

WEE JIMMY

by STEPHEN MITCHELL

Script Editor - Ann Turner
Producer - Franziska Wagenfeld
Director - Ian Dixon

1. EXT SMALL PRIMARY SCHOOL QUADRANGLE - DAY 1.

SFX : Fade in ambient soundscape of bagpipes as...

All the kids in the school stand gathered in 'Assembly', the rows and rows of faces forming a mosaic of ethnic diversity. From the youngest grades to the oldest, they are all smiling, laughing and nudging one another. Everyone is highly amused.

WEE JIMMY, a small and wiry eleven year old, stands alone upon a dais before his fellow pupils. He is not laughing. He clutches a certificate in his hands.

Nearby, the principal stands with DAVID, a blonde athletic twelve year old, who also holds a certificate. David grins at Jimmy and shakes his head ruefully.

Jimmy stares out with dismay.

SFX : The bagpipes are obliterated by the sound of a cricket bat striking a ball.

2. EXT SCHOOL OVAL - DAY 2.

The sound echoes across the oval as the cricket team, David amongst them, pack up their gear.

MARCELLA, a relaxed eleven year old Italian-Australian, is the only one left in the practice nets. ANGELO, a fellow Italian, charges in and bowls to her. He is a tall and solidly built twelve year old and he bowls fast. Marcella belts the ball back over his head with an elegant drive and stands grinning as he starts the long jog to retrieve it. The remaining bowlers drift off after the rest of the team.

MARCELLA (Calling after them)
Come on! One more, one more!

Behind the nets, Jimmy pauses with his school-bag slung over his shoulder and a book open in his hands. On the cover of the book is a picture of a man in a kilt and the title, "GEORDIE".

Jimmy watches Marcella through the wire mesh as she unbuckles the cricket pads from her bare legs.

She looks up and sees him. She returns his gaze challengingly while undoing the last of the buckles.

Caught out, Jimmy pretends to read his book and leaves.

3. INT KITCHEN, JIMMY'S HOUSE - DAY 3.

Jimmy's mum, JEAN, a slightly care-worn thirty-three year old, has the same sandy-blond hair as her son. With her reading-glasses threatening to fall off the end of her nose, she sits at the kitchen table before a laptop perched among piles of books and papers. With one hand she holds open a book entitled "THE POLITICS OF DISSENT".

Jimmy enters and sits unnoticed at the table with her, still holding his book. Preoccupied, he examines the crumpled pages, smoothing them out.

JIMMY

It was assembly day today.

JEAN

Mmmmm?

JIMMY

Me and David Lythe got called up in front of the school.

Jean looks up sharply at Jimmy's confessional tone.

JEAN (Scottish accent)

Why? What have you been up to?

JIMMY

For swimming. At the trials last week. Mrs. De Jong gave us certificates.

He fishes his certificate out of his bag and hands it over.

JEAN

For swimming? They had you up in front of the whole school?

Jimmy nods.

JEAN

That's my laddie!

JIMMY

(Meeting her eyes for the first time)
Everyone laughed at me.

Jean's pride is instantly punctured.

JEAN

What?

JIMMY

I said a Scottish word....and everyone laughed.

JEAN

Och, you're imagining it. What word?

JIMMY

(In a tiny voice)

'Wee'. I said I was 'wee'.

JEAN

There's nothing wrong with that!

JIMMY

They all thought it was pretty funny.
You know....wee. They called me Wee
Jimmy.

JEAN

Well, you are Wee Jimmy.

JIMMY

They mean 'piss' Jimmy.

JEAN

Hie! That's enough of that!

JIMMY

That's what they mean.

JEAN

It doesnae matter what they mean. It's a
good Scottish word. And Jimmy's a good
Scottish name. Everyone back home is called
Jimmy. Big or wee.

JIMMY

What about Billy Connelly?

JEAN

He's Jimmy too. It's like
(imitates Aussie accent)

'G'day mate!'

(Returns to Scottish)

They say, 'Hiya Jimmy! Watch yer heed,
Jimmy!'

Jimmy chuckles. Jean prods him playfully as she lays the accent on
super-thick. She chases him around the table.

JEAN

'Wheer ye off to the noo, Jimmy? Dinnae
faish yersel' about that, Jimmy!'

Jimmy laughs delightedly.

Suddenly, a man appears in the kitchen doorway: LASZLO, forty-
four, handsome but gone to seed. He fills the door with his large,
fleshy frame.

Jimmy's laughter dries up. Jean looks around. Laszlo is clutching a sagging tool-box under one arm. He indicates it with a little shrug.

LASZLO (Hungarian accent)

I find them.

JEAN (Smiling warmly)

You dinnae have to do it the now.

Laszlo shrugs again. He turns to Jimmy with a grave nod.

LASZLO

Jim.

Jimmy looks down at the floor.

JIMMY

Hello.

Jean, her smile failing, looks toward Laszlo over Jimmy. She gives a little shake of her head. Laszlo nods again and retreats.

Jimmy looks up at his mum. Jean returns his look carefully.

JEAN

He's missed you, you know.

Jimmy shifts uncomfortably.

JEAN

That wasnae much of a greeting after all this time.

JIMMY

Sorry.

She pokes him good-humouredly.

JEAN

'Sorry' is it? 'Sorry'?

Jean picks up the certificate.

JEAN (Reading)

"James Stevenson."

"Outstanding Achievement."

That's grand, son. Just grand.

(Looking searchingly at Jimmy)

Will you do something for me? Go and show Laszlo?

JIMMY

Is he staying?

JEAN
We're his family.

JIMMY
What about my dad?

JEAN (Sighing)
Believe me son, some things you're better
off without...Go on. He'd like to see it
as much as me.

Jimmy takes the certificate back with poor grace and turns
reluctantly to the door.

4. EXT JIMMY'S HOUSE - DAY 4.

Jimmy crosses the front porch, where his seven year old sister
ERSZI is playing. Like Laszlo, she has dark curly hair. She sings
happily to herself.

ERSZI
Oh you cannae shove your granny off a bus,
No, you cannae shove your Granny off a bus...

Jimmy approaches her from behind. He sees that she is playing with
a Babushka doll-within-a-doll-within-a-doll. She lines the dolls
in order of size in front of piles of carefully-stacked Hungarian
coins.

ERSZI
...You cannae shove your Granny,
Cos she's your mammy's mammy.
You cannae shove your Granny off a...(bus)

Erszi catches sight of Jimmy's reflection in a window and looks
around, breaking off her song.

ERSZI
Jimmy!

JIMMY
What's that?

ERSZI
Daddy brought us presents!

JIMMY
You can't spend that.

ERSZI
When I go to Hungary I can.

She looks curiously at the certificate in Jimmy's hand.

ERSZI

What did you get?

Jimmy looks out across the front garden to where Laszlo sits on a milk crate by the open engine housing of Jean's volkswagen.

JIMMY (Curiously)

Dunno...

He steps off the porch with a renewed sense of purpose. Behind him, Erszi resumes her song.

ERSZI (OS)

You can shove your other Granny off a bus...

Jimmy crosses the lawn to the

DRIVEWAY

Laszlo, a cigarette clamped in his lips, has his tools spread out before him on a large square of greasy canvas. His shirt is laid on the ground beside him. His white singlet is stretched across his ample and hairy torso. He rattles out a smoky cough.

From the porch, Erszi's singing drifts quietly across the yard.

ERSZI (OS)

...You can shove your other Granny,
Cos she's your daddy's mammy...etc.

Laszlo looks up as Jimmy's shadow falls on the tools.

LASZLO

Ah, Jim.

Laszlo reaches behind him. Jimmy's eyes follow Laszlo's hand expectantly as it gropes around in the tool box. Laszlo grunts. He emerges with a large monkey-wrench and drops it on the canvas. Jimmy sighs and edges in for a closer look.

JIMMY

I got a certificate today.

Laszlo wipes the grease from his hands and takes the certificate gingerly by the edges, holding it at arm's length, squinting in the sun.

LASZLO

What for you get this?

JIMMY

For swimming. It says right there....

Laszlo examines the certificate in all ways except by reading it.

LASZLO
Swimming. Hm. Very good.

Jimmy reaches out uncertainly to take the certificate back, but Laszlo, unnoticing, keeps hold of it.

LASZLO
We used to swim in the Baloton in the summer. You know how I learn? My father, he throw me in. I learn, quick smart!

Jimmy's eyes are still probing the open tool box...the promising bulk of Laszlo's folded shirt...but he can see nothing.

JIMMY
Is this in Hungary?

LASZLO
Yeah. Hungary. Of course.

Laszlo hands back the certificate and fishes in the pocket of his shorts. Jimmy, alert to every move, watches carefully but slumps in disappointment as Laszlo pulls out his cigarettes.

LASZLO (Remembering)
I swim there, many times.

JIMMY
Well, I've got to go inside.

Jimmy retreats. Laszlo emerges from the memory.

LASZLO (Calling after him)
Maybe we go swimming, you and me, eh?

5. INT JIMMY'S BEDROOM - DAY 5.

Jimmy slams his door and tosses the certificate disgustedly upon a desk cluttered with books, papers and a small computer, on top of which a "Highlander" action figure stands with claymore raised triumphantly.

He half turns away, then looks back, frowning. Reaching over, he nudges the certificate aside. Underneath is a gift-wrapped package.

Excitedly, Jimmy rips open the wrapping. Inside is a well-worn leather case, the size of his palm. He presses the catch to open it, revealing an old-fashioned travelling-clock. He stares at it in his hand, suspiciously.

He folds it out. On the back of the clock, he discovers two engraved inscriptions : the first in dull letters worn with age, *LASZLONAK EDESAPJATOL*, the second carved below, shiny and new, TO JIM FROM LASZLO.

Frowning, Jimmy rubs the old inscription with his thumb, as though trying to erase it.

Abruptly, as if suddenly unwilling to touch it any longer, he folds the clock back up and replaces it on the desk, crushing the wrapping paper back over it. He backs away and sits on his bed, regarding it with a troubled expression.

In the quiet of the room, the wrapping paper *CREAKS* as it slowly creeps back open, the clock-case nestling within.

6. INT LOUNGEROOM, JIMMY'S HOUSE - NIGHT 6.

Jimmy (changed into tracksuit pants and "silverchair" t-shirt) and Erszi sit on either side of Jean on the couch, the flickering light of the TV upon their faces.

(OS) The sound of "Hamish Macbeth" on the TV fills the room.

Laszlo enters and, after a brief hesitation, perches upon the arm of the couch next to Erszi.

Jimmy stretches his arm across his mum's shoulders. She lifts it off and places it firmly back in his lap. Neither takes their eyes off the TV.

7. INT KITCHEN, JIMMY'S HOUSE - DAY 7.

Outside, magpies are warbling a dawn chorus as Jimmy sits down to a bowl of cornflakes at the kitchen table, reading his book "GEORDIE" at the same time. From behind the front cover comes the sound of him crunching his cereal.

Suddenly, there is a long irregular *SNORE* (OS). The crunching of cereal halts abruptly.

Jimmy peers warily over the top of the book.

On a couch in the corner of the kitchen, Laszlo's bum pokes out from beneath a rumpled blanket, the crack between his buttocks visible between the inadequate waistband of his white underpants and his rucked-up singlet. A further snore drifts up. Laszlo shifts uncomfortably...and slips from the couch. He hits the floor heavily. Shocked awake, his eyes dart around in a wild daze before coming to rest on Jimmy. He focuses.

LASZLO

Ah...Jim.

Jimmy doesn't move. He holds the spoon poised before his mouth. In the silence, the dripping milk PLIPS loudly into the bowl.

JIMMY

Morning.

Laszlo, disturbed and bleary, hauls himself back onto the couch.

LASZLO

My god's sake, I dream....terrible dream.

Jimmy resumes eating apprehensively, staring at his book.

LASZLO

The AVH come at night...banging...banging...
I see my mother, with no clothes, kneeling in
the snow. And my father, he...I think he have
a clown face, but then I realise is blood...
he have blood all over...

Laszlo holds up a hand to his face as if to staunch a wound.

LASZLO

It was the last time I see him, Jim. The
last time...

Jimmy nods dumbly. He stands and makes a hurried escape.

Laszlo sighs, picks up Jimmy's bowl of uneaten cornflakes and scrapes them into the bin. He places the bowl carefully in the sink.

8. EXT SCHOOLYARD - DAY 8.

Lunchtime hubbub. Marcella sits with a group of girls on the grass, laughing and chatting.

Nearby, Jimmy sits with his book open before him but watching Marcella.

The bell rings for the end of lunch.

Suddenly, Jimmy's book is snatched from his hand. He whirls and discovers Angelo examining the cover critically, while two of his MATES snigger alongside.

JIMMY

That's not mine....!

Angelo pretends shock at the picture on the cover.

ANGELO

This guy's having a wee! Check it out! You can see his dick and everything! What kind of book is this?

Jimmy lunges for the book. Angelo deftly hoiks it to one of his mates.

First mate chucks it to second mate.

FIRST MATE

Weeee....

Jimmy pursues furiously. The three of them take off, 'weeing' for all they're worth and laughing like it's the funniest thing ever.

Jimmy abruptly gives up the chase. Angelo flings the book high into the air. It goes sailing over Jimmy's head. He turns to see the book land at Marcella's feet. She picks it up and hands it to him as she walks past, grinning.

Humiliated, he watches her walk away.

David passes nearby, carrying some stumps and a cricket bat.

JIMMY

Hey! Is there a game on after school?

DAVID (Sceptically)

You don't want to play, do you? Thought cricket was for pommy wankers?

9. EXT SCHOOL OVAL - DAY 9.

Jimmy, wearing cricket pads and gloves, stands at the crease. He is dusty, grazed and disshevelled. He nervously taps his bat, squinting in the fierce glare of the summer sun. At the bowler's end, David (the non-striker) holds up a gloved finger.

DAVID

One more for the over, mate. One more.

Angelo comes steaming in and bowls at breakneck pace. Jimmy takes some clumsy evasive action. The ball hits the bat by accident and is caught. GORDON-who-is-fat-and-therefore-the-umpire raises his finger. Jimmy looks at him uncomprehendingly. Angelo raises his middle finger with a broad grin.

ANGELO

That's a weeee bit out...

David joins Jimmy as he trudges off the pitch.

JIMMY

Here's your bat. Not that I used it anyway.

DAVID

Why don't you hang onto it for a while?
For practice. I've got another one.

JIMMY

Thanks.

Jimmy looks up from the bat to see Marcella watching from the boundary with the rest of the batting side. He looks down in embarrassment.

SFX : Fade in the bittersweet violins of Hungarian gypsy music.

Jimmy looks up again. Marcella is still watching. He smiles tentatively. She smiles back. He walks a little taller, keeping eye-contact with her the entire way off the field.

SFX : Music continues as...

10. INT HALL/LOUNGEROOM, JIMMY'S HOUSE - DAY 10.

...Jimmy stands in the hall, listening. Hesitantly, he peeps around the lounge room door. Seeing no-one, he creeps through. He passes the stereo, to which an older-style record-player is connected by trailing wires. The gypsy music plays scratchily and loud. All around are scattered LP's.

Jimmy sniffs the air. He follows a drift of steam to the kitchen door.

11. INT KITCHEN, JIMMY'S HOUSE - DAY 11.

Entering, Jimmy passes the stove and investigates three big pots of bubbling liquid sitting on the burners. They cast off volumes of steam, filling the air inside the kitchen with moist clouds.

Through the steam, he sees on the counter two partially dismembered chicken carcasses (unprocessed, with feet and a few clinging feathers). He approaches the counter and gazes upon the gory mess.

Suddenly, Jimmy becomes aware of Laszlo, on the other side of the counter, sitting at the far end of the kitchen table.

Laszlo doesn't notice Jimmy. Immobile, he stares into some inner space, his head in his hands. A cigarette has burnt down to his fingers, leaving a long precariously balanced tower of ash. His eyes are full of tears.

The violins, in their wild extremes, continue to play loudly from the other room as Jimmy stares with palpable unease at Laszlo over the dead chickens.

Laszlo sees Jimmy, and reacts with embarrassment. He stands hurriedly, wiping the tears from his eyes but pretending to wipe away perspiration. At the same time, he covers his embarrassment by looking for an ashtray.

LASZLO

My god's sake, is hot, uh? I sweat like a pig. How you do anything in this heat?

12. EXT PUBLIC SWIMMING POOL - DAY

12.

Jimmy hits the water at the deep end of the swimming pool with a sharply executed dive and arrows through the blue depths. He breaks surface, moving smoothly into an elegant freestyle. He drifts to a halt in the centre of the pool and rolls casually onto his back.

Suddenly, he stops in surprise, looking back the way he has come, an expression of mortified panic on his face.

Laszlo arrives at the pool-edge in bathers a couple of sizes too small for him, the tan lines on his upper body defining the shape of a singlet, and his socks and shoes on. He smokes a cigarette as he props a foot upon the raised lip of the pool-edge and surveys the water.

Jimmy watches with a pained expression as Laszlo is approached by a pool attendant who points to his cigarette and a sign which says NO SMOKING.

Slowly, Jimmy slips beneath the surface of the water.

13. EXT JIMMY'S HOUSE - DAY

13.

A gate in the rear fence connects the bare expanses of Jimmy's back yard with his grandparents' green and luxurious garden. At the gate, Jean stands talking to Jimmy's NANA, a jolly-looking woman in her late fifties.

JEAN

... cannae imagine what it was like under the communists - the bloody AVH breaking down your door! You know what they did to his father.

NANA (Scottish accent)

It's no like that now, surely.

JEAN

Of course not. That's just it. Everything's changed. I think he got a shock, going back, finding it so different...

Jimmy arrives in his bathers, carrying his book. Jean and Nana break off their conversation.

NANA

Hi there, swimming boy.

JIMMY

Can I have dinner at your house tonight?

JEAN

No you can't. Laszlo's cooking. There's enough in there to feed a bloody army.

JIMMY

But Mum...

JEAN

No, I said!

Jimmy holds his hands up in cheeky surrender as he passes through the gate and into his grandparents' leafy garden.

14. INT KITCHEN, GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

14.

The kitchen is awash with afternoon sunlight. GRANDDAD, stern-featured and in his early sixties, is wearing an apron dusted with flour as he pulls a tray of hot rolls from the oven.

Jimmy's AUNTY EILLEEN leans languorously in the door, a brown paper bag in her hands and a beach towel over her shoulder. In her late thirties, she is excessively tanned and has her sunglasses pushed back on top of her head.

AUNTY EILLEEN (Scottish accent)

...I mean, the man's lived here longer than any of us...I'm no sayin' it's not an awfy way to leave your home...

GRANDDAD (Scottish accent)

Aye.

AUNTY EILLEEN

...but this is a new country. Ye cannae spend your life greeting over the old one.

GRANDDAD

Aye.

AUNTY EILLEEN

It's the bairns I'm thinking about. I mean, what's she doing? The man's a bloody manic depressive -

She breaks off and turns, revealing Jimmy standing behind her, his eyes shining as he looks up at her admiringly.

AUNTY EILLEEN

Och, it's Wee Jimmy. Hi there, son.

JIMMY

Hello, Auntie Eilleen.

GRANDDAD

(Putting on an atrocious Australian accent)
G'doy, moit! What's the toim?

AUNTY EILLEEN (Waving the paper bag)

Anyway....thanks for my rolls, Dad. She makes a face Jimmy is not supposed to see, pulls her sunnies down and exits.

JIMMY

I don't talk like that.

GRANDDAD (Continuing the accent)

Down't ya? Would ya loik a poy?

Jimmy slumps down in a chair, dropping his book on the kitchen table.

JIMMY

Stop it.

GRANDDAD (Dropping the accent)

You're a bit grim today, Jimmy.

JIMMY

Can you teach me to play cricket?

GRANDDAD

What? You're no playing the English game now? You'll be wanting the words to God Save The Queen next!

JIMMY

No way!

GRANDDAD

Up the redcoats is it?

JIMMY

No!

GRANDAD

The bloody English, eh? They can take our country...

JIMMY

...but they can never take...

GRANDAD & JIMMY

(Together, fists punching the air)
...our freedom!

They grin at each other.

GRANDAD

How you liking the book?

JIMMY

Great. Finished.

GRANDAD

Are you hungry? Fancy some loop-the-loop?

JIMMY

Laszlo's cooking dinner.

GRANDAD (Mischievously)

They're no feeding you that foreign guff?
I'll give you a good plate of Scotch broth.

Jimmy's eyes sparkle with guilty pleasure at his grandfather's outrageousness.

JIMMY

It's not guff. It's nice...

GRANDAD

It's guff. Hungarian muck. Here, how about a bap? Fresh out the oven?

He hands Jimmy a steaming roll, winking conspiratorially. Jimmy sniggers, still enjoying the wickedness of the joke. Jimmy takes a bite of the roll, then pauses meaningfully.

JIMMY

Grandad...my dad was Scottish, wasn't he?

GRANDAD

You'd have to ask your mum.

JIMMY

She never says anything.

GRANDAD

What's it matter anyway?

JIMMY

What you are, isn't where you're born, is it? It's what your parents are.

Grandad pauses silently, dusting his rolls with flour.

JIMMY

So if my dad's Scottish, that makes me...

GRANDAD

What about Laszlo?

Jimmy glares at him.

GRANDAD

...Right enough.

JIMMY

My dad is Scottish, isn't he?

Grandad gazes at Jimmy for a moment, then sits down at the table with him. He spits on his thumb.

GRANDAD

Don't let your Mum know I was telling you anything.

Jimmy spits solemnly on his thumb.

JIMMY

I won't.

They press them together and twist. The bargain is complete.

GRANDAD (Slowly)

Well, your dad came frae down Leith, which was where all the dockers were when I was your age.

(Catching himself)

No that he's a docker, but even these days, Leithers are a breed apart...

15. INT KITCHEN, JIMMY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

15.

As evening falls outside, Laszlo, Jean and Erszi tuck into a big spread of food arrayed across the kitchen table. The room is warmly lit, filled with their clatter and chatter. Laszlo and Jean are drinking dark red wine from tumblers.

Laszlo is teaching Erszi Hungarian.

LASZLO

Edes anyam nagyon szép.
[My mother is very beautiful.]

ERSZI

Edes anyam nagyon szép.

Laszlo roars with laughter.

JEAN

You're no teaching her to swear?

Jimmy enters and stops in surprise.

JIMMY

You started without me!

JEAN

I thought you might be eating over there.

JIMMY

You knew I wasn't! You said to come home!

He goes to storm out. Jean gets up.

JEAN

(Attempting a bantering tone)
And when was the last time you paid attention
to that? Come on. Come and have some tea.

Jimmy pulls away.

JIMMY

I don't want any!

16. INT JIMMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 16.

In the light of a torch beam, Jimmy, wearing pyjama bottoms, is engaged in a silent stage-fight with his pillow. The light projects a giant shadow-play on the tartan wallpaper behind him.

Suddenly, he stops, listening. From elsewhere in the house comes the sound of the Hungarian gypsy music.

17. INT HALL/LOUNGE-ROOM, JIMMY'S HOUSE - NIGHT 17.

Jimmy hides outside the loungeroom door and peeks in.

Laszlo sets a half-empty wine-glass on the coffee table with the exaggerated care of the inebriated. Hungarian records are spread on the carpet around him.

Jean enters by another door, carrying a wine bottle. She heads for the stereo.

JEAN

You'll wake the bairns!

Jean goes for the volume control but Laszlo intercepts her. She allows herself to be drawn into a clumsy waltz. They do a circuit of the coffee-table before Jean pokes him in the ribs with the bottle.

JEAN

Are you wanting me to open this or not?

He reaches around her waist to fondle her.

LASZLO

I want your fat bottom!

Outside the door, Jimmy turns away, shocked. He looks back as Jean fends Laszlo off, laughing.

JEAN

Get out of it, you fool.

She steps back to the stereo and lifts the needle off the record. The music halts.

JEAN

Dinnae mistake me, Laszlo. You're no in the clear yet.

Laszlo returns to the coffee table and his glass of wine. He lights a cigarette and shrugs.

LASZLO

I know this. What you want from me? I am sorry. I have said it.

JEAN

Aye. You've said it.

LASZLO

I not go again. I am finished with it. There, I am a stranger. Here, I am a wog.

(He shrugs)

All I have is you, girl. My Scottish girl.

JEAN

And Erszi. And Jimmy.

Laszlo nods thoughtfully. Suddenly, he stands up.

LASZLO
I talk to the boy.

JEAN
What, now?

LASZLO
It is hardest for him I think. I talk to him.

At the door, Jimmy retreats in consternation.

18. INT JIMMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

18.

Jimmy and Laszlo sit on the bed side by side. Jimmy, with folded arms, is fiercely uncommunicative. Laszlo somewhat boozy, still holds a glass of wine. He starts to speak, stops, considers, and starts again.

LASZLO
You know Jim, in my country....

Laszlo makes a gesture of his heart gushing outward.

LASZLO
Your mother, she not like this. The Scottish
is not like this.

Jimmy looks at him suspiciously.

LASZLO
I think you are little bit Scottish.

Jimmy absorbs this unexpected compliment.

LASZLO
I love your mother, Jim. In Budapest, I think
all the time of her.

Jimmy squirms. Laszlo, just drunk enough to be excessively demonstrative, flings an arm around his shoulders.

LASZLO
But then I think, Jim is there. She is alright.
He look after little Erszi, help his mother...

Laszlo pauses, staring. Jimmy hunches within the half-embrace, profoundly uncomfortable. He follows Laszlo's look and sees the travelling-clock still in its wrapping upon the desk.

LASZLO (Nodding to the clock)
You no like it?

Jimmy shrugs, then nods reluctantly.

LASZLO

My father give me this. I give it to you now.

He waits for a response, but gets none.

LASZLO

I am not your father, Jim. I know this. But you are like a son to me. I swear it.

Jimmy's eyes are welded to the floor. Laszlo turns to face Jimmy square-on.

LASZLO

My god's sake! Why you not say something? You always like a...a mouse! *Az isten bassza meg!* Speak!

JIMMY (Looking up coldly)

...not 'my god's sake'. You don't say 'my god's sake'. You say 'my god' or 'for god's sake'!

The two of them lock eyes. Laszlo stands up. For a moment, he regards Jimmy from an unsteady height.

LASZLO

I never hit you, Jim. Not once. But don't let me hear you shout at your mother again.

He turns and leaves. Jimmy lashes out at the clock on the desk. It spins across the room and hits the cricket bat leaning against the wall. The alarm begins RINGING furiously.

19. EXT SCHOOLYARD - DAY

19.

The RINGING merges with loud GRUNGE playing in Jimmy's walkman headphones as he sits on a bench, holding the cricket bat, staring out across the schoolyard. Absentmindedly, in time to the rhythm of the music, he hits the bat against the edge of the bitumen.

His eyes scan across the yard, coming to rest on Marcella, who is standing with a group of Italian kids. He looks away, troubled, and spies David and Angelo drifting across the playground, assembling players for a cricket match.

Jimmy looks down at the notched and splintered bat in his hands. His expression conveys the sudden fearful realisation of the damage he has done.

He looks up to see David and Angelo approaching and hurriedly hides the bat under the seat.

ANGELO (Grinning)
Aw, not 'Weewee', Davo. We want someone
who can play.

JIMMY
Up yours!

ANGELO
(Highly amused, flourishing a cricket ball)
This'll be up yours, mate. Right up.

Jimmy stands angrily but Angelo couldn't care less. David diverts
Jimmy conspiratorially.

DAVID
Come on. You been practising, right?

JIMMY
For cricket? Nuh.

ANGELO
Chickening out, 'Weewee'?

Jimmy replaces his headphones over his ears and turns away.

JIMMY (Muttering)
Wog.

Angelo surges towards him and spins him back around. Jimmy is
taken by surprise.

ANGELO
What was that?

Jimmy refuses to meet his eyes. Angelo circles him menacingly.

ANGELO
Did you just say something?

He pushes his cricket ball in Jimmy's face.

A crowd assembles, buzzing with excitement.

Angelo shoves Jimmy, who staggers and falls. Instantly, Angelo is
on him, cramming the ball against his mouth.

ANGELO
Come on! Come on!

Jimmy thrashes beneath Angelo's weight.

Suddenly, Jimmy's arm, scrabbling for purchase on the ground,
emerges from beneath the bench with the cricket bat clutched in
his hand. He delivers Angelo a sickening blow.

The onlookers gasp and fall silent. Winded, Angelo gasps hideously. Trembling, Jimmy stands over him with the bat raised.

JIMMY

You're a wog! You're a fucking wog! Got it?

He straightens and realises that Marcella is standing right in front of him. She looks at him coldly and turns away.

Jimmy yanks the earphones back onto his head. He switches up the volume. He puts his palms over the earphones, jamming them into his ears. Screwing his face up, he opens his mouth and lets loose a yell of frustration and rage.

20. EXT SCHOOL OVAL - DAY 20.

Jimmy loiters around the empty cricket nets, pacing remorsefully back and forth.

From the bus stop by the oval, Marcella watches him as he slumps with his head in his hands. She looks thoughtful.

Jimmy gives up and leaves.

21. INT LOUNGEROOM, GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE - NIGHT 21.

The room is full of Jimmy's RELATIVES crowded around the TV set, which is blaring out the bagpipes of the Edinburgh Military Tattoo. The whiskey is flowing. Conversations are an uninterrupted wall of Scottish accents.

Jimmy's uncle (BIG JIMMY) is wearing a kilt and trying to dance with Erszi, who keeps trying to look up his kilt.

AUNTY EILLEEN

I hope you've got your knickers on, you big fool. You'll gie the wee one the fright of her life.

BIG JIMMY

Ah, hold yer wisht woman! What d'you think I am?

Jimmy stands in the doorway, staring bleakly at the goings-on.

BIG JIMMY

Wee Jimmy! Here's my man! Gie it a twirl son!

He links arms with Jimmy and spins him wildly round.

GRANDDAD

Watch out, ye bloody bamstick!

Jimmy is just about lifted bodily from the ground by his uncle's boisterous (and potentially injurious) cavorting. As he spins past his variously clapping, grimacing, laughing relatives, a grin slowly spreads across his face until he is participating wilfully, buoyed up by the celebratory atmosphere of the room.

NANA (Waving Big Jimmy away)
Get oot the way Jimmy! We cannae see!

JEAN
Och, it makes me homesick. I cannae bear it.

BIG JIMMY (Still dancing)
Of course, that's no Edinburgh you're lookin' at. It's all done frae a set in Hollywood these days.

There is a chorus of disavowal.

Jimmy sees his mum look towards the door. He follows her gaze to see Laszlo standing shyly at the threshold. He stops dancing.

One by one, the relatives break off their conversations and glance round at the door. Jimmy sits down. In the ensuing quiet, broken only by the sound of the television, Jean stands and draws Laszlo into the room.

JEAN
Laszlo...you know everyone.

Laszlo nods. There is a collective murmur of greeting.

JEAN (Motioning Jimmy to squeeze up)
Make room for Laszlo, Jimmy.

Jimmy, with a look at Laszlo, vacates the seat entirely and takes a spot on the floor by his grandad's feet. Laszlo is duly deposited and given a whiskey.

In the background, Jimmy sees his AUNTY MARY whisper to UNCLE PETER.

BIG JIMMY
Havenae seen you in a while, Laszlo.

Eilleen darts a warning glance at Big Jimmy.

JIMMY
He went back home.

BIG JIMMY
Oh aye? Where's that again?

LASZLO

Hungary.

BIG JIMMY

Aye? Me too, I'm famished!

He bursts into uproarious laughter at his own joke. Jimmy sniggers along.

AUNTY EILLEEN

Dae us all a favour, Jimmy. Hurry up
and pass oot.

Big Jimmy stares at Laszlo, daring him to take offence. Behind him, Eileen snares the whiskey-bottle and hides it behind a sideboard. Wee Jimmy watches her.

The TV blares on. Erszi climbs sleepily into Laszlo's lap. Jimmy regards him blackly from the other side of the room. Laszlo catches his eye. They both look away simultaneously.

Big Jimmy slugs down his whiskey and looks around for the bottle.

BIG JIMMY

Hie, Dad! What've ye done with that Glenlivet,
ye cheap old bugger?

Jimmy looks to the bottle's hiding place...and back to his uncle. He twists the fabric of the couch between his fingers as he stares, considering. Abruptly, he releases the fabric and slips his hand down behind the sideboard.

He looks up to find Laszlo watching him. For a moment, he stares back, then pulls out the bottle and hands it to Big Jimmy.

BIG JIMMY

Ah yer a prince, laddie! A prince!

Big Jimmy pours himself a big shot and starts offering the bottle around. Nobody wants any. Eileen glares meaningfully at him. He ignores her and descends upon Laszlo.

BIG JIMMY

Laszlo! Put some hair on your chest!

Laszlo declines but Big Jimmy slops some in his glass anyway, splashing it all over the place. Eileen grabs the bottle off him and surreptitiously passes the bottle to Jean, who quietly takes it out of the room.

Eileen firmly sits Big Jimmy down. Laszlo puts aside the glass of whiskey. He looks at Big Jimmy slumped on the floor with Eileen whispering fiercely in his ear. The relatives stare furiously at the TV, all desperately pretending nothing is amiss.

Laszlo eases himself out from under the sleeping Erszi and stands. He turns his eyes to Jimmy. Jimmy looks down at the floor.

Laszlo gently pushes the hair off Erszi's face and leaves the room without a word. Jimmy releases a sigh of pent up tension.

NANA

What's the matter?

Jean re-enters and discovers Laszlo has gone.

JIMMY (With a secret smile)

Nothing.

Jean goes to follow Laszlo out the door, but Jimmy leaps up and intercepts her.

JIMMY

Mum, quick! The Lone Piper...you'll miss it!

Jimmy draws her back to a chair, motioning everyone to be quiet.

JIMMY

Quiet! Everyone quiet! The Lone Piper!

Grandad chuckles.

GRANDAD (In his mock Aussie accent)

The 'Lown Poiper'?

JIMMY

The Lone Piper! It's the best bit!

GRANDAD (Playing to the crowd)

I don't know that there is a 'Lown Poiper'.

General chuckles of amusement. Jimmy suddenly realises he's being made fun of.

JIMMY

I didn't say it like that.

UNCLE PETER

Have we got an Aussie cuckoo in the nest?

AUNTY MARY

Wee Jimmy's a wee Aussie.

General laughter. Jimmy stands indignantly.

JIMMY

I'm not an Aussie! I'm Scottish!

JEAN

Course you are son. You're a Scottish Australian.

JIMMY (Blocking the TV)

No....My dad's Scottish, so I'm Scottish.

Embarrassed shufflings amongst the relatives. Grandad looks up at Jimmy in surprise.

JEAN (Gently)

Your dad's no Scottish...Where'd you get that idea?

Jimmy turns to his grandad, shock and disbelief upon his face.

JEAN (Suspiciously)

What have you been saying, Dad?

Grandad doesn't know what to say. Jimmy pins him with his eyes, entreating him for support.

JIMMY

Grandad?

AUNTY EILLEEN (Eyes on the TV)

Shh. Here he is! Out the way, Jimmy.

BIG JIMMY

Aye, move it, Bruce.

Grandad looks away. Jimmy stares at him, stricken.

On the TV, the Lone Piper steps up to the battlements of Edinburgh castle, and plays a slow stirring lament. Jean plucks Jimmy out from the front of the screen.

JEAN

Come on son. What a fuss.

He shrugs her off, still staring at his Grandad, who refuses to meet his eyes.

He looks around at his family as they sit in silence, resolutely ignoring him. He turns and bolts from the room.

22. EXT GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE - NIGHT

22.

Jimmy stumbles from the house. Numbly, he sits upon a bench in a lush corner of the garden.

SFX : From inside the house, the Lone Piper's lament drifts through the night air.

Jimmy's face cracks. Tears roll down his cheeks. On the wooden slats of the bench, his small hand clenches into a fist, trembling in time to his sobs.

A shadow crosses the slats. The bench creaks beneath a new weight. Laszlo's big brown hand reaches out to cover Jimmy's fist. Jimmy tugs it away, but Laszlo takes hold of it again. This time it stays, and slowly, the fist uncurls until it grasps the bigger hand in a shaking grip.

SFX : The bagpipes swell and fill the air, drifting up into the night, sounding strangely like the mournful violins of the gypsy music.

Beneath the star-strewn sky, Laszlo puts his arm around Jimmy's shoulders. Jimmy leans into him.

Music continues as...

23. EXT SCHOOL OVAL - DAY

23.

...Jimmy stands at the edge of the oval with schoolbag and cricket bat. On the pitch, a cricket match comes to a conclusion as Marcella takes the final catch.

Jimmy approaches David, who is packing up gear at the nets. David sees him coming and stands warily.

JIMMY (Holding out the bat)

Thanks for the loan.

He looks down at the bat. David follows his gaze. The bat is a mess: notched, splintered, the grip trailing off the handle. David gives Jimmy a rather stunned look.

JIMMY

I'll...I'll get you a new one.

DAVID (Nodding slowly)

No worries....Why don't you keep this one?

(Grins)

For practice.

Jimmy grins back.

The rest of the cricketers start filtering past. David stiffens apprehensively. Jimmy, following his look, sees Angelo approaching.

DAVID

Jimmy...

Angelo and Jimmy lock eyes as the distance between them shrinks. Finally, as Angelo comes abreast, Jimmy nods courteously. Angelo pauses...then nods back. Marcella watches in the background. David breathes a sigh of relief.

DAVID

Catch you later, eh Jimmy?

JIMMY

Yeah.

David leaves, but Jimmy's attention is on Marcella as she retrieves her schoolbag from the nets and heads towards the road.

24. EXT ROAD BY THE SCHOOL - DAY

24.

Jimmy catches up to Marcella and falls into step beside her. She gives him a quick look. He gives her a quick look. Their eyes don't meet.

MARCELLA

So how's the batting practice, Skip?

JIMMY

Shithouse.

MARCELLA

You're telling me!...I hope you can bowl.

JIMMY (Laughs)

No.

Marcella laughs too. She gives him a good-natured shove. Jimmy shoves her back. They laugh together.

A Ford Falcon pulls up in the street beside them. The passenger door swings open. Marcella's FATHER, leaning over from the driver's side, summons her peremptorally in Italian. She gets in.

Jimmy sighs, gives her a defeated wave and plods on up the street.

In the car, Marcella has a brief exchange with her father. He regards Jimmy for a moment, then noses the car up alongside him, keeping pace. Marcella leans out the window.

MARCELLA

What're you doing this weekend?

JIMMY (Brightening)

What are you doing?

MARCELLA

I'm going....(grins)...swimming.

Jimmy breaks into a big smile and nods enthusiastically. Marcella waves out the window as her father accelerates and the car disappears up the road. Jimmy watches it go, then breaks into a run, still smiling his head off.

THE END