

NOTTING HILL
(THE NOTTING HILL FILM)

(WORKING TITLE)

Screenplay

by

Richard Curtis

Edited by Emma Freud

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PASS THE CINEMA, SHOWING A MOVIE STARRING AND DIRECTED BY 'CLIT EASTWOOD'.

I even like the weekends, with the antiques stalls

A FRANTIC CROWDED PORTOBELLO MARKET

full of thousands of people from abroad buying antique totally authentic Indian sculptures of.... Mickey Mouse.

A MAN HOLDS A LARGE CONVINCINGLY AGED SCULPTURE OF MICKEY MOUSE.

And I love the fact that my friend Tony's always been here....

SHOT OF TONY PROUDLY SETTING OUT A BOARD SAYING ' GRAND OPENING SATURDAY LUNCH'.

and that my wayward sister works in the local record store and is so bad at her job....

A LITTLE RECORD STORE. HONEY WITH HER BRIGHT RED HAIR IN PLATTS. IS CHANGING THE WINDOW DISPLAY AND NOT DOING IT WELL.

WILLIAM(V/O)

And so this is where I spend my days and years. in a house my wife and I bought before she left me for a man who looked like Harrison Ford, but handsomer. Where....

WE ARRIVE OUTSIDE HIS HOUSE. IN A LITTLE MEWS JUST OFF THE PORTOBELLO ROAD.

...I now lead a strange half-life with a lodger called....

2. INT. WILLIAM'S HOUSE. DAY.

WILLIAM

Spike!

THE HOUSE HAS FAR TOO MANY THINGS IN IT. DEFINITELY A TWO-BACHELOR FLAT.

SPIKE (V/O)

Even he. Hey, you couldn't help me with an incredibly important decision, could you?

WILLIAM

This is important in comparison to, let's say, whether to forgive third world debt?

SPIKE APPEARS IN THE CORRIDOR. AN UNUSUAL LOOKING FELLOW. HE HAS UNUSUAL HAIR, UNUSUAL FACIAL HAIR AND AN UNUSUAL WELSH ACCENT: VERY WHITE, AS THOUGH HIS FLESH HAS NEVER SEEN THE SUN. HE WEARS ONLY SHORTS.

3. EXT. PORTOBELLO ROAD. DAY

WILLIAM (V/O)

And so it was just another hopeless Wednesday, when I set off to work, little suspecting that this was the day that would change my life forever. This is work, by the way, my little Travel Book shop.....

A SMALL UNPRETENTIOUS STORE

.....which, well, just sells travel books - and, to be frank with you, doesn't always sell many of those.

WILLIAM ENTERS....

4. INT. THE BOOKSHOP. DAY.

IT IS A SMALL SHOP, SLIGHTLY CHAOTIC, BOOKSHELVES EVERYWHERE, WITH LITTLE SECRET BITS, ROUND CORNERS, WITH EVEN MORE BOOKS. MARTIN, WILLIAM'S SOLE EMPLOYEE, IS WAITING ENTHUSIASTICALLY. HE IS VERY KEEN. AN UNCRUSHABLE OPTIMIST.

WILLIAM

Morning, Martin.

MARTIN

Morning, Monsignor. Very exciting day, eh? Can't believe you'd be looking so melancholy on such a joyous day.

WILLIAM

What are you taking about Martin? It's Wednesday. That's what it is.

MARTIN

THE Wednesday when Keith Garthwaite, THE Keith Garthwaite signs copies in our store of his classic climbing books. Watch the profits come pouring in.

WILLIAM

O Christ in his heaven. I'd totally forgotten. Did you put the ad in Time Out?

MARTIN

No.

WILLIAM

Or a notice in the window?

MARTIN SHAKES HIS HEAD.

Why not?

MARTIN

I thought it was a policy decision - increase the excitement..... (LOSING CONFIDENCE)... by not publicising it... until the last moment.... yes. I've sort of cocked it up, haven't I?

5. EXT. BOOKSHOP. DAY.

OUTSIDE - A BIG PIECE OF CARDBOARD GOING UP IN THE WINDOW, HELPED BY MARTIN & WILLIAM. " WEDNESDAY MAY 17TH - KEITH GARTHWAITE SIGNS COPIES OF HIS CLASSIC CLIMBING TRILOGY." (AND THEY'VE WRITTEN 'TODAY' IN BLACK INK OVER IT). WITH THE COVERS OF THE BOOKS STUCK ON IT - " CLIMBING IN CATALONIA " - " CLIMBING IN THE CLOUDS " AND " CLIMBING WITH COURAGE " .

6. INT. BOOKSHOP. DAY.

MARTIN

What sort of crowd do you think we'll get?

WILLIAM

A no-crowd crowd. Some beardy weirdy non-entity comes to a small, unsuccessful shop with the benefit of 25 minutes pre-publicity. How many copies of his book did you order?

MARTIN

125

WILLIAM

O God. What if he arrives early?

'PING' GOES THE DOOR. WILLIAM JUMPS OUT OF HIS SKIN. BUT IT IS HONEY. SHE WEARS A YELLOW T-SHIRT COVERED IN BIG DAISIES.

HONEY

Hi guys. Big day.

WILLIAM

Big disaster, more like.

HONEY

Has he cancelled?

WILLIAM

Wouldn't it be fabulous if he cancelled. Imagine - if he'd just tragically fallen off the top of a mountain. Not dead - but far too badly hurt to travel back from Tibet. Joy.

PING AT THE DOOR. IT IS HE. BIG. BEARDED KEITH. A FAIRLY GRUFF AND DOUR NORTHERNER - NOT REALLY USED TO HUMAN COMPANY.

WILLIAM

Mr Garthwaite! What a pleasure to see you.

KEITH

Hello. Sorry I'm early.

WILLIAM

Don't you worry. I'm William.

KEITH'S IS A KILLER HANDSHAKE...

This is Martin. my trusted assistant.

MARTIN
Hail, noble warrior of the mountains!

ANOTHER HANDSHAKE....GOES ON A BIT .

Bloody hell! That's quite a handshake! I love your books Keith - not a climber myself - but when I read your purple prose, I feel it is me up there on the peak, tumbling in the avalanche, my life hanging by a string.

KEITH
Really?

MARTIN
Absolutely.

WILLIAM
Look, you two obviously have a lot to talk about. Martin, why don't you take Keith out for a cup of coffee while I prepare for the crowds. And don't rush.

MARTIN
O fine - no.

WILLIAM
(WHISPERING) I mean it. If I see you before 11.45, I'll strangle you with my belt.

MARTIN
So, Keith, let's start at the very beginning. You were born, where, when, what time of day?

KEITH
12 noon. Morley General Hospital.

MARTIN
Right. Forceps, caesar, natural birth?

KEITH AND MARTIN SET OFF.

HONEY
Exciting.

WILLIAM
No, not exciting. He's going to come back in half an hour - and no-one will be here. We'll not only make no money - we'll also break a man's heart.

HONEY
Do people actually have to buy the books?

WILLIAM
What do you mean?

HONEY
Well, there might just be a way...

WILLIAM
We have 29 minutes max.

HONEY

Funky.

7. EXT. KENSINGTON PARK ROAD. DAY.

MARTIN AND KEITH WALKING BACK DOWN KENSINGTON PARK ROAD.

MARTIN

So, it's your seventh birthday - and you are starting to get to grips with your first really serious climbing frame.

KEITH

That's right, Martin.

MARTIN

Now - the thing is, Keith - you know there won't necessarily be hundreds of people, don't you?

KEITH

O yes. I know I'm not John Grisham.

THEY TURN THE CORNER.... AND THERE IS A LONG QUEUE. IT IS FULL OF RASTAFARIANS, TRAVELLERS, AND QUITE A LOT OF PEOPLE JUST IN JEANS AND T-SHIRTS OR BAGGY JUMPERS.

MARTIN

Good lord. Ahm, there must be... ahm... a sale next door or something.

THE QUEUE GOES ON AND ON. THEY STILL DON'T TWIG. THEN, A VERY FRIENDLY BLACK GUY, JERRY...

JERRY

Yo, Keith, my man. Put it there. Love your work.

KEITH

(CONFUSED) Why thank you.

A BIG HANDSHAKE.

JERRY

Hey, look, it's Keith.

LOTS OF PEOPLE

Hey Keith! The Man.

THERE IS A LARGE ROUND OF APPLAUSE.

JERRY

The Keithster.

KEITH GIVES AN UNEASY WAVE. THEY TURN INTO THE STORE.

8. INT. BOOKSHOP. DAY.

THEY ARE GREETED BY THE MASSIVELY SMILING HONEY AND WILLIAM.

WILLIAM
Welcome back, Keith. Time to get signing.

IT'S THE HAPPIEST MOMENT OF KEITH'S LIFE.

CUT ON. THEY'VE SAT KEITH AT A DESK AT THE FRONT. WILLIAM HANDS THE FIRST MAN, A BLACK GUY, A COPY OF THE BOOK. HE HEADS ON....

KEITH
Have you been keen on climbing a long time?

ROGER
Not a long time, Keith. not a very long time.

KEITH
Better late than never.

ROGER
That's right. You're a god, Keith. I will treasure this till the day I die.

WE FOLLOW ROGER OUT. GRIPPING THE TREASURED TOME.

9. EXT. BOOKSHOP. DAY.

OUTSIDE WAIT MARTIN & HONEY. WHO GIVE HIM A CAN OF BEER. AND HE HANDS BACK THE SIGNED BOOK. MARTIN & HONEY SMILE AT EACH OTHER. IT'S GOING WELL.

10. INT. BOOKSHOP. DAY.

AN HOUR LATER - ALL THE COPIES GONE.

KEITH
Thank you, son.

HE ACTUALLY BEAR HUGS WILLIAM. HONEY AND MARTIN EXCHANGE BIG GRINS.

Greatest day of my life.

CUT TO WILLIAM SHAKING HIS HEAD. OVER A PAD. HALF AN HOUR LATER.

WILLIAM
Classic. Absolutely classic. Profit from major sales push - minus £247.

MARTIN
I'm sorry.

HE'S SERIOUSLY DISTRESSED. REAL SORROW ON HIS FACE.

WILLIAM
No, don't worry. It's not your fault. It's a cruel world.

MARTIN
Just going out for a cappuccino. Do you want one?

WILLIAM
Bad news.

THIEF
What?

WILLIAM
We've got a security camera in this bit of the shop.

PAUSE

THIEF
So?

WILLIAM
So. I saw you put that book down your trousers.

THIEF
What book?

WILLIAM
The one down your trousers.

THIEF
I haven't got a book down my trousers.

WILLIAM
Right - well, then we have something of an impasse. I'm afraid - one which I fear only the long hand of the law will be able to resolve. I'll call the police - and, what can I say? - if I'm wrong about the whole book-down-the-trousers scenario, I really apologise.

THIEF
Okay - what would happen if I did have a book down my trousers?

WILLIAM
Well, ideally, when I go back to the desk, you'd remove the Cadogan Guide to Bali from your trousers, and either wipe it and put it back, or buy it. See you in a sec.

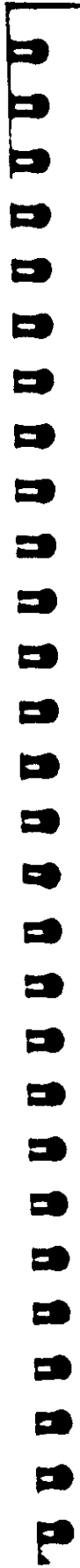
HE RETURNS TO HIS DESK. IN THE MONITOR WE JUST GLIMPSE. AS DOES WILLIAM. THE BOOK COMING OUT OF THE TROUSERS AND PUT BACK ON THE SHELVES. THE THIEF DRIFTS OUT TOWARDS THE DOOR. ANNA, WHO HAS OBSERVED ALL THIS, IS LOOKING AT KEITH'S BOOK.

WILLIAM
Sorry about that....

ANNA
No, that's fine. I was thinking of stealing one myself - but I've definitely changed my mind. Signed by the author, I see.

WILLIAM
Yes. We couldn't stop him. If you can find an unsigned copy, it's worth an absolute fortune.

SHE SMILES. SUDDENLY THE THIEF IS THERE.



Excuse me. THIEF

Yes. ANNA

Can I have your autograph? THIEF

Mmm. What's your name? ANNA

Rufus. THIEF

SHE SIGNS HIS SCRUFFY PIECE OF PAPER. HE TRIES TO READ IT

What does it say?

Well, that's the signature - and above, it says ' Dear Rufus - you belong in jail'.

Thanks. Nice one. You're absolutely the person I most fancy in the whole world, no exceptions, except perhaps the girl who plays Lois Lane on the telly.

Thank you. ANNA

Would you like my phone number. THIEF

Tempting but....no, thank you. ANNA

THIEF LEAVES.

I think I will try this one.

SHE HANDS WILLIAM A £20 NOTE AND THE BOOK HE SAID WAS RUBBISH. HE TALKS AS HE HANDLES THE TRANSACTION.

O - right - so..... On second thoughts maybe it wasn't that bad. Actually - it's a sort of masterpiece really. None of those childish kebab-stories you get in so many travel books these days. And.... I'll throw in one of these for free.

HE DROPS IN ONE OF KEITH'S BOOKS.

Very useful for propping up things. And standing on if you ever need to be taller.

SHE LOOKS AT HIM WITH A SLIGHT SMILE...

Thanks. ANNA

AND LEAVES. SHE'S OUT OF HIS LIFE FOREVER. WILLIAM IS A LITTLE DAZED.
SECONDS LATER MARTIN COMES BACK IN.

MARTIN

Cappuccino as ordered.

WILLIAM

Thanks. I don't think you'll believe who was just in here.

MARTIN

Who? Someone famous?

PAUSE. HIS INNATE NATURAL ENGLISH DISCRETION TAKES OVER.

WILLIAM

No. No-one - no-one.

THEY SET ABOUT DRINKING THE COFFEE.

MARTIN

Would be exciting if someone famous did come into the shop though, wouldn't it. Do you know - this is pretty incredible actually. I once saw Ringo Starr.

WILLIAM

Where?

MARTIN

Kensington High Street. Or at least I think it was Ringo. It might have been that bloke from Fiddler on the Roof. Topsy.

WILLIAM

Topol.

MARTIN

That's right - Topol.

WILLIAM

Ringo Starr doesn't look at all like Topol.

MARTIN

Well, he was quite a long way away.

WILLIAM

So, it might have been neither of them.

MARTIN

I suppose so.

WILLIAM

What was he actually doing - this quasi-Ringo?

MARTIN

Well, it was brilliant actually. He was..... just walking along, with some shopping.

WILLIAM

And...

MARTIN
And then he... went round the corner.

WILLIAM
Right. It's not a classic anecdote, is it?

MARTIN SHAKES HIS HEAD.

MARTIN
Not classic, no.

WILLIAM DRAINS HIS COFFEE.

WILLIAM
And now I feel like a sandwich - want another coffee?

MARTIN
Yes. No, wait - I'll have an orange juice - let's go crazy!

11. EXT. PORTOBELLO ROAD. AFTERNOON.

WILLIAM SETS OFF - SEES HONEY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD. KISSING HER RATHER HANDSOME BOYFRIEND MEETING HER FOR LUNCH. SHE LOOKS TO WILLIAM AND VERY QUICKLY MIMES VOMITING WHILE THE BOYFRIEND ISN'T LOOKING. THEN GIVES THE BOYFRIEND A BIG SMILE - AND WALKS AWAY WITH HIM. GIVING WILLIAM A LITTLE WAVE. HE LAUGHS AND HEADS ON.

12. INT. PURPLE COFFEE SHOP. DAY.

WILLIAM IN A PURPLE COFFEE SHOP ON PORTOBELLO ROAD. AS HE WAITS. HE SEES A SLIGHTLY RADICAL COUPLE. LOOKING LOVINGLY INTO EACH OTHERS EYES. HE TAKES IT IN - SO, THERE ARE PEOPLE IN LOVE. (THIS IS A TINY MOTIF THAT CARRIES THROUGH THE FILM - WILLIAM NOTICES THESE FIGURES - THE WORLD OF LOVE HE'S NOT PART OF.) HE THEN COLLECTS HIS SANDWICH AND ORANGE JUICE AND EXITS THE STORE...

13. EXT. PORTOBELLO ROAD. DAY.

.....AND BUMPS STRAIGHT INTO ANNA. THE ORANGE JUICE IN ITS FOAM CUPS. FLIES. IT SOAKS ANNA. MUCH POST CRASH CONFUSION.

ANNA
O Jesus.

WILLIAM
Here, let me help....

HE GRABS FOR SOME PAPER NAPKINS AND STARTS TO CLEAN IT OFF - GETTING FAR TOO NEAR HER BREASTS IN THE PANIC OF IT...

ANNA
What are you doing?!

WILLIAM

Nothing, nothing....

HE JUMPS BACK

ANNA

God alive - what did you have in that cup? The world's entire supply of orange juice?

WILLIAM

No, it was a medium. Thank God it was a medium. If it had been a large... doesn't bear thinking about.... Look, I live just round the corner - you could get cleaned up - I have water and soap - it's a classic combination.

ANNA

No thank you. I need to get my car back.

WILLIAM

I also have a phone. You could call your car and clean your clothes. I'm confident that in 5 minutes we can have you back on the street again... in the non-prostitute sense obviously.

IN HIS DIFFIDENT WAY, HE IS CONFIDENT: DESPITE HER BEING GENUINELY ANNOYED. SHE TURNS AND LOOKS AT HIM. BUT SUDDENLY THEY'RE INTERRUPTED BY A MIDDLE-AGED FAN.

FAN

Scuse me, Anna - can I have your autograph. It is for me - it's not for my nephew!

HE LAUGHS ENTHUSIASTICALLY AT HIS EXCELLENT JOKE. BUT IT'S NOT A GOOD TIME TO ASK HER - WILLIAM CAN TELL SHE'S A BIT DELICATE.....

WILLIAM

Actually this is a bad moment.

FAN

What about you then - are you famous?

WILLIAM

Ah - no. Although I tell you what - I think I just saw Ringo Starr go round the corner - though it might have been Topol.

FAN

O great.

THE FAN HEADS OFF.

ANNA

How do I know you're not some dangerous maniac who'll whack me on the head and keep me in a cupboard for a year and a half?

WILLIAM

Cos that's my brother. And anyway - we're both taking risks - you might just walk in and move all the furniture around and throw away my favourite stuff just because it's a bit old-fashioned.

SHE SMILES. PAUSE.

ANNA

Okay. So what does round the corner mean - give it to me in yards.

WILLIAM

18 yards. That's my house there.

HE DOESN'T LIE - IT IS 18 YARDS AWAY.

ANNA

Let's do it.

THEY SET OFF - SHE HAS WITH HER A FEW STYLISH BAGS OF SHOPPING.

So I bought a bad book?

WILLIAM

Well.... it's not a good book.

ANNA

Do you like selling books?

WILLIAM

O fuck no.

SHE ALMOST SMILES.

Every day I know I should be scuba diving off the coast of Madagascar.

THEY REACH HIS FRONT DOOR.

WILLIAM

Excuse me just a minute.

14. INT. WILLIAM'S HOUSE. CORRIDOR. DAY.

WILLIAM RUNS IN - IT'S A MESS. HE KICKS SOME OLD SHOES UNDER THE STAIRS AND HIDES AN UNFINISHED PIZZA BEHIND THE SOFA. THEN RUSHES BACK TO THE DOOR.

WILLIAM

Come on in. It's not that tidy, I fear.

SHE ENTERS.

The bathroom is at the top of the stairs and the phone's on the landing.

SHE TAKES THE FIRST STEP - THEN TURNS TO HIM.

ANNA

Even if I get the dress clean, I won't be able to get it dry, so I may have to come back down wearing the stuff in this bag, which is, well.... a bit inappropriate. As the man responsible for destroying the first outfit, you better not laugh at the next one.

WILLIAM

I promise.

SHE HEADS UPSTAIRS.

15. INT. KITCHEN AREA. DAY

WILLIAM IS WAITING - A LITTLE NERVOUSLY. PUTS ON A RECORD. IT'S NOISIER THAN HE EXPECTED. HE PUTS ON SOME ELLA FITZGERALD INSTEAD. THAT'S BETTER. THEN ANNA WALKS DOWN. SHE WEARS A PERFECT. ELEGANT. TIGHT, SHORT, BLACK EVENING DRESS.

WILLIAM

I've never seen anything less funny in my life.

ANNA

Well thank you.

WILLIAM

Would you like a cup of tea before you go?

ANNA

No.... thanks.

WILLIAM

Coffee?

ANNA

No.

HE TAKES A LOOK IN HIS VERY EMPTY FRIDGE - AND OFFERS ITS ONLY CONTENTS.

WILLIAM

Orange juice - probably not. Something else cold - coke, water, some disgusting sugary drink pretending to have something to do with fruits of the forest?

ANNA

Really no.

WILLIAM

Would you like something to eat - something to nibble - apricots, soaked in honey - quite why, no-one knows - because it stops them tasting of apricots, and makes them taste like honey, and if you wanted honey, you'd just buy honey, instead of apricots, but nevertheless - there we go - yours if you want them.

ANNA

No.

WILLIAM

Do you always say 'no' to everything?

PAUSE. SHE LOOKS AT HIM DEEP.

ANNA

No. (PAUSE) I better be going. I'm sure the car is outside. Thanks for your help.

WILLIAM

You're welcome.... And, may I also say... heavenly.

IT HAS TAKEN A LOT TO GET THIS OUT LOUD. HE IS NOT A SMOOTH-TALKING MAN.

Take my one chance to say it. After you've read that terrible book, you're certainly not going to be coming back to the shop.

SHE SMILES. PAUSE. SHE'S COOL.

ANNA

Thank you.

WILLIAM

Yes. Well. My pleasure.

HE GUIDES HER TOWARDS THE DOOR.

ANNA

And I think you should move that couch into the corner and throw away those awful posters.

HE SMILES.

WILLIAM

Nice to meet you. Surreal but nice.

IN A SLIGHTLY AWKWARD MOVEMENT. HE SHOWS HER OUT THE DOOR. HE CLOSES THE DOOR AND SHAKES HIS HEAD IN WONDER. THEN....

WILLIAM

'Surreal but nice'. God help me.

HE SHAKES HIS HEAD AGAIN, IN HORROR AND WANDERS BACK ALONG THE CORRIDOR IN SILENCE. THERE'S A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. HE MOVES BACK. CASUALLY....

WILLIAM

Coming....

HE OPENS THE DOOR. IT'S HER.

WILLIAM

O hi. Forget something?

ANNA

My bag.

WILLIAM

O yes, here we go.

ANNA

Thanks. Well....

SHE'S NOW AT THE DOOR AGAIN - IN THAT SMALL SPACE. SECOND TIME SAYING GOODBYE. A STRANGE FEELING OF INTIMACY.

ANNA

O hell.

AND SHE KISSES HIM. TOTAL SILENCE. A REAL SENSE OF THE STRANGENESS OF THOSE LIPS. THOSE FAMOUS LIPS ON HIS. THEY PART.

WILLIAM

I apologise for that 'surreal but nice' comment. Disaster...

ANNA

Don't worry about it. I thought the 'apricot and honey' business was the real lowpoint.

SUDDENLY THERE IS A CLICKING OF A KEY IN THE LOCK.

WILLIAM

O my God. My flatmate. I'm sorry - there's no excuse for him

ANNA NODS AND PUTS BACK ON DARK GLASSES AS SPIKE WALKS IN...

SPIKE

Hi.

ANNA

Hi.

SPIKE WALKS PAST UNSUSPICIOUSLY AND HEADS INTO THE KITCHEN.

SPIKE

I'm just going to go into the kitchen to get some food - and then I'm going to tell you a story that will makes your balls shrink to the size of raisins.

AND LEAVES THEM IN THE CORRIDOR.

ANNA

Probably best not tell anyone about this.

WILLIAM

Right. No-one. I mean. I'll tell myself sometimes - but... don't worry - I won't believe it.

SPIKE IS COMING OUT OF THE KITCHEN, EATING SOMETHING WHITE OUT OF A BOWL WITH A SPOON.

ANNA

Bye.

AND SHE LEAVES, WITH JUST A TOUCH OF WILLIAM'S HAND.

SPIKE

Who was that?

WILLIAM

Ahm. friend of Bernie's - came to collect something.

SPIKE

Babe?

WILLIAM

I couldn't really tell.

SPIKE

There's something wrong with this yoghurt.

WILLIAM

It's not yoghurt - it's mayonnaise.

SPIKE

Well, there you go. (TAKES ANOTHER BIG SPOONFUL) I knew it tasted funny.

HE EXITS: WILLIAM STANDS STOCK STILL: SPIKE THEN RE-EMERGES.

SPIKE

You don't fancy a movie tonight, do you?

WILLIAM

What have you got in mind?

SPIKE

I thought the new Anna Farrell thing.

WILLIAM

Okay.

16. INT. CINEMA. NIGHT.

SPIKE AND WILLIAM SITTING IN THE CINEMA - WATCHING THE SCREEN AND SEEING HER....

SHE IS HUGE ON THE SCREEN. AND WONDERFUL.

17. EXT. NOTTING HILL GATE.

THE SIDE-DOORS OF THE CORONET CINEMA SMASHING OPEN. SPIKE AND WILLIAM EMERGE AMONGST THE CROWD AND HEAD FOR HOME.

SPIKE

She is bloody perfection. isn't she?

WILLIAM

Yes, she is fairly fabulous.

SPIKE

Imagine - somewhere in the world there's a man who's allowed to kiss her.

AND THEY WALK ALONG. HOLDING THAT THOUGHT - PAST ABOUT 26 POSTERS FOR THE FILM. WITH A HUGE PICTURE OF HER ON IT.

18. INT. BOOKSHOP DAY.

THE NEXT DAY: FRIDAY. WILLIAM AND MARTIN QUIETLY CO-EXISTING.

MARTIN

Penny for your thoughts?

WILLIAM

Nothing. Nothing. I'm just wondering whether to order one copy of this new book about Latvia - or none.

MARTIN

O let's go nuts - let's order two and face the damn consequences.

WILLIAM LOOKS AT MARTIN - AND THEN OUT THE WINDOW. AT THAT MOMENT THE ENTIRE WINDOW IS SUDDENLY TAKEN UP BY THE HUGE SIDE OF A BUS. OBSCURING THE LIGHT - AND ENTIRELY COVERED WITH A PORTRAIT OF ANNA. THE OMNIPRESENCE OF CELEBRITY.

19. EXT/INT. TONY'S RESTAURANT. DAY.

WILLIAM APPROACHES TONY'S RESTAURANT. OUTSIDE IT SAYS "OPENING SATURDAY", WITH "TODAY!" WRITTEN ABOVE IT. INSIDE IT IS VERY FULL - WITH A BRIGHT, SUCCESSFUL, HOT FEEL TO IT. WILLIAM APPROACHES A TABLE OF FRIENDS. WE HAVE ALREADY MET HONEY. THE OTHERS ARE...

MAX - MIDDLE THIRTIES, BALDING, CONFIDENT, WEARING A SUIT AND TIE.
BELLA - WEARING A VERY SMART, COLOURFUL, SEXY FROCK - STRONG-WILLED, AND OF FIRM OPINIONS. MAX'S WIFE. SHE'S IN A WHEEL-CHAIR: THOUGH WE MAY NOT EVEN REALISE IT IN THIS FIRST SCENE.
BERNIE - ALSO MID-30s - PLUMP - IN A SUIT, BUT LOOKING A MESS IN IT.

THEY ARE DEFINITELY RELAXED WITH EACH OTHER.

WILLIAM

Sorry I'm late. How's it going?

BELLA

Apparently a slightly disappointing celebrity count.

MAX

So you say. Chances are we wouldn't recognise them even if they were here. In real life, famous people always disappoint you. I once passed Meg Ryan in Knightsbridge - thought it was Jim Carrey.

BERNIE

Who?

MAX

Jim Carrey - funny chap - pulls faces and makes farting noises.

BERNIE

O brilliant.

WILLIAM

Hiya Hun.

SHE HAS A RADICAL NEW HAIRSTYLE SINCE HER FIRST SCENE.

My God the hair.

HONEY

I told them I wanted the Audrey Hepburn look. What do you think? Do I look exactly like her. (LOSING CONFIDENCE QUICKLY) Or anything at all like her?

PAUSE

WILLIAM

You both have ears.

TONY COMES ACROSS.

TONY

What do you think?

BELLA

Perfection. I bet my life this will be most successful restaurant in London within a week.

TONY

Well, you know - fingers crossed. Legs crossed. Everything crossed. Drinks on the house - and I'd try the lamb.

MAX

Six lambs then.

TONY

Great. It's wonderful that you're all here. Such a big day.

HE GOES AWAY FULL OF OPTIMISTIC SMILES.

MAX

Right - so what's new?

WILLIAM

Well, look. I can't hold this in any longer. Something pretty extraordinary happened on Wednesday. Can you all keep a secret?

MAX

Definitely.

HONEY

Definitely.

BERNIE

Definitely not.

BELLA

Bernie!

BERNIE

No really - I can't. You hear so many things during the day. I just find it impossible to remember which one was the secret one.

WILLIAM

He's right. No-one can keep a secret.

HONEY

This is so unfair!

WILLIAM

No. I was only joking - as you well know, I don't have any secrets.

MAX

What about that girl in Crete?

BELLA

What girl in Crete?

WILLIAM

There was no girl in Crete - I have never actually been to Crete.

MAX

Apart from the time you went to Crete on holiday.

WILLIAM

Apart from that time.

BELLA

When there was apparently some incident with a girl.

WILLIAM

Everyone makes one mistake in their lives.

BERNIE

So is yours the one with the girl in Crete. or the business with you and that boy at school?

WILLIAM

Right - change the subject - Bernie - how's work?

BERNIE

Splendid thanks. Still wearing the suit and not having any idea what's going on.

WILLIAM

Excellent. Max, Bell - any news on the kids front? Get pregnant now. the baby gets born at Christmas. which saves the godfathers money on the present front.

BELLA

Well, truth is. it's not as easy as it seems.

WILLIAM

What's that?

BELLA

Having children. Getting pregnant.

SHE'S DEALING HERE WITH SOMETHING THAT IS TERRIBLY SERIOUS TO HER.

WILLIAM

I'm so sorry - I didn't know.

BELLA

No, no-one knows - but.... well. I mean, it's no secret, it's just that saying you're 'trying' is so... trying.

BERNIE

What are you going to do? What's the game-plan?

MAX

Well, this is the point. I can't begin to describe the nightmare of it - I've spent the last 3 months having blood tests, shooting home at 4 in the afternoon for sex and masturbating into test-tubes - with absolutely no effect whatsoever.

BERNIE

O, bad luck. I am sorry.

MAX

Doesn't matter. Tomorrow we go back for a final fiddle. So.... this secret.

WILLIAM

Really it's nothing. Just a moment of... I'll tell you when I'm very old and you'll be amazed.

BERNIE'S BEEN THINKING.

BERNIE

You actually come home at four in the afternoon and Bella lets you have sex with her?

MAX

As it were.

BERNIE

Bloody hell. What fabulous lives other people lead.

20. EXT. PORTOBELLO ROAD. DAY.

THEY ARE STROLLING ALONG PORTOBELLO WITH EACH OTHER. AFTER THE MEAL. IN FRONT MAX AND BERNIE. BEHIND WILLIAM. HONEY AND BELLA IN HER WHEELCHAIR.

BERNIE

I mean, you just walk in the door at 3 in the afternoon, and wham bam...

MAX

That's enough.

BERNIE

Sorry. Indelicate.

MAX TURNS BACK TO BELLA.

MAX

I think Bernie needs a girlfriend, don't you?

SHE CASUALLY NODS - AND THEN WHEN HE TURNS BACK, SHE BLOWS OUT THE SMOKE FROM HONEY'S CIGARETTE.

MAX
Or you could just marry Honey.

BERNIE
(LAUGHING) Right.

THE TRUTH IS THAT THIS IS HIS SECRET DREAM.

WILLIAM
Well, if you'll all excuse me - we part ways here.

MAX
See you Monday.

WILLIAM
What's Monday?

HONEY
Don't ask that question - you know perfectly well. And I want lots of presents.
And not just sweets again.

WILLIAM
Not even really nice sweets?

HONEY
No!

AND HE PEELS OFF TO HIS HOUSE. PASSES THE NEWSAGENT. THE ENTIRE RACK OF MAGAZINES IS A FRONT COVER OF ANNA. HE NOTICES AND HALF SHAKES HIS HEAD.

21. INT. WILLIAM'S HOUSE. CORRIDOR. DAY.

WILLIAM HEADS UPSTAIRS AND PASSES SPIKE COMING DOWN. WEARING FULL BODY SCUBA DIVING GEAR.

SPIKE
Hey..

WILLIAM
Hi...

22. INT. WILLIAM'S KITCHEN. DAY.

THE TWO OF THEM FIXING A CUP OF TEA IN THE KITCHEN.

WILLIAM
Just incidentally - why are you wearing that?

SPIKE
Ahm - combination of factors really. No clean clothes...

WILLIAM
There never will be, you know, unless you actually clean your clothes.



SPIKE

Right. Vicious circle. And then I was like rooting around in your things, and found this. and I thought - cool. Kind of spacey.

WILLIAM

Right.

23. EXT. WILLIAM'S TERRACE. DAY.

THE TWO OF THEM ON THE ROOFTOP TERRACE. PASSING THE DAY. IT IS SMALL AND THE PLANTS AREN'T GREAT - BUT IT OVERLOOKS LONDON IN A RATHER WONDERFUL WAY - ROOFS, PARKS AND CATHEDRALS ALL VISIBLE. SPIKE STILL IN SCUBA GEAR, THE GOGGLES BESIDE HIM.

SPIKE

There's something wrong with the goggles though...

WILLIAM

No, they were prescription, so I could see the fishes properly.

SPIKE

Groovy. You should do more of this stuff.

WILLIAM

No, it was... Carol's thing really. Any messages?

SPIKE

Yeh, I wrote a couple down.

WILLIAM

Two? That's it?

SPIKE

You want me to write down all the messages?

WILLIAM CLOSES HIS EYES IN EXASPERATION.

WILLIAM

Who were the ones you didn't write down from?

SPIKE

Ahm let's see - ahm. No. Gone completely. O no, wait. There was - one from your Mum: she said don't forget lunch and her leg's gone blue.

WILLIAM

No-one else?

SPIKE

Absolutely not.

SPIKE LEANS BACK AND RELAXES.

Though if we're going for this obsessive all-message thing - some American girl named Anna called a few days ago.

WILLIAM FREEZES - THEN LOOKS AT SPIKE.

WILLIAM
What did she say?

SPIKE
O nothing much - says she's staying at the Ritz. I think - you should give her a call sometime.

WILLIAM
The Ritz. You sure?

SPIKE
Positive.

24. INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

WILLIAM AT THE PHONE. SPIKE NOT THERE.

WILLIAM
Hi - do you have Anna Farrell staying with you?

25. INT. CORRIDOR. DAY.

WILLIAM HAS SPIKE BY THE LAPELS OF HIS JACKET AND HOLDS HIM AGAINST THE WALL.

WILLIAM
Right - it wasn't the Ritz. Where was it?

SPIKE
No - it was the Ritz. It was genuinely bizarre... She said, "Hi - it's Anna" - and then she said, "Call me at the Ritz - my name's..." and then she gave a completely different name.

WILLIAM
And that was?

SPIKE
No idea - Jesus - remembering one name of a person who's rung is bad enough - let alone two.

WILLIAM
I hate you so much.

26. INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY / INT. RITZ RECEPTION. DAY.

WILLIAM ON THE PHONE. WE HEAR THE FORMAL MAN AT THE OTHER END OF THE PHONE. AND THEN INTERCUT WITH HIM.

WILLIAM
Hello.

RITZ MAN
Good afternoon.

WILLIAM

Ahm, look this is a very odd situation. I'm a friend of Anna Farrell's - and she rung me at home the day before yesterday - and left a message saying that she's staying with you...

RITZ MAN

I'm sorry, we don't have anyone of that name here, sir.

WILLIAM

No, that's right - I know that. She said she was staying under another name. However - there's been a slight hiccup. Imagine if you will the stupidest person you've ever met - are you doing that...?

RITZ MAN

Yes, sir. I have him in my mind.

WILLIAM

And then double it - and that is the - what can I say - git I'm living with - and he took this message - and forgot to write down the new name. Which means. I have no way of....

RITZ MAN
(INTERRUPTING)

I'll put you through, sir.

WILLIAM

Beg your pardon?

RITZ MAN

I'll put you through.

WILLIAM COUGHS. HE MIGHT BE JUST ABOUT TO SPEAK TO HER.

WILLIAM
(PRACTICING HOW TO SOUND) Hello. Hi. Hi.

ANNA

Hi.

WE HEAR HER VOICE - DON'T SEE HER.

WILLIAM
(CAUGHT OUT) O hi. It's William Thacker. We, ahm... I work in a bookshop.

ANNA

Aha. You played it pretty cool here, waiting for three days to call.

WILLIAM

No. I've never played anything cool in my entire life. Spike, who will incidentally be stone dead tomorrow, never gave me the message.

ANNA

O - Okay. Unfortunately I'm just off to Paris - then back here Monday and leave first thing Tuesday morning.

WILLIAM

O right. Damn. Ahm... perhaps I could drop round for tea on Monday or something?

ANNA

Well, things are going to be pretty busy, but... okay, let's give it a try. 4 o'clock should be good.

WILLIAM

Right. Great. (HE HANGS UP.) Classic.

27. EXT. LONDON STREETS. DAY.

CUT TO WILLIAM ON THE BUS FROM NOTTING HILL TO THE STRAND. IT SHOOT PAST REGENTS PARK. ROUNDS MARBLE ARCH - AND IS HEADING DOWN PARK LANE.

INSIDE. THE BUS IS HALF FULL. WILLIAM SITS NEAR A VERY TIDY MIDDLE-AGED COUPLE - HOLDING EACH OTHER'S HAND - EXCITEDLY LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW - HAPPY AFTER YEARS IN EACH OTHERS COMPANY. THAT WORLD OF LOVE.

WILLIAM IS VAGUELY TRYING TO WORK OUT HOW TO LOOK HANDSOME - NOT SOMETHING HE THINKS ABOUT OFTEN. HE TRIES TO FIX HIS HAIR A BIT - BUT IT JUST GETS WORSE. HE THEN PLAYS AROUND WITH BUTTONS ON HIS SHIRT - TRYING 3 UNDONE. THEN 4. FINALLY DOES THEM ALL UP EXCEPT TWO. PAUSE. THEN THE OLD WOMAN BESIDE HIM CASUALLY OBSERVES...

OLDWOMAN

I'd do up another one. Two looks a bit tarty.

WILLIAM

Really? O God.

HE QUICKLY DOES UP THE SECOND BUTTON ON HIS SHIRT. BEHIND HIM IS A VERY OLD WOMAN.

VERY OLD WOMAN

What's wrong with tarty?

28. EXT./INT. RITZ. DAY.

WILLIAM WALKS INTO THE RITZ AND SOMEWHAT NERVOUSLY APPROACHES THE DESK. HE CARRIES SOME WHITE ROSES.

WILLIAM

Hello, I'm here to see... O God... I forgot to ask her what her name is.

RITZ DESK MAN RAISES AN IRONIC EYEBROW.

Look - I'm actually here to see... (LEANS IN. THEN QUIETLY...) Anna Farrell.

RITZ MAN

Third floor. Room 36.

WILLIAM IS PERPLEXED AT HOW EASY THAT WAS.

WILLIAM

O. Right. Thanks.

HE WALKS OFF TO THE LIFTS. PUSHES THE BUTTON. AS HE IS GETTING IN, HE IS JOINED BY A VERY PLUMP YOUNG MAN IN A SHORT SLEEVED SHIRT. HIS NAME IS TARQUIN.

29. INT. RITZ LIFT. DAY.

WILLIAM PUSHES THE THIRD BUTTON...

WILLIAM

You?

TARQUIN

Third floor too.

THEY STAND THERE TOGETHER. THE LIFT LANDS. WILLIAM GETS OUT. SO DOES TARQUIN.

30. INT. RITZ CORRIDOR. DAY.

ROOMS 30-35 ARE TO THE LEFT. 35-39 TO THE RIGHT. WILLIAM HEADS RIGHT.

SO DOES TARQUIN. WILLIAM IS PUZZLED. HE SLOWS DOWN AS HE APPROACHES ROOM 38. SO DOES TARQUIN.

WILLIAM STOPS, SO DOES TARQUIN, WHO IS GIVING WILLIAM'S FLOWERS A SLIGHTLY STRANGE LOOK. WILLIAM STARTS TO KNOCK... THEN... POINTING AT THE NUMBER.

WILLIAM

Are you sure you...?

TARQUIN

Yes.

WILLIAM

O. Right.

HE KNOCKS. A BRIGHT, WELL-TAILORED AMERICAN GIRL OPENS THE DOOR.

KAREN

Hello, I'm Karen. Sorry - things are running a bit late. Here's the thing...

31. INT. ANNA'S SUITE ANTE-ROOM. DAY.

AS THEY ENTER, SHE HANDS HIM A VERY SLICK, EXPENSIVELY-PRODUCED PUBLICITY BROCHURE, WITH A STARTLING PICTURE OF ANNA ON, CLEARLY FOR HER NEW FILM.

What did you think? KAREN

Marvellous. "Close Encounters" meets 'Jean de Florette.' Oscar-winning stuff. TARQUIN

THEY BOTH TURN TO WILLIAM FOR HIS OPINION.

I agree. WILLIAM

When's it released? TARQUIN

Late summer. KAREN

Right. TARQUIN

THEY SIT. WILLIAM LOOKS ROUND AT THE ROOM, WHICH IS FULL OF ELEGANT SOFAS. IN THE WELTER OF HIS CONFOUNDED EXPECTATIONS, WILLIAM LOOKS ACROSS TO THE PLUMP MAN. HIS NAME IS TARQUIN. KAREN RETURNS.

I'm sorry. I didn't get down what magazines you're from. KAREN

Time Out. TARQUIN

Great. And you... KAREN

Well... (SEES IT ON A COFFEE TABLE) Horse and Hound. The name's William Thacker. WILLIAM

Okay - stay there. I'll check. KAREN

HE STAYS SEATED AS KAREN GOES OFF.

You've brought her flowers? TARQUIN

WILLIAM GOES FOR THE COVER-UP.

No - they're... for my mother. She's in a hospital nearby. Thought I'd kill two birds with one stone. WILLIAM

I'm sorry. Which hospital? TARQUIN

PAUSE

WILLIAM

Do you mind me not saying - it's a rather distressing disease and the name of the hospital rather gives it away.

TARQUIN

O sure. Sure. (PAUSE, THEN VERY QUIETLY) Cancer?

WILLIAM SHAKES HIS HEAD. PAUSE.

Heart problems?

A FAIRLY GRAVE, AUTHORITATIVE FIFTY YEAR OLD MAN - JEREMY, KAREN'S BOSS - COMES OUT, CONSULTING A LIST.

JEREMY

Right - Mr Thacker. In you go.

AS HE GETS UP, TARQUIN HAS ONE LAST STAB.

TARQUIN

It's Alzheimer's, isn't it.

JEREMY

We're just squeezing you. You have five minutes.

HE IS SHOWN IN THROUGH BIG GOLDEN DOORS. JEREMY STAYS OUTSIDE.

32. INT. ANNA'S SUITE SITTING ROOM. DAY.

THERE ANNA IS. FRAMED IN THE WINDOW. GLORIOUS.

WILLIAM

Hi.

ANNA

Hello.

WILLIAM

I brought these, but clearly...

THERE ARE LOTS OF OTHER FLOWERS IN THE ROOM.

ANNA

O no, no - these are great - they're white - which is my favourite colour and they smell... (SHE SMELLS THEM) of absolutely nothing - which is great. Can't stand the smell of flowers.

SHE TAKES THE FLOWERS. PAUSE. A LOT OF TENSION. THESE TWO PEOPLE HARDLY KNOW EACH OTHER - AND THE FIRST AND LAST TIME THEY MET, THEY KISSED.

WILLIAM

Sorry about not ringing back. The whole two-names thing was totally too much for my flatmate's pea-shaped intellect.

ANNA

It's a stupid privacy thing. This week my name is Mrs Flintstone.

AT WHICH MOMENT PR JEREMY COMES IN.

JEREMY
Everything fine?

ANNA
Yes thanks.

JEREMY
Mr Thacker is from Horse and Hound magazine.

ANNA
Is that right?

WILLIAM SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS. JEREMY SITS DOWN AT A LITTLE DESK IN THE CORNER AND MAKES NOTES. A PAUSE. WILLIAM FEELS HE HAS TO ACT THE PART. THEY SIT IN CHAIRS OPPOSITE EACH OTHER.

WILLIAM
So I'll just fire away shall I?

ANNA NODS.

Right. Ahm... the film's great... and I just wondered - whether you ever thought of having more.... horses in it?

ANNA
Ahm - well - we would have liked to - but it was difficult, obviously, being set in space.

WILLIAM
Obviously.

A BELL GOES OUTSIDE. JEREMY LEAVES. WILLIAM PUTS HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS. HE WAS PATHETIC.

WILLIAM
I'm sorry - I arrived outside - they thrust this thing into my hand - I didn't know what to do.

ANNA
No, it's my fault, I thought this would all be over by now.

WILLIAM
The thing is. I'm...

RE-ENTER JEREMY. HE STROLLS TO THE DESK - PICKS UP HIS MOBILE PHONE...

WILLIAM
I'm (TOTALLY LOST)... told white's your favourite colour, is that right?

JEREMY'S FACE REGISTERS SCORN AS HE EXITS

ANNA
I just wanted to sort of apologise for the kissing thing. I seriously don't know what came over me. I just wanted to check you were fine about it.

WILLIAM

Absolutely fine about it.

ANNA

It's so much not my...habit. I never kiss anyone at all. My mother complains. I have grandparents I've never even pecked on the cheek.

RE-ENTER JEREMY

JEREMY

Do remember that Miss Farrell is also happy to talk about her next project. which is shooting later in the summer.

WILLIAM

O yes - excellent. Ahm - any horses in that one? Or hounds, of course. Our readers are equally intrigued by both.

ANNA

It takes place on a submarine - so I rather doubt it..

WILLIAM

Yes. Right.

JEREMY EXITS.

WILLIAM

I'm just a complete moron..

ANNA

No - it's my fault. Though quite why you picked Horse and Hound.

WILLIAM

Well exactly. I hate horses, well, not hate them, but I certainly wouldn't write a magazine for them. Sorry - I'm burbling. This is the sort of thing that happens in my dreams - not in my life.

ANNA

And what happens next in the dreams?

IT'S A CHALLENGE.

WILLIAM

Well. I suppose in the dream dream scenario, I just... ahm, change my personality. because you can do that in dreams. and walk over and kiss the beautiful film star... but you know.... it'll never happen.

PAUSE. THEN - THEY MOVE TOWARDS EACH OTHER WHEN... JEREMY ENTERS.

JEREMY

Time's up. Sorry it was so short. Did you get what you wanted?

WILLIAM

Ahm.... nearly.

JEREMY

Maybe time for one last question.

WILLIAM

Right. Ah - when is it that you return to England?

JEREMY GOES OUT - IT'S THEIR LAST SECONDS.

ANNA

I might be back for a while in August.

WILLIAM

August! That's... August. All bloody June - and the whole of sodding July to get through. Are you busy tonight?

SHE NODS.

So. August it is.

THEY LOOK AT EACH OTHER. JEREMY ENTERS.

JEREMY

His name is Tarquin - he's from Time Out, the magazine.

ANNA

Great.

SHE LOOKS TO WILLIAM. THEY SHAKE HANDS FORMALLY.

Well, it was nice to meet you. Surreal but nice.

WILLIAM

Thank you. You are Horse and Hounds' favourite actress. You and Black Beauty.

33. INT. ANTE-ROOM. DAY.

WILLIAM COMES OUT THROUGH THE GOLDEN DOORS. THE ROOM IS STILL BUZZING WITH PEOPLE WAITING TO TALK TO HIS GIRL. TARQUIN IS ABOUT TO ENTER.

TARQUIN

How was she?

WILLIAM

Fabulous.

TARQUIN

Wait a minute - she took your mother's flowers?

PAUSE. ACTUALLY WILLIAM CAN'T THINK HIS WAY OUT OF THIS.

WILLIAM

Yes. That's right. Bitch.

AS HE STEPS FORWARD TO HEAD OUT, HE IS ACCOSTED BY KAREN.

KAREN

If you'd like to come through here we can rush you through the others.

WILLIAM

The others ?

HE FOLLOWS HER INTO A SECOND ROOM.
34. INT. SECOND INTERVIEW ROOM. DAY.

KAREN

Mr Tuckers from Horse and Hound.
A 45 YEAR OLD ACTOR WITH GREAT PRESENCE. WARMLY SHAKES HIS HAND
(PIERCE BROSNAN. AS IT WERE)

MALE LEAD

Pleased to meet you. Like the film ?

WILLIAM

Ah... yes, enormously.

MALE LEAD

Well, fire away.

WILLIAM

Right, right. Ahm - did you enjoy making the film ?

MALE LEAD

I did.

WILLIAM

Any bit in particular?

MALE LEAD

Well, you tell me which bit you liked the most - and I'll tell you if I enjoyed making it.

WILLIAM

Ahm.... Right, right.

35. INT. THIRD INTERVIEW ROOM. DAY.

WILLIAM IS NOW SITTING IN A SMALLER ROOM, WITH A MAN WITH A BEARD.

WILLIAM

What's it like acting with a star like Anna Farrell?

SERIOUS MAN

I don't know - I'm the director ?

WILLIAM

Of course you are, of course you are.

36. INT. FOURTH INTERVIEW ROOM. DAY.
ANOTHER ROOM. WILLIAM IS SITTING OPPOSITE A 10 YEAR OLD. ANNA
PAQUIN TYPE GIRL.

WILLIAM
Ahm - is this your first film?

GIRL
No - it's my 27th.

WILLIAM
Of course it is. Any favourites among the 27?

GIRL
Well, I suppose the obvious one.

WILLIAM
Right. Classic. And what was it about the (DOES INVERTED COMMAS WITH HIS FINGERS) "obvious one" that was so much fun?

GIRL
Working with Leonardo.

WILLIAM
Da Vinci?

GIRL
DiCaprio.

WILLIAM
Of course.

37. INT. FIFTH INTERVIEW ROOM. DAY.

HE SITS IN A ROOM WITH AN INTERESTING LOOKING BEARDED MAN (JEAN RENO TYPE) AND AN INTERPRETER.

WILLIAM
Did you identify with the character you were playing?

INTERPRETER
Te relaciones con el personale que vas a interpretar?

FOREIGN ACTOR
No.

INTERPRETER
No.

WILLIAM
Why not?

INTERPRETER
Por que?

FOREIGN ACTOR
Porque es un robot carnivoro que la encanta matar.

INTERPRETER
Because he is playing a psychopathic flesh-eating robot.

Classic.

WILLIAM

38. INT. RITZ CORRIDOR. DAY.

WILLIAM EMERGES TRAUMATISED INTO THE CORRIDOR. AND THERE IS KAREN.

KAREN

Mr Thacker.

WILLIAM

O God - not more.

KAREN

No - Anna wanted just one more word with you.

39. INT. ANNA'S SUITE SITTING ROOM. DAY.

HER DOOR OPENS. WILLIAM WALKS IN. A CERTAIN NERVOUSNESS. THEY ARE ALONE AGAIN.

ANNA

Ahm. That thing I was doing tonight - I'm not doing it anymore. Who wants to have dinner with the Queen anyway?

WILLIAM

O well, great. Fantastic. Perfect. O no - shitty brickitty - it's my sister's birthday - shit - I'm meant to be going out to dinner....

ANNA

Okay - fine.

WILLIAM

But no. I'm sure I can get out of it. I'll just have to buy her a more expensive present. A bag of sweets won't be enough.

ANNA

No, I mean. if it's fine with you, I'll, you know, string along.

WILLIAM

You'll string along to my sister's birthday party?

ANNA

If that's okay....

WILLIAM

I'm sure it's okay... my friend Max is cooking and he's the worst cook in the world, but, you know, if you can... hide the food in your purse or something.

ANNA

Okay.

WILLIAM

Okay.

40. BELLA'S KITCHEN. EVENING.

BELLA AND MAX IN THE KITCHEN.

MAX
He's bringing a girl?

BELLA
Apparently. Miracles do happen.

MAX
It is a miracle. Or a con - probably a cousin or something. Do you think I should wear something less attractive? If he has scrambled together a date for the first time in a decade, I don't want her falling for me.

BELLA
No, I think she'll be able to resist the wrinkled suit and sick-green tie.

MAX
Christ, what is going in there?

THE OVEN SEEMS TO BE SMOKING A LITTLE. THEN THE BELL RINGS. MAX HEADS FOR THE DOOR IMPATIENTLY. HE OPENS IT AND TURNS WITHOUT LOOKING AT WILLIAM AND ANNA STANDING THERE.

MAX
Come on in. Food crisis.

41. INT. MAX & BELLA'S CORRIDOR. NIGHT.

WILLIAM AND ANNA MOVE ALONG THE CORRIDOR TO THE KITCHEN. BELLA COMES OUT. THERE IS A LITTLE STEP BETWEEN KITCHEN AND CORRIDOR. WHICH HAS A RAMP. SHE IS VERY ATHLETIC AND AT EASE IN THE WHEELCHAIR.

BELLA
Hiya - sorry - the quail is proving more complicated than expected.

WILLIAM
Quail?

BELLA
Don't even ask. He's worked so hard on it.

WILLIAM
Bella - this is Anna.

ANNA
Hi. Sorry to come so uninvited.

BELLA
O nonsense, lovely to meet you....

SHE LOOKS AT HER PROPERLY, AND FREEZES JUST A TINY BIT.

..you're..... ahm. . . Let me take your coat.

ANNA

Hiya. Great dress.

HONEY

O God... this is one of those key moments in life - when it's possible you can be really, genuinely cool - and... I'm going to fail... a hundred percent.

MAX

Have a drink.

HONEY

Good idea. .

HONEY KNOCKS BACK A GLASS OF WINE.

Nope, still can't do it. Sorry Willie (TO ANNA) I absolutely and totally and utterly adore you and I think you're the most beautiful woman in the world and more importantly I genuinely believe and have believed for some time now that we can be best friends. What do you think?

ANNA

Ahm - I think that sounds - you know - lucky me. Happy birthday.

SHE HANDS HER A PRESENT.

HONEY

O my God. You gave me a present. We're best friends already. Marry Will - he's really nice and then we can be sisters.

ANNA

I'll think about it.

THE FRONT DOOR BELL GOES.

MAX

That'll be Bernie.

HE HEADS OUT INTO THE CORRIDOR TO THE FRONT DOOR. THE SECOND HE GOES - WE SEE BELLA PICK UP A CIGARETTE AND SMOKE ENERGETICALLY. BACK AT THE DOOR.

MAX

Hello, Berns.

BERNIE

I'm sorry I'm so late. Bollocksed up at work again. I fear.

THEY ENTER THE ROOM.

MAX

Bernie - this is Anna.

BERNIE

Hello, Anna. Delighted to meet you. (DOESN'T RECOGNIZE HER - TURNS TO HONEY) Honey Bunny - happy birthday to you. (HANDS HER A PRESENT) It's a hat. Hope you like it. Don't have to wear it or anything.

CUT ON A MINUTE OR TWO - THEY ARE STANDING, DRINKING WINE BEFORE DINNER. BERNIE WITH ANNA ON THEIR OWN - WILLIAM WITH MAX HELPING IN THE KITCHEN.

MAX

You haven't slept with her, have you?

WILLIAM

That is a cheap question and the answer is, of course, no comment.

MAX

'No comment' means 'yes'.

WILLIAM

No it doesn't.

MAX

Do you ever masturbate?

WILLIAM

Definitely no comment.

MAX

You see - it means 'yes.'

THEN ON TO BERNIE'S CONVERSATION.

BERNIE

So tell me Anna - what do you do?

ANNA

I'm an actress.

BERNIE

Splendid. I'm actually in the stock-market, so not really similar fields, though I have done some amateur stuff - Wodehouse, you know - farce. all that (JIGGLES HIS GLASSES IN AN AMUSING WAY) - but I have got a mate who's directing now at the National Theatre - sort of assistant director I think - but you know - not without clout. If you'd like me to put a word in I'd be happy to.

ANNA

Well, that's very kind of you.

BERNIE

No, no - my pleasure. Perhaps you can give me your number later. (HE'S ACTUALLY MAKING A TINY PASS AT HER) Always like to help actors if I can. They're so bloody poor - I mean the wages are a scandal, aren't they?

ANNA

Well.... they can be...

BERNIE

I see friends from university - clever chaps - been in the business longer than you - they're scraping by on 7, 8 thousand a year. It's no life. What sort of work do you do?

ANNA

I've been in a few films.

BERNIE

O splendid. I'm sure you're excellent. How's the pay in movies? Any better than the theatre. I mean, last film you did, what did you get paid?

ANNA

10 million dollars.

BERNIE

Right. Right. So that's.... fairly good. On the high side. 10 million dollars?

ANNA

Yes. I mean, it's crazy but that's the way it goes these days.

BERNIE

Good lord. Perhaps I should concentrate more on the acting myself. Certainly more profitable than what I do now.

MAX

Right - everyone to the table.

ANNA

(TO BELLA) I wonder if you could tell me where the...?

BELLA

O, it's just up the stairs on the right.

HONEY

(NOW WEARING BERNIE'S HAT) I'll show you.

EVERYONE CONTINUES WITH THE CONVERSATION THEY ARE HAVING - UNTIL THE INSTANT SHE LEAVES THE ROOM - THEN IN A SPLIT SECOND THEY ALL TURN IN TOTAL SILENCE TO WILLIAM. THEN....

BELLA

Quickly, quickly - talk very quickly..... What are you doing here at dinner with Anna Farrell?

BERNIE

Anna Farrell? O no. I thought her face rang a bell - but I'm so bloody bad with names. I didn't want to put my foot in it.

HONEY RE-ENTERS

HONEY

I don't believe it. I walked into the loo with her. I was still talking when she started lifting up her dress. She had to ask me to leave.

BELLA

Look, everyone just be quiet and let William talk. We need everything - how? What? When? Where? How often?

ANNA RE-ENTERS. THEY DESPERATELY TRY TO CUT BACK INTO CONVERSATION....

BERNIE

Ahm... and I said to him... ahm... yes. Yes. Glaxo looks in good shape - particularly if the Proctor and Gamble deal materialises.

SHE SETTLES IN NEXT TO WILLIAM AND PECKS HIM ON THE CHEEK. EVERYONE AGAIN GOES COMPLETELY SILENT..... ONLY BERNIE FIGHTS ON...

BERNIE

I don't know whether you agree with me on that, Max?

MAX

Ahm.... yes.... I do. Bernie.

CUT ON A LITTLE LATER. THEY ARE AT AT DINNER. BELLA NEXT TO ANNA.

BELLA

What do you think of the quail? Max is so proud of his cooking.

ANNA

Can I be honest with you?

BELLA

Yes.

ANNA

(WHISPERING) I'm a vegetarian.

BELLA

O God.

MAX CALLS ACROSS THE TABLE.

MAX

So how's the quail?

ANNA

Best quail I've ever tasted.

MAX

Probably don't get quail much in America.

ANNA

Almost never.

MAX

I'll send you some.

ANNA

Send me lots. Fill my freezer with quail.

MAX

This is an excellent woman. More?

PAUSE: SHE LOOKS AT BELLA. THEN....

ANNA

Yes.

MAX
Breast or leg?

ANNA
Give me the whole damn bird.

CUT ON THROUGH THE EVENING - THEY ARE VERY RELAXED, AS THEY EAT DINNER. A FEW SECONDS WATCHING THE EVENING GOING WELL - ANNA IS TAKING THIS IN - REAL FRIENDS - RELAXED - EASY, TEASING. SHE WATCHES WILLIAM LAUGHING AND THEN PUTTING HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS WITH MOCK SHAME. DRIFT THROUGH TO COFFEE.

MAX
So - if it's not too personal a question - what the hell are you doing here with a loserlike William?

ANNA
Is he a loser?

MAX
He didn't tell you?

SHE LAUGHS

ANNA
No - he did say though that you were his best and most trusted friend.

MAX
He said that?

SHE NODS

MAX
This guy is a winner - you have got really lucky here - this is a man in a million. Excuse me a second.

HE STANDS

Right - I'm just about to make a statement - your response to it must be either - 'good idea. they're lovely kids' - or 'fuck 'em.'

THEY ALL NOD AND GENERALLY AGREE WITH THE PLAN.

I bought these delicious brownies as a special treat for my sweet little nephews who are coming round for tea tomorrow.

PAUSE

ALL
Fuck 'em.

MAX
Excellent. Tuck in.

THEY ALL GO INSTANTLY. EXCEPT ONE.

Having you here, Anna, firmly establishes what I've long suspected, that we really are the most desperate lot of under-achievers.

BERNIE

Shame!

MAX

I'm not saying it's a bad thing. In fact. I think it's something we should take pride in. I'm going to give the last brownie to the saddest act here.

BERNIE

Well, obviously it's me, isn't it - I work in the city in a job I don't understand and everyone keeps getting promoted above me. I haven't had a girlfriend since... well... long and short is nobody fancies me, and if this stomach is anything to go on, they never will.

HONEY

Nonsense. I fancy you. Or I did before you got so fat.

MAX

You see - and unless I'm much mistaken, your job still pays you rather a lot of money, while Honey here, she earns nothing flogging her guts out at a seedy record store.

HONEY

Yes. And I don't have hair, I've got feathers and I've got funny goggly eyes and I'm attracted to cruel men and... and... my breasts have actually started shrinking, so no-one will ever marry me.

MAX

You see - incredibly sad.

BELLA

On the other hand, her best friend is Anna Farrell.

HONEY

That's true, I can't deny it. She needs me, what can I say?

BELLA

And most of her limbs work. Whereas I'm stuck in this thing day and night in a house full of ramps. And to add insult to serious injury - I've totally given up smoking, my favourite thing, and it's now very clear that we can't have a baby.

DEAD SILENCE.

WILLIAM

Belle.

BELLA SHRUGS HER SHOULDERS. BERNIE IS TOTALLY GRIEF-STRUCK.

BERNIE

No. Not true....

BELLA

C'est la vie..... We're lucky in lots of ways, but... surely it's worth a brownie.

WILLIAM REACHES FOR HER HAND. MAX BREAKS THE SOMBRE MOOD.

MAX

Well, I don't know. Look at William. Very unsuccessful professionally. Divorced. Used to be handsome, now kind of squidgy round the edges - and absolutely certain never to hear from Anna again after she's heard that his nickname at school was Floppy.

THEY ALL LAUGH. ANNA SMILES ACROSS AT WILLIAM.

WILLIAM

So I get the brownie?

MAX

I think you do, yes.

ANNA

Hold it right there. What about me?

MAX

You think you deserve the brownie?

ANNA

Well.... don't discount me out of hand.

WILLIAM

You'll have to prove it. This is a great brownie and I'm going to fight for it.

ANNA

Well, I've had a sequence of not nice boyfriends - one of whom hit me: no-one has behaved normally with me for 10 years now till tonight: I've got a pen pal who's a serial killer and hundreds of people I've never met write rude things about my hair every day. Meantime, it cost millions to get me looking like this.... and one day, not long from now.....

WHILE SHE SAYS THIS, QUIET SETTLES ROUND THE TABLES. THE THING IS - SHE SORT OF MEANS IT..... AND IS OPENING UP TO THEM.

....my looks will go, they'll find out I can't act and I'll become a sad middle-aged woman who looks a bit like someone who was famous for a year or two.

SILENCE... THEY ALL LOOK AT HER.... THEN

MAX

Nah!!!! Nice try, gorgeous - but you don't fool anyone.

THE MOOD IS INSTANTLY BROKEN. THEY ALL LAUGH.

WILLIAM

Pathetic effort to hog the brownie.

BELLA

And anyway - obviously the prize goes to Max because he's now almost totally bald and his sperm is absolute rubbish.

ALL

Hear, hear!

MAX

Well, I'm honoured. Thank you. Though, actually my hair has started to grow back again. I will have a full head of hair in about a year's time. Give me 5 years, my nickname will be Jimi Hendrix.

45. INT. MAX AND BELLA'S CORRIDOR. NIGHT.
ANNA AND WILLIAM ARE LEAVING.

ANNA

That was such a great evening.

MAX

I'm delighted.

HE HOLDS OUT HIS HAND TO SHAKE. SHE KISSES HIM ON THE CHEEK. HE IS DELIGHTED.

ANNA

And that's a heavenly tie.

MAX

Now you're lying.

ANNA

You're right. I told you I was bad at acting.

MAX LOVES THIS.

HONEY

I'm so sorry about that toilet thing. I meant to leave - but I just... look, ring me if you need someone to go shopping with. I know lots of nice cheap places... not that money, necessarily... (GIVES UP) Nice to meet you.

ANNA

You too - from now on you are my style guru.

HONEY GRINS THE HUGEST GRIN EVER AS ANNA AND WILLIAM GO OUT, AND ARE CASUALLY WAVED GOODBYE.

46. EXT. MAX & BELLA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

WILLIAM AND ANNA STEP OUTSIDE. FROM INSIDE THEY HEAR A MASSIVE AND HYSTERICAL SCREAM OF THE FRIENDS LETTING OUT THEIR TRUE FEELINGS. THE HOUSE IS IN CLARENDON ROAD, ON THE EDGE OF NOTTING HILL. IN CONTRAST TO THE SHOUTING FRIENDS INSIDE - THESE ARE TWO PEOPLE WHO ARE TRYING TO WORK OUT WHAT THEIR RELATIONSHIP IS. A BIT OF SILENCE. THEN....

WILLIAM

Would you like to walk a bit?

ANNA

Sure.

THEY SET OFF THROUGH NOTTING HILL AND TURN THE CORNER INTO ELGIN CRESCENT WHERE SUDDENLY ALL THE HOUSES ARE DIFFERENT , BRIGHT COLOURS. PINK, WHITE, BLUE, ORANGE - A WONDERFUL BACKGROUND. A BIT OF SILENCE.

ANNA

Floppy. huh?

WILLIAM

It's the hair! It's to do with the hair.

SHE LAUGHS. THEY WALK A LITTLE FURTHER.

ANNA

What's the story with Bella?

WILLIAM

It was an accident - about a year ago.

ANNA

And the pregnancy thing - is that to do with the accident?

WILLIAM

You know, I'm not sure. I don't think they'd tried for kids before. as fate would have it.

THEY WALK IN SILENCE FOR A MOMENT. THEN....

WILLIAM

Would you like to.... come home?

SHE SMILES AND SHAKES HER HEAD

ANNA

Too complicated.

WILLIAM

That's fine.

ANNA

Busy tomorrow?

WILLIAM

I thought you were leaving.

ANNA

Things change. What's in there?

THE BRIGHT, MULTI-COLOURED HOUSES HAVE STOPPED. THEY ARE NOW WALKING BY A 5 FOOT RAILING. WITH FOLIAGE BEHIND IT.

WILLIAM

Gardens. All these streets round here have these mysterious communal gardens in the middle of them. They're like little villages.

ANNA

Let's go in.

WILLIAM

Ah - no - that's the point - they're private villages - only the people who live round the edges are allowed in.

ANNA

You abide by rules like that?

WILLIAM

Ahm.....

HER LOOK MAKES IT CLEAR THAT SHE IS WAITING WITH INTEREST ON THE ANSWER TO THIS.

Let's go..

HE STICKS ONE LEG UP AND SWINGS HIS LEG OVER - HE DOESN'T QUITE MAKE IT, AND FALLS BACK ONTO THE PAVEMENT...

(CASUALLY) Whoopsidaiesies.

ANNA

What did you say?

WILLIAM

Nothing.

ANNA

Yes, you did.

WILLIAM

No I didn't.

ANNA

You said "Whoopsidaiesies."

TINY PAUSE

WILLIAM

Did I?

ANNA

Well, you tell me. Am I out on a date with someone who says "Whoopsidaiesies." Remembering that it wouldn't actually be physically possible for me to spend time with someone who says 'Whoopsidaiesies'.

WILLIAM

I don't think so. No-one says "Whoopsidaiesies", do they - I mean unless they're...

ANNA

I don't think there's an 'unless'. No-one has said "Whoopsidaiesies" for fifty years and even then it was only little girls with blonde ringlets.

WILLIAM

Exactly. Here we go again.

HE FAILS, AND UNFORTUNATELY, SPONTANEOUSLY.

WILLIAM

Whoopsidaisies.

THEY LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

It's a disease I've got - it's a clinical thing. I'm taking pills and having injections - it won't last long.

ANNA

I'll do it. Give me your jacket and kneel.

HE BENDS OVER AND SHE CLIMBS ON HIS BACK, WITH HIS JACKET THAT SHE'S GOING TO USE TO COVER THE SPIKES ON THE TOP OF THE RAILINGS - THEN HE LIFTS HER UP....

CUT ON: ANNA JUMPS DOWN INTO THE GARDEN.

ANNA

Come on, sissy.

WILLIAM JUMPS, AND DUSTS HIMSELF OFF.

WILLIAM

Now seriously - what in the world that we could find in this garden could make that ordeal worthwhile?

SHE LEANS FORWARD - AND, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE FIRST TIME - SHE KISSES HIM. THIS TIME A PROPER KISS. PAUSE.

Nice garden.

THEY WALK AROUND THE GARDEN. IT'S A MOONLIT DREAM - A CHILD'S PLAYGROUND, A TENNIS COURT - A LITTLE POOL - AND ROSES ROSES ROSES. WE SEE THE LIGHTS OF THE HOUSES THAT SURROUND THE GARDEN.

ANNA

I always get a little jealous when I see into people's houses at night. I imagine the perfect family, and want to be part of it.

WILLIAM

Your family wasn't perfect?

ANNA

Not quite.

WILLIAM

I'm sorry.

THEY COME ACROSS A SINGLE, SIMPLE WOODEN BENCH OVERLOOKING THE GARDEN.

ANNA

What a lot of time people must have - just to sit on a bench and look at this garden.

SHE IS JEALOUS OF SUCH A LIFE.

ANNA

Look

WE CUT IN AND SEE AN INSCRIPTION CARVED INTO THE WOOD. SHE READS IT OUT....

"For June, who loved this garden - from Joseph who always sat beside her."

SHE DOESN'T READ THE DATES, CARVED BELOW - "1927 - 1992." SHE IS SLIGHTLY CHOKED BY IT.

Some people spend their whole lives together.

HE NODS. THEY ARE STANDING ON EITHER SIDE OF THE BENCH, LOOKING AT EACH OTHER. THE CAMERA GLIDES AWAY FROM THEM, UP, SO WE SEE THEM IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WHOLE GARDEN - THEN FURTHER OUT - WIDE - SO WE SEE THE GARDEN IN THE CONTEXT OF A SILENT NOTTING HILL, WITH ITS MANY GARDENS, ALL LITTLE OASES OF PEACE.

47. INT. WILLIAM'S PARENTS' DINING ROOM. DAY.

WILLIAM AT LUNCH WITH HIS PARENTS. THEY ARE SITTING, JUST THE THREE OF THEM, AT A FORMAL WOODEN DINING TABLE. THERE ARE PRINTS OF RACING SCENES AND ROSES ON THE WALLS. BOTH PARENTS HAVE DRESSED UP A BIT FOR THE LUNCH - FATHER IN JACKET AND TIE - MOTHER IN A FLORAL DRESS.

PAUSE.

WILLIAM

Now look - if I tell you - you absolutely mustn't tell anyone else.

FATHER

Of course not.

WILLIAM

Well, you say that - but this is a peculiarly strange person to have got... ahm... involved with...

MOTHER

It's not Fergie is it?

WILLIAM

No, it's not Fergie - it's good news rather than bad.

FATHER

Don't want to get involved with Fergie - she'll spend all your money, make you suck her toes and then run off with the first bald man who takes her fancy.

WILLIAM

No, Dad - don't worry. It's not Fergie.

MOTHER

Lady Helen Windsor is lovely.

FATHER

O yes - she's gorgeous.

WILLIAM

No, it's not a member of the Royal family at all. The truth is - and you must keep this an absolute secret - I've sort of got to know... Anna Farrell, in fact.

MOTHER

O. Really. Who?

WILLIAM

For heaven's sake - you know her - she was in that film we all saw together last month... come on... Anna Farrell.

FATHER

O yes. That's right. Splendid. (PAUSE) And how are things at the bookstore?

WILLIAM

No, stop - we can't end the conversation there. Try to take this in - it's like the equivalent in your generation of going out with Audrey Hepburn, or Grace Kelly.

MOTHER

Poor Grace.

WILLIAM

What do you mean, "Poor Grace"?

MOTHER

What a terrible way to die. Those poor children.

WILLIAM

I'm not talking about how she died - I'm talking about how incredible it would have been to kiss her when she was alive.

FATHER

I remember the first time I kissed your mother...

MOTHER

Now, be careful here, darling.

FATHER

It was a boiling hot day...

WILLIAM

No, we're drifting here, aren't we? Remember, we were talking about me and Anna Farrell.

MOTHER

I do remember her now. She's that pretty girl, isn't she. Looks a bit like Mavis.

FATHER

Dear Mavis - she and Gerald have had such a difficult year. Arthritis is such a bugger.

WILLIAM DROPS HIS HEAD INTO HIS HANDS.

WILLIAM

Okay. Forget it. Anyway - it's nothing. Mum. how's your leg?

48. INT. PARENTS HOUSE - FRONT DOOR.

WILLIAM IS JUST PUTTING ON HIS COAT. HE LOOKS BACK AT HIS MUM AND DAD. MOTHER IS SITTING AND HIS DAD HAS STARTED TO MASSAGE HER BAD LEG. THEY ARE, CURIOUSLY, ALSO AN IMAGE OF LOVE.

49. INT. WILLIAM'S CORRIDOR. EVENING.

WILLIAM IN A TOWEL RUSHING OUT OF THE BATHROOM. HAVING JUST HAD A SHOWER. HE SHOOTS PAST SPIKE.

WILLIAM

Fuck, fuck, fuck. Have you seen my glasses?

SPIKE

No, 'fraid not.

WILLIAM

Damn.

50. INT. SITTING ROOM. EVENING.

WILLIAM ENTERS. BY NOW GENUINELY PANICKY. ALMOST DRESSED. DOING UP THE BUTTONS ON HIS SHIRT.

WILLIAM

Seriously Spike - have you seen the glasses? I'm going to see a film.

SPIKE

Seriously I haven't.

WILLIAM

The problem is. people with glasses who lose their glasses can't see properly so they never find their glasses. It's one of life's real cruelties.

SPIKE

That's compared to, like, torture in Turkey and police racism in LA?

WILLIAM

O shit, look at the time. I'll have to go. Buggeration.

51. INT. CORRIDOR. EVENING.

HE SPRINTS UPSTAIRS, AND THEN SPRINTS DOWN AGAIN. HE'S CARRYING A SUPERMARKET PLASTIC BAG.

WILLIAM

(not meaning it)

Thanks for your help.

SPIKE
(sincerely)

Welcome. What's in the bag?

52. INT. CINEMA. NIGHT.

MID-FILM. WE MOVE ACROSS THE AUDIENCE. AND THERE IN THE MIDDLE OF IT, WE SEE ANNA, WATCHING THE SCREEN, AND NEXT TO HER, WILLIAM, WATCHING THE FILM KEENLY. THROUGH HIS SCUBA-DIVING GOGGLES.

53. EXT. WEST END STREETS. NIGHT.

THEY WALK. LIKE A HAPPY COUPLE.

ANNA
You're a big idiot.

WILLIAM
O my God.

ANNA
What?

WILLIAM
That woman coming up. in the expensive coat.

ANNA
What about her?

THE WOMAN. CLASSY, WELL-PRESENTED. 35, IS APPROACHING FAST - HE CAN'T FINISH THE SENTENCE.

WILLIAM
She was.... my word, Carol - good to see you.

CAROL
William. (SHE GIVES HIM A QUICK KISS) Sorry. I'm late as hell as I am always late as hell.

WILLIAM
(ALREADY HURT AGAIN) O fine. well, I won't hold you up. Anna - this is Carol. We were.... married for years. Carol - Anna.

ANNA
Hello.

CAROL
Hi.

VERY CASUAL - THEN SHE REALISES WHO IT IS - AND CAN'T STOP HERSELF. SHE SLOWLY LOOKS ACROSS AT WILLIAM AND THEN BACK AT ANNA.

Hi.

54. INT. RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

A FAIRLY DISCREET, SMALL RESTAURANT. MIGHT BE JAPANESE. WE SEE ANNA AND WILLIAM SITTING AT A NEARBY TABLE. THEY'RE VERY RELAXED TOGETHER. NEAR THE END OF THEIR MEAL

So who left who? ANNA

She left me. WILLIAM

Why? ANNA

She saw through me WILLIAM

Uh-oh. ANNA

WE'VE BEEN AWARE OF THE CONVERSATION BEHIND THE PARTITION TO THE NEXT TABLE - AND NOW, WE CAN HEAR IT. TWO SLIGHTLY ROWDY MEN.

LAWRENCE
No - no - no! Give me Anna Farrell any day.

WILLIAM & ANNA LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

GERALD
I didn't like that last film of hers. Fast asleep from the moment the lights went down.

AGAIN - ANNA REACTS - 'WELL, WELL'.

LAWRENCE
Don't really care what the films are like. She's like chocolate - anything with chocolate - I'll have it - any film with her in it - fine by me.

GERALD
I don't like her hair - too frizzy. I prefer that other one - you know - straight hair - quite chunky - drives a bus.

LAWRENCE
Sandra Bullock.

WILLIAM AND ANNA SMILE AT THIS - THEY'RE ENJOYING IT.

Yeh - she's fine, but the point about Miss Farrell is - she's got that twinkle in her eye.

ANNA TWINKLES FOR WILLIAM'S BENEFIT.

She's so clearly up for it.

THE TWINKLE FADES

You know - some girls they're all - "stay away chum" - but Anna. she's absolutely gagging for it. You'd be able to get her to do anything you want. On her back, on her front, on her knees - that's what you're looking for.... someone really filthy.

THIS IS HORRIBLE. WILLIAM TRIES TO TAKE THE CURSE OFF THE MOMENT. THEY WHISPER A BIT.

WILLIAM

Would you like me to go and, you know, punch him or something?

ANNA

Absolutely no. The rule is calm. This is the price you pay.

WILLIAM

Right. Right.

LAWRENCE

Do you know that in over 50% of languages the word for 'actress' is the same as the word for 'prostitute'?

WILLIAM

No, that's it.

HE GETS UP AND ROUND THE CORNER TO THE MEN. THERE ARE IN FACT 4 OF THEM. THE TWO YOUNGER MEN, HANGING ON THE OLDER GUY'S WITTY WORDS.

I'm sorry to disturb you guys but -

LAWRENCE

Can I help you?

WILLIAM

Well, yes, I wish I hadn't overheard your conversation - but I did and I just think. you know...

HE'S NOT A VERY CONVINCING OR FRIGHTENING FIGURE

- the woman you're talking about is a real person and I think she probably deserves a little bit more consideration. rather than having jerks like you drooling over her....

LAWRENCE

O sod off, mate. What are you, her father?

ANNA SUDDENLY APPEARS AT HIS SIDE AND WHIPS HIM AWAY WITHOUT BEING RECOGNISED.

ANNA

Told you it wasn't worth it....

WILLIAM

I'm sorry.

ANNA

Though I love you for trying.... time was I'd have done the same.

CUT TO THEM SETTling THE BILL IN THE CORNER.

ANNA

In fact - give me a second.

AND SHE WALKS STRAIGHT BACK TO THEIR TABLE.

Hi.

LAWRENCE

Hello Darling.

SHE TAKES OFF HER GLASSES. SHE IS VERY CLEARLY WHO SHE IS.

ANNA

I'm not your darling. And I'm not gagging for it. And (TO LAWRENCE) I wouldn't sleep with you if there were only two guys left in the world and the other one was Pee Wee Herman. And... let's be honest... this is too tempting for a girl like me....

SHE PICKS UP THE MISO SOUP IN FRONT OF HIM AND TIPS IT OVER HIM.

Night night.

55. EXT. WEST END OF LONDON. NIGHT.

THEY ARE WALKING ALONG PICCADILLY.

ANNA

I shouldn't have done that. I shouldn't have done that.

WILLIAM

I was very proud.

ANNA

I never let myself do things like that. I'm rash and I'm stupid and what am I doing with you.

WILLIAM

I don't know, I'm afraid.

ANNA

I don't know either.

THEY HAVE SUDDENLY ARRIVED JUST ROUND THE CORNER FROM THE ENTRANCE TO THE RITZ.

Here we are.

PAUSE.

ANNA

Do you want to come up?

WILLIAM

(HE DOES) There seem to be lots of reasons why I shouldn't.

ANNA

There are lots of reasons.

PAUSE.

Do you want to come up?

WILLIAM

I'll follow you in a couple of minutes.

HE WATCHES HER GO - AND STANDS IN THE STREET. A BUSKER BEGINS TO PLAY. AND WILLIAM JUST STANDS THERE AND LISTENS - THE SONG IS 'AND I LOVE HER' BY THE BEATLES.

A LONDON BUS DRIVES BY. IT HAS A HUGE PHOTOGRAPH OF ANNA ON IT. WILLIAM NOW KNOWS IT HAS TURNED INTO LOVE. HE SETS OFF TOWARDS THE HOTEL.

56. INT. RITZ CORRIDOR. / ANNA'S ANTE-ROOM. NIGHT.

WILLIAM COMING ALONG THE HOTEL CORRIDOR. THE VIOLIN OF THE SONG IN THE STREET IS STILL PLAYING. HE KNOCKS ON THE DOOR.

ANNA

Hiya.

THERE'S SOMETHING SLIGHTLY AWRY. HE DOESN'T NOTICE.

WILLIAM

Hi.

HE KISSES HER GENTLY ON THE CHEEK.

To be able to do that is such a wonderful thing.

PAUSE.

ANNA

You've got to go.

WILLIAM

Why?

ANNA

Mainly because my fiance, who I thought was in America, is in fact in the next room.

WILLIAM

Your fiance?

HE IS DULY SHOCKED. SHE'S TRYING TO BE CALM.

ANNA

Yes - it's... unexpected.

JEFF

Who is it?

JEFF DRIFTS INTO VIEW BEHIND. HE IS A VERY FAMOUS FILM STAR AND LOOKS THE PART - VERY WELL BUILT, VERY HANDSOME IN A WHITE T-SHIRT AND DARK GLASSES. UNSHAVEN HE HAS MAGIC CHARM. WHATEVER HE SAYS. A PERFECT SMILE HIDES HIS HARD HEART

WILLIAM

Ahm... I'm from room service.

JEFF

I thought you guys all wore those penguin coats.

WILLIAM

Well, yes - usually - I'd just changed to go home - and was doing this final visit.

JEFF

O well great. Could you try to get us some really cold water up here. Last time I was here it seemed like it was illegal to serve liquids below room temperature.

WILLIAM

I'll see what I can do.

JEFF

Still. not sparkling.

WILLIAM

Absolutely. Ice cold still water.

JEFF

And maybe you could just do a quick tidy while you're here.

WILLIAM

Ahm - perhaps I'll just get someone from housekeeping for that.

JEFF

Okay - but please just take away the plates and maybe empty the trash in here.

WILLIAM

Right.

AND HE DOES JUST THAT. SCOOPS UP THE THREE USED PLATES AND HEADS TO THE BIN.

ANNA

Really - don't do that - I'm sure this is not his job.

JEFF

No, he loves it. You love it, don't you? Reminds you of the bad old days. (TO ANNA) What did you order?

ANNA

Mind your own business.

JEFF

Well, don't over-do it. Those thighs are starting to look plump to me.
See you in a minute - I'm taking a shower.

HE WANDERS OFF TAKING OFF HIS T-SHIRT.

WILLIAM

I better leave.

ANNA JUST NODS.

Will I see you again?

ANNA

I don't know. Do you want to see me again?

WILLIAM

I don't know - this is a fairly strange reality to be faced with. To be honest.
I didn't realise...

ANNA

I'm so sorry... I don't know what to say.

WILLIAM

I think 'goodbye' is traditional.

JEFF COMES BACK IN JUST IN BOXER SHORTS.

JEFF

Second thoughts. Could you get me a sandwich too.

WILLIAM

Absolutely. Ah - what flavour?

JEFF

Tuna fish would be great - but no mayonnaise - okay?

WILLIAM

Absolutely. No mayonnaise.

JEFF

That's right. Absolutely no mayonnaise. If there's mayo, I'll complain and not
in a quiet way.

WILLIAM

Right. Right. Well, I'll be on my way. With the dirty plates. And the garbage.

JEFF

Right.

WILLIAM HANGS ON FOR AN ODD SECOND - BUT JEFF IS NOT GOING.

Goodbye.

WILLIAM

Goodbye.

ANNA

Goodbye.

NEITHER CAN SAY THE ACTUAL 'GOODBYE' THEY WANT TO SAY. THE DOOR SHUTS.

57. INT. RITZ LOBBY. NIGHT.

DOWN IN THE LOBBY, WILLIAM PASSES A WAITER...

WILLIAM

Room 37 - they'd like some lukewarm sparkling water and a tuna fish sandwich.

WAITER

I'll see to it at once.

WILLIAM

And... ahm...they want a lot of mayonnaise on that - really, table spoonfuls of the stuff - you know how fussy these people can be.

58. EXT. RITZ. NIGHT.

WILLIAM OUTSIDE THE HOTEL. HE IS STUNNED.

59. EXT/INT. LONDON BUS. NIGHT.

WILLIAM SITS ALONE. STARING OUT, TO THE TUNE OF 'IF I FELL'. IT IS THE MIRROR IMAGE OF HIS ORIGINAL, OPTIMISTIC DRIVE TO THE SAVOY THOSE MONTHS AWAY.

"If I give my heart to you,
I must be sure from the very start
That you won't hurt my pride like her
Cos I couldn't stand the pain."

A FEW SEATS IN FRONT OF HIM SIT ONE OF OUR COUPLES IN LOVE. BOTH OF THEM ARE READING. HIM A MAGAZINE - HER A NOVEL - BUT THEY'RE CASUALLY HOLDING HANDS.

60. EXT. ALMA MEWS. NIGHT.

WILLIAM GETTING HOME AS THE SONG STILL PLAYS. HE ENTERS.

61. INT. WILLIAM'S CORRIDOR. NIGHT.

SPIKE (V/O)

Hey. How's it going, lover boy?

WILLIAM

Good, good. What about you?

SPIKE (V/O)

Not great. I took out this French video - and every time the girl takes her top off, they put the bloody subtitles over her breasts.

WILLIAM IS SLIGHTLY PERPLEXED. HE GOES INTO THE SITTING ROOM.

62. INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

SPIKE IS WATCHING A CLASSY FRENCH MOVIE. SURE ENOUGH - A MID-SHOT OF A NAKED ACTRESS. TALKING. WITH THE SUBTITLES OVER HER BREASTS.

SPIKE

Actually, this is outrageous. Why can't they put the damn things over her eyes instead. I'm going to write to someone about this. I'm going to go to the top - who's head of the United Nations now? This is important stuff.

WILLIAM

In comparison to, say, child slavery?

SPIKE

I think so.

WILLIAM SHAKES HIS HEAD AND HEADS UPSTAIRS.

63. INT. WILLIAM'S BEDROOM.

HE GOES INTO HIS ROOM AND SITS ON THE BED.

WILLIAM

Damn - I think I'm in trouble.

64. INT. BOOKSHOP. DAY.

THE NEXT DAY AT WORK. WILLIAM SITTING. NOT HAPPY. A CUSTOMER APPROACHES.

CUSTOMER

Do you have the new novel by John Updike?

WILLIAM

No, I'm afraid not. This is a travel bookshop.

CUSTOMER

Anything by Jane Austen?

WILLIAM

No. As I say - we don't actually do novels.

CUSTOMER

Tolstoy, that sort of Russian stuff, novels from foreign countries.

WILLIAM

No, really, no fiction at all.

CUSTOMER

I see.

PAUSE.

Do you have any folding chairs?

PAUSE.

WILLIAM

No, sorry.

CUSTOMER

So it's just books.

WILLIAM

That's right. Just travel books.

CUSTOMER

Anything by Dickens?

PAUSE. THAT'S WILLIAM'S LIMIT.

WILLIAM

Yes, Martin. I wonder if you could lend a hand here?

65. INT. WILLIAMS' BEDROOM. EVENING.

WILLIAM IS BACK. SITTING THERE ON HIS BED. THERE IS A KNOCK ON THE DOOR....

SPIKE

Look, are you sure you're okay?

WILLIAM

I'm fine.

SPIKE

Come on - open up - this is me - Spike - I'm in contact with some quite important spiritual vibrations. Come on - hit me with it.

SPIKE SETTLES ON THE ARM OF A CHAIR. WILLIAM DECIDES TO OPEN UP A BIT...

WILLIAM

Well, okay. There's this girl...

SPIKE

Aha. I'd been getting a female vibe. Good. Speak on, dear friend.

WILLIAM

She's someone I just can't - someone who... self-evidently can't be mine - but I suppose I let a dream take hold of me - just for 36 hours - just when she seemed to... you know... like me - and it's as if I've taken love-heroin - and now I can't ever have it again. I've opened Pandora's box. And there's trouble inside.

SPIKE NODS THOUGHTFULLY.

SPIKE

Yeh. Yeh... tricky... tricky... I knew a girl at school called Pandora... never got to see her box though.

HE ROARS WITH LAUGHTER. WILLIAM SMILES.

WILLIAM

Yes - very helpful.

SPIKE

Come on - let's go have a pizza. Go to a pub. chat up some babes in bras.

WILLIAM

No, I'm busy tonight, I'm afraid.

SPIKE

Okay - then it's another night with just me and Drew.

TAKES OUT A COPY OF THE VIDEO OF "POISON IVY".

Underpraised, actually. A searing indictment of the American education system - with some excellent shots of teenagers in skimpy lingerie. Enjoy yourself - I will.

66. INT. TONY'S RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

ONLY TWO TABLES ARE BEING USED. WILLIAM AND HIS FRIENDS. ON THE TABLE IS AN EVENING STANDARD, WITH A PICTURE OF ANNA AND JEFF AT HEATHROW AIRPORT.

MAX

You didn't know she had a fiance?

WILLIAM

No - did you?

BELLA

You know the song in The Sound of Music - 'high on a hill lived a lonely goatherd'?

WILLIAM

Yes.

BELLA

Even the lonely goatherd knows she's got a fiance.

WILLIAM

I can't believe it - my whole life ruined because I don't read 'Hello' magazine.

BERNIE

Did you actually...?

WILLIAM SHAKES HIS HEAD.

Well, thank God for that - if I'd actually slept with her and she left me. I'd go insane instantly. I'd be walking round with a huge sign round my neck saying - "heart broken by Anna Farrell". Every face I saw, I'd see her face...

BELLA

Shut up Bernie. Come on - let's order...

TONY IS STANDING BY... WITH HIS PAD.

TONY

Thanks for coming again. Thanks for always coming.

BELLA

It's the best restaurant in London.

TONY

I don't really get it. They're full over the road - they're full next door - can't work out what the magic ingredient is.

BELLA

I'm sure it's just time.

TONY

Yes. That's right.

MAX

Any specials tonight?

TONY

No, not tonight. (SLIGHT DEFEAT HERE)

MAX

Good - hate specials. Throw us some starters and we'll decide later.

THEY ALL AGREE. TONY HEADS OFF.

BERNIE

I'm sure she'll be back. Handsome guy like you, Will - I mean. where's the justice in it?

WILLIAM JUST SMILES.

HONEY

I'd come back. People often go out with... you know... unexpected people. Didn't Liz Taylor marry a truck driver...

MAX

Yes - but she divorced him brutally a year later. It's a terrible truth - we ordinary folk are not for them - who did Michael Jackson marry?

BELLA

Elvis Presley's daughter.

MAX

Who did Antonio Banderas marry?

BELLA

Melanie Griffiths.

MAX

Who before that was married to Don Johnson.

BERNIE

Twice I heard.

MAX

And look at Mia Farrow. Married Woody Allen after being married to Andre Previn.

BELLA

And Frank Sinatra.

HONEY

And somewhere in the middle she didn't marry someone with floppy hair who ran a bookshop?

MAX

She did not. And let's be honest - if she had, it would have ended in disaster. Fame makes people abnormal - it's a virus you catch. Anna may be the world's sweetest girl - but she's got this in-built flaw, this fame thing, that you'll never get away from. She's a goddess - and you know what happens to people who get involved with the Gods.

WILLIAM

Bugged?

MAX

Every time. But don't despair - I think I have the solution to your problems.

WILLIAM

Really?

MAX

Definitely.

THEY ALL LOOK TO HIM FOR WISE WORDS.

Her name is Tessa and she works in the contracts department. The hair, I admit, is unfashionably frizzy - but she's as bright as a button and kisses like a nymphomaniac on Death Row.

WILLIAM LAUGHS.

BELLA

That's all we need - your smiles. No obsessing this time.
None of the Carol stuff.

WILLIAM

I don't know what you're talking about.

BELLA

A year after the divorce. I clearly remember you saying you would be
sad and alone for the rest of your life.

WILLIAM

I was being ironic.

BELLA

You were sitting on a toilet with tears in your eyes.

WILLIAM

I had indigestion. Anyway - this is completely different. I swear I've
forgotten it already. Anna.... who?

MAX

That's the spirit.

67. INT. MAX & BELLA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

THE KITCHEN. WILLIAM IS LOOKING UNEASY. A DOORBELL RINGS.

MAX

That'll be her.

HE HEADS OUT AND THEN TURNS TO WILLIAM

Now - try.

WILLIAM NODS. MAX HEADS TO THE DOOR AND OPENS IT.

Tessa. Welcome to my humble abode.

A LUSH GIRL WITH HUGE HAIR.

TESSA

I got completely lost - it's real difficult isn't it. Everything's got the
word Kensington in it - Kensington Park Road, Kensington Gardens,
Kensington Park Gardens.

THEY REACH THE KITCHEN.

MAX

This is Bella my wife.

TESSA

O hello, you're in a wheelchair.

BELLA

That's right.

MAX

And this is William.

TESSA

Hello William. Max has told me everything about you.

WILLIAM

(FRIGHTENED) Has he?

MAX

Wine?

TESSA

O yes please. Let's get plastered.

WILLIAM HAS A SPLIT SECOND TO PULL A FACE OF TERROR AT HONEY.
WHO AGREES.

MAX

Right dinner everyone.....

MAX IS AT THE OVEN OPENING IT UP, STEAMING.

let's eat this bird. shall we.

HE WALKS OVER TO THE TABLE : BERNIE. HONEY. BELLA. WILLIAM -
AND ANOTHER GIRL. WE HAVE CUT ON A WEEK.

Keziah - some woodcock?

KEZIAH

No. thank you - I'm a fruitarian.

MAX

I didn't realise that.

KEZIAH

Honey didn't tell you.

HONEY

Sorry.

THIS IS CLEARLY HER PUNT AT A GIRLFRIEND FOR HER BROTHER.

WILLIAM

And ahm - what's a fruitarian exactly?

KEZIAH

We believe that fruits and vegetables have feelings - so we only eat fruits
and vegetables that have fallen from the tree. that actually are dead. as it
were.

WILLIAM

Right. Carrots?

KEZIAH

(SLIGHTLY OFFENDED) No thank you.

WILLIAM

Of course not.

URNS & WHISPERS TO BERNIE

Help me.

BERNIE NODS - HE WILL.

CUT BACK TO MAX AT THE STOVE. ANOTHER WEEK ON.

MAX

Right - prepare for the pudding.....

HE OPENS THE STEAMING DOOR AND TAKES OUT SOMETHING VERY BURNT....

which I think is ice-cream on its own. .

HE WALKS OVER TO THE TABLE: BERNIE, HONEY, BELLA, WILLIAM - IT'S A WEEK LATER AND THERE'S ANOTHER GIRL, BERNIE'S CHOICE.

MAX

Ice-cream for you, Caroline?

CAROLINE

O absolutely, pile it on.

HUGE GRIN ON BERNIE'S FACE. SHE'S DOING WELL. SHE'S A VERY CHEERFUL, QUITE POSH TYPE. IN THAT GREEN JUMPER.

WILLIAM

And tell me Caroline - what do you do?

CAROLINE

Sorry - not with you....

WILLIAM

What do you do - as a job?

CAROLINE

O gotcha. right. Yes. Absolutely. Right. Gosh. Thicky me. Sorry. Durr. Ah, no right. Ahm. No. I teach actually.

WILLIAM

O. Right. What age?

CAROLINE

I'm 28 come June..

WILLIAM

Right. And how old are the children you teach?

CAROLINE

O God - is that what you meant. Right. Sorry. Had my brains just scooped out with a great big spoon. Ahm - no - sorry - ahm - what was the question?

WILLIAM
How old are the children you teach?

CAROLINE
Actually they're not children. They're dogs.

WILLIAM
Classic. Challenging stuff.

CUT TO BELLA - HER HEART GOES OUT TO HIM.

CUT ON ANOTHER WEEK - MAX WITH COFFEE.

MAX
Right - coffee for everyone.

THEY ARE MOVING TO SIT ON COUCHES

Here we go Jane. Enjoy the meal?

JANE
Ahm - yes and no. You can't really cook at all, can you, Max?

WILLIAM BURSTS OUT LAUGHING.

MAX
What a terrible thing to say.

JANE
No, it's just that... well you know - you call it lamb provencale - I'd call it stuffed fat.

WILLIAM IS LOVING THIS. JANE IS BELLA'S CHOICE - AND MUCH BETTER THAN THE LAST TWO. SHE LOOKS AT THE DECOR OF THE ROOM ABOUT HER. LOTS OF BOOKSHELVES.

JANE
You should get rid of all these books you know.

Really?
BELLA

JANE
Yeh - books are finished. You can get the whole of the Encyclopaedia Britanica on two CDs. You should junk the lot of them.

WILLIAM
You don't think books have a certain charm...

Like what?
JANE

WILLIAM
Ahm... an ability to make you dream.

JANE

An ability to make you sleep more like. Nah, burn 'em all. Now, William - since we've been dragged together on what is quite clearly a blind date - tell me what you do.

WILLIAM

Ah... right.

CUT TO AFTERWARDS - WILLIAM IS SITTING EXHAUSTED AT THE KITCHEN TABLE WITH MAX AND BELLA.

WILLIAM

Belle, this is never going to work. Give up on me. I'm happy with you guys - let me just live this quiet life.

MAX

Give us one more chance.... there's this gorgeous girl who lives across the street - we've been meaning to invite her in - I swear - she is just gorgeous - please - one last go....

WILLIAM

No!

MAX

Yes.

WILLIAM

No!

MAX

Bella will cook.

WILLIAM

Maybe.

68. INT. MAX & BELLA'S KITCHEN. NIGHT.

CLOSE-UP OF A PLATE - A DELICIOUS DESSERT BEING WIPED OFF WITH A FINGER. PULL BACK TO SEE THE TABLE - AT THE END OF WHICH, BESIDE WILLIAM, SITS THE FINAL PERFECT GIRL. SHE IS EXQUISITE. QUITE YOUNG, SMARTLY DRESSED, OPEN-HEARTED. IT IS JUST MAX & WILLIAM & BELLA & HER.

PERFECT GIRL

That was delicious.

BELLA

Thank you. I'm so glad you could make it round at last.

PERFECT GIRL

Thank you. Unfortunately...

MAX

No, please, I beg you - don't say you have to leave. If you do, William, your delightful date, will kill himself.

A vertical column of 20 small, stylized symbols, possibly representing a film strip edge or a specific production code, running down the right margin of the page.

PERFECT

If I don't leave, I walk into work tomorrow empty handed and walk out instantly with no job.

MAX

Fair enough.

69. INT. MAX & BELLA'S HALLWAY. NIGHT.

WILLIAM IS HELPING THE GIRL WITH HER COAT.

WILLIAM

Lovely to meet you.

PERFECT

And you. Maybe see you again some other time.

WILLIAM

Yes. That would be... great.

SHE KISSES HIM GENTLY ON THE CHEEK. HE OPENS THE DOOR - SHE WALKS OUT. HE SHUTS THE DOOR QUIETLY AND HEADS BACK INTO THE KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM....

70. INT. MAX/BELLA KITCHEN. NIGHT.

MAX AND BELLA WAIT EXCITEDLY.

MAX

Well?

WILLIAM

She's perfect.

BELLA

And....

WILLIAM MAKES A GENTLE. EXASPERATED GESTURE. THEN...

WILLIAM

Maybe you guys have forgotten what love is.... (HE LOOKS AT THEM) ... what you two have here. There are a million wonderful girls in Britain - but how to find the one you love, who'll love you? The chances are always against it. Look at me - I've only loved two girls in my whole life, both total disasters.

MAX

That's not fair

WILLIAM

No really, one of them marries me and then leaves me quicker than you can say Indiana Jones - and the other, who seriously ought to have known better. casually marries my best friend.

PAUSE

BELLA
Still loves you though.

WILLIAM
In a depressingly asexual way.

PAUSE

BELLA
I never fancied you much actually...

THEY ALL ROAR WITH LAUGHTER.

- I mean I loved you - you were terribly funny.

WILLIAM
O no - this is just getting worse. I am going to find myself, 30 years from now, still on this couch.

BELLA
Do you want to stay?

WILLIAM
Why not - all that awaits me at home is a masturbating Welshman.

MUSIC STARTS TO PLAY TO TAKE US THROUGH THESE SILENT SCENES.

71. INT. MAX/BELLA/S KITCHEN. NIGHT.

MAX IS IN THE KITCHEN MAKING COFFEE.

72. INT. MAX/BELLA'S LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

THE THREE OF THEM ARE DRINKING COFFEE. BELLA SAYS SOMETHING AND MAX, LEANING AGAINST THE COUCH WHERE SHE LIES, ROARS WITH LAUGHTER. WILLIAM IS RIGHT - THEIRS IS TRUE LOVE.

MIX THROUGH..... MAX LIFTS BELLA OFF HER COUCH AND LIFTS HER UPSTAIRS.

MIX THROUGH - WILLIAM LIES ON THE COUCH DOWNSTAIRS - EYES WIDE OPEN - THINKING.

73. INT. MAX/BELLA'S LIVING ROOM. DAY.

MORNING. MAX WALKS TO THE FRONT DOOR - ALL IN HIS SUIT FOR THE CITY... BELLA IS THERE AND KISSES HIM GOODBYE. WILLIAM LOOKS UP AND SEES THIS.

74. EXT. MAX/BELLA'S HOUSE. DAY.

WILLIAM EXITS THE HOUSE SLEEPILY AND HEADS FOR HOME...

75. EXT. PURPLE CAFE. DAY.

WILLIAM IS HAVING A CUP OF COFFEE.

76. EXT./INT. NEWSAGENT. DAY.

WILLIAM ENTERS THE NEWSAGENTS - AND SEES ANNA'S FACE ALL OVER THE FRONT OF THE TABLOIDS.

WILLIAM

O no.

77. INT. WILLIAM'S KITCHEN. DAY.

WILLIAM IS SITTING AT THE KITCHEN TABLE WITH THE PAPER IN FRONT OF HIM. NOT A HAPPY LOOK ON HIS FACE. THE BELL GOES. HE WANDERS DOWN THE STAIRS AND OPENS THE DOOR. THERE STANDS A DARK-GLASSED ANNA. A SUITCASE BY HER SIDE. A CAR BEHIND HER.

ANNA

Hi. Can I come in?

WILLIAM

Come in.

SHE MOVES INSIDE. SHE TAKES OFF HER GLASSES. HER HAIR IS A SHORT MESS - HER EYES ARE TIRED. NOTHING IDEALISED.

WILLIAM

What's the story, morning glory?

78. INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

THE TWO OF THEM. SHE LIGHTS A CIGARETTE NERVOUSLY.

ANNA

They were taken just years ago - when I was a teenager - I know it was...but I was poor as a mouse and it happens a lot - and to make things worse, it now appears someone was filming it. So what was a stupid photo-shoot now looks like a porn film. And well.... the pictures have entered the public domain.

WILLIAM SHAKES HIS HEAD.

I needed somewhere to come. The hotel is surrounded.

WILLIAM

This is the place.

ANNA

Thank you. I was just in London for two days on my way back from the Venice festival - and it's sort of the worst place to be.

SUDDENLY SHE ALMOST BREAKS DOWN. SHE'S VERY SHAKEN.

ANNA

These are such horrible pictures. They're so grainy...
I look like...

WILLIAM

Don't think about it. We'll sort it out. Now what would you
like - tea... bath....?

ANNA

A bath would be great..

79. INT. CORRIDOR. DAY.

THE LIGHT IS ON IN THE BATHROOM. WILLIAM EXITS AND HEADS
DOWNSTAIRS TO THE KITCHEN. AT WHICH MOMENT, SPIKE ENTERS
THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR. WILLIAM DOESN'T HEAR HIM. SPIKE IS
READING THE NEWSPAPER WITH THE ANNA PICTURES IN IT.

SPIKE

Incredible..... MIngnificent..... Pussitively fannytastic.

HE HEADS UP THE STAIRS. OPENS THE BATHROOM DOOR. WALKS IN.

80. INT. BATHROOM. DAY.

SPIKE HEADS FOR THE TOILET - UNDOES HIS ZIP - GOES A BIT
FURTHER...

ANNA

You must be Spike.

SHE'S IN THE BATH. SPIKE SCREAMS - AND LEAPS OUT OF THE
BATHROOM.

81. INT. CORRIDOR. DAY.

SPIKE'S FACE IS A STUDY IN CONFUSION. HE THEN OPENS THE
BATHROOM DOOR AGAIN - AND LOOKS IN.

82. INT. BATHROOM. DAY.

ANNA IS STILL LYING LOW IN THE BATH.

ANNA

Hi.

SPIKE

Just checking.

83. INT. CORRIDOR. DAY.

SPIKE COMES BACK OUT INTO THE CORRIDOR. LOOKS TO HEAVEN.

Thank you, God.

84. INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

THE THREE OF THEM ARE SITTING THERE. ANNA IS WEARING THE MOST RELAXED POSSIBLE CLOTHES. BAGGY TRACK SUIT. THICK SOCKS. ETC. THINGS A LITTLE AWKWARD. AND THEN IT JUST GETS THE BETTER OF HER FOR A SECOND. SHE PUTS HER HEAD IN HER HANDS TO HAVE A LITTLE CRY. SHE'S SERIOUSLY SHAKEN AT THE MOMENT - AND DOES A TINY SNIFFLE.

SPIKE

Hold it right there !

HE STANDS UP AND RUSHES OVER TO HER.

One, two, three...

AND DRAMATICALLY PULLS A VERY WRINKLED HANDKERCHIEF OUT OF HIS POCKET AND HOLDS IT OUT TO HER.

SPIKE

Go on, take it, babe. I know it doesn't look great - but I swear I have not blown my nose into this kerchief. I'd remember, because I'm a man who enjoys blowing his nose.

ANNA

Thank you.

SPIKE

It's an honour.

HE EXITS. THEN COMES BACK IN. WITH A HAPPY THUMBS UP....

SPIKE

Great photos by the way.

AND EXITS AGAIN.

ANNA

And Spike is from which planet?

85. EXT. TERRACE. DAY.

WILLIAM'S LAYING OUT TAKE-AWAY CAPPUCCINOS. THERE ARE OLIVES AND HOUMOUS TO NIBBLE. ANNA'S READING A SCREENPLAY. THEN AGAIN HER HEAD FALLS.

ANNA

O god - everything is messed up.

WILLIAM

That is so not true. (HE COMES OVER AND PUTS AN ARM ROUND HER) This afternoon's the worst bit - this time tomorrow it'll already be fading.

ANNA

I'm really sorry about last time. He just flew in - I had no idea - indeed. I had no idea if he'd ever fly in again.

WILLIAM

No, that's fine. It's not often one has the opportunity to be insulted by the highest paid actor in the history of the cinema.

SHE LAUGHS.

How is he?

ANNA

O, this time I've definitely left him. He's not a very nice man. And you... and love?

WILLIAM

Well, there's a question.

PAUSE

ANNA

I have thought about you.

WILLIAM

O no no - no. (HE DOESN'T THINK SHE HAS TO TALK ABOUT THIS)

ANNA

Just anytime I've tried to keep things normal with a normal boy - it's been a fuck up.

WILLIAM

I appreciate that absolutely. (CHANGING SUBJECT TACTFULLY) Is that the film you're doing?

ANNA

Yes - we start in L.A. on Tuesday. If they still want me.

WILLIAM

Don't be silly. Would you like me to take you through your lines?

ANNA

Would you? It's all talk. talk. talk.

WILLIAM

Hand it over. Basic plot?

ANNA

I'm a difficult but brilliant junior officer who in about 20 minutes will save the world from nuclear disaster.

WILLIAM

Well done you.

MOVE ON IN TIME A LITTLE. THEY'RE IN THE THICK OF IT.

WILLIAM

"Message from command. Would you like them to send in the HKs?"

ANNA

"No, turn over 4 TRSs and tell them we need radar feedback before the KFTs return at 19 hundred - then inform the Pentagon that we'll be needing Black Star cover from 10 hundred through 12.15 - and don't you dare say one word about how many mistakes I made in that speech or I'll pelt you with olives."

WILLIAM

"Very well, Captain - I'll pass that on straightaway."

ANNA

"Thank you". How many mistakes did I make?

WILLIAM

11.

ANNA

Damn. "And Wainwright..."

WILLIAM

Cartwright.

ANNA

"Cartwright, Wainwright, whatever your name is. I promised my son Jimmy I'd be home for his birthday - could you get a message through that I... may be a little late."

WILLIAM

"Certainly. And your son Johnny?"

ANNA

My son's name is Johnny?

WILLIAM

Yup.

ANNA

Well, get a message through to him too.

WILLIAM

"I'll do what I can, Captain. There are very few lines, and they're very busy." And Cartwright exits.

ANNA

"Jesus, that guy is a pain in the ass."

WILLIAM

Actually you feel rather more strongly about him.

ANNA

"Christ, that guy is a fucking pain in the ass."

WILLIAM

But who does he like to...

ANNA

"Christ, that guy is a motherfucking pain in the ass."

WILLIAM

Brilliant. (THE SCENE'S OVER) Word perfect I'd say.

ANNA SMILES HER BIGGEST SMILE OF THE DAY. HE IS HELPING.

ANNA

What do you think?

WILLIAM

Gripping. It's not Jane Austen, it's not Henry James, but it's gripping.

ANNA

You think I should do Henry James instead?

WILLIAM

I'm sure you'd be great in Henry James. But, you know - this writer's pretty damn good too.

ANNA

Yes - I mean - you never get anyone in 'Wings of a Dove' having the nerve to say 'Christ that guy is a motherfucking pain in the ass'

WILLIAM

And I think the book is the poorer for it..

SPIKE'S HEAD APPEARS AT GROUND LEVEL. THE TERRACE IS REACHED BY CLIMBING A LADDER OUTSIDE A WINDOW - SPIKE IS STANDING ON IT.

SPIKE

What's the plan for dinner?

WILLIAM

I thought you might go and get us some pizza.

SPIKE

Seriously? Me - me buying pizza for...(ANNA)... you.

ANNA

Sounds great.

SPIKE SMILES AND HEADS BACK DOWN THE LADDER. HE AGAIN LOOKS UP TO HEAVEN.

SPIKE

Nice one, mate. I won't forget this.

86. EXT. BLENHEIM CRESCENT. NIGHT.

SPIKE IS HEADING OFF FOR THE PIZZA. HE'S NOT WALKING. THOUGH. HE'S DANCING - THE PROUDEST, COOLEST MAN ON THE STREET. WITH THE BIGGEST SECRET.

87. INT. DINING ROOM. EVENING.

ANNA AND WILLIAM. SAT DOWN AT TABLE. THERE'S A PICTURE HANGING ON THE WALL BEHIND.

ANNA

I can't believe you have that picture on your wall.

IT IS A POSTER OF A CHAGALL PAINTING OF AN EMBRACING WEDDING COUPLE. FLYING HIGH ABOVE THE EARTH, WITH FLOWERS AND COWS AS COMPANY.

WILLIAM

O that. How love should be. Floating on air.

ANNA

With a cow in the background.

WILLIAM

Yes - happiness wouldn't be happiness without a flying cow.

SPIKE ENTERS WITH THREE PIZZAS.

SPIKE

Voila. All my faves - pepperoni plain for the simple folk - pepperoni hot with extra artichoke and olives - for the man with everything. And La Reine, pizza fit for a Queen - ham and onion and a little more ham.

ANNA

Fantastic.

WILLIAM

I didn't mention that Anna's a vegetarian. did I?

PAUSE.

SPIKE

Bill, why don't you rustle up some beans on toast.

88. INT. WILLIAM'S SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

LATER IN THE EVENING. WILLIAM AND ANNA ON THEIR OWN. THEIR EMPTY BAKE-BEAN PLATE ON THE TABLE. THEY'RE SIPPING COFFEE. ANNA LOOKS UP.

ANNA

You've got big feet.

WILLIAM

Yes. Always have had.

ANNA

You know what they say about men with big feet.

WILLIAM

No. What's that?

ANNA

Big feet - large shoes.

HE LAUGHS. THEY'RE GETTING ON SO WELL.

A FEW HOURS LATER - THEY'RE BOTH NOW SITTING AT DIFFERENT ENDS OF THE SAME SOFA. EATING ICE-CREAM.

ANNA

The thing that's so galling is that now I'm so totally fierce when it comes to nudity clauses.

WILLIAM

You actually have clauses in your contract about nudity?

ANNA

Definitely. "You may show the dent of the top of the artist's buttocks - but neither cheek. In the event of a stunt person being used, the artist must have full consultation."

WILLIAM

You have a stunt bottom?

ANNA

I could have a stunt bottom, yes.

WILLIAM

Would you be tempted to go for a slightly better bottom than your own?

ANNA

Definitely. This is important stuff. Remember the English girl in that movie 'Scandal'....

WILLIAM

Yes. Pretty..

ANNA

That's right. But in that film she had the most disastrous stunt bottom - I swear they got Rod Steiger to do it. "Rod, we need a stunt bottom and we need it fast." And he said, "I'm coming in". That one shot set her career back a decade.

HE IS LAUGHING A LOT.

It didn't help Rod either. One shot of his ass - and he still over-acted.

WILLIAM

It's one hell of a job. What do you put on your passport? Profession - Mel Gibson's bottom.

ANNA

Actually, Mel does his own ass work.

89. INT. UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR. NIGHT.

THEY ARE WALKING UP THE STAIRS - AND STOP AT THE TOP.

ANNA

Today has been a good day. Which in the circumstances is... unexpected.

WILLIAM

Well. thank you. (AWKWARD PAUSE) Anyway - time for bed.

ANNA

Right.

PAUSE. THEY DO NOT MOVE. THEY MIGHT BE ABOUT TO KISS. BOTH ARE EMBARRASSED. THE DAY HAS MOVED THEM ON.

WILLIAM

I better go downstairs. The comfy couch beckons.

ANNA

Yes. Thanks for everything. Night.

WILLIAM

Night.

PAUSE. AND THEN SHE MOVES FORWARD AND KISSES HIM GENTLY ON THE CHEEK.

90. INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

WILLIAM DOWNSTAIRS - ON THE COUCH. AWAKE. THINKING. WE HEAR ANNA ENTER THE ROOM UPSTAIRS. CLOSE THE DOOR, STEP INTO THE BED. PAUSE AND PAUSE.

HE WAITS AND WAITS - THE ULTIMATE 'YEARN'. A SOFT SONG PLAYS. AS THOUGH THIS IS THE ROMANTIC CLIMAX OF THE FILM... BUT NOTHING HAPPENS. WILLIAM GETS OUT OF BED DECISIVELY. SITS ON THE SIDE OF THE BED. THEN GETS BACK IN AGAIN.

PAUSE, PAUSE, THEN... IN THE DARKNESS, THE DOOR OPENS -

WILLIAM

(TO HIMSELF) O my god... (THEN...) Hello.

SPIKE

Hello. I wonder if I could have a little word.

WILLIAM

Spike.

SPIKE

I don't want to interfere. or anything... but she's split up from her boyfriend, that's right isn't it?

WILLIAM

Maybe.

SPIKE

And she's in your house.

WILLIAM

Yes.

SPIKE

And you get on very well.

WILLIAM

Yes.

SPIKE

Well, isn't this perhaps an opportunity to... pounce.

WILLIAM

Spike. For God's sake - she's in trouble - get a grip.

SPIKE

Right. Right. You think it's the wrong moment. Fair enough.

PAUSE.

Do you mind if I have a go?

WILLIAM

Spike!

SPIKE

No - you're right.

WILLIAM

I'll talk to you in the morning.

SPIKE

Okay - okay. Might be too late, but okay.

BACK TO WILLIAM THINKING AGAIN. DREAMY ATMOSPHERE. AND THEN... THE DOOR OPENS AGAIN.

WILLIAM

O please sod off.

ANNA

Okay.

WILLIAM

No! No. Wait. I... thought you were someone else

CUT ON... THE DARKNESS OF THE SITTING ROOM. WE SEE ANNA IN THE SHADOW.

CUT ON... LATER. THEY'RE BOTH ON THE COUCH. UNDER A BLANKET. A NAKED ARM. WILLIAM IS JUST LOOKING AT HER ARM. THEN KISSING HER NECK. THEN HER BACK. WHAT A MIRACLE IT WOULD BE JUST TO BE ABLE TO TOUCH THIS GIRL'S SKIN. THEN HER FACE. THAT FACE.

CUT ON... A LITTLE LATER. IT IS THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT. HE WAKES. SHE IS ASLEEP BESIDE HIM. HE PUSHES THE LIGHT ON HIS WATCH - ITS LITTLE BLUE LIGHT GLOWS ON TO HER FACE. THAT FACE.

CUT ON... THE MORNING. PAUSE.

WILLIAM

You know - I think I've just forfeited the right to be pitied for the rest of my life.

ANNA

Oreally?

WILLIAM

Absolutely. I'll get knocked over by a car - and they'll jump out full of concern - and then someone'll say - "wait a sec - he's the bloke who slept with Anna Farrell", and there'll be a pause and then they'll get back in the car and run me over.

SHE LAUGHS. PAUSE.

ANNA

There's something you should know....

PAUSE

My name's not really Anna.

WILLIAM

You're a look-alike? I've just spent the night with an Anna Farrell lookalike?

ANNA

No, I mean, Anna is a made up name. My real name is Charlotte. Charlie. But they thought Charlotte was too Southern - and Charlie was too butch - so they called me Anna instead.

WILLIAM

I can't bear that. You weren't allowed your own name.

SHE SHRUGS HER SHOULDERS

So who calls you Charlie?

ANNA

My Mum. My sister. People I love.

PAUSE

WILLIAM

It still strikes me as, well, surreal, that I'm allowed to see you naked.

ANNA

You and every person in the country.

WILLIAM

O god yes - I'm sorry.

ANNA

What is it about men and nudity? Particularly breasts - how can you be so interested in them?

WILLIAM

Well....

ANNA

No seriously. I mean. they're just breasts. Every second person in the world has got them.....

WILLIAM

More than that actually. when you think about it. I mean Meatloaf has a very nice pair....

ANNA

I mean.... they're odd-looking. They're for milk. Your Mum's got them. You must have seen a thousand of them - what's the fuss about?

PAUSE.

WILLIAM

Actually, I can't think why really - let me just have a quick look....

HE LOOKS UNDER THE SHEET AT HER BREASTS.

No, beats me.

SHE LAUGHS....

ANNA

You know what Rita Hayworth said - "they go to bed with Gilda - they wake up with me." Do you feel that?

WILLIAM

Who was Gilda? Her twin sister?

ANNA

No - Gilda was her most famous movie - they went to bed with the dream - and they didn't like it when they woke up with the reality - do you feel that way with me?

PAUSE

WILLIAM

Yes.

ANNA

You don't!

WILLIAM

Course I don't!

ANNA

You mustn't try to be funny all the time. If you're funny all the time. I'll never be sure how you feel.

WILLIAM

Okay.

PAUSE. MORE PAUSE.

ANNA

All right. I give up. You can be funny when you like.

WILLIAM

Phew. But seriously - you're lovelier this morning than you have ever been.

ANNA

(VERY TOUCHED) O.

PAUSE. SHE LOOKS AT HIM CAREFULLY. THEN LEAPS OUT OF BED.

I'll be back.

91. INT. SITTING ROOM. MORNING.

WILLIAM ON THE COUCH/BED. THE DOOR OPENS. IT IS ANNA WITH A TRAY OF TOAST AND TEA.

ANNA

Breakfast in bed. Or actually, more like lunch.

SHE HEADS ACROSS. SHE SMILES.

Can I stay a bit longer?

WILLIAM

Stay forever.

WILLIAM IS GOING TO POUR HIMSELF A CUP OF TEA. LOOKS AROUND....

ANNA

O yeh. I didn't mention. No milk.

WILLIAM

I'll run out and get it.

ANNA

Like that?

HE'S JUST IN HIS T-SHIRT AND BOXER SHORTS WITH SLIPPERS ON...

WILLIAM

Yes - this is a very informal area and as you know - it's only 18 yards.

92. INT./EXT. CORRIDOR. DAY.

WILLIAM COMES OUT OF THE LIVING ROOM. INTO THE CORRIDOR. AND OPENS THE DOOR. OUTSIDE ARE HUNDREDS OF REPORTERS - AN EXPLOSION OF CAMERAS AND QUESTIONS. OF NOISE AND OF LIGHT. THE PRESS SEEM TO FILL THE ENTIRE MEWS. THE SCALE OF THE MOVIE SUDDENLY FEELS AS THOUGH IT HAS CHANGED - THIS IS THE FIRST REAL DEMONSTRATION OF THE WORLD THAT ANNA LIVES IN.

WILLIAM

Jesus Christ.

HE COMES BACK INSIDE. SNAPPING THE DOOR BEHIND HIM.

ANNA

What?

WILLIAM

Don't ask.

SHE THINKS HE'S JOKING. SHE OPENS THE DOOR. THE SAME EXPLOSION. IN A SPLIT SECOND SHE'S INSIDE.

ANNA

O my God. How did they find out?

WILLIAM

Search me.

ANNA

And they got a photo of you dressed like that?

WILLIAM

Undressed like this, yes.

ANNA

Jesus.

SHE GOES STRAIGHT TO THE PHONE AND PUNCHES THE NUMBERS.

SPIKE IS BLITHELY HEADING FROM THE KITCHEN UPSTAIRS. CARRYING A BOWL OF CEREAL. .

SPIKE

Morning, darling ones.

ANNA

(ON THE PHONE) It's Anna. The press are here. My brilliant plan was not brilliant. Get me out. And ring Lynn will you, and tell her to try to control things over there. Thanks.(SHE HANGS UP) Damn. Damn. Damn.

SHE STORMS UPSTAIRS. WILLIAM GOES INTO THE SITTING ROOM AND PUTS HIS TROUSERS ON. AND HEADS UPSTAIRS. PASSING SPIKE.

WILLIAM

I wouldn't go outside.

SPIKE

Why not?

WILLIAM

Just take my word for it.

SPIKE HAS JUST GOT HIS BRIEF UNDERPANTS ON. HE OPENS THE FRONT DOOR. ALL THE PHOTOS AGAIN. WE CUT TO SEE WHAT IT LOOKS

LIKE FROM OUTSIDE - THIS SCRAWNY BLOKE IN THE FRAME OF THE DOORWAY, IN HIS GREY UNDERPANTS.

HE CLOSES THE DOOR AND WANDERS ALONG TO A MIRROR IN THE HALLWAY, MUTTERING.

SPIKE

How did I look?

INSPECTS HIMSELF.

Not bad. Not at all bad. Well-chosen briefs, I'd say. Chicks love gray. Mmmm. Nice pecs.

93. INT. UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR. DAY.

WILLIAM KNOCKS ON HER DOOR. HE'S UNHAPPY FOR HER.

WILLIAM

How are you doing?

ANNA (V/O.)

How do you think I'm doing?

WILLIAM

I don't know what happened.

ANNA WHIPS OPEN THE DOOR. SHE'S ALMOST DRESSED.

ANNA

I do. Your furry friend thought he'd make a buck or two telling the papers where I was.

WILLIAM

That's not true.

ANNA

Really? The entire British press just woke up this morning and thought "Hey - I know where Anna Farrell is. She's in that pink house next to the newsagent in Notting Hill." And then you going out in your fucking underpants.

SPIKE

(PASSING BY) I went out in my fucking underpants too.

WILLIAM

Ssssh. I'm so sorry.

ANNA

This is such a mess. I come to you to protect myself against more crappy gossip and now I'm going to be landed in it all over again. For God's sake. I've got a fiance.

WILLIAM

You do?

PAUSE. IT'S A DIFFICULT MOMENT - DEFINING WHERE THEY STAND.

ANNA
As far as they're concerned I do. And now tomorrow there'll be thousands of pictures of you in every newspaper from here to Timbuktu.

SHE IS PACKING NOW.

WILLIAM
I know, I know - but... just - let's stay calm...

ANNA
You can stay calm - it's the perfect situation for you - you get to spend just one night with Anna Farrell - and everyone knows. All your friends. Everyone you ever bump into. "Well done you - you slept with Anna Farrell - we've seen the pictures."

WILLIAM
That's spectacularly unfair.

ANNA
Who knows. It may even help business. Buy a boring book about Egypt from the guy who screwed Anna Farrell.

WILLIAM
Now stop. Stop. I beg you - calm down. Have a cup of tea.

ANNA
I don't want a fucking cup of fucking tea. I want to go home.

THE DOORBELL GOES. SPIKE WHO HAS OVERHEARD THIS IS THRILLED WITH THE NEW NEWS. WILLIAM TOOK HIS ADVICE!

WILLIAM
Spike. see who that is...

94. EXT. WILLIAM'S HOUSE. DAY.

SPIKE LEANS MERRILY OVER THE TERRACE.

SPIKE
Looks like a chauffeur to me. Hey, are you Anna's chauffeur?

CHAUFFEUR GIVES A THUMBS UP.

Hi Guys!!!

ALL THE PRESS CRY OUT. SPIKE HOLDS A PICTURE FRAME OUT THE WINDOW.

SPIKE
This is a picture of my Mum - she's pretty cute. isn't she?

95. INT. CORRIDOR. DAY.

ANNA IS NOW IN THE CORRIDOR. WITH A CASE.

ANNA

Right. Let's do this.

SHE HEADS PAST WILLIAM DOWN THE STAIRS - AND TURNS.

And remember - Spike owes you an expensive dinner. Or holiday - depending if he's got the brains to get the going rate on betrayal.

WILLIAM

That's not true. And wait a minute...

HE RUSHES DOWN AFTER HER AND CONFRONTS HER.

This is crazy behaviour. Can't we just laugh about this? Seriously - in the huge sweep of things, this stuff doesn't matter.

SPIKE

What he's going to say next is - there are people starving in the Sudan.

WILLIAM

Well, there are. And we don't need to go anywhere near that far. My best friend slipped - she slipped downstairs, and she's in a wheelchair for the rest of her life. All I'm asking for is a normal amount of perspective.

ANNA

And you're right - of course, you're right. It's just that I've lived with this garbage for 10 years now - you've had it for 10 minutes. Our lives are very different. You really have no idea.

WILLIAM

I mean: today's newspapers will be lining tomorrow's waste paper bins.

ANNA

Pardon me?

WILLIAM

Well, you know - it's just one day. Tomorrow today's papers will all have been thrown away.

ANNA

You really do know nothing. This story gets filed. Every time anyone writes about me - they get out these photos - they'll read about this morning. Newspapers last forever. Not just one day. (PAUSE) I'll regret coming here forever.

HE TAKES THIS IN. THAT'S THE END.

WILLIAM

Right. Right. Well, okay. I will feel the opposite - if that's all right by you - and always be glad you came. But you probably better go.

SHE LOOKS AT HIM. THE DOORBELL GOES AGAIN.

I better.

ANNA

SHE OPENS THE DOOR. MASSIVE NOISE AND PHOTOS. OUTSIDE ARE HER PEOPLE. NOT ONE, NOT TWO - FIVE - INCLUDING KAREN, A CHAUFFEUR. TWO BODYGUARDS. THEY'VE COME IN FORCE.

AND THEN THE DOOR IS SHUT AND THEY'RE ALL GONE. SILENCE. MOVE BACK INTO THE KITCHEN. THERE SITS WILLIAM, ALONE.

96. INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

SPIKE AND WILLIAM SITTING THERE, BOTH ON THE FLOOR. PAUSE.

WILLIAM

Was it you? Be honest with me.

SPIKE

I guess it could have been.

WILLIAM

What does that mean?

97. INT. PUBLIC HOUSE. NIGHT.

CUT BACK IN TIME TO SPIKE THE NIGHT BEFORE. HE RUSHES INTO A PUB. AT LEAST 40 PEOPLE IN THERE. HE LEAPS ON A TABLE AND SHOUTS OUT TO EVERYONE.

SPIKE

See this pizza. Guess who it's for?! Anna Farrell and she's staying in my house!!!

98. INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

WILLIAM SITS STILL. HEAD IN HIS HANDS. SPIKE SITS NEXT TO WILLIAM. NO CHANGE.

SUDDENLY THE BELL RINGS.

WILLIAM

Ignore it.

THEN IT RINGS AGAIN - IN A LITTLE TUNE.

It's Honey.

CUT TO THE DOOR. SPIKE OPENS IT - HONEY SQUEEZES IN. THERE IS A MOMENT OF AWKWARDNESS BETWEEN HONEY & SPIKE BEING SO CLOSE.

SPIKE

Hi Hun bun.

Hi Spikey.

HONEY

A LITTLE PAUSE. HE STRAIGHTS UP. SHE POPS HER HAIR BEHIND HER EARS. THEN SHE SEES WILLIAM.

Willie. What the double-fuck is going on?

HONEY

Basically, we had... ahm.. Anna Farrell to stay for the weekend.

SPIKE

You're kidding?

HONEY

Unfortunately it ended slightly stormily. She was trying to avoid the press. but yours truly slightly let the cat out of the bag thus leading to rather more photographers outside the front door than usual.

SPIKE

O dear. What sort of mood did she leave in?

HONEY

If you remember the mother in "Aliens" - you know - big jaws - slobber - total desire to kill - that's very close.

WILLIAM

Ah.

HONEY

In case you're interested, there are quite a lot of pizzas out back - pepperoni hot with artichoke.

SPIKE

AND SUDDENLY WE REALISE THAT THERE IS A NEVER-SPOKEN FEELING BETWEEN THESE TWO. FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER. SPIKE PULLS HIS HAIR BACK BEHIND HIS EARS. HONEY DOES AN AWKWARD WIGGLE.

My favourite.

HONEY

THE PHONE RINGS.

The phone.

SPIKE

Yes.

WILLIAM

It's ringing.

SPIKE

That's right.

WILLIAM

Shall one of us answer it.

SPIKE

WILLIAM

No. It'll be a journalist.

SPIKE

O right. (PAUSE.) Exciting. (AND HE PICKS IT UP INSTANTLY.) It's for you.

WILLIAM

I'm not talking to anyone.

SPIKE

Fair dos. Sorry, Anna - he's not talking to anyone.

AND HANGS UP.

WILLIAM

Anna?

SPIKE

Yes.

WILLIAM

O God. Spike. you are an idiot of Olympian proportions. If idiocy was an Olympic Sport you would be Carl Lewis - there'd be gym shoes named after you.

SPIKE

So if she rings again, you want to talk.

WILLIAM

She won't ring again.

HE WALKS INTO THE LIVING ROOM. THEN TURNS.

And actually... no - on second thoughts - I think you were right.

99. INT. WILLIAM'S LIVING ROOM. DAY.

WILLIAM WALKS TO THE BOOKSHELVES AND BEGINS TO EMPTY ANNA FARRELL VIDEOS INTO A BOX.

SPIKE

What's going on?

WILLIAM

I'm going to throw out these videos. We'll not watch them again.

SPIKE

No. You can't bin these. They're classics. I'm not allowing this.

WILLIAM

Right - let's talk about rent....

SPIKE

Let me help. We don't want all this old shit cluttering up our lives.

100. EXT. LONDON. NIGHT & DAY.

AS THE FULL, SAD MUSIC PLAYS - WILLIAM BEGINS TO WALK THROUGH NOTTING HILL - ALMOST THE REVERSE OF HIS ORIGINAL STROLL. THIS WALK TAKES SIX MONTHS... AS HE WALKS, THE SEASONS ACTUALLY & MAGICALLY CHANGE. FROM AUTUMN, THROUGH WINTER, BACK INTO SPRING...

WILLIAM (V/O.)

So there we go. 6 months after I met Anna, I'm back wandering round Notting Hill. Different moods, you notice different things. The once glorious Electric Cinema, closed down after all those years.

IT IS SADLY RAMSHACKLE NOW.

Posters advertising pop groups who'll never have a hit.

WE SEE POP POSTER FOR AN UNKNOWN GROUP.

The Salvation Army Hall where every day people who drink too much are press-ganged into singing "Lord of the Dance" to get a bowl of soup. And next door - the people who got so drunk they had a tattoo and now they can't remember why they chose "I Love Ken"...

A PERPLEXED MAN INSPECTS HIS ARM.

The debris of the fruit market. The antique market closed.

ALL THE SHOPS ARE BOARDED UP DOWN PORTOBELLO ROAD ON A WEEKDAY EVENING.

Lives that don't go right.

ONE VERY LONELY PERSON WALKING DOWN THE ROAD TOWARDS HIM.

Love that doesn't go right.

WE SEE A VERY HANDSOME GUY IN A LEATHER JACKET SNAP HIS HANDS TOGETHER - AND WALK ANGRILY AWAY FROM A GIRL IN THE STREET. WHEN THE CAMERA MOVES BACK TO HER - WE REALISE IT IS HONEY. STANDING ALONE IN THE GREY. LOOKING TINY. TEARS IN HER EYES.

When you're happy, you see the friend walking towards you, and the cinema you're about to enter. But other times - you notice other things.

WE SEE A HOMELESS MAN IN AN EIDERDOWN IN THE DOORWAY OF THE CORONET CINEMA ON NOTTING HILL GATE.

And then it's spring again - and it's meant to remind you of new hope. But what mainly comes to mind are the old hopes that came to nothing.

HE IS OUTSIDE TONY'S PLACE. ON THE WINDOW, IT SAYS 'LAST CHANCE TOTRY - CLOSSES SATURDAY'.

101. INT. BOOKSHOP. DAY.

ANOTHER DAY IN THE STORE - A FEELING THAT THINGS IN THERE NEVER CHANGE.

Martino. **WILLIAM**

Capo di capo. **MARTIN**

Question. **WILLIAM**

Do my best. **MARTIN**

In your experience of love... **WILLIAM**

Yes... **MARTIN**

What credence do you give to the concept of time the healer? **WILLIAM**

Right. **MARTIN**
(THINKS ABOUT IT, THEN) Well, when I was at college. I fell in love with a girl who wasn't interested in me at all. For three years she wasn't interested. I haven't seen her since.

How long's that? **WILLIAM**

7 years. **MARTIN**

HE FIDDLES ABOUT IN HIS BACK POCKET AND FINDS HIS WALLET. LEAFS THROUGH IT - TAKES OUT AN OLD BLACK AND WHITE PICTURE. WHICH HE UNFOLDS. IT IS A DARK-HAIRED GIRL. SMILING. AND WEARING A UNIVERSITY SCARF.

I look at it every day. No-one else has ever made a mark. **MARTIN**

WILLIAM NODS.

I thought as much. **WILLIAM**

A CRACK OF THUNDER. SAD MUSIC PLAY.

102. INT. TONY'S RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

IT IS THE SATURDAY - CLOSING NIGHT AT TONY'S.... A QUIET EVENING. A YEAR EXACTLY SINCE THE OPENING - IT'S JUST THE FRIENDS.

EVERYONE IS THERE: MARTIN, SPIKE ALSO - AND TONY IS SITTING AT THE TABLE.

BELLA

I'd like to make a little speech. This is the finest restaurant in London - and tonight it closes. But I just want to say to Tony - don't lose faith - restaurants are like life - nobody knows why some of us get broken hearts and some of us get broken limbs - it's certainly nothing to do with..... what you deserve.

MAX

Hear, hear.

WILLIAM

Best restaurant in the world.

TONY RISES TO ANSWER THE TOAST - HE IS EMOTIONAL.

TONY

Thank you. Thank you. I had a dream. (HE GESTURES TO THE RESTAURANT) I have woken from it and found that the only thing that is real is my friends. I salute you.

HE SITS - BELLA GIVES HIM A HUG - HONEY STANDS UP.

HONEY

I also have a speech to make. I've decided to get engaged.

TOTALLY BEWILDERMENT FROM THE OTHERS.

Yes - I've had enough of all these horrible handsome boys - I've found myself a nice, slightly odd looking bloke who I know is going to make me happy for the rest of my life.

SPECIAL CUT TO BERNIE - THE SHOT SHOWS HE HAD SPECIAL FEELINGS FOR HONEY.

WILLIAM

Wait a minute - I'm your brother and I don't know anything about this. Is he financially viable?

HONEY

The answer is 'yes' and 'no' - he's an artist with brilliant prospects.

BERNIE

Well.... this is all absolutely joyous. When's the big day?

HONEY

Not sure - we haven't fixed it.

MAX

Is it someone we know?

HONEY

Yes. I will keep you informed.

AS SHE SITS DOWN. HONEY LEANS TOWARDS SPIKE AND WHISPERS.

By the way - it's you.

Me? SPIKE

Yes. What do you think? HONEY

Well, yes. Groovy. SPIKE

BERNIE LOOKS ACROSS - FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE. HE'S FIRST TO REALISE SOMETHING. A DEFEATED SMILE.

Any more announcements? MAX

Yes - I feel I must apologise to everyone for my behaviour for the last six months. I have, as you know, been a miserable bugger. WILLIAM

Can't deny it - there are dead people on better form. MAX

But I've turned a corner and henceforward intend to be as happy as a lark. WILLIAM

Bravo. You've laid the ghost? MAX

I believe I have. WILLIAM

Don't give a damn about the girl. MAX

Don't give a goddamn. WILLIAM

Which means you won't be distracted by the fact that she's back in London, grasping her Oscar, and to be found filming most days on Hampstead Heath. MAX

HE SHOWS A COPY OF THE STANDARD - WITH ANNA ON THE FRONT.

(IMMEDIATE GLOOM) O God no. Now I'm going to spend every day wondering if she'll ever ring me again. WILLIAM

So not over her, in fact. MAX

Ahm.... WILLIAM

MAX

Eat up. I have a plan.

103. EXT. NOTTING HILL STREETS. NIGHT.

LATER THAT NIGHT. WILLIAM AND MAX WALKING ALONG.

MAX

Remember when we first met I used to have that ridiculous moustache.

WILLIAM

Yes.

MAX

I grew it because I thought it made me look more macho and more likely to be approached at University by the secret services for spying activities.

WILLIAM ALMOST LAUGHS.

No - I'm serious. My Dad fought in Burma. I was brought up on a diet of the Great Escape and the Guns of Navarone. I thought I was going to lead a life of guns and girls. 20 years later - I've been working in a merchant bank for 20 years. I wanted to be James Bond - I've become a boring bond dealer.

WILLIAM

That's not true.

MAX

It is - I've never done anything risky in my life. never lived the life I dreamed I would. But you, you've now got the chance: this is my plan: go up on that heath tomorrow - and say to that huge Hollywood star - look. girl, I love you - I'm your man - you'd be nuts to go out with anyone else.

WILLIAM

To which she'll reply - 'get out of the shot. you sad nonentity.'

MAX

Well. that's the risk part. When Steve McQueen got on that motorbike. he knew there'd be Nazis coming after him.

PAUSE

WILLIAM

And what about the fact that the last time I saw her she was shouting at me.

MAX

So the girl lost her temper! What are you looking for here - perfection. The person who's married to me has to put up with this. (POINTING TO HIS HAIR) And this (HE POINTS TO HIS STOMACH)

WILLIAM

Right. So.... Hampstead Heath, you say.

MAX
I believe tomorrow's the final day.

WILLIAM
Classic.

THE MUSIC SWELLS. HE'S GOING TO DO IT.

104. EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH. DAY.

CUT TO THE WIDE SWEEP OF HAMPSTEAD HEATH. WILLIAM ENTIRELY ALONE. HE MARCHES UP A HILL.... GOES OVER THE CREST OF IT - AND SEES AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT. A HUGE FILM CREW AND HUNDREDS OF EXTRAS IN FRONT OF THE RADIANT WHITE OF KENWOOD HOUSE. WITH ITS LAWN AND ITS LAKES AND ITS MAGNOLIA TREES. A FEELING OF SIZE AND SCOPE AND GRANDEUR AND MAGIC..... AND FEAR - HE'S COME TO SEE ONE GIRL - BUT HE HAS TO DEAL WITH ALL THIS. HE HEADS DOWN AND APPROACHES THE FIRST MAN WITH A WALKY-TALKY.

WILLIAM
Hello, I wonder if you could point me in the direction of Anna Farrell.

ASSISTANT
Ahm... yes - just wait there - I'll find someone who knows.

THE MAN WALKS AWAY. A FEW SECONDS HANGING AROUND - THEN ANOTHER MAN APPROACHES.

SECURITY
Can I help you?

WILLIAM
Yes - I was looking for Anna Farrell...

SECURITY
Does she know you're coming?

WILLIAM
No. no. She doesn't.

SECURITY
I'm afraid I can't really let you through then. sir.

WILLIAM
O right. I mean. I am a friend - I'm not a lunatic - but - no, you basically

SECURITY
Why don't you leave a message?

AT THAT MOMENT - 30 YARDS AWAY, WILLIAM SEES A TRAILER DOOR OPEN. OUT OF IT COMES ANNA - LOOKING EXTRAORDINARY - IN A VELVET DRESS: FULL BEAUTIFUL MAKE-UP; RICH, EXTRAVAGANT HAIR. SHE HAS A NECESSARY CLUSTER OF PEOPLE ABOUT HER. HAIR.

MAKE-UP, COSTUME AND THE THIRD ASSISTANT WHO HAS COLLECTED HER.

SHE WALKS A FEW YARDS. AND THEN CASUALLY TURNS HER HEAD. AND SEES HIM. HER FACE REGISTERS NOT JUST SURPRISE. CERTAINLY NOT A SIMPLE SMILE. HIS BEING THERE IS A COMPLICATED THING.

CUT BACK TO HIM. HE DOES A SMALL WAVE. SHE MOUTHS...

ANNA

Hi.

AT WHICH POINT THE WHOLE PARAPHERNALIA OF THE UPCOMING SCENE PASSES BETWEEN THEM. A BIG CRANE, HORSES AND CARTS, 50 EXTRAS. THE MOVIE DIVIDES THEM. BUT THEN SHE BEGINS TO WALK THROUGH IT. AND FOLLOWED BY HER CLUSTER, SHE MAKES HER WAY TOWARDS HIM.

WHEN SHE REACHES HIM. THE SECURITY GUARD STANDS BACK A PACE. AND HER PEOPLE HOLD BACK.

ANNA

You came.

WILLIAM

I only found out you were here.. yesterday. I'm not in the swing of popular things.

ANNA

I was going to ring... but... I didn't think you'd want to....

THE THIRD ASSISTANT IS UNDER PRESSURE.

FIRST

Anna.

SHE LOOKS ROUND. THE POOR THIRD IS NERVOUS - AND THE FIRST IS APPROACHING.

ANNA

(TO WILLIAM) It's not going very well - and it's the last day.

WILLIAM

Absolutely - you're clearly - very busy.

ANNA

But please... wait... there are, you know, things to say.

WILLIAM

Okay.

ANNA

Drink tea - there's lots of tea.

AND SHE IS SWEEP AWAY WITH FOUR PEOPLE TOUCHING HER HAIR AND COSTUME.

KAREN

Come down here and have a look....

THEY APPROACH A PRODUCTION CLUSTER. SOUND. CAMERAS, ASSISTANTS.

IN FRONT. A COMPLICATED SHOT IS ABOUT TO HAPPENING - WITH WAVES OF EXTRAS . THEY END UP NEXT TO THE SOUND DESK.

KAREN

This is Harry - he'll give you a pair of head-phones so you can hear the dialogue.

HARRY. THE SOUND MAN IS A PLEASANT, 50 YEAR OLD BALDING FELLOW. HARRY HANDS HIM THE HEADPHONES

HARRY

Here we go. The volume control is on the side. Are you getting it?

WILLIAM

Yes - that's great.

WILLIAM. THE HEAD-PHONES ON, SURVEYS THE SCENE - THE CLUSTER IS A FULL 100 YARDS FROM THE ACTION. TO ALLOW A GRACIOUS SWEEPING WIDE-SHOT. HE WATCHES ANNA. SHE IS WITH HER CO-STAR. IN THE HENRY JAMES FILM - LET'S CALL HIM JAMES - AND A YOUNG ACTRESS.

JAMES

We'll never get everything done today.

ANNA

We have to. I start in New York on Thursday.

AN ASSISTANT IS RE-GROUPING SOME ACTORS FOR THE SHOT - HE MOVES THE YOUNG ACTRESS A FEW YARDS TO THE LEFT, TO JOIN ANOTHER GROUP.

JAMES

God, that's an enormous arse.

ANNA

I'm not listening.

JAMES

No, but seriously - it's not fair - so many tragic young teenagers with anorexia - and that girl has an arse she could perfectly well share round with at least ten other girls - and still be big-bottomed.

ANNA

I said, I'm not listening - and I think, looking at something that firm, you and your droopy little ass would be well-advised to keep your mouth shut.

BACK UP TOP, WILLIAM IS LISTENING AND LAUGHS. THAT'S HIS GIRL. HARRY THE SOUND MAN RETURNS WITH TEA. WILLIAM TAKES THE TEA. LOOKS BACK DOWN.

ANNA
What's your line?

JAMES
Could this be the time - could this perhaps be the place.

ANNA
And then I... right.

JAMES
And who was that you were talking to on the way up?

ANNA
O... no-one... no-one. Just some... guy from the past. Bit of an awkward situation.

105. EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH. DAY.

CUT BACK TO WILLIAM - HE HAS HEARD.

WILLIAM
Of course.

HE TAKES OFF THE HEAD-PHONES AND PUTS THEM GENTLY DOWN.

WILLIAM
Thank you.

HARRY
Any time.

WILLIAM WALKS AWAY. THE MOMENT OF HOPE IS GONE. HE COULDN'T HAVE HAD A CLEARER REMINDER. HE STOPS AND TURNS ONE LAST TIME. HE CAN JUST HEAR.

DIRECTOR
Action...

AND ANNA AND THE HANDSOME ACTOR MOVE GRACEFULLY TOGETHER TO KISS. WILLIAM TURNS AWAY.

106. EXT. KENSINGTON PARK ROAD. EVENING.

WILLIAM APPROACHES HIS HOUSE. SAD MUSIC. HE SEES TONY STANDING OUTSIDE THE RESTAURANT. TONY LOOKS UP.

TONY
Just looking back on better times.

WILLIAM
It's all we do.

HE PAUSES - LOOKS UP - AND THEN TONY AND HE HEAD OFF DOWN THE STREET TOGETHER, WALKING IN SILENCE. IT'S ALL OVER.

107. INT. BACKROOM OF THE BOOKSHOP. DAY.

THE NEXT DAY. WILLIAM IS HARD AT WORK, DOING THE ACCOUNTS IN A DARK SMALL ROOM WITH FILES IN IT. MARTIN KNOCKS, AND POPS HIS HEAD IN.

MARTIN
Master mine.

WILLIAM
God, I hate doing this. What is it?

MARTIN
There's a delivery.

WILLIAM
Just shove it in the storage room.

MARTIN
It's not books.

WILLIAM
Really Martin - (getting up) - you can't just do this yourself?

MARTIN
But it's not for the shop. It's for you.

WILLIAM
Okay. Tell me, would I have to pay a wet rag as much as I pay you?

THEY HEAD OUT, MARTIN BEHIND HIM. INCOMPREHENSIBLY RUBBING HIS HANDS - HE'S IN A VERY GOOD MOOD..

108. INT. BOOKSHOP. DAY.

WILLIAM ENTERS - AND THERE IS ANNA.

ANNA
Hi.

WILLIAM
Hello.

ANNA
You disappeared.

WILLIAM
Yes - I'm sorry - I had to leave... I didn't want to disturb you.

ANNA
But I had.. you know... a lot to say. For a start, you know - apologising five or six more times.

WILLIAM
No - really, it was all understandable. It's fine.

WILLIAM IS BEING NICE. BUT HE CAN'T HELP BUT BE A LITTLE CHILLY
HERE.

ANNA

Well, it's not, but.... How have you been?

WILLIAM

O good. Everything much the same. When they change the law
Spike and I will marry immediately. Whereas you... I've watched
in wonder. Awards. glory...

ANNA

O no. It's all nonsense, believe me. I had no idea how much
nonsense it all was - but nonsense it all is. (SHE'S NERVOUS) I
made an acceptance speech that made Sally Field's speech look like the
Gettysburg Address and then I cried more than Tom Hanks.

WILLIAM

Tom Hanky, as we call him.

ANNA

Right. Well, yesterday was our last day filming and so I'm just off - but
I brought you this so... I had it in my apartment at home, and....

IT'S QUITE A BIG WRAPPED PARCEL, FLAT - 3 FOOT BY 4 FOOT, LEANING
AGAINST A BOOKSHELF.

I thought I'd give it to you.

WILLIAM

Thank you. Shall I...

ANNA

No. don't open it yet - I'll be embarrassed.

WILLIAM

Okay - well, thank you. I don't know what it's for. But thank
you anyway.

ANNA

I just thought you'd.... But, when it came to it, I didn't know how to
ring you.... having behaved so... badly, twice. So it's been just sitting
in the hotel. But then... you came. so I figured...

WILLIAM

(BEING POLITE) Would you like a cup of tea or something?

ANNA

Well... no, no - maybe - but no, first I... the thing is... the thing is....

WILLIAM

What is the thing?

ANNA

The thing is... I have to go away today but I wondered, if I didn't,
whether you might let me see you a bit... or, you know, a lot
maybe...see if you could... like me again.

PAUSE AS WILLIAM TAKES THIS IN.

WILLIAM

But yesterday... I was wearing those head-phones and that man in green asked you who I was.. and you just dismissed...

ANNA

You expect me to tell the truth about my life to the most indiscreet man in England?

MARTIN EDGES UP.

MARTIN

Excuse me - it's your mother on the phone.

WILLIAM

Can you tell her I'll ring her back.

MARTIN

I actually tried that tack - but she said you said that before and it's been twenty four hours, and her foot that was purple is now a sort of blackish colour...

WILLIAM

Okay - hold the fort for a second will you...

MARTIN IS LEFT WITH ANNA.

MARTIN

May I say, I thought 'Ghost' was a wonderful film.

ANNA

Is that right?

MARTIN

Yes... I've always wondered what Patrick Swayze is like in real life. Does he just kind of ooze all that sort of sexual energy like he does in the pictures?

ANNA

I can't say I know Patrick all that well.

MARTIN

O dear. He wasn't friendly during the filming?

ANNA

Well, no - I'm sure he was friendly - to Demi Moore - who acted with him in 'Ghost'.

SHE'S KIND HERE, NOT SARCASTIC.

MARTIN

O right. Right. Sorry. Yes... well if I see her, I'll ask her... instead then.

WILLIAM RETURNS A LITTLE UNEASY.

MARTIN

Well, it's lovely to meet you.

WILLIAM

Sorry about that.

ANNA

That's fine. There's always a pause when the jury goes out to consider its verdict.

PAUSE. SHE'S AWAITING AN ANSWER.

WILLIAM

Anna. The thing is... I'm a fairly level-headed bloke. Not hugely in and out of love. But...

PAUSE - HE CAN'T REALLY EXPRESS WHAT HE FEELS.

... can I just say 'no' to your kind request and leave it at that?

ANNA

...Yes. that's fine. Of course. I... you know... of course... I'll just... be getting along then... Nice to see you.

WILLIAM

The truth is...

HE FEELS HE MUST EXPLAIN.

With you, I'm in real danger. It looks like a perfect situation. apart from that foul temper of yours - but my relatively inexperienced heart would. I fear, never recover when I was once again... cast aside. which I would absolutely expect to be. There are too many pictures of you everywhere. too many films of you. You'd go and I'd be... a broken man.

ANNA

I see. (pause) That really is a real 'no', isn't it.

WILLIAM

I live in Notting Hill. You live in Beverly Hills. We're from different worlds. Everyone in the world knows who you are. My mother has trouble remembering my name.

ANNA

Okay. Fine. Fine. Good decision.

PAUSE.

But the same thing isn't really real. you know. Don't forget - I'm also just a girl. Standing in front of a boy. Asking him to love her.

PAUSE.

Okay.

SHE KISSES HIM ON THE CHEEK.

Bye.

THEN TURNS AND LEAVES. WILLIAM IS DAZED.

MARTIN

Sir.

WILLIAM

Yes.

MARTIN

I know traditionally we've kept our private lives out of our business relationship, but if I might just say one thing.

WILLIAM

Yes, Martin. Go ahead.

MARTIN

Fucking hell.

WILLIAM SMILES, THEN PUNCHES SOME NUMBERS ON THE PHONE WITH ONE HAND WHILE UNWRAPPING THE PRESENT WITH ANOTHER. IT IS THE ORIGINAL OF THE CHAGALL IN HIS HOUSE. IT'S WORTH A MILLION POUNDS.

109. INT. LEGAL CHAMBERS. DAY.

BELLA IS IN A BRIGHT CITY CHAMBERS. SURROUNDED BY PAPERS.

BELLA

Hello.

BACK TO WILLIAM.

WILLIAM

Bella, it's William: look - it would be great to see you now. I've just done the right thing, and it's grisly.

BACK TO BELLA

BELLA

This better be good.

110. INT. TONY'S RESTAURANT. DAY.

THE RESTAURANT IS IN THE MIDDLE OF BEING DECONSTRUCTED. THE PICTURES ARE GONE OFF THE WALLS - ON A TABLE BEHIND THEM IS A KETTLE ON A LONG EXTENSION LEAD ON THE BARE TABLE BEHIND.

THEY'RE ALL SITTING THERE, ALL THE FRIENDS - WILLIAM STANDS IN FRONT OF THEM. .

BELLA

So what's the score?

WILLIAM

Well, as you all know - Anna Farrell stormed out of my house a year ago, and I haven't seen her since.

BELLA

Behind your back. we have bad-mouthed the callous cow without drawing breath.

WILLIAM

Exactly. And I thought that was it - and though it was grim, I did know that the possibility of anything except disaster coming from anything between the two of us was minimal. But the strange thing is. she came to the shop this morning - and she said that she wanted to, sort of, be with me.

BERNIE

And then?

WILLIAM

Well, I told her that it was... unrealistic... that she'd ruin my life because I'd put my whole heart into it - and it would come to nothing. And you know - I'm pretty damaged goods already - the last thing I need is another debacle.

PAUSE

What do you think? Good move?

HONEY

Good move: when all is said and done. she's nothing special. I saw her taking off her pants and I definitely glimpsed some cellulite down there.

BELLA

Good decision.

WILLIAM

Max?

MAX

Absolutely. Never trust a vegetarian.

WILLIAM

That's right. Great.

PAUSE.

BERNIE

But she said she wanted to go out with you?

WILLIAM

Yes - sort of

BERNIE

That's nice.

WILLIAM

What?

BERNARD

Well, you know, anybody saying they want to go out with you is.. pretty great... isn't it....

BELLA IS CASUALLY LOOKING AT THE CHAGALL.

BELLA

This painting isn't the original is it?

PAUSE. ENTER SPIKE

SPIKE

I was called and I came. What's up?

HONEY

William has just turned down Anna Farrell.

SPIKE

Are you crazy!!!

HONEY

No - it's actually quite sensible. Though, I suppose there is an argument the other way...

WILLIAM

Oh no: there isn't, is there?

HONEY

Well, no - as long as you're completely certain. Because obviously she would have ruined your life - but then... if you've turned her down and you're not sure, then she ruin your life anyway. And you didn't get to go out with the world's best girl.

MAX

But, look. she's got a fiance.

WILLIAM

Well actually no, she's got rid of hi... it was sort of sweet actually - I mean. I know she's an actress and all that, so she can deliver a line - but she said that she might be the most famous person in the world - but also... that she was just a girl, standing in front of a boy, asking him to love her.

MASSIVE PAUSE. THEY TAKE IN THE FULL WEIGHT OF THE LINE. IT TOTALLY REVERSES THEIR ATTITUDES.

HONEY

This is Anna Farrell? Saying that to my big brother.

WILLIAM NODS. PAUSE.

WILLIAM

O sod a dog. I've made the wrong decision. haven't I?

PAUSE. THEY LOOK AT HIM. SPIKE DOES A BIG NOD.

WILLIAM

Max - how fast is your car?

111. EXT. BOOKSHOP. EVENING.

MAX'S CAR ARRIVES IN THE STREET OUTSIDE. THEY'RE ALL WAITING.

BELLA

Leave me.

THEY PILE INTO THE CAR.

MAX

(IN A SEAN CONNERY IMPRESSION) It's faster than a speeding bullet - it has turbo injection and if anyone gets in our way - we have small nuclear devices. Where's Bella?

HONEY

She's not coming.

MAX

Sod that.

HE SHOOTS OUT OF HIS DOOR. RUSHES ROUND AND GRABS HER OUT OF THE CHAIR.

Come on, Babe.

112. EXT. THE STRAND. EVENING.

THE CAR SWINGS AT A DANGEROUS SPEED INTO THE PRIVATE CIRCLE OUTSIDE THE RITZ. WILLIAM SPRINTS INTO THE HOTEL. BERNIE FOLLOWS. WILLIAM GLANCES AT HIM.

BERNIE

If you think I'm missing one moment of this you must be absolutely crazy.

113. INT. RITZ LOBBY. EVENING.

WILLIAM

Is Miss Farrell staying here?

IT IS THE SAME MAN - ACTUALLY WITH THE SAME CLERK BESIDE HIM - STILL TRYING TO FINISH THAT DIFFICULT TASK.

RITZ MAN

No, sir.

WILLIAM

How about Mrs Flintstone - or Miss Mouse... or Bambi?

MAN SHAKES HIS HEAD.

RITZ MAN
No, sir.

WILLIAM
Fair enough.

HE TURNS DESPONDENT AND TAKES TWO STEPS WHEN THE RITZ MAN STOPS HIM IN HIS TRACKS.

RITZ MAN
There was a Miss Pocohantas in Room 126 - but she left an hour ago. I believe she's holding a press conference at the Savoy before returning to America.

BERNIE
That's my baby!!!

114. EXT. ST JAMES. EVENING.

THE CAR SPEEDS THROUGH LONDON. IT GETS TOTALLY STUCK AT LIGHTS THAT AREN'T CHANGING.

SPIKE
Bugger this for a bunch of bananas.

HE GETS OUT OF THE CAR AND BOLDLY STOPS THE TRAFFIC COMING IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION. OUR CAR SHOOTS PAST HIM.

SPIKE
Go!

THEY LEAVE HIM BEHIND. HONEY LEANS OUT THE WINDOW AND SHOUTS...

HONEY
You're my hero - you know that!

SPIKE WAVES WILDLY - LOSING CONCENTRATION AND IS VERY NEARLY HIT BY A CAR.

115. EXT. THE SAVOY. EVENING.

THEY PULL TO A STOP. MAX OPENS THE DOOR OF THE CAR - AND WILLIAM LEAPS OUT.

MAX
Go!

116. INT. THE SAVOY. EVENING.

WILLIAM RUSHES UP TO THE MAIN DESK.

WILLIAM
Excuse me, where's the press conference?

MAN/WOMAN AT DESK
Are you an accredited member of the press?

WILLIAM
Yes...

HE FLASHES A CARD.

MAN AT DESK
That's a Blockbuster Video membership card, sir.

WILLIAM
That's right... I work for their in-house magazine. (MIMES
QUOTATION MARKS) "Movies are our Business".

HONEY SHOOTS INTO SHOT.

HONEY
Honey Tucker - Sunday Times. He's with me.

MAN AT DESK
Can I see your press card.

HONEY
O don't be so bloody stupid. I'm here every day.

MAN AT DESK
Sorry, madam. It's in the Raleigh Room. I'm afraid you're very late.

HONEY
(to William)
Go!

117. INT. SAVOY CORRIDOR. EVENING.

WILLIAM RUNS, SEARCHING. HE FINDS THE ROOM. AND ENTERS.

118. INT. RALEIGH ROOM. EVENING.

HUGE ROOM - FULL OF PRESS. ROW AFTER ROW OF JOURNALISTS.
CAMERAS AT THE FRONT, TV CAMERAS AT THE BACK.

ANNA CLEARLY GIVES PRESS CONFERENCES VERY RARELY. BECAUSE
THIS ONE IS POSITIVELY PRESIDENTIAL. SHE SITS AT A TABLE AT THE
END OF THE ROOM. BESIDE KAREN: ON HER OTHER SIDE IS JEREMY, THE
PR BOSS, FIRMLY MARSHALLING THE QUESTIONS.

JEREMY
Yes... you - Dominic

QUESTIONER 1
How much longer are you staying in the UK then?

ANNA

No time at all. I fly out tonight.

SHE'S IN A SLIGHTLY MELANCHOLIC - AND THEREFORE HONEST MOOD.

JEREMY

Which is why we have to round it up now. Final questions.

HE POINTS AT A JOURNALIST HE KNOWS.

John.

JOHN

What do you make of the rumours about Jeff and his present leading lady?

ANNA

That not my business now. Although I will say, from my experience, that rumours about Jeff... do tend to be true.

THEY LOVE THAT ANSWER. AND ALL SCRIBBLE IN THEIR NOTE BOOKS. NEXT QUESTION COMES FROM SOMEONE STANDING RIGHT NEXT TO WILLIAM.

QUESTIONER 3

Last time you were here, there were some fairly graphic photographs of you and a young English guy - what happened there?

ANNA

He was just a friend - and I think we're still friends.

JEREMY

Yes, the gentlemen next to Gavin.

HE IS POINTING STRAIGHT AT WILLIAM.

WILLIAM

Yes - Miss Farrell - are there any circumstances in which you two might be more than just friends?

ANNA SEES WHO IT IS ASKING.

ANNA

I hoped there might be - but, no, I'm assured there aren't.

WILLIAM

And what would you say...

JEREMY

No, it's just one question per person. I'm afraid.

ANNA

No, let him... ask away. You were saying?

WILLIAM

Yes. I just wondered whether if it turned out that this... person...

OTHER JOURNALIST
(to William)

His name was Thacker.

WILLIAM

I just wondered if Mr Thacker realised he'd been a fool and got down on his knees and begged you to reconsider, whether you'd... think again.

PAUSE. WE CUT TO MAX, BELLA, BERNIE AND HONEY. ALL WATCHING. THEN BACK TO ANNA.

ANNA

Yes, I'm pretty sure I would.

WILLIAM

That's very good news. The readers of Horse and Hound will be absolutely delighted.

ANNA WHISPERS SOMETHING TO JEREMY.

JEREMY

Dominic - if you'd like to ask your question again? There's been a slight change of plan.

QUESTIONER 1

Yes - Miss Farrell - how long are you intending to stay here in Britain?

PAUSE. ANNA LOOKS UP AT WILLIAM. HE NODS.

ANNA

Indefinitely.

THEY BOTH SMILE - SUDDENLY THE PRESS GETS WHAT'S GOING ON - MUSIC - NOISE - THEY ALL TURN AND FLASH. FLASH. FLASH PHOTOS OF WILLIAM. SPIKE FINALLY MAKES IT - HE'S BRIGHT RED FROM RUNNING.

SPIKE

What happened?

HONEY

It was good.

HONEY HUGS HIM. IT'S A NEW EXPERIENCE FOR SPIKE.

CUT TO WILLIAM'S FACE - FLASH AFTER FLASH - STILL LOOKING AT ANNA. THEY ARE BOTH SMILING.

119. INT. BIG BALL ROOM. NIGHT.

SCENES FROM A MARRIAGE - SHOT IN ROUGH HIGH-8 - VERY UPTEMPO MUSIC. OVER IT. THE SOUND OF A NEWS REPORT...

REPORTER (V/O.)

And the big story in London tonight is the marriage of American superstar Anna Farrell and British boyfriend William Thacker. Mr Thacker met Miss Farrell when she came into his store, that specializes in cookery books. After a long courtship believed to have contained many clandestine meetings in London's top hotels, they finally announced the marriage at a special press conference in London two months ago. Frequently seen together at top Notting Hill eaterie, Tony & Anna's, they are marrying tonight in true West End style. .

IT IS A HUGE, GLAMOUROUS RESTAURANT. THROUGHOUT THIS WE SEE EVENTS FROM THE RECEPTION.

1. SPIKE IS PLAYING THE ELECTRIC SAW IN FRONT OF A BAND. HE LOOKS RATHER GOOD.
2. WATCHING SPIKE ADORINGLY IS HONEY, A BRIDESMAID IN PEACH SATIN - SHE IS SURROUNDED BY THE OTHER THREE BRIDESMAIDS. ALL UNDER 5.
3. WILLIAM'S PARENTS - DANCING AWKWARDLY. BESIDE THEM. MAX, DRESSED IN THE MOST DEVASTATING BOND-LIKE WHITE TUXEDO IS DANCING WITH ANNA - GLOWING WITH PRIDE. BELLA WATCHING. PRETENDING TO BE FED UP. ACTUALLY DELIGHTED.
4. CLOSE TO HER, MARTIN. IN AN AWKWARD TWEED SUIT, IS JIGGLING TO THE BEAT, ENTIRELY HAPPY IN THE CORNER. HE LOOKS ACROSS AND SMILES. A MAN COMES AND HANDS HIM A DRINK. IT IS KEITH THE CLIMBER.
5. FURTHER ON FROM THEM IS BERNIE. ALONE - HE IS WATCHING WITH A BIG SMILE ON HIS FACE. THEN A SAD THOUGHT CROSSES HIS MIND. HE LOOKS DOWN FOR JUST A REFLECTIVE MOMENT. THEN LOOKS UP AGAIN, AND SMILES.

REPORTER (V/O.)

The couple are tonight resting at a secret destination before flying out for their honeymoon tomorrow.

120. INT. HOTEL BEDROOM. NIGHT. / EXT. WILLIAM'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

ANNA AND WILLIAM ARE SITTING ON THE FLOOR IN A COSY HOTEL BEDROOM. THEY LEAN AGAINST THE BACK OF THE BED - THE PICTURE OF LOVE AND INFORMALITY. THEY ARE WATCHING THE TELEVISION.

REPORTER (V/O.)

Although our cameras were not allowed into the wedding or reception, we did manage to catch an interview with Basil Cargill, Mr Thacker's best friend.

CUT TO TV - SPIKE, STILL IN HIS BLUE VELVET SUIT, IS BEING INTERVIEWED OUTSIDE THE HOUSE. CORRESPONDENT NICK IS INTERVIEWING HIM.

NICK

Hello, Basil.

SPIKE

It's Spike actually. Basil's my official christian name, but no-one's called me that for donkeys years.

NICK

Fair enough. Spike - what's the story?

SPIKE

I don't know. I suppose that my Dad was just such a huge fan of Spike Milligan - but my Mum wanted Basil, because that was her Dad's name - and when push came to shove...

NICK

No, what's the story with your flatmate William, and Anna Farrell?

SPIKE

O right. I thought you meant. what's the story with my being called Spike instead of Basil....although come to think of it, I can't imagine why you'd be interested in that.

NICK

Well, quite.

SPIKE

Though you never know - there's a lot of this 'real people' TV around at the moment. so you know, people might be intrigued...

CUT BACK OUT TO WILLIAM AND ANNA WATCHING...

ANNA

He's doing this on purpose.

WILLIAM

Yes, he's not as stupid as he looks...

CUT BACK TO THE TV.

SPIKE

There is one other thing I'd like to mention.

INTERVIEWER

Yes.

SPIKE

You know when you rent an X-rated French video.

INTERVIEWER

Yes?

SPIKE

It really annoys me the way they put the subtitles right over the breasts.

CUT BACK TO WILLIAM AND ANNA.

WILLIAM

Bravo Spike.

HE SWITCHES TO THE OTHER STATION. SPIKE'S ON THERE TOO.

SPIKE

Absolutely - there she was - stark naked in the bathroom.

WILLIAM

O God.

SPIKE

She looked pretty exhausted to me. William - ironically nicknamed Floppy - is a very attractive and athletic young man. Though, it must be said, he often says to me on sexual matters - "I yield to the maestro".

CLICK. WILLIAM TURNS OFF THE TV.

WILLIAM

How long does this sort of thing last?

ANNA

If we're really lucky, it'll all blow over in about... 43 years.

WILLIAM

Classic.

SHE KISSES HIM.

121. EXT. CINEMA. NIGHT.

A HUGE PREMIERE - SCREAMING CROWDS - ANNA AND WILLIAM GET OUT OF THE CAR. HER HOLDING HIS HAND - HER LOOKING ULTIMATELY GORGEOUS - HE IN A BLACK TIE THAT DOESN'T QUITE FIT.

WILLIAM

Jesus H.

122. INT. TONY'S NEW RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

ALL OF THE FRIENDS HAVING DINNER AT TONY'S - NOW A POPULAR JOINT. THE CAMERA PULLS OUT SLOWLY FROM THEIR TABLE.

MAX

So tell us, Bill - how's life in the fast lane?

WILLIAM

Well it's all....

THERE IS ANNA - AND AS THE SHOT WIDENS - YOU SEE SHE IS SIGNING AN AUTOGRAPH - AND BEHIND THE AUTOGRAPH HUNTER ARE TEN, TWENTY, THIRTY OTHER PEOPLE, WAITING WITH SCRAPS OF PAPER. TONY IS MARSHALLING THEM INTO SOME SORT OF ORDER. ANNA LOOKS UP AT WILLIAM - A LITTLE EXHAUSTED.

WILLIAM

...nice and complicated. You know - like most things in life - it has its ups and down. But when you love the girl.... it's all worth it....

THE CAMERA IS CLOSE ON HIM - HE'S THINKING THIS THROUGH...

in....

A CAPTION ON BLACK READS & HIS VOICE SAYS:

The End.

THE CREDITS PLAY OVER VERY SIMPLE FOOTAGE OF A PRETTY GREEN COMMUNAL GARDEN. CHILDREN ARE PLAYING, WATCHED BY MOTHERS, ONE OF WHOM HOLDS A NEW BABY IN A PAPOOSE. A MAN IS SPRAYING THE ROSES. A VERY OLD COUPLE WANDER ALONG SLOWLY. TWO NOT VERY GOOD PLAYERS PLAY TENNIS. AND AS THE CAMERA GLIDES, IT PASSES A COUPLE SITTING ON A SINGLE, SIMPLE WOODEN BENCH OVERLOOKING THE GARDEN. HE IS READING, SHE IS JUST LOOKING OUT, TOTALLY RELAXED AND HOLDING HIS HAND. IT IS WILLIAM AND ANNA.