

SCAN

Written by

Anthony Cawood

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

RUTH, 30s, red faced and uncomfortable, lies back on the bed and pulls her maternity top up and her maternity trousers down.

RUTH
Enough?

The NURSE, 50s, cheerful and relaxed, nods.

NURSE
Yes, that's great.

She squeezes some gel onto the Ruth's stomach, pauses.

NURSE
No one joining you?

Ruth shakes her head, unhappy.

She starts to scan.

The Nurse points to the screen.

NURSE
Well, there's still just one... did you want to know the sex.

RUTH
No, we're going for a surprise.

NURSE
Good, better I always think.

She moves the scanner round some more.

NURSE
It's very mobile, healthy...

She presses some buttons on the screen, making measurements.

NURSE
And all developing as it should.

Ruth sighs.

NURSE
You okay?

RUTH
I wish Gavin could see it.

NURSE
Well, you get your scan picture, in
colour too these days.

Ruth shakes her head.

RUTH
He's blind.

NURSE
Oh... well...

Her eyes drop to the weird contraption below the scanner.

NURSE
Maybe I can help.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ruth sits on the edge of the raised legged sofa, a package in
her hands, waiting.

The front door opens, shuts, keys jangle as they get tossed
onto wood.

RUTH
In here.

GAVIN, 30s, crumpled face and business suit to match, trudges
into the room.

GAVIN
What a day, bloody awful.

Ruth deflates, sinks back into the sofa.

RUTH
Oh, why?

GAVIN
That idiot Tony --

He looks towards Ruth's voice.

GAVIN
God, I'm the idiot... how did the
scan go?

Ruth stands.

RUTH
Brilliant, everything is great with
the baby.

GAVIN
Sorry, I should have been there...
but...

RUTH
I know, busy and it's not like you
can see anything.

She laughs.

GAVIN
All for humour as a tonic, but
being blind isn't often funny.

RUTH
I know, but you can see it, kind
of... hold your hands out.

GAVIN
What?

RUTH
Now, please.

Gavin holds his hands out.

Ruth carefully unwraps the package.

She places a small naked doll, foetal position, into his
hands.

GAVIN
It isn't?

RUTH
It is.

Gavin runs his fingers gently over the surface of his unborn
child.

GAVIN
How?

RUTH
New service, they hook the scanner
up to a 3D printer.

GAVIN
It's amazing.

Tears stream down his face.

GAVIN
Truly amazing.

Tears trickle down Ruth's face too.

RUTH
It's got your face.

GAVIN
Maybe, but it's got your nose.

Gavin feels sensitively all around the model.

GAVIN
Wow, is that a leg... or...

RUTH
(laughing)
No, definitely a leg.

He sits by her, cradling the baby.

GAVIN
Thank you, it's perfect.

She pulls him close, hugs him tenderly.

RUTH
Not long before the real thing.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Gavin sits in the dark on the edge of the bath.

He wrings his hand together, dry heaves.

He gets to his feet, moves to the toilet.

Dry heaves again.

He settles, composes.

He goes back to the edge of the bath.

His hand flies to his mouth, he stumble-jumps to the toilet bowl and vomits.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ruth sits up in bed.

Light escapes from under the door opposite her.

Sounds of Gavin dry heaving come from the bathroom.

Silence...

Solids splash into liquids.

She wrinkles her nose.

The sounds calm down, Gavin sets to brushing his teeth.

He comes into the room.

GAVIN

Sorry, didn't mean to wake you.

He climbs into bed.

She cradles him.

RUTH

Same again?

He tenses.

RUTH

It's okay, I understand.

GAVIN

I don't.

RUTH

Your worried's all --

GAVIN

Of becoming a father, to the point
of throwing up every night?

She holds him tight.

RUTH

It'll be fine.

GAVIN

No, not in my dreams...

Gavin sobs gently.

RUTH

But it is in mine.

She pulls him closer.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Gavin sits on the sofa, reading a braille novel.

Ruth enters, fiddling with an earring, she's dressed to impress.

RUTH
Sure you don't mind?

GAVIN
Course not, baby shower is
tradition.

RUTH
But overnight --

GAVIN
(irritated)
I'm not helpless.

RUTH
No, I know, but the vomiting...

GAVIN
(softening)
Don't worry, I promise to brush my
teeth.

He smiles.

RUTH
Okay, okay... I'm off then.

She leans in and plants a kiss on his lips.

GAVIN
Have fun.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gavin sits at the small dining table.

The small plastic child in front of him.

GAVIN
So, just you and me kid... fancy a
drink?

Silence.

GAVIN
Very wise.

He gets up and goes to a cupboard, rummages round and retrieves a mostly full bottle of Whiskey.

He pours himself a couple of fingers and sits back down.

The first swig results in a grimace.

GAVIN
Needs ice.

He doesn't move, takes another gulp, grimace less pronounced.

GAVIN
Maybe not.

He strokes his model child, sighs.

GAVIN
It's not you kid, it's me.

He pours himself another couple of fingers, swirls a digit in the glass.

GAVIN
Why not.

He tops it up to the rim.

GAVIN
Don't tell Mom.

Two large gulps and it's half gone, no grimace at all.

Gavin visibly relaxes, shoulders dropping, posture relaxed.

GAVIN
I was thinking, Bobby... what do you think?

BEAT

GAVIN
Exactly, works if you are a boy or girl, Bobby it is.

He swirls the amber liquid.

GAVIN
How will I feed you, clean you...

He takes another slug.

GAVIN
In my dream, always the same, I
drop you.

He dangles Bobby over the side of the table.

Puts him carefully back down.

GAVIN
(slurred)
I hope you're a boy...

His eyelids flutter closed, he sinks further into his seat.

The whiskey glass starts to slowly list, fingers losing grip.

He starts awake just before it drops entirely.

GAVIN
Almost.

He downs the last of it and puts the glass to the side.

BEAT.

SNORING, gently, volume climbs and soon fills the kitchen.

LATER

RING, RING, RING.

Gavin wakes, looks bewildered.

Fumbles in his pocket for his phone.

GAVIN
(groggy)
Hello.

RUTH (V.O.)
Hi baby, you okay?

Gavin pulls himself upright.

GAVIN
Me, yeah... you caught me napping.

RUTH (V.O.)
(laughing)
Explains why you're ignoring my
texts.

GAVIN

Really? Sorry... dog tired for some reason.

Gavin rolls the empty glass round in his hand.

RUTH (V.O.)

Long as you're okay.

GAVIN

Never better... how's the shower?

He moves to the sink and puts the glass down.

RUTH (V.O.)

Great, you know what Beth's like, everything's themed, pastel blue and pastel pink.

GAVIN

Sounds lovely.

RUTH (V.O.)

(whispering)

She means well... but it's a bit overwhelming.

GAVIN

Well, she's your sister.

RUTH (V.O.)

True... what?

GAVIN

What, what?

RUTH (V.O.)

Sorry, Beth's calling me for more fun and gapes.

GAVIN

Gapes?

RUTH (V.O.)

Exactly... gotta go. Sure you're okay?

GAVIN

I'm fine, I'm gonna get some proper sleep.

RUTH (V.O.)

Okay love, see you tomorrow, love you.

GAVIN
Love you too.

He puts the phone down on the table and yawns.

Eyes flutter shut again.

Open quickly, scan the table.

Bobby isn't on the table.

GAVIN
What the...

He tentatively slides his hands over the entire surface of the table.

No doll, just his phone.

He drops to his knees and repeats the process on the kitchen floor.

Still no sign of the child.

GAVIN
Really?

A SCUTTling noise comes from behind him.

He spins unsteadily on his heels, head cocked.

The noise comes again, to his left.

GAVIN
Someone there?

No answer.

He moves to where the last sound came from, the cupboards nearest the sink.

He feels along the surfaces.

Drops to his haunches and feels around on the floor.

The SCUTTling comes again, in the hallway now.

Gavin follows after it.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

SCUTTling over the wooden floor, drops to a muffled whisper.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Gavin tentatively enters the room.

GAVIN
Hello...

Something pink brushes past his leg, he yelps in surprise.

GAVIN
Shit.

An amused GURGLE floats from behind the sofa.

GAVIN
Bobby?

He rounds the sofa, now at the back. A flash of pink retreats underneath.

The GURGLE comes again.

GAVIN
Impossible.

Impossible, or not, he reaches under the sofa.

He pulls his hand back sharply.

GAVIN
Fuck, what is this?

A babies's LAUGH accompanies his question.

He moves round to the front of the sofa again, kneels and reaches under.

His face lights up.

GAVIN
Gotcha...

He pulls back, standing quickly... too quickly.

He overbalances, nosedives into the sofa, catching his head on the arm as he falls.

WHUMPH, the wind is knocked from him, he's out cold.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Gavin snores loudly, asleep on the sofa.

In the crook of his arm, Bobby nestles, static and plastic.

A key rattles in the door.

Steps echo in the hallway.

Ruth enters the room. Gavin murmurs something that could be Bobby, but doesn't wake.

She smiles at what's in front of her.

RUTH

Bless.

She leaves the room, unbuttoning her coat as she goes.

Bobby twists a little, settles back down.

GAVIN

(whispers)

It's okay Bobby, Daddy's got ya...
had the weirdest dream...

FADE OUT.