

Y2K: Take 2

Episode 8: Claire - age 34 - Edinburgh - August 2006

CHARACTERS

CLAIRE - scenes 8.1 - 8.3 (Maddy)
NIC - scenes 8.1 - 8.3 (Dallas)
RAY (ANNOUNCER) - scene 8.1 (David)
MEGAN (COMEDIAN 1) - scene 8.1 (Bonnie)
COMEDIAN 2 - scene 8.1 (Sarah)
COMEDIAN 3 - scene 8.1 (Chris)
JESS - scene 8.2 (Karin)

Scene 8.0

DIRECTOR

Places, please. We'll try again everyone. Right. Whenever you're ready - Take 2.

(MUSIC "Welcome to the Year 2000")

NARRATOR

Episode 8. Welcome to the year 2006. Edinburgh, Scotland. Claire is 33 years old.

Scene 8.1

(INT COMEDY CLUB. Raucous laughter, scattered applause)

CLAIRE

...and I was horrible. *(audience laugh)* You can laugh, but I really was. *(smiles)* Still am, really, but that's a different story-

NIC

(shouting from audience) Still love you Claire! *(audience laughs)*

CLAIRE

(laughs) Oh, all right then. Phew. *(beat)* No, but seriously. *(audience quiets down)* I was a shit person, and drinking made me even shittier. Treated people abominably. People I cared about. People I loved. *(beat)* Yeah, you're not laughing now, are you? Real uncomfortable, this bit... *(scattered uncertain laughter)* I cheated and lied and hid bottles and breath mints everywhere. Here's a tip, just for you, *(lowers voice)* Breath mints? They're shit. *(audience laugh, CLAIRE back to normal volume)* No, for real. They do fuck-all. *(slowly, with emphasis)* Fuck. All. *(scattered giggles)* All they do is make you smell of mint *and* liquor. So if that's what you're after, ka-ching! *You've* got it. *(laughter)* Also, it's not

like folks can't tell when you're sloshed, you know? Like, yeah I'm smelling minty-fresh while (*emphasis*) walking into tables and slurring every word so **no-one** can tell (*puts finger to mouth*) Shhh! (*pretend-drunk voice*) It's our little secret, yeah? Nah. Doesn't work like that. My girlfriend kicked me- (*audience member whistles*) Ah yes, didn't mention that, did I? (*exaggerated Southern US accent*) Big ole queer up here. (*scattered cheers*) Yeah. Thank you, thank you. Very proud and all that. (*minor cheers*) Anyhoo, my girlfriend kicked me out after a while. Don't blame her. I mean, would **you** want to be with someone who is constantly drunk or hungover? Or, in my case, drunk **and** hungover? (*scattered laughter*) Though they do say I was **way** funnier back then, sorry about that everyone! (*laughter, gets signal from RAY to wrap it up*) Anyway, I stopped drinking, started improv, found my way to stand up, and here I am. (*some cheers*) Ah, and that's my time up, thank you very much, you've been fantastic! (*applause*)

RAY

Thank you so much - the brilliant Claire Reid, everyone! (*applause, CLAIRE takes a few steps to go off stage*) No, no, stay on for a bit, Claire.

CLAIRE

(*stops, takes a step back, stressed*) All right.

RAY

Yeah, that's right. That was a bit of a confession, wasn't it? Love some honest comedy, me. Kind that makes you laugh and **squirm**. (*laughter*) Yeah. You know what I mean, don't you? (*Audience member cheers, scattered laughs*) You want to come up here and tell us about it? (*scattered laughs*) No? Haven't got the guts, have you? (*garbled shouted reply, RAY laughs*) That's right. Neither do I. (*scattered laughs, to CLAIRE*) So, Claire, how was that for you?

CLAIRE

(*beat*) Terrifying. (*scattered applause*)

RAY

Aye, I can imagine. Is this your usual set, or where you trying out something new today?

CLAIRE

Um. First time trying this out.

RAY

OK. (*to audience*) Well, we got an exclusive today, folks! Just for the Fringe. (*scattered cheers, to CLAIRE*) So how do you feel about the material now, is it staying or going?

CLAIRE

Um. Not sure. Staying?

RAY

(approving) That's right, you keep 'em squirming. Well, I for one can't wait for more.

CLAIRE

(uncomfortable with the praise) Thanks.

RAY

There you have it. You heard it here first. Again - Claire Reid everyone!

(applause, CLAIRE walks off stage, we follow her, RAY becomes a little distant)

MEGAN

(to CLAIRE, nervous) That was amazing!

CLAIRE

(stops) Thanks.

RAY

(distant) Hold onto your hats, people, we have one more set before the break.

MEGAN

(still nervous) How's the crowd?

CLAIRE

They're good. Seem to be in the zone, you know.

MEGAN

Good. *(beat)* I'm so nervous.

CLAIRE

You'll be great. *(beat)* Break a leg.

MEGAN

Thanks.

RAY

(slightly distant, continues) Next up in the Fresh Faces of Comedy is someone who is making their Fringe debut today - all the way from the US of A - the fabulous, the hilarious, the one and only Megan [MEE-gan] Roberts! *(applause)*

MEGAN

(steps onto stage, slightly distant, Scottish accent) Thanks so much. Hello, Edinburgh... *(scattered laughs, switches to US accent)* No, who am I kidding, right? Just a 'murican' up here... *(to RAY, jokingly)* You ruined my opening joke, Ray!

RAY

(yells from side of stage) No I didn't - I made it funnier!

MEGAN

(slightly distant, to RAY) Well, for next time, thanks but no thanks! *(scattered laughs)* Seriously. Very happy to be here in your beautiful city. But, I have to ask, what's with all the cobble stones? Do you all enjoy twisting your ankles? *(scattered laughter)* Or is there some sort of trick? Do Scots have unusually strong tendons or something? *(some laughs)* What is it I'm not getting? Anyways. So, I flew in yesterday, and everyone was saying *(Scottish accent again)* 'Oh, you should walk around and discover the city' *(switches back to US)* And I did. *(beat)* In *these*. *(audience laughs)* So I *(demonstrates, exertion in voice)* walked... one... step... wobble... another step... wobble *(audience laugh)* I made it about four feet on the Royal Mile before just giving up! *(raucous laughter)* And then I had to hobble back to my hotel. Again... *(demonstrates)* one... step... wobble... another step... wobble *(audience laugh)*

(CLAIRE laughs. MEGAN and audience fade to background as we follow CLAIRE further backstage. Footsteps.)

MEGAN

(distant) Why did nobody tell me to bring walking shoes? I was packing for this trip and wanted to put my prettiest... shoe... forward? Something like that. Actually, come to think of it, the folks who told me to walk around the city were all Americans, *(From here overlaid with following conversation between CLAIRE and COMEDIAN 2)* not Scots. They were probably all just making fun of the new girl... *(laughter)*

COMEDIAN 2

(as they walk past) Hey, congrats Claire, that was a great set! *(keeps walking toward stage)*

CLAIRE

(happy but a little rushed) Ah, cheers! *(keeps walking toward dressing room)*

COMEDIAN 2

(increasingly distant) Yeah... Good stuff...

MEGAN

(very distant now) Also, did you know there's a volcano here? *In* the actual city? No-one warned me about that, either... *(distant laughter)*

(Opens door to dressing room, as it shuts stage noise disappears)

COMEDIAN 3

Claire, how'd it go?

CLAIRE
(grabs bag) Good, I think!?

COMEDIAN 3
Ah, good on you!

CLAIRE
Thanks. See you later.

(walks out of dressing room again, very distant laughter from stage again as door opens, door closes, CLAIRE walks to stage door, opens it, outside ambiance, some city sounds. NIC is waiting and rushes over)

NIC
Oh babes you smashed it! (quick kiss)

CLAIRE
Really? Good. I feel. It's all... I did it.

NIC
You did! And they loved it!

CLAIRE
(lets out breath) Never been so nervous in my life.

NIC
Of course you were. It was beautiful.

CLAIRE
(smiles) I did all right, didn't I?

NIC
Sure did! Let's celebrate. Where to?

CLAIRE
Wherever you like, Am far too shaky to decide.

NIC
All right, come on! (They walk away)

(Fade out)

Scene 8.2

(INT PUB, crowded, around 10 pm, door opens, CLAIRE and NIC enter)

NIC
(shouting over crowd) Wanna find a table and I'll tackle the bar?

CLAIRE
(shouting over crowd) Sure.

(CLAIRE makes her way through the crowd, bumps a few people along the way)

CLAIRE
(mutters) Pardon me... Sorry!... Oh excuse you!... Coming through...

JESS
Oh sorry! (beat, very surprised, shouting over crowd) Claire!

CLAIRE
(shocked) Jess!

JESS
(shouting over crowd) (same time as CLAIRE) Good to see y-

CLAIRE
(shouting over crowd) (same time as JESS) What are you d- (doing here)

JESS
(shouting over crowd) Came to see a colleague's play - kid show - Gruffalo's Child.

CLAIRE
(shouting over crowd) (still shocked) Yeah, heard that's good. But... you... you came from New Zealand for a play?

JESS
(laughs) (shouting over crowd) No, I live here now-

CLAIRE
(shouting over crowd) Here?

JESS
(shouting over crowd) -or not here in Edinburgh. in London I mean. Finsbury Park.

CLAIRE
(shouting over crowd) Oh. I- (someone bumps against her) Hey! (no response from the bump-er, annoyed, mutters) Good thing I didn't have a drink in my hand...

JESS
(shouting over crowd) (carefully) You want to find a... quieter corner? Seems like this is a bit of a thoroughfare.

CLAIRE

(*shouting over crowd*) Sure. Um, looks like they're leaving that table over there?

JESS

(*shouting over crowd*) Great! I'll just go tell my friend.
(*footsteps*)

CLAIRE

Right. (*to herself as she walks away*) Jess. (*US accent*) Holy moly.

(*CLAIRE walks to the back of the pub, it's a little quieter here, sound of 2-3 people leaving while chatting a little, CLAIRE sits down, footsteps*)

JESS

(*approaches, as she sits down, places her pint on the table*) Hi.
This is better.

CLAIRE

Yep. (*long pause*)

JESS

(*trying to think of something to say*) It's so nice now they banned smoking in pubs. (*sips*)

CLAIRE

Yeah. (*beat*) You always hated cigarette smoke. Remember when-
(*interrupts herself, pause*)

JESS

Mm. Do you... are you performing in anything? Or just enjoying the festival?

CLAIRE

I do stand-up now.

JESS

That sounds like just the thing for you. I bet you're really good.

CLAIRE

I do all right. Just did a spot at The Ivanhoe.

JESS

Tonight?

CLAIRE

Yeah.

JESS

That's great! Wow. I'd love to see you perform some time.

CLAIRE

Do you mean that?

JESS
(*sincerely*) Yes, I do.

CLAIRE
All right. (*lightly*) I'm sure that could be arranged now you're in London. I do gigs every month or so, latest was at the King's Head, which was exciting. And my improv group is doing a show in Brixton next month. Do you still have the same e-mail? I could send you some links.

JESS
Still the same. So, yeah, please. (*sips*)

CLAIRE
(*more serious*) Not sure this one would have been for you, though.

JESS
Oh. Why not?

CLAIRE
I... First time I've done a set about the, y'know. Drinking. All that shite.

JESS
Oh. Is that... I mean. Is- How is that comedy?

CLAIRE
(*small laugh*) Well, it's not funny, well, there are funny bits but... It's real. People seem to like that.

JESS
I have to see more stand-up, I think.

CLAIRE
Yeah. Yeah. Think you do.

JESS
I mostly go see plays, still. (*sips*)

CLAIRE
Practically all comedy and improv for me at this point. (*beat*)
So... when did you move to London?

JESS
November last year. Moved for work.

CLAIRE
And what is work these days?

JESS

I'm a freelance TV writer.

CLAIRE

Oh. Fancy. Anything I would have heard about?

JESS

Few different projects. You may have heard of Northern Lights? It's a comedy. I mostly do edits and polishing, though, not much original writing.

CLAIRE

Haven't seen it. But yeah, cool. Enjoying it?

JESS

Yes. Of course, still have my own writing projects brewing as well, but who knows if anyone will ever want those.

CLAIRE

Right. Well. Someday, surely.

JESS

Hope so.

CLAIRE

So, you still with...

JESS

(smiles) Rachel, Yes. We got married a few years ago.

CLAIRE

That's nice. *(beat)* Congratulations.

JESS

Thank you. How about you, are you... happy?

CLAIRE

(smiles) Yes. I am happy. *(beat)* Been with Nic for a few years now. They're great.

JESS

Good. I'm glad.

CLAIRE

(at the same time as JESS)

Listen, I-

JESS

(at the same time as CLAIRE)

I've been wondering-

CLAIRE & JESS

(at the same time) Sorry- *(BOTH laugh uncomfortably, pause)*

JESS

When I think about us - you and I... It wasn't all bad.

CLAIRE

Not 'til I ruined everything.

JESS

Yeah, there was that. *(beat)* I- Were you- *(new breath, quicker)* I feel like I should have noticed. You. With the drinking, I mean.

CLAIRE

Ah. Well. *(pause)* Tried very hard to make sure you didn't.

JESS

Yeah. Still-

(NIC approaches, sets down drinks on table)

NIC

Here we are... *(friendly)* Hello, I'm Nic.

JESS

(friendly) Great to meet you, Nic. I'm Jess.

(NIC sits down)

CLAIRE

Nic's my partner. Jess is *(beat)* an ex.

NIC

(interested) Drama school Jess?

CLAIRE

Yep.

NIC

(to JESS) Thought you lived on the other side of the world or something? *(sips)*

JESS

I did. But I'm in London now. Finsbury Park.

NIC

Oh. Cool. We're in Ealing.

CLAIRE

Were just talking about the good ole days when I was hiding bottles from Jess.

NIC

(sympathetic) That must have been hard. For both of you.

CLAIRE

It was.

JESS

Except I didn't know about it. I'm... I'm sorry I didn't get what was going on, Claire. Too wrapped up in myself, I guess.

CLAIRE

(shrugs) Ah. Wasn't as bad then. Got worse later.

JESS

Right.

CLAIRE

Make no mistake, I was the arse. *(brief laugh-snort)* Still am.

NIC

(affectionately) Well, you're **my** arse now. *(laughs)* **That** came out wrong.

(ALL laugh)

JESS

So, how did you two meet?

NIC

Claire volunteered for Switchboard. I work there.

CLAIRE

We would have probably met through stand-up anyway, at some point. Nic is a brilliant comic. *(sips)*

NIC

Did Claire tell you about her set today? She smashed it.

JESS

She did. Sounds amazing.

CLAIRE

Well, tomorrow it's my turn to be the supportive partner. Nic's doing a show at the Outhouse.

JESS

I'd love to see that!

CLAIRE

You should. They are killing it. It's all about-

JESS

(interrupts) Damn - I forgot - I'm going home tomorrow afternoon.
But maybe some other time? In London I mean?

NIC
Sure.

JESS
Break a leg tomorrow, Nic. I should probably get back to my friend.
(gets up) Good to see you are doing well, Claire.

CLAIRE
You mean that?

JESS
Yes. Really good.

CLAIRE
Thanks. You too. *(beat)* You ever see any of the others? Emma, or
Kat? Shirin?

JESS
I do. Emma's in Cardiff these days, and Shirin's still in New York.
Saw them both earlier this summer. Kat - she goes by Ina now -
lives in LA but seems she's always off somewhere else, so I try to
catch her when she flies through London.

CLAIRE
(slightly sad) I lost touch. Except with Lee, I still see him
sometimes. But *(beat)* Ina is some kind of film actor, right? I saw
her in... What was that film with the really old orange aliens?

(NIC laughs a little)

JESS
(small laugh) Sediton.

CLAIRE
(wry smile) My one claim to fame I suppose - I knew her way back
when...

JESS
(small laugh) She always has loads of stories from various film
sets... Fun to hear about but not *quite* as glamorous as you may
think. Want me to say hi?

CLAIRE
Sure. Say hello to all of 'em.

JESS
All right. And say hi to Lee for me?

CLAIRE

Will do. Take care Jess.

JESS

I will. It was great meeting you, Nic.

NIC

Likewise.

JESS

All right. Really off now. Bye you two.

CLAIRE & NIC

Bye!

(JESS walks away, CLAIRE lets out a breath she didn't know she was holding)

NIC

So... So hang on - did I get this right - you know Ina Fischer?

CLAIRE

I do. Or I did. Flatmates for a while.

NIC

And you didn't tell me. Why?

CLAIRE

Never came up. More important things from that time to tell you about.

NIC

Yeah. Fair enough. But if *I* had been flatmates with a celebrity, I would have told the whole world.

CLAIRE

(laughs) That's where we differ I suppose.

NIC

It was nice meeting her. But a little unreal too - always odd to meet folks you've only heard about.

CLAIRE

Yeah - it's like they're not quite real, right?

NIC

Exactly. But I am glad to have met her. Have I met all your important exes now?

CLAIRE

(thinks) I think you have.

NIC

Good. No skeletons left?

CLAIRE

(smiles) No. You know all about my skeletons. Every single bone.

NIC

(smiles) And you know all of mine. *(small laugh)* We're perfect together!

CLAIRE

(suddenly serious) I think we are. I'm lucky you put up with me.

NIC

(laughs) You are! *(more serious)* As am I. *(quick kiss)* Refill on that lemonade?

CLAIRE

My turn this time. *(gets up)* Usual?

NIC

(smiles) Thanks. *(footsteps start)*

(Fade out)

Scene 8.3

(EXT city street, late evening, CLAIRE and NIC are walking out of the pub, door closes behind them, they start walking at leisurely pace)

CLAIRE

(breathes in) Ah... Bit stuffy in there.

NIC

(breathes in) This is nice.

CLAIRE

Long day.

NIC

Definitely. Tomorrow will be even longer.

CLAIRE

Nervous?

NIC

No. I should be, right?

CLAIRE

Not necessarily. You have everything prepped.

NIC
Yeah. Yeah. I'm excited.

CLAIRE
Good! (*stumbles, exclaims*) Ah!

NIC
(*steadies CLAIRE*) You all right?

CLAIRE
Yeah. Bloody cobbles.

NIC
(*small laugh*) So. I was thinking. Next year, we should- we should do a show together.

CLAIRE
Think anyone would book us?

NIC
If we have a good enough concept. (*wry smile*) And if I am as much of a hit tomorrow as you were today.

CLAIRE
Oh, you will be. I've helped you rehearse, remember?

NIC
How could I forget? Hours upon hours... But that's what I mean. We always run all our material by each other, and rehearse, and give each other notes. If we were doing something together, that would all be part of the same thing.

CLAIRE
Good point. Right, so what should it be about?

NIC
Let's brainstorm right now. All right. We should go for the hard stuff, right?

CLAIRE
(*lightly*) Yep. Trauma. Abuse. (*funny voice*) Alcoholism.

NIC
(*lightly*) Gender dysphoria, bullying, homophobia. All right, what else?

CLAIRE
(*lightly*) Loss, depression, violence, did I say trauma?

NIC
(*smiles*) You did! Barrel o' laughs, this one!

CLAIRE

(laughs) Oh yes! We'll make 'em laugh and *hurt*!

NIC

God. It's what we do best!

(BOTH laugh, as they walk further away)

(Fade out)

Scene 8.4

NARRATOR

Thank you for listening to Y2K: Take 2. This episode was written by Karin Heimdahl and directed by Sarah Golding. Our intro and outro music is created and recorded by Jake Haws, listen to his podcast "Making Music with Jake Haws" to hear more. This episode featured Maddy Searle as Claire, Dallas Wheatley as Nic, David Ault as Ray, Bonnie Brantley as Megan, Sarah Golding and Chris Gregory as comedians backstage and Karin Heimdahl as Jess. The drama school director was Sarah Golding, and the narrator Emma Laslett. For more information, please go to Y2Kpod.com or find us on social media @Y2Kpod If you enjoy the show, please consider supporting us on Patreon.com/Y2Kpod Please join us again next month when we meet Shirin in 2001.

DIRECTOR

(claps hands) All right, thank you everyone. That's a wrap for today!

(MUSIC "Welcome to the Year 2000" - instrumental)