

GRENADE

By

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FADE IN:

INT. IGGY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Toy soldiers line a shelf. A GRENADIER leads a charge, arm raised, poised to throw a grenade.

A VOICE drifts from another room, tone harsh:

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
I just knew you'd let me down--

Books on electronics, radio schematics scattered on the floor. One titled: Clansman Portable Radio. An open catalogue shows a range of 12v batteries.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
I promised them you were
reliable...

IGGY, 12, mop haired, dressed in pajamas, perches on his bed. He rubs at his eyes, sleepy.

LANDING

Iggy pads barefoot down the hall.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
You think you can just breeze in
and out of our lives, no word of
where you are-- half the time I
don't even know if you're alive!

He stops before a half-open door.

Inside, MARIE, early 40s, a shopworn soul, paces before a window, her back to the door, phone cradled to her ear.

MARIE
I don't want excuses. The last
useless bastard had his and I
watched Mum put up with a lifetime
of yours--

Iggy looks along the hall.

ANNIE, 7, peeks around her bedroom door with sleepy concern.

ANNIE'S BEDROOM

Annie raises her arms as Iggy helps snug a jumper into place over her school shirt.

Marie continues to argue in the background, her voice raised, words indistinct.

ANNIE
Will you do my hair?

IGGY
Where's your brush?

Annie thinks, points to the door.

HALLWAY/MARIE'S BEDROOM

Marie hunches on the bed, dabs away the tears. Her back is turned to the doorway, phone on the pillow behind her.

A hairbrush rests on a dresser. A ten-pound note beside it.

Iggy reaches in, grabs the brush. He steals a guilty look at Marie before swiping the money.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Iggy wheels his bike along the pavement, Annie beside him. Both wear school uniform. Annie chews on a slice of toast.

Ahead, CHILDREN filter through a set of school gates, cars pull to the curb to deposit others.

Iggy watches a FATHER wave his SON goodbye.

FOUR YOUTHS loiter in the entrance to an alleyway. SCULLY, 13, spots Iggy and alerts the others. They all look over.

Iggy's face clouds. He slows, wheels his bike around.

ANNIE
Are you coming?

IGGY
Gotta get something. I'll meet you after.

EXT. HIGH-STREET - ELECTRONICS SHOP - DAY

Iggy cycles into view. He stops, hops off the bike, leans it on a wall and slips inside.

EXT. DISUSED TRAINING GROUND - PERIMETER - DAY

Iggy stashes his bike in some scrub.

A faded sign fixed to a fence reads: PARFIELD MARSH, M.O.D. PROHIBITED AREA. CLOSED TO PUBLIC. Below, Iggy squeezes through a gap in the chain-link.

EXT. DISUSED TRAINING GROUND - DAY

Gutted shells of buildings. Cracked window panes. Tangles of ivy climb damp stained walls to sagging roofs.

INT. STOREROOM/IGGY'S BASE - DAY

A mouldering army recruitment poster threatens to slip from cracked plaster. A sheet of ply balanced on blocks makes up a table, a car tyre for a chair.

Iggy drags a sack from beneath a pile of debris.

A battered Clansman field radio stands on the table. Two wires trail from the rear...

...Iggy clamps the wires' other ends into place on a shiny 12v battery. He takes his time. This is his pride and joy.

He flicks the Clansman's main switch, raises the headset to his ear. Cycles through the frequency selectors one after another focused in anticipation...

A SHOUT in the distance.

Iggy looks up, frowns.

A burst of STATIC over the receiver pulls him back. He beams, success.

The CLANG of metal, raised VOICES.

Edging to a window Iggy peers out to see Scully's gang roving through the site in his direction.

He hurriedly disconnects the radio, stashes it beneath the debris pile.

Pack in hand he squeezes out through a hole in the rear.
He doesn't see the wire trailing out from under the debris.

EXT. DISUSED TRAINING GROUND - STOREROOM/IGGY'S BASE - DAY

Iggy narrowly scrambles into an overgrown ditch as the gang moves into view behind him.

EXT. OVERGROWN DITCH - DAY

Iggy peeks through the foliage, watches them move through the buildings.

He settles in, no choice but to wait it out.

MOMENTS LATER

Iggy scrapes at the ground with a stick, restless. Scattered SHOUTS and LAUGHTER echo in the distance.

The stick catches against something. He brushes the dirt away to reveal a layer of rust.

He levers a small munitions box from the earth and works off the lid.

Inside, machine parts and a small cloth bundle. He takes out the bundle, unwraps the cloth to reveal a HAND GRENADE.

Iggy freezes in shock, barely registering the VOICES:

SCULLY (O.S.)
Come on, he's not here!

YOUTH #2 (O.S.)
Just gimme a sec'!

FOOTSTEPS close in...

Iggy's eyes dart from the lip of the ditch to the grenade.

FOOTSTEPS stop...PATTER of running water.

He watches a stream of urine trickle into the ditch, narrowly avoiding his feet...It stops.

FOOTSTEPS recede.

YOUTH #2 (O.S.)
Oi, wait for us!

Iggy slips the grenade into the cloth.

He stuffs the box back into the hole, rakes a layer of dirt over the top and marks it with the stick.

EXT. STREET - SCHOOL GATES - DAY

Annie waits dutifully on the pavement. Iggy joins her, wheeling his bike past in silence.

ANNIE
Where you been?

IGGY
Got kept in.

ANNIE
Give us a backie!

He pulls ahead, Annie catches up with him, tugs at his back-pack.

ANNIE
Why you being a dick?

INT. IGGY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A fork skewers a chip on a dinner plate.

Marie sits opposite Iggy, watches him chomp it down.

MARIE
How was school?

Iggy shrugs.

MARIE
Did you go?

IGGY
Yeah.

She wants to believe it.

IGGY
(indignant)
What?

She stands, collects their plates in frosty silence.

IGGY
Will Grandpa lose his job?

MARIE
Don't know. Wouldn't be the first.
It's not much to ask is it, turning
up.

She cuts him a look, places the dishes in the sink before
searching out an envelope from a shelf.

MARIE
I want you to take this to him
first thing.

IGGY
What?

MARIE
It's his work schedule. I've
highlighted his shifts--

IGGY
It's a Saturday! Why can't you give
it him?

MARIE
I'm on an early tomorrow.

IGGY
You go that way!

MARIE
I'm tired, Iggy. I'm not arguing.

She crosses to his school-bag, slips the envelope inside.

MARIE
Don't stay up all night.

She exits the room leaving Iggy to brood.

LOUNGE

Iggy sits on a sofa. The light from a T.V. playing off his
face. It sounds like a war film: GUNFIRE, EXPLOSIONS.

EXT. CANAL - TOWPATH - DAY

A line of ducks paddle through murky water.

Iggy pedals his bike along the pathway.

He stops at a narrowboat. Paint flakes from the cabin.
Curtains drawn. A name on the side reads: GALAHAD.

Iggy bangs on the roof. A MUFFLED response from inside.

INT. THE GALAHAD - GALLEY - DAY

Cramped and cluttered with junk. A dress shirt hangs from a rail. A badge pinned to the pocket reads: PALACE SECURITY.

BRYN, early 60s, unshaven, hard eyes set under a tattered fisherman's cap, fills a kettle and sets it on a hob.

BRYN

You want tea? There's no milk, well
there is, but it's bad, so there
isn't. So it's tea or water.

IGGY

What, like from the canal?

BRYN

That's strictly for washin'.

He sifts through cupboards, searches out some matches.

Iggy looks around, zeroes in on a framed photo of a NAVAL
CLASS SHIP.

BRYN

Your Ma' working?

IGGY

Yeah.

BRYN

Where's your sister?

IGGY

Dad's.

BRYN

And you're not..?

IGGY
He don't have the room.

BRYN
He comes by though?

IGGY
Sometimes. She just gives him a
hard time. She don't like it when
he's around.

BRYN
It's doesn't. Not don't.

IGGY
Fine, she doesn't like it.

Iggy crosses to the picture.

BRIN
Whole world of things your Ma'
doesn't like.

IGGY
What's that?

BRYN
What's it look like?

IGGY
A battleship.

BRYN
Round Table Class Landing Ship's
what that is. What it was.

IGGY
Was that the one you was on?

After a few failed strikes a match takes. Bryn stares at the
flame a beat before lighting the hob.

BRYN
What's your Ma' told you 'bout me?

Iggy wavers, not really knowing how to answer.

BRYN
She send you down here on a recce,
see if I was still here?

Iggy looks hurt. He pulls the envelope from his bag, drops
it on the table.

IGGY
Made me bring you this.

BRYN
Postman an' all...

IGGY
I was going this way anyway.

Iggy shoulders his pack, pauses at the exit.

IGGY
She says you don't like people. You
don't like work. You live on a boat
so you can run away whenever you
want, not have to bother with us.

With that he slips out the hatch.

EXT. THE GALAHAD - STERN - DAY

Bryn steps out, envelope in hand. He watches Iggy ride away,
a twinge of shame in his eyes. The truth hurts.

EXT. DISUSED TRAINING GROUND - DAY

Iggy picks his way past the derelict buildings.

INT. STOREROOM/IGGY'S BASE - DAY

The poster litters the ground. Table overturned. Battery
smashed. Wires trail from the Clansman's broken headset.

Iggy gathers up the radio piece-by-piece. Angry tears well
in his eyes as he slips them into his pack.

Overseeing it all, a big smiley-face daubed on the wall.

EXT. OVERGROWN DITCH - DAY

Iggy stares at the stick marker, uncertain.

He opens the rusted tin, pauses...looks around.

He stuffs the wrapped grenade inside his backpack.

EXT. CANAL - TOWPATH - DAY

Iggy wheels his bike over a bridge. He reaches the pathway. Scully and co. loiter by a bench, blocking his path.

Too late to run. He keeps his head down. The Gang falls silent, parting as if to let Iggy through. At the last moment Scully snatches Iggy's pack from his shoulder.

SCULLY

You not heard of a phone?

Iggy drops his bike, spins for the pack. Scully dodges, tosses the bag to GRUB, 13, paunchy.

Grub takes a few steps back, shakes the bag, amused.

GRUB

It's in there, you can hear it clanking--

SCULLY

See if it floats!

IGGY

Gimme my bag!

GRUB

What d'you say?

Iggy tries to grab the bag, Grub tosses it over his head, Scully misses -- the bag lands with a THUMP. It rips.

Iggy loses it, charges Scully.

AT THE GALAHAD

Bryn steps onto the stern, drawn by the commotion. He spots Iggy scuffling with Scully.

TOWPATH

Iggy lies on the ground, Scully looms over him.

BRYN (O.S.)

(urgent)

Any you lads seen a dog?

Bryn appears behind them, a stick in one hand, saucepan in the other. A blanket wraps his arm from wrist to elbow.

All eyes shift to Bryn.

BRYN
 Shepherd mix, little Rotty, touch
 of Dane in the leg. He got free
 again.

Bryn drums the stick against the pan. Holds out his arm,
 presenting it for the 'dog' to bite.

BRYN
 Stalin, it's me, it's a good boy.
 (to the Gang)
 Don't look him in the eye-- there's
 no schools near here is there?

The Gang exchanges nervous glances.

BRYN
 (mutters)
 I can't go through that shit again.
 Stalin!

Bryn SNAPS his jaw at Scully, imitating a dog.

BRYN
 You see him, you don't do that, he
 hates it.

Scully shrinks back, rattled.

YOUTHS #3 and #4 are already slipping away, not taking any
 chances with this scruffy lunatic. Grub trades a look with
 Scully, they quickly make to catch up.

BRYN
 You see him, just jump in the
 canal, he hates water. He's an
 intolerant bastard. Stalin!

Iggy picks himself up, scuffed. His nose bleeds.

Bryn crosses to the torn bag, reaches down --

Iggy gets there first, defensive.

IGGY
 I got it.

Bryn surveys the damage.

BRYN
 Best not let your Ma' see you like
 that.

INT. THE GALAHAD - GALLEY - DAY

Bryn rummages around in a cupboard.

Iggy sits, a handkerchief held to his nose. He spots the envelope in a rubbish bin.

BRYN
Still bleeding?

IGGY
I think it's stopped...I'd have sorted it.

BRYN
Aye, you would.

IGGY
I would, I'm not scared of them.

BRYN
Nothing wrong with standing your ground, it's your maths you want to work on. You have to know when to run.

IGGY
Like you?

Bryn bristles, catches himself from turning.

BRYN
Go on, get yourself cleaned up.
Don't flush nothing, toilet's broke, you'll sink us.

Iggy slinks off to the bathroom.

Bryn finds what he's looking for -- a sewing kit.

He lifts the torn bag --

CLUNK.

He looks down to see a piece of broken headset trailing from its cord. He tilts, a faint smile finds his lips.

Piece by piece he pulls the broken radio from the bag, placing it on the table.

He delves in again, feels around...

...He freezes. The smile fades.

BATHROOM

Iggy towels his face. He steps out into the

GALLEY

Bryn, seated. The grenade set on the table before him.

Iggy stops cold, guilty as charged.

BRYN

L-two...good nick for its age. Know
what that red band on the bottom
means?

Iggy stares back in silence.

BRIN

Means that pin comes out it's over.
You an' anyone in twenty feet.

IGGY

I-- I thought it were a dud.

BRYN

Thinking like that get you killed.

IGGY

Sorry.

BRYN

Coming home late's sorry. Bunking
school's sorry. It's not for live
ordnance...who gave it you?

IGGY

Found it.

BRYN

Where?

IGGY

Parfield.

BRYN

That where you found the radio?

Iggy nods.

BRYN

What were you gonna do with it?
Blow up them lads?

IGGY

No!

BRYN

What then? Hawk it online as a
novelty paperweight?

Iggy stands hunched in silence.

IGGY

I weren't gonna do nothing. Thought
it were a dud, thought they'd find
it, like they did the radio. Like
they do everything...Am I gonna go
to jail?

Bryn leans forward, hands clasped in thought.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

Bryn carries the back-pack. Iggy follows at a good distance.

IGGY

How far is it?

BRYN

Doesn't sound like a safe distance
to me.

EXT. FOREST'S EDGE - DAY

Bryn crouches at the base of a tree.

Iggy does the same -- at a safe distance.

BRYN

Just like I said, right?

Iggy nods.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Bryn leads Iggy in a charge through the trees. They dodge
and weave, pushing forward, tactical style.

Iggy comes to rest behind a fallen tree.

Bryn, flush from the run, takes up position twenty feet
away. He peers out to see a rusting fridge in a clearing. He
scans the perimeter, checking they're alone.

Iggy peeks over the log, frowns.

IGGY
That a fridge?

BRYN
Hotpoint T-three-seventy
under-counter fridge-freezer.

IGGY
How d'you know?

Bryn winces...don't ask. He unwraps the grenade.

IGGY
What you doing?

BRYN
Getting my taxes worth. I give the
word you get down.

IGGY
Can I watch?

BRYN
You wanna watch, dig up a firework.

IGGY
How long's it take?

BRYN
Five second fuse, give take. That's
if it doesn't go off in my face.

IGGY
What if it does?

BRYN
Your Ma' gets a boat. Ready?

Iggy thinks about it, nods.

Bryn pauses, thumbs the grenade's pin.

BRYN
Don't be hard on her. She's been
through it.

With that he slips out of sight towards the clearing.

Iggy listens to the CRUNCH of leaves, waiting...

Moments pass...Bryn scrambles over the log, drops down
beside him. He pulls Iggy close, protective.

Iggy mouths the count: four, five, six...

A SHARP BANG!

Iggy flinches. Bryn tenses, for a moment he's somewhere else, another place and time. He buries it deep, shields Iggy as debris patters down around them.

The fridge door CLUNKS down a short distance away.

Silence.

Iggy giggles. Bryn fights a smile, slowly gives in, wheezing in amusement.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

Iggy and Bryn traverse the landscape, side-by-side.

BRYN

Better you don't mention the you
know what to your Ma'. She's got it
in her head I'm irresponsible.

IGGY

I won't.

BRYN

An' no more playin' round Parfield.

EXT. IGGY'S STREET - DAY

Iggy and Bryn approach a semi-detached house. Iggy wheels his bike.

Marie opens the front door, sends Bryn a cold look.

BRYN

Bike trouble. Walked him home, eh.

IGGY

Puncture-- it just blew up.

Bryn tenses, unamused.

Marie eyes them, sensing the lie but accepting it.

MARIE

Tea's on the table...there's enough
you want to join?

Iggy looks up at Bryn, hopeful. Bryn opens his coat to reveal the Palace Security name-tag pinned to his shirt.

BRYN
Nightshift...My Monday's clear of
green high-lighter if that works?

A faint smile passes between him and Marie. She nods.

MARIE
It's not getting any warmer.

She slips back inside.

BRYN
What d'you say we take a crack at
that Clansman of yours? ...After
school, an homework.

Iggy's face lights up.

BRYN
Go on.

Iggy turns to go--

BRYN
Hey--

Bryn presses something into his palm. Iggy knows what it is, grins.

INT. IGGY'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Iggy hurries in, tears up the stairs. Marie looks out from a side-room, watches after him with a smile.

INT. IGGY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Iggy drops onto his bed. He opens his hand, stares at the contents...leans over to the shelf. He pulls back, studies his handiwork with a smile.

The toy Grenadier, positioned as before. The grenade's metal pin-loop dangles from its arm.

FADE OUT