

Screenplay

INT. FISH AND CHIP SHOP - DAY.

It is lunchtime in the seafront fish and chip shop. Three women rush around behind the counter to serve an accumulating queue of pensioners. The customers talk to one another over the loud, wheezing noise of a breaking fan.

FRANK, a twenty-five year old businessman with sleeked auburn hair and a clean-shaven face enters hurriedly into the shop. He knocks an old man forward and the man shakes his head. FRANK wears a pinstripe suit and black, polished brogues. The conversation begins to quieten as each customer turns to watch FRANK push his way towards the front of the queue.

FRANK  
(shouting)  
Excuse me! Um...Excuse me! Phone! I  
need a phone!

FRANK reaches the blue, plastic counter top. Realising that he has failed to gain full attention of the staff, FRANK lifts up his right finger and clicks twice. He clears his throat.

FRANK  
Um...Miss?!

KELLY, a worker, who faces away from FRANK, slowly slides the door closed on the food warmer. KELLY is in her mid-twenties. She is plump but pretty and is wearing bright gold eyeshadow. Her greasy, blonde hair is wrapped in a neon green scrunchie and sits on top of her head.

KELLY slaps the chip scoop onto the counter. She wipes her hands in her dirtied, pinstripe pinny and looks up at FRANK. FRANK smiles briefly and places both palms on the counter.

FRANK  
(calm)  
Yes. Miss. I need to borrow your  
phone. I can't get signal on my  
blackberry.

KELLY watches FRANK as he pulls his phone from his pocket and lifts it into the air. He squints at the screen, sighs, and returns the phone to his pocket. He looks back to KELLY and raises his eyebrows.

KELLY  
(sarcastically)  
Yes. Mister. You need a phone,  
these customers need their lunches.  
Get to the back and wait your turn.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK looks behind him at the queue. The customers are near-silent as they watch him. FRANK turns back to KELLY.

FRANK  
No, No Miss-

KELLY  
-Kelly.

FRANK  
Sorry?

KELLY  
It's Kelly.

FRANK  
Right. Fine. Kelly. But Kelly, I don't think you quite understand. I need a phone, now. My car's broken down here in, ergh, wherever, and I have to be somewhere very important in an hour, Kelly. So...phone?

FRANK raises his eyebrows.

FRANK  
(desperate)  
Please.

KELLY looks behind FRANK at the spectating queue.

KELLY  
Sure-

FRANK  
(relieved)  
-Thank you.

KELLY  
When it's your turn.

FRANK  
But-

GRAHAM, a stout, elderly man with only a few grey strands of hair left on his bald and sunburned head raises his arm from midway down the queue.

GRAHAM  
(shouting)  
- 'Ere...I'll have a look at 'er for you.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK turns around and searches for GRAHAM, who has his head tilted up and is squinting at FRANK through his thick glasses.

FRANK

Excuse me?

MAN

I said I'll have a look at 'er for you. ' Soon as I've had me fish 'n' chips.

FRANK

(sneeringly)

Right. I appreciate the offer but no, definitely not. I have cover. AA cover actually. And they will come and pick me up, if I could just use a phone.

FRANK turns back to face KELLY who is now serving an elderly woman. KELLY ignores FRANK as she reaches past him and hands the customer a cone of chips. The lady gives her the exact money and they exchange a smile before she turns and exits the shop.

FRANK

So...Miss? I mean, Kelly? Phone?

KELLY turns to the till, opens it, and cashes the money. She slams the cash drawer closed and snaps her head to face FRANK. KELLY places both palms on the counter so that her fingers touch the end of his. FRANK looks down at her hands. KELLY stands on her tip-toes and pushes her face closer to FRANK's face.

KELLY

(calmly)

Move out of my way, please.

FRANK

(exhausted)

Oh, come on-

KELLY

-Rude, rude man.

A few customers turn to one another and nod.

FRANK

Rude? But Kelly, I *trust* the AA. And I *pay* for the AA. And the AA can pick me up. I just need to be able to *call* them!

(CONTINUED)

KELLY sighs, shakes her head, and turns towards the man standing next to FRANK.

KELLY

Yes please? Hi Dave, OK? Just the usual?

FRANK

(exhaustively)

Oh, Christ-

FRANK looks at the clock behind the counter. He removes his phone from his pocket and holds it up into the air. He turns around and starts to exit the shop. The customers move out of his way and the bell rings as he leaves. The fan splutters and the conversation resumes.

EXT. SEAFRONT- DAY.

FRANK, holding his phone in the air, walks towards the sea-front. He turns to a couple that are walking past him.

FRANK

Yes! Excuse me? You don't happen to have a ph-

The couples shake their heads and continue walking.

FRANK sighs. He looks out onto the crowded beach. He shields his eyes from the sun with his left hand as he makes towards an empty bench. FRANK starts to slow down as he notices seagull mess spread across the whole of the seat. FRANK sighs and looks at the bench to his left where TOBY is sat. TOBY, a nine-year-old boy, sits at the end of the bench swinging his legs. He wears a blue, ripped legionnaire sun-hat and neon-green swimming trunks. Thick sunscreen is smeared across his pale, freckled face. TOBY watches two boys as they play in the sea. He taps the red bucket on his lap with a yellow spade.

TOBY

(shouting)

Yeah?!...Well it's too cold in the sea *anyway* and my mum's just got me this new bucket and spade and making sandcastles is more funner *anyway*!

FRANK looks at TOBY and then out to sea where the boys are playing. FRANK looks over to the empty bench and back to TOBY again. TOBY screws his face up, stops swinging his legs, and sighs. FRANK leans over, brushes the very edge of the bench, and perches on it.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY slowly turns to look at FRANK. FRANK slowly turns to face TOBY, and realising that TOBY is look at him, he quickly looks back out to sea.

FRANK pulls out his phone, looks at the screen, and then returns it to his pocket. He sighs.

FRANK  
(whispering)  
Damn it.

FRANK rubs his face with his hands. TOBY, watching FRANK, places the bucket and spade next to his side, and rubs his face with his hands.

TOBY  
(whispering)  
Damn it.

FRANK turns to face TOBY, who is now smiling at him.

FRANK  
Excuse me?

TOBY stops smiling.

TOBY  
Excuse me, what?

FRANK  
Did you just say something?

TOBY  
I said 'Damn it.'

FRANK  
-Mmm.

FRANK shuffles and looks for another bench. Unsuccessful, he leans back onto the seat, closes his eyes, and tilts his head up to face the sky. TOBY looks around and then looks back to FRANK.

TOBY  
Well...why did you say it?

FRANK continues to face the sky with his eyes closed.

FRANK  
(exhaustively)  
Say what?

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

Why did you say 'Damn it?'

FRANK

(cold)

Because I felt like it.

TOBY

Oh.

TOBY raises his eyebrows and watches FRANK. FRANK keeps his eyes closed. He loosens the tie around his neck and folds both of his sleeves back. TOBY looks behind him to the fish and chip shop where he can see KELLY serving customers. TOBY exhales, rolls his eyes, and looks back to FRANK.

TOBY

Well...Do you wanna know why I said it?

FRANK

Not really-

TOBY

-Well, it's because my mum got me this new bucket and spade and everything, and then my friend Thomas was going to come and play with me today but then Thomas' mum rang my mum this morning and said that Thomas had to stay in because he made the babysitter cry.

FRANK

-Right.

TOBY

Yeah. Right. And I asked mum what Thomas did to make the babysitter cry and my mum said that she didn't know, but when I was listening to her talk to Thomas' mum on the phone my mum was saying things like 'ooo, that's dreadful,' and 'ooo, how terrible of him,' so I know that she definitely knows what Thomas did but she just won't tell me.

TOBY frowns. FRANK sighs, sits up on the bench, and slowly opens his eyes. He looks out to sea as he reaches for his sunglasses in his shirt pocket. He puts on the glasses and turns to TOBY who is looking at him again. FRANK nods towards the sea.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK  
What about those boys?

TOBY looks out to sea and then back to FRANK.

TOBY  
(confused)  
Who? Alex and Rory?

FRANK  
I don't know...those boys in the  
sea that you were talking with.  
Can't you play with them?

TOBY  
Well, they are in my class but they  
are definitely *not* my friends.

FRANK  
(impatiently)  
And why not?

TOBY  
Well...they make fun of me because  
I can't swim very well.

TOBY looks down at his toes.

TOBY  
(quietly)  
Well...I can't really swim at all.

FRANK looks over his sunglasses at TOBY. TOBY waits for a  
reaction, but FRANK turns back out to sea.

TOBY  
And they say that me and my mum  
smell funny. Like, of vinegar and  
stuff.

FRANK  
(surprised)  
Vinegar?

TOBY rests his face on his palms and looks at the sand.

TOBY  
They say that when our mums come  
and pick us up from school their  
mums have to hold their noses.

FRANK raises his eyebrows as he watches ALEX and RORY pass a  
red ball between them.

(CONTINUED)



TOBY  
(defeated)  
I don't even like vinegar.

FRANK looks at TOBY who continues to stare at the ground.  
FRANK shakes his head, shuffles back onto the bench, and  
tilts his head to face the sky.

FRANK  
I don't like vinegar either. Just  
ignore them.

TOBY  
I do.

TOBY slowly looks up at FRANK. He looks at the bucket and  
spade beside him and begins to slowly push it towards FRANK.  
FRANK doesn't notice, and TOBY starts to swing his legs  
again. TOBY pulls his head forward and looks at FRANK's  
shoes.

TOBY  
Why are you dressed all posh?

FRANK  
Because I'm supposed to be  
somewhere important.

TOBY  
Where?

FRANK  
Somewhere with my partner.

TOBY  
Why?

FRANK  
Because I'm meant to be supporting  
her. This is an important day f-

FRANK looks at TOBY, who has raised his eyebrows.

FRANK  
Well, it's actually none of your  
business.

TOBY  
Well-

FRANK  
(angrily)  
-And now she's on her own and I'm  
stuck in, bloody, where am I?

(CONTINUED)

TOBY  
(innocently)  
- The beach?

FRANK  
The beach? Right. Yes. Stuck on the beach with no car and no bloody signal. And apparently no one in this village has a phone, or they just don't want to lend me one.

FRANK jerks his head in the direction of the fish and chip shop. TOBY slowly pulls the bucket back towards him. He sits in silence and starts to push the air in his mouth from one cheek to the other.

TOBY looks around him, then at the bucket and spade, and then back to FRANK.

TOBY  
Well, I do know what would help.

FRANK  
(sarcastically)  
Oh, you do, do you?

TOBY  
(concerned)  
It would help you if you built a sandcastle with me, just while you waited for your phone to work.

FRANK  
(sarcastically)  
And that would be beneficial to me, would it?

TOBY  
Um, well I'm pretty sure it would.  
It would make the time go really fast anyway.

FRANK removes his sunglasses, folds them, and tucks them into his shirt. TOBY smiles, takes the spade out from his bucket and holds it at FRANK. FRANK stares at the spade.

FRANK  
Definitely not.

TOBY frowns and places the spade back into the bucket.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK

And you shouldn't be even talking  
to me, a stranger, anyway. And stop  
sulking, too. I'm not good with ki-

FRANK's phone begins to vibrate. He pulls it from his  
pocket, looks at the screen, and walks off. TOBY sighs.

EXT. SEAFRONT- DAY.

FRANK returns to the seafront. His shirt is unbuttoned and  
his face is red. TOBY is sat on the bench licking an ice  
lolly that has left an orange trail down his chin. FRANK  
sighs and slumps on the bench. TOBY ignores him and  
continues to swing his legs and lick his lolly.

FRANK rubs his eyes, closes them, and lifts his head up to  
the sky. TOBY jumps up from the bench and puts his chewed  
lolly stick in the nearby bin. He walks a few metres ahead  
to a patch of untouched sand. He sits cross-legged and  
begins to dig with his spade. FRANK opens one of his eyes  
and watches TOBY. TOBY looks up, notices FRANK staring, and  
frowns at him. FRANK sighs and sits up. He shuffles along  
the bench nearer to TOBY. TOBY looks at KELLY in the empty  
fish and chip shop who is watching behind the counter.

FRANK

Nice Lolly?

TOBY

(blunt)

' guess so.

TOBY shuffles so that his back is facing FRANK. He continues  
to dig at the sand.

FRANK

(loudly)

Where'd you get it from? I could do  
with one.

TOBY

(reluctantly)

Sam sells them 'round the corner.  
If you want you can take some money  
from the tip box in the chip shop,  
that's what I do.

FRANK

I don't think I should-

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

But don't order a 'ninety-niner,'  
because they actually cost one  
pound forty-nine. But when I told  
Sam to change the name he told my  
mum that I was bothering him and  
then my mum told me off. So now I  
only order ice-lollys.

FRANK smiles.

TOBY

Even though the  
'one-pound-forty-niners' are  
especially nice with chocolate  
sauce.

TOBY, with a full bucket, slowly shuffles around to face  
FRANK. TOBY raises his eyebrows.

TOBY

(intrigued)

Why are your eyes like that?

FRANK quickly looks down at the ground.

FRANK

Like what?

TOBY

Like all red and blotchy?

FRANK doesn't answer. TOBY spins back around and begins  
smoothing off his bucket.

TOBY

Y'know...My mum's friend called  
Julie has eyes that are red inside  
all of the time and my mum once  
told me that it was because she  
pushed too hard on the toilet. But  
when I asked Julie about it my mum  
told me off and told me not to make  
up lies but my mum definitely said  
it.

TOBY looks at his bucket and smiles to himself. FRANK smiles  
and wipes a tear from under his right eye. TOBY begins to  
turn the bucket over.

FRANK

Wait!

(CONTINUED)

FRANK gets off from the bench and jogs towards TOBY. FRANK kneels down. He notices sand on his black trousers and brushes it away.

FRANK  
Quickly.

TOBY looks up at FRANK.

FRANK  
You've got to flip it over quickly.

TOBY  
Oh.

TOBY picks up the bucket and holds it out at FRANK. FRANK hesitates before taking it. TOBY covers his eyes with his hands and looks through the gaps in between his fingers. TOBY gasps as FRANK flips the bucket over. FRANK slowly lifts the bucket to reveal a perfect sandcastle.

TOBY AND FRANK  
(excitedly)  
Yes!!

TOBY holds up his hand. FRANK looks at it and slaps it hard.

TOBY  
Ouch!

FRANK  
Oh, Sorry.

TOBY rubs his hand on his swimming trunks and grins. TOBY and FRANK look towards the fish and chip shop. KELLY is standing next to the glass door drying up a plate. She smiles at the pair and they smile back.

FRANK looks down at some sand that has gathered on his trousers. He smiles. He pushes his fingers into the sand beside him and TOBY copies him.

TOBY  
What's that?

FRANK  
What's what?

TOBY nods at FRANK's shirt pocket. FRANK looks down.

FRANK  
Oh, these?

FRANK pulls out two square cuff-links.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY  
Yeah, them.

                  FRANK  
They're cuff-links. They go on your  
sleeves to make you look... smart I  
guess.

                  TOBY  
Oh. Well...shall we use them for  
windows in our castle?

                  FRANK  
Our castle?

TOBY nods.

                  FRANK  
I don't know-

                  TOBY  
*Please...?*

TOBY smiles and slowly holds out his hand. FRANK looks at  
TOBY's hand. He passes one cuff-link to TOBY and keeps one  
for himself. TOBY smiles.

                  TOBY  
You put a window on your side and  
I'll put one on my side.

FRANK nods and pushes the cuff-link into the castle. FRANK  
looks up suddenly.

                  FRANK  
Ah, windows.

FRANK stands on his tip-toes and shields his eyes with his  
right hand. He looks over to the car park next to the fish  
and chip shop.

                  FRANK  
Wait...*What!?*

                  TOBY  
What?

                  FRANK  
Oh, Christ!

FRANK brushes the sand from his trousers. He runs away  
crushing his side of the sandcastle. TOBY gasps.

FRANK looks back momentarily but continues to run off. TOBY sighs.

EXT. CAR PARK NEXT TO THE FISH AND CHIP SHOP- DAY.

FRANK runs to the car park. He spins around and looks up and down the joining road. He spits out some sand that has gathered in his mouth.

FRANK  
(shouting)  
'Christ sake!

FRANK starts to run across the car park towards the fish and chip shop. He suddenly stops as he hears the sound of his engine. He turns around and jogs back towards the other side of the car park. He looks down the road and sees GRAHAM stood next to his car bonnet who is wiping his hands in an off-cream rag. GRAHAM shuts the bonnet and smiles briefly at FRANK. FRANK sighs and walks towards the car.

FRANK  
Thank-

GRAHAM  
(bluntly)  
-Your car, Mister. Up 'n' runnin'.

FRANK  
How can I ever-

GRAHAM  
-and I'd suggest in future you  
don't leave your keys in the  
ignition.

GRAHAM winks and walks away. FRANK opens the door to his car and gets in. He smiles as he moves both of his hands around the steering wheel. He brushes off a few grains of sand from the dashboard and revs the engine twice. He puts the car into gear and begins to drive away. He drives past the seafront and notices Alex and Rory jumping over the sandcastle which is now submerged by the incoming tide. Alex puts both cuff links into his trunk pocket. FRANK begins to speed off.

FRANK hits his foot on the brake. He sits motionless staring at the accelerator. He looks up at the rear view mirror and studies himself. FRANK puts the car into reverse and reverses quickly back down the road.

FRANK pulls over on the side of the road, takes his keys out of the ignition, and gets out of the car. He runs towards the beach.

EXT. SEAFRONT- DAY.

FRANK runs towards ALEX and RORY.

FRANK  
Where's the boy?

ALEX  
Dunno.

FRANK  
Come on. You must have seen him.

RORY  
Nope.

The boys laugh.

FRANK shakes his head and runs towards the sea. The bottom of his trousers cling to his legs. FRANK stops and feels his pocket. He pulls out his vibrating phone. He stares at the screen for a moment. FRANK exhales slowly and answers the phone.

GIRLFRIEND  
Frank?...Frank?...Frank, I couldn't go through it without you.

FRANK ends the call and sighs with relief. He looks up and out to sea and starts to run along the tide's edge with his phone in his hand. As he runs further into the sea he hears the bell of the fish and chip shop and turns around. FRANK stops.

TOBY and KELLY are walking out of the shop. KELLY has her hand on TOBY's shoulder as he balances two forks on top of two cones of chips. KELLY and TOBY both stop and look up to FRANK. FRANK looks down at his trousers and then looks at TOBY. TOBY smiles, looks up to KELLY, and KELLY nods. TOBY and FRANK walk towards each other. They stop. TOBY looks down at the cone of chips and then back to FRANK. He holds out a cone. FRANK looks at KELLY, KELLY smiles, and FRANK takes the cone of chips.

FRANK  
No Vinegar?

TOBY smiles.

(CONTINUED)



TOBY  
No vinegar.