

TOUGH LOVE

An urban drama for television

FADE IN:

EXT. LONDON STREETS -- NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

Oxford Street. Selfridges. Homeless people huddled in doorways. Drunken lads hollering, with traffic cones on their heads.

Police cars speeding past, SIRENS BLARING.

EXT. SALVATION HOUSE HOSTEL -- CONTINUOUS

The SIRENS BLARE in the distance.

As WALLY, (huge, bushy beard, 60's) squats on the steps of a massive building, muttering something completely indecipherable.

The sign above him reads SALVATION HOUSE.

SID, (a long-haired hippie, 50's) and TOMMY, (wears a baseball cap backwards, 20's) are staggering up the steps, buckling under the weight of a battered refrigerator.

SID

Easy will yer? You'll mess with the electrics.

Tommy pulls a face.

SID (CONT'D)

They're delicate items fridges you know. They don't like moving about.

INT. SALVATION HOUSE HOSTEL, ENTRANCE HALL --MOMENTS LATER

Sid and Tommy carry the fridge through a large entrance foyer that was long ago painted in cheerful colours, but is now quite tatty with peeling paint.

They tiptoe towards a giant staircase at the far end of the hall..

As VOICES are heard OFF SCREEN.

WOMAN'S VOICE - MONICA (O.S.)

We can't keep moving people about on a whim.

Sid and Tommy back sharply into a doorway with the fridge.

WOMAN'S VOICE - ANNABEL (O.S.)

But these two are going to kill each other!

WOMAN'S VOICE - MONICA (O.S.)
All our residents want to kill...

A door SLAMS.

SID

C'mon!

...And Sid and Tommy heave the fridge up the stairs, past a large sign on the wall:

HOSTEL RULES

NO DRUGS.

NO ALCOHOL.

NO VIOLENCE.

NO PETS.

NO GUESTS.

HAVE A NICE DAY.

INT. SALVATION HOUSE HOSTEL - OFFICE -- NIGHT

Haphazardly filling the shelves and surfaces, are files labelled: SERIOUS INCIDENTS, DEATHS, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL and MENTAL HEALTH.

..As the colourful confection of bohemian chic, that is ANNABEL STANLEY-RODGERS, (32) pulls on her coat.

An open hatch dominates one wall - through which we can see into a common room, containing a pool table and vending machine.

..And A FEW RESIDENTS in armchairs, gazing out of large windows onto the street.

ANNABEL

Nothing much else to report.

She picks up a stray duvet from the floor and puts it on top of the photocopier.

ANNABEL (CONT'D)

There was a bit of a ruckus at dinner.

MONICA, (large and rather imposing, 40) sits beside a shelf crowded with cans of strong lager, cider and a few bottles of spirits - all with sticky labels attached, bearing handwritten names: TOMMY, VINCE, DONALD.

MONICA

Tommy?

ANNABEL

Who else? And Mikey O.D'd again.

MONICA

But he's all right?

ANNABEL

Yeah. They're keeping an eye on him overnight...

MONICA

(Sighs)

But he'll be back with us soon enough.

Annabel grins.

MONICA (CONT'D)

In God's name what is wrong with these people?

ANNABEL

He wants some attention, poor sod.

MONICA

It's like coping with children.

Annabel makes to leave.

ANNABEL

Well I guess we all have our issues.

MONICA

We don't all romp around like lunatics though, do we?

ANNABEL

(Grinning)

Speak for yourself.

She waves goodbye through the glass.

MONICA

(Shouting)

Night Annabel - oh, and congratulations!

EXT. SALVATION HOUSE HOSTEL -- MOMENTS LATER

Annabel trots down the hostel steps, turns the corner - and quickly knocks back a miniature bottle of vodka.

INT. TUBE TRAIN -- NIGHT

Annabel rides the tube, smiling to herself.

INT. WEST LONDON, ANNABEL'S BEDSIT -- NIGHT

Annabel hurries into her colourful bedsit, opens the fridge and pulls out a bottle of wine.

Papered all over the wall of her kitchenette, are numerous photos of Annabel and a dark-haired, handsome man. (BARRY WOODS, 40) - at parties, picnics and on a motorbike.

She pours a glass and toasts a photograph of herself and Barry; on a sunny beach, kissing on top of an elephant.

ANNABEL

To us, lover-boy.

HAPPY, UPBEAT POP MUSIC PLAYS, as Annabel remembers...

DISSOLVE
TO:

EXT. SRI LANKA, BEACH -- DAY (FLASH BACK)

Miles and miles of sun-drenched sand, palm trees and a violet-blue ocean. Frothy white suds lapping on golden shores.

Paradise.

As into paradise, bursts forth Annabel - hot-footing it to the sea.

..Swiftly pursued by the dangerously handsome Barry, in open shirt and swimming trunks.

They collapse slap-bang into the waves, giggling, kissing, intoxicated, in love.

EXT. SRI LANKA, RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Chinese lanterns twinkle in the dark - as Annabel and Barry dine in a garden restaurant.

A WAITER approaches, tops up Annabel's wine glass, smiles and leaves.

..As Barry winks and toasts her with his fruit juice.

EXT. SRI LANKA, BEACH -- DAY

Barry's arms are tight around Annabel's waist, as they straddle a mighty ELEPHANT.

..As the beast raises his giant foot - and their GUIDE aims a camera.

BARRY

Annabel Stanley-Rodgers, will you marry me?

ANNABEL

Yes I will!

They kiss.

DISSOLVE
TO:

INT. WEST LONDON, ANNABEL'S BEDSIT -- CONTINUOUS

Annabel clutches a glass of wine, as she gazes up at the photograph - and talks into her mobile.

ANNABEL

(Into phone)

What problem? Don't you want to see me?

EXT. LONDON, TRAFALGAR SQUARE -- NIGHT

Barry frowns at his motorbike parked up on the pavement. He knows exactly what he wants and usually he gets it. When he's sober.

He talks into his mobile.

BARRY

(Into phone)

Of course I do. It's just..

(Inspiration)

A flat tyre.

The tyres look fine. Nothing wrong with the bike.

..Though there's definitely something not quite right with Barry.

BARRY (CONT'D)

(Into phone)

I'm sorry babe.

A little shakily, he pulls a bottle of vodka from his pocket and swigs.

..As a red bus sails past Trafalgar Square.

BARRY (CONT'D)

(Into phone)

I'll get a bus.

He watches a couple clink glasses outside a pub ..And finds himself walking towards the entrance.

BARRY (CONT'D)

(Into phone)

..Bloody spark plugs!

INT. ANNABEL'S BEDSIT -- CONTINUOUS

Annabel on her mobile, holding her glass of wine.

ANNABEL

(Into phone)

I thought it was the tyre?

She goes to take a mouthful of wine..

ANNABEL (CONT'D)

(Into phone)

What?

..And puts the glass down.

ANNABEL (CONT'D)

(Into phone)

No, of course I haven't been drinking.

Throwing the phone down, she pulls a face at Barry's photograph.

She studies the wine glass.. Then the wine bottle.. Thinks for a moment, (fuck it) and pours herself some more wine.

And turns on the television. It is the Ten O'Clock News.

TELEVISION PRESENTER

And in a special report tonight..

EXT. GLASGOW STREET -- NIGHT

"GLASGOW, THE FRIENDLY CITY" is painted on the side of a green and yellow bus, as it glides up Great George Street.

TELEVISION PRESENTER (V.O.)

..We ask what can be done about our homeless population.

INT. GLASGOW - MRS O'REILLY'S COUNCIL FLAT -- NIGHT

A sweet-faced woman (MRS O'REILLY, 70) is watching the Ten O'clock News.

..As on the television screen a YOUNG LAD inside a red telephone box is smoking crack from a miniature bottle of vodka.

TELEVISION PRESENTER (V.O.)

As concerns escalate over a flood of crack-cocaine and heroin on the streets.

The picture cuts to a REPORTER interviewing a couple of HOMELESS MEN on the Charing Cross road in London.

HOMELESS MAN#1

It's everywhere man ain' it?

The SECOND MAN nods and drinks from a can of cider.

HOMELESS MAN#1 (CONT'D)

I've lost count of the number of
pals who've died.

MRS O'REILLY

(Broad Glaswegian
dialect)

I'm so glad you got yerself offa
that horrible stuff.

JIMMY O'REILLY, 33, a gentle, dashing, Scottish dreamer
with a raffish style about him, is sprawled over the other
chair in a trilby hat and 'anti nazi-league' t-shirt.

JIMMY

(Glaswegian dialect)

Aye.

He drinks from a can of lager, transfixed by the television.

MRS O'REILLY

Yell hardly remember yerself once
ye start yeh new job tomorrow.

Jimmy frowns at the suit on the back of the door.

MRS O'REILLY (CONT'D)

That London will soon be forgotten.

Jimmy stares hard at his mum. ..And jumps up.

JIMMY

Mam I'm..

He holds up the can of lager - and is out the door.

MRS O'REILLY

Jimmy?

The front door SLAMS.

INT. PUB IN GLASGOW -- NIGHT

BELTING ROCK MUSIC blares.

..As Jimmy is rammed against the bar of a rowdy pub in a
scrum to get last orders.

A CHEERFUL BARMAID, 20, hands Jimmy a pint.

CHEERFUL BARMAID

(SHOUTING with
Glaswegian dialect)

So whit's it like in London Jimmy?

JIMMY

(Shouting)

Big!

CHEERFUL BARMAID
 (Shouting)
 Bet there's loads aye drugs!

JIMMY
 (Shouting)
 Aye!

CHEERFUL BARMAID
 (Shouting)
 So when are we gonnae git tae meet
 yeh lassie?

Jimmy smiles, but it's not a happy smile. He's miles away.

EXT. WEST LONDON STREET -- NIGHT

Barry jumps off of a red bus and sprays his mouth with
 breath freshener.

INT. ANNABEL'S BEDSIT -- NIGHT

An empty wine bottle lies on the bed. ..As Annabel lies
 beside it, nodding-off.

THE DOOR BUZZER SOUNDS - and Annabel lifts her head with a
 start.

INT. ANNABEL'S BEDSIT -- MOMENTS LATER

Barry, crash helmet in hand, stumbles in with a big grin
 on his face.

BARRY
 Got the washers, I can fix that
 tap.

Annabel SLAMS the door.

ANNABEL
 Fuck the tap.

BARRY
 (Embracing her)
 Then I can make a start on the
 cupboard?

ANNABEL
 Don't you dare!

BARRY
 Well then.

He carries her to the bed.

BARRY (CONT'D)

What is it that you're looking for
my gorgeous?

ANNABEL

You being on time Barry! I'm on
early shift tomorrow.

BARRY

(Unbuttoning her
top, kissing her
neck)

That's what you want? To live to
work?

ANNABEL

(Jumping up)

I want some damn respect! ..And I
don't think you should stay over.

BARRY

I'm sorry babe, bastard bike.

ANNABEL

You could have called.

BARRY

I did call!

ANNABEL

Less than an hour you said!

BARRY

Relax honey, I'm here now.

He pats the bed beside him.

She doesn't move.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Oh don't let's spoil the evening,
Annabel.

ANNABEL

YOU'RE TWO HOURS LATE!

BARRY

OH PUT A FUCKING CAP ON IT!

Annabel stares. He doesn't usually talk to her like this.

BARRY (CONT'D)

I was getting you a present.

He produces a bottle of wine.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Your life's so effin simple innit?
(MORE)

BARRY (CONT'D)

Out there saving the world every day, getting drunk every night...

ANNABEL

I don't get...

BARRY

You mind if I open this?

He finds two glasses and opens the wine.

ANNABEL

(Scared)

You don't drink.

Barry pours the wine and hands Annabel a glass - that she takes hold of, speechless.

BARRY

Cheers.

He downs his glass in one.

ANNABEL

(Panicked)

Barry!

Barry peers back at Annabel, a little shamefaced.

EXT. GLASGOW HOUSING ESTATE -- MORNING

A POSTMAN weaves his trolley around the rubbish.

INT. MRS O'REILLY'S COUNCIL FLAT - HALLWAY -- MORNING

Mrs O'Reilly carries a breakfast tray as she KNOCK-KNOCKS on a door.

MRS O'REILLY

Wakey wakey, today needs a proper breakfast!

She opens the door and peeps in - flicking on the light.

...To find on the neatly-made bed, a note of one word: SORRY.

INT/EXT. LORRY ON M4 MOTORWAY -- MORNING

A HAIRY TRUCK DRIVER SINGS along to a love song on the radio.

As Jimmy, next to him - with a LONDON PLEASE sign at his feet - stares through the windscreen at the approaching Chiswick Roundabout.

All around them lanes of automobiles are pouring into London.

As they pass a sign reading: HAMMERSMITH 2 MILES.

INT. ANNABEL'S BEDSIT -- MORNING

The DOOR BUZZER BUZZES PERSISTENTLY.. As Annabel painfully opens her eyes.

Groping her way out of bed, tripping over empty wine bottles, she grabs hold of the window-sill and leans out.

..To see Barry swaggering in the street in his crash helmet.

BARRY

(Shouting)

This is absolutely the last time I
am doing this!

He holds up a second helmet.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Or were you planning on getting
the sack this morning?

INT. SALVATION HOUSE HOSTEL, OFFICE -- MORNING

MUSIC PLAYS ON A RADIO..

As BRIAN (a high flyer in a suit, 37) counts out piles of coins and stuffs them into envelopes.

Monica is on the phone.

MONICA

(Replacing the phone)

That was Annabel, running late.
May I go now please?

BRIAN

And leave me without any staff?

He taps a 'KEY CLIENTS' LIST on the wall, headed by the names: ANNABEL, CLIFF, FIFI, GEORGE and MONICA.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Where the hell is Cliff?

EXT. BUSY LONDON STREET -- MORNING

CLIFF, (black, street-smart urban warrior, plenty of bling, 35) strides through a small community of Chinese restaurants, talking into his mobile.

CLIFF
 (Into Phone)
 I'm working Lizzie. Can't this
 wait? I said I was sorry didn't I?

Turning around, he gestures for Jimmy (carrying a rucksack) to hurry up.

Jimmy quickens his pace.

CLIFF (CONT'D)
 (Into Phone)
 I'm telling you it was a blood
 bath. They all had knives. Then
 we had to hang around and give
 statements.

JIMMY
 (Shouting to Cliff)
 Doncha just love London!

Cliff grins and talks back into his phone.

CLIFF
 (Into Phone)
 Where's all this coming from?
 ..But it's my job honey, innit?

JIMMY
 (Shouting to Cliff)
 All these greet strategies in place
 tae keep us scruffy toe-rags ootta
 sight oer the tourists!

Cliff throws Jimmy a wink.

CLIFF
 (Into Phone)
 Lizzie I'm late. Of course I love
 you, bye.
 (To Jimmy)
 Come on!

They break into a run.

EXT. LONDON STREETS -- MORNING

Annabel and Barry speed along the Embankment on his motorbike.