

The Gaffer

by Robin Peters

EXT. NORTHERN ENGLISH CITY - NIGHT

Lights flicker against the night sky.

SIMON

(O.S.)

I've got something for you.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

We move through diners to find SIMON PAGE - late twenties, rough round the edges, with boyish features.

He sits opposite TRUDY - mid twenties, designer clothes, natural beauty behind heavy make up. He hands her a box.

She opens it - a small diamond ring.

TRUDY

Oh.

SIMON

So?

TRUDY

This is a point seven five.

SIMON

So 'yes'?

She tries it on. He waits awkwardly.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Tru?

She takes off the ring, puts it on the table.

TRUDY

Let's just see how it goes.

SIMON

Tomorrow?

TRUDY

I don't mean to be heartless but I can't spend the rest of my life with a market trader, can I?

SIMON

Yeah, course.

Beat.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Sorry, which... which bit of that wasn't heartless?

INT. OPEN PLAN OFFICE - DAY

Simon exits a room into a gleaming corporate open plan office, reeking of wealth. A SUIT comes up to him.

SUIT
 Congratulations Malcolm.

They shake hands.

SIMON
 It's Simon.

SUIT
 Whatever.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Simon stands staring at the ducks. He kicks a stone around like a football and fires it into the pond, celebrating an imaginary goal.

Trudy walks up behind him.

He turns - a half smile. She throws her arms round him.

TRUDY
 Well done - you clever man.

They kiss.

SIMON
 It's in Texas.

She pulls away.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 'They could use a junior in Texas'. That's what they said.

TRUDY
 America?

He nods.

TRUDY (CONT'D)
 Simon, listen to me. You have to go. You have to do it.

SIMON
 But what about us?

She gives him a long kiss.

As she breaks away he finds something in his hand - the diamond ring.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SIMON (CONT'D)

Tru?

TRUDY

Don't waste your life.

SIMON

But I want to waste my life with you.

He listens to what he's just said.

SIMON (CONT'D)

I mean-

She kisses his cheek.

TRUDY

I've got to leave.

SIMON

I'll grab my bag.

TRUDY

No. Si.

He gets it.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

I'm terrible at goodbyes. So. I'll see you around yeah?

She turns to go.

SIMON

No. Tru! I'll take you to Nandos and we can talk about it yeah?

She's already walking away.

SIMON (CONT'D)

TRU!

She doesn't turn around.

SIMON (CONT'D)

You love Nandos!

She is in the distance now.

SIMON (CONT'D)

PERI-PERI CHICKEN?

She's gone. He throws the ring away. A duck QUACKS.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Sorry.