

## *SEASON OF TRAUMA & REDEMPTION*

# '88

## *EPISODE 3*

# 1988 SEASON OF TRAUMA & REDEMPTION

*EPISODE 3*

**Let's stop to appreciate the power of the first ten seconds of this third part of the '88 series.** A quiet Christmas Eve twilight interrupted by Shaun with his dial turned up past nine. "FUCKING HELL!"

It doesn't matter if we hadn't seen the part before this one, or if we don't understand that Shaun just lost the one person he felt unconditional love from, who invested in him, and (most importantly) understood him in a way that even his Mom never could. Smell has cast Shaun aside for his betrayal. There is no going back after this, only moving forward, whatever that means for Shaun.

The only thing Shaun's Mom and Mr. Sandhu can give him right now is their love and emotional support, the same thing Woody's parents have been doing for him. Growing up is not easy; we all need a family



to help us do it right. Soothingly, his Mom tells him, “Listen, Shaun, we always forgive the people we love.” I love how cluttered this room is, like their love; it’s insufferably clustered to smother but is somehow functional and filled with a simple bliss more powerful than this trauma that will pass.

If humans are to survive this modern age, we must create larger circles of connected concentric support. And if we can’t do that, as Stills sang, we’ve got to love the ones we’re with. It’s funny here that Shaun calls Faye a slag to his Mom when, just two hours ago, he was smitten with her as a new adventure in his life.

Lol walks back to her mother’s apartment in the cold night, smoking a cigarette. She hears a chorus of singers growing louder. Is that the background music in her head? Is Mickey right behind her? No, it’s a church service on Christmas Eve, a beautiful chorus of voices lifted high in praise of something more than their pain, more than their bank accounts, more than their suffering, and more than this version of England for Lol. This version of England is no good.

Woody and Jennifer are walking the streets in the after-haze of a proper drunk from fine alcohol and good conversation. Woody may be about to embark on a new life that began tonight. He finally said yes to the new job and to Ken Squires as his mentor! This is a big deal for Woody. But sometimes, in our lives, simply turning down one street instead of another can change everything that follows.

Woody and Jennifer are bantering about eighteen-hour cafes when the unthinkable happens; his old crew comes out of the shop and passes by. Milky is with them, that “snake in the grass” who cried with



him and called himself a brother while he bedded and impregnated the woman Woody will forever be in love with, the only person who could ever satisfy Woody's soul. In Woody's perception at this moment, Milky is the reason for this descent into the abyss.

They all stand looking at each other like they are about to break out in song with a musical knife fight. Milky doesn't retreat, but it's clear he doesn't know how Woody will respond to seeing him here. What is about to happen will be extraordinary when you see this scene for the first time. It has only grown in value and impact for me after several viewings. I think it's one of the best scenes of this show or any other I've ever seen. All the trauma that's been baking inside Woody for eighteen months is going to combust here, then come spewing into the street like a sewer line popped under pressure.

After the pleasantries are awkwardly exchanged, a decision point falls upon Woody, one that will change his life. Will he walk on by and forget them all? Has he been practicing for months what he would say at this moment? Now is the chance.

Woody takes door number two, and the die is cast. He asks them all, Milky in particular, "Well, I must look a cunt in front of you?" They stammer that he doesn't, of course he doesn't. And then comes the judo reply because Woody knew how they'd all respond to that question. He says, "I feel like one, Milk, to be honest with you, mate. You certainly know how to treat me like one, though, don't you?" DAMN!!!!!! We are very close to physical violence here; it's just beyond the edge that we are nearing closer to with every word spoken. I've been on the periphery of a couple of group brawls in my life; in each of them, there were moments of escalation, where events could have



gone down differently (some with better results) if only someone would have said or done something different in those moments. But Woody's been waiting for this for a long time; he owns this moment.

He says to Milky, "You let me stand in front of her while she gave birth to your fucking baby! And I wanted...I wanted a child. It was fucking planned for us, Milk." Woody is losing control of his emotions, tears streaming down his cheeks.

It's so moving when Kelly chokes into crying after Woody, through tears, says to them all, "I haven't fucking seen any of you for the last two months. Where've you all fucking been?" He gave all his love to these people, all his love, and they just left him standing there in the doorway crying when he needed them most. They are all on trial here, not just Milky.

Despite all his faults, Woody has the sacred heart of Jesus, a snow blind bodhisattva with nearly boundless compassion that he pours into the lives of the ones he loves while reserving no mercy for himself. Woody is putting himself on trial here as well. A spiritual crime was committed against common dignity and respect, and this has to be answered.

Woody admits that he's been going mental, and Milky starts to lose it, crying in the most stoic manner he can muster. It's not like Milky is sitting on top of the world over here; he's pretty well fucked it, just like Woody and Lol. No one is happy at this moment, and it's all because Milky couldn't say no to the woman he loved. Milky committed a crime of love, and those crimes hurt the ones we love the most, the worst.



Woody tells them he tried to kill himself, and this levels them. Now that the hurt is all out, we see the rage start to build. Milky goes to walk away, and Woody starts to get angry, accusing them of siding with Milky. He attacks them with his love, and they suffer. Woody almost has mercy on Milky here by making it a physical confrontation.

Milky doesn't seem to get angry quickly. Still, he eventually gets worked up enough to start getting back into Woody's space and suffer his awful insults, which pivots back to an emotional attack. Woody tells them all to go away from him, to get the fuck out of here, and when they go, he runs to attack Milky from behind (a punk move, but he's pissed that they are abandoning him again). This sneak attack makes Milky angry enough to fight now, but the crew and Jennifer pull them away quickly enough to end this drama now without significant violence.

I love watching Woody settle back down here, like a fizzy drink losing carbonation. If you are a *Twin Peaks The Return* fan, you know about the legendary Part 8, where (I believe) a nuclear explosion serves as a metaphor for a soul being corrupted by "An Extreme Negative Force." But not all emotional violence is corruption. There is a cleansing aspect to this kind of explosive exchange that, when contained from self-destruction, can actually emotionally progress one or more characters involved, like a released pressure valve. Similar to real people, fictional characters under massive stress seek to maintain their emotional connections with each other while simultaneously stretching and pulling their affections and loyalties as far as they can be moved without breaking the narrative tension. David Milch,



the creator of *Deadwood* and *NYPD Blue*, refers to this as characters who “spin against the way they drive.” When characters are ready to break is where the true power of drama connects with humans in their hearts. Woody’s tears here are coda, and his healing can now begin.

The nurse (Helen) comes round to see about Lol, but Lol isn’t home; she’s sleeping at her mother’s apartment tonight for Christmas Eve.<sup>1</sup> Helen looks up to the bathroom window, sees it’s all dark, and then leaves. She’s right to be concerned about Lol, who is sitting in the back pew of the church she was passing, listening to a sermon on mercy and sin; the prayer is a petition for forgiveness.

Lol has an experience here in this church. I think she feels a short blast of mercy. Her eyes are closed in prayer, and maybe for the first time in her life, she seems to experience a brief moment of bliss, calm, and peace. She opens her eyes and sees a lovely little child smiling at her, and she smiles back. Could the world possibly change that quickly, just by touching the transcendent inside the waking moment? Not a chance. The levy will be paid, and as Dylan sang, everyone’s gotta serve somebody. Right now, Lol serves Mickey. He’s always owned her in ways no one should ever own someone else, and not even death could break his grip on her liberty.

---

In the credits for ‘88, this nurse’s name is Evelyn, but in the ‘90 season, she is renamed Helen, which is the actress’s name. It’s possible that Joe Gilgun accidentally called the character by the actress’s name during a very complex scene in ‘90 and, rather than reshoot, they simply renamed the character. Perhaps we can justify this by believing that her nickname is Helen, and Lol calls her this in ‘90 because she is a close friend.



The camera pans around Lol, and we can see on her face that she feels Mickey's huffing and hulking presence in the pew behind her, his jowls clenching in ripples like a caveman waiting to strike out at the noise in the night. He sees what is going on, and it amusingly irritates him. He whispers in her head, "What are you doing here? Because I'm here, Lol. And I will always be here." No church or prayer is going to save her from him. You can't wish the devil away; it must be cast out by what is incorruptible in the human soul. Lol must face this Extreme Negative Force inside her.

Will these sins, this guilt, and all the lies always be with Lol? Is there is no absolution for her? Not even in this house of worship on Christmas Eve? She must feel forever stalked inside her waking thoughts and visions. She seems sentenced to doom, and it's all over her face. She gets up to leave the church.<sup>2</sup>

Because we remain with Mickey after Lol leaves, this gives us insight into where the editors wanted us to be positioned as viewers. We are with Lol and Woody, and the rest of the crew. But the viewer is also granted the privilege of seeing the landscape of their lives at the global level, where the ocean is a circle filled with the waters of emotion, dotted by islands which always seem to be on fire, ground shaking from the cruelty of unpredictable earthquakes. We are blessed to watch from this height as the waves roll across this collective map of their lives. Technically, Mickey is as real to us as

---

I am reminded of The Woodsmen in *Twin Peaks The Return*, those metaphysical beings who feed off the misery, darkness, fear, and trauma inside our psyches, represented as creamed corn chewed with bloody and rotten teeth.



Lol, in the sense that they are both fictional characters. But in this narrative, Mickey is a ghost of generational sin. In life, he committed crimes against the human spirit, and his memory in Lol's mind has become a dreadful lingering ghost, floating amongst the least saved, haunting an audience of one.

In her mind right now, there is only one escape left to test for Lol, and she's out the door, ready to make that try and work. Mickey is almost relaxed in the back of this church. He looks like a crucified man, resurrected, that has come to watch an audience seek their salvation under the shield of his mercy and sacrifice. But Mickey is no savior, as we know; his justice was overdue. But murder is a spiritual crime, and Lol's guilt suffers the weight of sin while she flees the church into the night.

Hours later, Kelly and Trev walk back from Foz's in the wee hours of Christmas Day. They enter Chrissie's apartment, collapse on the couch, and reflect a bit on the predictable madness of the night.

Trev wants to check on Lisa, who is sleeping. Lol is sleeping deeply in another bedroom. Little Lisa is peaceful and sweet. But when Kelly checks in on Lol, she finds a note on the bedside and sees the bottle of paracetamol. Oh my god, she's tried to do herself in! Christmas Eve allowed her to make sure Lisa would be taken care of, which is a measure of responsibility that Lol may not have been capable of before becoming a mother.

To the juvenile spirit, death by suicide on Christmas Day in 1988 may sound like Juliet swooning, but the reality, if one is lucky, is that it ends with a tube in your throat and vomit and blood everywhere. Lol fights





the intubation. At the same time, she fights all of her inner demons at once. The vomit spewing from her mouth is sourced from the demons in her mind.

Images of: Mickey's violence | Combo's return back in '83 | Mickey said, "You're the only one who knows" | Starving black children somewhere far away from England | Violence and death "out there" in somewhere "Not England" | Trevor being raped by Mickey | Woody looking over his shoulder at her from the past, when no one defended Milky against raw racism |

All this terrible trauma puked from the past into this bucket, pouring out in chunks, an awful screeching passion play of the generations who do violence to each other and have the nerve to still call it love.

Nurse Helen is a very good person, arguably the angel of mercy in *This Is England*. Here, she prays for Lol's mortal soul, and I want to capture this prayer of salvation as evidence of faith in action:

"I believe you hear this earnest prayer from my heart and that it's powerful because of your promise. I have faith in you, Lord, to heal my friend. But I also trust in the plan that you have for her life. Lord, I don't always understand your ways. I don't know why my friend has to suffer. But I trust you. I ask that you look with mercy and grace towards Lorraine. Nourish her spirit and her soul in this time of suffering, and comfort her with your presence. Let Lorraine know that you're there with her through this difficult time. Give her strength. And may you, through this difficulty, be glorified in her life, and also



in mine. Amen.”

This is such a beautiful moment in *This Is England*, a quick injection of mercy that costs nothing, hurts no one, blesses the world, and saves lives. This is a huge turning point that pushes us into the resolution of the ‘90 season coming up.

Lol could be dead at this point, but we quickly find out she made it through, meaning she fucked it, and she is soon going for a psychiatric assessment. For Kelly and Trev, this is the second time in several hours that they learned of the attempted suicides of these titanic mother and father figures in their lives, Woody and Lol.

We cut to Woody in the bathroom, soaking his bruised hand in the sink, sunlight streaming through the window. He is still experiencing the aftershocks of that emotional comet strike last night. Woody may be thinking, “Where do I go from here? I told them to leave, and they left me again.”

Jennifer comes in to ask him how his hand is from scraping it on the gravel last night. Woody apologizes to her, but she tells him not to be sorry. He says that he feels indifferent about it all now that it’s out like this. How could they all be friends again? There isn’t a way he sees; this is a different level of finality and sadness for Woody. Is this what closure feels like?

Jennifer says, “But they are your mates. They are the people you’ve got all your history with,” and Woody cuts her off, saying, “But you’re my friend.” She laughs, but not in a mean way. I think she wishes what he was saying was true, that he was ready to devote his life to her. Jennifer is such a sweet person, incapable here of pettiness and



jealousy, quite remarkable in that respect. Jennifer, Helen, and Cynth are the saints of *This Is England*, angels in the flesh who shepherd these lost souls away from damnation and back to each other, where they belong.

But Jennifer is also a human being, and we see some pain and resentment come out of her here. Unlike the violence and cruelty we've seen come out from the pain of being hurt, Jennifer's pain here is drenched in love, and what she says to Woody heals him without harm.

Woody reminds Jennifer that she's the one who stayed. He also admits that he wishes they would've stayed while he told his friends to go last night. She asks if Woody wishes it all back (warts and all). He says that sometimes he does. Woody is being honest now, no longer lying to himself and those who love him; it's a milestone of manhood that we do well to acknowledge and consider here.

Jennifer says she's never seen Woody like that last night and asks if it's because he's still so heartbroken over Lol. He admits it, and she tells them that he needs to make it up with them because, "That's your life. That's who you are."

Woody doesn't want to patronize Jen, and he thinks he's been doing it, admitting more of his faults here. What he's revealing to her here may have more pain wrapped inside it than the explosion with Milky and the old mates last night. He tells her that he feels like the most giant twat in all the world because she's one of the most incredible people he's ever met (and still not good enough). She fusses with him about patronizing her after he just said he wouldn't, then she stops



for a half-measure, pondering this compliment he just gave, and she asks, “But I’m not Lol, am I?” It’s as close as she comes to being bitter about all this. Woody doesn’t respond, but she’s made her point and impact. Woody looks like a toddler who just got caught drawing on the wall in crayon.

Lol is sitting in a hospital chair, tube in her arm with a patient bracelet. We see Woody’s name tattooed on her left hand, both of these once strong people now split to splinters and sinking without the other one to offer ballast in response to gravity’s cruel and cold nature.

Lol looks like a child come down with the flu. A nurse comes to take her blood pressure, while Lol stares vacantly ahead, wincing in pain when the doctor prods her abdomen with his stubby, clinical fingers. A nurse asks what her feelings were just before the suicide attempt. Lol can’t remember, or can’t put it in words if she does recall. She confirms that she has no desire to hurt herself or anyone else and that she doesn’t have a gun or access to harmful medication. Now she’s getting fed up with these form questions. She tried to do herself in; she’s not taking fucking entrance exams to college.

Chrissie and Kelly wait in the hallway, an empty chair across from them. Woody should be sitting in that chair.

Back at Woody’s house, they are opening their gifts now; young Richard is wearing a spectacularly awful Chrimbo sweater, and he seems a half measure happier since we last saw him during his bathroom confession to Jennifer.



Someone knocks at the door twice, and Woody finally jumps up to answer it, the family following him like loyal companions. It's Trev at the door. As she tells Woody about Lol committing suicide, what follows is one of the great acting performances on film that I have ever been blessed to see. Woody comes undone here in a way that makes me proud to be a human being capable of still being moved by art. This dramatic performance is as potent as uranium with the same stubborn half-life of effectual decay.

It's important to understand that the way Trev tells Woody about Lol here makes him think that Lol may be already dead. It's hard to count the number of times that an actor playing a character in a simulated fiction can evoke a blended emotion of heartache and eternal loss in a single scene, but this is undoubtedly one of them for me. This is like the scene in *Superman The Movie*, when Superman realizes that Lois Lane has died because he wasn't fast enough to save her. He lets out that super scream of rage, love, and loss that gives him super-duper strength to fly the Earth backward and reverse time to save the person he loves most. When fiction is most potent, its blast cuts with more profound radiation than a nuclear bomb. We must forever be searching for the great stories that evoke our compassion and carve out an inner space for these emotional wells of mercy inside each of us.

In his shock and horror at Lol's perceived loss, Woody explodes in rage at his family for fussing at him when she's just gone and done this without reaching out to him; his Lollipop might be gone. He flees the house without even saying goodbye. Jennifer is crying, their romantic relationship clearly over now.



Helen offers a second round of prayer that is again worth noting in the record:

“Father, I bring Lorraine before you today. I break the power of Satan from his assignments and activities in her life in the name of Jesus. Now, while Satan is bound, I ask that you send forth the Holy Spirit to share the good news of the Gospel in such a way that she will listen and understand it. As the truth ministers, I believe Lorraine will come to know and love you, and so out of the snare of the devil. Therefore, my confession of faith is this—by delivering her from the mouth of death, God has begun work in Lorraine’s life, and may this continue until the day of the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Jesus’s name. Amen.”

Lol has been twice blessed by Helen’s prayers, acting with solid spiritual faith as an investment in Lol’s well-being. Prayer is essential because it marks an internally codified intention that submits and commits to the Common Good for All and One.

Trev and Woody come barreling into the hospital parking lot, not even close to properly parking between the lines. Woody jumps out and runs into the hospital, begging everyone he sees to tell him where he can find Lorraine Jenkins. He’s an absolute wreck.

He enters Lol’s room and sees that her bed is empty and made, a sure sign to him that she’s died. Chrissie is sitting next to the bed in tears, staring off, possibly remembering all the times she turned away from what was happening to Lol. Milky and Kelly are here as well. Thinking she’s dead, Woody comes even more unhinged, convinced that he’s lost his chance to tell Lol goodbye before she died. He starts kicking



cabinets and wrecking up the room.

Milky gets up and tells him to calm down, and Woody takes a moment to apologize, then asks where they've taken her body.

Chrissie asks what he's talking about. They realize that he thinks that she's dead, and Chrissie says, "You daft twat! She's not dead! She's downstairs having a fucking smoke, you idiot!"

This doesn't faze Woody, who has no pride left. He feels nothing but frustration and joy at learning Lol is alive. All the trauma of betrayal has burned away along with the illusion of loss he's just suffered through; it was a cleansing fire. He is now Paul on his knees, just outside the gates of Damascus.

The scene de-escalates into a rant against made beds in the hospital, convincing people their loved ones are dead. Trev thought Lol was dead as well. Milky walks over and squeezes Woody's shoulder. Woody looks up at him, relief rippling through the room, and he tells Milky, "I love you, man, for fuck's sake." Milky says he loves Woody too.

These people have no money. They aren't supermodels. These characters aren't blessed with talents that anyone was seeking out in 1988. But god damn, if they don't have hearts deeper than the ocean and more expansive than all of outer space. What is happening here is a communal and spiritual reconciliation that is filled with mercy and love. In the '86 season, the group was married over Meggy's hospital bed. Here, in this scene, those who remain renew their vows over Lol's empty hospital bed. This is redemption in the Season of Trauma and



Redemption, but it's not over yet. Woody and Lol aren't through this yet.

Woody is very sensitive. I know he's acted daft in the past (leaving Lol in the lurch at the altar, not digging in deeper to what was going on with her father, not even being aware she was cheating on him with Milky). He isn't perfect, but Woody has all the assets of becoming a genuinely great human being if he can get out of his own way.

Milky points to his bruised head and asks Woody if he's seen it. Woody looks at him (almost disappointed) and says, "You don't even got any stitches." They part friends again, as Woody leaves the room to go to Lol, shaking his hurt hand and shaking off his hurt pride, doddering like some old codger on his way to the bathroom for his sixth piss of the morning.

Woody has already accomplished what he thought impossible only an hour before; his mates are back and ready to move forward with whatever life hands them all next. There's only one thing left to do to get there.

The choir sings out as Lol sits straight up in a chair, gowned up in her open-back hospital robe, her cigarette raised. She looks like the Queen of the Midlands, but something is also different about her. It's as if Helen's prayer has worked a spell of protection and healing over Lol, and she's waking up to her true power before our eyes, which is the wisdom to see beyond her own misery. Nothing has changed outwardly, but inwardly everything has changed, ripples from the source of change inside this human being in pain before us.





Woody peeks in, and Lol seems truly surprised to see him, joy starting to fill up her insides like a petrol tank; this ship is already beginning to wobble back to balance. Woody's head, stuck just through the door crack, asks if she's alright, and she answers by asking what he's doing here? He says he wanted to find her, and this is where they said she'd be. And just like that, the final puzzle piece of solving this nest of emotional complexity and suffering drops into place. Lol invites Woody into the room and back into her life.

But he says to wait and closes the door, him on the other side of it. Seconds later, he opens the door wide and teeters in with a walker, giving her a glance of the doddering old codger he's already started to become, just like his Dad. And it's okay. This is classic Woody, making a joke of it all, plugging across the floor with this gadget, saying, "Mummy's little soldier. There are two of us in this war, Lol." She gives a giggle (it's impossible not to). Woody has twice done the impossible today: 1) He has mended his relationship with Milky and 2) Lol is smiling.

There is a passage in one of the Gnostic Gospels found at Nag Hammadi back in 1947, where Jesus says something to the effect, "If you bring forth what is within you, what you bring forth will save you. If you do not bring forth what is within you, what you do not bring forth will destroy you." I think of this saying a lot as I've grown older. For Woody, by becoming honest with himself, and then with the people he loves, he has brought forth the best inside him. Like Cynth, Jennifer, Helen, and Smell, what they bring forth from within themselves saves the world around them through their behavior in relationships with other people. *This Is England* reveals to us what it means to be a very good, a regular, or outright horrible person. These



apparent moral distinctions this show reveals are just one of the gifts that *This Is England* offers in great bounty to the viewer.

Woody will continue to make light of this whole situation as long as possible to ease the transition to the more serious topic at hand. He asks how the entire overdose is treating her. She's game to play on this level a bit longer, admitting that she fucked it right up. Woody suggests a nuclear warhead next time, which lets her giggle again. He says she should use one of those big Clint Eastwood hand cannons next time because there isn't one paracetamol on Earth that could take any of her family out. He tells her, "You're the hardest bunch of bastards in the world."

Interestingly, he mentions her family as being tough here. Now is the time for Lol to confess everything to Woody, to make him an equal partner in the complete and total fucked up truth of her life, to let the secrets come pouring out like a river, all that is known and all that is unknown.<sup>3</sup>

Woody says that Lol is her family's leader, the hardest person he knows. She says she's not. He doubles down and starts to cry. She counters with, "Look at me now." No one can hold up forever under the kind of pressure Lol has been living with for the last two years (hell, the last twenty). It's a testament to her iron strength that she didn't buckle as a teenager. While showing us the marketed vision of Iron Lady Margaret Thatcher each season, Shane Meadows and

---

This is a paraphrase of what Margaret Lanterman (The Log Lady) says to Hawk in *Twin Peaks The Return* while calling his attention towards an epiphany that Laura Palmer is "The One."



his actors have given us much better visions of more powerful female characters. The Iron Women of *This Is England* are supported by good-hearted yet foolish men, and they all somehow fumble their ways back to community.

Finally, Woody asks Lol the question that really matters, “What the fuck, Lol? Fucking paracetamol. It’s Christmas Day! What got so bad?” But doesn’t Woody already know the answer to this question of what got so bad? He knows where that line is, nearly crossed it himself.

Woody stares down as Lol tells him the story of how she killed her Dad, not Combo, who’s gone to prison for something that he didn’t do. Woody takes this in intellectually at first, and then it starts to resonate emotionally for him, what she’s saying, what’s behind what she’s saying. She never tells him in this scene about what her father did to her, but I think Woody feels it in the deepest atom of his heart, and it breaks him in the best way possible. Here, we see a man step out fully formed from this eggshell of childhood he’s been pecking at for too long. Woody, the man, is born, and he finally meets his partner halfway.

He says, “Oh God!” She says she couldn’t live with it anymore, and he’s packed on crying now, but not for himself for once. Woody says the only thing that he can, “I’m so sorry! To be on your own with that.” He says Combo’s name, almost in reverence. She says she knows, implying, “Who would’ve expected such a sacrifice from Combo?” Woody asks if anyone else knows. Lol says no, which means that not even Trevor knows this secret. The viewer knows this secret, but only because we have been granted this privilege from the creators.



Earlier, when Lol told Helen that she has so many secrets and lies inside of her, this is what she meant. Her lies have been categorized and reinforced like sealed bulkhead rooms in the flooded chambers of her damaged heart.

Lol tells him, “Only you and Combo know, and I don’t want to be telling anyone else.” He agrees. This decision they make here, to not tell the others, will be important for the ‘90 season, and I’m calling it out to be clear where these little hooks tie seasons together in such a magnificent and minimalist method of scripting, direction, acting, and editing.

Classic Woody, he gets quickly back to joking, telling her he would ask her to move in, but how dangerous is she out of ten? Lol almost laughs, but he starts crying again, telling her that he wanted to be brave. She says he is brave, but we know, along with Woody, that Lol is the bravest person in this whole show, maybe in all the realm of this fictional Queendom.

Woody asks Lol a mental idea, “Why don’t we fucking grow up?” She says it sounds like a good idea. He says that he hasn’t even met Lisa, and Lol tells him proudly, “She’s beautiful. You’ll love her.” He says he can’t wait to meet her, and here we see a modern family get busy living instead of dying. The redemption in this season concludes with the timing that it takes two dissonant hearts, beating off rhythm, to once again beat together in sync again.

Woody asks Lol to put her head on his chest for a bit like they used to when they watched telly together all those years ago. Watch the look of relief on her face when she nestles into him, his tattooed hand



caressing her head. He tells her he loves her and that he can't be with anyone else. Lol acknowledges this truth with a head nod. A simple balance is restored from a snake pit of secrets and misery, somewhere near Grimsby, England, on Christmas Day in 1988.

*Dogwood Blossom* by Fionn Regan starts playing, and, once again, it's the perfect song to bake this moment to rise on screen. We see two characters become healed through forgiveness and mercy, pressed together into a diamond by their shared sacrifices that have outlived the traumatic tectonic pressure of their turbulent history together in this fictional life.

We see Combo alone in his cell; he eats and reads, making himself a better man with each stacking moment.

Shaun, his Mom, and Mr. Sandhu eat a lonely Christmas dinner together as Smell's chair sits empty. Shaun is growing up in an uncomfortable direction. Elsewhere, Smell is also still reeling from this shared loss.

Gadget, Harvey, Banjo, and someone's Mom are having Christmas dinner, and the turkey on the table looks like it was worked over by wolves. They're having a ball, and we love them for it. Chrissie, Milky, Trev, and Kelly share snacks and sodas on Lol's hospital bed upstairs from where this miracle of all reunions has taken place today. And with that, we are back to Lol on Woody's chest, which is where we leave it for now.

What we've seen happen in this '88 season are tributaries of trauma returning to their source stream, where they froth and mix together against the immovable river rocks of mercy, compassion, and unconditional love. The healing that happens between Woody, Lol, Milky, and Combo in these final moments of '88 has illuminated these characters with a heated glow, allowing them to move from trauma, past redemption, into the Season of Transcendence and Damnation.



# CAST

CHARACTER	ACTOR
GADGET	ANDREW ELLIS
MILKY	ANDREW SHIM
KELLY	CHANEL CRESSWELL
FAY	CHARLOTTE TYREE
TREV	DANIELLE WATSON
BANJO	GEORGE NEWTON
TRUDY	HANNAH WALTERS
EVELYN (NURSE)	HELEN BEHAN
CYNTHIA FIELDS	JO HARTLEY
MICK	JOHNNY HARRIS
WOODY	JOE GILGUN
CHRISSEY	KATHERINE DOW BLYTON
MR. SANDHU	KRISS DOSANJH
HARVEY	MICHAEL SOCHA
BABS	REBECCA MANLEY
SMELL	ROSAMUND HANSON
JENNIFER	STACEY SAMPSON
COMBO	STEPHEN GRAHAM
SHAUN FIELDS	THOMAS TURGOOSE



CHARACTER	ACTOR
LOL	VICKY MCCLURE
FAY'S DAD	ALEX MCQUEEN
BOY IN CHURCH	ARTY JAMES MEADWOS
TITCH	AUTUMN SMILES
NURSE	DENA SMILES
JANICE	EMILY ASTON
DOCTOR	GUY WILLIAMS
MR BENSEN	IAN SMITH
MUM IN CHURCH	JO MEADOWS
MATRE'D	JOANNA SWAIN
NURSE	LADENE HALL
MR. SQUIRES	WILLIAM TRAVIS



# ***CREW***

<b>ROLE</b>	<b>NAME</b>
WRITER & DIRECTOR	SHANE MEADOWS
SERIES PRODUCER	MARK HERBERT
PRODUCER	REBEKAH WRAY-ROGERS
CO-PRODUCER	LIBBY DURDY
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY	DANNY COHEN
PRODUCTION DESIGNER	JANEY LEVICK
CAMERA OPERATOR	ZAC NICHOLSON
COSTUME DESIGN	CHARLOTTE WALTER
HAIR & MAKEUP DESIGNER	CATHERINE SCOBLE
EDITORS	ALISTAIR REID & JONATHAN STENTON
SOUND RECORDIST	DAVID MITCHELL
1ST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	NICKIE SAULT
LOCATION MANAGER	RICHARD KNIGHT





# ***BITS & BOBS***

---

**“ I’ve ruined everything. I’ve ruined Christmas. How am I going to make my Dad proud of me if I can’t even keep a girlfriend?**

Shaun To Cynth And Sandhu

**Listen, Shaun, we always forgive the people we love.** ”

Cynth

**“ I’m such a fucking wimp.**

Woody To Jennifer



**“ I fucking really loved you, mate. I used to call you me brother...Yeah, fuck mate. You’ve broke it. You’ve fucking broken everything, you have.**

Woody To Milky

**I FUCKING LOVE YA!  
DO YOU HEAR ME? 🎵**

Woody To Everyone

**“ Why can’t you be more of a twat with me about it? Why do you have to be so fucking wonderful about everything all the time?**

Woody To Jennifer

“ I feel like the biggest twat in all the world.

Woody

What am I gonna do, roll up and knock on your door after yesterday's performance? ”

Milky To Woody

“ Well, I didn't expect to see you or laugh today, so thanks for that.

Lol To Woody

***You're the hardest bunch of bastards in the world.*** “

Woody To Lol

“I’ve been really poorly, Woods and it’s nothing to do with you, or Milky, or any of that.

Lol To Woody

**What would  
I have done?  
I’ve been  
so lonely  
without ya,  
you dick!**

Milky To Lol