

Pig in the Middle

by

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Genetic Futures Version

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Scene One

Gemma 18, and Ryan 16, are sitting connected to kidney machines. She is reading. Dr Angela Mayhew, a trendy looking young doctor, is making final adjustments to Ryan's machine.

Dr M: Almost done... there we are...

(Dr M finishes adjusting Ryan's machine)

Dr M: I'll be just down the end of the ward seeing to some other patients... and I'll pop back in a little while, and see how you're getting on.

Ryan: **(nervous)** What? Yeah... okay.

(Exit Dr M)

(Ryan twists around anxiously to look at the machine)

Ryan: So this is a kidney machine? **(pause)** What does it do?

(Gemma looks up from her book)

Gemma: It just takes over the job of our kidneys – filtering the waste products from our blood. **(Pause)** It's your first time right?

Ryan: Well er... yeah.

(Ryan is still looking anxiously at the machine)

Gemma: It doesn't hurt. It's completely safe.

Ryan: I know!

(Pause. Gemma goes back to her book. Ryan looks at his watch)

Ryan: So... is there anything I ought to be doing... buttons I should be pressing?

Gemma: **(Amused)** You don't have to touch it.

Ryan: Good. I don't want it going wrong or anything. I mean what happens if it stops working?

Gemma: Doctor Mayhew will have to come back and fix it. Stop worrying. It's perfectly safe. All you have to do is sit here for a couple of hours. You should've brought a book in to read or something to do.

Ryan: I didn't know I was going to end up here okay? I just came in to get the results of some tests... then Doctor Mayhew tells me my kidneys have failed and I need to have this er... di- something.

Gemma: Dialysis...

Ryan: Twice a week, at least until they find out what's wrong and whether they can get my kidneys working again... What about you? I mean have you been coming here for long?

Gemma: Almost a year. I've had diabetes, and my kidneys have been permanently damaged.

Ryan: Oh... And you know... people are alright about it, are they?

Gemma: What?

Ryan: I mean your mates.... Your friends and that...

Gemma: Oh... er... they're fine about it all yeah... No problems.

Ryan: They didn't like... tease you or anything?

(Gemma pretends to be reading her book)

Ryan: I don't think I'm gonna tell anyone. I mean I don't want them to know... at school and that... **(pause)** Hey, you're at my school aren't you? I knew I'd seen you somewhere... You're in the lower sixth... yeah... must be great not having to wear uniform... Look, er... er... I'm sorry I don't know your –

Gemma: Gemma.

Ryan: Look, Gemma, you won't tell anybody at school that you've seen me here...

Gemma: No.

Ryan: Thanks... **(pause)** Good book is it?

Gemma: I don't know... it might be if I get the chance to read any of it.

Ryan: Oh I see.... You want me to shut up or something?

(Gemma studies her book)

Ryan: Alright, I can take a hint.

(Ryan fidgets about, looks at Gemma, who is reading, finally he takes a leaflet from his pocket, unfolds and opens it and settles down to read, Gemma sneaks a look at Ryan. Seeing he is reading, she goes back to her book)

Ryan: Oh no! Oh my God – death by diet!

(He reads from the leaflet)

Get this – 'Foods to be avoided' – bread, biscuits, cakes, scones... So far so bad... no ice cream, cream, yoghurt, tinned or packet soups, no tinned veg... no crisps! No fudge, no toffees. No chocolate! Welcome to hell. And there's more...

Gemma: **(annoyed)**... oh please.

Ryan: No cheese, no bacon, no ham, no corned beef... Can't say I'm gonna break my heart over corned beef. No sausages... no burgers! What!

(Gemma looks up)

Ryan: God I could do with a 'Big Mac' right now, couldn't you?

(Gemma ignores him)

Ryan: Or how about a nice 'Royale with Cheese'?

Gemma: No.

Ryan: Excuse me. Did I mishear, or did you say you don't fancy a burger?

Gemma: Burgers are totally disgusting.

Ryan: What? So what do you eat when you go to MacDonald's?

Gemma: I've never been to MacDonald's in my life.

Ryan: Never? Not in your whole life? So what are you then, an alien life form from a far-off galaxy?

Gemma: I'm a vegan.

Ryan: Like Mr Spock! Joking. You're one of those strict vegetarians who get all smug about mad cow disease and only eat things with Linda Mc Cartney on the box. You're a health freak right, and you've still got kidney failure?

Gemma: **(Irritated)** I'm not a health freak.

Ryan: You smoke?

Gemma: No...

Ryan: Or drink?

Gemma: You won't either when you get to the end of that diet book. No beer, no lager...

Ryan: What!

Gemma: Check it out.

(Ryan flicks to the back of the book)

Ryan: God... supposing my kidneys never recover - I'll never be able to get drunk again... and maybe I won't be able to play football...

Gemma: Yes, it's a good way to get out of doing PE and sport.

Ryan: I don't want to get out of it. I'm in the school team, and the youth side. Football's my life.

Gemma: You might still be able to play... I mean it depends...

Ryan: On what?

Gemma: On how you feel. Some days I've got enough energy to... to do the kind of things I used to, and sometimes I feel too tired or sick.

Ryan: I've got to keep my place in the youth side. I've got to.

(Enter Dr M. Checks Gemma's machine, starts disconnecting her from it)

Dr M: Right, that's it Gemma.

(Gemma gets up, offers Dr M the book)

Gemma: I've made a note of the addresses for some of the activity holidays.

Dr M: That's great Gem. What's it going to be, abseiling, rock climbing, surfing...

Gemma: Tree planting...

Dr M: Oh... right, sounds interesting... **(to Ryan)** There're special holiday centres with kidney machines, where people on dialysis and their families can go on holiday... Gemma's thinking of going on one this year.

Gemma: It's great there's a nature conservation one.

Ryan: Is there a footballing holiday too?

Gemma: Probably.

(Dr M gives Ryan the book)

Ryan: Ta...but look, I'm not always going to be on dialysis am I, Doctor?

Dr M: No, Ryan. It's early days yet. We might still be able to get your kidneys working again and of course, as I said earlier; the other option is a kidney transplant.

Gemma: Once you get a new kidney, you can do all the things you used to, again.

Ryan: Like play football? And dance? And drink? And party!

(Dr M nods, smiling)

Gemma: Bye, Doctor Mayhew. See you Friday.

Ryan: You're in on Friday for more dial-a-wossit...

Gemma: Dialysis.

Ryan: So am I. We might see each other.

Gemma: **(mutters)** Oh lucky me.

(Exit Gemma. Dr M is leaving too)

Ryan: Hey, what about me?

Dr M: What about you?

Ryan: Are you just going to leave me sitting here?

(Dr M looks at her watch)

Dr M: **(teasing)** Only for another two and a half hours.

(Ryan slumps back, bored)

Dr M: I could see if I could find you a book to read...

Ryan: Er... no thanks. I don't really enjoy reading... look don't worry about me Doc, I'll just count the ceiling tiles or something.

(EXIT Dr M, smiling)

Scene Two

Ryan's house. Sally, his mother, is preparing dinner. Enter Ryan.

Mum: Hi, love. What have you been doing?

RYAN: Playing football. On the computer. Is dinner ready?

Mum: Give us a chance. It's gonna take longer, now every meal has to be specifically prepared. It's not like I can just get something out of a tin or the freezer. **(Mum fetches a casserole dish, sniffs the contents)** Mmm, smells all right. **(Mum wags the dish under Ryan's nose)**

Ryan: **(without enthusiasm)** What are the grey bits?

Mum: Grey bits? Oh that's the last of the chicken.

Ryan: Chicken? Mum...

Mum: **(interrupting)** and it's not really grey...

Ryan: Mum... I think I'd rather have something else...

Mum: You said make a casserole.

Ryan: I said make a vegetable casserole.

Mum: It is. Look, potatoes, carrot, peas...

Ryan: And chicken. Look, mum, I'm thinking about stopping eating meat.

Mum: You're allowed chicken, I checked in the book.

Ryan: I'm thinking of becoming vegetarian, okay?

Mum: What?

Ryan: You don't know what that chicken had to go through before it ended up in there.

Mum: And I don't particularly want to know either. So what's brought this on? I know it's tough you're not allowed to eat burgers...

Ryan: I don't want to eat them anymore. They're horrible. They're full of Mad Cow Disease... and everything.

Mum: What are you on about? You've always loved your meat... and this renal diet's strict enough already without you suddenly deciding to become vegetarian...

Ryan: Look, I've decided right? I don't want to eat that. It makes me feel sick. You have the casserole. I'll go make myself a salad sandwich...

(Mum shrugs. Ryan is about to exit)

Mum: Joel rang. Said would you call him back.

Ryan: Right.

Mum: I wish you'd still go out with your friends...

Ryan: I don't always feel like going out. I feel too tired.

Mum: I just worry about you spending so much time on your own. Now you've changed to the other kind of dialysis, and you won't have to go up the hospital three times a week, you won't even see your friend up there...

Ryan: Gemma? She's not really a friend... we just end up chatting cos we're both stuck there for three hours and it passes the time. I don't even think she likes me that much... I mean even if I'm boring her, it's not like she can get up and walk away.

Mum: Ryan, I still think... well wouldn't it be a good idea to see one or two of your old friends –

Ryan: **(interrupting)** No.

Mum: - before you go back to school on Monday?

Ryan: I don't feel like seeing anyone. You didn't say anything to Joel? Just that I was out?

Mum: Look, Ryan, you can't keep it secret...

Ryan: I wish I hadn't said I'd have the bag system.

Mum: But you've been feeling much better...

Ryan: It was bad enough explaining to everyone that I had to go up the hospital three times a week. They all thought I was like dying or something... and everyone still keeps asking me if I'm okay every five minutes. But at least, then I still *looked* normal.

Mum: You still look normal.

Ryan: Yeah, but I won't in the changing rooms. I mean Doctor Mayhew said she thinks it'll suit me better than the kidney machine cos it means I won't have to miss school – I can change my bags in the loo... and it won't make me feel tired like the machine does. And she thinks I'll be able to go back to playing football... but I don't know what people will say when they see I've got a tube sticking out of my stomach. Or what'll happen if I'm tackled and fall on it, on the football pitch?

(Exit Ryan. The doorbell rings)

Mum: **(calls)** I'll get it, shall I? **(Exits)**

(Off, sounds of Gemma greeting Mum)

Gemma: **(off)** Hi, is this Ryan's house?

Mum: **(off)** Er, yes... You'd better come in.

(Enter Mum and Gemma)

Gemma: Er, I'm Gemma...

Mum: Oh right... from the kidney unit. Ryan's mentioned you. **(calls)** Ryan? **(to Gemma)** I'd just made some dinner actually... perhaps you'd like to stop...

Gemma: Oh... oh, okay, thanks.

(Gemma sits down, undoes her bag, takes out a clipboard)

Gemma: Mrs Wheeler...

Mum: Call me Sally... oh no, not another sponsor form... if it's the running round the park, or the swimming –

Gemma: **(interrupting)** It's not a sponsorship form, it's a petition.

Mum: Oh, so it won't cost me anything.

(Gemma gives Sally the petition)

Mum: Against battery farms?

Gemma: Yeah, they're unbelievably cruel. I've got a video I could lend you where –

Mum: Er no thanks love. But I always buy free-range eggs...

Gemma: **(impressed)** You do?

Mum: Well it's better for the hens and healthier for us isn't it? Where do I sign?
(sighs) Gemma... if you don't mind me asking... are you a vegetarian?

Gemma: Yes. Why? Are you?

Mum: No, it's just that Ryan's said that he's thinking of becoming one...

Gemma: Is he?

Mum: I just wondered if you might have talked to him about it and...

Gemma: We've talked about it... yeah. But I didn't know he was thinking of turning veggie.

(Enter Ryan, with an overstuffed salad sandwich on a plate. Gemma gets up)

Gemma: **(suddenly shy)** Hi Ryan...

Ryan: Hi. I was just making dinner, you know...

(Gemma looks at the sandwich dubiously)

Gemma: Oh. Right. **(Awkward pause)** I just popped round to see if you'd sign my petition. Your Mum just invited me to stay for dinner...

Mum: Er yeah... I'm not so sure... I mean that was before I knew you were vegetarian... We're... I mean, I'm having chicken.

Ryan: It's okay Mum. She can share my salad sandwich.

Gemma: Is that's what it is?

Ryan: Yeah. What does it look like Gemma?

Gemma: A whole lettuce squashed between two lumps of bread.

Ryan: There's some tomato in there too, look. Do you want some then?

Gemma: No. Er... I'm fine. I've eaten. Honestly. Look, er I think, if you're gonna be a vegetarian, maybe I should lend you one of my cook books for vegetarians on a renal diet.

Mum: Yes, that would be useful... But I'm afraid we don't have much in the house I can offer you at the moment...

Gemma: Oh, it's okay I can't really stop. I've got a lot of work to do this evening...

Mum: Homework eh?

Gemma: No... well kind of... it's nice to see you Mrs... Sally.

(Ryan walks towards the door with Gemma)

Ryan: **(pause)** Gemma, I was hoping to see you...

Gemma: Yeah?

Ryan: I mean now I won't be coming into the ward twice a week, anymore...

Gemma: You won't? What, are your kidneys working again?

Ryan: No...no, Doctor Mayhew's put me on the bag system. **(Hastily)** But you're not to tell anyone, all right...

Gemma: No, no of course not. Is it working out?

Ryan: Yeah, I think so... Now the thing is, I've been invited to a party. My mate Joel's got his birthday on Saturday and we're going to The Escape.

Gemma: The Escape? That's like a nightclub isn't it?

Ryan: Haven't you ever been? Everyone goes there.

Gemma: Clubbing isn't really my scene.

Ryan: The thing is... I mean you were on the bag system for a while weren't you, you said?

Gemma: For a couple of months.

Ryan: And could you go out for the evening? You know... and manage all the changing and stuff?

Gemma: ...It was okay, yeah.

Ryan: You could dance and everything? Without the tube working lose... or anything?

Gemma: It'll be fine, Ryan. Look, when I had the bag system, I still did all kinds of things ...like running across fields, and crawling through mud and brambles, without catching my tube up on anything, or getting an infection.

Ryan: And what were you doing crawling about in the bushes? Or shouldn't I ask?

Gemma: Disrupting fox hunts, stopping motorways being built...

Ryan: Yeah? Really? Bit of an activist in your spare time are you? Like Swampy? Do you chain yourself to bulldozers and stuff like that?

Gemma: Not since I've been ill.

Ryan: Wow, I had no idea... hey do you remember when someone at school let out all the stick insects? And wrote 'Let Them Live Free' on the blackboard? There were stick insects all over the lab ceiling for weeks...

Gemma: Yeah...

Ryan: That wasn't anything to do with you, was it?...

(Gemma looks embarrassed)

Gemma: Yeah, that was me.

(Ryan laughs, Gemma smiles)

Gemma: I was much younger then. I thought they were going to be experimented on.

Ryan: You're crazy you are...

Gemma: No, I'm not...

Ryan: So's my mate Joel. You've got to come to his party. You'll love it. It'll be a laugh...

Gemma: Thanks, but... I probably won't feel much like it.

Ryan: Oh come on, Gemma. Look... all my friends are so... *healthy*... and I haven't really been out since I went on dialysis... I'm a bit nervous about going actually and it would be nice to be similar position. We could just sit and talk... if you don't feel up to dancing...

Gemma: I don't know, Ryan...

Scene Three

A nightclub. Loud dance music. Lights flash. Enter Ryan, dragging Gemma out onto the dance floor.

Gemma: I'm not dancing! I hate dancing.

(Ryan lets go of her)

Ryan: What on earth were you doing? Those people are my friends!

Gemma: Well they should know better.

Ryan: Yeah, well, look, not everyone feels the way you do.

Gemma: She called me a fanatic...

Ryan: After you called her a cow killer. Lots of people wear leather jackets, Gemma...

Gemma: And lots of people are just totally ignorant about cruelty to animals. Anyway she started it, going on about how expensive it was... and asking me to feel how soft it is, I just said I thought it would've felt nicer on the cow... and then she started getting all arsy about it.

Ryan: She is my best mate's girlfriend. This is supposed to be a party. Look, just tell her you didn't mean it...

Gemma: No way. I'm going home.

Ryan: What?

Gemma: It's getting late.

Ryan: We've only just got here...

Gemma: Yeah, well I don't see it getting any better.

Ryan: Look why don't you let yourself chill a bit and just relax?

Gemma: I can't relax when I'm with people I don't get on with.

Ryan: I thought we got on.

Gemma: Not you... her... the air head, with the cow on her back.

Ryan: Oh, she's all right; she's a nice girl... I'm sure if you said you were sorry...

Gemma: Look, all right, I'll say I'm sorry I had a go at her.

Ryan: That everyone is entitled to their own beliefs...

Gemma: Yeah... I'll say, "of course you can wear a leather jacket if you want, it's your choice"...

Ryan: Yeah.

(They start walking off the dance floor)

Gemma: "...but if you really gave any thought to the way the cow was killed..."

(Ryan stops)

Gemma: "And I can give you a leaflet which explains why..."

Ryan: **(interrupting)** Let's dance.

Gemma: What? Oh... I thought you wanted to go back to your friends. Anyway, I can't dance...

Ryan: Try.

Gemma: I can't....

Ryan: Come on...

(Ryan tries to encourage Gemma to dance)

Ryan: Oh... hang on.

Gemma: What?

Ryan: **(embarrassed)** I need to... change my bag.

Gemma: What?

Ryan: I need to... change my bag.

Gemma: Oh right.

Ryan: Do you think you could come with me.

Gemma: **(loudly)** I can't go into the gents!

Ryan: Shhh. No, I mean, could you stand outside... stop anyone coming in... you know, in case they're funny about it or anything...

Gemma: Oh yeah. Okay.

(Ryan and Gemma move to Exit)

Gemma: I'll stand in front of the door and I'll say... "Sorry you can't go in there... because..." er... what shall I say?

Ryan: What?

Gemma: **(Practising)** "You can't go in there mate... cos the toilets are on fire" No... cos there's a big fight going on, cos it's out of order...

(Ryan stops and waits for her)

Gemma: Look at that!

(Gemma is pointing at her. Ryan comes back and joins her)

Ryan: What?

Gemma: **(horrified)** Look at that woman's bag. That's *crocodile!*

(Ryan looks heavenwards, drags her off)

Scene Four

Dr M is connecting Gemma to the dialysis machine. Gemma has a book of notepaper on lap.

Gemma: It wasn't a date!

Dr M: Oh yeah?

Gemma: It was more like a disaster.

Dr M: You went to The Escape? I used to go there... with my previous boyfriend.

Gemma: The airline pilot?

Dr M: Yeah, that scumbag. Good club though.

Gemma: I don't like clubs. They're too noisy.

DM: **(teasing)** That's what my gran says.

Gemma: Oh thanks very much.

Dr M: So what was the problem with the lovely Ryan? Don't tell me he talked about football *all* night?

Gemma: Most of it. Him and his mate Joel. They left me talking to Joel's airhead girlfriend... and we had an argument.

Dr M: Who did? You and Airhead or you and Ryan?

Gemma: Both. Like I said, it was a bit of a disaster.

Dr M: Are you seeing him again?

Gemma: I don't know. I don't think he likes me very much.

Dr M: I think he does.

Gemma: I don't think so. We don't have much in common.

Dr M: I watched the two of you, when he was coming in for dialysis. Always laughing and chatting.

Gemma: Yeah, well...

Dr M: That's why I made sure you were nearly always both in at the same time...

Gemma: Did you? I thought it was just coincidence, that every time I came in, he was on the machine next to me.

Dr M: Whereas it was me playing at being Cilla Black.

Gemma: **(smiling)** With about the same amount of success.

(Gemma starts on her letter)

Dr M: Are you writing to Ryan?

Gemma: No.

Dr M: Another man?

Gemma: Could be...

Dr M: Ah, two-timing are we?

(Dr M looks over Gemma's shoulder)

Dr M: Eliot Morley. *Eliot* – sounds rich, at any rate.

Gemma: Behave. He's Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture. I'm writing to tell him I'm backing the campaign to ban the transportation of live

animals for food. **(pause)** I expect you think I'm wasting my time. Ryan does. He doesn't reckon people like me can make any difference.

Dr M: When I was your age, I used to go on marches with CND.

Gemma: Really? You're having me on.

Dr M: I'm not Gemma. I've always wanted to... to make things better in the world. But anyway, I remember at the time, someone quoting a statistic, which was for every *one* person who writes a letter of protest, the authorities believe there are another hundred people out there with the same views.

Gemma: So it is worthwhile? The thing that makes me think I'm wasting my time sometimes, is when politicians send me a stock reply. You know, their secretary just sticks my name at the top of the letter, and it's exactly the same letter to everyone who writes in.

Dr M: What you have to do is write back again. Say it isn't good enough. You want a personal reply. Insist on it. Remember to put your age too. You can vote in the next election, and they don't want to lose a potential voter.

Gemma: Right. Thanks.

(Dr M is about to move on)

Gemma: Doctor Mayhew... you wouldn't like to help with some of my letters...

Dr M: ... If I wasn't so busy, Gemma. Look, why don't you ask Ryan...?

Gemma: Ryan won't be interested... I suppose I ought to give him a ring though. He did ask me to call him.

Dr M: And you haven't?

Gemma: He wants us to get together again this Saturday...

Dr M: Well that's great. Isn't it?

Gemma: The thing is, I don't want to go clubbing again... or to some awful boring football match... but I don't want to offend him by telling him that...

Dr M: Well why don't you take him somewhere you *do* like going?

Scene Five

Sounds of dogs, cats, goats, and chickens. Enter Gemma, in wellies and muddy jacket, carrying a bucket containing freshly dug carrots, cabbages, windfall apples etc. She tips the vegetables out on to the floor, starts to cut them up.

(Enter Ryan; he has bits of straw in his hair. He carries a pile of bowls)

Ryan: These shoes were fifty quid, Gemma. And I've trodden in goat crap.

Gemma: It'll wash off.

Ryan: It better.

(Ryan puts the pile of bowls down. He joins Gemma chopping vegetables)

Ryan: So this is how you spend your weekends, helping look after abandoned animals? When we got off the train and it was trees, and mud and country stuff all around, I thought for a minute we were gonna be sabotaging a foxhunt or something.

Gemma: Would you like to?

Ryan: I was kidding Gem.

Gemma: It's really exciting. You're always trying to make me understand about the buzz you get from scoring a goal. Well, for me, it's the moment I hear the hounds pick up the false trail we've set for them, and you know the fox is safe, this time at least.

Ryan: I should be on the football field right now...

Gemma: Take it a stage at a time. It was a big thing to tell them about your bag...

Ryan: Somebody said 'my granddad's got one of those'. Now my class nickname is 'grandad'. You said your friends were really supportive. Perhaps girls are just more mature...

Gemma: I told you I didn't have any problems... but er, actually... **(pause)** I didn't tell anyone when I was on the bag system.

Ryan: Not your closest friends?

Gemma: No. I... I think if people knew I have this kidney problem, they'd treat me differently.... As if I was suddenly more fragile. I might stop getting asked to do demos and stuff, cos my friends wouldn't think I was up to it.

Ryan: But how did you keep it secret? Didn't people notice when you did PE?

Gemma: I don't do PE. I've never liked it anyway.

Ryan: Well, I had to go back to football training... so I had to let people know. I keep trying to show the coach I'm fit enough to play, but he won't even make me sub. [I hope] It didn't sink in straight away when Doctor Mayhew said my kidneys aren't gonna get better. But when I thought about it... it could mean I'll never make the first 11 again... or go to college to train as a PE instructor.

- Gemma: I know... For as long as I can remember, I've wanted to be warden of a nature reserve. But there's no way, until I get the chance of a kidney transplant...
- Ryan: If only there wasn't a waiting list. Doctor Mayhew said I could wait anything up to five years. There are 5,000 people already on the list... if that's me, I'll be 21 before I get a chance of one.
- Gemma: I'll be 23. Then of course a transplanted kidney'll only last between 10 and 20 years, in spite of the fact we'll be taking anti-rejection drugs every single day.
- Ryan: Then what? What happens when our new kidney fails?
- Gemma: It's back on dialysis. And back in the queue for another one.
- Ryan: So why's there a shortage of kidney donors? Is it cos not enough people carry donor cards?
- Gemma: Kidneys can only be taken from people who die in certain ways. Most transplant organs are from people who have died from certain types of head injuries.
- Ryan: It's morbid isn't it? – thinking of people needing to die so they can be used as spare parts for us. My Mum was saying she might be able to donate me one of her kidneys... but I don't know if I want her to do it. Suppose then her other kidney fails.... Or my body rejected my Mum's kidney. That would be awful... I'd feel so guilty... She'd have lost a kidney for nothing.
- Gemma: She might not even be a compatible donor anyway. But it would make such a difference, having a new kidney...
- Ryan: But I suppose all we can do is wait.
- Gemma: Yeah. **(Gemma picks up the bowls)** Let's go feed those hungry animals... **(Ryan follows)**
- Gemma: Ryan!
- Ryan: What?
- Gemma: You've just trodden in goat crap again.

Scene Six

Ryan is sitting in Dr Mayhew's office. Enter a harassed-looking Dr M

Dr M: Oh, I'm sorry, Ryan... I've got the wrong notes. Excuse me a minute.

(Exit Dr Mayhew. Ryan waits. Re-enter Dr M)

Dr M: Here we are. So... how are you, Ryan.

Ryan: Fine yeah.

Dr M: Getting on alright with the bag system?

Ryan: Yeah, it's okay...

Dr M: Good... that's good...

Ryan: And how are you Doctor Mayhew?

Dr M: Me? Oh, I'm alright, you know...

Ryan: Bit stressed out, eh?

Dr M: Oh. Do I look stressed out?

Ryan: Just a bit, yeah.

Dr M: Yeah, well I'm running a bit late... things didn't get off to too good a start this morning.

Ryan: What, did you over sleep or something?

Dr M: No... no I got up to find someone had... vandalised my car. Glue in the locks, paint stripper thrown over the bonnet.

Ryan: Oh my God.

Dr M: I'm still a bit shaken up actually...

Ryan: Yeah, I bet. I mean that'll cost a bit to put right...

Dr M: It's not that, so much... it's knowing these people have found out where I live...

Ryan: Friend of mine's Dad is always getting stuff done to his car... aerial snapped off, windows broke... it's just drunks and nutcases...

Dr M: This is slightly different. I think it's because some of my work is seen as controversial... there are certain people who don't agree with what I'm doing... I've had hate mail in the past...

Ryan: Yeah?

Dr M: But only addressed to me here at the hospital. Not at my home. That's what's so scary. So frightening.

Ryan: Doctor Mayhew, are you okay?

Dr M: Yes, yes of course. The police are investigating, and the best way of dealing with this kind of... intimidation, is just to get on with my work... and ignore it. **(beat)** Now Ryan, the reason I asked you to come and see me here today, is because there's something important I want to discuss with you.

Scene Seven

(Doorbell rings. Sally enters with Gemma)

Mum: Have a seat. **(They both sit)** I thought he'd be back by now. It's only a routine check up... just to see how he's getting on with the bag system. There shouldn't be anything to worry about.

Gemma: He looked very well when I saw him on Wednesday.

Mum: Yes, I'm glad he's back playing football... for the school at least. I wish he could get his place back on the youth side. He's been training so hard.

Gemma: Has he been taking vitamins?

Mum: Yes, he wanted to buy up half of Holland and Barratts when we were in town. That wasn't your doing by any chance.

Gemma: It was Doctor Mayhew's idea.

Mum: These are vitamins he needs because he's become a vegetarian?

Gemma: No... being veggie is very healthy. The vitamins are to replace those lost during dialysis... and to give him a bit more energy.

Mum: He used to be so energetic.

Gemma: So did I.

Mum: Well, lets hope you both get your transplants soon. Would you like a drink or anything?

Gemma: No I'm fine.

Mum: So... have you been to school today?

Gemma: Yeah. It was art, which I'm crap at, but I've been designing some posters... they're not very good... I'm taking them home to try to improve them a bit...

Mum: Have you got them with you?

Gemma: Do you want to see? Er, they're still pretty rough...

(Gemma takes a partly painted poster outline from her bag, unrolls it on the floor. The slogan reads, 'Say No To Animal Experimentation')

This is the best one... but it's still crap.

Mum: No, it's good. The lettering's good. Did you do it freehand?

Gemma: Yeah... But what about the design... I don't think it's strong enough. Maybe it should be more red... like blood or something... and you can see it's a monkey in a cage?

Mum: From here I can, but from across the room... **(Mum backs up, Gemma holds up the poster)** The thing that would get me, is if I could see the monkeys face clearly. His eyes terrified eyes staring into mine...

Gemma: Yeah... that would make people notice. **(pause)** You seem to know a lot about it... are you into animal welfare?

Mum: I care about animals... but I don't have any special knowledge about them or anything. I'm just thinking from a design point of view. I work for a design and printers – we do leaflets and posters for all kinds of organisations.

Gemma: Wow. Maybe you should be designing my posters...

Mum: I think you're doing all right there. But how are you thinking of copying them?

Gemma: I hadn't got that far... how do you think I should?

Mum: Well, if you've got it finished, and you've any free time on Saturday morning, you could pop by the office and we could scan it in on the computer... and print up some copies. Glossy paper, full colour.

Gemma: Oh that would be great... You know my Mum isn't very helpful when it comes to my 'campaigns'. She and Dad are always worrying about me getting myself arrested and that. I keep telling them, 'if the law's wrong, it's okay to break it...' but my Dad is just so strict... **(pause)** Ryan hasn't told me anything about his Dad... I mean is he...?

Mum: He died when Ryan was still small.

Gemma: Oh... oh I'm sorry.

Mum: Had a heart attack... at thirty-five... you really don't expect things like that to hit your family... and now there's this... with Ryan.

(Enter Ryan. Mum and Gemma get up)

Ryan: Sorry I'm late.

Mum: How did it go with Doctor Mayhew?

Ryan: Fine, Mum. I'll tell you about it when I get back. **(to Gemma)** Ready to go?

Gemma: Yeah, I'm starving.

Ryan: See you later, Mum.

Gemma: Thanks for your help with my poster Sally.

Mum: See you soon, Gemma. Have a lovely meal.

(Exit Gemma and Ryan)

Scene Eight

(Ryan and Gemma are sitting in a restaurant. Ryan looks at the menu)

Gemma: The veggie ones are probably marked with a 'V'.

Ryan: Nope... with a little rabbit cartoon, sticking his thumb up.

Gemma: You're kidding me.

(Gemma looks and giggles)

Gemma: Was Doctor Mayhew impressed by all the vitamins you've been taking?

Ryan: Yeah... and said... well she said that there's a chance that I can have a kidney transplant soon...

Gemma: Yes!

Ryan: ... If I want it.

Gemma: And you certainly do!

Ryan: ... Well yeah...

GEMMA: Don't you?

Ryan: The thing is Gem... it's a new treatment... a new kind of transplant...

Gemma: But is that a problem?

Ryan: I don't know...

Gemma: It's not riskier, is it?

Ryan: I'm not sure...

Gemma: But Doctor Mayhew thinks it's a good idea?

Ryan: Yes.

Gemma: Well then. And it would mean you could live a normal life again.

Ryan: It would... but the thing it... Gem, it's a kidney from a pig.

(Gemma looks at him)

Gemma: ... A *live* pig.

Ryan: A dead one. They kill it... humanely and everything first.

(Gemma leaps up)

Gemma: And you said you'd have this? You didn't did you, Ryan?

Ryan: Doctor Mayhew... she left me to think about it.

Gemma: But you're not, are you? Tell me you're not.

Ryan: I don't know, Gemma. I mean I have to think about it. Two to five years is a long time to wait for a human kidney and –

Gemma: **(interrupting)** ... you don't care about animals suffering just so you can play your bloody football!

Ryan: Gemma...

Gemma: I can't believe I'm hearing this, Ryan...

Ryan: Sit down... please... I haven't said I'm having it. Look everyone's looking at us.

Gemma: You said you weren't having it?

Ryan: Sit down, Gem.

(Gemma sits)

Gemma: I knew this was gonna happen soon... I know the research was happening, but not that it could happen *here*, at our hospital.

Ryan: Yeah, apparently Doctor Mayhew's been involved in the research...

Gemma: Doctor Mayhew... Oh that is sick! It's disgusting...

Ryan: ... And it's all been kept very hush-hush until now, cos they were worried about the attacks from animal rights people. In fact Doctor Mayhew had her car trashed last night...

Gemma: Well good. She's really involved? All this time she's been treating us, she's been experimenting on animals? You know they use monkeys, in the research? They put the pig kidneys in healthy monkeys, just to see what happens! Oh God... I feel sick...

(Ryan looks around)

Ryan: You don't do you? We haven't ordered yet.

Gemma: Say you won't have this transplant! Promise me!

Ryan: Look let's discuss this later, okay? You'll put me off eating and all in a minute.

Gemma: Ryan I... I don't want to eat now... I don't think I can, okay...

Ryan: Come on Gem, order a nice cutlet.

Gemma: And everyone's looking at us, cos I started shouting... Look can we leave... right now... **(Gemma gets up)**

I'm sorry Ryan... I'm sorry.

(Exit Gemma, running out)

Scene Nine

Ryan is at home, doing his homework. The doorbell rings. Ryan goes and lets Gemma in.

Gemma: Hi... er... I thought I'd just drop by... and say sorry about the other night... making a scene in that restaurant...

Ryan: **(laughs)** I really thought you were going to throw up in someone's dinner.

Gemma: Yeah, so did I. **(pause)** Ryan... I'm not gonna let Doctor Mayhew get away with this... I'm organising a demonstration... you don't have to be involved if you don't want to... but it would be great if you do and –

Ryan: **(interrupting)** Gemma...how do you fancy going out somewhere?

Gemma: What?

Ryan: I'm fed up with sitting around talking about kidneys.

Gemma: Well I don't want to go to a club...

Ryan: And I don't think the restaurant will have us back.

(Gemma sits down beside him)

Gemma: Well I don't know where else we could go, do you?

Ryan: I just want to find somewhere... where we can sit and talk and laugh... with nothing else to remind us of hospitals and doctors... and pigs...

Gemma: We can't just run away from the situation, Ryan.

Ryan: But we can forget it for a while can't we?

(He cups her face in his hands, tilts it to look at him. He kisses her)

Gemma: **(startled)** What was that for?

Ryan: You tell me. **(pause)** Gem... you're not... you know seeing anyone at the moment...

Gemma: What do you think **(she stops)** Oh? No. I did have a boyfriend... before I got ill and that. I met him at a protest.

Ryan: I bet he had dreads and a holey jumper. Did he?

Gemma: You are so prejudiced at anyone who cares about the environment.

Ryan: He had dreads, I know he did!

(Gemma shoves him)

Gemma: No he didn't actually. **(She smiles suddenly)** but his jumper was a bit holey.

Ryan: Yeah, well I suppose anyone's would be... if they spent their time crawling through tunnels and being squashed by bulldozers! So what did you do... you and Swampy?

Gemma: What... what do you mean, do?

Ryan: Did you like, live in a tent together, or in a tree?

Gemma: We used to go for a drink after the demo... sit and chat like.... Oh you know. What about you?

Ryan: Girlfriends? I've had a few yeah. Nothing serious.

Gemma: My boyfriend... wasn't serious. We didn't... you know.

Ryan: Good... I mean you didn't?

Gemma: Did you... have sex? I mean you don't have to say if –

Ryan: **(interrupting)** Well kind of... I mean not really... but you're nearly 18 and you've never...

Gemma: Yeah, all right, I know. And I don't suppose I'll ever have a proper boyfriend now... well not until I get a new kidney... I mean it'd be a bit embarrassing...

Ryan: For you? At least you haven't got a plastic tube and a bag hanging from your stomach.

Gemma: I've got a tube sticking out of my arm...

Ryan: That's not so bad.

Gemma: Yeah, well it doesn't make me feel very sexy anymore.

Ryan: Not like you used to.

Gemma: What?

Ryan: You said you used to feel sexy...

Gemma: Well guys used to fancy me and that. And I could talk to them. Now I feel kind of awkward and self-conscious...

Ryan: You talk to me.

Gemma: Yeah, well you're different.

Ryan: Cos I'm not sexy.

Gemma: I didn't say that.

Ryan: You didn't have to. **(He gets up)** I mean who'd fancy someone all tied up in plastic tubing!

Gemma: I would.

(Ryan laughs)

Ryan: You're a pervert, Gemma.

Gemma: Charming. Maybe I won't ask you for another kiss, after all.

(Ryan gets up. He puts his arms around her. They kiss, rather awkwardly)

Scene 10

(The hospital. Dr Mayhew, Mum and Ryan are having a meeting)

Ryan: Why me?

Dr M: There are so many factors such as your age and your fitness, Ryan, which makes you an ideal candidate for one of our first xenotransplants.

Mum: This will be the very first time that a kidney from a pig has been transplanted into a human?

Dr M: Yes it will.

Mum: So it's a completely new treatment.

Dr M: But it is now fully tested.

Ryan: But what I don't understand is why you're offering me this instead of a human kidney.

Mum: It's the second-class option isn't it?

Ryan: Who are the people being offered human kidneys?

Mum: Are they being saved for private patients? People who can afford to pay?

Dr M: Absolutely not! Everyone in this renal unit, who's medically suitable, is being offered this opportunity. You've told me that being on dialysis is restricting your quality of life... it's stopping you from doing many of the things you want to do. If you want to wait until a human kidney is available, you may very well still be on dialysis this time next year. This gives you a chance to be right at the front of the queue.

Ryan: What if it doesn't work – this pig kidney?

Dr M: All our research and data suggest it will.

Ryan: But if it doesn't – would I die?

Dr M: No, you'll have to go back on dialysis and await another transplant. The same as if your new human kidney failed.

Mum: Isn't it more likely to fail?

Dr M: No. The reason we have been waiting so long before beginning to use xenotransplants is that we had to make sure the new anti-rejection drugs were safe and effective. Without these drugs, the kidney would reject, but with them, I'm very optimistic that we shall see a good result here.

Ryan: Hang on, I've not decided if I'm having it yet.

Dr M: I'm talking of the effects on our renal unit as a whole. If you don't want to be considered for this treatment, Ryan, I completely understand. A number of other patients have already put their names forward.

Mum: So the advantage is that Ryan could have the new kidney sooner. What are the disadvantages?

Dr M: There is a slightly higher risk of the new kidney rejecting. The anti-rejection drugs he would need to take are new and although they are now fully tested, it would involve a few more hospital check-ups... just to make sure everything is running smoothly.

Ryan: But... I mean what would I feel like, with part of a pig inside me?

- Dr M: Don't think of it as a pig's kidney. Remember it contains a special gene so your body will believe it to be a human kidney, *your* kidney. And that's how you should think of it too.
- Ryan: Well, Gemma keeps making me think of the pigs...
- Dr M: Gemma has her own views. In a perfect world we wouldn't have to use animals in this way. But as you well know this isn't a perfect world. Gemma has to have medicines and treatments for her diabetes and kidney failure, which were originally tried out on animals. Where do you draw the line?
- Mum: Are you sure this is the right thing for Ryan, Doctor Mayhew? I know if it were successful it would mean he would be healthy and active again... but supposing it goes wrong...
- Dr M: That's extremely unlikely.
- Ryan: And what about viruses, which might be passed to me from the pig? I was reading some stuff in the paper, where they said that it could happen...
- Dr M: The chance of anything like that happening is almost nil...
- Mum: You *think*, but you can't be sure, can you? Ryan would be one of the first people having this transplant. He'd be a human guinea pig in other words. Aren't you underplaying the risks, Doctor? I know you are keen for Ryan to have this treatment...
- Dr M: Yes, I think it would be in his best interests...
- Mum: **(interrupting)** And your best interests, too? I've seen you giving interviews in the paper and on the telly. If enough of your patients agree to have these transplants it's going to help your career isn't it?
- Dr M: Really, Sally! I'm not doing this for the sake of my career. I believe in this treatment. And of course the interest of my patients always comes first.
- Mum: Well, all I hear from Gemma is reasons why Ryan shouldn't have this transplant. All I hear from you are reasons why he should. What you both seem to forget is he's *my* son... and I'm the one who has to decide whether to put my name on that consent form.
- Ryan: But it's *my* body, Mum. It's should be *my* decision.
- Mum: I know, Ryan, and as I've said, I'll go along with whatever you decide, but that doesn't make it any easier for me. All I want you to do is make the decision, which is right for you - not to please someone else.
- Ryan: A pig's kidney would mean getting back into the team, it would mean going to college, feeling fit and healthy again... but then I start thinking about the risks and the pigs...

Dr M: The pigs live on a special farm in very hygienic conditions. It's not worse than using them for pork or bacon. They're happy, healthy pigs.

Scene Eleven

Gemma is having dialysis. She is talking to Ryan.

Gemma: **(mimicking Dr M)** 'They're happy healthy pigs'. Yeah right. Has Doctor Mayhew told you exactly what goes on down at Kidney Farm? They start with the mother pig. She's given an injection to make her produce lots of egg cells. Then she's artificially inseminated...

Ryan: So, she doesn't get a shag – so what?

Gemma: 24 hours later the embryos are collected, usually by killing the mother pig and cutting out her womb. The embryos are then injected into a foster pig. The baby pig grows inside its foster mum... until the day she is killed, so the piglet can be taken from the womb and raised in a controlled environment. It takes at least 20 pigs to produce 2 kidneys for transplant. **(Ryan turns)**

It's been proven that pigs are more intelligent than dogs. They may even be cleverer than chimpanzees. Did you see the programme about the pigs that were taught to use a computer?

Ryan: Yeah, and I remember that story about those two pigs who escaped from the slaughter house... got under the fence and swam a river to get away.

Gemma: Did Doctor Mayhew mention to you that there's a danger of as yet unknown viruses being spread from pig to human via Xenotransplantation?

Ryan: She said it was unlikely to happen. They'll screen and check everything carefully.

Gemma: C'mon. How long was it before the government admitted that Mad Cow Disease existed.

Ryan: But if mankind hadn't exploited animals, where would we be now? You and me might not be still alive... There'd be hundreds more diseases which couldn't be cured... Don't you think people should be allowed to choose whether or not to have this treatment?

Gemma: No. It's not an acceptable choice.

Ryan: To you. And to you, eating meat isn't an acceptable choice. But you have to take drugs for your diabetes and when you get infections – all originally tested on animals...

Gemma: I know, and I don't feel good about it. But these pig to human transplants aren't necessary... or wouldn't be if the billions of pounds being invested in xenotransplants was used to improve the donor scheme. And I'd like to see

that kind of money being spent on preventative care so less people would have kidney failure in the first place.... Or they could use it to provide more home dialysis machines...

Ryan: Doctor Mayhew believes in the treatment.

Gemma: And it said in the paper that she's on the payroll of the drug company doing this research. They're going to make a lot of money out of pig kidneys – because it means they'll sell more of the drugs that stop transplants rejecting.

(Mum has entered, unnoticed by Ryan and Gemma)

Ryan: Yes, Doctor Mayhew told me about that... but just think, even if a pig's kidney only lasted a couple of years, and then a new one was needed, it would still be two whole years without dialysis, the tiredness, the feeling sick...

Gemma: ...but with the constant worry that you might've caught a deadly virus from a pig.

Ryan: Oh, hi Mum. Time to go home?

Mum: Yes... but first... could I possibly have a word with Gemma... on my own?

GEMMA: What about?

Ryan: Yeah, what's the big secret?

Gemma: Anything you want to say to me, you can say in front of Ryan.

Mum: Alright. Okay. **(Pause)** Gemma... I just want Ryan to be able to have time to think this thing through for himself.

Ryan: I am, and I will, Mum. But I only get to hear one side of it from the Doctor. Gemma and I are both patients. She's refused a pig kidney...

Mum: No she hasn't, love.

Ryan: What?

(Ryan looks from one to the other.)

Gemma: What are you saying? I'm not having a pig kidney.

Mum: I know, but then the choice isn't yours to make. Doctor Mayhew was mentioning to me that some patients couldn't currently be offered a transplant for health reasons... and she mentioned your name. She assumed we knew.

Gemma: Yeah, I can't have a pig's kidney right now cos I'm not fit enough, with my diabetes...

Mum: But you want to influence Ryan's decision...

Ryan: - while for you it was never on offer anyway? It's easy to make a decision, when you don't have a choice, Gemma! Why didn't you tell me? Why didn't you say you weren't even offered a pig's kidney?

Gemma: Because it doesn't matter. If I had been offered it I'd have turned it down. A few months ago I was offered the chance of a treatment which means I wouldn't have to give myself daily insulin injections for my diabetes. It involved having a transplant of pig cells which would produce insulin inside my body. I'd jump at the chance of anything which would mean I could stop sticking needles in my veins, - Or I would if it didn't involve using part of an animal. But it was a hard decision to make... several times I've felt like going to the hospital and saying, "give me those pig cells". I know being on dialysis for years is pretty grim. Dialysis patients have a suicide rate fourteen times higher than the national average. But when I'm fit enough for a transplant, I'll stay on dialysis until a *human* kidney becomes available to me.

(Enter Dr Mayhew)

Dr M: Ryan, I'm glad I've caught you. The lab have lost the results of your blood test... I was wondering...

Ryan: You want another one? My arm's already like a pincushion.

Dr M: I'm sorry, Ryan. It won't take a minute.

(Ryan gets up. Exit Ryan and Dr Mayhew)

Gemma: Another cock up. It's a bit worrying isn't it?

Mum: It's only a routine blood test.

Gemma: Yeah, but if things can go wrong... then so can bigger things...

Mum: **(Snaps)** I know! Look, this is hard enough for me as it is...

Gemma: **(interrupting)** Do you want him to have this operation? Do you?

Mum: Look Gemma....

Gemma: Do you!

Mum: I want Ryan to make the right decision *for him*... whatever that may be.

Gemma: I've told Doctor Mayhew I want to switch to another consultant. I can't be with a doctor involved in vivisection. I've got loads of people coming to my demo. I'm gonna camp out in the hospital car park every night until then, and I was gonna ask you to help me with the posters... I mean when we first met, you told me you cared about animal welfare...

Mum: I do... But I care about my son, more than anything. Look, all I'm saying, Gemma... is let Ryan make up his own mind... give him a little space...

Gemma: You want to split us up?

Mum: No... no of course not... **(more softly)** I'm just scared for him, Gemma...

Gemma: So am I. **(tearful)** I'm really scared.

(Sally hugs Gemma)

Gemma: When does he have to decide?

Mum: The end of the month. It's so frightening that one decision he has to make now at sixteen could affect the whole of his life... **(tearful)** It's so scary.

(Gemma hugs Sally)

Scene Twelve

Ryan's house. Ryan is reading a letter. Enter Mum.

Mum: I didn't hear you come in. I thought you were stopping after school for football.

Ryan: I didn't really feel like it. **(pause)** Mum, what's this? **(He hands her a letter)** Why didn't you tell me? Who's it from?

Mum: I don't know... just some person...

Ryan: Some *nutter* Mum. Who knows where I live and everything. How could they know that...

Mum: You don't think Gemma could of...

Ryan: **(interrupting)** Mum! Gemma would never do something like this. Anyway, that's definitely not her writing... and she can spell... look "death to *aminal* haters".

Mum: Well it's been in the paper about transplants... and lots of people at school know about you being a kidney patient... I mean, it might not be from animal rights people at all; it might be one of your mates having a joke.

Ryan: They wouldn't.

Mum: Well they've not exactly been very supportive since you've been ill. I mean how many times has Joel been round here?

Ryan: He's just... kind of embarrassed. I don't know... He finds it hard to deal with.

Mum: Yeah, he's not the only one.

Ryan: I'll have to go down her school and kick ass. You know I'm not looking forward to Saturday and Gemma's demo. I think we should stay in the house and lock all the doors, just in case some of the crazier animal rights people have got into their heads that I'm having a pig kidney...

Mum: And are you? Have you made your decision yet, love?

Scene Thirteen

Gemma stands with her placards. Ryan approaches. Ryan and Gemma look at each other. An awkward pause.

Gemma: **(awkward)** Er, Hi.

Ryan: **(nervous)** Hi. Mum's just parking the car. Can't find a space in the car park this morning.

Gemma: Cos it's full of tents.

Ryan: And people cooking lentil soup over their campfires.

(Gemma tries to smile)

Ryan: We saw you on the news. And taped it for you.

Gemma: I'd be too embarrassed to watch... I don't know what I said to the reporter. She stuck a microphone under my nose, and suddenly I just started spouting nonsense...

Ryan: We thought you were very good. Maybe you should get a job on TV. Like David Attenborough or something. They said there were hundreds at your demo...

Gemma: Yeah, it was great! – Everyone shouting and waving banners... you should've come...

Ryan: **(interrupting)** Look, I'm sorry I couldn't...

Gemma: Oh I didn't mean... I just meant it was good that's all. You might've enjoyed it. You might've understood why it's so important...

(uneasy pause)

Ryan: Is it important? This kidney thing?

Gemma: Course it is, Ryan.

Ryan: Is it more important than you and me... I mean it seems to be driving us apart... You've been spending all your time down here. You've not been round to see me.

Gemma: ... do you think it's been easy for me? Your Mum said I should let you alone and give you time to make your decision...

Ryan: And that's why you haven't been round or phoned all week?

Gemma: Yeah.

Ryan: It's not cos you care more about pigs than you do me?

(Gemma hugs him)

Gemma: No. Oh Ryan...

(Ryan gently pulls away)

Ryan: And if I've decided to have a pig's kidney... what would you think of me?

Gemma: I'd try to respect your decision. I'd really like to try to understand....but I don't think I could, Ryan. **(pause)** I don't think... Look Ryan, this is hell for me.

(She blinks back tears, her voice is unsteady)

Gemma: If you go ahead and have a pig transplant... I'm sorry... I just don't think I can deal with it, okay. **(She looks away)**

Ryan: Gemma... I'm not going to sign up for a xenotransplant.

Gemma: You're not?

Ryan: Doctor Mayhew rang me with the results of my blood test last night. I've got an infection. Must've got a germ while changing the bag.

(Gemma goes to him, feels his forehead)

Gemma: Oh poor you.

Ryan: My temperature's up. That's why I had to come here today. They're going to keep me in for a couple of days while they give me antibiotics and stuff.

Gemma: I'll come in and see you when they've got you settled.

Ryan: It might mean coming off the bag system and going back on the dialysis machines for a while at least. It'll certainly mean I won't be able to have a pig kidney this time around...

Gemma: **(softly)** How do you feel about that? **(pause)** Had you made your decision?

Ryan: Yes, Gemma. **(Ryan places a finger on Gemma's lips to stop her saying any more. He then turns slowly and exits)**

Gemma: See you around Ryan.

THE END