

THE VOICES

United in song.

Divided by almost everything
else.

6 X 30 min comedy series for
television

By

Gerard Foster

EPISODE ONE: 'FUNERAL'

(draft two)

E-mail: gerardfoster@madasafish.com

Tel: 07769 662799

Agent: Clare Israel at David Higham

Associates

clareisrael@davidhigham.co.uk

Tel: 020 7434 5900

At the piano is KAZ, (early-30s like Sam but a bit wild and punky - piercings, tattoos, dyed hair etc). She smashes at the keys with both enthusiasm and talent.

Near to the piano sits her nine-year-old son, LENNIE, dressed in neat school uniform and wearing ear defenders to block out the choir. He is doing homework at a desk.

Sam conducts with a certain naive enthusiasm but not much confidence or expertise. He has clearly not done much of this before.

CHOIR

(singing)

Your touch got me hoping you'll
page me right now
Your kiss got me hoping you'll save
me right now
Looking so crazy
Your love's got me looking, got me
looking so crazy
Your love...

Tom and Alys hurriedly slip in and split up into their respective places: Tom with the two or three other males, Alys with the altos.

As the singing continues, they try and join in while also hurriedly removing helmets, scarves, reflective clothing etc. Alys fishes several items out of her shopping bag: song-sheets, bottle of water, pencil, reading glasses, and passes them along the line to Tom. He pulls apologetic faces at the choir members around him, who look increasingly annoyed at this disruption...

CHOIR (CONT'D)

(singing)

Uh oh, uh oh, uh oh, oh no no
Uh oh, uh oh, uh oh, oh no no
Uh oh, uh oh, uh oh, oh no no-

Suddenly the door <bangs> open and a teenage boy appears - hoodie, tracksuit bottoms, can of cider. A couple more teenagers lurk behind him. The singing and piano come to an abrupt halt.

TEENAGE BOY

(sounding impressed)

Oh my god, is that Beyonce..?!

Sam looks pleased - an appreciative audience.

SAM

It is, yeah. What do you think?

TEENAGE BOY

Shit!

OTHER TEENAGERS
(laughing mockingly)
Aah! / Rank, mate! ETC

One of the teenagers produces a mobile phone and starts filming. Sam hesitates, not sure how to cope with this intrusion. But Kaz stands up from behind the piano.

KAZ
So you think you can do better,
yeah? Well come on then, let's
hear you sing!

Kaz grabs her own mobile and points it at them. The teenagers look immediately cowed. Kaz moves over towards them, her mobile pointed at them like a weapon.

KAZ (CONT'D)
What's the matter? Not so full of
it now, are ya? Dick-splat!

Kaz aims a cuff round the teenager's head. He ducks, shocked.

TEENAGERS
Wooah! / Easy! / Oi!

The teenagers hastily retreat, defeated. Kaz moves unapologetically back to the piano and sits down. Sam and the rest of the choir look stunned. Lennie no longer has his ear defenders on.

LENNIE
Mum, what's a dick-splat?-

SAM
(hastily interrupting)
OK we'll leave that one there for
now. So, welcome-

The choir all sit down except for Mike.

MIKE
Sorry Sam, could I say a few words,
now that we're all finally here?

He glances pointedly at Tom and Alys.

SAM
Er, well, can it wait till the end,
Mike-

MIKE
No. Firstly I think we can all
agree from now on let's stick to
the stuff we know.

AJAY

Oh come on Mike, we all love a bit of jiggy!

MIKE

Yeah that's what my ex-wife said when I caught her in bed with another man.

He turns to Gill and Richard in turn.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Oh, sorry Gill, Richard, I forgot you were there.

Gill and Richard try their best not to react.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Secondly, I thought you all should know our old friend, Jim, sadly passed away.

Mike waits for a response but the rest of the choir all look blank or confused... Sam tries to fill the void...

SAM

Oh no... Really sorry to hear that, Mike...

MIKE

Well I don't know why you're so sorry. He'd left long before you came along.

HILDEGARD

Sorry, who?

MIKE

Jim Daley. He was in the choir.

CYNTHIA

Was he?

MIKE

Bloody hell! You've got short memories, you lot.

RICHARD

(winding him up)

Sorry what did you say his name was again?

MIKE

(not amused)

Jim Daley! He was in the choir! Vera, you remember Jim.

VERA

Oh yes. I saw him in Asda today.

MIKE

(getting annoyed now)
Yeah well that must have been
another Jim 'cos this Jim died a
week ago and we're singing at his
funeral!

SAM

Oh...

This is clearly news to Sam. And everyone else in the room.

MIKE

That is what we always do. Or it
was when your Dad was here.

SAM

Oh, right, well I've not heard
anything. Do you know when it is?

MIKE

What the funeral? No.

SAM

But the family have said they'd
like us to sing?

MIKE

That's good.

SAM

No that was a question.

MIKE

Didn't sound like one.

SAM

Have the family said they'd like us
to sing?

MIKE

I dunno. I haven't talked to them.
That's your job.

SAM

Well I don't know them.

MIKE

Nor do I. But he was in the choir.
So we're singing at his funeral,
yeah?

Mike looks to the others for support.

ALYS

Well I guess it depends when it is.

TOM

Yeah I'm not sure I'd get
compassionate leave for someone I
didn't actually know.

MIKE

All right fine, yeah he's dead now,
sod him. I just thought this is
what we did. I mean look what
happened when his Dad died.

Mike points accusingly at Sam.

GILL

That's hardly the same is it, Mike?

MIKE

No, sure. When it's just one of us,
who cares? But when our glorious
leader dies, we give him the full
Bohemian Rhapsody. And Going
Underground at the grave.

SAM

And it meant a huge amount to me.
And my mum. It was... wonderful.
That's why I'm here. To try and
keep this thing going till we find
someone who can take it on-

MIKE

Which I've already said I'm happy
to do-

GILL

Yeah I think it needs someone that
can, you know, sing.

MIKE

(fiercely)

I can sing! You used to love my
singing! Till Michael Ball-Bags
came along!

Mike indicates Richard, who reacts with a contemptuous scoff.

SAM

OK, well let's crack on-

MIKE

So we're singing at the funeral
yeah?

SAM

Erm well... if his family want us to and if there's enough of us that can, then yes, I'm sure we'd be happy to sing at...

He hesitates momentarily...

MIKE

Jim Daley-

SAM

Jim Daley's funeral.

Mike sits down, pleased. Others around him look less so.

3

INT. COMMUNITY CENTRE - AN HOUR OR SO LATER

3

The choir are all gathering coats and bags to leave. A group of Karate students and their instructor impatiently help them along, stacking chairs loudly with passive-aggression and wheeling the piano away. Sam gathers up discarded song-sheets.

RICHARD

Pub?

CHRISSIE

(over-eagerly)

Pub!

Everyone looks at her a little warily. She repeats with a little more restraint.

CHRISSIE (CONT'D)

Pub.

SAM

I'll see you in there.

CHRISSIE

I hope you will. It's your round.

SAM

Oh...

CHRISSIE

I'm joking! It's actually Mike's I think.

Mike looks less than pleased with this.

CHRISSIE (CONT'D)

Then Tom's, then yours, then mine.

(to Vera & Cynthia)

Come on, ladies.

The choir all depart, leaving just Sam, Kaz and Lennie. Ellie is there in a corner, putting on her coat.

KAZ

Oi Sponge-Knob, well done with Mike. I thought you really stood up to him there.

Sam is a little tense, not responding to her familiar tone.

SAM

Well it's obviously a bit delicate-

KAZ

Mate, just tell him we're not doing it, yeah. That's what your Dad would have done.

SAM

Right.

Ellie, approaches with an intense look.

ELLIE

Thanks Sam.

Sam, well aware of Ellie's crush, gets immediately flustered and drops all his song-sheets.

SAM

Uh, yeah, see you next week, yeah?

Kaz grins knowingly at Sam as he hastily tries to pick up all the sheets, assisted by Lennie.

KAZ

(calling after Ellie)
You not coming down the pub?

SAM

(hastily)
Uh no, I imagine Ellie's father will want her back home-

ELLIE

Oh no, it's fine, I'll just text him.

Ellie smiles at Sam and moves off into the entrance hall, texting on her phone. Sam glares at Kaz.

SAM

Thanks.

Kaz plays dumb for a moment, then....

KAZ

...Oh what, you think she fancies you?!

SAM

(embarrassed)

No! I dunno. Maybe, yeah. For God's sake, she's about twelve years old.

KAZ

She's eighteen. She's a grown woman.

SAM

Barely!

KAZ

(suggestively)

Aye-aye!

Sam looks increasingly mortified by all this. Lennie is clearly taking it all in and Ellie is still lurking in the entrance hall.

SAM

For Christ's sake, she's still at school! And it's not as if I even... anyway. And even if I did, which I don't, I already have a girlfriend, so.

KAZ

(genuinely)

Oh right. I thought you'd split up-

SAM

No, we're fine. We just... I still can't leave Mum. And Jane's stuck in London all week. And at weekends, yeah, she could come and visit but... someone's got to feed the fish.

KAZ

Yeah.

4

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE PUB - EVENING

4

Sam, Ellie, Kaz and Lennie walk towards the pub in awkward silence. Lennie opens the door of the pub and goes to enter.

KAZ

Oi. Not on a school night, yeah?

Lennie stops. Kaz holds out her keys and he reluctantly takes them and moves off away from the pub.

KAZ (CONT'D)
I'll be back by ten. Love you.

Sam gives Lennie a sheepish nod and follows Kaz in.

5

INT. PUB - MOMENTS LATER

5

Sam, Kaz and Ellie arrive at the bar.

SAM
Just a lemonade please.

Sam notices Kaz standing expectantly next to him.

SAM (CONT'D)
And a gin and tonic.

He turns reluctantly to Ellie on the other side.

SAM (CONT'D)
And a-

ELLIE
Double vodka and red bull.

SAM
Yeah.

The server moves off and Sam straightens up a beer-mat, while he waits. Ajay meanwhile calls over from a table where he is distributing drinks to Mike, Tom, Alys, Chrissie, Richard, Gill, Vera, and Cynthia.

AJAY
Hey Sam, I got you one in!

Sam looks over and sees Ajay pointing proudly at a full pint of Guinness. Sam sees it and tries to look pleased.

SAM
Oh. Thanks.

Kaz meanwhile notices a group of blokes on the other side of the pub and turns away.

KAZ
Oh shit. Don't look.

Sam looks and sees TONY NORRIS, a dodgy builder type, the same age as Sam and Kaz. Big biceps, tattoos, short hair etc. He's drinking, loud and hard, with a couple of mates.

KAZ (CONT'D)
I said don't look!

SAM
Is that Tony Norris? From school?

KAZ

Yeah. Whenever he sees me, he says I'm the one.

SAM

You are the one who... in the science lab, while Laura Bennett's little sister watched.

KAZ

No I ain't! That was Sarah Wood. I just gave him a hand-job in R.E.

Tony and his mates have by now spotted Kaz at the bar.

TONY

Oi Kaz!

KAZ

(brightly to Tony)
Hi Tony, how you doing?
(to Sam)
Don't let me get off with him, yeah?

Kaz takes her gin and tonic and heads over towards Tony and his friends...

6

INT. PUB - AN HOUR LATER

6

Sam watches grimly from across the pub as Kaz appears to be getting on roarily with Tony Norris and his two mates. Their table is covered in empty pints and shot glasses. They do more shots, then more again. They sing along to the jukebox - "Smells Like Teen Spirit" by Nirvana.

Richard returns grandly from the bar with a tray of drinks.

RICHARD

Here we are. Make way. Drink up, Sam.

He puts another pint of Guinness in front of Sam, to add to the one he's already struggling to finish. Chrissie, rather the worse for wear now, eagerly grabs a fresh glass of white wine.

CHRISSIE

Yeah, your Dad wouldn't let his Guinness go warm.

RICHARD

(raising his glass)
To Martin!

ALL

To Martin!

The choir all clink glasses heartily and drink.

MIKE

And to Jim.

Mike raises his glass again. The others all look blank for a moment then half-heartedly raise their glasses too.

RICHARD

Yeah, Jim...

The music changes to "Delilah" by Tom Jones. Across the room, there's a roar of excitement. Tony Norris bursts into song, singing powerfully and very impressively over Tom Jones. Kaz extravagantly acts out the song with him, in full view of everyone in the bar.

TONY

I saw the light on the night that I
passed by her window.
I saw the flickering shadow of love
on her blind.
She was my woman. As she deceived
me I watched and went out of my
mind!

Tony Norris's two mates, and indeed most of the choir and the rest of the pub are soon joining in with the chorus. Only Sam doesn't join in, and Ellie too, still waiting hopefully next to him. Oh and Chrissie who is now fast asleep...

ALL

My, my, my Delilah! Why, why, why
Delilah?
I could see that girl was no good
for me.
But I was lost like a slave that no
man could free.

Sam can take no more. He picks up the full pint of Guinness he's just been bought and heads over to where Kaz and Tony Norris are dancing increasingly intimately.

SAM

Excuse me, can I get through- oops!

Sam accidentally on purpose spills the Guinness all over Tony and Kaz. All hell breaks loose. The song abruptly stops.

TONY

Oi!

KAZ

(screams)
Hey!

Tony makes a furious lunge for Sam but his two mates hastily pull him away and continue to violently restrain him in the background.

KAZ (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you doing?!!

SAM

You said not to let you get off with him, yeah-

KAZ

Not by pouring a pint of Guinness down my front!

She contemplates her soaked front. A bright red bra now showing through the white top. Sam tries not to look.

KAZ (CONT'D)

And I wasn't getting off with him anyway!

SAM

Well you did tell Lennie you'd be back by ten-

KAZ

(snaps)

All right! It's called having fun! You should try it.

SAM

Yeah and maybe you should try acting like a responsible parent. I mean Christ, you're all the poor kid's got. Unless you've remembered who the father is.

Kaz glares at him furiously.

KAZ

Fuck you!

Kaz shows him the finger and then storms out of the pub. Gill arrives with another full pint of Guinness.

GILL

Here, I got you another.

Sam looks at it and takes it resignedly.

7

EXT. VICARAGE - NIGHT

7

Sam pulls up in his car outside Ellie's house - a vicarage. Ellie is in the passenger seat next to him. Sam looks distinctly uncomfortable.

ELLIE

Thanks for the lift.

SAM

No, that's fine. No worries.

He waits for her to get out of the car. Sees the face of a concerned father at an upstairs window. Ellie however doesn't seem to be in any hurry to get out of the car.

SAM (CONT'D)

Night then.

ELLIE

Your Dad was really cool.

SAM

Yeah...

ELLIE

I mean we all, like, really miss him.

SAM

Yeah...

ELLIE

But in a way I'm glad he's dead because now we've got you.

SAM

(beat)

Yeah...

There is a knock on the passenger seat window. Ellie's father, the local vicar, REVEREND DAVID, peers in. Ellie looks annoyed and opens her door sharply into her father.

ELLIE

(crossly)

All right I'm coming in, God!

She goes on past her father and into the house. Rev. David peers in at Sam with cold disapproval.

REV. DAVID

Thank you for bringing her home in one piece.

SAM

Uh no, that's fine, any time.
Night.

REV. DAVID

Night.

8

INT. HALLWAY / LIVING ROOM, SAM'S PARENTS' HOUSE - NIGHT

8

Sam lets himself in. Music is playing softly in the living room. "Pale Blue Eyes" by the Velvet Underground.

SAM

Hi Mum, I'm home.

SHEILA

Martin, is that you?

Sam puts his head around the living room door and we see SHEILA, his Mum. The living room is cosy, bohemian, full of records, film posters, family photos etc. Sheila sits contentedly in an armchair with a glass of red wine and a cat sleeping peacefully on her lap. She looks as if she's just woken up from a nap.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

Oh sorry love, I must have dropped off.

Sam just manages to catch the glass of red wine before she tips it over onto the floor.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

I don't know where your Dad is.

(calls off)

Martin!

SAM

Mum, Dad's not here anymore.

SHEILA

Where is he?

SAM

In the churchyard.

SHEILA

What's he doing there?

SAM

He's dead, Mum. He died, remember?

SHEILA

Who did?

SAM

Dad.

SHEILA

Did he?

SAM

Yes.

SHEILA

Oh...

SAM

But I'm here, yeah? It's OK.

SHEILA

Thanks, love.

Sam starts to move off with the wine glass. Sheila picks herself up from the sofa.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

I expect he's with that girl.

Sam freezes, not sure what to say.

SAM

What girl?

Sheila stops, looks confused.

SHEILA

I dunno.

She moves off.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

I think she was in the choir.

9

INT. CAFE - DAY (THE NEXT DAY)

9

Kaz is tucking into an all-day-breakfast. She's very hung-over. Sam sits opposite her with a mug of tea, watching her darkly. He clearly has something on his mind.

KAZ

Oh God, I can't remember a thing.
D'you think he put something in my
drink?

SAM

What, like alcohol you mean?

KAZ

(groans)
Oh shit...

Kaz, beginning to feel a bit sick, pushes her plate away onto Sam's side. Sam edges it back towards the middle.

KAZ (CONT'D)

Thanks for getting me home.

Sam looks awkward for a moment...

SAM

Yeah...

KAZ

What?

SAM

Nothing.

KAZ

No come on, what..? Oh God, we didn't..?

SAM

No, God, no. I just didn't walk you home, that's all.

KAZ

What, you let me walk back on my own? Oh thanks.

SAM

You let Lennie walk back on his own.

KAZ

He hasn't got tits. And he wasn't drunk.

SAM

Yeah well that's hardly my fault is it?

KAZ

Oh right, so you'll stop me getting off with Tony Norris but if some total stranger wants to have a go, that's fine. I bet you walked Ellie home.

SAM

No, I gave her a lift-

KAZ

Yeah I bet you did-

SAM

She's eighteen!

KAZ

So?

SAM

You're thirty-two!

KAZ

Your Dad would have walked me home.

SAM

Yeah! And we all know why!

Kaz looks momentarily surprised and guilty.

KAZ

Shut up.

SAM

Were you sleeping with my Dad?

KAZ

What? No!

SAM

(repeats more insistently)
Were you sleeping with my Dad?

KAZ

No!

Sam, not believing her, gets up to go.

KAZ (CONT'D)

It's complicated-

SAM

No it's really simple. Did you or did you not have sexual relations with my father?

Kaz hesitates, not sure which way to go and aware that everyone else in the cafe is watching too...

KAZ

Yes.

Sam gives her a look of contempt then leaves her at the table and exits the cafe...

10

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE CAFE - CONTINUOUS

10

...only to find himself being immediately collared by Mike who's clearly been waiting to ambush him outside.

MIKE

Eh-up, fancy seeing you here!

Sam, in no mood to talk to Mike, walks briskly on. But Mike hastily catches him up and walks alongside him.

MIKE (CONT'D)

So come on then, what are we going to do?

Sam ignores this and carries on.

MIKE (CONT'D)

At the funeral. Jim's funeral.

Sam stops. Tries to speak. But Mike ploughs on.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Hey, you know he was a Liverpool fan. What about "You'll Never Walk Alone"? He'd have loved that. Yeah, that's perfect for Jim-

SAM

(finally interrupting)

Mike, we're not doing the funeral.

MIKE

Yeah we are. Course we are. Why not?

SAM

Because nobody knew him.

MIKE

I did.

SAM

No you didn't. He was only in the choir for a couple of months.

MIKE

What, Jim? He was in it for at least three. He loved it. I dunno why he gave up-

SAM

(interrupting impatiently)

All right, two, three months, what's the difference? Nobody knew him! Nobody cares!

MIKE

I care!

SAM

Well that's very good of you, Mike-

MIKE

No I care 'cos next time it could be me. And when I die, I don't want people going "he was only in it for fifteen years" or "nah I never liked the cunt". I want every one of those bastards there, singing their selfish bloody hearts out for me - just like they did for your dad!

Sam sighs, resignedly giving in.

11

EXT. JIM DALEY'S HOUSE - DAY

11

Sam and Mike stand outside a run-down council house - graffiti, litter, a faded England flag in a window. This is clearly the less-nice end of town. Sam holds a cheap bunch of flowers.

SAM

And you're sure this is the right house?

MIKE

(shrugs)

I dunno. I'll let you do the talking, yeah?

Mike rings the bell and steps back. From inside the house we hear <loud barking>.

Sam looks at the flowers, suddenly notices the price label still on them - £3.99 - and hastily starts trying to peel it off without success.

Inside, the dog's loud barking is quelled by an even louder voice...

MRS DALEY (O.S.)

Oi, Roy! Shut it!

...and the door opens to reveal a great big bruiser of a woman. She's in her late fifties, wearing an old Man Utd away top and jogging bottoms.

MRS DALEY (CONT'D)

Yeah, what?

Sam can't help but recoil, taken aback by the woman's sheer presence.

SAM

Oh... hi... we, er....

He looks to Mike for help but he says nothing, equally intimidated.

SAM (CONT'D)

Mrs Daley..?

MRS DALEY

Yeah, what?

SAM

We're from the community choir. Your husband Jim was a member for a while?

MRS DALEY

(sighs)

How much does he owe you?

SAM

Oh nothing, no. We just wanted to say how sorry we all were to hear that Jim had passed away.

He tentatively offers her the flowers. She looks at them unimpressed, then takes them, softening just a little.

SAM (CONT'D)

And that it would be a real honour for us to be able to show our respect for Jim by singing a song at his funeral...

Mrs Daley considers this for a moment, then...

MRS DALEY

Nah.

SAM

(relieved)

Oh, OK, if you're sure.

MRS DALEY

Yeah.

SAM

Right. Well, good luck.

MRS DALEY

Thanks, love. Bye.

Mrs Daley closes the door. Sam turns to see Mike looking at him, unimpressed.

MIKE

Is that it?

SAM

Yeah...

Mike steps past Sam and rings the doorbell. Inside the dog starts <barking loudly> again.

MRS DALEY

Roy! ROY!!!!

The door opens and Mrs Daley stands there again, still holding the flowers, as intimidating as before.

MRS DALEY (CONT'D)

Yeah, what?

Mike's confidence wavers just for a moment.

MIKE

Sorry, what my colleague here didn't make clear is that this is what we always do. It's tradition. When one of our number dies, we sing a song at their funeral.

MRS DALEY

Yeah well Jim wasn't in the choir for long-

MIKE

Doesn't matter-

MRS DALEY

And it was a while ago now-

MIKE

Don't care-

MRS DALEY

Look we wanna keep it simple, yeah?

MIKE

Good idea. Simple's always good. Something classic, maybe, like Stand By Me?

MRS DALEY

No we want to keep it low-key.

MIKE

OK, so a bit of Barry White maybe?

MRS DALEY

Look we don't want you singing, all right!

Mrs Daley hands back the flowers and goes to shut the door but Mike hastily puts his foot in and stops her closing it.

MIKE

Is there someone else?

MRS DALEY

What?

MIKE

Is there another choir?

MRS DALEY

No-

MIKE

Has the vicar said you have to use his lot?

MRS DALEY

No-

MIKE

'Cos you don't, you don't have to use them at all. This is your day. You can do whatever you like-

SAM

Mike, stop.

Sam tries to pull Mike away but he resists. Mrs Daley tries again to close the door but Mike still won't let her. It's all getting rather clumsy now and the flowers in his hand are getting very messed up.

MIKE

So we're offering to all take the day off work and come along and sing at Jim's funeral -for free!- and you're saying you don't want us?

MRS DALEY

Yeah.

MIKE

Why not?

MRS DALEY

'Cos it's not what Jim would have wanted.

Mike stands back from the door, stunned.

MIKE

No, I'm sorry, that's bollocks. Jim loved the choir.

MRS DALEY

Well he went along for a week or two but I don't think it was his cup of tea-

MIKE

Well you obviously didn't know him as well as me.

MRS DALEY

(laughs)

I was married to him for forty years!-

MIKE

(strongly)

Yeah well maybe you should have been paying more attention!

Now it's Mrs Daley's turn to be stunned.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You're right. I didn't know him as well as you. I didn't know he lived round here for a start. But what I do know is Jim lived for that choir. You should have seen him, every Monday, when he came into that room. The look on his face. His whole body changed. It was like a huge weight had been lifted from him. And suddenly whatever was outside that door, whatever was waiting for him at home, it didn't matter for that hour and a half. And the truth is he wasn't the greatest singer. The truth is none of us are. But when we all sing together as one, it's like magic. There's a power there. And Jim knew that. And so would you if you'd ever bothered to listen-

MRS DALEY

(wearily interrupting)

All right, you can sing one song.

MIKE

Yesss!

Mike punches the air, childishly triumphant... then stops as he sees Sam and Mrs Daley looking at him.

12

INT. CHURCH - DAY (A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER)

12

A hushed, sombre atmosphere. Sam, dressed for a funeral, is carefully setting out song sheets for the choir. A keyboard and chair are set up nearby. Rev. David arrives and picks up a sheet. His tone is again rather cold and sardonic.

REV. DAVID

So what have you got for us today? Bread of Heaven? Abide With Me? Or that song from Carousel, very good.

SAM

It's what Jim would have wanted, apparently.

REV. DAVID

Yes, I'm afraid, what with it being in a church, I may have to mention God once or twice. But I'll try not to let it spoil the show.

He drops the song sheet and moves off to the altar.

At the other end of the church, Mike <clatters> in through the front porch. He is carrying a laptop computer, a box with red and white scarves poking out and also a rolled-up big screen.

MIKE

(inappropriately cheery)

Eh-up! How you feeling? First gig, eh? I'll buy you a Guinness after the show. So where's the best place for a screen?

SAM

What screen?

Mike dumps his stuff at the top of the aisle and starts dragging the lectern off to one side to make space for his big screen.

Rev. David watches, unimpressed, from the altar.

MIKE

Got a slide show. Pictures of Jim and the choir.

SAM

I thought he was only in it for a couple of months.

MIKE

Yeah I had to photo-shop a few.

SAM

And the family know you're doing this?

MIKE

(surprised)

Do they? Oh.

SAM

Do the family know you're doing this?

MIKE

No. I wanted it to be a surprise.

SAM

Uh yeah, generally speaking, Mike, people don't expect surprises at a funeral.

MIKE

Yeah I know. It's a surprise surprise.

SAM

Er no, it's a really bad idea.

MIKE

Oh come on, it's a few little photos of Jim. I mean Christ, it's his bloody funeral!

Rev. David looks over sternly from the altar. So too do the ushers at the front of the church. Sam, conscious they're creating a scene, hastily gives in.

SAM

All right fine, but if anyone asks, I will make sure you take all the credit.

MIKE

Thanks.

Sam moves off, leaving Mike to cheerfully erect his screen.

13

EXT. CHURCH - A LITTLE LATER

13

Mourners congregate outside the church, waiting for the door to be opened. From inside the church we hear the sound of low sombre organ music being drowned out by the choir warming up.

CHOIR

(singing repeatedly,
faster and faster)

My dog can do the can-can
Better than the cat can
But the goldfish finds it very
difficult.
My dog can do the can-can
Better than the cat can
But the goldfish finds it very
hard! (REPEATS)

Tom & Alys arrive on their tandem with cycling gear over their funeral-wear. They are late and flustered as ever. They fight their way through the mourners and in through the door.

14

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

14

We cut to inside the church. Sam is conducting the choir as they continue to sing faster and faster. There is no one at the keyboard. Sam looks at the empty chair and then over to the door, a little concerned.

Tom and Alys hurriedly join in the singing while hastily getting themselves ready. Alys passes a water bottle then a small shopping bag along the line to Tom. Tom pulls a just-bought black tie out of the bag, hurriedly ties it round his neck, then realises there's a label still on it and hastily rips it off.

All the while, the singing continues round and round, faster and faster...

Rev. David approaches...

REV. DAVID

Sorry, I will have to open the church.

SAM

Er, right, yeah, that'll have to do.

Rev. David signals to an usher at the bottom of the aisle to open the door. The choir stop singing and take their seats. Sam looks again at the empty seat at the keyboard and checks his phone (swiping away his home-page: a close up of several tropical fish).

Mike meanwhile turns to another usher who is seated ready at Mike's laptop. We see the first photo on the computer screen - a small man with glasses in a Liverpool top.

MIKE

So the moment the music starts, you hit play on the slide show, yeah?

The usher looks a little confused but nods obediently.

REV. DAVID

OK, ready to go in five?

SAM

Er no, bit of a problem. Our pianist isn't here yet.

MIKE

What do you mean? Where is she?

Sam shrugs hopelessly.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Oh great. Well done.

SAM

(defensively)

I did leave several messages on her phone-

GILL

But you didn't actually speak to her?

SAM

No.

Gill and Mike share a mutual look of despair, momentarily united in their disappointment.

MIKE

Unbelievable! I knew this would happen. It's Sooty and Sweep all over again!

SAM

What?!

MIKE

It was never the same with his son in charge.

SAM

Well if you think you can do better, Mike, you're more than welcome to have a go-

GILL & RICHARD

No!

REV. DAVID

Look, why don't I have a word with Mary and see if she can fill in.

Sam and the choir look across at a geriatric lady at the organ, playing the organ in a painfully lumbering fashion.

RICHARD

Oh please, God, no.

Too late. The vicar is already moving off to the organist with a song sheet.

Just then Sam's phone rings. Sam looks at the caller display.

SAM

It's Kaz.

Mike grabs Sam's phone and moves off down the aisle, barking into it.

MIKE

Where are you..? Hello..? Kaz..?

The phone is still ringing. Mike looks confused. Sam hastily catches him up, takes the phone from him and swipes to answer the call.

SAM

Where are you? ...What?

Mike wrestles the phone back from Sam and continues off down the aisle again, disturbing mourners as they come in.

MIKE

We need you at the church now!

Sam follows him down the aisle and out of the church...

15

EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

15

...where Mike ends the call and calmly hands the phone back to Sam.

MIKE

All sorted. She'll be here in two minutes.

Just then, a hearse pulls up with a coffin inside and flowers spelling out J-I-M. A second hearse follows it with Mrs Daley and other family members inside. They get out, all equally big bruisers like Mrs Daley. They prepare to follow the coffin as the pall bearers take it out of the hearse.

SAM

Too late.

MIKE

No it isn't. Just keep 'em talking.

SAM

Why me?

MIKE

'Cos you're the one in charge.

Sam looks daggers at Mike, but reluctantly moves forward, blocking the way of the coffin into church.

SAM

(cheerily)

Mrs Daley, hi!

Mrs Daley and her family look at Sam and Mike with confusion and growing annoyance.

SAM (CONT'D)

We er just wanted to say thank you again for giving us the opportunity to pay our own small tribute to Jim. He was such a valued member of the choir and although I didn't personally know him, he's someone I will never forget.

Sam looks at the road behind them. Still no sign of Kaz. He keeps talking.

SAM (CONT'D)

So anyway, how are you? I mean apart from... Jim...

The pall-bearers, struggling a bit under the weight of the coffin, try to move off. Sam hastily starts talking again.

SAM (CONT'D)

The thing is, you're actually a couple of minutes early. And the vicar isn't quite ready yet, sorry. Few technical issues, if you know what I mean.

Improvising wildly now, Sam mimes a wobbling glass to indicate the vicar has been having a drink.

SON

He's drunk?!

SAM

(hastily back-tracking)
No, absolutely not. He's just... got a slightly funny hand...

Mrs Daley and her family all stare past Sam at Rev. David, who's now waiting at the church door. Sam turns to see him too and hastily has to adjust...

SAM (CONT'D)

And here he is! Don't mention the hand. Or look at it. Actually it's not that bad.

The pall bearers start to step forward. Sam hastily steps into their way and bends forward.

SAM (CONT'D)

Ooh, laces, sorry.

Sam pretends to tie a lace. The pall bearers stop and try and steer round him. Sam hastily swaps feet and moves so he is still in front of the coffin.

The pall-bearers try to go past the other way. Sam again moves to block them, jinking first one way then the other as the pall-bearers try to get past.

DAUGHTER

(finally snapping)
For FUCK's sake, can you let us past?!

Sam sheepishly stands up and lets the coffin and family pass on through the door of the church.

As they do so, a builder's van pulls up with Tony Norris driving. He beeps the horn. Kaz hurriedly gets out the passenger door, followed by Lennie in school uniform.

KAZ

Sorry, had to pick up Lennie from school.

Sam eyes Tony Norris in his van.

SAM

Oh I see. Yeah course, I should have known you'd be shackled up with Tom Jones by now-

KAZ

Shut up. He gave me a lift, that's all-

SAM

Yeah, right-

KAZ

Look I'm here now. What's the problem?

SAM

(exploding furiously)
You're half an hour late! That's the problem! I've been stood out here for the last five minutes trying to stop them bringing the coffin in!

Mike steps in to try and calm things down.

MIKE

Wooah easy, Sam, deep breaths, get a grip. Your dad would never have lost it like this-

SAM

Yeah well guess what, I'm not my Dad! I'm not dead! I don't drink Guinness! And I haven't been sleeping with someone I shouldn't for the last god knows how many years!

Sam turns accusingly to Kaz, who glares back defiantly.

KAZ

Once. It happened once. That's all.

Sam looks confused. Slowly the cogs begin to turn... He looks at Lennie... looks back to Kaz... finally understands.

SAM

Oh great.

Meanwhile an old guy, JIM, arrives with glasses, black suit and a discreet Liverpool badge on his lapel.

JIM

(scouse accent)
Hey calm down, keep your voice down, mate. There's a funeral going on- hello Mike!

MIKE

Hello Jim! How you doing?

JIM

(cheerily)

Well I'm still here!

Mike stops dead, as he realises...

JIM (CONT'D)

What..?

MIKE

...You're alive.

JIM

Yeah. Just.

Mike grasps for words, speechless. Sam too now realises that something is badly wrong.

SAM

Mike, what's going on?

MIKE

Whose funeral is this then?

JIM

Jim.

MIKE

Jim who?

JIM

Jim Daley.

MIKE

You're Jim Daley.

JIM

No I'm Jim Davis, you numpty...

SAM

Oh shit.

He turns to look at the church. Inside we hear the organ begin a rather lumbering and uncertain version of "You'll Never Walk Alone". Sam looks horrified and hurries off towards the church.

16

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

16

Sam rushes in to the back of the church. The audience have risen. The pall-bearers are just starting to make their way up the aisle, followed by the family behind the coffin.

SAM

No, stop!

Sam desperately tries to fight his way through to pull back the coffin but the ushers and other family members all shove him unceremoniously back. He goes sprawling, hastily picks himself up.

Too late. The coffin is already half-way up the aisle. And Sam's choir, all gently swaying and holding up matching red and white scarves, are now singing the opening lines of "You'll Never Walk Alone".

CHOIR

(singing)

When you walk through the storm
Hold your head up high
And don't be afraid of the dark...

On the screen at the top of the aisle, a slide-show is showing photo after photo of Jim (Davis not Daley) with the choir - some of them rather clumsily photo-shopped.

Sam watches in horror from the bottom of the aisle. Next to him are Mike, Kaz, Lennie and Jim, utterly bemused to suddenly find himself apparently at his own funeral.

As the coffin reaches the top of the aisle, the choir boom out the chorus with impressive conviction...

CHOIR (CONT'D)

Walk on, walk on
With hope in your hearts
And you'll never walk alone...

...then gradually trail off into ragged uncertainty as they too, like everyone else in the church, look from the screen to the horrified family of the deceased to Sam standing at the bottom of the aisle with Mike, Kaz, Lennie and Jim...

A terrible silence...

SAM

(lamely)

Surprise..!

17

INT. PUB - AN HOUR OR SO LATER

17

The wake is going on. Sam is drinking with the rest of the choir around the buffet table. Mike is happily digging in to the sandwiches. A framed picture of Jim Daley in a Man Utd top sits on the table behind the plates. His family sit further off, drinking, still in a state of shock.

Kaz and Lennie sit at a table in the corner. Kaz is on her phone. Lennie is reading.

MIKE

I'm just saying, you know, at the next funeral, you might want to check your choice of song.

Sam glares back at Mike.

MIKE (CONT'D)

My round. Same again?

Chrissie hurriedly knocks back half a glass of white wine and hands her empty glass to Mike.

CHRISSIE

Yeah, if you're sure.

RICHARD

Course he is. It's a free bar.

Mike glares at Richard and moves off with empty glasses to the bar.

Sam meanwhile spots his mother introducing herself to Kaz and Lennie and sitting down at their table. He anxiously moves over.

SAM

Hi Mum.

SHEILA

Hello love, I got you one in.

She nods to a pint of Guinness on the table.

SAM

Oh, thanks.

Sam sits and takes a reluctant sip for his Mum.

SHEILA

This is Kaz and Lennie.

SAM

Yeah I know. Kaz is in the choir. We've known her for years, Mum.

SHEILA

(laughs)

Have we? Oh! Sorry!

Kaz smiles awkwardly. They drink in silence for a moment. Then the opening riff to "Going Underground" by The Jam comes on the juke box...

SHEILA (CONT'D)

Your Dad used to like this one.

SAM & LENNIE
(simultaneously)
Yeah...

They stop. Sam, Kaz and Lennie share an awkward look. But Sheila doesn't seem to have noticed. They resume drinking in awkward silence...

CUT TO:

18

END CREDITS

18

Music: "Going Underground" by The Jam, sung by the choir...

CHOIR
(singing)
Some people might say my life is in
a rut
But I'm quite happy with what I got
People might say that I should
strive for more
But I'm so happy I can't see the
point
Something's happening here today
A show of strength with your boys
brigade
And I'm so happy and you're so kind
You want more money of course I
don't mind
To buy nuclear textbooks for atomic
crimes
And the public gets what the public
wants
But I want nothing this society's
got
I'm going underground (going
underground)
Well the brass bands play and feet
start to pound
Going underground (going
underground)
Well let the boys all sing and the
boys all shout for tomorrow...