

"PRESS GANG"

SECOND SERIES

EPISODE 8

"SOMETHING TERRIBLE"
(Part Two)

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Producer

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CHARACTER LIST

LYNDA
KENNY
SPIKE
SAM
COLIN
FRAZZ
SARAH
CINDY
TIDDLER
BILLY
BOY
SULLIVAN
MISS McGUIGAN
MRS. MATTHEWS
MISS HESSHOPE
TEACHER (Sc.829)

Breakdown of Days

NIGHT 1 Sc.801, 802
day 2 Sc.803-806
DAY 3 Sc.807-811
DAY 4 Sc.812-818
NIGHT 4 Sc.819-822
DAY 5 Sc.823, 824
DAY 6 Sc.825, 826
DAY 7 Sc.827
DAY 8 Sc.828-831

801 INT. CINDY'S LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

801

We are directly above CINDY looking straight down at her. She is curled in an armchair, watching an off-screen television. Loud pop music is playing. The room is in virtual darkness, the only light flickering over Cindy is from the television.

We crane down slowly to a close shot of Cindy's face. She stares solemnly, fixedly, at the television.

A shot of the television screen - a pop video.

Cindy's face. Off screen we hear a conversation as from an adjoining room.

MUM (OS)

... there's some beers in the fridge and some cold meat and I left Cathy's phone number on my dresser...

DAD (OS)

Sure, right.

MUM (OS)

And don't let Cindy stay up all night watching telly.

DAD (OS)

I won't.

MUM (OS)

You usually do.

DAD (OS)

I won't. Listen, why don't you stay over?

Cindy's eyes widen slightly in alarm.

MUM (OS)

What?

DAD (OS)

At Cathy's, why don't you stay over? You might as well.

Eyes still fixed on the television, Cindy starts to frown fiercely. Her breathing quickens.

MUM (OS)

Well I suppose I could, but...

801 CONT'D

801

DAD (OS)

Look, I don't go out 'til twelve tomorrow anyway, long as you're back before then. Stay over, why not?

MUM (OS)

Maybe I will. Probably I will.

We hear the front door open.

DAD (OS)

Have a good time.

MUM (OS)

You too.

We hear them kiss. Cindy blinks as if with the impact.

We hear the front door close. Again Cindy blinks as if with the impact.

Cindy stares ever more fixedly at the television. Her breathing is still harder. A tear trickles down one cheek.

Off screen we hear the Father cross the room. Holding on Cindy's face throughout, we hear the television click off, see the flickering light go from Cindy's face.

In the darkness that follows we can still see her eyes - as they slowly look up at her Father.

CUT TO:

802 INT. COLIN'S LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

802

Close shot of COLIN as he starts awake. He is sitting on an armchair, the room is in darkness. We are aware that the same music is playing as it was in the dream.

Colin looks around, momentarily bewildered.

COLIN

Cindy?

He looks around, his eye fixed on something.

A shot of a television playing the same pop video as Cindy was watching. Evidently Colin has fallen asleep watching television. As he stares at the video he slowly registers that it was a dream. He reaches for the remote, clicks the television off, sits back in the chair.

For a moment he stares, troubled and thoughtful.

He glances around at the clock - 2:05.

He stares hopelessly into the dark.

FLASHBACK SCENE 725 (Cindy and Colin in Colin's Storeroom)

COLIN

You don't like your dad, is that it?
Cindy, I get the feeling you're
trying to tell me something.

CINDY

I'm not!

COLIN

Then why... ? Are you frightened of
your dad, Cindy?

Cindy doesn't reply.

COLIN

Your dad, does he... does your dad hit
you, Cindy?

CINDY

He never hits me.

COLIN

Then why are you...?

He reaches to touch her. She lunges away.

CINDY

Don't touch me!

Colin stares at her, beginning to understand.

Back to Colin's room. We are slowing closing in on
Colin's troubled face.

FLASHBACK SCENE 725 (Cindy and Colin at the doors)

COLIN

Cindy, listen to me. Is your father
... is he... Is he making you... do
things? Not hitting you, but
making you do things?

802 CONT'D

802

Cindy won't meet his eye. She pushes at the door but Colin pulls it shut.

COLIN

Is he?

Cindy looks up at him, tearful, frightened.

COLIN

I'm right, aren't I?

His grip has slackened on the door. She now starts to push through.

Back to Colin. He frowns.

FLASHBACK SCENE 725

Cindy is heading over to her Father. She turns, looks back at Colin. For a moment she is about to say something - her look is frightened, helpless - then she turns and runs to her dad.

Shot of Colin as he steps forward as if about to call out. The words die in his throat.

Shot from Colin's POV as Cindy and her Father go out the doors. We - and Colin - can just make out what they are saying.

CINDY

Is mum home?

FATHER

No.

The doors swing shut behind them.

Back to Colin. He closes his eyes in despair.

After a moment we crane up until we are directly overhead looking down at Colin sitting on the chair. This should exactly resemble the opening shot of Cindy.

"Something Terrible"

803 INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE NEWSROOM. DAY

803

SPIKE is throwing his jacket over his chair and sitting down.

LYNDA
(appearing beside him)
Morning, Spike.

SPIKE
Morning, Lynda.

She takes a typed sheet from her clipboard, gives it to him.

LYNDA
Your record review - I made a few notes.

SPIKE
Is this girl a romantic or what?
She's put kisses all over it.

LYNDA
Crosses, Spike. At your spelling mistakes.
(points on sheet)
'U' after 'q' always and speaking of 'always' it's got one 'l'.

SPIKE
I put one 'l'. And that one.

LYNDA
Trim down the beginning, beef up the end, get Sarah to help you with the middle.
(glancing at sheet)
You misspelt 'illiterate' too - check your school reports.

SPIKE
Well you didn't put a cross at it.

LYNDA
Here.

She kisses him, starts to move away.

SPIKE
Just the one?
(pulls her back)
There's two 'l's in illiterate.

LYNDA
Not the way you spell it.

SPIKE

I'm learning.

LYNDA

(moving away)

That's 'learning' with one 'l'.

She goes. Spike turns to FRAZZ who is standing just beyond him.

SPIKE

Spelling! Don't you just love it?

FRAZZ

(looks at him a moment)

Remember two years ago when I was sick all over your living room carpet?

SPIKE

Remember it? We're still waiting for you to clear it up. Why?

FRAZZ

Because I'm just remembering it, too.

He goes. Spike grins, starts to follow him.

SPIKE

I guess I expected this.

FRAZZ

Expected what?

SPIKE

I suppose a guy like you could never hope to fully comprehend the kind of relationship that Lynda and I have.

FRAZZ

(sitting at his desk)

Don't start on this, Spike.

SPIKE

It's a spiritual thing, really.

FRAZZ

Spiritual?

SPIKE

I'm glad you agree.

FRAZZ

I've been watching this relationship. She brushes against you in the doorway, you need three laps of the Newsroom and a jump in the canal before you can breathe normally. That's spiritual?

SPIKE

You said it - that's spiritual!

He gets up.

FRAZZ

You're sad, Thompson!

SPIKE

Maybe, but get this! I'm in love!

He picks up the wastepaper bin from the floor and dumps it in Frazz's lap.

SPIKE

Do what you must.

He starts to go. Frazz follows, still with wastepaper bin.

FRAZZ

In love?? With Attila the skirt?

SPIKE

You got it!

FRAZZ

Tell me one thing, Spike. Does she kiss with her teeth?

SPIKE

That's a painful subject.

FRAZZ

Spike, listen to me!

Spike turns, looks at him tolerantly.

FRAZZ

Forget this one, okay? She's a dangerous lady. She'll have you in pieces.

SPIKE

Dangerous? Are you serious?
 (fondly)
 Look at her!

They look over. Lynda is just in the process of striding over to one of the Newsteam at his desk.

LYNDA

Graham, what the hell is this supposed to be? I told you five hundred words maximum, I said I wanted facts not theories! I am absolutely sick of your pathetic inability to follow the simplest and most basic instructions! (throws down typed sheets in front of him)
 One thing I've always wondered about you, Graham. When you wake up in the mornings, how do you tell?

The BOY stares back at her aghast. KENNY has appeared quietly beside her. He now whispers briefly in her ear.

LYNDA

(looking around)
 Well, which one is Graham?

BOY

He's in hospital.

LYNDA

(snatching up papers)
 What are the visiting hours?

KENNY

(taking her firmly by the arm, starting to lead her away)
 Lynda...

Back to Spike and Frazz watching this.

SPIKE

Isn't she sweet?

FRAZZ

(handing him bin)
 Keep this. They'll need somewhere to put your head.

803 CONT'D

803

Frazz goes. Spike glances into the bin, mildly disturbed at the idea.

SAM

(passing)
Hi, Spike! How's the latest brunette?

SPIKE

Sam, she's not just my latest brunette.

SAM

I didn't mean your latest brunette,
Spike - I meant hers.
(grins)
So how are you, Spike?

She winks at him and goes. Spike, mildly perturbed, glances into his bin.

SPIKE

(looking at bin; replying to Sam)
Head over heels!

TIDDLER appears beside him.

TIDDLER

Spike, where's Colin?

804 INT. COLIN'S BEDROOM. DAY

804

Colin is lying on his bed staring at the ceiling. We slowly close in on his face. A phone rings. He reaches behind him and pulls a cordless phone from behind his pillow. He presses the button, answers.

COLIN

CM Enterprises, hello?

The phone continues to ring - but evidently not this one. He tosses it aside, opens a drawer in the chest by his bedside, takes out another identical phone. Not this one either.

He goes over to a large cupboard, pulls open the doors. The shelves are stacked with identical cordless phones. One of them is ringing.

He listens carefully, homing in on one in particular.

COLIN

(answering it)
CM Enterprises, hello?

805 INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE NEWSROOM. DAY

805

(INTERCUT WITH SC.804)

TIDDLER

Did I phone the right one?

COLIN

(irritably)
No. What is it, Tiddler?

TIDDLER

I've got some information for you.

COLIN

Right, good. Listen could we maybe save it for later, I'm not really...

TIDDLER

About Cindy Watkins.

COLIN

(suddenly interested)
Cindy?

TIDDLER

Yeh. You asked me to find out about her, remember?

COLIN

What have you got?

TIDDLER

You know, I just don't understand it. Why are you so interested in this...

COLIN

Never mind, what have you got?

TIDDLER

Well, it's not much but I thought I should tell you straight off.

COLIN

(impatient)
Tiddler...

TIDDLER

She goes to the same school as us. She's Norbridge High.

Close shot of Colin as this fact sinks in.

806 INT. BILLY HOMER'S BEDROOM. DAY

806

Shot of BILLY listening patiently to Colin - initially out of shot - as he prattles on. During the below conversation we are slowly pulling out to reveal Colin wandering around the room chatting cheerily.

COLIN

The old days, eh? Remember them?
You haven't been round the Newsroom
much lately, we miss you, me old mate!

He sits on the bed, wearing his best nostalgic smile.

COLIN

You and me, eh? The stuff we used to
get up to! Craziiness city, right?
The terrible two.

He laughs and shakes his head at all these memories.

BILLY

Can I ask a question?

COLIN

Hey sure! We're buddies, ask!

BILLY

Who's Roger?

COLIN

(stares at him in amazement)
You're not Roger??

BILLY

I'm Billy.

COLIN

Oh, right! Roger was the one with the
limp, easy mistake.

He gets up again, starts round the room again.

COLIN

The number of times I've been in this
room, the many happy hours I've spent
here.

(shakes head)
I don't know!

BILLY

You've never been in this room.
We've only just moved to this house.

COLIN

Well, sure, right! What I meant was I knew the people who used to live here and I spent many happy hours with them.

BILLY

Nobody used to live here. It's a brand new house, they've just finished building it.

COLIN

(flaring)

I knew the architect, I spent many happy hours reading the plans - get off my back, okay?

BILLY

Colin, what is it you want?

COLIN

(warmly again)

Hey, just a chat - between old buddies, you know? Old times and all that.

BILLY

Colin, in all the time I've known you we've had exactly one conversation. You asked me if I could pass you a can of coke and I told you it was highly unlikely.

COLIN

(still warmly)

Yeh, remember that!

BILLY

(firmly)

Colin, what do you want?

COLIN

Just a chat, I told you!

BILLY

Then chat!

COLIN

Oh, right.

There is a moment of silence as Colin composes himself for conversation. He beams at Billy.

COLIN

So! You're paralysed, are you?

Billy just looks at him for a moment.

BILLY

Let me save you some time. You know I can hack into the school computer. You want me to get in there and pull someone's school record for you, right?

COLIN

Isn't it weird! You and me, we always think exactly the same things!
(he starts to push Billy's chair over to the computer)
Her name's Cindy Watkins, she's in first year. I'll help you get the headset on!

BILLY

Forget it!

COLIN

What?

BILLY

I'm under orders from Lynda. On no account have you to be allowed anywhere near the school records.

Colin sinks back onto the bed, deeply shocked.

COLIN

Lynda said that?

BILLY

She did.

COLIN

Well I'm hurt. Obviously she doesn't trust me.

Billy just looks at him. Colin looks back at him for a moment - then he gives up. His shoulders sag and all the bounce goes from his manner.

COLIN

Okay, Billy, I'm going to be straight with you.

Billy just chuckles.

806 CONT'D

806

COLIN

(very sincere)

No, I mean straight! Really! Look, I know how I sound. I open my mouth and it's a hustle! I can't help that. But this is not for me. Just this once I'm not pulling something.

BILLY

(looks at him sceptically)
Yeh?

COLIN

This is serious. A serious situation. As serious as it can be!

BILLY

(cynically)
And how serious is that?

COLIN

(picking up his tone)
What do you mean?

BILLY

I mean how much do you owe and who do you owe it to?

Colin stares at him, starting to realise the impossibility of convincing anyone of his sincerity. He looks bitterly at Billy, gets up, goes. Off screen we hear the door slam.

Close shot of Billy. He smiles cynically.

807 EXT. NORBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL. DAY

807

Establishing shot.

MISS MCGUIGAN (VO)

Are you sure it's in here?

808 INT. SCHOOL OFFICE. DAY

808

MISS MCGUIGAN - middle-aged, plainly not too bright - and Colin are standing together both looking warily around the office. Colin has a large butterfly-type net.

COLIN

We can't afford to overlook any possibility, Miss McGuigan.

MISS MCGUIGAN

Perhaps we should wait 'til Miss
Hesshope gets back.

COLIN

There may not be time. Please stay by
the door, I'll check under the desk.

Miss McGuigan watches nervously as Colin starts crawling
under the desk, net in hand.

MISS MCGUIGAN

A lizard, you say?

COLIN

(from under desk)
A lizard, yes.

MISS MCGUIGAN

Escaped from the Science Department.

COLIN

(emerging on other side of desk)
It's an experimental lizard.

MISS MCGUIGAN

Perhaps it'll find its way outside and
be safe there.

COLIN

(now looking in the cupboard)
Well this is not its natural habitat,
Miss McGuigan.

MISS MCGUIGAN

Yes, but it might get adopted by a
rabbit or something.

Colin looks at her for a moment making a rapid assessment
of her intelligence.

COLIN

I'm afraid we can't allow that to
happen. You see, this lizard is
radioactive.

MISS MCGUIGAN

Radioactive?! I saw that on television.

COLIN

Exactly! Who knows what size it may
be by now!

He has gone to a particular filing cabinet.

A shot from his POV of the label on the top drawer -
'SCHOOL RECORDS, FIRST YEAR GIRLS'.

MISS MCGUIGAN

I wish Miss Hesshope was here.

COLIN

Actually I'm glad it was you. I don't think Miss Hesshope would have believed me as quickly.

MISS MCGUIGAN

(proudly)

You know, you could be right.

Colin is now listening at the filing cabinet.

COLIN

(indicating cabinet)

I need to get in here.

MISS MCGUIGAN

It can't be in the filing cabinet.

(making a joke)

Not unless it got the key from Mr. Sullivan's room.

COLIN

It's obviously developing quicker than I thought.

MISS MCGUIGAN

(her eyes widen)

I'll get the key.

Just as she turns to the door SULLIVAN comes through it.

SULLIVAN

Miss McGuigan, is Rosemary...

He breaks off, seeing Colin standing by the filing cabinet, net in hand.

MISS MCGUIGAN

(by way of explanation)

Colin thinks there might be a radioactive lizard in the filing cabinet.

SULLIVAN

(looks grimly at Colin)

Again?

809 INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR. DAY

809

Colin is standing before Sullivan's desk as he writes on a sheet of paper.

COLIN
Sir, could you please listen to me?

SULLIVAN
(handing him sheet)
Write this out five hundred times -
for tomorrow.

COLIN
(taking it)
Look, I know how all this seems. But
it's not what you think. I've got a
problem, sir!

SULLIVAN
Yes, Colin.

COLIN
Can I talk to you seriously for a moment?

SULLIVAN
I very much doubt it.

COLIN
It's important!

SULLIVAN
Goodbye, Colin.

COLIN
Why will nobody take me seriously?

SULLIVAN
(looks at him for a moment)
Don't forget your lizard net.

Close shot of Colin as he again registers his difficulty in being believed.

810 INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE NEWSROOM. DAY

810

A shot of the doors as Colin comes through them, a virtually defeated man. We track with him through the Newsroom heading for his Storeroom. Lynda falls in step beside him.

810 CONT'D

810

LYNDA

Colin, I want the books. And I don't want to hear how they've been eaten by your cat, or how they were stolen by a roving band of deranged accountants, or how the recent stock market collapse in New Guinea has rendered the figures meaningless in a very real sense. I want the books now!

During the above they have gone to the doors to Colin's Storeroom. Colin has disappeared inside while Lynda continues her tirade. Colin promptly reappears and dumps the books in her hands just as she finishes the above speech. He disappears back inside, closing the doors.

LYNDA

(calling after him; astonished)
You're giving me the books?!

811 INT. COLIN'S STOREROOM. DAY

811

Colin goes to a pile of boxes, sits on them dejectedly. He looks at the net still in his hand - then hurls it at the opposite wall.

Lynda appears through the doors. She throws the books at Colin's feet.

LYNDA

Don't think you fooled me for a minute! I want the real books!

She storms out again.

Colin stares in disbelief after her - then plunges his head in his hands.

812 INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR. DAY

812

Shot of FIRST YEAR KIDS filing out of a classroom, talking and laughing. We come across Cindy on her own. She looks up, sees something ahead of her.

A shot of Colin leaning against the opposite wall waiting for her.

Immediately Cindy turns and starts heading rapidly down the corridor.

812 CONT'D

812

COLIN
 (going after her)
 Cindy!

813 INT. DIFFERENT SECTION OF CORRIDOR. DAY

813

Cindy appears through the doors, starts to run up the stairs.

Colin comes bursting through after her.

COLIN
 Cindy!

Cindy stops near the top of the staircase.

COLIN
 Cindy, I just want to talk to you.

Cindy looks hesitantly around.

COLIN
 Want to do lunch?
 (hastily correcting)
Have lunch, eat lunch!

814 INT. STAIRCASE. DAY

814

Same staircase, some time later. Colin and Cindy sit on the steps. Cindy is eating from a lunch box on her knees. There is total silence between them. Colin stares at the floor, troubled.

In continuing silence Cindy solemnly finishes her lunch, sets the lunch box down next to her. She looks at Colin who is still staring at the floor.

CINDY
 (after a long moment)
 Can I go now?

COLIN
 Cindy, I don't know what to say to you.

He looks around at her.

CINDY
 Tell me about the pink rabbit suit -
 the time you went to that funeral
 dressed as a pink rabbit.

COLIN

I know something's happening to you - something bad, something terrible. And I know it's to do with your father.

CINDY

The way I heard it you just forgot you had the rabbit suit on - your friends had to tell you.

COLIN

And I'm pretty sure I know what it is your father's doing to you.

CINDY

But you'd got yourself stuck in the rabbit suit so you had to go with it still on. But you didn't know the guy you were supposed to be meeting had just died and you ran into the middle of his funeral shouting 'Hi, everyone, I'm a bunnygram!'.
There is a silence. Colin looks steadily at Cindy.

CINDY

(after a long moment)
He never hits me.

COLIN

I know he doesn't. But he does other things, doesn't he? Things you don't think he should be doing to you.

Cindy looks away from him.

CINDY

(after a moment)
Have you still got the rabbit suit?

COLIN

I have to know for sure, Cindy. You have to tell me.

CINDY

Bring in your rabbit suit, I want to see it.

COLIN

I need to know for sure.

Abruptly Cindy gets up, starts to head away.

COLIN
(standing, calling)
Cindy!

She hesitates, stops, doesn't turn.

COLIN
I think you're asking me for help.
I think you're wanting me to help you.

CINDY
I'm not.

COLIN
Good. Because I'm the wrong guy.
(coming over to her)
You've got to go to someone else, Cindy,
I'm no use. You know what I am? I'm
a pink rabbit at a funeral. I'm a
radioactive lizard in a filing
cabinet. I'm the guy who tried to
market the inflatable telephone for
the poolside executive. My own
mother doesn't believe a word I say
without three independent witnesses
and a death threat. Cindy, I'm a
jerk.

Cindy looks at him, resenting his description of himself.

CINDY
I think you're great.

Colin stares.

CINDY
The stuff you do, I think it's great.

Colin doesn't know how to reply. For a moment Cindy keeps looking at him - almost a mute appeal for help.

CINDY
(abruptly)
Bring in your rabbit suit!

She turns, heads off through the fire doors.

Colin stares after her for a moment. He turns, goes back to the stairs, slumps down, head in hand.

We hear rapidly ascending footsteps from the staircase below. Lynda - looking somewhat furtive - comes briskly round the corner and starts to head up Colin's staircase.

She sees him and freezes guiltily.

LYNDA
(flustering guiltily)
I was just going up these stairs, no
particular reason or anything.

COLIN
(barely glancing at her)
Yeh, sure.

LYNDA
(awkwardly)
So, ah... hi.

COLIN
Hi.

LYNDA
I was just going up these stairs.

COLIN
Right.

LYNDA
No particular reason.

COLIN
You said.

LYNDA
Well, ah... I think I'll just go up
them then!

She starts to hurry up them. Almost immediately we hear another set of footsteps hurrying up the lower staircase. Lynda freezes and turns as Spike comes quickly round the corner - just as she did before - and comes to a guilty halt as he sees Colin.

SPIKE
(guiltily)
I was just going up these stairs.

He sees Lynda desperately signalling him to shut up.

SPIKE
(hurriedly)
No particular reason or anything.

LYNDA
Me neither.

814 CONT'D

814

SPIKE

Is that right?

LYNDA

What a coincidence!

SPIKE

It's just amazing!

COLIN

(suddenly on his feet; flaring angrily)
 Look, would you mind!! You're both very
 cute and everything, I mean if you're
 selling the film rights to this little
 romance, I'm in, but just at the
 moment I really don't want to listen
 to it.

He storms off, banging his way through the Fire Doors.
 Shot of Spike and Lynda staring after him astonished.

They turn and look at one another, baffled.

DISSOLVE TO:

815 INT. COLIN'S LIVING ROOM. EVENING

815

Shot of Colin sprawled across the sofa dully watching
 television. His mind is plainly elsewhere.

We pan away from him, across part of the room, to where
 Cindy is standing solemnly watching him. After a moment
 she goes over to him, stands waiting at the side of the
 sofa.

Colin turns. He sees her and starts.

COLIN

Cindy!

(sits up)

Cindy, what are you doing here? Did
 my mum let you in?

Cindy stares solemnly back at him, doesn't reply.

COLIN

Cindy?

He puts a hand out to her arm - she immediately flinches
 away.

COLIN

Sorry. I forgot.

He looks at her solemn face for a moment, sees the tear streaks down it. A thought occurs to him.

COLIN

Is your mum home, Cindy?

She looks at him a moment, shakes her head.

COLIN

Your dad?

She nods tearfully.

COLIN

Is that why you're here?

CINDY

(after a moment)
I've got to go!

She turns, starts heading for the door.

COLIN

(starting after her)
Cindy, no! You can stay here!

Cindy rounds on him with a sudden unexpected ferocity.

CINDY

Why? What for? What will you do?

COLIN

(taken aback)
Cindy?

CINDY

How could you help me, Colin? How
could someone like you ever help anyone?
Who'd ever believe a word you say?
Who'd ever take you seriously? You
know what you are? You're useless!

The force of this onslaught causes Colin to sit abruptly
back down on the sofa.

Close shot of Cindy's face.

CINDY

Completely useless!

815 CONT'D

815

CUT TO:

Colin asleep on the sofa as we saw him at the beginning of the scene. He starts awake.

Confusedly he sits up, looks around for Cindy, realises it was a dream.

COLIN
(sighs bitterly)
Useless!

COLIN'S MUM (OS)
Colin...

He looks around. His MOTHER is standing in the doorway.

COLIN'S MUM
There's a girl here for you.

COLIN
(stares)
A girl?
(realises)
Cindy!!

He goes straight for the door almost pushing past his mother on his way out.

816 INT. HALLWAY. EVENING

816

Shot of Colin as he comes through the door.

Shot of Lynda turning towards us as she hears him.

COLIN
(stares)
Lynda?

LYNDA
Hi.

Colin looks at her in complete disbelief.

817 INT. COLIN'S BEDROOM. EVENING

817

Lynda sits crosslegged on the end of Colin's bed. Colin wanders around, plainly somewhat agitated.

LYNDA

The books you gave me were real - I thought they were fakes, but they weren't, I checked. Over the last few days you haven't hustled once in the Newsroom - short of you being tied up and gagged I can't think of anything that would normally stop you. And today you blew up at Spike and me - and I've never seen you do that.

Colin looks at Lynda for a moment.

COLIN

Of all the people I thought would notice...

LYNDA

I'm the last?

COLIN

And of all the people I thought would care...

LYNDA

I'm not sure I do care - I don't know what your problem is yet. But I do know it's serious.

COLIN

And how do you know that?

LYNDA

Because you live for what you do. You live to hustle, right?

COLIN

Well sure. So?

LYNDA

It's like you live for your work. Like there's nothing outside of that. No social life, nothing. Just what you do. And of course, there's your appalling dress sense.

COLIN

What's appalling dress sense got to do with it?

LYNDA

I'm trying to think of everything we have in common.

The thought that he and Lynda might have anything in common strikes Colin.

LYNDA

The point I'm making is this. I know how an obsessive behaves. Because I am one. And I know how much it takes to knock an obsessive off the tracks - because I've been there.
(she looks at him a little ironically)
If you remember ending up as editor a few months ago you'll know what I'm talking about.

Colin looks away a little guiltily.

COLIN

Right.

LYNDA

So whatever you're going through it's got to be pretty bad. Yeh?

Colin looks at her a moment, slowly nods his head.

COLIN

Yeh.

LYNDA

And I think I'm the only person who's likely to know that. Which kind of places me under an obligation, doesn't it?
(smiles)
I mean us obsessives have got to stick together, right?

COLIN

You really want to hear this?

LYNDA

No. But I think you should talk to someone. And I think I'm it.
(grabs her jacket)
Want to walk? I find this kind of chat easier walking.

COLIN

Me too.

817 CONT'D

817

LYNDA
 (heading for door)
 Come on then!

COLIN
 You know, I really can't believe we're
 having this conversation. I really
 can't believe you taking this kind of
 interest in me.

LYNDA
 If it helps, think of it this way. You
 haven't sold one piece of advertising
 this week and our budget's looking shaky.
 I'm just getting your head together
 before you mess up my paper.

She opens the door and goes. Colin hesitates a moment
 then smiles.

COLIN
 (starting to follow)
 Actually that does help.

818 EXT. COLIN'S HOUSE. EVENING

818

Shot of the house as Lynda and Colin come out through the
 front door.

They come to the end of the path. Colin hesitates, takes
 a breath.

COLIN
 Okay, Lynda - bedtime story.

He leads the way off down the street. We pan round with
 the two of them and hold on them as they go off down the
 road together.

DISSOLVE TO:

819 INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE. NIGHT

819

The Newsroom empty and in virtual darkness. We pan round
 the empty room 'til we come to a shot with the doors in
 the background. The corridor lights go on. A moment
 later Lynda then Colin come through the doors. Their
 faces are solemn, their talk evidently finished.

Lynda goes over to the light switches, flicks them all on.

She turns to Colin who is still standing by the doors. They look at one another for a moment.

LYNDA

(grimly)
Well!

The phone rings. Lynda heads over to it, answers it.

LYNDA

Hello, Junior Gazette? Oh hi, Spike, how did you know I was here? Yeh, I suppose it was a pretty safe bet. Look, can I phone you back? Well I'm just busy at the moment. What?? Of course you're not! You're not, Spike! Spike, you're not my latest brunette! I never knew you could be so paranoid!

Spike says something which causes her to burst out laughing. Shot of Colin watching this grimly. He almost winces at the laugh, starts to head over to his desk.

LYNDA

(still laughing)
You are disgusting! Look, I've got to go. No, I've really got to go. And you're not my latest brunette, okay?
(grins)
I've had several since you!

Still laughing she puts the phone down. She turns to see Colin watching her grimly now sitting at his desk. Her smile fades.

LYNDA

Sorry.

COLIN

It's okay. It's nice to see something normal.

LYNDA

(smiles)
This really has got to you, hasn't it?

COLIN

(seriously)
Yeh.

LYNDA
(starting over to him)
So. How sure are you?

COLIN
Sure?

LYNDA
That Cindy is being sexually abused
by her father.

COLIN
You make it sound so...

He tails off, shakes his head.

LYNDA
(gently)
Colin, are you sure?

COLIN
(thinks about this)
It's just like a gut certainty, you
know? Like when you're selling and you
hit the right price - you just know.
(pauses, collects his thoughts)
But I'm not selling. And I can't
really be sure. I mean I can't go
pointing fingers, can I? I can't go
accusing her dad of anything - what if
I was wrong? Think of the damage I'd
do!

LYNDA
(nodding agreement)
If something's going on, she's got to
be the one to say.

COLIN
(getting agitatedly to his feet)
She's not going to say anything! Not
for years anyway - maybe never.

LYNDA
But we can't just let this go on!

COLIN
I know!

LYNDA
Then somehow you've got to persuade her.

COLIN

How? Lynda, I'm a salesman! That's all I am! Not a counsellor!

LYNDA

Then sell her an idea.

COLIN

(flaring)
Don't patronise me!

LYNDA

Sell her the idea that if something's happening, she should tell someone.

COLIN

You're patronising me!

LYNDA

I'm not, I'm serious about this. You're right, you're a salesman - you're a very good salesman. You're the best salesman I've ever met. So sell!

COLIN

(angry now; bitterly sarcastic)
Right, Lynda, sure! I'll have some posters printed shall I? A few tasteful little adverts perhaps? I know a hoarding in the town centre we could use, how about that?

LYNDA

You're not thinking, Colin!

COLIN

I'm not thinking!
(shakes his head bitterly)
Sorry, Lynda. I've had enough of this.
(starts heading for the door)
How about some TV commercials, would that help? Or some jazzy little pamphlets? Or a brochure with full colour pictures!

He storms out the doors. They bang shut behind him.

Shot of Lynda patiently waiting for the obvious to occur to him.

Colin comes back through the doors, finally understanding.

COLIN

Or a newspaper!

LYNDA

Exactly!

820 INT. KENNY'S HALLWAY. NIGHT

820

Shot of the phone as it rings.

KENNY (OS)
I'll get it, dad.

Kenny appears in shot, lifts the phone.

KENNY
Hello?

821 INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE NEWSROOM. NIGHT

821

(Intercut with Sc.820 as required)

Lynda on the phone, Colin at her side.

LYNDA
I want everything for the next edition cancelled - clear the whole thing, we're doing a special. Call round everyone who thinks they've got tomorrow off and cancel that too. And I want our four best researchers in the office five o'clock tomorrow morning - you better phone them now and tell them to go to bed. And I want you in at five as well, okay?

KENNY
Couldn't I come in any earlier? I hate having a proper night's sleep, I start getting used to it.

LYNDA
Okay, half past four.

She puts phone down.

822 INT. KENNY'S HALLWAY. NIGHT

822

Kenny looks at the receiver in his hand, shakes his head in disbelief.

KENNY
(calling)
Dad!

DAD (OS)
(from other room)
Yes?

KENNY
What phase is the moon right now?

823 INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE NEWSROOM. DAY

823

Shot of a typewriter being pounded. We pan round from this to a shot of the Newsroom in full swing.

Kenny and Lynda are striding through the Newsroom, arguing.

KENNY

I know child abuse is important, I accept child abuse is important - but why is it suddenly more important than everything else in the middle of this week?

SARAH appears by Lynda.

SARAH

Lynda, the guy from the NSPCC is coming in at seven - who do you want interviewing him?

LYNDA

You. Get as much info from him as you can but specifically we want to know what happens to the kid once they tell someone what's going on, we've got to cover that angle.

SARAH

(noting this, going)
Right.

LYNDA

(to Kenny)
I just suddenly thought it was time we dealt with this issue.

KENNY

And boy do you mean suddenly! Totally clearing the edition takes time you know. Would you care to guess when I got to bed last night?

LYNDA

Tell me.

KENNY

Not yet.

LYNDA

Me neither.
(hands him some sheets of paper)
Give this lot to Kate, tell her I want about two hundred words.

KENNY
Any particular angle?

LYNDA
Just tell her I want it good.

She heads on.

KENNY
(ironic)
Yes, boss.

Shot of Spike slumped asleep in his chair, his dark glasses on. Lynda appears behind him, whips his glasses off.

LYNDA
Come on, tiger, we need you awake.

SPIKE
Lynda, you had me awake all last night - doing layout sheets with you. Not that I mind, I'd rather layout with you than anyone, but I'm getting bags under my eyes.

LYNDA
You've always got bags under your eyes, it's a trick to make you look older.

SPIKE
You found me out, boss - I got silicone in my face.

They laugh, he looks around, catches sight of something.

SPIKE
Hey, look!

Shot from their POV - Colin is reading something at his desk.

SPIKE
What do you suppose he's doing here?

LYNDA
(smiles to herself)
You'd be surprised.

She heads over to Colin, leaving a somewhat baffled Spike.

Closer shot of Colin reading, his face very serious.
Lynda comes up beside him.

LYNDA

What do you think?

COLIN

(looking)

Why did we have to go for the next
edition? Another week couldn't have
hurt that much.

LYNDA

This lot work best on the run. And
besides I get a kick out of it. What
do you think of the article?

COLIN

Is it Sarah's?

LYNDA

The lead article's always Sarah's.

COLIN

It's not right. It's not selling.
(getting up, calling)
Sarah!

Shot of Sarah turning.

COLIN

Sarah, I've been reading your lead -
mind if I make a few comments?

SARAH

(stares)
What?

COLIN

Well, do you mind?

SARAH

Well, ah...

Lynda is watching this amusedly.

LYNDA

(to Sarah; firmly)
You don't.

COLIN

It's just this. What's this article for?
What's it supposed to do?

Sarah looks at him blankly.

COLIN
What's your market?

SARAH
Market?

COLIN
You've got to think of it this way.
Somewhere out there there's going to be
a kid reading this paper who's actually
being assaulted, who's actually being
abused. What are you going to say to
them?

Sarah looks blank. Around them the Newsroom has gradually
been falling silent as they stare in some astonishment at
this new, impassioned Colin.

COLIN
(now to everyone)
Look, we've all got to get this into
our heads. All that stuff about what
happens afterwards, what happens once
they've come out and said something,
that's important, that's good. I mean
we've got to show them everything's
going to be okay, right? We've got
to prove life doesn't end once you've
told someone - but most important of
all we've got to get them to tell
someone. That's the sale, guys!
That's the clincher.

He is now well into his stride, moving around the
Newsroom, addressing them all.

COLIN
Now the thing is this. These kids
don't like what's happening to them -
I mean, they want it to stop, right?
So why haven't they told someone
already? What's the problem? What
we're dealing with here, guys, is
consumer resistance! If you're going
to make a sale, that's the thing to
beat.

SARAH
(staring at him)
Consumer resistance?

COLIN

Exactly! Like this.
(rounds on Kenny)
Kenny, you're the kid that's being
abused - why won't you tell anyone?

KENNY

(turns to Lynda)
Do I do this?

LYNDA

Yup.

KENNY

(turns back to Colin)
Well, I'm ashamed. I don't want people to
know about this, it's dirty.

COLIN

It's not you that should be ashamed.
This is not your fault. This is the fault
of the person who's doing it to you. And
you're not the only person it's ever been
done to and no one's going to hate you
because of it. You're not alone and
you're not dirty. And it's not your fault.
(to Sarah)
Make that point.

SARAH

Right, sure.

COLIN

Well note it down!

SARAH

Sorry!

She hurriedly notes it down.

COLIN

(to Newsroom)
What else then? What else is stopping
you?

LYNDA

I'm scared. I'm worried what my dad
will do to me if I tell.

COLIN

Nothing. Once you've asked for help
we promise you'll be looked after.
There is absolutely no danger -
that's a guarantee. Got that, Sarah?

SARAH

I'm noting it down.

TIDDLER

Who do I tell?

COLIN

Someone you trust. A teacher's a good bet, they've got the back-up. A teacher or someone you trust. And if they don't help you you tell someone else. You keep telling 'til you find the person who's going to help you.

(to Sarah)

That's important, Sarah!

SARAH

(noting it down)

I know.

SPIKE

I'm worried about my dad.

COLIN

What?

SPIKE

Maybe I still love him. I mean he is my dad. What's going to happen to him?

COLIN

If your dad loves you then he knows he shouldn't be doing this, he knows he's harming you. And if he can't stop doing it on his own, then he needs someone to stop him.

SARAH

Got it.

COLIN

Go for it!

(starting to head for his Storeroom)
Remember, guys - we've got to get the kid through the door and talking.
We've got to sell, sell, sell! So let's get to it!

KENNY

(instinctively)

Okay, boss.

(flinches, turns to Lynda next to him)

Sorry, boss.

Colin turns, goes off into his Storeroom.

823 CONT'D

823

Sarah appears next to Kenny and Lynda, an expression of wonder on her face.

SARAH

He's actually quite intelligent,
isn't he?

LYNDA

It's just a phase.

Lynda starts to head over to Colin's room.

824 INT. COLIN'S STOREROOM. DAY

824

Colin is leaning against the wall thoughtfully, as Lynda comes in. They look at each other for a moment.

LYNDA

I just wanted to say. You're an
immoral, dishonest, tasteless little
hustler - but you're okay.

He gives a slight smile.

LYNDA

Which doesn't mean I don't expect the
financial report on time and accurate
at the Thursday meeting.

COLIN

Doesn't mean you're going to get it
either.
(looks at her a moment)
At times you're kind of okay yourself.

LYNDA

Yeh. But I don't make a habit of it.

She smiles and goes. We hold on Colin, slowly closing in
on his troubled face as we

DISSOLVE TO:

825 INT. PRINT ROOM. DAY

825

MONTAGE of printing press ending with bundle of papers
coming off the end - 'CHILD ABUSE SPECIAL'.

826 INT. SCHOOL STAIRCASE. DAY

826

Colin is coming down the stairs, still troubled and thoughtful. He looks ahead - and freezes. At the foot of the stairs Cindy is standing and staring at him resentfully.

COLIN

Cindy?

She turns and runs off through the Fire Doors. Colin stares after her.

DISSOLVE TO:

827 EXT. PLAYGROUND. DAY

827

A queue of Kids are making payments to Colin while he makes entries in a little black notebook.

Close shot of Colin as he glances up from his notebook.

Colin's POV. Cindy is watching him, still with a resentful stare. Again Colin stares after her, troubled.

828 INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR. DAY

828

The bell is ringing as Colin comes out of a classroom. He crosses the corridor to take his bag from one of the coat hanger units. He freezes. A torn and mutilated copy of the 'Child Abuse' Junior Gazette is sticking out of his bag. Baffled and troubled he takes the paper from his bag, looks at it.

CINDY (OS)

I know what you're trying to do.

Colin turns. Cindy is staring murderously at him.

CINDY

And I hate you!

She turns and runs off down the corridor. Helplessly, Colin watches her go.

DISSOLVE TO:

829 INT. CLASSROOM. DAY

829

A silent classroom. Everyone working quietly. We start on a shot of Colin staring blankly at the open book on the desk in front of him. He is plainly in a state of almost complete despair.

Shot of Lynda watching him concernedly from another desk.

Colin sits back a moment, sighs. He evidently comes to a decision. He stands, starts heading for the door.

TEACHER

(from his desk; looking up from his work)

Colin, where are you going?

COLIN

(going out)

Excuse me, sir.

TEACHER

(calling after him)

Colin!

Lynda is now heading for the door.

LYNDA

It's all right, sir.

(she turns at the door)

Excuse me.

She goes out.

LYNDA (OS)

(from the corridor)

Colin!

Colin comes bursting through the Fire Doors closely followed by Lynda. He starts striding down the corridor, Lynda at his heels.

LYNDA

There's no point in this, Colin!

COLIN

I need to talk to her!

LYNDA

We agreed it had to come from her, she had to say it herself!

COLIN

I still need to talk to her!

831 INT. SCHOOL OFFICE. DAY

831

Colin comes through the door quickly followed by Lynda.

COLIN

Miss Hesshope, could you tell me what class Cindy Watkins is in at the moment?

LYNDA

Colin, there's no point!

MISS HESSHOPE

(to Colin)
Ah yes! The lizard man.

COLIN

Could you please just tell me what class she's in.

MISS HESSHOPE

And could you tell me why Miss McGuigan is now bringing a net to work?

COLIN

Please, Miss Hesshope. Just tell me what class Cindy Watkins is in.

SULLIVAN (OS)

She's not in her class.

Colin and Lynda turn. Sullivan is standing in the doorway.

SULLIVAN

Could I see you both outside?

Colin and Lynda glance at each other. They follow Mr. Sullivan out of the office.

832 INT. SCHOOL OFFICE CORRIDOR. DAY

832

Sullivan leads Colin and Lynda out of the office.

SULLIVAN

Cindy asked to be excused from her class this morning. She's with Miss Sandford at the moment.

LYNDA

The Guidance Teacher?

SULLIVAN

Yes. I just, ah... thought you might like to know.

He turns to go. Colin and Lynda exchange a look.

COLIN

Sir?

Sullivan turns.

COLIN

What's happening? You've got to tell us what's happening. I mean, has she... Is she... What's happening?

SULLIVAN

You know I can't tell you that, Colin. (looks at him a moment, ghost of a smile)

But I can tell you this. I was very impressed with your 'Child Abuse' edition. I thought it was very, ah... (looks at them very directly) ... effective.

(looks at them for a moment)
Well done.

He turns and goes. Colin stands there, hardly able to believe it.

COLIN

She must have... Just after she talked to me, she must have...

He can't go on.

LYNDA

(smiles at him)
Don't ever tell anyone I did this.

She hugs him.

Freeze Frame

END TITLES

End titles duologue over end credits:

CINDY

Get off my case, Colin!

COLIN

Cindy, these things are important.
Frankly this is not a good report card!

CINDY

You know, when I first met you, you were a real fun guy. Now you spend all your time bugging me about school and stuff. Everyone else you try and hustle. Me you nag about homework!

COLIN

And I don't like some of the people you're hanging around with either. I mean, some of them are friends of mine!

CINDY

And you still haven't shown me your rabbit suit. I mean how long have I been asking?

COLIN

Look at this! Your marks have gone down in English.

CINDY

(sarcastic)
And I'll bet you paid lots of attention in English.

COLIN

Well you don't want to turn out like me!

CINDY

Yes I do!

COLIN

No you don't!

CINDY

Do!

COLIN

Don't!

CINDY

Show us your rabbit suit!

COLIN

Shut up!

Cindy giggles.

THE END