

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A MAN

OR

"CONSEQUENCES"

A film for television

by

Richard Woolley

Commissioned for Channel 4 Television

by

Alan Fountain

Richard Woolley  
Spectre Productions Ltd.  
1982

TITLE SEQUENCE:

EXT. A NORTHERN STONE-BUILT FACTORY. EARLY MORNING.

THE MIXED WORKFORCE OF MEN AND WOMEN ARRIVE FOR WORK.

1. INT. A WELL-TO-DO BEDROOM. MORNING.

A MAN AND A WOMAN ARE IN BED SIPPING TEA. THE MAN IS READING A NEWSPAPER. THE WOMAN A WEEKLY MAGAZINE. THE WOMAN TAKES A PILL FROM BESIDE HER BED AND SWALLOWS IT WITH HER TEA. THE MAN LOOKS AT HIS WATCH AND CASTS A SIDEWAYS GLANCE AT HIS WIFE, WHOSE EYES HAVE CLOSED. HE COUGHS. SHE GETS UP, PUTS ON A DRESSING GOWN AND DISAPPEARS OUT OF THE DOOR. THE MAN JUMPS OUT OF BED AND WALKS THROUGH TO A BATHROOM SUITE WHERE HE REMOVES HIS PYJAMA TOP, LOOKS BRIEFLY AT HIMSELF IN A MIRROR, HOLDS HIS STOMACH IN AND PATS IT, AND THEN GETS DOWN ON THE FLOOR AND DOES TEN PRESS-UPS. HE LIES FOR A MOMENT EXHAUSTED FROM HIS EXERTIONS AND THEN GETS UP AND STARTS TO SHAVE WITH AN ELECTRIC SHAVER. HE IS ROBERT PRENDERGAST, 35, FIGURE STILL INTACT, SLIGHTLY BALDING.

2. INT. MODERN FITTED KITCHEN. DAY.

A HAND COOKS BACON IN A PAN. THERE IS A LOUD SIZZLING NOISE. A TIMER RINGS. A COFFEE MACHINE BUBBLES. TOAST POPS OUT OF A TOASTER. EVENTUALLY THE CAMERA MOVES UP TO THE FACE OF THE WIFE (TESSA) WHO IS PREPARING THE BREAKFAST. SHE LOOKS TIRED, OLDER THAN HER HUSBAND, BUT HAS NOW PUT HER MAKE-UP ON. WE PAN ROUND WITH HER AS SHE TAKES THE BACON, A BOILED EGG AND A CUP OF COFFEE OVER TO THE TABLE WHERE HER HUSBAND IS SITTING. HE IS DRAINING A GLASS OF ORANGE JUICE. THE PAPER IS PROPPED UP BY HIS PLATE. THE WOMAN FETCHES HERSELF A CUP OF COFFEE AND SITS DOWN. SHE STIRS IT PRECISELY, LOOKING UP OCCASIONALLY AT HER HUSBAND WHO IS INTENT ON THE PAPER. EVENTUALLY SHE STOPS STIRRING AND PUTS THE SPOON DOWN NOISILY IN THE SAUCER. ROBERT HAS POLISHED OFF HIS BACON AND EGGS IN A FEW MOUTHFULS.

TESSA

Robert.

ROBERT

(WITHOUT LOOKING UP) Yes.

TESSA

I think I need a break.

ROBERT

(LOOKING UP) Darling. It's only a fortnight to Christmas.

TESSA

I know.

SHE STARES OUT OF THE WINDOW. ROBERT LOOKS UP. HE DRAINS HIS COFFEE, WIPES HIS MOUTH AND GETS UP. HE PUTS HIS ARMS ROUND HIS WIFE FROM BEHIND.

ROBERT

Come on Tess. Not now eh?

TESSA

I'm sorry. It's just ...

ROBERT

We'll go away in the spring, OK? (HE HUGS HARDER. SHE SMILES WEAKLY) Good girl.

ROBERT REMOVES HIS ARMS, RUFFLES HER HAIR AND LEAVES THE ROOM. THERE IS A SHOUT OF "BYE SALLY, BYE TOM" AND A REPLY OF "BYE DADDY". TESSA CLEARS THE PLATE IN THE FOREGROUND AND THEN SLUMPS IN TEARS ON THE TABLE.

CHILD'S VOICE (OFF)

Mum, can I have two eggs this morning, I've got football.

ROBERT

Bye darling. See you this evening.

A DOOR SLAMS OFF.

3. EXT. ROBERT'S HOUSE. DAY.

ROBERT BACKS HIS CAR OUT OF HIS GARAGE AND DRIVES OFF.

4. EXT. STREET. DAY.

THE CAR STOPS IN A QUEUE IN FRONT OF A HOARDING WHICH READS "UNDERNEATH YOU LOVE THEM ALL". IT DEPICTS A WOMAN IN A TRENCH COAT LOOKING TOUGH AND UNAPPROACHABLE, AND A SECOND PICTURE OF HER WITH THE COAT OPEN REVEALING HER UNDERCLOTHES. ROBERT LOOKS UP BRIEFLY AT THE AD AND SMILES. THE CAR MOVES ON.

5. EXT. A STONE-BUILT FACTORY (AS IN TITLE SHOT). DAY.

ROBERT PARKS HIS CAR IN FRONT AND GOES IN THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR, HAVING FIRST HELD IT OPEN FOR A WOMAN, WITH A BIG "AFTER YOU" GESTURE.

5a. INT. STAIRCASE (STONE). DAY.

ROBERT FOLLOWS THE WOMAN UP THE STAIRS, OBSERVING HER. SHE TURNS INTO A DOOR MARKED "LADIES". ROBERT PAUSES LOOKING AFTER HER A MOMENT AND THEN PUSHES OPEN ANOTHER DOOR.

6. INT. OFFICE RECEPTION AREA. DAY.

ROBERT ACKNOWLEDGES THE SECRETARIES AS HE WALKS THROUGH. THERE IS A BURBLE OF "MORNING MR. PRENDERGAST", "HAVE A GOOD WEEKEND?" ETC.

7. INT. OFFICE. DAY.

THE OFFICE IS A BIT SHABBY WITH ONE DESK CENTRALLY PLACED, A FEW WILTING POT PLANTS AND A NUMBER OF FILING CABINETS. ROBERT ENTERS, PUTS DOWN HIS BRIEFCASE AND REMOVES HIS COAT. HE PICKS UP A 'PHONE AND TAPS THE ENGAGER.

ROBERT

No sugar in my coffee please, Eileen.

HE PUTS HIS 'PHONE DOWN AND SITS DOWN AT HIS DESK. HE LOOKS CURSORILY THROUGH A PILE OF POST, PUTS IT INTO A TRAY, OPENS HIS BRIEFCASE AND REMOVES A NEWSPAPER WHICH HE STARTS TO READ. AFTER A MOMENT OR TWO THERE IS A KNOCK ON HIS DOOR.

ROBERT

Come.

ROBERT DOES NOT LOOK UP. THE DOOR OPENS AND THE WOMAN WHOM HE 'MET' AT THE ENTRANCE BRINGS IN HIS CUP OF COFFEE. SHE PUTS IT DOWN ON HIS DESK AND TURNS TO GO. SHE IS A WOMAN OF ABOUT 28 WITH A STRONG FACE. SHE HAS LONG HAIR AND IS LIGHTLY MADE UP. SHE IS WEARING A BLOUSE AND TROUSERS. SHE IS A LARGE WOMAN WITH A 'GOOD' FIGURE.

ROBERT

(STILL NOT LOOKING UP) Thank you Eileen.

WOMAN

Sheila actually. Eileen's left.

ROBERT LOOKS UP.

ROBERT

Oh it's you. (HE SMILES) Yes, she found the workload a bit much I'm afraid. (SHEILA CONTINUES TO THE DOOR) You married?

SHEILA

(TURNING WITH HER HAND ON THE DOOR KNOB) I was.

ROBERT

Kids?

SHEILA

One. That's why I got married.

ROBERT

I see. (PAUSE. HE STANDS UP) I'm Robert Prendergast, Head of Personnel. (HE STRETCHES OVER A HAND)

SHEILA RETURNS FROM THE DOOR AND NERVOUSLY STRETCHES OVER HERS.

SHEILA

Sheila Cook.

SHE LETS GO QUICKLY AND LEAVES THE OFFICE.

ROBERT

(SHOUTING AND EMPHASISING HER NAME) Thanks for the coffee Sheila.

HE SITS DOWN AGAIN AND SMILES TO HIMSELF AS HE SIPS HIS COFFEE. A MAN POPS HIS HEAD ROUND THE DOOR. HE IS A LITTLE YOUNGER THAN ROBERT, THOUGH EQUALLY SMARTLY DRESSED. HE HAS A REFINED YORKSHIRE ACCENT. HE IS MICHAEL.

MICHAEL

Morning Robert. (HE INDICATES WITH HIS HEAD IN THE DIRECTION THE NEW SECRETARY HAS JUST GONE) Not bad for a Monday morning eh?

ROBERT

(SMILING AND LOOKING THROUGH HIS POST) She'll do. Any response yet?

MICHAEL

Give us a chance. I've only just met her.

ROBERT

To the redundancy plans, Michael ... (HE LEANS FORWARD) you did leak the information ...?

MICHAEL NODS, COMES FORWARD AND SITS. ROBERT LOOKS EXPECTANTLY AT HIM.

... and?

MICHAEL

Those who've heard don't like it, those who haven't won't like it. (ROBERT NODS AND STEEPLES HIS FINGERS OVER HIS MOUTH) What d'you expect? A bunch of flowers with 'thanks for the memory' on the card?

ROBERT

(SMILES BRIEFLY) And Stella?

MICHAEL

She's heard alright. The old cow.

ROBERT

(HE TAPS HIS FINGERS TOGETHER) I think I'll talk to Ed first. Ed Mason.

MICHAEL

Stella's old man?

ROBERT

Yes. Why not? He's senior steward.

MICHAEL

Go over her head? Behind her back? (HE SHAKES HIS HEAD) She won't like it.

ROBERT

(DRILY) Well I'm not going to get far between her legs am I? (MICHAEL CHUCKLES) Anyway, she needn't know about it. ,

MICHAEL

(STANDING) Alright, I'll get him up.

MICHAEL HEADS TO THE DOOR. THERE IS A KNOCK AND SHEILA COMES IN. SHE ALMOST BUMPS INTO MICHAEL.

SHEILA

(TO MICHAEL) There you are. Manager wants a word.  
(SHE EXITS)

MICHAEL TURNS TO ROBERT.

MICHAEL

I'll tell you this for nowt, she's got a better bum than Eileen.

ROBERT

(SMILING SARCASTICALLY) That's not saying much.

MICHAEL LAUGHS LOUDLY AND LEAVES. ROBERT STROKES HIS CHIN FOR A MOMENT AND THEN OPENS A DRAWER. HE PULLS OUT A PILE OF PAPERS AND PICKS UP THE 'PHONE.

ROBERT

Send Sheila in here a minute will you please. Oh ... and tell her to bring a pad ... yes ...

AFTER A MOMENT SHEILA ENTERS WITH A PAD AND PENCIL.

ROBERT

(SMILES) I'd like you to take down a letter please.

SHEILA STANDS UNCERTAINLY FOR A MOMENT. ROBERT APPRAISES HER.

ROBERT

Take a seat. You can do shorthand?

SHEILA

Oh yes.

SHEILA SITS AND CROSSES HER LEGS. ROBERT CONTINUES TO OBSERVE HER.

ROBERT

(IN A FRIENDLY MANNER) ... and by the way Sheila, there is a rule about wearing skirts here.

SHEILA

Yeah, they told me.



ROBERT

Good. "To all ...

SHEILA

And they also told me it's very draughty in office and they'd like to be able to wear trousers.

ROBERT

(LOOKING AT FIRST ANGRY BUT THEN BREAKING INTO A SMILE) Well there's a suggestion box in the front office. Now where was I ...

SHEILA

To all ...

ROBERT

"To all employees. It has come to our attention that certain rumours have been circulating over the past week, and therefore we feel it is important for us to clarify the situation. It is unfortunately true that due to a number of factors, including the recent pay settlement negotiated by your union, the recession etc. etc. (PAUSE)

SHEILA

What do I put there?

ROBERT

Jane'll tell you. It's a standard formula I use. "... a certain number of redundancies will have to be made among the part-time staff. However, we can assure the remaining full-time workers that there is no risk whatever of further redundancies affecting them in the foreseeable future, and we count on their understanding, co-operation and ... (HE PAUSES)

SHEILA

(QUIETLY) Blind terror?

ROBERT

I beg your pardon.

SHEILA

(SMILES) Nothing.

ROBERT

... and loyalty in these difficult times. A list of those affected will be posted later in the week after further consultation with your representatives. Signed on behalf of the management, Robert Prendergast, Personnel." Type that up and hold it. Alright?

ROBERT HAS STEEPIED HIS HANDS AND IS WATCHING SHEILA CLOSELY. SHE STANDS UP AND HIS EYES MOVE UP HER LEGS TO HER BOTTOM.

ROBERT

And before you go, would you mind filing these for me.

HE PASSES OVER THE PILE OF LETTERS HE HAD PREVIOUSLY TAKEN OUT OF THE DRAWER. SHE TAKES THE LETTERS AND HEADS TOWARDS THE DOOR.

... no ... no... in the cabinet over there.

SHEILA GOES OVER TO THE CABINET WHERE SHE STARTS WORKING WITH HER BACK TO ROBERT. HE OBSERVES HER AND THEN, GETTING UP, GOES OVER TO HER. HE TAKES HOLD OF HER HIPS AND MOVES HER TO ONE SIDE.

... excuse me a moment.

HE LEANS ACROSS SO THAT HE IS PRESSING SHEILA AGAINST THE WALL. HE OPENS A DRAWER AT THE TOP OF THE CABINET AND THEN PULLS BACK.

... sorry, am I squashing you?

SHE SHAKES HER HEAD. HE CLOSES THE DRAWER AND TURNS SO THAT HE IS IN FRONT OF HER, SHE WITH HER BACK AGAINST A WALL.

... your first job in an office?

SHE SHAKES HER HEAD. HE SNIFFS AND SMILES.

... Lentheric? ... (SHE SHAKES HER HEAD) ... Miss Dior?

SHE TRIES TO GET OUT BUT ROBERT'S HANDS ARE NOW EITHER SIDE OF HER ON THE WALL.

... come on. (HE SMILES) Just a quick cuddle ...

HE MOVES HIS FACE TOWARDS HER TO TRY AND KISS HER. SHE PUSHES HIM AWAY AND HE TRIPS OVER THE OPEN BOTTOM DRAWER OF THE FILING CABINET.

ROBERT

(GETTING UP AND BRUSHING HIS SUIT) For Christ's sake, I was only being friendly. What's the matter with you? (HE STARES AT HER AND THEN PUTS OUT HIS HAND) Forgive and forget?

SHELLA

(WHO HAS RETURNED TO FILING) Look, touch me again and I'll do you.

ROBERT

Now calm down, you're a grown woman. I wasn't going to hurt you.

SHELLA

Just assault me eh?

ROBERT LOOKS MOMENTARILY WORRIED, BUT THEN SMILES.

ROBERT

You're not going to sneak on me are you?

SHEILA

I might do you for sexual harassment, if that's what you mean.

ROBERT LOOKS MOMENTARILY SHOCKED AND THEN BURSTS OUT LAUGHING.

ROBERT

One stolen kiss hardly qualifies.

HE RETURNS TO HIS DESK STILL LAUGHING. SHEILA CONTINUES FILING.

... alright, you can leave that for now.

SHEILA TURNS TO GO.

... and Sheila, I'm sorry. Body talk you know.

SHEILA

Mine didn't say owt. (HE LAUGHS. SHE TURNS AND STARES AT HIM) Think about it Mr. Prendergast, think about it.

SHEILA LEAVES THE OFFICE. ROBERT STARES AFTER HER. THE CAMERA MOVES IN ON HIS FACE. HE IS LOOKING PENSIVE.

8. A BLACK SCREEN.

A WHITE DOT APPEARS IN THE MIDDLE AND A NOISE SLOWLY BUILDS LIKE THE WARNING TONE TO TURN THE TV OFF. SUDDENLY A SERIES OF SMALLER WHITE DOTS HEAD ACROSS THE SCREEN AS IN A VIDEO GAME. AS ONE OR TWO OF THEM HIT THE DOT IN THE MIDDLE THERE IS A MALE GROAN FOLLOWED SHORTLY BY A SOUND OF SNORING.

ELDERLY MALE VOICE

... and so my dear little Robert, the egg was eaten up by the naughty fox and together they grew and grew in your mummy's tummy ...

THE WHITE DOT SLOWLY ENLARGES AND BECOMES THE PICTURE OF A TINY BABY SLOWLY GETTING BIGGER AND BIGGER UNTIL IT GOES OUT OF FOCUS, FILLING THE SCREEN.

... until you just popped out.

THERE IS A BABY'S SCREAM.

9. INT. WELL APPOINTED STUDY. NIGHT.

CLOSE IN ON AN ELDERLY HAND ON A PYJAMA'D KNEE.

SMALL BOY'S VOICE

But how did the naughty fox get to the egg to eat it?

THE HAND RUBS THE KNEE.

ELDERLY VOICE

Another time my boy, another time.

THE CAMERA MOVES UP TO THE RATHER PERPLEXED LOOKING FACE OF ROBERT (AS A CHILD) IN HIS DRESSING GOWN. IT PULLS OUT TO REVEAL AN ELDERLY MAN SITTING BESIDE HIM ON THE SOFA.

... off you go now. Tell Middleton 4 to come in would you.

10. INT. A DOOR. DAY.

CLOSE UP OF A DOOR HANDLE. THERE IS A KNOCK.

VOICE

Mr. Prendergast.

11. INT. OFFICE OF ROBERT. DAY.

CLOSE UP OF ROBERT WHO IS STARING INTO SPACE. HE JUMPS INTO CONSCIOUSNESS AND ADJUSTS HIS TIE, CONCENTRATES ON A LETTER LYING LIMP IN HIS HAND AND LOOKS AT THE DOOR.

ROBERT

Come in.

12. INT. AS ABOVE.

CLOSE UP OF DOOR. IT OPENS AND SHEILA POKES HER HEAD ROUND.

13. INT. AS ABOVE.

CLOSE UP OF ROBERT, WHO LOOKS UP.

ROBERT

(BRISKLY BUT NERVOUSLY) Yes? What do you want?

14. INT. AS ABOVE.

CLOSE UP OF SHEILA.

SHEILA

There's a deputation from finishing section. They want to see you.

15. INT. AS ABOVE.

MS WITH SHEILA BACK OF HEAD IN FOREGROUND AND ROBERT AT HIS DESK.

ROBERT

(LOOKING PUZZLED) A deputation? Already?

SHEILA

Well it's two of 'em. (SHE LOOKS AT A BIT OF PAPER)  
Mrs. Thwaite and ... and Stella Mason.

ROBERT

Tell them I'm busy and make an appointment (HIS HAND  
RUNS DOWN HIS DIARY) two-thirty this afternoon.

SHEILA

They seemed quite angry.

ROBERT

(SMILING NERVOUSLY) Did they? (HE LOOKS AT SHEILA)  
I wonder why?

SHEILA REMAINS STANDING AND STARES BACK AT ROBERT.

... Is there something else? (SHE SHAKES HER HEAD AND GOES TO THE DOOR) And use the intercome next time. Please.

SHEILA LEAVES. ROBERT RETURNS TO HIS FILE.

16. INT. A DARKENED ROOM, NIGHT.

A CRACK OF LIGHT IS VISIBLE THROUGH A DOOR. A CHILD'S VOICE IS CALLING OUT "MUMMY, MUMMY". THE DOOR OPENS AND A SILHOUETTE STANDS IN THE DOORWAY.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Now what is it Robert? You'll wake Emily.

ROBERT

My eiderdown's fallen off.

LIGHT IS TURNED ON.

WOMAN

(ANGRY) Oh for heaven's sake. Can't you pick it up yourself? (SHE PICKS UP THE EIDERDOWN AND TUCKS ROBERT IN BRISKLY) You always wait till I'm downstairs having a drink and relaxing.

ROBERT

But I was cold.

WOMAN

And your father's only just got in from work. Don't you ever think of anyone but yourself?

ROBERT STARTS TO CRY.

CLOSE UP AS THE MOTHER LEANS DOWN TO KISS HIM.

WOMAN

... I'm sorry. Goodnight darling. God bless. I do love you, but be a good boy please. See you in the morning.

CLOSE UP OF ROBERT AS THE LIGHT IS TURNED OUT AND HE TURNS OVER TOWARDS THE CAMERA.

ROBERT (VOICE OVER)

I hate you, I hate you, I hate you.

HE PUTS HIS THUMB IN HIS MOUTH.

17. INT. LANDING. NIGHT.

THE MOTHER LEANS MOMENTARILY AGAINST ROBERT'S DOOR AND LISTENS.

MALE VOICE (OFF)

Monica, Monica. Will supper be long?

MOTHER

(BRIGHTLY) Coming darling.

SHE WALKS WEARILY OFF DOWN THE LANDING. THE CAMERA PANS AND LOOKS THROUGH THE BANISTERS AS SHE GOES DOWNSTAIRS.

18. INT. RECEPTION AREA. DAY.

SHEILA IS TALKING TO TWO WOMEN NEAR THE SWITCHBOARD.

WOMAN

Look love, tell him Stella Mason is not hangin' around until two bloody thirty this afternoon, alright?

SHEILA PICKS UP A 'PHONE.

... (TO ANOTHER SECRETARY) He'll be in there reading newspaper and drinking his coffee. (THE SECRETARIES SMIRK AT EACH OTHER) It's no joking matter love, it'll be your job next, you wait and see.



19. INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE. DAY.

THE 'PHONE IS RINGING ON HIS DESK. ROBERT IS STILL STARING IN A DAZE.  
HE COMES TO AND ANSWERS THE 'PHONE.

ROBERT

Yes? ... No, absolutely no ... I've got a ... I've  
got a board meeting.

20. EXT. WOODLAND. DAY.

THREE ADULTS IN SHORTS AND WHITE AERTEX SHIRTS AND GUMBOOTS APPROACH  
THROUGH THE TREES. ONE OF THEM CARRYING A CANE. THE ONE SLIGHTLY  
DRAGGING BEHIND BECOMES RECOGNISABLE AS ROBERT. ONE OF THE BOYS BENDS  
OVER A TREE TRUNK. THE OTHER LOOKS OVER AT ROBERT, SMILES AND RAISES  
THE CANE. ROBERT WATCHES.

21. EXT. AS ABOVE.

CLOSE UP OF ROBERT WHO WINCES AT THE SOUND OF THE CANE, BUT CONTINUES  
TO WATCH.

22. INT. DORMITORY. DAY.

A SMALL BOY IS LYING ON HIS BED READING A BOOK. HIS BACK IS TO THE  
CAMERA, BESIDE HIM ARE TWO TEDDY BEARS. TWO OTHER SLIGHTLY OLDER BOYS  
CREEP UP ON HIM AND PIN HIM DOWN ON THE BED. HE STARTS TO CRY.

OLDER BOY

"Cry baby bunting ..." (HE PICKS UP A TEDDY AND THROWS  
IT AWAY) He even plays with dolls. Sissy.

2ND OLDER BOY

Come on, let's scrag him.

THEY START TO PULL AT HIS SHORTS.

LITTLE BOY

Stop them Prendergast. Ow! Prendergast's a prefect,  
he'll report you.

THE OLDER BOYS TURN TOWARDS THE CAMERA.

1ST OLDER BOY

You won't mind, do you Prenders?

23. INT. AS ABOVE.

CLOSE UP OF ROBERT, WHO IS AGAIN WATCHING.

YOUNG ROBERT

(TO HIMSELF) Why don't I stop them? It's dirty, horrible what they're doing. But I won't stop them, will I? In fact I'm sort of enjoying it. What are they doing ...?

THERE IS A SCREAM FROM THE LITTLE BOY AND ROBERT BLOCKS HIS EARS AND BURIES HIS HEAD IN THE PILLOW.

24. EXT. BESIDE A RUGBY PITCH. DAY.

MCU OF HEADMASTER CHEERING ON A RUGBY TEAM.

HEADMASTER

Get in there Jackson. Nail him.

THE SOUND OF CRYING IS AUDIBLE IN THE 'FOREGROUND' ABOVE THE CRIES FROM THE GAME. THE HEADMASTER LOOKS DOWN.

... come on Prenders, brace up. No bones broken eh?

25. EXT. AS ABOVE.

LOOKING DOWN ON ROBERT IN FOOTBALL CLOTHES. HE IS CRYING. THE HEADMASTER KNEELS DOWN BESIDE HIM.

... bit of a knock eh? Who was it?

ROBERT

Jackson Two sir.

HEADMASTER

Well look, get back in there, and next time he goes for you, grab him hard between the legs. That'll make him squeal. Alright? Good chap. Off you go.  
(ROBERT LEAVES SHOT) Come on colts, hit 'em.

26. INT. CORRIDOR. DAY.

ROBERT COMES OUT OF HIS OFFICE AND LOOKS DOWN TOWARDS THE CAMERA. REVERSE ANGLE FROM HIS POV REVEALS SHEILA AND TWO OTHER SECRETARIES AT THE END OF THE CORRIDOR. THEY ARE WHISPERING TOGETHER. THEY TURN AND LOOK AT ROBERT. ROBERT SMILES NERVOUSLY AND WALKS OFF IN THE OTHER DIRECTION.

27. INT. OFFICE, SMALL STAIRWAY AND TOILET, DAY.

ROBERT CLIMBS UP A NARROW STAIRWAY SEEN FROM ABOVE AND THROUGH A DOORWAY FRAMED IN THE FOREGROUND. A DOOR SHUTS IN THE FOREGROUND AND IS BOLTED.

28. INT. CHANGING ROOMS OF A BOARDING SCHOOL.

YOUNG ROBERT IS HAVING A SHOWER. THE CAMERA MOVES THROUGH TO THE CHANGING ROOM WITH HIM. HE STARTS GETTING DRESSED BY HIS TOWEL PEG WHERE HIS CLOTHES ARE HANGING. HE STOPS DRESSING SUDDENLY AS SOME GIGGLING BECOMES AUDIBLE. HE POKES HIS HEAD BETWEEN SOME TOWELS.

29. INT. AS ABOVE.

WE SEE HIS FACE FROM THE OTHER SIDE, TWO LITTLE BOYS ARE VISIBLE FROM THE WAIST UP IN THE FOREGROUND, THEIR BACKS TO ROBERT.

1ST BOY

Do you want a feel Ollie?

2ND BOY

(GIGGLING) There's so much hair.

ROBERT SNEEZES. THE TWO BOYS TURN AND NOTICE HIM.

1ST BOY

Well don't just watch Prenders, come and show us yours.

2ND BOY

Yes, let's have a feel of yours.

ROBERT'S HEAD DISAPPEARS THROUGH THE TOWELS. THE BOYS GIGGLE TOGETHER.

30. INT. AS ABOVE.

ROBERT STRAIGHTENS HIS TIE AND DOES UP HIS FLIES. HE IS ALMOST CRYING.

1ST BOY (OFF)

Does he know about wanking?

2ND BOY (OFF)

I doubt it.

1ST BOY (OFF)

I bet he couldn't even do it.

THE TWO BOYS GIGGLE LOUDLY.

ROBERT

(SHOUTING) I can, I can. (THEN TO SELF) Do what?

THE GIGGLING MERGES INTO GIGGLING OF SOME WOMEN OUTSIDE THE

31. INT. OFFICE LOO AND WASHROOM. DAY.

ROBERT IS WASHING HIS FACE VIGOROUSLY. HE THEN SHAKES HIS HEAD AS IF TO CLEAR IT, LISTENS TO THE LAUGHTER AND PUTS HIS JACKET ON.

32. INT. STAIRWAY. DAY.

THE DOOR TO THE TOILET OPENS AND ROBERT COMES OUT. THERE ARE TWO SECRETARIES FILING IN THE NARROW CORRIDOR OUTSIDE. THEIR GIGGLING STOPS AS SOON AS THEY SEE ROBERT AND THEY TURN THEIR BACKS ON HIM.

ROBERT SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS AND WHISTLES AS HE GOES DOWN THE STAIRS.

33. INT. OFFICE CORRIDOR. DAY.

ROBERT APPEARS ROUND THE END OF THE CORRIDOR, BUT THEN RETREATS QUICKLY. IN REVERSE ANGLE WE SEE STELLA MASON APPEAR FROM THE RECEPTION AREA AND HEAD DOWN TO HIS OFFICE, WHERE SHE KNOCKS ON THE DOOR.

34. INT. OFFICE COFFEE MAKING AND PHOTOCOPYING AREA. DAY.

ROBERT COMES INTO THE COFFEE MAKING AREA, QUICKLY CLOSES THE DOOR BEHIND HIM AND SWITCHES ON A KETTLE. A SECRETARY COMES IN TO USE THE PHOTOCOPIER. HE SMILES AT HER. SHE IGNORES HIM. HE STARES AT THE KETTLE.

35. INT. BOOKCASE. DAY.

A SMALL HAND REMOVES A DICTIONARY FROM A BOOKCASE AND PUTS IT ON A DESK. THE BOOK IS OPENED AND IN BIG CLOSE UP WE SEE THE FINGER RUN DOWN TO AN ENTRY MARKED "MASTURBATE", "PRACTICE SELF-ABUSE", "HENCE MASTURBATION" AND THEN TO "FORNICATE", "COMMIT FORNICATION". THE BOOK CLOSES. THE CAMERA MOVES UP TO A PUZZLED LOOKING ROBERT AS A BOY.

36. INT. HEADMASTER'S STUDY AS BEFORE. NIGHT.

WE SEE THE HEADMASTER BEHIND A DESK.

HEADMASTER

Ah Gastly, I mean Prendergast, come in.

SMALL BOY ROBERT ENTERS. HE STANDS UNTIL THE HEADMASTER GUIDES HIM OVER TO A SOFA. THE HEADMASTER SITS DOWN NEXT TO HIM.

HEADMASTER

Well Robert, you're nearly thirteen now, aren't you.

ROBERT

Yes sir.

HEADMASTER

Quite a big boy I expect?

ROBERT

Yes sir.

HEADMASTER

But keeping out of trouble I hope?

ROBERT

Yes sir.

HEADMASTER

Now I want to talk to you about some changes you may be experiencing in the waterworks department.

ROBERT

I don't wet the bed any more sir.

HEADMASTER

No, not that.

ROBERT

Middleton 4 does.

HEADMASTER

Quite. Now I expect up until now you've fiddled about quite a bit (PAUSE) down there (HE POINTS AT HIS CROTCH). Haven't you old boy?

ROBERT

No sir.

HEADMASTER

(SLIGHTLY NONPLUSSED) Well don't start now.

ROBERT

Why not sir?

HEADMASTER

Well sometimes you'll wake up ...

ROBERT

I usually do sir.

HEADMASTER

(UNDETERRED) ... and find a dried sticky liquid on your pyjamas and that you may have had a dream about unclean things.

ROBERT

Like what sir?

HEADMASTER

(CARRYING ON REGARDLESS) Now that is quite normal. It's called a wet dream.

ROBERT

(LOOKING CONFUSED) I see sir.

HEADMASTER

But I don't want you to play with yourself or you'll get very tired and not pass your exams. Any questions?

ROBERT

Can I be excused sport then sir?

HEADMASTER

Why on earth?

ROBERT

That makes me very tired too, sir.

HEADMASTER

Ah, that's different. It builds you up, doesn't sap your strength like ... (PAUSE) ... the other.

ROBERT

Oh, I see sir. Thank you sir.

HEADMASTER

Run along now.

37. INT. OUTSIDE STUDY. NIGHT.

ROBERT COMES OUT OF THE STUDY AND FINDS TWO LITTLE BOYS WAITING.

1ST LITTLE BOY

Did he tell you about stuffing it up little girls  
to make babies?

ROBERT SHAKES HIS HEAD.

38. INT. OFFICE PHOTOCOPYING ROOM AS BEFORE. DAY.

ROBERT IS STARING OUT OF THE WINDOW. THE SECRETARY AT THE PHOTO-  
COPIER IS JOINED BY SHEILA. ROBERT TURNS AT THE SOUND OF THE DOOR.  
THE FIRST SECRETARY WHISPERS SOMETHING TO SHEILA AND GOES. SHEILA  
LOOKS APPREHENSIVELY OVER AT ROBERT.

ROBERT

(SMILES) Sort out the deputation alright?

SHEILA

I gave 'em your message. (POINTEDLY) About board  
meeting.

ROBERT

Good. (HE LOOKS AT THE KETTLE) Slow isn't it?

SHE TURNS ON THE PHOTOCOPIER, MAKING FURTHER CONVERSATION  
IMPRACTICABLE. ROBERT WAITS FOR THE KETTLE AND WATCHES SHEILA.

39. EXT. COUNTRY GARDEN. DAY.

ROBERT AND ANOTHER LITTLE BOY RUN INTO SHOT AND HIDE BEHIND A TREE.  
SOON AFTER A YOUNGER GIRL AND TWO OTHER SLIGHTLY OLDER GIRLS COME  
INTO SHOT AND START FILLING A TOY PLASTIC BATH IN WHICH THEY ARE



GOING TO BATH SOME DOLLS THEY HAVE WITH THEM.

40. EXT. AS ABOVE.

THE GIRLS ARE SEEN FROM BEHIND A TREE.

ROBERT

I wish we had girls at school.

2ND BOY

Oh Prenders, it'd be awful. They're so wet.

ROBERT

Yes, I suppose they are. (PAUSE) I don't know why my sister plays with these common village girls. Have you heard them talk?

SUDDENLY A COUPLE OF ROUGH LOOKING BOYS RUN INTO SHOT, TIP OVER THE BATH AND THE TWO VILLAGE GIRLS RUN OFF CRYING. THE SISTER SHOUTS AT THEM AND STAMPS HER FOOT.

SISTER

Go away you horrible boys. Go away.

2ND BOY,

Shall we get them?

ROBERT

No. They're bigger than us.

THE VILLAGE BOYS RUN OFF AS A MAN APPROACHES. THE GIRL RUNS TO HIM.

SISTER

Daddy, daddy, the village boys have spoilt our game.

DADDY

(KNEELING DOWN) Well they shouldn't have been in the garden, should they? (THE SISTER SHAKES HER HEAD AND

SULK. HE GIVES HER A HUG) But they're only being boys, you'll have to learn to put up with them.

SISTER

(STAMPING HER FOOT) I won't, I won't.

SHE BREAKS AWAY FROM HER FATHER AND RUNS TOWARDS THE TREE IN THE FOREGROUND. ROBERT JUMPS OUT AT HER AND GOES "BOO!". THE FATHER LAUGHS IN THE BACKGROUND.

DADDY

You might have offered your sister a little protection Robert.

41. INT. PHOTOCOPYING AREA AS ABOVE.

STEAM ISSUES FROM THE KETTLE IN THE FOREGROUND. SHEILA LOOKS OVER FROM THE BACKGROUND.

SHEILA

Kettle's boiling.

ROBERT, WHO HAS BEEN STARING AT SHEILA, 'COMES TO', SWITCHES THE KETTLE OFF AND BUSIES HIMSELF MAKING COFFEE.

42. INT. BEDROOM IN WELL-TO-DO HOUSE. DAY.

YOUNG ROBERT IS SITTING IN A WINDOW SEAT READING A BOOK. HE HEARS LAUGHTER FROM OUTSIDE AND GETS UP TO LOOK OUT.

43. INT. AS ABOVE.

LOOKING THROUGH THE WINDOW AT THE STREET BELOW. TWO GIRLS WALK DOWN THE VILLAGE STREET. ROBERT'S HEAD IS IN THE FOREGROUND. AS THEY PASS THEY LOOK UP AND SMILE. ROBERT'S HEAD DISAPPEARS. THEY WALK ON. THE HEAD RE-APPEARS AND PRESSES AGAINST THE WINDOW, WATCHING THEM AS THEY DISAPPEAR.

44. INT. AS ABOVE.

ROBERT RETURNS TO HIS READING. THE CAMERA MOVES IN ON HIS FACE. HIS EYES LOOK OVER THE BOOK.

ROBERT

(TO SELF) Why am I so frightened of them? They're only girls ... village girls ... but they seem so powerful ... I'd never dare touch one. (HE LOOKS DOWN AT THE BOOK) Books don't help much ... about girls. They're mostly sissies, goddesses or witches. (HE LOOKS UP AGAIN) I wonder if Muriel's Mum's a witch? She's very ugly.

45. INT. PHOTOCOPYING AREA. DAY.

THE PHOTOCOPIER SEEMS TO BE MALFUNCTIONING. SHEILA IS ATTEMPTING TO CORRECT IT. OVEREXPOSED COPIES ARE APPEARING IN THE FOREGROUND. ROBERT MOVES OVER FROM THE BACKGROUND TO HELP SHEILA WITH THE PROBLEM.

ROBERT

Let me ...

HE TAKES A PLATE OFF THE SIDE OF THE MACHINE AND PUTS HIS HAND IN. HE WINCES SUDDENLY AND WITHDRAWS IT.

SHEILA

Don't worry. It'll right itself.

A LAST BIT OF BLACKENED PAPER COMES OUT AND THE MACHINE HUMS BACK TO PROPER LIFE. THE NOISE GROWS IN INTENSITY AS WE MOVE IN ON ROBERT SUCKING HIS FINGER.

46. EXT. GARDEN OF LARGE HOUSE. NIGHT-TIME.

THERE IS THE SOUND OF MUSIC AND LAUGHTER. LIGHTS SHINE FROM CURTAINED WINDOWS. A YOUNG GIRL WITH LONG SIXTIES HAIR AND PRE-MINI-SKIRT DRESS LEADS A YOUNG ROBERT (BUT OLDER THAN THE PREVIOUS FLASHBACK) OUT OF A GLASS GARDEN DOOR. THEY WALK HAND IN HAND UP THE GARDEN TOWARDS THE CAMERA.

ROBERT

Nice to get a bit of air.

GIRL

Yes Robert.

ROBERT

You're not cold though, are you?

GIRL

No Robert.

ROBERT

I can lend you my jacket?

GIRL

Robert.

ROBERT STIFFLY PUTS HIS ARM ROUND HER SHOULDER. THEY WALK A BIT FURTHER IN SILENCE.

ROBERT

What Os are you taking?

GIRL

English, maths, religious knowledge and domestic science.

ROBERT

Only four?

THE GIRL TURNS AND FACES ROBERT.

GIRL

Don't you want to kiss me?

ROBERT

(LOOKING DOWN) I do think you're a nice girl Julia.

GIRL

So you don't want to kiss me.

ROBERT

No, no, I mean I prefer you to Rosemary.

GIRL

That's only 'cause Rosemary's got off with your brother.

JULIA PULLS ROBERT TO HER AND PUTS HER MOUTH ON HIS LIPS. (MUSIC)  
HE PUTS HIS ARMS ROUND HER IN A RATHER AWKWARD FASHION.

CLOSE UP OF THE TWO KISSING. ROBERT'S EYES ARE OPEN, ROVING. HERS  
ARE CLOSED.

ROBERT

(TO SELF) My first kiss ... ooh she's got her mouth open ... what am I meant to do? Get inside her bra, I think I'm meant to do that ... (HIS HAND MOVES UP TO HER BREAST) ... but I don't feel much except worry ... I'd better open my mouth I suppose ... what if my breath smells? (PAUSE) Perhaps I'm not doing it right, my body's not tingling, suppose she wants to go on to other things? ... ow, her knee's squashing my willy. Still I'm kissing, that's the main thing. I did want to kiss Rosemary, but if she's not available I have to kiss somebody ... how do I get my hand inside? ... you've got to have kissed somebody by the age of fifteen and let others know you've kissed ... ow, I've pricked my finger on her stupid brooch ... (HIS HAND LEAVES HER BREAST AND WAVES IN THE FOREGROUND. IT RELAXES.) ... Actually it is quite nice when she puts her tongue right in, and strokes my hair ... but my willy isn't getting big, I'm sure it's meant to, in fact it's shrinking ... I wonder if they know I'm kissing ... the people inside ...

ROBERT BREAKS OFF THE KISS.

ROBERT

You won't tell them it's my first time, will you?

JULIA SHAKES HER HEAD AND LEADS HIM BACK DOWN THE GARDEN PATH. HE IS SUCKING HIS FINGER. AS THEY OPEN THE DOOR THERE IS A CHEER.

47. INT. OFFICE PHOTOCOPYING ROOM.

ROBERT IS STILL SUCKING HIS FINGER. SHEILA FINISHES PHOTOCOPYING AND TURNS THE MACHINE OFF. AS SHE STRAIGHTENS HER COPIES ROBERT COMES OVER AND PUTS HIS ARM ROUND HER. SHE FREEZES.

ROBERT

You won't mention this morning to anyone, will you?

SHEILA

Mr. Prendergast. (SHE REMOVES HIS ARM)

ROBERT

Look, why don't you come for a drink at lunchtime and talk it over?

SHEILA ,

No thanks.

ROBERT

There's a nice pub round the corner. Good food.

SHEILA

I've arranged to see some of the girls from finishing section for a chat.

SHEILA PICKS UP HER PILE OF PHOTOCOPYING. ANOTHER SECRETARY ENTERS BEFORE ROBERT CAN SAY ANYTHING ELSE. SHEILA LEAVES, CLOSING THE DOOR.

ROBERT

Shit!

THE SECRETARY RAISES HER EYEBROWS AND STARTS PHOTOCOPYING.

THERE IS A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. ROBERT BRACES HIMSELF. THE DOOR OPENS AND A GREYIBG MAN IN HIS MID-FIFTIES AND WEARING AN OVERALL PEERS ROUND.

MAN

Mr. Prendergast?

ROBERT

(RECOVERING HIS POISE, PUTS OUT HIS HAND) Ed, hello.  
Good to see you. You alright?

ED

(TAKES ROBERT'S HAND) Could be worse.

ROBERT

And the wife?

ED

Could be better. (HE SMILES) Reception said you were in a board meeting, but then Sheila told me ...

ROBERT

(SHARPLY) Told you what?

ED

(TAKEN ABACK AT ROBERT'S TONE) That you were in here.  
(NODDING TOWARDS THE SECRETARY) I ... eh ... didn't disturb you did I?

ROBERT

Heavens no. Come along to my office. Bring a coffee for Mr. Mason would you, Jane.

48. INT./EXT. BEDROOM WINDOW ON TO SCHOOLYARD. DAY.

A YOUNG ROBERT IS AT THE SAME WINDOW AS BEFORE LOOKING DOWN ON A VILLAGE SCHOOLYARD WHERE TEENAGE KIDS IN LEATHER JACKETS ARE EITHER PARKED ON MOTORBIKES AT THE GATE OR FOOLING AROUND ON BICYCLES. ONE BLOKE IS IN A CLOSE CLINCH WITH A GIRL, HE PUTS HIS HAND UP HER SKIRT.

VOICE OVER (ROBERT)

The village boys can do it, the rough tough motorbike boys and coarse farmhands can do it. They just put their hands up a girl's skirt and her "don't touch me" stare turns to a blush. Why can't I?

49. INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

THE ANGLE REVERSES SO THAT THE IMAGE OF THE YOUNG ROBERT'S FACE PRESSED AGAINST A WINDOW PANE FILLS THE SCREEN.

VOICE OVER

I wonder which one it was. I bet my sister was lying. She says two workmen asked to see her wee wee hole. She says she took down her knickers and showed them and then one of them touched it and showed her his wee wee thing and asked her to touch it. I didn't believe it, not with my sister, he wouldn't dare.

50. EXT. SCHOOLYARD.

THE YOUTH WHO WAS KISSING LOOKS UP AT THE WINDOW AND BECKONS TO ROBERT. HE DRAWS A CURTAIN ACROSS THE FRAME.

51. EXT. GARDEN.

YOUNG ROBERT EMERGES OUT OF A GARDEN DOOR AND RUNS UP A GARDEN PATH, TAKING HIS BICYCLE FROM A SMALL SUMMER HOUSE AND, GOING THROUGH A WROUGHT IRON GATE, GOES ON TO A LARGE LAWN WHERE HE CYCLES AROUND BY HIMSELF. THE CYCLING GETS FASTER AND FASTER AS THE CAMERA CLOSES IN FOLLOWING THE CYCLIST'S FEET.



ROBERT

(TO SELF) I don't care about girls ... I'm not interested ... I'm not, I'm not, I'm not! I'll just pretend I know what's going on, pretend I know what to do, pretend I'm choosing not to do it out of ... disdain. I'll ... I'll ... I'll pick up the tricks by watching. But I won't make a fool of myself ... I won't, I won't, I won't!

SUDDENLY THE CYCLE CAREERS OVER A BANK AND CRASHES. THE YOUNG ROBERT CRAWLS UP THE BANK. HE COLLAPSES AND SOBS INTO HIS ARMS.

52. INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE. DAY.

ROBERT IS STANDING BY THE WINDOW. ED MASON IS SITTING IN FRONT OF THE DESK.

ED

... as I say, I'll pass on your proposition Mr. Prendergast, but it's going to be tough. (ROBERT CONTINUES STARING OUT OF THE WINDOW) Mr. Prendergast?

ROBERT

(COMING TO) Sure Ed. I realise that. (PAUSE) But can we at least agree, that the redundancies are ... will be amongst the part-time staff. That way we keep the skilled men. Neither of us wants to lose them, do we?

ED

No, no we don't. But I'd rather not see any redundancies.

ROBERT

My own feelings precisely, but then ... (HE SITS ON THE EDGE OF HIS DESK) ... I'm not the boss. (HE SMILES AT ED)

ED

(FLATLY) I'll put it to the joint shop stewards' committee, that's all I can do.

ROBERT NODS IN RESPONSE AND PLAYS WITH HIS EAR. ED IS PUTTING PAD AND PENCIL INTO HIS TOP POCKET.

ROBERT

(LIGHTLY) How do you think Stella will react?

ED

(WRILY) I think she might make a hole in the roof.

ED GETS UP. ROBERT LAUGHS AND COMES OVER TO USHER HIM TO THE DOOR.

ROBERT

Must be tricky being married to another shop steward.

ED

I represent all of workforce Mr. Prendergast. Personal feelings don't come into it.

ROBERT

Of course not. ,

BUT AS ROBERT REACHES FOR THE DOOR HANDLE, ED LEANS ACROSS TO HIM CONFIDENTIALLY.

ED

But if this goes through I might be sleeping on sofa.  
(THEY LAUGH)

AT THAT MOMENT THERE IS A KNOCK AND SHEILA ENTERS. ED SLAPS HER BOTTOM PLAYFULLY.

ED

Alright Sheila?

SHEILA

Eh, have less. Cheeky monkey.

ROBERT LOOKS PERPLEXED BY THIS RELATIVELY GENTLE REACTION.

ED

Get on, you're a big girl now.

SHEILA

And don't you forget it.

SHE CROSSES OVER TO ROBERT'S DESK AND PUTS A MEMO DOWN.

ED

(WINKS AT A STILL CONFUSED ROBERT) I'll see what I  
can do Mr. P. (HE EXITS)

ROBERT

(NERVOUSLY BUT BRIGHTLY, STILL AT THE DOOR)  
You know Ed Mason?

SHEILA

Yeah. He's my dad.

SHE EXITS. ROBERT CLOSSES THE DOOR BEHIND HER AND THEN FREEZES IN  
HORROR FOR A MOMENT. HE OPENS THE DOOR AGAIN AND LEANS OUT.

53. INT. OFFICE CORRIDOR. DAY.

ROBERT IN MIDDLE DISTANCE.

ROBERT

Michael, Michael. Come here a minute would you.

54. INT. CORRIDOR OF A BOARDING SCHOOL HOUSE. EVENING.

ROWS OF DOORS DOWN EITHER SIDE. YOUNG ROBERT APPEARS OUT OF A DOOR  
AT THE END OF THE CORRIDOR AND WALKS TOWARDS THE CAMERA, A COUPLE  
OF BOYS RUN DOWN THE CORRIDOR PAST HIM.

BOY

Have a good hols Prendergast?

ROBERT NODS AND CONTINUES PAST THE CAMERA WHICH PANS WITH HIM AND THROUGH SOME GLASS PANED SWING DOORS. HE STOPS OUTSIDE A DOOR IMMEDIATELY THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOORS AND KNOCKS.

55. INT. A SMALL STUDY BELONGING TO ONE OF THE BOYS. EVENING.

TWO BOYS ARE LOUNGED BACK IN WICKER CHAIRS IN THE FOREGROUND. "PLEASE PLEASE ME" IS ON IN THE BACKGROUND. ANOTHER IS SITTING ON A WOODEN BOX. ONE OF THE BOYS YELLS "COME IN". THE DOOR OPENS IN THE BACKGROUND AND ROBERT ENTERS.

1ST BOY

It's little Prenders. Come in my boy ... take a seat ... have some burdock ... (HE HANDS ROBERT A BOTTLE OF POP)

2ND BOY

(TO FIRST, IMPATIENTLY) So did you shag her?

1ST BOY

Hold on, hold on ... we're on these sand dunes at Southport, right? And she's crying "No Dave, no" and I'm trying to undo my flies all clogged up with sand ...

3RD BOY

Stick to buttons, 'cause buttons don't stick.

1ST BOY

(ANNOYED AT INTERRUPTION) Anyway I get her knickers down - she's still saying no, but if you'd heard her gasps you'd have known she didn't mean it - and then ...

THE CAMERA IS SLOWLY ZOOMING IN ON ROBERT'S FACE.

... I'm finally home and dry. Wow did it feel good.

3RD BOY

And wet I should hope.

THEY ALL ROAR WITH LAUGHTER EXCEPT ROBERT, WHO CONTINUES TO SWIG FROM THE POP BOTTLE.

2ND BOY

That reminds me of the one about the woman who was buried in the desert.

3RD BOY

Heard it.

1ST BOY

Well I haven't, and Prenders hasn't, have you?  
(ROBERT SHAKES HIS HEAD)

2ND BOY

There's this woman buried in the sand right? And she says to this passing tribesman, "Help, help, dig me out" and he says, "Why, what's in it for me?" and she says ...

3RD BOY

Sand.

2ND BOY

Thank you Philipps Minor.

THE FIRST BOY LAUGHS. ROBERT LOOKS EMBARRASSED AND DRAINS THE POP BOTTLE, EVEN THOUGH IT IS EMPTY. THE FIRST BOY TAKES IT FROM HIM, GOES TO THE DOOR AND YELLS "FAG!".

2ND BOY

You get it in anywhere Prenders?

ROBERT HESITATES AND LOOKS AT HIS WATCH.

ROBERT

I don't think so - look I must go. See you.

56. INT. CORRIDOR AS ABOVE.

THE THIRD BOY LEANS ROUND THE DOOR AS WE SEE ROBERT DISAPPEARING DOWN THE CORRIDOR.

3RD BOY

Wouldn't mind shagging your sister if you can get her up one weekend?

ROBERT BREAKS INTO A RUN AND DISAPPEARS ROUND A CORNER.

57. INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE. DAY.

MICHAEL IS SEATED ON THE EDGE OF ROBERT'S DESK TAPPING HIS FINGERS AND SWINGING HIS LEG. ROBERT IS PACING UP AND DOWN THE OFFICE.

MICHAEL

I still say she's got a grand bum.

ROBERT

(ANGRILY) Look, we can't have a shop steward's daughter working in my office with access to very sensitive information. (HE KICKS SHUT THE FILE DRAWER THAT HE FELL OVER EARLIER) She could tell anything to anybody.

MICHAEL

Come on Bob, being a bit paranoid aren't you?

ROBERT

I should have been told.

HE RETURNS TO HIS DESK CHAIR AND SLUMPS IN IT. HE FIDDLES NERVOUSLY WITH HIS EAR. HIS EYE TWITCHES SLIGHTLY.

MICHAEL

(WITH SOME AWE IN HIS VOICE) Eh, you haven't tried it on with her have you?

ROBERT

(SHARPLY) Of course not. (PAUSE) Who took her on?

MICHAEL

You did. Not that you were to know. Different name, different address.

ROBERT NODS WEARILY.

MICHAEL

How did it go with Ed?

ROBERT

I think he's bought it. If we stick with the part-time argument it should go. Trouble is we've got to be sure. Any ideas?

MICHAEL

I'll think of something.

ROBERT

Well make it quick, before Stella gets her foot in the door.

ROBERT RUBS HIS FACE IN HIS HANDS. MICHAEL JUMPS OFF THE DESK, GOES ROUND AND CLAPS ROBERT ON THE SHOULDER.

MICHAEL

Come on Robert, it's not that bad. Catch the lunch-time strip at Stag. New bird, fantastic tits, (HE MAKES A REVOLVING MOVEMENT WITH HIS CHEST) with tassles. That'll take your mind off foreman Stella.

ROBERT

Foreperson.

MICHAEL LAUGHS AND GOES OVER TO THE DOOR. HE TURNS BACK AS HE OPENS THE DOOR.

MICHAEL

(WITH LOWERED VOICE) Eh, you know what she needs don't you Bob? A good bit of forearm foreplay, that'd calm her down.

ROBERT LOOKS UP, SMILES AND SHAKES HIS HEAD. HE LIGHTHEARTEDLY THROWS A PIECE OF PAPER AT MICHAEL.

(JOKILY) ... think about it Bob, think about it.

HE EXITS. ROBERT LOOKS ACROSS AT THE FILING CABINET.

58. INT. OFFICE RECEPTION AREA. DAY.

ROBERT PASSES THROUGH THE OUTER OFFICE. ALL THE WOMEN SEEM TO STARE AT HIM AS HE GOES THROUGH. HE IS JUST AT THE OFFICE DOOR WHEN

SHEILA

Mr. Prendergast.

HIS FACE FREEZES IN THE FOREGROUND.

ROBERT

(WITHOUT TURNING) Yes Sheila?

THE OTHER SECRETARIES TURN TO LOOK AT SHEILA IN ANTICIPATION.

SHEILA

When should I take my lunch?

ROBERT

(RELIEVED) Whenever you wish.



HE LEAVES THE OFFICE. THE WOMEN ALL SHAKE THEIR HEADS AND SMILE, AND THEN A BATTERY OF TYPING STARTS, NOT DISSIMILAR TO MACHINE GUN FIRE, WHICH MERGES INTO LOUD NOISE.

59. EXT. OFFICE BLOCK. DAY.

THE CAMERA (HAND-HELD) SEEMS TO MEET ROBERT AS HE COMES OUT. IT FOLLOWS HIM. HE TURNS A CORNER. THE CAMERA STOPS.

60. EXT. STREET. DAY.

THE CAMERA MEETS HIM COMING ROUND THE CORNER AND FOLLOWS HIM AGAIN. HIS FACE IS ANXIOUS, HE LOOKS OCCASIONALLY OVER HIS SHOULDER. HE GOES ROUND ANOTHER CORNER.

61. EXT. STREET WITH BUS STOP. DAY.

ROBERT APPROACHES A BUS STOP. HE LOOKS AT A GIRL IN A MINI-SKIRT WAITING IN THE FOREGROUND.

62. INT. BOARDING SCHOOL WASHROOMS. DAY.

A ROW OF BASINS. A BOY IS JUST FINISHING SHAVING AT A MIRROR. HE HAS A NEAT BEATLE HAIRCUT. HE RINSES HIS FACE AT THE BASIN AND DRIES IT. WE MOVE IN AS HE GOES TO THE MIRROR AGAIN AND PULLS DOWN HIS FRINGE. IT IS YOUNG ROBERT.

ROBERT,

(TO SELF) That should get the girls. (HE SQUINTS AT HIMSELF) I even look quite like John. I'd fancy me anyway - apart from the spots.

HE MOVES INTO THE MIRROR AND STARTS SQUEEZING ONE. THERE IS A DISTANT SHOUT OF "ONE FAG".

63. INT. SCHOOL DORMITORY. DAY.

THE CAMERA TRACKS DOWN TO THE END PARTITION WHERE YOUNG ROBERT IS LYING IN JUST HIS UNDERPANTS, READING. THE CAMERA ZOOMS IN ON THE BOOK. IT IS "LADY CHATTERLY'S LOVER". HE PUTS THE BOOK DOWN AND LIES BACK.

ROBERT

(TO SELF) That's the trouble with boarding school. Only little boys to flirt with. Perhaps I'll get seduced next hols ... pity there are no girl gardeners ...

HE PICKS UP THE BOOK AGAIN, SKIPPING PAGES UNTIL HE COMES TO THE 'RIGHT' BIT.

64. EXT. ESCALATOR IN A SHOPPING PRECINCT. DAY.

ROBERT (SENIOR) IS COMING UP FROM THE BOTTOM. A GROUP OF BLACK YOUTHS ARE TRYING TO RUN DOWN IT THE WRONG WAY. THEY BUMP INTO HIM.

ROBERT

Haven't you got anything better to do with yourselves?

THEY COCK A SNOOT AT HIM AND TURN THEIR ATTENTION TO TWO YOUNG GIRLS COMING UP FROM BELOW.

65. INT. DORMITORY AS ABOVE, ONLY NIGHT.

MOONLIGHT FALLS ON ROBERT AWAKE IN BED. HE GETS UP AND PUTS HIS DRESSING GOWN ON. HE REACHES UNDER HIS PILLOW AND PULLS OUT A SMALL MAGAZINE. HE CREEPS OUT OF HIS PARTITION WITH THE MAGAZINE HIDDEN AND DISAPPEARS INTO THE WASHROOM AT THE END.

66. INT. TOILET. NIGHT.

ROBERT UNDOES HIS DRESSING GOWN, TAKES OUT THE MAGAZINE AND SITS ON THE TOILET. HE JUMPS SLIGHTLY AT THE COLD CONTACT. HE BEGINS TO LEAF THROUGH THE MAGAZINE WHICH IS CALLED "HEALTH AND EFFICIENCY". AS THE CAMERA MOVES IN, HIS RIGHT HAND GOES DOWN BETWEEN HIS LEGS.

67. INT. NEWSAGENT IN SHOPPING PRECINCT. DAY.

ROBERT (SENIOR) ENTERS. HE LOOKS AT A RACK OF MAGAZINES, PRETENDING TO BE INTERESTED IN A HI-FI MAGAZINE. WHEN THE MAN BESIDE HIM MOVES AWAY HE REACHES UP QUICKLY AND TAKES A COPY OF "MAYFAIR" FROM THE TOP SHELF. HE COLLECTS A COPY OF "THE SUN" FROM THE BOTTOM SHELF.

HE APPROACHES THE TILL AND PLACES THE MAGAZINE WRAPPED UP IN "THE SUN" ON THE COUNTER SO THAT ONLY THE PRICE IS SHOWING. THE GIRL PULLS IT OUT, LOOKING UP BRIEFLY AT ROBERT, AND RINGS UP THE TOTAL.

GIRL

One pound twenty.

ROBERT

I thought it (HE INDICATES THE MAGAZINE) was only ...

GIRL

Christmas edition. (SHE WAVES AT A GIRLFRIEND OUTSIDE THE SHOP. HE GIVES HER A TENNER) Haven't you anything smaller?

ROBERT SHAKES HIS HEAD AND WAITS ANXIOUSLY FOR HIS CHANGE, ONCE MORE WRAPPING THE MAGAZINE IN THE PAPER.

GIRL

(FLATLY) Want a bag?

ROBERT

It's alright.

HE TAKES HIS CHANGE AND EXITS. OUTSIDE THE SHOP HE PUTS THE MAGAZINE IN HIS BRIEFCASE. WE SEE THIS WITH THE CASHIER IN THE FOREGROUND THROUGH THE SHOP WINDOW.

68. INT. A WELL APPOINTED SITTING ROOM. DAY.

TWO PEOPLE (YOUNG ROBERT AND A GIRL) ARE SITTING ON A SOFA. HE HAS HIS ARM AROUND HER. THEY ARE LISTENING TO A RECORD. THEY MOVE ACROSS TO EACH OTHER AND KISS.

WOMAN'S VOICE (OFF)

Will you two be alright? I'm just going to the shops.

GIRL

Fine thank you mum.

THE GIRL LOOKS AT ROBERT AND SMILES. HE SMILES QUICKLY AT HER AND STARTS TAPPING IN TIME TO THE MUSIC. SHE CUDDLES UP TO HIM AND WHISPERS.

GIRL

Shall we?

ROBERT

But your parents.

GIRL

It doesn't take long, does it?

ROBERT

Eh ... no ...

69. INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

THE GIRL COMES IN AND DRAWS THE CURTAINS SO THAT THE ROOM IS IN SUBDUED LIGHT. ROBERT COMES IN AND THEY BOTH UNDRESS (ROBERT CAREFULLY FOLDING HIS CLOTHES) ON EITHER SIDE OF THE BED. THEY BOTH STAND NAKED FOR A WHILE AND THEN THE GIRL GETS INTO BED AND PULLS THE SHEET UP. ROBERT DOES THE SAME AND THEY BOTH SIT WITH THEIR KNEES HUNCHED UP. SHE SMILES AT HIM. HE MOVES ACROSS TO KISS HER. THEY GO UNDER THE SHEET. THE CAMERA 'ROVES'.

ROBERT

(TO SELF) Nothing works. No erection. Ow. She obviously doesn't know how to give me one. Mark you I'm not sure I know where to put it anyway ... oh dear, it's not like in the magazines, she keeps moving ... come on Robert, concentrate, think of a dirty book ... um ... he shoved a hand between her legs, squeezed her nipples, grabbed a handful of ass, pushed a finger up her ... oh it's no good ... it's no fun all this grabbing and shoving, I'd like to just cuddle and stroke but I can't ... she'd

think I was funny ... come on, try again, think  
dirty ... banging, poking, shagging, knickers ...  
it's no use. Perhaps if I pretend to love her  
it'll help.

THE CAMERA 'RETURNS'. THEY BOTH EMERGE FROM UNDER THE SHEET,  
SUITABLY DISHEVELLED.

ROBERT

I do love you Jill.

JILL

I love you too Robert. (SHE KISSES HIM) Bodies  
touching is good isn't it.

ROBERT LOOKS MOROSE.

... what's wrong?

ROBERT

We didn't do it properly.

JILL

That doesn't matter.

ROBERT

It does to me.

JILL

Come on, let's just kiss.

ROBERT

Kissing's not the problem. I think it may be this  
neck injury I got playing ruggger. It stops messages  
going from my brain to certain parts of my body.

JILL

Poor you ...

ROBERT

I might never be able to do it.

JILL

That's alright, I don't mind. Anyway you've done it before so it'll come back. Like riding a bicycle.  
(SHE SMILES AT HIM)

ROBERT GETS UP TO GET DRESSED, WITH HIS BACK TO JILL.

VOICE OVER (ROBERT)

Of course I haven't done it before. I suppose I'll have to go on seeing her till I have. You can't leave a girl with a failure like that can you? She might tell.

ROBERT PUTS ON HIS UNDERPANTS.

JILL

Anyway, I like it all floppy.

ROBERT PICKS UP THE REST OF HIS CLOTHES AND GOES OUT OF THE ROOM. THE CAMERA MOVES ROUND ON TO JILL, WHO LIES BACK AND CLOSES HER EYES.

70. EXT. "THE STAG" PUB. DAY.

ROBERT ENTERS THE PUB.

71. INT. PUB. LUNCHTIME.

ROBERT (ADULT) ENTERS AND LOOKS AROUND SOMEWHAT ANXIOUSLY. HE THEN GOES TO THE BAR AND ORDERS A DRINK. THE BAR IS EMPTY APART FROM A MIDDLE-AGED MAN IN OVERALLS AT ONE OF THE TABLES. THERE IS THE SOUND OF STRIP MUSIC AND SHOUTING FROM NEXT DOOR. ROBERT TAKES HIS DRINK TO THE TABLE FURTHEST AWAY FROM THE MAN. HE LAYS HIS FOLDED NEWSPAPER ON THE TABLE AND STARES INTO SPACE, OCCASIONALLY LOOKING TOWARDS THE DOOR FROM WHICH THE MUSIC IS COMING. AFTER A MOMENT THE OTHER MAN COMES ACROSS.

MAN

(INDICATING THE PAPER) May I?

ROBERT MAKES A "GO AHEAD" SIGN AND LOOKS THE OTHER WAY. THE MAN SITS DOWN ALMOST NEXT TO ROBERT. HE GLANCES AT THE BACK PAGE, SKIMS THE FRONT AND TURNS TO PAGE THREE. HE LEANS OVER TO ROBERT TO SHOW THE PICTURE.

MAN

Wouldn't mind getting my hands on those eh?

ROBERT SMILES WEAKLY AND NODS IMPERCEPTIBLY AND THEN TAKES ANOTHER SIP OF HIS DRINK. THE MAN GETS UP WITH THE NEWSPAPER AND GOES OVER TO THE BAR. HE CALLS THE BARMAN OUT AND SHOWS HIM THE PICTURE. ROBERT (IN THE FOREGROUND) LOOKS AT THEM AND THEN GETS UP, DECISIVELY, AND HEADS TOWARDS THE OTHER BAR. AT THAT MOMENT SHEILA AND THREE WOMEN WALK IN. ROBERT NOTICES THEM, DOES AN ABOUT-TURN AND PRETENDS HE IS JUST COMING OUT OF THE GENTS. HE GOES TO THE BAR. SHEILA COMES UP NEXT TO HIM.

SHEILA

Hello Mr. Prendergast. (SARCASTICALLY) Bit posh for you here in't it? (THE WOMEN WITH HER SNIGGER)

ROBERT

(AS IF NOTICING HER FOR THE FIRST TIME) Oh hello Sheila. I was just shopping near here. (HE NODS AT THE OTHER WOMEN) Can I get you all a drink?

SHEILA

It's alright. (SHE LEANS OVER TO LOOK DOWN THE BAR) Shop! (TURNING TO ROBERT) I've just been talking to your wife.

ROBERT

What?

SHEILA

She rang.

ROBERT

(NERVOUSLY) Oh ... anything important?

SHEILA SHRUGS HER SHOULDERS. THERE IS A SILENCE. ROBERT DRINKS. THE OTHER MAN AT THE BAR IS OBSERVING. WHEN ROBERT TURNS BRIEFLY TO LOOK AT HIM AGAIN HE WINKS. THE BARMAN ARRIVES TO SERVE SHEILA.

SHEILA

Three pints of bitter and a soda water with ice and lemon please.

ROBERT LOOKS AT HIS WATCH.

ROBERT

I'd better be getting back. Mustn't be late for your Mum, Sheila.

SHEILA

She says can you make it three 'cause she forgot about her hospital appointment.

ROBERT

Right. (HOVERS UNDECIDED WHETHER TO GO OR NOT) You should have said you were her daughter.

SHEILA

Thought it'd be a nice surprise.

ROBERT

It certainly was.

SHEILA

I always like people to take me as they find me.  
(SHE GLANCES AT HER THREE COMPANIONS AND WINKS)



ROBERT

Yes ... (HE HESITATES) ... but ... well if I'd known I could have ...

SHEILA

(LEANS TOWARDS ROBERT) Controlled your 'involuntary urge'?

ROBERT HEADS FOR THE DOOR. THE WOMEN WATCH HIM GO.

MAN

Eh you've forgotten your paper.

HE WAVES THE PAPER, STILL OPEN AT PAGE THREE, AT ROBERT. ROBERT HESITATES.

ROBERT

(EMBARASSEDLY) You keep it.

MAN

Cheers pal.

ROBERT HEADS OUT OF THE DOOR.

72. INT. WELL APPOINTED HALLWAY. DAY.

ROBERT (YOUNG) IS DIALLING A NUMBER AT A 'PHONE ON AN OAK DESK. "CAN'T GET NO SATISFACTION" IS ON IN THE BACKGROUND. ROBERT IS SMOKING AND DRINKING BEER OUT OF A CAN.

ROBERT

Mrs. Mackenzie-Smith? Is Jake there please? ...  
Hi man, how's tricks? ... how was last night? ...  
what? ... the one with cross eyes and tree trunk  
legs? Sagging Celia? ... I'm sorry ... it was dark,  
I see. And she's very nice. O.K. Jake you're  
forgiven ... how's brother Mick? ... put him on  
the line then.

A LOT OF LAUGHTER ENSUES UNDER THE VOICE OVER.

ROBERT

(TO SELF) Mick is Jake's older brother. My hero. A real lad. Always has the newest dirty books, flash clothes, and an endless flow of sexual double-talk and dirty jokes. He's a fab guy. Always in control, on top of things, making the girls blush and the boys envious, and woe betide anyone who tries to take the mickey out of Mick. For him life begins and ends with sex, and all girls are available if you know how to tickle their fancies, and he does. What a lad.

YOUNG ROBERT

... all the breast Mick (AS IF SAYING IT TOGETHER) and don't do anyone I wouldn't do ... your brother, honestly ... me? ... I'm a bit down. Jill and I have bust up ... I know ... still we'd done all there was to do together if you know what I mean ... oh sure, she was a nice girl, I liked her ...What?! ... thought we were getting married? You must be joking. Anyway Mum didn't approve of her ... "You can do better than that darling" ... Yeah, wouldn't mind a shoulder to cry on, a buddy to drown my sorrows with. Ten minutes at the Bull. O.K. Bye Jake.

ROBERT PUTS THE 'PHONE DOWN. IT RINGS ALMOST IMMEDIATELY AND HE PICKS IT UP.

ROBERT

Rosemary? Julia hi ... yeah I asked your mum to leave a message ... fancy coming to the Kinks concert next Saturday? ... super. "All of the day and all of the night, all of the time".

A WOMAN DRESSED IN AN OVERALL COMES THROUGH CARRYING A HOOVER AND INDICATES TO ROBERT THAT SHE HAS SOMETHING TO SAY.

... hang on Rose... Julia ... (TO WOMAN) What is it Mrs. Jones?

MRS. JONES

Your Mum says could you get off 'phone 'cause she's got a call booked in to your Dad's hotel in Australia.

ROBERT NODS. MRS. JONES DISAPPEARS.

ROBERT

... by the way my Dad's staying in the same hotel as the Beatles ... honest. Anyway I must dash. Bye.

ROBERT REPLACES THE RECEIVER, GRABS A JACKET AND OPENS THE FRONT DOOR.

... I'll be late for lunch Mum.

HE GOES OUT, SLAMMING THE DOOR.

73. EXT. PARK. DAYTIME.

ROBERT (ADULT) IS WALKING ALONG IN A PARK. HE SITS DOWN IN A DRAB OLD BANDSTAND OVERLOOKING A LAKE. IN THE FAR DISTANCE A COUPLE ARE WALKING BY THE LAKE. IN THE FOREGROUND A COUPLE OF KIDS RUN PAST PLAYING FOOTBALL WITH EACH OTHER. ROBERT'S HEAD FOLLOWS THEM. ONE OF THEM DOES A BACK KICK AND THE BALL LANDS IN THE BANDSTAND. ROBERT PICKS IT UP AND THROWS IT TO ONE OF THE KIDS.

KID

Ta.

ROBERT STANDS STARING DOWN THE LAWN AT THE LAKE. THE COUPLE REAPPEAR IN THE MIDDLE GROUND. THEY SEEM (FROM THEIR GESTICULATIONS) TO BE ARGUING. THEY PAUSE IN THE CENTRE OF FRAME AND THEN MOVE ONCE MORE OUT. ROBERT SITS IN THE BANDSTAND.

74. EXT. PARK AS BEFORE.

CLOSE UP OF ROBERT SITTING IN THE BANDSTAND. THE CAMERA CIRCLES SLOWLY ROUND HIM.

ROBERT

(TO SELF) Why did I do it? Why, why why? She's probably gone and told my wife now. But how are you supposed to know? If they want it or not? I thought since the sixties girls were supposed to be more available, less hung-up. Where's the permissive society now? Where are all those beautiful soft chicks ready for laying? (HE SIGHS) Not that I was a very cool cat.

THERE IS LAUGHTER OFF. ROBERT TURNS TO HIS LEFT AND THE COUPLE SEEN BEFORE IN THE DISTANCE COME INTO SHOT, ARM IN ARM AND LAUGHING. THE BLOKE TURNS TO ROBERT AND SHOUTS.

MAN

Got the time?

ROBERT

(LOOKING AT HIS WATCH) A quarter to two.

MAN

Cheers.

THEY GO OFF KISSING. ROBERT GETS UP AND WALKS OFF TOWARDS THE LAKE. "LAY LADY LAY" BY BOB DYLAN FADES UP.

75. INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

ROBERT (AS A YOUNG MAN WITH LONG HAIR, A FRILLY SHIRT AND VELVET TROUSERS) IS POURING A BOTTLE OF GIN INTO A BATH. HE GIVES THE LAST DREGS TO A WOMAN WHO IS SWAYING SEVERELY, WRAPPED IN A TOWEL. SHE TURNS TO THE LOO AND IS SICK. ROBERT TURNS UP A RADIO IN THE BATHROOM. IT IS BOB DYLAN SINGING "LAY LADY LAY".

76. INT. A SMALL POORLY FURNISHED BED SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

THE WOMAN IS LYING ON A SOFA. SHE HAS BEEN CRYING. ROBERT IS STROKING HER FOREHEAD AND REPEATING "IT'S COOL, SARAH. HONESTLY IT'S COOL". SUDDENLY SHE SITS UP AND PUTS HER HEAD IN HER HANDS.

SARAH

Shut up Robert. I've done what you wanted and it hasn't worked, now shut up.

ROBERT TRIES TO MAKE HER LIE DOWN, BUT SHE STRUGGLES FREE AND STANDS AT THE WINDOW LOOKING OUT.

ROBERT

Don't stand there, you'll get cold. I'll roll a joint.

SARAH

I need some fresh air.

ROBERT

But you will have an abortion?

SARAH DOESN'T REPLY.

ROBERT

Dad'll pay, he's said he will. (HE STARTS ROLLING A JOINT)

77. EXT. BY A RIVER, A RUINED ABBEY IN THE BACKGROUND. DAY.

ROBERT (LONG-HAIRED AND IN FLARED TROUSERS) AND SARAH (IN A LONG DRESS AND SHAWL) ARE WALKING BY THE RIVER. HE HAS HIS HANDS IN HIS POCKETS. SARAH IS GESTICULATING EMPHATICALLY. AS THEY APPROACH A ROPE AND WOOD SUSPENSION BRIDGE WE GO IN CLOSE.

ROBERT

Look Sarah, I don't own you and you don't own me, O.K.?

SARAH

But why with Jean? She's my best friend.

ROBERT

Look, I sleep with Jean, you sleep with ...

SARAH

Jake? I'd like to see your face if I did that.  
Anyway I don't want to sleep with Jake.

ROBERT

I wouldn't mind if you did.

SARAH

You would.

ROBERT

Well a bit maybe. It's just I don't want to possess  
you and I don't want you to possess me. It's not  
cool.

ROBERT STOPS AND LEANS OVER THE SWAYING BRIDGE. HE LOOKS DOWN AT THE  
TORRENT BELOW.

SARAH

But it is cool for me to be around when you want me?  
Your cool chick, your laid back 'old lady'.

ROBERT

Sarah!

SARAH

Well, who's helping you through your breakdown? Me  
or Jean!

ROBERT

I'm not having a breakdown. Anyway I didn't ask you  
to.

SARAH

Oh for Christ's sake.

ROBERT

Well I didn't, you offered.

SARAH KICKS ROBERT'S HEELS SO THAT HE SLIPS THROUGH THE ROPES AND DANGLES ABOVE THE WATER. SHE RUNS OFF.

ROBERT

Sarah, Sarah. Help me up. I think my palpitations are coming on.

78. INT. A BEDROOM. DAY.

ROBERT IS LYING IN BED WITH HEADPHONES ON ALTHOUGH WE CAN HEAR "A MAN NEEDS A MAID" BY NEIL YOUNG. HE IS READING A COPY OF "PENTHOUSE". SARAH COMES IN. SHE HAS SOME SHOPPING IN PLASTIC BAGS. SHE TAKES HER COAT OFF, KISSES ROBERT, AND GOES OUT WITH THE BAGS.

VOICE OVER (YOUNG ROBERT)

I know that my breakdown is quite severe, but Sarah looks after me. I don't know what I'd do without her, and I resent that. My Mum's sent me to this silly old bag of a psychiatrist who - guess what - thinks it might be to do with sex. Something to do with the fact that I split lusting, buying soft porn mags and eyeing up girls in the street from sex with girlfriends. She says I should try and integrate them. I think she's a silly old cow but she gives me pills. It's just overworking for my finals that's done it. I'll be alright. As long as Sarah can see me through.

SARAH RETURNS INTO THE ROOM WITH TEA. ROBERT POINTS WEAKLY AT THE RECORD PLAYER, SHE GOES OVER AND CHANGES A RECORD FOR HIM, AND THEN COMES OVER TO HIS BED.

ROBERT

I feel so alone. Nobody understands.

SARAH

I do. I love you.

ROBERT

Don't leave me Sarah, will you?

SARAH SHAKES HER HEAD AND HUGS HIM, AND THEN AS HIS EYES CLOSE, SHE TAKES THE "PENTHOUSE", GETS UP AND SITS IN A CHAIR READING IT.

79. EXT. OFFICE/MILL. DAY.

ROBERT RE-ENTERS THE OFFICE BLOCK OF THE MILL.

80. INT. TOILET DOWNSTAIRS IN OFFICE BLOCK. DAY.

HE HAS A PEE IN THE DOWNSTAIRS LOO NEAR THE OFFICE ENTRANCE. THERE ARE PINUPS. HE DOES HIS HAIR IN THE MIRROR AND RUBS HIS EYES.

ROBERT

(TO SELF) Poor old Sarah. She was so kind.

HE SITS ON THE TOILET SEAT AND PUTS HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS.

81. INT. OFFICE RECEPTION AREA. DAY.

ROBERT WALKS THROUGH. THERE IS A NOTICEABLE DIFFERENCE FROM HIS EARLY MORNING WALK THROUGH. BY THE DOOR HE PUTS HIS HAND TO HIS MOUTH AND HAS TO STEADY HIMSELF.

SECRETARY (JANE)

You alright Mr. Prendergast?

ROBERT,

Fine thank you Jane. Just a little indigestion that's all.

JANE

Would you like a cup of tea?

ROBERT

Yes thank you, and maybe a couple of disprin. Sheila not back yet?

JANE

She's picking her mum up from the hospital.



ROBERT

(HESITATES) I see.

HE LEAVES THE OFFICE.

82. INT. OFFICE CORRIDOR. DAY.

IN THE CORRIDOR MICHAEL COMES TOWARDS HIM.

MICHAEL

Big eh? (HE CUPS HIS HANDS OVER HIS CHEST) And those tassles. Wow ...

ROBERT

(COOLLY) I didn't go.

MICHAEL

Oh ... say, you alright Bob? You look a bit pale.

ROBERT

Just something I ate yesterday. Seems to have unsettled me. It'll pass.

MICHAEL

Wife trying to poison you I expect. (HE CLAPS ROBERT ON THE BACK AND TURNS TO GO)

ROBERT

What about Ed? Have you come up with anything?

MICHAEL

Aye, we're keeping him sweet.

ROBERT

And the boss approves? You know what happened last time.

MICHAEL

He does. He does.

ROBERT

Good. (PENSIVELY) It's a shame they have to go.

MICHAEL

Well if they don't, we all will.

ROBERT

I suppose so.

HE TURNS INTO HIS OFFICE. MICHAEL GOES OFF DOWN THE CORRIDOR.

83. INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE. DAY.

ROBERT CLOSSES THE DOOR AND LEANS AGAINST IT FOR A MOMENT. THEN HE CROSSES TO HIS CHAIR AND SLUMPS INTO IT. HE LOOKS UP AT A CLOCK ON THE WALL. IT SAYS A QUARTER TO THREE. HE PICKS UP THE 'PHONE AND DIALS A NUMBER.

ROBERT

Hello Mrs. Evans ... could I speak to Mrs. Prendergast please ... well I expect she's upstairs having her rest ... (HE TAPS HIS FINGERS) ... No? Well she must have gone shopping or something ... it's not important, I'll ring later.

ROBERT SLUMPS BACK IN HIS CHAIR. A SMILE CROSSES HIS FACE.

84. EXT. BY THE SEA. DAY.

A LONG BEACH WITH CLIFFS. IN THE FAR DISTANCE A COUPLE ARE VISIBLE CHASING EACH OTHER IN A PLAYFUL MANNER. FINALLY THEY BOTH COLLAPSE ON THE SAND. WE GO IN CLOSE. IT IS ROBERT WITH HIS WIFE, THOUGH BOTH ARE DRESSED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO INDICATE THAT THEY ARE YOUNGER. THEY KISS TENDERLY. SUDDENLY ROBERT BREAKS AWAY AND LOOKS AT THE WOMAN.

ROBERT

Did you enjoy it last night Tess?

TESSA

You know I did.

ROBERT

But you kept shouting "wait", "wait".

TESSA

Oh don't worry ... (PAUSE) ... you looked so funny when you came, like your eyes were going to pop out.

ROBERT

But for you was it as good?

TESSA

Robert ...

ROBERT

No, tell me, please.

TESSA SIGHS, LIGHTS UP A CIGARETTE AND LIES BACK ON THE DUNES.

TESSA

I didn't have an orgasm if that's what you mean, but then I never have.

ROBERT

You wanted one though.

TESSA

Well yes ... I'd like to know what it's like.

ROBERT LOOKS AWAY AT THE SEA.

ROBERT

I'm no good then.

TESSA

Oh don't be silly. As long as you're happy.

SHE LEANS ACROSS TO HUG HIM. HE PUSHES HER ARM AWAY, JUMPS UP AND RUNS OFF ACROSS THE BEACH.

TESSA

Robert, Robert, come back.

ROBERT KEEPS ON RUNNING.

85. EXT. BEACH AS BEFORE.

CLOSE UP ON LONG LENS AS ROBERT RUNS ALONG THE EDGE OF THE SEA TOWARDS THE CAMERA.

ROBERT

(TO SELF, BREATHELESS) I can't afford to worry about them or my erection goes. Why couldn't she pretend like the others? Anyway I never understand how you tell whether a girl's really come or not. At least they can see with a bloke. I'm learning though. I read about it in "Penthouse". Stimulating the clitoris and all that. I'll become the best organiser of orgasms, leave her begging for more. I will.

86. INT. AMUSEMENT ARCADE. DAY.

ROBERT ENTERS AND SITS, OUT OF BREATH, AT A DISUSED BINGO STAND. TESSA APPROACHES FROM BEHIND AND STANDS AT THE ENTRANCE WATCHING HIM FOR A MOMENT. THEN SHE CROSSES OVER AND PUTS HER ARM ROUND HIM. HE TAKES HER HAND AND KISSES IT.

TESSA

It's been a really good summer hasn't it?

ROBERT

(NODDING) I thought you were never going to let me ...

TESSA

Robert, can't you talk about anything else?

ROBERT

Like what?

TESSA

Like ... do you love me?

ROBERT NODS. THEY KISS. MUSIC.

87. EXT. PROMENADE. DAY.

THEY WALK OUT ON TO THE PROMENADE AND STOP, LEANING OVER THE SEA WALL.

TESSA

... How long will you be in Germany?

ROBERT

(GLOOMILY) Well, it's a two year management course.

TESSA

Robert! You said ...

ROBERT

But I'm only doing the first six months.

TESSA

Tease. Anyway you'll probably meet some gorgeous Fraulein and marry her.

ROBERT LAUGHS.

ROBERT

What are you going to do?

TESSA

Mother wants me to be a deb, but I'd rather just temp, until I get married that is.

SHE DIGS ROBERT IN THE RIBS AND RUNS OFF DOWN THE PROMENADE. HE SHAKES HIS HEAD AND RUNS AFTER HER.

88. INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE. DAY.

THERE IS A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. ROBERT LOOKS UP. SHEILA ENTERS WITH THE CUP OF TEA AND THE ASPIRINS.

SHEILA

Headache?

ROBERT

(TRYING A WEAK SMILE) My wife's cordon bleu cookery I expect. Thank you Sheila. (HE SWALLOWS THE TWO ASPIRINS) Is your mother ...

SHEILA

She'll be along in a minute.

ROBERT

No I meant ... the hospital.

SHEILA

She's alright. Just having a bit of trouble with her breathing, that's all.

ROBERT

Oh dear. Too many ciggies I expect.

SHEILA

I don't think so.

THERE IS AN EMBARRASSED SILENCE. ROBERT LOOKS DOWN.

ROBERT

I am sorry about this morning. (CHUCKLING EMBARRASSEDLY)  
It was probably just the trousers. I do have a thing about tight trousers.

HE LOOKS UP. SHEILA TURNS TO GO. AT THE DOOR SHE PAUSES AND LOOKS BACK AT ROBERT.

SHELLA

Well, you know what they say Mr. Prendergast.  
(ROBERT LOOKS UP) ... "Wherever we go, however we  
dress, no means no and yes means yes". Right?

SHE GOES OUT THE DOOR.

89. EXT. BERLIN STREET OF TENEMENT BLOCKS. DAY.

ROBERT APPROACHES CARRYING A LARGE BUNCH OF FLOWERS. HE IS DRESSED CASUALLY IN SMART DENIMS. HE ENTERS THE BIG WOODEN DOORS OF A BLOCK IN THE FOREGROUND.

90. EXT. TENEMENT COURTYARD. DAY.

LOOKING DOWN FROM ABOVE WE SEE ROBERT WALK ACROSS THE COURTYARD AND ENTER A SMALL DOORWAY AT THE BACK.

91. INT. STAIRWAY OF APARTMENT BLOCK. DAY.

LOOKING DOWN FROM ABOVE WE SEE ROBERT COMING UP THE STAIRS. WE PAN WITH HIM AT THE TOP AS HE GOES UP TO A DOOR AND RINGS THE BELL.

92. INT. CORRIDOR OF FLAT LEADING UP TO FRONT DOOR. DAY.

A WOMAN APPEARS IN A DRESSING GOWN FROM BEHIND THE CAMERA AND GOES TO THE DOOR. SHE OPENS IT AND SHE AND ROBERT EMBRACE LOVINGLY.

VOICE OVER (ROBERT)

Helga's into personal development, women's rights, equality with men, that sort of thing - a bit of an oddball, but I think I'm a little in love with her. No, quite a lot in love with her actually. She doesn't dress up, make up, or expect me to keep her. She isn't always there when I want her, but she doesn't expect me to be either. She argues a lot but that's better than some dumbbell who agrees all the time. A good deal in some ways I suppose, though probably a bit strenuous ... in the long term. I wonder if she'd ...

DURING THE VOICE OVER ROBERT AND HELGA HAVE BEEN KISSING AND UNDRRESSING EACH OTHER ON THEIR WAY DOWN THE CORRIDOR UNTIL THEY GO PAST THE CAMERA.

93. INT. A BEDROOM OF THE ABOVE FLAT. DAY.

ROBERT AND HELGA ARE SITTING UP IN BED. SHE IS SMOKING AND SIPPING A GLASS OF WINE. THE FLOWERS ARE LYING ON A TABLE. CLOTHES ARE STREWN ALL OVER THE PLACE.

ROBERT

Why not?

HELGA

Because firstly there's no need, and secondly I don't want to ... how do you say? ... become married.

ROBERT

But we can't go on being flipped out young people for ever.

HELGA

I'm 31 Robert. I don't need to be more settled than I am at the moment. I have a job, I have a flat, I have you sometimes.

ROBERT LIGHTS A CIGARETTE AND SNUGGLES UP TO HELGA, KISSING HER BREAST.

ROBERT

Well, I want you all the time. Anyway I've got to start work with Dad's business in the autumn. I need some security, some regularity, someone ... (HE KISSES HER NIPPLE)

HELGA

No Robert. You take me like this or you leave me. O.K. so I might come over to England some time, but I'd rather you looked for work over here.

ROBERT

(SITTING UP) But I'm English (CLUTCHING HIS HEART)  
"Rule Britannia" ...



HELGA

(SHE LAUGHS AND SHAKES HER HEAD) And you call us nationalistic.

ROBERT

Anyway, I'm supposed to be the breadwinner.

HELGA

Well I'm German, I'm a trained teacher and I like to win my own bread.

SHE GETS OUT OF BED AND, PUTTING ON A ROBE, GOES AND LOOKS OUT OF THE WINDOW.

ROBERT

I do love you Helga. Please marry me, please. (PAUSE. HE LOOKS DOWN) Yes, I do need someone to look after me, but what's wrong with that? No, I can't go on for ever questioning who I am, how I relate, what I ought to do. I want a home and a wife and a bit of order, a bit of normality. Can't you understand that?

ROBERT LOOKS UP TO SEE IF HIS PASSIONATE SPEECH HAS HAD ANY EFFECT, BUT HELGA REMAINS STANDING AT THE WINDOW. ROBERT CLIMBS OUT OF BED AND GOES OVER TO HER. HE PUTS HIS ARMS ROUND HER BUT SHE REMOVES THEM.

HELGA

Off you go then, to your ordered English normality.

ROBERT PAUSES. SHE SMILES AT HIM.

... go on, I'm not going to beg you to stay.

94. INT. ON S-BAHN TRAIN RUNNING BY THE WALL. DAY.

ROBERT SITS IN THE FOREGROUND LOOKING OUT OF THE WINDOW. MUSIC FOR A WHILE AND THEN

VOICE OVER (ROBERT)

Of course it wouldn't have worked. I'm through my adolescence, she's obviously going to stay in hers for ever. I'll go back to England, marry Tessa if she's waited - she'll look after me. I'll get the job with Dad's firm, buy a house of my own, have some kids and then ...

ROBERT GETS OUT AT A STATION AND THE TRAIN CARRIES ON, LEAVING HIM BEHIND ON THE PLATFORM.

95. INT. OFFICE. DAY.

ROBERT IS STANDING STARING OUT OF THE WINDOW.

ROBERT

(OUT LOUD) Then why did I try and kiss Sheila this morning?

ROBERT IS SUDDENLY DISTURBED BY MICHAEL POKING HIS HEAD ROUND THE DOOR.

MICHAEL

Watch out Bob, frustrated fanny's on her way.

ROBERT

What?

MICHAEL

Stella, Stella Mason. And by the way the big boss man's office is strictly out of bounds this afternoon, on his orders, O.K.? ... (ROBERT NODS) ... Good luck ... (VOICE OFF, VERY POLITE AND SMARMY) ... that's it Mrs. Mason, in there. Mr. Prendergast is expecting you.

ROBERT QUICKLY TAKES UP HIS POSITION OF AUTHORITY IN THE DESK CHAIR AND LIGHTS A CIGARETTE. THERE IS A KNOCK.

ROBERT

Come in.

STELLA APPEARS. A SMALLISH SHARP-EYED WOMAN. EDGY BUT SELF POSSESSED.

ROBERT

(HALF STANDING) Mrs. Mason, do come in. Take a seat.

STELLA SITS. SILENT, WAITING. ROBERT OFFERS A CIGARETTE.

STELLA

I don't use 'em thanks. (SHE COUGHS)

ROBERT STUBS OUT HIS RECENTLY LIT CIGARETTE.

ROBERT

I'm sorry I couldn't see you this morning, but ...  
eh ... I did happen to bump into Ed, your husband,  
and we had some initial words about the redundancy  
situation ... (PAUSE)

STELLA DOES NOT RESPOND. SHE WAITS STEADILY EYEING HIM.

... though of course as you are shop steward for the  
finishing section, and as the present proposals are  
likely to hit your members hardest ... it is of the  
utmost importance that we two should meet. (PAUSE)  
As we are now doing. (HE SMILES, WAITING FOR A  
RESPONSE)

HE IS BECOMING VERY UNEASY IN THE FACE OF STELLA'S SILENCE.

... You see on balance it does seem fairest that the  
part-time staff should be the first to ... go, I'm  
sure you can ...

STELLA

(INTERRUPTING) No way. And let's stop talking about part-timers. We both know what you mean.

ROBERT

I'm sorry?

STELLA

Who works part-time in this place? Eh? Women!

ROBERT

Well yes, but ...

STELLA

You're saying you want women up the road first. Well they're not going.

ROBERT

No, no Stella. All I'm seeking to do is retain the full-time staff. Skilled men are hard to come by, the company can't afford to lose them. I've got nothing against women.

STELLA

There's plenty of skill among part-timers and all. You try sacking my girls and you're going to find it a lot more expensive.

ROBERT LEANS FORWARD

ROBERT

Stella my love, somebody's got to go. I know it's painful ... it's unfortunate ...

STELLA

It's discrimination - against the women.

ROBERT SIGHS DEEPLY AND LEANS BACK, SHAKING HIS HEAD SLIGHTLY, A PATRONISING SMILE ON HIS FACE, BUT STELLA CONTINUES.

... and quite frankly I'm surprised, Mr. Prendergast. I wouldn't have thought it of you. Well educated, progressive. I could hardly believe our Sheila.

ROBERT IS CAUGHT SHORT BY THIS REMARK - WHAT DOES SHE MEAN? HE REACHES FOR HIS CIGARETTES. HE STARES NERVOUSLY AT STELLA AS HE LIGHTS IT. STELLA REMAINS STILL, STARING AT HIM.

... I don't like carrying tales Mr. Prendergast. But things like that can get out.

ROBERT THROWS THE MATCH AWAY AND INHALES DEEPLY ON HIS CIGARETTE.

... It's embarrassing for you, for our Sheila ...

ROBERT

(BREATHING OUT THE SMOKE) What happened between me and Sheila this morning was quite simply a misunderstanding, and I don't see what it has to do with ...

STELLA

If we have to take you to court on this discrimination, well, it's not going to look good is it?

ROBERT RUNS HIS LEFT HAND THROUGH HIS HAIR AND LEANS FORWARD. HE CAN'T DECIDE HOW SERIOUS THIS THREAT IS OR HOW TO HANDLE IT.

ROBERT

Mrs. Mason ... (HE DRIES)

STELLA

As far as I'm concerned it's best forgotten. I'm sure you'll agree with that ... it's just a matter of where we go from here?

ROBERT

(IN A PLEADING TONE) There's nothing I can do about the redundancies, you know that ...

STELLA

In that case I suggest we go and see the boss.

ROBERT

Hang on a moment Stella. (PAUSE) I'm perfectly happy to discuss any suggestions you may have and pass them on, but as far as seeing the old man goes ...

STELLA

Just you and me.

ROBERT

(CURSORILY CONSULTING HIS DIARY) I think he's out at the moment, perhaps tomorrow ...

STELLA

We can sit and wait. In his office. You've got keys?

ROBERT

Look love, I can't ...

STELLA

Or do I have to get 'em off cleaners?

ROBERT IS SWEATING, INDECISIVE. THROWN BY THE LAST INNUENDO. FINALLY HE SWITCHES TACK.

ROBERT

Alright, why don't you and I pop up there now and try and have a word with him. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

STELLA SMILES AND GETS UP EXPECTANTLY. ROBERT DOES AS WELL AND USHERS STELLA TO THE DOOR.

... I've just got to make a couple of quick calls, so if you'd wait in reception I'll be with you in a moment, O.K.?

STELLA

Don't mess us around will you?

ROBERT SHAKES HIS HEAD AND USHERS HER OUT THE DOOR, AND THEN STANDS, TURNING OVER FAST IN HIS MIND WHAT TO DO.

96. INT. OFFICE RECEPTION AREA. DAY.

STELLA ENTERS. SHEILA LOOKS UP FROM HER TYPING. STELLA HURRIES OVER TO HER.

SHEILA

Cracked it?

STELLA

Get ten of the lasses in cleaners' room at bottom of stairs, fast. (SHEILA GETS UP) And tell 'em to keep it quiet.

97. INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE. DAY.

ROBERT IS PACKING HIS BRIEFCASE HURRIEDLY. HE PICKS UP THE 'PHONE BUT THEN PUTS IT DOWN AGAIN. HE TAKES HIS COAT AND HAT AND GETS HIS KEYS READY OUT OF HIS POCKET. HE HAS A LAST LOOK ROUND THE OFFICE AND LEAVES.

98. INT. OFFICE CORRIDOR. DAY.

ROBERT LEAVES HIS OFFICE IN THE MIDDLE DISTANCE AND COMES TOWARDS THE CAMERA. IN THE BACKGROUND A DOOR WHICH IS HALF OPEN, OPENS WIDE TO REVEAL STELLA.

STELLA

This way love.

ROBERT

(FREEZING) Of course. (HE TURNS)

99. INT. OFFICE RECEPTION AREA. DAY.

STELLA AND ROBERT PASS THROUGH. THE TWO SECRETARIES CHANT "GOODNIGHT MR. PRENDERGAST".

STELLA

(OVER HER SHOULDER) He's not going home yet.

SHE OPENS THE DOOR FOR HIM. THEY EXIT.

100. INT. STONE STAIRWAY. DAY.

STELLA AND ROBERT APPEAR ABOVE COMING DOWN THE STAIRS. AS THEY REACH THE BOTTOM STELLA TAPS ON A DOOR. ROBERT TURNS TO SEE TEN WOMEN IN OVERALLS EMERGING ALONG WITH SHEILA. SOME ARE HOLDING PLACARDS.

ROBERT

(HORRIFIED) What's this?

STELLA

Just a little deputation. Come on.

ROBERT CONSIDERS PROTESTING. SHEILA SMILES AT HIM AND INDICATES THAT HE SHOULD LEAD THE WAY OUT.

101. EXT. FACTORY. DAY.

THE GROUP EMERGES OUT OF A SIDE DOOR WITH ROBERT UNCOMFORTABLY LEADING THE BAND OF 12 WOMEN. THEY CROSS A COURTYARD AND ENTER A MODERN LOOKING ANNEXE.

102. INT. CARPETED STAIRS. DAY.

THE CAVALCADE SEEN FROM ABOVE CLIMBS THE STAIRS. ROBERT IS ALMOST BEING PUSHED UP.

103. INT. OUTSIDE MANAGING DIRECTOR'S OFFICE.

THE GROUP ARRIVES AT THE DOOR. ROBERT TRIES THE DOOR. IT IS LOCKED.

ROBERT

It's locked. I told you he'd be out. Let's all come back tomorrow.



STELLA

Open it please. We can wait can't we girls?

ROBERT RELUCTANTLY INSERTS THE KEY.

104. INT. PLUSH OFFICE. DAY.

WE SEE THE DOOR OPEN FROM INSIDE. ROBERT ENTERS.

ROBERT

Father ...

HE STOPS IN HORROR AND TRIES TO CLOSE THE DOOR BEHIND HIM, BUT THE WOMEN (STELLA AND SHEILA IN FRONT) CROWD BEHIND HIM.

THE CAMERA CUTS TO REVEAL A PLUSH OFFICE WITH MICHAEL, ED, THREE OTHER MEN IN SPORTS JACKETS AND A GREY HAired MAN IN A PIN STRIPED SUIT SEATED ON PLUSH SOFAS. ON THE ARMS AND IN SOME CASES OVER THE MEN, ARE DRAPED SOME VERY FLASHY LOOKING WOMEN. ON THE TABLE ARE ALL MANNER OF BOTTLES AND BUFFET SNACKS. ED LOOKS SHATTERED AND REMOVES THE ARM OF A WOMEN WHICH IS AROUND HIS SHOULDER.

REVERSE TO STELLA, SHEILA AND ROBERT.

STELLA ,

Sorry I'm late.

ROBERT SUDDENLY PUSHES HIS WAY OUT IN A PANIC. THE WOMEN IGNORE HIM.

105. EXT. FACTORY PARKING LOT. DAY.

ROBERT RUNS FOR HIS CAR. HE IS OBVIOUSLY IN A STATE. HIS BRIEFCASE FALLS OPEN, HE HURRIEDLY PICKS UP THE STUFF AND HURLS THE MAGAZINE HE BOUGHT EARLIER OVER A WALL. HE CLIMBS IN THE CAR AND DRIVES OFF AT SPEED.

106. INT. CAR. DAY.

ROBERT IS BREATHING HEAVILY. CARS HOOT AT HIM. HE SWERVES TO A HALT. HIS HAND REACHES IN THE DASHBOARD FOR A CAN OF SPRAY PAINT USED FOR TOUCHING UP HIS CAR.

107. EXT. STREET. DAY.

ROBERT JUMPS OUT OF THE CAR AND DANGEROUSLY WEAVES HIS WAY ACROSS A FOUR LANE ROAD. HE REACHES THE OTHER SIDE WHERE THE ADVERTISEMENT SEEN ON HIS WAY TO WORK STANDS. HE BEGINS SPRAYING THE WORD "LOVE" UNTIL IT IS ILLEGIBLE THEN OVER THE TOP HE SPRAYS "HATE". THE AD NOW READS "UNDERNEATH YOU HATE THEM ALL". HE RUNS BACK ACROSS THE ROAD.

108. EXT. ROBERT'S HOME. DAY.

ROBERT'S CAR SCREECHES TO A HALT, HE JUMPS OUT AND RUNS INTO THE HOUSE.

109. INT. ROBERT'S HALLWAY. DAY.

ROBERT RUSHES IN, LEAVING THE DOOR OPEN, SHOUTING "TESSA, TESSA".

110. INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY.

HE RUNS INTO THE LIVING ROOM WHERE HIS TWO CHILDREN ARE WATCHING TV.

ROBERT

(MANICALLY AND BREATHLESS) Where's Tessa, Mummy  
I mean.

THE OLDER CHILD (A BOY) PEERS OVER THE SOFA.

... well come on, where is she?

BOY

The hairdresser's. She's left a note for you on the  
kitchen table.

LITTLE GIRL

(PEERING ROUND SIDE OF SOFA) Your shoelace is  
undone Daddy.

BUT DADDY HAS GONE.

111. INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

ROBERT RUNS INTO THE KITCHEN AND GRABS THE NOTE. HE RIPS IT OPEN AND READS IT. HE STARTS TO SHAKE WITH LAUGHTER WHICH TURNS TO CRYING. HE

SLUMPS AT THE TABLE. HIS SOBBING IS AUDIBLE AS THE CAMERA MOVES IN ON THE NOTE WHICH READS

"Dear Robert, I've decided to take a break and look after myself for a bit. Will be back for Christmas. Please look after the children. They love you too. Tessa."

ROBERT, CALM NOW, SMILES THROUGH HIS TEARS AND PUTS THE NOTE IN HIS POCKET.

112. INT. BEDROOM AS AT START OF FILM.

ROBERT ENTERS AND TAKES HIS JACKET OFF. HE GOES AND LOOKS AT HIMSELF IN A FULL LENGTH MIRROR. SLOWLY HE BEGINS TO UNDRRESS UNTIL HE IS COMPLETELY NAKED. HE STANDS LOOKING AT HIS NAKED FORM IN THE MIRROR. THERE IS A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. THE YOUNGER CHILD COMES IN. SHE COMES OVER AND STANDS IN FRONT OF ROBERT. SHE POINTS BETWEEN HIS LEGS.

LITTLE GIRL

What's that for Daddy?

ROBERT PUTS A HAND ON THE CHILD'S HEAD AND BENDS DOWN TO KISS HER. HE IS SOBBING BUT WITH A SMILE ON HIS FACE. FREEZE FRAME. TITLES.

(POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL/ALTERNATIVE END TITLE SEQUENCE)

EXT. FACTORY MORNING.

MEN AND WOMEN PICKETING GATE WITH PLACARDS - ED AND STELLA TO THE FORE.

E N D