

UNTITLED ALEXANDER MCQUEEN PROJECT

Written by

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From a BLACK SCREEN

We're in the middle of a conversation.

LEE (V.O.)
White socks. Discuss.

CUT TO:

LEE MCQUEEN, 39, is staring right at us.

He's the smartest person in the room and he knows it. Sitting at a table, with a mischievous eye he takes a drag on his cigarette, smirking while continuing this filmed interview...the year is 2009.

MIKE (O.S.)
What about them?

LEE
About how me and my mum will be
like walking somewhere -

MIKE (O.S.)
Walking where?

LEE
Like, I dunno, like round
Woolworths or something.

MIKE (O.S.)
Okay -

LEE
Yeah, and every time we reach the
checkout she'll spot someone
wearing a pair. Like sock
spotting's become her fucking sport
or something. And the next thing,
see you know it don't you?

The screen blurs as the camera pulls in and out of focus.

LEE (CONT'D)
Next thing you know, she's pointing
at the fucker, cause she likes to
prove her point with a fucking
point.

The camera pulls sharply back into focus on LEE.

LEE (CONT'D)

Only then she turns to me, turns
and says 'Lee. Never trust a man
who wears white socks.'

MIKE (O.S.)

I'm wearing a pair right now.

LEE

Guess you're proving her point.

Pleased with himself LEE takes another cheeky smoke.

MIKE (O.S.)

I didn't ask her here so you might
trust me again.

LEE

Is that right?

LEE puts out his cigarette.

MIKE (O.S.)

The first time we met you asked me
to record the real you and you're
never more real than when you're
with your mum.

LEE

Are we okay with the sound?

LEE takes a sip of his tea.

MIKE (O.S.)

Sound is fine. Can we run starter
questions while we wait for her?

LEE

You can try.

LEE sparks up another cigarette as the frame on LEE closes in
a little.

MIKE (O.S.)

What's the most expensive thing
you've ever stolen?

LEE thinks for a moment. Tired, rubbing his face with his
palm. It's been a long day.

LEE

Someone's heart.

MIKE (O.S.)

How many times have you been in
love?

LEE

One and a half.

MIKE (O.S.)

Would you say you enjoy your work?

LEE

Rarely.

MIKE (O.S.)

Do you think it gives you meaning?

LEE

Does yours?

MIKE (O.S.)

Sometimes.

LEE

Mine does when it's good. Only when
it's good.

MIKE (O.S.)

What would you like your legacy to
be?

LEE

I haven't thought about it.

MIKE (O.S.)

Are you an honest person?

LEE

No.

MIKE (O.S.)

What's the biggest lie you've told?

LEE

Pass.

MIKE (O.S.)

How would you define the truth?

LEE contemplates this for a while before taking one last
inhalation on his cigarette and then exhales.

SMASH TO BLACK:

TITLE CARD

LONDON OCTOBER 2008

INT. CAR - MORNING

A rugged MIKE POULTER who looks like he hasn't had a good night's sleep in years, sits in the back of a Mercedes driven by a chauffeur. He pulls out a scrunched up woollen burgundy tie from his trouser pocket and begins tying it, using the reflective glass window to help guide him. As he does this, we get glimpses of the rainy London streets outside as a political debate plays on the radio. But MIKE's not even listening, the tie feeling ever more like a noose around his neck.

POLITICIAN

I firmly believe the G20 conference is going to bring about some concrete action -

PRESENTER

A summit which has been scrambled together -

POLITICIAN

I don't really think that's fair -

PRESENTER (CONT'D)

A few months ago. Tell me, why pump trillions of pounds into the system to bail out the banks when some would claim they're socially useless?

POLITICIAN

Fundamentally, when markets seize up the only people who can show leadership to build confidence is governments -

PRESENTER

It's going to be the tax payer who bails out the banks though isn't that right?

The DRIVER turns the radio down. We see his eyes in the rearview mirror.

CHAUFFEUR

First day then?

MIKE

Maybe.

MIKE returns to looking out the window.

INT. STAIRWAY UP TO MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

We follow MIKE as he climbs three flights of rickety stairs. Through a door comes a group of men carrying boxes. From within we can hear muffled studio noise. MIKE grabs the door and walks into the studio with the door shutting behind him.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

We are hit by a wall of music and noise as we follow tight behind MIKE as he's lead through a frantic working studio by a female assistant whom we never really see.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

MIKE sits awkwardly a few meters away from a giant stuffed polar bear. He puts his attention on all the comings and goings of the studio which intrigue him.

Technicians sewing at machines. Boxes being packed, sealed and taken away by assistants. Other designers sitting at their desks sketching, others work at computers with their earphones in while two employees randomly play a rally of table tennis in the corner.

MIKE becomes increasingly aware that some of the staff are observing him and discreetly passing judgement. They know why he's there and evidently isn't what they were expecting.

Feeling he's dressed a little too formally MIKE self-consciously takes off his tie, stashing it in his pocket, at which point a line of staff begin filing past MIKE into the room behind him.

Wondering what to do MIKE gets up from the chair and files in behind them into -

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS.

A room filled with employees.

SARAH (O.S.)

'This one allowed us to see beyond
the sensationalist presentation -

MIKE politely navigates his way through the employees as we hear SARAH BURTON'S Macclesfield voice reading a review.

SARAH (O.S.) (CONT'D)
And fully appreciate the beauty of
the clothes...'.

LEE (O.S.)
However?

MIKE sees an unassuming SARAH BURTON, Lee's right hand woman and most trusted advisor, holding a newspaper from which she reads.

SARAH
'However, so used to drama are we at McQueen that some of us left feeling as though we hadn't quite seen it all. Where were the fireworks and nightmare inducing sound tracks we have come to expect?'

LEE (O.S.)
What did *The Guardian* say?

MIKE moves again to try to get a better view. There is an awkward tension in the room which makes MIKE feel slightly uncomfortable, like a voyeur who shouldn't be privy to this information.

In between the gaps of people he gets a glimpse of CAMILLA, head stylist, extremely thin, always dressed in black, holding *The Guardian* newspaper.

CAMILLA (O.S.)
'If you want a dress that is gorgeous enough to break your heart and unnerving enough to send a shiver down your spine, McQueen's your man - '

LEE (O.S.)
But?

CAMILLA feels slightly unnerved about continuing yet does so.

CAMILLA
But for a coherent plan to save the planet? Looks like the search continues.

MIKE finally gets a better view and glimpses LEE MCQUEEN. He's wearing baggy jeans, a white vest, and a red checkered, flannel shirt and is casually smoking a cigarette whilst perched on top of a chair.

The team nervously look for his reaction while LEE scans the room. He spots MIKE.

LEE
Who's up for shopping?

INT. CHARITY SHOP - DAY

We're inside a very traditional British Charity shop. Pokey, musty, badly decorated with rails of clothes scattered around. Shelves stacked with books and random ornaments line the walls. Two of Lee's dogs, JUICE and CALLUM, can be seen through the glass front door, tied up outside.

Deep in thought, LEE sifts through a rail of clothes which act as a barrier between himself and MIKE, who is stood on the other side, unsure of what he should be doing. A radio plays in the background.

MIKE
Do you always do that?

LEE ignores MIKE.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Read your reviews?

LEE keeps his head down searching through the rail.

LEE
You have to rummage deep. They like
to mix all the good stuff in with
the crap.

MIKE starts looking through some of the clothes and stock on the shelves.

MIKE
What is it you're looking for?

LEE
Not sure yet.

LEE wanders over to another rail of clothes. MIKE follows him.

MIKE
The err...e-mail you sent -

LEE
What about it?

MIKE

It didn't specify what the job was.

LEE

You're a photographer?

MIKE

Yeah.

LEE

You know what I do?

MIKE

A little.

LEE

What's your thoughts on this?

LEE holds up a black and white jumper resembling a Viennetta.

MIKE stares blankly at the jumper. Unsure of what to say.

MIKE

I think whoever wore that never got laid.

EXT. CANAL ISLINGTON - DAY

The two men walk side by side along the rain soaked pavement. LEE walks his two dogs on their leads and has the jumper from the previous scene wrapped round his shoulders.

LEE

It's like everything you are is informed by where you're from, isn't it? Like what your upbringing is, those influences early on.

MIKE

So what's your dad do for a living?

LEE

Cab driver.

Both men walk around a giant puddle.

MIKE

And have you got any siblings?

LEE

Five. Three sisters, two brothers.

MIKE

And what do your brothers do?

LEE

One's a bricklayer, other one's a
cabbie.

MIKE

So then growing up chances are
what? He probably looked at your
dad and thought, yeah, that's what
I should do. That's the precedent
that's been set?

LEE

Maybe.

MIKE

But you didn't did you? So why's
that?

LEE

Because I'm a fucking anarchist
mate.

EXT. PARK - DAY

JUICE and CALLUM are play fighting in the park, while MIKE and LEE sit on a pair of swings watching them.

LEE

I like how you get to know the
people you photograph and film.
It's like you get under their skin.
You go to all these war zones, see
all these fucking awful things and
you seem to really try and
understand them, record them
truthfully. And I fucking rate
that. For me that's what sets you
apart from other photojournalists.
JUICE!

LEE throws a giant stick to his dogs and continues watching them play.

MIKE

You should know I've little
interest in fashion.

LEE

And what makes you think I do?

JUICE returns with the stick. LEE throws it again.

LEE (CONT'D)

It's funny I was telling my mum I was meeting you and she reminded me, and I swear this is the god's honest truth, I always wanted to do what you do.

MIKE

But you didn't.

This stings LEE a little. LEE scrambles for his packet of cigarettes, sticking one in his mouth.

LEE

No...No, guess it was always gonna be fashion. Well either that or synchronized swimming.

He offers the pack to MIKE.

MIKE

Given up.

LEE

You mind if I -

MIKE shakes his head as LEE lights the cigarette.

LEE (CONT'D)

I used to go when I was eight.

He exhales the smoke.

LEE (CONT'D)

Only boy there, fat as fuck, like I was a big lad, but an excellent swimmer.

MIKE

Why d'you stop?

LEE

Well one time before practice, I royally fucked up this back flip. Missed the water by about this much. Landed face first on the cement slabs.

MIKE

Ouch.

LEE

Yeah, never went back after that.
Mind you, I now know why I was such
a good swimmer.

MIKE

Why's that?

LEE

Fat kids are more buoyant.

INT. CAFE - DAY

LEE and MIKE sit opposite one another at a table in an old school greasy spoon. In front of them are two cups of tea and some plates. They've both had a fry up but MIKE has only eaten half of his. Every now and then LEE feeds scraps to his dogs who sit by him on the floor.

LEE

I'd be commissioning you to
document the new collection. The
process. Not the clothes but what
makes the clothes. You would be the
first person to have ever been
allowed this kind of access.

MIKE

So, why now?

LEE

It's our fifteenth anniversary so
it seems like the right time.

MIKE

And what would it be for? An
exhibition? A book?

LEE

Maybe, or in the end it might just
be for me.

MIKE

So this is some kind of vanity
project?

LEE

No. Not at all. Like I said, I've
been doing this for fifteen
years...

Lee struggles to find the words. He seems tired all of a sudden.

MIKE

And...

LEE

I want to see what we do. What I've done. But through the eyes of someone else.

MIKE

Why?

LEE

What I need right now is a little fucking objectivity. Are you done with that?

MIKE gives LEE his plate of food. LEE scrapes the remains onto his plate.

LEE (CONT'D)

An outside eye looking in. Some proof.

MIKE

Proof of what?

LEE

(with a smile)

Plus I'll pay you pretty much whatever you fucking want.

Mike is certainly interested by Lee's take on the project. Plus the idea of money certainly doesn't hurt.

MIKE

I'd need full access.

LEE

Okay.

MIKE

Not only to your staff and studio but your friends and family as well.

LEE

Everything outside of the studio is irrelevant.

MIKE

You mean everything outside is not in your control. And if that's the case then this wont work.

Lee smiles. He knows he's right.

LEE

Okay then.

MIKE

Good.

LEE

One question though.

MIKE

What?

LEE

How much do you know about me?

MIKE

A little.

LEE

Have you Google'd me?

MIKE

What will I find if I do?

LEE

I just want you to come at this
with as few preconceptions as
possible.

MIKE

That makes sense.

LEE

So what do you think?

Lee offers his hand and Mike shakes it cautiously.

LEE (CONT'D)

What are you doing tonight?

EXT. ROWAN WALK HORNCHURCH - NIGHT

MIKE (carrying a six back of beer) walks past a row of
handsome houses, mostly detached with nicely kept front lawns
and two cars on their drives. It's a very middle class
neighbourhood, well lit and safe.

MIKE turns into the driveway of a family home, with a black
cab parked out the front. He makes his way to the front porch
of the house.

Colourful party balloons are attached to the door and the front room light is on. Muffled party noise can be heard from within.

MIKE knocks on the door, waiting a few seconds before a six year old GIRL wearing a ballerina dress and a party hat opens the door.

MIKE

Oh...hello.

The little girl runs away leaving the door ajar. MIKE walks through, shutting the door behind him.

INT. JOYCE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

MIKE makes his way through the kitchen which is filled with people lost in conversation. Slightly unsure of himself he makes his way over to the kitchen unit placing the beers down.

A knock on the large window in front of him reveals LEE smoking and waving at MIKE.

LEE gestures 'one minute' and then disappears again.

MIKE tears open the box of beer and opens a can.

INT. JOYCE'S LOUNGE - NIGHT

A hub of noise hits us as MIKE and members of the MCQUEEN FAMILY including JANET (Lee's eldest sister, 53) and JOYCE (Lee's mother, 74, a charming East End matriarch, never without a fag or a cup of tea in her hand) are all sat on the floor playing a game. LEE'S dogs are running around playing, causing havoc.

The only person not taking part is RON (LEE's father, 70) sitting solitary in his armchair watching the football, cheering on Arsenal who are playing.

LEE, who is also participating in the game has the GIRL (now with chocolate framing her mouth) sitting on his shoulders, waving a wand, casting spells.

On each of the family's foreheads are post-it notes with names of various celebrities or iconic characters, such as Margaret Thatcher, Elvis Presley, Hitler, and JAY Z (which is Joyce's). They're all trying to guess who one another are. It's Joyce's turn.

JOYCE

I can't remember if I'm a man or a
woman?

LEE

She'll never get it.

JANET

Mum, you're a man.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

How'd you know I won't get it?

LEE

Cause you'll never get it.

JANET

Come on, come on, come on.

JOYCE

Just let me a think a minute
let me think.

LEE

Is this chocolate round your
mouth?

GIRL

It's mud.

LEE

That's mud?

JANET

Come on.

The girl nods. LEE laughs and then tickles her, making the girl scream with delight. Arsenal score and the whole room erupts with cheers. RON punches the air from his armchair.

RON

GET IN! GET IN. Did you see that?
Did you see that shot?

INT. JOYCE'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

LEE and JANET are at the kitchen counter making sandwiches. Meanwhile MIKE is sat with JOYCE at the kitchen table with his bottle of beer while she sits drinking her tea, orchestrating things around her and eating a biscuit. From time to time the odd person may come in to collect a drink, bottle opener, or a snack - mild chaos.

JOYCE

I can't get my head round why
anyone would want to put themselves
in danger.

MIKE

Sometimes.

JANET

(To LEE)
Don't be too generous with
the butter.

LEE blobs some butter onto Janet's face. She hits him with a tea towel laughing, it's clear they have good camaraderie. JOYCE continues talking, absorbed in her conversation with MIKE.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
I wouldn't be able to sleep at night if that was me.

LEE
Lucky it's not you then isn't it?

MIKE
How long have you and Ron lived
here? It's a lovely house.

JOYCE
Been in Hornchurch few years now.
In Stratford before.

LEE
She didn't want to move -

JOYCE LEE (CONT'D)
That's not true. Don't listen Didn't want to move did she
to him. Janet?

JOYCE
I didn't want you spending your
money buying me and your father a
house -

LEE makes a few cups of tea from the kettle and then gives one to JANET.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
Jan, grab my lighter, it's behind
you love.

JANET
You didn't put sugar in this did
you?

JOYCE
Sure you don't want a biccie?

JOYCE offers MIKE a biscuit, he shakes his head politely.

LEE

D'you want to drink it or fucking
wear it?

JOYCE

Mind your mouth.

JANET

You hear how he speaks to his
sister Mike?

JANET passes her mum a lighter.

LEE

Make it yourself then.

JANET (CONT'D)

You hear that?

JOYCE

Show Mike what Lee got you for your
birthday. Get those dogs out.

JOYCE offers MIKE a cigarette as she lights hers. He shakes his head declining.

LEE

(To the Dogs)
Come on, out. Out.

LEE takes a big plate of cheese and ham rolls onto the dining room table, which he starts rearranging things. JANET hands MIKE a white gold and diamond cross necklace.

JOYCE

White gold. Beautiful, isn't it
Jan?

JANET

Yeah.

MIKE

It's lovely.

LEE

Mum where'd you want the cake?

JOYCE

Let me do it.
(To a dog)
Come on out.

JOYCE gets up and wanders into the dining room to help LEE with the cake.

MIKE

So how many years between you two
then?

JANET

Fifteen. Oldest, youngest. You need
another drink?

MIKE

Umm...

JANET

Oh go on.

MIKE

Errrm, alright then. Cheers, yeah.

JANET

What is it? A beer?

MIKE

Please.

JANET hands MIKE a beer.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Thanks.

They watch JOYCE and LEE rearranging the table together.
Lighting the candles on the cake.

JANET

Must be serious then?

MIKE

What is?

JANET

Well I can't remember the last time
he brought a fella home.

JANET drinks her tea, while MIKE is stumped for words,
blindsided by this comment.

INT. JOYCE'S LOUNGE - NIGHT

The chaos of the birthday celebrations have subsided and
there is a sense of calm.

RON sits in his armchair watching snooker smoking. MIKE sits
on the sofa between JANET (tea in hand) and JOYCE (wearing
her red reading glasses and smoking) proudly going through a
scrapbook filled with LEE's achievements.

LEE is sat in an arm chair eating birthday cake and
intermittently feeding it to one of the dogs.

JOYCE passes MIKE a picture of a YOUNG LEE wearing
questionable eighties fashion.

JOYCE

Remember the grief you gave me
about taking that picture? The
grief he gave me -

MIKE

What's this?

JOYCE

That's his first day on Savile Row.
How old was he there Jan? Sixteen?

JANET

Fifteen.

JOYCE

Fifteen.

JANET (CONT'D)

You're gonna make that dog
sick carrying on like that.

LEE

He likes it, don't you?

MIKE

How d'you get the job?

JANET

Well you saw that advert on the
telly didn't you?

JOYCE

There was this advert on the telly -

JANET

Looking for apprentices on
Savile Row.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Which I saw -

JOYCE (CONT'D)

That' right.

JANET hands MIKE a photograph of LEE in his early twenties holding a portfolio.

JANET

This is Lee on his first day at St.
Martins.

LEE

No, no, no, put that away. I look
disgusting.

JANET

Oh shut up, you look lovely.

LEE (CONT'D)

Mum, tell her to put it away.

MIKE
Was this for a degree?

LEE
M.A., not that anyone knew what it
was.

LEE laughs

JANET
Shut up.

JOYCE
You know who he sounds like when he
laughs don't you? That actor.
What's his name Ron? You know that
actor. The American one. Scary
eyes.

RON
Jack Nicholson.

MIKE picks up a batch of newspaper clippings.

LEE
I sound nothing like him. JOYCE
Jack Nicholson. That's it.

JANET
Careful with those -

JOYCE
Jack Nicholson, I like him.

MIKE
Sorry - JANET
It's a complicated system.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
He's a good actor isn't he?

MIKE
What are these?

JOYCE
Now these are all his reviews.

LEE
Mum seriously -

LEE lights up a cigarette.

JOYCE

The early ones we had to rescue
from the bin cause he used to throw
everything out. That one there's
his graduation show -

JOYCE coughs.

JANET

You okay?

JOYCE

Those are from his years at
Givenchy in Paris.

LEE

We call them the lost years.

JOYCE continues coughing. It sounds serious.

RON hands JANET his cup of tea who passes it to JOYCE, who sips from it.

A concerned LEE stubs out his cigarette.

LEE (CONT'D)

Mum you alright?

JOYCE

Fine, don't fuss.

RON throws a glare of concern at LEE while JANET rubs her mum's back. MIKE continues sitting there, slightly uncomfortable at this turn of events but smiles through it.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Where were we?

JOYCE hands back the mug of tea to JANET before delving back into the scrapbook and handing MIKE another photograph. RON returns his focus to the television, while LEE slumps back into the arm chair.

INT. JOYCE'S HALLWAY - NIGHT

MIKE slowly climbs the stairs, making his way to the bathroom, looking at the old-fashioned picture frames lining the walls featuring the McQueen family.

A black and white picture of a young JOYCE and RON on their wedding day.

LEE as a child in his swimming shorts and goggles, with both thumbs up.

Various shots of the family having fun at the entertainment resort Pontins.

LEE wearing his tartan kilt, proudly stood with his mum and dad in Claridges holding his CBE.

He moves a little further along spotting a wooden plaque with the McQUEEN coat of arms.

The quiet sound of voices grabs his attention. He turns and sees through the bannister JOYCE sitting on her bed. LEE comes into shot holding a glass of water and two pots of pills. He passes the glass to JOYCE then kneels down in front of her, unscrews the pots, counts out two pills and places them in JOYCE'S hand. She swallows the pills.

Without seeing MIKE, LEE shuts the door.

Black.

INT. STAIRWAY UP TO MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

MIKE climbs the three flights of rickety stairs.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

LEE is busy ripping down the display images and designs of his last show as MIKE sets up his camera in the corner.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

LEE's perched on top of a chair staring at the white studio wall, surrounded by the discarded paper. On his lap is a sketch book. He's also intermittently drinking a bottle of Diet Coke and smoking, desperately trying to think of ideas for his collection.

MIKE is on the periphery of the room taking shots of LEE.

CLICK.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - LATER

LEE browses through bookshelves handing MIKE books for reference.

LEE

My influences come through from everything I see. So from the street scene to the club scene. Sex, love, death, drugs, Scotland, that feeds into a lot of stuff.

MIKE

You got Scottish roots?

LEE

On my dad's side. Grandad was from Isle of Skye, so you know it's always playing in my head. You ever been there?

MIKE

No.

LEE

You gotta go. Seriously, it's fucking stunning. It's like my favourite fucking place. Films.

LEE pulls a few DVD'S off the shelf and gives to MIKE.

LEE (CONT'D)

Always good for ideas. Always watching them.

MIKE

What's your favourite?

LEE passes a DVD of THE PIANO.

LEE

Hang on, errr -The Piano. You seen it?

MIKE

That one with -

LEE

The Piano. Yeah.

MIKE

And the mute girl.

LEE

It's so fucking good.

MIKE

I kinda found it a bit slow.

LEE hands MIKE another book.

LEE
Get out. Now.

MIKE looks down at the book and recognizes it as his own. A harrowing black and white war photograph graces the cover as does the name MIKE POULTER. LEE hands him another book.

MIKE
Do you ever go to art galleries for ideas?

LEE
Only when things are looking really fucking bleak.

LEE throws MIKE another book.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - LATER

LEE
We create ten collections a year.

LEE is sat at his desk smoking while sketching a design, surrounded by fabrics, and books.

LEE (CONT'D)
Womenswear, Menswear, the diffusion line, accessories. You keeping up with this?

MIKE
So far.

LEE
We also do stand alone collaborations with different companies. Individual commissions, which is good money.

LEE throws a sketch away.

MIKE
What was wrong with that?

LEE
There was nothing right with it.

MIKE
Do you ever get overwhelmed with the amount of work?

LEE

I find smoking helps.

MIKE

Are you allowed to smoke in here?

LEE

I'm allowed to do what the fuck I want.

LEE screws up another sketch and discards it. He then looks up at MIKE quizzically.

LEE (CONT'D)

Don't suppose you're any good at sports?

INT. STUDIO. LATER THAT DAY

LEE & MIKE are in the middle of a rally of table tennis. MIKE is really poor at it, LEE on the other hand is exceptional. They drink cans of Diet Coke in between rallies.

MIKE

Why do you say that?

LEE

Because for me love and sex are two completely different things.

MIKE

How d'you mean?

LEE

I mean, okay, can you recall the first sexual feeling you had towards someone?

MIKE loses the point.

MIKE

I'm not talking about this.

MIKE goes in search of the ball.

LEE

Oh come on -

MIKE

No -

LEE

Don't be fucking shy about it?

MIKE

I could be shy, you don't know me.

LEE

Or you could be the kind of guy who makes blow job jokes in a church.

MIKE

Who was yours then?

LEE

Mine?

MIKE

Yeah.

LEE

Mine was this Pontins entertainer who looked like a Ken doll you wanted to take home and play with.

MIKE

That was your first love?

MIKE throws the ball to LEE who holds on to it.

LEE

No, that was my best friend from school.

MIKE

Did you ever tell him?

LEE

He knew. We spent all our time together on the roof of the high-rise opposite my house. Never really spoke about anything. Didn't really have anything to say. Just ate fuck loads of chips and watched the birds fly.

MIKE

So what happened?

LEE

One day I got the urge to run my hand from the top of his neck all the way down to the bottom of his spine. And that was it. Never talked to me again after that. Friendship over.

LEE starts the rally.

MIKE

Are you seeing anyone now?

LEE

Ahhh, that's err, that's
complicated territory.

MIKE

Why's it complicated?

LEE wins the rally.

LEE

I tend to push people away. That's
why I have dogs. They forgive
everything. No, it's your serve.

MIKE

If I was you I'd want someone to
share all this with, no?

LEE

Yeah, but no one gets it. Not that
I expect them to. You know I'm
fucking difficult to be with.

MIKE

I don't think so.

LEE

No, yeah, I am. I'm pretty selfish
when I want to be. But then maybe
that's because I find it hard to
trust people.

MIKE

Because of fame?

LEE

That and because people have their
own agendas. Even you. You have an
agenda.

MIKE

I guess.

MIKE serves.

LEE

So why've you never married then?

LEE instantly wins the point.

LEE (CONT'D)

Get in.

LEE goes and retrieves the ball.

MIKE

I guess I never felt it was fair on
the other person with what I do.
It's difficult.

LEE

In what sense?

MIKE

Them not knowing how long I'd be
gone for. When I'd be coming back.
If I'd be coming back all.

LEE

What's the worst thing you've seen?

A beat.

MIKE

Your serve.

The men continue to rally.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - NIGHT

MIKE packs away his camera as he watches LEE sat at his desk working. His computer screen lights up his face as he keeps repeating a video clip on You Tube.

MIKE closes the camera bag and puts it over his shoulder. He walks over to LEE and see's that he's watching Edith Beale (daughter) in GREY GARDENS who is telling the interviewer what she's wearing. LEE repeats the clips again.

MIKE

See you Monday then.

LEE doesn't acknowledge MIKE, he's too deep in thought.

CAMILLA (O.S.)

You don't think we should play this
one a little more safe?

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

The whole creative team is spread around a table filled with laptops, papers, materials, sketches, bowls of sweets, crisps, Jaffa Cakes.

Joining LEE, MIKE, SARAH and CAMILLA (Stylist) are -

SAM (30's) the show producer, very preppy and cool.

CAT (30's) brilliantly practical female Stage Manager.

JOHN (40's) sound and lighting designer, husband to SAM.

All of the core creative team have worked with LEE for years and are incredibly loyal. Importantly, they have a quick point of reference with one another. It's an open forum for ideas and questions.

JOHN

When have we ever played it safe?

LEE

Pass the sugar. No the other
one.

SAM

The collection needs to, no
I'm not using that -

SAM passes a pen to CAT as JOHN throws LEE a packet of Haribo.

SAM

Have more of a commercial appeal
after our last one, it just does.

SARAH

When have we ever set out to be
commercial?

CAMILLA

Are we discarding these sketches?

SARAH

Yeah, we're changing concept.

LEE throws the sweets at JOHN.

LEE

Stop me eating this shit.

CAMILLA

I still think they're good.

SARAH

There's no coherence to the ideas.

LEE

Have we got any Diet Coke?

CAT passes LEE a Diet Coke.

JOHN

If we don't commit to a concept
now, we're gonna run out of time.

SARAH

We're still playing around with
ideas to do with the recession.

CAT

Too on the nose, no?

SAM

Every other fashion house will be
responding to it in someway and if
we don't we need to have a good
reason why.

CAMILLA

You see I don't think they will.

MIKE notices LEE discreetly lifting up his jumper a little
and squashing his rolls of fat together and then sucking his
stomach in and then letting it out again.

CAMILLA (CONT'D)

All anyone is gonna be sending down
the runway are cashmere twin sets
because they're shit scared of
their cash registers not ringing.

JOHN

So then we should.

CAMILLA

Right.

CAT

Okay, so what's the angle so far?

SARAH

We were toying with looking at
postwar Britain but I don't think
Lee wants that, do you?

CAMILLA

Why not?

SARAH

There's lots we could do with it.

SAM

Really?

CAMILLA

Austerity clothing wasn't necessarily drab.

LEE

Neither was it innovating or empowering. Fuck me, does anyone have any ideas today? I mean what is this shit? What is it? What's that? Are you not fucking embarrassed? I'm embarrassed. This collection has to be special, to mean something, to say something we haven't said before otherwise what's the fucking point in any of this? It's doing my head in. I can't fucking think anymore.

LEE stubs out his cigarette and leaves the table.

CAMILLA.

What about creating some new prints, perhaps ripping headlines from - great.

LEE exits the studio leaving the team alone, unsure of what to say or do. MIKE who is slightly bemused by the whole situation tentatively asks...

MIKE

Does he do this a lot?

LEE re-enters the studio, ignoring his team and calling out to MIKE.

LEE

Mike. Are you coming or not?

MIKE grabs his camera, coat and follows LEE out of the studio, leaving the team slightly annoyed, surprised and deflated.

INT. TATE BRITAIN - DAY

We see the painting : Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion by FRANCIS BACON.

MIKE and LEE are sat down looking at the pictures. Not many tourists are milling around as it's the late afternoon.

They both sit there silently taking in this masterpiece.

INT. TATE BRITAIN - DAY

MIKE and LEE walk around the exhibition of BACON'S work speaking quietly in the hushed room.

LEE

The biggest criticism I have of myself is that I'm not good at taking it.

MIKE

Why d'you think that is?

LEE

When you're starting out, trying to make a name for yourself, you have this like insane delusion that your work deserves to be seen. That it's better than other people's. When really the reality is you've no idea what the fuck you're doing. You're producing collections with no money, that no one is buying and that the critics hate. And the only way to keep going through all that, that fear is to keep telling yourself that all the work which is getting the recognition isn't worthy of it.

MIKE

How'd you go about reconciling that when they start praising you then?

LEE

Well then you have nothing to measure yourself by do you? Fucks you up. Then comes all this expectation, fear of failing. You gotta keep improving, bettering yourself, otherwise it's all just gonna go away and that would be worse than never having had it at all.

MIKE

How'd you deal with that?

LEE

Drink. Drugs. Fuck lots of strangers.

(MORE)

LEE (CONT'D)

But then I'll go through periods like now where you stop everything and go to the other extreme. But the only problem with that is the ideas are slower to form when you're clean.

MIKE

Why don't just you stop working then?

LEE

Well, yeah, that would be the smart thing to do. Stop while you're ahead. Protect whatever kind of legacy you've got going for yourself because chances are the longer you continue the more likely you are to screw it up.

MIKE

Really?

LEE

Come on it happens to pretty much every artist, every actor, writer, musician there's ever been. They all reach this kind of pinnacle and then it's a downward spiral from there. Scares me to think your best is behind you.

MIKE

I'm thinking about stopping.

LEE stares at MIKE...

LEE

To do what?

MIKE

Shoot landscapes.

LEE

Don't do that.

MIKE

Why not?

LEE

You'll get bored...and fat.

A beat.

MIKE

I'm already fat.

INT. MIKE'S HALLWAY - NIGHT

MIKE turns the hallway light on, having just come in from the rain outside. He picks up the pile of envelopes on the floor. Mainly bills. There's a suitcase at the bottom of the stairs. He picks it up and starts walking up the stairs.

INT. MIKE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

MIKE sits at his kitchen table alone eating a microwaved curry. The kitchen is sparse of any personal items, or clutter. Devoid of any personality. Radio 2 plays.

INT. MIKE'S LOUNGE - NIGHT

Later that evening MIKE'S still sat on the sofa, feet perched up on the coffee table. His battered laptop rests in his lap with the television playing Billy Wilder's 'THE APARTMENT.' He stares at the GOOGLE home page open on his screen. He's unsure of what to write.

After a moment the letters being typed form: ALEXANDER MCQUEEN

He can't decide whether to press enter or not...Thinking better of it he deletes the letters and then shuts the laptop screen off.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

We follow MIKE as he walks through to the back of the busy studio. There's no sign of LEE but his work space is strewn with more books and magazines covering the floor. He picks one up. It's a 1950's fashion magazine. His attention is then drawn to a white wall which now features a giant question mark drawn in black marker.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

We follow MIKE as he walks down a dreary corridor at the top of the MCQUEEN building. Unsure of where he is going he eventually comes to a large conference room where he can see LEE and a group of important looking people in suits sat round an oblong table. LEE who is addressing the room clocks MIKE outside and signals for him to come in.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MIKE walks into a heated conversation between LEE and JEFF WILCOX (50's) who is A SENIOR MANAGER of the MCQUEEN COMPANY. MIKE discreetly sits down at the only spare seat around the table.

JEFF

There's no market research telling us we're failing because we're overpriced. They're telling us we're failing behind because the customer doesn't believe the designs to be wearable.

LEE

The only people who believe the customer knows anything are the customers themselves.

JEFF

And yet our main advertisement is the show and if the show doesn't represent products we can sell in our stores then we fall short. Who is this?

JEFF shoots a look of annoyance in MIKE'S direction.

LEE

Did we or did we not break even this year?

JEFF

If you're asking was this the first year since Gucci acquired the company we didn't make a loss? Then yes. Congratulations.

LEE

Then we're improving.

JEFF

Seven years of no profit.

LEE

Seven years of building a foundation.

JEFF

We're currently running at 70% wholesale, 30% retail.

JEFF passes the paper down the table.

JEFF (CONT'D)

I suggest we use this as leverage in our negotiations to find a partner able to provide mass distribution of an affordable collection.

LEE takes a paper and walks towards the window feeling the frustration of having to even consider working with another company.

LEE

I don't want to even consider such a collaboration. I've told you I'm not working with another company.

JEFF

It's commercially vital we get the deal through by the end of the month so we're cushioned for any economic blow-back.

LEE

What is this?

LEE holds up the paper.

JEFF

We've gone over various strategies -

LEE flicks through the document.

LEE

Budget outlines, business models, lay off the bullshit.

LEE puts the document down, looking straight at JEFF.

LEE (CONT'D)

How much of my show budget is getting cut?

JEFF

Half.

LEE is visibly shocked by this but tries to hide it. He looks at the other board members who look slightly sheepish.

JEFF (CONT'D)

The board agrees this is the best course of action if we're to remain competitive.

LEE

This isn't survival it's a suicide.
You cut my budget by half you kill
the company.

JEFF

The company you sold a majority
stake in for millions. Cuts are
being implemented across the group
and we need you to fall into line.

LEE

No, you need me to make ten
collections a year. Each one
bigger, bolder and better than the
next.

JEFF

I understand your frustrations -

LEE

Understand it's my name on every
label, on every bag, on every sign
above every god damn fucking store.
It's my name that gets written
about when I don't deliver what's
expected of me, not yours.

JEFF

And we're heading into one of the
worst economic downturns any of us
are likely to experience. If we
don't protect ourselves now the
fallout could be catastrophic.

LEE

That's not what I care about.

LEE slams all the papers off the table with his hand. They
scatter to the floor.

JEFF

You'll care when you're sat round
this table twelve months from now
laying off members of your team.

LEE

My team and I are creating work
none of you are capable of
producing. Work, which in years to
come will not only be regarded as
art but pieces of history.

(MORE)

LEE (CONT'D)

And if history has taught us anything it's in times like these you have to take risks. And I'm not talking about the decision whether you wear a black or navy suit today. I'm talking about risking something of yourselves. You remember what that means? What loyalty is Jeff? What that sounds like? Because let me tell you I'm not hearing it. I'm not seeing it and by the looks of it you're not even fucking wearing it.

LEE storms out of the room as a bashful JEFF looks down at his suit, aware it's not a McQueen design and straightens his tie.

All the board members sit silently, slightly embarrassed but mostly shocked by what they just witnessed, including MIKE.

EXT. MCQUEEN STUDIO ROOFTOP - DUSK

MIKE walks across the rooftop to where LEE is standing smoking a cigarette. They both look out at the view of London.

There's a silence between the men.

LEE

Do you own another jacket?

A beat.

MIKE

Why, what's wrong with it?

LEE

Nothing...I like it.

LEE exhales his cigarette.

MIKE

What you thinking?

LEE

I'm thinking we should go get fucking smashed.

INT. GHETTO BAR - NIGHT

We're hit by the punishing beats of club music. A barrage of lights, noise, people drinking, dancing, it's pure hedonism.

MIKE and LEE push their way through to the bar greeting ANNALISE, (39) a party girl model coming to the end of her career but still strikingly beautiful.

LEE

Hey, how are you?

ANNALISE throws her arms round LEE hugging him tightly.

ANNALISE

Good, I'm good. How are you?

LEE

Anna Mike, Mike Annalise, one of my
oldest friends.

ANNALISE

Nice to meet you.

INT. GHETTO BAR - LATER

In the middle of a crowd of people ANNALISE and LEE introduce MIKE to a small group of their friends. Firstly, ALINKA a beautiful, stick thin, Russian model.

MIKE

Nice to meet you.

ALINKA

Alinka.

LEE

Alinka's one of my models.

ANNALISE

Bobby and Cookie.

MIKE shakes hands with BOBBY, a hang over from the late eighties, wearing crazy face make-up and a Sergeant Peppers military styled red jacket. COOKIE is a cool looking pretty boy half everyone's age.

LEE

Don't believe a word they say.

INT. GHETTO BAR - LATER

We see various shots from MIKE'S perspective of the group dancing together, drinking shots.

He immerses himself with the group and is surprised by how much fun he's having after being reticent at first. The night is young and so are they...well kind of. At some point we see ANNALISE and LEE dancing to their reflections in a mirror.

INT. CAFE BOHEME - NIGHT

LEE, MIKE, BOBBY, COOKIE & ALINKA sit round a table drinking and eating bites. BOBBY holds court telling a story of him and LEE cruising.

BOBBY

We're in this club in Camden, and there's sweat on the walls, cum on the fucking floor. No, seriously, we've taken so many fucking pills, we don't know what the fuck is going on anymore, when this one demands we go cruising on Clapham Common -

LEE

I fucking didn't -

BOBBY

Yes you fucking did.

LEE (CONT'D)

Fuck off -

BOBBY

Only we lose each other and I end up getting my arsehole torn to pieces by this German -

ALINKA

That's fucking disgusting.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

He's like five foot six with a hard on the size of my arm.

ANNALISE approaches the table with a tray of shots. Which they all pick up as BOBBY continues on -

ANNALISE

Everyone take one. Here we go. Come on.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

It's the worst fucking experience of my life.

ANNALISE

Okay. One. Two. Three.

Everyone takes a shot, various noise of disgust and laughing. LEE starts throwing peanuts at BOBBY throughout the continuing dialogue.

BOBBY

Anyway, I spend the rest of the night looking for Lee only to find him three hours later, stop that, stark bollock naked tied with gaffa tape to a fucking -

ANNALISE

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Oak tree. Oak tree. Oak tree. Oak tree. Oak tree. Oak tree.

Everyone laughs at LEE who swigs at his whiskey and coke as ANNALISE wraps her arms round him and kisses his cheek.

LEE

You're all cock suckers. Get off.
No, get off.

INT. CAFE BOHEME - NIGHT

ANNALISE, MIKE & BOBBY stood at the bar trying to order a drink whilst watching LEE hitting on a good looking guy at another table.

ANNALISE

You'd never believe it but really he's a romantic at heart.

MIKE

Yeah, no, I don't believe it.

BOBBY

What are you having? The same?

ANNALISE

Yeah but no ice. No, like he has lots of fun but ever since I've known him he's always been in and out of relationships.

BOBBY

Oh hello.

LEE has discreetly put his hand on the man's arse.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Get in there my son!

LEE gives BOBBY the middle finger without looking at him.

ANNALISE

Always drawn to people who need him too much, you know what I'm saying?

BOBBY

Has he spoken to you about George yet?

ANNALISE

He doesn't need to know about George.

BOBBY

Ask him about George. They got married on this fuck off yacht in Ibiza.

ANNALISE

It wasn't legal or anything.

BOBBY

Only been together a few months -

ANNALISE

But they wanted to show how committed they were to one another.

MIKE

What happened between them?

BOBBY

Fell apart. Lee was taking too many drugs.

ANNALISE

But he's clean now.

BOBBY

Been clean since Izzy passed away.
(To the bartender) I said no ice.

MIKE

Who's Izzy?

ANNALISE

Isabella Blow?

BOBBY

No. Ice.

ANNALISE

Fashion editor? Stylist?

BOBBY

She discovered him after seeing his first show. She helped him get to where he is.

ANNALISE

Do you know anything about fashion?

MIKE

Not really.

ANNALISE

So that's why he likes you.

MIKE

Sorry?

ANNALISE raises her voice over the music.

ANNALISE

That's why he likes you.

EXT. OLD COMPTON STREET - NIGHT

MIKE stands outside on the street getting some air. We hear the clattering sounds of the Soho nightlife around him. LEE comes out of the front door and takes out a smoke. He offers one to MIKE who takes one. They both stand there smoking their cigarettes side by side soaking up Soho.

EXT. VICTORIA PARK RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

LEE, ALINKA, ANNALISE and MIKE drunkenly stumble along the quiet up market street - well it was until they arrived, stealing traffic signs, messing around in the road as they make their way up to LEE'S flat.

INT. LEE'S LOUNGE - NIGHT

MIKE stands next to a giant stuffed stag in the hallway, beer in hand as he takes in the kitchen. It's more minimalistic than he was expecting. Everything is white other than one wall which is volcanic in its texture.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

MIKE stands with his back to a giant framed black and white photograph of a man's arse which dominates the wall. He meanders around the living room. L-shaped sofa. Everything covered in Ostrich skin. He looks at the coffee table which hosts the 'Marquis De Sade's' book *120 days of Sodom*.

He scans the shelves which contain rows of DVDS and awards such as British designer of the year.

He then wanders over to another wall where he takes in a HENDRIK KERSTENS painting of a woman with a plastic bag over her head.

INT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT

MIKE meanders up the stairs. The walls feature macabre artwork by NICK NIGHT, JOEL PETER WITKIN which are extreme in their graphicness.

He then stops in his tracks seeing one of his photographs. We recognise it as the cover of MIKE's book we saw earlier in LEE's studio. It's of a bloodstained child standing in the centre of rubble.

From seemingly nowhere ANNALISE appears catching MIKE off guard?

ANNALISE
You coming?

INT. LEE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MIKE follows ANNALISE into LEE'S large bedroom where LEE sits upright on a huge bed eating a McDonalds, the dogs joining him on the duvet.

ANNALISE jumps onto the end of end of the bed spread eagle and starts channel hopping while smoking a cigarette. Meanwhile ALINKA sleeps on the sofa with a throw wrapped round her.

MIKE makes his way over to a large chest of drawers upon which sits a collection of photo frames, mainly of LEE with his family and friends.

He spots a framed photograph of LEE and an eccentrically dressed woman, pale faced, wearing a flamboyant hat. MIKE picks it up to get a closer look.

LEE
Izzy hated that you could see her face in that one. Although I always thought it was the best photo ever taken of her.

LEE returns to eating his food, as MIKE places the photograph back.

INT. LEE'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

MIKE washes his hands in the bathroom basin catching his reflection in the bathroom cabinet. He looks tired, and unshaven. Just as he's about to turn the tap off he gets a thought which he knows he shouldn't act upon but his curiosity gets the better of him.

Leaving the tap running he opens the mirrored cabinet revealing various hygiene equipment, tooth brush, face wash etc. But what is most striking is the sheer amount of medication bottles. There's enough here to stock a pharmacy.

MIKE takes a few bottles off the shelf and examines the labels intrigued by what they are. He places the bottles back and shuts the cabinet.

INT. LEE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MIKE exits the en-suite walking into the bedroom where LEE (who has his back to him) is sitting in front of the television with ANNALISE stood behind also watching, remote control in hand.

MIKE clocks the film playing, it's the famous Ascot scene from MY FAIR LADY. Ladies fill the screen wearing the famous black and white frocks. As MIKE approaches he sees LEE is actually sketching a design.

LEE then rips out the paper and holds it up to show MIKE the design of an elaborate skirt and jacket two piece.

LEE

Got it.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - NIGHT

The lights to the studio all flicker on, the place is deserted of people. LEE strides through the room trailed by ANNALISE, ALINKA and MIKE unsure of what's going on.

We watch the process of how LEE creates a two piece jacket and skirt from start to finish. He begins by pulling out roll after roll of black and white checkered material laying it on the floor.

He then places screen shots from MY FAIR LADY on the wall. Bam. Bam. Bam.

On his hands and knees he quickly begins cutting out a pattern from the fabric. The scissors glide smoothly across the material.

Meanwhile, MIKE takes out his camera and starts focusing the lens as ANNALISE helps undress ALINKA down to her underwear.

MIKE begins to circle LEE as he in turn circles ALINKA, her arms outstretched like a beautiful swan. LEE wraps material around her, quickly pinning it to create a silhouette he's happy with. Meanwhile ANNALISE stands to the side always assisting with pins, scissors, cigarettes, coffee, whatever is needed in the moment.

The familiar noise of the sewing machine which lights LEE as he sews a seam on the skirt, cigarette constantly dangling from his mouth or seeing him rip the material with his teeth again and again.

A sleep deprived SARAH rushes into the STUDIO carrying her bag, throwing off her coat and straight into assisting LEE.

ANNALISE hands LEE and SARAH pin after pin as they both stab through the material ALINKA is wearing. She stands still as a statue slightly nervous she could get pierced at any moment.

LEE lays on his back, sweat dripping down his face as he hacks away with a pair of scissors to the bottom of the black and white checkered skirt. He hand sews intricately in and out of the material. His eyes, red raw.

We watch a heady sequence of LEE and SARAH ripping, sewing, cutting. Each consecutive sequence is faster, building manically to a beautiful crescendo. ANNALISE and SARAH constantly assisting, MIKE shooting and ALINKA modelling. Until finally -

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - EARLY MORNING

Stillness. The early morning sunlight streams through the studio covered in material, paper, cigarette butts and books. It's like a fashion bomb's exploded.

A dishevelled LEE sits down next to SARAH. He clasps her hand in relief and pride. ANNALISE affectionately throws her arms around his shoulders, as they all looks up at ALINKA standing before them like the most beautiful mannequin wearing LEE's new creation. A black and white houndstooth two piece skirt and jacket. A relieved LEE rubs his tired face and exhales a deep breath before a wide grin appears. He knows he's created the first piece in his new collection.

CAMILLA (O.S.)

What you want us to create is a
sackable offence.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

The whole creative team are once again spread around a table filled with laptops, papers, materials, sketches, bowls of sweets, crisps, jaffa cakes.

LEE

Can we secure the Palais Omnisports
for the 10th of March? Yes or no?

CAT

Three months notice isn't viable.

CAMILLA

No one's disputing the designs are
good -

LEE

They're fucking excellent.
I'm not considering any other
venues.

LEE (CONT'D)

Pass me the sugar.

SAM

We should discuss alternative
ideas before we go any
further on this.

JOHN throws LEE a packet of Haribo.

LEE (CONT'D)

This has the potential to be the
most exciting collection we've
created in years. The only show
anyone is going to be talking about
will be ours.

SAM

Why?

SARAH

Because people have bigger concerns
than buying clothes no one can
afford.

LEE

Clothes made with the same
silhouettes as everything that's
gone before but sold as if they're
brand fucking new

JOHN

Aren't we in the same business?

LEE

Yes, which is why we're also going to parody ourselves.

CAT

Self-deprecation, now that is original.

LEE

We've pushed consumerism to the point of overconsumption right? Designers don't create anything new anymore. We just steal from the past, present it as if it's new and everyone buys into it.

SAM

The board won't like it.

LEE

Who says the board have to know?

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

LEE presents the team with design ideas and sketches.

SARAH

We're gonna create pastiches of Givenchy's little black dress. Valentino's ladies at lunch. And Dior's new look.

SARAH hands out design references to the team.

LEE

We'll also concentrate on reinventing our best pieces from the last fifteen years referencing the archive.

SARAH

Key motifs, themes. We've already discussed using the Escher prints from Birds, using the houndstooth check.

The team pass pictures of past McQueen shows around as LEE eats some chocolate.

SARAH (CONT'D)

The idea is to turn trousers into shirts. Jackets into dresses.

CAMILLA
Retrospection into reinvention?

SARAH
Exactly.

LEE
I want you to look through every collection we've ever done. Suggestions to me by the end of tomorrow. John, can we pull up some music from past shows?

JOHN
Already on it.

CAT
Why don't we use old props, pieces from past sets?

LEE
And do what with them?

SARAH
Use them as a centre piece?

SAM
Set it up like a museum?

MIKE picks up a picture of the HENDRIK KERSTENS painting of a woman with a plastic bag over head he saw at LEE'S house.

LEE
Fuck no.

JOHN
What about a rubbish dump?

LEE
Pile it up.

CAT
Make it look like it's all burnt to a cinder.

LEE
I like that.

CAMILLA
Are you wanting Philip to do headwear?

LEE takes the Hendrik picture out of MIKE'S hand and passes it to CAMILLA.

LEE

Send him the Hendrik portrait as a starting point. I want us to also run with rubbish, bags, bin liners, work that into the clothes too.

SAM

Do we have a title?

LEE

I'm working on it.

SARAH

Any more questions...

LEE

Great. Last one down to the archive is buying lunch.

LEE starts running down the studio. The team all start yelling and chasing after him. MIKE laughs. He's in a madhouse but LEE'S enthusiasm is infectious.

INT. ARCHIVES BASEMENT - DAY

A projector plays images from LEE'S first fashion show

JACK THE RIPPER STALKS HIS VICTIMS.

MIKE sits next to LEE who is giving a running commentary of his work to him. JOHN works the projector while CAMILLA, SARAH, CAT and SAM sit around the room taking notes and passing documents to one another. LEE intermittently bites his fingernails off and lays them on his trouser leg in a row.

LEE

This one was a fucking mess.

MIKE

This was your graduate collection?

LEE

Yeah, we based it on Jack The Ripper and his victims.

MIKE

What don't you like about it?

LEE

There's too many ideas going on. It's not cohesive enough as a whole.

MIKE

Did you think that at the time?

LEE

No at the time I thought it was the dog's bollocks.

INT. ARCHIVES BASEMENT - LATER

The projector plays images of **No13**, one of LEE'S most famous fashion shows.

LEE

That girl there was an athlete who had her legs amputated as a child, so we offered to design those wooden legs especially for her.

MIKE

Wow.

LEE

Critics didn't agree, they really went for us. Said we were exploiting disabled people, all that kind of shit, fucking killed me. Oh I love this bit it's beautiful. Wait for it...Wait...

LEE starts to conduct the music with his hands. He looks like a child, filled with exuberant joy, as he watches the grand finale; a solitary ballerina in a white dress rotates on a turntable while being spray painted by two industrial robots.

INT. ARCHIVES BASEMENT - LATER

We're nearing the end of **VOSS**. Models are walking around an enormous glass box, with white tiled floors and walls formed from surveillance mirrors. LEE is scribbling notes down while eating sweets.

SARAH

He'd say to the models, 'do something fucking crazy. I don't care what it is, just fuck with the audience.'

MIKE

How'd you go about choosing the models?

SARAH

Well some we use time and time
again don't we?

LEE

Yeah but really they've just got to
be strong and fearless, like
warriors. Like men should be
fucking scared of them, you know?
That's important.

MIKE

Why?

LEE

Just is.

MIKE

And do you see this as more fashion
or a show?

LEE

I see it as art.

Footage comes up of people being interviewed after a show.
ISABELLA BLOW appears. Just her voice makes LEE stop in his
tracks. His silent focus shows us how important she was to
him. He's like a lost boy listening for directions. The rest
of the creative team share concerned looks.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

I know you're talking to everybody
but just quickly, in a phrase, what
is Alexander McQueen?

IZZY turns away taking a puff on her cigarette before
returning back to the reviewer, sharp as a whip with an
answer.

IZZY

'He's a wild bird with a good
silhouette...And he always makes
his whole work about being a bird.
So birds have movement, they have
freedom, they're wild, they're
free. They don't have to be
responsible to anyone other than to
their great technical ability to
fly. And I think he makes clothes
fly.'

Clearly chocked, LEE clears his throat before saying -

LEE

Stop there. I've seen enough.

INT. STORE ROOM - DAY

LEE scans through rails of clothes and shelves of boxes for accessories while MIKE trails behind questioning him.

LEE

She made several attempts. Pills, tranquilizers, tried to drown herself once.

MIKE

Did you ever try and help her?

LEE

I paid for her medical bills, not that she knew. We weren't really on the best of terms by then.

MIKE

Why's that?

LEE

She felt I owed her a job and I wasn't willing to give her one.

MIKE

Do you feel guilty about that?

LEE

Has someone you loved taken their life?

A beat.

MIKE

Sorry, I shouldn't have asked you about this.

LEE

I only talk to you because I like talking to you. If I didn't I wouldn't fucking say anything.

MIKE feels weirdly validated by LEE'S back-handed compliment, yet tries to conceal it.

LEE (CONT'D)

All I know is I've enough destructive tendencies of my own to not take on someone else's.

(MORE)

LEE (CONT'D)

I couldn't of helped her more than
I did because I wasn't in a
position to help myself.

MIKE

Are you angry at her for what she
did?

LEE

How can you be angry at someone for
making the hardest choice there is
to make? For someone to feel their
life doesn't have enough worth to
keep going? How can I be angry at
her for deciding that she wasn't
enough?

LEE knows he has opened up too much, and goes back to looking
at the book but can't concentrate, closing it after a few
moments.

LEE (CONT'D)

I think I'm done for today.

LEE walks off in the direction of the exit, leaving MIKE
watching him go.

EXT. VOLVO CAR - MORNING

From behind we see MIKE driving his battered old Volvo. He
pulls over into a layby picking up his camera from the
passenger seat and exits the car. From the car we see MIKE,
making his way up the hill and out of view.

EXT. WOODLAND - MORNING

MIKE trudges up the muddy hillside until he reaches the top.
We see the landscape darkened with towering rain clouds ready
to burst. It's a sight to behold.

MIKE hears a rustling sound and looks round to see what it
is.

We stay on Mike as raises his camera to his eye to capture
what we can't see.

Click.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

MIKE walks through the quiet studio, wearing the same rain drenched coat and camera. As he approaches we see LEE focused, working on a model who is wearing a red dress with black birds printed on it. As always, he is accompanied by SARAH, CAMILLA and few other assistants, and everyone is speaking in hushed tones.

The studio has more mood boards filled with inspiration. Hanging rails with a few completed dresses. New materials, sketches, and polaroids of models.

LEE keeps standing back from the model thinking deeply, rubs his face frustrated at not being able to solve the problem that stands before him. He gestures at an assistant for more pins and gets down on his knees to fix the garment.

Meanwhile MIKE takes out his camera and starts snapping. Click. Click. Seemingly unaware that with each shot the tension grows at how inappropriate this feels. LEE continues to stand back from the dress deeply unhappy. He gestures for the scissors, and starts hacking away at the dress.

Click.

Click.

LEE stands back again to observe his creation, still deeply frustrated.

Click.

Click.

LEE
STOP TAKING MY FUCKING PICTURE!

LEE throws the scissors at the wall before going up to his desk and throwing everything off it with one swish of his arm. He then makes his way over to the mood boards manically ripping pictures and designs off the board as MIKE calmly stands there, waiting for LEE to stop but he doesn't. He continues destroying parts of the studio and the collection until he finally stops and begins to calm down. MIKE stays standing there fascinated by what he's witnessing.

LEE begins to compose himself and looks up at MIKE. There's a new understanding between the men. LEE quietly goes back to working on the models dress while MIKE resumes taking his pictures.

The studio goes back to work.

INT. KITCHEN STUDIO - DAY

MIKE is waiting for the kettle to boil. LEE walks into the kitchen, grabs a cup, puts a tea bag in it, takes the kettle off and pours the water in.

MIKE pours the water into his cup as LEE looks in the fridge for milk, pouring it into his own cup and stirring it.

LEE

Milk?

MIKE

Yeah.

LEE pours the milk into MIKE'S mug, stirs it and then gives it to him. A poor mans apology.

The men just stand there drinking their tea for a few moments.

INT. MIKE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

MIKE lays out all the equipment he will need to turn the kitchen into a dark room.

Enlarger easel and timer. Trays and tongs to develop, stop, and fix the prints. Bottles of chemicals, chemical cylinders, photographic paper as well as his cameras.

He then puts up rows of string across the ceiling from where he will later hang the photographs, before covering up the window (which has aluminium foil around the inside edges,) with a piece of plywood until the room becomes pitch black.

INT. MIKE'S KITCHEN - LATER

The red light which has been placed on the wall, switches on. It feels like we're in a womb.

We see the step by step process of developing film.

The rolling of film being unfolded, trays of chemicals, developers, the clock watch being set into motion.

MIKE hangs undeveloped pictures up on a line.

He then looks through some developed shots he's taken over the last few weeks. Images of models, mood boards, LEE in various different states of emotions. He then looks closer at a picture of LEE'S arm tattoo which reads...

'LOVE LOOKS NOT WITH THE EYES, BUT WITH THE MIND.'

INT. MIKE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

MIKE sits at the table surrounded by developed pictures. In front of him sits his open laptop, with the home page open on GOOGLE.

He thinks, then writes something into GOOGLE and presses search. The results page pops up and he scrolls through, clicking on some of them. It becomes apparent it's medication for HIV.

He sits back and reflects on this for a second, slightly shocked by the discovery and secondly what he's going to do with the new found information.

He then returns to the laptop and begins to type into GOOGLE other subjects. McQueen HIV, McQueen drugs, McQueen Depression, McQueen Isabella Suicide.

Mike starts reading and then pointedly closes the screen shut, instantly regretting his actions.

INT. SADLERS WELLS AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

MIKE walks among a well-dressed crowd down the aisle of the auditorium looking for his row. He then squeezes along, with the odd person having to stand until he reaches his seat next to which LEE is already sat waiting. The two men greet one another but we can't hear what they're saying due to the chatter of the crowd.

INT. SADLERS WELLS AUDITORIUM - MOMENTS LATER

The dramatic orchestral score taken from Act 4 - three minutes from the very end of the ballet - plays.

We look out on the audience watching the ballet, slowly pulling in on LEE'S face. We stay on him for longer than is comfortable. His face, transfixed, betrays every shifting emotion.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY/NIGHT - MONTAGE

The music continues as we see various shots over various days of LEE creating the White and Black Swan pieces which will be the grand finale to his collection.

A MODEL stands in the middle of the room wearing nothing more than a nude bodice and G-string and vertiginous heels as LEE circles her sizing up what to do here.

Various assistants pull out rolls of material and equipment LEE might need. SARAH is stood with her notebook busy taking notes as CAMILLA stands by assisting with pins and scissors.

LEE drapes beautiful white fabric over the MODEL, it's fluid, elegant and graceful. We circle him as he is handed pin after pin by his assistants creating shape and form. MIKE all the time capturing what he's observing. White feathers are flung out onto the floor. They are individually hand stitched to the garment.

The MODEL raises her arms to the sky and the white feathered dress is lowered over her head. She looks heartbreakingly ethereal, as the team stand admiring her.

Night descends on the studio. There's a new MODEL, along with SARAH, CAMILLA, MIKE and LEE who empties bags of black feathers onto the floor. They all look completely exhausted. Some are drinking cans of Red Bull or eating sweets to keep going. SARAH measures the new MODEL while LEE cuts out the pattern from a lengthy roll of black material. Again we see him draping the material over the MODEL. It's luxurious, sensual, tender and fluid.

LEE takes out the pins in his mouth and places them into the dress. He's beginning to look feverish and intense. The music crescendos now.

LEE circles the MODEL wondering what to do next, it's not working.

Instead we see him ripping, tearing, cutting material with hands, teeth, scissors.

Likewise we see the team, pinning, cutting, tearing feathers out. Every component is coming together in perfect harmony. The music, the coordinated movement, the humming rhythm of work carried out in sync is an extraordinary thing to witness. All the while MIKE continues documenting this incredible feat of skilled teamwork.

The team collapse one by one into their chairs looking at what stands before them - The two MODELS stood in beautiful black and white swan garments.

LEE stands in the centre of the studio. He knows he's created a masterpiece.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - NIGHT

MIKE sits uncomfortably as LEE does up the buckle of one of his new skyscraper heels to MIKE'S foot.

MIKE

What if I fall over?

LEE

You fall, you fall.

MIKE

What I don't understand is why anyone would want to walk in something so high?

LEE

Height gives you power. Stand up for me. Come on up. Up.

MIKE

I'm not sure that's possible.

LEE

You can't appreciate a model's job until you've walked in her shoes. Up you get.

MIKE stands back and tries to keep his balance.

MIKE

Jesus...

LEE

Walk to that wall and back.

MIKE

That's not happening.

LEE

Walk to the wall and back.

MIKE

No.

LEE

It's either that or wear a dress.

MIKE walks towards the wall slowly, as LEE picks up his camera to take a shot.

LEE (CONT'D)

Little quicker, Michael.

Mike throws him the middle finger. Click. LEE takes the photograph.

LEE's mobile phone rings. The caller ID reads JANET. LEE sits back down and picks up the call.

LEE (CONT'D)
Heya, you alright?

MIKE reaches the wall and starts walking back.

LEE (CONT'D)
Where is she?

MIKE sensing the change in LEE'S tone sits down. We now stay on LEE as he hears the news.

LEE (CONT'D)
I see....

A beat

LEE (CONT'D)
Will she...

LEE'S finding it hard to not show his emotion in his voice. He starts crying despite his best efforts not to.

LEE (CONT'D)
Yeah, no, I'm still here.

A beat.

LEE (CONT'D)
Is Dad with you?

A beat.

LEE (CONT'D)
I'm not sure I can see her like
that...I know it's just... Right,
okay...No I'll be there...Okay,
bye. Yeah, bye.

LEE cancels the call looking, slumping into his seat for safety, numb.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

MIKE and RON sit next to one another in silence not knowing what to say to one another, as medical staff wander past.

The windows are lined with tinsel as Christmas is soon approaching.

RON
They threw the game away today.

A beat.

RON (CONT'D)
Spurs. Two one up at half time.

A beat.

MIKE
You always been a supporter?

RON
Always...Different game though now.
People follow players not teams.
When I was young you picked your
team and you stuck with them.
Whatever the season, whatever the
outcome, however close to
relegation you always stood by your
team and they'd always see you
through. Players come and go but
the colours rarely change that's
what I say.

A beat.

RON (CONT'D)
Couldn't imagine supporting anyone
else...Wouldn't know who I was
without them.

A beat.

MIKE
Janet said they're putting Joyce on
dialysis...I didn't know she had
kidney problems.

RON
Why would you?

MIKE searches for the most sensitive reply.

MIKE
I mean, well Lee, he err never
mentioned she was ill.

RON

Maybe he didn't mention it cause
it's got nothing to do with you.

RON'S frankness takes MIKE back a little.

MIKE

No...No, I'm sorry -

RON

Sorry for what? What you sorry for?
Sorry for being here when you
shouldn't be? Or you sorry for
coming into my house, my home
without having the decency to shake
my hand.

MIKE just looks at RON blankly, unsure of how to respond to this.

RON (CONT'D)

What has to happen in a man's life
to end up being you, hmm? Having to
come into someone else's life
because yours isn't interesting
enough? Or maybe you think spending
a few months with my son and you'll
understand him? Well you won't.
I've spent a lifetime with him and
he's still a stranger to me. So
good luck if you think you can do
any better.

A beat.

MIKE gets up and walks away from RON, down the corridor. He stops briefly at the window. He spots JANET asleep in the corner armchair while LEE sits on the bed holding JOYCE'S hand. She's fast asleep in bed, wired up to machines. She looks frail and a shade paler than when we last saw her. LEE catches MIKE'S eye, looking like a lost boy. He then returns his gaze to JOYCE as MIKE walks away.

INT. MIKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MIKE lays restlessly in bed unable to sleep. After a few moments he rolls over and rummages in a bag on the floor by the side of the bed. He pulls out a packet of cigarettes and lights one with a match illuminating his face. He sits in bed smoking. It's a release.

INT. STAIRWAY UP TO MCQUEEN STUDIO - MORNING

From above we see MIKE walk into shot as he once again slowly climbs the stairs up to the studio.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - MORNING

We follow a tired looking MIKE as he walks through the studio. For the first time we're not hit by a barrage of either music or the noise of machines. In fact it's eerily silent. There are hardly any workers present and those who are, aren't doing much. No clothes are being made. Tools have been put down.

MIKE walks past JEFF, who has just extricated himself from a heated conversation with a very upset SARAH, who clocks MIKE herself and hurriedly goes back to stitching a garment.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO KITCHEN - DAY

MIKE makes a cup of tea while in conversation with JOHN who sits on the counter sipping his drink.

MIKE

I didn't know whether to call him
or not?

JOHN

Probably best to leave it for
now... He'll be back when he's
ready.

A beat

MIKE

Did any of you know Joyce was sick?

JOHN

Umm, I don't know if -

MIKE

No it's fine -

JOHN

It's just he tends to keep work and
family separate.

MIKE

Right.

A beat.

JOHN

Saying that, every show I've ever
worked on Joyce has been there.
Never missed one.

MIKE

What about Ron?

JOHN

I can't recall him ever attending.

MIKE takes a sip of his coffee, pondering the enigma that is
RON MCQUEEN.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Can you not tell him I said that?

MIKE nods as JOHN exits the kitchen.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY.

The sound of a phone ringing out. MIKE stands by a window,
mobile to his ear.

LEE (V.O.)

This is Lee, leave a message.

MIKE doesn't know what to say, so after a few seconds hangs
up.

EXT. LEE'S FLAT - DAY

MIKE rings the intercom of a LEE'S FLAT. No answer. He rings
again.

JANET (O.S.)

Hello?

MIKE

Oh hi, it's err, it's Mike Poulter,
who's that?

JANET (O.S.)

Janet.

MIKE

Oh, hi, I was err just checking
Lee's alright?

JANET (O.S.)

He's fine.

A beat.

MIKE

We're all a little worried about
him at the studio.

JANET (O.S.)

He's fine. I'm looking after him.

MIKE looks around at the traffic thinking of what to say
before hitting the intercom again.

MIKE

Maybe I could come up and see him?

JANET (O.S.)

He doesn't want to see anyone at
the moment Mike.

MIKE

Maybe if you told him I was here?

JANET (O.S.)

He doesn't want to see anyone.

MIKE

I'll try tomorrow then.

JANET (O.S.)

Why?

A beat.

MIKE

Because I'm worried about him.

JANET (O.S.)

If you're worried you wouldn't be
here trying to take pictures of
him.

MIKE

I'm - I'm not here to take
pictures.

JANET

But that's what you do isn't it?
Take pictures of people suffering?

A beat.

MIKE

I'm not -

The intercom cuts out. Deflated, he breathes out and shakes his head in disbelief before walking away from the flat and out of shot.

INT. TUBE CARRIAGE- DAY

MIKE stands on a packed tube carriage with his camera round his neck. A few tourists wearing Santa hats are taking selfies of themselves with their mobile phones.

We hear the overhead announcement that the train is pulling into Stratford and the other lines commuters can change to at this station.

EXT. BIGGERSTAFF ROAD - DAY.

MIKE walks through LEE'S old estate. It's a sharp contrast to Hornchurch, a lot more urban. There are three giant council blocks, lots of rubbish on the streets and surly teenagers around. He comes to LEE'S street and stands outside the house. It's changed since the McQueens were there, but still looks small and humble.

EXT. BIGGERSTAFF ROAD - DAY

MIKE approaches the tower block behind the McQUEENS old residency. As he approaches it a woman with a pram, shopping bags and a small toddler is struggling to get through the main entrance doorway. MIKE speeds up a little and helps the WOMAN with her bags and gains entry.

EXT. ROOF OF COUNCIL BLOCK - DAY

MIKE stands taking in the view of Stratford, the birds flying in their formations. He raises the camera to his eye -

INT. MIKE'S LOUNGE - NIGHT

Channels of a television are being flicked through by MIKE sat on his sofa drinking a beer. Most of the programmes are to do with NEW YEAR. He stops on the BBC counting down from the South Bank. Fireworks go off. MIKE closes his eyes for a few seconds then turns off the television. He sits there in the silence...The sound of a telephone.

INT. MIKE'S HALLWAY - DAY

MIKE walks into the hallway and picks up the phone from the wall.

MIKE

Hello?

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - MORNING

MIKE walks through the studio, there's a distinct change in atmosphere. Work has recommenced. There are a number of models being fitted into clothes, while an area is being cleared for a walk way with chairs at the end for staff who are assembling, with their notepads and electronics.

JUICE runs up to MIKE who gives him a welcome pat. He looks across the studio and sees LEE deep in conversation with SARAH and ANNALISE, he looks tired, run down and continually smoking.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - LATER

There is a hushed silence as the whole MCQUEEN team have assembled(including ANNALISE) sitting at the bottom of a makeshift walkway. LEE sits centre, with SARAH and CAMILLA next to him. MIKE stands to the side assembling his camera.

Opposite the staff is a line up of models wearing some of the new designs. They are staggeringly beautiful, very tall, and yet there is a sharpness to them.

LEE

And go.

ALINKA walks from the back wearing the most beautiful red dress with black birds printed on it. She stops in front of LEE and his team.

LEE (CONT'D)

Turn.

ALINKA turns.

LEE (CONT'D)

Go have your Polaroid taken. Next.

ALINKA goes to another part of the studio, and has her polaroid taken by an assistant up against a wall.

Meanwhile, another MODEL walks forward and stops.

LEE (CONT'D)

Turn.

The MODEL turns. LEE leans forward, there's a problem. He gets up and holds out his hand. SARAH gives him a pin.

LEE (CONT'D)

More.

LEE pins the material while SARAH hands him two more pins, which LEE puts around the waist.

LEE (CONT'D)

Polaroid. Next.

MODEL 2 walks forward and stops in the centre.

LEE (CONT'D)

Good. Next.

MODEL 2 goes to have her polaroid taken while GRACE a pale, tall, freckly, ginger duckling who hasn't the confidence yet to know she's a swan, walks towards LEE.

LEE (CONT'D)

Stop.

GRACE stops slightly unsure of the protocol.

LEE (CONT'D)

Go back and walk properly.

GRACE returns to her spot and proceeds to walk again.

LEE (CONT'D)

Stop...Again.

GRACE nervously returns to her spot and proceeds to walk again...She barely gets three strides in.

LEE (CONT'D)

Again.

GRACE returns. She's physically shaking. He begins her walk -

LEE (CONT'D)

Again.

GRACE returns to the spot. The team are all looking nervous for her. Heads down. They know what's coming. GRACE breathes in and walks a few steps.

LEE (CONT'D)

Again.

Once more GRACE returns to the line turns and then walks. Finally she gets to the middle and stops waiting for LEE'S instruction.

LEE (CONT'D)
What's your name?

GRACE
Grace.

LEE
So everyone can hear you?

GRACE
Grace.

LEE
How old are you?

GRACE
Sixteen.

LEE
Sixteen?

GRACE
Uhhm.

LEE
You ever walked for a fashion house before?

GRACE
No.

LEE
This your first one?

GRACE
Yes.

LEE
Name two of my shows.

A beat.

LEE (CONT'D)
Two of my shows. Name them.

A beat.

LEE (CONT'D)
Sarah how many shows have I done?

SARAH
Thirty three.

LEE
Two's easy no? What are they?

GRACE
Umm -

LEE
What's my silhouette?

GRACE
Silhouette?

LEE
Describe a McQueen woman to me.

GRACE
Sorry?

LEE
Characteristics. Adjectives.
You know what an adjective is
right?

GRACE
Yes.

LEE
Then name one.

GRACE
Strong?

LEE
What else?

ANNALISE
Lee -

LEE raises his hand to stop ANNALISE continuing.

LEE
What else?

GRACE
Powerful?

LEE
What else?

GRACE
I don't know.

LEE

Yes you do. What else?

GRACE

Umm.

LEE

WHAT ELSE?

GRACE

Strong!

LEE

You already said that. What else?

GRACE

I don't know.

LEE

You don't know?

GRACE

No.

LEE

Why don't you know?

GRACE

I don't know.

LEE

If you don't know then how do you think you're going to be one? Walk like one? Inhabit one? What is it? You think you can just turn up here in my studio, on my time and walk around this room like you haven't got a fucking thought in your head? You better be crying because you care not because you're frightened. Are you frightened or do you care about what we're trying to achieve here?

GRACE

I care.

LEE

It's a privilege to walk in my clothes. What is it?

GRACE

A privilege.

LEE

Louder.

GRACE

A privilege!

LEE

THEN FUCKING WALK LIKE THAT THEN!

A beat.

GRACE holds her head up high and walks her best circuit yet.

LEE (CONT'D)

Better...

LEE walks off in the direction of the toilets. ANNALISE runs up to GRACE to try and comfort her, while the rest of the team disperse mumbling to one another. We track MIKE who walks through the studio following LEE into...

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO TOILETS - CONTINUOUS

The toilets, where LEE is at the sink taking cocaine.

LEE

You here to judge me or take my picture?

LEE takes another line of coke and washing his face with water from the tap, looking at the mirror, dabbing his face down with paper. MIKE just stands there for a second, taking in the view of a man choosing to self destruct.

MIKE

How's Joyce?

LEE

Never better. Thanks for acknowledging that. You can go now.

MIKE

I appreciate things are difficult for you -

LEE

Appreciate your job is to document, not comment but hey, if you wanna have an opinion go right ahead -

MIKE

Look if this helps you, makes your work better that's your business.

LEE

Sure is.

MIKE

But you can't treat people the way
you treated that girl.

LEE

I can treat people anyway I want
because everyone knows I make them
better at what they do.

MIKE

That's the most honest thing you've
said to me in months.

LEE

You don't think I've been honest
with you?

MIKE

No.

LEE

You think I'm adopting some fucking
persona around you?

MIKE

I didn't say that.

LEE

I have told you things -

MIKE

Things you wanted me to hear so you
can create a version of yourself
you actually like.

LEE

What is it you think I'm not
telling you then?

MIKE

Forget it.

LEE

No come on, if you think you know
something then ask me. Don't
fucking walk away from me you cunt.
Ask me your fucking question.

MIKE

I saw your medication in your
bathroom cabinet. What is it?

LEE is visibly shocked and then quietly upset by the question. MIKE'S deception hits a raw nerve emotionally. Loyalty is something he values above anything else.

LEE

I invited you into my house, into my home. Let you into my life because I trusted you. I trusted you.

MIKE

Why didn't you tell me you were positive?

LEE

There was no reason to.

MIKE

It changes everything.

LEE

Changes nothing. Get out of my face.

LEE (CONT'D)
Out of my fucking face.

MIKE
Changes how you see things.
Your approach. Your work.

LEE (CONT'D)

I'm a faggot who grew up in the fucking eighties so sex and death are always gonna be related. As are the parts of me that are dark and ugly and messy which you've loved questioning me about so then you don't have to ask anything of yourself. Because the truth is you are scared to live.

LEE gets up in MIKE'S face

MIKE

No.

LEE

You are scared to be alive.

MIKE

That's not true.

LEE

You don't know how to be here
anymore than I do. Is that honest
enough for you?

The two men intensely stare at each other, LEE slightly backs away. MIKE takes a few breaths, gathering his composure. We then follow MIKE as he walks past LEE exiting the bathroom.

EXT. LAYBY - DAY

MIKE'S Volvo sits in the layby, rain slamming down on the window shield.

EXT. COUNTRY HILLSIDE - DAY

MIKE treks though the muddy landscape, rain pouring down on his rainmack. After a while we see him come to a stop. He spots something and squats down low. We see a HIND and its FAWN walk into the shot who quickly spot MIKE and stop still. MIKE is transfixed by the mother and baby and they are on him.

MIKE raises his camera to his eye. Click. The HIND and FAWN run back into the woodland. MIKE lowers his camera watching them go. He knows exactly what he needs to do next.

EXT. ROWAN WALK - NIGHT

From behind we follow MIKE walking along the familiar residential road holding a bunch of flowers in his hand. He turns into the driveway approaching the front door. He clocks that RON'S cab isn't there. He steps up and rings the door bell.

INT. JOYCE'S LOUNGE - NIGHT

JOYCE sits in her armchair, wearing a baby blue dressing gown, clutching a cup of tea smoking a cigarette, thinking about the proposition that's been put to her. This is the most frail we've seen her.

MIKE sits on the sofa holding his cup of tea, as the television flickers in the background playing something along the lines of Family Fortunes or Coronation Street. There's a selection of custard creams on a plate on the table.

JOYCE exhales her cigarette.

JOYCE

What's Lee think about all this?

MIKE

I wanted to run it past you first.

JOYCE takes another drag on her cigarette, thinking.

JOYCE

I'm not sure.

MIKE

Why not?

JOYCE

You want one?

JOYCE offers MIKE a cigarette.

MIKE

Given up.

JOYCE

Me and you both.

JOYCE takes another drag on her smoke.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

It's a nice idea...I mean it's something I would have liked to have done. I would have liked to have done something like that. So many questions I'd like to ask. Mind you knowing Lee he wouldn't want me asking most of them.

A beat.

MIKE

Ron at work?

JOYCE

Yeah, so help yourself to a biccie.

MIKE

I'm alright.

JOYCE

Go on, it stops me from eating them.

MIKE takes a biscuit to appease her.

MIKE

You seen much of Lee recently?

JOYCE

We speak on the phone...How's the collection coming together?

MIKE

Okay...I think he's a little unfocused at the moment.

JOYCE

Well he's always been like that. Too many ideas. Gets that from me.

A beat.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Don't suppose he's err - got a special friend at the moment?

A beat.

MIKE

I don't think so...You know, I think if you did this it would be a good distraction for him.

JOYCE

Distraction from what?

MIKE takes a cigarette and lights it while JOYCE watches on. She knows her son's fallen off the wagon again.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

How bad is he?

MIKE

He's not in a good way...You said he hasn't visited in a while?

JOYCE

No.

MIKE

Maybe doing this interview might be a good way to visit him...Don't you think?

A concerned JOYCE sits back in her chair, thinking what would be best for her son.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

CONTINUING ON FROM THE FIRST SCENE

LEE is on camera but looking to the side -

LEE

Do you need a hand?

JOYCE (O.S.)

I'm fine. I'm fine.

JOYCE sits down next to LEE. She is dressed up in a jacket and skirt and holding a few sheets of paper with handwritten questions.

LEE

Can I look at these?

JOYCE

No you flaming well can't.

JOYCE hits LEE playfully with her notes.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - MOMENTS LATER

LEE is answering JOYCE'S questions, he's relaxed a little.

LEE

What makes me proud?

JOYCE

Yeah.

LEE

Well you make me proud.

JOYCE

Oh get away -

LEE
It's true. It is.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
With you.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
Well then what makes you furious?

LEE

You do.

LEE laughs as JOYCE hits him with her notes.

JOYCE

(TO MIKE) I said he wouldn't take
this seriously -

LEE

Go on, next one. Come on.

JOYCE

As you know, I'm a big Simply Red
and Elton John fan.

LEE

I wouldn't admit to that on camera
mum. You don't who's gonna see
this.

JOYCE

Who are your favourite artists?

LEE

As in singers?

JOYCE

Yeah, well, y'know, groups -

LEE

Oh I dunno.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Because at one time, you were
very much into classical
music.

LEE

Ask me something else.

JOYCE

Okay, so you've travelled round the
world -

LEE

Uhhm.

JOYCE

But you still haven't been to the
Isle of Skye yet, which is the root
of your McQueen heritage. So are
you ever gonna visit it?

LEE

Mmm ... yeah. Sure.

LEE looks at MIKE knowing he's been caught out.

JOYCE

In the near future?

LEE

Yes.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - MOMENTS LATER

JOYCE

If you hadn't trained on Savile Row, how would you have entered the fashion industry?

LEE

I'd have slept my way there.

JOYCE

Lee -

LEE

I'm joking, I'm joking. I'd err, oh God I dunno, I'd find other ways of getting into it.

JOYCE

Do you ever look at something else and say, "I could have done that"?

LEE

Photo-journalism.

JOYCE

Why?

LEE

Cause I think it captures a moment in time that reflects where we are.

JOYCE

What about an architect?

LEE

No patience for it.

JOYCE

If you lost all this tomorrow, all the money and security -

Uhhm -

LEE

JOYCE (CONT'D)

What would be the first thing you would do?

LEE

Sleep.

JOYCE

See, I thought you'd say go on
holiday.

LEE

How can I go on holiday if I've
lost it all?

JOYCE

(Laughing)
Oh, I didn't think of that!

LEE

Let me ask you one.

JOYCE

No hang on, what's the err, what do
you think is a side to you, you
rarely let people see?

LEE

I dunno, you tell me.

JOYCE thinks about it for a second.

JOYCE

I'd say it's how kind you are. You
can be really kind and I don't
think you want people to know that
about you, and I have no idea why
that is.

LEE is unable to respond. He lowers his head slightly,
looking down at the floor to stop himself from getting
emotional.

JOYCE takes her son's hand and squeezes it.

MIKE takes a picture of them together.

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

We see LEE (smoking as usual) with MIKE sitting on top of a
table watching JOYCE with PHILIP TREACY trying on some
beautiful hats.

LEE

You wouldn't know she was ill to
look at her.

A beat.

LEE hands MIKE an invitation to the show. The title of which reads THE HORN OF PLENTY : EVERYTHING BUT THE KITCHEN SINK. DEDICATED TO MY MOTHER. The image on the front is the HENDRIK KERSTEN'S portrait.

MIKE

I don't get the title.

LEE

First show, what was it?

MIKE

Jack the Ripper.

LEE

That's the name of the pub his final victim was last seen in before her murder.

A beat.

MIKE

Cheerful then.

LEE laughs. The bond between the two men is restored to a degree.

LEE

Twat.

INT. MIKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MIKE unzips his empty suitcase on the bed. He then opens his wardrobe. There are only five or six hangers holding clothes. He takes the clothes and places them down in the suitcase (Still on hangers).

INT. MIKE'S HALLWAY - NIGHT

MIKE stands in the hallways, turning off all the lights. Darkness.

INT. PRIVATE CAR - EARLY MORNING

LEE & MIKE sit in the back seat of a fancy car driving through Paris. It's a sharp contrast to London. Even the weather is starting to show signs of very early Spring.

INT. PALAIS OMNISPORTS DE PARIS-BERCY - MORNING

LEE & MIKE walk into the most gigantic sports arena. In the centre of which is CAT, SAM, CAMILLA & JOHN looking at the centerpiece of past MCQUEEN props all painted black, piled sky high with the broken mirror flooring.

LEE makes his way over greeting every one and then starts inspecting the set, all the props piled together and the cracked mirrored flooring. He dances on it like a little boy.

INT. PALAIS OMNISPORTS DE PARIS-BERCY - DAY

LEE sits at the sound and lighting desk drinking a Starbucks with JOHN in the auditorium wearing cans. BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE by MARILYN MANSON is blaring. The lights on the rubbish tip are blue. Some of the creative team are walking around the space as stand-ins for the models. The music cuts out.

LEE

Can we try red?

The lights change to red. LEE thinks about it. He's not sure.

INT. PALAIS OMNISPORTS DE PARIS-BERCY - DAY

The MODELS circuit the space (at intervals) in their own clothes but with the shoes that they will be wearing for the show. LEE (stop watch in hand), SARAH & SAM stand on the perimeter of the performance space watching the girls pass.

LEE

(To Sarah)

Thirty seconds needs to come off.

INT. BACKSTAGE - DAY

MIKE walks around the backstage area which is being assembled with mirrors, lights, tables. Television monitors are being turned on showing us what's happening on the stage.

He walks over to a quiet corner where a make up artist is doing a trial run on a MODEL. Pale white faces and lipstick. LEE looks unhappy with the lipstick and gestures to take it.

LEE

Can I?

LEE takes the lipstick and draws around the model's lips so she looks like a clown.

LEE (CONT'D)
Better.

INT. BACKSTAGE - LATER

LEE is on his knees cutting away at a dress that a model is wearing with CAMILLA assisting. SARAH meanwhile is going through the rail of garments as MIKE photographs LEE. CAT enters, holding her clipboard -

CAT
Philip's ready when you are.

LEE
Okay.

SARAH goes back through the rail, looking bemused.

SARAH
Why are we seven dresses short?

LEE stops what he's doing and nails CAT with a piercing stare who looks like she wants to fade away.

INT. BACKSTAGE - LATER

A MODEL is sat down with PHILIP TREACY who is gaffa-taping a plastic bag to her head. They have the HENDRIK KERSTEN painting of a woman with a plastic bag over her head attached to the mirror for reference. Once again CAMILLA and LEE observe...After a while PHILIP finishes.

PHILIP
Happy with that?

LEE
Always.

INT. MCDONALDS - NIGHT

LEE and MIKE sit opposite one another eating Big Macs and chips in a moderately busy McDonalds. MIKE is drinking a COKE while LEE has a Strawberry Milkshake.

MIKE
Why'd you call them the lost years?

LEE
Givenchy?

MIKE

Uhhm.

LEE eats into his burger thinking about it and then starts speaking with his mouth full.

LEE

It was like one of those relationships where you both really need the other but would be so much better off alone.

MIKE

How old were you when you took the job?

LEE

Twenty seven.

MIKE

Young.

LEE

Too young. Having all that responsibility's not good for you.

MIKE

Why d'you say that?

LEE

Cause I was like that age, running this huge couture house which I knew fuck all about. Running my own label back in London, and I was making fourteen collections a year. Too much.

MIKE

Then why do it?

LEE

They offered me fuck loads of money...Passez la ketchup, sale cochon.

MIKE

What?

LEE

Pass the ketchup you dirty pig.

MIKE passes LEE the ketchup.

MIKE

Five years in Paris and that's what
you came away with?

LEE

Pretty much.

INT. LEE'S HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT.

MIKE pins up the last photograph of the collection he's made on the wall of this vast expensive antique looking hotel suite.

We now see the wall in all its glory. Hundreds of photographs that MIKE has taken over the last few months.

LEE looks on slightly dumbfounded by the scale and breath. He looks through them, seeing the creative process through MIKE'S eyes.

He begins to take down some pictures. MIKE picks one up.

MIKE

Why not this one?

LEE

I don't look happy enough.

LEE continues looking and taking down but holding onto pictures of Biggerstaff Road, his old house, the view from the block of flats, the birds, Janet's birthday, the family portrait, himself and ANNALISE in Soho, the team messing around during meetings, his dogs, the picture of him and Joyce, and lastly the pictures of the landscapes. It's clear that he's trying to keep his emotions in.

He looks down at the landscape picture of the storm clouds.

MIKE

What's wrong?

LEE doesn't know how to express what he's thinking...

LEE

These say more about me then any of
the other ones.

MIKE picks out a picture of LEE creating a piece from the show, the expression on LEE's face focused and intense. LEE looks at the picture of himself.

INT. LEE'S HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

LEE and MIKE lie on the bed together, head and feet in opposite directions, looking up at the ceiling.

LEE

Maybe none of it matters.

A beat.

LEE (CONT'D)

It's not like anyone's gonna care years from now, so what's the point of all the stress it takes to do this?

A beat.

MIKE

I used to ask myself if I had the right to take the pictures I took. How to justify my presence amongst so much misery and death...But I also know that if I really believed what I was doing was meaningless I wouldn't do it.

A beat.

LEE

I feel lost...I thought by now I might understand myself a bit better. Gotten away from stuff.

MIKE

What stuff?

LEE

Being the fat kid with bad teeth. Little faggot. Being at home, seeing things I shouldn't have seen.

MIKE

What things?

A beat.

LEE

When I was young I used to see Janet's late husband knocking her about. I was only eight or nine at the time.

(MORE)

LEE (CONT'D)

And when he was done with her he'd
put his attention on me in ways you
don't understand when you're that
young.

MIKE

I'm sorry.

LEE

Just the way it is
really...Sometimes I wonder if he
hadn't done those things I probably
wouldn't be doing all this and
maybe I'd be all the better for it.

MIKE

Then go do something else.

LEE

Maybe I'll buy myself some land.
Few animals -

MIKE

What animals?

LEE

Pigs. Sheep. I'll name one after
you if you're lucky.

MIKE

You'll get bored.

LEE

No I won't.

MIKE

And fat.

LEE

I'm already fat.

LEE looks back up at the ceiling.

MIKE

I'm not worried about you...You'll
figure things out.

A beat.

LEE

All clothes are is armour...That's
all they are.

The men stay lying there.

INT. MIKE'S HOTEL BATHROOM - MORNING.

MIKE showers himself. We see a few nasty war wounds on his body.

INT. MIKE'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

MIKE does up his shirt buttons when he hears a knock at the door.

MIKE

One second.

MIKE throws on his trousers and walks over to the door opening it -

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

A large Alexander McQueen box sits outside the door. He looks down the corridor but no one's there. He picks up the box and takes it back inside his room.

INT. MIKE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

MIKE opens the box on his bed. Inside is a beautiful McQueen suit.

INT. STAGE RIGHT - DAY

MIKE (in his pristine suit) walks around the perimeter of the auditorium camera in hand, fiddling with his tie. The show is pre-set, light floods the pile of props built up like a mountain of trash in the middle of the stage.

He witnesses the circus which has come to town. VIPs (we don't see their faces) are having their photos taken. Flashes here there and everywhere erupt and dazzle us.

People mill around, eccentrics dressed to the nines air kissing one another to death.

Bored security guards pace about the perimeter while SAM talks into her walkie talkie like this is a covert operation.

We see the bay of press heaving like a lion waiting to catch its prey at the bottom of the catwalk, hungry for the kill - or for a model to fall flat on her face.

MIKE continues walking showing his backstage pass to the security as he enters -

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Backstage, which is another level of craziness. There are people milling around everywhere. Film crews, journalists, photographers. It's a feast for the eyes.

MIKE passes CAT who sits by four large monitors talking on her headset, going through cues. While an assistant is busy sticking pictures of the models in order for the walk out board.

MIKE continues walking past a row of models all having the finishing touches to their make-up done. Some are playing with their phones, others are sat gossiping or simply zoned out listening to music on their I-pods.

MIKE pushes through a door and...

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Walks down a corridor where assistants run past with clothes. He then turns into -

INT. GREEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The GREEN ROOM where LEE & SARAH are on the floor stitching a dress to a model. CAMILLA is in the midst of a conversation.

LEE

So what does that mean?

CAMILLA

All I know is the dresses still haven't arrived.

LEE

Fucks sake. Sarah, can you finish this?

SARAH

Sure.

LEE gets up off the floor and starts walking with CAMILLA, MIKE trails them all the time.

CAMILLA

We tracked them down -

LEE

Mike, stay with me.

CAMILLA

But the courier's now stuck in
traffic.

LEE

So whose fault is it?

They walk out of the room back down into the -

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

LEE

Nice suit by the way.

CAMILLA

It's nobody's fault.

LEE

Who's to fucking blame?

CAMILLA

I'm not telling you.

LEE

How long until they're here?

CAMILLA

Not long.

LEE

I didn't hear an answer in there.

LEE pushes through the doors walking into -

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

The main backstage area.

CAMILLA

Fifteen minutes.

LEE

The show starts in ten.

CAMILLA

We always go up late.

SAM comes up to LEE holding a clipboard.

LEE

What is it?

SAM
You know about the dresses?

LEE
We're not starting late.

LEE stops at a model.

LEE (CONT'D)
Stand up for me.

LEE begins ripping a detail from her dress.

SAM
People expect us to go up late.

LEE
People expect us to defy their
expectations. Try defying mine
otherwise I'll cancel the show.

JEFF walks into shot unsure of what's going on but concerned
it doesn't sound good.

JEFF
I need a word.

LEE
Will two do you?

SAM
We're not cancelling the show.

JEFF
Why are you saying that?

SAM
Everything's fine.

JEFF
Doesn't sound fine.

LEE
Will be when the clothes are. Walk
with me. Mike you got any gum?

MIKE searches for some gum and hands LEE one.

JEFF
You want to tell me why you didn't
attend the press call this morning?

LEE

I had this idea of letting the journalists form their own opinions rather than me telling them what they should know. (TO MIKE) Thanks.

JEFF.

We've arranged a photo call straight after the show and then some questions from the press. I need you to show up and be polite. Do you think you're capable of that?

LEE

I couldn't think of anything I'd rather do. I need this.

LEE takes JEFF'S can of coke and looks for PHILIP.

JEFF

We can't afford bad press.

LEE

Well no we can't afford anything can we? Out of interest do you have any idea how much of my own money I've put into this show? To make this happen?

JEFF

All I'm doing is protecting you and your staff who by all accounts were working on this for weeks when you were nowhere to be found. Do you want to tell me about that?

A beat.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Didn't think so. See you after the show.

JEFF leaves. LEE downs the can of coke as CAT appears.

CAT

Lee your mum's in the Greenroom.

LEE

One second. I want us to use this in the hair.

HAIR ASSISTANT

How?

LEE grabs the models hair and raps it round the Coke can.

LEE
Is something like this possible?

HAIR ASSISTANT
Should be.

LEE
Do as many as you can. Cat your
monitors are down.

The monitors have all gone from clear images of a stage to a snowstorm of black and white.

CAT
Seven minutes. Fuck.

LEE walks past ALINKA wearing the BLACK SWAN dress.

LEE
You able to breathe?

ALINKA
Just about.

LEE gestures towards the flowers sat on her dresser.

LEE
Can I take these?

ALINKA
They're from you.

LEE picks up the flowers as we follow him circuit the backstage area. He spots GRACE sitting alone and looking a little overwhelmed as the circus swells around her.

Grace looks up at LEE holding out the flowers.

LEE
Prove me wrong.

LEE hands a slightly stunned GRACE the bouquet of flowers and continues walking away as he pulls out a packet of cigarettes.

LEE (CONT'D)
You got a light?

MIKE hands him a light as they walk through the door, into the -

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Corridor where some people pass by saying Good Luck to LEE who pushes through a fire escape into -

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

A small courtyard filled with rubbish. LEE lights his cigarette and takes a few moments to compose himself as MIKE stands by watching him.

MIKE

You alright?

LEE nods but then quickly starts to tear up. MIKE unsure of what to do approaches him and gently places his hand on his shoulder.

MIKE (CONT'D)

It's gonna be great.

LEE nods and tries to compose himself. He wipes his faces, takes one quick inhale on his cigarette and stubs it out.

LEE

Yeah.

LEE followed by MIKE returns through the FIRE EXIT into -

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The corridor which he walks down before turning into -

INT. GREEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Green Room where SARAH is fitting another model which ANNALISE is observing. Meanwhile JOYCE is sat down drinking some tea with JANET. LEE'S dogs are also running amuck. LEE gives JOYCE and JANET a hug and a kiss.

LEE

Hey mum. You alright?

JOYCE

Fine, I'm fine.

LEE

You look lovely. Jan.

ANNALISE gives LEE a hug.

LEE (CONT'D)
You alright love?

ANNALISE
It's looking great.

LEE
You think?

ANNALISE
Best yet.

JANET
How you feeling.

LEE
Good. Yeah. Great. Sarah, how long
on this?

SARAH
One minute.

LEE
Have you been shown where you're
sitting?

ANNALISE
We're fine, don't worry about us.

CAMILLA enters the room.

CAMILLA
The dresses are here.

LEE
Okay. Okay, I've got to go.

ANNALISE
Good luck.

LEE
(To Joyce)
Love you.

LEE kisses his mother again and leaves the room followed by
CAMILLA & SARAH.

MIKE nods his head and continues out the room leaving JOYCE &
JANET, & ANNALISE behind turning into the -

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Corridor with speed and pushes through the double doors into -

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

A barrage of backstage noise and activity. LEE, SARAH, SAM, CAMILLA, and some other assistants are already dressing some naked models with a rail of clothes close by.

CAT

Two minutes everyone.

LEE

Out the way. Move, move, move.

MIKE watches on as MODELS line up preparing to take to the catwalk wearing the most stunning creations. Meanwhile the rest of the team continue frantically getting the other seven models into their dresses. None of them give a shit how they look. There is sweat pouring off them, dripping make-up, it's all pretty grim but all hands are on deck now. They are racing against the clock which reads 11.58.

LEE (CONT'D)

Move.

LEE takes a dress from an assistant and puts it on the model, making sure it falls the right way. He isn't happy with how it looks.

LEE (CONT'D)

Scissors.

The assistant gives LEE a pair of scissors and he starts cutting away at the dress, it's a radical move but he's in full control, pouring himself into his work. He is a master, working so fast but precise, violent but elegant. Members of the team and other MODELS can't quite believe what they're encountering. It really is quite beautiful to watch. All the while MIKE continues shooting away knowing he is capturing gold. The clock reads 11.59.

CAT

Front of House one minute to stand
by please.

The team frantically get the models zipped up and stage ready, it's like a relay race now. Scissors and needles are being passed over like batons. MAKE UP ARTISTS are finalizing the MODELS look. Hairspray is smothering everyone. Everyone is on overdrive.

LEE

Go.

LEE sends his model to the line up and runs over to finalise the other six models looks with SARAH and CAMILLA.

MIKE looks over at the monitors where CAT is sat.

CAT
LX on standby...And three, two,
one.

On the monitors MIKE sees the lights start to change colour as AUDIENCE members all start to turn to each other, hoping they are about to witness something extraordinary. There is a scurry of phones being whipped out from bags and held aloft.

MIKE turns his gaze back to

CAT (CONT'D)
Ten seconds.

LEE runs down the line of models throwing them words of encouragement, respect and adoration. He reaches the front of the line where GRACE stands, she looks at him. He rubs in some make up on her face and then gives her a wink.

SAM
We ready?

CAT
You happy?

LEE
(Smiling)
Never happy.

CAT
We have a green. Good luck
everybody!

The whole creative team huddle round the monitor to watch the show. The nervous energy is palpable. SARAH takes LEE's hand and squeezes it.

CAT stands next to the line of models with her clipboard and headpiece.

CAT (CONT'D)
And three, two, one. Go Grace.

GRACE takes a breath, lifts her head up and starts walking. We hear the music erupt.

We watch the monitors as GRACE makes her entrance onto the catwalk, which surprisingly she owns. The buzz in the room is electrifying. Murmurs ripple throughout the audience, audible even over the roar of the soundtrack.

Every three seconds we here CAT saying 'And Go' cueing the next model on their entrance. LEE checks over each model just before she makes her entrance as the rest of the team continue nervously watching the monitors as the models strut like towering giants, and pose at the end of the catwalk. Fierce, bold, powerful women. The flashes from the press are blinding. SARAH runs up to LEE trying to keep her composure -

SARAH
There's a problem.

LEE follows SARAH as they run to the end of the line of models, with MIKE in pursuit. We see two assistants already surrounding ALINKA in her black swan dress picking up feathers which are falling out.

LEE
Keep still, don't move.

LEE and SARAH are handed a needle and thread and start sewing the feathers back on vigorously. LEE is not going to let his last creation not go on stage. He will do anything to make this happen.

We see more models leaving the backstage area and appearing on the monitor.

CAT
Petra. Go.

The queue of models is getting shorter as LEE and SARAH sew faster than they ever have before. The music is ringing in LEE'S ears, it's so loud even backstage. His jaw clenches, his knuckles are red raw, his eyes start welling up with tears and his forehead is sweating. But he ignores all this and keeps fighting, keeps sewing. Under his breath he is encouraging himself.

LEE
Come on...come on...come on...

CAT
White swan in five seconds. Lee
you've got twenty.

The team are all looking nervous, unsure if the last creation is going to make the stage.

CAT (CONT'D)
And go.

The WHITE SWAN makes the most glorious entrance. She is mind-blowingly beautiful.

One of the most unique garments to ever grace a catwalk. We see on the monitor the audience who are left breathless as more and more flashes capture the image.

CAT (CONT'D)
Ten.

LEE
Come on.

LEE and SARAH are like machines now. MIKE stares at them like they're attractions in a Zoo.

CAT
Nine...Eight...Seven...

SARAH is drenched with sweat. The music is roaring out.

CAT (CONT'D)
Six.

We can see LEE's fingers are bleeding where he's pricked himself so many times.

LEE
Come on.

CAT
Five.

LEE
Come on.

LEE'S crying with exhaustion and keeps on sewing.

CAT
Four...Three.

The whole team look on anxiously, are they going to make this in time? SARAH stops exhausted.

CAT (CONT'D)
Two.

We go in close in on LEE the finishing line is within reach.

LEE
COME ON!

CAT
ONE.

The climatic last thread through the feather as LEE rips it with his teeth. He's done!

LEE

GO.

THE BLACK SWAN walks out onto the catwalk. LEE is finished. Everyone runs over to the monitor. MIKE stays with LEE but looks up from where he is following the BLACK SWAN as she makes her triumphant circuit. She hits her mark and poses, poses again, strikes a final stance and as she does so the music slowly fades into a heart beat. It grows louder and louder and louder until finally it flat lines. THE BLACK SWAN keeps on walking. The lights fade to black.

The team stand huddled together looking at the blacked out monitor. The flat line still plays for a few seconds and then cuts out entirely...SILENCE...The whole team nervously exchange glances. Was it good? A disaster? Did they love us or hate us?

A beat.

We begin to hear a faint sound of applause...the team begin to look relieved...the applause grows louder and louder until it's a roar.

CAT

Models go. Grace go. Go.

GRACE

What?

CAT

Fucking go.

The models start filing out to do their final circuit as a group. The whole team start hugging and celebrating with each other. Pure delight and relief - they have pulled it off.

We get quick glimpses of the audience on the monitors rapturously clapping as the models walk past them for a final time. More and more flashes from photographers and the public.

CAT (CONT'D)

Lee you're up.

LEE sits with his head in his hands, overwhelmed by the whole experience.

MIKE wraps his arm around him and helps LEE to his feet.

LEE'S a bit off balance but we follow him as he makes his way from BACKSTAGE out onto the CATWALK.

MIKE watches him on the monitor race round the catwalk, as if he were a shy school boy lost amongst all the applause. LEE spots JOYCE, JANET and ANNALISE on the front row, he runs over and quickly hugs them before exiting back into the backstage area behind the models who are all filing through.

Everyone is in a mass celebrating with each other but LEE continues walking.

MIKE sits down and watches him go, expecting LEE to turn back but he doesn't. Exhausted, MIKE continues watching as he becomes engulfed by a wave of people celebrating.

INT. LEE'S HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

For the first time we see LEE alone. He examines the wall of photographs. He scans them, pictures of him and JOYCE at the interview, himself working on the swan dresses, and then one of him looking pensive sat on the chair looking at the white wall all those months ago.

He removes all the photographs off the wall one by one, and then starts editing them, putting the pictures of himself and the process he likes up on the wall in chronological order. It's clear he is creating his own version of events, the way he wants to be seen, remembered.

He puts the last photograph up and takes a step back. He takes in the narrative before him. The rejected and more truthful pictures are on the floor under his feet.

INT. LEE'S HOTEL BALCONY - DUSK

LEE stands on the balcony, lights a cigarette looking out over Paris. The view is beautiful. We stay on LEE'S face. What's going on in his mind? What's he going to do next? After a while we hear MIKE'S voice -

MIKE (V.O.)
You won't ask me questions smarter
than my answers will you?

INT. MCQUEEN STUDIO - DAY

LEE sits next to the cameras smoking while interviewing MIKE who we can only hear - but perhaps can see his reflection a little in the lens.

LEE
Have you ever stolen anything?

MIKE (O.S.)
An opportunity.

LEE
Would you say you enjoy your work?

MIKE (O.S.)
Sometimes.

LEE
And if you had a legacy -

MIKE (O.S.)
That's a big if -

LEE
Big if. What would you want it to be?

MIKE (O.S.)
I don't expect to have one.

LEE
How many times have you been in love?

MIKE (O.S.)
One and a half.

LEE
Fuck off.

MIKE (O.S.)
It's true.

LEE
Okay then what's the biggest lie you've ever told?

MIKE (O.S.)
Pass. Last question.

LEE
Last question?

MIKE (O.S.)
Better make it count.

LEE knowingly smiles.

LEE
How would you define the truth?

We hold on LEE for a second before...

HARD CUT TO:

BLACK.

The camera pans across a wild, beautiful and remote landscape, The Isle of Skye. Coming to rest on a gravestone bearing the inscription 'Love looks not with the eyes but with the mind.' The following titles play over it.

TITLE: The Horn of Plenty is regarded as one of Lee's greatest works.

TITLE: The following year Joyce McQueen died peacefully in her sleep.

TITLE: Lee took his own life three days later.

TITLE: Alexander McQueen is regarded as one of the greatest artists to have graced the world of fashion.