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opening extract from

Radio Radio

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published by

Bloomsbury

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1 INT. STELLA'S HOUSE – BEDROOM – DAY 1

Scene opens with an ESTABLISHING SHOT of a bedroom. Hard to tell if it belongs to a boy or a girl; there's stuff everywhere, every flat surface is covered with clothes, shoes, full ashtrays and empty takeaway food cartons. The walls are a patchwork of recent history, recorded in Blu-Tacked music posters and club flyers.

CAMERA PANS ROUND THE ROOM, FOCUSING ON:

Music BLARING from a Sony mini-system set up on the top of a cupboard and surrounded by a collection of beer cans, empty bottles and general crap; the MC is ranting like a maniac about something, his vocals just about in front of the bass-heavy sample thundering away on a seemingly endless loop. We can see that the bedroom door is ajar. Suddenly, it's SLAMMED SHUT by someone outside the room.

STELLA'S MUM
Turn that bloody radio down, Stella! How many times do I have to tell you, girl?

CAMERA PANS TO:

Stella Whitely, standing by the bedroom window, looking out. She turns towards us, lighting a roll-up.

STELLA
(mutters to herself)
A million times more than *you've* got the patience for.

Stella jabs a finger on to a button and the sound dies. The room is quiet. The radio is off. Camera ZOOMS in on Stella, still standing by the window. She picks up a cheap disposable lighter from the window ledge and relights her roll-up.

Behind her, a phone starts ringing. She picks her way over the untidy floor and answers it...

STELLA
(sounding tired)
Hi? Oh, hello Jase...yeah, I'm feeling fine now. (PAUSE) Been home since yesterday...yeah, everything seems cool...no, I'm glad you called.

Stella relights the roll-up.

STELLA
(brighter)
Where are you getting together... the Cherrytree? When? OK, I can make that, yeah...(PAUSE) Will Jo...will she be – she will? No, that's fine...(PAUSE) You did? Last night? I'm sorry, Jason – are you OK? Right, I'll, ah, I'll see you there. Bye.

Stella puts down the phone and stubs out the roll-up in an overflowing ashtray on the floor. Sitting on the edge of her unmade bed, she leans over to pick up some flyers off the floor. We can see they're advertising something called Reel FM 103.5.

The phone goes again and Stella lets the flyers drop back on to the floor and picks up.

STELLA
Yeah? (FACE BREAKS OUT INTO A BIG SMILE) Nick! I'm good...I'm better – you? That's great...they said there was nothing they could get you on? Fantastic!

Stella lies back on her bed.

CAMERA SHOT FROM ABOVE.

STELLA
What've your parents said? They don't know? God, you're a jammy bastard, Nick. (LAUGHS)...My Mum? She's her usual self...yeah, she rather had to know, didn't she... the appointment? It's at 4.15 this afternoon...You will? No, I'm not surprised, I'm glad...It'd be rough on my own. Yeah, he called just now, told me about Jo...Yeah ...I'll meet you up at the caff. Bye. Love you.

Stella sits up.

CUT TO FRONT SHOT OF HER LOOKING TO CAMERA.

Stella pulls up the sleeve on her left arm to reveal a neatly wrapped and taped-up bandage. She touches it lightly, remembering. Then she stands and pulls the sleeve back down as she looks round the room.

Going to her jam-packed closet, she takes out a denim jacket, goes over to a chair and picks up a black leather shoulder bag. She EXITS, loudly shutting

the door.

She's left the light on, and we hear her clatter downstairs and slam the front door, then:

SHEILA WHITELY (O.S.)
Have you remembered your appointment, Stella?

CAMERA ZOOMS IN ON THE FLYERS ON THE FLOOR, TURNING ROUND TILL THE TOP ONE FILLS THE SCREEN WITH THE MESSAGE:

REEL FM 103.5
UNDER YOUR SKIN
EVERY FRI/SAT/SUN
8 TILL LATE

ROLL:

RADIO RADIO TITLE SEQUENCE

Sequence runs over HAND-HELD LIVE FOOTAGE of a club gig, mainly focused on an MC who's on a small stage. He's standing in front of a DJ and his deck set-up, rapping into one half of a pair of studio headphones, the curly wire hooked over his shoulder and jacked into an amp in a stack to the right of the DJ. The scene is lit by a couple of MOBOS and the effect is very

strobe-like, with everyone's movements extremely jerky.

HARD CUT TO:

2 INT. CHERRYTREE CAFÉ – DAY 2

A group of six people are sitting round a table: Tom Cross is finishing off a plate of egg and chips, wiping the plate with a slice of white bread; CC Oweyo, Jo Knight and Jason Towne have empty plates in front of them and are drinking cans of Coke; sitting next to Sy Redstone, Stella Whitely is smoking a roll-up cigarette. The bell above the café door RINGS.

CAMERA PULLS BACK AND PANS OVER...

Nick Foster walks in, smiling broadly.

NICK
And a good morning to you all!

He pulls up a chair and sits next to Stella, taking the cigarette out of her hand and taking a drag. All the body language makes it obvious they are an item of some long standing.

TOM
Where've you been, Nicky boy – it's bloody two o'clock, mate!

NICK
That wanker Noddy gave me the late shift on Street FM again – two to four in the morning. And *then* he had the bloody nerve to say he couldn't afford my cab fare. I had to walk from Tottenham Hale.

CC
Those guys at Street are just ripping you off, man!

STELLA
But if he doesn't get on the air, how's he going to get better gigs, eh, CC? At least he's getting some time...you sounded great, babe.

NICK
How much did you hear?

STELLA
Fifteen minutes, tops...then I was out like a light.

CUT TO:

A shot of Jo looking at Stella, with a slight, almost imperceptible curl of the lip...

CUT TO:

NICK
You're right CC, I bloody *know* they're ripping me off...but the only way I can see of stopping that is by moving to a station that actually *wants* me, rather than being on one that uses me like slave labour.

TOM
(thoughtful)
Or...

NICK
Or what?

TOM
Or we start our own station and do it our way.

CC
(singing)
We did it owwwwwwww-r waaaaaaay!

NICK
Riiiight...and how the hell are we gonna do that?

TOM
If that idiot Noddy and his moron pals can do it, how difficult can it be? I reckon, between the six of us, we could do it.

CAMERA PANS ROUND THE TABLE.

Everyone's thinking about what Tom has just said, but it's obvious that no one's majorly keen. The CAMERA ends up back with:

TOM
It's just a thought...(SHRUGS) better'n being ripped off, and it might be a bit of a laugh.

SFX: MOBILE PHONE RINGING.

CUT TO:

Jo, pulling her mobile out of her bag.

JO
Shit! I'm late!

CUT TO NICK:

He picks up a ketchup bottle and goes into rap.

NICK
(singing)
Making time, making time to make time, getting late, getting late, being outta line, it's all control, jus don think, do it my way, keep your head down, keep your mouth shut, you don't *have* a say...

Jo grabs her bag, chucking in her fags, lighter and phone, and exits the café.

CUT TO:

Stella looking at Jo as she goes, cool, then turning back to smile at Nick.

HARD CUT TO:

3 INT. JO'S KITCHEN – RADIO PLAYING – NIGHT 3

The rap that Nick started in the café is now playing on Jo's radio at home. She's in the kitchen, making a cup of tea and LISTENING.

QUICK CUTS TO:

4 VARIOUS INT.'S RADIOS PLAYING – NIGHT 4

As we switch from person to person – they're people we haven't met before, the audience for Street FM – the song progresses. Until...

HARD CUT TO:

5 INT. TRANSIT VAN – NIGHT 5

There are three people crammed into the back of a Transit. One is asleep, the second reading the sports pages of a tabloid newspaper; the third man has headphones on and is hunched over the bank of digital equipment that takes up most of the space in the van.

We can just hear Nick's vocals and the music. Suddenly, the man with the headphones sits back and PUNCHES the air.

PHIL
(headphones)
Got the bastard!

MARTIN
(sports page)
About bloody time — give sleeping beauty a kick and tell him to get on the blower to Charlie...got an address yet, Phil?

PHIL
Gimme a sec! (REACHES OVER AND PRODS THE SLEEPING FIGURE)

BILLY
(sleeper)
Wha?!

MARTIN
Call Charlie; he's with Simmons ...we finally got a fix on that poxy bunch who've been giving us the runaround...Phil'll have the address in a minute...tell him to watch it when they go in, though, I heard they had dogs.

BILLY
Woof, woof! That'll be nice for Charlie, he bloody *hates* dogs...(PULLS OUT MOBILE PHONE AND PUNCHES IN A NUMBER, LISTENS)
...Charlie?

HARD CUT TO:

6 INT. APARTMENT – SITTING ROOM – NIGHT 6

It's quiet and very low lit, furnished in early Courts and MFI. There's no one in the room, although you can just about hear the sound of some muffled breathing. Then a door opens and noise and light spills out of what we can see is an extremely heavily sound-proofed room full of audio equipment – microphones, tape decks, CD players...wires everywhere. Nick walks into view.

NICK
(over his shoulder)
See you tomorrow, Noddy.

A mobile phone rings somewhere in the sitting room – its tone is the theme tune from *The Sweeney*.

NICK
...Want me to get that?

Before Noddy has a chance to answer, the door to the apartment splinters apart under the assault of a steel battering ram. A bald-headed man with multiple earrings pokes his head out of the studio.

NODDY
(yells)
Genghis! Khan!

From the corner of the sitting room there's a hair-raising growl as two squat, incredibly powerful white blurs launch themselves across the short distance between the corner where they were asleep and what is left of the entrance to their territory.

NODDY
(orders)
Nuts, boys! NUTS!!

HARD CUT TO:

7 EXT. APARTMENT BLOCK – NIGHT 7

The scene is lit by the foggy glow of bad street lighting and the flashing blue lights of police cars and an ambulance. The CAMERA pans round, passing curious neighbours, kids and dogs until it finds Nick. He's surrounded by Billy, Martin and Phil.

ZOOM IN ON:

MARTIN
What's your name again?

NICK
Nick Foster.

MARTIN
What were you doing there, Nick?

NICK
Delivering...a friend of mine asked me to drop some stuff off for a friend of his.

MARTIN
For the radio station?

NICK
I didn't know it was a radio station...I thought it was just a flat.

MARTIN
Just a flat? (LOOKS AT HIS WATCH) Bit late for deliveries, isn't it?

NICK
(looking away)
Not really.

BILLY
What about the dogs?

NICK
What about the dogs? Everyone's got dogs round here...in case someone tries to break into their flat, know what I mean?

Behind them the ambulance starts to move off, its siren whooping.

MARTIN
Quit the clever stuff, lad, and bugger off.

BILLY
(surprised)
Boss?

MARTIN
Got nothing to hold him on, Billy...he was just there.

Nick turns to walk away...

MARTIN
(calls after him)
I'd keep your nose clean from now on, though...Mr Simmons isn't going to look very kindly on anyone involved in tonight's little fracas. Know what *I* mean?

NICK
Who's Mr Simmons?

BILLY
The man in charge, (SMILES WRYLY) and one of the poor sods got their tackle tickled by those bloody dogs.

FADE TO: