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Bernadette – A Screenplay

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Dominican University of California

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Synopsis:

Bernadette is a comedy-drama road movie that centers on an introverted IT Services Professional and her relationship with her father. The central character of Bernadette works for a faceless finance corporation in London's financial district. She's in her early thirties and lives a somewhat sheltered life, has next-to-nothing of a social life, and lives in a small flat with her elderly father whom she pretty much takes care of. She also has an older sister with whom she doesn't have much of a relationship, and her life really just consists of looking after her father and dealing with the drudgery of her job. Although she is seemingly content on the surface, we see that she is really just plodding along, day-to-day, clearly unhappy at how underappreciated she is at work. We meet her at a point where the cracks are starting to show in her patience with the people she is forced to work with.

Early on in the screenplay, after a bad day at work, Bernadette finds her father being taken to an ambulance by paramedics after a minor accident. At the hospital, while waiting to see how her father is, she has a phone conversation with her sister, in which she has to reassure her that their father is ok, and this is followed by a visit from her sister the next day. While giving her a ride to work her sister then informs her, that she wants to look at care homes for their father. Bernadette argues with her sister, has a confrontation with her boss, and then has an emotional conversation with her father about both of their futures. This prompts her to do some soul-searching, and she decides to make a change.

A group email from a co-worker, in which the co-worker excitedly tells everyone that she is quitting to realize her dream of becoming a Blackjack Dealer at a Tribal Lands Casino in America, inspires Bernadette and she decides to quit her job and to take a trip to the US to pay her co-worker a visit. After packing, she catches up with her father, who is looking at a care

home with her older sister; she tells him that she's going on an adventure and that he's going to go with her. We leave them at the end of this half of the screenplay as they are boarding a plane at the airport.

What follows is a father-daughter road movie in which, in the best tradition of road movies, the journey is not just a physical but a mental and emotional one, as Bernadette and her father begin to talk about the gaps in their own relationship and to deal with the pain that they have both ignored concerning the loss of Bernadette's mother when she and her sister were in their teens. After several experiences and adventures, they arrive at their destination, the Four Winds Casino in North Dakota, where Bernadette intends to surprise her former co-worker. But it turns out that nobody knows who she is talking about. It seems that the co-worker was being honest about leaving, but made up the whole moving to America story as a gag. Not knowing what to do with herself, Bernadette panics about having made a stupid decision and decides that she needs to head home. But her father suggests, with his inevitable move into a care home and his worsening health, that they keep going so that they can see everything they've talked about seeing in America.

BERNADETTE

written by

Dain Bedford-Pugh

1 EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The house sits semi-detached in a typical suburban London street. An old, weathered gate marks the edge of the small front garden. A broken gutter hangs a little loose, dumping rain water in a stream down the front of the house and onto the porch.

2 INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

We can hear the constant pitter-patter of raindrops hitting the window. The curtains are drawn, and pale light creeps in around their edges. In the semi-gloom we can see that the room is tidy and rather sparse, with neat IKEA-style furniture. There are two large framed pictures on the walls. On the bed there is clearly someone lying asleep under the duvet.

After a few beats, the relative silence is broken by the sound of a phone alarm, with the phone revealing itself on the bedside table as its screen lights up. A hand snakes its way from beneath the duvet, picks up the phone, silences it, and puts it down again. The hand disappears back under the duvet for a moment, before the duvet is then pushed back from the bed's occupant - a woman in her early thirties, wearing pajamas - sits up, swings her legs over the side of the bed, and stands. This is BERNADETTE. Her dark mess of hair is in disarray around her head. She yawns and stretches, joints popping, before she heads to the door and opens it, allowing light to pour into the room as she exits. We can now see that the room is decorated in neutral tones, and the framed pictures are in fact posters: one is of Casablanca, and the other is of Seven Samurai.

3 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Bernadette flicks the kettle on and spoons instant coffee into a mug.

4 INT. LOUNGE - DAY

This room is the bedroom's opposite. Wallpaper with a 70s print. A mismatched assortment of furniture. Walls covered in framed photographs showing various people including Bernadette. A bookshelf heaving under a jumbled assortment of books. Another full of videotapes with film titles scrawled in felt-tipped. A sofa sits against one wall, a coffee table in front of it. There is also an old armchair, its stuffing showing in a couple of places. A well-used acoustic guitar sits in a stand near the armchair. A TV is showing the news of Britain's upcoming exit from the European Union.

Bernadette enters the room, carrying a tray with the mug of coffee and a small plate with a couple of cookies. She puts the tray down on the coffee table, and then heads out of the room.

5 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Bernadette walks up the hallway and stops outside a door. She knocks gently.

BERNADETTE
Dad? You in there?

From behind the door comes a muffled voice, that of Bernadette's father, ARTHUR.

ARTHUR (O.S.)
Yep.

BERNADETTE
You ok?

ARTHUR (O.S.)
Bernadette, I appreciate your concern, but crapping in peace is one of my few joys in life.

BERNADETTE
Ok. Just making sure.

ARTHUR (O.S.)
And I appreciate it. Now bugger off.

Bernadette smiles.

BERNADETTE
Don't forget to spray.

ARTHUR (O.S.)
Yeah, yeah...

Bernadette heads back down the hallway and up the stairs.

6 INT. LOUNGE - DAY, LATER

Arthur is now sitting in the armchair, his feet up on a footstool, the guitar resting on his lap. He has wispy hair that has pretty much disappeared from the top of his head.

He is wearing a striped shirt and tan trousers and sips from the coffee mug as he scowls at the TV screen, which is showing BBC News. On the screen, Nigel Farage is talking about Britain's upcoming exit from the European Union.

ARTHUR
Slimy little shit.

Bernadette walks in, zipping up a raincoat over clothes for work - dark trousers, shirt, sweater vest. She is wearing rain boots on her feet, and they are a bright blue - a splash of color in her otherwise monochrome outfit. On her back is a daypack.

BERNADETTE
Yes, he certainly is.

ARTHUR
His side has managed to win, and now he's lording it up over them all.

On the TV we see Nigel Farage making a speech to the European Parliament.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Racist, sniveling toad! His side has won, and he can't manage to be gracious in victory.

BERNADETTE
I have to leave. Don't let Farage stress you out too much.

Arthur looks up at her as she steps over to him.

ARTHUR
And what about you?

BERNADETTE
What about me?

ARTHUR
Talk about getting too stressed out. Bernie, you've got to leave that place.

BERNADETTE
Yeah, sure. I think you like having luxuries too much for me to quit, dad. Like a roof. Food. Those kinds of things.

Arthur picks up the remote and mutes the TV.

ARTHUR

The money from Gemma and Ryan is enough.

BERNADETTE

You'd think. Look, I really have to go. Don't forget the Meals on Wheels is coming a bit later today. And no pub, ok?

ARTHUR

Yeah, ok.

BERNADETTE

I mean it. I don't need Doctor Hilliard giving me that look that tells me I'm a terrible caregiver.

ARTHUR

Ugh, 'care-giver'. I hate it when you say that.

BERNADETTE

Then take better care of yourself.

ARTHUR

Fine.

BERNADETTE

Thank you.

She bends over and kisses his head, then turns and leaves the room, closing the door behind her. Arthur unmutes the TV. Nigel Farage and his colleagues are waving Union Jack flags.

ARTHUR

Oh, for crying out loud!

7

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Bernadette closes the front door behind her, phone in one hand, and steps out onto the porch. She puts on a pair of wireless headphones on, and pulls her hood up over them and her head. She looks up at the water spluttering down from the broken gutter, and sighs and rolls her eyes at it as she jams her phone into a coat pocket. Dodging the gutter water, Bernadette walks down the garden path and pulls at the garden gate. It doesn't budge, so she yanks harder and it suddenly gives, making her stagger. She looks at it balefully and just leaves it open before stepping out onto the street. She stops, reaches up and presses a button on the headphones.

Music begins to emanate tinnily from her headphones. She turns and heads up the street. The music switches from being diegetic to non-diegetic, and we hear it in all its glory as it continues across the next few scenes.

8 EXT. CITY - DAY

Rays of sunlight attempt to penetrate the jumble of grey clouds that crowd the sky. Bisecting the city as it winds its way on its journey to the sea is the River Thames, its drab water reflecting the dreary sky above. A drizzling rain falls, and through it we see the mass of buildings that make up the city's skyline: tall blocks of concrete and glass loom over squat slabs of red brick and sandstone, with plentiful trees - their well-fed green leaves a splash of color among the gloom - scattered among them.

9 EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

A multitude of train tracks snake their way into the covered terminal at London Waterloo train station. Several trains, packed with commuters, slowly pull into platforms where their doors open and they dump out their human contents.

10 EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Below, streams of people, buses, cars and taxis flow around each other during the morning rush hour.

11 EXT. PEDESTRIAN CROSSING - DAY

Down at street level, a crowd of commuters - a mass of darkly-clad figures with umbrellas and raincoats - waits at a pedestrian crossing. In the middle is Bernadette. She seems almost separate from everyone around her. After a couple of beats the lights change and the crowd crosses. Bernadette is a little slower than everyone else, and they stream around her as she walks towards us.

12 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A grand and gigantic lobby, huge glass windows, and marble floors that gleam in the light of several large chandeliers dangling high above. Through the revolving doors several people hurry into the building, depositing their dripping umbrellas into stands before continuing on to file through the card-swipe barriers that sit between the lobby area and the elevators. After a beat, Bernadette enters the building.

She walks over to the barriers as she pulls her hood back and pulls out an ID card attached to a lanyard. She presses a button on her headphones and the music stops. She stops and swipes the card... but the barrier remains in place. She tries it again but to no avail.

BERNADETTE

Dammit.

She turns and walks over to where BRIAN - a security guard - is stood at one end of the barriers.

BRIAN

Good morning, Bernadette.

BERNADETTE

Morning, Brian.

She holds her card up.

BRIAN

Not working?

BERNADETTE

Nope.

He taps his own card on the reader next to the barrier he's standing at, and it opens. He steps aside for Bernadette to walk through.

BRIAN

There you go. You going to get my software update done today?

Bernadette walks through and turns to him.

BERNADETTE

Wait... they still haven't done that?

BRIAN

Still waiting.

BERNADETTE

This place. See, this is what happens when they don't let me arrange this stuff. I'll get someone to come by in half hour and get it sorted for you, ok?

BRIAN

Thanks, B.

BERNADETTE
You're welcome, B.

She turns and heads over to the elevators.

13 INT. OFFICE - I.T. DEPARTMENT - DAY

A modern, open-plan office. People walk to-and-fro and others sit tapping away at keyboards or jabbering away on telephones. In the middle of the hustle and bustle, Bernadette sits at her desk, eating a salad. She is wearing a headset with a microphone as she listens in on a conference call on her computer. We can just about make out the buzz of other voices coming through her earpiece. The clock hanging on the divider at the back of her desk shows that the time is 12:40.

BERNADETTE
Well, I'm not sure that is the best way to go. I'd prefer it if we integrate-

She notices something.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Hello? Oh.

She grabs her mouse and clicks on the mute icon.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Sorry, I had my-

She stops as the other attendees of the teleconference carry on, having not noticed her speaking.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Guys, I had my microphone muted. Sorry. So, as I was saying...

She stops again, and listens to them talking for a moment.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Although clearly it doesn't matter. Because you're not hearing me at all.

They carry on.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
I've basically given up on trying to understand what all of you are talking about.
(beat)
(MORE)

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
 Because it's so insanely boring.
 (beat)
 And I honestly don't care.

She listens to them talk some more.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
 Ok. Bernadette is leaving the call.

She sits another moment, and then disconnects.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
 Wankers.

She takes her headset off, east a last mouthful of salad,
 then gets up and leaves with her bowl in hand.

14 INT. OFFICE KITCHEN - DAY

Bernadette finishes washing up her bowl and fork, and then
 turns to the kettle that has just finished boiling. She pours
 water into a cup with a teabag in it as her boss, PHIL, walks
 in.

PHIL
 Hey, how'd the call go?

BERNADETTE
 Oh yeah, great. They've got some
 amazing ideas. Truly innovative
 stuff.

PHIL
 Ok. You're taking the piss, right?

Bernadette turns to him.

BERNADETTE
 Have you been on one of those calls
 lately?

PHIL
 No.

BERNADETTE
 Smart man. They're ridiculous.

PHIL
 This again...

BERNADETTE
 Phil, they're idiots. And they're
 juvenile. And they're sexist-

PHIL

-I know.

BERNADETTE

(beat)

So why do you have me on these calls?

Phil sighs and leans against the counter.

PHIL

Because they're idiots, juvenile, and sexist. And I hoped you'd kick them into shape.

Bernadette looks at him for a moment.

BERNADETTE

Well, that shouldn't be my job.

PHIL

I know. I'm sorry. What do you want me to do?

BERNADETTE

Er, take me off the calls.

PHIL

Fine. Anything else?

BERNADETTE

I need tomorrow off. I have to take my dad to his doctor's appointment.

PHIL

Tomorrow? But that's the new print implementation.

BERNADETTE

No problem. I've written a script that will auto-install for every user. No need for me to be here to do it.

PHIL

Oh, ok. Fine. Sure.

BERNADETTE

Thank you.

She turns, picks up her mug, and heads out of the kitchen.

15 INT. OFFICE - MARKETING DEPARTMENT - DAY

Bernadette is walking back to her desk, past a sign that indicates that she is passing by the Marketing Department. A woman sat at one of the desks sees Bernadette, stands up at her desk and waves her over. This is LAUREN. She is in her late twenties, and is dressed in the extremely fashionable way that Marketing people dress themselves.

Bernadette flashes a big grin as she unconsciously fiddles with her before walking over to Lauren.

BERNADETTE

Hey, Lauren, how are you?

LAUREN

Oh, I'm fantastic thank you!
Except, I really need help with
this. I know I should submit a help
desk request, but thought that,
maybe you could...

She sits down and gestures at the screen.

BERNADETTE

Ok. So what's the problem?

She walks over to Lauren and stands beside her.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Problem with Excel?

LAUREN

Yeah. I've been told I need to do a
pivot table or something. It's not,
like, something I should know,
being in Marketing.

BERNADETTE

Ok. Well, it's not really an IT
issue.

Lauren looks up at her with puppy-dog eyes.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

But I know Excel fairly well, so
let me take a look at this for you.

LAUREN

Great! Thank you so much! Here,
take my seat.

Lauren stands up and Bernadette sits down.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
Thanks so much, Bernadette.

Two of Lauren's colleagues approach and sit down at their desks.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
Hey ladies, Bernadette's here to save the day!
(to Bernadette)
You think you could do theirs as well?

BERNADETTE
Sure. No problem.

LAUREN
Thank you! You're the best!

She leans down and hugs her.

16 EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The sky is darkening as the sun begins to set. It has stopped raining, but there are still plenty of grey clouds.

Bernadette is walking down the street, frowning at her phone. As she approaches the house, she looks up and sees that there is an ambulance parked outside.

BERNADETTE
Oh, shit.

She breaks into a run, and hurries the short distance to the gate and up the garden path. She glances at a ladder lying on the lawn, a hammer and a piece of guttering lying next to it, as Arthur is being brought out of the house on a gurney by two paramedics. A square piece of gauze had been applied to one side of his forehead.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Dad, what the hell?

Arthur glances at her and then looks away.

ARTHUR
It's fine.

BERNADETTE
Really? Is that why you're about to ride in an ambulance?

She looks at PARAMEDIC 1.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

What happened?

(beat)

I'm his daughter. Bernadette
Halloran.

PARAMEDIC 1

Ah, right. Well, he took a fall in
the garden, and hit his head.
Luckily his arms took the impact
first, so it doesn't look like he's
sustained any obvious head trauma.
Only superficial grazes to the
forearms. But we need to get him
checked out at St. George's anyway,
given his age.

ARTHUR

Watch it with the ageism there,
lad! I'll get off this gurney, run
to the hospital and still beat you.

Paramedic 1 smiles at him then looks back at Bernadette.

PARAMEDIC 1

You can ride with us.

BERNADETTE

Thank you.

Bernadette follows them down the path to the ambulance.

17 EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Bernadette is on a bench just outside the entrance to the
hospital. A couple of doctors, overcoats over their uniforms,
pass by her, glancing at her as she raises her voice during
her phone conversation.

BERNADETTE

Gemma, have you heard a word I've
said?

(beat)

No. Look, I-

She leans back, sighing in frustration.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Gemma! Listen to me. He fell off a
ladder and hit his head. Now he's
getting a CT scan.

(beat)

Like I already said.

(MORE)

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

It's standard procedure for his age.

(beat)

Yes, he was conscious. He was even cracking the usual bad jokes, so that's a good-

(beat)

Oh, look, you know what, if you're going to have that kind of attitude, you can fuck right off.

She stands up.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

He doesn't need to go into a home, he needs his other daughter to put some effort in from time to time!

She angrily ends the call, and pinches the bridge of her nose, eyes squeezed shut.

She turns and walks into the hospital, the automatic doors sliding open for her.

18 INT. HOSPITAL WARD - NIGHT

Bernadette walks along a corridor and into the waiting area of the ward. She spots Arthur laughing with a nurse at the desk.

She walks up to them and Arthur turns and notices her.

ARTHUR

Hi, sweetie.

BERNADETTE

Well?

Arthur smiles at her. The bandage and gauze have been replaced with a large band aid covering the spot where he hit his forehead.

ARTHUR

Good as new! The doctor here even called Doctor Hilliard and then did a blood test like he was going to order for me tomorrow. Had a chat with him and no need to go in to see him tomorrow.

BERNADETTE

Oh. Ok. Shouldn't I just speak to the doctor?

ARTHUR

Bern, I'm fine. No need.

(to the nurse)

Honestly, she thinks I'm losing it and need her to do everything for me.

The nurse smiles at him.

BERNADETTE

Ok. Come on.

She takes Arthur's arm and they head off down the corridor.

19 INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Bernadette is asleep in bed. After a few beats her phone alarm goes off. In a repeat of the previous morning, her hand snakes out from under the duvet, picks up the phone and silences the alarm. Again, her hand disappears back under the duvet for a moment, before she pushes the it back, sits up, swings her legs over the side of the bed, and stands. She yawns and stretches, joints popping, before she heads to the door and opens it before exiting the room.

20 INT. HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Bernadette reaches the bottom of the stairs, turns into the hallway and walks towards the kitchen. As she passes the closed door to the living room, she stops and listens. We can hear the muffled voice of a woman talking, with the occasional low murmuring voice of Arthur. Bernadette opens the door.

21 INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Bernadette walks into the room and stops. Sat on the sofa is GEMMA, her sister. She is a few years older than Bernadette. Arthur is sitting in the armchair, listening as Gemma talks at him. They both have mugs of coffee.

GEMMA

-and so we're remodeling because we really want to sell it for quite a bit more than the current market value. But plasterers are so expensive. And we-

Gemma stops as she notices Bernadette.

GEMMA (CONT'D)
Oh, hi sis!

ARTHUR
Look, Bern. Your sister's here...

She stands up and reaches out and Bernadette lets her pull her into a hug.

BERNADETTE
Er... hi, Gemma.

GEMMA
Sorry, I know you were sleeping and didn't want to wake you. I'll go make you a coffee.

BERNADETTE
It's ok, I can-

ARTHUR
-let her make you a coffee!

GEMMA
Yeah, it's no problem! Milk and two sugars?

BERNADETTE
Black. No sugar.

GEMMA.
Oh. Right.
(to Arthur)
Another one, dad?

ARTHUR
No, thanks. I'm still working on this one.

GEMMA
Ok!

Gemma leaves. Bernadette takes a seat on the sofa as Arthur grimaces at his cup and puts it down on the coffee table.

BERNADETTE
Did she call you before she came?

ARTHUR
Nope. Just showed up half hour ago.

BERNADETTE

Right.

Arthur goes to sip from his mug, and then grimaces before putting it down on a side table.

ARTHUR

She still can't make coffee worth a crap.

Bernadette gets up.

BERNADETTE

I need to shower and get ready.

She leaves.

22 INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Gemma is waiting for the kettle to boil as Bernadette walks in.

BERNADETTE

Gemma, I'm going to skip the coffee.

GEMMA

Oh. Ok.

She reaches out and flicks the kettle off.

BERNADETTE

Yeah, I've really got to shower and get going.

Gemma looks back at her.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

To work.

(beat)

Remember work?

Gemma frowns at her.

GEMMA

That's not funny.

BERNADETTE

Sorry. Bad joke. Couldn't resist.
Anyway, nice to see you.

Bernadette steps forward to awkwardly embrace Gemma.

GEMMA

Hey, I'll drive you!

BERNADETTE

No, no it's fine. I'm, you know...
I work in Central London.

GEMMA

Oh right. Well I can at least drive
you to the tube. You go from
Tufnell Park, right?

BERNADETTE

Yeah, but-

GEMMA

-oh come on. We can catch up.

BERNADETTE

Yeah, ok. Sure. I'll go shower and
get ready.

GEMMA

Great!
(calling to Arthur)
Another coffee, Dad?

ARTHUR (O.C.)

Oh no, I'm good!

Bernadette leaves the kitchen.

23 INT. GEMMA'S CAR - DAY

The car is a high-end luxury model, all leather interiors and the like. Gemma is wearing driving gloves. Bernadette looks somewhat uncomfortable and out-of-place. She is fiddling with the array of buttons on the door on her side.

GEMMA

I'm fairly certain she's stealing
from us.

Bernadette is getting frustrated with trying to lower her window. She stops and turns to look at Gemma.

BERNADETTE

Er...what?

GEMMA

The nanny. I'm sure she's stealing
from us. I had some bracelets go
missing.

(MORE)

GEMMA (CONT'D)

And I'm fairly certain one of mum's antique figurines has gone as well.

BERNADETTE

Wow. Sorry to hear that. Just one of them? Because you got them all, right?

Gemma glances at her before turning back to the road.

GEMMA

I...yeah. I guess I did.

BERNADETTE

Well, I guess the other figurines will have to make do without it.

GEMMA

Have I done something wrong?

BERNADETTE

We really don't have enough of a drive left to get into that.

Bernadette looks out of the window.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

My station's coming up on the left.

Gemma switches lanes to the right.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

GEMMA

Taking you to the next one. Kentish Town, right?

BERNADETTE

Yeah, but that's, like three minutes away.

GEMMA

Fine. Camden Town then.

BERNADETTE

Why?

GEMMA

Because I want to know what your problem is.

BERNADETTE

My problem.

GEMMA

Yes.

Bernadette turns and looks out of the window for a moment before turning back to Gemma.

BERNADETTE

My problem is this stupid window.

Gemma presses a button on her side, and Bernadette's window rolls down.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

They drive in silence for a moment.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Why are you here? Why did you come over this morning?

GEMMA

To see how dad was doing. To see how you're doing.

She glances at Bernadette again.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, is there something wrong with that?

BERNADETTE

No, no. Not at all.

GEMMA

Good. So what is-

BERNADETTE

-what is a problem is that it's not really in your nature to be so caring.

Gemma looks sharply at Bernadette.

GEMMA

What?!

She looks back at the road, her face set in anger.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

How dare you.

BERNADETTE

How dare I? We never hear from you.
We never see you. And to be honest,
I'm ok with that.

Gemma's eyes begin to well up.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Oh, jeez, Gemma. Look, we don't
have that kind of sister
relationship that most sisters do,
ok?

Gemma abruptly pulls the car over and stops.

GEMMA

Fine. We don't. But I want a
relationship with my father-

BERNADETTE

-first time for everything-

GEMMA

-and I want him taken care of. So
I'm looking at homes for him.

She turns and grabs some brochures from her back on the back
seat, then turns and drops them in Bernadette's lap.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

Take these and have a look through
them. See what you think.

Bernadette glances at the brochures in her lap.

BERNADETTE

I don't need to. I can tell you
what I think. I think it's a shitty
idea.

GEMMA

Well it's not really about you, is
it?

BERNADETTE

Did you ask Dad what he thinks?

GEMMA

It's not about asking him, it's
about telling him that he needs to
do this. You know he's going to be
stupidly stubborn about it.

BERNADETTE

Great way to build a relationship
with him.

Gemma glares at her and gestures to the station entrance on
the street.

GEMMA

Oh look, there's Kentish Town
station. Maybe you should get out
here after all.

BERNADETTE

Glad to.

Bernadette opens her door, gets out and slams the door shut.
She storms off into Kentish Town station, brochures in hand,
as Gemma drives away.

24 INT. OFFICE - DAY

Bernadette walks to her desk, and takes off her coat and bag.
She hangs her coat up, puts her bag under the desk and sits
down. She picks up the phone, dials a number and waits. After
getting no answer after a few rings, she hangs up, thinks for
a moment, and then gets up and leaves.

25 INT. OFFICE - PHIL'S OFFICE - DAY

Phil at his desk. He is wearing a headset and is taking part
in a conference call. He's leaning back in his chair, facing
the window as he repeatedly tosses a rugby ball into the air
and catches it.

PHIL

Yeah, but that's the problem isn't
it?

The door opens and Bernadette walks in. Phil doesn't notice.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Look, you know how Bernadette is.

(beat)

She's not even in this morning, so
we're doing the install how I said
we would.

Bernadette, frowning, takes a quiet couple of steps further
into the room.

You know how she is.

(MORE)

PHIL (CONT'D)

She's just got to have a little rant. But don't worry about her.

He tosses the ball up in the air.

BERNADETTE

Wow.

Suddenly startled, Phil fumbles catching the ball as he spins to face her, wide-eyed surprise on his face. The ball bounces off of his desk, scattering a couple of framed photos and a pot of pens and pencils before hitting the floor.

PHIL

Oh crap.

(into headset)

Sorry, guys. I need to mute for a sec.

He taps at a button on the headset as he pulls it off and drops it on the desk.

PHIL (CONT'D)

What are you doing here? I thought you were off this morning!

BERNADETTE

Change of plan. What the fuck, Phil?

PHIL

Look.

(beat)

I'm sorry. I was just... you know how they are. I was trying to ease their minds a little.

BERNADETTE

From the scary systems developer?

PHIL

You are a little scary.

BERNADETTE

That's not funny.

PHIL

I'm sorry-

BERNADETTE

-I'm serious. Do you know how hard it is doing this job surrounded by cretins?

PHIL

Oh, come on, let's not-

He looks at her for a moment.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Does that include me?

BERNADETTE

Sometimes, yes. Particularly right now.

She takes a seat as Phil leans back in his chair.

PHIL

What are you doing here, Bernadette?

BERNADETTE

I told you. Change of plan. Had to take Dad to the hospital, so he didn't need the doctor's appointment, and-

PHIL

-no. I mean, what are you doing here, working here?

BERNADETTE

What do you mean?

PHIL

You're not happy here. You hate it.

BERNADETTE

I don't hate it. I just... wait, I see. You want me to quit.

PHIL

No, I don't. I-

BERNADETTE

-yeah, that would make life easier for you wouldn't it?

PHIL

Honestly? Short term? Yes, probably. Because you're a pain in the butt and you're constantly at me about changing things. But this place needs that and there's no-one better at this than you.

BERNADETTE

So why-

PHIL

-because, like I said. You're clearly not happy. I thought about promoting you. About giving you a raise.

BERNADETTE

That would be nice. And overdue.

PHIL

Yeah, ok. Whatever. I've had approval to do so.

BERNADETTE

Wow. Great.

PHIL

But... I still don't think that's what you want.

BERNADETTE

I'm fine. I'm just having to figure some stuff out, and I'm...I'm fine.

They sit in silence for a moment.

PHIL

Is your dad ok?

BERNADETTE

Huh? Yeah, he's fine. He's...

(beat)

Look, I need to get back to work.

PHIL

Ok...

She gets up and leaves.

26

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Bernadette gets back to her desk, sits down and opens her email inbox. She scrolls through, deleting some junk before one particular email makes her stop in her tracks.

BERNADETTE

Holy crap...

She opens the email.

ON THE SCREEN

Hi everyone,

Not all of you know me, but I just wanted to email everyone to say that today is my last day. I am finally realising my dream of become a blackjack dealer on an Indian reservation in America!

So if any of you happen to be in North Dakota anytime, stop by the Four Winds casino on the Black Elk reservation and say hi!

Wishing everyone the best as I set off on my grand adventure!!

Much Love,

Lauren

Bernadette stares at the screen for a moment and then begins typing a reply.

ON THE SCREEN

Hi Lauren,

Wow. This is one of the most amazing things I've ever heard. I'm gobsmacked. Good for you for getting the hell out of here. Good luck with everything!

Bernadette.

She reads the email back, sends it, and then sits, deep in thought for a moment, before she picks up a coffee cup from her desk, gets up and leaves.

27

INT. TUBE TRAIN - NIGHT

Bernadette is sitting in a mostly-empty tube train car. She has the brochures that Gemma gave her on her lap, and is reading one of them. After a moment her eyes begin to well with tears. She closes her eyes and tears spill onto her cheeks. She opens her eyes again, sighs shakily, and sobs. She then wipes the tears away, as she notices an ELDERLY MAN looking at her from the other side of the car, a few seats away. He's looking at her with concern.

ELDERLY MAN

Are you ok, my dear?

Bernadette smiles, and wipes her face some more.

BERNADETTE

Yes, thank you.

She sighs again, and begins to compose herself.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

I'll be fine. Bad morning. Work, you know.

ELDERLY MAN

I'm sorry to hear that. Here.

He brings out a pack of tissues and offers it to her.

BERNADETTE

Thank you so much.

She stands up, steps over to him, and takes the pack. She opens it, takes a tissue, and offers the pack back. The elderly man waves at her to keep it.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Thanks.

She returns to her seat.

ELDERLY MAN

Maybe you need a holiday.

He gestures at all the advertising for holiday deals that are plastered above the car windows.

Bernadette look up at the advertising and then back at the Elderly Man.

BERNADETTE

Huh, yeah. Maybe. Wish it was that easy.

ELDERLY MAN

It is that easy. You decide to do something you want to do. Then you do it.

BERNADETTE

I guess so.

The train car slows. Bernadette stands up.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

My stop.

She heads to the door.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Thank you again.

ELDERLY MAN

You're most welcome. Keep your chin
up, eh?

The train stops and the doors slide open. Bernadette smiles at the old man and nods before turning and leaving the train.

28 INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

Arthur is absent-mindedly noodling away on his guitar as a movie plays on the TV. After a few moments, Bernadette walks in.

ARTHUR

Hey! You're home early.

BERNADETTE

Yeah.

She flops down onto the sofa, dumping her bag on the table. The brochures spill out a little and Arthur glances at them.

ARTHUR

Quiet day then?

BERNADETTE

No. Just... I don't know, dad.

She sits up and leans forward, pausing a moment before pulling the brochures fully out of her bag. She places them in a stack on the coffee table.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Gemma gave these to me. They're
brochures. For, well...

She turns back to looking at the brochures.

ARTHUR

Uh huh.

BERNADETTE

She thinks-

ARTHUR

-yeah. I know.

BERNADETTE

You know?

ARTHUR

Yeah. Gemma called me about an hour ago. She was quite upset.

BERNADETTE

She was, huh?

He puts the guitar down on the stand next to his chair.

ARTHUR

Yeah. As were you, I understand.

BERNADETTE

Well... we did get into it a bit in the car.

ARTHUR

Yeah.

(beat)

Gemma is...she's...

BERNADETTE

Uptight. A pain the arse.

ARTHUR

This is true.

They both laugh.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

But we really did have a good talk. She opened up and, er...

He stops for a moment, finding the words.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

She had a hard time of it. With your mum.

BERNADETTE

We all did.

ARTHUR

Of course we did. But we both know how close she was to your mum-

He looks up at Bernadette.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

-not that you weren't. But, You know what I mean. She was always more her mother's daughter, and you were always more mine.

BERNADETTE

Yeah, I suppose.

ARTHUR

With you, it's always been easy. We're so alike, that I never had to try, you know? Your mother always had a connection with Gemma that I didn't.

BERNADETTE

I loved mum too.

ARTHUR

Of course you did. I just-

He swallows and gathers himself for a moment.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

It's just that, I hadn't realised how little I'd supported her when your mum died. You and me had each other, and I think she was left out in the cold a bit.

BERNADETTE

I do get that. But dad-

She holds up the brochures-

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

-you'll go insane in one of these places. And how is being cooped up in one of these homes going to fix your relationship with Gemma?

ARTHUR

I-

BERNADETTE

-she's got plenty of space at hers. Why can't you just move in with her? Not that I want you to go, of course...

ARTHUR

She did suggest that as an alternative. I said the home would be better.

BERNADETTE

That's crazy.

ARTHUR

No, living with Gemma and that husband of hers would be crazy. That would finish me off, to be honest.

Bernadette sighs, looks at the brochures in her hand.

BERNADETTE

I can't put you in one of these places, Dad.

ARTHUR

You're not doing it. I'm doing it. And with my health, you know. I don't want you to have to spend even more time taking care of me.

BERNADETTE

I thought you were fine?

ARTHUR

Well, I am. For now...

They sit for a moment.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

But this also isn't just about me, or me and Gemma. It's about you as well.

BERNADETTE

Why? What do you mean?

ARTHUR

What are you doing here?

BERNADETTE

I just...

She shrugs.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

...just didn't feel like being at work.

ARTHUR

Ok. That partly answers what I'm asking. But what I mean is, what are you doing here?

He gestures to the house as Bernadette frowns at him.

BERNADETTE

You're the second person who's asked me that today.

ARTHUR

Well it clearly needs answering.

BERNADETTE

How is this about me now? This is supposed to be about you and the big decision you're making to give up and, and-

ARTHUR

Bernadette, I want you to have a life.

BERNADETTE

What do you mean? I have a life. A perfectly good one.

ARTHUR

You're not happy. And I want you to get out there and be happy, to do some living.

(beat)

What do you want? What do you want to do?

Bernadette glares at him for a moment before she gets up.

BERNADETTE

I want out of this conversation, and to take a bath.

ARTHUR

Bern-

She gets up and storms out.

29

INT. BERNADETTE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Bernadette walks in. She's wearing a bathrobe and has a towel wrapped around her head. She closes the door, sits on the bed, and picks up her laptop. She opens it and logs in. We see on the laptop screen that she is looking at her work calendar. Various meetings and task are booked in. Bernadette sighs, closes the laptop, and puts it aside. She lies down and turns to her side. After a couple of beats, she closes her eyes.

30 INT. BERNADETTE'S BEDROOM - DAY

The next morning, and Bernadette is asleep in her bathrobe. Her phone, lying on the bed next to her, begins to vibrate as someone calls. Bernadette wakes up, she looks down at her bathrobe and sighs before she picks up the phone and answers.

BERNADETTE

Hello?

(beat)

What?

She looks at the phone screen, checking the time.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Shit. Yeah, I dunno. Slept through my alarm. I'll be in soon as I can.

She hangs up and hurriedly gets out of bed, steps over to her wardrobe, and begins pulling out clothes.

31 INT. LOUNGE - DAY

Arthur's chair is empty other than what looks like a note on the seat. The door opens and Bernadette walks in, now dressed for work. Seeing the note on the chair, she steps over, picks it up, and reads it.

NOTE

Bern,

I didn't want to wake you as I think you needed to sleep in. If that boss of yours doesn't like you going in late, I'll have words with him!

I'm sorry about yesterday, I didn't mean to upset you. I just want you to start doing something for yourself.

I'm off looking at a community home - the one over in Hampstead. See you later.

Dad.

She puts the note down on the coffee table and leaves.

32 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Bernadette strides through the lobby towards the barriers. She pulls out her ID card on its lanyard and swipes it through the barrier reader. Nothing happens. Frustrated, does it again, but slower. It fails again.

BERNADETTE

Dammit!

She angrily swipes it again, it gets caught and the corner of the card bends. Defeated, Bernadette's looks down at the floor as her shoulders slump. She then turns and walks over to where Brian is stood. He looks up as she approaches him.

BRIAN

Morning, B.

He checks his watch.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Just about morning, anyway!

BERNADETTE

Morning, Brian.

He glances at the bent ID card in her hand.

BRIAN

Yeah, that's probably not going to work.

He notices the serious look on her face.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Ok. Not funny, I guess...

He turns to swipe his own card to open the barrier next to him, and gestures for her to step through. Bernadette walks through and turns back to him.

BERNADETTE

Did someone ever come by to do that update for you.

BRIAN

No. I was about to say, but you look like you've had a hell of a day already.

BERNADETTE

I'll do it now for you.

She steps over to his desk.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Can you log in?

BRIAN

Of course.

He walks through the barrier, steps over to join her, and logs in to the computer. She bends to tap at the keyboard.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
You want the chair?

He pulls the chair in for her.

BERNADETTE
No.

She taps some more.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
It's done.

BRIAN
That's it?

BERNADETTE
Yeah, that's it.

BRIAN
Great. Thanks so much.

BERNADETTE
You're welcome. Can I use your phone?

BRIAN
Certainly.

She picks up the phone handset and dials.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
B, I know you're not exactly happy here. And I'm pretty sure you're not appreciated upstairs like you should be. But I'm grateful for what you do around here.

She smiles at him.

BERNADETTE
That's very sweet. Thanks, B.

BRIAN
You're welcome.

He looks up to see a couple of people waiting at the barrier, their cards held out.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Back to it. Thanks again, B.

He turns and steps over to help them. Bernadette waits as the phone rings.

33 INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY - LATER

Bernadette, now dressed more casually, is stuffing a hooded top into a large backpack. She closes it, picks it up off the bed, and leaves the room with it.

34 EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Bernadette steps out through the front door, the rucksack on her back. A pair of sunglasses on top of her head. In one hand is a suitcase. She places this on the ground and then turns to close and lock the door. She turns and looks up at the blue sky, smiling. She closes her eyes, enjoying the sun on her face for a couple of moments before she takes a deep breath, opens her eyes, and pulls the sunglasses down on to wear them. She take the handle of the suitcase, extends it and pulls it on its wheel as she walks down the path, turns, and heads up the street, pocketing her keys as she goes.

35 EXT. RETIREMENT COMMUNITY - DAY

A well-kept green lawn runs up towards a large house. Brightly-coloured flowers explode from flowerbeds dotted around the edges of the lawn and the front of the building. A signboard in the lawn reads "PENNINGFORTH RETIREMENT COMMUNITY".

36 INT. RETIREMENT COMMUNITY - DAY

Arthur, Gemma, and her husband MALCOLM, walk across the lobby led by a smartly-dressed middle-aged woman. The woman's name badge indicates that she is the MANAGER.

MANAGER

Well, that's the bulk of the tour.
What do you think so far?

MALCOLM

Oh, well I think it's fantastic! I reckon you'd be really happy here, Arthur. Don't you think, Gem?

GEMMA

Oh yes, absolutely! Honestly, I was thinking it would be quite different-

MANAGER

-that's often the case. But everyone who visits to take a look at our little community here finds themselves pleasantly surprised.

GEMMA

Yes! I was. I am! What do you think, dad?

ARTHUR

Yeah, very nice. Certainly nicer than any place I've ever lived in.

Gemma, Malcolm and the manager laugh at this.

MANAGER

Glad to hear it Mr. Halloran. Next I'd like to show you the recreational facilities - we have an outdoor heated pool!

GEMMA

Oh lovely!

The Manager begins to lead them off.

ARTHUR

Actually, I think I'd like to take a breather. Give these old pins a bit of a rest, you know.

GEMMA

Oh. Well, we could all take a break, I suppose.

She looks at The Manager, who is checking the time on her watch.

MANAGER

Well, I do have an intake in twenty minutes, but that gives us time for a little break. I could get some tea-

ARTHUR

No, no. Please, you lot carry on. I'll catch up. Or you can tell me all about it.

GEMMA

Oh, dad. You don't want to see the pool.

ARTHUR

If I move in here, which is looking likely-

The Manager, Gemma, and Malcolm all grin at each other happily.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

-I'll see it plenty then, won't I? Go on. I'm going to sit in one of these lovely wingback chairs here.

He ushers at them to get moving.

GEMMA

Ok, Dad. We'll be back in about..

She looks at the Manager.

MANAGER

Oh, we'll be ten mniutes or so.

GEMMA

Ok. See you in a bit, Dad.

She kisses his cheek, and then turns and walks off with the Manager and Malcolm. Arthur watches them go through a set of doors as they exit the lobby. He then sighs, puffing his cheeks as he blows out, before he walks over to a leather wingback chair in front of a fireplace. As he sits down, Bernadette enters through the front entrance. She stops and looks around before she spots Arthur.

BERNADETTE

Dad!

He turns to look in her direction.

ARTHUR

Oh, hey!

She walks over and sits down in the other wingback chair.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

I honestly didn't think you'd come.

BERNADETTE

Well, I made a decision. And I need to run with it before I talk myself out of it.

ARTHUR

Oh, ok. Well that's great...right?

BERNADETTE

Er... yeah. Don't know yet. Guess we'll see.

ARTHUR

Well, you just missed the tour, so-

BERNADETTE

Yeah, don't worry about it. Look, I understand what you were saying yesterday. I get it. And I really appreciate it. And honestly, I think that maybe it will be good for you to be somewhere like this.

ARTHUR

Do you? Huh. Well, it is nice here. I'll miss your place, but-

He looks around.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

-I could get used to it I suppose. Bit like a hotel really.

BERNADETTE

Yeah, right. But I don't know if you're quite ready for it just yet. Like, maybe you need to go somewhere to have a really good think about it, you know.

She pats the suitcase. Arthur looks down at it and then back up at her.

ARTHUR

You've brought my suitcase. I'm not moving in here, like, right now.

Bernadette smiles back at him.

37

INT. PHIL'S OFFICE - DAY

Phil walks into his office, carrying a cup of coffee. He sits down at his desk, puts the coffee down, and then unlock his computer. He then notices his phone's message light blinking. He picks up the handset and hits a button.

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)

You have one new message.

Phil hits the number one key and picks up his coffee, taking a sip.

VOICEMAIL

First new message received at
11:38am.

BERNADETTE (V.O.)

Hi Phil. It's Bernadette. Sorry I'm
late this morning. I overslept,
totally slept through my alarm.
Can't remember ever doing that...

(beat)

...anyway I'm not going to be
coming in. Well, actually I did,
I'm here right now, in the lobby.
But I'm not coming up. I've given
my ID card and laptop to security.

Phil pauses, the coffee cup halfway to his lips.

BERNADETTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I'm leaving now, and well, yeah.
I'm leaving. I'm done. I'll email
my resignation letter when I get
home in a little bit. So that;s it.
Thanks for giving me a little push.
You can be a bit of a shit... but
you're alright, really. Thank you.
Bye.

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)

End of message. To repeat the
message, press one. To delete,
press-

Phil replaces the handset, disconnecting the call. He puts
his coffee cup down and slowly leans back in his chair. After
a beat, a smile slowly appears on his face.

PHIL

About bloody time.

38

EXT. RETIREMENT COMMUNITY - DAY

We are looking at the front of the building again. We can see
through the windows into the lobby. Arthur and Bernadette are
nowhere to be seen - the chairs they were sitting in are now
empty. After several beats, Gemma, Malcolm and the Manager
appear, exiting from the doors they left through earlier.
They are chatting and smiling. Gemma glances over at the
wingback chairs and frowns as she notices that Arthur is no
longer there. She walks to the middle of the lobby and looks
around for him. Malcolm and the Manager join her. She says
something to them and then all three of them start walking
around, looking for Arthur.

Malcolm heads off down one of the hallways leading from the lobby, while the Manager walks over to the lobby desk, picks up the phone and begins speaking into it. Gemma looks around a little more and then walks over to the main doors and exits, walking towards us. She looks around, scanning the lawn and surrounding area.

GEMMA

Dad! Arthur!

We hear her phone beeping with a text message alert. She retrieved it from her handbag, unlocks it and checks the new message, frowning. Overhead we hear the sound of a plane flying far above.

39

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

We are looking towards the top of an escalator that leads up from the airport's main entrance area below. There are people moving back and forth with their luggage and pushing carts, kids in pushchairs etc.

Bernadette and Arthur appear as they reach the top of the escalator. Bernadette has her backpack strapped to her back, and Arthur is wheeling his suitcase. They step off of the elevator at the top and walk towards a shopping and dining area.

BERNADETTE

Can't we just get through security and eat there.

ARTHUR

Hang on. I just wanted to check something.

He takes a couple of steps and looks around, craning his neck. He then smiles broadly as he spots something.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

That's the one.

He walks off in the direction of whatever it is he's found.

BERNADETTE

Wait - hey!

She follows after him.

40 EXT. ANTONIO'S CAFE - DAY

An old-fashioned cafe. It has tables and chairs scattered around outside. There are more tables and chairs inside, where a bar curves along one side of the room. The cafe is reasonably busy, with patrons eating and drinking as several waiting staff move to and fro between the tables, the bar, and the kitchen doors.

Arthur stops at the entrance and looks around slowly, smiling and misty-eyed.

ARTHUR
It's still here.

BERNADETTE
What is?

ARTHUR
This place!

Bernadette looks around, not quite as taken with it.

BERNADETTE
What about it.

Arthur walks in.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Dad!

She follows after him.

41 INT. ANTONIO'S CAFE - DAY

Arthur deliberately heads over to a particular table in the back corner. He stops, releasing his suitcase, and then slowly, almost, reverently sits down on one of the chairs.

BERNADETTE
Dad, we've got to get going.

ARTHUR
This is where your mum and I sat.

He looks up at Bernadette, tears in his eyes.

BERNADETTE
When?

ARTHUR
About thirty-two years ago.

Bernadette takes it in, looking around with a new insight.

BERNADETTE

Wow.

She sits down as well, easing her backpack off and placing it on the floor. Arthur wipes at his eyes.

ARTHUR

We'd been off backpacking for, oh... a couple of years. Well, about two-and-a half in the end, actually. It was supposed to be a year, but we'd been having such a great time we extended it.

BERNADETTE

I had no idea you and mum did that.

ARTHUR

Yeah. Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Fiji, Bali. It was quite something. I think we would have kept going forever if we could.

He smiles again, a tear spilling out of one eye and down his cheek.

BERNADETTE

Oh, dad. I'm sorry.

He picks up a napkin and dabs at his eyes.

ARTHUR

Oh no, don't be sorry. Wonderful memories.

Bernadette smiles back at him.

BERNADETTE

How did you pay for it?

ARTHUR

Well, at first we had savings. Your mum was amazing with that. She worked a few jobs to save up her half. I say half, she probably put in well over that to be honest. Very good with money she was.

He points at Bernadette.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

That's something you definitely got from her.

He sits back.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

I worked ridiculous hours at the pub - you remember the Kings Arms down Clapham way?

BERNADETTE

Uncle Bill's place?

ARTHUR

Not then, of course, but yeah he did own it later. Because of Elaine we really made that money last. But eventually had to pick up work. Fruit-picking, that sort of thing. But the best money we made - not the most, but the best, the most enjoyable - was when we'd busk, and play sets at bars on our travels. I'd play guitar, and your mum would sing.

BERNADETTE

Wait, what? Mum sang?

ARTHUR

Oh yeah. Beautiful voice she had.

(beat)

Anyway, eventually it was time to come home. We got back here, penniless. We'd not spoken to your grandparents the whole time we were away, although your mum made sure to write to them every few weeks. So we weren't sure about calling them to come get us. So we called Bill. Of course, we knew it would take him a while, you know what your uncle was like. While we were waiting they had an open mic night here.

He nods over Bernadette's shoulder. Bernadette turns and sees the small stage off to one side.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

We made just enough money to get a couple of cups of coffee and a sandwich.

He looks at Bernadette.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Patrons of this place weren't as appreciative of your mum's talents. Bit tight with the coins you know.

(beat)

Anyway. We sat right here at this table, drinking our coffee, munching our BLTs, and just feeling so happy.

BERNADETTE

Why did you stop travelling? Why did you come home?

ARTHUR

Oh, that was all your fault.

He grins at her. She frowns back at him.

BERNADETTE

My-

She realises what he means.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

-oh! Thirty-two years ago.

ARTHUR

Yep. You were almost called Tavua.

BERNADETTE

Tavua? Why?

ARTHUR

It's a town in Fiji where we worked out... well, you know.

BERNADETTE

Oh, right!

She thinks for a moment.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Eww, thanks for that.

Arthur laughs as a SERVER stops by.

SERVER

Hi there. My name is Brad and I'll be your server today. Can I get you started with some drinks?

ARTHUR

Actually, Brad, we've got a plane to catch.

BRAD

Oh, ok. Well, maybe some coffee to go?

BERNADETTE

That would be great, Brad. Just two large coffees to go please.

BRAD

No problem.

He scribbles in his notepad, then tears the receipt off and places it on the table before heading off. We hear Bernadette's phone ringing. She pulls it out of her backpack, looks at the screen, then looks up at Arthur.

BERNADETTE

Gemma. Again.

ARTHUR

We have to answer at some point.

BERNADETTE

I just can't have her shouting at me.

ARTHUR

I'm just glad she's calling you and not me.

BERNADETTE

Why isn't she calling you?

ARTHUR

Well, she probably has been. But I was smart enough to turn my phone off.

Bernadette glares at him.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Hey, you're the one who kidnapped me!

BERNADETTE

I got you that phone for a reason.

ARTHUR

Yeah, for emergencies. And you're with me, so it's fine.

BERNADETTE

Funny.

She puts her phone down on the table.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

I'm gonna use the bathroom before
we leave.

She gets up and heads towards the bathroom door. Arthur takes his own phone out, and switches it on. It starts ringing. Arthur hesitates a moment and then answers it.

ARTHUR

Gemma, hi-

(beat)

Yeah, I know.

(beat)

I'm sorry. She's sorry too.

(beat)

Er, well-

(beat)

-yes, fine. I'm sorry he had to
cancel an important meeting to look
at the home.

(beat)

We're just taking a little trip.
One last trip between two
housemates, I guess. OK?

(beat)

I haven't. But I will.

(beat)

Yes, I will tell her, and I've got
the meds you picked up for me. I'll
be fine. We're not exactly trekking
the Sahara!

(beat)

I don't actually know yet. She's
surprising me. Look, I've got to
go, we've got a plane to catch.

(beat)

Yea, a plane! No I didn't say we
were staying in the UK. I... my
battery's dying. 'bye, love!

He hangs up.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Bloody hell.

He picks up the receipt, takes out his wallet, and puts down some cash as Bernadette gets back to the table just as Brad brings their coffees by. He sets them down and then takes the receipt and money.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Keep the change, Brad.

BRAD
Thank you! Have a great flight.

Brad leaves.

ARTHUR
That was quick.

BERNADETTE
Yeah, the bathroom's out of order,
so I'll have to use the one
downstairs.

ARTHUR
Ok. Let's get going then.

They stand up and pick up their baggage and coffees. Arthur lovingly pats the table and has a last look around at the room.

BERNADETTE
You ok, Dad?

ARTHUR
Yeah. I am.

BERNADETTE
Good, because I'm about to burst.

Arthur laughs and they leave the cafe.

42 INT. AIRPORT DEPARTURE LOUNGE GATE - DAY

The seats surrounding the gate are mostly full. Arthur and Bernadette appear as they approach. They negotiate their way around people's legs and find two seats together. They sit down, placing their luggage on the floor in front of them.

ARTHUR
I think that every time I've flown,
I'm always the one they pick out
for a detailed luggage check.

BERNADETTE
Whenever that happens to someone,
that someone always says that.

ARTHUR
It's true for me though! Must be
the Irish last name.

BERNADETTE

I was fine.

ARTHUR

Good point.

He leans back, yawning.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

That coffee didn't do much for me.

BERNADETTE

There'll be plenty of coffee on the plane and where we're going.

ARTHUR

Yeah! America, eh? Can't believe I'm finally going to have a proper cup of coffee in a proper American diner!

BERNADETTE

Glad you're excited!

ARTHUR

I am! Me and your mum never made it to America.

BERNADETTE

Really? All that travelling and you never went there?

ARTHUR

We'd always wanted to. We always said we'd go to Nashville and Chicago someday. Among other places. But those two, the music you know?

BERNADETTE

Yeah, for sure. Well, we're flying nowhere near either, but I'm sure we can make to them anyway.

ARTHUR

Yeah, where is it we're flying into again?

BERNADETTE

Fargo. Hector International airport to be exact.

She checks through her phone

(MORE)

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

We'll be there for a couple of nights, then pick up a hire car for to drive to this casino resort.

ARTHUR

Huh. A casino resort, eh?

BERNADETTE

Yeah.

ARTHUR

Interesting choice for you.

BERNADETTE

Why? I still remember all those card games gran would play with me and Gemma on those holidays to Seaford.

ARTHUR

Yeah, but rummy and newmarket aren't exactly what they'll be playing in a casino. But don't worry, your old man will teach you how to play poker.

BERNADETTE

Great.

ARTHUR

But seriously, what made you pick there? If you wanted a casino, there's always Vegas. That's, you know, the big place to go.

BERNADETTE

I didn't pick it because I wanted a casino. And Vegas sounds vile anyway.

ARTHUR

Can't argue with that. So, why?

Bernadette doesn't answer for a moment, and just goes through her backpack.

BERNADETTE

Where are my earphones? I'll need them on the plane.

ARTHUR

Bern?

BERNADETTE
 Someone I know is there. Someone I
 used to work with.

ARTHUR
 Oh. Cool.

He watches her for a moment. She continues to rummage around
 her backpack and then looks up at him.

BERNADETTE
 What?

ARTHUR
 A bloke? Like, you know...

BERNADETTE
 No! Not a bloke. A woman.

She goes back to her search.

ARTHUR
 Oh, right. Fair enough. So what's
 her name?

BERNADETTE
 Lauren.

She stops and looks at him again.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
 It's not like that.

ARTHUR
 Ok. So this friend-

BERNADETTE
 -Lauren.

ARTHUR
 Lauren. She's on holiday there?

BERNADETTE
 She moved there.

ARTHUR
 Wow. Recently?

BERNADETTE
 A few days ago, yeah.

ARTHUR
 I see.
 (beat)
 (MORE)

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Moving from London to North Dakota.
That's quite something.

Bernadette finds her earphones.

BERNADETTE
Oh, good!

She pulls them out.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Yeah, well. I was really impressed.
And having thought about where I
want to go, seeing her leaving
email in which she said anyone can
visit her anytime, I just thought
why not do that.

ARTHUR
Yeah, ok. Well, I want to go to
Nashville and Chicago, like I said.
But always happy to go somewhere
I'd not even thought of seeing.

BERNADETTE
You think it's crazy?

ARTHUR
A little. But adventuring should
be.

He puts and arm around her shoulders.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Something inspired you, and you
went for it. And I'm so honoured
that you wanted to bring me along
for the ride. He kisses her head.

BERNADETTE
Thanks, dad.

An AIRLINE EMPLOYEE'S voice crackles over the PA system.

AIRLINE EMPLOYEE
Ladies and gentlemen, we are now
ready to begin boarding sections B
rows thirty-two to forty-eight. If
you have seats for rows thirty-two
to forty-eight, please line up
ready for boarding, thank you.

BERNADETTE
That's us.

ARTHUR

Excellent.

They gather their belongings and then join the line. Before long they have had their tickets and passports checked and head to the entrance to the jetway.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

America here we come. Yee-ha!

BERNADETTE

Yes, dad.

They turn the corner and disappear from view as they head down the jetway.