-Major style.

...call every last one of them a prick individually, tell 'em how you'd take a crisp rocket salad over a pile of peas any day. Then, when they've lost all hope, you fucking mush them. Every last one of the little green wankers.

Michael mashes the little green wankers. Good for him.

INT. OFFICE, DAY

MICHAEL

That's what Claire is doing. Accumulated anger. *No-one* would get as upset as she can if it's just about invoicing. She just thinks we're peas.

Long pause whilst Hannah assesses this.

HANNAH

If you place the bag on the side and use scissors they won't scatter everywhere.

After a pause in which he looks at her, she takes his scissors back out of the drawer, and mimes this action.

MICHAEL

Has my wife been talking to you? Why are you fixating on the peas? I've just told you my version of Hawking's Universal Theory of Testicles.

HANNAH

I just think the peas must be the most solvable of your many problems.

MICHAEL

(Slightly lashing out, slightly joking)

Why couldn't she just wait for your review to eviscerate you?

She flinches. He shakes his head aggressively to himself at his outburst.

MICHAEL

Sorry, I'm sure she won't eviscerate you. I was pissed off at the peas again.

HANNAH

It's ok.

PAUSE.

MICHAEL

What kind of monkeys would I need to get your arms ripped off? I want to help, you know.

HANNAH

That's the weirdest thing. You know what kind of monkeys were in the programme?

MICHAEL

What kind?

HANNAH

Lemurs.

MICHAEL

What's weird about that? Lemur monkeys, vicious little monkey bastards.

Brief cut to a shot of the lemurs.

DANNY DYER (V/O)

Facking Lemur Monkeys.

Back to the office.

HANNAH

Lemurs aren't even monkeys.

MICHAEL

Sure they are: lemur monkeys.

Cut to the lemurs (different shot).

DANNY DYER (V/O)

Facking Lemur Monkeys.

Back to Michael, who nods to himself.

MICHAEL

Yeah, lemur monkeys.

Cut to a different shot of the lemurs.

DANNY DYER (V/O)

Lemur monkey slaaaags.

Back to the office.

MICHAEL

Lemur monkeys ripped her arms off. Tiny hairy bastards...

The radio comes on and plays I Can't Live If Living Is Without You by Harold Nilsson (or some suitably depressing alternative).

Michael flinches slightly as he notices the music. His mood instantly seems lower.

MICHAEL

You know I used to work in television?

HANNAH

Yeah?

MICHAEL

Oh yeah. Could have made it big. Had an idea for a film and everything.
Cash in the bank. Now look at me.

HANNAH

What shows did you work on?

He shakes his head, like he's trying to shake off the music. Dumb method, doesn't work. He catches himself doing it and is embarrassed.

MICHAEL

Look, I have to go to the bathroom, I can't deal with the...

Michael indicates the air around him, trying to point at the music. The screen splits. One side of the screen follows Michael, the other Hannah.

Michael leaves the room. The moment the door shuts he seems to be in some distress. He's accidentally singing along to the music.	Hannah smiles at the door as it closes behind Michael, and remains smiling briefly afterwards, lost in thought. She starts singing a few lines, clearly not knowing any but the most famous words.
Michael gets to the toilet. He shuts the door and checks the lock, and checks it again, and checks it again. He's satisfied, sort of.	

<p>He approaches the bowl and closes the lid, steps up on top of it and reaches on top of the cistern out of shot and pulls from out of frame a carton of orange juice and places it on the sink. This is shortly followed by a coke bottle that's been filled with a clear liquid, probably vodka, and then a tube of toothpaste.</p> <p>He lines up his drinks like a pro, unscrewing the lids off all three items. He steels himself for a while. He takes a large mouthful from the clear bottle, flinches, takes a swig from the carton and then smears the toothpaste around his mouth with his finger. He considers another but decides against it, and puts everything back on his makeshift booze shelf.</p> <p>He walks back down the corridor and into the office. The boss is no longer in the room, so he crosses it and turns off the radio at the wall. A worker drone looks up at him, smiles in thanks but says nothing.</p>	<p>She shakes it off and looks down at her work for probably the first time today. Her smile immediately fades and she buckles down.</p> <p>Hannah is approached by her boss...</p> <p>"Check your email."</p> <p>Hannah checks her email. As she reads we see her react. Her face drops instantly and she looks extremely upset. It only gets worse as she continues to read. The song takes a more depressing turn.</p> <p>Hannah is clearly holding back tears as Michael sits down.</p>
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The cameras join.

MICHAEL

Sorry about that. You ever heard of this thing, music affective disorder?

Hannah looks blank, as she's holding back tears. Michael doesn't notice.

There's no reason why you should, I'm fairly sure I made it up, but I'm also fairly sure it's real and I'm certain I have it. It's this thing where your mood is way too affected by the music you listen to. You could be having the best day of your life, but if Morrissey comes on the radio you have to be put on suicide watch.

I'm so sensitive to music I can just fire up my iPod day or night and put my mood on shuffle. So every time she...

He indicates the boss's office.

MICHAEL

...puts on her music my mood goes on a little spin. The stuff she plays. This unsettling mix of upbeat 80s movie soundtracks and music you'd run the bath to before dropping the radio in the tub.

The only time it's ever benefited us having that music system is when she put the soundtrack from *Rocky IV* on repeat for a day and I actually got some work done.

You know I had this idea for an 80s film once... would have made me millions, if it wasn't 2006 at the time.

Hannah is unresponsive, but Michael is mildly drunk and undeterred.

MICHAEL

Ended up pitching it to this film producer.

INT. MOVIE PRODUCER'S OFFICE, DAY

We cut away to Michael in a small office, describing his idea to a producer. The producer looks like a 1950s big shot Hollywood producer. Either Michael is misremembering, or this never actually took place.

MICHAEL (V/O)

It was about this shark that kept eating paddlers.

We see Michael act out shark attacks to the producer, cutting from the producer's stony face to Michael's shark face (and he's doing shark arms).

MICHAEL (V/O)

He tried to stop but they were just so delicious. It was getting beyond a joke. A few stray children here and there, that'd be annoying, but this shark was eating them like they were crumpets. Up to three a day, he chain ate them.

Well this group of ragtag fishermen, they're sick of it. They team together and decide they need to kill this shark. So they get a boat and sail out, but when they get out there, they realise this thing is *huge*. And they say to each other "we're gonna need to utilize a larger sailing vessel".

The screen splits.

MOVIE PRODUCER <i>Jaws.</i>	HANNAH <i>Jaws</i>
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<p>CUT-AWAY MICHAEL</p> <p>No, boat.</p> <p><u>He points at a childish drawing of a boat he's done on a white-boardpost-it note.</u></p>	<p>OFFICE MICHAEL</p> <p>No, boat.</p> <p><u>He points at a childish drawing of a boat on his computer screen, found with a rapid image search. (Look closely and you might see his search terms: "child drawing of a boat".)</u></p>
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The screen splits.

<p>MOVIE PRODUCER</p> <p>You're describing <i>Jaws</i> to me, as if you came up with it.</p>	<p>HANNAH</p> <p>You're describing <i>Jaws</i> to me, as if you came up with it.</p>
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The producer pulls out a copy of *Jaws* from nowhere, in slow mo, and holds it up at Michael. Michael looks devastated, takes it with a trembling hand. The producer gestures at a poster of *Jaws*, on the wall behind Michael. He turns around, slowly, a tear on his cheek.

Back to office

MICHAEL

Turns out I'd independently made up and written the film *Jaws*. I had *that exact* idea, just some other douchebag came up with it decades before I did. Also mine was a porno.

HANNAH

Spielberg.

MICHAEL

Right, Spielberg. Spielberg the douchebag. Made the best 80s film out there, and manages to do it in 1975... Shit title though.

(like it's a better idea)

I was gonna call mine *Sharkbangers*.

He finally notices Hannah is nearly in tears.

MICHAEL

What's wrong?

HANNAH

I just received an email outlining everything I've ever done wrong here "ahead of your annual review".

MICHAEL

Oh for Christ's sake, she is such a... look.

He leans in, then worries that he's leaned in close enough that she can smell his breath, tries to cup his mouth weirdly.

MICHAEL

Whatever she says in there for your review, it is *not* about you. You know what she told me last year? You know, just before I got sick?

HANNAH (Reading)

As you will no doubt realise there have been problems with your performance over the last year. This is especially concerning as you have only been here six months. We find you unwilling to communicate with people, even internally. Your negative attitude to life is starting to bleed into your work and that of others.

She stops reading.

It just goes on like this... And then look here, again! She signs it off "regards," again.

She sounds outraged by the word "regards". He looks confused.

MICHAEL

Ok...

HANNAH

"Regards". As in "fuck you". That's the email equivalent of signing off a regular conversation "fuck you".

MICHAEL

Regards really means "fuck you"?

He scrolls through his email.

MICHAEL

I get a lot of regards.

(Hopeful)

What does "Kind Regards" mean?

HANNAH

Kindly go fuck yourself.

Michael's eyes widen and narrow with concern as he scrolls.

MICHAEL

Right.

Pause as Michael continues to scroll. They both briefly look as though they are going to work for the first time today. In fact, Hannah starts to do precisely that, clicking open a few things on her screen and tapping half-heartedly at her keyboard. Michael, on the other hand, starts to fidget nervously, eyes scanning the room desperately for a distraction of any sort.

HANNAH

Actually do you know what really annoys *me* the most?

Michael looks over eagerly and with gratitude.

HANNAH

It's that she's not quite unreasonable enough. She's a dick, yeah, but she's not outright evil. I had this thought that maybe if she said something truly terrible or cartoonishly evil I could get her fired, you know? But she keeps everything just on the right side of reasonable. Not like Lisa from Accounts, with *her* racist comments.

MICHAEL

Lisa? Which Lisa?

HANNAH

Racist Lisa. Racist Lisa from Accounts.

MICHAEL

Which race is she mad at? What's she ever said that's racist?

Hannah struggles.

HANNAH

She keeps on pronouncing "July" as "Jew-Lie". Thinks it's some kind of Jewish conspiracy to keep June away from August - I don't know. My point is is that if Claire was as racist as Lisa we'd be fine, we could go to HR, but she's smarter than that. Treats her workers equally shite. She's the Martin Luther King of shit bosses.

The radio comes back on. It's now playing unsettling experimental jazz, e.g. [Moanin' by Charles Mingus](#).

MICHAEL

(Slightly manic)

She is *not* as reasonable as she makes out. You know what she told me last year, before I got sick? For my review? She told me all the others had been discussing how off-putting I am as a person, but when she looks at me she sees something different.

She sees a homeless man in a shirt. Said if I didn't increase my productivity that shirt would soon be taken from me, and all that would be left was a naked tramp.

He's distracted as the music volume goes up.

Is she controlling the music from the other room now? Jesus.

I've been sat here in this office five years now. The only things that have changed are my desk and my hopes for the future, both shrinking from time to time.

He scrolls on his Facebook page as he talks.

That and the targeted ads I'm getting online. Used to be filled with promise: wedding venues, sex swings, semi-detached homes. Now it's all prostate exams and nursing homes... Got an advert the other day that was just for coffins. Had the slogan "Get ready for the big day".

You know the first time I realised my marriage was on the rocks was when I saw the adverts on my wife's Facebook were for divorce lawyers? If I hadn't blocked her, I might have had a few earlier clues.

He's just opening his mouth and letting words flop out now. It might be the jazz.

MICHAEL

You know what my wife said the morning after we got married? She looked under the covers and said "well it's not wedding tackle any more. I guess 'funeral tackle' would be more accurate now" and part of me thinks she's right, you know? Maybe the funeral *will* be the next time anyone sees it.

He pauses, looks at her expectantly. She doesn't react, wouldn't know how.

MICHAEL

I forget my point, it's this fucking music, it's distracting. But Hannah, just... don't stay here, you know? You don't want to wake up years from now, drink your breakfast beer and look at yourself in the mirror and realise you're me. Let's quit. Let's go out like Thelma and Louise.

HANNAH

They killed themselves.

The music, thankfully, stops.

MICHAEL

Bad example. Change your job, you know? Be the version of Thelma and Louise where they seek career guidance at the end. What did you want to do before you got here?

HANNAH

I used to want to be a low level academic.

Michael looks disappointed with her.

MICHAEL

Dream big.

HANNAH

I know, I know, but that's what I wanted. I had this image of having my own little office. I wouldn't use it much, but it would be sat there waiting for me whenever I came home to it. Sort of like a loyal, scruffy dog.

MICHAEL

Sort of like a scruffy dog with a computer rammed inside it.

Hannah completely ignores this.

HANNAH

I'd mainly be out doing nonspecific research on some needy orphans. I'd be helping improve the world, or at least the calibre of orphan. But, I couldn't afford to do a Master's, let alone a PhD, and here I am.

I used to have this dream where I'd unveil my first published research paper to my parents, and though they're not exactly proud of me in the dream, they have to acknowledge that, objectively, I have achieved a measure of success.

She looks haunted. The room goes dark.

HANNAH

Do you know what I dream about now?

MICHAEL

(Now he's interested)

Go on.

HANNAH

It's... a recurring dream. I wake up, outside.

EXT. PARK, EVENING.

We see everything Hannah describes, as she describes it, from her perspective. We don't get a good look at her until she describes herself. She's in the park seen earlier in the professor's cut-away scene,

although there are some feeble props setting the park up to look like a farm. The children's playpark in the background gives the game away.

HANNAH

It's evening, and I'm on a farm. I walk around, freely at first, but then my belly feels incredibly heavy. I feel like it'll be ok if I just lie down for while, in the dirt. So I do, and of course when I look down I've got trotters.

She holds up her trotters in front of the camera.

HANNAH (V/O)

I'm all alone. I feel hot. I feel queasy. I black out, and then I'm giving birth, and when I come around I see I've given birth to five piglets.

They are in fact her co-workers with snouts and trotters, wearing cheap pig outfits and looking alarmed.

As I lie there, sweaty and exhausted, I feel a hand on my belly. I feel safe. I look up and it's the farmer, only the farmer is Claire. Even on the farm she's the boss. I'm worrying about my piglets being chopped up for meat, and I think if I can get her to like me enough, she won't turn me or my children into sausages. But one by one they get taken away. Soon, there's only one left.

By this point all the co-pig-workers apart from pig-Michael have gone from the scene. One or two can be seen in the background though, on the swings and slide.

That's when Claire looks down into my little piggy eyes, and all she says is: "that'll do, pig. That'll do." And... I feel *proud* of myself.

Cut back to
INT. OFFICE, DAY

HANNAH

I wake up and I feel... happy. Right until I remember I'm not a pig.

My dreams, they've changed a little.

The screen splits to show Michael's face on one side. He looks like he doesn't know how to take it all in. Eventually he can't help it and lets out a laugh against his will, while apologising.

Hannah gets up and walks to the door, telling Michael "it's fine, really" as she goes.	Michael continues to laugh for an obscene amount of time, whilst Hannah leaves.
As soon as she's out in the corridor her face falls. She walks, stretching and un-stretching her hands uncomfortably. Without warning	Susan looks over, wanting to share the joke. He tells her "I had the exact same dream."

<p>she hunches over and lets out a muted swear word.</p> <p>Hannah goes into the kitchen. The door shuts and she looks at her reflection in the microwave. She lets off a stream of insults at herself, telling herself “I hate you”. It’s uncomfortable to watch. She lets out a few C-bombs. That’ll do wonders for her self-confidence. She finishes up with:</p> <p>“Fuck you. Fucking pig-bitch freak. Fuck.”</p> <p>She lets out an inhuman noise of frustration at herself, then talks to herself in a calming manner.</p> <p>“It’s fine. You’re fine. It doesn’t matter. F...”</p> <p>She almost lets out another stream of swearwords, but instead she kicks a bin like it’s wronged her and leaves the kitchen, fixing a smile on her face as she does so. She walks back, smiling like a maniac at the person she passes in the doorway who almost certainly just heard the whole outburst.</p> <p>Hannah walks back in, passing Claire in the doorway.</p> <p>She sits at her desk and starts to work. Partly because she’s done nothing that day, but partly out of passive aggression towards Michael.</p>	<p>He relaxes back into his chair. For a moment he looks like he’s going to work, but then he looks at the clock. He might just have enough time to...</p> <p>He gets up, looks around shiftily at the others in the office. They’re all working. He moves around to Hannah’s drawers, which used to be his.</p> <p>He needs an excuse for why he’s going through her drawers, so he stands there with a piece of paper making scissor actions with his hands. No one looks up. He goes in the drawers, rooting through the piles of junk desperately. There’s a fairly distinctive sound of clinking bottles. He slows down his search, and is more careful. The door behind him opens. He grabs whatever he can and jams it in his pocket as he says, desperately, to the whole office.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MICHAEL</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Has anyone got any scissors?</p> <p>He holds up his... blank piece of paper as explanation.</p> <p>It was Claire who entered. She looks at him oddly, but carries on, collects something from the office and leaves, passing Hannah in the doorway.</p>
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THE CAMERAS REMAIN SPLIT. ONE SIDE OF THE SCREEN FOCUSES ON HANNAH, THE OTHER MICHAEL.

MICHAEL

Look, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to laugh at you.

HANNAH

Mhmmm...

MICHAEL

I wasn't laughing at you. I had the exact same dream. Exactly. Except in my dream I wasn't a sow, I was a male goat. But I was still firing out piglets like champagne corks. But I'm sorry, you know.

HANNAH

(She doesn't buy it)

It's fine, honestly.

Hannah resumes typing, won't look at him. Long pause. Michael takes drastic measures.

MICHAEL

Claire was talking about you whilst you were out the office, you know?

Hannah finally stops typing and looks at him.

THE CAMERAS JOIN AGAIN.

HANNAH

What did she say?

MICHAEL

Said you were never at your desk. Said she's got a tally she keeps in a notebook three inches thick of the times you've been slacking off to the toilet.

Hannah looks devastated. Michael barely notices, just glad they're talking again.

MICHAEL

She's a nasty woman. We should definitely leave. Come on, Jobseekers' Thelma and Louise with me? Let's leave this place.

HANNAH

I'm not sure unemployment is the solution here. My problems won't be solved by months on job seekers' allowance and more time to watch the news, where I can see the politicians gather to call people like me scroungers.

MICHAEL

You think it'll be worse than this?

He gestures around the office again. Still doesn't look that bad. Susan waves, confused.

HANNAH

I can't... do it all again. Do you know how hard it was for me to get this job? I can't talk in interviews. I freeze up and won't let out a word. The only reason I got this one is because Claire took that as a sign of absolute subservience and let me through. And now if anything I have

even less self confidence, she's taken the last little bit I was holding on to.

MICHAEL

If you have all these problems talking to people how come you're fine with me?

HANNAH

You don't count.

He looks pleased. He should probably be offended. There's a pause whilst he thinks of what to say.

MICHAEL

I can help you with that. What was your weather conversation you've been practicing? Try it out on me.

HANNAH

I can't.

MICHAEL

I won't judge.

HANNAH

It's not... It's just, it's not sleeting. Sleet's the only one I've got nailed.

He can't help himself.

MICHAEL

You're practicing for fucking *sleet*? Well... come on then, try it out. Isn't this cool, moist, sleet we've been experiencing of late?

The door opens. Claire walks in and the mood shifts. Michael and Hannah immediately pretend to work. Claire addresses the whole room.

CLAIRE

Annual review day. I know a lot of you don't look forward to this, but I do. It's like Christmas except I get to judge people... actually it's more like a nativity play.

The office laugh like sycophants. If you had to do this, it'd make you be sick in your mouth.

I'm joking, of course. But if I am firm with you, know that it's not personal; there's something fundamentally and objectively wrong with you, which we've noticed and would like you to improve.

It's unclear if this is a joke. They laugh just to be on the safe side.

I'll be calling you all individually and we'll go through your reviews one on one. Except for Michael. Good to see you, Michael. One of the HR drones will be sitting in on yours. I hope you don't mind? Ok, I'll see you all later then.

Claire leaves. Michael announces to the whole office:

MICHAEL

That's it then. I'm fired. They're not playing the long game, it'll be the big climax.

We briefly hear western cowboy showdown music again. Without thinking Michael pulls out his drinking bottle, filled with a suspicious liquid, and places it on the desk, begins to unscrew it, idly.

Susan comes over, and Hannah noticeably freezes up now that it's not just the two of them.

SUSAN

If you need anyone to back you up in there I can. Just... just don't do anything rash or...

She tries to avoid using the word stupid. She fails.

SUSAN

...stupid. That's what she wants you to do. Just don't panic and don't do anything and you'll be fine. I'm sure Hannah agrees, don't you?

Hannah looks frozen. The most she can do is smile, and is unable to talk. Susan shakes her head and walks away.

Michael is about to let off a huge stream of offensive, tasteless things. In his defence, he isn't well, and he's quite drunk for 10:30 in the morning.

MICHAEL

Why did she have to let me know it was coming? Now I'm going to spend the whole day dreading it. It's like the difference between being told you're going to be executed and being killed instantly in a terrorist atrocity.

I'll bet no one got fired on September 11th. Maybe a few people at baggage control, but no one else. But there'll be no terrorist attacks today, will there?? Because I can't catch a break and the date isn't catchy enough. The 27th of July? No chance, not fucking snappy enough to commit a terrorist atrocity, not like 9/11, so I'm stuck getting fired. I bet she planned around that.

HANNAH

You think a second 9/11 would be a solution to your problems?

MICHAEL

Not entirely. Even a death in the family would save me, she wouldn't fire me if a parent had just died, but nooooo, my Dad has to go and perish 10 years ago, long before it's of any use to me. Would it have killed him to have clung to life for a few decades longer? No he has to die on the day of my big film pitch, ruin my chance to get *Sharkboys* made, rather than snuff it today when it could save my ass. And yeah I'd be sad and all that but I'd be crying and employed. Now if I do get fired I have to admit that though Claire is a dick, it's *entirely reasonable for her to do so*.. You know I once didn't do work for a month, just to see if anyone would notice?

Hannah looks around to see if anyone heard that.

HANNAH

(Calming tone)

Sit down, Michael.

MICHAEL

I should have quit. But now it's too late, isn't it? Is there any dignity in quitting literally moments before you're fired, or does there have to be a gap? How long is that gap? Two hours? Twelve minutes? Should have quit from home last week when I had food poisoning...

He mimes picking up the phone.

Hello... I'm terribly ill...

He mimes being sick.

I quit...

He mimes being sick again.

HANNAH

Slightly disappointed in him.

I thought it was piles.

MICHAEL

Exhausted.

What does it matter? I'm getting fired anyway.

HANNAH

It doesn't, just... sit down. We don't know what's going on yet. Sit. Down. And we'll talk.

Michael reluctantly sits down.

HANNAH

If you are going to get fired...

He lets out an involuntary noise.

HANNAH

I'm not saying you are, but *if* you are...

MICHAEL

I definitely am.

HANNAH

Then we need to make sure you do it properly. You will need a reference.

MICHAEL

Oh Christ, the reference: you can't even get fired spectacularly these days. Screw that, if I'm going to get fired I'm going to walk into that meeting doing this.

He sticks up his middle fingers on both hands. He waggles each arm up in turn, over and over again at an imaginary boss in front of him, before grabbing his crotch. It's embarrassing to see.

HANNAH

And *if* you're not getting fired we need to make sure you don't go in there all guns blazing, ranting and raving and...

She nods at his cupped penis.

...doing that until they change their minds. Now think, are there any *other* reasons why they may want an HR drone to sit in on the interview?

Michael immediately says:

MICHAEL

No.

HANNAH

Well I'm glad we put some thought into it.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry, there's just no other reason why they'd do it.

HANNAH

(Pointed)

You can't think of *any other reason* why they might get HR involved, after last year and its effect on you afterwards?

She tries not to glance at his drinking bottle. She fails.

MICHAEL

No.

Hannah lets out an exasperated sigh.

MICHAEL

Do you know how infinitesimally small the chances are that I'm *not* getting fired when I walk out of here today?

Hannah tries not to respond to this, but at least it gets him sitting down and looking relatively calm, so when he does sit down she responds...

HANNAH

(Annoyed, unimpressed)

No Michael, please tell me.

Michael leans in closer.

MICHAEL

The chances of me not getting fired today are so infinitesimally small that if I go in there and I don't get fired, it would prove to a 5-fucking-sigma confidence level that the universe is so large that literally anything can happen. I would be obliged to leave the office to inform a scientist, and collect a Nobel prize for physics.

He leans back in his chair, exhausted.

But no need to panic, Coxy, I'm going to get fired.

HANNAH

You need to calm down, Michael. It's all about your attitude now. Go in there and behave like Gandhi in front of the HR drone and you might not get fired at all. Who would fire Gandhi, you know?

MICHAEL

Claire. Churchill? I'm not Gandhi though am I? I'm barely even, fucking...

(WEAKLY)

Champion the Wonder Horse.

HANNAH

Do. your. best. Do not leave me here with absolutely no-one I can talk to. If I can't talk to anyone I *will* go insane waiting for it to sleet.

The radio starts up again, playing “Bye Bye Baby” by the Bay City Rollers. Claire, taunting him from the other room. The phone rings and the screen splits.

<p>Hannah sits at her desk as Michael walks out. She looks distressed. She’s approached by Susan.</p> <p>SUSAN</p> <p>It’s not looking good for Michael. Do you think he will get fired?</p> <p>Hannah looks like she’s frozen, and can’t talk. She manages to get out, a bit, the words.</p> <p>HANNAH</p> <p>I don’t know.</p> <p>Awkward pause. Susan looks out of the window.</p> <p>SUSAN</p> <p>Anyway, it’s a nice day isn’t it?</p> <p>Hannah looks awkward again, and tries several times to get something, any words at all out, before giving in.</p> <p>HANNAH</p> <p>It’s very... I.... It’s...</p> <p>Sigh. Defeated.</p> <p>HANNAH</p> <p>Honestly, Susan, it’s just fucking weather.</p>	<p>MICHAEL</p> <p>Finance office, Michael speaking... I’ll be there in a second.</p> <p>Michael openly drinks from his plastic bottle, and barely disguises his wince.</p> <p>He walks slowly down the corridor, past the bathroom and paces back and forth outside an office door, muttering to himself.</p>
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The screens join, focussing on MICHAEL walking down the corridor, as the music gets louder.

He stands outside the door, poising himself and imagining what will happen when he goes in there. Possibilities start appearing on screen and then shrinking into a grid of smaller squares, slowly at first but then more quickly.

<p>Michael goes in. Claire is in there in a ballgown with a rose between her teeth.</p> <p>She offers a hand to Michael, they dance.</p>	<p>Inside the office is a large group of people wearing party hats. They all set off party poppers.</p> <p>A banner comes down from the ceiling, reading “You’re fired”</p>	<p>Michael opens the door. Inside the office is Michael’s exact doppelgänger.</p> <p>They immediately fight.</p>
<p>Michael walks in. He finds Claire being held hostage by a group of terrorists wearing Tony Blair masks. He does some top notch punching and rescues Claire and carries her out. As they leave she takes out a big sign reading “you’re fired” from her jacket and tears it up. They both laugh.</p>	<p>A sir Alan Sugar lookalike sits at a boardroom table assistants either side. He delivers the classic “you’re fired” finger from the Apprentice, miming the words.</p>	<p>Hannah is in the room, in a wedding dress. Michael kisses her and a bed rolls into shot from off screen. Claire and HR lady applaud as they roll onto the bed.</p>
<p>Michael walks into an endless corridor, the door getting further away as he walks towards it.</p>	<p>Michael walks into an old-school bar. The bartender greets him, and Michael settles onto a stool. The bartender sets before him a shot, a coke bottle, and a tube of toothpaste. Michael raises the shot and mimes “cheers”.</p>	<p>“Michael” walks in and we see the movie producer sitting in a 50s office, just as in the earlier cut-away. The movie producer laughs insincerely but pleasantly, and shakes his hand, gesturing to a contract for Michael to sign, and handing him a pen.</p>
<p>He walks in the room. A man in a monkey costume is sat where Claire should be. He looks at Michael’s arms and licks his lips. The monkey dives at Michael.</p>	<p>A man in a giant pea costume lies in wait. The moment Michael comes in, it pounces. They immediately fight.</p>	<p>Michael places his bottle on the floor and walks in the room. Claire and a lady from HR are sat in the room.</p>

The music fades out. The squares disappear, leaving the final shot of Michael walking in the door. The office they’ve chosen to do the annual reviews in looks like an interrogation chamber. On one side of a large table in the middle of the room sit Claire and a lady from HR. They have looks of kind concern fixed on their faces as he approaches slowly. Claire gestures him to sit, and he does. He gulps, eyes flicking from one to the other. The HR lady takes notes, looking at him over her glasses. He’s under a large spotlight, and a clock ticks loudly, pendulum swinging.

CLAIRE

(With what sounds like genuine concern)

Hi Michael. How are you doing?

MICHAEL

Fine, sure. I mean... you know.

He looks down at the desk.

CLAIRE

Good. I'm glad you're doing... you know. We're going to have a little talk about something quite difficult now. We think it's...

MICHAEL

(Interrupting)

Can we do this another time? I know what you're going to say, it's just, can we do it another time? My... I...

He breathes, he doesn't seem to know what he's about to say. We see Claire looking sceptically at him.

MICHAEL

(Half like a question)

My dad died?

We see them react. HR lady reacts with raised eyebrows, and starts scribbling notes rapidly. She probably doesn't know that Michael's dad died a decade ago. We zoom in to Claire's eyes, flared with rage...

End of episode 1