

River Episode Guide

Episodes 001-006

Last episode aired Tuesday November 17, 2015





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Season One

Episode 1

Season 1
Episode Number: 1
Season Episode: 1

Originally aired: Tuesday October 13, 2015
Writer: Abi Morgan
Director: Richard Laxton
Show Stars: Stellan Skarsgård (John River), Nicola Walker (Jackie 'Stevie' Stevenson), Lesley Manville (Chrissie Read), Eddie Marsan (Thomas Cream), Adeel Akhtar (Ira King), Georgina Rich (Rosa Fallows), Owen Teale (Marcus McDonald), Sorcha Cusack (Bridie Stevenson), Turlough Convery (Frankie Stevenson)
Guest Stars: Josef Altin (Christopher Riley), Pippa Bennett-Warner (Tia Edwards), Fady Elsayed (Aten Olama), Cathy Murphy (Marlena Fielding), Shannon Tarbet (Erin Fielding), Franz Drameh (Bruno Marconi), Mouna Albakry (Journalist 1), Dominic Hecht (Journalist 2), Scott Hunt (Fast Food Server), Jacqueline Boatswain (Ursula), Dockley Mieke (Karaoke Till Girl), Steve Edwin (Security Guard), Nina Carey (Young Erin)
Summary: John River is a respected police officer haunted by the murder victims whose secrets he must uncover. Struggling to come to terms with the recent loss of a close colleague, River chases a potential suspect across London, with tragic consequences. In his fragile mental state, he comes under increasing pressure both from the press and within the police force as calls for his dismissal grow.



So when did you realise the important fact about Nicola Walker's character, Stevie? I was both gutted and delighted when the big reveal happened. Yes, it did take me that long to figure it out. Not until I saw the gory mess that used to be the back of Stevie's head did I twig that River's watery eyes and dogged pursuit of that young drug dealer were all for her — his recently murdered partner.

Once we know that Stevie is dead (but not a ghost, River is clear about that) River's internal world is unleashed on to

the screen. His other imaginary friends, temporary residents in that rather crowded mind palace, start to pop up. When this week's murder victim (who turned out not to have been murdered) sits at his dining table, telling him she needs to pack for university, I assumed it was his daughter. And I like that it wasn't all explained with exposition-heavy dialogue. It's nice to be left to work things out for yourself for once.

Then we meet the ghastly Thomas Neill Cream, the infamous Lambeth Poisoner. River's been reading about him and his rather unpleasant ideas, but I'm assuming that this is the last we'll see of him after River decided to silence his angry ranting once and for all.

Back on the balcony, River's superior tells him to get counselling, and we find out that Stevie's murder happened only three weeks ago.

At the centre of it all is Skarsgård in the form of his life, internalising nearly everything and leaking just enough inner turmoil to utterly convince. As if all of this wasn't enough to take in, Ira King arrives as River's new partner. He's a half-Jewish, half-Muslim detective constable with a nice line in hand-gone expressions and dry one-liners.

The only clanging howler is River and Ira's visit to the young murder suspect in prison. They interview him without his lawyer present, which no police officer would ever do, not even a maverick one.

Despite River's protestations to the counselor, we know he loved Stevie, although what kind of love it was is unclear. At this early stage, I see them as father and daughter or the Doctor and his companion. He's protective, but she's easily as capable and clever as him.

When he wakes up on Stevie's bed after going round to feed her cat, we know he is grieving as though he's lost his touchstone in life. For all of the imaginary figures we see with him, he is mostly alone and considered a weirdo by most colleagues.

That shot of River, perched high in the tree with the "ghost" of the dead girl sitting next to him is sublime. Her boyfriend is moved to a holding cell while she reads from *Romeo and Juliet*; Juliet's dying speech, and River realises he is going to make a second attempt at suicide.

When he howled: "You have to live," at the boy, cutting him down from the ceiling, I had something in my eye.

And, instead of ending the episode on his despair, this show does something unexpected. It returns you to the warm embrace of his relationship with Stevie. That karaoke scene could have been catastrophically schmaltzy, but it is joyful. To the sounds of *I Love to Love*, he sings alone in the booth and we see him pin Stevie's milkshake cup to his wall. And just when you think it's over, we cut to the dead suspect, sitting on the end of his bed, taunting him that he didn't commit the murder.

Episode 2

Season 1
Episode Number: 2
Season Episode: 2

Originally aired: Tuesday October 20, 2015
Writer: Abi Morgan
Director: Richard Laxton
Show Stars: Stellan Skarsgard (John River), Nicola Walker (Jackie 'Stevie' Stevenson), Lesley Manville (Chrissie Read), Eddie Marsan (Thomas Cream), Adeel Akhtar (Ira King), Georgina Rich (Rosa Fallows), Owen Teale (Marcus McDonald), Sorcha Cusack (Bridie Stevenson), Turlough Convery (Frankie Stevenson), Michael Maloney (Tom Read), Steve Nicolson (Jimmy Stevenson)
Guest Stars: Josef Altin (Christopher Riley), Pippa Bennett-Warner (Tia Edwards), Franz Drameh (Bruno Marconi), Youssef Berouain (Youth), Jane Jeffery (Tia's Lawyer), Jon House (Police Officer), Soo Drouet (Loud-Mouthed Woman), Andy Rashleigh (Pub Landlord)
Summary: Still wracked with grief over the death of his friend and partner Jackie 'Stevie' Stevenson, River and his colleagues must attend her wake. There he is surprised to come across her brother Jimmy — recently released after serving sixteen years for a brutal murder, in which Stevie's own evidence was key. River reaches breaking point as he begins to suspect that the man he chased to his death was innocent.moreless



We are back in River's night-time city: the London where he lives is mostly dark, jewelled with tiny lights, but it doesn't feel at all friendly. When he later admits to the psychologist that he has no friends, we can see the *mise-en-scène* really backs this up.

If episode one was about establishing River's relationship with Stevie, tonight is given over to discovering the unknown depths of River himself. And the psychologist (a great cheat's way of filling in a character's background) mentions that

River lived with his grandmother until he was 14.

When the Lambeth Poisoner pops up on the DLR platform, he taunts River and tells him to jump in front of the train. A part of him wants to give up, but he fights it. "I don't want to talk to you today," he roars at the air beside him as fellow commuters look puzzled.

The big revelation, in terms of Stevie's murder, comes when River zooms in to her face just before the bullet's impact and sees that she recognised the driver of the blue car. His boss says forensics found her DNA inside the car, too, and the first doubts are cast about whether she was on the straight and narrow.

We hear more about her background and the murky connections of her East End family as the day of her funeral rolls around. We also discover that she put her own brother in prison; he didn't speak to her for 16 years.

In the men's loos, Stevie talks River down from a panic attack as he asks her about the forensics results.

River's ultimate boss says he's just waiting for the psychiatric report so he can sign off River for a few months. He obviously sees him as a liability, but we know his line manager, Chrissie

Read, wants him to wind his neck in and try to keep his idiosyncrasies sub-radar — she needs his brain.

"I decapitated a man, River," says Stevie's brother, making his point at Stevie's wake while their mother weepily sings *Since You've Been Gone* to her daughter's coffin. It's excruciating, and a bit heavy-handed, but you can see why Stevie might have left behind this family for a new life on the right side of the tracks.

The scene between Stevie and River around the back of the pub is heartbreaking. She cries as she says he is the only person she really wants at her burial. He replies: "I'm not family." They clearly meant a great deal to one another.

In his dealings with Tia, the girlfriend of the now-deceased Riley, his tenderness is overwhelmingly sweet. His outsider status makes him empathetic to others who feel different. "You always were good with the window-lickers," says Stevie, putting it slightly less tenderly.

The theme of parents and children is ever-present. River's paternal feelings towards Stevie (he balks when the psych asks him if they had been on a "date") are always in parallel to the parental relationships going on in the subplot. Tonight, it's poor Tia and her desperation to be a good parent "this time".

We leave River, once again at night, the lights twinkling behind him, as he talks to Stevie in his office. "Your cheeks explode when you laugh," he sobs.

In that moment of complete vulnerability, River admits to the psychologist that he has an undiagnosed mental condition of some sort. And that he has no friends. His only friend was Stevie, and now she's dead.

As the Nolans swell back to full volume on the soundtrack, River walks towards the pub to join his colleagues and have a bash at pretending to be one of them.

Episode 3

Season 1
Episode Number: 3
Season Episode: 3

Originally aired: Tuesday October 27, 2015
Writer: Abi Morgan
Director: Tim Fywell
Show Stars: Stellan Skarsgard (John River), Nicola Walker (Jackie 'Stevie' Stevenson), Lesley Manville (Chrissie Read), Eddie Marsan (Thomas Cream), Adeel Akhtar (Ira King), Georgina Rich (Rosa Fallows), Owen Teale (Marcus McDonald), Sorcha Cusack (Bridie Stevenson), Turlough Convery (Frankie Stevenson), Steve Nicolson (Jimmy Stevenson), Jim Norton (I) (Michael Bennigan)
Guest Stars: Amelia Lowdell (Pauline Merton), Julian Lewis Jones (Jordy Merton), Alec Utgoff (Sasha Mischenko), Jo Romero (Tina Gilbert), Peter Bankole (Haider Jamal Abdi), Souleiman Bock (Khaalid Mohamoud), Stefan Kalipha (Omari Tadros), Andrew Byron (Ukrainian Manager), Andrei Zayats (Ukrainian Lad), Deborah Carroll (Globe Usher), Heather McClelland (Busker), Louis Mahoney (Lumo), Faith Edwards (Doreen)
Summary: With his career and access to the Stevie case resting on the outcome of his psychiatric report, River must keep his unofficial investigations into Stevie's death to himself. This sends tensions high with his new partner Ira, who fears being dragged down by River's instability, and Chrissie, who needs River working on his own caseload.



"Oh, it gets dark. Oh, it gets lonely, on the other side from you," sang Kate Bush in *Wuthering Heights*. It could be the soundtrack to tonight's episode as River delves further into the murky world of Stevie's secret life.

Abi Morgan has spent two hours making me fall for Stevie and her mischievous, irrepressible banter with her boss, and now she's starting to look less and less like the person we thought we knew. Large cash withdrawals, a second mobile phone and a frankly alarming ke-

bab habit.

The numbers on Stevie's phone link to that kebab shop, a sex chat line (her manifest shrugs and says she gets lonely), an unregistered mobile number and Jimmy Stephenson, her ex-con brother. She said she hadn't spoken to him since he went to prison 16 years earlier.

Meanwhile, Stevie's mum tells River that Frankie (the younger brother) hasn't been home for two days. While all the focus is on Jimmy, the obvious villain, who boasts of decapitating a man, I want to know what the deal is with junior. And then, sure enough, he has a confession to make tonight too. But not about Stevie's death, just about where he was at the time in question.

It turns out, after much chasing down, that the two boys weren't watching *X Factor* the night of her death, which gets them an instant pardon in my court. Jimmy had dragged Frankie to see a prostitute in the hope of helping him pop his cherry. Do we believe any of this? I think it's fairly obvious that Frankie has far too open a nature to be a good liar. But he remains heavily under the influence of his hard-bitten brother.

A big motif tonight is the continued buzzing of the strip lights in municipal building and how they grate on River's nerves. This gels nicely with the random report last week that stated people who can't stand the noisy chewing of others are probably geniuses.

The subplot this week features the apparently accidental electrocution of married construction worker, Jordie Merton. It turns out to be a crime of passion, or at least a cover-up of passion, as his Ukrainian colleague finally admits they were having an affair and they had rowed over Jordie wanting to end it.

My favourite moment tonight happens when River urges Jordie's soon-to-be-widow to go to his bedside, before it's too late, and say anything she needs to say to him. So she does. And as we stay in the hospital corridor, the stillness of the strip-lit corridor is suddenly disturbed by her repeated, angry shouts of, "Bastard. Bastard." Quite right too, missus.

River's continued eccentricity is another big focus of this episode. Sympathetic Ira provides a big laugh when he does his impression of River, saying he leaks too much of the madness in front of the punters. Ira is building his part up nicely to fill the space left by our newfound doubts over Stevie.

River's relationship with his psychologist, Rosa, is explored and expanded tonight as he follows her to the Globe Theatre on the South Bank, unsure himself why he has done it. Although she is colluding with the enemy in her relationship with Marcus McDonald, she obviously has a soft spot for River, passing him in his psych test and asking him to start attending regular sessions with her. We must presume it's because she finds him clinically fascinating and not that she wants to start a second workplace relationship.

The Lambeth Poisoner provides handy exposition tonight when he reveals that Stevie gave River 10,000 pounds outside that Chinese restaurant on the night she died. Before we have too much of a chance to start doubting the integrity of both of them, it's further revealed that she asked River to use the money to take care of Frankie if anything happened to her. She knew she was going to die.

Tonight's final Stevie revelation comes when Ira scans the CCTV footage from the cameras outside Crystal Kebabs. They clearly show Stevie affectionately holding the face of a mystery man. No actual snogging but they look intimate.

"You didn't think you were the only one, did you?" snaps Stevie at River in the street shortly afterwards, all that warmth and fondness suddenly absent. Obviously this reflects how he feels about her, not the truth of her, but it's still like a cold slap on a grey day. No 1970s karaoke tonight, just the mournful hum of Nina Simone's To Love Somebody. It's like a light going out when Stevie's smile disappears.

Episode 4

Season 1
Episode Number: 4
Season Episode: 4

Originally aired: Tuesday November 3, 2015
Writer: Abi Morgan
Director: Tim Fywell
Show Stars: Stellan Skarsgard (John River), Nicola Walker (Jackie 'Stevie' Stevenson), Lesley Manville (Chrissie Read), Eddie Marsan (Thomas Cream), Adeel Akhtar (Ira King), Georgina Rich (Rosa Fallows), Owen Teale (Marcus McDonald), Turlough Convery (Frankie Stevenson), Jim Norton (I) (Michael Bennigan)
Guest Stars: Michael Maloney (Tom Read), Peter Bankole (Haider Jamal Abdi), Souleiman Bock (Khaalid Mohamoud), Louis Mahoney (Lumo), Stefan Kalipha (Omari Tadros), Joanne Seymour (Appeal Room Officer), Mark Brennan (Appeal Room Officer), Assly Zandry (Isnino Mohamoud), Nana Agyeman-Bediako (Tooxow Mohamoud), Gledis Cinque (Au Pair), Rachel Stubbings (Thin White Woman)
Summary: The investigation into Stevie's murder changes direction when CCTV footage shows her to be closely involved with an illegal immigrant who owned the car that was used in her murder. The police launch a man-hunt to track him down.



There is no distracting subplot this week. Episode four is all about Stevie's murder and a series of new revelations leading from the discovery of that picture of her outside Crystal Kebabs, cupping the face of a mystery man.

We are initially supposed to think that they were lovers, but by the episode's end, as poor Haider (the man in question) lies dead on the library floor, we know that he was a happily married man and Stevie was helping him. Or rather, he was helping her, but with what?

River swings wildly from guilt over not being able to give Stevie the kind of love she wanted from him, to wishing he could hold on to her somehow. "I'm losing her," he says desperately to Rose when he bumps into her by the lifts.

Tonight's new manifest is Haider, but a version of him that River imagines before he finds out he wasn't in a relationship with Stevie after all. The imaginary friends are so useful in releasing the often uncomfortable thoughts River has as he discovers more about his late partner.

If they aren't all dead people, they usually end up dying, foreshadowing doom and casting a constant, looming shadow of dread over the story.

River's frank talk with Stevie while sitting in the blue Mondeo at the car pound goes some way to explaining their complicated relationship. "You're jealous," she says flatly. He denies this, to Stevie and to Rosa in their session later that day.

Stevie says that "sex is an itch" and River seems to be about to say that he would have offered her the necessary scratch, but he doesn't. When Chrissie later tries to kiss him while plastered and is rebuffed, she tells River: "She said you'd do that" — signalling that Stevie has either tried to kiss River herself or just knew not to.

River, concerned for young Frankie, gives him a couple of hundred quid, saying it is from his sister. But what is he doing with the rest of the 10 grand? Do his superiors know about the money? I'm guessing not.

The scene at Chrissie's house when we finally meet her husband, Tom. With a single look in the kitchen, he is established as someone with a roving eye (the au pair), who likes a drink and smokes the odd joint in the garden. Which would be fine, but he's a judge.

That scene on the street outside his chambers in Lincoln's Inn, when River calls the unidentified number on Stevie's burner phone and Tom pulls a ringing phone from his pocket, turned the plot on its head. Stevie and Tom: another suspected affair, or were they up to something else involving the unfortunate Somalian families?

"Find your way through your chaos. Otherwise, how will you ever find me?" says Stevie as River sits, drunk, at the kitchen table. He is still lost as to who Stevie was, particularly after that revelation about Tom. And what is Tom going to do now he knows someone has found Stevie's secret phone? Surely this puts him on high alert if he was up to no good. Does River go straight to Chrissie with this information? I bet he doesn't.

Reliable as ever, after River's psych session in which he talks fondly about his early life with his grandmother in Sweden, the Lambeth Poisoner turns up to burst that bubble. "What was it she called you? 'Idiot'?" he gloats, as River swats the air around him. River can't get away with anything because a manifest is always there, for good or bad, to keep him in check.

Following River's dash to the library only to find Haider murdered, the dead man, like the other manifests, sits on the back seat as River drives away, talking to him about the loneliness of migrating to a strange country. River as alien, the stranger in a strange land, is a big theme tonight. He knows how it feels to be alone in an unfamiliar place, and you can see in his eyes that it's chilly.

"Where do we go now?" says Ira later that night, putting his hand on River's shoulder. We end the episode, as always, with Stevie and River. He is outside Rosa's group-therapy session, looking through the window. Stevie is beckoning at him from inside. He goes to her; we remain outside and don't hear what is said, but Rosa looks pleased to see him.

Episode 5

Season 1
Episode Number: 5
Season Episode: 5

Originally aired: Tuesday November 10, 2015
Writer: Abi Morgan
Director: Jessica Hobbs
Show Stars: Stellan Skarsgard (John River), Nicola Walker (Jackie 'Stevie' Stevenson), Lesley Manville (Chrissie Read), Eddie Marsan (Thomas Cream), Adeel Akhtar (Ira King), Georgina Rich (Rosa Fallows), Owen Teale (Marcus McDonald), Sorcha Cusack (Bridie Stevenson), Turlough Convery (Frankie Stevenson), Steve Nicolson (Jimmy Stevenson), Jim Norton (I) (Michael Bennigan)
Guest Stars: Michael Maloney (Tom Read), Lydia Leonard (Marianne King), Marinca (Ema Anamaria), Adjoa Andoh (Sunday Akentola), Ali Craig (Banker), Marko Leht (Fedor), Peter Landi (Fedor's Lawyer), Jon House (Police Officer), Andrew Byron (Ukrainian Manager), Naveed Khan (Laughing Man), Stacha Hicks (Housewife), Nicon Caraman (Moldovan Man), Wendy Mae Brown (Ghanaian Secretary (June)), Peter Bankole (Haider Jamal Abdi)
Summary: Following the murder in the public library, River and Ira must track down the killer. Their journey takes them deep into the world of the undocumented migrant community in London, a world of international hostels and immigration lawyers. They begin to get a sense of what it was that Stevie might have been unravelling before she died. Was it these investigations she was punished for?



Tonight, it's all about Chrissie and Tom Read, the unhappy but basically functional middle-class couple with four teenagers and a nice London house. He has affairs, she's preoccupied with work but, somehow, they maintain the rails on which their relationship runs.

We begin this episode knowing that River knows that Tom doesn't yet know we all know about his secret phone and those clandestine calls to Stevie's secret phone.

We hear, again, the dead Haider's words to River about their mutual alien status. "You see what people here do not see," Haider says as River places the rosary beads in his lifeless hand.

River's confrontation with Tom over his burner phone is met with an unequivocal, "I'm a shit," from Tom. But we later find out that he is involved in far more than a few workplace affairs and CCTV evidence later proves him to be associated with an illegal immigration ring, taking backhanders to ensure certain applications go through.

Stevie's laptop sits on River's desk but, initially, he can't bear to look at it.

Meanwhile, the CCTV from the library features a mysterious cleaner of whom the library have no record. Ira eventually puts two and two together when he recognises the same man outside the hostel that is home to a lot of newcomers when they first arrive in London.

The man's eventual arrest, after he savagely beats Ira, provides the key to the case as with him comes Pink Bobble Hat Lady, the translator who knows more than she's letting on. When

she finally does disclose her knowledge of the immigration scam and nudges them towards Tom Read's involvement, the gossamer thread holding aloft Chrissie's personal life snaps and down she tumbles. Lesley Manville's brilliantly weary performance throughout has totally involved me.

As Ira and River's relationship solidifies nicely, River tells his partner that he hated London when he first arrived. He came to live with his mother who only had peanut butter in the fridge. Nothing was green and he longed for the lush land of Sweden. He paints a very bleak picture.

"You could talk to me instead of her," says Ira dolefully as River talks about the Weightwatchers points in mayonnaise with his imaginary friend. Ira invites his boss for dinner but he declines with a brusque, "I'm busy."

Stevie's family are in the police offices "filling in forms" and Uncle Mickey asks River if the investigation is any closer to the answers they all so desperately want. Marcus calls them "vultures" behind their backs.

While Tom only purports to be working late, River really does head back to the darkened office to study Stevie's internet records. The Lambeth Poisoner hovers at his shoulder, and poisoning's what he does best. "Give in to it," says Cream about River's lurking madness.

After River's outburst at Rosa's therapy group and their subsequent meeting at the DLR station, the two seem poised to change the nature of their relationship from patient/therapist to something more romantic.

He apologises (sort of) for what he said to her about leaving it late to have children and she drops the bomb about the baby she lost soon after it was born.

During their date/therapy session, River tells Rosa a story from his childhood, of finding an old man dead in the snow. A policeman comforted the young John River and took him home, but, he says the old dead man came home with him, too. "And I wasn't alone anymore," he says. These visions have been almost a comfort to him since early childhood.

"Some people never encounter death their entire lives — and you live with it every day," says Rosa to him before they're interrupted by the phone call about Ira's hospitalisation.

The episode ends with Tom's arrest as he desperately shouts for a response from Chrissie and she turns her back.

Episode 6

Season 1
Episode Number: 6
Season Episode: 6

Originally aired: Tuesday November 17, 2015
Writer: Abi Morgan
Director: Jessica Hobbs
Show Stars: Stellan Skarsgard (John River), Nicola Walker (Jackie 'Stevie' Stevenson), Lesley Manville (Chrissie Read), Eddie Marsan (Thomas Cream), Adeel Akhtar (Ira King), Georgina Rich (Rosa Fallows), Owen Teale (Marcus McDonald), Sorcha Cusack (Bridie Stevenson), Turlough Convery (Frankie Stevenson), Steve Nicolson (Jimmy Stevenson), Jim Norton (I) (Michael Bennigan)
Guest Stars: Michael Maloney (Tom Read), Lydia Leonard (Marianne King), Josef Altin (Christopher Riley), Shannon Tarbet (Erin Fielding), Helen Anderson (Tom's Lawyer), Nicholas Goh (Chinese Waiter), Ali Craig (Banker), Stacha Hicks (Housewife), Lucy Formby (Young Stevie)
Summary: River is convinced that Stevie's investigation into the exploitation of undocumented migrants holds the key to her murder. Further questioning of someone close to the team reveals a system of immigration cases that could lead into some very unexpected places. When a common link to certain businesses is found, it all starts to fall into place for River, with unfortunate repercussions.



We begin the final episode with Tom, Chrissie's husband, in custody, River and Rosa's relationship hovering somewhere between clinical fascination and possible romance and Stevie's killer still at large.

Stevie is heavily present tonight, as is right and proper. "Solve this, Magoo, and you know what happens," she warns him. She's preparing River for her leaving. I'm not at acceptance yet, do you hear me? She can't go.

Cream taunts River that he couldn't tell Stevie how he felt, couldn't say the

words. He uses a version of that King Lear quotation about heaving your heart into your mouth. I've always liked that description and I love Abi Morgan's little nods to Shakespeare.

Back at the office, Ira is doing the real police work, scouring Stevie's case notes, and finds one of her last investigations has strong links with Uncle Mickey's car company. The dots join up neatly from Bennigan Cars to African immigrants paying for quick visa resolutions, to Judge Tom Read. I knew my hunch about Mickey was right.

Sitting there in his enormous, vulgar house he seems unrepentant as he tells River, directly and indirectly, how this whole horrible mess began. I know some of you have been pulling towards a secret son storyline from almost the start. But I didn't see this one coming, quite the way that it did.

Uncle Mickey raped a 14-year-old Stevie, and her Catholic mother shipped her off to Cork to give birth in secret, whereupon Bridie pretended the child was hers. With no question of an abortion taking place, the unfortunate child (and that's all Stevie was) was made to go through with the birth and the pain of that secret. All of them claim they were protecting Frankie, but it

gets so much darker than that. As the immigration racket grew to include the car firm and the judge in Mickey's pay, the threat of discovery became too great.

Mickey paid to have Haider killed after Stevie sent him into Bennigan Cars to see how the system worked. But worst of all he ordered the death of his own niece as she got too close to the truth and it looked like the family secret would also be blown in the process.

Now we understand why Stevie gave River the 10k pounds: to take care of her son. But little did she know that the boy she was protecting would pull the trigger on the instruction of her moral wasteland of an uncle.

Frankie's vulnerability was, apparently, the reason he was persuaded to shoot his own "mummy" and the reason she had to die. They were all determined he would never find out the truth. I don't know if I believe he could have pulled the trigger, drunk or no.

It's only when River spots the coat on Bridie's coat rack that he really understands the family's full involvement in Stevie's death. "Did you shoot your own daughter? Did Michael kill her?" demands River as he interrogates her at the station. She is cold, a closed door. Sorcha Cusack plays that hardening of heart so perfectly. What a horrible cow Bridie turned out to be.

The case buzzing in his head, River returns to Rosa's group therapy session to open up about his childhood and his mother's abandonment of him. As Stevie stands across the room, he tells her how he misses her and she smiles.

The tenderness is shattered by Cream's appearance, goading him to let the hate out. He turns on him and starts hurling chairs, yelling that he is not listening to him any more. The rest of the group cower on the other side of the room and he leaves, apologising as he does so.

"Ask me why I did it," says Frankie, as River finally confronts him, gently, at his Weight-watchers meeting. Frankie gets his gun out as he tells River Stevie was going to break his family, parroting what the others must have told him. He recounts the whole thing, how Stevie abandoned him and the anger and hatred comes surging forth. He's suddenly a different man, hard like the rest of the family. As River reads him his rights he's never looked more like a little boy.

The team at the station all watch the CCTV of Frankie getting into the car in silence. Mickey and Bridie are hauled in for questioning along with the other brother. It's over. Case closed.

As the final act begins, the dead girl from episode one chooses River a tie as he gets ready to go out. He walks along the street clutching flowers as Reiley from episode one tells him not to be nervous. He enters the Chinese restaurant where he last dined with Stevie and sits down opposite her.

They are going to re-enact her final moments one last time, to give him the chance to say what he could never say to her, living.

As River is about to tell Stevie, "I love you," he notices everyone else in the restaurant is staring and runs outside, shouting for her because he knows what must come next. They are going to re-live that dread moment one last time, so he can finish this.

"Screw you, Mr Magoo," she grins and is obscured by the white van for the last time. The shot rings out. "I love you," he finally sobs over her lifeless body. And she opens her eyes, smiles and says "And then you say? Sing, you nutter, sing." And he does. Their song from episode one — I Love to Love.

That last dance, the singing and the grinning and all that affection all but finished me off. He holds her so tight and just as he's about to kiss her, it all disappears and he is alone again. He has finally said good bye.

"I love you too," says Stevie as she disappears from the rear view mirror. I can't see the screen now for tears. In a final scene of hope, he holds Ira's son while Ira's wife unpacks them an office picnic. He looks at the smiling baby. "Hello," he says, smiling back.

Actor Appearances

A

Nana Agyeman-Bediako	1
0104 (Tooxow Mohamoud)	
Mouna Albakry	1
0101 (Journalist 1)	
Josef Altin	3
0101 (Christopher Riley); 0102 (Christopher Riley);	
0106 (Christopher Riley)	
Helen Anderson	1
0106 (Tom's Lawyer)	
Adjoa Andoh	1
0105 (Sunday Akentola)	

B

Peter Bankole	3
0103 (Haider Jamal Abdi); 0104 (Haider Jamal Abdi);	
0105 (Haider Jamal Abdi)	
Pippa Bennett-Warner	2
0101 (Tia Edwards); 0102 (Tia Edwards)	
Youssef Berouain	1
0102 (Youth)	
Jacqueline Boatswain	1
0101 (Ursula)	
Souleiman Bock	2
0103 (Khaalid Mohamoud); 0104 (Khaalid Mohamoud)	
Mark Brennan	1
0104 (Appeal Room Officer)	
Wendy Mae Brown	1
0105 (Ghanaian Secretary (June))	
Andrew Byron	2
0103 (Ukrainian Manager); 0105 (Ukrainian Man-	
ager)	

C

Nicon Caraman	1
0105 (Moldovan Man)	
Nina Carey	1
0101 (Young Erin)	
Deborah Carroll	1
0103 (Globe Usher)	
Gledis Cinque	1
0104 (Au Pair)	
Ali Craig	2
0105 (Banker); 0106 (Banker)	

D

Franz Drameh	2
0101 (Bruno Marconi); 0102 (Bruno Marconi)	
Soo Drouet	1
0102 (Loud-Mouthed Woman)	

E

Faith Edwards	1
0103 (Doreen)	
Steve Edwin	1
0101 (Security Guard)	
Fady Elsayed	1
0101 (Aten Olama)	

F

Lucy Formby	1
0106 (Young Stevie)	

G

Nicholas Goh	1
0106 (Chinese Waiter)	

H

Dominic Hecht	1
0101 (Journalist 2)	
Stacha Hicks	2
0105 (Housewife); 0106 (Housewife)	
Jon House	2
0102 (Police Officer); 0105 (Police Officer)	
Scott Hunt	1
0101 (Fast Food Server)	

J

Jane Jeffery	1
0102 (Tia's Lawyer)	
Julian Lewis Jones	1
0103 (Jordy Merton)	

K

Stefan Kalipha	2
0103 (Omari Tadros); 0104 (Omari Tadros)	
Naveed Khan	1
0105 (Laughing Man)	

L

Peter Landi	1
0105 (Fedor's Lawyer)	
Marko Leht	1
0105 (Fedor)	
Lydia Leonard	2
0105 (Marianne King); 0106 (Marianne King)	
Amelia Lowdell	1
0103 (Pauline Merton)	

M

Louis Mahoney 2
 0103 (Lumo); 0104 (Lumo)
Michael Maloney 3
 0104 (Tom Read); 0105 (Tom Read); 0106 (Tom
 Read)
Marinca 1
 0105 (Ema Anamaria)
Heather McClelland 1
 0103 (Busker)
Dockley Mieke 1
 0101 (Karaoke Till Girl)
Cathy Murphy 1
 0101 (Marlena Fielding)

————— R —————

Andy Rashleigh 1
 0102 (Pub Landlord)
Jo Romero 1
 0103 (Tina Gilbert)

————— S —————

Joanne Seymour 1
 0104 (Appeal Room Officer)
Rachel Stubbings 1
 0104 (Thin White Woman)

————— T —————

Shannon Tarbet 2
 0101 (Erin Fielding); 0106 (Erin Fielding)

————— U —————

Alec Utgoff 1
 0103 (Sasha Mischenko)

————— Z —————

Assly Zandry 1
 0104 (Isniino Mohamoud)
Andrei Zayats 1
 0103 (Ukrainian Lad)