Normal

By Alfie James from the play “My boy Danny”

**ANGE:**

Being normal is underrated. I used to hate it. Like most. The dreary daily routine. Ping! The alarm clock sounds, the morning rituals, the constant battle with time and the desperate press of the snooze button trying to pause those tiny moments for a few seconds more. The arguments over the bathroom, the battle to get your child to sit still long enough to eat his breakfast or to get out of bed and to have a shower regularly. The screaming tantrums when they can't find their much-loved hoodie or football boots. The noise of pre-school work run. The mayhem of the kitchen sink, the disappearing good-bye kiss and the slamming of the door. Followed by the moment of sheer silence. The sigh as I would collapse in the chair and realize the last tea bag had been used, the milk had been reduced to a drain. I'd swear under my breath, curse them a little and give a sarcastic little 'thanks mum' to myself. It hardly seemed worth it. But at the same time, I wouldn't change it. I wouldn't change normal.

I nearly had a right smack up in the Asda car park today. One of these football wannabe wives on her daily audition of the only way is Essex. You know the type. Size 8, designer clothes, a broken nail equals the instant end of the world. Sugar daddy husband dresses her in designer wear and encourages her not to live in the real world. She tries to drive a four by four by struggles to control it and loses her temper when it doesn't do what it is told. She comes speeding down the centre of the car park road, ignoring the arrows and driving the wrong way as she's late for her hair appointment at the latest new designer salon to open on the high street. I give her a toot in my clamped-out fiesta as she narrowly drives over it to pinch the car park space which I'm clearly signalling to go into. She gives me one of them pissed off looks as to say, 'how dare you' and then gives me the middle finger. Normally, I would have reversed my car right into the front of her on purpose or even worse, parked right in front of her blocking her. I'd get out and give her what’s for. Telling her that she's an arrogant, spoilt brat and that her fake tan and nails don't fool me. I'd make so much a scene that she'd become so embarrassed that she'd have to apologise. I'd do because it was right. It was me. I took no crap from people. I said it as it was. (Beat) Today I let her in. I didn't fight. I drove on. I even let her give me that patronizing smiles. The ones that say oh well, bad luck. On a normal day I would have stopped. Normal is underrated.

Have you noticed how people instantly turn into refugees grabbing their last food batch before a world crisis? The constant speed and magnitude of exploding trolleys coming at you in all directions. The near misses with the shop assistant unloading a supply of soap powder on to the shelves, the battle to get served at the cheese counter and the pushing, squeezing through to the cost-cutter section to grab the slightly out of date bargains. The loud banging headache which followed. There was no headache today. No argument with the self-service checkout. I looked down at the once overfilling trolley and saw an empty one instead. The turkey twizzlers, the fish fingers, alphabet shapes, the lunch box bars, monster munch crisps and bottles of Asda value coke. All gone. I miss normal. Normal is underrated. I'd do anything is have that full trolley back, to have the fight left in me to give the only way is Essex woman a mouthful of reality. Instead, I'm stuck here, looking out of the window…(Tearful) waiting for that cheeky grin.