

—ARMOUR

TREATMENT

SEPTEMBER 2022

EPISODE TWO: **SAVE/TOUCH**

With a transfer in the offing and his profile growing, Harry seeks fulfillment from old flames and tries to rebuild bridges with a close friend.

June 2016. Harry looks at the headline. Aiden stands above him, weary from the all-night negotiation that led to it. It says that a well known professional player is gay... but doesn't name him or the club. Waves of relief. An enduring silence. The brothers look at each other for a long while, before Aiden turns to leave: "I'll leave you to reflect".

July 2016. Pre-season at Leeds. At the start of training, Harry's gaze lingers a little too long on new young pro, Zac, getting changed. Zac notices, but doesn't say anything. Harry quickly looks away. After training, Harry and Aiden have a meeting with Isobel, Leeds' chairperson, about a new contract. Aiden is open that they are getting interest from Premier League clubs and that he needs to think about Harry long-term. They get the offer from Isobel and it's nowhere near what Aiden wants. He says they'll be in contact. On the way out, Aiden says they have an offer from Spurs - the official offer should come through to Leeds in the coming days, until then Harry shouldn't mention it to anyone. This is a promise of a regular spot in the starting XI of a side in the Champions League.

Harry sits in his parents living room, alone, eating a sandwich. He has an article open on his phone: "Top English Player Caught In Gay Sex Scandal". He reaches the bottom of the article, then scrolls back up to re-read it. How many times has he done this? It borders on a nervous compulsion. He hears footsteps approaching and hastily closes it. Mum Angie hurries into the room, carrying a large picture frame. She starts holding it up at various points on the wall; she wants to display his first England u21 cap alongside a cheesy picture of him with braces as a child. He's embarrassed and not even sure if they get actual, physical caps for u21s. He hasn't eaten much of his sandwich, is he okay? He replies that he's just nervous about the match.

Harry parks up at St. George's Park, England's training centre. He looks nervously out towards the facilities, then hesitates. He reads the article on his phone, yet again. Staring at it. A knock on his car window makes him jump. He meets Oli, a fellow u21 player. He recognised Harry and knows it's his first time. Oli spots the article on Harry's phone, commenting what bullshit that article really was; they didn't even name the player or the club and regardless, who actually cares? What does it matter? Harry seems a little fortified by this and accompanies Oli inside. Harry plays in the match, performing well. The commentator: "are you watching, Premier League scouts?".

August 2016. Sunday lunchtime. Harry and Aiden check into a luxury hotel in King's Cross. Aiden heads off to meet 'contacts'. Harry sits alone in the room. He seems apprehensive. Charlotte arrives, clearly a pre-arranged meeting. She is moody at first - she states that Aiden is the only reason she is here. She explains how she felt at the camping trip and what it's done to their friendship. She then allows Harry to speak. He is apologetic and admits to his failures as a friend. Eventually, she permits him to hug her and agrees they can be friends again. Harry says he's so grateful for her. Charlotte says they're now going to her flat - she won't tell Harry why. In a montage, Charlotte forces Harry to get dressed into an "out-there" outfit, despite his protests.

They get the tube and arrive at Notting Hill Carnival. Harry is joyous, transformed. He sees an openly gay couple and is clearly moved. His eyes linger on them. He is amazed by the vibrancy of the different types of people. One of the guys comes up to Harry and recognises him - "oh are you Harry Slade?" - Harry is a bit short with the guy, but not rude. Clearly not knowing how to speak to a gay person but more importantly, thinking that any 'gay interaction' could put him at risk of being found out.

Charlotte gets involved in a dance-off - she encourages Harry to join in, but he tells her "absolutely not". A guy in the group grabs Harry's hand and brings him into the circle. Surprising even himself, Harry ends up performing a short dance. He blushes after but has a huge grin on his face. Harry briefly chats with the guy after - Harry asks if he lives in London - he says he's originally from Bolton but has lived here for 6 years: "it's so much more open down here". He explains he grew up in a mining town and it's still pretty backward, although there's no doubt it's getting better. Harry and Charlotte take a selfie together, both ecstatic. Harry gets a text from Mason: "that bird I was with at your party - Chloe - she wanted your number. Told her I'd let you know." - Chloe's number follows. Harry looks anguished but tries to take the look off his face.

The next day, Harry is taken to a suite at White Hart Lane to meet the Sporting Director at Spurs. He is sold a vision of the club's ambition and his role in the team, plus shown a promo video for Spurs' new stadium that he'd be playing at once built. They talk about the prospect of Harry signing a 2-year deal with an option for Spurs to extend to a third year. Harry seems excited but after the meeting is still reluctant to leave his boyhood team.

Harry and Aiden pack in the hotel. Aiden asks if Harry wants to discuss what happened. How is he getting on mentally. Aiden tells Harry he needs to be more careful. Always needs to keep his wits about him. If he wants to fuck a lad, then he needs to make it his own business and make sure it's someone who doesn't have a clue who he is. Harry goes bright red and is insistent he isn't gay. It was a one time, drunk thing. He was led astray. Aiden doesn't help matters by saying "sure it was, mate".

After getting home to Leeds, Harry plays on his phone. He sends a bluntly sexual message to Chloe. She responds with a topless pic. Harry takes a shot. Chloe comes over to Harry's flat. She's dressed up. They have a few drinks and begin an awkward hook-up... Harry acts uber masculine and licks her out but after a lot of attempts, he can't physically sleep with Chloe after all. He is uncommunicative and silent. He calls Chloe a cab and Chloe clearly blames herself for what has happened. Harry - horny, tipsy and alone - sees Theo's follow request on Instagram. He accepts it and sees a few topless pictures of Theo. He starts to get hard... he messages Theo - a tactless message: "eyup - sorry about what happened. Appreciate you keeping it on the DL. Curious innit". Harry goes for a piss... he gets back. No reply. He turns on the TV... footie. Vibrate. "Yeah dw, I'm not gonna say owt. I'm not a wanker". Harry gulps... he replies instantly. "Would be good to say hi like. You free?". Theo - "what, like now?".

Harry picks up Theo in the city centre. Theo's first comment is that why is he a rich footballer in a shit car. "Hire car - Jag's fucked". They share an awkward and sexually tense journey. Harry hardly says a word and Theo does all the talking as they drive through the countryside. Harry keeps looking in his rear-view mirror - no one's following him this time.

The pair sit in the car for a moment in a deserted car park. Theo makes the first move... he purposefully doesn't kiss him. Starting him off with a handjob then head again. Harry keeps his eyes shut throughout. Theo whispers "wanna fuck me?". Harry doesn't answer. "You fucked a guy before?" "Shut up. Stop talking". Harry gets out of the car. Theo looks at him through the windscreen. Harry motions with his head for Theo to get out of the car. Harry grabs Theo and turns him around, pushing him against the car bonnet. "Wait, you got lube and a jonny?". Harry shakes his head. Theo digs his wallet out of his back pocket and takes out a condom. "Just use spit". Harry struggles to get inside Theo but eventually does and as he does, Harry loses his virginity, aggressively fucking Theo.

Harry and Theo begin the drive back, in the same silence that typified the ride there. Harry stops the car suddenly. Theo is confused before understanding dawns on him. He is furious with Harry, who tells Theo to leave his car in the middle of nowhere. Theo shames Harry for being a "coward" and not being able to accept who he is. Harry drives away, leaving Theo.

Match day. Tuesday night. Harry stands next to Mason in the tunnel, awaiting the arrival of the opposing team. Mason turns and reminds him that it's WAGs night tomorrow, they've got it all booked and Harry needs to find a date for it. He nods with fake enthusiasm, but when Mason turns away again, Harry is sullen. The match starts. Harry is out of sorts. Leeds are losing and Harry is responsible for a way-laid pass, which results in an opposition goal. He hears abuse towards him from the stands. He hits a shot on goal but it is easily saved by the keeper. Harry sees the keeper's pass out to his defender and Harry barges the player, attempting, unnecessarily, to get the ball. Sent off, again. Harry storms down the tunnel - Zac is there, stood watching in his sub's bib. He asks Harry if he's alright.

Lorna speaks to Harry, having noticed a change in Harry's behaviour. Is it press speculation / attention or something else that's affecting him? Lorna says she knows Harry is inevitably going to leave soon and she doesn't want to see him risk his future. Lorna asks whether there is anything the club can do? Could the club help to get Harry some mental health support - counselling perhaps? Sports psychology is a developing science in football and perhaps something can be done to help. Harry goes to the psychiatrist, Riley, but although there is a willingness from Harry to talk, he does not speak about what the biggest single reason is for his drop in form; he clams up evasively, greatly limiting the benefit of the sessions.

The next morning, Harry rings Aiden and asks him to hook him up with one of his friends for the WAGs dinner. Aiden says it won't be a problem and to leave it to him. Before he hangs up, Aiden, off-the-cuff, mentions: "come to think of it, I've not seen you with a bird for a long time".

Harry turns up at the dinner with his date. Paps are already there - it's clear one of the lads or their agents gave the press the low down. Harry is quiet and nervous throughout. Mason has turned up with an equally attractive date - he makes an active effort to kiss her within the paps' view. Harry questions his motivation - Mason is honest in that he's aiming to piss off his girlfriend. Harry's date goes to the bathroom and Mason follows her - Harry is immediately suspicious. He waits a minute then goes in their direction. He can't find Mason in the gents and takes an alternate route back to the table. Not even trying to hide it, Harry comes across his date and Mason getting frisky. Another of the players comes across the scene too and immediately asks Harry why he's letting Mason get off with his date. Harry grabs Mason and pushes him against the wall and shouts at him to "go fuck himself". Mason turns his head and whispers to Harry - "enjoying this are you?". He nods down to Harry's crotch. Whilst he's not visibly erect, the suggestion that he could be is there. Harry lets Mason go and storms out.

Harry lies on his bed and Googles "are there any gay football players". He reads about former Leeds player Robbie Rogers who came out after retiring. He is linked to the Wikipedia page about Justin Fashanu - the only

British player to have come out whilst playing professionally but who later killed himself. Harry quickly slams shut his laptop.

Harry sits at his kitchen table with a cold coffee in front of him. He looks stressed, head in hands. His phone vibrates and he opens the message; Charlotte. They have been chatting about what happened with Mason; Harry has said he doesn't even want to go to training because of it. She sends him a voice note in response. Charlotte tells him to ignore the press but that he's going to have to get used to this, especially if he's going to be transferred to the top flight. She has faith that he can handle it. Charlotte's advice livens Harry's spirits.

The Leeds first team, and under-23s, play a 7-a-side high intensity game - Harry and Mason are kept purposefully apart by the coaching staff. Zac tackles a player and ends up on the floor near Harry's feet. Harry gives him a hand up and Zac gives Harry a broad smile in thanks before turning back to the game. Harry blushes.

Harry is called to a meeting room where Aiden is marching up and down, looking stressed. He shows Harry a splash on Twitter about his and Mason's altercation with accompanying photos. Aiden explains that Harry's recent behaviour, and press attention, means that Spurs are looking at signing someone else, instead of him. They've been put off. However, Aiden has a potential offer from another northern club - Everton - that Harry now needs to consider. Harry says he'll just stay at Leeds, then. Aiden, frustratedly, explains that is not an option anymore, as Leeds already have a replacement lined up for him and are counting on the money from his sale. Harry is still adamant in wanting to move to a London club. Aiden is confused and angry with him; they are running out of time before the transfer window ends.

Harry calls Charlotte and she tells him he should go to Everton - why wouldn't he? Harry fails to explain. Charlotte battles for him to speak to her... eventually he asks her "is London really as open as people say?". She asks him why and he pushes her just to answer. She says that it really is - she feels so much more at home as a gay woman. You don't get so many socially right-wing arseholes like her mum down here, or at least, they're usually outnumbered. She asks why he wants to know - is there something he wants to tell her? Aiden bursts in - there's been a huge development...

Harry trains late on his own, trying to keep his mind off things. When he gets to the changing rooms, Zac is there waiting. Harry asks why he is still here so late and he replies that he is waiting for Harry so he can clean his boots. Harry is clear that Zac doesn't need to do this - he can clean his own boots, he's only a few years older. Harry is exhausted and doesn't say too much back. There's an undeniable sexual tension. Zac goes over to Harry and takes off his boots. He looks at Harry as he does, before walking away. Harry goes to shower. He hears the door to the changing rooms lock. Harry's anxiety is palpable. After a while, Zac appears on the opposite side of the showers. They look at each other. Zac moves over to the shower next to Harry. Harry nervously asks "So are you like...". He can't finish the sentence. They shower in silence, both looking forward, not at each other. Zac looks nervous too but then suddenly turns and kisses Harry. It's not a peck, it's a proper kiss... Zac pulls away. They look at each other... nothing is said... then Harry kisses Zac back.

EPISODE THREE: SWITCH/TRAP

Despite an electrifying new connection, Harry's move opens up a dangerous world of fame, thirst and expectation.

September 2016. Harry is unveiled as a Spurs' player. He signs shirts at the club shop: SLADE '8' emblazoned on the back. He comes off the bench, for his debut in a top-of-the-table fixture, and has a solid match. Afterwards, he is interviewed alongside goalscorer, and captain, Harry Kane by Match of the Day, with specific questions about how he's settling in and his nerves about a potential England debut.

September 2016 - March 2017. A montage as Harry revels in playing in the Premier League and Champions League. He receives his first ever call up to the England first team, for a round of friendlies. He is ecstatic, as is Aiden. Harry receives a video call from his father, Aaron, who is so proud he almost cries. / Harry texts with Zac, staying in contact, a tinge of sweetness, affection and romantic implications in Zac's messages. Harry is a little more conservative but still eager, with lots of selfies and laughter. / Harry trudges in and out of a fancy hotel, repeatedly, getting to know the staff better each time, smiling at them but also looking weary of the place.

March 2017. Having lived in a hotel for months, Harry moves in temporarily with Charlotte in her Central London flat. His fancy new flat still isn't finished and he can't bear the sanitised feel of a hotel any longer. She mothers him and teaches him how to cook. Harry properly gets into it. They have a glass of wine as they watch a TV show - when the episode finishes, the next show is "Drag Race". Charlotte speaks enthusiastically about it but Harry demands they watch something else, being rather abrupt. Harry goes to the toilet. On his way, he eyes a collection of seashells displayed ornamentally on a hallway table. While he is gone, Charlotte sees a WhatsApp notification pop up on Harry's phone - it's from Zac and it's a cute message. She realises this is a romantic interest. When Harry returns, she turns the channel over to sport and pauses as she prepares to ask him a question... is he seeing anyone at the moment? Harry says no. Charlotte presses the point saying he's in a whole new world down in London - is he going to get on dating apps? She is careful to say there's "so many single people down here. Loads of girls... and guys... looking to date". Harry doesn't respond and pauses... clearly wanting to tell Charlotte. He decides not to, but doesn't kick back against Charlotte's obvious choice of words. Harry goes to bed, where he starts to reply to Zac's cute text with a similarly cute response, kisses and all... before deleting the message and responding with something more restrained.

The next morning, Harry cooks Charlotte breakfast, delighted at his new, and clearly natural, skill. Charlotte gets an email, offering her a position at the Copenhagen Post - an English language newspaper in Denmark. Harry looks disappointed but congratulates her all the same. Charlotte says she's going to go and donate blood that morning - Harry should come with her. At the hospital, Harry and Charlotte fill out the mandatory blood donation form. Harry suddenly goes white, seeing that the form states that men-who-have-sex-with-men (MSM) can't donate. He does his best to conceal a panic attack by pretending to go to the toilet. When he gets back, he gives blood. As he does, he passes out. A member of the public takes a pic of Harry, unconscious. Charlotte notices and forces the person to delete the image.

April 2017. Before his England debut in a friendly match, Harry gets a selfie from Zac. Careful for the other players not to see in the dressing room, Harry discreetly sends him a selfie back - he looks genuinely happy. Harry performs well and lots of fans wait for his autograph after the game. A few days later, Harry misses a vital penalty in the FA Cup semi-final against Chelsea. They end up losing and missing out on the final. Now he gets abuse from fans. He voice-notes Zac about how he feels, letting his heart open to him and complaining how fickle fans can be; that many of them might be the same people who cheered for him in an England shirt and at earlier Spurs games. Zac sends a sweet message back.

Aiden nervously tells Harry that he's been selected as one of the faces of a new anti-homophobia campaign. Harry immediately goes red. Aiden carefully asks Harry if he's had any more dalliances with men. Before he can finish his sentence, Harry cuts him off and tells him to "fuck off". Harry demands that Aiden gets him out of it.

Harry gets back to Charlotte's flat. He looks into her room, now partially empty since she has gone to Copenhagen. He clearly feels lonely. He gets a call from Zac; Zac explains he had a holiday booked with his brother to Spain but that he's bailed as he's got a new job. Would Harry want to come with him?

The paper that ran the "gay footballer scandal" story run a similar article, this time speculating that a player could be about to come out. The story has some negative connotations, implying that this would be controversial rather than a positive change; speculating whether the player in question had been "caught out", increasing the undercurrent of insecurity and anxiety that Harry constantly feels. Harry texts Zac and tells him he can't come on the holiday. Zac is disappointed, but understands; Harry is famous. Zac offers to look for places they could go where people wouldn't know him. But Harry refuses the idea altogether, it's just too risky.

Harry is forced to do the anti-homophobia campaign. The team attends the training and the trainer uses the tabloid story as an example. Harry freezes and his mouth dries when he has to answer a question. After the training, he is moody and the campaign includes rainbow laces and wearing a rainbow armband. He is one of four players to speak to camera explaining how homophobia has no place in football. During the filming, a player speculates who the gay player is.

July 2017. Pre-season. Harry is now living in his own place in North London. He is spotted by locals. He gets the team's coach up to Leeds - on the way up, his teammates speculate what reaction Harry will get from the "Elland Road faithful"; the Leeds fans. Harry is invited to a Leeds United charity bash as a former player. He is reunited with Mason, who he has an awkward conversation with, and Lorna - with whom he later watches an under-23s match. As they watch from the sidelines, they discuss how brutal being an academy player is: one minute about to hit the heights of the first team, and the next released and down to the lower leagues. She uses Zac as an example - she reveals he rejected an offer from Doncaster Rovers - a smaller Yorkshire club - in the summer in the hope of making it at Leeds; she is honest that his chances are slim.

At night, Harry and Zac hook up in a sauna in a closed part of the Leeds training ground, Thorp Arch. They are nearly caught by Lorna who is the keyholder on duty and was checking the building. Lorna expresses her surprise at them still being friends - they only met briefly at the end of Harry's time at Leeds - and being on site so late. Harry uses comedy to deflect from the situation, saying he wanted a steam. Zac lies, saying he was passing on his way out and wanted to catch up with Harry; as they stayed in touch a little after their short time together at Leeds. After Lorna's departure, Zac asks Harry if he's ever going to tell anyone about his sexuality - Harry rudely and abrasively replies "are you my fucking therapist or summit?" and marches off.

Aiden accompanies Harry to an interview with BBC Radio Leeds. Aiden lets abuse from local fans - loitering outside the station - get to him, whilst Harry messes up the interview. On the way out, Harry expresses his frustration that their parents won't accept his money, not even for their healthcare. Harry is rested for the match and watches from the bench and discreetly celebrates when Leeds score. One of the Spurs players makes an inadvertently homophobic comment in the dressing room after - Harry forces himself to laugh along.

Charlotte video calls Harry from Copenhagen. Harry proudly shows Charlotte his new cooking skills and Charlotte proudly explains how her budding career is going well. She also reveals that she's got a first date that night - she shows Harry pictures from Tinder. Harry makes trivial complaints about being benched recently and says that people always think he's happy just because he's famous and is well paid. Charlotte reminds him that he

can always speak openly to her but he says he's just being silly. The call is interrupted by Charlotte seeing a man at her window with a camera - paparazzi. She screams and hides. Harry is terrified for her. She calls the police. Eventually they arrive and say there is no one around. They question her about the incident and it comes out that she is friends with Harry. The Danish police recognise Harry's name. They suggest they give her police protection for 48 hours. Charlotte rings Harry back. He is beyond frustrated and worried for Charlotte. He apologises that his 'name' is causing difficulties for Charlotte.

January 2018. Harry's performances haven't been up to scratch lately. He's played less minutes and, as a result, he hasn't made the England squad this time around. He texts Zac about having a few days off and being generally fed up. The next month, Harry is mid-wank when he gets a text... "Look outside your fucking window". Outside, in the street, Zac is leaning on the bonnet of an old hatchback with a grin on his face. Harry lets Zac up into his flat. Zac spots gay porn on the laptop and Harry just in a pair of boxers and states firmly that Harry can either "wank himself senseless" or "fuck me senseless" this weekend. "Pack your shit. We're off to somewhere that no one will ever find us". Harry is speechless but the idea has excited and gripped him. He wants to so badly, and why the fuck shouldn't he? But still he is afraid...

Zac drives with a nervous looking Harry in the passenger seat next to him, wearing sunglasses (in January) and a cap pulled low over his face. He turns the car speakers up - one of Harry's favourite DnB tunes. He presses Zac on where this mystery road trip is leading. Zac hesitates... "Kinloch Laggan". Zac has booked a cottage there. Harry is nonplussed. Zac clarifies "Scotland". Harry's jaw drops. As the journey passes, Harry grows increasingly comfortable and more confident, laughing with Zac and feeling free. They arrive that evening, but Harry refuses to collect the cottage keys with Zac, who rolls his eyes and goes to meet the owner himself. The owner asks whether Zac has come to one of the most remote and sparsely populated places, in the entire British Isles, alone...

Harry and Zac spend the evening indoors together, cooking food, having sex and talking long into the night in front of the fireplace. Harry is happier and more comfortable in his own skin than we have ever seen him previously. The next day, they take a walk along the coast. Harry refuses to hold hands, despite there being no sign of life save for themselves.

That evening, Zac suggests they go to the local pub. Harry is obviously reluctant but Zac argues "Look, on the tiny chance someone recognises you then we're just mates, it's not like you have to shag me in the beer garden". He and Zac drink pints and share some whiskey with the locals, who don't seem to have a clue who he is. Harry starts to socially come out of his shell much more in the absence of fame. However, Zac accidentally lets slip where they are staying, which elicits a noticeable pause in conversation with the locals. Chatter soon resumes, but Harry abruptly stands up and walks out into the beer garden. Zac follows moments later, perplexed. "It's a one-bed cottage." Harry states. Realisation washes over Zac. That minor detail may have given away the nature of their relationship. In a tiny settlement like this, what are the chances that the locals know the cottage and its size?

Back at the cottage, Harry and Zac get into a conversation about their situation. Harry admits how much he hates being a footballer when he can't reconcile it with his sexuality. All he wanted to do in that pub was kiss Zac, but he's too afraid of the consequences. It's so, so unfair that he can't do what he loves and is very good at, whilst being openly gay. Zac says he understands, he has the same situation, but Harry insists it's different. "Imagine me lining up at a Champions League match while the anthem plays, and the crowd are just chanting "Gay!" and "Bender!" along with it.

A couple of days later, Harry is back in London. He messages Zac and thanks him for a wonderful trip, emphasising how much he loved it. However, because of all the things they discussed on the last night of the trip, he thinks it's better if they "cool things off". Zac does not reply.

February 2018. In his hotel room before a Champions League match in Turin, Italy, Harry logs onto Grindr for the first time. He creates a profile with a pic of just his torso, selects "top" as his position and "discreet" as his tribe. After filtering out a number of men just visiting the city for the match, he finds someone who has no interest in the sport at all. He agrees to meet up with the guy in a few hours.

Harry learns that he's not even been benched for the match against Juventus and sits in the stands. He panics when he receives a message on Grindr with the accompanying notification tone. Spurs score and Harry's panic at being caught results in him not celebrating. After the match, he asks a fellow player to make excuses for his temporary disappearance as he is "off to shag a bird from back home who lives here".

Whilst showering, Harry has a panic attack in anticipation of the meet-up. He forces himself to go, leaving the hotel in a tracksuit with his hood up. When he reaches the guy's hotel, his lack of a lift keycard results in him not being able to get up to the room. During his wait to speak to the receptionist to gain entry, he takes out his phone to message the guy on Grindr. As he does, he is spotted from behind by a group of Italian football fans. They recognise him immediately and question why he is on Grindr. Harry makes a swift exit from the hotel lobby. He is followed by the group of drunk guys who start to abuse and fight him. Harry tries to protect himself but is outnumbered. He is beaten to the floor but manages to kick the legs out from the main assailant and darts away. He runs down side streets and manages to lose the guys. He hears police sirens and from his hiding place, witnesses the authorities arrest the men.

Harry limps back to his hotel, the immediate adrenaline and panic no longer dulling the pain of his injuries. He is spotted by a pap on the way in. He reaches his hotel room and, upon entry, slides to the floor in pain. He wells up, but tells himself not to cry. His armour not permitting his emotion. He pulls off his trackies to reveal his badly bruised knee. He pulls out his phone and deletes Grindr before flinging it across the room in anger. He wipes a bloody tear from his cheek...

He slowly walks over to his phone and picks it up. He curls into the fetal position on his bed and rings Charlotte... she answers. "Char... I've got something to tell you".

EPISODE FOUR: **PLAY/CROSS**

Harry's career becomes the casualty of his harrowing ordeal but the unlikely aftermath results in a new opportunity for acceptance.

February 2018. Aiden turns up at Harry's house, asking "what the fuck happened". He brandishes a press article with a photo of Harry on the streets of Turin, wearing trackies and with a hood up, entering Spurs' hotel. They speculate on what he was doing. Harry refuses to elaborate - Aiden is brutal, saying Harry needs to get his act together. He can't continue to defend a client who won't be honest with him. Harry's only retort is "am I only a 'client' to you?".

In the Spurs' physio room, Harry is told he's gonna be out for a while and might need to go for surgery. Aiden messages Harry again, pleading Harry to tell him the truth about what happened after the Champions League match and what is bothering him in general. "You up to that gay shit again?" "Fuck off Aiden". They continue to exchange texts before Aiden rings and reveals a sponsor has dropped him.

Harry has coffee with Charlotte who has come back from Denmark to check on him. She tries to talk to him about guys, but he still clearly feels uncomfortable talking about his sexuality and being overheard. Harry insists they go for a walk with their coffees. He opens up to Charlotte for the first time about his sexuality. They have a jovial conversation about men and Charlotte makes him play a game, identifying "hot guys" as they walk past.

August 2018. That night, at home, injured Harry watches Spurs smash Manchester United away - he's delighted with the result, but clearly frustrated at still being injured nearly 7 months later. Mid-match, Zac messages Harry and says he'll be in town in a few weeks for an away game at AFC Wimbledon (he's on loan from Leeds at Scunthorpe United). Could they meet up? Harry says Zac should come over to his place.

September 2018. Harry gets nervous waiting for Zac to come over -. Zac stays over that night and the next day, they sit in bed chatting. Zac asks Harry if he wants to come watch him play for Scunthorpe. Harry promises he will.

Harry walks towards AFC Wimbledon's stadium. He is spotted by some fans who ask why he's at a League One match. He lies and says he's doing some scouting on behalf of Spurs... an obvious lie on reflection, but sufficient in the moment. Harry gets a call from Aiden - there's an Instagram story of Harry on his own in Wimbledon - why on earth is he there? / Zac looks around the stadium and can't see Harry. / Harry exercises back at Spurs' gym - he looks annoyed at himself. / After the match, Zac looks at his phone; no response to his texts. He calls Harry and his phone is off. / Harry is working out alone, but as he finishes, the pain in his knee peaks and he crumples to the floor.

November 2018. Harry plays a reserve match. He is off the pace and is eventually substituted. Harry asks Aiden if he could look into other clubs and see if there's a loan option that they could take up for the second half of the season.

Harry and Aiden go to a Bonfire Night at Alexandra Palace. Harry keeps bringing up how Aiden is doing with finding him a club. Aiden, clearly frustrated, snaps and tells Harry that he needs to be realistic - staying at Spurs is not a viable long-term option. You don't bounce back immediately from an injury like Harry's and Spurs, when his performances are questionable even before the injury, are not likely to gamble on him regaining full fitness. He raises the idea of Harry going on loan to Middlesbrough - a Championship club in the north, but Harry is dismissive of this idea without providing a clear reason. Frustrated, Aiden says that Spurs have offered to pay his wages for six months and to send him to a sister club, Portland Timbers, in the USA. The MLS season starts in

February and Harry should be able to come off the bench by then and be in the first team by April. The Timbers are looking for a loan whilst their best winger is out with a broken leg.

December 2018. Harry and Charlotte are both back in Yorkshire for Christmas. Charlotte goes to visit her mum, with whom she has a strained relationship due to her mum's far-right social views. Harry goes with her for moral support and they sit through a slightly awkward meal together. Afterwards, Harry expresses his worry about going to the USA alone on loan, but Charlotte says it could be a new lease of life for him. A new country, new people and he can "reinvent (himself), however wanky that sounds", especially as Portland is so liberal and gay-friendly. Charlotte tries to persuade him to get a dating profile - one with his real name and image - when he gets there. He refuses as it's still too risky, though Charlotte does manage to convince him to add 'dates' to his Grindr profile, rather than just having 'right now'. As he will be much less famous in the US, this should be less risky. What happened with Zac? Harry questions how she knew about Zac? She admits she saw the cute texts from him last year. Harry admits that he didn't treat Zac well but that with them both not 'out', it just felt like whatever they had was doomed. Charlotte reveals that she's been dating this girl from Copenhagen for half a year. She's quite a character, a bit of a rebel. The girl, Tove, is coming over to England to do her masters - Charlotte would love to introduce them.

January 2019. Harry arrives in Portland. He explores the city, alone, admiring the architecture and noticing the many Pride flags and murals dotted about the city. He goes on a hike, trying to test his fitness after his long injury. As he hikes, he decides to listen to the BBC LGBT Sports podcast. He reaches Pittock Mansion at the top of a small mountain and admires an incredible view of the city and landscape below. He breathes deep on the clean, fresh air. He looks invigorated, renewed, at the apex of a revelation.

He returns to a large, spacious home in Portland that he is clearly sharing with a man named Bryson, in his late twenties. It transpires that Bryson is the son of the Portland Timbers chairman and studied film at Manchester University in the UK. Harry has been temporarily housed here to help him assimilate to life away from home. The two seem to get on well, with the one thorny issue of Bryson supposedly being a 'Man. United fan', which Harry describes as "bloody typical". Bryson invites Harry to a chilled out dinner party, where Harry gets on well with the other guests and notes the more progressive social attitudes that seem to prevail here. Could this actually be a place where Harry could feel more comfortable? Be more open? Maybe even build a life? Later that evening, back in his bedroom, Harry agrees to a meetup on Grindr; not a hook-up, but a real date.

Harry prepares himself as he enters a bar in Portland, clearly nervous. His eyes cast around for any phones that might be pointing in his direction. There sits Jeff, his Grindr date. Harry is very nervous, this being the first time he has attended a date with another man, plus in public. Jeff is flamboyant, shocking, forthcoming and unafraid to say or do anything. Jeff quickly clocks that Harry is fresh meat on the gay scene. Harry shyly admits that this is his first date with a man and Jeff skilfully lets Harry down gently, saying that he is not romantically interested in him. He suggests they would be better as friends; instead he invites Harry to a gay club. An introduction into the LGBTQ+ scene. Harry refuses at first, but after Jeff pressures him to have shots, he acquiesces.

In the queue to the gay bar, Jeff flirts with anybody and everybody and talks through the complexities of the web of sexual partners he and his friends have shared. Jeff offers cocaine to a reluctant Harry who gives in to peer pressure. Harry mentions his love of drum and bass and bemoans the fact that "Americans don't get drum and bass". Jeff tells him that you just need to know where to look and to trust him. He mentions that he needs to pick up some "molly" for the night. Jeff gets a call from his housemate who has lost his keys. Jeff asks Harry if he would pick up the drugs on his behalf whilst he heads back to let his housemate in. Harry refuses, saying whatever's left of his career would be gone if he got caught. Jeff notes that the drug dealer is hardly going to reveal themselves to the police or the press, and besides, nobody cares as much about "soccer" over here. Harry reluctantly agrees. He gets anxiety as he waits for a dealer - luckily the dealer is an amusing, friendly, middle-aged woman, which is a relief to Harry.

Harry finds Jeff at the rave and they drop pills. Harry begins to come up hard in the middle of the club – his first ever time. Harry begins earnest, MDMA-induced emotional conversations with pretty much anyone who'll listen. He speaks with a gay guy called Kyle – they exchange numbers.

Harry texts Charlotte, telling her he wants to come out to Aiden properly. Harry and Aiden video call, Harry clearly prepares himself to tell Aiden. Before he can, Aiden gets serious and tells Harry that they need to talk "business". Aiden says it's unrealistic that Harry will be playing in the Premier League again anytime soon. Aiden says he's going to have to let Harry go as a client – he can't keep Harry on for emotional reasons. Business is business – all his clients are now major players. Aiden tries to apologise, but Harry cuts the call short... utterly shellshocked.

Harry scrolls through Twitter and sees that Zac has been released by Leeds. He hovers over Zac's WhatsApp, pondering whether to text. His phone alarm rings and he gets up. He finds an email from Spurs, with a link to a video call. He has an online meeting with Riley, the independent psychologist he saw years ago. Harry admits to the doctor that he bullshitted him before, but realises that he won't be able to improve his mental health and how he feels if he lies. Harry admits that he created a siege mentality, to deflect from what was bothering him, because he wasn't ready to speak about the issues. His life is constantly changing and he wants to speak with someone about those changes moving forward. He does not explicitly say what the biggest issue in his life is, though Riley does not press the point. Does he suspect an issue around sexuality?

February 2019. Harry arrives at the Timbers' training centre and meets his new teammates. The atmosphere in the locker room is very different to that of an English one – perhaps more friendly and open. He's taken to a bar by some of the players – they ask him if he has a "partner" back home. Harry says he doesn't but that he's got a date at the weekend. He refuses, in a jovial fashion, to reveal who he's got a date with but promises to tell them more if it goes well. A few pints down, Harry gets an unexpected call from Lorna. She explains that she's moved roles to North America Scout since she grew up in Vancouver. She says she's meeting the San Francisco 49ers (Leeds' new co-owners) then going to see her uncle in Canada. She's got a layover in Portland and would Harry like to have a coffee.

March 2019. Harry comes off the bench for the first time for the Timbers. He plays 20 minutes and looks sharp. His involvement is minimal but the fans chant "Let's go Slade!" and Harry's delight, at being on the pitch again, is evident.

Harry arranges another session with his psychiatrist, Riley, to whom he "comes out". Harry finds it difficult at first but is also more engaged in the session, and we can sense the potential for a drastic improvement in his mental health and general happiness as a result.

At Portland Airport, Harry and Lorna catch up. She tells Harry that she's now engaged to her long term boyfriend and that he must come to the wedding next summer. She asks if he has a plus one... Harry, at first, skirts around the issue but then takes a breath and tells her he's gay. Lorna says she's very proud of Harry and that it "all makes sense". Harry makes Lorna promise not to tell anyone. Aware Harry is still awkward about talking about his sexuality, Lorna asks about his football. Harry admits he's had no interest from other clubs. Aiden dropped him as a client and Spurs confirmed his contract won't be extended. He's still not got round to sourcing a new agent. Lorna asks Harry if he'd ever consider coming back to Leeds. Harry exclaims that it's all he could ever want. Lorna departs for her flight but leaves Harry with the promise of "I'll be in touch with the wedding invite. Oh, and keep your emails open... the new manager is an open book." Harry watches as Lorna departs for her gate, an equal mix of excited and confused...

EPISODE FIVE: **PRESS/TURN**

Harry's new life, and friendships abroad, give him a chance to explore his sexuality but moves from his circle may reignite an enticing, lifelong dream.

May 2019. Harry bottoms for the first time with Kyle. In bed, Kyle asks about "the meal" Harry promised where he'd finally meet Harry's friends; they've been dating nearly three months. Harry says Charlotte and Tove promised they'd come over to visit soon and he could meet Jeff then as well.

MONTAGE: Harry wakes up at 5am - Kyle still in bed with him. He goes to the gym and works out furiously. / Harry sits in the gym café at lunch. He watches highlights of Leeds' play-off match vs Derby. Eyes glued to the screen. Leeds score and Harry jumps to the air to celebrate, causing a scene in the otherwise silent cafe. Harry texts Lorna: "Any news yet mate?". / Harry becomes a key player for the Timbers. He is popular and successful. Fans buy shirts with his name on. He revels in his new role at right wing back. He speaks with Riley - his counselor - again, and his positive transformation is clear.

June 2019. Harry introduces Kyle to Jeff, for the first time, at a pub. The Champions League Final plays in the background - Spurs are playing Liverpool. Kyle gets frustrated at Harry, who is clearly not paying attention to the group. Jeff makes a comment on Harry's distractedness and laughs, saying that Kyle should expect that, dating a footballer. Kyle is frosty and unresponsive to Jeff's jibe.

The next day, Harry and Jeff meander the streets during the 'Starlight Parade' of Portland's Rose Festival. As they walk through the crowds, Harry admits to Jeff that he feels boxed in and that he's not ready for anything serious and it's going that way with Kyle. Jeff tells him gay relationships are different. He's still a "baby gay". Harry keeps on avoiding "the conversation" with Kyle. Jeff says that Harry's journey needs to be about him, not Kyle, and that whilst it isn't a nice thing to do, sometimes we all have relationships which are selfish for our growth. Harry and Jeff pause to admire a float, near an openly gay couple holding hands. Jeff strikes up a conversation, with a mischievous glint in his eye. Harry hangs back, several feet away, slightly unsure of the situation.

Later, Jeff returns to Harry. Harry looks inquiringly at him and Jeff says that they are two very attractive gay men, who also happen to find Harry very attractive and quote, "hate soccer"... Harry is taken aback but grins:: is Jeff suggesting he should pursue a threesome with them? Jeff tells Harry he is being silly. Not a threesome. Jeff will, of course, be participating himself. Harry looks nervously excited but a little reluctant. Jeff persuades Harry, telling him to forget about Kyle. "It's just a matter of time". Harry doesn't want to "cheat" on Kyle but Jeff demands an answer: "are you officially exclusive?". It's okay if Harry is uncomfortable with it, but worrying about Kyle should not be the reason for not further exploring his sexuality.

They follow the couple back to a large, fancy townhouse. The couple mix everyone a G&T each and lead the way into the huge back garden. There is a hot tub. Jeff strips quickly... Harry requires encouragement but soon grows in confidence. They all climb in. Harry is offered poppers, which he accepts. He is also offered GHB, which he declines. One of the couple slips to Jeff's side - they start to kiss. Hands everywhere beneath the bubbles. The fourth man edges towards Harry. Bathed only in a dim patio light, Harry kisses the neck of the man.

Harry comes home sheepishly. The next morning, he pretends nothing happened the previous night - Kyle makes his breakfast and acts very romantically in comparison to Harry.

Harry is approached by a US agent to represent him. Harry and his new agent meet with the club physio who states that Harry's recovery is quite remarkable. His agent spreads the word and receives offers from several

major English Championship sides to go on loan for 2019-20 season, but Harry rejects the offers to stay on with the Timbers. Spurs agree to sign a deal that keeps Harry on loan at the Timbers until the end of Harry's contract.

Charlotte and Tove come to visit Harry. Jeff offers to take Tove out shopping one day ("Scandinavians have such style!"), but Charlotte has little interest in it. Instead, she and Harry drive to a secluded beach. They swim in the sea, then sit chatting on the sand. Charlotte has brought weed with her - borrowed from Jeff's stash. Harry is reluctant and nervous at first, looking all around him. But the beach is deserted, so he has a few tokes.

Slightly high, Charlotte asks Harry if he's excited to meet his nephew (Aiden and his wife have recently had their first child). Harry laughs, saying it feels like only yesterday he and Aiden used to wrestle around their parents' house and Harry was fully in the closet. He opens up, talking about how he used to think he really wanted kids, but perhaps that was just because of the way they were brought up, or a desperate desire to conform? He feels confident now that he actually doesn't want that for himself. Charlotte hesitates, before revealing that she and Tove are going to pursue IVF, but Charlotte has doubts. Though she does yearn for it, she worries about the responsibility and the pressure. Will it make life more difficult for a child to grow up with two mums? Should she even be worried about that? Should she feel guilty for worrying about that? Also, what if she makes a mess of things? Her own mother isn't winning any awards and it's fortunate that Charlotte wasn't indoctrinated into her way of thinking - what if she made a mess of things for this potential child? As she bares her innermost thoughts and feelings, she toys with a beautiful shell that she collected from the ocean. Harry is supportive, saying that while it is obviously her decision, and he'll back her no matter what, he does think she'd make a great mum. Though appreciative of Harry's words, she looks a little forlorn and casts the shell back into the ocean.

Harry returns home from training one day to find Kyle waiting for him. He's a bit perturbed by this - they don't live together. Although they see each other a lot, Kyle should not just let himself in with Harry's spare key (hidden under a plant pot) whenever he wants. Kyle challenges Harry about the parade a couple of weeks ago: a friend of Kyle's saw Harry and Jeff leaving with two other guys who were clearly gay. Harry never mentioned this when Kyle asked him how the parade was. What happened? What was Harry trying to hide? The conversation gets heated and Harry gets defensive, saying they're not exclusive, he's allowed to sleep with other people. Kyle backs himself up, saying that when you spend most nights at each other's house then you're allowed to assume exclusivity. Kyle tells Harry that maybe they shouldn't see each other anymore as he needs someone more emotionally mature - a fair point and desire. Harry loses his temper in his emotional state and tells Kyle to "fuck off". Kyle leaves, head held high but clearly upset.

Harry plays a match against Minnesota United. He is made aware that their player Collin Martin came out as gay recently. After the match, he purposefully arranges to swap shirts with Collin and shakes hands. He offers him congratulations on his news and asks if he could buy him a drink. A few hours later, they meet up and Harry quickly tells Collin he is gay. He asks his advice and Collin shares his story.

October 2019. Harry returns to the beach he spent the day at with Charlotte. He rereads Charlotte's last text to him. "Yeah, we argued about it again last night. I don't wanna be a coward but I just can't get myself over the line with it". He looks thoughtful. It is a lot colder now. He stands at the edge of the water, slightly hesitant. Plucking up his courage, he braces himself, removing most of his clothing and plunges into the water.

December 2019. Harry flies back home to spend Christmas with his family and attend Lorna's wedding. Harry sees Aiden's new family life for the first time. Harry is great with his nephew. They play football together in the garden. He sits down and tries to tell Aiden about his sexuality, but Aiden just moves it onto a conversation about one of his clients.

Harry, Charlotte, Tove and Aiden have a family Sunday Roast in a country pub with Harry and Aiden's parents, Angie and Aaron. The contrast of the two worlds is stark: Tove's open queerness and the classic domesticity of Harry's parents. Angie and Aaron talk proudly about Harry's football achievements. They press Harry on when he will come back to England - Aiden makes his excuses.

Harry turns up at Aiden's. Aiden answers but says he's about to go into a conference call and could Harry call him later. Harry pleads with him to go on a walk - he's got to go back down south soon and this needs to be in person. In the hills, Harry tells Aiden everything: about being gay, why he felt he had to leave the north, the struggle afterwards, his mental health, his newly ended "kind of relationship" with Kyle and Lorna's hint of a return to Leeds. Most importantly, the need for him to have Aiden in his life and the fear he has for his safety being an openly gay footballer. Not having his brother there is terrifying. Aiden tells Harry he'll be there. Embracing him. Harry asks Aiden to represent him as his UK agent; it is important to Harry that he keeps his family close with his business affairs moving forward. Aiden gets emotional, realising his lack of care for Harry over the years. He reacts beautifully, embracing his brother again and telling him he'll be there for him in every way.

Harry takes Charlotte as his plus one to Lorna's wedding. It's a beautiful affair. At the reception, Lorna drunkenly says to Harry that good things are on the horizon for him. Beaming, Harry drinks more. He gets emotional with Charlotte and tells her that she's his best friend for life.

Aiden meets with Isobel, Leeds' chairperson. They discuss the potential return of Harry. Legally it can be done, as there is a "recall clause" in Harry's loan deal with the Timbers. However, Isobel expresses concern about the club's image and how it could negatively impact them, even though it would be the right thing to do. Isobel questions Aiden about Harry's life as a gay man - she borders on the unacceptable in her questioning, but apologises, saying that a football club is more than just one person. Aiden calls Harry to tell him the good news - he's got a trial back at Leeds. He tells him it's early days, but things sound positive. Harry beams.

January 2020. Harry goes for his trial match at Leeds. Isobel watches from her office. Harry plays well enough to be noticeable, helping assist a goal and a maturity which is impressive. Lorna notes Harry speaking with the youngsters confidently, encouraging them on the field. Harry notes a circumspect photographer behind a fence, sitting in a car, taking photos.

Harry looks at Zac's Instagram and clearly remembers the good times he had with him as he scrolls through his images and lands on an image of Zac on a holiday abroad. Harry WhatsApps Zac, asking him if he wants to meet up. Just a single grey tick. Harry, clearly anxious, messages Lorna asking her if she "knows where that academy lad Zac who got released ended up?". Lorna replies, saying that he retired and she heard that he ended up working as a kids' coach at England's training ground, St George's Park.

Harry waits outside St George's Park. Zac comes out, dressed in an England tracksuit. Harry ambushes him. Zac looks awkward; Harry says he tried to get in contact with him but his messages didn't go through - maybe he has an outdated number. Zac admits he blocked Harry. Harry says he's sorry for how he acted. He's now "out" to his brother and friends... he's a different person, he may even "come out" to his teammates. Could they go for a drink sometime? Zac tells Harry that he is dating someone and it's going well. The guy is really nice and he's been out since he's 18 - there's no drama or uncertainty. Harry pleads his case but Zac admits that he can't cope with Harry's on/off attitude and unpredictability. He leaves Harry and says sorry. Harry is heartbroken.

Charlotte hosts a dinner party in a restaurant in London, with a group of close friends, to celebrate her landing a new job. Tove is away, so she has reluctantly invited her mum. There's talk of this new disease in China. Harry hands Charlotte a present, in a small wrapped box. He says he was going to give it to her for Christmas but then wasn't sure. She asks if that's why he got her those "hideously flashy" boots instead. He laughs, slightly outraged but also amused. No-one else has brought a present so she pops it into her handbag and promises to open it later. Charlotte's mum arrives. It is slightly awkward as Charlotte has never come out to her mum, but all around the table seem aware and prepared for it.

Mid-way through the first course, Tove appears unexpectedly: she has cut her trip short in order to come home and join the celebration, as a surprise for Charlotte. Charlotte looks shell-shocked, glancing nervously at her mum and around the table in general. The meal progresses in an increasingly awkward fashion, with Tove looking hurt and confused at Charlotte's lack of affection: Tove is clearly unaware that Charlotte's mum does not know about her or her daughter's sexuality. Harry is distracted and repeatedly checks his phone, searching for any new emails from Leeds and occasionally scrolling Zac's Instagram. Charlotte leaves the table to go to the toilet, her enjoyment in the evening visibly diminishing as it wears on. Joining the conversation half-heartedly, Harry accidentally refers to Tove as Charlotte's "girlfriend", effectively outing Charlotte to her mum. There is a shocked, tense silence. Charlotte returns to the table and arguments ensue. Tove is clearly upset: apparently, Charlotte once told Tove that she was out to her entire family, which wasn't true. Charlotte's mum leaves, unsure how to react and devastated at the idea of her daughter being a lesbian. Charlotte storms out in tears.

Harry turns up at Charlotte's flat. She answers but tries to shut the door in his face. He tries to force his way in and she reluctantly allows him in. She reveals Tove is pregnant after incredibly complex IVF and she's now gone back to Denmark to be with her family. She tells him she feels betrayed, especially after everything she has done for him and how she tried to help him come out when he was younger. Harry couldn't even keep his mouth shut on this one night, in front of her mum, when he knew all about the situation. She slams the door in Harry's face.

Harry sits alone in his childhood bedroom. He can hear Sky Sports playing downstairs, a story discussing his potential return to English football. Harry has no interest. Jeff video calls him. At the look on Harry's face when he answers, Jeff immediately looks sympathetic.

Lorna and Isobel sit in a meeting room and they discuss Harry's trial. Of course, Harry is a bit off the pace now, but he's still in good shape and, with a lot more training and matches, he'd get up to speed. Lorna says she's impressed with how Harry has grown as a person and that this would translate well into passing on lessons to the youngsters in the team. Lorna tells Isobel that Harry would be good to have in the dressing room and around the club. Isobel has reservations - wouldn't it endanger Harry and his family? Only Justin Fashanu "came out" whilst playing professionally and the abuse was so much for him that he committed suicide - would it be morally right for them to put Harry in a similar position?

Harry attends the medical at Elland Road. He looks fit, passing all the tests and then... the doctor looks concerned.

Harry leaves his family home in shorts and a t-shirt, football in hand. He tries to call Charlotte - she rejects his call. Harry plays football on his own in a caged pitch. His phone on the floor starts to vibrate. Isobel. He looks at it in nervous anticipation and picks it up. We can't hear what she says... Harry's face doesn't reveal a thing...

EPISODE SIX: **COUNTER ATTACK**

With his friendships and love life in tatters, Harry wonders if making history is worth the risk to himself and his personal life.

June 2020. Covid-19 headlines dominate the news. Talks of restrictions lifting in the UK.

Harry sits nervously, staring at his TV. He watches as Leeds play Swansea - Pablo Hernandez's goal all but confirms Leeds' promotion to the Premier League. Harry goes ballistic and calls his Dad and Aiden, who are jumping around the living room. Tears roll down Harry's cheeks. Harry gets a video call from former teammates: they are drunk at Elland Road and celebrating promotion.

August 2020. Pre-season. Harry is out-of-contract - he failed his medical at Leeds in the January 2020 transfer window and ended up staying at the Timbers for another six months. Harry persuades Aiden to reject an offer from Derby County in favour of a rolling contract at Leeds. Aiden finalises negotiations and Harry is told that he will be training with the under-23s for the foreseeable future. Harry is frustrated at not being able to be back home because of COVID restrictions and having to sign his contract from Oregon on DocuSign.

Covid restrictions are partially lifted and Harry buys a business class plane ticket back to Leeds.

Harry goes to his local pub, in the north, alone. Eyes are on him immediately as the locals try to ascertain whether their eyes are telling them the truth... is Harry Slade really in their pub? The contrast between Harry's pleasure at returning to the sport, and his angst at missing his friendships with Jeff and Charlotte and his relationships with Kyle and Zac, is evident. An older geezer sits next to him at the bar and strikes up a conversation. At first Harry is reticent, but the old man's sweetness is endearing. He tells Harry he will buy him a drink, Harry refuses at first but drinks his pint when it's placed in front of him. The old man talks about Leeds heroes gone by and what a local lad means to the club. He asks after Harry's mother, who he knows as another local in the area. Harry's mother is very ill with Covid, and the reminder that this is a place she loves is powerful to him, endearing him further to the old pub. Harry misses a call from Aiden and says he has to head off, but not before shaking hands with the old gent.

When Harry walks out of the pub, he sees Theo, his dalliance from 5 years ago. He swallows his Adam's apple and stops in his tracks, as Aiden answers the phone. Harry tells Aiden he needs to call him back. Theo makes the first bit of conversation, joking that Harry thinks he still works at the pub. Harry doesn't say anything but Theo tells him that he's now the landlord. He lives with his fella; they've got a kid - Simmy - adopted. All the locals know and they are relaxed about his sexuality. Harry offers his congratulations. He eventually finds the words - he thanks Theo for never telling anyone about his sexuality and apologises for how he acted. Theo waves it off immediately - Harry isn't the first closeted "masc" guy who has been a "dick'ead", and he won't be the last. Theo asks if Harry is "out" now - Harry nods but stops short of saying he is "gay". Harry spots the 'For Sale' sign on the pub; Theo explains that Covid has fucked them financially - it was difficult for locals even before the pandemic. Aiden calls Harry again. Harry says his goodbyes to Theo and says it was nice to see him.

Harry takes out his phone and types out a message to Charlotte about Theo. Then looks up and remembers his series of texts to her completely unanswered. He looks gutted. Harry walks back up the hill to his parents' home. Aiden calls again. This time Harry answers. Their Mum's Covid has taken a turn for the worse... Harry says he'll be at the hospital in 30 minutes but Aiden reminds him relatives aren't allowed to enter.

Harry attends a training session. He's clearly upset and takes himself to Lorna. For the first time, Harry allows his bottled up feelings to come out... Harry calls Aiden for an update - their Mum is stable and getting better. He rings Jeff immediately and tells him the good news. The call results in Jeff telling Harry his own tragic health

news... he has gonorrhoea... Jeff asks Harry when he last got a STI test. Never. "WHAT!?". Harry visits a private sexual health clinic where he learns about PREP (a drug that reduces the risk of getting HIV) - he signs up.

Harry's performances in training continue to be impressive. He scores for the under-23s. He is offered a loan deal with another top Championship side but rejects it, stating he wants his return to be with Leeds. In a meeting with Isobel, his sexuality is brought up and it's suggested that he could consider telling his teammates soon.

Aiden comes to Harry's new flat in Leeds. He has bad news: the pap who took Harry's photo all those years ago with Theo has heard a rumour that Harry is about to come out. He is going to release the photos if Harry does this, to sell them on for big money. Aiden was unable to dissuade him. What's more, he'll reveal to anyone who asks exactly *how* these images were prevented from publication in the past: because Aiden bribed him, which will result in Aiden being removed from the FAs list of registered intermediaries and no longer be able to operate as a football agent.

Harry is distraught, his homecoming and return to football in tatters, with embarrassing photos about to be published and his best friend having seemingly dropped him for good. He doesn't want to come out anymore, especially if it ruins his brother's career. He can't do it. Aiden tries his best to talk him round: what he's doing is difficult, yes, but he wants him to be open and happy and he simply won't have Harry refusing to do it because of his brother's career. He says that the photos don't show anything Harry should never have had to be ashamed in the first place. Harry, however, is inconsolable.

Aiden visits Charlotte at her flat in London to plead with her to speak with Harry. She is defensive and admits that Harry hit such a nerve. Aiden explains the situation with the pap, says he knows how much Harry cares about her and how sorry he is, and says that they need each other... Harry is about to come out to the world and she is about to have a kid... She doesn't give Aiden a straight answer on whether she'll reach out to Harry. However, after he leaves, she goes to find the unopened present Harry gave her at her new job celebration. She opens it. It is a shell, the same type of shell that she toyed with while baring her soul to Harry on the beach near Portland, when he told her what a good mum she would be and promised to support her, no matter her decision...

Charlotte turns up at Harry's flat in Leeds. She brings a present... a cock ring. The tension is immediately broken. Harry enquires as to why she has bought him a cock ring - she explains that some guy she dated years ago had bought it for them and when it came to them having sex, she didn't feel comfortable and sent him packing. He forgot to take it with him and it's been left, unopened, in her "naughty box" ever since... Charlotte and Harry drive to Fountains Abbey (a rural, ruined monastery). They walk among the ruins and properly talk. Harry apologises for what his fame has done to their friendship - he admits he could happily just play the sport and not have to deal with the press or the fame, and that these aspects combined with his sexuality meant he was often self-absorbed and in many ways, failed as a friend.. They speak about their friendship and how Harry's decisions need to factor her in more. He tells her that he feels like a new person, no more secrets and his time in Portland has helped him. Harry asks Charlotte about the pregnancy and how she and Tove are doing - she reports that Tove came round quickly and that they have already started talking about baby names.

Charlotte says, like Harry did to her, that she'll support him whatever decision he makes, but that she does hope he chooses to come out publicly. She acknowledges how difficult it will be, not least because poor Theo is included in those images as well. Perhaps he should reach out to Theo? Harry has nothing to be ashamed of and this move could inspire generations of gay footballers - and sportspeople at large - to come out. She seems to be getting through to him...

Harry plays in another under-23s match. He looks calmer and more relaxed and has good rapport with the players. Lorna and a coach tell Harry that the club will aim for Harry to be in the matchday squad by the end of the season. He'll be on the bench, not in the starting XI and probably won't play, but it's a real achievement that

he's got this far. In the changing room, Harry reads a text from Theo: "Hey man! Thanks for heads up. I've thought about it, and tbh, everyone I care about knows I'm gay and there's no way that should stop what you're about to do. It might shock my Grandma a bit, but go for it! Good luck mate". Harry smiles with relief.

Afterward, Harry and Aiden make their way to their family home with Harry preparing to tell his parents about his sexuality and his return to football. Harry is unsure if he can do it. Harry is relieved to see his mother - she is a bit frail but back home and well. After a lot of small talk, Harry comes out and says he intends to come out professionally too - his family are surprisingly supportive but an emotional argument ensues. Angie in particular states her worry for his safety. Harry stays strong and says he doesn't care and that he has to do this. It was always his dream to play football in the top flight and for Leeds. Whatever happens, this is the right thing for him. He cannot live in fear. He must choose a future and hope. At night, Harry sits in his old bedroom and watches clips of himself playing on his debut. He stares and becomes emotional watching it.

In a montage, Harry tells his teammates that he is gay - most are amazing, hugging him and patting him on the back. Isobel and the club put the plan into action: arranging an interview for Harry with Football Focus, security for him and his family, extra security on matchday, new stadium ejection rules re homophobic chanting / abuse, Stonewall & Pride In Sports branding over all stadiums, Football vs Homophobia conduct LGBT+ training across all clubs (paid for by the PFA), major social media campaign, coordinated newspaper and other press reveal, FIFA/UEFA/PFA/Premier League statements, rainbow laces and armbands for all players across the league and the 'reveal' article by Charlotte in Gay Times, along with articles from other players.

Harry trains with Mason - Mason takes him aside and awkwardly brings up the time they wanked together. He says Harry that he hopes that his comments didn't make things more difficult for him, in terms of accepting his sexuality. He tells him of a sexual experience he once had with a guy when he was 16 and says that he's sure there's other footy lads who are gay or bi. Harry lets Mason spew out everything and then just gives him a huge bear hug. Mason then reveals that he's nearly at the end of his career - he's only come off the bench a few times in cup matches and that he has to accept that he's going to be at a lower side next season.

Mason, very sweetly, says that he realises how "WAGs" is really a very exclusionary term. He admits he stayed up late last night on thesaurus.com and acronym generator, trying to work out a new term. He couldn't find anything suitable so he settled on CAMPs: "companions and married partners" and states cheekily, "it is quite relevant though ey? I was quite impressed with myself". He also suggests the next team CAMPs dinner could be at a drag night. Harry goes bright red at the care and thought Mason has put in but says "just cos I'm gay now, it doesn't mean I want to go to drag. I enjoy it like, but just cos you're gay doesn't mean you have to do stereotypically 'gay' things" all the time. Mason and Harry part on great terms with Mason's last question: "who you gonna bring as your date then?". Harry says he doesn't have anyone at the moment, but he's sure he could find a gold digger twink to take along and make the Daily Mail go up in arms.

Meanwhile, Aiden sits in Isobel's office. Aiden explains the whole situation around the photos, admitting his own bribery in the process. Isobel decides that the club should use its considerable resources to potentially sue the pap or the paper that buys the photos. At the very least send a letter of intent, to try to protect Harry's welfare. However, they would expect Aiden to resign as Harry's agent as this would involve revealing everything. Aiden accepts that willingly: he's had a good run, and there are many other things he could do. His brother is more important than his job.

Jeff comes to visit England and gets a hotel with Harry in London. Jeff drags Harry to a number of tourist sites. Harry introduces Jeff to Aiden at a pub in Soho. They celebrate the success so far of Harry's "coming out". Jeff notes that Harry is not drinking. He says it makes him sad but that he is happy for Harry to get back into his career, albeit away from the queer life of excess they've been living together in the US. Charlotte arrives and insists they all go to the famed gay club, Heaven to the protests of Aiden and Harry but the cheers of Jeff.

In Heaven, Harry laughs as Jeff screams to a pop song as a drag queen parades the stage. Charlotte comes up to Harry and rolls a rainbow fanbrush down his neck. With it still being Covid times, the groups are separated by plastic barriers. Harry goes off to the toilet. Charlotte jokingly asks Aiden if he is losing his masculinity, being in a gay club. He admits he feels uncomfortable but he'd better get used to it, now having a gay brother. Charlotte tells him she's proud of him.

On the walk to the toilets, Harry stumbles across Zac sitting with a group. Neither knows what to say and Harry quickly moves on. At the urinal, Harry swears at himself. No sooner does he sit down back at their table when Zac appears. Zac asks if they can chat. They go out to the smoking area. Zac reveals he's no longer dating the guy he mentioned before. Harry's excitement is clear. Zac asks Harry how things are going with him, he's seen the press reports and stuff on socials... Harry diverts and asks if they can meet up sometime properly. Zac agrees. Zac says goodbye, plants an unexpected kiss on Harry's lips and heads back in.

Harry meets up with Zac in Leeds. They realise they are gonna be in each other's lives - in what capacity remains to be seen but for now they agree to be "seeing each other" and see how it goes. He knows neither of them are necessarily ready for a proper relationship but they can learn and grow together. Zac says he's going to come out professionally too - he knows it won't have the same impact as Harry but he wants to help create a wave. He will wait for a while til after Harry is out so he doesn't steal his thunder! They share a romantic kiss and Harry makes to leave but turns around: "would you wanna come to a CAMPs dinner?"

May 2021. Harry is with his family, Charlotte and Tove at the ground, a few hours before the match - the calm before the storm of 8,000 fans back at Elland Road for the first time since the pandemic. Even the rest of the squad and management team haven't arrived yet. Charlotte announces that Tove is now past 12 weeks pregnant and they will be having a daughter. Harry introduces Zac to Aiden - his first intro of a man in his life to his family. As Isobel introduces herself to Angie and Aaron; Harry and Aiden share a moment together. Aiden expresses his pride in his brother being the first top division footballer in Europe to take the leap in this way. Harry goes white - his brother's comments making him more nervous, rather than reassured. Harry asks Charlotte if they could speak privately.

They go to a corridor and Harry breaks down to Charlotte - terrified of going on the pitch in front of thousands of fans, some of whom may have homophobic views. Charlotte reassures him, telling him someone has to do it and he's always had the determination in his life to do so. She suggests he goes for some time alone - maybe have a light warm up before the rest of the players arrive. They hug and Charlotte says that everything is in place for his safety and that he will be remembered for his bravery.

In the changing room, Harry sends Jeff the official team sheet to show that he will be on the bench for the game. Jeff receives the text whilst backstage at a drag night - finding huge amusement in the irony of it all. Harry takes a shower. Solitary once again - nervous, but happy. Alone in the changing room, he gets changed into his kit, throwing an orange bib over his shirt. His phone buzzes - a WhatsApp from Charlotte, the picture of the two of them smiling at Carnival together, years before. Harry smiles and laughs at himself for being so sappy, as he allows himself to cry a bit.

Harry walks through corridors, saying "hi" to the security guards, the physios and the commentators as he goes; more people have started to arrive. A nod of the head and a hug with Lorna as they pass each other. And finally, into the tunnel. It's empty. He heads out towards the centre of the pitch and pauses, looking around at the empty rows of seats. A faint smile. He starts to run.

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