Chapter 1

(00:06:34 – 00:12:51)

Chapter 2

(00:06:34 – 00:12:51)

Chapter 3

(00:12:52 – 00:20:11)

Script

About a Boy
This was exciting. A potential gold mine of single mums. I could see the beautiful creatures now, getting roaring drunk forgetting their troubles, ready to rock and roll.

Moira: That was when I was seven months pregnant. By the time I had the baby, he was in Majorca with another woman. Not even the one he cheated on me with the first time.

Frances: Well, with me, it was the week before the birth. He said I’d got too fat.

Caroline: Mine was shagging his secretary. Such a cliché.

Will: Tell you one thing: Men are bastards. After about 10 minutes I wanted to cut my own penis off with a kitchen knife.

Will: Me. Yes. I have a two-year-old. Ned. He’s got blue eyes and sort of sandy-coloured hair and he’s about 2’3. And his mum left.

Frances: Really?

Will: Yeah. Yeah, I mean, obviously it was a very big shock because we were so happy, you know? Sandra’s neurology practice was just up and running and then one day her bags were packed, and my best friend was waiting outside in his Ferrari. Yeah. You know, the Moderna? The one with the supercharged engine where you can actually see the engine through the back – back-window?

Moira: You got dumped then?

Will: Yeah, yeah.

Suzie: May I ask, do your ex see Ned at all?

Will: Sorry, I didn’t catch your name.

Suzie: Suzie.

Will: She doesn’t see much of him, no.

Suzie: How does he cope with that?

Will: You know he’s a very good little boy. Very, very brave. They’ve got amazing resources, don’t they? Just the other day I was thinking about my ex. He came crawling up, put his little pudgy arms around my neck, and he said: “You hang in there, Dad!”

Suzie: God, that’s amazing for a two-year-old!

Will: Is it? Yeah, he’s very special. Very, very special. Sometimes I think, you know, he’s the one taking care of me. Teaching me the ways of the world. Sorry. Thank you.

My God, what a performance! I was

Is it? Yeah, he’s very special. Very,

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Is it? Yeah, he’s very special. Very,
Will: Yeah, Will here.
Marcus: It's Marcus.
Will: Pardon?
Marcus: It's Marcus.
Will: Marcus?
Oh, Marcus. Hi.
Will: How'd you get my number?
Marcus: From Suzie.
Will: I thought you'd like to take me out for the day on Saturday.
Will: And why did you think that, Marcus?
Marcus: Suzie said we hit it off.
Will: Did she?
Marcus: Yeah.
Will: And you said, 'See you soon.'
Will: I said what?
Marcus: 'See you soon.' The night you dropped us off. Remember? You said, 'See you soon.'
Will: Ok, this is soon, all right, Marcus. The thing is, mate, my life is really kind of hectic at the moment.
Will: Yeah, well you know, I've got Ned and stuff to look after. Matter of fact, I should be on the way to playschool just at the moment.
Marcus: What's that noise?
Will: That's a lawn mower. So, you know, just time-wise it's not... Tell you what, just hold the line one sec. Hold on, one sec. Thanks. But then I thought, "Why not?" Why shouldn't I take the poor little sod out for a coffee? I could be Uncle Will. Cool Uncle Will, King of the Kids.
Okay, Marcus. You're on.
Marcus: I'll come if you take my mum, too. She hasn't got any money, so we'll have to go somewhere cheap or you'll have to treat us.
Will: Sure.
Marcus: I don't beat about the bush, Marcus.
Marcus: Why should I? We're poor.
You're rich. You pay. You can bring your little boy, if you like. I don't mind.
Will: That's really big of you.
Marcus: Fine. Come round at half past twelve or something. Remember where we live? Flat 2, 31 Craysfield Road, Islington, London, N12SF.
Will: England, the world, the universe.
Marcus: Yeah.
Will: Marcus?
Marcus: Who?
Will: So, Fiona, how are you? I mean, how are you feeling?
Fiona: My stomach's fine, yeah.
Will: Great.
Fiona: I must still be a bit barmy, though. This kind of thing doesn't go away overnight, does it?
Will: No.
Marcus: If Mum was going to get Will to marry her, she'd have to quit making jokes like that. At least she looked good. I made her put on that nice hairy jumper and the earrings. She got from her friend that went to Zimbabwe.
Will: The kid seemed to think this was some kind of date. As for his mum, she was clearly insane and appeared to be wearing some kind of Yetti costume. This had better be quick one. We were definitely not ordering starters.
Marcus: I'll start with the artichoke, please. Then I'll have a mushroom omelette with fries and a Coke.
Fiona: I'll have the vegetable platter.
Marcus: We're vegetarians.
Will: I'd never have guessed.
Staal sandwich, please. Thanks.
Marcus: This was going really well. I wondered if we were going to move into Will's place or move into someplace new.
Song: I heard he sang a good song, I helped him with a style.
Will: I knew, of course, that the song couldn't last forever that I'd soon be at home, tucked up in bed. I knew it, but I couldn't feel it.
Song: And there he was, this young boy, a stranger to my eyes.
Will: I must've been insane. All I'd wanted was a date with Suzie. This was my punishment.
Song: Strumming my pain with his fingers, singing my life with his words.
Will: The worst part was when they closed their eyes.
Song: Killing me softly with his song
Killing me softly
Marcus: Come and sing with us, Will.
Will: You know I should really get going. Thanks. That's the problem with charity. You have to mean things. You have to mean things to help people. Like the time I volunteered to help out at a soup kitchen and very nearly made it. Or the time I worked the phones at Amnesty International.
Activist Amnesty International: Did you know for instance in Burma you get seven years in prison for telling jokes? Next time you laugh, I want you to think of Pa Pa Lay, the Burmese stand-up comedian.
Woman activist: We're at a crucial stage in our struggle for human rights in Burma which have been grossly abused by the ruling military junta.
Activist: We need your support more than ever. Together we can make a difference.
Will: And your kidding. And what's your boyfriend say about that? Wait a minute. You say you haven't got a boyfriend? Talk about human rights violations. Is that right? You're in the bath now?
Chapter 6 (00:33:46–00:45:37)
Will: You have to mean things to help people. Fiona meant "Killing Me Softly," Killing Me Softly meant something to her and took where she ended up. Me, I didn't mean anything, about anything, to anyone. And I knew that guaranteed me a long, depression-free life. All the same, over the next few days, I did have a strange feeling. Like a presence lurking at the back of my mind. And I didn't like it.
Marcus: You don't have a kid, do you?
Will: What?
Marcus: You don't have a kid, do you?
Will: Of course I've got a kid! What are you on about?
Marcus: No, you don't. I've been watching you, and you don't have one.
Will: What is it to you, anyway?
Marcus: Nothing. Except you've been lying to me, my mum and my mum's friend. Can I come in?
Will: No.
Marcus: Why?
Will: Cause I'm busy.
Marcus: What are you doing?
Will: I'm watching TV.
Marcus: I could watch it with you, if you like.
Will: That's very nice of you, Marcus... but I usually manage on my own, thanks. Don't you have homework to do, or something?
Marcus: Yeah, do you want to help me?
Will: No, that's not what I meant. I meant, why don't you go home and do your homework?
Marcus: I'll do you a deal. I won't tell anyone you don't have a kid if you go out with my mum.
Will: Why would you want your mum to go out with someone like me?
Marcus: Don't think you're not too bad, you know, you told lies, but apart from that you seem okay. And she's sad. I think she'd like a boyfriend.
Will: You now I can't just go out with someone because you want me to, Marcus. I'd have to actually like the person, as well.
Marcus: What's wrong with her?
Will: Nothing's wrong with her, it's just the system. That's how it... for Christ's sake I'm not talking about this with you. Just go.
Marcus: Okay. But I'll be back.
Will: Ooh. I'm really scared!
That's the best I could come up with, 'Ooh, I'm scared.' But as a matter of fact, I was.
Marcus: Thanks, see you.
TV host: Hello, everybody, welcome. Welcome to the game of Countdown. You remember yesterday, Carol, I revealed to a grateful nation that our guest, Tom O'Connell. Yes, he, like all of us, changes for each show. But he is such a...
TV host: Is that right?
Contestant: Yeah. Another term for Hosta, I think.
Yes, well. Named after Heinrich Christian Funck, who also invented disco dancing.
Yes. I've got all his audios.
Marcus: Mum, did you always know I was going to be a vegetarian?
Fiona: Yeah, of course I did. I didn't just decide on the spur of the moment 'cause we ran out of sausages.
Marcus: Did you ask me if I wanted to be a vegetarian?
Fiona: What, when you were born?
I do the cooking and I don't want to cook meat. You have to eat what I eat.
Marcus: But you don't let me go to McDonald's, either.
Fiona: Is this premature teenage rebellion? I can't stop you from going to McDonald's. I'd just be disappointed if you did.
Marcus: Don't worry, Mum. I won't go to McDonald's. After a few visits, Will seemed to think he had to ask me serious questions. But I knew he really wanted to watch Xena: Warrior Princess.
Will: So, how's it going at home then?
Marcus: You mean my mum?
Will: Yeah.
Marcus: She's all right, thanks.
Will: I mean, you know, she's...
Marcus: Yeah, I know. No, nothing like that.
Will: Does it still bother you, then?
Marcus: Does it bother me?
Marcus: A bit. When I think about it.
Will: Fucking hell.
Marcus: I don't know why he swore like that, but it made me feel better. It made me feel like I wasn't being pathetic to get so scared.
Will: I wouldn't make the mistake of asking about Fiona again. Marcus was clearly really screwed up about it and unfortunately I couldn't think of anything to say that'd be of smallest value. Next time he could talk to Suzie, or a counsellor or anybody capable of something more than an obscenity.
Shit can't be. November-the-sodding-19th. Six weeks before Christmas and already they were playing the bloody thing.
Will: Dad?
Marcus: What was your dad like?
Will: A bit sad, really. You know, he wrote one crap song that turned out to be a massive hit and then spent the rest of his life trying to write a better one.
Marcus: Do you ever want to write songs like him? Is that what the game's for?
Will: No.
Marcus: So, that's just there to look cool.
Will: Yeah.
Marcus: I like Santa's Super Sleigh. Hmmm.
Kids: Madonna! Come here! We've got something for you. He's getting away, look! Hurry up!
TV: On Pet Rescue today, the clever stoat keeps everyone on their toes in Somerset.
Will: What are you doing?
Older kids: Who are you?
Will: Who am I? Bugger off, that's who I am! Go on, piss off!
Will: Who were they, then?
Marcus: Who?
Will: What do you mean, 'Who'? The one trying to embed sweets into your skull.
Marcus: Oh, them. They're just a couple of older kids. They started following me after school.
Will: Does this happen often?
Marcus: They never chucked sweets before, they only just thought of that.
Will: I'm not talking about the sweets. The kids trying to kill you.
Yeah, she had loads more.

Marcus: Sometimes I sing out loud without noticing.

Will: That's not a brilliant idea, is it?

Marcus: I said I did it without noticing, didn't I? It just happens! I'm not going to do it on purpose, am I? I'm not stupid, you know.

Will: My advice is to keep out of people's way. Try to make yourself invisible.

Marcus: How am I supposed to be invisible? One machine in your kitchen is an invisible machine? I don't think so. I just try not to think of that, it's all. It happens, and I wish it didn't, but that's life, isn't it? There's nothing I can do about it.

Will: No. There is something we can do about it, Marcus. You're coming with me.

Marcus: I was worried he was going to take me to the headmistress' office. But instead he took me shopping. I didn't get it.

Will: We're starting with your feet. I can't make you invisible, but I can make you blend in with the crowd.

Marcus: I don't know how to tie them. They've got these funny strappy things.

Will: It's called Velcro. It's a revolutionary new technology. For Christ's sake. It's not hard. All right, wait a minute, it is a bit hard.

Shop assistant: Everything all right?

Will: Yeah, thanks.

Shop assistant: He's pretty trendy, your old man, isn't he?

Will: There. You think you look cool, don't you?

Marcus: Don't know. Do you think I look cool?

Will: Yeah, Marcus. I think you look cool.

Marcus: Yeah.


Christine: If you please. I made it myself.

Shop assistant: You must have a lot of courage.

Will: Why is that, Christine?

Christine: Well, most people need something in their lives to keep them afloat and you have absolutely nothing. Doesn't that scare you?

Waitress: Do you know what you want?

Will: Yeah, I do. I'll have the steak...

Christine: I'm not stupid, you know.

Waitress: Yes, there is! There's Marcus. Look, Mum. Open yours, Will.

Will: Brilliant! What is it?

Christine: It's a CD, Marcus. By Mystikal.

Marcus: They're cool. You'll like them.

Waitress: Merry Christmas! My only request is that you use a CD player.

Will: Not a bad idea.

Christine: Oh God, you're a selfish bastard.

Christine: That's what I keep telling him. He always puts himself first.

Will: But I'm on my own. It's just me. I'm not putting myself first. Because there's nobody else.

Fiona: Yes, there is! There's Marcus. You're involved now. He keeps coming around your bloody house. I understand you've come into his life for a reason. You can't just shut him out. You can't shut life out. No man is an island.

Christine: She's right, you know.

Waitress: Yeah, she is.

Will: No, she's not! She's wrong! Some men are islands. I'm a bloody island! I'm bloody lupil!

Fiona: What are you talking about?

Marcus: Do you want to come over for Christmas?

Will: No, Marcus. I do not want to come over for bloody Christmas. I do not want to spend Christmas with Miss Granola Suicide and her spawn. I'd always thought what you did with Christmas was sort of a statement about where you stood in life. I was going to spend this Christmas the way I usually did. Watching videos and getting drunk and stupid.

Old blind man (TV): Before you came, I was all alone. It is bad to be alone.

Frankenstein's monster (TV): Alone, bad. Friend, good. Friend, good!

Old man (TV): Now come here. The good news was it wasn't just me and Fiona and Marcus. The bad news was...

Will: So, you're Marcus' dad?

Marcus' Dad (Clive): Yeah, I guess so. And this is my girlfriend, Lindsey. And Lindsey's mum.


Will: I had to hand it to the kid. He could be enthusiastic about some truly crap presents.

Marcus: Wow, a tambourine! Thanks, Mum. Isn't that cool, Will?

Will: Yeah, that'll come in handy.

Fiona: I saw it in the shop and I thought, 'This'll be perfect: Maybe you can perform at that school concert. Get a pop group together. Make some friends.'

Marcus: Maybe, Mum.

Fiona: When you sing it, brings sunshine and happiness into my heart.

Marcus: Thanks, Mum.

Will: And this one's from me.

Marcus: Brilliant! What is it?

Will: It's a CD. Marcus. By Mystikal. They're cool. You'll like them.

Fiona: And what kind of music is Mystikal?

Will: It's sort of world music.

Marcus: "Shake Ya Ass."

Will: Slash rap type thing.

Lindsey's mom: Shake Ya Ass? Is he Morrocan?

Fiona: I'm afraid we haven't got a CD player.

Marcus: It's great anyway.

Will: I know you haven't got a CD player, so, I got you one of them as well.

What a lucky boy.

Marcus: Look, Mum. Open yours, Will.

Will: All right. Thanks a lot. Marcus, is this a joke?

Marcus: Yeah.

Will: It's not bad.

Suzie: Hi. Sorry, I'm dead late! Have I missed anything?

Fiona: Not at all, come on in. Hey, Merry Christmas!

Suzie: Merry Christmas! Will: Hey! Long time no see. Where's Megan?

Suzie: At her dad's. Where's Ned? At his mum's for Christmas?

Will: Well, yeah. No. I should probably go and see him.

Suzie: You could go pose as Santa, try and shag some carol singers.

Lindsey's mom: Are you a professional Santa? How lovely!

Will: Right. That's it. I'm off. Thank you very much. It was great.

Fiona: Suzie has every right to express her anger, Will.

Will: Yes, and she's expressed it. Now I have a right to bugger off. Thanks a lot. Bye.

Marcus: Wait! He's my friend. I invited him and I should be able to tell him when to go home.

Fiona: I haven't told Will to go. Marcus. Suzie's angry with him and has every right to be, and she's telling him so.

Will: She's right, Marcus. Just leave it, okay?

Marcus: All he did was make up a kid for a couple of weeks. God, that's nothing. So who? What cares? Kids at school do worse than that every day!

Fiona: The point is, Marcus, Will left school a long time ago. He should've grown out of making people up by now.

Suzie: That's for sure.
Marcus: It's not fair to gang up on him. He's been lot better behaved since then. He bought me trainers, he lets me go round to his house even if he doesn't want me to and he knows what kids need.

Fiona: What? Expensive footwear and obscene music? If there's something you really need then we can talk about it.

Marcus: No, we can't. It's not really a discussion, it's an argument, and you always win. Why not just tell me what to do?

Fiona: Because I want you to think for yourself.

Marcus: I'm thinking for myself! And I want Will to stay! He's not the only one who ever did anything wrong! Remember how we met? Remember why? Because you...

Will: Because you threw a bloody great loaf of bread at a duck's head and killed it, basically.

Fiona: Excuse me? What's this about a duck?

Lindsey's mom: Are we having duck?

Will: And there it was. It wasn't a lie. It was 100 percent her assumption. Well, 50 percent, at the very least. I was in fantasyland again. But this time it was different. SPAT was far too fast. This was serious. I acted in self-defence. We arranged to get our laptops together. Which means we arranged for us to get together. Single parents, alone together.

Everyone at the party: Happy New Year!

Will: I was in deep trouble. And there was only one person who could help me out.

Marcus: I'm ashamed to say it, gave me a warm, fuzzy feeling. I held that feeling directly responsible for the strange events that followed.

Chapter 8

(00:55:53–01:06:24)

First of all, Marcus got a crush on a girl.

Marcus: Hello.

Girl: Piss off.

And then, even stranger, so did I. It was all Marcus' fault, really because once you open your door to one person, anyone can come in. On New Year's Eve, I met Rachel. She was interesting, smart and attractive. And for about five minutes, I had her convinced that I was too.

... things like political events.

Okay.

Rachel: You in television?

Will: Am I in television? No. Everyone else is in television.

Rachel: Yeah.

Will: I watch television.

Rachel: Right, right. So you're more in front of it than in it.

Will: In it, yeah.

Rachel: Yes, I get it, yeah.

Will: It was torture. For five minutes I realized what life would be like if I were, in any way, interesting. If I had anything to say for myself, if I did anything. But I didn't do anything. And in about 30 seconds she'd know and she'd be gone like a shot.

Rachel: So what do you do?

Will: Well, I'm sort of taking a bit of time off at the moment.

Rachel: Sounds good, yeah.

Will: Yeah.

Rachel: Time off from what?

Will: To be absolutely honest, time off from time off, in fact. The interesting thing about me is I don't actually do anything.

Rachel: You don't do anything?

Will: Actually, no.

Rachel: Nothing.

Will: Nope.

Rachel: That's...

Rachel's tablemate: Now, Rachel, darling. East Coast or West Coast rap?

Rachel: Oh God, I have absolutely no...

Will: She was gone. There was no more to say.

Rachel: All rap music sounds exactly the same to me.

Will: Or was there?

Will: I tell you what. I know a 12-year-old who'd kill you for saying that.

Rachel: Really?

Will: Yes.

Rachel: So do I, come to that.

Will: Yeah?

Rachel: Yeah. What's yours called?

Will: Mine? He's called Marcus.


Will: And there it was. It wasn't a lie. It was 100 percent her assumption. Well, 50 percent, at the very least. I was in fantasyland again. But this time it was different. SPAT was far too fast. This was serious. I acted in self-defence. We arranged to get our laptops together. Which means we arranged for us to get together. Single parents, alone together.

Will: I was in deep trouble. And there was only one person who could help me out.

Marcus: Yeah. It's just that I can't really do much at the moment, can I? I mean, Will, that's my dad he likes your mum, and I think she's keen on him.

Ali: She's not keen on him! She's only keen on me!

Will: One amazing thing about Rachel was that I wanted to kiss her every time she was talking about something interesting. Which was all the time. It was sexy. It was weird.

Rachel: I use Bristol boards, India ink and... Am I boring you?

Will: No, no. What?

Rachel: Nothing. It's just you looked like Marcus just then.

Will: Did I?

Rachel: I think it's sweet how much he seems to take after you and the way he dresses like you, as well.

Will: I don't think I dress like Marcus, really.

Rachel: Marcus?

Will: Wait! Hang on. Hang on. Come on, we're going back.

Marcus: He's off his head.

Will: No, he's not.

Marcus: He said he'd cut me up into little pieces and hide me under the floorboards.

Will: He did?

Marcus: No. But I'm sure he's capable of it.

Will: It'll be different. You'll like it, I promise.

Rachel: Marcus, Ali has something to say to you. Doesn't he?


Marcus: It's okay, Ali.

Rachel: Ali finds all this very difficult.

Will: Yeah, so do Marcus. Don't you, mate? You know, I mean, divorced parents... and not knowing how to feel about new people.

Marcus: Yes. Absolutely. Absolutely the way I feel.

Rachel: Ali didn't get along with the last bloke I went out with.

Ali: He was a liar!
Rachel: All right, darling. He wasn't 100 percent good news. I'm not saying that you and I are...

Marcus: That's okay. He fancies you. He told me.

Will: Thanks a lot, mate.

Rachel: Oh, dear.

Will: Cheers, mate.

Rachel: Don't look so worried, sweetheart.

Chapter 9 (01:06:25–01:16:23)

Marcus: Ellie!

Ellie: Marcus? What are you stalking me?

Marcus: No.

Ellie: Too bad. Made me feel like a celebrity. Yeah, but I didn't know that then, did I, sexy?

Will: All I'm saying is, you know, watch out. It just looks a bit more like owner and pet than boyfriend and girlfriend.

Marcus: At least I'm honest.

Will: What does that mean?

Marcus: It's just that you and Rachel...

Will: What? What does that mean?

Marcus: I don't know, just I think there's a problem with you and Rachel. I mean, like, you want to be with her but she thinks you have a son. And you don't, I mean, like if you're going to be with someone shouldn't you tell them things like that?

Will: No.

Marcus: I mean, you know, like the truth.

Will: What's wrong with you?

But later that night, when I was on my own I remembered the deal Marcus was prepared to strike. Yes, I wanted to touch Rachel. But at this moment, if I had the choice, I'd settle for the less and the more that Marcus wanted. Jesus, was I turning into Marcus? Would he be buying me shoes soon? So I took his advice and told Rachel the truth. Or very nearly the truth. That I wasn't Marcus' natural father.

Will: And that is not natural seaweed. The problem was, once I told the truth, I knew there'd be more questions.

Rachel: I don't get it. If you're not Marcus' natural father and you don't live with him, then how is he your son?

Will: Yeah, I see. It must look very confusing from the outside.

Rachel: Tell me how it is on the inside.

Will: It's just one of those long, boring stories. Look, do you want to move on to wine? You want some Chinese rice wine, miss? You would like to try, I suspect, the Panang Panang. Yeah?

Rachel: No.

Will: Anyway, tell me about your relationship with Ali. Is that as complicated as mine and Marcus'?

Rachel: No. I slept with his father, and then nine months later I gave birth. Pretty straightforward.

Will: Yeah. I envy you that.

Rachel: I'm really sorry to harp on about this but I haven't got it all worked out yet. You are Marcus' stepfather, but you don't live with him or with his mother.

Will: No, you see, wait. Look, I never said he was my son. Did I? The words 'I have a son called Marcus', never escaped my lips. It's what you chose to believe.

Rachel: Yeah. Right. It's me that's the fantasist. I wanted to believe that you had a son, so I let my imagination run riot.

Will: Obviously I played a part, I can see that.

Rachel: No! Not at all. I met you and I thought, 'Cute guy. God, if he had a son. A geeky, teenage kid, if possible'. Then you turned up at my house with Marcus, and bingo! Now I made this crazy link 'cause of some deep psychological need in me.

Will: You shouldn't beat yourself up about it. It could have happened to anyone.

Rachel: You know, the first time I met you I thought you were a bit blank. But then you changed my mind. But maybe I was right.

Will: Rachel, listen.

Rachel: Yes?

Will: I'm sorry, you're right. I am a blank. I'm really nothing. I don't know what the hell I was thinking of, I'm sorry.

Marcus: Bye, Ellie.

Ellie: Marcus! My man! Classmates: Bye, Marcus! See you, Marcus!

Marcus: Mum? Teacher: So, if z = 12, does x have to be more than 2? Marcus?

Marcus: I didn't know what the answer was. I didn't know what 'x' equalled. And I didn't know how to help my mum. And then I realized. There was something she said I could do for her. I'm thinking of singing at the school concert.

Ellie: You? At the rock concert? I don't think that would be a very good idea, Marcus.

Marcus: Will you accompany me? All I've got is a tambourine.

Ellie: No, I'm sorry. It's suicide. I mean, like they'll crucify you.

Marcus: Mum's at it again.

Will: At what? Sorry.

Marcus: What do you mean, what? The crying. She sits in the house all day, crying. She sits it in the mornings, too. It's as bad now as it was before the Dead Duck Day.

Will: Marcus, I'm sorry, mate. I'm a bit busy at the moment.

Marcus: You're busy? Doing what? Didn't you hear me?

Will: Yeah, I heard you, I heard you. What do you want me to do about it?

Marcus: I don't know. You could talk to her.

Will: Yeah? And what would I say?

Marcus: I don't know.

Will: Why would she listen to me? Who am I to her? I'm nobody.

Marcus: You're not nobody. You're...

Will: Who? Who do you think I am? Who do you think you are? You've come here uninvited, you disrupt my life, you screw things up. What do you want from me Marcus? This isn't my problem. I'm not your family, mate. I'm not. I'm not your uncle. I'm not your big brother. And

I think we've established pretty firmly that I'm not your father, either, am I?

Marcus: But...

Will: I'll tell you what I am. I'm the guy who's really good at choosing trainers or records, okay? That's it. I can't help you with real things. I can't help you with anything that means anything.

Marcus: You could try. You're right. You can't help me. How could you? You're just a stupid person who hangs around watching TV all day and buys things. You don't give a shit about anybody, and nobody gives a shit about you!

Marcus: Mum had said that when I sang it brought sunshine and happiness into her life. So I'd do it, even if it meant mine was over. Look, Mum.

Chapter 10 (01:06:24–01:30:04)

Will: My life is made up of units of time. Buying CD: two units. Eating lunch: three units. Exercising: two units. All in all, I had a very full life. It's just that it didn't mean anything.

Song: Look who's coming round the back.

Will: The fact was there was only one thing that meant something to me. Marcus was the only thing that meant something to him. And Fiona was the only thing that meant something to her. And she was about to fall off the edge.

Woman at SPAT: Single parents alone together! Single parents alone together! Single parents alone together! All for one and one for all!

Fiona: Wha.

Marcus: Fiona! Woman from SPAT: Will, we haven't seen you for a while. How's Ned?

Will: Who? He's a load of crap. He doesn't exist. Yeah, I made him up.

Another woman: You made him up?

Will: Yeah. To meet women.

Woman: You're sick.

Will: Yeah, Fiona, I've got to talk to you.

Fiona: Go ahead.

Will: No, you know, properly talk to you, privately.

Fiona: No, this is a circle of trust. Whatever you have to say, you can say it in front of everybody.

Will: Okay, please don't try to commit suicide again.

Fiona: I can't believe you just said that. That is my private experience. Will: Yeah, well, that's the thing, isn't it? It's not. Because Marcus is worried about you. And I'm worried about Marcus because he's worried about you.

Fiona: Will, I don't have plans to commit suicide.

Will: You don't?

Fiona: Not at the moment, no.

Will: Great! Great!

Fiona: You know I'm not attracted to you, right?

Will: What are you on about? No. What are you, nuts? All right. Wrong word completely. But that's something that we should, you know, talk about a bit. This crying in the morning thing, the depression.

Let's get that fixed.

Fiona: That's what men think, isn't it?

Will: What?

Fiona: That unless you've got the answer, unless you can say: 'I know this bloke in the Essex Road who could fix that,' then there's no point bothering.

Will: No. Well, okay, I would. I'd love to know the name of the bloke in the Essex Road because I've got a feeling I'd be useless.

Fiona: Will, you're not useless, you're – you're here. And that matters.

Will: What?

Fiona: Now, can we? Do you mind?

Will: What?

Fiona: Marcus is singing at the school concert.

Will: Marcus is singing?

Fiona: Yeah, singing.

Will: At school?

Fiona: It's a pop concert. He's really excited. I want to get there on time.

Will: Wait, wait. What's he singing?

Marcus: Killing me softly with his song. Telling my whole life...

Will: Okay, what time does this thing start?

Fiona: What have you got against Marcus singing anyway?

Will: You know the dream where you turn up at school without your trousers on and everyone laughs at you?

Fiona: What's got to do with anything?

Will: That will be Marcus, but for real. If he sings that song in front of those kids you can just write him off until he reaches university. If he reaches university, 'cause he's going to get torn to shreds.

Fiona: You cannot stop someone from expressing themselves.

Will: He's not expressing himself! He's expressing you, okay?

Fiona: Oh, God.

Will: Jesus Christ

Fiona: You're right. Will, am I a bad mother?

Will: No, you're not a bad mother. You're just a barking lunatic.

Fiona: No. I am. I am a bad mother. I've let things slide and I haven't been noticing properly. He's a special, very, very special boy. And he's got a special soul, and I've wounded it!

Will: Please, just shut up. You're wounding my soul. Okay, you park it.

Fiona: Will: What are you doing there?

Rachel: That's Ali up there.

Will: He's talented.

Mr Chalmers: Now that was the Def Penalty Kru with Murder Fo' Life. Our next big act is Marcus Blandford singing Roberta Flack's beloved 'Killing Me Softly'. He'll be accompanied by Simon Cosgrove on the recorder.

Simon: Marcus, I can't do this. That lot's going to shit all over us.

Marcus: But you said...

Simon: I'm sorry. Here's your five quid back.

Mr Chalmers: Any moment now.

Come on, Marcus, you wally!

Will: Wait! Wait!
Mr Chalmers: Excuse me. What is going on here?
Will: Nothing. Everything’s under control. I’m just his voice coach.
Marcus: What are you doing here?
Will: I heard you were about to commit suicide, so I dropped by.
Marcus: My accompanist left!
Will: That’s brilliant. You don’t have to do it.
Marcus: I can’t do that.
Will: Yeah, you can. Just tell them: Artistic differences. You can’t work without him. He had a drug problem. It’s easy.
Marcus: My mum wants me to sing it. It’ll make her happy.
Will: Look, mate, nothing you do can make your mum happy, all right? I mean, not in the long term. She has to do that for herself.
Mr Chalmers: Get over here right now!
Will: Just bugger off, will you! What I’m saying is, the important thing is to make yourself feel happy.
Marcus: I’ve tried just making myself happy. She’s tried making herself happy. It doesn’t work. You need other people to make you happy.
Will: But that’s just it. If other people can make you happy then they can also make you unhappy. What, you think those people out there are going to make you happy? Hang on. Wait. Marcus, don’t. Marcus! Bollocks.
Audience: Come on, Britney! Yeah, give us a song, then.
Marcus: This is for my mum. I heard he sang a good song I heard he had a style And so I came to see him to listen for a while
And there he was this young boy a stranger to my eyes
Marcus: Strumming my pain with his fingers
Singing my life with his words Killing me softly with his song
Killing me softly
Audience: Who the hell is that?
Song: Telling my whole life with his words
Killing me softly with his song
I felt all flushed with fever embarrassed by the crowd
I felt he found my letters and read each one out loud
I prayed that he would finish but he just kept right on
Strumming my pain with his fingers
Singing my life with his words
Killing me softly
Audience: Give it a rest.
Marcus + Will: Killing me softly with his song
Telling my whole life with his words
Killing me softly
With his song
Will: He sang as if he knew me
Marcus: Will. Will:
In all my dark despair
Marcus: We’re finished.
Will: And then he looked right through me as if I wasn’t there
Marcus: Will, come on. Will, we’re finished.
Will: So there I was, killing them softly with my song. Or rather, being killed. And not that softly, either. I was singing with my eyes closed. Was I frightened? I was petrified. This was definitely not island living. Killing me softly
With his song
Thank you, Finsbury. I’d like to introduce one or two members of the band. Marcus Brewer on vocals and tambourine. And that’s about it. Let’s get off quick. Get off.
Fiona: Marcus, thank you. For the song. You were terrific.
Marcus: You think so?
Fiona: Yeah. As a matter of fact, I think we should celebrate.
Marcus: Okay.
Fiona: How about McDonald’s?
Marcus: McDonald’s?
Fiona: Yeah.
Marcus: Thanks, Mum, but it’s okay.
Fiona: No, really. I want to go to McDonald’s.
Marcus: You know, I’m not really hungry.
Fiona: Come on. Are you telling me you couldn’t murder a Big Mac?
Marcus: Mum!
Fiona: Okay, another time. Any time. I’ll be around a while, you know.
Chapter 11
(1:30:05 – 01:32:22)
Will: By the following Christmas things were back to normal.
TV: Before you came...
Will: Every man is an island. And I stand by that. But clearly, some men are part of island chains. Below the surface of the ocean they’re actually connected.
Ali: So you’re going to marry my mum, then?
Will: Don’t know. Why? You think she’s up for it?
Marcus: I used to want him to marry my mum.
Ali: You serious?
Marcus: Yeah. But that was when she was depressed and I was desperate.
Will: Thanks, mate. Cheers.
Fiona: Will, how do you use this blender-thing?
Will: You don’t.