

A VERY BRITISH SCANDAL: DUCHESS OF ARGYLL

EPISODE 2

Written by

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1 INT. PRIVATE CLINIC. BOND STREET. DAY 17. 13:06. FLASHBACK 1

Patterned tiles stretching to a hallway with a lift. Sunlight from high windows. MARGARET, awash with furs and a veiled hat tipped over her eyes, walks to the lift and presses the button to call it with an elegant gloved finger. Everything is strangely heightened and distorted, the sun too bright, the lines too sharp. We can hear the mechanism of the weights and cables inside the lift shaft and with a Hotel little 'ding' the lift announces its arrival and the doors open. Not looking or paying attention, Margaret steps in-

And there is no floor there, no lift, just a black hole. She disappears-

And the doors glide smoothly shut.

CUT TO:

2 INT. LIFTSHAFT. DAY. FLASHBACK. NIGHTMARE. DAY 17. 13:06 2

Blackness, oily cables, flashes of light coming from the lift door windows at other floors and Margaret falling, falling, flailing wildly, eyes and mouth stretched in abject terror, trying to catch hold of something anything, falling, falling and the grinding axles and wheels of the lift mechanism waiting for her like a beast-

CUT TO:

3 INT. IVOR GRIFFITHS' CONSULTING ROOM. DAY 23. 10:17 3

A Harley Street room. Spotless moulded cornicing and a ceiling rose. Distant traffic. A thick carpet, sunshine through the windows and a large silver bowl of roses on a windowsill. As yet we should have no clue whatsoever that this is a doctor's consulting room. All we know is that Margaret is standing in bare feet, in her silk slip on thick carpet, she is surrounded with sunlight, a pulse jumps in her neck, perhaps from excitement. She moistens her dry lips with the tip of her tongue. A handsome silver fox of a man in impeccable dark suit, beautifully manicured fingers is approaching, eyes narrowed, assessing. This is DOCTOR IVOR GRIFFITHS. We don't know this is a medical examination. It just looks... hot. As Margaret stares out of the window, he places the tips of his fingers at the base of her skull and Margaret lets her breath out.

GRIFFITHS

Bend. Slowly. Very slowly.

Margaret bends from the waist. Griffiths runs his fingers down her spine. Puts the flat of his hand on the base of her spine, his fingers spread, a dominating gesture, stood behind her like that.

 GRIFFITHS (CONT'D)
And straighten. Slowly.

Margaret straightens, Griffiths' fingers following her spine up to the base of her skull.

He stands in front of her.

 GRIFFITHS (CONT'D)
You know what to do by now.

Margaret lifts her arms wide, like a T. Like a crucifixion. Griffiths runs his hands down her ribs, under her breasts to her pelvis, rocks her slightly gently, assessing.

He looks her very closely in the eye.

 GRIFFITHS (CONT'D)
Left. As far as you can go.

Margaret turns her head left.

 GRIFFITHS (CONT'D)
And right.

Margaret turns her head.

 GRIFFITHS (CONT'D)
And back.

Margaret tips her head back. Not that far. She winces.

 GRIFFITHS (CONT'D)
HMMMM. That's new.

He steps away to the desk.

And picks up a stethoscope. And now we see there is a bed in the room with white linen. A desk, files, framed certificates. Margaret's clothes and shoes draped neatly. A curtained screen. Griffiths is a doctor. And Margaret has a kind of hopeful dread about her. Griffiths warms the stethoscope, listens to her heart.

 GRIFFITHS (CONT'D)
Pain?

 MARGARET
No.

Griffiths raises an eyebrow.

*

MARGARET (CONT'D)
It's just a twinge.

*
*

GRIFFITHS
Hmmm. Numbness? Pins and needles?

MARGARET
No.

GRIFFITHS
Blurred vision? Insomnia?
Headaches?

MARGARET
No. No. And sometimes.

Griffiths meets her eyes with a frown and Margaret gives a bright little smile.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
But quite normal, you know. If one is a little worried... then, that would be normal.

GRIFFITHS
Worried?

A long beat.

MARGARET
I want to have another baby.

*

Griffiths drops the stethoscope and stares at her.

GRIFFITHS
We've spoken about this. You were lucky to have two children, all things considered, and that was before your fall -

*
*
*
*

MARGARET
But I've been fine since then -

*
*

GRIFFITHS
If you managed to carry the child to term, and it's a big if, I'm not certain you'd survive the labour-

*
*

MARGARET
(across)
There are advances in medicine...

*
*
*

GRIFFITHS
 It could kill you. If you become
 pregnant you must speak to me
 immediately.

*
*
*
*

Griffiths is not unkind but firm. But it doesn't register
 with Margaret, here thoughts already elsewhere.

*
*

CUT TO:

4	OMITTED	4
5	OMITTED	5
6	INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. CORRIDORS/DRAWING ROOM. DAY 24. 08:12	6

Very close on Margaret's face, IAN'S hand over her eyes as he
 guides her towards the drawing room.

We see glimpses through Ian's fingers. Ian is excited, almost
 bursting with it.

 IAN
 No peeking. It's a surprise.

 MARGARET
 I'm not peeking.

 IAN
 I can feel your eyelashes moving!

He guides her carefully into the drawing room.

In the drawing room, Margaret's portrait gazes down.
 Margaret's hands out as if to stop herself from bumping into
 anything.

Ian stops her in front of the table.

 IAN (CONT'D)
 Ready?

 MARGARET
 Yes, ready, what is it.

 IAN
 And look.

He takes his hand away and watches her face as she looks.

On the table is a cannon ball. Dark and strange, like something from another world. Margaret musters the impressed face Ian's giddiness requires, her mind is elsewhere.

MARGARET

A cannon ball?

IAN

A Spanish Armada cannon ball. Four centuries that's been buried on the sea bed. And now it's our paper weight!

Ian starts to unbutton her blouse-

MARGARET

We're getting there.

IAN

All my treasure would be, what, two decks down? Somewhere safe. But I'm getting there. I'm in the right place.

Margaret holds his face.

MARGARET

Didn't I tell you, didn't I promise you, you'd be the one to do it?

The kiss and embrace, the cannon ball squatting like a troll behind them and suddenly-

YOUNG IAN

Father?

Margaret jumps a little and moves smartly away from Ian. Standing in the doorway, YOUNG IAN in his school uniform and with him, YVONNE MACPHERSON, a gentle apologetic smile. Yvonne wears a black crepe band round the arm of her sober tweed suit. Young Ian likes Yvonne very much.

IAN

Christ, yes, I forgot, got to get you back to school. Margaret, you remember Mrs MacPherson-

Take Margaret, still calibrating at these unexpected presences, no she doesn't but-

MARGARET

Of course.

IAN

I've asked her to do some
secretarial work for you, she's
excellent, nothing gets past her-

And off Margaret's look, he lowers his voice-

IAN (CONT'D)

Her husband died. I made him a
promise to look after her.

He gives Margaret an encouraging little nod and Margaret
musters a smile.

MARGARET

I could certainly do with the help.

Ian kisses her cheek, heads out-

IAN

Marvellous. She'll tell you how
much she gets paid.
(to Young Ian)
Come on, First Born.

Margaret sees the way Young Ian looks up at his father. The
hero worship. And then they're gone.

A moment with Margaret and Yvonne. Yvonne is so not looking
at Margaret's unbuttoned blouse. Margaret glances down but
makes the strategic decision not to button herself up.

YVONNE

My apologies, a bit of a surprise
for you.

MARGARET

Not at all.

Yvonne gestures at the cannon ball.

YVONNE

Such good news, isn't it! A great
family's fortune, soon to be
restored. Wonderful for the Duke.

MARGARET

Wonderful for us both, Mrs
MacPherson.

Young Ian re-enters.

YOUNG IAN

Will you come and wave me off?

YVONNE

Of course I will. Then we'll
discuss my duties? And please, call
me Yvonne.

Yvonne leaves with Young Ian.

MARGARET

Goodbye, Ian.

And Young Ian looks back over his shoulder and nods. He
leaves.

Stay with Margaret, a sudden surge of anxiety and
uncertainty. The wording of the letters ringing through her
brain.

What in hell is she doing?

CUT TO:

6A OMITTED

6A

7 EXT. INVERARAY CASTLE. BRIDGE. DAY 25. 08:31

7

A postboy comes hurtling down the road on his bike, he
clatters over the driveway, his postbag over his shoulder,
whistling through his teeth.

CUT TO:

7A INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. DINING ROOM. DAY 25. 08:33

7A

The sideboard loaded with silver sconces and coffee pots. A little fire burns in the grate. Margaret with her minuscule, delicate breakfast and her diary. Ian at the sideboard, loading his plate with eggs and black pudding.

Margaret has her little red diary out and is making notes in it.

MARGARET

I've arranged dinners and theatre visits for us both.

IAN

Must I.

MARGARET

Yes, you must. And dancing every night. Your feet won't touch the ground.

IAN

Cicero said only women and insane men dance.

But Margaret's attention is gone. Ian clocks the moments silence, thinks he's won that particular conversational sally.

IAN (CONT'D)

Got nothing to say to that?

MARGARET

Cicero was a shocking bore with halitosis and two left feet. You are taking me dancing or I'll set the dogs on you.

She gives him a pert smile, Ian carries his plate to his place, addresses himself to his breakfast as Margaret listens to the sound of the front door opening and distant greeting between Yvonne and the postboy. She puts a tiny sliver of grapefruit in her mouth and attempts to chew, her throat closed up...

CUT TO:

7B INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. HALLWAY. DAY 25. 08:34

7B

Yvonne closes the door, she has a handful of post, she glances through it...

We see the envelopes... some handwritten, some typed, addressed to Margaret... addressed to Ian. Yvonne, absorbed, starts sorting through them...

And we see one envelope, postmarked Paris, addressed to Ian in a round, clumsy hand...

Yvonne heads towards the stairs, we follow her sensible, low heeled shoes, her sensible thick stockings wrinkling slightly at the ankle, along the corridors..

CUT TO:

8 INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. DINING ROOM. DAY 25. 08:35

8

Margaret's head bent over her diary. The creak of a floorboard as Yvonne gets closer and closer, her heavy, regular, sensible tread-

Her blood sizzles and her heart thuds...

And a drop of ink falls from the nib on to the diary page-

And Yvonne enters with the post, Margaret almost shudders.

YVONNE

The car is being packed. We'll need to leave in half an hour.

MARGARET

Thank you, Yvonne.

Yvonne leaves. Ian starts to slice letters open.

Every slice of the letter opener, the rasping rip... the tiny puff of paper fibres, everything in such dazzling clarity under Margaret's eyes.

She opens her own letters, keeping her eyes on Ian, the passage of the thin cheap envelope as he works his way down the pile of letters towards it...

The sunlight catching the letter opener, the rip of paper, the rustle as Ian takes out a letter, scans it, puts it to one side-

Margaret's eyes as Ian picks up the letter, she catches in pin sharp detail, the round clumsy handwriting.

With Margaret, here it is. Here. It. Is. She swallows, surreptitiously wipes her palms on her napkin...

And Ian is staring at the letter, frowning.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

What is it?

And we see the letter: There is a fine piece of writing paper, headed 'L'Hotel Saint Mariette, Paris', as if it's the sign off from a longer letter in Louise's distinctive handwriting:

'I love you so much. I'm happy that my sons are yours, not Ian's.

Your own Louise.'

And a separate piece of blank writing paper, written in the same round clumsy hand that addressed the envelope:

'For your safekeeping. More will follow.'

Ian is frozen.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Ian?

IAN

I don't know, it's... I don't know.

Margaret gets up, reads over his shoulder.

MARGARET

Oh, good god. It's a crank.

IAN
It's her handwriting.

A moment, Margaret plays the role of a woman trying to reassure her husband.

MARGARET
You're not to brood on it. Now,
come on. Car.

Ian gets up and heads to the door. He stops.

IAN
Not a word about this.

MARGARET
What on earth do you take me for?

Ian leaves. Margaret's eyes, a flicker of uncertainty. Of guilt. But then it's gone. The path decided.

CUT TO:

8A INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. BEDROOM. NIGHT 25. 19:54 8A

Margaret's diary and pen lie on her bedside table. Margaret dressed, she looks glorious. Diamonds in her ears, the lustre of her pearls round her throat. Ian is dressed in evening finery. Sitting on the bed, his tie not yet done up. On his side of the bed is a framed photo of Young Ian and Colin, perhaps one we saw in the house he shared with Louise. Two solemn little boys with cricket bats too big for them. He has a glass of booze, cigarette holder between his teeth, eyes narrowed against the smoke as he studies the photograph.

Margaret watches him, the faintest flicker of triumph that the blow has landed.

And then she comes round to where he sits and kneels in front of him. She turns his face towards her and gently tilts his chin up so she can do his bow tie for him, the loving wife.

IAN
Why would someone send me that?

And as Margaret speaks, Ian starts to lean forward, as if he's making the tying of the tie easier for her but Margaret is steadily being tilted back, at an angle we know is painful.

MARGARET

Because people are very strange.
You should see some of the things I
get sent. I don't think about them
because that's what these peculiar,
nasty little people want. Of course
the boys are yours. Of course. I
might not get along with their
mother but I can't imagine for a
second that she'd do something like
that. She's far too boring.

And they hold that position for a moment. Ian's eyes on her.

And then he gets up suddenly-

IAN

Stay. Don't leave me at the party.
Stay close by.

And he leaves the bedroom. Only now can Margaret relax from
that braced position. A flicker of a smile on the corner of
her mouth.

CUT TO:

9 INT. TOWNHOUSE. JEANNE'S PARTY. HALLWAY. NIGHT 25. 20:12 9

Festooned with flowers and glittering chandeliers, elegant
women in evening dresses loaded with jewels and men in
evening dress, it reeks of money and entitlement and status,
guests smiling in front of 'chosen' photographers,
orchestrated by Yvonne...

From somewhere inside, the sound of piano music...

Ian and Margaret enter, Margaret's hand tucked through Ian's
elbow. The immediate rustle of fascination, eyes on
Margaret's dress, guests smiling obsequiously, reporters
scribbling, photographers getting their cameras ready...
Margaret's hand tucked through Ian's elbow, claiming him.

And ahead of them JEANNE and JANET. Jeanne immediately rushes
to Ian-

JEANNE

Papa-

IAN

Darling.

They embrace. Ian pecks Janet on the cheek.

MARGARET

Jeanne. You look wonderful. Happy Birthday, dear.

JEANNE

(sour)

Margaret.

IAN

I'm spitting feathers. Must get a bloody drink.

And he pulls himself free from Margaret, takes Jeanne and Janet and leaves towards the music. Janet throws a quick apologetic look over her shoulder.

Margaret suddenly feels foolish, almost stripped, left hanging but then Yvonne is ushering photographers towards her and she quickly arranges her face to gracious as the flashes go off and off and off.

CUT TO:

10 INT. TOWNHOUSE. JEANNE'S PARTY. HALLWAY/ RECEPTION ROOM/ 10
LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 25. 20:32

Bright lights and chatter and laughter. The glint of jewels and expensive evening wear. Margaret, a glass in her hand, threads her way along the corridor, waiters passing with champagne coupes and canapés. Ahead the sound of piano music playing jazz standards. Margaret smiles and smiles, gracious and elegant.

And MAUREEN passing, cigarette aloft. Her sly kindness.

MAUREEN

Have you lost Ian, darling? He's in there, with Wife Number One.

MARGARET

Yes, I know. Thank you, Maureen.

But she didn't know and Maureen isn't fooled.

Margaret reaches the open door of the living room. Inside a piano is being played, waiters with trays, clusters of people talking and laughing. Jeanne dimpling at some pink faced Tory. Margaret is about to enter and stops, dead in the doorway.

Beyond it, she can see Ian and Janet. He is talking close to her, his hand in the small of her back. Janet is smiling at some joke or compliment. It is very close, very intimate and Margaret sees it all in refracted, sharp detail... Janet's lowered eyelashes, her sideways glances, Ian's finger lifting one of her earrings to comment on it, his face so close to hers... It's Janet she can't take her eyes off.

The piano music sounds discordant and strange. Margaret's hand white knuckled round her glass, aware of eyes watching her, from the stairs, from inside the living room... The humiliation of it.

In the room, among the crowd is a man we will soon come to know as PETER COMBE, handsome, like a young Sean Connery, a woman hanging on his arm. Peter sees Margaret frozen in the doorway, follows her sightline to Ian looming over Janet, the enfilade of his charming smile. Peter sees Margaret's uncertainty and humiliation under her brittle smile. He's about to move towards her, to draw her in-

And just as suddenly, Margaret has gone, the doorway is empty and Ian hasn't even noticed.

CUT TO:

12 INT. TOWNHOUSE. JEANNE'S PARTY. DRESSING ROOM. NIGHT 25. 12
20:35

A dressing room beyond the toilets. Mirrors and stools. *

Margaret stands in front of one, very, very rigid, breathing *
hard, her blood thumping, her heart racing with fury. Her *
hands bunched into fists. Distantly, we can hear piano music *
and the sound of laughter. *

Margaret takes a deep breath, uncoils her fists and rubs at *
the impressions her fingernails have made in the palms. She *
smooths her dress, opens her handbag to repair her make-up. *

Janet enters with Jeanne and sees Margaret. *

JANET
Jeanne, go back to your friends.

JEANNE
Oh but Mummy, this is much more
interesting.

JANET
(cold)
Jeanne.

A moment. Jeanne huffs and leaves.

In the mirror an icy Margaret sees Janet approaching. *

MARGARET
I paid for this party-

JANET
I know-

MARGARET
The very least you could do is not
humiliate me.

JANET
This isn't about humiliating you,
Margaret. This is about doing what
Ian wants because not doing what
Ian wants, is a scene. You must
have realised that by now. A scene.
In public, right here, in front of
everyone. Shouting. Swearing. I
don't want that.

MARGARET

Don't make excuses, Janet. You just
can't bear that I've succeeded
where you failed.

Janet raises her eyebrows. Almost laughs. Margaret's brittle
face watching her.

JANET

You think I want him back?

Margaret doesn't answer, her lips pinched.

JANET (CONT'D)

On the first night of our
honeymoon, Ian took me to a brothel
because, according to him, I had a
lot to learn. I was seventeen. He
took everything I had and then he
moved onto Oui-Oui and took
everything she had and now it's
your turn and when the money dries
up, because it will, the campaign
to remove you will begin in
earnest. And if you're not careful,
you too, will be left with nothing.
I worry for you-

MARGARET

(across)

You and Wee Wee might be
snivelling little girls but I'm not
and I don't need or want your
advice.

With Janet 'she tried'. She picks up her bag and exits. *

Steely-faced, Margaret takes her make up and perfume from her *
bag and carefully re-paints her mouth- *

And stops mid-way. Turns her eyes to the door Janet left *
through. Her hot, furious eyes. Despite it all, Janet's words *
landed. *

CUT TO:

13 INT. TOWNHOUSE. JEANNE'S PARTY. HALLWAY. NIGHT 25. 22:37 13

The end of the party. Some battered flowers from the displays
crushed underfoot. Drunken guests swaying out.

Margaret saying good night with a rictus grin, in between that, she interrogates Yvonne in a hiss. Under this, Peter Combe approaches, over hearing. Handsome, a party boy, insouciant, brimming with warmth and fun. Life, for him, is very sweet.

MARGARET

He just went? And you couldn't stop him?

YVONNE

How could I? And I did look for you.

MARGARET

You didn't look very hard. And he's taken the car. My car and my driver!

Peter approaches.

PETER

I have a car.

Margaret eyes him.

PETER (CONT'D)

Well, it's no frills and full of dog hair.

YVONNE

Dog hair? For a Duchess? I'll arrange a taxi-

MARGARET

(across)

I love dogs. And you are?

PETER

Peter Combe.

He offers his arm and Margaret takes it. And so begins a friendship.

As they leave up the corridor, we see Janet, looking tired and desperate to go home and momentarily Margaret moves away from Peter to speak to her, low, in her ear.

MARGARET

I won't lose a single thing. I'll keep it all. No-one will remove me.

And then she turns to Peter with a smile and retakes his arm and they leave. Yvonne watches them go.

CUT TO:

14 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. BATHROOM/BEDROOM. NIGHT 25. 14
23:05

The lights all blazing. Ian is passed out, asleep on the bath mat. He's still wearing his clothes and shoes. There is a bottle of brandy on the lid of the toilet, a tumbler spilled and an ashtray with a smouldering butt. Margaret stands over him, looking down, her face taut. She watches him for a very long time. Maybe she considers braining him with the brandy bottle.

But finally, she breathes out. She pulls off Ian's shoes and loosens his collar stud. She fetches a pillow and a counterpane from the bedroom and makes him comfy. As she puts the pillow under his head he whimpers and curls up tighter into a foetal ball and looks for a moment, horribly vulnerable. She rinses the tumbler and fills it with tap water and places it nearby for when he wakes. Then she turns off the light.

CUT TO:

15 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. BEDROOM/BATHROOM. DAY 26. 15
09:47

Margaret is sitting up in bed, a tray of tea somewhere. The bathroom door is open, Ian pouchy-eyed and dry mouthed is brushing his teeth, dressed for a day in the Lords. He examines his parched tongue.

IAN

I hate this bathroom. Why would anyone sane want to watch themselves from every possible angle as they strain for stool.

MARGARET

There are other bathrooms for you to strain in.

IAN

I hate all of those too. In fact, I hate this house.

MARGARET

Yes but I love it. And you didn't mind passing out in there last night.

IAN

That's a low blow. You do like to kick a man when he's down, don't you.

MARGARET

If I liked kicking a man when he's down, I'd have stamped you to pieces on that bathmat.

Ian brightens, enjoying the sparring.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

You took my car. My car! And my chauffeur!

IAN

Oh, mea culpa.

MARGARET

You didn't think twice how I'd get home.

IAN

But you got home, didn't you? You're fine.

He comes into the bedroom and passes Margaret his cufflinks, holding out one sleeve after another.

IAN (CONT'D)

You should give it up.

MARGARET

Give what up?

IAN

This house. This soulless, sterile, house.

MARGARET

Don't be ridiculous.

IAN

We'd have more money. You're always complaining about money. Give this house up and you won't have to complain, will you?

MARGARET

Get that shipwreck off the sea floor and we can have as many houses as we want.

And a sudden split second volte-face from Ian. All the air is sucked out of the room. The ice beneath the charm.

IAN

You don't think I'm going to do it, do you? I'm going to cock it up. Can't fight a war without getting captured. Can't raise a shipwreck. Can't father his own sons-

MARGARET

Ian, for God's sake, I told you to ignore that bloody letter. And who is it who's always telling you that you can achieve whatever you want? Me!

IAN

You do a lot of telling. You're like Nanny.

MARGARET

The very last thing I am is your Nanny. And if I didn't believe you could raise that rotting hulk, I wouldn't have invested so much in it.

IAN

There you go again. Money.

A moment.

And just as quickly, Ian is charming again.

He gives her a kiss.

IAN (CONT'D)

I'm being a horrible bastard. Why d'you put up with me?

MARGARET

No idea.

IAN

I'll take you out to dinner this evening to make up for being such an incorrigible selfish prick last night. Have a good think about the house.

Ian leaves. With Margaret, a little snort. No intention of giving up this house. She sips coffee, closes her diary with a decisive snap.

CUT TO:

16 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. BEDROOM. DAY 26. 11:04 16

Margaret is at the window, looking down, impatient. She hears the growl of the sports car pulling up and a woman getting out and immediately leaves, crossing the room fast-

CUT TO:

17 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. STAIRWAY/ HALL. DAY 26. 11:05 17

Margaret races down the stairs. In the hall, we see DORA crossing to answer the door-

MARGARET

Leave it!

Margaret gets to the door and pulls it open-

DIANA NAPIER/WOLKOWICKI is on the door step. Margaret pulls her in.

DIANA

You're answering your own door?
Have the ravens left the Tower?

Margaret sees Dora waiting.

MARGARET

Go away.

Dora rolls her eyes and goes.

DIANA

Where's Il Duce?

MARGARET

House of Lords. All day, Something about... Oh, I don't know and I don't care.

(MORE)

MARGARET (CONT'D)

(low)

Diana, I am swearing you to
absolute secrecy.

DIANA

Oh, god, who is it this time?

MARGARET

Absolute secrecy, Diana, do you
swear?

A moment. Margaret's wide desperate eyes.

DIANA

Alright, fine. Yes.

Margaret takes her arm and hurries her up the stairs.

DIANA (CONT'D)

What's the urgency?

CUT TO:

18 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. DRAWING ROOM. DAY 26. 11:06 18

Margaret and Diana enter and Margaret shuts the door,
slightly out of breath. Diana adjusts her furs pulled
slightly askew.

DIANA

Well?

MARGARET

Diana, I need you to buy me a baby
boy.

A silence. Diana laughs. Stops laughing.

DIANA

What?

MARGARET

A new born baby boy. I'll pay.
I'll pay really well.

DIANA

...what?

MARGARET

You're married to a Pole. You must
have loads of contacts.

(MORE)

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Some poor girl, she'd love her baby
to have a wonderful life, the best
of everything-

DIANA

Oh Jesus. You're serious.

Diana goes to the cocktail cabinet and pours a belt of gin
into a glass.

MARGARET

-but it really needs to grow up
tall like Ian so it's best if you
know the parents-

DIANA

Margaret, either you're having a
nervous breakdown or I am-

MARGARET

Diana, this is just too awful, too
shocking but...

She glances quickly at the door, draws Diana closer-

MARGARET (CONT'D)

(hissing)

Ian's sons are not his. They're
illegitimate. Both of them. Heir
and spare.

DIANA

...How do you know?

MARGARET

Ian had a letter. Anonymous. They
say they've got proof-

DIANA

Well, that's just standard
extortion-

MARGARET

They don't want money, they want to
undo a great wrong. Set matters
straight. They are some other man's
sons. Passed off by that bloody Wee-
Wee as Ian's all this time.

DIANA

Louise? Oui-Oui? She doesn't seem
the type.

MARGARET

Oh, she's the type. Completely vindictive. And now Ian needs an heir because he can't leave it to them, can he?

DIANA

Have you met the British aristocracy? It's rammed with bastard Earls and by-blow Barons, everyone turns a blind eye.

MARGARET

Ian won't. He's too honourable. So you see why I desperately need a baby boy? I can't have one of my own so I must find a way to get one. To inherit the title.

DIANA

This is completely mad-

MARGARET

I've thought it all through. I start to pad my waist, let people whisper about it. Start the rumours. I go to a nice clinic in Switzerland, clean air and good doctors and then you give me a beautiful baby boy and I give you a lot of money. We've got about 8 months. Say yes, Diana.

CUT TO:

19 INT/EXT. SPORTS CAR/ UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. DAY 26. 11:15 19

Diana back in her car, starts the engine and there's a sharp rap on the window. Margaret outside. Diana takes a deep breath and winds the window down.

MARGARET

I thought you were my friend.

DIANA

I am. And as your friend, I'm telling you, don't get involved. Ian's sons are nothing to do with you.

MARGARET

Inveraray wouldn't exist if it wasn't for me and Daddy.

(MORE)

MARGARET (CONT'D)

It would be a ruin. There wouldn't be anything for them to inherit so yes, it's everything to do with me.

DIANA

Go on holiday, Margaret, before you get yourself in trouble.

MARGARET

I swore you to secrecy, so if you tell, I'll know you can't keep a promise.

Diana gives her a sorrowful look.

DIANA

A long holiday. Somewhere sunny.

She puts the car in gear and zooms away. Margaret watches her go.

CUT TO:

20

INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. DRAWING ROOM/HALLWAY. NIGHT 20
26. 21:47

Margaret, dressed for an evening out, sits bolt upright. Her jaw tense. Cigarette smoke coils. The ashtray brims. A whisky tumbler shows a red lip print. A little carriage clock ticks softly. It shows 10.30. The poodle waits with her.

From downstairs, the echo of the front door slamming and heavy, stumbling footsteps up the stairs. Margaret rises gracefully, lips tight and heads out.

On the upper landing, she watches Ian heft himself up the stairs. He is very drunk. He stops when he sees her and smiles, lopsided and swaying.

IAN

Hello, darling.

MARGARET

You said you'd take me out for dinner.

IAN

The House sat late.

MARGARET

Yes, it did. But you weren't there.

IAN

I was at the Club.

MARGARET

No. You weren't there either.

IAN

Oooh. Your legion of spies.

MARGARET

And you're drunk. You were drunk
last night and you're drunk now.
Where have you been?

Ian puts his hand on her face, pushes at her cheeks to make
her pout, he's none too gentle.

IAN

Fish-face is being a nag tonight.

Margaret's nose wrinkles with distaste, she pulls her face
away.

MARGARET

You reek of other women. That's
where you've been. You've been with
some other woman and then you come
home to me in this state?

IAN

Oh, Christ. This relentless
bourgeois whine...
(rising to a shout)
...it's so fucking boring.

His shout echoes. A silence. Somewhere in the house, we hear
a door open.

IAN (CONT'D)

Now, look what you made me do. I've
woken the servants. I'll sleep at
the club. Tomorrow morning, we're
going back to Inveraray. First
train.

MARGARET

I won't be. I have appointments in
town and I never break
appointments.

IAN

You will do what I tell you to do
when I tell you to do it!

And for a moment, Margaret's tongue snags. She breathes, composes herself.

MARGARET

You must be confusing me with one of your other wives.

Ian curls his lip and slams out of the house. Margaret stock still, blood racing. Dora approaches.

DORA

Shall I get you ready for bed?

Margaret sets her jaw, eyes blazing. The answer very clear. No.

CUT TO:

21 EXT. UPPER GROSVENOR TERRACE. NIGHT 26. 22:04 21

A battered old Land Rover pulls up and Margaret comes out of the front door and runs down the steps towards it.

CUT TO:

22 INT/EXT. PETER'S LANDROVER/ UPPER GROSVENOR TERRACE. 22
NIGHT 26. 22:05

Peter, smart and louche in evening wear at the wheel of his landrover, lighting two cigarettes as Margaret climbs in. They beam at each other.

MARGARET

I'm so glad you were free.

PETER

We hunt by night. What's it to be, drinking or dancing?

MARGARET

Both.

He hands her one of the cigarettes and Margaret settles back in her furs as the landrover rattles away into the dark.

CUT TO:

22A EXT. NIGHTCLUB. LONDON. NIGHT 26. 22:31

22A

The thrill of it. Lights and pulsing hot music coming from inside. Margaret gleaming, back in her natural habitat. Peter offers her his arm and she takes it and sashays in.

CUT TO:

22B INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. LIBRARY. DAY 27. 08:30

22B

A heavy light at the windows. Bad, louring weather. A thick pall of cigarette smoke. Ian surrounded by papers. Ashtrays brimming. His treasure sits on his desk on some sackcloth, a pile of rust, metal and seaweed. A pewter plate, a second cannon ball, a rusty horseshoe.

Ian feels mocked and belittled. A sourness in the pit of his stomach.

And over this, nightclub music, giggles and chatter whirl...

CUT TO:

23 INT. NIGHTCLUB. NIGHT 26. 22:56

23

A whirl of music and glitter of society with Margaret at the centre of it, Peter accompanying her... A dizzying, kaleidoscopic montage of camera flashes, jewels, Margaret's eyes, knowing she's the centre of attention. Passing men are admired, breadth of shoulder, a sharp jawline, she gives them the full force of her wide green regard. The cameras flash as she swoops round a dance floor in Peter's arms. She dances, she smiles, she shimmers. She is adored. She is jubilant. As life with Ian at Inveraray becomes tenser, she shines even brighter, her partying becomes wilder, faster and faster, dizzying, a danse macabre...

Through out this we intercut with:

CUT TO:

24 EXT. TOBERMORY BAY. DAY 27. 08:56

24

Out on the water, a buoy with a tolling bell marking the site of the wreck.

Ian comes racing down the dunes, trudging towards him are the teams of BOATMEN, pulling dinghies up the beach, carrying them away, coils of ropes and tools, their faces and bodies drawn and exhausted.

Ian is trying for optimistic and assured but there's an edge of feral panic to him as he tries to stop them from leaving.

IAN

You can't just stop, you can't give
up, I'm working it out with the
Admiralty, you can get back to it,
you have to get back on the water,
keep going!

But the men just trudge past him with their cargo of dinghies and ropes and chains. Ian stares after them, furiously.

IAN (CONT'D)

Amateurs! FAILURES!!

He stays there as they disappear away from him, he is dwarfed by the water and the sky. The sound of the waves mock him. The relentless mournful tolling of the bell on the marker buoy.

CUT TO:

25

OMITTED

25

25A INT. NIGHTCLUB 2. NIGHT 26 23:22

25A

Another nightclub. Another man dancing with Margaret, we can't see his face, only breadth of his shoulder, his hand curled round her waist, the flash of Margaret's green eyes, her white throat as she spins in the man's arms, the dazzling lights-

CUT TO:

26 INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. DRAWING ROOM. DAY 27. 14:27 26

The portrait of Margaret over the fireplace. The cannon ball sits on the table like the unblinking eye of a sour god. Louise, pinch mouthed and furious in her mink reads the letters. Ian watches her closely as she reads them.

LOUISE

(ice)

Are you telling me you actually believe this?

IAN

It's your writing.

LOUISE

I write hundreds of letters. I've never written these.

IAN

You spend a lot of time in Paris.

LOUISE

Everyone spends a lot of time in Paris. I've never stayed at the-

She checks the letter-

LOUISE (CONT'D)

-L'Hotel St Mariette, I've never even heard of it and I wish I had been unfaithful to you, it would have given me some happy memories of our marriage. Have you shown this to the police?

IAN

No.

LOUISE

Then you should, for god's sake!

IAN

Are the boys my boys?

Louise puts her hand on her heart. She blazes with fury.

LOUISE

I swear. On the lives of my sons
who I would die for, who I'd kill
for, I swear that you, Ian
Campbell, you are their father, you
don't deserve them, but you are
their father, you piece of absolute
shit.

And without a doubt, she is telling the truth. The portrait
of radiant Margaret smiles down at them.

CUT TO:

26A INT. NIGHTCLUB 3. NIGHT 26. 23:47

26A

Another nightclub. Another man. Margaret spins, she isn't
being held close now, her hands are held and she spins as if
in some uncontrollable centrifugal force. Her hair whips, the
music is discordant-

CUT TO:

27 INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. DRAWING ROOM. DAY 27. 15:52

27

The black cannon ball on the table. Yvonne sits opposite
Margaret. She passes her bills to be paid. Margaret signs
cheque after cheque. Yvonne puts the cheques in envelopes. A
stack of them, an efficient machine. Margaret looking tauter
and more drawn with each signing. Fierce wind buffets the
windows. The cannon ball sits there, dense and matt and
ominous, like a curse.

CUT TO:

28 INT. NIGHTCLUB. NIGHT 26A. 23:56

28

The whirling music has stopped. The dance floor is empty.
There is only Margaret, her heart audibly thumping, out of
breath and giddy. She staggers. She tries to gather herself.
Her breathing rasps. She is hectic and disordered. She is
entirely alone in the cavernous, echoing space.

CUT TO:

28A INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. BEDROOM. DAY 28. 09:12

28A

Trays of breakfast tea and coffee. Ian and Margaret's
respective post, letters and diary. Very close on Ian,
Margaret sitting by him, looking worried and disturbed.

An envelope addressed in the clumsy round hand to 'Margaret, Duchess of Argyll'. A sheet of paper and the same clumsy handwriting-

'You are a good woman, I know you are. Please help expose the lies of a very evil woman.'

And a piece of a letter in Louise's handwriting -

"I can't bear that the boys call Ian father, I can't bear that they don't know the truth..."

IAN

(reading)

'Please help expose the lies of a very evil woman'

MARGARET

I was wrong. I don't think this is a crank.

Margaret puts her hand on his shoulder.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Whatever you decide to do, you know I'll completely support you.

She squeezes his shoulder and goes back to her own end of the table. Ian's eyes on the letter. Margaret's eyes on Ian.

CUT TO:

29

INT. DORCHESTER HOTEL. LOBBY. DAY 28. 13:03

29

Margaret walks across the lobby to the lifts and stops as she sees GEORGE coming away from the lifts with JANE CORBY on his arm. Jane is a year younger than Margaret.

A wholesome, healthy, easy quality to her. Good, undemanding, fun company. A ray of sunshine. She's well dressed, not with the same elegance and style as Margaret, that's unique to her but still, a wealthy man dresses her and it shows.

Margaret stops dead as George and Jane smile at her. Margaret manages a smile back.

MARGARET

Daddy.

GEORGE

This is Jane Corby. A very good friend.

Margaret nods, shaken. Taking in every detail, Jane's hand resting in the crook of her fathers arm. Jane beams at her, unshaken.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'm taking a little break from the sickroom. You can sit with Mother till I'm back.

MARGARET

...I was hoping to talk to you?

And it hangs in the air. Money. More money.

GEORGE

Not today, Margaret. Our table's booked.

JANE

We're having a cream tea!

MARGARET

Yummy!

George and Jane leave. We hear Jane's bright girlish excited giggle as they head away. A flash of jealousy, of being left out across her face.

CUT TO:

30

INT. DORCHESTER HOTEL. SUITE. BEDROOM. DAY 28. 13:05

30

Helen, hollowed out from pain lies propped up with pillows. Her hands twisted, her spine agony, her legs wasted. Her bedside table bristles with pill bottles. The wheelchair abandoned in the corner, turned to the wall as if in shame. Margaret sits by the bed.

MARGARET

I meant to bring you some flowers.

HELEN

But instead you brought the begging bowl.

MARGARET

That's not why I'm here.

HELEN

(snorts)

You're not going to get anything more out of your father. He's got other fish to fry now. Did you see her? Jane?

MARGARET

Yes.

HELEN

He's got himself a house. In Berkshire. For when I'm gone.

MARGARET

You're not going anywhere.

HELEN

(ignoring her)

You wait. Soon as I'm in my shroud, she'll be in there. Trotters under the table. Snout in the trough.

MARGARET

You always see the worst in everyone. Daddy needs cheering up and he's grateful for her company, that's all.

HELEN

You really are astonishingly dim, Margaret. Sometimes I wonder if you should be allowed out on your own.

MARGARET

You always t-t-t-tell me I'm st-st-st-stup...

She gives up.

HELEN

You should have grown out of that stammer by now-

MARGARET

I st-st-stammer because you tied my
left hand behind my back so I
wouldn't write with it! You did
that!

HELEN

Oh, it's all coming out now. Now
that I'm trapped, now I have to lie
here and listen to it. Well, come
on, daughter! Speak up. The clock's
ticking, unless you want to
harangue my corpse.

MARGARET

God, don't be so dramatic.

Margaret's tone is light but there's a silence. Helen's sharp
look. Waiting. Margaret glances at her. Swallows. A shift
in atmosphere. Margaret building herself up...

MARGARET (CONT'D)

I wish we weren't always like this.
At each other.

HELEN

You started it. Bringing up the
past, bringing up what's gone-

MARGARET

Oh, it's never gone-

HELEN

What would you have been without
me?

MARGARET

There's a question.

HELEN

I did everything for you. I groomed
you. I trained you. Prepared you.
Launched you. The right clothes.
The right jewels. The right
friends. I made sure you could get
to the very top and now you want me
to say sorry for how I raised you?

MARGARET

That's not what I want. I just...

But she cannot find the words. Instead Margaret steadies her
breath, plans her words so she doesn't stammer.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Was there ever a time when you
liked me, Mother?

HELEN

Like you? I adore you. You're my
daughter. You were the whole point
of my entire life.

The longest longest moment. Helen's twisted hands lying on
the covers. Margaret tries to take her hand and Helen winces
with the pain and in the end, Margaret rests her hands so her
fingertips just touch Helen's. Just touch.

CUT TO:

31 INT. DORCHESTER HOTEL. SUITE. BEDROOM. NIGHT 28. 20:49 31

Candles flickering. Helen lies flat on the bed. Her poor,
twisted hands crossed on her breast. George and Margaret are
there. George's face blurred with tears. Margaret tucks a
sprig of heather between Helen's fingers, holds that cold
hand for a moment because now she can.

And then she goes to George and embraces him besides the
silent shrouded figure.

MARGARET

(soft)

You've got me, Daddy. You've always
got me.

George clings to her.

CUT TO:

31A EXT. SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS/INVERARAY. DAY 29. 11:12 31A

Pelting rain, louring clouds. Highland cattle cluster, almost
threateningly, poor beasts in the rain. Rain runs streaming
on their coats. Their cloven hooves churn the mud.

CUT TO:

31B INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. DRAWING ROOM. DAY 29. 11:14 31B

Pelting rain against the windows. The castle feels empty and
echoing. The portrait of Margaret glows on the wall. A spider
spins busily, weaving it's web.

CUT TO:

32 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. DRAWING ROOM. DAY 29. 11:16 32

A photographer and his assistant set up lights. A backdrop of misty mountains and pine forests is hauled into place. Ian, resplendent in full Laird gets up, his eyes are glassy. Margaret in mourning black. Laid out on a table are some high class socks. 'Argyll's'. Ian has his nose dusted with powder. He is seated at a small table set up for make up. Margaret stands nearby. Ian looks at her in the mirror.

IAN

You shouldn't have let Yvonne go without discussing it with me.

MARGARET

I couldn't really afford to pay her. Besides I don't have the work for her, she can't stand around doing nothing.

IAN

Why not? You do.

MARGARET

I got her another job and I'm giving her lunch to make up for it.

IAN

What a treat for her.

He does a practise smile in the mirror.

MARGARET

That's terrifying.

IAN

You think I want to do this? Debase myself advertising Argyll socks? You'll have me flogging surgical trusses with the family crest on it next.

MARGARET

If they pay well, why not.

IAN

Or you could give up this house.

MARGARET

That conversation's been had.

The photographer comes over. Give line on the day.

PHOTOGRAPHER
We're ready, Your Grace.

The photographer leaves. Ian's eyes on Margaret.

IAN
The writer of the letters. Why do
they think you're a very good
woman?

A long beat.

MARGARET
I do a lot for charity.

IAN
Which charity?

MARGARET
Well, you. For a start.

A moment of tinkling ice. Ian picks up a pair of Argyll socks
and heads away.

Margaret watches as Ian poses in front of the tacky back drop
of Bonnie Scotland, knee up on a box, to display his own
socks. He holds the Argyll's up to the camera and smiles a
terrible manic haunted smile. The flashbulb pops.

CUT TO:

33 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. DRAWING ROOM. DAY 30. 13:06 33

A little table set with china and crystal for lunch. Delicate
fillets of sole. Yvonne, smart, and Margaret, dressed to the
teeth but she looks tired. There's a rather stiff, formal
froideur to Yvonne, Margaret doesn't seem to be aware of it.

YVONNE
I was very sorry to hear about your
mother.

MARGARET
Thank you.
(beat)
Are you enjoying your new job?

YVONNE
They're a very generous employer.

MARGARET
I'm glad. It was difficult to let
you go, I hope you understand that.

A tiny beat. Yvonne doesn't believe a word of it but she smiles politely.

YVONNE

I saw the Duke's advertisement.

A moment. Margaret pushes her fish around.

MARGARET

Yvonne, I wanted your advice.
You've known Ian longer than I
have. He and your husband were such
close friends and if I'm honest,
I'm at a loss. Because he's
impossible. I can't keep track of
his moods. From one minute to the
other, he's different.

Yvonne's eyes on Margaret, perhaps she knows from Ian what is
upsetting him, the rumours, the letters. Margaret holds her
look, innocently.

YVONNE

The Duke has a lot on his mind.
Although, I don't see how you can
tell that he's impossible, you're
never with him.

A silence.

MARGARET

I beg your pardon.

YVONNE

You keep talking about how much you
love Inveraray-

MARGARET

I do. It's my home.

YVONNE

But you're always here, going about
with... men. Men half your age. If
you spent more time with him,
supporting him as a proper wife
should then maybe he wouldn't be so
"impossible".

MARGARET

I see. So, it's my fault.

YVONNE

I don't think you try hard enough.

MARGARET

I try. I try and try and-

YVONNE

Do you? Really? And as for that
advertisement. How could you do it?

(MORE)

YVONNE (CONT'D)

Debasing and humiliating a man like that? Your own husband, forced to shill for mass produced socks!

Margaret is arctic.

MARGARET

I invite you to lunch, as a friend and this is how you talk to me?

YVONNE

You invited me to lunch because you want me to agree with you. Perhaps because you thought I'd drop some hints, some gossip about poor Margaret and how she suffers with the Duke, what a saint that woman is. But you're no saint. I feel sorry for Ian. He deserves better.

MARGARET

Ian never thought you were any good, if it wasn't for me you wouldn't have lasted two months.

Yvonne looks at her pityingly.

YVONNE

If you're going to tell lies, do try and make them plausible.

Margaret stares at her. Glacial.

MARGARET

Do you know, Yvonne, I think you've just remembered an important engagement.

YVONNE

Do you know, you're right. I have.

She gives Margaret a death stare, puts her knife and fork together, gathers up her bag and leaves. Stony faced Margaret listens to the sound of her feet going downstairs and the front door closing. She takes a tiny forkful of food and chews and chews, her throat closed up.

CUT TO:

The buoy marking the spot tolls its bell, desolate and mocking.

And there's Ian, in torrential rain and a raw, howling wind. He wears Highland clothes. He stares out at the choppy water and suddenly, he's wading out into it and we see he has a hunting whip. He wades out into the water, lashing the surface with the whip, the crack of it ricocheting as he wades deeper and deeper, the whip gets waterlogged and he ends up thrashing wildly but helplessly, spray flying, howling, his eyes wild-

IAN

Bastard! Bastard! Fucking traitor!
Give me my gold! Give it to me!
Bastard!

CUT TO:

35 EXT. INVERARAY CASTLE. NIGHT 30. 19:56

35

A taxi pulls up and DR JOHN PETRO gets out, looks up at the castle. He looks unsettlingly suave and louche, someone who knows a lot of people's ugly secrets and enjoys knowing them. He has something of the night about him. A watcher. An unerring instinct for the unshelled, the weak spot. He carries a small overnight bag and a doctor's attaché case.

A butler waits at the door.

PETRO

Doctor John Petro for the Duke.
He's expecting me.

He sweeps inside, confident.

CUT TO:

36 INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. BEDROOM. NIGHT 30. 19:58

36

Ian is in bed, raving with fever, all the bones of his face sharp, sheeny with sweat. The bedclothes twisted. Margaret sits by his bed, feels his hot face.

IAN

I've failed.

MARGARET

You haven't failed. You've tried everything, we both have but it's just not possible.

IAN

I did it for them.

He shifts suddenly, stares at her, his hand tight round her wrist, white knuckled so her bones shift-

IAN (CONT'D)

My boys are mine. I know they're mine.

And even as he stares at her, he's not really seeing her, perhaps he doesn't even know she's there.

Margaret is shaken, his wild febrile stare. A quick knock on the door and Petro enters, already opening his bag, stethoscope out.

PETRO

Dear me, old chap. You are in a mess.

MARGARET

He's got a raging temperature. He's not making any sense.

PETRO
(To Margaret)
I beg your pardon, Your Grace but I
need privacy.

And before she knows it, she's ushered out and the door is closed.

CUT TO:

37 INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. BEDROOM. NIGHT 30. 20:21 37

Ian sleeps heavily. His breathing hoarse. The bedside table bristles with medications. Margaret studies Ian's face. Puts a hand on his forehead. His face twitches as if to shake her off. She studies the medicines by the bed, picking up bottles reading the labels. She stops at one, frowning. Opens the bottle and shakes the pills out on to her palm. Small blue tablets. She puts them back and replaces the cap. We glimpse the long name on the label 'Sodium amobarbital and dextroamphetamine sulfate'.

CUT TO:

38 INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. CORRIDOR/LIBRARY. NIGHT 30. 20:26 38

Margaret walks along the gloomy corridors, ahead in the library the sound of a fire crackling and a record playing.

She pushes open the door and goes in. Petro is sitting with his feet up in front of the fire, reading, smoking, working his way down a bottle of claret. A record plays softly. On the walls a display of boomerangs among the antlers, stuffed gamebirds and pike and butterfly display cases. A tray with the remains of a meal. Petro looks up as Margaret enters but he doesn't get up, and he doesn't take his feet off the stool. Margaret sits gracefully on the edge of a chair.

MARGARET
Dr Petro, thank you for coming all
this way.

PETRO
I go where I'm needed.

He smiles at her blandly. A few moments tick by, the sense of battle lines being drawn up.

MARGARET
You've prescribed amphetamines for
the Duke.

PETRO

Yes. To boost his system.

MARGARET

I would have thought an iron tablet would be better as a boost. Cod liver oil. A Mediterranean holiday. Not amphetamines.

PETRO

You're very worldly. For a Duchess.

MARGARET

The Duke's behaviour can be volatile. Have you given my husband this 'boost' before?

A shiver of cold in the air.

PETRO

I'm here to treat your husband's pneumonia.

MARGARET

What sort of doctor are you?

PETRO

(a sly smile)
The Duke's.

He gets up.

PETRO (CONT'D)

Better check on the patient.

He leaves, Margaret watches him go. The fire spits and crackles.

CUT TO:

39

INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. BEDROOM. DAY 31. 10:02

39

Ian in his dressing gown, thin and gaunt in bed. On his bedside table, glasses of water, bottle of pills and medicines. Ian's eyes are pinched from illness but he still has that glitter, febrile from the retreating fever. He is unshaven. His pillows are mashed and creased. On Margaret's side of the bed, the linen is pristine. Her beside table tidy, only her handbag and her diary.

Ian stares at the diary. Its red leather seems to glow and pulse and hum.

He hears Margaret's returning footsteps, picks up a hardback novel and pretends to read. Under next, she gets her fur, touches up her face, fixes her hat, ready for departure.

IAN

Which one of your lovers are you seeing this time. Is it Peter Combe?

MARGARET

Peter escorts me. He's got plenty of his own girlfriends. I'd have to book him in advance. I have a meeting with the bank and if I thought it would help our situation, I'd ride the manager and all his clerks like Cheltenham winners.

IAN

You like it this way.

MARGARET

Do I.

IAN

It means you can still control me, prancing around calling yourself Duchess with my balls in your fucking handbag-

MARGARET

Well, it's not like they take up much room!

And she moves swiftly aside as Ian hurls the book at her. It bounces harmlessly off the wall.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Now you've lost your place.

Ian takes his pill box out of his pocket, takes some pills and dry swallows them. He sees Margaret's eyes on him.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

You take too many of those.

IAN

They stop me from shooting myself
in the face. How many men have you
got?

MARGARET

Oh, at least eighty. Possibly more.
And you? How many women have you
got?

IAN

(shrug)
Lost count.

A long moment. They watch each other. Ian suddenly smiles at Margaret, a smile of such devastating charm and Margaret is wrong footed again in this strange game. Margaret hands Ian his novel back.

IAN (CONT'D)

Of course, I could just shoot you
in the face.

MARGARET

Yes, you could but then you'd be
hanged for murder so I'd win and
think how much you'd hate that.

Ian laughs suddenly, genuine delight, before it tails off into a racking, painful cough.

IAN

This is why we're a match. Janet
and Oui-Oui would have burst into
tears. Not you. You're a little
street fighter.

She leans in to kiss him goodbye and Ian kisses her hard on the mouth, so that her lipstick rubs off on him. Margaret blots his lips with her gloved fingers, his eyes on her face.

MARGARET

Have you decided what you're going
to do about the letters? About Wee-
Wee?

IAN

After taking professional advice,
I'm going to do nothing.

A little beat.

MARGARET

What professional advice?

IAN

I went to Scotland Yard.

Margaret is taken aback but manages to cover it.

IAN (CONT'D)

Spoke to a Detective. Dirty
fingernails but a decent sort. He
said this sort of thing happens a
lot to people in the public eye. He
said, do nothing. They always trip
themselves up in the end.

MARGARET

You never mentioned it to me.

IAN

Why would I? They're not your
children. Are you going to talk to
your father?

MARGARET

I don't want to ask him for money
when he's still grieving.

She goes to the door and turns.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

I do love you, you know. In spite
of it all. I do love you. And don't
worry about your balls. I'll keep
them safe.

She pats her handbag and leaves. We follow her out as her
face hardens.

CUT TO:

40

INT. MAUREEN'S TOWNHOUSE. DRESSING ROOM. DAY 31. 15:53 40

Maureen and Margaret lie back as beauticians buff their feet
and file their nails. Maureen is languid and sharp eyed.

Margaret is frozen, staring at a headline in the society pages of the newspapers. Maureen is reading from the same article: 'Millionaire Businessman George Whigham Marries at Caxton Hall.' And a grainy photograph of a beaming George and Jane in a cloud of chiffon. Margaret's pulse is thready but she can't let Maureen see that.

MAUREEN

(off Margaret's face)

Don't tell me you didn't know,
dear.

No, she didn't at all. Frozen with shock and disbelief.

MARGARET

Of course I did. But they wanted
the wedding to be small and-

MAUREEN

Secret?

MARGARET

Private. So soon after Mother. And
everywhere I go, there are cameras
so-

MAUREEN

You didn't want to steal the
bride's light. You are so selfless.
Utterly angelic.

(reading)

The couple departed immediately for
a honeymoon in Barbados. Adorable!

Margaret swallows, dry mouthed, panic rising, her father lost to her.

MAUREEN (CONT'D)

Your new step-mother is younger
than you! Your Daddy is a sly old
dog!

CUT TO:

41 INT/EXT. PETER'S LANDROVER/ UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. NIGHT 41
31. 21:02

The car is full of cigarette smoke. Margaret made up for an evening out, Peter in evening wear but there's nothing celebratory or festive about them. Margaret is rigidly silent, her jaw tight with grief and betrayal, tension ringing from her. Peter studies her and reaches out as if to comfort but she twitches away.

MARGARET
No, please don't.

A moment.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
I'm perfectly fine. I feel terribly
silly, telephoning you. I don't
know what I was thinking-

And then headlights sweep across them, a large chauffeured
car pulling up outside the house. Margaret sits up, pats at
her hair.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
My guest. And I'm a fright. I have
to go-

She goes to get out of the car, Peter catches her hand,
wanting to stop her, perhaps, sensing catastrophe present in
this night.

PETER
Margaret, why don't you tell him
another night, not this one? We'll
have a quiet dinner, just you and
me-

MARGARET
(brightly)
Oh no. It's just a few drinks and
you know how I hate to break
appointments. Thank you, Peter. I'm
so sorry I ruined your evening-

PETER
You didn't-

MARGARET
I'll make it up to you, I promise.

She blows him a kiss as if nothing at all is wrong and is
gone, silhouetted in the car's headlights, another figure
getting out of the car and following her up the steps.

CUT TO:

42 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. DRAWING ROOM. NIGHT 31. 21:34 42

Soft lamps. Very close in on the poodle, sitting on the
armchair. A click of a camera...

Margaret has a polaroid camera. She opens the back and pulls out the photograph.

There is a man in the room. Stretched out, relaxed. We can see his crossed legs, his expensive handlasted shoes, his jacket slung over the back of the sofa. His gleaming cufflinks, his watch. A signet ring on his little finger, his hand curled around a glass. A nimbus of cigarette smoke. Margaret looks down at the developing polaroid and then up at the man. Eyes shining, she smiles.

CUT TO:

43 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. BEDROOM/BATHROOM. NIGHT 31. 43
21:41

The door to the mirrored bathroom is open.

In the bedroom, Margaret unzips her dress and steps out of it, leaving it a puddle on the floor... In her underwear and jewellery she heads to the bathroom-

She steps into the bathroom and closes the door. She is reflected from all sides like a hall of mirrors. The polaroid camera is on the side.

The man is naked. Apart from his watch and his signet ring. Margaret regards him admiringly.

MARGARET
Take your watch off.

The man does and lays it on the side.

She comes and stands close to him. Her eyes are huge. She pushes the straps of her chemise down her shoulders and the man runs light, knowing fingers along her collarbone, the hollow at the base of her throat. She shivers at his touch, her eyes are huge.

The man reaches for her but Margaret stops him-

MARGARET (CONT'D)
I'm in control of this.

She hands him the polaroid camera and trails a lacquered finger nail down his naked torso-

And we see her bare legs, the pale arches of her feet as she kneels, the lace of her slip pooling on the tiled floor, we see the man's naked back and Margaret's left hand gripping his hip, her nails digging in and the sound of the man's moan-

And then the flash and whirr of the polaroid camera..

The man's shaking hand puts the camera down unsteadily and we focus on that as the man gasps for breath...

CUT TO:

44 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. DRAWING ROOM. DAY 32. 10:21 44

Margaret at her desk. Opening mail. She slices open a thick envelope, takes out a plain folded piece of paper and opens it. Inside are four Polaroid photographs. If we see anything at all, we see a man's chest and torso, a line of dark hair running up his belly. We see captions, written on the Polaroid. 'Thinking of you.' 'Nearly There.' 'Oh!' And 'After.'

Margaret puts her hand over her mouth and giggles, eyes bright.

She reaches into the shelves of her desk, past the stacked old diaries, past the letters bound in ribbon. She takes a plain manila envelope and puts the new Polaroids inside it.

She tucks the envelope with the Polaroids deep among the shelves of the desk.

She locks the desk and drops the key inside a little vase on the mantelpiece.

And we see the clear Polaroid image of the poodle propped in front of the vase.

CUT TO:

45 EXT. INVERARAY CASTLE. GARDENS. DAY 33. 12:59 45

A beautiful table laid for lunch. Ian is slouching and sulking. Margaret watches him and then sees the butler, showing Jane and George through the gardens towards them. She stands in greeting. Ian opens his pill box, swallows a couple, sees Margaret's eyes on him.

MARGARET

Please be nice. P-please.

IAN

I know how to b-b-behave.

The mimicry stings but Jane and George are there, tanned and radiant. Happy greetings, if happy has gritted teeth. Jane's beautiful clothes and the enormous diamond next to her wedding band. Margaret's eyes flick to it as Ian, all charm and chivalry bends over it.

IAN (CONT'D)

George! Dear man, warmest
congratulations! Jane. Enchanted to
meet you at last. Come and sit
down, I got some very special
champagne up in your honour.

He escorts her away and Margaret and George face each other. He looks so happy and that just makes it worse but she smiles for him. He holds his arms wide and she embraces him. So tight, so tight.

GEORGE
Little girl.

MARGARET
Daddy.

CUT TO:

46 EXT. INVERARAY CASTLE. GARDENS. DAY 33. 13:57 46

Ian and Jane walk among the flower beds. Chatting and laughing, discussing roses and blight and aphids and mulch. They are delighted in each other's company.

From the windows above, we catch a movement, Margaret looking down.

CUT TO:

47 INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. DRAWING ROOM. DAY 33. 13:58 47

Post dinner coffee. George on the sofa, Margaret at the window, watching Ian and Jane in the garden.

GEORGE
Of course I should have told you
but I was swept off my feet.

And with Margaret, watching Jane. Of course, it's her fault.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
And I've been so lonely, you know,
since Mother.

With Margaret, it twists like a knife but she bites down on what she'd like to do, which is howl at him, she bites down on it. Turns to him.

MARGARET
I'd have kept you company.

George chooses not to respond to the child-like quality of this. There's a bigger elephant in the room.

GEORGE
Ian was drunk at lunch.

MARGARET

We were all having champagne!

GEORGE

He was drunk when we arrived. It was obvious. And I see the way he drinks in the Club.

MARGARET

Everybody drinks, daddy.

GEORGE

Not the way he does. He drinks for oblivion and you know it.

There is a long, awkward moment. Margaret fidgets, building herself up to ask George the terrible question but-

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Please don't ask me to bail Ian out again. I won't throw good money after bad.

MARGARET

I see.

A pause. With Margaret. Christ. Now what.

GEORGE

You understand? About the money?

MARGARET

Of course.

GEORGE

And about Jane?

MARGARET

I just want you to be happy.

GEORGE

I am. So very happy.

Margaret smiles at him, turns back to the window.

And down below, the gardens are empty. Ian and Jane are nowhere to be seen.

CUT TO:

49 INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. DINING ROOM. NIGHT 33. 20:00 49

The long polished table. Laid for two people. Lit by candles. Attended by an impassive butler. Margaret dressed for dinner at one end. Ian, not dressed for dinner at the other. He reads. He doesn't eat. Margaret takes tiny bites of her food. She sips her wine.

IAN
Did you talk to him?

MARGARET
Yes.

IAN
And.

MARGARET
No.

A long, long moment. Ian's eyes hard on her. Then he finishes his wine and refills his glass, turns back to his book, ignoring her. Margaret watches him, drinking for oblivion. The candles flicker. The clock ticks.

CUT TO:

50 INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. BEDROOM. NIGHT 33. 22:27 50

Ian sits on one side of the bed, pulling off his clothes and dropping them on the floor. Margaret taking off her clothes on the other side of the bed. Their backs to each other. Moments pass. Margaret can't stand it any longer.

MARGARET
How long am I going to get the
silent treatment?

No response.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
It's pathetic. And what's
especially sickening is watching
you being completely charming to
Jane and then foul to me.

IAN
It's easy to be lovely to Jane.
She's delicious. Sexy. Your old
pa's going to need Spanish Fly to
keep up with her. She's wasted on
him-

And he stops short as one of Margaret's shoes hits him on the back of the head. A long long moment. Ian sits perfectly still with his back to her but the stillness is coiled and terrifying, Margaret is braced, fists clenched, waiting, waiting for the bomb to go off...

CUT TO:

51 INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. STAIRS/BEDROOM. NIGHT 33. 22:30 51

From the bedroom, the terrifying sound of thumps and crashes, a splintering of glass and shouting, Dora, in her dressing gown, curlers in her hair, racing along the corridor-

She hammers on the bedroom door with her fists-

CUT TO:

52 INT. INVERARAY CASTLE. BEDROOM. NIGHT 33. 22:31 52

Ian has Margaret pinned down on the bed, his hands tight around her neck, Margaret struggles and kicks, her face going dark, her eyes bulging as he screams into her face-

IAN

What are you for? What's the point
of you? What is the fucking point
of you!!

The hammering gets louder-

DORA

(OOV)

I heard something breaking! Has
there been an accident? I'm coming
in! I'm coming in right now!

And suddenly, Ian lets go, stands up from the bed, wrenches the door open, ashen faced Dora outside. He pushes past her and leaves. And under next we hear him going down the stairs. Dora goes into Margaret, gasping on the bed, trying to sit up. There is the indentation of pearls round her neck. A lamp is broken, ornaments swept off surfaces. Margaret tries to sit up but can't, her breathing harsh and loud. Dora pulls a cover over her, strokes her shoulder to try and comfort but there's no comfort to be had, not here.

CUT TO:

53 INT/EXT. DAIMLER. STREET. JAZZ CAFE. DAY 34. 14:56 53

A dank street. A small bar with painted out windows. Some bedraggled looking people outside with drawn, hollow faces.

Cheeseman is parked up, attracting stares. He looks very dubious. Margaret looks out at the bar. Sets her jaw.

MARGARET

Don't let anyone touch the car.

She gets out and stalks across to the bar.

CUT TO:

54 INT. JAZZ CAFE. DAY 34. 14:57 54

The looping discordant jazz. It smells. Cigarettes. Unwashed bodies. Margaret enters, everyone turns and watches her. So completely out of place in her furs and jewels. She ignores them all. If she feels disquiet, she doesn't show it, refuses to show it, she's a damn Duchess. She lets her eyes adjust to the light, stalks further into the murk. Staring people out until they move out of her way and finally, sitting at a table in the back, Petro. He sees Margaret and looks genuinely wary. Margaret approaches. Pulls a chair out, grimaces at the seat but sits in front of him.

MARGARET

How are you, Dr Petro.

PETRO

How did you find me?

MARGARET

As you said at our last meeting,
I'm very worldly. For a Duchess.

PETRO

What can I do for you?

MARGARET

You are going to stop giving my
husband amphetamines. You're going
to stop, as of now, right this very
moment. You will cease all
communications with my husband. His
health is no longer your concern.

PETRO

Or?

MARGARET

I'm sure the police would be very interested in a doctor whose consulting room is this sordid hole and whose patients queue up outside. Very interested.

A little bristling moment. Margaret smiles charmingly.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

We understand each other.

Margaret leaves, Petro's eyes on her.

CUT TO:

55 EXT. JAZZ CAFE. DAY 34. 15:04

55

Margaret emerges into the dank little street into what feels like bright sunshine and fresh air after the cafe. And just for a moment, she allows herself a smile. This feels like triumph. She sails back to the car, revelling in the stares and what feels, for this brief moment, like glory.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. DAY 34A. 15:32

56

Margaret sashays along the street with the poodle on a lead and pauses...

Outside the house, a knot of reporters and photographers. Nothing unusual. She pats her hair, heads across with a smile but is taken aback as they cluster round her, not the usual fawning obsequies, she picks up the poodle protectively, flashbulbs going off in her face as they shout questions-

REPORTER 1

Your Grace, do you have a comment about the Duke taking a suite at Claridges?

MARGARET

You have your facts wrong, I'm afraid. The Duke's in Scotland, if he was in London, he'd be here with me-

REPORTER 1

Nope, he's in Claridges. We've been told your marriage is over. Any comment?

The colour drains from Margaret's face. Flashbulbs popping, the reporters closing in, relishing her shock.

REPORTER 1 (CONT'D)
Looks like this is a bit of a
shock, Your Grace?

And all the sound drains away, just dull hollow noises, men's mouths moving and the muted explosions and fizzes of the camera flashes.

CUT TO:

56A	OMITTED	56A
56B	OMITTED	56B
57	INT. CLARIDGES. STAIRCASE. DAY 34A. 16:02	57
	Caption: Claridges Hotel.	

Margaret races up the stairs, barreling past anyone she meets, waiters with trays and as she turns the corner, she stops dead.

Yvonne is on the landing, a cluster of reporters around her and all Margaret's paranoia rushes at her, before Yvonne and the avid reporters can say anything-

MARGARET

You. It would have to be you, wouldn't it. Spreading lies, going against me!

YVONNE

Please lower your voice and I've done nothing, I've said nothing to anyone-

The reporters scribble, agog, Margaret turns on them-

MARGARET

You don't want to listen to a word she says. She's lying. That's why I didn't want her working for me anymore! A very troubled woman. You do your best for people and they throw it back in your face!

The cameras flash in her face and she hurtles away down the stairs, the reporters in pursuit, their questions bouncing up the stairwell-

REPORTERS

What went wrong? Why's he divorcing you! You can be the first to tell your side of the story!

Margaret hurtles down the stairs, reporters in pursuit, their voices bouncing up the stairwell. Yvonne, tight mouthed, wrongly accused.

CUT TO:

58	OMITTED	58
59	INT. WHITE'S CLUB. NIGHT 34. 21:11	59

Dr Ivor Griffiths in a wing chair enjoying a brandy. Ian and Petro, each with brandy balloons, with him. Men discussing the tiresome problem of women and their brains.

IAN

That fall she had. Big bang on the head.

GRIFFITHS

That was over twenty years ago and she made an astonishing recovery.

PETRO

Ah. Did she.

(to Ian)

Speak to him man to man.

IAN

I think she might have been hiding things from you, Griffiths. Lying. She's become very adroit at deception.

And he looks noble and grief-stricken.

GRIFFITHS

...What do you mean?

IAN

Where do I start. Her rages. Her moods. Her headaches. Blackouts. She's febrile. Erratic. Either she's completely silent or she can't stop talking, shouting, accusing, swearing... She attacked me.

GRIFFITHS

...Physically?

IAN

Raking at me with her fingernails. She doesn't remember that she's done it or completely denies that she's done it. I feel the most hideous brute coming to you, what a betrayal of one's wife but she needs proper help. She scares me. I'm scared for her.

Griffiths is appalled. Worried.

PETRO

She needs us to make her safe. Somewhere secure. I've got some papers for you to co-sign.

Petro produces some documents from his attache case.

CUT TO:

60 INT. IVOR GRIFFITHS' CONSULTING ROOM. DAY 35. 10:02 60

Griffiths on one side of his wide desk. Margaret stares at him, reeling in shock and disbelief. And outrage.

MARGARET
Do I look insane?

GRIFFITHS
I have seen plenty of people
present as entirely ordinary who
are in deep psychiatric distress-

MARGARET
Entirely ordinary? I have never
been ordinary, never.

And with that, Griffiths starts to weaver, that's such a Margaret thing to say.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
I have sat here for some
considerable time, answered all
your questions and you still doubt
me?

A long moment. Griffiths has the grace to look abashed.

GRIFFITHS
I would never have had you
committed without assessing you
thoroughly.

MARGARET
Well, I do feel blessed.

GRIFFITHS
This was a very dirty trick. From
here, it could only get dirtier.
Margaret, you need to be careful.

A little moment.

MARGARET
It's not really Ian doing this, you
know. He's being influenced. So
it's not really him, do you see?

Griffiths doesn't answer. Margaret glacial, armoured in her delusion.

CUT TO:

61 INT. CLARIDGES SUITE. BEDROOM. DAY 35. 11:57 61

There are trays and dishes of uneaten food, empty bottles and glasses, full ashtrays everywhere. The bed unmade. Petro looks round at the staggering mess. There is a waiter clearing away the piles of room service.

PETRO

Where is he?

CUT TO:

62 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. BEDROOM. NIGHT 35. 21:50 62

The phone ringing insistently, Margaret turns on the light and answers. Shaky, desperate breathing. The terrible sound of a man weeping.

MARGARET

(phone)

Ian?

IAN

(OOV, phone)

Please come. Please. I can't bear it. Please come.

MARGARET

(phone)

Where are you?

CUT TO:

63 INT. HOTEL. CORRIDOR/SUITE. NIGHT 35. 32:40 63

Caption: Paris.

Margaret walks down the corridor and knocks on a door. After a few moments, Ian opens it and Margaret takes a step back at the state of him. Grey, his eyes sunken, stubbled, hair greasy and his clothes stained and crumpled. The moment he sees her, he puts his hands over his face and starts to weep. Margaret goes into the room and takes him in her arms. He clings to her. Broken.

CUT TO:

64 INT. HOTEL. SUITE/CORRIDOR. NIGHT 35. 23:46

64

Margaret opens the door to a waiter bearing a food trolley. She tips him and wheels the trolley inside as the waiter leaves. Margaret lifts the sconces. Soup and bread and ham. Nursery food. And a pot of tea. She pours a cup. Adds sugar. She takes it into the bathroom.

The bathroom is full of steam. Ian is crouched in the bath, his back all bones, a cage. Margaret crouches down, offers him the tea.

MARGARET
Strong and sweet.

Ian tries to take the cup but his hands shake so Margaret takes it back, holding it so he can sip.

She sits on the edge of the bath and he leans his head against her and closes his eyes. Margaret strokes his hair.

64A INT. HOTEL. SUITE/BATHROOM. NIGHT 35. 00:16

64A

Later. Ian is asleep in the bed.

In the bathroom, Margaret goes through the pockets of his discarded clothes, she finds pill bottles.

She pours the pills down the sink and turns on the tap, watches as they churn away down the plug, her mouth set in grim satisfaction.

CUT TO:

64B INT. HOTEL. SUITE. DAY 36 09:22

64B

Morning sunlight coming through the windows. Margaret and Ian nurse cups of coffee, Ian still looks pale and fragile, dark shadows under his eyes. He has a blanket wrapped round his shoulders. They sit on the floor together, their backs leaning against the bed.

IAN
I don't know why I went to
Claridges. I don't know why I say
and do the things I do.

MARGARET
You frighten me sometimes, Ian.

IAN
I frighten myself.

MARGARET
You hurt me.

IAN
You wouldn't give me money. You
were always in charge.

MARGARET
Someone has to be.

IAN
I kept thinking you were going
behind my back. Lying to me.

MARGARET
About what?

Ian doesn't answer, just shakes his head as if it's part of
some terrible dream.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
I think we can make this work.
Between us. I really do. But we
have to be kinder. Stop doing
terrible things to each other.

IAN
What terrible thing have you done.

And with Margaret, a fractional beat, the letters, obviously,
but she's not going to say that.

MARGARET
Oh, just being in London too much.
Not the same as trying to get
someone locked up for being insane
but still.

IAN
I'm sorry.

MARGARET
So you should be.
(beat)
And the drinking and the pills have
to stop. For good.

Ian nods. They hold each others gaze.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
No-one understands us like us, do
they?

Their fingers twine. They lean against each other. The room
is bright with sun. Everything seems possible.

CUT TO:

65 INT. HOTEL. SUITE. NIGHT 36. 23:58

65

Margaret and Ian lie together in bed. Margaret curled against
him, her arms possessively across his chest. Ian stares up at
the ceiling.

He turns his head on the pillow and looks at Margaret. Her
beautiful face in sleep.

Over and over in his mind, he replays 'what terrible thing
have you done?' And Margaret's innocent 'Nothing.'

Over and over again.

And once again, his eye is drawn to her handbag on the side.

He slowly edges away from her and out of the bed. He waits to
see if she wakes but she doesn't. He pads across the room
silently, checking over his shoulder and opens her bag. The
little red diary. He opens it and flips through the pages,
running back through the closely annotated months, the
initials, the letter V... But again, these are not what he's
looking for... he flips back and back and back...

And then he sees the entry. L'Hotel St. Mariette.

Margaret stirs. Ian closes the diary, puts it back in the
bag. 'What terrible thing have you done?' 'Nothing.' His face
is sharp as a blade.

CUT TO:

66 INT. HOTEL. SUITE. DAY 37. 08:52

66

And later. Sunlight floods in. Margaret wakes. Ian is gone.
She sits up in bed and puts her forehead on her knees.
Perhaps she even expected it.

CUT TO:

67 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. HALLWAY/ STAIRS. DAY 37. 10:467

Ian enters silently, putting his door keys back in his pocket... From the kitchen the sound of the radio. A hoover and cleaning equipment are standing around in the hall. The poodle wags his tail hopefully at Ian.

IAN

Piss off.

Ian goes quietly up the stairs. The poodle watching.

CUT TO:

68 INT. UPPER GROSVENOR STREET. DRAWING ROOM. DAY 37. 10:47 68

Ian rattles the little desk, trying to open it, finally he wrenches it open. Inside, all the little compartments and drawers and diaries. He rattles through them, pulling out letters, the stacks of old diaries... He pulls out a stack of writing paper and sees the heading L'HOTEL SAINT MARIETTE. For a long moment, the world stops turning. His eyes flash with white hot rage. He is incandescent with fury. It roars through him. He is convulsed with it.

A long moment passes. A sense of absolute brutal finality. He pulls off the thin gold wedding band from his finger, goes to the window, opens it, hurls the ring out into the street, closes the window and has a moment where he thinks what to do next. We can almost hear his mind racing.

He goes back to the desk, stares at it. The piles of old diaries, letters bound in ribbon and cold and methodical, he starts to pull them out, reading through them quickly, the faintest flicker on his face at what he's reading, things he can use against her.

Still cold, tactical, strategic, he makes neat piles of the things he's going to take. The stacks of letters, the diaries, he goes back to the desk and rakes through it a final time-

And he dislodges the envelope. Tucked in among other, innocent envelopes.

We see it fall and the corner of the Polaroid coming out of it.

Ian picks it up and turns the Polaroid over.

He sits down heavily. He stares at the Polaroid.

He stares and stares and stares.

68A OMITTED

68A

68B OMITTED

68B

68C OMITTED

68C

68D OMITTED

68D

69 OMITTED

69

70 OMITTED

70

END OF EPISODE.