“LETTING IT LIE”

Katharine Eleanor Larking
MA by Research

University of York
Theatre, Film and Television
December 2018
LETTING IT LIE - ABSTRACT

'Letting It Lie' is a three part television drama series that explores the pressures of modern society and the subsequent issues of control that follow. When Leila Mellor goes against her husband Rob's wishes and signs them both up for significant medical tests, she realises that the more she tries to hold her family together the further apart they become.

The key theme of Letting It Lie is the dilemma of the modern woman and trying to be everything to all people. This situation is clearly not unique to women however they are often expected to keep more balls in the air than their male counterparts. Leila is juggling a demanding, high-pressure career with the desire to be a good mother, manage the household and repair her relationship. This ‘mental load’ constitutes normal life for many women and the concept of having time to oneself or a spare moment during the day in which to sit down and switch off, is alien. Often, something has to give – be it health, relationships or mental well-being and life can become overwhelming. Unfortunately for Leila and her family, the effect of such pressure is life-threatening.

This series explores a very modern, serious and universal dilemma with warmth, humour and heart.
# LIST OF CONTENTS

Abstract ............................................................................................................................................. ii  
List of Contents ................................................................................................................................... iii  
Author’s Declaration ........................................................................................................................ iv  
‘Letting it Lie’ Screenplay – Episode 1 Title Page ........................................................................... v  
‘Letting it Lie’ Screenplay – Episode 1 ................................................................................................ 1
AUTHOR’S DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.
LETITING IT LIE

Written by

Kate Larking

17 December 2018

66 Moorland Road, Stockport, SK2 7AX
Kate@larking.co.uk
+44 7970 105 594
INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM. DAY

LEILA (36, well dressed, angular, uptight) and ROB MELLOR (34, jeans, t-shirt, trainers, slouching) sit opposite one another in a cold, clinical hospital corridor. Garish strip lighting highlights a noticeboard filled with thank you cards and photos of recovering children. Rob is jiggling one leg anxiously. Leila glares at it with frustration.

LEILA
Rob!

Rob looks at Leila questioningly. Leila glares at his jiggling knee again. Rob looks down at his knee, back at Leila and begins to jiggle even more ferociously.

Leila stares at Rob with contempt, about to blow up then checks herself. She breathes deeply, just as the door to the office in front of them is opened by a NURSE.

NURSE
Mr and Mrs Mellor?

She opens the door wide for them and smiles. Rob steps back to let Leila enter the consulting room first, just as her phone starts to ring. She hurriedly searches in her bag and mutes it.

ROB
Leila! For god’s sake.

Leila shoots Rob daggers.

LEILA
I’m sorry, I thought it was on silent.

INT. CONSULTING ROOM. DAY

Paediatric Consultant MS MEHTAL (warm, kind eyes, mid 50’s) stands up and shakes Rob and Leila’s hands.

MS MEHTAL
Leila, Rob – good to see you. How have things been?

Rob glances at Leila who is lost for words. Rob looks confused – this is a first for Leila.

ROB
Theo’s in good spirits. He seems to be doing well.

Leila nods.

Ms Mehtal holds up a file as if to verify this. She smiles.
MS MEHTAL
You’re right! Theo’s results are excellent. His heart appears to be functioning perfectly. We won’t need to see him for another six months.

Leila and Rob let out a huge sigh of relief. They look a little shell-shocked.

MS MEHTAL
I am absolutely delighted for you all – although I appreciate that this news may take time to digest.

She leans across the table and takes each of their hands. This has clearly been a long road and a close acquaintance.

MS MEHTAL
Obviously we are here for you and Theo for the foreseeable future. But please do get in touch if you have any concerns – you know the score. It’s been a long journey.

Tears in her eyes, Leila gets up to hug Ms Mehtal. Rob stands up and moves towards the door, hand outstretched.

MS MEHTAL
Oh Rob, there is one more thing before you head off.

(Pause)
I have been asked to talk to you both about a research project affiliated with the hospital and university that we would very much like you to involve you in.

Rob looks at her blankly. Leila nods.

MS MEHTAL
It’s called RELIEVE. You’ll know all about it, Leila. Rob?

Rob shakes his head. Ms Mehtal pushes some pamphlets across the table.

MS MEHTAL
Well I’ve prepared some reading for you. In the light of Theo’s highly unusual condition, we would encourage you to take part but...

(she pauses)
...it is not compulsory.
LEILA
No, no - of course we will. It’s the least we can do after the care we have been given.

She looks at Rob guiltily - she should have consulted him before responding.

LEILA
Rob?

ROB
I’d like to read about it first.

MS MEHTAL
Of course. Absolutely. There are two things that I would like you to consider carefully. One is the timeframe. Due to the nature of Theo’s condition, they would like to include you in the current sample which closes next week. This means that we need to move quickly. It is an accelerated programme and should you sign up, the results would be returned within twenty eight days. The other thing to bear in mind is the two different options. The main findings will be relevant to Theo’s illness and hopefully offer some sort of explanation.

Leila is nodding throughout Ms Mehtal’s spiel, fascinated.

MS MEHTAL
The additional findings give a much bigger picture - for both of you. They look at genomic changes that cause serious or life threatening illnesses. And both parents would need to agree, it cannot just be one of you. We expect about one in a hundred people who take part to have one of these conditions.

ROB
You mean, you can tell us what serious illnesses we are going to get further down the line? Ultimately you can predict what can kill us?

Leila nods in awe. Rob looks uncomfortable.

LEILA
Isn’t it amazing?
ROB
I’m not sure about that.

MS MEHTAL
You two go home, read the information, have a talk and a think. It is a big decision, I do realise that. But most importantly give that little boy the biggest cuddle in the world!

She gets up and opens the door. Leila and Rob make their way out, hugging Ms Mehtal again and thanking her as they leave.

INT. LEILA’S CAR. DAY

Leila is driving, uptight. Rob sits sprawled in the passenger seat, eyes closed.

ROB
Thank fuck.

LEILA
What do you mean “Thank fuck”

ROB
He’s okay Leila. Theo is going to be okay.

LEILA
But now we’ve got the tests to worry about. It’s not over yet.

ROB
Lei, we don’t have to do it. We don’t even have to take part. It’s optional. Chill, enjoy the moment. This is an amazing day. Theo-is-okay!

LEILA
Chill?

Leila is incredulous.

LEILA
We owe it to the system. We owe it to the NHS. We owe it to the country. We owe it to the next poor little bugger like Theo. And we owe it to their parents.

Rob sighs. Right now he just wants to enjoy the moment and savour this breathing space that they have been granted.

LEILA
We have to do it.
Rob puts a hand on her arm. A moment.

ROB
Leila, breathe.

Leila looks down at his hand, her face softens and she suddenly yanks the steering wheel and pulls off the road.

ROB
What are you doing?

LEILA
Come on, we need to talk about this. Look we’ll make it quick, I want to get back to Theo too but we need to resolve this now. We can’t just go back to home to your mother and Theo with everything up in the air. Let’s walk and talk.

Rob does as he is told.

EXT. WOODLAND PATH. DAY

Rob and Leila walk through the woods. They are surrounded by bluebells, it is beautiful.

LEILA
The bluebells are out!

Leila’s shoulders drop. She inhales and breathes deeply.

ROB
Wild garlic

Leila’s phone rings, undoing all nature’s good work. Rob grimaces. Leila mutes it crossly.

LEILA
Sorry – it’s work. It must be important.

Rob looks at her questioningly.

LEILA
This is more important. The most important thing in the world.

She stops and turns to Rob and takes his hand without realising. He is surprised but leaves his hand in hers.

LEILA
Rob, look – I’m sorry – you know how I get caught up in things. And today is the day we have been waiting for, hoping for – you’re absolutely right.

(MORE)
We need to go home and tell Theo and your mum. But we also need to discuss this genome testing whilst it’s just the two of us. Otherwise we won’t see each other for another couple of weeks and then it will be too late.

Rob nods. Leila looks down, suddenly self-conscious and drops Rob’s hand.

LEILA
Sorry.

She moves on and Rob follows.

ROB
It’s okay.

He tries to distract themselves from the awkwardness.

ROB
So what’s to discuss? You say we have to take part and yes okay, I guess you’re right. I’ll read the info and then we can sign up for the main findings. If we can help other kids like Theo we should.

LEILA
But don’t you think we should think about the other option?

ROB
Uh - no-

LEILA
Don’t you want to know more about yourself and your body? I know that I certainly do.

Rob stops dead and looks at Leila.

ROB
Are you mad?

Leila is on a roll.

LEILA
Just think, we can pre-empt future illnesses and potentially extend our lifespan as a result of these tests! What a privilege. Medicine is developing and we are at the forefront.
ROB
Leila – listen to yourself. This is not work. This is us – your family. We’ve just gone through five years of hell with Theo. And that’s how we’ve ended up...

He indicates them both and the distance between them

ROB
(pause)
And I don’t know where we go from here.

He looks at Leila pointedly.

ROB
After the constant worry and relentless tests we’re being given the opportunity to find normality – whatever that is. But you want to add even more drama to our lives. Even worse, you’re trying to manipulate your own mortality. Can’t you just let things lie?

LEILA
But Rob, that is exactly what this would enable us to do! We can plan and pre-empt and make the most out of the rest of our lives!

ROB
Lei, think where we would be without all this. Living with Theo together – and his little brothers and sisters. I wanted a family. I wanted you. I didn’t for one minute think I’d be living with my mother at the age of thirty five.

LEILA
But–

ROB
YOU CANNOT CONTROL EVERYTHING. You have destroyed us.

He walks off, head down, dejected. Leila looks angry, then aghast. Tears slowly begin to run down her face as she walks slowly towards the car.
EXT/INT. CAR. DAY

Rob is leaning against the passenger door. Leila unlocks it remotely, Rob does not look at her as he gets in. As Leila puts the key in the engine her phone rings again. Rob sighs loudly and shakes his head. Leila answers it.

LEILA
Hi Alison.
(Pause)
Oh shit, I’m so sorry. Yep I’ll forward it now.
(Pause)
Okay, sorry, sorry, sorry...

She hangs up then taps away at her phone forwarding an email, fighting tears. She talks to Rob, still tapping away.

LEILA
Sorry, sorry.

Leila turns to Rob.

LEILA
Sorry. It’s work, I’ve missed something – I’ve really screwed up.

Rob visibly backs down. He can see the pressure she is under.

ROB
I’m sorry I shouted.

He is not used to seeing Leila cry. He takes her hand. A moment. Leila pulls her hand away and starts the engine.

LEILA
Let’s go and see our son.

EXT. LEILA’S CAR/ LEILA’S HOUSE

Leila looks at the front door, trying to compose herself. Rob carries a balloon with ‘WOW’ written on it, a big bag of crisps, a bottle of milkshake and a huge bar of chocolate.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. DAY

Leila and Rob burst through the door holding the treats.

LEILA ROB
No more hospital! No more Where is he? My superstar! tests.

Rob’s mother PAM (mid 60’s immaculate, fashionable) comes running, face full of concern.
ROB
Mum, he’s got the all clear!

He lifts Pam in the air and twirls her round. Leila looks at them, trying not to feel left out. She spots a mark on the kitchen island and scrubs at it with the dishcloth.

PAM
That’s incredible! Theo, Theo!

Theo walks in, head buried in his tablet. Leila is disapproving. Theo doesn’t even look up. Pam hugs him.

PAM
Look, your mum and dad are back.
See what they’ve bought you?

Leila tries not to push past Pam as she grabs her son.

LEILA
Clever boy!

She buries her head in his hair.

LEILA
You’ve done it baby. Good boy.

THEO
I’m not a baby!

He sits at the kitchen island with his tablet and looks up.

THEO
No more hospital?

Theo punches his arm in the air.

THEO
Yessssssssss.

Pam high fives him and Rob pats him on the back, keen to get close to his boy. Leila sits next to Theo and watches Pam put the kettle on, totally at home in their kitchen. Theo munches on the crisps, still immersed by the tablet.

PAM
Bed time in five minutes Theo. So you can get your head down again now can’t you Leila? Sit your surgeon exams again perhaps?

Leila is taken aback. She was in the family zone so this throws her a little.

LEILA
Uh – yes. I suppose so.
(Pause)
I’d love to.
Pam makes three cups of tea and pours a glass of milk for Theo, frowning at the milkshake as she puts it in the fridge.

**PAM**
You’ve had to put your life on hold for the last five years haven’t you, duck? Now it’s your time.

Leila does not know whether to feel touched or suspicious.

**LEILA**
I guess so- but I need to get Theo-

Leila smells her hand, that cloth is rank! She grimaces and then gets up and puts the dish cloth in the bin.

**PAM**
Don’t you worry about Theo, he can stay with us whenever. He’ll love it. Thick as thieves, us.

Leila tries not to get irritated.

**ROB**
Mum, that would be great. That’s so kind. Leila - isn’t it?

He nods at Leila, to elicit an acknowledgement of gratitude.

**LEILA**
Yes, great - thanks. I’d just like -

**PAM**
Theo, love - bed time now. Come on, I’ll take you up.

Leila looks at Rob questioningly. Rob chooses to ignore it.

**ROB**
Grandma’ll take you up. I’ll be there for a story in five minutes once you’ve brushed your teeth.

Leila opens her mouth to say something to her son then closes it again. Between them they’ve got it covered - it’s as if she’s not there. She empties her cup of tea down the sink and takes a half open bottle of wine from the fridge, pouring herself a glass. Rob frowns at her.

**LEILA**
Want one?

**ROB**
No thanks. I’ll finish my brew first.
LEILA
Do you think your mum could be a little less... dominant?

Rob shakes his head at her in disbelief.

ROB
Not this again.

Leila walks out.

INT. LEILA’S DOWNSTAIRS TOILET. NIGHT

Leila sits on the toilet staring at the ceiling. She pulls her knickers up, washes her hands then straightens the towel, Sleeping with the Enemy style. Removing a Tampax packet from a high shelf she reveals a cigarette packet and lighter.

INT. LEILA’S FRONT DOOR/ EXT. LEILA’S HOUSE. NIGHT

Leila creeps out of the front door, round the side of the house and crawls in to Theo’s playhouse. She shuts the door.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Rob is at the sink washing up. He clocks Leila and double takes. He shakes his head then goes to say goodnight to Theo.

EXT/ INT. THEO’S PLAYHOUSE. NIGHT

Leila’s hand comes out of the window, tapping her ash outside. She scrolls through her work emails on her phone.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Rob and Pam dry the dishes. She is distracted by the sight of Leila’s hand sticking out of the playhouse.

PAM
Is that Leila? In the playhouse? What is she doing? I didn’t know she smoked!

ROB
Neither did I. Well I did, then she gave up when she was pregnant with Theo. But – it’s been a while now.

PAM
She’s a funny one. A complete maze of contradictions.
INT. THEO'S PLAYHOUSE. NIGHT

Leila gives herself a talking to.

LEILA
Stop being such a bitch. She’s trying to help. Grit your teeth and go back in there - and be nice!

She crawls out of the playhouse and steels herself.

INT. LEILA'S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Pam puts the tea towel down and picks up the ‘RELIEVE’ pamphlet, reading out loud to Rob.

PAM
Anyway. These genomes. You said they’re something we all have?

ROB
Well - yes.

PAM
‘Additional findings - adults can choose to find out whether they risk passing on serious genetic conditions to future children or grandchildren’. Would you honestly want to know that? Would you heck!

ROB
No mum -

Pam looks incredulous as she continues to read.

PAM
What nonsense! ‘May get results several years later, as new genomic changes are discovered’. So everything is going swimmingly, until a letter arrives saying ‘You’re going to die on 3 August 2022’. Do you really want to know that, son? The world’s gone mad!

INT. LEILA’S HALLWAY. NIGHT

Leila is searching for chewing gum in her handbag. She overhears the conversation from the kitchen.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Pam is still reading the pamphlet, Rob listens.
PAM
‘May/ may not be curable, treatable
or prevented’. Good to know! Don’t
get pushed in to this duck.

ROB
Mum –

Too late, Leila enters and gives them both death stares.

LEILAL
So you’ve decided have you? After
all, this is clearly your decision
to make, nothing to do with me.

PAM
Well, you clearly aren’t going to
take part in this nonsense are you,
so what’s there to discuss?

Rob is desperately trying to placate the situation

ROB
MUM!

Leila stares at Rob, if looks could kill...

LEILAL
I’m going to say goodnight to Theo.

As Leila storms out of the room Pam cannot resist calling
after her

PAM
I think he’s probably asleep by
now.

LEILAL
Please do not be here when I get
back.

She looks at Rob too.

LEILAL
Neither of you.

Leila slams the door behind her.

INT. THEO’S BEDROOM. NIGHT

Leila creeps into Theo’s bedroom and strokes his hair.

LEILAL
Night night sweetheart. I love you.

THEO
Night mummy. Love you.
Theo is nearly asleep. Leila kisses him again, inhaling her son – drinking him in. Then she slowly leaves the room.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Leila enters the empty kitchen and sighs. She pours herself a glass of wine and looks at the RELIEVE pamphlet, putting her head in her hands. Picking up her phone she texts Rob “SORRY”. He texts back. “See you at 8am”.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. DAY

Leila is in her running kit, eating a banana. There is a knock at the door.

LEILA
Come in

She hears the sound of the key turning. Rob walks in.

LEILA
I keep telling you, you don’t have to knock.

ROB
It just doesn’t seem right. What if you were –

They both look a bit awkward. Moving towards the door.

LEILA
We’ll just do the usual route, I’ll be back in an hour and a half.

She heads out of the door then turns around.

LEILA
Rob? Thank you.

She heads out once again then Rob hears the doorbell ring.

INT. LEILA’S HALLWAY – FRONT DOOR. DAY

Rob opens the door to Leila.

LEILA
Left my keys. I wanted to say – I’m sorry about last night.

She shifts awkwardly from foot to foot.

LEILA
I’ll try to be less...controlling.
Rob’s instinct is to hug her, which he does. Leila gratefully welcomes the hug but when it becomes slightly too long neither of them know how to end it. Leila sides steps, gives Rob a little nod then runs off.

EXT. ROUNDHAY PARK. DAY

Leila, JEN and LOU (both 36) jog around the lake.

LOU
That’s bloody brilliant Lei, I’m so pleased for you all!

JEN
How did Theo react?

LEILA
Oh you know - pretty non-plussed. Head behind tablet. He was happiest about the treats he got!

She runs off and shouts behind her

LEILA
SPRINT FINISH!

Lou and Jen run after Leila. They round a corner and find her sprawled out on a grassy verge. They collapse beside her.

LOU
How’s Rob?

Leila sits up and straightens her pony tail, brushing the grass off her top.

LEILA
Um - up and down. We’ve got a pretty big decision ahead of us. Come on, let’s get a coffee.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP. DAY

Jen and Leila are seated outside a coffee shop.

LEILA
And obviously I want the additional findings but Rob is determined to bury his head in the sand and stick to the main ones because he’s Rob.

Lou plonks three mugs down in front of them.
JEN
But why rock the boat? You’ve got through what is hopefully the hardest thing you’ll ever have to face. Now you can get things back on track. Your son’s health. Your career. Maybe even your relationship if you want?

Leila looks thoughtful.

JEN
You have a nice house, a great job – not to mention the sheer goddesses that are your two best mates! Can’t you just live for the moment?

Leila sighs and hesitates before speaking

LEILA
Because –

Lou takes her hand

LOU
Think about this from Rob’s point of view. He wants a bit of peace and quiet for a while. If things are getting better between the two of you – the three of you – why not have some breathing space?

LEILA
...he wants another child. And I want Rob.

Leila looks surprised by what she has just put in to words. Lou and Jen look at each other.

LEILA
I want him back.

LOU
Oh love, I hear you, I really do.

Leila unloads her confused brain.

LEILA
A baby was the last thing on my mind until yesterday. And how would I have a baby and do my exams? And what if it had what Theo has? We can’t do that again.

LOU
No love. You can’t.
LEILA
But this test could tell us. We could find out whether a baby would have the same thing as Theo...if that’s what Rob wants.

LOU
If it’s what YOU want Lei. This must be right for all of you.

JEN
You’re playing God, Leila. You’re playing with fire.

LEILA
I didn’t say that I’m going to have a baby for Rob. But I’d like to explore the option - and this seems like a sensible way of doing so. And knowing if it is a possibility.

LOU
You both need to make the same decision. Why not get the main findings for now and see how things go with Rob? Then if after a while you both want to think about another child you could ask for the additional findings.

Leila stands up stiffly, not quite sure what to think or say. She regains her composure and sets off at a gentle jog.

LEILA
Come on, I need to get back to my healthy, happy boy.

JEN
(to Lou)
I hope she doesn’t do a Leila.

She rolls her eyes and they both run after her.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. DAY

Theo is dipping soldiers into a boiled egg. Rob is pouring coffee into a travel mug, his bike helmet and rucksack next to him. Leila walks in and kisses Theo. She looks at Rob hesitantly then plants a kiss on his cheek too. He smiles.

ROB
Good timing! Your egg’s done.

He serves it up to Leila.
ROB
Would you like me to slice your
soldiers for you madam?

Leila laughs

ROB
Gotta run. Well bike.

LEILA
Where are you rushing off to?

ROB
I’ve got a year eleven revision
session. What are you up to?

He gives Theo a hug and smiles at Leila before rushing out.

LEILA
Not sure yet.

Leila turns to Theo who shrugs.

LEILA
Now then my best boy, what do you
fancy doing today?

ROB (O.S)
Well have an ace time, whatever!

EXT. SCARBOROUGH SEAFRONT. DAY

Theo and Leila sit on a bench eating fish and chips looking
out to sea. On Theo’s other side is an enormous dolphin soft
toy and a bucket and spade. They are happy and content in
each other’s company.

LEILA
How is it?

THEO
The best!

LEILA
Hooray! How are you feeling? Okay?

THEO
Good. Can I have an ice cream after?

LEILA
Sure thing! Ninety-nine with sauce
and sprinkles?

THEO
YEAH!
They watch a FAMILY walk along the seafront in front of them. MUM holding the YOUNG BOY’S hand, DAD pushing a pram.

THEO
Mum?

LEILA
Yes sweetie?

THEO
I’d really like a little brother. Or sister even. Eddie Selway has just had a little baby brother. He’s pretty cool.

LEILA
And you’d like one too?
(under her breath)
It’s a conspiracy!

THEO
Yes please.

LEILA
I’ll see what I can do. Right we’d better finish off that sandcastle.

EXT. ICECREAM VAN. DAY
The ICECREAM MAN hands Leila and Theo a 99 cone each and they head back to their picnic blanket. Theo gobbles down his ice cream then busies himself filling the moat with water. Leila lies on the blanket and reads her Kindle, one eye on Theo.

INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE. DAY
Theo sleeps on Leila’s shoulder as she checks her work emails on her phone, attempting to balance the huge dolphin across their laps. She looks out the window thoughtfully then texts Rob “Got plans tonight? Would you like to come for tea? X”

EXT. LEILA’S GARDEN. NIGHT
Leila is mowing the lawn in the twilight. Rob pushes his bike through the garden. Leila shouts above the noisy mower.

LEILA
Theo’s probably still awake if you want to say goodnight to him.

Rob nods and goes inside. Leila continues to mow in her very precise manner. Rob returns and feeling like he ought to help, attempts to strim very badly. After observing him critically for a few moments Leila stops the mower.
LEILA
Why don’t you go and get a beer?
As soon as Rob has gone Leila goes back over his handiwork.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN/ EXT LEILA’S GARDEN. NIGHT
Rob spots the dinner ingredients carefully laid out and chops an onion whilst drinking his beer. He watches Leila out of the window perfecting the lawn. She enters, washing her hands meticulously. Leila takes a bottle of wine from the rack and pours two glasses before heading out of the room with hers.

LEILA (O.S.)
Don’t forget the parsley!
Rob inhales deeply. His phone rings. He balances it between his shoulder and ear whilst he adds various ingredients to the pan. We can hear a loud voice on the other end of the line but the words are indistinguishable, he whispers.

ROB
Hi mum.... Yep, I’m at home - Leila’s....I’m not whispering... she’s upstairs. They’ve been to Scarborough....yes I think so... he’s asleep ... just some dinner.

He hears the sound of Leila coming down the stairs.

ROB
Look mum, I’ve got to go. Love you, bye... yes tomorrow, fine.
Rob hangs up as Leila enters, she has changed her top and put on some make-up. She stirs the dinner and adds a sprinkle of oregano, Rob stands to the side then goes to set the table. Leila moves the huge dolphin out of the way and sits down. She begins to fill in the hospital paperwork.

LEILA
How was your day?

ROB
Leila looks sympathetic.

ROB
Who’s this fella?
Rob gestures towards the dolphin.
LEILA
Oh that’s Harry Kane from Scarborough. I was trying to get Theo to go for something alliterative you know, Dora, Dolly, Dean - but no, Harry Kane.

ROB
Amazing, I never won anything at those places as a -

He stops as he sees Leila absent-mindedly straightening the table settings and grits his teeth.

ROB
(under his breath)
Want to get your set square out whilst you’re at it?

Leila looks up, she hadn’t noticed what she was doing. She continues to fill in the form and Rob goes back to cooking.

LEILA
Sorry?

ROB
Nothing... How was Scarborough?

Leila looks up from the form and smiles at Rob, engaging with him properly for the first time since he arrived.

LEILA
Really lovely. Theo was so happy. We had fish and chips and ice cream. Built a sandcastle. He said - he said he wants a little brother.

She scrutinizes Rob’s face. He sets Leila's plate down in front of her, sits down with his own and nods. Leila looks surprised. There is an awkward silence and they begin to eat.

ROB
I’d like that too, Lei - if we can work things out.

He puts his knife and fork down.

ROB
In fact I’d really like it. You know I’ve always wanted a big family. Two parents one child is overkill - just look at mum.

He laughs. Leila smiles but Rob has clearly touched a nerve.

LEILA
But what if we were to have another child with the same thing as Theo?
ROB
Don’t you think that’s jumping the gun a bit? There’s lots to talk about first. We need to remember what life was like before Theo got ill. Remember ‘us’, have some fun.

Leila gets up and opens a cupboard.

LEILA
Surely it’s a reason to go with the additional findings though? To see whether it actually would be a risk or if we’re safe to go ahead?

She returns to the table with the pepper and salt and seasons her food. Rob looks put out.

ROB
What if we find out that one of us has a fatal illness? Do we just sit back and count down to the end? I’d honestly rather not know. Would you really want to find that out?

LEILA
YES! That’s exactly my point – I want to know so we can plan our lives – our lives together – and make the most of every milli-second. We’ve already wasted the last five years. Not a minute more!

Rob goes quiet. He looks exhausted, pale, beaten. He gets up, grabs his plate and moves to the sink.

ROB
Lei, you know I’m not one for ultimatums. But I’m telling you – I cannot – cope – with – this. It would be the last straw for me, if you do this then that is it.

Leila looks taken aback by the force of Rob’s outburst.

LEILA
Okay, okay. I’m sorry. I get it.

She moves gently over to him, she wants to hug him but is unsure whether this is acceptable. He embraces her. Silence.

ROB
It’s alright. I really want to try and make this work Lei. But you’re going to have to let go a bit.
Rob untangles himself and clears the table. Still processing the conversation, Leila puts on her apron and marigolds and begins to stack the dishwasher in a regimented manner.

ROB
Look, why don’t I ask mum to babysit tomorrow night and we can go out – we could go to Alonso’s, we’ve not been there in years.

Leila smiles

LEILA
That would be nice. But I really think we need some space from your mother, Rob. Let’s get a babysitter and have some you and me time that is not top and tailed by Pam.

Rob looks a bit miffed.

LEILA
Don’t get me wrong, I’m so grateful for everything she does for Theo – but to quote Princess Di ‘there are three of us in this relationship’.

Rob smiles. And then Leila does too. A moment of relief.

LEILA
Seriously though, she needs to butt out. She cannot be our Camilla.

Leila looks at Rob in mock horror.

LEILA
And that would also be weird.

Rob laughs, a little freaked out. He takes Leila’s hand. She laughs as she is wearing marigolds.

ROB
I’ll talk to her...again. But you know what she’s been like since dad died. She throws herself in to things–

LEILA
I know – but she needs to find another interest. And allow us some space. To give us a chance.

ROB
Yes. Okay.
Rob takes Leila in his arms and kisses her. He expects her to protest but she responds passionately, still in rubber gloves and apron. They become intimate, it still feels very natural. They have missed this closeness and clearly need each other.

INT. LEILA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

Rob is asleep. Leila awakes to the sound of Theo crying.

INT. THEO'S ROOM. NIGHT

Leila sits on the side of Theo’s bed and soothes him until he falls back to sleep. She strokes his face and kisses his forehead gently then leaves the room. Her face is thoughtful.

INT. LEILA'S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Leila switches the light on and sits down. She removes the form from the envelope, ticks a box then replaces it. Sealing it, she places her hands on top, not quite believing what she has done. Switching the light back off she heads to bed.

INT. LEILA'S BEDROOM. DAY.

Leila wakes to see Rob tiptoeing around, retrieving his clothes.

LEILA

Are you trying to sneak out like a dirty stop out?

They both laugh.

ROB

I thought it would be better if Theo didn’t know I stayed.

LEILA

Why?

ROB

I just thought -

LEILA

But if we both want to give things another go then what’s the worry?

She clambers out of bed wrapped in the duvet and pulls him underneath it. They both giggle and shriek. Theo enters to see a wriggling duvet on the floor.

THEO

Mum? What are you doing?
Rob whispers, muffled, from under the duvet.

ROB
Uh-oh. Sprung!

LEILA
Nothing, darling. Go and get dressed and I’ll be right with you.

THEO
Daddy, is that you?

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. DAY

Rob is cooking bacon. Leila is in her dressing gown making sandwiches looking happy, relaxed and a little disheveled. The envelope lies on the kitchen island. Theo enters wearing his school uniform, his jumper back to front.

THEO
Bacon, yippee!

Rob and Leila look at each other, relieved. Rob hands out the sandwiches, wrapping his in foil.

ROB
Right, I’m off – got a staff meeting before registration.

He kisses them both, picking up his rucksack and bike helmet.

THEO
(grinning)
I knew you’d be back.

Rob reaches out and takes the envelope.

ROB
Oh good, you’ve done it. I’ll post it on my way.

Leila looks panicked, she’d temporarily forgotten her midnight activities.

LEILA
Don’t worry, I can –

ROB
It’s no bother, really.

He gives Theo a big hug.

ROB
Good luck today mate. Smash it!
He kisses Leila again then leaves the room. She looks at once on top of the world and tortured.

**INT. LEILA’S HALLWAY. DAY**

Dressed smartly and immaculately made up, Leila stands at the door; work case, school bag and water bottle in hand.

**LEILA**
THEO! We can’t be late on your first day back! How many times?

Theo comes running. He shouts like a protesting teenager.

**THEO**
Okaaaaaaaaaay

**EXT. LEILA’S CAR. DAY**

Leila opens Theo’s door for him and shepherds him in to car.

**EXT. THEO’S SCHOOL. DAY**

Leila holds Theo’s hand tightly and gives him a huge hug as she hands him to the teaching assistant, MRS FAY (late 40’s, brilliant with children but terrible with adults)

**LEILA**
Have a good day darling.

She smiles anxiously at Mrs Fay who nods at her with little reassurance.

**INT. LEILA’S CAR. DAY**

Leila drives fast and efficiently. She calls Rob.

**LEILA**
Hi - it’s me. I just wanted to say... yes he went in no problem. He didn’t seem bothered at all! He’s such a trooper isn’t he?

(pause)

Yes okay. So I just wanted to see if you had chance to post that letter?...Oh great, you did.

She pulls in to her work car park.

**LEILA**
Rob, I need to – oh okay, bye.

The phone is cut off abruptly
LEILA
I need to tell you that your wife
is a complete twat but she loves
you. Please remember that.

Frustrated, she hurls her phone to the floor of the car.

EXT. ROUNDHAY PARK. NIGHT

Leila sees LOU and JEN in the distance and sprints to catch
up with them.

LEILA
Sorry, sorry – we were running an
hour behind today.

LOU
You need to be stricter with them,
you can’t let work rule your life.

LEILA
Yes – but if anyone knows what it’s
like Lou, it’s you. And right now I
need to prove myself.

LOU
Humph.

JEN
The only way to have it all is to
be a hard-assed bitch. Like me.

They laugh as they run.

LOU
How’s Theo? How’s he got on with
his first full week back at school?

LEILA
It’s like he’d never been off. He
waltzed right in!

JEN
That’s ace. Superstar Theo.

LOU
And have you and Rob had chance to
properly discuss the tests?

JEN
Like grown ups?

Leila rolls her eyes. Then hesitates.

LEILA
Um, kind of.
Leila steps up the pace somewhat, intentionally. Lou struggles to keep up. Jen races after her.

JEN
Don’t try that trick missy. Under 15’s cross-country champion 1997, remember?

Leila laughs.

LOU
Have you agreed to the tests?

LEILA
Yes

LOU
The main findings?

LEILA
No

LOU
What? You haven’t, have you Leila?

Jen grabs Leila’s arm and slows her to a halt.

JEN
Lei, you know how serious this is.

She guides Leila to a nearby bench and she and Lou sit on either side of her like concerned bouncers.

LEILA
I know, I know….. I don’t know. There’s just been so much uncertainty - and this is something we can be certain about.

LOU
Yes but you cannot make that decision for him Leila. That’s not right. Nor moral.

LEILA
Is it right or moral that he can make the decision for me? One of us has to lose out here. It’s fifty percent my decision after all.

JEN
Think what’s at stake! You’re just getting back on your feet Leila. With a lot to lose. It’s a huge gamble.
LEILA
I know I shouldn’t have. I tried to tell him - then I thought - maybe I don’t need to? There’s no reason for him to find out... is there?

Jen gets up and stretches her legs, She waits for a family who have been feeding the ducks to pass.

JEN
For fuck’s sake, Leila.

Jen looks at Leila angrily before walking off. Lou follows. Leila stays, staring stubbornly ahead at the ducks swimming around in the lake, mundanely bickering about bread.

INT. LEILA’S CONSULTING ROOM. DAY

Leila hands a prescription to MRS WRIGHT and opens the door.

LEILA
Let’s see how that goes then Mrs Wright. All the best.

Shutting the door, Leila picks up her phone and texts Lou and Jen: “You’re right. I’m telling him. Love you XX”

She picks up her mobile and dials Rob’s number.

LEILA
Hey, have you got an hour later? Theo’s with Pam and I need to talk to you...Brill, park cafe at 4.30?

As she hangs up she notices a missed call from an unknown number before she is distracted by the buzzer.

INT. CAFE IN THE PARK. DAY

Leila spots Rob in the far corner of the cafe, a cup of tea and a slice of carrot cake waiting for her. She smiles.

ROB
What’s up?

LEILA
This is nice. Thank you.
(stalling)
How was your day?

Rob looks at her quizzically.

ROB
(formally)
Fine thanks Leila, how was yours?
Leila takes the cue and uses it to stall further.

LEILA
Theo was hilarious this morning. He was going through the alphabet - you know phonetically a is for apple and so on - and guess what he said when he got to L? L is for lady bits. How embarrassing!

Rob laughs.

LEILA
What do you do? If you tell him not to say it he’ll say it more, but if we don’t, he’ll say it at school.

ROB
Could be worse.

LEILA
True.

ROB
So -

LEILA
This morning was relentless, all the usual suspects, you know.

Rob nods, utterly confused. What is he here for?

LEILA
Then I grabbed a sandwich at my desk and ate it whilst catching up on the morning’s notes.

ROB
And what did you drink?

LEILA
Drink? I had a coffee.

She realises that Rob is being facetious and checks herself.

ROB
Léi, as nice as this is -

He indicates their surroundings

ROB
We don’t do this. What are we doing here? You said it was important.

Leila steals herself. She moves closer to the table and grabs Rob’s hand. This is her chance and she must do it now.
THEO (O.S.)
MUMMY! DADDY!

Theo comes rushes to bear hugs his parents. Pam follows.

PAM
What are you two doing here? Oh -

She senses that something is up.

PAM
Theo love, do you want to come and choose your icecream?

Leila seizes the opportunity.

LEILA
No Pam, don’t you worry. I’ll get it. Come on Theo.

Leila grabs Theo’s hand. Rob looks utterly bemused.

ROB
Leila?

LEILA
It’s alright Rob, we can talk about it later.

She leads Theo over to the counter. Pam looks at Rob and raises her eyebrows.

EXT. PARK CAR PARK. DAY.

Leila waves to Pam and Theo as they drive off. Rob cycles after them, pulling faces at Theo. Leila opens her car door and sits down heavily, head on the steering wheel.

LEILA

EXT. LEILA’S HOUSE. DAY

Theo kicks the tyres of the car, school bag in hand.

THEO
Muuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuu! Come on, we’re going to be late.

Leila comes running out of the house and slams the door. She unlocks the car and they both jump in. She notices another missed call but has no time to think further on it.

LEILA
Sorry, sorry, sorry
INT. LEILA'S CAR. DAY

Leila is focussing intently on the road ahead, willing the cars to get out of her way. Her son will not be late in his second week back at school. Theo tries to get her attention.

THEO
Mum, I need a dolphin costume.

LEILA
What’s that?

THEO
A dolphin costume. I’m playing the dolphin in Aesop’s Fables.

LEILA
I don’t remember a dolphin in Aesop’s Fables.

THEO
There is one, just ask Mrs Fay.

Leila smiles as she pulls up outside the school.

LEILA
It’s okay sweetie, I believe you!

She hurries Theo out of the car.

EXT. THEO’S SCHOOL. DAY

Leila kisses Theo, passing him his bag, lunch and drink bottle. Mrs Fay hands her a letter.

MRS FAY
Don’t forget it’s the reception play next Wednesday and Theo will need a dolphin costume.

THEO
I told you.

Leila laughs and gently nudges him through the door.

LEILA
Wednesday?

MRS FAY
Yes, you will have received a text and an email.

LEILA
Oh. Shit.

She puts her hand over her mouth and surveys the small children surrounding her. Mrs Fay gives her a death stare.
LEILA

Sorry.

Layla runs, if she had a tail it would be between her legs.

INT. LEILA'S CAR. DAY

Leila drives furiously, her phone rings on hands free.

LEILA

Hi Alison..... Yes I know, nine fifteen. I’ll be there.

She looks at the clock. 9.11.

LEILA

Two minutes.

She puts her foot down even more.

LEILA

Newcastle? Next Wednesday? Oh shit. Is there anything we can do?...Just pulling up now. Okay, bye.

Leila screeches into a parking space and runs in to work.

INT. LEILA'S WORK RECEPTION. DAY

Leila leans over the desk pleading with ALISON the department receptionist (60’s, Scottish, unimposing in stature but ferocious in attitude - born to be a gatekeeper)

LEILA

It’s Theo’s first school play Ali, I can’t miss it. Can I just go to the next one instead?

ALISON

You know the departmental policy Leila. Sue’s been so understanding over the last few years - understandably - but I really don’t think you can get out if it again.

Leila nods.

LEILA

Understandably understanding, sure. Look what if I just go for the morning?

ALISON

As far as I’m aware you’ll be there for the whole day.
She winks and nods at a patient nearby.

ALISON
You’re getting a death stare from Mr Corbett, any longer and I actually think he will bore right through you in to me then who’ll be left to keep you from the lions?

Leila laughs, picks up her clipboard from the desk, puts on a smile and turns to survey her patients.

LEILA
Mr Corbett? Please follow me.

INT. GYM/INT. ROB’S WORK. DAY

Leila is on the cross trainer in the gym on the phone to Rob who is packing up his things in his classroom.

LEILA
I thought you were doing bed time tonight Rob, why’s Pam there?

ROB
I got caught late at work. Emergency meeting about Paul Pratt. You know, psycho cat killer.

LEILA
Yes I know the one. But it’s only Theo’s second week back at school and your mum is already putting him to bed. If I’d known I’d have skipped the gym. I thought we were trying to establish a normality.

ROB
Leila. It was an emergency.

Leila clocks the impatient tone of his voice and takes a mental step backwards.

LEILA

Rob waits for the sarcastic remark. None follows.

ROB
I’m on my way. I’ll be home in twenty minutes.

LEILA
Okay, I’ll be back in a couple of hours. I’m going for a drink with Lou and Jen... thank you.
ROB
You’re welcome. I’ll leave some tea
as you’ll be either hungry,
hammered or both, knowing you.

Leila laughs.

ROB
Have a good night, see you later.

LEILA
Rob – you’re welcome to stay over –
if you want – that is.

She hangs up, smiling shyly to herself.

EXT. BAR. NIGHT.

Leila and Jen are sat at an outside table with a bottle of
wine, three glasses and three cocktails. Leila rushes up, hot
and sweaty from the gym.

JEN
Oh jeez you’re that active wear
mum. Do we have to sit with you?

LOU
Why didn’t you get changed?

LEILA
I left my clothes at work by
mistake. God, I’m such a state...
Is this for me?

She gestures towards a cocktail and takes a swig.

LEILA
Thank you.

JEN
Happy Hour.

Lou knows that it is not like Leila to be so disorganised and
flustered so she tries to help calm her down.

LOU
You’re fine. Here take my make-up
and go to the toilet. Have a bit of
a wash, bob’s your uncle.

Leila looks at the lip gloss Lou is proffering.

LEILA
Jen, lend us your make-up will you?

Lou pretends to be insulted and they all laugh as Jen passes
Leila her huge handbag.
JEN
Just take the whole thing.

Leila gratefully departs with the huge bag after downing the rest of her cocktail.

LOU
So, guess what? A tattoo shop has opened on my street! Shall we?

Jen laughs.

JEN
What. You want us to get matching tattoos?!

LOU
Just small ones, it’d be fun.

JEN
Midlife crisis anyone?

LOU
Mind you, the guy specialises in Clint Eastwood apparently!

She scrolls through her phone to find a photo and shows Jen.

JEN
Wow, that’s awesome. Who else can he do? Not sure I want Clint, how about someone more... current? Tom Hardy or Ryan Gosling?

LOU
Ooooh yes. But are they lifers? You will have their mugs on your arm - or wherever...

She gestures downwards and giggles

LOU
...for life, so you need to choose a classic face who will age with you and never fall out of favour.

JEN
True.

Leila returns, a bit calmer, carrying two bottles of wine.

LEILA
Happy Hour, woohoo!

She tops up their glasses and takes a swig.
JEN
Leila, here’s one for you. Tattoo -
arm - famous man - GO!

LEILA
Patrick Stewart of course.

JEN
Really?

LOU
I forgot you were a Trekkie!

Jen turns to Leila abruptly.

JEN
Have you told him?

LEILA
Who, Patrick Stewart?

JEN
No, your husband. About the form.

Lou sighs and shoots Jen a look - she doesn’t have to be
quite so brutal. Jen shrugs it off. Leila refills her glass.

LEILA
No.

Jen looks at her questioningly.

LEILA
I tried -

JEN
It’s been two weeks Leila.

LEILA
I know, I know. You’re right. I
will do it, I promise.

She downs her glass then refills them all.

LEILA
Can we talk about something fun
now?

EXT. LEILA’S HOUSE. NIGHT

Leila falls out of a taxi outside her house. She gets up and
brushes herself off. Wobbling, she manages to shut the door
and let herself in. Spotting a pile of unopened post on the
side she leafs through it. One official looking letter is
addressed to them both. Leila knows exactly what this is.
She walks in to the kitchen to sit down and open it but instead she about turns to the bin and forces the envelope down inside angrily. She then wobbles back out of the door.

49  INT. LEILA’S BEDROOM. DAY

Leila wakes up to find the room spinning and a cup of cold tea and toast by her bed. Theo is jumping on her.

    THEO
    Mummy!

    LEILA
    OUCH!

    THEO
    Come on Mummy, wake-up!

Leila realises that Theo is fully dressed in his school uniform and looks at her phone.

    LEILA
    SHIT! It’s eight thirty!

Leila jumps out of bed and looks in the mirror. She has panda eyes and is still in her sports bra, knickers and socks. Hearing a loud noise she looks out the window. It’s the bin men. A horrible thought crosses her mind as she watches one of them approach her drive. She rushes from the room.

    THEO
    Mummy! Where are you going?

50  INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. DAY

Leila runs to the kitchen bin. It’s empty.

51  EXT. LEILA’S HOUSE. DAY

Leila is running along her road after the bin men dressed only in sports bra, knickers and trainer socks. She winces, her head pounding from the excesses of the night before.

    LEILA
    STOP! PLEASE! STOP!

A bin man is just about to load her wheelie bin on to the truck. He turns to look at her.

    LEILA
    Number seven - I need it!

She catches up with the bin man and lorry.
LEILA

Sorry. Please may I have my bin?

The man looks totally confused but pushes the wheelie bin towards Leila then hits the back of the lorry. It moves up the road as Leila scrabbles in her bin. She pulls out a bin bag and collapses on the ground next to it. She sticks her hand in and feels around, eventually pulling out the envelope covered in filth. There is a moment as she sits there staring at the envelope. Leila’s rapture is soon broken by Theo.

THEO

MUM! What are you doing? We’re going to be late!

Leila stands up and shakes herself, get a grip Leila. Theo is stood outside the front door, bewildered. She puts the bin bag back in the bin and returns it hastily to the drive. She runs in to the house, clinging to the envelope.

INT/EXT. LEILA’S HOUSE. DAY

Theo stands outside; bag, lunchbox and water bottle in hand. Leila runs out of the house, clutching the envelope and looking exactly the same as before except for a dress, bag and a pair of trainers. They jump in the car and race off.

INT. LEILA’S CONSULTING ROOM. DAY

Leila sits, staring directly ahead, breathing deeply, hands on the desk. The envelope is in front of her unopened. She grabs it and tears it open. Shaking, she removes the letter, words jump out: ‘CRITICAL’, ‘URGENT CONTACT’, ‘ROBERT MELLOR’.

LEILA

Rob?

Leila is in shock. The buzzer goes. We hear Alison’s voice.

ALISON (O.S.)

Doctor Mellor, Mrs Howard is here.

INT. LEILA’S CONSULTING ROOM. DAY

Leila shuts the door behind her last patient and begins to search the internet, scrolling through serious medical terms. Her mobile rings, it’s Rob. She takes a deep breath.

LEILA

Hey… yep a bit hungover. Thanks for the tea this morning, I needed it…..I honestly don’t know what happened…. Yes Theo was fine….
She continues to scroll through the journals, staring stonily at the terrifying words in front of her. Her voice falters.

**LEILA**

How are you?...Oh that’s - good. Are you coming over tonight?...Yes I’d like that.

The intercom crackles

**ALISON (O.S.)***

Ms Partington has arrived.

Leila stands up and moves towards the door.

**LEILA**

Look Rob, I’ve got a patient. But see you tonight, yes?

Leila hangs up and leans with her head against the door. She takes a deep breath before opening it.

**INT. LEILA’S HOUSE - LANDING/HALLWAY. NIGHT**

Leila closes Theo’s door quietly and tiptoes down the stairs. She takes her phone out of her coat and sees a text from Rob. “Sorry Lei, emergency – Paul Pratt/ Cat. Can’t make it X”.

Leila sits on the bottom step, relieved. She begins to laugh. Her laughter soon turns into tears of despair.

**INT. TRAIN STATION. DAY**

Leila races through the station and checks the departures board. She runs along the platform and spots Lou hammering on the train window. Jumping onboard, she collapses next to Lou.

**LOU**

You made it! But why have you got Theo’s water bottle?

Leila looks down at her hand.

**LEILA**

No idea! Well other than the fact that I actually don’t know my arse from my elbow right now.

Lou looks at her sympathetically.

**LEILA**

Lou, it’s Rob.

**LOU**

What do you mean “it’s Rob”... Oh. Rob? No.
Leila nods. Her eyes fill with tears. Now she has actually given words to the situation it all begins to come out.

LEILA
Lou, what have I done?

She cries, rummages in her bag and hands Lou the letter. Lou hugs Leila whilst reading the letter.

LOU
Oh shit. Leila honey, we have to do something about this. Now.

INT. CONFERENCE CENTRE. DAY

Leila and Lou file in to the lecture.

LEILA
Lou, will you tell him? Tell Rob? You’re his GP after all.

Lou looks panic striken and keeps walking.

INT. LECTURE THEATRE. DAY

Leila and Lou are sat amidst a sea of people.

LEILA
It could work perfectly. You call him in for a ‘standard’ blood test, get the results, then - tell him!

Lou looks at her questioningly - this is unbelievable.

LOU
Are you serious? You want me to break the news to your husband that he has a life threatening condition because you are too scared to?

Leila looks deflated.

LOU
Lei, can you put someone else first for once? It just might save Rob’s life. What’s more important? His life is literally in your hands.

Leila begins to cry again. Lou sighs and hugs her.

LEILA
Lou, if I tell him then - then it will be over. Without a doubt.

LOU
Leila, this is his life.
She sees just how helpless and vulnerable Leila is right now.

LOU
Let me think. I’m sure we can come up with something.

Leila looks at Lou gratefully.

LEILA
I’m going to head back in a bit for Theo’s play. As far as you’re concerned I was here all day.

Leila puts a finger to her lips and Lou elaborately mimics her. They are interrupted by an announcement.

SPEAKER
Welcome ladies and gentlemen to the fifth annual....

The voice drones on in the background and Lou pulls a face.

58

EXT. CONFERENCE CENTRE. DAY

Leila tries to hail a taxi in the rain, checking her watch anxiously. Finally one stops and she dives in. They race off.

59

INT. TRAIN. DAY

Leila checks her emails on the train. She receives a text from Lou: ‘I promise I’ll help you to tell him XXX’. Her eyes fill with tears as she stares blankly out of the window, the rain lashing down outside. She looks lost.

60

EXT. THEO’S SCHOOL. DAY

Leila runs through the door, still clutching Theo’s bottle.

61

INT. THEO’S SCHOOL HALL. DAY

Leila sneaks in to the back of the school hall. The stage is filled with child ANTS and one in a splendid GRASSHOPPER costume. Once her eyes have settled she detects Rob in the darkness and slides in to the seat next to him. Pam is on his other side. Rob takes her hand. This is nice. For maybe one moment Leila will be able to forget... Rob whispers.

ROB
You’ve missed The Dog in the Manger. Now we’re on to The Ant and the Grasshopper.

Leila smiles.
ROB
I’ve never known a school play like it!

Suddenly the child dressed as a GRASSHOPPER dramatically keels over on stage and the ants run around happily with an assortment of plastic food.

GRASSHOPPER
“It is best to prepare for days of necessity”.

The audience clap, parents on their feet. The grasshopper and ants bow enthusiastically. Pam whispers loudly.

PAM
Prepare for days of necessity?
They’re only five! What on earth are they teaching them?!

Leila laughs and spots a DOLPHIN (Theo) and a MONKEY sidestep shyly on stage. They are followed by a SAILOR GIRL.

LEILA
Shhhhhh, it’s Theo!

Pam claps loudly and Rob looks nervous.

SAILOR GIRL
A sailor took her monkey on a voyage.

The monkey follows the Sailor Girl around the stage.

SAILOR GIRL
There was a big storm and their ship was wrecked. Everybody had to swim for their lives.

The Sailor Girl swims dramatically to one side of the stage as the monkey thrashes around in the sea. Meanwhile, Theo is stood stock still at the edge of the stage looking on.

SAILOR GIRL
A dolphin saw the monkey and thought it was a man so went to help him.

Leila, Rob and Pam are all anxiously willing Theo on.

SAILOR GIRL
(whispering loudly)
Go on dolphin!

The monkey grabs Theo’s hand.

MONKEY BOY

Now!
Theo hesitantly swims up to the Monkey. The Monkey tries to climb on his back and they collapse on the floor. The audience laughs. They stand up and glare at each other. The Monkey Boy and Sailor Girl gesture at Theo to speak.

**MONKEY BOY**
I am a Citizen of Athens

Theo nods. The Sailor Girl gesticulates further at Theo.

**SAILOR GIRL**
His family are rich and noble

Theo opens his mouth to speak but nothing comes out. She nudges him and whispers loudly.

**SAILOR GIRL**
Ask if his family are rich and noble.

**THEO**
(Robotically)
Are your family rich and noble?

**MONKEY BOY**
Yes, my family is one of the noblest in the city.

There is silence. The Monkey Boy hisses at Theo.

**MONKEY BOY**

Piraeus

**THEO**
Then you must know Piraeus?

**PAM**

Piraeus? What is this?!

**ROB**

Shhhhh mum, you’re as bad as the sailor!

The Sailor Girl nudges Theo and whispers in his ear.

**MONKEY BOY**
Piraeus is my best friend. I play with him every day.

The Monkey Boy climbs on to Theo’s back again and he carries him around the stage before dramatically dropping him on the floor and swimming off.

**SAILOR GIRL**
The dolphin saw that he was carrying a monkey and dropped him in to the sea. He went to search for a human being to save.
Letting it Lie

MONKEY BOY
He died

SAILOR GIRL
Yes he drowned. Because he did not
tell the truth.

Leila’s face falls. Pam lets out a whoop and Rob claps
loudly. The Monkey Boy flops back down on to the floor. Theo
bobs around the stage in his dolphin costume before all three
of them bow, the Sailor Girl remonstrating with Theo.

INT. RESTAURANT. DAY

Theo, Pam, Leila and Rob eat burgers. Theo is buzzing. They
feel like a happy family unit, the first time in ages.

THEO
And then I said “Then you must know
Piraeus”

Leila and Theo nod.

PAM
Yes we heard you, love. You were
brilliant. You all were.

THEO
Who is Piraeus?

PAM
Why have they got five year olds
acting out Aesop’s Fables? This new
head teacher is from the dark ages!
Wouldn’t have happened in my day.

ROB
Of course not mum! We just did
musicals when you were head.
Piraeus is a place and not a person
Theo. That’s how the dolphin knew
the monkey was a liar.

PAM
See, the geography of Greece age
five? Word play? She’s nuts!

Leila smiles and hugs Theo. She studies Rob, he looks well.
Maybe it’s just a horrible mistake. Or a dream - she wishes.

EXT/ INT. LEILA’S CAR. DAY

Leila gets in to her car which is parked outside the school,
drives off and phones Pam on hands free.
LEILA
Pam? Hi it’s me. Can I -

Leila checks herself.

LEILA
How are you? Did you enjoy last night?

She waits for Pam to respond and tries to remain patient.

LEILA
Oh good. Yes it was lovely wasn’t it?... He the best dolphin ever!
Look, I wondered...is there any way you could have Theo tonight? That’s fab, thanks Pam. I’ll Facetime him - you both later. Thank you.

Leila hangs up and dials Rob’s number. There is no answer.

INT. LEILA’S CONSULTING ROOM. DAY

MS FINCH lies on the examining table, Leila looks at her leg.

LEILA
What’s your occupation Ms Finch?

MS FINCH
I’m a counsellor

LEILA
If I advise you to rest as much as possible, and elevate the leg you can still do your job? Not that I’m advocating such a thing but I am realistic. If you can take a week off work by all means do!

MS FINCH
I should be so lucky! Mind you work is a holiday compared to home.

LEILA
Yes that’s the tricky bit.

She helps Ms Finch to get up and passes her her crutches.

LEILA
Counsellor you say?

Ms Finch hobbles towards the door, nodding.

MS FINCH
That’s right.

Leila runs to help her.
LEILA
Can I ask you a question?

Ms Finch looks a little surprised but shakes her head.

LEILA
If you have to break some news to someone, some really bad news, how would you do it?

LEILA’S CONSULTING ROOM. DAY

Leila writes a prescription and hands it to MR OLIVER.

LEILA
There you go Mr Oliver. One pill three times a day for seven days.

Mr Oliver nods and stands up to go.

LEILA
Do you mind if I ask you a question? If you have done something that you know will upset Mrs Oliver how would you tell her?

MR OLIVER
Um?

LEILA
Say - crashed her new car.

MR OLIVER
She doesn’t drive.

LEILA
Poisoned the dog.

MR OLIVER
We don’t have a dog.

LEILA
Okay - well you lied to her - something big. How -

MR OLIVER
I never lie.

LEILA
Okay, thanks then.

Leila shows Mr Oliver out and shuts the door behind him.
Leila is having a sneaky cigarette, trying to conceal herself from patients. She phones Rob but gets his answerphone. She looks a little anxious. An orderly, MAX joins her.

MAX
You okay Leila?

LEILA
Yes just trying to get through to Rob, he’s not answering.

MAX
Probably with his other woman.

LEILA
I wish!

Max looks at her strangely, she realises how odd this sounds.

LEILA
I mean, it would be better than him being ill or something wouldn’t it?

Max nods, still looking surprised.

MAX
Well yes, for sure.

Leila looks around her then moves closer to Max.

LEILA
Max, I appreciate this is a bit of a weird question but if you had something serious - really serious - that you needed to tell Rana - how would you do it? And where?

MAX
What’s up Leila? Are you okay?

Leila shrugs and takes another drag on her cigarette. Max appreciates that some questions just need to be answered.

MAX
I would get a bottle of wine and a takeaway and tell her I loved her. And then spill.

Leila nods thoughtfully. She stubs out her cigarette.

LEILA
Yep, thought so. Thanks Max.

She hugs him then heads back inside.
Leila chooses a bottle of wine whilst ordering a takeaway.

LEILA
Yes mixed starter for two, sweet
and sour prawns, duck pancakes,
special fried rice and prawn
crackers. Seven thirty? Thanks.

She hangs up. The phone rings.

LEILA
Rob? Thank god. I was worried...

Rob is trying to put his helmet on whilst on the phone to
Leila and balancing his bike against his legs.

ROB
Why?

LEILA
Well I called you earlier... twice.

ROB
Sorry Lei, it’s been meeting after
meeting today. You okay?

LEILA
Theo’s at your mum’s so you don’t
have to get him. And we’re having a
takeaway. Can you come over?

ROB
Oh – okay – what’s the occasion?

LEILA
I just – thought it would be nice.

ROB
Alright. See you soon.

LEILA
Love you.

She hangs up leaving Rob staring at his phone in surprise.

EXT. LEILA’S CAR/ EXT. LEILA’S HOUSE. NIGHT

Leila shuts her car door and lets herself in to the house.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Leila dumps her bags and gives the room a quick tidy. She
puts on some music and lays the table. She checks her watch.
INT. LEILA’S BEDROOM. NIGHT

Leila changes her clothes and applies her make-up. She looks at Rob’s side of the bed and then at the clock. Still no Rob.

EXT. LEILA’S FRONT DOOR. NIGHT

Leila smokes nervously. She tries to phone Rob but there is no answer. She sits down on the step and calls Pam.

LEILA
Hi Pam - it’s me... all okay with you two? Thanks again... Listen, I was wondering, Rob hasn’t popped in on his way home has he?...thought as much. Yes, I’m sure he’ll be here any minute. Thanks, yes bye.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT.

Leila tries Rob again. No answer. She scrubs some already very clean pans ferociously. Her phone rings. She runs to it.

POLICE VOICE (O.S.)
Leila Mellor?

LEILA
Yes

POLICE VOICE (O.S.)
I’m afraid your husband is in hospital. Can you come now? He’s in Leeds General Infirmary.

LEILA
Yes. Of course.

Leila hangs up. Methodically she puts on her shoes and coat, remaining calm. She gets her handbag showing no sign of panic. She opens the door to find the TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN raising his hand to knock. She looks utterly bewildered.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
Twenty-four sixty please.

Leila looks absolutely flummoxed and bursts in to tears.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
You okay love?

INT. TAKE AWAY DELIVERY VAN. NIGHT

Leila grips the door handle as the Take Away Delivery Man drives fast. A tear silently trickles down her cheek.
TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
You alright love? Want some music?

He doesn’t wait for an answer, keen to break the silence. Roxette’s ‘Must Have Been Love’ comes on.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
Hmmmmmm...
He fiddles with the radio again and some thrash metal starts.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
Perhaps not...
He turns the radio off. Driving fast, deliveries slide around in the back. He tries to distract Leila.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
So Theo, you said? Your son?

LEILA
Yes

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
How old is he?

LEILA
Five

The Takeaway Delivery Man jumps on this, a talking point.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
Oh, so is he in reception? He might be in the same class as my niece.

LEILA
Yes but he has a heart problem and hasn’t been there much.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
Shit. And now husband. You’re going through the mill aren’t you, love?

Rather than the floodgates opening, Leila starts to laugh and the delivery man joins in, relieved.

LEILA
I guess you could say that.

They swing in to A&E, drawing up beside the ambulances.

LEILA
Thank you, I am so grateful.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
No worries, that’ll be twelve pounds please love.
Leila looks confused but puts her hand in her bag.

**TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN**

Only joking love! Take care -

He gestures to the hospital

**TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN**

And of him. And Theo.

Leila smiles, then gets out, terrified.

**INT. INTENSIVE CARE WAITING ROOM. NIGHT**

Montage: Leila paces the corridor. Reads the posters on the walls. Stares at the vending machine. Reorganises her purse. Picks up her phone and puts it down again several times.

**DOCTOR GERRARD** (late 50’s, gravitas) enters.

**DOCTOR GERRARD**

Mrs Mellor? Good news, your husband is doing really well.

**LEILA**

The lymphoma?

**DOCTOR GERRARD**

(confused)

Lymphoma? No. Sprained wrist and a broken rib - he was really lucky.

**LEILA**

Broken arm?

**DOCTOR GERRARD**

Yes, from the bike accident. Has nobody told you?

**LEILA**

No, the police just said to come here and I assumed -

She stops dead. Doctor Gerrard looks at her questioningly.

**LEILA**

Is he okay?

**DOCTOR GERRARD**

Yes he’s just coming round now, he’s going to be fine.

This time the floodgates open, Leila bawls. Doctor Gerrard hands her a tissue and beckons to a nurse.
75

**INT. HOSPITAL CAFE. NIGHT**

Leila is at the tea machine. She spots Pam and gives her a big, very genuine hug. Pam is delighted and hugs her fondly. Barriers crumble left, right and centre. Pam does not ask a million questions, ten to the dozen as usual, instead she lets Leila talk. They appear unified for the first time.

**LEILA**

He’s okay Pam. As soon as he comes round we’re allowed to see him. The bastard who knocked him off just drove off. How could he?

Leila adds milk to two cups of tea. Pam shakes her head.

**PAM**

My boy. Like blooming Geraint
Thomas on that bike he is. It was going to happen sooner or later I guess. And how are you duck?

**LEILA**

Me?

Leila bites her lip, it’s been a long time since anyone has asked that. She stirs the tea ferociously, fighting tears.

**LEILA**

I’m fine. Now I know Rob is. Come on, let’s go and see him. Was Lou okay to have Theo?

**PAM**

Yes love, it’s all in hand. Theo will be delighted to wake up to find Lou at the helm!

76

**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM. DAY**

Dawn is breaking as Leila and Pam tentatively stick their heads around the door. Rob smiles weakly from his bed. Pam hangs back, giving them a moment. Leila sits next to Rob, overwhelmed, unable to speak. She takes his hand and begins to sob. Rob strokes her hair.

**ROB**

Hey, Lei? It’s okay.

**LEILA**

I’m so sorry.

**ROB**

Why? It wasn’t your fault that some pissed up twat mangled my new bike.

Leila sobs more. Rob looks helpless and Pam finds tissues.
PAM
It’s okay duck, Rob’s fine and the police will trace whoever did it. They have witnesses.

LEILA
It’s not-

ROB
Honestly Lei, I’m fine.

He grimaces as he tweaks the rib awkwardly.

LEILA
I-

PAM
Now then Robbie, the food isn’t up to much in here. What will you be having when I come in later? I’ll rustle up something nice.

Leila looks deflated, the earth and everyone in it seem to be conspiring against her confession. A NURSE enters.

NURSE
It’s time to give Rob a bit of a break. If you come back later, visiting hours are two til three. You two could do with a rest too.

Pam leans over to embrace Rob.

PAM
Bye duck, see you in a few hours. I’ll bring a bag.

She winks at him. Leila lies gently down beside Rob and holds his good hand tenderly.

ROB
Give Theo a big hug from me and tell him I’ll be out soon.

LEILA
I love you. Don’t worry, I’ll sort this. I will, I promise.

Rob looks confused. She kisses him then backs slowly out of the room, not wanting to take her eyes off him as she goes.

INT. LEILA’S LIVING ROOM. DAY

Leila wakes up fully dressed on the sofa, confused and groggy. It takes her a few seconds to remember why she is asleep at midday. She hears a noise in the kitchen.
INT. LEILA'S KITCHEN. DAY

Jen is wearing marigolds and washing up, a coffee next to her. Her laptop is on the side, emails ping as Leila enters.

JEN
Afternoon! How are you feeling?

Leila looks around her. She gestures at the washing up.

LEILA
Okay... Thank you. You didn’t have to do the washing up! Where’s Theo?

JEN
Lou dropped him at school this morning with the twins.

LEILA
You two are absolute godsend, I owe you —

JEN
You owe us nothing. You’d do the same. Anyway, an extra one isn’t going to make any difference for Lou’s taxi service. And I’m

She gesticulates inverted commas with her hands

JEN
“working from home”

Leila smiles gratefully. She starts to dry up.

JEN
So what happened?

LEILA
Afternoon?

Leila looks at the clock. Shit, visiting hours.

LEILA
Jen, would you mind driving me back to the hospital?

JEN
Don’t be daft. Shove some clothes on and let’s go.

INT. JEN’S CAR. DAY

Jen puts her foot down.
JEN
So how is he? Lou said that he got
knocked off his bike. How?

LEILA
It was an accident. Completely
unrelated. It’s mad.

JEN
So – does he know? Do they know?
Have you told them?

Leila steel herself.

LEILA
No, but I’m going to as soon as I
get there. I promise.

Jen nods approvingly and takes her hand. Leila grips it hard.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM. DAY

Pam is already there, plying Rob with homemade lasagne and
ejelly. Previously this would have riled Leila but instead she
smiles. She kisses Rob gently, he is pleased to see her.

LEILA
How are you feeling?

ROB
Yeah, a bit sore. How’s Theo?

LEILA
Lou took him to school, I’ve not
seen him. I’ll get him after this
though. Listen –

She is determined that this is the moment. She doesn’t want
to say her piece in front of Pam but she deserves her wrath.

LEILA
I need to tell you something. Now –

Doctor Bernard knocks gently on the door and enters.

DOCTOR BERNARD
Hi there, Mr Mellor? I’m Doctor
Bernard.

ROB
Hi.

MS BERNARD
This is a little out of the
ordinary. We’ve been looking at
your records, Mr Mellor and I’m
afraid we have some concerns.
Rob looks confused and Pam indignant. Leila simply puts her head in her hands.

**MS BERNARD**
According to our partners in the hospital research scheme RELIEVE they recently informed you of some rather serious findings. Mr Mellor, we need to get you in for some further tests immediately.

**PAM**
(Incredulously)
For a broken rib?

**MS BERNARD**
No. Mrs-

**PAM**
Mellor. Senior.

**MS BERNARD**
It’s a bit more serious than that.

Pam is utterly confused. Rob stares at Leila as a hundred different emotions cross his face. Leila clutches Rob’s hand.

**LEILA**
(whispering)
I am so, so sorry.

**END OF EPISODE 1**
LETTING IT LIE - ABSTRACT

'Letting It Lie' is a three part television drama series that explores the pressures of modern society and the subsequent issues of control that follow. When Leila Mellor goes against her husband Rob's wishes and signs them both up for significant medical tests, she realises that the more she tries to hold her family together the further apart they become.

The key theme of Letting It Lie is the dilemma of the modern woman and trying to be everything to all people. This situation is clearly not unique to women however they are often expected to keep more balls in the air than their male counterparts. Leila is juggling a demanding, high-pressure career with the desire to be a good mother, manage the household and repair her relationship. This 'mental load' constitutes normal life for many women and the concept of having time to oneself or a spare moment during the day in which to sit down and switch off, is alien. Often, something has to give – be it health, relationships or mental well-being and life can become overwhelming. Unfortunately for Leila and her family, the effect of such pressure is life-threatening.

This series explores a very modern, serious and universal dilemma with warmth, humour and heart.
AUTHOR’S DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.
LETTING IT LIE

Written by

Kate Larking

20 December 2018

66 Moorland Road, Stockport, SK2 7AX
Kate@larking.co.uk
+44 7970 105 594
INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM. DAY

LEILA (36, well dressed, angular, uptight) and ROB MELLOR (34, jeans, t-shirt, trainers, slouching) sit opposite one another in a cold, clinical hospital corridor. Garish strip lighting highlights a noticeboard filled with thank you cards and photos of recovering children. Rob is jiggling one leg anxiously. Leila glares at it with frustration.

LEILA
Rob!

Rob looks at Leila questioningly. Leila glares at his jiggling knee again. Rob looks down at his knee, back at Leila and begins to jiggle even more ferociously. Leila stares at Rob with contempt, about to blow up then checks herself. She breathes deeply, just as the door to the office in front of them is opened by a NURSE.

NURSE
Mr and Mrs Mellor?

She opens the door and smiles. Rob steps back to let Leila enter the consulting room first, when her phone starts to ring. She hurriedly searches in her bag and mutes it.

ROB
Leila! For god’s sake.

Leila shoots Rob daggers.

LEILA
Sorry, I thought it was on silent.

INT. CONSULTING ROOM. DAY

Paediatric Consultant MS MEHTAL (warm, kind eyes, mid 50’s) stands up and shakes Rob and Leila’s hands.

MS MEHTAL
Leila, Rob - good to see you. How have things been?

Rob glances at Leila who is lost for words. Rob looks confused - this is a first for Leila.

ROB
Theo’s in good spirits. He seems to be doing well.

Leila nods. Ms Mehtal holds up a file as if to verify this. She smiles.

MS MEHTAL
You’re right! Theo’s results are excellent. His heart appears to be functioning perfectly.

(MORE)
We won’t need to see him for another six months.

Leila and Rob let out a huge sigh of relief. They look a little shell-shocked.

**MS MEHTAL**
I am absolutely delighted for you all – although I appreciate that this news may take time to digest.

She leans across the table and takes each of their hands. This has clearly been a long road and a close acquaintance.

**MS MEHTAL**
Obviously we are here for you and Theo for the foreseeable future. But please do get in touch if you have any concerns – you know the score. It’s been a long journey.

Tears in her eyes, Leila gets up to hug Ms Mehtal. Rob stands up and moves towards the door, hand outstretched.

**MS MEHTAL**
Oh Rob, there is one more thing before you head off.

*(Pause)*
I have been asked to talk to you both about a research project affiliated with the hospital and university that we would very much like you to involve you in.

Rob looks at her blankly. Leila nods.

**MS MEHTAL**
It’s called RELIEVE. You’ll know all about it, Leila. Rob?

Rob shakes his head. Ms Mehtal pushes some pamphlets across the table.

**MS MEHTAL**
Well I’ve prepared some reading for you. In the light of Theo’s highly unusual condition, we would encourage you to take part but...

*(she pauses)*
...it is not compulsory.

**LEILA**
No, no – of course we will. It’s the least we can do after the care we have been given.

She looks at Rob guiltily – she should have consulted him before responding.
LEILA
Rob?

ROB
I’d like to read about it first.

MS MEHTAL
Of course. Absolutely. There are two things that I would like you to consider carefully. One is the timeframe. Due to the nature of Theo’s condition, they would like to include you in the current sample which closes next week. This means that we need to move quickly. It is an accelerated programme and should you sign up, the results would be returned within twenty eight days. The other thing to bear in mind is the two different options. The main findings will be relevant to Theo’s illness and hopefully offer some sort of explanation.

Leila is nodding throughout Ms Mehtal’s spiel, fascinated.

MS MEHTAL
The additional findings give a much bigger picture - for both of you. They look at genomic changes that cause serious or life threatening illnesses. And both parents would need to agree, it cannot just be one of you. We expect about one in a hundred people who take part to have one of these conditions.

ROB
You mean, you can tell us what serious illnesses we are going to get further down the line? Ultimately you can predict what can kill us?

Leila nods in awe. Rob looks uncomfortable.

LEILA
Isn’t it amazing?

ROB
I’m not sure about that.

MS MEHTAL
You two go home, read the information, have a talk and a think. It is a big decision, I do realise that.

(MORE)
But most importantly give that
little boy the biggest cuddle in
the world!

She gets up and opens the door. Leila and Rob make their way
out, hugging Ms Mehtal again and thanking her as they leave.

INT. LEILA’S CAR. DAY

Leila is driving, uptight. Rob sits sprawled in the passenger
seat, eyes closed.

ROB
Thank fuck.

LEILA
What do you mean “Thank fuck”

ROB
He’s okay Leila. Theo is going to
be okay.

LEILA
But now we’ve got the tests to
worry about. It’s not over yet.

ROB
Lei, we don’t have to do it. We
don’t even have to take part. It’s
optional. Chill, enjoy the moment.
This is an amazing day. Theo-is-
okay!

LEILA
Chill?

Leila is incredulous.

LEILA
We owe it to the system. We owe it
to the NHS. We owe it to the
country. We owe it to the next poor
little bugger like Theo. And we owe
it to their parents.

Rob sighs. Right now he just wants to enjoy the moment and
savour this breathing space that they have been granted.

LEILA
We have to do it.

Rob puts a hand on her arm. A moment.

ROB
Leila, breathe.
Leila looks down at his hand, her face softens and she suddenly yanks the steering wheel and pulls off the road.

ROB
What are you doing?

LEILA
Come on, we need to talk about this. I want to get back to Theo too but we need to resolve this now.

Rob does as he is told.

EXT. WOODLAND PATH. DAY

Rob and Leila walk through the woods. They are surrounded by bluebells, it is beautiful.

LEILA
The bluebells are out!

Leila’s shoulders drop. She inhales and breathes deeply.

ROB
Wild garlic

Leila’s phone rings, undoing all nature’s good work. Rob grimaces. Leila mutes it crossly.

LEILA
Sorry - it’s work. It must be important.

Rob looks at her questioningly.

LEILA
This is more important. The most important thing in the world.

She stops and turns to Rob and takes his hand without realising. He is surprised but leaves his hand in hers.

LEILA
Rob, look - I’m sorry - you know how I get caught up in things. And today is the day we have been waiting for, hoping for - you’re absolutely right. We need to go home and tell Theo and your mum. But we also need to discuss this genome testing whilst it’s just the two of us. Otherwise we won’t see each other for another couple of weeks and then it will be too late.
Rob nods. Leila looks down, suddenly self-conscious and drops Rob’s hand.

LEILA

Sorry.

She moves on and Rob follows.

ROB

It’s okay.

He tries to distract themselves from the awkwardness.

ROB

So what’s to discuss? You say we have to take part and yes okay, I guess you’re right. I’ll read the info and then we can sign up for the main findings. If we can help other kids like Theo we should.

LEILA

But don’t you think we should think about the other option?

ROB

Uh – no-

LEILA

Don’t you want to know more about yourself and your body? I know that I certainly do.

Rob stops dead and looks at Leila.

ROB

Are you mad?

Leila is on a roll.

LEILA

Just think, we can pre-empt future illnesses and potentially extend our lifespan as a result of these tests! What a privilege. Medicine is developing and we are at the forefront.

ROB

Leila - listen to yourself. This is not work. This is us - your family. We’ve just gone through five years of hell with Theo. And that’s how we’ve ended up...

He indicates them both and the distance between them
ROB
...here. Splintered. Fractured.
Destroyed.
(pause)
And I don’t know where we go now.

He looks at Leila pointedly.

ROB
After the constant worry and
relentless tests we’re being given
the opportunity for normality –
whatever that is. But you want to
add even more drama to our lives.
Even worse, you’re trying to
manipulate your own mortality.
Can’t you just let things lie?

LEILA
But Rob, that is exactly what this
would enable us to do! We can plan
and pre-empt and make the most out
of the rest of our lives!

ROB
Lei, think where we would be
without all this. Living with Theo
together – and his little brothers
and sisters. I wanted a family. I
wanted you. I didn’t for one minute
think I’d be living with my mother
at the age of thirty five.

LEILA
But-

ROB
YOU CANNOT CONTROL EVERYTHING. You
have destroyed us.

He walks off, head down, dejected. Leila looks angry, aghast.
Tears run down her face as she walks slowly towards the car.

EXT/INT. LEILA’S CAR. DAY

Leila unlocks the car remotely, Rob gets in without looking
at her. As she starts the car her phone rings again. Rob
sighs loudly and shakes his head. Leila answers it.

LEILA
Hi Alison... Oh shit, I’m so sorry.
Yep I’ll forward it now... Okay,
sorry, sorry, sorry...

She hangs up then taps away at her phone forwarding an email.
LEILA
Sorry, sorry.

Leila turns to Rob.

LEILA
Sorry. It’s work, I’ve missed something – I’ve really screwed up.

Rob visibly backs down. He can see the pressure she is under.

ROB
I’m sorry I shouted.

He is not used to seeing Leila cry and takes her hand. A moment. She gently removes her hand and drives off.

LEILA
Let’s go and see our son.

EXT. LEILA’S CAR/ LEILA’S HOUSE

They look at the front door, trying to compose themselves. Rob carries a balloon with ‘WOW’ written on it, a big bag of crisps, a bottle of milkshake and a huge bar of chocolate.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. DAY

Leila and Rob burst through the door.

LEILA
No more hospital! No more tests.

ROB
Where is he? My superstar!

Rob’s mother PAM (mid 60’s immaculate, fashionable) comes running, face full of concern.

ROB
Mum, he’s got the all clear!

He lifts Pam in the air and twirls her round. Leila looks at them, trying not to feel left out. She spots a mark on the kitchen island and scrubs at it with the dishcloth.

PAM
That’s incredible! Theo, Theo!

THEO (5) walks in, head buried in his tablet.

PAM
Look, your mum and dad are back.
See what they’ve bought you?

Leila tries not to push past Pam as she grabs her son.
LEILA
Clever boy!

She buries her head in his hair.

LEILA
You’ve done it baby. Good boy.

THEO
I’m not a baby!

He sits at the kitchen island with his tablet and looks up.

THEO
No more hospital?

Theo punches his arm in the air. He spots the treats.

THEO
Yessssssssssss.

Pam high fives him and Rob pats him on the back, keen to get close to his boy. Leila sits next to Theo who is still immersed by his tablet and watches Pam put the kettle on, totally at home in their kitchen.

PAM
Bed time in five minutes Theo. So you can get your head down again now can’t you Leila? Sit your surgeon exams again perhaps?

Leila is taken aback. She was in the family zone so this throws her a little.

LEILA
I suppose so...yes. I’d love to.

Pam makes three cups of tea and pours a glass of milk.

PAM
You’ve had to put your life on hold for the last five years haven’t you, duck? Now it’s your time.

Leila does not know whether to feel touched or suspicious.

LEILA
I guess so- but I need to get Theo-

Leila smells her hand, that cloth is rank! She grimaces and then gets up and puts the dish cloth in the bin.

PAM
Don’t you worry about Theo, he can stay with us whenever. He’ll love it. Thick as thieves, us.
Leila tries not to get irritated.

ROB
Mum, that would be great. That’s really kind. Leila - isn’t it?

He nods at Leila, to elicit an acknowledgement of gratitude.

LEILA
Yes, great - thanks. I’d just like -

PAM
Theo, love - bed time now. Come on, I’ll take you up.

Leila looks at Rob questioningly. Rob chooses to ignore it.

ROB
Grandma’ll take you up. I’ll be there for a story in five minutes once you’ve brushed your teeth.

Leila opens her mouth to say something to her son then closes it again. Between them they’ve got it covered - it’s as if she’s not there. She empties her tea down the sink and takes a half open bottle of wine from the fridge, pouring herself a glass. Rob frowns at her and Pam and Theo leave the room.

LEILA
Want one?

ROB
No ta. I’ll finish my brew first.

LEILA
Do you think your mum could be a little less.... dominant?

Rob shakes his head at her in disbelief.

ROB
Not this again.

Leila walks out.

INT. LEILA’S DOWNSTAIRS TOILET. NIGHT

Leila sits on the toilet staring at the ceiling. She pulls her knickers up, washes her hands then straightens the towel, *Sleeping with the Enemy* style. Removing a Tampax packet from a high shelf she reveals a cigarette packet and lighter.
INT. LEILA’S FRONT DOOR/ EXT. LEILA’S HOUSE. NIGHT

Leila creeps out of the front door, round the side of the house and crawls in to Theo’s playhouse. She shuts the door.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Rob is at the sink washing up. He clocks Leila and double takes. He shakes his head then goes to say goodnight to Theo.

EXT/ INT. THEO’S PLAYHOUSE. NIGHT

Leila’s hand comes out of the window, tapping her ash outside. She scrolls through her work emails on her phone.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Rob and Pam dry the dishes. She is distracted by the sight of Leila’s hand sticking out of the playhouse.

PAM
Is that Leila? In the playhouse?
What is she doing? I didn’t know she smoked!

ROB
Neither did I. Well I did, then she gave up when she was pregnant with Theo. But – it’s been a while now.

PAM
She’s a funny one. A complete maze of contradictions.

INT. THEO’S PLAYHOUSE. NIGHT

Leila gives herself a talking to.

LEILA
Stop being such a bitch. She’s trying to help. Grit your teeth and go back in there – and be nice!

She crawls out of the playhouse and steels herself.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Pam puts the tea towel down and picks up the ‘RELIEVE’ pamphlet, reading out loud to Rob.

PAM
Anyway. These genomes. You said they’re something we all have?
ROB
Well - yes.

PAM
‘Additional findings - adults can choose to find out whether they risk passing on serious genetic conditions to future children or grandchildren’. Would you honestly want to know that? Would you heck!

ROB
No mum -

Pam looks incredulous as she continues to read.

PAM
What nonsense! ‘May get results several years later, as new genomic changes are discovered’. So everything is going swimmingly, until a letter arrives saying ‘You’re going to die on 3 August 2022’. Do you really want to know that, son? The world’s gone mad!

INT. LEILA’S HALLWAY. NIGHT

Leila is searching for chewing gum in her handbag. She overhears the conversation from the kitchen.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Pam is still reading the pamphlet, Rob listens.

PAM
‘May/ may not be curable, treatable or prevented’. Good to know! Don’t get pushed in to this duck.

ROB
Mum -

Too late, Leila enters and gives them both death stares.

LEILAOH SO y’u’ve decided have you? After all, this is clearly your decision to make, nothing to do with me.

PAM
Well, you clearly aren’t going to take part in this nonsense are you, so what’s there to discuss?

Rob is desperately trying to placate the situation
ROB
MUM!

Leila stares at Rob, if looks could kill...

LEILA
I’m going to say goodnight to Theo.

As Leila storms out of the room Pam cannot resist calling after her

PAM
I think he’s probably asleep by now.

LEILA
Please do not be here when I get back.

She looks at Rob too.

LEILA
Neither of you.

Leila slams the door behind her.

INT. THEO’S BEDROOM. NIGHT

Leila creeps into Theo’s bedroom and strokes his hair.

LEILA
Night night sweetheart. I love you.

THEO
Night mummy. Love you.

Theo is nearly asleep. Leila kisses him again, inhaling her son – drinking him in. Then she slowly leaves the room.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Leila enters the empty kitchen and sighs. She pours herself a glass of wine and looks at the RELIEVE pamphlet, putting her head in her hands. Picking up her phone she texts Rob “SORRY”. He texts back. “See you at 8am”.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. DAY

Leila is in her running kit, eating a banana. There is a knock at the door.

LEILA
Come in

She hears the sound of the key turning. Rob walks in.
LEILA
I keep telling you, you don’t have to knock.

ROB
It just doesn’t seem right. What if you were -

They both look a bit awkward. Moving towards the door.

LEILA
We’ll just do the usual route, I’ll be back in an hour and a half.

She heads out of the door then turns around.

LEILA
Rob? Thank you.

She heads out once again then Rob hears the doorbell ring.

INT. LEILA’S HALLWAY – FRONT DOOR. DAY

Rob opens the door to Leila.

LEILA
Left my keys. I wanted to say - I’m sorry about last night.

She shifts awkwardly from foot to foot.

LEILA
I’ll try to be less...controlling.

Rob’s instinct is to hug her, which he does. Leila gratefully welcomes the hug but when it becomes slightly too long neither of them know how to end it. Leila sides steps, gives Rob a little nod then runs off.

EXT. ROUNDTWENTY PARK. DAY

Leila, JEN (a tall, slim red head in expensive sportswear, 36) and LOU (short, amiable, wearing jogging bottoms and baggy t shirt, 36) jog around the lake.

LOU, 36
That’s bloody brilliant Lei, I’m so pleased for you all!

JEN
How did Theo react?

LEILA
Oh you know - pretty non-plussed. Head behind tablet. He was happiest about the treats he got!
Letting It Lie

She runs off and shouts behind her

LEILA
SPRINT FINISH!

Lou and Jen run after Leila. They round a corner, find her sprawled on a grassy verge and collapse beside her.

LOU
How’s Rob?

Leila sits up and straightens her pony tail, brushing the grass off her top.

LEILA
Um – up and down. We’ve got a pretty big decision ahead of us. Come on, let’s get a coffee.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP. DAY

Jen and Leila are seated outside a coffee shop.

LEILA
And obviously I want the additional findings but Rob is determined to bury his head in the sand and stick to the main ones because he’s Rob.

Lou plonks three mugs down in front of them.

JEN
But why rock the boat? You’ve got through what is hopefully the hardest thing you’ll ever have to face. Now you can get things back on track. Your son’s health. Your career. Maybe even your relationship... if you want?

Leila looks thoughtful.

JEN
You have a nice house, a great job – not to mention the sheer goddesses that are your two best mates! Why can’t you just live for the moment?

Leila sighs and hesitates before speaking

LEILA
Because –

Lou takes her hand
LOU
Think about this from Rob’s point of view. He wants a bit of peace and quiet for a while. If things are getting better between the two of you – the three of you – why not have some breathing space?

LEILA
...he wants another child. And I want Rob.

Leila looks surprised by what she has just put in to words. Lou and Jen look at each other.

LEILA
I want him back.

LOU
Oh love, I hear you, I really do.

Leila unloads her confused brain.

LEILA
A baby was the last thing on my mind until yesterday. And how would I have a baby and do my exams? And what if it had what Theo has? We can’t do that again.

LOU
No love. You can’t.

LEILA
But this test could tell us. We could find out whether a baby would have the same thing as Theo...if that’s what Rob wants.

LOU
If it’s what YOU want Lei. This must be right for all of you.

JEN
You’re playing God, Leila. You’re playing with fire.

LEILA
I didn’t say that I’m going to have a baby for Rob. But I’d like to explore the option – and this seems like a sensible way of doing so. And knowing if it is a possibility.

LOU
You both need to make the same decision.

(MORE)
Letting It Lie 20.12.18.fdx

Why not get the main findings for now and see how things go with Rob? Then if after a while you both want to think about another child you ask for the additional findings.

Leila stands up stiffly, not quite sure what to think or say. She regains her composure and sets off at a gentle jog.

LEILA
Come on, I need to get back to my healthy, happy boy.

JEN
(to Lou)
I hope she doesn’t do a Leila.

She rolls her eyes and they both run after her.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. DAY

Theo is dipping soldiers into a boiled egg. Rob is pouring coffee into a travel mug, his bike helmet and rucksack next to him. Leila walks in and kisses Theo. She looks at Rob hesitantly then plants a kiss on his cheek too. He smiles.

ROB
Good timing! Your egg’s done.

He serves it up to Leila.

ROB
Would you like me to slice your soldiers for you madam?

Leila laughs and shakes her head.

ROB
Gotta run. Well bike.

LEILA
Where are you rushing off to?

ROB
I’ve got a year eleven revision session. What are you up to?

He gives Theo a hug and smiles at Leila before running out.

LEILA
Not sure yet.

Leila turns to Theo who shrugs.

LEILA
Now then my best boy, what do you fancy doing today?
ROB (O.S)
Well have an ace time, whatever!

EXT. SCARBOROUGH SEAFRONT. DAY

Theo and Leila sit on a bench eating fish and chips looking out to sea. An enormous dolphin soft toy and a bucket and spade are next to them.

LEILA
How is it?

THEO
The best!

LEILA
Hooray! How are you feeling? Okay?

THEO
Good. Can I have an icecream after?

LEILA
Sure thing! Ninety-nine with sauce and sprinkles?

THEO
YEAH!

They watch a FAMILY walk along the seafront. MUM holding the YOUNG BOY’S hand, DAD pushing a pram.

THEO
Mum?

LEILA
Yes sweetie?

THEO
I’d really like a little brother. Or sister even. Eddie Selway has just had a little baby brother. He’s pretty cool.

LEILA
And you’d like one too?
(under her breath)
It’s a conspiracy!

THEO
Yes please.

LEILA
I’ll see what I can do. Right we’d better finish off that sandcastle.
EXT. ICECREAM VAN. DAY

The ICECREAM MAN hands Leila and Theo a 99 cone each and they head back to their picnic blanket. Theo gobbles his down then busies himself filling the moat with water. Leila lies on the blanket and reads, one eye on Theo.

INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE. DAY

Theo sleeps on Leila’s shoulder as she checks her work emails on her phone, attempting to balance the huge dolphin across their laps. She looks out the window thoughtfully then texts Rob “Got plans tonight? Would you like to come for tea? X”

EXT. LEILA’S GARDEN. NIGHT

Leila is mowing the lawn in the twilight. Rob pushes his bike through the garden. Leila shouts above the noisy mower.

LEILA
Theo’s probably still awake if you
want to say goodnight to him.

Rob nods and goes inside. Leila continues to mow in her very precise manner. Rob returns and feeling like he ought to help, attempts to strim very badly. After observing him critically for a few moments Leila stops the mower.

LEILA
Why don’t you go and get a beer?

As soon as Rob has gone Leila goes back over his handiwork.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN/ EXT. LEILA’S GARDEN. NIGHT

Rob spots the dinner ingredients carefully laid out and chops an onion whilst drinking his beer. He watches Leila out of the window perfecting the lawn. She enters, washing her hands meticulously. Leila takes a bottle of wine from the rack and pours two glasses before heading out of the room with hers.

LEILA (O.S.)
Don’t forget the parsley!

Rob inhales deeply. His phone rings. He balances it between his shoulder and ear whilst he adds various ingredients to the pan. We can hear a loud voice on the other end of the line but the words are indistinguishable, he whispers.

ROB
Hi mum.... Yep, I’m at home -
Leila’s....I’m not whispering...
she’s upstairs. They’ve been to
Scarborough....yes I think so...
he’s asleep ... just some dinner.
He hears the sound of Leila coming down the stairs.

ROB
Look mum, I’ve got to go. Love you,
bye... yes tomorrow, fine.

Rob hangs up as Leila enters, she has changed her top and put
on some make-up. She stirs the dinner and adds a sprinkle of
oregano, Rob stands to the side then goes to set the table.
Leila moves the huge dolphin out of the way and sits down.
She begins to fill in the hospital paperwork.

LEILA
How was your day?

ROB
Yeah – you know. A revision
session. In a hot classroom on a
Sunday. Not the best.

Leila looks sympathetic.

ROB
Who’s this fella?

Rob gestures towards the dolphin.

LEILA
Oh that’s Harry Kane from
Scarborough. I was trying to get
Theo to go for something
alliterative you know, Dora, Dolly,
Dean – but no, Harry Kane.

ROB
Amazing, I never won anything at
those places as a –

He stops as he sees Leila absent-mindedly straightening the
table settings and grits his teeth.

ROB
(under his breath)
Want to get your set square out
whilst you’re at it?

Leila looks up, she hadn’t noticed what she was doing. She
continues to fill in the form and Rob goes back to cooking.

LEILA
Sorry?

ROB
Nothing... How was Scarborough?

Leila looks up from the form and smiles at Rob, engaging with
him properly for the first time since he arrived.
LEILA
Really lovely. Theo was so happy.
We had fish and chips and ice
cream. Built a sandcastle. He said —
he said he wants a little brother.

She scrutinizes Rob’s face. He sets Leila’s plate down in
front of her, sits down with his own and nods. Leila looks
surprised. There is an awkward silence and they begin to eat.

ROB
I’d like that too, Lei — if we can
work things out.

He puts his knife and fork down.

ROB
In fact I’d really like it. You
know I’ve always wanted a big
family. Two parents one child is
overkill — just look at mum.

He laughs. Leila smiles but Rob has clearly touched a nerve.

LEILA
But what if we were to have another
child with the same thing as Theo?

ROB
Don’t you think that’s jumping the
gun a bit? There’s lots to talk
about first. We need to remember
what life was like before Theo got
ill. Remember ‘us’, have some fun.

Leila gets up and opens a cupboard.

LEILA
Surely it’s a reason to go with the
additional findings though? To see
whether it actually would be a risk
or if we’re safe to go ahead?

She returns to the table with the pepper and salt and seasons
her food. Rob looks put out.

ROB
What if we find out that one of us
has a fatal illness? Do we just sit
back and count down to the end? I’d
honestly rather not know. Would you
really want to find that out?
LEILA
YES! That’s exactly my point - I want to know so we can plan our lives - our lives together - and make the most of every millisecond. We’ve already wasted the last five years. Not a minute more!

Rob goes quiet. He looks exhausted, pale, beaten. He gets up, grabs his plate and moves to the sink.

ROB
Lei, you know I’m not one for ultimatums. But I’m telling you - I cannot - cope - with - this. It would be the last straw for me, if you do this then that’s it.

Leila looks taken aback by the force of Rob’s outburst.

LEILA
Okay, okay. I’m sorry. I get it.

She moves gently over to him, she wants to hug him but is unsure whether this is acceptable. He embraces her. Silence.

ROB
It’s alright. I really want to try and make this work Lei. But you’re going to have to let go a bit.

Rob untangles himself and clears the table. Still processing the conversation, Leila puts on her apron and marigolds and begins to stack the dishwasher in a regimented manner.

ROB
Look, why don’t I ask mum to babysit tomorrow night and we can go out - we could go to Alonso’s, we’ve not been there in years.

Leila smiles

LEILA
That would be nice. But I really think we need some space from your mother, Rob. Let’s get a babysitter and have some you and me time that is not top and tailed by Pam.

Rob looks a bit miffed.

LEILA
Don’t get me wrong, I’m so grateful for everything she does for Theo - but to quote Princess Di ‘there are three of us in this relationship’.
Rob smiles. And then Leila does too. A moment of relief.

LEILA
Seriously though, she needs to butt out. She cannot be our Camilla.

Leila looks at Rob in mock horror.

LEILA
And that would also be weird.

Rob laughs, a little freaked out. He takes Leila’s hand. She laughs as she is wearing marigolds.

ROB
I’ll talk to her....again. But you know what she’s been like since dad died. She throws herself in to things-

LEILA
I know - but she needs to find another interest. And allow us some space. To give us a chance.

ROB
Yes. Okay.

Rob takes Leila in his arms and kisses her. He expects her to protest but she responds passionately, still in rubber gloves and apron. They become intimate, it feels very natural. They have missed this closeness and clearly need each other.

INT. LEILA’S BEDROOM. NIGHT

Rob is asleep. Leila awakes to the sound of Theo crying.

INT. THEO’S ROOM. NIGHT

Leila sits on the side of Theo’s bed and soothes him until he falls back to sleep. She strokes his face and kisses his forehead gently then leaves the room. Her face is thoughtful.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Leila switches the light on and sits down. She removes the form from the envelope, ticks a box then replaces it. Sealing it, she places her hands on top, not quite believing what she has done. Switching the light off she heads back to bed.

INT. LEILA’S BEDROOM. DAY.

Leila wakes to see Rob tiptoeing around the room.
LEILA
Are you trying to sneak out like a dirty stop out?

They both laugh.

ROB
I thought it would be better if Theo didn’t know I stayed.

LEILA
Why?

ROB
I just thought –

LEILA
But if we both want to give things another go then what’s the worry?

She clammers out of bed wrapped in the duvet and pulls him underneath it. They both giggle and shriek. Theo enters to see a wriggling duvet on the floor.

THEO
Mum? What are you doing?

Rob whispers, muffled, from under the duvet.

ROB
Uh-oh. Sprung!

LEILA
Nothing, darling. Go and get dressed and I’ll be right with you.

THEO
Daddy, is that you?

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. DAY

Rob is cooking bacon. Leila is in her dressing gown making sandwiches looking happy, relaxed and a little disheveled. The envelope lies on the kitchen island. Theo enters wearing his school uniform, his jumper back to front.

THEO
Bacon, yippee!

Rob and Leila look at each other, relieved. Rob hands out the sandwiches, wrapping his in foil.

ROB
Right, I’m off – got a staff meeting before registration.
He kisses them both, picking up his rucksack and bike helmet.

THEO
I knew you’d be back.

Theo grins. Rob reaches out and takes the envelope.

ROB
Oh good, you’ve done it. I’ll post it on my way.

Leila looks panicked, she’d temporarily forgotten her midnight activities.

LEILA
Don’t worry, I can –

ROB
It’s no bother, really.

He gives Theo a big hug.

ROB
Good luck today mate. Smash it!

He kisses Leila again then leaves the room. She looks at once tortured and on top of the world.

INT. LEILA’S HALLWAY. DAY

Smartly dressed and immaculately made up, Leila stands at the door; work case, school bag and water bottle in hand.

LEILA
THEO! We can’t be late on your first day back! How many times?

Theo comes running. He shouts like a protesting teenager.

THEO
Okaaaaaaaaay

EXT. LEILA’S CAR. DAY

Leila opens Theo’s door for him and shepherds him in to car.

EXT. THEO’S SCHOOL. DAY

Leila holds Theo’s hand tightly and gives him a huge hug as she hands him to the teaching assistant, MRS FAY (late 40’s, brilliant with children but terrible with adults)

LEILA
Have a good day darling.
She smiles anxiously at Mrs Fay who nods at her with little reassurance.

**INT. LEILA’S CAR. DAY**

Leila drives fast and efficiently. She calls Rob.

**LEILA**

Hi – it’s me. I just wanted to say… yes he went in no problem. He didn’t seem bothered at all! He’s such a trooper isn’t he? (pause) Yes okay. So I just wanted to see if you had chance to post that letter?…Oh great, you did.

She pulls in to her work car park.

**LEILA**

Rob, I need to – oh okay, bye.

The phone is cut off abruptly.

**LEILA**

I need to tell you that your wife is a complete twat but she loves you. Please remember that.

Frustrated, she hurls her phone to the floor of the car.

**EXT. ROUNDHAY PARK. NIGHT**

Leila sees LOU and JEN in the distance and sprints to catch up with them.

**LEILA**

Sorry, sorry – we were running an hour behind today.

**LOU**

You need to be stricter with them, you can’t let work rule your life.

**LEILA**

Yes – but if anyone knows what it’s like Lou, it’s you. And right now I need to prove myself.

**LOU**

Humph.

**JEN**

The only way to have it all is to be a hard-assed bitch. Like me.
Leila laughs.

**LOU**
How’s Theo got on with his first full week back at school?

**LEILA**
It’s like he’d never been off!

**JEN**
That’s ace. Superstar Theo.

**LOU**
And have you and Rob had chance to properly discuss the tests?

**JEN**
Like grown ups?

Leila rolls her eyes. Then hesitates.

**LEILA**
Um, kind of.

Leila steps up the pace somewhat, intentionally. Lou struggles to keep up. Jen races after her.

**JEN**
Don’t try that trick missy. Under 15’s cross-country champion 1997, remember?

Leila laughs.

**LOU**
Have you agreed to the tests?

**LEILA**
Yes

**LOU**
The main findings?

**LEILA**
No

**LOU**
What? You haven’t, have you Leila?

Jen grabs Leila’s arm and slows her to a halt.

**JEN**
Lei, you know how serious this is.

She guides Leila to a nearby bench and she and Lou sit on either side of her like concerned bouncers.
LEILA
I know, I know..... I don’t know.
There’s just been so much
uncertainty - and this is something
we can be certain about.

LOU
Yes but you cannot make that
decision for him Leila. That’s not
right. Nor moral.

LEILA
Is it right or moral that he can
make the decision for me? One of us
has to lose out here. It’s fifty
percent my decision after all.

JEN
Think what’s at stake! You’re just
getting back on your feet. With a
lot to lose. It’s a huge gamble.

LEILA
I know I shouldn’t have. I tried to
tell him - then I thought - maybe I
don’t need to? There’s no reason
for him to find out... is there?

Jen gets up and stretches her legs, She waits for a family
who have been feeding the ducks to pass.

JEN
For fuck’s sake, Leila.

Jen looks at Leila angrily before walking off. Lou follows.
Leila stares stubbornly ahead at the ducks swimming around in
the lake, mundanely bickering about bread.

INT. LEILA’S CONSULTING ROOM. DAY

Leila hands a prescription to MRS WRIGHT and opens the door.

LEILA
Let’s see how that goes then Mrs
Wright. All the best.

Shutting the door, Leila picks up her phone and texts Lou and
Jen: “You’re right. I’m telling him. Love you XX’

She picks up her mobile and dials Rob’s number.

LEILA
Hey, have you got an hour later?
Theo’s with Pam and I need to talk
to you...Brill, park cafe at 4.30?
As she hangs up she notices a missed call from an unknown number before she is distracted by the buzzer.

INT. CAFE IN THE PARK. DAY

Leila spots Rob in the far corner of the cafe, a cup of tea and a slice of carrot cake waiting for her. She smiles.

ROB
What’s up?

LEILA
This is nice. Thank you.
(stalling)
How was your day?

Rob looks at her quizzically.

ROB
(formally)
Fine thanks Leila, how was yours?

Leila takes the cue and uses it to stall further.

LEILA
Theo was hilarious this morning. He was going through the alphabet - you know phonetically a is for apple and so on - and guess what he said when he got to l? l is for lady bits. How embarrassing!

Rob laughs.

LEILA
What do you do? If you tell him not to say it he’ll say it more, but if we don’t, he’ll say it at school.

ROB
Could be worse.

LEILA
True.

ROB
So -

LEILA
This morning was relentless, all the usual suspects, you know.

Rob nods, utterly confused. What is he here for?
LEILA
Then I grabbed a sandwich at my desk and ate it whilst catching up on the morning’s notes.

ROB
And what did you drink?

LEILA
Drink? I had a coffee.

She realises that Rob is being facetious and checks herself.

ROB
Lei, as nice as this is -

He indicates their surroundings

ROB
We don’t do this. Why are we here? You said it was important.

Leila steals herself. She moves closer to the table and grabs Rob’s hand. This is her chance and she must do it now.

THEO (O.S.)
MUMMY! DADDY!

Theo comes rushes to bear hugs his parents. Pam follows.

PAM
What are you two doing? Oh -

She senses that something is up.

PAM
Theo love, do you want to come and choose your icecream?

Leila seizes the opportunity.

LEILA
No Pam, don’t you worry. I’ll get it. Come on Theo.

Leila grabs Theo’s hand. Rob looks utterly bemused.

ROB
Leila?

LEILA
It’s alright Rob, we can talk about it later.

She leads Theo over to the counter. Pam looks at Rob and raises her eyebrows.
EXT. PARK CAR PARK. DAY.

Leila waves to Pam and Theo as they drive off. Rob cycles after them, pulling faces at Theo. Leila opens her car door and sits down heavily, head on the steering wheel.


EXT. LEILA’S HOUSE. DAY

Theo kicks the tyres of the car, school bag in hand.

THEOMuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuu
EXT. THEO’S SCHOOL. DAY

Leila kisses Theo, passing him his bag, lunch and drink bottle. Mrs Fay hands her a letter.

MRS FAY
Don’t forget it’s the reception play next Wednesday and Theo will need his dolphin costume.

THEO
I told you.

Leila laughs and gently nudges him through the door.

LEILA
Wednesday?

MRS FAY
Yes, you will have received a letter, text and an email.

LEILA
Oh. Shit.

She puts her hand over her mouth and surveys the small children surrounding her. Mrs Fay gives her a death stare.

LEILA
Sorry.

Layla runs, if she had a tail it would be between her legs.

INT. LEILA’S CAR. DAY

Leila drives furiously, her phone rings on hands free.

LEILA
Hi Alison….. Yes I know, nine fifteen. I’ll be there.

She looks at the clock. 9.11.

LEILA
Two minutes.

She puts her foot down even more.

LEILA
Newcastle? Next Wednesday? Oh shit. Is there anything we can do?… Just pulling up now. Okay, bye.

Leila screeches into a parking space and runs in to work.
INT. LEILA’S WORK RECEPTION. DAY

Leila leans over the desk pleading with ALISON the department receptionist (60’s, Scottish, unimposing in stature but ferocious in attitude - born to be a gatekeeper)

LEILA
It’s Theo’s first school play Ali, I can’t miss it. Can I just go to the next one instead?

ALISON
You know the departmental policy Leila. Sue’s been so understanding over the last few years - understandably - but I really don’t think you can get out if it again.

Leila nods.

LEILA
Understandably understanding, sure. Look what if I just go for the morning?

ALISON
As far as I’m aware you’ll be there for the whole day.

She winks and nods at a patient nearby.

ALISON
You’re getting a death stare from Mr Corbett, any longer and I actually think he will bore right through you in to me then who’ll be left to keep you from the lions?

Leila laughs, picks up her clipboard from the desk, puts on a smile and turns to survey her patients.

LEILA
Mr Corbett? Please follow me.

INT. GYM/INT. ROB’S WORK. DAY

Leila is on the cross trainer in the gym whilst on the phone to Rob who is packing up his things in his classroom.

LEILA
I thought you were doing bed time tonight Rob, why’s Pam there?

ROB
I got caught late at work. Emergency meeting about Paul Pratt. You know, psycho cat killer.
LEILA
Yes I know the one. But it’s only
Theo’s second week back at school
and your mum is already putting him
to bed. If I’d known I’d have
skipped the gym. I thought we were
trying to establish a normality.

ROB
Leila. It was an emergency.

Leila clocks the impatient tone of his voice and takes a
mental step backwards.

LEILA
Sure. Okay. Well I hope
everything’s alright.

Rob waits for the sarcastic remark. None follows.

ROB
I’m on my way. I’ll be home in
twenty minutes.

LEILA
Okay, I’ll be back in a couple of
hours. I’m going for a drink with
Lou and Jen... thank you Rob.

ROB
You’re welcome. I’ll leave some tea
as you’ll be either hungry,
hammered or both, knowing you.

Leila laughs.

ROB
Have a good night, see you later.

LEILA
Rob – you’re welcome to stay over –
if you want - that is.

She hangs up, smiling shyly to herself.

EXT. BAR. NIGHT.

Leila and Jen are sat at an outside table with a bottle of
wine, three glasses and three cocktails. Leila rushes up, hot
and sweaty from the gym.

JEN
Oh jeez you’re that active wear
mum. Do we have to sit with you?

LOU
Why didn’t you get changed?
LEILA
I left my clothes at work by mistake. God, I’m such a state...
Is this for me?

She gestures towards a cocktail and takes a swig.

LEILA
Thank you.

JEN
Happy Hour.

Lou knows that it is not like Leila to be so disorganised and flustered so she tries to help calm her down.

LOU
You’re fine. Here take my make-up and go to the toilet. Have a bit of a wash, bob’s your uncle.

Leila looks at the lip gloss Lou is proffering.

LEILA
Jen, lend us your make-up will you?

Lou pretends to be insulted and they all laugh as Jen passes Leila her huge handbag.

JEN
Just take the whole thing.

Leila gratefully departs with the huge bag after downing the rest of her cocktail.

LOU
So, guess what? A tattoo shop has opened on my street! Shall we?

Jen laughs.

JEN
What. You want us to get matching tattoos?!

LOU
Just small ones, it’d be fun.

JEN
Midlife crisis anyone?

LOU
Mind you, the guy specialises in Clint Eastwood apparently!

She scrolls through her phone to find a photo and shows Jen.
JEN
Wow, that’s awesome. Who else can he do? Not sure I want Clint, how about someone more... current? Tom Hardy or Ryan Gosling?

LOU
Ooooh yes. But are they lifers? You will have their mugs on your arm – or wherever...

She gestures downwards and giggles

LOU
...for life, so you need to choose a classic face who will age with you and never fall out of favour.

JEN
True.

Leila returns, a bit calmer, carrying two bottles of wine.

LEILA
Happy Hour, woohooo!

She tops up their glasses and takes a swig.

JEN
Leila, here’s one for you. Tattoo – arm – famous man – GO!

LEILA
Patrick Stewart of course.

JEN
Really?

LOU
I forgot you were a Trekkie!

Jen turns to Leila abruptly.

JEN
Have you told him?

LEILA
Who, Patrick Stewart?

JEN
No, your husband. About the form.

Lou sighs and shoots Jen a look – she doesn’t have to be quite so brutal. Jen shrugs it off. Leila refills her glass.

LEILA
No.
Jen looks at her questioningly.

LEILA
I tried -

JEN
It’s been two weeks Leila.

LEILA
I know, I know. You’re right. I will do it, I promise.

She downs her glass then refills them all.

LEILA
Can we talk about something fun now?

EXT. LEILA’S HOUSE. NIGHT

Leila falls out of a taxi outside her house. She gets up and brushes herself off. Wobbling, she manages to shut the door and let herself in. Spotting a pile of unopened post on the side she leaves through it. One official looking letter is addressed to them both. Leila knows exactly what this is. She walks in to the kitchen to sit down and open it but instead she about turns to the bin and forces the envelope down inside angrily. She then wobbles back out of the door.

INT. LEILA’S BEDROOM. DAY

Leila wakes up to find the room spinning and a cup of cold tea and toast by her bed. Theo is jumping on her.

THEO
Mummy!

LEILA
OUCH!

THEO
Come on Mummy, wake-up!

Leila realises that Theo is fully dressed in his school uniform and looks at her phone.

LEILA
SHIT! It’s eight thirty!

Leila jumps out of bed and looks in the mirror. She has panda eyes and is still in her sports bra, knickers and socks. Hearing a loud noise she looks out the window. It’s the BIN MEN. A horrible thought crosses her mind as she watches one of them approach her drive. She rushes from the room.
THEO
Mummy! Where are you going?

INT. LEILA'S KITCHEN. DAY

Leila runs to the kitchen bin. It's empty.

EXT. LEILA'S HOUSE. DAY

Leila is running along her road after the bin men dressed only in sports bra, knickers and trainer socks. She winces, her head pounding from the excesses of the night before.

LEILA
STOP! PLEASE! STOP!

A BIN MAN is just about to load her wheelie bin on to the truck. He turns to look at her.

LEILA
Number seven - I need it!

She catches up with the bin man and lorry.

LEILA
Sorry. Please may I have my bin?

The man looks totally confused but pushes the wheelie bin towards Leila then hits the back of the lorry. It moves up the road as Leila scrabbles in her bin. She pulls out a bin bag, sticks her hand in and feels around, eventually pulling out the envelope covered in filth. There is a moment as she stares at it. Leila's revelry is soon interrupted.

THEO
MUM! What are you doing? We're going to be late!

Leila stands up and shakes herself, get a grip Leila. Theo is stood outside the front door, bewildered. She puts the bin bag back in the bin and returns it hastily to the drive. She runs in to the house, clinging to the envelope.

INT/EXT. LEILA'S HOUSE. DAY

Theo stands outside; bag, lunchbox and water bottle in hand. Leila runs out of the house, clutching the envelope and looking exactly the same as before except for a dress, bag and a pair of trainers. They jump in the car and race off.

INT. LEILA'S CONSULTING ROOM. DAY

Leila sits, staring directly ahead, breathing deeply, hands on the desk. The envelope is in front of her unopened.
Letting It Lie

She grabs it and tears it open. Shaking, she removes the letter, words jump out: ‘CRITICAL’, ‘URGENT CONTACT’, ‘ROBERT MELLOR’.

LEILA
Rob?

Leila is in shock. We hear Alison’s voice.

ALISON (O.S.)
Doctor Mellor, Mrs Howard is here.

INT. LEILA’S CONSULTING ROOM. DAY

Leila shuts the door behind her last patient and begins to search the internet, scrolling through serious medical terms. Her mobile rings, it’s Rob. She takes a deep breath.

LEILA
Hey... yep a bit delicate. Thanks for the tea this morning, I needed it....I honestly don’t know what happened.... Yes Theo was fine...

She continues to scroll through the journals, staring stonily at the terrifying words in front of her. Her voice falters.

LEILA
How are you?... Oh that’s – good. Are you coming over tonight?... Yes I’d like that.

The intercom crackles

ALISON (O.S.)
Ms Partington has arrived.

Leila stands up and moves towards the door.

LEILA
Look Rob, I’ve got a patient. But see you tonight, yes?

Leila hangs up and leans with her head against the door. She takes a deep breath before opening it.

INT. LEILA’S HOUSE – LANDING/ HALLWAY. NIGHT

Leila closes Theo’s door quietly and tiptoes down the stairs. She takes her phone out of her coat and sees a text from Rob. “Sorry Lei, emergency – Paul Pratt/ Cat. Can’t make it X”.
Leila sits on the bottom step, relieved. She begins to laugh. Her laughter soon turns into tears of despair.
INT. TRAIN STATION. DAY

Leila races through the station and checks the departures board. She runs along the platform and spots Lou hammering on the train window. Jumping onboard, she collapses next to Lou.

LOU
You made it! But why have you got Theo’s water bottle?

Leila looks down at her hand.

LEILA
No idea! Well other than the fact that I actually don’t know my arse from my elbow right now.

Lou looks at her sympathetically.

LEILA
Lou, it’s Rob.

LOU
What do you mean “it’s Rob”... Oh. Rob? No.

Leila nods. Her eyes fill with tears. Now she has actually given words to the situation it all begins to come out.

LEILA
Lou, what have I done?

She cries, rummages in her bag and hands Lou the letter. Lou hugs Leila whilst reading the letter.

LOU
Oh shit. Leila honey, we have to do something about this. Now.

INT. CONFERENCE CENTRE. DAY

Leila and Lou file into the lecture.

LEILA
Lou, will you tell him? Tell Rob? You’re his GP after all.

Lou looks panic stricken and keeps walking.

INT. LECTURE THEATRE. DAY

Leila and Lou are sat amidst a sea of people.
LEILA
It could work perfectly. You call him in for a ‘standard’ blood test, get the results, then - tell him!

Lou looks at her questioningly - this is unbelievable.

LOU
Are you serious? You want me to break the news to your husband that he has a life threatening condition because you are too scared to?

Leila looks deflated.

LOU
Lei, can you put someone else first for once? It just might save Rob’s life. What’s more important? His life is literally in your hands.

Leila begins to cry again. Lou sighs and hugs her.

LEILA
Lou, if I tell him then - then it will be over. Without a doubt.

LOU
Leila, this is his life.

She sees just how helpless and vulnerable Leila is right now.

LOU
Let me think. I’m sure we can come up with something.

Leila looks at Lou gratefully.

LEILA
I’m going to head back in a bit for Theo’s play. As far as you’re concerned I was here all day.

Leila puts a finger to her lips and Lou elaborately mimics her. They are interrupted by an announcement.

SPEAKER
Welcome ladies and gentlemen to the fifth annual....

The voice drones on in the background and Lou pulls a face.

EXT. CONFERENCE CENTRE. DAY

Leila tries to hail a taxi in the rain, checking her watch anxiously. Finally one stops and she dives in. They race off.
INT. TRAIN. DAY

Leila checks her emails on the train. She receives a text from Lou: ‘We’ll find a way, I promise XXX’. Her eyes fill with tears as she stares blankly out of the window, the rain lashing down outside. She looks lost.

EXT. THEO’S SCHOOL. DAY

Leila runs through the door, still clutching Theo’s bottle.

INT. THEO’S SCHOOL HALL. DAY

Leila sneaks in to the back of the school hall. The stage is filled with child ANTS and one in a splendid GRASSHOPPER costume. As her eyes settle, she detects Rob in the darkness and slides in to the seat next to him. Pam is on his other side. Rob takes her hand. This is nice. For maybe one moment Leila will be able to forget... Rob whispers.

ROB
You’ve missed ‘The Dog in the Manger’. Now we’re on to ‘The Ant and the Grasshopper’.

Leila smiles.

ROB
I’ve never known a school play like it!

Suddenly the GRASSHOPPER dramatically keels over and the ants run around happily with an assortment of plastic food.

GRASSHOPPER
“It is best to prepare for days of necessity”.

The audience clap, parents on their feet. The grasshopper and ants bow enthusiastically. Pam whispers loudly.

PAM
Prepare for days of necessity? They’re only five! What on earth are they teaching them?!

Leila laughs and spots a DOLPHIN (Theo) and a MONKEY shuffle shyly on stage. They are followed by a SAILOR GIRL.

LEILA
Shhhhhhh, it’s Theo!

Pam claps loudly and Rob looks nervous.
SAILOR GIRL
A sailor took her monkey on a voyage.

The monkey follows the Sailor Girl around the stage.

SAILOR GIRL
There was a big storm and their ship was wrecked. Everybody had to swim for their lives.

The Sailor Girl swims dramatically to one side of the stage as the monkey thrashes around in the sea. Meanwhile, Theo is stood stock still at the edge of the stage looking on.

SAILOR GIRL
A dolphin saw the monkey and thought it was a man so went to help him.

Leila, Rob and Pam are all anxiously willing Theo on.

SAILOR GIRL
(whispering loudly)
Go on dolphin!

The monkey grabs Theo’s hand.

MONKEY BOY
Now!

Theo hesitantly swims up to the Monkey. The Monkey tries to climb on his back and they collapse on the floor. The audience laughs. They stand up and glare at each other. The Monkey Boy and Sailor Girl gesture at Theo to speak.

MONKEY BOY
I am a Citizen of Athens

Theo nods. The Sailor Girl gesticulates further at Theo.

SAILOR GIRL
His family are rich and noble

Theo opens his mouth to speak but nothing comes out. She nudges him and whispers loudly.

SAILOR GIRL
Ask if his family are rich and noble.

THEO
(Robotically)
Are your family rich and noble?

MONKEY BOY
Yes, my family is one of the noblest in the city.
There is silence. The Monkey Boy hisses at Theo.

MONKEY BOY
Piraeus

THEO
Then you must know Piraeus?

PAM
Piraeus? What is this?!

ROB
Shhhhh mum, you’re as bad as the sailor!

The Sailor Girl nudges Theo and whispers in his ear.

MONKEY BOY
Piraeus is my best friend. I play with him every day.

The Monkey Boy climbs on to Theo’s back again and he carries him around the stage before dramatically dropping him on the floor and swimming off.

SAILOR GIRL
The dolphin saw that he was carrying a monkey and dropped him in to the sea. He went to search for a human being to save.

The Monkey Boy looks up from the floor where he is lying.

MONKEY BOY
He died

SAILOR GIRL
Yes he drowned. Because he did not tell the truth.

Leila’s face falls. Pam lets out a whoop and Rob claps loudly. The Monkey Boy flops back down on to the floor. Theo bobs around the stage in his dolphin costume before all three of them bow, the Sailor Girl remonstrating with Theo.

INT. RESTAURANT. DAY

Theo, Pam, Leila and Rob eat burgers. Theo is buzzing. They look like a happy family unit, the first time in ages.

THEO
And then I said “Then you must know Piraeus”

Leila and Theo nod.
PAM
Yes we heard you, love. You were brilliant. You all were.

THEO
Who is Piraeus?

PAM
Why have they got five year olds acting out Aesop’s Fables? This new head teacher is from the dark ages! Wouldn’t have happened in my day.

ROB
Of course not mum! We just did musicals when you were head. Piraeus is a place and not a person Theo. That’s how the dolphin knew the monkey was a liar.

PAM
See, the geography of Greece age five? Word play? It’s nuts!

Leila smiles and hugs Theo. She studies Rob, he looks well. Maybe it’s just a horrible mistake. Or a dream - she wishes.

EXT/ INT. LEILA’S CAR – OUTSIDE SCHOOL GATES. DAY
Leila drives off and phones Pam on her hands free.

LEILA
Pam? Hi it’s me. Can I –

Leila checks herself.

LEILA
How are you? Did you enjoy last night?

She waits for Pam to respond and tries to remain patient.

LEILA
Oh good. It was lovely wasn’t it?... the best dolphin ever! Look, I wondered...is there any way you could have Theo tonight? That’s fab, thanks Pam. I’ll Facetime him - you both later. Thank you.

Leila hangs up and dials Rob’s number. There is no answer.

INT. LEILA’S CONSULTING ROOM. DAY

MS FINCH lies on the examining table, Leila looks at her leg.
LEILA
What’s your occupation Ms Finch?

MS FINCH
I’m a counsellor

LEILA
If I advise you to rest and elevate the leg can you still do your job? Not that I’m advocating such a thing but I am realistic. If you can take a week off please do!

MS FINCH
I wish! Mind you work is a holiday compared to home.

LEILA
Yes that’s the tricky bit.

She helps Ms Finch to get up and passes her her crutches.

LEILA
Counsellor you say?

Ms Finch hobbles towards the door, nodding.

MS FINCH
That’s right.

Leila runs to help her.

LEILA
Can I ask you a question?

Ms Finch looks a little surprised but nods.

LEILA
If you have to break some news to someone, some really bad news, how would you do it?

LEILA’S CONSULTING ROOM. DAY

Leila writes a prescription and hands it to MR OLIVER.

LEILA
There you go Mr Oliver. Take one three times a day for seven days.

Mr Oliver nods and stands up to go.

LEILA
Do you mind if I ask you a question? (pause) If you have done something that you know will upset Mrs Oliver how would you tell her?
MR OLIVER
Um?

LEILA
Say - bumped her new car.

MR OLIVER
She doesn’t drive.

LEILA
Fed the dog chocolate.

MR OLIVER
We don’t have a dog.

LEILA
Okay - well you lied to her - something big. How -

MR OLIVER
I never lie.

LEILA
Okay, thanks then.

Leila shows Mr Oliver out and shuts the door behind him.

EXT. LEILA’S WORK HOSPITAL. DAY

Leila smokes anxiously, trying to conceal herself from patients. She phones Rob but gets his answerphone. An orderly, MAX joins her.

MAX
You okay Leila?

LEILA
Hey Max. I’m just trying to get through to Rob, he’s not answering.

MAX
Probably with his other woman.

LEILA
I wish!

Max looks at her strangely, she realises how odd this sounds.

LEILA
I mean, it would be better than him being ill or something wouldn’t it?

Max nods, still looking surprised.

MAX
Well yes, for sure.
Leila looks around her then moves closer to Max.

**LEILA**

Max, I appreciate this is a bit of a weird question but if you had something serious - really serious - that you needed to tell Rana - how would you do it? And where?

**MAX**

What’s up Leila? Are you okay?

Leila shrugs and takes another drag on her cigarette. Max appreciates that some questions just need to be answered.

**MAX**

I would get a bottle of wine and a takeaway and tell her I loved her. And then spill.

Leila nods thoughtfully. She stubs out her cigarette.

**LEILA**

Yep, thought so. Thanks Max.

She hugs him then heads back inside.

**INT. OFF-LICENCE/ EXT. ROB’S WORK. NIGHT**

Leila chooses a bottle of wine whilst ordering a takeaway.

**LEILA**

Yes mixed starter for two, sweet and sour prawns, duck pancakes, special fried rice and prawn crackers. Seven thirty? Thanks.

She hangs up. The phone rings.

**LEILA**

Rob? Thank god. I was worried...

Rob is trying to put his helmet on whilst on the phone to Leila and balancing his bike against his leg.

**ROB**

Why?

**LEILA**

Well I called you earlier... twice.

**ROB**

Sorry Lei, it’s been meeting after meeting today. You okay?
LEILA
Theo’s at your mum’s so you don’t have to get him. And we’re having a takeaway. Can you come over?

ROB
Oh - okay - what’s the occasion?

LEILA
I just - thought it would be nice.

ROB
Alright. See you soon.

LEILA
Love you.

She hangs up leaving Rob staring at his phone in surprise.

EXT. LEILA’S CAR/ EXT. LEILA’S HOUSE. NIGHT

Leila shuts her car door and lets herself in to the house.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT

Leila dumps her bags and gives the room a quick tidy. She puts on some music and lays the table. She checks her watch.

INT. LEILA’S BEDROOM. NIGHT

Leila changes her clothes and applies her make-up. She looks at Rob’s side of the bed and then at the clock. Still no Rob.

EXT. LEILA’S FRONT DOOR. NIGHT

Leila smokes nervously. She tries to phone Rob but there is no answer. She sits down on the step and calls Pam.

LEILA
Hi Pam - it’s me... all okay with you two? Thanks again... Listen, I was wondering, Rob hasn’t popped in on his way home has he?...thought as much. Yes, I’m sure he’ll be here any minute. Thanks, yes bye.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. NIGHT.

Leila tries Rob again. No answer. She scrubs some already very clean pans ferociously. Her phone rings. She runs to it.
POLICE VOICE (O.S.)
Leila Mellor?

LEILA
Yes

POLICE VOICE (O.S.)
This is PC Dawson from Leeds
Central Police. I’m afraid your
husband is in Leeds General
Infirmary. Can you come now?

LEILA
Yes. Of course.

Leila hangs up. Calmly she puts on her shoes and coat, picks
up her handbag and opens the door to find the TAKEAWAY
DELIVERY MAN raising his hand to knock.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
Twenty-four sixty please.

Leila looks absolutely flummoxed and bursts in to tears.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
You okay love?

INT. TAKE AWAY DELIVERY VAN. NIGHT

Leila grips the door handle as the Take Away Delivery Man
drives fast. A tear silently trickles down her cheek.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
You alright love? Want some music?

He doesn’t wait for an answer, keen to break the silence.
Roxette’s ‘Must Have Been Love’ comes on.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
Hmmmmmm...

He fiddles with the radio again and some thrash metal starts.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
Perhaps not...

He turns the radio off. Driving fast, deliveries slide around
in the back. He tries to distract Leila.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
So Theo, you said? Your son?

LEILA
Yes

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
How old is he?
LEILA

Five

The Takeaway Delivery Man jumps on this, a talking point.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
Oh, so is he in reception? He might be in the same class as my niece.

LEILA
Yes but he has a heart problem and hasn’t been there much.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
Shit. And now husband. You’re going through the mill aren’t you, love?

Rather than the floodgates opening, Leila starts to laugh and the delivery man joins in, relieved.

LEILA
I guess you could say that.

They swing in to A&E, drawing up beside the ambulances.

LEILA
Thank you, I am so grateful.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
No worries, that’ll be twelve pounds please love.

Leila looks confused but puts her hand in her bag.

TAKEAWAY DELIVERY MAN
Only joking love! Take care. And of him. And Theo.

He gestures to the hospital. Leila smiles, bemused then gets out and heads towards the entrance, terrified.

INT. INTENSIVE CARE WAITING ROOM. NIGHT

Montage: Leila paces the corridor. Reads the posters on the walls. Stares at the vending machine. Reorganises her purse. Picks up her phone and puts it down again several times.

DOCTOR GERRARD (late 50’s, gravitas) enters.

DOCTOR GERRARD
Mrs Mellor? Good news, your husband is doing really well.

LEILA
The lymphoma?
DOCTOR GERRARD  
(confused)  
Lymphoma? No. Sprained wrist and a broken rib - he was really lucky.

LEILA  
Sprained wrist? Broken rib?

DOCTOR GERRARD  
Yes, from the bike accident. Has nobody told you?

LEILA  
No, the police just said to come here and I assumed -

She stops dead. Doctor Gerrard looks at her questioningly.

LEILA  
Is he okay?

DOCTOR GERRARD  
Yes he’s going to be fine. You’ll be able to see him shortly.

This time the floodgates open, Leila bawls. Doctor Gerrard hands her a tissue and beckons to a nurse.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFE. NIGHT

Leila is at the tea machine. She spots Pam and gives her a big, very genuine hug. Pam is delighted and responds fondly. Barriers crumble left, right and centre. Pam does not ask a million questions, ten to the dozen as usual, instead she lets Leila talk. They appear unified for the first time.

LEILA  
He’s okay Pam. But the bastard just drove off. How could he?

Leila adds milk to two cups of tea. Pam shakes her head.

PAM  
My boy. Like blooming Geraint Thomas on that bike he is. It was going to happen sooner or later I guess. And how are you duck?

LEILA  
Me?

Leila bites her lip, it’s been a long time since anyone has asked that. She stirs the tea ferociously, fighting tears.
LEILA
I’m fine. Now I know Rob is. Come on, let’s go and see him. Was Lou okay to have Theo?
PAM
Yes love, it’s all in hand.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM. DAY

Dawn is breaking as Leila and Pam tentatively stick their heads around the door. Rob smiles and Leila sits down next to him, overwhelmed. She takes his hand and begins to sob. Rob strokes her hair. Pam hangs back, giving them a moment

ROB
Hey, Lei? It’s okay.

LEILA
I’m so sorry.

ROB
Why? It wasn’t your fault that some pissed up twat mangled my new bike.

Leila sobs more. Rob looks helpless and Pam finds tissues.

PAM
It’s okay duck, Rob’s fine and the police will trace whoever did it. They have witnesses.

LEILA
It’s not-

ROB
Honestly Lei, I’m fine.

He grimaces as he tweaks the rib awkwardly.

LEILA
I-

PAM
Now then Robbie, the food isn’t up to much in here. What will you be having when I come in later? I’ll rustle up something nice.

Leila looks deflated, the earth and everyone in it seem to be conspiring against her confession. A NURSE enters.

NURSE
It’s time to give Rob a bit of a break. If you come back later, visiting hours are two til three.
Pam leans over to embrace Rob.

PAM
Bye duck, see you in a few hours.
I’ll bring a bag.

She winks at him. Leila lies gently down beside Rob and holds his good hand tenderly.

ROB
Give Theo a big hug from me and
tell him I’ll be out soon.

LEILA
I love you. Don’t worry, I’ll sort
this. I will, I promise.

Rob looks confused. She kisses him then backs slowly out of
the room, not wanting to take her eyes off him.

INT. LEILA’S LIVING ROOM. DAY

Leila wakes up fully dressed on the sofa, confused and
groggy. It takes her a few seconds to remember why she is
asleep at midday. She hears a noise in the kitchen.

INT. LEILA’S KITCHEN. DAY

Jen is wearing marigolds and washing up, a coffee next to
her. Her laptop is on the side, emails ping as Leila enters.

JEN
Afternoon! How are you feeling?

Leila looks around her. She gestures at the washing up.

LEILA
Okay... Thank you. You didn’t have
to do the washing up! Where’s Theo?

JEN
Lou dropped him at school this
morning with the twins.

LEILA
You two are absolute godsends, I
owe you -

JEN
You owe us nothing. You’d do the
same. Anyway, an extra one isn’t
going to make any difference for
Lou’s taxi service. And I’m -

She gesticulates inverted commas with her hands
Letting It Lie

JEN
“working from home”

Leila smiles gratefully. She starts to dry up.

JEN
So what happened?

LEILA
Afternoon?

Leila looks at the clock. Shit, visiting hours.

LEILA
Jen, would you mind driving me back to the hospital?

JEN
Don’t be daft. Shove some clothes on and let’s go.

INT. JEN’S CAR. DAY

Jen puts her foot down as Leila steels herself.

JEN
So how is he? Lou said that he got knocked off his bike. How?

LEILA
It was an accident. Completely unrelated. It’s mad.

JEN
So - does he know? Do they know? Have you told them?

Leila steels herself.

LEILA
No, but I’m going to as soon as I get there. I promise.

Jen nods and takes her hand. Leila grips it hard.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM. DAY

Pam is already there, plying Rob with homemade lasagne and jelly. Previously this would have riled Leila but instead she smiles. She kisses Rob gently, he is pleased to see her.

LEILA
How are you feeling?

ROB
Yeah, a bit sore. How’s Theo?
LEILA
Lou took him to school, I’ve not
seen him. I’ll get him after this
though. Listen -

She is determined to say her piece.

LEILA
I need to tell you something. Now -

Doctor Bernard knocks gently on the door and enters.

DOCTOR BERNARD
Mr Mellor? I’m Doctor Bernard.

ROB
Hi.

MS BERNARD
This is a little out of the
ordinary. We’ve been looking at
your records, Mr Mellor and I’m
afraid we have some concerns.

Rob looks confused and Pam indignant. Leila simply puts her
head in her hands.

MS BERNARD
According to our partners in the
hospital research scheme RELIEVE
they recently informed you of some
rather serious findings. Mr Mellor,
we need to get you in for some
further tests immediately.

PAM
For a broken rib?

MS BERNARD
No. Mrs-

PAM
Mellor. Senior.

MS BERNARD
It’s a bit more serious than that.

Pam is utterly confused. Rob stares at Leila as a hundred
different emotions cross his face. Leila clutches Rob’s hand.

LEILA
(whispering)
I am so, so sorry.

END OF EPISODE 1