

"THE GROVE"

EPISODE 1

By

Miss Keough

ALL OF THE ACTION IN THE TEXT TAKES PLACE ON 'THE GROVE'; A LITTLE CUL DE SAC FULL OF DIFFERENT NEIGHBOURS DURING LOCKDOWN.

THE ACTION SHOULD BE FILMED IN SOME PARTS TO CAMERA, LOOKING OUT OF THE WINDOW AND FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF ANOTHER ACTOR. THIS WILL BE SIGNALLED IN THE STAGE DIRECTIONS.

Characters:

Barry: early 50s, quite lazy- too lazy to go out anywhere. Steals items from his neighbours' doorsteps (milk, flower pots).

Irish Vincent: 75 years old and deaf. Loves his Irish music and blasts this out most days. His hearing aids have been playing up the last couple of weeks. Still drives, but frequently hits other cars on The Grove as his eyesight is also poor.

Fran: 20s. A young professional who has just moved into a house share on 'The Grove'. Fran has friends round frequently to social distance in the garden as nobody on The Grove is her age.

Julie: Early 40s and lives with her husband and 2 daughters. Julie is very kind and often offers to do the shopping for the elderly on The Grove. Julie can often be a little naive to situations as she sees the best in everyone.

Roy and Gayle: mid 60s and recently both retired. They see themselves as the local 'neighbourhood watch' team. Gayle wears the trousers and is easily irritated. Roy sits most days on his lawn watching the other neighbours and reports them for anything he deems to be 'breaking the rules'.

Karen: early 40s- recently single and living in a house share with Fran. Never really been bothered about her appearance but has recently taken up online fitness classes. Karen is quite loud and opinionated and is not very friendly to Fran. She sees their house share as her territory.

Richard: 60s and widowed for a few years. Richard has recently purchased chickens and a cockerel to keep him occupied during lockdown. Much to the dismay of his neighbours.

Michelle: 40. Used to live with her sister but she has moved out so now lives alone. Has an extremely nervous disposition and thinks that anyone on The Grove could give her the virus no matter how far away they are from her.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT

Characters are sat in their own rooms (wherever a TV would be). This should be filmed as if you are using your camera as the TV.

ROY

Well that's it then, Boris has said 3 weeks inside Gayle, no going out for us!

GAYLE

He said over 70s can't go out Roy, we're fine, we've only just retired. Poor Vincent across the way, he hates being stuck indoors as well.

VINCENT

(Trying to turn up the volume on the TV whilst fidgeting with his hearing aid trying to get it to work. Leans forward and squints at the TV)

Subtitles. There we are. *(We can see Vincent is furious by the lockdown announcement)*. If he thinks I'm staying inside for 3 weeks then he can absolutely...

BARRY

(lying on the sofa) Finally! A reason to not go into work!

MICHELLE

(eyes nervously dart to all corners of the room, heavy rapid breathing and eventually puts her head in her hands)

JULIE

(as if shouting through to her husband in the next room) What are we going to do with the kids? I will still have to work from home.

FRAN

(on the phone to one of her friends) Yes, he says lockdown but I'm sure you'll be able to come round. I've only just moved in, I want a housewarming...not sure what Karen will think about that though!

KAREN

(on the phone to someone) What are the chances, the first day she moves in and we're in complete lockdown. Lets hope we get on. She looks like she goes to the gym, no time like the present to get this body in to shape!

RICHARD

(talking to a picture of his late wife) Well, Nancy I've said it for years since you passed and now it's time! I'll order the chickens tomorrow and get on the ebay for a coup for the garden.

BARRY

(dancing around and singing to the tune of 'let's all do the conga') No more work for 3 weeks no more work for 3 weeks. *(turns off the light)*

JULIE

(at the door of her daughters' room) Night night girls, sleep tight. First day of homeschool starts tomorrow.

GAYLE

Night Roy

ROY

(Loud snoring noise)

Lights fade and we hear 'Tell me Ma' blasting

ROY

(visibly annoyed whilst looking out of his window). It's Vincent! I've a good mind to go over there and turn it off myself! What a racket!

GAYLE

Oh Roy, let him be. His hearing aids must be playing up again.

ROY

It's obviously not just bothering me, half the street is at their windows.

(We see a shot of the other characters looking out of their windows at the noise coming from Vincent's music)

JULIE

(as though talking to her kids) Come on you two, PE with Joe starts in 5 minutes, get your kit on and your drink ready!

(Julie's phone rings and she answers it) Yes, yes I know the meeting started at quarter to and I'm logging on as we speak. I'm just getting the kids set up for PE.

KAREN

(direct to camera as if talking to her new housemate, Fran)
Hiya, was thinking we could go through some of the house rules just so that we're on the same page. Looks like we're going to be spending a lot of time together. So firstly, your shelves are labelled in the fridge, your room is under mine so I'd appreciate if you would see your friends outside of the property so I'm not disturbed and finally, just make sure you clean up after yourself.

FRAN

(to camera as if responding to Karen)

There was nothing in the advert to suggest I couldn't have friends over. I am paying the rent the same as you are so I don't see why you're the one that's making the rules.

(looks at phone as it is ringing, looks back to camera) I need to take this.

RICHARD

(on his laptop/ipad)

Open the Google. Right here we are. Now... local chickens for sale. *(laughs at the screen)*. Not from the butchers Google I want chickens that are alive for my garden!

FRAN

(on the phone to her friend) You should definitely come round. I don't care what Karen says, I'm paying half of the rent, you can just come and sit at the end of the drive and we can have a cup of tea.

BARRY

(looking at his watch as if he has just woken up) 12pm, what a lovely lie in, could definitely get used to this. *(opens curtains and grimaces)*. Better keep them closed- too bright out there *(closes curtains)*. Now, have I got any bacon?

JULIE

(as if working and shouting through to her husband) Love, I've been thinking we should probably ask Vincent if we can help with his shopping. *(Pause as if the husband is responding)*. You do know Vincent- the old Irish man with the hearing aids at the top of the road. *(Pause as if husband is responding)*. He can't do his own shopping because the oldies have to shield! I better ask Roy and Gayle if I can get them anything too. I'll finish this email then I'll nip round and ask if they need anything.

RICHARD

(still on his laptop/ipad) Chickens bought, now on to the ebay to find them a coup. Wonder if I can also get the chicken feed from ebay?

(shot of Julie walking down the road)

ROY

(standing looking out of the window, shouts) Gayle! Gayle! Come and have a look at this I can't believe it. Boris tells us to stay indoors and you have these young ones galivanting around!

GAYLE

(joining Roy at the window whilst putting on her glasses)
Where am I looking?

VINCENT

(opens front door. This should be filmed looking directly at the actor. Fiddle with glasses to get them on face properly, confused)

Eeeerrrr

JULIE

(direct to camera)

Vincent, it's Julie- I live at number 10 and...

VINCENT

(direct to camera, fiddling with hearing aids)

Lovely to see ye, would you like to come in for a spot of tea. *(turns as if to walk in to the house)*

JULIE

Vincent I can't because of social distancing.

(shot of Vincent with his back turned)

Vincent? *(suddenly realizing he can't hear her, shouts)*
VINCENT!

ROY

(still at the window) First she's out on the street when she should be indoors and now she's harassing Vincent.

GAYLE

I don't think she's harassing him Roy..

ROY

She's screaming at him listen..

JULIE

VINCENT!

ROY

Get me my phone Gayle, I'm going to ring 111.

GAYLE

That's the number for the NHS helpline Roy.

BARRY

(lay on the sofa) WHY are people making SO much noise?!
(puts cushion over his head).

RICHARD

(reading his screen) Your order has been placed. Your delivery date is Wednesday 25th March. Excellent that's tomorrow. Better clear up the clutter so the chickens have a space.

VINCENT

Sorry lovey, my hearing aids don't seem to be working
(gesturing at his ears).

JULIE

(slowly and loudly, gestures with every word to act it out for Vincent) I. am. Going. To. The. Shops. Do. You. Need. Anything?

VINCENT

No thank you dear. But I may later in the week. Could you see if you could pick me up a couple of hearing aid batteries?

JULIE

No probs Vincent, see you later.

ROY

Gayle, Gayle, she looks as if she's coming to our house. Shout out of the window for her to get away!

GAYLE

Oh, Roy, maybe she just wants to chat.

ROY

There's no chatting Gayle, we're in LOCKDOWN!

KAREN

(on the phone, walking down the stairs) Ooohhh yes, I've heard great things about that but I'm actually just about to start watching this new documentary on Netflix called 'The Tiger King' apparently it's meant to be really good!

(gets to the living room, expression changes to annoyed)

Let me phone you back. Errrrmmmm can you not do that in your room?

FRAN

(doing a YouTube workout in the lounge- action is directed to the camera)

Not really no, there's not enough room. Won't be long, I just have two more sets to go.

KAREN

I want to watch the TV though.

FRAN

Two. More. Sets. Chill out.

KAREN

(visibly more annoyed)

Right, fine. Can you hurry up. *(dials her friend back, walks out of room)* I can't believe the cheek of it! If she wants to take over the lounge then that's fine. Two can play at that game.