

# 2019 MASTER OF ARTS SCREEN: PRODUCING APPLICATION TASK



**Australian Government**

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**Australian Film Television and Radio School**

Feature Film Script *Julian Corkle*, by Mark Herman and Jonathan Entwistle

You may only use the *Julian Corkle* script, for the AFTRS' 2019 Master of Arts Screen:  
Producing application task

JULIAN CORKLE

by

MARK HERMAN and JONATHAN ENTWISTLE

Based on the novel  
JULIAN CORKLE IS A FILTHY LIAR  
by D.J. Connell

23.08.16

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"It is always the best policy to speak the truth, unless, of course, you are an exceptionally good liar."

Jerome K Jerome.

1 EXT. CENTRAL HOSPITAL. ULVERSTONE - DAY 1

Opening credits as the camera wanders over a small coastal town. We home in on one particular building, the local hospital, and the nearer we get, the clearer we hear the awful bawling of a newborn. A caption tells us this is: 'Ulverstone, Tasmania. 1970'

2 INT. MATERNITY WARD. CENTRAL HOSPITAL. ULVERSTONE - DAY 2

The busy maternity ward hosts several new mums on several old beds. One of the new mums is Colleen Corkle, (25), who we'll just call MUM, and who is flushed from recent effort. Her baby, JULIAN, (0), screams loudly and incessantly. He isn't stunningly pretty, but as is always the case, the mother fails to recognise this, bristling with pride and delight as she smiles across to a NEIGHBOUR and her attendant HUSBAND.

MUM

Ah, listen to that.  
Lungs like Sinatra.

As if on cue, the baby wails even stronger, matched only for volume by a NURSE's voice from out in the corridor:

NURSE (O.S.)

Jesus! Shut that bloody thing up!

NEIGHBOUR

Mm. Sinatra's more of a crooner,  
though, isn't he.  
That's just a bawler.

MUM

Singing Sparkle, that's what you've  
got, isn't it, Julian?

The baby appears to nod. As he does, the title:

'JULIAN CORKLE IS A FILTHY LIAR'

NEIGHBOUR

Was it an accident?  
Or did you mean it?

MUM

Julian's no accident.

NEIGHBOUR

You're happy, then?

MUM

Very.

NEIGHBOUR

And your husband?

MUM

Ecstatic.

3 INT. KING'S ARMS. ULVERSTONE - DAY 3

He's in the pub. Jim Corkle, rapidly approaching 30, sits at the bar drinking and reading his 'Punter's Gazette'. He looks like he has had a few drinks already, and rightly so, being a new DAD, though it has to be said, not exactly a picture of ecstasy.

4 EXT. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. TASMANIA - DAY 4

Another title: 'Fifteen years later'. It's 1985. In tune with its unkempt and weed-strewn garden, the Corkle home, a buff-brick bungalow on 'Kangaroo Crescent', is similarly shabby. From within we hear some piano chords, attained apparently with some struggle, and the pitch-imperfect vocal tones of a teenage boy. He is singing, or trying to sing, *the Bryan Adams hit "Heaven"*

\*  
\*

5 INT. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - DAY 5

It's JULIAN CORKLE, a tubby 15 year old, sitting at an upright piano. Nothing too strange about that except possibly that he is dressed in one of his Mum's dresses and, as the camera pans down, instead of wearing stockings he has drawn a fishnet effect on his chubby bare legs with a biro. His DAD, (mid-40s, greying) is half trying to read, half hiding behind, a newspaper. Embarrassed, cringing, only occasionally daring to look at the source of his clearly evident discomfort - his son. We can almost hear his teeth grinding.

His MUM, Coleen (also mid-40s), is sitting on the couch, a tired but loving look on her face, watching, listening, fully attentive, bristling with pride at the same focus of attention.

JULIAN (sings)

*Baby, you're all that I want  
When you're lyin' here in my arms  
I'm findin' it hard to believe  
We're in heaven*

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

DAD

(From behind the sports  
pages)

Really?

\*

MUM shushes him and, when JULIAN finally comes to the end of his song, cheers, claps, and calls for more. DAD meanwhile looks like he has a gallstone.

MUM

Come on now. Time for dinner.

JULIAN

Do I need to change?

DAD

Yes, you do.

6

INT. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - LATER THAT EVENING

6

MUM is mashing potatoes as DAD, through in the living area, continues to read the evening paper whilst talking.

DAD

Fourteen year olds don't dress up in their Mum's clothes. It's not natural.

MUM

He's not fourteen, Jim. He's nearly sixteen.

DAD

So that's better?

MUM

It's just a phase.

DAD

No, it was a phase, now it's a bloody way of life.

(Mum sighs again)

I know exactly where this sort of thing leads, and I don't want a Catholic priest in the family, thank you very much. Or a male nurse, or a bloody hairdresser. You know about him playing leap-frog with those Taylor twins down the road?

MUM

That was years ago. And anyway what's wrong with playing leap frog?

DAD

Nothing.

When you've got your trousers on.

JULIAN has walked back in the room. DAD immediately reverts to reading the paper.

JULIAN has changed into an airtex shirt and some shorts, but they still reveal the biro fishnet latticework on his legs. He looks at the table:

JULIAN

Shall I do the floral centre-piece?

MUM tries to ignore the sounds of the flinching newspaper DAD'S holding.

MUM

Let's do without, tonight, eh  
Sparkle?

JULIAN'S sister CARMEL (17) enters. She has short, deep red hair. Every bit the tom-boy, she has a fierce look in her eyes. Checking out her brother, she takes a seat and clarifies her position on him by her studied disdain. \*

8

INT. CORKLE HOUSE. ULVERSTONE - MORNING

8

Getting ready for school. CARMEL and JULIAN. \*

CARMEL

You!

She grabs JULIAN by the arm. \*

JULIAN

Be careful! That's cashmere.

CARMEL

No it's not.

JULIAN

It could've been!

CARMEL

People are starting to remember that we are related and it's taken me a year to erase everyone's collective memory about the time you...

JULIAN

(Cutting her off) Yes, OK, I get it....

CARMEL

Just don't be so....

JULIAN

(Almost defiantly) So what?

CARMEL

...Cashmere...

DAD pops his head round the door. \*

DAD \*

Anyone seen my Rugby World  
magazine? It was just on the TV -  
can't find it anywhere. Thought you  
might like a squizz Julian? \*

9 EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS, ULVERSTONE - A BIT LATER 9

We track along with a beat-up moped skirting through the half rural, half suburban weirdness of Ulverstone. Hoards of bungalows nestle next to large expanses of land leading down to a small town centre and from there, the beach.

CARMEL is driving effortlessly, looking cool but then we see JULIAN on the back clinging on for dear life.

10 INT. CLASSROOM. ST. KEVIN'S SCHOOL. ULVERSTONE - DAY 10

Big noise as a classroom full of 15-year-olds find their desks. JULIAN is sharing one with the blonde, dolled-up and rather bold-looking PAULA STROMBOLI. The Maths teacher, BROTHER O'HARE, calls for attention.

BROTHER O'HARE

Seats please everyone.

BROTHER O'HARE is cut short by a knock at the door. JULIAN looks up as the door opens.

A boy is standing there. His tousled blonde hair and neat uniform portrays the innocence of a first day at school.

This is JIMMY BUDGE (15).

BROTHER O'HARE (CONT'D)

Ah! Mr Budge. Glad you could join us.

JIMMY BUDGE

Sorry I'm late sir, I got lost.

BROTHER O'HARE motions at the empty seat at the back of the room.

BROTHER O'HARE

Please all of you give a nice St.  
Kevin's welcome to young James  
Budge who has just moved to  
Ulverstone and joins our fold  
today.

The class all mumble "Hi James" with various - sometimes limited - degrees of enthusiasm.

As JIMMY walks by him, JULIAN can't help but be intrigued by, and slightly smitten by, the fact that one of Jimmy Budge's eyes is a different colour to the other. He looks at him for perhaps longer than the perusal of a new boy would normally merit. Noticing this, PAULA grabs and squeezes JULIAN'S thigh, causing his knee to jerk up, clatter loudly against the desk and knock over his pot of pencils, which scatter onto the floor. BROTHER O'HARE looks up disapprovingly and watches as JULIAN collects his spillage and sits back down.

BROTHER O'HARE (CONT'D)

Come on, settle down.

But the moment he re-settles, PAULA does it again. JULIAN reacts angrily, brandishing his pencil like a dagger, ready to stab her in the neck, but sees, to his astonishment, not only that she is holding up her dress, but also that she has pulled her knickers down. JULIAN, in a fair degree of shock, stares for a moment at PAULA'S revelation before flinging up his hand.

JULIAN

Sir? Sir??

BROTHER O'HARE

Yes, Corker?

(The class laugh.)

JULIAN

It's Corkle, sir.

Can I swap seats with Steve Bruce?

BROTHER O'HARE

No, Corker, you can't.

STEVE BRUCE is the toughest kid in JULIAN'S year and there is nothing about his 'bruiser' appearance that would suggest otherwise. He tries to see exactly what JULIAN'S problem is.

JULIAN

Excuse me, sir, ..sir?

BROTHER O'HARE

What is it now, Corker?

(The class laugh again)

JULIAN

It's.. It's a distraction, sir.

Can I swap seats with Andy Dawson?

BROTHER O'HARE

No you can't.

JULIAN

Well can I just stand?

BROTHER O'HARE

Oh Corker, if it means we can get started, then yes, very well.

JULIAN gets his pencil and his pad, stands up and tries to resume work. Others in the class snigger. PAULA nudges him but he daren't look down at her for fear of what more he might see. From the rear of the classroom, JIMMY BUDGE sees that fear, and smiles.

11 INT. ULVERSTONE WOOL BOARD OFFICES. ULVERSTONE - DAY 11

In the smoke filled Wool Board offices, DAD, like all his male colleagues, is checking invoices and samples. It's a macho environment. GREG and HARRY, two colleagues of similar age to DAD, chat at a desk opposite.

GREG

Jim, how old's your kid again?

DAD

Thirteen. Why?

HARRY

We're getting an under sixteens team together. They've got one over at the Wheat Board, we thought we'd give them a game.

DAD

Game? Of..?

GREG

Rugby. What position is he?

DAD

Oh he's, er, Fly Half usually, but he's... injured at the moment.

HARRY

That's okay, we're talking about a couple of months' time.

DAD

Well.. it's long term, actually. It's a .. spinal thing.

HARRY

Oh.. Sorry, we didn't..

DAD

No worries.

HARRY and GREG feel much more guilt about not knowing, and having even asked, than DAD does about having invented a long term spinal injury to cover up for his son's lack of sporting prowess.

12 INT. CORRIDOR. ST.KEVIN'S SCHOOL. ULVERSTONE.- LATER THAT ~~DAY~~

As the school bell sounds and classes file out of classrooms, big bruiser STEVE BRUCE catches up with a still disturbed JULIAN.

STEVE BRUCE

I know what you were up to, Corkle.  
Did you see her keyhole? ..Hang on.

A boy, GARY JINGS, is passing by in the opposite direction. The hems of his shorts are folded up like fancy trouser cuffs and amongst other brightly coloured stationery he carries a vivid pink pencil case. STEVE BRUCE smacks him hard across the head with a colossal, hefty text book. GARY JINGS reels away, clutching his head.

JIMMY BUDGE is the only one present, apart from JULIAN, who shows any concern for poor GARY JINGS, who staggers past him, tears in his eyes. STEVE BRUCE turns back to JULIAN.

STEVE BRUCE (CONT'D)

Paula's hole. Did you see it?  
Or are you a bloody poofter too?

STEVE BRUCE (CONT'D)

Paula's hole. Did you see it?

JULIAN

No.

STEVE BRUCE

Well what was it like then?

JULIAN

Sort of like a doughnut? An old one, past its sell-by date, that's been dropped on the floor in a barber's shop. Except with teeth. You have seen one before, haven't you, Steve?

STEVE BRUCE has already paled at the less pleasant description than he was expecting. He nods unconvincingly. Recovering, he looks down at JULIAN's legs, below his shorts, and the remnants of a biro pattern.

Steve BRUCE

What's that on your legs?

JULIAN

Ringworm. It's a condition.

Steve BRUCE

Bloody hell. Sorry. I never knew.

JULIAN

Well, us sufferers, we don't make a song and dance about it.  
I mean look at Ken Rosewall.  
You'd never know he had it either.

JIMMY BUDGE, who has been lingering, enjoys the exchange.

13

INT. LIVING AREA. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - DAY

13

JULIAN is having a singing lesson with his frumpy, bespectacled singing teacher, MRS CHANDLER (60ish). He stands in front of a music stand, hitting a(nother) bum note, while she sits at the piano. MRS CHANDLER winces.

MRS CHANDLER

You do practise, Julian, don't you?

JULIAN

Every second God sends.

MRS CHANDLER

You need to practice, Julian.  
Barry Manilow didn't get where he is today by not practising.

JULIAN

What? I don't really see myself in the Manilow mould, anyway.  
I'm more of a George Michael.

MRS CHANDLER

Pfft. Well we all know what he practises.

JULIAN looks at her, seemingly the only person that doesn't know.

JULIAN

It's just.. I prefer tunes.  
You know.. Songs from The Shows?

As MRS CHANDLER rolls her eyes toward the ceiling in despair, JULIAN hums a couple of bars of '*I Feel Pretty*' from *West Side Story* (or alternative?). It's not good, but it's recognisable. MUM comes into the room.

MRS CHANDLER

You'll never be the star you want to be, Julian, unless you practise.  
Day in, day out. Ask your mother.  
You've seen her art.

(JULIAN seems confused)

MUM

Oh, I gave that up a long time ago.

MRS CHANDLER  
Colleen, no! You were so good.  
Why on earth did you give it up?

MUM  
I got married.

MRS CHANDLER  
Why would that stop you?

MUM  
I got married to Jim.

MRS CHANDLER laughs, MUM doesn't. MRS CHANDLER looks back at JULIAN.

MRS CHANDLER  
So talented, your mother.

JULIAN  
It runs in the family.

Soon after, MUM sees MRS. CHANDLER, her head shaking sadly, out of the door and then, with a smile of encouragement, trots over to sit on the couch while JULIAN re-ignites his attempt at "I Feel Pretty".

14 INT. LIVING AREA. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - LATER THAT 14  
EVENING

The television is on, but JULIAN is more interested in the glossy celebrity magazine he is reading, particularly engrossed in a photo of somebody new on the scene: a long haired, leather-clad young Freddie Mercury. DAD sits in "his" armchair, immersed in the sports pages, and CARMEL plops herself down in "hers". Once again, we can hear MUM mashing potatoes through in the kitchen. On TV, we hear big band music and an introduction:

BERT NEWTON (on TV)  
Welcome to The Don Lane Show,  
seen throughout Australia  
on the National 9 Network.  
And now, ..here's Don.

MUM immediately doffs her apron and trots through to join JULIAN on the couch. Amidst the studio applause, the slick, smart-suited and handsome DON LANE bounces onto the screen.

CARMEL  
Isn't the cricket on?

DAD  
Is tea ready?

MUM

After this. Keep singing like you do, Julian, you'll be on this one day.

DAD exhales dismissively and, he thinks, surreptitiously, but it doesn't go unnoticed by either MUM or JULIAN.

MUM (CONT'D)

It's true. One day Julian's big face will be on that little screen. Imagine that. Don Lane chatting to our little Sparkle.

JULIAN tries to ignore his Dad's head-shake of despair. After a moment of self-congratulatory pleasure, JULIAN rewinds a little and his smile drops:

JULIAN

Mum? Is my face big?

CARMEL

No, just weird..

MUM

I mean big famous, sweetheart. Big famous.

Whilst DAD, behind his newspaper, puffs out his cheeks on a Dizzy Gillespie scale, JULIAN gets rapidly drawn into the programme. It's perhaps not the current chat and guests that are the cause of this apparent new obsession as much as the freshly planted notion of he himself, at some future date, being the subject of the interview. He can't take his eyes off DON LANE.

15 INT. JULIAN'S BEDROOM. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE - NIGHT 15

We pan across JULIAN's room. It's a basic room in a 1980's house, but the walls are papered with posters of bands. There are classic poses from Elvis Costello, INXS, Madonna, Adam & The Ants and particularly WHAM!. A pile of Smash Hits magazines on the floor. Every so often there is a dramatic flourish in the room, a bright scarf tied to the bed post. It's the room of a fledgling New Romantic.

JULIAN, in his pyjamas, carefully cuts out and adds a picture of Adam Ant to his bedroom wall gallery. He stares at them long, hard, and adoringly. They too, in their youth, must have had dreams like his, and theirs came true. We hear the sound of distant applause, and then, strangely, a voice we recognise from earlier. That of DON LANE.

DON LANE (O.S.)

We have great guests on this show every week, but it's not very often we're able to welcome a true global superstar. Please, a very special welcome for a very special talent, Julian Corkle.

We hear, in Julian's head, loud, lengthy and wildly enthusiastic studio applause. JULIAN turns to see DON LANE sitting in the chair by his bedside, smiling a showbiz welcome, patting on the vacant bed. It might be a surprise to us, but it's not to Julian, whose vivid imagination we are now in. DON, dressed exactly like we've just seen him on television, in trademark smart suit, waistcoat and tie, is a Mr Showbiz out of place in these messy teenage surroundings, but he stands, beckoning JULIAN to come and join him. JULIAN goes and sits on his bed, shaking DON's hand on the way. He settles, just like any world famous star does on a chat show as the audience whoop their approval.

DON LANE (CONT'D)

So, Julian. Why The Big Face?  
(Julian looks momentarily  
offended)  
The title of your new LP.  
Where did that come from?

JULIAN

Oh, that, yes. That was something my mother once came up with. Hard to believe now, but I was blighted by a little puppy fat in my youth.

DON LANE

So was it her that encouraged you most to get into this business we call 'show'?

JULIAN

She always said I had the voice of an angel, and added to that were my piano skills, all entirely self taught, no practice required, so it was only natural that she encouraged me..

DON LANE

And your Dad too, presumably?

JULIAN

Well, ..yes. He certainly never tried to, you know, push me down any road I didn't want to go down.

Contrary to the suggestion, JULIAN is eyeing the 'Rugby World' magazine that has somehow appeared on top of the pile of all his 'Celebrity Glitter's by his bedside.

He leans down to pick it up, eyeing the photograph on its cover of a lithe but muscular and sweat-drenched wing three-quarter. To DON'S dismay, JULIAN then climbs into bed with the magazine.

DON LANE

Julian..?

JULIAN

Actually, Don, can we finish this off tomorrow?

JULIAN looks to the chair on which DON LANE was sitting and he's not there any more. Comfortable in his privacy, JULIAN'S right hand slips beneath the bedclothes. With his spare one he clicks off his bedside lamp. We hear another voice:

BROTHER O'HARE (V.O.)

Masturbation!

16

INT. CLASSROOM. ST KEVIN'S SCHOOL. ULVERSTONE - DAY

16

BROTHER O'HARE

Masturbation!

Standing in front of a large blackboard is Brother O'Hare, wearing religious garb but slightly toned down for the lesson. He turns around swiftly revealing the word 'MASTURBATION' scrawled in chalk on the board behind him in dauntingly large letters.

He takes a steady step towards the class. The room is silent. They are not sure what to expect.

BROTHER O'HARE (CONT'D)

Masturbation.... Masturbation...

The word hangs like smoke in the air, as does the guilt, and it's etched on every boy's red face.

BROTHER O'HARE (CONT'D)

Masturbation is extremely dangerous! It's a hellish habit and it is a hard one to break.

He holds his hands up ecstatically, looking to the heavens. The class watches in silence - for several beats. JULIAN and JIMMY catch each other's eyes.

JULIAN

(Sensing an opportunity to show off)  
Sir?

After a moment's rumination BROTHER O'HARE answers him.

BROTHER O'HARE  
Yes, Corkle?

CORKLE  
Masturbation, sir.

BROTHER O'HARE  
Yes, thank you Corkle.

CORKLE  
Sir, I have a question.

BROTHER O'HARE  
(resigned to the  
forthcoming interrogation)  
Go ahead, Corkle.

CORKLE  
Sir, What about in the shower, sir?  
I mean how do we wash ourselves  
down there, and stay clean.

There's a ripple of barely suppressed laughter.

BROTHER O'HARE  
I have two key phrases for when one  
washes oneself. Be Fast & Be Sure.  
Soap the cloth into a lather and  
then execute the cleaning in a  
series of brisk rubbing motions.  
Brisk!

He shows the motion to the class. It's painful. Painfully  
funny.

JULIAN  
(Winding BROTHER O'HARE up even  
further) I tried that sir, but I'm  
having problems.

There's more laughing throughout the room.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
Do you think that Jesus had a  
problem with.... You know... I mean  
why would God have given boys a....  
thing... if...?

JIMMY, the new boy, has a direct line of sight to JULIAN.

BROTHER O'HARE looks like he's going to drop dead. The room  
is silent, but the faces are smiling. JIMMY looks on, a smile  
forming.

BROTHER O'HARE  
What sort of a question is  
that....?

JULIAN

Well, I mean did they have cloths  
in those days? When Jesus Christ  
took a shower and all, do you think  
he....?

BROTHER O'HARE

NO! Jesus Christ was the son of  
God!

BROTHER O'HARE slams his hand down onto the nearest desk.

JULIAN looks around the room, everyone smiling and looking at  
him. He's enjoying this. He catches a glimpse of the now  
laughing JIMMY and this only fuels him more. He's away now.

JULIAN

But he had a man's body. With  
muscles and things..

JIMMY laughs at JULIAN.

BROTHER O'HARE

He wouldn't have done anything  
impure with his body!

JULIAN

But maybe he touched himself  
sometimes?

BROTHER O'HARE's face is as cold as steel.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

He might have, you know, bumped  
against something accidentally.  
Maybe a chair, a table or.... a  
goat...?

That's the final straw. The room erupts in laughter. BROTHER  
O'HARE moves towards JULIAN with the speed and precision of a  
Great White shark.

BROTHER O'HARE

A goat?!

JULIAN

You know, God the Father,  
God the Son, and God the Holy Goat?

He grabs JULIAN by the armpit, drags him to the front, pulls  
out a short leather whip attached to a piece of wood and  
lashes JULIAN's hand and wrist.

With each blow, JULIAN looks up at the concerned faces before  
him, particularly JIMMY's.

The bell goes for the end of the class. Pupils jump up and leave the room. JULIAN gathers himself as the huge hulking figure of RALPH WATERS comes up behind him. With a huge grin he slaps JULIAN on the back again.

RALPH  
Excellent work, Corky!

JULIAN looks towards the back of the classroom where JIMMY is packing the last of his schoolbag. He walks past JULIAN and gives him a shy smile. JULIAN smiles back and his eyes follow JIMMY as he leaves the room.

We hear Don Lane again, in fantasy interview mode:

DON LANE (V.O.)  
So there you were,  
so popular, so early..

17 INT. JULIAN'S BEDROOM. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - NIGHT 17

JULIAN wearing just his pyjama bottoms is standing in front of his full-length mirror. He strikes various poses that mimic his favourite stars. He draws on two Adam Ant style stripes under his eyes and pops a feather into his back-combed hair for effect.

DON LANE, again smart suit and tie, looks out of place and slightly awkward sitting on a bean bag.

DON LANE  
Was it fame you craved at the time?  
Or was it just attention?

Julian is slightly wrong-footed by the question, eventually choosing to ignore it completely.

JULIAN  
The Fame Game's never easy, Don.  
You've probably found that yourself  
to a limited degree.

DON doesn't like that one. JULIAN pauses as he catches himself in the mirror. He notices, in profile, his somewhat podgy tummy and tries to pull it in a little.

DON LANE  
It never held you back? Being fat?

JULIAN fails to answer. He turns and stares at DON, hurt by the question. DON, like any conscience character would, raises his eyebrows still awaiting an answer. JULIAN looks at himself in the mirror once more, exhales to finally let his stomach out in all its sizeable glory, and accepts that Don has a point and that there might be a problem.

18

INT. LIVING AREA. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE - THE NEXT  
AFTERNOON

18

JULIAN is sitting at the piano practising his scales. Loudly shouting out the words. 'Doh', 'Re'...

JULIAN  
Mi, Mi, Mi, Mi, Mi

He repeats the note endlessly. MUM is sitting on the couch reading Woman's Weekly, seemingly oblivious.

Suddenly, JULIAN swings around to face Mum.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
How did you let me get this fat??

JULIAN stands up and twirls around trying to look at every inch of his own body.

MUM  
You are not fat darling.

JULIAN  
I've got the silhouette of Jubba  
the Hut...

\*  
\*

MUM  
Darling! That's not true!

JULIAN reflects as he again tries to get a look at his behind. At this moment, CARMEL wanders through the room nonchalantly and sits down in 'her' armchair. She glares at them both being weird.

\*

CARMEL  
Wow, you're looking fat today.

MUM  
Carmel!

JULIAN  
See! It's true! Urgh!

JULIAN slumps down on his chair again and plays one deep gloomy chord. Just as he goes to play another, a hand (DAD'S) comes into frame and slams the piano lid down swiftly. DAD then seamlessly moves from JULIAN over to his armchair, grabbing the remote on his way down.

The TV crackles on. The green of the cricket pitch comes into view.

CARMEL  
(Seeing that the cricket's  
on)  
You beauty!

MUM is staring blankly, and getting no "hello" or acknowledgement from her husband she folds her magazine, gets up from the couch and leaves the room.

DAD

(Without his eyes leaving the screen) Get us a beer will ya, mate?

JULIAN gets up and leaves the room to a sneery face from CARMEL.

JULIAN returns with a beer and a can of soda. He launches a can at CARMEL who deftly reaches up and plucks it perfectly from the air. He does the same for his DAD, only DAD fumbles the catch in a very un-cool way. He scowls at JULIAN who leaves the room knowing when he's not wanted.

19 INT. KITCHEN. CORKLE HOME, ULVERSTONE - MOMENTS LATER 19

JULIAN wanders back into the kitchen. There is a small, crackling TV set on the kitchen counter. It catches his attention.

There's a huge burst of music and a crazy infomercial starts.

He is entranced as a group of attractive and fit men and women come dancing onto the screen in full aerobics gear. They move perfectly in time to the epic 80s synthesiser ballad that's playing.

Different members of the Aerobic troop speak as they dance.

ON TV

Get thin fast with the SlimQuik body-hugging beauty suit. Scientifically enhanced to create the perfect You. Simple, easy, effective. Just look at us.

JULIAN can't take his eyes off the screen as these perfect specimens frolic in their make-shift studio.

ON TV (CONT'D)

Call us at Adventure Bay, Hobart on 1800 254 253 now. First five callers get a free beauty suit!

When we cut back JULIAN is energetically doing clumsy aerobics on the spot whilst frantically writing the telephone number down.

As the commercial comes to an end he does one final huge aerobic lunge. Through the doorway we see DAD's opened his beer and it's sprayed everywhere covering him in foam.

20 INT. HALLWAY. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - TWO DAYS LATER 20

The general hubbub of the family getting ready to leave on a school morning.

JULIAN becomes agitated when he hears the sound of a parcel being delivered. Just as CARMEL is about to pick up the parcel from the doormat, JULIAN grabs it before she can and runs upstairs as fast as he can.

21 INT. JULIAN'S BEDROOM. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - DAY 21

JULIAN tears open the parcel to reveal the package inside: 'The SlimQuik Body Skin'. The following scenes are quick cut, as JULIAN hurriedly mumbles the instructions from the sheet, whilst at the same time following them.

JULIAN  
"Remove all items of clothing, including undergarments. Wash body thoroughly to remove skin toxins".

JULIAN grabs the parcel and heads for the bathroom.

22 INT. BEDROOM. CORKLE HOME - DAY 22

He walks back into his bedroom after a quick shower and picks up the instructions.

JULIAN  
"Towel body dry."... OK

Interrupting his concentration CARMEL shouts from downstairs -

CARMEL (O.C.)  
Do NOT make me late Julian!

Panicking, JULIAN starts to dry himself really quickly.

JULIAN  
Be right down. Right.... "Slip on the SlimQuick body-hugging beauty skin".

He lays the suit as flat as possible. It's tiny, apparently made from a material that's part patent leather, part Lycra. He lifts it up and starts to squeeze into it, everything squeaking as he does so.

CARMEL (O.C.)  
JULIAN!!

JULIAN, now sweating, is battling to smooth out his body under the tight, tight suit.

Every inch of him is trying to either flop out or causes serious undulations. He forces his trousers on over the top.

JULIAN  
Body-hugging?!?!

He can barely breathe it's so tight.

CARMEL (O.C.)  
Right that's it!

Off camera, we hear CARMEL starting to thump up the stairs. Hearing her, JULIAN panics - squeaking and sweating as he puts his uniform on. He catches himself in the mirror and sees how stupid he looks. Nothing like the beauties in the commercial.

23 INT. HALLWAY. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE - MOMENTS LATER 23

CARMEL heads towards JULIAN's room.

CARMEL  
You are making me so late! Why are you such a dag?

She reaches for the handle and furiously swings the door open.

CARMEL (CONT'D)  
What the hell are you doing?

JULIAN is standing motionless as a statue in the middle of his bedroom, immaculately dressed in his school uniform, every inch of him looking perfect in the morning sun.

CARMEL (CONT'D)  
Why do you have to be so weird.  
Everyday!

\*  
\*  
\*

JULIAN takes a gulp, sweat pouring from the edge of his neatly coiffed hair.

24 INT. CORRIDOR. ST KEVIN'S SCHOOL - DAY 24

The bell rings as the two of them enter the deserted corridor. JULIAN runs - as best he can - behind CARMEL. As he does there are loud squeaks from his Body-suit.

CARMEL turns and looks questioningly at her brother, and aware that he's up to something, scowls at him, but can't be bothered to ask and strides off in the opposite direction leaving JULIAN standing alone.

He sighs.

Then the silence is broken by a voice...

BROTHER O'HARE  
Mr Corkle !

JULIAN swings round. A fierce O'HARE marches towards him.

BROTHER O'HARE (CONT'D)  
Late for lessons, immediate  
detention.

JULIAN  
But.... Carmel....

BROTHER O'HARE  
(Almost singing) You know the  
rules, Corkle.

JULIAN sighs again and takes a step forwards. A great sweaty  
squeak erupts from the body suit and echoes in the silence.

25 INT. TUCK SHOP. ST KEVIN'S SCHOOL - DAY 25

JULIAN uncomfortable and sweating somewhat, is in line. The  
TUCKSHOP LADY hands him a sausage roll.

JULIAN  
Is there a world shortage?

Reluctantly, the DINNER LADY adds another one. As JULIAN  
walks across the playground to a spare table, the noise he  
makes as he walks gradually brings even this area to  
intrigued silence, with all pupils trying to detect where the  
loud squeaking noise is coming from. When he realizes this,  
JULIAN promptly sits at the nearest table. Unfortunately, it  
hosts STEVE BRUCE and his burly gang. As he lifts his leg to  
get onto the bench the suit makes a fart noise.

STEVE BRUCE  
Bloody hell, Corkle, you wearing  
wotsits pants? Inconsequence.

JULIAN  
(reddening)  
It's "incontinence".

STEVE BRUCE  
Whatever. Poo-stoppers.

The table stare at him awaiting an answer. Finally:

JULIAN  
No. And it's a secret.  
I'm not supposed to tell anyone.

STEVE BRUCE  
Well, I wouldn't either if I was  
crapping myself.

JULIAN  
 No, I mean proper secret.  
 As in ...life threatening.

JULIAN glances around as if concerned others might be listening. Taps his nose. Zips his lips. And squeaks his way towards the door, finishing his lunch on the move. The others watch him go.

STEVE BRUCE  
 Julian Corkle.  
 International Man of Mystery.

If not exactly intrigued by the cloak of mystery, JIMMY BUDGE who is sitting at a nearby table, is at least amused.

26 INT. LIBRARY. ST KEVIN'S SCHOOL. ULVERSTONE - LATER 26

It's five o'clock. The bell rings for the end of the day and JULIAN slopes into detention in the gloomy library.

The only other person being punished is an airhead teenage girl - BETTY. She cares little about JULIAN'S arrival and gives him an eye roll while chewing on gum.

JULIAN stands in the doorway, unwilling to enter.

BROTHER STANLEY  
 (Without looking up) Take a seat,  
 Corkle.

JULIAN cautiously walks over, the suit slightly squeaking in the silence. He sits down at a desk. BETTY looks up and frowns.

All is quiet, JULIAN is sweating. And sweating. BETTY keeps looking over at him. After a while she whispers across..

BETTY  
 Why are you sweating so much?

JULIAN  
 I'm not, stop looking at me.

BROTHER STANLEY  
 Errr! SILENCE, Mr. Corkle.

BETTY looks down at her work, then quickly looks back up at JULIAN.

BETTY  
 You are really, really sweating  
 though!

JULIAN, annoyed to be in detention, just wants to take the suit off and release his tortured flesh and can barely conceal his irritation and frustration.

He is distracted by JIMMY walking past the library door. Spotting JULIAN, JIMMY hovers by the door, looking at him through the glass window. He knocks at the door, and enters.

JULIAN's eyes widen. He starts to sweat even more.

BROTHER STANLEY

What can I do for you, Mr Budge?

JIMMY BUDGE

I'm here for detention, sir.

BROTHER STANLEY

Really? Well, you're not on the list....

JIMMY BUDGE

Are you certain, sir? I am sure I should be (he glances at Julian).

JIMMY is all smiles and good manners.

BROTHER STANLEY

Well, either way you are very late, so you'll be doing an extra fifteen minutes. Now take a seat.

JIMMY walks towards JULIAN's table and takes a seat at the desk next to him. JULIAN tries very hard not to make eye contact.

27 INT. LIBRARY. ST KEVIN'S SCHOOL. ULVERSTONE - LATER 27

As the clock shows six o'clock on the dot, BETTY leaps up and packs up her things.

BETTY

Bye, freaks!

She leaves quickly, looking back perplexed as the boys just sit there in no rush to leave.

BROTHER STANLEY leaves the room.

JIMMY BUDGE

We haven't formally met. I'm Jimmy Budge, pleased to meet you.

JIMMY holds out his hand for a hand-shake. JULIAN shakes his hand.

JULIAN suddenly and perhaps over dramatically jumps up and sits on the desk. Luck is with him. No squeak. JIMMY moves towards it, jumping up on the desk next to JULIAN.

JULIAN

Your eyes... they're different colours...

JIMMY BUDGE

Yeah, this one's green with envy, because this one's blue.

(They both smile)

Bit of a problem, but there you go.

JULIAN

I don't think it's a problem.

There is an awkward moment and then JIMMY, noticing the sweat pouring down his face, breaks the silence.

JIMMY BUDGE

It's hot in here isn't it...?

JULIAN takes a leap and starts to unbutton his shirt revealing the body suit. He looks Jimmy directly in the eye. All drama. A stage whisper.

JULIAN

It's secret, I'm not supposed to tell anyone about it.

JIMMY looks impressed.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Anti chemical warfare suits. There's three of us testing them out for the ADF today. There's one of us in Perth, one in Sydney, and me, here. Obviously, now you know, you're bound under the Official Secrets Act not to mention it to anybody. Otherwise we're all in trouble.

JIMMY BUDGE

(Fake serious) Honestly, I swear I won't.

They suddenly both burst into laughter. JIMMY looks up at JULIAN. Another moment.

JULIAN

I'm walking back to Ocean Drive. Do you live near there?

JIMMY nods, with a smile on his face. He's intrigued by this weird but endearing boy.

28

INT. LIVING AREA. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - DAY

28

JULIAN arrives back from school, sweating even more profusely and clearly dying to get out of the Slim Suit. But such relief is delayed as he sees, sitting with his MUM having tea, his rather large AUNT DOLLY (early 50'S and Dad's sister).

MUM

Julian. Are you okay?

JULIAN

(Almost puce)

Yes, fine, why?

Can I have a biscuit?

MUM

Well say hello to Aunt Dolly first. We were just talking about the Starmaker Auditions. Your couin Sharon is going to enter down in Hobart.

JULIAN

(Nods to Aunt Dolly)

Hello.

JULIAN squeaks his way to the couch, prompting quizzical looks from AUNT DOLLY. He tries to disguise the fart noise he knows is coming as he sits down with a cough, but badly mis-times it.

AUNT DOLLY

What's that noise?

JULIAN

Aunt Dolly? A biscuit?

JULIAN offers the plate across to her. We hear it again.

AUNT DOLLY

The boy's got something in his trousers. He's got something alien down there.

JULIAN

"Starmaker Auditions" did you say?

MUM

Yes, Sparkle. It's a talent show.

JULIAN

Talent? And Sharon qualifies?

AUNT DOLLY

You won't have seen her for a while I don't suppose, but she's a real star in the making is..

JULIAN  
Aunt Dolly, do you have a  
handkerchief? You've got a dangler.

AUNT DOLLY  
I beg your pardon?

JULIAN  
A little dangler, hanging out of  
your nostril. I say little, but..

MUM  
That's enough, Julian.  
No, the last we heard of Sharon was  
the supermarket incident.

AUNT DOLLY  
(embarrassed)  
Oh, that. That was nothing.  
Just a little make-up kit.

MUM  
But an official arrest,  
all the same?

Almost thankful of the distraction, AUNT DOLLY is dabbing at  
her nose with a handkerchief. Julian is still staring in to  
space.

MUM (CONT'D)  
He's only fibbing, Dolly,  
there's nothing there.

AUNT DOLLY  
Ah, so you gave up trying to be  
musical did you, Julian?  
(Returning her  
handkerchief)  
Decided to fail in comedy instead?

MUM  
Oh no, Julian's still musical.  
He's very good. In fact we should  
see if they are holding any  
regional auditions near here.

A dismissive exhalation through the nostrils from AUNT DOLLY.

AUNT DOLLY  
In Ulverstone? Hah! I doubt it  
very much. And anyway, it's not  
like holiday camp, Colleen. They're  
serious.

JULIAN  
I need to change.  
Can I take an Iced VoVo?

JULIAN takes three biscuits and slips off the couch with a crackle, and squelches an exit towards his bedroom.

AUNT DOLLY

You want to watch that boy,  
Colleen. Young boys are such  
pleasure seekers. Rubber wear at  
his age. Is Jim aware?

MUM

Oh, for goodness sake, Dolly,  
he's wearing a sweat suit.  
(Dolly looks bemused)  
A sweat suit. To lose weight.  
(Dolly reaches for another  
biscuit)  
Maybe you should try one.

29 INT. JULIAN'S BEDROOM. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - DAY 29

JULIAN has stripped down to the bodysuit. It's glistening with sweat and he's trying too hard to pull it off his body.

He finally manages to get most of it off, however, the final leg proves too much. The suction force created by his sweat and the material send him flying out across the room.

He finally manages to stand up in front of the mirror. Topless and glowing red. He sighs and puts his shirt back on.

He looks at his tummy in the mirror again. And also again sees, in the reflection, DON LANE.

JULIAN

What?  
It didn't stop Elvis, did it?

DON LANE

It did, actually.

30 INT. LIVING AREA. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - NEXT DAY 30

It's the weekend. DAD is glued to the TV set watching cricket. MUM is through in the kitchen area, mashing potatoes. JULIAN is at the fridge, placing no small amount of cheese into a sandwich, such an amount it even distracts DAD:

DAD

Hey, Fatso, got enough in that sandwich there?

JULIAN considers this and adds another slice of cheese. Dad sighs.

MUM

Jim, don't start.

DAD

Well, no wonder he's a lard-arse. Stuffing his face watching TV all day. He should be outside playing sport.

Putting another handful of crisps into his mouth and returning to the cricket, DAD fails to spot the irony of what he's just said.

MUM

And when was the last time you did any physical exercise?

DAD

I've been into sports all my life.

MUM

Yeah, sitting on your bum watching it.

JULIAN giggles. Suddenly, athletically, and therefore totally out of character, DAD springs up from the sofa and strides towards the back door, grabbing JULIAN by the arm on the way.

DAD

Come on, then, Chubs. Carmel!!! Get down here. Now!

31

EXT. BACK GARDEN. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE - DAY

31

DAD, a little breathless from the few yards' exercise, picks up an old cricket bat, propped up against a tree, and forces it into JULIAN's reluctant grip.

DAD

OK, son. Five overs each.

JULIAN

Five what?

CARMEL walks towards them.

DAD plonks JULIAN firmly in front of the tree and picks up a tennis ball, which he rubs on his trouser leg, then blows on and hands to CARMEL.

DAD

(to Carmel)

Do your stuff, mate.

CARMEL steps up to bowl. She looks at JULIAN, he looks back. He takes a gulp as though the world he once knew might just be coming to an end, despite his best efforts. Everything slows down as CARMEL sets up, moves in and releases the ball. Julian prepares to take a shot but has no idea how to face the ball. After the bounce the world returns to normal speed as the ball spins with frightening speed slap, bang into JULIAN's head. He crumples to the ground like a sack of spuds. CARMEL shrugs only a bit mortified. DAD looms over him:

DAD (CONT'D)

A bit of flab from those love handles up on the top of your head and you'd have been saved there, mate!

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

JULIAN

She throws just like Dennis wotsits.

DAD

Lillee. And it's "bowls", not "throws".

JULIAN

The ball was all blurry. You too, Dad. Your edges went all fluffy. Like Doris Day on TV.

DAD looks offended. MUM has been watching through the kitchen window. She looks concerned. DAD calls to her:

DAD

He needs to see Doc Dent. His eyes are buggered.

JULIAN

No I don't. They're fine.

MUM

Julian, sweetheart, if you think your Dad looks like Doris Day, you really should have a check up.

JULIAN is still suffering.

DAD

Idiot. Did you close your eyes?

\*

JULIAN gets up storms off.

\*

32

INT. JULIAN'S BEDROOM. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - A FEW DAYS  
LATER

JULIAN, wearing a new pair of thick-rimmed black glasses, is staring at himself in his dressing table mirror.

Whatever position he puts them in his eyes never fail to seem outlandishly colossal. The camera tracks to reveal, in the mirror reflection, DON LANE leaning against the back wall of the bedroom.

JULIAN

They were actually de rigeur back then. In fact if anything I was setting a trend. After me, they all started wearing them. Michael Caine, Elton John, Andy Warhol, Yves Saint whatsisname..the designer bloke.

He continues to try and find an angle at which they look in the remotest way stylish.

DON LANE

Yes, but they weren't fat as well.

JULIAN heaves a tired sigh. He looks at himself in the mirror. His reflection continues to be a disappointment.

DON LANE (CONT'D)

And I think all of them were wearing glasses long before you.

JULIAN

Not this thick.

DON LANE

True.

JULIAN stares at his own large eyeballs in the mirror, then clicks off the lamp. In the darkness:

JULIAN

I'm not going to do these if you're just going to be a smart arse, Don.

33 EXT. PLAYING FIELDS. ST.KEVIN'S SCHOOL. ULVERSTONE - DAY 33

About twenty pupils are in sports clothes, preparing to play cricket. As well as being a little tight for him, JULIAN's clothes look pretty much unused. He's disinterestedly cleaning his fingernails as JIMMY BUDGE and Steve Bruce's friend ANDY DAWSON start to choose players for their respective teams.

ANDY DAWSON

Steve Bruce.

A fairly predictable first choice, STEVE BRUCE joins Andy Dawson.

JIMMY BUDGE

Julian Corkle.

JULIAN's eyes widen even more behind his new lenses.  
Laughter all round.

SPORTS TEACHER  
Be serious please, Budge.

JIMMY BUDGE  
I am.

More laughter. The SPORTS TEACHER shakes his head, then nods for JULIAN to join JIMMY. When he does, they exchange glances and smiles.

Cut to later: JULIAN padded up, facing the fast bowling of STEVE BRUCE. He's glad he had the practice with his DAD but it is to no avail. The ball thumps him smack in the crotch and he sinks to the ground once again like the same sack of spuds. His glasses land just after he does, in two pieces.

Cut to later: JULIAN sits on the grass with JIMMY BUDGE as others bat for the team. JULIAN is fixing his glasses back together with gaffer tape. JULIAN puts his barely fixed glasses back on.

JIMMY BUDGE (CONT'D)  
Do you sing?

JULIAN  
I sing, and play the keyboard too.  
My singing teacher says I have real talent. The next George Michael apparently!

JIMMY BUDGE  
Amazing! I mean.... cool. Did you hear that the Star Maker Auditions are coming to Ulverstone? Think I'm going to enter.

JULIAN  
No way! My horrendous cousin Sharon is entering in Hobart. I think I'll definitely enter then, too. I mean, there aren't many people in Ulverstone who can properly play and sing. What do you play?

JIMMY BUDGE  
I sing and play the guitar a bit.  
Maybe we could start a band?

JULIAN  
Yeah, like a duo, like WHAM!?

JIMMY BUDGE  
Exactly like WHAM!

There's an awkward silence.

JIMMY BUDGE (CONT'D)  
 (Bursts out) I love WHAM!

JULIAN  
 Me too!! I'll make you a mix tape!

JIMMY BUDGE  
 Great!

JULIAN  
 The mix-tape is one of life's  
 glorious art-forms. I happen to  
 consider myself a leading expert in  
 the field.

They share another smile, JULIAN sensing a comfort in finding  
 someone like-minded in the field of glam entertainment.

JIMMY BUDGE  
 I wish I wore glasses.

JULIAN  
 I only wear them as a prop, for  
 panache.

JULIAN squints through his glasses into the distance. He  
 blatantly needs them, but he's playing it cool.

JIMMY BUDGE  
 Right! Let's get down to business.

JULIAN  
 What?!

JIMMY BUDGE  
 Smoking! Have you ever had a  
 Gauloises?

JULIAN  
 Goll what?

34 EXT. BIKE SHEDS. ST KEVIN'S SCHOOL. ULVERSTONE - DAY 34

JULIAN holds the exotic white-filtered Gauloise to his lips  
 as JIMMY BUDGE leans in to light it for him. For this  
 moment, their faces are very close, a proximity they both  
 seem to enjoy. Finally, though, JIMMY backs away and they  
 both inhale. JULIAN immediately splutters uncontrollably,  
 new to the exotic world of European cigarettes. They both  
 laugh, and as they do, we hear 'WHAT YOU NEED' by INXS ring  
 out and into the next scene played on a cheap Casio and not  
 very well..

35 INT. JULIAN'S BEDROOM. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - NIGHT 35

..because it's JULIAN playing it, in his pyjamas again, tinkling away on his keyboard. It's a pretty basic, one fingered rendition.

His rendition comes to a dribbling end amongst unjustifiably loud applause. DON LANE is sitting at the end of the keyboard.

DON LANE

Well, exactly.  
"What do you need"?

JULIAN

I'd never known anything like it. Finally, here was somebody, very like me in many ways, a sort of flawed beauty, who spoke my language, shared my interests, and made me feel special. Even before I became a star, Jimmy made me feel like one.

We hear the TV studio audience gasp. DON LANE also appears to take a sharp intake of breath, looking suddenly nervous.

DON LANE

"Jimmy"?

JULIAN

Jim..Ima. Jemima.

They stare at each other, DON with a hint of suspicion.

36 EXT. BACK GARDEN. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. A FEW DAYS 36  
LATER.

DAD, sporting a striped apron and sun hat, wheels what is clearly a shiny, new, state of the art BBQ into place on the porch.

37 INT. KITCHEN. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE - MOMENTS LATER 37

JULIAN is sitting at the kitchen counter, activity swirling around him. MUM is mixing various salads of garish colours in big bowls and gathering drinks bottles together.

DAD is standing in the doorway to the garden in a full BBQ outfit. Striped apron, sun-hat, tongs at the ready. He is just wheeling a shiny new BBQ into place in the garden.

Off camera we hear a commotion from inside. MUM AND DAD are arguing.

MUM (O.S.)

All this just for your sister?

DAD (O.S.)

You know she likes an event! And I don't want her thinking we're.....

The voices get louder.

JULIAN is reading MUM's Woman's Weekly, his eyes peering over the top watching everything unfold. The door swings open and his MUM bursts in. She looks flustered, on the verge of tears.

MUM is surprised to see JULIAN sitting there. JULIAN looks quizzically at her. She doesn't want to talk about it, whatever it might be.

MUM

Anyway, I'm just popping upstairs. See you shortly, love.

DAD comes back inside.

DAD

(panicked)

Carmel, can you get the bag of coal from the garage please, mate? Julian, put the stubbies and the cask on the table outside, please. Oh, and the rum.

JULIAN

Rum??

DAD

You know Dolly likes her Pina Coladas.

JULIAN

(From behind the cover of the magazine) Along with a few donuts too, no doubt.

DAD

(to Julian)

And what the bloody hell do you think you are you wearing?

Julian lets the magazine fall from his face to reveal one of his mum's scarves draped loosely around his neck. And there's a feather in his hair.

MUM comes past and whisks the feather out of his hair with a smooth move.

MUM

He looks lovely, don't you darling!

JULIAN smiles.

DAD

Well, I don't want my sister thinking I'm going to have a window dresser for a son in a few years' time. She moves in very big circles up in Hobart.

\*  
\*

JULIAN

(Picking up the magazine again)  
They'd have to be....

DAD

I've had enough of your lip, mate, just bring the snags out, your Aunt Dolly and Sharon will be here any minute.

At the sound of the word 'SHARON', JULIAN's entire world turns to stone. He drops the magazine completely.

JULIAN

Sharon?!

MUM

She might have changed since we last saw her...

We hear the sound of a car pulling up.

DAD

They're here. Look lively.

JULIAN gulps, a cold sweat forming on his brow.

CUT TO:

38

EXT. DRIVEWAY. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE - MOMENTS LATER

38

The opening rousing strings of 'TWO TRIBES' By Frankie Goes To Hollywood.

In the blazing sun a pink Toyota Corolla estate that has the air of "all mod cons" pulls up outside the Corkle residence. Everything is in slow-motion.

We see a heavy foot hit the pavement as the door opens. As the track kicks in out steps AUNT DOLLY. Her detailed floral dress suggesting a meadow on the move. Following her out of the car is SHARON (16)- a bitchy looking girl with long blonde hair.

They both walk up the driveway. We see the Corkle family out to greet them all with various numbed smiles attached to their faces. JULIAN just looks on in trepidation. DOLLY walks forwards, her nose in the air. They walk towards the front door. DAD has a big smile on his face, eager to please. DOLLY looks at MUM with a tight grin, and rolls her eyes when she sees what JULIAN is wearing. CARMEL just looks at them all with disdain.

As the whole family turns to go into the house, JULIAN and SHARON are left outside.

JULIAN puts out his hand as if to say 'After you'.

SHARON

No, after you, Material girl!

As he turns to go into the house, SHARON sticks out her foot, sending him flying. Laughing, she steps over his prone body.

HARD CUT TO:

39

EXT. BACK GARDEN. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE - LATER

39

The family is sitting in an awkward silence around a table completely laden with food in the garden. DAD walks over and places a huge plate of raw meat on the table in front of DOLLY. He has a huge grin on his face.

DAD

Only the best for you, Dol!

DOLLY's face tightens.

AUNT DOLLY

No, No, No, No.

DAD

No?

AUNT DOLLY

No. Didn't I mention? Sharon and I have gone vegetarian...

JULIAN and CARMEL shoot each other a glance. DAD deflates and walks away.

AUNT DOLLY (CONT'D)

Olivia Newton John has been doing it for years now and look at her figure. We want Sharon in the best shape for the auditions, don't we darling?

SHARON

(Looking at JULIAN) Yes, it's so important to look right.

I'm singing Olivia's song PHYSICAL

She smiles at everyone around the table. MUM smiles back.

MUM fights her desire to say something and smiles again instead.

AUNT DOLLY

(To MUM) Where can I powder my nose, Colleen?

MUM

Carmel, can you show Dolly where the loo is please?

CARMEL rolls her eyes and leads DOLLY into the house.

Suddenly there's a loud crash and yelp from the BBQ area. MUM gets up from her chair and runs over to a stricken DAD leaving SHARON and JULIAN alone at the PVC table.

Silence.

Then. SHARON has a big sweet smile on her face.

JULIAN gulps.

CUT TO:

40 EXT. BACK GARDEN. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE - CONTINUOUS 40

We can still see JULIAN and SHARON at the table in the background, but we are now with DOLLY who has joined DAD at the BBQ. DAD is wiping up a mess of meat and broken plates.

AUNT DOLLY

I don't know what you see in Ulverstone. It's not really fitting of a Corkle is it?

DAD

Well, it's...

AUNT DOLLY

(Cutting him off) But Head of Southern Wool Distribution, running the depot in the capital, a Corkle at the helm... Yes! Make that move Jim, back home.

DAD looks thoughtful.

DAD

I don't know, Dol. I haven't even discussed it with Colleen.

AUNT DOLLY

(Suddenly acidic) Ah well, classic Jim. Not just failing, but failing in the middle of nowhere...

DAD's face turns to stone. His big sister knows how to push his buttons.

AUNT DOLLY (CONT'D)

I thought you dreamed big, Jim...

Her words hang in the air.

AUNT DOLLY (CONT'D)

(Suddenly lighter, looking at JULIAN and SHARON) Ah! Look, isn't it lovely?

MUM comes out from the kitchen with fresh plates. Smiling.

MUM

(catching Dolly's last sentence)

What is?

AUNT DOLLY

The girls over there, talking showbiz!

DAD looks crestfallen as he understands the dig.

DOLLY catches DAD's eye and raises an eyebrow.

AUNT DOLLY (CONT'D)

Think about it Jim. Be a man.

DOLLY waddles off. MUM puts the plates down and DAD stares down at the BBQ.

MUM

Think about what, Jim?

41 INT. KITCHEN. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - MORNING

41

It's Julian's 16th birthday, but instead of opening his presents and cards, he's wolfing down his cereal. He's in a hurry to get somewhere.... DAD glances at his watch, impatiently waiting for JULIAN to open his presents so that he can get to work. JULIAN carries on munching his cereal and looking dreamily into the middle distance.

DAD

Look mate, if you leave this much longer it won't be your birthday any more.

MUM

Sparkle?

JULIAN snaps out of it, puts down his spoon and picks up a present. DAD is irritated by the fact it takes only one word from Mum, and a stupid one at that, for him to click into action. JULIAN unwraps the first present, a Transformer's Robot. DAD smiles, JULIAN doesn't. It is all about giving. DAD's smile takes on almost sadistic proportions as JULIAN opens his next present: a Pogo Ball. To describe his gratitude as muted would be an over-statement. Through gritted teeth:

JULIAN

Thanks.

DAD

Pleasure, mate. We'll have fun with all those. Thought that Pogo Ball might help you burn off some of that puppy fat, eh?

And with that, he jabs JULIAN in the stomach, and is then out of the door heading hurriedly for the office. Mum follows him out of the kitchen. JULIAN turns to CARMEL. The look on her face says: Don't Say a Thing. He decides to ignore this.

JULIAN

Umm... I think I need your help.

She shrugs.

CARMEL

Stop prancing around and get to the point.

JULIAN breathes in. Gathers himself. Surveys his future. A little of his confidence returns.

JULIAN

Well, you know how by the time I'm 18 I intend to have found stardom and therefore, the perfect life?

CARMEL rolls her eyes.

CARMEL

Right...

JULIAN

How do you ask someone to start a band with you? Like, a duo?

CARMEL

What? You, in a band? Ha!

JULIAN's confidence is failing a little.

JULIAN

What do you do if you like someone at school....?

CARMEL bursts out laughing.

CARMEL

You?

JULIAN

Yes.

CARMEL

Like someone?

JULIAN

Yes...

CARMEL

At school....?

JULIAN

Yes! What don't you understand?!?

There's silence in the room.

CARMEL

OK, Casanova. OK.

She gets up and sits down next to him. This is awkward for JULIAN.

CARMEL (CONT'D)

What you have to do is treat her real nice.

CARMEL stares at JULIAN.

JULIAN

Why are you looking at me like that?

CARMEL

You have to make eye contact in bursts of at least thirty seconds.

CARMEL's eyes are getting wider and wider. She looks crazed. Demented. Genuinely scary.

JULIAN

No, seriously what's wrong with your face?

CARMEL

Do you want me to help you or not?!... So, you stare into her eyes and get closer to her, sit right up next to her. Even if she doesn't notice you then, she soon will...

She sidles right up against JULIAN, her body pressing against his. This is more advice than he wanted. Much more. Her voice is getting quieter and quieter.

CARMEL (CONT'D)

It's all about choosing the perfect moment to...

She swings and lands a huge punch on JULIAN's arm.

CARMEL (CONT'D)

(In the loud voice of a red-blooded Australian man) How ya doing there YOU BEAUTY?!?!?

It's an immediate dead arm. JULIAN yelps. Loudly. CARMEL falls back laughing as JULIAN jumps up in pain and still laughing leaves the room.

JULIAN

I knew I should never have asked you!

CARMEL

(over her shoulder)  
Happy Birthday little brother.

As MUM comes back in and looking across at JULIAN, an expression of some sympathy.

MUM

Are you ready for your big day, Sparkle?

42 INT. CORKLE'S CAR. ULVERSTONE - A BIT LATER

42

MUM drives a freshly coiffed (and as snappily dressed as it's possible for him to be) JULIAN through Ulverstone. She slows the car down and turns a corner. JULIAN sees a sign saying 'Regional Auditions - Starmaker Competition' outside the RSL Club and begins to get excited. A queue of young teenagers line the pavement. They travel alongside it.

MUM

Do what you always do, darling.  
Just sparkle.

She kisses him good luck as he grabs her make-up bag and steps nervously out of the car, back-combing his hair on the go.

43 INT. HOLDING ROOM. RSL CLUB. ULVERSTONE. - DAY 43

A large holding room is packed with TEENAGERS, some nervous, some confident, many perhaps over confident, chatting, singing, playing instruments, warming up. Some staggeringly beautiful, some exceptionally talented, ..and JULIAN. He hears a voice shout:

FLOOR MANAGER  
 Right, Number 21, Louise McGroarty.  
 22, The Bundaweena Boys  
 23, Jimmy Budge  
 And 24, Gillian Corkle.

JULIAN searches for JIMMY in the sea of faces.

44 INT. FUNCTION ROOM. RSL CLUB. ULVERSTONE. - DAY 44

In front of an empty bank of seating, a long table is home to a panel of judges, the 'star spotters'. In front of them, a well-lit performance area with various musical instruments on it, piano, drums, microphones etc. The panel look a mixture of exhausted and bored rigid and they're only on No.24. They are all dressed very casually, almost as if they're going to the beach, except for one older man, seemingly the head judge, SHANE, who is in a suit. The main conversationalists are the young, trendy BRENDAN, and next to him, the heavily made-up and very pretty LEILA.

JIMMY walks towards the microphone slowly and steadily, a guitar slung around his shoulders. He's wearing the achingly fashionable clothes of a pop star, but in truth looks slightly over-dressed. He takes his place.

BRENDAN  
 And you are?

JIMMY BUDGE  
 Jimmy, Jimmy Budge.

BRENDAN  
 And what will you be performing for us today?

JIMMY shyly squints in the lights.

We see JULIAN'S face through the door of the holding room, watching JIMMY. He is dressed ready for his performance in an ill-fitting light blue jacket, his hair more coiffed than ever before and heavy black eyeliner on his face. He puts on his glasses to get a better view of JIMMY.

JIMMY BUDGE  
 I'll be singing 'Last Christmas' by  
 WHAM!

JULIAN's eyes nearly explode out of his head.

JIMMY BUDGE (CONT'D)  
 And I'll be accompanying myself on  
 guitar.

A gasp from the panel.

The lights go down. JULIAN stares as JIMMY starts to strum the opening chords. Incredibly, smoke starts to float across the stage and the lighting becomes beautifully professional. Out of nowhere it starts to snow as palm trees rise out of the ground and a 'Australian Winter-Wonderland' backdrop appears.

This is JULIAN's fantasy. He is engrossed in JIMMY's performance.

And as we near the chorus, the music soars into the full blown track. The camera flies up into the air. This is a classic 80's music video. Lace, leather jackets and dry-ice.

Suddenly, we see JULIAN walk on to the stage, dressed the same as JIMMY. Over-sized leather jackets and blue jeans. This is it, their big show, together, a duo. As the drums build, JULIAN looks at JIMMY, snow falling onto his nose and glinting in the spotlights.

It is epic, powerful and everything JULIAN could ever have imagined. JIMMY can really sing.

But it's not real.

JULIAN sways at the door, his eyes closed, but is woken from his reverie by Brendan's voice.

BRENDAN  
 Thank you Jimmy, that was very  
 nice.... Next!

JULIAN's eyes explode open. He skulks through the door towards the performing area. He catches JIMMY's eye as they pass each other and JIMMY gives him the thumbs up.

He looks directly into the TV cameras. This is it. His big moment.

45 INT. FUNCTION ROOM. RSL CLUB. ULVERSTONE - CONTINUOUS 45

JULIAN stands in front of the judges.

BRENDAN  
And you are.. Gillian Corker?

JULIAN  
Corkle. Julian.

BRENDAN  
So, what have you got for us?

JULIAN  
I'm going to sing '*The Power Of Love*' by Jennifer Rush.

BRENDAN gives a very surprised look.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
With my own piano accompaniment.

Somebody wheels an upright piano over to the performance area, then they bring up a stool. This is all taking much too long and JULIAN smiles in the unbearable silence. It takes forever. Excruciatingly.

LEILA  
Unusual name, 'Corkle'.

JULIAN  
It's ..my stage name.

LEILA  
Really. What's your real name?

JULIAN  
Julian ..Dynamo.  
Well.. Jimmy Dynamo.

LEILA  
You changed your name from Jimmy Dynamo to Julian Corkle in order to make it more memorable?

JULIAN  
There's a lot of Dynamos about.  
The panel can't think of one.

BRENDAN  
So, Jimmy, how long have you been doing musical comedy?

JULIAN  
Comedy?

BRENDAN  
Sorry.. I thought.. The glasses?  
Are they not a prop?

JULIAN

Well..yes they are, but not comedy.  
More a stylistic enhancement.  
They look better on telly  
than in real life.

BRENDAN

Phew.

LEILA

How do you know?

Julian is momentarily flummoxed.

JULIAN

And I have poor eyesight.  
As a matter of fact, I'm blind.

LEILA

Blind?

JULIAN

Practically.  
But I wouldn't want that to sway  
you one way or the other.

BRENDAN

It won't. The only disability we  
pay any attention to here is the  
one of not being able to sing.  
Need any help finding the piano?

JULIAN

Thank you, no. I'll be okay.

JULIAN steps gingerly towards the piano as if he is tiptoeing through a minefield, his hands outstretched in front of him, seeking the piano. SHANE shakes his head in despair and leans into his neighbour:

SHANE (whispers)

Jesus Christ. How much time do we  
give lunatics?

BRENDAN

Never know.  
Could be the next Stevie Wonder.

SHANE

Mm. Or the next Blind Harry Watts.

BRENDAN

Who's Blind Harry Watts?

SHANE

Exactly.

They wheeze quietly.

Finally, JULIAN takes his seat by the piano. He presses a few keys as he sits down and discordant notes float across the empty room. LEILA grimaces.

JULIAN stretches and clicks his fingers before starting to play. JULIAN plays the opening chords. They are powerful, but with the slight honky-tonk nature of the piano they also sound a bit weak and silly. One in four notes is wrong.

The camera stays still as we watch JULIAN's performance in all its excruciating glory. This is perhaps the worst song to see anyone deliver in such a sincere but entirely exposed way.

JULIAN

*"The whispers in the morning  
Of lovers sleeping tight  
Are rolling by like thunder now  
As I look in your eyes..."*

He gets through the first verse. It's not bad, but it's not great either. His commitment is greater than his ability. His voice does falter every so often, especially when he sees JIMMY peering through the door, watching his performance.

He rises up to the big chorus.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

*"Cause I'm your lady and you are my  
man..."*

His voice cracks on the high notes, but he is battling on and feeling the emotion. Then suddenly SHANE's voice rips into the song.

SHANE

Not in this state. NEXT!

JULIAN's heart and face sink. He sits in disbelief.

JULIAN gets up from his piano and makes a beeline for the door, his head down.

46 INT. HOLDING ROOM. RSL CLUB. ULVERSTONE. MOMENTS LATER 46  
JIMMY sees JULIAN hurry out of the door.

47 INT. CAR. OUTSIDE RSL CLUB. - DAY 47

MUM waves enthusiastically as she sees JULIAN, a little shaken, emerge from the club. He climbs into the car.

MUM

Well? Did they like you? How was it being in front of the cameras, Sparkle?

JULIAN

They're going to let me know.

MUM

They didn't give any hints?

JULIAN

Nothing obvious.

MUM plants a proud kiss on his cheek. It constitutes small and somewhat false comfort.

48 INT. JULIAN'S BEDROOM. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - THAT 48  
EVENING

JULIAN is cutting more pictures of pop stars out of his latest edition of Celebrity Glitter magazine and sticking them onto his wall. He looks at various members of his Glam Gallery, wondering if they all went through similar sticky patches to the one he has just gone through on their first rungs of the ladder of fame. A big contented look returns to his face.

He reaches into his school blazer pocket and pulls out a slightly bent cigarette, places it in his mouth in a sophisticated way, fake puffing on it, and adjusts his hair.

In the mirror something catches his eye. One of his posters is blinking at him. He turns around and stares directly at all his idols on the wall.

Most of his posters are now of him and JIMMY. Annie Lennox is JULIAN, Dave Stewart behind is JIMMY. JULIAN is naturally George Michael, JIMMY cutting the innocent shape of Andrew Ridgeley. The proudest of all is Adam Ant. Shimmering in all his glory. Only this one is JIMMY.

His radio is on, but he can just about hear the conversation between his Mum and DAD in the living room.

49 INT. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - EVENING 49

MUM is watching TV. DAD, meanwhile, squirts open a beer as builds the Transformers Robot.

DAD

'Star Maker'? Jesus.

MUM

Well, at least he did something he wanted to do on his birthday.

DAD

(Shakes his head)

I don't know why you build up his hopes like that.

MUM

Because he's got them.  
Hopes and dreams.

DAD

Oh, give it a rest, woman.

He, at least, continues to have a modicum of fun building the robot. The doorbell rings. DAD glances at his watch and frowns - who could that be? Both of them wait for the other to go and answer it. Eventually, presumably as usual, MUM goes. She opens the door to reveal JIMMY BUDGE.

JIMMY BUDGE

Hi. Is Julian in?

MUM

Yes. Come in, come in.  
And you are..?

JIMMY BUDGE

Jimmy. From school. Jimmy Budge.

50 INT. JULIAN'S BEDROOM. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - SAME TIME

Through in his bedroom, JULIAN hears this. Face reddening, heart a-flutter, he straightens his hair and adjusts his clothing.

51 INT. LIVING AREA. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - MOMENTS LATER

MUM leads JIMMY into the living area. JULIAN enters, looking a little embarrassed.

JULIAN

Hi.

JIMMY BUDGE

Hi.

DAD looks up over his robot-making spectacles.

MUM

This is Julian's Dad.

JIMMY BUDGE

Mr. Corkle.

DAD nods, then promptly returns to the robot.

MUM

Sit down, sit down.  
Do you want a drink of something?

JULIAN dreads the notion of an evening with his parents.

JULIAN  
 ..Or do you want to come through?  
 (Dad glances up at them,  
 uneasy)  
 To my bedroom.

JIMMY nods and follows JULIAN out of the main room. DAD looks across at MUM as if to ask "are we allowing this?" Mum knows he is throwing this look, but keeps her eyes glued on the TV screen.

52 INT. JULIAN'S BEDROOM. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - NIGHT 52

'ANTMUSIC' By Adam And The Ants is playing.

JIMMY BUDGE  
 Cool room.

JULIAN just stands awkwardly silent.

JIMMY BUDGE (CONT'D)  
 I love your posters too.

More silence.

JIMMY BUDGE (CONT'D)  
 Look, I just wanted to say don't worry that you didn't get through the auditions.

JULIAN manages a smile.

JIMMY BUDGE (CONT'D)  
 There's no accounting for taste!

JULIAN  
 I haven't given it much thought to be honest as my mind has been taken off it... I think I'll concentrate on the song-writing aspect now, I'll be taking a break from live performing so to speak, writing, publishing.... You know.... That sort of thing...

JIMMY BUDGE  
 That's great.

JIMMY hides his skepticism. They both sit perched on the bed, surrounded by JULIAN'S posters. The song comes to an end.

DJ (ON RADIO)  
 So, there you go. That was 'Antmusic' by Adam Ant and The Ants. Wow, that's a lot of ants!  
 (MORE)

DJ (ON RADIO) (CONT'D)  
 So that leads us to it, dial in if  
 you can answer tonight's quiz  
 question: What is the singer of  
 that song's birth name?

JULIAN and JIMMY stare at each other, wide-eyed, but only for  
 the very briefest of moments before they rush out.

53

INT. LIVING AREA. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - NIGHT

53

The same silent, slightly frosty scene as before is now  
 violently interrupted as JULIAN and JIMMY, both giggling,  
 crash into it, JULIAN grabbing the telephone and frantically  
 dialling.

DAD  
 Jesus Christ, what's happening?

JULIAN  
 The quiz. The radio quiz..Adam  
 Ant. Hello?

They crash past them.

DAD  
 (to Mum)  
 Who the hell's he?

MUM  
 He's an English Pop Star!

DAD looks at MUM with a confused and astonished face.

JULIAN's eyes widen, alarmingly so behind those lenses, and  
 his jaw drops as he is immediately put through.

JULIAN  
 I'm through, I'm through!

JIMMY forgets himself and clutches JULIAN's arm.

DJ (on phone)  
 Grooving Port Sounds radio.  
 Your name is?.. Your name is?

JIMMY BUDGE  
 Go on!

JULIAN  
 Oh. Julian. Corkle.

DJ (on phone)  
 OK, Mr Corker. If you can tell me  
 the name correctly, you'll receive  
 two tickets to Sunday's big concert  
 at the Jubilee Hall.

JULIAN  
Actually, it's Corkle.

We hear the 'failure' sound effect on the radio.

DJ (on phone)  
I'm sorry, that's incorrect.

A burst of rare laughter from DAD.

JULIAN  
No! No. That's my name.

DJ (on phone)  
Ah right, son. So tell me then, if  
you can, the birth name of..

JULIAN  
It's Stuart Leslie Goddard.

We hear the triumphant loud brass fanfare on the radio.

DJ (on phone)  
Mr Corker, have just won yourself  
two tickets to the Jubilee Hall  
concert this Sunday night!

JIMMY and JULIAN embrace in an excited dance of celebration.

JULIAN  
Adam Ant! Here, in ULVERSTONE!

DAD looks disinterested and returns to robot assembly. MUM  
looks confused.

MUM  
But Julian, the Ulverstone  
auditions are on TV this Sunday,  
you'll miss your big moment on  
screen!

JULIAN  
(having no desire to be  
reminded of that  
audition)  
Adam Ant is way more exciting, Mum!

We pan down a crowd who are queuing to enter the theatre on the main street of Ulverstone. We quickly notice that they are all in their 50s and 60s. Suddenly we get to two figures - their faces painted just like Adam Ant himself. Red stripes under the eyes, neckerchief, the works. They look very authentic, but we can see behind the make-up that they also look sad and crest-fallen. JIMMY & JULIAN are looking up at the hoarding outside the theatre.

It says 'RACHMANINOV PIANO CONCERTOS No2 & 4 - PERFORMED BY MELBOURNE'S PREMIERE CLASSICAL MUSICIANS'.

JIMMY BUDGE

I suppose he never actually said  
"Adam Ant"...

55 INT. JUBILEE HALL THEATRE - EVENING 55

The glittery JULIAN and JIMMY, looking desperately out of place, sit in the audience of suited and frocked middle-aged suburbans. The lush chords of *RACHMANINOV'S PIANO CONCERTO NO 2* ring out around the scene. It's an incredibly dramatic piece of music. It rises and falls like a 1940's Hollywood movie score. JULIAN is visibly bored, unbearably so, he looks like he wants to die, his head tipped back on his chair. We watch as JIMMY's hand edges towards JULIAN's, then brushes it ever so slightly. JULIAN's head comes up. Neither of them look down to watch its progress, keeping their eyes on the stage, stoic faces, but progress there is. JIMMY's hand takes hold of JULIAN's and squeezes it tenderly.

They both look towards the stage as the gorgeous arpeggios rise and fall all around them. JULIAN looks flushed with excitement, and it's nothing to do with Rachmaninov.

56 EXT. JUBILEE HALL THEATRE - EVENING 56

The concerto carries on as we see the boys rush out of the foyer full of excitement - buzzing, pushing through the crowd. The Rachmaninov suddenly fades into a lonely piano chord. JULIAN & JIMMY jump on their bikes and cycle towards the beach. Big smiles on their faces.

57 EXT. ULVERSTONE STREETS - EVENING 57

The music seamlessly segues from the concerto into the full blown late 70's power ballad version of 'ALL BY MYSELF' by Eric Carmen. There's a huge drum crash and the famous chorus comes in as we see a smiling JULIAN and JIMMY loudly singing the words together as they ride fast towards the beach.

A montage of JULIAN and JIMMY riding and racing through the streets of Ulverstone to the music - happy and carefree, joking around. JULIAN has forgotten about the shame of the audition. He's got JIMMY now.

58 INT. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. AT THE SAME TIME. 58

MUM (and with less interest) DAD and CARMEL are watching the Ulverstone auditions on TV.

59

EXT. ULVERSTONE, BEACH - EVENING

59

JIMMY and JULIAN throw down their bicycles and make a dash across the sand, still racing each other. As they bound towards the sand dunes JIMMY makes a rugby tackle and takes JULIAN down, landing in the sand together. JULIAN laughs, but simultaneously makes sure his Adam Ant make-up is still perfect and removes the sand from his hair.

They sit back up, almost as if it never happened, but still smiling and content. Alone on the beach. And the power ballad fades into the sound of the lapping waves.

JULIAN

I think you are going to be amazing in the final audition! You have such panache!

JIMMY BUDGE

You think so?

JULIAN

Absolutely. I'll be there, cheer-leading with pom-poms and everything - the whole outfit!

JIMMY laughs in the way he does when JULIAN says something stupid.

JIMMY BUDGE

I still don't know what song to sing though!

JULIAN

The same song! It was sensational!

JIMMY hands JULIAN a cassette.

JIMMY BUDGE

Here, I made you this.

Scrawled on the front in some strange '80s block writing are the words MIX-TAPE.

JULIAN

Thanks!

JIMMY smiles. Their eyes meet and they hold the moment. It looks like they are about to kiss. All of a sudden and in the face of massive sexual panic, JULIAN swings back and punches JIMMY dead square in the arm. The perfect punch. Dead arm. Breaking the tension.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

"How you doing there, YOU BEAUTY?!?!"

Just like CARMEL taught him.

Laughing, JIMMY throws himself on top of JULIAN and wrestles him. Two fifteen year old boys happily exploring everything there is to explore in the moonlight.

60 EXT. ULVERSTONE, BEACH - NIGHT 60

But the moment is interrupted by three sharp blasts on, to Julian, an all too recognizable car horn. DAD is hurriedly rolling down his window:

DAD

Get in the bloody car now!

61 INT. BATHROOM. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - NIGHT 61

JULIAN stares at himself in the bathroom mirror as he scrubs off the Adam Ant make-up. He also wipes away some condensation to more clearly reveal, in the reflection, DON LANE sitting on the side of the bath, listening patiently.

JULIAN

Well, you just know, don't you, when it's 'the one'? It's a weird feeling, that sensation you get at the top of a roller coaster. I knew nothing could ever separate us. We were in this beautiful, perfect bubble that would never ever be burst.

62 INT. CORRIDOR. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - NIGHT 62

Outside the bathroom door, DAD is leaning in, listening in. On his face a contorted mixture of (fear and) despair. Fade out.

63 INT. LIVING AREA. CORKLE HOME. ULVERSTONE. - NIGHT 63

Fade in. MUM is on the couch watching the Launceston Starmaker auditions. JULIAN is sitting next to, pretending he's not watching the Launceston auditions. An obnoxious GIRL is tap-dancing. MUM compares this to her son's somewhat wobbly singing skills. He's no Michael Hutchence, but Mums are Mums.

MUM

They must be out of their tiny minds, those people. Couldn't spot talent if it bit them on the bum.

DAD enters, slams the door behind him and clenches his fists in triumph.

DAD  
We're moving!

JULIAN's hands freeze on the keyboard. He and MUM both stare at him, alarmed.

DAD (CONT'D)  
I landed it!  
The job at the Hobart Head Office!

MUM  
What job? You never said anything about a..

DAD  
Colleen, we need a change, all of us. This is it.

MUM  
But ..Hobart.  
What about Julian? And Carmel? And school?  
All of their friends are here.

JULIAN is still in a state of shock, his fingers now resting motionless and sad on the keyboard.

DAD  
Exactly. Jesus, woman, it's the state bloody capital. They'll make new friends. Better ones, hopefully. And it's not as if we won't know anyone. Dolly's there.

MUM  
Right, I've always wanted to be so much closer to your sister.

DAD  
I thought you'd be over the moon. It's too late now, anyway, the deal's done. Jesus.

64 INT. LABORATORY CLASSROOM. ST KEVIN'S SCHOOL. - NEXT DAY 64

JULIAN and JIMMY are in Chemistry class, paired together in white coats doing an experiment. JULIAN appears out of sorts, nervous, numb.

JIMMY BUDGE  
You okay?  
(Julian nods)  
Liar. What's up?

A beat as JULIAN prepares himself. Finally:

JULIAN  
We're ..moving.

JIMMY continues to add one liquid to another, expressionless.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
I mean ..leaving.  
Dad's got a new job.  
At the Wool Board in Hobart.

JIMMY stops pouring and slowly turns to face JULIAN.

JIMMY BUDGE  
Hobart? How long for?

JULIAN  
For good, I think.

A very sad pause.

JIMMY BUDGE  
When?

JULIAN  
A week on Friday.  
(Another long silence)  
You fancy a smoke at break?

JIMMY looks back down at the bubbling liquids and takes a long time to think, then, finally, nods.

65 EXT. BIKE SHEDS. ST KEVIN'S SCHOOL. ULVERSTONE - A BIT LATER

JIMMY, a Gauloise already in his mouth, places another in JULIAN's. He leans close to light it for him. JULIAN raises his hand to touch JIMMY's cheek. After a beat, JIMMY raises his to remove it, slowly, gently, and with anything but malice, but it still hurts JULIAN.

JIMMY BUDGE  
My Dad always says:  
"Don't start down a track  
if it ain't going nowhere".

JULIAN feebly tries to remain light:

JULIAN  
"Ain't"? Is he American, your Dad?

JIMMY smiles and shakes his head.

JIMMY BUDGE  
Just sensible. You and me, maybe  
after all we're just, you know,  
ships that passed in the night.  
Narrowly.

They return to their cigarettes. Something other than Gauloise smoke rearranges itself inside JULIAN's chest.

SLOW FADE TO BLACK.

66

INT. KITCHEN. CORKLE HOUSE. ULVERSTONE - DAY

66

A family gathering. MUM, DAD, JULIAN, CARMEL.

CARMEL  
Well I'm not going!

MUM  
Carmel.

CARMEL  
I'm old enough. You can't make me.

DAD  
But Carmel..

CARMEL  
I'm not going. I'm the captain -  
the cricket team will never win  
without me.

DAD  
Good point...

JULIAN  
Can I stay too then? The ice  
hockey team will never win this  
year without me?

\*  
\*

His parents look at him. CARMEL stares.

\*

MUM AND DAD  
No! You're coming with us.

DAD  
(Trying to make it better) Big  
city, bright lights! You'll love it  
there! More opportunities to show  
off your .....talents!

JULIAN  
No, I can't... What about Star  
Maker?

CARMEL  
You didn't get in...

JULIAN looks from face-to-face helplessly. He is still stunned. He thinks about JIMMY. He turns and runs from the room, slamming the front door. It echoes through to the kitchen as MUM sighs.

DAD

Dolly said he'd get all dramatic...

CARMEL stomps off. Music. FADE IN:

67 EXT. CORKLES' CAR. TASMANIAN ROADS - A WEEK LATER 67

The Corkles' car, carrying a trailer piled with belongings, trundles along the roads joining north and south Tasmania, heading for Hobart. Behind the car, in convoy, is a removals van.

68 INT. CORKLES' CAR. TASMANIAN ROADS - A MOMENT LATER 68

DAD is driving, a glint in his eye, the trace of a smile on his face as he eyes the road ahead, the future. Beside him, MUM doesn't look anywhere near as happy. In the back seat, squashed in amongst bags, cartons and boxes, JULIAN looks even more miserable than Mum. He looks to the seat beside him and sees, equally uncomfortably squeezed, DON LANE. His presence is some small consolation for JULIAN, glad he's coming too.

69 EXT. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - THAT AFTERNOON 69

Neighbourhood-wise, this is certainly a step up. The camera takes in the leafy suburbia, and focuses on one particularly pleasant-looking two storey house, the new Corkle home. Outside, REMOVAL MEN are carting furniture into the house. However nice it looks by comparison to the old home, JULIAN doesn't look too happy about it.

70 INT. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - DAY 70

MUM and JULIAN, upstairs, looking round the hollow empty new house. A somewhat sulky JULIAN pokes his head into one room.

MUM

This could be yours, sweetheart.  
Isn't it lovely?

JULIAN doesn't seem convinced. They can see down a spiral staircase to the living room below, and proudly walking through it, DAD.

DAD

Great, isn't it?  
New job, new home, new life.  
New start. For all of us, eh?

Contrary to all this, he squirts open a beer in customary fashion and sits down in the only chair that has arrived.

JULIAN

Can I choose my own fabrics?

DAD

What?

JULIAN

Fabrics. For my room?

71 INT. UPSTAIRS. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - A COUPLE OF WEEKS 71  
LATER

SOME WEEKS LATER and the house is decorated and full of recognizable Corkle belongings and furniture. They're clearly settled in, as upstairs, AUNT DOLLY, in a vivid, tight-fitting floral dress, is being given a tour of the new house by MUM. JULIAN trails the two women, as does his cousin, the still irritating SHARON.

MUM

There's so much space we don't really know what to do with it all..

AUNT DOLLY

Mm. Not as big as the one Jim and I grew up in. If anything, it feels a bit cramped to me.

JULIAN

Well, it would.  
Surely everywhere does.

MUM

Julian.

AUNT DOLLY

Hark who's talking.

The friction is broken as DOLLY stops, stunned, as she enters the vibrant gaudiness of Julian's newly decorated room. Sumptuous, brightly coloured curtains, deep rouge velvet bedspread, the lot. JULIAN, behind them, bubbles with proud anticipation. SHARON looks almost scared.

AUNT DOLLY (CONT'D)

Oh my Goodness!  
This must be little Liberace's bedroom. Or should I say 'boudoir'?  
Look at those curtains!

JULIAN glares at her. She stares back at him. MUM spots the eyeballing and is quick to Julian's defence.

MUM

Aren't they wonderful?  
Hand-picked by a chap called  
Bernard at the Blues Point Plaza.

AUNT DOLLY

Oh God, no wonder. Do the boy a  
favour, Colleen, and run him up  
some proper drapes. Something with  
dinosaurs on, or spaceships.

MUM

Julian's grown out of spaceships.

AUNT DOLLY

Yes. Sideways, I see.

JULIAN

Hark who's talking.

MUM

Shall we move on?

AUNT DOLLY

Yes, this is making me giddy.

MUM is clearly irritated by the criticism of her offspring.  
She leads the way out of the room. Sharon is staring at  
JULIAN in some disbelief.

AUNT DOLLY (CONT'D)

So, Jim tells me you've found a job  
already?

MUM

(Quite proud)

Yes. At the City Council.

AUNT DOLLY

Just in the canteen, though?

MUM

Well, they actually call it  
'The Restaurant'.

AUNT DOLLY

I've been there. It's a canteen.

MUM

Well, either way, it helps pay the  
bills.

AUNT DOLLY

Good. That's something. Like Jim  
said, more than playing about with  
paint was ever going to do.

MUM  
Yes, but that was only ever a  
hobby, really.

They approach the spiral staircase to go downstairs.

JULIAN  
Careful, Aunt Dolly, the spiral can  
be difficult for the wider hipped.

MUM particularly enjoys this one.

72

INT. DOWNSTAIRS. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - DAY

72

As they arrive downstairs, DOLLY runs her hand over the upright piano, then examines her fingertips for dust. SHARON follows suit, which further riles JULIAN.

AUNT DOLLY  
(to JULIAN)  
I thought you might have left this  
in Ulverstone, what with nobody  
playing it seriously.... So we saw  
your Ulverstone audition....  
Shame... Still, best not to  
dwell...

MUM  
Julian never heard a definite 'no'.  
I think the competition was quite  
stiff the day he went. Now we're  
here he can have another go at the  
Hobart auditions, can't you  
Sparkle?

DOLLY is not convinced..

MUM (CONT'D)  
Are you still entering, Sharon?

AUNT DOLLY  
You bet she is.  
So, Julian, are you ready for Port  
Arthur High? That'll be a culture  
shock for you.

JULIAN  
(eyeing Sharon)  
What do you do?  
Do you play anything?

AUNT DOLLY  
She sings. Brilliantly. No, quite a  
step up from St. Kevin's, but  
Sharon'll look after you, won't  
you, Sharon?

(MORE)

AUNT DOLLY (CONT'D)  
 (SHARON nods a helpful  
 smile, not entirely  
 convincingly)  
 There's a few bullies, apparently,  
 but it's not as bad as people say.

SHARON  
 Worst thing is the uniform.

MUM  
 I didn't think there was a uniform.

SHARON  
 Just plain white shirts.  
 Grey knee-length skirts for us,  
 and shorts for the boys.

MUM  
 I hadn't realised. I'll need to  
 pop to the Plaza again.

AUNT DOLLY  
 Well whatever you do, don't let  
 Bernard choose them. Thanks for the  
 tour, Colleen, it all seems quite  
 nice. He's done well, Jim.

73 EXT. PORT ARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL. HOBART - DAY

73

DAD rolls the car up to the daunting gates of Port Arthur High School. JULIAN is dressed very smartly in new blazer, white shirt and slightly tight grey shorts. DAD gives him an encouraging manly fist to the shoulder. JULIAN winces from the blow, then reluctantly gets out of the car.

74 INT. CORRIDORS. PORT ARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL. HOBART - DAY

74

JULIAN enters the main school entrance with deep trepidation. His nervousness deepens hugely when he realizes he is the only pupil wearing shorts. In fact the whole school seem to be in severely scruffy 'dress down' mode. He turns to look back at the gates to see if DAD is still there, in the hope that he might return home and change, but he's not. It is indeed a step up from St. Kevin's, in fact it's a war zone by comparison. Chief amongst the perpetrators appears to be the enormous, muscle-bound, crew-cut hard case that is WAYNE HOPPER. We hear a school bell sound. In amongst the crowd we can see a satisfied and smirking SHARON, who has witnessed her poor cousin's embarrassing arrival.

75 INT. WOOL BOARD OFFICES. HOBART - DAY

75

They're bigger and rougher in DAD's new world too. The offices of the Head Office are, like the ones of the Ulverstone Board, smoke-filled and male populated, but even more so, everything is on a much bigger scale. The staff more weather-beaten and world weary. A new colleague, a big bruiser, PETE, stops by DAD's desk as he checks out some samples.

PETE

'Jim', isn't it?

(Dad nods)

Got any boys, Jim? Under sixteen?  
We're trying to get together a..

DAD

No, I haven't. Sorry.

76 INT. STAFF 'RESTAURANT'. CITY COUNCIL. HOBART - DAY

76

It is a canteen. MUM struggles in the heat of kitchen as OFFICE WORKERS line up for their lunch. She's mashing potatoes again. Hardly a new start for her, except for the fact that she is being paid to do it. Which doesn't make it any more enjoyable. She has several kitchen COLLEAGUES, all working similarly hard.

77 INT. CLASSROOM. PORT ARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL. HOBART - DAY

77

MR.SNELL, the French teacher, is writing: 'Role play. Le Restaurant.' There is a long list of French words for various foods.

MR SNELL

All right, quieten down now,  
and get yourselves in pairs for  
role play. 'Le Restaurant'.

JULIAN is uncomfortable, especially so because of his inappropriate clothing. It's not a worry without foundation, as many of the class, as they begin to pair up, are eyeing him, looking him up and down as if he's landed from Mars. FRANK BURGER is nearly as big a brute as WAYNE HOPPER, who is also there. SHARON, also in this class, continues to enjoy her cousin's discomfort. FRANK leans in to JULIAN, with menace.

FRANK

Mummy dress you this morning?

(Julian shakes his head)

You mean you chose that? What are  
you, a Boy Scout or something?

MR SNELL senses potential trouble, and is quick to act, but is under the wayward impression that the family bond will avert any further skirmishes.

MR SNELL

Sharon, perhaps you could pair up with our new arrival? Your cousin's very strong on vocab, Chorkle. Top of the class, in fact.

JULIAN pulls a face, 'quelle bloody surprise'. SHARON smiles her superiority. MR SNELL leaves them.

SHARON

Sorry about the uniform thing. They changed the rules for this term, but we didn't get the letter.

Not a word of which JULIAN believes.

MR SNELL

Bien. Commencer.

SHARON

Which do you want to be? The waiter or the customer?

JULIAN

The waiter.

SHARON

No, actually, I'll be the waiter. More to say. What sort of restaurant shall we be in?

JULIAN

A burger bar?

SHARON

Yuk, no. Let's make it ..fish. Let me know if I go too fast for you. I sometimes forget other people might not be so good at..

JULIAN

(Loud)

Ding a ling a ling a ling!

SHARON

Wha..? What's that?

JULIAN

The restaurant door.

SHARON

Oh, right.  
(Prepares herself, in an actressy sort of way:)  
(MORE)

SHARON (CONT'D)

"Qu'est-ce que vous voulez manger, monsieur?"

JULIAN

"Umm, le boeuf bourguignon, s'il vous plait."

SHARON

What? It's a fish restaurant, Julian. You can't order beef.

JULIAN

Why not?  
There must be something on the menu for people who don't like fish.

SHARON

Why would people who don't like fish go to a fish restaurant?

JULIAN

Dunno. They might be on holiday at the seaside and there's no option. Maybe they're with friends and just being polite. I don't know, Sharon, use your imagination.

SHARON

(An irritated sigh)

Can't you just pretend you like fish so we can practise the vocabulary?

JULIAN

I do like fish. I love fish.

SHARON

So what's your problem?

JULIAN

I haven't got a problem. It's role play, Sharon. We're not really in a restaurant, I'm not really a customer. I'm playing one. Unfortunately for you, one that doesn't like fish.

Sharon

Why are you being so..?

JULIAN

What's French for oysters?

SHARON

Oysters aren't fish..

JULIAN

They're from the ocean.

SHARON

Yeah, well so is a sea sponge, you great fat doughnut, but I doubt you'll be ordering sponge a la creme, ..or maybe you will?

MR SNELL

"A la creme"? Sounds delicious. How's progress?

JULIAN

Very very slow, sir. I'm thinking of taking my custom elsewhere.

MR SNELL

Slow? With Sharon?

JULIAN

Well, sir, we're in a fish restaurant, I'd like to order oysters, but I don't know the word for them and neither does the Queen of Vocab here. And anyway, she says you'd never get oysters in a French fish restaurant.

MR SNELL

Nonsense!  
The French adore oysters.  
The word is 'huitres', Chorkle.

JULIAN

Thank you sir.  
(Then, clicks his fingers  
and very loudly, right in  
Sharon's face)  
"Serveuse! Je prends des huitres,  
s'il vous plait! Et maintenant!!"

SHARON is taken aback and, such is the ferocity of the order, actually quite scared. She flounces off, leaving JULIAN standing alone, abandoned, feeling somewhat exposed, looking silly as he does with his chubby bare legs squeezed out below his tight shorts. The rest of the class have stopped their role play and, as one, are staring at him. He sees SHARON, who appears to be crying, standing alongside MR SNELL, who puts his arm protectively around her shoulder.

MR SNELL

Chorkle, please lower your voice, you are distracting the rest of the class. Did you just call Sharon a "great fat doughnut"?

This is not a good first day.

A bell. Break time. JULIAN sees a gang of kids about his age hanging out by the cricket pavilion. They include a girl, CHRISTINE KANDY and males he recognizes from class, including FRANK BURGER and WAYNE, who they all seem to be laughing at, whether or not he's being funny. They are smoking and sharing a bottle of Mateus Rose. JULIAN decides to pluck up courage and 'mingle', though his nerves show as he approaches.

WAYNE

Hello, it's the Boy Scout.

His audience duly laugh. JULIAN, too, forces a smile. But they are silent, unwelcoming, and just stare at him as he dares to sit down near them on the steps.

JULIAN

Actually, I've never been a member of any organisation.

(His voice deepens:)

Apart from The Gun Club, of course.

As coolly as he can in the frosty atmosphere, he takes out and lights a Gauloises cigarette, taking a very French drag. The gang all swap glances, and WAYNE finally stops grinning.

WAYNE

You're in a gun club?

JULIAN

Was. Back in Ulverstone. Auxiliary member.

WAYNE

What's that mean?

JULIAN

Just can't take the guns home. Can do everything else, handle the ammo, polish the weapon..

FRANK offers a wanking motion, which makes the others laugh. JULIAN adopts a steely stare.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

And shoot, obviously.

FRANK

What, with those eyes?

JULIAN adjusts his glasses, blinking hugely behind the thick lenses.

JULIAN

This was before these. Before ..the motorbike accident.

\*

A mixed expression from CHRISTINE of sympathy, intrigue and awe.

WAYNE

At targets? You shot at targets?

JULIAN

Sometimes. Sometimes not.  
 Sheep. Cars. Stuff like that.  
 (The audience is  
 impressed.)  
 Want a Gauloises? French.

He over-pronounces the word. They're again impressed but don't quite know why. WAYNE takes one. JULIAN leans in to light it, but WAYNE shoves him backwards with some force.

WAYNE

Hey, what are you?  
 A pooftah or something?

WAYNE snatches the lighter and does it himself. He inhales deeply, his boxer's eyes immediately watering.

CHRISTINE

He's Wayne Hopper, that's Frank  
 Burger, -and I'm Christine.

WAYNE

Christine Randy.

CHRISTINE

Christine Kandy.

She smiles very warmly. More than anything to take their eyes off each other, WAYNE offers JULIAN the bottle of Rose. Hiding his reluctance, JULIAN accepts, takes a larger swig than he intends, then as a result coughs and splutters, spraying WAYNE.

WAYNE

Jesus! You prick.

The others stand back in silence, waiting for the punch. JULIAN, too, can sense it coming.

JULIAN

And a farmer. Once shot a farmer.

CHRISTINE

Really?

She's impressed, which further annoys WAYNE.

JULIAN

As a bet. Didn't kill him, just,  
 you know, winged him.  
 (To the wet Wayne:)  
 (MORE)

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Sorry about that. I'm a recovering alcoholic and sometimes get that reaction.

CHRISTINE

Wow. Really?

WAYNE glares at him but somehow still resists the temptation to hit him.

WAYNE

I'm off.

All others move to follow him except for CHRISTINE.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

You coming?

CHRISTINE

In a minute.

WAYNE, clearly irritated, walks away, tough man style, with the others in obedient tow, leaving CHRISTINE alone with JULIAN. CHRISTINE stares at JULIAN whilst taking another gulp of Rose.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

You're a thingie, you, aren't you?  
What's it called?  
An enimig.. An aminig..?

JULIAN

An enigma?

CHRISTINE

That's it. You're one of them, aren't you?

JULIAN

(Enigmatically)  
Possibly.

CHRISTINE

You've obviously been around, done loads, but.. you don't look like you have. Weird. Sexy almost.

She leans towards him, which makes him very nervous.

JULIAN

I think.. aren't we supposed to register for hobbies now..?

CHRISTINE leaps on him, planting her lips firmly onto his. From amidst it all, we hear JULIAN try and say something:

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
 Jimmybdgejmmybdg..

CHRISTINE  
 (Breaks off)  
 What?

JULIAN  
 Nothing.

She lunges in again, even more forcefully. It might only last a few seconds but to JULIAN it feels like an eternity. He eventually struggles free, wiping his mouth.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
 I saw there's an astronomy class.  
 That looks interesting.

But CHRISTINE is not deterred. After a quick look around, she now grabs hold of his hand and guides it under her skirt, holding it there firmly. While it's still there, immobile:

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
 Or maybe woodwork. Or chess.  
 Is there a chess club here?

CHRISTINE  
 Not there, there isn't.

CHRISTINE's shoulders sag and she finally permits JULIAN to extract his hand. He sits up and, as inconspicuously as possible, wipes his hand on the grass.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)  
 Let's go a bit further next time.  
 You enigma, you.

JULIAN's response is an octave higher than hers, and more of a noise than an intelligible reply. He gets up and starts to walk away. It is only a few yards before his walk breaks into a trot which breaks into a sprint. As he nears the school buildings he passes SHARON, who watches him flee, then looks into the distance at CHRISTINE re-organising herself.

JULIAN trudges sadly up the front drive of the Corkles' house. He opens the mailbox and pulls out a handful of letters. One envelope falls out of his hands and flutters to the ground. Addressed to him, it's pale blue and, under the address is a hand drawn image of two ships passing in the night. JULIAN can feel his heartbeat in his throat as he rips the envelope open, and extracts a cassette from it. He quietly reaches into his bag, pulls out his Walk-Man and slides the cassette into it. Headphones on, he stares into space as we hear what JULIAN hears.

The opening bars of 'LAST CHRISTMAS' by WHAM! ring out. JULIAN smiles a little to stop himself from crying. Suddenly the music starts to fade and we hear JIMMY's voice. JULIAN listens intently.

JIMMY BUDGE(V.O.)

Dear Julian. That sounds like a weird way to start a letter on a tape, but there you go I'm new at this...

JULIAN presses stop and sighs. Jimmy's voice continues as JULIAN wanders in small circles around the front garden.

JIMMY BUDGE(V.O.)

How's Hobart? Not much happening here, apart from Steve Bruce being expelled for pissing into a tuba in the music room.

JULIAN looks back down at the envelope and sees that there is something else, he takes it out and unfolds it. It's a page from a Smash Hits magazine. It's a picture of WHAM! Their faces have been replaced with cut-out pictures of JULIAN and JIMMY.

JIMMY BUDGE (V.O.)

Keep your chin up, I'm sure we'll see you on the box again soon. You're special.

80 INT. LIVING AREA. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - MOMENTS LATER 80

JULIAN sits on a chair by the keyboard and, eyes welling, looking at the photo, starts playing, one fingered: "All by Myself" (Eric Carmen).

JIMMY BUDGE (V.O.)

Are you going to enter the Hobart auditions? I hope you like my piece of art work.. Personally, I'd much rather see you in the flesh. I'm missing you.

He senses a presence on the couch behind him. Without even turning to look he knows (and we see) DON LANE is there.

JULIAN

Not now, Don.

FADE OUT.

81 INT. LIVING AREA. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - SOME WEEKS LATER

The optimistic mood in the house, the statements of intent about 'new starts', are clearly a thing of the past.

DAD drinks his customary beer, reads his customary sports pages. MUM is mashing her customary potatoes, with customary unhappiness. JULIAN is trying out a new song on the keyboard, just identifiable as 'KARMA CHAMELEON' by Culture Club.

JIMMY BUDGE (V.O.)

I will keep my eyes out for you at  
the Star Maker finals in  
Hobart...I'm still going to give it  
a go. Remember, you promised me Pom-  
Poms and everything! I'll hold you  
to that! Love, Jimmy.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

DAD winces as JULIAN hits another bum note.

DAD

Julian. Give it a rest, mate, eh?

MUM hears this, shakes her head slightly in disapproval and frustration, but carries on mashing.

\*

JULIAN takes his headphones off. Finally.

\*

82 INT. ASSEMBLY HALL. PORT ARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL. HOBART - DAY 82

The school is assembled for morning prayers. TEACHERS are on stage, PUPILS in rows of seating below.

ALL

Loving God, we give thanks for what  
we have, and the people we are.  
We ask for your continued guidance,  
and for a growth in faith, hope and  
love. Amen.

During this, JULIAN catches CHRISTINE's eye. On the word 'love' she rolls her tongue along her top lip lasciviously. The formidable headmistress, MRS. RICHARDSON, takes centre stage:

MRS RICHARDSON

We will now sing  
'As I Kneel before You'..

At this notion, CHRISTINE now raises both eyebrows at JULIAN. A few rows behind, SHARON is watching.

MRS RICHARDSON (CONT'D)

..unfortunately, today, due to  
Molly Smith's absence, without  
piano accompaniment. By the way,  
if there are any volunteers among  
you who would like to take over her  
role whilst she remains ill, please  
see Mrs. Hopkins.

As they begin to sing, a meeting with Mrs. Hopkins already seems high on Julian's agenda.

83

INT. LIVING ROOM. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - DAY

83

As JULIAN comes in through the door he can hear a lot of huffing, puffing and cursing. He sees its source: his DAD, seemingly stressed, amidst a pile of cardboard packaging and bubble-wrap, shifting into place a colossal mahogany 20 inch screen television. JULIAN's heart leaps.

JULIAN  
A colour telly!

DAD  
What?

JULIAN  
Brilliant! Thanks Dad. Now we can watch everything in colour.

DAD  
Well why else do you think I got it, you idiot?

JULIAN  
It's just, it means a lot to me.

DAD  
And me. Fifteen bloody dollars a month. Mind you, that includes the chair.

JULIAN is too appalled to even look at the chair, a large brown vinyl recliner wedged next to the couch with a wooden lever to work the footrest.

JULIAN  
What? It's ..rented?

DAD  
You don't think I'm dumb enough to buy one of these, do you?

JULIAN looks disapprovingly at the small but brightly coloured 'Rentascope' badge on the front of the TV.

JULIAN  
It is full colour, isn't it?

DAD  
No, I thought I'd just go for half colour. Just reds and greens.  
(Julian looks concerned)  
Of course it's full bloody colour, you moron.

(MORE)

DAD (CONT'D)

Now clear these tools away and get rid of this bloody cardboard.

84 INT. LOFT SPACE. CORKLE HOME. HOBART - DAY

84

JULIAN climbs into the dark loft space to deposit the boxes of cardboard from the new TV. He is about to crawl back out when he is intrigued by something. Amongst the piles of discarded, unwanted rubbish, hidden under a dirty blanket, are a few canvasses. Still on his knees, he flicks his lighter to inspect them: Oil paintings, landscapes. He has to wipe the dust off them to see them clearly. Not brilliant, but certainly not bad either.

85 INT. LIVING ROOM. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART. - EVENING

85

JULIAN and DAD eat a thrown together supper off their knees as they watch a programme about wool-making. DAD is far more engrossed than JULIAN is, despite the fact it's in colour.

JULIAN

Where's Mum?

DAD

Don't know. Late.

Pause, as they continue eating and watching.

JULIAN

I saw some of her paintings today. Up in the loft.

DAD

Best place to see them. In the dark.

As if on cue, MUM comes in. Her face is flushed, and she seems strangely buoyant as she drops her bags, a buoyancy that seems to irritate DAD. She kicks off her shoes and flops down on the couch next to JULIAN.

MUM

Hi, Sparkle. How was school?

JULIAN

OK. I'm playing the hymn at assembly next week.

MUM

Oh, that's brilliant!

DAD

How do you know? He hasn't done it yet. Where have you been?

MUM

Out celebrating. One of the girls won a poetry prize.

(Dad winces at the word 'poetry')

Georgina. She's brilliant. Her husband gave her lots of encouragement, now it's paid off.

DAD

Paid off how?

MUM

She won the prize.

DAD

Wowee. A prize.

MUM

She's fifty eight, got four kids, batters fish for a living, and she won a poetry prize. It is 'wowee'.

(She stifles a belch)

'Scuse I.

DAD

We fixed our own supper.

MUM

Well done. Find the cooker okay?

MUM hasn't even noticed the new chair that DAD is sitting in, nor indeed the fact that there's a new colour television in the room, which she is now watching.

JULIAN

Notice anything new?

MUM

What?

JULIAN

In the room? Notice anything new?

MUM

(Looks around, and at DAD)

No, everything's exactly as I remember.

(A pause)

Spurred me on, though, has Georgina. Think I might start art classes again.

DAD

Oh, not that again.

We can't afford that kind of stuff.

MUM  
(Frowns at the TV)  
Those sheep look queer.

DAD rolls his eyes, shakes his head.

JULIAN  
They're merinos, Mum, you can tell  
by the texture, and the 'hue'.  
And look at the colour of that  
border collie.

MUM  
It's black and white, silly.  
Collie's always are.

JULIAN  
But the grass, look, it's so green.

MUM  
Green grass. Whatever next?

DAD  
Christ, woman, how many have you  
had? It's in colour!  
It's a colour bloody television!  
I've bought a colour bloody..

MUM  
Oh, gosh, yes, I'm sorry!  
Crikey, it's colour, look!

JULIAN  
There's even a remote control,  
look, we don't even have to get up  
to change channels, ..except Dad  
forgot to get batteries.

Frustrated, JULIAN gets up to change channels.

MUM  
And we can afford that, can we?

Meaningful guilty silence from DAD. Sensing an opportunity to change the TV channel, JULIAN flicks over from sheep and wool to Vibrant Glam as Boy George invades the Corkle living room, complete with bright orange hair and make-up, singing 'Changing Every Day' while draping a limp arm around Roy Hay, who returns the gesture.

DAD  
Jesus wept.

JULIAN  
It's Boy George, look. He's  
amazing.

DAD  
That's a 'he'?  
Put the sheep back on.

MUM  
Oh Jim.

DAD  
What's he bloody wearing?  
And what's he got on his face?

MUM  
You mean his make-up?

MUM and JULIAN share a little giggle. JULIAN, kneeling close to the TV, stares in awe at the bright orange hair. MUM finally notices the horrible new recliner chair.

MUM (CONT'D)  
What in the Mother of God...?  
What are you sitting on?

DAD  
It comes with the set.

MUM  
What, whether you like it or not?

DAD  
Put the bloody sheep back on. Now!

Oblivious, JULIAN is still staring at Boy George's hair.

86 INT. THE 'BRUSH OFF' HAIR SALON. HOBART - DAY

86

In a Hobart city centre hair salon, after school, JULIAN is sitting in front of a mirror, wrapped in a plastic poncho. PHILIPPE, the resident stylist, is studying JULIAN's head. PHILIPPE is impeccably groomed, his eyebrows two perfect tick marks and his hair a fantastic construction in navy blue with red streaks, which rises in a column from the top of his head and explodes outwards like a mushroom cloud.

PHILIPPE  
So, how can I do you today, mate?

JULIAN  
Um, I'd like it something like Boy George's.

PHILIPPE  
Righty right, I can do that.

With that he gets the electronic clippers and switches them on. Hearing the buzz, JULIAN looks suddenly petrified.

JULIAN

Wait.. You do know who Boy George is, don't you?

PHILIPPE

Course I do, mate. "Who loves ya, baby?" That guy, right?

JULIAN

No! That's Kojak!

PHILIPPE and everyone else in the shop laugh at what is presumably an oft-repeated prank.

PHILIPPE

It's okay mate, no worries. So, Boy George. New Boy George, right?

JULIAN

Mm. I'm just starting out in the entertainment business myself, and just thought a new style might get me a bit more ..attention.

Exchanged skeptical glances within the salon.

PHILIPPE

Well, that's what we're here for. Leave it with us, we'll get you noticed.

Also, exchanged smiles.

87

INT. SITTING ROOM. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - EVENING

87

DAD is sitting once more in his recliner. Opposite him on the couch are a grizzly, seasoned wool salesman, his boss, RODNEY, and his wife, the dolled up CYNTHIA. They are all drinking the only drink in the house: beer. DAD, who looks distinctly uncomfortable, glances at his watch as RODNEY talks while shaking his head gloomily.

RODNEY

I was telling Cynth earlier. Worst month at The Board for three decades. There's going to have to be changes.

DAD

You mean in content?

RODNEY

Content, style, maybe staff. No way round it while prices are dropping. They'll be letting people go.

DAD  
Marketing, you think?

RODNEY  
Dunno. Maybe last in, first out.

Which is like a spear to the heart for DAD who, you can tell by his face, is one of, if not the, last in. A gloomy silence before DAD shapes enough to spot the empty glasses. He cranks the lever of his recliner.

DAD  
Anyway. Another?

An uncomfortable glance between RODNEY and his wife.

RODNEY  
Sorry, Jim, mate, but ..  
are we not actually eating?  
You did invite us over to eat.  
And it's nearly ten.

Another uneasy pause in an evening that seems to be going rapidly downhill, then DAD finally accepts a confession is probably in order.

DAD  
I don't know how this has happened,  
I did tell her, but Colleen must  
have got her days mixed up. I  
could rustle you up some cheese on  
toast or something if..?

We hear the key in the door, and DAD emits a huge sigh of relief. But not for long. JULIAN walks in. His hair is bright ginger, streaked with peroxide white, and teased into spikes which, instead of standing up, stick out sideways like two giant sea urchins. In several of the side pieces a feather has been added. If you're not used to this sort of thing, which these three aren't, it could actually be quite frightening. If Julian wanted attention, he certainly gets it now. For what seems an age, RODNEY, CYNTHIA and particularly DAD stare at him, their mouths hanging open. JULIAN smiles politely. DAD partially recovers:

DAD (CONT'D)  
This.. This is my.. My son, Julian.

RODNEY  
I didn't think you had a son.

JULIAN's smile turns to a frown.

DAD  
I promise, we'll do this again  
sometime soon, except properly,  
yeah?

He tries to laugh. RODNEY's elbow is being tugged eagerly  
towards his car. Between themselves:

CYNTHIA  
Over my dead body. Get me away  
from here, Rodney. Did you see?  
His TV was a Rentascope.

DAD goes back into the house, his shoulders dropping in  
embarrassment.

89 INT. KITCHEN. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - EVENING 89

JULIAN is poking around in the fridge, but feels his father's  
glare behind him.

DAD  
You know, it's almost like you do  
these things on purpose.

JULIAN  
What?

DAD  
(Nods to the hairstyle)  
That.

JULIAN  
I did. Why?  
Does it look like an accident?

DAD  
Yes. A bloody nuclear one.  
I'm going out.

DAD grabs his jacket and heads back to the door.

JULIAN  
Where's Mum?

DAD  
Fucking about with crayons.

The door slams closed. Mum taking up art again is as much a  
surprise to Julian as his Dad taking up the F-word.

90 INT. ART CLASS. COMMUNITY CENTRE. HOBART - NIGHT 90

A class of about a dozen, mainly middle aged people are in a  
semi circle, sketching. MUM looks a strange mixture of  
discomfort, embarrassment and flushed pleasure.

The camera tracks round to reveal they are all attempting life drawings of a male MODEL, mid-twenties, who is reclining on a low platform seemingly very content to reveal all. MUM has a particularly challenging angle. RUFUS BAMBER, the art teacher, hovers behind her.

RUFUS

Very good, Colleen. Although ..  
It's usually the area people tackle  
last, and you might want to just  
check those proportions again.

We see her drawing, which features a very detailed penis, and not much else, and the penis is so large it challenges credibility. As she holds a pencil up in front of her eye to check measurements and angles, she catches the eye of the model, who smiles warmly, and proudly.

91 INT. KITCHEN. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - DAY 91

A very silent breakfast. DAD in particular looks a picture of irritation as he and JULIAN eat their cereals. MUM returns to the table, flicking through the mail.

MUM

Ooh, one for you, Sparkle.  
Got a special friend back in  
Ulverstone? Who likes boats?

She hands JULIAN a pale blue envelope with ships passing in the night on. He tries to remain calm as he takes it.

MUM (CONT'D)

I like his hair, don't you, Jim?

Silence, except for the angry crunch of Cornflakes.

92 INT. CAR. NEAR PORT ARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL. HOBART - DAY 92

DAD, still looking miserable, is driving the exploding-mattressed, flame haired JULIAN to school. He pulls the car to the kerb. The school is not even in sight.

JULIAN

Are we not going to the gates?

DAD just shakes his head. Concealing his upset, JULIAN climbs out of the car, lingering by the open door:

DAD

Close it.

Which he does. JULIAN watches DAD drive off before trudging sadly in the direction of school. He doesn't even notice the several distant FELLOW PUPILS behind him and across the road guffawing at his new bright ginger hair sculpture.

93

INT. ASSEMBLY HALL. PORT ARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL. HOBART - DAY 93

The school is assembled once again for morning prayers. JULIAN sits nervously by the piano, his bright ginger hair accentuated by stage lighting. It's his big moment.

MRS RICHARDSON

And finally, I'd just like to say,  
whilst of course you're all  
exceedingly gifted in all sorts of  
areas, sometimes a very, very  
special talent shines through.

JULIAN is slightly embarrassed but not entirely surprised. He turns towards the school, a humble expression on his face.

MRS RICHARDSON (CONT'D)

Nobody achieves success without a  
great deal of hard work, practice  
and devotion to their craft.

(Julian nods)

Please join me in offering lots of  
luck to one of our most talented  
pupils, Sharon Tickton, who is  
auditioning later in the Starmaker  
Competition, which will be  
televised on Sunday.

The whole school, bar one, erupts into applause. SHARON stands and bathes in the appreciation. It finally dies down.

MRS RICHARDSON (CONT'D)

All stand now, please, as we sing..  
and this is not a reference to our  
substitute pianist's hair..  
'Be Not Afraid'.

The assembled laugh. Recovering, just, from the misunderstanding, JULIAN entwines his fingers, clicking them, then prepares them for the first chord of the hymn. He presses down but, bizarrely, all the keys go down. An awful sound. The school laugh as one. Horrified and bemused, JULIAN does the same thing again, and again all the keys go down. The laughter increases. JULIAN, hugely embarrassed, wants a hole to appear into which he can climb. Instead, with as much dignity as he can muster, he walks off the stage and out of the hall. As scoffing laughter continues, MRS RICHARDSON inspects the piano, picking at something she sees on the highest key. It's clear Sellotape. She pulls it off. The Sellotape makes a sound as it is pulled off the entire keyboard, from highest to lowest key. Meanwhile, SHARON, prankster extraordinaire and giggling wildly, is congratulated by several friends.

JULIAN, miserable, sits at the kitchen table, eating some old looking bread and a chunk of possibly out of date cheese. The house feels empty, dreary, dimly lit. Even his new hairstyle looks relatively lifeless. Opposite him sits DON.

DON LANE

So, your first public performance.  
A triumph?

JULIAN

Absolutely.

DON LANE

A view shared by those who were  
there?

JULIAN

Yes. They hadn't heard anything  
like it before.

DON LANE

So even in those early days, you  
were getting attention.

JULIAN looks down at Jimmy's tape, alone on the table, the note beside it that reads "Bread in bin, see you later, Mum", and through to the un-lit empty living room, the empty recliner.

JULIAN

Mmm.

He is in a world of his own as he puts the cassette into his Walkman and listens as:

JIMMY BUDGE (v.O.)

Dear Corky. Hope you got my last  
tape. It's been weeks since I sent  
it but no reply as yet. I hope  
you're okay and you haven't  
forgotten my address, or even  
forgotten me! I wouldn't like that  
but I'd understand. How's school?  
I'm thinking of leaving St. Kev's  
and getting a job at the Wool  
Board, like Dad. Hope the search  
for stardom's going well. I've put  
my address at the top again, in  
case you lost the last letter.  
Miss you, lots of love, Budge.

Looking bereft, JULIAN smells the envelope.

DAD is drinking with colleagues from the Wool Board. They stand at the bar. Amongst those gathered are big PETE, from the earlier scene at the office, and fellow potential bully, ALF.

PETE

No. Bad move that. He wasn't happy, wasn't Rodney. I mean, she needs feeding, does Cynthia.

ALF

Specially when she's in shock.

DAD

Shock?

PETE

That son of yours. Right weirdo, he says, red hair, proper pooftah.

ALF

Hence his non-existence, right?

PETE

Anyway, you going up to Bridgewater Friday? For the pow-wow?  
(Dad frowns)

ALF

You not know about it? Boss wants all those that matter up there for the night, talk things through, "turn this ship around" kind of stuff.

PETE

Piss up, basically. I'd be there if I was you, Jim, mate. Know what I'm saying?

DAD

No, no. I know about that, yeah. I'm going to be there.

There's a loud crash and the tinkle of broken glass. They turn to see a man in his late sixties having collapsed onto the floor. A stool on its side and a sea of spilt drink.

PETE

There goes Jessica again.

DAD

Jessica?

ALF

You not met Walter?  
 'Jessica Jewel everything you need  
 to know about wool'. That's Walter.  
 PR and marketing gimmicks. And you  
 wonder why prices are falling.

They look again at the mess that is the problem solver.

PETE

Crazy, isn't it? They say it's  
 going to be last in first out.  
 Walter was here before Captain  
 bloody Cook, safe as houses he is,  
 and look at him. Don't know who was  
 last in, do you?

They both look at DAD and wait a beat before laughing.

96

INT. ART CLASS. COMMUNITY CENTRE. HOBART - SAME TIME

96

It's coffee break during art class. Much of the class's work  
 is up on the walls. MUM is sipping her drink, admiring the  
 work. Alongside her, bare-chested, is the model, DEZZIE.

DEZZIE

Between you, me and the bedpost,  
 I think yours is streets ahead of  
 the rest.

MUM

(Smiles, embarrassed)  
 Oh, nonsense.

DEZZIE

I mean it. You've done this  
 before, haven't you?

MUM

Long time ago. I gave up when I..

DEZZIE

Got married?  
 That's quite common. What does your  
 husband think now? Of all this?

MUM

Oh, he hasn't seen anything I've  
 done recently.

DEZZIE

Well, he'd approve, surely.

MUM

Not sure.

They both sip their coffees again. We cut to a wide shot that reveals DEZZIE as being totally naked.

97

INT. SITTING ROOM. CORKLE HOME. HOBART - SAME TIME

97

JULIAN is sitting in the still empty house, on the couch, eating off his knees, now having grilled his cheese on toast and added some baked beans. If he was lonely and miserable before, he is now wide-eyed, fearful, horrified, as he watches the host of the Star Maker auditions announcing the people who have got through from tonight's show (along with a clip of them performing).

STAR MAKER HOST (ON TV)

A beautiful young lady and a true star in the making, remember this name: From Hobart, Sharon Tickton!

Huge music and applause as the studio camera zooms in on a pseudo-shocked and tearful SHARON, in a full Olivia Newton John aerobic outfit complete with head and wrist bands. Blood of envy rushes to JULIAN's head. His face deepens to a raging purple. He slips his white knuckled hand under his plate and hurls it at the television with an exasperated scream. As soon as it leaves his hand he deeply regrets the move and leaps after it. The plate smashes into the TV screen, cracking it just before JULIAN, not far behind, trips over the coffee table and follows it, flying, ginger head first into the screen, shattering it completely. The telephone rings. JULIAN stirs, and crawls groggily through broken glass across the room to the telephone. Blood is running from his head. He manages to pick up the phone.

AUNT DOLLY (on phone)

Did you see her?!!

JULIAN

Call an ambulance.

98

INT. EMERGENCY DEPT. HOSPITAL. HOBART - EVENING

98

DR DICKEY is a large man with a no-nonsense face. He reads notes as JULIAN sits in a wheelchair opposite him, his head heavily bandaged, but not enough to completely hold back the increasing wildness of his hair, which pokes out of the top like the top of a pineapple. He frowns his confusion during:

DR. DICKEY

So what happened, son?

JULIAN

My cousin was on 'Star Maker' and I was angry, so I ..

DR. DICKEY

Angry? That your cousin was on TV?

JULIAN

I'm the one who's wanting the career in television..

(Sees DR DICKEY smiling)

What's funny?

DR. DICKEY

Well, you wanting a career in television, and what do you do? Career into a television.

(Julian fails to see the humour)

99

EXT. PLAYGROUND. PORT ARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL. HOBART - DAY

99

JULIAN sits alone at a corner table picking at a high pile of food. His head is still heavily bandaged. He stares across at a very crowded table where SHARON is clearly regaling a large and adoring gang of FRIENDS about her triumph last night. Behind him, on the wall, are glossy photos from the show, Sharon complete with headband etc., and large golden letters spelling 'Congratulations Sharon', surrounded by glittering stars. He feels sick. CHRISTINE, skirt higher than ever, shirt woefully unbuttoned, sits down next to him with her lunch. Closer than he'd like.

CHRISTINE

Hello, Mr. Amigma.  
What happened to your head?

JULIAN

Just a.. little skirmish.  
Outside the Post Office.  
A couple of men.  
Took an old lady's handbag.

CHRISTINE

What? And you..? Are you okay?

JULIAN

You should see the state of them.

CHRISTINE

'Men' you say?

JULIAN

With baseball bats.  
Anyway, she got her bag back.

CHRISTINE puts her hand on JULIAN's leg, rather higher up it than would seem appropriate even as a reward for gallantry. He freezes. CHRISTINE looks across at SHARON's table.

CHRISTINE

Did you see her getting through on Star Maker last night?

JULIAN

What's 'Star Maker'?

CHRISTINE

You're amazing, you really are.  
You live in a different world to the rest of us, don't you?

Her hand creeps higher. As does Julian's voice:

JULIAN

Christine, it's lunchtime.

Her hand finally reaches its target. It causes JULIAN to stop eating but aside from that, there's very little reaction, despite time ticking by. An expression of disappointment grows on CHRISTINE's face.

CHRISTINE

Can I ask you something?  
As well as being an amigma,  
are you also a pooftah?

JULIAN

No! I think it may be trauma.  
Post Post Office.  
And the drugs, obviously.  
It was touch and go for a while.

Raucous 'wows' and giggles from SHARON's table.

CHRISTINE

She needs taking down a peg or two,  
that Sharon Tickton.

JULIAN is relieved her attention has been drawn elsewhere.

JULIAN

I agree.

CHRISTINE

I mean look at these.  
(She indicates the wall of  
photos behind them.)  
Be good to have some alternative  
piccies to replace those, don't you  
think?

JULIAN seems intrigued.

100 INT. CORRIDOR. PORT ARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL. HOBART - DAY 100

JULIAN is putting text books in his locker. He sees SHARON further down the corridor as she enters the Girls' Toilets. JULIAN looks up and down the corridor before extracting from his bag a Polaroid camera. Again he has a quick look up and down the corridor before also entering the Girls' Toilets.

101 INT. GIRLS' TOILETS. PORT ARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL. HOBART - DAY 01

It's very quick, almost professional. JULIAN strides to the closed cubicle door, stretches up on his tip toes, reaching the camera as high as he can, before clicking. We see a flash, hear a whir, and the start of a triumphant smile beams across his face. This is instantly wiped, however, when we hear the click of a lock and SHARON emerges from a cubicle further down the row, one that Julian hadn't realised was occupied.

SHARON

What the hell are you doing in here? Pervert.

Shocked, JULIAN looks down as the camera slowly spews out the fast developing photo, of headmistress MRS. RICHARDSON, on the toilet, looking up and highly astonished.

JULIAN

What the hell's she doing in here?

Momentarily frozen by incredulity, he hears another, nearer, click of a lock and immediately runs for the door, but is successfully blocked by SHARON. MRS RICHARDSON emerges from the cubicle and glares at JULIAN.

102 INT. HEADMISTRESS'S OFFICE. PORT ARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL - DAY 102

Each on separate chairs, JULIAN sits between MUM and DAD, opposite MRS RICHARDSON. MUM tries to hide her discomfort, but DAD's is clearly visible as he writhes around on the chair unable to look anybody in the eye.

MRS RICHARDSON

Let's not pretend this is an isolated incident. Mr. Snell has informed me your son here introduced a mood of some considerable aggression to the usually calm atmosphere of French Vocabulary. There's the hair of course, which, though not strictly against the rules, we feel constitutes borderline rebellion.

(MORE)

MRS RICHARDSON (CONT'D)

And the rendition of the morning hymn which some regarded as little less than a flagrant act of blasphemy. Not to mention his playing of the school song on Open Day AND Awards Night. It can only be interpreted as a blatant attempt to mock the school's musical tradition. There was also the disturbing report of an indecent assault on a poor vulnerable young girl (Dad's eyes light up at the thought of his son interacting in whatever way with a girl) in his class by the cricket pavilion, and though there was no proof, that did come from a member of your family, so..

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(Julian looks bewildered)  
What on earth brought him to this latest act of depravity whilst I happened to be checking up on facilities, I suppose only he can explain.

They all look at JULIAN, apart from DAD, who is still looking at his shoes.

MRS RICHARDSON (CONT'D)

I'm sorry Mr. Corkle, Mrs. Corkle, we at Port Arthur High have a reputation to protect, I'm afraid your son will have to complete his education elsewhere.

103 INT. CORKLES' CAR. HOBART STREET - DAY

103

DAD drives, stern faced. MUM has a tear of shame in her eye. In the back, JULIAN looks stunned. He turns to see DON LANE alongside him, looks to him for support but even he looks away embarrassed.

DAD

First the broken TV, now this.

Even while he drives, DAD is shuffling a newspaper around, turning pages. He eventually finds what he wants, folds the paper firmly and thrusts it into the back of the car onto JULIAN's lap.

DAD (CONT'D)

There you go.  
Welcome to the real world.

JULIAN looks down at the opened page: 'Situations Vacant'.

DAD (CONT'D)

Mind you, look on the bright side.  
At least it was a girl he  
indecently assaulted.

104 EXT. MUSIC SHOP. HOBART - DAY 104

We see in the window of a music shop a sign seeking an instrument 'demonstrator'.

105 INT. MUSIC SHOP. HOBART - DAY 105

The SHOP OWNER and other ASSISTANTS watch in disbelief as JULIAN fails to make the admittedly challenging leap from keyboard to violin. A bridge too far.

106 INT. YOUTH TV STUDIO. HOBART - DAY 106

JULIAN is at a desk, doing a test reading. Behind him is a large picture of Hobart Harbour and a sign: 'Cub News Report'. In a booth, a TECHNICIAN frantically tries to calm down the virtually strobing colour on the monitor. To no avail. The only thing that isn't violently a-wobble is the black and white writing on screen: 'Audition 332. Julian Corker'. Television is not sufficiently advanced yet to cope with hair as bright as JULIAN's. Behind the technician, a MANAGER shakes his head.

107 EXT. BUILDING SITE. HOBART - DAY 107

Perhaps having been offended beyond justification, but

perhaps also with a tinge of relief, JULIAN smartly exits a door of a portakabin that bears a sign saying 'Construction Workers Required'

108 EXT. DERWENT VIEW HOTEL. HOBART - DAY 108

JULIAN checks a piece of paper. The 'Derwent View Hotel' is not as nice as it looks in the photo, and it doesn't look very nice in the photo. Nor, clearly, does it have the remotest chance of having a view of the River Derwent. He approaches it with some trepidation.

109 INT. DERWENT VIEW HOTEL. HOBART - DAY 109

MRS BICKERSLEY is the elderly owner of the pokey bed and breakfast establishment in question. She walks JULIAN through the narrow corridors.

MRS BICKERSLEY

What on earth happened to your  
hair?

JULIAN

Oh, I was part of an experiment.

MRS BICKERSLEY

How cruel.

JULIAN

It won a hairdressing competition.

MRS BICKERSLEY fiddles with her hearing aid. She smiles.

MRS BICKERSLEY

I'm sorry. This thing. Sounded like you said it won a competition. Ha. I'm sorry, say again?

JULIAN

It's just.. the style nowadays.

She looks at it again and tries for a brief moment to understand what's become of the world.

MRS BICKERSLEY

Well this is a typical en suite.

She opens the door to what looks only marginally more welcoming than a prison cell.

MRS BICKERSLEY (CONT'D)

It all depends on time and how busy we are, of course, but removal of pubic hair from the shower plug is an absolute minimum. And of course any soiled sheets.

JULIAN pales.

JULIAN

I thought you were looking for a pianist and singer?

MRS BICKERSLEY looks deeply offended and fiddles with her hearing aid again.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

The advert was for a pianist.

(Has to mime)

A pi-an-ist?

MRS BICKERSLEY

Oh, that bit, yes. But I'm mainly after a cleaner. Any entertainment skills would just be a bonus. And that would be in the evening in the bar, so I'm afraid only for over 18's.

JULIAN

I am eighteen.

MRS BICKERSLEY

Really?

You look very young for your age.

(Studies his face)

You know, you remind me of someone.

Someone off the television.

JULIAN

Boy George?

MRS BICKERSLEY looks very confused.

110 INT. BAR. DERWENT VIEW HOTEL. - DAY

110

MRS BICKERSLEY leads JULIAN into the small, badly decorated bar. There are a few tables and chairs and in the corner, a shabby looking piano. This isn't Carnegie Hall.

JULIAN

What sort of audiences do you get in here?

Mrs BICKERSLEY

"Audiences"?

JULIAN can tell by the tone that they may not even exist.

Mrs BICKERSLEY (CONT'D)

So are you any good?

JULIAN

Yes, very. Show tunes mainly.

Mrs BICKERSLEY

At cleaning.

111 INT. BAR. DERWENT VIEW HOTEL - DAY

111

Sitting at a piano donning a bow-tied, JULIAN re-shapes his hair and prepares to perform. On top of the piano, a little hand-written card, propped up against a vase of flowers, reading 'Live Tonight: Jimmy Dynamo'. We hear his voice composing his own cassette tape letter. He plays his own accompaniment to an otherwise empty room. He doesn't seem to mind too much when he makes the odd mistake. Quite right too, because he is the only person in the room.

JULIAN (V.O.)

Dear Jimmy. Really sorry not to have got back to you sooner.

(MORE)

JULIAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 It's not because I didn't want to,  
 it's just that life's been so  
 hectic.  
 I decided to leave school too.  
 They really wanted me to stay, but  
 it was time to move on. The world  
 outside seemed so full of  
 opportunities. Anyway, guess what?  
 I've got a great job, playing piano  
 live, every night, in this trendy  
 bar in a swish hotel. They get all  
 sorts of celebs staying here. Tina  
 Turner was in last week. And  
 tomorrow, Billy Joel apparently.

MRS BICKERSLEY pops her head around the corner, and in the  
 same tone as the nurse back in 1970, says

MRS BICKERSLEY  
 Jesus! Shut that bloody thing up!

112 EXT. STREET NEAR CORKLE HOME. - EVENING

112

JULIAN walks home.

JULIAN (v.O.)  
 I know a lot of people thought it  
 wouldn't, but it's finally  
 happening for me. I hope it is for  
 you too. Lots of love, Jimmy, it  
 would be great to see you too some  
 time. Corky.

He looks down at the envelope, and on it his own drawing of  
 ships passing in the night, and posts it into a letter box.

113 INT. HOTEL BAR. BRIDGEWATER. HOBART - SAME EVENING

113

The bar of a Bridgewater Hotel has temporarily succumbed to  
 the boozy, shabby-suited invasion of everybody who thinks  
 they're anybody at the Wool Board. Amongst the throng we  
 recognize DAD, RODNEY, PETE and ALF. If the graphs and  
 numbers on a slide screen are not evidence enough of a fast  
 dwindling sales, and trouble ahead, then the grim faces on  
 those present offer clear confirmation. No excuse, however,  
 for beer not to flow. The smartest suit in the room belongs  
 to the Boards's CEO:

CEO  
 Obviously, this cannot continue, we  
 need to turn it around, and fast.  
 We need more originality, more  
 imagination..  
 And while these numbers continue to  
 drop, no-one's job is safe.

We hear a crash. WALTER is on the floor again. We see a young man come forward to assist him. To our surprise it's JIMMY.

114 INT. BATHROOM. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART. - NEXT MORNING 114

Morning. JULIAN is in the shower, washing his hair. He reaches out for the shampoo but instead touches something

unfamiliar. He opens his eyes to see he has hold of a large tartan sponge bag. He lets out a high pitched shriek.

115 INT. CORRIDOR. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART. MOMENTS LATER 115

Deeply concerned, JULIAN, wet, with a towel round him, and his orange hair stuck flat against his scalp, looks with some trepidation through the gap in the door to his parents' bedroom. There is nobody there but the bed looks like it might not have had a peaceful night.

116 INT. KITCHEN. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART. - MOMENTS LATER 116

JULIAN, still dripping, nervously enters the kitchen. He

sees a man wearing a dressing gown that doesn't look like it belongs to him putting bread into the toaster. The man is DEZZIE. He senses someone behind him and spins round.

DEZZIE

Oh! Morning. Julian, is it?

DEZZIE holds his hand out, which a horrified JULIAN ignores.

JULIAN

Where's my mother?

DEZZIE

She just popped out for some butter. Want some toast? It's my speciality, buttery toast. I'm Dezzie, by the way. From your mother's art class? (Julian is still in a state of some shock) We ran late last night. Missed my last train. Colleen, ..your mother, she very..

JULIAN

I know what my mother's called.

DEZZIE

..very kindly offered me your sofa.

JULIAN glances at the sofa, which seems strangely tidy.

JULIAN  
I presume you're not married.

DEZZIE  
I'm sorry?

JULIAN  
Unlike my mother, that's 'Colleen'.  
You're aware my mother is married  
and well into her fifties?

DEZZIE  
Actually I don't think that's  
strictly..

JULIAN  
And has a history of sexually  
transmitted diseases.

DEZZIE looks shocked. MUM suddenly enters.

MUM  
Ah, I see you two have met.

DEZZIE  
Yes. What a charming son you have.

MUM  
Dezzie missed his last train home  
so I let him stay over.

DEZZIE  
I think I'd better go and get  
dressed.

MUM  
Ooh, I don't know if I'll recognise  
you with your clothes on.

MUM laughs, as does DEZZIE as he heads for the stairs.  
JULIAN meanwhile is still shocked. He walks towards the back  
door.

MUM (CONT'D)  
Sparkle, where are you going?

JULIAN  
Garden. I'm going to be sick.

MUM  
He's the model, at life class.  
That's what I meant about the  
clothes. Why, you didn't think..?

JULIAN  
Strange he should happen to miss  
his train the only night Dad's been  
away for fifteen years.

MUM

Oh, Julian, don't be so silly.  
 He's only twenty something!  
 And certainly wouldn't be..  
 We just ran late that's all.  
 (Julian doesn't look  
 convinced)  
 Having said that..  
 Probably best if you don't mention  
 it to your Dad. Eh? Silly Billy?

JULIAN

I never see him.  
 I never see either of you.

117 INT. BAR. DERWENT VIEW HOTEL. HOBART - EVENING 117

The bar is as full as it's been for many a year. Four people. They stare aghast at the emotionally disturbed performance JULIAN is offering at the keyboard. The longer he plays the 'Theme From Love Story', the more he ramps up the volume, the more he cries. If it's not entirely murdering the tune it's certainly GPH; Grievous Piano Harm. Finally, the love theme is barely recognizable as he hits the keyboard with almost ham fists. During this, one of the GUESTS is adding to the cacophony of sound by hammering desperately on the 'Ring For Attention' bell on the reception desk. Finally, MRS. BICKERSLEY rushes in and virtually forces the piano lid down on JULIAN's frantic hands.

MRS BICKERSLEY

Mr. Dynamo, please! Mr Dynamo!

118 EXT. BUS STOP. HOBART - LATER THAT EVENING 118

Waiting at the bus stop, Julian sees a poster for the second day of auditions in Hobart for the Starmaker Competition, which are taking place the following day. Julian rips it off the board, screws it up, and throws it in the bin. He senses a presence next to him on the bench and looks up.

DON LANE

So tell us, Julian, when did you  
 first realize you had absolutely no  
 talent?  
 (JULIAN's shoulders drop  
 as he makes a mental note  
 of the time and date.)  
 Time for me to go, I think.  
 End of the show, don't you reckon?  
 It's real people you need.  
 Your MUM, your Dad,  
 people like that. Real world.

JULIAN finally looks up to DON, but he's not there any more. He gets up and starts to walk through the rain in the direction of home, far away. The walk turns into a jog. The jog turns into a run. The run turns into a sprint. "HAS ANYONE EVER WRITTEN ANYTHING FOR YOU" by Stevie Nicks plays on the sound track.

119

INT. KITCHEN. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - NIGHT

119

A wet, breathless JULIAN walks in not to the warm embrace of family, but to what appears to be the remnants of an unholy argument. DAD is sitting through in the living area, looking irate, flushed in the face, holding a beer. MUM is sitting through at the kitchen table, clearly having been crying, and for the first time that we've seen, smoking a cigarette.

JULIAN

What's..?

JULIAN sees, on the floor, Mum's various portraits of Dezzie, with all their lack of perspective and wayward dimensions, torn to pieces. JULIAN feels increasingly uneasy.

DAD

Why aren't you working?

JULIAN

Just.. finished early

A pause, during which JULIAN finally asks himself the question: what's the point of lying now?

JULIAN (CONT'D)

I got fired.

DAD

Oh, brilliant. I'm off out.

MUM

Jim..?

DAD grabs his jacket and breezes past JULIAN and out of the door, which slams closed in his trail.

JULIAN

Mum, are you okay?

MUM wipes her nose with some tissue and shakes her head. JULIAN goes over to the table and squeezes himself next to MUM on her chair. He puts an arm round her. She gets hold of his hand. He looks down at the torn sketches.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

That Dezzie. Did he carry a sponge bag round with him all the time, in case he missed his train?

MUM  
 (After some thought)  
 He must have.

120 INT. JULIAN'S BEDROOM. NEW CORKLE HOME - NIGHT 120

He sits down next to his bed and looks around at the posters again.... Still just the pop stars looking back at him.

Suddenly, and with determination, JULIAN reaches over to his tape-player, puts in a cassette. He presses record.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 Dear Jimmy

He sounds jolly.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 You'll be glad to know that my singing has gone from strength to strength. Dad has been really encouraging.

JULIAN smiles for the first time in weeks.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 It's the second day of auditions for Star Maker tomorrow. I'm going to give it another go. Wish me luck. Love, Julian.

The music fades back in.

121 INT. GREEN ROOM. TV STUDIO. HOBART - THE NEXT MORNING 121

JULIAN stands in the green room of the Hobart auditions.

It's bigger and grander than the Ulverstone version, and the entrants look far more professional. When his name is called, JULIAN walks towards the audition room.

122 INT. TV STUDIO . HOBART - A FEW MOMENTS LATER 122

JULIAN is stunned to see that there is a large audience in the room, including his cousin SHARON, who has obviously come to check out the competition, and AUNT DOLLY. To make matters worse, the same three judges who were at the Ulverstone auditions are seated at the judging table. This is NOT what he was expecting... at all.... SHARON and AUNT DOLLY snigger as his name is announced by the STARMAKER HOST. He walks slowly towards the microphone.

BRENDAN  
 (to the other two judges)  
 Who let him back in?

JULIAN is standing in the spotlight beam, just staring out. He hasn't started singing.

JULIAN looks like a deer in the headlights and this is pure ammunition for SHARON. He just can't find the inspiration, the fantasy, that comes with Jimmy. They start to jeer him and somebody throws a ball of paper that hits him.

JULIAN turns away from the lights and from the crowd and the jeers and from SHARON with tears in his eyes. He hasn't sung a single note. Not only has he failed, but he's failed in front of SHARON and AUNTY DOLLY.

SHANE

Next!

123 INT. SITTING ROOM. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - THAT EVENING 123

JULIAN is sitting alone in front of the (new) TV. He has a solemn look on his face. The lights are off and there is a low glow coming from the TV.

We see and hear DAD on the phone in the kitchen.

DAD

No Dolly.... Yes, Dolly. Of course  
- yes a complete bloody waste of  
time.... no he can't.

DAD comes in and sits down in his recliner. —He barely notices JULIAN sitting there. He flicks a few channels and we see some cricket briefly, then the adverts come on.

The next commercial is for a Telecom company, it shows a lonely woman calling her husband in a far off country. It's crackly melodrama, and some music kicks in. '*ALL BY MYSELF*'. JULIAN's eyes widen and he starts to cry. Softly at first, but getting more and more intense as the commercial plays on until he's sobbing dramatically.

DAD looks over with a quizzical look on his face at JULIAN.

DAD (CONT'D)

Come on mate, there's no need to  
cry.

JULIAN doesn't respond.

DAD (CONT'D)

Blokes don't cry, mate.

JULIAN's heart literally breaks.

DAD is starting to get angry in a way we haven't seen before. Lit by the glow from the TV, it's almost frightening.

DAD (CONT'D)

Look, you need to start focusing on other things. I always thought you were wasting your time, singing's obviously not for you. Come on, mate, man up and take it on the chin.

JULIAN jumps up and runs out of the room.

124 INT. JULIAN'S BEDROOM. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART- LATER 124

JULIAN is looking out of the window at his MUM and DAD

talking. His MUM looks up at him with a concerned look on her face, and then half smiles. After a few moments he sees DAD walk back inside.

He goes back and sits on the bed, picking up a book as he goes.

After a few moments, there's a knock at the door.

JULIAN

Yes?

DAD (O.C.)

Can I come in, mate?

JULIAN

Sure.

DAD opens the door and stands awkwardly, not making eye-contact. DAD shuffles into the room a bit.

DAD

Look... mate... what I said...

JULIAN remains calm and serious.

JULIAN

It's OK. I needed to be told.

DAD

Well...

JULIAN

Yeah.

Awkward silence reigns.

DAD

Maybe you could join a team? The cricket team or something?

DAD laughs nervously.

JULIAN

Yeah, maybe. Can't hurt...

There's a silence that is more awkward for DAD than anyone else.

DAD

Look, I was thinking maybe we should have an outing together tomorrow...

125 INT. CORKLES' CAR. HOBART - NEXT DAY DAY

125

FADE UP. JULIAN looks nervous, confused, even worried, as DAD drives the car.

DAD

It's okay, if you don't like it, you don't like it. Just take a look. What's the harm in that?

JULIAN

Dad, why are you doing this?

Awkward silence reigns.

DAD

Can you just.. flatten it a little bit?

JULIAN reluctantly pats down his hair a touch, but it makes no difference.

126 INT. WOOL DEPOT OFFICES. HOBART - LATER

126

JULIAN and DAD walk in to the shiny lobby of a brand new office building. This is big by Tasmanian standards. DAD is beaming as they walk through, past the front desk and into a series of hallways.

DAD

Every jumper you've ever seen, even ones you haven't seen have all passed through here.

They continue walking past various different rooms and departments.

As DAD walks him through the main offices, the sight of JULIAN in all his bright-haired thick-lensed glory brings shocked reaction from the tired, dull-grey employees of the Wool Board. There is even a distant wolf-whistle.

At the back of one large room, DAD opens a door and they walk into a smaller room. He opens another door, then another.

They keep walking. DAD has a big grin still. There are fewer and fewer windows as we go deeper into the building. DAD continues to talk in an animated way.

DAD (CONT'D)

Every thread and strand, from the sheep's back to the dying pools... We can do it all. The great circle of life that is WOOL!

DAD flings open a final door into a tiny, windowless room filled with four cramped booth like desks. Paper and wool samples everywhere.

It is incredibly under-whelming. The over-riding atmosphere is 'brown'.

DAD (CONT'D)

Everyone, this is my son, Julian.

The collective and continuing stare he gets in response momentarily unsettles DAD, makes him doubt what he's doing, worry that this act of paternal 'pride' might be a big, big mistake. He leads JULIAN to a glass compartment office that houses WALTER.

127 INT. WALTER'S OFFICE. WOOL DEPOT - A FEW MOMENTS LATER 127

WALTER looks up, shocked by Julian:

WALTER

Bloody hell!

DAD

Walter, this is my son Julian. Julian, this is Walter... Walter, I was wanting to give the boy here a taste of what it's like working in marketing..

WALTER

..and you brought him here?

He laughs a long, hacky, nicotine fuelled laugh which he takes time to recover from.

DAD

Maybe he could just help you out for the day? Observe and learn? Make you the odd cup of tea?

WALTER

'Tea'?

Well, yeah, that would be odd. You met my new assistant...or should I say replacement, yet?

JULIAN looks up to see, in a smart business suit and sensible haircut, JIMMY BUDGE. It's a long, shocked beat before he can utter a word:

JULIAN

Jimmy!

JIMMY BUDGE

Hi Julian

JIMMY smiles warmly. JULIAN tries, but is frozen in a mixture of about a hundred emotions.

128

EXT. WOOL BOARD. HOBART. A FEW MOMENTS LATER

128

JULIAN

(eyes welling up)

So what are you doing here?

JIMMY BUDGE

Oh. I got that job.  
At the Wool Board.  
Assistant manager, Marketing.

JULIAN

What..? You're here ..for a while?

JIMMY BUDGE

For good, I hope. I'm sorry, I  
should've written to you again, to  
tell you, I just..I thought your  
Dad would tell you?  
Thanks for yours, by the way.

JULIAN

It wasn't all lies, you know that?  
I do.. I did miss you.

JIMMY BUDGE

Yeah. I missed you too. Missed the  
laughs. Anyway, I'm here now.

For a moment JULIAN wonders whether "laughs" is all he's good for. JIMMY smiles, but it's another slightly awkward pause.

JIMMY BUDGE (CONT'D)

Well, I'd better get back to work.

JULIAN

What time do you finish?

JIMMY BUDGE

Well, it's one of those rare quiet  
days, so quite early I expect.

JULIAN

Just thought, maybe we could go out? Catch up. I've got so much to tell you. Fancy that?

(Jimmy nods, eagerly)

So what time do you think you'll..

JIMMY BUDGE

Now?

129 EXT. CINEMA. HOBART - A BIT LATER 129

JULIAN and JIMMY buy tickets for the cinema. 'Fame' is showing. JULIAN is bristling with excitement.

130 INT. CINEMA. HOBART - EVENING 130

JULIAN and JIMMY sit in the crowded cinema watching the young and handsome strut across the stage. Excited, JULIAN presses his thigh against JIMMY's. JIMMY looks nervously around before pressing back. They hold hands. Furtively. It's just like old times.

131 EXT. STREETS. HOBART - EVENING 131

JULIAN and JIMMY strut youthfully down a street full of bars. Weaving in and out of older, bawdy drinkers, they sing, Fame-style. They laugh. Others don't.

JULIAN AND JIMMY

*I'm gonna live forever, baby  
remember my name, Fame!*

JULIAN stops them. Turning to JIMMY.

JULIAN

That's it!

JIMMY BUDGE

That's what?

JULIAN

The song you should sing for the finals. Actually, we should sing this together - just like WHAM!

JIMMY BUDGE

But...

JULIAN

I can almost taste the audience's adoration as I hoist (turning to JIMMY) we hoist, the statuette into the air!

He's almost dancing down the street, elevated by this thought, parting the crowds as he goes and pulling JIMMY, by the hand, in his wake. When they are suddenly presented with DOLLY and SHARON, (exhausted from shopping for outfits with SHARON carrying all the bags.)

DOLLY

Well, well who's your little friend, Julian? If it isn't Jimmy Budge? No surprises here then. I warned your mother and father - should have stuck to the dinosaurs and space ships. Isn't that right Sharon?

Turning to her triumphant daughter. Who nods in a manner that indicates life or death for JULIAN.

SHARON

(to JIMMY)

Shame the judges can't see you now Mr Budge! Holding hands with a boy!

As DOLLY waddles off - SHARON in tow, JIMMY and JULIAN are left staring after them. Stopped dead in their tracks.

JULIAN

Come on, let's get a drink. The Pink Flamingo?

JIMMY BUDGE

No. No. Let's just have a coffee.

132 INT. CAFE. HOBART. - LATER

132

JULIAN and JIMMY sit in the corner of a rather dull cafe.

Business people, grey suits everywhere. JULIAN sticks out like a sore thumb. JIMMY has chosen to sit opposite rather than next to him.

JULIAN

Is something up? It's not Dolly and Sharon is it?

(Jimmy shakes his head)

Who's the liar now?

He smiles, but JIMMY doesn't. A long silence during which JULIAN doesn't take his eyes off JIMMY's, which look everywhere but back at him.

JIMMY BUDGE

Corky, I'm sorry, really sorry, but you know, I've only just got the job at the Wool Board and people talk. And they're already talking about letting the last one in go. And that's me.

(MORE)

JIMMY BUDGE (CONT'D)  
 (JULIAN stares at him,  
 preparing for the pain:)  
 I just.. I just think it's probably  
 for the best if I keep a low  
 profile.. for a while, anyway.  
 It's hard enough as it is, at the  
 Wool Board, you know, to get on.

JULIAN  
 But you will still perform tomorrow  
 night, won't you?

JIMMY BUDGE  
 (getting up to leave)  
 I don't know...

JULIAN can't believe what he's hearing. He's lost for words.

JIMMY BUDGE (CONT'D)  
 Bye, Julian.

133 INT. KITCHEN. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - A BIT LATER 133

CARMEL has come for a visit and is sitting in the kitchen  
 with MUM and DAD. It is clear that she watched JULIAN'S (non)  
 performance at the Hobart auditions on the TV.

CARMEL  
 Did you see it? He was just  
 standing there. He didn't sing, he  
 didn't say anything - he wasn't  
 even weird. What's happened to  
 him?

MUM  
 He's lost his sparkle..

CARMEL  
 Well, whatever you've done to him,  
 we have to do something about it.  
 Weird was weird but this is worse.  
 (DAD frowns)  
 What's happened to this family?

Unbeknownst to the family JULIAN has come into the kitchen.  
 He's never looked more miserable nor moved so quietly.

DAD  
 What are you on about?

CARMEL  
 Julian's always been special.

DAD  
 "Special"?  
 Pff. Is that what they call it?

CARMEL

Well, weird but special weird.

DAD

He's no good at anything.  
Except lying.

At this JULIAN cannot contain himself.

JULIAN

And is that a bad thing?

They all turn to stare at him.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Imagine the future I could have in  
politics, say, or the church.  
Or journalism, even. You call it  
'lying', others might call it  
having a great imagination.

There is silence. No one knows what to say. JULIAN'S words  
linger. DAD stares and behind his furrowed brow, and deep in  
his brain these words lie.

MUM

Oh Julian....

CARMEL

Hey Julian.

JULIAN

Hey Carmel.

DAD

(finally)  
You're telling the truth? You're  
not supposed to tell the *truth*..

MUM

(to Dad - finally in a  
different sense)  
He's right you know. You sit here  
feeling sorry for yourself, wanting  
things to be different, wanting him  
to be different, maybe it's you  
that needs to change. But you're  
too stupid to see that if you ever  
changed, then maybe your world  
might too.

DAD

Colleen??!

MUM

Our family's in tatters, and it  
doesn't cross your stupid mind that  
it's anything to do with you?

(MORE)

MUM (CONT'D)

You care more about Dolly and her family than you do about us!

CARMEL

Accept him. He's different, that's all.

JULIAN

I'm special.

They all look at him.

MUM

Yes Sparkle - like I always said - you are. Small screenability!

DAD

Oh God.... (here we go)

JULIAN

No, Mum. Not me. But I know someone who does have it.

JULIAN looks at his family - determination in his eyes.

134 EXT. JIMMY BUDGE'S UNCLE'S HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING 134

JULIAN rings the doorbell.

135 INT. JIMMY BUDGE'S UNCLE'S HOUSE. CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER 135 \*

JIMMY opens his bedroom door to find JULIAN. There's a moment between them.

136 INT. JIMMY BUDGE'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER 136

JULIAN'S eyes go wide as he sees, amongst the usual detritus, a shelf at eye-level that is filled with the remnants of their time together. JULIAN sees the tape he sent, some magazine scraps of 'WHAM!', piles of empty Gauloises packets and the ticket stub from the Rachmaninov concert.

JIMMY BUDGE

What are you doing here?

JULIAN turns to look at JIMMY - he pauses.

JULIAN

Jimmy - I'm no oil painting, perhaps a little overweight, and my overall appearance tends to put people off.

(MORE)

JULIAN (CONT'D)

You found appearances irrelevant, you looked deeper, beyond them, and I think you loved me for who I am, rather than for what I looked like. And I loved you back. With all my heart.

Shocked at what he is hearing, JIMMY stares at JULIAN.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

But whatever love we had was shattered when I moved to Hobart. When I saw you again the other day, I was so happy. I'm just the same person, Jimmy. Maybe not successful at much, but I'm the same person. But you've changed or at least you think you have. Part of me says I should try and forget about you and move on. Another part of me says I might never meet anybody like you ever again. My question, Jimmy, is which part of me is right?

JIMMY looks at JULIAN.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Well, I guess, the thing about feelings is that there's no stopping them. Maybe I've been stupid to air mine, and if you have similar ones, then perhaps you too will realize that hiding them may only lead to misery.

JULIAN pauses, hoping for a reaction.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Because you can't live life as a lie. And if you don't sing at the Star Maker finals you'll be doing just that.

JIMMY turns away. *What's he going to do?*

137 EXT. DRIVEWAY OF AUNT DOLLY'S HOUSE. HOBART - SIMULTANEOUS 137

We see some legs sticking out of DOLLY'S pink car. After a few moments, out slides the rest of CARMEL'S body. She gets up and walks away, smiling.

138 EXT. GARDEN. NEW CORKLE HOME. HOBART - LATER 138

DAD is sitting on his own in a deck chair in the garden, contemplating recent truths. CARMEL walks up to him.

CARMEL

Dad, get off your arse, we need to be somewhere.

DAD opens his eyes into the dazzling sun.

DAD

What?

CARMEL

C'mon, we need to go now.

DAD

On the back of that thing?  
(pointing at Carmel's moped)

CARMEL

Yep.

She takes out a cigarette and lights it.

139 INT. TV STUDIO. HOBART - SAME TIME

139

JULIAN walks down the corridor of the TV Studio with MUM open-mouthed at the many photos of celebrities on the walls, spangled stars who have been here before. Liberace, Shirley Bassey, Olivia Newton John, John Travolta, David Bowie, even Don Lane.

It's buzzing, everyone dressed in their finery, excitement everywhere in the air.

Cut to:

140 EXT. CARMEL'S MOPED. HOBART STREET - A BIT LATER

140

We see two figures speeding along little roads, both squeezed onto a tiny scooter. CARMEL is driving, DAD is clinging on for dear life to the back of her.

DAD

Careful mate! Jesus!

CARMEL

It's fine Dad! Relax

CARMEL is in control now.

As they round a corner they pass a car in a lay-by. Obviously broken down. They get closer to see AUNT DOLLY emerge from the open bonnet.

DAD

Hold on... is that?

Cut to:

141 EXT. LAYBY. HOBART STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

141

CARMEL pulls the bike up next to them.

SHARON, dressed in one of her favourite Olivia Newton-John outfits, emerges now, with a face of thunder.

DOLLY looks on as they pull up. She has an odd look on her face.

DAD

Dolly, what are you doing here?

AUNT DOLLY

If I knew that, idiot, I wouldn't be here would I? I've called RACT, but I suppose you'll just have to do.

CARMEL hangs back, leaning up against the bike, smile on her face, eyeing SHARON from a distance. She lights another cigarette.

AUNT DOLLY (CONT'D)

Can you find out what the problem is?

DAD stares at the open hood of the car, then back at DOLLY.

AUNT DOLLY (CONT'D)

Well??

DAD

No.

AUNT DOLLY

What?

DAD

I know what the problem is Dolly.  
(turning to Sharon)  
It's Sharon. For no reason whatsoever she made Julian's life at school a complete misery.

DOLLY's mouth hangs open.

DAD (CONT'D)

You lord it over us with her so called fame through those very mediocre impersonations, and let's be frank, imitations require as much talent as farting in the bath, with roughly the same musical result.

There's a beat that hangs in the air. CARMEL has appeared next to DAD.

CARMEL  
 (to Sharon)  
 You're a poisonous, serial  
 kleptomaniac and a vile bully. And  
 we all fucking hate Olivia Newton  
 John...

DAD and CARMEL turn and walk back towards the bike.

DOLLY and SHARON stand aghast.

DAD grabs the cigarette out of CARMEL's mouth, throws it on  
 the floor and jumps on the back.

DAD  
 Let's go.

CARMEL smiles, waves at DOLLY and SHARON and kick starts the  
 engine.

DAD (CONT'D)  
 And less of that language, Carmel!

CARMEL  
 Yes Dad!

142 INT. TV STUDIO. HOBART - LATER

142

This is it! The finals. The stage is set. It is quite a bit  
 more upmarket than the auditions, but still has a gaudy, '80s  
 tinsel-like polish to the whole thing. One thing it is, is  
 dramatic - colour, light, sparkle.

JULIAN finds a place deep in the crowd towards the back with  
 his MUM. We watch as if from JULIAN's POV. Looking up with  
 him.

Into the spotlight steps the STAR MAKER HOST, with SHANE,  
 BRENDAN and LEILA in the background.

STAR MAKER HOST  
 Welcome to the grand finals of Star  
 Maker 1985. Each and every district  
 of Tasmania has competed to get  
 here. (Overly dramatic) We've  
 watched with awe, the beauty and  
 rawness of the talent of this  
 island open and flower before our  
 very eyes. The songs and the dreams  
 of each and every contestant here  
 tonight can either be realised and  
 cast in gold forever, or dashed,  
 crushed and destroyed against the  
 rocks of failure...

The crowd has gone silent.

In the silence we hear a door at the back of the hall creak open and DAD and CARMEL walk awkwardly but quietly to the back of the studio.

STAR MAKER HOST (CONT'D)  
I've been informed that we have a slight change to the planned proceedings.

On JULIAN - has JIMMY decided not to come??

STAR MAKER HOST (CONT'D) (CONT'D)  
Sharon Tickton has been delayed so we will start with the Ulverstone heat winner - Mr Jimmy Budge.

The crowd roar, everyone claps, including JULIAN who is exhilarated. He's turned up! He looks at MUM who smiles encouragingly back: fingers crossed.

Then the room goes silent. The spotlight shines onto an empty stage. It's awkward. Time passes. No-one appears.

Then finally out steps JIMMY BUDGE.

He walks towards the microphone, squinting into the lights, looking for JULIAN.

He steps up to the microphone. It feeds back.

JIMMY BUDGE  
I'm Jimmy Budge, and I just want to...

He's abruptly cut off as the backing track starts.

We hear the intro to 'HELLO' by Lionel Richie. JIMMY misses the first few cues as he looks around for JULIAN. The intro keeps repeating.

The camera is slowly moving in towards JIMMY's face. Getting closer.

He takes the plunge.

JIMMY BUDGE (CONT'D)  
*"I've been alone with you inside my mind... And in my dreams I've kissed your lips, a thousand times"*

His voice sounds thin and weak, but it's not bad. We are getting closer to him. He gets into it. He looks out into the crowd but more disappointed this time and falters, as DOLLY comes crashing through the door of the studio, hideously out of breath and perspiring. The entire audience turns and stares as the music stops. There are even some sniggers.

DOLLY skulks into the shadows at the back as the Corkle family look on.

MUM looks towards JULIAN, but his seat is empty!

JIMMY starts singing again.

JIMMY BUDGE (CONT'D)

*"I sometimes see you pass outside  
my door"*

We are close in on JIMMY's face.

Suddenly, another voice chimes in, slightly out of tune. We stay on JIMMY's face, he stops singing but the words keep coming. The camera pulls back.

JULIAN

*"Hello, is it me you're looking  
for? I can see it in your eyes, I  
can see it in your smile"*

JULIAN is on stage. He's not dressed for showbiz, but he doesn't care. He sings the chorus.

This could be a scene from JULIAN's imagination, but it's not.

They continue to sing together. MUM looks on, relieved and thrilled that JULIAN is putting himself out there. The crowd cheers again. They really aren't as bad as one might imagine nor nearly as good as they feel. But we can hear both what they sound like and what they mean and that's just fine.

CUT TO:

143 INT. GREEN ROOM. TV STUDIO. SAME TIME 143

SHARON looks up at the TV monitor at JULIAN and JIMMY'S performance. Her face says it all.

CUT TO:

144 INT. TV STUDIO. HOBART. MOMENTS LATER 144

DOLLY looks on aghast as the crowd roars, and then over at DAD who is wildly applauding his son and at CARMEL who looks at JULIAN and JIMMY with a smile on her face.

Smoke machines fire up and the lighting is dramatic. JIMMY and JULIAN on stage together, finally the musical duo that they so wanted to be.

Meanwhile SHARON is whispering in the ear of the PRODUCER. He looks at her aghast. Looks around but the crowd seem to be with the young duo and TV is TV. He shrugs and dismisses her.

We see JULIAN's smiling face as he stumbles on a few lines, but doesn't care. JIMMY picks up the slack as it turns into the best concert Hobart has ever seen!

The crowd is so on their side, cheering and then JULIAN and JIMMY, swept up in the moment: KISS - Passionately!

The room goes silent.

LEILA  
(stage whisper)  
That was ..different.

BRENDAN is quite impressed. SHANE looks around stunned. The STAR MAKER HOST is frozen on the spot.

145 INT. CONTROL ROOM. TV STUDIO. HOBART - CONTINUOUS 145

The PRODUCER is in the TV control room, there's a scramble and the screens go to the channel logo. Plus music.

146 INT. TV STUDIO. HOBART - CONTINUOUS 146

The crowd is milling. SHARON is smirking.

STAR MAKER HOST  
I can only apologise for what just happened. The views aired on this programme are not necessarily the views of Starmaker Hobart as a company. Everyone here connected to the Show can only say we're deeply sorry. So.... I'm sure the viewers at home will be as excited as those here are to welcome local phenomena.....  
(his arms spread wide to embrace)  
SHARON TICKTON...!

SHARON takes to the stage, delighted to be in her proper place in the universe.

147 INT. CORRIDOR. TV STUDIO. HOBART - CONTINUOUS 147

JIMMY & JULIAN are marched from the studio. They exit with some trepidation, but see DAD, MUM and CARMEL by the door.

JULIAN  
Dad...

DAD  
 (patting him on the back)  
 Hey, mate.

MUM and CARMEL follow up with a hug.

148 EXT. TV STUDIO - LATER

148

JULIAN smiles. They are standing in front of the TV Logo STAR MAKER. (SONG HERE - TO SEGUE US INTO THE FLASH FORWARD?)

JULIAN  
 We did it you know.

He reaches out and holds JIMMY's hand.

JIMMY BUDGE  
 Even if we didn't win....and I'm  
 out of a job.

JULIAN turns to JIMMY with a glint in his eye.

Freeze frame on JULIAN CORKLE & JIMMY BUDGE. It turns into a poster.

Famous. In Tasmania.

CUT TO:

THINK THE SCENES BELOW NEED A BIT OF THOUGHT. PERHAPS THEY SHOULD BE WITHOUT DIALOGUE OVER THE END CREDITS (SHOULD JULIAN STILL BE LYING IN THE PRESENT?) ALSO WONDER IF BAND COULD BE CALLED "THE FILTHY LIARS"???

149 INT. BAR. BOUTIQUE HOTEL. HOBART. - PRESENT DAY.

149

We pull out from the poster that says \*\*JULIAN & JIMMY -

TASMANIA'S PREMIERE WHAM! TRIBUTE ACT - EQUAL 4TH PLACE IN 1985 STAR MAKER!!\*\* The poster is somewhat worn at the edges..

\*  
 \*

This is a sequence shot that starts on the poster. We see a hand come into shot, it places a large sticker across the text simply saying 'WINNERS'. It replaces the words 'EQUAL 4TH PLACE'.

\*  
 \*

The camera pulls back and we see the hand is JULIAN's. We follow him across the bar room. It's evidently being set up for their gig later. JULIAN walks through and into the lobby of a boutique hotel - their boutique hotel. JIMMY is behind the desk checking in new guests.

JIMMY BUDGE  
 So I've put you in the floral  
 suite, third floor. Lovely view.

JULIAN puts on his glasses. And waddles into the kitchen area. The years have not been kind to his figure - nor his hairline. He looks uncannily like his father.

JULIAN (O.C)  
 (to JIMMY and the GUESTS)  
 I'll get the scones and tea on -  
 you'll love it. Fresh from the  
 oven. Made them myself! Family  
 recipe - my Dad's favourite!

150 INT. KITCHEN. BOUTIQUE HOTEL. HOBART. - CONTINUOUS 150

As we see JULIAN pull them out of a packet and open the microwave.

151 INT. FOYER. BOUTIQUE HOTEL. HOBART. - CONTINUOUS 151

JIMMY looks up at the new guests.

JIMMY BUDGE  
 Fabulous imagination and a local  
 star - I do hope you'll join us in  
 the bar after dinner for the  
 entertainment?

JULIAN  
 (returning from the  
 kitchen)  
 We're famous across the nation!

JIMMY BUDGE  
 Well three states - at least.

The GUESTS look dubious..

END