

THE SOCIAL CONTRACT: EPISODE ONE

Written by

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OVER BLACK:

SUPER:

Six months ago the BBC made a documentary about Theo X, an aspiring media mogul.

During the course of filming Theo was reunited with his long lost brother, Mark.

The crew returns to film Theo and Mark's first week working together.

FADE IN:

INT./EXT. THEO'S CAR - DAY (DRIVING)

THEO (mid 30s, shaved head, wearing a leather jacket and aviators) drives his black BMW sport.

Next to him is MARK (late 20s, with a round face, thick Northern accent, wearing a faded Scooby-Doo T-shirt), wriggles in his seat.

MARK

I am so sorry.

They turn off the main road into a service station.

THEO

(clearly annoyed)  
Yeah no problem.

MARK

It must be the weather.

THEO

And the five bottles of Dr Pepper.

The car pulls up and Mark immediately jumps out.

THEO (CONT'D)

(talking to camera)  
This is our third stop in forty five miles. That's fifteen miles a piss. Ethel, who lives two doors down from me, can manage twenty.

Theo shakes his head.

EXT. SERVICE STATION CAR PARK - DAY

Theo leans against his car.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)

Can you do a little introduction?

THEO  
What here?

DIRECTOR (O.S.)  
Why not?

THEO  
Isn't this the type of thing you usually have a famous actor doing as a voice over?

Mark returns.

MARK  
You telling them about our lads weekend?

THEO  
It's a weekday business trip to a printers to finalise details on the first issue of the magazine.

MARK  
Lads on tour!

Mark comes alongside Theo and gives a thumbs up towards the camera crew.

THEO  
You ever been to Basingstoke?

MARK  
No but I've been to Stoke, I'm assuming it'll be about the same.

THEO  
I'm not sure it works like that.

Theo gets in the car, slamming the door closed. Mark opens another bottle of Dr Pepper and gets in the car.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

A generic looking chain hotel. Beige pebble-dash walls. Picnic tables in the car park. Kitchen staff in dirty overalls smoking on the fire escape.

INT. HOTEL RECEPTION - DAY

Theo and Mark approach the front desk. Standing behind it is ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST (70s, thick rim glasses and a Dot Cotton vibe).

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
You're the men with the camera crew?

THEO  
 (sarcastic)  
 What gave that away?

Elderly Receptionist points to the camera crew.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
 The camera crew.

THEO  
 Right...

Theo looks straight into the camera.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
 Is this your first time staying  
 with us?

THEO  
 First time here, first time in  
 Basingstoke.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
 Oh you must be so excited!

Theo tries to smile politely.

THEO  
 We do have a little bit of free  
 time, is there anything to do  
 around here?

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
 Our train station has the largest  
 car park in North Hampshire.

Theo smiles politely again.

MARK  
 Is it true that Basingstoke's the  
 donut city? Are they Krispy Kremes  
 or Dunkin' Donuts?

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
 No it's because of the roundabouts.

Elderly Receptionist gives Mark a friendly pat on the hand.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)  
 (to Theo)  
 We noticed on your online booking  
 form that it's your birthday  
 tomorrow...

MARK  
 Hold on a sec! It's your birthday?!

THEO

It's not a big deal.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST

It's always a big deal when one of our guests has a birthday. So we placed a complimentary fruit basket in your room. Let me just get your keys and print off a copy of your booking form.

Elderly Receptionist disappears into the back office.

MARK

I wish you would have told me. I'd have got you something!

THEO

I told you, it's not a big deal.

MARK

Of course it is. What're we going to do for it?

THEO

Nothing. Birthdays are a pointless distraction, an indulgence. There's no need for them.

MARK

Then how'd ya keep track of how old you are? Ooh... how do you know what your horoscope is?!

THEO

Age is a social construct. The only people who benefit from birthdays are Clintons Cards.

MARK

(to camera - smiling)

I reckon someone's secretly scared of clowns.

Elderly Receptionist returns.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST

And here are your keys, room 217 and 237.

She hands over two key cards to Theo. Theo picks up their bags and walks off.

Elderly Receptionist notices Mark eyeing up a bowl of mints on the counter.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Would you like some?

MARK

What... they're free?

RECEPTIONIST

Of course.

Mark opens his sports bag, picks up the bowl and pours all the mints inside. Except for one mint, which he pops in his mouth.

MARK

Ta very much!

Mark leaves the reception area and catches up to Theo, who is waiting for the elevator.

MARK (CONT'D)

So whatcha think?

He gestures towards the Receptionist

THEO

About what?

Mark gestures again towards Elderly Receptionist.

MARK

The firecracker on the desk.

THEO

What about her?

MARK

Reckon I'm in there.

Theo sneaks a look at Elderly Receptionist again.

THEO

I'm not even sure that's legal.

INT. THEO'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Theo enters the room and dumps his bags on the floor.

THEO

Is this it? This can't be it.

Theo takes a look around. The most obvious problem is there's no window.

THEO (CONT'D)

Where's the window? Jesus, even in Shawshank they had windows.

He inspects the bed, which is obviously too small.

THEO (CONT'D)  
They're taking the piss. An Ewok's  
going to have a rough night in  
that.

He goes to the desk in the corner, which is missing a chair.

THEO (CONT'D)  
Desk but no chair. Oh and here's my  
birthday fruit bowl.

Theo points to a bowl on the desk containing one large  
pineapple.

THEO (CONT'D)  
What am I meant to do with this?  
(chuckling)  
I suppose I could use it as a door  
stop.

Theo SIGHS.

THEO (CONT'D)  
I'm a first time guest. You'd think  
they'd make an effort.

There's a KNOCK at the door. The MANAGER pops his head in.

MANAGER  
Hello. Hi everyone. Just checking  
if everything's okay.

THEO  
Yeah it's fine thanks.

MANAGER  
Okay, any problems just let me  
know, okay.

Manager leaves, closing the door behind him.

THEO  
(to the camera crew)  
That's the problem with being  
British nothing gets better because  
we never complain.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)  
Shall I call him back?

THEO  
Nooooooo.

INT. MARK'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Mark stands proudly, arms outstretched, in the centre of his  
room.

MARK  
Welcome to me crib!

He goes to the light switch and gestures for the camera crew to follow him.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Check this out.

He turns the lights off. Then turns them back on.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Look at that! Every lightbulb in  
and they're all working!

Mark heads over to the bed.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Check this out. Even the pillows  
get their own little sleeping bags.

He picks up a pillow and starts tugging at the pillow case.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Dead cute that.

Mark places the pillow neatly back on the bed. He moves closer to the camera crew.

MARK (CONT'D)  
There's a socket down there. You  
think it'll be all right to charge  
me phone? Or would it show up on  
the bill?

DIRECTOR (O.S.)  
I think it'll be okay.

INT. THEO'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Theo stands awkwardly in the corner, mobile phone in hand.

THEO  
Full internet.

He moves the phone two inches to the right.

THEO (CONT'D)  
No internet.

He moves it back to the first spot.

THEO (CONT'D)  
Full internet.

Then moves it to the second spot again.

THEO (CONT'D)  
I can see why they said the wi-fi  
was free.

Theo's PHONE RINGS and he answers it:

THEO (CONT'D)  
(to Mark on the phone)  
Yeah. What? Yeah you can. It  
doesn't work like that. Yes I'm  
sure. Right. Bye.

He hangs up.

THEO (CONT'D)  
(to the camera)  
He was asking if it was okay to  
have a shower before me in case he  
used up all the hot water.

Theo LAUGHS.

INT./EXT. THEO'S CAR - DAY

Theo and Mark pull up outside the printers. Theo turns the engine off. The pair sit in silence for a second.

MARK  
So how are we going to play this?

THEO  
Mark it's just a meeting.

MARK  
Right but who's good cop and who's  
bad cop?

THEO  
I'm good cop and bad cop.

MARK  
Who am I then?

THEO  
You're trainee cop.

MARK  
What do they get to do?

THEO  
Sit in the corner and keep quiet.

MARK  
Quiet cop. Stealth. Got it.

They get out the car.

EXT. CAR PARK, PRINTING OFFICES - DAY

Mark and Theo walk across the car park towards the print works main entrance.

Mark puts on a suit jacket and straightens himself out. Theo notices a crest on the left breast pocket.

THEO

What's with the crest?

MARK

It's from my school. Not the one that burned down.

THEO

Wait, that's your school uniform?

MARK

Yeah it's me only suit.

THEO

Hope you haven't got your bloody PE kit under there as well.

Mark swings the main door open and enters.

INT. MEETING ROOM, PRINT OFFICE - DAY

Theo sits at one side of the desk, PRINT MANAGER (40s, pin striped suit) at the other.

PRINT MANAGER

The printing world is getting a little smaller every day. But clever men like you and I see that as an advantage. Less competition... More opportunities.

Through the glass door behind Theo, in the corridor outside, Mark circles a water cooler.

INT. CORRIDOR, PRINT OFFICE - DAY

At the water cooler, Mark tries to take a paper cup from the dispenser, but clumsily pulls out dozens of them, which scatter over the floor.

He picks up one, places it under the nozzle and presses the button. Nothing happens.

He BANGS the side of the cooler, then realises the water bottle sat on top is actually empty.

He notices a full water bottle on the ground.

Mark pulls out the empty water bottle.

He rolls up his sleeves and pulls the new bottle's tab, opening it.

Bending with his knees, Mark lifts the full water bottle to a halfway point, resting it on his hip.

He GROANS and flips the open container round, to place it on the water cooler.

But mid flip, gravity kicks in and water begins gushing out the bottom all over him and the floor.

He wrestles with the water bottle, losing all the way, staggering about left and right until he manages to jam it into the top of the cooler.

Mark, now soaking wet, places a cup into the water cooler and presses the button but nothing happens.

Mark looks round to see Theo and Print Manager staring at him through the glass door.

INT. MEETING ROOM, PRINT OFFICE - DAY

Mark enters the room. Theo gestures to the seat next to him.

THEO  
Come and sit down.

He walks across the office, dripping water as he goes.

MARK  
Sorry. Sorry everyone.

Mark drops into the seat.

PRINT MANAGER  
Shall we continue?

Mark leans forward, grabs a few tissues from a pack on the table and begins blotching at his soaked suit.

PRINT MANAGER (CONT'D)  
As I was saying there's not much more I can do regarding the cost. So it's up to you where you want to go from here.

THEO  
Well I'm not paying that amount unless I can get some money back from unsold copies. Is there nothing else you can do?

MARK  
Our school used to buy magazines.

THEO  
Why?

MARK  
Don't know, maybe they're cheaper than books? They never had much money at the best of times.

Mark looks wistfully to the camera.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Was even worse when someone burned it down.

THEO  
(to the Print Manager)  
Is that something you can do?

PRINT MANAGER  
Yes that's certainly something we can look into.

Theo turns to Mark and shakes his hand. Mark smiles proudly.

INT./EXT. THEO'S CAR - NIGHT (DRIVING)

Theo and Mark are on the road. The Camera Crew are in the back.

THEO  
As you've done so well today, how about dinner on me?

MARK  
Absolutely fan-bloody-tastic. Oh wait, who's paying?

THEO  
Well... me.

Mark excitedly CLAPS his hands together.

MARK  
Yep, I'll have some of that!

They pass a sushi restaurant.

THEO  
What about Sushi?

MARK  
I won't do sushi.

THEO  
Okay how about Mediterranean?

MARK  
Oh no, curries don't agree with me.

EXT. GREEK RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Theo and Mark outside a Greek restaurant that is trying to look like an authentic taverna. And failing.

THEO  
How about this place?

MARK  
Oh no. Oh no no no. No. Oh no. Not one of these.

THEO  
What now?

MARK  
It's dangerous! You don't even know. They've got one of these back home. It's always kicking off there! Shouting, plates smashing, the lot.

THEO  
Well I'm out of ideas.

Mark thinks for a second.

MARK  
Tell you what, I've got an idea.

He takes his phone out.

EXT. TRENDY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Mark and Theo walk up to a modern looking restaurant. Above it is a colourful sign that reads "AppEtite".

MARK  
Yelp says this place is trending number one in Basingstoke. Five out of five.

They both stop and peer at the menu by the main entrance.

THEO  
Food looks all right? Any complaints?

MARK  
Nope, none at all.

THEO

Thank God.

They both enter.

INT. TRENDY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Mark and Theo stand by the "Wait To Be Seated" sign.

A WAITRESS (20s dressed in black) approaches.

WAITRESS

Hi how are you both doing today?

THEO

Fine thank you.

MARK

First time in Basingstoke and let me tell ya, I am loving it. And we haven't even done the giant car park yet!

WAITRESS

Oh... Well that's great. Have you both downloaded our app?

THEO

What app?

MARK

Whatsapp? Yeah, I've got that.

Mark waves his phone at Waitress.

WAITRESS

This is AppEтите.

She points to a sign on the desk reading "AppEтите".

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

In order to eat with us you'll need to download our app.

MARK

Oh right.

Mark starts to download the app.

THEO

Why do I need an app to eat here?

WAITRESS

Because it's the AppEтите way.

THEO

But we're here now, couldn't we just order with you?

WAITRESS

I'm sorry we can't do that.

THEO

No? So I can't give you my order now. Then go and sit at that table over there and have it brought over?

Theo points to an empty table.

WAITRESS

I'm sorry. It just doesn't work like that sir.

Theo slightly leans in.

THEO

And why not?

Waitress leans in even further.

WAITRESS

Because sir... it's the AppEtite way.

THEO

Then we're going through the AppEtite way out.

Theo points to the front door.

WAITRESS

Well you have a good night sir.

THEO

Thank you. I will.

EXT. TRENDY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Mark and Theo head off down the street.

THEO

Can you believe that? You used to be able to eat with a knife and fork now you need a fucking internet connection.

MARK

Basingstoke: city of the future!

INT./EXT. THEO'S CAR - NIGHT (DRIVING)

Theo and Mark in the front again. Documentary Crew in the back.

THEO

Maybe we can talk that sushi place into doing something simple for you.

MARK

I'm not going in. I'm not eating anything that lives in the garden.

THEO

Wait what? What do you think sushi is?

MARK

It's disgusting! Them French snails in all the garlic.

THEO

That's escargot. That's French. Sushi is fish and rice.

MARK

Fish and rice. I like Captain Birds Eye and I love me some Uncle Ben's... Do you think Uncle Ben and the Captain were friends? I'd like to think so.

THEO

So that's a yes to sushi?

MARK

Aye-aye captain!

Mark throws Theo a salute.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. SUSHI RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Theo and Mark outside the restaurant. A big "Closed" sign on the door.

Theo SIGHS.

MARK

What we gonna do now?

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. FISH AND CHIPS SHOP - NIGHT

Theo's car parked up outside the chippy.

INT. THEO'S CAR - NIGHT

Theo and Mark sit eating a bag of chips each in the car.

Mark puts a large sausage dangerously close to Theo's mouth.

MARK

Sausage?

THEO

No thank-you.

They eat in silence for a few seconds. Mark splashes some vinegar on his chips.

MARK

I don't know what I'd do without vinegar. Three things a man needs: ya bed, ya Netflix and ya vinegar. You want any?

Mark sticks the vinegar bottle right under Theo's nose.

THEO

Get that thing out of my face. I can't stand the stuff.

Mark places the bottle on the edge of the dashboard and it immediately falls off, hitting the gear stick on the way and knocking the top of the bottle completely off.

Vinegar goes everywhere. They both start panicking.

MARK

Oh no me vinegar!

THEO

Fucking hell!

Theo, Mark and the camera crew start COUGHING and SPLUTTERING, scrambling to get out the car.

EXT. FISH AND CHIPS SHOP - NIGHT

Theo and Mark are doubled over, still COUGHING.

THEO

We're gonna smell like a pair of fucking pickled eggs.

Mark gets his chips from the car and gives them a SNIFF.

MARK  
Ya mind if I get another bottle?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

The sun has just risen. A glorious new day.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - DAY

Theo walking ahead of the Documentary Crew.

THEO  
I got up early this morning to  
clean my car. Still stinks of  
vinegar. I forgot to check if Mark  
woke up.

Theo knocks on the door.

MARK (O.S.)  
It's open!

INT. MARK'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Theo enters the room, the Documentary Crew right behind him.  
Theo checks inside the wardrobe and finds it empty.

THEO  
Looks like he's packed...

Theo sniffs the air.

THEO (CONT'D)  
Do you smell...

MARK  
Hiya!

Mark is in the corner, besides the trouser press. He's got  
his shirt on but no trousers. His suitcase is on the bed.

THEO  
Oh Jesus where are your trousers?  
And what's that smell?!

MARK  
I went over the road to the petrol  
station and got supplies.

Mark beckons Theo to join him. Mark opens the trouser press  
ever so slightly.

MARK (CONT'D)  
It's one of them Rustler's Burgers!

Theo's mouth hangs open in shock.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Clever, right?

THEO  
Mark?!

MARK  
Don't worry, yours is up next.

INT. HOTEL RECEPTION - DAY

Elderly Receptionist sees Mark and Theo approach, and tucks the newly replenished bowl of mints under the desk.

THEO  
Hi we'd like to check out please.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
Okay, just give me a minute.

She starts to type on her computer. Theo places the key cards on the desk.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)  
And how was your stay?

THEO  
(sarcastically)  
Fine. Do you have a complaints form?

Theo looks to the camera and smiles. Elderly Receptionist walks off into the back room.

THEO (CONT'D)  
Where's she gone?

Elderly Receptionist comes back and hands Theo a form.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
(voice cracking)  
Here's our complaints form sir.

THEO  
No, sorry, it was just a joke.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
A joke?

THEO  
Sorry, I was just being silly.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
I'm sorry sir, when a customer asks  
for a complaints form, we're  
required to supply one and log the  
details.

THEO  
But I don't actually want to make a  
complaint, it's not...

Manager enters from the back office.

MANAGER  
Hello, is there something I could  
help with?

THEO  
Sorry, sorry, I made a joke about a  
complaint.

MANAGER  
Sir, at this hotel we take all  
complaints very seriously.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
May I ask, what exactly is your  
complaint?

THEO  
There's no complaint. There is no  
complaint. I think it's best if I  
just leave.

Theo tries to get away.

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
You forgot your form!

THEO  
(defeated)  
Okay.

Theo takes the form and begins walking out. Mark approaches  
the desk.

MARK  
Do you think I could get your  
number?

ELDERLY RECEPTIONIST  
What for?

MARK  
Bit harsh!

THEO (O.S.)  
MARK!

Mark follows Theo out of the hotel.

MARK  
(to camera crew)  
Her loss.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Theo opens the car boot and puts his bags in.

MARK  
I don't get it, what was the  
complaint about?

Theo SIGHS and looks to the camera.

THEO  
Right we got an hour to kill. How  
about we check out that park round  
the corner?

He closes the boot.

EXT. ROAD NEAR PARK - DAY

A full car park next to a pleasant looking wood.

EXT. PARK PICNIC AREA - DAY

A beautiful day, people hangout, others walk their dogs. Theo and Mark sit on a bench by a small lake.

MARK  
I am loving the weather.

THEO  
Oh Christ, you don't need another  
piss do you?

MARK  
No I'm good for now.  
(beat)  
Look at that view, isn't it  
brilliant?

Theo points to a shopping trolley sticking out of the water, like a shark's fin.

THEO  
Yes it is, but I'd be enjoying it a  
lot more if there wasn't a fucking  
shopping trolley sticking out the  
lake.

Theo gestures towards an ice cream van.

THEO (CONT'D)  
How about an ice cream?

MARK  
Oh I could murder a Mister Whippy!

The pair stroll up to the ice cream van. Mark studies the pictures on the side intently.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Do you think Mister Whippy is friends with Uncle Ben and the Captain?

Inside the van, ICE CREAM WOMAN (early 30s), stands with her back to them as she unpacks several boxes of crisps.

THEO  
Hi, can I have a 99 please?

Ice Cream Woman turns round to reveal she's wearing a fashionable but almost see-through black mesh top.

ICE CREAM WOMAN  
Sure love, anything else?

Theo, embarrassed, looks at his shoelaces.

THEO  
That's everything for me thanks.  
Mark what do you want?

Mark finishes looking up at the menu and turns to Ice Cream Woman, noticing her for the first time.

MARK  
Can I have a...

Mark loses his train of thought.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Whatever he's having.

EXT. PARK PICNIC AREA - DAY

Theo and Mark sit on a wall enjoying their ice creams.

THEO  
(to camera crew)  
Did you see that then? How inappropriate was that top? She's not on a cat walk in Paris, she's in an ice cream van in Basingstoke. I can't relax anywhere.

MARK  
I thought she looked nice.

THEO

You thought Dot Cotton back at the hotel was nice. What exactly is your type?

MARK

I look for three things: own teeth, own hair and no wedding ring.

THEO

Own teeth?

MARK

Aye I've been caught out before. It put me off, at first.

Theo looks to the camera and LAUGHS. Then he leaps into the air and begins slapping at the back of his neck.

THEO

What the fuck was that?

MARK

What?

THEO

I think I just got stung by something.

MARK

Stung! Oh hang on, I know what to do!

Mark runs to the bushes and comes back with a hand full of leaves. He begins furiously rubbing them against the back of Theo's neck.

THEO

What's that?

MARK

It's okay, they're dock leaves. Me mam used to rub these on me when I got stung.

Mark carries on rubbing Theo's neck.

MARK (CONT'D)

Oh bloody hell!

Mark drops the leaves. Theo turns to Mark, seeing the leaves on the ground.

THEO

They're not dock leaves, they're fucking stinging nettles!

Theo starts vigorously rubbing his neck. Mark panics and shoves his ice cream onto Theo's sting. With the pain relieved, Theo smiles.

INT./EXT. THEO'S CAR - DAY (DRIVING)

Theo and Mark head out of town. Both windows fully open.

MARK  
How's your neck?

THEO  
It's getting better. Still a bit sore.

MARK  
I've got something that'll cheer you up.

Mark reaches into his bag.

THEO  
Better not be another bottle of fucking vinegar.

He pulls out an envelope and shows it to Theo.

THEO (CONT'D)  
What's that?

Mark opens it to reveal a birthday card.

THEO (CONT'D)  
Cheers, that's kind of you.

MARK  
And I've got another nine in here. Got them this morning.

Mark reaches back into his bag and comes out with another handful of identical envelopes.

MARK (CONT'D)  
They're for all the birthdays we missed together.

They drive in silence for a moment.

THEO  
Thanks. You shouldn't have mate, but thanks.

He looks to the camera and proudly smiles.

MARK  
How about we split a bag of maltesers?

THEO

Crack'em open and lets get the fuck  
out this place.

Theo turns on the RADIO as they pass a sign reading -

"You are now leaving Basingstoke".

MARK

You reckon we could stop for a piss  
soon?

FADE OUT.