

LOVE.LOST



JMG Stories



To find himself,
he must look for her



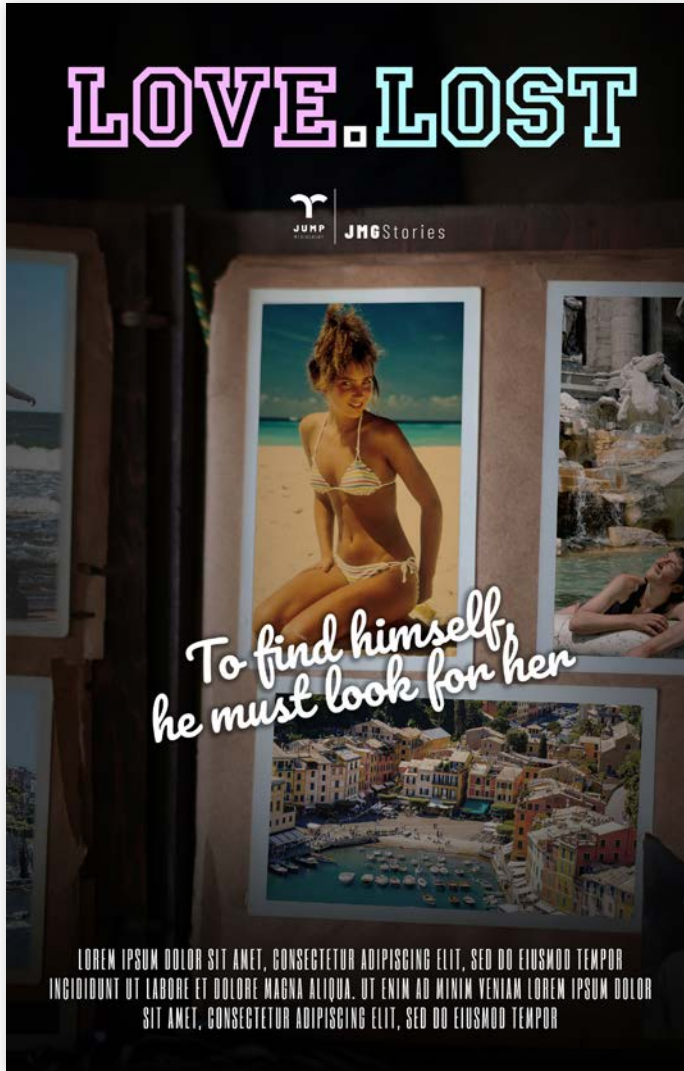
LOREM IPSUM DOLOR SIT AMET, CONSECTETUR ADIPISCING ELIT, SED DO EIUSMOD TEMPOR
INCIDIDUNT UT LABORE ET DOLORE MAGNA ALIQUA. UT ENIM AD MINIM VENIAM LOREM IPSUM

Written by: Alex Lynch

LOVE.LOST

— *To find himself, he must look for her* —

Written by: Alex Lynch



————— ” —————

*BENNY: Graham, this isn't like you.
You're not thinking.*

*GRAHAM: No. No, on the contrary –
I've been thinking. For once I have been
thinking and I've never been more sure of
anything in my life. I've spent years being
predictable, unimpulsive, unexciting and
now – enough – I want a change.
I want to change.*

*BENNY: Oh you speak Italian now,
do you?*

*GRAHAM: I'll download DuoLingo.
Start learning. Only need the basics.
C'est muy importante.*

*BENNY: That's Spanish. With some
French*

GRAHAM: Shit.

Genre: *Comedy Drama*

Format: *6-8 episodes of 30-45 mins each*

Targetgroup: *15 - 60 years old*

>>>

Graham Walker is a man with his life in limbo. He has just turned 50, he has worked 20 years in his mundane job at Manchester's city council, and he's recently lost his wife of 25 years to cancer. As the days blend into each other, Graham finds himself at a real impasse and in his melancholic state begins to meander down memory lane.

One night, as Graham sifts through old photos and scrap books from his past, with innocuous daytime travel telly shows playing in the background, he comes across photos from one particular trip to Italy when he was 17. The year: 1988. The place: Cinque Terre. A disappointing family holiday with his wannabe-cultured mother, his Brit-abroad dad and his no-nonsense little sister Lori, soon turns into a summer he would never forget following a chance encounter with local girl Daniela. An encounter which swiftly blossoms into a whirlwind romance. But that was over 30 years ago now. A distant memory.

But Graham starts to wonder whether that distant memory could become a promising future. In a move very much out of character he decides he should go to Italy and rekindle his relationship with Daniela. His first love.

Graham enlists the help and accompaniment of his oldest friend, Benny Buchanan, who in his early 50s has only just come out to his parents and is in dire need of some soul-searching himself (though he is much more reserved than Graham and would never admit to this). Graham eventually cajoles the ever-reluctant Benny into joining him on his mission to go back to Italy and find Daniela. Only one problem – they don't know where she is, who she is or what she looks like now. Plus, neither knows the country nor

speaks the language. It's a futile endeavour before they've even begun, yet Graham believes at this point he has nothing to lose and everything to gain.

So begins the trip of a lifetime for Graham and Benny as their travels take them through remote villages, dubious accommodations, and enigmatic trails – all of which provide their own unique set of surreal characters. Our heroes delve deeper down the rabbit hole of this wild goose-chase wondering whether this really is a sign of fate dealing them each a new deck, or else just a mid-life crisis on a monumental scale.

This show will take the viewers on an emotional journey of their own as they go on this quest of self-discovery with Graham and Benny, enjoying the quirky mishaps of our heroes whilst empathising with their inner-turmoil and grief. From the crossover of drizzly Northern England to scorching Southern Italy, we allow the viewer to bask in their comfort zone and then every so often subtly strike with a sentiment or social commentary which takes them right out of it. All the while, the show maintains an atmosphere of romantic Mediterranean escapism with glorious, diverse locations, rich culture, and an original Italian score to compliment the action.

Hilarious and heart-warming, 'Love. Lost' is a drama in a similar vein to film and TV titles such as 'Us', 'Burn, Burn, Burn' and 'The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel'. It tells us that, no matter our age, it's never too late to take risks and allow ourselves to follow the route less travelled – or in this case, never travelled. Because in life, we can only find what it is we're searching for once we have been truly lost.

LOVE.LOST

— *love.lost* —

CHARACTER BIOS



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Graham Walker

Age – 50:

Job – Disillusioned Council worker

Acting Aid: *Jason Manford*

For Graham (Age 17): *Nico Mirallegro*

“Things are going to change my friend, promise you.”

Graham Walker is a man with his life in complete limbo. He lost his wife, Beth, to oesophageal cancer 2 years ago and is still suffering. His self-care has pretty much gone out the window and he spends most of his nights eating ice cream in front of travel shows and reality television.

Graham has worked half his life in a mundane job in planning permission at Manchester’s city council. Before, it was nothing more than a temporary placement to gain him and Beth some stability but 20 years on Graham has stayed in the same building, moving up the ladder but never taking any real pleasure or reaping any real reward from the job. He’s in the rat race but running completely on empty. To say he’s disillusioned with life is an understatement.

Plus, to rub salt into these wounds, he has just turned 50. It’s the wake-up call that makes him realise that things are always going to be the same. Dismal, dull, drab, and dreary. Something is missing but he doesn’t know what. He’s at an impasse heading down a road towards a nervous breakdown, unless he veers off course and sets new wheels in motion.

Whilst flicking through old photos of times gone by and family holidays, he stumbles across a folder entitled ‘Cinque Terre 1988’. A very significant summer trip. In the folder, he finds a snap of him and a young Italian girl called Daniela. His first love. The two of them met on that holiday and sparked off a whirlwind romance which abruptly ended. He remembers their time together – how different life was, how different he was – and he has an epiphany that this is what is missing in his life. Those days of adventure and romance. Graham decides this is the change he needs to make and books tickets to Cinque Terre to see if he can find Daniela, 30 years on, and rekindle their flame.

On the surface, this looks like a gargantuan mid-life crisis but deep down Graham needs this in order to finally move on from the past and start anew. Start afresh. Start really living. This out of character move changes Graham’s outlook and attitude, as if someone has flicked a switch inside him and turned on all the lights. But what he doesn’t realise is that whilst this is a celebration of a new lease of life, it is also a second mourning for what has been lost, for what (and

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who) has come and gone. As the search for Daniela progresses it becomes harder for Graham to repress his grief.

Graham finds solidarity and consolation in his oldest friend, Benny, and in his little sister, Lori (Lozza) who have very much been his support network for the last few years. Because Beth was everything to Graham, he hasn't just lost his wife, he's lost a piece of himself. Graham cares deeply for Benny and Lori but unconsciously he is a rather selfish soul. He uses emotional blackmail to rope Benny into joining him on his travels and throws guilt on Lori for always being the favourite child and having the perfect family life – which we discover is far from perfect. Friends and

family have rallied round Graham to the point where he almost expects it and expects them to indulge his whims because he is the one who's hurting, without taking into account that the people around him are hurting too in their own way. His relationship with his Brit-abroad parents is full of friction and always has been.

As the series goes on, Graham finds himself faced with his various mental and physical insecurities and is forced to tear down the walls he has put up in front of the glaring issues that plague him. This journey across Italy is not so much a quest to find love as it a quest to find himself and what it truly means to be alive.

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Benny Buchanan

Age – 52

Job – Secondary school teacher

Acting Aid: John Thomson

For Benny (Age 21): Alex Lawther

“Why couldn’t you have just bought a motorbike and leathers like in a normal mid-life crisis.”

Benny is Graham’s oldest and dearest friend. He lives in Manchester and works as a music teacher in a secondary school. He used to be the drummer in semi-famous punk-rock band, Manc Panic, many moons ago but soon gave up on his dream of being a music star and instead turned to imparting his music wisdom to loud, rebellious teenagers.

Benny is on the whole pretty grounded and responsible, but he does like a drink. A man who tends to think he can find the solutions to his problems at the bottom of a pint glass. He’s much more reserved than Graham and whilst he is always happy to talk about and listen to other people’s problems and emotional anguish, he is much more reserved when it comes to opening up about his own. His guard is very much up at all times. On the whole, he is a rather comical character – very deadpan and a bit of a sarcastic sod. Graham rapidly shifts from extreme pessimist to extreme optimist. Benny remains simply a realist.

Age has never been an issue with Benny, he is two years older than Graham and has only just come out to his family about being gay. Deep down he’s known this about himself a long time and has often in the past shunned it. In his late 40s, he finally accepted his sexual identity and embraced it – it was like a weight had been lifted. It was only after the reaction from his old-school, ‘traditional’ mum that the weight was thrown back on and Benny was sent spiralling into a dark pit of self-loathing and feeling guilty about his sexuality. As the series progresses, we see him struggle to come to terms with his relationship with his – also very musical – mum.

Benny is very supportive of Graham and could almost be considered loyal to a fault. He agrees to go on this journey but is deeply concerned about his mate’s well-being – especially after finding out that he sold the car and quit his job – and feels a sense of duty to help Graham carry and share the emotional burden.

Benny doesn’t want to leave. He strayed from Manchester once in his twenties but after things fell apart for him and his career he soon made his way home and back to familiar ground where he has stayed put ever since. Unlike Graham, Benny doesn’t want change. Change has often left him disappointed. It is only as the adventure across Italy progresses that Benny meets people who help him to not fear change, to love himself, and feel liberated. It is just as much a voyage of self-discovery for him as it is for Graham.

Benny tolerates Graham’s poor decisions and choices that wind them both up either getting stranded, lost, or having to stay in the most dubious and/or dilapidated accommodations. It is only when Graham pushes his emotional blackmail of Benny too far that he finally snaps and gives Graham a few home truths. Whilst this may seem like a trigger to them both falling out permanently it actually releases years of pent-up tension and aggression that was bubbling under the surface between the two of them and their friendship ends up becoming stronger and more resilient for it.

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Lori Turnbull-Walker

Age – 45/46

Job – Stay at home mum

Acting Aid: *Sian Gibson*

For Lori (Age 13/14): *Shannon Tarbet*

“Gotta go, Tommy’s found mummy’s lighter again.”

Lori ‘Lozza’ is Graham’s no-nonsense little sister. A fun, cheeky Northern lass with a glint in her eye. As nippers, the two of them didn’t see eye-to-eye much growing up – except to argue and fight with each other – but as they have got older, they have become closer as siblings and friends.

Lori has been a real lifeline for Graham, often ringing him up to check in on him. She loves him very much but feels the care and show of support is rather one-sided. Not that she would say this to him. Where once she would blithely point out her brother’s shortcomings and faults, now she is much more delicate around him and his feelings, knowing how vulnerable he is and has been since the death of his wife, Beth.

Meanwhile, in her own life, Lori is a stay-at-home mum with two young children – 5-year-old stropky Hayley and 3-year-old mischievous Tommy – and a husband, Mark, who is never at home. Lori tells herself that he’s just incredibly busy bringing home the bacon. In actual fact, Mark is staying out as late as he can, sometimes sleeping in the office, to avoid any of the responsibility of childcare. He never wanted kids but Lori did so he feels justified in his behaviour. Exhausted stay-at-home mum Lori knows this isn’t the life she asked for but she soldiers on trying to remain upbeat and not dwell on the heartache.

Lori believes Graham’s impromptu trip to Italy to find a girl from 30 years ago is a massive yelp for help and a sign of his grief and stress finally catching up with him and causing him to go – well, frankly, insane. At the beginning she is given updates on the exploits of Graham and Benny and begins to worry about her brother’s behaviour.

Unlike Graham, Lori has a good relationship with their parents. Graham always considered her the favourite whilst Lori always felt she was forever standing in his shadow. She rarely sees Senga and Frank, both of them living in Spain, but keeps in touch with them regularly – being the peacekeeper between them and Graham. Almost clinging to and salvaging one family life to make up for the other one being beyond help and consequently falling apart.

It is Lori who ends up saving the day when she manages to get hold of tickets for Graham to Principessa’s show in Rome, the final leg of her tour, having hung on the whole day refreshing the box office website for returns or cancellations. It is this gesture that makes Graham realise just how loving and supportive his sister is and how he’s previously taken her for granted.

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Daniela Castiglione

— A.K.A Principessa —

Age – 48

Job – Italian singing sensation

Acting Aid: *Violante Placido*

For Daniela (Age 16): Gaia Girace

“Che bellissima!”

Daniela is an Italian princess from Milan, though her nobility is more of a hereditary title. She also wants to be just like any other girl and not be treated any differently. She is beautiful and elegant with a streak of feistiness in her. She’s more street-wise than she is perceived to be at first glance.

Daniela meets Graham when she’s 16, and also on holiday in Cinque Terre, after saving him from some local thieves and retrieving his wallet. They both go to the gelateria and from then on their attraction to each other blossoms into a full blown romance – each of them besotted with one another and thrown into the fiery passions of love. She has never met anyone like Graham, he is a refreshing change from the boys she normally encounters on a regular basis.

Having started singing at a young age, busking on the streets with local musicians and entering the local talent competitions, she was catapulted into stardom as her music alter ego ‘Principessa’. Years on from her time with Graham, Daniela is now a pop-music singing sensation with sold out tours and shows all across the country.

When Graham discovers her level of fame and adulation, he is certain that he will have been a mere drop in the ocean to her and she won’t remember him at all. Little does he know that Principessa has always

held a small lit torch for Graham, not only dedicating a number to him but also consequently using his doodle of a fish as part of her design for her branding.

Principessa’s music repertoire consists of both original songs written by her and covers of famous Italian hits. When we first hear Daniela sing with the band in the streets of Cinque Terre at the age of 17, she sings ‘Quando Quando Quando’ which has become a fan-favourite at her shows. Another big hit in her back catalogue is ‘Groovy Kind of Love’, the song which she first sang on stage with Graham at the Monterosso talent show back in the summer of 1988. The two of them dubbed it ‘their song’ and since those heady days she has always claimed to have dedicated this romantic number to ‘her first love’.

Daniela’s English is very basic when we first meet her but over the years – decades in fact – she has improved massively due to her international status. She has harnessed a much broader vocabulary and is now able to speak the language with aplomb.

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Senga Walker

Age – 72

Job – Ex-Pat (Retired)

Acting Aid: *Allison Steadman*

For Senga (Age 39/40): *Sheridan Smith*

“There’s an old Italian proverb...”

Frank Walker

Age – 78

Job – Retired Construction Manager

Acting Aid: *Kenneth Cranham*

For Frank (Age 47): *Steve Pemberton*

“That’s enough lip out of you, lad.”



Graham’s insufferable parents, Senga and Frank. Frank is happier speaking in short monosyllabic sentences whereas Senga can – and does – talk for Britain. Nouveau riche and keen to escape Manchester for a Mediterranean life in sunnier climes, the two of them now live on the coast of Spain and have resided there since they hit retirement.

Frank has owned his construction firm since the 1980s and was secretly hoping Graham would follow in his footsteps and continue the family business. Unfortunately, that was not to be. Frank is grumpy, bad-tempered, and very much an old-school Brit who wears his heart on his sleeve. Almost every emotion is suppressed and his views are – shall we say – more of a traditional ilk. He is the classic British Ex-Pat – not bothered about learning the language, not fussed about taking in the culture and much happier drinking lager and lounging on the beach in his shirt, shorts and sandals with his panama hat pulled down over his face.

Senga’s real name is actually Agnes but she changed it in the early 1970s to make herself sound more exotic. She worked in fashion briefly for a time but left to travel the world and broaden her horizons. Since then she hasn’t looked back and is determined to make herself more cultured – or at least appear to be more cultured – than she is. She makes jewellery as a hobby in her spare time and, unlike Frank, is always trying to learn the language and immerse herself more in the ways of foreign folk. She is always on hand to offer an Italian or Spanish proverb even if her chosen proverb doesn’t quite fit the context of the situation in question (at the end of Episode 5, she finally gets it right). She can often be found sporting a kaftan, large audacious earrings, and perfectly coiffed hair.

Despite Frank’s lack of desire to be living abroad, he will generally go along with whatever Senga wants – anything for a quiet life. She and Frank still love each other, the marriage is not on the rocks. It’s a case of opposites attract. He’s grounded, she’s heightened

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and yet the balance seems to work. They are both very family orientated and want the best for their children to the point where nothing either child does is good enough, or quite up to the standard ‘they deserve’. This is what tore Graham away from the two of them, they never liked his wife Beth and were never very welcoming towards her. They push Graham to the limit one Christmas where Senga makes a cutting put down towards Beth about a very delicate subject and that was where they crossed the line. They have barely spoken to Graham ever since. It is only when Graham runs into them in Florence on their holiday that they finally make up, putting years of resentment behind them, and start afresh.

Originally Senga had her eye on a place in Cinque Terre whereas Frank wanted somewhere more in the realms of Benidorm. Eventually, they wound up making a home for themselves in Spain and have since gained a new lease of life. In later years, they grew more dismissive of Manchester and became anti-UK which is ironic because they couldn’t look more like your typical Brits abroad if they tried. Ideally, they would have loved Graham and Lori to move out and join them but have accepted that is not going to happen. They will continue to spend their days on fine dining, intrepid explorations, and trips to as many museums and galleries as possible. At least until the money finally runs out.



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Tina Hennessey

Age – 59

Job – English teacher at language school in Italy

Acting Aid: *Helena Bonham-Carter*

For Tina (Age 25): *Tamla Kari*

“Speaking English in an Italian accent is not the same as speaking Italian.”

Originally hailing from the Midlands in the UK, Tina has lived in Italy for over 20 years. When we first meet her in Cinque Terre, she is in her mid 20s and part-way through a Celta course in order to later live and teach in Italy. She fell in love with the place and has moved around living in various regions of the country throughout her life. She has really made a life for herself out there. To her, it is home.

Studious and sassy, Tina makes an impressionable introduction at the gelateria by stepping in as Graham’s inadvertent guardian angel. She has the skills of being able to translate Daniela’s Italian and communicate in fluent Italian to her on behalf of Graham. She is also key at bringing the young couple closer together by sending them up to Lover’s Lane as the sun goes down on their first proper day out together.

30 Years on, Tina is now residing in Pisa and working as an English teacher at a top language school. When we see her again after all this time, she appears to have not changed a bit. Still the same wit and charm and never passes up an opportunity to poke fun at Graham. It is done with affection though; she is actually very fond of him.

However, as we find out more about Tina this time around, a lot has changed in her life. She is divorced and very lonely. She still hasn’t recovered from it and confides in Graham. This joint grief of loss resonates with them both and brings them closer together. Realising her feelings for him, Tina does a little sabotaging of Graham’s plans in order to steer him away from Daniela. It seems to work until one night when the two of them kiss which swiftly and abruptly ends with Tina breaking down in tears feeling sad and guilty. Afterwards, she leads Graham to his next destination towards finding Daniela. The two of them remain friends but it’s very bittersweet.

Tina loves her job and dreads retirement. Her teaching career has kept her busy, distracted, happy and has given her a purpose. She is scared that she doesn’t know what she’ll do, or if she’ll be able to cope, without it.

Minor Characters

Mags Buchanan

Benny's mum, 75 years old and a retired music teacher. She is where Benny gets his love of music. Benny and his mum always had a good, loving relationship but things changed when Benny finally came out about being gay. His mum doesn't know how to handle it, she thought she knew her only son so well and he's been lying to her all this time. This is a real bombshell to her.

Antonio

Antonio is a Brazilian bassist with a very good grasp of English. He's part of the band Benny meets in Pisa and though he is quite a bit younger than him (early 30s) is quite smitten. Antonio brings out the best in Benny – Benny goes back to drumming and becomes proud of the person he is. Antonio helps sneak Graham and Benny into the wedding towards the end of the series.

Giovanni Castro

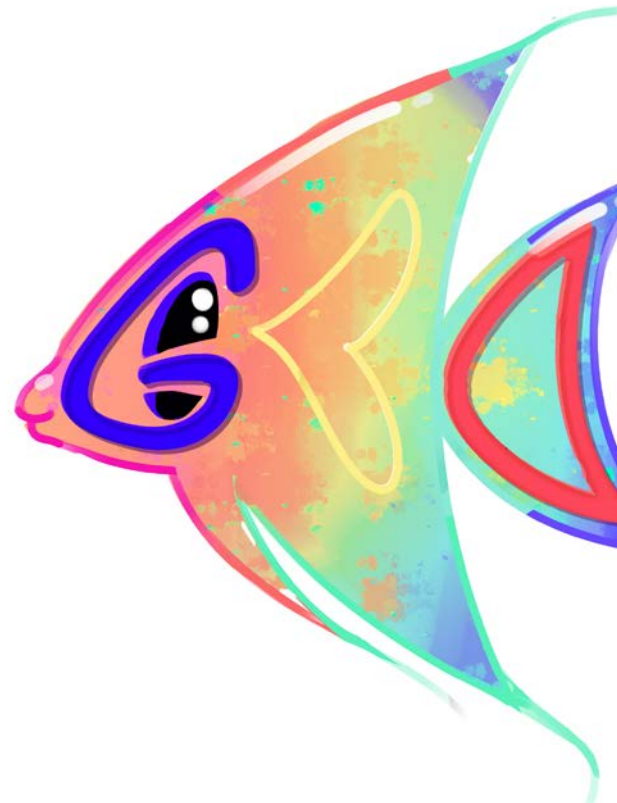
The promoter of the old town stage in Cinque Terre, he always had his regulars and loved finding and nurturing new talent that graced his many open mic nights and shows. He takes great pride in having known and had Daniela singing on his stage long before she took the form of Principessa. Giovanni is the man that leads Graham and Benny along the right path towards Daniela by giving them her tour dates.

Mark Turnbull

Lori's husband who is often absent from his home-life. He never wanted children but Lori did so he went along with it thinking he could then be away from the responsibility of bringing them up. He doesn't want to leave Lori but when she finds out his reason for never being at home it leaves their marriage at a very difficult and intense crossroads.

Rowan Pedagough

Middle-aged TV life coach and motivational speaker. Rowan is quite eccentric, rather obnoxious, and entirely pretentious. He even changed his name to sound like 'Pedagogue' and has been delivering his self-satisfied wannabe-TED talks to audiences all over the land. It's his words of wisdom that give Graham the idea to go to Italy in search of Daniela in the first place. Throughout the series, Graham tries to glean more helpful pearls from Rowan's online videos. Acting Aid: Adrian Lester.



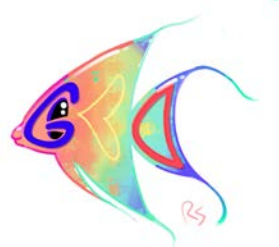
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– *Episode 1* –

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Created and written for JMG Stories by:

Alex Lynch



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EXT. SUNNY VILLA - DAY

TV SHOW - A PLACE IN THE SUN style programme called '*PLACE PICKERS - ON THE PENINSULA*'.

CHEESY HOLIDAY PROGRAMME INTRO

Cut to PRESENTER walking along the square towards camera.

PRESENTER:

Welcome back to 'Place Pickers on the Peninsula'. We're here with Brian and Jill from Suffolk who have a quaint sum to spend - they're looking for somewhere in the centre that's a bit quiet. Well, we dug deep and found this charming little property in Padua. Will they pick the place we picked as a place for them to pick on the Peninsula?

PRESENTER sighs after that tongue twister thinking they've cut.

PRESENTER: (CONT'D)

Christ almighty who wrote that?

CAMERAMAN:

(O.S)

We're still rolling.

PRESENTER:

Oh what the f-

She is cut off by SHOTS OF SUNNY ITALY before we cut back to her talking to a middle-aged couple.

PRESENTER: (CONT'D)

So, Brian and Jill, what do you think?

BRIAN and JILL begin to give their thoughts on the property.

We pan out, with the audio getting softer, to find this has all been playing on somebody's television. We are in fact in...

INT. GRAHAM'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A dimly lit room. GRAHAM, 50, Mancunian, average build - look of a man numbed by sorrow and regret - sits at his desk staring at a small, colourful cardboard box in front of him.

Outside, the rain hammers down - the weather is grim up North.

GRAHAM watches the drops decorating the window and then looks back at the box as the travel programme continues playing in the background. GRAHAM closes his eyes.

FLASHBACK

INT. GRAHAM AND BETH'S BEDROOM - 2018, DAY

GRAHAM opens his eyes and turns over. His wife BETH, 40s, mixed race, is standing by the bed in her dressing gown holding a tray of croissants, spreads, fresh coffee pot and mugs and the papers. It looks exquisite.

GRAHAM:

Morning.

BETH:

Awake at last! I was wondering how long I'd have to stand here like this.

GRAHAM:

Sorry.

He sits up in bed. They kiss.

BETH:

Happy Birthday my love...
(Gesturing to the tray)
Surprise.

GRAHAM:

Certainly is. This is smashing.
Thank you.

BETH:

The croissants are from the
patisserie as well. No expense
spared.

GRAHAM:

Breakfast in bed. That's champion
that is!

BETH:

So... 47.

GRAHAM:

47. I'm in my late forties. People say you can still count 46 as mid-forties but now I am officially late forties.

BETH:

You'll be 50 before you know it.

GRAHAM:

I know, awful isn't it?

BETH:

Have you thought about what you'll do for it?

GRAHAM:

Steady on love, let me get through this one first.

BETH:

You're telling me you haven't thought about it at all.

GRAHAM:

Not a jot. Probably the same as I've done every year.

BETH:

No, I'm not having that. Come on Graham, it's your 50th. It has to be special. Something a step up from roast at The Shepherds.

GRAHAM:

I do like a roast at The Shepherds.

BETH:

Yes, that's why we're doing it today. And why we did it last year. Ever seen 'Groundhog Day'?

GRAHAM:

Oh Beth, you know I don't like to make a big deal about my Birthday and I certainly don't want to make a big deal about my 50th Birthday.

BETH:

Well I do. Come on, just think - let your imagination run wild. What would you like to do? I mean, really like to do?

GRAHAM:

You mean like... Sex stuff?

BETH:

Well... No. I mean, sure - let's not rule that out. But I was thinking more outside the box, well, outside the bed.

GRAHAM:

(Chuckling)

I really don't know.

BETH:

Nope. Not an option

GRAHAM:

What would you want to do?

BETH:

Who cares? This isn't my day, it's yours! Go nuts - skydive, swim with dolphins, country retreat - all the cliches!

GRAHAM:

Beth, honestly - it doesn't matter if it's a hot air balloon ride in Naples or a cuppa in the garden. If I'm spending it with you, it's always my day.

BETH smiles and kiss him.

BETH:

Fine. Be that way. I'll just have to surprise you.

GRAHAM:

I love you.

BETH:

Love you too.

BETH gets into bed with him and they enjoy their breakfast.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. GRAHAM'S LIVING ROOM - 2021, NIGHT

Adverts for life insurance playing on TV.

GRAHAM looks at the telly and back at the little colourful cardboard box in front of him. He inhales and exhales and gently lifts the lid off the box.

Inside the box are photos. Stacks of photos. Photos of GRAHAM and BETH. GRAHAM picks up handful of photos and looks at them, happy times and special occasions flooding back to him - dinners, parties, the two of them lounging in the garden etc. GRAHAM puts them down looking tearful. He sits at his table looking lost and melancholic.

An aerial shot of him in his flat. All that can be heard are muffled sounds of the television and rain pelting the glass.

FLASHBACK

EXT. THE SHEPHERDS PUB - 2019, DAY

Shot of glasses of beer being plonked on the table. We pan out to see GRAHAM and his best friend BENNY (50s, Mancunian, stout, recently come out as gay) sitting in a table booth of the pub. They are dressed in black. It is sombre.

BENNY:

There you are pal, get that down you.

GRAHAM:

Cheers.

GRAHAM sips his pint, looking not at all with it. Almost spaced out. BENNY looks around awkwardly trying to find the best thing to say.

BENNY:

It was a good service.

GRAHAM:

Yeah, it was.

BENNY:

Your cousin is cute?

GRAHAM looks at him.

BENNY: (CONT'D)

Sorry, I was just trying to- I mean - nevermind. Sorry.

(MORE)

BENNY: (CONT'D)

I was not hitting on your cousin at
your wife's funeral.

GRAHAM:

Right.

BENNY:

No. Not at all. Just... Commenting.

GRAHAM:

Right.

They are joined by GRAHAM's sister LORI (40s, Mancunian, no-nonsense, exhausted mother) also dressed in black wearing a hat that's a little too large and holding a glass of wine. She sits down next to GRAHAM.

LORI:

Heya.

BENNY:

Hey.

GRAHAM:

Alright.

LORI:

How's it going, love?

GRAHAM:

Alright.

LORI gives GRAHAM a kiss and rubs his back. LORI looks around awkwardly trying to find the best thing to say.

LORI:

It was a good service.

BENNY:

Yeah, I was just saying...

LORI:

Yeah.

Silence.

GRAHAM:

Sorry I ducked out of the wake
early.

BENNY AND LORI:

(Scattered)

Oh no / not at all / totally fine
etc.

GRAHAM:

I just... Couldn't really handle it.
Being there.

LORI:

Totally fine.

GRAHAM:

All those people coming up and
saying 'sorry for your loss'. I
hate 'sorry for your loss'. It's a
shit thing to say. And half those
people hadn't been in touch with
her for about 5 years and what -
suddenly they're acting like they
were her best mates. It's all so
fake.

BENNY:

It's not easy mate. Grief does
funny things to people.

GRAHAM:

(Sighs)
I suppose.

LORI:

At least she's at peace now.

LORI looks at BENNY for help.

BENNY:

Yeah... Cancer is... Just...
Fucking awful.

LORI:

Yeah...

GRAHAM

Where's mum and dad?

LORI:

They had to head back.

GRAHAM:

Oh. Okay.

LORI:

They said they were sorry they
couldn't come by.

GRAHAM:

Did they?

Silence.

LORI:
Anyway, we're here for you.
Whatever you want to do.

GRAHAM:
Can we just sit here for a bit.

BENNY:
Course mate. Course.

LORI squeezes his hand and looks at him lovingly. GRAHAM rests his head on BENNY'S shoulder.

GRAHAM:
Thanks lads.

BENNY raises his glass.

BENNY:
To Beth.

EVERYONE:
Beth.

They clink their glasses together.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. GRAHAM'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

GRAHAM goes into the kitchen, fishes some bread out of the breadbin and sticks it in the toaster. He then fills the kettle and puts it on to boil. He reaches for his mug, which clearly hasn't been properly cleaned for a long time and sticks a teabag in it.

He stares at all the other mugs in the cupboard - that obviously belonged to Beth. He can't bring himself to throw them and doesn't want to use them. They just stay in their same spot in the cupboard gathering dust.

The toast pops up, he flips it over and toasts the other side. The kettle boils, Graham goes to the fridge and brings out the milk. He pours the water into the mug and adds the milk - which is off. Graham sighs, he looks out the window at the rain and back at his mug of curdled tea. He pours it down the sink. Suddenly remembers the toast and pops it up. The toast is black. Burnt.

GRAHAM:
Shit. Fucking hell!

GRAHAM looks up at the ceiling as if he's looking up at God.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)
You're loving this aren't you? You...
Vindictive...
(Emits an exasperated
noise. Sighs)

GRAHAM is scraping the black off the toast. It's definitely not salvageable and he bins it. Shot of kettle boiling again. This time for a herbal tea. Water going into the mug. GRAHAM looks at his mug of infused hot water, almost waiting for something else to go wrong.

The phone rings. GRAHAM answers. It's LORI.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)
Hello.

LORI:
Alright love.

GRAHAM:
Oh... Hi.

LORI:
Well don't sound to happy to hear
from me.

GRAHAM:
No, sorry, it's just I-

LORI:
Burnt the toast again?

GRAHAM:
Why has no one invented a toaster
that toasts both sides at the same
time.

LORI:
They have.

GRAHAM:
They have?

LORI:
Yup. But I don't think either of us
could afford it. How are you?

GRAHAM:
Oh... You know... Same.

LORI:

Sure.

GRAHAM:

How about you? How are the kids?

LORI:

Pain in the arse. Hayley is a stropky little madame and Tommy is definitely an arsonist in the making.

GRAHAM:

(Chuckles)

But you love them.

LORI:

(Deadpan)

Unconditionally.

GRAHAM:

Mark not there?

LORI:

No, he's out with the boys. He goes out and I get to stay at home with the kids because we live in the 1950s.

GRAHAM is quiet.

LORI: (CONT'D)

You okay?

GRAHAM:

I've been looking over old photos.

LORI:

Of?

GRAHAM:

Beth.

LORI:

Right.

GRAHAM:

Feels weird.

LORI:

I'll bet.

GRAHAM:

2 years ago. You know, on the one hand it all feels like another time, another life. And on the other hand, it's all so vivid it's like it could have happened yesterday.

LORI:

Yeah. These things take time bro and-

GRAHAM:

I keep thinking about the day she died. How I sat on the bed next to her, while waiting for the ambulance, and I just started talking to her. And I wasn't even saying anything of any worth. I was just - it was small talk, to pass the time. But, she wasn't even there. Beth had already gone. I may as well have been speaking to - I dunno, a stapler or a jam jar.

LORI:

Jam jar?

GRAHAM:

It doesn't matter. The point is, it wasn't Beth lying on that bed. It wasn't even a person. It was just a vessel. A cold, lifeless vessel...

LORI:

Yeah...

GRAHAM:

Sorry, I don't really know what my point was, it's just... I dunno. It's weird. Just really weird.

LORI:

Love, why don't you look at some other photos. Maybe crack out the family holiday snaps. That'll give you a good laugh. We're all bound to look horrendous - 80s Brit-abroad chic. Christ.

GRAHAM:

Yeah... Maybe I will. I've got these terrible travel shows on again.

LORI:
Place Pickers.

GRAHAM:
Don't know why I'm watching them.

LORI:
Because you need a holiday.

GRAHAM:
Maybe.

LORI:
Or because you secretly like to
feel superior to these people.

GRAHAM:
What are you talking about, we ARE
these people.

LORI:
Oy! Shut up.

GRAHAM:
Mum and Dad would have so been on
this show. Mum in her lilac kaftan.
Dad in his shorts and sandals.

LORI:
Oh God, you're right. Those shorts.
I thought I'd repressed that
memory. Thanks for dredging that
back up.

GRAHAM:
You're welcome.

LORI:
Oh I've gotta go love, Tommy's
found mummy's lighter again
(calling) No! Tommy! Leave Zippo!
(to GRAHAM) I know he's only just
turned three but I swear the little
shit does it on purpose.

GRAHAM:
Thanks for ringing, Lozza.

LORI:
Look at those holiday photos, yeah?

GRAHAM:
Okay.

LORI:

And if you come across any of me
with braces, burn them.

GRAHAM:

Noted.

LORI:

Loveage!

GRAHAM:

Yeah, loveage.

GRAHAM hangs up. He begrudgingly drinks his peppermint tea. He grabs a pack of digestive biscuits and heads back into the living room.

INT. GRAHAM'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

GRAHAM sits back down at the table with his tea and biscuits. He opens the pack, whilst watching the telly. A different programme is showing - this one features a strikingly confident and slightly eccentric life coach, ROWAN PEDAGOUGH (Late 40s/Early 50s) giving a speech to a room of people rapt by what he is saying.

Without thinking, GRAHAM dips a digestive into his peppermint tea and takes a bite. He recoils - it tastes rank.

We see ROWAN on Television. As ROWAN speaks we cut back and forth between him chatting to his followers and GRAHAM pottering about the house.

ROWAN:

Life. What is it? Anyone know? Oh sure - We all think we know, we have our own perception, our own interpretation, our own idea - of what life is. But when it comes down to the core - the crunchy nut - of it, we cannot confidently put a stamp down on it and say 'I know what life is'. Because life is what you make of it.

GRAHAM puts the box of photos of Beth back on the rather rickety low wooden shelf which collapses and the box falls off along with a few other trinkets. GRAHAM rubs his frontal lobe in frustration and starts collating the objects now strewn on the floor. He occasionally looks up at the TV and shakes his head at the life coach.

ROWAN: (CONT'D)

Life is different for everyone. All of you here, you'll have all got here - to this room - via your own route. Some of you will have gone down the main road, others will have taken the back streets. Some will have walked, some will have driven, some will have gone by public transport. Some of you will have come from afar and perhaps left at 8:30 to avoid rush hour and others will live a few minutes away and will have evidently still ended up running late.

THE GROUP laughs at his observation. ROWAN smiles.

ROWAN: (CONT'D)

We're all guilty of that. But my point is none of you, not one single person here took the exact same route to get here. And that's fine. You don't envy each other, you don't resent, idolise or even wish you had taken a better route. Because there is no better route. Now, apply that same logic to life - how each of you got to where you are now. None of us take the same route. We are our own unique road map. And yet we do envy, resent, idolise, long for and wish we had somebody else's map. Sounds daft when you think about it, doesn't it?

THE GROUP look as if they have just had their mind truly blown by this philosophy. ROWAN continues.

GRAHAM is still only half-listening as he returns to going through old folders of family photos. He comes across one titled 'Cinque Terre, 1988'. He stops on that folder. It's clearly a significant time. The TV blares in the background.

Camera holds on the rain falling on the window until we snap into...

FLASHBACK

EXT. MANAROLA - CINQUE TERRE - 1988 - DAY

Glorious sunshine. We have been transported from miserable Northern England back in time to a sun-soaked village in Italy.

CAPTION: MANAROLA, CINQUE TERRE, ITALY, 1988

A car pulls up outside a guesthouse. Out of the car step the Walker family - SENG, FRANK, 14-year-old LORI and 17-year-old GRAHAM.

SENG (40, brash, nouveau-riche) is dressed in a lilac kaftan and wearing a sun hat that is perhaps a little too big for her and a string of pearls round her neck. She lifts her designer sunglasses up onto her head in awe of the place. On her ears hang earrings in the shape of Buddahs.

Her husband, FRANK (Late 40s, gruff, shorts and sandals, dressed like a typical Brit-abroad) goes to the boot and lifts out the cases. He has the appearance of a man who never smiles. He looks fairly indifferent about the place.

LORI (13/14, cheeky, braces) is dressed in a very summery outfit, also wearing sunglasses. She carries a Walkman in her hands and headphones on her head. She leans on the car looking up at the sky.

Finally, GRAHAM (17, moody) emerges from the car. T-shirt and jeans - he looks the least dressed for the occasion out of the four of them. He is also tired and bored. In his hand he holds a copy of 'Catcher in the Rye' (or some other classic teenage title).

SENG:

Oh Frank! Would ya look at that!
Would ya look at that, Frank!

FRANK:

Yeah.

SENG:

Oh isn't it just gorgeous my
lovelies?

GRAHAM grunts.

LORI:

So are we moving here then?

SENG:

Don't jump the gun, Lori. We're
seeing what's around. We're just
browsing. Just browsing.

GRAHAM:

Just browsing. For a house.

LORI:

I'd live here. Fuck Britain.

SENGA:

Lori, don't swear. And that's a terrible thing to say.

LORI:

I'm only saying it because I heard you say it to Dad last night.

SENGA looks a little embarrassed.

SENGA:

Well I just meant - I can't imagine anybody would take living in Britain over living here.

GRAHAM:

I would.

LORI:

Because you're lame.

GRAHAM:

Shut it Jaws.

LORI:

MUM!

SENGA:

Don't call her Jaws, Graham. You know she's very sensitive about her crooked teeth.

LORI:

MUM!

GRAHAM:

I was much happier staying in Manchester before you forced us to come here so you could find ways to potentially up and move us from our home to a country we don't know, to speak a language we can't speak to live in a house we can't afford. Regardless of whether we actually want to. But yeah, I guess that makes me lame.

LORI:

You could always go back. No one's forcing you to stay.

SENGA:

No, you're not going anywhere. You're staying here. We're all staying together. Like a proper family.

GRAHAM:

(to LORI)

Really?

FRANK:

(To GRAHAM)

Oy! You wanna make yourself useful and help get these cases out? Unless you want me to completely fuck my back.

GRAHAM:

(Sarcastic)

What a shame that would be...

FRANK:

What?

GRAHAM:

Nothing.

FRANK:

Don't push it lad.

GRAHAM goes to the car and lifts the HEAVY suitcases out.

FRANK: (CONT'D)

Christ Senga, d'ya pack the whole of fucking Debenhams in here.

SENGA:

Don't start on me Frank. I'm on holiday.

SENGA goes into the apartment. FRANK staggers inside with her. GRAHAM stares at the suitcase in the car looking lost. LORI walks past him.

LORI:

It's not going to move itself.

GRAHAM:

Are you going to be a prick this whole trip?

LORI:

Not as much as you are. Why don't
ya cheer the fuck up for once.

LORI follows SENG and FRANK into the apartment. GRAHAM sighs, he lifts a suitcase out of the car and closes the boot.

INT. GRAHAM'S LIVING ROOM - 2021, NIGHT

He opens the folder and sifts through the photos, which bring back all manner of memories - chuckling, cringing, looking slightly forlorn. He reaches a photo of teenage Lori in her train-track braces and laughs to himself. He gets out his lighter and pretends to set it alight.

The flame from his lighter draws his attention to a slightly crunched photo crookedly sticking out of the pile. He fishes it out and holds it up. The sight of it makes him freeze. He clearly hasn't thought about this for a long time.

We see the photo. It is the young GRAHAM (around 17 or 18) with a stunning Mediterranean girl of around the same age. They are both smiling - blissfully happy - with a beautiful sun-soaked Italian vista behind them both.

GRAHAM stares at the photo. He turns to the TV and then at the window. The rain is still hammering down. Close in on YOUNG GRAHAM's happy face in the photo.

INT. THE APARTMENT - BEDROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Cut to YOUNG GRAHAM's miserable face as he lies on his bed looking fed up. He gets up and goes to the living room.

INT. THE APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM / KITCHEN

GRAHAM enters the room. LORI is lounging on the sofa, painting her nails with her feet up on the coffee table. FRANK sits in the corner reading his book. SENG is pacing around in the kitchen part.

SENG:

Graham, I need you to go to
Monterosso Al Mare for me.

GRAHAM:

Oh what? Why?

SENG:

We need olives.

GRAHAM:

Olives?

SENGA:

Yes, I need to go to the market and get a bunch.

GRAHAM:

Since when do you eat olives?

SENGA:

Don't start on me Graham Walker. If we're going to stay here then we have to start immersing ourselves in Italian culture and the Mediterranean way of life.

GRAHAM:

Right, so a few olives are going to do that, are they?

LORI:

(warning: 'You're pushing it')

Graham.

FRANK:

Graham - go and get your mum her fucking olives.

GRAHAM:

Okay fine. So where am I going?

SENGA:

Monterosso Al Mare?

GRAHAM:

Where's that?

LORI:

It's in Monterosso.

GRAHAM:

Where's that?

LORI:

The next town?

GRAHAM:

So where are we now?

LORI:

Italy.

GRAHAM:
(Glares)
Thanks.

LORI:
(Smirks)
Grazie.

SENGA:
You'll be fine my love. Just follow
the signs.

GRAHAM:
I don't know Italian.

FRANK:
Then ask directions.

GRAHAM:
Again, I don't know Italian.

FRANK:
Oh come on, everyone speaks English
here. It's an international
language. Probably find they speak
gooder English than we do.

LORI:
Gooder.

GRAHAM:
Can't Lori go?

SENGA:
Lori's 14. Out in a place like that
on her own - she could get robbed
or kidnapped or raped.

GRAHAM:
So could I?

SENGA:
Don't be silly, Graham. You're a
boy.

GRAHAM reacts.

LORI:
I think what mum's trying to say is
that she prefers me to you?

GRAHAM walks past LORI trampling her legs on the table. LORI
screams.

GRAHAM:
(Sarcastic)
Oh sorry.

LORI:
Dickhead!

SENGA:
Will you two stop it! Now, Graham,
here's the list. It's the olives
and a few other things.

GRAHAM:
Oh now it's a few other things.

FRANK:
Any more lip from you lad and
you'll have that tongue smacked
right out your mouth - and a few
other things.

GRAHAM holds his tongue, wanting to argue back. SENGA gives him the list and kisses him on the cheek.

SENGA:
Thank you sweetie.

GRAHAM:
I won't be long.

SENGA:
No, take your time. Look around.
You might find you like it here.

SENGA presses a small Italian dictionary into his hands.

GRAHAM:
Okay.

LORI:
(Calling)
Don't get raped.

SENGA shoots a sharp stare at LORI. LORI realises she's crossed a line and shrinks a little in her seat. FRANK shakes his head. GRAHAM shuts the front door.

GRAHAM:
(As the door shuts)
Bye.

SENGA:
Ciao bellissimo!!

EXT. MONTEROSSO AL MARE - STREET - DAY

GRAHAM is walking down the streets searching for the market stalls. He looks lost but keeps walking.

Some young Italian boys are playing and one of them bumps into GRAHAM. And they run off. GRAHAM then feels into his pocket and discovers his wallet has gone. He spins round and calls to the boys.

GRAHAM:

HEY!

(Calling around)

Help! Um... Thief! El thiefo! Shit!!!

Someone!!!

Suddenly out of nowhere, a young girl sprints past GRAHAM and tackles the boy who stole GRAHAM's wallet. The other boys scarper. A few choice words (inaudible) are exchanged between the girl and the boys. GRAHAM is completely dumbstruck by what he has just seen.

The girl, DANIELA (16, Italian, Goddess-like) strolls coolly back to GRAHAM holding his wallet. She hands it to him. GRAHAM is instantly smitten. This is the most beautiful woman he's ever seen.

DANIELA:

Tieni, Devi guardarti intorno da queste parti.

Subtitles: Here. Gotta watch yourself round this place.

GRAHAM:

Thank you. I mean - Grazie. Thanks.

DANIELA speaks to him in Italian. GRAHAM pauses.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)

Um... Olives?

DANIELA:

Olives? Si.

SHE gestures to a stall right next to him. GRAHAM is embarrassed. DANIELA buys the olives for him.

GRAHAM:

Grazie.

DANIELA:

You are UK, no?

GRAHAM:

Si, si, UK. England. Not from here.

DANIELA:

Non mi stai prendendo in giro,
vero?

Subtitles: No kidding.

GRAHAM:

Si. Si.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Mucho grazie for um..
(Holds up wallet)
This.

DANIELA:

Ah, no problem.

GRAHAM:

I'm Graham.

DANIELA:

Gray-Ham.

GRAHAM:

Yes.

DANIELA:

Gray-Ham.

GRAHAM:

Gray-Ham, yes.

DANIELA laughs. GRAHAM laughs with her.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)

Never really thought about it like
that before. Yeah - Gray-Ham. Silly
name, isn't it? What's yours? Um..
Tu Name-bra?

DANIELA:

Daniela.

GRAHAM:

Daniela. That's a lovely name. Um..
Bellissimo.

DANIELA:

(Smiles)
Grazie.

GRAHAM:

I feel like I should repay you to say thanks.

DANIELA:

Que?

GRAHAM:

I want to thank you -

(Gestures)

Coffee or-

(Gestures)

Eating. Oh God. Bite to um... food.

DANIELA:

You want food?

GRAHAM:

No. I mean, yes. You have food. with me? Now? Con... Me? Now?

DANIELA:

Ah d'accordo... We go Gelateria?

GRAHAM:

Gelateria?

DANIELA:

(Cheeky smile)

Puoi offrirmi un gelato, visto come mi sono conciata per te.

Subtitles: You can buy me Gelato for getting myself covered in dirt for you.

GRAHAM:

Gelato. Gelato.

GRAHAM gets out his Italian dictionary.

DANIELA:

Wow, vuoi proprio farti derubare.

Subtitles: Wow, you really do want to get robbed.

GRAHAM:

Ice cream. Gelato!

DANIELA:

Si! Gelato!

DANIELA grabs GRAHAM'S hand and rushes him away with her.

GRAHAM:
Oh okay. Si! Gelato!

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. GRAHAM'S KITCHEN - 2021, NIGHT

GRAHAM opens the freezer and brings out a tub of cheap own-brand ice cream. He goes to the cupboard, brings out a bowl, pauses, looks down at the tub and puts the bowl back.

INT. GRAHAM'S LIVING ROOM - 2021, NIGHT

Shot of the ice cream tub being opened - it's fairly plain and unexciting. Half of the contents have already been eaten. GRAHAM is holding his spoon, he glances over at the TV, ROWAN is still talking to his group.

ROWAN:
Life does not have a correct route.
We go down different paths, we try
detours, shortcuts and most times
we'll get lost. Hopelessly lost.
Sometimes so lost we feel like
we'll never get out of the woods
and back on track. So what do we
do, we keep going, we ask
directions, we re-trace our steps.
Whatever happens, we find a way.
Because life finds a way.

GRAHAM glumly looks back at his ice cream. We see the spoon digging into the frozen block which immediately transforms into...

FLASHBACK

INT. THE GELATERIA - DAY

MATCH CUT. A spoon scooping out delicious Italian gelato of many colours. GRAHAM eats it. DANIELA sits opposite him in a bright blue booth also enjoying her ice cream. They smile at each other.

GRAHAM:
This is the best ice cream I've
ever had.

DANIELA:
Buono?

GRAHAM:

Buono. Si. very, very, Buono.
Delizioso.

DANIELA:

So... How long... You been... Italy.

GRAHAM:

How long have I been here? Um... Er...
Dos... Days...

DANIELA:

Dos dias? Ah due giorni.

GRAHAM:

Yes. Two days.

DANIELA:

Two Dayees. Capito. You like Italy?

GRAHAM:

(In Italian accent)
Yes, I like Italy. It's very pretty
and sunny and hot-

A WOMAN next to them, TINA (Late 20s, British, studios) turns round and speaks to GRAHAM.

TINA:

Sorry mate but speaking English in
an Italian accent is not the same
as speaking Italian.

GRAHAM:

Ta. If you don't mind, we're trying
to have a conversation.

TINA:

Not trying very hard.

GRAHAM:

(To DANIELA)
Sorry about this Daniela.

TINA leans over and speaks to DANIELA in fluent Italian.
GRAHAM is taken aback. DANIELA listens to TINA intently.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)

What did you say to her?

TINA:

I said you'd been here two days,
you like Italy, you think it's very
pretty, hot and sunny but you just
wish you weren't so useless with
the language.

GRAHAM:

I didn't say that last bit.

TINA:

No, I added it.

GRAHAM:

Ta. I think I'll be fine from here.

DANIELA says something in Italian which floors GRAHAM.

TINA:

You think?

GRAHAM:

No, it's fine.

GRAHAM gets out his Italian dictionary.

TINA:

Wow, you really want to get robbed.

GRAHAM struggles to find the words. DANIELA speaks to TINA in Italian. TINA replies and the two of them get in a bit of conflagration. GRAHAM looks around confused and a bit stressed.

GRAHAM:

What is she saying? What's going
on?

TINA:

Relax babe, I'm talking you up to
her. She likes you. She says you
have kind of a sexy Simon Le Bon
vibe about you.

GRAHAM:

Do I?

TINA:

No. But she seems to think so.

GRAHAM:

Oh.

TINA:

Do you want to maybe compliment her?

GRAHAM:

Yes, um... Err... Sorry, I'm nervous. I don't know what to say.

TINA calms him down

TINA:

Breathe child.

GRAHAM:

(Exhales)

Well, she's kind, clearly doesn't suffer fools gladly judging by the scrap with those lads earlier.

TINA nods.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)

She's very beautiful, she's striking. There's an air of nobility around her, like she's a princess.

TINA relays this to DANIELA. DANIELA blushes and replies.

TINA:

She is a princess.

GRAHAM:

Yes, tell her she's a princess.

TINA:

No, I mean, she is a princess. She has an air of nobility because she is... Well... An heir of nobility.

GRAHAM:

Shit.

TINA translates 'shit' to DANIELA.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)

Don't translate that!

TINA:

Sorry. I didn't realise I was only your part-time interpreter. I'm not being paid for this. I'm in the middle of a CELTA course.

GRAHAM:

Sorry, I do appreciate your help.
Really I do. thank you... Um..

TINA:

Tina.

GRAHAM:

Graham. And this is Daniela.

TINA:

Piacere, Principessa.

GRAHAM:

(Gobsmacked)
Principessa.

TINA:

Nervous now?

GRAHAM:

She's a princess. An actual
princess.

TINA:

It's only a title.

GRAHAM:

Why is she talking to me? I'm not
la-di-da royalty.

TINA:

Maybe that's what's so refreshing
for her.

DANIELA:

Are you okay Gray-ham?

GRAHAM:

Si. Buono.
(Looks terrified)
Buono.

TINA:

Well, this is where I take my
leave. Thank you for a rather
eventful gelato.

GRAHAM:

Please don't go. I'm going to be
useless without you.

TINA:

You'll be fine. Just relax. She can speak some English. Just keep it simple. The basics. Don't worry about trying to impress her. She already likes your company. You're in.

GRAHAM:

Okay. Grazie.

TINA:

There you go. Addio Principessa!

DANIELA:

Addio!! Piacere!

TINA:

Good luck kid.

TINA exits. GRAHAM looks at DANIELA, they smile at each other.

DANIELA:

Walk?

EXT. TOWN - LATE AFTERNOON / EARLY EVENING

GRAHAM and DANIELA walk through town together talking. GRAHAM looks and feels more relaxed. DANIELA is much more talkative than before.

They pass by a small performance stage in the square. There is a small band of elderly Italian men playing - guitar, trumpet, piano etc. People are standing around enjoying their music. One of the players spots DANIELA.

MUSICIAN:

Principessa! Principessa!

DANIELA:

Ciao Fabio!

MUSICIAN:

Unisciti a noi, dai
(Join us. Come on.)

MUSICIANS:

Sì Principessa, vieni a cantare con noi.

(Yes. Principessa. Come sing with us!)

DANIELA looks a little embarrassed. She turns to GRAHAM.

GRAHAM:
(Encouraging her)
Go! Si, go!

DANIELA hops up on stage with the band. She looks coyly at GRAHAM.

FABIO:
Quando?

DANIELA:
Si amore.

The band start up. They play 'Quando Quando Quando'. DANIELA takes lead as vocals and begins singing. GRAHAM is blown away by her voice. It is stunning, sensual, enchanting. She smiles at GRAHAM as she sings. He smiles back, completely in awe of her. Around him, more crowds of people gather to watch her and the band.

The song finishes, everyone applauds. GRAHAM applauds enthusiastically. Everyone around him shouts 'BRAVA!' and so he joins in.

GRAHAM:
BRAVA!

FABIO blows a kiss to DANIELA. She blows kisses back to him and the band and hops off stage.

FABIO:
Arrivederci Princepessa!

DANIELA:
Ciao Fabio!

GRAHAM:
That was amazing.

DANIELA:
(Modest)
Oh no.

GRAHAM:
Yes. You were incredible!

DANIELA:
Thank you.

GRAHAM:
Do you come and sing here a lot?

DANIELA:
Yes. A bit. I love it. Singing -
it's my life!

GRAHAM:
(More to himself than to
her)
You are just full of surprises.

DANIELA smiles. She holds his hand. GRAHAM looks down at his hand clasped in hers and looks into her eyes. They continue walking.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)
Daniela. Tonight... Um... Noche...
Hang on...

He stops and brings out his Italian dictionary once again. DANIELA chuckles. GRAHAM finds the page.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)
Stasera - Fantastico!

DANIELA:
Oh si, grande!

GRAHAM:
(Miming as if he's playing
charades)
I... See... You... Again?

DANIELA:
(Beaming)
Okay.

GRAHAM:
Okay. Tomorrow?

DANIELA:
Okay.

GRAHAM:
Okay. Tomorrow.

GRAHAM and DANIELA walk on looking very contented.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

GRAHAM arrives back, looking vastly chipper than when he left. LORI is sitting on the sofa eating toast. FRANK is still sitting in the exact same corner. SENGU is sitting by the window drinking a cup of tea and reading the latest Pulitzer prize winner. She gets up.

SENGA:

Graham! You've been gone ages. We were starting to wonder what had happened to you.

FRANK:

I wasn't.

GRAHAM:

I just had a wander. You said go and explore the place.

SENGA:

Yes but I didn't expect- well that's wonderful sweetie. Did you get the-

GRAHAM puts the bag of shopping on the table.

GRAHAM:

Prego.

SENGA:

Oooh, someone's learnin' the lingo.

GRAHAM:

You know mum, I've been thinking. Maybe I was a bit down on this place before. I reckon I could see myself living here.

Everyone stops what they're doing and look at him almost in shock.

SENGA:

What?

GRAHAM:

It's pretty spectacular and... Beautiful and... You said yourself we need to immerse ourselves in the culture.

LORI looks incredibly suspicious.

SENGA:

Really love?

GRAHAM:

Si.

SENGA:

Oh Graham! You've made me so happy.
(Welling up)
Oh God, sorry. This is just...

SENGA clasps GRAHAM tightly.

GRAHAM:

(Chuckles)
Mum, come on. I'm just going to get
changed. Back in a sec.

GRAHAM exits. SENGA runs over to FRANK.

SENGA:

Did you hear that Frank? Did you
hear that? Our little boy wants to
live with us in Italiana!

FRANK:

Yeah, I heard.

SENGA:

Are you not pleased!

FRANK:

Over the moon.

SENGA:

Oh Frank. Just imagine it - the
Walkers of Cinque Terre. Has a nice
ring to it, doesn't it?

FRANK:

Sure, why not.

SENGA:

I just can't think what made him
change his mind all of a sudden.

LORI:

Yeah...
(To herself)
Or who.

LORI gets up and goes to GRAHAM's room. Halfway down the
corridor she hears Graham softly saying 'Grey-ham' in an
Italian accent to himself.

INT. GRAHAM AND LORI'S ROOM

LORI barges in as GRAHAM halfway through getting changed.

GRAHAM:

Er - ever heard of knocking.

LORI:

Shut up. I want to talk to you.

GRAHAM:

Okay...

LORI sits on her bed, legs crossed looking at GRAHAM with a mischievous grin.

LORI:

Go on then. What's her name?

GRAHAM:

What's whose name?

LORI:

Oh don't play dumb. You have been nothing but a whiny little git since we got here and suddenly you want to stay.

GRAHAM:

Those train tracks are cutting off the circulation to your brain.

LORI:

So you really want to live in a country you don't know now.

GRAHAM:

People can have a change of heart, Lozza.

LORI:

You're lying. I can tell.

GRAHAM:

Alright miss bloody Marple if you think you know about my life why don't you tell me.

LORI:

Alright - first you hate this place, then you go into town and either get lost, mugged, chased or all three of those things and then some local Italian girl steps in and rescues you and decides to show you round the village and now you don't want to leave because

(MORE)

LORI: (CONT'D)
(mocking)
You're in loooove.

GRAHAM pauses, trying not to look as if Lori has rumbled him.

LORI: (CONT'D)
(Grinning)
Was I close?

GRAHAM:
You're infuriating you know that.

LORI:
HA! I KNEW IT!

GRAHAM:
Leave me alone you irritating
little Ewok.

LORI:
Are you going to tell me her name?

GRAHAM:
No.

LORI:
HA! So she has a name!

GRAHAM:
No - I mean, yes. Wait, what?

LORI:
I won't say anything - to mum and
dad. It can be just between us.
Siblings can keep secrets.

GRAHAM looks at his little sister who for once actually seems sincere. GRAHAM half-smiles at her.

GRAHAM:
Bugger off okay. I need to wash my
hair.

LORI jumps off the bed and leaves.

LORI:
Alrighty. I will find out her name
(Mocking)
Gray-ham.

LORI exits and shuts the door. GRAHAM chuckles and shakes his head. He grabs a towel and heads to the shower whistling 'Quando Quando Quando'.

EXT. CINQUE TERRE - THE NEXT DAY

GRAHAM and DANIELA's first day out together. Told mainly through a montage of music and events with little dialogue. There may also be dancing and more singing to crowds from DANIELA.

Down on Monterosso Beach, the two of them are frolicking in the sand and on the rocks. Cut to DANIELA in the water urging GRAHAM - who has a towel wrapped around his waist - to join her. She keeps gesturing 'come on!'.

GRAHAM drops the towel and stands looking slightly self-conscious in his swimming trunks whereas DANIELA doesn't have a care in the world splashing about in her bathing suit - the sea on her glistening skin. GRAHAM slowly edges towards the water and she splashes him with a big wave of water. The two of them laugh and GRAHAM dives into the water.

Cut to the two of them wrapped in their towels, wet haired, eating ice cream under the palm trees still talking and laughing together. Around them are couples and groups of men and women all in brightly coloured, patterned beach-wear sporting fashionable sunglasses (Raybans) and sipping from bottles of Peroni and/or smoking cigarettes.

EXT. RIOMAGGIORE - FUORI ROTTA BAR - LATE AFTERNOON

GRAHAM and DANIELA are sitting out on a roof terrace in a gorgeous bar in Riomaggiore away from the crowds.

The place is donned with neon signs and brightly coloured seating. In the corner is a jukebox which is currently blaring out 'Club Tropicana' by Wham. A portion of the clientele is made up of New-romantics in Adam Ant style flamboyant clothing, mini-skirts and patterned leggings with wildy eccentric hair - mullets and bouffants - and dark eye make-up. The other portion is made up of more punk and rock types in leather jackets, jeans, crop tops and moussed hair.

There is also a large fish tank by the bar on the wall all lit up in sea green (neon of course). A platter of seafood is bought over to GRAHAM and DANIELA's table.

WAITER:

Un piatto di frutti di mare da
condividere.

GRAHAM AND DANIELA:

Grazie.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)

This looks champion. They do love their seafood over here.

DANIELA:

Seafood is special. Monterosso, deliciosos! You try!

GRAHAM:

I will.

DANIELA:

Tell me [about] you, Graham. I want to know everything.

GRAHAM:

Wow, everything. Um... Well... I was born in Manchester in England.

DANIELA:

Ah! Manchester United!

GRAHAM:

Si. Si. Um, I was born there and I still live there - in that same house - with my mum, my dad and my little sister. She's awful. Aaaand... Right now I'm at college studying English, maths and sociology which - well, I enjoy English, not so much maths and sociology is... I don't really know what it is... and... Um...

(Shaking his head)

Jesus I'm sorry, this is so boring.

DANIELA:

No. No. Continue.

GRAHAM:

Plus, you're probably only understanding like every 7th word I say.

DANIELA:

I just like... To hearing you talk. I like... To watching you talk.

GRAHAM smiles at her. He is besotted with this girl. TINA suddenly appears at the table.

TINA:

Well, look who it is!

DANIELA squeals with delight and hugs TINA.

TINA: (CONT'D)
The Principessa and the Pauper.

GRAHAM:
Oh thanks. Nice to see you too,
Tina. Can't keep away from us?

TINA:
Clearly. Good day?

GRAHAM:
Very good. What are you doing here?

TINA:
Oh I'm here having drinks with some
friends but-

GRAHAM:
Just thought you'd pop over and say
'hola'

TINA:
Hola is Spanish. Good to see that
language barrier's been knocked
down.

GRAHAM:
(Chuckles)
Give me a break. I'm trying.

TINA:
I know babe. So the night is so
young it's barely begun. Where are
you two heading next?

GRAHAM:
Oh I don't know. Probably just have
a walk and then get the train back
to Manarola.

TINA:
I see.

TINA turns to DANIELA and speaks in fluent Italian. The two
of them have a conversation completely in Italian. GRAHAM
smiles and looks down at the table at his napkin. As he sits
there, he picks up a pen and doodles on the napkin. TINA
finishes speaking to DANIELA.

TINA: (CONT'D)
Dovresti portarlo in via
Dell'Amore.

Subtitles: I hope you're both heading up to Via Dell'Amore.

DANIELA:
(Blushing)
Lo pensi davvero?

Subtitles: Oh, really? Do you think?

TINA:
(Grinning)
Siii, sicuro! Non voglio vedere
nessuno di voi due da solo stasera,
Via dell'Amore, vai, chi non risica
non rosica.

*Subtitles: Yeeees. Yes. I don't want to see either of you on
the train tonight. Lovers Lane. Do it. Nothing ventured,
nothing gained.*

DANIELA:
Va bene, augurami buona fortuna

Subtitles: Okay. Wish me luck.

TINA:
Credimi, non ne hai bisogno.

Subtitles: Trust me. You won't need it.

GRAHAM finishes his doodling and looks up at TINA and DANIELA.

GRAHAM:
What are you two chatting about?

TINA:
Nothing that needs translating,
right?

DANIELA:
No. Nothing. Just... Chat.

TINA:
Anyway, I shall take my leave and
probably run into you both tomorrow
because I appear to be your stalker
as well as your interpreter. How's
that for multi-tasking?

GRAHAM:
Nice to see you again. Have fun
with your friends.

TINA:

Oh don't you worry - the cinzano is
in full flow.

Sound of bottle being opened off-screen and a cheer. TINA
looks round. It's clearly her friends. She turns back to
GRAHAM and DANIELA.

TINA: (CONT'D)

And now we have Prosecco. Ciao
belli!

GRAHAM AND DANIELA:

Ciao!

DANIELA turns back to GRAHAM and notices the doodle on his
napkin.

DANIELA: (CONT'D)

What is that?

GRAHAM:

What?

DANIELA:

(Pointing at the doodle)
That!

GRAHAM:

Oh, I don't know. Just a... Well... a
doodle.

DANIELA:

Can I see?

GRAHAM passes her the napkin.

DANIELA: (CONT'D)

Oh! Pesce! Umm... Feesh.

GRAHAM:

Yeah. Fish. It's just a fish.

DANIELA:

E bello.

GRAHAM:

Is it?

DANIELA:

I love it. You artista?

GRAHAM:

(Chuckles)

That is being generous. I like drawing. Always have done.

DANIELA:

Hai talento!

GRAHAM:

No, let's be serious. You're the... Talento... Here. Your singing, your dancing, your hand-to-hand combat skills.

DANIELA:

Thank you. You so sweet.

GRAHAM:

I've never met anyone like you before.

DANIELA smiles at him.

DANIELA:

I keep this? Please?

GRAHAM:

(Baffled by this but delighted)

Sure.

DANIELA neatly folds up the fish and puts it in her purse. The two of them stare into each other's eyes for a moment.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)

So... Um... Where do you want to go after this?

DANIELA:

(Beat)

You know Via Dell'amore?

GRAHAM:

No. I don't. But whatever it is, count me in.

DANIELA grins.

EXT. RIOMAGGIORE - VIA DELL'AMORE (LOVERS LANE) - EARLY EVENING

Montage of GRAHAM and DANIELA walk along 'Lovers Lane' talking, laughing, goofing around and taking in the amazing landscapes around them as romantic music underscores this gorgeous scene of two people in love.

A couple stop and ask GRAHAM to take a photo of the two of them. GRAHAM does so. Just before they leave GRAHAM asks them if they can take a photo of him and DANIELA on his camera. They agree.

GRAHAM and DANIELA stand together in front of the backdrop of a scintillating sun-kissed Italian vista. GRAHAM tentatively puts his arm round DANIELA's waist. She leans into him. The photo is taken - the same photo which older GRAHAM originally stumbled across at home.

EXT. MANAROLA - ANOTHER BAR - SUNSET

GRAHAM and DANIELA are sitting enjoying an aperitif at another bar this time overlooking Manarola.

Most of the women are dressed in denim tops, floral skirts and shiny dangly jewellery such as pearl necklaces whilst the men are wearing polo shirts and khaki shorts.

The atmosphere is very romantic. The music is more jazz inflected with candles placed around the bar. It is less chaotic than the previous place. DANIELA looks out towards the coast.

DANIELA:
Look, Gray-ham!

GRAHAM turns to see the sunset, bathing the town in a sensational orange glow. It's truly stunning. He gets up and walks to the end of the balcony entranced by the view. DANIELA walks up to him. They both gaze out in silence.

GRAHAM:
Wow.

DANIELA:
Bellissimo, vero?

GRAHAM:
Yeah. It really is quite a sunset.

DANIELA:
Si. Tramonto.

GRAHAM:

Tramonto.

DANIELA:

Sì, dorato.

GRAHAM:

This has been amazing. This whole day. Amazing. Cinque Terre is amazing. You're amazing, Daniela.

DANIELA:

(Sounding out the word)

A-maz-ing.

GRAHAM and DANIELA lean in and as the sun finally disappears into the sea, the two of them share a passionate kiss.

INT. GRAHAM'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The phone rings. GRAHAM snaps out of his fantasy/memory and scrambles looking for the phone. He answers.

GRAHAM:

Benny.

BENNY:

Alright pal, you sound out of breath.

GRAHAM:

Yeah, I just-

BENNY:

I haven't interrupted a wank or anything, have I?

GRAHAM:

No. I was just... Sleepy.

BENNY:

That'll probably be the wank.

GRAHAM:

I'm not- Did you want something?

BENNY:

Just checking in, you know - what with today being-

GRAHAM:

Thanks.

BENNY:

You okay?

GRAHAM:

I'll be fine. It's just... I'm bored
Benny. That's all there is to say.

BENNY:

Bored of what?

GRAHAM:

Everything. Being sad. Being happy.
Being happy then sad for no bloody
reason. The days are all the same.
Work is the same. It's just all
going round and round in a loop.

BENNY:

I know man.

GRAHAM:

I've been looking over these photos
from my teens and twenties and - I
used to have adventures. I used to
actually do things worth telling
people about. Now I've got sod-all
to say, I'm just stuck in this
limbo asking myself what the hell
happened.

BENNY:

Hey, it'll pick up mate. These
things just take time.

GRAHAM:

Argh! I know! Will everyone just
stop telling me it will 'just take
time'. I haven't got time!

BENNY:

Oh don't be so dramatic.

GRAHAM:

Dramatic. Thanks.

BENNY:

Sorry, I didn't mean- Look, you're
only 50-

GRAHAM:

Don't say 50 years young.

BENNY:

I wasn't going to say that because I'm not a twat. I was going to say, you're not exactly dodderly and frail getting around on a zimmer. I'm 52 and I don't feel any different. Apart from when I bend down I can't always be sure I'll get up again.

GRAHAM:

But this is just a waste of time. If I'm still feeling like this after 2 years what's to say I won't feel like this after 4 years or 8 years? I'm climbing the walls mate, I need to change things up somehow or I'm going to fucking lose it.

BENNY:

I wish I could help pal. Sorry.

GRAHAM:

(Calming down)

It's okay. Anyway, how are things with you?

BENNY:

Um... Pretty rubbish.

GRAHAM

You spoken to your mum?

BENNY:

No.

GRAHAM:

Sorry.

BENNY:

Well I suppose it's not every day your middle-aged only son comes out of Narnia.

GRAHAM:

She'll come round... It'll just-

BENNY:

Take time?

GRAHAM:

Um...

BENNY:

That's what you were going to say!

GRAHAM:

No. No, it wasn't.

BENNY:

(Laughs)

Now you see how easy it is to know what to say.

GRAHAM:

Sorry.

BENNY:

It's fine. Maybe we should both just keep a little jar of fucking useless platitudes by the phone for emergencies.

GRAHAM:

(Chuckling)

Fair point. I should probably go.

BENNY:

I'll come by the flat tomorrow, cook us a late breakfast or something.

GRAHAM:

Yeah, sounds good. Thanks mate.

BENNY:

Ta ra pal.

GRAHAM hangs up. He glances at the TV - it's a travel advert. He goes back to the photos whilst sipping his probably cold herbal tea. He puts the mug down on the table as the tea turns into...

FLASHBACK

EXT. THE APARTMENT - DAY - 2 WEEKS LATER

MATCH CUT. Except the tea is now a frothy cappuccino being drunk by GRAHAM. He sits outside the apartment basking in the sunshine.

Behind him, FRANK appears lugging a suitcase.

FRANK:

Move it.

GRAHAM:

Sorry.

SENGA appears dressed very flamboyantly looking very emotional.

SENGA:

Oh I can't believe we're off already. Can you believe it's already been 2 weeks, Frank? Frank, can you believe it's already been 2 weeks.

FRANK:

(Completely stone-faced)
Time flies.

SENGA struggles to lift her suitcase. FRANK takes it from her and puts it to the back of the car. She kisses him.

SENGA:

Aren't you going to miss this place Graham?

GRAHAM:

(Looking out for Daniela,
not really listening)
Yeah.

SENGA:

And yet when we arrived you couldn't wait to leave.

GRAHAM:

Yeah.

SENGA:

It's that Italian culture. You just need to immerse yourself into it. Don't be so quick to dismiss it. There's an old proverb the Italians have - *la gatta frettolosa fa i gattini ciechi*. Do you know what that means, Graham?

GRAHAM:

(Suddenly listening)
What?

SENGA:

It means '*The hasty cat gives birth to blind kittens*'.

GRAHAM:
(Reacts. Have I missed something?)
Okay.

SENGA:
You have to give these things time.

GRAHAM:
Right.

SENGA:
Think about that.

GRAHAM:
I... Will?

FRANK:
That's the last of 'em. Come on, everyone in the car.

GRAHAM:
What? We going now?

FRANK:
Yeah, let's go.

GRAHAM:
Well, hang on - I thought we were off this afternoon. What's the rush?

FRANK:
We gotta return the hire car and I'm not queuing up for hours at the airport.

SENGA:
Oh I know it's a bit sudden my love.

GRAHAM:
Can't you all go and I'll get a different flight.

FRANK:
Don't start changing plans Graham. Just get in the car.

GRAHAM:
I'm changing plans?! You were the one-

FRANK:
Get. In the car.

SENGA:
What's gotten into you Graham?

GRAHAM:
Nothing.

LORI comes out of the apartment.

LORI:
He wants to see his girlfriend for
the last time.

GRAHAM:
Why don't you go chew through a
cable, you bitch!

SENGA:
GRAHAM!

FRANK:
ENOUGH!

SENGA:
Graham, you have a girlfriend?

GRAHAM:
I don't have a girlfriend. I've
just been sort of seeing this girl.

FRANK:
For Christs sake can we talk about
this on the way instead of just
standing around.

LORI:
Graham, just let her go. She
probably does this with all the
British teenage boys here.

GRAHAM looks angrily at her. LORI gets in the car.

SENGA:
Leave it love, there'll be others.
Plenty more fish in the sea.

SENGA goes to the car. She looks back at GRAHAM.

GRAHAM:
(Getting an idea) Okay. Just... Give
me two secs. Start the car.

SENGA:

Graham.

GRAHAM:

Start the car. I'll be right there!

GRAHAM runs back up to the apartment. We see him in the distance standing at the window making some kind of motion with his hands.

FRANK:

What is he doing?

SENGA:

I don't know.

LORI rolls her eyes and sticks her headphones on. GRAHAM runs back to the car and gets in. SENGA gets in and shuts the door. FRANK looks in the mirror and sees GRAHAM in the back looking incredibly deflated.

FRANK:

(Beat)

You alright lad?

GRAHAM:

Yeah... Thanks.

FRANK:

Okay. Can we GO NOW?!

GRAHAM:

Yes.

FRANK:

Thank fuck for that.

SENGA:

Addio Cinque Terre!

LORI:

Ciao!

FRANK:

Cheers.

GRAHAM:

Arrivederci...

(Under his breath)

Principessa.

The car drives away from the apartment and off into the distance.

Cut to later that morning, DANIELA arriving at the apartment. She stands outside looking round for GRAHAM.

DANIELA goes up to the apartment and knocks on the door. No answer. She looks confused. She notices the car is no longer there. She runs round the courtyard looking for GRAHAM. Nothing. She trudges back to the front of the apartment looking upset.

DANIELA goes up to the window and looks in to see if anyone is there. Tears in her eyes. Devastated that he has just suddenly left like this. Then her eyes are drawn to something on the glass.

Shot of the window. We see that a symbol has been drawn on the glass. It's GRAHAM's fish doodle from the seafood place. Within the Fish's body are the letter's G[heart]D. The letters have been subtly made to look as if they fit with the body of the fish e.g. the G is the head, the heart is the fin and the D is the tail. DANIELA's tears turn into tears of joy. She rests her hand next to the fish and smiles. She softly whispers.

DANIELA:
Arrivederci, amore mio.

We zoom in on the eye of the fish and then pull out on...

INT. GRAHAM'S LIVING ROOM - 2021, NIGHT

The eye of GRAHAM who is staring into space, zoned out in his flashback. We pan out back into his living room in the present day. He comes back down to Earth and looks around the room as if regaining his bearings. He looks disappointed.

He is still holding the picture of DANIELA. He places it down on the table and puts all the other photos away back in their box. He is still looking at the photo of him and DANIELA, getting an idea.

Shot of GRAHAM opening his laptop and heading straight to FACEBOOK. He clicks on the search bar and types 'Daniella, Italy'. The results are too much to narrow down. He deletes and tries 'Daniela, Italy' then 'Daniella, Cinque Terre' and 'Daniela, Cinque Terre'. Again, results aren't narrowed down much. Cue short montage of him typing variations on the same search, scrolling through, thinking he's found her but realising he hasn't etc. Until he finally closes his laptop.

GRAHAM gazes into the distance, suddenly snapping out of his thought of reconnecting with DANIELA. He shakes his head.

The life coach show is still on the TV.

ROWAN:

So I'm here to tell you, to not be afraid of your route. It's never, the wrong one. It may seem scary, wild, dangerous but this is just your preconception - once you travel down it you'll notice it's never as horrendous as you thought.

GRAHAM shakes as head and rolls his eyes at ROWAN.

ROWAN: (CONT'D)

Fear continues to strike -it always will - fear is your sidekick in this. You have to work with it in tandem, it's fine to let it pipe up with its own take on things but you never allow it to take centre stage. You are the hero, fear is the sidekick. Fear is not a bad thing. Without fear we wouldn't take risks. If we didn't take risks. Then we would all just be following each other down the same path like corralled cattle on a ranch. We are not cattle. We are people.

This time ROWAN's words of motivation catch the attention of GRAHAM.

ROWAN: (CONT'D)

If you've got an idea in your head, the worst thing you can do is hand the podium over to your sidekick before you take the platform. Voice your idea, act on it, and keep fear at the sidelines, in the wings whispering the lines to prompt you. So don't shy away from risk. It's better to regret the times we had than the times we didn't.

GRAHAM watches and listens intently. As ROWAN continues speaking, we see GRAHAM confirm in his mind that his brief notion is now evolving into a semi-formed idea.

ROWAN: (CONT'D)

We don't know where our roadmap ends - there is no clue as to how long or short it is.

(MORE)

ROWAN: (CONT'D)

We just have to keep building it -
adding the greenery, the streets,
the Yo Sushi branch on the corner.
Make your map exciting, diverse and
fruitful.

Shot of laptop being snapped open again and a cursor clicking onto an airline site. GRAHAM clicks on 'Tickets' and types in Italy. We cut back and forth from ROWAN on the TV to GRAHAM at the laptop as the motivational speech reaches its conclusion.

ROWAN: (CONT'D)

Be happy, be sad, be indifferent,
be scared and dominated by
uncertainty but whatever you do,
take control, take responsibility,
take your time. And live for
yourself. Don't sit back and wait
for life to happen. The only person
that can make it happen is you.

We watch GRAHAM's face as he browses. For the first time, we see GRAHAM smiles broadly as if he's happy.

ROWAN: (CONT'D)

You make life. What is life? This
is life! You are life! Go and live
life!

One final shot of the cursor hitting the button 'PURCHASE'.
On the click we flash to...

EXT. MANCHESTER - THE NEXT MORNING, THE RAIN HAS STOPPED

BENNY arrives at GRAHAM's front door. He rings the doorbell. GRAHAM answers, dressed differently and with a real spring in his step. BENNY looks him up and down.

BENNY:

... Is Graham there?

GRAHAM:

Get in here, you. Fancy a cuppa?
I've got milk!

INT. GRAHAM'S KITCHEN - DAY

Shots of Kettle boiling, milk being poured, tea being stirred etc.

BENNY and GRAHAM stand opposite each other with a mug of tea. GRAHAM has clearly told BENNY his idea and is awaiting BENNY's answer. BENNY stands looking completely baffled.

BENNY:

(Beat)

Sorry, you're going where again?

GRAHAM:

Italy.

BENNY:

Italy.

GRAHAM:

Yeah.

BENNY:

And you're going there to?

GRAHAM:

Track down and see Daniela.

BENNY:

Daniela, and she is?

GRAHAM:

My summer holiday Italian
sweetheart from when I was 17.

BENNY:

Right. So that is what I thought
you said.

BENNY takes a glug of tea.

GRAHAM:

I know it sounds rash.

BENNY:

'Rash' is putting it lightly.

GRAHAM:

But you know when you get an idea
in your head?

BENNY:

No. Not an idea like this. You're
going to a country you've haven't
been to in over 30 years, to find a
woman you haven't spoken to in over
30 years, who speaks a language you
still haven't learnt in over 30
years.

GRAHAM:

She could speak a little English.
Besides, I'll download DuoLingo.
Start learning. Only need the
basics. C'est muy importante.

BENNY:

That's Spanish. With some French.

GRAHAM:

Shit.

BENNY sits down at the table.

BENNY:

What makes you think this girl even
wants to see you?

GRAHAM:

We were in love you know.

BENNY:

You were 17.

GRAHAM:

She was stunning. Olive skin, these
blue doe-like limpid pools and
gorgeous flowing chestnut mane.

BENNY:

Okay, so she has skin, eyes and
hair. Good start.

GRAHAM:

I can't explain. You wouldn't
understand.

GRAHAM starts to walk out of the kitchen.

BENNY:

This is the grieving process
Graham, you're vulnerable.

GRAHAM:

I'm fine.

BENNY:

Where did all this suddenly come
from anyway?

GRAHAM:

Well you're always saying I never
take risks and try anything new.

BENNY:

Yeah, try something new like, I dunno, have the piri piri option at Nandos. You can't just go from 0 to 10.

GRAHAM walks out of the kitchen into the living room. BENNY follows. INTO:

INT. GRAHAM'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

GRAHAM slumps down on the sofa. BENNY stands looking at him.

GRAHAM:

This is new. It's an adventure.
Come on, I'm 50-

BENNY:

Oh that's what this is about.

GRAHAM:

What?

BENNY:

The big five-oh.

GRAHAM:

No, it's not that.

BENNY:

You know what I'm going to say.

GRAHAM:

It's not that.

BENNY:

Miiiiid liiiiiiife-

GRAHAM:

It's not that. Anyway, like you never did anything impulsive when you turned 50. You bought a new car.

BENNY:

Cos the other one failed its MOT.
It was an old car.

GRAHAM:

Sure swapping a Ford for a Lexus.
That's standard.

BENNY:
So this isn't about turning 50?

GRAHAM:
No.

BENNY:
Is it about Beth?

GRAHAM:
No.

BENNY:
(Pause)
Is it about your parents?

GRAHAM:
No. I just want a trip abroad. I
want something new in my life. I
WANT a life.

BENNY:
Graham.

GRAHAM:
Come on, it'll be great. We can go
on the beach, go to Italian bars-

BENNY:
Sorry 'we'?

GRAHAM:
You're coming too.

BENNY:
What?

GRAHAM:
I can't go on my own. I don't know
the country, or the language.
(Smirks)
I'm vulnerable.

BENNY:
I'm not going.

GRAHAM:
Why not?

BENNY:
Um... Something called a job. A
teaching job too.
(MORE)

BENNY: (CONT'D)

And I don't think the board would be massively enthusiastic about me suddenly swanning off round Italy in the middle of term time.

GRAHAM:

Oh they'll understand.

BENNY:

(Sarcastic)

Well, when you put it like that...

GRAHAM:

Please Benny.

BENNY:

Graham, I'm your oldest friend. This isn't like you. You're not thinking.

GRAHAM gets up from the sofa.

GRAHAM:

No Benny. No, on the contrary - I've been thinking. For once I have been thinking and I've never been more sure of anything in my life. I've spent years being predictable, unimpulsive, unexciting and now - enough - I want a change. I want to change.

BENNY:

Graham...

GRAHAM:

This feels right. I'm not going to get through this by staying here on my own. Please.

BENNY:

(Sigh)

Alright.

GRAHAM:

Alright?

BENNY:

I'll go.

GRAHAM leaps up from the sofa with joy.

GRAHAM:

YES!

BENNY:

I might be able to get a few days off. Only a few though.

GRAHAM:

Yes of course. Thank you Benny.
Thank you. Thank you! Oh wow. A ha!
I can't believe we're doing this.

BENNY:

You and me both.

GRAHAM:

Well I'd go pack! We're leaving tomorrow.

GRAHAM dances out of the living room and into the hallway.
BENNY follows.

BENNY:

Tomorrow? Bit short notice.

GRAHAM produces a ticket in his hand.

GRAHAM:

Cheap tickets. Strike while the iron's hot.

BENNY:

Well I'll have to get a different flight to you.

GRAHAM, with a quick flick, produces a second ticket which was hidden behind the first one.

BENNY: (CONT'D)

How did you know I'd agree to this.

GRAHAM:

(Smiling)
Benny, you're my oldest friend.
Flight's at 8!

GRAHAM excitedly bounds upstairs.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)

(Calling o.s)
In the morning! VIVA ITALIANA!

GRAHAM disappears. BENNY stands, mouth open, processing all this.

INT. GRAHAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

GRAHAM lies in bed. Wide awake. Staring straight up at the ceiling.

GRAHAM:
(Softly, to himself)
Daniela, ciao... Ciao Daniela... Ciao
mi amore. Long time, no... Parlare...
(Chuckles to himself)
Oh God.

He looks over at a framed photo of BETH on his bedside table. He sits up in bed and picks up the frame. He looks at it.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)
I did it love. I finally went nuts.
What you must be thinking about all
this. I know you'd want me to do
this - okay well, maybe not exactly
this but - I know you'd want to me
be spontaneous, try something new.
You'd want me to get out of
Manchester that's for sure... I'm not
trying to replace you. You know
that can never happen. God, I wish
I was doing this with you. Going
away, like we planned. I miss you.
More than you'll ever know.
(Kisses the photo)
Happy Anniversary my love...

He puts the photo frame back and turns away from it in bed. He lies on his side and closes his eyes.

EXT. GRAHAM'S FLAT - THE NEXT MORNING

GRAHAM and BENNY are waiting outside the flat with suitcases and bags for the taxi to arrive.

BENNY:
Thought you said it was on its way.

GRAHAM:
It said your driver will be with
you in 3 minutes.

BENNY:
Plus 15?

GRAHAM:
I'm sure they'll be here soon.

BENNY:

Freezing my bollocks off out here.

GRAHAM:

Well just you wait, before you know it your bollocks will be basking in scorching heat.

BENNY:

Please never say that sentence again in your life.

BENNY notices something

BENNY: (CONT'D)

Hang on Gray, where's your car?

GRAHAM:

Oh that - I sold out.

BENNY:

You sold the car?!

GRAHAM:

Yeah, was having a clear out and, well, I never did like that car.

BENNY:

So what else did you get rid of in your 'clear out'?

GRAHAM:

Just a few bits of bric-a-brac... And the washer dryer.

BENNY:

I see.

GRAHAM:

More lira for the trip.

BENNY:

And work?

GRAHAM:

I quit.

BENNY:

You what?

GRAHAM:

Yeah. They wouldn't let me have the time off, so I thought - fuck it. Fresh start. Right?

BENNY:

I don't-

GRAHAM:

Ah! Cab's here.

BENNY:

But Gray-

GRAHAM:

No time Benny. Let's go. Let's go.

TAXI pulls up in front of them. Shot of bags being chucked into the boot. GRAHAM and BENNY get into the back of the car.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)

Airport please mate.

BENNY is still in shock over GRAHAM's news.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)

Right, now's the perfect time for some Italiano.

GRAHAM brings out his phone and clicks into his language app.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)

'I pesci si lavavano le camicie'

(to BENNY)

'The fish washed their shirts' -
cos that's a phrase that's always
going to come in handy. Oh -
aaaaand *'I cavalli chiusero le
porte'* - the horses closed the
doors. It's like the Hungarian
phrasebook, this.

BENNY doesn't say anything.

GRAHAM: (CONT'D)

This subject is called Farm. I'd
love to know what kind of fucking
farms they have down in Italy.
(Chuckles)

BENNY:

Graham... I'm worried about you.

GRAHAM:

Don't mate. I'm grand. And you will
be too. You'll see. Things are
going to change my friend. Promise
you.

Shot of taxi driving away, camera pans away as we continue to hear GRAHAM doing his Italian learning from inside the car.

LANGUAGE APP:

*The cow wrote me a song. La mucca
mi ha scritto una canzone*

GRAHAM:

(Repeats sentence, very
poorly)
La mucca mi ha scritto una canzone

LANGUAGE APP:

*Why didn't the owls clean the
kitchen floors? Perche I gufi non
pulivano I pavimenti della cucina*

GRAHAM:

(Repeating sentence, very
poorly)
*Perche I gufi non pulivanti- no
hang on, Perche I pavimenti I err...
Della... No I got this - Perche I
gufi non pufi-*

We pull back further and further until they are a mere dot in the distance.

BENNY:

Are we there yet?

END



– *love.lost* –
SERIES OUTLINE

Episode 1 – Manchester

Graham Walker is in his flat in Manchester, one night, watching rubbish telly full of travel programmes and going through old photos of him and his wife Beth, who passed away from cancer a couple of years ago. It is their anniversary and Graham is still unable to move on. We are shown a flashback of Beth and Graham on his birthday and then another of him, his sister Lori and his best mate Benny at the pub just after her funeral.

Lori calls him to check in and he tells her how he's missing Beth and feels numb and empty. Lori has her hands full of the children's shenanigans, but she suggests to her brother that he puts away the photos from that time and instead look at old family holiday snaps – "That'll give you a good laugh. We're all bound to look horrendous - 80s Brit-abroad chic. Christ."

Graham sifts through folders of old holiday photos until he gets to a folder entitled 'Cinque Terre 1988' where inside he comes across a snap of himself as a young lad of 17 with a gorgeous young Italian girl and suddenly it comes flooding back to him.

Flashback to Italy 1988, Graham and his family – his mum, dad and Lori – arrive at Cinque Terre. Mum and Dad are essentially there to scout out the place with a view to moving the family there. Graham is grumpy and disinterested and wants to get away from it all. Whilst out in town, he gets robbed and is rescued by a young woman – the same one in the photo. Her name is Daniela and she is a princess of Italian nobility. The two of them begin chatting (well, as much as they can with the language barrier) and go to the gelateria together. Whilst there, Graham and Daniela get to know each other, with the aid of helpful British stranger, Tina, who can speak fluent Italian and acts as cupid for the two of them – The Principessa and the Pauper. From then on we see the romance between the two of them bloom right up to when he and the family come to the end of their holiday and head back to Manchester.

Back in the present day, Benny calls up Graham to check in and see how he is holding up on today of all days. Graham is frustrated and tells Benny he is bored of life and, having just turned 50, wants more from it. Benny tries to console him but Graham is too disillusioned.

On TV, a programme featuring motivational speaker Rowan Pedagough has been playing in the background. At first Graham dismisses his words of wisdom but suddenly something he says – about fear and taking risks – piques Graham's interest and he listens intently. As he does so, he gets an idea. A mad idea. He is going to book tickets to Italy and go back to Cinque Terre to try and rekindle his relationship with Daniela. 30 years on from when they first met!

The next morning Benny comes by and Graham tells him the plan, Benny is completely shell-shocked by this and even more stunned when Graham tells him he's going with him. He flat out refuses, telling Graham he's not thinking straight and that he's in a vulnerable state, Graham tells him for once he feels like his eyes have been opened. After much persuasion and emotional blackmail, Benny reluctantly agrees to accompany Graham on this one-way ticket towards a mid-life crisis and an existential breakdown.

The next day Graham and Benny leave for the airport. Benny is deeply concerned about Graham's behaviour – especially when he tells him he has not only sold his car but also quit his job. This all seems like a terrible idea. They ride off in the taxi as Graham proceeds to learn useless language phrases on DuoLingo.

Episode 2 – Cinque Terre

We open on a flashback to Graham in his soul-destroying council job – we see what work he did and how it has gradually sucked the life out of him over the years. His boss, Stuart, is the epitome of a pencil pusher with a real superiority complex. At the end we see that Graham finally – and rather dramatically – quits his job. It is drastic but it liberates him. The

worm that turned.

We are also treated to short, sharp flashbacks to Cinque Terre 1988. Graham and Daniela have been exploring more of the place – the annual Lemon Festival, the vineyards of Corniglia, Vernazza etc. which contrast between Graham going to these places now and going to them then.

In the present day, Graham and Benny arrive in Cinque Terre to begin their search for Daniela. Time to start back at where it all happened. They go to Monterosso where the stage in the town square was and discover it has long been torn down. They ask around for anyone who can give them information about Daniela despite not knowing her full name, what she looks like or even what she might be doing now. It has all changed. Even the gelateria has gone, which is sad for Graham.

Graham catches up with Lori over video call – who is as usual tired and frazzled with the kids – and tells her his plan. She is flabbergasted by this. “That’s right Tommy, uncle Graham has gone insane”. She is concerned that Graham may not be in his right mind and she isn’t the only one. Benny is still shocked that Graham has quit his job and sold his car. This isn’t like him at all.

Graham and Benny arrive at the Air BnB that Graham booked – this ‘accommodation’ turns out to be a caravan in a back field. It is cramped and most of the amenities are out of order. They meet the owner who essentially tells them they’d be lucky to find a hotel that didn’t cost a fortune at this late notice. Plus it’s during the Festival of Pirates so all the places will be booked up. Graham and Benny reluctantly agree to stay in the caravan. Graham is keeping positive. Benny is not. Later when they are getting ready to go to bed, a strange man enters the caravan. Turns out he is also sleeping there.

During the day Graham and Benny take in the local attractions and food but already things are off to a bad start with food poisoning, sea-related injuries “That wasn’t a jellyfish. / So did I just pis-? / Yep. On you? / Yep / For no reason? / No real reason, no.”

and Graham only knowing the most useless Italian phrases “This belt is too big for me”. They hire a vespa – being warned that there are thieves about stealing them. Later that day, having left their vespa for less than a minute, somebody unlocks it and speeds off on it. Graham and Benny chase after the bike thief down towards a warehouse. They hide near the entrance and see that the man who nicked the bike is the guy sleeping in their caravan. They watch him as he wheels the vespa into the warehouse. They have clearly stumbled across something bigger than just one robbery. The doors open and the caravan owner is waiting for him. Behind him are many vespas, clearly all stolen, being painted different colours.

Graham films them doing business and later, when they get back and find the sleeping guy who tries to sell them his ‘new’ vespa. They go straight to the caravan owner and blackmail him threatening to expose his illegal trade to the police. The owner refunds them their money for the caravan – and the vespa – and they leave.

After a long day, the two of them head to a bar. They decide that maybe their best course of action is to find the promoter, Giovanni, who used to run the stage and talent shows. He may know what happened to Daniela, especially if she was a regular face on the scene. Upon overhearing them, the bartender tells them he is Giovanni’s son and informs them that his father is now retired and living in a town called San Castello. He did make the effort of getting to know the open mic musicians and talent that came forth and so he would likely remember her. Benny was secretly hoping this would be the end of their trip but this quest is far from over.

Episode 3 – San Castello

Throughout this episode we flashback to Cinque Terre 1988 to gain further insight into how Graham and Daniela’s relationship grew and how much music became a big part of their time together. Daniela enters the local talent show and in one of her performances

she persuades Graham to get on stage with her and duet. The two of them perform a rendition of a popular song ('Groovy kind of Love') which goes down incredibly well with the audience and they are both bursting with love and pride for each other. They henceforth make it 'their song'.

Graham and Benny pull into the station where they were told the old music show promoter lives – A small town called San Castello "Try looking it up on the map. You won't find it...". However, when they arrive, they discover that the train station is remote and that the actual town is miles away. They have been told they have to find the promoter because he will most likely know what happened to Daniela. Without a car though, they are both stuck in the middle of a barren wasteland. As Graham and Benny are trying to gain their bearings and figure out how to get to town, an older, robust-looking woman is getting into her car. She spots Graham and Benny and goes over to them, she doesn't speak English and is agitated. She puts their suitcases into the boot and hurriedly gestures to them both to get into the back of the car. Graham and Benny have no idea what is happening but have no choice but to go with it. "Are we being kidnapped? Is it 'kidnapping' if you willingly go along with it"?

The woman, Martina, drives them back to the farm where she lives with her husband, Alessandro. She hasn't understood a word that Graham and Benny have been saying – despite Graham trying out his farm phrases on her to no avail. Still in a bit of a flap, she stops the car and goes to a house further down the road. She then comes back with her English-speaking son Antonio (40s). Martina could see they were lost and that they wouldn't make it to town before nightfall. She has agreed to let them stay for free if they can do some paid work helping her with some farm tasks. Then she will drive them back to the station. The two of them could do with the money and so agree.

Staying in this place isn't too dissimilar from 'Cold Comfort Farm' if it was set in the outskirts of Italy. There is an old lady, the grandmother, who doesn't say

or do a lot. "Are we sure she's not dead?". Some of the tasks include having to chase the chickens back into their coop (not as easy as it sounds), milking goats, and walking the family dog, Pedro. Whilst out on their walk they manage to lose Pedro and so embark on a wild goose chase to locate him. They are in deep shit if they don't. When they eventually get back to the farm, they find Pedro sitting waiting for them.

Meanwhile Lori, who has been dealing with the children single-handedly whilst her husband Mark has been busy, begins to worry that maybe he's having an affair. He's always home in the early hours of the morning and is gone again at the crack of dawn.

Benny fancies Antonio but tries to hide/deny it due to his recent fall out with his mum over being gay. He is full of self-loathing. That night, Graham can't sleep and goes downstairs. He runs into the grandmother and he begins monologuing to her about everything. It becomes clear that she knows more English than she lets on. The next day, Graham discovers that the grandmother knows the promoter and, having listened to Graham last night, gives Antonio his address. Antonio drives Graham and Benny to the house of the promoter, Giovanni.

Giovanni is very friendly but his memory is hazy until Graham sings his and Daniela's song and suddenly it all comes back to him "Sì! Principessa!". The promoter hands them both a flyer advertising a sold-out tour of 'Principessa' and that's when Graham discovers Daniela is now a mega star! Graham decides that he and Benny are going to follow her tour and catch her at her next show. And so, to the next stop – Pisa!

Episode 4 – Pisa

Throughout this episode, we flashback to Manchester in the early 1990s where a young Benny Buchanan is the drummer in upcoming punk rock band, Manc Panic. Benny who at this stage of his life – early 20s – is still keeping himself in the closet. We follow the

timeline of this band, the promising career Benny could have had and where and how it all went wrong. This contrasts with Benny rekindling his love for drumming with the band he meets in Italy.

In the present day, Graham and Benny have landed in Pisa, they both check in to a hostel which is incomparably grotty. It's cheap and they're only going to be here for one night. Graham tries to find out tour details on the internet but Benny stops him "Have you any idea what the data traffic costs over here?". Graham and Benny realise they have to be more practical, they decide to split up and search for any signs of Daniela's gig, agreeing to meet back later.

In a bizarre twist of fate, Graham bumps into Tina who he hasn't seen since that summer he spent with Daniela. She instantly remembers him. "I did wonder if I'd ever see your face round here again. How's the Italian? / La regina era nel castello / The Queen was in the castle / Yep / Is that it? / Pretty much / "Congratulations. 30 years' hard work right there". They go for coffee and reconnect; he tells her what he's doing here. She's surprised but supportive. They swap stories about the past few decades. She is now an English teacher at a top language school. She's lived all round Italy and finally settled down in Pisa. However, Tina is divorced and is clearly still reeling from it. Tina agrees to help Graham search for Daniela.

Meanwhile, Benny whilst walking through town encounters a group of bohemian musicians playing in the street. He gets chatting to one of the members, Antonio, and mentions he used to drum. They invite him to drum for them right there and then in the street. Benny is terrified at the thought, "I haven't picked up a drumstick since Nirvana's second album / Who? / Nevermind? / Oh okay then". However, he sits down and does a drum solo that absolutely blows the band away – and the crowds too. The band invite Benny to join them at their gig tonight. He agrees. That night they have a great gig, Benny feels a new lease of life – he's 19 again. He and Antonio get closer and spend the night together.

Back in Manchester, Lori tries to confide in Graham

over the phone about Mark but Graham isn't fully paying attention. Disappointed and feeling very alone for the first time, Lori decides to confront Mark about where he has been going and why he is never at home for her and the kids anymore.

Principessa's show has already been and gone! Graham got the dates mixed up and has missed it – or so this is what Tina has told him. In actual fact, Tina has somewhat exploited Graham's lack of understanding to sabotage his chances of meeting Principessa again. He is gutted so she takes him for a drink. Drinks soon turn to the two of them heading back to her apartment. They both kiss but Tina breaks down in tears, feeling sad and guilty. They are both stricken by grief and loneliness. Graham and Tina sit on the sofa and comfort each other. TINA: Can you just hold me please?

The next day, Graham and Tina say goodbye. They promise to keep in touch but their farewell is very bittersweet. Benny wants to stay with Antonio and the band but Graham, angry about how his evening transpired, won't let him and guilt-trips Benny into continuing the journey with him. Benny wants to remain loyal to Graham and so he goes to tell the band he's leaving – absolutely gutted. It's a sombre ending with the two of them heading to the next spot on the tour list – Florence.

Episode 5 – Florence

Throughout this episode, we travel back in time via flashbacks to Christmas 2016 when Graham fell out with his parents. Senga and Frank had never been particularly encouraging or complimentary towards Beth and during the lunch the two of them either did or said something to Beth which was unforgivable. The festive family get-together swiftly grinds to a halt. Since then Graham has hardly spoken to his parents and they have been too proud to apologise. The last time Graham saw his parents was at Beth's funeral and even then they didn't stay longer than the service.

Graham and Benny are in the next city on Principessa's tour list, Florence. Benny is still a bit shirty with

Graham because they had to leave Florence when he was actually having a good time there. They are not going to risk getting scammed again with dubious accommodation, so Graham buys them a tent to put up in a field. They both struggle to put the tent up and when they do finally get it going it's the size of a paddling pool. Benny is livid and they both attempt to fit inside, and sleep inside, this one-man "more like one-child" tent. Then it starts to rain...

In the morning, Graham speaks to Lori and she scares him by informing him that mum and dad are also in Florence. Graham tells Benny they are to avoid all museums, galleries etc. He does not want to see either of them. Later that morning, it starts to rain heavily. They run for cover in the Basilica of Santa Croce. Whilst waiting for the rain to stop and to stay dry, they run into Graham's parents, Frank and Senga. They are in Florence on holiday (Mum is of course there for the culture and to see all the famous people buried in that church) for their anniversary. An argument quickly ensues which is entirely whispered because they're in a church. Eventually they calm down and decide to walk along the Ponte Vecchio. Senga invites the two of them to stay at theirs. Benny is all for it and Graham begrudgingly agrees. It's either that or back to the tent. Graham spends the day with Frank and Senga but he is still not very forthcoming towards them.

Whilst out sight-seeing, Benny comes across a place which he remembers from childhood that he and his mum loved. He calls his mum to try and reconnect with her but she hangs up on him. Angry, upset and completely at the end of his tether, Benny goes out to a bar and gets blind-drunk. After getting chucked out of the bar, he gets into an altercation with a police officer and is arrested.

Graham is getting ready for Daniela's show tonight but at the last minute is called in to the police station, Benny is being held there. When Graham gets there he too gets into an argument with the officers and they are both fined for disturbing the peace. Neither can afford the fine and the police won't let them go until it is paid. Graham begrudgingly calls his parents

to come down and pay the fines to get them out. They sit feeling sorry for themselves, they have missed the show.

Lori confronts Mark about his absence. It turns out that he is not having an affair, he is purposely trying to stay out because he doesn't want any of the child-care responsibility. He never wanted kids but Lori did and he felt this was a compromise. Lori is both furious and devastated by this revelation.

In the end, Frank and Senga arrive and smooth everything over with the police – paying the fines for both of them in the process. Benny goes back to the house with Frank. The two of them talk, Frank is actually very sympathetic towards Benny's pain and comforts him. During this talk Frank realises that he was in the wrong over the fall out between him and Graham. Meanwhile Graham and Senga walk along the river and have a heart-to-heart before finally making up "There's an old Italian proverb – *Dopo la pioggia, arriva il sole* – After the rain comes sun". They then go home and he and Frank hug. The next day, Graham and Benny burn the tent and make trails to the next stop – Napoli!

Episode 6 – Napoli

The flashbacks in this episode are of Benny coming out to his family, the heart-breaking way in which his mum reacted to it and how it changed their relationship forever.

And so, to the sun-kissed streets of Napoli. Graham and Benny manage to finally luck out on some decent accommodation at a hotel. They are both incredibly wary though – this seems too good to be true. They take in the sights of Napoli and get wind (either via radio or social media) that Daniela is going to be doing an interview in the lead up to her show today at the radio station. Graham thinks this is the perfect opportunity to see her.

Benny finally gets through to his mum and a very short, curt conversation between them ensues. Benny now knows his mum is never going to feel different

and that their once loving mother-son relationship is over.

Graham and Benny head to the radio station, and the security guard, believing them both to be crazed fans, sends them off on a trail which he tells them will lead them to the stage door. Graham and Benny follow the trail and wind up in the woods. It is at this point they realise what has happened. After much hassle, they make their way out of the woods and into a green clearing. The green clearing turns out to be a golf course and the two of them run through trying to dodge and avoid getting killed by incoming golf balls. They run across the green and end up falling into a water-logged ditch getting absolutely drenched. GRAHAM: I'm starting to think that guy deliberately sent us the wrong way...

Back at the hotel, and now warm and dry, Benny is rapidly losing patience with Graham. There is a great deal of friction between the two of them and it isn't long before Graham and Benny finally snap at each other and a huge argument ensues between the two of them. They each give each other a few home truths, Benny tells Graham that Daniela isn't going to remember and that he's living in the past. Graham dismisses Benny's comments saying he doesn't understand what it means to grieve at which point this is the last straw for Benny ('My mother won't look at me, to her I'm like some kind of pervert. Ever had to deal with the realisation that your own mother is homophobic and thinks you're disgusting. I've been dealing with loss too so don't ever tell me I don't understand what it means to grieve'). A line has been crossed. They are done. Benny is going back to Manchester in the morning – without Graham – and storms out of the room.

Graham calls Lori, who is not in a good way, to rant about the parents and his argument with Benny and is shocked to find she 100% agrees with Benny. Graham pushes Lori to boiling point and the two of them argue as well. She tells him she can't go on trying to salvage their family relationship when she can barely fix her own. Graham hangs up on Lori and goes walking the streets of Naples. He finds a quiet spot and begins talking to 'Beth' – trying to get some clarity on the

situation. He is a mess.

Benny is at the bar drinking heavily, on the way out of the bar he gets jacked for his bag by drive-by thieves and in the struggle falls over in the street badly injuring himself.

Graham stands outside Daniela's show on his own. He should be excited but he's miserable. He looks at her poster and it dawns on him that this whole thing is crazy, that Daniela was a long time ago, things have changed and that if he did approach her he would just be humiliated. He walks away from the venue ripping up the flyer and putting it in the bin. On the way back, Graham gets a call from the hospital who tell him Benny is in A&E and that he is listed as the emergency contact. Graham rushes to the hospital.

Graham gets to the hospital fearing the worst and finds Benny waiting to be seen by the doctors. Graham throws himself around his mate and apologises for everything. The two of them make up and become friends again. He tells Benny that he's abandoning the rest of the plan and they're both going home. Benny refuses to let him do that – we've come this far, we may as well see this shit show through to the final curtain. The next morning the two of them go for coffee and work out the next plan of action as they make their way towards their final stop – Rome!

Episode 7 – Rome

Graham and Benny reach the place where they have their last chance to catch Daniela – Rome. Unfortunately, the show is sold out.

Graham is now ready to give up and go home. Benny tries to convince him it's worth doing but Graham is certain that he clearly didn't make as much of an impression on her life as she did on his. Benny goes to get them a coffee to cheer him up. Whilst he's gone, Graham looks down at the flyers strewn on the table in the outdoor cafe around him and suddenly notices something he never spotted before. In the design on her tour poster, almost hidden in the logo is the

fish doodle he gave her all those years ago. She did remember him! This gives Graham a real boost and he vows to finish what he started and reach Daniela.

After various failed attempts to obtain tickets to Principessa's show, Graham and Benny catch wind of a performance she is giving at a private wedding function. It's the only option they have left, they decide to pose as friends of the bride and groom and sneak into the wedding. As they reach the entrance, Benny spots Antonio and the band from back in Pisa. They are playing at the wedding and they sneak Graham and Benny inside. Once they are in, Graham mingles and hob-nobs subtly/un- subtly trying to find out more about Principessa. Benny meanwhile is reunited with Antonio who tells him they are staying a while in Rome and that he would like to see him again. Benny accepts his invitation. Graham then discovers that the Principessa singing at the wedding is a tribute act. To make matters worse, security have discovered there are two uninvited guests on the grounds.

Graham and Benny dash away from the wedding. When they get far enough away they collapse onto the bank in fits of laughter. This is the first time on this trip that they've truly enjoyed themselves. They sit and have a heart to heart. Graham thanks Benny for joining him. Benny thanks him for bringing him. Benny then rings his mum and finally tells her that he doesn't care whether or not she accepts him for who he is, the only person that needs to accept him is himself and he does. Before his mum can reply, he ends the call. He has taken a big step.

When they get back to the hotel, Graham rings Lori and apologises for the way he behaved and says that she was right. Lori confides in him over what has happened with Mark and this time Graham listens and offers her advice like a helpful loving big brother. Lori then reveals that she has been secretly refreshing the website page for Daniela's tours trying to grab a cancellation for Rome and she's finally done it. Graham is overwhelmed with love for his little sister. Lori is left with the incredibly hard decision of whether to carry on with things as they are or whether to leave Mark and bring up the children on her own.

They attend the concert – packed out with fans all screaming for 'Principessa'. The lights change, the show starts and out of a cloud of smoke, saunters Daniela. Now in her 40s but looking as elegant, radiant and stunning as ever. Graham is compelled. He hasn't seen this woman for 30 years and here she is in front of him – well, him and about 3,000 others. They watch the show and enjoy the music complete with light show. Hidden in the light show is a design of the same fish doodle.

Towards the end of the concert, Principessa sings one of her signature songs which she dedicated to 'her first love' whom she met and fell in love with when she was 17. She then sings her's and Graham's song from the talent show. Graham is shocked to discover she is in fact talking about him and he pushes his way to the front of the crowd. There are too many people so he and Benny fight their way to try and get backstage. Benny gets stuck in the crowds and Graham is ushered away by guards who think he's an obsessive fan. The concert ends with Graham stuck in a backstage room, detained.

Graham sits morosely in the back room. That was his last chance and he blew it. Once this show ends, Daniela will disappear and he'll never see her again. He overhears the music draw to a close and the crowds final cheers before it all goes quiet. Graham sits in silence. He suddenly hears faint footsteps outside. The door opens and a luscious Italian voice softly speaks 'Gray-ham?'.

Series 2

Having been reunited with Daniela, Graham and she go to a coffee bar and begin their catch up. Graham realises that he can't tell Daniela that he came all the way looking for her because it might look as if he has tracked her down to get back with her just because he found out she's now famous. Graham pretends that he was at the concert by chance – pure serendipity. Daniela is delighted to see him and so begins the first in a string of lies as Graham now has to keep up the

pretence of why he's out in Rome as he and Daniela continue seeing each other. She even confides in him later over how people from her past only seem to be interested in her now she's famous.

Benny has to pretend to be Graham's business partner and that they're both out there for work- related reasons – conference etc. They continue this pretence whilst managing to just about keep the nature of their work vague. Benny is still seeing Antonio but that soon starts to get a little rocky when the lies over who Benny is pretending to be get entangled with their relationship.

Meanwhile, Lori has left Mark and now has full custody of the kids. She is still just as exhausted as ever but is now having to deal with a divorce in the process. She is in desperate need of a holiday. On mentioning this in passing to Daniela she agrees to fly Lori and the children over to them in Italy.

At one point there is a family get together – the first proper one in a long time – over in Spain. Graham

and Lori go to stay with them and Daniela is brought along to 'meet the parents'.

Later in the series, Daniela finds out that her encounter with Graham wasn't by chance and that the whole thing was planned. He was always trying to find her. However, she gets the wrong idea believing he is just like all the others and only cares about her fame, just as she was starting to fall for him all over again. Graham then has to come up with a way – some bloody spectacular gesture - to prove to Daniela that he always loved her for who she was as a person and that her stardom is irrelevant to him.

The series ends with Daniela forgiving Graham and with him proposing to her. She accepts and he tells her he will move to Italy. But she has other ideas, she wants a change of scene. She wants to go with him to Manchester.

Series 3

Graham and his new fiancée Daniela arrive back in Manchester. Daniela is in awe of the place which both pleases Graham but also makes him uneasy because his life back here was very different to his life over in Italy.

Daniela struggles to adapt to UK life at the beginning of the series – experiencing all kinds of culture clash, not to mention friends constantly comparing her to Graham’s deceased wife, Beth. Graham is determined to make Manchester a home for her.

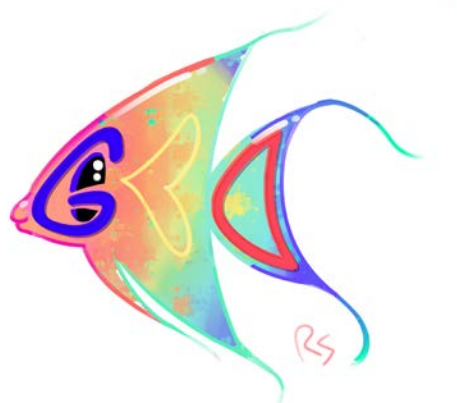
Graham now has to find a new job too, after quitting his long-running job in the council. But being early 50s now, not having had to job hunt for 20 years, and with the current state of the UK job market, he is shocked to find how much harder it all is now. Whilst searching for his main day job, he manages to get a part time night gig as a pub quiz host.

Benny has decided to give up teaching and go back to music as a serious career move. He and Antonio try to keep their long-distance relationship going but Benny’s obsession with getting his music career back on track starts to take precedence over Antonio.

Lori tries online dating which she absolutely detests. The landscape is bleak, she’s past the cut-off point for most men’s ‘preferences’ in terms of her age and she’s a single mum bringing up two kids. But then whilst at one of Graham’s pub quizzes, she meets a man who is very different from anyone she’s ever met and who loves children. This could be a happy ending for Lori after all.

Over video calls there are constant arguments between Graham’s family and Daniela’s family over the details of their forthcoming wedding, which just adds more stress to Graham and Daniela. As the series progresses they start to worry that they may have rushed into this.

The series ends with Graham and Daniela deciding to get married just the two of them without a big fancy marquee etc., because as long as they are together that is all that matters. A week later when Daniela is out Graham gets a knock at the door. It’s a young woman in her 20s who says she is looking for Daniela – her mother...



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