

Terry Cordrey

INCENSE

FADE IN TO:  
EXT. STREET. DAY (MORNING).

The neglected housing estate shines with the newness of recent rain.

A car speeds over one of the many water filled potholes and splashes contempt on the gang of youths standing on the pavement.

Most of the water goes over the jeans and Nike trainers of DANNY, the oldest. His skinny frame and thin face mask the cauldron of resentment that bubbles within. He would rather be a king among younger kids than a jester in a court of his own age.

Danny spins round and spits onto the rear of the car.

DANNY.

Wanker!

The others laugh and offer high fives in admiration of his accuracy.

Their backs are turned on the vast area of green emptiness of Boorman Recreation Ground, a vacuum in the bell jar of human habitation.

An old man is walking his dog and takes a short cut over the broken concrete post and wire mesh fence into the field.

He lingers by the dedication plinth and boringly studies the same words that he has seen a hundred times before. 'Boorman Park' 'Through Play Comes Hope' 'This Park was built on land donated, by Councillor A Boorman, for the use of the children of Barndon and officially opened by him on the 24<sup>th</sup> June 1952'

The dog shits at its base and they walk on towards the benches at the far end of the field.

On the opposite side of the street is a row of two-storey terraced houses converted into flats. The boundary of a much larger ghetto, a dumping ground for undesirable tenants of the Local Housing Authority. Most of the gardens are unkempt as if the tenants had accepted the unwritten label foisted upon them without question.

Tired light blue paint covers the door of number 13A.

The sparkling white plastic 'A' leaps out in stark contrast to the fag ash grey of '13' as if begging to be plucked and re-sited on a house with neat lawns and chintz curtains. This is the doorway to despair. Where brightness is trapped, grows stale and then dies in a slow gasp.

A lump of concrete strikes the door with a loud thump! '13A' becomes '13' as the 'A' shatters into small fragments. The youths whoop with laughter at yet another accurate shot. Danny swaggers boastfully and encourages the smallest boy to pick up more rocks. The boy hesitates and Danny cuffs him round the head.

INT FLAT LIVING ROOM DAY.

The living room is a dim void of disturbed lethargy.

A well-worn settee is angled across a corner of the room. Above it hangs a painting of two men sitting, one behind the other, in a cinema.

The man behind is holding a bag of pop corn and his eyes are focussing laser beams through the head of the man in front. The man in front has blood coming from his head, but carries on watching the film.

There is only one colour in this room – red, liberally stroked amongst seas of black on various

Terry Cordrey

INCENSE

unfinished paintings scattered around the skirting boards. None of them portray 'sunshine' or 'brightness'.

Wallpaper, stained from the nicotine of the previous tenant's smoking, soaks up the daylight squeezing through the dirt on the solitary front window.

Newspaper stuffed into a broken window pane keeps out the cold, noise and virgin light that would resuscitate the sweaty atmosphere of this stale room.

A kitten, TIBS, squats in the litter tray by the kitchen door. Its bum overhangs the rim and faeces join the carpet fibres already rotting from stale urine.

JASON, twenty years old, is lying fully clothed on the settee. He has slept there all night, comforted by the voices coming from the small black and white television on the floor.

The bang on the door startles him into consciousness and when he hears the laughter outside he settles back – he has heard it all before.

Jason stretches, rubs the stubble on his chin and sucks in a mouthful of air.

He looks across at the collection of spiritual ornaments on the chest of drawers: a dream catcher, Native American posters, a shiny red Buddha, joss sticks and an old potato.

His medication sits in a pile at the end together with a grubby glass.

Jason stares at the tablets, raises his eyebrows, looks up at the ceiling, gives a big sigh and then forlornly looks at the floor.

JASON  
(Head still bowed)

Here we go again Tibs.

Jason eases his way out of the settee and trudges towards the medication. The bubble packs and boxes are in a jumbled pile. He begins popping tablets from different foil strips. Finding an empty strip of Stelazine he looks for a new one in the box, but it is empty. Cupping the rest of the tablets in the palm of his hand he readies it for throwing them into the back of his mouth. At the same time he reaches for the glass and picks it up. The glass is empty, stained by last night's cola drink.

Jason rests his hand, still holding the glass, on the top of the chest of drawers. He ponders on the pile of medication and starts tossing the loose tablets in his hand as if they were small change awaiting a decision on a purchase. Suddenly he clenches them in a fist and smacks them down on the surface. Keeping his hand flat over the top of them he lifts the glass and presses its base firmly onto it. He tries to grind it in.

JASON  
(Hissing through gritted teeth)

Not today

Not

Today.

Jason starts perspiring.

TIBS.

Meeow!

He lets go of the glass and it rolls over on its side. He relaxes slightly and his face twitches as his

Terry Cordrey

INCENSE

nostrils detect the smell of fresh kitten shit.  
Today is not a good day.

INT BUS DAY

Beryl sits by the pushchair rack near the front of the bus. She is in her late forties, well spoken and always very smartly dressed. Beside her are two M&S carrier bags bulging with neatly ironed laundry. Next to them is a bag from The House of Fraser containing various toiletries, foremost of which is 'Obsession' body lotion, and bath and shower gel by Calvin Klein.

The bus stops, BESSIE gets on and sits opposite Beryl.  
Bessie is a happy go lucky woman in her late fifties. Today is her regular trip to the market.

BESSIE.

Hi Beryl.  
Can't keep meeting like this.

Bessie chuckles and Beryl just smiles in response.

BERYL.

Hello Bessie.  
Going to the market again?

BESSIE.

Yeh. The meat van wasn't there last week and so I had to get some in Tescos.  
I do hope he's there this week. He's very cheap you know.  
Off to see Jason?

BERYL.

Yes.

BESSIE.

He's been ill for some years now hasn't he?  
Such a bright lad when he was younger.

BERYL

Yes. Yes he is.

BESSIE

He seemed to be coping so well with your PETER'S death  
And then a year later he suddenly changed.

Beryl pulls the carrier bags a little closer to her legs and straightens some imaginary creases in her coat.

BESSIE.

Still, that's bereavement for you  
It's bad enough for an adult, but for a twelve year old.

BERYL.

Yes.

Terry Cordrey

**INCENSE**

Beryl turns her head to the window and stares at the world outside.  
She sees the church where she got married.

FLASHBACK EXT CHURCH FRONT DAY. (25 years earlier)

Beryl as a bride leaving church arm in arm with bridegroom Peter.  
Surrounded by relatives and friends.

INT BUS DAY (cont)

Beryl stares at this week's sign hanging above the main entrance.  
'Suffer little children to come unto me'

BESSIE.

Is he any better?  
Must be hard living in a tough place like that.

Beryl straightens the toiletries in one of the carrier bags and replies without looking at Bessie.

BERYL.

He's coping.

She briefly studies the other passengers and then gives searching looks towards the bus driver's window.

BERYL.

I use Swithern's.

BESSIE.

Pardon?

BERYL.

Swithern's the butchers.  
Mr Swithern learnt his trade at Harrods.

BESSIE.

So he says! There's a nearer one to you isn't there?

Beryl sits upright in her seat and looks straight at Bessie

BERYL.

He's a bit expensive for most people,  
but it's the personal service and quality that counts.  
I like to know what I am eating.  
Always buy Scotch beef.

BESSIE.

They do that in Tesco's

Beryl's eyes widen her jaw drops slightly and she gives a slight disapproving shake of her head.

Beryl glances towards the front of the bus again and sees the sign 'The Drover's Inn' in the distance.  
She relaxes back in her seat

Terry Cordrey

INCENSE

Bessie reaches up, presses the bell button and starts to get up.

BESSIE.

Time to get off.

Enjoy your visit.

They must be very special for you both.

Beryl gives a quiet sigh of relief, pauses and then gives a smug smile.

BERYL

Yes

they are

very special.

INT FLAT BATHROOM DAY.

The permanent smell of Bleach lingers in the air.

The white bath, sink and toilet bowl are immaculate despite being several years old.

Expensive towels drape the towel rail and the side of the bath.

There is a doily and a posy of flowers on top of the cistern.

Sponges and moisturising oils wait expectantly on the stainless steel rack on the wall.

The door slowly opens halfway.

Jason stands there with his arm on the door at shoulder height, as if it was shielding his eyes from the light within. He sees himself reflected in the cabinet mirror on the far wall

He pauses a breath and stares.

His eyes divert to the shining silver bath taps and watch his torso contorting over the main body and spout of the nearest one.

.

He takes half a step back then composes himself.

A deep breath and he reaches in to the toilet roll holder. His hand is trembling slightly as he spins off a few feet of tissue. A quick tug and the tissue is free, while the roller discharges another foot with the impetus of his action.

INT FLAT OUTSIDE BATHROOM DAY

Jason pulls the door to until he hears a 'click' of the catch. He gathers up the tissue into a loose bundle in his hand and walks towards the kitchen.

INT FLAT KITCHEN DAY.

The kitchen is a long narrow room that connects the living room to a rear lobby and the bathroom.

Several days worth of crockery and cooking utensils are piled up around the sink.

Scraps of empty packets and leftover food litter the work surfaces.

The contents of the waste bin are now erupting and finding their way to the floor.

There is an empty bottle of Obsession among the rubbish.

Jason opens the cupboard under the sink and takes out a cloth and a marigold glove. Putting the glove on his right hand he reaches in with it and takes out a bottle of floor cleaner (*bleach based*)

He goes to the living room.

INT FLAT LIVING ROOM DAY.

Terry Cordrey

INCENSE

Jason comes in from the kitchen, goes to the litter tray and drops the tissue onto the kitten shit. He crouches down, tentatively gathers it up and drops it in the tray along with the tissue.

The kitten jumps up at his leg causing him to lose his balance.  
Jason puts his left hand on the floor to steady himself.  
A despairing look of realisation appears when he notices that his hand is where the shit had been.

Jason brushes the kitten aside, soaks the cloth in the cleaner and wraps it around his hand.  
His nostrils twitch and a look of disgust comes over his face.  
He sniffs the bottle mouth then reads the list of contents.  
Raising his arm he holds it out as if proffering it for amputation.  
The cloth slips onto the floor. Jason puts the bottle down and walks briskly to the kitchen.

INT FLAT KITCHEN DAY.

Jason is standing at the sink vigorously scrubbing his hand with washing up liquid.  
He rinses it and repeatedly sniffs to see if the smell has gone.  
He washes it three more times before deciding to stop and return to the living room.

INT FLAT LIVING ROOM DAY

Jason walks towards the window.  
Broken glass lies on the floor by the sill. He stands to one side of it and starts to push it together with his foot.

JASON

Bet she has another go at me.

He stares out at the recreation ground, remembering the days when he and Danny used to play together.

FLASHBACK EXT RECREATION GROUND DAY (10 years earlier)

Jason and Danny are engaged in a number of play activities – football, jumping on apparatus, wrestling etc.

INT FLAT LIVING ROOM DAY.

Jason lifts up his left hand and smells it. He is still not satisfied and walks over to the chest of drawers.

Opening the top drawer he takes out a packet of rose scented joss sticks and box of safety matches. He opens the packet, but the sticks are hard to get at and so he shakes it to give them encouragement.

Suddenly they come loose and eight of them fall onto the floor.  
Jason gives a sigh and bends down to pick them up.

He places four in the potato and lights them.  
Leaning forward he allows the thin wisps of smoke to crawl up his face and sucks in the sweet smell.  
Lifting his left hand he uses it to caress the smoke, slowly twisting and turning as if they were conjoined in a sensual dance.  
*(Background music of Ravel's 'Bolero' perhaps find something else?)*

He looks across at the photo of Beryl on the mantelpiece and takes a slow lung full of air through his nose. His forehead creases, eyes narrow and a few beads of sweat appear on his brow as if he has just bitten a raw garlic clove in a spoonful of trifle.

Clasping the remaining four sticks he lights them and goes to the mantelpiece.  
Picking up the photo, he kisses it and then begins to bathe it in purifying scent.  
The hand holding the joss sticks, moves up and down in a rhythmic mantra, no longer a dance. Now more jagged and purposeful.

Terry Cordrey

INCENSE

He stares at her face, gives it another slow kiss, takes a soft nasal breath and gives a couple of negative shakes of his head.

Jason places the photo on the table and stabs the joss sticks into an old piece of pizza.  
He sits down and picks up a large marker pen from the scattered artists' material.  
A black Hitler moustache begins to appear on Beryl's face.

Sitting back he studies it, taps the pen impatiently on the table and then draws a pair of horns.  
On completion Jason tilts his head back and takes a long sniff.  
Dispirited he begins to draw spirals all over her face.  
(Background music of Bolero *change it!*)

Gradually he feels the strains of 'Bolero' in his mind and the movements become smoother and faster until the climax of complete obliteration.  
He sits back in the chair, sated and sucks in a lung full of satisfaction.  
A tired smile appears on his face.

EXT STREET DAY.

Looking down the street with the teenagers on one side and 13A on the other.  
A bus can be seen pulling up at the Stop in the distance.  
Beryl gets off and starts walking towards camera. The weight and size of the carrier bags shortening her steps and slowing her down.

Danny sees her in the distance.

FLASHBACK EXT SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE DAY (nine years earlier)

Danny is knocking on the front door, but gets no reply. He walks down the side of the house and hears noises coming from the bathroom window. A bike is resting against the wall and he steps on its main cog in order to look inside. Jason is sitting motionless in the bath. There are fragrance candles burning around the room. Beryl is wearing a low cut, thin cotton dress and kneeling beside the bath. Danny has a good view down her cleavage and freezes with awe as he notices the stiff outline of her nipples through the fabric.

EXT. STREET DAY.

Beryl sees the teenagers and a look of recognition appears on her face when she sees Danny.  
Her arms lift the bags slightly higher and her steps quicken.  
She can hear the abuse they are shouting about Jason and a concerned look appears on her face.

BERYL (shouting)

I know what you are up to Danny Baker!  
You were a bad influence when he was younger and now you are nothing but a vicious bully.  
Why can't you just leave him alone?

DANNY

Mummy's boy!  
I will if you will you ol' bat!

BERYL

At least I am better than your mother.  
LUCY was nothing but a trollop!

INT FLAT LIVING ROOM DAY

Terry Cordrey

INCENSE

Jason hears the commotion outside and jumps out of his chair.  
Rushing to the sideboard he quickly throws the photo into the top drawer and returns to his chair.

EXT STREET DAY

Danny starts strutting across the street towards Beryl.

DANNY

Fuck! What? What was that you fucking cow? !

Beryl turns smartly and, without knocking, starts to enter no 13A.  
Danny stands for a while staring at the door

FLASHBACK EXT SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE DAY (9 years earlier cont.)

Danny is walking out of the front garden. He hears the front door opening and turns round to see who is there. Beryl comes out, walks briskly to him and grabs both of his arms. She has a stern look and brings her face within inches of his.

BERYL

You disgusting little boy!  
I saw what you was doing.  
Don't you ever come round here or see Jason again!  
And if you ever, ever say anything to anyone about this,  
I can assure you that you will be the one in trouble.

Beryl shakes him violently, then lets him go.  
A frightened Danny runs away with tears in his eyes.

BERYL

Don't forget Danny Baker!  
Not a word! Or else!

INT FLAT LIVING ROOM DAY

Jason is sitting at the table pretending to tidy up his felt tip pens.  
Beryl enters, assertively closes the door and stares at it for a few seconds.

BERYL

Huh!

She turns round, gently rests her back against it, puts her bags on the floor and holds her hand to her chest.  
Jason carries on with what he is doing and ignores her. She eyes him suspiciously and stands up straight. There is still no reaction from Jason.  
Beryl slowly walks up behind him while he watches her out of the corner of his eye. Sweat reappears on his forehead and he fumbles the last few pens.  
He feels Beryl's hands lightly massaging his shoulders. His eyes close and his head tilts back - his body goes weak. It is a feeling that Jason enjoys, but knows he shouldn't enjoy.

JASON

Hello mum

BERYL

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INCENSE

Playing games with mummy today are you?

JASON (tiredly)

I was just concentrating on my art stuff.  
With all the noise outside I didn't hear you.

Beryl gives a quizzical look at the back of his head. She knows he is lying. The stroking of her hands begins to spread to his upper chest. His arms fall to his side as he passively accepts the warmth of her healing ritual.

BERYL

I thought you might have been ignoring me

(She exerts slight pressure into her hands).

Don't you love mummy?

JASON

Of course I do.  
I was just a bit confused this morning.  
You know I love you.

Beryl's hands relax and sensing his submissiveness her palms go to his neck and sides of his face.

BERYL

Have you not taken your medication again?  
And you haven't shaved today either.  
What a way to greet the one person in the world who cares for you.

JASON

I forgot. I am sorry

BERYL

I have done all your laundry  
And I have got some more bath oils  
so you will not have to miss it again this week

Jason begins to feel uncomfortable and his eyes flit from side to side as if they are the only part of his body that he has control of. Suddenly they see the medication and a way out. Jason starts to get out of the chair.

JASON

I'll take my pills now mum before I forget again.

Beryl stands back in mild surprise, her hands left hanging in front of her. Jason goes to the chest of drawers, picks up the glass and disappears into the kitchen.

INT FLAT KITCHEN DAY

Jason goes towards the sink, he is frowning, preoccupied with his own thoughts. Standing at the sink he looks at the wall for a while and then down towards his trousers. He gives a small sigh of relief and then turns on the tap letting it run for a while before filling the glass. He takes a quick sip and returns to the living room.

INCENSE

INT FLAT LIVING ROOM DAY.

Jason walks towards the chest of drawers, starts picking up the tablets, one by one and swallows them individually. Beryl tidies a few things around the room and sees the broken glass by the window.

BERYL

Haven't you cleared that up yet?

JASON

I have run out of Stelazine.

BERYL

I am not surprised, you are so forgetful.  
Your last prescription was over a month ago.  
Are you sure you are taking them regularly?

JASON

Yes. Yes, of course mum.

BERYL

I'll take this shopping through and put it away.  
When you have finished your pills we had better get you sorted.  
I have some nice clean towels in the bag.  
Two weeks without a bath is rather a long time.

Beryl picks up the bags and goes through to the kitchen/bathroom.  
Jason drinks the rest of his water in one long slow draught. He stares at the Dream Catcher and then the Buddha whose smile seems to mockingly say "There is no way out".

INT FLAT BATHROOM DAY.

Several perfumed candles light up the room and eliminate the clean smell of bleach.  
Jason is sitting motionless in the bath. He constantly stares straight ahead. He feels unable to make any movement that isn't directed by his mother.

Beryl is wearing a thick floral housecoat that is buttoned up to the neck.  
She is kneeling beside the bath, gently sponging Jason's back. Although she would never admit it to herself, her movements are sensual.

BERYL

Lift your arm for me.

Jason lifts his arm, Beryl takes hold of his hand and starts to sponge it from the fingers down to his armpit. She takes extra care in that area, as if reluctant to finish.

Jason squirms slightly as he senses his mother staring at him. His body begins to react sexually and, once again his eyes dart from left to right seeking a way out.

Beryl lowers his arm and begins to wash his shoulders.

BERYL

Don't be embarrassed, you are just a boy.

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**INCENSE**

It always happens  
I must have bathed you hundreds of times since you were little.

Beryl's movements slowly spread to his chest and work their way down to his stomach, navel and upper groin area.

He ejaculates under water in anticipation of a stage that never happens.

Beryl is looking into his eyes, always avoiding his groin. A slight smile appears on her face as she pretends not to notice his predicament.

Beryl soaks the sponge and squeezes the water over Jason's head.

BERYL

There! All done.  
We'll get you dry now and rub on the 'Obsession'.

They hear a loud "Thump" as another rock hits the front door.

Beryl throws the sponge into the bath and gets up off her knees.

BERYL

What are they up to? !

Beryl struts out of the bathroom.

FOLLOW BERYL THROUGH KITCHEN TO LIVING ROOM

INT FLAT BATHROOM DAY CONT.

Jason leans forward, elbows on knees, cradles his head and weeps in despair.

INT FLAT LIVING ROOM DAY.

Beryl has rushed to the window. She sees Danny standing alone: his mates have gone home.

FLASHBACK INT SEMI-DETACHED BATHROOM DAY (20 years earlier)

There are several plain candles lighting up the room.

Peter is sitting naked in the bath.

Lucy is wearing just bra and panties and kneeling beside him.

She is gently sponging his chest.

They kiss frequently.

FLASHBACK CONT INT SEMI-DETACHED FRONT LOBBY DAY.

Beryl enters through the front door.

She hears giggling and splashing coming from the bathroom.

Beryl puts her bags down, closes the door quietly and tiptoes upstairs.

FLASHBACK CONT INT SEMI-DETACHED DAY

Lucy and Peter are skylarking about and Peter begins to drag Lucy into the bath with him.

The bathroom door slowly swings ajar.

Lucy and Peter have their back to the door.

Beryl gasps as she stands wide-eyed in the opening.

BERYL

My God! Lucy!

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**INCENSE**

My best friend!  
Peter! How could you!  
My God! My God! My God!

Beryl puts her hand to her mouth and runs downstairs sobbing.

INT FLAT LIVING ROOM DAY (cont)

TIBS

Meow!

Beryl blinks quickly, stops staring out of the window and looks down at Tibs.

BERYL

You're just like him out there  
Nothing but trouble.  
Shoo!

Beryl turns round ready to return to the bathroom.  
She suddenly notices the space where her photo used to be on the mantelpiece.  
Her eyes give the room a quick scan and then she examines the things on the table.  
Beryl's forehead creases and she holds her chin as she scans the room again.  
Her attention is drawn to the chest of drawers where the top one has not been fully closed.

Beryl goes to the drawer, pauses and then rests her hands on both handles. For the first time there is a reluctance to treat Jason's possessions as her own.

Taking a deep breath she gradually opens the drawer.  
The photo comes into view  
A look of horror appears on her face and the room fills with a silent scream.

FLASHBACKS IN RAPID SUCCESSION.

Her wedding  
Peter and Lucy in the bathroom  
Jason being born  
Lucy pregnant  
Danny playing with Jason  
Peter's funeral  
Beryl warning Danny  
Jason ejaculating in the bath.

INT FLAT LIVING ROOM DAY (cont)

There is a "Thud" as yet again another rock hits the door.

BERYL (Screaming)

My God!  
My God!  
Why?  
What has he done to me? !

Beryl holds the photo outstretched with both hands and paces frantically up and down the room, screaming and panting.

INT FLAT BATHROOM DAY.

Terry Cordrey

**INCENSE**

Jason is stepping out of the bath when he hears his mother's screams. He pauses to be sure that he is not imagining it. Thinking that something terrible has happened he rushes, naked, down to the living room.

FOLLOW JASON THROUGH TO LIVING ROOM.

INT FLAT LIVING ROOM DAY.

Jason stands wide-eyed at the door, surprised there is no intruder and tries to assess what's happening. Beryl sees Jason and gives out an animalistic growl.

BERYL  
What have you done? !  
What are you? !

Beryl struts, half lunges towards him.

BERYL  
You were supposed to be different to your father  
I made you that way  
You're just the same  
NO! You're worse!  
You're a fucking animal!

Jason stands absolutely frozen to the spot. He has never seen his mother like this and, especially, never heard her utter a single swear word before. His eyes are looking everywhere and he doesn't know what to do.

Beryl, still clutching the photo in one hand, grabs him by the hair and holds the photo right in front of his face.

Jason winces in pain.

BERYL  
Clean it!  
Clean it, clean it, clean it!  
You miserable, pathetic, little psycho!  
Clean it!

The pain and sight of this animal, once known as mother, kicks in adrenaline levels that Jason has never known before. His body stiffens in defiance and he stares straight into his mother's eyes.

JASON

No.

BERYL

Clean it!

JASON

No.

Beryl's body seems to expand as she rises up in rage, face getting redder and spittle dribbling from her mouth.

INCENSE

Jason feels his head explode as she jerks him across to the mantelpiece and bangs his head down on the spot where the photo used to be.

BERYL

Clean it!

JASON  
(In trembling voice)

No.

Jason's legs become unsteady and his arms flop by his side. He lifts one in a vain attempt to remove his mother's grip on his hair.

Beryl responds by yanking his head back down onto the mantelpiece. She starts banging his head in tune with her mantra.

BERYL

Clean it! Clean it! Clean it!

Jason has become helpless. Blood is beginning to ooze from his head. His legs are even weaker and Beryl is beginning to have a struggle keeping him upright.

JASON  
(Barely audible)

Never.

BERYL

Then I'll clean it!

Beryl has finally lost all control of her senses and smashes the photo over Jason's head. She drags him round the room. He feels his body hit the open drawer and hears the Buddha smash on the floor, its grinning smile fractured in pain. Jason and Beryl end up by the window. She points to the street.

BERYL

You've turned out just like them out there!

He starts to slide down, but pulls Beryl down with him.

Jason lands on top and does the only thing he has the strength to do; he claws at her face and forces his body down hard on her chest.

Beryl thrashes about screaming and kicking the floor. She is slapping his head, but such is the pain already that Jason doesn't notice.

Jason is becoming weaker. He pushes one hand down hard on Beryl's nose, her eyes water and she begins to pinch and scratch at his back and buttocks. Again she gives out an animalistic groan that seems to give her added strength.

Jason is losing the battle. Instinctively his hand searches the floor for some weapon of hope. It stops when it finds a long sliver of window glass. There is a momentary pause as if it sighs in relief. His hand grips the glass like some long lost treasure. He raises it ready to plunge it into the neck of this demon that could soon be his end.

Suddenly there is a couple of loud "Thumps", a "Rip" and a "Crash" as the front door flies open.

INCENSE

Danny runs over to them and with a firm grip grabs hold of Jason's arm. There is a stunned silence as Jason and Beryl stare at his figure standing over them. The apparition is firm and menacing, but the window light coming from behind hides its identity in shadow.

DANNY

It's ok.

Jason and Beryl slowly turn, look at each other and then questioningly at their position on the floor.

DANNY

I said it's ok.

Danny uses his free hand to take the glass from Jason and then gently pulls him up from the floor. Jason flops onto the settee and Danny pulls out a handkerchief for him to wipe the blood on his head and hands.

Beryl remains on the floor and as the realisation of events dawns on her she breaks down and begins to sob.

Danny looks on with pity. He offers out his hand.

DANNY

'Ere, let me help you up?

Beryl stiffens and looks daggers at him.

BERYL

Never!

Beryl starts to get up and tries to gain some pride and composure.

BERYL

I will never accept any help from you and your kind!

DANNY

Oh! 'Kind' as in me and Jason you mean?

Beryl's jaw drops. Jason gives Danny a puzzled look.

DANNY

She hasn't told you has she?  
And I bet she doesn't even know that I know.

Beryl becomes flustered and gestures with her hand for Danny to be quiet.

DANNY

We're related.

JASON

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INCENSE

What do you mean?

DANNY

I'm your half brother.

Beryl gives a sigh of failure and despair. Her head bows in resignation. Jason looks at Danny and then his mother. There is silence.

He studies the blood on the handkerchief.

JASON

I think you had better go mum.

Beryl looks up pleadingly for recognition and reconciliation. Jason's eyes remain focussed on his own blood.

Danny looks at Beryl and speaks to her in a calming voice.

DANNY

Think it's best, don't you?  
Don't worry, I'll see he's alright.

She begins to respond to his kind voice and nods to him quietly. Danny reaches for her coat and she allows him to help her put it on. Beryl gives one last pleading look towards Jason before leaving. Danny pushes the door to behind her and props a chair against it to stop it opening again.

EXT STREET DAY

Beryl watches Danny closing the door and waits while she tries to collect her thoughts. She runs her hands gently over the tired blue paint and traces the outline of the missing 'A' with her index finger. She presses her face and body against it as if giving warmth and comfort to a newborn. The tears begin to flow.

The door opens slightly and a ray of hope lights up in a smile on her face. A hand appears with her House of Fraser carrier bag full of toiletries, far more than she had brought with her today. The carrier bag is placed on the ground and the door shuts.

INT FLAT LIVING ROOM DAY

DANNY (turning to Jason)

Muvva's!  
You know what? Mine still calls me her Water Baby!  
After all this time and at my age!  
God knows why!  
Now, let's have a look at that head.

EXT STREET DAY.

Looking down the street with 13A on one side and the recreation ground on the other. A sad, lonely old woman with a carrier bag is walking away from camera into the distance.

FADE OUT.