

# Scott Brown

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## *Carnival Girls*

*Extract from episode one of a six-part series*

### **FADE IN:**

#### **EXT. HIGH STREET, BUNTINGTON, KENT – DAWN**

The tacky looking High Street of an old suburban market town in decline. Lampposts are draped in shabby Christmas – but not Christian specific – decorations and dead hanging baskets. A banner hangs across the street: ‘BUNTINGTON OLDE WINTER FAYRE & PARADE – SAT 24TH DEC – 9AM+’.

The street is dark and deserted, except for KEN, 65. He’s wearing woollies and a fluorescent jacket over many layers. He is pouring a coffee from a thermos flask into the plastic lid/cup and holds his clipboard between his legs.

Just as he’s about to take his first sip, the headlights of an old transit van come into view behind him. He hears the van and – with the clipboard still between his legs – shuffles over to a litter bin. He balances the flask and cup on the domed top, retrieves his clipboard and jogs over to the middle of the street.

Using the clipboard, Ken makes a series of airport ground crew-style hand signals to guide the van into exactly the right place to park. When he is satisfied with the van’s positioning, he gives a thumbs-up to the FIRST STALLHOLDER, 37, behind the wheel and heads back towards the

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bin. First Stallholder winds down his window.

**FIRST STALLHOLDER**

Morning Ken!

**KEN**

Yes, morning.

As Ken nears the bin, the cup and flask slide off the domed top. Ken runs and tries to catch it, but he's too slow and it spills everywhere. He stands over the pool of coffee, disappointed.

**EXT. DRIVEWAY, CAROL'S HOUSE, BUNTINGTON – CONTINUOUS**

A 1950s built semi-detached with an immaculately well-kept front garden. Chasing Christmas lights frame the glass panels around the wreathed front door.

**INT. KELLY'S BEDROOM, CAROL'S HOUSE, BUNTINGTON – CONT.**

In the darkness, the digital alarm clock reads '4:59'. After a moment, it turns to '5:00' and the alarm goes off. It sounds three times and the door swings open: light from the upstairs landing floods in around a silhouette. CAROL, 48, turns on the bedroom light as she surges in. She whips open the curtains (still dark outside) and starts to tidy. KELLY, 16, remains hidden underneath the pink duvet of her single bed. Carol turns the alarm off, then bustles around the room.

**CAROL**

Are you awake?

**KELLY**

Hmm.

**CAROL**

Are you awake?

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**KELLY**

Hmmmmmm.

**CAROL**

Are you sure?

Carol waits for a moment and then turns on the alarm clock's radio: Mariah Carey, *All I Want For Christmas Is You*. A few seconds of Mariah as Carol stares at the body-shaped, duvet-covered mass. Carol turns up the volume. Kelly's head emerges.

**KELLY**

All right!

Carol turns the volume down. Kelly dives back under the duvet. Carol waits.

**CAROL**

I'll start Hoovering.

After a moment, Kelly re-emerges and starts to get up.

**CAROL (CONT'D)**

Be downstairs in fifteen minutes.

Kelly looks at the alarm clock, Carol turns to go.

**KELLY**

Did you change my alarm?

**CAROL**

(as she goes)

Half six is not enough time.

Carol shuts the door.

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**KELLY**

(under her breath)  
For fuck's sake.

***EXT. HIGH STREET, BUNTINGTON, KENT – LATER***

Several more cars and vans have arrived. STALLHOLDERS are setting up on the pavements.

Ken is parking – 747 style again – an estate car and trailer driven by the SECOND STALLHOLDER. Ken repeatedly makes him move a few inches forwards and backwards. The Second Stallholder becomes irritated and revs the engine, causing the car to jolt forward a few feet. Ken leaps out of the way, gives the Second Stallholder a panicked thumbs-up and totters off.

***INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING, CAROL'S HOUSE, BUNTINGTON – CONT.***

From behind the closed bathroom door: the sound of running water from the shower. Carol jogs up the stairs, looking at her watch. When she reaches the landing, she knocks on the bathroom door as she opens it and pokes her head in.

**CAROL**

Five minutes!

Carol closes the door.

**KELLY**

(shouting from the shower)  
MUM!

The doorbell rings. Carol goes downstairs, increasing in volume with each step.

*UEA Creative Writing Anthology 2011***CAROL**

Mary and Jenny are here!  
I'll make a start on her!

Carol is nearly at the bottom of the stairs.

**CAROL (CONT'D)**

FIVE MINUTES!

**KELLY**

(from the bathroom)  
I KNOW!

***EXT. HIGH STREET, BUNTINGTON, KENT – LATER***

Some Stallholders are still setting up, but most are finished. A stall's stereo is playing Paul McCartney's *Wonderful Christmastime*. Ken is stood next to a tinsel-clad burger van: bacon roll in one hand, clipboard in the other.

***INT. KITCHEN, CAROL'S HOUSE, BUNTINGTON – CONT.***

Carol's nicely designed – but small – modern kitchen.

JENNY, 16, is sitting on the middle of three stools positioned along the breakfast bar. She is wearing a pink dressing gown over joggers and a T-shirt. The counters and bar are completely covered with hairdressing equipment and make-up. Everything has been ordered in size and placed in straight lines. All the tongs, hairdryers and straighteners are placed on chopping boards and plugged into an elaborate arrangement of multi-socket adapters.

MARY, 49, leans against the counter at the back of the kitchen, nursing a mug of tea.

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Carol is concentrating on curling Jenny's hair with tongs. Jenny is trying to eat a croissant. She breaks off a tiny piece and is just about to eat it.

**CAROL**

Don't move, please.

Jenny freezes, holding the bit of croissant a few inches from her mouth.

Kelly – also wearing a dressing gown – strops into the kitchen and sits on a stool.

**CAROL (CONT'D)**

Good morning.

Kelly stares forward.

**MARY**

Did you sleep well, Kelly?

Kelly gives Mary a withering look. Jenny eats the bit of croissant.

**CAROL**

Make the girls some tea, Mary.

Mary switches on the kettle.

**KELLY**

None for me.

Mary switches off the kettle.

**CAROL**

You should have something hot.

Mary switches on the kettle.

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**KELLY**

I don't want it.

Mary switches off the kettle.

**CAROL**

It'll keep you warm later.

Mary switches on the kettle.

**KELLY**

I won't be able to wee when I'm in  
the dress, will I?

Carol shoots a warning look at Kelly. Mary switches off the kettle.

**CAROL**

You'd like some tea, wouldn't  
you Jennifer?

**JENNY**

No, thank you.

**CAROL**

You'll both be cold later.

Kelly and Jenny share a look.

**CAROL (CONT'D)**

I'll have a cup of tea then. Mine's  
gone cold.

Carol gives the mug to Mary. Mary pours the full – and still steaming –  
mug of tea into the sink and switches the kettle on.



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After a moment, Carol glances up from Jenny's hair and stares at the kettle. Carol stops curling, places the tongs on the counter, switches off the kettle, picks it up and fills it from the tap. Once it is full, she slams it down on the counter for emphasis, takes up the straighteners again and resumes curling Jenny's hair.

After a moment, Mary switches the kettle on.

The girls look bored and tired. Carol straightens with intense concentration.

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**Scott Brown** graduated from UEA's Scriptwriting and Performance BA in 2010 with starred first-class honours. He has worked professionally as an actor and stand-up comedian.

