

THE SITCOM SHOW

by Emily Pope

SCANDAL

HOW EXPENSIVE
ACTUALLY IS
IT TO UPGRADE
??

NEW DRAMA

DO YOU? DO
YOU? IT'S
LIKE HERDING
FUCKING CATS

PLEASE NOTE - THINGS HAVE TO GET WORSE BEFORE THEY GET BETTER

SHOP- LIFTING

EPISODE 2

*Starring Emily Pope with stolen footage of
Jo, Gemma, Ruth and Katie*

BIG NEW DRAMAS

OH GOD MY LIFE IS
A MESS THERE'S
BLOOD ON THE BED

EXCLUSIVE

I'M COMING FOR
YOU YOU CONSER-
VATIVE BITCH

PLUS!

YEAH, I AM SURE
YOU DO FEEL LIKE
YOU ARE KILLING IT

WARNING: THIS IS WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO COMEDY IF WE KEEP GOING THE WAY THAT WE ARE

Opening Credits

EPISODE 2 - SHOPLIFTING
Starring Emily Pope
with stolen footage of Jo,
Gemma, Ruth and Katie
PLEASE NOTE - THINGS
HAVE TO GET WORSE
BEFORE THEY GET BETTER

Overture

OH, AND I'M FEELING
DIRECTIONLESS YES, BUT
THAT'S TO BE EXPECTED
AND I KNOW THAT BEST,
IN CREEPS THE MORNING
AND ANOTHER DAY'S
LOST, YOU'VE JUST
WRITTEN WONDERING
AND I REPLY FAST.³

CLIP OF JO AND THE
CHEESE THEFT

So - that was Jo. She got in from work like that most nights during our room share. We shared a room for a month - this was - less than ideal. I kept finding things like broken glass and - personal fave - earplugs in the bed, or cocaine, like some white underground vision. She's gone travelling now so I am revelling in undisturbed late-night art making. Anyway - yesterday at work, I also had - quite a bad day. I was late - because - I didn't really want to go in. I was running through South Bermondsey and I felt this slightly warm spray on my cheek - just here - it was a circular spray - small radius - I looked up - and a pigeon was flying away, and I thought - that bird just went for a wee on my face. I was like - don't touch the wee - don't touch the wee just leave it - hope my pores don't absorb it - and quickly ran into work so I could wash my face. Got to work. No running water because we are refurbishing a studio. So - I sat down, and I thought about what to do. I decided not to tell anyone or touch it so as not to spread germs - and I became very embarrassed that I'd left the pigeon wee on my face for that long and the longer I didn't mention it I thought - the weirder it would be if did mention it. I eventually ended up scrubbing it off with a paper towel about four hours later in a cafe toilet and doing this loud confession where I told everyone the pigeon story - and everyone looked at me like I made up the pigeon story just to have something

to say. And then I said well - this is a metaphor for my week really isn't it, and Katie was like, no, babe, it's not a metaphor it is an analogy.

3 x CLIPS OF KATIE AT
WORK

That's Katie. Like I said - in the press release for this - after making the first episode, I realised that coming down off ketamine lying on top of a butterfly duvet from Primark, and then taking a photograph of the results, really does smack of a life lived under the radar. I am living my own groundbreaking and ever-so-underground, yet QUITE high street in its aesthetic web series. It isn't even a web series because I'm making it for a PROJECT SPACE SCREENING, and it really is worse than anything BBC Three comes up with. *Potentially* it is more like Sugar Rush circa 2005 which was staged after Channel Four and Julie Burchill were groundbreaking, and before they were gross. I'm concerned this sounds a bit too KNOWING, if you know what I mean, but - whatever. I've been thinking a lot about CORNER SHOP COURAGE - another possible title for this episode that I got rid of. If you can't even motivate yourself to go to the corner shop what even is your life and I've done MORE than go to the corner shop - I'm sitting here making endless observations scanning across the inboxes or Across the *Great Divide*, which is a Nanci Griffith song. The song playing in Bermondsey yesterday (in a coffee shop originally named *FUCK COFFEE*) was unfortunately *Babies* by Pulp - I wanna take you home, I want to give you children DO YOU. GREAT. At the moment everywhere is playing Pulp - it is important for ATTITUDE against the ever-present right wing because the attitude of the 90's really, really produced an excellent present reality. PERSONALLY I prefer: I spy a boy I spy a girl I spy the worst place in the world or I'll be around when he's not in town - I'll show you how you're doing it wrong watch your conscience disappear now, baby - Common people OR COME ON PEOPLE. I've lost an important part of my brain, somewhere, in a field... I want to call my mother and say - mother - I'm never coming home again OR JUST Hang o-o-on, hang on, to your IQ/cue a sideways glance because there's a disconnect between the images you are creating, the pastiche you are putting together and your urge to

educate people about the absence of class from discussions which are intersectional, because arguably if you get to the point where you are banging on about intersectionality on a Friday night you are probably having a confusing relationship with class identity yourself AND YOU END UP QUOTING SONG LYRICS FROM BANDS EVERYBODY KNOWS AND BEING FLIPPANT to distract yourself. The idea, I really hope, is to end up with a legitimate sitcom by the end of the series, just in case anyone was worried that there wasn't actually an AIM.

CLIP OF JO AND
THE BUS BELL

CLIP OF ME - PISSED

Before Jo left for Columbia, I went home for Christmas, to dry out - only joking - anyway. This train journey to Plymouth is a yearly feature. Stand for four hours in standard class and tweet about another passenger on the train who amuses you because of their idiosyncratic behaviours. I look at the odd formation of the plastic handle on the train seat and think oh god that could really be a funny take on a Hepworth, and then I think to myself ONLY / NOTICE THESE THINGS. I glare furiously at anyone sitting in first class whilst thinking - HOW EXPENSIVE ACTUALLY IS IT TO UPGRADE?? I arrive. I go straight to bed. I am tired, London is EXHAUSTING. VERY HECTIC. I hate the fact that my interesting life in one city translates merely as being a bit weird and a bit broke in another context. I'll definitely be faced with someone who has real mental health problems within my extended family, rather than the ones my friends in London indulge, elaborate, and proudly dissect over endless glasses of wine. It is likely that at the dinner table I will say something like this out loud (OR in my head). The likelihood IS you really aren't going to understand this But, you are very welcome anyway SO, I RECKON post-truth politics shape post-truth identities Which come from over-identification with - identity politics And in a desperate bid to belong, but at the same time stand out (an ambivalent state) We have invented politicised and traumatised identities, which we will fault for all they are worth Which is not that much

and call it sincerity And I want a little bit more transparency NO MORE LIES FOR LIKES But I am struggling with that myself and if one more person gives me one more bit of fucking advice about how to conduct a radical practice Well I might just go out and get a gun I know a pub where you can order one IN UNDER TEN MINUTES and I am not joking Sorry Mum, I know that isn't really that polite but I'm really batting on the side of POST-HYPOCRISY My uncle (by marriage - he married my aunt, so we were not related) was friends with a lot of members of Hells Angels I always lie and say he was actually IN Hells Angels, but in truth, I think he just flirted with them and had a hand in some cocaine deals, however he could have been Playing-it-down Because I was eleven at the time this was all going down They did all come to his funeral and sing - *Hallelujah* - by Leonard Cohen Leonard Cohen died too but it was the Jeff Buckley version ANYWAY I know he was involved in some very illicit activity He was a DJ who eventually died from a complicated brain injury, caused by a heart attack. His brain was starved of oxygen for a while and when I went to see him in hospice before he died he asked if I would have sex with him and this made me feel very sick and upset. It wasn't his fault, the brain injury made him say it, my aunt kept saying. Every night he would drink and take cocaine until he passed out and hit the floor, and one time he hit the floor and his wife thought *oh for fuck's sake he's done it again*, and then took over an hour to call an ambulance and that was a bit of a misjudgement on her part. Anyway - once he arranged for someone's hand to be cut off because they had stolen from him, and then the guy had a hook for a hand and they were still friends afterwards, and the man with a hook for a hand came to the funeral. I can never remember whether I actually saw the hook hand man at the funeral or whether I made it up. My uncle's mother was a black South African woman. My uncle shaved his head and didn't

tell everyone about this, he was very white-looking, and he was racist towards people of colour, and he pretended both of his parents were white and from Cornwall. He voted Tory if he could be bothered, got paid in cash, never paid tax, and he needed quite a lot of NHS resources towards the end of his life. Normally I leave these details out of the story. I suppose his saving grace was that he was never rich, and I think by the end he'd worked out choosing to be white and right wing alongside being working class by default, wasn't the best life he could have had, but he had a sense of power, of purpose, and he was in control in a small way. I recently found out that he was always threatening to have other members of my family killed, to ensure my aunt would never leave him, and because he told such an emotive and convincing lie (I don't know whether or not he really had the resources to do what he said) she believed him, and she stayed. I still miss him the most of anyone I know who is dead - which makes me question my moral compass. No one mentions him anymore. Everyone looks at each other. OR you imagine everyone looks at each other. Either way - everyone's looking at each other Collective Eye Roll, what is the significance of this anecdote WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF YOUR BIG ILLUMINATING POINT Or did you simply want to share that story? What else can you pull out of the safari that is visiting your family? Anyway - obviously then I came back to London feeling *naïve*, fatter, totally disillusioned with my own life and absolutely convinced I should retrain as a social worker in order to have a regular wage and feel like I am less narcissistic and Making A Difference. Think about schizophrenic cousin and his obsession with his Xbox and his disability allowance and the weird moment when you suggested he read The Kite Runner, and when you told him that not all gay men would in fact be interested in him or make advances towards him in a predatory way. On the other hand, I also can't wait to actually get a studio. This will be the year I find the money to do it. Then I won't have to SEE anyone. In fact, I never want to see another human ever again after that fucking disastrous ordeal. Loneliness is the human condition, may as well embrace this, get on with it, and make something *beautiful*. What is that, though? Toy with idea of

making all artists lie down on the floor and not make another thing, ever, no more poems, no more nice saleable objects, boycott gallerists and dealers too - it's like watching Mean Girls on repeat except no one has big tits. That's quite dictatorial though. Then, I remembered I had Jo living in the room, and we'd formed a weird co-dependent living situation and there is probably a collection of tampons, cocaine and old beer cans on your bedroom floor waiting to greet you, and you think the first thing you need to do, is really, really clean that room and completely put out of your mind that when your mother was your age SHE WAS LOOKING AFTER A CHILD (albeit a choice methodology for care) and feel comforted by the knowledge that you are so attached to the 90's because it was a bit more hopeful, the realities of hypernormalisation and the consumption of all radicalism and possibility for change had not yet become commonplace. Feel good about the fact you have the capacity to understand that sentence - and start cleaning up that room. Easier said than done really.

CLIP OF GEMMA ON
KITCHEN FLOOR

SO, I guess what I'm also saying is - please don't be confused by my apparent lack of ceremony or apparent lack of ethical boundaries here - I want you with me. So, let's discuss - non-hierarchically, some possible settings - Either we are on the phone talking about mould removal in a euphoric manner Or - we are in the pub - post protest Post post post post-protest (there have been a lot) And the best thing I've heard is don't burn yourself out Do what you can Make sure you don't run out of steam Keep turning up This is going to be a VERY long run of shit and we have to stand against it And I am STILL not speaking to her since she voted to kick me out of the country It's ok - you are cool as far as I am concerned But I don't know how to confront it Yeah mate, well, whilst you work that out - I am lying down with a towel between my legs, because I can't be bothered to put a tampon in, and I'm in bed. I recommend you get up, and

put a tampon in, or in a minute you are going to bleed on the bed then it will be like a self-fulfilling prophecy 'OH GOD MY LIFE IS A MESS THERE'S BLOOD ON THE BED' and you'll have to change the sheets, it's like those people who refuse to wear deodorant yet take ketamine at the weekends. I'm tired - always tired - and I got no place to sleep Life can be good you know - it can be beautiful If you just look in the right places I promise okay This has happened to me too, and I support you Three kisses And you are thinking all of this really is An original joke Anyway ANYWAY, I've never stooped low enough to troll someone you know but there is this one *BBC* reporter - I mean - MY GOD I watch her and she's like - yah rah rah and I'm like I'M COMING FOR YOU YOU CONSERVATIVE BITCH We're all in the same boat round this table aren't we girls? We all had this family shit and (knock on effect) personal shit, which we made happen by ourselves that's been going on for years and what did we do? Literally get fucked up for 5 years of our lives to block it out I know that's what I did YEAH, I AM SURE YOU DO FEEL LIKE YOU ARE KILLING IT You are really murdering some abstract concept of success I'm only hearing negatives If you were any colder I could disengage and if you were any older I might, potentially, try and act my age Instead of saying oh you'd be a lovely mum, people keep telling me on buses when I smile at their kids, that I should be a *children's entertainer* which is really quite alarming isn't it and my headphones are in - and Spotify is playing a man walks down the street and says why am I so soft in the middle now? why am I so short of attention? I need a role model DO YOU? DO YOU? IT'S LIKE HERDING FUCKING CATS types someone who is experiencing a CERTAIN TYPE of workload and I am eating an omelette with the nutritional value of a cardboard

box and I'm typing straight back and I say I would rather herd cats than talk to a cat in a suit who thinks it is clever and has ZERO life experience and uses the word homogeneous every 2 mins and has - like - never had a good fuck or a hard time they just speak like a hardcover book and have a good haircut I think I've said this kind of stuff before I need a photo opportunity I want a shot at redemption I don't find this stuff amusing anymore ANYWAY My favourite odd story which is not mine and I have stolen is about someone I know who will really have to remain nameless this time, I mean I'm TRYING OK TRYING TO BE DISCREET We'll call the story

The Dolphin she is 'eccentric' ok - and she lives in a tepee on purpose and her boyfriend lives 'next door' in the next field - in a tent - anyway, she really likes animal skulls, and someone was like well we should ask her to wear deodorant to the wedding and I was like er - it's more like we need to make sure we keep her away from the wildlife because a while ago when she was feeling particularly eccentric she went to Scotland and came across a dying dolphin on the beach and then the coast guard was saying there is no saving it she was upset about this thinking shall I put the dolphin out of its misery there is no saving it now anyway the coast guard told me its dying slowly what do I do about it there's about 3 people within 20 miles of the dolphin it's like the scene in Happy Valley where the police officer has to kill the sheep anyway she decapitated the dolphin and then it was dead, so it didn't die slowly and she also got a skull out of it - so there was - I suppose - a motive and we are all very WARY of selfless gestures and the next problem was due to the traumatising nature of decapitating a large sea animal she went missing for a bit and her mates were a bit concerned she doesn't have a phone and isn't on social media and so they went around asking things like has anyone seen her

and someone said ah yes she came over on her bike about two weeks ago and said she might go to this specific place in the highlands and her friends thought ok cool she'll be there then so, they took a bit of a gamble and went on a trip to locate her and they found her after about a week walking around with a skull breath all of the other people's rules that you have swallowed a long time ago'. AND WHILST I'm like YES LEE LOZANO I think I do actually completely agree with you, I also think she is taking NO RESPONSIBILITY. She was a notorious individual who had very complex and difficult relationships with everyone she knew, and whilst being GROUNDBREAKING, a lot of her writing also reads to me like an amazing lesson in how to pass the buck. Isn't pass the buck a great phrase in itself?

CLIP OF RUTH'S
CLOTHES STALL

That was an interlude of a semi-illegal clothes stall my friend Ruth put on in Shoreditch just to illustrate that sometimes breaking the rules can be fun, also couldn't really find a good place to slot that in but I made the beginning credits before I decided that maybe it didn't really fit and sometimes I do think it would be good to refrain from just saying EVERYTHING that is on my mind it's like when people ask me what I'm working on at the moment I'm either COMPLETELY MUTE or I go on for about an hour re all the different angles one could possibly perceive what is essentially a diary, because I get fixated on thinking about how all readings of one thing can simultaneously be true. Conclusively then - because I think we may have gone - a little bit - OFF THE POINT - again - this was *supposed* to be an amusing collection of all the different forms of actual shoplifting I'd heard about and stealing footage of my friends, and stories and weaving lyrics through the script, like - I had a mate who kept stealing salmon and avocado near her place of work in canary wharf and then she got caught and banned from the Tesco, and her place of work which was a luxury property company got sent a picture of her face as a person to KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR IN THE LOCAL AREA. So, I GUESS I'm obsessed with punchlines. And also, occasionally removing the punchline so then people are just - left waiting around thinking WHY did she tell a story about a pigeon AGAIN and was that an innuendo when she said that a bird went for a wee on her face. Also, been thinking a lot about positivity / output / cynicism e.g. my own cynical attitude towards millennials who are left wing and trying to live on the edge whilst really actually pleasurably fucking the system and enjoying having

a middle finger up at the system and one up their arse that the system inserted - and this can become a toxic satire which attacks the individual (indirectly). At the moment I'm reading all of Lee Lozano's notebooks from the late 60's, before she personally excommunicated the artworld, and there's this great bit where she's like 'dear everybody... artist, critic, dealer I smell on your (bad) living off the land eating mushrooms etc. and they brought her back to the tepee and her boyfriend was really pleased about it

END CREDITS

THANKS FOR WATCHING

Outro

THERE'S GOTTA BE MORE
TO LIFE THAN CHASING
DOWN EVERY TEMPORARY
HIGH TO SATISFY ME⁴