EXT. STREET - DAY

Closed shops and cafes on one side. Rows of parked cars sit in front of them. Opposite is a leafy park.

JOE pads around a red Toyota as he inspects it closely. He’s thirties, a little overweight and in a cheap suit.

VAL, forties and in casual clothes, follows him round the car. She spends more time watching him than inspecting.

Over on the pavement stands COLIN. Fifties, very overweight, scruffy, stubbly and using a baseball cap to cover his baldness. He fiddles with a phone while he glances at the couple occasionally.

He pauses when Joe approaches. Val follows close behind.

    COLIN
    So what d’ya think?

    JOE
    Erm yeah, good. How much again?

    COLIN
    Eighteen hundred. It said on the-

    JOE
    Mind if we...?

    He indicates to Val and himself. Colin nods his head. Gestures ‘be my guest’ while he goes back to his phone.

    Joe and Val step away. They speak in low voices...

    JOE
    So what do you think?

    VAL
    No. What do you think?

    He shrugs. Glances back to the car.

    JOE
    It’s not so bad. Drove well, looks the part. Only thing is...

    She gestures for him to continue with mild annoyance.

    JOE
    Seems a bit cheap.

    VAL
    That’s a problem?
JOE
Well. Maybe there’s something wrong with it.

VAL
Like what?

JOE
If I knew that I wouldn’t be wondering about it.

VAL
So we ring the breakdown people to check it over for us. They do that.

JOE
We should’ve brought them with us.

VAL
I bloody well would have if you’d mentioned it.

JOE
I never thought of it. It was...

She throws him a dirty look he finds hard to ignore.

JOE
Last time they were no good anyway. The fucking exhaust fell off. That’s why we’re here.

VAL
No. You wrapping it around the lamp post is why we’re here.

JOE
Hey alright. I was distr... You ain’t helping.

VAL
And you are?

JOE
He said at the start he’s got other people to see. Wants a yea or a nay today, he says.

VAL
Okay, so it’s simple. Shall we get it or not?

He glances over to the car. Twitches. Val taps her foot.

VAL
It’s the best we’ve seen.
JOE
Are you talking about the colour again?

VAL
Red ones go faster. I’m all for it if you are.

JOE
Ok, I’ll haggle him down a bit.

He turns to move.

VAL
Oh no, don’t. You always do it wrong.

He stops. Turns back to her.

JOE
Right then. You decide how much.

VAL
Sixteen.

JOE
No, cos then he’ll go straight to seventeen. Then I’ll go sixteen fifty and he’ll go seventeen thirty ecetera eceterum. No room.

VAL
Right. Fifteen hundred. No less. Just don’t get silly like you...

She trails off. Joe’s about to reply but bites his tongue.

Instead he steps slowly towards Colin, who looks up but keeps typing a text.

COLIN
What’s the verdict?

JOE
Yeah. It looks good.

COLIN
Already said that. Like driving it?

Joe nods. Both of them stare at the car a bit too long. Colin puts his phone away and claps his hands together.

COLIN
So...

JOE
Ok. How about I offer you fifteen hundred?
Colin scratches his chin.

COLIN
I got mouths to feed. Seventeen.

JOE
So have I. Fifteen fifty.

COLIN
Come on. You’re supposed to go sixteen. Right, sixteen fifty.

JOE
Fifteen seventy.

Colin guffaws, much to Joe’s surprise.

COLIN
Can’t go lower than sixteen fifty.

JOE
Fifteen eighty. Um, eighty five.

Val steps in.

VAL
No. Stop it. We can do sixteen fifty.

She shakes Colin’s hand as Joe quietly fumes.

INT. TOYOTA – MOVING – MOMENTS LATER

Val drives as Joe sits moodily in the passenger seat.

VAL
I like it.
(glances at Joe)
Oh come on. You’re like a child.

JOE
I was there. Right on it. Just about to seal the deal.

VAL
Or make him storm off. Why annoy the guy over that much?

JOE
He wasn’t storming off. And it was a sizeable amount of money.

VAL
Not when you spend it in the pub it isn’t. Look, it’s done now. Can we do the post mortem later?
Joe stares out of the window with a grim look.
Val shakes her head as she turns on the radio. Silence.

    VAL
    Didn’t we try this?

A pause until she thumps him on the knee.

    JOE
    No. I wanted to listen to the engine. And if there was any sounds indicating that the fucking exhaust might fall off.

She fiddles with the radio.

    JOE
    Whoa!

He grips the dash as Val narrowly misses a parked car.

She swerves then stares forward as if nothing happened.

    VAL
    Don’t say anything. Just make the radio work.

He hits two buttons. It lights up and blares pop music. He turns it down.

    JOE
    Me and technology have a -

    VAL
    A very special understanding. I know. Hmm. What’s in the glovebox?

Joe opens it. There’s a manual and a box of tissues. He pulls them out, flicks through the manual then blows his nose.

    JOE
    Weird.

    VAL
    What is?

    JOE
    Just thinking. Why’d he meet us there? He don’t live there. Where’d it say on the paperwork?

    VAL
    Greenvale, I think.

    JOE
    That’s miles away.
VAL
It’s half an hour.

JOE
How’d you know that?

VAL
I’ve got friends over there.

JOE
I don’t know anybody over there.

VAL
That’s because you only know people in the local.

JOE
Weird though, isn’t it?

VAL
What? That you haven’t got any proper friends any more?

JOE
Says Miss Popularity. You’ve got four friends and you don’t even like three of them. Ooh, watch the road, dear. I meant that he had us look at the car there.

VAL
Maybe he works there.

JOE
He don’t work there. It’s shut. It’s Sunday.

VAL
Maybe he works close by. Or he was visiting a friend.

JOE
He looked like a hobo with vague access to a sink.
    (peers in the mirror)
That’s weird.

VAL
You’re glitching. I think I might turn you off and on again.

JOE
That car. Watch your mirror. But don’t hit anything.

She eyes him hard then glances in the mirror.
VAL
I don’t see anything.

JOE
See? The black one two cars back.

VAL
I don’t see it.

JOE
Trust me. He’s there. He’s been there a good while.

VAL
Maybe he’s going the same way.

JOE
Nobody goes the same way as you do.
Take the next left.

She glares at him.

VAL
You serious?

JOE
Totally.

Val huffs but indicates then turns left. She drives on down a quiet side street. Joe lowers himself in his seat but keeps his eyes on his mirror.

VAL
You watch too much TV.

JOE
So do you. I know as you’re always sat there beside me watching it.

VAL
Yes, but I don’t let it affect my mind. Who’d follow us?

JOE
Look! That car. I told you.

She glances in the mirror. Sees a black BMW X5 behind them.

VAL
That one?
(he nods)
Ok. So let’s play.

She speeds up. Turns the next corner so quick Joe grips the dash and stomps his imaginary brake pedal. She drives hard then turns again.
JOE
Holy mother of...

Val yanks the steering wheel so they skid rather than turn into a narrow street with cars on just one side. She parks fast behind a larger car.

She smirks when Joe spots her lowering herself in her seat. They both watch their mirrors closely.

JOE
Great park by the way.

VAL
Thanks. Keep it coming.

A long moment passes...

JOE
Ooh. There they are.

The BMW X5 rolls past the street entrance slowly. Both hold their breath until it moves out of view.

VAL
Weird. You were right.

JOE
Hate to say I told you so.

VAL
No you don’t.

JOE
So, what now?

VAL
I dunno. Pub or home?

JOE
Hmm. Bit early for the pub.

VAL
Now there’s a surprise. Home it is. Watch the mirrors, James.

They set off.

INT. BMW X5 - MOVING - SEVERAL MOMENTS EARLIER

A COUPLE, rather similar but slightly different to Joe and Val, stare forlornly at house numbers and street signs.

He drives, she’s beside him.

HIM
You said you knew where it was.
HER
I thought I did. You said you knew where it was.

HIM
No. I said I had a good idea.

HER
You never have a good idea.

HIM
Do we have to argue now? I said I thought I knew where it was, not that I definitely did.

HER
But you were here six months ago. How do you not know where it is? Turn left. It’s gotta be up here.

HIM
We’ve already been up here.

HER
No we haven’t. Follow this car. Maybe they’re going to the same place too.

He speeds up to catch the red Toyota.

EXT. SMALL HOUSE - LATER
Val pulls the Toyota into the drive. There’s a horrible scraping and grinding as the fucking exhaust falls off.

JOE
I knew it!

VAL
No you didn’t.

JOE
Yes I fucking did!

FADE OUT.