

Bust

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News of the spiralling recession may be inescapable, but its human costs receive far less media coverage. Brian Woods's doc is an intimate portrait of three households struggling desperately to keep their heads above water. These are poignant tales, understatedly told: the Derby couple on a low income with three kids and, in London, the single mother of two on maternity leave and the retired chef who's housebound and battling ill-health. For two of them, borrowing has aggravated their troubles, but their huge debts have been raised not through reckless spending, but rather in an attempt to haul themselves out of a hole. The worry and stress – as two file for bankruptcy and the Derby family try to sell their run-down house before it's repossessed – is palpable. Especially pitiable is the sight of chef Michael, surrounded by medical machinery he cannot afford to run. It's economics with a terribly human face. *SO'C*