

The Deep End

1 INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE- MIDDAY

It is a gaudy, gargantuan room with no windows or natural light, fairly bare of furniture, except from two standing lamps and two plastic chairs in the centre of the room and a collection of patronising, 'self-help', posters. On one side sits HENRY PLANTER, 14, who is dressed in a lurid yellow diving suit, complete with snorkel and goggles. Sitting opposite HENRY is ELLA GARCIA, a therapist in her mid 20s. ELLA wears chapped lipstick and a dishevelled bun in her hair. She sits fumbling awkwardly with the monstrous book that is strewn across her lap. The book is titled 'HOW TO - A BEGINNERS GUIDE TO THERAPY'.

ELLA is clearly overwhelmed by the book, skimming through before landing on a page and running her delicate finger down the bind. She then smiles to herself with admiration. Raising her head, ELLA'S gaze lands on HENRY.

ELLA

How much sugar do you intake on a daily basis? Shall I put a 1-2 or 3-4?

Raising her glasses, she waits for a response. HENRY PLANTER sits still, giving her nothing but the sound of heavy breathing through his snorkel. ELLA leans slowly forward, closing in on HENRY.

ELLA

...Have there been any disconcerting influences on your life?... I hear you've been causing your mother a lot of stress.

ELLA leans back, stumped by the lack of response. She is becoming increasingly flustered.

ELLA

It can be a confusing time, being a teenager.

(beat)

So many emotions, puberty is such a hard time... and drugs!

ELLA purses her lips, aggressively scanning through the book for the next thing to say, her eyes darting between HENRY and the book.

ELLA

Well...I can't see any apparent cause for concern.

(beat)

How are you handling the sexual frustration? It can be hard as a teenager to control your...

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(beat)
... 'urges'.

ELLA pauses, blushing deeply. She slams the book shut, trying her best to avoid eye contact with HENRY.

ELLA
Well Henry, that seems to have covered all our scheduled sessions.

ELLA gets up and walks past HENRY PLANTER, whom is still dead-pan and unresponsive. Before exiting, ELLA awkwardly pats HENRY on the shoulder.

2 EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET. DAY

LEXI PLANTER, early 40s, HENRY'S mother is waiting for him outside the therapist's building. LEXI has bleach blonde hair and wears a fitted T-shirt with her own face on. HENRY exits the building, crossing towards LEXI. He walks slowly, stumbling over his diving flippers as he steps down off the pavement, looking searchingly down the street.

LEXI PLANTER
Hennie! Hennie, baby! Mummy's here darlin'!

HENRY grimaces through his snorkel, embarrassed at his mother's garishness.

LEXI PLANTER
Well Henry, I'm glad we're finished with all that therapy bollocks. What you need is a good friend. Then everything can go back to normal.

LEXI pats HENRY harshly on the back, causing him to flinch and stumble. The two of them then walk towards their car as LEXI is glued to her phone taking selfies of herself and HENRY.

LEXI PLANTER
My fans are gonna love these Henry. I'm gonna caption it "My baby's normal again", hashtag no more therapy!
(beat)
You are gonna be normal, aren't you Hen. Take off that silly diving suit. Yeah?

HENRY rolls his eyes at his mother's ignorance and sighs deeply through his snorkel. He then slides into the family car, bashing his snorkel on the top of the door as he gets in.

3 INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM. DAY

The bedroom is cramped and claustrophobic. Clearly, it hasn't been renovated since HENRY was a child, with remnants of the peeling cerulean blue wallpaper, plastered with cartoon fish and other ocean life.

HENRY sits alone at the desk inside his room, still dressed in the diving suit but his goggles are raised to his forehead and his snorkel hangs next to him, no longer in his mouth. He opens the notebook, slowly picking up the pen and chewing it, contemplating his thoughts. He then takes a weighty breath and writes "HOW TO BE NORMAL" on the opening page.

HENRY sighs again, turning the page and writing "SECTION 1: FRIENDS". He then pauses, taking a moment to think, whilst tapping his pen against the table. In the distance, Henry hears faint laughter of children playing in the room next door. He then smiles and shrugs, writing "1a.Sarah and Katie" down on the page.

4 INT. PINK. PRINCESS THEMED BEDROOM. DAY

HENRY enters the room in which SARAH PLANTER, 7, and KATIE PLANTER, 9, sit playing with their dolls, giggling giddily. The girls look up to and notice HENRY standing, watching them.

KATIE PLANTER
Wanna play?

HENRY looks down at the girls, nodding with reluctance. In response to HENRY'S nod, the girls turn to each other and grin cheekily.

The girls begin to dress HENRY in ridiculous tutus and feather boas, making him play with their dolls and tea sets.

It becomes increasingly apparent that HENRY is not enjoying playing with his sisters. HENRY'S breathing picks up, as the games escalate and in his eyes, the girls transform into twisted, demented, demonic creatures with fangs and nightmarish clown-faces. The demonic girls then grab and claw at him, forcing HENRY to play with them. The room becomes augmented through HENRY'S eyes, the girls laughter turning into cackling squeals. The room is plastered with their lurid shadows, surrounding and consuming HENRY.

5 INT. HALLWAY. PLANTER HOUSE. DAY

HENRY runs out into the hallway, leaving the pink nightmare behind. As he runs, HENRY pulls off the fancy dress clothing, looking emotionally scarred.

6 INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM. DAY

HENRY is still sitting at his desk, as he crosses out "1a. Sarah and Katie", shivering at the memory. HENRY begins to look around the room for inspiration, until his gaze lands on a humungous and tremendously out of place photo of his mother, singing at the opera (The photo is also signed by LEXI). HENRY sighs and writes "1b. MUM" onto his page.

7 INT. SMALL FAMILY KITCHEN. DAY

LEXI PLANTER is sitting on the kitchen stall. In one hand she holds a kitschy red phone, the other she uses to twiddle with the phone cord. HENRY PLANTER is sitting on the stairs, eavesdropping on his mother's conversation.

LEXI PLANTER

Oh Shazza, I'm just so worried,
why can't he be like a normal
son?

(beat)

He's ruining my image!

LEXI listens to her friend on the other side of the line. She nods.

LEXI PLANTER

So, are you recording Bake Off?

HENRY rolls his eyes and goes back to his room.

8 INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM. DAY

HENRY still sitting at his desk, quickly crosses out "1b. mum" from his list and glances out the window staring at his neighbour watering his garden. HENRY then writes "1c. MR. Lucas @ NO. 25".

9 EXT. PLANTER HOUSE- DAY.

HENRY wanders outside of his house, fiddling with his hands and breathing anxiously through his snorkel. HENRY approaches MR. LUCAS, a middle aged man with a buzz haircut and one large scar running down the left side of his face. He is watering his gardenias absentmindedly. HENRY edges closer, at which point MR. LUCAS notices HENRY but ignores him.

HENRY hangs around him awkwardly, building up courage to approach him, clutching a note in his hand that reads "will you be my friend?".

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MR. LUCAS
What do ya want, kid?

HENRY freezes up, staring dead-pan at MR. LUCAS, who is now scowling at him.

MR. LUCAS
You here to laugh, too? Laugh at
the goddamn cripple?

HENRY stares at him wide eyed, shaking his head vigorously. MR. LUCAS frowns, pulling up his left trouser leg to reveal his prosthetic leg.

MR. LUCAS
Go on, kid. Laugh it up!
(growling)
Go on, get outta here or I'll
turn my hose on you.

MR. LUCAS turns the hose threateningly towards HENRY, his brow twitching with anger. HENRY nods, retreating with a frown, still clutching his note.

MR. LUCAS
(Mumbling)
Goddamn kid, always in that
goddamn wetsuit. Needs to be seen
to, he does.

HENRY walks down the street, away from his house. As he does this, he quickly draws a line through MR LUCAS'S name in his notebook.

10 EXT. LOCAL PARK. DAY

HENRY perches on a long wooden bench, breathing through his snorkel. The light streaks through the trees above him and the birds caw in the distance. CJ JAMES, 16, sits down on the other side of the bench; a cool and fashionable teenager. HENRY gawks at CJ, clearly in awe of him. CJ looks up from his phone and nods to HENRY, then goes back to scrolling through his phone. HENRY blushes. Seizing the opportunity, he slides closer to CJ.

HENRY looks up, blushing a deeper shade of pink and peaking up at CJ for his reaction. He turns away briefly, pulls out his notebook and writes "ld. Boy on the park bench". HENRY slides closer to CJ, who again looks up from his phone and coolly acknowledges HENRY.

HENRY'S face begins to light up, building up the courage to do something more proactive.

In the distance and unbeknown to HENRY, LARA LAKER, a highly attractive and confident young woman, approaches HENRY and CJ.

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LARA LAKER

Hey, sexy!

HENRY looks up abruptly to see LARA standing in front of him. He begins to turn scarlet, his eyes widening like a baby deer. HENRY gestures to himself trying to ascertain if LARA is referring to him.

LARA ignores HENRY lumping herself down on CJ's lap and passionately snogging him.

HENRY stares at the couple, uncomfortable and somewhat disturbed. LARA begins grinding onto CJ, moaning passionately. HENRY's eyes widen, inhaling and exhaling deeply through his snorkel. LARA's hand brushes against HENRY's leg, to which HENRY immediately recoils, jumping off of the bench and bolting away, gaping at the couple as he goes.

HENRY runs into the distance, scanning behind him for any signs of the couple, oblivious to what is in front of him. He breathes heavily through his snorkel.

AMOS

(In the distance)

Watch out kid!

A little way down the path is AMOS OZ, roller skating at full pelt towards HENRY. AMOS is in his early 60s and has an anxious, "tortured artist" look about him. He is dressed in tattered and paint speckled clothing with an aviator hat.

HENRY and AMOS collide into each other, both falling backwards. AMOS immediately bounces up. HENRY lies still for a minute, taking everything in before slowly sitting up, dazed and confused.

AMOS moves over to HENRY, holding his hand out to him. HENRY stares, while AMOS impatiently ushers him to take his hand.

AMOS

(Rambling to himself)

Funny thing falling over. One minute you're up, next minute you're down. People don't notice too often when they're up... not until they're down anyway.

AMOS hoists HENRY up by his hand, shaking it vigorously.

AMOS

Amos Oz! Great to meet you!

HENRY stares up at AMOS, bewildered.

AMOS
(Hurriedly)
Better be off... Dragons to slay,
maidens to save.

AMOS pauses and suddenly pulls HENRY into him, staring searchingly into his eyes. They stay there for a long moment, AMOS boring into him, a complete switch from his previous persona. His face then softens, full of sorrow. He releases his grip on HENRY.

AMOS
Nope! Never mind.

AMOS jumps back into action, skating away down the path.

AMOS
(calling behind)
See ya, kid.

HENRY pauses for a moment, taking a deep breath through his snorkel before ripping his notebook from his pocket and writing "le. Amos Oz".