

HOUSE OF DREAMS

by

Seth Hopewell

20 June 2025

Email: seth.hopewell@gmail.com

Phone: +44 7967019266

EXT. LONDON, MILLENNIUM BRIDGE - DAY

It is bright and sunny. The bridge is packed with people. FREDDY, with floppy brown hair and boyish good looks that make him appear younger than his 35 years, is trying to run through the crowds of tourists and sightseers.

FREDDY
Sorry, excuse me, sorry...

Freddy exits the bridge with St Paul's Cathedral in the background.

EXT. WATERLOO TRAIN STATION - DAY

Weaving through the crowd, he tries desperately to make headway to the station. He checks the clock above the entrance - it says one minute to ten o'clock.

FREDDY
Shit...shit...SHIT!

He sees an opening in the streams of people and dashes through and into the station.

INT. WATERLOO TRAIN STATION - DAY

He anxiously checks out the train information on the board. It says the 10:02 for Paris is on platform three.

Freddy bursts through the platform gate and runs alongside the train, checking the passengers in the carriages. Finally, he reaches the end of the train and looks desperate.

He runs back. And stops. On the other side of the carriage, DEBRA, early 30s, stylishly dressed with black hair and bright red lipstick, sits with her head turned away, looking sadly out of the other-side of the carriage.

Freddy, with both hands outstretched, bangs on the window, looking like Dustin Hoffman at the end of The Graduate.

Debra slowly turns and sees him. She is shocked. She gets up, exits the train, and stands in front of Freddy.

FREDDY
I-I-I'm terribly sorry but you
can't take this train. It's really
not possible.

DEBRA
And why?

A TRAIN GUARD walks by.

TRAIN GUARD
All aboard!

FREDDY
Because I-I-I...

Freddy anxiously runs his hand through his hair.

FREDDY
I love you.

Debra's face is transformed - she beams at him. They passionately embrace. The TRAIN GUARD walks by again.

TRAIN GUARD
All aboard! Train's going y'know.

FREDDY
Yes, but she's not. She's staying with me.

TRAIN GUARD
(checking out Debra)
No need to boast, sir.

The TRAIN GUARD blows his whistle. The train starts to roll.

DEBRA
So what now, lover-boy?

FREDDY
Oh just about everything. We find a new house together, we're going to be terribly busy and of course there's the honeymoon to arrange.

DEBRA
Honeymoon?

FREDDY
We're getting married, didn't I tell you?

He whips out a small box and opens it, revealing a ring.

FREDDY
I got it from Rings Are Us.

She beams at the sparkling diamond.

FREDDY
But first, I'm afraid there's something we really have to do.

She looks confused.

FREDDY
Shopping! All your earthly
possessions are right now speeding
to Paris!

Debra turns to see the train in the distance and laughs.

DEBRA
O darling you're such a...FUCK!

DIRECTOR (O.S.)
AND CUT!

A clapper-board swiftly comes into frame. The name of the
production on the clapper-board is "RINGS ARE US"

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (O.S.)
END BOARD!

CLAPPER LOADER
SCENE 5! TAKE 37!

The clapper-board is snapped shut. Freddy and Debra are
surrounded by a film crew. The fierce looking bearded
DIRECTOR (early 40s) sits on his chair and bellows angrily.

DIRECTOR
The word you are looking for is
DREAM! Jesus, thirty-seven takes!

DEBRA
What a shitty line. I hate this
production. I'm exhausted.

FREDDY
But it's only one day's filming.

Debra scowls. The MAKE-UP WOMAN comes over and pats
foundation onto her.

FREDDY
I love this business, pure make-
believe yet films make you laugh,
cry...

DEBRA
This is a crap ad on YouTube.
Everyone stares at the 'skip ad'
countdown, nobody watches it...
(disdainfully)
...'lover-boy'.

DIRECTOR
 Okay, Freddy, Debra, take it from
 'there's something we have to do.'

The clapper-board is held out in front of the camera.

CLAPPER LOADER
 SCENE 5! TAKE 38!

The clapper-board is snapped shut.

DIRECTOR
 ACTION!!!

FREDDY
 But first, there's something we
 really, really have to do.

DEBRA
 Yes?

FREDDY
 Shopping! All your earthly
 possessions are right now speeding
 to Paris!

DEBRA
 O darling you're such a...FUCK!!!

DIRECTOR
 CUT!!! Everyone take a break.

EXT. WATERLOO TRAIN STATION - DAY

Freddy walks towards his trailer as TWO WOMEN (20s) walk
 excitedly up to him.

1ST WOMAN
 You're not, you know, him are you?

FREDDY
 Who's him?

2ND WOMAN
 You know, HIM.

FREDDY
 (wearily)
 You mean Hugo Bonnard?

1ST WOMAN
 You are, aren't you? Give us your
 autograph. For my sister, she
 really fancies you.

FREDDY
I'm sorry to disappoint but please
believe me, I'm not him.

2ND WOMAN
You are!

FREDDY
Look, there he is!

Freddy points at a large poster opposite them advertising a
feature film called LOVE & DEATH. It shows a handsome man
and a beautiful woman with the text 'STARRING HUGO BONNARD &
SUZANNE PAINOIRE'. The male actor is the double of Freddy.

FREDDY
He's him, I'm me. There is a
difference.

1ST WOMAN
I don't believe you, it's you isn't
it?

Freddy shakes his head.

1ST WOMAN
Please Hugo.

FREDDY
But...

The 1ST WOMAN gets out a pen and a tatty piece of paper.

FREDDY
This is absurd.

2ND WOMAN
Please!

FREDDY
Okay...

He signs the paper and hands it to the 1ST WOMAN who gives
Freddy a quick kiss on the cheek and walks away, reading the
autograph.

1ST WOMAN
Hey, you signed it Freddy Beaumont!
Who the hell's that?

FREDDY
Sometimes I have no idea...

He walks off to his trailer.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Freddy enters the trailer and sits down with a sigh, and looks bleakly at himself in the mirror. His phone rings.

FREDDY
 (to phone)
 Hi darling...
 (he listens)
 ...of course I won't be late.

EXT. PARLIAMENT SQUARE - NIGHT

Freddy frantically weaves through the traffic on his bike, past Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament.

FREDDY
 Bollocks, bollocks, bollocks!

Freddy cycles through a red-light. A horn screams and a car accelerates towards him. Freddy hits the brakes. The CAR DRIVER leans out of the window as he passes Freddy.

CAR DRIVER
 Wanker!

FREDDY
 Sorry...

EXT. JAMES & SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Freddy cycles through the gate and up to the front door. He rings the bell. SARAH, late 50s, opens the door. She wears a colourful scarf and is theatrical.

FREDDY
 Sorry mum...

SARAH
 Don't be silly, darling, birthday boys can be as late as they want.

She gives him a big hug and kiss.

INT. JAMES & SARAH'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Freddy and Sarah enter and everybody cheers. Sitting around the table are JAMES (dad), CHARLIE (brother), THERESA (wife), EVA (daughter), TREVOR and SHEILA (family friends in their 60s).

FREDDY
 Sorry, sorry...

James, early 60s and Freddy's dad, is white haired and bearded and demands the limelight. He sits at the head of the table with Charlie on his right.

JAMES

(booming voice)

Come, Freddy, sit here next to me.
I want my two sons to protect me
from these rampant women.

(to Eva)

Particularly that one, she's
ferocious!

Eva, Freddy and Theresa's daughter, is a tomboy who is precocious far beyond her ten years.

EVA

I could eat you for breakfast.

Everyone laughs. Freddy sits down opposite Charlie, Freddy's brother, who is aged 40 and wears an expensive grey suit, with a bright pink tie. He carries an air of achievement.

CHARLIE

How's the filming, Hugo?

FREDDY

I think you're confusing me with
someone who's had a very lucrative
career out of having my face. I'm
thinking of charging him royalties.

Everybody laughs.

CHARLIE

Any more work in the pipeline?

Freddy doesn't know where to look.

FREDDY

Er...no, not really...um...no,
nothing.

CHARLIE

(coldly)

That's a shame.

An uncomfortable silence falls on the birthday party.

EVA

Well I love it because I get lots
and lots of playtime with daddy.

Freddy beams at Eva.

FREDDY
And so do I. It also means I get to
write and play guitar.

Theresa, Freddy's wife, is 35 years with a stylish blonde bob
and bright smile.

THERESA
(affectionately)
I have two children.

Everyone smiles.

CHARLIE
You're not still making music?

FREDDY
You might have stopped, not I.

Trevor, aged 65 and family friend, leans forward.

TREVOR
(to Charlie)
What instrument did you play?

CHARLIE
Bass guitar. We were in a band
together called 'The BSE'.

TREVOR
The mad cow disease?

FREDDY
It was a double-edged name, and I
like this a lot, it also stood for
Big Sexual Encounter!

Everyone smiles.

CHARLIE
Then we called ourselves 'The
Bankers'...

FREDDY
And Charlie took it so seriously he
actually became one.

Everyone laughs.

JAMES
And an extremely successful one.

James puts a proud hand on Charlie's shoulder while Freddy
frowns with envy.

JAMES
(to Charlie)
Can you get Freddy a job?

Freddy is hurt.

CHARLIE
(smugly)
I'm afraid we're not looking for
Hugo Bonnard lookalikes.

SARAH
James! Charlie! For once leave him
alone.

JAMES
I say what I think.
(loudly & theatrically)
Can a leopard change his spots, a
tiger his stripes, a...

SARAH
Stop showing off.

JAMES
That's nothing, this is showing
off.

James stands up and paces the room.

JAMES
O Blow winds, and crack your
cheeks! Rage and blow! You
cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
til you have drenched our steeples,
drowned the cocks! You sulphurous
and thought-executing fires, vaunt-
couriers to oak-cleaving
thunderbolts, singe my white head!

Everyone claps, cheers and whoops.

FREDDY (V.O.)
No wonder dad was playing King Lear
at the National.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, STAGE

James as KING LEAR embraces the dead CORDELIA in his arms.

FREDDY (V.O.)
He was so good the critics had
decided he was the definitive King
Lear, the Lear of Lears.

James looks grief stricken at Cordelia.

JAMES
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat,
have life, And thou no breath at
all? Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!

Tears stream down his face.

INT. JAMES & SARAH'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Everyone claps and cheers.

TREVOR
Bravo!

James takes a deep bow and walks back to his seat.

SHEILA
You should do film, not just
theatre.

JAMES
I leave the low arts for others.

Sarah looks concerned at a wounded Freddy.

JAMES
Let us eat and drink! We are here
to celebrate!

SARAH
(sharply)
Yes, Freddy's birthday.

James pops the champagne with great gusto as Sarah frowns.

INT. JAMES & SARAH'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

The jovial birthday party have finished their food and are clearing the table and taking things to the kitchen. James stands in the middle of the room.

JAMES

I only had one line to say. I pulled out my sword and for the life of me I couldn't remember my line. So I shouted "Ha!" And you know what? No one noticed!

Sarah walks in carrying a stack of plates.

SARAH

I did.

JAMES

That's because you were madly in love with me! And you were on stage at the time.

EVA

Well I think Shakespeare's boring, very boring.

JAMES

(mock disdain)

I pity the ignorant youth...

With a Karate yell, Eva takes up a fighting stance.

JAMES

You think you can take me on?

EVA

Easy! Too easy!

Theresa smiles while Freddy stacks the dish-washer. Theresa's phone pings and she takes it out and reads the text message. Charlie fills the kettle.

CHARLIE

Coffee, everyone?

THERESA

Sorry, got to go, my boss is panicking over the presentation. He wants to go over the figures again.

Disappointed, Freddy frowns at Theresa.

THERESA

Sorry, we've got a deadline.

SARAH

Don't even think about it. Go, darling, go!

Fed-up, Freddy follows Theresa out to the hall.

FREDDY
Say hi to Steve, then.

THERESA
I don't have a choice. Someone's
got to bring home the bacon, the
mortgage, the...

FREDDY
Okay, okay...

Theresa leaves.

INT. JAMES & SARAH'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Charlie fills the cafetière with hot water.

SARAH
(to James)
No coffee for you, you've got a
scan first thing.

Freddy enters the kitchen.

FREDDY
What scan?

Charlie looks concerned.

JAMES
Pay no attention, boys, it's just a
check-up. Anything to keep my love
happy.

James and Sarah hug. Freddy and Charlie look on smiling.

JAMES
Boys, come to me, big hug now.

James roughly hugs them both.

EXT. PRIMARY SCHOOL - DAY

Freddy and Eva, in a red Mini Cooper, park up. Uniformed
children, with bags on their backs, stream into the school.

INT. RED MINI COOPER - DAY

Freddy leans over and kisses Eva.

FREDDY
Darling, have an amazing day.

EVA
(smiling)
That's pushing it.

Freddy smiles as Eva exits the car and enthusiastically greets two of her school friends.

Freddy gets out his phone and texts Theresa: "HOME NORMAL TIME? XX?" The reply is instant: "SHOULD BE X"

With a smile Freddy drives off.

MONTAGE

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Freddy is at the till loading the conveyor belt with pasta, salmon, garlic, white wine, chicken nuggets and chips.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Freddy loads the dirty laundry into the washing machine and turns it on, stops and thinks. He rushes out of the kitchen.

INT. STUDY - DAY

On the wall are three film posters, THE MATRIX, RESERVOIR DOGS and IF ONLY, which stars the beautiful French actor SUZANNE PAINOIRE.

Freddy rushes in and sits at his computer.

He types: "EXT. LONDON STREET - NIGHT. The deserted, quiet street is lined by warehouses and various businesses. A lone car is parked up with two occupants."

He stares at the screen and thinks hard.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Freddy hangs up the washing on a large clothes dryer which has a pole in the centre of the lawn. He pegs the final item, a pair of trousers, and stops and thinks. He rushes away.

INT. STUDY - DAY

Freddy is sitting at the computer and types: "INT. SAM'S CAR - NIGHT. LEON, in the passenger seat, is 40 years old and wears his trademark black suit. He is never far from menace."

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Freddy sits in his car near the school as a multitude of uniformed children exit the gate. Eva gets in the back seat.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. RED MINI COOPER - DAY

Freddy drives off.

FREDDY
So what's the best time at school?

EVA
Three thirty, Friday afternoon.

Freddy smiles.

EVA
What's for dinner?

FREDDY
Your favourite: chickpea and
spinach stew.

EVA
Yuck.

INT. FREDDY & THERESA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Freddy puts a tray of chicken nuggets and chips in the oven.

FREDDY
Eva! Dinner in twenty!

Sudden loud wailing and sobbing emanates from somewhere in the house. Alarmed, Freddy rushes out of the kitchen.

INT. EVA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Freddy rushes in. Eva sits at a computer, sobbing.

FRDDY
Sweetheart, what's wrong?

EVA
I can't do it...

FREDDY
(fearful)
Do what?

EVA
The...the maths homework.

FREDDY
(relieved)
Darling, what's the family motto?

EVA
(wearily)
Together we are stronger.

Freddy pulls up a chair and sits down next to her and stares at the computer screen. His face falls.

FREDDY
I hate algebra. No - loathe it.

EVA
Thought we were stronger together?

FREDDY
(despondently)
What is x if x minus fifteen equals ten? How the hell do I know?

He exhales loudly.

FREDDY
Got it! Minus fifteen goes to the other side and becomes a positive. So x equals ten plus fifteen: twenty-five! Come on, we can do this! Right next! What is x if...

Eva smiles lovingly at Freddy.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Freddy lays the table with cutlery, glasses and a bottle of wine. He puts a bowl of pasta with salmon in the centre.

He looks pleased at the table. His phone rings and he retrieves it from his pocket.

FREDDY
(to phone)
Hi!
(he listens)
Oh right...no worries.

He wearily puts the phone away and sits down as Eva enters.

EVA
Where's mum?

FREDDY
Working late. Why don't we go out?

EVA
It's a school night.

FREDDY
Go on, get your blades.

EXT. BATTERSEA PARK - NIGHT

Freddy strolls along the embankment next to the river Thames. Eva glides on rollerblades, with helmet, knee and elbow pads. In the distance, Albert Bridge glows with its numerous pretty coloured lights reflected in the dark water of river.

FREDDY
That's the best bridge in London.

EVA
Dad, you're being boring. Race me
to that lamp post!

She sets off at pace and Freddy runs after her.

EVA
Come on!

He almost gets level with her as she storms past the post. He stops in his tracks, bent over, exhausted.

Eva swings back to him with a cheeky grin.

EVA
You're clearly getting on a bit.

He smiles and walks away.

FREDDY
Let's go home, I want to do some
writing.

EVA
Why do you write film scripts?
They've got no chance.

FREDDY
I can dream.
(he looks lovingly at Eva)
I want you to be proud of me.

EVA
By being as successful as grandad?

FREDDY
Alright Freud.

Eva's eyes sparkle with mischief.

EVA
Like that's ever going to happen!

FREDDY
(mock indignation)
Why you cheeky...

He lurches forward, grabs her and intensely tickles her. She squeals in delight, wriggles out of his grip and races away. Freddy follows in hot pursuit.

FREDDY
I'm coming for you!

Eva screams with the thrill of the chase.

EXT. SOUTH BANK, CAFE - DAY

At a cafe, Freddy and DANNY, (mid 30s, shaved hair and glasses), are playing chess. Behind them is the London Eye.

Danny moves his Queen forward.

DANNY
Check.

Freddy stares at the Queen, his King is in mortal danger. He stares for an eternity at the board. Finally, his hand slowly reaches out to his Castle. Danny shakes his head.

DANNY
Uh-uh.

Freddy's hand withdraws. He rests his head in his hands. And thinks - hard. A chorus of birds suddenly sing loudly. Freddy's hand reaches to his Bishop.

DANNY
Uh-uh.

Freddy's hand moves to his Knight and Danny pulls a face.

FREDDY
What-can-I-move?!!!!!

DANNY
It's all there in front of you.

FREDDY
Danny, I know it's all there in front of me! But which bloody one!

A chorus of birds burst into song. Danny looks around.

DANNY
Where are the birds?

Freddy looks around, too. And then realises.

FREDDY
Shit! It's my new ring-tone.

Danny smiles as Freddy retrieves his phone and see's the caller's name: MUM. Freddy cancels the call.

DANNY
When's your next job?

FREDDY
No idea, I'm just trying to work on one of my film scripts.

Danny smiles and shakes his head.

FREDDY
But they're brilliant.

Danny looks doubtful.

FREDDY
Like the one about a guy who keeps losing his memory and has to solve his wife's murder by leaving notes.

DANNY
Sounds very familiar.

FREDDY
Christopher Nolan made Memento which had exactly the same concept. I was robbed!

Danny whistles the theme tune of the 'TWILIGHT ZONE'.

FREDDY
But see?
(mock arrogance)
I am a genius.

DANNY
A genius who's BEHIND HIS TIME!

Freddy pulls a face. Danny picks up a white pawn and a black pawn and holds them behind his back.

DANNY
Ok, let's see if you're gonna have a great career making movies.

Danny holds his hands out, the pawns buried in his fists.

DANNY
Do you feel lucky, punk?

FREDDY
Spoken like a true Clint Eastward
fan.

Freddy hand wanders between Danny's clenched hands, and
swiftly touches his right hand - it's the white pawn.

FREDDY
Yes! All is good!

DANNY
Sorry, wrong one. Black means a
wonderful future in films.

FREDDY
It's a fix!

DANNY
It's always a fix! You see you
don't get to choose what gets made,
somebody else does.

Disgruntled, Freddy looks down at the game but Danny starts
to clear the board and pack up.

FREDDY
Hey! What are you doing?

DANNY
You need to listen and learn. Have
you seen a film called Stalker?

Freddy looks puzzled.

DANNY
By a Russian dude called Tarkosvky.

Freddy shakes his head.

DANNY
Nobody sees it. The truth hurts.
It's about this room in a
radioactive wasteland in Russia,
where if you can get to it all your
dreams come true. So this stalker,
a sort of guide, takes a writer and
scientist to it and...

Danny pauses for effect.

FREDDY

And?

Danny snaps the chessboard together.

DANNY

There's nothing there! Nothing changes!

FREDDY

What's that got to do with me?

DANNY

Everything! You wanting to make films! It's an illusion. Come on, I can get you a job at my company.

FREDDY

I don't want to do data entry, I want to write and direct films.

The chorus of birds starts again. Freddy answers the call.

FREDDY

(to phone)

Hi mum.

He listens hard, his face freezes and goes white.

FREDDY

Oh no...

INT. JAMES & SARAH'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Sarah is cutting the stems of a bunch of tulips. Freddy sits on a stool looking downcast.

FREDDY

What am I going to do there?

SARAH

Nothing. The nurses will give him the chemotherapy, you're there to hold his hand.

Freddy looks anxious.

SARAH

You need to see what's happening.

JAMES (O.S.)

O for crying out loud, where's this bloody taxi! Incompetent morons!

INT. JAMES & SARAH'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

James looks out of the window at the street.

JAMES

Do they not understand the meaning
of time: I have a DATE WITH DEATH!

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Freddy and Sarah look at each other. He pulls a face.

SARAH

Remember, he's terrified.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The taxi pulls up outside and the TAXI DRIVER leans out of the window with a big, gormless, friendly smile and waves.

JAMES

O God help me! What clown do I see
before me? A happy man who enjoys
his life! What a fuckwit!

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Sarah smiles at Freddy.

SARAH

Good luck, darling.

FREDDY

Help.

INT. TAXI - DAY

James glares at the TAXI DRIVER who is all smiles. Freddy sits hunched, bracing himself for the hammer blows.

TAXI DRIVER

Isn't it a beautiful day?

JAMES

(scowling)

What, pray, is so beautiful today?

TAXI DRIVER

The sun's out, blue skies, the
birds are singing...

JAMES

(scowling harder)

The banality is breathtaking.

The TAXI DRIVER is taken aback but recovers.

TAXI DRIVER
I'm off to Majorca tomorrow. You
going anywhere nice this summer?

JAMES
Hades, probably.

TAXI DRIVER
Where's that? Greece?

JAMES
(biting the words)
There-is-a-Greek-connection.

TAXI DRIVER
Never been.

JAMES
It's underground!

TAXI DRIVER
Ah, I know what you're doing, my
cousin's into caving.

JAMES
Christ, will you please just drive!

The TAXI DRIVER looks round at Freddy, who smiles weakly.
James fumes as they drive on in silence and hit a traffic
jam. Nothing moves in either direction.

JAMES
For God's sake! Do you know what
you're doing?

TAXI DRIVER
Sorry?

JAMES
You're a taxi driver, you should
know what roads to use!

TAXI DRIVER
I can't predict every...

JAMES
You've done this deliberately,
haven't you? Just to gain a few
extra pounds. It's outrageous.
You're just a mugger on wheels.

The cars start to move.

TAXI DRIVER

Who do you think you are?

JAMES

Do you not know who I am? Of course you don't. You are a philistine, uncultured and unfettered with the finer creations of our glorious humanity.

TAXI DRIVER

If you carry on like this you can get out and walk.

JAMES

The clown has courage, does he? The insensitivity is astounding. Can you not hear the knocking?

TAXI DRIVER

What knocking?

JAMES

Are you deaf as well as ignorant? Death, sir, is knocking on my door!

The TAXI DRIVER cowers in his cab.

JAMES

You would be rude to a man who has but a handful of days left to him?

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

The TAXI pulls up to the hospital entrance.

JAMES

Have you not eyes? Look where we are - the Oncology Department. That's cancer to you, mate.

Freddy and James get out of the taxi.

JAMES

A pox upon you, sir, for treating a dying man so badly.

The TAXI DRIVER bursts into tears.

JAMES

Yes, weep, you who have the luxury of time to do so. My days appear to be strictly numbered.

James storms up the hospital steps and enters. Freddy gets out his wallet.

FREDDY
I'm really sorry, please ignore
him, it's all a bit...

The TAXI DRIVER wipes his eyes with his sleeve.

FREDDY
What was it, fifteen pounds?

TAXI DRIVER
Forget it, please don't...

Freddy hands over thirty pounds.

FREDDY
Really, I insist. Sorry again.

INT. HOSPITAL, SIDE ROOM - DAY

James sits back in the chair, his eyes firmly shut. A thin tube from the chemotherapy drip bag is plugged into his arm. Freddy sits in an armchair opposite him. He is trying to read a magazine, pretending to read, he just cannot read. He grimly looks up from the magazine at James who tightly grips the arms of his chair.

INT. FREDDY & THERESA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Eva is dancing energetically to a rock song. Freddy sits on the sofa, staring morosely into space.

EVA
Dad! Look at me.

Theresa comes in with two mugs of tea and sits down.

THERESA
What did the doctors say?

FREDDY
Six months, a year...

THERESA
(to Eva)
Turn that down.

EVA
But it's dad's best song.

THERESA
Eva!

EVA
Grandad will get better, won't he?

Getting no response, Eva stops dancing and walks over. She searches Freddy's face for an answer and none comes.

Eva bursts into tears. He picks her up, puts her onto his lap and hugs her.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

At the window, Freddy forlornly looks up at the stars in the sky. An idea comes to him. An exciting idea. He starts to pace. Eagerly, he grabs his phone and calls Danny.

FREDDY
(to phone)
Listen, Danny, pick up, dammit!
I've got it!

INT. DANNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

In bed, Danny is kissing RACHEL (30s), his girlfriend.

FREDDY (V.O.)
(filtered on answerphone)
The film, STALKER! Y'know, the room
that gives you everything you want
but doesn't. I get it now!

Danny stops kissing.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Freddy quickly paces the room.

FREDDY
(to phone)
It's such a great concept, I've had
this amazing idea! I'm going to
rewrite it.

INT. DANNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Danny and his girlfriend lie next to each other staring up at the ceiling listening to Freddy.

FREDDY (V.O.)
(filtered)
I'm going to remake STALKER for the
21st century! And you know what?
It's going to be brilliant!

Danny closes his eyes and slowly shakes his head.

INT. FREDDY & THERESA'S HOUSE, STUDY - NIGHT

Freddy sits in front of his computer staring at the screen. He scratches his head and drums the desk with his fingers. Finally, he types EXT. HILL - DAY.

He puts his hand on his chin and thinks. Wearing a dressing gown, Theresa enters.

THERESA

Aren't you coming to bed?

He types: THE HOUSE STOOD PROUDLY AT THE TOP OF THE HILL.

THERESA

You're not doing what I think
you're doing?

FREDDY

I'm running out of time, I don't
know how long he's got. This is my
last chance to show dad I'm not a
fail...

THERESA

Grownup? You've tried this many
times before.

FREDDY

But this is a new script.

THERESA

This is utter madness.

Theresa shakes her head and leaves as Freddy starts typing.

INT. STUDY - DAWN

Empty coffee mugs litter the desktop. Freddy is typing. A chorus of birds sing. Freddy stops typing and scans the desktop. He gets up and checks his trouser pockets. They are empty. Finally, he finds his phone in his jacket.

FREDDY

(to phone)

Hello?

The bird song continues. He looks confused. And looks out at the garden and sees the birds singing the dawn chorus.

FREDDY

Bloody ring-tone! Bloody birds!

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Freddy is asleep in bed. He stirs and staggers out of bed and wanders to the study and sits down at the desk. With a deep sigh, he starts typing.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Eva holds a bow and arrow and aims at a cat which is sitting high in a tree. The arrow, with a rubber suction tip, flies into the air and hits the cat. The cat shrieks and runs off. Freddy stands at the open window of the study.

FREDDY

Eva! Stop that. Leave the cats alone.

INT. STUDY - DAY

Freddy thinks hard as he paces the room.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Eva sees a pigeon on the window-sill of the study. She aims and fires the arrow. The pigeon flies off.

ARROW'S POV: the arrow flies through the air and heads towards the study's open window.

Freddy paces the room and turns to see the arrow heading straight at him. He freezes in shock. The arrow hits him in the forehead. And is stuck to his head. He stands for a moment, stunned. He runs to the window.

FREDDY

EVA!!!

Eva runs inside the house. Freddy storms downstairs and into the kitchen. She hides behind the table.

FREDDY

I told you to stop!

He chases Eva around the table. And stops. He sees himself in a mirror. The arrow is still stuck to his forehead. He puts his hands on his hips and poses.

FREDDY

Personally, I think this is a very good look.

He smiles warmly at Eva, who giggles as he plucks the arrow off his forehead.

INT. STUDY - DAY

Freddy looks at the computer screen.

FREDDY
(reading)
The house on the hill was a ruin.
Paul turned and walked away.
(beat)
The End.

He smiles at the screen with great satisfaction.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

On the table are ten copies of Freddy's screenplay. The front title page says 'HOUSE OF DREAMS' BY FREDDY BEAUMONT. He puts the scripts into addressed and stamped A4 envelopes.

EXT. FREDDY & THERESA'S HOUSE - DAY

Freddy strides out of the front door with the ten envelopes.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Whistling, Freddy saunters to a postbox and shoves the envelopes in. As he walks away, he gets out his phone.

FREDDY
(to phone)
Hi Richard...

RICHARD (V.O.)
(filtered)
Ah Freddy, well done on the jewellery ad but I'm afraid there's no more work in the pipeline.

FREDDY
That's fine with me, I'm a man on a mission at the moment. I've written a film script and I was wondering if you knew any companies that I could pitch it to, face-to-face?

INT. THE TALENT AGENCY OFFICE - DAY

RICHARD, Freddy's agent, is late 50s, glasses and grey, thinning hair. On the wall are head-shots of his actors.

RICHARD
(to phone)
That's very difficult. I could try a few contacts.

FREDDY (V.O.)
(filtered)
Listen, I need this. Please. The
script's so good I swear if it gets
made I'm going to be on first name
terms with Steven Spielberg.

Richard looks very skeptical.

INT. JAMES & SARAH'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

James lies in the bed reading a newspaper. He peers over his
reading glasses to see Freddy and Sarah enter. She is
carrying a big bunch of bright, colourful flowers.

SARAH
Look what Freddy's brought you.

JAMES
What's this, a bloody floral
tribute?

FREDDY
(nervously)
How's things?

JAMES
Things are fine, I however am
dying!

SARAH
Stop being an obnoxious sod or I'll
pack you off to one of those
depressing hospices where nobody
comes to visit.

JAMES
It's my deathbed, I will say and do
whatever I want!

SARAH
Of course, darling, you're normally
so timid. Honestly, you're being a
pig as usual.

Disgruntled, James snorts piglike at her.

SARAH
I'll get some tea, my delightful
piglet.

She leaves the bedroom. An awkward silence hangs in the air.

JAMES

Freddy, I know you don't think so
but I love you...so much.

Freddy is shocked.

JAMES

You need to get a job, a normal
job.

FREDDY

But you did what you wanted, and
look at you.

JAMES

Yes, look at me, great isn't it?

Freddy pulls a face.

JAMES

Listen, I got lucky, that's all.

FREDDY

I've written a new script, I really
believe in it.

JAMES

It's a pipe dream, a mirage...

James's hand clutches the empty air.

FREDDY

But I just want to...

JAMES

For Christ's sakes, at least listen
to me, I'm a dying man!

Sarah enters with two mugs of tea.

SARAH

You sound very alive to me.

JAMES

Do you know what my LAST WORDS will
be?

SARAH

I'm sure they will be very good.

JAMES

I will say thus: 'my only regret is
that I never murdered you!'

SARAH
Darling, you can do better than
that. Lean forward and be a good
boy...

Sarah plumps up the pillows behind James.

SARAH
There you go.

James lies back with a sigh and looks up at Sarah who smiles warmly at him. He puts his hand on her hip and they kiss.

Freddy walks out the room as tears stream down his face, and he heads down the stairs, banging the wall with his fist.

FREDDY
Stop it...stop it...stop it.

INT. FREDDY & THERESA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

Eva, in her school uniform, sits at the table eating cereal. Next to her is Freddy who nurses a mug of coffee. He looks disheveled and sad. Dressed for work, Theresa enters.

THERESA
Eva! Come on, we're going to be
late. Get your bag.

Eva jumps up and exits the kitchen. Concerned, Theresa squeezes Freddy's shoulder.

THERESA
Why don't you go for a run, it
might help?

Freddy shakes his head and looks out the window.

THERESA
Me and Steve are probably working
late again tonight.

She exits the room and heads to the hall.

THERESA (O.S.)
You've got mail!

The front door slams shut. Freddy slowly gets up and walks to the hall. Three letters are on the doormat. He picks them up. On the first one is the name of the sender: B-PLAN PICTURES. Freddy eagerly tears it open and scans the letter.

FREDDY

(reading)

'Many thanks but we found it
unconvincing...wish you every
success with your endeavour.'

(pulling a face)

And so do I.

He drops the letter to the floor and opens another.

FREDDY

(reading)

'We do not have the degree of
enthusiasm necessary to offer you
our services.'

(rolling his eyes)

Well just try, why don't you?

He opens the final letter from PRODUCER JEREMY MATTHEWS,
FIRESTORM FILMS, and reads it.

JEREMY MATTHEWS (V.O.)

Dear Freddy, thank you so much for
giving me the opportunity to read
your screenplay HOUSE OF DREAMS.
With your permission I would like
to use your script in lectures that
I am currently giving on how to
write for film.

FREDDY

Nice!

JEREMY MATTHEWS (V.O.)

I feel it is the perfect example of
how NOT to write for the cinema.

Freddy's face falls.

JEREMY MATTHEWS (V.O.)

The script suffers from poor
characterisation and unconvincing
dialogue: it is all tell and no
show. There appears to be little or
no understanding of narrative
structure; where does act one end,
and act two start? Lastly, but not
least, act three has zero
credibility - a devastating fire
without rhyme or reason? I suggest
a radical rewrite is required...

FREDDY
I'll radically rewrite your letter,
mate.

He furiously tears the letter up into tiny pieces and walks to the kitchen and puts the kettle on. The home phone starts to ring but he ignores it and gets out a mug.

RICHARD (V.O.)
(filtered on answerphone)
Well, you owe me big time. I've
called in a few favours with some
film companies and...

Freddy jumps to the phone.

FREDDY
(to phone)
Tell me what you've got!

INT. THE TALENT AGENCY OFFICE - DAY

Richard sits at his desk.

RICHARD
(to phone)
I've achieved the impossible. I've
got three production companies
happy to meet you.

FREDDY (V.O.)
(filtered)
This is the big break I need.

RICHARD
Don't blow it, there are no second
chances.

EXT. PRIMARY SCHOOL - DAY

Freddy and Eva, in a red Mini Cooper, park up as a multitude of school children pour through the gate.

INT. RED MINI COOPER - DAY

Freddy looks at Eva in the rear view mirror.

FREDDY
My big day today, wish me luck.

EVA
(smiling)
All the luck in the world, dad,
hope it's amazing.

Freddy smiles as she blows a kiss and exits the car.

INT. BLUE FEET PICTURES OFFICE, RECEPTION - DAY

Looking smart with a black coat and black briefcase, Freddy sits on a chair. The BLUE FEET EXECUTIVE appears, and smiles.

BLUE FEET EXECUTIVE
So sorry to keep you waiting.

FREDDY
Not at all...

Freddy follows the BLUE FEET EXECUTIVE into her office.

BLUE FEET EXECUTIVE
Please, take the sofa.

Freddy sits down on the very expensive looking black leather sofa and gets his script out from the briefcase.

BLUE FEET EXECUTIVE
Richard highly recommended you.

FREDDY
(embarrassed)
Well, yes.
(clears his throat)
Where shall I start?

BLUE FEET EXECUTIVE
(smiling warmly)
Just pitch the film.

FREDDY
Well...it...the story begins...
(coughs)
It opens with a wide shot of this hill, and this man, he's lying on the ground looking up, looking up at a house which sits on the hill, you know, the hill I mentioned at the beginning...and...um...

The BLUE FEET EXECUTIVE nods and smiles.

INT. PANORAMIC FILMS OFFICE - DAY

Freddy sits on a green leather sofa.

FREDDY
...and out of the front door
appears this very beautiful woman.
(MORE)

FREDDY (CONT'D)
Now her husband is the best friend
of Paul. And this woman is in love
with Paul...Paul...did I tell you?
He's the guy lying on the ground...

The PANORAMIC EXECUTIVE looks confused.

INT. LAZY DOG FILMS OFFICE - DAY

Freddy sits on a bright red leather sofa.

FREDDY
...and the husband is very ill, you
know terminal disease, that kind of
thing...but it won't be too
depressing. But then again death,
well, it's real. So. Yup. Um...

The LAZY DOG EXECUTIVE has his feet up on the desk and looks
at Freddy with sour contempt.

INT. BLUE FEET PICTURES OFFICE - DAY

Freddy smiles enthusiastically.

FREDDY
...he's ill, well dying, but very
slowly, otherwise there's no film!

The BLUE FEET EXECUTIVE nods and smiles warmly.

INT. LAZY DOG FILMS OFFICE - DAY

Freddy looks up at the ceiling.

FREDDY
So where was I? So he's dying.
Not Paul, but David. That's the
husband, not the lover. I did tell
you the husband is David? No? Yes?

The LAZY DOG EXECUTIVE has a look of bottomless contempt.

INT. PANORAMIC FILMS OFFICE - DAY

Freddy scratches his head.

FREDDY
Anyway, Isobel, the wife, is
desperately conflicted but at the
same time absolutely sure of
herself.

(MORE)

FREDDY (CONT'D)
(thinks)
If that's possible?

The PANORAMIC EXECUTIVE looks very confused.

INT. BLUE FEET PICTURES OFFICE - DAY

Freddy sighs and looks lost.

FREDDY
This isn't going very well, is it?
I couldn't start again could I?

With a pained smile, the BLUE FEET EXECUTIVE shakes her head. Freddy glumly nods, stands up and heads to the door.

INT. PANORAMIC LIMITED OFFICE - DAY

The PANORAMIC EXECUTIVE looks absolutely baffled.

FREDDY
And he turns to his wife and says I
went to the room, the room, y'know
where...where...

Freddy smiles to himself, gathers his script and stands up.

FREDDY
I wouldn't give money to myself on
that pitch.

INT. LAZY DOG FILMS OFFICE - DAY

The LAZY DOG EXECUTIVE scowls at Freddy.

FREDDY
So he goes to this special room and
there's nothing there and he
returns home to find his house
burning down...and...um...um...

The LAZY DOG EXECUTIVE sourly looks at his watch. Freddy sighs, shakes his head and gets up. He walks to the door and turns around to say something. The LAZY DOG EXECUTIVE stares at him with absolute loathing. Freddy smiles and fumbles with the door handle, dropping his script to the floor.

FREDDY
Sorry, sorry...

Freddy hurriedly retrieves the script and flees - mortified.

INT. UNDERGROUND TRAIN - DAY

Freddy sits on the train, hugging his briefcase, and stares at the floor in despair.

INT. FREDDY & THERESA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

His arms dangling to his side, Freddy sits with his head facedown on the table.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. JAMES & SARAH'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Freddy stands awkwardly, while James lies in his bed.

JAMES

You need to get a job, a normal job.

FREDDY

I've written a new script, I really believe in it.

JAMES

It's a pipe dream, a mirage...

James's hand clutches the empty air.

FLASH FORWARD TO:

INT. FREDDY & THERESA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Freddy gazes at the darkness outside. An idea hits him. He looks at his watch, gets out his phone and types in "STEVEN SPIELBERG" and hits a link.

Contact details appear for a film company. He taps the telephone number on the website, and eagerly stands up and listens as it rings out.

CHUCK FREIDMANN (V.O.)

(filtered)

Hello. This is Chuck Freidmann,
Head of Development for DreamWorks.

Freddy excitedly paces the room.

FREDDY

Hi, I was just wondering if...

CHUCK FREIDMANN (V.O.)

(filtered)

It is very important for you to realise that Mr Spielberg is a very, very busy man. He will not read your screenplay.

Freddy stops in his tracks - it's a recorded message.

CHUCK FREIDMANN

(filtered)

The only scripts he will receive have to come via a recognised agent or producer within the industry. Do not send unsolicited screenplays to Mr Spielberg, they will not be returned, they will be...

(menacingly)

...recycled. And do not even think about leaving your name and number.

(sarcastically)

Thank you.

The line goes dead.

Freddy is stunned and frozen with the phone to his ear, his face bright red with bottomless embarrassment.

Slowly, holding the phone as if it were contaminated, he puts it in his pocket and quietly walks out of the room, with his head bowed low with shame and humiliation.

EXT. LONDON - DAY

Panorama of London which sits under a gloomy and foreboding cloudy sky. The sound of a phone ringing.

FREDDY (V.O.)

Hey mum.

SARAH (V.O.)

(filtered)

Freddy, darling, you need to come over. Dad's had another scan and...

(sobbing)

...the news isn't good.

FREDDY (V.O.)

O mum!

The ominous sky rumbles with distant thunder.

INT. RED MINI COOPER - DAY

Freddy drives down the quiet suburban streets. He is sweaty and smoking furiously.

He looks around at the people in the streets and gardens: a woman (70s) carries shopping, a man (80s) trims a hedge.

FREDDY (V.O.)

It was my Matrix moment: suddenly I
could see behind the glitching
pixels of life.

Far off, the chatter of machine-gun fire.

FREDDY (V.O.)

By the time you reach your sixties
you might as well be living in a
bloody war-zone...

In the distance the sound of artillery shells explode.

FREDDY (V.O.)

All you've got to look forward to
is the artillery of cancer, the
snipers of strokes, and the hand
grenades of heart attacks...

(bitterly)

...with dementia as an added bonus.

Freddy parks up outside James and Sarah's house. He gets out the car and throws his cigarette to the ground.

FREDDY (V.O.)

And what a completely insane thing
to do - take up smoking.

He walks up to the front door and rings the bell. The door opens and a tearful Sarah hugs him.

FREDDY

How is he?

SARAH

It's spread everywhere...he's on
morphine.

He grimaces.

INT. JAMES & SARAH'S HOUSE, STAIRCASE - DAY

Freddy walks up the stairs to James's bedroom. He reaches the threshold and looks in. TWO NURSES are giving James a bed-bath. He is still breathing but looks comatose.

They pull him forward like a lifeless mannequin and sponge his back. Shocked, Freddy steps back and leans against the wall.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

James lies in bed sleeping while Freddy sits in a chair intensely watching him. James stirs, sees Freddy and waves him over with his outstretched fingers. Freddy leans forward and gently holds James's hand as he falls back asleep.

Charlie quietly enters, stands behind Freddy and puts a soft, affectionate hand on his shoulder.

CHARLIE
(whispering)
It's not long now.

Freddy slowly nods, with tears in his eyes.

EXT. GOLDERS GREEN CREMATORIUM GARDENS - DAY

A distant church bell rings the hour.

Sarah, Charlie, Freddy, Theresa, and Eva stand around a flower-bed. Behind James's immediate family stand a mournful throng of cousins, colleagues and close friends.

There is a small, freshly dug hole in the ground next to a purple Acer which is ready for planting. The OFFICIAL of the crematorium holds a metal urn.

OFFICIAL
(to Sarah)
If you'd like to have the poem
read, now is a good time.

SARAH
Yes, of course.

Sarah nods to Charlie.

CHARLIE
(to Freddy)
Are you sure you don't want to?

Distraught, Freddy shakes his head. Charlie stands in front of the mourners and takes out a sheet of paper.

CHARLIE
(reading)
Happy the man, and happy he alone,
He who can call today his own,
(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 He who, secure within, can say
 Tomorrow do thy worst, for I have
 lived today.

Freddy looks down at the ground.

CHARLIE
 Be fair or foul or rain or shine
 The joys I have possessed, in spite
 of fate are mine. Not heaven
 itself upon the past has power But
 what has been, has been, and I have
 had my hour.

Eva reaches out and holds Freddy's hand as the OFFICIAL walks to the flower-bed, opens the urn, and pours the ashes into the hole in the earth.

MONTAGE of the ashes pouring into the ground and James alive and well. MONTAGE ends on Freddy's tormented face.

INT. FREDDY & THERESA'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Wide-awake, Freddy lies in bed staring up at the ceiling. Theresa enters.

THERESA
 You can't spend the rest of your
 life in bed, it's a waste.

He rolls over to the other side of the bed, blanking her.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Eyes closed, Freddy is lying on the sofa. Theresa enters.

THERESA
 (sarcastic)
 Great, you've left the bedroom.
 Well done.

FREDDY
 What?

THERESA
 This is the living room, it's for
 the living. Your dad wouldn't want
 you to take it like this.

FREDDY
 Like what?

THERESA
Lying down.

FREDDY
Great pun.

THERESA
Look, I can only imagine what
you're going through but...

Freddy rolls over with his back to Theresa. Frustrated,
Theresa, walks out of the room. A chorus of birds sing.
Wearily, Freddy retrieves his phone.

FREDDY
(to phone)
Hi Richard.

RICHARD (V.O.)
(filtered)
The jewellery people have got the
green light for another ad, are you
up for it? I think you owe me...

INT. MAKE-UP TRAILER - DAY

Freddy and Debra sit alongside one another facing a large
mirror. The MAKE-UP WOMAN pats Debra's face with foundation.

DEBRA
...and I said no way, I don't have
intercourse on a first date. Blow
jobs? Sure. Intercourse is way
too personal.

The MAKE-UP WOMAN giggles. Debra glances over at Freddy.

DEBRA
What's up, 'lover-boy'?

Freddy calmly stares at himself in the mirror.

DEBRA
Where's all that 'isn't it a
wonderful world' gone?

FREDDY
My dad died.

DEBRA
Shit happens.

FREDDY
You could say that.

DEBRA

Sorry.

(to MAKE-UP WOMAN)

Okay, I need a cigarette.

Debra gets up and leaves. Freddy picks up a magazine called ALRIGHT. The front cover shows the actor HUGO BONNARD getting married to a glamorous woman called J-FOX. Freddy frowns at the beaming image of his doppelgänger.

With her back to Freddy, the MAKE-UP WOMAN gets various bottles and brushes ready.

MAKE-UP WOMAN

Did you hear about the woman who went into a bar?

Freddy shakes his head.

MAKE-UP WOMAN

She went up to the barman and said
'can I have a double-entendre,
please?'

A flicker of a smile flashes across Freddy's face.

MAKE-UP WOMAN

The barman replied: 'Madam, of course I can give you one.'

Freddy smiles. The MAKE-UP WOMAN, holding a foundation brush, turns round and beams at him, her eyes sparkling. She is early 30s, with long curly hair and radiates warmth.

MAKE-UP WOMAN

(smiling)

Okay, let's have you.

Freddy raises his eyebrows.

FREDDY

I'm Freddy.

TAMSIN

Tamsin.

EXT. KENWOOD HOUSE, HAMPSTEAD HEATH - DAY

Freddy and Debra are sitting on a bench. They are surrounded by the film crew.

DIRECTOR

ACTION!

Freddy and Debra stare into space. Freddy frowns and turns to Debra. She stares into space.

DIRECTOR
Debra! Action!

Debra stares at the floor.

DIRECTOR
You need to learn your lines!

DEBRA
I've got a migraine.

Freddy rolls his eyes. Debra storms off to her trailer, closely followed by the DIRECTOR.

DIRECTOR
Debra, I'm not falling for that...

Freddy looks over and sees Tamsin watching him - she smiles. He gets up and walks over to her.

FREDDY
The last time she had a 'migraine'
filming shut down for two days.

Tamsin's eyes sparkle at him.

TAMSIN
That's so inconvenient.

Freddy smiles.

EXT. PUB - NIGHT

Freddy and Tamsin sit at a table by a window. They are smiling, talking and drinking.

INT. PUB - NIGHT

Freddy beams at her - he looks alive.

FREDDY
Of course what I really want to do
is write and direct a feature film.

TAMSIN
Wow!

A handsome barman picks up the many empty glasses on their table and smiles at Tamsin. She raises her eyebrows at him.

FREDDY
Y'know, show the world what I can
really do.

The barman walks off, smiling.

TAMSIN
You should do it. Carpe diem!

She clinks her glass against his. Freddy stares intensely at Tamsin who returns the stare.

FREDDY
Seize the day.

Freddy leans forward and they kiss.

EXT. PUB - NIGHT

Freddy and Tamsin leave the pub and walk up the road.

FREDDY
My bike's up there.

They walk past a nightclub and Tamsin stops to hear the distant club beats.

TAMSIN
Let's go in.

Tamsin, holding Freddy's hand, pulls him into the nightclub.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

In the crowded nightclub, Freddy and Tamsin smile and dance.

EXT. TOWER BRIDGE - NIGHT

Freddy and Tamsin are on his bike; he pedals standing up as she sits on the seat. They cycle over and hit a red-light.

TAMSIN
You can't stop, otherwise you lose.

Freddy cycles in a circle in front of the traffic lights, looking very wobbly.

FREDDY
Whoah! I think I'm drunk.

TAMSIN
I was wondering why there are two
of you.

INT. TAMSIN'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Freddy and Tamsin walk in and collapse on the floor.

FREDDY
God, how many stairs was that?

TAMSIN
Three thousand, five hundred and
fifty-two...

She puts her hand under his top and gently claws his chest,
and they kiss.

THERESA (V.O.)
Freddy! Wake up!

INT. FREDDY & THERESA'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Freddy lies asleep in bed.

THERESA
You're going to be late!

FREDDY
(waking)
What?

THERESA
Honestly, you're like a child.

She marches out of the bedroom. The front door slams shut.
Freddy sits up. He looks rough and bemused.

INT. MAKE-UP TRAILER - DAY

Freddy strides in all smiles. And stops. Debra is having
her make-up applied by a new MAKE-UP WOMAN.

FREDDY
Where's Tamsin?

DEBRA
You're keen. Called in sick.

Despondent, Freddy sits down in his chair. He gets out his
phone and writes a text: "LAST NIGHT WAS BRILLIANT. SORRY I
COULDN'T STAY LONGER. SEE U TOMORROW BEAUTIFUL. XXXXXXXX."

DEBRA
Everything okay, 'lover-boy?'

FREDDY
Yeah, all good.

Freddy presses send on the text. And freezes. The name of the recipient: THERESA.

FREDDY
NO!!!

Under the text message is one word: DELIVERED.

FREDDY
Shit!!!

He stands up and frantically paces the trailer.

FREDDY
Bollocks!!!

DEBRA
Okay, lover-boy?

FREDDY
Fuck!!!

His phone rings. He stares at it in mortal fear - the name on the screen is "HOME."

FREDDY
(sheepishly)
Hi darling, what's up?

THERESA (V.O.)
(filtered)
Where's the phone charger? I can't find it anywhere. My mobile's dead.

FREDDY
(relieved)
Oh...um...no idea. Can't think.
(sweetly)
I'll find it when I get home.

INT. FREDDY & THERESA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Holding her dead mobile, Theresa walks into the kitchen using the landline phone. She opens a kitchen draw.

THERESA
Don't worry, found it!

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Freddy puts his phone away.

FREDDY
Shit, shit, SHIT!

A thought hits him.

FREDDY
There's still time!

DEBRA
What's going on?

He runs to the door.

EXT. TRAILER - DAY

Freddy storms out of the trailer, jumps onto his bike and cycles past the DIRECTOR.

DIRECTOR
Freddy! Where are you going?
You're on in five!

FREDDY
Got a migraine! Feel awful!

Freddy manically cycles off. The DIRECTOR shakes his head.

EXT. STREET - DAY

At great speed, Freddy cycles through the traffic.

INT. FREDDY & THERESA'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - DAY

The front door is slowly and tentatively opened. Freddy stands on the threshold, listening for any sounds. He carefully and furtively enters the hall and stops.

He quietly closes the front door, turns and listens. He feels as if he is about to be ambushed at any moment. Not hearing anything, he creeps into the kitchen. With relief he sees Theresa's phone on the kitchen work-top still plugged into the charger. He reaches out to the phone.

Theresa strides into the kitchen.

THERESA
You're home early. Very early.

Freddy freezes, then picks up a magazine.

FREDDY
(casually)
Filming got canceled. Power cut.

He pretends to read the magazine.

THERESA
That's a shame.

She exits the kitchen and he swiftly reaches for her phone.

THERESA (O.S.)
Thanks for the text, by the way.

He freezes and she walks back into the kitchen.

THERESA
But what exactly did we do last
night?

With his back to Theresa, he pulls a face in pain.

THERESA
Didn't you come home at five in the
morning?

She sits down on a stool.

THERESA
I have a confession, too.
(beat)
Me and Steve.

Freddy turns and faces her.

FREDDY
Oh.

THERESA
Just feelings, nothing's actually
happened between us...unlike you.

FREDDY
I think I...I lost my head. I've
fucked up.

Freddy slowly exhales.

FREDDY
She believed in me.

THERESA
I believed in you.
(beat)
Once.

Freddy's head drops and he stares at the ground - lost.

EXT. SOUTH BANK - DAY

The London Eye slowly turns and seagulls squark on the mudbanks of the river Thames. Freddy and Danny are at the cafe playing chess. Freddy's hair is greased back.

Freddy looks up from the chess board to see Danny staring quizzically at his new hair style.

FREDDY

It's so I stop looking like you know who.

DANNY

You look like Hugo Bonnard with greased hair.

FREDDY

Rubbish. I look completely different.

DANNY

How's living with mum working out?

FREDDY

Odd...but comforting.

DANNY

And Tamsin?

FREDDY

Gone to Brazil, met a boy on a beach.

Danny gives him a pitying look.

FREDDY

Don't look at me like that, she was brilliant but...

THREE TEENAGE WOMEN walk up to Freddy and giggle nervously.

FREDDY

(severely)

Yes?

1ST TEENAGE WOMAN

Love your new hairstyle, Hugo.

Danny smiles as Freddy rolls his eyes.

1ST TEENAGE WOMAN

You couldn't give us your auto...

FREDDY

No, I bloody well couldn't!

1ST TEENAGE WOMAN

No need to be so rude, Hugo!

FREDDY

I'm not Hugo, but if I was I still wouldn't give you my autograph.

1ST TEENAGE WOMAN

Then you wouldn't deserve to be him.

FREDDY

I'M NOT HIM ANYWAY!

2ND TEENAGE WOMAN

Hugo!

FREDDY

Christ almighty, I'm ME!

Danny gets up and slowly backs the adoring fans away.

DANNY

Come on, give him some space. Can't you see he needs to be alone.

2ND TEENAGE WOMAN

Has J-Fox left him?

FREDDY

I've got NOTHING to do with J-FOX!

1ST TEENAGE WOMAN

It's over! Already!

DANNY

Now you know, can you let him...
(milking it)
...grieve.

The THREE TEENAGE WOMEN look wide-eyed at Freddy.

DANNY

Please?

The THREE TEENAGE WOMEN rush off, wiping out their phones.

1ST TEENAGE WOMAN

(to phone)

You're never going to believe this but...

With a big grin on his face, Danny sits down.

DANNY
How does it feel to be so famous?

FREDDY
Like a fraud.

EXT. MAIN ROAD - DAY

Freddy's red Mini Cooper drives down the road, with Wembley Stadium and its iconic arch in the background.

INT. RED MINI COOPER - DAY

Freddy is driving and his hair is no longer greased back. Sarah is in the front passenger seat and Eva is in the back.

FREDDY
Eva, you must tell me when you're going to play hide and seek. I thought you'd been abducted!

EVA
But it's fun!

FREDDY
IKEA is too big! I even called the police! And hiding in the staff restroom. How was I going to even think of looking there?

A billboard on the side of the road catches Freddy's eye. It is an ad for the gossip magazine called ALRIGHT; it has a photo of Hugo Bonnard and J-FOX with a jagged white line separating them with the words: HUGO & J-FOX DENY SPLIT.

Freddy winces.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The red Mini Cooper pulls up and they exit the car carrying IKEA boxes and head to Sarah's house.

FREDDY
If I buy you an ice-cream will you stop hiding for once?

EVA
(cheeky grin)
I'll think about it.

Sarah opens the front door.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

The shopping party walk into the kitchen and Eva puts down a box and runs off to the garden.

SARAH
She's happy enough.

FREDDY
She's stronger than me. But then
again when she hits her twenties
her therapy bill's going to be
astronomical.

Eva, making a plane noise, runs back into the kitchen.

SARAH
Want a drink, darling?

EVA
No thanks!

Eva runs upstairs as Freddy starts unpacking a picture frame.
Loud thumping comes from upstairs.

FREDDY
Eva! What are you doing?

EVA (O.S.)
Jumping on the bed!

FREDDY
Well stop it!

The loud thumping continues. Freddy takes a photo of his dad
and starts to put it into a picture frame.

SARAH
So where's mine, then?

FREDDY
Mum, when I want to see you I can,
a bit difficult with dad.

He puts the picture on the side board and looks at it.

FREDDY
What a mess I've made of
everything.
(he sighs)
I really am stupid, I thought he'd
live for ever.

SARAH
What on earth made you think that?

FREDDY
I thought death only happens to
other people. If I'd known I'd have
taken more risks.

He stares at the photo of his dad.

FREDDY
Time just runs out.

She gives him a concerned look.

SARAH
I know he was hard on you but I
think he felt a bit threatened.

Freddy looks surprised.

SARAH
What if you were more successful
than him? He could be very
insecure, in fact a complete dick.

FREDDY
Bit harsh...
(thinks)
...but true, very true.

The door bell rings and Freddy goes to answer it. A POSTWOMAN
hands over a parcel and a letter.

FREDDY
Thanks.

Freddy closes the door, puts the parcel down and looks at the
letter and sees Theresa has crossed out the original address
and written Freddy's new one. He opens the envelope and
reads.

The heading of the letter says: STARLIGHT PICTURES LIMITED.

CECILY BISHOP (V.O.)
(very warm voice)
Dear Freddy, thank you so much for
sending us HOUSE OF DREAMS which
our producers have now read. We
thoroughly enjoyed the script,
which we felt was very well
structured and cleverly plotted,
with an excellent twist at the end.

He stares in wonder at the letter.

CECILY BISHOP (V.O.)
 The characterisation and dialogue
 were wonderfully and sensitively
 realised. I personally found the
 screenplay very moving and deeply
 affecting. However, we cannot
 offer to take this further.
 Unfortunately, we have a full slate
 of films that are currently in
 development and we feel that you
 need a producer who has the time
 and resources to do justice to your
 obviously rich and deep talents.
 Yours sincerely, Cecily Bishop,
 Executive Producer.

Dazed, Freddy wanders down the hall into the kitchen.

SARAH
 Everything okay?

FREDDY
 (indicating the letter)
 She loves it...

He walks out into the garden and looks up at the blue skies,
 his eyes glowing in wonder.

FREDDY (V.O.)
 If they couldn't get my film made,
 I knew somebody who could.

He turns and runs inside the house.

FREDDY (O.S.)
 Mum!

CHARLIE (V.O.)
 Freddy, You're bloody mad!

EXT. PRIMROSE HILL - DAY

With the view of the Shard and the Walkie-Talkie building
 before them, Freddy, Sarah and Charlie walk down the hill.

CHARLIE
 You don't know the first thing
 about making films...

FREDDY
 Yes I do, I've been acting for
 years.

CHARLIE

Yes, the fool, the idiot, the...

SARAH

Charlie, that's enough!

CHARLIE

I'm sorry, but listen to me, it'll be a disaster.

FREDDY

I've only got one life and I'm doing it. I've cashed some bonds dad left me and Mum's remortgaged the house and lent me the money.

CHARLIE

You mean she's given it to you! Mum? What-are-you-doing? You've hooked my inheritance to this fantasy!

SARAH

You're sorted, he's not.

CHARLIE

I wanted to be a rock star. Most people don't get what they want, why should you be any different?

FREDDY

Because it's now or never. Don't worry, I'm getting professionals on board...

CHARLIE

The Titanic! If you came to me I'd give you nothing! Zilch!

FREDDY

I've already got a production manager and she's done loads of great films.

Charlie and Sarah walk off.

CHARLIE

(to Sarah)

What a waste of money!

Standing alone, Freddy looks up to the sky as if there is someone in particular looking down at him.

FREDDY

You wait, it's going to be great!

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - DAY

MICHELLE (40s), the Production Manager, and TOM (early 30s), the Production Coordinator, sit opposite each other at computers on the dining table. On the wall is a whiteboard with the schedule for casting, crew, locations, set construction, principle photography and post-production.

Freddy walks in.

FREDDY

Michelle, let's talk casting.

MICHELLE

Ok, from Richard's agency have you decided who you want to audition?

FREDDY

There's two I want to see for the husband role, and of course I'm playing the lover. The only one I'm really struggling with is who will play the wife, Isobel.

MICHELLE

What exactly are you looking for?

Freddy looks over at a poster on the wall advertising the film "IF ONLY". Above the text, "STARRING SUZANNE PAINOIRE", is a beautiful woman gazing into the distance.

MICHELLE

You have to be realistic. You have to take the best available to you.

With a sigh, Freddy stares longingly at the poster.

MICHELLE

One other thing, have you ever directed anything before?

FREDDY

Many times...

Michelle nods with approval.

FREDDY

...in my mind, but no, nothing.

MICHELLE

(shaking her head)

Right, you need to do a workshop.
Frank Harris is in town running a
course for directors. He's good,
probably the best in the business.

Michelle clicks a link on the computer and a webpage loads
up: "FRANK HARRIS - THE RENOWN INTERNATIONAL TUTOR OF FILM
DIRECTING." A close up black and white photo shows him to be
in his late 50s, serious and arrogant.

INT. LECTURE ROOM - DAY

The lecture room is packed with keen film directors. Standing
before them is FRANK HARRIS who has greased grey hair and is
built like a bear. All that's missing is the big cigar.

FRANK

I am Frank Harris. And I am frank.
Do not be offended, I am rude to
all. Film directing is tough: life
is not always a hard-on, sometimes
you're pissing in the eye of a
tornado with your limp dick.

Frank looks at Freddy, who is seated at the front.

FRANK

You remind me of someone. A lot.

Freddy squirms under the intense gaze.

FRANK

(to everyone)

Before I start I want to remind you
that this evening you are all
invited to a gathering of actors
and agents. These agents even have
some famous names on their books.

INT. HOTEL, BAR - NIGHT

Everybody is talking and swapping contact details. Frank
walks up to Freddy who is standing alone at the bar.

FRANK

I want to introduce you to a good
friend of mine...

FREDDY

Oh right.

FRANK
(smirking)
It'll be an interesting experience.

Frank leads the way to a glamorous group of people, who are all avidly listening to a MAN out of vision.

MAN (O.S.)
And she said to me...
(comic French accent)
...you're the most arrogant bag of
shit I've ever had the misfortune
of knowing!

The group burst into laughter. Frank wades in, pulling Freddy with him to face the unseen MAN, who is none other than HUGO BONNARD. He wears a black leather jacket, white T-shirt and bright red trousers.

FRANK
Hey, Hugo, this is the guy I was
telling you about. It's uncanny.

With a sneer, Hugo Bonnard coldly looks Freddy up and down. Except for their dress and demeanour, they are identical.

FREDDY
(stunned)
Um...hi...pleased to meet you.

Freddy offers to shake hands but Hugo Bonnard blanks it.

FRANK
So what do you think, Hugo?

HUGO BONNARD
I think I'm a wonderful success...

Hugo Bonnard puts his arm around a stunning J-FOX.

HUGO BONNARD
...and he isn't.
(smiling smugly)
He's me gone wrong!

The glamour group laugh. Freddy looks at his watch.

FREDDY
God, is that the time?

Freddy flees with scornful laughter ringing in his ears.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Freddy walks out of the front doors of the hotel and joins a queue for a taxi. A fleet of taxies take all the waiting people except for Freddy and AMY (mid 20s).

AMY

Had enough of the party?

FREDDY

You could say that.

AMY

Strange events don't you think?
Everyone pretends to be in love for
five minutes.

FREDDY

That wasn't exactly my experience.

AMY

Are you an actor or director?

FREDDY

Both, but I'm here as a director.

AMY

Talk to me, I'm an agent's PA.
Let's play fantasy casting. In an
ideal world who would you want?

FREDDY

The French actor Suzanne Painoire,
she's amazing.

AMY

She's on our books.

FREDDY

(sarcastically)
Of course she is.

Amy smiles and nods.

FREDDY

(incredulous)
Really?

A taxi pulls up and Amy reaches inside her handbag.

AMY

Here's my agent's card, her name's
Catherine.

She gets into the taxi.

AMY
Send her an email.

Transfixed, Freddy gazes at the card.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Freddy sits at the dining table facing Michelle.

FREDDY
I've got a plan to win over
Suzanne's agent.

MICHELLE
Send an email?

FREDDY
(shakes his head)
Catherine won't take me seriously,
I've never directed a film before.

MICHELLE
So what's the big idea?

Freddy rubs his hands together.

FREDDY
Ok, here's what we do...

INT. RED MINI COOPER - DAY

Freddy and Michelle are in the car, parked up in a residential street. Freddy is looking furtive.

FREDDY (V.O.)
We find out where Catherine lives
and watch her closely...

MICHELLE (V.O.)
Sounds creepy.

Freddy spies Catherine leave her house and get into her car.

FREDDY (V.O.)
We follow her and find out her
usual route to work...

MICHELLE (V.O.)
Very creepy.

As Catherine's car takes off, the red Mini follows closely.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
Are you going to take her hostage
until she gives you Suzanne?

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Freddy looks aghast.

FREDDY
God, no! Why would you think that?

MICHELLE
I'm not suggesting you do it! I
can't think where this is going!

FREDDY
Let me explain. Now, where was I?

EXT. STREET - DAY

Catherine drives down the main road, followed swiftly by
Freddy and Michelle in the Mini Cooper.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
Stalking Suzanne's agent.

FREDDY (V.O.)
Not stalking, that's illegal!
Michelle, we're gathering intel.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
And how exactly does that help us?

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Freddy looks excited.

FREDDY
Well first of all we get a huge
poster made as if it's an ad for
Vanity Fair with a big photo of me,
and the words: FILM DIRECTOR FREDDY
BEAUMONT: THE ONE TO WATCH.

Michelle frowns.

FREDDY
And it's placed on one of those
large billboard advertising trucks
that we're driving.

Michelle frowns even deeper.

EXT. MAIN ROAD - DAY

A truck with a big poster showing Freddy on the cover of Vanity Fair is parked up.

INT. TRUCK CAB - DAY

Freddy sits in the driver's seat, Michelle is by his side.

FREDDY

Look! There she is!

Catherine is driving down the main road which is thick with traffic in both directions.

FREDDY

Let's do this!

Freddy and Michelle put on black balaclavas.

MICHELLE

Are these really necessary? I feel like we're going to mug her.

FREDDY

In a way we are...

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Freddy claps his hands.

FREDDY

Now here's the fun bit, the set up, or, and I like this even better, the ambush!

EXT. MAIN ROAD - DAY

The advertising truck suddenly lurches across the road in front of Catherine's car and abruptly stops, blocking her path. Catherine brakes hard and throws her hands in the air.

CATHERINE

What the fuck!

The traffic is stuck in all directions. Drivers hit their horns. With his balaclava on, Freddy jumps out of the truck and opens the bonnet of the engine and peers inside.

FREDDY (V.O.)

You see I pretend there's a problem with the engine...

MICHELLE (V.O.)
No, I really don't see.

FREDDY (V.O.)
It's simple: she is forced to see
the poster, and the poster gives me
credibility!

Exasperated, Catherine watches Freddy and shakes her head.

INT. CATHERINE'S CAR - DAY

Looking infuriated, Catherine gets out her phone.

CATHERINE
(to phone)
Amy, can you tell Branagh I'm
running late for our meeting, a
total idiot is blocking the road.

Catherine blasts her car horn. Freddy, standing at the engine, turns round, looks in Catherine's direction and points at the engine and shrugs his shoulders.

CATHERINE
(to phone)
I can't move, it's gridlock.

Freddy walks over to her, and she lowers her car window.

FREDDY
(bizarre Scottish accent)
Och aye lassie, the engine's a bit
temperamental.

CATHERINE
Try and fix it!

FREDDY
Have you seen the poster? He looks
really cool.

Taking no notice of the billboard, she stares at him.

CATHERINE
Can you please get on with it?

FREDDY
Aye lass, but check out the ad.

Catherine stares coldly at Freddy as he returns to the truck's engine.

CATHERINE

(to phone)

Tell Branagh I'm really sorry and
I'll be there as soon this plonker
has gone.

As Freddy pretends to examine the truck engine, Michelle
leans out of the cab.

MICHELLE

We need to go, there's a couple of
policemen heading this way.

Freddy quickly closes the bonnet, climbs back into the cab,
starts the engine and drives off.

FREDDY

She'll have had a good look at the
poster by now. This is working like
an absolute dream!

INT. CATHERINE'S CAR - DAY

Catherine sourly watches Freddy drive away.

CATHERINE

What an absolute weirdo!

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Michelle looks horrified.

FREDDY

You're not convinced?

She slowly shakes her head.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING, FOYER - DAY

Angily, Catherine strides into the foyer and heads to the
lift. As she enters the lift, Freddy, dressed normally,
swiftly follows her in. She hits the button for the fifth
floor and steps back.

MICHELLE (V.O.)

This is never, ever going to work.

FREDDY (V.O.)

Nonsense. Life loves a trier.

MICHELLE (V.O.)

Tell that to Scott.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Freddy is puzzled.

FREDDY
Film director?

MICHELLE
Explorer. He died a miserable death
in the Antarctic wastes trying to
reach the South Pole.

FREDDY
Good job we're only trying to make
a film then.

Michelle rolls her eyes.

INT. LIFT - DAY

Freddy moves forward trying to obscure the lift buttons.

FREDDY (V.O.)
Finally, we set the trap and
execute the pay off!

Freddy discreetly presses the alarm button, the lift lurches
to a halt and the alarm clangs loudly and incessantly.

FREDDY
We seem to be stuck. Never mind.

He offers to shake hands but Catherine gives him a hard look.

FREDDY
Let me introduce myself, I'm
Freddy Beaumont, you might have
seen me on the cover of Vanity...

CATHERINE
Why did you do that?

FREDDY
Do what?

CATHERINE
Press the alarm.

FREDDY
I didn't.

CATHERINE
I just saw you!

She hits the button for the fifth floor - nothing happens.

CATHERINE
Now you've broken it.

FREDDY
I didn't.

CATHERINE
You did.

DISSOLVE TO:

Freddy and Catherine sit listlessly on the lift floor, backs to the walls, facing one another with the alarm blaring out.

FREDDY
Didn't.

CATHERINE
Did.

FREDDY
Didn't.

She fixes him with a withering stare. Freddy sheepishly glances at her and exhales loudly.

FREDDY
Okay, I did.

She shakes her head. The alarm stops blasting out.

FREDDY
Sorry. I wanted to engineer a meeting with you to get Suzanne Painoire in my film.

CATHERINE
Ever heard of email?

FREDDY
I'm a first time director, I thought you wouldn't take me seriously.

CATHERINE
And this would?

FREDDY
Sorry.

He stares meekly at his feet like a lost school boy. She looks at her watch and slowly her angry frown fades away.

CATHERINE

Okay. We're stuck. Branagh will be long gone by now. Let's talk.

Freddy looks up, astonished.

CATHERINE

Why not? I get the commission, she gets work. Her last film was a critical success, but not with the box office. She's open to offers. She has an expensive habit.
(she sniffs emphatically)
It all depends on your finance.

Freddy smiles confidently.

FREDDY

The film is fully funded...

CATHERINE

Excellent!

FREDDY

I have two absolutely sound investors...

FREEZE FRAME ON FREDDY.

FREDDY (V.O.)

Me and my mum!

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - DAY

Michelle and Tom sit at computers working hard. The front door slams. Whistling, Freddy saunters in.

FREDDY

Good afternoon everyone!

MICHELLE

How did it go? Really bad?

Freddy raises his eyebrows and dances off to the kitchen. Curious, Michelle follows. Freddy puts the kettle on.

FREDDY

Tea? Coffee?

MICHELLE

So what happened?

Freddy beams.

MICHELLE

No!!!

FREDDY

The Suzanne Painoire is starring in
the HOUSE OF DREAMS, written and
directed by ME!

Freddy gets mugs out of the cupboard.

FREDDY

She doesn't do rehearsals, but I
don't care, I've got Suzanne. And
this could be the start of
something amazing!

Michelle is flabbergasted.

FREDDY

You need to believe more.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - DAY

While Freddy stares adoringly at the poster of Suzanne Painoire on the wall, Michelle works on a spreadsheet of the production costs. She shakes her head.

MICHELLE

Freddy, it's no good.

Freddy gazes lovingly at Suzanne Painoire.

MICHELLE

I've even cut out things like
insurance, but we're still short.

Freddy pulls himself out of his reverie.

FREDDY

What's the problem? I've got
Suzanne Painoire. All is good.

MICHELLE

The problem is Suzanne Painoire!
Having her and building a house is
too much. We can't afford both.

Freddy gets up and starts pacing the room trying to think.

FREDDY

Okay, we're in a hole, so we need
to dig deeper.

MICHELLE
That only makes the hole bigger.

He catches his reflection in a mirror and stares at himself.
An idea starts forming in his mind.

FREDDY
Which company invested in Hugo
Bonnard's last film?

Puzzled, Michelle searches online.

MICHELLE
How's that going to help?

Freddy closely examines his features in the mirror, and a
smile slowly spreads across his face.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Freddy, wearing a black leather jacket, white T-shirt and red
trousers, walks with purpose. He is accompanied by Michelle.

MICHELLE
This will never work.

FREDDY
You said that before.

MICHELLE
They will sue you!

FREDDY
I don't care, and when the film's a
great success they won't care.

MICHELLE
They'll know you're not him.

Freddy stops walking and looks sternly at her.

MICHELLE
I know, I need to believe more.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING, FOYER - DAY

Freddy and Michelle enter the foyer and he swaggers
confidently up to the receptionist.

FREDDY
Hi, I've got a meeting with Nick.

The receptionist smiles and picks up the phone.

RECEPTIONIST

Can you tell Nick that Hugo's here?

Freddy looks pointedly at Michelle who nods apologetically.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

In front of shelves loaded with multiple Oscar and Bafta statues, NICK sits at his desk. His personal assistant, DAVID, enters the office with Freddy and Michelle.

NICK

Hugo!

FREDDY

Nick!

NICK

Great to see you.

FREDDY

Even greater to see you!

They shake hands.

NICK

God, you're busy, you're meeting the Head of Development today to talk about another film.

FREDDY

Am I?

Both Freddy and Michelle look lost but she quickly recovers.

MICHELLE

Yes, Hugo, you are.

FREDDY

Yes, I am! Two birds, one stone.

NICK

Excellent. Come, let's talk House of Dreams. Coffee?

FREDDY

Please.

Freddy and Michelle sit down facing Nick as David starts to pour the coffee into mugs.

FREDDY

We've also got Suzanne Painoire on board.

NICK

You're back together? I thought you guys hated each other. She said she'd never work with you again.

FREDDY

(flustered)

Forgiven and forgotten?

NICK

What did she say?

(exaggerated French
accent)

'You're the most arrogant bag of shit I've ever had the misfortune of knowing.'

FREDDY

(embarrassed)

Probably a stressful production.

David passes the mug of coffee to Freddy.

FREDDY

Thank you so much.

Nick looks quizzically at Freddy.

NICK

You seem different, polite, nice even.

Freddy bashfully shrugs his shoulders.

FREDDY

What can I say? I've dug deep and therapy works!

NICK

Wow! A new Hugo! Okay, to business. I've read the script.

Freddy leans forward in anticipation.

NICK

It breaks all the rules: dialogue too on-the-nose, heavy on exposition, lacks pace...

Deflated, Freddy sinks back in his chair.

NICK

Weak structure, emotionally confusing...

Freddy's head drops in defeat.

NICK
...and you know what?

Freddy looks up and wearily sighs.

NICK
We don't care! Hugo, if it's the
worst film in the world, with your
face on the poster it will, at the
very least, make its money back!

Freddy smiles with relief.

NICK
We get the company name out there,
so for us it's free advertising!
You've asked for one hundred-
thousand, it's yours but no more.

INT. LIFT - DAY

The lift doors open and Freddy and Michelle enter. He hits the ground floor button and gives her a big, smug smile.

MICHELLE
Alright, alright.

He starts to whistle cheerfully. The lift arrives at the ground floor and the doors open. Freddy walks out, smack into Hugo Bonnard who is trying to enter the lift. They both wear black leather jackets, white T-shirts and red trousers.

They freeze. Freddy is shocked, while Hugo is baffled by the vision of his doppelgänger. Hugo swiftly lurches to his left as Freddy moves to his right - they collide. Hugo moves to his right and Freddy to his left and they clash once more.

HUGO BONNARD
What is this? A fucking 3-D mirror?

They try to move past one another again and bash heads.

FREDDY
Sorry...

HUGO BONNARD
Get out of my way, you...whatever
the hell you are!

Furious and confused, Hugo stands and stares hard at Freddy, as he and Michelle walk around him and head to the exit.

HUGO BONNARD
Am I going mad or is the world full
of fucking copies of me?

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - DAY

Freddy walks up to Michelle who is standing at the white board showing the schedule of production.

FREDDY
So what's happening this afternoon?

MICHELLE
You're interviewing the camera ops.

Coat on, Sarah walks in.

SARAH
I'm just going to pick up Eva,
don't be late.

FREDDY
I won't, promise.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

JOHNNY (late 50s), carrying a motorbike helmet and wearing a black leather jacket enters. He is followed by Michelle.

MICHELLE
This is Johnny.

Freddy motions Johnny to sit as Michelle leaves.

JOHNNY
Cheers, man.

Freddy has Johnny's CV on his lap.

FREDDY
(reading)
Great, you've shot loads of films.

JOHNNY
Yeah, I'm an awesome cameraman.
It's all instinct, I feel the
angles in my body.

FREDDY
Right, right.

JOHNNY
I did a great film a few years ago,
big impact.

FREDDY
It did well?

JOHNNY
BIG impact.

FREDDY
(nodding)
Did very well.

JOHNNY
No, that was the name of the film:
BIG IMPACT.

FREDDY
Ah, I see.

Freddy looks down the CV.

FREDDY
Funny, haven't heard of it. Ah.
2004. I see you've done nothing
since then.

JOHNNY
Well, to be honest, I went on a
trip, took a lot of stuff...

Freddy nods.

JOHNNY
...and dropped a lot of stuff.

Johnny taps his head with his finger.

JOHNNY
I traveled.

FREDDY
I see.

JOHNNY
I'm talking acid, man.

FREDDY
Yeah, I kind of got the idea.
Great. Good. Well, I've got your
number. Thanks for coming.

Johnny gets up.

JOHNNY

Man, this is the time, my BIG
COMEBACK. That's not a film, but it
should be.

FREDDY

I'll be in touch.

JOHNNY

Don't wait too long, otherwise I'll
be flying helicopters over Borneo.

FREDDY

I believe you.

Johnny leaves and Freddy rolls his eyes.

Michelle comes to the door with SUSAN.

MICHELLE

Freddy, Susan.

Susan (30s) short hair and stocky build, wears combat
trousers and a jacket with lots of harnesses and pockets
which contain screwdrivers, digital drives, batteries, a
portable film-light, and a small digital camera.

SUSAN

Hi!

FREDDY

Come, take a seat.

Susan retrieves her rolled up CV from a shoulder-holster and
gives it to Freddy.

FREDDY

(reading)

Amazing CV. You've done an
enormous amount of films. Unusual
titles: Garbage, Sky, Car, Office.

SUSAN

(earnestly)

My video-works are statements.

FREDDY

Oh yes, I see they all appear to be
made on video. Have you used a
film camera? I'm doing this on
35mm.

SUSAN

Film's expensive, you need shit-loads of equipment: tripods, cranes, tracks. Not to mention an army of assistants. It's prehistoric. You need to think video, think DIGITAL.

FREDDY

I'm sorry, I'm doing it on the real thing: film.

SUSAN

Film's not the real thing, this is.

Susan stands up and whips out a very small, very compact digital video camera.

SUSAN

Look, I don't need a tripod, my hand is steady as a rock.

Susan strides over to Freddy and stands in front of him. She raises the camera high above Freddy.

SUSAN

I can do all this stuff - crane to close-up.

She swings the camera down and holds it in front of Freddy's face - the lens is an inch from his nose.

SUSAN

I can dolly in an instant to wide.

Susan walks quickly backwards and stops.

SUSAN

Then zoom! Big close-up!

Susan runs to Freddy and stops - the lens is right in front of his eyes.

FREDDY

(nodding)

Great, that's great, but can you operate a film camera?

SUSAN

No.

FREDDY

Right, well, thanks for coming.

Freddy gets up and very gently, but firmly, ushers Susan to the door. She turns to Freddy.

SUSAN
Be cool: think DIGITAL.

Freddy smiles and starts to close the door.

SUSAN
That's D-I-G-I...

Exasperated, Freddy closes the door. He sighs and returns to his chair.

Michelle pops her head round the door. Freddy looks fed up.

MICHELLE
You okay?

FREDDY
Did you actually check their CVs?

MICHELLE
You've got to be open-minded, this is...

FREDDY
(frowning)
...low budget, yes I know.

MICHELLE
Amelia's next, I'll send her in.

Michelle leaves.

FREDDY
Whatever next?

AMELIA (40s) enters with a confident, warm smile and to Freddy's relief looks wonderfully normal.

FREDDY
Come in, nice to meet you.

Amelia is about to take a chair.

FREDDY
Sorry, before you sit down, have you made anything at all in the last two years?

AMELIA
Three feature films.

FREDDY
On film or video?

AMELIA
Film of course.

FREDDY
Great! And one last thing: what do
you think of the film Tenet?

AMELIA
Awful. No matter how many times
you see it, it makes no sense.

FREDDY
Excellent! Take a seat...

INT. SARAH'S DINING ROOM - DAY

Michelle and Tom are hard at work at their computers. Freddy
and Amelia enter.

FREDDY
Amelia's the one.

MICHELLE
Great.

Amelia sees the photo of James on the sideboard.

AMELIA
Hey that's...

FREDDY
My dad.

AMELIA
I saw him at the National. He was
amazing.

FREDDY
Yeah, a hard act to follow.

Freddy stares at the photo of James.

FREDDY
Jesus Christ! How could I forget?

He quickly looks at his watch.

FREDDY
Gotta go!

He races out of the room and the front door slams shut.
Amelia looks at Michelle, who shrugs her shoulders.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sarah, Eva and Charlie stand by a wall, next to a gate.

CHARLIE
I know he's busy being the next
Spielberg but does he have to be
late for everything?

SARAH
He'll be here soon.

EXT. HIGH STREET - DAY

Freddy runs down the road and sees a taxi.

FREDDY
TAXI!!!

The taxi drives away. He sees another and waves his hand.
The taxi drives on. Freddy looks exasperated.

Suddenly, thick rain pours down - he is soaked.

FREDDY
Whatever next?

A taxi pulls up beside him.

TAXI DRIVER
Hop in mate, you'll catch a...

Freddy and the TAXI DRIVER stare open-mouthed at one another.
It's the same TAXI DRIVER that took James to Hospital.

FREDDY
(embarrassed)
Hi.

The TAXI DRIVER anxiously checks to see if James is around.

TAXI DRIVER
He's not, you know, coming?

FREDDY
No, he's...look you couldn't take
me to Golders Green, could you?
I'm in a hurry.

TAXI DRIVER
Of course, get in.

Freddy jumps in.

FREDDY
I'm really late.

TAXI DRIVER
No worries, but I can't predict
every traffic jam.

FREDDY
(embarrassed)
I know, I know...

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sarah, Eva, and Charlie stand under their umbrellas.

EVA
Where is he?

SARAH
He'll be here, don't worry.

EVA
I'm not worried, I'm bored.

INT. TAXI - DAY

The TAXI DRIVER looks back at Freddy.

TAXI DRIVER
Doing anything nice today?

FREDDY
(flustered)
Um...I'm going on a picnic.

TAXI DRIVER
Not exactly the weather.

Freddy looks out at the rain-swept streets.

FREDDY
(embarrassed)
Oh yeah.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sarah, Eva, and Charlie stand in the pouring rain.

SARAH
We'll give it five minutes.

EVA
There he is!

The TAXI pulls over and Freddy jumps out.

TAXI DRIVER
Funny place for a picnic.

The sign on the building says: GOLDERS GREEN CREMATORIUM.

FREDDY
Well, yes, it's to...to remember...

TAXI DRIVER
(shocked)
Oh right.

FREDDY
Look, please don't go there. You'll end up having an affair, and before you know it you're divorced, living with your mum, wondering what the hell you've done.

Open-mouthed, the TAXI DRIVER stares at him.

FREDDY
But look on the bright side: you might end up making a film with Suzanne Painoire and all your dreams come true. Amazing, eh?

The TAXI DRIVER looks astonished.

FREDDY
Sorry, I'm a little high.

Freddy hands over the money for the fare.

FREDDY
Keep the change - bye!

The TAXI DRIVER waves goodbye in a mechanical, stunned manner as Freddy walks over to his family and kisses Eva.

EVA
Is he okay?

The TAXI DRIVER robotically waves.

FREDDY
(embarrassed)
He'll get over it. Shall we go in?

CHARLIE
Now the new Spielberg's finally
decided to turn up.

FREDDY
Just call me Tarkosvky.

CHARLIE
Tar-who?

FREDDY
Never mind, too high-brow for you.

They walk through the gate and head towards the gardens.

EXT. GOLDERS GREEN CREMATORIUM GARDENS - DAY

They walk up the path to the far end of the gardens.

FREDDY
(to Charlie)
I have brilliant news. Guess who's
going to star in my film?

CHARLIE
(sourly)
You, because no-one else will.

FREDDY
THE Suzanne Painoire.

CHARLIE
Never heard of her.

Freddy looks shocked as Charlie smiles.

FREDDY
Good one.

CHARLIE
Shame dad's not around to see your
amazing success.

Freddy is taken aback.

SARAH
That's enough! Dad's with us in
spirit and that's what counts.

They walk up to a flowering, purple Acer and stand in front
of it. A small sign reads "JAMES BEAUMONT 1959 - 2023."

EVA
Well?

FREDDY

Well what?

EVA

Isn't anyone going to say anything?

SARAH

Yes, that's a good idea.

(clears her throat)

Well, it's a year on and we're all here to remember you. We miss you very, very much. We think about you all the time.

Freddy, Eva, Sarah and Charlie stand under their umbrellas looking sadly at the Acer and the sign.

SARAH

Eva played a tree in the school play and she was excellent. Her teacher says she's got 'attitude' which we think is even more excellent.

Eva smiles proudly.

SARAH

Charlie's working long hard hours as usual, and he's just been made Vice-President at the bank.

Charlie looks very pleased with himself.

SARAH

Freddy's finally making a film...

CHARLIE

...which will probably sink without trace, he'll go bankrupt, lose the family house and end up sleeping in a tent in my garden.

FREDDY

Thanks Charlie.

CHARLIE

(smirking)

My pleasure.

FREDDY

So now dad's dead you're taking over his role of 'Freddy-bashing?'

CHARLIE
You've got to see the light.

FREDDY
Life's hard enough without you...

CHARLIE
Of course life's hard! You knuckle
down, get a roof over your head and
bread on the table and you pay your
way! When are you going to learn?

FREDDY
You're jealous, stuck in your bank,
chained to your desk, staring at
stupid numbers on a screen...

SARAH
Boys, boys!

CHARLIE
You're just trying to compete with
dad, it's stupid!

Freddy is stunned.

FREDDY
That's not true!

CHARLIE
Is!

FREDDY
I just wanted him to be proud of me
for a change. And you know what? He
still lives on in me, so that's
exactly what I'm going to do!

Freddy storms off.

SARAH
(sarcastically to Charlie)
Well done.

Charlie guiltily looks over at Sarah and Eva.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE, LANE - DAY

Freddy's red Mini Cooper speeds down the country lane.

INT. RED MINI COOPER - DAY

Freddy is driving and smoking. He's in a foul mood. Michelle,
in the passenger seat, has a detailed survey map on her iPad.

MICHELLE
You alright?

FREDDY
(bitterly)
Fine.

MICHELLE
I didn't know you smoked.

FREDDY
I don't.

She shakes her head.

MICHELLE
So all the hills we've seen so far
are no good?

FREDDY
They don't work. I'm just praying
the last one on the list is okay.

MICHELLE
Here we go, on the left.

They pull over at the entrance to a field and get out.

EXT. HILL - DAY

Puffing and panting, Freddy and Michelle reach the top of the steep hill and look at the view.

FREDDY
This is amazing, just what I want.

MICHELLE
Why do we have to build a house on
a hill anyway? It's going to blow
the budget.

FREDDY
To be satisfying every film needs
spectacle. When the house is
destroyed, we see that the main
character's whole world has been
wiped out, everything he ever
wanted gone, his universe, his...

FARMER (O.S.)
Hey! You! Get out of here!

A FARMER with a shotgun strides up the hill.

FARMER
This is private land!

MICHELLE
Leave this to me, I'll sort it.

Michelle walks over to the FARMER. Freddy watches the negotiations. After a while, Michelle returns to him.

MICHELLE
We can't afford it, he wants a fortune.

FREDDY
Tell him we're not Hollywood, we're not BBC, we're...

MICHELLE
...low-budget. I know, I told him.

FREDDY
(loudly)
Okay, forget it, I've changed my mind. I want the other hill.

Freddy walks off. Michelle looks confused.

FREDDY
Come on! We've got a movie to make!

Michelle follows.

FARMER
Hang on, let's talk.

Freddy winks at Michelle.

MICHELLE
I'm impressed.

FREDDY
About time.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

On the sofa, Freddy reads the script of HOUSE OF DREAMS. The front door bell rings. He gets up, goes to the front door and opens it. Theresa and Eva stand before him.

THERESA
She insisted on seeing you. She wants to give you something for tomorrow.

FREDDY

But what's happening tomorrow?

Eva playfully hits him.

EVA

You start filming!

FREDDY

Just teasing, gorgeous. So what do you want to give me?

EVA

A good luck cuddle.

She gives him a big hug.

EVA

It's going to be brilliant!

Freddy glances briefly at Theresa.

FREDDY

At least someone believes in me.

THERESA

I always said you should do it.
I don't know what's taken you so long.

FREDDY

No you didn't! You said...

Theresa beams at Freddy.

FREDDY

Funny.

THERESA

I actually think this might be
the making of you.

Freddy looks stunned.

THERESA

Let's go, dad needs his beauty
sleep. He's got a big day ahead.

Taking her by the hand, Theresa leads Eva away.

EVA

Love you!

FREDDY
Bye, darling.

Freddy blows Eva a kiss.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Freddy lies on the sofa reading the script. The phone rings and switches to answerphone.

DANNY (V.O.)
(filtered on answerphone)
It's me, Danny. So you don't
return my calls. I guess you must
be some big Hollywood player now.

INT. DANNY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Danny is on the phone.

DANNY
I miss you. Miss whipping your ass
at chess that is. Good luck with
the film. What did Hitchcock say?
Treat the actors like cattle!

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lying on the sofa, Freddy listens to Danny.

DANNY (V.O.)
(filtered)
What I say is look out for the
bull! See you soon, buddy.

Freddy smiles, yawns and reads the script: "ISOBEL WALKS
OUTSIDE AND SEES PAUL LYING ON THE GROUND. ISOBEL: "I WANT
YOU, I NEED YOU."

SUZANNE PAINOIRE (O.S.)
I want you, I need you.

Freddy looks up from the script and sees, standing by the
door, the beautiful SUZANNE PAINOIRE. Freddy is shocked. She
walks gracefully over, her eyes glowing, and passionately
kisses him.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The loud banging sound is accompanied by Freddy's mobile and
house phone both ringing at the same time.

CUT TO:

Illuminated by the morning light, Freddy is fast asleep on the sofa. He is fully clothed and his arms are wrapped around a cushion. He is oblivious to the cacophony of sound.

He suddenly wakes up and is startled by the thumping noise and incessant phones. Someone is banging on the front door.

FREDDY
(to front door)
Hang on!

He picks up his mobile.

FREDDY
Yes?

MICHELLE (V.O.)
(filtered)
It's me, Michelle...

FREDDY
(to phone)
Wait, let me answer the door...

MICHELLE (V.O.)
(filtered)
It's me.

The door knocker bangs hard.

FREDDY
(to phone)
I know it's you, Michelle, hang on,
there's someone at the front door!

Freddy walks to the front door and opens it - Michelle stands before him, holding her mobile.

MICHELLE
IT'S ME!

Next to her is Tom, with his phone.

MICHELLE
We've been calling for ages. We're
going to be late!

FREDDY
Shit!

EXT. MOTORWAY - DAY

The red Mini Cooper storms down the motorway.

INT. RED MINI COOPER - DAY

Michelle looks terrified as Freddy floors the gas.

MICHELLE
I don't want to die.

FREDDY
I'm a very safe driver.

Driving at 110 miles per hour, the Mini weaves through the traffic, overtaking and undertaking everything in sight. Michelle's phone rings and she answers it.

MICHELLE
Hello?
(listening)
But we have a contract!
(listening)
That's not fair.

Michelle puts the phone down.

MICHELLE
Slow down! We have a big problem.

FREDDY
I'm not slowing down for anything.

MICHELLE
That was the farmer, he wants an extra hundred-thousand.

FREDDY
He signed the contract!

MICHELLE
He says if we don't pay up he'll let his bull loose on the set.

FREDDY
His bull?
(beat)
God, Danny, you're psychic.

MICHELLE
And he says the bull hasn't had sex in six months which means...

FREDDY
...it's a very angry bull. This is extortion!
(MORE)

FREDDY (CONT'D)

Jesus, there's no time or money to take the house down, find another hill and put it up again. We'll have to pay up.

MICHELLE

Then we won't have enough to pay Suzanne. She wants it all today because she's been burnt before.

FREDDY

Give-him-the-money.

MICHELLE

Suzanne will walk.

FREDDY

We blag it, tell her there's a mix-up at the bank. I've got to wing it, otherwise I've got nothing.

MICHELLE

You've got to face reality.

FREDDY

The one thing life has taught me is that reality is a state of mind.

Michelle stares at Freddy in sudden admiration.

FREDDY

Anyway, I'm sure me and Suzanne will soon be in a relationship.

(beat)

Did I say that out-loud?

MICHELLE & TOM

(rolling their eyes)

Yes.

EXT. HILL - DAY

From high above, the scene is an impressive sight: the house has been built and all that's missing is the roof and the front wall. In front of the house is a camera crane and to the side of the house, on the ground, is the roof and front wall and a large industrial crane to lift them into place.

A short distance away are film trucks and trailers. The set is a hive of activity.

The red Mini Cooper drives up the steep hill and stops by the trailers. Freddy, Michelle and Tom get out of the car.

Freddy looks relaxed and thrilled as he strides towards the house.

FREDDY
(to the CARPENTER)
Hi!

He walks on, a big smile on his face.

FREDDY
(to a RUNNER)
Hi!

He saunters up to the house, leaps onto the ground floor and looks up at Amelia who sits on the camera crane.

FREDDY
How's it looking?

Amelia looks through the lens at Freddy.

AMELIA
Perfect.

FREDDY
Excellent! Let's rock 'n roll.
Where's Suzanne?

Michelle walks up to the house.

MICHAEL
She's running a little late.

FREDDY
Okay, no problem. Amelia, let's
talk through the first shot.

Freddy gallops upstairs. SAM, who plays the husband, is lying on the double bed, trying it out for size.

FREDDY
Hey Sam.

SAM
Morning!

Amelia, on the camera crane, is level with the first floor.

FREDDY
(to Amelia)
Okay, so Sam's lying here with his
terminal illness and Suzanne sits
by the side of the bed.
(MORE)

FREDDY (CONT'D)

The camera starts way up above and
as Suzanne says her lines to Sam,
the camera moves level to her.

Freddy walks to the stairs.

FREDDY

Then she goes to the stairs and the
camera tracks her...

Freddy walks downstairs and out of the house.

FREDDY

...and follows her as she walks
over to me lying on the ground,
where she says her immortal lines:
"I want you, I need you."

AMELIA

Sounds good to me.

SUZANNE PAINOIRE (O.S.)

(French accent)

It does not sound good to me.

Freddy spins round to face SUZANNE PAINOIRE who is blonde,
petite and in her early 30s.

FREDDY

Suzanne! Wonderful! You're here!

SUZANNE

(frowning)

You are playing the lover?

FREDDY

Oui!

SUZANNE

(sourly)

Oh.

FREDDY

I'm Freddy Beaumont by the way.

SUZANNE

Ah, I thought you were someone
else. So you are the lead actor?

FREDDY

Yes!

SUZANNE
And the writer?

FREDDY
Yes!

SUZANNE
And you are also the director?

FREDDY
Absolutely!

SUZANNE
I want to talk to the executive
producer.

Suzanne looks around. Her eyes meet Freddy's eyes.

FREDDY
(smiling)
That's me.

SUZANNE
What kind of a production is this?!

FREDDY
Low-budget...very low budget?

Suzanne angrily ruffles her hair.

SUZANNE
Incredible!

Suzanne's phone rings and she gets it out.

SUZANNE
(to phone)
Oui?

Listening to the phone, she storms off. Freddy and Michelle
look at one another anxiously.

SUZANNE
(to phone)
Non? Merdré!

She turns and fixes her furious eyes on Freddy.

FREDDY
Oh dear.

MICHELLE
I think we know what's coming.

Suzanne puts her phone away and marches up to Freddy.

SUZANNE
I am not appy!

FREDDY
Appy?

SUZANNE
HA-PEE!

FREDDY
Oh.

SUZANNE
Catherine tells me I have not been
paid. Why? Why is this?

Freddy turns to Michelle.

FREDDY
Michelle! Why hasn't Suzanne been
paid today? It's in her contract.

MICHELLE
(bitterly)
I don't know, Freddy, I can't think
WHY she hasn't been paid.

SUZANNE
I want the whole payment in my
account maintenant. That means now!

Freddy is dumbfounded.

SUZANNE
If not, I go!

FREDDY
Right. Okay.

Suzanne stares hard at him.

FREDDY
Right. Okay.

SUZANNE
You said that already.

FREDDY
Right...

She gives him a cold stare.

FREDDY
I'm sure it's just a technical
hitch at the bank, I'll fix it.

Embarrassed, Freddy flees, followed by Michelle.

MICHELLE
What are you going to do?

FREDDY
I have absolutely no idea.

A short distance away from the house, Freddy paces up and down. He is closely followed up and down by Michelle.

FREDDY
Please stop following me, I need
space to think.

MICHELLE
Sorry.

Michelle walks away while Freddy continues to pace. Finally, he stops and whips out his phone.

FREDDY
(to phone)
Hi Charlie...
(squirming)
How are you?

INT. INVESTMENT BANK - DAY

Charlie is sitting at his desk. Everywhere are bankers at computers with endless lists of numbers on their screens.

CHARLIE
(to phone)
I'm so glad you called. I'm really
sorry about the other day. I was
out of order. If there's anything I
can do to make up for...

EXT. HILL - DAY

Freddy paces up and down.

FREDDY
Well actually there is. I have a
small, tiny problem. No that's
bollocks. It's a monster mess.
Suzanne wants all her money now and
I haven't got it. I will be sunk
without trace. It's just a mere...

INT. INVESTMENT BANK - DAY

Charlie is gobsmacked.

CHARLIE

One hundred-thousand pounds! I'm sorry, I can't do it. Low-budget films are guaranteed to lose money.

FREDDY (V.O.)

(filtered)

Listen, if Suzanne does the film, at the minimum, I am actually going to make the costs back.

Charlie looks very skeptical.

CHARLIE

Oh really? Explain that one to me. Exactly how does that happen?

EXT. HILL - DAY

Freddy stops pacing.

FREDDY

She's famous! Simply her face on the poster will get me the cash back. I know this for a fact. Charlie, I'm doing this for dad, for Eva, I need to do this. I'm desperate.

Freddy takes a deep breath.

FREDDY

All these people here are in your hands, the house has been built, all the equipment's here, the crew, the cast. Think of all the hard work that's been put in, the hours, the days, the...

INT. INVESTMENT BANK - DAY

Charlie looks as if the whole world is on his shoulders.

CHARLIE

Alright! Stop! Enough!

He stands up and the bankers stop working and stare at him.

CHARLIE
 This is emotional blackmail, but
 okay I'll do it, I'll give you a
 loan, and it's a loan, NOT A GIFT!

EXT. HILL - DAY

Looking ecstatic, Freddy strides over to Michelle.

FREDDY
 Give Suzanne's bank details to
 Charlie, will you?

Michelle smiles and takes his phone. Freddy jumps up to the
 ground floor of the house and claps his hands.

FREDDY
 Suzanne! The money's going into
 your account as we speak. Listen,
 I'm very open to any ideas you've
 got, I just want you to be happy.

Suzanne stares at Sam, who is on the ground floor.

SUZANNE
 I am starting to feel 'appier.

FREDDY
 Great! Shall we do the first scene?

SUZANNE
 I think we need to make a small
 adjustment.

FREDDY
 Sorry?

SUZANNE
 I don't see my character's passion
 for you.

Suzanne looks at Sam.

SUZANNE
 This man 'ere, Sam, n'est pas? Why
 don't we make 'im the lover, and
 you the 'usband? Why would the
 wife want to, you know, with...you?

Freddy is stunned.

SUZANNE
 You look like someone I detest.

FREDDY
(wearily)
Hugo Bonnard.

She nods and walks up to Sam.

SUZANNE
He is far more attractive to moi.
If 'ee was my lover, I would kiss
'im like this...

Freddy forlornly watches her passionately snog Sam.

FREDDY (V.O.)
It has been said you should never
meet your idol...

INT. BEDROOM, FIRST FLOOR, HOUSE - DAY

Freddy lies in the bed and looks very, very fed-up.

CLAPPER LOADER
Scene one, take one!

The CLAPPER LOADER snaps the clapper board shut.

FREDDY (V.O.)
It has also been said that ninety
per cent of success is just turning
up...

Accompanied by rumbling thunder, thick rain pours down.

FREDDY (V.O.)
...and that is absolute bollocks!

Lying in the bed, Freddy is soaked.

FREDDY
Take cover!

Freddy jumps up and quickly runs downstairs with the cast and crew to take shelter on the ground floor of the house. They stare up at the ominous black sky pouring with rain.

FREDDY
I thought the forecast was good.

White lightning streaks across the black clouds in answer.

MICHELLE
It was.

Freddy turns to see a river of rain-water streaming down the stairs. He looks up at the ceiling.

FREDDY

Jesus!

He runs out of the house and sees the solid rain falling onto the first floor of the roofless house.

FREDDY

The house is going to be ruined!

He turns and sees the roof on the ground next to the house and the crane for lifting it into place.

FREDDY

We've got to get the roof on!

MICHELLE

But the operator isn't here, he's coming tomorrow.

FREDDY

I don't care!

Freddy runs over and jumps onto the platform of the crane. He starts to hit all the buttons on the control panel.

FREDDY

Just start will you!

Suddenly the crane engine comes to life.

FREDDY

We're in business!

Freddy frantically pulls at the levers. The crane violently swings left, then right, but somehow he manages to get the crane above the roof. He pulls and pushes several levers. The crane tilts up to a steep angle. He hits a button and the cable streams down from the top of the crane.

Crash!

The hook on the cable smacks into the roof making a hole. Freddy winces. Michelle shakes her head.

FREDDY

(to Michelle)

Attach the hook to the roof!

Michelle shakes her head but runs over to the roof.

MICHELLE
Attach it to what?

FREDDY
The hole! There's a reason for
everything!

Doubtfully, Michelle attaches the hook to the roof.

FREDDY
Get back!

Michelle retreats as Freddy pulls a lever. The cable slowly winds up and the hook grips the wood around the hole and the roof is lifted up.

FREDDY
YES!

The crane swings the roof over the house but, blown by the fierce wind, the roof starts to spin like a spinning top.

Dumbfounded, Freddy stares at it. There is a loud creak. The wood, that the hook is gripping onto, snaps and Michelle dives out of the way.

Freddy watches wide-eyed as the roof smashes against a corner of the house and falls to the ground. One of the side walls is knocked out at an angle away from the house.

In the pouring rain, Freddy puts his head in his hands. Michelle runs over to him.

MICHELLE
You can't stay there, come on.

Downcast, Freddy shuffles onto the ground floor of the house.

FREDDY
It's a disaster.

Nobody knows where to look.

FREDDY
(to Michelle)
Please tell me we have insurance?

MICHELLE
(wearily)
No, this is...

FREDDY
...low-budget. Yes, I know.

Freddy's head drops in defeat.

CARPENTER
(sheepishly)
There's...um...some tarpaulin at
the back of the house. It was for
covering the...um...timber, before
we put the house up...um...

Freddy slowly turns to the CARPENTER.

FREDDY
(eyes bulging)
Why-didn't-you-say-so-before?

The CARPENTER meekly shrugs his shoulders.

FREDDY
Everyone! It's our last chance!
Let's go! Let's do this!

Everyone, except Suzanne, follows the CARPENTER.

SUZANNE
This is not in my contract.

FREDDY
Suzanne, please...

SUZANNE
I am an actor not a labourer.

Suzanne, head held high, leaves the house, but the hill has
now turned into a wet, muddy mound and she slips and falls
flat on her face into the sludge.

SUZANNE
Merdré!

With a look of satisfaction, Freddy runs to the back of the
house where the CARPENTER feeds the tarpaulin to the crew and
cast.

In the deluge and blasting wind, they carry it upstairs to
the first floor which is a wreck: tables, chairs and plants
are overturned, the double-bed is drenched, books are blown
and strewn across the floor which flows with water.

FREDDY
(to CARPENTER)
We need to nail the tarpaulin to
the walls otherwise the wind will
blow it away.

Against the surging wind, they unravel the tarpaulin. With a hammer, the CARPENTER gets onto a chair while everyone lifts up the tarpaulin and he begins to nail it to the side wall.

FREDDY

Not too many! Just get it into place!

Freddy grabs the other side of the tarpaulin and starts to stretch it towards the opposite wall.

CARPENTER

Wait!

FREDDY

There's no time!

Michelle urgently taps Freddy on the shoulder.

MICHELLE

Look!

Freddy is horrified and flabbergasted: a small but vicious tornado is fast approaching, spinning straight at the house.

FREDDY

NO!!!

The tornado hits the house and kicks the tarpaulin out of Freddy's hands and the few nails holding it to the wall. The tarpaulin flies up and is swallowed by the tornado.

Numb, Freddy watches his last hope rising, tossing and twisting into the distance.

The cast and crew start to leave the house. Freddy stares bleakly at the black sky while the furious wind and rain beat against him. Michelle puts her hand on Freddy's shoulder.

MICHELLE

Come on, it's not safe.

He doesn't move.

MICHELLE

Freddy?

Freddy angrily shrugs off Michelle's hand and looks up at the spitting sky.

FREDDY

If this is what you want, then you can have it!

Lightning lashes across the black rain clouds. Freddy runs over, picks up the hammer and proceeds to smash everything. Michelle flees the carnage.

FREDDY
I have nothing, nothing, nothing!
Absolutely NOTHING!!!

Freddy breaks a window into pieces.

EXT. TRAILER - DAY

At the window of the trailer, Amelia and the CARPENTER nervously watch the spectacle of Freddy on the rampage. Amelia sadly shakes her head.

INT. HOUSE ON THE HILL - DAY

On the exposed first floor, Freddy smashes a mirror.

FREDDY
O Blow winds, and crack your
cheeks! Rage and blow!

He starts to bash the wall which has been knocked out at an angle to the house.

FREDDY
You cataracts and hurricanoes,
spout til you have drenched our
steeple, drowned the cocks!

He puts his back to the wall and pushes hard.

FREDDY
You sulphurous and thought-
executing fires, vaunt-couriers to
oak-cleaving thunderbolts, singe my
white head!

The wall starts to give. He turns around and faces the wall.

FREDDY
And thou, all shaking thunder...

He kicks hard against the wall and it breaks free.

FREDDY
...strike flat the thick rotundity
of the world!

The wall hits the muddy ground with an enormous splat.

Freddy has a completely insane look in his eyes.

The whole house creaks, moves, and stops. Freddy freezes. He is brought to his senses. He nervously looks around at the house which now only has two walls and a first floor.

The entire house groans and starts to shift. With a yelp, Freddy jumps off the first floor as the house collapses like a thunderous pack of cards.

Screaming, he hits the thick, muddy ground and slides down the long, steep, and sludgy slope of the hill. He desperately tries to halt his momentum, but the mud is so wet and soggy it merely slips through his fingers.

He rolls, twists and slithers to the bottom of the hill and finally comes to a rest, lying spread-eagled and face-up in the sludge. He is soaked and smeared with mud and stunned.

An angry bolt of lightning crashes across the sky.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, STAGE

James, is on the stage playing KING LEAR, accompanied by the sound of rain, thunder and lightning.

KING LEAR

Why, thou wert better in thy grave
than to answer with thy uncovered
body this extremity to the skies.
(becoming comic)
Is man no more than this?

EXT. HILL - DAY

Lying on the ground, Freddy looks up at the lashing heavens.

KING LEAR (V.O.)

(comic tone)
Unaccommodated man is no more but
such a poor, bare forked animal as
thou art.

As the lightning sizzles in the sky, Freddy looks down at himself and shakes his head, smiling at the state he is in.

Wearily, he gets up, slips and falls back into the wet mud. He stands up again, steadies himself, and looks over at the trailers in which the cast and crew have taken shelter.

With great care, he slinks away.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Freddy walks along the road, hands in his pockets, shoulders hunched against the wind and rain. An OLD LADY with an umbrella stands at a bus-stop. Soaked and mud-streaked from head to toe, he sheepishly walks over and stands in line.

Shocked by his appearance, the OLD LADY looks him up and down. Shaking with the cold, he smiles with embarrassment. The OLD LADY nods for him to come under her umbrella, and he gratefully shuffles under it.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - DAY

Freddy opens the front door and slowly and robotically walks in: his blue jeans and white T-shirt are caked in stiff, dried mud, and his face and hair are likewise smothered in the thick brown sludge.

Dejectedly, he stops and stares at himself in the mirror.

FREDDY

I suppose I'd better get a job.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

An imposing, impressive office building. The sign above the entrance says in big, bold letters: DATA UNLIMITED.

FREDDY (V.O.)

I had to...I owed so much money to my mum and my brother.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A large open plan office with lots of workers staring at computers. Danny, carrying a huge pile of documents, walks up to Freddy and slaps them on his desk.

DANNY

(warmly)

The boss wants these input by Friday.

Freddy looks around the office.

FREDDY

Who's the boss?

DANNY

(smiling)

Me.

Freddy smiles and starts to enter data into the computer.

FREDDY (V.O.)
And did my dream die?
(beat)
Of course it didn't!

INT. COLLEGE BUILDING, LECTURE ROOM - NIGHT

The TUTOR stands at a whiteboard writing in big letters
NARRATIVE STRUCTURE, ACT ONE AND THE POINT OF NO RETURN.
Freddy sits at the front of the class, avidly taking notes.

FREDDY (V.O.)
I went to night-school and did a
screenwriting course...

EXT. STREET - DAY

Freddy and the TUTOR stand on a street corner. A SMARTLY
DRESSED WOMAN walks up and greets them.

FREDDY (V.O.)
...and my tutor loved my writing so
much, he introduced me to a top
agent...

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Freddy and the SMARTLY DRESSED WOMAN sit in a posh restaurant
as CHUCK FRIEDMANN walks up to their table and takes a seat.

FREDDY (V.O.)
...who introduced me to a top
executive.

CHUCK FREIDMANN
Hi! Chuck Freidmann. Really great
to meet you, Freddy.

FREDDY
(beaming)
Likewise.

They warmly shake hands.

FREDDY (V.O.)
And what did I write about? Me!

FLASHBACK TO:

JAMES IN HOSPITAL RECEIVES CHEMOTHERAPY.

FREDDY (V.O.)
About a man, whose very successful
dad died...

FREDDY AND TAMSIN KISS.

FREDDY (V.O.)
Who had a brief affair...

THERESA LOOKS BITTERLY AT FREDDY.

FREDDY (V.O.)
And a permanent divorce...

EXT. HILL - DAY

The house on the hill with cast, crew and film trailers.

FREDDY (V.O.)
Who thought he could make
everything right by making a
film...

A tornado hits the house.

FREDDY (V.O.)
...in which everything went wrong.

The tarpaulin dances and spins away in the sky.

FREDDY (V.O.)
And in a wonderful twist of fate,
I got HIM...

Hugo Bonnard jumps off the house, hits the ground with a
splat, and slides down the water soaked and muddy hill.

FREDDY (V.O.)
...to play ME!

At the bottom of the hill, next to a camera crew, Freddy sits
in a chair with a megaphone, surrounded by assistants.

FREDDY
(into megaphone)
Cut! Let's do it again!

Smothered in thick mud, Hugo Bonnard wearily gets up.

HUGO BONNARD
Really?! Again?!

FREDDY
Again, please, Hugo! Okay guys,
clean him up!

Hugo Bonnard gets battered by water from a large hosepipe.

FREDDY (V.O.)
I made him do it thirty-seven
times.

Exhausted, Hugo Bonnard trudges back up the hill.

FREDDY
Get a move on, Hugo! Chop-chop!

Hugo Bonnard staggers up the hill and resentfully looks back at a beaming Freddy, who is thoroughly enjoying himself.

EXT. FREDDY'S NEW HOUSE - DAY

The sun is shining on a beautiful Spring day.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A large black and white photo of James performing King Lear hangs prominently up over the fireplace. A phone rings and Eva walks over and picks up it up.

EVA
Hello?
(listens)
Hang on a minute. Dad!

FREDDY (O.S.)
I'm busy! Who is it?

EVA
It's Steven!

FREDDY (O.S.)
Steven who?

EVA
Steven Spielberg! Dad! Come on!

FREDDY (O.S.)
I can't, I'm on the loo!

EVA
(to phone)
I'm afraid he's having a poo.

INT. TOILET - DAY

Freddy sits on the loo with his trousers around his ankles.

EVA (O.S.)
Steven says can you call him back
when you've finished your dump!

Embarrassed, he shakes his head...and chuckles.

THE END