

SOS – Episode 9 – It starts.

FADE IN:

EXT. ARC UNIVERSITY – AFL FIELD – MORNING

SONG – WHITE FLAG - DIDO

ALEX is running anti-clockwise around the perimeter.

ALEX pulls his wet shirt over his head and increases his pace to sprinting.

BLAIR is lying on the ground in the middle of the field.

BLAIR sits up as ALEX throws his shirt away.

BLAIR

Ok, now you're just showing off.

ALEX (panting)

What?

BLAIR

You've beaten me by six sprints. Done. Let's go.

ALEX gets back to the point where he left his shirt and slows to a jog again.

ALEX (Panting)

I'm not trying to beat you. I have one more for fifteen.

BLAIR

When did you start doing this?

ALEX

I have been doing it since I started. Usually early morning though.

BLAIR

Ahh...

So you wouldn't waist potential Noah time. But now he's sick...

ALEX

Dry up!

ALEX reaches the shirt and accelerates into a full sprint.

BLAIR

Just admit it. It's out there now, I know!
All of your apparent little "quirks" are explained, simply, by Noah Jones.

ALEX ignores him and increases his pace.

BLAIR

You actually had me fooled for a while. I thought you were deep.

ALEX reaches the shirt.

ALEX stops and walks around with his hands around his head.

BLAIR

You're just as dick driven as the rest of us.

ALEX

Shut up, Blair.

BLAIR

Can we please leave now!

ALEX scoops up his shirt and turns for the exit.

BLAIR scuttles to follow him.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARC UNIVERSITY – PATH – MORNING

BLAIR runs up behind ALEX from the football field.

BLAIR

Wait up will ya!

ALEX

Hurry up!

BLAIR

Don't be a dick!

ALEX stops annoyed.

BLAIR catches ALEX.

BLAIR

See, was that hard?

BLAIR grins at ALEX stupidly.

ALEX cannot maintain his anger.

THEY continue walking.

BLAIR

What is your problem mate?

ALEX

Nothing.

BLAIR

I worry about nothing.

It's scary that there could actually be nothing somewhere.

ALEX rolls his eyes

ALEX

Ok.

Well I am not happy then.

BLAIR

Why? Because of Noah?

ALEX

No...

Yeah, sort of.

BLAIR

That's a start.

You're not happy, and it is sort of Noah's fault.

ALEX

You're not very good at this.

BLAIR

Neither are you.

ALEX

It's just that...

BLAIR

Noah is psychotic.

ALEX
I don't want to like him.

BLAIR
Stiff!

ALEX looks away surprised.

BLAIR
To bad.

ALEX
But I have no interest in being gay, or gay people!
They're annoying.
I don't want to be gay.

BLAIR
Tough.

ALEX
Thanks.

BLAIR
HEY, man!
At least you know what you do want.
AND, you can have it, whenever you want!
Think about who you're complaining too.

ALEX and BLAIR continue to walk in silence.

FADE TO:

OPENING CREDITS.

FADE IN:

INT. ARC UNIVERSITY – LECTURE HALL – MIDDAY

ALEX is sitting in the second row next to TARNIA.

TARNIA has a look indicating she believes the lecturer to be talking crap.

Many of the females in the hall are throwing occasional dirty looks at TARNIA.

TARNIA turns to ALEX.

TARNIA
He is just full of it.
Now he is even insulting your people.

ALEX
What people?

TARNIA
Blondes.

ALEX
You're blonde.

TARNIA
Silver.

ALEX looks at her hair confused.

ALEX
Let's leave?

TARNIA
No.
He'll expect us to regurgitate this dribble in the exam.
Truth is meaningless to his type.

ALEX Nods, stifling a laugh.

The lecturer announces a "Ten minute break"

TARNIA turns back to ALEX

TARNIA
What happened to Noah?

ALEX
What do you mean?

TARNIA
He isn't here.
You didn't play well on the weekend.

ALEX
Well.

TARNIA

I don't need to know. But there is a rumour that he tried to kill himself at the gym,
buzzing around the back row.

ALEX looked at the back row. Several people were talking and shooting ALEX quick
looks.

ALEX

He found out that his dad died.

TARNIA

Oh, that is unfortunate.

ALEX

Yeah.

Then he went to gym, and didn't drink anything for about seven hours.
Ended up in the hospital.

TARNIA

Did you carry him there?

ALEX

No.

(beat)

I was in the ambulance though.

TARNIA

Well, at least the rumour isn't too far removed from the truth.

ALEX

Dehydration through grief is very different from suicide in the gym.

TARNIA

True. But the raw facts are near correct.

You, gym, ended up at the hospital.

ALEX thought about it and nodded.

TARNIA

I had come up with my own story anyway.

ALEX Chuckles internally.

ALEX (not laughing)

What was it?

TARNIA

I decided that one of those dangerous ergonomic devises at the gym had malfunctioned and Noah was in the way.

You, being in love with him, wouldn't trust the gym staff and took him to the hospital yourself.

ALEX smiles

ALEX

Maybe you should start spreading that rumour.

TARNIA

Oh no.

Noah would like that far too much from you.

If you want to begin one, you should.

ALEX

I think he'd like both even more.

ALEX grinned at her.

TARNIA studied ALEX quizzically.

TARNIA

How many ladies have given up themselves to you?

ALEX chokes, then starts laughing.

TARNIA

I know you don't mean to, but you naturally flaunt your beauty when you want things.

I just wondered.

ALEX was now confused at the remark.

ALEX

Was that a complement or a criticism?

TARNIA

Neither, just an observation.

You are lucky to have picked Noah, he is very secure.

ALEX

What does that mean?

TARNIA

I don't think any female could prevent being jealous of you around other people.

ALEX
Oh.

TARNIA
Noah will not care.

ALEX
Why do you say that??

TARNIA
Jealously would make him have to think about someone else.

ALEX
That's a bit harsh.
Noah isn't that narcissistic.

TARNIA
Oh no, He is.
If he does get you, I imagine it will get worse.

ALEX
I've never seen Noah do anything for himself.

TARNIA
Oh yes, Noah is very giving.
Everyone is completely narcissistic; people only do things to because they get something
out of it.
Noah just accepts himself.
With you beside him, he will be perfect, but then again he only thinks about you now.

ALEX grins at the thought.

The lecturer returns and continues speaking.

FADE TO:

EXT. ARC UNIVERSITY – LECTURE HALL – AFTERNOON

TARNIA and ALEX are walking together outside towards the coffee shack.

TARNIA
So when do you expect you'll bed Noah?

ALEX scoffs

ALEX
That is way harsh.

TARNIA
You have bedded half of the women on campus and it is May. How is that question harsh?

ALEX
I don't think of Noah that way.

TARNIA
You need to figure out how you do think about him.
You seem to have feel and think messed up.

ALEX
That is an interesting way to put it.

TARNIA
Do you even know *what* you want to happen when you get him?

ALEX
If.

TARNIA
No when.
You could literally have anyone you want.
A lot of people lie and tell people that, but with you it is actually true.
You could walk up to even a professor on campus with a husband and kids and she would drop everything!
Noah sees your worth; surprisingly, even beyond your looks.

ALEX
That is easy to say, but believing it is a beast.

TARNIA
Yes I know.
Why Noah?

ALEX
He is supreme.
At first I was just dazzled by the show he gives to everyone.
Then he messed up; I stayed long enough to see through it.

TARNIA was blissfully satisfied with listening.

TARNIA
How?

ALEX
At first I thought he did what he does to be superior.
Then I figured it was just because he could.
(beat)
But, he, needs to do it. He has to be useful to his friends.
He is terrified if he isn't we will leave.

TARNIA continues to respond as if she is hearing a symphony.

ALEX
Then when his dad died.
I saw him in the gym. He was so tired. He had no show left in him.
I never considered Noah as lonely.
But he is. Desperately lonely.
I figure, giving like he tries to, separates him from having friends.
When he lost his dad, it was as if I got to see something secret.
Everything he has; he couldn't do anything to help his own dad, and he lost him.
I guess, he thinks, it is just a matter of time until he loses us.

TARNIA and ALEX walk together for a while.

TARNIA
Why did you see that?

ALEX
Because I was there.

TARNIA
No.
Noah meant to show it to you.
And you chose to see it.

ALEX stood and thought for a moment, then jogged to catch up to walking next to TARNIA.

ALEX
You think?

TARNIA
Freud says there are no accidents, and apart from him being psychotic, I think that is true.

ALEX
He doesn't believe jokes exist either.

TARNIA
Jokes that make fun of people is what he meant.
I have to go now.

TARNIA walks down an alley.

ALEX
See you later.

TARNIA continues to walk without responding.

ALEX rolls his eyes and heads on.

CUT TO:

INT. ARC UNIVERSITY – COFFEE SHACK – AFTERNOON

CODA and JEN are standing at the counter waiting for their coffees to be finished.

JEN
Apparently, Alex saved Noah's life now.

CODA
I heard that Noah was as high as a kite, has been banned from the rowing team, and his scholarship is being revoked.

JEN laughs heartily.

JEN
Too bad Noah is in the states, he would just love this.

CODA
You should have seen Alex yesterday when he heard one of the rumours; he nearly snapped it. Blair had to stop him from hitting one of the wrestlers.

JEN
I think Noah would like the idea of that more than the rumours.

CODA
I would love to have my own personal honour guard. You would too.

JEN
Do you think Alex would do that for us?

ALEX appears behind them.

ALEX
Do what?

CODA
Beat someone up for spreading rumours.

ALEX
Yep. If the rumours were crap.

JEN
See, he's perfect.

ALEX blushes

CODA
When is Noah back?

ALEX stares at CODA

CODA
Well?

ALEX shakes of the fright.

ALEX
Um, late tomorrow night.

JEN
How is he?

ALEX
Don't know, haven't heard from him since before the funeral.
Don't think Blair has either.

CODA
How was he before the funeral?

ALEX
Surprisingly back to normal.
He is just taking it on the chin.

JEN
Well he got to have his outburst early on. I suppose he has done the grieving he needed to do.

ALEX snorted.

ALEX
I doubt it's that.
I figure he is trying to be noble.

CODA
What noble? You'll worry more if you think he's hiding it.
He knows that.

JEN
A worrier!
Who would have guessed it, the screw bot actually feels.

ALEX
Lay off.
What have I done to you today?

JEN
Nothing, just making hay while the making's good.

CODA
Come on Jen, Awix is wowwied.

ALEX appears to be getting a head ache.

CASHIER looks to ALEX

ALEX
Double Latte, Non-fat.

BLAIR APPEARS

BLAIR (to CASHIER)
Two, on him!

ALEX
Get off it, you get nothing!

BLAIR looks at ALEX and raises his eyebrows.

(beat)

ALEX (to CASHIER)
Yeah, two.

CODA
What is this?

ALEX
What?

CODA
You've never shouted anything in your life!

JEN
Yeah!
What does Blair know?

ALEX
You really need to lay off.

JEN
Tell us Blair.

CODA
Resistance is futile!

ALEX is hiding his panic by flirting with the cashier.

BLAIR
He borrowed fifty from me on Monday.

JEN
Well that's shit.

CODA
Come on, let's get a table.

CODA and JEN walk away with their coffees.

BLAIR puts an arm around ALEX, while they wait.

ALEX
You're not going to blackmail me.

BLAIR
I just did!

ALEX
I owe you a coffee for driving me home.

BLAIR
Nice try.

ALEX
Say a thing, and I'll break your hip.

BLAIR
You know how Noah feels about violence.

BLAIR laughs.

ALEX grinds his teeth.

ALEX
I know, he likes it against you!

ALEX smiles at himself.

BLAIR
You know, you're right.
Misplaced aggression, Noah must have the hots for me...
(beat)
There goes your chances boyo!

ALEX decides to give up, takes his coffee, and walks off to follow the girls.

CODA and JEN are sitting at a corner table.

ALEX walks over to sit with them.

CODA
Not yourself today?

ALEX
Hu?

CODA
You have ignored every flirting glance thrown at you since you got here.

ALEX
Come on. Just lay off.

JEN
I personally love sitting with you.

ALEX
Really?

JEN
Yeah, every chick here is visually throwing daggers at us.
Whomever you marry, better have a thick skin.

BLAIR walks over and sits down.

BLAIR
What are we talking about?

JEN
Alex getting married.

ALEX
Can we try another subject?

CODA
But, you are your favourite subject?

JEN (to CODA)
That is hilarious; I said exactly the same thing to Noah last week.

CODA
Maybe Alex should marry Noah.

BLAIR laughs

JEN
I doubt Noah would argue.

JEN and CODA join BLAIR laughing.

ALEX stands up abruptly, knocking over his coffee, and walking away.

BLAIR
Oi! Where are you going, hot head?

ALEX exits.

CODA
What is his problem today?

BLAIR
No idea.

JEN
He has been a bit off since Noah left.

BLAIR

Well he did pretty much see him die at the gym.

JEN

What is it with all of these rumours?

BLAIR

It is true, Noah did flat line in the ambo.

CODA

How did Alex end up there anyway?

BLAIR thought for a second.

BLAIR

I sent him...

JEN

Why?

BLAIR stands.

BLAIR

I have to go.

BLAIR exits.

CODA

Do you ever feel that we are out of the loop?

JEN

Yes, but I don't want to be in it.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARC UNIVERSITY - MAIN QUAD – AFTERNOON

ALEX is striding across the campus.

BLAIR appears behind ALEX and runs to catch him.

BLAIR

ALEX!

ALEX ignores him.

BLAIR
ALEX!

BLAIR increases his pace and catches up.

BLAIR walks beside ALEX

BLAIR
Alex, I am sorry.

ALEX
I don't need you to be, and I didn't want you to follow me.

BLAIR
Don't be stupid.

ALEX
Hey, I am allowed to leave to avoid getting burned.

BLAIR
Yeah, and I'm sorry I let it happen, I forgot.

ALEX
What, that now I must be a delicate faggot.

BLAIR
No, that you are having a hard time.

ALEX
Look I'm angry.
Just leave me alone, I'll get over it.

BLAIR
This doesn't change who you are.

ALEX
What a stupid thing to say.
Of course it does!
It changes the direction of my entire life, I am going to have to deal with this crap forever
man.

BLAIR
You know what I meant.

ALEX

Mate, thanks for that. But knowing that you don't care really does nothing for me at the moment.

BLAIR

You're over reacting.

ALEX

No, I'm not.

(beat)

The only person I know that could possibly get it, is away at his own dad's funeral. I am not allowed to be selfish right now. But I also don't have to sit around and cop shit.

BLAIR

There must be heaps of gay people on campus.

ALEX

I can't stand gay people Blair.

The only one that I like, I also happen to be into.
So talking about it to him will be a definite treat for me.

BLAIR

There is someone else.

ALEX

I am not speaking to Coda.

BLAIR

I didn't mean Coda.

Hillary would probably get it better than anyone.

ALEX

Great timing for her this week.

BLAIR

I'd bet she'd appreciate the distraction.

ALEX

She's Noah's mum.

BLAIR

If what you said is true your crush on Noah isn't the issue.

ALEX stops walking.

BLAIR stops.

ALEX

She told me once that I should come to talk to her...

BLAIR

With her experience, she probably knew before you did.

ALEX looks around in distress.

FADE TO.

EXT. JONES MANOR – DRIVEWAY – MORNING

ALEX is walking up the driveway.

ALEX reaches the door and rings the bell.

After a moment HILLARY answers the door.

HILLARY smiles happily.

HILLARY

ALEX

HILLARY leans out and kisses ALEX on the cheek.

ALEX

Morning Hillary.

HILLARY

To what do I owe the pleasure?

ALEX becomes very interested in his feet.

ALEX

Um...

You once offered me... um.

HILLARY

An open ear?

ALEX nods.

HILLARY

Come in, I'll make a cup of tea.

HILLARY leads ALEX into the house.

INT. JONES MANOR – KITCHEN – MORNING

SONG – DIESEL – 15 feet of snow.

HILLARY places the teapot on a tray with two cups.

HILLARY goes back to the cupboard.

HILLARY

I think this is a biscuit moment.

HILLARY takes a packet of biscuits out of the cupboard and puts them on a plate.

HILLARY puts the plate on the tray and walks over to ALEX, sitting at the table.

ALEX looks like a child about to be punished.

HILLARY puts the tray to one side and sits.

HILLARY

Maybe you should lead us off...

ALEX looks up.

ALEX

This might seem a little bit out of left field.

HILLARY

I am the mother of Noah Jones, I live in left field.

ALEX

How do you feel about Noah being gay?

HILLARY thinks a moment.

ALEX

Sorry, I sh...

HILLARY (interrupting)

At first... I know many people say they could always tell, I did not really have time for that. As you know, Noah was eight when he made the announcement.

ALEX laughed and shook his head.

HILLARY

I can't, unfortunately, say that I was thrilled.
I sometimes worry that is what keeps some distance between us.

HILLARY(cont'd)
William wasn't even phased.
He was one of those rare men, he didn't put expectations on anyone. I never once
disappointed by anything.
I envied that.

ALEX
Did it change how you felt about Noah?

HILLARY
No! Never.
Noah, I can easily say, was the love of my life from the moment he was born.
But, I will add, Noah, is not an ordinary example.
You never will repeat this.

ALEX nods fervently

HILLARY
That boy teaches me more about being myself, then I imagined there was to learn.
The people he as chosen to surround him, yourself included; I sometimes am more
jealous then a Christian woman should admit.
(beat)
Why are you here Alex?

ALEX looks away.

HILLARY
Are you having problems with Noah being gay?

ALEX shook his head still looking away.

HILLARY
Are you having problems with being gay?

ALEX doesn't move for a moment.

ALEX slowly begins to nod, still looking away.

HILLARY
Who brought this on?

ALEX kept looking away.

HILLARY pours two cups of tea.

HILLARY
You know what he'll hate most?
(beat)
That I knew first.

ALEX nodded weakly, still looking away.

ALEX
Blair too.

HILLARY
Blair?
(beat)
I'm impressed.

ALEX looks back at HILLARY.

ALEX
Why?

HILLARY
It is always the ones you don't expect to be able to lie.

ALEX
What do you mean?

HILLARY
Noah asked why you have been avoiding him since we got back.
Blair covered perfectly, I didn't even suspect anything.

ALEX
What did he say?

HILLARY
That you were fighting with Coda, and was avoiding anywhere she might be.

ALEX
It helps it's actually true.

HILLARY
You're that angry at yourself?

ALEX
What?

HILLARY

You're are even willing to give up your friends?

ALEX

No.

HILLARY

Then why have you started fighting with them?

ALEX

They just wont let up.

HILLARY

People make there own drama Alex.

ALEX

I don't understand.

HILLARY

You are creating a problem to hide another.

Nobody knows, nor even suspects.

I am sure that it will stay that way as long as you want it too.

ALEX

You knew.

Tarnia knew.

Blair knows.

HILLARY laughed at the mention of Tarnia.

HILLARY

Tarnia...

Tarnia doesn't work like most people.

You told Blair yourself.

And I, I love my son, I know what it looks like.

ALEX

How do I live with it?

HILLARY

I have no idea.

Noah would probably have a better answer.

I think society has a lot to answer for; how you feel now.

ALEX

Why?

HILLARY

The biggest suicide rate is young men under 25.

(beat)

You're looking at a large drop. You have to give up the leading minority, and will be forced into an outcast pariah.

If you let that happen.

(beat)

I once asked Noah how he would deal with this.

ALEX

What did he say?

HILLARY

I would never choose an easy path if I had a choice.

The day I succeed, I want the knowledge that I did it with what I have. The more difficult it is, the better the day will be.

ALEX

What if he fails?

HILLARY

Then he will die on the journey.

ALEX

What about my family?

HILLARY

You don't have that little faith in them.

All you are worried about is that you will be a let down, when they weren't.

ALEX

They gave me everything.

HILLARY

Then they will give you happiness too.

ALEX

I'm not like Noah, I don't know who I am going to be.

HILLARY

What rot!

You know exactly who you are, your family gave you that too.

And I'll tell you what Alexander Williams, you are more like Noah than anyone I have ever met. Your difference is you lack his stubborn independence.

A trait he could afford to lessen.

ALEX smiles.

ALEX
Why did he come out so young?

HILLARY grins.

HILLARY
As I said, independent, and as stubborn as a mule.
Noah likes to think he needs no one.
(beat)
Having a nine digit trust fund didn't hurt either.

ALEX smiles.

ALEX
Nine!

HILLARY
Why do you think no one can keep up with the Jones' ?

ALEX
That's crazy.

HILLARY
To his merit he has never touched it.
Although; he does know it's always there.

ALEX smiles

ALEX
I am going to go, Noah will be back soon, and I still need some time to think.
(beat)
Thank you. I appreciate this.

HILLARY
Not a problem, do it again.

ALEX stands

HILLARY
Alex.

ALEX
Yeah?

HILLARY

May I ask you a personal question? Feel free to ignore it.

ALEX nods

HILLARY

What made you notice Noah?

ALEX

The stubborn independence.

HILLARY sniffs a laugh she is disheartened.

ALEX notices.

ALEX

But

HILLARY looks up in surprise.

ALEX

It's just an act.

I like that I know that even more.

HILLARY smiles happily.

ALEX smiles weakly and exits.

HILLARY (to off)

Promise me you'll tell him that one day!

ALEX (off)

No.

FADE TO BLACK.