

FINE, THANKS

Episode #101 "Running Club"

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TEASER

EXT. CLARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sitting adjoined to identical houses on either side is a bog-standard British terrace house.

Faintly, the sounds of sex make their way out into the quiet suburban street.

INT. CLARK'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

CLARK HABERS (22), a pasty lad with a tremendous lack of social awareness, lies in bed. Alone. The covers move slightly around his crotch.

His phone screen illuminates his face. The moans fill the room--quiet, but deafening against the silence of a sleeping house. The bed creaks.

Suddenly, his phone pings--a notification.

Clark lets out a huff as he swipes it up.

The motions beneath the covers resume--and then the phone pings again.

Clark takes a deep breath, looking genuinely frustrated. He turns his phone vertical.

PHONE SCREEN

Clark taps on the notification, taking himself to a Instagram DM from '@notajayboy'.

There are two Ryan Gosling memes, both about being scared of women and thriving as a single man. Another appears.

BACK TO SCENE

Clark tries not to smile. He double taps his screen thrice.

Then he sighs, hand slipping beneath the covers, and he presses back on his phone.

PHONE SCREEN

It goes to the Instagram home page, not the porn, and there it is: a holiday post from '@MickeyBaker'--Clark's high school ex--with her current partner.

Nothing sexual or even close to it--just a smiling woman.

BACK TO SCENE

Clark's face drops.

His hand snakes out of the covers, as he looks ashamed and a bit stung.

He rolls his eyes, locks his phone and turns onto his side, admitting defeat.

END OF TEASER.

ACT ONE

INT. SAM'S HOUSE - DAY

The corridor, leading to the front door, is white and pristine. It's borderline too clean, as if no-one lived there. But the family photos and school portraits on the wall say otherwise.

There's a sudden, harsh knock.

SAM (O.S.)

Coming!

SAMEER "SAM" RAZA (23), a stocky, young know-it-all, heads to the front door.

He opens it, revealing Clark on the other side.

Clark is stood motionless, about a foot away from the door, staring straight ahead. When it opens, he seems to 'pop' to life.

Sam looks at him, confused.

CLARK

(cheerily)

I'm going to kill Jay. Alright by you?

Sam continues to look at him, even more confused, but then he considers it. He nods, accepting Clark's plan.

He steps aside, letting Clark in, and Clark heads straight to the living room.

INT. SAM'S LIVING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Clark marches in. He looks back, checking Sam's following.

SAM (O.S.)

What's he done this time then?

Sam enters, looking sympathetically at his best friend. Clark huffs.

CLARK

He keeps sending me fecking Ryan Gosling memes.

SAM

Right... Like the ones you send me?

CLARK

Exactly! But it's funny when I do it.

Sam nods again, humouring Clark.

Clark goes to sit down on the sofa and, following his lead, Sam sits in an arm chair.

However, as soon as Clark's backside touches the sofa, he stands again.

Sam goes to stand up, then sinks back into his chair, resigning.

Clark paces around the living room.

SAM

So, these... memes.

Clark looks at him, pausing his pacing for a moment before going right back to it.

CLARK

They were the ones about being scared of talking to women and shit like that. Which, look, I get it. Ha ha. But after the 300th it's like, *yeah, I get it. I'm single. We're single.* It's just--

Clark stops again. He looks at Sam, desperate to be understood.

CLARK (CONT'D)

I'm not scared of women, you know? Look at Amira! She's a woman and I'm not scared of her, am I?

Sam tilts his head, telling Clark to be honest.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Okay, she can be scary, but I'm not scared of her. Most of the time.

SAM

Okay, sure. What's your plan then?

Clark furrows his brow, confused.

SAM (CONT'D)
To kill him. You said you were
going to kill him.

CLARK
I wasn't serious about that.

SAM
No shit Sherlock. What I actually
meant was what's your plan to get
back at him? I know you've already
thought of something.

(BEAT)
Tell me I'm wrong.

Clark sighs. He rolls his eyes.

CLARK
Look--

SAM
I knew it! Go on then. What is it?
Silent treatment? No, no. Oh my
god, are you gonna try and sleep
with his sister because of this?
Feels a bit far, but I'm here for
the fallout.

CLARK
Right, right. Shush. Does any of
that sound like me? No, I'm not
doing any of that.

SAM
(hamming it up)
So, what? You just gonna suddenly
get a girlfriend to prove you can?

Clark gives an awkward, thin-lipped smile. Sam's face drops.

SAM (CONT'D)
No.

CLARK
Yes?

SAM
No, Clark. No. That's actually
insane! You shouldn't just start
dating someone to--to prove a point
to someone else. Especially to Jay!

CLARK

It's not just to prove a point,
though.

Sam sits up, intrigued.

CLARK (CONT'D)

I'm not getting any younger.
It's... probably about time I
started looking for a relationship.

Slowly, Sam nods, coming round to the whole idea.

CLARK (CONT'D)

At the very least, it'd be nice to
meet someone who can help me not
die a virgin.

SAM

Hey, some of history's best people
died as virgins. Isaac Newton.
Nikola Tesla. Mother Teresa.

Clark winces a little as he hears Mother Teresa's name. He
gives a slight grimace.

CLARK

I'd be careful putting her in a
list of history's best people.
Apparently she was a bit of a dodgy
old nun.

SAM

Doesn't really matter to my point.

CLARK

(in a whisper)
Probably matters in the grand
scheme though.

SAM

What I was trying to say was that
sex doesn't really matter.

Clark scoffs.

CLARK

Doubt you'd be saying that if you'd
done it. Everyone who's done it
makes seem like the best thing in
the world.

SAM

Eh. It's overrated.

Clark looks over to Sam suddenly. He wears a confused look--eyes narrowed--but he quickly gives up with a shake of his head.

Finally, Clark sits down on the sofa, slumping into it. He sits there, in silence for a moment.

CLARK

You know any dating apps then?

SAM

Tinder. And, uh... Yeah, that's about it.

CLARK

(sitting up)

Really? You only know Tinder? Not Bumble? Not Hinge?

Sam shakes his head.

CLARK (CONT'D)

No OkCupid? eHarmony? No Facebook Dating?

Sam scoffs in disbelief.

SAM

That last one's not real... right?

CLARK

I mean, it's not its own separate app--it's built into Facebook. But, no, yeah, it's real. You really only know Tinder? What are you, like 30?

SAM

Why are even asking about apps? You're not seriously thinking about using a dating app, are you?

CLARK

It'd be odd for me to ask about them, without them being my plan.

SAM

Clark, that's a horrible idea.

CLARK

What? Why?

Clark gets to his feet. He starts to pace again, as Sam speaks.

SAM

Okay... I mean this in the nicest way: you text like a bot. If you messaged someone on a dating app, they'd one hundred percent think they're about to be mined for personal information.

CLARK

What, just because I use proper grammar and punctuation? Come on, that's a bit of a stretch, isn't it?

SAM

It's... It's just not how people usually text.

CLARK

I know--but, look, I don't really have any other choice? I don't leave my house. How else am I meant to meet someone?

Sam narrows his eyes, as he looks at Clark--standing in the middle of a house that's not his own. Sam just slowly nods.

SAM

What about trying to get out more then?

Clark cocks an eyebrow, asking 'really?'

SAM (CONT'D)

Come on, what about clubs?

CLARK

Not a chance.

SAM

Pubs?

CLARK

Only for meals.

SAM

Clubs, but the hobby kind this time?

Clark pauses at this suggestion. He thinks.

CLARK

Maybe, but also probably no as well.

SAM

What about randomly approaching
someone in the street,
complimenting them, and then asking
for their number and/or a date?

There's a silence.

Both start laughing.

CLARK

Look, I'm not against getting out
more... We might just need another
perspective.

Sam meets his eyes, and they're clearly thinking the same
thing.

SAM

A womanly one by any chance?

INT. AMIRA'S CORNER SHOP - DAY

The bell above the shop door rings as it opens. Clark and Sam
step inside, with the latter leading the way.

Behind the counter is AMIRA RASOOL (23), an emo-style stunner
with smarts as sharp as her looks, who idly fiddles with an
empty packet of crisps--now folded into a triangle.

CLARK (O.S.)

Amira?

She quickly discards the folded rubbish and flashes a false
smile at the boys, not realising it's them yet.

And then she meets Clark's eyes.

She looks at Sam next. Her false smile softens into a more
genuine one. Her shoulders relax.

AMIRA

What're you two doin' here?

Clark looks to Sam, hoping he'll explain.

SAM

We're here for your... womanly
perspective on an idea Clark's had.

Clark looks at Amira, giving her a confirming nod. She stands
up straight and narrows her eyes.

AMIRA

If this is anything like Jay's questions about 'womanhood', you can ask someone else.

Clark and Sam look at one another, unsure what she means--but guessing based on Jay as a person.

They look back at her in near unison and shake their heads.

INT. AMIRA'S CORNER SHOP - LATER

Amira leans against the countertop, looking focused, as she listens to Clark.

CLARK

And that's about it.

(to Sam)

Right?

Sam nods, agreeing that just about sums it up. Amira stands up straight and folds her arms.

AMIRA

Wow. Clark, that... is a horrible idea.

SAM

Thank you.

CLARK

What is? Which part exactly?

AMIRA

The part where you want to get into a relationship just to spite Jay.

CLARK

Why do you both keep fixating on that part? It's, like, a really, really minor part. I also want to do this because I actually want to, you know, date someone.

Amira and Sam both give Clark the same sceptical look.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Honestly! I do. I've been thinking about it for a while and this is just the... the straw that broke the camel's back.

Amira looks Clark up and down, then nods.

AMIRA

Okay... and how exactly am I meant to be helping with all this? I'm not looking to date at the minute so--

Clark's eyes widen, and his hands shoot up.

CLARK

Nope. Yeah. Cool. Cool. Wasn't-- Yep.

Clark nods, stopping himself. Amira relaxes.

AMIRA

Right, yeah. Of course. Still, what exactly do you need my 'womanly perspective' on then?

SAM

He's considering dating apps for this little venture of his.

AMIRA

Nah. Nope. Clark, you're not using dating apps.

CLARK

Why not?

AMIRA

Dating apps are for hook-ups, not love.

CLARK

I thought that was just Tinder and Grindr.

Amira and Sam give Clark confused looks at his mention of Grindr.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Oh, no. I've not used Grindr. I've not used any yet. Just... what I've heard.

Slowly, the confused looks fade.

AMIRA

Look, if you're really serious about this--and it's not just about Jay--then meeting someone in-person will be better. Do you have any hobbies?

CLARK
(innocently)
I like Warhammer.

Amira looks Clark up and down again. He's no Henry Cavill.
She grimaces slightly.

AMIRA
Just join a running club.

CLARK
But... I don't like running.

AMIRA
No-one does. Running clubs are just
the current way you meet people.

Clark's furrowed brow tells all: he doesn't get it. He lets
out a quiet sigh, though, and accepts the idea with a shrug.

CLARK
Okay. I guess... I can try that.

Amira seems pleased that someone's taken her advice finally.
Sam seems relieved that the matter is concluded.

CLARK (CONT'D)
Fancy joining me?

Sam looks back at Clark, like he's mad, and Clark just gives
pleading smile.

Sam sighs, looking to the sky. He then looks at Amira, and a
cunning smirk grows on his face.

SAM
Sure, mate. We'll *all* join you.
Won't we, Amira? Me, you, and Jay.
(to Clark)
Whilst you go chasing love, we
can... catch up.

Caught off guard, Amira tries to refuse. But, seeing Clark so
at ease, she just sighs, accepting her fate.

END OF ACT ONE.