

# **THE CHALK MAN**

by

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(Based on The Chalk Man by C J Tudor)

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FOUR excited 12 YEAR OLD BOYS run through the WOODS following SIGNS we can't see yet - we're ahead of them, low to the ground, tracking back at speed.

FAT GAV's at the front - FAT GAV's the leader - overweight but super-quick - he spots the next SIGN:

FAT GAV  
Yeah - straight on!

MICKEY's right behind him - MICKEY would love to be leader - he sees the next SIGN; it's showing a change in direction:

MICKEY  
There - over there!

FAT GAV cuts the corner - MICKEY, glancing back, sees the mixed-race fourth BOY lagging behind:

MICKEY (CONT'D)  
Eddie - keep up!

EDDIE has a stitch but sprints to catch them as FAT GAV points out another SIGN:

FAT GAV  
Now this way!

MICKEY  
Where are they taking us!

And, as they alter course again - we get:

Caption: **Summer 1991**

Then the BOYS slow; they've seen something; and now they stop - all bunched-up together - but we keep going till we come to a halt just beyond a DELICATE pale FOREARM and HAND reaching up out of a MOUND of LEAVES; like it's pointing at the sky.

HOPPO, the 4th boy, the quietest boy, touches FAT GAV's arm:

HOPPO  
Who is it - who's under there!

MICKEY  
Yeah, what're they doing?

FAT GAV picks up a branch and creeps forward:

HOPPO  
Gav?

FAT GAV

Shush.

MICKEY

They're gonna jump up!

FAT GAV, ready to bolt at any moment, stretches forwards with the BRANCH, scrapes at the LEAVES - and the LIMB topples over; it's SEVERED; attached to NOTHING - the BOYS stop breathing - they're rooted to the spot - then: MICKEY moves forward to join FAT GAV - HOPPO follows suit - but when MICKEY glances round, EDDIE's still holding back:

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Eddie - get here now!

EDDIE, though, mouth open, can only whisper and point to something further on; beyond the others:

EDDIE

But Mickey - Mickey look!

MICKEY and the others turn to where he's pointing - and we see their POV of: a WHITE CHALK MAN FIGURE drawn on a TREE; a CHALK MAN pointing further into the woods - and then, a few TREES on, another CHALK MAN pointing; these are the SIGNS they've been following - and, as they dare to edge forwards, obeying the directions, their EYES WIDEN as they come across something far far WORSE - and:

## TITLES

2           **EXT. EDDIE'S HOUSE. STREET. ANDERBURY. 2021. DAY.**           2

A bright summer's day - a pleasant residential street - and the comforting sight of a POSTMAN parking his RED TROLLEY, and walking up the garden path to an attractive HOUSE.

Caption: **July 2021**

The POSTMAN reaches the FRONT DOOR - and:

3           **INT. EDDIE'S HOUSE. ANDERBURY. 2021. DAY.**           3

A LETTER comes through the LETTER BOX - and, as it falls, we go into SLOW-MO - the LETTER FLOATS to the floor - it lands and we can see it's addressed to **EDDIE ADAMS**; the ENVELOPE suggests an INVITE - the address is printed.....

Then we're UP TO SPEED as other MAIL and CIRCULARS crash on top of the ENVELOPE, hiding it - and:







GEOFF

They bubble up from nothing.

MARIANNE (VO)

Its sunny all day - BBC said so.

EDDIE's no-nonsense MUM has come in - MARIANNE, 42 and tall, is a doctor - and sometimes scary - EDDIE's learnt not to contradict her - GEOFF's not bothered though:

GEOFF

BBC says lots of things.

MARIANNE nods at EDDIE's WALLET:

MARIANNE

How much are you taking?

EDDIE

(lying)

Two fivers and some change.

MARIANNE

Wear this.

She's holding out a BUMBAG

EDDIE

Oh Muu-uum - no - !

MARIANNE

You're going on rides -

(OF THE WALLET:)

- That'll fall out of your pocket -

EDDIE

But it looks stupid!

MARIANNE

Put it on - or don't go - up to you  
- your choice.

EDDIE, growling, grabs the BUMBAG, stuffs the WALLET in, and fastens it round his waist as he heads out.

MARIANNE (CONT'D)

See you later.

GEOFF

Have fun.

GEOFF's still looking into the FRIDGE.... And we cut to:



And, taking out his WALLET, he shoves the BUMBAG into a HEDGE  
- HOPPO's concerned: it's not really hidden.

HOPPO

Sure you wanna leave it there - I  
can still see it.

MICKEY

Yeah, what if Mummy finds out!

FAT GAV

Oh c'mon - who cares -  
- Dodgems - let's go!

FAT GAV, MICKEY and HOPPO start to move off - EDDIE, stuffing  
his WALLET in his pocket, hesitates:

EDDIE

But Nicky's not here yet!

The TRIO turn back to him:

MICKEY

So what - she'll find us - she's  
always late -

EDDIE

Let's give her five more minutes.

FAT GAV instantly responds with his JOHN McENROE impression:

FAT GAV

FIVE whole MINUTES - how can you  
SAY that - You CANNOT be serious -  
that's one whole RIDE!!

FAT GAV's impressions always crease EDDIE and HOPPO up -  
MICKY's doing ROBOTICS - then, as FAT GAV finishes:

NICKY (O.S.)

What's so funny?

EDDIE beams a smile as he sees NICKY:

EDDIE

Hiya.

FAT GAV

(waving finger at Nicky)  
Late-late-late-late-late-late-late.

NICKY nods and starts handing them batches of LEAFLETS from a  
whole pile she's holding:

HOPPO  
What're these?

NICKY  
My dad wants to me hand them out.

MICKEY  
And you want us to do it!

EDDIE  
I'll help you - I don't mind -

NICKY  
(of the leaflets)  
Look at them.

Some read: **1 CROSS + 3 NAILS = 4 GIVEN** and others say:  
**ETERNAL LIFE - THE RIDE THAT GOES ON FOREVER.**

FAT GAV  
Buck-a-double-crap-a-roo!

NICKY  
Yeah - so -  
(SHE SETS OFF FOR THE  
FAIR:)  
These go in here -

She dumps THREE-QUARTERS of the LEAFLETS in a BIN - then, of the ones she and the are still holding, she starts running towards the RIDES shouting:

NICKY (CONT'D)  
And these go...!

She scatters LEAFLETS to the WIND as she races for the DODGEMS - the BOYS laugh and follow suit - and we cut to:

15 **EXT. FAIRGROUND. 1991. DAY.**

15

A MONTAGE of the FRIENDS on FAIRGROUND RIDES - on: the ORBITER, the DODGEMS, the METEORITE - with bouts of eating HOT DOGS and CANDY FLOSS - then:

They're at the RIFLE RANGE - they've waited till they can all shoot together - so the FRIENDS are in a line - but as EDDIE goes to pay: he hasn't got his WALLET - and as the others get their PELLETS he checks his pockets and looks around:

GAV  
Okay - we all fire together on the count of three, yeah?

MICKEY

And we take it in turn to do the  
count -

HOPPO

Who goes first, Gav?

GAV/MICKEY

Me/Me!

NICKY

Girls go first -

Then:

EDDIE

I've lost my wallet.

They all look along the line to him. EDDIE feels like he  
wants to cry.

NICKY

Where did you last have it?

EDDIE

...Hot Dog stand -

HOPPO

I'll come and look -

FAT GAV/MICKEY

We've all paid!/We're just about to  
start!

EDDIE

(embarrassed)

It's okay -

MICKEY

(back to rifle-range)

Yeah - c'mon - get loaded up -  
who's ready - everyone ready - ?  
- Nicky: count of three.

And, as the FRIENDS start firing, EDDIE trudges off back  
across the FAIR to the distant HOT DOG stand near the WALTZER  
- he checks the GROUND as he goes - he sees some of NICKY's  
DAD's PAMPHLETS trodden into the MUD - but no sign of the  
WALLET - so he quickens his pace - and:

16

**EXT. HOT DOG STAND/WALTZER. FAIRGROUND. 1991. DAY.**

16

The noise of the WALTZER dominates as EDDIE approaches the  
HOT DOG STAND.

EDDIE checks the ground all around: nothing - which is dispiriting except he spots SOMEONE who distracts him for a moment: it's a PALE MAN - HALLORAN - 36 - so striking - weird even - he's an ALBINO - and dressed mainly in WHITE - so it's almost like he's a ghost - except he's sucking a BLUE SLUSHY through a STRAW as he watches the WALTZER. EDDIE remembers his WALLET - and makes himself ask the HOT DOG STAND MAN:

EDDIE

Excuse me - did I leave my wallet here?

HOT DOG MAN

Did you what?

EDDIE

...Did I leave my wallet here.

The HOT DOG MAN, looking at him like he's mad, shakes his head and says:

HOT DOG MAN

Nah, mate.

But we can only hear:

WALTZER

SCREAM IF YOU WANNA GO FASTER!

EDDIE, despondent, looks round, checking the ground again. The PALE MAN's still there; still fixed on the WALTZER; maybe he knows someone on the RIDE, EDDIE looks - and sees:

TWO GIRLS, 16 & 17, standing in FRONT of the WALTZER, in RARA SKIRTS and T-SHIRTS; so unaware of how beautiful they are, sharing a WALKMAN and its headphones; lost in the music, and for half a beat EDDIE can't place where he knows them from - because he does recognise them - then, as the DARK-HAIRED, most beautiful GIRL does a half-turn, he realises and, with an intake of breath, we cut to:

17

**EXT. A POND. THE WOODS. 1991. FLASHBACK. EARLY EVENING** 17

EDDIE, on his own, deep in the woods one evening, swishing at FERNS with a STICK, till he hears: TWO GIRLS' VOICES, some way off, daring each other:

HANNAH (O.S.)

I will if you will.

Oh my God!

What - we're really doing this?

EDDIE runs towards where the VOICES are coming from - then moves forwards quietly as he hears sounds he can't fathom:

ELISA (O.S.)  
 Straight in - just come in - it's  
 so good.

It's the sound of water, and we cut to EDDIE's POV and see:

ELISA and HANNAH, the WALTZER GIRLS, backs-to-us, naked, in a deep, secret, spring-fed POOL, that nestles in a wide, crater-like, tree-ringed HOLLOW.

EDDIE's face is a picture - then, as ELISA, the dark-haired girl, half turns her head so we can see her profile, the SOUNDS of the WALTZER return, and we cut back to:

18

**EXT. BY THE WALTZER. FAIRGROUND. 1991. DAY.**

18

ELISA, laughing with HANNAH, in front of the WALTZER, watched by EDDIE - everything about her is captivating; even her GOLD HOOPED EARRING glinting in the sun - in fact her beauty's too much for EDDIE - it makes him feel guilty and self-conscious; so he has to look away - except now he sees the PALE MAN, HALLORAN smiling in the direction of the girls - like he's enthralled too - and just as EDDIE's about to see if it's the GIRLS that HALLORAN's watching, there's a DREADFUL ear-splitting, high-velocity sound of metal shearing-off - and:

It's dreadful: a rush of disintegrating METAL and splintering WOOD hurtles through the air as a WALTZER CAR leaves its TRACKS and FLIES off the ride, it demolishes the WIN-A-GOLDFISH STALL, and tears past EDDIE; crashing into the HOT DOG STALL - EDDIE's thrown up in the air. There are SCREAMS - and, when he lands, EDDIE's trampled on; kicked in the ribs, his wrist is stamped on - he tucks-up and rolls - but a STANCHION from the HOTDOG STALL gives way under the weight of half a WALTZER CAR; sending debris down on top of him - and:

EDDIE's in semi-darkness - and very STILL for a moment - then he finds out he can move, and draws breath, to call out, but:

ELISA (O.S.)  
 (so quietly)  
 Help me.  
 (EDDIE FREEZES)  
 Help me....

He looks to his left and he's right by WALTZER GIRL, who lays there badly injured, a terrible GASH down one side of her FACE; her beauty destroyed in an instant - but also, SHARDS of LIGHT pick out that GOLD HOOPED EARRING that's laying by her left LEG - a LEG that's almost severed just below the KNEE; it's hanging on by its tendons - there's blood everywhere - EDDIE starts trembling; he just wants to flee, but now the GIRL reaches out a hand:

ELISA (CONT'D)  
Please - please -

And as her head moves EDDIE sees the full extent of the DAMAGE to her EYE - and THAT sends him into flashbacks of:

19 **EXT. A POND. THE WOODS. 1991. FLASHBACK. EARLY EVENING** 19

EDDIE's POV of ELISA's FACE when beautiful, in the WOODS; in the POOL - although now a SHADOWY FIGURE looms-in:

SHADOWY FIGURE (O.S.)  
Got you -

20 **EXT. DEMOLISHED HOTDOG STALL. FAIRGROUND. 1991. DAY.** 20

And a HAND steadies EDDIE as he tries to MOVE away from the injured ELISA - and, in a soft voice, HALLORAN says:

HALLORAN  
You're alright - it's okay - I know  
you're scared, but I need you to  
listen very carefully to me, yes?

EDDIE stares at HALLORAN: he's such a strange sight; he is leaning in through a HOLE in the debris that's twisted all around EDDIE and ELISA.

HALLORAN (CONT'D)  
What's your name?

EDDIE  
...Eddie.

HALLORAN  
Okay, Eddie - you hurt?  
(EDDIE SHAKES HIS HEAD)  
Good. But this young lady is - so  
we have to help her, yes?  
(EDDIE NODS)  
This is what I need you to do...  
Turn to face her.

EDDIE does - and HALLORAN stretches in and places EDDIE's hands on ELISA's leg, above the knee - the GIRL's eyes are closed; her breathing is getting shallow and is rasping:

HALLORAN (CONT'D)  
Hold her leg here - both hands  
round - Good - but tight - tight as  
you can - got it?

EDDIE, bottom lip trembling, nods - HALLORAN leans back out to take his BELT off - we stay with EDDIE - but hear:

HALLORAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Need that ambulance here as soon as  
it arrives!

HOT DOG MAN (O.S.)  
(of the debris)  
Want us to shift this?

HALLORAN (O.S.)  
Let me get this tourniquet on first

HALLORAN leans back in, and reaches over EDDIE to wrap his  
BELT round the top of ELISA's injured leg:

HALLORAN (CONT'D)  
Still with me, Eddie?

EDDIE  
...Yes.

And he starts crying.

HALLORAN  
Good boy - concentrate - hold it  
tighter - that's it - yeah -

HALLORAN secures the BELT; and the TOURNIQUET works:

HALLORAN (CONT'D)  
You can let go now.

EDDIE does - but now he starts shaking - and:

HALLORAN (CONT'D)  
Here - c'mon -

And as HALLORAN lifts EDDIE out:

EDDIE  
Is she going to be okay?

HALLORAN  
....I don't know - yeah - hopefully  
- but you did great, Eddie - you  
were great.  
There you go.

HALLORAN puts EDDIE down and goes back to ELISA - we stay  
with EDDIE; someone puts their COAT round him - EDDIE's in a  
daze; everything's a blur - then, as we pull up and away to  
take in the whole sight, we might glimpse EDDIE slipping  
ELISA's GOLD HOOP EARRING into his pocket - and we cut to:



ED's ready for this:

ED

Well, I thought we'd meet in town -  
there's a new Indian -

MICKEY

What - ?

ED

Yeah - it's terrific -

MICKEY

No, no, no, no-no-no-no - I wanna  
see the old house - that's half the  
fun -

ED's looking round - the HOUSE was 'done' three years ago:  
virtually nothing's the same:

ED

Well, it's - (*all changed*)

MICKEY

Ed - I'm coming to you -  
- Tell you what: I'll get us a  
takeaway from your Indian - how's  
that - yeah: sold to the teacher at  
the front of the class!

He laughs - and it's a laugh that makes EDDIE feel MICKEY  
knows he's at home and not at school:

MICKEY (CONT'D)

See you at eight.

MICKEY rings off.

25      **INT. KITCHEN. EDDIE'S HOUSE. ANDERBURY. 2021. DAY.**      25

ED, stands there, PHONE in hand; he's been steam-rollered; he  
looks pained - and:

CHLOE (O.S.)

What's the matter?

ED looks round: CHLOE, his lodger, is in the KITCHEN DOORWAY:  
sleep crumpled and yawning; the fringe of her dyed black hair  
sticking up in a cowlick, still wearing pyjamas, CHLOE's 25,  
maybe 26 - even 27 - under the layers of last night's make-  
up; who knows.

ED frowns at her - there's a hint of disapproval:

ED

Didn't go to work today?

CHLOE

(irritated by that)

My day's just starting -

(SHE GOES TO THE FRIDGE)

- I'm on late-shift - we're doing stocktaking - but hey: maybe I'll have a Me Too moment in the store room with Andreas - I think we're building towards one - fingers crossed, yeah?

She turns back 'smiling', with 'armfuls of food' - ED doesn't respond; he's lost in thinking about MICKEY:

CHLOE (CONT'D)

Oh, c'mon - what - what is it!

ED comes-to - and groans:

ED

I've got this friend coming round for dinner.

CHLOE

(what's the problem?)

That's nice, isn't it?

ED

If we were meeting somewhere neutral and I could escape, yeah - but he wants to come here -

CHLOE

Get a load of drink in.

ED

He isn't like that - well, he wasn't - maybe he is now - I haven't see him in 20 years - he lives in London -

(AND AS ANOTHER THOUGHT  
OCCURS HE SUDDENLY SAYS)

Shit!

He heads back out to the HALL - and as he puts his RAINCOAT on:

CHLOE (O.S.)

D'you want me to call in sick - cos I can be here if that would help?

ED stops and looks back at CHLOE: she's in the KITCHEN DOORWAY eating YOGHURT from the POT with her fingers:

ED  
No - you're alright -

CHLOE  
(knowing/teasing smile)  
Wouldn't make the right impression?

ED almost smiles - but he's got too much on his mind so, leaving it at that, he heads off with.

ED  
See you later.

CHLOE  
Good luck.  
Oh, I put my rent on the side - did you - (see it?)

But ED's left the house.

26      **EXT. EDDIE'S HOUSE. ANDERBURY. 2021. DAY.**      26

ED walks down his front garden PATH - checking the time:

ED (V.O.)  
I had a problem.  
If Mickey was coming to my house -  
I had to tell Gav and Hoppo -  
- Gav especially -  
- And face to face.

ED, shaking his head at the prospect, walks down the road:

ED  
Actually: going to Gav's - for his  
12th birthday, was the next big  
event after the fair.

And we cut to:

27      **EXT. THE BULL. 1991. DAY.**      27

THE BULL, a stand-alone PUB with loads of BALLOONS outside - and a sparkly '**HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GAV**' BANNER over the ENTRANCE:

ED (V.O.)  
His parents owned a pub and threw  
great parties - they invited  
everyone.

EDDIE and his MUM and DAD (GEOFF's in shorts as ever) walk into frame and head for the PUB ENTRANCE - ED's carrying a wrapped present - and:

28

**INT. THE BULL. 1991. DAY.**

28

EDDIE and his parents enter the PUB - FAT GAV's there - in Hawaiian SHORTS and a neon green T-SHIRT with **ALMOST A TEENAGER** on it:

FAT GAV

Hey - hi - thanks for coming -

MARIANNE/GEOFF

Happy birthday, Gavin!/Many happy returns!

EDDIE

Happy birthday, yeah.

EDDIE holds out his PRESENT.

FAT GAV

Wow - thanks!

GAV's MUM AND DAD arrive, greeting EDDIE's PARENTS:

GAV'S DAD

Hey - glad you could make it!

FAT GAV drags EDDIE away:

FAT GAV

This way - through here - come and see what we've got!

They race off - but we stay with EDDIE's PARENTS as GAVIN's DAD introduces ANOTHER COUPLE to them:

GAV'S DAD

Jenny, Vijay - this is Geoff and Doctor Adams -

MARIANNE

Marianne, please -

29

**INT. CORRIDOR. THE BULL. 1991. DAY.**

29

FAT GAV, rips the WRAPPING PAPER off EDDIE's PRESENT (it's an AIRFIX KIT) as he leads EDDIE to a WINDOWED CORRIDOR that looks onto the GARDEN; where there are 40+ PEOPLE and SCHOOL FRIENDS; including MICKEY and HOPPO - but in this CORRIDOR, there's a TRESTLE-TABLE full of all the GIFTS GAV's received - and, on a CLOSE-UP of EDDIE taking them all in:

ED (V.O.)

Fat Gav got an insane number of presents - more than I'd had in all my birthdays put together -

EDDIE's AIRFIX GIFT joins the rest with a cursory:

FAT GAV

Great - thanks -  
- Okay: we've got a barbecue -  
we've got an awesome magician - and  
we've got TWENTY WATER-GUNS!

ED

Twenty!

FAT GAV

With paddling pools already filled  
for reloads - let's go!!

30

**EXT. PUB GARDEN. THE BULL. 1991. DAY.**

30

FAT GAV and EDDIE race out into the PUB GARDEN - and we get a flavour of the next half-hour with:

A MONTAGE of: the WATER-FIGHT - with its TWO-SIDES; its chasing and ambushes - and ADULTS insisting the WATER FIGHT stays away from the BARBECUE - then we get:

The MAGICIAN - doing close-up TRICKS - particularly on GAV - making the CARD he's chosen appear in the BOTTLE of COKE he's drinking!

During the next TRICK, EDDIE sees NICKY arriving with her DAD, PASTOR MARTIN. MICKEY and HOPPO also clock this:

MICKEY

Nicky's in a dress!

She is - EDDIE thinks she looks lovely - NICKY hates it; and stands by PASTOR MARTIN staring at the ground.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Why doesn't her dad wear a dog collar like other vicars?

HOPPO

Cos he's not a vicar - he's a Pastor.

MICKEY

You mean like a bowl of spaghetti?  
(EDDIE AND HOPPO LAUGH)  
Looks more like a quiz-show host.

Which is true - he has the SMILE and dress sense of a TV HOST - then, as they keep watching him, PASTOR MARTIN takes a passing GLASS of WINE and starts talking to EDDIE's MUM.

EDDIE

Wonder what he got Gav for his birthday?

HOPPO

A prayer book or something.

EDDIE

Yeah!

MICKEY doesn't like HOPPO trying to be funny - to punish him, he looks around, asking a question he knows the answer to:

MICKEY

Where's your mum - I can't see her.

HOPPO

She's working.

MICKEY

How many toilets does she clean a week?

FAT GAV (O.S.)

Mickey - come and watch this!

MICKEY goes. HOPPO blinks, then turns to EDDIE - but EDDIE's watching NICKY being sent by PASTOR MARTIN to join a GROUP of GIRLS on the far side - and, on her way to join them, she passes a familiar figure: TALL and SKINNY, talking to a group of PARENTS - it's MR HALLORAN, EDDIE's co-hero from the FAIR who, on seeing EDDIE looking his way, smiles and briefly raises his hand. EDDIE, instantly awkward, gives a half wave back. HOPPO's seen HALLORAN too.

HOPPO

He's going to teach at our school from September.

(EDDIE NODS)

My mum cleans the cottage next to his. He's come here early to get to know the area before he starts.

EDDIE always has the desire to move away from HOPPO when he's on his own with him - and EDDIE wants the LOO right now - but won't tell HOPPO because he's bound to say: 'Me as well.'

So EDDIE looks back at the MAGICIAN - and when HOPPO follows suit, EDDIE leaves - heading back inside.





GEOFF  
If you ever, EVER talk to my wife  
like that again -

GAV's DAD, the PUBLICAN, experienced in these matters, is  
between them at speed:

GAV'S DAD  
And that's it - that's enough -

We cut to EDDIE - still with the other KIDS as PASTOR MARTIN  
gets to his feet spouting scripture:

PASTOR MARTIN  
Jeremiah 1 - verse 5: ' Before I  
formed you in the womb I knew you!'

GAV'S DAD  
I said -

PASTOR MARTIN's turned to EDDIE's MUM and raises his voice:

PASTOR MARTIN  
'Before you were born I set you  
apart - '

GEOFF  
You wanna go down again!

MARIANNE  
Geoff - no!

Everyone piles in between them - and we cut to:

EDDIE mortified - HOPPO shocked - but FAT GAV and MICKEY,  
mouths open in disbelief, loving it - and now they watch as:

NICKY arrives and grabs her DAD's arm to pull him away:

NICKY  
Daddy - stop it - come away -

But PASTOR MARTIN shrugs her away with a loud barked:

PASTOR MARTIN  
OFF!

He's so rough, NICKY, stumbles and falls - and maybe, at this  
moment, we notice some bruises on her legs - old discoloured  
bruises as her dress rides up - but she's helped, and is  
quickly up - and PASTOR MARTIN now raises his palms as:

GAV'S DAD  
Everyone calm down now.

PASTOR MARTIN

Thank you - yes - thank you - calm  
is restored -

(HE WIPES BLOOD FROM HIS  
NOSE)

- And...

(TO GAV'S PARENTS)

Thank you for inviting us -  
apologies for the disturbance -

(GLANCES AT MARIANNE)

- But sometimes one must speak out -

Which GEOFF starts to react to - but MARIANNE tells him:

MARIANNE

Leave it.

Which GEOFF does - as the departing PASTOR MARTIN barks at  
his daughter again:

PASTOR MARTI

Nicola!

NICKY hurries off after her FATHER - she glances back - and  
catches EDDIE's gaze; the briefest moment - then she's gone  
as EDDIE's thumped on the back by MICKEY:

MICKEY

Your dad just punched the  
spaghetti!

EDDIE

(blushing)

Yeah, I know -

- Really sorry, Gav -

FAT GAV

You're kidding - who's ever gonna  
forget this birthday!

MARIANNE (O.S.)

Eddie?

EDDIE looks round; his MUM coming over - he goes to meet her:

MARIANNE (CONT'D)

Your dad and I are going to head  
home.

EDDIE

...Okay.

MARIANNE

You can stay if you want.

EDDIE's so torn - but, glancing round, he sees MICKEY and FAT GAV re-enacting the fight:

MICKEY

Bob Marley takes down the lasagna!

EDDIE

(back to his mum)

No - it's okay - I'll come too.

They head out - with EDDIE's parents apologising to EVERYONE - EDDIE hates it - then as they head into the PUB on their way out - cut to:

35

**INT./EXT THE BULL. 1991. DAY.**

35

FAT GAV's MUM running after them:

FAT GAV'S MUM

Eddie - Eddie - wait - here!

She disappears - then quickly reappears with:

FAT GAV'S MUM (CONT'D)

Your Goodie Bag!

EDDIE

Oh - thanks...

GEOFF

Sorry again -

FAT GAV'S MUM

It's fine.

Her smile says: let's not talk about it any more - and:

GEOFF and MARIANNE head out of the PUB - EDDIE trails them - the PUB is in the background - we see the '**HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GAV**' BANNER again.

GEOFF

Shouldn't have hit him.

MARIANNE

No, you shouldn't.

GEOFF rubs the side of his head, just forward of his temple - rubs it hard - MARIANNE looks concerned:

MARIANNE (CONT'D)

You okay?

He nods - but rubs on.

During this, we've seen EDDIE, behind them, transfer a MUTANT TURTLE ACTION FIGURE from his pocket to his GOODIE BAG - EDDIE stole an ACTION FIGURE earlier, on his way to the GENTS - then, as soon as it's in the GOODIE-BAG, we cut round to BEHIND the trio - to a low angle as EDDIE asks:

EDDIE

What happened, Dad - why did you hit him - what did he say to Mum?

GEOFF

.....Later, Eddie.

And we let them leave shot - and hold on the SKY for a beat - till:

ED, in his RAINCOAT, walks into shot and stops; we're back in 2021 - and, via a CLOSE-UP, we see: ED's nervous, as we hear:

ED (V.O.)

Gav owns the pub now.

We cut to: ED's POV - and see:

36

**EXT. THE BULL. 2021. DAY.**

36

The BULL in 2021 - completely refurbished:

ED (V.O.)

His parents moved to Portugal.

We cut back to ED - he's still just standing there:

ED (V.O.)

I come here a lot -  
- But never to say: Mickey's coming to dinner.

And ED says out loud to himself:

ED

Just do it.

And we cut to:

37

**INT. THE BULL. 2021. DAY.**

37

ED coming into the PUB - inside's been refurbished too - and we track ED to the BAR:

ED

Hi.

The BARMAID's surly - she nods (which equals a smile) and taps the IPA pump handle.

ED (CONT'D)

Thanks.

(SHE PULLS HIS PINT)

Is Gav - (*in*)

SURLY BARMAID

With Hoppo - through there.

And we jump cut to:

ED, with his PINT, heading through the PUB - and there's GAV, 43, sitting at a table, on his LAP-TOP. GAV's really looked after himself; he's powerfully built - the fat's all muscle now - and with him is HOPPO, 42, still so boyish - and HOPPO clocks ED - but turns away as GAV hisses:

GAV

Don't fucking look at him!

Which ED hears - but still keeps coming - and joins them - except, when he puts his drink down and takes a seat, GAV snaps his LAP-TOP shut - and we're thinking: what's going to happen, what's going on, when GAV suddenly pushes himself away from the table and nimbly swings himself round and forwards in a WHEELCHAIR: GAV's in a WHEELCHAIR and, reaching forward, he scoops/tips the PINT of IPA into ED's lap with:

GAV (CONT'D)

Call yourself a fucking friend!

And he's off - GAV's gone - manoeuvring his CHAIR so quickly - leaving HOPPO to hover - and he'd maybe apologise, but:

GAV (O.S.) (CONT'D)

HOPPO, C'MON - WE'VE GOT PRACTICE -  
LEAVE HIM!

And HOPPO goes too - leaving ED, sitting there, soaked in BEER - looking like he's pissed himself - and we cut to:

38 INT. PUB TOILETS. 2021. DAY.

38

ED, standing in front of the TURBO HAND DRYER, trying to dry his TROUSERS and RAINCOAT - not that easy - and embarrassing when other MEN enter - and:

39 EXT. THE BULL. 2021. DAY.

39

ED - RAINCOAT off - holding it in front of his lap - comes out of the PUB and looks away to the LEFT: to a new-build SPORTS COMPLEX. ED weighs up the options - and heads for it.



HOPPO

Yeah - Mickey called me yesterday  
and...mentioned he was meeting you  
tonight -

GAV

And you never told us.

ED

Yeah, cos I was waiting to see if I  
could find out what it's about - so  
I'd have more to say than, y'know:  
Mickey's coming to dinner -

GAV

Mickey's coming - (*to dinner!*)  
- You've invited him to dinner!

ED

I wanted to eat out -

GAV

Who gives a fuck - you're happy to  
have in your home -

ED

I'm not happy with any of this -

GAV

So just say: I don't want to see  
you, Mickey - or do what Hoppo did:  
put the phone down on him -

ED

I'm not like that -

GAV

(getting cross again)  
Yeah, no - what ARE you like, Ed!  
Mickey Cooper put me in this chair;  
he did this to me - and he can say  
as much as he likes it wasn't his  
fault - but it was!

(AND GAV ISSUES A  
WARNING:)

So don't be a messenger for him,  
Ed.  
In fact, you can give HIM a message  
from me, since you're so keen to  
see him - tell him: fuck off and  
die.

HOPPO looks pained: his friends were only friends again for a  
moment - and now they hear:



47

**EXT. PARK. 1991. DAY.**

47

An ARTIST'S HAND sketching PARK LIFE SCENES in PASTELS - we watch the deftness and speed - then tilt up to see the SCENE that's being sketched: TWO MOTHERS with their sitting-up but not walking yet BABIES - AND, on the edge of frame: 12 year old EDDIE standing there watching the ARTIST - we cut to:

EDDIE, centre-frame, holding his BIKE, watching the artist - who, when we cut to EDDIE'S POV, is HALLORAN; sitting on a BENCH with a tray of PASTELS.

EDDIE dithers - not sure whether to say hello; partly because HALLORAN'S albinism is still surprising to him. HALLORAN, without looking up, breaks the ice:

HALLORAN

Hi, Eddie.

EDDIE

Hi, Mr Halloran.

HALLORAN

(still drawing)

How are you?

EDDIE

...Um, fine thanks, sir.

HALLORAN

Good.

There's a beat - HALLORAN keeps sketching.

EDDIE

Can I ask what you're drawing?

HALLORAN looks at EDDIE - and smiles - his TEETH seem so yellow with his FACE being so WHITE.

HALLORAN

Want to look?

EDDIE lays his BIKE down - goes over - and HALLORAN turns his PAD so EDDIE can see - EDDIE lets out a little gasp:

EDDIE

Oh - that's so good!

(HIS EYES LOOK FROM THE  
PAD TO THE MOTHERS ON  
THE GRASS - THE SKETCH  
IS EVEN BETTER)

Are there any others?

HALLORAN smiles and FLIPS the pages of his SKETCH BOOK - more PARK SCENES - an OLD MAN and his ancient DOG, a BOXER with his TRAINER (3 quick sketches on one page) EDDIE loves them:

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Wow.

Then he glimpses DRAWINGS of a GIRL - maybe the WALTZER GIRL, ELISA - possibly - but HALLORAN's not showing these:

HALLORAN

That's other stuff.

And HALLORAN flips back to the MOTHERS and BABIES sketches and carries on drawing - there's the slightest awkward beat - then EDDIE asks:

EDDIE

Are those crayons?

HALLORAN

Pastels - they have oil in them so you can smudge and blend the colours. Can't do that with crayons - you can do it with chalks

EDDIE

Fat Gav got chalks for his birthday.

HALLORAN

Did he?

EDDIE

Yeah - but he likes things that light-up and flash and...

HALLORAN

Squirt water.

EDDIE

Yeah! He thinks chalks are sissy.

HALLORAN

He's missing out - when I was a kid we used them to draw on pavements and all sorts.

EDDIE

Really?

HALLORAN

We made up a secret code and left each other messages - cos chalk writes on all sorts of surfaces.

(MORE)

HALLORAN (CONT'D)

And you can get rid of the evidence  
- you can rub them out.

EDDIE's face is a picture: CHALKS and SECRET CODES is such a great idea - HALLORAN laughs - and:

48

**EXT. PLAYGROUND. ANDERBURY. 1981. DAY.**

48

EDDIE, with FAT GAV, MICKEY, HOPPO, and NICKY - he's trying to sell the idea of using CHALKS to leave each other secret messages; he's using the TUB of CHALKS FAT GAV got for his birthday - but it's NOT catching fire - MICKEY's trying to take charge AND rubbish it at the same time; he takes a piece of CHALK and writes on a WALL as he says:

MICKEY

What, you mean like: **A's** really **E**  
and **B's F** - ?

He's written an **E** under an **A**, and an **F** under a **B**.

FAT GAV

What - no!

NICKY

That would take forever.

HOPPO

And people would see it was words.

FAT GAV

Yeah - stops being secret pretty quick -

MICKEY

Sorry, Eddie - crapperoo-idea.

NICKY

We can play Hangman with them,  
though -

NICKY chalks FIVE DASHES on the CONCRETE SLABS:

NICKY (CONT'D)

Guess the word, a letter at a time.

EDDIE

Oh yeah! **T**?

NICKY

No.

NICKY draws a CIRCLE alongside the dashes.

EDDIE  
E?

NICKY  
No!

She draws a 'stick' NECK.

MICKEY  
S!

NICKY  
No!

She draws a stick ARM - and:

FAT GAV  
Hey!

He takes a CHALKS and draws a STICK MAN - and:

FAT GAV (CONT'D)  
We use these - and symbols -  
they're our code!

NICKY  
And we each have our own colour!

MICKEY  
But what does it mean?

NICKY  
Okay - what's this? And I'm red -

As NICKY draws, there's a dash to claim colours:

FAT GAV/MICKEY/EDDIE/HOPPO  
I'm blue!/Orange!/Green!/Purple.

NICKY's drawn a RED STICK MAN with a STICK TREE next to it:

NICKY  
What does that say?

A beat as they stare at it - then:

EDDIE  
Nicky's in the woods!

NICKY  
YEAH!

They all erupt with enthusiasm - and start drawing their own  
CHALK MEN in their own colours:



ED  
Good - fine.

MICKEY  
What's he like - is he another  
Rasta?

ED  
(a smile)  
No - he's a doctor too.

MICKEY  
Did they meet down the abortion  
clinic?  
(MICKEY LAUGHS - THEN IS  
STRAIGHT ONTO:)  
Can I have a drink?

ED  
...Yeah -  
(OF THE MACALLAN)  
- You want this - or -

ED's opened the fridge - MICKEY spots what's on offer:

MICKEY  
(of the whiskey)  
Yeah: that - and a beer.

ED  
Okay - ice?

MICKEY  
Sorry?

ED  
...Do you want ice?

MICKEY  
Sorry?

ED's not sure what's happening - MICKEY touches the MACALLAN:

MICKEY (CONT'D)  
Do you know how much this costs?  
No. No ice.  
(THEN, AS EDDIE DOES THE  
DRINKS)  
I've ordered a Thai for 9.30

And MICKEY walks through to the UTILITY room - where there's  
FOLDED WASHING on top of the TUMBLE DRYER; two piles; on top  
of one, there's a BRA:

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Eddie - Eddie -

He picks up the BRA and takes it back to the kitchen:

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Wife or girlfriend?

EDDIE's thrown by MICKEY handling the BRA:

ED

Lodger.

MICKEY smiles conspiratorially - and, of the BRA:

MICKEY

Big lodger.

Then as MICKEY disappears to put the BRA back - we do a time jump - and cut to:

**80 minutes later** - and they've sunk a load of BEERS and more than half of the MACALLAN's without anything to eat - and MICKEY's on his favourite subject: himself.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

We get awards, we win prizes every year, we've got 80 plus brands - anyone who knows anything about advertising will tell you: we're a top three agency -  
- And it's Baker **Cooper** and Magnus; my name's in lights -

ED

(bring polite)

Great.

MICKEY

Oh yeah - I could never say I'm disappointed.

(HE'S SUDDENLY  
EXPANSIVE:)

But what's going on - why am I here - what's all this about!

And beaming a smile, MICKEY swings his SHOULDER BAG onto the table - it's been by his CHAIR:

MICKEY (CONT'D)

More beer - and a top up.

ED does as he's told. Then before MICKEY OPENS his bag:

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Okay.  
Soon as I say this, you're going to go: oh right, yeah, of course, cos - well...

(HE STOPS HIMSELF -  
ANOTHER SMILE)

I've been talking to media contacts - broadcasters - commissioners - people who get things done - and... I've got backers who want us to revisit the events of 30 years ago -

ED

What?

MICKEY

They want a ten-part podcast on the summer Of '92 - we might even call it: 'The Summer Of '92' -

ED

What are you talking about?

MICKEY

People go crazy for True Crime content - especially unsolved crimes cos then they can get involved and start doing their own investigations and detective work -

ED

Mickey -

MICKEY

Yeah?

ED

No.

MICKEY

Listen -

ED

No -

MICKEY

Eddie - Ed - it's thirty years ago - it's an anniversary - there's going to be media interest whether you like it or not - so -

And MICKEY produces one of the BROCHURES and hands it to ED - it's personalised: **EDDIE ADAMS** is embossed on the front.

ED stares at it.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

The podcast's going to happen - and  
I want you onboard -

(ED DRAWS BREATH)

Hear me out.

(ED TAKES A DRINK)

Good.

This is how I see it.

Each of us gets an episode - our  
own episode - so that's five out of  
the ten - then, as the picture  
builds, we start cross-referencing;  
making connections - looking at the  
facts, yes - but also at: memory -  
perceptions - perspective -  
childhood trauma - truth and lies -

MICKEY'S VOICE CROSS-FADES with the BLOOD-RUSHING sound in  
ED'S head as he turns the PAGES of 'his' BROCHURE - which we  
see too - and see again:

NEWS CUTTINGS of the FAIRGROUND ACCIDENT - of ELISA the  
WALTZER GIRL - which, in turn, provoke FLASHBACK images of:

ELISA in the WOODS, with her friend HANNAH - being spied on  
by EDDIE - then we're back to the BROCHURE seeing:

Newspaper shots of EDDIE and HALLORAN together - then:

We're on ED'S FACE as he turns pages and sees coverage of  
EVENTS WE DON'T WANT TO REVEAL YET - then, on a PAGE-TURN and  
a REACTION, we cut to the BROCHURE and:

A NEWSPAPER HEADLINE announcing: **BOYS FIND DISMEMBERED BODY  
IN WOODS** - there's a PHOTO of the BOYS, standing together,  
looking sombre - which prompts more super-fast FLASHBACKS to:

DISMEMBERED BODY PARTS - including, this time, a delicate LEG  
severed mid-THIGH; the BOYS running through the trees - then:

ED'S turned to the last page which includes a NEWSPAPER PHOTO  
of a PEUGEOT 505 wrapped around a tree with the headline:  
**teen will never walk again after horror crash** - and now we're  
hearing MICKEY again - and we're back with ED, looking at him  
as he says:

MICKEY (CONT'D)

And the good news is, as well as  
having your story told, you get  
shares in the project - and money  
up front -

The DOORBELL goes and MICKEY's PHONE PINGS; both at the same time - ED, already on the way to being pissed, can't think who it is - MICKEY checking his watch knows:

MICKEY (CONT'D)  
That's our Take-away.

ED stands, getting his WALLET out - MICKEY waves him away:

MICKEY (CONT'D)  
Already paid for -  
- Just go and get it.

ED stares at MICKEY for a moment - then sways his way to the FRONT DOOR - and collects TWO CARRIER-BAGS of THAI, saying to the DELIVERY RIDER, once too often:

ED  
Thanks - thank you - thank you -  
thanks - thank you.

ED shuts the door, comes back, puts the BAGS on the side, and is getting PLATES etc when he sees MICKEY plugging a VARIABLE-D MIC into his iPhone; the MIC's on a small STAND - MICKEY's angling it towards ED's chair.

ED (CONT'D)  
What's that?

MICKEY  
I'm recording out conversation.

ED  
...What for?

MICKEY  
For the podcast.

ED  
Mickey, no -

MICKEY  
Dish-up - sit down.

ED  
I'm not doing this.

MICKEY  
(into the mic)  
Testing-testing: one, two, three,  
four - say something.

ED  
I'm not doing this.

MICKEY

Yup - that's good for level.

ED

I mean it.

And when MICKEY just stares at him:

ED (CONT'D)

I don't want to go back over all  
that - what can come of it - ?  
- Nothing -  
- Bad memories, that's all - and I  
don't want that.

MICKEY

And what if....

MICKEY takes some PAPERS and a PEN out of his BAG:

MICKEY (CONT'D)

I say: I know who the killer is -  
the real killer.

That gets EDDIE - he stares at MICKEY:

ED

Who?  
And how - how could you know that?

MICKEY smiles and slides the PAPERS across the TABLE:

MICKEY

Sign the contract and I'll tell  
you.  
(ED GLANCES DOWN AT IT)  
Oh - and you get two grand when you  
sign.  
That's on top of 12% of the gross.

MICKEY holds the PEN out to ED - but ED shakes his head.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

C'mon, Ed - I've been away for 20  
years - I'm a stranger here now -  
- I need someone to fill in the  
gaps - someone everyone trusts -  
(ED REALISES SOMETHING)  
- Yeah - you're the link between  
then and now -

ED's raised his hand - MICKEY stops:

ED  
If you're hoping I'll smooth the  
way with Gav and Hoppo, forget it.

MICKEY  
Doesn't have to happen overnight.

ED  
It'll never happen.

MICKEY  
I have faith in you.

ED  
Answer's no.

MICKEY pauses - studies him:

MICKEY  
Ed, I'm going to do this whatever  
you decide, okay - just think about  
that - because if you're not there  
to speak for yourself, how's your  
part going to come out?

(HE SMILES)  
What's there to lose?  
And what's there to gain?

He's taken an envelope out of his INSIDE JACKET POCKET:

ED  
The answer's no.

MICKEY 'opens' the ENVELOPE and shows him the CASH anyway:

MICKEY  
You can donate it to charity.

MICKEY smirks - ED's had enough of this:

ED  
Not doing it.  
(MICKEY 'FANS' THE CASH -  
ED GETS UP)  
Let's eat.

Then, as ED turns to get the TAKE-AWAY:

MICKEY  
Fuck you, then.

And MICKEY's packing up - it's swift - he's going.





CHLOE (CONT'D)

What're those?

ED follows the pointing CHOPSTICKS and sees the BROCHURE and CONTRACT - it takes a few beats - then:

ED

Oh - yeah - God -  
 - Mickey wants to make a podcast -  
 - And it was 30 years ago -  
 - Y'know: leave it alone - it was  
 bad enough then -

CHLOE's picked up the BROCHURE, he's not making sense - and as soon as she sees it she's hooked - pointing at pictures and headlines:

CHLOE

Wow - hey -  
 - Were you one of these - (*kids?*)  
 (SHE SEES THE FAIRGROUND  
 ACCIDENT PHOTO)  
 Yeah - look - that's you!  
 (AND AS SHE READS))  
 Oh wow...  
 (SHE'S FLIPPING PAGES)  
 Yeah - a podcast - yeah -  
 (TO EDDIE)  
 I love stuff like this -  
 - Exciting -

ED

No, no - NOT exciting - and it's  
 not going to happen.

CHLOE

What - why!

ED

Cos Gav and Hoppo won't have  
 anything to do with Mickey - and  
 they're my friends -

CHLOE

So's this Mickey -

ED

! You don't understand -

CHLOE

Obviously not -

ED

Right, so please - (*just leave it*)

But CHLOE's waving the BROCHURE:

CHLOE

Cos, I'd say, this here's EXACTLY what your life needs: an injection of something -  
 - I mean, just an observation but: you teach in the same school you went to, you live in the same house you grew up in - y'know: 'get a life' was made for you - and when an offer to do something different DOES come along, you turn it down - great -

ED

Like I say - you (*don't understand*)

CHLOE

They're called opportunities - and you have to take sometimes!

ED

Do you?

CHLOE

Well, the alternative is to sit around doing what you're already doing; wasting your life -  
 - Take charge - do something for yourself - grow some balls, as they say.

ED

....Well, thanks for that - thanks - that's...great advice from someone really living on the edge -

(CHLOE DRAWS BREATH)

No: working in a vintage clothes shop; that's pushing the limits -

(RAISES HIS GLASS)

- Here's hoping you got fucked in the store room tonight!

She shakes her head at him and goes - he frowns - realises what he just said and calls after her:

ED (CONT'D)

Sorry - Chloe: sorry - sorry.

CHLOE reappears in the doorway:



60 INT. ED'S BEDROOM. 2021. MORNING.

60

ED, sucking in air as he opens his eyes - it's MORNING - and he lays there - getting his breath back - taking comfort from the daylight; from the sunlight - that was a horrible dream - horrible - and he gets up - and feels like shit - and catches sight of himself in a mirror - he looks like shit too - and we cut to:

61 INT. KITCHEN. ED'S HOUSE. 2021. MORNING.

61

The KITCHEN - as ED left it last night: empty or half-drunk BOTTLES of WHISKEY, CALVADOS and BEER on the side and table - glasses with dregs in them - the half- eaten TAKE-AWAY - exactly the same except:

CHLOE's by the COFFEE-MAKER and RADIO, eating toast, drinking coffee and listening to BBC 6 at volume - and:

She turns: ED's come in - he's stopped by the doorway; he's surveying the scene - clearly struggling to remember the details of last night's events - CHLOE smiles:

CHLOE

I'll clear up, don't worry - just thought you might like to see how much you got through last night.

ED looks at her - then nods towards the RADIO:

ED

Can we...?

He gestures with both hands - CHLOE turns the volume down.

ED (CONT'D)

Thank you.

He joins her at the COFFEE MACHINE - everything's done at half speed - and finds a CUP:

CHLOE

So how long did you stay up after I'd gone to bed?

ED

...I didn't.

CHLOE

You didn't stay up?

ED

No.

CHLOE  
You went to be and stayed in bed?

ED  
Yeah.  
(SHE SMILES AND FROWNS)  
No - I got up to have some Rennies.

She laughs - ED doubts himself; turns - and: on the TOP above the DRAWER is the SILVER FOIL PACK the TABLETS come in.

ED (CONT'D)  
There you go.

CHLOE  
Okay - so you have a Rennie's and then what?

ED  
Then nothing - what is this - I went back to bed. Can I have my coffee now, please.

He goes back to loading the COFFE MACHINE - but CHLOE heads out - with a casual:

CHLOE  
Let me show you something.

ED stops 1 and looks round - CHLOE, at the door beckons him - and goes - he follows - and:

62 **INT. HALLWAY AND LIVING ROOM. ED'S HOUSE. 2021. DAY. 62**

CHLOE leads the way along the hallway to the LIVING ROOM - ED would rather be making his COFFEE:

ED  
What is this, what're we doing?  
(CHLOE STOPS BY THE  
LIVING ROOM DOOR:)  
What!

She opens the DOOR and, in around where HALLORAN's CORPSE sat sketching, the FIREPLACE and WALLS are covered in a FRENZY of WHITE CHALK MEN - literally dozens of them, overlapping, interacting - maniacally DRAWN - and we cut to: ED's FACE - to his incomprehension - then to the CHALK MEN again - and:

**END OF EP 1**