

INT. CHURCH. DAY.

JAMES is in a suit, chewing and fumbling with his carnation. Cut to entrance: KATE is there, in bridal gear, on the arm of a solemn-looking old man. The music strikes up.

GRAMS: Maneater, Daryl Hall & John Oates

KATE

(whispered shout) Guy!

Cut to GUY, hand-miming a nag. He changes the tape. MIRANDA is next to him, camcorder in hand.

GUY

Well, this is a turn-up, eh?

James is trying to stick his carnation back in. He takes the gum out of his mouth and repairs it. Kate approaches.

Swimming-reality effect: a vaseline-tinted montage of his relationship with Kate - the first time he saw her; their first heart-to-heart; swelling orchestra ...

VICAR

Are you all right?

James comes to and finds ... it's all real. The VICAR is shaking his shoulder. Kate takes her place beside James.

VICAR

(under breath) Good luck.

Kate and James smile at each other nervously. James gulps.

GUY

(whisper to Miranda) Is it just me, or is it a bit pointless having a wedding rehearsal when neither the bride nor the groom can make it?

MIRANDA

It's not just Charles and Emma that need it. The best man, the parents, the ushers need to know what to do as well. Speaking of which, shouldn't you be practising your ushing?

GUY

Bride, or groom? Bride? Or *groom*?
Groom ... or bride? (sarcastic) Oh no -
I'll never get it right!

VICAR

Right, so, at this point, the father
of the bride stands there ... that's
right. Now you should be here -
that's right, and you should be there
... except you won't be, because you're
the best man, is that right?

KATE

And I won't be here, I'll be ... back
there somewhere. Not wearing this,
obviously. My dress is way better.
It's sort of -

VICAR

I shall be sure to bring my camera.
So then we move to the vows: "We are
gathered here today, blah blah ..."

KATE

Mo, don't say "blah blah", say the
words.

VICAR

I'm sorry?

KATE

You don't want to fluff your lines in
front of 200 people, do you?

VICAR

I have done this once or twice
before, you know.

KATE

Better safe than sorry? Oh go on.
Pleeease.

VICAR

(sighs) Very well ... Do you, Emma
Albertine Cox ...

KATE

Could you say my name instead?

VICAR

What?

KATE

My name. Katherine Jane Flaherty.

VICAR

Has there been a change of plan?

KATE

Look, if Emma can't be bothered to
turn up to her own wedding rehearsal,
she can't expect to have her name
read out.

JAMES

Kate! She's broken her collarbone!

KATE

Whatever. I'm here and she's not.

VICAR

Well, if no one objects ... Do you,
Katherine Jane Flaherty ... take this
man, Charles - ah ... ?

JAMES

(embarrassed) James Alexander Deacon.

VICAR

Take James Alexander Deacon, to love,
honour and obey, in sickness and in
health, till death do you part?

Kate jumps excitedly and squeals.

KATE

I do! I've *always* wanted to say that!

VICAR

(hurrying) And do you, James Alexander Deacon, take Katherine Jane Flaherty to be your lawful wedded wife.

JAMES

I do. (aside) And I haven't.

Sound of sobbing. Pan to EMMA'S DAD, in floods of tears.

GUY

(whispering to Miranda) Jesus, if he's like that now, what's he going to be like tomorrow?

VICAR

You may kiss the bride.

James turns to kiss Kate. As his lips near hers, Kate takes evasive action, and he ends up kissing her shoulder.

KATE

Hey! It's only a *rehearsal*.

As the crowd breaks up, GUY approaches.

GUY

You lucky sod. I'd give my right arm to kiss that ... right arm.

INT. WANNABE LIVING ROOM. DAY.

Caption: "That morning ..." JAMES is on the house phone, fingering a magazine. guy wanders in.

JAMES

Hi, this is a message for the manager of the Laughing Cow. My name's James Deacon, and I am the *funniest man on the planet*. (shout) At least, I might be, if I ever got any *gigs* to practise my material at. So, in the

name of all that is holy, give me a
break for once in your life and
return my shitting call!

GUY

You ever thought about applying for a
job with Samaritans?

JAMES

I am *not* in the mood. Now give me
some good news and tell me you
remembered to book the hotel.

GUY

(long pause) Ah. Now. See. Almost.

JAMES

Satan's cock! Why do I bother asking
you to do these things?

James picks up the phone and starts dialling.

GUY

(hurt) So you've got an excuse to
shout at me when I forget?

JAMES

One sodding job ...

While James is on the phone, Guy picks up the magazine.

GUY

Contents page ... contents page ...
(flicking forward) Crikey, they need
a contents page to tell you where the
contents page is.

James slams the phone down.

JAMES

Well, thanks to you, there are only
three rooms left in the hotel, so one
of us has to stay at the B&B down the
road.

GUY

Not nervous about your speech, are you, by any chance?

JAMES

(holding up fingers to reveal chewed nails) No, I just donated generously to the Blue Peter fingernail appeal.

GUY

Come on. You've been doing stand-up for what ... two years?

JAMES

Five.

GUY

What could be scarier than standing up in front of 200 people you don't know and trying to make them laugh?

JAMES

Standing up in front of 200 people I do know and trying to make them laugh.

Guy nods in agreement.

JAMES

OK, I'm off to the hairdresser. And if I come back and find you haven't done the *other* thing I asked you to do, you'll be taking a bath with your electric guitar.

GUY

Good as done! I mean, done!

The door slams. Guy carries on reading the magazine.

GUY (CONT)

What other thing?

He examines the living room table.

GUY (CONT)

I must have written it down
somewhere. I always write these
things down.

He gets up, goes through the bin, checks Post-It notes by the
phone, then pats his body. He spots writing on his inner wrist.

GUY (CONT)

Aha! ("Book ... hotel." bollocks.

He starts examining ever more obscure parts of his body.

GUY

Bollocks.

EXT. OUTSIDE WANNABE FRONT DOOR. DAY.

JAMES pauses by the front gate and smiles.

JAMES

Ahh. "That other thing I asked you to
do" ... I love me sometimes.

INT. GYM CORRIDOR

Sign: "The Mr Muscle Workout". Pan down to subhead on sign: "No
stain, no pain!"

INT. GYM.

KATE, MIRANDA (and others we don't see) are wearing aprons,
rubber gloves and scrubbing away at the gym skirting board.

INSTRUCTOR (OFF)

And wash, rinse, repeat ... and wash,
rinse, repeat. That's it, ladies.
Keep those elbows high.

KATE

I'm so excited! I've never been to a
wedding.

MIRANDA

Me too! I mean, I've been to

weddings, but I've never *filmed* one before.

KATE

Isn't it weird, having to work at your friend's wedding?

MIRANDA

I can't really enjoy it anyway, if Gilbert's not there. Stupid ebola outbreak.

INSTRUCTOR

That's it. Do the shake and vac, and put the fitness back!

KATE

Will there be single men?

MIRANDA

I thought you had a boyfriend?

KATE

It, ah, didn't work out. After we had sex, he asked me if he was the best I'd ever had.

MIRANDA

Ugh! No wonder you dumped him.

KATE

No, he dumped me. I told him he was about 27th equal.

MIRANDA

Ah. Well ... (trying to be supportive) some men have very fragile egos.

KATE

That's the thing! Like I told him, 27th equal is actually pretty good.

MIRANDA

Oh. Well, if you borrow a good book from the library, you've got to expect a few people to have taken it out before.

KATE

Quite!

MIRANDA

(innocently) And honestly, who cares if it's got a couple of coffee stains and a few pages are stuck together?

INT. WANNABE FLAT.

JAMES enters. He has a new, short haircut. GUY is lounging. MIRANDA is fiddling with large pieces of card in the background.

MIRANDA

Wow! I love your hair.

JAMES

You can touch it if you like.

MIRANDA

(ruffling it) Ahh, puppy.

GUY

(to Miranda, hopefully) Wow! I love your ass.

MIRANDA

Guy, remember what we talked about? You fucking off and dying? (to James) So, you nervous about your speech?

JAMES

Given the choice between doing my speech and spending a year in a dark cave full of spiders with only mould to eat, urine to drink and Morrissey

for company, I'd take the cave.

MIRANDA

Come on, you'll be fine. You're really funny.

JAMES

I'm more worried about being *cheery*. I have to toast the happy couple, and I don't know if I can do it.

GUY

Is that because you still want to shag Emma?

JAMES

It's not that, gutterbrain. It's just, like ... we're turning into our parents, and we're having a big party to celebrate. (to guy) And I *never* wanted to shag Emma.

MIRANDA

But they love each other. It's only natural.

JAMES

Is it? Do giraffes get married? Do sea slugs sign away their youth and freedom for a set of tea towels and a dinner service they'll use twice?

GUY

Sea slugs are hermaphrodites.

JAMES

That's not the point. Anyway, how do you know that?

KATE enters, wearing a revealing outfit. She does a twirl. James and Miranda are dumbstruck. Guy drools a little.

KATE

What d'ya think?

GUY

(delighted) No one told me it was a Rocky Horror theme wedding!

KATE

What's wrong?

JAMES

It's very *striking*, Kate ... it's just not very ... appropriate.

MIRANDA

What sort of look were you after?

KATE

Sort of ... slutty, but tasteful.

GUY

Well, you're halfway there.

KATE

I hate you!

Kate turns to leave.

JAMES

Don't listen to him, Kate. Anyway, we need to talk. See, we're all booked into the hotel ... except one of us has to stay in a B&B, because *someone* forgot to book the rooms.

GUY

"Guy forgot to book the rooms". How come you never go on about the times I get stuff right? "Guy remembered to clean the bath", "Guy remembered to turn off the oven"?

JAMES

So, obviously, Guy will be staying at

the B&B.

GUY

Hey! Just because it's my ... (tailing off) fault ...

MIRANDA

No, we should do this fairly. I know
- let's draw straws!

She hurries off.

JAMES

What are those bits of card for?

KATE

Miranda's storyboards for the
wedding.

JAMES

You can't storyboard a wedding!

GUY

It's all right, it has a happy
ending.

Miranda returns with straws protruding from her hand.

MIRANDA

Come on then. Let fate be our master!

Kate goes first, and gets long. Guy gets long. Miranda gets long. James sighs, and draws. His is also long.

MIRANDA

Brilliant! Now none of us has to stay
at the B&B!

JAMES

No, Rand, one of us still has to stay
at the B&B. But first, one of us has
to make one of the straws shorter.

MIRANDA

Oh.

GUY

I still can't believe they won't let my band play.

JAMES

Guy. You're an experimental thrash-garage/bluegrass combo.

GUY

No, we've had a change of direction, and now we're an experimental thrash-garage/goth band.

JAMES

I believe my point stands.

MIRANDA

Let's try again.

They all draw quickly. Kate gets the short one.

KATE

(sulky) Why does the shortest one have to lose? That's discrimination.

JAMES

Those are the rules, Kate. Right. Guy. Go and iron your shirt.

GUY

How do you know I haven't -

James extends his finger. Guy leaves without further protest.

JAMES

Rand, go and help Kate get dressed. I mean changed. I need to practise my speech.

He pulls cue cards from his pocket. Miranda leaves. Kate hangs back briefly.

KATE

James ...

JAMES

Hm?

KATE

If you borrowed a book from the library - a really good book - it wouldn't bother you if lots of people had taken it out before, would it?

JAMES

(distracted) I don't use libraries. I like my books pristine.

EXT. OUTSIDE CHURCH.

A muddle of people chatting. MIRANDA is beyond them, holding a camcorder and trying to direct everyone.

MIRANDA

(ad lib) No, no - *you* need to be over there and *you* need to be there ... You! you with the hat! No, not that hat ...

No one is listening. She sighs and shoulders the camcorder.

MIRANDA

And ... action!

Camcorder POV. We pan across the muddle of nice hats and animated conversation. KATE joins James.

JAMES

Wow. That dress is *much* more ... appropriate.

KATE

Thank you. What's up with you? you look like you're at a funeral, not a wedding!

JAMES

I am, in a way.

KATE

Oh, forget about the blooming speech.

JAMES

It's not the speech. I just feel ...
this isn't the beginning of
something, it's the end.

KATE

How do you mean?

JAMES

OK. In fairytales, when does the
wedding happen?

KATE

At the end.

JAMES

Precisely. Getting married is like ...
act three. End of story. Move along
now, nothing else to see here.

KATE

That's horrible!

JAMES

You don't think I should put that in
my speech, then?

KATE

No!

James sighs, sorts through cue cards, then throws one out. GUY
appears. He is wearing an iPod, and shouting.

GUY

God. There are some *amazing*-looking
women at this wedding.

JAMES

Guy. You're shouting.

GUY

You what? (gesturing at nearby blonde with small bum) Blimey. You could paint that silver and use it as a toast rack.

The woman concerned turns around, looks appalled, and huffily moves away. James buries his face in his hands.

KATE

Never mind unreconstructed - you weren't even given planning permission, were you, Guy?

James yanks out guy's earphones and confiscates the iPod.

JAMES

Quite. (bundling him away) Haven't you got some ushering to do?

GUY

Oo! Oo! Door monkey go!

Guy scampers off like a monkey.

INT. CHURCH.

Inside the door, GUY is ushering people in. MICHELLE approaches.

GUY

(bored) Bride or groom?

MICHELLE

Bride.

GUY

That way.

A young couple approach.

GUY

Bride or groom?

The man and woman look at each other.

JACOB

Well ... sort of both, really.

GUY

Mm. (thinks) Well then ... you go that side, and you go that side.

The couple split off and go where told, looking confused. The camera pans across the congregation to the front of the crowd, where JAMES and CHARLES are waiting.

VICAR

And we've definitely got the right couple today?

James nods. The wedding march starts up. Emma and Charles clutch hands and smile lovingly.

VICAR

Ahem. We are gathered here today ...

The vicar's voice fades to a drone. The camera moves to James's ear and we hear what he hears: a cacophony of background comments, as if someone changed the inputs on a mixer.

ASSORTED VOICES

Doesn't she look lovely? ... It won't last, you know ... I'm telling you, she's pregnant ... (MAD WOMAN) Where are we? ... (CHILD) Daddy, my shoes hurt ... a male cough ... (MAD WOMAN) Why has everyone gone quiet?... (WOMAN) Doesn't everyone look smart? ... (CHILD) This is boring ... (MAD WOMAN) Who's that man in the dress? I don't recognise him ... a baby cries ... EMMA'S DAD bursts into tears ... I don't believe that rubbish about her falling off her bike. I reckon he knocks her about.

The sound normalises.

CHARLES

I do.

VICAR

You may kiss the bride.

The happy couple do so. there is general applause, cheers.

MIRANDA

That was great, people, fabulous.
Now, could we just try that one more
time, only with a bit more *passion*?

EXT. OUTSIDE CHURCH.

PETE, the wedding photographer, is waving people around. He is quite short, late 20s/30, average-looking, and a cockney git.

PETE

Right, can I have the bride and the
bride's family over 'ere?

Pete is about to shout again when he catches sight of KATE.

PETE

(under breath) Hold up! (to Kate)
What's your name, love?

KATE

Me? I'm Kate.

PETE

Can I ... can I just get a couple of
shots of you first? Just you, by
yourself.

KATE

(flattered) Really?

PETE

Yeah, this lot'll be ages sortin'
'emselves out.

KATE

Well ... What do I do?

PETE

Just act natural. Be yourself. Yeah.
(he starts snapping away) That's
right, babe. (slightly pervy) Oh,

yeah. The camera loves you, darlin'!

Kate starts posing in model fashion, pouting, etc. Montage of fashion/glamour stills of Kate, some with wind machine. She bares her shoulder. Suddenly the music cuts short.

JAMES

Ahem.

Pete whirls around to see JAMES waiting, arms crossed.

JAMES (CONT)

Do you think we could possibly get a couple of shots of the bride's family now?

PETE

Of course. I was just, er ... adjusting my focal length.

Pete slopes off and GUY arrives.

JAMES

Who is that guy, anyway? Doesn't look like a professional.

GUY

Charles's brother's mate, I think. Friends call him Tripod.

JAMES

I hope that's because of his equipment. (beat) Let me rephrase.

INT. RECEPTION HALL.

The guests are queueing up to meet the couple's families in the background. KATE and JAMES are in a corner.

KATE

(excited) So what happens now?

JAMES

You just sort of mill around and say, "Beautiful service, wasn't it?"

KATE

Can you stop being Mr Grinchy
Scrooge-face for one second? Can't
you at least be happy for them?

JAMES

I *am* happy for them. I just ... can't
see myself doing it, that's all.

KATE

What, never?

JAMES

Getting married is like ... an
admission of defeat. It's like
saying, "I hereby give up trying to
do anything special with my life." I
don't know ... I just don't want to get
to the stage where the high point of
my week is getting a parking space
close to the entrance at Ikea.

KATE

I'm not sure I can enjoy this wedding
with you.

She leaves in a huff.

JAMES

Too much, huh?

James sighs, pulls out his cue cards, and tosses two more in the
bin. SEB approaches, a smooth, sporty type.

SEB

Hi. So ... what do you do?

JAMES

Oh, hi. I'm a comedian.

SEB

Heh. Tell us a joke then.

JAMES

Well ... this isn't really the place.

SEB

Oh, go on. Just your best one.

JAMES

They ... really work better on stage.

SEB

So, not a very funny comedian, then?

JAMES

All ... right.

James takes off his jacket and throws it down. He comes round to face Seb, moves him back a step, and sticks his chin out.

JAMES

Good evening, my name's James Deacon.
How are you all tonight?

SEB

(folds arms) Get on with it.

JAMES

(ruffled) I, er, saw an observatory
today.

Seb is stonily silent.

JAMES (CONT)

That gave it a taste of its own
medicine.

Seb looks unimpressed.

JAMES (CONT)

My dad's a bishop ... It's not that
he's been ordained into the church,
just that he can only move
diagonally.

SEB

(v hostile) Get off.

JAMES

Who with? you?

SEB

(venomous) You're shit.

JAMES

I'm shit? At least my jokes are more original than your heckles.

SEB

I'm not heckling you, I'm telling you you're shit.

JAMES

Oh! Right. *What?*

Just as it looks as if things might escalate, MIRANDA jumps in.

MIRANDA

Oh! There you are. Come here, there's someone I want you to ... (as they pass out of range) not get killed by.

She drags him away past KATE and GUY.

KATE

So, if you were in a library, and you saw a really good book on the shelf, would it bother you if lots of people had borrowed it before?

GUY

Meh, I order mine off the internet. Two or three at a time, usually.

INT. DINING ROOM.

JAMES and KATE approach their table together. Kate sits. As James takes his seat, RAFF, the man in the next seat, rises to shake his hand. He is an overconfident City type.

RAFF

Ibbotson. Raff.

JAMES

James.

RAFE

(unabashed) So what do you do?

JAMES

I'm a ... (sigh) stand-up comedian.

RAFE

(amused, smiles at table) Tell us a joke, then.

JAMES

(fiercely) What do you do, sorry?

RAFE

Banking. Goldman Sachs.

JAMES

Oh, well then ... invest some of my money in a corrupt diamond-mining regime, will you? Then I'll tell you a joke.

Rafe turns to neighbour, turns back and laughs.

RAFE

Heh. You're quite funny.

He and his neighbour are now perched on elbows, as if awaiting the next joke. Exasperated, James sighs and turns away.

JAMES

Oh God. I'm not sure I can survive two hours of small talk.

Pan across room. At GUY's table, everyone is playing poker. Guy is giving instructions to a woman.

GUY

No, you can't fold before you've put in the blinds. You're the big blind, which is twice as big as the small blind.

Pan across/time-shift to MIRANDA's table. A fat, timid-looking man, PAUL, is eating. Miranda is filming him up close, for ages. he has no idea where to look or what to do.

PAUL

Am I ... doing all right?

MIRANDA

You're doing great. Just keep eating.

He continues as before, only more uncertain. Pan across/time-shift to Guy's table. Guy lays down his cards.

GUY

Read 'em and weep, ladies!

Everyone throws their cards on the table in disgust. Guy sweeps up the pot - those sweets you get in cute little bags.

GUY

Come to papa!

As he is stuffing them in his pockets, he notices James passing.

GUY

Jimbo! How's it going?

JAMES

(looking down) About every five minutes.

GUY

At least you've got plenty to look at on your table. How come you get set up with Reese Witherspoon, and I get Rhys Ifans?

JAMES

I have not been "set up" with her. We just happen to be seated near each other. Anyway, I'm here with Kate.

GUY

Has anyone told him that?

He points to Kate, in conversation with PETE. James dashes over.

KATE

James, you remember Pete? He was just telling me he's done some work for ... (shy giggle) top-shelf magazines.

JAMES

(mutters) Must be weird, working for magazines you can't reach.

PETE

What was that?

JAMES

I said, 'That's unbelievably cool.'

KATE

(starstruck) Yeah ...

Someone in the background starts waving at James.

JAMES

Look. It's nearly speech time. I'll ... catch you after.

PETE

Yeah. See ya, mate.

KATE

Good luck!

James reluctantly tears himself away.

KATE

So, Pete ... If you were in a library, and you saw a really good book on the shelf, would it bother you if lots of people had borrowed it before?

PETE

Not really. I usually just flick through the first few pages and then chuck 'em anyway.

INT. DINING HALL.

EMMA'S DAD is giving his speech. The crowd is quiet.

EMMA'S DAD

(Series of strangled sobs
approximating real speech. He
finishes by breaking down.)

A hesitant round of applause. JAMES stands up.

JAMES

Thank you, Graham, for your beautiful
... words. Now. Before I start, I
should explain that, for the benefit
of our Nigerian friends, Joshua -

James gestures at a jovial-looking man who stands up and bows.

JAMES (CONT)

- will be translating. Ahem. First of
all, I'm sure you'll all agree with
me when I say how amazing the bride
looks today.

General applause, a couple of whistles.

JAMES (CONT)

(indicating neck brace) And look.
Charles has even bought her a collar
in case she gets lost.

A short, polite ripple of laughter.

JOSHUA

(he reads, from a card, taking about
the same time.)

The Nigerian section of the crowd descends into hysterics.

JAMES

Now. There's a reason I'm the best
man tonight. And that is, Charles and
Emma actually shared their first kiss
in the back of my car.

The crowd gives a half-hearted 'woo'.

JAMES

At least, they *told* me it was just a kiss. Now that I think of it, the steering column has veered to the left a bit ever since.

The crowd barely titters.

JOSHUA

(reading, from a card, apparently the same joke)

The Nigerian guests laugh even louder. One falls on the floor. James frowns, and turns to his next card.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

JAMES

Right, before I finish, we have a message ... it's a fax from Uncle Ian, in Costa Rica, and he says he's really sorry he couldn't make it and he hopes you have a wonderful day.

JOSHUA

(reading, from a card, apparently the same joke)

The Nigerian section of the crowd hoot with laughter. They are wiping their eyes, holding their sides, etc. James chucks his cards on the table and sits down. The hysteria continues.

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR TOILETS.

JAMES is making his way to the toilet. JOSHUA is coming out. He smiles and shakes James's hand enthusiastically.

JOSHUA

My friend! You are a very amusing man.

JAMES

Not as amusing as you, apparently.
What did you say to them?

JOSHUA

Exactly what you said! With one or two ... embellishments. (leaving) But your material is great. Perhaps you should try doing it professionally.

JAMES

Oh. Thank you. Thank you so much.
What sort of embellishments?

He is about to pursue Joshua when MIRANDA appears, breathless.

MIRANDA

Bad news.

JAMES

That'll make a nice change from all the good news then.

MIRANDA

The band have pulled out. They've split up.

JAMES

What? *Why?*

MIRANDA

Creative differences, they said.

JAMES

But they're a covers band! Have they *all* gone?

MIRANDA

The pianist might still be here.

JAMES

This is a disaster!

MIRANDA

We could ask Guy to play.

JAMES

(ignoring) They'll never forgive me!

MIRANDA

He brought his guitar.

JAMES

I've got it! we could ask Guy ...

Cut to Miranda, looking relieved.

JAMES (CONT)

... to teach someone to play. How long have we got?

MIRANDA

Five minutes.

JAMES

We ask Guy to teach someone *young* to play. They learn fast. (grabs passing boy, about 8) You'll do. how do you fancy being a rock star?

The kid looks panicky.

MIRANDA

James ...

JAMES

You're right. He'll just teach him to play the same rubbish he does.
(pushes kid away) There must be something we can do.

Miranda looks at her watch and sighs.

INT. DINING ROOM.

The tables have been cleared. GUY is on stage, tuning up. He whispers to the PIANIST, who is quite elderly. The pianist nods.

JAMES

(hands over eyes) I can't look.

MIRANDA

He promised he wouldn't play his own material.

Cut to stage. A small crowd is gathering in front. Guy is blowing into the microphone.

GUY

(to pianist) Right, I think we're set.

PIANIST

(funky) Let's get freaky on their asses.

GUY

(strums) This one's for the happy couple.

Guy proceeds to sing a hauntingly beautiful rendition of Wichita Lineman. Just before he gets to the chorus, CHARLES leads EMMA on to the dance floor. They gaze lovingly into each other's eyes.

GUY

And I need you more than want you ...
and I want you for all ti-i-ime ...

The crowd are loving it. More gather. KATE and Miranda beam.

MIRANDA

(to James) See?

James peeps out cautiously. Time-shift. Guy is singing a jazzy version of Yeh Yeh, and everyone is bopping furiously. James's face is a picture.

Time-shift. James is standing with the same expression. Guy walks up, looking a bit sweaty.

GUY

Sorry about that, mate.

JAMES

(coming out of daze) Wh ... what for?

GUY

I think I did one too many
Scaramouches in Bohemian Rhapsody.

JAMES

No ... no, really, Guy. You were ...
amazing. you actually *impressed* me.

GUY

I'm not sure you're supposed to use
the word "actually" when you
compliment someone.

JAMES

Of course, I'd have been even more
impressed if you hadn't sold CDs and
T-shirts at the end.

INT. DINING ROOM/DANCE FLOOR.

The disco is playing 80s tunes, and the dance floor is emptying.
GUY and JAMES appear from the bar area, drunk. A few couples
start slow dancing as Three Times A Lady comes on.

JAMES

What's the minimum number of sex
changes required to be three times a
lady?

GUY

(thinks) Four. (a drunken pause)
Assuming you start as a lady. (beat)
I reckon this means you're drunk
enough to ask her to dance.

JAMES

Who?

GUY

Duh. Your dancing queen.

James hesitates, then heads boldly over and grabs KATE.

JAMES

Hey, you.

KATE

You still think marriage is a sham?

JAMES

I never used the word sh-

KATE

Don't you want what *they've* got?

James looks; we see CHARLES and EMMA twirling ecstatically.

KATE

Two people who love each other ...
pledging to spend the rest of their
lives together ... come rain or shine,
plague or famine ... to stand by each
other, care for each other ...

JAMES

Well, yes, that's all lovely, but ...
all these couples. Are they meeting
dynamic, thrusting new people?

KATE

Are you?

JAMES

Am I? That's not the point. I *can*.

KATE

Are you sure you haven't got this
whole thing topsy-turvy?

JAMES

What do you mean?

KATE

You don't want to get married because
you want to meet dynamic, thrusting
people. Maybe they don't need to meet

dynamic, thrusting people ... *because they're married.*

James is briefly stumped. PETE arrives, chipper as ever.

PETE

Speaking of thrusting, how do you fancy a dance, babe?

KATE

You know, I think I will.

JAMES

Wait a minute, I -

KATE

Oh - and that fairytale thing? The wedding isn't the last thing in the story. *You forgot about happy ever after.*

They head to the dance floor. GUY appears.

GUY

When I said ask her to dance, I meant with you.

JAMES

He snuck up on me from below.

GUY

Look - I'd love to hang around and give you a pep talk, but there's a blonde in a tight dress dirty-dancing alone, and my code simply will not permit that.

He heads off. James sighs, sits down, and starts to drink. Fade out, fade in. On the dance floor, Kate and Pete are getting close. Guy is bumping and grinding with the blonde, and Emma and Charles are snogging a bit too racily.

JAMES

(to whisky glass) Everyone's got

someone. *I don't have anyone. Except you. You're all I have in the world. You'll never abandon me, will you?*

James picks up the glass, downs it in one, then snarls at it.

JAMES

Bastard.

INT. HOTEL.

GUY and JAMES come through the door, trying to be quiet and failing, shushing each other, giggling.

GUY

Wait here. I've got to drop off my guitar.

He exits. As James waits, KATE arrives.

JAMES

You're not staying here!

KATE

No, I wasn't, but ...

PETE appears from behind the door.

PETE

All right, fella! Monster night.

He grabs Kate's waist, snogs her neck, then opens a door.

PETE

Don't be long, gorgeous.

JAMES

Well. Guess I'd better go.

KATE

James! Wait ... I liked your speech.

She kisses him on the cheek.

JAMES

(transported) 'Night.

Guy returns just as Kate disappears behind the door.

GUY

Looks like Kate drew the short straw
again.

JAMES

(sigh) Looks like.

GUY

Women, eh? Who needs 'em?

JAMES

Yeah. Yeah! Let's go to my room,
finish off the whisky and throw bits
of damp toilet paper at the wall.

GUY

Oh. Sorry, mate. I've, er, got a
rendezvous.

Guy heads off.

JAMES

Hey! What happened to "Women, who
needs 'em'?"?

GUY (V/O)

Well, I don't *need* one, but I
wouldn't half mind one right now.

James's face sinks. He notices Pete's hotel door, checks both
ways, and changes the 'Do not disturb' sign over to 'Please
clean me'. He takes a swig of whisky, and heads out.

GRAMS: What Have I Done to Deserve This, Pet Shop Boys

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOTEL, IN THE FLOWERBED

JAMES is lying in a patch of mud, listening to his iPod and clutching a bottle. MIRANDA crouches down, pulls his earplugs out and lies down next to him. Only on the grass, not the mud.

MIRANDA

(playful) What-cha do-in'?

JAMES

Staring into the abyss.

MIRANDA

And is it ("spooky" voice) staring back?

JAMES

No. It's ignoring me, like everyone else.

MIRANDA

I found out why they call Pete "Tripod".

JAMES

Why?

MIRANDA

Cos he's got three iPods.

They both laugh, then sigh. Pull back to reveal they are in the pose from the end of Gregory's Girl.

JAMES

Have you ever seen Gregory's Girl?

MIRANDA

I don't know ... What does she look like?

JAMES

Never mind. So ... do you think there's anyone out there for me?

MIRANDA

Of course there is. You know *I* think you're gorgeous.

JAMES

Thanks, Rand. Why is it that only girls with boyfriends tell me that?

MIRANDA

(laughing) Duh, because if I was *single* and I said it, then I'd have to get off with you!

JAMES

(sighs) Makes sense.

INT. WANNABE FLAT.

MIRANDA is preparing to leave.

GUY

So, Kate, you seeing that photographer bloke again? If you do, you can borrow my magnifying glass.

KATE

Will you stop going on about his height?

GUY

I wasn't talking about his height.

KATE

I don't think it's going to work out. He's only interested in one thing.

Kate sees the looks on their faces.

KATE (CONT)

No, not that. He just wanted to take *photos* of me all night.

JAMES

Tasteful photos, I trust?

KATE

Well, sort of ... slutty but tasteful.

MIRANDA

Anyone want to come and help me run over the final edit?

GUY

I thought you finished the video yesterday?

MIRANDA

Oh, no. Still got the voiceover and special effects to do yet.

JAMES

Special effects? Like what?

GUY

Canned laughter for your speech, for a start.

JAMES

Har, di, har. So what did you take to Charles and Emma's yesterday?

MIRANDA

The trailer. Right. (making sign wrong way round) See you "losers" later.

Miranda and Kate exit.

GUY

On the bright side, I bet you've got some great material out of this.

JAMES

You're probably right.

GUY

Remember, Phil Collins wrote his best songs when he was at his lowest ebb.

JAMES

I'm not sure I like your example, but I take your point. I need to take this pain and pour it into my stand-up ... to make it personal, and moving, and real!

James gets up, invigorated, and cracks his knuckles.

GUY

You go, girl.

James dances merrily to his room.

INT. JAMES' S ROOM.

JAMES enters, still chipper. He goes to his desk, puts his iPod on, sits down, and flexes his fingers over the keyboard.

JAMES

Rrrright.

The hands pause over the keyboard. GRAMS: Inside Out, Phil Collins. As Phil sings the first "inside out", James bursts into tears.

FINAL CREDITS

Randa's wedding video.