

" T H E E N D "

O R

" W A I T I N G F O R A L A N "

A SHORT FILM

BY

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CHARACTERS

(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

MARCIA JOHNSON

ALAN JOHNSON

MR. SAXBY

MRS. BETTS

Most of the action takes place in a large well-appointed country house.
It is spring, the evenings are getting longer.

1. INT. BEDROOM. EARLY EVENING

A WOMAN (MARCIA JOHNSON) IS SITTING IN BED READING. SHE TURNS THE PAGES OF HER BOOK AND THEN PUTS IT DOWN BY HER BED. SHE PICKS UP THE CLOCK BY HER BED AND LOOKS AT IT. THERE IS THE SOUND OF A CLOCK STRIKING FIVE. SHE THROWS BACK THE DUVET AND CLIMBS OUT OF BED. SHE IS DRESSED IN HER SLIP. SHE GOES OVER TO THE DRESSING TABLE AND COMBS HER HAIR.

2. INT. BATHROOM. EARLY EVENING

SHE ENTERS A BATHROOM/DRESSING ROOM AND LOOKS THROUGH A LARGE CUPBOARD OF DRESSES. SHE PICKS OUT SEVERAL DIFFERENT ONES BEFORE PICKING ON A CASUAL BUT SMART COCKTAIL DRESS. SHE PUTS IT ON, ADMIRES HERSELF IN THE MIRROR AND MOVES ONCE MORE THROUGH TO THE BEDROOM.

3. INT. BEDROOM AS BEFORE

SHE MAKES GOOD THE DUVET AND LAYS OUT A MAN'S PYJAMAS AND DRESSING GOWN ON THE BED. SHE PICKS UP THE PYJAMAS AND INSPECTS THEM FOR A STAIN ON THE COLLAR. SHE MOVES OVER TO A CHEST OF DRAWERS AND SELECTS A CLEAN PAIR. ALONGSIDE SHE SETS OUT A SET OF CASUAL CLOTHES FOR A MAN (SWEATER, JEANS ETC.). SHE WINDS THE CLOCK UP. SHE DRAWS THE CURTAINS.

4. INT. KITCHEN

MARCIA ENTERS AND GOES OVER TO A CORNER CUPBOARD. SHE PICKS UP A TRAY ON A RACK BENEATH AND OPENING THE CUPBOARD, SETS OUT TWO GLASSES AND A RANGE OF DRINKS.

5. INT. AS ABOVE

HER HAND OPENS AN ICE BOX AND REMOVES ICE CUBES.

6. INT. AS ABOVE

HER HAND BREAKS UP THE ICE CUBES INTO AN ICE CONTAINER UNDER THE COLD TAP AT THE SINK.

7. INT. AS ABOVE

SHE POURS NUTS INTO A NUT BOWL, CHEESELETS INTO ANOTHER BOWL.

8. INT. SITTING ROOM

SHE ENTERS WITH THE DRINKS TRAY AND PUTS IT DOWN ON AN ANTIQUE WRITING TABLE. SHE PAUSES TO LOOK AT A PHOTO OF TWO CHILDREN, SMILES BRIEFLY AND MOVES OVER TO A BUREAU. SHE SITS ON THE EDGE OF AN ARMCHAIR AND WRITES SOMETHING ON A PIECE OF HEADED NOTEPAPER.

9. INT. AS ABOVE

CLOSE UP OF HER WRITING "SEND BIRTHDAY CARD TO MARK", "ASM MARK AND JOHN WHICH WEEKENDS THEY WANT TO COME HOME".

10. INT. AS ABOVE

SHE SETS TWO NEWSPAPERS (TELEGRAPH AND FINANCIAL TIMES) BY AN ARMCHAIR. SHE LIGHTS A FIRE IN THE OPEN GRATE.

11. INT. KITCHEN

SHE RE-ENTERS THE KITCHEN AND PICKS UP A NOTE ON THE KITCHEN TABLE. WE READ IT: "CASSEROLE IN THE OVEN. GARLIC RUNNING LOW. SEE YOU TOMORROW. MRS. BETTS".

12. INT. AS ABOVE

SHE WALKS OVER TO A LARGE AGA COOKER. SHE OPENS ONE OF THE OVENS, REMOVES A CASSEROLE, OPENS IT, POURS IN SOME WINE AND REPLACES IT.

13. INT. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM

SHE OPENS THE DOOR TO A DINING ROOM AND CHECKS THAT THE TABLE IS LAID. SHE RE-ARRANGES SOME OF THE CUTLERY WHICH IS WRONGLY POSITIONED AND REMOVES THE CHEESE BOARD TO A SIDE DRESSER.

14. INT. TV LOUNGE

SHE ENTERS, DRAWS THE CURTAINS, SWITCHES ON TWO OF THE LAMPS. SHE PLACES A BOX OF CIGARS BY ONE OF THE SOFAS. SHE RE-ARRANGES SOME FLOWERS IN A VASE AND MOVES ONE PLANT FROM ON THE TELEVISION TO ANOTHER POSITION. THE TELEPHONE RINGS.

15. INT. SITTING ROOM

SHE ENTERS AND PICKS UP THE 'PHONE.

MARCIA

Hello darling ... half an hour? Right. Everything's ready ... bye darling.

SHE REPLACES THE 'PHONE. SHE HESITATES AND THEN, MOVING TO THE DRINKS TRAY, POURS HERSELF A STRONG GIN AND TONIC. SHE SITS IN AN ARMCHAIR AND PICKS UP A MAGAZINE WHICH SHE FLIPS THROUGH AND THEN LEAVES LYING ON HER LAP. SHE SWALLOWS HER DRINK IN ONE GO AND GETS UP TO POUR ANOTHER.

16. EXT. STABLEYARD

A CAR PULLS INTO THE YARD AND DRIVES INTO A GARAGE.

17. INT. GARAGE

A PAIR OF SUITED LEGS EMERGES OUT OF THE CAR. THE CAMERA MOVES UP THEM AS A GLOVED HAND LOCKS THE CAR DOOR.

18. INT. SITTING ROOM

CLOSE UP OF A DRINK BEING Poured.

19. EXT. GARDEN

LOWER HALF OF THE SUITED BODY ENTERS A GARDEN GATE AND CLOSES IT.

20. INT. SITTING ROOM

MARCIA (SITTING ONCE MORE) EMPTIES HER DRINK AND LISTENS. THERE IS A SOUND OF A DOOR BEING OPENED. SHE STANDS, STRAIGHTENS OUT HER DRESS, QUICKLY CHECKS HER HAIR IN THE MIRROR.

21. INT. PORCHWAY

A MAN (BACK VIEW) TAKES OFF OVERCOAT AND SCARF AND HANGS THEM ON PEGS. HE TURNS AND WE SEE HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME, A MAN IN HIS EARLY MIDDLE AGE, BALDING, WELL-BUILT, A SELF-SATISFIED FACE. HE SMOOTHS BACK WHAT REMAINS OF HIS HAIR AND HEADS TOWARDS THE CAMERA.

22. INT. SITTING ROOM

THE DOOR OPENS. THE MAN ENTERS. MARCIA IN THE FOREGROUND MOVES TO MEET HIM. HE KISSES HER ON THE CHEEK. HE IS ALAN JOHNSON, HER HUSBAND.

ALAN

Hello darling. Everything alright?

SHE NODS.

... down in a tick then.

ALAN EXITS. MARCIA REMAINS STANDING AND THEN GOES TO THE DRINKS TRAY AND POURS A WHISKY AND SODA WHICH SHE CARRIES ACROSS TO THE ARMCHAIR WITH THE NEWSPAPERS.

23. INT. BEDROOM/BATHROOM SUITE

THERE IS A SOUND OF SHOWERING. THE CAMERA PANS FROM THE NEATLY LAID OUT CASUAL CLOTHES TO A SHOWER VISIBLE THROUGH A DOORWAY INTO THE BATHROOM AREA. ALAN EMERGES WITH A TOWEL WRAPPED AROUND HIM AND, WALKING TO THE FOREGROUND, BEGINS TO GET DRESSED IN THE CASUAL CLOTHES. HE IS AS METICULOUS ABOUT HIS APPEARANCE CASUALLY DRESSED AS IN HIS SUIT.

24. INT. SITTING ROOM

ALAN ENTERS AND GOES OVER TO POUR HIMSELF A DRINK.

MARCIA

There's one by your chair darling.

ALAN

(MOVING OVER TO THE CHAIR) Of course. Thank you.
Have a good day?

MARCIA NODS. ALAN MOVES OVER TO THE CHAIR. SITS DOWN, TAKES A SIP FROM HIS DRINK AND PICKS UP THE NEWSPAPER.

MARCIA

Supper won't be long.

ALAN'S FACE APPEARS BRIEFLY FROM BEHIND THE PAPER.

ALAN

Good.

MARCIA LOOKS DOWN AND PLAYS WITH HER EMPTY GLASS.

MARCIA

I'll just go and see that everything's alright.

ALAN

Fine.

MARCIA GETS UP AND LEAVES THE ROOM. ALAN TURNS THE PAPER OVER, TAKES ANOTHER SIP FROM HIS DRINK AND SINKS FURTHER INTO HIS CHAIR.

25. INT. KITCHEN

MARCIA REMOVES THE CASSEROLE FROM THE BOTTOM OVEN AND VEGETABLES FROM THE TOP OVEN AND CARRIES THEM THROUGH TO THE DINING ROOM. THE CAMERA MOVES IN ON THE STEAMING CASSEROLE.

26. INT. SITTING ROOM (SEEN THROUGH A DOORWAY)

ALAN IS STILL READING HIS NEWSPAPER. MARCIA APPEARS IN THE DOORWAY AND STANDS MOMENTARILY WATCHING HIM.

MARCIA

Shall we eat?

ALAN PUTS DOWN THE PAPER, SWALLOWS HIS DRINK, GETS UP AND CROSSES OVER TO HIS WIFE, KISSES HER ONCE MORE ON THE FOREHEAD AND EXITS PAST THE CAMERA IN FRONT OF HER. THERE IS SILENCE APART FROM TICKING CLOCKS.

27. INT. DINING ROOM

THE COUPLE ARE FINISHING EATING.

ALAN

That was delicious. (HE SMILES AT MARCIA)

MARCIA

Have some more. There's plenty left.

ALAN

No thanks darling. (HE PATS HIS STOMACH)

MARCIA

I'm afraid there's only fruit and cheese for afters.

ALAN LOOKS AT HER AND SMILES. HE DRAINS A BOTTLE OF WINE INTO HIS GLASS.

ALAN

I'll just have coffee in the sitting room tonight.
How about you?

SHE PICKS AT AN APPLE.

28. INT. KITCHEN

THEY BOTH LOAD THE DISHWASHER WITH THE DIRTY DISHES. HE LEAVES THE ROOM, SHE FILLS THE COFFEE MACHINE.

29. INT. SITTING ROOM.

THE COFFEE IS BROUGHT IN. ALAN IS AGAIN BEHIND THE PAPER. MARCIA PUTS A CUP DOWN BY HIS CHAIR. HE LOOKS UP BRIEFLY.

ALAN

Thanks darling.

MARCIA SITS WITH HER OWN CUP OF COFFEE. AFTER A WHILE SHE PICKS UP SOME KNITTING AND TURNS TO CAMERA. ALAN IS STILL VISIBLE IN THE BACKGROUND.

MARCIA

Twelve years we've done this. Twelve years. Always the same every evening, apart from Christmas, the summer holidays and the occasional guests at weekends. (SHE SMILES) I must have knitted dozens of jumpers, darned hundreds of socks ... (SHE CHECKS HER KNITTING) The children? Both away at boarding school. Not that

it was much different when they were here. We had a nanny you see, well a young girl. Good company in the day time, but Alan didn't like me talking to her when he was at home. "Get's them confused" he used to say. (SHE LOOKS DOWN MOMENTARILY AT HER PATTERN) Funny he didn't think she'd be confused having to sleep with him once a week. (STARTS KNITTING AGAIN) Not that he knew I knew. He still doesn't. But she told me just before she left. He used to go into her room when I took the children to see grandma on Saturday mornings, regular as clockwork, fitted in like a business appointment.

ALAN LOOKS UP FROM BEHIND HIS PAPER.

ALAN

Any more coffee darling?

MARCIA GETS UP, FETCHES HIS CUP AND MOVES OVER TO THE COFFEE TRAY. SHE TURNS ONCE MORE TO THE CAMERA.

MARCIA

He always has a second cup. He's been having a second cup for twelve years. Black with a dash of cream.

ALAN

No sugar darling.

MARCIA

No sugar, not for the last two years. Started worrying about his waistline. On whose behalf heaven knows. Certainly not mine. I haven't had the chance to touch it for years.

ALAN

By the way, I asked George and Felicity over on Saturday.

MARCIA TURNS WITH THE COFFEE CUP AND TAKES IT OVER TO HIM.

MARCIA

Oh good. We haven't seen them for a long time.

ALAN

(LOOKING UP) Thanks darling. No, that's what I thought.

MARCIA

Felicity's vegetarian isn't she?

ALAN

Is she?

MARCIA RETURNS TO HER SEAT AND PICKS UP HER KNITTING.

MARCIA

Twelve years, day in, day out. That's at least 3600 days. (SHE SMILES) But not for much longer. You see tonight's the last night, the very last night, unless he ... excuse me ...

ALAN FOLDS HIS NEWSPAPER IN THE BACKGROUND AND STANDS UP.

ALAN

Think I might catch the news. Fancy coming through?

MARCIA

In a minute darling. I'll just finish this row.

ALAN WALKS OVER PAST HER, PATS HER ON THE HEAD AND EXITS. THE CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSER ON HER FACE.

MARCIA

Unless he (SHE PAUSES) ... well unless Alan does something tomorrow night - something different ... I'm going to (PAUSE) ... well let's just say things

won't be the same any more. (SHE CHUCKLES) He thinks I need him, he's always thought I needed him. I suppose I did used to, but I don't any more. I realised that this afternoon, lying in bed. I've thought it before many times, but always tucked the thought away as disruptive, untidy, uncomfortable. But this time, well I felt it ... so tomorrow night's the night unless ...

ALAN'S VOICE (OFF)

Do come through darling.

MARCIA

I'll give him three chances, three chances to change. Now if you'll excuse me.

SHE SMILES AT THE CAMERA, PUTS DOWN HER KNITTING AND EXITS.

30. INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT

ALAN UNDRESSES IN THE FOREGROUND AND PUTS ON HIS PYJAMAS (NEATLY LAID OUT FOR HIM). MARCIA IS PUTTING ON HER NIGHTDRESS IN THE BATHROOM IN THE BACKGROUND. ALAN CLIMBS INTO BED AND TAKES A BOOK FROM THE TABLE BY THE BED. HE SIPPS AT A CUP OF HORLICKS. SHE BRUSHES HER HAIR AND THEN COMES THROUGH AND JOINS HIM. SHE ALSO PICKS UP A BOOK. THEY BOTH READ. AFTER A MOMENT ALAN PUTS HIS HORLICKS AND BOOK DOWN, TURNS OFF HIS LIGHT AND TURNS OVER TO GO TO SLEEP, HAVING BRIEFLY KISSED HER ON THE CHEEK.

ALAN

Don't read for too long darling, I've got to be up early. (PAUSE) You wouldn't rub my neck for me would you? (SHE AUTOMATICALLY MOVES A HAND OUT) Mmm, just there, lovely. Love you darling, sleep well.

SHE CONTINUES TO READ FOR A WHILE AND THEN PUTS HER BOOK DOWN AND STOPS THE RUBBING, HER HAND PAUSING ON HIS NECK. SHE TURNS HER LIGHT OUT AND LIES DOWN TO SLEEP. THE CAMERA MOVES IN ON HER FACE. SHE SMILES AND LOOKS AT CAMERA.

MARCIA

Three chances - I'll give him just three chances.

SHE CLOSES HER EYES.

31. INT. BATHROOM. MORNING

ALAN IS HAVING A SHAVE. WHEN HE HAS FINISHED, HE GETS DOWN ON THE FLOOR AND WITH SOME DIFFICULTY DOES TEN PRESS-UPS, THEN CHEST EXPANSION AND FINALLY SOME RUNNING ON THE SPOT.

32. INT. KITCHEN. MORNING

MARCIA IS 'PLAYING' WITH BACON AND EGGS IN A FRYING PAN ON THE AGA STOVE. A TOASTER NEARBY RELEASES ITS TOAST. SHE TAKES IT OUT, PICKS UP A KNIFE AND CUTS OFF THE CRUSTS. SHE DIVIDES IT INTO TRIANGLES AND PLACES IT IN A TOASTRACK.

33. INT. ANOTHER PART OF KITCHEN

ALAN TAKES HIS SEAT AT THE KITCHEN TABLE, PICKS UP HIS POST AND BEGINS TO OPEN IT, PAUSES AND DOWNS AN ORANGE JUICE. THE BACON AND EGGS IS PLACED IN FRONT OF HIM, HE LOOKS UP AND SMILES. THE TOAST IS PLACED ON THE TABLE. MARCIA SITS AND TOYS WITH HER SPOON IN A CUP OF COFFEE, SHE DOES NOT EAT ANYTHING. SHE LOOKS UP AT THE CAMERA AND SMILES TIREDLY. THERE IS THE SOUND OF TOAST BEING CRUNCHED.

MARCIA

The last two pieces of toast I shall ever have to watch him eat. (SHE GLANCES AT HIM) What I've never understood is why he always insists on me making three bits, when he only ever eats two.

THE CAMERA MOVES UP TO ALAN MUNCHING.

34. EXT. FRONT DOOR

ALAN APPEARS AT THE DOOR WITH BRIEFCASE AND IN OVERCOAT OF DAY BEFORE. MARCIA APPEARS ON THE STEPS BEHIND HIM. THEY KISS. HE RUNS DOWN THE STEPS PAST THE CAMERA. SHE WAVES AND THEN GOES BACK IN THE HOUSE.

35. INT. BEDROOM

MARCIA ENTERS. SHE STRAIGHTENS THE DUVETS, FOLDS HER HUSBAND'S PYJAMAS AND HANGS HIS CASUAL CLOTHES ON A HANGER. SHE MOVES OVER TO THE WINDOW AND STARES OUT FOR A MOMENT, FILING HER NAILS AT THE SAME TIME.

36. EXT. GARDEN

SEEN THROUGH A WINDOW, A GARDENER WHEELS A WHEELBARROW THROUGH THE WALLED GARDEN BELOW HER WINDOW.

37. INT. BEDROOM

MARCIA MOVES FROM THE WINDOW, PICKS UP A NEWSPAPER AND SITS ON A CHAISE LONGUE TO READ IT. AFTER A MOMENT SHE LAYS THE PAPER ON HER LAP AND LOOKS UP REFLECTIVELY.

MARCIA

I don't think he'd give me a divorce. Not without a long messy fight. I don't want to have to do it this way, I really don't, but ... I can't spend my whole life waiting for Alan.

SHE RETURNS TO THE NEWSPAPER.

38. INT. DRAWING ROOM

A 'PHONE IS RINGING. MARCIA ENTERS AND PICKS IT UP.

MARCIA

Oh good morning ... yes ... yes ... no don't worry about Perrior water, just add an extra four bottles of tonic ... yes I'm sure you did order it ... can't rely on anybody any more, I know what you mean Mr. Sainsbury ... well yes there is ... I'd like two extra packets of Ryvita, half a pound of thinly sliced ham, and a bottle of bleach ... that's what I said Mr. Sainsbury, bleach ... makes things go white, that's right. Oh and a half bottle of brandy ... no not for cooking ... for me. Good. And you'll deliver this afternoon. Fine. Goodbye Mr. Sainsbury.

SHE PUTS THE RECEIVER DOWN AND STARES AT IT FOR A MOMENT. SHE LOOKS AT THE CAMERA MOMENTARILY AND SMILES.

MARCIA

One of the old sort, Mr. Sainsbury. Revels in service.

39. EXT. GARDEN WITH A VERANDAH IN ONE CORNER

MARCIA EMERGES FROM THE VERANDAH AND WALKS TOWARDS THE CAMERA WITH A PAIR OF SHEARS. SHE IS WEARING A HEADSCARF. SHE BENDS DOWN IN THE FOREGROUND AND STARTS TO PRUNE SOME ROSE BUSHES. ONE HAND IS GLOVED, THE OTHER BAR. SUDDENLY SHE PRICKS HER BARE HAND ON A THORN AND PUTS IT IN HER MOUTH. SHE DROPS THE SHEARS AND STANDS UP.

MARCIA

Damn. Every year I cut my finger (SHE SUCKS AT IT) and every year Alan comes home and says "Oh poor old you, let me kiss it better". (SHE SUCKS AGAIN) Then wags his finger at me and chortles "Now next year leave the pruning to Mr. Saxby, that's what I pay him for, to stop you having to get your hands dirty". Well there won't be a next year.

AT THAT SHE TURNS AND PULLS UP THE ROSES ONE BY ONE, LEAVING THEM ON THE LAWN ALONG WITH THE SHEARS. SHE DISAPPEARS OFF THROUGH A GARDEN GATE.

40. EXT. STABLEYARD

MARCIA IS STANDING AT A HORSE BOX PEERING IN. THERE IS A NEIGHING FROM INSIDE. A HORSE APPEARS. SHE TAKES OFF HER GLOVE, REACHES IN HER POCKET AND BRINGS OUT AN APPLE.

MARCIA

Poor old Chestnut. What have they tied you up for? Eh? Shall I let you go? Would you like that? Eh?

SHE IS ABOUT TO GO INTO THE LOOSE BOX WHEN THERE IS THE SOUND OF A WHEELBARROW. IN THE FOREGROUND THE GARDENER APPEARS WITH THE WHEELBARROW AND STOPS. MARCIA TURNS AND SEES HIM.

... morning Mr. Saxby. Chestnut's looking well
isn't he?

SHE MOVES OFF UP SOME STEPS AT THE END OF THE YARD. THE HORSE NEIGHS
EVEN LOUDER AS MR. SAXBY APPROACHES WITH HIS WHEELBARROW. AT THE
HORSE BOX HE BENDS DOWN AND PICKS UP SOMETHING. IN CLOSE UP WE SEE
IT IS MARCIA'S GLOVE. HE PUTS IT ON THE WINDOW LEDGE OF THE STABLE
AND THEN DISAPPEARS INTO THE STABLE.

41. EXT. A LARGE LAWN WITH A SUMMER HOUSE ON THE FAR SIDE

MARCIA IS SWINGING IN A SWING TO THE RIGHT OF THE SUMMER HOUSE.

42. EXT. AS ABOVE

SWING IN CLOSE UP. MARCIA FILLS AND EMPTIES THE FRAME. SHE IS SINGING.

MARCIA

Three blind mice, three blind mice
See how they run, see how they run
They all ran after the farmer's wife
Who cut off their tails with a carving knife
Did ever you see such a sight in your life as
Three blind mice.

THE SWING GRADUALLY SLOWS DOWN AS SHE STARTS THE REPEAT OF THE SONG.
IT COMES TO A HALT AND SHE SITS FOR A MOMENT, HER HEAD HUNG DOWN.

43. EXT. LAWN SEEN THROUGH RECTANGULAR ENTRANCE OF GARDEN HOUSE

MARCIA COMES AND SITS IN AN OLD WOODEN GARDEN CHAIR IN THE CENTRE OF
FRAME, HER BACK TO CAMERA. SHE STARES OUT AT THE TENNIS COURT LAWN.
HER HEAD BEGINS TO MOVE FROM SIDE TO SIDE. THERE IS THE SOUND OF A
TENNIS BALL BEING HIT AND SHOUTING AND LAUGHING. THE VOICES GET
LOUDER AND CLOSER. "WELL PLAYED ALAN", "COULD DO WITH A DRINK",
"YOUR LEGS LOOK GREAT IN THAT SKIRT MARSH ...", "WATCH IT SIMON, SHE'S
MINE NOW". THEN IN HER OWN VOICE "I'LL GO AND GET SOME BEER, I PUT
SOME IN THE FRIDGE TO COOL". "GOOD OLD MARCIA". SHE GETS UP AND RUNS
ACROSS THE LAWN THROWING HER HEADSCARF IN THE AIR AND LEAVING IT
WHERE IT FALLS. SHE RUNS DOWN A BANK AND THROUGH A GATE INTO SOME
FIELDS. SHE LEAVES THE GATE OPEN. SHE RE-APPEARS RUNNING ON THE
HORIZON.

44. EXT. BY A LAKE/RESERVOIR

SEEN THROUGH SOME BARBED WIRE, MARCIA APPEARS IN THE FOREGROUND AND CLIMBS THROUGH, CATCHING HER SWEATER ON THE WIRE AND LEAVING A PIECE OF WOOL. WE PAN WITH HER AS SHE RUNS DOWN TOWARDS THE LAKE. SHE RUNS ON TO A SMALL PROMONTORY WHERE THERE IS THE TOP HALF OF A CHURCH PRESERVED, ABOVE THE WATER LINE. SHE WALKS TO THE END OF THE PROMONTORY AND LOOKS ACROSS THE LAKE.

45. EXT. AS ABOVE

MARCIA IN THE FOREGROUND, CHURCH IN THE BACKGROUND. SHE IS THROWING STONES IN THE LAKE. SHE HALF TURNS TO CAMERA BUT DOES NOT LOOK DIRECTLY AT IT.

MARCIA

They flooded hundreds of acres to make this, and a whole village. The church only just managed to keep its head above water. I used to walk here when I was first married, when there were just fields and a church on the hill. I used to lie in the valley down there, look up at the sky and think how happy I was. (SHE CHUCKLES) And now it's covered in water, completely covered.

SHE TURNS TO GO AND AS SHE GOES PAST THE CHURCH SHE SUDDENLY STOPS AND, TAKING OUT A GEM MARKER FROM HER POCKET, LOOKS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT AND QUICKLY SCRAWLS ON THE WALL "I WAS HERE, BUT I'VE GONE. M." SHE SMILES AND RUNS OFF UP THE HILL.

46. INT. CONSERVATORY

MARCIA IS VISIBLE THROUGH THE CONSERVATORY WINDOW, WALKING UP THE LAWN. SHE ENTERS THE CONSERVATORY, PICKS UP A WATERING CAN AND BEGINS TO WATER PLANTS IN THE FOREGROUND. SHE STOPS AS MR. SAXBY EMERGES THROUGH A GARDEN GATE IN THE BACKGROUND, NOTICES THE ROSES SHE PULLED UP EARLIER AND, PUTTING HIS WHEELBARROW DOWN, STARTS TO RE-PLANT THEM. SHE RUNS TO THE DOOR OF THE CONSERVATORY.

MARCIA

I pulled them up Mr. Saxby, I don't like them. I want them thrown away. (MR. SAXBY PAUSES) Did you hear? I don't like them.

MR. SAXBY RELUCTANTLY STARTS PLACING THEM IN HIS WHEELBARROW. SHE SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT AND LEAVES THE CONSERVATORY.

47. INT. KITCHEN

A WOMAN (MRS. BETTS) IS MIXING FURIOUSLY AT A BOWL BY THE COOKER. ON THE COOKER THERE ARE ENDLESS PANS BOILING. THERE IS FLOUR ALL OVER THE SIDEBOARD AND A HALF-SMOKED CIGARETTE BURNING IN THE ASHTRAY. A RADIO IS ON, A BELL RINGS TO INDICATE THAT SOMETHING IS READY. MRS. BETTS OPENS ONE OF THE OVENS TO PULL OUT A BURNING CAKE.

48. INT. AS ABOVE

MARCIA IS WRITING A LIST IN THE FOREGROUND AT A TABLE. WE START CLOSE UP ON THE LIST WHICH HAS "GARLIC" AT THE TOP. MARCIA'S FINGER HAS A PLASTER ON IT. THE COOKING AREA WHERE MRS. BETTS IS COOKING COMES INTO VIEW AS THE CAMERA TILTS UP. MARCIA LOOKS UP AND WATCHES MRS. BETTS STRUGGLING WITH THE BURNT CAKE.

MARCIA

I've never understood Mrs. Betts. Always in a hurry. Always late for something. Slap, dash, "I'll just knock up a quick soufflé for you Mrs. Johnson" bang, crash, "I'll have to go now Mrs. Johnson cause me husband'll be home for his tea" mish, mash ...

AN OVEN DOOR IS SLAMMED SHUT, DISHES ARE PILED IN THE SINK AND A QUICK WIPE OVER OF THE WORK SURFACE DEPOSITS MOST OF THE FLOUR ON THE FLOOR. MRS. BETTS COMES OVER TOWARDS MARCIA TAKING OFF HER OVERALL.

MRS. BETTS

I'll have to go now Mrs. Johnson cause me husband'll be back for his tea. Just leave the dishes to soak and I'll see to 'em tomorrow.

MARCIA

I thought your husband didn't have a job any more to be 'back' from.

MRS. BETTS

No, well he doesn't. (PAUSE) But he still expects his tea.

MARCIA

Oh yes, I suppose he would. Funny though, when I think of Alan not going to work, I think of long walks in the country, dinner for two at some country pub, a chat in front of the fire ...

MRS. BETTS

Yes well ... I must dash. See you Mrs. Johnson.

MARCIA

Goodbye Mrs. Betts. Goodbye.

MARCIA WRITES SOMETHING AT THE TOP OF THE LIST AND THEN GETS UP. THE CAMERA ZOOMS IN ON THE LIST. WE READ "GOOD BUYS FOR ALAN" AT THE TOP OF A LIST OF SHOPPING, WITH AN EXCLAMATION MARK AFTER IT.

49. INT. BEDROOM (AS SHOT 1)

MARCIA GETS UP FROM HER REST. AT MIRROR SHE SPEAKS.

MARCIA

I wonder if I'll miss him, dear old Alan, dear reliable old Alan.

SHE BRUSHES HER HAIR.

50. INT. BATHROOM (AS SHOT 2)

MARCIA GETS DRESSED.

51. INT. BEDROOM (AS SHOT 3)

SHE LAYS OUT THE CLOTHES AND PYJAMAS.

52-55. INT. KITCHEN (AS SHOTS 4-7)

SHE PREPARES DRINKS, NUTS ETC.

56. INT. SITTING ROOM (AS SHOT 8)

SHE ENTERS WITH DRINKS TRAY. SHE GOES OVER TO THE BUREAU AND ADDS SOMETHING TO THE PIECE OF HEADED NOTEPAPER.

57. INT. SITTING ROOM AS ABOVE (AS SHOT 9)

SHE WRITES "EXPLAIN WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE CHILDREN".

58. INT. SITTING ROOM AS ABOVE (AS SHOT 10)

SHE SETS NEWSPAPERS BY THE CHAIR.

59-61. INT. KITCHEN (AS SHOTS 11-13)

ONLY SHE POURS SOMETHING INTO THE CASSEROLE FROM ANOTHER BOTTLE.

62. INT. TV ROOM (AS SHOT 14)

SHE DRAWS CURTAINS, PUTS OUT CIGARS ETC. THE 'PHONE RINGS AS BEFORE.

63-68. INT. SITTING ROOM, STABLEYARD AND PORCHWAY (AS SHOTS 15-21)

SHE POURS DRINK, CAR ARRIVES, ALAN GETS OUT ETC.

69. INT. SITTING ROOM (AS SHOT 22)

THE DOOR OPENS. ALAN ENTERS. MARCIA IN THE FOREGROUND MOVES TO MEET HIM. HE KISSES HER ON THE CHEEK.

ALAN

Hello darling. Everything alright? (HE NOTICES HER PLASTERED FINGER) What have you done to your finger?

MARCIA

I was pruning the roses.

ALAN

Oh poor old you. Let me kiss it better. (HE DOES SO)
Next year leave the pruning to Mr. Saxby, that's what I pay him for, to stop you having to get your hands dirty. Eh?

SHE NODS. HE KISSES HER AGAIN AND EXITS.

... down in a tick then.

MARCIA REMAINS STANDING. SHE SHAKES HER HEAD AT THE CAMERA AND PUTS UP HER FINGER AND MOUTHS "ONE". SHE POURS HIM AN EXTRA STRONG WHISKY WHICH SHE CARRIES ACROSS TO THE ARMCHAIR.

70. INT. BATHROOM/BEDROOM

TAIL END OF ALAN GETTING INTO HIS CASUAL CLOTHES. HE PICKS UP A BOTTLE OF PILLS BY THE BED AND SHAKES HIS HEAD. HE REPLACES THEM.

71. INT. SITTING ROOM (AS SHOT 24)

ALAN ENTERS, STARTS TO GO OVER TO THE DRINKS TRAY, BUT THEN HEADS FOR HIS CHAIR. HE SITS DOWN.

ALAN

Have a good day?

MARCIA NODS. ALAN TAKES A SIP FROM HIS DRINK AND PICKS UP THE NEWS-PAPER.

MARCIA

Darling?

ALAN

(FROM BEHIND NEWSPAPER) Yes?

MARCIA

I was wondering if you'd like to go to the cinema tonight. There's a good film on at the Playhouse. It doesn't start till nine so there'd be plenty ...

ALAN

(LOWERING NEWSPAPER) Not tonight darling, I've had a difficult day at the office. Another time perhaps, when I've got less on.

MARCIA

Yes darling.

MARCIA LOOKS AT THE CAMERA AND PUTS UP TWO FINGERS.

MARCIA

His second chance gone. Perhaps I should warn him. No, he's got to do it of his own accord. I mustn't help him. (TURNING TO ALAN) Supper won't be long.

HIS FACE APPEARS BRIEFLY FROM BEHIND THE PAPER.

ALAN

Good.

MARCIA LOOKS DOWN AND PLAYS WITH HER EMPTY GLASS.

MARCIA

I'll just go and see that everything's alright.

ALAN

Fine.

SHE GETS UP AND LEAVES THE ROOM. ALAN TURNS THE PAPER OVER, TAKES A SIP FROM HIS DRINK AND SINKS FURTHER INTO THE CHAIR.

72-75. INT. DINING ROOM/KITCHEN (AS SHOTS 25-28)

ONLY SHORTENED ACTION.

76. INT. SITTING ROOM (AS SHOT 29)

THE COFFEE IS BROUGHT IN. ALAN IS BEHIND THE PAPER. MARCIA PUTS A CUP DOWN BY HIS CHAIR. HE LOOKS UP BRIEFLY.

ALAN

Thanks darling.

SHE SITS WITH HER OWN COFFEE. SHE DOESN'T PICK UP HER KNITTING, BUT DRUMS HER FINGERS ON THE CHAIR. SHE LOOKS AT THE CLOCK AND THEN GETS UP.

ALAN

Where are you going darling?

MARCIA

Just upstairs.

ALAN

Upstairs? (NOTICING THERE'S NO KNITTING) Where's your knitting?

MARCIA

I've finished it.

ALAN

(QUIZZICALLY) Finished?

MARCIA

Yes, finished.

ALAN

But you always knit.

MARCIA

Not tonight. (SHE SMILES) I'll be down in a minute.

ALAN SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS AND GOES BACK TO THE NEWSPAPER. AFTER A MOMENT MARCIA RE--APPEARS AND SITS ONCE MORE IN THE CHAIR. SHE IS CARRYING A SEWING BAG WHICH SHE PLACES ON HER LAP. ALAN LOOKS UP FROM BEHIND HIS NEWSPAPER.

ALAN

Any more coffee darling?

MARCIA GETS UP, FETCHES HIS CUP AND MOVES OVER TO THE COFFEE TRAY. SHE TURNS TO THE CAMERA.

MARCIA

At least he has noticed I've been knitting all these years, but I don't think that's enough to save him, do you? I mean it hardly amounts to someone changing, noticing you're not knitting.

ALAN

No sugar darling ... please.

MARCIA

"Please" ... another small improvement.

MARCIA TAKES THE COFFEE TO ALAN AND THEN RETURNS TO HER SEAT AND SITS WATCHING HIM. SHE LOOKS AT THE CLOCK. IT SAYS TWO MINUTES TO NINE. ALAN FOLDS THE NEWSPAPER IN THE BACKGROUND AND STANDS UP.

ALAN

Think I might catch the news. Fancy coming through?

MARCIA TAKES A DEEP BREATH.

MARCIA

I thought we might (PAUSE) have a talk, a chat.

ALAN

A talk? What about?

MARCIA

Oh you know. About this and that, about your work, about the children, about anything really.

ALAN PAUSES AND SIGHS. A SERIES OF CLOSE UPS OF THEM BOTH. HE STROKES HIS CHIN.

ALAN

Will it keep till the weekend? I really am very tired tonight. Is that alright?

MARCIA REACHES DOWN FOR HER SEWING BAG, LOOKING UP AT THE CAMERA AND MAKING A "THREE" SIGN WITH HER FINGERS. ALAN MOVES OVER. SHE PUTS HER HAND IN THE BAG. HE PATS HER ON THE HEAD. SHE REMOVES HER HAND FROM THE BAG AND LIES BACK, A LOOK OF RESIGNATION ON HER FACE. THE TELEPHONE RINGS. SHE GETS UP TO ANSWER IT.

77. INT. AS ABOVE

MARCIA ON 'PHONE, SEEN THROUGH DOORWAY.

MARCIA

Hello? Who ... Mr. Betts, that's alright ... it's no bother ... oh no ... how awful ... no, no, yes, she did ... fine, she seemed fine ... is there something we could do to help? No, well if she ... yes, of course ... I am sorry Mr. Betts ... yes of course. Goodbye Mr. Betts.

78. INT. HALLWAY

MARCIA COMES INTO THE HALLWAY.

ALAN (OFF)

Who was that darling?

MARCIA

Mr. Betts. Mrs. Betts has disappeared.

ALAN

I hope she re-appears in time to cook for George and Felicity on Saturday.

MARCIA

Perhaps we should ...

ALAN

(INTERRUPTING) You coming through?

MARCIA

In a minute.

SHE LOOKS AT THE CAMERA AND SHAKES HER HEAD. SHE RUNS UP THE STAIRS.

79. INT. BEDROOM

CLOSE UP OF PILL BOTTLE. MARCIA'S HAND COMES IN AND PICKS IT UP, THE CAMERA PANS TO SHOW HER PUTTING IT IN A HANDBAG.

80. INT. HALLWAY

MARCIA RE-APPEARS DOWN THE STAIRS. SHE HAS A COAT ON AND IS CARRYING HER HANDBAG AND A SMALL CARRIER BAG. SHE PAUSES IN THE HALL, LOOKS AT THE CAMERA AND MOUTHS "GOODBYE" AND THEN LETS HERSELF OUT OF THE GARDEN DOOR, WHICH BLOWS OPEN AFTER SHE HAS GONE. THERE IS SILENCE APART FROM THE CLOCKS TICKING. THE CAMERA TILTS UP TO THE CLOCK AT TEN PAST NINE. IT DISSOLVES THROUGH TO TEN PAST TEN AND BACK DOWN INTO THE HALL. ALAN APPEARS OUT OF THE TELEVISION ROOM.

ALAN

Darling ... darling? Darling where are you. I'm ready for my Horlicks now ... you missed a very good programme.

HE LOOKS DOWN THE HALL. THE GARDEN IS OPEN.

... darling, where are you?

HE LOOKS IN THE LIVING ROOM AND THE KITCHEN, RUNS UP THE STAIRS SHOUTING, THEN HE GRABS A TORCH AND RUSHES OUT OF THE GARDEN DOOR.

81. EXT. STABLEYARD

HE FINDS THE GLOVE ON THE STABLE WINDOW LEDGE.

82. EXT. GARDEN

HE FINDS THE HEADSCARF ON THE LAWN. HE RUNS OFF TOWARDS THE FIELDS.

83. EXT. BY GATE TO FIELDS

HE FINDS THE GATE OPEN. HE PAUSES AND THEN HEADS OFF OVER THE FIELDS.

84. EXT. BY LAKE

HE CLIMBS THROUGH THE BARBED WIRE AND DISCOVERS THE TORN BIT OF CLOTH.

85. EXT. AS ABOVE

HE RUNS DOWN TO THE SUBMERGED CHURCH. HE SHINES THE TORCH ALONG THE WALL AND SEES THE WRITING ON THE WALL. HE REACHES THE END OF THE PROMONTORY AND SHINES HIS TORCH ON THE LAPPING WATER.

86. INT. HALLWAY

HE COMES BACK IN THROUGH THE GARDEN DOOR AND CLOSES IT BEHIND HIM. HE GOES INTO THE SITTING ROOM.

87. INT. SITTING ROOM

HE FINDS THE NOTE ON THE DESK SAYING "EXPLAIN WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE CHILDREN". HE SHIVERS AND CLOSES A WINDOW.

88. INT. KITCHEN

HE COMES INTO THE KITCHEN AND PICKS UP THE LIST, READING THE HEADING "GOOD BUYS FOR ALAN". HE PUTS IT DOWN. THE CAMERA PANS TO THE KETTLE WHERE THE HORLICKS AND ONE MUG ARE LAID OUT. HE SWITCHES ON THE KETTLE AND PUTS SOME HORLICKS IN THE MUG.

89. INT. BEDROOM

HE ENTERS WITH HIS MUG OF HORLICKS AND SURVEYS THE NEATLY LAID OUT PYJAMAS. HE PUTS HIS HORLICKS DOWN BY THE BED AND NOTICES THE PILLS ARE GONE. HE UNDRESSES AND GETS INTO BED AND SHIVERS. HE SITS FOR A MOMENT, THEN SIGHS. HE SETS THE ALARM AND TURNS THE LIGHT OUT AND BURIES HIMSELF UNDER THE BEDCLOTHES.

90. EXT. STATION BOOKING OFFICE

MARCIA APPEARS AND GOES UP TO THE TICKET OFFICE.

MARCIA

One ticket for London please. First class.

VOICE

Single or return madam.

MARCIA

Single.

91. EXT. STATION PLATFORM

A TRAIN PULLS IN AND SHE CLIMBS ON AND SITS IN A FIRST CLASS CARRIAGE.
AS THE TRAIN PULLS OUT, WE SEE MRS. BETTS SITTING AT THE WINDOW OF A
SECOND CLASS CARRIAGE.

T H E E N D

