

REASONS TO BE SINGLE

by

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FADE IN:

SUMMER. LONDON. PRESENT DAY.

INT. HALLWAY STAIRS, SHABBY BED-SITS -- MORNING

JULES, (35) is very thin and very white with dramatic black hair and nail varnish.

He wears an orange silk dressing gown and BATTERS on a wooden door.

JULES
Annie! Annie!!

His SCREAMS are high pitched, whiny.

JULES (CONT'D)
This is a community!

EXT. RIVERSIDE GARDENS, HAMMERSMITH -- MORNING

Swans sail by on the sunlit river.. Cruise past bobbing houseboats.. And under Hammersmith Bridge.

JOGGERS run in the brilliant white haze of the early morning sun.

A SMALL WHITE DOG bounds over the grass with a football in its mouth.

And strolling behind, wiping sleep from his eyes, is BRENDAN, (37). Floppy hair and worn jeans. He's attractive in his unkempt way, the type women want to take care of.

He calls the dog.

BRENDAN
Lucifer! Wait up.

And stops to study a flower-bed.

INT. HALLWAY STAIRS, SHABBY BED-SITS -- MORNING

Jules is SCREAMING and HAMMERING on the wooden door.

JULES
We do not exist in isolation!

EXT. RIVERSIDE GARDENS, HAMMERSMITH -- MORNING

Brendan steps onto the flower-bed and removes a discarded wine bottle and some crisp packets.. And drops them in a dustbin.

Lighting a roll-up, he stands back to admire the flowers.

INT. HALLWAY STAIRS, SHABBY BED-SITS -- MORNING

Jules is still PUMMELLING on the wooden door.

..As the front door SLAMS.

JULES

One keeps no secrets!

He flashes a crazed look at Brendan.. Who's climbing up the stairs unconcerned..

And gives Lucifer a wide berth.

INT. KITCHEN, SHABBY BED-SITS -- MORNING

Brendan at the kitchen table - pot of tea, gardening gloves and a trowel.

He tips some tea in the dog bowl. Lucifer GUZZLES.

..And Jules flies in the Kitchen - frantic.

JULES

She's puking up!

He puts his fingers to his mouth. Mimes being sick.

BRENDAN

Then use the other one.

JULES

That's not the bloody point!

He hops up and down, his dressing gown flapping.

The dog GROWLS.

INT. BATHROOM, SHABBY BED-SITS -- MORNING

ANNIE TRAVAIL, (39) is eighty-four exquisite pounds of gorgeousness. Sitting on the lavatory, draped in a zebra-striped towel..

She bends across to vomit in the bathtub.

Blonde glossy ringlets spill over her shoulders, breaking loose from colourful braids.

A real-life Barbie Doll.

Except that right now her eyes are red and sweat streams down her pretty face as she cries with the exhaustion of emptying out her insides.

Cries and prays.

(CONTINUED)

ANNIE

Dear God, please don't let me die.
Please, please...

She chucks-up again in the bath.

And leans her cheek against the porcelain, crying.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

I swear this is the last time, I
swear, I swear...

BAM! BAM! BAM! on the door.

JULES (O.S.)

Will you get a fucking shift on!

INT. HALLWAY STAIRS, SHABBY BED-SITS -- MORNING

Annie comes out of the wooden door all smiles.

..And disappears up the stairs.

Jules sticks his nose in the bathroom.

JULES

(Screaming)

You've used all the toilet roll!

A door SLAMS.

INT. ANNIE'S BED-SIT -- MORNING

Sun streams in the window of a colourfully chaotic room.

Annie strides the clothes-strewn floor in her zebra towel
and turns on a C.D player, filling the space with lively,
upbeat POP MUSIC.

..And hops onto a set of scales.

The dial points to SIX STONE exactly.

ANNIE (V.O.)

Today is a good day.

She kicks-to-the-beat as she pulls on a mini skirt, tee
shirt and biker boots - very 'street'.

..And poses this way and that in front of a giant mirror.

ANNIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Days like today I'm flying.

She boogies across to a sink unit, pours out a pint-glass
of water and GULPS it down in one.

(CONTINUED)

On the draining board is a pad of paper. In big red letters are the underlined words: **TO DO**.

Under this: **STICK TO DIET**.

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

..And Brendan peeps in.

BRENDAN

Greetings.

ANNIE

Brendan.

BRENDAN

I opened this yesterday by mistake.

He gives her a letter.

ANNIE

Is it good?

Brendan shrugs and leaves.

Annie reads: DEAR MISS TRAVAIL,

THANK YOU FOR AUDITIONING FOR US, BUT ON THIS OCCASION YOU WERE UNSUCCESSFUL...

Annie scrunches-up and HURLS the letter onto a gigantic pile of screwed-up paper. Above the pile, a felt-tipped sign is sellotaped to the wall - it says REJECTION CORNER.

ANNIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Other days I'm so low down all I want to do is die.

She kicks a pile of books across the floor.

The jackets have titles like: WHERE IS YOUR WILL POWER?; YOU ARE NOT ENOUGH; FAST IF YOU WANT TO BE GORGEOUS.

INT. HALLWAY STAIRS, SHABBY BED-SITS -- MORNING

Annie clatters down the stairs towards the kitchen.

ANNIE (V.O.)

There are never any middle days.

INT. KITCHEN, SHABBY BED-SITS -- CONTINUOUS

Brendan is coughing and placing bread under the grill.

BRENDAN

Do you mind?

Jules is spraying air-freshener around.

JULES

I don't feel well.

He sits down.

JULES (CONT'D)

You know I feel quite dreadful.

Brendan sits down.

BRENDAN

You need to get out more.

Annie runs in and grabs an apple.

JULES

Oh don't you worry about me. I
will somehow soldier on.

Annie laughs.

ANNIE

Will you ever belt up about the
soldier-boy?

Jules LEAPS up.

JULES

(Shouting)

He was in the Navy and you twisted
his head!

BRENDAN

Children!

He yanks Jules back to his chair.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

It's Sunday. Can we just for once..
Be normal?

Jules glares daggers at Annie.

And Brendan opens a newspaper.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

(Reading aloud)

Capricorn. This will be a most
fortunate week for romance in the
work place.

(CONTINUED)

ANNIE
Shame you work by yourself.

JULES
There's no shame if he chooses to
be alone.

BRENDAN
I don't choose!

Black smoke is billowing out from under the grill.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
(Jumping up)
Oh not again.

JULES
You don't?

Brendan is dragging out flaming toast, burning his fingers.

BRENDAN
Ouch, ouch.

He fans smoke out of the window.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
No Jules, I live in pathetic hope
like everybody else.

JULES
That's very brave. I suppose there
could be someone out there. Even
for you.

The SMOKE ALARM goes off and Lucifer starts BARKING.

JULES (CONT'D)
(Shouting over the
din)
It's Annie who has reason to be
single!

Annie's heard enough and struts towards the door.

BRENDAN
Annie!

She turns - as Brendan holds up the barking dog with a
pleading look.

EXT. SHABBY BED-SITS -- DAY

Annie jumps onto the street, with Lucifer at her heels -
and SLAMS the door behind her.

ANNIE (V.O.)
He was right of course. Good reason.

She lights a cigarette.

EXT. RIVERSIDE GARDENS, HAMMERSMITH -- DAY

Ducks drift by the gaily bobbing houseboats.

FIVE MEN are playing football on the grass.

As Lucifer chases towards them..

With Annie 'power-walking' behind.

ANNIE (V.O.)

It certainly wasn't my plan to
fall in love.

A footballer SHRIEKS at Annie.

FOOTBALLER

Oi!.. Lucky Legs!

..And the players all FREEZE and gawp.

ANNIE

What?

FOOTBALLER

Lucky that they don't snap!

The players all fall about cackling.

..And Annie starts to pull a face, but instead her eyes
grow wide..

As an Adonis jogs out of the pack - skilfully keeping a
ball in the air with his knees.

JAKE CANTONA, (40). Deep brown eyes and sticky-up hair.
Looks like he can handle himself and might be a musician.
Even in his football shorts.

He smiles.

His smile lights up his face.

JAKE

Forgive the lads. They don't get
out that much.

Annie grins.

And nods.

And grins.

And Lucifer SPRINGS up at Jake and GALLOPS away with the
ball between his teeth.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Oi!

(CONTINUED)

The footballers HOLLER after the dog..

Zig-zagging chaotically all over the grass..

In frenzied, screaming pursuit.

An ELDERLY MEMBER of the group topples over, a cider bottle in his hand.

Annie's hand shoots up to her head.

ANNIE

Oh god.

..And Jake FIRES after Lucifer.

Annie claps her hands.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Lucifer! Lucifer! Here!

But Lucifer, the ball held high..

Completes a full lap of the green.

..As the footballers stumble one by one - leaving a crumpled trail.

Annie blows hard on a high-pitched whistle..

And Jake is tight behind Lucifer's rump..

As the dog bounces back triumphant..

..LEAPS high onto Annie's chest - and SMACKS her back in the mud.

Jake tumbles astride her, push-up position ...And an arms-length from an embrace.

He smiles.

JAKE

Pleased to meet you. The name's Jake.

EXT. RIVERSIDE GARDENS, HAMMERSMITH -- LATER

Lucifer is tied to a wooden bench.. Where Annie and Jake smoke cigarettes.

The lads are playing football.

JAKE

That one there - the mouthy one, that's Becks. That's what I call him. Our great white hope.

(CONTINUED)

FREEZE on BECKS, (25) and the face of a cherub. The one who shrieked at Annie.

He YELLS to Jake, displaying the gap where his front teeth should be.

BECKS

Jake and Lucky Legs up a tree, K-I-S-S-I-N-G!

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE

Heroin addict. Six weeks clean and fingers crossed. I'm relying on him for the championship. Him with the ball, Giggsy.

FREEZE on GIGGSY, (30) very pale with long lanky hair - nodding his head as if listening to music.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Steams through anything, fearless.

Becks tackles the ball off Giggsy..

And Giggsy flops onto the grass to make a roll-up.

JAKE (CONT'D)

(Yelling)

For god's sake Giggsy, fight for it!

Jake scowls.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Same drug of choice but never clean.

A muscular man with striking features sits down next to Annie.

JAKE (CONT'D)

And this is Ollie. Cocky as hell but bugger all motivation.

FREEZE on OLLIE (33). He gives Annie a dazzling smile.

OLLIE

I'd watch him darling if I were you. He's not been near a woman in twelve whole months.

JAKE

On the pitch Ollie!

Ollie runs off - blowing a kiss to Annie.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Coke and women, that's his poisons.

(CONTINUED)

ANNIE

Haven't you?

JAKE

What?

ANNIE

In twelve whole months?

JAKE

Well.

(Beat)

I haven't really counted.

Annie throws Jake a curious look.

ANNIE

So who's that over by the tree?

JAKE

We call him Bestie. Bless him.

FREEZE on BESTIE, (65) hair standing on end and flies undone. He's some distance from the others, slugging a bottle of cider.

Jake grins.

JAKE (CONT'D)

And me of course. The Fabulous Five! Not that we're playing for United at present, but who know's what when we clean up our acts?

He winks.

JAKE (CONT'D)

All residents at the Shelter I work in. I run the team on my days off. Like I said, they don't get out that much.

Annie smiles. She likes this man. Suddenly shy, she scrapes some mud off her legs.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Wanna come back to mine and get cleaned up? I feel vaguely responsible for all that mud.

Annie's eyes lock hard with Jake's.

ANNIE (V.O.)

Well I certainly wasn't taking him back to my place.

INT. JAKE'S ENTRANCE HALLWAY -- DAY

Annie and Jake BURST in the door, all over each other.

Tearing at clothes, mouths locked together, Jake fumbles blindly with the key to his flat.

INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

It's very bachelor, surprisingly neat.

Annie and Jake CRASH in the room; kissing, groping, pawing at flesh.

..SLAMMING against a chest of drawers, after-shave and nick-nacks flying, the whole thing topples over..

As they collapse head-first to the floor.

Jake helps Annie up.

JAKE

You really ought to take off that muddy skirt.

Not breaking eye contact for a second, she rips it away in a flash.

Jake grins.

Throwing her over his shoulder, he carries Annie across the room..

And HURLS her onto his bed.

He nudges the BIG BLUE BOOK OF RECOVERY (and a pile of AA pamphlets) out of sight..

And LEAPS on top of her.

ANNIE

Wait!

She jumps up.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

I came here to get cleaned up.

Jake gapes.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

And shouldn't you be offering me dinner or something first?

JAKE

Should I?

ANNIE

It would be polite.

JAKE

(Beat)

Well I'm obviously out of practice.

(CONTINUED)

Annie nods.

ANNIE

Yes, me...

She stops herself.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Yes.

INT. JAKE'S BATHROOM -- LATER

Annie's skirt is hanging to dry from the rail of the shower curtain.

INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Indexed rows of books and C.D'S.

Annie wears a pair of Jake's Manchester United football shorts as she enters the tidy living space.

And her eyes grow wide.

ANNIE

Oh my.

Lucifer is sniffing at a large animal hutch in the centre of the polished-wood floor.

Annie kneels by the dog and peers at a fat WHITE GUINEA-PIG.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

(Shouting)

Who's this?

Jake appears, holding a wooden spoon.

JAKE

That's Eric.

A smaller version of Eric runs into the main cage.

ANNIE

And this?

JAKE

That's little Eric.

Annie looks puzzled.

JAKE (CONT'D)

He's the king.

He nods to the wall.. To a gigantic POSTER OF ERIC CANTONA.

Annie stares.

Now she notices more posters of George Best and David Beckham. ..The room is a shrine to Manchester United.

Jake grins.

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN -- LATER

Jake has a pan of spaghetti bubbling on the stove.

..As Annie touches an INK-BLOT SHAPED MARK on his neck.

ANNIE
How very unusual. That's not your
average birthmark.

Jake picks up a strand of spaghetti.

JAKE
It's a tattoo.

Annie pulls a face.

JAKE (CONT'D)
All right, it's a fucking disaster.

He hurls the strand of spaghetti at the wall.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I tried to change it to 'Fred the
Red'.

He taps a framed picture of a red devil, as the spaghetti
slides down the wall.

ANNIE
So what did it used to be?

JAKE
Good question.

He wipes up the spaghetti.

JAKE (CONT'D)
A girls name, I don't remember.

ANNIE
You don't remember?

Jake tips the pan of spaghetti into a colander.

JAKE
Perhaps I'd rather forget.

He sits Annie down at the table, in front of a bottle of
wine and a jug of orange juice - and sees her horrified
face.

JAKE (CONT'D)
It was some time ago now, Annie.

He pours Annie some wine - and himself a glass of orange
juice.

JAKE (CONT'D)
There's a few things I don't
remember.

(CONTINUED)

Annie stares at Jake and knocks back the wine in one.

Jake plonks two steaming plates of spaghetti and sauce on the table and sits down opposite Annie.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Don't you have any skeletons?

Annie stares hard at the food.

..As droplets of sweat break out all over her forehead.

ANNIE

I forget.

Jake smiles and tops up her glass.

He eats.

Lucifer eats from a dish on the floor.

Annie stares at her food.

JAKE

Here let me help.

Jake leans over and picks up her fork - and starts to feed Annie spaghetti.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Open wide.

ANNIE

I shouldn't...

Jake stuffs her mouth with spaghetti.

JAKE

Good?

ANNIE

Mmmmm.

Annie is in rapture.

JAKE

Not bad for a geezer, huh?

He feeds Annie some more.

ANNIE

Mmmm, mmmm.

Annie is gorging on the spaghetti.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Oh wow.

Jake spills spaghetti down her chin and mops it up, laughing.

..As panic floods Annie's face.

(CONTINUED)

She stares at her plate in horror.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
I have to go.

JAKE
What?

EXT. LONDON STREET -- EVENING

Annie jogs along the pavement with Lucifer.

ANNIE
One-two-three-four-stupid-stupid-
stupid-cow. One-two-three-four..

EXT. PHARMACY -- EVENING

Annie races into a Chemists - leaving Lucifer outside.

EXT. PHARMACY -- CONTINUOUS

Lucifer wags his tail - as Annie runs out..

Clutching a white paper bag.

INT. ANNIE'S BED-SIT -- NIGHT

Annie runs into her bed-sit with the paper bag.

ANNIE (V.O.)
It was not my plan to get fat and
happy.

She closes the curtains.. Unplugs the telephone.. And locks
the door.

ANNIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Not that I liked to be living this
way.

She fills three pint glasses with tap water - and lines
them up on the floor.

ANNIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I was nearly forty for heavens
sake.

Cross-legged on the carpet, she opens the bag and takes
out two huge pill bottles. She tips the contents of a bottle -
hundreds of tablets - onto the floor.

ANNIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But that was the thing. I couldn't
stop now.

Scooping up a huge handful of pills, she throws them in
her mouth - grimaces - and gulps them down with the water.

She gags.

(CONTINUED)

ANNIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Didn't see I had any choice.

Scooping more tablets, she hurls them into her mouth - and is retching before she swallows.

ANNIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 How could I possibly have a
 boyfriend like normal people.

Holding her stomach, she rocks back and forth as a tear slides down her cheek.

ANNIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 No way was I fucking normal.

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Jake's cleaned up the kitchen and it's gleaming.

Now he's drying the dishes.

INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Jake sits staring into space. He looks quite lost.

Jumping up, he puts on music - and starts polishing the surfaces.

EXT. LONDON STREETS -- MORNING

The sun is shining in the Rush-Hour.

Cars, buses, people.

..And Annie. Squashed against the window on the top deck of a bus - gliding by in the traffic.

INT. MOVING BUS -- MORNING

Annie sits by the window of a bus - and suddenly clutches her stomach.

She glances at the gentleman beside her.

Her stomach lurches again.

ANNIE
 Excuse me.

Jumping up, she HURTLES downstairs to the DRIVER.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
 Stop the bus!

DRIVER
 I can't stop here.

(CONTINUED)

Annie is frantic, clutching her backside.

..Unaware of Jake sitting by the door.

ANNIE
(Screaming)
Stop the fucking bus!

Jake stands up.

JAKE
Annie?

The bus comes to an abrupt halt - causing uproar among the passengers..

As Annie stares at Jake in horror.

..And LEAPS off the bus.

EXT. LONDON STREET -- CONTINUOUS

Annie BELTS along the high street.

ANNIE (V.O.)
Yes this is a diet I'm so damn
good at, its kinda got out of hand.

INT. GREASY CAFE -- CONTINUOUS

Annie CRASHES into a Cafe, crying out to the PROPRIETOR.

ANNIE
You have a toilet?

PROPRIETOR
No. No toilet.

Annie SPRINTS past the bustling tables..

And into a door marked PRIVATE.

PROPRIETOR (CONT'D)
Hey!

INT. GREASY CAFE KITCHENS -- CONTINUOUS

Annie CANNON-BALLS through the kitchens..

The Proprietor at her heels.

PROPRIETOR
Stop!

..Startling TWO CHEFS.

CHEF
Wh..?

EXT. GREASY CAFE BACK YARD -- CONTINUOUS

The Two Chefs are flapping their arms - quarreling in Italian.

..As the Proprietor RAT-A-TAT-TAT's on a ramshackle shed.

A toilet FLUSHES.

EXT. GREASY CAFE -- CONTINUOUS

Annie flies out of the Cafe's front door - slap-bang into the waiting arms of Jake.

JAKE

Annie!

Annie stares open-mouthed.. And dashes away up the street.

..As the Proprietor chases out after her.

CAFE OWNER

And don't come back!

Jake stares at the Proprietor.

EXT. KENSINGTON HIGH STREET -- DAY

CAMILLA is beautiful, stylishly groomed and slightly on the plump side (36). She's loitering in the busy high street holding a placard that reads:

FREE BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE! Just for visiting our apartments!

..As Annie dashes up, out of breath.

CAMILLA

About bloody time - take over.

She thrusts the placard at Annie.

EXT. KENSINGTON HIGH STREET -- MOMENTS LATER

Annie is holding the FREE CHAMPAGNE! placard and Camilla is eating a yoghurt out of a pot with a plastic spoon, as they amble along the high street.

CAMILLA

Of course you must go out with him.

Annie shakes her head.

ANNIE

He's obsessed with football and keeps guinea-pigs in his living room.

(CONTINUED)

CAMILLA

And cooks. Has he got any mates?

ANNIE

I doubt it.

CAMILLA

Annie when was the last time that you actually had a date?

Annie shoves the placard onto Camilla..

ANNIE

Punters in sight!

..And leaps theatrically into the path of a MIDDLE AGED COUPLE.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Sir, Madam. Are you from London or on holiday here?

MIDDLE AGED WOMAN

Well we're just...

ANNIE

Fantastic! My name's Annie and today I'm promoting a holiday club. We're inviting couples like yourselves..

She gestures flamboyantly from one to the other.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

To come and tell us what you think. All we want is your opinion, but your opinion matters to us! So much so that we'll give you a whole bottle of champagne for just a few minutes of your time.

She pulls out a card..

ANNIE (CONT'D)

This is your invitation.

..And ushers the bemused couple down the street.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

This way.

As Jake LEAPS into her path.

JAKE

And this is your invitation!

He waves a football match ticket.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE (CONT'D)

I'm inviting, well to be quite honest I'm demanding, that the most intriguing woman I've ever met - that's you Annie - accompany me to a football match tonight.

Annie stares.

..As Camilla sticks her thumbs up behind Jake's back.

EXT. FOOTBALL GROUND -- EVENING

Manchester United and Chelsea football fans swarm outside Chelsea football ground, moving towards the gates.

INT/EXT. FOOTBALL GROUND -- EVENING

The football terraces are packed with singing, ROARING FANS. The noise is deafening.

..And Annie and Jake are watching the game, laughing and shouting.

INT/EXT. FOOTBALL GROUND -- LATER

The crowd erupts in JUBILATION as someone scores a goal.

And the fans dance in the terraces.

Jake picks up Annie and THROWS her into the air. The boys are doing well.

INT/EXT. FOOTBALL GROUND -- LATER

A loud "OOOH" from the terraces. The boys have let one in.

A battle-cry of disappointment. ..As Jake's head drops into his hands.

And Annie lays her head on his shoulder.

INT/EXT. FOOTBALL GROUND -- LATER

Fans are SCREAMING in the aisles and kissing total strangers.

Bellowing horns confirm their joy.. And POP MUSIC BLASTS from the speakers.

Jake is rapturous. The boys have done it. They've done good.

He turns to grab hold of Annie..

But she's nowhere to be seen.