

Edward Dyer
Racing Hearts

FADE IN:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM – AUTUMN, PRESENT DAY, EARLY MORNING

Light shines through the window. The bedroom is messy and filled with all manner of racing posters, toys and duvet covers. There is a large poster of Ayrton Senna above the bed. JACK (10) is standing in front of a full-length mirror. His mother, CAROL (34), is brushing down the white shirt he's wearing. They both look in the mirror. Jack smiles; Carol is close to tears.

FLASHBACK

INT. HALLWAY – NIGHT

Carol is sitting on the stairs, caught in the faint light of the TV, casting shadows of the banisters over her face. She's been crying for an hour and can't shed any more tears.

The kitchen light along the corridor is bright. There's a man's coat hanging off the back of one of the chairs, and a baby's bottle of milk on the counter.

FLASHBACK

INT. HALLWAY – EARLIER, EVENING

Jack is standing in his race car pyjamas at the top of the stairs. Somewhere in the kitchen below, a glass smashes. Jack doesn't react. He can see long shadows along the hallway. Carol and JONATHAN (38), his father, are arguing.

Jonathan

You think my job is easy?

Carol

I never said that.

Jonathan

Nine 'til five. Every day for the last seven years. I've sacrificed everything.

Carol

So have I.

Jonathan

Like what? You'd never blame yourself for any of this, would you? Of course, this is all my fault!

Jack puts his hands over his ears.

Carol

(inaudible)

You're not even listening to me.

Jonathan

(inaudible)

I'm going out. I need a drink.

Carol

(inaudible)

No you don't. You don't...

Jonathan

(inaudible)

I'm taking the car. Don't wait up.

Jonathan pulls on his coat, leaves the kitchen and exits the house through the front door. Upstairs, Jack's sister ELLA (18 months) begins to cry. Carol stirs in the kitchen. It's only then that Jack runs back to his room.

EXT. DRIVEWAY – PRESENT DAY, EARLY MORNING

Jack, wearing a dark suit jacket over his shirt and a badly fastened black tie, is ushered out of the front door. He is holding Ella's hand, who toddles beside him. Carol, wearing a black veil, turns to shut the front door to their semi-detached house, but drops the keys in her struggle to find the right one.

Jack and Ella walk down the tarmacked driveway towards a black limousine. JEAN (70) and BILLY (68), Carol's parents, help the children and their mother into the car. They too are wearing dark clothes.

INT. LIMOUSINE – CONTINUOUS

Jack looks out of the window, as the door shuts, to watch the wind blow several leaves off an oak tree in their front garden.

FLASHBACK

Jonathan, Carol, Jack and Ella (8 months) are having a picnic beneath some trees in a large park. Jonathan is drinking a bottle of Stella from a four-pack. The day is bright, but the air seems a little cold. There is a fenced playground behind them and a small stream in front where a few children are splashing in the water.

Jack plays with a blue, remote-controlled car. It moves quickly over the short grass on the field by the playground. Jonathan is helping him steer. Ella is in a basket, sucking her dummy, on the picnic blanket with Carol who is eating a cucumber sandwich. Ella drops the dummy and Jonathan turns back when she starts crying. Jack loses control of the car and it veers into a bush.

He looks over to the picnic and watches Jonathan try to soothe Ella. He can't and he passes her to Carol. He walks away. Jack shields his eyes from the sun, watching Jonathan go.

INT. FUNCTION ROOMS, 3-STAR HOTEL – PRESENT DAY, LATE MORNING

Jack looks up to lots of MOURNERS standing around the room, dressed all in black. They're standing in small groups around small card tables, against the bar and around the buffet table on the other side of the room. He glances over at Carol, she is holding Jean's hand and crying.

FLASHBACK

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM – AFTERNOON

During an Art lesson, Jack is drawing a picture of a race car. It is surprisingly good for a 10-year-old. Two BOYS (10-11) are fighting next to him, and accidentally knock Jack. A tin of red paint spills over his drawing and drips onto his uniform. The boys laugh. Jack stands up, furious, and pushes one of them back. He falls backwards onto the floor. MS. ATHERTON (36), the art teacher, notices and strides over.

EXT. CHURCH YARD – PRESENT DAY, EARLY MORNING

The limousine pulls up outside a church. More autumn leaves fall and swirl in the courtyard.

FLASHBACK

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM – LATE EVENING

Jack is sitting on the edge of his bed, playing with his fingers. There is still red paint over his uniform. There is a half eaten sandwich on a plate on the bed and a packet of unopened crisps.

Jonathan enters and tries to make Jack laugh by pulling a funny face. He walks, unsteadily, a little drunk, and sits down next to his son. They sit in silence.

Jonathan looks up at the poster of Ayrton Senna and then down to the plate of food on the bed. He opens the crisps and eats one. He offers one to Jack, who doesn't look up. Jonathan wipes his fingers on his trousers and gets up. He finds the remote control for the blue toy car. He drives it along the floor and steers into Jack's foot. He makes the car butt Jack's foot again and again. Jack smiles.

INT. CHURCH – PRESENT DAY, EARLY MORNING

Jack is staring at a RELATIVE at the lectern beside the coffin. She sobs at the end of her speech and then steps down. Billy gets up to comfort her. All that Jack can hear is the sniffing and suppressed sobbing of the other mourners.

FLASHBACK

INT. KITCHEN – EARLY AFTENOON

Even though it is early, all of the lights are on in the house. Jonathan is sitting at the kitchen table, surrounded by scraps of paper, receipts and a calculator. He adds a few numbers together, but his attention is caught between the receipts and the tempting bottle of whisky. He squeezes his eyes to try and wake himself up.

He looks down at Jack's blue race car that has butted into his foot. Jonathan smiles at his son, standing in the doorway. He puts down his pen, grabs the bottle of whisky and heads out of the backdoor into the garden with Jack.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM – LATER

Jack is sitting on the floor, hugging his duvet around him. There is a sliver of light coming in through his door from the hallway.

Why can't you take this seriously?

Jonathan

It sounds like you're blaming me for this. I work hard all day, and you...

Carol

I'm not blaming anyone.

Jonathan

You sit at home all day. What have you got to show for it?

Carol

That's what we agreed. I'd stay home to look after the kids.

Jonathan

You've never thought I was a good father. I've never been able to shut her up when she's crying.

Carol

I don't want to lose my home.

Pans clatter. Ella starts crying in a room nearby; it goes unnoticed. Jack looks over to his race car.

INT. CHURCH – PRESENT DAY, EARLY MORNING

Jack looks either side of where he is sitting on the church pew. Some of his relatives are crying, holding hands. Others are smiling with fond memories, or looking away. He stares at the coffin.

INT. FUNCTION ROOM – PRESENT DAY, LATER

Jack is sitting alone. The mourners tuck into the buffet. Various relatives attempt to talk to him, but he doesn't hear them speak. Carol offers him some food: a sandwich and a packet of crisps. She leaves them on the table nearby, but they go untouched.

FLASHBACK

INT. KITCHEN – LATE EVENING

Jack is racing his blue car around the floor. Ella is sitting on a mat, playing with building blocks. The radio plays 'Love me Tender' by Elvis Presley, which is louder than the rain outside. Carol is washing up after dinner, ignoring the untouched plate of food still left on the table.

The front door swings open. Carol turns to see Jonathan, drunk, walk into the kitchen, carrying a nearly empty bottle of whisky. He goes over to Ella but she starts crying. Carol tries to pull him away from her but he pushes her backwards. She stumbles up against a wall and knocks the radio so it stops playing. There is a moment of stillness.

Jack's race car drives up against Jonathan's feet. He scoops it up, and in a flash of temper, throws it against the wall. He glances at Jack and Ella and then turns to leave. The front door slams behind him, the car starts and reverses rapidly out of the driveway.

Jack looks over at his race car. It is smashed to pieces.

INT. FUNCTION ROOM – PRESENT DAY, EARLY EVENING

The room is emptying – only Ella, Carol, Jean and Billy remain. Billy shakes hands with the staff, thanking them for their service. Jack follows Carol, who has Ella

asleep in her arms, out of the room. They walk from the hotel and into the descending darkness of outside.

INT. HALLWAY/KITCHEN – LATER

Jean and Billy hug Carol goodbye. Jack watches from the kitchen table. Carol shuts the door behind her parents and immediately goes through into the living room.

Jack is left alone in the Kitchen.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM – NIGHT

Jack wakes up. He can hear Carol faintly crying downstairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Carol is sitting on the sofa, covered in a blanket. She is bathed in a blue glow from the TV. Jack enters and crawls under the blanket with her. They fall asleep.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM – NIGHT

The single lamp on Jack's desk is on. It is shining on the blue race car, which has been glued back together by Jack. It isn't perfect, but it will race again.

The lamp is switched off.

FADE OUT.

Biography (50 words)

Edward Dyer began life in Coventry, where he used writing as one of many outlets for his creativity. He believes that you should only do what you find challenging. So, if given the chance, his next project would be to build a tree house.