

BODIES

PUTTING THE FUN IN
FUNERAL



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Given up on life, given up on faith, given up on love, 50 year old funeral director, RONAN, has reached the end of his rope. But as he prepares to hang himself he is disturbed by a call from an old colleague, with whom he has unfinished business with.

Ronan is forced to return to his home town to teach his colleague's son how to embalm. But CONOR, the Deadpool of funeral directors, has no interest in learning to embalm. A self-proclaimed 'life enthusiast', he is more intent on putting the 'fun' in funeral and extracting some sign of life from Ronan.

But when tragedy strikes and Conor's father dies, Ronan is thrust into his worst nightmare; being a father figure for this boy during his time of need.



Bodies chronicles the unlikely friendship between Ronan and Conor, as they teach each other how to live and love whilst surrounded with death. Bodies looks at emotional repression and masculinity in the modern world.

A life affirming story about death, this 6 part series combines the black comedy of *IN BRUGES* & *DEAD TO ME* within the themes and setting of *SIX FEET UNDER* to create a tonally unique and compelling story. Brevity and dark wit combined, this series provides a rich exploration of what it truly means to be alive.





KEY CHARACTERS

RONAN is a taciturn and reserved man, who has retreated further into emotional isolation since the the tragic death of his son 10 years before. As his relationship with Conor slowly begins breaking down his protective shell, Ronan must overcome his fear of connection, in order to save this young man's life, realising his own life might be saved in the process.

CONOR is constantly trying to revitalise his lifeless surroundings and dead end job. Wanting the love of a father, Conor finds himself unable to express his emotion through healthy avenues, so he distracts himself with hedonistic pursuits, whilst battling confusing feelings for his childhood best friend Livy.

LIVY is Conors childhood best friend. Smart and fiery, Livy's intelligence and talent are wasted in this small town. She wants more from life, determined to let nothing stand in her way. With a 'give a fuck' attitude, Livy says what she means with her emotions worn on her sleeves.

EDITH is Ronan's ex-wife who has found healthy ways to grieve the loss of her son. A gentle kind woman, she's rebuilt her life piece by piece. A life that Ronan's return threatens to jeopardise.

PARTICK is Conor's father. A cold distant man, he acts more like Conor's boss than his father. Which is easy since he is Conor's boss. All his focus is keeping the family run Funeral Directors afloat, trying to mould Conor into a person who can take up the mantle.

#1 'Knockin on Heavens Door'

Suicidal Funeral Director Ronan, is forced to return to his hometown to tutor Conor; the Deadpool of funeral directors. A self proclaimed 'life enthusiast', Conor is more interested of putting the fun in back in funeral and the life back in Ronan. However the town is haunted by the ghosts of Ronan's troubled past and he finds that keeping Conor at arms length is difficult when they are stuck in the confines of a hearse. Despite their different outlooks on life (and death) Ronan finds himself growing annoyingly fond of the boy. But when the professional becomes personal for Ronan, it is revealed that Ronan might have more of a connection to Conor than first thought... tensions between the two men reach boiling point and Ronan realises Conor might need more guidance than just an embalming lesson. In the process Conor teaches Ronan about life and Ronan learns that an old dog can learn new tricks. This burst of new life from Ronan is ripped away when tragedy strikes and Conor is faced with his fathers death.

#2 'Live & Let Die'

In the aftermath of his father's death Conor has to tackle his personal grief, whilst dealing with the professional Undertaking of his father's funeral. Ronan is forced to face the past after he bumps into his ex-wife, who reveals that it's almost the 10 year anniversary of their son's death. Struggling with the strain of organising the funeral of a funeral director, Conor emotionally reaches out for support. However Ronan is struggling with his own grief and not wanting to feel love for the boy, he pushes Conor away. Ronan makes it clear, they are colleagues - not friends - not family. Conor turns to his childhood best friend Livy, but things become complicated after Conor, lost and lonely, kisses her. The two funeral directors reunite for the funeral for a Mother of a boy with Down Syndrome. The boy asks all the inappropriate questions that society silences - but all the questions we privately ask ourselves, giving both men an outlet to start dealing with their own grief. Ronan attends the 10 year anniversary of his son's death with ex-wife. Conor buries his father.

#3 'Sweet Child of Mine'

Despite still struggling with his fathers death, life goes on and people keep dying. Conor has a job to do. Ronan tries to reconnect with his ex-wife but it is revealed she has re-married. Livy and Conor butt heads over Conor's behaviour whilst he channels his efforts into being 'fine' as he parties through his grief. After a particularly wild night with Livy and a prank gone awry, Ronan implements his own unique form of discipline by locking Conor in a coffin. Conor doesn't take this well. Ronan finds unexpected an connection with Livy as he confides that his actions were so extreme because Conor reminds him of his own son... who committed suicide. Edith comes to visit Ronan and explain that she has remarried. They start to go over where they went wrong and she tells him how emotionally distant he was. Death brings the men together once more for a strangely life affirming body pick-up. Effected by this, Ronan gives 'YOLO'ing' a go and the bond between Conor and Ronan deepens, as they take time off from death and go to a Funfair.



#4 'Coma'

Open on a suicide of a boy Conor's age. Suicide is not recognised by the Catholic church, so the family are denied a plot or service. The boy's death gets under Conor and Ronan's skin, touching them both personally. Conor deals with this by going clubbing with Livy, but the party turns sour when Conor kisses a random girl. Livy disappears and Conor goes looking for her. Meanwhile Ronan and Edith are also out on the town and they find themselves rekindling their romance. Conor tries to talk to Livy, but she is as confused by her feelings towards him as he is about his feelings towards her. The argument morphs into a kiss but at the last moment Conor breaks it off. Livy is left alone. Angry at himself, Conor stands on top of the building where the boy who committed suicide jumped from. Ronan still isn't able to show Edith enough emotional truth so she distances herself. Ronan works hard to persuade the local Parish to let the boy be buried in the graveyard. A compromise is struck and they allow his ashes to be buried just inside the cemetery walls and for something to be erected in his memory. A phone box. Ronan enquires why. "So everyone has a place to talk." After the service Conor reaches out to Ronan, asking for help, but still stung by Edith, Ronan shuts him down. 'I'm not your Dad'. It is time for Ronan to move on and get back to his 'life'.

#5 'Estranged'

Ronan doesn't turn up to work. Conor is forced to enlist Livy's help. They go on a pick up and work out their issues over a dead body, culminating with Conor asking her on a date. Meanwhile Ronan is drinking himself into a stupor in a pub. His sobriety is definitely over. Livy waits for Conor to arrive for their date. Eventually he does. He's acting strangely, avoiding her eyes. Eventually he tells her that he doesn't think this is a good idea. They should just be friends. He leaves and she calls a friend. Conor goes out to get fucked up and sleeps with another girl, in an attempt to feel alive. But it's hollow. Livy and her friend go to the same late bar and she see's him emerging from the bathrooms with the girl. She cuts him out of her life. Conor drunkenly drives home from the club in the hearse. His self-destructive streak starts to build as he speeds dangerously. Ronan is still in the pub and provoked by a man, starts viscously beating him up. We see his dangerous side. Conor crashes the hearse. Ronan's chucked out of the pub. His phone rings.. Cut too; Ronan arrives at the crash site. He see's a body being stretchered into an ambulance. Flashback to his son's body being loaded into the ambulance. He watches the ambulance drive away. Is Conor dead or alive?

#6 'Banging down Heavens Door'

Ronan is in jail. Conor is in hospital. Ronan is released and makes his way to the hospital, fearing the worst. The Doctor asks Ronan if he's the boy's Dad and goes onto explain that it looks like the crash might have been intentional. Livy turns up and they share a moment of connection in the hospital corridor and he confides what the Doctor just told him. Conor stirs as Livy enters, but he turns his back on her. As she leaves we see silent tears trickle down his face. Ronan helps Conor home and into bed. He is cold and distant and Ronan doesn't know how to connect with him. New funeral directors set up business down the road and Ronan investigates. Later, on a pick up; Conor is still distant and unresponsive. They arrive and find a boy Conor's age. Ronan looks around at the grief and see's his own grief reflected. Conor looks around and see's the love he doesn't have - no parents, no friends. Build up to the boy's funeral which is superhero themed. The congregation looks like a Marvel / DC orgy. Soon, Conor and Ronan are left alone in the graveyard and Ronan tries to talk to Conor. But something he says triggers Conor into a rage. In the face of Conors vulnerability and pain, Ronan finally breaks. All the grief and guilt he's been repressing for years bubbles uncontrollably to the surface. He tells Conor he can't lose another son. If were to kill himself it would kill Ronan too. Conor gets the father's love he was seeking. The two men sit in silence in the graveyard. There is a sense of rebirth.

The gravestone of Conors father is finally put in and Ronan accompanies Conor to pay his respects. But there's a woman already at the Grave... Conor's Mum.



FUNERAL DIRECTING...
THE INDUSTRY THAT NEVER DIES.



WHAT DEATH CAN TEACH US ABOUT LIFE

When life serves us hardship or tragedy, the heart can be broken open. Like a shattered vase that is hard to fix. Sometimes irreparable. But the heart is a muscle.

“There is no safe investment. To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly be broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket – safe, dark, motionless, airless – it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. The alternative to tragedy, or at least to the risk of tragedy, is damnation. The only place outside Heaven where you can be perfectly safe from all the dangers and perturbations of love is Hell.” -- CS. LEWIS ‘The Four Loves’

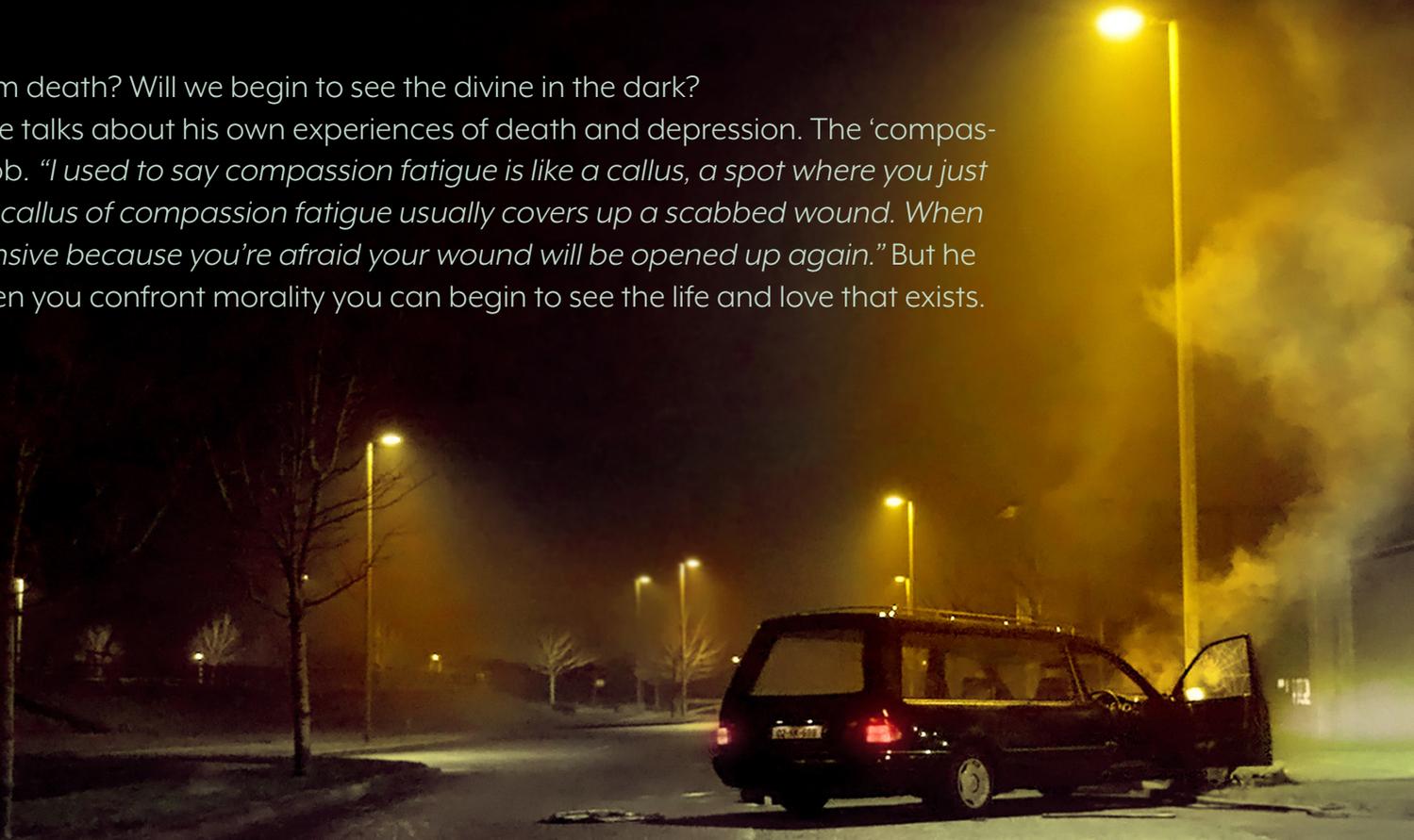
The broken open heart can be like a fist that opens to give back. To understand. To empathise. To explore with the curiosity and enthusiasm of a child.

What happens if we stop hiding from death? Will we begin to see the divine in the dark?

In his book ‘Confessions of a Funeral Director’, Caleb Wilde talks about his own experiences of death and depression. The ‘compassion fatigue’ and the unique emotional struggles of the job. *“I used to say compassion fatigue is like a callus, a spot where you just don’t feel things the same way. And while that’s true, the callus of compassion fatigue usually covers up a scabbed wound. When you see emotions like this, it makes you fearful and defensive because you’re afraid your wound will be opened up again.”* But he also talks about the good he’s seen from death. How when you confront morality you can begin to see the life and love that exists.

“To be human is not to be closed off, detached, emotionless and on a strict schedule. Being human means the opposite: connecting, being fluid, feeling, and - at times - weeping. Ironically, sometimes heaven happens when we’re closest to hell. Because heaven is wherever love reigns, even in those circumstances that are painful and full of tears. Sometimes heaven even happens on earth.”

--- ‘Confessions of a Funeral Director’, Caleb Wilde





WHY A FEMALE CREATOR WITH A
“MALE” STORY?

“We are seeing more female protagonists on our screens as they inhabit a stereotypically male. What interests me is the opposite - allowing men to adjust. That’s why I want to make this film. Bodies examines how men are defined in society and how these stereotypical ‘emotional barriers’ can be broken.” B Welby-Delimerre, Director

Noah Gittel for writes a piece in Esquire;
**‘WHY MORE MOVIES ABOUT MEN
SHOULD BE MADE BY WOMEN.’**

“Isn’t it possible that women could bring a much-needed new angle to our stories of male mythology? Men should advocate for this change because we are also burdened by norms of masculinity. We shouldn’t continue to bury our feelings underneath heavy suits of armor. Letting female directors make male stories symbolically gives them the chance to deconstruct the walls of power that men have spent centuries building.”

MASCULINITY AND MENTAL HEALTH IN A MODERN WORLD

“As anyone with mental health difficulties knows, asking for help when you are at your lowest is incredibly difficult. It takes unbelievable strength to fight your own mind and reach out. This is especially true for young men, as historically our country has stigmatised those with mental illnesses as weak or failing in some way.” - Turned Away by Lisa Naylor

Suicide, in young males in particular, is a pandemic which is rarely discussed. To move into the realm of statistics for a moment and to quote the words of journalist, Jack Urwin (Author of “Man Up”), we see just how serious this problem is “...In Ireland, England and Wales suicide is now the leading cause of death in men aged 20-49, and in 2013, 78% of suicides in the UK were by men. Men are over three times more likely to take their own lives than women, a disparity that’s disturbing on it’s own. But it gets even more troubling when we look at wider statistics and see that women are actually 40% more likely to develop mental illnesses. At a glance this seems to suggest men are less able to cope with illnesses such as depression and anxiety..”

If we are to ask ourselves why men appear to be at such a drastic disadvantage when it comes to dealing with these issues, it calls to mind how men have been educated to behave throughout the ages. Haven’t we all heard that severely damaging phrase “boys don’t cry” a hundred times over? Haven’t we all at one time or another sought to emotionally connect with a man in our lives? Even if we just highlight the social-cultural effect of the wars throughout the centuries - how showing emotion or fragility was considered a weakness in soldiers that could cost lives - It’s easy to understand how we are still stuck in a cycle of this toxic behaviour and disillusionment.

As art can lead the way in social evolution, with this film we aim to open up the dialogue of expression between men and show that being vulnerable could in fact be the strongest weapon. We aim to create an evocative, engaging cinematic experience and want to give voice to this subject, allowing an audience to access and engage with it through drama and stark, sardonic humour. For we are all aware of the fine line between laughter and tears, brevity and wit, life and death.





PLAY SHORT FILM (2015)

{password - ronan}



PLAY EPISODE 5 MOODREEL



“LIVE SO THE PASTER DOESN'T
HAVE TO LIE AT YOUR FUNERAL”