

EXT. PARK - DAY

Michael and Sarah walk barefoot in a circle opposite each other.

SARAH

So any idea what you're going to do?

MICHAEL

I wish I did. I never thought I'd be here like this. It's only been nine months.

SARAH

Come on grumpy, at least we got the day off. Doesn't the sun cheer you up? Gotta appreciate all that Vitamin D nourishment we're soaking up. Good for the skin, you know.

MICHAEL

I really wasn't sure if I was doing the right thing starting here again.

SARAH

Well the weather was better over there. Small mercies. Although I'd dance in the rain today. I really don't care. So sick of waking up to spend eight hours in a place I hate, just so I can make sure my credit card company doesn't send in the black helicopters to beam me up, for missing the minimum payment. Bastards.

Michael laughs and Sarah joins in.

SARAH

You know what we should do? A drawn out orchestrated campaign of office theft. Go out in a blaze of glory.

MICHAEL

Sounds like you've already got it planned out. You would love army life. Three rations a day, an angry local populace clamoring for your violent death, and some seriously impressive footwear.

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SARAH

Not to mention the incredibly creative clothing range of camouflage, family-friendly cluster bombing, and a total lack of sex, for like, years.

MICHAEL

War, what is it good for? Self-esteem. A rotary club for graduate psychopaths.

She looks at him intently.

Michael leans in to her face and decides to give her a slight kiss as he places his right hand upon her cheek.

MICHAEL

So do you know what you're going to do?

SARAH

I know one thing's for sure, I'm taking tomorrow off as well. Fuck it, let's stay out late tonight and play truant like happy-slapping hoodlum kids. That is, if you, didn't have something more important to do, like getting sacked.

MICHAEL

If I could spend every day slacking off... I have to... I really can't wait to be told how useless I am. Cue another 8 hours of why Michael should have been aborted at birth.

SARAH

Then why are you with her? You never have anything good to say about her.

MICHAEL

I could ask you the same thing.

SARAH

Then I'd have to kiss you to shut you up.

There is an awkward silence before both of them look to the ground. Then Michael's mobile rings.

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MICHAEL

(to Sarah)

One second.

(on the phone)

Hello. No sorry... I know, I know
but... I haven't really got time at
the moment... no really.

He hangs up his mobile.

MICHAEL

Fuck sake, they don't stop do they?

SARAH

Who?

MICHAEL

Telesales man on my back again
trying to sell me things I've
already got. They should go get a
real job. You know, the kind where
you wear an expensive suit and
spend the day being drained and
ruined for 8 hours just so your
boss can take all the credit.

SARAH

I heard they go straight to hell
when they die, just like lawyers.

MICHAEL

The Devil's own.

SARAH

What were they trying to sell you?
New advanced camo paint, or free
polish for your rifle when you buy
the ammo in bulk?

MICHAEL

Things I've already got, but the
deal on the tank sounded good.

He looks at her in the eyes, she smiles.

SARAH

So what did you do over there
anyway Mr Mysterious?

MICHAEL

Reconnaissance. Fancy way of
playing hide and seek.

(MORE)

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MICHAEL (cont'd)

Try to avoid being mutilated or murdered, or getting the clap. Nah, basically we were the wide angle lens for the cannon fodder. All you do is try and stay alive until the next chorus of Bohemian Rhapsody. If you can get the timing to sync with long-range artillery, it's pretty much in-car entertainment.

She grabs his arm.

SARAH

(dramatically)

My hero.

MICHAEL

The lowest form of wit, my dear.

SARAH

The highest form of humour, soldier boy. They say that even if you come back from a war, you never really come back.

MICHAEL

I did it because I thought it meant something. And because my dad told me I should. No, I don't think I could. I wish I could. There are days when I wake up and can't wash away what I saw over there from my head. They conveniently don't mention on the TV adverts, join the army, be the best, pick up pieces of your best friends from the roadside, and oh, remember to check your food just in case some insane native fuck laced it with powdered glass.

He forces a smile.

MICHAEL

Plus, I've got Judith now.

SARAH

Sounds like you were better off with the powdered glass!

He snickers, while raising one eyebrow.

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SARAH

I would have made you write me poetry.

MICHAEL

Yeah I could just imagine that. 'Commence bombing, over.', 'delay that order, I'm only on line 11 of my sonnet.'

SARAH

I'm really going to miss you.

MICHAEL

I'm going to miss you too darling! You're the reason I made it through the rest of this fucking year!

SARAH

Well, we had today. If we're going down, we're going down together.

MICHAEL

Like we used to say in a foxhole or two. I guess I've faced worse. It's not exactly the same as watching children running out of building screaming with an arm missing.

SARAH

Maybe you could be a mercenary. You know, like a soldier of fortune. Or an assassin!

MICHAEL

Good pay, flexible hours, job security and a certain satisfaction. If there's one thing you can rely on this in this world, it's our need to nuke the fuck out of each other.

A football flies in between them, startling them both. A kid runs after it. Sarah laughs.

MICHAEL

Would you still love me if I killed for a living?

SARAH

Would you kill for me?

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MICHAEL

I've already made a list.

She laughs but Michael looks uncomfortably serious.

MICHAEL

No I'm serious.

She continues laughing.

SARAH

Just don't bring your work home with you. Cooking is enough of a fucking pain without having to add twenty minutes extra prep time for the body lying in the hallway. Blood is a nightmare to get out of white shirts and beige carpets too. Home disposal would be inconsiderate and you'd be on shopping trip duty for a month afterwards.

MICHAEL

Marry me.

SARAH

Yeah sure, why not! I couldn't think of any better way to condemn myself to life without any intimate contact, meaningful conversation or productive family time than that.

MICHAEL

The secret life of a marriage hating HR manager, exposed. I know what you need to do. Go work as a motivational coach or a funeral director.

SARAH

Shock horror! Ex-army lazy ner-do-well logistics manager finds office life boring. Prefers violent chaos. Likes pets. Apply within.

MICHAEL

Whatever. You're supposed to be helping here. What the fuck am I supposed to tell Judith?

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SARAH

That you've fallen madly in love with your beautiful HR manager and you're eloping to the Caribbean to tend a small herd of well-natured farm animals in between smoking lots of weed and cracking coconuts.

MICHAEL

I'm sure that would go down well. Perhaps I could add that, "I never loved you Judith! Did you know that I'm actually a pre-op transsexual hermaphrodite and I just cleaned out our joint bank account to finance my crack habit?"

SARAH

Then top it off and ask her if you can do it anal.

They both laugh softly.

MICHAEL

It's not like it's my fault one of the biggest banks in the country inadvertently collapsed and fucked over 30,000 of its employees is it?

SARAH

I guess it isn't, so why get upset about it?

MICHAEL

What really pisses me off about you is that I can never get pissed off with you. All you do is make me smile. Stop that. It's annoying.

SARAH

Michael, seriously, if she gets angry with you for that, just pack your bags. She's not worth it. It's not your fault.

MICHAEL

The whole eloping to the Caribbean to tend goats thing is looking ever more attractive by the minute.

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SARAH

Better than what's on offer here:
there's an HR manager on every
corner waiting to service the CEO
and his board for a boardroom
biscuit.

MICHAEL

Yeah but look at you Sarah! You're
so beautiful. And smart. Anyone
would hire you. Maybe we've both
got too comfortable. Besides you
could get in some horizontal
training in with your bank manager
about the overdraft to practice for
the next HR job interview.

SARAH

So how do you reckon they'll do it?

MICHAEL

Do what?

SARAH

Give us all the bad news.

MICHAEL

Well knowing our erstwhile
employer, I should imagine it will
be the politest form of wholesale
slaughter.

SARAH

Herd us all up like cattle, give us
each the sensitive we-care routine,
and avoid all talks of their
colossal financial mismanaged
fuckups? Sounds about right.

MICHAEL

I'm not even going to be there.

SARAH

Maybe we should resign first.

MICHAEL

A blaze of glory.

SARAH

Torvill and Dean!

MICHAEL

Oh please.

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SARAH

Last thing I need is to look like a prick in front of everyone. Think your rough army hands could cope with hiding a 'poor crying girl' from this war?

MICHAEL

It may have a price.

SARAH

Name it.

MICHAEL

Your everlasting love and devotion. And voluntary duty for domestic duties like washing out bloodstains from my work clothes.

SARAH

I don't think I could ever not love you Michael. I don't know how I'm going to get through this without you. I can cope with losing my job. I'm sad because I know when I wake up in the morning you won't be waiting for me with a cup of coffee in your hand when I'm bashing the photocopier at 8.30.

MICHAEL

Not any more; it's history.

SARAH

We had today.

MICHAEL

Yeah

He smiles.

MICHAEL

We had today.

CUT TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR - NIGHT

Michael sits, a wide smile stretched across his face. As he rounds a corner, the smile fades. He rubs his eyes which look like they're ready to close. The car feels claustrophobic.

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