

GROWN UP LOVE

Written by

Vicki Cargill & Adam Cargill

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10-page introduction.

www.twotalenthacks.com
twotalenthacks@gmail.com
+44 1434689212

FADE IN:

EXT. - LONDON, HELICOPTER SHOTS - ESTABLISHING

London's iconic landmarks: Tower Bridge, Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament, St Paul's Cathedral, O2 Arena, Piccadilly Circus.

We establish our city for a few shots, and then

CUT TO:

EXT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE, LONDON - DAY

A sturdy, brown stone building on a busy street. A discreet brass plaque announces this is the Heartstone Medical Clinic.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S EXAM ROOM - DAY

We see a Doctor's face with a head lamp turned on. He looks into the camera.

DOCTOR SPELUNKER

Hmm...

He turns his head to the left, then slowly to the right.

DOCTOR SPELUNKER (cont'd)

Ah, right...

He reaches up and turns off the light.

DOCTOR SPELUNKER (cont'd)

Well, Mrs. Stelling, I was correct!
You are indeed pregnant!
Congratulations!

CUT TO REVERSE

SHOT:

EM STELLING lies on a bed, in a medical gown, her feet in the stirrups. She is 35 and looks surprised and embarrassed.

EM

Oh shit...

CUT TO:

EXT. LEAFY SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Close in to see a building with "Mandrake Medical Surgery" sign out front.

CUT TO:

INT. DR MANDRAKE'S OFFICE - DAY

We see a woman sitting at her desk. She reaches down and hands a pamphlet across the desk. It reads "NHS - LIVING WITH DIABETES". She speaks to the camera.

DOCTOR MANDRAKE

So while we caught it early, it's still going to mean a major adjustment to your lifestyle. Diet, exercise and work habits will all have to change.

CUT TO REVERSE

SHOT:

ERIC STELLING, 37, American, and balding, sits and looks despondent.

ERIC

Oh shit...

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY LONDON STREET, AUTUMN - DAY

EM is walking along, on her phone.

ERIC (V/O)

Hi this is Eric Stelling, I'm not here at the moment. Please leave...

EM

Voicemail...Shit...

ERIC (V/O)

...back as soon as possible.

BEEP

EM
 (distracted)
 Hey, it's me. You know, your wife.
 Sorry, just had a bit of a...well,
 um, it's been an eventful morning.
 Now I'm off to meet Harriet at the
 concert hall. I'll see you tonight,
 and I think you should --

She absentmindedly walks into an intersection and a black cab nearly runs her over. She jumps back from the curb.

EM (cont'd)
 (shouts)
 FUCK ME!
 (beat
 into phone)
 Shit! No, not that. Well, we can if
 you want to. I mean, I'd like dinner
 first, but...
 (agonized
 embarrassment)
 Shit. Look, I'll speak to you later.

She throws the phone in her bag.

CUT TO:

EXT. LEAFY LONDON SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

ERIC emerges from the Doctor's office building. He reaches into his jacket for his phone, walking along the street, and dials.

EM (V/O)
 Hello, you've reached Em Stelling
 Of Stellar Events. Please..

ERIC sighs and hangs up. He texts her instead:

ERIC (TEXT)
 Hey - checking in. i think you are at
 the hall now, but i wanted to talk.
 never mind. hope it's going well
 there. see you at home.

He sees that he has a voicemail. As he walks along, he plays it.

EM (V/O)
...FUCK ME! Shit! No, not that. Well,
we can if you want to. I mean, I'd
like dinner first, but...

ERIC doubles over in laughter...

CUT TO:

Opening MONTAGE.

A) A black tie party staged at an event hall. We can see British politicians, media people and socialites everywhere. There are billboards all around proclaiming "la Rochelle".

DEE SHIPLEY, an attractive woman in her late 30s, is elegant sophistication personified. Black knee length dress, sparkles, understated. Hair perfectly coiffed, dripping with jewels. She is confident, smiling and working the room with a vengeance.

Behind her are two minions: ALEC, 25 and gorgeous in a tuxedo, is carrying file folders. Next to him and handing out cards, press packets and trying to manage a large, over-the-shoulder bag, is EM. EM is dressed in a daring, plunging, tight blue dress that is totally wrong for her job. She looks stunning.

We see ERIC approach DEE, wearing a tuxedo. He kisses her on each cheek and hands her an emblazoned BluffPost business card. She nods, smiling, then stops and looks at him. She turns and beckons EM forward, and introduces them. She smiles and leaves.

EM is flustered and tries to hand him a folder when the bag slips off her shoulder, nearly taking the dress with it. ERIC is smitten, and grabs for the bag. The camera closes on their faces, close to each other, as they smile.

B) ERIC & EM's living room at dusk. ERIC is moving into EM's flat. There are boxes everywhere and all is disorder and chaos. ALEC, 25 and fit, sits with DEE on a sofa, the two of them holding hands. FREUD, a large mutt, sits next to EM on the other couch. EM looks amused but tired.

ERIC walks in from the kitchen with a tray of cold drinks.

ERIC motions FREUD to move so he can sit next to EM. FREUD bares his teeth. ERIC yells, FREUD barks. Everyone else laughs. EM shrugs her shoulders.

C) A rather ostentatious, 5 carat diamond ring on EM's finger. We are at a jewelers and as a SALES CLERK looks on like the cat who has eaten the canary, ERIC looks glum.

EM turns her hand this way and that, looks at ERIC and smiles. ERIC asks the CLERK a question. The CLERK responds and ERIC bursts out laughing and looks at EM, who also laughs. They look at the CLERK, who is standing with grave seriousness.

ERIC and EM glance at each other, EM removes the ring with exaggerated care and they place it on the table, backing out of the store. Once outside they burst out laughing again and ERIC tries to kiss EM. EM pushes him away, extending her hand mockingly to him showing no ring. ERIC scowls then they both laugh and walk down the street.

D) ERIC arrives with flowers at an office one day for EM. DEE emerges from her office with two tall men in grey suits, one of whom is SIR JEREMY WYATT. DEE kisses the other man on the lips and SIR JEREMY on the cheek. The men turn to leave, and SIR JEREMY lingers for a moment, leering at HARRIET, EM's secretary. HARRIET is 23, a "Sloane Ranger". HARRIET smiles at him invitingly.

E) ERIC, in front of a news camera, getting ready for a remote interview. He looks confident and professional, holding an orange folder. As the countdown hits one, we cut to the news feed. The chyron reads

'BluffPost Exclusive: "Ex"Chequor-Gate: Expenses Fraud Scandal Claims First Senior Minister'

"Eric Stelling - Senior Director, BluffPost UK"

ERIC begins speaking.

F) EM, meeting in a conference room with a number of men in dishevelled suits. They stand up and shake her hand, sign a paper in front of them, then walk out. EM turns to HARRIET and nods. HARRIET presses a button on her laptop and we cut to a newspaper story headline

"UNICEF Children's Night Handed To STELLAR PRODUCTIONS."

G) EM standing outside the house as ERIC's CAR, a two-seater sports model, is towed away. As the car moves off, it reveals ERIC, standing disconsolately, shouting into his phone. A man waits patiently next to him. As ERIC shouts, he is obviously hung up on. The man reaches out and takes the phone from ERIC. He then holds out his hand and ERIC takes his BLUFFPOST lanyard ID and hands it to him. ERIC turns and puts his head on EM's shoulder.

FREUD barks at and chases the man as he walks to his car.

DISSOLVE TO
WHITE:

FADE IN:

INT. LARGE CIRCULAR THEATRE (ALBERT HALL) - DAY

In the background, on stage, we see various designers and technicians wandering around. A large set for a musical is being worked on in the background.

To the fore, near the sound board, EM is standing with HARRIET and the two of them are speaking with DEREK TUPP, a dapper man in a bow-tie. Next to them on the wall is a placard for "CARZZ!! The Musical!!"

EM is exasperated, HARRIET is ultimately self-absorbed, and DEREK stands laconically.

DEREK
(sardonically
condescending to EM)
Well, you see, what happened is that when it came time to actually book the hall for an event, they did, while you did not. In your literature, you instructed us to direct all correspondence to Ms Marriet.

EM
...But what I don't understand is how something like this could have happened...I mean, it's a pretty big deal. It's a benefit for dying children put on by UNICEF--

HARRIET
(interrupting)
--Well I did everything at my end. This is the first I've heard of any issue. This is my career we are talking about. You know how important it is. And now they've got some experimental theatre piece where everyone is dressed as a car?

HARRIET looks at the set and double takes.

HARRIET (cont'd)
 ...Bloody Hell, is that a Maserati?
 It's just like Daddy's!...

HARRIET wanders off towards the set.

CUT TO:

DEREK and EM.

DEREK
 We sent multiple emails which went
 unanswered, sent registered post and
 heard nothing. Finally, we left
 thirteen voice messages, at which
 time Mr Julien...

He sweeps his hand to a poster of a dapper mid-50s gent
 standing next to the Prime Minister.

DEREK (cont'd)
 Simply swept into my office and told
 me all about CARZZ!!...

In the background, we see HARRIET, now dressed in a Maserati
 costume, perform some wild interpretive dance.

EM
 (sighs)
 There must be something you can do?
 What we are doing changes lives! It's
 a bit more than a collection of Ford
 Fiestas lamenting how hard it is to
 have supportive parents in suburbia!

DEREK
 I am afraid not. Not without a time
 machine.
 (beat)
 That being said, they do seem to be
 constructing one stage left...

We see HARRIET sweep across the stage towards the Time
 Machine and climb on top of it waving a flag which reads
 "FOSSIL FUELS FOREVER" and mime being in a wind tunnel.

EM
 You're not even giving me time to
 find a new venue! Do you want me to
 get Angelina Jolie down here? Is that
 what you want?

DEREK
 (Lighting up)
 Absolutely! I'd love to meet her!

EM
 Well she's not coming - she would
 hate you and all this--

EM waves her hand at the stage in anger. We see HARRIET wave back.

DEREK
 Regardless of Miss Jolie's feelings,
 there is simply nothing I can do. The
 promotion must begin as soon as
 possible for CARZZ.

EM
 Well let me tell you Mr Tupp, I think
 you are making a huge mistake. Our
 event is about saving lives, making a
 difference to whole communities. You
 are missing a tremendous opportunity
 to increase the profile of your
 theatre. And you won't meet the
 Queen.

DEREK
 I've had the pleasure of Her
 Majesty's company before...
 (under his breath)
 it's enough to turn one Republican.

EM
 Ah, professional AND social suicide
 is what you're after!

DEREK
 No more damaging than losing a venue
 6 weeks before a global fundraising
 event, hmm?

We hear a shout from the stage. HARRIET is now riding in a
 mock of a hot air balloon emblazoned with the phrase
 "CONSUME!"

EM
 (to herself)
 ...I have to fire her. And she is
 sleeping with our investor.

DEREK
 (through gritted
 teeth)
 Get her off my stage...

We see HARRIET touching down from the balloon.

CUT TO:

INT. ERIC'S HOME OFFICE - DAY

There are bundles of yellowing newsprint, 7 coffee mugs with stained sides on a messy, unkempt desk. One of the mugs is obviously from the White House, and is filled with sugar cubes.

On the wall we see a framed "BLUFFPOST" report: "Bluffpost Exposes Washington Corruption." Another one below it reads "BLUFFPOST UK? STELLING IN TALKS TO LEAD UK TEAM!"

We see ERIC, sitting at his desk, on the phone. Sitting next to him on the other office chair is FREUD, the dog.

ERIC
 I understand that you are doing your best for me, and I'm grateful. But no more interviews with red-tops, Bernie.
 (beat)
 Because it's just not a good fit, that's why...

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The room has a giant red billboard for "THE DAILY SUN". ERIC sits at a table, with a glass of water in front of him. He is dressed in a suit. On the other side sit three men. The man on the left is slightly more crumpled. His nameplate reads "Mr Grant - Photography".

ERIC
 ...so in the end, headquarters lost their nerve and settled, and I wound up taking the blame.

MR GRANT
 You know, I think I hacked your voicemail on that case...

ERIC stares at him. Awkward silence ensues...

CUT TO:

INT. ERIC'S HOME OFFICE - (PRESENT DAY)

ERIC
 Right Bernie...Well keep an ear out.
 I'm desperate.
 (Beat)
 Whoa, not THAT desperate...

He hangs up the phone and picks up a file from the pile of papers.

ERIC (cont'd)
 Right. Back to work, then. Or what I
 do now instead. Christ, How did it
 come to this?

He opens a file labelled "ADULT CREATIVE WRITING!"

He groans and reclines in his chair. He hears a slurping sound, looks down. FREUD is busily licking his own balls.

ERIC (cont'd)
 You aren't helping, Buddy.
 (beat)
 Wow, you're really going at it...

ERIC begins aimlessly tidying his desk.

ERIC (cont'd)
 I mean, you have someone to look
 after you, feed you, clothe you. You
 have the best chair in my office.
 When you fart, people laugh, instead
 of saying, "Sir, please leave the
 waiting room now" or "Eric, I don't
 love you anymore."
 (beat)
 Why is that, Freud?

CUT TO:

FREUD, really going to town.

ERIC (CONT'D) (O/S)
 Well Buddy, you're kinda making me
 wish I was double jointed.