

(Name of Project)

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CHARLIE CASANOVA

by

Terry McMahon

In complete blackness we hear approaching bare footsteps

- followed by the noise of fingers gripping the lens cap off a digital video camera

- the camera kicks into life and struggles to focus on a single chair situated on a vast empty rooftop

- we hear the sound of a wine bottle being uncorked off camera.

The lens whizzes as it zooms in closer on the chair then pulls back and struggles for focus as a playing card is thrown from behind the camera

- the playing card floats to the ground in front of the camera and as the camera struggles to focus on it

- another card

- and another

- more playing cards in quick succession

- some hitting the empty chair

- some missing it

- until the entire deck is used up.

As the final card settles on the ground we hear the sound of someone drinking

- swallowing

- then there is a pause

- followed by an ear splitting enraged male scream.

A male figure dressed in a bathing robe walks from behind the camera and moves, with his back to the camera, to the chair.

He sits down and the video camera finds focus on him in the vast empty space as he drinks a bottle of wine from the neck and when he looks into the camera he touches the bruise on his face and wipes his bloodied nose.

This is CHARLIE BARNUM, a confident, mid-thirties, debonair poster child for the generation who have it all.

Charlie extends his arm, and uses the camera remote control to zoom in a small bit closer on himself.

He looks into camera, opens his mouth to speak, then hesitates, trying to find the correct words.

CHARLIE

I am a man. The five percent. The alpha male. I will not be tamed by your conditioning and fear. I will die as I lived. Powerful. Audacious. And alone.

He takes a mouthful of wine and ponders this word.

CHARLIE

Alone.

He shrugs it off.

CHARLIE

These lives we lead. These cops in our heads. These self made prisons. No more. You drink my milk, piss in my porridge, then invite me to breakfast? No more.

He holds up a shining, thin, dangerously sharp razor blade.

CHARLIE

You think I'm a beast? The devil, The bogeyman? I'm not.

He stops as he hears a police siren in the distance then calmly stares back into the camera.

CHARLIE

I'm you.

FADE OUT

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

In the carpark, among the other parked cars, a BMW car stands out.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Various people mull around the hotel as a sandwich board stands outside the conference room

- it reads: IRISH ESTATE AGENTS CONVENTION

- and under that it reads - Topic : Is the future bleak?

INT. VARIOUS HOTEL HALLWAYS - DAY

Camera floats down the various hallways pausing to pick up muffled snatches of conversations outside the closed doors then it comes to a stop outside one of the rooms and the door is ajar and through it we see :

INT. LINDA AND DONALD'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A dog greedily licks peanut butter off the end of an extended spoon as his loving owner LINDA, mid thirties, gracious and quietly passive aggressive, feeds him.

Her husband DONALD, late thirties, reserved enters and watches her stick the spoon back into the peanut jar, scoop out another spoonful, then extend it back to the dog.

As the dog continues licking the spoon Linda turns and smiles at her husband, and Donald smiles at her, but, when Linda turns back to the dog, Donald's smile vanishes.

Camera floats to the room across the hall and holds outside:

INT. UNA AND KEVIN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

UNA, mid thirties, provocative, ambitious and frustrated, passes her husband KEVIN, mid thirties, inhibited and emasculated, as he goes through his briefcase.

Una farts loudly then casually looks at Kevin but he doesn't respond to the deliberate provocation.

As Una goes upstairs, their five year old daughter, MAJELLA, enters from the sitting room and hugs her father's leg then sniffs the air.

MAJELLA
Daddy, you smell.

Camera further down the hallway and stops at another door:

INT. CHARLIE AND SAOIRSE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Charlie surfs internet porn on his laptop but as his wife SAOIRSE, early thirties, tender and intelligent, dressed in her bathrobe with wet hair, enters, he quickly calls up a half played game of the card game 'Patience' onto the laptop screen.

Saoirse puts her arm around his neck and kisses him from behind then reaches forward and uses the finger pad to move an on-screen card to the correct place.

Charlie smiles at her in appreciation and as Saoirse kisses him and exits to the bathroom Charlie closes the game of patience on the laptop screen and returns to surfing porn.

INT. UNA AND KEVIN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin is undressing for a shower as Una puts cream on her face.

KEVIN

What time is the hotel baby-sitter due?

Una farts then watches Kevin's reaction.

UNA

You want me to hold them in like a good woman ought to? A nice polite wife who puckers her anus to protect her husband's sensibilities about what a woman should be?

KEVIN

Just being a woman would be a beginning.

She farts again.

UNA

Womanly enough for you?

INT. CHARLIE AND SAOIRSE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Charlie closes down the laptop as Saoirse enters.

SAOIRSE

Did you set the recorder?

CHARLIE

(Baby voice)

Is the conference making my baby miss her comedy show?

SAOIRSE

(Baby voice)

I know, but did you set it?

CHARLIE

I don't know why you watch them. A vegetative coma is funnier.

SAOIRSE

Do you have to be such an ape?

CHARLIE

There are few things more
hilarious than unimpeded saliva
running down a coma patient's
chin.

SAOIRSE

You think it would be funny if it
was you?

CHARLIE

I'd expect you to sell tickets.

INT. LINDA AND DONALD'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

As Linda pulls on her absurdly conservative underwear there
is a knocking on the bathroom door and she stands behind it
as she opens the door to Donald.

DONALD

Sorry, I thought you were
dressed.

LINDA

Nearly.

DONALD

I'll come back.

Linda smiles and closes the door then as she continues
dressing she sees a tiny amount of peanut butter under her
finger nail and eats it out.

INT. UNA AND KEVIN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin, his hair wet, and a towel wrapped around his waist,
comes out of the bathroom as Una puts on her makeup.

Kevin turns his back to her, takes his towel off and dries
his hair.

Una looks at his sagging posterior in the mirror with
barely concealed contempt.

UNA

Fancy a quickie before we go?

KEVIN

I just showered.

UNA

So did I. We can't shower again?

Kevin sighs, drops the towel and turns around to her.

KEVIN

Okay.

UNA

Forget about it.

INT. LINDA AND DONALD'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Donald buttons up his loud shirt, does an absurd karate move and grins at his magnificence in the mirror.

Linda passes, carrying her little dog, and, without looking at him, she politely enquires.

LINDA

You're going to wear that?

DONALD

What's wrong with it?

LINDA

Nothing.

As Linda exits Donald moves to the full length mirror, examines his reflected self, pulls in his stomach, smiles with newfound confidence, looks in his reflected eyes, falters, then angrily pulls off the shirt.

INT. CHARLIE AND SAOIRSE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Lying on the bed Charlie watches as Saoirse gets dressed across the other side of the room and, as they talk, he squints his eyes then uses his fingers to isolate certain aspects of her body.

SAOIRSE

Be nice tonight, okay?

CHARLIE

Aren't I nice every night?

Saoirse pulls up her hair, looks at her belly in the mirror, momentarily adjusts her body and hair to look like someone else and loses herself in the reflected image.

SAOIRSE

Charlie...?

CHARLIE

What?

SAOIRSE

Nothing.

CHARLIE
Wait a second, do that again.

SAOIRSE
Do what.

CHARLIE
The way you raised your arm
there, the curve of your breast
ran all the way to your thigh.

Saoirse assumes the pose and Charlie stares at her.

SAOIRSE
If you were with someone else
you'd tell me wouldn't you?

CHARLIE
Honey, I'd send you photographs.

SAOIRSE
I'm serious.

CHARLIE
And you think I'm not?

INT. LINDA AND DONALD'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Donald and Linda wait in silence.

Donald looks out the window and sees across the road a poster with a large laughing clown face advertising a 'COMEDY NIGHT - OPEN MIKE'

As Donald stares at the laughing face on the poster the silence between him and his wife is heavy.

INT. UNA AND KEVIN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin has his shirt on and as he takes off the towel to dry himself one final time Una glances at him.

UNA
Put that thing away will you. Too
big to be a clitoris, too small
to be a penis.

KEVIN
Ever think maybe you're a bit on
the wide side?

UNA
(Snaps)
What do you think happens to a
woman's insides after two kids?

KEVIN

Did I cross the line? I'm sorry.

But as he moves towards her their five year old, Majella, enters and Kevin pulls the towel back up.

MAJELLA

Daddy?

KEVIN

Hello Beautiful.

UNA

What did Mummy tell you about coming into our room?

Majella hesitates and looks to Kevin.

UNA

Don't look to your Daddy. Your room is there and ours is here.

Majella exits.

KEVIN

Was that necessary?

UNA

I don't know why they're even here, but someone has to discipline them and it's obviously not going to be you.

INT. CHARLIE AND SAOIRSE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

From across the room, sitting on a chair, Charlie watches as the now clothed Saoirse sits on the bed, upright, facing him.

SAOIRSE

Your mother called again.

Charlie ignores her as he continues shuffling the cards.

SAOIRSE

Leave them down, will you?

CHARLIE

I have to sublimate the lack of intimacy somehow.

Charlie watches her as she pours another measure of whiskey for him.

SAOIRSE

You know they say sarcasm is repressed aggression.

CHARLIE

Who? Humourless pacifists?

SAOIRSE

And they say comedy is sublimated pain.

CHARLIE

Nothing sublimated about my pain, it's etched on my testicles.

SAOIRSE

What do you think of Una?

CHARLIE

My testicles makes you think of Una?

SAOIRSE

They made me think of lascivious behavior.

CHARLIE

That is possibly the nicest thing you have ever said to me. Have a drink, might loosen you up.

SAOIRSE

I'm leaving it for awhile.

CHARLIE

You? Without alcohol? That's like Laurel without Hardy.

SAOIRSE

You should visit her.

CHARLIE

Una?

SAOIRSE

Your mother.

CHARLIE

Abbott without Costello.

SAOIRSE

Do you think she sleeps around or is all her fronting just an act?

CHARLIE

Yeah, mother's a real whore.

SAOIRSE

I don't know when you're serious anymore.

CHARLIE

Did you ever? What is it they say, if you don't laugh...?

SAOIRSE

You'll cry.

CHARLIE

And once again the cliché queen reigns supreme.

SAOIRSE

I know you think you're an amateur comedian Charlie but it's not funny any more.

CHARLIE

It's comedic genius. See? Now you got me using cliches. It's catching. Like thrush.

SAOIRSE

You're a pig.

There is a knock on their hotel door.

CHARLIE

What happened to ape?

SAOIRSE

You know I used cream for that.

As Charlie moves towards the door he adjusts his genitals, and calls back to his wife.

CHARLIE

And if you pay me, the jokes will get more professional.

He makes to move to the door but stops and grabs Saoirse, spins her around and holds her in an embrace.

CHARLIE

You and me against the world
babe. Morecambe and Wise and you
and me.

He kisses her, lets her go, and moves to the door.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE CHARLIE AND SAOIRSE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Una and Kevin stand outside, both frowning with mutual contempt.

INT. CHARLIE AND SAOIRSE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Charlie answers the door and both of them smile.

KEVIN

I hope we're not early.

CHARLIE

My wife was just about to ravage me, can you come back in twenty minutes?

Una walks right in.

UNA

How come you never make twenty minutes?

KEVIN

Because I'm too busy trying to get it over with.

UNA

Have you met my loving husband?

CHARLIE

Ten minutes?

Kevin enters and pulls out a plastic wrapped deck of playing cards.

KEVIN

I got a new deck.

CHARLIE

Marking them for later are we? How are you Una?

UNA

Unfulfilled Charlie.

KEVIN

Have you met my loving wife?

CHARLIE

I'm not in the mood for refereeing your domestic shit tonight?

(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)

So don't make me bitch slap both of you. Walking in like impending doom.

UNA

I like the sound of that. Why do you never bitch slap me Kevin?

CHARLIE

And don't you be trying to get me to take sides against my best mate you manipulative mutt.

UNA

I love it when you talk dirty to me. Kevin why do you never talk dirty to me?

KEVIN

Because, my lovely, for you, a suitable insult hasn't yet been invented.

UNA

Are the other two here yet?

CHARLIE

Down stairs.

As Saoirse enters the room Kevin hangs back with Charlie.

KEVIN

Charlie, I hate to ask but, that money...

CHARLIE

The cat is in the bag and the bag is in the river.

KEVIN

What does that mean?

CHARLIE

Soon as I get rid of that properties you'll get yours.

KEVIN

You have to drop the price.

CHARLIE

I have. Four times already.

KEVIN

The market is on its knees and that loan is being called in. Una's asking questions. I need the money back.

CHARLIE

You have to consult with your wife to take a shit? Help me out here Kevin. We're here for one weekend. We'll go through it next week and I'll get everything in order, okay? On my mother's life.

KEVIN

Thanks Charlie. Sorry for asking.

They move into the room as Una hands Saoirse a glass of whiskey.

SAOIRSE

You look fabulous.

UNA

Lying bitch.

Saoirse gives a glass of whiskey to Kevin.

SAOIRSE

You do, you really do. Doesn't she Charlie?

CHARLIE

How would I know, I'm blind to any women other than you?

They clink their glasses.

UNA

Lying bastard.

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

The six friends are sitting at a table in the lively bar, the alcohol flowing freely, its influence causing Linda to become giggly.

The 'COMEDY NIGHT - OPEN MIKE' poster with the name of the hotel on it hangs on the wall as the laughing clown stares out at the six friends.

Charlie is in full flow and they seem to vaguely know some of the other estate agents in the bar, who seem to know them in return and as they talk it's evident these six friends have inherited each others rhythms and language.

CHARLIE

How many black, yellow, or any color other than pink skin Paddy do you really know?

(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)

How many people do we know from Nigeria, the Congo, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Russia or Poland? Here we sit, on our self-satisfied liberal leftist arses yet not one of us has a genuine foreign friend.

DONALD

I have Filipino friends.

CHARLIE

For Christ's sake Donald, they're not your friends, they're tenants in one of your properties. You charge them fifteen hundred a month for the pleasure of your friendship and the privilege of broken heating and damp bedrooms.

Linda begins to giggle more as her husband is good naturedly swatted down by Charlie.

DONALD

All this liberal posturing. We walk into a Spar store and we think because we smile at the foreign minimum wage worker behind the counter we're liberals and humanitarians? We don't have foreign friends...we barely have each other.

UNA

This is the word of the Lord.

Linda goes into a fit of the giggles and Donald gently tries to comfort her as she struggles not to laugh.

DONALD

You know you shouldn't drink.

CHARLIE

It's imperative she drink Donald, this is always my favorite part of the evening.

SAOIRSE

Kevin, help her, will you?

KEVIN

How?

SAOIRSE

I don't know, frighten her or something.

KEVIN

Boo.

UNA

Okay, you boys get your cards and your whiskey and leave us alone.

KEVIN

Have you met my wife? Apparently she has just taken over.

CHARLIE

Give me the papers and we'll head up to the roof.

SAOIRSE

What?

CHARLIE

The Rizzla paper.

SAOIRSE

You said you were getting them.

CHARLIE

I have to work twenty-three hours a day to keep her in the style she has so swiftly become accustomed to and now I have to do the shopping too?

UNA

Bravo Saoirse. I can't even get Kevin to do me.

CHARLIE

How can we have a joint without paper?

SAOIRSE

Keep your voice down.

CHARLIE

Tell you what Kevin, while Donald is trying to resuscitate his choking wife, we'll draw for it?

DONALD

For what?

CHARLIE

To go to the shop. You draw five or lower and I'll go, I draw six or higher, you go.

KEVIN

What about the Royals?

CHARLIE

Don't complicate it. Leave them out. Draw. And don't show it to me.

Kevin takes out a card and turns it face down then Charlie does the same.

UNA

You should put a bet on it too.

KEVIN

Twenty.

UNA

Have you met my husband, the big spender?

KEVIN

Fifty.

CHARLIE

Why not make it a clean hundred?

UNA

That's fighting talk Charlie. Bit too manly for Kevin methinks.

KEVIN

Why don't we make it two?

CHARLIE

Kevin, you're growing a pair of balls in front of our very eyes. Why don't we make it five?

SAOIRSE

Charlie, stop.

UNA

No, don't; get him to put his money where his fat mouth is.

Kevin looks at Una then back at Charlie.

KEVIN

I don't want to bet five hundred.

UNA

Chickenshit.

KEVIN

I want to bet a thousand.

Even Charlie is surprised by this and Linda stops giggling.

SAOIRSE
Charlie stop this now, please.

Some of the others in the bar have taken an interest in the proceedings.

UNA
No, let the fool bet our
daughter's college fund.

CHARLIE
Kevin, I hope your underwear are
stretching to accommodate these
new found testes of yours. A
clean thousand it is.

Charlie touches his card and looks to Kevin.

CHARLIE
You ready?

SAOIRSE
Charlie, please call this bet off
now. You cannot be taking money
from our friends.

UNA
See Kevin, even she knows you're
a loser?

CHARLIE
It's okay love, he's a big boy.

UNA
If only.

Charlie stares at Kevin.

CHARLIE
Final chance to back down.

Kevin shakes his head, no.

CHARLIE
Then let me sweeten the pot
further. Double your money.

Linda whispers to Donald.

LINDA
That's way too much.

CHARLIE
You can never have too much.
Ever. You in for a luscious two
grand New Balls or are you out?

Kevin looks at Una but for the first time she is quiet.

SAOIRSE
I'm not watching this.

Saoirse makes to leave but she can't help her curiosity so she ends up staying at the door as Charlie continues to stare at Kevin then Kevin nods, yes.

CHARLIE
Read 'em and wail.

Kevin and Charlie turn their cards over and Kevin's is a four of spades and Charlie's is a nine of hearts.

Charlie is gutted and tries to conceal his rage.

KEVIN
I win. I can't believe it, I win.

UNA
Have you met my husband?
Sometimes he's surprisingly
impressive.

CHARLIE
Hold on a second. I win.

KEVIN
What? You said above five was
yes, below five was no.

CHARLIE
What?

KEVIN
That's what you said.

UNA
Is that what he said?

SAOIRSE
I don't know.

DONALD
Charlie, what you said was...

CHARLIE
Who's talking to you?

Donald and Linda are stunned.

SAOIRSE
Charlie, what are you doing?

CHARLIE

What I said was, one to five was
yes, six to ten was...

Kevin stands up.

KEVIN

Hold on a second here, you
said...

The bar goes quiet as everyone watches Charlie get in
Kevin's face with ugly ferocity.

CHARLIE

You hold on a second, talking to
me like that you con artist
cheating piece of shit liar.

Stunned, Kevin backs down.

KEVIN

Charlie, I don't want the money.
We're friends. What are you
doing?

Charlie looks at everyone, including the others in the bar
then he begins to laugh.

KEVIN

What are you doing you psycho?

CHARLIE

I tried to but I couldn't keep it
up any longer.

LINDA

That was a joke?

SAOIRSE

Charlie you really are a pig and
an ape.

Charlie starts imitating a monkey as he dances around Kevin
and picks up his car keys.

CHARLIE

I don't know if I'd want you
beside me in the trenches Kevin,
you were folding there.

LINDA

That was a horrible thing to do.

CHARLIE

Yeah? But you ain't got the
giggles now, do you?

UNA
What about his money?

KEVIN
Have you met my wife?

UNA
She looks after the finances.

CHARLIE
Two grand in our business is
token change Una so don't you
worry your pretty little head
about it, I'll write you a check
before you go.

UNA
I love it when he patronizes me.
Darling why don't...oh sorry you
do.

Charlie picks up the deck of cards.

CHARLIE
I'll take these in case you mark
them when I'm gone.

Saoirse stares at Charlie.

CHARLIE
Have you met my wife? And her
three little friends, shock,
horror and dismay? Sense of
humour wasn't one of the classes
in Sister Mary Teresa's school
for virgins.

As Charlie exits Kevin looks at Una.

UNA
Well done.

Kevin smiles with sheepish pride but Una quickly pulls the
rug from under him.

UNA
Don't be preening dear, you
didn't exactly cure cancer.

Linda touches Saoirse.

LINDA
Saoirse, are you okay?

SAOIRSE
Charlie doesn't like to lose.

EXT. TRAFFIC LIGHTS, STREET - NIGHT

Sitting in his BMW, Charlie waits at the traffic lights, with the window down.

He looks up at a group of teenage kids staring in admiration at his fancy car and he discreetly takes the newly purchased Rizla papers off the dashboard.

Charlie tries to ignore them and pushes the button for the window and it slides up, causing minor offended laughter from the teenagers.

Charlie makes the mistake of glancing back at them which is perceived as an invitation for trouble.

One of them emits a derisory wolf whistle while another brings up some phlegm.

The thug spits across the distance between them and

- as the lights turn green

- the saliva lands on the side of the bonnet of Charlie's car

Charlie pulls off in disgust.

As Charlie continues driving beyond the corporation blocks of flats into less populated darkness he keeps looking in disgust at the spit on the side of his bonnet, fixating on it, his rage rising.

He is suddenly brought back to his senses as he hears

- a sickening crunch

- and feels a powerful reverberation through the car as a young woman bounces off the hood

- and is flung over the roof

- then lands in a fatally awkward slump on the dark street behind him.

Charlie skids to a halt and waits in utter shock

- listening to the engine ticking over

- waiting

- looking out at the deserted area around him

- waiting for someone to turn the clock back as he sees the unmoving body slumped behind him.

As he stares out the windscreen he sees the playing cards on the dashboard

- hesitates
- looks back at the slumped body
- reaches for the cards
- and holding them face down, he picks a card and turns it over
- the two of clubs.

With almost paralysed economy of movement Charlie shifts the car into first gear and slowly, impossibly slowly, the car starts to move, as he watches the slumped body in his rearview mirror.

He keeps expecting someone to come out of the buildings but nobody does and, as he almost imperceptibly speeds up, he expects to be accosted by locals at any moment but nothing happens.

Nobody comes.

As he incrementally increases his speed he keeps looking around and doesn't realize that

- he is coming to a red light
- until another car screams by, horn blaring.

Charlie pulls up to a halt and nearly vomits with panic and fear.

He watches the car drive away into the distance

- takes one last look at the slumped body
- glances at the red light
- then slams his foot onto the accelerator and speeds away.

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

Una and Saoirse are at the bar waiting for their drinks.

Una watches Saoirse

- almost examining Saoirse's body with her eyes
- then looks away as Saoirse looks at her.

SAOIRSE
How are the kids?

UNA

Don't ask.

There is silence as Saoirse drinks water while Una continues to watch.

UNA

When are you having some?

Saoirse stops and smiles, a glint of delight in her eye.

SAOIRSE

Don't ask.

EXT. BACK OF REMOTE HOUSING ESTATE - NIGHT

Charlie looks around to make sure he is alone then douses his car in petrol

- sets it alight

- and as he quickly moves away, carrying the brandy bottle

- the tiny red light of a security camera on a high traffic pole flickers in the distance.

INT. HOTEL ROOF - DAY (VIDEO CAMERA FOOTAGE)

As Charlie stares into the camera, he listens as the distant sirens grow louder.

CHARLIE

My name is Charlie Barnum. And this is a razor blade. And if there is a God, this may very well be my last will and testament.

Charlie swigs from the wine bottle and looks back into camera.

CHARLIE

Regrets? Living a half life. In my day to day existence I was the ghost of Christmas future walking around the dead present.

He stares at the razor blade.

CHARLIE

That pretentious enough for you Dad?

He brings his hand upright beside his face, flexes his fist and studies the veins in his wrist but then he's interrupted by the banging on the locked metal fire exit door.

He screams at the camera again, a combination of primordial fear and invitation to death.

CHARLIE

I'm a man who defined his own morals, his own code, and lived with the consequences. Depending on the fickle passion of the day that man is reviled or exalted, devil or god, boy or man. I am such a man. An escapee. I'm not afraid to say it, a hero. So, if there is a God on a day of reckoning, I'll look Him square in the eye and tell Him to explain to me what it was I did that was so fucking wrong?

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

Linda, Donald and Kevin are sitting in silence as Una and Soairse wait for their drinks at the bar.

Until eventually Kevin speaks up.

KEVIN

Ratzinger is something else isn't he?

Linda looks at him as if to say, excuse me?

KEVIN

I mean, Benedict.

Linda remains silent and, because he can't think of anything else to say, Kevin continues.

KEVIN

The sixteenth is it?

Kevin looks to Donald but Donald looks like he wants to hang himself with boredom.

At the bar Saoirse checks her watch as she watches Una pour her drink.

UNA

I mean do you have any idea the amount of long term couples out there who don't have sex anymore? Go to bed. Go to sleep. Go to work, to bed, to sleep.

(MORE)

UNA (cont'd)

Dead from the neck down. And not particularly alive above it. The last great taboo - all those sexless relationships out there.

Saoirse sees lights from a car outside and sees Charlie through the window outside getting out of a taxi.

SAOIRSE

What's he doing?

The others look out the window and, as Charlie walks up the driveway, they see how ashen faced he is.

They rush out to the hotel foyer as Charlie enters.

SAOIRSE

What's wrong?

Charlie is silent.

SAOIRSE

Where were you?

Charlie finds it difficult to speak.

CHARLIE

Something terrible happened.

SAOIRSE

Oh my God, what Charlie?

Charlie looks like he is about to weep.

CHARLIE

I don't know if I can...something horrible.

KEVIN

Charlie, what's wrong?

Tears begin to flow freely as Charlie looks at them, a pathetic figure desperate to confess.

CHARLIE

I went to the shop...and...they didn't have...Rizlas.

SAOIRSE

What?

CHARLIE

The papers for the spliff.
Heartbreak nearly killed me.

As everyone realizes Charlie is jesting and mocking them Saoirse is unimpressed.

SAOIRSE

This isn't funny Charlie.

CHARLIE

But the I saw them in the other shop and the angels shone down upon me.

KEVIN

You're a bad actor is what you are.

CHARLIE

Bullshit, I had you going.

SAOIRSE

You got a taxi? Where's the car?

Charlie strolls past them and, almost as a casual aside, he glances back at Saoirse.

CHARLIE

Oh yeah, I forgot, our car was stolen.

As everyone reacts Charlie silences them.

CHARLIE

Let's not make a big deal of it folks. It's insured and I'm alright.

KEVIN

But it's your car. Your Beemer. We love our cars.

UNA

I can't believe you're taking it so well.

CHARLIE

I'm not reporting it until tomorrow in case they smell alcohol off me.

SAOIRSE

But...

CHARLIE

Saoirse, my beautiful wife, you take it easy, Kevin you order another round, and Donald, you shuffle the deck.

As Charlie takes off his coat and moves down the hallway towards the toilets Saoirse smiles proudly.

SAOIRSE
Have you met my husband?

Saoirse follows him.

SAOIRSE
Are you sure you're alright?

CHARLIE
Hello Beautiful.

SAOIRSE
My baby lose his BMW?

CHARLIE
Baby lost his broom broom.

SAOIRSE
I'm proud of you.

CHARLIE
Why?

SAOIRSE
The way you're dealing with this.
My baby's all growed up.

She kisses him and as she goes back to the others Charlie enters the toilets pushing against the poster of the laughing clown's face on the 'COMEDY NIGHT - OPEN MIKE' poster with the name of the hotel on it.

INT. HOTEL, MALE TOILETS - NIGHT

Charlie stares at himself in the mirror

- tries to look calm

- then slips a diamond shaped blue Viagra pill into his mouth.

INT. HOTEL, MALE TOILETS - NIGHT

As Charlie exits the toilets and moves back up the hallway, he passes Una on her way to the female toilets

- they politely smile

UNA
You okay?

Charlie continues on his way to the dining room as Una enters the bathroom

- but then he slows down walking

- and stops.

INT. HOTEL, FEMALE TOILETS - NIGHT CONTINUOUS

Una checks her face in the mirror

- then goes into one of the empty cubicles

- raises her dress

- lowers her panties

- and, as she sits on the toilet

- she looks up to see hands on the dividing wall between her and the cubicle next door

- and, just as she is about to speak out

- she stops when she sees Charlie looking at her from above

As the music and conversation travels from down the bar Una, with surprising calm, looks at Charlie

- and he too calmly stares back at her

- and they both lock eyes as Una begins to urinate.

They remain utterly silent

- listening to the impact of her urine on the water

- and, when she has finished, and the final drips fall lazily into the toilet bowl water

- they still don't take their eyes off each other

- then Charlie steps down and Una listens as she hears the toilet door closing as Charlie quietly exits.

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

As Charlie re-enters the bar Donald talks to Kevin while he shuffles the cards, badly, as Linda watches.

DONALD

These scum are everywhere.
Killing, stealing, raping.

Donald notices Linda watching him and becomes momentarily defiant.

DONALD

I'm playing a couple of hands.

Linda says nothing.

KEVIN

They get away with it, that's
where I have the problem.

DONALD

They'd steal anything. The eyes
from a blind man.

Charlie whispers to Saoirse as they watch.

CHARLIE

Is your brother actually talking?

SAOIRSE

Leave him alone, he's just shy.

Charlie looks to Linda.

CHARLIE

Imagine them having sex.

SAOIRSE

I'd prefer not to, thank you.

CHARLIE

I wonder if she prays for
forgiveness after.

SAOIRSE

I know I do.

CHARLIE

No, with you darling, it's
during.

Charlie kisses her and makes a big moment of holding her.

CHARLIE

Listen, I know I don't say this
often enough, but Saoirse...
you're not so bad you.

Saoirse smiles.

SAOIRSE

You're a shit.

CHARLIE

You wouldn't have me any other
way.

As Una re-enters the bar Charlie and her don't even look at
each other and, as they settle Charlie takes the floor.

CHARLIE

Folks, life is too short and it's time to play a game bigger than poker.

UNA

Strip poker?

KEVIN

Have you met my wife the slut?

CHARLIE

I want to tempt fate.

SAOIRSE

Have you met my husband the nihilistic philosopher?

CHARLIE

Did my wife crack a funny?
You want power folks?

UNA

And plenty of it.

CHARLIE

You want the gloriously contagious disease of determining a new fate?

UNA

Praise Jesus.

CHARLIE

Think of the innumerable things you privately yearn to do.

UNA

You don't want to know those.

CHARLIE

But law, morality, conservatism, wives, children, friends, parents, even strangers, tell you everyday that you cannot do those things.

KEVIN

Like what?

UNA

Like growing a pair of testicles.

KEVIN

I'll borrow yours.

CHARLIE

Shut up you two. We all know how boring this conference is but we still have a weekend here. What happens if you're given the right to abdicate all responsibility?

UNA

You become my husband.

CHARLIE

What happens if you temporarily put the destiny of those private yearnings into the hands of the gods?

UNA

That's one for you Linda.

But Linda is unimpressed as she absorbs Charlie's words.

CHARLIE

What happens if you tempt fate to find out if this is what you should really be doing with your life? If this is really who you should be? Now that; that is power.

Charlie takes out six packs of fresh unopened decks of cards and throws a deck to each person as he explains the rules.

CHARLIE

You pose a question to yourself, a question you're afraid to even consider.

UNA

Like getting an erection Kevin.

Embarrassed Kevin briefly looks to Charlie but Charlie nods reassuringly - a knowing wink.

CHARLIE

Something that pushes you out of your comfort zone, something that at least changes you day, or, better still, your life.

The group are responsive in the way that giggling teenagers are responsive to a Ouija board; half believing and half disbelieving, but all along for the ride.

UNA

You're insane. Saoirse, are you aware your husband is insane?

SAOIRSE

He usually hides it when we're in company.

KEVIN

What do we do with the cards?

CHARLIE

Just like we did with the Rizla papers. But you have to pose the question in such a way that there is only a yes or no answer.

SAOIRSE

What kind of questions?

CHARLIE

Just one question. It might be something you desperately want to do or something you desperately don't want to do. And after you ask the question you pick from the deck of cards. Take the Royals out. Ace to five, yes. Six to ten, no.

Suddenly Linda quietly speaks.

LINDA

You're testing God.

CHARLIE

Sorry Linda, say that again?

LINDA

You can't test God.

CHARLIE

I'm testing us Linda, God's got nothing to do with it.

SAOIRSE

Charlie, please, some respect for people's beliefs?

CHARLIE

What's the sense in submitting to a god when I'm so busy being one myself?

SAOIRSE

Charlie...

CHARLIE

I say introduce the burkas, I might get a word in edgeways.

LINDA

God has something to do with everything. He gave us the gift of free will.

CHARLIE

The most expensive free gift of all time. God was invented to emasculate man and imprison woman.

UNA

I thought that was marriage.

As Linda attempts to respond Una cuts her off.

UNA

What happens if you pick a joker, joker?

CHARLIE

Good question. You are allowed a reprieve. No, I'll tell you what, you get a joker, you have to donate a hundred to charity. How's that suit you Linda?

Linda doesn't answer.

CHARLIE

Does that pacify your interventionist God my beautiful wife?

Saoirse smiles and nods appreciatively.

UNA

Can it be something naughty?

KEVIN

Surprise, surprise.

CHARLIE

It can be anything you want. But you have to push it and be brave and you have to abide by the answer on the card.

UNA

I like this game.

CHARLIE

And tomorrow after the conference, each of us throw fifty quid each into the pot, one by one tell our stories, and the democratically decided winner gets the entire pot.

UNA

Ace to five is yes?

CHARLIE

And six to ten is no.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

A man in his sixties, ALAN, sits beside a patient in a bed, the monitor periodically piercing through the sense of imminent death in the room.

He dials a number on a mobile phone and waits

- but there is no answer

- and he hangs up.

INT. CHARLIE AND SAOIRSE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Charlie and Saoirse have sex and Saoirse is responsive but as we move to Charlie's face we see he is completely distracted, fear etched across his grimacing face.

INT. UNA AND KEVIN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Una decides she wants sex with her drunk husband but Kevin is asleep.

Una slowly pulls up the bed covers

- looks down

- and is surprised to see Kevin has an erection.

- thinks what the hell

- pulls the covers over her head

- and creeps down

- slowly

- slowly

- and as we see her form under the covers slipping further down Kevin adjusts in his sleep

- then suddenly his eyes snap open

- and he screams like a woman.

Una appears above the covers.

KEVIN

What are you doing?

UNA

What's your problem?

KEVIN

You bit me.

UNA

I did not...I merely nibbled.

KEVIN

I was asleep.

UNA

Been so long since I saw you with an erection I wanted to make sure it was real.

Suddenly their daughter Majella bursts into the room.

MAJELLA

Daddy, daddy, I heard a scream.

Una bursts into derisory laughter as Kevin placates Majella.

KEVIN

It's okay Beautiful, Daddy had a bad dream, that's all.

UNA

That's it, you keep babying her.

MAJELLA

But Mummy I'm scared.

UNA

Join the queue Honey.

MAJELLA

Daddy, will you put me back to bed?

KEVIN

Of course I will Beautiful.

The baby wakes up and as his scream pierces through the wall Una shouts back at him.

UNA
Jesus Christ child give me five
minutes.

Kevin turns and tries to placate her.

KEVIN
I'll take care of him.

UNA
Yeah, you do that mister action
hero. Mister perfect father.

Kevin picks up Majella and as he carries her out Una feels guilty and calls after her.

UNA
Night night Beautiful.

But Majella doesn't respond and as Kevin closes the door behind him Saoirse lies alone in bed.

She slaps her face hard then looks at her hand

- hesitates
- aggressively spits on her hand
- and as the baby screams next door
- Una slides her wetted hand under the sheets
- and when she begins to touch herself
- there is rage and sadness etched on her face.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

More people mull around the hotel as the sandwich board standing outside the conference room

- reads: IRISH ESTATE AGENTS CONVENTION
- and under that reads - Topic : The Vicious Circle of Commerce.

The conference room door opens and as the sound of somebody giving a speech to a vast hall spills out Charlie and Kevin discreetly close the door behind them and, like mischievous schoolboys, make their way to the front desk.

CHARLIE
Where's the business centre?

INT. HOTEL BUSINESS CENTRE - DAY

A full screen image of a scantily clad woman fills the computer screen as Kevin and Charlie check a list of escorts on the web.

KEVIN

A life. A job. A family.
Responsibilities, I have a past,
a present and a future. You want
me to throw all that away because
some deck of playing cards told
me to?

CHARLIE

Precisely.

Kevin can't help but laugh.

CHARLIE

You're not a man Kevin, you're a
ghost like me. You think that
long list of responsibilities
define you? Make you the best you
can be? Or does it emasculate you
to the point where you don't know
where your balls are any more?
True, you'll be buried in fifty
years or so but you're already
dead. Here lies Kevin No Balls
Donnelly, died at thirty, buried
at eighty. So you do that, you go
home to your bitchy wife and
whining children but you should
have someone walk in front of you
with a bell shouting, 'dead man
walking' so that your kids are
given advance notice of the
deadbeat coward that is their old
man. You really think little
Timmy or whatever name you gave
your boy is going to be well
served by a father who tip toes
around little Timmy's mother and
asks permission to take a piss?
You might as well write the
little kid off as a nonce
already. Job well done.

KEVIN

Justin.

CHARLIE

What?

KEVIN

My son. His name is Justin.
You're his godfather Charlie.

CHARLIE

Oh yeah, but who the hell called
him that?

KEVIN

What's wrong with it?

CHARLIE

Is it like, 'I'm just in,' or you
caught me 'just in time?'

KEVIN

My wife picked it.

CHARLIE

Course she did. She picks your
nose for you Kevin. You were
never like this.

KEVIN

I know, I don't know what's
happening to me.

CHARLIE

It's an epidemic, a rampant
disease affecting our entire
generation. Are we men? Are we?
It's time for you to reattach
your scrotum, step up, reclaim
your sphincter and use it to book
yourself two women for a fantasy
fuelled hour of magic.

KEVIN

I love you Charlie.

CHARLIE

Steady on old boy, we're in a
public place.

Kevin knocks back his drink.

KEVIN

Majella.

CHARLIE

What did you say?

KEVIN

Majella. That's my daughter's
name.

CHARLIE

Don't tell me, your wife's choice again?

KEVIN

Majella. I hate that name.

CHARLIE

Sounds like Christy Brown asking for his desert,
(Imitating Christy Brown)
Ma jella and ass cream.

KEVIN

I wanted Juliet.

CHARLIE

Now that's a name. I'll drive you there and I'll pick you up afterwards.

Kevin tries to swallow back hard emotion.

KEVIN

I'm thirty five years old and I'm scared.

CHARLIE

Nobody said it was going to be easy. You ready to do this thing Romeo?

EXT. MASSAGE PARLOR - DAY

Video footage of Kevin standing outside then entering a suburban house that's a front for a massage parlour.

Pull back to reveal Charlie filming Kevin from a distance.

Charlie pops a blue diamond pill into his mouth

- but as he swallows

- he sees the hand made poster with the hit and run girl's face on it

- already raped by the wind and rain

- a nameless faceless ghost hanging to a lamp post

Charlie looks up ahead and sees a woman taping another poster to a lamp post and as Charlie pushes his foot onto the accelerator the poster and the woman are left behind as Charlie speeds off.

INT. MASSAGE PARLOR - DAY

Kevin stands in front of an empty jacuzzi in a badly lit, sparsely furnished room.

An Asian woman GLORIA, enters and, as she draws ever closer to him, Kevin becomes increasingly nervous and excited.

GLORIA
How are you?

KEVIN
I'm very good. I mean I'm bad. I mean not too bad.

GLORIA
You pay now.

KEVIN
Of course.

Kevin gives her four hundred Euro and Gloria starts to fill the jacuzzi and, as she disrobes, Kevin becomes deeply and incomprehensibly embarrassed

- and begins to sweat

- the beginnings of a minor panic attack rushing through him.

Kevin takes out his wallet, opens it on a picture of his children, and shows it to Gloria.

KEVIN
My babies.

GLORIA
They're beautiful.

Kevin looks back out the window then opens the wallet again.

KEVIN
I miss them.

GLORIA
When did you last see them?

KEVIN
This morning.

Awkward silence.

Kevin looks back out the window but immediately he opens the wallet again and points to the baby boy.

KEVIN

That's Jus...I mean that's Romeo.
And that's Juliet.

GLORIA

You called your children Romeo
and Juliet?

Kevin becomes more uncomfortable.

KEVIN

Not really.

GLORIA

Then why did you say it?

Kevin has no answer and, as he falters and words fail him,
he just looks away from her and back out the window.

Kevin continues to stare out the window, and, as he speaks,
almost to himself, his voice breaks.

KEVIN

Justin and Majella...that's their
names.

But Gloria doesn't answer him, she just slips into the
jacuzzi as another Asian woman MARIE enters.

INT. UNA AND KEVIN'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Una stands above the baby, watching it sleep.

Her expression is completely blank.

A soft tapping on the front door isn't enough to interrupt
her thousand yard stare.

The baby moves slightly and Una reacts as if she's scared
of it waking.

The door knocking resumes and this time she hears it.

She quickly and quietly exits the baby's room, softly
pulling the door behind her.

She quietly makes her way down the stairs and, as she looks
through the peephole, she registers surprise.

She opens the door to Charlie.

UNA

Charlie?

Charlie just stands there, calmly looking at her.

UNA
Kevin isn't here.

Charlie ignores her and walks on in.

Una watches him as he stands in the middle of the space, absorbing its energy.

UNA
Charlie, Kevin's not here.

KEVIN
Close the door.

UNA
Sorry Charlie, I'm not dressed
and the baby is going to wake up
any minute.

But Charlie doesn't move, he just picks up the remote control and clicks on the television.

UNA
Charlie...

Charlie doesn't answer as he indifferently watches the television.

Una approaches him.

UNA
Just because I let you watch me
doesn't mean -

CHARLIE
Let the cards decide.

Charlie holds out the cards and Una hesitates.

UNA
We're not doing this.

CHARLIE
We are not doing anything Una.
Except abdicating responsibility.

UNA
Time to leave Charlie.

CHARLIE
You want me to bitch slap you?

Una hesitates.

CHARLIE
Ace to five, yes; six to ten, no.

Una sighs as if to humour Charlie and takes a card - the five of spades.

As she looks up, her attempt to casually speak, is interrupted by

- a stinging open handed slap across her face.

As she touches her face, Una is stunned.

Charlie watches her as a small amount of blood forms on the side of her mouth.

She touches the blood on her mouth with her fingers and looks at the residue of blood on her fingertips.

UNA

Slap me again.

Charlie makes to slap her again

- but stops just short of contact.

CHARLIE

You hit me first.

Una hesitates.

UNA

Where is Saoirse?

CHARLIE

Getting her facial.

Una lashes out

- and smacks Charlie across the face.

But Charlie doesn't flinch, he just calmly looks at her.

CHARLIE

Harder.

Una slaps him again

- and again

- and again

- a frenzied series of slaps

- until her hand hurts and she stops.

Una spits blood into Charlie's face

- and he lets the blood track down his face.

He slides his finger into Una's mouth and she sucks on it.

Charlie pulls the tie around the nightgown and it falls open.

He slides his hand back out of her mouth and down inside her nightgown.

We hold on their faces as Charlie pulls out an unopened condom and rises it to her mouth.

He puts the wrapping into Una's mouth.

Una bites down hard on the condom wrapper.

Charlie rips the condom wrapper open using Una's teeth.

INT. MASSAGE PARLOR - DAY

Kevin watches as the two bored Asian women try to entice him into the water.

They touch each other but, as Kevin approaches them, he hesitates.

KEVIN

I'm sorry. You're really
beautiful, both of you but...no
thank you.

They look to each other then back to him.

GLORIA

Then why are you here?

Kevin hesitates, finding the words difficult.

KEVIN

Tell me how to please a woman.
Tell me how to love a woman.
How to make my wife love me?

INT. HOTEL, UNA AND KEVIN'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

The morning news is on the television in the background as Una is sitting on top of Charlie, grinding her hips.

Charlie sucks greedily on her breast as the News Reporter on the television discusses a court case where a grinning young man in a tracksuit casually strolls out of court and gives the television camera the two fingers salute.

Charlie quivers then quietly climaxes.

Una stops, and tries to conceal the look of disappointment on her face, as if to say, 'That was it?'

Then she decides to say it.

UNA
That was it?

CHARLIE
Excuse me?

UNA
I'd like a little pleasure
myself, you know?

CHARLIE
Excuse me again?

UNA
I see it in the movies and read
about it in the magazines but I
still wonder if the orgasm is a
myth.

CHARLIE
You didn't come?

UNA
I thought you were different.
Thought you were Charlie
Casanova.

As Charlie pushes her off him and buckles his trousers he watches a repeat of the thug on the television giving the camera the two fingers.

CHARLIE
My mother is ill.

UNA
Meaning?

CHARLIE
You know what Una? Be my guest.
Pleasure yourself.

Charlie exits, slamming the door behind him.

- and Una is left alone

- listening, as the remaining sound of the door
reverberates around the room

- and the baby starts to wail

- and as Una slides down onto her hunkers and tries to
choke back broken sobs

- the baby wails louder.

INT. MASSAGE PARLOR - DAY

Kevin sits alone in the room, the curtains pulled, blocking out the daylight.

He stands up

- moves to the door
- stops at the door without opening it
- and stares impassively at the door
- before moving back to the bed and sitting down again
- a man paralysed by loneliness and fear.

EXT. HOTEL GROUNDS - DAY

Linda sits with her dog as he licks peanut butter off her fingers.

She consults the cards then puts some on her mouth and the licks it off.

She puts some on her tongue and the dog licks it off that too.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

As Charlie waits in the police station he looks with disdain at a working class woman calmly staring ahead.

An honest country cop GUARD MCMANUS shows Charlie into the interview room.

GUARD MCMANUS
Thanks for waiting Charles.

CHARLIE
Always happy to help the force.

GUARD MCMANUS
Last night it was stolen was it?

As Charlie nods Guard McManus glances to his colleague and hides his grin.

GUARD MCMANUS
If you'd like to take a seat there Charles.

Charlie realizes something is going on as he takes a seat in front of the monitor.

GUARD MCMANUS
You don't mind me calling you
Charles, do you?

Charlie doesn't respond and Guard McManus nods for them to start the tape.

As the monitor flickers on Charlie watches grainy footage of an empty area taken from a high angle CCTV camera.

Guard McManus watches with pleasure as, on the monitor, there is the unclear image of Charlie pulling up in his BMW car and getting out.

Charlie panics in silence as he watches the difficult to distinguish image of himself on the monitor pouring petrol over his car.

Guard McManus nods in quiet satisfaction to his colleague as they await Charlie's inevitable confession.

Charlie reaches into his pocket

- takes out the deck of cards
- shuffles them
- and picks an Ace of Spades.

Charlie's mood shifts instantly and Guard McManus is slightly perturbed by Charlie's new poise.

Charlie looks at the screen closely and, exaggerating, he squints his eyes as if to struggling to see better.

CHARLIE
Who's that?

GUARD MCMANUS
Insurance fraud is a very serious
offence Charles.

CHARLIE
This is about insurance fraud?

GUARD MCMANUS
That's quite obvious, don't you
think?

Charlie laughs, relief and insolence in his smile, as he realizes he is not there for the hit and run.

CHARLIE

What's quite obvious is it's not me.

GUARD MCMANUS

What?

CHARLIE

You heard me.

Guard McManus is confounded.

GUARD MCMANUS

It's obviously you.

CHARLIE

It's not.

GUARD MCMANUS

So, you're saying it's not you?

CHARLIE

I thought it was the army who claimed against the state for deaf claims, not you blue flue protectors of the peace.

GUARD MCMANUS

Think you're smart don't you?

CHARLIE

I have two first class honours masters degrees and a recorded IQ Of 187. But I don't like to boast.

GUARD MCMANUS

Then tell me why a genius would burn out his car?

CHARLIE

Black and white grainy security camera footage taken from thirty feet away? Genius I can discuss my country bumpkin friend, but, one of the few subjects I know nothing about is arson.

GUARD MCMANUS

Country bumpkin?

CHARLIE

However, since we're engaging in a spot of quid pro quo; out of curiosity, what quotient do you have?

(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Apart from two passes and eight fails in your Intermediate Certificate exam garnered from sweet favours dispensed to the ever grateful Christian Brothers in what mucksavage town? Let me guess? Mullingar?

Charlie stands and slips the deck of cards into his pocket.

CHARLIE

Rather than bothering me with your bad eyesight I suggest you do your job and find out who stole my BMW and, no, you cannot call me Charles.

Charlie moves to the door, confidently opens it, then turns to McManus before he exits.

CHARLIE

Incidentally, officer Mullingar, what do you drive? No, don't answer, I hate to see a grown man cry.

INT. UNA AND KEVIN'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Returning from his, 'massage' Kevin enters.

KEVIN

Una?

He listens.

No reply.

He moves to the bedroom, takes off his tie and slowly unbuttons his shirt.

Staring at his wife's underwear drawer, he takes off his shirt and trousers.

In front of the full-length mirror he looks at his body.

He slips his hand inside his underwear.

He takes a sock off, rolls it into a ball and slips it down the front of his underwear.

He turns sideways and checks the profile of his newly enhanced manhood.

He looks at the drawer, checks the bathroom and calls out.

KEVIN

Una?

He listens.

Nothing.

He slides open the drawer

- lifts up a pair of Una's panties
- slips them on over his head
- and gently touches himself through his underwear.
- but when he hears the sound of the door, he freezes.

Una, enters, pushing the pram, and calls out for her husband.

UNA

Kevin?

- Kevin doesn't answer as he hides in the wardrobe and she takes recently purchased shampoo from the pram and moves into the bathroom to run the bath.

Kevin watches her through the tiny opening in the wardrobe, the underwear still on his face.

Una begins to undress.

As Kevin watches her through the wardrobe door he notices the sock still in his underwear.

He pulls the sock out, and nearly screams as a thread from the sock gets wrapped around his penis.

UNA

Kevin?

Kevin silently struggles to get the sock out of his underwear.

- Una listens, hears nothing and moves back into the bathroom.

- Kevin winces as, still in the wardrobe, he pulls his trousers on over his tender privates.

He suddenly stops as he sees Una come back out of the bathroom, stand in front of the mirror and examine what appears to be a love bite on her breast.

Then she re-enters the bathroom, pours foam bath into the water and locks the bathroom door behind her.

- Kevin makes his way out of the wardrobe but slows down when he sees something small in the corner of the bed.

- He stops and frowns and, though we can't see what it is, he bends down to pick it up.

- Una slides into the bath, the water still running.

- Kevin pulls back the cover of the bed and smells the sheets.

- Una, slips down into the bubbles and we experience the submerged sights and sounds from her pov.

She hears a muffled sound and resurfaces.

She turns off the tap and listens to soft knocking on the door.

UNA

Kevin?

KEVIN (O.C.)

Yeah.

UNA

I'm having a bath.

Una dismissively slips back down into the water.

From under the water she hears a loud muffled sound.

She resurfaces to see Kevin standing in the doorway - naked.

She looks at the broken lock on the bathroom door.

She decides to keep her mouth shut until she knows the score.

Kevin steps into the bath and sits behind his wife.

Kevin takes the bottle of shampoo and pours a small amount onto Una's hair.

He sees a small bite mark on the side of her neck.

He empties the entire bottle onto her head and as it spills down her shoulders he produces the object he picked up off the kitchen floor - the piece of the condom wrapper Una tore off with her teeth.

Una turns her head to look away from it.

But Kevin grips the back of her head and forces her to look back at the wrapper.

UNA

I get the fucking point.

Kevin lets go of her head and they sit in silence.

KEVIN

Who is he?

Una doesn't answer.

KEVIN

Are you in love with him?

UNA

It's a hotel room Kevin, anybody could've left it there.

KEVIN

Are you in love with him?

UNA

Only you would ask a question like that.

KEVIN

Are you?

UNA

Go screw yourself Kevin, because nobody else will.

Una gets out of the bath.

KEVIN

Why are we like this?

UNA

I'm telling you nothing. You hear me Kevin, nothing.

Una exits and Kevin sits alone, confused and emasculated, watching the water being sucked down into the dark plug hole.

EXT. HOTEL GROUNDS - DAY

Charlie smokes a joint as he tries to comfort his father in a two way phone conversation on his mobile phone.

He looks at the video camera as talks to his father and on the small screen we see from Charlie's P.O.V. watching his wife sleep at night and choosing a seven of hearts from the deck.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Charlie's father Alan sits beside his dead wife's body in the hospital as he talks to his son on the mobile phone and we intercut between them.

CHARLIE
I know you loved her very much.

ALAN
What?

CHARLIE
I'm just, you know...

ALAN
No, I don't, just what?

- On the small screen Charlie slowly pulls the bed sheets back revealing his wife as she sleeps.

CHARLIE
Commiserating.

- In the hospital Alan shouts into the phone

ALAN
What are you, a stranger to me?

- Charlie adjusts his head to see the image clearer.

CHARLIE
No, I'm just saying...

ALAN
Too busy to return her calls and now you're commiserating?

CHARLIE
I'm at a very important conference here, you want me to just...?

ALAN
I don't want you to do a damn thing son.

CHARLIE
Sine when did you become the self appointed moral guardian of this family unit?

ALAN
What does that mean? Genuinely, what does that literally mean? Because half the time son I haven't a clue what the hell you're talking about.

Charlie decides to bring the conversation to a close as he watches Saoirse approach.

CHARLIE

It means I know you loved her and you'll miss her and I'll see you around.

ALAN

You know shit.

CHARLIE

Yeah, I know, I'm a pretentious ponce and all the rest. Take care of yourself.

- Charlie hangs up and switches the video camera off.

- In the hospital Alan throws the phone against the wall and as it smashes to the floor he shouts his confession at the broken phone.

ALAN

I never loved her. Most of the time I could barely stand to be in the same room as her. All your fancy words and all you think you know about life? You're still a fucking novice son.

- in the Hotel grounds Saoirse looks at Charlie.

SAOIRSE

Everything okay?

CHARLIE

Never better.

SAOIRSE

You called your mother yet?

CHARLIE

Definitely tonight.

Saoirse sits beside Charlie and wants to tell him something but when she sees the distant look in his eyes she decides to leave it until later.

- In the hospital Alan sits in silence looking at the phone then slowly moves to it, picks up the broken pieces, holds them to his ear and tries not to weep as he whispers.

ALAN

Son?

INT. LINDA AND DONALD'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

The dog watches Linda as she locks the door

- spreads newspapers out on the bed
- then opens two jars of peanut butter.

The dog watches Linda in anticipation as she opens a bottle of vodka, slides a large amount of peanut butter into her mouth then follows that with a glass of vodka.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

More people mull around the hotel as a sandwich board stands outside the conference room

- it reads: IRISH ESTATE AGENTS CONVENTION
- and under that it reads - Topic : Maximizing profits.

Charlie comes down the stairs, makes his way towards the conference hall, then does an about turn and heads towards the bar instead.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Una, Majella, the baby and Saoirse stroll down the street.

As the pedestrian lights turn auburn Saoirse quickly makes to move across the street.

SAOIRSE

Be back in a minute, just want to go to the pass machine.

As Saoirse moves down the street to the bank machine, Una stands at the traffic lights, staring blankly ahead, with Majella and the baby in the pram, waiting for the lights to change.

Una's bag is in the pram, the tips of the cards showing through the opening as the cars speed past.

Majella peeks in at the baby and smiles as the baby smiles back at her.

UNA

He just settled, leave him alone.

Majella looks away from the baby but the baby wants more connection and begins to cry when Majella won't look back at him.

UNA

Now look what you did.

The baby wails louder as Una looks in at him.

UNA

I'm asking you, please don't.

But, almost as if the baby takes his cue from her, he screams.

The cars continue to speed by, the hood of the pram dangerously close to their trajectory, as the baby's wails grow louder.

Una looks at the cards in her bag, glances at Majella, then reaches in, sneaks a peek at the tip of one of the cards and sees the two of clubs.

She watches the cars coming towards them

- their speed fatal to anything in their path
- glances at the red traffic lights
- then inches the pram closer towards the edge of the kerb.

The cars keep coming, roaring past, as Majella notices the wheels of the pram slowly inching closer to the road.

Majella looks up at her mother in increasing bewilderment but Una's eyes are closed, a calm serenity on her face as she pushes the pram just a few millimeters more each time.

Majella looks in at the baby who suddenly stops crying when he sees the expression on Majella's face.

The speeding cars get closer and closer until the screaming horn of a car snaps Una out of it and she opens her eyes.

As the last cars speed past and the others pull to a halt, the traffic light turns to green.

Una looks down at Majella and sees she is scared.

UNA

What are you looking at? Hold my hand.

Majella is hesitant and looks at the traffic then back to her mother.

UNA

Hold my hand when I tell you.

Majella shakes her head, no.

Una grabs Majella's hand and, as the lights turn back to orange, she calmly drags Majella and the pram across the street to Saoirse who, as she finishes at the bank machine, is completely unaware of what has just transpired.

INT. LINDA AND DONALD'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

The vodka bottle has decreased significantly and the little dog waits patiently as he watches Linda cover her naked body in peanut butter.

She consults the cards, hesitates, then whistles to the dog.

And as the dog jumps on the bed

- we hold on Linda's drunk, pleasure filled face

- as we hear the sound of the dog lapping.

INT. HOTEL BAR - EVENING

There are six fifty Euro notes on the table as Charlie stares at the other five people.

CHARLIE

That's it?

UNA

We obviously don't have the capacity we thought we had.

DONALD

I tried but couldn't think of anything.

SAOIRSE

I drew the joker so I gave the agreed amount to a homeless man.

CHARLIE

I'm taking my money back.

LINDA

Why?

CHARLIE

You confessed to buying a second jar of peanut butter Linda, I don't think that was the ground breaking results we were looking for.

UNA

Tell us first what you did.

Una knows she's pushing it here but she doesn't care.

CHARLIE

I still maintain you're all liars
but I'll tell you the truth. I
called my mother.

Saoirse is thrilled and proud of Charlie.

SAOIRSE

Did you?

LINDA

That was nice.

CHARLIE

Yeah, I'm glad I did.

UNA

Mommy's boy.

SAOIRSE

How was she?

CHARLIE

Good, we...she asked for you.

SAOIRSE

That took real bravery. I think
you should win.

CHARLIE

No, all bets are off. Let's just
call it quits.

UNA

And never play this stupid game
again.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - EVENING

The conference centre is being cleared out by a multitude
of foreign workers.

Charlie, Kevin and Donald pass and Charlie glances at the
sandwich board.

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

Charlie, Kevin and Donald are getting drunk as Charlie
raises his glass in a toast.

CHARLIE

To my mother. To the generation
before me. To the fanny that bore
me.

Charlie laughs with drunken fury but then he sees that Kevin and Donald are not laughing.

Charlie laughs loudly into Kevin's face but there is no joy in the laughter as he eyeballs Kevin.

As Charlie goes to the toilet he does a double take as he sees the laughing clown's face on the 'COMEDY NIGHT - OPEN MIKE' poster with the name of the hotel on the toilet door.

He stops, pulls out his deck of cards, draws a four of diamonds, and smiles widely over at Kevin and Donald.

INT. HOTEL NIGHT CLUB BAR - NIGHT

Greta, a nervous and sweating wannabe comedian is in the middle of her act as Charlie, Kevin and Donald enter.

GRETA

Mister, call the STD clinic, I'm getting screwed here.

The large, mixed, friendly audience laugh at her self-deprecation and, as the Emcee comes on stage, takes the microphone and consults a list, Charlie looks over at the small queue of people putting their names on a list.

INT. HOTEL NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

A finger tip taps the top of the microphone then a mouth blows into it.

We pull back to reveal Charlie standing behind the microphone as he waits in silence

- staring at the audience

- then he quietly speaks.

CHARLIE

My mother died today.

At the back of the audience Kevin winces but the crowd laugh a little.

CHARLIE

She did, I swear.

They laugh again and Kevin looks to Donald but Donald just shrugs.

CHARLIE

What does a man have to do to solicit a sympathy shag around here?

The crowd laughs louder.

CHARLIE

Didn't tell my wife. You know how women get. Didn't want to spoil the weekend. I'll tell her Monday.

They laugh warmly.

CHARLIE

No, I'm only joking. I'll leave it 'til Wednesday.

The crowd laugh again and Charlie is beginning to relax.

CHARLIE

Lord knows, there's nothing more fucked than family but it's the only one we've got. My sister is a socialist anorexic lesbian.

He looks at the audience for maximum impact.

CHARLIE

Only thing she'll eat is working class pussy.

They generously burst out laughing, particularly the contingent of working class women and their boyfriends in the corner.

CHARLIE

I love that uninhibited working class laughter.

The contingent of women and their boyfriends proudly cheer and Kevin looks on proudly as his friend woos the audience.

CHARLIE

You're wonderful, one and all. Everybody wants to be working class these days. A badge of honor. But what is it with you and tracksuits? Clothes designed for healthy exercising worn by the unhealthiest members of society? Only time you'd come first is the race to the top of the welfare queue.

The content is risky but people still laugh, particularly the contingent of women and their boyfriends, however some of the audience boo.

CHARLIE

Look at that, the self appointed moral guardians booing. Don't you be defending them. They're well able to defend themselves. Aren't you girls?

The contingent of women cheer.

CHARLIE

We all know the jokes; how do you know when a working class chick has an orgasm? She drops her chips. Or why do young working class men have moustaches? So they can look like their mothers. But I love the working class, I really do. They are the backbone of a spineless society.

The contingent of women and their boyfriends interpret this as a compliment and clap and cheer louder.

CHARLIE

They breed like rabbits though don't they? Soon as you kill one with poverty, lack of education or infanticide, they squat with their big meaty thighs and push out another tracksuit.

Kevin watches as the audience still laugh, some uncomfortably, but the contingent in the corner still cheer with noisy pride.

CHARLIE

Have you ever actually seen a Nike or Addidas factory? They don't exist. Like chickens and eggs these big-boned working class ladies spread those ample human conveyor belt thighs, and give birth to countless any size tracksuit you want.

As people laugh Charlie imitates a crass working class cliché, Ryano.

CHARLIE

(Imitating Ryano)

What's the story Chantelle? Give us an extra large Addidas for me and an extra-extra large Nike for me Ma.

Charlie squats down and imitates giving birth to a tracksuit and, as the audience laugh in shocked disgust - none more so than the contingent of women - one of the boyfriend's of the women, JIMMY, is taking offence.

CHARLIE

(Imitating Ryano)

You're deadly Chantelle. When I get the labour I'll fix you up, right?

(as himself)

And then Chantelle fixes him with that lazy eye of her's and grins.

(Imitating Chantelle)

There might be another way of payin' me Ryano.

(Imitating Ryano)

What?

(Imitating Chantelle)

Go on Ryano, the only thing I've had in my fanny all day is my fist. And I swear the crabs is almost cleared. And anyway, if you do it in the bum, it doesn't count.

Charlie demonstrates Ryano looking Chantelle up and down.

CHARLIE

(Imitating Ryano)

Thanks Chantelle, but I think I'd prefer to pay for them.

As the audience nervously laugh, Jimmy, loudly but good naturedly, coughs the word, 'Wanker!' into his hand and, as Charlie looks over at them, Jimmy's girlfriend becomes embarrassed.

CHARLIE

Do we have any middle class in the room?

Nobody responds, then they laugh at their own hesitancy.

Charlie looks at Kevin and Donald at the back of the room.

CHARLIE

Isn't it bizarre how nobody wants to admit it? No wonder the middle class have no heroes. I ask these proletariat lowlifes and they chant with pride, yet when I ask...

Jimmy again loudly coughs, 'wanker!' into his hand, and as his girlfriend discreetly punches him, Charlie stops.

CHARLIE

Sorry folks, our heckler here appears to have caught his brother's semen in the back of his throat.

JIMMY

Fuck you.

Jimmy's mates laugh as the audience get excited by the frisson of still relatively good natured danger.

CHARLIE

What a comeback sir. You nailed me there. Quite the mensa member we have here folks. Intellectual giant.

JIMMY

'Least I'm not a prick.

CHARLIE

Forgive me sir, I'm not fluent in knacker, could you repeat that please?

As Jimmy stands up his girlfriend tries to pull him down.

JIMMY

What did you fucking say?

CHARLIE

There you go again with that bizarrely archaic dialect. May I ask what part of Knackeragua you are from?

JIMMY

You're the fucking knacker.

The audience have stopped laughing as the situation becomes increasingly tense.

CHARLIE

You want me to purchase a copy of The Big Issue? Of course.

Charlie reaches into his pocket and takes out a two Euro coin.

CHARLIE

Please allow me to contribute to your worthy cause.

Charlie aggressively throws the two Euro coin at Jimmy.

Jimmy is stunned as he has to duck out of the way to avoid being hit by it.

Kevin watches in shock as a group of several nervous people quickly get up to exit while Jimmy calmly picks up his pint glass and drains it.

CHARLIE

And to hell with those fools who
cry out against procreation with
your sister; bravo to you I say
sir, bravo.

Jimmy throws the glass and, as it smashes against the wall beside Charlie, Jimmy drains another glass, and many more people quickly move to the back of the room.

CHARLIE

Typically articulate response;
when in doubt, prove your working
class credentials by throwing a
pint glass. I rest my case your
honour.

Jimmy throws another glass and as the Emcee grabs the microphone off Charlie, he has to duck to avoid the glass as it smashes against the wall.

CHARLIE

We're going to take a ten minute
break folks. Thanks for your
patience.

As Charlie casually strolls out and barks at Jimmy like a dog, Jimmy makes to go for him.

But Jimmy's girlfriend pulls him back and makes him sit down as Kevin and Donald grabs Charlie and pulls him outside.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Testosterone inspired by his dangerous comedy debut, a newly empowered Charlie stands on the street outside the hotel, and, as he hails a taxi, he watches a group of women pass by.

CHARLIE

We're going into town boys.
Firing on all cylinders. Now
that's comedy gentlemen.

Charlie suddenly approaches the women.

CHARLIE

Ladies, I'm feeling a hint of
humanity and in the giving vein,
so, as a once off act of charity,
I might be coerced into allowing
you the unparalleled pleasure of
releasing Charlie junior from his
Calvin Klein cage tonight.

Kevin pulls him away as the girls look at him in disgust.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Charlie, Kevin and Donald are at another quieter bar as a
television plays in silence up in the corner.

CHARLIE

You found a what?

Kevin nods and tries not to weep.

KEVIN

A condom wrapper.

DONALD

Sorry to hear that Kevin.

CHARLIE

What type?

KEVIN

What difference does it make?

CHARLIE

Sorry, you're right. I'm really
sorry too my friend. I knew Una
behaved like a slut but I never
thought she'd do the deed.

KEVIN

She's my wife Charlie, don't talk
like that.

CHARLIE

Yeah, you're right, sorry. Women;
take the shirt off you back then
complain about having to iron it.
Actually you know what Kevin,
fuck her, fuck her and the pig
she rode in on.

KEVIN

Don't say that.

CHARLIE

She can't do that to my friend,
my best friend, and expect me to
be polite about it. God giveth
life and woman taketh away. What
say you Donald?

DONALD

I'll drink to that.

CHARLIE

You'd drink to anything.

DONALD

I'll drink to that.

Despite himself Kevin laughs as does Charlie.

CHARLIE

That's the spirit Kev. You and
me.

KEVIN

Laurel and Hardy.

CHARLIE

That's it, Abbott and Costello.

KEVIN

Morecambe and Wise.

CHARLIE

And never you forget it. Me and
you against the world. And Donald
too. When do we start?

Donald glances at the television, as the same man strolls
out of a court and give the middle finger salute to the
television cameras, and Donald throws away a casual
comment, not really meaning it.

DONALD

Start with him.

CHARLIE

Wouldn't I love to. Case
collapsed because the jury were
too scared to continue. Twenty
first century scum. Look at him.
Untouchable. People talking about
them as if they're some mythical,
wonderful group. The great
disenfranchised.

KEVIN

Some of them are alright.

CHARLIE

You think that twat back at the comedy club wouldn't have ripped my head off if he could? Because of a joke?

KEVIN

You did push it.

CHARLIE

Fuck them I say. Fuck them and the mother's they were spat out of. Fuck them and their whining mediocrity. Fuck them and their excuses for not living, their excuses for failure. Why do our class have to swallow all this guilt as if we've done something wrong? We carry those fucks. On our backs. Everyday. And this is how they thank us? Resentful, jealous, backbiting lowlifes calling us the enemy but with the hand out looking for more all the same. Why are we the ones punished for being successful while they are rewarded for failure? Walking around in their pajamas at three o'clock in the afternoon. Fuck them and the shit they get away with everyday.

DONALD

It's the system.

CHARLIE

Damn right. This is not a world of men. We're cowards. No wonder our wives want other men. When was the last time we stepped up to do anything other than earn money? A generation of cowards.

DONALD

What can we do?

CHARLIE

I don't know. Any random act of courage will do. No matter how small. Seek out, find, and give a little lesson in culpability to one of them.

DONALD

But they're in Limerick.

CHARLIE

I don't mean those specific ones,
I mean any of them.

KEVIN

Them who?

CHARLIE

Them. The scum. The tracksuit
wearing, welfare claiming,
handbag stealing, what's the
fucking story scum. These lowlife
bunnies interbreed so much that
everybody is somebody's cousin.
Throw a stone anywhere north side
and you're bound to hit someone
guilty. I say we ask the cards
right now. Five or below yes, Six
or above, no.

KEVIN

You can't blame the entire
working class for...

CHARLIE

There's a war being fought out
there and they see people with
money and education as the enemy
and they're winning. Kicking us
in the balls everyday and we lie
down and take it because Lord
knows we should never offend the
working class. Fuck them is what
I say. And take back what the
stole from us is what I say. Our
money and dignity.

KEVIN

Who precisely stole from you?

CHARLIE

Where do you think the obscene
taxes I pay on my properties
goes? Who do you think pays their
weekly welfare cheques so they
can buy their shit quality drugs,
water them down then try to sell
them back to us? Me, that's who.
Me and you and Dominic. I want a
rebate. I say we ask the cards
right now.

Kevin looks to Donald for a rational voice.

KEVIN

What do you think?

DONALD
I despise them.

KEVIN
What?

DONALD
It was probably one of them doing
your wife Kevin.

CHARLIE
He's right.

DONALD
We should take our power back.

CHARLIE
Still waters run deep. Bravo
Donald, bravo. You have a toolbox
in your car?

Charlie looks to an increasingly nervous Kevin.

CHARLIE
Kevin, you ready to step up to
the plate and send out a signal
or are you going to continue to
sit on that privileged, fat,
frightened ass of yours and do
nothing? If you tolerate this,
then your children will be next.

DONALD
What song is that?

Charlie takes out the deck and shuffles the cards.

CHARLIE
Manic Street Preachers. You pick
the card. That way you know it's
the gods making the decision.

Charlie places the deck on the table and him and Donald
stare at Kevin who hesitates then takes out a card and
turns it over - the three of spades.

CHARLIE
The perfect card. All for one and
one for all gentlemen.

DONALD
It's just a message, a slap,
nothing too drastic.

CHARLIE
What are we? Animals?

As they clink glasses Kevin tries to hide his fear.

CHARLIE

A toast gentlemen; to a day our
grandchildren will boast about.

EXT. DARK STREET - NIGHT

Charlie, Kevin and Donald are in Kevin's car watching people pass by, seeking out the perfect working class person to nail.

KEVIN

I just don't understand why it
had to be my car?

CHARLIE

I don't have my car because of
these scum and the cards decided
it was going to be you, so stop
whining like a bitch.

KEVIN

I don't know if I can go through
this?

DONALD

You can. And will.

CHARLIE

I'm getting to like you more
every second Donald. What about
them?

They look out at two young men in tracksuits as they walk on the other side of the empty street.

KEVIN

No.

CHARLIE

You're not scared are you?

KEVIN

Terrified.

CHARLIE

A man's not a man 'til he's been
hit. Donald?

DONALD

Shitting myself.

Everyone bursts out laughing at Donald's honesty.

CHARLIE

You think those lowlifes would be nervous about mugging us? They'd be sitting here with hard ons they'd be that excited. These people think they can just walk in front of our car and ruin our lives?

Charlie watches intently as a lone forty something man in a tracksuit, MICK, talks on his mobile as he passes the car.

MICK (ON PHONE)

So Jackie says to me, I'm owe her four hundred and I says, Jackie fuck you and your four hundred.

CHARLIE

Gentlemen, I think we have a winner.

KEVIN

Wait. How do we know he's not one of the good ones?

CHARLIE

You think his type are on the road to Damascus? They're going to Hell and we're just giving them early season tickets. Ask the cards.

KEVIN

Fuck the cards Charlie!

CHARLIE

What did you say?

KEVIN

The cards are determining nothing. You're the one controlling the questions so all your answers are self serving.

CHARLIE

Well thank you Oprah, you want to change your tampon now so we can get on with some manly stuff Miss Winfrey?

KEVIN

I'm not doing this.

CHARLIE

Where did I hear that before. You are doing this Kevin, it's all happening around you right now.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)
 And if you don't I'll be letting
 Una know where you went today.

Donald watches as Kevin reacts to Charlie's threat.

DONALD
 Where?

CHARLIE
 Two Asian hookers. Not one but
 two.

DONALD
 You dog.

Charlie picks out an ace of spades and shows it to Donald.

CHARLIE
 Now that's what I call a card.
 The gods are with us tonight
 gentlemen.

Kevin becomes increasingly nervous as they get out of the car and, as Charlie and Donald close their doors, Kevin stands by his and holds his stomach.

KEVIN
 I can't do this.

CHARLIE
 You're a nonce. And your son is
 going to grow up to be a nonce.

KEVIN
 I'm sorry.

CHARLIE
 You ready Donald?

Donald looks down the road at Mick hanging up his mobile then nods to Charlie.

CHARLIE
 At least there's one brave man in
 the middle class.

As Charlie and Donald move after Mick, Kevin sits back into the car, sweating and ashamed, and watches as Charlie and Donald quicken their pace approaching Mick.

CHARLIE
 Anto?

Mick turns.

CHARLIE
 You're Anto, am I right?

MICK
Sorry bud, you got the wrong
bloke.

CHARLIE
You're not Anto?

MICK
No man, I'm Mick.

CHARLIE
You're sure, I thought you were
Anto?

MICK
Didn't we just have this
conversation? Are you lost lads?

CHARLIE
We're not lost, we own this town.

MICK
Fair play to you.

CHARLIE
Show some respect.

Mick looks at both of them then takes a small step back.

MICK
I'm presuming you're taking the
piss and Jimmy put you up to this
because if he didn't...?

CHARLIE
Is Jimmy another working class
piece of shit?

Mick hesitates, frowns, then smile broadly.

MICK
Yeah, that would be a good
description of him.

Mick takes two steps closer to them.

MICK
Now lads, good night and fuck
off.

As Mick makes to walk away Charlie hesitates

- then we move to Kevin in the car and watch from his point
of view

- as Charlie slips the hammer out of his pocket

- quickly moves towards Mick
- and slams the hammer into the side of Mick's head.

Kevin is frightened and excited as he watches Mick grab the side of his head and drop to the ground followed by Donald repeatedly kicking him in the stomach.

Adrenaline pumping through him, Charlie tries to control his voice as he stands above a semi-conscious and stunned Mick.

CHARLIE

You tell your lowlife friends and family there's a new breed of top dog in town. You tell them we are the movers, shakers, makers and takers, and you fuck with us at your peril.

Mick suddenly pulls himself off the ground and smashes Donald across the face with his mobile phone

- then hurls himself against Charlie
- knocking him off balance
- and as Charlie stumbles to the ground, he drops the hammer
- as Kevin watches in horror from the car
- Mick staggers like a drunk onto Charlie and gouges his thumbs into Charlie's eyes.

Kevin struggles out of the car and screams at Mick.

KEVIN

Stop!!! We didn't mean it. Please stop!

Mick drags himself up off Charlie

- struggles to focus on Kevin's voice
- then picks up the hammer and makes his way towards a terrified Kevin.

Kevin is paralysed with fear as he watches Mick approach with the hammer hanging by his side

- then Charlie and Donald grab Mick from behind and try to drag him to the ground.

But Mick, like a man possessed, just drags both of them with him as he stares at Kevin

- then Mick is momentarily distracted by a trickle of blood that begins to flow from his nostril

- but just as the blood reaches his mouth the trickle explodes into a torrent

- Mick's eyes go blank

- and as he collapses into unconsciousness, Charlie and Donald, still hanging off him, slump on top him.

Through his exhausted breaths Charlie shouts out at Kevin.

CHARLIE

Start the car!

Donald stands as Kevin quickly sits back into the car, then Charlie drags himself up off Mick

- pulls the hammer out of Mick's hand

- raises it high above his head to bring it down onto Mick's head

- then Kevin screams out from the open door of the car.

KEVIN

No!!! Charlie, don't. Don't.

Charlie looks at Kevin then down at Mick's head

- grips the handle of the hammer tighter

- and just as he's about to smash it down onto Mick's head

- he stops, looks at Kevin, and quotes himself.

CHARLIE

We're not animals after all.

Then Charlie looks to Donald.

CHARLIE

Not like them.

INT. LINDA AND DONALD'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Donald stares at his wife as she sleeps beside the dog.

The dog stares back at him.

Donald grabs the dog and, as it whelps, he holds its mouth tightly, barely daring to breath, as he waits to see if Linda wakes.

But she does not so Donald quietly exits with the dog.

EXT. HOTEL ROOF - NIGHT

Standing on the high roof, a half smoked joint in his mouth, a drunk and stoned Kevin sings out into the night air as Charlie watches him.

KEVIN
'I believe I can fly.'

His singing mixes with the dull pounding of the music in the hotel nightclub downstairs.

KEVIN
I let you down, didn't I Charlie?

CHARLIE
Why give up the habit of a lifetime?

Kevin goes to sing out again...

KEVIN
'I believe I can...'

...but stops halfway through the first line.

KEVIN
I don't like that song. And I sing it all the time.

Charlie checks the cards and draws the seven of hearts.

CHARLIE
Give me the joint you babbling twat.

Kevin gives Charlie the joint.

KEVIN
Why do we sing songs we don't like?

CHARLIE
Why do we marry women we hate?

As Kevin sings out again Charlie checks the cards and draws the three of clubs.

KEVIN
'I believe I can touch the sky.'

Charlie realizes the joint has gone out.

CHARLIE
Light me.

Kevin gives Charlie the cigarette lighter.

KEVIN

I don't.

As Charlie lights the joint he glances over the edge of the building.

CHARLIE

What's that?

KEVIN

I don't hate my wife.

CHARLIE

Your kids aren't around, no need for the bullshit facade up here.

Kevin becomes emotional as Charlie spits over the edge and watches the saliva vanish into the darkness below.

Kevin watches as Charlie checks the cards again then he takes out his own deck and places his cards on the edge of the railings as he looks out into the sky.

KEVIN

I'm finished with them Charlie. You should too.

CHARLIE

You think so?

KEVIN

Look at that city sky. The possibilities. Personal responsibility and absolute freedom.

CHARLIE

You sure you should be smoking this stuff?

Kevin almost sobs but catches it as it reaches his throat.

KEVIN

I fucking love her Charlie.

CHARLIE

Steady on big man.

KEVIN

You'll be a great father they said, it'll all happen naturally they said, it's the most wonderful thing on earth they said.

(MORE)

KEVIN (cont'd)

I hold my new born kid and my muscles get sore, my body weak, my mind numb. But I continue Charlie...for her.

CHARLIE

Famous last words.

KEVIN

When does it all go wrong? That first day? That first time it all starts to turn to shit.

CHARLIE

What difference does it make?

KEVIN

We were supposed to be the generation Charlie. The educated, the rich, the new future.

CHARLIE

Who tried to feed you that line of shit?

KEVIN

If I could have realized what was happening with her I might have been able to stop it.

CHARLIE

Did you not take them blue boys I gave you last night?

KEVIN

I had a raging erection but the rest of my body was cold.

CHARLIE

It was hard, was it not?

KEVIN

Una bit it. That's not my idea of intimacy Charlie. Yeah, it's hard, but it's dead.

As Charlie jokes Kevin still looks out into the night sky.

CHARLIE

Nothing wrong with being gay my friend.

Kevin sings out into the night again.

KEVIN

'I believe I can fly. I believe I can touch the sky.'

Charlie checks his watch.

KEVIN
What we did was wrong.

CHARLIE
Shut your mouth.

KEVIN
We should do something.

CHARLIE
Like what?

KEVIN
What do they call it? Make
atonement.

CHARLIE
Did Linda suddenly materialize on
the roof? We'll be out of here
tomorrow, never to return and you
want to prostrate yourself in
front of a working class Jesus?
These people don't now how to
spell atonement Charlie much less
engage with complex philosophical
constructs.

KEVIN
'These people?' We can do
something decent here Charlie.
Turn it around.

CHARLIE
You going to shop me?

KEVIN
Me? You're my friend Charlie, my
best friend.

Kevin bursts out laughing at his own joke.

CHARLIE
If I were you and you were me I
I'd probably be spilling the
proverbial beans to every pig
with a willing ear.

KEVIN
Why?

CHARLIE
Why? Hypocrisy for one, possible
reward, notoriety, sublimated
jealousy and every other reason.
(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)

And if I were you and you were me
and you owed me the kind of
moolah I owe you and you were
doing who I'm doing, I'd
probably...

KEVIN

I'm not like that.

CHARLIE

Like me you mean?

KEVIN

You know that's not what I meant.

CHARLIE

You're a good man Kevin. One of
the remaining few. I'd be lost
without our friendship.

KEVIN

Me too Charlie. I mean that.

CHARLIE

Laurel and Hardy.

KEVIN

Abbott and Costello.

CHARLIE

Morecambe and Wise.

They stare out into the night sky and smoke in silence.

KEVIN

What did you ask the cards?

CHARLIE

If I should have another toke on
the smoke.

KEVIN

The second time.

CHARLIE

(obviously joking)

If I should throw you off the
roof?

KEVIN

My singing was that bad?

CHARLIE

Frankly, yes.

KEVIN

What did the cards say?

CHARLIE

See, you prick? You're still hooked.

KEVIN

Jut making conversation.

CHARLIE

Okay smarthole, they said no. Can you believe that?

KEVIN

What if they'd said yes?

CHARLIE

You'd be pulling a Wright brothers and flying for real.

KEVIN

That money...

Kevin trails off, the words hanging in the air, where Charlie lets them hang for a long beat.

CHARLIE

What about it?

KEVIN

I was thinking about it.

CHARLIE

You'll get it.

Kevin looks out into the night sky and the silence.

KEVIN

Una was asking about it again.

Charlie flicks the lighter and looks at the flame then holds his hand over it.

CHARLIE

Tell the pig she'll get it back along with the other two grand from the bet.

Kevin snaps and defies Charlie for the first time.

KEVIN

Don't call her that anymore, you hear me Charlie?

Kevin watches Charlie as the flame singes the skin on the palm of his hand.

CHARLIE

The trick is to turn the pain
into pleasure.

Charlie turns the lighter off and looks out into the sky.

KEVIN

What do you mean, 'doing who I
was doing?'

CHARLIE

If you were me and I was you,
you'd be doing my missus and I'd
be doing your pig because we'd
both be each other.

KEVIN

I told you Charlie, don't say it
again. I was wrong about my wife.

CHARLIE

Good for you.

KEVIN

I want to give her the benefit of
the doubt.

CHARLIE

You should give her the benefit
of a slap in the face.

KEVIN

She's a good woman.

CHARLIE

At the beginning they're all
supportive smiles and Florence
Nightingale tenderness, but you
live with them and nobody
celebrates your achievements less
and enjoys your hurt more. We
should've hooked up with these
foreign women. The Africans with
their gravity defying curves, the
Poles and Eastern Europeans with
their cool magnificence; even the
gypsy Romanians with those
hypnotic eyes so filled with
promise. But the Irish filly?
Broken pink skinned rage with
upper lip hair as thick as their
IQs and personalities so savagely
passive-aggressive you're dodging
sixteen different types of
psychosis just to keep a hard on.
Our Irish women, full of half
truths and complete fallacies.

KEVIN

I think you might be one of those men who hate women Charlie?

CHARLIE

Not as much as I hate owing money.

KEVIN

I don't want a different woman.

CHARLIE

Why do you think some women like to be slapped?

KEVIN

What?

CHARLIE

What do you say to a woman with two black eyes? Nothing, you've already told her twice.

KEVIN

That's not funny.

CHARLIE

Why are there so many shelters for battered women? Because they just don't fucking listen. You were right about her by the way.

KEVIN

Who?

CHARLIE

She's a whore.

KEVIN

Say that again.

CHARLIE

Your wife's a pig whore.

Kevin pushes Charlie hard and Charlie stumbles.

KEVIN

I told you not to call her that.

CHARLIE

And what's with her penchant for being slapped? Where did she get that kinky shit from?

KEVIN

Hold on a second.

CHARLIE
You're Ollie to my Stan.

KEVIN
Who told you that?

CHARLIE
Lou to my Bud. You know
everything about me.

KEVIN
Say again what you just said
about my wife.

CHARLIE
Ernie to my Eric. Which is the
problem with best friends.

KEVIN
How do you know Una likes that?

CHARLIE
They have the key to the secrets.

KEVIN
You...

CHARLIE
Yeah, me.

KEVIN
You and my wife?

CHARLIE
Me an Una up a tree. F-U-C-K-I-N-
G. She's a whore Kevin.

KEVIN
But, you...you're my...

CHARLIE
Best friend, I know.

Charlie casually pushes Kevin

- and as Kevin stumbles towards the edge of the building

- he spins round and reaches out towards Charlie but the
only thing his hand can grasp is Charlie's tie.

- Charlie grabs onto the pole and tenses his neck to take
the pressure

- Kevin is left precariously balanced on the roof edge

- the only thing preventing him from falling being the tie.

Kevin looks at Charlie with a mixture of fear and disbelief but Charlie just grins at him like it's a game.

CHARLIE

Now, that, I didn't plan.

Kevin tries to reassure himself its not serious but doesn't do a good job of it.

KEVIN

It's not funny anymore.

Charlie glances at the umbilical tie holding them together.

CHARLIE

The ties that bind huh?

KEVIN

This isn't funny Charlie, stop,
I'm scared.

CHARLIE

Come on grant me that one, it was
just a little bit funny?

Charlie ignites the cigarette lighter

- and holds it under his tie

- and as the flame burns away at the material

- Kevin's grip begins to slide down the tie

KEVIN

Charlie, please...whatever I did,
I'm sorry.

CHARLIE

You're apologizing to me?

Charlie suddenly grabs Kevin by the wrist to help him

- but, as Kevin lets go of Charlie's tie

- Charlie still leaves him balancing precariously on the
edge.

CHARLIE

You really think I'm going to
throw you off a roof because I'm
banging your wife, owe you money,
and the cards told me to?

KEVIN

The cards said no.

CHARLIE

You're the one who said I should
stop listening to them.

Charlie lets Kevin go and as Kevin reaches in vain his hands grasp empty air and he plummets to his death below.

Charlie carefully takes out his handkerchief and goes through Kevin's deck

- making sure his fingertips don't touch the cards
- finds the five of spades
- folds it in half then throws it and the rest of the cards off the roof
- and watches as they float down around Kevin's corpse.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

As quietly Charlie makes his way back inside he checks the desk is clear and he passes the sandwich board, he glances at it.

Charlie walks out of frame and as we hold on the sandwich board he suddenly appears again.

Charlie stops, moves to the sandwich board, and quickly rearranges the letters, throwing several onto the floor, and as he moves away again, the remaining letters on the board clearly spell:

- IRISH STATE CON

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sneakily making his way back to his room Donald is startled to meet Charlie.

Charlie is a little uneasy too, both men unaware that the other is trying to hide something too.

DONALD

Alright?

CHARLIE

Yeah. You?

DONALD

Good night tonight.

CHARLIE

The best.

DONALD
Where's Kevin?

CHARLIE
He's a bit stoned. Like myself. I gave him a few Viagra. Probably on the saddle as we speak.

DONALD
In like Flynn.

CHARLIE
You want some?

DONALD
Me?

CHARLIE
No harm in a little blue support.

DONALD
Wouldn't be my type of thing.

CHARLIE
Suit yourself. See you in the morning.

DONALD
Yeah...and Charlie...thanks.

EXT. HOTEL ROOFTOP - NIGHT (VIDEO FOOTAGE)

Charlie looks into the video camera then pours some wine over his wrist and watches the wine trail over his veins.

CHARLIE
The funny thing about Kevin is I thought standing by his grave was going to be the hardest part.

He stands, uses the remote control to zoom out, and takes off his jacket.

CHARLIE
And even though it was a tiny piss-ant funeral it was the speech that got me. At the grave I deliberately did nothing. Which works beautifully because people want to project all kinds of meaning onto you. That blank canvas allows them their indulgence.

He takes off his shirt and taps the veins in his arm, then, almost as a parody of himself, he flexes his muscles into the camera and smiles.

CHARLIE

It was supposed to be short and pithy but the words had their own power. Weaved their own spell.

He unbuckles his trousers looks down and grins up at the camera as if to say, 'Dream On.'

He stretches out his underwear and pours some wine down into his underwear.

CHARLIE

The speech got to the closet performer in me. The other part of me struggled not to laugh out loud. Especially when I smuggled in a direct quote from him. Which would have been inappropriate. And with the other funeral waiting outside...

He pours some more wine over his head and, as it dribbles down his face and chest, he licks the trails that lead to his mouth, then seems almost confused.

CHARLIE

I held onto that laughter until later.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

All cried out with eyes puffed and heart smashed, Kevin's daughter Majella sits in the front row with Una and the baby beside her.

Beside them sit two vacant looking older people - Kevin's parents.

Behind them sits Saoirse.

The rest of the church is empty apart from a few people in the background who have nothing to do with the funeral.

Charlie talks into the microphone.

CHARLIE

There's a term we used in the playground when we were kids. It was important to us then. The most important thing there was. Best friend. There was nothing more powerful.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)
 Everyone of us dreamed of having
 one. Everyone except me and
 Kevin. We didn't have to dream.
 Kevin was my best friend. And I
 was his.

Charlie almost breaks as he sees Majella trying not to sob.

CHARLIE
 I don't care what the coroners'
 report claimed, or what the
 police said, I don't believe
 Kevin took his own life. I don't
 know what happened on the roof
 that night but I wish I had been
 there. If I could have realized
 what was happening with him I
 might have been able to stop it.
 If my best friend took his own
 life I wish he had taken mine
 instead.

He struggles to retain his composure as he looks at the
 coffin.

CHARLIE
 Goodbye my friend. My best
 friend.

INT. HOTEL BAR - DAY

The mourners have a quiet drink in the same hotel.

Charlie, Saoirse, Donald and Linda watch as Una sits coldly
 while Majella weeps openly with Kevin's mother.

DONALD
 You don't think its strange she
 decided to have the wake here?

SAOIRSE
 She insisted on it.

LINDA
 I think it's fitting. It's where
 she saw him last.

CHARLIE
 You find Peanut?

Linda struggles to swallow back the hurt.

DONALD
 No sign of him anywhere.

SAOIRSE
 Sorry to hear that Linda.

DONALD

She hasn't eaten a drop of peanut butter since.

CHARLIE

I lose my best friend and you lose your dog. Hotel is cursed.

SAOIRSE

It's for Una. If this is what she wants...

CHARLIE

Then this is what she should have; you're right. I suggest we get properly pissed and raise a glass or twenty to Kevin Donnelly, my best friend.

EXT. HOTEL GROUNDS - NIGHT

Linda weeps as she peers into the darkness and quietly calls out her dogs name.

LINDA

Peanut?

INT. LINDA AND DONALD'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Upstairs Donald contentedly watches as his wife walks around in the dark, vainly calling out her dog's name.

INT. HOTEL BAR, BATHROOM - DAY

Drunk, Charlie stares at himself in the mirror, his tears flowing freely as he begins to sob.

His sobs turns to laughter

- then to sobs again

- then to laughter again

- a man capable of turning either emotion on and off on a whim.

He abruptly stops as he realizes he hasn't been alone in the bathroom when the door to the cubicle is unlocked and a man steps outside.

Charlie keeps his head down wiping his eyes as the man washes his hands and tenderly enquires.

MAN

You alright bud?

Then the man looks at Charlie and we realize it is Jimmy - the working class man who Charlie threw the coin at in the Hotel comedy night club.

JIMMY

I know you.

CHARLIE

You don't know me.

JIMMY

Yeah? Remember me from your comedy routine last week?

But Charlie seems almost excited by his own fear.

CHARLIE

Were you the one with his brother's semen in your throat?

Jimmy looks at him calmly.

CHARLIE

I can't tell, you tracksuits all look alike to me.

Jimmy smiles then throws a series of fast and powerful punches.

Charlie slumps to the ground, blood pouring from his mouth and, as he watches Jimmy exit, he calls out.

CHARLIE

Think you're tough? You don't know me. What I've done. What I'm capable of doing. YOU HEAR ME? YOU DON'T KNOW ME!!!

Charlie begins to laugh and cry at the same time, the cackle of pain and adrenaline fuelling his hysteria.

INT. CHARLIE AND SAOIRSE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Charlie, carrying a bottle of wine with the cork half stuck in, sits as Saoirse calmly cleans his bruises.

CHARLIE

Every time I come to this shithole some skank takes something off me.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)

I mean we're the ones who go to the gym, who work out, the super fit, fully fed, masters of the universe, and what do we do? We bend over for these bad diet, thieving gypsy bastard working class lowlifes and let them fuck us.

SAOIRSE

You have to stop talking like that.

CHARLIE

Like what?

SAOIRSE

A bigot. I used to think you were joking but -

CHARLIE

Many a true word has been said in jest and many a truth teller was accused of bigotry.

SAOIRSE

I'm working class Charlie.

CHARLIE

No, you're not.

SAOIRSE

And your parents were born in Coolock.

CHARLIE

If both my parents were blind, and I could see, would you still claim I was blind? Middle class is a state of mind not a place of birth. Surely money has taught you that? You sure as shit spend enough of it.

Charlie winces as she continues cleaning his blood.

SAOIRSE

Why did you never want children?

CHARLIE

Jesus Christ, Saoirse, is now really the time for the Nuremberg trials? Put on that red one I got you, will you?

SAOIRSE

How can you have an erection at this time?

CHARLIE

The effect you have baby. You and me against the world baby.

SAOIRSE

Laurel and Hardy.

CHARLIE

Abbott and Costello.

SAOIRSE

I'm pregnant Charlie.

CHARLIE

Did my wife just make a funny?

Saoirse nearly breaks.

SAOIRSE

I tricked you into getting me pregnant Charlie. How's that for comedy?

Charlie realizes she is serious.

CHARLIE

All's fair in love and rape.

SAOIRSE

Did you hear what I said? I know you're drunk but our baby is in my belly Charlie.

Charlie suddenly becomes aggressive and pushes her away.

CHARLIE

This is what I need in my life right now? We're broke Saoirse. Bankrupt. And you give me this shit?

SAOIRSE

A baby Charlie.

CHARLIE

You want to know how sacred childbirth is? Two hundred and fifty million sperm in each ejaculation. Quarter of a billion possibilities in every blob. You think there's something special about this one? I have a lot more blobs where that came from so on with the lingerie and lets get this pony show on the road.

SAOIRSE

What have you become?

CHARLIE

The best part of me. The very best part of me. After I hit her that night I became untouchable. I fight back now. And they respect me. And I'm untouchable.

SAOIRSE

Hit who?

CHARLIE

She was trying to steal my car. I fought back. And now I'm alive and that knacker piece of shit is...I'm untouchable.

SAOIRSE

Is what?

CHARLIE

I took power back baby, I took the power of our class back.

SAOIRSE

Is what Charlie?

CHARLIE

What do you think?

SAOIRSE

What are you saying?

CHARLIE

What, are we going to start whispering the word, 'dead' now? You're going to look in your heart and find sympathy for these tracksuits? Who's going to solve that crime? Does anybody care? If my daughter went missing would I trust the local muck savage in blue to find her?

He imitates a country bumpkin police officer.

CHARLIE

Could you tell me the gender of your daughter please?

SAOIRSE

What did you do Charlie?

CHARLIE

The dumb pricks had me in the station and didn't even know who they had. Morality is dead and culpability a fallacy Saoirse and we should be brave and honest enough to recognize that. It's a free for all feeding frenzy out there and, unlike those hypocrites, this little piggy has no shame in admitting I want to get to the top of the hog trough. That's how its always been honey, you and me against the world.

SAOIRSE

Charlie, are you saying...?

CHARLIE

No. Somebody killed themselves Saoirse. A long time ago. They just used the bumper of my car to finish the job.

Saoirse is trying to absorb what she's just been told.

CHARLIE

Look at you. He's just another dead man Soairse. Let's move on.

SAOIRSE

I thought you said she.

CHARLIE

Whatever, her too. Tell you what I'll do; put my fate in the hands of the gods.

Charlie pulls out the cards and shuffles them.

CHARLIE

Five or below yes, you call the police and I come clean, hand myself over, full confession, the whole nine yards but, if you pick six or above, you swear to forget about it and hump me hard tonight.

Saoirse stares at him in disbelief.

CHARLIE

I mean make love to, make love to me tonight.

SAOIRSE

This magnificent potential in your hands, and all you use it for is sex and power?

CHARLIE

What else is there? Pick a card, any card. Come on, live a little; take one risk your entire life. Let your interventionist God make the decision.

SAOIRSE

You swear you'll give yourself up?

CHARLIE

With bells ringing and banners flapping in the wind.

Saoirse hesitates, then picks the card and without looking at it she holds it against her chest.

SAOIRSE

Swear to me Charlie. Swear on your life.

CHARLIE

Show me the card.

Saoirse slowly looks at the card as Charlie barely contains himself.

CHARLIE

Come on, what is it?

Saoirse slowly turns the card around to reveal a ten of hearts.

CHARLIE

A ten. Not only is that a no but you cannot get more no than a ten. Now, while I'm having a shower, get fresh panties on baby because tonight, live and exclusive, Daddy's home.

INT. BATHROOM, CHARLIE AND SAOIRSE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The video camera powers up and, as Charlie uses the remote control to film himself looking at his reflection in the bathroom mirror, he shaves the final section of his face, puts the razor in his teeth to free his other hand, then takes out two Viagra and swallows them back as he winks at himself.

As he moves the camera towards the bathroom door and exits we see, through the camera's point of view, Saoirse sitting at the dressing table, naked, her back to the camera looking at Charlie's reflection through the mirror as he films her.

Charlie tries to speak but he has forgotten the razor blade is still in his mouth so only incomprehensible sounds come out.

He takes the razor from his mouth and slips it into his bathrobe pocket as he smiles at Saoirse.

CHARLIE

You know I like the lingerie to begin with. Come on, chop, chop.

SAOIRSE

How could I be married to you for ten years and not know you?

CHARLIE

What can I tell you? I'm an enigma.

Charlie pulls the cork off the wine with his teeth and drinks.

SAOIRSE

I loved you Charlie.

CHARLIE

What's not to love? Now drag yourself off the cross, drop the martyred messianic complex and get the red number on will you?

Charlie notices the blue flashing lights for the first time and frowns.

Then he looks at Saoirse and sees the look in her eye.

Charlie looks at the phone by the bed and realizes he's been pigged.

CHARLIE

You called them? But the cards? The cards said no.

SAOIRSE

The cards are your religion Charlie, not mine.

Charlie looks out the window and sees Officer McManus and other guards quickly moving into the hotel entrance downstairs.

Charlie turns to Saoirse, bile in his heart, drags her up and slams her against the wall.

CHARLIE

You're definitely not working class. They'd never shop their own.

He holds her close, his fingers wrapped around her throat.

SAOIRSE

You need help Charlie. Real help.

CHARLIE

You think I won't kill you too?

There's a calmness in Saoirse's eyes that unsettles Charlie.

SAOIRSE

I'm already dead.

He stares at her and becomes almost calm too.

CHARLIE

Me too. And if they ask, you tell them, tell them loud and clear, marriage and domesticity made me do what I did.

He releases his hand and gently fixes her hair.

CHARLIE

I've had to take hard on pills for two years to be able to even think of touching you.

Still carrying the wine and camera he, stops at the door, takes one final glance at her then exits.

INT. HOTEL, VARIOUS CORRIDORS - NIGHT

Charlie bolts up the corridors until he comes to a dead end then he sees the fire escape door at the end of the hall.

EXT. HOTEL ROOF TOP - NIGHT (VIDEO FOOTAGE)

Charlie sits and the video camera finds focus on him in the vast empty space as he drinks the wine from the neck.

Charlie extends his arm, and uses the camera remote control to zoom in a small bit closer on himself, looks into camera, opens his mouth to speak, then hesitates, trying to find the correct words.

CHARLIE

I am a man. The five percent. The alpha male. I will not be tamed by your conditioning and fear. I will die as I lived. Powerful. Audacious. And alone.

He takes a mouthful of wine and ponders this word.

CHARLIE

Alone.

He shrugs it off.

CHARLIE

These lives we lead. These cops in our heads. These self made prisons. No more. You drink my milk, piss in my porridge, then invite me to breakfast? No more.

He holds up a shining, thin, dangerously sharp razor blade.

CHARLIE

You think I'm a beast? The devil? The bogeyman? I'm not.

He stops as he hears a police siren in the distance then calmly stares back into the camera.

CHARLIE

I'm you.

As he continues staring into the camera, he listens as the distant sirens grow louder.

CHARLIE

My name is Charlie Barnum. And this is a razor blade. And if there is a God, this may very well be my last will and testament.

Charlie swigs from the wine bottle and looks back into camera.

CHARLIE

Regrets? Living a half life. In my day to day existence I was the ghost of Christmas future walking around the dead present.

He stares at the razor blade.

CHARLIE

That pretentious enough for you Daddy?

He brings his hand upright beside his face, flexes his fist and studies the veins in his wrist but then he's interrupted by the banging on the locked metal fire exit door.

CHARLIE

I'm a man who defined his own morals, his own code, and lived with the consequences. Depending on the fickle passion of the day that man is reviled or exalted, devil or god, boy or man. I am such a man. An escapee. I'm not afraid to say it, a hero. So, if there is a God on a day of reckoning, I'll look Him in square in the eye and tell Him to explain to me what it was I did that was so fucking wrong?

He pours some wine over his wrist and watches the wine trail over his veins.

CHARLIE

The funny thing about Kevin is I thought standing by his graveside was going to be the hardest part.

He stands and takes off the bathrobe and stands in his underwear as the pounding on the door grows more intense.

CHARLIE

But the speech before hand was what got me. At the grave I deliberately did nothing. Which works beautifully because people want to project all kinds of meaning onto you. And that blank canvas allows them to indulge.

He taps the veins in his arm, then, almost as a parody of himself, he flexes his muscles into the camera and smiles.

CHARLIE

It was supposed to be short and pithy but the words had their own power. Weaved their own spell.

He looks down towards his white underwear and grins up at the camera as if to say, 'Dream On.'

He stretches out his underwear and pours some wine down into his underwear to calm the stirring of his chemical inducement, the wine seeping out through the clean white cotton like dirty red blood.

CHARLIE

The speech got to the closet performer in me. The other part of me struggled not to laugh out loud. Especially when I smuggled in a direct quote from him. Which would have been inappropriate.

He pours some more wine over his head and as it dribbles down his face and chest he licks the trails that lead to his mouth.

CHARLIE

Held onto that laughter until later.

Using the razor blade to slice the plastic wrapping on the deck of cards, as he speaks, he slips the plastic off.

CHARLIE

I thought my answers were the problem but I was just asking the wrong questions. How would you tempt fate? What questions would you ask? Don't tell me you haven't been thinking about it? Don't tell me when you've finished watching this video you're not going to reach for your deck?

He stops the cards and splits them in two and, though we can't see the card he chooses, he can.

CHARLIE

Don't tell me you're not going to have the courage to tempt fate and let the cards fall where they may?

As he looks at the card and the blade and back to the card - is that joy, or pain, or both, on his face?

He raises the remote control and presses pause.

And as we freeze on his face the pounding on the door continues as we watch

- the sad, lonely, twisted poster-child of a greedy, ego driven generation who had it all

- and threw it all away.

FIN.