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ATCHING TAN
By
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SC 1. EXT HENFOLD PLOT MORNING

LOVVIE IS CLEANING HER TRAILER WINDOWS AND SINGING TO

NORAH: The Markham's are coming to mi wedding. Be more like a funeral when they've done with it.

NELIUS: (CHUCKLING) They're the life and soul all right.

NORAH: They'll be murders. Poggerings in the church you watch and see.

NELIUS: Use a registry office then.

NORAH: Dad'll stick you on a spit if he sees you like that. (BEAT) I'm going to get us a cup a'tea.

LOVVIE: No, something cold, divvie. And put some ice in it if you can.

NORAH: I'll be five minutes.

FADE INTO NEXT SCENE.

SC3. EXT. MARKET. DAY:

LOVVIE IS ALONE ON THE STALL SINGING A SONG TO HERSELF IN ROMANI.

LOVVIE: (SINGS)
Patsliv tumenge oh Ramale.
Mashkar le gajende oh gajende.
Tepotshinen penge la jav.
May shordjol muro rat.

*(Honour to you Romani people.
Amongst the Gadje oh Gadje people.
While they reward themselves, I feel shame
That spills my blood)*

A YOUNG MAN APPROACHES. HE IS IN HIS EARLY TWENTIES, TALL WELL BUILT AND HANDSHOME.

JOHN: Nice voice.

LOVVIE: (A LITTLE STARTLED) Oh...I...

JOHN: Don't stop on my account.

LOVVIE: The sun always makes me feel like singing.

JOHN: Been a scorcher today.

LOVVIE: Still is.

JOHN: I... like your outfit.

LOVVIE: (BEAT) I think you ought to find yourself some shade.

JOHN: I prefer it here.

LOVVIE: Well, if you'll excuse me...

SHE MOVES AWAY

JOHN: I was just being neighbourly.

LOVVIE: You ain't my neighbour.

JOHN: That's not strictly true. My mother's got a stall over the other side there. I help her load and unload her stuff sometimes. I've seen you around.

LOVVIE: Can't say I've noticed you.

JOHN: Ouch.

SHE BUSIES HERSELF ON THE STALL

JOHN: Mind if I browse?

LOVVIE: We've got some decent shirts over there if you're interested. Or how about a bracelet for your girlfriend? If you don't have a girlfriend buy a lucky charm. Might help get yourself one.

JOHN: I'm not superstitious.

LOVVIE: Maybe you should be.

LOVVIE HUMS THE SONG AGAIN AS SHE WORKS

JOHN: What language is that song written in? I've never heard it before.

LOVVIE: You wouldn't know it.

JOHN: Try me.

LOVVIE: Look, I ain't got the time.

JOHN: For what?

LOVVIE: This.

JOHN: And what exactly is this?

LOVVIE: (WITH AN EDGE) Listen mate do you wanna buy something or not?

JOHN: I'm sorry I... I was genuinely interested in the song. My work is sort of connected to music that's all.

LOVVIE: (HE HAS HER INTEREST) Yeah?

LOVVIE NOTICES NORAH COMING BACK.

LOVVIE: Here comes mi sister. I really have got to get back to work now.

JOHN: Look, I'll write my name and number on this card. If you want to do something with that voice, give me a call.

HE HANDS HER THE CARD.

LOVVIE: Thanks.

HE GOES.

LOVVIE: (CALLS TO HIM) My name's Lovvie.

LOVVIE WATCHES HIM GO AS NORAH APPROACHES.

NORAH: Who's the chavi?

LOVVIE: He was just looking for a shirt.

NORAH: I could see you rokking to him right from the top of the street.

LOVVIE: He was playing hard to get, that's all.

NORAH: (SUSPICIOUSLY) Oh yeah?

LOVVIE: Yeah.

NORAH: Then how come you're blushing all the down to your bikini top?

SC 4. EXT. SITE. LATE AFTERNOON:

LOVVIE AND NORAH HAVE RETURNED HOME AFTER A BAD WORK DAY TO BE MET BY THEIR ANGRY FATHER. THEY ARE UNLOADING GOODS FROM THE VAN THAT HAVEN'T BEEN SOLD SO THERE IS

LOVVIE: Gammy the lot. We could have stayed out all night and wouldn't have sold anymore of them poverty dear things.

JIM: Yeah, well, a bad workman.

NORAH: We ain't workman.

JIM: I pity your husband when he finds out what he's got.

NORAH: He ain't got me yet.

JIM: He wouldn't want ya if he knew you can't earn bread.

NORAH: I might be good at other things.

AGGIE: It's no mistake that child's got a mooie on it.

JIM: (WITH DARKER ANGER) The only thing you're good at is being cheeky with your filthy mouth. But it's my money that's gonna have to pay for this bloody wedding cos you ain't gonna earn it.

NORAH: (VICIOUSLY) You can keep your poxy money!

JIM: And be the biggest laugh amongst Travellers?

NORAH: What, and we ain't already?

JIM: We can't get away from that wedding for five minutes and there's still eight weeks to go.

NORAH: You brought it up.

JIM: (DANGEROUSLY) You're looking to get the granny knocked right out of you today.

AGGIE: Traveller's'll come from all over the place anyway. You gonna tell'em they can't?

JIM: You'll be sending out invitations next like a Gorgia girl.

NORAH: They'll be blood spilt you watch and see.

JIM: The only way you're gonna keep Traveller's away is to sit at the top of the site with shotgun.

NORAH: Well I might get mi self one then.

SC 5. INT. LOVVIE AND NORAH'S TRAILER. PRE DAWN:

**THE GIRLS ARE IN BED. THEY SLEEP ON SEPARATE BUNKS. ALL IS
QUIET ON THE SITE**

**NORAH GOES TO HER WITH THE BOOK AND SHOWS HER A PICTURE
OF A DRESS SHE HAS DRAWN HERSELF**

NORAH: Ain't it cushti?

LOVVIE: (WITH A SLIGHT d2LF

NORAH: Phoebe said some Travelling girls use chicken blood on their wedding night if they've been fibbing to their husbands.

LOVVIE: Oh yeah? That what you're using?

NORAH THROWS A PILLOW AT LOVVIE AND THEY BOTH LAUGH. A COCK CROWS IN THE BACKGROUND

LOVVIE: Now let's get to bed. It's nearly morning.

SC 6. INT. LOVVIE AND NORAH'S TRAILER. THE NEXT MORNING:

LOVVIE IS JUST DRAYING HER HANDS AFTER HAVING DONE THE WASHING UP AS NELIUS ENTERS.

NELIUS: Make us a cup a'tea Lovvie? I'm parched.

LOVVIE: Perfect timing. I've just finished the washing up.

NELIUS: Where's Norah?

LOVVIE: Gone with Huck to pick up her trailer. Pass us that can here will ya?

NELIUS: Thought you'd have your water in taps by now.

LOVVIE: You know what thought done.

NELIUS: (HANDING HER THE CAN) When's your dad plumbing you in?

LOVVIE: He ain't.

NELIUS: We've been on for months.

HE SITS DOWN WHILE SHE POURS WATER IN A KETTLE FROM A CAN

LOVVIE: He won't pay the council four hundred quid will he. It don't take a minute to walk to the chalet and fill a can anyway.

NEILOIUS: Yeah but when it's cold in the mornings-

LOVVIE: Mi dad thinks it's gorgiarified to have water coming through your pipes.

NELIUS: He'd still be boiling kettles on a prop over a fire outside if he had his way.

LOVVIE: Yeah, eating shoosies and hotchi witchi.

NELIUS: My dad's still likes a rabbit and the odd hedgehog.

NELIUS: Then the grandchildren come along.

LOVVIE: And that completes the picture. The sum and substance.

NELIUS: (GETTING ANNOYED) You make life with me sound cushti.

LOVVIE: I don't mean to it's just... If there was some other way we could-

NELIUS: Our life's set, Lovvie. There's no way of changing it. What more do you want?

LOVVIE: I don't know. (BEAT) Something... there must be another way.

NELIUS: There ain't. And I can't wait forever.

LOVVIE: Just till... till after Norah's wedding. Then I'll give you an answer. I take oath on my life I will.

SC 7. EXT. A QUIET BACK STREET IN TOWN. EARLY AFTERNOON:

LOVVIE IS SITTING ON A BENTCH OUTSIDE THE CHURCH HALL.

JOHN: (APPROACHING) Hello.

LOVVIE: I didn't think you'd remember me.

JOHN: The girl with the voice from the market.

JOHN: I'm surprised you called.

LOVVIE: So am I.

JOHN: I'm glad you decided to come. You're even a little early. Shall we go inside?

SC 8. INT. CHURCH HALL. NIGHT:

ENTERING THE SPACE

LOVVIE: It don't look like a recording studio.

JOHN: I said my work was related to music. I didn't say I was a record producer. Is that why you came?

LOVVIE: Why else?

JOHN: I've disappointed you already.

LOVVIE: (FEELING UNCOMFORTABLE) I don't know what I'm doing here. I'd best go.

JOHN: Wait. I'm a drama teacher.

LOVVIE: A drama...? You don't look old enough to be a teacher.

JOHN: That's almost a compliment. When I said my work was sort of connected to music what I meant was lots of people sing in plays. Musicals. You ever done any acting?

LOVVIE LAUGHS SOFTLY

JOHN: What's so funny?

LOVVIE: The thought of me acting.

JOHN: You didn't do anything at school?

LOVVIE: (BEAT) Nah.

JOHN: Ever wanted to?

LOVVIE: Never thought about it.

JOHN: You like films?

LOVVIE: Love'em.

JOHN: They're all actors.

LOVVIE: Yeah but I couldn't do that.

HE CAN SEE SHE'S INTRIGUED.

JOHN: My first student doesn't arrive for another twenty minutes so let's have some fun.

HE HANDS HER A SCRIPT.

LOVVIE: What's this?

JOHN: A play script. You read the part of Maureen and I'll read-

LOVVIE: I can't.

JOHN: I just thought as you're here-

LOVVIE: (EDGY) I told ya. I ain't never done it before.

JOHN: (BEAT) There's nothing to be scared of.

SILENCE

LOVVIE: You don't understand. I... (SLIGHT PAUSE) The language...in the song.

JOHN: The one you were singing at the market?

LOVVIE: (BEAT) It's Romani.

JOHN: (BEAT) So you're a Gypsy? Can I say that?

LOVVIE: I'm a Gypsy Traveller.

PAUSE

JOHN: Have you ever seen a play script before?

LOVVIE: No.

JOHN: (CAREFULLY) So... you didn't get much schooling?

LOVVIE: None hardly.

JOHN: Which means you're reading's a little bit-

LOVVIE: I can't read or write.

JOHN: No wonder you laughed when I asked you if you'd done any acting. (AFTER A PAUSE) We can still go through the script if you want.

LOVVIE: How?

JOHN: I could... say the words out loud and you repeat them. Or if you wanted to go away and lean them I could record a scene. You've got an MP3 player haven't you?

LOVVIE: Course.

JOHN: Problem solved. Look, I work at the college during the day then I'm here twice a week helping students pass their drama exams. Would you be interested in... I mean I know it's not singing but I think you'd find it interesting. And like I said, you could possibly do some singing later on. What do you say?

SC 9. INT. HENFOLD CHALET: EARLY MORNING:

LOVVIE IS IN THE BATHROOM WHILE NORAH WAITS OUTSIDE.

NORAH: (CALLING THROUGH BATHROOM DOOR) Lovvie, what are you doing in there?

LOVVIE: What do you think?

NORAH: You must be clean by now. You've been in there nearly an hour.

LOVVIE: I'm just drying me self.

NORAH: I'm freezing out here. Run some clean water for me will ya?

LOVVIE TURNS THE TAP ON AND OPENS THE DOOR

NORAH: (GOING IN THE BATHROOM) Why didn't you put the heater on?

LOVVIE: No coins for the meter.

NORAH: When I get on my plot I ain't having a meter. I'm having proper electric and plumbed in water. Everything.

LOVVIE IS ABOUT TO HEAD BACK TO THE TRAILER

NORAH: I didn't hear you come in last night.

LOVVIE: Tried not to wake ya.

NORAH: Nelius called again.

LOVVIE: (SLIGHT PAUSE) Right?

NORAH: Said he'd leave another message on your mobile.

LOVVIE: Okay.

NORAH: Did he?

LOVVIE: Ain't checked it.

NORAH: (TURNS TO HER) Not since last night?

LOVVIE: No.

NORAH: (BEAT) You all right?

LOVVIE: Yeah.

NORAH: Mary girl called for you an'all.

LOVVIE: (AS SHE LEAVES) Don't let your water get cold.

NORAH: I'm moving some of mi things into mi trailer this afternoon. You wanna give me a hand?

LOVVIE: Er... I've got something else to do.

NORAH: What?

LOVVIE: Stuff.

NORAH: Lovvie!

SC 10. INT. CHURCH HALL: DAY:

JOHN IS STANDING BY THE WINDOW WHEN LOVVIE ENTERS

JOHN: Not at all.

LOVVIE: John it ain't working and we both know it. Whatever am I doing in this place.

JOHN: You're learning . One step at a time.

LOVVIE: What made me think I'd be any good at acting. I'm a proper loon. I ain't no good at it!

JOHN: You've got to have patience. You need to understand what's going on in the play. What's happening to your characters. For example, we know this is the first time they've been together for a year. But do you think they made love together before she left?

LOVVIE: (HORRIFIED) Oh dordie!

SHE TURNS AWAY IN EMBARRASMENT

JOHN: Now what's the matter?

LOVVIE: You shouldn't talk like that. You don't even know me.

JOHN: Talk like what?

LOVVIE: Saying dirty things.

JOHN: (PERPLEXED) Saying dirty... I'm not sure I... you mean when I said-

LOVVIE: You say it again and you'll get a smack in the mouth!

IT BEGINS TO DAWN ON HIM WHAT HER PROBLEM MAY BE

JOHN: I... didn't mean it to sound dirty. It's just when two people love each other... will you look at me?

LOVVIE: No.

JOHN: I'm sorry if I've embarrassed you. (BEAT) But they're not exactly children are they.

LOVVIE: They ain't married neither.

JOHN: (BEAT) I see.

PAUSE

JOHN: The thing is... this scene is quite... You see unless we know if they've-

LOVVIE: I've warned ya-

JOHN: -Become close. Then you're not going to know how to play the scene. Earlier you thought you sounded wooden. "Dead as a dummy" you said. Well that's because you don't understand what she's going through.

LOVVIE: And I'm glad I don't.

JOHN: But if you're going to give the scene any truth...

LOVVIE: You mean I have to do it!?

JOHN: No of course not. But... You... have to imagine what it's like.

LOVVIE: I'm going!

SHE PICKS UP HER COAT AND HEADS FOR THE DOOR

JOHN: No wait Lovvie! Please. There's nothing-

LOVVIE: I ain't no lubnie!

JOHN: It's only acting. You're playing someone else. And I'm sure she's not a... whatever it is you called her.

LOVVIE: Any girl who's-

JOHN: Well maybe she hasn't done anything. That's what I'm saying. Has she or hasn't she? If she has you play the scene one way. If she hasn't you play it another.

LOVVIE: Well then she ain't.

JOHN: Okay. Fine. Nothing happened between them last year. Will you take your coat back off now?

SHE THINKS CAREFULLY BEFORE TAKING HER COAT OFF

JOHN: So. She's absolutely pure. At least in body.

LOVVIE: What's that supposed to mean?

JOHN: Well her thoughts would suggest... that is the words she says tell us... I mean I would say she's quite a passionate girl wouldn't you?

LOVVIE: That's one word for it.

JOHN: Well what word would you use?

JOHN: Look, you have to find a way to somehow relate it to your own life. Otherwise you'll just sound false.

LOVVIE: How can I do that? She's a Gorgia and I'm a clean Traveller girl. It ain't never gonna work.

PAUSE

JOHN: Why not imagine she's a Traveller who just happens to be in love with a Gorgia? I mean the play sort of lends itself to it. These characters are from neighbouring settlements who have been at war with each other for years. Their love is forbidden.

LOVVIE: Yeah?

JOHN: Their families hate each other. These two people should not be together. The whole world is against them. At least that's how they see it.

LOVVIE: (AFTER A PAUSE) A Traveller girl in love with a Gorgia man? Would never happen.

JOHN: Why not?

LOVVIE: Just wouldn't.

JOHN: But what if it did? (BEAT) Just try it.

SC 11. EXT. WOODED AREA CLOSE TO SITE. DAY:

**LOVVIE IS LISTENING TO JOHN READING LINES ON AN MP3 PLAYER
AND SHE REPEATS THEM**

JOHN: (ON DISK) Our hearts beat as one with the forest.

LOVVIE: Our hearts beat as one with the forest.

JOHN: (ON DISK) The wind is our breath.

LOVVIE: The wind is our breath.

JOHN: (ON DISK) The streams, our blood.

LOVVIE: The streams our-

NELIUS: (CALLING FROM BEHIND HER) Lovvie?

LOVVIE: (TO HERSELF) Oh damn it!

SHE QUICKLY HIDES THE MP3 PLAYER

NELIUS: You talking to yourself now?

LOVVIE: Yeah, the site's finally got to me.

NELIUS: Or the people on it.

LOVVIE: Same thing.

NELIUS: You all right?

LOVVIE: People keep asking me that.

NELIUS: Might have something to do with you wondering about in woods rokkering to yourself.

LOVVIE: I ain't wondering about.

NELIUS: What was you doing then?

LOVVIE: Can't I go for a walk when I want to? I wish people'd leave me alone sometimes.

NELIUS: You mean me?

LOVVIE: I just need to take a breath now and again.

NELIUS: You've been breathing a lot lately. Ain't seen you round the site for days.

LOVVIE: I've been about.

NELIUS: Yeah?

LOVVIE: Walking. Thinking.

NELIUS: Thinking about what?

LOVVIE: Things. I said I would didn't I?

NELIUS: (BEAT) Yeah. You said you would.

PAUSE

LOVVIE: I know I've been a bit loopy lately. It's a lot of things. Work, mi dad, the wedding...

NELIUS: Thought you'd be excited about the wedding.

LOVVIE: I am. But... you know, with everything else...

NEILUS: What everything else?

LOVVIE: (LOSING HER COOL) Nelius I'm just... Let's go back now. You can walk me.

NELIUS: I'm starting to like it here now. Quiet. Peaceful. Nobody about.

LOVVIE: Don't get any ideas.

SHE PUTS HER ARM THROUGH HIS

LOVVIE: Come on. Let's go.

HE DOESN'T MOVE

NELIUS: Wanna go out tonight?

LOVVIE: Where?

NELIUS: I don't know. Pictures?

LOVVIE: I...can't.

NEILOUS: Why not?

LOVVIE: I've got loads of things to do in the trailer... Cleaning and that.

NELIUS: You're always cleaning that trailer. Can't Norah lift a finger?

LOVVIE: It's my turn.

NELIUS: (BEAT) You sure everything's all right?

LOVVIE: How'd you mean?

NELIUS: (HE WATCHES HER CLOSELY) I don't know. There's something.

LOVVIE: There's nothing.

NELIUS: (AFTER A PAUSE) They ain't gonna be no secrets between us when we're married Lovvie girl. I can promise you that.

LOVVIE: God, if mi family could see me now. They'd think I'd gone off mi head. They know I'm half dolally anyway but...acting.

JOHN: You're a rebel.

LOVVIE: No. Just on the look out for something else I think.

JOHN: I've lived such a conventional life compared to you. Stable home, school, college, straight into work. My mother's an ex nurse and my father works in insurance. You can't get more conventional than that!

LOVVIE: But your life's so...

JOHN: What?

LOVVIE: I don't know. Rich and exciting I suppose. You've got books and learning and everything.

JOHN: But you've got experience I couldn't even imagine. I mean what must it have been like not going to school. So you can't read or write. That can be learned. You have a whole other kind of education.

LOVVIE: You left home and went to college at what, eighteen? Imaging the freedom in that... You could try new things, find out what ya liked and what ya didn't. Discover for yourself what you was good at and then allowed to choose just what ya wanted to do with your life.

JOHN: But you can choose if you want to.

LOVVIE: First I've heard of it.

JOHN: Look, you're a very talented actress. When you understand. When you mean it. There is such truth in you. It's like nothing I've ever seen before. (BEAT) Lovvie, I've got a friend who is a theatre director, he's putting on new play and you would be brilliant for one of the roles.

LOVVIE: (BEAT) Me?

JOHN: I've spoken to him and he's agreed to give you an audition.

LOVVIE: An audition? But... I ain't no where near good enough.

JOHN: Would I put you forward if I didn't think you were good enough?

LOVVIE: But...when is it?

JOHN: It would mean extra lessons and an audition in the New Forest.

LOVVIE: The New... But that's miles away. I'd have to...

JOHN: Leave the site for a while I know.

LOVVIE: How long would I have to be away?

JOHN: It's three weeks rehearsal and a ten week tour.

LOVVIE: Thirteen weeks! My family'll go divvie!

JOHN: They'll be proud.

LOVVIE: Are you mad?

JOHN: Not at first maybe. But when they realise how talented you are-

LOVVIE: When they realise...? You don't know my family.

JOHN: Look, I anticipated your answer would be yes so I've put an audition monologue on MP3. Here.

LOVVIE: John I... I'm not sure if I should... If I should laugh or...I've never been so happy and at the same time so... Oh my god!

JOHN: What's the matter?

LOVVIE: What time is it?

JOHN: Two forty five.

LOVVIE SCREAMS

JOHN: What the-

LOVVIE: I've got to go!

SHE RUNS BACK IN THE DIRECTION THEY'VE COME

JOHN: (CALLING TO HER) But...Lovvie... will you do the audition? Lovvie!

SC 13. INT. HENFOLD TRAILER. DAY:

LOVVIE HAS MISSED HELPING NORAH PICK OUT HER WEDDING DRESS. ALL HER FAMILY ARE FURIOUS WITH HER

LOVVIE: I'm so sorry.

NORAH: It's bad luck is what it is.

LOVVIE: Of course it ain't.

NORAH: You took oath.

LOVVIE: The time just-

AGGIE: You've missed the biggest day of your sister's life.

LOVVIE: It ain't her biggest day.

NORAH: It's big enough.

AGGIE: Self. That's all you can think about.

NORAH: You should have been there with me.

LOVVIE: I know I should.

AGGIE: What kept you away today Lovvie? You're hardly around here anymore. You sure you ain't skiving somewhere on the sly and pocketing the lovvo?

LOVVIE: Cos I ain't.

AGGIE: Well you're up to something my girl I bet my life. And when your father gets back and finds out you weren't with Norah today he'll take your face off!

AGGIE STORMS OUT LEAVING LOVVIE CLOSE TO TEARS

NORAH: Lovvie you've got to tell me now. You've got to tell me what's so important that you missed me getting mi cushti wedding dress!

LOVVIE: (AFTER A PAUSE) I've... I've been learning something.

NORAH: Learning?

LOVVIE: Yeah.

NORAH: Well, learning what? Where?

LOVVIE: (BEAT) Acting.

NORAH: (INCREDULOUS) Acting?

LOVVIE: At a place in town.

NORAH: But... you ain't all there are ya? I knew you was up to something but I never thought... Dordie dordie there's a ladge. (*you've an embarrassment*). So that's what you've been doing in secret all this while. (A NEW THOUGHT) Is it with a chavi?

LOVVIE: That ain't the reason.

NORAH: How'd you meet him?

LOVVIE: It don't matter.

NORAH: You like him?

LOVVIE: I told ya it ain't about that.

NORAH: Nelius is gonna-

LOVVIE: Nelius ain't gonna find out.

NORAH: What about mum and dad? She'll scream blue murder and he'll cut the blood out of ya just for not telling'em.

LOVVIE: Take a wicked oath you won't rokker a word to'em.

NORAH: And if on top of that if they found out you're messing about with a gorgia...

LOVVIE: I ain't messing about! Norah, (BEAT) Something's happened to me.

NORAH: (MORE SERIOUS) What? Talk sense will ya? What's the chavi done to ya?

LOVVIE: He's explained and I've understood. You wouldn't believe there was so much in a little bit of writing.

NORAH: You've gone proper loopy ain't ya?

LOVVIE: When I was saying these lines it was like...

NORAH: You mean acting?

LOVVIE: It was real. He's put the words of a monologue on disk for me to learn and-

NORAH: Hark at you, "monologue". You're rokkering gorgiarified (*talking like a non-Gypsy*). Acting's a shuzz. He's making game of you, dinilo. You'll be the talk of the site.

LOVVIE: Well it won't be the first time will it.

NORAH: No, but it'll be the last.

LOVVIE: Norah...

NORAH: You've over done it this time Lovvie, and I ain't got no sympathy for ya. It's time to get your head out of them clouds before Traveller's find out what you've been doing. If you don't drop seeing this Gorgia mush, stop doing Gorgia things it ain't only Nelius you're gonna lose, it's gonna be the lot of us.

SC 14. EXT. CHURCH HALL. NIGHT:

JOHN IS WAITING OUTSIDE AS LOVVIE APPROACHES

LOVVIE: Why ain't you waiting inside?

JOHN: We're not rehearsing tonight. I've made other plans.

LOVVIE: (SOLEMNLY) I've got something I need to tell ya.

JOHN: That can wait till after.

LOVVIE: After what?

JOHN: Come with me.

SC 15. INT. THEATRE. NIGHT:

THEY ARE IN THE STALLS AND IT'S RELATIVELY FULL

LOVVIE: This place is... is incredible.

JOHN: It's a really old theatre. Masses of character.

LOVVIE: I can't hardly breath I'm so excited!

JOHN: You've never been to a theatre before, right?

LOVVIE: I've always wanted to go but never thought I ever would.

JOHN: I think you're going to like it.

SC 16. INT. THEATRE. NIGHT:

THE END OF THE PLAY. ENTHUSIASTIC APPLUSE

THEN FADE TO...

JOHN AND LOVVIE ARE DRINKING AT THE BAR

JOHN: Well, what do you think?

JOHN: You're kidding me right?

LOVVIE: It's too big.

JOHN: We'll see about that. Wait here.

LOVVIE: Where you going?

JOHN: I'll be back in a sec.

SC 17. IN. THEATRE. NIGHT:

HE LEADS HER BACKSTAGE

LOVVIE: Are you sure about this?

JOHN: I know the stage manager. He does some work at the college. He said we've got half an hour before the cleaners come in.

LOVVIE: It's very dark back here.

JOHN: It's where the actors make their entrances and exits.

LOVVIE: Looks so different from behind.

JOHN: And there's the stage. Those butterflies still dancing?

LOVVIE: More like wild horses now.

THEY STAND IN THE WINGS AND LOOK OUT ONTO THE STAGE

JOHN: So, on you go. The stage is all yours.

LOVVIE: I don't know.

JOHN: Go on Lovvie. I want to see what you look like under the lights.

SHE STEPS OUT ONTO THE STAGE

JOHN: Just as I imagined. How does it feel?

LOVVIE: (AT THE CENTRE OF A NEW WORLD) Like I was born here.

JOHN: Now let's hear the monologue.

LOVVIE: (STARES BACK AT HIM) Perform my-

JOHN: Yes. Now. On the stage.

LOVVIE: But I'm not sure I know all the words yet.

SC 18. INT. HENFOLD TRAILER. DAY:

IT'S THE DAY OF THE WEDDING AND CHAOS REINS AT THE HENFOLDS

JIM: Are you sure you're gonna be able to walk in that thing, Norah? You wanna go to the lav and you'll need a chair either side of you to hold it. Must weigh a ton.

AGGIE: Twelve stone Sheena said. And that's one of the lighter dresses.

NORAH: I told her I wanted eighty layers of silk but she could only do fifty.

JIM: You wanna watch it don't break your back. We're gonna have to carry you to the motor and stuff you in like a sardine.

AGGIE: There's plenty of room in them limousines.

LOVVIE: I thought you was having a grai and carriage?

NORAH: Changed mi mind at the last minute. Thought the horse might you know what at the wrong time. There's a ladge.

AGGIE: That'd shuzz you up.

AGGIE LAUGHS

JIM: Nothing to be ashamed of. It's natural.

NORAH: Not at my wedding it ain't.

THE CARS ARRIVE

LOVVIE: Norah the cars are here!

NORAH: Quick Lovvie, do the back of mi dress up. Mum where's mi garter?

JIM: (EMBARRASED) Dordie dordie.

AGGIE: Well you shouldn't be in here with the women should ya? Go outside and sort the motors out.

JIM: I'm always in the way!

JIM LEAVES

NORAH: Lovvie do me up will yeah?

LOVVIE: I'm trying.

LOVVIE LACES UP NORAH'S DRESS

LOVVIE: There you are it's done.

NORAH: (EXCITED) How do I look?

SLIGHT PAUSE

LOVVIE: Cushti. You look really lovely and happy.

NORAH: Oh I am. I can't believe it!

LOVVIE: Norah I'm really sorry I missed your fitting and everything. But I'm just... I'm just... (CLOST TO TEARS) really glad I'm here with ya and...

NORAH: Oh Lovvie I'm gonna miss ya!

LOVVIE: Oh come here...

BOTH GIRLS HUG, LAUGH AND CRY

AGGIE: You're only gonna be half a dozen plots away from each other. Hurry up you two dinilos or Norah's gonna miss her own wedding!

SC 19. INT. CHURCH. DAY:

A CHURCH FULL OF GYPSIES – CHILDREN CRYING, PEOPLE TALING TOO LOUDLY DURING THE SERVICE, MOBILE PHONES GOING OFF ETC. THE PRIEST CAN JUST BE HEARD ABOVE THE DIN

PRIEST: Dearly beloved. We are gathered here today in the sight of God etc...

NELIUS IS SEATED BEHIND LOVVIE - HE LEANS FORWARD AND WHISPERS IN HER EAR

JIM: Norah my lovely girl of course your dad's gonna sing to you on your wedding day.

NORAH: I love that one you used to sing to us when we was little, about the pub not having any beer in it.

JIM: I know exactly the one you mean my babe, and if that's the song you want,

LOVVIE: I've diked the rakli's eyeing him up.

NORAH: He only wants one. You know that. (BEAT) And speak of the devil...

NELIUS APPROACHES

NELIUS: Evening Mrs Oswald.

NORAH: Nelius...

NELIUS: Your dad ain't holding back is he.

LOVVIE: I wish he would.

NELIUS: He ain't that bad. You all right Lovvie? I've seen you look happier.

LOVVIE: Yeah? Well I ain't never seen you look handsomer.

NORAH: Oh dordie. I think I'd better leave you to it.

NORAH MOVES AWAY

NELIUS: A smile at last. (BEAT) What's wrong Lovvie? This ain't like you. Is there something you ain't telling me?

JIM'S SONG ENDS FOLLOWED BY DRUKEN APPLAUSE

AGGIE: (SLIGHTLY DRUNK CALLS TO LOVVIE) Come on, Lovvie. Anything your dad can do.

LOVVIE: Oh no I can't. Not now. I might do later.

NELIUS: Go on woman. Might cheer you up a bit.

WOMEN/GIRLS URGE HER ON "COME ON LOVVIE" "LETS HEAR YA" "YOU'VE GOT A CUSHTI VOICE" ETC

NORAH: "I don't know why I love you but I do".

JIM: That's a good'un. Come on Lovvie, sing it for us.

AGGIE: Go on.

NELIUS: (GENTLY TO LOVVIE) Sing it for me.

LOVVIE: (AFTER A PAUSE SHE SINGS) "I don't know why I love you but I do. I don't know why I cry so but I do. And since you've been away I cry both night and day. I don't know why I love you but I do".

SC 21. EXT. SITE. DAY:

JOHN SHUTS THE CAR DOOR AND WALKS ONTO THE SITE

JOHN: Afternoon.

NELIUS: You a bit lost, mate?

JOHN: Do you know Lovvie Henfold?

NELIUS: (AFTER A PAUSE) I might do.

JOHN: I'm looking for her parent's plot.

NELIUS: Oh yeah?

JOHN: Do you know where it is?

NELIUS: (BEAT) What do you want with her, if you don't mind me asking?

JOHN: It's private.

NELIUS: That so?

JOHN: (AFTER A PAUSE) It's just a note I need to put through her door. So if you could point me in the right direction?

NELIUS: I'll do better than that. I'll take ya to her.

JOHN: No, no that's fine.

NEILUS: (THREATENING) No, I'll take you to her.

SC 22. EXT. SITE. DAY:

JIM: (SLURRING) Lovely. Absolutely beautiful.

NORAH: That was cushti, Lovvie.

AGGIE: Who else is gonna give us I song?

NEILOUS: I think I've found a little bird who might do some singing for us.

**JOHN FINDS HIMSELF IN THE LIONS DEN SURROUNDED BY GYPSIES.
HE STEPS FORWARD**

JOHN: Hello Lovvie.

LOVVIE IS SPEECHLESS

NORAH: (SO ONLY LOVVIE CAN HEAR) Please tell me this ain't who I think it is.

LOVVIE: (BARELY A WHISPER) Oh John no...

NORAH: Oh my loving lord almighty.

JOHN: Sorry Lovvie I wasn't going to interrupt the wedding but I needed to get this note to you.

NELIUS: Lovvie, you'd better rokker something and quick.

AGGIE: (TO LOVVIE) Who is the chavi?

JIM: What's a Gorgia doing acoi?

NORAH: (JUST TO LOVVIE) Lovvie, get him out of here quick before they muller him.

NELIUS: I ain't asking you again, Lovvie.

LOVVIE: John, you'd better come over here with me.

NELIUS: Lovvie?

LOVVIE: I won't be five minutes!

SC 23: EXT. HENFOLD PLOT. NIGHT:

LOVVIE AND JOHN ARE AWAY FROM THE CROWD AT THE BACK OF

JOHN: She's very talented.

AGGIE: (MYSTIFIED) Talented?

NELIUS: At what is what I wanna know.

LOVVIE: It ain't like that.

NELIUS: Then how is it?

JOHN: (BEAT) She's a good actress.

JIM AND AGGIE TOGETHER: Actress?

NELIUS: What lies you been telling me?

LOVVIE: I ain't never lied to you.

NELIUS: (TO JOHN) You'd better walk off this plot now teacher otherwise they'll have to carry you off.

SC 23: INT. HENFOLD TRAILER. NIGHT:

**MUSIC CAN BE HEARD IN THE BACKGROUND AND BOTH JIM AND
AGGIE ARE STILL HALF DRUNK**

AGGIE: Norah was praying no blood'd be spilt at her wedding and now this.

JIM: (TO AGGIE) Have you ever seen anything like it in your life?

AGGIE: Lovvie if I live to be a hundred and ten-

JIM: Carrying on with a Gorgia mush-

LOVVIE: How many more times...

AGGIE: Dordie dordie the shame of it.

LOVVIE: I ain't been carrying on.

AGGIE: Right in front of all them people. We ain't never gonna live this one down.

JIM: And Norah knew all about it and never rokkered a word.

LOVVIE: Norah's a married woman now dad and ain't got nothing to do with it.

JIM: Well you ain't married Lovvie and the lord strike me dead if I don't give you the best hiding of your life tonight.

LOVVIE: Just for learning a few lines? Where's the harm in it?

AGGIE: Learning what lines? What's the rakli talking about? She can't read so how's she learning lines?

JIM: Gorgia games is what she's been playing.

LOVVIE: Acting ain't a game.

AGGIE: Traveller's don't act.

JIM: Children's games.

AGGIE: At your age? Your sisters just got married and she's two years younger than you!

JIM: You're a dark horse and no mistake.

AGGIE: Dark? Black as night.

JIM: You'll be the talk of the site.

AGGIE: Are you ashamed of your own people?

LOVVIE: Of course I ain't ashamed.

AGGIG: Then why ain't we good enough for ya!?

AGGIE BRINGS HER FIST DOWN HARD ON THE TABLE AND

HE LETS HER GO AND TURNS AWAY

JOHN: They're thinking of themselves too. I know how proud you are of where you come from but... It's okay to be of one them but not like them. You want to do something different with your life.

LOVVIE: They don't wanna lose me.

JOHN: Neither do I.

A TRAIN PULLS INTO THE STATION

JOHN: This is us.

LOVVIE: (DESOLETE) No... It can't ever be us.

JOHN: Lovvie? You're not going are you?

LOVVIE: I can't. I never could. Not really.

JOHN: But... all the work you've done. Everything we talked about. There must be something...

LOVVIE: There's nothing.

JOHN: Anything... is there anything I could do or say to-

LOVVIE: I've gotta go.

JOHN: Lovvie I... I-

THE WHISTLE GOES

LOVVIE: (BEAT) Goodbye John.

SHE WALKS AWAY

SC 26. INT. LOVVIE'S TRAILER. DAY:

LOVVIE: (SINGS)

Kai are tute, why aren't tute sar mandi?

Sikkur amande kai mandi am.

Sikkur amande so am.

Please chiv abri o flames

Adrey miro stirapen of yog

Ta lel amande doomo cati miro sueti.

Lel amande doomo cato miro rat.

(Where are you, why aren't you with me?

Show me where I am.

Show me who I am.

Please, put out the flames

In my prison of fire

And take me back to my people.

Take me back to my blood)

NELIUS KNOCKS ON THE DOOR AND SHE OPENS IT.

LOVVIE: Come in. Sit down.

NELIUS: Trailer feels a bit empty without Norah's stuff in it.

LOVVIE: That's cos it is.

NELIUS: (BEAT) Yeah.

LOVVIE: (HESITANT) Nelius, a few weeks ago you asked me a question and I took oath I'd give you an answer after Norah's wedding.

NELIUS: Things have changed a bit since then.

LOVVIE: You sorry you asked me?

NELIUS: You mean all the world to me Lovvie. Nothing's ever gonna change that.

LOVVIE: Well, mi mind's made up.

NELIUS: (TENTATIVE) Well then?

LOVVIE: (BEAT) Yeah, I'll marry ya. But let's do it now, or next week, or as soon as we can.

NELIUS: All this while and now... why the rush?

LOVVIE: No rush. It's time is'all.

NELIUS: But what about your dress? You don't wanna big wedding?

LOVVIE: We'll have a registry office do.

NELIUS: Your mum and dad ain't gonna be pleased. Neither is mine.

LOVVIE: I don't want'em there. Nobody else. Just you and me.

NELIUS: It'll cause ructions.

LOVVIE: I don't care.

NELIUS: (BEAT) We ain't even got a trailer to live in nor nothing.

LOVVIE: We can live in this till we get ourselves one.

NELIUS: I... I ain't got a lot'a money...

LOVVIE: Money don't mean a thing to me. We'll get some from somewhere.

NELIUS: Lovvie are you...? I mean this is how you really wanna do it?

LOVVIE: I've been waiting too long. Sitting about, head getting full of silly ideas. Bout time I grew up I reckon. Get mi feet on the ground like everyone keeps telling me.

NELIUS: Are you're sure this is really what you want?

LOVVIE: (BEAT) I'm sure.

PAUSE

NELIUS: Well, that's it then.

LOVVIE: Yeah. That's it.

PAUSE

NELIUS: From now on all your singing's gonna be for me.

THE END