

ROUNDAABOUT

Written by

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A Night Mail Production

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INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

DAVID (23) lies in bed with STELLA (26).

STELLA  
Is that an orchid?

DAVID  
Well spotted.

STELLA  
Gosh, you're not like other boys are  
you.

David sighs.

DAVID  
That's probably my fifth one this  
year.

STELLA  
(playfully)  
Yeah, I can tell.

They both laugh.

DAVID  
Is it that obvious?

STELLA  
(with a hushed whisper)  
You've still got the tag on it.

David laughs.

DAVID  
(sarcastically)  
My cover's been blown.

STELLA  
...It's okay, I'm on my sixth.

DAVID  
You're so full of shit aren't you.

STELLA  
(sighing)  
I dunno, it's nice to have a little  
delusion in your life I suppose.

DAVID

Yeah.

(BEAT)

Do you want some wa-

STELLA

-Water? Yes please.

David smiles, he leaves the bed to get the desired glass of water. He soon returns in record time.

DAVID

(gesturing the drink towards  
Stella)

Madame!

Stella reluctantly takes the water, rolling her eyes.

STELLA

Thanks.

Stella sips the water before noticing her dress is stained on the floor.

STELLA

Aw, what the fuck!?

DAVID

Oh sorry, is it no good? I should probably change the Brita filter shouldn't I?

STELLA

No, no, not the water, my dress! For fuck sake.

Stella's dress lies in a heap on the floor, it is marked by what can only be red wine.

DAVID

Oh, shit, yeah. whoa. ...fuck.

STELLA

When the hell did that happen? Did you fucking swill me!?

DAVID

No, obviously not.

STELLA

Well, you're gonna have to buy me a

new one now.

DAVID  
I really don't appreciate you  
implicating me into this crime.

STELLA  
Why do you talk like that?

DAVID  
Like what?

STELLA  
'Implicating me into this crime'. You  
sound like an answering machine.

DAVID  
(imitates an answering phone)  
beep.

They both laugh.

STELLA  
Which bar do you think it happened at?

DAVID  
I don't know. Probably the last one. I  
can't imagine many places letting you  
in looking like that.

STELLA  
What was it called?

DAVID  
Could've been Fitzzy's?

STELLA  
...where?

DAVID  
It's by, that uhh, that one bar-

STELLA  
Oh. Right.

A brief silence ensues.

STELLA (CONT'D)  
Anyway, I've actually got a thing.

DAVID

Yeah, yeah. I'll show you out.

Stella leaves the frame as she heads towards the door, David can be heard closing the door as she exits.

David ponders in embarrassment in his bedroom. His phone soon begins to ring, he waits a moment before answering.

DAVID

Hey! yeah, sorry I was actually a bit... preoccupied! So, couldn't answer. Yeah, sorry that's my bad, I didn't mean to leave you guys. I actually don't remember much. I had a girl over so couldn't have been that bad! I don't actually remember meeting her. I don't remember her name either. I don't really remember anything. How was your birthday though? Yeah? Good! Good, I'm glad. I'll let you enjoy your day, I'll call you later, kinda need to sort myself out first.

David sniffs the body odour from his t-shirt, instantly being struck by another wave of embarrassment.

DAVID

Fucksake.

David falls back on to the bed.

TITLE CARD: ROUNDABOUT.

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - DAY

MARNIE (27), is in a photoshoot with TWO MODELS, their outfits conjure images of a wedding at a skatepark. She is attempting to capture an image for the cover of a fashion magazine, however, she is becoming increasingly frustrated by the lack of chemistry between the models.

She has her back to us, moving around the models, taking many pictures from different angles, weaving in and out of frame.

The models embrace each other in a different manner than before, as Marnie continues to dance around them with her camera.

The models continue to shift their positions, unsure of Marnie's demands. As she continues to take photographs, we

see her frustrations increase.

MARNIE

Guys, you're meant be in love, you don't even look like you want to fuck each other. Take five. Do me a favour, get to know your husband.

The models are left bewildered as Marnie leaves the room. They begin to converse, airing their frustrations with Marnie's lack of professionalism.

We follow Marnie as she passes by a LIGHTING TECHNICIAN.

MARNIE

(exhausted)

Right, can we sort out the light please?

The technician nods and heads towards the lighting equipment.

Marnie pulls out her phone, she attempts to call her friend, they do not answer.

EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON.

David walks through the park, headphones in, nursing a hangover.

David eventually stumbles across his friend MICHAEL in the park sat on a bench as he reads from a notepad with a pen in his hand. Michael whistles over to get his attention

David takes a seat, and gestures towards Michael's notepad. In the background, a MAN struggles to fly his kite.

DAVID

Oh God, you're not going through a poetry phase again are you?

MICHAEL

(Playfully)

The poetry thing was never a phase, and these are just some notes for an audition.

DAVID

Ahh! What is it? Shakespeare's like, 17th Henry or something like that?

MICHAEL  
Close! It's Romeo and Juliet.

DAVID  
Juliet, I'm guessing. Right?

MICHAEL  
(sarcastically)  
Yeah.

DAVID  
When is it?

MICHAEL  
It's later on today, it's not looking  
very good. I don't know these lines.  
SO fucking nervous

DAVID  
Mate, you'll be alright. You just  
gotta learn them

MICHAEL  
Listen I'm thinking, beside this  
audition there's a bar. I'm thinking,  
drinks, music, me, you, all at the  
same time? How's that sound.

David's hangover brings him great reluctance to go out again,  
but Michael's temptation is too strong.

DAVID  
Yeah go on then.

MICHAEL  
Brilliant, super.

DAVID  
Well I'll leave you learning your  
lines. Obviously you need all the help  
you can get.

MICHAEL  
Thanks. Dick.

David stands up to leave and Michael goes back to his notes.

INT. STELLA'S APARTMENT - EVENING.

Stella enters her apartment after leaving David's. Feeling  
hangover and exhausted, she pours herself some vegetable

juice to recover, until her friend Marnie rings her. Stella clumsily soils over the drink she's just made, reinforcing her own frustrations.

STELLA  
(playfully elongating her words)  
Shit, hello...

MARNIE (O.S)  
Jesus, I thought you were dead.

STELLA  
No, unfortunately not.

MARNIE (O.S)  
Please say we're still on for tonight.

STELLA  
Yeah. Of course. 7 is good.

MARNIE (O.S)  
Right I'll see you later.

INT. TURNSTILES BAR - NIGHT.

We pass by a MUSICIAN tuning his guitar - eventually arriving at the table, where Marnie and Stella are sat.

MARNIE  
So it's for some streetwear company, and they're like, trying to branch out into the wedding market. Like, could you imagine that. Walkin' up the aisle in a pair of Reeboks.

STELLA  
Ideal if you're gonna do a runner.

The waitress approaches Michael's table.

WAITRESS  
Can I get you guys some drinks?

MICHAEL  
Yeah can I just get the cheapest beer please?

DAVID  
Can I just get a water please?

WAITRESS

Of course.

Michael looks at David with bewilderment, the camera follows the waitress, passing by the musician, arriving at Marnie and Stella's table.

MARNIE

-Honestly the more I think about it, I just don't think the photography game is for me.

STELLA

I imagine it's probably quite difficult to find a balance with your vision and the spec isn't it.

MARNIE

I just need to branch out and really reconsider my options. Maybe I'll even start writing again.

The waitress cuts in.

WAITRESS

Can I get you ladies anything else?

MARNIE

I would love a glass of Merlot.

WAITRESS

Okay, and yourself?

STELLA

Just a glass of water for me please.

Marnie looks at Stella with confusion.

CUT TO MICHAEL.

MICHAEL

You're a bad man.

DAVID

Don't mate, I've properly fucked it.

CUT TO MARNIE.

MARNIE

SO, how was it?

STELLA

Yeah, it was weird. Like, I haven't been in that situation with someone who isn't Connor, like, he kisses funny, and this guy doesn't. I don't know, it's just weird.

CUT TO MICHAEL.

MICHAEL

But I thought you were seeing that other girl.

DAVID

I am. Thing is, things are actually going really well. We like the same music, we read the same books.

MICHAEL

That reminds me actually, I was with this girl recently. Things are going well, naturally.

David rolls his eyes.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

We go back to hers, I go into her bedroom and I see she's got like three copies of Lolita-

DAVID

I thought we were talking about my problems.

CUT TO MARNIE.

MARNIE

You don't remember a thing?

STELLA

Well I remember we were dancing at one point.

Marnie looks at Stella in disgust, surprised by her actions.

STELLA

Sounds bad doesn't it?

MARNIE

Well, does he remember meeting you?

CUT TO DAVID.

DAVID

Do you remember Ollie Miller?

MICHAEL

Jesus yeah, what a freak. What about him?

DAVID

Yeah well, I bumped into him the other week. He's married now, got a good job, expecting his first.

CUT TO MARNIE.

MARNIE

How long has it been since you and Connor anyway?

STELLA

Like 3 months.

MARNIE

Then what's stopping you?

STELLA

Well, I've still got all of our pictures-

MARNIE

-So he's still in your head.

CUT TO MICHAEL.

MICHAEL

You know what, Ollie probably came away from that conversation feeling exactly how you're feeling now.

DAVID

I highly doubt that. It's just... it's just really hard seeing someone who had all the same opportunities as me do better.

MICHAEL

What is better? What do you mean by that?

DAVID

Well, you grow up and everyone your age is in the same boat, you do the same exams, we all want the same CDs, but then - bam - you leave, and everyone goes at a completely different pace.

MICHAEL

Yeah, exactly it's fi(ne)-

DAVID

-It's jarring.

CUT TO STELLA.

STELLA

Is there ever really a 'right time' to get rid of old photos? I mean, it's a chapter in my life. I'm not just gonna erase them because things are different now.

MARNIE

You're not erasing the memories, you're taking away the power that they have over you.

STELLA

But by keeping them, that's my way of taking control. Actually, that's what makes it official.

MARNIE

You shouldn't take a photo with someone until you're at least somewhat official.

STELLA

Yeah but what if it takes a while?

MARNIE

Then so be it. You have to make sure people earn their way into your life.

STELLA

Yeah I agree but then that's potentially a lot of memories that I'm losing because of some stupid, self-imposed framework.

MARNIE

Well it's not a refusal, it's a caution. Have you never been with a complete dick before?

STELLA

Yeah well I suppose it's alright to get your hopes up. If you have to be disappointed in the end then so be it. It would've been useful to have the pictures from last night.

MARNIE

Why would you want that?

STELLA

It helps connect the dots doesn't it, doesn't mean you want to keep it. It's just a piece of information at the end of the day.

CUT TO DAVID.

DAVID

It's just like when you're younger and you're told to walk on the inside of the pavement because it's safer.

Michael's face wears a confused expression.

DAVID (CONT'D)

When am I supposed to take control? You know, when do I say, hang on, I should be closer to the road now.

MICHAEL

What? What the hell are you talking about?

DAVID

I'm talking about life y'know, like me. Everyone else seems to have become the 'adult version' of themselves when's that going to happen? Fuck me it's a hard pill to swallow. I don't know, I just- I just need some structure.

Michael gives a sympathetic smile.

CUT TO MARNIE

INT. AUDITION - AFTERNOON

Marnie, seated among fellow casting directors, has her script laid out before her, prepared to audition actors for her upcoming film. Alongside her, a live-video feed and camera capture the door, behind which a line of hopeful ACTORS eagerly await their turn. The table in front of her displays the script titled 'Autumn Leaves - written by Marnie Brennan.'

One after one, the actors walk in, and read a line.

ACTOR 1

In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes...

Marnie cuts the actor short of their dialogue.

MARNIE

(Stern)

Thank you, next.

The second actor approaches the table.

ACTOR 2

In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes, for they in thee a thousand errors note; but 'tis my heart that loves what...

Marnie cuts the actor short once again.

MARNIE

Next.

The third actor approaches the table with some trepidation.

ACTOR 3

In faith-

MARNIE

What does this mean to you? This text.

Actor 3 begins to look around the room in search of thought.

MARNIE

Next.

Michael; the fourth actor, approaches the table.

MICHAEL

In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes, for they in thee a thousand errors note; but 'tis my heart that loves what they despise, who, in despite of view, is pleased to dote. Nor are mine ears with thy tongue's tune delighted, nor tender feeling, to base touches prone, nor taste, nor smell, desire to be invited to any sensual feast with thee alone. But my five wits nor my five senses can dissuade one foolish heart from serving thee, who leaves unswayed the likeness of a man, thy proud heart's slave and vassal wretch to be. Only my plague thus far I count my gain, that she that makes me sin awards me pain.

Marnie's impressed by this candidate, but she wants to be confident in her decision. She makes Michael repeat his lines again, and again, and again.

MARNIE

Can you do that again for me?

MICHAEL

Yeah, of course.

Michael keeps reciting his lines to impress the casting directors.

INT. BEDROOM - MARNIE'S FILM SET

There's an awkward silence between Michael and CYNTHIA in a bedroom. Marnie has cast Michael and CYNTHIA in her film to replicate the events of Stella and David.

CYNTHIA

Is that an orchard?

Marnie immediately intervenes with a professional tone despite the sense of exhaustion that she bares.

MARNIE

Can you read that line again for me?

With a grimace and furrowed brow, Cynthia continues.

CYNTHIA

Is that an Orchard?

Marnie responds with light humour.

MARNIE

It's an orchid. Yeah? Orchid.

CYNTHIA

Sorry yeah I just didn't even know what you meant, aren't I meant to be looking at it? Where is it?

MARNIE

Yeah, sorry budget's fucked.

(Awkwardly Laughs)

Anyway, let's go from the top. And remember Cynthia, it's an orchid, not an orchard... we've not been transported to a bloody fruit farm!

MICHAEL

(To Cynthia)

Could have fooled me.

They perform their lines from the top again.

CYNTHIA

Is that an orchid?

MICHAEL

Yeah, or at least it was. Everything I touch seems to die.

Marnie, stunned at Michael's inability to stick to the script, immediately cuts in.

MARNIE

Michael. What the fuck.

MICHAEL

...You told me to watch some James Cagney films.

MARNIE

Yeah, 'Footlight Parade', not 'Public Enemy'. Just stick to the script, please.

CUT BACK TO MICHAEL. Michael and Cynthia look at each other at the same time, grimacing.

A PAINTER sits at his canvas, sketching a crude interpretation of a couple sat beside the river. The couple

approach the painter as he signals them over, only to discover his awful painting skills. They begin to quarrel as Marnie approaches from the left.

We follow Marnie as she comes to a stop only a few meters away as she begins to call Stella.

MARNIE

Hi, sorry it's been a while. Hope everything's going well... anyway, I've been working on this little project, it's all very hush hush at the moment but we're just trying to get the numbers sorted for the premiere. The whole cast is going to be there, I'd love it if you could make it. Give me a ring back when you can!

INT. CINEMA - AFTERNOON

A close up of someones hand grasping flyers that reads 'Autumn Leaves - Premier.' They hand them out as people enter.

Stella, amongst other friends, enters and takes a seat next to Marnie.

David, amongst other friends, takes a seat next to Michael.

The film begins to roll, as the camera pans across the audience, focusing on each individuals countenance. The camera stops at Marnie.

CUT TO MICHAEL.

CUT TO DAVID.

CUT TO STELLA.

ACTRESS (O.S.)

Is that a ficus you've got there?

David's eyes widen.

Stella's eyes widen.

Marnie sits looking proud of herself.

Michael shifts in his seat, looking nervous.

CUT TO STELLA.

CUT TO DAVID.

THE END.