

RIGHT OF SUCCESSION

Written by

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SCENE 1. EXT. DAMP STREET. DUSK.

SFX: Birdy's *Skinny Love*.
Head down, Joely walks towards block of flats.

ORLAGH
[FLASHBACK] [Joely's crying] Oh babygirl,
don't. -
[Orlagh holds up the savings book] Look.
I've moved my money into your account.
[END FLASHBACK]

Social Worker speaking on her mobile walks past Joely.

KATHY
[Frustrated] Her neighbour says she is
there, but she keeps herself to herself,
I'll try calling her later. -
Yeah? -
Look I'd better go, we'll catch up
tomorrow OK?

ORLAGH
[FLASHBACK] You've only to avoid the
department for a few months, just till
you're sixteen and if you take care of
yourself after I've... -
Well they'll just have to let you keep
the flat, wont they?! [END FLASHBACK]

SFX: Automatic beep as Social Worker unlocks her car out of shot.
Joely turns the corner, she bumps into Melih. The boy is motionless, looking
down, texting. She's moving on but looks back over her shoulder, then head
down again as her mobile signals incoming text.

SCENE 2. INT. KITCHEN. MELIH' PARENTS FLAT, 4TH FLOOR. DUSK.

Melih's father Erkut kneeling on prayer mat in corner.

AZIZE
[Angry stirring of pan] Not a romantic
bone in your rotten body!

ERKUT
[Shouting] I don't know what this
Valentine is supposed to mean to ME!

SFX: Front door unlocking.

AZIZE
[Under her breath] Saint! -
[Calling out] Is that you Melih?

MELIH
Yo.

SCENE 3. INT. BOY'S BEDROOM. MELIH'S PARENTS FLAT. DUSK.

Melih kneels, rummages in wardrobe, takes out prayer mat, unfurls it across
the laminate, pushes edge under bedroom door. Pulls out 2 identical
paperbacks, peeling 'half price' stickers off the back covers. Sticks labels
together, back-to-back. Pulls Valentines card out of hoodie. Mobile vibrates
in pocket. Reads: 'meet in the library @6? J'.

SCENE 5. INT. JOELY'S FLAT. 11TH FLOOR. DUSK/NIGHT.

Light on, Joely picks up two letters. Shuts door. One letter is handwritten
reads 'Important Letter - from Kathy Phelps, Children's Department'. Joely
throws it onto a pile. She fingers another envelope postmarked Ireland.
Bolts front door.

SFX: Incoming text message signal.
Walking to living room, Joely pulls mobile from pocket, looks at screen. The
Ironing boards up. Table laden with books and papers, coke bottle, two empty
glasses. She puts phone in pocket and carries glasses to the kitchen. Pile
of washing up. Array of prescription drugs and sharps caddy getting dusty on
window sill. She shakes empty coffee jar.

SCENE 6. INT. ORLAGH'S BEDROOM. JOELY'S FLAT. NIGHT.

Joely drops bag and takes off hoodie as computer starts up. Mobile on desk. She grabs oversized dressing gown. Kicks off school shoes and puts on her mum's slippers. She flops on chair, pulls out savings book from school bag, flicking through the pages, she's down to her last £50.

Room bathed in blue white light, camera pans to urn between two cushions on the bed, then out of window. Inky city, traffic dashing two and fro, Olympic stadium in darkness.

Joely opens the '16th' birthday card, £10 note falls to the floor. Note reads: 'Happy birthday Joely, hope you and your mum are keeping well, love Auntie Maggie.' Joely swivels on chair, stoops to pick up note.

Turning back to screen she logs onto Facebook. Someone at school has set up a page 'Joely No Mates'. A string of abuse directed at the young girl including vile joke about her being raped on Valentines night!

Incoming mobile message: 'Only 6 hrs till ur legal! M', she jumps as landline phone also rings.

SCENE 7. INT. LIVING ROOM. JOELY'S FLAT. NIGHT.

Mobile in hand she searches for landline receiver. She stubs toe, hopping around she drops mobile on carpet. Orlagh's voice echoes around the flat.

ORLAGH
You've reached the answerphone of Orlagh and Joely. We're both out at the mo, so leave a message and we'll get back to you.

SFX: Beep. Birdy's *Skinny Love* beginning to fade back up.

Joely standing stock still. Petrified. The pain in her toe forgotten.

KATHY
Hi Joely, my name's Kathy Phelps, I'm your social worker. Sorry it's taken so long to catch up with you. I've spoken to Mr Benton at your school and he tells me you haven't missed a single day since your mum died. He says the school weren't aware that your circumstances had changed and he was really shocked to find that you've been fending for yourself. -

Joely beginning to swirl about in the room, lost in the sound track in her head.

KATHY (CONT'D)
As you're only fifteen Joely, we've got to make alternative arrangements for you. I've got a place lined up. Big screen TV, loads of other girls. -
Joely call me will you? My number's 0878 665452.

SFX: Answerphone end-beep. Joely comes to sudden halt, staring at a large canvas print of her and Orlagh on the wall, she drops, overwhelmed with grief and relief. Mobile at feet, message: 'I'm outside the library now. Mx'.

She hesitates then rushes to open the door. It's raining. Melih's shivering on doorstep. He acknowledge the dressing gown and slippers. They burst out laughing as mascara smudged Joely invites the boy in.

SCENE 8. INT. LIVING ROOM. JOELLY'S FLAT. NIGHT.

Melih takes sweets and bottle of coke from his bag, along with book and the Valentines card. Joelly tears off the wrapping paper: Garth Nix's *The Keys To The Kingdom*. She opens the card. Leaning to Melih she kisses his cheek. Embarrassed Melih pulls out his copy of the book from his bag. They settle into the pages. Chatty. Happy. Popping Liquorice Allsorts.

FADE OUT *SKINNY LOVE*

END