

SHOWTRIAL

Written by

Ben Richards

Episode 4: VELLEITIES  
SHOOTING SCRIPT 14.04.21

14th April, 2021

World Productions Ltd.  
5th Floor, National House,  
60-66 Wardour St.  
W1F 0TA.  
Tel. 02071566990

1 EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS, BALL - NIGHT 1

1

The beat of dance music, shrieks of laughter and general crowd racket.

(A sequence of "flashbacks" follow which dramatically recreate the opening of the Prosecution case against Talitha and Dhillon)

Fade up to the college ball and we see HANNAH ELLIS but from a distance and she is arguing with Dhillon and Talitha.

We track in from the person of a woman who we will reveal as Ellie.

HANNAH

I'll go to the police! I'll tell them about everything you've done.

(This is said in much more dramatic form than Talitha suggested in her flashback chat with Cleo in 3/50) Now we see Ellie who we also saw in Talitha's flashback.

ELLIE

(to Hannah)

You OK?

HANNAH

I'm fine.

She turns away.

JUMP CUT TO:

2 OMITTED

2

3 INT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS, BALL STAFF AREA - NIGHT 1

3

Hannah is getting her stuff together. The girl ELLIE who has been serving drinks with her comes in.

ELLIE

You done?

HANNAH

Yeah.

ELLIE

We can stay and be in the survivor's photo apparently.

Hannah laughs dismissively.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

What happened with Talitha and Dhillon earlier?

Hannah cannot answer. She wipes at her eyes angrily.

HANNAH

She's just vile. But she's also  
ancient history.

ELLIE

He sounded like he was trying to  
make up?

HANNAH

He's a little fake. But they're  
both evil and twisted and I'm not  
taking it from them.

Gets up and heads off.

ELLIE

Night 'babe.

HANNAH

Night, Ellie.

ADAM (V.O.)

*Later, the jury will hear from  
crown witness Ellie Winchester  
about the argument at the ball,  
about Hannah's threats to call the  
police, and about her subsequent  
distress.*

SMASH CUT TO:

4

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS, MARQUEE - NIGHT 1

4

Now Talitha in the same green scarf with Dhillon in the chill out area, both drinking cocktails. The ball is winding down a bit and there are some serious casualties around.

ADAM (V.O.)

*So the threats prior to the ball  
and the subsequent argument at the  
ball give us a vital clue as to the  
motives of the defendants, which  
revolved around the complaints made  
against Dhillon. These had been  
passed on to Dhillon by Stephen  
Vendler via Vendler's lover Talitha  
Campbell.*

*(beat)*

*Hannah, who had been grievously let  
down by the college authorities,  
was about to go the police.*

Dhillon looks around and indicates towards a stash of vodka bottles next to the bar.

TALITHA

We need to sort this out, Dhillon.

She reaches a hand. He holds out his own to haul her up and we see their two hands clasped together (to suggest shared endeavour and purpose).

ADAM (V.O.)

*We know that Dhillon and Talitha left the ball some time after Hannah had finished her shift. Dhillon does not deny that they formed the intent to visit Hannah, and indeed did so, but claims the initial goal was some kind of reconciliation and that her death was an accident in which he played no part. The Prosecution absolutely reject this cynical falsehood.*

5 EXT. ALLEY / HANNAH'S HOUSE, COURTYARD - NIGHT 1

5

Talitha and Dhillon walking down the alley to Hannah's house. Dhillon is holding a vodka bottle.

ADAM (V.O.)

*We do not know what they really discussed on their fateful journey to the house or when they formed the intent to assault and kill her. We do know they were fired up, angry, and had consumed a lot of illegal drugs.*

They knock at the back door of Hannah's house.

ADAM (V.O.)

*Nor do we really know quite how they persuaded Hannah to admit them. We will offer no evidence on that. But it is possible Dhillon used the same story of an apology as some kind of cover.*

Hannah comes to the back door. Hold on her outraged/astonished/contemptuous face. Dhillon holds up the vodka bottle.

DHILLON

We came to say sorry!

ADAM (V.O.)

*What we do know for certain though  
is that not more than an hour after  
Talitha and Dhillon entered her  
room, Hannah was strangled with the  
scarf worn by Talitha Campbell to  
the ball that night...*

JUMP CUT TO:

6 OMITTED

6

7 EXT. BOATYARD - NIGHT 1

7

Talitha and Dhillon now dragging the wheelie bin through the boatyard. They reach the jetty.

ADAM (V.O.)

*And then her body was disposed of  
with cruel indifference...*

DHILLON

Here.

They push it into the water.

SPLASH!

It disappears.

TALITHA

We need to find somewhere for...

She shows him the green scarf.

DHILLON

I'll do that. I can go to the cottage and burn everything there.

She looks at him. Eyes gleaming with both fear and excitement.

They head away. The deep dark water laps at the jetty.

ADAM

*Until her mother, Andrea Ellis,  
grew so worried about the lack of  
communication from her daughter  
that she went to the university to  
look for her.*

8 INT. HANNAH'S HOUSE, HANNAH'S ROOM - DAY 2

8

Andrea Ellis tentatively going into the room. And we see the bed with the duvet on the floor.

She picks up a toppled glass and looks at a puddle of vodka that has dripped to the floor with a terrible sense of catastrophe that she obviously immediately senses.

Flash into: a photographic image of what we are watching and what we now know to be a crime scene - part of the evidence bundle.

9 INT. COURTROOM - DAY 11

9

The whole court with all our main protagonists.

Adam - the Crown QC - is now concluding the presentation of his case.

ADAM

Ladies and Gentlemen of the jury, that is the case which the Crown will prove to you with both circumstantial and forensic evidence. It can leave no doubt in your minds that BOTH Talitha Campbell and Dhillon Harwood are guilty of the cruel murder of a young woman with everything to look forward to in life.

We now see the defendants - Talitha and Dhillon - together in the dock. He is staring intently in front of him, she is doing some kind of studied stretching exercise.

On the jury a woman with her arms folded and big glasses and M&S clothing - the smart normie that Virginia has forecast is staring at them both.

As Adam sits down, he sees that James has written MRS PLAIN! on a piece of paper with an arrow to the juror with big glasses. Adam grins and nods acknowledgement of this.

The Judge - a middle-aged elegant woman called ISOBEL REYNOLDS now nods to EMMA HEMMING who is sitting next to CLEO. Also present are Dhillon's defence team NISHA BARIA.

JUDGE

Ms Hemmings...

Emma rises. She has a pleasant, relaxed and humorous note to her also combined with a drill-hammer logic.

EMMA

As you have already heard, ladies and gentlemen, the Prosecution have to prove Talitha Campbell's guilt. *She does not have to prove her innocence.*

(MORE)

EMMA (CONT'D)

They say they have the evidence to support the case they have just presented and we shall come to that evidence in due course. But I would also remind you what it is that they have to prove my client guilty of. And that is murder. Not sending silly drunken texts, or taking drugs, or coming from a privileged background, or preferring to do unorthodox work rather than rely on her family, or having a provocative nickname. Or indeed any of the other annoying qualities shared by so many of the young people at the ball that night for which we tend to use the catch-all phrase "being a student".

A few jurors smile at this.

EMMA (CONT'D)

They have to prove that Talitha Campbell formed the intent to murder Hannah Ellis and carried out that act in accordance with her intent. And they can't as the defence will show.

(beat)

Now the jury have heard that her co-defendant Dhillon Harwood blames Talitha but that is a ludicrous attempt to shift the blame.

(beat)

We've all heard of a sex-game-gone-wrong defence yes? Men who kill women and then say: "oh I didn't mean it" or "oh she wanted to be choked to death really".

(wry smile of contempt for this)

You have also heard from Dhillon Harwood's defence that while he admits to preventing a lawful burial due to his inebriated condition, Hannah's death was a sex-game-gone-wrong-by-proxy. He won't even take responsibility for the part that supposedly went wrong!

(MORE)

EMMA (CONT'D)

In seeking to mount this cowardly evasion, which truly offends the memory of a young woman by trying to find another woman to blame, he and his defence will do everything that this court will permit... (repeat for emphasis while looking at judge) ...**everything that this court will permit** to attack the character of my client. But it is not Talitha's character that is on trial here. The only thing that you have to ask yourself at the end of this trial is this. Do you have any doubt as to the guilt of Talitha Campbell. I am sure that after we have dealt with the prosecution evidence then you will have a great deal of doubt and if you do... you must acquit her.

JUDGE

Thanks you, Ms Hemmings. We have now heard all the opening statements. Due to the late start I think we will now adjourn and bring the police witnesses in fresh for the morning.

General movement in court and a swell of noise prelapping the scene outside.

REPORTER (V.O.)

*...Damian Campbell, the controversial property magnate at the end of the first day of the trial of his daughter Talitha leaving court with his legal team...*

10

EXT. COURT - DAY 11

10

...there are now groups of noisy demonstrators among the press frenzy waiting for the protagonists to leave court. Some have placards saying JUSTICE FOR HANNAH! NO MORE SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON CAMPUS. But also anti-Damian protestors with placards saying PEOPLE BEFORE PROPERTY with pictures of the property tycoon and TORY CRONY who clearly love the opportunity to have a go at a public hate figure.

Also a heaving scrum of press. We cannot even see the figure they are surrounding at first. It is Damian Campbell and just behind him is Cleo. Also Brian who palms off a pap with brutal efficiency.

A reporter half-trotting beside the car with a microphone followed by a camera team.

Pauses and speaks straight to camera. Behind him/her while report goes on we see a few other players from the drama leaving court.

REPORTER

Much of the first day was taken up with legal arguments but also the cases for the prosecution and both defendants. Dhillon Harwood has already pleaded guilty to the lesser charges of preventing a lawful burial and perverting the course of justice but has denied murder. Meanwhile Talitha Campbell denies all the charges against her.

11 OMITTED

11

11A INT. COURT, HOLDING ROOM - DAY 11

11A

Dhillon Harwood is with his mum Meera and Nisha the lawyer.

DHILLON

What can I expect? If I get convicted of the unlawful burial charge?

NISHA

Maximum is still life but it can be as low as a fine so...

She gestures.

NISHA (CONT'D)

There's also perverting the course of justice remember.

DHILLON

I deserve punishment for all that. That's not the important thing.

MEERA

What's the important thing?

DHILLON

The truth, mum.

(beat)

I don't mind what I'm known for. Being "on-the-spectrum". Being an idiot. Being Talitha's chihuahua - they used to call me that at school. A Dog so Small. But not a murderer.

NISHA

OK, can we talk a little about  
Lucinda Bright?

He shakes his head a little.

DHILLON

She is completely nuts anybody will  
tell you.

(puts his head in his  
hand)

God I wish I had never even heard  
her name.

Meera sits beside him and takes his hand.

MEERA

It will be OK, sweetheart. Just  
stay calm and tell the truth. That  
is all you can do.

A police officer comes into the room and indicates to Dhillon  
that it's time to go.

12

INT. ANDREA ELLIS HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY 11

12

Amanda the FLO putting a glass of wine down beside Andrea who  
is with James. She mimes a wine glass at him but he shakes  
his head and mimes a steering wheel.

ANDREA

I should have been there for her.

JAMES

You can't. You're a witness.

ANDREA

I want to be there when  
they...(give evidence).

JAMES

You can attend the trial once you  
have given your own evidence.

(beat)

Defence might not even call Talitha  
if they think cross-examination  
will damage her too much.

ANDREA

Can't you...(call her).

JAMES

No. A defendant cannot be compelled  
to give evidence by the  
Prosecution.

She sighs.

ANDREA

I keep hearing all this stuff.  
People on TV or in the papers  
talking about what the trial  
represents, what it MEANS, what it  
tells us about all these issues.

JAMES

Well I guess all criminal cases  
tell us about issues. But every one  
is different as well.

ANDREA

(impatient)

I don't care about them though. All  
these stupid people shouting on the  
internet. They never stop with  
their bloody opinions.

(beat)

And I just think: where's Hannah in  
all this?

(beat)

Where's my daughter?

13

EXT. LAKESIDE LODGE, TERRACE - EVENING 11

13

Damian Campbell approaches Cleo who is walking alone by the  
shore of the lake.

DAMIAN

Brian's here.

She nods.

CLEO

Mrs Campbell wasn't in court.

DAMIAN

No.

CLEO

How come?

DAMIAN

Couldn't face it.

Cleo nods.

DAMIAN (CONT'D)

For the best really.

(bitter laugh)

I don't think her presence would be  
a big comfort to Tally.

CLEO

Has it ever been?

Beat.

DAMIAN  
Is this relevant to anything?

CLEO  
I don't know: is it?

DAMIAN  
Well I'm no lawyer but my hunch  
would be that providing an  
explanation to their new forensic  
evidence is higher on your to-do  
list than raking through my wife's  
parenting skills.

CLEO  
Got it.

DAMIAN  
Good.

Brian approaches. Looks out at the lake, the little wavelets  
hitting the pebbles on the shore.

BRIAN  
Surf's up!  
(beat)  
As is DI Cassidy in the morning.

CLEO  
I know; I'll be handling that.

BRIAN  
I thought...

CLEO  
Solicitor-advocate. I'll do some  
cross-examination of police  
witnesses and I know Paula Cassidy  
well.

BRIAN  
What about Talitha?

CLEO  
That will obviously be my silk but  
nothing's decided on that anyway.

BRIAN  
You're going to put her in the box  
though?

Beat.

CLEO  
It's all under discussion still.  
There are issues...

DAMIAN

Only one issue really. This is a showtrial. It won't be decided on the evidence but on her. And on us. On...(indicates their surroundings)...this.

CLEO

By the media, sure, but the jury...

DAMIAN

The jury is the media. Twitter is the real world.

CLEO

Let me guess: NIMBYS and Commies?

DAMIAN

Few other cults but broadly yes. But if 99% of humanity is anything to go by, the jury will absolutely hate her.

He's actually upset and worried behind all this bluster.

CLEO

I don't hate her.

He turns to look at her.

DAMIAN

I know.

There's a lot in that "I know". He also means that he likes and admires her for her forebearance towards a girl you might imagine she would absolutely detest.

BRIAN

(to Cleo)

You need to push her again on that rucksack fragment they've found on the bracelet or she's in big trouble.

CLEO

(nods)

Talking to her in the morning.

They start to head together up to the house.

TALITHA (O.S.)

I bet they planted it, I bet it was that Cassidy, stupid ugly...

14 INT. TALITHA'S PRISON, VISITOR'S ROOM - DAY 12

14

Talitha with Cleo who is holding up a hand as if to deflect the bombardment of noise.

TALITHA

...evil bitch.

CLEO

Sh sh sh.

Beat.

CLEO (CONT'D)

(patient)

How else could a fragment from  
Hannah's rucksack have got snagged  
in your bracelet.

Silence. Cleo's face. ?

TALITHA

Oh, what, I can talk now?

Cleo gives her a look.

TALITHA (CONT'D)

Haven't got a clue.

CLEO

Then would you be an absolute  
puppet and try and rack your brains  
because it might make a significant  
difference to the rest of your  
life?

Talitha laughs.

TALITHA

Made you cross!

CLEO

You often make me cross, Talitha,  
I'm just usually better at  
disguising it.

TALITHA

Still.

CLEO

Think hard, because I'm really not  
messing around. Everything depends  
on this. That is the one piece of  
forensic evidence that they have  
that directly ties you to the  
murder scene.

TALITHA

Wait! She leant it to me once! To  
go to Paris!

CLEO

Did she?

TALITHA

Course she fucking didn't. Like I'd  
walk around the Marais with that  
piece of high street nylon crap.

Cleo nods slowly. This is not going to be easy. Guard comes in and signals "time" to them.

JUMP CUT TO:

15 INT. COURTROOM - DAY 12

15

DI Cassidy is now giving evidence to ADAM REYNOLDS.

ADAM

So, DI Cassidy, who was it who  
spotted that Talitha was wearing  
the green scarf at the ball?

DI CASSIDY

It was me. After the pathologist  
had confirmed to me that Hannah was  
strangled with it...sorry to be  
precise it was after the  
pathologist had described green  
fragments under her nails.

ADAM

And we heard from the pathologist  
that this was likely to be caused  
by a struggle against her  
attackers?

DI CASSIDY

Correct.

In the jury box, Mrs Plain looks reproachfully at the two defendants.

ADAM

There is no doubt that Talitha's  
scarf was the murder weapon?

DI CASSIDY

None whatsoever.

ADAM

And Talitha is wearing the scarf  
throughout the entire ball?

TINY BEAT.

DI CASSIDY

Yes we have scrutinized all the mobile and photographic footage and in every single piece of evidence Talitha is shown wearing the scarf.

This is true. But is it the whole truth?

ADAM

OK, if I could ask the jury to look again at the photographs in their bundle...the one marked 7c.

Bit of a kerfuffle. Mrs Plain has to point out the photo to the juror sitting next to her who is plainly a testimony to the democratic spirit of trial by jury in that he looks as if he would struggle to tie his shoelaces.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Could you describe the photo, Detective Inspector?

DI CASSIDY

Yes, it is the fireplace at Dhillon Harwood's cottage.

ADAM

Where he burned the evidence?

DI CASSIDY

Yes we were able to match fibres from the burned remains to Talitha's scarf.

ADAM

This was the only item belonging to Talitha that Dhillon was burning am I correct?

DI CASSIDY

Yes. He was also burning his own clothes.

ADAM

Does that appear strange to you?

JUDGE

That's not an appropriate question, Mr Reynolds. DI Cassidy is here to give evidence not opinion as you know perfectly well.

ADAM

Apologies, Your Honour.

(to Cassidy)

Were the clothes very burned?

DI CASSIDY

Yes. But I was able to extinguish  
the fire in enough time to preserve  
them.

ADAM

All the clothes?

DI CASSIDY

Fortunately yes.

ADAM

Including a scarf?

DI CASSIDY

Yes.

ADAM

Where else were fibres from that  
scarf found?

DI CASSIDY

On Hannah's body and also a single  
fibre found in Talitha's drawer at  
home.

ADAM

All the same scarf?

DI CASSIDY

All the same scarf.

JUMP CUT TO:

16

INT. COURTROOM - DAY 12

16

DI Cassidy is now facing Cleo.

CLEO

When you first arrested Talitha  
Campbell it was over the texts the  
jury have already seen.

DI CASSIDY

Yes.

CLEO

And that was your original  
hypothesis. That Talitha had  
commissioned a drugdealer to attack  
Hannah?

DI CASSIDY

Yes.

CLEO

That wasn't the case though?

DI CASSIDY

No.

CLEO

So your angle of attack changed?

DI CASSIDY

When the evidence changed.

CLEO

Towards Dhillon Harwood.

DI CASSIDY

Correct.

CLEO

Hannah's bank card was used almost immediately after her disappearance is that correct?

DI CASSIDY

Yes.

CLEO

In the West Midlands area?

DI CASSIDY

Yes.

CLEO

Does Talitha have any connections to the West Midlands to the best of your knowledge?

DI CASSIDY

No not to the best of my knowledge.

CLEO

Who is Troy Manners, DI Cassidy?

Beat

DI CASSIDY

An individual we eliminated from our enquiries due to him providing a satisfactory alibi.

CLEO

Does Troy Manners have any connection to the West Midlands?

DI CASSIDY

Yes.

CLEO

Was Troy Manners at the ball at any time?

DI CASSIDY

Yes.

Cleo pauses and frowns as if this is a very significant answer.

CLEO

Is it the case that Hannah's debit card was discovered in the flat of somebody who does have connections to Troy Manners? A Mr Jamie Walton.

The jury stir a little. This does have a kind of significance but they are straining to compute it.

DI CASSIDY

Yes.

CLEO

But you had ruled him out?

DI CASSIDY

Who?

CLEO

Troy Manners.

DI CASSIDY

Yes.

She's an experienced witness - knows not to give any more than she must.

CLEO

So how do you explain the card turning up where it did?

DI CASSIDY

It remains an open question as to how the card found its way there. But he is known to Talitha Campbell.

CLEO

Does Troy Manners have a nickname?

DI CASSIDY

I believe it is Moneyz.

CLEO

Would it shock you to learn that drugs are sold at student balls?

DI CASSIDY

(smiles calmly)

No.

CLEO

Do you know how many other students have Troy Manners's number on their mobiles?

DI CASSIDY

No.

CLEO

Would you like to hazard a ballpark guess?

DI CASSIDY

No.

CLEO

Also under his working name of 'Moneyz' perhaps?

DI CASSIDY

No idea.

CLEO

The jury will hear that it was on the phone of several students to whom we have talked including the witness Ellie Winchester who was working with Hannah at the ball.

DI CASSIDY

OK.

CLEO

Was his number also on Dhillon Harwood's mobile under the nickname Moneyz?

DI CASSIDY

Yes.

CLEO

And just remind the jury again. Which of the two defendants was responsible for disposing of the critical evidence from the crime scene?

DI CASSIDY

Dhillon Harwood.

CLEO

Good, thank you, DI Cassidy.

A moment shuffling papers for effect - then...

CLEO (CONT'D)

Is Talitha Campbell wearing the green scarf in the CCTV footage showing her walking home from the ball?

DI CASSIDY

We couldn't tell.

CLEO

Let me rephrase that so you can give the jury a yes or no answer. Does your last sighting of Talitha Campbell on the night of the ball show her wearing the green scarf used to kill Hannah?

DI CASSIDY

No.

CLEO

Who was the last person to have possession of the scarf?

DI CASSIDY

Well if you mean...the CCTV didn't show...

CLEO

I mean precisely what I said. Who was the last person to have possession of the scarf used to murder Hannah?

DI CASSIDY

Dhillon Harwood, at the cottage obviously. But on the night of the ball itself...

CLEO

No, thank you, you have already answered my question.

Judge looks at Cleo. Is that it?

CLEO (CONT'D)

Do you know what "confirmation bias" is?

DI CASSIDY

Yes.

CLEO

What is it?

DI CASSIDY

I don't know if I have a definition to hand.

CLEO

How about: 'selective use of evidence in order to make it fit a pre-existing theory or prejudice while ignoring evidence that does not'?

Cassidy looks at her.

CLEO (CONT'D)

Does that match your understanding of the concept?

DI CASSIDY

Yes but...

CLEO

No further questions.

She sits down.

16A EXT. STREET OUTSIDE COURT - DAY 12

16A

James is with Cassidy.

DI CASSIDY

Wasn't expecting her to kick off with Troy.

JAMES

Start with the googly. We often discussed that.

Cassidy looks at him.

DI CASSIDY

I don't think she exactly took out my leg stump.

JAMES

That wasn't the real intention.

She looks at him. ?

JAMES (CONT'D)

Make the jury frown. Who's Troy Manners? Why isn't he here? Are they trying to cover something up?

DI CASSIDY

Talitha could have given him the card.

JAMES

So could Dhillon, so could any number of students, that was the point.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

But you don't want to consider that because you made your mind up from the get-go.

DI CASSIDY

Sorry, wait a second, Sooty, just want to check...

She almost leans around as if checking his back.

DI CASSIDY (CONT'D)

...you haven't got a hand up your jacksie moving your mouth.

JAMES

You should worry more about the mouths in the jury room because they'll be discussing Troy Manners right now I guarantee it.

JUMP CUT TO:

17 INT. COURTROOM - DAY 12

17

Judge now addressing court.

JUDGE

I have been sent a note from the jury asking for further information about Troy Manners specifically asking to hear his evidence. Ladies and Gentlemen of the jury, I should remind you that only the Prosecution and Defence decide who gives evidence. And on that evidence alone will you be asked to reach your verdicts.

(beat)

We will adjourn for lunch.

James looks pointedly across at Cassidy. TOLD YOU.

18 OMITTED

18

19 INT. CAFE - DAY 12

19

Cleo is sitting having a sandwich and scrolling down through an i-Pad. She is on one of those Mail Online pages with TONS of photos one on top of another.

**Hannah with her dog.**

**Talitha and Dhillon's "POSH £45,000 a year school".**

**Damian Campbell leaving court.**

**And a photo of Hannah and Talitha TOGETHER. They are outside somewhere, behind them are rolling hills. The caption is designed to highlight the dramatic irony of it all.**

**BEST OF FRIENDS?**

Cleo pokes and tries to finger-pinch the photo to enlarge it but can't obviously get what she wants. (What she wants - although we won't reveal this now is to see more details of Talitha's arm which is cut off in the image before the wrist). Takes out her phone and speed-dials.

CLEO

Brian?

20 INT. CPS, MEETING ROOM - DAY 12

20

James, Virginia, Cassidy and Adam.

VIRGINIA

So who are the big fish left?

JAMES

Forensics still to come; that looks like a slam-dunk. Then it's the whole Vendler thing.

DI CASSIDY

How many sleeps 'til Talitha?

VIRGINIA

(to James)

You found my namesake right? Mrs Plain.

Adam and James laugh.

JAMES

Four fidgets and three scowls at Lady Tease already.

ADAM

What's Talitha doing in that bloody dock? Looks like she's talking to herself when she's not yawning or rolling her eyes.

JAMES

It is not a good look.

ADAM

Well all Vendler's stuff comes with a big warning sign marked "admissibility" especially the widow.

JAMES

Hopefully that'll just be the  
cherry on the forensics cake.

(beat)

I thought I might speak to Mrs  
Vendler again and test the water.

VIRGINIA

Good idea.

ADAM

(winks)

No coaching though obviously.

DI CASSIDY

Don't worry I understand James is  
really good with widows.

James looks at her.

DI CASSIDY (CONT'D)

It's a burden sometimes but we  
can't help it if we're beautiful  
right?

Adam and Virginia laugh disloyally.

DI CASSIDY (CONT'D)

Only teasing! Mandy actually says  
you're very helpful with Andrea  
Ellis and sworn to keep it on the  
level.

JAMES

And you'd be making this kind of  
joke if I were a woman right?

Sadly for James this merely provokes more cackles of  
laughter.

VIRGINIA

Men have feelings too!

DI CASSIDY

It's so unfair!

ADAM

(to James)

Bend like a reed, mate, only gonna  
be one winner here.

James rolls his eyes good-naturedly and gets up to go.

DI CASSIDY

Let me know how it goes.

JAMES

Sorry, Paula, you've hurt my  
feelings now I'll mansplain to  
Ginny later.

Exits. But the mood is positive - they think things will  
swing their way. HOWEVER...

21 INT. COURT, HOLDING ROOM - DAY 12

21

Cleo now back with Talitha.

CLEO

The bracelet.

TALITHA

This again.

CLEO

Green Man.

TALITHA

What about it?

CLEO

What can you tell me about it?

TALITHA

It's a music festival in Cornwall.

CLEO

It's a music festival in Wales.

TALITHA

Oh right yeah Cornwall is Port  
Eliot same difference.

CLEO

Not really, who did you go with?

TALITHA

Dhillon.

CLEO

And?

TALITHA

Oh, man, I dunno. There was a bunch  
of us really. It was absolutely  
shit, I never wanted to go 'cos I  
hate festivals. You'll never guess  
what though...

CLEO

What?

TALITHA

It poured with rain. I know! In Wales! So I stayed in the tent and smoked opium. As a rainy day drug I can strongly...(recommend)

CLEO

But you did go outside at one point. Because there's a photo in the paper with you and Hannah.

TALITHA

Is there really? Oh yeah it stopped raining for a bit and Dhillon wanted to go to the writers tent 'cos his dad was doing a star turn reading from his 'blame us for everything' volume ninety four. Don't you find that embarrassing, Cleo? When white people be like: 'I'm so sorry we're oppressing you please buy my book now...'

Cleo rows on doggedly through the nervy prattling.

CLEO

Brian's found out who took the photo. It was from the Facebook page of Amber Morton.

TALITHA

Never met her.

CLEO

Yeah you have, you've just got a sieve-shaped brain.

Talitha thinks.

TALITHA

Wait! Red hair. Eyes.

CLEO

She does have red hair. And eyes.

TALITHA

Yeah no but they're those really close-together eyes on quite a big nose? Don't mind that look to be honest and I might have snogged her actually during Van Morrison. He was great. Didn't fuck about, just like the greatest hits. Van the Man. Sha la la la la..

Shifts into Brown-eyed Girl.

CLEO

Talitha.

TALITHA

La di DA.

(suddenly)

I'll kill myself if I'm found guilty.

Beat.

TALITHA (CONT'D)

Not being melodramatic, Cleo, but I definitely will.

CLEO

OK so take a breath.

Talitha does.

CLEO (CONT'D)

Take another one.

TALITHA

Stop while... (you're ahead)

Cleo's expression. She breathes again.

CLEO

Now talk me through Green Man.

22

INT. VENDLER HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY 12

22

James is sitting in a living room filled with books and papers. Lydia Vendler is looking at him dispassionately. She is a normally reserved person at the best of times but is now cold with hurt. There is a kind of focused austerity to her and a supreme reserved dignity. Essentially she is the anti-Talitha.

JAMES

You're an academic as well?

She nods.

LYDIA

Sort of. I teach part-time on a creative writing course and I also have a writer's grant.

JAMES

Oh what do you (write)?

LYDIA

I'm a poet.

JAMES

Great.

LYDIA

Why?

JAMES

Sorry?

LYDIA

Why is it great?

James nonplussed then recovers.

JAMES

It sounds better than Crown  
prosecutor I guess.

She smiles faintly.

LYDIA

Do you like poetry, Mr Thornley?

JAMES

Um...well I don't read a lot any  
more to be honest.

LYDIA

People don't. That's why I also  
have to teach.

JAMES

There was a poem I liked when I was  
a kid though. It was called Flannan  
Isle.

LYDIA

'Though three men dwell on Flannan  
Isle...'

JAMES

That's the one. The overtoppled  
chair. Spooky.

A small boy comes into the room. The Vendler's little boy.

LYDIA

I'm busy with the gentleman, Wilf.

WILF

My plane has broken.

JAMES

Let me see...

He takes the toy and fixes the elastic band on it.

She watches him. Something is wrong inside her but it is as if she cannot properly gauge the force of it or what it might become yet. This crime has claimed so many victims along with Hannah. Wilf scuttles off.

JAMES (CONT'D)

We still don't know if the judge will admit your evidence. Both defences will argue it is hearsay.

She nods slowly.

LYDIA

She sounds like quite a girl this Talitha Campbell.

He half-smiles awkwardly.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Looks ghastly in the newspapers.

JAMES

In fairness, they are emphasising a particular side to her.

LYDIA

I suppose so. Lady Tease.

JAMES

Yup.

LYDIA

Poor little rich girl. Is she beautiful?

JAMES

I guess. Not my type especially.

LYDIA

Why not?

JAMES

I'm not sure.

LYDIA

What is your type?

JAMES

Not sure about that either.

LYDIA

Are you a good husband?

JAMES

You'd have to ask my wife.

The tone is quite strange now, charged with an odd kind of energy, her pain and anger making her kind of reckless.

LYDIA

Could you resist her?

JAMES

Yes.

LYDIA

Stephen said to me once that there is no man who does not immediately evaluate a woman in terms of whether he would like to fuck her or not.

James almost sighs.

JAMES

Maybe that's true. But normal life - happiness, society. Luckily they don't really depend on peoples' thoughts. So it's not a very interesting or useful thing to say.

She studies him.

LYDIA

That's a good answer.

Beat.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Stephen did not kill himself because I found out he had slept with another student.

*Another.*

LYDIA (CONT'D)

He killed himself because he had a conscience and he was convinced he had caused those two narcissistic monsters to murder that poor girl.

JAMES

Right. Well that's something that definitely needs to come out in court I guess.

LYDIA

When will I know what the judge decides?

JAMES

Soon hopefully. We have to deal with the forensics first.

His phone bleeps.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I have to go.

She acknowledges this, he rises and as they start to leave, she takes a slim book from a shelf and passes it to him. The title is "Velleities".

LYDIA

These are my poems. I can't promise Flannan Isle. But maybe you'll like them.

He nods, takes the book and exits.

23 INT. COURTROOM - DAY 12

23

An image on screen. It is a bracelet. Like a wrist band and inset with tiny stones.

Then another image of a magnified fibre trapped between the links and the stones.

DR ENGLISH (V.O.)

So there are twenty small diamonds in the bracelet and four links.

Pull back to show that the witness box is now occupied by the police forensics expert DR MICHAEL ENGLISH.

ADAM

OK. With Your Honour's permission...

JUDGE

Go ahead.

The forensics specialist produces/is given a rucksack.

ADAM

(to jury)

So you can see it is a perfectly normal rucksack, this is the one Hannah kept in her cupboard along with the sleeping bag used to dispose of her body in the river.

(beat)

Mr English...

English holds up the rucksack.

DR ENGLISH

We found a nylon fibre matching the constituent fibres of the rucksack in colour and composition caught in one of the links of the diamond bracelet Talitha Campbell was wearing to the ball.

ADAM

How did it get there?

DR ENGLISH

So we think that when shouldering  
the rucksack, this part...

Demonstrates the handle.

DR ENGLISH (CONT'D)

...snagged on the one of the  
casings holding the diamonds which  
have tiny claws.

ADAM

So let me be very clear. A fragment  
from the rucksack used to dispose  
of the body was found on a bracelet  
worn by Talitha Campbell?

DR ENGLISH

Yes.

ADAM

And what is your conclusion based  
on that?

DR ENGLISH

Given that the rucksack was used to  
weight the body, it is strong  
support for the idea that Talitha  
Campbell assisted in disposing of  
the body of the deceased.

ADAM

No further questions.

He looks at the jury though. As if to say: there's no coming  
back from that.

JUMP CUT TO:

24

INT. COURTROOM - DAY 12

24

Emma Hemmings now cross-examining.

EMMA

'The rucksack used to weight the  
body'. That was Hannah's rucksack  
am I correct?

DR ENGLISH

Yes.

EMMA

A rucksack she would have used on  
other occasions?

DR ENGLISH

I have no knowledge of that.

EMMA

The jury will hear that she was given the rucksack along with the sleeping bag by her mother Andrea Ellis on her nineteenth birthday.

DR ENGLISH

I'll take your word for it.

EMMA

So she had owned the rucksack for over a year.

DR ENGLISH

Yes.

EMMA

Do you know how long a microfragment could remain trapped like that in a bracelet?

DR ENGLISH

I don't have an estimate for that.

EMMA

But you would be able to hazard a guess?

DR ENGLISH

Guessing's not my business.

EMMA

Well it took you a fair time to discover it so I imagine it wasn't just faintly hanging on or anything? It wouldn't have come loose any time soon?

English half-shrugs in slight annoyance.

EMMA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry but shrugging isn't your business either.

DR ENGLISH

I don't really understand your question.

EMMA

If Talitha had handled the rucksack at any point in the year since Hannah had owned it, could the nylon fragment have become snagged then?

DR ENGLISH

It grows more unlikely that it would stay there over time of course...

EMMA

But would you be amazed, Dr English? Would it be like seeing the rain falling upwards or Rovers winning at home.

A few chuckles in the jury.

JUDGE

Not everybody understands a football joke Ms Hemmings but I assume you want us to consider that this event is at the outer limits of plausibility?

EMMA

I do your honour and please excuse the levity; this is a most serious matter.

DR ENGLISH

As I say I don't like to speculate...

EMMA

I'm not asking you to speculate. Could the nylon fragment remain trapped for as long as a year?

DR ENGLISH

(reluctant)

I wouldn't say it is impossible.

EMMA

So just removing the double negative for the benefit of the jury...

DR ENGLISH

Yes. It is possible.

Nisha and Meera walking.

NISHA

They obviously are going to suggest that Talitha plus bracelet plus rucksack came together on a previous date.

MEERA

When?

NISHA

No idea but I'm sure we're going to find out when they bring in their own forensics and/or Talitha. Maybe they're bluffing and haven't got anything.

MEERA

You think Talitha will give evidence?

NISHA

I imagine that is a question that will give them a few sleepless nights.

26

INT. CPS, MEETING ROOM - EVENING 12

26

James is back with Virginia and Cassidy.

DI CASSIDY

My guess? They're still working on it hoping something will turn up.

VIRGINIA

Either way, they've got a massive accumulation problem. You can get away with one "possible but unlikely"...

JAMES

I'd still say with the scarf as well we're ahead.

VIRGINIA

What's happening with Talitha's porn history and the femdom stuff?

JAMES

Judge is giving her decision on Monday morning.

VIRGINIA

Can't see her allowing it.

JAMES

We don't need it. Lydia Vendler is the gamechanger.

DI CASSIDY

Agreed.

JAMES

She's compelling.  
(without stopping or  
looking at Cassidy)  
Don't start.

Cassidy grins and holds up her hands - wouldn't dream of it.

DI CASSIDY

Both defences will be praying it's  
ruled as hearsay given the real  
witness took a header off a tower  
and was clearly not in his right  
mind.

VIRGINIA

Hmmmm.

DI CASSIDY

What does hmmmm mean?

JAMES

Incoming metaphor...

VIRGINIA

(to Cassidy)

Don't bet the ranch on it.

(to James)

Which defence team will be most  
scared of Lydia Vendler do you  
reckon?

JAMES

Talitha's.

DI CASSIDY

Good. That lot think they can buy  
their way out of anything.

27

INT. LAKESIDE LODGE - EVENING 12

27

"That lot" assembled.

DAMIAN

So what happens next on the  
rucksack?

CLEO

We've fired our gun and there are  
no more bullets in the chamber.

BRIAN

Amber didn't have any other photos  
of interest.

CLEO

Which means that they will only have our word for the idea that Talitha wore the bracelet to the festival.

DAMIAN

Does Talitha say she did?

Cleo looks at him. *It's Talitha remember.*

DAMIAN (CONT'D)

OK.

BRIAN

Don't abandon hope; I'm chasing down some more contacts over the weekend.

CLEO

I'm still worried about Lydia Vendler. She's a massive wild card.

BRIAN

Surely that's hearsay now Vendler's gone full Tom Daley.

CLEO

It depends. Also we've got Andrea Ellis who saw Vendler and who is hardly going to be considered unreliable.

They hear the sound of a helicopter landing in the grounds outside as Cressida comes into the room holding a weekend bag.

CRESSIDA

The helicopter is here.

DAMIAN

I heard.

CLEO

Going anywhere nice?

DAMIAN

Scotland.

Brian mimes a shooter picking off grouse.

CRESSIDA

Not your thing I imagine, Cleo.

She manages to make this sound vaguely insulting. Cleo just smiles.

CLEO

Not really.

CRESSIDA

You disapprove?

CLEO

A bit yes.

CRESSIDA

Thought you might.

CLEO

Largely on aesthetic grounds.

CRESSIDA

Aesthetic grounds.

CLEO

That's right.

CRESSIDA

Care to elaborate - I'm intrigued.

They all look at Cleo. Tension.

CLEO

(utterly calm)

OK well, sure, if you like. I don't care for the whole look - from the Balmoral clothes to the Land Rovers. It's just not me.

CRESSIDA

No.

CLEO

(almost to herself)

"Leaving their little lives in the sky"

CRESSIDA

What?

Cleo shakes her head (she's quoting Pope on the shooting of skylarks).

CLEO

And while I'm not especially right-on there is something weird to me about blasting delicate creatures into smithereens just because you have the means to do so. Which is still an aesthetic judgement of sorts because it strikes me as such a deeply stupid thing to enjoy doing.

CRESSIDA

Deeply stupid. Did you hear what  
your lawyer thinks of us, darling?

Eyes on Damian now.

DAMIAN

I did.

He stands. Looks at the window.

DAMIAN (CONT'D)

But she's quite right. It is  
stupidly satisfying to blast  
something feebler than oneself into  
a mass of blood and feathers.

Without even looking at Cleo.

DAMIAN (CONT'D)

Have a nice weekend everybody and  
we will reconvene Sunday evening.

Follows his wife out. Brian winks at Cleo, blows on an  
imaginary pistol and reholsters it.

Cleo looks at Emma.

CLEO

Ready?

28

INT. CLEO'S OFFICE - DAY 13

28

Cleo is back on the terrace with Heidi.

HEIDI

Brutal.

CLEO

Yeah.

HEIDI

You really do not like her.

CLEO

I really do not.

HEIDI

Quoting Pope though.

CLEO

I know. Showing off right.

She shrugs humorously. Then...

CLEO (CONT'D)  
Talitha was abused as a child. By  
her mother's friends.

HEIDI  
Shit.

CLEO  
Cressida came out of that whole  
cocaine-blizzard, Britpop thing and  
she was still at it with a few  
diehards when Talitha was in her  
early teens.

HEIDI  
Wait, you're saying...she allowed  
it.

CLEO  
Allowed. Encouraged even.

HEIDI  
Has Talitha...

CLEO  
Sort of. We're getting there.

HEIDI  
So what's the issue here?

CLEO  
The issue is that the case against  
Talitha is very strong. The scarf.  
The bracelet. The history. And  
she's about to have the kitchen  
sink thrown at her especially if  
they allow Lydia Vendler.

HEIDI  
And you're thinking about using her  
abuse to change the jury's  
perception of her?

Cleo nods.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
Risky.

CLEO  
But Damian Campbell won't let me.

HEIDI  
What was his role do you think?

CLEO  
(shrugs)  
Blind eye. Otherwise occupied.  
Definitely not involved.

HEIDI

You don't want a big falling out  
with Damian.

CLEO

Bite the hand that feeds us you  
mean?

HEIDI

(calm)

I do mean exactly that.

CLEO

I'll do the right thing for my  
client.

HEIDI

Not this again.

CLEO

This again.

28A EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY 13

28A

Meera is sitting alone. Nisha comes and sits down next to  
her. Meera is staring at an unlit cigarette.

NISHA

You don't smoke any more.

MEERA

No that's why I haven't lit it.

NISHA

This is hard.

MEERA

I look at her, Hannah's mum, and I  
think...

She shakes her head.

MEERA (CONT'D)

It will sound...

NISHA

It's OK. You are facing a terrible  
loss as well.

Meera's face.

NISHA (CONT'D)

I don't mean the verdict.

MEERA

All those years. The family  
holidays. The orthodontist.

(MORE)

MEERA (CONT'D)

The ice cream treats.  
(beat)  
All the innocence.

She looks down at the cigarette in her hands, then she crumples it and throws it away.

29 INT. PUB - NIGHT 13

29

Happy Birthday balloons. The cops are all in the pub celebrating the birthday of Paula Cassidy. Quite a lot of drink has been taken, it's rowdy.

James comes into the pub to pay brief respects.

Heads over to the bar where DC ANDY LOWELL and DI PHIL HASTINGS (the disclosure officer) are downing pints and shots. They're pissed.

James acknowledges them slightly warily.

DC LOWELL

Sweet Baby James! Bet you didn't know that was your nickname.

JAMES

I did actually.

DC LOWELL

Gonna be going round to give Andrea Ellis some of your special "grief counseling" after this?

JAMES

Knock it off, Andy.

DC LOWELL

Not gonna lie: I would.

JAMES

I said knock it off.

DI HASTINGS

Yeah come on, Andy, that's not really on, mate.

DC LOWELL

I'm only kidding, here what are you drinking?

JAMES

I'll just go and say Happy Birthday to Paula...

Lowell grabs his arm though.

DC LOWELL

Wanna know our latest odds on a double conviction? 5/11. Fancy a bit of that?

JAMES

Flattered you're so confident but not on my salary.

DC LOWELL

(to Hastings)

Throw all that ball footage back in the schedule, Phil - might improve the return.

James frowns and turns to Phil Hastings who is not as drunk as Lowell.

DI HASTINGS

Yeah ha ha very funny.

JAMES

What ball footage is that then?

Lowell realises his slip-up. Tries to change the subject.

DC LOWELL

Evens on just Talitha.

James looks at Phil Hastings and can sense his discomfort.

JAMES

I'll just go and say hi to Paula.

As he moves off.

DI HASTINGS

(to Lowell)

You absolute plonker.

DC LOWELL

He didn't notice anything.

DI HASTINGS

'Course he did.

DC LOWELL

You think he did?

Beat.

DC LOWELL (CONT'D)

I don't think he did but don't say anything to Butch - we'll sort it.

30

EXT. COURT - DAY 14

30

The usual scrum of reporters and paps and demonstrators.

BBC REPORTER

*Today the focus of the trial shifts to allegations of harassment on the university campus and the role of Dr Stephen Vendler who was responsible for hearing an earlier case against Dhillon Harwood. Much of this morning has been taken up by legal arguments over the admissibility of certain evidence. The complication being of course that nobody can question Stephen Vendler due to the fact that he took his own life.*

JUMP CUT TO:

31

INT. COURTROOM - DAY 14

31

All the lawyers and the judge. No jury or public are present.

JUDGE

First the pornographic history. I am certainly not going to allow witnesses discussing Talitha's sexual behaviour in pornography or any evidence that might suggest she had sufficient control over their content to be taken as evidence of her own preferences.

On Cleo. That's a small victory.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

On the question of Lydia Vendler I have given this very careful thought and I am going to allow her evidence.

EMMA

Your Honour if I might...

JUDGE

Conserve your energy, Ms Hemmings. That is my decision having carefully considered the pros and cons.

Looks sternly at Adam.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

But I should warn the prosecution that I will be watching very carefully for anything I think is leading the witness so you must stick absolutely to what she remembers her husband saying to her and absolutely no canvassing of opinion or speculation which is a habit of yours that is starting to irritate me. Now I understand that the first witness today is...

LUCINDA (O.S.)

Lucinda Imogen Bright.

32 INT. COURTROOM - DAY 14

32

The face of a young woman. She is wearing a t-shirt with the moon in its different phases and the slogan: IT'S JUST A PASSING PHASE!

JUDGE

Thank you, Lucinda. Mr Reynolds?

ADAM

Lucinda, I'd like to start just by taking you through the reasons behind your complaint to the college authorities about Dhillon Harwood...

LUCINDA

Well he raped me for a start.

That's certainly got everybody's attention.

EMMA

Your Honour!

JUDGE

Stop there please, Mr Reynolds. I would ask the usher to escort the jury back to their room please while we sort this out.

JUMP CUT TO:

33 INT. COURT, HOLDING ROOM - DAY 14

33

Now we are looking at Dhillon Harwood. And he is looking at his mother and Nisha. And it is impossible to know what she must be thinking about what she has just heard.

DHILLON

I didn't...it wasn't like that at all.

Meera holds up a hand.

DHILLON (CONT'D)

She's a nutter. Everybody knows that.

MEERA

She's a woman. Any woman can be raped including the...

(scornful)  
"nutters".

She is clearly angry and distressed by what she has just heard.

DHILLON

I just ASSUMED because we were already in bed together and she was letting me...

MEERA

And the lie about the condom?

DHILLON

I misunderstood.

MEERA

Misunderstood. Sorry but how the hell do you misunderstand: are you wearing a condom?

NISHA

OK let's not get too emotional. The judge has ruled the rape allegation inadmissible as it did not form part of her complaint at the time.

MEERA

Jury have heard it though.

DHILLON

She's a liar.

But his mother gives him a look of anguish and loss.

NISHA

I'm going to have to go hard at her.

MEERA

(doubtful)

Really?

NISHA

She's bad for Dhillon. Sit it out  
if you're faint-hearted, Meera, but  
we have no choice here.

34 INT. COURTROOM - DAY 14

34

Lucinda Bright is now being questioned by Nisha.

NISHA

Lucinda I think it's correct to say  
you've had your fair share of  
internet conflicts?

JUDGE

Please be more specific with your  
question, Miss Baria. How are we  
supposed to evaluate a fair share  
in this day and age?

NISHA

You are quite right, Your Honour,  
that was too vague.

(back to Lucinda)

You once, for example, gave the  
personal details of an adversary on  
line in a practice known as  
doxxing.

LUCINDA

I deleted it.

NISHA

Could you tell the court what that  
was about?

LUCINDA

So at the time I was quite into  
witchcraft.

NISHA

Sorry could you just speak up a  
tiny bit for the jury. You were  
quite into...

LUCINDA

(firmly)

Witchcraft.

Nisha gives her a "goodness me, do continue" look.

LUCINDA (CONT'D)

It's a thing you know but now I'm  
not so...

NISHA

At the time you referred to  
yourself as a 'baby witch'. Is that  
some kind of...what... traineeship?  
NVQ?

Ripples of laughter in court.

LUCINDA

No.

NISHA

There was a dispute where you  
claimed another student was  
negatively affecting the energy of  
the full moon?

LUCINDA

Because he was.

JUDGE

Where is this all going?

NISHA

That student, also Asian, made a  
complaint against you which  
included an allegation of racial  
harassment. Am I correct?

LUCINDA

He was half-Malaysian but...

NISHA

And that was upheld am I correct?

LUCINDA

Yes.

NISHA

Do you still consider yourself to  
be a witch?

LUCINDA

I believe it to be a legitimate  
identity yes.

NISHA

You believe being a racist witch is  
a legitimate identity?

Open mocking laughter in court now. INCLUDING TALITHA who  
even looks at Dhillon and exchanges a laugh.

LUCINDA

No I didn't...

ADAM

Your Honour...

JUDGE

Miss Baria. Please.

NISHA

Let's just leave it as somebody who enjoys a complete fantasy then. As the college disciplinary panel concluded in the case of Dhillon Harwood.

(serious)

But the real harasser here is you isn't it, Lucinda?

LUCINDA

1000% not.

NISHA

A hundred usually covers all the bases.

(gentle smile)

Thank you, Lucinda.

TALITHA (O.S.)

She's a silly little cow.

35

INT. TALITHA'S PRISON, VISITOR'S ROOM - DAY 14

35

CLEO

Also a rape survivor.

TALITHA (O.S.)

Sorry but if that's rape then stick me in the dock too.

CLEO

You are in the dock, Talitha.

Talitha smiles at the riposte.

TALITHA

Seriously though. This bloke I fancied once? Passed out on Ket and I whipped all my clothes off, got into bed with him and didn't give him much choice in the matter.

CLEO

It's completely different.

Talitha shrugs this off.

TALITHA

Probably read an article in Teen Vogue about consent needing a sworn affidavit every time. Lucinda not so fucking Bright MORE LIKE.

(MORE)

TALITHA (CONT'D)

Lucinda Imogen I mean that's such a geography student name isn't it?

CLEO

Good good, keep focusing on the big picture.

TALITHA

She was a pest, Cleo. Sure, Dhillon didn't treat her very well and fucking her was just taking the piss really as I told him at the time. But she was lucky he even noticed her.

Cleo looks coldly at her.

CLEO

OK I've reached my "just sayin'" threshold thanks.

TALITHA

Really? 'Cos she's not the only one to have been drugged and raped JUST SAYIN'.

Looks at Cleo.

TALITHA (CONT'D)

But you've always known that right?

36 OMITTED

36

37 INT. CPS, VIRGINIA HOULT'S OFFICE - DAY 14

37

James is with Virginia.

VIRGINIA

So Lucinda was a bit of a let-down.

JAMES

Yeah, Dhillon's defence battered her. It wasn't pretty.

VIRGINIA

Establishment gets ruthless lawyers shocker.

JAMES

Still don't think Meera Harwood was enjoying it much.

VIRGINIA

If her son gets away with this she'll learn to live with it.

JAMES

He won't. We've got another far more weighty allegation to come.

VIRGINIA

Good. Unlike Cassidy I don't just want Talitha. She needs to get that prejudice out of sight.

Beat.

JAMES

Yeah on that note...I heard something a bit disturbing, Ginny.

She looks at him.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Andy Lowell was shit-faced at Cassidy's birthday party.

VIRGINIA

At a cop piss-up? Surely not.

JAMES

I got the impression some of the "not relevant" material could stand another look.

Beat.

VIRGINIA

It could always stand another look. The establishment has good lawyers, James so let them request it.

Looks hard at him.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

Cleo's also doing just fine from what I can see. You don't have to atone any more for past...mishaps.

A beat.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

Concentrate on what we want. A double conviction.

Andrea Ellis and a MOB of press as she goes in.

39 INT. COURTROOM - DAY 15

39

Andrea Ellis is now giving evidence to Adam. All eyes are upon her. She is VERY VERY NERVOUS.

ADAM

Did Stephen Vendler come to your house?

She nods.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Could I ask you to...

JUDGE

Please give a verbal answer, Mrs Ellis.

ANDREA

(faintly)

Yes.

ADAM

Could you tell the Court, to the best of your recollection, what he said to you?

ANDREA

He said he was sorry. He kept saying that.

ADAM

Did he say why was he sorry?

ANDREA

Yes because Hannah had trusted him and he had betrayed her trust.

ADAM

Did he say how that happened?

ANDREA

She had complained to him about Dhillon Harwood.

Adam to the jury.

ADAM

Just for clarity, this is another complaint on top of the various allegations made by Lucinda Bright.

JUDGE

I am sure the jury are aware of that, Mr Reynolds.

ADAM

Of course.

(beat)

Did he say what the complaint was  
about?

She shakes her head.

ANDREA

I'm sorry. No.

She has started to tremble violently. Can't stop looking at the defendants.

JUDGE

Take your time, Mrs Ellis.

ANDREA

May I have some water please, Your Ladyship.

The judge smiles but does not correct the mistitling.

JUDGE

Yes you may.

Andrea nods. Takes a long sip of water. All the jury are staring at her very intently.

ADAM

What else did he say?

ANDREA

He said that if it hadn't been for him they would never have done it and my Hannah would still be alive and now he couldn't live with himself.

ADAM

They?

ANDREA

Yes.

Now some on the jury turn and look hard at Talitha and Dhillon. This is BAD.

Andrea turns and looks at the defendants.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

Why?

JUDGE

Mrs Ellis...

ANDREA

Why did you hurt her? She would never have hurt anybody?

JUDGE

Mrs Ellis you will get a chance to make a statement when...

ANDREA

(screams)

WHY DID YOU HURT MY DAUGHTER?

Mrs Plain dabs at her eye.

JUDGE

OK, we will take an adjournment I think. Could the usher please...thank you.

JUMP CUT TO:

40

INT. COURTROOM - DAY 15

40

Andrea back on the stand.

JUDGE

Are you ready to continue with your evidence?

ANDREA

Yes. I am sorry.

Judge signals a sympathetic no need and indicates to Emma that she can cross-examine now.

EMMA

Mrs Ellis I appreciate how agonising this all is and I will make this as painless as possible for you.

ANDREA

Painless?

She laughs.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

I'll never know what it is to live without pain again.

EMMA

OK...

ANDREA

I dream every night. Every night. I dream that she is crying for me.

(MORE)

ANDREA (CONT'D)

I dream that I am trying to get her out of the sleeping bag but I can't.

(beat)

I can't make the zip work you see.

EMMA

I want nothing more than to bring this particular ordeal to a swift end. Just a few questions.

ANDREA

OK.

EMMA

Did Hannah ever discuss Talitha with you?

ANDREA

No.

EMMA

Never complained about her in any way.

ANDREA

No.

EMMA

And was Stephen Vendler drunk in your opinion. Could you smell alcohol on his breath?

ANDREA

Yes.

EMMA

When he saw the CPS officer he ran? As if he regretted coming.

ANDREA

I don't know why he ran. But he said it was all his fault. He said he had told her...

AND SHE LOOKS AGAIN STRAIGHT AT TALITHA AND DHILLON.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

...what Hannah said that one had been doing.

EMMA

Thank you, Mrs Ellis, I am so sorry you have had to go through this.

Andrea Ellis looks across in desperate impotent grief at Talitha and Dhillon. She is wishing everlasting hell upon them. Dhillon looks down at the floor. Talitha blinks slowly.

The usher comes across to take her away.

JUDGE

Thank you, Mrs Ellis, and please accept the deepest sympathy of the court and gratitude for giving evidence in such terrible circumstances.

Andrea nods.

41 INT. COURT, RECEPTION - DAY 15

41

Lydia Vendler is coming through the metal detector and having her bag scanned. *There may be more drama on the way.* James comes to meet her.

JAMES

Hi.

LYDIA

Am I still allowed to give my evidence?

JAMES

You are.

LYDIA

Good.

JAMES

I read a couple of your poems.

LYDIA

And?

JAMES

Truthfully. They sounded nice but I didn't have a clue what they were about.

She smiles.

LYDIA

Sounding nice is a good start. It's not a test.

JAMES

I had to google velleities.

LYDIA

It's a good word.

JAMES

A wish or an impulse not strong enough to lead to action.

She smiles quiet assent. *And at that moment he sees Cleo and Emma going past.* For a moment his attention drawn from Lydia to Cleo who barely notices him she is deep in conversation with Emma. James acutely aware perhaps of the gap between impulse and action again - his own velleities.

JUMP CUT TO:

42 INT. COURTROOM - DAY 15

42

Lydia Vendler is now on the stand. She looks briefly at Talitha and smiles drily to herself. From now on in, she will not look at her again.

ADAM

Mrs Vendler, you saw your husband before he left for Andrea Ellis's home?

LYDIA

Yes.

ADAM

And you did not see him again after that?

LYDIA

No.

ADAM

How would you describe his condition?

LYDIA

Very bad. He was overcome with worry about our family in the wake of the press reports and he believed he had caused the death of Hannah Ellis.

ADAM

Why?

LYDIA

Because he had told the student he was sleeping with that Hannah Ellis had complained about her friend.

ADAM

Her friend being...

LYDIA

The other person in the dock with her I believe. Anyway, apparently she was angry.

ADAM

Why?

LYDIA

I'm afraid I don't know; you would have to ask her that.

ADAM

You didn't see him again?

LYDIA

No. He phoned shortly before he died and left a brief message on the answerphone.

ADAM

Had he ever referred to Talitha before the newspapers got hold of their affair?

LYDIA

No not really. He talked about Hannah though. He liked her and was extremely impressed by her.

Andrea Ellis is now in the gallery and bows her head at this.

ADAM

Exacerbating his remorse?

LYDIA

I don't know but that seems a fair assumption.

She is very calm, very composed, very impressive.

ADAM

OK. Thank you, Mrs...

LYDIA

He did tell me something about Talitha though. After the news broke.

EMMA

Your Honour...

JUDGE

May I remind you that you may give evidence as to what your ex-husband told you Talitha had said and not...

LYDIA

He said she had no soul and was preternaturally cruel.

JUDGE

No I won't allow this.

LYDIA

He also told me that Talitha had  
discussed her fantasies with him.  
Which involved killing another girl  
during sex.

WHAT THE FUCK.

The faces of the jury show their shock at this. They turn to  
look at Talitha in the dock. Cleo whispers urgently to Emma.

EMMA

Your Honour!

JUDGE

That's enough.

ADAM

You are sure about this?

JUDGE

MISTER Reynolds.

LYDIA

Quite sure.

JUMP CUT TO:

43

INT. COURTROOM - DAY 15

43

Lydia Vendler now being cross-examined by Talitha's defence.  
Her calm manner and demeanour do not change at all.

EMMA

Naturally, Mrs Vendler you feel  
anger at Talitha Campbell.

LYDIA

I'm not sure it's natural and it's  
certainly not correct.

EMMA

You don't feel anger at the person  
who destroyed your marriage?

LYDIA

Sorry you are repeating your  
question. Are you expecting a  
different answer?

Lydia is easily the match of Emma.

EMMA

I'm just wondering if you have given evidence as a form of retaliation after knowing the facts of the case.

LYDIA

I guessed that's where you were going with your question.

(beat)

But it isn't true. I didn't know her and she had no obligations to me.

EMMA

You haven't embellished it in any way. These were the exact words of Stephen Vendler - a man overcome with guilt, drink and...

LYDIA

I didn't make them up.

EMMA

You're a part-time poet I believe. Used to imaginative flights.

LYDIA

Yes but also quite capable of remembering something my husband said.

EMMA

It's part of your job to embellish things isn't it?

LYDIA

It's part of your job as well but I imagine you can sustain a reasonably honest conversation at the dinner table.

Emma smiles.

EMMA

What I'm getting at...

LYDIA

I'm well aware of what you're getting at but it was his opinion not mine and I have no idea if it is true.

EMMA

And we are to just take your word  
for the fact that your husband told  
you that his lover admitted to  
fantasising about exactly the crime  
of which she is accused?

A beat.

LYDIA

Yes I am asking you to take my word  
for it.

Emma shakes her head in slow, silent disbelieving negation.

EMMA

Again, it's not really your  
everyday conversation is it?  
Soulless. Preternaturally cruel.  
Don't these words sounds a  
little...invented? A little poetic  
licence?

Long beat. Lydia looks down.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Mrs Vendler?

LYDIA

It wasn't a conversation.

EMMA

Smoke signals? Sign language?

JUDGE

(reproach)

Ms Hemmings.

EMMA

I'm sorry, Your Honour but this  
is...

LYDIA

It was a letter.

Now everybody is stunned including the prosecution.

EMMA

There is no letter referred to in  
any...

LYDIA

My husband wrote a final letter to  
me from the hotel after he fled  
from Andrea Ellis's house. It  
arrived after his death.

(MORE)

LYDIA (CONT'D)

I have not shared it with anybody because it is deeply private and contains very intimate details of our marriage. Also I did not want our children to ever have to know of its existence. But it will substantiate all the evidence I have given in court today and I can produce it if the court so requires.

You can feel now the absolute tension and shock in the courtroom. SOMETHING HAS CHANGED COMPLETELY.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

My husband certainly believed that both of the accused killed Hannah Ellis and that he was the indirect cause.

(beat)

And so he took his own life.

JUDGE (O.S.)

Thank you, Mrs Vendler, we will stop here.

(to the jury)

You have concluded your work for the moment, ladies and gentlemen, and can leave court with the usher. I have some pressing matters of law that I need to deal with in your absence with counsel.

As the jury rise, Emma mutters to Cleo.

EMMA

Start thinking about a plea change and mitigation.

(beat)

She's done for.

Cleo looks at Talitha in the dock. Her lips are moving soundlessly.

She is singing to herself.

**END OF EPISODE**