

PIECE 1 - STORM, JOY, SAGE, MAYA

STORM. Okay, right, check that works, great. Everyone ready?

JOY. Yeah.

STORM. So, we're gathered here today to celebrate Mum.

*Projection: 'Rosemary Pelican 1953-2020'*

Mum was an amazing person, she was kind..

*Projection: 'kind' (written in funky clip-art).*

Generous.

*Projection: 'generous' (written in funky clip-art)*

Loving.

*Projection: 'loving' (written in funky clip-art).*

..and she didn't mind being a bit silly sometimes too.

*Projection: 'silly' (written in funky clip-art).*

And we all loved her very much.

SAGE. This is really weird and lovely, Stormy.

STORM. Thanks. Now, as you all know Mum was never very interested in her finances.

MAYA. You can say that again!

STORM. And she didn't leave the most detailed will in the world, but on page four.

*Projection: Image of excerpt from will.*

..as I've mentioned before, it says: 'My estate and assets should be divided fairly between my children.' Note the wording here, 'fairly'

*Projection: Image of excerpt from will with 'fairly' underlined.*

..not equally. Now it's taken Joy and I the last eight months to sort out all the paperwork to sell the house but that's all done now, so thanks, Joy, for helping with that.

JOY. No problem.

STORM. And it looks like, after fees, we should be left with about.....

*Projection: '£250,000'*

..two hundred and fifty thousand, so roughly fifty grand each.

*Projection: Graph of how money is divided.*

However, given the amount of time I spent caring for Mum, I think it would be fair for us to each shave a little..

*Projection: Amended graph of how money is divided.*

..off the top of our amounts, to pay me for that time.

*Projection: "Thank you" cute cat image.*

*Silence.*

SAGE. Are you serious?

STORM. What I'm suggesting is that we shave ten thousand pounds

*Projection: '£10,000 x4 = £40,000'*

..off everyone's total, so that we can pay me a modest salary, fifteen thousand a year.

*Projection: '£10,000 x4 = £40,000 = 2.5 years at £15,000 per year'*

...for two-and-a-half years of looking after Mum. I think that's fair.

MAYA. Huh.

JOY. You're asking us to pay you a salary?

STORM. Okay not a salary, more a gesture of goodwill. Compensation for that time, for that unpaid labour.

MAYA. Okay. Storm, I don't think you can just decide...

STORM. This isn't me deciding, it's a request from your sister. It's why I wanted us all to come together.

SAGE. That's not why! We're here to celebrate Mum's birthday.

STORM. And we are. We are!

SAGE. You're making this about money and paperwork. She hated all of that shit.

MAYA. I thought you got paid?

STORM. Carer's allowance.

MAYA. Yeah.

JOY. It's not a lot.

STORM. Sixty-four pounds a week.

JOY. Just over three grand a year, yes. Look, Storm, I know how much work you did. But if we're talking about finances, you also lived in this house, rent-free.

STORM. I lost two years of my life, Joy. I was going to go. I was going to... I had plans!

JOY. But you made that choice and we supported you, when you said you would do it.

STORM. I understand that this is complicated

JOY. Yes it is. Look, Derren and I have plans. I'm sorry but we need that money.

STORM. I changed her nappies, Joy, I changed her fucking nappies. Do you get that?

JOY. Yes. I get that.

STORM. I had to wipe shit off her legs while she called me a cunt.

JOY. I know.

STORM. And you promised you'd make it up to me.

JOY. With a holiday or something.

STORM. Thanks, Joy! Two years' hard labour con with a week in the Costa del Sol.

JOY. Might do you some good to fuck a pool boy.

MAYA. Joy.

STORM. Bitch.

MAYA. I'm going to say that, in principle, I'm not averse to Storm's request.

STORM. Thank you.

MAYA. Storm, I love you with every fibre of my being. But I can't give you that money.

STORM. What?

SAGE. Ha.

MAYA. I'm broke. I've got nothing.

STORM. You spent the last year travelling, Maya. You skateboarded down flipping volcanoes.

MAYA. Sandboarded.

STORM. You hiked to Machu fucking Picchu.

MAYA. Mum wanted me to travel.

STORM. And I wanted Mum not to die!

PIECE 2 - LARA, GRANNY, DERREN

GRANNY. Lara. Leave, love.

LARA. I've got to stay to put you to bed, Dawn.

GRANNY. Oh don't be ridiculous.

LARA. I'm here to look after you.

GRANNY. I pay your wages, Lara. Leave.

LARA (to DERREN). Is that alright with you?

*DERREN nods.*

(To GRANNY.) I'll pick you up in the morning!

GRANNY. Piss off, Lara.

*LARA leaves.*

You've got a lovely beard. Bushy. Like a badger. Are you okay, Derren?

DERREN. Not feeling my best, if I'm honest with you, Granny.

GRANNY. Me neither. Baby Maya with a baby.

DERREN. I didn't think you'd heard that, Granny.

GRANNY. I'm sorry, Derren. But a great-grandmother! No one should be made to feel that old. It's desperately unflattering. Derren, I want to leave now.

DERREN. I thought you said you wanted to stay, Granny.

GRANNY. I want to die.

DERREN. Oh. You don't mean that, Granny.

GRANNY. Kill me, Derren.

DERREN. Oh, no, Granny,

GRANNY. I tried to jump out the window. But I forgot I lived on the ground floor.

DERREN. No, Granny,

GRANNY. Do you know how much I cost?

DERREN. That doesn't matter.

GRANNY. My nursing home isn't cheap.

DERREN. We love having you here, Granny.

GRANNY. I live in pain, it hurts to breathe, I can't hear, I can't dance, I can't do anything I like.

DERREN. Oh, Granny.

GRANNY. It's not the only road, Derren. You and Joy should consider yourselves lucky. It's painful having children. It's painful losing them too.

DERREN. I'm sure it is, Granny.

GRANNY. Shall we have a glass of sherry?

### PIECE 3 - STORM

*STORM moves the objects away, leaving two on the table. She picks up a remaining object.*

STORM. This is Storm.

*She picks up another.*

This is Mum.

*She gestures to a space beside her.*

This is Storm's future.

*She puppets the STORM and Mum objects.*

Do what you want with your life. I can look after myself.

Okay, Mum. I'm going to move away.

Hey, Storm, it's my chemo tomorrow. Joy is working, and she's busy trying to start her own family.

Sage has got her big exhibition coming up. Maya is in Mexico. Can you take me to the hospital?

Okay, Mum. I'll be right there.

Oh, I feel a lot weaker than I expected.

That's okay, Mum. I'll stay the night.

Night, Storm.

Night, Mum.

I've thrown up.

Okay, Mum. I'll be right in.

Hey, Storm, I've fainted in Tesco. Can you help?

Okay, Mum.

Hey, Storm, I'm not eating.

Oh.

And don't tell Sage, she's busy. I don't want to worry her.

Okay, Mum. By the way, Joy will be over this weekend. And I'm so glad. She gives me some time. I am so grateful to her. She has such good intentions. But Joy doesn't ask me what I want. She says, "Storm, go out with your friends." But I don't have any friends. They've all moved away. So I go to the pub and I just sit there in the corner and all I'm thinking about is if Mum's okay.

Hey, Storm, it's got into my brain. I can't remember who you are

Oh.

I'm dead now.

*STORM puts the Mum puppet down.*

That's really hard. That you're dead now. I didn't do it for the money. I just thought that in the shittiest moments, that it would be worth something. That what I put in, would be paid back somehow. And I know, it was my choice to stay, and that you don't owe me anything. But I'm so tired, I've spent so long in this fucking house, and the world is so terrifying to me now.

PIECE 4 - STORM, DODO

*STORM in the garden. DODO enters.*

DODO. Hey, what are you doing out here?

STORM. Family. I just needed some fresh air.

DODO. Yeah, I hear ya. Luke is a hoot. I didn't even know you guys had a brother, so..

STORM. Sometimes it's better not to talk about him. Sometimes it's better to just let him be.

DODO. I'm sure he's a nice guy deep down.

STORM. You didn't have to live with him. I couldn't bring friends home because he would take stuff from their bags. We had to put locks on our bedroom doors. When Mum got ill, he just pissed off to his dad's. Didn't even visit.

DODO. I'm sorry.

STORM. You know, I used to pretend this end of the garden was a whole other country. I'd get in my plane, like this, neaaaaaaooow, and end up here in less than two seconds. Bit cheaper than EasyJet.

DODO. I'm sure. So, where are you now?

STORM. Hawaii.

DODO. Nice. Fancy.

STORM. Hot.

*DODO gets in his plane.*

DODO. Neaaaaaaooow. Seeking permission to land in Hawaii.

STORM. Permission granted.

*He lands.*

Aloha.

DODO (in Southern US accent). Why hello there, ma'am. Do you come here often?

STORM. All the time.

DODO. Would you like to try some magic mushrooms?

STORM. No. What?

DODO. Okay, sorry.

*She goes to leave.*

STORM. My system is very sensitive to stimulants of any kind.

DODO. It's okay, you don't have to take them

STORM. What's it like?

PIECE 5 - SAGE, DERREN, JOY

SAGE. It's half eleven. Where is everyone?

DERREN. I dunno.

SAGE. So much for everyone being together for Mum's birthday - (*Shouts offstage.*) Pelicans assemble! Pelicaaaaaans!

DERREN. Sage, Sage. Could you just not, please.

SAGE. Is Swindon a little grumpy?

DERREN. No, I'm not grumpy.

SAGE. Is Swindon man throwing his toys out of the Swindon pram?

DERREN. Can you just stop?

SAGE. Swindon angry. Swindon smash.

DERREN. Stop, okay, stop with the Swindon thing. I actually like Swindon, I like my life.

SAGE. Derren.

DERREN. It just really pisses me off.

SAGE. Derren.

DERREN. When you're all here... You know you lot, you're just not nice.

SAGE. It's all part of the charm

DERREN. Well, it's not charming. It isn't. Joy's suffering. She's really suffering and nobody cares.

*JOY enters with a bottle of prosecco.*

JOY. Where have you been?

DERREN. In the car.

JOY. Why?

DERREN. I needed some air.

JOY. Do you feel better?

DERREN. What's that supposed to mean?

JOY. Oh that's great. I'm fine.

DERREN. Well, you don't sound fine.

JOY. Oh really? I wonder why that could be?!

DERREN. We aren't doing this now /

JOY. Yes we are /

DERREN. No we aren't /

JOY. Yes we are!

DERREN. No, we're not! We're supposed to be on the same team.

*Pause.*

JOY. Well, this team doesn't seem to be doing very well at the moment, does it? And some teams seem to be winning without even trying and that's not fair!

*Pause.*

Well? Anything to say on that?

DERREN. What do you want me to say?

JOY. Anything. Scream. Shout. Swear. Throw something.

DERREN. I don't know what to do. I don't know what you want me to do.

## PIECE 6 - SAGE, LUKE

LUKE. Are you kidding me? All those records and you pick this?

SAGE. Yes, and?

LUKE. And it's boring.

SAGE. It's not boring, it's the most important song of all time. Listen to it.

LUKE. We've already listened to it, about a thousand times

SAGE. Fine, you might have been listening but you haven't been hearing. Actually listen to the words. It's a manifesto. It's a set of ideas.

LUKE. I know the words, we know every single word, just like the rest of the world. How old is this song now, like a hundred years old?

SAGE. Like fifty years old.

LUKE. Fifty years old. Hasn't really worked then has it? If it had, surely we'd all be hippies by now, running around in fields throwing flowers about.

SAGE. It's not naive to imagine a better world and strive towards making it.

LUKE. Oh yeah, hello, I'm John Lennon. Imagine this, imagine that, wouldn't it be great if there was no war and we all shared everything and everyone just got off with each other all the time.

SAGE. This was Mum's favourite song. So stop being a cynical prick and stop saying snarky shit about things that meant stuff to Mum and mean stuff to me.

LUKE. It's true. The song's bullshit.

SAGE. I don't care! Maybe the song is shit and John Lennon was a prick, but there is value in the things Mum believed in.

LUKE. Like what?

SAGE. Love, understanding. That we can work it out. That we can work together. That the world can be a family, that humanity is good.

LUKE. Humanity is good? You think humanity is good? When the Prime Minister looks like this.

*Projection: Photo of Boris Johnson.*

And the Queen looks like this.

*Projection: Photo of the Queen.*

Why have we even got a Royal Family? Look how fucking old she is! And all Mum could ever do is sit on the sidelines and complain. She was sitting on a house worth this.

*Projection: '£229,431'*

If she actually wanted to make a difference aren't there better things she could've done with that money than just leave it to us?

SAGE. Luke!

LUKE. What? And what's going to happen to you, now Mum's not around to buy your sculptures?

SAGE. You wouldn't dare talk like this if she was here.

LUKE. If you follow the bible of Mum, you end up with Sage: sofa-surfing in South East London, 'working' in her 'studio' but still somehow having the moral high ground? Bollocks. Mum was an idiot and a hypocrite and so is she.

SAGE. You know I wish there was some reason that you're such a dick. But from where I'm standing turns out you're just a dick. You're like a real dick, like a full dick.

LUKE. What, you think it was easy growing up in this house with you lot?

SAGE. Yes, yes it was. It was the easiest. We could do whatever we wanted.

LUKE. You could do whatever you wanted. Whenever I did anything I wanted, Mum would just lecture me about my place in the wider story of my gender, and then cry. When you lot do that, when you cry, we stop having a conversation and I can't win.

PIECE 7 - DERREN, MAYA, JOY

DERREN. All a bit much?

MAYA. Yes. All a bit much.

DERREN. I don't have a big family. I envy that. All that energy. Even Granny!.. Can you feel it yet?

MAYA. What? Oh, no.

DERREN. Do you mind if I touch it?

*He moves closer to MAYA as if to touch her belly. She draws back.*

Oh, shit. Sorry. That was weird. I just wanted to Congratulations.

MAYA. Congratulations... for what? Well done, Maya, your life is over. Congratulations on your little bundle of cells. Good on you, Dodo, for planting that seed in her. God he's so damn proud of himself too, like he has set up basecamp in my belly. He keeps touching it, there's nothing even there yet. Is this it? Is this gonna be it for the next seven months?! Two years? For the rest of my life? Because no amount of fucking meditation is gonna get me through this. I'm scared. I can't go to Joy, not this time. I just need my mum. I need her to tell me it's all alright. That I can do this, cos I'm not sure I can.

DERREN. Maya...

MAYA. Oh. Go on then.

DERREN. I feel a bit uncomfortable about it now to be honest.

MAYA. Do it.

DERREN. No.

MAYA. Touch my fucking belly, Derren.

DERREN. Okay.

*He touches it. He stays too long. He kneels. He presses his ear to her belly.*

MAYA. You know how to be quiet.

DERREN. Uhh.

MAYA. Dodo is always talking.

DERREN. You can do this, Maya. Oh. I think it's kicking.

MAYA. Derren, it's the size of a butterbean! It definitely isn't kicking.

*He stays. JOY enters and sees this image. DERREN sees JOY, gets up.*

JOY. Sorry to interrupt. Derren, is there any more prosecco?

MAYA. I'll get it.

DERREN. No, it's alright. I'll just. I'll leave you guys to it.

*DERREN exits.*

MAYA. Joy.

JOY. Maya. How did you do it?

MAYA. I dunno, we just /

JOY. How did you do it? Because we've tried everything. I've been on the Mediterranean diet for three years. We've spent seventeen grand on IVF. Not to mention the bloating, the cramps and the vaginal scans. They're painful. I've stopped wearing nail polish.

MAYA. What? Why?

JOY. The fumes. I dunno.

MAYA. Joy, I'm sorry.

JOY. Mehhhh.

MAYA. You can see it whenever you like.

JOY. Careful, might not give it back.

MAYA. I'm scared, Joy.

JOY. Your life doesn't have to change, Maya, it doesn't. Thirty.



MAYA. What?

JOY. Thirty grand.

MAYA. What?

JOY. Okay, forty, not a penny more. Call it fifty but that's my final offer, I can't go any higher.

MAYA. Stop playing around. It's not funny.

JOY. It's not a joke. I'm desperate. I could give that baby everything it would ever need. You could see it whenever you want. Think about it.

## PIECE 8 - DODO

DODO. So last night, Storm and I, we fucked. It happened. I'm sorry, I'm so sorry. We were high. I love you. And I am sorry. But I've been walking around all night thinking about it and I've worked it out. This house is poison. Your sisters are poison. And Bristol is a horrible city. Since the moment I've got here, you've all treated me like I'm some kind of joke. Well, guess what? Not any more.

Maya, we have got to get out of here. Back on the road Where we can start a family, a real family, a better family, which communicates clearly, and tells the truth. You keep talking about your mom like she was some kind of hero, like she gave you some special powers to live in some profound new way. But look at all of you.

Joy, you're completely joyless. Storm, you're obsessed with money, like it's going to fix all your problems, well, guess what? It's not gonna. Sage, you are rude and self-centred, and I've seen your website, and your art is derivative and mediocre at best. Derren, you're alright. Luke, I don't know you very well so I'm sorry, but you do not seem like a very nice little boy. And your mom, God rest her soul, seems like she was one crazy, manipulative bitch! The only person in your family who seems like they have a single shred of rational thought is Grandma and I'm pretty sure she's got dementia.

Maya. Come on. Let's get out of here.

## PIECE 9 - SOLICITOR

SOLICITOR. Well, as I am quite busy and as this was our booked appointment, I'll dive right in if that's okay. As you may well be aware, your mother remortgaged this property in 2005. This mortgage was then sold by Nationwide to Santander in 2006 as a 'stated income, verified assets' mortgage and then, in June of 2009, a majority stake of fifty-one percent of that mortgage was sold by Santander to a bank in Greece called the Patria Bank as a 'no income, verified asset' loan. In the ten or so years that followed, the interest rates on the financial agreements through which your mortgage was divided and traded, called mortgage-backed securities, which derive their value from outlay of conflated mortgage conglomerates, have remained relatively stable. Such financial innovations have enabled investors such as Richard Branson, Elon Musk, ExxonMobil and Berkshire Hathaway to invest indirectly in your mortgage, and millions of others like it.

Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances between EU and UK financial sectors, some of these investors and the banks and funds that they represent, have attempted to sell mortgages such as yours to other international mortgage brokers. But, as no credible buyer was found by the Patria Bank, and in an attempt to recoup lost funds, nine months ago they increased their interest rates to such an extent that they now technically own one hundred and twelve percent of your house, which may seem counterintuitive, as it obviously isn't physically possible to own more than one hundred percent of a house, but unfortunately it is both legally and financially very possible, and is now legally and financially a very real situation.

I initially thought that your mother's savings might be able to cover this deficit, and leave you each with a four-figure inheritance to walk away with, but looking more closely into the numbers, your mother left just under twenty-seven thousand pounds of savings and assets which, after inheritance tax and probate fees, leaves about eighteen thousand pounds.

However, two days ago, I was contacted by Tony Cameron Lifecare PLC, and because of your grandmother's increased care needs in Tulip Manor Trust, over the last twelve months, they've retro-actively billed you for having to arrange a private residential-care package, at an additional cost of two thousand, six hundred pounds per month, as well as a one-off fee of five thousand pounds for the use of the on-site residential, nursing and dementia care home, which is also operated by Tony Cameron Lifecare PLC. Which means, in short, that all things considered, after all taxes and fees are accounted for, including my own soliciting fee, there will be just under two hundred pounds left, and if you don't sell this house by Friday you will immediately default on your mortgage repayments, and that two hundred pounds will very quickly turn into a hefty debt of several tens of thousands of pounds. Additionally, if you'd like me to stay here today to advise you any further, my minimum consulting session is the one-hour package, and my hourly rate is a hundred and twenty-five pounds, which would leave you with roughly seventy-one pounds.

I can give you five minutes now to discuss your course of action, while I take a brief stroll outside, and then you must let me know, by 10.15 a.m., whether or not you'd like to retain my advisory services or not. Thank you, I'll be back in... four minutes.