

BENNY FIX

Pilot for TV drama series

EXT. BENNY'S BOAT, STOWBAY - DAY

Late summer, present day. A modest, weathered cabin-cruiser, the 'Louise', is idle mid-bay.

BENNY PORTER (35) checks the faltering bilge pump. He's agile, easy on the eye.

He picks up his phone and resumes a video call with sassy PASCALLE (25) in an art gallery. Casual activity behind her. She gestures to hush.

PASCALLE
(video-link)
Benny?

BENNY
Sorry, sorry, the bilge pump's playing up.

PASCALLE
Just a few more days. I'm doing well.

BENNY
Fine. As long as you're selling.

He glances at a luxury motor-yacht cruising by.

EXT. ANTON'S YACHT

Sun deck. Guests relax. Sharply handsome ANTON THANOS (30) is the social focus of attention.

Sleek GISELLE THANOS (30) approaches and strokes Anton's arm.

GISELLE
Where's Mikey?

ANTON
(posh)
Not with you?

Lounge deck. Little MIKEY (5) rips off a life-jacket, revealing a blue-white stripes football shirt, with 'KOKI 9' on the back.

A ball bounces away.

Bouncing down into the stowed power-dinghy. Mikey scrambles down steps after it.

SEAGULLS SQUAWK, swooping low. Mikey is briefly alarmed.

He spins round and around, laughing at the seagulls.

He loses his balance on the shallow sea deck.

He falls SCREAMING into the water.

Guests react.

A deckhand throws a life-ring out, but Mikey is too far back, struggling in the yacht's wake.

Skipper STEFFA (35) cuts the engines and rushes aft. She's tanned, super-fit, in white uniform jacket and shorts.

EXT. BENNY'S BOAT

Bobbing in the yacht's wake.

Benny reacts to Mikey's SCREAMS.

EXT. ANTON'S YACHT & DINGHY

Steffa launches the power dinghy. Anton scrambles in.

ANTON
Mikey, we're coming!

Giselle is too late as the dinghy speeds away.

GISELLE
Mikey! Mikey! Oh my God! Please no!

EXT. BENNY'S BOAT & ANTON'S DINGHY

Benny steers toward Mikey.

He hurls a life-ring but it's out of Mikey's reach.

He throws a rugby ball. Closer.

He tears off his shirt and dives in.

He reaches and supports flailing Mikey in the water.

Dinghy approaches. Steffa takes control of hauling Mikey out.

STEFFA
(NZ accent)
Keep him level!

She performs expert resuscitation on Mikey's little form.
He's breathing.

Anton presses hands to his face, trembling in utter relief.

Benny's boat. The rugby ball is tossed up onto the deck.
Benny clambers onboard, heaving the life-ring.

He calls across.

BENNY

He's OK?!

ANTON

He's OK! Thank you my friend, from
my heart.

Benny signals acknowledgement.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Please, you must be my guest.
Anton, The Fortuna. Pier five.

Distracted, Benny searches for something. He checks his
sodden pockets, his shirt.

His phone is behind a toolbox. He moves the toolbox.

The phone splashes into the bilge-water.

Benny grabs the phone. It lights up with a home-screen photo
of a brightly smiling woman and girl.

He quick dries it with his shirt. He flops down, relieved,
exhausted.

He cradles the phone, gazing at the screen.

EXT. BENNY'S MERC, CAR PARK, MARINA - NIGHT

A classic Mercedes coupe. Benny opens the boot. A stash of
'Tonioni bespoke' dry-cleaning is revealed. He unzips a suit
cover. He selects a jacket/slacks combination. He selects a
shirt and shoes.

A few promo cards lie scattered - for 'Alice Gallery' and for
'Classic Cars e-Born'.

EXT. ANTON'S YACHT, MARINA

The yacht is moored among other luxury yachts. Security
guards chatter on the pier.

I/E. LOUNGE DECK

The guests have gone. Anton is on a call, with a glass of
champagne. Tense.

ANTON

(on phone)

Now let's not... we both should
have... Darling please, just be
thankful he's OK...

Benny sips champagne, intrigued by Anton's discomfort.

A young Asian steward deftly refills glasses.

Skipper Steffa declines a top-up.

STEFFA

Thanks Edmond, that'll be all.

She fiddles with a folder. Benny discretely admires her. She guardedly knows it.

ANTON

(on phone)

Give him a hug from me...

(a glance at Benny)

Yes, of course I will... back soon... soon... Bye.

He downs the champagne and gestures for more. He turns, smiling.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Mikey's running around again.

STEF

Oh, that's wonderful.

BENNY

Marvelous.

ANTON

Like he's a seagull. The little scamp.

He lifts his glass in a toast.

ANTON (CONT'D)

To life.

His smile fades.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Benny, I can't say enough just how... Without you and Steffa...

An involuntary shudder.

BENNY

Best not dwell on it.

Steffa offers her folder for Anton to check.

STEFFA

Boss, I have to organize for tomorrow.

Anton waves away the folder, while admiring her.

ANTON
Relax. More champagne.

STEFFA
You'd better not drive.

She starts away, glancing back at Benny.

Benny and Anton share tacit admiration of her departing form.
Disappointed at her leaving.

BENNY
Impressive.

ANTON
She's a proper amazon. Olympics
medal for sailing.

BENNY
Wow.

ANTON
Lives on board. Runs our charters.
I'll show you around.
(calls out)
Edmond, brandy.

BENNY
But you're expected home.

ANTON
And you must dine with us. Giselle
insists.

BENNY
Another time maybe. You'll just
want to be together tonight.

Anton looks doubtful. His PHONE RINGS. He reacts jittery.
Then, checking the phone, with relief.

ANTON
(on phone)
Not tonight, Seb. Duty calls at
home, had a bit of a scare... Well
I'm sure you guys can party without
me...
(calls)
Edmond? Damn it.

INT. BRIDGE

Navigation screens light up. Benny is politely impressed.

Anton refills brandy glasses. He eases up into the skipper's
swivel leather chair.

ANTON

I'll have it installed for you.

BENNY

In my old tub?

ANTON

Then the very least I can do is
offer you club membership. VIP.

I/E. LOUNGE DECK

Benny dutifully views footballers on a giant TV screen -
celebrating a goal, clutching a silver trophy with blue and
white ribbons, doing selfies for fans, signing shirts.

TV V.O.

An exciting new season is upon us.
We're in the big league now...

TV FOOTBALLERS

And we're here to stay... here to
stay... here to stay...

Anton turns to Benny for comment.

BENNY

I have to say, that was just lazy
indulgence. A bunch of super-egos,
playing to camera.

ANTON

(stung)

But its promotion to the Premier
League. What do you expect?

BENNY

Some proper content. More humility
in victory, more compassion. More
about the backroom staff and the
fans.

Anton sighs frustration.

BENNY (CONT'D)

And you'll need regular updates for
specific targets, to keep them
onside. Sponsors, investors, your
local council. I'll put someone on
it if you like.

Anton shrugs vague consent.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Believe me, you'll appreciate the
difference.

ANTON
You're some kind of expert I
suppose.

BENNY
I was in p.r.

Anton reacts with a flicker of suspicion.

He shows off his mini-gym and sauna.

He sees Mikey's little football shirt, drying on a chair.
He's briefly overwhelmed.

ANTON
Damn football.

Benny picks up the shirt, silently coaxing.

ANTON (CONT'D)
Oh I shouldn't complain, of course.
But if you knew just what I have to
deal with.

They move toward the stern.

Anton sways, the worse for drink.

ANTON (CONT'D)
All the pressures and agents'
demands, and the season hasn't even
begun.

On impulse he clutches Benny's arm.

ANTON (CONT'D)
And there's the 'old lion'.

BENNY
Your father? Tycho?

Anton is again suspicious.

ANTON
You know him?

BENNY
I know of him. Hotels empire.

ANTON
He's put me in charge of the club.
Supposed to prove myself.

He sees the dinghy. He shudders, averting his gaze out across
the bay. But no comfort in that view either.

He takes Mikey's shirt from Benny.

ANTON (CONT'D)
He dotes on Mikey.

BENNY
Only natural.

ANTON
Sees him as a chip off the old block. So if he should hear of what... Oh God, he'll be unbearable.

He distractedly folds the shirt, tighter and tighter.

ANTON (CONT'D)
Our guests, I did ask for their discretion...

BENNY
Who were they?

ANTON
Not another scandal.

BENNY
(firm)
The guests. On board, today.

ANTON
The guests? Hotel execs from Lisbon. And a couple of Giselle's showbiz friends.
(stark)
I must stop the gossip.

Benny picks up Mikey's little life-jacket.

ANTON (CONT'D)
Promise me, Benny. You will be discrete.

BENNY
More than that. I can help.

Anton stares at him. An accusing stare. Drink fuelled paranoia.

ANTON
So, p.r. All your questions.

He confronts, jabbing a finger.

ANTON (CONT'D)
I might suppose you're a scandal-monger. A hot story to promote.

Benny remains calm.

BENNY
Anton, you have me wrong.

ANTON
Well, you got lucky. And a
photographer snooping, no doubt.

Benny mock gestures around.

BENNY
(flat)
Of course.

Anton pushes at him. Benny evades.

Anton collapses into a chair.

ANTON
Watch out for parasites. The old
lion is right about that.

Benny tosses the life-jacket onto his lap.

BENNY
Thanks for the hospitality.

He starts away.

Anton stares after him.

ANTON
Benny, please, forgive me.
Completely out of order. Heat of
the moment.

He scrambles to his feet.

Benny pauses. Turning, he's caught in a man-hug embrace.

ANTON (CONT'D)
My son is alive thanks to you.

Steffa approaches, alerted.

BENNY
Thanks to us.

He eases Anton away.

BENNY (CONT'D)
You need to make a call.

BENNY (CONT'D)
(to Steffa)
Black coffee and food. Anything.

A LITTLE LATER

Anton finishes a sandwich. Steffa pours more black coffee.
Benny eyeballs him.

BENNY (CONT'D)
So. Make the call.

ANTON
Now?

BENNY
Now. Set up a social visit, then
casually admit what happened.

ANTON
(sour)
That's p.r.?

BENNY
You want him to hear secondhand?
Mention about little Mikey, so
mischievous.
(mimics posh Anton)
'Takes after you, father'.

A wry smile from Anton.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Take the hit and move forward. No
shirking. He should at least
respect you for that.

ANTON
Debatable.

BENNY
Tell him Mikey must have torn off
the life-jacket to show off his
football shirt. So proud.

ANTON
Hmmm.

BENNY
Chased a ball into the dinghy, the
seagulls made him dizzy. A little
scare in the water, but he's fine.

Anton pulls a face.

BENNY (CONT'D)
I'll prompt you.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Be pro-active. Tell him safety
barriers will be fitted.

Anton considers.

BENNY (CONT'D)
And you must visit, soon as.

ANTON
You'll come with me? Moral support?

BENNY
(shrugs)
I'm due back in London, but...

ANTON
Excellent.

BENNY
If you make the call.

ANTON
Yes, yes.

BENNY
(exasperated)
Now. Then I can go check my bilge.

EXT. BENNY'S BOAT, MARINA - DAY

Seagulls hover.

The 'Louise' is flanked by up-market motor-yachts. Benny is in bathrobe and flip-flops, heading for the quayside.

INT. LOCKER ROOM, MARINA CENTRE

Benny showers.

He opens a locker, but is drawn to a discarded newspaper, with photo of a flamboyant, orange-hair footballer - "Koki Key To New Season Hopes".

EXT. BENNY'S MERC, ENTRANCE GATES, STOWBAY FC

A mega display image of footballers in blue-white shirts. Dominated by Koki.

Benny drives up in his Merc, taking a random lanyard pass from a tangle of them. He briefly flashes it to security, as though a mere formality.

The guard casually waves him through.

EXT. STADIUM FORECOURT

Fans admire a bronze statue of an imposing footballer with slick hair and baggy shorts, with bronze boots hung around his neck.

Brash, brawny WAYNE (35) is the fans' guide. He wears a 'supporters club' gilet.

WAYNE
(squeaky)
The legend. Three hundred and sixty
two goals.

Benny walks by, breezily commenting.

BENNY
Big new season. High hopes?

WAYNE
Yeah, for survival.

BENNY
All about the money I suppose.

WAYNE
We need a bigger squad.

SUPPORTER
We should give more chances to our
local lads.

2ND SUPPORTER
The Academy.

3RD SUPPORTER
Shame about Ollie Hollis.

SUPPORTERS
(chants)
Ollie Ollie Ollie 'Ollie!

3RD SUPPORTER
Shame.

BENNY
Ollie?

WAYNE
Don't you know nothing? Got
injured. Then lost to gambling.
Tragic.

EXT. PITCH & GROUNDSMAN'S SHED

Benny emerges from between stands, passing a shed.

Lanky groundsman SHAWN (60) maneuvers a pitch sprinkler. A terrier dog dashes in and out of the spray.

SHAWN
What's up, mate?

BENNY

Oh, I'm early for a meeting.

Shawn gestures above, to the main stand.

SHAWN

All about Koki I bet.

Benny shrugs.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

Koki this, Koki that. And more dosh
to keep him. But no budget for us.

(in vague hope)

Don't suppose you can chase up my
trainee application?

The terrier springs toward Benny.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

Dizzy, down, down!...

(to Benny)

Fancy a proper coffee?

They approach the shed. Sturdy EMMA (30) prepares coffee.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

Need more staff. Tell him, Em.

Seeing Benny, Emma instinctively flirts a little.

HELICOPTER ROAR distracts. It lands on the pitch.

EXT. BOARDROOM WINDOW, MAIN STAND

Indistinct faces peer down at the helicopter.

EXT. HELICOPTER ON PITCH

Chubby 'GOBBO' (35) clambers out as the rotors slow. He
prevents a 'G' logo cap from flying off his head.

He ignores Shawn's 'double teapot' glare.

He bustles on, adjusting his suit and tie, fending off Dizzy.

He scrambles to avoid the spray from a sprinkler.

Shawn laughs.

Gobbo responds with a finger 'salute'.

He makes a phone call.

Intrigued, Benny follows him.

INT. STADIUM LOBBY

Gobbo passes display cases of football memorabilia.

Nuggety factotum SIDDH (70) polishes the silver trophy with ribbons attached.

GOBBO
(on phone, Scouse)
Yeah, do it now... Now!...

Saucy receptionist CANDACE (20) pauses in her phone chatter.

CANDACE
Can I help...?

Gobbo blows a kiss and bustles on.

Recognizing, Candace rolls her eyes. She makes a fast call.

Benny follows Gobbo, gesturing 'with him', and with a disarming smile to Candace.

He follows Gobbo into a lift.

GOBBO
(on phone)
You're breakin' up...

INT. LIFT

Benny nods a greeting. Gobbo ignores him.

GOBBO
(on phone)
Shut up and text...

INT. EXECUTIVE FLOOR

They emerge at a grandstand view of the stadium.

INT. EXECUTIVE SUITE

Gobbo bustles in, followed by Benny. He offers a cursory glance around.

GOBBO
Ladies...

Secretaries are on alert. They eye Gobbo with wary familiarity. But they fancy Benny.

Gobbo approaches the boardroom.

Compact, sharp-suited JUSTIN (30) emerges, with a box lid of mini-me footballer caricatures in blue-white kit.

He holds up a warning hand to Gobbo.

JUSTIN
They're busy.

GOBBO
Me too.

Pushing by he knocks the box lid. The caricatures spill.

He strides on into the boardroom.

GOBBO (CONT'D)
Gents...

He SLAMS THE DOOR shut.

Justin glares after him.

JUSTIN
Bastard.

Secretaries giggle.

MUFFLED SHOUTING in the boardroom.

A secretary starts to pick up the caricatures. Benny helps, while Justin stands rigid in wounded pride.

He eyes Benny.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)
Who do you want to see?

BENNY
Anton, a lunch appointment.

Justin promptly offers his hand.

JUSTIN
(a little vain)
Justin, general manager.

Benny gestures to the boardroom.

BENNY
So who?

JUSTIN
That idiot? Gobbo. Players' agent.

He displays the orange-hair caricature of Koki.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)
Has Koki on his books. Two idiots.

ZEGGER ZOF (40) storms out of the boardroom and away. He's a crew-cut hulk in blue tracksuit, initialed ZZ.

Gobbo follows him out, almost bouncing with ferocity, leaving a parting shot inside.

GOBBO
That's where we stand on Koki.
You've got my number.

He chases after Zeger.

GOBBO (CONT'D)
Zeger, Zeger...

Fascinated, Benny hot-foots after them.

Anton emerges from the boardroom, furious, trying to compose himself.

INT. CORRIDORS

Gobbo chases.

GOBBO
Zeger, listen. Don't mess with the
politics.

Zeger pauses to confront. Benny pauses too.

ZEGGER
(Dutch accent)
Politics? Bollocks. Greed.

GOBBO
It's all about negotiation. You
know the game.

Zeger continues on, swatting Gobbo away.

ZEGGER
Get lost. You put crazy words in
Koki. Gonna ruin him.

Gobbo chases him down stairs to another corridor.

GOBBO
Koki's a star on the rise, big
time. You've been blessed.

Zeger ignores.

GOBBO (CONT'D)
If you can't deal with me, you
can't deal with Koki. Tell you that
for nothing.

Zeger turns on Gobbo, threatening a fist.

Benny steels himself. He calls out.

BENNY
Gentlemen, gentlemen, please...

The antagonists turn in surprise.

Benny approaches with a princely, benevolent air.

GOBBO
You again.

BENNY
I couldn't help overhearing.

GOBBO
Snooping. Clear off.

BENNY
Please. Let's be constructive.
There's new interest in the club.

Gobbo is instantly intrigued.

GOBBO
What kind of interest?

BENNY
Let's find a quiet spot.

He moves on. Zeger and Gobbo follow, disarmed by Benny's calm authority.

Benny peers into an open 'Supporters Club' office. He politely gestures to enter.

Gobbo and Zeger resist.

BENNY (CONT'D)
(to Gobbo)
You must be the agent.

GOBBO
Clever lad.

ZEGER
The great Gobbo.

GOBBO
(preens)
A dozen players on my books. Eight
in the Premier League.

BENNY
Excellent.

He turns to Zeger, but Gobbo speaks for him.

GOBBO
Zeger Zof, Dutch international.
Class.

Zeger is unmoved by Gobbo's flattery.

GOBBO (CONT'D)
Now he's a decent coach, but he's
nobbled on budget.

ZEGER
The season not start yet, but this
jerk, he try to mess with Koki.

GOBBO
Just business, and you know it.

Benny gestures inside again.

BENNY
I can guess the situation but,
indulge me...

INT. LIFT, CORRIDOR

Wayne emerges from the lift, with a carton of milk. Starting down the corridor he hears VOICES.

INT. SUPPORTERS' CLUB OFFICE

A filing cabinet, fridge and kettle. The walls are covered with football posters and pin-ups. A red postie bag is on the table.

Gobbo and Zeger are warily seated. Benny is by the open door, strategically blocking the exit.

GOBBO
(to Zeger)
You should be spending, big time,
if you want to stay up.

ZEGER
That for sure, but you hold us to
ransom. You want all the money for
Koki...
(to Benny)
And get-out clause in the contract.

GOBBO
To kick in half way through the
season, the winter window.
(MORE)

GOBBO (CONT'D)

That's only if you're stuck near
the relegation zone. Bottom four.
Can't say fairer.

INT. CORRIDOR

Wayne pauses by the Supporters Club door. He's astonished by
what he overhears.

WAYNE

'Kin'ell.

INT. SUPPORTERS' CLUB OFFICE

Zeger shakes his head.

ZEGER

The great Gobbo. Nothing but a
greedy rat.

Benny intervenes.

BENNY

And threatening to make Koki the
deserting rat, it seems.

Gobbo jumps to his feet.

GOBBO

Koki's worth double the deal. He's
had offers. Massive. Needs a
quality team to bring out the best
in him.

BENNY

Or bad results and his price drops.

GOBBO

Bright lad. You got it.

He reaches for a packet of biscuits in the postie bag. Zeger
moves the bag away. Gobbo glares.

GOBBO (CONT'D)

I'm fighting for you, big fella. To
keep Koki and more money for the
squad.

ZEGER

You just bullshitter. You gonna
threaten the dirty tricks.

Benny reacts, pantomiming enlightenment.

GOBBO
It's just money. The friggin'
league's loaded. Tycho's loaded.

Wayne bursts in, with a challenging glare all round.

WAYNE
Dirty tricks?

He recognizes Zeger.

WAYNE (CONT'D)
Jeez, Zeger the Wizard. Good luck
mate. We're looking good? No injury
scares?

ZEGER
(beams)
We good. You good fans. You make
the big noises.

Wayne gives a double thumbs up. He thumps a poster of Koki.
He glares at Benny and Gobbo.

WAYNE
Koki's our boy. Helped get us up.

GOBBO
Hop it, pal. With respect.

Wayne wavers, fearing he's out of his depth.

WAYNE
Well er, carry on like. I'll get a
coffee at the shop.

He backs out. Benny intrigues.

BENNY
Wait. You run the supporters' club?

WAYNE
(pumped up again)
Chairman.

BENNY
Excellent. Then you might have a
minute.

He gestures to sit with them.

GOBBO
(to Wayne)
No way. Clear off. This is private
business.

WAYNE
Koki's our business.

ZEGER
That's right.

He pulls out a chair for Wayne.

Benny eyes Gobbo, enjoying his discomfort.

BENNY
You were saying?

GOBBO
Up yours, pal. Hasta la vista.

He kicks his chair over. He makes a scowling exit.

INT. CORRIDOR

Justin snoops.

Gobbo pushes him aside.

GOBBO
Get lost.

INT. SUPPORTERS' CLUB OFFICE

Benny and Zeger share glances.

Wayne is confused.

WAYNE
Was that a result?

BENNY
A skirmish. He'll be back.

He gets a text message. 'Change of plan. Scallywags at 8?'

EXT. BENNY'S BOAT, MARINA

Benny approaches. He stares at his boat in dismay.

Powerful unit CHESTER (40) sunbathes in boxer shorts. With paperback novel and beer bottle beside him. A suit lies folded.

A manila envelope is perched on a business backpack.

Benny backs away.

EXT. ENTRANCE GATES TO PINCHAM HALL

'Pincham Hall' is carved in a stone gate-post. The imposing iron gates are rusty, chain-locked.

Benny gets out of his Merc. He peers through the gates at the abandoned grounds.

He makes a call. He sounds upbeat, but looks concerned.

BENNY
(on phone)
Alice, have you settled in?...
How's Daisy?... Tomorrow's still
on?... The gallery's OK, don't
worry...

A pheasant wanders towards the gate.

Benny scares it back to safety.

BENNY (CONT'D)
At two...
(pained)
Yes, I'll be on time.

EXT. TOWN MARKET

Benny buys a modest bunch of flowers. He pauses to observe a 'Fresh Garden Produce' stall.

The country-gent stall-holder serves a customer with an affable air.

He smiles in response to a joke from a fellow trader. He settles down with a newspaper crossword.

Benny turns away and sees a natty chap admiring his Merc.

BENNY
Electric.

He points to a window decal - 'Classic Cars e-Born'.

NATTY CHAP
Bit of a compromise?

Benny smiles and gestures to get inside for a ride.

BENNY
Be my guest.

His PHONE RINGS. He steps away.

BENNY (CONT'D)
(on phone)
Hey Elliot, you're a football nut.
I might have a nice gig for you,
regular too...

I/E. GORSE COTTAGE

Another 'Fresh Garden Produce' sign. The garden is dominated by a large greenhouse and cloches.

Home-office. Impeccable HARRIET PORTER (60) has a queen-bee aloofness about her, even alone.

She prepares Women's Institute mailers with brisk efficiency.

She talks to herself.

HARRIET

That's the reminders done.

She arches her back and runs her hands down her body. A moment of sensuous indulgence.

BENNY (O.S.)

Mother?

Kitchen. Harriet finds Benny waiting with the flowers.

HARRIET

Benny, how nice.

She allows a brief kiss on her cheek.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

You could have warned me.

BENNY

Sorry, sorry.

HARRIET

No matter.

A LITTLE LATER

Patio. Tea and cakes.

BENNY

I saw him at the market.

HARRIET

He's desperate to make a proper go of it.

BENNY

Tell him to put his crossword away. Look busy and leave spaces to show he's in demand. Busy-ness brings business. Basic.

HARRIET

He won't listen.

Benny sighs.

HARRIET (CONT'D)
 Anyway, the money for the boat,
 from your 'actor friend'. That's
 certainly helped.

BENNY
 I'll get it fixed and sell on.

HARRIET
 He suspects it's you, of course. So
 stubborn.

Benny shrugs in put-upon frustration.

A trusty old Land-Rover pulls up, with trailer of unsold
 produce.

Benny tenses.

The driver is the stall-holder, CLIVE PORTER (60). He gets
 out, a little stiffly, staring at Benny's Merc.

Benny lifts a hand in token welcome.

Clive ignores him. He jerks a thumb at the Merc.

CLIVE
 (to Harriet)
 Expect he'll be leaving soon.

HARRIET
 Tea, dear?

CLIVE
 Later. Things to do.

A LITTLE LATER

Kitchen. Benny is ready to leave.

HARRIET
 I have to rehearse for The
 Captivating Stranger. A challenging
 role. Such a commitment.

BENNY
 I'm sure you'll find time.

Harriet draws his attention to a framed 'Stowbay Players'
 theatre poster on the wall.

HARRIET
 I always liked Alice's designs.
 Maybe she can do our new one, now
 she's...

Trying to prompt. Benny is silent.

HARRIET (CONT'D)
And losing the gallery. In her
name, what a shame.

BENNY
We still have it.

HARRIET
You, giving up your career to run a
gallery.

BENNY
(flat)
I have other projects.

HARRIET
So that's it. Just too busy, as
ever. Too distracted. Poor Alice,
poor Daisy.

BENNY
Yes Mother.

HARRIET
You never could relax. Always up to
something. It was always 'whatever
next?' with you.

BENNY
Yes Mother.

He starts out.

HARRIET
I do care.

I/E. GARDEN HIDE-AWAY SHED

Old rugby photos on a wall. Clive checks an online trading
site on a laptop. Concerned, frustrated.

MERC DOOR CLOSES. Clive reacts. A sigh of relief.

I/E. BENNY'S BOAT, MARINA

Benny cautiously approaches. No sign of Chester.

On-board, he stares at a discarded beer bottle and sandwich
wrapper. He checks the cabin door. It's locked.

A VOICE BOOMS.

CHESTER
Benjamin Porter, I presume.

He strides down the pier, now dressed, with backpack on a broad shoulder, cooling his face with a bottle of beer.

CHESTER (CONT'D)
Chester Sullivan. Grieves
Adjustments.

He finishes the beer and tosses the bottle to Benny.

CHESTER (CONT'D)
Old Barn bitter. Not bad.
Permission to board?

No response. He boards.

CHESTER (CONT'D)
Just a little matter of mortgage
arrears, Benjamin. Gallery and
flat.

BENNY
But I have an understanding with
the agents.

CHESTER
Well you'd better understand a
court order.

He methodically opens his backpack and presents the manila envelope. Benny reluctantly accepts.

CHESTER (CONT'D)
We can dispense with it for now, if
you're willing to make a
contribution...

BENNY
Trust me, I have serious deals in
play.

CHESTER
We only trust the money.

He jerks a thumb back at the quay.

CHESTER (CONT'D)
Nice motor by the way.

Benny can't hide his exasperation.

CHESTER (CONT'D)
You shouldn't have done a runner.

BENNY
Hardly that. I have a summer show
at the gallery. A young artists'
group, so I'd rather be out of the
way. I can work from here.

CHESTER

Whatever. You'll pay something now?

He whips out a card reader. Benny frowns at the hustle.

BENNY

Let me check.

He starts toward the cabin.

Inside, he makes a call.

BENNY (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Captain's Choice?

A LITTLE LATER

Deck. Benny shows iPad photos to Chester of a chateaux development.

BENNY (CONT'D)

A conference resort project.

Twenty percent investment.

Excellent prospects.

CHESTER

So sell your share.

BENNY

And lose out?

He shows art prints.

BENNY (CONT'D)

I can cover the shortfall with

these. But it'll take time to

negotiate the best prices.

(eyes Chester)

Maybe you'd like to invest in art.

Chester enjoys Benny's chutzpah, briefly.

CHESTER

It's your tangibles if you're

struggling. Your boat, your motor.

A Captain's Choice waitress wiggles along the pier, carrying fish and chips take-aways and Old Barn beers on a tray.

Benny signals and pays cash.

BENNY

Marvelous, thanks.

A lingering smile from the waitress as she starts away.

Chester eyes her, and the feast.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Enjoy.

Chester eyes Benny, silently acknowledging an 'operator'.

He seizes a bottle-opener. Beer froths.

Benny hastily moves his iPad away.

INT. 'SCALLYWAGS' BAR - NIGHT

LOUD CHATTER and B/G MUSIC. Decor features photos and cartoons of famous rogues and rascals.

A soul band prepares to perform.

Benny is at the bar, glancing around.

BENNY

(to barman)

Just a student hangout back in the day.

Anton and Zeger arrive. Zeger winces at the vibrant atmosphere. Party animal Anton hails Benny.

ANTON

Brilliant, you sly devil.

Benny feigns puzzlement.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Gobbo. I hear you shafted him.

BENNY

Needed shafting.

ZEGER

That son of a bitch.

ANTON

(to barman)

Champers.

ZEGER

Got him good, for sure.

ANTON

But Gobbo. How?

BENNY

The bigger the front the more to hide. And we had a little help.

A glance to Zeger.

BENNY (CONT'D)
From the Supporters Club.

ZEGER
For sure.

Barman pours champagne. Zeger covers his glass.

Rangy RUPERT (30) and chubby SEB (30) converge. Smug playboys.

RUPERT
Hey, Anton....

SEB
She's let you out?

ANTON
You wasters...

They're distracted by LIVE MUSIC.

Zeger frowns.

Anton and friends whistle and whoop, moving closer to the soul band.

Anton flirts with a waitress.

Benny and Zeger strain to be heard.

ZEGER
You gonna work for the club?

BENNY
Oh, I'm just happy to help.

ZEGER
You deal with the politics, I deal with the football.

BENNY
You deal good with the football.
Thirty eight internationals for
Holland. Many trophies.

Zeger acknowledges Benny's 'homework'.

ZEGER
I been lucky, and still lucky.

He proudly shows photos on his phone.

BENNY
Very nice.

ZEGER
Now we expect a third. And you?
Family man?

BENNY
A have a daughter, Daisy.

He shows his phone.

ZEGER
Very nice.

EXUBERANT APPLAUSE for the band. Rowdy customers push by.

Zeger looks trapped, out of place.

ZEGER (CONT'D)
Too much.

BENNY
Go home. I'll say you had an
emergency.

Zeger brightens.

ZEGER
OK. You good man.

He lifts his empty glass.

ZEGER (CONT'D)
I don't drink...
(a nod toward Anton)
He should know that.

He starts out.

Benny is obliged to stay. Jostled as he gazes at his phone.

I/E. 'YVONNE' FASHIONS SHOP - DAY

A 'Summer Sale' sign in a window display of country fashions.

Benny approaches with a cardboard box and large bunch of
flowers.

Shop BELL RINGS as Benny enters.

Vivacious, voluptuous YVONNE JEEVERS (40) glances away from
attending to elderly customers.

YVONNE
Can I...?

Mutual attraction.

BENNY
Benny... Alice's er...

Yvonne checks her gaze.

YVONNE
Oh, Benny, yes... they're not back
yet from shopping.

She beckons.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
Please, come into my parlour.

Back office. Benny follows her in. Stairs are glimpsed, and a courtyard through french windows.

Yvonne offers wine.

BENNY
Tempting, but I'm Daisy's chauffeur
for the day.

He takes a lava lamp out from the box.

BENNY (CONT'D)
For her. It got left behind.

YVONNE
I'm sure she misses you.

BENNY
I miss them both.

YVONNE
Alice is a Godsend. She's
organising my websites too.

BENNY
She ran our gallery in London.
Inspired it.

EXT. 'SOPHIE FASHIONS' SHOP

Lissome ALICE (35) and DAISY (10) take shopping from a compact SUV. They're recognisable from Benny's phone image.

Alice tenses, Daisy brightens, on seeing Benny's Merc.

INT. 'SOPHIE FASHIONS' SHOP

Shop bell RINGS.

Daisy hurries in.

DAISY

Dad?

Back office. Reacting, Yvonne smiles blithely at Benny.

YVONNE

I'll leave you to it. Bye.

Shop. Yvonne emerges. Daisy bounces into her.

YVONNE (CONT'D)

Oops. Hi Daisy.

DAISY

Hi.

Daisy hurries on as Alice enters.

YVONNE

(to Alice)

He's here. He's nice.

Back office. Daisy hesitates, then rushes into Benny's arms.

DAISY

Dad.

BENNY

Sweetie.

He kisses and swings her round.

She lands as Alice enters.

ALICE

Benny.

Benny glances at his watch, and at Alice.

BENNY

So who's late?

A tolerant smile from Alice. Daisy smirks.

BENNY (CONT'D)

(arch)

Sorry, sorry.

Alice bustles Daisy away.

ALICE

Pop up and get your things.

DAISY

Dad, come and see the flat.

Benny is diplomatic.

BENNY
Another time maybe.

Disappointed, Daisy starts upstairs alone.

ALICE
(murmurs)
Thanks.

She allows Benny a kiss on her cheek.

ALICE (CONT'D)
How's London?

BENNY
Just about coping without me, I
suppose.

Their eyes lock in mutual concern.

A customer calls.

CUSTOMER (O.S.)
Miss? Hello?

Alice reluctantly responds.

Shop. She attends to the customers. One holds up a blouse.

CUSTOMER (CONT'D)
It's not really my colour.

SECOND CUSTOMER
Oh it is.

CUSTOMER
(to Alice)
What do you think?

I/E. BENNY'S MERC ALONG STREETS

Daisy is dressed for sports. She checks her bag. She glances
at Benny.

BENNY
Takes time to resolve.

Daisy ties her trainers. She finds a Stowbay Marina Guide.
She tidies it away in a door pocket.

DAISY
But you're still friends?

BENNY
Of course.

DAISY
Not just cos of me?

BENNY
Sweetheart, we've been friends
since teens.

He gestures ahead.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Game on.

Daisy's eyes light up.

EXT. PARK

Girls' softball cricket. High spirits. Daisy is an eager fielder.

Parents help set up a BBQ.

Alice's SUV draws up, at a distance, unnoticed.

She sees Benny pacing, absorbed in a phone call.

BENNY
(on phone, patient)
Norris, Norris... yes, I get your
drift... well I'll be back
tomorrow, with a possible deal to
stabilize things...

West Indian JUANITA (10) bowls. The batter hits the ball high and far.

PLAYERS (O.S.)
Catch!

Daisy runs and catches. She celebrates and spins round, seeking to enjoy the moment with Benny.

The sudden excitement draws him, in time to share her elation.

Juanita rushes to embrace Daisy. They laugh and tumble.

They bump heads.

Alice starts toward them concerned, but the girls giggle.

Juanita's father ROY (35) strides over. He's tall, lean, calmly regal, taking off a BBQ comic apron.

Benny follows him.

JUANITA
We're OK, Dad.

ROY
Best we do a check. What's your
name?

JUANITA
Daisy.

More giggles, met by Roy's stern gaze.

He turns to Daisy.

ROY
How many fingers...
(supposing)
Daisy?

He displays three fingers.

DAISY
Three.

Roy waves a finger in random circles, checking the girls' eye
co-ordination.

He gestures OK and to get back to the game.

ROY
Good catch, well bowled.

Alice smiles with relief, still unnoticed.

BENNY
(to Roy)
You're a doctor?

ROY
(grins)
Hardly. Just basic checks.

Alice retreats to her SUV. A little tearful. Still unseen.

INT. ALICE'S FLAT - NIGHT

Dusk. Compact living-room with kitchenette.

A TV is on mute. The lava lamp glows in the window.

Alice adjusts an Yvonne Fashions layout on a computer screen.

Daisy's little bedroom. She practices scales on an acoustic
guitar. Some of the frets buzz. Frustration.

Alice turns and stretches as Daisy approaches. They hug.

I/E. BENNY'S MERC, COAST ROAD - DAY

He drives, speeding, glancing at his sat nav.

Momentary alarm.

He slows to cruising speed.

EXT. TYCHO'S VILLA

Security guard at gates checks and lets Benny through.

Anton's Range Rover is parked, with view of the villa beyond.

He gets out to liaise with Benny.

Mikey, in his Koki football shirt, wriggles free from Giselle. He runs away, around the villa, kicking a ball.

Giselle eyes Benny and is attracted.

 GISELLE

Benny? At last.

She gestures after Mikey.

 GISELLE (CONT'D)

I can't thank you enough.

 BENNY

What anyone would have done.

Giselle embraces him with socialite poise.

 GISELLE

Thank you, thank you.

Her embrace tightens, discomfiting Benny, ending with her defiant glance at Anton.

Anton follows Mikey, trying to take Giselle's hand. She deftly resists.

 BENNY

Now let's focus. You're here to celebrate family. If Tycho mentions Mikey's mishap, just remember what you said on the phone.

 ANTON

(arch)

He takes after you, father. Full of adventure.

 GISELLE

Huh. Tycho. Full of himself.

EXT. VILLA TERRACE & POOL

The garden slopes away to a jetty at the edge of the bay.

A classic schooner yacht is moored.

Mikey's ball bounces past mini goal posts, towards a swimming pool.

Mikey races to stop the ball, but it falls into the pool.

MIKEY
My ball, my ball!

He teeters on the edge and backs away, fearful.

HECTOR
Hey Mikey.

Body-built, smiley Greek aide HECTOR (50), retrieves the ball with a pool skimmer.

On the terrace, DES MANDERS (70) discards a newspaper. He's in powerful good nick, in shirt and swim-shorts, with a rugged 'game face'.

DES
C'mon Mikey.

Hector and Des pass the ball, teasing, tempting Mikey to tackle.

But Mikey is still distracted by the pool.

DES (CONT'D)
What's up, lad?

MAUDE STYRIOS (55), in straw hat, breaks away from conversation with a gardener. She's spry, composed. She carries fresh-picked flowers in a trug.

She offers a smiling welcome to Anton, Giselle and Benny.

She chills slightly on embracing Giselle.

MAUDE
Giselle, my dear.

GISELLE
Maude, how nice to see you again.

Anton gives Maude a warm hug.

He lifts Mikey for a kiss from her.

MAUDE
Ah, darling little Mikey.

Anton and Giselle share anxious glances, and relief.

Maude gives the trug of flowers to Mikey.

MAUDE (CONT'D)

Be a dear and give to Hilda.

She gestures toward emerging, comely Asian maid HILDA (30).

A seagull hovers close by.

Mikey drops the trug. He races around, imitating a seagull.

Roar of LAUGHTER from a villa balcony. Imperious, robust TYCHO STYRIOS (70) observes in silk robe.

TYCHO

(Greek accent)

Hey Mikey. I come down.

An apprehensive glance from Anton to Benny.

MAUDE

Tycho, we have a guest. Look respectable.

(aside to Hilda)

We'll have tea now.

She gestures for all to relax on the terrace.

Anton makes introductions.

ANTON

My good friend Benjamin... my dear mother Maude.

BENNY

Benny. Delighted.

Maude is lightly charmed.

Des approaches.

ANTON

And Des is, what can I say, the club legend.

BENNY

Three hundred and sixty two goals. Remarkable. Honoured to meet you.

Des has a shrugging modesty, well used to compliments.

DES

I had the knack I suppose. And no bad injuries.

Maude lightly scrutinizes Benny.

MAUDE

Now then Anton, what about this young man?

ANTON

A fellow mariner.

BENNY

Oh, just a weekender.

ANTON

And helping me at the club.

MAUDE

(a glance at the villa)
Well try and avoid shop talk.

Anton 'zips' his mouth.

Benny admires the bay view.

BENNY

Marvelous.

MAUDE

Tycho's family were fishermen. He's always lived by the sea.

ANTON

(to Benny)
Don't get him started on his life story.

MAUDE

It is rather special.

BENNY

And you must have been a vital influence.

Maude is dismissive, but further charmed.

MAUDE

Oh, I just happened along.

Tycho joins them, swaggering in open robe, revealing swimming shorts.

TYCHO

Greetings.

He only has eyes for Mikey.

TYCHO (CONT'D)

Mikey, Mikey, my little hero.

Anton and Giselle share anxious glances.

Mikey rushes forward and into Tycho's lifting arms.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
My young lion.

He hugs and kisses Mikey. Pretends he's a heavy load, letting him down.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
He's coming on good.

Anton and Giselle share relief.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
What shirt you have?

He gestures for Mikey to turn around.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
Number nine, Koki.

MIKEY
Koki Koki.

ANTON
(on impulse)
Number one problem.

Tycho frowns. Maude sighs. Anton pulls a face.

Tycho appraises Benny.

TYCHO
So, who?

ANTON
My good friend Benjamin.

Tycho is distracted by Mikey's antics.

ANTON (CONT'D)
A sailing friend.

TYCHO
Sailing. Huh. You like Anton's ugly monster? Or you prefer?

He gestures out to his classic yacht.

BENNY
You're putting me on the spot,
but...

He gestures admiration of the yacht.

Tycho laughs.

TYCHO
Relax, have swim, enjoy.

He drops his robe.

MAUDE
No Tycho, we're about to have tea.

Tycho dives into the pool.

Mikey instinctively steps away.

Tycho floats on his back.

TYCHO
Come on Mikey. Take off your shoes.

Mikey reluctantly obeys.

Tycho stands in the pool.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
And your shirt, come on.

He beckons, arms wide.

Anton and Giselle dare not intervene.

Mikey edges closer, closer. Tremulous.

Tycho glares at Anton.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
What is this? You say he fall off
the boat, but no big deal.

ANTON
Chasing seagulls, full of
adventure.

GISELLE
Like you, Tycho.

TYCHO
Huh.

Anton turns to Benny for support.

BENNY
No real danger.

TYCHO
I heard about it some more. You
fished him out?

Benny awkwardly shrugs.

BENNY
With Anton and the skipper.

TYCHO
We're in your debt my friend, big
time, and I don't forget.

He eyes Anton and Giselle.

He checks his watch. He unfastens and gestures for Mikey to
take it.

He grabs Mikey and tries to pull him in.

ANTON
No, no!

GISELLE
Leave him alone!

Mikey breaks away.

DES
Go easy on the little fellow.

TYCHO
Come on Mikey. You chicken?

MIKEY
(yells)
No chicken.

Tycho flails in the water. Sudden panic. Mikey is shocked.

Tycho is play-acting. He laughs.

Mikey laughs too. He rushes to the little diving board.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
No chicken.

He jumps up and down on the board. He springs off, over
Tycho, and into the water.

Tycho beams. Mikey clumsily swims close.

TYCHO
My little hero.

He grabs Mikey and ducks him under, holding him down.

Anton and Giselle look on in horror.

Des starts up.

DES
Hey, hey!

ANTON
Stop that!

Tycho lifts and embraces spluttering Mikey.

TYCHO
Nothing to scare. Just water. We
all come from the water.

A LITTLE LATER

EXT. VILLA WATERFRONT

Benny and Anton stroll toward the wooden pier, kicking
Mikey's ball.

ANTON
It's hard to have any kind of
conversation.

BENNY
That breeds suspicion.

ANTON
But he expects unquestioning
loyalty. Impossible.

He kicks the ball hard. It bounces off the pier onto the
yacht.

They start back.

ANTON (CONT'D)
Nikolas found a way to escape.

BENNY
Your brother?

ANTON
Doing hotel deals in the Far East.
Loyal to the business but out of
reach. Lucky for him.

BENNY
Now you're stuck with running the
club.

ANTON
And the 'old lion' interfering.

BENNY
Walk away?

ANTON
I wish. But he'd brand me a
quitter.

BENNY
He's king of the hill. You have to
accommodate.

ANTON
With your help.

Benny is silent.

EXT. VILLA TERRACE & POOL

Tycho tries to teach Mikey a folk song, towelling him dry.

Hilda clears away the tea.

She bustles past Tycho. He admires, shaping to flick her
bottom with the towel.

He shares naughty boy grins with Hector.

MAUDE
(calls out)
Now, Tycho, you must rest.

Tycho waves in heeding irritation.

Hector prepares to massage him.

Maude is with Giselle, separated by an empty chair.

Giselle reaches for Mikey as he scampers by.

GISELLE
Tycho was way too rough.

MAUDE
There was no real danger.

She eases out of her chair.

MAUDE (CONT'D)
You are staying for supper?

GISELLE
(flat)
Of course.

Maude eyes her.

MAUDE
Anton needs a settled home life,
more than ever.

GISELLE
Then he should make an effort. He
can't expect me to give up
everything.

MAUDE

He's having to adjust at the club,
under the spotlight...

GISELLE

Where is Nikolas? He should be
helping.

MAUDE

He's far too busy.

GISELLE

Odd that I've never met him. Too
busy even to fly in for our
wedding.

MAUDE

That extravaganza?

She starts away.

A LITTLE LATER

Giselle is on a call, casually swinging her hips.

GISELLE

(phone)

Listen, we had two number-ones.
Let's do it.

INT. LOUNGE

Fading light. Spacious. A grand piano with family portraits
in digital photo frames. Paintings of idyllic Greek harbour
views.

Mikey sleeps on a sofa. Giselle is glimpsed beyond, through
terrace windows, still on her call.

Tycho proudly shows off a curious coffee-table to Benny.
The glass top rests on a battered leather suitcase.

TYCHO

I got off the ship with nothing,
just a suitcase of my mother's
lace to sell.

Benny nods appreciation. Anton, Des and Hector have heard
it all before.

TYCHO (CONT'D)

I worked all hours and bought an
ice-cream van. More money in fish
and chips. Then I bought a boarding
house. Too many actors in it, but
it was bricks and mortar. Always I
plan ahead.

He shows a row of tattered notebooks in a display case of curios.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
My books. Everything inside. All
I needed. No wise guys to rip me
off.

Maude passes by, putting on a cardigan.

MAUDE
Then I interfered.

TYCHO
Maude worked in a bank. Taught me
how best to leverage my money.
Tried to teach me how to relax.

He blows a kiss to Maude.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
I started late but... what is
life without family?

He eyes Anton, with gesture across to Mikey.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
(hisses)
Mikey needs a brother, a sister.
You forget what to do huh? You
playin' away? You both playin'
away?

Benny sees the hurt on Anton's face.

Des chuckles and slaps Tycho's back.

DES
Go easy.

A LITTLE LATER

INT. TV LOUNGE

Framed football mementos - photos, signed shirts. a giant TV
screen shows Johan Cruyff playing for Ajax.

Tycho and Des view, in football heaven.

Benny and Anton keep silent company. Benny glances at his
watch.

A sequence of passes on TV.

DES
Brilliant.

TYCHO
Stroking the ball. Pure teamwork.

DES
Pure football.

TYCHO
Too much knockabout now.

DES
Too much money. Too much ego.

TYCHO
The managers, the players, they
come they go, no time to
experiment.

DES
No time to bond a proper team.

TYCHO
(aside to Des)
That boy, Ollie?

Des sadly shakes his head. He turns to Benny.

DES
Academy. A natural playmaker.
Brilliant, but lost to gambling.

BENNY
I heard.

TYCHO
What a waste.

He fixes his gaze on Anton.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
So what is this with Koki?

Anton is on his guard.

ANTON
Oh, just star player tensions.
Nothing to worry about.

TYCHO
Like what?

Anton eyes Benny.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
(forceful)
Like what?

ANTON
(shrugs)
Gobbo wants a get-out clause.

TYCHO
But you have the deal.

ANTON
He threatens the unpredictables.

TYCHO
Unpredictables?

Des is animated.

DES
The usual bollocks. Fake
injuries, dressing-room flare-
ups.

TYCHO
No way.

He confronts Anton, jabbing a finger.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
You must put a stop. Nip in the
bud. Bad for team morale, and for
the fans if rumour gets out.
Poison.

ANTON
That's Zeger's headache.

TYCHO
Passing the buck huh?

ANTON
Well I'm just filling in. You
expect me to work miracles?

TYCHO
You can't stand the heat? So soon?

Anton is exasperated. He eyes Benny again.

Tycho eyes him too.

BENNY
Player power. The modern game.

ANTON
Zeger and Gobbo had a shouting
match. All about Koki. Benny
stepped in, and sent Gobbo on his
way.

He's desperate for Benny to engage.

BENNY

A storm that I just happened on.
Only natural to try and calm the
situation. Clarify best
interests.

Tycho savours the phrase.

TYCHO

Clarify best interests. Sounds
like bullshit, but go on.

BENNY

Gobbo will hit back of course,
that's his job.

DES

Football agent? Call it a job?

TYCHO

Parasites.

He eyes Benny more closely.

TYCHO (CONT'D)

So, what is your interest?

Anton chips in.

ANTON

I met him at the marina. We...

Tycho sharply signals for Benny to answer.

BENNY

Anton suggested helping at the
club. I'm rather too busy but I
had a look around.

TYCHO

You're some kind of expert?

BENNY

I was at Jessop and Keen,
consulting.

TYCHO

Huh. What kind of consulting?

BENNY

Mostly corporate, advising on
problems and opportunities.

TYCHO

A spin man. An operator. One step
up from Gobbo.

ANTON
That's not fair.

Tycho glowers.

BENNY
Tycho is right to be cautious.

TYCHO
Consulting. Why you leave? What
you do now?

BENNY
Oh, I have other interests, and I
needed more family time.

Tycho's eyes light up.

TYCHO
Family. That's the biggest deal.
Through the good times, the not
so good times. All these years
with Maude.

DES
And counting, pal. You got lucky
with her.

Tycho presses a hand to his heart, but with a frowning
glance after Maude.

TYCHO
I only wish we could have raised
a bigger family.

He turns back to Benny.

TYCHO (CONT'D)
Maybe you OK for a bullshit PR
guy. Maybe you help Anton. Some
wise counsel.

BENNY
If available.

He defers to Anton.

ANTON
To be sure.

Tycho steps closer to Benny.

TYCHO
You think I should check you out?

BENNY
If my CV...

Tycho waves away the suggestion. He stares intently, appraising.

He offers his hand. Benny warily accepts.

Tycho twists Benny's hand, forcing him to the ground. Though Benny is part-diplomatic in his surrender.

Tycho laughs. Des laughs. Anton is dutifully amused.

Tycho slaps Benny's back.

TYCHO

You make us your priority. You do good and we pay good. Top dollar. And I say this...

He eyes Anton too.

TYCHO (CONT'D)

Football is entertainment. I want the crowds to enjoy the beautiful game. Give it our best shot, hey Des? But if all the talk is the money game, how much we pay for, how much we sell for... if all the talk is idiot stars and bastard agents...

His gaze returns to Benny.

TYCHO (CONT'D)

You put a stop.

BENNY

Well I'm certainly flattered, and honoured to be in the presence of not one legend, but...

His gaze moves to Des, and back to Tycho.

TYCHO

I said no bullshit.

Laughter.

Tycho turns on Anton. A piercing stare.

TYCHO (CONT'D)

So, you've been reckless with Mikey. Letting him fall off that ugly thing you call a yacht.

ANTON

But I explained...

BENNY

We've avoided the media.

Tycho turns to him.

TYCHO

I'm grateful. But my boy has been mixing with the wrong crowd. Neglecting his responsibilities. Dickin' around, caught up in those scandals. Shaming the family name, shaming my reputation.

ANTON

Well you're no saint.

Tycho turns and slaps his face, hard.

TYCHO

At least my private life stays private.

Des steps forward.

DES

Hey, let's all calm down.

Tycho continues to eye Anton.

TYCHO

You have to play smart.

A glance at Benny for support.

BENNY

(shrugs at Anton)
Discretion or disgrace.

TYCHO

(beams)
Discretion or disgrace... I like this guy.

He motions to Benny to step away with him.

TYCHO (CONT'D)

We must talk.

But Benny pulls out his car key-fob.

BENNY

I've intruded enough on your hospitality...

ANTON

But you must stay for supper.

BENNY

I'm due back in London tomorrow. Much to do.

Tycho beckons again.

TYCHO
But first we talk.

BENNY
Another time, perhaps.

Tycho looks affronted as Benny turns away.

Des is impressed by Benny's polite resistance.

EXT. VILLA

Anton sees Benny to his Merc.

ANTON
Now you know why I need you.
He's impossible.

BENNY
But he's the boss. I can't work for
a house divided.

Anton is panicky.

ANTON
You promised.

BENNY
I expressed an interest.

ANTON
I'll put you on a retainer. All the
perks. You name it.

Benny starts to drive off.

BENNY
I wish you luck, and I'm happy to
advise informally.

Anton despairs.

I/E. BENNY'S MERC THROUGH STREETS

Benny drives past Stowbay FC stadium. The Koki photo
display shines bright.

He drives on. Pensive. He slows by Yvonne Fashions shop. He
peers up at a warm window glow in the flat above.

I/E. ALICE'S FLAT, YVONNE FASHIONS

Changing colours of the lava lamp.

Alice lies sleepless...

FLASHBACK

EXT. ALICE GALLERY, LONDON - DAY

Alice hurries reluctant Daisy out. They load bags into her double parked SUV.

Alice pushes keys into the letterbox.

END OF FLASHBACK

EXT. BENNY'S BOAT, MARINA - NIGHT

Aft deck. Rain SPATTERS on the toolbox.

Benny checks the bilge with phone torchlight.

Rain SPATTERS on the cabin windows.

Benny is glimpsed inside, flopping down exhausted.

FADE OUT.