THE REMAINS OF THE DAY

a screenplay

by

Harold Pinter

THIS MATERIAL IS THE PROPERTY OF COLUMBIA PICTURES, A UNIT OF COLUMBIA PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT INC. ("COLUMBIA") AND IS INTENDED AND RESTRICTED SOLELY FOR COLUMBIA'S USE BY COLUMBIA PERSONNEL. DISTRIBUTION OR DISCLOSURE OF THE MATERIAL TO UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS, OR THE SALE, COPYING OR REPRODUCTION OF THIS MATERIAL IN ANY FORM, IS PROHIBITED.

RECEIVED
FEB 6 1991
COLUMBIA STORY DEPT.

Revised 24 January 1991

NOTE

In 1923 Stevens is thirty-five. In 1936 he is forty-eight and in 1954 he is sixty-six.

In 1923 Miss Kenton is twenty-five. In 1936 she is thirty-eight and in 1954 she is fifty-six.

THE REMAINS OF THE DAY

1. DARLINGTON HALL FROM THE PARK

Darlington Hall is a large English country house. It stands in grounds which extend to the horizon.

Miss Kenton's voice over:

MISS KENTON
It is seven years since I last wrote to you. I have left my husband. I am staying with a friend in Little Compton.

2. FIRST FLOOR BEDROOM DUST SHEETED 1954 DAY

Stevens (66) comes into the room. The large windows are open. He closes them. He stands a moment, looking down.

Miss Kenton's voice over:

MISS KENTON
I often think of you.

3. HIS POV

The lawn. The summerhouse. The Downs in the distance.

3a. THE HALL MORNING

Stevens walks across the dustsheeted hall with a tray of coffee.

4. THE LIBRARY MORNING

Farraday reading the newspaper. Stevens comes in with coffee.

FARRADAY
Morning, Stevens. How you doing?

STEVENS
Good morning, Sir.

Stevens places the tray and pours coffee.

Mr. Farraday....you were kind enough to suggest that I take a trip to the country....while you are in America.

FARRADAY
That's right. Sure. Take the car. Shut the house. Give yourself a break. Good idea.

STEVENS
I tend to agree, sir.

FARRADAY
Ah. You tend to agree? But do you agree? That's the question.

STEVENS
I agree, Mr. Farraday. I think it would do me good.

FARRADAY
Clean out the cobwebs. Right?

STEVENS
Uuh....Right, sir....Oh....when you say take the car, sir -- which car -- ?

FARRADAY
I mean the Bentley. You belong to that Bentley, Stevens. You were made for each other. I want to see you sitting in that car. I want to take a photograph of you in that car to show to the folks back home.

STEVENS
That's very kind of you --

FARRADAY
Talking of the folks back home -- I'll be back in a month -- right? -- with my wife and an architect -- guy called -- he's some kind of Swede -- Okay? Of course -- let me tell you, Stevens -- my wife is a hell of an interior decorator herself -- she's won medals -- that kind of thing. She's dying to meet you, Stevens.

STEVENS

I look forward to that, sir.

FARRADAY

She's really interested in English historical landmarks -- like you. Right? Anyway it's a good plan. Shut the house. See the world. When did you last see the world? Tell me.

STEVENS

Well, sir, the world always used to come to this house, in a manner of speaking, if I may say so.

FARRADAY

You may say so. But listen, there's plenty world outside this house, believe me. So where you going to go?

STEVENS

I intend to drive to the West Country, sir. And I believe.... incidentally....that I might be able to solve our staff problem while I'm there.

FARRADAY

What staff problem?

STEVENS

The post of housekeeper.

FARRADAY
How you going to do that?

STEVENS
A lady who left here some.... eighteen years ago....has indicated to me that she might be prepared to return. She is at present living in the West Country. She's a most able person. She was here for a number of years.

FARRADAY
An old girlfriend, huh?

Stevens smiles.

STEVENS
Oh no sir, nothing like that.

5. MAIN STAIRCASE

Stevens walking up the staircase. Miss Kenton's voice over:

MISS KENTON
I often think of you. I often think of Darlington Hall. Is the view from the first floor bedroom the same? The lawn, the summerhouse, the Downs in the distance? It was magical. I was enchanted by it.

Stevens goes through a door in the wall. The door closes. Miss Kenton's voice over:

MISS KENTON
I don't know what my future is.

6. BACKSTAIRS SERVANTS' QUARTERS

Stevens on the landing.

MISS KENTON (VO)
Perhaps my mood -- or my life -- will change for the better. But it's not easy to know how. With all best wishes.

A door bangs. Stevens looks up a flight of stairs. He starts to climb the stairs, stops. Sound of a woman crying.

Stevens stands still. He then goes up the stairs and opens a door.

7. MISS KENTON'S BEDROOM

The room is empty, apart from a few boxes. The hinge of the window is creaking. Stevens shuts the window and leaves the room.

8. STABLE YARD AND GARAGES DAY

Farraday standing by a 1939 Humber. Stevens hands Mr. Farraday's baggage to a chauffeur. (Stevens wears a thick tweed three piece suit). The chauffeur puts the baggage in the car.

FARRADAY
Listen Stevens, I have to ask you something. Where the hell did you get that suit?

STEVENS
It belonged to Lord Darlington, sir. He gave it to me.

FARRADAY
Well, well... It's beautiful. In fact it's remarkable. They don't make them like that anymore. Okay, Stevens, I want to see you ride out in that Bentley in that suit.

Stevens smiles and takes his own baggage towards a garage. He opens the garage door.

Farraday nudges the chauffeur.

FARRADAY (to chauffeur)
Watch this.

9. THE GARAGE

A gleaming two-door Bentley Continental. Stevens starts the car and drives slowly into the yard.

FARRADAY
Hold it! Hold it!

Stevens stops the car. Farraday brings out a camera and takes photographs.

FARRADAY
Great! Don't move! Wonderful!

Stevens sits still at the wheel as the photographs are taken.

FARRADAY
Okay! That's it! Have a good trip! And give my love to your girlfriend!

Stevens puts the car into gear.

10. STABLE YARD. HOUNDS BARKING 1923

The hunt. A number of riders on horses. Hounds. Stevens and underbutlers with trays of whisky and mulled wine. The riders bending to drink. The horses hooves.

Lord Darlington raising a glass. Some of the men call to him to join the hunt. He smiles and declines.

11. CAR DRIVING OUT OF STABLE YARD 1954

12. HUNT RIDING OUT OF STABLE YARD 1923

13. BUTLER'S PANTRY 1923

Stevens (35) and Miss Kenton (25) sitting. Stevens looking at her references.

STEVENS
And how big a staff is there at Granchester Lodge?

MISS KENTON
Seven, Mr. Stevens.

STEVENS
And the name of the butler?

MISS KENTON
Benn. William Benn.

STEVENS
Benn....yes. Well, as I'm sure you've already observed, this is a much larger house with a much larger staff. We sleep forty here. How do you....how confident are you that you can make the adjustment?

MISS KENTON
I think it's within my powers.

He studies her.

STEVENS
Your references are certainly most complimentary, Miss Kenton.

MISS KENTON
I enjoy the work, Mr. Stevens. And the responsibility.

STEVENS
Yes. Good.

Pause.

No gentleman callers allowed, of course.

She is expressionless.

14. THE LIBRARY

Lord Darlington looking at his shelves. Stevens enters.

STEVENS
Might I have a word with you, m'lord?

DARLINGTON

Of course.

STEVENS

The matter of the housekeeper and the underbutler, m'lord --

DARLINGTON

Matter?

STEVENS

They....ran off together last month --

DARLINGTON

Ah yes. Bad business. How are you managing?

STEVENS

I believe I have found two first rate replacements.

DARLINGTON

Oh, have you? Good.

STEVENS

A Miss Kenton. A young woman with excellent references. Very pleasing demeanour. Appears to be very able.

Darlington fingers a book.

STEVENS (cont.)
And a man with considerable experience of butlering. But now of a certain age and happy to take on the post of underbutler.

DARLINGTON
Name?

STEVENS
Stevens, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
Stevens?

STEVENS
Yes.

DARLINGTON
That's your name.

STEVENS
He's my father, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
Oh, really? Couldn't do better, I'm sure. I'd like to see him sometime.

STEVENS
Thank you, m'lord.

Stevens goes towards the door.

DARLINGTON
Oh Stevens, what are we at dinner tonight -- twenty-seven or twenty-eight?

STEVENS (with a smile)
Twenty-nine, m'lord.

15. BACKSTAIRS

Stevens leading Father down passages and up stairs. He is carrying two of father's bags.

Maids scurrying. Bells ringing. Stevens stops and calls to a footman.

STEVENS
Smith! Fasten that jacket!

FOOTMAN
Yes, Mr. Stevens. Sorry, Mr. Stevens.

Stevens and Father climb a further staircase to the attic, reach a room, go in.

16. FATHER'S ROOM

Father and Stevens in the room.

STEVENS
This is your room.

Father looks around the room.

FATHER
I'll take the bags.

Stevens gives him the bags. Father puts them down and looks out of the small window.

FATHER
Big house.

STEVENS
It sleeps forty.

Father remains still, looking out of the window, his back to Stevens.

STEVENS
How is your health?

Father turns to look at him.

FATHER
What?

STEVENS
How is your health?

FATHER
Why do you ask?

STEVENS
Interested.

FATHER
Fit as a fiddle.

17. THE KITCHEN

Great activity. Stevens comes in, surveys the scene.

18. DINING ROOM

Dinner party. Ladies and gentlemen. Jewels. Father serving at table. Stevens watching him.

19. BACKSTAIRS CORRIDOR

Stevens in corridor. Miss Kenton appears at the far end of the corridor and calls.

MISS KENTON
Mr. Stevens.

He turns.

MR. STEVENS
Miss Kenton.

She walks down the corridor towards him. She is holding a silver jug.

MISS KENTON
Can you possibly advise me, Mr. Stevens?

STEVENS
I shall do my best.

MISS KENTON
This jug. It seems to be quite out of place here. Was it intended for this part of the house? Or has it found its way here by accident?

Stevens takes the jug and looks at it.

STEVENS
It has no business here.

MISS KENTON
I thought not.

STEVENS
No business at all. It belongs to the first floor landing -- front of house. An aberration on the part of the previous housekeeper, no doubt. One of many. Well spotted, Miss Kenton.

MISS KENTON
Thank you.

STEVENS
Do always ask me anything you might be unsure about, won't you? I shall always be very happy to help.

MISS KENTON
Thank you, Mr. Stevens.

20. THE GARDEN

Stevens walking across the lawn to the summerhouse with a tray of tea. He goes in.

21. THE SUMMERHOUSE

Lord Darlington lying in an armchair, reading. Stevens puts the tray down, pours the tea.

DARLINGTON
Father settling in all right?

STEVENS
Yes, thank you, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
And Miss Kenton?

STEVENS
Remarkably well, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
Jolly good.

22. BUTLER'S PANTRY

Stevens sitting at his table doing accounts. Miss Kenton knocks at the door and comes in with a vase of flowers.

MISS KENTON
Mr. Stevens, I thought these would brighten your pantry a little.

STEVENS
I beg your pardon?

MISS KENTON
It's a beautiful day. Your room is so dark and cold. I thought these might cheer things up.

STEVENS
Very kind of you.

MISS KENTON
Do you know these walls are damp?

STEVENS
Condensation, that's all.

She places the vase on a ledge.

MISS KENTON
There. What do you think?

STEVENS
Very nice. But I really don't need distractions, you know.

MISS KENTON
Surely you can't call flowers distractions?

STEVENS
As you're here, Miss Kenton, there is a matter I would like to mention to you.

MISS KENTON
Oh? What is that?

STEVENS
Just a small matter --

KENTON
Do you mind if I sit down?

STEVENS
No, no, please do --

MISS KENTON

Thank you.

She sits.

STEVENS

The other day I heard you calling someone "William".

MISS KENTON

Oh yes?

STEVENS

That is right. You were calling someone "William". Can you tell me who it was?

MISS KENTON

There is only one William on the staff, Mr. Stevens. Your father. I think you know that.

STEVENS

Yes. I do know that.

MISS KENTON

So why did you ask me who it was?

STEVENS

I wanted to be quite certain we were talking about the same person.

KENTON

But you knew we were, Mr. Stevens. I would be obliged if you would get to the point.

STEVENS

In future, please address my father as Mr. Stevens or -- if you're referring to him to a third party -- as Mr. Stevens senior. I'm most grateful.

KENTON

I am the housekeeper of this house. Your father is an underbutler.

STEVENS

That may be his title. But he is much more than that. For someone of your age to address him as "William", is inappropriate.

MISS KENTON

Is that so?

STEVENS

Yes.

MISS KENTON

I have no wish to offend your father. I respect your father.

MISS KENTON (cont.)
I will address him as Mr. Stevens in the future. Or as Mr. Stevens senior. Or as anything else you care to recommend. Excuse me.

She leaves the room.

23. THE HALL

Stevens leading Father across the hall. Stevens goes into the library. Father waits outside.

24. THE LIBRARY

Lord Darlington reading a newspaper. Stevens comes in.

STEVENS
My father is at the door, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
Oh, yes. Good. Bring him in.

Stevens opens the door. Father comes into the room.

DARLINGTON
Mr. Stevens. How do you do?

FATHER

M'lord.

DARLINGTON

Settling in?

FATHER

Thank you, m'lord.

DARLINGTON

Very good man here, your son. Does the house great service. Don't know what we'd do without him. Proud of him, are you?

FATHER

Very proud, m'lord.

DARLINGTON

Quite right. Yes, very glad to have you with us.

25. <u>DINING ROOM. EVENING</u>

Lord Darlington, Sir David Cardinal, Herr Bremann.

Stevens serving. Footmen etc.

DARLINGTON

We were enemies, yes. But we tried to behave like gentleman.

BREMANN

Certainly. We treated each other decently. We had a job to do, we did it. That should have been the end of it.

CARDINAL

Yes, what we said was, when this damned war is over, we'll shake hands and have a drink together. What?

BREMANN

As gentlemen.

DARLINGTON

As gentlemen. But how can I look you in the face now? This treaty has made me a liar. We're grinding Germany into the dust. You can't treat a defeated enemy like this.

CARDINAL

It's a complete break with the best traditions of this country.

BREMANN
We cannot understand it. We are poverty stricken.

DARLINGTON
I fought that war to preserve justice in the world. I wasn't taking part in a vendetta against the German race.

CARDINAL
It's the French.

Stevens pours wine.

BREMANN
They hate us.

DARLINGTON
But it's pointless having a conference on this question without a Frenchman present.

CARDINAL
Afraid so.

DARLINGTON
I've invited Dupont.

26. THE LIBRARY DAY

Stevens polishing silver. Miss Kenton comes in.

MISS KENTON
Excuse me, Mr. Stevens, but if you're searching for your dustpan it is out in the hall.

STEVENS
My dustpan?

MISS KENTON
Your dustpan. You've left it out in the hall.

STEVENS
I haven't been using a dustpan.

MISS KENTON
Oh, really? Then it must have been somebody else.

STEVENS
I don't follow you.

MISS KENTON
Oh, it's quite all right, Mr. Stevens.

She goes. He listens to her steps fading away, opens the door and looks into the hall.

26a. THE HALL

A dustpan and brush sit at the very centre of the polished floor.

27. THE PARK

A Shoot on its way back to the house.

28. Hundreds of dead birds thrown into a wagon.

29. Preparations for dinner in the kitchen.

30. Maids rushing upstairs to bedrooms.

31. Ladies in long gowns descending the stairs.

Men in white tie and tails stand in the hall. Lord Darlington greets the ladies, kissing their hands.

32. Large dinner in the hall. Stevens overseeing the service.

33. SERVANTS' HALL. LATER THAT NIGHT

Butlers and valets sitting around the log fire. They include Stevens, Harry Graham, Bill Williams and Father.

Rows of bells on the wall.

GRAHAM
All right. Who's a great butler then?

WILLIAMS
Jack Neighbours.

GRAHAM
Get out of it. Jack Neighbours is nowhere near a great butler.

WILLIAMS
He's clever.

GRAHAM
Oh, he's clever. He uses his head. But it's all show. He's riding for a fall, that lad. Take my tip.

STEVENS
Quite right.

WILLIAMS
Well, you tell me then. Who's a great butler?

STEVENS
I'll tell you.

WILLIAMS (grinning)
Harry Graham?

GRAHAM
Not me.

STEVENS
Mr. Marshall of Charleville House. Mr. Lane of Bridewood.

GRAHAM
Quite right.

WILLIAMS
What have they got?

STEVENS
Dignity.

WILLIAMS
Yes, but what is that? What is dignity?

GRAHAM

You can't describe it. It's just something you're born with.

STEVENS

No. It's something you work for. It's something you work for day after day.

GRAHAM

You can work for it as long as you like. But if you haven't got it, you haven't got it.

STEVENS

A great butler has to work for it. He has to work at it, whether he was born with it or not.

A bell rings. They all look up. Father stands, leaves the room.

GRAHAM

Well, I'll tell you someone who was born with it. I'll tell you a man who was absolutely born with it.

STEVENS

Who?

GRAHAM

Your dad, Stevens. (He turns to the others.) Listen. Here's a story I heard about him. (To Stevens) How long was he butler to Mr. Sims at Loughborough House?

STEVENS

Fifteen years.

GRAHAM

Well I was told this by Charles Derwent. You know Charles Derwent? Well, he was with two other gentleman visiting Loughborough House and one day they had a bit too much to drink at lunch and they asked Mr. Stevens -- his father -- to take them for a ride in the car, see? So he did. And they started to sing some pretty fruity songs in the back and they ordered Stevens to go right and then left and then the other way round and they insulted all the villagers they saw through the window and then they started to call Mr. Sims all the names under the sun -- and that's Mr. Stevens employer -- and at that your dad stops the car dead --

34. CAR ON COUNTRY ROAD

Car stops dead. Father gets out of the driving seat and opens the rear door.

35. INT. CAR. PASSENGERS POV

Father at the open door. His figure looms. He stands without speaking, looking down at the three men.

Silence. The men stare up at him.

SMITH
Are we....not going on with the journey?

Father remains still, framing the doorway.

JONES
I suppose we have been....uh....
talking a little out of turn.
Please accept our apologies.

Father remains still, blocking out the light. He slowly closes the door, gets back into the driving seat and drives away.
The three men are silent.

36. THE SERVANTS' HALL

The butlers by the fire.

GRAHAM
Didn't have to say a word, you see. He was born with it.

37. THE BILLIARD ROOM DAY

Stevens arranging Lord Darlington's trophies in a glass cabinet. Miss Kenton comes in.

MISS KENTON
Mr. Stevens, was it his lordship's wish that the Chinaman on the upstairs landing should be exchanged with the one outside the door?

STEVENS
The Chinaman?

MISS KENTON
Yes. The upstairs Chinaman is now outside this door.

STEVENS
I think you are confused, Miss Kenton.

MISS KENTON
I am not at all confused. Come and see for yourself.

STEVENS
I'm busy at the moment.

MISS KENTON
All you have to do is pop your head outside this door and see for yourself. It won't take a minute.

STEVENS
I will look into the matter in due course, Miss Kenton.

MISS KENTON
But you accept that this is not a fantasy on my part.

STEVENS
I accept no such thing. I will investigate the matter in due course.

MISS KENTON
So you think it might be a fantasy -- a fantasy on my part?

STEVENS
I am busy in this room, Miss Kenton.

KENTON
I shall wait outside.

She goes out, closing the door.

Stevens continues to arrange the trophies. He stops, listens. He goes to the door, listens. Silence. He puts his hand on the door handle, listens. He goes to the french windows and looks out. It is raining. Puddles.

He looks at the door of the room, walks quickly to it, opens it, strides into the hall.

38. THE HALL

Miss Kenton's face, startled.

Stevens striding by fast.

Miss Kenton overtakes him and stops in front of him. He stops. She points to a Chinaman on a table. (A Chinaman is a large china figure of a Chinaman with a nodding head).

MISS KENTON
Look at it. Is that or is it not the wrong Chinaman?

STEVENS
Keep your voice down, Miss Kenton.

KENTON
Look at that Chinaman and tell me the truth.

STEVENS
Please keep your voice down.

MISS KENTON
Look at the Chinaman.

STEVENS
Let me pass.

MISS KENTON
Look at the Chinaman.

He turns slowly and looks at the Chinaman. He looks back at her.

STEVENS
It is a small mistake. A trivial mistake.

MISS KENTON
Your father is entrusted with more than a man of his age can cope with.

STEVENS
You are making yourself look foolish.

MISS KENTON
Oh, no. I am concerned that you are allowing your father to appear foolish. I am in fact concerned for him, Mr. Stevens. It was he who left the dustpan in the middle of the hall, it is he who is leaving polish on the cutlery, it is he who has confused the Chinaman -- you must recognise this before he commits a major error --

STEVENS
I'm afraid you can't talk to me like this, Miss Kenton.

MISS KENTON
I'm afraid I can, Mr. Stevens. I am the housekeeper in this house. I am giving you serious advice. Your father should be relieved of a number of his duties. For his own good. To save him humiliation. His powers are diminished. He should not, for example, be asked to go on carrying heavy trays. His hands tremble. There is a growing danger that at dinner he will drop a tray into a lady's lap.

STEVENS
I thank you for your advice. Now perhaps you will allow me to go about my business.

MISS KENTON
Oh, I never meant to keep you from your business, Mr. Stevens.

He walks away. She looks after him.

39. THE SUMMERHOUSE THE LAWN DAY

Lord Darlington and guests in the summerhouse.

Father approaching with tray across the lawn.

He climbs the flagstones towards the summerhouse, slips. The tray falls. He falls, hits his head; the teapot, cups, sandwiches and cakes scatter; the teapot breaks.

Father lies still.

Lord Darlington rushes out of the summerhouse. He calls for a cushion and rug. A guest brings them. Darlington turns Father on his side, puts the cushion under his head and the rug over him. Stevens runs from the house.

40. FATHER'S ROOM EVENING

Miss Kenton sitting at his bedside with a glass of milk. Father has a bandage on his forehead. He opens his eyes, looks at her.

FATHER
What happened?

MISS KENTON
You slipped.

Pause.

FATHER
The tray went.

MISS KENTON
Yes.

FATHER
Shocking.

Pause.

MISS KENTON
Those steps to the summerhouse -- they're very awkward.

FATHER
They're crooked.

He takes the glass of milk and sips.

FATHER
Where's Jim?

MISS KENTON
Jim?

FATHER
My son. Mr. Stevens.

MISS KENTON
Oh.

FATHER
His name's Jim.

KENTON
Is it?

FATHER
He'll have to get those steps put right. I'll have to tell him. They've got to be put right.

41. <u>THE HALL LIBRARY DOOR MORNING</u>

Lord Darlington seen through the open door studying the spines of books on his shelves. He pulls out a volume as Stevens comes into the hall.

DARLINGTON

Oh, Stevens....

Darlington strolls back into the library with his book. Stevens follows, closes the door.

STEVENS

M'lord?

DARLINGTON

Your father feeling better?

STEVENS

He has made a full recovery, I am happy to say.

DARLINGTON

Oh, good. Good. Glad to hear it. It so happened I was watching him walk across the garden. Missed his step. Tripped.

STEVENS

I'm afraid he did.

DARLINGTON

Trouble is, if it can happen once, it can happen again. At any time. You see, the thing is, the first of the delegates will be arriving here in under a week.

STEVENS
We are well prepared, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
What happens within this house after that may have considerable repercussions.

STEVENS
Yes, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
I mean considerable repercussions. For the future of Europe. See what I mean?

STEVENS
Yes, I do, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
So we really can't run the risk of any....accidents, can we? I tell you what -- why don't we lighten your father's burden? Make life a little easier for him. I'd be terribly worried if he served at table during the conference. Really much too dangerous. Don't you agree?

STEVENS
I fully understand, m'lord.

42. EXT. THE HOUSE DAWN

Deer in the park.

43. EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE DAWN

Father at his window, standing still, looking out.

44. BACKSTAIRS DAWN

Stevens climbing the stairs. He knocks on Father's door and goes in.

45. FATHER'S ROOM

Father is sitting dressed in full footman's uniform on the edge of the bed.

Pale light.

STEVENS
I might have known you'd be up and ready for the day.

FATHER
I've been up for two hours.

STEVENS
That's not much sleep.

FATHER
It's all the sleep I need.

He gets up from the bed, grasps the back of the chair and stands upright.

STEVENS
I have come to talk to you about something.

FATHER
Well, talk then. I haven't got all morning.

STEVENS
I'll come straight to the point.

FATHER
Do and be done with it.

STEVENS
You are no longer young.

Father stands, staring at him.

STEVENS

There is a very important international conference in this house next week. His lordship cannot allow anything to threaten the smooth running of that conference.

Father continues to stare at him.

It has been decided that you should no longer wait at table.

Silence.

FATHER

I have waited at table every day for the last fifty-four years.

STEVENS

It has also been decided that you must no longer carry laden trays.

He takes a piece of paper from his pocket.

Here is a revised list of your duties.

He offers the piece of paper to Father. Father does not take it. Stevens puts the paper on the bed. Father remains still, clutching the back of the chair.

FATHER

I fell because of those steps. They're crooked. Why don't you get them put right before someone else does the same thing?

STEVENS

You will study the revised list of your duties?

FATHER

Get those steps put right. You don't want all those gentleman from Europe tripping up and breaking their necks, do you?

STEVENS

Indeed I don't. Well, good morning father.

Stevens goes out. Father remains still, clutching the chair.

46. <u>FIRST FLOOR BEDROOM CORRIDOR EARLY EVENING</u>

The bedroom doors are ajar. The house is silent.

Stevens walks down the corridor. Suddenly through one bedroom door he sees Miss Kenton's figure, silhouetted against a window, looking down.

He pauses and then steps into the room. She turns quickly, sees him, turns back to the window. Stevens walks to the window. He stands a few feet from her and looks down.

47. THE SUMMERHOUSE THE LAWN THEIR POV

Shadows of the poplar trees across the lawn. Last light of sunset around the summerhouse. Father standing by the steps.
He walks slowly up the steps. At the top he turns and comes back down, a little faster.
He turns, stands still, looks at the steps.

He climbs them, very deliberately. He walks across the grass to the summerhouse, stops, turns, walks slowly back, his eyes never leaving the ground, down the steps, across the lawn to the house.

Stevens and Miss Kenton remain still in the empty bedroom, in the last light of the day, not looking at each other.

48. THE SERVANTS HALL

Stevens is addressing the whole staff, including Father and Miss Kenton. He is holding a sheet of paper.

STEVENS

I have jotted down a few words to say to you on the eve of this important conference.

He puts on a pair of glasses and reads.

Polished brass, brilliantly shining silver -- what do these objects represent? I would like to tell you. They represent the finest values of a civilized society. They represent the perfection for which we all strive. They represent the very best aspirations of we, the English.

He looks about the Hall at the staff. They stare at him.

STEVENS

History could well be made under this roof over the next few days. You can each and every one of you take great pride in the humble role you will play in helping to bring this about. Go to your tasks.

49. <u>PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE</u>

(A) Food arriving from London and Scotland.

(B) Sheets etc. being laundered in laundry room.

(C) Miss Kenton overseeing chambermaids in bedrooms.

(D) Stevens examining a pile of dinner plates on a sideboard, watched by footmen. The plates he considers dirty he puts to one side.

50. THE HALL DAY

Stevens and Father in a corner of the hall. They are standing by a trolley loaded with cleaning utensils. Mops and brushes.

STEVENS
You have what we can call a roving commission. In other words you can excercise your own judgement -- within certain limits of course. You have your mops....here....

FATHER
These are my mops.

STEVENS
And your brushes --

FATHER
I have my brushes and I have my mops. What do you want me to do with them?

STEVENS
I think you know what to do with them well enough. Look for dust and dirt.

FATHER
And if I find any dust or dirt, I give them a good going-over with this mop?

STEVENS
That's right.

Father pushes the trolley across the hall vigorously.

51. BACK STAIRS CORRIDOR

Miss Kenton and Stevens meet in a bright streak of light from a window in the dark corridor.

STEVENS
Ah, Miss Kenton.

MISS KENTON
Yes, Mr. Stevens?

STEVENS
The bed linen for the upper floor will need to be ready by the day after tomorrow.

MISS KENTON
I know that.

STEVENS
Ah, good.

MISS KENTON
I know that, Mr. Stevens. It's my job. I don't bother you about your job, why do you bother me about mine?

STEVENS
There's no need to be so bad tempered --

MISS KENTON
This is the fifth time in the past two days that you have made quite unnecessary remarks to me about my job. You seem to have a great deal of time on your hands, Mr. Stevens --

STEVENS
If you actually believe I have time on my hands, Miss Kenton, it shows more clearly than ever your great inexperience.

MISS KENTON
You're always talking about my "great inexperience". Point out one defect in my work.

STEVENS
I never said --

MISS KENTON
You can't. Because if you could, you would. But you can't. I think what you really need is some fresh air, Mr. Stevens.

She stamps away. He goes on to the kitchen door. She turns and calls.

MISS KENTON
Mr. Stevens!

51a. CAR ARRIVING THE HOUSE

Lewis gets out.

51b. BACKSTAIRS CORRIDOR

Miss Kenton walks down the corridor to Stevens.

MISS KENTON
From now on I would prefer it if you did not speak to me directly at all.

STEVENS
What are you talking about?

51c. EXT. THE HOUSE

Lewis walking towards the front door.

52. BACKSTAIRS CORRIDOR

MISS KENTON
If it's necessary to send a message to me, please do it through a messenger. Or else write me a note.

The front doorbell rings.

MISS KENTON
I am sure our working relationship will be a great deal easier.

STEVENS
Miss Kenton --

MISS KENTON
Thank you so much.

She walks away.

53. THE HALL

A footman opens the front door. Lewis comes in. Lord Darlington walks across the hall to meet him. Stevens appears in background.

LEWIS
Lord Darlington? I'm Jack Lewis.

DARLINGTON
How do you do Mr. Lewis? Like some tea?

LEWIS
Glass of whisky would be welcome.

DARLINGTON
Scotch and soda, Stevens.

54. SMOKING ROOM

Darlington, Lewis, Sir David Cardinal and one or two others. Stevens with decanter of whisky.

LEWIS
There's one thing you should know about Dupont. He hates Germans. I mean seriously. But I'd say that you can't blame a Frenchman for hating Germans, can you? They have a pretty good cause.

CARDINAL
We English also fought the Germans long and hard.

LEWIS
But there's a difference. You don't hate them anymore. You know what I'd say it was? I'd say it was a difference in temperament. A temperamental difference. What would you say?

Darlington looks around the room.

DARLINGTON
Let me be frank. I think I speak for everyone here. Most of us in England find the present French attitude despicable. It's simply unbecoming to go on hating an enemy like this once the conflict is over. Once you've got your man on the canvas that ought to be the end of it. You don't then proceed to kick him to death. To us the French behaviour has become increasingly barbarous.

Lewis nods.

LEWIS
Well, I see what you mean, yes.

55. GUESTS ARRIVING.

Two German ladies with ladies' maids. Gentleman with footmen.

Trunks being carried from cars.

An Italian gentleman with a valet, a secretary and two bodyguards.

56. BACKSTAIRS CORRIDOR

Stevens calls to Miss Kenton. She turns to him.

STEVENS

Miss Kenton, the Italian gentleman has brought two bodyguards. One sleeps while the other is on duty. They --

MISS KENTON

Put it in writing, Mr. Stevens.

She walks away. He looks after her. A footman comes round the corner.

FOOTMAN

Mr. Stevens, Mr. Dupont has arrived.

57. DUPONT'S BEDROOM

Dupont, Stevens, Dupont's valet.

Dupont has a short grey beard and wears a monocle. A footman puts down his suitcases.

DUPONT
Butler, I have sore feet. I need a basin with warm water and salts.

STEVENS
Yes, sir.

He turns to the valet.

I shall ask Miss Kenton, the housekeeper, to consult you on the matter.

VALET
Est-ce qu'elle parle francais?

STEVENS
I beg your pardon?

DUPONT
Warm water and salt. As soon as possible.

58. THE CONFERENCE DRAWING ROOM

Some twenty people sitting around. Darlington standing. Stevens with tray.

DARLINGTON
-- a strong moral case for relaxing aspects of the Versailles treaty. I have personally witnessed great suffering in Germany....

Stevens goes out.

59. KITCHEN

Stevens examining coffee trays. He gives one cup to a footman.

STEVENS
This won't do. It's filthy. Change it.

60. DRAWING ROOM

Stevens comes in with coffee followed by under butlers. Sir David Cardinal is talking.

CARDINAL

We therefore consider it appropriate to call for a freeze of German reparation payments and the withdrawal of French troops from the Ruhr....

Dupont approaches Stevens and whispers.

DUPONT

Butler. I need more water. I need another basin to bathe my feet.

Stevens opens the door for him. They go out.

61. THE HALL

They walk across the hall to the billiard room.

DUPONT

I blame myself. Too tight shoes. Vanity.

62. THE BILLIARD ROOM

STEVENS

Can you wait here, sir?

DUPONT

I shall wait.

A footman comes into the room.

FOOTMAN
Mr. Stevens.

STEVENS
What is it?

Footman looks at him.

I'll speak to you in the hall.

63. THE HALL

Footman and Stevens.

FOOTMAN
Mr. Stevens, your father has been taken ill.

STEVENS
Take a basin of hot water and salts into the billiard room for Monsieur Dupont.

64. FIRST FLOOR LANDING

Stevens comes onto the landing.

At the far end of the corridor, in front of a large window, is the frozen figure of Father.

He is on one knee, bowed before the trolley, gripping it. Two chambermaids stand watching.

Stevens goes to Father. He tries to release his grip on the trolley. The grip is immovable. He tries again and fails. Father's eyes are closed. Very slowly, Stevens loosens the fingers, one by one.

He lays him on the carpet, gently.

65. FATHER'S BEDROOM

Stevens and two footmen lifting Father onto the bed. He lies still. Miss Kenton arranges blankets around him.

MISS KENTON
Mr. Stevens, I have more time than you at the moment. I'll look after him. I've called the doctor.

STEVENS
Thank you. Thank you very much.

66. DRAWING ROOM

A break in the proceedings. Tea and spirits are being served. Stevens.

Young Cardinal. A Clergyman. A German Countess.

YOUNG CARDINAL
You were in Berlin recently, sir?

CLERGYMAN
I was indeed.

YOUNG CARDINAL
What was your impression?

CLERGYMAN
Children are literally skin and bone in Berlin. Literally skin and bone. What we are talking about here is essentially a matter of Christian responsibility.

COUNTESS
Precisely. Christian responsibility. Quite right. May I shake your hand?

She does so.

67. THE HALL

Stevens into the hall with a tray. Doctor putting on his coat.

DOCTOR
Oh, yes. Hello, Stevens. Your father's not so good. If he deteriorates call me immediately, will you?

STEVENS
Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.

DOCTOR
How old is he?

STEVENS
Seventy-two.

DOCTOR
I see. Well, if he deteriorates, call me immediately.

68. FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR EARLY EVENING

Stevens walking along corridor past Dupont's bedroom. The door is slightly ajar. He hears Lewis's voice. He stops.

LEWIS
Listen, I have to tell you, Monsieur, that you're being manipulated. They're ganging up on you. Why did his lordship invite you a day late?

Stevens looks through the chink in the door at Lewis and Dupont.

So that they could all get the whole thing set before you got here.

LEWIS (cont.)
Listen, you know how they were talking about you French, the night before you got here? They were calling your own countrymen barbarous and despicable. I have to tell you that. I have to tell you I was appalled.

DUPONT
I see.

LEWIS
I just thought you should know all this. I just thought I had a responsibility to tell you all this.

Stevens moves on.

69. FATHER'S ROOM

Father asleep. A chambermaid sits with him. Stevens comes in. The chambermaid immediately shakes Father's shoulder.

STEVENS
What are you doing?

CHAMBERMAID
He said to wake him if you came in.

STEVENS
Don't be silly.

CHAMBERMAID

No, really, honestly, he said I had to wake him. He said I had to.

She continues to shake Father. He opens his eyes.

STEVENS

You can go and have a rest now, Ellen.

The maid goes.

STEVENS

How are you feeling, Father?

Father gazes at him.

FATHER

Everything in hand downstairs?

STEVENS

We're preparing dinner. It's the last dinner of the conference. So you can imagine the atmosphere in the kitchen.

FATHER

But is everything in hand?

STEVENS

Yes, yes. I think we're up to scratch. But how are you feeling? Are you feeling any better?

Father takes his hands from under the bedclothes and stares at the backs of his hands.

FATHER

I hope I've been a good father to you.

Stevens laughs.

STEVENS

I'm glad you're feeling better. I have to go down now. A lot to see to.

FATHER

I'm proud of you. I hope I've been a good father to you.

Stevens stands.

STEVENS

I have so much to do, Father. But we'll talk again in the morning.

FATHER

There's something I have to tell you.

STEVENS

What?

FATHER

I fell out of love with your mother. Your mother was a bitch. I loved her once but love went out of me when I found out what a bitch she was. Your mother was a bitch.

Silence.

STEVENS

I'm glad you're feeling better.

He leaves the room.

70. SERVANTS' HALL

Bells ringing, babble of voices, English and foreign. Secretaries, valets, maids etc. bustling in and out.

The Italian bodyguards.

71. THE KITCHEN

Pandemonium. The cook shouting, Stevens checking the dishes.

72. BANQUETING HALL (this is the hall itself turned into a banqueting hall).

Dinner, wine flowing. Lord Darlington stands.

DARLINGTON

I would like to express my gratitude to all present for the spirit of friendship and goodwill which has prevailed in our discussions over the last two days. Tomorrow morning the conference will be wound up and I trust that the last session will be rich in commitments on the part of each participant concerning action he will be taking before the international conference in Switzerland. I ask you to rise and drink to peace and justice in Europe.

The company stands, toasts, sits. A rap of knuckle on wood. Monsieur Dupont stands. He looks around the hall. The company becomes still.

DUPONT

I came here to listen. And I have been impressed by what I have heard.

DUPONT (cont.)

Let me say clearly that I intend to bring what modest influence I possess to encourage a change of emphasis in French policy in accordance with the views of this conference.

Great applause.

But before I go on to thank our host, the most honourable and kind Lord Darlington, there is a small thing I wish to remove from my chest. Some of you may say it is not good manners to do such things at the dinner table.

Laughter.

But I have no alternative. I believe it is imperative to openly condemn any who come here to abuse the hospitality of the host and attempt to sow discontent and suspicion. My only question concerning Mr. Lewis is this -- does his abonimable behaviour in any way express the attitude of the present American administration?

DUPONT (cont.)
Of course America is concerned about our debt payment to her in the event of a freeze in German reparations. But the thinking in that country, I assure you, is much more farsighted than that of our crude and cynical friend. In any case, he is hardly the influence he once was. Enough of that. Join me please, ladies and gentlemen, in raising your glasses to Lord Darlington.

Everyone stands and toasts Darlington. They sit. Lewis remains standing.

LEWIS
I thought I'd stay on my feet because, if everyone's making speeches, I might as well take a turn myself.

He looks round the room.

I don't have anything to say to the nonsense our French friend has been uttering. What I do have to say is this. You're a bunch of dreamers. Naive dreamers. You're amateurs. The world is no longer a world for amateurs. You've all been talking hogwash. Let me tell you something. Keep your nose out of the big world.

LEWIS (cont.)
That's serious advice. Leave it to the professionals. You need the professionals to run the place. Until you realise that you're headed for disaster. Okay. I'll give you a toast. To professionalism.

He raises his glass. Nobody moves. Lewis drinks and sits. Darlington stands.

DARLINGTON
I have no wish to enter into a quarrel on our last evening together. But I must say this. What Mr. Lewis describes as "amateurism" I would describe as "honour".

Applause. A footman enters the room, goes to Stevens and whispers.

DARLINGTON
And I suggest that his "professionalism" means greed and power rather than the desire to see justice and goodness prevail in the world.

Applause. Stevens goes out.

73. FATHER'S BEDROOM

Father in bed. Mrs. Mortimer (the cook) and Miss Kenton. Stevens comes in.

MRS. MORTIMER
Oh, Mr. Stevens, he's gone very poorly.

MISS KENTON
His pulse is very weak. I think he's had a stroke.

Stevens touches his father's forehead.

MRS. MORTIMER
We were together at Bowley House. My first place it was. And his. He was only eighteen. Oh, he was so handsome. He had such a lovely smile.

She cries.

STEVENS
I must....go down. When the doctor comes --

MISS KENTON
I'll tell you.

STEVENS
Thank you.

He goes.

74. THE SMOKING ROOM

Great jollity. Cigars, whisky etc. Stevens and underbutlers with trays. No sign of Lewis. Young Cardinal takes a drink from Stevens' tray.

CARDINAL
Ah, Stevens. Are you well?

He takes a glass.

Tell me. You interested in fish?

STEVENS
Fish?

CARDINAL
I used to have an aquarium. Well just a little one. In my bedroom. Gone now, of course.

STEVENS
Gone, sir?

CARDINAL
The fish. My fish. I lost them somewhere along the way. But I just -- I'll have another drop of that if you don't mind -- thanks -- your good health -- I just thought --

CARDINAL (cont.)
from your face, Stevens -- that you were a man who might have something in common with fish -- I mean would appreciate fish -- would recognise in the species, fish....virtue, purity, generosity of spirit, goodness and justice as opposed to greed and power. What do you say? Am I anywhere near the truth? Stevens?

STEVENS
I do like fish.

CARDINAL
Are you all right?

STEVENS
Sir?

CARDINAL
Are you all right?

STEVENS
Perfectly all right, sir.

CARDINAL
Not feeling....ill or anything?

STEVENS
No sir. Excuse me.

Stevens moves away. He takes the tray to Lord Darlington and others. Darlington looks at him suddenly, puts his hands on his shoulder and takes him into a corner.

DARLINGTON
Stevens, are you all right?

STEVENS
Yes, m'lord. Thank you, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
Coming down with a cold or something?

STEVENS
No, no, m'lord. No, no.

DARLINGTON
But is everything all right?

STEVENS
A hard day, m'lord.

Someone calls Darlington, he turns. Miss Kenton opens the door and signals to Stevens. He goes towards her. Dupont intercepts him.

DUPONT
Butler, I need another basin, salt water. My feet are a curse. I am in pain.

STEVENS
I will deal with it, sir.

75. ALCOVE IN HALL

Miss Kenton standing. Stevens comes to her.

MISS KENTON
Mr. Stevens, I'm very sorry, your father passed away four minutes ago.

STEVENS
Oh, I see.

MISS KENTON
I am so sorry.

Pause.

Will you come up and see him?

STEVENS
In a little while.

KENTON
In that case, will you permit me to close his eyes?

STEVENS
I would be most grateful.

She turns and walks up the stairs.

STEVENS
Miss Kenton.

She looks down.

My father would have wished me to carry on with my work. I know that.

MISS KENTON
Of course.

STEVENS
I can't let him down.

KENTON
No, of course.

Pause.

Of course.

76. SMOKING ROOM

Stevens comes in, takes a tray from an under-butler, offers whisky. Dupont goes to him.

DUPONT
Where am I to find the salt water, butler?

STEVENS
Assistance is not available at this precise moment, sir.

DUPONT
You've run out of water? Or salt?

STEVENS
A doctor is coming.

DUPONT
Oh, you called a doctor? Very good. Well done.

The German Countess calls to Stevens.

COUNTESS
Stevens -- at one point during dinner -- I would have sworn you were at least three people. Magnificent service!

She laughs. He smiles.

STEVENS
I am delighted to be of service, Madame.

A footman murmurs into Stevens ear.

FOOTMAN
Miss Kenton would like a word with you, sir.

Stevens goes to the door. Dupont follows.

DUPONT
Is the doctor here, butler?

STEVENS
I'm just going to find out, sir.

DUPONT
I am in pain.

Stevens goes into the hall, followed by Dupont.

77. THE HALL

Miss Kenton.

MISS KENTON
Doctor Meredith is here.

DUPONT
Ah. Good, good.

STEVENS
If you will follow me, sir.

78. BILLIARD ROOM

Stevens stoking the fire. Dupont sits and removes his shoes and socks.

STEVENS
Rather cold in here, sir. I'll send the doctor in to you.

DUPONT
Thank you very much, butler. Well done.

79. MAIN STAIRCASE

Miss Kenton waiting. Stevens joins her. They go up the staircase together.

80. FATHER'S ROOM

Doctor Meredith. Stevens comes into the room. Miss Kenton remains standing by the door.

DOCTOR MEREDITH
My condolences, Stevens. It was a stroke. A severe stroke. He wouldn't have suffered much pain.

STEVENS
Thank you for telling me.

MISS KENTON
My condolences, Mr. Stevens.

STEVENS
Thank you. That is kind of you.

DOCTOR MEREDITH
I'll leave you.

STEVENS
Doctor, there is a gentleman in the billiard room in need of your attention.

DOCTOR MEREDITH
Urgent?

STEVENS
His feet.

DOCTOR MEREDITH
Feet?

STEVENS
Yes. Shall I take you to him?

DOCTOR MEREDITH
If it's urgent.

STEVENS
Oh, yes. It is urgent. The man is in pain.

Stevens and the doctor leave the room. Miss Kenton stands.

81. A COUNTRY LANE HAMPSHIRE 1954

Stevens sitting still in the car.
Clouds of steam are coming out of the radiator.
Stevens stares helplessly.

A car comes round the corner behind him, brakes sharply, hoots. Stevens waves him on. The driver over takes, glaring.

Stevens drives on slowly down the lane into a wider road. The radiator continues to steam. He finally sees a big Victorian house with a driveway and garage.

82. THE HOUSE DRIVEWAY

Stevens drives up the drive. He gets out of the car and knocks at a side door. A man in shirtsleeves comes out.

STEVENS

Good morning.

MAN

Morning.

STEVENS

I'm sorry to bother you -- but do you by any chance know anything about cars?

The man laughs.

MAN

I'm a chauffeur! You've hit the jackpot first time. What's the trouble?

STEVENS

There's a great deal of steam....

MAN

Let's have a look.

They walk towards the car.

That's a beautiful old car. A real beauty.

He opens the bonnet.

Water, guv. You need some water in your radiator.

STEVENS

Oh.

MAN

Hang on.

He goes into the house. Stevens stands. The man comes out of the house with a jug, pours water into the radiator.

MAN

Not used to driving cars then?

STEVENS

I've done very little of it. My work has kept me housebound, I'm afraid.

MAN

What line of work is that?

STEVENS

I am the butler at a house called Darlington Hall.

MAN

Are you? That's funny. I look after the old Colonel here. Do a bit of everything for him. I was his batman in the war, you see. Eh, wait a minute, Darlington Hall? You don't mean Darlington Hall? Lord Darlington?

STEVENS

Yes. Lord Darlington lived there all his life. It's changed hands now.

MAN

Wasn't he a Nazi or something, Lord Darlington? Got us into the war?

STEVENS

Oh, I don't know anything about that. I never knew him, you see. It was before my time.

MAN

Oh.

He puts the bonnet down.

83. DARLINGTON HALL BACKSTAIRS 1936

Lord Darlington on a landing. He calls out.

DARLINGTON

Miss Kenton?

Miss Kenton (38) comes out of the kitchen.

MISS KENTON

M'lord?

DARLINGTON
I hear the young ladies from Germany have arrived.

MISS KENTON
Yes, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
I'd like to say hello to them. Practise my German.

MISS KENTON
They speak excellent English.

DARLINGTON
Good, good. Are they in here?

She opens the kitchen door. They walk in.

84. THE KITCHEN

Two girls (17 and 18) are sitting at the kitchen table with glasses of milk.

MISS KENTON
This is Elsa and this is Sophy.

The girls stand and bob.

DARLINGTON (in German)
Did you have a good journey? (to Miss Kenton) Just asking them if they had a good journey.

ELSA (in English)
It was long, my lord.

DARLINGTON (in German)
But you have arrived safely. What do you think of the weather? (To Miss Kenton) Asking them what they think of the weather.

ELSA (in English)
We are very grateful to you, my lord, for letting us come here. Our parents are very grateful.

DARLINGTON
Not at all, not at all. Miss Kenton will look after you. Won't you?

MISS KENTON
Oh indeed, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
Welcome to Darlington Hall.

He repeats the sentence in German and laughs.

85. SMOKING ROOM NIGHT

Past midnight. Lord Darlington, Sir Leonard Bax, Mr. Spencer.

Stevens (48) comes in. They stop talking and look at him.

DARLINGTON
Oh, Stevens. Mr. Spencer would like a word with you.

Stevens goes to them.

SPENCER
My good man, I have a question for you. Do you suppose the debt situation regarding America is a signficant factor in the present low levels of trade? Or do you suppose this is a red herring and that the abandonment of the gold standard is at the root of the problem?

He smiles.

STEVENS
I'm very sorry, sir, but I am unable to be of assistance in this matter.

SPENCER

Oh, dear what a pity. Well then, perhaps you can help us on another matter. Would you say that the currency problem in Europe would be made better or worse if there were to be an arms agreement between the French and the Bolsheviks?

STEVENS

I can't help you sir, I'm afraid.

Suppressed laughter.

SPENCER

You see, gentlemen, our man here is unable to assist us in these matters.

Laughter.

And yet we still go along with the notion that this nation's decisions be left in the hands of our good man here and a few millions like him. You may as well ask a committee of the mother's union to organise a war campaign.

Laughter.

CARLINGTON

Thank you Stevens.

Stevens goes out.

86. LORD DARLINGTON'S DRESSING ROOM MORNING

Large window looking over the park in background.

Lord Darlington dressing. His valet hands him his clothes.

Stevens comes in.

STEVENS
You called for me, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
I did, yes. Look here Stevens -- it was dreadful -- the ordeal we put you through last night.

STEVENS
Not at all, m'lord. I was only too happy to be of service.

DARLINGTON
It was dreadful. Please accept my apologies. But you see, Stevens, the thing was, Mr. Spencer had a point to prove to Sir Leonard. Sir Leonard had been talking a lot of old fashioned nonsense, you see.

DARLINGTON (cont.)
About the will of the people being the wisest arbitrator and so on. But the fact is, Stevens, democracy is finished. It doesn't work. What was it Mr. Spencer said last night? He put it rather well.

STEVENS
He compared the present parliamentary system to a committee of a mother's union organising a war campaign.

DARLINGTON
Exactly. Look at Germany and Italy. They've set their houses in order. How? Through strong leadership. If you look at Italy and Germany you see something that <u>works</u>. None of this democracy rubbish there.

Silence.

Anyway, that was the point Mr. Spencer was trying to make.

87. <u>BUTLER'S PANTRY</u>

Stevens and Miss Kenton sitting at the table with a young woman (Lizzie Hull). Stevens is examining her papers.

STEVENS

Well....Miss Hull....this reference, I have to tell you, is quite.... reserved. Why exactly did you leave your last employment?

LIZZIE

Oh....they didn't want me any more.

STEVENS

Why not?

LIZZIE

I don't know.

MISS KENTON

They say she works well.

STEVENS

But if so....?

LIZZIE

They just didn't want me any more.

Pause.

But I can work.

STEVENS

Would you please wait outside?

Lizzie goes out, closing the door.

STEVENS
Unsuitable.

MISS KENTON
Not at all.

STEVENS
What?

MISS KENTON
I want her. She'll be under my supervision. She'll do well.

STEVENS
I don't think she's suitable.

KENTON
She'll do well. I'll see to it.

STEVENS
Then it's entirely your responsibility.

88. EXT. THE HOUSE DAY

Three large cars arriving. Sir Geoffrey Wren jumps out of the first car. He wears a black shirted uniform. Other black uniformed figures get out of the cars. Lord Darlington comes out of the house and greets Wren.

89. BACKSTAIRS EVENING

Stevens leading underbutlers towards the dining room. They carry trays, push trolleys etc. They enter the dining room by a side door.

90. DINING ROOM

Stevens and the underbutlers come in. Wren is talking.

WREN
I think we know where the problem lies. It's really terribly simple to locate.

DARLINGTON
Mmmnn.

WREN
It stares one in the face, to be frank. Don't you think?

Silence around the table.
Stevens begins to serve dinner. Wren leans across the table to another man.

WREN
How're the pheasants, Freddy?
What's your bag?

91. THE HALL NIGHT

Wren and the other guests walking towards the smoking room, laughing. The smoking room door slams. Blurred laughter continues.

Through the open dining room door, see Stevens come in and stand looking at the table.

92. LAKE IN THE GROUNDS AFTERNOON

Stevens and Miss Kenton walking.

MISS KENTON
Lizzie has started well. She hasn't made one mistake.

STEVENS
I take my hat off to you.

MISS KENTON
Look at the smile on your face. That tells an interesting story in itself. A very interesting story.

STEVENS
What story is that?

MISS KENTON
Well, she's a very pretty girl, don't you think?

STEVENS

Is she?

MISS KENTON

I've noticed you have a curious aversion to pretty girls being on your staff.

STEVENS

You know you're talking absolute nonsense.

MISS KENTON

You don't like pretty girls to be on the staff. I've noticed. Might it be that our Mr. Stevens fears distraction? Can it be that our Mr. Stevens is flesh and blood after all and cannot trust himself?

STEVENS

You know what I'm doing, Miss Kenton? I'm placing my thoughts elsewhere while you chatter away.

MISS KENTON

But why is that guilty smile still on your face?

STEVENS

It's not a guilty smile at all. I'm simply amused by the nonsense you sometimes talk.

MISS KENTON
It is a guilty smile. You can hardly bear to look at her. That's why you didn't want to take her on. She was too pretty.

STEVENS
You must be right, Miss Kenton. You always are.

They walk on.

93. THE FRONT DRIVE

A car arriving. Lord Halifax gets out.

94. THE LIBRARY

Darlington standing. Stevens comes in.

STEVENS
Lord Halifax is here, m'lord.

DARLINGTON
Ah.

95. THE HALL

Darlington walks across the hall and shakes hands with Lord Halifax.

HALIFAX
Really Darlington, I don't know what you've put me up to here. I know I shall be sorry.

DARLINGTON
Oh, I hope not, old boy.

HALIFAX
Is he here?

DARLINGTON
Not here yet, no.

HALIFAX
I'm not at all certain this is a good idea.

They go into the library.

96. THE DRIVE

A car arriving. Ribbentrop gets out.

97. LIBRARY

Darlington and Halifax. Stevens comes in.

STEVENS
His Excellency the German Ambassador is here, m'lord.

Darlington and Halifax stand.

DARLINGTON
Ah.

98. THE HALL

Stevens comes out of the library and closes the door. He walks across the hall.

99. LORD DARLINGTON'S BEDROOM DAY

Stevens polishing objects. He looks out of the large window across the park.

100. THE PARK HIS POV

Horses moving.

101. BEDROOM

Stevens stops polishing and moves closer to the window. He peers.

102. THE PARK HIS POV

The figure of Miss Kenton seen walking by the side of the lake.

103. BUTLER'S PANTRY EVENING

Stevens sitting in an arm chair reading a book. Miss Kenton comes in with a vase of flowers.

MISS KENTON
Flowers.

She puts them on a shelf and looks at him.

You're reading. Very dim in here. Can you see?

STEVENS
Yes, thank you.

MISS KENTON
This room is like a prison cell. Honestly. It's like the cell of a condemned man.

STEVENS
Not at all.

He continues reading.

MISS KENTON
What are you reading?

STEVENS
A book.

MISS KENTON
Yes, but what sort of book?

He looks up at her. She goes towards him. He shuts the book, stands, and holds it to his chest.

STEVENS
What are you doing?

MISS KENTON
What's the book? Are you shy about your book? Show it to me. Is it racy?

STEVENS
Racy?

MISS KENTON
Racy. Are you reading a racy book?

STEVENS
You don't think "racy" books are to be found on his lordship's shelves, do you?

MISS KENTON

How would I know? What is it? Let me see it. Let me see your book.

STEVENS

Miss Kenton, please leave me alone.

She smiles and moves closer to him. He wards her off.

MISS KENTON

Why won't you show me your book?

STEVENS

This is my private time. You are encroaching upon it.

MISS KENTON

Oh, is that so? I am encroaching upon your private time, am I?

She moves closer.

What's in that book? Come on. Let me see. Or are you protecting me? Is that what you're doing? Would I be shocked? Would it ruin my character?

They both stand quite still.

Let me see it.

She gently begins to take the book from him, lifting his fingers one at a time from the book.

This takes place in silence, their bodies very close.

She opens the book and flicks through it.

MISS KENTON
Oh dear, it's not scandalous at all. It's just a sentimental old love story.

They look at each other.

STEVENS
I read these books -- any books -- to develop my command and knowledge of the English language. I read to further my education.

Pause.

MISS KENTON
Ah. I see.

104. LIBRARY MORNING

Darlington reading the newspaper. Stevens comes in with coffee.

DARLINGTON

Oh Stevens, forgot to tell you. Lord Halifax was very impressed with the silver the other night. Very impressed. Said it was a delight. Really put him in a good mood. We had a pretty worthwhile meeting, as a consequence. Anyway I told him the silver was all your doing. Sent his compliments. Well done.

STEVENS

Thank you, m'lord.

Stevens moves towards the door.

DARLINGTON

Oh, Stevens, one other thing. I've been doing a good deal of thinking. A great deal of thinking. And I've come to the conclusion that we can't have Jews on the staff here at Darlington Hall.

STEVENS

M'lord?

DARLINGTON

I've looked into this matter very carefully, Stevens, and I'm letting you know my conclusion. I've consulted a number of people.

STEVENS

I see, my lord.

DARLINGTON

I'm acting on the very best advice, in fact.

They stand in silence.

We have....some Jews on the staff at the moment, I believe?

STEVENS

We do, m'lord. The two refugee girls. You gave them a home three months ago.

DARLINGTON

You'll have to let them go, I'm afraid.

STEVENS

Let them go?

DARLINGTON

It's regrettable, Stevens, but we have no choice. You've got to see the whole thing in context. I have the well-being of my guests to consider.

STEVENS
But m'lord, may I say that they work extremely well. They get on with everybody in the house. They are very intelligent, clean and...graceful.

DARLINGTON
Can't have them. Sorry.

105. THE LAWN THE SUMMERHOUSE DAY

Stevens walking towards the summerhouse.

Miss Kenton can be seen through the windows of the summerhouse.

106. THE SUMMERHOUSE

Stevens comes in. Miss Kenton is repairing a cushion with a needle and thread. She looks up.

STEVENS
Good afternoon.

MISS KENTON
Good afternoon.

Stevens looks about the summerhouse.

STEVENS
Pleasant here.

MISS KENTON
Very peaceful.

STEVENS
It'll be a busy weekend. We have Sir James Chambers coming and Lord Whittlesea.

MISS KENTON
Yes I know. You'll be seeing your friend Harry Graham, won't you?

STEVENS
I will, yes.

MISS KENTON
You like him, don't you? He speaks your language. I wish I knew what it was. I'll have to ask him. Oh, well....

STEVENS
There is....something else.
A rather....sad matter, that I have to...

MISS KENTON
What is it?

STEVENS

I'm afraid we have to let Sophy and Elsa go. His Lordship has decided that he cannot have Jews on his staff.

She stares at him.

Can you send them to me at 9:30 tomorrow morning? If you think it right to tell them beforehand yourself, then of course you must do so.

Silence.

Well I must get on.

He turns to the door. She puts the cushion down.

MISS KENTON

Just one second. I can't quite believe my ears. Are you telling me that the girls are to be dismissed because they are Jewish?

STEVENS

His Lordship has made his decision.

MISS KENTON

But it's outrageous! I've never heard of anything so disgraceful!

STEVENS

Please don't excite yourself.

MISS KENTON

But it's a crime! It's a crime!

STEVENS

I agree that it's a matter of great regret -- but I'm afraid it's out of our hands.

MISS KENTON

And where are they to go?

STEVENS

I am thinking about that.

MISS KENTON

You realise that if they have no work, they could be sent back to Germany?

STEVENS

I am aware of that.

MISS KENTON

But what are you going to do about it?

STEVENS
I am thinking about it.

MISS KENTON
Mr. Stevens, I warn you, if those girls go, I shall leave this house.

She sweeps out of the summerhouse.

107. BUTLER'S PANTRY MORNING

Stevens at his table. Miss Kenton and the German girls come in.

STEVENS
Miss Kenton, you don't have to stay if you don't wish to.

MISS KENTON
I'll stay.

The girls stand, looking at Stevens.

STEVENS
I am very sorry to say that his lordship has decided to cut down on staff. I am afraid we shall have to let you both go. You have worked very well and we have given you excellent references. Here they are.

He taps the references on the table.

SOPHY (in German)
But it's so lovely here.

STEVENS
What does she say?

ELSA
She says it's so lovely here.

Sophy begins to cry quietly.

STEVENS
But I have good news. I have spoken this morning to Mr. Wellington -- the butler at Railton House in Surrey. He thinks there is every possibility of placing you there. Here is the address and directions and here is the address of a hostel in London where you will stay tonight.

He points to two envelopes.

Here are your wages...and here --

He takes money from his wallet.

-- is a little extra for you. I am very sorry to see you go.

ELSA
Thank you, Mr. Stevens.

SOPHY (whispering)
Thank you, Mr. Stevens.

The girls pick up all the papers and Miss Kenton goes out with them.

107a. BUTLER'S PANTRY NIGHT

Stevens and Miss Kenton sitting with cocoa.

Silence.

MISS KENTON
I shall be leaving the house....in due course, Mr. Stevens. When I have made all my arrangements.

STEVENS
I'm very sorry you feel you have to do this, Miss Kenton. Very sorry.

Pause.

We shall miss you here....very much. Is there anything I can say to -- ?

MISS KENTON
No. Nothing.

She sits still.

STEVENS
Can I do anything -- to help?

MISS KENTON
No, thank you.

STEVENS
I mean with your arrangments.

MISS KENTON
It's my business, Mr. Stevens. I shall deal with it myself. In my own time. Thank you very much.

108. SERVANTS HALL NIGHT

Stevens and Harry Graham sitting by the fire.

GRAHAM
How's Miss Kenton?

STEVENS
Miss Kenton? Well, to be honest, she's been a little moody of late.

GRAHAM
I was wondering how much longer it would be.

STEVENS
What would be?

GRAHAM

What is she now, thirty-seven? Thirty-eight? Missed out on the best of her mothering years -- but it's not too late yet.

STEVENS

I've never heard her say she wanted a family.

GRAHAM

Doesn't need saying, does it? She's a fine woman. She'll want what it's natural for her to want.

They sit.

I'm giving up butlering.

STEVENS

What? What do you mean?

GRAHAM

I'm fed up with it.

STEVENS

Fed up?

GRAHAM

Haven't you had enough of it yourself? After all these years?

Pause.

STEVENS

No. No, of course not.

Pause.

It's my life. To serve is my life. It's....it's my duty.

Pause.

GRAHAM

Well, I'm giving it up, anyway.

108a. <u>BUTLER'S PANTRY NIGHT</u>

Stevens and Miss Kenton with cocoa.

Silence.

MISS KENTON

I should tell you....Mr. Stevens.... that I shall not be leaving Darlington Hall.

STEVENS

Oh?

MISS KENTON
I've nowhere to go, you see. I have no family. I'm a coward.

STEVENS
No, no -- I think --

MISS KENTON
Yes. I am a coward. I'm frightened of leaving. That's the truth. All I see out in the world....is loneliness. It frightens me. That's all my high principles are worth, Mr. Stevens. I'm ashamed of myself.

Silence.

STEVENS
You mean....a great deal to this house. You are....extremely important to this house, Miss Kenton.

MISS KENTON
Am I?

109. THE HALL MORNING

Stevens opening an envelope, taking out a letter and reading it.

110. BACKSTAIRS

Stevens walking up the stairs with the letter in his hand. He knocks on Miss Kenton's door. Kenton's voice: "Yes".

STEVENS
It's me, Miss Kenton.

She opens the door.

STEVENS
Can I come in?

She opens the door further. He goes in.

111. MISS KENTON'S BEDROOM

STEVENS
I've just found this letter -- from George.

MISS KENTON
Yes. I have one from Lizzie. What does yours say?

Stevens looks at his letter and reads.

STEVENS
"Please do not judge us too harshly. We are in love and are going to be married."

MISS KENTON
This is what Lizzie says: "We are in love he loves me. We don't have money but who cares we have love and who wants anything else we've got one another that's all anyone can ever want."

STEVENS
Dear, oh dear. You did wonders with that girl. You were right and I was wrong.

Miss Kenton smiles.

MISS KENTON (wryly)
No, no. It was I who was wrong.

STEVENS
I've suddenly remembered -- when you came here in 1923 -- it was because the previous housekeeper had run off with the footman.

MISS KENTON
That was a very long time ago, Mr. Stevens.

She picks up Lizzie's letter.

Would you like to keep Lizzie's letter -- for your files perhaps?

Stevens takes the letter uncertainly.

MISS KENTON
Oh, I shall be taking my day off tomorrow, Mr. Stevens. I shall be back in the house at about 9:30.

STEVENS
Certainly, certainly.

112. EXT. BACK DRIVE EVENING

Miss Kenton walking towards the house.

113. WINDOW HIGH UP BACK OF THE HOUSE

Stevens looking down at her.

114. BACK DRIVE MORNING RAIN

Miss Kenton walking towards the gate with an umbrella.

115. HALL MORNING

Stevens examining the post. He picks up a letter addressed to Miss Sarah Kenton.

116. BUTLER'S PANTRY NIGHT

Miss Kenton and Stevens sitting with cocoa.

STEVENS
Going off again on Thursday? On your day off, I mean.

MISS KENTON
Yes, I think so.

STEVENS
You never used to take so many days off. Have you found somewhere pleasant to go?

MISS KENTON
It's a man I used to know at Granchester Lodge. He was the butler there.

STEVENS
Oh, him.

MISS KENTON
Who?

STEVENS
Mr. Benn. Wasn't that his name?

MISS KENTON
That's right. He left the service. He works around here now. We've renewed our acquaintance. That's the long and the short of it.

STEVENS
It must be refreshing to get out of the house.

MISS KENTON
It is.

Silence.

MISS KENTON
He was really keen once -- to be a first class butler -- but he just didn't have the ability -- or the talent -- or the confidence.

STEVENS
It's not the easiest of jobs.

KENTON
But you've mastered it.

STEVENS
I'm glad you think so.

KENTON
You must be a very contented man. You're at the top of your profession. You have everything under control. I can't imagine what more you might wish for in life.

A short silence.

STEVENS
I'd like to discuss next week. We have the party from Scotland --

MISS KENTON
I'm sorry -- I'm rather tired this evening.

STEVENS
You never used to be so tired --

MISS KENTON (exploding)
I've had a very busy week! Don't you realise that? I am very tired. I am very, very tired, Mr. Stevens. Can't you appreciate that?

STEVENS
If that's how you feel about it there is really no need for us to continue with these evening meetings. I had no idea you found them such a burden.

MISS KENTON
I just said I was tired tonight --

STEVENS
No. These meetings are clearly a burden. Let's stop them.

116a. COACH AND HORSES INN SOMERSET 1954

Landlord leading Stevens up narrow stairs to a bedroom. They go in.

116b. BEDROOM

LANDLORD
This suit you, sir?

STEVENS
Perfectly, thank you.

LANDLORD
If you're hungry we've got sandwiches in the bar, sir.

STEVENS
Good. I'll be down.

The landlord goes out. Stevens looks out of the window onto the dark, narrow street.

116c. THE BAR

Four men at the bar. Landlord behind the bar. Stevens at a table with beer and sandwiches.

A man turns to Stevens.

MAN
Driving far?

STEVENS
Cornwall.

MAN
Well that's not too far.

SECOND MAN
Sleeping here tonight, are you? Upstairs?

LANDLORD
Yes he is. What's the matter with that?

SECOND MAN (to Stevens)
Brought your earplugs with you? You won't get much of a sleep in this place. He bangs away at his barrels right through the night.

FIRST MAN
And his missus starts shouting at him the moment she gets up. She's shouting at him from the crack of dawn.

Laughter all round.

LANDLORD
Bloody rubbish. Don't take any notice of them, sir.

SECOND MAN
She starts shouting at him at the crack of dawn. You take my word.

They look at Stevens, waiting for him to speak.

STEVENS
A local variation of the cock crow, is she?

Silence. The men stare at him. Stevens half smiles. The men laugh uncertainly and then stop. They turn back to their beer.

116a. THE BEDROOM

Stevens opens the door and comes into the room. Raised voices from the bar downstairs. He closes the door and sits in an armchair. The room is lit by lamplight through the window.

Miss Kenton voice over:

MISS KENTON
Is the view from the first floor bedroom the same? The lawn, the summerhouse, the downs in the distance? It was magical. I was enchanted by it.

117. LITTLE COMPTON HIGH STREET DAY 1954

Little Compton is a small village in Cornwall with one hotel.

Stevens car drives down the street and stops outside the hotel.

118. ROSE GARDEN HOTEL LITTLE COMPTON
THE DINING ROOM DAY

One or two people at tables finishing lunch. Stevens sitting with coffee. He looks out onto gardens through one set of windows and onto the village square through another.

119. DARLINGTON HALL THE HALL EVENING 1936

The doorbell rings. Stevens opens the door. It is young Cardinal.

CARDINAL
Hello, Stevens. How are you? In a bit of a mess with arrangements. Do you think his Lordship would put me up for the night?

STEVENS
I shall tell him you're here, Mr. Cardinal.

CARDINAL
Hope it's not too inconvenient. Nothing special on tonight, is there?

STEVENS

His lordship is expecting some gentlemen to call after dinner.

CARDINAL

Oh. Well, I'd better keep my head down. I've got my column to write anyway.

STEVENS

You're in good time to join his lordship for dinner.

CARDINAL

Oh, good. Splendid. And how is my godfather? Fit?

STEVENS

Very well, sir. Can I give you some refreshment?

CARDINAL

A drop of Scotch would go down well. Who is he expecting tonight?

STEVENS

I'm unable to help you, sir.

CARDINAL

No idea at all?

STEVENS
No idea, sir.

CARDINAL
Better keep my head down all the same. Don't you think?

120. MISS KENTON'S BEDROOM

Miss Kenton sitting upright and quite still in her armchair.

A knock on the door.

MISS KENTON
Come in.

Stevens comes in.

STEVENS
Mr. Cardinal has turned up out of the blue. He'll be requiring his usual room tonight.

MISS KENTON
I shall see to it before I leave.

STEVENS
You're going out this evening?

MISS KENTON
I am indeed. We discussed this a fortnight ago.

STEVENS
Yes, of course. It slipped my mind.

MISS KENTON
Is something the matter?

STEVENS
Not at all. Some visitors are expected -- but that needn't involve you.

MISS KENTON
We agreed that I was taking tonight off, a fortnight ago.

STEVENS
Yes, yes, it's quite all right.

He turns to the door.

MISS KENTON
I have something to tell you.

He turns back.

My friend -- the man I am going to meet tonight --

STEVENS

Yes?

MISS KENTON

He has asked me to marry him.

STEVENS

Ah.

MISS KENTON

I am thinking about it.

STEVENS

I see.

MISS KENTON

He is taking over a shop in the West Country next month. A newsagent -- tobacconist.

STEVENS

Oh really?

MISS KENTON

Yes. I am thinking about it. I thought you should be informed of the situation.

STEVENS

Thank you. Yes. Well, I hope you have a pleasant evening.

121. DINING ROOM

Lord Darlington and Cardinal eating. Stevens serving. Silence.

CARDINAL
Something special tonight?

DARLINGTON
Eh?

CARDINAL
Your visitors this evening. Are they special?

DARLINGTON
Can't tell you, my boy. Strictly confidential.

CARDINAL
So I can't sit in on it?

DARLINGTON
Sit in on what?

CARDINAL
Whatever it is that's going to take place here tonight.

DARLINGTON
Absolutely not. Can't have someone like you sticking your nose in.

DARLINGTON (cont.)
Wouldn't do at all. Once you've finished your food you'd better make yourself scarce.

CARDINAL
Well, it sounds pretty special to me.

Stevens pours more wine and leaves the room, closing the door.

122. THE HALL

Stevens outside the door. Darlington's voice from the dining room:

DARLINGTON
But it's not your business, my boy! It's not your business!

123. THE DRIVE EVENING

Cars arriving. Two police cars and a large Daimler. The police get out and ring the bell of the house.

The Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary get out of the Daimler, accompanied by a secretary and a Foreign Office official.

124. THE HALL

Stevens opens the front door. They come into the hall. Lord Darlington crosses the hall to greet them. Various "good evenings". Lord Darlington takes them into the drawing room, closes the door Sound of another car arriving. Doors slamming.

Stevens opens the front door. Ribbentrop comes in followed by a secretary.

Darlington comes out of the drawing room. Stevens takes Ribbentrop's coat. Darlington takes Ribbentrop into the drawing room. The door closes.

Stevens stands alone in the hall.

A bell.

Stevens goes to the drawing room and enters.

125. THE DRAWING ROOM

Dim lamps. The men sitting in various armchairs and sofas.

DARLINGTON
Whiskies and soda, Stevens.

Stevens moves towards the door.

FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIAL
Yes, I'm very fond of those very long, very thin sausages. What are they called? Had some in Dusseldorf last May.

RIBBENTROP
Frankfurters?

Stevens closes the door.

126. THE DRIVE NIGHT

Police on guard.

127. THE HALL

Stevens standing. It is two hours later. The drawing door remains closed. A distant bell.

128. BACKSTAIRS

Stevens approaching the back door of the house. He opens it.

A policeman stands with Miss Kenton.

POLICEMAN
Could you confirm that this lady is on the staff here, sir?

STEVENS
Yes, of course. She's the housekeeper.

POLICEMAN
Just security, miss.

She comes in. Stevens bolts the door.

STEVENS
I trust you had a pleasant evening?

She doesn't speak. He turns to her.

Did you have a pleasant evening?

MISS KENTON
Yes, thank you.

She walks on, stops, turns.

Would you like to know what took place?

STEVENS
I have to return upstairs. There are events of global significance taking place in this house tonight.

MISS KENTON
Ah. When are there not? I accepted his proposal.

STEVENS
His....?

MISS KENTON
His proposal of marriage.

STEVENS
Oh. Congratulations.

MISS KENTON
I'm prepared to serve out my notice. But if you were able to release me earlier, I'd be grateful.

STEVENS
I'll do my best. Excuse me.

He goes back up the stairs towards the front of house. She calls.

MISS KENTON
Mr. Stevens!

He stops.

MISS KENTON
Am I to take it, that after all the years I have been in this house, you have nothing else to say to me?

STEVENS
You have my warmest congratulations.

MISS KENTON.
Did you know that you have been a very important figure -- for my friend and me?

STEVENS
In what way?

MISS KENTON
I tell him all sorts of things about you. I tell him stories about you. About your habits. About your.... mannerisms. He finds it very funny. Especially when I show him how you pinch your nose when you put pepper on your food. That always gets a good laugh.

STEVENS
Does it really? Please excuse me.

129. THE HALL

Stevens comes into the hall. Cardinal is standing at the door of the smoking room, an empty decanter in his hand.

CARDINAL
Hate to bother you, Stevens. Couldn't trouble you for a little more whisky, could I? This decanter appears to be empty.

STEVENS
You said you had a column to write, Mr. Cardinal. Is it entirely wise?

CARDINAL
Oh, just a little more, old chap.

STEVENS
Very well.

130. BACKSTAIRS

Stevens coming from wine cellar with bottle of whisky. He looks up another flight of stairs and stops. The door to Miss Kenton's room is half open.

Movement in the room. A curtain pulled.

Silence.

He goes on.

131. SMOKING ROOM

Stevens pouring Cardinal whisky.

CARDINAL
Thanks. Care to join me in a little drink?

STEVENS
No, thank you, sir. No, thank you.

Cardinal looks at him closely.

CARDINAL
You all right?

STEVENS
Yes, perfectly all right, thank you.

CARDINAL
Not feeling unwell, are you?

STEVENS
No, no. A little tired perhaps.

CARDINAL

I should think you are tired. What is it -- about one o'clock? Why don't you sit down? Look, I didn't come here tonight by accident. You know that. I had a tip-off, you see, about what's going on now, across the hall.

STEVENS

I see.

CARDINAL

Oh, do sit down, for God's sake. I want us to talk like friends and you just stand there holding that blasted tray.

Stevens sits.

That's better. Now tell me, I don't suppose the Prime Minister is in that room over there, is he?

STEVENS

The Prime Minister, sir?

CARDINAL

Listen, over in that room -- and you don't have to confirm it -- are the British Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and the German Ambassador.

CARDINAL (cont.)
His Lordship has worked wonders to bring this meeting about. He thinks he's doing something good and honourable but he's being made a fool of, you see. He's out of his depth. The Nazis are manipulating him like a pawn. Aren't you in the least curious about any of this?

STEVENS
I would not say I was not curious. I simply do not consider it appropriate to display curiosity about such matters.

CARDINAL
Display? Inappropriate? What's all that about? Loyalty? Do you think that's being loyal?

STEVENS
I have absolute trust in his lordship's judgement.

CARDINAL
Oh, yes? Do you know what they're discussing in there?

STEVENS
No, sir.

CARDINAL

He's trying to persuade the Prime Minister to accept an invitation to visit Hitler.

STEVENS

His lordship has always striven to aid better understanding between nations.

CARDINAL

Yes, sure, sure. But that's not all he's doing in there. At this very moment, unless I'm very much mistaken, at this very moment, his lordship is discussing the idea of His Majesty himself going to see Hitler. The King himself. It's a quite appalling idea. But you don't think so?

STEVENS

I cannot see that his lordship is acting from any other than the highest and noblest of motives. He is doing what he can, after all, to ensure that peace will prevail in Europe.

CARDINAL

He's deluded. Remember that American -- years ago -- here at that conference? Called Lord Darlington an amateur, a bungling amateur, out of his depth. He was right.

A distant bell.

STEVENS

I am required, sir. Excuse me.

132. THE DRAWING ROOM

Cigars burning in the dim light. Stevens enters.

DARLINGTON

Oh, Stevens. Bring us a bottle of Dow 1913, will you?

STEVENS

Yes, m'lord.

133. BACKSTAIRS

Stevens going down towards the wine cellar. Miss Kenton's door opens. She stands in the light.

MISS KENTON
I was very foolish just now.

STEVENS
Not at all, I --

MISS KENTON
I shouldn't have said those stupid things. You mustn't take anything....anything I said....to heart. Please. I was just being foolish.

STEVENS
No, no --

MISS KENTON
Yes. Yes. I didn't mean....

She stops. They stand, looking at each other. She goes into her room and shuts the door.

134. WINE CELLAR

Stevens finds the bottle of Dow 1913.

135. BACKSTAIRS

Stevens climbing the stairs. He sees light under Miss Kenton's door. He stops.

He stands, listening.

Silence.

A vague sound from within.

He stands, listening.

The sound stops.

He looks at the bottle, slowly continues up the stairs.

136. ROSE GARDEN HOTEL DINING ROOM 1954

Stevens sitting. A girl comes in.

GIRL
There's a lady asking for you at reception, sir.

Stevens stands.

137. HOTEL LOBBY RECEPTION DESK

Stevens comes in, looks about.

RECEPTIONIST
Mr. Stevens?

STEVENS

Yes.

RECEPTIONIST

The lady is in the tea lounge.

STEVENS

Oh, thank you.

RECEPTIONIST

Just down there.

STEVENS

Thank you.

He goes towards the tea lounge.

138. TEA LOUNGE

Miss Kenton sitting by the window. The room is empty. She stands.

MISS KENTON

Mr. Stevens.

STEVENS

Miss Kenton -- Mrs. Benn. How nice to see you again.

They shake hands.

MISS KENTON

It's lovely to see you. Shall we sit here?

STEVENS

Yes, yes.

They sit.

Is there anything you would like?

MISS KENTON

No, no. Not at the moment, thank you.

They look at each other and smile.

MISS KENTON

Have you driven down from Darlington Hall?

STEVENS

I made two stops. Taunton and Tavistock. It's been a good break for me. Good to see the country.

MISS KENTON

That's Lord Darlington's old car. Isn't it? I saw it outside.

STEVENS

Yes. Yes, it is.

MISS KENTON

I can't believe it still goes.

STEVENS

Oh yes, it goes. It goes very well. Although I'm not much of a driver. The new owner bought it.

MISS KENTON

Who is the new owner? What's he like?

STEVENS

Oh, he's very nice. His name's Farraday. He takes up residence... next month. He's a very nice man. American.

Pause.

MISS KENTON

Well, it must be eighteen years since we met.

STEVENS

Oh yes. All of that. Most of the house is under dust sheets now, you know.

MISS KENTON

Really?

STEVENS

Yes. Skeleton staff. Four people. Nothing much to do at the moment, of course. But when Mr. Farraday takes up residence we're going to have problems. Staff problems. But I suppose we'll overcome them -- in one way or another.

She laughs.

MISS KENTON

Oh, you were always able to overcome staff problems, Mr. Stevens. And you had quite a few to overcome, as I remember.

STEVENS (smiling)

Oh, not all that many, really.

Pause.

Oh, do you remember that very.... energetic young man, Lord Darlington's godson, young Cardinal? He became a correspondent for a newspaper.

MISS KENTON
Yes, I remember him.

STEVENS
He was killed in the war.

MISS KENTON
Oh. I'm sorry.

Pause.

STEVENS
And so are you still staying with your friend, Mrs. Benn?

MISS KENTON
Oh, no. No, I've moved back with my husband.

STEVENS
Oh.

MISS KENTON
Yes, I returned home. To my husband.

STEVENS
Ah. I see.

Pause.

MISS KENTON
Will you be driving back through Dorset?

STEVENS
Dorset? Which part?

MISS KENTON
My daughter lives in Dorchester. She'd love to meet you. She's heard so much about you.

STEVENS
Really? How old is -- ?

MISS KENTON
She's eighteen. (she smiles) I'm about to become a grandmother.

STEVENS
Oh, wonderful.

MISS KENTON
Yes. In the autumn. Yes. It is wonderful. She's very young, but she's happy.

Pause.

MISS KENTON
His lordship died then?

STEVENS
Three years ago. His heart....was broken, quite honestly.

MISS KENTON
I read about it. He sued that newspaper. Didn't they call him a Nazi?

STEVENS
They destroyed his good name. He died a recluse, an invalid. I used to take him his tea, alone in the drawing room. He lost all his friends, you see.

MISS KENTON
Very sad. But I must admit, Mr. Stevens, that, to do with all that, I never quite followed what was going on.

STEVENS
I'm not sure that I did either, Mrs. Benn.

The girl comes into the room.

GIRL
Would you like some tea?

STEVENS
Yes. Yes, let's have some tea. And some cake. You will have some cake?

MISS KENTON
Oh, yes. Why not?

139. EXT. HOTEL LOUNGE WINDOW

Stevens and Miss Kenton seen through the window, talking. She turns and looks out.

140. HOTEL TEA LOUNGE

The remains of the tea on the table.

MISS KENTON
Oh, dear. It's raining again.

She looks at her watch.

I'll have to go, I'm afraid.

STEVENS
How did you....?

MISS KENTON
Oh, I came by bus.

STEVENS
Where is the bus stop?

MISS KENTON
It's a little way out of the village, as a matter of fact.

STEVENS
In that case, I'll drive you. I'll drive you to your bus.

MISS KENTON
Thank you. But I don't want to take you --

STEVENS (standing)
No, no. I'll drive you.

He turns to the waitress.

How much do I owe you, please?

141. INT. THE CAR DRIVING

STEVENS
Mrs. Benn. I was a little worried about something you said in your last letter --

MISS KENTON
Oh? What was that.

STEVENS
You said -- you wrote -- "I don't know what my future is."

MISS KENTON
Really? Did I?

STEVENS
You did, yes.

MISS KENTON
Oh, dear. Well, perhaps there are some days when I feel like that. But they pass. Anyway, I do know what my future is.

STEVENS
What is it?

MISS KENTON
Well, for one thing, we're so looking forward to our grandchild. The first of a few perhaps.

STEVENS
Yes. Quite. Which is the bus stop?

MISS KENTON
That one up there.

STEVENS

Ah, yes.

MISS KENTON

And what does the future hold for you, back at Darlington Hall?

STEVENS

Oh, work, work and more work.

He stops the car by the side of the road. They sit still.

MISS KENTON

Will you wait for the bus with me? We're quite early.

142. <u>THE BUS SHELTER</u>

They walk from the car to the shelter. It is raining.

She sits. He stands.

Empty fields. Telegraph poles.

Silence.

STEVENS

Mrs. Benn, we may not meet again for a long time. Can I ask you something ....personal? It has been troubling me.

MISS KENTON
We are old friends, Mr. Stevens.

STEVENS
Yes. We are old friends. Nevertheless you don't need to answer this question. It's simply this. The few letters I have had from you -- particularly the last one -- have suggested that you have been -- unhappy. I simply wondered if you were being illtreated in some way?

MISS KENTON
No. My husband doesn't mistreat me at all, in any way. He's not ill-tempered or cruel. Or violent. Not at all.

Pause.

STEVENS
I'm very relieved to hear it.

MISS KENTON
Don't you believe me?

STEVENS
It's just that you have left your husband a number of times -- and of course, gone back. So you don't seem to have been totally happy.

MISS KENTON
Yes, I've left him three times -- and gone back.

Rain.

Are you asking me whether I love my husband?

He looks at her.

I feel I should answer you. As you say, we may not meet again for many years. Yes, I do love my husband. I didn't at first. I didn't for a long time. When I left Darlington Hall all those years ago, I never realised I was really, truly leaving. I think I thought of it as simply another ruse, Mr. Stevens, to annoy you. It was a shock to come out here and to find myself actually married. For a long time I was very unhappy. Very unhappy. But then the years went by, there was the war, Catherine grew up and one day I realised I loved my husband, that I had grown to love him.

Rain.

MISS KENTON (cont.)
But that doesn't mean to say, of course that there aren't occasions now and then -- extremely desolate occasions -- when you think to yourself "what a terrible mistake I've made with my life." And you get to thinking about a different life, a better life -- which you might have had. For instance, I get to thinking about a life I might have had with you, Mr. Stevens. And I suppose that's when I get upset over some trivial thing and leave my husband's house. But the real truth is that there's no turning back the clock now. One should face the facts and be grateful for what one has.

143. CLOSE UP HIS FACE

144. THE BUS SHELTER RAIN

STEVENS
Yes, you're quite right. It's too late to turn back the clock. You're quite right, yes. We must each of us, as you say, be grateful for what we do have.

MISS KENTON
You're so kind.

Silence.

Sound of approaching bus.

STEVENS
Is this your bus?

She looks out into the road.

MISS KENTON
Yes.

She stands.

Thank you for the lift. It was so kind of you. It was so nice to see you.

STEVENS
It was a great pleasure to see you again.

The bus pulls up.

145. <u>WEYMOUTH PIER EVENING</u>

Stevens and a man sitting on a bench looking out to sea. There is space between them. People are drifting around, waiting for the lights on the pier to go on.

Silence.

MAN
Sea air does you a lot of good, you know.

Stevens looks round at him.

STEVENS
Yes, I'm sure it does.

MAN
I retired here from London. Thought I could do with a good dose of sea air.

STEVENS
Yes, good idea.

MAN
I was a bus driver in London. Not much sea air on a London bus.

STEVENS
No, I should think not.

The man looks at his watch.

MAN
The pier lights'll be on in a minute.

STEVENS

Oh?

MAN

You retired?

STEVENS

No. Oh no. But perhaps I should think about it. I'm not sure I've got anything left to give, you see. I worked for Lord Darlington for thirty years. I gave him the very best I had to give. I don't think I have a great deal more to give.

The man is silent.

I think perhaps you're right. I should retire. You see, I've given all I have to give. I gave it all to Lord Darlington.

MAN

Oh dear, mate. Want a handkerchief? I've got one somewhere.

STEVENS

No, no thank you. It's all right.

MAN

What did you do for him? This lord.

STEVENS
I was his butler.

Pause.

No, truly. I think I've given all I have to give. I gave it all to him, you see.

MAN
Listen mate. Take my tip. Stop looking back. Looking back'll get you nowhere. Why don't you look forward? Look forward to the evening. Believe me, it's the best part of the day. Honest. Take my tip. I know what I'm saying. The evening's the best part of the day.

The man stands.

See you again, then.

The man walks away.

The lights suddenly go on on the pier. Cheers from the onlookers.

Music starts from the pier through the loudspeakers.

The crowd moves up the pier.

Groups of girls and groups of boys call to each other. Some of them, laughing, chase each other through the crowd.

Stevens sits still. He suddenly stands and looks at the brilliantly-lit pier. He slowly walks towards the pier, gives a coin to the attendant in his booth, goes through the turnstile and walks away from the camera along the pier until he is lost in the crowd.