

# SLIDING DOORS

A FILM

by

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Producer: Philippa Braithwaite - Big Deal Pictures

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FOR EDUCATIONAL  
PURPOSES ONLY

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BLACK SCREEN

FADE UP CAPTION:

"There are things known and things  
unknown....and in-between .....  
the doors"

Aldous Huxley

PRE-TITLE SEQUENCE

EXT. COUNTRY ROADS. NIGHT.

ALL CLOSE SHOTS: Headlights of a car coming one way towards a bend in the road. Headlights coming the other way.

One car veers across the road as they approach each other. They skid into each other although not drastically and bounce off each other.

One car ends up in the small ditch by the side of the road.

The other car slows down to a stop and the driver's door opens.

IMMEDIATE FLASHBACK. We see the same scenario again with the two cars coming round the corner towards each other (same footage). They collide as before and one car lands in the ditch

This time the other car slows down as if to stop and then keeps going around the corner and away.

CUT TO:

TITLE SEQUENCE

INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

A BIG CLOSE UP of a cup of tea being knocked over on the corner of a dressing table spilling some tea onto an Erica Jong novel "Fear of Flying".

A wrist is held up to reveal a watch telling us it is 9.47 am.

A female voice curses the time and the bedroom door shuts as she leaves.

EXT. LONDON SKYLINE. DAY

A big landscape of London centring on the houses of parliament, the Embankment and the Thames. End on Embankment underground station.

2.

INT. TUBE STATION. DAY

A tube train sliding doors open and out of them comes a hurried HELEN. Late twenties and...late. This is her story.

INT. BIG CLOSE SHOT:

A WOMAN of 29 (LYDIA) applying lipstick.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. BATHROOM. DAY

The sliding doors to a shower open and the upper body of a late twenty year old man gets in (GERRY)

EXT. EMBANKMENT TUBE. DAY

HELEN arrives out into Villiers Street and goes up the road.

INT. BIG CLOSE SHOT.

of a woman's long black coat being buttoned up.

INT. SANDWICH BAR. DAY.

HELEN is given a take away coffee and snack from LUCA, the owner. They share some playful banter and she leaves hurriedly. There is a 'Staff Wanted' sign in the window.

EXT. SANDWICH BAR. DAY

HELEN comes out of the sandwich bar with a take away coffee and morning snack and walks hurriedly up Villiers street towards the Strand.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. SHOWER. DAY.

GERRY washes under his arms and sings along to the opening soundtrack.

EXT. LONDON SUBURBAN STREET. DAY

A pair of black high heeled shoes are swung into a VW golf and the car door is shut. The car moves off.

EXT. TRAFALGAR SQUARE. DAY

HELEN comes hastily out of an off licence with two carrier bags and hurries round the square and up Charing Cross Road.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY

CLOSE SHOT: A bottle of cherry brandy and two glasses. GERRY, towel round his waist carries them down the corridor of the flat and into the bedroom screeching along with 'The Doors'

EXT. LONDON STREETS. DAY

The VW Golf drives along the road.

EXT. OFFICE BLOCK. DAY

HELEN enters the office.

INT. LONDON OFFICE RECEPTION AREA. DAY.

CLOSE SHOT. The light at the top of the lift as it comes on and the lift sliding doors open. HELEN comes out and enters the main office.

END OF TITLE SEQUENCE

INT. LONDON PR OFFICE. DAY.

As HELEN enters the office the five or so desks in the open plan area are empty and the 'team' are gathered in the glass walled conference room at the end of the office.

HELEN ups her pace through the office dumping her tea and snack on her desk as she goes.

HELEN

(to herself)

Shit shit shit shit shit,  
tchoh shit. (she mimics)  
"Hello Helen, I'd almost  
forgotten you work here.

She goes into the conference room.

Five MEN sit round the table in shirtsleeves. They are stony faced.

The BOSS (PAUL) speaks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL

Hi Helen...

HELEN

...I know, I know, you'd almost forgotten I worked here, but I swear I was up all night toying with the fashion show and I've really hit on something...you see...

She takes in their faces for the first time.

HELEN

What?

PAUL picks up an empty spirits crate. HELEN gets the reference at once.

HELEN

I took four bottles of vodka on Friday. I was having a party. I was running late so I borrowed some....

PAUL

You stole promotional goods that as we all know are not.....

HELEN

I didn't st...what are you on about 'steal', I've bought some more to repl....

PAUL

Not a lot of use to me when I had nothing to offer the executives who called by unexpectedly late Friday evening.

HELEN

Well, off the top of my head you could have told them you'd run out. It's popular stuff, been sending a lot round to people, real buzz about it etc. etc. Schmoo bullshit schmoo. We're in PR. That's what we do isn't it?

She looks at his face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HELEN

Huh ho yes but you didn't do that did you, Paul? - So I'm out am I? Well this is perfect isn't it. Congratulations. You've wanted me out for ages. Now you did it. Very well done. Theft. Yeah pretty foolproof. O.K. I'll go, I'll go. I was getting a bit choked up with all the testosterone flying about the place. Best I get out before I start growing a penis.

She stands. Looks at them all one by one and we see them all individually.

HELEN

But as a parting thought may I humbly say that in my opinion you are all wankers. Yes, I think between you you represent every form of wanker.

She looks at STEVE a smooth smarmy looking twenty four year old with braces.

HELEN

Steve, you think every woman wants to screw you, myself included. You are a smug wanker - piss taking, and half brained. Bob - you are a stupid wanker. You think Steve is your mate but most of the piss taking he does is out of you because hey guess what Bob? - He thinks you're a wanker. - Nigel. Well I'm afraid you're called Nigel, Nigel so you're just a wanker. Barry. You are in and out of the loo every five minutes with Men Only or Shag Monthly or whatever so you are a dirty wanker aren't you? - and (turning to Paul) you Paul, you are from Bradford aren't you Paul but for some reason you speak with an American accent so that makes you a complete wanker. Surely

CONTINUED: (3)

HELEN (Cont'd)  
So, whatever the collective noun for wankers is, you are it. Probably a 'Kleenex' - Yes - you gentlemen, are a 'Kleenex of wankers'.

She leaves.

A moment of silence.

STEVE  
Told you - Lesbian.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE RECEPTION AREA. DAY.

1

HELEN walks out through the main reception area. She presses the lift button.

She can't help herself. She lets out a massive giggle. She enjoyed that.

The lift has arrived. The sliding doors open.

Already in the lift are a group of three or four BUSINESSMEN who have come from an office above.

One of them is JAMES HAMMERTON a handsome thirty two year old man. He is in seemingly high spirits. Another young BUSINESSMAN is with him.

JAMES  
I thought they would be much harder to crack than that.  
Hah!

HELEN gets into the lift, still stifling her giggles. She runs her hand through her hair. As she does she dislodges one of her earrings. It falls to the floor by JAMES'S feet. He instinctively picks it up and hands it to her. They don't register each other.

HELEN  
Thanks.

The sliding doors of the lift are shut.

INT. BATHROOM/FRONT DOOR. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY.

GERRY stands with a towel round his waist looking in the mirror. He is applying body lotion, singing "Love me two times" to himself.

The front door buzzes.

GERRY moves quickly through the bedroom rubbing himself and humming contentedly as he goes. A sense of urgency about his movements. He moves the alarm clock on the side of the bed round so he can see the dial. 10:53 am.

CUT TO:

The front door as GERRY opens it.

ANGLE: A pair of black high heeled shoes walk in past GERRY'S bare feet. They stop and turn. We travel up the body of the WOMAN (LYDIA) as she starts to unbutton her long black coat.

GERRY closes the door.

LYDIA has finished unbuttoning her coat and lets it fall to the ground. We see all of her for the first time. She is wearing only black high heeled shoes and a pair of black French knickers.

They stare at each other with smouldering sexual electricity.

On GERRY.

GERRY

That's it. You make  
yourself at home.

He releases his towel from around his waist and lets it fall to the ground.

EXT. OFFICE LONDON DAY.

HELEN walks out of the building and walks off down Charing Cross Road. She is in a world of their own, mulling over what has happened to her.

We can see that just in front of her JAMES is walking in the same direction.

She walks round Trafalgar square - past Charing Cross station and into Villiers Street.

She arrives at Embankment station.

INT. EMBANKMENT UNDERGROUND. DAY.

22

HELEN gets her ticket and heads through the barrier. She gets onto the escalator down towards the District Line.

We can see JAMES at the bottom of the escalator as he disappears round onto the platform.

A third of the way down HELEN hears the tube train thundering into the station.

She starts to run down the escalator to try and catch the train. She gets to the bottom and runs round through the small tunnel onto the platform just as the sliding doors of the tube train are closing. She makes a desperate lunge for the train and just manages to stop the door with her arm and a MAN on the train helps prize it open for her and she gets on.

### IMPORTANT VISUAL SEQUENCE

IMMEDIATE CUT BACK TO:

HELEN coming down the escalator as before (Same footage). The sound of the train again and HELEN runs down the escalator and round onto the platform again as the sliding doors of the tube train are shutting. This time she is just too late and the doors shut just as she gets to them. The MAN who helped her in the first scenario stands by the door reading his paper oblivious to HELEN'S failed attempt.

As the train pulls out we see 'HELEN' on the platform but on the train we see the 'HELEN' that caught the train move along the carriage to take her seat.

(N.B. This is an integral moment. From now on we will follow the TWO stories of HELEN. The one that caught the train and the one that didn't.

For ease of differentiation the story of 'HELEN' that caught the train will be written in normal print. the one that didn't in bold italics.)

INT. TUBE TRAIN. DAY.

2

HELEN settles down in seat of the fairly crowded train. Next to her JAMES has just sat down. There is no recognition between them.

INT. STATION DAY.

24

HELEN watches as the train starts to pull out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A last glimpse of HELEN who has unknowingly sat down next to JAMES as the train is moving off. As HELEN and JAMES leave frame as the train enters the tunnel we pan back to:

HELEN

watching the train moving off

(IMPORTANT VISUAL NOTE: This is the only time in the film that both 'HELEN' and 'HELEN' appear in the same 'frame')

INT. TUBE TRAIN. DAY.

As the train pulls out HELEN looks out of the window and as the train passes further down the platform gathering speed towards the tunnel three YOUTHS walk onto the platform.

The train windows go black as the train hits the tunnel.

INT. STATION. DAY.

The three YOUTHS look at HELEN further down the platform.

They walk over to her.

YOUTH 1

'Scuse me miss, got  
change for the chocolate  
machine?

The other YOUTHS laugh. HELEN looks up.

HELEN

No, sorry...

But the YOUTHS have grabbed her bag and are trying to wrench it from her and open it at the same time to get at her purse.

HELEN sees the alarm. She makes a lunge for it but in the fracas she falls heavily hitting her head against the corner of the seat.

A station official arrives on the platform and the YOUTHS dash off

OFFICIAL

You all right?

HELEN checks her bag.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELEN  
Bastards got my video membership card. Ah, serves them right. Let them pay the fine.

INT. BEDROOM. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY.

GERRY and LYDIA stand close together. They are naked. they both hold a glass and GERRY fills them both with brandy. They stare steamily at each other.

They both take sensual sips from their glasses and then kiss each other, allowing the brandy to run out of their mouths and down their upper bodies. GERRY's head leaves frame as he begins to lick the spilt brandy from LYDIA's breast.

Close in on her face as her head goes back with electric sexual pleasure.

The sound of a busker singing.

BUSKER (V.O.)  
"She used to make me feel so fine. When I come home from working all day on the line.

INT. TUBE TRAIN. DAY.

On the train the BUSKER continues to sing.

The other PASSENGERS try to become invisible.

BUSKER  
.And so I'm biding my time, just drinking her wine..

JAMES  
Ooh oh. Stolen from the Beatles.

HELEN looks at him and nods non committedly and continues to read her book.

EXT. UNDERGROUND STATION. DAY.

HELEN is being helped up into an ambulance by a medic.

INT. TUBE TRAIN. DAY.

The BUSKER finishes his song. He starts to go round with a hat. A couple of PASSENGERS put some coins in. JAMES puts in ten pence.

JAMES

I've kept back a few pence to send to the Performing Rights Society for lyric poaching. "Biding time drinking wine", Norwegian Wood lyrics.

He turns to HELEN.

JAMES

Aren't they?

HELEN

I don't know, sorry.

JAMES

Course you do. Everyone is born knowing all the Beatles lyrics instinctively. They're passed into the foetus subconsciously with all the amniotic stuff. Fact they should be called 'The Foetles'.

Nothing from HELEN.

INT. TUBE TRAIN. DAY

A few stops later. The train is pulling out of Sloane Square.

HELEN sits quietly looking at but not reading her Erica Jong book.

( N.B. IMPORTANT VISUAL NOTE: There is a nasty tea stain on the bottom half of the book which has soaked several pages rendering them almost unreadable.) JAMES is looking round, keen to chat.

After a moment.

JAMES

Funny the way nobody speaks on tubes, isn't it? I mean I rarely catch the tube but....Or in lifts. Confined spaces, everybody shuts down. Why is that?  
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES (Cont'd)

Perhaps we think everyone else on the tube or in the lift is a potential psychopath. So we close down and pretend to read a book or something. You've got a tea stain on your book, by the way.

HELEN

(dismissively)

Look I don't think you're a psychopath. I just want to read my book.

JAMES

I understand. I apologise. I'm er...I'm in a little bit of a good mood as a matter of fact, today so er...sorry.

HELEN

It's O.K.

Although overly chatty there is something inoffensive and unobtrusive about JAMES.

He looks around at other PASSENGERS

A moment passes. He glances at HELEN again.

JAMES

Did you know the bloke who lives in the flat above me is Erica Jong's' cousin?

She looks at him.

JAMES

Sorry. Sorry. - Have we met before? No, I honestly, you seem familiar.

HELEN

I don't think so. He notices her earring.

JAMES

Yes, you were in the lift, just now, you dropped your earring. I picked it up.

HELEN

Yes, you did. Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAMES

It's O.K. You work there?

She looks at him hard for a moment.

HELEN

I did do. But I have just been fired. O.K.

JAMES

Oh no, that's...that's horrible. I'm sorry.

HELEN

That's O.K. You didn't do it. Now thank you for your concern, I'm glad you're in a good mood etc. and thank you for picking up my earring but I just want to read my book.

INT. HOSPITAL CASUALTY. DAY

In a small cubicle HELEN is finishing having a bandage fitted to her slight head wound.

INT. TUBE. DAY.

The tube train pulls into Fulham Broadway station.

JAMES

Well, I get off here. - I'm just telling you in case you get off here too and you get up before me and then I get up and you think I'm following you. Which I'm not, I mean I wouldn't, I mean, you know....

(suddenly he is very serious and genuine)

I really didn't mean any offence. Please forgive me. I'm really not a nutcase. I apologise.

He gets up. Heads for the doors as the train comes to a halt. Helen gets up too and gets off as he does, slightly behind him. He gets off, followed by Helen. She feels the need to say something.

HELEN

Excuse me.

CONTINUED:

He turns round.

HELEN

I..er...look I'm sorry, I'm  
sure you're not a nutcase or  
a psycho or anything...I  
just...I'm not that  
..er...good at...er you know  
er.....

JAMES

Constructing sentences?

She laughs.

HELEN

Talking. On tubes. You're  
right. No-one does it. And  
I'm a little.. you know.  
Er... so... anyway....

She goes slightly distant.

JAMES

You live in Fulham?

HELEN

Hummm?

JAMES

Is this your stop? Only you  
got off the train. This is  
Fulham Broadway.

HELEN

Yes. Yes I live just up the  
road.

JAMES

Me too. I'm James.

HELEN

Helen.

JAMES

Hi Helen. Walk you to the  
street?

She giggles foolishly and they walk off. After a few silent  
steps, suddenly HELEN blurts out.

HELEN

I live with someone. A man.  
I live with a man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAMES

Really. I have people I consider soul mates who don't confide in me this much. And what would he think if he knew you were walking up from the tube in broad daylight with a complete stranger? Pretty outrageous stuff.

Helen laughs. A moment.

HELEN

O.K. You are clearly not in the mood to be deterred so...I'm curious, how come you're in such a good mood.

JAMES

Well...barring a disaster I may well have just become the sole British franchise licence holder of a large and successful American sports company. So after a period in my life in which everything has been going wrong suddenly everything seems to be going right. See now I'm confiding in you. So don't worry about losing your job, they're plainly not aware of your amazing potential and I know some of my good fortune will rub off on you and now we're at the exit and I go left. It was nice to meet you Helen. I'm sorry about your job. Really. I suppose being Aquarian can have it's down sides.

They have indeed reached the exit. As he wanders off he turns back.

JAMES

Those Monty Python boys are right you know.

HELEN

Always look on the bright side of life?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JAMES  
No. Nobody expects the  
Spanish inquisition. Bye.

He waves. She waves back, smiling slightly and amazed that he guessed her star sign correctly. She wanders off to the right. His open honesty has been refreshing.

INT. BEDROOM. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY.

The sexual festivities continue with vigour and fervency.

LYDIA pins him down on the bed and puts her face close.

LYDIA  
I love you.

GERRY  
Snap.

LYDIA  
So when? When Gerry?

GERRY  
Lydia!!

LYDIA  
When?..... When.

GERRY  
Soon..

LYDIA  
Soon?

GERRY  
Yeah soon. I promise.

LYDIA  
How soon?

GERRY  
Very. Very soon.

LYDIA  
Not soon enough.

She plants her mouth firmly on his in a passionate kiss. The sex continues. GERRY'S leg swings round and unbeknownst to him knocks the phone by the side of the bed off the hook.

The sound of an engaged telephone.

INT. HOSPITAL CASUALTY. DAY.

HELEN is on the public pay phone.

VISUAL NOTE: She has a small bandage on her forehead. This will differentiate her from HELEN visually.

HELEN puts down her receiver.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY.

The key in the door as HELEN comes through the door. She is about to call out when she notices the towel on the floor by the door and then her gaze wanders to the discarded coat.

She can hear the sound of Phil Collins singing "In The Air Tonight" coming from the bedroom.

She walks slowly along past the living room, kitchen and to the bedroom door which is just open. She can hear the soft moans of a man and woman coming from inside.

She pushes the door open and walks in and stands by the door.

On the bed GERRY is sat with his LYDIA sat astride him and they are rocking back and forth like a rocking chair. GERRY facing HELEN, LYDIA with her back to her. GERRY'S eyes are closed as he is reaching towards climax. He is moaning. As he rocks back and forth his voice gets louder and louder.

GERRY

Oh  
yeah...Hmmm....Oh...Ohho...  
Oh yes indeed....Oh  
yes.....Oh Yes!....OH  
YES!!.....OH YESSS!!!  
....OHMH YESSSS!!!! (He  
opens his eyes and sees  
HELEN looking at him)....OH  
FUCK!!!

His movement immediately stops as he is frozen in the headlights of HELEN'S eyes. LYDIA keeps going.

LYDIA

Yes, yes - talk to me like  
that. Tell me again. Don't  
stop...Oh please don't stop  
..Please...Oh.

GERRY is tapping her on the shoulder to get her attention. She eventually subsides and looks at him, sees his face staring and looks round to see HELEN.

LYDIA just looks at HELEN stony faced. A long moment of silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eventually.

HELEN

(casually)

I didn't think you liked Phil Collins.

GERRY

(trance-like)

I do sometimes.

HELEN

Yeah? Just shows you you never really know people, do you? Go ahead, tell her again. She's right, you really shouldn't just stop like that. Set a woman back three days doing a thing like that. - Who is she.

LYDIA

(unfazed - almost defiantly)

She's Lydia.

HELEN moves her stare to LYDIA. A moment of eyeballing. LYDIA then calmly picks up her knickers and leaves unruffled.

A beat.

HELEN

Well, I've had a dreadful day. I got sacked. - And so did you it would seem. Cup of tea?

She turns and casually walks out of the door leaving GERRY still staring pathetically.

Suddenly she comes back through the door at speed and launches herself on the bed at him like an exocet missile screaming and punching him.

HELEN

You BASTARD. You useless shagging man type BASTARD. You bastard You bastard...you bastard...you bastard..

She gets slower and slower until there is almost a macabre Hannibal Lecter style calm rhythm to her beating which accompanies the word BASTARD each time.

INT. TAXI CAB. DAY.

HELEN sits in the taxi on her way home. Her head bandaged.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY.

HELEN

(vehemently)

You haven't laid a finger on me in three months - Three months Gerry. Almost to the day. I am working all the hours under the sun to support you while you are supposedly writing your first novel, I come home and catch you screwing Lady shagging Godiva and I don't have a point? - I have a point, Gerry!- believe me - I have a very big point. I have such a big point I could shove it right through you and make a kebab out of you. Am I being clear-ish?

GERRY

Look....look....

He goes into a thought process. HELEN watches expecting him to carry on talking. Eventually.

HELEN

Yes, - Look....? That's not much of a sentence is it? "Look.... look" Is it? It's just two words. It's just one word, in fact, repeated. Look - what?

GERRY

No, it's all right - nothing.

HELEN

"Look... look.....no it's all right nothing'?! 'Oh dear, your knob's gone soft but now your brain's got a stiffy. - How long? Huh? Do you love her? Questions too difficult? I'm just asking because I need to know exactly how big a fucking mug I am. Hmmm?

But he simply can't speak. She picks up her coat and heads for the door

CONTINUED:

HELEN

Well you clearly need some time to work out which line to spin me so..

GERRY

Helen..

HELEN

Yes - Gerry. What?

GERRY

Er....I'm sorry.

She looks at him for a moment.

HELEN

Well congratulations, Gerry, I thought you handled that really well. Really well.

She leaves the room. The sound of the door slamming. GERRY plonks down on the bed and sees an earring that LYDIA left behind. He picks it up and holds it.

EXT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY.

The door to the flat closes and LYDIA comes out. Panning to the window we see GERRY waving her good-bye. They are both exuding sexually fulfilled radiance.

LYDIA gets into her VW Golf car and drives off.

She drives down the road to the junction of the main road. As she pulls out onto the main road the cab with HELEN in pulls into the road. The two cars pass each other the occupants oblivious of each other.

The cab continues along to the flat and HELEN gets out of the cab and goes to the front door.

The NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOUR is kneeling scrubbing her doorstep in a possessed manner. As she scrubs she is yelling and screaming at someone in the house in GERMAN. The sound of a GERMAN MAN inside patiently saying "Ja, ja, ja!"

HELEN lets herself in.

21.  
INT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY.

HELEN comes into the flat. The sound of water splashing down from a shower.

CUT TO:

In the bathroom GERRY is showering himself off after his 'session'. He hears the door shut and pulls back the sliding doors to see who it is.

Cut between the bathroom and HELEN moving through the flat to join him.

HELEN  
Hello.....Gerry?

GERRY (calling)  
Helen, that you!

HELEN  
(playfully)  
No, it's your bit of  
stuff. Wednesday - shag  
day remember?

GERRY (Under his breath)  
Jesus Christ.

He slams the shower sliding doors shut and instinctively grabs the soap and frantically starts scrubbing his balls like a madman.

HELEN has made it to the bedroom and calls through to the bathroom, taking in the dishevelled state of the bed.

HELEN  
Have you just got up you  
lazy git?

GERRY is getting out of the shower and thinking madly on his feet.

GERRY  
Yeah...yeah...I er...I  
didn't sleep that well,  
you know er....then I  
went into a deep  
....really er deep deep  
sleep when you left for  
some er....you know...I  
think I might be coming  
down with er...anyway  
what are you doing home  
at.....

GERRY arrives in the bedroom and sees the bandage on her head.

CONTINUED:

GERRY  
...Oh my god what  
happened to you?

HELEN  
Huh, well, depends.  
Which story do you want  
first?

GERRY is still rubbing himself dry during this.

(The radio is on and Genesis have just come on  
singing "That's All")

GERRY  
Sh?

HELEN  
Well, if you're sitting  
comfortably...

GERRY suddenly sees one of LYDIA'S earrings on the  
bed. He launches himself onto the bed like an exocet  
missile and grabs it.

HELEN  
What are you doing?

GERRY instinctively turns the radio off.

GERRY  
Can't stand Phil Collins,  
you know that.

HELEN  
That was Genesis.

GERRY  
Yeah, but it's him  
singing. Yerrrhhh!  
Anyway, look - what  
happened? what's  
happened to your head?

He gets up and crosses to her dropping the earring  
in the bin at the side of the bed as he does.

HELEN  
Well, I got mugged and  
sacked. ..only not in  
that order.

GERRY is now into the concerned boyfriend role  
convinced he has had the escape of the century.

GERRY  
What!....you....

HELEN

Well I mean I was sacked first and mugged later although it wasn't an actual mugging it was only an 'attempted' mugging according to the policeman because they er.. they didn't..

She is beginning to crumble with the shock of it all.

GERRY

Wait wait - Woh, woh slow down - stop, wait a sec, wait a sec. - O.K. come here.. Just.....

He puts his arm round her and takes her to the bed and sits her down. He is kissing her gently on the cheek.

GERRY

That's it. Now then, just relax - take a deep breath. O.K, just. ...take it easy, you've obviously had a bit of a shock.

(she's not the only one)

You're in shock sweetheart. Now then...there we are. O.K - Now then.

He looks up and sees the Cherry brandy bottle on the dressing table with the two glasses by the side of it. He leaps up to it instinctively.

GERRY

Do you want a brandy?

He crosses to the dressing table and grabs one of the glasses and chucks it neatly into the washing basket next to the dressing table.

HELEN

No I don't like brandy.

GERRY

No, 'course not.

GERRY has unknowingly poured himself a massive one and takes a large calming swig from it without knowing he is doing it. HELEN looks at him.

HELEN

CONTINUED: 3;

4

GERRY

Me, - fine. Fine. I'm just er..hmmmm bit of a chest cold....Now - tell me all about it.

EXT. THAMES EMBANKMENT AT FULHAM. DAY.

4

HELEN is looking out over the Thames broodingly taking in the scenario she stumbled upon. A rowing 'eight' passes her up the river. A courting COUPLE walk past arm in arm. A JOGGER runs past and a six year old BOY runs past with a kite followed by his MUM trying to keep up.

Life goes on.

HELEN turns and walks away from the river wall.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY.

4:

GERRY has managed to get back in control of the situation. HELEN finishes telling her story to him.

HELEN

....and then I waited hours in casualty and we had to give a statement and all that and I couldn't help thinking if I'd have just caught that bloody train it would never have happened. I'd have been home at eleven thirty and .....

GERRY has immediately imagined what that would have meant. (we, of course have seen it). He jumps in.

GERRY

Well look you mustn't think like that. You can't go round wondering 'what if this' you know, 'if only that' It's done now. Come on, I'm going to - follow.

He leads her into the bathroom and runs the water in the sink.

GERRY

Splash (she splashes her face) ..going to take you out and get you alarmingly out of your head on Grolsch

CONTINUED:

He hands her the towel and she dries her face.

GERRY

...and then - this way  
 (leading her to her wardrobe and opening it)  
 and then when you've sung all your favourite Barbara Streisand songs at the top of your voice and got us slung out of the pub - put this on (taking a dress out of the wardrobe and handing it to her) I'm going to let you have carnal knowledge of a lamb passanda - which I know your diet does not allow - with double Tarka Dahl which you can then throw up all over the pristine doorstep of Herr and Frau Goebbels next door. Chop chop.

HELEN is laughing at him. She throws her arms around him.

HELEN

Oh I love you Gerry.  
 We'll be O.K. won't we?

GERRY'S face over her shoulder!

INT. PICKLED PELICAN BISTRO BAR. FULHAM. EVE. (5PM)

HELEN is sitting at the bar with a bottle of Grolsch lager which she drinks from the bottle. She is in her own world and has predictably 'hit the bottle'. She has a packet of ten Marlboro's on the bar and is smoking one.

EXT. ANNA'S FLAT. EVE.

ANNA is HELEN'S best friend. A woman of about thirty.

She stands at her doorstep talking to GERRY. She is unsympathetic to his frantic state.

GERRY

Oh, come on, Anna, you're Helen's best friend, where else would she be.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA

Gerry, she's not here. Come in and search the place if you like. - What is it you've done anyway? Can't have been very nice.

He has no desire to answer.

GERRY

O.K. Sorry, well if she comes here will you just let me know or get her to ring or something. That's all I ask.

ANNA

Gerry, like you said I'm Helen's best friend. If she comes here I'll do what she asks.

She shuts the door in his face.

INT. HEIDI'S FLAT. NIGHT.

JAMES is holding a woman, HEIDI, in his arms. She is crying, distraught.

JAMES

On my mother's life Heidi. No one. I promise. I just don't think we.... It was just not a good idea was it. But there is no one else, on my life.

HEIDI

O.K.

JAMES

O.K.?

She nods, still clearly upset and trying to keep a grip.

CUT TO:

The door to HEIDI'S flat closes and JAMES walks away.

In the flat HEIDI leans against the closed door and stares strangely ahead as tears run down her cheeks. She is in a very disturbed state.

INT. PICKLED PELICAN. NIGHT.

Another beer arrives for HELEN. She lights another cigarette.

INT. PUB. EVE.

GERRY sits with his mate RUSSELL.

RUSSELL

Gerry, you've been telling me for months that you couldn't hack it with the two of them and you weren't sure which one you felt the most for.

GERRY

I know.

RUSSELL

And I told you that something would happen to help determine the outcome.

GERRY

I know.

RUSSELL

And something has. Ha ha.

He bursts into hysterics.

GERRY

It's not funny actually, Russell.

RUSSELL

No, sorry I beg to differ old man, it's very very very funny. And look at you. It's not as if you're running around frantically looking for her.

GERRY

I went to Anna's. She wasn't there.

RUSSELL

You went to Anna's! Boy you're a regular one man SAS crack unit. Gerry, you clearly wanted this to happen. Didn't you?

On GERRY.

INT. PICKLED PELICAN. EVE.

HELEN sits with another bottle of Grolsch and lights another cigarette.

Unseen by HELEN, through the window JAMES is coming along the road with a FRIEND. They come into the wine bar and up to the bar not seeing HELEN at first. They are chatting.

JAMES

Oh, please. Norwegian Wood was the only Beatles song that didn't get to number one?! It was never a single. You know I blame the homeless situation on people's lack of Beatle trivia knowledge.

He sees HELEN at the bar who is staring down at her cigarette as if it holds the answer to her problem. She has obviously been crying.

JAMES

Helen. Hello. James. Rather annoying chatty bloke on the tube?

HELEN looks up. She takes a moment to realise who he is.

HELEN

(almost inaudible)  
Oh...yes.... Hi.

She takes an amateur drag of her cigarette. Her hand is trembling slightly.

He goes over to her.

JAMES

Oh dear. You look all stressed up with nowhere to go. - It's only a job, you'll get another one.

HELEN looks up at him.

JAMES

It's something else isn't it? - Sometimes helps to just say whatever it is out loud.

HELEN looks up at him. She doesn't speak.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

(genuinely)

Of course it also helps if people mind their own business and leave you alone. I'm sorry.

HELEN

When I left you at the tube earlier I went home and found my boyfriend....

JAMES/HELEN

...in bed with another woman.

JAMES

Shit! I mean, sorry. Er oh dear. That is...what an idiot!

HELEN

It's O.K. you weren't to know.

JAMES

Not me. Your boyfriend. He's an idiot. Er... I'm sorry. It's not my place. I...

HELEN

It's O.K. Thank you.

JAMES

Well look if it makes you feel any better that bloke over there thinks that Norwegian Wood was a single and his favourite programme is Baywatch - so you see there is always someone worse off than you.

She can't help laughing.

JAMES

Do you love him?

HELEN

No I could never love a Baywatch fan.

JAMES

Very good. You did a joke in the midst of your turbulent state, that's very positive. Your boyfriend.

CONTINUED: 2)

HELEN

Ex-boyfriend. I don't know.  
No. Yes. We had been  
having er...well you know...  
we er Oh... I don't know.  
Why am I telling you, all  
this anyway.

JAMES

Telling me all what. All I  
got then was that "you and  
he were...er you.....um, you  
know...er...um!" Listen, I'm  
celebrating, you're  
commiserating, let's team up  
we can...'comisibrate'.

She laughs again. Then looks at him.

HELEN

Are you faithful to your  
girlfriend?

JAMES

Well actually at this  
precise moment I don't have  
a girlfriend. We broke up  
er...forty six minutes ago.

HELEN

Were you unfaithful to her?

JAMES

Heidi? Actually no.  
Well...to be honest it  
wasn't that serious a thing,  
you know, she's a work  
colleague, bit of an office  
romance, you know, never  
really a good idea - so we  
went out a few times, now  
we've stopped. blah blah  
blah, 'life goes on'. Which  
it does by the way although  
you may not think it just  
now. But that's the  
annoying thing about  
clichés, they're all true.  
Listen, change your mind and  
we're just over here O.K. -  
I'm really sorry Helen.

She nods embarrassed. He wanders off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 3;

(IMPORTANT VISUAL SEQUENCE)

HELEN and GERRY come in and walk up to the bar next to JAMES and friends.

(IMPORTANT VISUAL NOTE: There is NO recognition between them as 'JAMES' has not met HELEN in this storyline.

We see HELEN, GERRY and further along the bar JAMES and Co. and along at the end of the bar there is of course NO HELEN.

GERRY

Two of your most disgustingly large grolshes please and she'll have the same.

We pan away from them and back to the door as:

ANNA (HELEN'S friend) comes in and looks around the bar. She spots HELEN in the corner on her own and goes over to her.

IMPORTANT VISUAL NOTE: As ANNA arrives with HELEN we see back the other way along the bar and see JAMES and CO. but NO HELEN and GERRY

ANNA

Gerry came looking for you. Is it what I think?

HELEN

Depends. Is what you think that I walked in on him shagging 'Lydia' in my bed and I walked out.

ANNA

Pretty much.

HELEN

Then yes.

It is all suddenly too much for HELEN and she crumbles into a mess of tears and ANNA holds her tight.

ANGLE: Wide on the bar with HELEN and GERRY just sitting down at a table. In the BG at the other side of the bar there is NO HELEN and ANNA.

At the bar JAMES and friends stand drinking champagne.

MIX TO:

Later. No dialogue.

CONTINUED: (4)

HELEN is now pretty drunk. JAMES and his friends are just leaving. He looks over and waves good-bye to HELEN. There is a moment. She waves back. ANNA looks at him and immediately wants to know who this attractive man is. HELEN drunkenly explains.

They both watch him walk out of the bar.

INT. INDIAN RESTAURANT. NIGHT. (11.30 PM)

GERRY and HELEN have the remnants of a gargantuan Indian feast on their table.

HELEN

No more, really. I'll be sick.

GERRY

Well we're on schedule for that but we've got to move locations so just don't swallow for ten minutes.

INT. ANNA'S FLAT. NIGHT.

ANNA tucks a very pissed HELEN into bed. She is waffling, half comatose.

HELEN

He didn't fancy me. He was just being concerned.

ANNA

Uhuh? Well, let me tell you if he was being that 'concerned' about me I wouldn't be helping you into bed right now.

HELEN

Am I in bed?

ANNA

Yes. Now sleep. You'll be fine.

GERRY (V.O.)

.....just fine.

INT. GERRY'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

HELEN'S face as she is slopped over the shoulder of GERRY as he manoeuvres her into the bedroom and deposits her almost comatose body onto the bed.

GERRY

There we go. (to himself) Well I think along with Liverpool 0 Port Vale 9 we can put that down as a result, Gerald.

HELEN fast asleep on the bed.

INT. ANNA'S FLAT. NIGHT.

HELEN fast asleep.

FADE TO BLACKOUT

EXT. FULHAM. SKYLINE. DAY (2) MONTAGE

Fade up on the streets of London SW6.

EXT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY. (A.M.) MONTAGE

Outside GERRY'S FLAT. The postman leaves having put letters through the letter box.

On the doorstep of the house next door is the GERMAN WOMAN (FRAU GOEBBELS) who is throwing a bowl of hot water over her doorstep, to clean 'something' off (HELEN'S puke). She is cursing vociferously in German at her husband inside the house.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY. MONTAGE

HELEN wakes up to GERRY holding out a glass of sparkling Redoxon orange vitamin C drink. She holds her hand out for it without opening her eyes.

INT. ANNA'S FLAT. DAY. MONTAGE.

ANNA holds out a glass of strawberry drinking yoghurt. HELEN reaches for it blindly and takes a sip. She pulls a face.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY.

HELEN in the showers herself.

INT. ANNA'S FLAT. SHOWER. DAY. MONTAGE. 5

HELEN showers herself. Establish that this is definitely not GERRY'S FLAT. Water cascading onto HELEN'S back.

MIX TO:

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. SHOWER. DAY. MONTAGE. 55

HELEN turns the shower off and gets out. She still has a bandage on her head.

She towels herself dry and gets into a robe and walks through the bedroom. She glances momentarily at the dressing table wondering why something bothers her about it.

She walks through to the living room where GERRY sits at a computer typing away. He stops and picks up a book of reference.

She walks past him and holds up her hands in a T shape. He nods and winks at her.

INT/EXT. SANDWICH SHOP. DAY. MONTAGE. 60

LUCA takes the "Staff wanted" sign out of the window

MIX TO:

HELEN behind the counter making various sandwiches and loading them into a big basket. She refers to an order list. Her hair is tied back and she is being as industrious as she can.

INT. ANNA'S FLAT. DAY. MONTAGE. 6

ANNA and HELEN are sat on the sofa looking at a hairdressing styles magazine.

HELEN shakes her head at the outrageous style on the open page.

Various shots of the pages turning, fingers pointing, HELEN laughing shaking her head, ANNA pulling and manoeuvring HELEN'S hair into various shapes to copy the styles.

The phone rings. They stop dead and look at each other. ANNA answers. HELEN is tense. ANNA shakes her head it's not GERRY. HELEN looks deflated.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY. MONTAGE. 6

HELEN is loading up the washing machine. She is wearing a black skirt and a white blouse.

CONTINUED:

GERRY comes round the doorway with a portfolio in his hand and blows a kiss to HELEN. She waves bye back at him.

As she empties the basket she finds the brandy glass that GERRY discarded into it. There is a lipstick lip-print on it. HELEN looks at it 'suspiciously' then puts it on the draining board.

INT. PICKLED PELICAN WINE BAR BISTRO. DAY. MONTAGE. 6

HELEN arrives in the kitchen with a pile of dirty plates and sticks an order for more food on the hook. She picks up three plates of burgers, ribs etc. and carries them out into the bistro to a table of CUSTOMERS.

She is very busy. She looks over at the boss who nods at her. She is working well.

INT. LYDIA'S FLAT. DAY. MONTAGE. 6

ANGLE: On the floor a briefcase. The name in gold embossed letters on the side - GERRY ASHBY.

Panning off it and around the room to discarded clothes and bottles of advocat, blue and orange curacao and a cocktail shaker ending on the back of the sofa. The sound of sexual festivities coming from on the sofa.

LYDIA'S head arrives at the end of the sofa followed by GERRY'S head above her's. He grab's the cocktail shaker and shakes it. Their heads disappear again.

INT. PICKLED PELICAN. NIGHT. MONTAGE.

The end of the session.

HELEN is slumped on a bar stool seeing off a large cold coke.

The BOSS gives her some money. He is pleased with her. She looks at him as if to say - Is it always that busy

EXT. HAIRDRESSING SALON. FULHAM. DAY. MONTAGE

HELEN sits in one of the chairs having her hair styled. ANNA is standing next to her. It already has a deep and attractive cochineal colour and is much shorter.

JAMES is walking by. He notices HELEN. She doesn't see him.

INT. ANNA'S FLAT. DAY.

ANNA and HELEN. HELEN is sporting her new hair style.

HELEN is looking through the Evening Standard. She is looking for a particular page.

ANNA

You don't mean that.

HELEN

I do. Really.

ANNA

So you were together two and a half years, you've been sitting here like suicide on a stick for a week.....

HELEN

Nine days Anna.

ANNA

.....for nine days but "Bollocks to him"!

HELEN

Yes. I mean why hasn't he even called to see if I'm O.K. or to admit that he's a twat. "Hello Helen it's Gerry I'm a twat, please come home I love you" all that shit - Oh I don't care anyway. Bollocks to him. I'm over him.

ANNA

Oh - you're over him?

HELEN

Yes. Totally.

She is still looking at the paper.

ANNA

Totally.

HELEN

Yep.

ANNA

Totally and utterly and completely over him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELEN

(reading)

Mmm.

ANNA looks at her. She looks up.

ANNA

No you're not.

HELEN

(continues reading)

I am.

ANNA

You're not.

HELEN

(looking up)

Anna - I'm over him. What do you mean I'm not. How do you know I'm not?

ANNA

Well two things really. One you are still counting how long you've been apart in days - and probably hours and minutes - but the big flashing red light way of telling you're not really over someone is when you're still reading their horoscope in the hope that they're going to get wiped out in some freak napalming incident.

HELEN throws the paper at him.

HELEN

Smart arse!

ANNA picks up the paper.

ANNA

What is he?

HELEN

A wanker.... Oh Pisces.

ANNA reads.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANNA

Pisces, Pisces - Well just shows how much I know.  
 (reads) "With mars your ruler in the ascendancy you will get wiped out in a freak napalming incident and Helen says bollocks to you."  
 This guy's very good.

They laugh. The door bell rings. They look at each other.

HELEN

You go. No I will. No you. I'm not in, I'm out. You don't know where or who with - especially who with. Quickly, go on.

ANNA

Helen, go and answer the door.

HELEN

No! You answer it. It won't be him, anyway.

ANNA

So there's no big deal is there.

HELEN leaves the room and walks down the hall to the front door.

HELEN

(muttering)

Bollocks to him, bollocks to him, bollocks to him, bollocks to him....

She opens the door. It's JAMES.

CUT TO:

INT. AMERICAN DINER. EVE.

JAMES and HELEN are sat at the bar on stools with big chocolate milkshake monstrosities in front of them. JAMES slurps the last of his and HELEN is still playing with hers with her straw.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

Come on. You don't drink your fatty drinks you will never really achieve quality cellulite.

HELEN smirks slightly.

JAMES

Hair cut suits you by the way. Ronald MacDonalD ever quits you've got a job for life.

Nothing from HELEN. He is worried he has offended her.

JAMES

Oh I'm sorry. It was a joke.

HELEN

Listen James maybe I shouldn't be here. I'm sorry. I'm not being fair. You know under normal circumstances etc. You're really nice. And funny. And my friend Anna thinks you're cute.

JAMES

(feigning outrage)  
Wait, wait. Hold. You friend Anna thinks I'm cute? You friend Anna thinks I'm cute? Shit, I just blew, wait (picks up the menu) er..£2.85 - two eighty five on the wrong girl.

HELEN laughs. He takes both of her hands. Looks straight at her.

JAMES

Helen. Sometimes you know we are plonked into people's lives when they just need to be cheered up and it turns out that for some reason it's your job. We don't know why. - But I'll be honest. I do think you are very attractive. There, I've said it. But..but.. that's...that just makes the job easier you see and should not worry you at all.  
Wall - a bit

CONTINUED: (2)

JAMES (Cont'd)

It should worry you a bit.  
 But only a really tiny bit.  
 No. Kidding. My intentions  
 are completely and totally  
 honourable. Well completely  
 anyway. Well fairly. I  
 have no desire to overstep  
 the mark. You prefer  
 sapphires or diamonds -  
 sorry! Nothing-sorry.

HELEN is laughing. She is charmed and embarrassed.

JAMES

So, having firmly  
 established the ground rules  
 what are you doing two weeks  
 on Saturday?

HELEN

Probably killing myself.

JAMES

Excellent. What time does  
 that finish? You like  
 boats?

She looks at him.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

61

A CLOSE shot of a pirate galleon crashing against the  
 waves on the open sea. Pull away to reveal the room.

The room is lit by candlelight. The remnants of a  
 home-cooked meal on the large coffee table.

HELEN and GERRY sit on the floor with their backs  
 against the sofa. HELEN is wearing a robe. GERRY  
 his jockey shorts. They have a glass of wine each.  
 There is a warm feeling. They have obviously just  
 made love.

A moment.

HELEN

You know we haven't done  
 that for three months?

GERRY

Don't be daft.

HELEN

Three months. Almost to  
 the day.

CONTINUED:

GERRY

Almost to the day!  
Listen to you. What are  
we, a survey? We did it  
much more recently than  
my birthday! There, we  
did it on my  
birthday.....

HELEN

In May. It's August.

GERRY

(struggling)  
Bloody hell, May, June  
Jul....

HELEN

Gerry, why was there a  
brandy glass with  
lipstick on it in the  
laundry basket?

GERRY'S face.

GERRY

With what on it?

HELEN

Lipstick.

GERRY

I don't know. Can I  
answer questions on 70's  
rock music?

HELEN

And last week when I got  
the sack and I came back  
there was a bottle of  
brandy and two glasses on  
the dressing table.

GERRY

(acting vague)  
No there wasn't, was  
there? Surely.

HELEN

Yes there were.

GERRY

No, wait a minute I  
remember now. There was  
one glass and I'll tell  
you why.

HELEN

GERRY

There were not.

HELEN

There were!

GERRY

Helen, I'm not sure I like the way these questions 'sound'. There was one glass . I told you I couldn't sleep and I got up in the night and got a drink to knock me out. It was still there when you got back. Simple.

(HELEN'S imagination of that morning in flashback over GERRY'S last speech: She puts her hand out to pick up a lipstick without looking and knocks over her tea cup as we saw in the opening sequence. It is in the same place the brandy was when she got back. It spills tea onto her Erica Jong book.)

Back in normal reality GERRY is still going for it.

GERRY

.....I mean, let's spoil the moment properly, you know - am I shagging a brandy drinker, yes?

HELEN

Gerry, relax - I'm only asking....

GERRY

No - no you're not. Women don't ask. They never ask, they insinuate. You are insinuating, - not very subtly may I say, that I am - Thanks. No...thanks. Really, you know, I ...I ...this is as good a time as any to address the state of our relationship ...you know...

HELEN

Gerry, for God's sakes - I asked a simple question - there's no need to go Woody Allen on me.

GERRY gets up and picks up the dirty dinner plates and heads for the kitchen.

CONTINUED: (3)

6

HELEN  
 (to herself)  
 That's it. Storm off  
 into the kitchen. Now do  
 angry washing up.

The sound of the plates being dumped aggressively  
 into the sink.

EXT. ANNA'S FLAT. NIGHT.

7

JAMES is dropping HELEN off in a taxi. She waves as he pulls  
 away. She waits until he is gone and then walks up to the  
 corner of the street and the main road. She hails another  
 cab and gets in.

CUT TO:

EXT. GERRY'S FLAT. NIGHT.

HELEN gets out of the taxi and looks across the road at the  
 front of the house.

She goes to the door. Stands there for a second or two.

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

GERRY is washing up. The sound of the pirate film on the  
 telly can be heard.

The door bell goes. He picks up the towel and leaves the  
 kitchen.

EXT. GERRY'S FLAT. NIGHT.

HELEN waiting by the door. The hall light goes on.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. NIGHT.

GERRY walks to the front door. He opens it.

There is no-one there.

EXT. GERRY'S FLAT. NIGHT.

Huddled down behind the front wall peering through a bush is  
 HELEN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Her POV of GERRY looking around to see who rang on the bell.  
He goes back in.

HELEN slides down on to the pavement in a disconsolate mood.

HELEN  
What are you doing Helen.  
It's over. Go home.

She gets up and walks away.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. NIGHT.

76

HELEN and GERRY lie in bed together. Apart.

After a moment GERRY moves his hand over to hold  
HELEN'S on top of the duvet.

GERRY  
I'm sorry. Helen. I'm  
just tense because I only  
seem able to write  
bollocks.

HELEN  
It's just writer's block.  
You'll be O.K.

GERRY  
I know but I shouldn't  
have reacted like that.  
I'm uptight. You're  
doing all these crappy  
jobs to keep the money  
coming in, I know that.

HELEN  
I'll get another PR job.

He kisses her hand over the duvet.

GERRY  
I know you will. And  
I'll write my book.

HELEN  
Of course you will. And  
it will be brilliant.

GERRY  
I love you.

HELEN  
Good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GERRY'S face in some turmoil.

FADE TO BLACKOUT.

INT. JAMES' OFFICE. DAY.

JAMES is sat at his desk on the phone. He is nodding and attempting to stay calm.

He puts the phone down, jumps up and screeches with joy.

The whole office of about eight or so people erupt and leap on each other with joy and celebration.

One of them is HEIDI. She is pleased but still hurting.

EXT. JAMES'S MOTHERS COUNTRY HOME.

Establish a grand detached house in the home counties with sweeping gravel drive. A car drives in the drive and up to the door.

INT. JAMES' MOTHER'S COUNTRY HOUSE. DAY.

JAMES' MOTHER lies in bed reading a magazine. She is an elegant 70 year old woman. She is obviously poorly.

The sound of a car door closing. She sits herself up and puts down her magazine in expectation.

The door opens and JAMES comes in.

JAMES  
Hello Mum.

MUM  
James!

JAMES  
Now, don't worry, I've been on to Kevin Keegan and provided we can get your boots out of the pawn shop you're definitely playing Saturday.

He goes over and gives her a kiss.

JAMES  
How are you?

MUM  
I'm fine. Fine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He looks at her. She has to be honest with him.

MUM

The sale has gone through.  
It's going to be hard to  
leave this place, James,  
but...

JAMES

But we've still got the  
London flat and I'll be able  
to keep an eye on your crack  
habit more easily from  
there. And you know what  
the Monty Python boys say.

MUM

Nobody expects the Spanish  
Inquisition, I know.

JAMES

Exactly. Now as usual there  
is some good news. - I got  
the American contract. They  
made one major error. They  
forgot to ask me if I knew  
what I was talking about and  
they gave me it. Can you  
believe it.

MUM

Oh, James, that's great  
news.

They hug.

MUM

Your dad would have been  
very proud.

A moment.

JAMES

I hope so...Oh and I've  
brought someone to see you.

He goes over to the door and opens it.

We see him lead a female hand into the room. It is wearing a  
wedding ring. Pan up to see that it is someone we have never  
met before. A woman of thirty two. She stands arm in arm  
with JAMES.

MUM'S face lights up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MUM

Claudia. How nice to see you dear. How are you?

CLAUDIA

I'm great. I'm sorry I haven't been down with James for a while I'm just so busy at the moment.

MUM

I understand. You work hard. Give me a hug. Did you hear the news?

CLAUDIA

Isn't it great.

JAMES

Right, well you know how adulation embarrasses me so I'll leave you to discuss how brilliant I am in private.

He blows a kiss and leaves the room.

INT. ANNA'S FLAT. DAY.

HELEN is unpacking some of her clothes. She has obviously been round to GERRY'S to collect them.

She sorts through things. She finds some old photos of her and GERRY on holiday. Some of her. A lot of the ones of her, taken by GERRY, have a print mark where he held a finger over the lens.

ANNA comes in.

ANNA

How was it?

HELEN pulls a face. She shows her the photos.

ANNA

Nice photos of Gerry's. finger. who's the bird in the background?

HELEN

He's a crap photographer.

The phone rings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA

He's a crap bloke Helen.  
You're better off without  
him.

She goes to answer the phone. She calls back in.

ANNA

Helen.

INT. JAMES' MOTHER'S HOUSE. DAY. 8:

JAMES on the phone.

JAMES

Yes 'tonight' tonight. You  
know the tonight that comes  
immediately after today.

INT. ANNA'S FLAT. DAY. 8:

ANNA stands egging HELEN on.

HELEN

Well, O.K. All right.

INT. JAMES' MOTHER'S HOUSE. DAY. 8:

JAMES

Great. See you.

The door opens and CLAUDIA comes in. JAMES puts the phone  
down.

JAMES

O.K?

CLAUDIA

Yeah? She doesn't really  
want to leave here.

He goes over and holds her.

JAMES

I know. You're a dream, you  
know that don't you? It's  
little wonder I asked you to  
marry me.

He gives her a kiss.

INT. PICKLED PELICAN BISTRO BAR. EVE.

HELEN is dashing from table to table. The place is really busy. There is a band playing in the corner.

She goes to a table. A cheeky bloke tries a chat job on her.

BLOKE

Hey gorgeous. What do you do when your not serving up mad cow burgers in here?

HELEN

(skilfully)

Well, now then. I get up about 7.30 - make and deliver sandwiches during the day before I come here at about 6 o'clock, then when I leave here at night I go home and wash my hair which you can imagine is quite smelly by then. Er..after that if I've got any energy left I give my boyfriend a blow job, something which, though I say it myself as shouldn't I'm pretty nifty at. Would you like some mayonnaise with that?

INT. PUB. NIGHT.

GERRY sits with RUSSELL.

RUSSELL

Wait a sec, sorry let me just.....Lydia is becoming more and more demanding and Helen is working night and day to keep the money coming in, but you have asked Helen to come on a research trip to Devon with you knowing she would not be able to, to cover up the fact that you are taking Lydia! And you are having a moral dilemma. Gerry you are a morality free zone. You want to get out of this Lydia thing. I foresee problems. Ha ha ha!

CONTINUED:

8

GERRY

How come you don't get  
any of these quandaries?

RUSSELL

I've got my boxing mate.  
It's up front.  
Honourable. Two warriors  
in the ring - slugging it  
out. Nothing underhand.  
All blows below the belt  
are immediately dealt  
with.

GERRY

It's barbaric.

RUSSELL

Is it? You have spent  
the last six months  
repeatedly punching your  
girlfriend in the nuts  
and boxing is barbaric.  
Oh dear. I have to say  
that being with you makes  
the agonising wait before  
the next series of  
"Seinfeld" much easier to  
bear. You want to make  
your next book a fantasy,  
you're living in a bloody  
dream world. Ha ha ha.

More hysterics.

GERRY

You have no compassion.  
None. Why do I bother  
confiding in you?

RUSSELL

I'm your mate. I'm here  
to help you. Hah hah.

INT. RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

8

MUSIC OVER.

HELEN and JAMES are at a table with eight of JAMES business  
colleagues, male and female. They are celebrating.

We stay a little way away but see there is good humour and  
banter. JAMES leads three or four of them as they do the  
"Spanish Inquisition" sketch from Monty Python at full pelt.  
Everyone, including HELEN, is in fits of laughter.

INT. HEIDI'S FLAT.

HEIDI sits on a chair holding a brandy glass.

The room is in darkness save for an orange glow from the log fire which has all but burnt out.

INT. RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

We isolate HELEN to see that she is having a good time and enjoying 'being' with JAMES.

Various shots of the evening. Little moments between JAMES and HELEN.

INT. TAXI. NIGHT

HELEN and JAMES are travelling back to ANNA'S

JAMES

I'm deadly serious.

HELEN

Just set up my own PR company?

JAMES

Why not. I did it. I was like you. Lost my job, couldn't get another one. Started my own firm. You've got the experience, the know how, the contacts. You want to spend the rest of your life working for other people? Heh? What's the worst that can happen.

HELEN

I could fail miserably and look like a complete tosser.

JAMES

Exactly, so what's there to worry about?

HELEN

You're round the twist, you know that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES  
Thank you. When you win  
businesswoman of the year I  
expect a mention.

She laughs.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANNA'S. NIGHT.

9

HELEN gets out of a cab. She turns to say goodnight to  
JAMES.

HELEN  
I had a really nice time  
James.

JAMES  
Did you? Shit, I'm sorry,  
that's against the rules  
isn't it?

HELEN  
Yes it is, so just bear that  
in mind in future would you.  
I'm getting over a major  
break up.

JAMES  
Yes, sorry. It won't happen  
again.

HELEN  
Just as long as it doesn't.

The cab pulls off. JAMES leans out of the window and calls  
back. During the next dialogue the taxi gets further and  
further away.

JAMES  
What's your surname?

HELEN  
Eh? Quilly.

JAMES  
"Q.P.R." Perfect.

HELEN  
What!

JAMES  
Quilley Public Relations.  
QPR. It's a football team!  
You'll be top of the league.

CONTINUED:

And he has gone. HELEN looks after the cab. She is starting to weaken.

The taxi disappears.

HELEN'S face.

FADE TO BLACKOUT

EXT. STREET. DAY.

HELEN is walking down the road. She passes the bank. There is a poster in the window advertising business loans. She ponders briefly and goes in.

CUT TO:

She comes out of the bank clutching some bump and application forms.

ANNA (V.O.)

QPR?

INT. ANNA'S FLAT. DAY.

ANNA and HELEN stand over the application forms as HELEN fills them in.

HELEN

Quilley Public Relations. -  
QPR. It's a football team  
Anna. You don't sound very  
interested.

ANNA

I know, I know it's a  
football team. How did you  
come up with that?

HELEN

It was James's idea.

ANNA

It was James's idea! Now  
I'm interested. So what  
other ideas has he 'run by  
you'.

HELEN

Anna. Don't do that.  
You're my friend. Don't do  
'desperate mother' acting  
with me.

(more)

CONTINUED:

HELEN (Cont'd)  
He's a friend. O.K. A friend. I am not remotely interested in him romantically.

ANNA  
You're not?

HELEN  
No.

ANNA  
So how come last night was the first night since you've been here you didn't ask if 'anyone had called' the second you walked in the door?

HELEN looks up at her.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNA'S KITCHEN. DAY.

HELEN is reading a letter from the bank. She screams with delight.

INT. SMALL OFFICE. DAY.

HELEN is being shown a small but neat office space by an ESTATE AGENT.

She nods. It's fine.

MIX TO:

HELEN and ANNA are up ladders painting the walls.

MIX TO:

A carpet is being laid.

HELEN and ANNA struggle to manoeuvre a desk through the door as a BT ENGINEER fixes in a phone line.

MIX TO:

The office is ready. HELEN sits at her desk in front of her computer playing with her new business card with QUILLEY PUBLIC RELATIONS written on it.

A knock on the door and a man comes in with a bunch of blue and white flowers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELEN opens the card. It is from JAMES. It says - "They think it's just started - it has now!! James".

INT. LONDON OFFICE. DAY.

HELEN stands with her sandwich basket on her arm. She is practically asleep on her feet having held down both jobs for a good while. She is being berated by an extremely unhappy and abusive CUSTOMER.

We can only see HELEN at this point.

IRATE CUSTOMER (V.O.)

Well, I'm afraid that is little use to me is it?

HELEN

I suppose not.

IRATE CUSTOMER (V.O.)

You suppose not. You only suppose not.

HELEN

No, I mean...yes, of course. I'm sorry.

IRATE CUSTOMER (V.O.)

You're sorry. You're sorry that four of the staff here have been cut down with food poisoning after eating your sandwiches. And before you speak, yes they all had the same sandwiches and the same symptoms at the same time. Are you trained in the catering trade may I ask?

HELEN

No, I actually work in PR but I lost my job. I'm doing this to fill in.

IRATE CUSTOMER (V.O.)

Well you are not doing a particularly good PR job this morning are you. It's little wonder they let you go.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

9

## IRATE CUSTOMER (Cont'd)

I have to tell you that I have written to your boss suggesting that he takes more care in his employment process. Now if you will excuse me I have five people's work to do.

HELEN leaves the room shell shocked. She walks disconsolately to the lift and presses the button. She puts down her basket and leans her head against the wall. She begins to sob.

Back inside the office the IRATE CUSTOMER sits down in the swing chair and swings round so we see her for the first time.

It is LYDIA!

CUT TO:

INT. PICKLED PELICAN BISTRO BAR. EVE. 9

HELEN at work at the diner. She is quite distracted almost in a trance with fatigue and the horrible events of the morning.

She plonks some dirty plates in the kitchen and picks up the pay phone and dials.

CUT TO:

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. EVE. 9

The phone rings and the answerphone clicks on.

CUT TO:

INT. PICKLED PELICAN BISTRO BAR. EVE. 9

HELEN tuts and puts the phone down. She gets out her filofax from her bag. Picks up the phone to dial again.

INT. LYDIA'S FLAT. 9

LYDIA and GERRY have just had sex.

LYDIA

She's quite pretty in an average home counties sort of way isn't she?

CONTINUED:

GERRY'S confused face.

LYDIA

Helen. I had reason to summon her to the office today. Well I made up a reason to summon her to be brutally honest.

GERRY

Sorry, Helen came to your office today?! Why? What are you playing at. Have you gone raving mad. She's not bloody stupid you know.

LYDIA

Ooh I wouldn't say that. I wanted to see, Gerry what the opposition is like.

GERRY

She is not the opp...

LYDIA

I wanted to see what this girl you seem to be finding extremely hard to leave - despite your insistance that you are had that was so.... un-leavable. And I have to say I ended our brief meeting at a bit of a loss.

GERRY

Don't talk like this Lydia, it sounds ugly.- I've told you - I can't leave Helen at this moment. It would destroy her.

LYDIA

And it doesn't matter what this being dangled on a piece of string is doing to me? Does it.

GERRY

Yes...of course... Oh god (checks his watch) look I'm going to have to go. Please, please be patient. Everything will

CONTINUED: (2)

LYDIA

When though, Gerry. When  
will it be O.K. And who  
will it be O.K. for?

His confused face.

CUT TO:

INT. GERRY'S BEDROOM. NIGHT. 1

GERRY sits on the bed in a dilemma.

The phone rings at the same time as the key goes in  
the front door.

GERRY answers the phone.

GERRY

Hello.

RUSSELL (V.O.)

At last. It's Russell,  
listen wherever you were  
tonight as if we need to  
ask, you weren't with me.  
Helen called looking for  
you.

GERRY

Thanks.

He hangs up. HELEN comes in.

GERRY

Thank god. I was  
worried. I called you at  
the bistro over an hour  
ago.

HELEN

I went to Anna's. I  
needed to see a friendly  
face. I've had a  
horrible day. I met  
Cruella de Ville's less  
nice sister this morning  
and she completely  
deflated me.

GERRY

I know.

HELEN

How do you know?

He goes over to him thinking on his feet.

CONTINUED:

GERRY

No, I mean I can tell,  
you look worn out.

HELEN

Where were you earlier.  
I really needed to talk  
to you.

GERRY

I'm sorry, I went to the  
library to read up on  
some stuff. Come here.  
Take off that coat.  
Here.

He lays her down on the bed and begins to stroke her  
forehead. He looks at her really fondly.

HELEN

I want to work in PR  
again. I'm sick of  
waiting on people. Will  
you be much longer with  
the book. When are you  
going to finish it.

GERRY

I'm going to finish it  
very soon. Very soon. I  
really love you, Helen.

He holds her really tight to him.

Tight on GERRY. His face shows some kind of decision  
taking place.

After a moment.

GERRY

Helen, I've got something  
I want to tell you. I  
need to tell you. It's  
um...well it's a bit to  
do with the brandy glass  
with the lipstick on and  
er... a bit to do with the  
woman you met today  
...only please let me  
finish before you say  
anything O.K? - Helen?  
- Helen.

He leans over to see her face.

She is fast asleep.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GERRY  
(defeatedly)  
Bollocks.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. THAMES EMBANKMENT AT HAMMERSMITH. DAY. 10

A long rowing boat comes towards the camera out of a shed.

It is put into the water by the crew. One of them is JAMES.

HELEN is watching. She is wearing a jumper and jacket. She holds up two crossed fingers to JAMES.

CUT TO:

The race in progress. JAMES and his seven other team members giving it all they've got against the other crew. It is very close.

HELEN is on a small motor boat following by the side. She is willing JAMES on in a conservative manner.

The race goes under Putney bridge.

As it does we pan up to the bridge to find:

EXT. PUTNEY BRIDGE. DAY. 10

HELEN walking along the road with ANNA.

HELEN  
(suddenly)  
Boat race. Blue and  
yellow.

She looks over the side of the bridge down at the river just as the race comes out from under it. The two teams in Blue and yellow vests.

ANNA  
What?

HELEN  
That's weird. I knew  
there would be a boat  
race. And that boat  
going alongside. That's  
happening a lot lately.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IMPORTANT VISUAL NOTE Shot of the boat going alongside it with NO HELEN on board.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVER THAMES. DAY.

The race gathers momentum as they reach the final stages.

HELEN becomes more and more vociferous until she is screaming and jumping up and down in excitement.

JAMES' team crosses the line just ahead of the others. HELEN is ecstatic.

CUT TO:

INT. BOAT CLUB BAR. EARLY EVE.

A full club house bar. Everybody is singing "Father Abraham has seven sons" a high action energetic drinking song, led by JAMES who stands on a table at the front.

HELEN is trying to keep up with all the various actions and is having a great time.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOAT CLUB. EMBANKMENT. EARLY EVE.

Along the embankment outside the boat club come GERRY and LYDIA.

LYDIA

Darling it's just writer's block. You'll be O.K.

GERRY glances in the window of the club and sees the frivolity inside and sees HELEN jumping up and down throwing her arms and legs out as the song requires.

He stops.

GERRY

That's Helen in there.  
She's got red hair.

He goes over to the window and peers in. LYDIA keeps walking.

GERRY

There's loads of them having some kind of sponsored epileptic fit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He sees that LYDIA has moved on.

GERRY

Lydia!

She spins round viciously.

LYDIA

Maybe it isn't writer's block at all, Gerry. I - don't - want - to - hear - about - Helen, Gerry. I don't care about Helen. Understand.

She storms off.

GERRY

Lydia....I...tchoh Jesus.-

He looks after her. This relationship is not going to work.

CUT TO:

INT. BOAT CLUB BAR. EVE.

1

HELEN stands at the bar with JAMES and a bohemian looking man of twenty five called CLIVE.

JAMES

Yes you are Clive. See what I mean he's too modest. He is one of the most naturally gifted chefs around. But of course being talented he's totally weird and unpredictable. He's about to open his first restaurant but he 'doesn't want a big affair'. Typical genius, he's completely barking.

HELEN

Well not everyone wants the big hype. We had wars getting Pierre Claude to let us do his launch.

CLIVE

You did Pierre Claude? Oh shit, he's my hero. I did a couple of his master classes. He so free and reckless.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLIVE (Cont'd)  
 You did his launch. I heard that was a really classy do. People went on about it.  
 HELEN Well, it hasn't done him any harm, certainly. He opens in New York and Hollywood next month.

CLIVE  
 I heard yeah.

HELEN  
 Can I come and look at your restaurant.

CLIVE  
 Sure yeah, no problem. You kidding? Come down. I'll cook you some lunch. Wow. Shit man, Pierre Claude, that really is like 'fucking hell' James, you know.

JAMES  
 Clearly.

HELEN gives him a card. JAMES smiles.

MIX TO:

EXT. ON THE RIVER THAMES. NIGHT.

HELEN and JAMES are in a rowing boat. JAMES is rowing. There is an unmistakable warm feeling.

They stop and look out over the river.

HELEN  
 Thanks for that.

He looks at her.

HELEN  
 Clive.

JAMES  
 He really is top notch. Just needs someone on the reins.

HELEN  
 You're very thoughtful James. You give out an incredible amount.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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JAMES

My dad was quite a ruthless man. Successful. Very. He wanted me to take over his business. I declined. Usual story. We fell out. He cut me off. His business failed and then died before we could 'make up'. So I try my best to 'prove' somehow that doing it yourself is the best way to go. I never got his encouragement. So I try and make up for him wherever I can. Anyway, you're the same, you encouraged me today. I could see you jumping up and down like a mad thing during the race. Spurred me on.

She looks a little embarrassed. Cups her nose to hide her face.

HELEN

Aren't you a bit old for that kind of exertion?

JAMES

Aren't you a bit close to water for that kind of question? Cheeky bitch.- Hey look at this view. Look come here.

She gets up to change seats to sit next to JAMES. The boat wobbles and she loses her footing. He grabs her. Their faces are close.

They look at each other.

He goes to kiss her. She stops him.

HELEN

No, please James. Don't. Oh god I'm sorry, I mean I.... I know this is a pretty ideal sort of kissing moment. Night, moon, boat, water lapping, you know, I..it's perfect - and I'm not not feeling that it would be nice because you're nice and ...and ..you are, you're really really nice and you've been so nice to me and and the whole day has

CONTINUED: (2)

JAMES

Nice?

She giggles.

HELEN

Yes, yes it has. It's been perfect. I've had a great time. You've given me so much in such a short space of time. But, I don't know anything about you. Or you me. You've been this whirlwind knight in shining armour but I don't..... I'm still on 'rebound' - urgh I hate that word, but I am.

JAMES

Who isn't. You think you're the only person on rebound. We spend our whole lives on rebound. All of us. We bounce happily from one dilemma to the next. I'm on rebound myself from Pamela.

HELEN

You said your ex was called Heidi.

JAMES

Cor good memory. You women are freaky. Heidi yeah but I met her on rebound you know and it...well truth is it all really pivots round Pamela and I breaking up.

HELEN

When was that?

JAMES

Nineteen seventy three. We were eight. I bloody loved that woman.

HELEN laughs.

JAMES

No warning. Just gone. Left me for someone else.

HELEN

Who?

(CONTINUED)

JAMES

Gary Glitter.

HELEN

The bitch.

JAMES

Gary Glitter for crying out loud!! I mean all my pals were being left for Donny Osmond or David Cassidy. I could have somehow come to terms with that given time. But Gary. She wanted to be in 'his gang'. Well, I went to pieces as you can imagine. And there was no 'junior Prozac' to help me through so.....

HELEN suddenly kisses him hard but quick and solidly. She pulls away. They look at each other.

A long moment.

JAMES

Er....so um....I....it....

HELEN

I kissed you.

JAMES

Yes I spotted that too. You weren't going to do that.

HELEN

I know. I know. Er... would you er...I mean would you mind putting it down to a momentary lapse of concentration?

JAMES

Is that what it was?

HELEN

No. Yes. I don't....oh help.

He takes her by the shoulders and looks at her hard.

JAMES

Helen. We don't know why we meet the people we meet. It's just destiny. But we met. I very very rarely catch the train. But I did that day.

CONTINUED: (4)

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JAMES (Cont'd)

And I met you. If I hadn't caught that train I wouldn't. Same if you hadn't etc. And all the little things I've done for you as I've said have no 'fee' - and I'll happily forget that kiss that didn't happen. I don't want to be another confusion in your life, Helen. I don't. Truly. So, if you don't feel the same or you want to stop now or.. I understand. You only have to say. But whatever you decide I just want to say that I think you are beautiful. Inside and out. And er...I....

He suddenly seems very open and vulnerable.

HELEN puts her finger tenderly over his lips. She kisses him again slowly and deeply.

MIX TO:

INT. JAMES'S FLAT. NIGHT.

10

JAMES and HELEN are making love. It is beautiful.

FADE TO BLACKOUT.

INT. PICKLED PELICAN BISTRO BAR. EVE.

105

HELEN works away at the restaurant. It's as busy as ever. She looks weary and a little distracted.

IMPORTANT VISUAL NOTE: INTERMIX this sequence of HELEN working hard and getting more and more dizzy and nauseous over the next two scenes until the shots become slow motion and she finally faints, dropping plates all over the floor.

INT. INTER CITY TRAIN. EVE.

110

GERRY sits on the train staring out of the window.

After a moment LYDIA arrives at the table with some food and drinks.

He smiles a tight smile at her. She is clearly getting a buzz out of being 'in public'. He is less enthralled by it.

CONTINUED:

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LYDIA  
Relax. Cor dear, you'd  
make a crap spy.

She opens up a bottle of wine and pours it into a cup for him.

CUT TO:

INT. CLIVE'S RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

111

Champagne is poured into a glass.

Pull wide. The opening night party is in full swing.

The restaurant has been done up beautifully. HELEN has done a great job. There are REPRESENTATIVES from every top magazine there, CELEBRITIES, GLITERATTI. PHOTOGRAPHERS snap away.

Bottles of SimploV flavoured vodkas are being passed around with the beautiful looking samples of CLIVE'S 'slovakian style' cuisine as HELEN has cleverly managed to marry the two together.

The banter is high and positive. HELEN looks radiant. JAMES looks on proudly and CLIVE can hardly contain himself.

We move around the party from group to group.

At one moment HELEN is chatting to a group of people including JAMES and CLIVE and some CATERING JOURNALISTS. She looks around to see how things are going in the rest of the room and her gaze falls full on

GERRY!

He is staring at her. She immediately loses all her cool. JAMES sees that she has plainly seen something that has thrown her. He sees GERRY of course not knowing who he is.

HELEN blusters, heart racing.

HELEN  
Er..sorry excuse me...er for  
a minute. I just er....  
sorry.. 'scuse me.. sorry.

CUT TO:

HELEN and GERRY stand to one side of the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELEN

What do you mean you wanted to see me. Jesus Christ Gerry, what..how did you get in.

GERRY

One of the waiters is a friend of Russell's. Got me a ticket. It's a great do, Helen. I hear you're really taking off with your company. I'm thrilled for...

HELEN

Gerry, you can't just...just 'turn up' like this. This is a big night for me. Look at me I've gone all clammy.

He looks across at JAMES. He is looking over at them and has sensed HELEN's reaction.

GERRY

Good looking bloke. He your new fella?

HELEN

Look just go Gerry, please.

GERRY

Will you come and see me. I miss you. Do you miss me?

HELEN

What! Look this really isn't fair Gerry, please go. Please. Don't blow this for me.

GERRY

Do you?

HELEN

I...I think about you, yes. Yes I do. I wonder why...uh..

GERRY

What?

HELEN

Nothing. I don't want to talk about it now! Please just go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GERRY

Please come round and see me. There's things I need to tell you.

She looks at him.

GERRY

Well, I've made the first move. It wasn't easy coming here like this. It's up to you now. Have a good night. I'm really proud of you.

He kisses her hard on the lips and leaves her frozen on the spot.

HELEN stands for a moment. She starts to move off and stumbles in a slight faint.

A GUEST near her catches her.

GUEST

You O.K.

HELEN

Yes, thank you. Just went a bit dizzy. Too much champagne.

(IMPORTANT VISUAL NOTE: This dizzy faint will coincide with HELEN passing out in the restaurant)

MIX TO:

The place is now fairly empty. The party over. A few staff clearing up.

HELEN comes out of the kitchen into the restaurant plainly looking for something. CLIVE wraps her up in a mad embrace.

CLIVE

It's official. I'm in love with you. Thank you. You are a genius. I'm ecstatic.

HELEN

Have you seen James?

CLIVE

He left a while ago. He said to say goodnight. He's very taken with you, you know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 37

HELEN

Yes, I know.  
Congratulations Clive.  
You're a success.

They toast each other with champagne.

MIX TO:

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM. DEVON. 11

Two champagne glasses clink together. LYDIA and GERRY in bed.

LYDIA pours champagne over GERRY'S body and disappears out of shot to lick it off.

GERRY'S face in torment.

MOMENTARY SPLIT MIX  
WITH:

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. NIGHT. 11

HELEN alone in bed. Lonely. A tear runs down her face.

FADE BACK TO GERRY IN  
HOTEL AND FADE TO BLACK

INT. JAMES'S MUM'S LONDON FLAT. 1

JAMES is settling his mother in to her flat. She is a little frailer than before. She is in a wheelchair with a rug over her.

CLAUDIA is helping out. JAMES seems somewhat sullen - Preoccupied.

JAMES

Well, listen Mum I have to get back to the office, so, just call if you need anything.

He kisses her. CLAUDIA does too.

They leave the flat. CLAUDIA stops JAMES in the corridor.

CLAUDIA

Darling. Do you want to tell me what's bothering you or is it private?

He looks at her and pulls a grimace.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM. DEVON. EVE.

115

GERRY is on the phone to HELEN. From the bathroom we can hear a bath running.

INTERCUT WITH.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT EVE.

116

HELEN is lying on the bed talking on the phone to GERRY.

HELEN

....and I was this big success. Everyone was there, pop stars and celebrities and they were all talking about me. And there was this bloke that was trying to get off with me. Or something, you know he was...and he .. there was ...like there was a cloud in front of him...or or... or... and I couldn't really see him. And, that's right, and I couldn't concentrate because I kept looking to the door for you to come. We'd had broken up or some.... and....and then you were suddenly there and the whole place was suddenly empty and we were talking but you had a strange look on your face like you weren't really you. You had something you needed to tell me, but you couldn't say it. Yes and you had something behind your back that you were hiding and you wouldn't show me , you said it was a surprise for later..

GERRY

(bluffing)

Well, that does it I'm afraid, I'm taking away your class one drugs for a week.

HELEN

Anyway, there's something else. I fainted at work

CONTINUED:

GERRY

Oh, sweetheart. Are you  
O.K?

HELEN

Yes, but I don't normally  
faint so I....

Sudden screeches and yelps of pain from LYDIA in the  
bathroom. GERRY instinctively holds his hand over  
the mouthpiece.

HELEN

What was that noise?

GERRY

I don't know, the people  
in the next room are  
plainly engaged in some  
bizarre sexual ritual. I  
might pop in and  
introduce myself later.  
What did you say?

HELEN

Well, I don't normally  
faint so I was a little  
curious.....

But LYDIA is in the room hopping up and down holding  
her foot in pain.

LYDIA

Ow, fuck, shit, I stubbed  
my foot on the side of  
the shagging bath.  
Ahhhhhhh! Ow ow  
bollocks.

GERRY is frantically trying to get her to shush as  
silently as he can pointing manically at the phone  
and holding his hand over the mouthpiece

GERRY

(mouthing only)  
Shut up - shut up!

HELEN

Sounds horrific.

GERRY

I know ...er....I

HELEN

Anyway, I was a little  
curious. so I.....

He knocks his knuckles twice on the side of the bed

GERRY

Oh look that's room  
service with my sandwich  
- I'll call you back when  
world war twelve has  
stopped for tea.

He hangs up.

HELEN is left holding a receiver with no-one at the  
other end.

She moves the receiver a little away from her face.  
She speaks calmly and quietly to herself almost  
trancelike.

HELEN

...so I did a test and it  
turns out that I'm  
pregnant. I just thought  
you might like to know.

She hangs up resignedly and stares into the middle  
distance.

INT. DEVON HOTEL BEDROOM. NIGHT.

117

GERRY has hung up the phone and is furiously berating  
LYDIA who is sat on a chair administering to her  
foot. She looks up at him.

GERRY

Are you completely  
insane?! What are you  
trying to do?

LYDIA

What do you mean, what am  
I trying to do? I think  
I've broken my toe.

GERRY

Lydia, I was on the  
pissing phone to Helen,  
for goodness sakes.

LYDIA

Sol

GERRY

(condescending)  
Soooooo, in case you had  
forgotten, she doesn't  
know you are here, she  
thinks that I am on a  
research trip - alone -  
remember.

CONTINUED:

LYDIA

Oh yes I remember. Don't  
worry I remember. It's  
pretty hard to forget.

GERRY

So what are you trying to  
do, coming in screeching  
the place down when I'm  
on the ph....

LYDIA

(viciously)

Don't you know - Gerry.  
- I'm trying to be your  
girlfriend. That's what  
I'm trying to do. I'm  
standing on the platform  
at 'Limbo Central' with  
my heart and soul packed  
in my suitcase waiting  
for the Gerry fucking  
Express to roll in and  
tell me that my ticket is  
valid and that I may  
board the train. Only  
the station announcer  
keeps coming on telling  
me that the train has  
been delayed as the  
driver has suffered a  
major panic attack at  
Indecision City, please  
await further  
announcements. That's  
what I'm trying to do. -  
You wanker!

She storms back into the bathroom.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. EVE.

116

Close shot of HELEN on the bed. She stares at the  
ceiling looking somewhat lost.

MIX TO:

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. EVE.

11

Close shot of HELEN on the bed.

HELEN

.....and I was a waitress.  
I was running around with  
plates of burgers and chips.

(more)

CONTINUED:

HELEN (Cont'd)

I was all hot and bothered and tired. And you were sat at one end at this one table all done up with a linen tablecloth and silver wear, plush red velvet and a butler pouring champagne. It was your book launch and there were people sucking up to you and you kept nodding at me as if to say "keep going, you're working well" and then you chinked your glass with 'Lydia' - funny how I only met her once but I remember her name and face distinctly. You see Gerry I can't get her out of my mind. That image. I really don't know what I'm doing here. Look at me, what am I doing in bed with you.

Cut wide to reveal they are in bed.

She gets up and pulls on her jeans and jumper and starts to do put her boots on.

GERRY

Because you wanted to. We both did. Please try to get her out of your mind. She's out of mine. It was a mistake. I made a mistake. Can I not be allowed just one error. I fucked up. I'm sorry. I'm truly truly sorry. These weeks we've been apart Helen I swear to God I have realised how much I.....

The phone by the bed rings. He picks it up.

INT. LYDIA'S FLAT. EVE.

LYDIA on the phone.

LYDIA

I'm late Gerry. Four days. I'm never late.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. EVE.  
GERRY is dumstruck.

GERRY  
(bluffing) Hello Russ.  
Listen mate can I call you  
back in a minute. Yeah O.K.

He puts the phone down. To HELEN.

GERRY  
Russell. Dying for the loo.

He goes into the bathroom. HELEN is curious and picks up the phone. She dials 1471.

BT. ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Telephone number 0171-491-  
3184 is stored. To return  
the call press three.

She presses 3 on the phone. The line rings. LYDIA answers.  
She launches straight in.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. LYDIA'S FLAT. NIGHT.

LYDIA  
Why are you pretending I'm  
Russell, Gerry. Who have  
you got there? Gerry answer  
me. Who's there.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. NIGHT.

HELEN  
It's Helen actually. We met  
once. I interrupted you  
faking your orgasm. Ten  
minutes earlier you could  
have returned the  
compliment.

She disconnects the line with her finger and lays the phone on the bed. She puts on her coat. She stands to face the bathroom door.

GERRY comes back from the loo.

GERRY  
I've just been thinking  
and...you're not going yet  
are you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He sees her face.

GERRY

What?

HELEN

(calmly, finally)

You wanker. You sad, sad wanker.

She walks out. He looks at the bed and sees the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOWER. ANNA'S FLAT. NIGHT.

HELEN is showering GERRY off herself. ANNA stands by the door talking to her.

HELEN

God I feel like I've been raped. The useless..no good. shagging horrible, despicable, no good pissing, shagging....

ANNA

Wanker?

HELEN

Exactly.

She suddenly pulls the sliding door across and pops her head out.

HELEN

You know the worst bit. All I could think about was James. I felt like I was being unfaithful to him just being there.

ANNA

That sounds like the best bit. And you were.

HELEN

He didn't call did he?

ANNA shakes her head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELEN

That's nearly a week. I think I've blown it. I've blown it haven't I?

ANNA

Depends. You only blow things if you really want to.

She hands HELEN a towel.

HELEN

You are my mother, I swear.

INT. PUB. NIGHT.

GERRY sits opposite RUSSELL.

RUSSELL

I blame B.T. myself. All this new MIS technology - last number re-dial, 1471 if you want to know who rang - another number if you don't want them to know you rang - answerphones with timers on them - take away the number you first thought of - they are single handedly condemning the average red blooded Briton to a life of terminal monogamy. What are they after, the nobel peace prize!?

GERRY

And Lydia might be pregnant. And she's dumped me as well.

RUSSELL howls with laughter.

RUSSELL

No more please. I can't take it. Oh dear, this is terrific stuff. I must say you do make the wait for the next series of 'Sienfeld' much easier to cope with.

GERRY

I knew you were going to say that. That keeps happening.  
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

125

GERRY (Cont'd)  
I didn't reckon on things  
ending up like this. The  
whole thing's a complete  
cock up. What's going on?

RUSSELL  
Well, to use boxing parlance  
if I may, it's quite simple.  
You just lost!

GERRY stands up. His mind suddenly racing.

GERRY  
I'm going to get her back.

RUSSELL  
Which one?

GERRY  
Will you help me.

RUSSELL  
Depends, what have you got  
in mind?

But GERRY has gone.

(IMPORTANT VISUAL NOTE: We end on RUSSELL sat alone. He  
picks up his boxing magazine to read again.

BLEED MIX TO:

INT. PUB. DAY.

126

(IMPORTANT VISUAL NOTE: We start on RUSSELL in the  
pub as in the last shot of the previous scene, this  
time in a different outfit.

GERRY comes in. He is energetic.

GERRY  
I've done it Russell.  
I've bloody done it.

RUSSELL  
Excellent.  
Congratulations. Done  
what?

GERRY  
I finished it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSSELL

The book! Oh well,  
that's great...

GERRY

Not the book, not the  
book Russell. I'm a  
novelist I'm never going  
to finish the book.  
The affair! The affair.  
The sordid affair. With  
Lydia. It's over. I've  
blown her out. God I  
feel so euphoric. No  
more deceit, no more  
lying to Helen. I can't  
tell you it is such a  
good feeling.

RUSSELL

And how does she feel  
about it? Lydia.

GERRY

Sheee...she....well, you  
know she's not jumping  
through hoops obviously.  
But it's the best thing.  
By far. Far and away the  
best thing. She knows  
that, well she will do,  
when she's....I mean she  
was upset...and a bit er  
fraught, you know  
obviously. I mean she  
can be a bit fraught.  
But she'll realise in  
time. It's the best  
thing. I have to say she  
was becoming very....odd.

RUSSELL

Odd?

GERRY

Well, she is odd. I mean  
she's not becoming odd, I  
think she has always  
been..er..odd. Very  
strange girl..you know..I  
became to realise.  
Very...er..very unsettled  
..um...you know.

RUSSELL

In an odd sort of way.

GERRY

CONTINUED: 2,

12

RUSSELL seems strangely sceptical about the whole thing.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. RUSSELL'S FLAT. DAY.

125

RUSSELL opens the door to his flat having just woken up to find GERRY on the doorstep.

GERRY

He's married.

GERRY pushes past him into the flat.

GERRY

You still got that sexy camera with the long lenses and stuff!

RUSSELL is left on the doorstep.

RUSSELL

Hello Russ, sorry to call round so early without warning only I'm an ignorant twat. Who is?

RUSSELL wearily closes the door.

INT. JAMES'S OFFICE. DAY.

126

JAMES is busy at work in his own office. He has a view of the rest of the office.. There are three or four of his work colleagues in the office, all extremely busy

HEIDI is at the reception desk. JAMES is on the phone.

HELEN arrives through the door and is confronted by HEIDI.

HELEN

Er excuse me is James Hammerton in please.

JAMES has looked up and seen HELEN at the reception desk. He gets up and comes to the door of his office.

HEIDI

Er well, he's extremely busy. Can I say who's calling.

HELEN

Er...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES  
It's O.K. Heidi. Hello  
Helen.

HELEN looks at him and smiles quite coyly. He smiles. He is pleased to see her. HEIDI looks on at the scenario.

CUT TO:

EXT. JAMES'S OFFICE. DAY.

12

HELEN and JAMES come out of the office and walk towards the camera.

GERRY (V.O.)  
Look at him. Two faced  
bastard. Go on.

He urges RUSSELL, who is holding the camera, to start taking photos.

RUSSELL  
Gerry, I'm not sure I want  
to be party to this sort of  
carry on.

GERRY grabs the camera from him.

GERRY  
Oh give me it here.

He starts clicking away.

RUSSELL  
How did you find all this  
stuff out, anyway?

GERRY  
I'm a writer, Russell.  
Intense research is a pre-  
requisite.

Pan up to see HEIDI at the office window watching them go down the road.

INT. RESTAURANT. DAY.

13

HELEN and JAMES are sat at a window table.

They are looking at the menu. JAMES seems nervy and not as vivacious as usual.

HELEN is aware that she must make the moves at this point.

After a moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

13

HELEN

Are you O.K.? Would you  
rather I hadn't come.

JAMES

No, no, I..er. I'm just a  
little, you know the er...  
things are busy now at work  
with the Americans...you  
know and ...and....my ... my  
mother has got a tumour.  
They took her into  
hospital....for er..tests,  
just... I mean they think  
it's a tumour...er... I'm -  
it's just tests, you know...

She takes his hands in her hands over the table.

HELEN

I'm sorry.

JAMES

What for, you didn't do it.  
Touche.

He gives a wry smile at his attempt at humour.

The sound of snaps being taken by a camera.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESTAURANT. DAY.

13

GERRY snaps away at the scene in the restaurant. RUSSELL  
stands there feeling a bit torn about the whole thing.

INT. RESTAURANT. DAY.

13

HELEN nervously retracts her hands from his.

CUT TO:

HELEN and JAMES have their main courses. They are not really  
eating. Just toying with their food.

Although they are just making stilted almost monosyllabic  
small talk there is a massive undercurrent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

13

JAMES

Clive's jumping through hoops by the way. Booked up for three months. Well, you saw the reviews I'm sure.

HELEN

Yes, I'm pleased. It's very exciting. Listen, your mum will be O.K. I can tell.

JAMES

You want more wine?

HELEN

No, thanks. - Yes, please.

They look at each other. Both very nervous.

They talk at the same time.

HELEN

James....

JAMES

So the.....

They laugh nervously.

HELEN

Sorry.

JAMES

I've never done one of them before. Now then how does it go, I invite you to speak, you invite me, we do "no, no, you first, please I insist, mine wasn't important" for a bit and...

HELEN leans over and plants a big kiss on his lips.

Over the road we can see the camera clicking away.

HELEN sits back down.

JAMES

Was that another momentary lapse of concentration.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: 1,

12

HELEN

I missed you James. I thought I might not see you after Clive's...

JAMES

I didn't know how to er... I've never felt jealousy before and I just... I wasn't sure how you felt.

HELEN

James, there's something I have to tell you. Want to tell you.

JAMES

Good because when you've finished I want to tell you...

His mobile phone rings. He answers it.

JAMES

Hello. I see. No, I'll come straight away.

He clicks off the phone.

JAMES

Mum's results have come through. I have to go. I'm sorry.

They stand up.

HELEN

Do you want me to come with you.

He looks at her.

JAMES

No - thank you. I....

They hug each other. Their faces are close. HELEN talks quietly.

HELEN

It'll be O.K. Remember Monty Python.

He leaves. HELEN watches him go. He hails a cab outside.

CUT TO:

INT. GERRY'S CAR. TRAVELLING. DAY.

GERRY drives following the cab with JAMES in. We can see that James is on the phone again.

RUSSELL  
You really shouldn't be doing this. It's illegal surely.

In front the cab turns into the hospital.

GERRY  
Hospital eh? - Illegal!  
Journalists do it.

RUSSELL  
I'm sorry Gerry, I wipe my hands of the whole thing. It's completely unethical.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL. DAY.

JAMES stands outside his mother's room talking to the CONSULTANT.

DOCTOR  
So, I would like to keep her here for a while to monitor the situation.

JAMES  
Of course, thanks.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL. DAY.

CLAUDIA arrives in a taxi and gets out.

In GERRY's car he spots her.

GERRY  
That's her, that's the wife.  
Claudia her name is.  
Married for six years.

He clicks off a few shots.

GERRY  
Come on.

He gets out of the car. RUSSELL gets out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSSELL

No, I'm sorry Gerry, you've plainly gone mad. You're on your own. This is trespass. Call me when you come back to earth.

He walks off.

MIX TO:

GERRY waits outside the entrance, surreptitiously concealed.

JAMES and CLAUDIA come out together. They hug each other and CLAUDIA touches his face tenderly. Her wedding ring is in plain view.

GERRY snaps away.

FADE TO BLACKOUT:

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. KITCHEN. DAY.

136

GERRY comes into the kitchen in his dressing gown.

HELEN follows him in. She fills up the kettle with water and takes it over to plug it in

HELEN

Well you'll see what I mean when I tell you. Which one first?

GERRY

O.K. Second thing first.

HELEN

Well the second thing is that I've got an interview for a job. A PR job. A proper one. Private meeting at the chairman's apartment.

GERRY is just opening the blind as she gets to the end of this.

Staring in at the window is LYDIA!! Large as life just staring in at the window.

GERRY

Jesus Christ!

He slams down the blind again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELEN

What?

GERRY

(covering madly)  
Jesus Christ that's just  
great. That's the best  
news.

HELEN goes over to the blind.

HELEN

Is the blind bugged  
again.

GERRY panicking. Staring.

GERRY

No no,.....er I...

HELEN opens the blind again. GERRY cringes as it  
goes up. He is about to leap into the "I can explain  
everything" routine.

There is no-one there. He gasps with relief.

HELEN is back over to the tea.

HELEN

You all right?

GERRY

Yes, yes, I'm  
just...that's great news.  
I'm thrilled.

The phone rings.

GERRY picks it up.

GERRY

Hello.....Oh hello Russ.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY.

LYDIA on her mobile phone.

LYDIA

I suggest you come and  
see me. We have things  
to discuss.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

13

GERRY

(bluffing)

Oh, really. What a drag.  
 Yeah of course mate sure.  
 When do you want to do  
 it? O.K. Yeah that's  
 fine I'll give you a  
 hand. Cheers.

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY.

138

GERRY hangs up.

GERRY

Russell's family  
 descending un announced.  
 Wants me to help him  
 clear his spare room out  
 tomorrow night. Right  
 I'm off for a shower.

He walks out of the room, leaving HELEN looking  
 deflated that her wind has been taken away.

GERRY pops his head back round the door.

GERRY

Oh, what was the other  
 thing you wanted to tell  
 me?

HELEN

Doesn't matter. It's not  
 important...

The door shuts.

HELEN

.....evidently.

She looks sad.

INT. JAMES'S OFFICE. DAY.

139

HEIDI is packing away her things. This is her last day  
 working at JAMES'S company.

GERRY arrives through the door. He has a 10x8 envelope under  
 his arm.

HEIDI at once senses his aggressive mood. She is immediately  
 defensive.

HEIDI

Can I help you?

GERRY  
James Hammerton please.

HEIDI  
Is he expecting you?

GERRY  
No, but I strongly recommend  
he sees me. It's in his  
best interest, shall we say.

HEIDI  
What is it regarding?

GERRY  
It's personal.

HEIDI  
I'm afraid he's not here at  
the moment.

GERRY  
Wait. Wait. "Is he  
expecting you?" and then  
"I'm afraid he's not here".  
Make your mind up. You're  
his secretary?

HEIDI  
Yes.

GERRY  
Then he won't thank you for  
being so obstructive when he  
knows why I'm here.

HEIDI  
I'm sorry Mr...

Nothing from GERRY.

HEIDI  
I'm afraid I can't help you.

GERRY  
You can't help me. This  
could well be the biggest  
mistake you...

HEIDI  
I'm sorry but if you refuse  
to tell me what it's  
regarding then....

(CONTINUED)

GERRY is now quite ugly with his aggression. He starts to open the envelope.

GERRY

O.K. You want to know what it's regarding? O.K. I'll tell you. I'll tell you what it's regarding. It's regarding these photos of him and Helen Quilley that I wondered if his wife might be interested in seeing. That's what it's regarding. Now, is he in or not?

HEIDI looks at the photos of JAMES and HELEN that GERRY has strewn out on the desk.

Her face.

MIX TO:

INT. PUB. DAY.

140

HEIDI sits in a distressed state. She has a brandy. She fidgets nervously with a paper handkerchief.

GERRY arrives with another drink for her. He senses the opportunity to glean more information from this source and feigns concern for her.

GERRY

Here. I had no idea, I'm so sorry. I feel so insensitive.

HEIDI

No, it's me. I seem destined somehow. I get too involved with things and they just....it all takes me over. Since the crash he's been....

GERRY

Crash?

HEIDI

(slightly hesitant)  
Well, it hardly matters now I suppose. We had a car crash. Two months ago. In Surrey. It wasn't bad but he'd had some drinks. He didn't stop.

(more)

CONTINUED:

140

HEIDI (Cont'd)

Soon after that he finished it. He said there was no one else. He certainly didn't mention a wife. I decided to leave the company. I have a low emotional threshold. I still love him, you see. (beat) It's my birthday in two days. I'm thirty. - I have to go now, I'm sorry.

She finishes her brandy and gets up. She looks back at GERRY.

HEIDI

Thank you.

GERRY

Happy birthday.

She wanders off. He looks after her as if she is a nutcase.

INT. ANNA'S FLAT. DAY.

141

HELEN and ANNA face each other. ANNA is looking down at something.

HELEN

Well.

ANNA

Looks pretty positive to me.

We see she is holding a predictor test.

HELEN'S face.

The doorbell sounds. ANNA leaves the room handing the test to HELEN as she leaves. HELEN looks down at it.

ANNA comes back in. She hands HELEN a 10x8 envelope. She opens it and takes out the photos of JAMES and CLAUDIA.

A disguised note reads: Thought you might like to see these photos of Mr and Mrs. James Hammerton before you make a fool of yourself - A well wisher. HELEN'S shocked face.

She just stares at the photos.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANNA'S FLAT. DAY.

14

ANNA fends off an insistent JAMES on the doorstep.

JAMES

Anna please, I have to see her. I know she's in.

ANNA

She's not. - She doesn't want to see you James.

The door shuts in his face.

INT. HEIDI'S FLAT. DAY.

14

HEIDI sits at her table writing a letter.

INT. JAMES'S FLAT.

14

JAMES is on the phone.

JAMES

I wouldn't ask if it.....well look thanks. I owe you one as usual. Cheers.

He hangs up. The door bell goes. He goes the door with expectancy, checking himself in the hall mirror en route.

He opens the front door.

Two POLICEMEN confront him.

POLICEMAN

Mr. James Hammerton?

JAMES

Yes.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNA'S FLAT.

14

HELEN sits on the sofa.

Sitting opposite her is CLAUDIA.

CLAUDIA

We didn't feel the need to divorce until we wanted to marry again.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

148

CLAUDIA (Cont'd)

And James's mother has not been well for some time with her heart.

MIX TO:

INT. HEIDI'S FLAT. DAY.

146

HEIDI licks the envelope and writes on the front of it.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)

Her husband died suddenly last year, we didn't want to give her another thing to be distressed about. But the marriage has existed in name only for over two years. We just married too young.

INT. POLICE CAR. TRAVELLING. DAY.

147

JAMES sits in the car with the two officers.

POLICEMAN

Well as I say in this instance Mr. Hammerton you are fortunate that the other person was not injured, but that does not take away the fact that leaving the scene of an accident is a serious offence.

JAMES

I know. I just panicked. I wanted to stop. In a way I'm glad this has happened because it's been on my conscience.

OFFICER

And this Miss Heidi Williams will verify everything you have told us.

He is unsure.

JAMES

Yes, yes indeed.

INT. ANNA'S FLAT. DAY.

148

CLAUDIA is on her feet and on her way out.

CLAUDIA

Please think seriously  
before letting him go,  
Helen. He is one of a dying  
breed. He's a 'good catch'.  
(beat) And the other day he  
asked me if I would divorce  
him.

HELEN takes in what this means. She hugs CLAUDIA.

HELEN

Thank you Claudia. It was  
very unselfish of you to  
come here.

MIX TO:

INT. STAIRWELL LEADING TO HEIDI'S FLAT./HEIDI'S FLAT. DAY.

149

The POLICEMEN and JAMES arrive at HEIDI'S flat door. The  
POLICEMAN knocks on the door. It opens.

They walk in.

OFFICER

Miss Williams. Police. No  
cause for alarm.

They walk along the corridor and knock on the living room  
door and go in.

HEIDI is lying on the sofa. There is a bottle of pills by  
her side. On the mantle shelf is an envelope addressed to  
JAMES.

JAMES'S face.

CUT TO:

EXT. HEIDI'S FLAT. DAY.

150

HEIDI with an oxygen mask is being loaded into an ambulance.

JAMES stands by watching with the POLICE OFFICER.

As the PARAMEDIC closes the doors.

PARAMEDIC

Thank goodness you came when  
you did. She's going to be  
O.K.

INT. ANNA'S FLAT. DAY.

HELEN is in her bedroom looking again at the photos of JAMES and CLAUDIA.

Her attention is suddenly taken by something she has seen in the corner of the photo.

It is the out of focus thumb print of whoever took the photos.

She picks up the rest. The thumb print is there on three or four of them.

She picks up the photo of her on holiday taken by GERRY that we saw earlier and looks at the thumb mark.

Her face suddenly seems placid and free of concern.

HELEN

(quietly)

You incompetent....

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. DAY.

CU of GERRY he is looking at something. It is an open newspaper.

The story headline: DOUBLE SHOCK FOR LATE BUSINESSMAN HAMMERTON'S SON with two lower case sub headlines with bullet points:

- Police arrest James Hammerton on driving charge.
- Distraught jilted mistress takes overdose.

He just stares at the page. He realises what he has done.  
MIX TO:

INT. JAMES'S FLAT. DAY.

CU of JAMES sitting at his kitchen table. Unshaven. He has the same paper in front of him.

A moment while the desperation of it all registers.

The sound of a key in the door.

JAMES looks up, wondering who it can be. It's not the day for the cleaning lady.

We wait with him to see who comes in.

After a moment HELEN appears into the kitchen carrying a bag of shopping as if she has lived there all her life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She is bright and breezy. She doesn't even look at JAMES but starts to empty the shopping on the working top.

HELEN

(light and busy)

Now, we've got orange juice, half a grapefruit each - taste crap but very good for us, some croissants, nearly got the chocolate ones, just managed to resist, de-caf coffee. Full caf makes my heart play tunes on my rib cage. Oh, and for dinner I was going to cook you Red Mallett with chilli and coriander. - You do like fish, don't you? Or would you rather go out?

She turns for the first time and looks full on at him.

He gets up in a slight state of shock.

He is genuinely not sure if he is dreaming all this.

JAMES

Er.. how did you.....?

HELEN

Claudia gave me her key. She's very pretty isn't she?

He goes over to her slowly.

JAMES

Hav...have you seen the paper?

HELEN

Yes. I have. And I have to say that it's the most depressing thing I think I've ever read.

JAMES

Is it?

HELEN

God yeah. Haven't you seen it? Big article on page 17 about the inevitability of cellulite. It's the worst news - Are you going to shave today?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAMES realises exactly what is going on. It all becomes too much for him. He crumbles into her arms in tears. She holds him tight and warmly with great care and affection.

She gently pulls up his head to hers. She kisses him deeply and strongly.

She pulls back and looks at him.

JAMES

Another momentary lapse of concentration?

She just looks at him.

JAMES

I love you.

HELEN

Well, that's going to come in handy. Because I fully intend spending the rest of my life with you.

They kiss each other deeply.

MIX TO:

INT. GERRY'S FLAT. EVE.

15

HELEN is getting ready for her interview. She is dressed very smartly.

GERRY comes in and gives her a kiss.

GERRY

Right I'm off to Russell's. Good luck.

HELEN

I'm nervous.

GERRY

Don't be. You're the best. I know you're going to get it. I'll see you later.

He leaves the room.

INT. CLIVE'S RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

16

CLIVE opens a bottle of champagne to toast the happy couple.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

155

At the table are ANNA, CLAUDIA, HELEN'S SECRETARY and a COUPLE of JAMES'S rowing club FRIENDS.

Great happiness.

CUT TO:

INT. LYDIA'S FLAT. NIGHT.

156

LYDIA opens the door. It is GERRY. She opens the door for him to come in. He does so very tentatively.

She opens the sliding doors to the living room and they go in. She shuts the sliding doors behind them.

CUT TO:

INT. CLIVE'S RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

157

The festivities continue. HELEN hands JAMES a fax.

JAMES

Phil Collins. Wow, that's fantastic. (reading) ...was very impressed by your CV and forward thinking approach. You didn't tell me about this.

HELEN

I didn't think I'd get it and if I did I wanted it to be a surprise. Do you know the best bit?

JAMES

What?

HELEN

Gerry can't stand him. There's another bit of news.....

But CLIVE has arrived with more champagne interrupting the moment.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. LYDIA'S FLAT. NIGHT.

158

GERRY sits on the sofa. He is holding a positive predictor test in his hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

15

LYDIA

Looks pretty positive to me. Trouble is that you don't. Excuse me I have to go to the bathroom.

She goes into her bedroom off the living room. GERRY just sits and looks at the test slide.

CUT TO:

LYDIA in the bathroom putting on some lipstick.

The door bell goes. She calls.

LYDIA

Get that would you.

In the living room GERRY gets up wearily holding the test slide and goes to the front door.

He opens it.

It is HELEN!!

She stares in at him completely dumbfounded and he at her. They are both momentarily speechless.

The moment is broken.

LYDIA (V.O.)

Of course if you don't want it darling I can always have an abortion.

She opens the sliding doors to the hall. She is now wearing a red negligee with a glass of champagne in her hand.

LYDIA

Who is it? Oh. - Hello again. So glad you could come. You're right on time.

Quick fire shots:

HELEN'S face, GERRY'S face, HELEN looks at LYDIA. LYDIA'S lipstick.

FLASHBACK IMAGE of the brandy glass with lipstick on it. HELEN on the phone hearing the noise in the background in the hotel room.

We crash in closer and closer to HELEN as the whole realisation envelopes her and she suddenly runs away from the door.

CONTINUED: (2)

15

GERRY chases after her screaming at her to stop.  
HELEN bursts through the door to the staircase.

GERRY grabs her arm. She is very violent in her attempts to free herself.

GERRY

Helen, please, stop wait.  
I can....

HELEN

GET OFF ME!!! LET GO OF  
ME!!!!

She rips herself free of him with great violence and the momentum takes away her footing and she falls headlong down the concrete staircase knocking herself unconscious.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CLIVE'S RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

159

HELEN suddenly screams with agonising pain clutching her stomach. She falls on to the floor.

Immediate mayhem.

EXT. LONDON ROADS. NIGHT. EXT. LONDON ROADS. NIGHT.

160

Intercut two ambulances (coming visually from different directions) thundering along, sirens blazing.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR. NIGHT.

161

HELEN is being rushed on a stretcher by the CRASH TEAM to the theatre. She is still in a lot of pain and close to unconsciousness. JAMES urgently brings up the rear.

MIX TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR. NIGHT.

162

HELEN is being rushed down the corridor. She is unconscious. She has a big bandage round her head where her wound has been treated in the ambulance.

GERRY urgently brings up the rear.

CUT TO:

INT. THEATRE. NIGHT.

The mayhem that surrounds a now unconscious HELEN, with drips and monitors all in action. Two theatre NURSES attend the SURGEON who frantically tries to save HELEN.

JAMES stands a little way away. He is beside himself with grief. A SENIOR THEATRE NURSE comes over to him.

NURSE

James. Are you her husband?

JAMES

I'm....her fiancée. I'm...  
going to marry her.

NURSE

I'm afraid Helen has an  
ectopic pregnancy.

JAMES

What?

NURSE

The foetus gets trapped in  
the fallopian tube. Helen's  
has ruptured causing a  
severe haemorrhage. It's  
quite serious I'm afraid.  
Did you know she was  
pregnant.

JAMES

Er... yes. Yes of course.  
I...but...sh.. she's going  
to be all right though.....  
isn't she?

The NURSE'S face shows that she can't guarantee that.

MIX TO:

INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE WARD. NIGHT. 1

A NURSE faces GERRY.

In the BG HELEN lies unconscious with drips coming  
out of her.

NURSE

She has lost her baby I'm  
afraid. You did know she  
was pregnant?

GERRY

Yes. Of course. She..  
she's going to wake up  
though isn't she?

CONTINUED:

164

The NURSE can't guarantee anything.

NURSE  
Would you like me to  
bring you some tea?

INTERCUT NEXT SEQUENCE WITH A SERIES OF MIXES BETWEEN:

INT. HOSPITAL THEATRE. NIGHT.

165

HELEN lies on the operating table.

Her monitor bleeps away. JAMES looks on and paces urgently.

The DOCTORS reaching the point where there is not much more they can physically do.

INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE. NIGHT.

166

GERRY paces up and down as HELEN lies unconscious in the bed.

Her monitor bleeps away.

THE URGENCY BUILDS BETWEEN BOTH SCENARIOS. SHOTS OF MONITORS GET CLOSER AND CLOSER UNTIL:

INT. HOSPITAL THEATRE. NIGHT.

167

CLOSE SHOT of the monitor as it stops bleeping.

At exactly the same time as:

INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE. NIGHT.

168

HELEN'S eyes open. GERRY'S face.

He looks down on the conscious HELEN.

MIX TO:

INT. HOSPITAL THEATRE. NIGHT.

169

JAMES'S face. He looks down at the dead HELEN.

MIX TO:

Dawn. JAMES hasn't moved for hours. He is sitting holding HELEN'S hand. He is white and looks so lost.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

...so don't worry about me because I'll be fine. I'm glad we got engaged tonight. If you promise not to break it off then we can stay together forever. I'm glad I caught the train that day..... I....

He cries into her hand.

INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE. DAWN.

HELEN removes her hand from GERRY'S who is struggling to explain himself to a now conscious but slightly woozy HELEN. She has a much smaller bandage on her head.

HELEN

...and who knows, if I had caught that train that day I may even have caught you in the act. So... two blows to the head and one to the heart. That's three strikes, Gerry. You like baseball, you know what that means.

GERRY

Helen, I swear it was nothing. It...I...it was ov...

He clearly has no line of defence.

GERRY

I'll do anything you want Helen.

HELEN

Will you? In that case I want you to stand up, walk over to the door, open it, walk through it, and close it behind you.

He knows she means it. There will be no absolution.

MIX TO:

Daylight. HELEN, dressed is leaving.

DOCTOR

CONTINUED:

17

**HELEN**

Yes, thanks. My friend  
Anna is waiting for me.

**DOCTOR**

Call in if you have any  
problems. You are very  
fortunate Helen. You had  
a lucky escape.

**HELEN**

Say that again. Thank  
you.

She walks off down the corridor.

**CUT TO:**

INT. HOSPITAL. NIGHT.

171

A stretcher with the body of HELEN comes around the corner followed by JAMES. He watches it as it disappears away and out of sight.

He walks off down the corridor.

**INT/ EXT. FINAL VISUAL SEQUENCE. INTERCUT.**

172

HELEN'S life now begins to rewind. It intercuts with JAMES and HELEN walking down separate corridors in slow motion.

1. The final restaurant scene rewinds.
2. JAMES walks down the corridor. (Slow motion)
3. HELEN walks down the corridor. (Slow motion)
4. HELEN arrives in JAMES'S kitchen with breakfast rewinds.
5. JAMES'S face as he walks down the hospital corridor. (slow motion)
6. JAMES and HELEN at the launch of CLIVE'S restaurant - JAMES and HELEN making love - On the Thames in the rowing boat. The first kiss - rewinds.
- 6a. HELEN walking down the corridor. (slow motion).
7. JAMES and HELEN in the American Diner. JAMES on ANNA'S doorstep. At the wine bar - On the tube rewind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

8. A door with 'Mrs. Mary Hammerton' on it closes and JAMES walks off down the corridor. He wears a different shirt and tie to JAMES and has a less sombre demeanour (slow motion)
9. A shot of the hospital lift at the end of the corridor.
10. HELEN comes out of her ward and heads toward the lift (Slow motion)
11. JAMES approaching the lift. He now looks quite normal (slow motion)
12. HELEN sitting down on the tube - just catching the tube - running down the escalator rewind.
13. HELEN approaches the lift. (slow motion)
14. JAMES arrives at the lift.(slow motion)
15. HELEN walks towards the lift. (slow motion)
16. The tube train moving along the tunnel (forward - slow motion.)
17. CU.. JAMES presses the lift call button (slow motion)
20. JAMES sitting on the tube as it approaches the station (forward - slow motion)
18. HELEN nears the lift (slow motion)
19. The train thunders into the station ( forward -real time)
20. The hospital lift's sliding doors open (slow motion)
21. HELEN sees the lift doors have opened. She walks more quickly (slow motion)
22. The tube train sliding doors open. (slow motion)
23. JAMES steps into the hospital lift. He presses a button (slow motion)
24. HELEN runs down the escalator to catch the train (forward - slow motion)
25. The hospital sliding doors start to close (slow motion)
26. HELEN moves faster towards the lift. She is very near. (slow motion)

CONTINUED: (2)

2172

28. HELEN arrives on the platform and makes a lunge for the train (slow motion)

29. JAMES sits on the train oblivious of HELEN.

30. JAMES stands in the hospital lift oblivious of HELEN approaching.

31. HELEN'S final lunge for the train as the doors are almost shut.(slow motion)

32. HELEN's lunge for the lift as the doors are almost shut (slow motion)

33. Extreme close up as the tube doors shut. MIX TO Extreme Close up of the hospital lift doors shut.

34. The tube train pulls out. HELEN stands on the platform

35. HELEN stands by the closed lift doors.

36. The closed lift doors. After a second they slide open again. JAMES stands looking at HELEN. He is holding the 'open door' button.

JAMES

Sorry, I just saw you.  
Going down?

HELEN

Thank you.

HELEN steps in and starts to put on her earrings. She drops one on the floor.

JAMES bends down and picks it up for her as he did in the opening scene.

She doesn't register him as he hands her back the earring. She is miles away.

JAMES

Cheer up. You know what those Monty Python boys say.

And with no pause whatsoever and as if she is not in control of what she is saying.

HELEN

Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition.

She immediately looks at him. "How did I know to say that?"

CONTINUED: (3)

And as 'JAMES' and 'HELEN' look at each other for the  
'first time' .....  
.....  
.....the sliding doors gently close.

CLOSING CREDITS TO PHIL COLLINS SINGING 'YOU CAN'T HURRY

5