

Visitations

Six half hour dramas for Young People's TV

Series Format : Six unrelated narratives, linked by style and situation.

Six teenagers (one per episode) are 'visited' by the effects of strange and unexplained forces which symbolise aspects of their life-situations. In the world of the series the young test and resist the limits placed upon them through imaginatively volatile experiences.

Each episode opens and closes with a satellite shot of the Earth and the grinding sound of it's turning. We then see the sky and travel in to the 'chosen' home. Each week a different house and a different central character. There is a brief summative narration at the end of each episode given by the main character.

The keynotes of the series will be :

Young teenage characters facing the extra-ordinary.

A distinctive, atmospheric, filmic style.

Contemporary urban settings.

Dark, off-beat narratives working on ambiguity, audacity and the theatrical.

Touching both irony and awe.

There will be six episodes :

1. Water

2. Dark

3. Crisp

4. Freezer

5. Angel Meat

6. Chain

Episode 2

Dark

Abdi is scared of the dark. His brothers think it's very funny. They taunt him with dark images. He fights with them. His father stops them.

Later. Bedtime. Abdi's parents are discussing his fear. At 13 they believe that he should have grown out of it. Father blames the power-cut when Abdi was a baby. In flashback we see Abdi as a baby, his father is holding him in the dark and crying in fear.

Abdi's bedroom. He has a large number of lamps, lights and torches around his bedroom; just in case. At night he longs for the brightness of the day. He lies in bed surrounded by the lights.

The following morning. His family are going on a trip by train. It is summer. On the train they sit facing an old man whose mirrored glasses always seem to catch the sun. Abdi has his face out of the train window facing into the blazing sun. Back in his seat Dad is talking to the old man. The old man is facing Abdi. He says the longest tunnel in the country is on this line... and coming soon. Abdi panics. He looks out of the window to see the blackness of the tunnel approaching. He begins to run towards the back of the train to avoid the shadow of the tunnel. It chases and then catches him. He is at the back window of the train as it disappears into the darkness.

Dark time. The old man's voice questions him, taunts him, soothes him. Abdi sees the things he has always imagined in the dark; things he has learnt to fear. He sees a figure far off... as if down the tunnel. He runs again, groping forward towards it. He reaches the figure and taps it gingerly on the shoulder. It turns. It is himself (of course), white with fear. At his feet is Dad. Scared.

The train comes out of the tunnel. Abdi is staring at the old man chatting to mum and dad. Dad's eyes give away his fear. Mum is telling the old man about Abdi's fear and laughing. The old man turns to Abdi. "The darkness is my friend. It isn't black. It's thick with colour. Full of shades." The family are gob-smacked at this quiet and strange outburst. Abdi is angry. He shouts. "You don't know!" Parents horrified. The old man takes off his glasses, they still reflect the sun. Quiet. He is blind.

Later. Home. Night. Abdi is switching off all the torches, lights and lamps. His parents watching nervously. He climbs into bed. Only one light left. Is he sure? Yes. The light goes out.

Dad watches from the door. He looks nervously around the dark corners of the room. Then in the direction of Abdi. He smiles.

Abdi lies in bed. Looking ahead of him. He closes his eyes.

Darkness for a good few moments.

Then glorious colour.

Episode 3.

Crisps

Dee loves crisps. She eats alone in her bedroom. She looks forward to every new sales promotion. Her dinner is cold on the table downstairs. Her bedroom is crammed with the free gifts that she has sent for from the packets.

The shops. Today there is a new promotion beginning on her favourite crisps : Treasure Hunt - little black bags inside the packets with £10, £20 and £50 notes.

She is at the door of the shop as it opens. Her friend is trying to make her see sense.

With her first crisp packet she wins. Then again. Again. Again.

The money begins to pile up in her bedroom amongst the free gifts. Her friends watch her disappear from them. They go their own way.

Shop. A happy shop-keeper takes Dee's money. The little black bag contains a personal messages to her. One word. She sticks it to her bedroom wall. She takes money from a tin high on a shelf in the kitchen. leaves the evidence,

She visits many different shops. Wherever she buys them from they contain one word in an order which builds into full sentences. They prophesise. They tell her to eat crisps. She does. The money piles further.

She uses the money to buy crisps direct from the manufacturer. A small, silent van, with two delivery men arrive at her house. They leave with money on the dash-board. She doesn't eat the crisps anymore. She takes out the black packets and tips the crisps into a growing pile. When she goes out she has crisps in her hair. Her friends pick them out. She turns angrily on them.

Shop. No promotional crisps. Another. No crisps. Another. No.

A super-market. An assistant manager is showing a distracted Dee that the date of the promotional offer is about to pass. He has one packet left. He tells her she might try the manufacturer. She snatches the crisps and goes.

Her luck is out. The black bag says "Sorry, you haven't won this time. But why not try our new Prawn Cocktail flavour". She throws the crisps in the air in violent desperation. They land in her hair and stay there.

Her friends try to reach her but fail. She has suffered a gross personality change. Crisps are now always in her tangled hair.

Bedroom. She finds herself down to her last wadge of money. She slowly dials the manufacturer. The voice on the other end of the line knows her name. She orders as many boxes as she can with her last winnings. It is the final day of the offer.

A huge van blocks the street outside her house. The two silent delivery men are delivering the final boxes. They drive off. The final money on the dashboard. The family move towards Dee's bedroom door. It opens. The room is crammed from ceiling to floor with blue packets of crisps. They spill forward.

We see the outside of the house. Dee's bedroom window. Her bloated, blue face presses against the glass. Suffocated in cellophane and crisps.