

CLOSER

by

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**For Educational  
Purposes Only**

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET, LONDON - DAY

Morning rush hour. Traffic. Commuters. Office workers.

A young man (DAN) trudging along in the flow of people. \*

He carries a battered brown brief case, wears a shabby overcoat, suit, glasses, messy hair. \*

He arrives at traffic lights near Blackfriars Bridge and waits to cross the road. Cars and lorries thunder past. \*

On the other side of the street he sees a young woman (ALICE) amongst the commuters waiting to cross.

Dan stares, struck by her gamine beauty. She's lost in thought, smoking. She takes a drag then drops the butt on the ground and treads it in. \*

Then, she sees Dan staring at her. She holds his gaze. A moment. \*

She glances to her left and then STEPS INTO THE ROAD. Immediately, she's hit by a BLACK CAB. \*

INT. HOSPITAL - LATER

Busy minor injuries unit. Patients waiting. Doctors, nurses etc.

Alice sits in a quiet corner. By her side, Dan's briefcase.

She has a gash on her leg, quite bloody. She picks some dirt from the wound.

Dan arrives with two hot drinks in plastic cups. He's about to approach but then edges behind a pillar to observe her.

DAN'S P.O.V: Alice looks at the BRIEFCASE. Thinks. Looks around. Opens it. She pulls out his SANDWICHES wrapped in silver foil. She looks at the contents, smiles, thinks, puts them back. Then she removes an APPLE, shines it and bites in.

As she's chewing Dan approaches. She grins, a little guilty.

ALICE  
Sorry. I was looking for a  
cigarette.

DAN  
I've given up. \*

He hands her a drink and various sachets.

ALICE  
Thanks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He surreptitiously checks his watch - but she notices.

ALICE (cont'd)  
Have you got to be somewhere?

DAN  
Work.

Dan watches her pour sugar and milk in her drink.

DAN (cont'd)  
Didn't fancy my sandwiches?

ALICE  
I don't eat fish.

DAN  
Why not?

ALICE  
Fish piss in the sea.

DAN  
So do children.

ALICE  
I don't eat children either. What's  
your work?

DAN  
(evasive)  
I'm a sort of journalist.

ALICE  
What sort?

DAN  
I write obituaries.

They sip their drinks. Dan remains standing. \*

ALICE  
Do you think a doctor will come?

DAN  
Eventually. Does it hurt?

ALICE  
I'll live.

Dan glances at her leg. \*

DAN  
Shall I put your leg up?

ALICE  
Why?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
That's what people do in these  
situations.

ALICE  
What is this situation?

They look at each other.

DAN  
Do you want me to put your leg up?

ALICE  
Yes, please.

Dan carefully lifts her leg on to a chair.

ALICE (cont'd)  
Who cut off your crusts?

DAN  
(mildly embarrassed)  
Me.

ALICE  
Did your mother cut off your crusts  
when you were a little boy?

DAN  
I believe she did, yes.

ALICE  
You should eat your crusts.

DAN  
You should stop smoking.  
(beat)  
Why didn't you look?

ALICE  
I never look where I'm going.

DAN  
We stood at the lights and you  
just...stepped into the road. \*

ALICE  
Then what?

DAN  
You were lying on the ground, you  
focused on me, you said, 'Hallo,  
stranger'.

ALICE  
What a floozie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN

The cabbie got out. He crossed himself. He said, 'Thank fuck, I thought I'd killed her.' I said, 'Let's get her to a hospital.' He hesitated, (I think he thought there'd be paperwork and he'd be held responsible) so I said, with a slight sneer, 'Please, just drop us at the hospital.'

ALICE

Show me the sneer.  
(He does so)  
Very good, Buster.

\*  
\*

DAN

We put you in the cab and came here.

ALICE

What was I doing?

DAN

You were murmuring, 'I'm very sorry for all the inconvenience'. I had my arm round you...your head was on my shoulder...

ALICE

Was my head lolling?

DAN

That's exactly what it was doing.

A Doctor (LARRY) walks past unbuttoning his white coat as he goes. Dan tries to stop him.

DAN (cont'd)

Excuse me...

LARRY

Sorry, not my department.

\*

He makes to go, glances briefly at Alice, 'looker'. He stops:

\*

LARRY (cont'd)

What happened?

ALICE

I was hit by a cab.

DAN

She was unconscious for about ten seconds.

LARRY

May I?

Larry looks at the wound and examines her leg with interest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY (cont'd)  
You can feel your toes?

She nods. He traces the line of a SCAR on her leg. It vaguely resembles a question mark.

LARRY (cont'd)  
What's this?

ALICE  
It's a scar.

LARRY  
Yes, I know it's a scar. How did you get it?

ALICE  
In America. A truck.

Larry looks at the scar, shakes his head.

LARRY  
Awful job.

ALICE  
I was in the middle of nowhere.

LARRY  
You'll be fine.

Larry makes to leave.

ALICE  
Can I have one?  
(nods at his pocket)  
A cigarette.

Larry takes out his pack of cigarettes and removes one. Alice reaches for it, he withdraws it.

LARRY  
Don't smoke it here.

He hands her the cigarette, nods at Dan then goes. Alice toys with the cigarette.

DAN  
What were you doing, in the middle of nowhere?

ALICE  
Travelling.

DAN  
Alone?

ALICE  
With a male.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
What happened to this male?

ALICE  
I don't know, I ran away.

DAN  
Where?

ALICE  
New York.

DAN  
Just like that?

ALICE  
It's the only way to leave: 'I  
don't love you anymore, good-bye.'

DAN  
Supposing you do still love them?

ALICE  
You don't leave.

DAN  
You've never left someone you still  
love?

ALICE  
No.

She looks at the cigarette. Dan gazes at her.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

Dan and Alice come out the hospital. She lights the  
cigarette. Dan glances at her leg, the wound still exposed.

DAN  
Are you sure you don't want to  
wait?

She shakes her head.

ALICE  
I need this more.

She draws on her cigarette then offers Dan a drag.

DAN  
I told you, I've given up.

ALICE  
Well try harder.  
(beat)  
You'll be late for work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
Are you saying you want me to go?

ALICE  
I'm saying you'll be late for work.

Dan glances at the wound, it's still a little bloody.

EXT. STREET NEAR HOSPITAL - MINUTES LATER

Alice and Dan walking towards a PHARMACY.

DAN  
When did you arrive in London?

ALICE  
Yesterday.

DAN  
Are you on holiday?  
(American accent)  
You taking a vacation?

ALICE  
(thinks)  
I'm on an expedition.

DAN  
Where's your luggage?

Alice opens her arms, 'this is it'.

DAN (cont'd)  
Where are you staying?

ALICE  
(shrugs)  
I'm a waif.

They head into the Pharmacy. \*

EXT. SMALL PARK - TEN MINUTES LATER

Dan and Alice in Postman's Park. Alice is looking at a MEMORIAL. A series of plaques set into a wall: names and dates. Alice smiles to herself.

DAN  
Who does it commemorate?

ALICE  
People who died saving the lives of others.

Dan opens a small paper bag from the pharmacy. He takes out Savlon and a roll of bandage. He hands them to Alice.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

She sits and applies the antiseptic cream to her leg. Dan looks around. Thinks. Realizes something. She sees he's troubled, turns to him.

DAN  
I've been here before. When I was fifteen. We came here (my mother's dead) my father and I came here the after-noon she died.

He thinks for a moment.

DAN (cont'd)  
She died in the hospital.  
(warns Alice)  
She was a smoker.  
(remembering)  
My father ate an egg sandwich. His hands shook with grief...pieces of egg fell on the grass...butter on his top lip...but I don't remember this memorial.

Pause.

ALICE  
Is your father still alive?

DAN  
Clinging on. He's in a home.

Dan checks his watch, he's very late.

DAN (cont'd)  
I have to go.

EXT. PLATFORM, TRAIN STATION - DAY

Alice and Dan sit on a bench, waiting for his train. The bandage is on her leg.

ALICE  
How did you end up writing obituaries? What did you really want to be?

DAN  
(smiles)  
Oh, I had dreams of being a writer but I had no voice - what am I saying? I had no talent. So, I ended up in the Siberia of journalism.

ALICE  
Tell me what you do, I want to imagine you in Siberia.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN

Really?

She nods.

DAN (cont'd)

Well...we call it 'the obits page'. There's three of us; me, Harry and Graham. When I get to work, without fail, Graham will say, 'Who's on the slab?' Meaning, did anyone important die overnight - are you sure you want to know?

She nods, remains focused on him.

DAN (cont'd)

Well, if someone important died we go to the 'deep freeze' which is a computer containing all the obituaries and we'll find the dead person's life.

ALICE

People's obituaries are written when they're still alive?

DAN

Some people's. If no one important has died then Harry - he's the editor - he decides who we lead with and we check facts, make calls, polish the prose.

As Dan continues Alice gently removes his glasses, looks at him without them, breathes on the lenses, polishes them and finally returns them to his face. Throughout this Dan continues to talk as if nothing unusual were happening. Alice is not being rude, nor does her attention waver for a second. Her concentration on his words is perpetually intense.

DAN (cont'd)

Some days I might be asked to deal with the widows or widowers; they try to persuade us to run an obituary of their husbands or wives. They feel we're dishonouring their loved ones if we don't but... most of them are... well, there isn't the space. At six, we stand round the computer and read the next day's page, make final changes, put in a few euphemisms to amuse ourselves...

ALICE

Such as ?

DAN

'He was a convivial fellow' meaning he was an alcoholic.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN (cont'd)  
'He valued his privacy' - gay. 'He  
enjoyed his privacy'...raging  
queen.

ALICE  
And what would your euphemism be?

DAN  
For me?

He thinks for a moment.

DAN (cont'd)  
He was reserved.

ALICE  
And mine?

DAN  
She was...disarming.

Beat.

ALICE  
How did you get this job ?

DAN  
They ask you to write your own  
obituary. If it amuses, you're in.

Dan's train arrives on the platform. He gets up.

INT. TRAIN, DOCKLANDS LIGHT RAILWAY - DAY

Dan and Alice sit next to each other. The carriage is nearly  
full. Dan watches her as she gazes out the window. He is  
slightly unsettled by her tagging along, but not unwilling.

The train passes the high rise buildings.

DAN  
Did you like living in New York?

ALICE  
Sure. Have you been?

He shakes his head.

DAN  
What were you - were you studying?

ALICE  
I was stripping.

Alice looks at him.

ALICE (cont'd)  
(softly)  
Look at your little eyes.

(CONTINUED)

DAN  
I can't see my little eyes.

Dan glances around to see if anyone's listening. They're not.

DAN (cont'd)  
Were you good at it?

She responds with great seriousness:

ALICE  
Exceptional.

DAN  
Why?

ALICE  
I know what men want.

DAN  
Oh really?

ALICE  
Oh yes.

DAN  
Tell me...

Alice considers.

ALICE  
Men want a girl who looks like a boy. They want to protect her but she must be a survivor. And she must come like a train. But with elegance.

Dan continues to gaze at her as the train speeds along.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

They arrive at Dan's office. Alice cranes her neck up at the high building. \*

ALICE  
Where are you?

He points up high. They look at each other.

DAN  
Thank you for such an interesting morning.

ALICE  
My pleasure. And thank you for scraping me off the road.  
(earnestly)  
You knight. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dan looks at her.

DAN  
You damsel.  
(beat)  
Enjoy your stay in London. And  
please remember, our traffic tends  
to come from the right. \*

Pause. He doesn't move.

ALICE  
Do you have a girlfriend?

DAN  
Erm...yeah. Ruth. She's called  
Ruth. She's a linguist.

Alice nods, nonchalantly. Dan looks at her.

DAN (cont'd)  
Will you meet me after work?

ALICE  
(smiles)  
Why don't you take the day off?  
I'll call in for you, say you're  
sick.

DAN  
I can't.

ALICE  
Don't be such a pussy.

Dan looks at her, protectively.

DAN  
I might be anyone, I might be a  
psychotic.

ALICE  
I've met psychotics, you're not.  
Phone.

Dan thinks then gives her his mobile.

DAN  
Memory One.

He ushers her away from the building as Alice punches in the  
number.

ALICE  
Who do I speak to?

DAN  
Harry Masters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE  
What's your name?

They stand in the street facing each other. \*

DAN  
Mr. Daniel Woolf.  
(beat)  
What's your name? \*

ALICE  
Alice. My name is Alice Ayres.

CUT TO: \*

CAPTION: THE FOLLOWING YEAR \*

CUT TO: \*

INT. ANNA'S STUDIO - DAY \*

CLOSE: Dan's face. Completely still. Straight into camera. \*

He goes out of focus. And then back in. Sound of camera shutter. Five shots. \*

ANNA (O.S)  
Good. \*

DAN'S P.O.V: He's staring into a camera lens. \*

The photographer - a woman in her thirties (ANNA) - stands over the camera, her face not visible. \*

She takes a few more shots and then raises her head so she's revealed for the first time. \*

She looks at Dan a few seconds - professional, detached. \*

ANNA (cont'd)  
I need to change film. Are you alright for time? \*

DAN  
(nods)  
Mmhm. \*

Anna begins to change film, adjust lights, etc. \*

Dan gets off the stool on which she's placed him. He looks different; better hair, better dressed, no glasses. \*

DAN (cont'd)  
Do you mind if I smoke? \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA  
If you must.

DAN  
I don't have to...

ANNA  
Then don't.

He idles round her busy studio, looking at some of the rough prints on the walls - a variety of works, mainly portraits.

Anna watches him, makes a decision.

ANNA (cont'd)  
I liked your book.

DAN  
(turns)  
Thanks...

ANNA  
When's it published?

DAN  
Next year. How come you read it?

ANNA  
Your publisher sent me a manuscript, I read it last night. You kept me up till four.

DAN  
I'm flattered.

ANNA  
Is your anonymous heroine based on someone real?

He watches her as she sets a light. Her bare arms, the muscles flexing as she works.

DAN  
She's...someone called Alice.

ANNA  
How does she feel about you stealing her life?

DAN  
Borrowing her life. I'm dedicating the book to her, she's pleased.

Dan stares at her back - almost mesmerised. Anna turns. They look at each other.

DAN (cont'd)  
Do you exhibit?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA  
Sometimes. I've got a thing next  
year. \*

DAN  
Portraits?

Anna nods.

DAN (cont'd)  
Of who?

ANNA  
Strangers.

DAN  
What, you go up to complete  
strangers in the street and ask if  
you can photograph them? \*

ANNA  
(shrugs)  
It gets me out the house. \*

DAN  
Isn't it dangerous? \*

ANNA  
I choose carefully. \*

She gestures for him to sit again. She checks the light on  
him with a meter. \*

DAN  
How do your strangers feel about  
you stealing their lives? \*

ANNA  
Borrowing.

Anna adjusts his hair.

DAN  
Am I a stranger?

She stops. A little wary now. \*

ANNA  
No, you're a job.

Pause. They are close. \*

DAN  
You're beautiful.

Anna looks at him, doesn't quite know what to do. She  
retreats behind her camera, looks down the lens. \*

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

ANNA  
Chin up, you're a sloucher.

She takes some more shots.

DAN  
You didn't find it obscene?

ANNA  
What?

DAN  
The book.

ANNA  
No, I thought it was...accurate.

DAN  
About what?

ANNA  
About sex. About love.

DAN  
In what way?

ANNA  
You wrote it.

DAN  
But you read it. Till four.

Dan smiles at her, Anna looks down the lens.

ANNA  
Don't raise your eyebrows, you look smug. Stand up.

Dan stands up.

DAN  
But you did like it ?

ANNA  
Yes, but I could go off it.

DAN  
Any criticisms?

ANNA  
I'm not sure about the title...

DAN  
Neither am I. Got a better one?

She looks at him, 'really?'. He nods.

ANNA  
'The Aquarium'?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They look at each other.

DAN  
So you liked the filth?

Anna shrugs.

DAN (cont'd)  
You like aquariums? \*

ANNA  
Fish are therapeutic.

DAN  
Hang out in aquariums, do you? \*

ANNA  
When I can.

DAN  
Good for picking up strangers? \*

ANNA  
Photographing strangers. \*

Silence. Dan holds her gaze.

DAN  
(gently)  
Come here.

Anna thinks. Then moves towards him, slowly. She stops.

ANNA  
I don't kiss strange men.

DAN  
Neither do I.

She looks into his eyes. \*

ANNA  
Do you and this Alice live  
together?

Dan considers.

DAN  
Yes. \*

Dan touches her face. Anna gently takes his hand, looks at it and then pulls away from him.

DAN (cont'd)  
Are you married?

ANNA  
Yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dan grimaces, she looks at him. \*

ANNA (cont'd)  
No. Yes. \*

DAN  
Which? \*

ANNA  
Separated.

She turns off a light. \*

DAN  
Do you have any children?

ANNA  
No.

DAN  
Would you like some?

ANNA  
Yes, but not today.

She shuts her camera case and packs up, session over. \*

ANNA (cont'd)  
Would Alice like children?

DAN  
She's too young. \*  
(glances at his watch)  
Actually, she's coming to meet me  
here, quite soon. \*

ANNA  
Why are you wasting her time ?

DAN  
I'm not. I'm grateful to her. She  
changed my life. She's completely  
lovable and completely unleaveable. \*

ANNA  
And you don't want someone else to  
get their dirty hands on her? \*

Dan shrugs.

ANNA (cont'd)  
Men are crap.

DAN  
But all the same. \*

ANNA  
They're still crap.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The door buzzer goes.

ANNA (cont'd)  
Your muse.

Dan looks at Anna, she shrugs ruefully. \*

DAN  
You've ruined my life. \*

ANNA  
You'll get over it.

The buzzer sounds again. Dan leaves the room. Anna thinks. \*

INT. STAIRS, ANNA'S STUDIO - MOMENTS LATER \*

Dan heads towards the front door, deep in thought. He stands by the door, breathes in and then opens it - no one there. \*

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS \*

Dan steps outside, glances around... \*

DAN  
Alice? \*

Then, from behind some nearby rubbish bins: \*

ALICE (O.S.)  
Cold. \*

Dan heads towards the bins. \*

ALICE (O.S.) (cont'd)  
Warmer. \*

She pops up. \*

ALICE (cont'd)  
Hot. \*

They kiss. Her hair is a different colour and length. \*

DAN  
Hallo. \*

ALICE  
Are you done? \*

DAN  
Yup. \*

ALICE  
How's the photographer? \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
Professional, rigorous, beady.

Alice strokes his face.

ALICE  
Did she capture you?

She looks at him, something troubles her a second as they head inside.

INT. STAIRS, ANNA'S STUDIO - MOMENTS LATER

Dan and Alice go up the stairs and come in to the studio. Anna's waiting for them at the far end of the room.

DAN  
Anna...Alice.

ANNA  
Hi.

Alice looks at Anna as she walks towards them. The sun behind her, she looks a vision.

ALICE  
I'm sorry to interrupt.

ANNA  
No, we've just finished.

ALICE  
Was he well-behaved?

ANNA  
Yes, reasonably.

ALICE  
Is he photogenic?

ANNA  
I think so.

ALICE  
Did you steal his soul?

ANNA  
(smiles)  
Would you like some tea?

ALICE  
No thanks, I've been serving it all day. Sorry, can I use the...?

ANNA  
(gestures)  
Through there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alice goes. Anna watches her leave, turns to Dan. \*

ANNA (cont'd)  
She is beautiful.

Dan approaches. \*

DAN  
I've got to see you.

ANNA  
No!

DAN  
Why are you getting all sisterly?

ANNA  
I'm not getting sisterly. I don't  
want trouble. \*

DAN  
I'm not trouble.

ANNA  
You're taken.

INT. CORRIDOR - SAME TIME \*

Alice stands there - listening to their conversation -  
distraught. \*

DAN (O.S.)  
I've got to see you. \*

ANNA (O.S.)  
Tough. \*

DAN (O.S.)  
But you would've kissed me...? \*

ANNA (O.S.)  
I would've and then I didn't. The  
End. \*

Alice's eyes prick with tears. She thinks, steels herself. \*

INT. ANNA'S STUDIO - MOMENTS LATER \*

Alice comes in, shivers slightly. \*

ALICE  
I'm a block of ice.

Dan goes to her and rubs her. Alice turns to Anna. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE (cont'd)  
 Will you take my photo? I've never  
 been photographed by a professional  
 before. I'd really appreciate it.  
 I'll pay you.

\*  
\*  
\*

ANNA  
 (unsure)  
 No...I'd like to...

\*

ALICE  
 (To Dan)  
 Only if you don't mind?

DAN  
 Why should I?

ALICE  
 Because you'll have to go away.  
 (To Anna)  
 We don't want him here while we're  
 working, do we?

Beat.

\*

ANNA  
 No, we don't.

DAN  
 Right...I'll wait in the pub on the  
 corner...

DAN (cont'd)  
 (kisses Alice)  
 Have fun.  
 (To Anna)  
 Thank you. Good luck with your  
 exhibition.

\*  
\*

ANNA  
 Good luck with your book.

Dan takes a slightly nervous look at Alice who waves to him  
 with a little smile. Dan leaves, lighting a cigarette as he  
 goes.

\*  
\*

ALICE  
 You've got an exhibition?

ANNA  
 Only a small one. Take a seat.

Alice sits. Anna busies herself with the camera, checks  
 light, etc. Alice watches her.

ALICE  
 Are you single?

\*

ANNA  
 ...Yes...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE  
Who was your last boyfriend? \*

Anna unsure where this is leading.

ANNA  
My husband.

ALICE  
What happened to him? \*

ANNA  
Someone younger.

ALICE  
What did he do? \*

ANNA  
He made money. In the City.

Anna looks into the camera.

Anna's P.O.V: Alice up close, framed in the lens.

ANNA (cont'd)  
You've got a great face.

Anna focuses tight.

ANNA (cont'd)  
How do you feel about Dan using  
your life, for his book?

ALICE  
None of your fucking business.

Alice stares at Anna.

ALICE (cont'd)  
When he let me in...downstairs...  
he had this...'look'. I've never  
seen him guilty before. \*  
\*  
(beat) \*  
I just listened to your  
conversation. \*

Silence.

ANNA  
I don't know what to say.

ALICE  
(shrugs) \*  
Take my picture. \*

ANNA  
I'm not a thief, Alice.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

ALICE  
(nods)  
I know. I heard.

Pause.

ANNA  
Shall we have a drink, I've got  
some vodka...?

She gestures to the battered old fridge and then the camera.

ANNA (cont'd)  
Let's have a drink instead?

Alice shakes her head, continues to sit for the shot. Anna  
looks down the lens.

ANNA (cont'd)  
Head up...

Alice raises her head, in tears now.

ANNA (cont'd)  
(gently)  
Turn to me...Alice...turn to me...

Alice slowly turns into the lens.

CLOSE: Alice huge in the lens, close up.

Despite herself Anna sees she's got a great photo here. She  
fires off ten shots as swiftly as she can.

The loud sound of the camera shutter. And then silence.

ANNA (cont'd)  
Good.

CUT TO:

CAPTION: THE FOLLOWING YEAR

CUT TO:

EXT. INDIAN RESTAURANT - EVENING

Dan comes out with a carrier bag of take away food.

He's unshaven, wears dirty jeans, a t-shirt and his overcoat.

EXT. PUB, STREET - MINUTES LATER

Dan walks past a PUB. A blackboard outside it says 'LIVE  
TONITE - ARSENAL V SPURS'.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As Dan passes a HUGE ROAR emanates from the pub. A goal has been scored. He looks through the window and sees a room full of SUPPORTERS leaping up and down in joy. \*

Dan goes on his miserable way. \*

INT. SITTING ROOM, DAN'S FLAT - LATER \*

Dan sits at his desk typing on his computer. Dim light.

The room's a tip. Writerly sloth, etc. He swigs from a can and vaguely picks at the remains of his take away. \*

He is online, in a chat room. \*

CLOSE: his computer screen as he types:

DAN (TYPING)  
Hallo

He receives a reply:

Hi

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE, HOSPITAL - SAME TIME

LARRY at his desk with a computer. Typing. He wears a white coat. The desk is lit by a single lamp, secretive atmosphere... \*

A message appears on his screen:

How RU ?

Larry replies:

LARRY (TYPING ETC...)  
ok

And a response appears:

Cum here often?

Larry smiles and types:

LARRY (cont'd)  
1st time.

DAN  
A Virgin! Welcome. Wots yr name?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
Larry. U?

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DAN'S FLAT - SAME TIME

\*

Dan considers then types:

DAN  
Anna

LARRY  
Nice 2 meet U

DAN  
I love COCK

INTERCUT AS  
NECESSARY:

LARRY  
Youre v. forward

DAN  
Do U want sex ?

LARRY  
yes. describe u.

DAN  
Blonde. Big mouth. Epic Tits.

LARRY  
define epic

DAN  
36DD

LARRY  
Nice arse?

DAN  
Y

LARRY  
cos i want 2 know

Dan smiles.

DAN  
No, 'Y' means 'Yes'

LARRY  
O

DAN  
I want 2 suck U senseless.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
B my guest

DAN  
Sit on my face Fuckboy

LARRY  
I'm there

DAN  
Wear my wet knickers

Larry considers. \*

LARRY  
ok

DAN  
RU well hung?

LARRY  
9f (speaking )  
Shit!  
9" (typing )

DAN  
GET IT OUT

Larry considers and then unzips. He puts his hand in his trousers. The phone on his desk rings. Loud. He jumps.

LARRY  
(speaking)  
Wait!  
(typing)  
wait

Larry picks up. Dan lights a cigarette. \*

LARRY (cont'd)  
(speaking in phone) \*  
Yuh.  
(he listens)  
What's the histology? Progressive?  
No, sounds like an atrophy.

Larry puts the phone down and goes back to his keyboard.

LARRY (cont'd) \*  
hallo?

Dan looks at his screen.

LARRY (cont'd) \*  
anna?  
(speaking)  
Bollocks.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY (cont'd)  
(typing )  
ANNA? WHERE RU?

DAN  
Hey, big Larry, what d'you wank  
about?

Larry considers then types:

LARRY  
Exgirlfriends

DAN  
Not current g-friends ?

LARRY  
Never

Dan smiles.

DAN  
Tell me your sex-ex fantasy...

LARRY  
Hotel room. They tie me up, tease  
me, wont let me come. They fight  
over me, 6 tonges on my cock,  
ballls, perineum etc.

DAN  
All hail the Sultan of Twat?

Larry laughs.

LARRY  
Anna, wot do U wank about ?

Dan thinks.

DAN  
Strangers.

LARRY  
details...

DAN  
They form a Q and I attend to them  
like a cum hungry bitch, 1 in each  
hole and both hands.

LARRY  
then?

DAN  
They cum in my mouth arse tits cunt  
hair.

LARRY  
(speaking)  
Jesus...

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

DAN  
Dont b a pussy. I make u cum like a  
train.

LARRY  
2morro lpm where? \*

Dan thinks, smiles to himself, types: \*

DAN  
The Aquarium, London Zoo & then  
HOTEL.

LARRY  
How U know me?

DAN  
Bring white coat

LARRY  
?

DAN  
Dr + Coat = big horn 4 me

LARRY  
OK! Bye Anna!

DAN  
Bye Larry! xxxxxx

LARRY  
xxxxxxx

Huge KISSES fill the screen. \*

CUT TO: \*

CAPTION: THE NEXT DAY \*

CUT TO: \*

INT. AQUARIUM - DAY

A party of school children leave with their teacher to reveal  
ANNA alone on a bench. \*

The room is dark, quiet, just the bubbling of water tanks. \*

Anna vaguely looks at the fish, occasionally referring to her  
guide book. She's deep in thought, feeling her solitude. \*

She reaches into her bag and takes out her CAMERA. In the bag  
a copy of Dan's novel, 'THE AQUARIUM'. She flicks through it: \*

Her photo of him on the inside flap. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The dedication, 'For Alice'. \*

His hand written inscription, 'To Anna, Thank You, Love Dan'. \*

LARRY comes in. He checks her out, amazed and thrilled she's turned up. \*

Anna sees him and gives a slight nod, acknowledging this stranger's presence... \*

LARRY  
Anna...? \*

She nods. Larry surreptitiously unbuttons his overcoat to reveal his WHITE COAT underneath. \*

LARRY (cont'd)  
I've got 'The Coat'. \*

ANNA  
Yes...you have...? \*

LARRY  
The White Coat. \*

ANNA  
So I see...? \*

LARRY  
I'm Larry. The Doctor. \*

ANNA  
Hallo, Doctor Larry. \*

LARRY  
I can't believe these things actually happen! I thought you'd be an old trout but you're bloody gorgeous! \*

ANNA  
Thanks...? \*

Larry takes her in, appreciatively. Anna looks at him, trying to work out who he is. Larry takes in the fish. \*

LARRY  
Fish. You've gotta respect 'em. \*

ANNA  
Have you? \*

LARRY  
Of course. We were fish. \*

ANNA  
What? \*

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

LARRY \*  
 Long ago. Before we were apes. \*

He instantly regrets his attempt at small talk. \*

LARRY (cont'd) \*  
 You mentioned a hotel - no rush. \*  
 (checks his watch)  
 Actually, there is, I've got to be  
 in surgery by three.

ANNA  
 Are you having an operation?

LARRY  
 No, I'm doing one! \*

ANNA  
 You really are a doctor ?

LARRY  
 I said I was.

He brandishes his hospital ID badge. \*

LARRY (cont'd)  
 (sudden panic)  
 You are Anna?

ANNA  
 Yes! I'm sorry, have I photographed  
 you, have we met somewhere? \*

LARRY  
 Don't play games, you Nymph of the  
 Net!

Anna looks non-plussed.

LARRY (cont'd)  
 (confused) \*  
 You were up for it yesterday. \*

ANNA  
 Was I?

LARRY  
 YES! 'Wear my wet knickers', 'Sit  
 on my face', 'I'm a cum hungry bitch  
 typing with one - why do I feel  
 like a pervert? \*

ANNA  
 I think you're the victim of a  
 medic's prank. \*

Larry thinks for a while. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
I am so sorry.

He makes to leave. Anna chuckles.

LARRY (cont'd)  
NO! We spoke on the net but now  
you've seen me you don't - it's  
fine - I'm not gonna get upset  
about it. \*

ANNA  
Then why are you upset?

LARRY  
I'm not, I'm frustrated.  
(beat) \*  
Where were you between the hours of  
8.45 and 9.00 pm yesterday? \*

ANNA \*  
None of your business! Where were  
you between those hours ? \*

LARRY  
On the net talking to you. \*  
(she shakes her head) \*  
Well I was talking to someone. \*

ANNA  
(realising)  
Pretending to be me. You were  
talking to Daniel Woolf! \*

LARRY  
Who?

ANNA \*  
Daniel Woolf. His girlfriend told  
me he plays around on the net. It's  
him! \*

LARRY  
No, I was talking to a woman.

ANNA  
How do you know?

LARRY  
Because - believe me, she was a  
woman, I got a huge - she was a  
woman.

ANNA  
No, she wasn't.

LARRY  
She wasn't, was she?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA  
No.

LARRY  
What a CUNT. Sorry.

ANNA  
I'm a grown-up, 'Cunt away'.

LARRY  
Thanks. This bloke, how d'you know him?

ANNA  
I don't know him really, I took his photo for a book he wrote.

LARRY  
I hope it sank without trace.

ANNA  
It's on its way.

LARRY  
There is justice in the world.  
What's it called?

ANNA  
The Aquarium.

LARRY  
Oh what a PRICK! He's advertising!  
(beat)  
But why? Why would he pretend to be you?

ANNA  
(shrugs)  
He likes me.

LARRY  
Funny way of showing it, can't he send you flowers?

EXT. AQUARIUM, LONDON ZOO - DAY (MINUTES LATER)

Anna comes out and wanders past the cages of animals.

After a while Larry comes out too, spots her and catches up with her. She turns to him, a little surprised.

LARRY  
Could I buy you a coffee, as a token of my extreme contrition?

Anna thinks.

EXT. LONDON ZOO CAFE - DAY (MINUTES LATER) \*

They sit at a table with their drinks. Anna stirs sugar in. \*

ANNA \*  
Wonderful thing, the internet. \*

Larry nods in agreement. \*

ANNA (cont'd) \*  
The possibility of genuine global \*  
communication, the first great \*  
democratic medium... \*

LARRY \*  
Absolutely, it's the future. \*

ANNA \*  
Two boys tossing in cyberspace. \*

LARRY \*  
He was the tosser. \*  
(grins) \*  
I'll say this for him, he can \*  
write. \*

Anna smiles. Larry looks at her, curious now. \*

LARRY (cont'd) \*  
Is he in love with you? \*

ANNA \*  
I don't know. No.

LARRY \*  
Are you in love with him ?

ANNA \*  
I hardly know him, no.

LARRY \*  
But you're sort of interested?

ANNA \*  
I think he's interesting. \*

She looks away from him. \*

LARRY \*  
(gently) \*  
Are you all right?

Anna nods.

LARRY (cont'd) \*  
You can tell me...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA  
Because you're a doctor?

LARRY  
Because I'm here.

Anna turns to him.

LARRY (cont'd)  
I'm famed for my bedside manner...

ANNA  
I took my first picture, just here.  
We were having ice cream. It was my  
eighth birthday. My father let me  
take some shots with his camera. I  
was desperate to see the pictures.  
When no one was looking I opened  
the back and took out the roll of  
film. Exposed it. So I never saw my  
first photo.

LARRY  
Was he angry?

ANNA  
(shakes her head)  
No, but I was devastated. He said,  
'let this be a lesson; don't rush.'

Anna raises her camera, Larry covers his face.

LARRY  
I look like a criminal in photos.

ANNA  
Please, it's my birthday.

LARRY  
(dropping his hands)  
Really?

ANNA  
(takes photo)  
Yes, really.

LARRY  
Happy Birthday.

He smiles at her. And she smiles back.

CUT TO:

CAPTION: A FEW MONTHS LATER

CUT TO:

INT. GALLERY - NIGHT

CLOSE: Anna's huge black and white photo of Alice. \*

Alice stands looking at it, swigs from a bottle of lager. \*

A poster hangs elsewhere: ANNA CAMERON - STRANGERS \*

The gallery has various rooms, all full of people with drinks and canapes. The subjects of the portraits have all been invited. They wander around amongst the arty types. \*

Dan comes in. He has a glass of wine. A slightly shabby black suit. He looks at Alice looking at the image. After a while: \*

DAN

Cheers! \*

She turns. They drink. Dan admires the photo.

DAN (cont'd)

You're the belle of the bullshit.  
You look beautiful.

ALICE

(softly)

I'm here.

(Dan smiles)

A man came into the cafe today and said, 'Hey, waitress, what are you waiting for?'

DAN

Funny guy.

ALICE

I said, 'I'm waiting for a man to come in here and fuck me sideways with a beautiful line like that.'

DAN

What did he do?

ALICE

He asked for a cup of tea with two sugars.

(She looks at him)

I'm waiting for you \*

DAN

To do what? \*

ALICE

Leave me.

DAN

I'm not going to leave you. I totally love you. What is this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE  
Please let me come...  
(Dan turns away)  
I want to be there for you. Are you  
ashamed of me? \*

DAN  
Of course not. I've told you, I  
want to be alone.

ALICE  
Why?

DAN  
To grieve...to think.

ALICE  
I love you, why won't you let me?

DAN  
It's only a weekend.

ALICE  
Why won't you let me love you?

Dan turns, drinks. He looks into the next door room. He sees  
his ex-editor, HARRY - a man of around sixty, boozy, red  
faced, holding court with a gaggle of guests. \*

DAN  
Harry's here. Pissed as a newt.  
He wants me to go back to obits,  
says they miss me. \*

ALICE  
Poor Harry - you know he's in love  
with you. \*

DAN  
No he's not!  
(glances at him again.)  
Is he? \*

ALICE  
Yes. D'you want to go back? \*

DAN  
We're very poor...

ALICE  
What about your writing?

Dan shrugs.

DAN  
Look, I'm going to say hallo and  
goodbye to Anna and then I'll get a  
cab to the station, OK? Buster?

Dan kisses her forehead. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE  
(softly)  
Kiss my lips...?

He does so.

DAN  
I'll call you as soon as I get  
there.

He goes as Larry comes in. They almost collide. Larry regards  
the departing Dan. Alice lights a cigarette, she uses her  
bottle as an ashtray.

Larry wears a suit and a black cashmere sweater with a  
collar. He has a bottle of wine and a glass.

Alice is curious, knows she's seen him before...

LARRY  
Evening.

ALICE  
Are you a waiter?

LARRY  
No, I'm a refugee escaping from the  
glittering babble.

He looks at the photo and then his exhibition catalogue.

LARRY (cont'd)  
And you are, 'Young Woman, London'.  
(points to the photo)  
Do you like it?

ALICE  
No.

LARRY  
Well you should. What were you so  
sad about?

ALICE  
Life.

LARRY  
What's that then?

Alice smiles.

LARRY (cont'd)  
What d'you reckon, in general?

ALICE  
You wanna talk about art?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

LARRY

I know it's vulgar to discuss 'The Work' at an opening of 'The Work' - but someone's got to do it. Serious, what d'you think ?

\*  
\*

ALICE

It's a lie. It's a bunch of sad strangers photographed beautifully and all the rich fuckers who appreciate art say it's beautiful because that's what they want to see. But the people in the photos are sad and alone but the pictures make the world seem beautiful. So, the exhibition is reassuring, which makes it a lie, and everyone loves a Big Fat Lie.

LARRY

I'm the Big Fat Liar's boyfriend.

ALICE

Bastard!

LARRY

Larry.

ALICE

Alice.

They shake hands. Beat. Alice moves in on him.

ALICE (cont'd)

So you're Anna's boyfriend?

LARRY

A princess can kiss a frog.

ALICE

How long have you been seeing her?

LARRY

Four months. We're in 'the first flush', it's paradise, all my nasty habits amuse her.

(gazes at her)

You shouldn't smoke.

\*  
\*

ALICE

Fuck off.

LARRY

I'm a doctor, I'm s'posed to say things like that.

\*

Alice realises where she's seen him before. She holds out her pack of cigarettes.

\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE  
Want one?

LARRY  
No!

Alice continues to proffer.

LARRY (cont'd)  
Yes. No. Fuck it, yes. NO! I've  
given up.

He watches her smoking.

LARRY (cont'd)  
Anna told me your bloke wrote a  
book. Any good?

ALICE  
Of course.

LARRY  
It's about you, isn't it?

ALICE  
Some of me.

LARRY  
Oh? What did he leave out?

ALICE  
The truth.

Beat.

LARRY  
Is he here? Your bloke.

ALICE  
Yeah, he's talking to your bird.

Alice gestures into ANOTHER ROOM. Larry glances in and sees  
ANNA and DAN in intense conversation. Dan looks stunned by  
something she's just told him.

Larry turns back to Alice - can't resist.

LARRY  
So...you were a stripper?

ALICE  
(flirtatious)  
Yeah, and?

Larry sees the scar on her leg.

LARRY  
Mind if I ask how you got that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE  
You've asked me this before.

LARRY  
When??

ALICE  
Two and a half years ago. I was in hospital. You looked at my leg.

LARRY  
How d'you remember me?

ALICE  
It was a memorable day. You didn't really want to stop but you did, you were off for a crafty smoke. You gave me a cigarette.

LARRY  
Well, I don't smoke now and nor should you.

ALICE  
But you used to go and smoke. On the sly.

LARRY  
Yeah, in a little park near the hospital.

ALICE  
Postman's Park?

LARRY  
That's the one.

Alice takes a swig from his bottle.

LARRY (cont'd)  
And the scar?

ALICE  
A mafia hit-man broke my leg.

Larry gives her a look of disbelief, Alice nods insistently.

LARRY  
Doesn't look like a break...

ALICE  
What does it look like?

LARRY  
Like something went into it.  
(tentative)  
A knife, maybe...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE  
When I was eight some metal went  
into my leg when my parents' car  
crashed, when they died. Happy now?

LARRY  
Sorry, it was none of my business.  
I'm supposed to be off-duty.

Alice looks at him, curious: \*

ALICE  
Is it nice being good?

LARRY  
I'm not good.

Larry looks at her, close. \*

LARRY (cont'd)  
What about you? \*

Larry gently strokes her cheek, she lets him. A moment of  
intense intimacy - which he now breaks, guiltily. \*

LARRY (cont'd)  
I'm seeing my first private patient  
tomorrow. Tell me I'm not a sell  
out.

ALICE  
(perfunctory) \*

LARRY  
Thanks. You take care.

ALICE  
I will, you too.

Alice goes. Larry watches her leave. \*

CUT TO: \*

EXT. TERRACE, GALLERY - SAME TIME \*

Dan is lurking. The party is thinning out, he's almost alone. \*

He has a small suitcase and his coat. He checks his watch and  
waits, nervously. \*

He sees ANNA detach herself from some admirers inside and  
then come out to him. \*

ANNA  
I can't talk for long. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
Bit of a do, isn't it? \*

ANNA  
Yeah, I hate it. \*

DAN  
But you're good at it. \*  
(beat) \*  
So, he's a dermatologist. Can you \*  
get more boring than that? \*

ANNA  
Obituarist?

DAN  
Failed novelist, please.

ANNA  
I was sorry about your book.

DAN  
Thanks, I blame the title.

ANNA  
I blame the critics. You must write  
another one.

DAN  
Why can't failure be attractive?

ANNA  
It's not a failure.

DAN  
It's perceived to be, therefore it  
is. Pathetically, I needed praise,  
a real writer is above such  
concerns. \*

ANNA  
Romantic tosh.

DAN  
Ever had bad reviews? Well, shut up  
then.

(beat)  
Talk to Doctor Larry about  
photography, do you? Is he a fan of  
Man Ray or Karsh? He'll bore you.

ANNA  
No he won't - he doesn't, actually.

DAN  
(exasperated )  
I cannot believe I made this  
happen! \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA  
How's Alice? \*

DAN  
She's fine. Do you love him? \*

Anna nods. \*

DAN (cont'd)  
(alarmed)  
You're not going to marry him? \*

ANNA  
I might. \*

DAN  
Don't. Marry me. Children,  
everything. You don't want his  
children - three little stooges in  
white coats. Don't marry him, marry  
me. Grow old with me, die with me,  
wear a battered cardigan on the  
beach in Bournemouth. Marry me!

He goes down on one knee, she forces him to his feet. \*

ANNA  
There are people here. \*

DAN  
No, there's no one, there's no one  
in the world. Marry me. \*

ANNA  
I don't know you. \*

DAN  
Yes you do. I couldn't feel what I  
feel for you unless you felt it  
too. Anna, we're in love, it's not  
our fault, stop wasting his time. \*

ANNA  
I haven't seen you for a year! \*

DAN  
Yes you have. \*

ANNA  
Only because you stalk me outside  
my studio. \*

DAN  
I don't stalk, I lurk. And when I'm  
not there you look for me. \*

ANNA  
How do you know, if you're not  
there? \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
Because I am there - lurking from a distance. (I love your work by the way, it's tragic).

ANNA  
Thanks.

He gestures to his suitcase.

DAN  
I know this isn't appropriate, I'm going to my father's funeral - come with me.

ANNA  
Your father died?

DAN  
It's fine, I hated him - no I didn't - I don't care - I care about THIS. Come with me, spend a weekend with me, then decide.

ANNA  
There's nothing to decide. What about Alice?

DAN  
She'll survive. I can't be her father anymore. Anna, you want to believe he's 'the one' but it's not real, you're scared of this.

ANNA  
There is no 'this', I love him.

DAN  
Why?

ANNA  
(exasperated)  
Any number of reasons!

DAN  
Name one.

ANNA  
He's kind.

DAN  
(ferocious)  
Don't give me 'kind'. 'Kind' is dull, 'kind' will kill you. Alice is 'kind', even I'm 'kind,' anyone can be fucking KIND.  
(beat)  
I cannot live without you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA  
You can. You do!

He tries to speak, exclaims in frustration.

DAN  
All the language is old, there are  
no new words: I love you.  
(beat)  
I need you. I can't think, I can't  
work, I can't breathe. We are going  
to die. Please...save me.  
(beat)  
Look at me.

Anna looks at him.

DAN (cont'd)  
Tell me you're not in love with me.

Pause.

ANNA  
I'm not in love with you.

Beat.

DAN  
You just lied. See me next week,  
please, Anna, I'm begging you. I'm  
your stranger. Jump.

Silence. They are close. Larry is watching them from inside.  
Dan sees him and makes to leave.

ANNA  
Your case.

Dan returns, picks up his suitcase and leaves via the  
alleyway at the side of the building.

INT. GALLERY - CONTINUOUS

Anna immediately comes inside to join Larry. He hands her a  
glass of wine.

LARRY  
Hallo, stranger.

ANNA  
Hallo.

She drinks.

LARRY  
Intense conversation?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

ANNA  
His father's died. Were you spying?

LARRY  
Lovingly observing - with a  
telescope.  
(beat)  
He's taller than his photo.

ANNA  
The photo's a head shot.

LARRY  
Yeah, I know, but his head implied  
a short body but in fact, his head  
is deceptive.

ANNA  
Deceptive?

LARRY  
Yes, because he's actually got a  
long body. He's a stringy fucker.  
(She laughs.)  
I could 'ave 'im.

ANNA  
What?

LARRY  
If it came to it, in a scrap, I  
could 'ave 'im.  
(beat)  
Did you tell him we call him Cupid?

ANNA  
No, that's our joke.

She tugs his sweater pulling him towards her.

LARRY  
I've never worn cashmere before.  
Thank you. I'm Cinderella at the  
ball.

ANNA  
(charmed)  
You're a peasant.

LARRY  
You love it.  
(He holds her, 'mock  
rough')  
I had a chat with young Alice.

ANNA  
Fancy her?

LARRY  
'Course. Not as much as you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA  
Why?

LARRY  
You're a woman, she's a girl. She has the moronic beauty of youth but she's got side.

ANNA  
She seems very open to me.

LARRY  
That's how she wants to seem. You forget you're dealing with a clinical observer of the human carnival.

ANNA  
Am I now?

LARRY  
Oh yes.

ANNA  
You seem more like the cat who got the cream. You can stop licking yourself you know.  
(He looks hurt)  
God, I'm sorry. that was a horrible thing to say. I didn't mean it. It's just...my family's here and friends and...I have no excuse. I'm sorry.

LARRY  
I know what you mean. I'll stop pawing you.  
(beat)  
I met your Dad.

ANNA  
I know. He actually said, 'I like him'. He's never said that before, about anyone. They all adored you; my stepmother thinks you're gorgeous, 'Lovely hands,' she said, 'you can imagine him doing his stitching, very sensitively.'

LARRY  
So they didn't think I was an oik?

ANNA  
No! You're not, you're you and you're wonderful.

LARRY  
D'you like my folks? They loved you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA  
Your mother's got such a...kind  
face.

\*

They look at each other.

CUT TO:

\*

CAPTION: THE FOLLOWING YEAR

\*

CUT TO:

\*

INT. SITTING ROOM, DAN'S FLAT - MIDNIGHT

\*

Alice asleep, curled up on the sofa. She wears pyjamas. A  
half-eaten apple beside her.

\*

Sound of front door. Footsteps on the stairs.

\*

INT. SITTING ROOM, ANNA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Anna waits on a chaise longue. Sound of a taxi pulling up  
outside. She doesn't move. Steels herself.

EXT. HOUSE - SAME TIME

Larry gets out the taxi carrying a suitcase and a bag of duty  
free. He heads towards the house - worried.

INT. DAN'S FLAT - SAME TIME

Dan comes in. He carries the brown briefcase seen earlier. He  
looks at Alice. He's nervous, his face pale with anxiety.

Alice stirs, wakes, sees him.

ALICE  
Where've you been?

DAN  
I had a drink with Harry. You never  
have one drink with Harry.

ALICE  
Did you eat? I made some food.

DAN  
I'm not hungry.

She looks at him, worried now.

\*

ALICE  
What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
This will hurt. I've been with  
Anna. I'm in love with her. We've  
been seeing each other for a year.

Alice gets up and exits. She drifts past him like a ghost. \*

INT. ANNA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Larry comes in to the sitting room, sees Anna and beams:

LARRY  
Don't move! I want to remember this  
moment for ever: the first time I  
walked through the door, returning  
from a business trip, to be greeted  
by my wife. I have, in this moment,  
become an adult.

(hugs her) \*  
Thanks for waiting up, you darling, \*  
you goddess. I missed you. Jesus, \*  
I'm knackered.

ANNA  
Didn't you sleep on the plane?

LARRY  
Nope, because the permed German  
sleeping next to me was snoring  
like a Messerschmitt. \*  
(removes his jacket) \*  
What's the time?

ANNA  
Midnight.

LARRY  
Seven. Time - what a tricky little  
fucker. My head's in two places, my  
brain actually hurts.

ANNA  
D'you want some food? \*

LARRY  
Nahh, I need a bath.

ANNA  
Shall I run you one?

LARRY  
No, I'll have a shower. \*  
(untucks his shirt and \*  
kicks off his shoes) \*  
You OK? \*

ANNA  
Mhmm. How was the...thing? \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
As Dermatological Conferences go,  
it was a riot.

Larry takes a bottle of scotch from his bag of duty-free and swigs it, offers the bottle to Anna who shakes her head.

LARRY (cont'd) \*  
Don't suppose you fancy a friendly \*  
poke?

ANNA  
Oh, I've just had a bath.

LARRY  
I'll see to myself then, in the  
Elle Decoration bathroom.

ANNA  
You chose that bathroom.

LARRY  
Yeah and every time I wash in it I  
feel dirty. It's cleaner than I am.  
It's got attitude. The mirror says,  
'Who the fuck are you?'

ANNA  
You chose it.

LARRY  
Doesn't mean I like it. We  
shouldn't have...this.

Larry gestures vaguely about the room.

ANNA  
Are you experiencing bourgeois  
guilt?

LARRY  
(sharp)  
Working-class guilt. \*  
(looks at her) \*  
Why are you dressed? If you've just  
had a bath?

ANNA  
We needed some milk.

Larry nods then makes to leave, stops. \*

LARRY \*  
You OK?

ANNA  
Uhhuh. You?

LARRY \*  
Yeah!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He leaves the room with his suitcase. \*

INT. SITTING ROOM, DAN'S FLAT - SAME TIME \*

Alice comes in wearing the clothes she wore the day they met. \*

ALICE  
I'm going.

DAN  
I'm sorry.

ALICE  
Irrelevant. What are you sorry for?

DAN  
Everything. \*

ALICE  
Why didn't you tell me before?

DAN  
Cowardice.

Pause. \*

ALICE  
Is it because she's clever?

DAN  
No, it's because...she doesn't need me.

Pause.

ALICE  
Do you bring her here?

DAN  
Yes.

ALICE  
She sits here?

DAN  
Yes.

Pause. \*

ALICE  
Didn't she get married?

DAN  
She stopped seeing me.

ALICE  
Is that when we went to the country?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE (cont'd)  
 To celebrate our third anniversary?  
 (Dan nods)  
 Did you phone her? To beg her to  
 come back? When you went for your  
 'long, lonely walks'?

\*  
\*

DAN  
 Yes.

ALICE  
 You're a piece of shit.

DAN  
 Deception is brutal, I'm not  
 pretending otherwise.

\*

ALICE  
 How...? How does it work? How can  
 you do this to someone?

DAN  
 I don't know.

ALICE  
 Not good enough.

\*

DAN  
 (justifying)  
 I fell in love with her, Alice.

\*  
\*  
\*

ALICE  
 You 'fell in love' - as if you had  
 no choice. There's a moment,  
 there's always a moment; 'I can do  
 this, I can give in to this or I  
 can resist it.' I don't know when  
 your moment was but I bet there was  
 one. You didn't fall in love, you  
 gave in to temptation. I'm going.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Dan prevents her from leaving.

DAN  
 It's late, it's not safe out there.

\*

ALICE  
 And it's safe in here?

DAN  
 What about your things?

ALICE  
 I don't need 'things'.

DAN  
 Where will you go?

\*

ALICE  
 I'll disappear.

INT. ANNA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Larry comes in wearing a robe, having had his shower. He hands Anna a gift from Barneys. Anna takes out new shoes. \*

ANNA  
They're beautiful. Thank you. \*

LARRY  
Here's a thing: Alice was at the hotel. \*

ANNA  
What?

LARRY  
They sell arty postcards in the lobby, I bought one to boost your sales.

Larry takes a POSTCARD from his dressing gown pocket and reads the back.

LARRY (cont'd)  
'Young Woman, London'.  
(hands Anna the postcard) \*  
And...I checked for your book in \*  
The Museum of Modern Art. It's  
there! Someone bloody bought one!  
This guy with a ridiculous little  
beard. He was drooling over your  
photo on the inside cover - fancied  
you, the geek. I was so proud of  
you; You've Broken New York!

ANNA  
You're wonderful.

LARRY  
Don't ever forget it.

Larry goes out. Anna stares at her new shoes.

INT. DAN'S FLAT - SAME TIME \*

ALICE  
Change your mind. Please, change  
your mind.

Dan hangs his head.

ALICE (cont'd)  
Can I still see you? Dan...can I  
still see you? Answer me.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

DAN  
I can't see you. If I see you I'll  
never leave you.

ALICE \*  
What will you do if I find someone  
else?

DAN  
Be jealous.

ALICE  
D'you still fancy me?

DAN  
Of course.

ALICE \*  
You're lying. I've been 'you'. \*  
(beat) \*  
Hold me? \*  
(he does so) \*  
I amuse you but I bore you. \*

DAN  
No. No.

ALICE  
You did love me?

DAN \*  
I'll always love you. I hate \*  
hurting you.

ALICE \*  
So why are you?

DAN  
Because I'm selfish and I think  
I'll be happier with her.

ALICE \*  
You won't, you'll miss me. No one \*  
will ever love you as much as I do. \*  
(pause) \*  
Why isn't love enough? I'm the one \*  
who leaves. I'm supposed to leave \*  
you. I'm the one who leaves. \*

Alice kisses Dan. He responds, with sudden enthusiasm. She \*  
breaks.

ALICE (cont'd)  
Make some tea...Buster.

Dan leaves. Alice sits, stares at his briefcase on the sofa. \*

INT. ANNA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Larry comes in, fully dressed. He looks sick. \*

ANNA  
Why are you dressed? \*\*

LARRY  
Because I think you might be about  
to leave me and I didn't want to be  
wearing a dressing gown.

(pause)  
I slept with someone in New York.  
A whore. I'm sorry. Please don't  
leave me. \*

Beat. \*

ANNA  
Why?

LARRY  
(sighs)  
For sex. I wanted sex.  
(shrugs)  
I wore a condom.

Beat. \*

ANNA  
Was it...good?

Larry huffs and puffs.

LARRY  
...Yes.

ANNA  
Where did you go?

LARRY  
Her place.

ANNA  
Nice?

LARRY  
Not as nice as ours. I'm really  
sorry.

Pause.

ANNA  
Why did you tell me?

LARRY  
I couldn't lie to you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA  
Why not?

LARRY  
Because I love you.

Pause.

ANNA  
It's fine.

LARRY  
Really? Why?

Anna looks at her shoes.

ANNA  
Guilt present?

LARRY  
Love present. Something's wrong...  
(she turns to him)  
Are you leaving me? \*

She gives him a faint nod. \*

LARRY (cont'd)  
Why? \*

Pause. \*

ANNA  
Dan.

LARRY  
'Cupid'? He's our joke.

ANNA  
I love him. \*

LARRY  
You're seeing him now?  
(she nods)  
Since when? \*

ANNA  
Since my opening, last year. I'm  
disgusting.

LARRY  
You're phenomenal. You're  
so...~~clever~~. Why did you marry me? \*

ANNA  
I stopped seeing him, I wanted us  
to work. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
Why did you tell me you wanted  
children?

ANNA  
Because I did.

LARRY  
And now you want children with him?

ANNA  
Yes - I don't know - yes.

LARRY  
Why?

Pause.

ANNA  
I need him.

LARRY  
But...we're happy...aren't we?  
(she nods)  
Are you going to live with him?

ANNA  
You stay here, if you want.

LARRY  
I don't give a FUCK about the  
spoils.

CUT TO:

INT. DAN'S FLAT - SAME TIME

Alice takes a last look at the room and leaves.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. ANNA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

LARRY  
You did this the day we met - let  
me hang myself for your amusement.  
Why didn't you tell me the second I  
walked in the door?

ANNA  
I was scared.

LARRY  
Because you're a coward, you spoilt  
bitch.

INT. DAN'S FLAT - SAME TIME

Dan comes in with tea, sees Alice has gone, runs after her.

INT. ANNA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

LARRY  
Are you dressed because you thought  
I might hit you?  
(He moves towards her,  
slowly)  
What d'you think I am?

ANNA  
I've been hit before.

LARRY  
Not by me.  
(stands over her)  
Is he a good fuck?

ANNA  
Don't do this.

LARRY  
Just answer the question. Is he  
good?

Beat.

ANNA  
Yes.

LARRY  
Better than me?

ANNA  
Different.

LARRY  
Better?

ANNA  
Gentler.

LARRY  
What does that mean?

ANNA  
You know what it means.

LARRY  
Tell me.

ANNA  
No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
I treat you like a whore?

ANNA  
Sometimes.

LARRY  
Why would that be?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Dan searches for Alice. Gone. He heads home. \*

INT. ANNA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME \*

ANNA  
I'm sorry, you're-

LARRY  
Don't say it, don't fucking say,  
'You're too good for me.' I am -  
but don't say it.

He kneels to her. \*

LARRY (cont'd) \*  
(gently) \*  
Anna, you're making the mistake of  
your life. You're leaving me  
because you think you don't deserve  
happiness, but you do Anna, you  
do... \*  
(looks at her, thinks) \*  
Did you have a bath because you had  
sex with him? \*

Anna looks at him. He moves away from her.

LARRY (cont'd) \*  
So you didn't smell of him? So \*  
you'd feel less guilty? \*  
(she nods) \*  
And how do you feel? \*

ANNA  
Guilty.

Beat.

LARRY \*  
Did you ever love me? \*

ANNA  
Yes.

Silence. Larry breaks down. Anna holds him. \*

INT. DAN'S FLAT - SAME TIME

Dan sits on the sofa where Alice lay. He stares at her half eaten apple. \*

CLOSE: The impression of her teeth in the fruit. \*

INT. ANNA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Larry breaks from Anna. \*

LARRY  
Did you do it here ?

ANNA  
No.

LARRY  
Why not?

ANNA  
Do you wish we did? \*

LARRY  
Just tell me the truth. \*

ANNA  
Yes, we did it here.

LARRY  
Where?

ANNA  
Here.

LARRY  
On this?

He gestures to the chaise-longue.

LARRY (cont'd)  
We had our first fuck on this.  
Think of me?  
When?  
When did you do it here?  
ANSWER THE QUESTION. \*

ANNA  
(scared)  
This evening.

Pause.

LARRY  
Did you come?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA  
Why are you doing this?

LARRY  
Because I want to know.

ANNA  
(softly )  
Yes, I came. \*

LARRY  
How many times?

ANNA  
Twice.

LARRY  
How?

ANNA  
First he went down on me and then  
we fucked.

LARRY  
Who was where? \*

ANNA  
(tough)  
I was on top and then he fucked me  
from behind.

LARRY  
And that's when you came the second  
time?

ANNA  
Why is the sex so important?

LARRY  
BECAUSE I'M A FUCKING CAVE MAN!  
Did you touch yourself while he  
fucked you?

ANNA  
Yes.

LARRY  
You wank for him?

ANNA  
Sometimes.

LARRY  
And he does?

ANNA  
We do everything that people who  
have sex do.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

LARRY  
You enjoy sucking him off?

ANNA  
Yes.

LARRY  
You like his cock?

ANNA  
I LOVE it.

LARRY  
You like him coming in your face?

ANNA  
YES!

LARRY  
What does it taste like?

ANNA  
IT TASTES LIKE YOU BUT SWEETER.

LARRY  
THAT'S THE SPIRIT! THANK YOU! Thank  
you for your honesty!  
(beat)  
Now fuck off and die, you fucked up  
slag.

\*  
\*

Larry leaves the room. Anna stands, alone.

INT. DAN'S FLAT - SAME TIME

Dan on the sofa, alone, motionless.

\*

FADE TO:

CAPTION: THREE MONTHS LATER.

\*

CUT TO:

\*

EXT. STREET, LONDON - NIGHT

\*

Camera tracks down a dark, secluded alley, to a sleek,  
brushed steel door. A DOORMAN in uniform opens it.

\*

\*

INT. RECEPTION, NIGHTCLUB - CONTINUOUS

\*

Fabulous interior; Venetian mirrors, Art Nouveau lamps,  
mother of pearl occasional tables, a Rothko, a MAN and WOMAN  
in conversation on a slick Italian day bed, an elegant FEMALE  
RECEPTIONIST nods us further in.

\*

\*

\*

\*

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS \*

Neat WAITRESSES pass with drinks on neat silver trays as we head down a beautifully lit carpeted corridor. \*

Now we can hear the music. 'Fascination' by David Bowie. \*

We go through a set of steel double doors and enter the MAIN ROOM of the club. \*

INT. MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS \*

A huge room. An exclusive modern speakeasy, a cool designer dive - money. \*

A HUNDRED MEN, mainly in suits, singly or in groups sit at tables watching the show. The tables have 1930's repro TELEPHONES on them. \*

The MEN sip drinks and smoke. They don't talk, they just WATCH the WOMEN DANCING. Some of the women are naked, some are about to be. They dance on various raised areas above the men. \*

The music is VERY LOUD. \*

We see the WOMEN from the men's P.O.V in RAPID CUTS: leg - ankle - collar bone - back of knee - cleavage - ass - tits - spine - pubic hair - armpit - cleft of buttock - the muscles flexing - perspiration - eyes - mouths - ear lobes - fingers - toes - bellies - teeth. \*

Now we watch the MEN watching. The intensity of their gaze, the seriousness of their gratitude. \*

MEN lean forward and place twenty pound notes in the women's GARTERS. The women smile and bend over. \*

And now, alone, at a SINGLE TABLE we find LARRY. \*

He's in a smart suit, tie loosened. He's cradling a crystal tumbler of scotch. He draws on his cigarette. He's coked up but lucid. He watches the women but remains detached. Present but not wholly involved. \*

Then he focuses on a BLONDE. Suddenly, he sits up, she's ten yards away, dancing to her own slower rhythm. He watches her. \*

The BLONDE finishes her dance and goes to sit in a LINE with the OTHER GIRLS. Fifteen of them in red velvet armchairs, facing the MEN. NUMBERS are displayed above the chairs, 1 - 15. On the arm of each chair is a PHONE. \*

The BLONDE is sat at number NINE. Larry reaches for his phone and dials. \*

A red light flashes on the blonde's phone. She picks up. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And now, as the camera moves in on her, we realise it's  
ALICE.

She speaks into the phone and glances over to her caller.  
Larry waves to her. She sees him, immediately recognises him  
but doesn't seem to react.

She nods and puts down the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. PRIVATE ROOM, CLUB - TEN MINUTES LATER

Larry sitting on an elegant day bed. Alice standing. Distant  
thud of music from the main room.

Alice has a garter round her thigh, cash in the garter.

A huge mirror on the wall.

Larry gazes at Alice. She smiles. She has just finished  
dancing for him and is putting her short dress back on.

He waits till she's done.

LARRY  
I love you.

Pause.

ALICE  
Thank you.

LARRY  
What's this room called?

ALICE  
The Paradise Suite.

LARRY  
How many Paradise Suites are there?

ALICE  
Eight.

LARRY  
Do I have to pay you to talk to me?

ALICE  
No but if you want to tip me it's  
your choice.

He takes out a twenty. She presents her leg. He puts the  
money in her garter.

ALICE (cont'd)  
Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
I went to a place like this in New  
York. This is swish. Pornography  
has gone upmarket - bully for  
England! This is honest progress,  
don't you think?

\*  
\*  
\*

ALICE  
England always imports the best of  
America.

LARRY  
I used to come here twenty years  
ago, it was a punk club, the stage  
was...  
(can't remember, gives up)  
Everything is a Version of  
Something Else.  
(takes a slug of his  
drink)  
Twenty years ago, how old were you?

\*  
\*  
\*

ALICE  
Four.

LARRY  
Christ, when I was in flares you  
were in nappies.

ALICE  
My nappies were flared.

LARRY  
You have the face of an angel.

\*

ALICE  
Thank you.

LARRY  
What does your cunt taste like?

ALICE  
Heaven.

Beat.

\*

LARRY  
How long you been doing this ?

ALICE  
Three months.

LARRY  
Straight after he left you?

ALICE  
No one left me.

He stares at her.

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
Nice wig. \*

ALICE  
Thank you.

LARRY  
Does it turn you on?

ALICE  
Sometimes.

LARRY  
Liar. You're telling me it turns  
you on because you think that's  
what I want to hear. You think I'm  
turned on by it turning you on.

ALICE  
The thought of me creaming myself  
when I strip for strangers doesn't  
turn you on?

LARRY  
Put like that, yes.

She shows him her behind.

LARRY (cont'd)  
Are you flirting with me?

ALICE  
Maybe.

LARRY  
Are you allowed to flirt with me?

ALICE  
Sure.

LARRY  
Really?

ALICE  
No I'm not, I'm breaking all the  
rules.

LARRY  
You're mocking me! \*

She sits opposite him.

ALICE  
Yes, I'm allowed to flirt.

LARRY  
To prise my money from me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE  
To prise your money from you I can  
say or do as I please.

LARRY  
Except touch.

ALICE  
We are not allowed to touch.

Beat. \*

LARRY  
Open your legs.  
(she does so) \*  
Wider. \*

She does so. Larry looks between her legs. \*

LARRY (cont'd)  
What would happen if I touched you  
now?

ALICE  
I would call Security.

LARRY  
And what would they do?

ALICE  
They would ask you to leave and ask  
you not to come back.

LARRY  
And if I refused to leave?

ALICE  
They would remove you. This is a  
two-way mirror.  
(gestures to the mirror) \*  
And there are cameras in the \*  
ceiling.

Larry glances up, sees them, gives a little wave. \*

LARRY  
I think it's best that I don't  
attempt to touch you.  
(looks at her) \*  
I'd like to touch you...later. \*

ALICE  
I'm not a whore.

LARRY  
I wouldn't pay.

He gazes at her with longing. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY (cont'd)  
Why the fuck did he leave you? \*

ALICE  
What's your job?

LARRY  
A question! You've asked me a question!

ALICE  
So?

LARRY  
It's a chink in your armour.

ALICE  
I'm not wearing armour.

LARRY  
Yes you are. I'm in the skin trade.

ALICE  
You own Strip Clubs? \*

LARRY  
Do I look like the sort of man who owns strip clubs?

ALICE  
Yes.

Larry looks in the mirror, a little perturbed. \*

LARRY  
Define that look.

ALICE  
Rich.

LARRY  
Close your legs. I don't own Strip Clubs.

ALICE  
Do you own Golf Clubs?

LARRY  
You know what I do.  
(he stands.)  
Why are you calling yourself Jane? \*

ALICE  
Because it's my name.

LARRY  
But we both know it isn't. You're all protecting your identities.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY (cont'd)  
The girl in there who calls herself  
Venus, what's her real name?

ALICE  
Pluto.

LARRY  
You're cheeky.

ALICE  
Would you like me to stop being  
cheeky?

LARRY  
No.

ALICE  
What's your name?

Larry considers.

LARRY  
Daniel.

ALICE  
Daniel the Dermatologist.

LARRY  
(sharp)  
I never told you my job. \*

ALICE  
I guessed.

LARRY  
(close)  
You're strong. \*  
(pause)  
There's another one in there  
(judging by the scars, a recent  
patient of Doctor Tit) she calls  
herself Cupid. Who's gonna tell her  
Cupid was a bloke?

ALICE  
He wasn't a bloke, he was a little  
boy.

LARRY  
I'd like you to tell me your name.  
Please. \*

He gives her £20

ALICE  
Thank you. My name is Jane.

LARRY  
Your real name.

He gives her £20

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

ALICE  
Thank you. My real name is Jane.

LARRY  
Careful.

He gives her £20

ALICE  
Thank you. It's still Jane.

LARRY  
I've got another five hundred quid here.  
(takes out the money.)  
Why don't I give you - All - This - Money - and you tell me what your Real Name is...  
(raises her face towards him with the wad of notes)  
Alice.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

She tries to take the money, he withdraws it.

\*

ALICE  
I promise.  
(he gives her the money)  
Thank you. My real name is Plain - Jane - Jones.

\*  
\*

LARRY  
I may be rich but I'm not stupid.

ALICE  
What a shame 'Doc,' I love'em rich and stupid.

LARRY  
DON'T FUCK AROUND WITH ME.

ALICE  
I apologise.

LARRY  
Accepted. All the girls in this hell-hole; the pneumatic robots, the coked up baby dolls - and you're no different - you all use stage names to con yourselves you're someone else so you don't feel ashamed when you show your cunts and arseholes to Complete Fucking Strangers. I'm trying to have a conversation here.

ALICE  
You're out of cash, Buster.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
I've paid for the room.

ALICE  
This is extra.

LARRY  
We met last year.

ALICE  
Wrong girl.

LARRY  
TALK TO ME!

ALICE  
I am.

LARRY  
Talk to me in real life. I didn't  
know you'd be here. I know who you  
are. I love your scar, I love  
everything about you that hurts.

Silence. He breaks down.

LARRY (cont'd)  
She won't even see me...you feel  
the same...I know you feel the  
same.

ALICE  
You can't cry here.

LARRY  
Hold me, let me hold you.

He approaches her.

ALICE  
We're not allowed to touch.

LARRY  
Come home with me, Alice. It's  
safe. Let me look after you.

ALICE  
I don't need looking after.

LARRY  
Everyone needs looking after.

ALICE  
I'm not your revenge fuck.

LARRY  
I'll pay you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE  
I don't need your money.

LARRY  
You ~~have~~ my money.

ALICE  
Thank you.

LARRY  
THANK YOU, THANK YOU! Is that some  
kind of rule?

ALICE  
I'm just being polite.

Larry sits down.

LARRY  
Get a lot of men in here, crying  
their guts out?

ALICE  
Occupational hazard.

LARRY  
Have you ever desired a customer?

ALICE  
Yes.

LARRY  
Put me out of my misery, do you  
desire me? Because I'm being pretty  
fucking honest about my feelings  
for you.

ALICE  
Your 'feelings' ?

LARRY  
Whatever.

ALICE  
No. I don't desire you.

LARRY  
Thank you. Thank you sincerely for  
your honesty. Next question; do you  
think it's possible you could  
perceive me as something other than  
a sad slot machine spewing out  
money?

ALICE  
That's the transaction; you're the  
customer, I'm the service.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
Hey, we're in a strip club let's  
not debate sexual politics. \*

ALICE  
Debate?

LARRY  
You're asking for a smack,  
gorgeous.

ALICE  
No I'm not.

LARRY  
But you are gorgeous.

ALICE  
Thank you.

Larry stands, straightens his tie, lights a cigarette.

LARRY  
Will you lend me my cab fare?

ALICE  
No! \*

LARRY  
I'll give it back to you  
tomorrow...

ALICE  
Company policy, you give us the  
money.

LARRY  
And what do we get in return?

ALICE  
We're nice to you.

LARRY  
'And We Get To See You Naked'.

ALICE  
It's beautiful.

LARRY  
Except...you think you haven't  
given us anything of yourselves.  
You think because you don't love us  
or desire us or even like us you  
think you've won.

ALICE  
It's not a war.

Larry laughs for a considerable time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY

But you do give us something of yourselves: you give us imagery. And we do with it what we will. If our women could see one minute of our Home Movies - the shit that slops through our minds every day - you'd string us up by our balls, you really would.

(beat)

You don't understand the territory. Because you are the territory.

(beat)

If I asked you to strip, right now, would you?

\*  
\*

ALICE

Of course. Do you want me to?

\*

LARRY

No. Alice, tell me something true.

ALICE

Lying is the most fun a girl can have without taking her clothes off. But it's better if you do.

LARRY

You're cold. You're all cold at heart.

(looks into the two-way mirror)

WHAT D'YOU HAVE TO DO TO GET A BIT OF INTIMACY AROUND HERE?

\*  
\*  
\*

ALICE

Well, maybe next time I'll have worked on my intimacy.

LARRY

No. I'll tell you what's gonna work. What's gonna work is that you're gonna take your clothes off right now and you're gonna turn around very slowly and bend over and touch the fucking floor for my viewing pleasure.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

ALICE

That's what you want?

He looks at her; defeated, beaten, vulnerable.

\*

LARRY

(softly)

What else could I want?

\*

She looks at him. A moment. A trace of a smile.

\*

CUT TO:

\*

CAPTION: A MONTH LATER

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY, OPERA HOUSE - EVENING

The lobby is nearly empty. The performance began ten minutes ago. Distant music in the background.

USHERS in uniform chat quietly by the stairs. PROGRAMME SELLERS count their takings. BAR WORKERS prepare their stock for the first interval.

Dan is at a table with a drink. Waiting. Another drink and two PROGRAMMES on the table. He tries to read, can't concentrate, he's worried now.

After a while Anna hurries in through the MAIN ENTRANCE. She spots him and comes to the table.

ANNA  
Sorry, I'm really sorry.

Dan kisses her.

DAN  
What happened?

ANNA  
Traffic.

DAN  
(gestures to auditorium)  
D'you want to stand at the back?

ANNA  
Do you?

DAN  
Hey, you're the one who likes opera. Let's wait till the interval.

Anna nods, sits.

DAN (cont'd)  
You're flushed, you didn't need to run.

She sips her drink. He watches her.

DAN (cont'd)  
So...how was it?

ANNA  
Oh...fine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
You had lunch?

ANNA  
Mmhm.

DAN  
Then what?

ANNA  
Then we left.

DAN  
And?

ANNA  
There is no 'and'.

DAN  
You haven't seen him for four  
months, there must be an 'and'.  
(she shrugs)  
How is he?

\*  
\*

ANNA  
Terrible.

DAN  
How's his dermatology?

ANNA  
He is now in private practice.

\*

DAN  
How does he square that with his  
politics?

ANNA  
He's not much concerned with  
politics at present.

Beat.

\*

DAN  
Was he weeping all over the place?

ANNA  
Some of the time.

DAN  
(genuine)  
Poor bastard.  
(beat)  
Was he...difficult....?

ANNA  
Are you angry I saw him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
No...it's just...I haven't seen  
Alice. \*

ANNA  
You can't see Alice, you don't know  
where she is.

DAN  
I haven't tried to find her.

ANNA  
He's been begging me to see him for  
months, you know why I saw him, I  
saw him so he'd...sign.

DAN  
So has he signed?

ANNA  
Yes.

DAN  
Congratulations! You are now a  
divorcee - double divorcee. Sorry.  
(takes her hand) \*  
How do you feel? \*

ANNA  
Tired.

Dan kisses her hand, Anna kisses his.

DAN  
I love you. And I need a piss.

He gets up from the table and heads for the Gents. Camera  
closes in on Anna. \*

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - SAME DAY (FLASHBACK) \*

Anna waiting for Larry at lunch time. Larry comes in.

LARRY  
(sitting)  
After-noon.

ANNA  
Hi.

LARRY  
I hate this place. \*

ANNA  
At least it's central.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

LARRY  
I hate central. The centre of  
London's a theme park. I hate  
'Retro' and I hate the future.  
Where does that leave me?  
(gazes at her) \*  
Come back.

ANNA  
You promised you wouldn't.

LARRY  
Come back.

ANNA  
How's work ?

LARRY  
Oh Jesus, Work's shit, OK.

He looks around for a waiter.

LARRY (cont'd)  
(loud)  
Do they have waiters here?  
(turns back to Anna) \*  
I love you. Please come back. \*

ANNA  
I'm not coming back. \*

She reaches into her bag and pulls out the DIVORCE PAPERS.  
She spreads them on the table. Larry stares at them.

ANNA (cont'd)  
Sign here, please. \*

LARRY  
No pen.

She hands him her pen. \*

ANNA  
Pen.

He takes her hand. \*

ANNA (cont'd)  
Give me back my hand...

After a while, Larry lets go. \*

ANNA (cont'd)  
Sign.

He stares at her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY

I'll sign on one condition: we skip lunch, we go to my sleek, little surgery and we christen the patients' bed with our final fuck. I know you don't want to, I know you think I'm sick for asking - but that's what I'm asking - 'For Old Time's Sake', because I'm obsessed with you, because I can't get over you unless you...because I think on some small level you owe me something, for deceiving me so exquisitely. For all these reasons I'm begging you to give me your body. Be my whore and in return I will pay you with your liberty. If you do this I swear I will not contact you again - you know I'm a man of my word. I will divorce you and, in time, consider the possibility of a friendship. I'm going to the bar. I assume you still drink vodka tonic?

He heads for the bar. Anna thinks.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. LOBBY, OPERA HOUSE - EVENING

Dan walks back to the table, deep in thought. He sits, stares at Anna, she turns to him, slowly.

DAN

You slept with him, didn't you?

She nods, apologetically. Dan smiles at the misery of it all.

DAN (cont'd)

What do you expect me to do?

ANNA

(shakes her head)  
Understand...?

DAN

Why didn't you lie to me?

ANNA

We said we'd always tell each other the truth.

DAN

What's so great about the truth?  
Try lying for a change - it's the currency of the world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA

I did what he wanted and now he  
will leave us alone. I love you, I  
didn't give him anything. \*

DAN

Your body? \*

He reaches for his cigarettes, regards Anna like a specimen. \*

ANNA

If Alice came to you - desperate -  
with all that love still between  
you and she said she needed you to  
want her so that she could get over  
you, you'd do it. I wouldn't like  
it either but I'd forgive you  
because it's...a mercy fuck - a  
sympathy fuck. Moral rape, everyone  
does it. It's kindness. \*

DAN

No, it's cowardice. You don't have  
the guts to let him hate you. \*

(beat)

Did you enjoy it? \*

ANNA

No. \*

DAN

So you hated every second of it? \*

Anna looks at him. \*

DAN (cont'd)

Did you come? \*

ANNA

No. \*

DAN

Did you fake it? \*

ANNA

Yes. \*

DAN

Why? \*

ANNA

To make him think I enjoyed it, why  
do you think? \*

DAN

If you were just his slag why did  
you give him the pleasure of  
thinking you'd enjoyed it? \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA  
Because that's what slags do. \*

DAN  
You fake it with me?

ANNA  
I fake one in three, all right? \*

DAN  
Tell me the truth.

Pause. \*

ANNA  
Occasionally, I've faked it. \*  
(he looks surprised) \*  
It's not important, you don't make \*  
me come. I come. You're... 'in the \*  
area' - providing valiant \*  
assistance. \*

DAN  
You make me come. \_

ANNA  
You're a man, you'd come if the  
tooth fairy winked at you.

DAN  
Are you late because you've come  
straight here from being with him? \*

She nods. Dan looks at her, guiltily repulsed. \*

DAN (cont'd) \*  
Where was it? \*

ANNA  
His new surgery.

DAN  
(reflects) \*  
Long session. \*

Anna tries to touch him, he pulls away from her.

ANNA  
Please, be bigger than jealous. \*

DAN  
What could be bigger than jealousy?

Silence.

ANNA  
When we're making love, why won't  
you kiss me? \*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA (cont'd)  
Why don't you like it when I say I love you? I'm on your side. Talk to me.

DAN  
It hurts. I'm ashamed. I know it's illogical and I do understand but I hate you.

(beat)  
I love you and I don't like other men fucking you, is that so weird?

ANNA  
No. YES. It was only sex!

CUT TO:

INT. LARRY'S SURGERY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Anna and Larry fucking on the floor - semi-dressed - amongst the packing cases and bubble wrapped surgery equipment.

DAN (V.O)  
If you can still fuck him you haven't left him.

Anna lies back, face flushed, Larry by her side.

INT. LOBBY, OPERA HOUSE - EVENING

DAN  
(softly)  
It's gone...we're not innocent anymore.

ANNA  
Don't stop loving me, I can see it draining out of you. It meant nothing. If you love me you'll forgive me.

DAN  
Are you testing me?

ANNA  
No. Dan, I do understand.

DAN:  
No. He understands.  
(stares at her)  
All I can see is him all over you. He's clever, your ex-husband, I almost admire him.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY (FLASHBACK) \*

Larry returns to the table with two drinks. Vodka tonic for Anna, scotch and dry for himself. \*

LARRY  
Vodka tonic for the lady. \*

ANNA  
Drink your drink and then we'll go. \*

Larry looks at her - he's surprised. \*

ANNA (cont'd)  
I'm doing this because I feel  
guilty and because I pity you.  
You know that, don't you? \*

LARRY  
Yes. \*

ANNA  
Feel good about yourself? \*

LARRY  
No. \*

CUT BACK TO: \*

INT. LOBBY, OPERA HOUSE - EVENING \*

Silence. Dan stares into space. \*

ANNA  
Where are you? Alice?

DAN  
(smiles)  
I was reading the paper once. She  
wanted some attention. She crouched  
down on the carpet and pissed right  
in front of me. Isn't that the most  
charming thing you've ever heard?

ANNA  
(tough)  
Why did you swear eternal love when  
all you wanted was a fuck?

DAN  
I didn't just want a fuck, I wanted  
you.

ANNA  
You wanted excitement, love bores  
you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
 No. It disappoints me.  
 (beat)  
 I think you enjoyed it; he wheedles  
 you into bed, the old jokes, the  
 strange familiarity, I think you  
 had a whale of a time and the truth  
 is, I'll never know unless I ask  
 him.

ANNA  
 Well, why don't you?

CUT BACK TO:

INT. LARRY'S SURGERY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Anna and Larry putting on their clothes.

LARRY  
 Will you tell him?

ANNA  
 I don't know.

LARRY  
 (helpfully)  
 Better to be truthful about this  
 sort of thing...

She spreads the DIVORCE PAPERS on his desk.

ANNA  
 Sign.

LARRY  
 I forgive you.

ANNA  
 Sign.

As Larry does so-

CUT BACK TO:

INT. LOBBY, OPERA HOUSE - EVENING

Huge APPLAUSE from the auditorium. The USHERS start opening the theatre doors.

DAN  
 Let's go home?

Anna nods as the AUDIENCE FLOOD OUT for the interval - the voices and the people engulf them at their little table.

CUT TO:

CAPTION: A MONTH LATER

CUT TO:

EXT. HARLEY STREET - EARLY EVENING

Darkness, rain, Dan runs, protecting himself from the downpour as best he can. He arrives at a smart building.

INT. RECEPTION - LATER

Dan sits, bedraggled, clutching his brown briefcase.

The RECEPTIONIST's internal phone rings. She picks up, listens, nods to Dan. He goes into:

INT. LARRY'S SURGERY - CONTINUOUS

Dan comes in with his briefcase. Larry sits behind his desk.

They stare at each other. Eventually:

DAN  
I want Anna back.

LARRY  
She's made her choice.

DAN  
I owe you an apology. I fell in love with her. My intention was not to make you suffer.

LARRY  
Where's the apology? You cunt.

DAN  
I apologise.  
(beat)  
If you love her, you'll let her go so...she can be happy.

LARRY  
She doesn't want to be 'happy'.

DAN  
Everyone wants to be happy.

LARRY  
Depressives don't. They want to be unhappy to confirm they're depressed. If they were happy they couldn't be depressed anymore.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

LARRY (cont'd)  
They'd have to go out into the  
world and live, which can  
be...depressing. \*

DAN  
Anna's not a depressive.

LARRY  
Isn't she?

DAN  
I love her! \*

LARRY  
Boo hoo, so do I! You don't love  
Anna, you love yourself. \*

DAN  
You're wrong, I don't love myself.  
You don't even want Anna, you want  
revenge. She's gone back to you  
because she can't bear your  
suffering. You don't know who she  
is, you love her like a dog loves  
its owner.

LARRY  
And the owner loves the dog for so  
doing. \*

DAN  
You'll hurt her, you'll never  
forgive her.

LARRY  
Of course I'll forgive her - I have  
forgiven her. Without forgiveness  
we're savages. You're drowning.

DAN  
You only met her because of me! \*

LARRY  
Yeah, thanks.

DAN  
It's a joke, your marriage is a  
joke! \*

LARRY  
Here's a good one: she never sent  
the divorce papers to her lawyer. \*

(Dan looks stunned) \*

To a Towering Romantic Hero like  
you I don't doubt I'm somewhat \*

common but I am, nevertheless, what  
she has chosen. And we must respect  
What The Woman Wants. \*

(beat)

If you go near her again, I promise- \*

(the phone rings) \*

I will kill you. \*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY (cont'd)  
 (he picks up)  
 Uh-huh. Ok.  
 (he puts the phone down,  
 addresses Dan)  
 I have patients to see.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

He takes his jacket off to prepare for his patient. Dan  
 glances round the room - the SURGERY BED - he looks sick.

\*  
\*

DAN  
 When she came here you think she  
 enjoyed it?

LARRY  
 I didn't do it to give her a nice  
 time. I fucked her to fuck you up,  
 a good fight is never clean. And  
 yeah, she enjoyed it, she's a  
 Catholic - she loves a guilty fuck.

\*  
\*  
\*

DAN  
 You're an animal!

\*

LARRY  
 YEAH - What are you?

\*

DAN  
 You think love is simple? You  
 think the heart is like a diagram?

LARRY  
 Ever seen a human heart? It looks  
 like a fist wrapped in blood. GO  
 FUCK YOURSELF, you...WRITER! You  
 LIAR! Go check a few facts while I  
 get my hands dirty.

\*  
\*

DAN  
 She hates your hands, she hates  
 your simplicity.

\*

LARRY  
 Listen...I've spent the last week  
 talking about you. Anna tells me  
 you fucked her with your eyes  
 closed. She tells me you wake in  
 the night crying for your dead  
 mother. You mummy's boy.  
 (close)  
 Shall we stop this?  
 (beat)  
 It's over. Accept it.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

He prepares a paper sheet on his surgery bed.

\*

LARRY (cont'd)  
 You don't know the first thing  
 about love because you don't  
 understand compromise. You don't  
 even know...Alice.

\*

Dan looks at him, completely disoriented now.

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY (cont'd)  
Consider her scar, how did she get that?

DAN  
When did you meet Alice?

LARRY  
Anna's exhibition. You remember. A scar in the shape of a question mark, solve the mystery.

DAN  
She got it when her parents' car crashed.

LARRY  
I think she mutilated herself. It's fairly common in children who lose their parents young. They blame themselves, they're disturbed. \*

DAN  
Alice is not disturbed. \*

LARRY  
But she is! You were so busy feeling your grand artistic 'feelings' you couldn't see what was in front of you. The girl is fragile and tender, she didn't want to be put in a book, she wanted to be loved. \*

DAN  
How do you know?

LARRY  
Clinical observation.

Larry hands Dan his briefcase indicating for him to leave. Dan stays rooted to the spot, shivering, distraught.

Larry looks at him, close.

LARRY (cont'd)  
Oh, don't cry on me. \*

Silence. Dan slowly breaks down. Larry observes him. \*

DAN  
I'm sorry...sorry. \*

He continues to cry. Larry watches him sob. After a while: \*

LARRY  
Sit down.

Dan sinks into a chair, head in hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY (cont'd)  
You want my advice? Go back to her.

DAN  
She'd never have me. She's  
vanished.

Pause. \*

LARRY  
No, she hasn't. \*  
(Dan looks up) \*  
I found her. By accident. She's \*  
working in a...club. Yes, I saw her \*  
naked. No, I did not fuck her.

DAN  
You spoke to her?

Larry nods. The phone rings, he picks up. \*

LARRY \*  
(In phone) \*  
Yes. One minute.

He puts the phone down. \*

DAN \*  
How is she? \*

LARRY \*  
She loves you. Beyond \*  
comprehension. \*

He writes on a pad. \*

LARRY (cont'd) \*  
Your prescription. \*  
(he tears off a sheet and \*  
hands it to Dan) \*  
It's where she works. Go to her. \*

DAN \*  
Thank you. \*

Pause. Dan collects himself. Larry taps in data on his \*  
computer. \*

LARRY \*  
Still pissing about on the Net? \*

DAN \*  
Not recently. \*

LARRY \*  
I wanted to kill you. \*

DAN \*  
I thought you wanted to fuck me? \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY  
 (smiles)  
 Don't get lippy.  
 (beat)  
 Still writing obituaries?  
 (Dan nods)  
 Busy?

\*  
\*  
\*

DAN  
 I was made editor.

\*

LARRY  
 Yeah? How come?

DAN  
 The previous editor died.

They smile.

DAN (cont'd)  
 Alcohol poisoning. I sat with him  
 for a week, in the hospital.

They look at each other.

LARRY  
 I really do have patients to see.

Dan gets up, holding his 'prescription'.

\*

DAN  
 Thank you.

\*  
\*

LARRY  
 For what?

\*  
\*

DAN  
 Being kind.

\*  
\*

LARRY  
 I am kind. Your invoice is in the  
 post.

\*  
\*  
\*

They shake hands. Dan goes to exit. Larry watches him until  
 he reaches the door. Struggles but can't stop himself:

\*  
\*

LARRY (cont'd)  
 Dan...

Dan turns, innocently.

\*

LARRY (cont'd)  
 I lied to you.  
 (pause)  
 I did fuck Alice.  
 (pause)  
 Sorry for telling you. I'm just not  
 big enough to forgive you.  
 (beat)  
 Buster.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They stare at each other.

CUT TO:

CAPTION: A MONTH LATER

CUT TO:

EXT. HEATHROW AIRPORT - NIGHT

HIGH SHOT: the lights of the airport at night. An AIRPORT HOTEL dominates the shot.

INT. CHEAP HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Dan lies on the bed in boxer shorts, smoking, reading the Gideon's Bible. He stubs his cigarette in the ashtray.

ALICE (O.S.)  
SHOW ME THE SNEER!

Dan sneers in the direction of the bathroom.

ALICE (cont'd)  
BRAVO!

DAN  
(laughing )  
It's two in the morning, you'll  
wake the hotel.

Alice enters in her pyjamas and cartwheels onto the bed.

ALICE  
Fuck me!

DAN  
Again?! We have to be up at six.

ALICE  
How can one man be so endlessly  
disappointing?

DAN  
That's my charm.

Alice lies in his arms, Dan strokes her.

DAN (cont'd)  
So, where are we going?

ALICE  
My treat - my holiday surprise - my  
rules.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dan tortures her with tickling.

DAN  
Where are we going?

ALICE  
(laughing)  
New York.

DAN  
You angel.  
(kisses her)  
Did you remember to pack my  
passport?

ALICE  
Of course, it's with my passport.

DAN  
And where's that?

ALICE  
In a place where you can't look. No  
one sees my passport photo.

Dan strokes her.

ALICE (cont'd)  
Hey, when we get on the plane we'll  
have been together four years. Kind  
of. Happy Anniversary, Buster.

Dan flinches inwardly at the word, looks at her.

DAN  
I'm going to take my eyes out.

Dan gets off the bed, heads for the bathroom.

DAN (cont'd)  
What was in my sandwiches?

ALICE  
Tuna.

DAN  
What were your first words to me?

ALICE  
Hallo, stranger.

Dan goes into the bathroom.

ALICE (cont'd)  
What was your euphemism?

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - SAME TIME \*

Dan is taking out his contact lenses.

DAN  
Reserved. Yours? \*

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAME TIME \*

ALICE  
Disarming. \*

She smiles, remembering.

ALICE (cont'd)  
Were the chairs in the hospital  
red or yellow?

Dan saunters in wearing his glasses.

DAN  
No idea.

ALICE  
Trick question, they were orange. \*

DAN  
You are a trick question. Damsel.

ALICE  
Knight.

Alice opens her legs suggestively. Dan looks at her, suddenly  
remembers something. \*

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY (FLASHBACK) \*

Dan watches the DOCTOR in his white coat examining Alice's  
wounded leg. The doctor looks up at Dan. It's LARRY. \*

CUT BACK TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

DAN  
Do you remember a doctor?

Beat. \*

ALICE  
No...what doctor?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

DAN  
There was a doctor...he gave you a  
cigarette...

Beat.

ALICE  
No, don't remember.

They look at each other. Dan shrugs it off, 'impossible'. \*

ALICE (cont'd)  
I haven't been on holiday  
for...ever.

DAN  
We went to the country.

ALICE  
That doesn't count, you were making  
sneaky calls to that witch we do  
not mention.

DAN  
(watches her)  
Do you think they're happy? \*

ALICE  
Who? \*

DAN  
Anna and Larry.

ALICE  
Couldn't give a toss. Come to bed.

DAN  
I want a fag. How did you manage to  
give up?

ALICE  
Deep Inner Strength.

Dan gets into bed. He holds Alice, kisses her, strokes her  
leg for a while, focuses on her scar...

DAN  
How did you get this?

ALICE  
You know how.

DAN  
How?

ALICE  
I fell off my bike because I  
refused to use stabilisers.

(CONTINUED)

He gives her a disbelieving look. \*

ALICE (cont'd) \*  
You know how I got it. \*

DAN \*  
Did you do it yourself? \*

ALICE  
No!

DAN  
Show me your passport.

ALICE  
No, I look ugly.

Beat. \*

DAN  
When are you going to stop stripping?

ALICE  
Soon.

DAN  
You're addicted to it.

ALICE  
No I'm not. It paid for this.

Dan struggles - can't stop himself. \*

DAN  
Tell me what happened.

ALICE  
Dan, don't. Nothing happened.

DAN  
But he came to the club?

CUT TO: \*

INT. LAPDANCE CLUB - NIGHT (FLASHBACK) \*

Dan searching for ALICE amongst the dancers. \*

ALICE (V.O.) \*  
Loads of men came to the club. You \*  
came to the club - the look on your \*  
face... \*

Dan spots her in mid-gyration. Is STUNNED. Then she SEES HIM \*  
and stops. Stares at him - amazed, overcome. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN (V.O)  
The look on your face...

Dan makes his way towards her, offers her his hand and she steps from the stage.

DAN (V.O) (cont'd)  
What a face. What a wig!

She falls into his arms.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Dan gazes at Alice, gently holds her face.

DAN  
I love your face...I saw this face...this...vision. And then you stepped into the road. It was the moment of my life.

ALICE  
This is the moment of your life.

DAN  
You were perfect.

ALICE  
I still am.

Pause.

DAN  
On the way to the hospital...when you were lolling...I kissed your forehead.

ALICE  
You brute!

DAN  
The cabbie saw me kiss you. He said, "Is she yours?" and I said, "Yes, she's mine."

He kisses her forehead, holds her, struggles with himself:

DAN (cont'd)  
So he came to the club, watched you strip, had a little chat and that was it?

ALICE  
Yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
You're not trusting me. I'm in love  
with you, you're safe. You had  
every right, if you fucked him you  
fucked him, I just want to know.

\*  
\*

ALICE  
Why?

DAN  
(tenderly)  
Because I want to know everything.  
(lost)  
Because I'm a loony.  
(pause)  
Tell me...

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Long silence.

\*

ALICE  
Nothing happened. You were living  
with someone else.

DAN  
(sharp)  
What are you justifying?

ALICE  
I'm not justifying anything, I'm  
just saying.

DAN  
What are you saying?

ALICE  
I'm not saying anything.

DAN  
I just want the truth!

\*

Dan gets out of bed and puts his trousers on.

ALICE  
Where are you going?

\*

DAN  
Cigarettes.

ALICE  
Everywhere's closed.

DAN  
I'll go to the terminal.  
(puts his coat on.)  
When I get back please tell me the  
truth.

\*  
\*  
\*

ALICE  
Why?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
Because I'm addicted to it. Because  
without it we're animals. Trust me!

Alice slowly turns to him. A look of terrible determination.

ALICE  
I don't love you anymore.

Pause.

DAN  
Since when?

ALICE  
(gently)  
Now. Just Now. I don't want to lie  
and I can't tell the truth so it's  
over.

DAN  
Alice, don't leave me...

She gets out of bed and goes to her rucksack, finds Dan's  
passport and hands it to him.

ALICE  
I've left. I've gone. I don't love  
you anymore. Goodbye.

DAN  
Why don't you tell me the truth?

ALICE  
So you can hate me? I fucked Larry  
many times, I enjoyed it, I came, I  
prefer you. Now go.

Dan absorbs the information.

DAN  
I knew that, he told me.

ALICE  
You knew???

DAN  
I needed you to tell me.

ALICE  
Why?

DAN  
Because he might've been lying, I  
had to hear it from you.

ALICE  
I would never have told you because  
I know you'd never forgive me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
I would!  
(pleased with himself)  
I have!

ALICE  
Why did he tell you?

DAN  
Because he's a bastard! \*

ALICE  
(distraught)  
How could he?

DAN  
Because he wanted this to happen.

ALICE  
But why test me?

DAN  
Because I'm an idiot. \*

ALICE  
Yes. I would've loved you for ever.  
Now, please go. \*

DAN  
Don't do this Alice, talk to me.

ALICE  
I am talking - fuck off.

DAN  
I'm sorry, you misunderstand, I  
didn't mean to-

ALICE  
Yes you did.

DAN  
I love you.

ALICE  
Where?

DAN  
What?

ALICE  
Show me. Where is this 'love' ?  
I can't see it, I can't touch it, I  
can't feel it. I can hear it, I can  
hear some words but I can't do  
anything with your easy words.

He tries to respond- \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE (cont'd)  
Whatever you say it's too late. \*

DAN  
(desperately)  
Please don't do this.

ALICE  
It's done. Now go or I'll  
call...security.

DAN  
You're not in a strip club, there  
is no security.

They look at each other. Pause. Alice tries to grab the  
phone. Dan throws her onto the bed. They struggle hard. \*

DAN (cont'd)  
Why d'you fuck him?

ALICE  
I wanted to.

DAN  
Why?

ALICE  
I desired him.

DAN  
Why?

ALICE  
YOU WEREN'T THERE!

DAN  
Why him?

ALICE  
He asked me nicely.

DAN  
You're a liar.

ALICE  
So?

DAN  
WHO ARE YOU?

ALICE  
I'M NO ONE!

She spits in his face. He grabs her by the throat, one hand.

ALICE (cont'd)  
Go on, hit me. That's what you  
want. Hit me, you fucker.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Silence. Dan hits Alice. One sharp slap across the face.  
Alice falls to the bed. Dan stares in horror.

ALICE (cont'd)  
Do you have a single original  
thought in your head?

CUT TO:

CAPTION: SIX MONTHS LATER

EXT. POSTMAN'S PARK - DAY

A summer's day. Anna looks at the MEMORIAL. LARRY stands,  
holding his white coat. He carries two drinks in plastic  
cups. He watches her. She turns.

ANNA  
Spy.  
(he approaches.)  
You've got the coat.

LARRY  
The white coat...

ANNA  
Hallo, Doctor Larry.

He hands her a drink, she nods 'thanks'.

ANNA (cont'd)  
Have you read these?

She nods to the memorial.

LARRY  
Yeah, I knew you'd like it.

He sits on a bench and lights a cigarette.

ANNA  
How's Polly?

LARRY  
Polly's great.

ANNA  
I always knew you'd end up with a  
pretty nurse.

LARRY  
Yeah, how?

ANNA  
I just thought you would.  
(beat)  
Is she 'the one'?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

LARRY  
 I don't know.  
 (glances at Anna)  
 No.  
 (beat)  
 Everyone learns, nobody changes.

\*  
\*  
\*

ANNA  
 You don't change.  
 He shrugs, looks at her.

\*

LARRY  
 You seeing anyone?

She shakes her head. Pause.

\*

ANNA  
 I got a dog.

\*

LARRY  
 Yeah, What sort?

ANNA  
 Mongrel, she's a stray. I found her  
 in the street, no collar...nothing.

Pause.

\*

LARRY  
 You look fantastic.

ANNA  
 Don't start.

LARRY  
 I'd give you one. Serious.

\*

She looks at him.

\*

ANNA  
 Fuck off and die, you fucked-up  
 slag.

\*

They chuckle.

LARRY  
 I never told you this. When I  
 strode into the bathroom, 'that  
 night', I banged my knee on our  
 cast-iron tub. The bathroom  
 ambushed me. While you were sobbing  
 in the sitting-room I was hopping  
 around in agony. The mirror was  
 having a field day.  
 (pause)  
 How's work?

\*  
\*  
\*\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA  
I'm having a break...I'm taking the  
dog to the country...we're going to  
go for long walks...

\*

Beat.

\*

LARRY  
Don't become...a sad person.

ANNA  
I won't. I'm not. Fuck off.

They look out at the memorial.

\*

LARRY  
How did she die?

ANNA  
I don't know. When he phoned, he  
said it happened last night in New  
York. He's flying out today. He  
wanted to see us before he left.

LARRY  
They weren't together?

\*

ANNA  
They split up in January.

LARRY  
(anxious)  
Did he say why?  
(she shakes her head)  
How did they contact him?

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

ANNA  
Maybe she wrote his name in her  
passport as next of kin. You're  
still in mine, in the event of  
death.

\*

\*

(reflects)  
I must remove you.  
(sits with him)  
Are you glad you're back at the  
hospital?

\*

\*

LARRY  
Yeah. Well, Polly said she wouldn't  
have sex with me until I gave up  
private medicine. What's a man to  
do?

Anna looks at the MEMORIAL.

\*

ANNA  
Do you think the families arranged  
these?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY

I suppose. It's a bit like putting flowers at the roadside. People need to remember. It makes things seem less random. Actually, I've always hated this memorial.

\*  
\*  
\*

ANNA

Why?

LARRY

It's the sentimental act of a Victorian philanthropist: remember the dead, forget the living.

ANNA

You're a pompous bastard.

LARRY

And you're an incurable romantic.  
(beat)  
Have a look for Alice Ayres.

\*

ANNA

Larry, that's horrible.

Larry points to one memorial in particular. Anna reads.

\*

CLOSE: the inscription on the memorial:

\*

Alice Ayres, daughter of a bricklayer's labourer, who by intrepid conduct saved three children from a burning house in Union Street, Borough, at the cost of her own young life. April 24th 1885.

\*

Anna turns to Larry, shocked.

\*

LARRY

She made herself up.

After a while, he puts his cigarette out and picks up his white coat.

\*

LARRY (cont'd)

I'm not being callous but I've got a lot of patients to see. Will you give my apologies to Dan? I'm not good at grief.

Anna continues to look at the memorial then turns to him.

\*

ANNA

You do remember me?

Before Larry can respond Dan arrives. He's wearing his black suit and carrying the suitcase seen earlier.

\*

He holds a bunch of flowers. He looks exhausted.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN  
I couldn't get away from work,  
sorry.

LARRY  
Dan...I'm sorry...I have to...

Dan gestures, 'it's fine'. The three of them stand in silence  
a few moments until Larry goes. \*

DAN  
(To Anna)  
You look well. \*

ANNA  
I am well. \*

Dan looks at the memorial. Anna gestures for him to sit, he  
remains standing. \*

DAN  
This is where we sat.

ANNA  
Who?

DAN  
Me and my father, didn't I tell  
you?

ANNA  
No, wrong girl, you told Alice.

DAN  
Jane. Her name was Jane Jones.  
The police phoned...they said that  
someone I know, called Jane, had  
died. I said, 'there must be a  
mistake, I don't know a  
'Jane'...'They had to describe her. \*

(pause)  
There's no one else to identify the  
body. She was knocked down by a car  
on 43rd and Madison. \*

(beat)  
At work today...Graham said, 'Who's  
on the slab?' I went out to the  
fire escape and cried like a baby.  
I covered my face - why do we do  
that? \*

(beat)  
A man from the Treasury had died. I  
spent all morning...writing his  
obituary. \*

Dan sits on the bench with Anna.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN (cont'd)  
The phone rang. It was the  
police...her parents' are alive -  
divorced - they're trying to trace  
them.

(beat)  
She said she fell in love with me  
because...I cut off my crusts...but  
it was just...it was only that  
day...because the bread...broke in  
my hands.

Dan looks at the flowers. Silence.

DAN (cont'd)  
I want to put these at Blackfriars  
Bridge.

They stand.

DAN (cont'd)  
I should go, I'll miss the plane.  
(beat)  
Thank you.

They look at each other a moment.

DAN (cont'd)  
Goodbye.

ANNA  
Yes. Goodbye.

They leave in different directions.

EXT. BLACKFRIARS BRIDGE - DAY (MINUTES LATER)

Dan arrives at the crossing where he first saw Alice.

He holds the flowers, looking for somewhere to place them.

And then...amongst the people across the road...ALICE.

She stares at him, glances left and then STEPS INTO THE ROAD.  
Immediately, she's hit by a black taxi.

She spins and falls to the ground.

Dan rushes over to her - the flowers gone - FLASHBACK - the  
day they met...

Dan kneels by her side, she's out cold. He feels her pulse,  
her eyes open, she focuses on him, speaks softly:

ALICE  
Hallo, stranger.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dan gazes at her.

\*

CUT BACK TO:

\*

Dan standing at the crossing, remembering.

\*

Traffic thunders past. The lights change to red, PEDESTRIANS  
cross the road.

\*

\*

Dan in his black suit, holding his flowers, motionless as the  
people move towards and away from him.

\*

\*

The lights change to green and the traffic continues to roar.

\*

FADE TO BLACK.

\*