



garden, 1975, Hearts and Minds of Gold award  
when I called Noakes a prick, live on air.

FX \_\_\_\_\_ SOMEWHERE A PARTY STARTS (UNDER).

PAUL HENRY

Introduced on the show four months earlier as the world's youngest myrmecologist at only twelve years of age, Noakes peering into my aquarium of *Eciton burchelli*, the beaver ant and points to one of thousands of workers and says 'What's his name, Paul?' They all laugh, but I don't. I've heard that joke before, it's not funny. I say 'Her.' 'Whassat, Paul?' 'Her name.' 'No, his name.' More laughter, but not quite as confident. 'It's a she.' Kindly voice 'No, the queen's a she, Paul; that's a worker.' 'All ants are female except –' 'Well it doesn't matter, does it –' and off he goes talking to camera but yes it does, it does matter John, it does matter very much when you've just called me a liar in front of twelve million people, in front of everyone I know, in front of my entire school, in front the entire myrmecologist community, it does matter when I'm right and you're wrong and you know I'm right and I know you know I'm right and you know I know you know I'm right but you still use your celebrity status to cover up your blunder, your ignorance and act like you know best when you're on my territory, the one thing I know and have over all the other screaming little shits in the playground.

FX MOVES TO WINDOW. AGAINST THE GLASS.

PAUL: Four months later I'm at the Hearts and Minds of Gold award, in the Blue Peter garden along with a swimmer, a girl who saved a dog and a bald kid in a wheelchair and I see you there, coming down the line, genial, relaxed, loved by the world, and I wait, and I wait, and I wait, and there you are, handing me a medal asking me if I'd like to say anything and I say 'Yes John. A; all ants are female except the males who live only long enough to fertilise the queen, then die.' Slight pause. Noakes is a tad unsure. 'And B; you're a prick.'

FX WINDOW OPENING, SOUNDS FLOODING IN.

PAUL HENRY TURN THAT DOWN, YOU BLOODY REPTILES!

FX WINDOW CLOSING.

PAUL HENRY And the second? The second time? The second time is about to happen any minute now.

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SCENE 2 – VINNIE’S BEDROOM

FX A BOMB FALLING, MASSIVE EXPLOSION.

FX JETS ROARING OVERHEAD AND THE  
DISTANT CRACKLE OF SPORADIC GUNFIRE  
(UNDER)

VINNIE ... extremely... extremely close, the situation is, it's chaos here. F16's overhead as you can probably hear, there are Marines to my right, the ten 58<sup>th</sup>, laying down a suppressing fire, though to be honest it's extremely difficult to tell the difference between civilians and civilian militia, and I can see a body, 10, 15 feet away, I can't tell whether it's male, it's female, it looks young but...

FX ANOTHER HUGE EXPLOSION.

VINNIE It's... it's chaos here, it's madness, the madness of war, it's mental, it's a mental war, the mental war, the mentalness of war, but it's my duty no matter how terrified, no matter what the personal danger

SARAH (MUFFLED, UNDER) Vinnie?

VINNIE because, this is the job, it comes with the, and I will tell what's happening here, the body

SARAH (MUFFLED, UNDER) Vinnie?

VINNIE the body, a girl, I think a young girl

SARAH (MUFFLED, UNDER) Vinnie? She's got her door open...

VINNIE an old man, yes, it's a wise old man, a blood  
stained book in what's left of his

SARAH (MUFFLED, UNDER) That one opposite.

VINNIE No fingers, no thumb, yet somehow still clinging

SARAH (MUFFLED, UNDER) She's got her door open again and...

FX CD TURNED OFF. WAR SOUNDS STOP.

FX DISTANT PARTY (UNDER). DOOR OPENING

SARAH (SLIGHTLY SLURRED) You doing your thing?

VINNIE Yeah

SARAH Up here doing your thing?

VINNIE Yeah

SARAH

Yeah.

Don't want me disturbing you.

She's got her door open again, Vinnie.

That one opposite. Look, two along from the party, look, second floor, she's got her front door open and her little one'll get out on the...

Why don't you ask if you can join them.

VINNIE

Mum.

SARAH

- party there, get some friends, you should have –

VINNIE

Mum!

PAUL HENRY (SHOUTING FROM NEXT DOOR)     FILTHY ANIMALS!

SARAH

He's at it again. Next door. Eh?

D'you want a drink? Drinkie with your mum?

You gonna come and watch telly with – (SHE  
BEGINS TO CRY QUIETLY)

VINNIE

Mum.

FX

DOOR CLOSING. CD BEING TURNED BACK  
ON. MASSIVE EXPLOSION.

SCENE 3 – PAUL’S FLAT

FX \_\_\_\_\_ DISTANT PARTY

PAUL HENRY                      I don’t allow people to screw me. I’m not  
vindictive, but I remember. I don’t let them win.

FX \_\_\_\_\_ OPENING WINDOW AGAIN.

Look at it. The U bend she used to call this  
place. Because the block is in the shape of a U.  
If you look at it from the air. ‘Five floors of toilet’  
she’d say (SLIGHT LAUGH) She meant it funny,  
not nasty.

FX \_\_\_\_\_ CLOSING WINDOW. MOVING AROUND AND  
SETTING UP – SPRAYS AND WIPES SIDE OF  
GLASS TANKS.







LOUISE

This is just, just gonna, to sponge on the water.

There.

How's that?

Nice? yeah?

Lovely hair.

You used to say mine was like Poppet's coat.

Probably have their barbecue set up out the back.

Nice sunny day like today.

(SLIGHT LAUGH). 'Great hair for a dog,' you'd say 'not for a girl'.

S'that alright? Not going in your eyes?

Didn't invite me. Went to school with her daughter, but still.

'Member her barking to get out? And you said 'Don't you let that dog out'. I did anyway. You called me pathetic.

Just a little shampoo, then. I'll rub it in my hands because that'll be warmer.

Pathetic, you said. And you went out to find her and she'd been hit by a car. D'you remember that mum? And you brought her home. And I was in bed crying. And you lay her down at the end of my bed. And she was screaming. And bleeding. And you said 'you see what you've done'.  
Contd over .../

LOUISE:

Just massage this in now.

And you left her there. On my bed. And you  
taped up her jaw to stop her screaming. And I  
watched.

Not too cold?





SCENE 6 - PARTY

FX IN THE PARTY, LAUGHING MUSIC (UNDER)

ADE (V/O)

Hello, how are you?

Fine thank you, I'm fine.

How are you enjoying the barbecue?

Great, I'm having a great time.

That's good. I just wonder because you're standing here on your own, staring at the television set.

Well, I'm watching a bit of television.

In the middle of a party?

Well, it's the Superman film.

I just thought maybe you were staring at that television set because no-one was talking to you.

I'm thinking about the bit at the end when Superman flies around the world and turns time backwards.

I thought maybe you were paralysed with fear.

I'm imagining what would happen to the bullet in my son's brain if I could do this.

I thought maybe you were just terrified.

I imagine time going backwards. I can see the pieces of grey flesh filling out the furrow made by the bullet in my son's brain.           Contd over .../





SCENE 7 – VINNIE’S BEDROOM

FX DISTANT PARTY (UNDER). DOOR KNOCKS.

SARAH (OUTSIDE DOOR) Vinnie?

FX WINDOW CLOSING, PARTY MUFFLED  
(UNDER)

VINNIE What?

SARAH (OUTSIDE DOOR) Can I come in?

VINNIE No.

FX DOOR OPENING.

SARAH Vinnie?

VINNIE What?

SARAH (BEAT) Good news. I called them, the party I  
called them and –

VINNIE You did what?



**SCENE 8a – PAUL’S FLAT (INTERCUTTING SCENES)**

**8c. VINNIE'S BEDROOM**

SARAH (OUTSIDE DOOR) Her baby's just crawled out her door. Vinnie?

VINNIE Mum!

**FX WINDOW OPENING.**

**8d. PAUL'S FLAT**

PAUL HENRY Her babies just... Left her door open, her, baby's just... I mean I can't... I've got... I can't... I'm busy. I'm busy!

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Scene 10 – PARTY

FX

PARTY FROM INSIDE (UNDER), SOUND OF  
RUSH OF AIR AS IF FLYING OVER EARTH.

ADE:

They can't bear to talk to you

But I don't stop there because time is going

backwards and I am in this man's brain, in his

brain, yes, I trace the path of my son's death into

the brain of this man.

They can't even look at you.

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SCENE 11 – LOUISE’S FLAT

FX CLOSE UP BREATHING, INCREASINGLY AGITATED. THE PARTY. WASHING HAIR (ALL UNDER)

LOUISE Don't worry about the baby. Be fine.  
I'm going to towel this now.

FX LOUISE VIGOROUSLY TOWELLING HER MOTHER’S HEAD.

D’you remember coming back from Auntie Nora’s in Cardiff? And we stayed at that motel because you were scared to drive in the rain? And you we’re just talking and taking and talking and I held my breath in case you stopped, I didn’t want you to stop. And there was only one bed and we slept together in that bed, and I was curled up against you and I pretended to be asleep and you kissed me on the head. D’you remember?

FX FINISHES TOWELLING.

Now, this is colour so it might sting.

You okay?

Don't worry about the baby, mum.

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PAUL HENRY

There are two creatures on this earth that war.

Two species in all of creation that destroy their

own kind en masse. Man and ants.

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**SCENE 14 - PARTY**

SCENE 15 – PAUL’S FLAT

PAUL HENRY

That baby is not my responsibility. This is important. What’s happening in here...

FX

WINDOW CLOSING. POLAROID PHOTOS

Nests sprang up around me the first few years,  
aquariums everywhere, my freedom, and I knew

PAUL HENRY

yes come in, come in, live with me, I'm sorry, let's  
forget what happened, and in the last few years, in



**16c. PAUL'S FLAT**







PAUL HENRY

... I can't, they're, they're...

SCENE 18 – VINNIE’S KITCHEN

FX KISSING, PASSIONATE AND CLUMSY,  
MOVEMENT AS A TABLE IS KNOCKED AND  
SOMETHING ON IT ROLLS.

VINNIE (THROUGH KISSING) Shit.

LOUISE What?

VINNIE No, it's...

LOUISE What?

VINNIE Nothing.

FX THEY CARRY ON. SUDDENLY IT STOPS.  
BREATHING. PAUSE.

VINNIE What?

LOUISE Nothing.

VINNIE You alright?

LOUISE Course I'm alright.

VINNIE (BEAT) Have I done something?

LOUISE No.

VINNIE Louise –

LOUISE You were going to make me some tea.

VINNIE Yeah. Yeah, I'll –

FX MOVEMENT. TEA MAKING SOUNDS (UNDER)

VINNIE Louise, are you al-

LOUISE Are there still many people down there?

VINNIE What? No. Yes: one. Just one. That bloke  
who's boy got killed in Iraq. He's just standing  
there, staring.

LOUISE What about the ambulance?

VINNIE Gone.

(PAUSE) Dunno why they bother putting it in an  
ambulance. Seems a bit silly.

LOUISE Can't just chuck it in a bin.

VINNIE You alright?

LOUISE I'm fine.

VINNIE Sorry.

LOUISE What about?

VINNIE You know, for... for kissing you.

LOUISE I kissed you.

VINNIE Doesn't seem right, does it.

LOUISE No.

VINNIE But it feels different. Now.

LOUISE It does.

VINNIE That's not why I spoke to you.

LOUISE I know.

VINNIE I wasn't trying to, using something like that to –

LOUISE I kissed you.

VINNIE (BEAT) There was a lot of people.

LOUISE There was.

VINNIE Probably that barbecue.

LOUISE You weren't invited?

VINNIE D'you take sugar?

LOUISE Two small ones.

VINNIE I've seen you around. On the estate. I don't mean, I mean I haven't been watching you or anything.

LOUISE And what did you think?

VINNIE What?

LOUISE When you saw me around?

VINNIE I thought you was... nice.

LOUISE 'Nice'?

FX HANDS HER THE TEA. SITS DOWN.

VINNIE In your own world.

LOUISE How old are you?

VINNIE Seventeen.

LOUISE I'm twenty-eight.

I didn't want... I didn't want to go back home yet.

VINNIE No, it's nice.

FX HE GIGGLES. SLIGHT LAUGH FROM HER.

VINNIE That's bad though, innit. After something like that.

LOUISE I spose so.

VINNIE D'you wanna see me again?

LOUISE (SLIGHT 7JKdT?W:LcqA-9'q ac. LmT i





LOUISE

You watched it?

VINNIE

Yeah, but no, I couldn't've –

LOUISE

I'm just asking.





ADE

Yes.

(PAUSE) They won't serve me in the Mitre!

Fifteen years I've been going in there and they won't bloody well serve me. I told them about the shock, I've had a shock. Stupid bastards. Stupid fat bastard. They've got no sense of humour. What's the point if you haven't got a sense of humour? A tiny joke. Fifteen years of my business and I'm barred. I said 'What about the shock?' Fat bastard says 'You're barred and you're staying barred.'

ADE

I should –

SARAH

Don't go.

ADE

What?

SARAH

Because I called his boy a mong? Not nasty. It

ADE I think I've been here long –

SARAH Please don't go, fifteen years, a little joke, what am I s'posed to now? When do I talk to people? Where do I sit down for a laugh, for a bit of a laugh?

ADE Really, I have to –

SARAH You watched it fall.

ADE (BEAT) What?

SARAH I shouted at you. I was shouting to you, I was screaming to you to do something.

ADE I didn't –

SARAH You did, I shouted at you. Running but I was too far, so I shouted at you.

ADE I didn't watch...

SARAH What did you do then?

ADE

I-

SARAH                      What?

ADE                         I-I was.

SARAH                      What?

ADE                         In my own world, I –

SARAH                      In your own world?

ADE                         I know, but –

SARAH                      What did you think when you saw me screaming?

ADE                         I don't know, I thought –

SARAH                      In your own world? That baby's dead! I tried to  
stop it, I wanted to stop it, I couldn't move fast  
enough, I was screaming, so I was screaming at  
you and I thought you'd, I thought you'd, I thought  
you'd...                      contd over .../







LOUISE

In wars.

VINNIE

Yeah, but you're respected.

LOUISE

Are you not respected now?

LOUISE                    It's dead.

VINNIE                    (BEAT) Yeah.

LOUISE                    All that blood.

VINNIE                    There was a lot of blood.

LOUISE                    It's dead, and we're here.

VINNIE                    We are.

LOUISE                    I should've... I shouldn't've kissed you.

VINNIE                    Why?

LOUISE                    S'wrong.

VINNIE                    It's not, no, no, it's –

LOUISE                    I felt like I'd walked out of a fog. What kind of  
person am I?

VINNIE                    You're lovely.





VINNIE

Oh.

LOUISE

I had to make a choice.

VINNIE

I understand.

LOUISE

I had to make a –

VINNIE

I understand.

SCENE 21 – OUTSIDE FLATS

FX

DISTANT FOOTBALL (UNDER). TOP BEING  
SCREWED OFF A BOTTLE.





ADE (BEAT) Look, I don't know you. We've never met. You seem... kind enough, but please don't start telling me how brave you think I am.

SARAH Okay.

ADE Okay?

SARAH Okay.

ADE I didn't want to go to the barbecue. I don't know why they invited me. I don't think they would've invited me before. I keep wondering what I am supposed to behave like.

SARAH Not supposed to behave like anything.

ADE I keep wondering what they expect from me.

SARAH They don't expect nothing.

ADE All I can see is people looking at me. I don't know how to be what they expect me to be.

SARAH Here y'are.

ADE

No thank you.

SARAH

You sure?

SARAH

Fair enough.

I do think you're a brave man.

ADE

Bloody hell.

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SCENE 23 – VINNIE’S BEDROOM

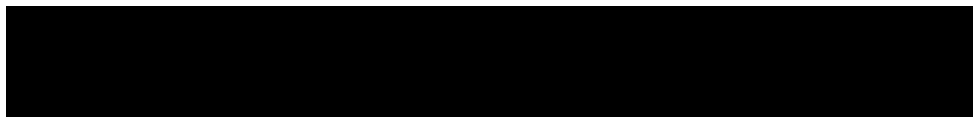
VINNIE

This is my room. That’s where I sit there, on the,  
er, bed and do my tapes. I send them tapes, the  
BBC, just so they know. I send them a tape  
every weeyKW’J::B-’7?jKjjKM’:B-9’7?q?W:C-9M7j’IIW:o-9I7KjMJKud-9j7

P

IE

TLT



VINNIE

Okay.

'Dear Vincent,

Thank you for your enquiry regarding a position as war correspondent and for sending in the enclosed tape, which I am now returning to you.

As I'm sure you're aware this is an extremely competitive field, which can be seen to represent one of the higher rungs on a well-defined career ladder, and as such is something that can require a large degree of experience. Looking at your CV I would suggest a few more GCSE's, three or four 'A' levels, a degree, followed by a good post grad MA (preferably in journalism, though not necessarily) then maybe a year or so's internship for a quality broadsheet.

I listened to your tape with interest and noted that you had a lively - if somewhat unusual – style and had an interesting grasp of the basics. I would say, however that you occasionally veer towards –'

LOUISE

I watched it happen.

I watched all of it, not just the end, I watched it from the very beginning and I didn't do anything.

I could've done something, but I didn't want to.

My mum was, she was agitated, she saw the baby and she was, she was, and I thought 'Fuck you, caring about that baby, you didn't care about me, it's too late to come over all caring, you can watch, you can watch and I won't do a thing because you want me to.' I wanted her to learn. It's important that we learn. If there's one thing I've learned it's that, that it's important that we learn.

(PAUSE) I didn't know the baby was going to...

VINNIE

No.

LOUISE

I just thought it would –

VINNIE

Yeah.

LOUISE

You "qWq:l-9I7M"



LOUISE I just thought it would... Or someone else, I thought someone else would come. And I would just be looking her in the eye and she would be scared and think 'I taught her well'.

VINNIE I understand.

LOUISE Do you?

VINNIE Yes.

LOUISE I thought someone else would –

VINNIE I know.

LOUISE She's a wonderful woman. When she goes my life will be sludge.

VINNIE It won't. We feel different.

Now. Don't we.

Louise?

I was watching as well.

Like you.

I was, when I said I just saw at the end I was lying.

LOUISE (BEAT) What?

VINNIE I was, because I didn't feel, I was lying. I saw.

LOUISE You were lying?

VINNIE Yeah, I was watching, from the beginning, I was doing a tape and I was really, this is a new CD, this sound effects CD... and I'd just got it and was doing a tape –

LOUISE You lied.

VINNIE Because I felt... I was reporting. I watched the baby and I thought this is great –

LOUISE You watched?

VINNIE Yes. And reported. I reported the child crawling out on the balcony.

LOUISE And you didn't do anything?

VINNIE No. I didn't...  
My mum came in and told me.



VINNIE

No.

No, I did...

No.

Like you. Louise. I did nothing.

LOUISE

(LONG PAUSE) I want to hear you.

VINNIE

What?

LOUISE

I want to watch.

VINNIE

What do you mean?

LOUISE

I want to watch you do a report.

VINNIE

(BEAT) I don't think –

I'd feel –

LOUISE

I want to, Vinnie.

VINNIE

- bit silly, or –

LOUISE

Vinnie?

VINNIE (BEAT) I've never... I've never done... it's private.

LOUISE Do you like me?

VINNIE (PAUSE) Yeah.

LOUISE Let me watch.

VINNIE What now?

LOUISE Yes.

VINNIE Just like that?

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SCENE 24 - INSIDE FLAT OF BABY'S MOTHER

FX WOMAN SOBBING, QUIETLY (UNDER)

PAUL HENRY

Can I do something? Some tea? I'm stupid, you don't speak English. Tea? Would you like some...?

I saw the door open and I thought... I just thought... I wanted to make sure...

I felt like something died. In me. When your... when it... Which was a bit of a shock to be honest, because I didn't know there was anything left. I felt like the world slowed, stopped and then pieces of it was ripped out, and then it was started again and we have to carry on without those pieces. Sorry, I'm...

I collect ants. I was... I was busy. I was doing this... Did you know that ants and humans are

the only creatures that destroy their owW': -I7'j?W':w-9W7JIJu jKqj7IKW

**SCENE 25 – OUTSIDE FLATS ON SOFA**

**SARAH** I'm sorry.

**ADE** What for?

**SARAH** I didn't mean to have a go at you. About the baby.  
You didn't do anything.

**ADE** I know.

**SARAH** No, I mean it's not like you did something. It's not like you did something deliberately. You were just in your own thing. I didn't mean to... It's made me feel a bit funny. The whole thing. And then that fat bastard in the Mitre.

**ADE** They've never invite me to a barbecue before. I didn't know what to do.

**SARAH** Just be yourself.

**ADE** I felt I was letting them down.

**SARAH** Don't be silly.







ADE

You have a son.

SARAH

What about you, you at a barbecue, up there,  
they're all having a drink, what about you,  
standing there in a barbecue. At a bloody  
barbecue! Out to parties, I love my son, I love  
Vinnie. Don't you call me into question, at a party  
with your son in the ground.

ADE

I didn't want to go to their party!

SARAH

You still went though.

ADE

I went.

SARAH

Don't call me into question. I love my son,

ADE I'm sorry.

SARAH - calling me a –

ADE I shouldn't've –

SARAH - don't start calling me a –

ADE I'm just angry.  
I'm just angry.

SARAH (PAUSE) Yeah, well. I know but...  
I know you are, but... You know. Fair enough,  
but...  
You shouldn't cast aspersions.

ADE I'm sorry.

SARAH No, it's alright, it's just it gets my blood up. Gets  
me going, you know. Makes me defensive, I say  
things.  
I didn't mean that. About...

ADE No. I know.

SARAH

Because I think you should get out.

ADE

I know.

I just don't feel I deserve it.

SARAH

Who does?

(BEAT) Sorry, (PAUSE) I can't understand how

SCENE 26 – INSIDE MOTHER’S FLAT

FX CLOSE UP WIPES TO NORMAL ACOUSTIC  
OF WOMAN SOBBING

PAUL HENRY (PAUSE) It’s my daughter’s birthday. Today. She’s ten. Ten years old today. Be a party, should imagine. Balloons and kids, and ice-cream in wafer sandwiches. Probably don’t do that now. Dunno. Better sweets these days. Toys. Presents. Games, music, jelly, probably have new clothes, watch a video, maybe a clown, maybe a magician.

And her mother.

And her... father.

Whoever she thinks is her father.

I was thinking of sending her a present, but I don’t know what they like. Britney Spears or something, but then you never know because maybe that’s exactly what they don’t like.

I didn’t think I’d make it through the day. I didn’t plan to. I’ve got some pills. I thought... you know. Be fitting. With my ants. I collect ants.

You shouldn’t be alone. Not now.

\_K:w-9MkJWI:d-qIjMJK:n-9I7KjMJK:t-I7kouow.



LOUISE                      What about the baby?

VINNIE                      - a war so perverse now –

LOUISE                      What about the baby?

VINNIE                      – so twisted, so dark –

LOUISE                      The baby?

VINNIE                      - that children have taken to –

LOUISE                      The Baby, Vinnie!

VINNIE                      - a baby, a baby, I can see a baby –

LOUISE                      Where?

VINNIE                      To the left, in the children's –

LOUISE                      No.

VINNIE                      - opposite –

LOUISE                      Yes.

VINNIE

... a baby, opposite, crawling along a balcony,  
unnoticed by the world. The baby perhaps  
eighteen months old, crawling through the horror  
of war –



LOUISE

Vinnie?

VINNIE

... and I, I, I'm watching the baby...

LOUISE

Why?

VINNIE

... reporting on the baby, I'm here reporting on  
the baby, I'm here reporting on this baby because

he this story muste bajKW'J: -'jj7KqI] T/Y9'IJ7I'd9'W7J:m-9I7qjMIW: -I7'j?W

thior y,'K7'?Y: --YTB[ :V[ ?fJ: -'jj7KqI] T/Y9'IJ'jdMdTdY[ :ogo-q7'-Ijdl hr







LOUISE

And the baby? The baby wasn't a metaphor for freedom. Or innocence. Or our loss of pride. Or the indefinable something that we lost by whatever it is you're on about. It was a baby. Vinnie? It was a baby. It was a little eighteen month old baby, it was someone's child and now it's dead because of you. Because of your stupid, lonely little game. That's what this is.

VINNIE (CRYING NOW) You said, you said you felt different.

LOUISE I did.

VINNIE You said about the fog.

LOUISE The fog, yes.

VINNIE You said you felt different.

LOUISE I did. I did feel different, Vinnie.

VINNIE What about all that?

LOUISE There's only one way to learn. We have to learn the hard way.

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SCENE 28 – INTERCUTTING SCENES

SARAH                      Well, I'd better be going.

PAUL HENRY              I should go.

LOUISE                    I'm going to go.

SARAH                    Everyone gone as if it never happened.  
Still. We've met now. I'll say hello to you now.

ADE                        No. We'll just go back to our lives.

SARAH                    No we won't. We won't. I'll say hello.

PAUL HENRY              I'd better get back. I'm sorry about....

VINNIE                    (TAdTAd'j?W':T-9'7?q?W: -9M7?M'?q:L-'7?jKM':N-9W7JJI':L-'7?jKM':T

PAUL HENRY

I'm sorry.

LOUISE

Goodbye.

ADE

Bye, then.

PAUL HENRY

Sorry.

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SCENE 29 (a)– OUTSIDE PAUL’S FLAT – CORRIDORFX PARTY STARTS UP AGAIN (UNDER TO END).

PAUL HENRY

Cause and effect, cause and effect. All

individuals are linked. All individuals are linked by a chain of events to their past, one action leading to another, one reaction to a new reaction. Ants don't know what they're doing. An individual performs an action as a response to some form of stimuli and a collection of these actions – when looked at from above – become a tunnel, a nest, the tending of grubs, the destruction of a colony. Cause and effect.

I'm lifting my key to the lock of my front door and suddenly I'm struck with the overwhelming impression that I've stepped out of my life. That inside my life is carrying on without me. I begin to think that if I turn that key I will walk in on myself standing over the battleground tank, barking out orders, festering away, alone, unnoticed. And then another image; me slumped into that tank, eyes open, an empty bottle of pills on the floor, ants swarming all over my face. So strong is this impression that I begin to shake, can't turn the lock. I think back: no-one has spoken to me, no-one has seen me. Maybe it's, maybe I'm in there, maybe - Then I calm.                      Contd over .../



SCENE 30 – OUTSIDE FLATS

FX ADE WALKING TO THE BARBECUE.

ADE (V/O) ... and I turn back time further, I pull my son towards me and suddenly it is the weekend before he leaves and he has taken me to the pub, he has taken me to the pub and he is meeting his friends later on, but right now he is with me in the pub and we are having a couple of pints, I don't drink pints, but we are having a couple of pints, and it is sunny and the smoke in the pub drifts around in the sunlight as if it is in no hurry whatsoever and it's a nice pub, he has chosen a nice pub and he is laughing and smiling and slightly worried because he has started smoking and he wants to tell me but doesn't know how, but I already know and I want to laugh because I am annoyed that he is smoking but it is funny that he can't tell me, this soldier, this big soldier, and I stop time there, that is where, that is where, that is where time stops. Exactly there. And I hold it there. I hold it right there.

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SCENE 31 (a) – PAUL’S FLAT

FX INSECTS CLOSE-UP WIPE OF SOUND

PAUL HENRY

A huge battle rages in all of the tanks.

Thousands of workers have been killed on both sides. They fight in the sand, up the sides of the tanks, inside the connecting tubes, tiny bodies being dragged everywhere. But both nests are dead. The first queen I see is that of the *Mymica ruginodis*, caught while trying to escape. There are still ants killing her even though it is obviou

VINNIE

No.

SARAH

No. (BEAT) S'pose it doesn't seem right after that.

S'terrible.

VINNIE

Yeah. S'terrible.

SARAH

(PAUSE) Do you want to be left alone?

VINNIE

(BEAT) No.

SARAH

No? Maybe you want something to eat? Drink?

VINNIE

No.

SARAH

(PAUSE) Tea? Want a cuppa tea with your mum?

VINNIE

Yeah. Yeah I'll have a cuppa tea, mum.

PAUL'S FLAT – 31 (c)

PAUL HENRY

I'm standing surveying the scene. I'm looking at the ants. I'm looking at the queens. I'm looking at the linked aquariums sprawling across my living room like some insane glass insect. I'm looking at the bottle of pills.

And I'm wondering if it's too late.

I wondering if chains can be broken.

I'm wondering.

I'm wondering.

END