

EXT. PARLIAMENT HILL - MORNING

The place is busy with dog walkers and dozens of little pockets of fitness classes.

Cherry is standing at the side of a path, smoking, watching a Tai Chi class in the distance, with London coughed up behind them.

The class ends, there's a round of applause, people disband. Michelle and Gerard walk over to Cherry, who's giggling.

GERARD

What's so funny?

Cherry has a last drag of her fag before putting it out.

CHERRY

I dunno, just you, doing that, in this place, at seven a.m. Just sort of ticks the boxes.

Gerard wipes at his face with a towel, doesn't really get it.

GERARD

Why am I getting the feeling that's an insult?

MICHELLE

Well we are part of the metropolitan liberal elite darling, whether we like it or not.

Michelle kisses Cherry on both cheeks. Cherry looks bashful but pleased.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

There. Just to complete the bourgeois stereotype. We've missed you. Has Gerard told you we're organising a show of support for BLM?

Cherry looks at Gerard, who avoids her stare.

CHERRY

I've been a bit preoccupied with stuff, sorry.

MICHELLE

Well at the risk of putting nails in the coffin of our bleeding hearts, if you're in any kind of  
(MORE)

MICHELLE (CONT'D)  
trouble, we're always here for  
you. Even if it's trouble you  
start.

Cherry smiles and nods. Michelle runs a hand back and  
forth over Cherry's cropped hair, smiling back.

MICHELLE  
I'm not being maternal. Or  
paternal. I just love the feel.

Michelle moves off.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)  
(to Gerard)  
See you at home.

Gerard and Cherry watch her go.

CHERRY  
See ya!

Michelle holds a hand up in reply. Cherry looks pleased.

GERARD  
(serious)  
Why haven't you been answering my  
calls?

Cherry looks at Gerard, almost forgetting he was there.

CHERRY  
I'm banned from the group, remember?

GERARD  
These were personal calls.

Cherry watches Michelle saunter off.

CHERRY  
D'you think she knows? I think  
she knows. She's super smart.  
(impressed)  
I think she knows and doesn't give  
a fuck.

Gerard gives her a 'what are you talking about?' look.  
Puts his hands on his hips and sighs.

GERARD  
I just don't know what I've done  
wrong.

Cherry looks exhausted with him.

CHERRY

God, so needy! I really have had a lot on my plate and, I don't know, I LIKE Michelle and I just felt like me and you, whatever that is, was complicating things.

GERARD

After you got what you wanted.

CHERRY

Don't act all hurt Gerard. You're a fifty-something married man with a great wife, I'm a nineteen year old with mental health issues and a 'difficult story' I'd say we both got what we wanted.

Gerard smarts a little. Looks doleful. Cherry laughs.

GERARD

What?

CHERRY

This! That sad voice! Having this fucking conversation!

He looks blank.

GERARD

(a bit tougher)

I'm WORRIED about you! I'm worried about you trying to find this man Sean Bridger. Yes, Simz told me. Of course he told me! He's my son. From

(he waves a hand)

Way back.

Cherry considers this, the way it echoes her own life a little.

CHERRY

I suppose you still see him, so, well done you?

Gerard nods at the sarcastic compliment.

GERARD

I don't know what you're planning but I just really think you should stay away from him. That's all I want to say.

CHERRY

I don't fuck every older man I meet Gerard!

Gerard is flustered.

GERARD

Jesus! Look! I asked Simz not to give you that information because you always over-react. He's a nothing employee working for a supply chain company for a social media giant, yet YOU want to find him. Him specifically.

Gerard stares at her, pauses, running a hand through his hair, glancing around at people happily going about their business in the park.

CHERRY

(goads)

Come on Gerard, man up. Spit it out. Be my hero.

GERARD

(blurts it out)

I'M WORRIED! Are you going after rapists now? Are you some sort of avenging angel?

CHERRY

(annoyed)

What?

GERARD

This guy.

(pause)

Come on Cherry, stop playing with me. A rape conviction? A string of sexual assaults? Changes his name and moves away?

(pause, annoyed at Cherry's blank reaction)

For fuck's sake Cherry, trashing houses, spray painting buildings, that's one thing. But going after rapists? And getting Simz to find his address, that can come back on me you know!

Cherry stares at him, mouth open, a million different accusations surging through her head. She turns round and starts walking off. Gerard goes to her, she violently shrugs him off and carries on walking.

He shouts after her.

GERARD (CONT'D)  
JUST DON'T DO ANYTHING STUPID!

Normal life eddies around him. Happy shrieks of children, people pushing prams, moving round Gerard, stuck like a stone in a stream.