

# THE SANDMAP

by

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A Family Comedy

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## THE SANDMAP CAST OF CHARACTERS

### The Woodbridge family.....

Jo	14
Tom	12
Charlie [a girl]	9
George	7

### Other characters.....

Aunty Gwen	about 60
John [Aunty Gwen's friend]	about 60
Dewi [John's son]	17
Monty [ the childrens' uncle]	65
Natasha [ a dance teacher]	25
Mam [Gareth and Dai's mother]	60's
Gareth Davies [ a villain!]	30's
Dai Davies [ Gareth's brother]	30's
Father [ the childrens' father]	50's
Selwyn [the village policeman]	40's
Woman [ in supermarket]	50's
Bishop	60's

'Cariad' the dog

'Pedro' the parrot

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THE SANDMAP

EXT. DAY. IN A CITY.

JO is fourteen; TOM is twelve; CHARLIE, a girl, is nine; GEORGE is seven. They are standing on a pavement in a city street. It is raining and they are soaked. The rain streams down their faces but they don't seem to notice. They have no coats on. There is an AMBULANCE parked at the side of the road. JO has her arm around CHARLIE, who is crying. Tom looks blank. George's lower lip trembles. The ambulance pulls away and the children watch it disappear down the road.

INT. DAY. IN GARETH AND DAI'S BARN.

GARETH and DAI are in their barn. They are farmers' sons, both in their thirties. Dai is lying in the hay chewing a piece of straw. Gareth is leaning on a pitchfork.

GARETH

I hear the old man has snuffed it.

DAI

That was three years ago.

GARETH

Not our old man. Andrew Woodbridge...the guy we used to work for. The one who fiddled us.

DAI

As I remember it was us...or rather, you.....who was trying to fiddle him. That's why we got fired.

GARETH

Well....you got to take your chances in this life....don't always want to be poor...do we?

DAI

I s'pose not.[Beat]

GARETH

I hear that he's left his fortune to his mad brother Monty who lives on the beach.....

He drops his voice to a whisper

GARETH (CONT'D)

.....and it's in the form of a map that leads to the treasure.

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Dai also whispers.

DAI  
You mean like Long John Silver in  
Treasure Island?

GARETH  
That's right.

DAI  
Monty's got a parrot as well.

GARETH  
That's right.

DAI  
But Long John Silver only had one  
leg.

GEORGE  
What's that got to do with it?

DAI  
Dunno. I just know that Monty's  
got two legs.....'cause I've  
counted 'em, see.

Gareth gives Dai a disdainful look.

EXT. DAY. IN THE VILLAGE SUPERMARKET.

MAM [GARETH and DAI'S mother] approaches the supermarket  
check-out. JOHN is in front of her in the queue.

Mam simpers. She tries to be very posh but is two-faced.  
She has fancied John for years since their respective  
spouses died but John cannot stand her.

MAM  
Morning, John.

JOHN  
Hello.

MAM  
I hope you'll be at the service  
on Sunday. The bishop will be  
giving his annual sermon.

JOHN  
I wouldn't miss it for the world.

MAM  
Have you thought any more about  
my invitation?

The woman on the check-out is all ears.

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JOHN

Bit busy on the farm at the  
moment....with the lambing.

John has a loaf of bread and a packet of fish fingers in  
his basket. He reaches the front of the queue and the woman  
rings the items through.

MAM

I see you're getting into the  
religious spirit....with the loaf  
and the fish.

JOHN

Not really.....my son Dewi loves  
fish finger sandwiches...with  
curry sauce.

John winks at the woman on the check-out. She smiles back  
at him. Mam looks appalled.

I/E. DAY. THE CHILDREN ARE ON A TRAIN.

The children are all dressed in an old fashioned way with  
hats and raincoats as if they have just got on the train.  
TOM and GEORGE wear shorts. JO and CHARLIE wear skirts. Jo  
stares blankly into space. Tom is playing on his 'gameboy.'  
Charlie and George sit opposite each other in the window  
seats. They stare blankly out of the window and all look  
unhappy. The view out of the window shows the suburbs of a  
typical city ie. Terraced housing, small back-to-back  
gardens; washing hanging on clothes lines and litter  
everywhere. Perhaps it is starting to rain.

SLOW DISSOLVE to suggest the passing of time.

Jo is now reading a paperback book. It is a Jane Austen  
novel. She still has her coat on. Tom continues to play on  
his 'gameboy' but has taken his coat off as have Charlie  
and George, who still sit opposite each other in the window  
seats. The view out of the window is now a much more rural  
scene ie. Mountains, hills, green fields, rivers, farm  
animals etc. The sun is now shining. George chews gum. Jo  
looks at him disapprovingly.

CHARLIE

Let's play I-Spy.

GEORGE

That's a girls game.

CHARLIE

Just for me...please?

George rolls his eyes upwards and shrugs his shoulders.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
I-spy with my little eye  
something beginning with 'c'.

GEORGE  
Cow

Charlie frowns. George points out of the window.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Over there. Black and white cows.

Charlie looks out of the window. The cows are clearly visible. Charlie looks relieved.

CHARLIE  
That's not the right  
answer.[Beat]

GEORGE  
Cream.

CHARLIE  
I can't see any cream.

GEORGE  
It's in the cow.

CHARLIE  
You can't actually see it though,  
can you?

GEORGE  
Just because you can't see  
something doesn't mean it isn't  
there.[Beat]

CHARLIE  
Anyway...it isn't cream.

GEORGE  
Cheese.

CHARLIE  
I s'pose that's in the cow as  
well?

GEORGE  
Na. It's up in the sky. The sun  
looks just like a big yellow  
cheese.[Beat]

Charlie and George both look upwards and shield their eyes.

CHARLIE  
You're daft.

George stands up suddenly and points excitedly out of the window.

GEORGE  
There it is. I saw it.

CHARLIE  
What?

GEORGE  
The sea....and it's blue.

CHARLIE  
If it's blue the cheese must be  
mouldy.

Out of the window the sea now becomes visible. Sunlight streams across a bay. Boats bob gently at their moorings in a harbour. The scene is idyllic.

GEORGE  
I told you I could see the sea.

CHARLIE  
But it doesn't start with a 'c'.

GEORGE  
Who cares?

Now the sea is clearly visible and even Jo and Tom take an interest and look out of the window. The train now goes over a bridge with stunning views of a harbour and estuary. Mountains frame the panoramic view. The river meanders off into the distance. The children stare in wonder. George and Charlie smile broadly, as does Tom. Even Jo manages a trace of a smile. The train begins to slow down.

CHARLIE  
Are we nearly there?

JO  
I think so.

The children start to get their bags ready. They pick up all their bits and pieces and put them away into their bags. They put their hats and coats on. Jo helps George with his jacket. Tom and Charlie sort themselves out.

I/E. DAY. ON THE TRAIN / ON THE STATION PLATFORM.

The children are all now standing, clutching their bags. There are only one or two other passengers getting off the train here. A MIDDLE-AGED MAN stands up close to the children and smiles at Charlie. Charlie smiles back. George doesn't smile at the man but looks angry. The man's smile disappears and he looks away, almost embarrassed.

Charlie sees George frowning at the man and elbows George in the ribs.

George and Charlie whisper. George rubs the spot where he was elbowed.

GEORGE  
What was that for?

CHARLIE  
You know.

The train pulls up at the station and the man gets out first and kindly holds the door open for the children to exit. Jo descends first followed by Tom, Charlie and George.

JO  
Thank you.

Charlie smiles at the man again, who smiles back. As George gets off the train he gives the man a huge, false smile. Again the man's smile disappears instantly. The man closes the door of the train and walks quickly off down the platform. Jo, Tom and Charlie start to walk down the platform to follow the 'Way Out' sign. George stands and stares at the view of rolling green fields, trees and sheep and other farm animals. Again it is an idyllic view. Jo walks back to get him and stops next to George.

JO (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?

George points at the view. Jo looks at where he is pointing and also now stands and stares at the view for a few moments.

JO (CONT'D)  
It's beautiful.[Beat] You OK?

George shields his eyes from the bright sunlight and looks up at his big sister. He nods his head. Jo puts her arm around his shoulders.

JO (CONT'D)  
Come on, you.

Jo and George walk down the platform to meet Tom and Charlie who are already standing by the exit to the station.

EXT. DAY. THE RAILWAY STATION FORECOURT.

The children walk out of the station and onto the forecourt. The place is deserted. Unseen by the others, George starts to walk off down the road following the path of a stream.



CHARLIE  
There's nobody here.

TOM  
You don't say.

Charlie sticks her tongue out at Tom who pulls a silly face in return. Jo checks her watch. They stand for a moment not quite sure what to do. Charlie looks around and sees that George is missing.

CHARLIE  
Where's Georgie?

They look around quickly and see George marching off down the road. Jo sighs.

JO  
Tom....go and round him up will  
you...?

Tom sighs.

TOM  
Why have I got to do all the  
dirty work?

JO  
Because I asked you to...please?

Tom sighs again, drops his bag and runs after George down the road. Tom catches up with him but George doesn't stop 'marching' down the road. Tom falls into step behind him. George is following the course of a stream.

TOM  
Where d'you think you're going?

GEORGE  
To see the sea.

TOM  
How d'you know you're going the  
right way?

GEORGE  
It's obvious. All rivers run into  
the sea.

TOM  
True. But it could be miles away.

GEORGE  
I don't mind.[Beat]

TOM  
But we're waiting to be picked  
up.

George ignores this last comment and keeps walking.

TOM (CONT'D)  
If you come back I'll give you a  
bag of crisps.

George suddenly stops 'marching' and speaks without turning around.

GEORGE  
What flavour?

TOM  
Salt'n'vinegar.

GEORGE  
Don't like them.

George carries on marching.

TOM  
You liked them last week.

GEORGE  
Don't like them now.[Beat]

TOM  
What about smoky bacon?

George stops marching suddenly, turns and puts his hand out.

TOM (CONT'D)  
They're in my bag.

GEORGE  
You sure?

TOM  
I swear they are in my bag.

GEORGE  
If you're lying God will send a  
thunderbolt down to strike you  
dead.

George marches straight past Tom in the direction of the station.

TOM  
Yeah, yeah...tell me something I  
didn't know.

Tom follows George back to the station forecourt where the girls are waiting. As Tom and George re-join them there is suddenly a loud bang as if a bomb has gone off. All the children jump.