
Extract from **Port**
By Simon Stephens

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Characters

Racheal

Chris

Scene Three

The L section of the bus station in Stockport Town Centre. 1992. It is approaching night-time and darkening. The station is deserted except for the children. It feels huge, almost completely hollow. The childrens' movement is freed by the absence of others.

An aluminium queue divider centres the stage.

Racheal Keats, fifteen years old leans against the divider's pole. Breathless. Waiting.

Chris Bennett follows her, also fifteen years old. Not breathless. In a track suit. Cocky, confident, very handsome and knows it. He joins her, leaning against the pole. Looks at her for some time without speaking. She grows increasingly self conscious of this.

They are waiting for their friends. He watches her while she talks. She can't look back.

RACHEAL: Gonna rain. Bet ya.

CHRIS: -

RACHEAL: Gonna slash it down.

CHRIS: -

Racheal moves away from the pole - looks outwards and all around her.

RACHEAL: Always rainin' here. Always fuckin' leatherin' it.

CHRIS: -

RACHEAL: Fuckin' hate it.

CHRIS *laughs briefly*: -

RACHEAL: Don't you Chris?

CHRIS *smiles*: What?

RACHEAL: Don't you hate it here?

CHRIS *thinks, sniffs*: S'arright.

RACHEAL: S'fuckin' never. S'fucking cheap. Grotty. Shit buildings. Stinks.

She belches hugely and then giggles.

CHRIS *with a grin*: Yer got a tab?

RACHEAL: No.

CHRIS: Liar.

RACHEAL: Am not.

CHRIS: Y'are. Fuckin' seen ya. Juss now.

RACHEAL: Finished 'em.

CHRIS: Yer didn't. Yer still got some.

RACHEAL: I aint.

He reaches for her shirt pocket. Slight scuffle. Giggle.

CHRIS: Here.

RACHEAL: Get off.

CHRIS: In yer pocket.

RACHEAL: Get off us.

Pulls out a packet of cigarettes.

CHRIS: Told ya.

RACHEAL: 's me last one.

CHRIS: Yer cheeky little monkey. Knew y'ad one.

He puts it in his mouth. Goes to light it. She grabs for it. Misses.

RACHEAL: Don't.

He backs away from her, always watching her, grinning.

CHRIS: Stop me.

RACHEAL: Chris.

CHRIS: Come on.

RACHEAL: What are yer like?

CHRIS: If yer don't want me to smoke it come and gerrit off me.

RACHEAL: Yer mental.

CHRIS: Am not. Am well sane.

He lights the cigarette.

CHRIS: Look at yer. Yer all red. Yer look dead cute when yer all red.

RACHEAL *affectionately*: Cracked you.

He takes a long draw on the cigarette. They stare at each other for a time.

RACHEAL *turning from him, out into space*: Only good things around here are Man U.
And Mr. Everson.

CHRIS: Mr. Everson?

RACHEAL: Yeah.

CHRIS: He's a fat fucking thick twat.

RACHEAL: He's not. He's fucking great.

CHRIS: Yer fancy him don't yer? Fucking hell.

RACHEAL: No. I just think he's good.

CHRIS: You fucking fancy him and all.

RACHEAL: Teaches us new words.

CHRIS: New words?

RACHEAL: Catatonic. A state of schizophrenic unconsciousness.

CHRIS: New words? Are you six?

RACHEAL: Philanthropy. Love of mankind. *Suddenly turns to him.* Yer know what else I love?

CHRIS: What?

RACHEAL: All mountains.

CHRIS: Yer what?

RACHEL: Our Mum went on about them all the time and all. Yer hould've seen em this morning. Such a clear day. Yer could see 'em all really detailed. We should go. Shouldn't we? Me and you. Tek Luce and Danny.

CHRIS: Tek your kid.

RACHEAL: Fuck off.

CHRIS: I like him.

RACHEAL: Yer can have him.

CHRIS: He's a nutter. Nicks out don't he?

RACHEAL: What?

CHRIS: Billy. Steals anything. 'S funny. Like 'avin' a likle dog.

Silence

CHRIS: 'S not mountains. 'S fuckin' hills. S'fuckin' Pennine way that. S'never fuckin' mountains.

RACHEAL: Yer ever noticed how many transport routes cut through this place?

CHRIS: Yer what?

RACHEAL: All the transport routes come through here. Every single fuckin' type.

CHRIS: What yer crackin' on about now, you?

She begins to circle away from him.

RACHEAL: Yer got yer A6 for yer cars. Yer got yer viaduct for yer trains. M62. River fuckin' Mersey. Flightpaths down Ringway. 'S mental. Planes have still got the wheels down when they come over here. Every cunt's trying to get out.

CHRIS: Am not.

RACHEAL: 'In't yer?

CHRIS: Nah.

RACHEAL *to him*: 'In't yer Chris? Really?

CHRIS: No.

RACHEAL *turns away, stares out again*: Fuckin' should.

CHRIS: I like it.

RACHEAL: Why?

CHRIS: 'S a laugh, innit? Yer can bunk off school. Go home. Watch telly. Brother's all right. Mum & Dad and that. Phone yer mates. Come down here. Ride buses. Go down Manchester. Go cinema. Gerr up to all sorts.

RACHEAL *turns to him, seriously*: I hate my family.

CHRIS: No yer don't.

RACHEAL: The only person in my family who's any cop was my Grandad and he's been dead two year. Most significant person in my life and he's fucking snuffed it.

CHRIS: What about yer brother? He's all right.

Pause. Racheal stares out.

RACHEAL: I hate death. Scares the shit out of us.

Pause.

Remember Paul Castle?

CHRIS: Yeah.

RACHEAL: Remember his brother?

CHRIS: His brother?

RACHEAL: In third year. When we was in first year. Threw himself off bridge over M62. Remember that?

CHRIS: Oh yeah.

RACHEAL: I remember thinkin' it were funny. And that he were stupid. That he were a thick cunt. I mean as if yer do that. We're older than he was now. Paul Castle's older than his older brother. Nuts that i'n't it?

CHRIS *disinterested* : Yeah.

RACHEAL: It is though Chris i'n't it?

CHRIS: I used to like Paul Castle. He were all right. How come he never comes to school anymore?

She looks at him for three seconds. Stamps her cigarette out. Looks away.

RACHEAL: I don't know.

Pause. She looks back to him. He begins to lift his own weight up off the bar. And then stops.

CHRIS: Yer know one thing I like about you?

RACHEAL: What?

CHRIS: You've got really lovely tits.

RACHEAL: Yer what?

CHRIS: Y'ave. They look lovely.

RACHEAL: Do they?

CHRIS: Yeah.

RACHEAL: Right.

CHRIS: Don't panic. It's a good thing.

RACHEAL: Thanks.

CHRIS: 's all right.

He turns away again, grinning.

RACHEAL: Where are they?

CHRIS: Don't know.

Pause.

RACHEAL: Chris.

CHRIS: Yeah.

RACHEAL: What are you scared of?

CHRIS: How do yer mean?

RACHEAL: Like I'm scared of death. And when I were a nipper I were scared of me Mum cause she used to thump us with her hairbrush and me Dad because he was fucking wierd. What are you scared of?

CHRIS: Nothing.

RACHEAL: Nothing?

CHRIS: No.

She touches his face with her finger. Pulls it away.

RACHEAL *seriously*: Liar.

CHRIS: Am not.

RACHEAL: Yer are.

Long pause. Neither shakes eye contact.

RACHEAL: Y'ever get like yer just want to go fucking ape?

CHRIS: Yer what?

RACHEAL: Don't matter.