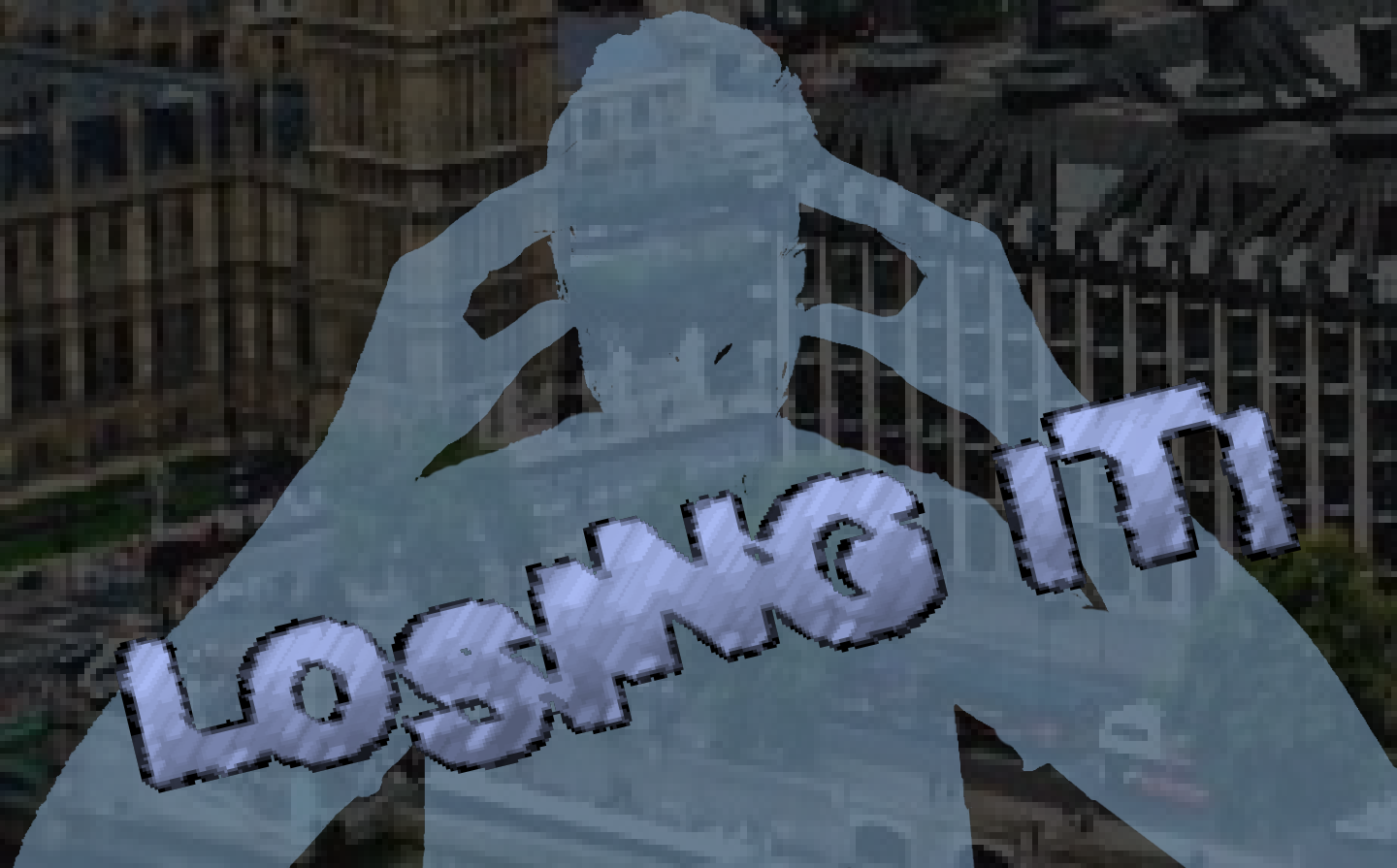


Written by
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LOSING IT



1

Character Overviews

Ian Barrett

A former star, in the 80's, now in his early fifties. He is living off the recognition that his name affords, even if that is dwindling year on year. Through the years he has tried many things to remain positive and relevant. His latest fad is psychology and the power of positive thought. The appearance of Ian's subconscious is a consequence of his newfound fad, who comically leads his decision making.

Ian is driven largely by the hope of getting his name back up in lights. Circumstances prevail, when his 'soap-opera father' is diagnosed with cancer, Ian is invited back to the show to do a 6 episode arc reunion, for the still airing 30 years later, Claremont Avenue. Ian, deep inside, wants this to become a more permanent situation, but he is halted at the gate when he becomes torn between doing the right thing and personal success, following unfair media coverage, about Charles (his on-screen father and mentor), after his death.

Ian's Subconscious

A visible manifestation of Ian's innermost feelings, thoughts and knowledge. Ian's inner guide, which comically leads him to become a better version of himself. He helpfully taunts Ian through everyday life and becomes an integral part of his story and eventual transformation. First, he appears as a younger version of himself but after the death of his 'soap-opera father', he becomes the grumpy co-star that made his life hell as he rose to fame in the 80's.

Tracey

A soap star in her early fifties (same age as Ian). She was in the soap when Ian first rose to fame. They had a brief relationship at that time but split due to the divergence in their fame. She is still on the soap, thirty years later. Her life has stayed the same during the intervening years. A potential love interest for Ian as he reconnects with the life he once had.

Abigail

Ian's agent. About forty years old, she has inherited Ian as a client and he is the most famous name on her roster even if his best days are firmly behind him. Abigail's greatest desire is to become more successful, to be able to promote bigger names, but she is very familiar with how difficult the business can be and is also a realist.

Derek Harper

The Executive Producer on the soap. Thirty years previously Ian and Derek were the best of friends. Derek as a Production Assistant and Ian as a new actor on the show.

Derek's life has moved on in the thirty years, promotions and more promotions.


When Ian briefly returns to his former life on the show they have to reassess their friendship based on the shift in power in their relationship.

With sliding ratings, Derek is under pressure and puts ratings ahead of morality when he uses Charles' current media focus, following his death, to bring attention to the show (Claremont Avenue) and MHF studios, bad-mouthing Charles in the process.

Charles

The patriarch of the soap. Beloved star, diagnosed with cancer and on his last days on the show. His demise leads to a return for Ian. However, the public image of Charlie and the reality are polar opposites. Before Charles dies, via his nurse, he passes on his memoirs to Ian in the hope that he can right some wrongs in their relationship.

Charles knows deep down that his abrasive attitude towards people made him unpopular to work with, but beneath all of that, it was a mechanism for Charles to cope with his personal circumstances without having to share his desperation and to avoid unwanted pity.

An aerial, high-angle photograph of a city, likely London, showing a dense urban landscape. A prominent feature is a large, ornate clock tower (Big Ben) on the left side. To the right, there is a modern building with a distinctive glass and steel facade. The overall scene is captured in a slightly desaturated, dark tone, with the text overlaid in white.

2

Series Overview (SYNOPSIS)

The story follows Ian Bennett, an actor/singer/entertainer who had eighteen months of being the hottest star in the UK during the late eighties. He starred in a top-rated soap called Claremont Avenue, had a number one hit single and moved on to be the star of a high profile West End musical.

Unfortunately, he is now thirty years older, left on the scrap heap of life. No longer famous just a nostalgic memory for those of a certain age. He struggles to make ends meet and resorts to jobs he feels are beneath him to keep the wolf from the door. Based in London, where Ian resides in his now shabby, but once classy and opulent flat, we follow him as he tries to survive in a world that he feels has discarded him. In contrast, the story also features flashbacks to his heyday of the late eighties, very different from the mundane life that he now lives.

In a delicate state of mind, his latest fad is psychology and the power of positive thought, which leads to a visible manifestation of his subconscious. His subconscious emerges as Ian's inner guide and comically leads him to become a better version of himself.

What starts as a light-hearted drama takes a turn for the tragic with the death of a peripheral character. However, due to Ian's visible subconscious, the comedy remains because he sees and hears a character that no one else does. But far from being a friendly voice the projection insults and humiliates Ian every chance it gets. Further undermining his self-confidence and hampering his attempts to move his life forwards. It charts Ian's attempt to redeem himself and the voiceless dead man in a world that has moved on and passed them.

Ultimately, Ian must choose a route back to the famous life and all that means or trying to give voice to the voiceless and being returned to the life he has been living for thirty years.

With the story switching between the two decades we are charting the rise and ultimate fall of Ian. We see the inevitable march of time as it catches up to all of us. With the death of Charles, we are also highlighting that there is more than one character 'losing it'. As well as the slide in ratings for the soap which can also push it into the category of 'losing it'. There is a fight from all of them to regain former glories. How do you return to the peak when the public perceives that your best days are behind you?

Many of Ian's life struggles are the everyday issues affecting all of us. Although we have seen shows featuring TV stars we are not often presented with a character who has lost his fame and is living a normal everyday life.

The story is not based on any one real life but rather on a chance encounter with Don Estelle busking in a shopping centre. A once very famous actor and singer being forced to live off the scraps that society will afford him. Also the thought of what happens when you are no longer relevant in the consciousness of an increasingly fickle public.

An aerial, high-angle photograph of a city, likely London, showing a dense urban landscape with numerous buildings, streets, and green spaces. A large, white, stylized number '3' is superimposed in the upper center of the image. The overall tone is slightly desaturated and dark, giving it a cinematic or historical feel.

3

The Setting / World /
Location

Set in the modern world of London we follow Ian as he struggles to remain relevant in a world that he feels has forgotten him. A major star in the late eighties, starring in a top soap and having a number one hit provided the springboard to a life that never quite fulfilled its promise. Flashbacks to his heyday in the eighties help to punctuate Ian's mundane life of today. The contrast they provide showing in sharp relief how the mighty have fallen. They create a sense of nostalgia for the viewer and reveal traits in the characters that flow throughout their lives. Mainly based in two locations, Ian's flat and the studios of the soap, we see their crumbling between the two time periods. A slow decline that is accelerating all around unless someone can stop the slide.





4

Tone

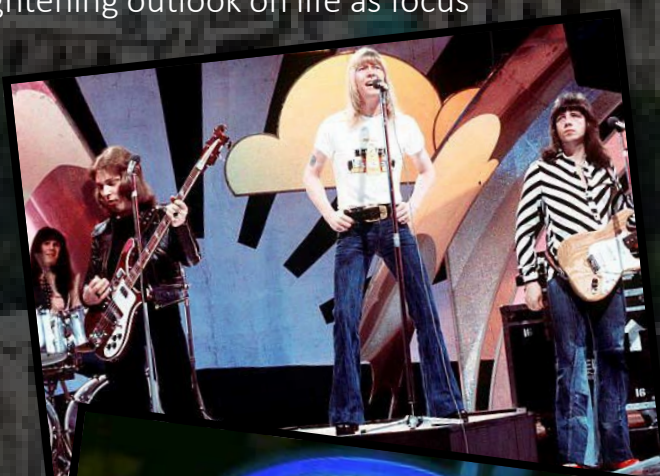
The tone is darkly comedic, with an underlying theme of dark to light as the season progresses. Set in London with the fantastical element of a projection of Ian's subconscious. Ian, Tracey and Derek are the straight 'men' with Abigail and the subconscious being able to interject lines of humour that puncture the bubble of the seriousness of the conflicts of everyday life.

The present-day scenes are more muted in their colour schemes, more browns and dowdy colours. In contrast the eighties flashbacks are bright and vivid featuring a lot of lurid neons and pastels. Again this contrasts the difference in Ian's life between his famous highs and his more mundane life now.

With Ian's subconscious being a projection in the form of both Ian and Charlie in their heyday (80's) their colours would mirror those of the flashbacks. Pastels, neon's, Miami Vice cotton suits.

These colours would also highlight the technicolour world that people remember the eighties to be. In contrast to the drab lives that people perceive themselves to be living today.

As Ian's life turns around as the series progresses the colour scheme changes to include lighter shades. Mirroring his brightening outlook on life as focus returns.



An aerial photograph of a city, likely Los Angeles, showing a dense urban landscape with various buildings and structures. A large, white, stylized number '5' is overlaid in the center of the image.

5

**Character Traits /
TRANSFORMATION /
BackStory**

All the characters have been through their own stories in the thirty years of Ian's career. Ian has been on a downward spiral having once reached the headiest of heights. Tracey has maintained an equilibrium and has remained rooted in the life she has always had. Derek started low and has reached the heights of his profession. This in turn causes conflict because the roles in Ian and Derek's relationship have reversed. Where once Ian was the major player now Derek has all the power and Ian doesn't measure up.

Abigail on the other hand came to the drama late, having inherited Ian as a client later in his career (post fame) so is an impartial observer of the drama playing out.

Ian starts the series doing things for personal reasons but with the death of Charlie and his learning the truth about his behaviour Ian becomes more focused on helping someone else. Charlie no longer has a voice so Ian becomes his living representative for righteousness against the turning popular opinion.

During the height of Ian's fame, he was considered a heartthrob. In the opening shot, we see awards from the time (sexiest man of the year, etc.). Now thirty years later he is described as going squidgy around the edges. There are hints of who he once was and if his fame had continued who he could have been.

Tracey was a typical teenage eighties soap star – glamorous in an obvious way. Now though, with the passing of time, the years have taken their toll but if we squint we can see the girl she once was.

With Ian's subconscious pushing him he is fighting to do the right thing for a co-star who can no longer speak for themselves. In some ways acting as Ian's conscience during the second half of the series.

Ian's initial instinct in most cases is to try to please people and not let them down. This is evident in some flashbacks as he makes mistakes in his early career but is always very apologetic about them.

Derek on the other hand is full of bluster and will try to bend people to his will by force of personality.

Charlie is rude and dismissive of his co-workers to create an emotional shield so he doesn't need to share the internal torment that his life has become.

An aerial, high-angle view of a city, likely London, featuring a prominent clock tower (Big Ben) on the left and a large, modern glass-fronted building on the right. The city is densely packed with buildings, and the overall scene is dimly lit, suggesting dusk or dawn. The text is overlaid in white on a dark background.

6

Season 1 Summary

Season one focuses on the death of Charlie. It leads to an invitation for Ian to return to the soap for a short arc family reunion.

Ian is guided along the way by his projected subconscious.

When the truth about Charlie is revealed only Ian has the full information of why Charlie behaved as he did, after receiving Charles' memoirs days before his death.

Ian fights for the full truth to be known. This causes a rift in his old friendship with Derek. It also puts his chance at a full comeback on the soap in jeopardy.

He must choose between a return to prominence and a life scratching a living on the edges of fame and relevance.

Tracey becomes closer to Ian and she becomes the physical moral support that he needs in his fight to clear Charlie's name.

Derek has progressed in his career and is fighting to remain in control of the soap. He puts Charles' story into the media in an attempt to stimulate viewers. This in turn brings him into conflict with Ian, his old friend. The internal fight between job and friend are prevalent and cannot be resolved in one season. Season two would focus more on their fight and hopeful eventual reconciliation.

Abigail is the neutral observer offering sneaky one-liners, mostly directed at Ian in an attempt to bring some levity to what becomes a more tense situation as the season progresses.

Ian's subconscious starts as a younger version of himself and prods Ian in the way that a young person mocks an older person for being somehow no longer relevant. In the wake of Charles' death, he transmogrifies into a younger version of Charles who pushes Ian to 'do the right thing'. Charles was a boorish man in life and that is how Ian's subconscious then appears to him. Exactly how Ian remembers him. Rude and overbearing he makes Ian's life difficult with demands that put him at odds with the life he would rather live.

An aerial, high-angle view of a city, likely London, featuring a prominent clock tower (Big Ben) on the left and a modern glass-fronted building on the right. The city is densely packed with buildings and greenery. The image is darkened to serve as a background for text.

7

Episode SUMMARIES

Episode 1 – A Day in the Life

Introduction to Ian. Faded star of the eighties who is living off the glories of his past. The idea of Ian's subconscious having a physical form that only Ian can see and interact with emerges. We meet Abigail his agent, the neutral observer. A flashback to Ian's heyday introduces the audience to better times gone by. Ian gets the news he's back at Claremont Avenue.

Episode 2 – I'm Back

Charles makes a final entry in his journal. Ian is recalled to his former stardom with the dying of his soap opera father. Introduction to Charlie, the public image and the real behind the scenes persona. Ian receives Charles' memoirs from Charles' nurse.

Episode 3 – Goodbye Charlie?

Ian gives an emotive performance at Charles' on-screen funeral. Ian begins reading Charles' memoirs which forms a deep contrast and an understanding of the Charles he thought he once knew. Ian's projected subconscious is now represented as young Charles. The death of Charles is revealed in the news along with damning press coverage about Charles' true off-screen personality. Charles' real-life funeral has only a handful of mourners as a consequence.

Episode 4 – Man on a Mission

Ian's fight to clear Charlie's name brings him into conflict with a former friend. It also has the potential to scupper Ian's chances of a return to stardom and relevance.

Episode 5 – Glass Houses

Ian has had his moment back in the spotlight but now because of his fight for Charles, he is back to being in a professional position of insignificance. Ian continues to fight for Charles' name, unable to live with knowing the reality compared with the media representation of him. Inevitably, he chooses Charles' name over his career.

Episode 6 – Standing Tall

An opportunity arises that allows Ian to get Charles' story into the mainstream media. He achieves the public vindication that comes his way. However, has his chance at renewed stardom disappeared? Ian has won a somewhat pyrrhic victory, in that he has got Charles' real story out into the world, but has sustained considerable personal setbacks during the process. Namely, his career status and the possible loss of a once dear friend.

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Los Angeles, showing a dense urban landscape with various buildings, including a prominent classical-style building with a dome on the left and a modern glass skyscraper on the right. A large, white, stylized number '8' is centered in the upper half of the image.

8

**A FEW INTERESTED ACTORS
/ ACTRESSES / MUSICIANS**

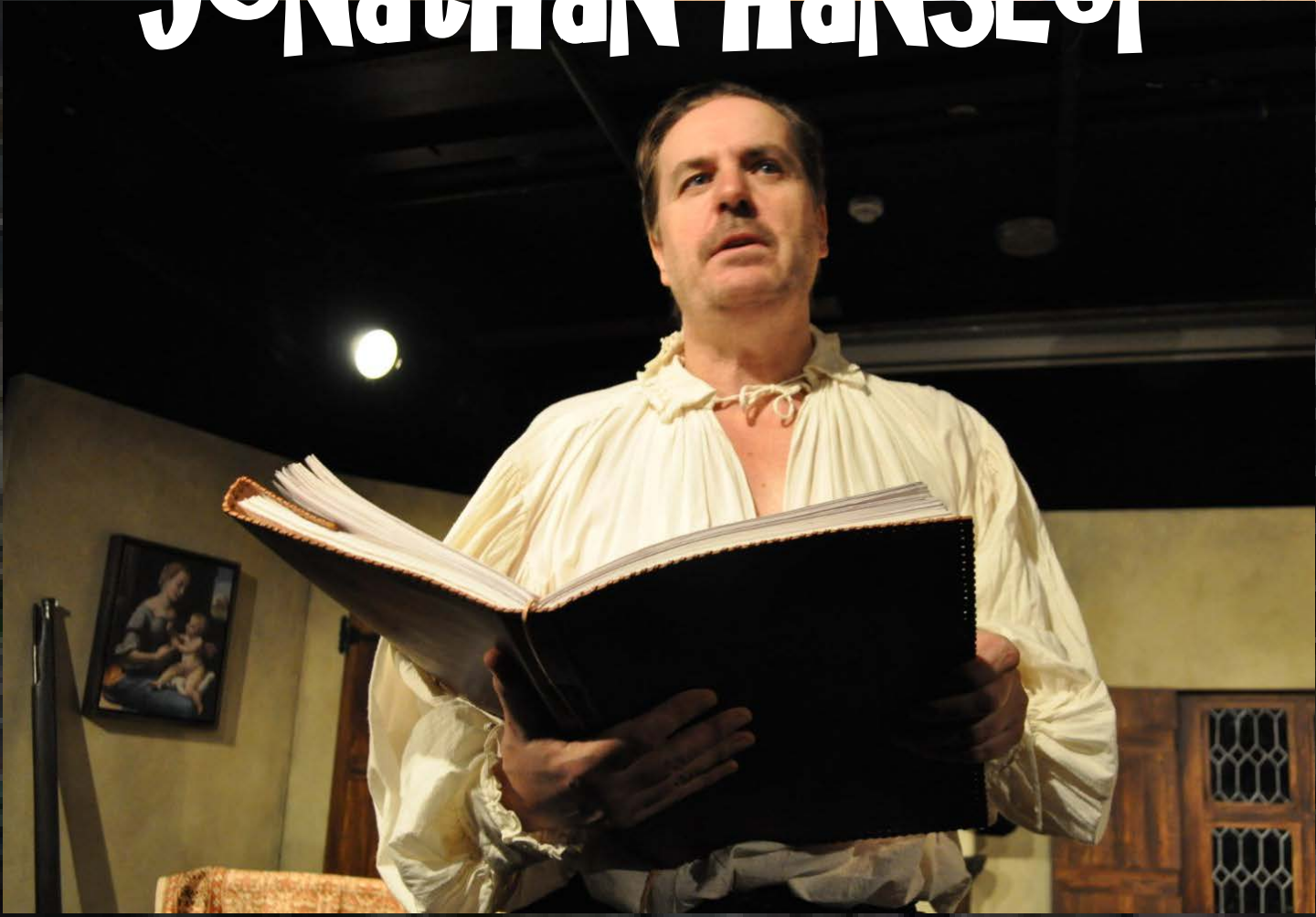


Robson Green





JONATHAN HANSLER





Mel Harris





JONATHAN BRENNER



