

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND - PRESENT DAY.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET. EVENING.

JOE, sixteen, good-looking with closely cropped hair, charges along a street with HEALY, a heavy muscular boy, also sixteen. Healy beckons Joe to hurry up.

HEALY

Joe for fucks sake your
old man sounded really
worried.

JOE

Well how come he phoned
you?

HEALY

He couldn't get through
to you could he. Come
on.

They tear past DAVID BRENNAN, also sixteen. David's a skinny, awkward looking kid with unkept hair. David crouches on the kerb reciting song lyrics under his breath.

DAVID

The wheels on the bus go round and
round, round and round, round and
round..

INT. JOE'S HOUSE. EVENING.

Joe hurriedly opens his front door. He anxiously stumbles into the front room. A room full of people greet him all yelling surprise and happy birthday. A banner reading 'Happy 16th Joe' hangs on the wall. Joe grins.

JOE

Fuck me.

Healy puts his arm round Joe and shakes his hand.

HEALY

Happy Birthday Joey. Fucking
surprise hey. I'll be down in a
sec mate, I'm dying for a slash.

Joe walks through the crowd of people, the boys shake his hand and the girls kiss him on the cheek. Everyone's eager to say hello and happy birthday.

ALEX, a hard faced kid wearing a leather jacket, stands with his arm around his girlfriend AMY. Amy talks to TOM, a wiry framed, streetwise charmer who talks a million miles an hour. Alex's eyes follow Healy up the stairs.

ALEX

I'll be back in a minute
sweetheart.

AMY

Don't start nothing
Alex.

ALEX

I'll be back in a
minute.

Alex kisses Amy then follows Healy up the stairs. Amy shrugs and resumes her conversation with Tom.

Joe files past Tom. Tom mouths Happy Birthday to him. Joe glances at Amy and winks knowingly at Tom.

Joe reaches the corner of the room. He hugs his Dad, CHARLIE, a good-looking man in his mid forties.

CHARLIE

Happy Birthday Joe.

JOE

Where's Mum?

CHARLIE

Night shift son. She couldn't get
out of it.

JIMMY, mid twenties, pats Joe's head and hands him a beer. Jimmy's hair, like Joe's, is closely cropped. He has a cocky and disarming smile. He's good-looking but his skin is worn and thick. He has a scar above his eye that accentuates his hard face and suggests he's been in his fair share of scrapes. In short, Jimmy is not a man to cross. Jimmy shouts out to the crowd.

JIMMY

Everyone to my little brother Joe.
Happy Birthday.

Everyone choruses Happy Birthday in response.

Joe, Jimmy and Charlie clink glasses, then down their beers in sync. Joe struggles to keep up, but eventually sees off his beer.

CHARLIE

You're drinkin with the big boys
now son. Not your mates. Gotta
learn to keep up!

Joe beams at his Dad.

LAYLA, an attractive blonde girl, leans against a wall, sipping a beer. She stands by herself. Joe catches her eye. She returns his stare and smiles.

Jimmy hands Joe another beer.

JIMMY

Who's that?

JOE

New girl at school.

NATALIE, a bubbly, drunk girl dressed in next to nothing brushes past and grabs Joe's hand.

NATALIE

Come with me Joe.

Joe smiles at his Dad and his brother.

NATALIE

Joe, Come on!

Natalie leads Joe out of the front room and up the stairs.

INT. STAIRWAY - EVENING.

Joe sees Healy dart quickly into a room. The door remains open at a slight angle. Joe looks puzzled before he is yanked into his bedroom by Natalie.

INT. JOE'S BEDROOM. EVENING.

Natalie pushes Joe onto his bed. She smiles, unzips his trousers and goes down on him. Joe still looks confused, his attention focused on what he just saw. Slowly his face relaxes, turns to pleasure and then relief.

Natalie smiles.

NATALIE
Happy Birthday Joe.

Natalie walks out the room.

Joe downs his beer, zips up his trousers and makes his way out of his room and down the stairs.

INT. STAIRWAY. EVENING.

Alex hurtles down the stairs, rushing past Joe. Joe follows him back into the front room where the party is in full flow.

INT. FRONT ROOM. EVENING.

Alex makes a beeline for Tom and Amy who are still in conversation. Alex pushes Tom and squares up to him.

ALEX
Get the fuck away from my
girlfriend.

Tom pushes Alex back.

TOM
Fuck off.

Alex pulls a knife and directs it at Tom. Tom backs away.

Jimmy steps in and pulls Alex's hands behind his back. Jimmy grabs the knife, drags Alex towards the door and lobs him outside.

JIMMY
I don't want to see you anywhere
near me again. Got that sunshine?

Jimmy slams the door.

JIMMY
Fucking kids can't hold their
drink.

Joe looks over at Healy who loiters at the bottom of the stairs. Healy puts up his hands and gives Joe an 'I haven't got a clue' look.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET. EVENING.

Alex picks himself up and walks away down the street. David Brennan watches him. Alex yells at him.

ALEX

What the fuck are you lookin at?

David continues to recite lyrics under his breath.

DAVID

Round and round, round and round,
round and round..

INT. SCHOOL BATHROOM. DAY.

Joe paces around the bathroom. He lights a cigarette and put another one behind his ear. He takes a couple of drags and then stubs it out.

Joe splashes water on his face and runs his hands over his closely cropped hair. He smiles into the mirror. He walks out of the bathroom.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY. DAY.

Joe takes a look around and strides towards the fire alarm. He takes the hammer and smashes the glass. The loud, shrill ring of the alarm reverberates around the school.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD. DAY.

Lines of kids assemble outside as the fire alarm continues to ring. Teachers stand in front of each line and call attendance.

Joe struts past each line, hurriedly scanning every individual. He spots who he's looking for and heads towards her.

Joe smiles at Layla, she wears a short skirt and has wavy long hair. She smiles back. Joe whispers in her ear. Layla smiles again. Joe takes her hand and they walk briskly away from the yard.

EXT. FIELD. DAY.

Joe and Layla squat under some trees in a field overlooking the school. Layla takes a final drag of the joint they've been smoking and stubs it into the ground.

JOE

So you been here a month now?

LAYLA

More or less.

JOE

Must be different from London?

LAYLA

Totally. (Pause) I didn't see a fire.

JOE

No?

LAYLA

Funny the alarm going off.

Joe smiles, deliberately giving himself away.

JOE

Must've been a drill.

Layla smiles back, letting Joe know she's aware of his trick.

LAYLA

Must've been.

There is an awkward silence. Joe doesn't let it hang for long. He leans in towards Layla and kisses her. Layla responds and pulls Joe closer towards her. Joe doesn't need a second invitation. He moves on top of Layla and starts stroking her body.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR. DAY

Layla and Joe walk along the corridor. Their shirts are untucked and their ties loose. David Brennan says hi to Layla.

DAVID

Hi Layla.

LAYLA

Alright David.

David walks past promptly.

JOE

You know David Brennan?

LAYLA

Yea, from London. We were neighbours when we were kids.

JOE

Are you friends?

LAYLA

All he does is say hello, that's
it. Why?

JOE

No reason. He's just kind of
weird.

Layla stops outside a classroom.

LAYLA

So what now Joe?

JOE

How'd you mean?

LAYLA

All the girls say you're a ladies
man, that you don't stick around
long. So, I mean, you can take me
out tonight for a drink and no
hard feelings or you can take me
out as your girlfriend.

Layla kisses Joe.

LAYLA (CONT)

Your call.

INT. CLASSROOM. DAY.

Joe swaggers into class. He sits down at the back, next to
Tom and Healy.

TOM

So did you?

JOE

Did I what?

TOM

Did you do the business?

JOE

Don't know what you mean.

TOM

Did you get on Layla?

JOE

I'm not saying.

TOM

Fuck off you're not saying.

HEALY

He can't have done. He'd say if he had.

JOE

Think what you like boys.

TOM

No mate Joey did the business. He's got that look in his eyes.

Joe grins and changes the subject.

JOE

So what you gonna do about Alex?

TOM

He mugged me right off mate. In front of Amy too.

JOE

He wouldn't have used it.

HEALY

Doesn't matter mate. Can't let it go.

JOE

How'd you mean?

HEALY

He plays basketball on his own after school. Tommy's gonna do him over then. I'm going to back him up.

TOM

You in Joe?

JOE

You sure boys?

HEALY

He pulled a knife mate. Can't let it go.

JOE

Alright then boys, I'll be there.

INT. LAYLA'S HOUSE. DAY.

Layla walks in the front door. She heads into the kitchen. Layla's Mum, ANGELA pops two headache pills into her mouth and drains a glass of water. Layla helps herself to some juice from the fridge.

LAYLA

You alright?

ANGELA

Just a headache sweetheart, that's all.

LAYLA

Where's Dad?

ANGELA

He's gone for a sunbed.

LAYLA

But it's sunny out.

ANGELA

He was still feeling a bit gloomy. It might perk him up.

LAYLA

Mum, David Brennan's at my school.

ANGELA

David Brennan from home?

LAYLA

Yea.

ANGELA

David Brennan who...

LAYLA

Yea.

ANGELA

I didn't even know. Poor Linda. Poor, poor Linda. I don't know how she ever coped.

Angela pops another pill in her mouth.

LAYLA

Mum?

ANGELA

Just for the headache honey, you know.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET. DAY.

David, bag strapped to both shoulders, trousers too short, walks home from school. He mutters under his breath to himself.

DAVID

When they kick at your front door.
How you gonna come. With your
hands on your head or on the
trigger of your gun...

A football bounces against David's head. Three kids slightly younger than him laugh hysterically. They are following David home, kicking their football at him.

DAVID

When the law break in, how you
gonna go, shot down on the
pavement or waiting in death row...

The football flies past David's head. The shortest of the three kids shouts

SHORT KID

You'd better start running
Brennan. One, two, three, go!

David sprints away. The kids gain on him with every step. He turns into his front garden and opens his front door.

INT. BRENNAN HOUSE. DAY.

David runs up to his bedroom.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM. DAY.

David slams his door and leans back against it.

DAVID

You can crush us and bruise us.
You can even shoot us. But you'll
have to answer to... oh the guns of
Brixton.

EXT. BRENNAN HOUSE. DAY.

The kids walk away from the house laughing. One throws a Coke can at the window.

INT. BRENNAN LIVING ROOM. DAY.

Copyright 2005 Mike Walden -- All Rights Reserved

For the complete script please contact Jennifer Brooks at
info@filmmakers.com