

# Extract from Scene 8 Gemma and Zoey



Photograph by Robert Workman

**SCENE 8.** THE BRIDGE. ENTER ZOE AND GEMMA ONTO 'THEIR BRIDGE.' THEY EACH HAVE CHIP PAPER WHICH THEY THROW INTO THE BIN AS THEY COME IN. GEMMA GUIDES ZOE TO SIT ON A BENCH (OR LEAN OVER THE BRIDGE?)

ZOE (LOOKING DOWN ONTO RIVER) The river's nice and calm today, it always makes me feel better. Thanks for paying for the chips darling.

GEMMA That's OK.

ZOE Was that your Dad's money?

GEMMA I didn't use all of it. Anyway, I don't need it, I don't go out much anymore do I? My friends have kind of given up on me. I'm never available.

ZOE That's my fault as well.

GEMMA I didn't meant . . . [that]

ZOE It's OK. I'm not going to start crying again. I just want you to realise, I do know how hard this is for you.

GEMMA PUTS HER ARM ROUND HER MUM, GIVES HER A HUG

GEMMA I wouldn't swap you with anyone you know.

ZOE (LAUGHS) Wouldn't you?

GEMMA Are you kidding? You are an absolute Ledj, all my mates, they're always going on about you 'Oh you're Mum's an *artist*, she's so cool'

ZOE Back in the day maybe.

GEMMA No, you've still got it Mum, it's just . . . on the back shelf at the moment that's all.

ZOE You are such a lovely girl.

GEMMA (BASHFUL) Shut up.

ZOE Remember when you were little? We used to come to this Bridge almost every day didn't we?

GEMMA Of course I remember! We used to skateboard here didn't we? Well, you used to skateboard, I used to fall off.

ZOE (LAUGHING) Only at first, you soon overtook me darling.

GEMMA Yeah, I wonder if I could still do it?

ZOE You should try some day.

GEMMA Have we still *got* my skateboard?

ZOE Yep, under my bed. And your bow and arrow. And your nerf gun!

GEMMA Oh My God, I was such a tom boy.

ZOE You were *brilliant*.

GEMMA Nearly all my friends were boys at that age weren't they?

ZOE Yes, they were. That's changed a lot.

GEMMA Not . . . completely.

SLIGHT PAUSE

ZOE (EARS PRICKING UP) Oh yeah?

GEMMA I, sort of, have a new friend who is a boy. He's called Tyler.

ZOE Tyler eh? Just a *friend* then is he???

GEMMA Yes, just a friend, God why are your generation so obsessed with relationships?

ZOE (HOLDS HANDS UP) I never said nothing!

BEAT.

GEMMA He is, sort of, quite cute I suppose.

ZOE *Is* he?

GEMMA He's a bit cross with me at the moment though.

ZOE Oh.

GEMMA I was helping him with his maths homework.

ZOE Oh that's very kind of you darling.

GEMMA Yeah, but we had a little tiff. He's, em, he's a Carer. For *three* people!

BEAT. ZOE SHIFTS UNCOMFORTABLY

ZOE Really.

GEMMA Yeah. His Mum's in a wheelchair and his brother's Asperger's and his dad's got bi-polar.

ZOE Gosh. That's . . . wow, poor kid.

GEMMA Yeah but he's really positive about it all. He never complains. I don't know how he manages to be so cheerful.

ZOE Well I guess he has to be to get by.

GEMMA Yeah.

ZOE Although . . . putting a brave face on like that all the time, bottling it all up, isn't always . . . [healthy.]

GEMMA (BLURTING) He goes to a Young Carer's Group, he was telling me about it, he thought I might like to join.

PAUSE

ZOE Right.

GEMMA And he said we could get help, you and me . . .

ZOE [CUTTING IN] You and me are none of this Tyler's business Gemma.

GEMMA What?

ZOE (TRYING TO GET UP) Come on, we'd better get back, you need to revise for tomorrow.

AMBVER What? Why are you . . . why are you changing the subject?

ZOE Look. It's all very well for Tyler, he obviously has got a lot going on in his family, but you and me, we can manage can't we? It's alright isn't it? We're doing alright.

GEMMA Well, yes, just about, but I . . . I'm only sixteen and I do have a lot to do and when I start my A levels it'll be even harder and I get very . . . [tired]/

ZOE (CUTS IN) What if they take you off me?

BEAT

GEMMA What? What are you talking about?

ZOE I'm *not* coping too well, OK? You're right. And if we tell your teachers they . . . they might tell Social Services and they might think you'd be better off in Care or something.

GEMMA They wouldn't . . . think that would they?

ZOE They might do.

PAUSE. GEMMA LOOKS WORRIED

ZOE Look. I promise I'll be more . . . more normal, OK?

Ok?

GEMMA Yes, sure, OK.

ZOE Good. Good girl. Come on, let's get back eh? Let's get that revision started.

ZOE HOLDS HER HAND OUT, GEMMA PULLS HER TO HER FEET, THEY EXIT.