

REAWAKENING

Written by

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1

BLACK SCREEN:

A YOUNG GIRL (CLARE) half-hums, half-sings an old folk song - *Early One Morning*.

YOUNG CLARE (O.S.)
(sings/hums)
*Early one morning,
Just as the sun was rising,
I heard a young maid sing,
In the valley below.*

Snatches of the lyrics are heard under the following:

MAN'S VOICE (JOHN) (O.S.)
*Blonde hair, shoulder length. Blue
eyes - light blue, with hints of
green. 5'4, slim build - size 8-10.
A strawberry birthmark on her
scalp, no bigger than a 2p coin,
hidden by her hair. No tattoos, no
scars, no other distinguishing
features.*

UP ON:

CLOSE: JOHN, 53, worn, weathered. He's watching something - or someone, his eyes darting, scanning.

1

EXT. CITY STREET. DAY.

Morning rush hour. Traffic's back to back. People pound the pavement - kids and parents on their way to school, office workers, heads down, headphones in, glued to screens.

YOUNG CLARE (O.S.)
(sings/hums)
*Remember the vows,
That you made to your Mary,
Remember the bow'r,
Where you vowed to be true.*

JOHN (O.S.)
*Good at sports - football,
netball. Long-distance
running. Musical, though
never bothered with an
instrument. Good singing
voice. Loved to sing. Was
singing before she was
talking.*

Faces - women - young women - harried, preoccupied, alert.

John's watching them.

The women - only the young women.

He's at a pedestrian crossing, waiting to cross the road.

YOUNG CLARE (O.S.) (CONT'D)	JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(sings/hums)	<i>Not that it matters. She's</i>
<i>Oh, don't deceive me,</i>	<i>not made a career out of</i>
<i>Oh never leave me,</i>	<i>singing else we'd have heard</i>
<i>How could you use,</i>	<i>about it, one way or the</i>
<i>A poor maiden so?</i>	<i>other - everything's online</i>
	<i>these days. You can't escape.</i>

John's eye lands on a YOUNG WOMAN across the way.

She's looking at her phone, her face hidden.

He stares at her.

JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
*But there's nothing. Nothing has
 ever come up, even with the most
 advanced technology - facial
 recognition - nothing.*

The crossing lights beep and the young woman looks up, readying herself to cross.

She sees John staring at her and a flash of uncertainty passes over her face.

He quickly looks away, crossing the road, head down as they pass one another.

JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
*Would I know her now? If I got a
 glimpse... Bone of my bone, flesh
 of my flesh.... Would I know her?
 Would I...?*

CLOSE: A photograph of CLARE, 14, in school uniform, the standard school photo-shoot.

The young Clare's face gradually...

DISSOLVES INTO:

... a computer-generated, aged-up photo of Clare, now 24.

Her face has lengthened, the cheekbones more accentuated than her childhood picture.

There's an unreal, altered quality to it.

Clare's voice hums the final bars of the song.

2

INT. POLICE STATION - CONFERENCE ROOM. DAY.

CLOSE: John gazes at the image of his aged-up daughter.

MAN'S VOICE (DOMINIC) (O.S.)
 Clare Reed was 14 years old when
 she left home.
 (MORE)

MAN'S VOICE (DOMINIC) (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 She went to Harrow-on-the-Hill
 station and took a Metropolitan
 line train to central London.

Under the table, a hand reaches for John's.

He tears his gaze from the photo to his wife, MARY, 52, who
 sits next to him.

She glances at him, apprehensive.

He squeezes her hand.

They're seated at a table next to DI DOMINIC CHAMBERS, 38,
 fit, attractive, who addresses a small group of journalists.

DOMINIC
 The last known sighting of her is
 from CCTV footage at Kings Cross
 station at 10 o'clock that morning.

He clicks on his laptop.

A blown up, CCTV image of a girl on a busy station concourse
 appears on the large TV next to the table.

Though it's grainy, it's unmistakably the same young girl as
 in the school photo.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)
 There have been no further positive
 sightings. In the ten years since
 Clare's disappearance, we have made
 comprehensive and thorough
 enquiries to ascertain the
 circumstances and establish where
 she may be.

John turns to the image on the screen.

His daughter. As she was. Ten years ago.

FLASH TO:

2A

**INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM. LATE AFTERNOON - 12
 YEARS PREVIOUSLY.**

12 year old Clare unwraps a small present.

It's a jewelry box. She opens it.

Inside is a gold chain with a small gold heart pendant.

On the heart, the letter 'C' is engraved.

She raises her eyebrows, surprised. Quietly pleased.

BACK TO:

John gazes at the CCTV image of Clare:

She's looking ahead, headphones in, a calm expression.

His eyes roam over every detail - her eyes, her hands, her hair - drinking her in, trying to reconcile her absence.

DOMINIC

Today, the ten year anniversary, we are making a fresh appeal to any witnesses who may have seen Clare either on the day of her disappearance, or at any point since. We ask anyone - maybe new friends, neighbours or work mates - who believe they know a 24 year old woman that could be Clare, but aren't aware of her past beyond the last few years, to please come forward.

JOURNALIST

DI Chambers - after 10 years with no confirmed sightings, do you really believe she's still alive?

DOMINIC

Until proven otherwise, we are operating on the basis that she is. What matters is doing everything we can to find Clare.

He turns to John, who gazes at the image of Clare onscreen.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)

(low)
John?

John doesn't appear to hear. Mary glances at him -

MARY

Love...

John turns back.

JOHN

Yes, sorry.

He glances at the faces before him.

Some wait expectantly, a couple are on their phones.

A cameraman at the back yawns.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Er... I'd just like to echo what Dominic - DI Chambers - said. Please, if anyone has any information about Clare, please get in touch with the police.

He glances at Dominic. Dominic nods, reassuringly.

John takes a breath, then -

JOHN (CONT'D)
 Clare, if you're watching... We
 love you. We miss you. We think
 about you every day. Please, get in
 touch. Tell us you're safe. Come
 home, love. Please come home.

DISSOLVE TO:

3 **EXT. SUBURBAN STREET. EVENING. TWO MONTHS LATER.**

The two faces of Clare - schoolgirl and aged up - stare out
 from a tattered and rain soaked missing persons poster on a
 lamppost.

4 **INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN. EVENING.**

John and Mary eat supper.

JOHN
 Aaron called.

MARY
 (surprised)
 Oh?

JOHN
 He's got a big job starting.
 Wondered if I'd be interested.

MARY
 That's great, love. Be a nice
 change.

JOHN
 Mmm. How was Janet today?

MARY
 In one of her moods. Said I was
 inconsiderate for not having known
 she wanted to switch phonics till
 after lunch. Like I'm supposed to
 read her mind.

JOHN
 She means nothing by it. All hot
 air. She's always been like that.

MARY
 Well, I took the remedial group
 again. She'd've blown her top with
 them, poor things. No patience.

JOHN
 How's little Casey getting on?

MARY
 She tries ever so hard, bless her,
 but she's struggling.
 (MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

I keep telling Janet we should get her assessed but it goes in one ear and out the other.

JOHN

Bugger Janet - go to the head!

MARY

When we were reading today, Casey told me she hates it because her mum's always reading her favourite book on her phone - Facebook.

JOHN

God.

MARY

I don't understand some people. Glued to a screen when their kids are around.

She stands, taking her plate to the bin, scraping it clean.

MARY (CONT'D)

You done?

She motions for John's plate. He hands it to her.

MARY (CONT'D)

That new detective thing's starting later. Might be worth a watch?

JOHN

Mmm.

MARY

There's chocolate mousse in the fridge. It was on special in Tesco.

JOHN

I'll have it in front of the telly.

5

INT. GARDEN SHED. A LITTLE LATER - EVENING.

It's dark outside but the shed is well-lit, set-up as a workshop.

Shelves line the back wall, with numerous packages and lots of small packing boxes.

John's at his table, repairing a vintage model train.

He uses a large, fixed magnifying glass to see the tiny components more clearly.

He works with complete focus, utterly immersed in the intricate and delicate work at hand.

He carefully removes a small cog. It's gold, delicate.

He holds it to the light, admiring it.

YOUNG CLARE (O.S.)
Trains are boring.

YOUNGER JOHN (O.S.)
Only boring people find things boring.

YOUNG CLARE (O.S.)
They're for boys.

YOUNGER JOHN (O.S.)
Rubbish, they're for everyone. Come here - look -

FLASH TO:

5a CLOSE: John's hands guide the young Clare's (aged around 8 or so), pointing out the inner workings of a train.

The cogs inside are gold, beautifully made.

YOUNGER JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
This is the motor. It turns this shaft here, rotates the screw, which is aligned with this cog here. The axis for the wheels passes through the cog. When the motor operates, the screw spins, turning the cog which turns the wheels. It's like a chain reaction.

YOUNGER CLARE (O.S.)
What's that?

YOUNGER JOHN (O.S.)
Everything's connected - one thing makes the next thing work and so on, down the chain. The motor turns the screw which turns the cog -

YOUNGER CLARE (O.S.)
Yeah, I get it.

She pushes his hands away impatiently, turning over the train.

YOUNGER CLARE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Still boring though. You should have had a boy.

An ALARM sounds -

BACK TO:

- from John's phone, jolting him back to the present.

He puts the train down, turning off the alarm.

He carefully puts all the components into a plastic ziplock bag, then places the train and bag into a small box.

He gets up, goes to the door, turns off the light and leaves.

6

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM. A LITTLE LATER - EVENING.

John and Mary sit next to one another on the sofa, watching TV - the detective show.

Eerie music is building to a climax.

The chocolate mousses sit in front of them on the coffee table, uneaten.

Mary watches the programme, expressionless.

On screen, the body of a young girl is discovered.

John glances at his wife. Mary doesn't change expression but her hands twist in agitation in her lap.

He reaches over and takes her hand.

7

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS LANDING. LATER - NIGHT.

John comes out of the bathroom, turning off the light.

He heads down the hall towards his and Mary's bedroom.

The room next to theirs (Clare's room) has the door open slightly.

He hesitates, listening.

Through the crack in the doorway, he can just make out Mary, sitting on a single bed, her back to him.

The room is dark, lit only by the streetlight from outside.

MARY
(very low, whisper)
... she was in one of her moods,
you know how she is - you never
liked her when you were in her
class. Dad says it's just hot air
but she takes it out on the
kids.... (MORE)

Silently, John reaches out and touches the door briefly, as if it's a religious relic, before heading to their bedroom.

8

INT/EXT. JOHN'S CAR/PRIMARY SCHOOL. MORNING.

John, dressed in work overalls, drops Mary off outside the school where she works.

It's busy with arriving kids, parents and staff.

JOHN
Have a good day, love. And don't
mind Janet.

He kisses her on the cheek.

MARY
You at the hairdressers?

JOHN
(nods)
Going there now. Not sure how long
I'll be.

MARY
I'll give you a call at break.

JOHN
Yeah.

Mary gets out, heading to the school.

John watches her.

She stops by the notice board outside the building.

A flyer partially obscures the missing poster of Clare.

Mary adjusts it, making Clare's poster fully visible.

She gazes at the images of her daughter, lost in thought.

A little girl (CASEY) approaches.

CASEY
Mornin' Mrs Reed!

It takes a second for Mary to drag herself back to reality.

She smiles at the child, giving her her full attention.

MARY
Morning, Casey. How are you today?

CASEY
Tired. I done all my homework.

MARY
Good girl. I'd love to see it.

She takes Casey's hand, heading into the school, the little girl chattering happily to her.

John takes this in.

Only once she's inside the building does he start the car.

9

INT. SMALL HAIRDRESSING SALON - BACK ROOM. MORNING.

There's no light or power. A couple of staff members chat and laugh in the empty salon.

John is working on the fuse box.

A YOUNG WOMAN (ANDREA) in her early twenties comes in, carrying a takeaway cup of tea.

ANDREA

Here you go.

JOHN

Ah, thanks very much. What do I owe you?

ANDREA

It's fine - petty cash. How's it looking? D'you think it'll take long?

JOHN

Some of the fuse terminals are corroded - and this one here is melted... I think the whole thing's overheating.

ANDREA

That sounds bad.

JOHN

D'you know when it was last looked at?

ANDREA

(shrugs)

No idea. I've only been here a couple of months. The boss just said to ring you.

JOHN

Where is your boss?

ANDREA

Lanzarote.

JOHN

You might need to get her on the phone.

ANDREA

She's not going to be happy.

JOHN

I'm not sure her salon burning down due to an electrical fault'll make her happier.

ANDREA

Ok.

She seems nervous. John notices.

JOHN
(kindly)
Put her on to me - I'll explain.

ANDREA
(relieved)
Cheers.

She pulls out her phone, scrolling for the number.

John watches her. He hesitates for a moment, then -

JOHN
Did you, er, grow up around here?

Andrea glances at him, slightly thrown.

JOHN (CONT'D)
It's just - you look around the
same age as my daughter. Clare
Reed. She went to Whitemore?

ANDREA
Oh, right. No, I'm from Barnes.
Came here for college five years
ago.

John nods, concealing his disappointment. She dials her boss.

ANDREA (CONT'D)
(on phone)
All right Tracey? Yeah, sorry to
disturb you but the electrician
needs a word....

She thrusts the phone at John.

CUT TO:

10 CLOSE: A Facebook page titled 'Missing - Clare Reed'
The new police appeal is at the top, with photos of Clare.
Hundreds of comments appear below.
Ten years!! Wow this seems like yesterday.
So sad, hope she's safe and happy. If so she should let
someone know.

10 **EXT. CITY PARK/STREETS. DAY.**

John sits on a bench, eating his sandwich, going through the
comments on his phone.

Hope she found a good life.

10 years?!!!! No news?!!!! She's long dead. Very sad.

Have to ask why she wanted to leave in the first place....

I'm a psychic with years of experience. I can tell you where Clare is. PM me for details.

John hesitates at this one - just for a second.

But he knows better. He closes the page. There's nothing.

Nothing at all.

Across the way, two JUNKIES, a man and a woman, totter into the park, sipping from cans.

The WOMAN seems angry - she shoves the man, who barely reacts.

She's young, but her face is prematurely aged. She's oblivious to others, lost in her own drama.

John takes her in.

MARY (O.S.)
(sobbing)
*I should have been more lenient...
I should have sat her down and
said, you can tell me anything! We
should have watched her closer.
Maybe she wouldn't be gone.*

He suddenly starts.

Behind the junkies, outside the park, a YOUNG WOMAN sits outside a cafe.

She looks almost exactly like the computer generated, aged-up photograph of Clare.

She appears to be watching John.

John stares at her, frozen, in shock.

As he watches, she gets up, gathering her things, leaving.

Galvanized, John grabs his stuff and -

RUNS

- to the park exit, dashing out onto the -

10a

ROAD

- narrowly avoiding a car.

He keeps his eye on the young woman, who's at some distance.

JOHN
(calls)
Clare!

She turns a corner.

He picks up his pace, sidestepping other pedestrians, and turns the -

CORNER

JOHN (CONT'D)
(calls)
Clare!

... and sees only an empty street.

He takes this in.

Shaken up, he can't make sense of what he's just seen.

His phone rings.

The caller ID reads *Mary*.

John takes a breath, trying to calm himself, keeping his voice steady.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Hello love.... No, no, fine.
Everything's fine.

11 **INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM. EVENING.**

As before, John and Mary sit on the sofa watching TV.

John glances at her. She's apparently concentrating on the programme.

The only giveaway are her hands, twisting on her lap.

12 **INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM. LATER - NIGHT.**

Mary is asleep in bed, curled up tight.

John, fully dressed, stands in the doorway, checking on her.

Quietly, he closes the door.

13 **EXT. STREET. LATER - NIGHT.**

John's car drives through a quiet suburban street.

14 **INT. JOHN'S CAR. A LITTLE LATER - NIGHT.**

John gets onto a dual carriageway, heading into the city.

Traffic's busier now.

He drives with steady concentration.

15

INT. KINGS CROSS SHELTER. LATER - NIGHT.

A charity drop-in shelter for street workers and the homeless, providing food and support.

It's busy - volunteers at the food counter, women and a few men at tables, chatting.

John comes in, scanning the faces of the young women.

BELLA, 48, the rather harassed founder, spots him.

BELLA

John!

She comes out from around the counter.

JOHN

Hi, Bella.

BELLA

It's been a while. Good to see you.

She embraces him. John loses himself momentarily in the warmth of it.

Bella pulls away, taking him in.

BELLA (CONT'D)

How are you?

JOHN

Ah, you know... Fine.

BELLA

I saw the appeal.

JOHN

There's a new DI. Keen to make his mark.

BELLA

Well, that's good. It all helps.

JOHN

Yeah.

Clearly it hasn't and they both know it.

JOHN (CONT'D)

They, er, did a new picture -

He takes the poster from his bag. Bella studies it.

BELLA

There's a couple of newbies down from Scotland. One from Manchester. Tea?

JOHN

That'd be great, thanks.

Bella turns to a volunteer behind the counter.

BELLA
Suze, would you be a darling and
bring us a couple of teas?
(to John)
Two sugars, right?

John nods. Bella takes his arm and steers him towards a table of two young women (CIARA and MAGDA) and a boy of no more than 17 (NATHAN).

BELLA (CONT'D)
(low)
Ciara's from Manchester. Magda was
in Glasgow for a while.

JOHN
Who's the boy?

BELLA
Nathan. Turned up a few weeks back.
Hasn't said much but it feels like
he's straight out of care.

They approach the table. The group eye John suspiciously.

BELLA (CONT'D)
I'd like to introduce a good friend
of mine, John Reed. John's
daughter, Clare, ran away from home
ten years ago and he pops in now
and again to talk to any new faces,
see if anyone might know anything
about her.

The group still seem wary.

An OLDER WOMAN (NOLEEN), on her way back out to the streets,
squeezes John's arm as she passes.

NOLEEN
Howaya, John love.

JOHN
Hi Noleen. You looking after
yourself?

NOLEEN
Ah sure, I'm grand.

She looks at the table of youngsters.

NOLEEN (CONT'D)
You mind and talk to this fella.
He's one of the good ones. So no
bullshit or back-chat, you hear?

BELLA
(to Noleen)
You get what you need?

Noleen opens her purse which holds a large box of condoms and a rape alarm.

NOLEEN

Sorted.

BELLA

Right. Be safe. Check in later?

NOLEEN

(winks)

Depends how it goes.

(to John)

You mind yourself now. I'll be lighting a candle for you on Sunday, regular as clockwork.

JOHN

Thank you.

She heads off. John and Bella sit at the table. John's about to speak, when -

NATHAN

You been doing this ten years?
Coming here, talking to everyone?

JOHN

(nods)

On and off.

Nathan half-laughs, impressed.

NATHAN

Shit. What about the police?

CIARA

Wow. You really are a twat.

NATHAN

Fuck you, I'm only asking!

CIARA

Think the police are gonna spend ten years looking for some street hoor?

(to John)

No offence, man.

JOHN

The police have been good. They've done everything they can - I mean, they do everything they can. But without fresh leads or evidence...

He puts a photo of schoolgirl Clare on the table.

Ciara picks it up, studying Clare's face. Nathan and Magda lean in to look.

JOHN (CONT'D)

It's one of the last photos we have of her before she left. She'd look pretty different today, of course. She's 24 now. She might've changed her hair, her name.... We don't know.

He puts the latest picture of the aged Clare down.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Might be closer to what she looks like now.

Ciara looks up at him, direct, challenging.

CIARA

She ran off?

John nods.

CIARA (CONT'D)

Can't have been happy, then.

BELLA

Ciara -

JOHN

It's all right.

(to Ciara)

She wasn't. She was very unhappy.

CIARA

'Cos of you?

JOHN

Me. Her Mum. Her life. We didn't.... We didn't understand just how unhappy she was.

(a moment, then -)

She got into drugs. Started getting in trouble. Shoplifting. Anti-social behaviour.... We didn't know what to do. The school tried, we spoke to counsellors, doctors...

Ciara snorts, contemptuously.

John glances at her, as if acknowledging these are excuses.

JOHN (CONT'D)

It was *our* job to help her. Understand her. That's all we had to do. But... she left. We found out she'd sold her phone on ebay - her laptop, everything of value she owned. We think she had about four hundred quid on her when she went. CCTV captured her getting off a train at Kings Cross. That's the last official sighting we have.

The table takes this in.

NATHAN
What about all the CSI shit? DNA or
whatever?

JOHN
(shakes head)
There's been a few leads over the
years but they've never amounted to
anything.

CIARA
You think she's still alive?

Nathan nudges her, shocked. John doesn't flinch.

JOHN
She might be.

CIARA
If she is, seems like she doesn't
want to be found.

JOHN
Perhaps. But I don't think I'd be
any kind of father if I didn't keep
looking.

CIARA
Yeah? And what kind of father were
you? Did you hit her? Fuck her? Are
you that kind?

Ciara -
BELLA
NATHAN
You are one fucked up skank!

John holds Ciara's gaze. Eventually, she looks away.

CIARA
I've never seen her.

Nathan picks up the photos.

NATHAN
(shakes head)
Sorry, me neither.

John nods, resigned. Magda glances at him.

MAGDA
My sister... she also do drugs. It
is... how do I say....
(a moment, then -)
I think maybe you should not hope
too much.

BELLA
I'll ask around. We'll put the poster up.

John pulls out his wallet, taking out some notes.

BELLA (CONT'D)
Ah, John, you don't -

JOHN
Just... get them what they need.

Bella takes the money, touched. She leans up and kisses him on the cheek.

BELLA
I hope I won't see you soon.

John half-smiles.

JOHN
Yeah. Me neither.

17

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE. LATER - NIGHT.

John comes up the stairs as quietly as he can.

On the landing, he takes off his shirt and trousers, then passes the closed bedroom door next to his - Clare's.

He stops for a moment, pressing his hand to the door - that reverent, apologetic gesture.

Then quietly, he opens his own door.

Inside, Mary's still asleep in the same position, curled up.

John slips into bed beside her. She doesn't stir.

But we see she's wide awake.

A burst of LAUGHTER -

18

INT. LARGE OFFICE. MORNING.

- which comes from a group of workmen.

John comes in, accompanied by the FOREMAN (CARL), taking it all in.

CARL
Great to have you with us, John.
Feels like old times, eh?

JOHN
Yeah.

CARL
I'll introduce you to the lads.

19

INT. LARGE OFFICE BUILDING. A LITTLE LATER - DAY.

John works alongside three young guys - MARK, ADAM and BRIAN, who chat and banter.

Though he's focused on his work, he smiles, enjoying the camaraderie.

Another colleague arrives, carrying a tray of takeaway coffees.

MARK
Coffee's up.

The men, including John, stand and stretch.

MARK (CONT'D)
(to John)
Cappuccino, two sugars.

JOHN
(taking coffee)
Thanks a million.

MARK
There's brownies in the bag.

JOHN
(shakes head)
I'm good.

ADAM
(teasing)
Watching your figure?

John smiles, sipping his coffee. The lads muck about, enjoying their break.

JOHN
How long've you been with Aaron?

MARK
'Bout a year now. Mate of mine knew him - introduced me. He's a good bloke.

JOHN
(nods)
Business seems to be booming.

MARK
He's quality. Knows the trade. No cutting corners but no hidden charges. The domestic side of things gone mental - extensions, conversions. He's always on the lookout for more guys - you should talk to him, if you're interested.

JOHN
We worked together, years ago, when
he was starting out. Then I went
out on my own.

MARK
Oh yeah? How come?

John hesitates briefly, then -

JOHN
Just... needed more flexibility.

His phone rings. Automatically, he pulls it out - it's Mary.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Sorry - excuse me a moment.

He walks a few feet away to answer.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(on phone)
Hi, love - how's the morning going?

Mark joins the others and they laugh and natter.

John, listening to Mary, watches their easy companionship.

20

INT. LARGE OFFICE BUILDING. AFTERNOON.

The shadows are long but the mood inside is chipper.
Floorboards have been torn up and plaster removed from walls.
John's rewiring on a wall while the others work and banter.

BRIAN
... and the eejit goes and tells
her!

The men laugh. John chuckles. He's enjoying their company.
Someone's phone rings.

ADAM
(checking phone)
Ah, bollocks - the missus. I'm
s'posed to get the kids, she's
having her hair done... shit....

He heads out to answer the call -

ADAM (CONT'D)
(on phone)
All right darling? Yeah, I'm on my
way....

John pulls out his phone. It's nearly 4pm. Surprised, he
realises Mary hasn't called, as she usually does.

Quickly, he dials her.

The phone rings out, going to voicemail.

VOICEMAIL (O.S.)
*The person you are calling is not
 available. Please leave a message
 after the tone.*

JOHN
 (on phone)
 Hi love, it's me. It's a little
 before 4. Just checking
 everything's okay. Call me when you
 can.

21

EXT. LARGE OFFICE BUILDING. LATER - AFTERNOON.

The men leave, calling their good-byes.

MARK
 (to John)
 See you tomorrow, mate.

JOHN
 (nods)
 Have a good one. And bring your
 lad's train in, I'll have a gander.

MARK
 Cheers, John. Safe home.

En route to his car, John pulls out his phone.

Still no messages, no calls. He dials Mary again as he opens
 his car, loading up his gear.

It rings, then rings out.

VOICEMAIL (O.S.)
*The person you are calling is not
 available. Please leave a message
 after the tone.*

JOHN
 (on phone)
 I'm on my way home. Give me a call,
 will you?

22

INT. JOHN'S CAR. A LITTLE LATER - AFTERNOON.

It's rush hour. John, frustrated, is stuck in traffic.

He dials Mary again.

VOICEMAIL (O.S.)
*The person you are calling is not
 available. Please leave a message
 after the tone.*

CLOSE on John, increasingly anxious.

FLASH TO:

23

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM. AFTERNOON - 10 YEARS PREVIOUSLY.

The curtains are drawn, the room is shadowy and dark.

Mary's hunched in the bed.

John approaches, sitting beside her. Her eyes are closed.

JOHN
(low)
Sweetheart?

No response from Mary.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You should come down, love. You
need to eat something.

Still nothing. Not a flicker, not a stir.

A little concerned, John shakes her gently.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Mary?

Nothing. Worried now, he shakes her harder -

JOHN (CONT'D)
Mary? *Mary!*

He looks at her side table - sleeping tablets - he's not sure how many are gone....

JOHN (CONT'D)
Oh, Jesus, Jesus....
(shouts)
Mary!

Slowly, groggily, she opens her eyes.

MARY
(woozy)
John?

John exhales.

JOHN
Oh, sweetheart....

She half-smiles at him for a moment, before she remembers....

MARY
Oh God... oh no....
(wails)
She's gone! I can't bear it! No!

She buries her face in the pillow, sobbing. John gazes at her, helpless.

BACK TO:

24

EXT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE. LATER - AFTERNOON.

John's car pulls into the driveway.

The living room curtains are drawn.

He turns off the engine but he doesn't emerge from the car.

Finally, slowly, he does get out.

25

INT/EXT. HOUSE - HALLWAY/KITCHEN/STREET. MOMENTS LATER - AFTERNOON.

John unlocks the door, coming in.

Voices are audible from the kitchen, though we can't make out words.

John exhales, visibly relieved.

JOHN
(calls)
Mary?

A sudden CLATTER as if something's been dropped.

John moves towards the kitchen but before he can get there, Mary runs out, closing the door behind her.

She's wild-eyed, wired - unlike we've ever seen her.

MARY
John!

JOHN
You didn't call, your phone's off -

MARY
John, stop! Stop!

John stares at her. She's visibly trembling, quivering.

JOHN
What is it? What's happened?

MARY
She's here.

JOHN
Who's here?

MARY
Clare.

John half-laughs, shocked, disbelieving -

JOHN
Come on, Mary - who's in the
kitchen?

He moves to go to but Mary stops him.

MARY
Listen to me, John. She's here.
Clare's here. She's come home.

He shakes his head, baffled. This doesn't compute....

JOHN
Stop -

Mary grips him hard -

MARY
You're not listening! She's here.

CLOSE on John, taking this in.

JOHN
It's another crank... I'll call DI
Chambers -

MARY
No, John! It's her. She's come
home.

He stares at her.

Everything around her becomes a blur, a haze. The only thing
that's clear are her intense eyes, focused on him.

JOHN
(mumbles)
I... I saw her...

MARY
(distant, muffled)
John?

His heart beats rapidly - he's overwhelmed.

MARY (CONT'D)
(closer, less muffled)
John!

She grips his shoulders. The momentary panic abates a little.

MARY (CONT'D)
Breathe... breathe, love.

JOHN
I can't...

He stumbles - Mary grabs him and guides him to a chair.

MARY
Sit, sit....

JOHN
(resisting)
I have to see her....

Mary holds him tight.

MARY
You will! Just... take a breath.

Slowly, he calms himself.

Mary's grip loosens a little.

He looks at her. She can't contain her joy.

MARY (CONT'D)
It's happened, John. It's finally happened. It's today. It's today - this day. Now.

JOHN
How... When...?

MARY
I know. I *know*. It's...
(a moment, then -)
I'm sorry I didn't call. I'm only just... I...
(a moment, then -)
She was waiting for me. Here. On the doorstep. I... Oh, John. Oh, love.

She embraces him, tight, burying her face in his shoulder.

John stands stock-still. He still can't quite process what she's saying.

Mary pulls away. Tears streak her face but she's smiling.

MARY (CONT'D)
There's so much to say... so many questions, but...

She wipes her eyes.

MARY (CONT'D)
Come. Just... come and see her.

She takes his hand.

He stares at it in wonder, as if this is the first time he's ever experienced human contact.

JOHN
I...

MARY
(gently)
Come and see.

Slowly, as if in a dream, John allows himself to be led down the hall.

Mary reaches out to open the kitchen door -

JOHN
(dry-mouthed)
Wait.

She turns to him.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Why?

Mary smiles at him, full of love. She leans up and kisses him tenderly.

MARY
She'll tell us, love. She'll tell
us everything. Just... give her
time. Trust me?

Unable to speak, John simply nods.

Mary opens the door, leading him -

25a

INSIDE

- the kitchen.

A young woman (CLARE) is sitting at the table.

Hearing them, she stands, awkward, uncertain.

John stops short, taking her in.

It's not the same girl he saw in the park.

Skinny, her clothes (nondescript jeans and hoodie) hang loose on her, her fingers poking out the ends of her sleeves.

Her face is lean, pale - none of the roundness of schoolgirl Clare. There are hollows under her eyes, deep purple shadows.

But her eyes are blue. Her hair, long and unstyled, is a bit darker than before - dirty blonde rather than light.

And though there's a fragility to her, there's something in her gaze that resembles the aged-up photo of Clare, though it's not an exact match.

She looks at John, nervous, twisting the ends of her sleeves anxiously - a gesture not unlike Mary's.

CLARE
(quietly)
Hi.

John stares at her.

FLASH TO:

25B

A RAPID, TUMBLING SERIES OF JOHN'S MEMORIES:

All images are CLOSES of Clare's face at various stages:

- Newborn - eyes closed, scrunched up features;
- 8 month old Clare, laughing in her high-chair;
- 4 year old Clare, frowning in concentration over a task;
- 7 year old Clare, singing in a school production;
- 10 year old Clare, unwell, feverish, lying in bed;
- 12 year old Clare - a sullen, watchful, glance;
- 14 year old Clare, mid-argument - angry, resentful -

BACK TO:

CLOSE: the now-adult Clare.

John looks at her, blankly.

There's no instant, visceral recognition.

In fact, there's nothing at all.

Clare shifts in place, uncomfortable under his scrutiny.

Mary looks at him, concerned.

MARY
John....?

He stares at Clare, mute. Mary takes his arm -

MARY (CONT'D)
Say something.

CLARE
(hesitant)
Maybe leave him for a minute?

Her voice has a slightly husky edge, worn.

Mary drops his arm, gazing at her. The sound of her voice, unheard for so long, transfixes her.

MARY
(nods, awed)
It's a shock...

John can't speak, can't move. Clare bites her lip, anxious -

CLARE
I'm really sorry, I didn't want
to...

She looks up at him, vulnerable.

CLARE (CONT'D)
I don't know how to do this.

John still doesn't respond.

MARY
John?

Clare glances at Mary, really uncertain -

CLARE
(to Mary)
I'm sorry - this was a bad idea...
maybe I should -

Mary breaks away from John, going to her, grabbing her hand.

MARY
(strong)
No! No.

Clare looks at her, grateful.

CLARE
I don't want to be any trouble.

Mary's eyes well with tears. So do Clare's.

CLARE (CONT'D)
(tearful)
I'm sorry....

Mary half-sobs, half-laughs. She pulls her into a tight embrace.

MARY
(muffled)
Oh Clare...

John watches them. He's completely numb. Frozen.

Everything about this feels surreal.

The women gently disengage.

MARY (CONT'D)
(half-laughs)
The pair of us.....!

CLARE
Yeah....

Clare smiles, wiping away tears. She glances at John -

CLARE (CONT'D)
There's... so much to say. But...
we don't have to say anything now.
We've got plenty of time.

Mary exhales, loudly, unable to contain her joy.

MARY
Time....

John stands stock-still, unable to move.

CLARE
Maybe we could sit -

She tentatively steps towards him and suddenly, John -

RECOILS

- stumbling back, nearly losing his footing.

John! MARY Oh! CLARE (CONT'D)

He shakes his head, violently, over and over.

No JOHN

Blindly, he backs out of the kitchen, into the -

25b **HALLWAY**

- and out the front door, stepping into the -

25c STREET

- where he breaks into a run, heading down the road.

Mary comes to the front door -

MARY
(calls)
John! *John!*

But he doesn't turn, doesn't slow or stop.

He runs, faster, faster, sweat beginning to bead his brow.

CLARE (O.S.)
There's so much to say....

He SLAMS his head with the heel of his hand, not breaking stride.

CLARE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
We've got plenty of time.

He SLAMS his head again, over and over, as if to block her voice, her image, her presence.

26

EXT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

The street is quiet. No one's about.

There are no lights on inside John and Mary's house.

27

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE. A LITTLE LATER - NIGHT.

John unlocks the front door quietly. He looks exhausted.

Before he's even stepped fully inside -

MARY (O.S.)

John?

She comes out of the living room, slightly wild-eyed.

MARY (CONT'D)

Oh, god! Thank god!

She clutches him, pulling her to him.

John stands, allowing her to hold him.

MARY (CONT'D)

I thought you'd... I... Thank god...

JOHN

Is she here?

MARY

No...

She pulls away, searching his face.

MARY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I should have warned you - I wish I... I got no warning myself! But John - she's come back to us!

(a moment, then -)

We've got to take it easy, love. We mustn't press her - we mustn't push her - whatever she's been through, whatever she needs - we'll be here, in her own time. But we can't overwhelm her. We've got to give her space. We can't go rushing in and...

(a moment, then -)

We won't make the same mistakes. We have to listen to her, listen to what she needs -

JOHN
It isn't her.

Mary gasps, as if he's thrown a punch. But she quickly rallies, attempting to smile -

MARY
Oh, sweetheart. I didn't believe it at first either. It's so much to take in...

She approaches him -

MARY (CONT'D)
She's different. Of course she is. What did you expect? She's older. And we can't imagine what she... We can't.

John takes her in - her happiness.

JOHN
I don't... I don't recognize her.

His voice breaks.

Mary reaches out and strokes his cheek, tenderly.

MARY
(softly)
Come. You need to rest, my love.
Come. Let me help you.

Like a child, John allows himself to be led by the hand as Mary takes him upstairs.

DISSOLVE TO:

The young Clare's voice faintly hums *Early One Morning*.

CLOSE: a haze of rippling purple-blue fills the screen, glints of bright light peeking through now and again.

UP ON:

28

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM. MORNING.

John swims to the surface of consciousness.

The purple-blue blur takes shape - the curtains, gently undulating in the breeze from the open window, sunlight coming through the gaps.

The humming stops.

29

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN. LATER - MORNING.

Cheerful music plays softly in the kitchen. Movement can be heard within.

John approaches.

Mary, dressed and made-up, looks better than we've seen her.

A rack of freshly-made scones cools on the table.

She mixes cake batter in a bowl, humming along to the radio.

John stands in the doorway, transfixed, watching his wife.

As if sensing him, she suddenly turns.

They gaze at one another across the empty kitchen.

She quickly breaks it, coming to him, embracing him tightly.

MARY

Thought I'd let you sleep - you
were out like the dead. It's good.
You need it. Come - come and have
some tea. I've called in sick - you
should do the same.

She guides him to the table, then busies herself putting the
kettle on, getting out the tea things, mixing the cake.

JOHN

(of the scones)
What's this?

MARY

It's ridiculous, isn't it? Scones,
cake... I'm being stupid....

He goes to her -

JOHN

Mary -

MARY

I just want her to feel... safe.

John looks at her.

JOHN

What did she say? When you first
saw her?

Mary smiles, remembering.

MARY

She didn't say anything. She was
sitting on the doorstep, like she'd
forgotten her key! It was so...
ordinary.

FLASH TO:

29A Teenage Clare, earphones in, sits on the doorstep, oblivious to the world around her.

BACK TO:

Mary looks up at John, almost in wonder. Reverence.

MARY (CONT'D)
 She stood up. I saw her properly.
 I... I thought I'd finally tipped
 over, thought I was imagining
 things. But... She had that look -
 that same look she used to have
 when she wanted to say sorry. The
 same face.

Mary gasps at the memory. John watches her, unsettled.

FLASH TO:

29A CLOSE: Teenage Clare looks up at an unseen person.

BACK TO:

John swallows, uncomfortable.

MARY (CONT'D)
 We came in. We sat down.

She gestures to the kitchen table in awe.

JOHN
 But she must have said something?
 Where's she been? What happened?
 Ten years, Mary. Ten years!

Mary wrenches her gaze back to him, as if pulled from a dream.

MARY
 You don't talk about ten years in
 ten minutes.

JOHN
 She must have told you *something*!
 Didn't she try to explain?

Mary looks up at him, strong. Almost defiant.

MARY
 She asked for my forgiveness, John.
 She wept and asked my forgiveness.

CLOSE on John, taking this in.

30 **INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM. LATER - DAY.**

Distant sounds from outside - children's voices and laughter.

John stands at the window.

All is quiet on the street below.

An ordinary street. An ordinary day.

A figure turns the corner, coming down the street.

Clare.

He watches her slight, delicate figure, her long hair partially obscuring her face.

John's heart beats faster and faster.

She approaches the house.

She stops, hesitating slightly, as if deciding whether or not to proceed.

31 **INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - HALL/KITCHEN. A LITTLE LATER - DAY.**

John slowly comes down the stairs.

Voices are audible from the kitchen.

MARY (O.S.)
... lemon. I don't know if you
still like it?

Clare replies, but we can't make out the words.

John hesitates, steadying himself, then approaches the -

31A **KITCHEN**

- watching from the doorway.

Clare sits at the table, awkward, anxious, pulling at her sleeves. She seems dwarfed by her surroundings.

Mary fusses with tea and plates.

John gazes at Clare, who hasn't yet seen him.

MARY
There's jam for the scones -

CLARE
You've gone to so much trouble -

MARY
It's nothing -

CLARE
(to Mary)
Let me help -

She half-rises, knocking the table, spilling some milk -

CLARE (CONT'D)
 (upset)
 Shit! Sorry! I'm sorry!

Mary comes to her, fast. She puts a hand on Clare's shoulder.

MARY
 You're all right. It's all right.

Clare gazes at her, desperate for reassurance.

Mary smiles at her, full of warmth. Comfort.

John takes this in. Mary's happiness, her transformation.

Clare and Mary sit. Mary quickly mops the milk up.

MARY (CONT'D)
 There we are. Now come on, tuck in.

Clare hesitates, looking at the spread in front of her.

Mary notices -

MARY (CONT'D)
 (quickly)
 'Course, you don't have to. If
 you're not hungry -

CLARE
 (shakes head)
 I don't know where to start.

She's clearly overwhelmed. Mary takes a breath.

MARY
 How about a slice of lemon drizzle?
 Your favourite. I mean...

She breaks off, uncertain. This time, Clare reassures her.

CLARE
 Yeah, that'd be great. Thanks.

Mary can't contain her happiness. She cuts the cake.

MARY
 Right, let's get into this...

John watches Clare.

As if sensing his eyes on her, she looks up.

They lock eyes.

John stares at her.

Under his gaze, Clare's expression falters.

She tugs at her sleeves, nervously.

MARY (CONT'D)
 (to Clare)
 Pass your plate -

Registering Clare's expression, Mary looks over, seeing him.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Sweetheart....

She goes to John, taking his hand.

John doesn't move. His eyes don't leave Clare's.

MARY (CONT'D)
 (gentle, to John)
 Come. We're having cake.

John wrenches his gaze to his wife. He gazes at her, numb.

Mary cups his face in her hands, reassuring him.

MARY (CONT'D)
 It's all right, love.

She gently guides him to the table.

He watches as she pours tea and hands out the cups -

MARY (CONT'D)
 (to Clare)
 For you -

CLARE
 Thanks.

MARY
 (to John)
 - and you.

Clare pushes the sugar bowl across the table towards John.

He looks at her, thrown.

CLARE
 Sorry, do you not -

JOHN
 (sudden, blurts)
 Are you going to tell us?

MARY
 John - !
 (to Clare)
 You don't have to -

JOHN
 (to Clare)
 Ten years. And here you are, sat in
 the kitchen, having tea and cake.

Clare looks away, stricken.

Mary looks down, her hands twisting on her lap.

He reaches for them -

MARY

No.

She reaches for Clare -

MARY (CONT'D)

(to Clare, anxious)

Please - don't mind him -

CLARE

(to Mary)

It's all right....

JOHN

Is it? Not a trace of you - not a word and now -

MARY

John, *please!*

CLARE

(low)

I'm sorry.

John barks out a harsh laugh. Mary swallows a sob.

Clare squeezes her hand.

John watches. Everything about this feels wrong.

Clare looks down, her voice low.

CLARE (CONT'D)

I've lived with you in my head...

I... I've imagined this moment for so long. But for you...

She glances up at John.

CLARE (CONT'D)

What I've done... I understand if you don't want me.

MARY

No!

JOHN

Where did you go? When you got off the train?

MARY

Don't -

JOHN

How did you live? What did you do? Fourteen years old with a few hundred quid -

Mary shakes her head -

MARY
Stop it -

JOHN
(over Mary, mounting
anger)
How did you manage? And no trace of
you anywhere - *anywhere* - no
records, no sightings - *nothing* -

MARY
Stop it, stop it -

JOHN
Do you know what we've lived with
in our heads? Do you have any
idea?!

Mary SLAMS both hands on the table. Clare jumps.

MARY
(explodes)
Leave her be!

John looks at her. He's struggling. Mary softens a little.

MARY (CONT'D)
We don't have to do everything at
once.

A moment. John tries to get himself under control.

JOHN
(to Clare)
What do you want?

Clare looks at him, nervous, pleading.

CLARE
Only... to explain. To... ask your
forgiveness.

MARY
You have it. You have it!

CLOSE on John, taking this in.

32

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN. A LITTLE LATER - DAY.

Mary and Clare's voices can be heard from the living room,
though we can't make out their conversation.

John washes up at the sink, sunlight from outside streaming
through the window, partially blinding him.

He seems in a daze as he handles the plates.

YOUNG CLARE (O.S.)
*Trains are boring... You should
 have had a boy.*

He fumbles a plate.

MARY (O.S.)
 John?

He turns, thrown. Mary is in the doorway.

MARY (CONT'D)
 She'd like to see her room.

33

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - STAIRS/LANDING/CLARE'S ROOM.
MOMENTS LATER - DAY.

John climbs the stairs.

Clare and Mary are already up on the landing.

They're talking, but their voices are muffled, distant.

From John's perspective, only their legs are visible through the stair railings.

The bottoms of Clare's jeans are frayed and dirty; the backs of her heels red and slightly peeling where her shoes rub.

John takes this in.

As he arrives on the landing, their conversation is still muffled, but slightly less so - we can make out words.

MARY
 ... could do with a lick of paint,
 it's a bit shabby.

CLARE
 No. It's perfect.

Mary smiles, touched. Clare glances at John.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 (shyly)
 You sure this is all right?

Mary looks at him. John nods, wordlessly.

Mary opens the door, going inside -

33A

CLARE'S ROOM

Clare follows.

A moment.

John hesitates. Slowly, he approaches the door -

FLASHBACK TO:

33B

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - CLARE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT. TEN YEARS PREVIOUSLY.

Tinny music is audible.

14 year old Clare, her back to us, is at her laptop, earphones in, looking at something we can't see.

John is replacing a bulb in her bedside table lamp.

He removes a light scarf draped over the lamp, tutting.

The scarf slips to the floor. He bends to pick it up.

The bottom drawer of her bedside table is open a fraction.

A pack of condoms is visible within.

John takes this in, shocked.

CLARE (O.S.)
You going to be long?

John straightens up, guilty, embarrassed.

Clare's turned to look at him.

He takes her in - her impatient, aggressive expression.

He hesitates but can't bring himself to say anything.

JOHN
Two minutes.

She turns away.

BACK TO:

33A

CLOSE on John.

He watches adult Clare look around her room.

It's unchanged from when she left.

Posters on the walls, a couple of stuffed animals.

A dresser with some old makeup, a mirror.

Clare looks around in wonder.

CLARE
It's all... it's the same.

Mary nods.

Clare approaches the dresser, picking up a lipstick, opening it, looking at the colour.

There's a bottle-of half-used, cheap perfume.

She picks it up, takes off the lid, inhales the scent.

She nods slightly, as if confirming something to herself.

John watches her - every movement, every glance.

Mary stifles a sob. Seeing her daughter in her room again.

Stricken, Clare goes to her.

Mary tries to smile, but can't.

Tentatively, Clare embraces her.

John takes them in, the two women locked together.

His wife. His daughter...

Over Mary's shoulder, Clare looks at him.

It's a look not unlike Mary's - both pleading and defiant.

34

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM. LATER - AFTERNOON.

John, Mary and Clare sit together a little awkwardly - John and Mary on the sofa, Clare on the armchair.

They've all got tea.

John can't take his eyes off Clare.

He drinks her in - her eyes, her mouth, her skin....

MARY

So you've, er, got your own place?

CLARE

(nods)

It's nothing much but... it's the first time I've lived properly on my own.

JOHN

Oh?

Mary glances at him.

Clare hesitates, pulling anxiously at her sleeves.

MARY

Maybe we should -

CLARE

(sudden)

I had a boyfriend. When I left.

Mary's hands instinctively clasp on her lap.

John can't take his eyes off Clare.

CLARE (CONT'D)

I thought he loved me. He said he did. Said he'd take care of me. How stupid can you get?

(a moment, then -)

He was my dealer. Then he was... he....

MARY

(low)

You don't have to -

CLARE

I want to. You deserve to know.

She glances at John. He holds her gaze.

CLARE (CONT'D)

I was so angry. I don't even remember why anymore.

JOHN

You don't remember?

CLARE

I was off my head nearly all the time.... There's a lot that's....

She looks away, trying to keep it together.

CLARE (CONT'D)

You'd never done anything except try and keep me straight. It was me. It was all me.

MARY

(shakes head)

You were a child -

CLARE

I was old enough to know right from wrong.

(a moment, then -)

I think... I just didn't care.

John takes this in.

JOHN

So... that was it, then? You stayed with this man? All this time?

MARY

John -

CLARE

No, I....

(a moment, then -)

(MORE)

CLARE (CONT'D)
I stayed a few years. He, er, made
it difficult to leave.

Mary looks away.

CLARE (CONT'D)
But I did. I did get away.

JOHN
Why didn't you come home?

Clare looks at him. Her eyes fill with tears.

CLARE
I was ashamed. I was so ashamed.
She breaks down, burying her head in her hands.

FLASH TO:

34A CLOSE: Toddler Clare, brow furrowed in concentration in an
unseen task.

TODDLER
'elp, Daddy! Elp me!

BACK TO:

John's rooted to the spot, unable to move.
Mary has gone to her, her arms around her, comforting her.

CLARE
(muffled, sobbing)
Everything I put you through...

MARY
It's done now. All done. All
over....

Clare looks up, her face wracked with guilt and pain.

CLARE
(to John)
Forgive me!

35 **INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN. LATER - EVENING.**

John, Mary and Clare sit around the table, eating.
Clare looks pale and drained, but she's calm.

CLARE
It's really good.

She reaches for the salt at the exact moment that John does.
Their hands brush.

CLOSE on John, feeling the contact of her skin on his.

He pulls his hand back.

Clare hesitates, thrown. Hurt.

Mary glances up. Seeing Clare reaching for the salt -

MARY

It needs seasoning. Old habits. You
never liked things too salty.

Clare rallies -

CLARE

(apologetic)

It's my taste buds. They're shot.

Mary smiles, a little sadly.

Clare salts her food. John watches. He's barely eating.

JOHN

After you left... this man. What
did you do?

Clare looks up, glancing anxiously between John and Mary.

CLARE

I... I'm not sure we should talk
about that right now...

MARY

Course not.

She shoots John a glance - a warning. John looks away.

MARY (CONT'D)

(to Clare)

You know I went full-time?

CLARE

Yeah?

MARY

(nods)

Few years now. 'Course, they stuck
me with Janet.

Clare doesn't respond. John notices.

JOHN

(to Clare)

You remember Janet.

CLARE

Um....

MARY

Mrs. Hodge. Year 1. You couldn't
stand her.

CLARE
Oh yeah, right. Didn't know her
name was Janet.

MARY
(chuckles)
You came home after the second day
in her class and said she was the
worst woman you'd ever met! I'll
never forget that - 'worst woman'!

Clare smiles.

John's eyes haven't left her and she knows it.

She pokes at her food, uncomfortable.

MARY (CONT'D)
(of John)
He's still doing the trains. It's
become quite the second business -
people send them from all over the
place.

Clare glances at him.

CLARE
That's great.

John doesn't reply.

A flash of something passes over her face - despair?
frustration? - but she quickly covers.

She hesitates, then -

CLARE (CONT'D)
I used to love coming in the shed.
Watching you work.

MARY
(to Clare)
Would you like some more -

JOHN
(to Clare)
Did you?

CLARE
Sorry?

JOHN
You always said trains were boring.

Clare looks away, a bit uncomfortable.

CLARE
I probably just wanted to... wind
you up.

John stares at her.

JOHN
 (sudden)
 What did we do for your 9th
 birthday?

MARY
 (shocked)
 John!

Clare falters, glancing at Mary -

CLARE
 I -

MARY
 (to Clare)
 You don't have to.

JOHN
 She doesn't know.

MARY
 (to John)
 What is the matter with you?!

Mary stares at him, angry.

John looks at Clare.

JOHN
 You don't know, do you?

CLARE
 My ninth... I... Was it a party?

She exhales shakily, on the spot.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 My memory...

MARY
 (to Clare)
 It's all right, love - you don't
 have to -

JOHN
 She can't.

MARY
 (to John, furious)
 Will you leave her alone!

CLARE
 Wait - was it the one we went into
 town?

Mary and John stare at her.

CLARE (CONT'D)
Lion King, wasn't it?

Mary nods in wonder -

MARY
You were obsessed with the film.

CLARE
(more confidently)
Yeah. You'd wanted to do it for my
10th - something special for double
figures - but I begged and begged.

John's eyes don't leave Clare.

CLARE (CONT'D)
We went into town - the West End.

MARY
Yes... yes, we went to the show -
then for a Chinese after - you
remember?

Clare nods -

JOHN
What did you say to me? At supper?

A moment. Clare glances at him.

CLARE
I, er, wanted to see it again the
next day, but you said the tickets
cost 70 quid.

John takes this in, stunned.

FLASH TO:

35A CLOSE: 9-year old Clare grins up at John in the restaurant.

BACK TO:

MARY
Yes - and I'd made a cake - we had
some when we got back -

CLARE
Lemon drizzle -

MARY
Icing. Buttercream in the middle.

CLARE
(nods, smiles)
My favourite. It was a really good
birthday.

She glances at him, still smiling.

John shakes his head, his thoughts crowding him -

JOHN

We have to go to the police. Do a
DNA test -

Clare looks away -

MARY

John -

JOHN

If she is who she says -

MARY

For god's sake -

JOHN

There shouldn't be a problem -

CLARE

(to Mary)

Maybe he's right -

MARY

Can't we just enjoy this in peace?!
Not have the media camped on our
doorstep? The jibes, the jeers, the
endless hounding! Can't we just
enjoy this for now, just us?

JOHN

(to Clare)

What do you want? Is it drugs?
Money? Are you in trouble?

CLARE

(to Mary)

I should go -

MARY

Stay where you are.

(to John)

Listen. You're in shock. You're
angry - that's okay -

JOHN

(shakes head)

We need a test - we've got
everything of hers - clothes,
hairbrush, make-up -

MARY

(explodes)

My god - what have we got that she
could possibly want?! We're no one!
We're nothing! Why would *anyone*
want us if they didn't have to?!

A sudden SQUEAL of TIRES -

36 **INT. JOHN'S CAR. A LITTLE LATER - EVENING.**

- as John slams on the brakes at a crossroads, barely missing a passing car.

The other driver beeps his horn in anger as he passes.

Thrown, John pulls over, trying to steady himself.

He's trembling.

He's in no state to drive.

He's in no state to do anything.

37 **EXT. POLICE STATION. LATER - EVENING.**

A couple of people go inside.

38 **INT. JOHN'S CAR. SAME TIME - EVENING.**

John's parked over the road.

Ashen-faced, wrung out, he's struggling.

FLASH TO:

Clare quietly pushes the sugar bowl across the table to him.

BACK TO:

38A **INT/EXT. JOHN'S CAR/PAVEMENT. SAME TIME - EVENING.**

John buries his head in his hands, the thoughts tumbling in on him.

A GIGGLE makes him look up.

Two TEENAGE GIRLS approach, arm in arm, chatting conspiratorially.

John watches them.

They're completely engrossed in their little bubble of two.

One whispers something to the other.

CLARE (O.S.)
Lemon drizzle.

The first girl grins, nodding. She says something in reply.

MARY (O.S.)
Icing.

CLARE (O.S.)
It was a really good birthday.

They burst out laughing as they pass the car.
 John takes this in. Something clicks.
 A police officer comes out of the station.
 Glancing over, he locks eyes with John.

39 **EXT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE. NIGHT.**

John parks the car in the driveway.
 There are no lights on in the house.
 All is quiet and still.

40 **INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS LANDING/CLARE'S
 BEDROOM. A LITTLE LATER - NIGHT.**

John comes upstairs.
 Clare's bedroom door is open.
 There's a figure sitting on the bed, their back to us.
 He stops, thrown. Is it Clare?

MARY
 Where've you been?

John exhales, relieved.

JOHN
 Nowhere. Driving.

He approaches.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 Mary, we need to -

He stops short in the doorway.

In the moonlight, we can see that everything has been
 stripped bare - posters gone from the walls, all traces of
 teenage Clare removed.

John takes this in, stunned.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 What have you done?

Mary turns to look at him. In the moonlight, it's hard to
 read her expression.

MARY
 What we should have done a long
 time ago.

John shakes his head, panic rising -

JOHN

No, *no!* This is madness! Listen to me - we need to speak to the police - get this sorted out -

MARY

John -

JOHN

(anguished)

It's not her! But... I think she knows all about her, somehow. About us. I don't know how, I don't know why. But it's cruel what she's doing - *wicked!*

MARY

No -

JOHN

She might know something - she might know where she is! Our daughter!

MARY

I know where she is. For the first time in a very long time.

JOHN

(shakes head)

I know you want it more than anything, god knows, I do too, but you must feel it, Mary - you must feel it isn't right!

MARY

Don't tell me what I feel!

John stops, thrown by the force of her words.

MARY (CONT'D)

Ten years, all I've heard is I have to stay positive, I have to believe, or I have to give up hope, I have to find peace. Ten years I've been told what I have to feel, what I have to think. And I did what I was told. I had no choice. I had nothing to hold on to.

JOHN

You had me.

A moment. Mary regards him, calm.

MARY

She's come back, John. Whether you like it or not.

He stares at her. But there's no give.

And in that moment, he understands.

Mary has chosen. With or without him.

Suddenly, he turns on his heel -

41

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN. MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT.

SLAM!

John throws open a cupboard. He pulls out mugs, a jar of coffee - then sees it.

The sugar bowl.

JOHN
(mutters)
Clean... Keep it clean....

Frantic, he goes to a drawer, opening it, grabbing a roll of cling film, unwinding it, tearing off a section -

JOHN (CONT'D)
Come on, come on....

He goes back to the cupboard, reaching for the sugar bowl with the cling film, carefully removing it...

... catching his head on the edge of the open cupboard door -

JOHN (CONT'D)
Argh!

He DROPS the bowl, which -

SHATTERS

- into small pieces on the floor.

He stares at it, aghast.

MARY (O.S.)
(close, intimate)
John...

He turns, startled, panicked.

But there's no one there.

He stands alone in the empty kitchen.

FADE TO BLACK.

UP ON:

42

CLOSE: Photographs of women, their faces looking out at us.

Some are smiling, caught in a happy moment, others look sombre. Distant. Lost.

42

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN. EARLY MORNING - SOME WEEKS LATER.

It's very early - just after dawn.

John's at the table on his laptop, on a Missing Persons website, eating a slice of toast.

He looks pale, drawn. Exhausted.

He trawls through the photographs of women.

Endless photographs.

He stops.

There's a picture that looks like the adult Clare.

He clicks on the photo, maximizing it.

He studies the face.

It's not the same person.

He minimizes it, making a note in the notebook beside him.

His phone beeps an alarm.

He closes the laptop.

43

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS LANDING. MOMENTS LATER - MORNING.

John comes out of his bedroom, carrying his overalls.

Noises come from inside Clare's old bedroom.

John stops outside the closed door.

JOHN

I'm off.

The noises stop.

JOHN (CONT'D)

See you later?

John waits for a reply, but there isn't one.

He reaches out and touches the door briefly.

Silence.

He leaves.

MARY (O.S.)

(concerned, urgent)

Clare!

DISSOLVE TO:

44

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM. NIGHT. 10 YEARS
PREVIOUSLY.

14 year old Clare is slumped on the sofa, barely conscious.

Mary's crouched in front of her, holding her by the shoulders, trying to keep her awake.

John's on the phone.

MARY
What have you taken?

JOHN
(on phone) ...no, we don't know... But she's almost unconscious... MARY (CONT'D)
Clare! What have you taken!

Clare grins idiotically and mumbles something incoherent.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(on phone)
Yeah, please. Thank you.

He hangs up.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Ten minutes.

Clare slumps. Mary shakes her, trying to rouse her.

MARY
Clare - wake up, sweetheart! John!

Together, they try to wake her -

JOHN
Clare! Clare!

CLARE
(slurred)
Leave it.... Geddoff...

MARY
Oh thank god....

The relief is overwhelming. John is suddenly enraged.

JOHN
(close to tears)
How could you be so stupid?!

He grips her, hard, shaking her -

JOHN (CONT'D)
Stupid thoughtless little -

MARY

John!

SLAM!

45 **EXT/INT. STREET - CLARE'S FLAT/JOHN'S CAR. A LITTLE LATER - MORNING.**

The outer door to a nondescript block of flats slams shut.

Clare has come out.

John is parked up, some distance away, watching her.

She pulls her coat tightly around her.

She seems small. Fragile.

Without looking in his direction, she heads down the street.

John watches her, completely mesmerized.

An alarm beeps on his phone.

He ignores it, until Clare turns the corner, out of sight.

CUT TO:

46 CLOSE: three wires - brown, blue and green and yellow - intertwine.

46 **INT. LARGE OFFICE BUILDING. MID-AFTERNOON.**

The office building is in a better state - walls have been plastered, ceiling lights put in.

Members of the team chat and joke as they work.

A radio plays tinny pop music.

John rewires a plug at a little distance from the others.

He's hardly able to concentrate, lost in his thoughts.

Carl, the foreman, passes by, glancing over John's shoulder -

CARL
(frowning)
You've got the live in the earth.

John stares numbly at the wrongly-wired plug in front of him.

JOHN
Yes. Sorry.

Quickly, he takes out the wires.

Carl hesitates but decides not to make anything of it.

John's sweating. He wipes his brow.

47

EXT/INT. TOWN CENTRE CAFE/JOHN'S CAR. LATER - LATE AFTERNOON.

John sits in his car, looking across the road at a cafe.

He's pale, wrung out.

Clare is visible inside, cleaning the counter.

Mary is also there. She stacks up some chairs.

Though we can't hear, Mary's clearly telling Clare a story.

Clare glances at her, warm, responsive - more relaxed and at ease than we've seen her before.

JOHN
(mutters)
Liar... you liar....

Mary comes out of the cafe.

Clare switches off the lights and follows, locking the door.

Arm in arm, Mary and Clare walk off together.

John starts the car.

48

INT. KINGS CROSS SHELTER. LATER - NIGHT.

A few people sit at tables, having a snack and a hot drink.

John comes in, going to the desk.

It's manned by a YOUNG WOMAN (CHARLIE) John hasn't met before.

JOHN
(to Charlie)
Is Bella about?

CHARLIE
(shakes head)
She's away this week.

JOHN
Shit. Listen - I need to speak with
some of your clients.

Charlie is instantly suspicious.

JOHN (CONT'D)
My name's John Reed. That's my
daughter up there!

He points to the missing person poster on the wall.

49

INT. KINGS CROSS SHELTER. A LITTLE LATER - NIGHT.

CLOSE: A slightly grainy, unposed photo of Clare outside the cafe, clearly taken without her knowledge.

John is at a table with two women, one middle aged, one younger, showing the photo on his phone.

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN
(shakes head)
No, love - sorry.

YOUNGER WOMAN
No, me neither.

John tries to conceal his disappointment. He gets up.

JOHN
Thanks for your time.

There's no one else to ask. He heads to the door.

CHARLIE
Any joy?

JOHN
(shakes head)
I'll try another night.

As he's leaving, Nathan and Ciara come in, almost colliding.

NATHAN
Woah!
(recognizing John)
Oh, hey.

JOHN
Nathan, isn't it?

NATHAN
Yeah.

He glances at Ciara.

JOHN
Hi.

She ignores him, pushing past, going to the food counter.

John watches her.

NATHAN (O.S.)
How's it going?

John turns back.

JOHN
Er... would you have a look at something?

He pulls up the picture of adult Clare on his phone.

NATHAN
Who's this?

JOHN
Have you ever seen her?

NATHAN
Thought you were looking for your daughter?

JOHN
I am -

NATHAN
This ain't the girl from before -
Ciara, a few feet away, turns, listening.

JOHN
No, I... She might know something about Clare, about my daughter.

NATHAN
Who is she?

JOHN
That's what I'm trying to... Look, I just wondered if you'd seen her before -

NATHAN
(laughs)
Mate, how many girls d'you want us to look at?!

CIARA
(loud)
Fucking perv.

John turns to look at her, startled.

The room goes quiet, all eyes on John.

Nathan and Charlie are suddenly suspicious.

CIARA (CONT'D)
(loud)
Take photos of all the whores that suck you off, do ya?

JOHN
No!

He approaches, holding out the photo on his phone -

JOHN (CONT'D)
Please look -

CIARA
Back off - !

JOHN
(urgent)
Please just look!

He thrusts the phone at her.

Ciara glances at the photo.

A flash of recognition passes over her face.

She covers almost instantly. But John's seen it.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(shocked)
You know her...

Ciara turns to go -

CIARA
Fuck off -

John grabs her -

NATHAN
Hey - !
CIARA (CONT'D)
Get the fuck off me!

JOHN
You know her, don't you! *Tell me!*

Charlie presses a panic button -

CHARLIE
(to John)
There's a police station over
the road - they're on their
way -
CIARA
Get off!

John doesn't loosen his grip on Ciara.

JOHN
For god's sake, tell me! It's my
daughter! My child!

Ciara suddenly -

SPITS

- in his face, causing John to recoil.

CIARA
Fuck your daughter.

50

INT. JOHN'S CAR. LATER - NIGHT.

John quickly gets in his car, shaken, overwhelmed.

He's breathing heavily, close to panic.

FLASH TO:

CLOSE: Toddler Clare, brow furrowed in concentration -

TODDLER
'elp, Daddy! Elp me!

BACK TO:

CLOSE on John, stricken.

51 **INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS LANDING. LATER - NIGHT.**

John comes upstairs, drained, shattered.

Clare's bedroom door is closed.

He approaches.

He knocks.

JOHN
Mary? I need to talk to you.

No reply.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Mary - *please!*

Silence.

He opens the door...

... revealing an empty room.

DISSOLVE TO:

52 **EXT. LARGE OFFICE BUILDING/STREET. MORNING.**

John wearily approaches the building, carrying his toolbox.

His colleagues are outside with some of their gear, having a quick smoke before the day starts.

MARK
(seeing John)
Morning fella! So I got the new
van, didn't I?

John drags himself from his thoughts.

JOHN
Yeah?

MARK
(gesturing over the road)
Picked her up last night - she's a
beaut.

John turns to look. The colour drains from his cheeks.

ADAM (O.S.)
 'Course, price he paid, the
 wheels'll come off later!

The men laugh and joke.

Mark notices John's stricken expression.

MARK
 (to John)
 Hey - she's not that bad!

John moves off, to the bemusement of his colleagues.

ADAM
 He all right?

MARK
 No idea.

We stay with John, who's gazing at something or someone...

... and now we see.

Clare.

Standing over the road, at the crossing - as if in his dream -
 looking at him.

The lights change.

Quickly, she crosses over, coming towards him.

John's really thrown.

Behind him, Carl comes out -

CARL
 (to the men)
 Right then, come on lads, let's get
 going.

He notices John -

CARL (CONT'D)
 (calls)
 John! We're heading in.

Clare approaches him, a little apprehensive.

JOHN
 I'll be right there....

His colleagues cast curious glances at them but go inside.

CLARE
 Hi.

John doesn't reply.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 You, er, you've been watching me.

John's thrown by this.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 It's okay. But... I figured...
 maybe we should talk?

JOHN
 I don't think there's anything to
 say until you do a DNA test.

A flash of something passes across her face - hurt? anger? -
 but then she nods.

CLARE
 That's fair.

John's taken aback.

JOHN
 You'll do it?

CLARE
 If that's what you want. I know
 Mu... I know she won't be happy.
 All the publicity. But... I never
 wanted her to have to choose
 between us, so... whatever it
 takes.

John surveys her. She seems totally, completely plausible.

He's about to speak, when she suddenly thrusts a small,
 wrapped package at him -

CLARE (CONT'D)
 I got you something. It isn't much,
 but...

She holds it out.

John stares at her, completely thrown.

JOHN
 I can't accept... I can't.

CLARE
 Please!

With enormous reluctance, John takes the package.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 (sudden, blurts)
 I never wanted to make you unhappy.

Before he can reply, she's turned on her heel, walking away.

John watches her. She turns a corner out of sight.

53 EXT/INT. TOWN CENTRE CAFE/JOHN'S CAR. EARLY EVENING.

As before, John's parked over the street from the cafe.
A barely touched takeaway sandwich is on the passenger seat.
Clare's closing up.

FLASH TO:

53A CLOSE on 14 year old Clare mid-argument -

14 YEAR OLD CLARE (O.S.)
(shouts, angry)
Jesus Christ, Dad, what is wrong
with you?!

BACK TO:

As he watches, Mary arrives, carrying some shopping bags. She goes inside the cafe, where she and Clare embrace. Mary laughs at something she says, helping her tidy up. He watches them - easy, relaxed. Happy. His eyes well with tears.

DISSOLVE TO:

54 INT. LARGE OFFICE BUILDING. DAY.

John's finishing a piece of tricky wiring in the wall.

His colleagues are heading out for lunch.

Mark glances at him, but decides not to invite him.

Clearly John is very much an outsider now.

They leave. John's phone rings. He pulls it out, checking the caller ID.

It's a private number. Slightly wary, he answers.

JOHN
(on phone)
Hello?

Listening to the caller, his expression changes.

55

EXT. PRIMARY SCHOOL. AFTERNOON.

It's pick up time. The last few kids and parents head off.

John waits by the gate.

Mary and a colleague come out, chatting.

Casey calls goodbye to Mary as she leaves with her mother (who's talking on her phone) -

CASEY

'Bye, Mrs Reed!

MARY

(calls)

'Bye, Casey! See you tomorrow. And remember - I want a picture of Dobby!

The little girl nods, turning back to her oblivious mother.

Mary's colleague spots John and waves, nudging Mary.

Mary looks over.

Seeing John's expression, she falters.

56

INT/EXT. JOHN'S CAR/PRIMARY SCHOOL. A LITTLE LATER - AFTERNOON.

John and Mary sit in the car.

MARY

(worried)

What exactly did he say?

JOHN

Not much. A possible sighting. He wants us to go in.

Mary's hands clasp and unclasp on her lap.

MARY

Well, we can't... I mean... We have to go, of course. We just have to... We... We mustn't....

JOHN

Mustn't what, Mary?

Her phone rings, making her jump. She pulls it out.

The caller ID reads *Clare*.

John looks at her. She makes no move to answer.

They gaze at one another. A challenge. A plea.

The phone rings out.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
(calls, urgent)
Hannah!

John looks.

A HARRIED MUM rushes through the school gates towards a lone girl, who waits on a bench with the teacher.

HARRIED MUM
(calls)
I'm so sorry!

MARY (O.S.)
We've been blessed.

John looks at her.

MARY (CONT'D)
We've had good lives, John. For better and for worse.

JOHN
Is that really what you think?

MARY
I think we've been given a second chance. Both of us. But you have to choose to take it.

JOHN
Have you asked her? Have you actually asked her about *our* daughter?

John's voice cracks. Mary gazes at him. She takes his hand.

MARY
We've lived a decade of wanting. We're lucky if we get eight on this earth. We've lost one of them. We don't have too many more.

John shakes his head - this is all too much -

JOHN
Then let's get it out in the open! If she can prove it, then... then I'll change everything! I'll apologize, I'll get to know her - I'll make it right -

MARY
You can do all that now -

John wrenches his hand away from her -

JOHN

She's still out there! She's still out there somewhere, Mary - you know she is!

A moment. Mary regards him.

MARY

You've always trusted, haven't you, love? Trusted that somehow, someday, they'll get to the bottom of it all. That they'll find everything out - find the reason, find the how, the why. Perhaps we will, in time. But it won't be through *them*. It'll be through *her*. When she's ready.

JOHN

We have to tell him, Mary. DI Chambers. We have to tell him one way or another. I know you don't want to know the truth but we can't do this. We owe it to our daughter. We owe her that.

Mary straightens up. She looks at John, cool, appraising.

Her phone rings again.

Clare.

This time, she answers, turning away from John a little.

Her voice softens, her tone warm and tender as she speaks.

MARY

(on phone)

Hello love... Oh, that's brilliant. 'Course I think so!

(a moment, then -)

Listen, I've got to stay on - staff meeting.

(a moment, then she laughs)

No, she was fuming because Casey's assessment finally came through. Mmm-hmm. But it's good, we can give her the right support now - whether Janet likes it or not.

(a moment, then -)

Yeah. Listen - I've got to run. I'll call you when I'm done.

(a moment, then -)

Me too. Yes. Love you. Bye.

She hangs up. She turns to John.

He stares at her, almost in wonder.

MARY (CONT'D)
 (calm)
 Right, then. Shall we go?

57

INT. POLICE STATION - OFFICE. LATER - AFTERNOON.

Mary and John sit side-by-side in a small, cramped office.

They don't speak, don't look at one another.

The desk is piled with paperwork. A framed photo of a young GIRL and BOY, grinning at the camera is visible.

The door suddenly -

OPENS

- and DI Chambers comes in. John and Mary stand -

DOMINIC
 (warmly)
 John, Mary.

He shakes their hands.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)
 Did anyone offer you tea? Coffee?

MARY
 We're fine, thanks.

John glances at her. Her tone is normal but she holds herself stiffly, evidence of her nerves.

DOMINIC
 Good. Well listen, thanks so much
 for coming in.

JOHN
 Of course.

DOMINIC
 Please - sit down.

Instead of going behind his desk, he pulls a chair over to sit closer to them.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)
 So, er, we've found a possible
 sighting.

John glances at Mary but her face betrays nothing.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)
 Please don't get your hopes up.
 It's a long shot. It's from seven
 years ago.

MARY
 Seven years?

DOMINIC
 Colleagues in Manchester are
 working on a case and they've been
 going back over some CCTV footage.

JOHN
 They've had this for seven years?

Dominic sighs.

DOMINIC
 It's an unrelated case... I don't
 know what to tell you. Nobody made
 the connection before. But a new
 sergeant saw our appeal...

He looks at them, profoundly apologetic.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry. I could only wish...
 (a moment, then -)
 They ran facial recognition against
 our databases. It wasn't
 conclusive, but Clare's name came
 up as a possible match.

Mary takes a sharp breath.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)
 I know this is a lot to take in.

John is trying to process the information.

JOHN
 You said it's not conclusive?

DOMINIC
 (nods)
 The footage isn't great quality -
 we've enhanced it as much as we
 can. But I'd like you both to look
 at it.

John swallows.

JOHN
 If it is her, what does that mean?

DOMINIC
 It means we've got something to try
 and follow up on.

JOHN
 This other case, in Manchester -

DOMINIC
 I can't say anything about that,
 I'm afraid. I'd just like you to
 look at the footage.

Mary looks down. Her hands are twisting in her lap.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)
 As I say, it's a long shot. And I'm
 sorry to ask you. I know this is
 hard.

MARY
 (sudden)
 You already had us do the appeal.
 You put us through that.

Her voice is strained. When she speaks, it seems to be as
 much to John as to Dominic.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Have you ever had journalists
 camping out on your front lawn?
 Hanging around your place of work,
 following you down the street?
 Trying to trick you - pretending to
 be an interested stranger, a
 helpful passer-by? Death threats?
 Hate mail? Whole websites devoted
 to saying what a terrible parent
 you must have been? Conspiracy
 theories about your daughter's rape
 and murder, torture, abduction -

She breaks off, close to tears.

Dominic looks away, giving her a moment.

John turns to her. His voice is steady and calm.

JOHN
 We should look at the footage. Tell
 the Detective Inspector what we
 think. He needs to do his job.

Mary looks at him. Is he going to say something...?

John calmly turns to Dominic.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 Let's see it.

Dominic glances at Mary, taking them both in.

He picks up an Ipad from his desk and loads the footage.

DOMINIC
 Here -

He hands them the Ipad.

57A CLOSE: High-angle black and white CCTV footage, taken from
 someone's home security camera.

A suburban scene - houses are visible.

A YOUNG GIRL appears, walking on the pavement opposite.

A CAR pulls up, slowing beside her, then stops.

The girl stops, talking to the driver.

Then she opens the back seat of the car.

As she's about to get in, for a brief split-second, she glances up, revealing her face.

The footage freezes on the image.

From the distance of the camera, it's hard to make any definitive statement about her.

She has long hair, a round face - like the teenage Clare.

But the eyes are blurred white, caught by a streetlight.

The image zooms in. It's not much clearer.

John gazes at it.

MARY
(shakes head)
No.

DOMINIC
I know it's not the best image, but
please look closely. It's seven
years old -

MARY
(snaps)
You don't have to tell me!

DOMINIC
I'm sorry.

Mary gets up.

MARY
It's not her.

She leaves.

A moment.

Dominic turns to John, who is still gazing at the screen.

DOMINIC
John?

John looks up, distraught. Tears run down his cheeks.

JOHN
I don't know. I don't know.

John and Dominic come out of the office.

DOMINIC
I'm sorry to have upset you both.

JOHN
(shakes head)
No, no. Thank you for... for
everything you're doing.

DOMINIC
I wish it were better news.

JOHN
You will follow up on it?

DOMINIC
I'll do what I can -

JOHN
Please! Please look into it!

A moment. Dominic looks at him, concerned.

DOMINIC
Are you all right, John?

John looks at him - his intelligent, responsive face.

He hesitates. He longs to confess, to tell him everything,
but...

JOHN
Yeah.

DOMINIC
Look, I'll be in touch. And please,
don't hesitate to contact me if you
need anything or just... want to
talk.

John heads away. Dominic watches him go, thoughtful.

59 **EXT. POLICE STATION. LATER - AFTERNOON.**

John comes out of the station.

He stops, oblivious to passers-by, who have to side-step him.

His car is empty. Mary's not there.

But he knows where she's going.

60 **INT. CLARE'S CAFE. LATER - LATE AFTERNOON.**

The cafe is still open but it's not busy, only a couple of
customers - a MUM with a YOUNG DAUGHTER and a BURLY GUY
(STEVE) on his phone.

Clare is behind the counter.

John comes in.

She sees him. She's clearly surprised.

JOHN
Manchester. That's where you met
her, isn't it?

Clare glances around, nervous -

CLARE
I'm finishing in fifteen minutes -
can we talk then?

JOHN
We can talk now. Tell me -

CLARE
(pleading)
Just let me close up -

JOHN
(loud)
Fucking tell me!

The customers look over. Steve stands up.

STEVE
(to Clare)
Is he bothering you?

CLARE
No... it's okay -

JOHN
Fuck off and mind your own
business.

STEVE
You what?

John grabs a fire extinguisher from the counter, flooded with
adrenaline. He brandishes it at Steve.

JOHN
I told you to mind your own
business.

STEVE
What the fuck?!

CLARE
John, please -

John rounds on her -

JOHN
'John', is it? What's the matter,
Clare? Can't bring yourself to call
me Dad?

STEVE
Back off, mate -

JOHN

Fuck you!

John SWINGS the extinguisher over a table, knocking used plates and cups to the floor, shattering them -

CLARE

Stop!

The MUM grabs her daughter -

MUM

Go. Now!

John looks unhinged. Steve backs away -

STEVE

Okay, okay - take it easy -

JOHN

Fuck off. Just *fuck off*!

Steve grabs his coat and phone and heads for the door...

... as Mary comes in -

MARY

Jesus! John - what are you doing?!

STEVE

(to Mary)

You know him?

MARY

(to John)

Put it down.

STEVE

I'm calling the police -

CLARE

No!

No!

MARY

CLARE (CONT'D)

Please. It's okay. We're family.

John barks out a laugh.

JOHN

Is that what we are?!

STEVE

(to John)

Fucking nutter.

He leaves.

John still holds the extinguisher, caught between Mary and Clare.

JOHN
 (to Clare)
 Who the fuck are you?!

Clare looks away. Mary slowly approaches him.

MARY
 (gently)
 Put it down, love.

JOHN
 It's Manchester. That's where she
 knew her.

MARY
 (stronger)
 John.

He turns on Clare, who watches him, nervous.

JOHN
 For God's sake, why won't you tell
 us?! Put us out of our misery?!

CLARE
 I -

MARY
 (to Clare)
 Go.

Clare hesitates -

JOHN
 (to Clare)
 You're a liar -
 (to Mary)
 You're both fucking liars - !

MARY
 (to Clare)
 Go! Leave the keys, I'll lock up.
 I'll find you later.

Scared, uncertain, Clare grabs her bag from behind the
 counter and goes out the back.

JOHN
 I'll lock up... *Jesus!* That's your
 solution! Pretend nothing's wrong,
 play happy families!

MARY
 I'm not playing -

JOHN
 (exploding)
 It's disgusting - you're
 disgusting! I thought I was going
 mad, but it's *you!*

He approaches her, furious, appalled -

JOHN (CONT'D)
How can you do this, Mary? How can you?! It's sick, it's wrong -

MARY
No -

JOHN
- and now you're lying to the police, you want to stop them doing their job, maybe even getting some answers, finding out what -

MARY
(strong)
She's dead, John!

A moment. John stares at her, appalled.

MARY (CONT'D)
She's gone. She's long gone. If we find out anything, it'll be that.

John is reeling. He can't speak.

MARY (CONT'D)
I've known it from the start. A month after she went. When there was no news. Nothing. I knew then.

JOHN
(dry-mouthed)
No... no....

MARY
(gentle)
She had to be, love. It was the only thing that made sense. She was angry, she was defiant, she was very, very lost but... she would have come home. Things weren't ever so bad that she wouldn't have come home.
(a moment, then -)
And then... she did.

John shakes his head, completely overwhelmed -

JOHN
Please, Mary. Please. You're making no sense. Please....

Mary approaches him. She cups his face in her hands.

MARY
It's hard to understand. I know it is. I don't really understand it myself. I don't want to. Because I know what I feel. It feels... right. Clare -

JOHN
Don't. Don't call her that...

Mary looks at him, tender, gentle.

MARY
Clare must have known her. You're right. She won't say how and she won't say when but... The funny thing is, it doesn't really matter.

John stares at her. None of this seems possible.

FLASH TO:

60A CLOSE: the NEWBORN CLARE, umbilical cord still attached, is quickly wiped down and handed to an exhausted, exuberant Mary, John by her side.

MARY (CONT'D)
(overwhelmed)
Oh my god... Oh my god... Hello! Hello, my little darling! Hello. Oh my god... I've been waiting to meet you for so long... It's Mummy. I'm your Mum.

John watches - his tiny daughter, nuzzling at the breast. And his wife, utterly transfixed - a total transformation.

MARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You think I'm mad.

BACK TO:

John stands, lost, helpless. Mary watches him, closely.

MARY (CONT'D)
I don't blame you. Perhaps I am.

JOHN
She's our child...

MARY
Yes.

He can't speak. This doesn't make sense to him, any of it.

JOHN
Our baby.... We made her....

MARY
We lost her, John. We lost her.

He takes this in, despairing.

The weight of a decade crushing in on him.

Mary gently approaches him.

MARY (CONT'D)
 (low, soothing)
 We lost her, my darling.

JOHN
 (voice cracking)
 No....

MARY
 (gently)
 Yes. We lost our little girl.

John can't bear it.

He begins to sob, huge, wrenching waves of grief shuddering through his body.

Mary pulls him to her, holding him close.

MARY (CONT'D)
 (low, soothing)
 My love.... My darling...

His knees give way. He sinks to the floor, Mary with him.

Wave after wave of grief washes over him.

She holds him, cradling him gently, like an infant.

FADE TO BLACK.

UP ON:

61 CLOSE: A video of Clare, taken at school.
 She's 8, in school uniform, giving a presentation.
 She's a bit nervous but manages to speak well.
 The video zooms in closer and closer as she speaks.

8 YEAR OLD CLARE
 My mummy's name is Mary and she's a
 teaching assistant which means she
 helps the teacher teach the kids.
 My Dad's name is John and he's an
 electrician. He's very clever
 fixing all sorts of things with
 electricity. He also fixes model
 trains which are actually quite
 interesting when you know how they
 work. There's a chain reaction.

CLOSE on 8 year old Clare.

She smiles.

FADE TO:

63 INT/EXT. JOHN'S CAR/CLARE'S APARTMENT. EARLY EVENING. A FEW WEEKS LATER.

John and Mary sit in the parked car.

They've been sitting for a while.

Mary glances at him.

John stares straight ahead. Then he nods.

64 ***MISSING***

65 ***MISING***

66 INT. CLARE'S FLAT. A LITTLE LATER - EVENING.

A small, cramped flat - cheap, tatty.

Mary and Clare can be heard in the kitchen, their voices low, murmuring, the words unclear.

There's little furniture - a battered, ancient sofa, a couple of mismatched chairs.

A small dining table, laid for three people.

Clearly Clare doesn't have much money but she's done what she can - a small vase of flowers, a throw over the sofa.

A light scarf draped over a lamp.

John takes it all in. There's something almost dream-like to his experience.

Mary comes in, carrying a bowl of salad, which she puts on the table.

MARY
All right?

He looks up at her, wordlessly. Mary nods, reassuring.

MARY (CONT'D)
(low, soothing)
It's all right.

Clare comes in, hesitant, awkward.

CLARE
(to John)
Would you like a drink?

A moment. Mary and Clare wait for him to answer.

Eventually, John finds his voice.

JOHN
Yes. Please. That'd be lovely.

67

INT. CLARE'S FLAT. LATER - EVENING.

Clare, Mary and John eat at the table.

John has his eyes down, focusing on his food.

Mary and Clare exchange a glance.

MARY
(to John)
She's been promoted to assistant
manager.

John looks up. Clare nods.

A moment. Mary looks at him. Clearly it's his turn to speak.

JOHN
Right.

MARY
It's more responsibility. You've to
do all the food ordering now, don't
you?

CLARE
Well, it's not a big menu.
Sandwiches, toasties - that kind of
thing. And sweet stuff - pancakes,
waffles.

MARY
She's also enrolled at the college.

JOHN
Oh?

CLARE
It's nothing really -

MARY
(proudly)
Hairdressing.

CLARE
Only part-time.

MARY
Doesn't make it any less valuable.
And you'll have a real trade, a
real skill.

CLARE
Well, you put me on to them. I
thought I was too old.

MARY
 (scoffs)
 Too old! You're still a baby!
 Anyway, you're never too old to
 learn.

She pats Clare's hand.

MARY (CONT'D)
 You won't be out of work, that's
 for sure - people'll always need
 their hair cutting! And there are
 so many options - working in a
 salon or a mobile service - you
 could set up your own business like
 your Dad -

John puts his knife and fork down, not looking at them.

Mary stops short.

Clare flushes a deep red. She stands quickly, leaving -

CLARE
 I'll just check the oven -

Mary looks at John, anxious -

MARY
 I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Please -
 please don't....

She half-rises -

MARY (CONT'D)
 I've upset you both. I should...

She hesitates, uncertain as to who she should comfort.

John stands.

JOHN
 I'll go.

68

INT. CLARE'S FLAT. MOMENTS LATER - EVENING.

Passing the kitchen, John sees it's empty.

There are only two other doors off the small corridor.

One's open - the bathroom. Empty.

The other is closed.

Clare's bedroom.

John approaches. He stands outside the closed door.

FLASH TO:

68A

**INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - CLARE'S BEDROOM. LATE AFTERNOON -
TEN YEARS PREVIOUSLY.**

John passes by Clare's open bedroom door on the way to his own room.

He stops.

14 year old Clare is sitting on her bed, her back to him.

She's crying.

John hesitates.

Then he quietly comes in and sits next to her.

He puts his arm around her.

She leans into him, sobbing into his shoulder.

They sit there, wordlessly, and he holds her while she cries.

BACK TO:

68

INT. CLARE'S FLAT. SAME TIME - EVENING.

John takes a breath, steadying himself.

He gently knocks at the door.

After a moment, Clare opens it.

John gazes at her. For the first time, he takes in her face - her youth, her vulnerability, her anxious eyes.

He takes her in, clearly, calmly.

And with a new sense of wonder.

She looks away, embarrassed under his scrutiny.

JOHN

Clare.

Surprised, she looks up at him.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You really... want us, don't you?

Thrown, she opens her mouth as if to reply, but no words come.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You need us.

Clare's eyes fill with tears.

He nods, as if the words are spoken for him, rather than her.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You need us.

69

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM. LATER - NIGHT.

The room is dark. Mary's curled up in bed.

John comes in quietly and gets into bed, trying not to disturb her.

He lies in the silence of the night.

Then, to his surprise, Mary turns to him.

She looks at him, full of love. Hope. Tenderness.

She reaches out and strokes his cheek.

MARY
Thank you.

John gazes at her, drinking her in.

Whatever they're doing, whatever this is, she's her own true self again.

And perhaps he could be, too.

She gently pulls him to her, drawing him close.

MARY (CONT'D)
(whispers)
I love you.

John takes her words deep within himself.

MARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(whispers)
I love you, John.

He exhales.

It's as if the weight of the world is slowly, finally, lifting.

He strokes her face.

Gently, he leans in and kisses her.

Mary responds.

Slowly at first, but then more hungrily, they start to make love.

SLOW DISSOLVE
TO:

70

INT. RESTAURANT. EVENING - SOME WEEKS LATER.

John, Mary and Clare are out celebrating Mary's birthday.

MARY
I never said that!

JOHN
You did -

CLARE
(laughing)
It sounds like you.

Mary bats them off, half-amused, half-annoyed.

MARY
Now you're just ganging up on me!

John tops up their glasses. He clears his throat.

JOHN
I'd, er, like to make a toast.

CLARE
Any excuse for a drink!

MARY
At least he's bothering to make one
for once!

John rolls his eyes at their banter, but he's serious.

JOHN
I just want to say....

The women sense his shift in mood. They straighten up a little, listening.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I'm very grateful to be here
tonight, with both of you.

He glances at Mary.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Happy birthday, my love. May this
new year bring only joy.

He looks at Clare. She holds his gaze, nodding.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(raising his glass)
To Mary.

CLARE
(raising her glass)
To Mum.

Mary wipes away a tear. She leans over and swats John playfully.

MARY
Sentimental old bugger!

Behind her, at Clare's signal, the waiter brings out a cake, a sparkler fizzling and crackling on top.

WAITER
(singing)
Happy birthday to you!
(MORE)

Mary half-laughs, half-groans -

MARY
(to John)
You didn't -

JOHN
(of Clare)
It was her idea.

Clare grins at Mary, clearly thrilled.

They all join in, as does the restaurant. Mary beams.

CLARE
(singing)
Happy birthday to you!

She's got a good voice, strong, confident.

John watches her for a moment.

She catches his eye and smiles.

He returns it.

71

EXT. OXFORD STREET. LATE AFTERNOON.

The street is crammed with people - Saturday shopping.

John stands outside a clothes shop, trying to avoid the crowds going in and out.

He's replying to an e-mail on his phone:

I need to replace the power supply but since your model isn't made anymore, it might take me a while to source one -

BELLA (O.S.)
John?

He looks up, startled.

Bella approaches. Trailing behind her is Ciara.

Seeing John, Ciara keeps her distance.

BELLA (CONT'D)
 (smiling)
 It is you!

She embraces him.

John glances at Ciara, a little apprehensive.

BELLA (CONT'D)
 Haven't seen you for a while. How
 are you?

JOHN
 I'm, er, good.

BELLA
 (warmly)
 I'm very glad to hear that.

Behind her, Ciara stares at John, hostile, wary.

He's deeply uncomfortable under her gaze -

JOHN
 Sorry - I should -

He gestures that he should go. Bella notices how tense he is.

BELLA
 Are you all right?

JOHN
 Yeah... Just... the crowds.

Bella nods, not entirely convinced. She turns to Ciara.

BELLA
 Right then - let's get your stuff
 before it gets even busier.

Ciara scowls, but reluctantly approaches.

John avoids her gaze. Bella notices.

BELLA (CONT'D)
 (to John)
 Good to see you. Hope I don't see
 you soon.

JOHN
 Yeah, you too, Bella.

Bella pushes ahead into the store, Ciara following, and as
 she does so -

- Mary and Clare come out, laden with bags, laughing.

MARY
 ... that's the last time I take
 fashion advice from you!

As Ciara passes, she and Clare lock eyes for the briefest of moments.

And in that moment, there's a flash of recognition between them.

Clare straightens up. She glances at John.

He's rooted to the spot, transfixed.

MARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Sorry we took so long, the queues
were crazy.

Ciara opens her mouth as if to speak but Clare turns away -

CLARE
(to Mary)
Come on - we can make Mango if we
hurry.

She links arms with Mary, walking away. Mary turns back -

MARY
(calls, laughing)
John?

John hesitates. Ciara stares at him.

It's a look of shock.

Which then becomes contempt.

CLOSE on John, taking this in.

The guilt, the shame, is overwhelming.

Quickly, he pushes through a crowd of incoming shoppers,
going to join Mary and Clare, getting lost in the crowd.

DISSOLVE TO:

72

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN. LATER - NIGHT.

John's doing the washing up after supper, lost in thought.

Mary and Clare sit at the table, picking at some pastries.

MARY
I've asked to work with her again
next year.

CLARE
You're not serious...

MARY
She's not so bad....

Clare snorts. Mary waves her off.

MARY (CONT'D)
 I can handle her. Besides, no one
 else'll go near her and it's only
 the kids who suffer in the end.

CLARE
 You're all right, you know?

Mary shrugs, pleased, embarrassed. She puts the pastries on
 some plates.

MARY
 We can have these in front of the
 telly. There's a new cop thing
 starting tonight.

CLARE
 (rolls eyes)
 Another one.

John dries his hands and turns, glancing at Clare.

JOHN
 People like to think they can solve
 a mystery. Or if they can't, that
 someone will.

A moment between them.

Clare breaks it, standing.

CLARE
 Tea?

73

INT. GARDEN SHED. A LITTLE LATER - NIGHT.

John's repairing a train.

There's a soft rap on the door.

Clare comes in, carrying a cup of tea, which she places on
 the table.

CLARE
 Here you go.

JOHN
 Thanks.

He puts the train down and stretches, clicking his back.

CLARE
 That doesn't sound good.

JOHN
 It's just playing up a bit.

CLARE
(chiding)
You're bent double at work all day
then you hunch over all evening...

JOHN
I'm getting old, that's all.

CLARE
You're not old - you and Mum are -
She stops herself.

CLARE (CONT'D)
(briskly)
You need a massage. I'll get one of
the college girls - they're very
good and they need guinea pigs for
their course. The show's starting
soon. You going to be much longer?

John picks up the train.

JOHN
I'll be done in a minute. The
motor's running fine, I just have
to realign the screw. It was an
easy job - he could have looked it
up on Youtube and fixed it himself.

He holds the train under the large, fixed magnifying glass on
his desk.

Clare leans over his shoulder, looking at the inner workings
of the engine.

CLARE
Chain reaction.

A flash of surprise passes over John's face but he quickly
covers.

JOHN
That's right.

He carries on working. He's meticulous, precise.

Clare stays close to him, standing at his shoulder.

It's very intimate, though they can't see one another.

CLARE
(softly)
She told me she'd come in here some
evenings, watch you work. She liked
to hear you talk about it, even if
she pretended she didn't.
(a moment, then -)
She was a hard girl. But she was
always soft when she talked about
you.

John takes it all in, deep to his very core.

He doesn't stop working, doesn't stop focusing on the job in hand, even as the parts seem remote and odd, so intently is he staring at them.

CLARE (CONT'D)

We worked together. Shared a room.
Manchester. You were right.

As she speaks, the faintest trace of a northern accent is detectable.

CLARE (CONT'D)

We had the same pimp. He called us
the twins. Thought we looked alike.
Thought it was funny, two for the
price of one. He was a bastard.

John swallows. But he has to hear, has to know.

CLARE (CONT'D)

He'd met her down here, sold her
the same bullshit he sold all of us
- we were special, he'd take care
of us. He did, for a while. Then he
didn't.

She hesitates but knows she has to go on. She owes him that.

CLARE (CONT'D)

She spent everything on drugs. I
never touched the stuff. I saw what
it could do. Scared the hell out of
me.

(a moment, then -)

I didn't understand her. She'd had
everything. Though you wouldn't
have known it, the way she talked.
Always complaining. Everything was
always wrong, always someone else's
fault. When she talked about the
life she'd had, she'd find
something to ruin it, something to
make it seem bad. But she didn't
have a clue! She didn't know what
bad was. I'd been in care. There
was a guy worked there, he.... No
one gave a shit. So I left.

(a moment, then -)

She'd had so much. Her own room,
her own stuff. People who loved
her. Cared about her. But she
didn't want it. Maybe she couldn't
see it. Maybe it was bravado. But I
think, some people... they just...
they don't know how to live a good
life. And she just... threw it all
away. I'm sorry she did that. I'm
sorry she didn't find a way to get
back to you.

John keeps his eyes locked on his work, hardly breathing.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 I longed for it. Longed for everything she'd had. She thought I was mad, asking her things, every little detail, question after question. But she told me. I don't know why. Comfort, maybe. It was like listening to a storybook. I used to dream about it - about her life. She'd sing sometimes. She'd a lovely voice.

John takes this in, overwhelmed.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 I didn't have a grand plan. I saw you on the telly, doing the appeal. And it was funny, I'd heard so much about you, I just... You were so familiar. I knew you. You were so sad. I know how that feels. And I thought... why do we have to feel that way? Could it be possible to find a bit of happiness, together?

CLOSE on John. He can barely breathe.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 So I came to see you. I thought maybe we'd just... I never wanted to... But then she....

FLASH TO:

73A **EXT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE. AFTERNOON.**

Mary walks up their street, carrying her school bags.

Clare, hunched, sits on their doorstep, clearly nervous.

She looks up the street, and stands, ready to leave.

Mary stops short.

Clare turns.

Mary sees her fully.

Disbelief. Completely overwhelmed.

CLARE (O.S.)
 She asked me inside. She asked me to stay. And I found myself crying and crying - I could hardly speak. She wanted to take care of me. She wanted me so much and I... I somehow knew how to be, with her. With Mary. It just... felt right.
 (MORE)

CLARE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I know it wasn't - I know that -
 but it felt like... coming home.
 Like it was meant to be. Like I was
 meant to make things right,
 somehow.

Clare's thrown.

Mary stares at her.

She opens her mouth to speak, but Mary drops her bags.

She moves towards her, slowly, as if in a dream.

Clare watches her, transfixed, in shock.

Mary comes to her.

She drinks her in, her eyes roaming over her features.

Clare hesitates, tugging at her sleeves nervously. She wants
 to speak, but Mary suddenly -

- pulls her into a tight embrace.

BACK TO:

A blur of shapes.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry.

They sharpen. We're seeing through John's tears.

John gazes at the little cog inside the engine, the evenly
 spaced spokes, the detail. The intricacy. The connection.

Clare hesitates, then -

CLARE (CONT'D)
 (softly)
 Last time I saw her we were 17. I
 don't know what happened to her. I
 wish I did. I would tell you. I
 understand you have to do whatever
 you need. It doesn't change
 anything. Not for me, anyway.

John fumbles the train.

JOHN
 Ow!

Clare steps back, as if the conversation had never happened.

Any trace of Northern accent has vanished.

CLARE
 You okay?

JOHN
(flustered)
Yeah.

She goes to the door.

CLARE
Show's on in two. I'd better get
back. You coming?

JOHN
Er, yeah... Yeah.

She leaves, pulling the door to.

John sits, beyond astonished. He stares unseeing at the delicate model engine in front of him.

Through the magnifying glass, we see that the screw is out of alignment with the cog that turns the wheels.

BLACK SCREEN.

UP ON:

74 People in a crowd, a vast throng of people, on a packed street.

Faces are a blur - people walk fast, their heads down, in their own bubbles.

And now we see John, standing over the road.

His side of the street is empty.

He watches the crowd opposite - watches the faces.

Glimpses of women's faces - busy, distracted, preoccupied.

John watches, careful, patient.

JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Blonde hair, shoulder length. Blue eyes - light blue, with hints of green. 5'4, slim build - size 8-10. A strawberry birthmark on her scalp - no bigger than a 2p coin, hidden by her hair.

A BLONDE WOMAN glances up, catching his eye.

She quickly looks away.

JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Good at sports - football, netball. Long-distance running. Musical, though never bothered with an instrument. Good singing voice. Loved to sing. Was singing before she was talking.

A WOMAN'S VOICE - Clare's? - begins to hum, low, tuneful -
Early One Morning.

JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
*She'll look different now.
 Unrecognizable, probably. She'll
 probably be different, too. 'Course
 she will. We're all different now.*

John watches. He keeps on watching.

And in the crowd, suddenly, standing still, he sees her.

The 14 year old Clare, dressed in her school uniform as in
 the photograph.

As he watches, transfixed, she smiles at him.

DISSOLVE TO:

75

INT/EXT. JOHN'S CAR/MANCHESTER SHELTER. NIGHT.

John, pale but determined, parks his car.

It's raining heavily.

Over the road, he can just make out a small sign on a
 building: *Street Shelter Manchester.*

76

INT. MANCHESTER STREET SHELTER. LATER - NIGHT.

John is at a table with two WOMEN - TESSA and SASHA, showing
 them the photos of schoolgirl Clare and aged-up Clare.

JOHN
*My girl's been missing for ten
 years - she was only 14 when she
 went but *this* woman -*

He shows them the photo of Clare on his phone -

JOHN (CONT'D)
*- says she knew my Clare here in
 Manchester. She would have been 17
 or so - seven years ago - she'd be
 24 now. Apparently she had a pimp
 who was her dealer.*

The women look at the photos, studying them carefully.

Tessa nods, slowly, pointing to school girl Clare.

TESSA
*Jasmine. That's her name - that's
 what she said, anyway.*

This hits John like a ton of bricks.

TESSA (CONT'D)

I knew her. Not well, mind, but she used to work Cheetham Hill. Saw her around before the cops did a clean up. We chatted some - they used to send a van round, bring us tea and the like before this place was set up. Don't have the money for that no more.

John's reeling. He can't believe he's found someone who actually knew his daughter.

JOHN

Clare. Her name's Clare.

TESSA

(shrugs)

Said her name was Jasmine, said she lived with her boyfriend.

John tries to marshal his thoughts.

JOHN

When... When did you last see her?

TESSA

(shakes head)

Not for a long time, pet. Stopped working Cheetham years ago.

JOHN

Roughly when - please - it's important!

TESSA

(sighs)

I dunno... seven years ago sounds about right.

JOHN

And this.. boyfriend - her pimp, her dealer -

TESSA

I don't know - saw him around once or twice. He was a young fella, wasn't with anyone I knew. Haven't seen him for years.

She gestures to the photo of fake Clare.

TESSA (CONT'D)

Her, no idea.

JOHN

Is there anyone else who might have known her - or him? Anyone who worked that area the same time?

WOMAN 1
Listen man, I'm here for a cup of
tea and a sandwich, yeah?

77

EXT/INT. MANCHESTER STREET SHELTER/JOHN'S CAR. LATER - NIGHT.

A gaggle of teenage girls, dressed for a night out, laugh and giggle as they go past.

John comes out, dazed by this new information.

He stands on the street for a moment, oblivious to the rain.

FLASH TO:

CLOSE: toddler Clare, frowning in concentration.

TODDLER CLARE
'Elp me, Daddy!

BACK TO:

John nods.

JOHN
(whispers)
I'm trying, love.

DISSOLVE TO:

78

INT. LARGE OFFICE BUILDING. DAY.

The job is nearly done - just the final touches.

The lads are chatting, as per. Music's on the radio.

John's installing a socket in the wall.

Carl comes over.

CARL
It's been good having you with us.
Aaron says the door's always
open...

John's about to reply when his phone rings. He pulls it out.

The caller ID reads *DI Dominic Chambers*.

JOHN
(to Carl)
Sorry, I've got to take this -

He turns away, walking off -

JOHN (CONT'D)
(on phone)
Dominic, hi - did you get my
message?
(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)
 Yeah - you were right about
 Manchester! That footage... She
 wasn't in London, she was -

Dominic clearly interrupts him because John stops, listening.
 His expression changes.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 (on phone)
 Right. When?
 (a moment, then -)
 Okay. No. No, it's fine. I'll come
 in.

79

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM. LATER - AFTERNOON.

CLOSE: A police evidence photo of a bra.

JOHN (O.S.)
 I'll go back up at the weekend -
 now I know about the Jasmine name,
 I can ask around.

He's at a table, looking through a pile of evidence photos of
 women's belongings, Dominic opposite him.

DOMINIC
 I'll let my colleagues up there
 know. I can't promise anything
 right now - they're rather in the
 midst...

He gestures to the photos.

John nods. He looks at the next photo - a scuffed, worn
 woman's trainer.

JOHN
 No. I mean, I don't recognise it.

DOMINIC
 Okay.

John looks at the next one - a silver charm bracelet.

JOHN
 No.

He keeps looking - another bra, a pair of women's knickers,
 an earring -

JOHN (CONT'D)
 How many are there?

Dominic hesitates, then -

DOMINIC
 We don't know. We think he's been
 operating for years.
 (MORE)

DOMINIC (CONT'D)

With his job, he travelled round
the country, place to place.... It
could go back decades.

JOHN

Jesus.

(of the photos)

But they found all these in
Manchester?

DOMINIC

(nods)

In his house. I thought it was
worth you having a look because of
the possible connection with the
city. I'm sorry.

John takes this in. He looks at the next photo.

A keyring with a silver letter 'E' attached.

JOHN

No.

A quick knock at the door, which opens - an OFFICER sticks
their head inside -

OFFICER

(to Dominic)

So sorry - can I have a word?

John gestures that it's fine.

DOMINIC

(to John)

Won't be a second.

He leaves.

John's phone buzzes a message. He puts the photos down and
pulls out his phone - it's Mary -

We need milk please! xxx

He quickly types a reply and puts his phone away.

He goes to pick the photos back up. One is slightly more
visible, poking out from the pile.

A thin gold chain. A hint of something attached to it.

John looks.

Slowly, almost reluctantly, he reaches for it, sliding it out
from the pile.

Laid on a bare white surface, with a yellow police ruler
displayed next to it to show the size, is a thin gold
necklace with a small gold heart.

A 'C' is engraved in the centre of it.

John stares at it. He inhales, sharply.

FLASH TO:

2A INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM. LATE AFTERNOON - 12 YEARS PREVIOUSLY.

As before, 12 year old Clare has unwrapped her present.

Now, she fastens the necklace around her neck - a thin gold chain with a heart and a 'C' engraved on it.

She glances down, admiring it, then looks up, flashing a smile.

BACK TO:

John gazes at the photo, numb. Disbelieving. Overwhelmed.

FLASH TO:

23 INT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM. AFTERNOON - 10 YEARS PREVIOUSLY.

As before, Mary sobs into her pillow in anguish as John watches helplessly.

BACK TO:

CLOSE: John stares at the photo.

The gold heart. The curve of the letter 'C'.

FLASH TO:

34a CLOSE: Toddler Clare looks up from her task, happy.

TODDLER CLARE
Thank you!

BACK TO:

CLOSE on John, staring at the photo.

FLASH TO:

5a CLOSE: John's hands guide the young Clare's (aged around 8 or so), pointing out the inner workings of a train.

YOUNG CLARE (O.S.)
(chuckles, warm, teasing)
You should have had a boy!

Young Clare playfully squeezes his hand.

BACK TO:

John gazes at the photo of the necklace.

Slowly, he reaches out, gently resting his hand on it.

FLASH TO:

12 year old Clare's hand plays with the heart around her neck.

BACK TO:

John gazes at the photo.

A distant, muffled sound - we can't make out what it is.

John doesn't hear.

Another sound - distant, muffled.

Still he doesn't move, doesn't hear.

Then -

DOMINIC (O.S.)

John!

He starts.

Dominic's watching him.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)

Anything?

John looks up at him.

Dominic waits, expectantly.

MARY (O.S.)

(whispers)

I love you.

Slowly, carefully, John puts the photo at the back of the pile.

He looks at Dominic.

JOHN

No. There's nothing there.

80

EXT. POLICE STATION. MOMENTS LATER - AFTERNOON.

Dominic accompanies John to his car.

DOMINIC

Thanks again. I'm sorry to have put you through it, but it's really helpful.

John nods, barely listening.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)
 Let me know how you get on in
 Manchester. Things are a bit crazy
 at the moment, but I promise, we'll
 look into this properly very soon.

JOHN
 Yeah. Okay.

He opens his car door, about to get in, but hesitates.

He turns back.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 All those girls. Those poor girls.

Dominic nods, slowly.

DOMINIC
 (softly)
 Yes.

The thought hangs between them.

Suddenly, John nods, as if to confirm something he already
 knew.

Quickly, he gets in his car, starting it up and pulling away.

81 **INT/EXT. JOHN'S CAR/SUBURBAN STREET. LATE AFTERNOON.**

It's a glorious late afternoon, the sun heavy in the sky.

John drives, staring straight ahead.

We hear a girl's voice humming - *Early One Morning*.

82 **INT/EXT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN/FRONT
 GARDEN. LATE AFTERNOON.**

The kitchen is visible through the living room.

Mary and Clare are making supper, passing back and forth.

Clare clearly says something amusing because Mary laughs.

John stands outside, watching.

It's a glorious late afternoon - heavy, golden sunshine.

All is quiet and peaceful.

As John watches, Mary moves past Clare, placing her hand on
 her shoulder.

Clare glances at her, smiling. She rests her hand lightly on
 Mary's.

It's a brief, everyday moment of love.

John gazes at them.

They go about their preparations, oblivious of his presence.

And as he watches, we begin to move, from the kitchen back through into the -

82A **LIVING ROOM**

- past the sofa and over to the dresser.

A photo of John and Mary on their wedding day.

A photo of Mary with her class at school.

A more recent photo of John, Clare and Mary, taken on Mary's birthday.

And at the back, half-hidden by the other pictures, the framed, schoolgirl photo of Clare.

Slowly, we begin to move in towards it - the young girl's face.

Her eyes, her half-smile. Like the *Mona Lisa*, it's not certain what her expression means. An eternal mystery.

BACK TO:

82 **EXT. JOHN AND MARY'S HOUSE - DOORSTEP. SAME TIME.**

John gazes at his wife and his surrogate daughter.

Mary, her back to Clare but visible to John, takes a private moment.

She looks up, her face radiant with happiness.

John watches her.

GIRL'S VOICE (O.S.)

*Early one morning,
Just as the sun was rising,
I heard a young maid sing,
In the valley below.*

Slowly, we move in on him, watching.

GIRL'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

*Oh, don't deceive me,
Oh, never leave me,
How could you use
A poor maiden so?*

CLOSE on John.

CUT TO BLACK.