



6 X 60 minute drama series

TRAMA QUEEN

Written & created by
Victoria Taylor Roberts

Where are we and what's the show about?

Exploring the lives of four culturally diverse women from the small towns surrounding Leeds, series one observes our four main characters as they navigate their first year at university as mature students. Each episode follows all of the women's shared adventures while focussing on the inner world of one.

Steeped in chaos and close-to-the-bone humour, the four embark on a succession of hair raising exploits involving a carrier bag of prescription painkillers and a disastrous attempt at taking over the local drug dealer's turf.

Needless to say there are hurdles along the way in the form of run-ins with family, the police, unhappy 'customers' and the competing dealers themselves. The women quickly realise they are in a world way over their heads.

Yorkshire, born and bred



Mel

Newly single mum
of two just getting
by on her wits &
the love of her kids



Moira

No family, no
friends, no
prospects & no
fucks to give



Saanvi

A super smart
disappointment to
her strict, religious
Bengali family



Kyles

A catherine wheel
in human form &
Mel's 'bezzie'
from school



Melanie Harrison

Mel is a mother of two in her late 30s raising her children alone after the sudden departure of her cheating husband, Dave. Having been with Dave, a mechanic, since the two were in their teens, Mel hadn't really paid much attention to building a career. In an area where family is the focus, everyone had just assumed that he would work and, after a bit of fun clubbing and some decent package holidays in their 20s, she would settle into domesticity and bring up babies. It was all going to plan until, with both kids in school, Mel realised she needed to do – and be – something more than that.

To everyone's surprise, her English and Maths GCSE re-takes at night class gave Mel what Dave describes as 'delusions of grandeur'. His response is to secretly cheat on her in protest of her 'neglect' and then move out once she starts her first year of uni – just when she needed him most. Now Mel is left with fees to cover, bills to pay and two primary-aged kids to manage alone. Her only family is a dad dying of Dementia and COPD. And now that the two have split, Dave's dysfunctional family are meaner than ever. Her hard fought-for academic ambitions on the rocks, Mel contemplates desperate measures.



Moira Thurrup

Moira is a dyed-in-the-wool Northerner in her 50s whose life spiralled into isolation from her 30s on due to the demands of caring for her invalid mother. Details of her youth remain hazy, with small clues dropped only as random anecdotes in conversations. Pieced together, they make for an interesting life of partying, pilgrimages - and even prison - that Moira obviously does not want to share with her new course mates.

Trained originally as a nurse, she now begrudgingly works as a carer in an old people's home in a small village bordering the moors. Those who know her nickname her Myra in response to the whiff of 'sociopath' about her. Moira doesn't care: she has no need of friends – they're just more people she's expected to be nice to.

What Moira is interested in is drugs: what works, how to get them and who to sell them to. When Mel finds herself with an unwanted stash, Moira is a moth to the flame.



Saanvi Chandra

Saanvi is a Bengali woman in her 20s who, defying her family's wishes, enrolls at university, hoping that an education will free her from an arranged marriage to someone she is unlikely to have ever met, let alone considered dating.

Saanvi craves the same rights as her two brothers, given much more choice in their futures. She's super smart according to her teachers, whose interest in her schooling ensured Saanvi was able to stay on past GCSEs and get her A Levels. Her appetite for learning whetted, Saanvi now hopes to become a Counselling Psychologist, or – given her own fight for her rights – something to do with law; she isn't sure. Like Mel, she is a fixer, finding her own value through caring for others.

Saanvi, although culturally worlds apart from her parents, loves them deeply. Still, her life is her own and she can't give up her future to please them. The burning question is how to keep them both.



Kylie Bennett

Kylie (or Kyles, as she's widely known) is basically a walking, talking tornado. Traumatized from a neglectful childhood about which she is vocal (and childhood sexual abuse, which she is not), Kyles attended just enough school to sit her GCSEs, failing all of them. Unqualified and unambitious, she has spent her entire adulthood on benefits in-between short-lived jobs, often getting sacked for losing the plot in one way or another.

Although friends since high school, Kyles is the antithesis of Mel in every way: disorganized, unproductive and emotionally immature, skipping from one destructive relationship to another in search of her 'soul mate'. The problem is that the more care Kylie is shown, the more she revolts: love is not something this damaged woman is comfortable giving or receiving.

Having always used Mel as a measuring stick, Kyles finds Mel's newfound academic ambitions both baffling and intimidating. She says she's happy to see her friend's life evolve but her actions throughout the series show us differently.

Shopping List

We think these actors would be amazing as Mel, Moira, Saanvi and Kyles

Camilla Beeput



Maxine Peake



Charitha Chandran



Katherine Kelly



M
E
L

H
A
R
R
I
S
O
N

M
O
I
R
A

T
H
U
R
R
U
P

S
A
A
N
V
I

C
H
A
N
D
R
A

K
Y
L
I
E

B
E
N
N
E
T
T

Gugu Mbatha Raw



Lizzie Roper



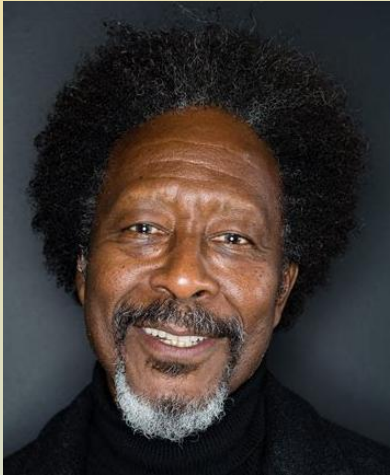
Simone Ashley



Rose Leslie



Wishlist for Supporting Characters



Mel's dad, Bob
(Clarke Peters)



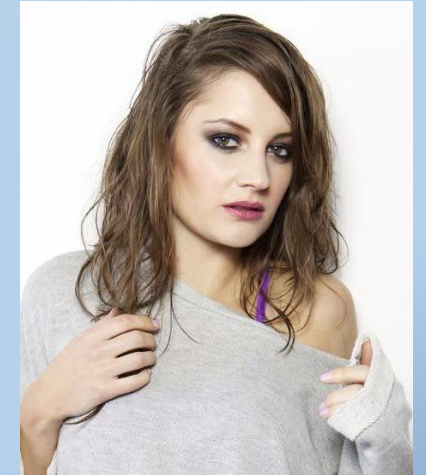
Mel's ex, Dave
(Kit Harington)



Dave's sister, Trisha
(Charley Webb)



Dave's mum, Sandra
(Gaynor Faye)



Dave's fling, Michelle
(Paula Lane)



Trisha's husband,
Carl
(Robert Aramayo)



Dave's stepdad,
John
(John Simm)

Pilot Episode outline

We first encounter MEL HARRISON bent over the toilet of a small, grubby W.C. vomiting copious amounts of blood into the bowl. Moving to the vanity basin to regard herself in the mirror, she gargles water from the tap, checks her watch and then vomits again without warning. There is no trace of self-pity in her demeanour, only impatience. The dental surgery's receptionist, JEN, takes pity on Mel, altering the dentist's 'tight-arse' painkiller prescription, adding an extra two zeros that transforms one packet of tablets into a bagful. It is the kind stranger, however (later, Mel's uni colleague, SAANVI) that must steal the dentist's famous purple pen to make it happen. During all this, Mel learns that her kids' father – and recent ex – DAVE, has a new girlfriend.

Justifying the stash of Tramadol she has been handed, Mel explains to the suspicious pharmacist that she is having major dental surgery and has been granted a one-off prescription to save funds. In an underground carpark, Mel unloads a full trolley of shopping into the boot when her mobile rings. She hopes it is Social Services responding about a carer for her dad, instead it is his complaining neighbour. Mel, without thinking, throws her handbag (with the mobile inside) into the boot before driving off at speed.

Stopping at traffic lights on the way to her dad's, Mel tries to take one of the tablets but is distracted by a phone call she answers using her in-car speaker. Finally, it's Social Services. Unable to hear the call properly, Mel jumps out to get her handbag from the boot – much to the annoyance of MOIRA in the car behind her, another course mate Mel is yet to meet. Moira, rants at her before screeching off, making Mel miss the important call.

Pilot Episode outline continued

At her dad's, Mel finds that, despite animal allergies and being rigged up to an oxygen tank, BOB – his behaviour altered by dementia – has taken in many of the neighbourhood pets. Mel throws the cats out but is unable to return the dog, LOLA, whose owner is in hospital, and must take it with her. After it wees on the back seat in the car, Mel has no choice but to use her daughter's bunny blanket to clean it up. She tries again to take a painkiller when she sees Dave's text saying he has left the kids, JAMES and NATTY, with his sister, TRISHA. Mel leaves him a furious voicemail and heads straight to Trisha's, where a slanging match ensues. Trisha resents watching Mel's kids and lets her sons bully them. Mel drives away with the kids fawning over Lola in the back just in time to see Trisha's husband, CARL, appear, drunk and ready for a domestic.

Mel stops outside an off-licence to top up the electricity key. Waiting in the car, James and Natty are upset to see their dad coming out of the chippy, kissing a woman. When questioned, Mel distracts them with the promise of a takeaway. On her third attempt to take a Tramadol she finds her water bottle empty.

Meanwhile, Dave and his new girlfriend, MICHELLE, are warmly welcomed at his parent's house by mum, SANDRA. Dave's step-dad, JOHN, disapproves of Dave cheating and has sympathy for Mel. Sandra, however, appears almost gleeful at the recent turn of events.

Pilot Episode outline continued

Mel and the kids get home with their take away just as friend KYLIE arrives unannounced with two bottles of wine – one already half-drunk. She admits knowing about Dave's cheating but protests her motive for secrecy was to spare Mel. Mel hands Kylie the key to top up the electricity whilst she puts the kids to bed; Kylie gets distracted by a feather duster hanging inside the cupboard door, top up forgotten. When Mel confesses her new stash of Tramadol, Kylie begs a few of them and then disappears into the night (or, more specifically, her booty-call's car).

With Kylie gone, the kids in bed and Mel's own dinner now in the dog, she finally takes a painkiller. In fact, having been told by Kylie that 'these ones are as weak as shit', Mel decides to take two. Mel finds the post by the front door and opens the one bearing the university's logo. She reads aloud as far as 'Dear Mrs Harrison,' before swooning. Dropping to all fours, she makes her way back to the kitchen, the room about her spinning.

Slumped on the floor with her back pressed against the cabinets, a nauseous Mel reaches for the single remaining shopping bag nearby, opening it to discover Natty's soiled comforter. After recoiling, she vomits into it violently and then reads the letter in her hand. 'Dear Mrs Harrison, this is a final request for payment for your first academic year....' It's money she hasn't got. At that moment the electric goes off and the lights go out; through the darkness comes Natty's small voice from upstairs, calling for her bunny blanket.

Series one: overview of each episode

Mel, Kylie, Moira and Saanvi are all strong women who, despite having grown up within a few miles of each other, come from disparate backgrounds. Within the serial arc, alongside the developing friendship and Mel's attempt to sell the Tramadol, Trama Queen will explore each of the entwined women's lives.

Episode One focuses on Mel's daily struggle with caring for her father and her kids, and the financial hardship resulting from the departure of her husband, Dave.

Episode Two gives us an insight into Moira's solitary existence as a carer and her sideline in selling the various drugs she steals from the old people's home she works in.

Episode Three follows Saanvi's familial relationship as they prepare for an arranged marriage she does not want.

Episode Four reveals Kylie's harassment by her boss at work, as well as her affair with the very same dealer threatening Mel.

Episode Five gives us Dave's perspective as he begins to regret ending things with Mel now that Michelle wants to get serious. We also look more closely at the domestic violence within Trisha and Carl's relationship.

Episode Six pulls the drug dealing caper to a close; Mel makes a life-changing decision when she turns a remorseful Dave away and finds not only the first signs of new love but also financial freedom on the university campus.

So, what does Trama Queen feel like?



Fizzybrainproductions.co.uk

For more info



please contact

fizzybrainproductions@gmail.com

or call / text

Victoria: +44(0)7947 390 642 / Shelly: +44(0)7919 416 694