

~~LAURA~~

~~Did she really say three a day?~~

~~JOE~~

~~It's fine. Just bring me three biscuits or something.~~

~~LAURA~~

~~I think I've built up a backlog.~~

~~JOE~~

~~... So bring me the pack.~~

~~They share an awkward smile - things are strained. Laura turns away, something getting to her. Joe hesitant about whether to hug her.~~

~~JOE (CONT'D)~~

~~What's up?~~

~~LAURA~~

~~Nothing. It's just...  
(gestures around)  
... doesn't really feel like a fresh start, does it?~~

~~JOE~~

~~Not yet. Give it time.~~

~~But he doesn't look sure. He gives her a kiss. She reciprocates, with a few kisses, but it's a bit forced...~~

26 **EXT. CAFE, COASTAL VILLAGE - DAY**

26

A little cafe/tea room called "HOOLEY'S", a bit tired and old-fashioned, in a village street. The grey sea not far.

27 **INT. CAFE - DAY**

27

A BROOM sweeps the floor of a little cafe (clean, seaside feel, but in need of TLC). The sweeper is clad in a Synth tunic/pedal-pushers combo, but yellow. It's MIA. Or is it? Because her expression and movements are pure ANITA...

One OLD MAN drinks tea at a table, at the back a YOUNGER MAN - late 20s, casually dressed, untidy hair and vague beard on a kind, handsome face. He's on the phone. In front of him, the BOOKS - account ledgers, a calculator, note pad, stacks of bills. He's on the phone, very stressed out. This is ED.

We play a lot of his conversation on Mia's expressionless face - she may not react observably, but she's listening.

ED

(into phone)

... no, we don't need it to be permanent. This situation is temporary...

(MORE)

ED (CONT'D)

I'm just asking that you help us through it. We've been customers for fourteen years...

(beat, frustration)

No, she's not well enough to come in. I can, if that'll help.

(beat)

Yes. Alright. Thank you. Yes. I'll be in tomorrow.

He hangs up - sags, sighs. The weight of the world on him - but he's never self-pitying. He sifts aimlessly through the bills - we see "FINAL NOTICE" on one.

The Old Man gets up, slowly, painfully. Fishes for change.

Ed rubs his face, crushed by it all. Mia turns, glances at him once, continues working.

OLD MAN

How much I owe you, Ed?

Despite his troubles, Ed finds a smile for the Old Man.

ED

One pound twenty to you Ken. Price hasn't changed in three years.

He says it with affectionate, very gentle mockery. Ken the Old Man counts out coins. Ed gets up. Goes over.

OLD MAN

I'm, uh... a bit short again.

Not a surprise. Ed looks down at a pile of coins and fluff. He picks up the fluff. Holds it up.

ED

I'll take this too and we'll call it quits.

He sweeps up the coins. The Old Man shuffles for the door.

OLD MAN

Cheers. Here - I hope Val takes a turn for the better.

Ed smiles, holds the door open for him. He leaves. Ed lets the door swing shut, then rests his forehead on the glass. Mia looks at him. Or is it Anita?

MIA

I have determined the cause of the malfunctioning boiler.

ED

Let me guess, it's easy and free to fix!

MIA

The fault is irreparable. It will cost one thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds to replace the unit.

That could break the camel's back - but he LAUGHS, resigned.

ED

Well. I'm seeing the bank tomorrow, I'll ask them to chuck it in.  
(checks his watch)  
It's dead. I'm heading up to the hospital. Might as well close up.

28

**EXT. CAFE - DAY**

28

MIA holds a foil parcel. ED flips the "Closed" sign, exits, locks the door. Looks quizzically at her parcel, which she presents to him.

MIA

You have mentioned on six occasions your mother's dislike of hospital food.

Ed doesn't see the need to thank a machine - but smiles, nods, takes it. Remembers something, takes out two TEN POUND NOTES, hands them to her.

ED

Your owner should be charging more... Don't tell him that. Oh bloody hell, you have to tell him that now, don't you?

MIA

I don't deem your remark pertinent.

ED

Thank God for that. See you tomorrow Anita.

He turns and hurries to a battered hatchback. Mia watches.

MIA

Good night, Ed.

After a moment, she turns and walks away.

29

**EXT. STREET NEAR CAFE - CONTINUOUS**

29

MIA passes bustling people. A SYNTH LOLLIPOP MAN shepherding SCHOOLKIDS across a road. Mia walks on, elegantly, upright, machine-like.

But as she turns down a coastal path, away from the town, hidden by hedges... she checks to see she's alone - and her gait changes. Becomes a little looser.