# GENTLY WITH CLASS

Written by

Pet er Fl anner y

PINK AMENDMENTS - 20.03.12

ii.

1 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NI GHT 1. 01:50

A car flashes through the frame. Too fast.

2 EXT. A BEND IN THE RIVER - NIGHT 1. 01:52

> A hill with a bend and a bridge at the bottom. We hear the sound of the car approaching on the far side of the hill. Its beams light up the sky.

3 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT 1. 01:53 3

> The car gathers pace as it crests the hill heading away from us and down towards the bend in the river and the bridge.

CAPTION: NORTHUMBERLAND 1968.

EXT. A BEND IN THE RIVER - NIGHT 1. 01:54 4 4

The car comes downhill towards us. The bend in the road, the low bridge parapet, the cold water - all arrive too soon for the unseen DRIVER. A scream of brakes.

EXT. THE RIVER - NIGHT 1. 01:55 5 5

The car is upside down in three feet of water. The still unseen DRIVER is kicking at the door from the inside. That's

#### GENTLY

Did I survive another year, Doctor?

ARNOLD (SCRIBBLING) Yer as fit as a lop. As they say up here. No idea what it means. Lived here for 26 years, still no idea ....what anybody's ...saying.

He finishes his notes and looks at GG. This is a man who sees into people. GG likes him very much.

GENTLY

My Sergeant - John Bacchus of this parish-has a joke on the subject. Geordie goes to get his eyes tested and the optician says "Can you read me the letters on that board, please?"

ARNOLD

And Geordie says "Board? What board? A cannit even see its cage!".

It's a good accent.

#### GENTLY

Very good.

He's ready to go and is completely taken aback by:

#### ARNOLD

So tell me, Chief Inspector. When does it hurt the most? First thing in the morning - or last thing at night?

Their eyes meet.

9

## INT. BACCHUS' HOUSE, A BEDROOM - DAY 2. 10:10

9

BACCHUS face down on his pillow, snoring softly. A phone starts ringing downstairs. He doesn't wake up. A WOWAN considerably older than him is beside him, waking up, trying to figure out where she is. She nudges him awake.

> WOWAN (SHYLY) Erm....yer phone...?

They stare at each other.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

10 INT. BACCHUS' HOUSE, A STAIRCASE - DAY 2. 10:12. 10

JB, half asleep and hungover, negotiates the stairs, tripping over shoes and clothes. Not his own.

11 INT. A DOCTOR'S SURGERY - DAY 2. 10:15.

They're smoking cigarettes.

GENTLY Grief. Is like ... chronic pain. Always in the room somewhere. But, yes: the mornings are the worst. I don't miss her any less as time passes. I just miss her differently.

ARNOLD (NOT EXACTLY SURE)

How I ong?

GENTLY Four years. Four years, three months, two weeks, and...

He smiles and doesn't bother with the rest. Point made.

GENTLY (CONT'D) It's the "never again", you know? The "never"...

ARNOLD

Do you talk about this with anybody? Your Sergeant perhaps?

GG thinks about Bacchus and has to smile at that notion.

GENTLY It's a thought...

12 I/E. BACCHUS' CAR TRAVELLING ALONG COUNTRY ROADS - DAY 2. 12 10: 20.

He's pissed off, shouting into his radio mouthpiece as he drives the roads at speed.

BACCHUS (ALREADY REPEATING HIMSELF) Is she identified? Is. The. Woman. Identified?

VOICE What woman you talking about?

BACCHUS "What woman" do ye think l'm talkin about? Twiggy? (MORE)

The one in the car, dumbo. (Pointless pursuing this, so:) Tell them do not move the car till I get there, understood? Where's Cently - anybody found him yet? Is he fishin? Has he gone fishin again and not said?! (Just crackle, so he slams the receiver back down) Great! I'll deal with the dead woman then, cheers, George!! On my only morning off this month!! Thanks, pal!!

13

12

3 INT. A DOCTOR'S SURGERY - DAY 2. 10:22.

GENTLY

Do you believe in dreams?

#### ARNOLD

Try me.

#### GENTLY

I'm having the same one time and again. I go back to a house I used to live in. I meet a woman on the doorstep. She's leaving. Her hand brushes mine and she tells me she'll see me again later.

#### ARNOLD

Your wife?

# GENTLY (SHRUGGING)

I don't see her face. Then I go through the door and I'm glad to be back. But slowly I realise all the rooms are different. Different shapes, different sizes, different things in them Everything's changed.

#### ARNOLD

Then what?

A beat.

#### GENTLY

Then there's water pouring down the walls and across the floor. And I'm drowning. Helpless and drowning.

14 EXT. THE RIVER - DAY 2. 11:00.

The camera is under water as the car lifts upwards.

4.

13

#### 14 CONTI NUED:

BACCHUS, in waders, stands in the water and watches as the car is lifted by a recovery vehicle from the river. As it clears the river, water spills from it and we see an arm sticking out. Water pours from the car as it twists in the air and we catch a glimpse of the dead ELLEN MALLAM (19), i nsi de.

#### 14A EXT. THE RIVER. DAY 2. 11:15

The car is now on the bridge. GG is getting out of his car a few yards away. Curious. JB is taking off his waders.

> BACCHUS I wanted to have a look at her before they disturbed anything. There's a bruise on her head. Coul d've been unconscious.

## GENTLY

Let's hope so.

JB is handed a violin case.

#### BACCHUS

This was inside.

He opens it. A soggy violin. Nothing to identify the owner.

#### GENTLY

Driver?

#### BACCHUS

No sign of him

GG shakes his head at the implications. They look into the car and see ELLEN, very beautiful and very dead, in the passenger seat. They examine her side of the car, gingerly, sadly.

## BACCHUS (CONT'D) The metal was caved in by the impact, guv. Left foot's trapped. OK, we have to cut her out!

This was to the RECOVERY MEN, who prepare their equipment. JB and GG st and back.

> BACCHUS (CONT'D) I don't think she was unconscious.

## GENTLY

Either way... he didn't call for help. Panicking because he'd nicked the car, maybe? Young man, too much to drink? Older man with a wife somewhere. ?

14

14A

5.

(CONTI NUED)

14A CONTI NUED:

JB thinks this sounds like the speech for the defence.

BACCHUS He left her to drown, guv! She was helpless.

GGs face. Helpless and drowning.

BACCHUS (CONT'D) Dead and alone. All night. Out here. Didn't even make an anonymous phone call, ye know...?

GENTLY If she was already drowned what difference would it make...?

JB should just get on with it, but:

BACCHUS Do ye ever have any feelins?

GENTLY

Scuse me?

RECOVERY MEN are using an angle grinder to cut the body free.

JUMP CUT TO:

## GENTLY (CONT'D) You all right?

BACCHUS Woke up with a complete stranger next to iz.

GENTLY Some men pay money for that.

BACCHUS Shoulda seen the state of her. Like wakin up next to ya Grannie. Her hair was all stickin up, an all.

The radio in JB's car starts to crackle. He goes to it.

BACCHUS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Guv?

GG joins him.

BACCHUS (CONT'D) We've traced the car. (Into the radio:) Say that again for Mister Gently, would you? 6. 14A VOICE Abberwick Hall.

(CONTI NUED)

14A CONTI NUED: (3)

7. 14A

He replaces the radio and smiles.

BACCHUS

Registered to Hector Blackstone. The 13th Earl of Guyzance.

## GENTLY

Friend of yours?

## BACCHUS

Nope, but I know his son pretty well. James Blackstone. Nicked him twice for being drunk in charge of a vehicle.

## GENTLY

And?

## BACCHUS

Murmy and Daddy got him expensive lawyers. Murmy and Daddy waved a magic wand over the charge sheet and it disappears into thin air. Murmy and Daddy got me reprimanded for victimization.

Hard to tell which of this litany has angered him the most. GG watches as the body is lifted free by 2 AMBULANCE MEN and carried to the ambulance.

> PC 2 Nothin on her, sir, except this.

He hands him a key.

GENTLY We don't even have a name.

BACCHUS Bet you a hundred quid the Right Honourable James Blackstone'II know her name.

GENTLY OK, let's ask him Nicely.

15 EXT. ENTRANCE TO ABBERWICK HALL ESTATE - DAY 2. 12:00. 15

GGs car goes through the impressive gates and heads up a drive through woodland.

## 16 I/E. IN GG'S CAR TRAVELLING - DAY 2. 12:10. 16

Pasture land now. Still no sign of the Hall.

BACCHUS "Are we nearly there?" I mean: how much of England is one bloke

## BI LLY

"Who is there that has not jeered at the House Of Lords, the military caste, the Royal Family, the public schools, the huntin and shootin people, the horrors of country society...?"

A beat.

GENTLY

Don't know, I'm afraid.

BACCHUS

Rudyard Kipling.

BILLY (WHAT A STUPID ANSWER) Kiplin was a King n Country Imperialist, ye clot. George Orwell. And Orwell knew summit that gets forgot these days. The English rulin

#### BACCHUS

Oh my golly goodness me, I was never granted an audience. But if they're anything like the son, get ready to throw up.

They turn a bend and there is the splendid Hall before them They stop and get out, rather overawed by the place.

17

16

INT. ABBERWICK HALL, ENTRANCE HALL - DAY 2. 12:20. 17

GG and JB wait in the entrance hall. HECTOR BLACKSTONE (60s, dressed in a boilersuit, wiping his oily hands on a rag) comes barrelling towards them with a smile. As friendly an old cove as you're likely to meet.

#### HECTOR

Inspector Gently, Sergeant Bacchus, so sorry. I was in the stable working on my motorcycles. Something about a car l'mtold...?

#### GENTLY

Yes, a car registered to you has been involved in a fatal accident, your .. Erm ...?

HECTOR (STUNNED) Fatal accident...? Ch... Hector... just call me Hector.

#### BACCHUS

Is your son James in at the minute? Hector.

HECTOR

Fatal to whom?

GENTLY A young woman, late teens, early 20s. . .

HECTOR Oh, dear Lord...

BACCHUS Your son have a girlfriend, Hector?

HECTOR Which car was this?

### BACCHUS

Austin A40 'Farina', blue -registration number 209 NWV

## GENTLY

Are you saying you're unaware of this car even being missing?

# HECTOR

Tot al I y.

JB thinks they're being given the run around.

## BACCHUS

Any chance of talking to your son, please?

HECTOR I don't even know if he's here, Sergeant. My wife may know.

They walk past French windows which are being repaired by a

18 CONTI NUED:

This is their and our first sight of ALETHEA BLACKSTONE, COUNTESS of GUYZANCE, (40s, striking, intelligent, and absolutely self-assured). She raises a limp-wristed clenched fist.

## ALETHEA (CONT'D)

"Be realistic: demand the impossible". The naivety. Do they reaaally think they can overturn the natural order by throwing a few stones? De Gaulle's run away, of course. So...? Hector?

She looks right into his eyes for a second.

HECTOR Chief Inspector Gently and Sergeant Bacchus.

She takes them in properly. Not impressed. Specially JB, who probably doesn't rank highly in the natural order.

ALETHEA Is there a problem..?

HECTOR A fatality. A young woman.

ALETHEA

Ch, dear...

BACCHUS

We found your husband's car, Mrs. Blackstone, upside down in-

ALETHEA I beg your pardon?

A beat.

BACCHUS Sorry, you hard of hearing?

HECTOR My wife prefers to be "your ladyship".

A beat.

BACCHUS Well, I wouldn't mind bein Bobby Charlton, butGENTLY (LET'S GET ON WITH IT) Your ladyship, an Austin car belonging to your husband has been found five miles from here, upside down in a river. With a dead girl inside.

She doesn't bat an eyelid. She takes a cigarette from a box and lights it.

ALETHEA Well then. Somebody stole one of our cars. Is it a write-off?

BACCHUS Don't you care about the dead girl?

ALETHEA Why should I care about a car thief?

BACCHUS What if it wasn't stolen?

ALETHEA What other explanation is there?

BACCHUS Is your son at home?

ALETHEA He may be. It's a large house.

BACCHUS Want me to organize a search party?

GENTLY Was he here last night, your ladyship?

#### ALETHEA

Yes. We had a late supper together. Hector was at one of his musical self-flagellation evenings in the village. James and I sat talking and playing backgammon till the early hours. Then he went to bed.

## GENTLY

Musical what, sorry...?

## ALETHEA

My husband likes the music of the downtrodden workers. Fiddles and squeezeboxes, starving children, wicked mineowners, tragic underground explosions. (MORE)

IGG6. Film 1. PINK AVENDVENTS. 20.03.12 CONTINUED: (3) ALETHEA (CONT'D) Singers with their fingers in their ears. That sort of thing. GG notices HECTOR staring silently at her. GENTLY So you stayed in with your son. HECTOR seems about to say something, but stays silent. GENTLY (CONT'D) When did you last see him? ALETHEA I kissed him "goodnight" at 1 a.m. GENTLY And you haven't seen him this mor ni ng. ALETHEA I'm his mother, not his maid. BACCHUS (HAD ENOUGH) Could you go and find your son? Now. ALETHEA What sort of school did you go to, Ser geant?

> BACCHUS One with an outside lav.

ALETHEA And did they teach the word "please"?

A beat.

18

#### BACCHUS

Pl ease.

#### ALETHEA

Thank you.

A beat. She stubs out her cigarette and leaves. A silence.

GENTLY When did you last use your car, sir?

HECTOR It was the Austin, you say..?

BACCHUS (EXASPERATED) How many cars you got? 14.

## HECTOR

There are seven or eight dotted around the estate, all registered to my name for insurance purposes, but intended for common use.

BACCHUS (FOR THE SECOND TIME) Austin A40 'Farina'. Blue. Registration number 209-

## HECTOR

Yes, yes, yes, I'm sorry. No, no, I've no idea when I last drove it. I avoid cars if at all possible. Prefer my motorcycles. You don't know who the girl was then?

#### GENTLY

Not yet, no. So various people had access to this car?

HECTOR Yes, it's a very large estate.

BACCHUS Well who keeps the ignition keys?

HECTOR Actually.. They're usually just left in the cars.

A beat.

18

BACCHUS (UNBELIEVABLE) Right. I'll need a list of employees.

## HECTOR

Of course.

JB moves past GG towards the fireplace, muttering.

BACCHUS (SOTTO VCCE) More money than sense.

#### HECTOR

My wife has misremembered one thing: James did in fact come with me to the village last night to hear the music. He then had a late supper with his mother after our return.

#### GENTLY

But not you.

(CONTI NUED)

## HECTOR

No, I went straight to my rooms.

GG gets the picture. He nods.

#### GENTLY

## Your wife's a very forceful woman.

JB is at the far end of the room now, looking at a fulllength portrait of Hector in military uniform Boring. He heads towards the windows.

## HECTOR

Al et hea's my second wife ... hence the ..discrepancy in our ages. My first wife died 30 years ago. Bonny. That was her name. Though in fact she was He points his finger at JB, trying to remember something. JB can't stand him - the floppy hair, the arrogance, the superciliousness.

BACCHUS (HELPING HIM OUT)

Bacchus.

JAMES Sergeant Bacchus. Of course. How spl endid to see you again.

BACCHUS That's a nasty cut, yer Highness. Get it playin backgammon?

GENTLY (QUI ETLY)

Ser geant.

This public rebuke offends JB, and pleases ALETHEA. JAMES genuinely wasn't offended in the first place:

JAMES I actually don't mind what he calls me, Chief Inspector.

GENTLY Well, I do. So now: how did you come by that injury? I GG6. Film 1. PINK AMENDMENTS. 20.03.12 CONTINUED: (2)

## BACCHUS

Can't remember? A whack like that?

ALETHEA (TOUCHING JAMES TENDERLY) Of course he can remember. It was -

BACCHUS I'm not askin you, I'm askin him

ALETHEA It was just after supper.

JB hacked off. She answered for him

JAMES

Yes. It was.. just after supper.

JB notes down what he regards as a pack of lies. GG makes a decision. Got to remove him from his mother.

GENTLY I'd like you to come to headquarters and answer some-

She's like a tigress defending her cub:

ALETHEA Are you harassing my son again?

GENTLY No, l'masking him to-

ALETHEA Are you arresting my son?

GENTLY

No. But if he won't come voluntarily l'll get a warrant and I will arrest him

A beat.

#### ALETHEA

There will be a lawyer present at all times.

#### BACCHUS

He doesn't need a lawyer, he's not bein charged with-

ALETHEA Our solicitor will be present at all times. Hector, get on the phone.

HECTOR goes inside. JB's glance at GG says "See what I had to put up with?"

ALETHEA (CONT'D) You had better be SO careful, Mister Gently. This could go very badly for you.

GG smiles gratefully. Nice of you to care. He holds out his arm to JAMES, who stands. GG guides him towards his parked car across the lawn. JB

I GG6. Film 1. PINK AMENDMENTS. 20.03.12 CONTINUED: (4)

Her self-belief is unnerving, her smile withering.

## 20 EXT. POLICE HQ - DAY 2. 15:00.

In the sunlight. POLICE PERSONNEL coming and going.

GENTLY (V.O.) OK, you're the expert on the Right Honourable James Blackstone...

21

19

## INT. POLICE HQ, CORRIDOR / INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 2. 15:01. 21

G and JB looking through a window at JAMES, who is in the interview room with his head bowed.

#### BACCHUS

24. Just resigned his Commission in the Coldstream Quards - anybody got any idea what they're guardin? which was Hector's regiment -

## GENTLY

You and me.

#### BACCHUS

Par don?

#### GENTLY

They spend their time guarding our safety. Could I have some facts, please?

#### BACCHUS

Sorree. Marlborough Public School, then St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, which is apparently where the thick ones with money get in.

## GENTLY

Says who?

BACCHUS

Well I asked this bloke I know.

## GENTLY

Good work, Sergeant. How many "O' Levels did you say you got?

## BACCHUS

General Science, Biology, German and Tech Drawing, OK?

#### GENTLY

Fully rounded human being.

20. 19

22

BOB ANDERTON (50s), a forensic pathologist, GG, JB. The body is uncovered by BOB. She still looks beautiful. GG shakes his head sadly. His eyes ask BOB for his report.

#### BOB

Unknown female, approximately 20 years of age. No distinguishing marks or features. Except the fingers, which are cut and scratched. Death was by drowning.

GENTLY

The bruise on the head?

BOB

Consistent with the crash, but a glancing blow. I doubt she lost consciousness.

#### GENTLY

Because the fingers tell us she was trying to free her trapped foot, yes?

He nods. Silence.

#### BACCHUS

Left her fightin for her life. And he's gunna run the country, is he?

#### BOB

Sexually active.

## GENTLY

Recent I y?

#### BOB

I'd say fairly recent. Fingernails of her left hand much more worn than the right, presumably she was scrabbling at the door with that hand.

#### GENTLY

Or maybe because she plays the violin. Anything else I should know at this point, Bob?

#### BCB

Yep. A sample of blood from the metal frame on the driver's side.

#### BACCHUS

Oh yeh...?

BOB

It's a pretty rare type actually, which might help you. A2B Positive.

GENTLY After all night in the water?

BOB Apparently the car was at a slight angle - not all of the frame was submerged....?

GG looks right into BOB's eyes, which don't blink. GG nods.

GENTLY I see. OK, we're done here.

They watch BOB covering her up and wheeling her away.

GENTLY (CONT'D) Does James Blackstone have a rare blood group?

JB puffs out his cheeks. Wishes he could remember.

BACCHUS Can't remember. Let's ask him

GG knows exactly what's going on here, but shows nothing to JB. But we see his eyes as JB exits frame.

23 INT. POLICE HQ, CORRIDOR - DAY 2. 15:10.

GG and JB walk briskly towards the interview room

GENTLY I'll ask the questions. You take a back seat.

But the interview room is empty. TAYLOR arrives.

TAYLOR Sir. Assistant Chief Constable's waiting for you in your office.

24 INT. POLICE HQ, GENTLY'S AND BACCHUS' OFFICE - DAY 2. 15: 1224

GG and JB arrive to find the ACC (50s, uniformed), JAMES, ALETHEA, and a female solicitor called ACKLINGTON (40s) are already there. ACC takes charge.

24 CONTI NUED:

ACC

Your questioning of His Lordship will take place here, with Mrs. Acklington in attendance. I'll remain but will play no part.

GENTLY

You already have.

ACC

This is not for discussion, Chief Inspector. (A glance at JB). It's a necessary precaution given the history.

He sits to one side. GG nods politely to MRS. ACKLINGTON, who nods back. Then he looks at JB, who shakes his head and almost laughs. JB leans against a wall, in GG's eyeline.

GENTLY Very well. How would you like me to address you?

JAMES "James" is fine.

GENTLY James. May I ask you again how you came by that cut on your head?

ACKLI NGTON

You don't have to answer that.

GENTLY

He's already told us, in fact, that he fell into a window frame while under the influence of alcohol. Would he like to elaborate on that? Were the French windows open or closed, for instance?

ACKLINGTON nods to JAMES. ALETHEA watching GG like a hawk.

JAMES

They were open. I was talking to my mother. Not paying attention properly...

GENTLY Why were they open?

JAMES That's what French windows are for.

GENTLY Quite. So were you on the inside or on the outside? I GG6. Film 1. PINK AMENDMENTS. 20.03.12 CONTINUED: (2)

> JAMES We were outside.

GENTLY

Just the two of you?

JAMES

Yes.

24

GENTLY Nobody else present? Nobody distracting you?

JAMES No, Iwasjustdrunk.

GENTLY You'd been drinking with your father.

A beat. JAMES looks to ALETHEA. She thinks and nods. JAMES nods. GG is convinced JAMES would speak more freely if he wasn't being watched over.

GENTLY (CONT'D) At a music event in the village. Though Her Ladyship first told me you'd spent the evening together having supper and playing backgammon. So, which is true?

ACKLINGTON The Countess isn't here to answer questions.

GENTLY (TO ACC) The question is to James.

JAMES looks to his MOTHER, unsure what the party line is.

ALETHEA They're both true. James and his father came back at about eleven.

GENTLY So why did you first tell me-?

ACC (NOT HEAR THE FIRST TIME?) The Countess isn't here to answer-

GENTLY She has no trouble answering for her son, I notice!

A beat. JB clears his throat noisily so that GG looks at him JB mouths silently "Blood. Blood".

The OTHERS turn to see what GG is looking at. JB looks innocent. GG goes in a very different direction.

GENTLY (CONT'D) James. We have a car upside down in a shallow river. And a young girl dead. Do you know what happened to her last night?

ACKLINGTON The Chief Inspector must ask specific questions, not go on a fishing trip.

## ACC

Agr eed.

24

JB agrees too. He coughs again. Everybody looks at him except GG.

#### GENTLY

I'm asking James what he knows about a young girl whose life ended in the early hours of this morning. Trapped. Frightened and helpless in a metal tomb, waiting for cold river water to fill her lungs and drown her. Just her name would help. A tiny bit of dignity for her.

Silence. JAMES starts to crack.

JAMES

I think I might know her.

Electricity in the room

ALETHEA (TO ACKLINGTON) Put a stop to this.

ACKLINGTON James, there's absolutely no-

GENTLY Why might you know her, James?

A beat. He's on the verge of something.

JAMES Just... I just.. If she's local, I might recognize her...

ALETHEA and ACKLINGTON relieved that he's rowed back a bit. But they're way behind GG, who now sees what JAMES wants. GENTLY Would you like to see her, James? She's here. Just down the corridor.

Alarm from ALETHEA and ACKLINGTON. But JAMES is nodding, grateful.

JAMES Yes, I would. Very much.

GG already has JAMES on his feet, heading him for the door.

ALETHEA (TO ACKLINGTON) Stop this. James, I forbid this!

ACKLINGTON (TO ACC) I strongly object to this procedure-

GENTLY (TALKING OVER THEM) M ster Blackstone has volunteered to help identify the body. This way, please, James.

And they've got him out of there before he can be physically restrained by his mother. ALETHEA turns her venom on the ACC.

ALETHEA You said you could control this man!

25 INT. POLICE HQ, CORRIDOR - DAY 2. 15:20

GG and JB practically frogmarching JAMES through a door at the end of the corridor. They turn right and disappear.

26 INT. POLICE HQ, MORTUARY - DAY 2. 15:21.

BOB uncovers the head and shoulders. GG watches JAMES closely. BOB glances at JB, but JB is watching JAMES. When BOB glances at GG he is disconcerted to find that GG is scrutinizing him BOB looks away. GG returns his gaze to JAMES.

GENTLY (SOFTLY)

James...?

JAMES Ellen. Her name's Ellen. watches JAMES 25

The word registers with him

## JAMES (QUI ETLY)

Never?

#### GENTLY

Never. Were you driving the car, James?

JAMES doesn't take his eyes off her face. Tears fall silently.

GENTLY (CONT'D) Were you driving the car, James?

27 INT. POLICE HQ, GENTLY'S AND BACCHUS' OFFICE - DAY 2. 15: 3027

ALETHEA, ACKLINGTON and the ACC wait in silence. ALETHEA smoking. GG and JB come back.

GENTLY Your son's waiting in Reception.

Relief for all three. JB's not exactly doing cartwheels.

ALETHEA What did he tell you?

GENTLY He told us the name of the dead girl. Nothing more.

She again seems relieved. She nods. And is ready to go.

GENTLY (CONT'D) Aren't you curious to knowit?

ALETHEA Yes, of course.

GENTLY Ellen Mallam

ALETHEA Well that begins to make sense. Her father works for us.

GENTLY Did he have access to the car?

ALETHEA He's free to use it anytime. Gosh. What a run of bad luck he's had. Lost his wife, lost his job at the pit, then throat cancer, now this.

(CONTI NUED)

28. 26

## GENTLY

Throat cancer?

28 EXT. ENTRANCE TO ABBERWICK HALL - DAY 2. 17:00. 28

For the second time today, GG drives them through the gates.

29 I/E. GG'S CAR TRAVELLING - DAY 2. 17:10. 29

And on towards BILLY at his fencing work, where they pull up. BILLY sees them and sticks his head in through GG's window again - again disconcerting JB by doing so.

## BILLY Yiz wanta buy a compass, you two. Straight past the House of Lords stableblock- gan quiet cos tha fast asleep in the aftanoons- torn right at the Profumo Swimmin Pool, ower the bridge at the Christine Keeler Goldfish Pond-

He finds GG's warrant card under his nose.

## GENTLY

William Mallam?

BILLY's taken aback. His twinkling eyes fill with worry.

BI LLY

Aye...?

30

## INT. ABBERWICK HALL, ESTATE WORKSHOP - DAY 2. 17:20. 30

GG and JB standing, BILLY slumped in a chair at a trestle table in a corner which is used as a tea-break station. Music from the next scene is already fading in. Folk rock. A bass is joined by drums is joined by violin is joined by lead guitar. The song is "Matty Groves", all about an illicit love affair between high born and low, and the violent deaths that ensue. But we are focussed on BILLY.

### BILLY I went ower the watta to see Ellen Wilkinson speak the day the Jarra March set out. "The Fiery Spark" the called a. Ye knaa, she had that thing aboot a... ye moved towards a, ye knaa...? And I thought to mesell - and I hadn't even met a mutha yet- "if a ever have a girl child I'll call a Ellen". And my

Ellen had that fiery spark an all.

29. 27 31

## INT. THE MINERS WELFARE CLUB - NIGHT 1 FLASHBACK. 20: 30. 31

The band is playing on the stage and the packed AUDIENCE is enjoying it. Taking the eyes so far is the guy playing lead guitar - ANTHONY BAUGH (24) - his long hair held out of his eyes by a bandana. But the real star is about to appear. As the song arrives at the vocals, ELLEN arrives from the wings, already playing her violin, and starts singing. Perfectly timed arrival, and what a voice.

> ELLEN (SINGING) A holiday, a holyday, and the first one of the year. Lord Arlen's wife came into the church, the gospel for to hear. And when the meeting it was done, she cast her eyes about. And there she saw little Matty Groves, walking in the crowd.

She's dressed in vintage. Very sexy. She is much admired. Not least by ANTHONY, with whom she has flirtatious eye contact as she sings to him

ELLEN (SINGING) (CONT'D) "Come home with me, little Matty Groves, come home with me tonight. Come home with me, little Matty Groves, and sleep with me tonight".

ANTHONY (SINGING) "Ch, I can't come home, I won't come home, and sleep with you tonight. By the rings on your fingers I can tell, you are Lord Arlen's wife."

He's not as good as she is, but good enough. They shared raised eyebrows as she sang the bed invitation.

32

## INT. ABBERWICK HALL, ESTATE WORKSHOP - DAY 2. 17:32.

32

GENTLY And this was last night. The last time you saw Ellen. In the Miners Welfare in your village.

BI LLY

Who was drivin the car, M sta Gently?

GENTLY We don't know yet. Do you ever drive one of the cars home?

BILLY A walk to work. 30.

BILLY Nah, nah. Just mates she stayed with sometimes in Newcastle or Morpeth.

GENTLY And how long had she been home from London?

BILLY 3 or 4 days.

#### BACCHUS

She was a student.

**BI LLY** 

At the Royal College of Music. From a bairn, M ster Bacchus, she could pick up any instrument and play it. Dunno where she got that from Not me or her Mam And what a voice. She made the angels weep.

INT. THE MINERS WELFARE CLUB - NIGHT 1 <u>FLASHBACK. 20: 32.</u> 33

The song has intensified in pace, narrative drive and volume.

ELLEN (SINGING) Saying "How do ye like my featherbed, and how do you like my sheets? How do you like my lady,

#### BACCHUS

You call him "Hector"...? The class enemy that stole the country off the workers...?

**BI LLY** 

Aye, I knaa, but me n Hector's been friends for donkeys. Forst time I ever had a drink with Hector he still owned the pit and I was the Deputy. I was supposed to fight him over conditions, like. Which I did. But ye couldn't help likin the man. He sez tiv iz one day "WIII iam, my dear, isn't it marvellous that two chaps with nothing in common can share a bottle of beer?" I sez "Hector, we have got summit in common: wa both traitors to wa class!"

GG smiles along with him, though there are tears mixed in with the smiles for BILLY himself. He likes this guy. But:

GENTLY So Hector has known Ellen all her life?

#### BILLY (NODDING)

Used to always tell a she was beautiful, ye knaa... Give a presents on a birthday an that. She used to give him that big smile and say "Hector, give all the land and money yiv pinched back to Td -0.211 Tc 0.096 "44 2i Tm -0

GENTLY

She had your politics.

**BI LLY** 

She believed in justice and fair shares. She hated big countries like the US of A invadin little places like Vietnam

BACCHUS (BORING) Did James have a gash on his head, Mister Mallam?

BILLY A gash? Nah, why?

HUS (Bies

## BACCHUS (V.O.) What were they talkin about?

BILLY (V.O.) Ah, the were too far away. All I remember was thinkin "there he goes again: drunk behind the wheel".

He looks for ELLEN, but she's gone.

38

37

## INT. ABBERWICK HALL, ESTATE WORKSHOP - DAY 2. 17:50.

38

GENTLY Could he have been offering to come back later and give her a lift to the coach station in Newcastle?

BILLY She did say she had a lift.

BACCHUS

From James?

BILLY Well I assumed Anthony.

This knocks JB off course.

#### BACCHUS

Anthony Baugh the guitarist who's writin a book? Why did you assume that?

**BI LLY** 

Cos that's what usually happened. The wa close. The grew up together.

GENTLY Does he have a car?

BI LLY

Nah, he uses the ones from the estate.

GENTLY So, if he thought he might be needing a car last night, he-

They are interrupted by the shy arrival of HECTOR, who is devastated.

HECTOR So sorry, Inspector. Billy... this is appalling.. appalling.. 36. 37

(CONTI NUED)

BILLY stands. They clap each other on the back. It very nearly turns into an embrace, but neither man can manage it. So it peters out. And besides: a serpent has entered BILLY's heart. HECTOR apologizes again to GG and JB for interrupting.

## HECTOR (CONT'D)

Sorry, I just wanted...

## GENTLY (UNDERSTANDS) We were finished anyway. We want to

talk to Anthony Baugh.

HECTOR

I'm afraid he isn't here today.

GENTLY

Could he have borrowed the Austin yesterday?

Whereas a young lass like Ellen, who had more brains and more heart in a little finga than he'll ever have...! Her life can be snuffed out like ...!

He snaps his fingers. He's right on the edge.

#### BACCHUS

M ster Mallam, could there've been something goin on between James Blackstone and Ellen?

BILLY's anger is growing.

BI LLY

She used to stick up forrim Even when he was a kid. Used to say he was better than he seemed. Nobody else could stand him Sept eez Mam

BILLY's anger erupts.

### BILLY (CONT'D) Eez killed a, hasn't ee...? The only one who had any time for him An eez killed a. Why's he not locked up?

JB's look at GG says he couldn't agree more.

39 INT. POLICE HQ, GENTLY'S AND BACCHUS' OFFICE - NIGHT 2. 39 19: 30.

> GG and JB smoking. Having a whisky. But nothing shared or convivial about this scene. They are pissed with each other. So they stay in their own thoughts. GG's thinking about this long day. Started with that dream again, then that unexpected chat with Arnie, then this wasted life and grief. JB yawns. Both really tired. TAYLOR arrives.

> > TAYLOR There's still nobody in at Anthony Baugh's house, sir.

Silence. He looks to GG and gets nothing. So he looks to JB and gets:

BACCHUS (DON'T LOOK AT ME, MATE) I don't care.

More weary silence. GG glances at JB.

Silence. He's desperately hoping GG will say:

## GENTLY

Go home.

He goes, fast. GG has drawn a map on a blackboard. He goes to it. JB's eyes go to the ceiling. What a waste of time.

GENTLY (CONT'D) Hall here. Village here. A1 to Newcastle and the coach station off this way. River winds round like this. Death occurred here at the bridge.

BACCHUS (FASCINATING, BUT) Is there a point to this, cos-?

GENTLY (OVER HIM) She had a ticket to London. So.. Whoever was driving her was presumably taking her to her Dad's to pick up her luggage.

#### BACCHUS

Yeh. So?

GENTLY But she did have her violin with her. Why's that, you think?

BACCHUS (ARE WE REALLY DI SCUSSING THIS?)

No i dea, guv.

GENTLY

Maybe she took her violin with her wherever she went.

BACCHUS Yeh. Good job she didn't play the piano.

#### GENTLY

Or maybe: she was playing it somewhere. If so: Where? Who with? Her band had all gone home in their van. Except Anthony Baugh. Who we can't find. And that's why I care.

JB's losing the will to live. GG blows out his cheeks, feels the tiredness and makes a decision. He stubs out his fag and stares at JB, who has also made a decision.

## GENTLY

Nothing to say to me?

BACCHUS (KNOWS WHAT'S COM NG) About what?

GENTLY

OK, let me tell you just one of the vast array of things that's wrong with planting false evidence.

BACCHUS Whoa, Nelly. "False evidence"?

GENTLY The blood sample. I take it James Blackstone is A2B....?

JB shrugs, innocently.

GENTLY (CONT'D) Come on, you know that from the times you tried to nick him

#### BACCHUS

So?

GENTLY And a smear of it conveniently turns up on the car frame.

Silence. Eye contact.

# GENTLY (CONT'D)

Do I look like I came down the Zambesi on a banana boat? The blood sample doesn't exist, does it?

BACCHUS (HAD ENOUGH) Eez got a three inch gash across eez head! Eez got previous for drinking and driving! Thiv stopped iz puttin him away twice before and -guess what - now eez killed somebody! And you're tryin to stop iz a third time!

#### GENTLY

I'm trying to stop you perjuring yourself! And ruining Bob Anderton's career. He's got a wife and four kids relying on his salary! He's risking it all because you are SURE you've got the right man, you just need the evidence to prove it! A beat. JB just shakes his head at all of this.

## BACCHUS

Blokes your age can't help yerselves, can yiz? "Oh, this bloke was in the army, he'll be a good bloke". "Oh, this bloke's got a posh accent, he'll never tell iz a pack of lies"!! How many times do these guys get a free pass just cos they won the pools the day they were born?!

Silence. GG pretty hurt by that.

## GENTLY (QUI ETLY)

That's how you see me, is it? A man who knows his place.

A beat. JB should shut up, but:

## BACCHUS

You... These people've been fartin in wa faces for centuries and now we don't have to take it anymore... and there was you... my Guvnor.. calling this stuck up cow "Yer Ladyship"..

This is said more in sadness than anger. Silence.

GENTLY

And this excuses you inventing evidence against her son.

JB sighs.

39

## BACCHUS

A: I'm doin nothin of the kind, yer imaginin it. B: He's guilty. And C: Do you think this lot got all tha land, all tha wealth, all tha titles - by stickin to the rules?

How depressing it is for GG to hear this.

## GENTLY

Go home.

## BACCHUS

Guv...

GENTLY Just go. You disappoint me, John.

A beat. JB goes: well, fuck you then. GG lights another fag and pours another Scotch.

Music starts. Tim Buckley "Once I Was", perhaps. Slow and moody, anyway. Once I was a soldier. Once I was a hunter.

46 INT. POLICE HQ, GENTLY'S AND BACCHUS' OFFICE - NIGHT 2. 46 21: 42.

GG's face. He's thinking about "helpless and drowning". And "never". Another slug of anaesthetic. Nearly there, George.

47 I/E. THE CAR UNDER THE WATER - NIGHT 1 FLASHBACK. 01:57 47

ELLEN motionless, her hair floating around her face as the car fills with water.

48 INT. POLICE HQ, GENTLY'S AND BACCHUS' OFFICE - NIGHT 2. 48 21:45.

GG slumped face down at his desk, passed out. No more pain tonight.

The song ends and we are back into real sound as we move to:

49 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY 3. 04:55.

49

Ge and JB are marching along corridors, not connecting with one another at all. They pass CLEANERS, mopping floors.

BACCHUS This wouldn't've happened if we'd arrested him yesterday.

GENTLY 4 'O' Levels and 20/20 hindsight.

50

INT. HOSPITAL CANTEEN - DAY 3. 05:00.

50

It's only 5 a.m so the place is barely up and running, and sparsely populated. A few YAWNING PORTERS with tea and fags. Hot drinks are coming not from the unmanned counter but from a vending machine, in a far corner, which has a queue waiting to use it. In the queue is ANTHONY. In the other far corner sits ALETHEA, arms folded, legs crossed. Very very angry with the world. Beside her is HECTOR, lost in thought. JB and GG enter and look around. She looks up and sees GG and JB approaching.

> ALETHEA What business is this of theirs!?

GENTLY (ARRI VI NG) How's your son?

HECTOR They don't really know yet. Would you like a cup of tea, Inspector? 43.

GG shakes his head, but:

BACCHUS Yeh, woul dn't mind.

HECTOR (CALLING OUT)

Ant hony?

GG and JB look over and realise it's the ANTHONY.

HECTOR (CONT'D) A tea for Sergeant Bacchus?

BACCHUS (QUI ETLY) Ant hony Baugh, guv.

GG moves quickly into action.

GENTLY (QUIETLY) Find out all you can. I'll take him outside.

He heads for ANTHONY.

51 INT. HOSPITAL CANTEEN - DAY 3. 05:10.

51

JB sitting at the table with ALETHEA. She's barely acknowledging him JB notices blood on her peignoire, which is visible because her overcoat has fallen open. 51 CONTI NUED:

## BACCHUS (HARD TO BELIEVE) Sorry, are you saying James accidentally cut his own throat...?

Suddenly a crack in her armour.

#### ALETHEA

He isn't going to die. He's not. He's just hurt himself very badly. He'll get better, things will be different.

#### BACCHUS

What things?

#### ALETHEA

He is quite unbelievable, isn't he?

JB thinks she's still talking about James here, until he sees she's again watching HECTOR, who's now at the front of the queue holding a five pound note, looking slightly lost.

## HECTOR (CALLING ACROSS) Darling? Do you have any shrapnel?

She shakes her head in despair. He leaves the queue and starts asking the YAWNING PORTERS if they can change a fiver.

#### ALETHEA

My husband was conceived upon a flannel. Did you know that, Sergeant?

#### BACCHUS

I beg your pardon...?

JB has no idea where that came from

52 EXT. HOSPITAL GARDENS - DAY 3. 05:15.

52

GG and ANTHONY are walking and smoking.

#### ANTHONY

Apparently Alethea heard a noise from the garden, looked out of the window and there he was.

GENTLY So Alethea found James with his throat cut?

## ANTHONY

Yes.

45. 51 And did James manage to say anything?

ANTHONY Well presumably not, with his throat cut...

Not dying of grief, then.

GENTLY Were you at the Hall last night?

ANTHONY At night? Of course not.

GENTLY Do you think he tried to kill himself?

ANTHONY (THAT'S OBVIOUS) James was... is probably the most unhappy human being l've ever met. And one of the least likeable.

GENTLY What makes him unhappy?

ANTHONY I'm not a psychiatrist.

GENTLY What makes him unlikeable?

ANTHONY

Proximity to him

A beat. GG trying to figure this guy out.

GENTLY How do you fit in at Abberwick Hall, Anthony?

## ANTHONY

The ruling class of England went mad about ten years ago -shortly after Suez- didn't you notice? I'm writing a book about it. "Through A Class Darkly - The Decline Of The Old Order". Think it'll sell?

53 INT. HOSPITAL CANTEEN - DAY 3. 05:25.

HECTOR has got some change and is once more in the queue.

(CONTI NUED)

53

## ALETHEA

BACCHUS

## Well what happened?

HECTOR raises his armin salute. Nearly at the front.

ALETHEA

Mm? Ch, he lost his case, obviously.

54 EXT. HOSPI TAL GARDENS - DAY 3. 05:35.

CONTI NUED: (2)

#### GENTLY

How do you know James so well?

ANTHONY

My parents owned the village shop. James and I were at school together.

GENTLY You went to public school..?

ANTHONY

Yep.

GENTLY Thrifty shopkeepers.

## ANTHONY

Yes. But not that thrifty. Hector paid for my education. And no, I'm not his illegitimate offspring, it was pure philanthropy. Hector does a lot of good in the world. All he asks in return is that you try and do the same.

## GENTLY

And will you?

## ANTHONY

Well that's debateable. I'd like to go into politics.

## GENTLY

As James is meant to do? Except he has a mother who controls the local Tory Party and decides who the MP will be.

## ANTHONY

Lucky boy, eh?

## **GENTLY**

But. If James were no longer a candidate..?

#### ANTHONY

Ch, crikey. Am I a suspect?

But GG isn't laughing.

GENTLY Tell me why you shouldn't be..?

55

INT. HOSPITAL CANTEEN - DAY 3. 05:50.

HECTOR is putting one tea on a tray, while another is filling under the automatic spout. He's asking the rest of the queue if he can get them anything. They're shaking their heads. He doesn't really get this whole self service thing. JB wants the rest of the story before he comes back.

> BACCHUS Well, how? How did the "old bird" get away with that?

ALETHEA She simply told the Judge the facts of the matter.

BACCHUS

Which were...?

#### ALETHEA

That because he wasn't getting any sex, Hector's father was in the habit of relieving himself on a flannel in her bathroom One night in her bath she'd used the flannel to wash herself down there, thus impregnating herself with his sperm

A beat. HECTOR's on his way.

BACCHUS And the judge believed that!?

ALETHEA Of course he believed her. Her father was a Duke.

HECTOR's nearly arriving. A thought occurs to JB:

BACCHUS So ... who's your husband's real f at her?

(CONTI NUED)

49. 54

55

54

ALETHEA God knows. Probably some hornyhanded son of toil from the local coal mine. That would explain a lot about Hector.

HECTOR Tea at last. Getting to know each other?

He knows exactly how his wife operates. A NURSE arrives near the doors.

NURSE Is there a "Mr. and Mrs.... Guyzance?" here?

ALETHEA straight to her feet, fearing the worst.

56 EXT. HOSPITAL GARDENS - DAY 3. 06:00.

56

## GENTLY

So where exactly were you last night, Anthony? I sent officers to bring you in.

ANTHONY (WORRIED)

Why?

GENTLY Answer me, will you?

ANTHONY I was at my parents' bungalow on the coast.

GENTLY Will they corroborate that?

ANTHONY

Yes. 5 Tj 1 0 0 1 240aDhwsl Nr 86. 418T HIS WATCH 0 0 1 168 418

CONTI NUED:

56

## GENTLY (CONT'D) Why had you gone to your parents?

## ANTHONY

## Why shouldn't I?

#### GENTLY

A friend of yours had just lost her life in a car crash. Someone you were close to, according to her father. Is that true?

He seems to falter. He nods.

GENTLY (CONT'D) Why wasn't it you driving that car? Billy assumed it would be you giving her a lift to the coach station. Why didn't you?

A beat.

#### ANTHONY

Because she wasn't going to the coach station. James was driving them both to London.

GENTLY How do you know this?

ANTHONY

She told me.

GENTLY How close were you, Anthony?

Again he won't answer. He no longer seems cocky.

GENTLY (CONT'D) Did you love Ellen Mallam, Anthony?

A beat.

## ANTHONY

All my life.

JB arrives at a distance.

#### BACCHUS

Guv?!

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY 3. 06:10. 57

> GG and JB find HECTOR on the end of a row of chairs, looking at the liver spots on his hands. He greets them with sad eyes and a shake of the head.

51.

56

(CONTI NUED)

57

## HECTOR

He'd lost too much blood. They couldn't bring him back.

ANTHONY arrives too. He sits at a distance.

57

GENTLY

I'm very sorry. What can you tell us about what happened?

### HECTOR

Very little. I heard my wife's screams, I went to the window, saw the scene and immediately phoned for help. When I got outside... well there was blood everywhere and James was barely alive. We bandaged his neck, but... He was drowning in his own blood. The ambulance took an age.

GENTLY And you saw nobody el se?

HECTOR Such as who...?

GENTLY Ant hony Baugh, for instance?

HECTOR

No, of course not.

#### GENTLY

And the previous night. The night Ellen met her death? Was he at the Hall then?

HECTOR Why on earth would he be there in the evening?

Beat. JB and GG share a look. They know something's being hidden.

#### BACCHUS

I'm very sorry as well. Hector. Before your wife's screams - did you hear anything? Raised voices, a car engine, anything...?

## HECTOR

No.

BACCHUS

This silver knife that was found beside James..?

IGG6. FILM 1. PINK AMENDMENTS. 20.03.12 CONTINUED: (2)

#### HECTOR

It's a letter opener. I don't know what's happened to it.

BACCHUS It's in a forensics lab.

GENTLY

Was it familiar to you?

## HECTOR

It's my wife's. A gift from James on her 40th birthday. It has an inscription on it: "To Mummy from James". It normally lives on her desk in the day room

GENTLY Do you think your son took his own life with it, sir?

A pause.

57

## HECTOR

Yes. I do.

GENTLY And why would he do that?

Anot her pause.

#### HECTOR

l don't know.

#### GENTLY

Were the three of you at home together yesterday evening?

#### HECTOR

I don't know about Alethea. We live rather separately. I didn't see James until .... I myself went out for a while.

### GENTLY

To go where?

#### HECTOR (RELUCTANTLY)

I went to Billy Màllamis housé, to share a drink with him But he slammed the door on me. There was real hatred in his eyes. (He looks at JB). I fear he may have been led to the wrong conclusion about his daughter's death.

A beat. JB hunkers down beside him

53.

## BACCHUS

I think your son killed himself last night because he was responsible for Ellen Mallam's death. So why do you keep pointin yer finger at other people, I wonder?

## HECTOR

Confucius had a saying, Sergeant. "When a wise man points at the

#### BACCHUS

It's just a smokescreen, guv! The truth just walked out the door!

GENTLY (HAD ENOUGH OF THIS) You don't have to be there. I'll question Billy Mallam myself.

BACCHUS (POINT TO BE MADE HERE) No, no, no! It's all my fault, so I'll do it!! I will do it!

58

57

#### INT. POLICE HQ, INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 3. 09:00.

58

Full of smoke and old tea cups. We arrive in the middle of a loud and aggressive interrogation. GG, JB, BILLY, and a PC taking notes. JB is holding up a photo of the knife.

#### BACCHUS

This was meant for slittin envelopes, not throats. It's like a razor. What did ye sharpen it on? A dry-stone wall, mebbies?

BILLY Is this lad on drugs?

#### BACCHUS

Par don?! ?

BILLY How would I get hold of the thing?

BACCHUS You work there!

BILLY Aye, in the fields, not in the Hoose.

#### BACCHUS

The place leaks like a sieve, man, it's got twenty five back doors! You tellin iz Hector goes round checkin window latches every night?

**BI LLY** 

There's easier ways of killin a man than that, bonny lad.

## GENTLY

Such as?

BI LLY A shot gun. . . . ?

55.

57

58 CONTI NUED:

#### BACCHUS

Yeh, but you wanted poetic justice, didn't ye, for yer gorgeous artistic daughter?! Cut her killer's throat with a knife inscribed to his "Mummy"! What could be sweeter than that?!

BILLY (GETTING DISTRESSED) Havin Ellen alive would be sweeter, bonny lad.

BACCHUS But she's not, Billy. You'll never see her again. Never.

GG winces. BILLY takes deep breaths to steady himself.

BACCHUS (CONT'D) You had hate in your heart last night, Billy.

BI LLY

Sez who?

BACCHUS Who came knockin on yer door?

A beat. BILLY can hardly believe it.

BILLY (TOGG) Hector put yiz up to this?

GG can't deny it. BILLY even more distressed.

#### BACCHUS

James Blackstone leaves Ellen to drown. James Blackstone drowns in his own blood. Nobody on this earth would blame ye, Billy. Nobody.

Silence.

GENTLY Did you leave the house after Hector came to see you?

A beat. BILLY nods. JB surprised.

GENTLY (CONT'D) Where did you go, Billy?

His face takes us over to:

59

## EXT. A BEND IN THE RIVER - NIGHT 2 FLASHBACK. 21:45

BILLY stands looking into the inky black water of the river. He has the shotgun in the crook of his arm

> BILLY (V.O.) To the river. I went to the river.

60

### INT. POLICE HQ, INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 3. 09:05.

60

59

BI LLY

To see where me bairn lost a life. Thinkin a might die there in the same spot.

Silence. GG nods. JB leans against a far wall. BILLY looks right into GG's eyes.

#### BILLY (CONT'D)

Mister Gently, soona or later, many of we get to a place in life where wiv lost everythin. And there we meet despair. A couldn't kill mesell last night. And this was not simple cowardice. At age 19, I spent 6 days trapped by a rockfall underground on me own. So, I've met despair before. Wrapped tight round me throat in the dark. But a survived it. As a will the loss of Ellen. As a have everythin else. So: if James Blackstone met despair last night and couldn't see a life beyond it... well, what ever else he may or may not've done: God rest eez soul.

Silence. They are both moved by him What a big heart. But:

GENTLY Anthony Baugh thinks Ellen and James were leaving for London together.

BILLY shakes his head. Daft idea.

GENTLY(CONT'D) Knows it for a fact, he says.

#### BI LLY

He only knows one thing for a fact: that Anthony Baugh will one day be at the top of the greasy pole. I've watched that lad grow up. He believes in nothin except heself. Not really an answer to the question, say GGs and JB's faces. But it's all they're going to get, it seems.

#### BACCHUS

All the same: why would he make this up? You told us yourself. She held onto James's hand, she kissed him Funny thing for a fiery workin class lass to do. Stand neckin in the street with a bloke whose mother's posher than the Queen.

GENTLY

Billy. The post-mortem told us Ellen had sex with somebody in the few days before she died.

BILLY Did yiz have to telliz that?

GENTLY Could it have been James?

BILLY Nevva in a million year.

GENTLY

Ant hony...?

A pause. BILLY shrugs.

BILLY I think the used to, but that was years ago...

GG nods. Enough pain for this man tonight.

GENTLY I'll get a squad car to take you home, Mister Mallam

BILLY shakes hands with them both. He accepts that JB was just doing his job, however loathsomely. JB humbled. The PC escorts BILLY out. JB breathes out. Sometimes he hates this fucking job. A WPC arrives and hands GENTLY a written report on the knife, and the item itself, bagged and tagged. She goes.

> GENTLY (CONT'D) Only one recognizable set of prints on the weapon. James Blackstone's

#### GENTLY

What am I thinking? I'm thinking "Why have I got a total liability for a Sergeant?"! You spend half an hour talking to Alethea Blackstone and what do you bring me? A clue about how or why her son might've met this grotesque death? Oh, no! Some load of rubbish about his Granny's flannel!!

JB is a bit red-faced.

60

#### BACCHUS

I'll go and see her again.

#### GENTLY

Ch, no you won't. I'll do it myself. Go and get Anthony Baugh. "Was he still going to bed with Ellen or not?" If so, "What was she doing running off to London with James?" And how angry was Anthony about that? The man he despised heading off to London with the girl he loved.

#### 61 INT. ABBERWICK HALL, CHAPEL OF REST - DAY 3. 11:00

A catafalque awaits the coffin. Flowers have been brought in and candles are waiting to be lit. Stone plaques adorn the walls in memory of previously departed Guyzances. ALETHEA is arranging flowers, pale, beautiful, and dressed simply in black. GG is sitting in a pew. He glances at a plaque which tells him that the 1st Earl, Cornwallis Blackstone, died at the Battle of Malplaquet in 1709.

#### ALETHEA

When the undertakers have done their work, people can come and pay their respects. He was so... so very loved my son. England has lost a future leader.

GG not sure about that one. There are suddenly tears in her eyes and she needs a little assistance. A handkerchief would be favourite. A beat. GG takes a clean one from his pocket and holds it out. She comes and gets it. And dabs her eyes as she slips into the pew alongside him

> ALETHEA (CONT'D) Have you ever lost anyone you were really close to, George?

He doesn't reply, but his eyes go to his hands.

59. 60

## ALETHEA (CONT'D)

Of course you have. We're the generation, aren't we? I lost my father and my brother in the war. In the same week.

#### GENTLY

I lost some comrades. Anzio. Sicily before that. I also lost my wife a few years ago.

She touches his arm, gives it a little rub.

## ALETHEA

l'm so sorry.

## GENTLY

It's been very much on my mind recently. Can't quite work out why.

#### ALETHEA

Because you're a sensitive man, George. But life will be good again. Life always works out well in the end for good men like you.

He's actually quite moved. She is rather brilliant at this.

GENTLY

Your ladyship, I need to-

ALETHEA

Why don't you call me Alethea? When GENTLYALETHEAGENTLY

61

#### ALETHEA

Gosh, hasn't he got a lot to say for the son of village shopkeepers...? Complete nonsense.

#### 62 INT. POLICE HQ, INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 3. 11:05.

62

ANTHONY sits waiting. BACCHUS comes in, breezily. He sits down and smiles. And smiles.

## ANTHONY

Can I help you in some way?

BACCHUS Yeh. Sometime before she died, somebody shagged Ellen. Any idea who?

ANTHONY has to stop himself attacking him. He simply stares at him. And he seems a bit stunned.

#### ANTHONY

You really are.... Something.

BACCHUS

All right, an easier one: was it you? Or was it James?

#### ANTHONY

Body's hardly cold, Sergeant.

#### BACCHUS

Oh, sorry, if you want cops with good taste they should send us all to public school so we can learn to cane each other. I just went to the local Grammar, though. So... never got into bondage.

ANTHONY (WITH DIGNITY) This is an... amazing, kind, beautiful, talented human being who's lost her life in tragic circumstances. The fact that you think it's funny. The fact that you think she's to be mocked.... does you no credit. And actually maybe that is something to do with your education.

#### BACCHUS Oh, where did I go wrong?

Eyeball to eyeball.

62 CONTI NUED:

## BACCHUS (CONT'D)

Let me tell you what I'm thinkin, Ant. I'm thinkin this. There's you sent off to school to learn how to parrot the upper classes, and it'll always be all right cos there's yer childhood sweetheart Ellen, the Fiery Spark, Red Ellen, and as long as she still loves ye, ye haven't turned into a complete toady. But one day: disaster. Red Ellen thinks to herself "why am I botherin to drop me knickers for a pretend Upper Class Twit when I can have a real one?" James never took eez eyes off her at the concert. That musta made you angry, did it? Then he leaves her to drown in the river. And ye expect iz to believe you sat all last night playin draughts with yer Mam and Dad in Seahouses?

#### ANTHONY

Ask them

#### BACCHUS

I have, and thiv said "yes, he was here all the time, honest". What are Mams and Dads for?

## 63 INT. ABBERWICK HALL, CHAPEL OF REST - DAY 3. 11:08.

She finds GG standing right beside her.

GENTLY What was James' relationship with Ellen Mallam?

She smiles at the idea.

## ALETHEA

"Relationship"? James was a man of action. A soldier. They're allowed to sow their wild oats. And village girls... well sometimes they get the wrong idea. She laid herself down for him - and then expected a wedding ring.

GENTLY So she threw herself at him?

## ALETHEA

She'd ensnared him with sex, it was obvious.

63

GENTLY This proud working class girl, named after a famous working class heroine, wanted a life with your

## GENTLY

Why?

63

## ALETHEA

Because he hat ed my son. Hat ed and envied him Because you can give a boy an education. But you can't give him breeding.

#### GENTLY

Oh, but Anthony's family, really, isn't he? Why else would you ring him at his parents at 2 in the morning and ask him to comfort you?

Silence. Her face. She won't look at him

GENTLY (CONT'D) How I ong has Anthony been your I over, AI et hea?

A movement in the doorway. HECTOR has come in. He clearly must have heard that last question. And they know that.

HECTOR James is home, my dear.

ALETHEA Would you excuse us now, please.

She walks towards him

GENTLY

One more question.

She turns to look at him, standing beside HECTOR.

ALETHEA Did Ellen come to visit you the night she died?

A beat.

## ALETHEA (CONT'D) What an absurd idea.

HECTOR looks at the ground. GG's face.

64 EXT. ABBERWICK HALL - DAY 3. 11:12.

The coffin is wheeled on a gurney towards the Chapel. HECTOR and ALETHEA fall in behind it. GG watching. Their hands find one another's as they walk. The perfect image of the grieving parents. GG heads for his car.

64. 63

64

#### BACCHUS

It's a simple question: was it you or James shagged Ellen shortly before she died?

#### ANTHONY

## Well. It wasn't me, no.

JB grins.

#### BACCHUS

Oh, dear. The thought of her and James woulda hurt ye, wouldn't it. But it wasn't James either, was it?

Silence. ANTHONY meets his gaze and waits.

### BACCHUS (CONT'D) I nicked him twice for bein drunk behind the wheel. Both times he was with a lad. Different lads, but never any sign of lasses. And Billy just laughed at the idea of Ellen and James.

ANTHONY nods.

#### ANTHONY James was queer. Everybody knew that. Except one person, of course.

66 INT. ABBERWICK HALL, CHAPEL OF REST - DAY 3. 11:18. 66

ALETHEA and HECTOR stand looking down on the coffin on its catafalque. The top portion of the lid has been removed,

67 CONTI NUED:

IGG6. FILM 1. PINK AMENDMENTS. 20.03.12

FUNERAL DI RECTOR The more reasonably priced items are towards the .....

BILLY nods.

67A INT. POLICE HQ INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 3 11.21

67A

BACCHUS

So who was it then, Anthony?

A beat.

ANTHONY

I don't know. But you could tell just by looking at her she'd met someone. I've never ever seen her more happy.

68 EXT. THE MINERS WELFARE CLUB - DAY 3. 11:22.

68

The CARETAKER (70) is removing the poster advertising The Fiery Spark from the glass-fronted display beside the door as GG's car arrives and parks. GG gets out.

> GENTLY Excuse me, is it all right to leave my car-?

CARETAKER Does it eat meat?

GENTLY

Par don?

CARETAKER Nee botha, hinny, it can stop there all day.

OK, it's a foreign country.

GENTLY Were you here the night Ellen Mallam was playing?

CARETAKER Wadden missit.

Possible yes. Worth persevering.

GENTLY What sort of music is it?

(CONTI NUED)

## CARETAKER

Like folk-rock, ye knaa. Songs aboot the common people. In yesteryore. But wi drums and guitars an all that.

GENTLY (STRUGGLING) Like "Hey, nonny, no" on LSD...?

#### CARETAKER

Nah, nah, like she would do a sorta rock n roll version of an owld ballad like Matty Groves, where the peasant lad gets killed for gannin to bed wi this posh tart. Aboot how the upper class always stuffs the lower class in the finish.

A beat. This sounds interesting.

#### GENTLY

Yeh...? What else?

## CARETAKER

Er... she done a one called "Silver Dagger". Was one of a best ones.

GENTLY Silver Dagger? How does that go?

CARETAKER Ah, hey, when ah sing the mice throw thasells

#### BACCHUS

"Silver Dagger"....?

ANTHONY

It was the last song she ever sang.

ANTHONY's face takes us over to:

70

69

INT. THE MINERS WELFARE CLUB - NIGHT 1 FLASHBACK. 20:45. 70

ANTHONY, on acoustic guitar, is playing a kind of Country and Western version of a traditional ballad called "Silver Dagger". A violin briefly joins, played by ELLEN, with her back to the audience. Then she turns and steps into the mike, as we join the scene.

> ELLEN One more then. This is for mothers everywhere.

She doesn't look at JAMES, but he knows who she means and she looks mischievous.

ELLEN (SINGING)(CONT'D) Don't sing love songs. You'll wake your mother. She's lying there. Right by your side.

ANTHONY glances at her and smiles to himself.

ELLEN (SINGING) (CONT'D) And in her right hand. A silver dagger. She says that I can't be your bride.

JAMES' face. Enraptured, troubled. HECTOR glances at him, and back to the stage. It's an enchanting song, and she's singing it brilliantly.

ELLEN (SINGING) (CONT'D) "All maids are false". Says your mother. "They'll tell you wicked, winning lies. And the very next evening, they'll love another. Leave you alone, to pine and cry".

Her violin comes back to play the refrain. Then it's the last verse and she's pretty much singing it to one person.

ELLEN (SINGING) (CONT'D) Go find yourself a rich young maiden. And hope that she will be your wife. For I have been warned and I've decided. To live alone all of my life. The violin ends the song. She's looking straight at JAMES in the ensuing silence. JAMES' face. HECTOR looks at him She bows. The audience applauds.

71 EXT. THE MINERS WELFARE CLUB - DAY 3. 11:26.

71

GENTLY You knew Ellen, I assume?

CARETAKER Watched a grow up. Lovely lass. Breaks ya heart, ye knaa.

GENTLY Was there anything different about her that night? Did anything unusual happen?

CARETAKER Why she was nevva usually short of a lift.

## **GENTLY**

Sor r y?

CARETAKER A locks the place up and torns the lights off, and there she is: sittin on the wall on a own.

GENTLY What did she say?

CARETAKER Just a lift hadn't torned up.

GENTLY Did she say who her lift was?

## CARETAKER

Nah. She just said "I don't care, I'll walk". Like determined, ye knaa? And off she goes, with her violin.

73 EXT. THE MINERS WELFARE CLUB - DAY 3. 11:28. 73

GENTLY Heading which way?

CARETAKER (POI NTI NG) That way.

GENTLY Towards Abberwick Hall. With her violin.

74 INT. POLICE HQ INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 3. 11:50.

74

BACCHUS What were your movements after the ANTHONY

Well then... for some reason he must've come back for her in the Austin.

#### BACCHUS

Why?

ANTHONY seems at a loss to explain it.

GENTLY What car were you driving, Anthony?

ANTHONY Just one of the Abberwick cars. I don't remember which.

#### GENTLY

Don't you?

He won't look at them

GENTLY (CONT'D) Ellen walked to the Hall. I have an eye witness. 5 miles. In the dark. On her own. She could've taken the short cut through the woods. But she didn't. Because she didn't want to miss James driving back for her.

EXT. ENTRANCE TO ABBERWICK HALL - NIGHT 1 FLASHBACK. 12:55.

#### BACCHUS

Oh. This why he paid to send you to a posh school, Anthony? So's eez wife would have a bit of wellspoken rough? Or was this just your way of sayin "thank you" to Hector?

He'd like to kill JB. But he takes a big breath and lets it out.

#### ANTHONY

I was with Alethea when Ellen arrived.

## BACCHUS

Doin what exactly?

ANTHONY looks him right in the eye.

ANTHONY We were discussing... the uprising.

77 INT. ABBERWICK HALL, ALETHEA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 1 <u>FLASHBACK.77</u> 01:05.

She's cross-legged on her messed-up bed, half-wrapped in a peignoire, smoking the biggest joint in the world. And 0/F16 1 H3 0

She takes a huge drag on the spliff, which she then blows into his mouth. She leaves the spliff with him, and lays back.

#### ALETHEA

#### Good. Because I'm ready.

## 78 EXT. LAWN OUTSIDE DAY ROOM, ABBERWICK HALL - NIGHT 1 78 <u>FLASHBACK. 01:07</u>

In the moonlight, ELLEN positions herself in the middle of the lawn and takes the violin from its case. She taps four times on the corners of the violin with the heel of her bow to set the time. And starts playing "Silver Dagger".

79 INT. ABBERWICK HALL, ALETHEA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 1 <u>FLASHBACK.79</u> 01:08.

He's on top of her, the remains of the joint in an ashtray. A huge explosion on the radio. Sirens too.

ANTHONY That will be you one day, my lady. Your house will burn, baby, burn.

ABETHEATm Tm bc 0v4 Ta 0 boy?nside her now, by1 Ch, reeaaally, I'm so scared. The working classes on the rise, at last seeing through all our ruses to keep them enslaved. Lord, what shall become of me...?

back.

There is ELLEN playing her violin on the lawn. He looks too, but doesn't want to be spotted.

## ALETHEA

This girl is insane!

#### ANTHONY (REALIZING WHY SHE'S HERE) She's come to collect James, Alethea. He wants to go to London with her. Wants to drop out. Find his own space, whatever.

Didn't even bother to hear that stupid notion.

ALETHEA The police can deal with this. Tell her she has ten minutes to get off my property!

ANTHONY (PANIC) I can't talk to her! She-

A beat.

79

ALETHEA Oh, she still doesn't know. Well it's about time she did.

She heads for the door.

#### ANTHONY

Alethea. Why not just let him go with her? He isn't what you think he is. He isn't clever enough.

## ALETHEA

Ch, and you are, I suppose...? Don't get i deas above your station, Anthony. Your parents ran a shop.

#### ANTHONY

He's weak, Alethea. And not very bright.

#### ALETHEA

Have you ever met any Government ministers?

ANTHONY I wrote his essays for him all through school and Oxford.

## ALETHEA

And were amply rewarded!

79

74.

ANTHONY

Can't you see what you've turned him into? A vain, stupid, lazy-!?

She slaps him Hard. A beat. We can hear ELLEN singing up at the windows now:

ELLEN (O.S.) (SINGING) Don't sing love songs. You'll wake your mother.

80

79

INT. POLICE HQ, INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 3. 11:56.

#### GENTLY

Then what?

This is the most painful bit for ANTHONY.

#### ANTHONY

One of the things I loved most about Ellen was she told you exactly what she thought.

81 EXT. ABBERWICK HALL, LAWN OUTSIDE DAY ROOM - NIGHT 1 81 FLASHBACK. 01: 15.

ELLEN. ANTHONY comes out. She stops playing and stares at him

ELLEN

Ant hony...?

Then she sees ALETHEA arrive from the day room, still in her peignoire. And she realises the story. It makes her sad.

ELLEN (CONT'D) Ch, Anthony. You're better than this.

He's shame-faced. She smiles at him

ELLEN (CONT'D) I always worried you might sell yer granny, but I never thought you'd shag her!

ALETHEA Make her shut up.

ELLEN You are a total nightmare, Missis Guyzance, do you know that? Does Hector know?

ANTHONY nods, even more shame-faced.

75. 79

## ELLEN (CONT'D) Well, good luck.

She shakes her head in disbelief at them and starts playing again, looking up at the windows.

## ALETHEA

"Lonely enough to become obsessed with a young girl?", he wonders. But JB wants progress. He's to one side, and quite aggressive. For a change.

#### BACCHUS

Ellen Mallam came here the night she died. You've been lying to us. Isn't that against the rules for barons?

A beat. HECTOR nods. Might as well come clean.

HECTOR

Yes. She came here.

GENTLY

ELLEN (SINGING) Don't sing love songs. You'll wake your mother. She's lying there. Right by your side.

88 INT. ABBERWICK HALL, DAY ROOM - NIGHT 1 FLASHBACK. 01:10. 88

Drawn by the voice, JAMES has come down to the day room in his pyjamas and dressing gown. He watches her from the shadow of the drapes fringing the large windows.

> HECTOR (V.O.) James wasn't at all what he appeared to be.

89 EXT. ABBERWICK HALL, STABLEYARD - DAY 3. 12:36.

89

HECTOR is talking specifically to JB.

HECTOR He was a frightened young man, really. Desperately unsure of what he wanted of life; desperately unsure he could deliver what life seemed to be asking of him

GENTLY What life was asking of him? Or his mother?

HECTOR hears the question and looks at him, but doesn't need to answer.

BACCHUS And where was she while this was going on?

HECTOR's face is sad.

HECTOR You'll have to ask her that.

BACCHUS I'maskin you.

GENTLY (ENOUGH) We've spoken to Anthony Baugh. We know where your wife was.

HECTOR nods. JB just thinks GG is going soft.

BACCHUS Where is your wife now, please?

89 CONTI NUED:

## HECTOR

She's asleep. Exhausted. You can appreciate that, I'm sure, Sergeant.

## BACCHUS

Somebody is responsible for the death of Ellen Mallam I think your wife knows who. So could you go and tell her "wakey, wakey", please?

HECTOR goes. GG glances at JB. Does he have to be so offensive?

BACCHUS (CONT'D) You do it your way, I'll do it mine, OK? I've had enough of this bunch of toffee-nosed hypocrites.

GG stares at him

GENTLY OK. Your way if you must.

90

INT. ABBERWICK HALL, DAY ROOM - DAY 3. 12:40

90

GG, JB, HECTOR and ANTHONY. Enter ALETHEA looking fragile now. She takes a cigarette from the ornamental box on the table, lights it, and turns to face them She lets her gaze rest on ANTHONY first, with disdain. He can't hold her gaze.

#### ALETHEA

You wish to speak with me yet again?

#### BACCHUS

Ellen Mallam walked here at 1 a.m the night she died. According to your husband, she came to talk to your son. You were in your bedroom With Anthony Baugh.

A beat. She gazes at ANTHONY again.

ALETHEA Goodness, Anthony. You have been t al kat i ve.

JB is totally in charge. He thinks he's got this sorted. GG finds him distasteful.

#### BACCHUS

Yep, he's give we all the gory details.

79. 89 90 CONTI NUED:

Her face. HECTOR's face - he's trying to be stoic in the face of this complete humiliation.

BACCHUS (CONT'D) So what happened next? When Ellen tried to take your son away from you?

#### 91 EXT. ABBERWICK HALL, LAWN OUTSIDE DAY ROOM - NIGHT 1 91 <u>FLASHBACK. 01:17.</u>

JAMES finds the courage to step out of the shadows of the drapes. ELLEN sees him and smiles. She stops, lowers her violin, and holds out her hand to him. He steps through the French windows. He hasn't yet seen ALETHEA in the shadows.

> ALETHEA Go back to bed, James. I'm dealing with this.

He sees her and stops walking.

ELLEN It's not as hard as you think, James. Just take the first step. Come with me. Do you really want all this rubbish for the rest of your life...?

She means the whole place, and the people in it.

ALETHEA

Go inside, James.

ELLEN

Don't let her do this to you. There's an amazin world out here, beautiful man. You'll find different friends, do different things. I promise. I'll help you.

She holds out her hand. He might almost do it, though he's swaying under the influence of the bottle of brandy he has in his hand. But he shakes his head. Can't do it.

JAMES Just forget about me, Ellen.

ELLEN No, I won't just forget about you.

#### ALETHEA

The police will be here shortly, my dear, so I suggest you pack up your fiddle and clear of 8Nnd fi here you belong.

ELLEN Let him choose his own life, Alethea.

ALETHEA He's chosen. Haven't you, James?

ELLEN James? It's now or never, babe.

JAMES steps for ward, unsteadily.

## ALETHEA

We have no idea. We were busy with James and his cut head. Perhaps she drove herself - does that never occur to you?

GENTLY She was in the passenger seat when the car crashed.

A beat. ALETHEA shrugs. HECTOR's eyes bore into her. JB glances at GG. We can't just let them get away with this, for lack of a bit of evidence.

GENTLY (CONT'D) James was drunk and now bleeding profusely from a head wound. I don't believe he drove the car.

## HECTOR

James was barely conscious.

It's a stand off, and ALETHEA knows it.

## ALETHEA

Chief Inspector, it seems to me you'd like us to solve this mystery for you - but I'm afraid we can't. And you've obviously failed to come up with any evidence of who was behind the wheel, or you'd have ALETHEA

Blood types...?

BACCHUS

It's quite simple. James was A2B, so one of his parents must be. So. What are you?

## ALETHEA

" O' .

JB nods. Disappointing. But that leaves the obvious.

## BACCHUS

## Ch. What about you?

HECTOR thinks. GG looks at him

#### HECTOR

It's my blood. I drove the car. Somebody had to. James was incapable. My wife... was under the influence.. So I took the nearest car and drove Ellen home for her luggage. Except we didn't get there. I drove too fast. I lost control of the car on a bend. I lost consciousness for a while. When I came to, we were upside down in the river. Ellen was trapped. I tried to free her. The water was rising. I kicked open my door and scrambled out. God help me, I tried to save her. But I couldn't free her foot. I talked to her. Held her hand. Till the water covered her and she died...

Silence. They all find this harrowing. Even ALETHEA has to swallow hard. ANTHONY is crying softly.

#### BACCHUS

You could've just told us all of this at the beginnin.

HECTOR glances at his wife and ANTHONY.

#### HECTOR

And have all of this held up to public scrutiny? My life -our livesa laughing stock? There go the aristocracy again... mad, degenerate... sexually incontinent... no longer fit to lea.04 238.44 1 0 0 1 168 106.44 Tm n3-o wdegenerate... smp

#### BACCHUS

Well. Who wants to be "led" by people who can leave a dead girl out in a drowned car all night...? You're under arrest.

GENTLY

Just a second. He's under arrest when I say so. Your blood type is "B", Hector. I checked with the hospital.

#### BACCHUS

Eh?

GENTLY Basic police work, Sergeant.

ALETHEA onto it straightaway.

ALETHEA Then how could there be an A2B blood stain in the car?

All eyes on JB.

GENTLY Yes. How could there be, Sergeant?

A beat.

BACCHUS Musta been... some sort of mistake.

GENTLY A very serious mistake I think.

Will JB show shame and be quiet now? No.

BACCHUS Like Hector thinking James was his son.

A beat.

HECTOR I was never under that misapprehension, Sergeant.

OG is really sorry for him ALETHEA helps herself to a cigarette.

GENTLY We have no evidence except your confession. Do you wish to retract it?

#### HECTOR

No. Someone should pay. I was brought up to honour a debt.

Silence. She's looking at him

92

ALETHEA

You're a fool, Hector.

#### HECTOR

Perhaps so. But I can live with being a fool, Alethea. What I wouldn't be able to live with, however, was knowing that I'd as good as killed my own son.

That gets her right in the solar plexus.

HECTOR (CONT'D) How could the poor chap live, after all you'd done to him?

ALETHEA No, no... it was a silly accident..

HECTOR I sawit, Alethea. I sawit.

She's shocked.

ALETHEA No. Hector... no. Please.

ALETHEA (V.O.) Please. Please. Darling. Please.

ALETHEA Hector...? Please...?

ALETHEA (V. O.) Please. James. Please.

## 93 EXT. ABBERWICK HALL, LAWN OUTSIDE DAY ROOM - NIGHT 2 93 <u>FLASHBACK. 22:05.</u>

ALETHEA is on her knees in supplication.

ALETHEA I'm begging you. Sweetheart. Please. Don't. Don't.

Now we see JANES twenty feet away with the 12 bore pointed at his chin. There's a brandy bottle beside him on the lawn. She is in great distress, but trying to gently talk him round. But he gets pleasure from hurting her. And this is what will hurt her the most.

85.

92

(CONTI NUED)

## JAMES

Why not, Mummy?

#### ALETHEA

I can give you twenty good reasons, my precious, a hundred. Because you are the most precious creature in all the world.

#### JAMES

I'll count to ten. One.

She almost gives way to tears and despair, but:

ALETHEA No, no, please. James. Because you are brilliant.

#### JAMES

Two.

ALETHEA Darling, let's go inside and talk. This is us. We can talk any problem away.

#### JAMES

Thr ee.

ALETHEA Because I love you with every fibre of my being.

## JAMES

Four.

ALETHEA What if I do this? What if I crawl to you?

She crawls slowly across the lawn. He laughs. We see HECTOR watching from the shadows at the edge of the lawn, resigned to what he knows must happen.

ALETHEA (CONT'D) Yes, laugh at me, but don't destroy yourself. Not after all we've done together.

JAMES What've I ever done?

#### ALETHEA

So much - and so very much more to come. The world is waiting for you.

#### JAMES

Ah. The world. Five, six.

## ALETHEA

Please. Please, please, please. James, let me hold you, let me take all the pain away.

She kneels up and opens her arms to him. She's only eight feet away now.

#### JAMES

She was the only real friend l've ever had, because she didn't want anything from me. She only wanted to help me. So tell me, Mummy, why did she have to die...?

#### ALETHEA

Oh, it's so, so hard to lose what's precious. Which is why you mustn't do this.

#### JAMES (SM LING) Because it'll hurt you?

#### ALETHEA

Because the world needs you. You know that, James. You've always known that. We've always said that, haven't we? Since you were a little boy...

JAMES You've always said it. I just wanted... a life to live.

He no longer seems desperate. Just sad. He lays down the 12 bore on the lawn. He takes a swig from the brandy bottle.

#### ALETHEA

Darling. You don't need that. You don't need anything. You are the master of your own destiny. And one day: of all our destinies. Come here.

She thinks she's won. She stands and walks slowly towards him

#### ALETHEA (CONT'D)

My darling son. My brave, brave boy.

JAMES She was right about you. You are a night mare.

#### ALETHEA

James?

93

She stops walking. A moment of stillness. He reaches into his pocket. He pulls out the silver handled letter opener.

## ALETHEA (CONT'D)

Oh, no...

JAMES

Seven, eight, nine, ten, Mummy.

He stabs himself in the neck. Her face, with his blood splattered across it. HECTOR in the shadows. He stays where he is.

94 INT. ABBERWICK HALL, DAY ROOM - DAY 3 12.50

94

Their faces. ALETHEA's is like a mask of pain. No pretending anymore. Silence.

GENTLY Stand up, would you, please?

HECTOR stands up.

GENTLY (CONT'D) Hector Blackstone, I'm charging you with causing death by dangerous driving and attempting to pervert the course of justice. You do not need to say anything but anything you do say may be used in evidence. Do you understand?

HECTOR Perfectly, thank you.

GENTLY Is there anything?

HECTOR

Yes.

ALETHEA starts to head for the door.

HECTOR (CONT'D) Oh, no, l'd like you to hear it too, Alethea.

She stops and turns, reluctantly. HECTOR looks her right in the eye.

88. 93 94 CONTI NUED:

HECTOR (CONT'D) I want you to know exactly what happened, because I will never tell a court.

His eyes take us over to:

## 95 I /E. THE CAR TRAVELLING ALONG COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT 1 95 FLASHBACK. 01: 30.

ELLEN Hector. Stop for a minute. I want to talk to you.

The Austin pulls into a lay-by. Fields all around. The moon shining.

96 I/E. IN THE CAR - NIGHT 1 FLASHBACK. 01: 32.

She looks at him

ELLEN Hector... When did you stop breathin...?

A beat. He knows exactly what she means, but:

HECTOR As you get older, Ellen, things

like one's personal happiness don't really matter quite so-

ELLEN

No, no, no. Sorry, I don't want to hear anything about "duty" and all that.

He looks at her and is engulfed by sadness.

HECTOR My life has been so lonely, Ellen. For so long.

ELLEN Let's go for a walk.

He's taken aback.

HECTOR

But -

ELLEN There's bags of time.

She's already getting out of the car.

## 97 EXT. A HILLSIDE - NIGHT 1 FLASHBACK. 01.40

They are looking out at the lunar landscape. She is sitting. He has his head resting in her lap. She is singing to him

#### ELLEN (SINGING) My Daddy he's a handsome devil. He's got a chain five miles long. And on every link a heart does dangle of another maid he's loved and wronged.

He's smiling and relaxed. He opens his eyes to find her smiling radiantly.

HECTOR What are you thinking of? Or is it "who"...?

She blushes. She nods.

ELLEN I've never ever been so happy in all my life.

HECTOR Is he waiting for you in London?

She nods. Then she looks him right in the eye.

ELLEN It can happen for you as well, Hector. I want you to believe that. Can you?

A beat.

HECTOR I could try to believe it.

ELLEN Good. When you get home. Start making changes. OK? Promise?

HECTOR (LYING) I promise.

She looks at her watch and gasps.

ELLEN Look at the time!

They get up. She kisses him They run laughing towards the car.

90.

## INT. ABBERWICK HALL, DAY ROOM - DAY 3. 12.55

ALETHEA has become transfixed by him

#### HECTOR

It's perhaps hard for you to understand what those few minutes meant to me. Just to be touched by a beautiful young woman. It was only when Ellen kissed me that I realised the truth of what she'd said. I had stopped breathing. I had stopped breathing the day Bonny died.

Silence. ALETHEA walks out, slowly.

HECTOR (CONT'D) A man can drown in air if he has noone to breathe for. Can you possibly understand that, Inspector Gently?

Silence. GG's face.

#### GENTLY

Yes.

Silence.

HECTOR We were late. I wanted Ellen to get to London to meet the man she'd fallen in love with. I drove too fast.

His face.

98A INT. POLICE HQ, CELLS - NIGHT 3. 19:00

98A

HECTOR, in his stocking feet, is handing over his watch, his braces and his tie to the CUSTODY SERGEANT. Then he walks through the door into the tiny cell. JB and GG watch him The door closes on him

99 INT. POLICE HQ, GENTLY'S AND BACCHUS' OFFICE - NIGHT 3. 99 19: 30.

Whiskies. And cigarettes. And some unpacking of minds to do.

BACCHUS He'll get off. His posh lawyer'll say he was in shock.

## GENTLY

Which he was. He held her hand till she died, John. Then he walked home to tell his wife and his wife's young boyfriend what had happened.

Silence. JB shakes his head at it all.

#### BACCHUS

I don't understand these people. It's like The Wizard of Oz, isn't it? Everybody thinkin there's some amazing brains running the place, but when you look behind the curtain, it's just some weird Hurray Henry who used to be in the Bullingdon Club. England, eh? You know: David Frost and Private Eye and them have pulled the curtain aside and we can all see the.. you know: the pyramid.

# GENTLY (WHAT THE FUCK'S HE ON ABOUT NOW)

What pyramid's this?

#### BACCHUS

The pyramid with Queenie at the top. Serried ranks of landowners, all went to public school together, all married each other's sisters, so the kids've all got webbed feet, and none of them's got a proper job. The game's up, though. Cos once you start 8.1 vrs,

GENTLY

On your honour?

He holds up his glass to chink.

BACCHUS

On my absolute honour.

We see, but GG doesn't, that JB has his fingers crossed. He chinks glasses. They smile. He's forgiven.

GENTLY That was a solemn promise.

BACCHUS Cross me heart and hope to..

He crosses his heart and cuts his throat. Then realises.

BACCHUS (CONT'D) Oh. Sorry. That was a bit...

He starts to chuckle. Ellen's "Matty Groves" starts up as we play out. JB chuckling and GG shaking his head in disbelief. And drinking. And smoking. Time to go. Her voice plays us out.

102 OM TTED

102

103

103 OM TTEDs