

SOS – Episode 27 – Take the boy home.

Synopsis – Alex takes Noah home to meet his family. Alex is morbidly obsessed with himself and cannot see that he is pushing Noah away.

ARC UNIVERSITY – MAIN QUAD – MIDDAY

NOAH is lying in the middle of the Quad alone, bopping to non-existent music.

ALEX approaches him.

ALEX arrives at NOAH's side and stands over him.

ALEX

Alright, I've been talking about the rain festival since we first met.

NOAH shows no response.

ALEX

I just don't want to go home this year.
There is too much happening here.

NOAH continues to bop.

ALEX

What do you want?
I mean it, you're not getting your way this time.

NOAH continues to enjoy the non-existent music.

ALEX

Do you have any idea how hard this is going to be for me?

NOAH changes his dancing beat.

ALEX

You said it yourself, there are too many exams coming up.

NOAH changes his dancing style.

ALEX

You realise it is a six hour drive.

NOAH Continues to move.

ALEX
We're leaving at four A.M.
And if you complain once on the drive, I'll just turn around.

NOAH opens his eyes, stands and looks at ALEX.

NOAH
We've been together for over a year, I've met your mum and your dad.
The only point of interest; were you hiding your home from me, or me from your home?

ALEX shrinks.

NOAH
You may feel scared, but I feel worthless.

NOAH grins at ALEX and walks away.

ALEX's demeanour collapses into guilt.

CUT TO:

OPENING CREDITS.

FADE UP:

ARC UNIVERSITY – FOOTPATH – MIDDAY

NOAH walks along a footpath bopping his head to non-existent music.

ALEX approaches behind him.

ALEX reaches NOAH and walks beside him for a moment.

NOAH
You're not worthless.

NOAH sighs and stops.

ALEX
I am.

NOAH falters.

NOAH
I'm not scared about them liking you.
I was always useless to them.

ALEX
An AFL boy in a Rugby town.
I never was worth a cent to anyone there, now I will be worth less.
I'm just going to disappoint them all more.

NOAH stares at him.

NOAH
That isn't their problem.
It's yours.
You should know how much you are worth by now.

ALEX shrinks.

NOAH
That place created you.
It's in your blood.
I have to be appraised by them.
For our sake Alex, you still need their approval.

ALEX
What happens if I don't get it?

NOAH
That's up to you.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. OPEN ROAD – ALEX'S TRUCK – EARLY MORNING

ALEX is driving along a scenic road, NOAH is in the passenger seat.

The road suddenly transitions from bush to a never ending bridge across open ocean.

NOAH watches in wonder at the change.

ALEX
This bridge was supposed to be built about two k's inland. By the time the contractor came to check they had almost half finished, so they just finished it.

NOAH
How do you know this shit?

ALEX
Dad and I used to do road trips to buy cattle. I remembered it.

NOAH

I remember last Tuesday you said that your brain “just doesn’t retain stuff”.

ALEX

Yeah, uni stuff is different.

NOAH

Maybe it’s that you get bored unless it is entertaining.

ALEX

Are you always going to do that?

NOAH

Yep.

Until you break this ‘stupid Alex’ delusion.

ALEX

It was just a random fact.

NOAH

Some people call it Australian Modern History.

ALEX

How do you manage to make everything academic?

NOAH

It’s a gift.

Like running around for hours catching footballs.

ALEX

You are going to be *very* popular at home.

NOAH

That’s fine, I don’t want to be.
And I can’t say that I’ll be trying.

ALEX

Do you think you might be a little bit strange?

NOAH

I hope so, I’d hate to be normal.

ALEX

Abnormal would be the best description.

NOAH

I'd like to think that since you like me, *that* would be enough for your town to get over it.

ALEX

Small town, small people, small steps.

NOAH

Your mum and dad got me.

ALEX

They moved from the city.

NOAH

Nothing has happened yet, you might want to give them all the benefit of the doubt until it does.

ALEX

I'm not getting my hopes up.

NOAH

You were born there, my guess is they're a heap of people just like you.

ALEX

I'm not in the mood for complements.

NOAH

Again, I will do what I want!
I like ya, and I am too cool be with a pud.

ALEX

This is going to be a very long two days.

NOAH

Grow a backbone.

NOAH looks around.

NOAH

How long is this fucking bridge?

ALEX

17.6 kilometres.

NOAH rolls his eyes.

FADE TO:

INT. ALEX'S CAR – PARKS – MIDDAY.

SONG – John Farnham – Rolling home.

ALEX and NOAH are driving. ALEX points out various places, NOAH sits smiling.

ALEX

Ok so that shit cable fence is the boundary to the Stacks property. Jeff threw my new shirt into their pig pen when I was twelve, I went in to get it and tripped. While I was down the pigs started biting my pants, ripped them off and ate my shoe.
Got out without my shirt, wearing only my undies and one shoe.

NOAH laughs.

ALEX

Jeff was laughing so much he didn't see me coming.
I hit him in the head, stripped him naked and threw all of his clothes in too.
When we got home mum said Mr Stacks had called screaming because two pigs died.

NOAH laughs.

ALEX

Mum lied completely, she told him that we were upstairs doing our homework.
He showed up the next day with the tongue of my shoe that the butcher had found.

NOAH

How did he know it was you?

ALEX

I wrote my name on the tongue in texta.

NOAH

You still do that.

ALEX

I know.

But mum had to pay him a thousand bucks.
She came upstairs to get into me, opened the door and broke down laughing.

NOAH

Why?

ALEX

She insisted on getting me plastic shoes instead of leather ones.
And the plastic killed the pigs.
I didn't get in trouble or anything.
She just took me to buy new leather trainers.

NOAH smiles.

ALEX points.

ALEX

That is Jolie Pratts farm.
She paid me 200 dollars in advance to cut down a gum tree in her yard, because she was
scared it would fall on her house in a storm.
I started cutting and it fell the wrong way.
It crushed her car and rolled into the swimming pool.

NOAH laughs.

NOAH

What she do?

ALEX

I was stuck here.
I needed her to drive me home.
I went to the front door to ask if I could use her phone.
She asked why and I said I needed to call mum to come get me.
She offered to take me home, I told her she couldn't her car was in the swimming pool
under the gum tree.

NOAH continues to laugh.

ALEX

She went out to look and broke down laughing as well.
I was only 11, I shouldn't have been cutting down sixty foot gum trees.

NOAH finally stops laughing.

NOAH

How the hell didn't she hear it?

ALEX

She's as deaf as a May street DJ.

NOAH laughs.

NOAH
What happened?

ALEX
I called mum, gave her the money back and went home.
She came over three weeks later with the two hundred.
A new car.
And said insurance paid to have to pool re-built.
She thought it was the best accident in years.

NOAH
What else did you do to these people?

ALEX points.

ALEX
That house, Leila and I made space rockets to test.
Leila's went great.
Mine went sideways and burnt down their fence.
I think that is about all.

ALEX turns the car onto a long gravel track.

The Sign on the fence reads "Williams Stud"

The car bumps along the road for a while, crossing small streams and fields.

The road disappears into a massive bush area dense with trees and animals.

Quickly the trees disappear, the road opens onto an expanse of luscious rolling hills covered with cows and grass.

SONG – Dave mathew's band – crash into me.

In the distance a large two story homestead is seated on the highest hill, over looking the entire countryside. ALEX'S eyes mist, he breathes deeply, his air intake stammers.

The car approaches the house and parks next to a new red Toyota.

EXT. WILLIAMS STUD – FRONT YARD – MIDDAY

ALEX gets out of the car and walks around to the front bonnet.

NOAH gets out of the car.

ALEX smells the air deeply.

NOAH looks around in awe, smiling.

The front door of the house slams open, LEILA screams and hurtles towards ALEX.

LEILA
ALEX!!!

ALEX
Leila, slow down.

LEILA crash tackles ALEX to the ground.

LEILA
You're home!

ALEX
You noticed.

LEILA stands and looks at NOAH.

LEILA
That's him?

ALEX Nods.

ALEX
Noah, meet Leila.

LEILA
He's gorgeous!

ALEX sits up.

LEILA
I'm going to transfer to ARC.

NOAH looks to ALEX stunned.

ALEX
She doesn't get out much.

LEILA rushes over to NOAH, hugging him roughly.

LEILA
Nice to meet you.

Noah looks to Alex.

NOAH
She's a stunner.

LEILA blushes.

NOAH
Nice to meet you.

NOAH looks down to his hand.

NOAH
May we stop now?

LEILA
No.
I'm keeping you.

ALEX
I need him back.

Leila lets Noah go.

LEILA
You don't deserve this.
You're a fence-burner-rugby-hating-pig-murderer.

NOAH
A car-crusher-pool-vomiting-live-worm-eater.

ALEX
And it's all mine anyway.
See the ring!

LEILA
Mum said you wouldn't show.

ALEX
I haven't ever missed a rain festival.

LEILA
I didn't think you'd come.

ALEX
Noah made me.

JULIA opens the front door.

JULIA (yelling)
GET INTO THIS HOUSE ALREADY!

NOAH (to LEILA)
I'm the boss.

LEILA
Of Alex?

NOAH
No, of everyone.

LEILA
What?

ALEX
It's true.

They walk towards the house.

LEILA (to NOAH)
What, people just do what you say?

ALEX
Generally.

LEILA
Why?

NOAH shrugs.

LEILA (to ALEX)
Why?

ALEX
It's almost like he wouldn't understand if you didn't.

LEILA (to NOAH)
Mum says your rich as.

NOAH
Yep.

ALEX
Hey, I'm not doing that badly.

LEILA
I'll get to that.
(to NOAH)
I think dad is scared of you.

ALEX
Yeah, he totally is.
Noah took dad to a boxing class, and knocked the instructor out.

LEILA
So people do what you say because you'll hurt em?

NOAH
No, I wouldn't hurt anyone on purpose.

ALEX
Nah, it isn't that, he seriously gets confused if you don't.

LEILA
What are you talking about?

ALEX
Wait and see, he'll own the town by Sunday.

LEILA
He's the only thing everyone can talk about.

They all arrive at the door.

JULIA (to LEILA)
I knew you ran out to gossip.
Get inside.
(To NOAH)
Welcome home Noah.

JULIA smiles.
NOAH smiles.

NOAH
Thanks
It's great to see you again.

JULIA (To ALEX)
Hey baby!

JULIA opens her arms to ALEX.

ALEX drops into his mother's arms.

ALEX
Hey mumma.

JULIA
I'm glad he made you come.

ALEX stands smiling, embarrassed.

CUT TO:

INT. WILLIAMS STUD – ENTRANCE – AFTERNOON

ALEX bustles through the front door with a hand full of bags and rubbish from the car.

NOAH follows him empty handed.

JULIA, JOCK, LEILA, MARK, JEFF and JORDAN are sitting around the lounge room chatting.

The coffee table is covered with afternoon tea.

NOAH
You're a real dick head sometimes!

ALEX
You're supposed to be the guest.

NOAH
Yeah, and the guest gets what he wants.
Give me my stuff!

ALEX
Be waited on.

NOAH
I'm not a chick!

JULIA
I resent that.

NOAH

You should.

Does anyone else have a problem with me drawing attention to being male?

JOCK

You don't need to.

It is quite obvious.

NOAH (to ALEX)

I look like your bitch.

ALEX walks off up the stairs.

NOAH walks into the living room and flops down belligerently.

LEILA

You're making one hell of a first impression.

NOAH

If I wasn't engaged to your brother, *you'd* be all over me.

JEFF looks at LEILA.

JEFF

You so would.

LEILA

Shut up Jeff.

ALEX walks back down the stairs.

ALEX flops onto the chair next to NOAH.

ALEX

See.

How much hassle would it have been to just shut up in the first place?

JULIA

Where did you put it all?

ALEX

It's on the spare bed in the office.

JULIA

I'll move your stuff into your room later.

ALEX
Nah, it's ok.
We'll be fine in the office.

JOCK
You aren't sleeping together under this roof.

NOAH snorts then begins to laugh heartedly.

JULIA
We're serious, you can do what you want in your own house, but here you will follow our rules.

ALEX begins to visibly become angry.
MARK looks quizzically at his parents.
JULIA silently hushes him.
NOAH continues to laugh.

NOAH
The only way we won't be sleeping together is if you set one of us on fire.

NOAH continues to laugh.

JOCK
Then you wont be sleeping in this house.

NOAH continues to laugh and shrugs.

ALEX stands.

ALEX
What the fuck are you talking about?

JULIA
Alex!

MARK (with JULIA)
Yeah, I've had like fifty guys here?

NOAH(to MARK)
You're gay?

MARK (to NOAH)
Yeah.
Alex never told you?

JOCK
Alex doesn't know.

ALEX
Hang on, you never said anything about separate rooms on the phone!

JULIA
That's because we are giving you... shit Alex.

ALEX (to MARK) (interrupting)
You're gay?

MARK
Yeah, must run in the family.

NOAH (at LEILA)
Did they arrange this skit earlier or is a lot of shit just falling together?

LEILA (to NOAH)
They practiced briefly while you were at the car.

ALEX
When did this happen?

NOAH
Alex, you gunna sit down?

ALEX
They want us to sleep in separate rooms.

NOAH
I think you need a moment.
They're shitting you!

ALEX
Mark isn't gay?

NOAH
No he is.
The separate rooms is a joke to get you going.

ALEX
How do you know?

NOAH
There are a couple of separate conversations I have been having.

ALEX
When?

NOAH
Just now.

ALEX
Oh.
Tell me what is happening.

NOAH
You're mum and dad wanted to see you get upset.
Your brother just came out to you.
And you just fell for the whole thing.

Realisation dawns on ALEX.

ALEX
How come they didn't get you?

NOAH
They had me for a moment, but I didn't care I would have slept with you anyway.
So it was funny.

ALEX
So I just look like a wanker?

NOAH
No, still as hot as ever.

LEILA
Ew.

MARK
You should be used to it by now.

ALEX sits shaking his head.

JORDAN
He's right you should.

JEFF
Can we change topic now?

ALEX (to MARK)
How long have you been out?

MARK
Three days after you.

ALEX
Why am I last to know?

MARK
I wanted to tell you in person.
It looks like this family has kept a secret for once.

JEFF
No, Alex just hasn't spoken to any of us in over a year.

NOAH
Wow, there is major resentment in that!
Can we fight over it?

JEFF
WHAT?

NOAH
I have nothing to do with him not calling.

JULIA
You do.
He stopped contact just after you started dating.

NOAH
That's him not me.

ALEX
Don't put me in it.

NOAH
I never told you not to call or go home.

LEILA
Why would he want to when he has you?
I wouldn't.

NOAH smiles at LEILA

NOAH
Fine. It was all me.
I commanded him to never contact you all again.

JOCK
We figured as much.

LEILA
So how rich exactly?

JOCK
LEILA

NOAH
My great grandparents helped America buy Alaska.

JOCK
Holey fuck!

NOAH begins to laugh.

JOCK
Why do you want to marry Alex?

NOAH continues to laugh.

ALEX
Hey!

JORDAN
Seriously.

ALEX
Hey!

NOAH
He's the smartest bloke I ever met, and he loves you all so much he is terrified you will cut him off.

THE FAMILY shrinks.

JULIA
Ok, I think he passes the test phase.

NOAH smiles.

NOAH

It would have been much more convincing if Jock wasn't terrified of me.

JOCK

I'm not scared of you Noah.

NOAH smiles.

NOAH half jumps at JOCK.

JOCK flinches.

ALEX watches his dad and begins to laugh hysterically.

MARK and LEILA begin to laugh.

JULIA, JEFF and JORDAN laugh at the others.

JOCK

None of *you* saw him turn a boxing champion into a throw rug.

NOAH smiles.

The rest of the family continue to laugh.

NOAH

You're never going to forget that, are you?

JOCK

What the hell are you trained in?

ALEX

Everything!

JOCK

Really?

NOAH

It was scary world being openly gay from 8 years old.

JOCK

That makes sense.

JULIA (to MARK and LEILA)

Come on, we better start on dinner.

ALEX (to NOAH)
Lets go, I want to show you around.

NOAH nods.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. WILLIAMS STUD – ALEX’S ROOM – EVENING

ALEX is lying on his bed in just a pair of jeans.
NOAH walks in fully dressed ready to go out.

NOAH
Look, you might avoid this, I’m not.
I’m going to the festival.

ALEX
Great, have fun.

NOAH
Night babe.

NOAH walks over to ALEX and kisses him on the lips.

ALEX watches as NOAH sorts his wallet on the dresser.

ALEX
This isn’t going to guilt me into going.

NOAH turns.

NOAH
What?

ALEX
If you think I am going to change my mind.

NOAH screws up his face

NOAH
What?
Ha.
I couldn’t care less if you come.
I’ve wanted to go to this festival since you first mentioned it.

NOAH (cont'd)
I would have driven down by myself to come.
Mark, Leila, Jeff and Jordan are all ready and I'm going with them.

AND!
I'm going to get *plastered*.

ALEX
You're hopeless.

JEFF (off, yelling)
Hurry up pretty boy!
There is tail to be had.

NOAH (yelling)
Coming!

ALEX
When will you be back?

NOAH
Don't intend it to be today!

NOAH trots out the door.

ALEX shuts his eyes and breaths out.

FADE TO:

All in BLACKNESS

MUSIC is playing

ALEX is lying on his bed with his eyes shut.

The music suddenly cuts.

ALEX's eyes open.

FADE IN:

INT. WILLIAMS STUD – ALEX'S ROOM – NIGHT.

ALEX'S POV – eye's blink open.

JOCK is standing at the IPOD DOCK.

CUT TO:

NORMAL POV

ALEX is sitting up on his bed.

JOCK is standing opposite him.

ALEX
Hey Pa.
What do you need?

JOCK
You to get up and get dressed.

ALEX
What for?

JOCK
The festival.

ALEX
I don't want to go.

JOCK
I don't care.
I wanted to show up with my boys.
You ruined that, so I will ruin your staying here.

ALEX
You can't make me.

JOCK
No. I suppose I can't anymore.
But you are hurting Noah.

ALEX
Noah and I don't live off each other dad.

JOCK
I figure that you have never been able to notice this. Being yourself.

ALEX
What?

JOCK
Noah's happiness is centred completely on you.

ALEX
No it isn't.
Noah is Noah.
You just don't know him.

JOCK
Let me explain it in your *learn'ed speak*.
Noah's happiness is inversely proportional to the distance between you.

ALEX
What are you on?

JOCK
Even when you leave the room, the light in his eyes dims.

ALEX
No it doesn't.

JOCK.
Considering you couldn't possibly know this for sure, maybe you should trust me.

ALEX
Well dad, that goes completely against everything I have learnt about him in the past two years.

JOCK stands.

JOCK
Well over the past twenty-four years, have you learnt that I'm a liar.

ALEX looks away.

JOCK
Be down at the car in five minutes.

ALEX
Or what?

JOCK
I'll be very disappointed.
And maybe the reason you doubt you deserve Noah is because you don't.
I just can't see an eight-year-old fighter and a twenty-four-year-old sook together.

JOCK looks at ALEX until ALEX meets his gaze.

JOCK leaves

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. TOWN CENTRE – PARKS – NIGHT

A large tea light festival.

Light music is playing from a country band.

NOAH is standing in the middle of the crowd.

JEFF is off in the distance.

JORDAN is with him.

NOAH is talking to an old woman.

JOLIE PRATT
So where is Alex then?

NOAH
Probably off somewhere setting fences on fire.

JOLIE PRATT
OH NOW NOW. That isn't fair.
You must always stand by your partner.
Even if you disagree with them, completely.

NOAH
I will remember that.

JOLIE PRATT
Your man is a hero here.

NOAH
That is a little hard to believe, being the rugby traitor.

JOLIE PRATT
Believe it.
Every heckler in this place is glued to the TV every game he plays.
That guitar and the violin sitting on stage, no one else is allowed to touch.
Alex was the youngest member of the rain band

NOAH
Maybe you should tell him that.

JOLIE PRATT
No-one has had the chance.

NOAH
Pity he isn't here then.

SONG – JOHN FARNHAM – TALK OF THE TOWN
Begins to be played by the band.

JOLIE PRATT
Shhh. Shhh. It is starting!

NOAH
What?

JOLIE PRATT
The rain dance.
Shhh.

NOAH stands at attention.

CUT TO:

LATER

EXT. TOWN CENTRE – PARKS – NIGHT

NOAH is tipsy.

JEFF, MARK, JORDAN and 5 OTHERS (around ALEX'S age) are dancing around NOAH.

NOAH is happily playing with them, dancing and mucking around.

LEILA pushes through the drunk crowd.

LEILA (yelling)
NOAH!

NOAH (to the sky)
I can hear my name.

LEILA (yelling)
NOAH, YOU IDIOT!

NOAH looks around and notices LEILA.

NOAH moves towards LEILA.

LEILA
NOAH! Come up to the stage!

NOAH
Why?

LEILA
The throng wants you to sing.

NOAH
What, why?

LEILA
They want you to sing the Rain dance.

NOAH
Why me?

LEILA
Apparently, the counsel insisted.

NOAH
Rightio then.

LEILA
Follow me.

NOAH follows LEILA toward the stage.

LEILA drags him up towards the Microphone.

LEILA walks to the microphone.

LEILA
Ladies and Gentlemen, as we are lacking Alex this evening, I bring you his other half.
(to Noah, whispers.)
You know the song right?

NOAH
I bloody should, they've played it six times.

LEILA (to CROWD)
APPLAUSE PLEASE

The CROWD cheer.

NOAH checks in with himself, shaking off some Alcohol.

SONG – JOHN FARNHAM – TALK OF THE TOWN.

BAND begins to play.

ALEX's violin is missing.

NOAH begins to sing, accompanied by the two backing singers.

NOAH reaches the first chorus, a violin joins the music.

The CROWD roar.

ALEX is REVEALED behind the band.

NOAH turns.

ALEX continues to play.

NOAH turns happily and continues to sing.

NOAH reaches the third chorus.

ALEX Walks over to NOAH'S Microphone.

ALEX joins the vocals.

One line in, torrential rain covers the group.

NOAH Stops singing, looking around.

Everyone is oblivious.

ALEX smiles at NOAH.

ALEX Leads NOAH off the stage towards the crowd.

Every crowd member greets ALEX.

ALEX begins to dance, coaxing NOAH to join.

NOAH joins.

THE SONG ENDS, THEN STARTS AGAIN.

NOAH

They don't seem to care.

ALEX

I figured being gay at twenty-four should be easier then eight.

NOAH

Why would you say that?

ALEX

I didn't want to disappoint you.

NOAH

Who cares if you do?

ALEX

I do.

NOAH

I really didn't want to guilt you.

ALEX

You didn't.

Dad did.

NOAH

Well you made everyone's day.

ALEX

Yours?

NOAH

Nah, I actually hoped you'd stick to your guns and have a shit night.

ALEX

Sorry to disappoint you then.

NOAH smiles.

NOAH

I kinda liked it.

FADE TO BLACK.