

# Extract from Scene 7 Gemma and Zoey



Photograph by Robert Workman

**SCENE 7.** MUSIC. ZOE'S FLAT. AFTER A MOMENT GEMMA PICKS UP MATHS BOOK, PUTS IT IN HER BAG AND 'ARRIVES' HOME. SHE SITS ON THE SOFA AND GETS OUT A HISTORY REVISION BOOK AND A CHEMISTRY REVISION BOOK. THEY ARE BOTH WELL WORN, GEMMA HAS REVISED A LOT. SHE STARTS READING THEM, TAKING NOTES ETC. AFTER A BIT, ZOE ENTERS. SHE HAS A STICK. SHE WATCHES GEMMA FROM THE DOORWAY. AFTER A BIT GEMMA LOOKS UP.

GEMMA        Hi.

ZOE            Hi. You busy?

GEMMA        (LOOKING POINTEDLY AT BOOKS) Er yeah, it's my 'Day of GCSE Hell' tomorrow? Remember?

ZOE            Oh God yeah, I'd totally forgotten! Chemistry AND History in one day yeah?

GEMMA        Yeah.

GEMMA SMILES AT HER MUM BRIEFLY AND GOES BACK TO HER BOOKS. ZOE STILL HOVERS

IN DOORWAY. AFTER A BIT, GEMMA LOOKS UP AGAIN

GEMMA        Everything OK?

ZOE            I'm just . . . it's just a bit tricky cooking, with this stick and everything, but don't worry.

GEMMA        Er . . .

ZOE            No, don't worry, I'll manage . . .

ZOE GOES OFF. GEMMA LOOKS ANXIOUS FOR A MOMENT THEN GOES BACK TO HER BOOKS. THERE IS A CRASH OFFSTAGE.

GEMMA        (SIGHS) You alright Mum?

ZOE            (OFFSTAGE) Yeah! Don't worry!

GEMMA GOES BACK TO HER BOOKS. THERE IS ANOTHER CRASH. GEMMA GETS UP

GEMMA        I'm coming!

ZOE            (OFFSTAGE) No don't, don't love. It's just the collander.

GEMMA        (IN DOORWAY) You sure?

ZOE            (OFF) Yeah. You get on with your studies.

GEMMA GOES TO SIT DOWN AGAIN, READS FOR A SHORT WHILE BUT CAN'T CONCENTRATE. SHE GETS UP BUT ZOE COMES INTO DOORWAY BEFORE SHE GETS THERE. SHE HAS A TIN WITH TIN OPENER STUCK IN IT.

ZOE            Sorry. You couldn't open this could you, my fingers are so stiff.

GEMMA        Look, why don't I just come and help you? I'll get back to this afterwards.

ZOE            No, no. I want you to get your revision done.

GEMMA        I can't concentrate Mum.

ZOE            What?

GEMMA        All the crashing and banging.

ZOE            Well pardon me for being a bit clumsy but I do have Multiple Sclerosis.

GEMMA        I didn't mean . . . don't take offence, I was just . . . [saying]

ZOE I'm not deliberately dropping stuff you know.

GEMMA I know you're not!

ZOE They just seem to slip away from me, my hands are so . . . they're so . . .

ZOE STARTS CRYING.

GEMMA (DISTURBED AND UPSET TO SEE HER MUM LIKE THIS AGAIN)  
Mum don't, don't do this!

ZOE I'm sorry. It's just . . . I can't *do* anything anymore. I tried to do some painting earlier and I couldn't even hold the brush properly. I'm meant to be working on the bridge painting, I'll never have it ready in time.

GEMMA Mum, don't cry, please, it will pass won't it? The consultant said once the relapse is over you . . . [might go back to normal again]./

ZOE [CUTTING IN] And I'm just stuck here at home *all the time*. I hate going out with this *stupid* stick. Everyone looks at me.

GEMMA No they don't you're just not used to it yet that's all.

ZOE I don't *want* to get used to it! I used to be busy, sociable, life and soul of the party. *Look* at me.

PAUSE. ZOE SOBS. GEMMA DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.

GEMMA Look, why don't we . . . let's . . . let's forget the cooking. Ok? Let's get some chips and go and sit on our Bridge for half an hour.

ZOE What about your revision?

GEMMA I'll do it when we get back, I already know most of it anyway.

ZOE Are you sure?

GEMMA Yeah, I can't concentrate anyway. Come on.

GEMMA HOLDS HER HAND OUT, HER MUM TAKES IT, THEY EXIT.