

COME OUT TO PLAY

COME OUT TO PLAY: Episode one - Reflections.

FADE IN:

TEASER

1 INT. EXPRESS TRAIN CARRIAGE - DAY 1

The rain-streaked train window reflects JACKIE, 58, her reserved smart attire, her distinctive eyes: one hazel, one grey-blue. She absorbs the bleak countryside. On the table, a tea-cup and empty blister pack of prescription painkillers.

She takes a partly-written letter from her bag: 'Dear Evan'. She begins to write. We hear her words -

JACKIE (V.O.)

Here we are again. I can hardly believe how quickly the year has gone. Mummy misses you so much. But.. you're always with me.

Pen poised, she gazes beyond her reflection to the hills.

2 EXT. WELSH RAILWAY STATION - AFTERNOON 2

An uneasy gait and slow pace makes Jackie seem older now. She moves slowly towards a bus stop, checks the timetable.

A mini-cab driver touts for business. She declines, steps back uneasily and waits beneath a dripping umbrella.

3 EXT. WINDING ROAD - EVENING 3

With great effort, Jackie heads uphill in the half-light and rain. She reaches a promontory. Stops and peers over. It slopes to a ledge then banks down to a fast moving river. In the misty distance is the open sea.

Looking up along the sodden road, her mind's eye sees headlights coming towards her. She slips back in time.

4 INT. CAR - 15 YEARS AGO, EVENING 4

Jackie, 43, is the front seat passenger in a vintage Mark Two Jaguar. Husband BARRY, 48, drives. She turns, checks EVAN, 5, clutching a home-made paper airplane. Melts as he sings along to the nursery rhyme "GIRLS AND BOYS COME OUT TO PLAY".

He wriggles his arms out of his seat straps so he can lift the paper plane higher.

JACKIE

Evan put those straps back on. Now!

Jackie releases her seat belt. Turns to get Evan back in.

The honk of a truck's horn. The screech of brakes. Tyres squealing on tarmac. Silence. A glimpse of Jackie's legs at the wrong angle to her body. Twisted, bloodied and broken.

5 EXT. WINDING ROAD - EVENING

5

The swish of wet tyres as a car speeding past brings Jackie back to the present. She slowly reaches into her bag, takes out the letter, folds it into a paper plane. She flies it down towards the river, watches it skim the grey water. Swirls and splashes as the current takes it to the sea. She turns her face to the leaden skies. Tears and rain mingle.

JACKIE

Fuck you, fate.
FUCK YOU!

END TEASER

FADE TO:

6 EXT. LONDON STREETS, TEMPLE - MORNING

6

Jackie blends with the smartly suited and booted legal types as she wends her way down the historic streets. But she moves slowly, more cautiously.

Past the landscaped gardens and old church, through narrow passageways. She finally stops by stone steps that lead up to a shiny, black front door with a large brass door-knocker.

Placing one hand on the iron-railings, she hauls herself up the steps and puts a code into a keypad. A brass plaque declares: Frobisher Clark Chambers. The door swings open.

7 INT. GENERAL OFFICE, FROBISHER CLARK - MINUTES LATER

7

Jackie enters a hive of small connecting offices buzzing with activity. Nervous activity. From behind one of several doors leading off the main office, a woman's voice. A trace of a West Indies lilt as the voice booms loudly.

NULA HARE (O.S.)
 I don't give a flying fig about her
 issues! It was fifteen years ago.

Jackie lowers her head. Hangs up her jacket. Nearby JING SHUANG, 28, winces at the cringeworthy moment.

8

INT. GARTH FROBISHER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

8

GARTH FROBISHER, 60's, rocks the old Etonian style. He sits tall behind his desk as NULA HARE, 48, challenges him.

GARTH FROBISHER
 It was one day, Nula. Taken from
 her holiday entitlement.

A fine film of sweat forms on Nula's black skin. She speaks with a second generation 'Windrush' accent.

NULA HARE
 Oh fine then. I mean.. Jing is
 still finding her feet, Glenda's on
 maternity leave and Michael is off
 sick! Actually, Jackie could be
 useful here for once if she brushed
 up her old nursing skills.

Beat.

GARTH FROBISHER
 And how is Jing doing?

NULA HARE
 Good. I don't understand why she
 left Cressingers in Leeds. She'd
 have made partner there in four or
 five -
 But that's not the point! I'm in
 the middle of a retrial with a jury
 that looks at *me* as if I'm the
 devil incarnate, let alone my
 client.
 (quietly)
 Fifteen years. Y'know if Jackie has
 STD -

GARTH FROBISHER
 PTSD.

She dismisses him with a wave of a bejewelled hand.

NULA HARE

If it is still so painful then she should get help.

GARTH FROBISHER

That's not her way.

NULA HARE

She was a nurse - she should know.

GARTH FROBISHER

Look Nula, Evan was my godson and Barry...

NULA HARE

Barry was special to me too but-

GARTH FROBISHER

Enough. That day changed everything. *Everything!*

NULA HARE

And this case could change everything for Chambers if I lose. Our reputation, integrity -(sighs)

You're too soft Garth. It's time you smelt the coffee.. Or roses. Maybe retire - like Neville?

Nula reaches into her pocket, takes out a pack of cigarettes and drums it with a lighter.

GARTH FROBISHER

Neville Clark may have retired from the practise, but he's still a very busy man. As I intend to remain.

Nula stands to leave. Looks at her watch.

NULA HARE

And she's late.

GARTH FROBISHER

Twelve minutes...

Nula spins on her heel and wrenches the door open.

Now seated at her desk, Jackie flinches as the door creaks.

NULA HARE

Fine - just put her name in the
'tardy book', or whatever it is
they do at your "Eton"!

Calmly Jackie continues scrutinising documents as Nula flies through the office like the queen bee. Jing calmly follows, raises her eyebrows to Jackie.

NULA HARE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Someone bring me the O'Leary
affidavits.

10 INT. OFFICE, METROPOLITAN POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS 10

Hair just too long, clothes just too casual, DI ARTHUR "ARTY" BARKER, late 50's, grits his teeth. The latest grilling by CHIEF INSPECTOR JOHN DERHAM, 44. Clearly not a fan of Arty's.

Derham's eyes do not shift from the documentation before him.

CHIEF INSPECTOR JOHN DERHAM

- and the forensic report's here?

DI ARTY BARKER

Yes. Sir.

CHIEF INSPECTOR JOHN DERHAM

At least they couldn't use Sullivan as an expert witness. That man was good on the stand.

DI ARTY BARKER

Yeah too good, as it turned out.
Too good to be true.

CHIEF INSPECTOR JOHN DERHAM

Dread to think how many convictions could now be deemed "unreliable" thanks to one discredited professional.

DI ARTY BARKER

Do we have the list yet?

CHIEF INSPECTOR JOHN DERHAM

Almost complete apparently. Considering we've relied on his "expert testimony" for just about every case relying on DNA evidence, for christ knows how long, it's going to be a bloody long list.

(MORE)

CHIEF INSPECTOR JOHN DERHAM (CONT'D)
 (back to documentation) Anyway,
 have we ensured the lab has -

DI ARTY BARKER
 With respect, sir, we've been
 through all this. Twice.

CHIEF INSPECTOR JOHN DERHAM
 And if I want to go through it
 again, that is what we will do. We
 can't risk a second hung jury. If
 they can't decide on a verdict for
 a second time -

DI ARTY BARKER
 We've got him this time, sir.

CHIEF INSPECTOR JOHN DERHAM
 And he's got Nula Hare, Barker.

11 INT. NULA HARE'S OFFICE - LATER

11

Nula stands by her window, twirls her cigarette pack in one hand whilst reading a document she holds in the other.

Jackie watches as Jing and another worker-bee buzz around organising piles of paperwork and files.

Jackie does what she's good at: waits. Deferentially.

Nula tosses the document on the desk, massages her temples.

NULA HARE
 Christ I need a cigarette.

She turns, gives Jackie a lingering look.

NULA HARE (CONT'D)
 And..?

Jackie places the neatly bound documents on her desk.

JACKIE
 The O'Leary affidavits.

NULA HARE
 Jing, check these.

Jing is already scooping up the documents.

NULA HARE (CONT'D)
 I have to be in Court in -

JACKIE
The taxi is booked for 0920.

JING
I'll have the files in order before
you leave.

Nula rubs her temples again, begins to pack papers into a bulging, soft leather briefcase.

Jackie senses her anxiety.

JACKIE
It'll be in the hands of the jury
soon.

NULA HARE
You'd like nothing better than to
see me lose.

JACKIE
That's not true.

NULA HARE
So you want me to win this case?

JACKIE
I trust the Court to draw the right
conclusion. And if he's guilty -

Nula slams the briefcase shut, hoists it under her arm and barges past Jing and Jackie.

NULA HARE
I don't have the time or stomach
for lefty's with a conscience.
It's just my job - innocent or
guilty, win or lose.

Nula blusters out of the door.

JACKIE
(quietly)
And how she likes to win.

Jing smiles as she follows Nula out.

12

INT. GARTH FROBISHER'S OFFICE - LATER

12

His door ajar, Garth sees Jackie pop two pain-killers from a blister pack as she sits at her desk. The worker-bees have buzzed off for caffeine, the office is quiet.

13

INT. GENERAL OFFICE, FROBISHER CLARK - CONTINUOUS

13

Garth perches his lean, pin-striped frame on a desk adjacent to Jackie's.

GARTH FROBISHER
Hell on earth - Nula giving up
smoking.

Jackie raises her eyebrows. Carries on sorting papers.

GARTH FROBISHER (CONT'D)
You know, she doesn't mean -

JACKIE
Please. It's not necessary for you
to apologise on her behalf.

GARTH FROBISHER
I know this case has affected you.

JACKIE
It's affected everyone Garth.

GARTH FROBISHER
Everyone deserves a defence, even
child killers. Alleged child
killers.

JACKIE
He's guilty. Hopefully this time,
the jury knows it.

GARTH FROBISHER
As she rightly says, it's her job.

JACKIE
I know. And I do trust the Court to
draw the right conclusion. But it
doesn't make it any easier.

Especially this week.

Garth remains silent, stares at his well-buffed shoes.

He stands, reaches out as if he'll touch Jackie's shoulder.
Instead he returns to his office.

A phone rings.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Good morning, Frobish -

Jackie listens, quickly scans the desk in front of her, brushing papers to and fro. She grabs a document, winces.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Yes. Yes it's here. But I thought -

14 INT. CORRIDOR, COURT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS 14

JING

Take a taxi Jackie. Bring it right away please. Now. She's seething.

15 EXT. FROBISHER CLARK CHAMBERS, TEMPLE - MINUTES LATER 15

Jackie hobbles down the steps, looks mournfully up the street as a bus just pulls away.

A taxi approaches, its yellow lamp glowing. She partly raises her hand. The taxi driver veers towards her. The rattle of the diesel engine echoes menacingly in her ears. She lowers her hand, sets off on foot as fast as she can manage.

16 INT. COURT ROOM - LATER 16

An USHER quietly opens the door, Jackie creeps in and stops. Nula is in full flow.

NULA HARE

And there was no forced entry at the Thomson home?

POLICEMAN

No. We checked all windows and doors. There were no signs of a forced entry.

NULA HARE

Mrs Thomson, Abigail's mother, has given evidence that all windows were closed and that the front, rear and side doors were all key-locked. No keys had been lost or stolen, to her knowledge. So we assume, do we not, that the man who entered the Thomson house that night and took Abigail from her bed, had keys - or was somehow afforded access by someone?

POLICEMAN

We have no reason to believe -

NULA HARE

Have you been able to produce any evidence linking my client to the Thomson family? Anything to indicate he had ever met, let alone knew, this tragic family?

Beat.

NULA HARE (CONT'D)

No further questions. The defence calls Professor.. (fades)

Jing turns and sees Jackie.

Jackie mouthes 'sorry'. Hurries to Jing who takes the document, begins to read it carefully.

NULA HARE (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Professor Perkins, you examined evidence from the scene of crime including an item of clothing?

FORENSIC SCIENTIST

Yes, the item of underwear was identified by Mrs Thomson as belonging to the missing child, Abigail Thomson.

NULA HARE

We refer to exhibit VR-329, m'lord. Recovered from a vehicle the prosecution allege was used by my client.

A poly-bag containing a tiny pair of little girl's "Pink Princess" panties is held aloft.

Jackie looks at MARTIN O'LEARY, 40's, the composed man in the dock. He is using his left-hand nails to clean his right.

NULA HARE (CONT'D)

And what did you find when you examined the item of underwear?

FORENSIC SCIENTIST

We found traces of semen.

KAREN THOMSON, 38, swallows a sob. A mournful rumble rolls round court.

FORENSIC SCIENTIST (CONT'D)

From samples taken, we established two separate genetic codes.