



Lethal White

Episode 2

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Adapted from the novel by Robert Galbraith

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1 EXT. DELL, STEDA COTTAGE, CHISWELL ESTATE - NIGHT 5

1

In the dark, weed-tangled dell Robin's torch beam plays over white bones flecked with broken earth. The edges of a muddy pink fleece blanket are visible.

Strike stands at the top of the slope, his own torch beam trained on Robin. Dark woods surround them.

The silence is broken by DOGS BARKING in the near distance.

STRIKE

We need to go.

ROBIN

Should I--

STRIKE

Leave it.

Robin climbs back up the slope, spade held in one hand. She slips -- instinctively grabs for a plant -- and slashes her palm on a bramble stem as she falls. She CRIES out.

The BARKING is getting closer.

Strike grimaces, frustrated. He pulls off his coat, does his best to root the heel of his boot, and throws the coat like a rope to Robin.

She catches its hem -- and hauls herself up and out. Together they hurry away--

2 EXT. CHISWELL ESTATE - NIGHT 5

2

Strike grits his teeth, unable to fully mask the pain as he and Robin run toward the Land Rover.

Strike sees movement in the trees -- dogs closing in.

STRIKE

Get inside-- here--

3 INT. OLD WOODEN BARN, CHISWELL ESTATE - NIGHT 5

3

Strike and Robin climb back into the barn through the same entrance as before -- the broken back window. Strike grabs an old plank and semi-blocks the window just before the dogs arrive, snapping through the gaps and BARKING.

They're safe -- but stuck. Breathing heavily.

ROBIN

How many of them are there?

STRIKE

Dunno. At least two.

Robin's phone-torch beam sweeps around the barn.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Can you hold this? Watch your hands.

Robin takes over keeping the window secured -- the dogs jumping and snapping, nearly knocking her over.

ROBIN

Be quick.

Strike hurries over to the outer door at the far end of the workshop. It is padlocked and latched. He shoulders it -- the frame beginning to splinter--

Robin's torch catches the dogs vanishing from the bench-blocked hole. She realises--

ROBIN (CONT'D)

(to Strike)

Don't--!

The door flies open -- just as the dogs arrive. Strike grabs it -- quickly pulling it closed, closing the latch again. The dogs BARK to get at him.

As soon as Strike starts to return to Robin, the dogs vanish from his door--

--arriving at Robin's window to attack it again. They get there well before Strike does. He rushes to help Robin brace the plank against the dogs jumping up at it.

STRIKE

Try and keep them focused here.

Make a racket. I'll make a run for the car.

ROBIN

(beat)

You can't run.

STRIKE

Don't worry about--

ROBIN

No. You're limping. We have to be practical about this.

STRIKE

It's how we're doing it.

Strike puts his face closer to the gap between the plank and the window, his hands still helping to brace the plank.

STRIKE (CONT'D)
(to the dogs)
Bad dogs. No biscuit.

The dogs go wild, leaping and BARKING.

STRIKE (CONT'D)
Like that. And whatever happens,
don't come out there after me.

A beat. Then before Strike can react, Robin turns and sprints across the barn to the door--

STRIKE (CONT'D)
Robin!

The dogs almost knock Strike over -- he has no choice but to keep bracing the plank as Robin runs. He SHOUTS at the dogs, trying to goad them, to hold their focus, but--

He sees one of the dogs vanishing from the window--

STRIKE (CONT'D)
Robin! Run!

4 INT/EXT. CHISWELL ESTATE / LAND ROVER - NIGHT 5

4

Robin sprints out from the side of the barn, ripping through undergrowth, heading for the Land Rover.

Seconds later, Dog 1 emerges from the side of the barn, racing after her--

Robin makes it to the Land Rover -- yanks the door open -- throws herself inside and pulls the door closed as Dog 1 lunges up at her.

5 INT/EXT. LAND ROVER / OLD WOODEN BARN, CHISWELL ESTATE - 5
NIGHT 5 (CONTINUOUS)

In the distance, Robin sees a vehicle's headlights turn on. Likely coming to investigate. They're running out of time.

Robin starts the engine, keeping her lights off. Reverses towards the barn through the trees. Only her reverse-lights on--

INSIDE THE BARN

Strike sees the Land Rover headed for him. Dog 2 still trying to get at him. He fumbles in a pocket and pulls out a half-eaten chocolate bar.

STRIKE
Here. You want it?

He lowers the plank -- and tosses the chocolate bar behind Dog 2. It turns-- and Strike drops the plank and sprints across the workshop--

He has bought no more than a few seconds. Dog 2 jumps up through the now-open window-hole and runs in pursuit of Strike--

Strike just manages to shut the inner door in time. It SNARLS at him through the mesh.

ROBIN

Robin manoeuvres -- tightly weaving between dark trees --

Clouds of dust -- tail-lights -- BARKING -- darkness--

INSIDE THE BARN

Dog 2 leaps back out of the window--

WITH THE LAND ROVER

Dog 2 races round to join Dog 1, jumping up at Robin's driver-side window as she reverses towards the barn.

STRIKE

takes his chances with a short dash to the passenger-side door, jumping in just before the dogs get to him.

Robin sticks the Land Rover back into first gear -- and drives them out of the trees, back towards the track.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Lights--

ROBIN

Not yet. There's someone coming.

Robin pulls back onto the track. The lights of the other vehicle are closer and definitely headed in their direction. She changes gear -- flying along now. Shaking with adrenaline.

The two dogs chase them fifty yards before they give up.

With Robin parked nearby, Strike makes a call on that rarest of things: a public pay-phone...

STRIKE

(on the phone)

I think I've found human remains.

(beat)

(MORE)

STRIKE (CONT'D)

No, I'm not giving you my name.
I'll give you the location.

7 EXT. LAND ROVER, OXFORDSHIRE VILLAGE - NIGHT 5

7

Strike rejoins Robin, who is examining the beating that the back of her Land Rover has taken. A lot of scratches.

STRIKE

Company'll pay for damage.

ROBIN

No need. There's nothing to fix.

It's built like a tank!

(beat)

Matthew wanted us to get a sports car. Fat lot of good that would've been.

Strike smiles at her joke. But still feels the need to say:

STRIKE

You shouldn't have done it.

ROBIN

You shouldn't have tried stopping me. You know I'm faster than you.

(playful)

You're not going to fire me again, are you?

A moment passes between them, before he grins ruefully.

STRIKE

Learned my lesson there.

8 INT/EXT. LAND ROVER, OXFORDSHIRE VILLAGE - NIGHT 5

8

Strike and Robin climb back into their car seats.

ROBIN

What now?

STRIKE

In an hour the police will have a body. And if they talk to Billy, they'll have a witness as well.

ROBIN

So.... With Billy then--?

STRIKE

Yeah, we do need to find him.

9 INT. BEDROOM, ALMA GROVE HOUSE - DAY 6

9

BEING FILMED WITH AN I-PHONE

Grey light filters through closed-curtain windows.

Billy sits on the edge of an unmade bed. Over and over, he taps his nose and chest. He seems pale, bruised, worsening.

BILLY

Are they going to find me?

Jimmy sits opposite Billy. Filming him on his phone.

JIMMY

They won't. Not here.

A chisel is tossed into Billy's lap. Its blade-edge glints.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Just do what I tell you. Then I'll look after you. Now do it.

Billy's eyes fill with tears as he picks up the chisel.

BILLY

(to himself, fevered)

Mark of quality. Piece of England.

10 INT. BEDROOM, ROBIN AND MATT'S HOUSE - DAY 6

10

Robin wakes with a start to her phone BUZZING. She answers in partial-darkness, sleepy, lying next to MATTHEW:

ROBIN

Hello?

IZZY (V.O.)

(filtered)

Hi Robin. It's Izzy. Uh-- best not come to the office today. It's all got a bit challenging here.

ROBIN

Oh-- okay. What's going on?

IZZY (V.O.)

No, it's fine, it's all fine. We'll see you tomorrow. Unless I call.

ROBIN

Is there anything I can--

But the line goes dead. Robin notices that Matthew has woken and is looking at her coolly. She quickly puts her freshly-scratched arm under the covers.

MATTHEW

Was that the politician?

ROBIN

Yes. Well, his office.

MATTHEW

What happens if you get caught
messing about there? Like, if the
security services found you out?

(beat)

Have you not thought about that?

11

INT. MAIN OFFICE, THE AGENCY - DAY 6

11

Robin shoves the office door open. It has been bodged back
together where Billy smashed it, but now the frame sticks.

Robin finds Strike already working. He's pleased to see her.
And excited to share what he has. He barrels in with--

STRIKE

I've spoken to Wardle. He can't
find out anything about what's
happening with the bones. It's a
government minister's estate, so
everyone's on eggshells. He did get
me this though.

Strike hands Robin a photo of a twelve year old girl - Suki.
Robin notes that Strike is moving with a limp.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Billy was six when he saw a girl
strangled and he looks mid-twenties
now. So, roughly twenty years ago.
Wardle had a look for missing-girls
around then. Suki Lane fits. She
went missing from care, living less
than ten miles from the Chiswell
estate. She was twelve but built
small. Long dark hair. If Billy
could ID Suki then we'll really
have something. Tea?

ROBIN

Yes, please.

STRIKE

Barclay called as well. Jimmy drove
them to a house in South London
this morning. He was dropping food
off. Made Barclay stay in the car.
I'm going to take a look.

Finally Strike notices that Robin is very preoccupied.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Are you alright?

ROBIN

I was thinking. If Chiswell's arrested for murder then they'll search his homes in London and Oxfordshire, won't they? And they'll search his offices.

(beat)

I hid the spare bugs inside a box but they'd find them pretty quickly. And if they did a sweep...

STRIKE

...of the Winns' office. Yeah, I see what you're saying.

Strike's head fills with new concerns. And guilt.

ROBIN

My fingerprints are all over it. I could try and get it out. Sorry. It was my bit.

STRIKE

No, but I asked you to--

ROBIN (CONT'D)

It's fine.

STRIKE

We could ask Izzy--

ROBIN

Then she'd know we know something's happened to Chiswell.

STRIKE

I think the trade-off's worth it.

ROBIN

No. I'll take care of it. Honestly.

She smiles at him. Firmly. Forcing him to either respect her decision or outright-overrule her. Anxiety drives him:

STRIKE

Fine. But do it this morning.

ROBIN

They asked me not to go in today.

STRIKE

Ignore them. Say you had to do something time-sensitive.

ROBIN

They're not people who're used to being ignored.

STRIKE

So it'll be good for them.

12 MOVED TO SCENE 17A

12

13 INT. SECURITY LOBBY, HOC - DAY 6

13

Robin passes through security. Her anxiety is eating at her. Her eyes flick to SECURITY OFFICERS. Trying to remain outwardly calm and amenable as her identity pass -- Venetia's identity -- is examined by a GUARD.

Half expecting to be arrested at any moment.

14 INT. CORRIDOR, PARLIAMENTARY OFFICES, HOC - DAY 6

14

Robin KNOCKS on the door to the Winns' office and, getting no answer, tries the handle. The door is unlocked.

15 INT. WINNS' OFFICE, HOC - DAY 6 (CONTINUOUS)

15

Closing the door behind her, Robin moves swiftly to the plug socket and gets on her knees to remove the recording device.

It's not easy. It has been designed to fit snugly, and Robin struggles to free it. Her anxiety mounts as her fingers repeatedly slip off the casing. The plug's discreet siting beneath a chair now feels like a trap...

ROBIN

Come on...

She forces herself to breathe in and out, slowly, three times, wiping her fingertips before going back to it. She strains -- and pulls it free.

She hurries towards the door but pauses at a BUZZ--

The mobile phone on Aamir's desk has lit-up. Robin steps to read the text-message notification before it vanishes:

It's water under the bridge. Looking forward to seeing you on the 13th. Come 8ish. CBB

Robin looks up -- as the office door opens. She finds herself facing AAMIR.

AAMIR

What are you doing in here?

ROBIN

I was borrowing a stapler.

AAMIR

Show me.

ROBIN

(beat)

What?

Aamir steps into the room and closes the door behind him.

AAMIR

I don't believe you. Show me it.

ROBIN

Well, I didn't find one.

Aamir points -- to a stapler on his desk, sitting in clear view beside his desk-tidy.

Aamir steps towards Robin. Robin's anxiety begins to well up. She is clammy. Her hands shaking.

AAMIR

You were looking at my phone.

ROBIN

I wasn't.

AAMIR

Don't lie. You were looking at it.
What are you doing--

ROBIN

Look, I'm already running late.

Robin moves to leave, but Aamir makes it clear that he won't let her walk out unimpeded.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Um. Excuse me?

AAMIR

Not 'til you answer my question.

Robin takes a sharp breath in -- and looks Aamir in the eye. Summoning the most entitled version of "Venetia":

ROBIN

How many people do you know here?
Because I know six people who can
have you fired by the end of the
day. So don't even flirt with
pulling this crap on me.

Aamir looks furious. But -- also uncertain now...

AAMIR

What, so you can come in without--

ROBIN

Can I borrow your stapler or not?
If not, get out of my way before I
have you thrown out?

Robin's hands are clenched. Trying to damp down the panic.
Aamir is shaking too -- with rage, with upset --

AAMIR

People like you--

ROBIN

Yes. We run things. I know.

Robin picks up Aamir's stapler and pushes past Aamir to the door. He doesn't stop her.

16

INT. CORRIDOR, PARLIAMENTARY OFFICES, HOC - DAY 6
(CONTINUOUS)

16

Robin fights to control her BREATHING. And just about manages to arrest the rising anxiety attack as she walks back towards Chiswell's office.

From inside she can hear the sound of Chiswell's angry voice. Feigning pausing to text on her phone, Robin listens in:

CHISWELL (O.S.)

I'm not disputing the damn bill!
What I want to know from you is how
it breaks down. Is it one room and
two dinners, or eight dinners and
no bloody room? Do you see?

(beat)

Pass me to someone who speaks
English! Or-- yes, have the manager
call me. Urgently!

Robin KNOCKS on the door, then enters--

17

INT. CHISWELL'S OFFICE, HOC - DAY 6 (CONTINUOUS)

17

Robin affects breezy smiles. Izzy is at her desk, looking anxious. Chiswell is on his feet, twitchy.

ROBIN

Morning, Minister. Hi, Izzy.

Izzy is surprised at Robin's unexpected arrival.

IZZY

Did you not--?

ROBIN

I'm not staying long. Essential
maintenance on the you-know-whats.

Robin goes to her box of eavesdropping devices and affects to work on them.

CHISWELL
(to Izzy)
Let's just get on with it.

IZZY
Okay. Constituent wants to discuss his idea for a new tax on--

CHISWELL
No.

IZZY
Margaret Conarty asked if she--

CHISWELL
Absolutely not.

IZZY
Kind decline with best wishes then.

The LANDLINE begins to ring.

CHISWELL
Ignore it. Next.

IZZY
Two village fete requests.

An ANSWERPHONE BEEP, and then--

VOICE ON THE PHONE (V.O.)
(gravelly)
They say they piss themselves when they die. Is that true, Chiswell?

Chiswell sways. Glassy-eyed. Filled with turmoil. The line CLICKS dead.

ROBIN
Minister? Is this something we can help with?

CHISWELL
(beat; then to Izzy)
Delete that.

Chiswell exits abruptly. Izzy seems upset.

ROBIN
What was that about?

IZZY
It's just so miserable for him. I honestly think he's done nothing wrong.

17A EXT. SECURITY LOBBY, HOC - DAY 6 (PREVIOUSLY SCENE 12) 17A
 Robin exits, near the end of the working day.

RAFF (O.S.)
 Venetia!

Robin turns to find Raff perched on a nearby wall. He has two glasses of white wine in his hands.

ROBIN
 Hi, Raff. What are you..?

RAFF
 Enjoying the sunshine with a glass of Pinot Grigio. That's Italian for wine. The other one's yours.

Raff offers her one of the glasses. Robin doesn't take it.

RAFF (CONT'D)
 Mostly I wanted to have a drink with you after work. And you have demonstrably just left the office.

Robin LAUGHS. Slightly thrown by his transparent bid.

ROBIN
 I'm actually going straight to another work thing. But thank you.

RAFF
 Are you trying to get me drunk?
 Leaving me with two large glasses?

ROBIN
 Good luck. Hope they're delicious.

She smiles and keeps moving. Sensing his eyes behind her.

18 EXT. ALMA GROVE HOUSE - DAY 6 18

Strike walks with a limp, grimacing slightly as a paving slab catches him and forces him to shift his weight unexpectedly.

He consults his notebook -- yes, this is the house. He RINGS the doorbell. Nobody's home. He moves to--

19 EXT. SIDE RETURN, ALMA GROVE HOUSE - DAY 6 19

Strike finds a side-gate. It appears to be unlocked and ajar. When he touches the handle, he is left with someone else's blood on his palm.

He puts on gloves and heads down the side-alley.

20 INT. KITCHEN, ALMA GROVE HOUSE - DAY 6 (CONTINUOUS) 20

Strike moves cautiously in through the open back-door. He listens carefully for sounds.

He opens the fridge. There is fresh food inside. The kitchen (along with the rest of the house) has an old-lady decorative feel.

20A INT. STAIRCASE, ALMA GROVE HOUSE - DAY 6 20A

Strike climbs quietly upwards. He notes a blood smear on the bannister -- an elongated, downwards streak.

21 INT. UPPER LANDING/BATHROOM, ALMA GROVE HOUSE - DAY 6 21

Strike glances into the two bedrooms.

THE MAIN ONE has a neatly made bed. Folded pyjamas on top of it. At least *some* evidence that someone is living here.

THE OTHER BEDROOM has a messy, unmade, slept-in bed. Half-closed curtains. Smeared glass in the windows.

He turns to the closed bathroom door. Even from the outside it looks damaged, its surface cracked and splintered.

He carefully opens the door.

The mirror has been smashed. There are blots of blood on the linoleum flooring -- not yet fully dried either; the blood smears at the touch of Strike's gloved fingertip.

Strike pushes the door open wider and steps into--

22 INT. BATHROOM, ALMA GROVE HOUSE - DAY 6 (CONTINUOUS) 22

Two toothbrushes at the sink -- one neat-bristled, the other chewed-looking and dropped behind the tap.

Strike glances at the back of the door -- and then pushes it closed, finding: across the back of the wooden door, Billy's signature white horse motif has been carved. The wood gouged out messily. Perhaps with shards of the broken mirror? He can't be sure. A wastepaper bin has been kicked over.

Strike stares down at the blood on the floor.

23 INT. STRIKE'S OFFICE, THE AGENCY - NIGHT 6 23

Robin wipes orange gloop off the floorboards -- a spillage from an overflowing carton of sweet-and-sour pork. It's one of many cartons of Chinese food lined up on the desk.

She glances up as Barclay enters.

ROBIN

Are you Sam?

BARCLAY

Aye. And you'd be Robin?

(they shake hands)

Just waitin' on Batman then?

ROBIN

It was that or the "red breast" joke all through school. I preferred the Batman ones.

Barclay grins.

BARCLAY

Sam Barclay. Barclay's Bank. And you know what rhymes with bank if you're a teenager. So, I share your pain, pal.

Robin smiles back.

ROBIN

How're you finding the job?

BARCLAY

It's getting stoned all day, being lectured on neo-liberalism. I've still no idea what that is.

ROBIN

Well, in your defence, if you're constantly stoned...

BARCLAY

I've tried not inhalin' too much. Unprofessional on the job.

ROBIN

Might want to think about how you word things when you put in your expenses.

Strike enters carrying a bag of beers. He glances quickly between Robin and Barclay. He sniffs the air. Looks over at the Chinese food.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

I think I've over-ordered.

STRIKE

No such thing.

Robin notes his limp; how he turns with his upper body.

Barclay rummages for cutlery...

BARCLAY

Have you got more than two forks?

STRIKE

It's a spoon for me. Beer?

ROBIN

Thanks. We had about fifty messages on the answerphone.

STRIKE

Yeah, I know we need someone. How'd you do with the bugs?

Strike knocks a beer bottle's cap off using his lighter, and passes the bottle to Robin.

ROBIN

I got them out. Are we going to carry on with Chiswell as a client?

STRIKE

I think I'd rather stick close to him, at least until Billy's found.

BARCLAY

No luck at Alma Grove then?

STRIKE

He'd *been* there. He's not there anymore. There was blood on the bathroom floor.

ROBIN

(very concerned)

How much blood?

STRIKE

Blood on the bannister rail as well. It could have been him trying to hang-on and getting dragged off. Or he might have cut himself. He'd carved another one of his horses. It's hard to say.

(beat)

I searched the Land Registry. It's owned by a Mrs Collier. Ring any bells?

(off Robin's 'no')

We don't have enough money to put it under surveillance. Any sign of Billy at your end?

BARCLAY

Nothing, pal. Not a sausage.

Strike attempts to fish a meatball out of its carton using a teaspoon. It slips, eluding him -- until he upends a chopstick, stabs it, and eats it like a toffee apple. He's preoccupied with thoughts of Billy.

ROBIN

I think you're right about trying to stick with Chiswell. Someone left him a message today. I think it was about the girl Billy saw.

Strike looks up sharply.

STRIKE

What kind of message?

ROBIN

It went to answerphone. A man trying to disguise his voice. He said, "They piss themselves when they die."

STRIKE

"They piss themselves when they die"? Not "she pissed herself"?

ROBIN

Yeah. I'm sure.

STRIKE

And you watched him listen to it?

ROBIN

He left straight away. I got the impression Izzy might know something? But she's loyal to her family. I don't think she'll talk.

Strike considers that.

STRIKE

Maybe someone's found out about the police digging? He's done well to keep it out of the papers.

(beat)

He rang me. Wants a report in person. We'll have to drive to his place in Oxfordshire.

BARCLAY

That's a wee way to go for a chat!

STRIKE

Have we got anything to give him?

BARCLAY

I reckon Jimmy deals a bit of weed.

STRIKE

Unless he's caught with a kilo,
that's not going to be enough.

(to Robin)

Have you listened to the bugs?

ROBIN

Not yet.

STRIKE

So we've got nothing.

Awkward silence.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

I found Jimmy's ex-wife. We can
drop in on her before Chiswell.

Trying to apologise to them, in his way:

STRIKE (CONT'D)

So I haven't got much either.

24

INT. HAIRDRESSING SALON - DAY 7

24

Robin and Strike enter a hairdressing salon. They approach the RECEPTIONIST.

STRIKE

I've got an appointment with Dawn.

At the sound of her name, DAWN (Mancunian, sunbed-loving) turns from the CLIENT she is peroxidining.

DAWN

(to Robin, making
assumptions...)

What d'you want doing to him, pet?
Neaten him up all over?

STRIKE

I'm not here for a haircut. I'll
happily pay for one though. I don't
want to waste your time. My name's
Cormoran Strike. I'm a private
detective. Robin's my partner.

DAWN

I read about you! You caught that
man who did those things.

STRIKE

That's me.

(beat)

We were hoping to talk to you about
Jimmy Knight.

DAWN

Shit. What's he done now?

STRIKE

We're just after some background.

Dawn doesn't believe him, but nor is that a deal-breaker.

DAWN

(to the Receptionist)

Sian, can you take out her foils at
ten past?

(to Strike/Robin)

We can talk out back.

25

INT. BACK ROOM, HAIRDRESSING SALON - DAY 7

25

Dawn sets down a mug of tea for Strike.

DAWN

There you go, cock.

STRIKE

Thanks. Very kind.

Dawn settles herself in front of Strike.

DAWN

I've not seen Jimmy in years.

STRIKE

Well, it's his family we're
interested in as much as anything.
Did you ever meet his dad?

DAWN

Jack Knight were horrible. Drunk.
Got barred from everywhere. Used
his fists on his kids, I know that
much. Jimmy left when he were
eighteen, Billy were still really
little. He won't say it, but Jimmy
felt bad he left him. Billy used to
do all this--

Dawn mimics Billy's nose-to-chest tic.

DAWN (CONT'D)

--an' any time you asked him about
growing-up it'd get worse. He
weren't ever right. Lovely though.

ROBIN

You think his dad caused all that?

DAWN

One time Jimmy said his old man were going to hell for what he done. The big joke were his dad worked for a Tory. Ever heard of Jasper Chiswell?

STRIKE

I have, actually. Did Jimmy talk about the Chiswell family?

DAWN

That's the hypocrisy of him! 'Cos he went to their parties, didn't he? Freddie Chiswell's Eighteenth, the big marquee, all that. He hired a tuxedo. I've seen the pictures! Wish I had them now. I'd put them on the internet an' show all his mates what a lick-arse he was around posh kids. They'd've only wanted him around 'cos he could always get drugs.

Beat.

STRIKE

When's the last time you saw Billy?

DAWN

Not since I split with Jimmy. He used to come and stay sometimes but he'd scream the place down. I'm talking four in the morning. He pissed the bed more than once.

ROBIN

Did he ever say why?

DAWN

Why he pissed the bed..?!

ROBIN

I mean, what he was frightened of?

DAWN

He said he woke up and he couldn't breathe 'cos of what he'd done.

ROBIN

What had he done?

DAWN

It were ridiculous! It were all...
(indicates: in his head)
Where they grew up, the local kids would go onto this old chalk horse and make a wish on it.
(MORE)

DAWN (CONT'D)

And Billy said he wished to be dead, so he could be with his mum again, only the horse took some other kid. How cracked is that? I was giving him a cuddle and trying to tell him, but Jimmy come in and told him to shut his fucking mouth about the horse. Kicked me out. Left Billy crying.

(beat)

That's what I thought about after Jimmy walked out. That's not someone you want to grow old with, is it?

A long beat.

DAWN (CONT'D)

I'd better get back. Need to get the rollers off Mrs H before she goes bald.

26

EXT. HAIRDRESSING SALON - DAY 7

26

Robin and Strike walk back towards the parked Land Rover. Robin energised, Strike morose.

ROBIN

You know how Billy said that his dad "helped them bury her"?

STRIKE

Mmmn.

ROBIN

Well, if Jimmy really was that desperate to fit in with Freddie and his crowd..?

STRIKE

He helped them cover-up a murder?

ROBIN

If he was involved in it, he might've? He's obviously trying to stop Billy talking. And it explains why Jack Knight helped bury the girl, if Jimmy was mixed up in it. And why Billy took so long to tell anyone what he saw.

(beat)

You're not convinced.

STRIKE

No, I see what you're saying. I just don't see how Geraint Winn fits into that picture.

(MORE)

STRIKE (CONT'D)

(beat)

And I'm hungry.

They climb into the Land Rover.

27 INT/EXT. LAND ROVER / HAIRDRESSING SALON - DAY 7 (CONTINUOUS)

Seatbelts on...

ROBIN

There are biscuits in my bag.

Strike rummages in her bag and pulls out an unopened packet of biscuits. He eats one.

STRIKE

(mouth full)

What?

ROBIN

You're like one of those old-fashioned pay-phones, only you take biscuits instead of coins.

Strike nods. That's fair. He reaches for another.

STRIKE

I like your idea, but...

(beat)

Chiswell told me that Geraint Winn wants to destroy him. But if Geraint's got something that links Chiswell to a murder, why wouldn't he take it to the police? Let *them* do the work?

Robin hasn't got answers either. She starts the engine.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

We should take a look at Freddie though.

28 EXT. DELL, STEDA COTTAGE, CHISWELL ESTATE - DAY 7

28

Strike and Robin stare down at the excavation site. The vegetation has been trimmed down and there are plenty of signs of activity. The earth has evidently been dug up -- and then replaced. But beyond that, there are no signs of further investigation. No tape. Nothing. Robin looks to Strike for his experience.

ROBIN

Is there only so much they can do, after the bones are taken out?

(beat)

(MORE)

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Do they not tape-off the scene if
it's on private land?

STRIKE

There should still be people here.
For a buried child, you'd dig up
half the wood.

ROBIN

Chiswell couldn't just send them
away though, could he...?

29 EXT. DRIVEWAY, CHISWELL HOUSE - DAY 7

29

Robin's Land Rover bumps over a potholed driveway. Chiswell House comes into view. Scaffolding and loose plastic covering over a section of out-houses. No workmen in sight.

30 EXT. CHISWELL HOUSE - DAY 7

30

Chiswell comes out to greet Strike and Robin.

On the opposite side of the courtyard, Kinvara leads a saddled horse into its stable. She doesn't bother glancing in their direction.

Robin and Strike note the weeds, the cracks in window panes, the flaking paint.

31 INT. RECEPTION ROOM, CHISWELL HOUSE - DAY 7 (MOMENTS LATER) 31

Chiswell pours three glasses of sherry from a decanter and hands one apiece to Strike and Robin.

Strike stands looking at a striking painting hung above the fireplace: a brown-and-white mare nuzzling a pure-white foal.

STRIKE

(reading the panel)

"Mare Mourning".

CHISWELL

The foal's got lethal white syndrome. Looks healthy, but the bowels don't work. Kinvara likes it. It reminds her of Lady.

STRIKE

Who's that?

CHISWELL

A mare she had. Had to be put down.
Happens with animals.

(beat)

(MORE)

CHISWELL (CONT'D)

Now look here. Events are accelerating.

STRIKE

I gather the police have been here.

Beat.

CHISWELL

Who told you that?

STRIKE

Do you know what they were looking for?

CHISWELL

It's irrelevant.

STRIKE

Jimmy Knight grew up at Steda Cottage, didn't he? Where the police have been digging.

CHISWELL

Knight's past is irrelevant. I know all about Knight's childhood. I'm paying you to find out what he's up to now. So where are we? What have you actually got for me?

ROBIN

(lying)

We have some promising leads on Geraint. He looks like he's hiding some damaging stuff. And the Jimmy Knight deep-cover work has revealed drug-dealing. We think there's more to come. We just need more time.

CHISWELL

Time. That's what we lack! I can't give you more time.

STRIKE

We just need a few more days.

Silence.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Freddie was awarded the CGC posthumously, wasn't he?

CHISWELL

He was. What about it?

STRIKE

You don't happen to have it here,
do you? I'd love to see it. For
personal reasons.

Chiswell looks wrong-footed. But then-- pleased.

32

INT. FREDDIE'S BEDROOM, CHISWELL HOUSE - DAY 7

32

Freddie's old room is dusty -- untouched. A mausoleum, with his student-days era posters and knick-knacks on the shelves. All frozen in time.

A fencing sabre is mounted on the wall, with various cups.

Chiswell stands with Strike and Robin, Freddie's Gallantry Cross medal-case opened in his hands.

CHISWELL

Only sixty of these awarded since
it was created.

Robin's eyes scan Freddie's shelves... alighting on some shoe boxes on a shelf, each labelled: "school", "family" etc. She spots photo albums, including ones labelled "18" and "Uni".

ROBIN

Did Freddie always want to join up?

CHISWELL

Family tradition. And that goes a long way with us Chiswells. The country's been good to us, so we have to do our bit in return.

(beat)

He did more than his bit.

Chiswell looks powerfully sad. Then snaps the case shut.

CHISWELL (CONT'D)

Well. You've seen it now.

STRIKE

Thank you. I do appreciate it.

CHISWELL

I'll see you out.

ROBIN

Can I just quickly use the loo?
Where's the nearest..?

CHISWELL

Down the corridor, on the right.

33 INT. GROUND FLOOR HALLWAY, CHISWELL HOUSE - DAY 7 33

Chiswell opens the front door for Strike.

CHISWELL

Next time I have you report back,
have something to tell me. I'll
give you 'til the end of the week.
Then I'll cut my losses.

34 INT. FREDDIE'S BEDROOM, CHISWELL HOUSE - DAY 7 34

Robin goes through the "18" photo album. Working *fast*. There are party photos as well as family photos from that period.

STRIKE (O.S.)

(calling up to her)

Robin?

ROBIN

Won't be a minute!

Robin, frustrated, shoves the whole album into her bag.

35 INT/EXT. LAND ROVER - TRAVELLING - DAY 7 35

Robin drives Strike back towards London.

Strike looks through the stolen photo album.

IN ONE PHOTO: A girl in a distinctive dress has passed out on the grass, her dark hair obscuring her face. Freddie Chiswell has propped a wine glass into her hand and is captured braying with laughter as he tries to urinate into it.

IN ANOTHER: the same girl -- again, only identifiable by that dress, is slumped with her back to camera. Her bared back has been graffitied with crude lipsticked slogans. A boy's tuxedo-clad torso is caught at the side of the image -- with a silver "fencer" pin on his lapel.

ROBIN

Freddie liked humiliating people.

STRIKE

Especially women.

(beat)

His medal was bollocks, by the way.
Purely political. He was a terrible
officer.

In another photo, a young Jimmy Knight is caught nearly out of frame, smoking a joint in the woods, next to Freddie. Strike dwells on it.

35A INT. MAIN OFFICE, THE AGENCY - NIGHT 7

35A

Barclay draws a rough blueprint for Strike and Robin.

BARCLAY

Jimmy's mates run this squat, as much as you can run somewhere like that. Jimmy's got a room *here* and I'm pretty sure he's got Billy in it now. He keeps it locked.

STRIKE

Is there any way I can get to it?

BARCLAY

The developers are trying to clear them out this weekend so they're having a party. More the merrier.

(beat)

I cannae be there. Got a family thing. The missus'd kill me.

STRIKE

That's fine. We'll cover it. Thanks for this. It's good work.

BARCLAY

(pleased)

Thanks, pal. Beats delivering curries off a bike. Alright if I head off?

Strike nods. A friendly clap to the arm. Barclay exits.

STRIKE

(to Robin re: blueprint)
Would you mind covering this? My leg's not great, but if there's a chance Billy's in there...

An agonised beat for Robin.

ROBIN

I'm really sorry but I'm away. It's my anniversary and Matthew's booked a hotel. I can't get out of it.

STRIKE

(beat)

Okay. I'll cover it.

ROBIN

I'm really sorry. I could try to get back early on the Sunday if--

STRIKE

Robin. Forget it. Have a weekend.

Silence falls.

DISSOLVE TO:

36 EXT. CAR PARK, LE MANOIR HOTEL - DAY 8

36

Robin opens the boot of the Land Rover and picks up her suitcase. She winces -- having forgotten about the cut on her hand. A staff member takes her case from her. Matthew is busy taking photos of his surroundings.

37 INT. BEDROOM, LE MANOIR HOTEL - DAY 8

37

Matt photographs their door -- "MIMOSA" -- before opening it.

ROBIN

I'm pretty sure I'll remember where
our room is.

MATTHEW

Forgot I'd gone away with a world-

class detective...

(grinning)

This is for my Insta.

ROBIN

I didn't know you were on that.

MATTHEW

Got two hundred followers, mate.

38 INT. BEDROOM, LE MANOIR HOTEL - DAY 8

38

Matt, well-satisfied with what he finds.

MATTHEW

You'd expect a bigger telly for
seven hundred a night.

ROBIN

It's really nice, Matt. Thank you.

MATTHEW

You know, technically, it's not
been a year yet.

Robin goes to the window. Looks over manicured grounds.

ROBIN

(distracted)

How's that?

MATTHEW

Pronounced man and wife at half-three. 'Til then you were just some bird I was going out with.

He grins at his own teasing. He kisses her neck.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

I know I made a mess of some things but it was still the best day of my life, Rob. I'm lucky to have you. I know that. I really do.

On Robin, remembering--

39 INT. CHURCH, MASHAM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

39

-- the moment Strike walked into the back of the church, knocking over flowers. Robin turning to him as she says--

ROBIN

I do.

40 INT. BEDROOM, LE MANOIR HOTEL - DAY 8

40

Robin turns -- her movement like a decision -- and walks to Matt. She wraps her arms around his shoulders and kisses him.

ROBIN

Happy anniversary, Matthew.

41 EXT. DERELICT WAREHOUSE - DAY 8

41

Strike approaches the building. Hoardings are half-erected around part of the building's perimeter, advertising its forthcoming architectural conversion into office space.

Banners hung from top-floor windows state "People Before Offshore Profits" and "Cities for People Not Rent-Seekers". The THUD-THUD of techno emanates from the interior. Most of the windows have been papered-over.

Strike passes a LOCAL NEWS CREW. They are filming--

-- PROTESTORS, who are arguing with DEVELOPERS and POLICE.

Strike slips past this group. Beyond them, bored BUILDERS drink tea and smoke cigarettes, unable to work.

Strike approaches the doors to the building, where PROTESTORS stand guard / socialise. They look skeptically at Strike.

STRIKE

Big fan of techno. Can I go in?

THREE protestors are wearing "Anonymous"-style white Fawkes masks. One has his pushed on top of his head.

STRIKE (CONT'D)
Can I borrow that mask?

YOUNG PROTESTOR
You can have it. For a tenner.

STRIKE
(drily, as he pays)
How're we feeling about capitalism?

Strike steps into the building--

42 INT. GROUND FLOOR, DERELICT WAREHOUSE - DAY 8 (CONTINUOUS) 42

Strike's eyes adjust to the darkness. A loose dog runs across his path. Strike slips on a torn poster. He GRUNTS as the slip jars his leg.

He puts the Anonymous mask on.

In the half-dark he makes his way towards a rotten flight of wooden steps. TECHNO stomp-stomps above him.

43 INT. PARTY ROOM, DERELICT WAREHOUSE - DAY 8 43

Masked, Strike searches for Billy. A limited, disorienting view from behind the mask, daylight papered-out, strobes jittering across the sweating faces of DANCING SQUATTERS.

44 INT. TOP LANDING, DERELICT WAREHOUSE - DAY 8 44

PEOPLE milling about. Flick is nodding to the beat, alone. Strike glimpses Jimmy Knight coming out of a long corridor, heading to rejoin Flick. Strike times his own walk so that he ends up close to Flick before Jimmy gets there.

JIMMY
He's fine.

FLICK
What if the police come in?

JIMMY
They're not getting in today.

FLICK
But what if they do? And they find him locked-up?

JIMMY
So what's your great idea then?
Let's hear it!
(MORE)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

If he talks, that's it, we're done.
And all he wants to do is fucking
talk!

Jimmy becomes aware of Strike's malingering. He turns to him.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

D'you want to pick a different
spot?

Strike produces a cigarette from his pocket.

STRIKE

Got a light?

Jimmy fumbles for a lighter. Strike puts the cigarette to a non-existent mouth-hole in the mask. Shrugs...

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Design flaw.

JIMMY

Twat.

Jimmy takes Flick by the arm and walks them downstairs. After a beat, Strike moves into the corridor where Jimmy came from.

45

INT. TOP FLOOR, DERELICT WAREHOUSE - DAY 8

45

Strike finds what he is looking for -- a series of office spaces. And only one that has a lock on the door. He KNOCKS.

STRIKE

Billy? You in there?

No answer -- but he HEARS something inside. Movement.

He runs his hands around the top of the door frame, checking for a key. Finding nothing, he stoops to look at the lock type. It's a deadbolt - not something you can jemmy.

He moves to examine the office "walls" -- and finds that they're flimsy, ageing particle-board panels. He takes a screwdriver from his pocket, knocks it into the join, and applies pressure.

As hoped, the panel comes away from its frame.

BILLY (O.S.)

Help! Help!

STRIKE

Billy, it's okay. It's me.

Strike rips the rest of the panel away, crouches down, GRUNTING, and steps inside--

46 INT. BILLY'S ROOM, DERELICT WAREHOUSE - DAY 8 (CONTINUOUS) 46

Billy backs into the corner of the room as Strike straightens up. Billy is agitated, crossing himself, touching his nose.

STRIKE

Hi Billy. It's good to see you.

BILLY

Who told you about me? Why are you here?

STRIKE

Billy, remember: you came to me for help. I've been trying to find you since you ran off. I've been worried about you. I want to help.

BILLY

I can't see you. Jimmy'll kill me.

STRIKE

I can keep you safe. I'm going to find out about the girl you saw strangled. That's a promise.

BILLY

Don't come near me. I can't talk.

(sudden--)

I put the horse on them. I hated doing it, but I still did it! Jimmy says I'll get put away for it.

Strike takes a photo of Suki from his pocket. He hands it to Billy, doing this with an outstretched hand.

STRIKE

Do you recognise this girl?

BILLY

That's Suki. She went back to Aberdeen. The Barrows said so. Why've you got that?

STRIKE

Was she the girl you saw?

BILLY

No. Why would you say that?

Strike puts the photo back into his pocket. Masking any disappointment that he might feel.

STRIKE

Were any of the Chiswell family there that night? It's important that you try to think back.

(beat)

(MORE)

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Billy, do you know who strangled
the girl?

BILLY

I can't say. I can't. I can't.

(beat)

If Chiswell finds me, he'll kill
me. An' he'll kill Jimmy.

Behind Strike the door UNLOCKS. And Jimmy Knight steps in.
Bristling with controlled fury.

JIMMY

(to Billy)

What've you told him?

BILLY

Nothing!

JIMMY

Billy. Listen. Chiswell sent him.

Billy's face twists -- into deep fear and remorse.

STRIKE

Billy, that's not true. Please.

Billy turns -- and runs for the half-open window behind him.
Jimmy races to catch him -- fails -- and follows Billy out
onto a flat roof. Strike struggles, but pursues them.

47

EXT. FLAT ROOF, DERELICT WAREHOUSE - DAY 8

47

Strike sees Billy reach the lip of the roof. Jimmy running to
reach him.

Billy turns. Glances back at Jimmy-- then jumps.

STRIKE

No!

A brutal smashing of guilt and fear. Paralysing him.

Strike sees Jimmy rush to the edge of the roof.

JIMMY

(calling down)

Billy! Come back!

Strike realises-- Billy must not be dead. He's escaping.

Strike turns back, running -- with a head-start on Jimmy now.

48 INT. BILLY'S ROOM, DERELICT WAREHOUSE - DAY 8 48
Strike races out of the door left open by Jimmy-- biting back the pain in his leg...

49 EXT. REAR OF DERELICT WAREHOUSE - DAY 8 49
Billy jumps from a stack of containers. He falls awkwardly. But gets back on his feet, finding a route downwards...

50 INT. TOP LANDING, DERELICT WAREHOUSE - DAY 8 50
Strike hobble-sprints -- Jimmy now closing behind him.
As they reach a half-flight of steps down, Jimmy barges Strike and passes him -- Strike forced to land his weight on his amputated leg -- going down in a messy fall. The pain searing through him -- as Jimmy sprints away down the stairs.
Strike can barely breath for agony. His I.T. band has gone.

51 INT. LIVING ROOM, LORELEI'S FLAT - NIGHT 8 51
Strike looks up as Lorelei enters bearing a tray -- steak and chips, painkillers, and a bag of ice. Strike winces as he pushes himself upright.

LORELEI
I'm like a reverse take-away. I pick you up and take you to the food.
(re: his leg)
Does this happen a lot?

Strike places the ice over his pulled muscle.

STRIKE
No. I pushed it. Stupid of me.
(beat)
Do you mind if I stay for a bit?
Maybe a couple of days? It's really buggered.

She doesn't bother disguising her pleasure at the prospect.

LORELEI
Can't very well chuck you out. When you can hardly leave the bedroom.

She leans in and kisses him.

52

INT. BEDROOM, LE MANOIR HOTEL - DAY 9

52

While Matthew snoozes, Robin lies in bed flicking through social media pictures of the eviction protest...
 #LondonResists #COPRe #HomesForHumans

She alights on one of a familiar, tall man wearing a Fawkes mask, moving through the rave. She lingers there.

She sends Strike a text: *DID YOU FIND BILLY?*

MATTHEW

What are you doing?

Robin startles.

ROBIN

Oh. Nothing. Just-- while you were asleep.

MATTHEW

Well, I'm awake now. C'mere.

Matthew pulls Robin to him. Then moves to lie on top of her.

Robin turns her head away slightly, her eyes empty.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

I love you.

ROBIN

I love you too.

But there is no real sense that Robin believes or feels that.

53

INT. BEDROOM, LORELEI'S FLAT - DAY 9

53

Strike lies flat on his back, alone.

54

INT. MILITARY HOSPITAL - DAY (FLASHBACK)

54

Strike lies on a ward bed, bandaged in multiple places, with a saline drip in his arm, in the aftermath of the IED. His face is still dirty and scabbed.

FIVE OTHER SERVICEMEN are in nearby beds, in varying states of pain and disability. Reading, watching TV, on phones.

Every single one of them turns and outright stares as CHARLOTTE, beautiful, expensively dressed, opens the ward doors and walks the length of the room to Strike's bed.

She bends over him, her face hovering above his.

CHARLOTTE

Did you really think I wouldn't come?

And then she kisses his bruised and broken lips.

55 INT. BEDROOM, LORELEI'S FLAT - DAY 9

55

He swings himself upright. He feels the IT band of his amputated leg. Still very painful.

Strike steadies himself between wall and bed and hops -- then, realising this isn't sustainable, sits on the floor -- and shuffles towards the bathroom on his bum.

56 INT. MILITARY PHYSIOTHERAPY CENTRE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

56

Strike, in T-shirt and shorts, is learning to walk again, using parallel bars to steady himself. He is in pain. All the time. His arms tremble with exhaustion, his eyes fastened on the green emergency-exit sign above the door.

He lifts his hands-- takes a couple of faltering steps -- falls and tries to catch himself but slips, catching one side bar, swinging off it to land heavily on the floor.

Charlotte, seated, meets Strike's eye as she half-rises from her chair. He shakes his head: no. He can barely contain his emotion.

57 INT. HALLWAY/BATHROOM, LORELEI'S FLAT - DAY 9

57

Strike shuffles to the threshold of the bathroom. Braces his foot against the doorframe and lifts himself upright.

Strike half-hops, half-falls into position at the toilet. Standing to piss, on principle.

58 INT. MILITARY HOSPITAL - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

58

Strike and Charlotte lie together on his narrow ward bed, curtain drawn around them. He swallows back a handful of painkillers.

CHARLOTTE

Is it bad tonight?

Strike nods stiffly. Trying to contain how he feels -- mouth twisting -- until the grief and despair bubbles out of him.

STRIKE

What am I good for now?

She pulls him into her arms. Cradling his head.

CHARLOTTE

Everything. You're good for
everything.

STRIKE

I love you.

CHARLOTTE

And you've got me.

59 OMITTED

59

60 MOVED TO SCENE 85B

60

61 INT. BEDROOM, LORELEI'S FLAT - DAY 9

61

Strike collapses back onto the bed, sweating and exhausted.
Staring up at the ceiling. Worn out and dispirited.

62 INT. MAIN OFFICE / STRIKE'S OFFICE, THE AGENCY - DAY 9 62

Robin enters. She can hear someone in Strike's office--

ROBIN

Did you get my message?

LORELEI (O.S.)

Hi Robin. It's me.

Robin enters Strike's office to find Lorelei packing a couple of Strike's notebooks into a wheeled suitcase.

LORELEI (CONT'D)

How was your weekend?

ROBIN

It was fine, thank you. Um--

LORELEI

Cormoran's hurt his leg. He's staying for a few days. Do you know where he keeps his phone charger?

Robin stares at Lorelei. Guilt (and jealousy?).

ROBIN

Bottom drawer.

Lorelei opens the bottom drawer of Strike's desk.

LORELEI

Check you out! Right first time.

63

INT. LIVING ROOM, LORELEI'S FLAT - NIGHT 9

63

Strike is eating noodles on the sofa in boxer-shorts and T-shirt. His laptop is open on his lap.

He skims through pictures of the Chiswell family (that Robin took from Freddie's room) pausing on an image of Freddie at his 18th Birthday party, in a tuxedo. Then another: Major Freddie Chiswell, proudly wearing his regimental dress uniform.

He looks up as Lorelei enters.

LORELEI

I've brought a guest with me.

Robin appears behind Lorelei, unsure whether showing-up like this was the right thing to do. Strike is self-conscious.

LORELEI (CONT'D)

Found her lurking in your office.
Do you want your stuff now or..?

STRIKE

Yes, please. Thanks.

She hands Strike the case. He opens it and immediately pulls on a pair of jogging bottoms. Robin averting her eyes.

LORELEI

Do you want a drink, Robin?

ROBIN

Oh. Yes, please. Anything.

Robin notes Strike wincing as he shifts position.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Did you find him?

STRIKE

Briefly. Barclay says Jimmy can't find him either now. He's running.

(beat)

Take a seat.

Robin sits beside him.

ROBIN

I've gone through the audio on the bugs. Do you want to hear it? The first thing's a call with a woman called Elspeth Curtis-Lacey. She's been in their charity videos. She was one of their trustees. Resigned last month.

Robin opens her laptop. She plays the AUDIO:

GERAINT (V.O.)

--you have to give me more time.
End of the month. I will cast-iron
guarantee I can put the money back.
It's a blip and-- We can't go under
over a blip, can we? I don't
believe you'd do that to us anyway.
You've been a friend to Della for--

Robin pauses.

ROBIN

I think Geraint's been taking money
out of their charity funds.

STRIKE

That'd be perfect for Chiswell.
We'd need some decent evidence.

ROBIN

I asked Izzy for an introduction to
Curtis-Lacey. She's going to be at
an event for para-athletes.

Lorelei brings Robin a colourful cocktail in a long glass.

LORELEI

That'll put hairs on your chest.

ROBIN

Thank you.

Lorelei steps away again. Looking back at the two of them
together. Wondering, at least a little...

Robin presses PLAY on the final pinned-audio section:

GERAINT (V.O.)

Wait a second, Jimmy. Close the
door, Aamir.

(*clunk*)

Jimmy, we want the same thing and
we are *very close* to getting the
pictures. Aamir's taking care of
it. Then Chiswell can't hide.

Robin ends the audio.

ROBIN

That's the most useful stuff.

STRIKE

No, it's good. It might really help
us hang onto our client. Push
Curtis-Lacey hard if you need to.

Beat.

ROBIN

How are you doing?

STRIKE

It's not been a totally wasted day.

Strike has the photos that Robin took from Freddie's room.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

You see the lapel pin on the tuxedo? It's a silver fencer. Freddie had a fencer's sabre mounted on his bedroom wall. I dug around. He was on the UK Under-19s squad. And so was this girl.

Strike shows Robin a web-page... A team portrait. He points out a diminutive girl with long dark hair.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

That's Rhiannon Winn. Della and Geraint's only child. She's sixteen in that photo.

ROBIN

She's small for her age. Long dark hair. You don't think Billy saw her strangled..?

STRIKE

Rhiannon's buried in Wales. She's definitely not the girl in the dell. But there's this as well.

Another photo. Rhiannon, shy, hanging onto Della's arm at a political evening event. Rhiannon is wearing the same dress as the drunk girl in Freddie's photos.

ROBIN

It's the same dress.

STRIKE

Rhiannon's the girl that Freddie humiliated at his party.

(beat)

I rang their old fencing coach. When Rhiannon made it onto the team, Freddie's girlfriend lost her spot. What if these...

(re: the party photos)

...are the tip of the iceberg? What if Freddie did something even nastier later on? Jimmy was there. Maybe he saw someone take more photos.

ROBIN

What do you think he did to her?

STRIKE

What we know is Rhiannon hung herself four weeks after the party.

Beat.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Chiswell wants people to respect his son's legacy. But I did Freddie's case. His men all hated him. There are some kids who join the army out of family tradition. And there are ones who get sent there, to be straightened out.

ROBIN

So... Jimmy tries to blackmail Chiswell over what his son did to Rhiannon. Maybe even what Chiswell did to cover it up. But he can't get proof. So he goes to Rhiannon's dad and they start working together.

STRIKE

And somehow Aamir's going to help them get hold of pictures.

ROBIN

Who can we talk to about any of this, without tipping the Chiswells off?

STRIKE

I don't know.

Strike looks suddenly exhausted. He shifts his leg. It's hurting.

ROBIN

I'd better let you... I mean, I can come back tomorrow if you're going to be here awhile?

STRIKE

Let's see how it goes.

ROBIN

I'm so sorry that I wasn't--

STRIKE

Forget it. Was it a good weekend?

ROBIN

(beat)

It was okay.

A brief moment of eye-contact. Then they both drop it.

64

INT. CHISWELL'S OFFICE, HOC - DAY 10

64

Robin works quietly, looking at case notes on her laptop. Izzy hangs a pretty evening dress onto the back of the door, smoothing out a wrinkle or two.

ROBIN

Gorgeous dress, Izzy.

IZZY

Thanks! You never know with these things. You might meet someone. Hopefully *not* another MP!

ROBIN

You must have had some great parties at Chiswell House.

IZZY

When we were younger we did.

ROBIN

What was Freddie's eighteenth like?
(off Izzy's reaction)
Your Dad showed us his room when we were there. There were some photos.

IZZY

No there aren't. Not of that party. Sorry, what exactly did you see?

ROBIN

(beat)

I must have got it wrong.

IZZY

Well, what were these photos of?

Chiswell enters. [He is full of shock-and-fury, having just discovered something terrible about his family.]

CHISWELL

(to Izzy)

Is that *thing* gone?

IZZY

Yes. Deleted.

Chiswell slams down a blue tube of Lachesis pills onto the inbox on his desk.

CHISWELL

Pick me up from the Ministry at six.

IZZY

How was lovely Henry Drummond?

CHISWELL

Oh, shut up, Izzy! For God's sake!

Chiswell clutches his head. Izzy flushes, upset, then stands and walks out pointedly. Robin is left alone with Chiswell.

CHISWELL (CONT'D)

Four children. Only one of them worth a damn, and he's dead. He would have stood next to me. He would have stared these bastards down.

Chiswell raises his head. He looks drained.

CHISWELL (CONT'D)

What progress have you made?

ROBIN

After I speak to Dr Curtis-Lacey we might be able to--

CHISWELL

"Might" is no good. It's my head on the block or theirs. Please. They're taking everything from me.

Chiswell walks to Robin. Takes her hand.

CHISWELL (CONT'D)

I'm begging you.

Chiswell collects himself and exits.

Robin immediately goes to Izzy's desk before the computer can sleep. She clicks on the "deleted" folder in Izzy's email.

65

INT. BEDROOM, LORELEI'S FLAT - DAY 10

65

Strike is lying on the bed, being worked on by a PHYSIO. He grimaces as they manipulate his leg muscles.

His PHONE rings.

STRIKE

Sorry. Got to get this. Carry on.

Strike puts the call on speaker-phone.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

How're you doing, Sam?

BARCLAY (V.O.)

There's something going on, pal. Jimmy's gone to some event for athletes. Wouldn't let me go.

STRIKE

Robin's headed to the same thing.

Strike GRUNTS as the Physio hits a sore spot.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Christ...

BARCLAY (V.O.)

(beat)

Er... I've not interrupted--

STRIKE

(terse)

I'm with the *physio*.

BARCLAY (V.O.)

Ah, okay.

(beat)

They've taken a banner with them.

It's got that horse on it. The one

Billy carved on your wall?

STRIKE

Alright. I'll get down there.

Strike ends the call. Pushes himself upright. Clearly the Physio disapproves of the proposed course of action.

PHYSIO

What happened to a week of bed rest?

STRIKE

(re: his phone)

That happened.

66

INT. MAIN ROOM, LORELEI'S FLAT - DAY 10 (MOMENTS LATER) 66

Strike, smartly dressed, walking with his stick, steps out. Lorelei admires the effect. She steps to adjust his tie.

LORELEI

Very... rakish. I like the stick.
Is it ornamental or essential?

STRIKE

There's one way to tell. You take
it off me and see if I fall over.

Lorelei LAUGHS. Rests a hand over his own on the handle, and kisses him deeply.

LORELEI

Are you alright to go? The physio
said--

STRIKE

I'll take it easy.

LORELEI

Well, I hope the government throws a good party. Call me when you're done.

67

INT. CHISWELL'S OFFICE, HOC - DAY 10

67

Izzy has changed into her dress. Raff has popped by, and is swinging his legs off his dad's desk.

RAFF

What can I do?

IZZY

You could try behaving yourself. Honestly, you're not helping Papa. He is so stressed. Drummond's sale obviously isn't going to raise anything like what--

Robin steps back into the office, freshly-changed into *the green dress*.

RAFF

Wow. Venetia. You look amazing.

ROBIN

Thanks, Raff.

Kinvara enters before Robin can close the door. Kinvara is wearing a horse pendant around her neck. Her neckline plunges dramatically. She eyes Robin over.

IZZY

(to Kinvara)

And don't you look gorgeous as well!

ROBIN

I like your pendant.

KINVARA

(to Robin)

You're being treated very well, aren't you? For an *intern*.

RAFF

Venetia's doing something useful, and she's free of charge. She's the complete opposite of you, Kinvara.

KINVARA

Oh, fuck off, you little shit.

Rounding on Raff makes Kinvara notice the blue tube of pills. She picks them up.

KINVARA (CONT'D)
(to Izzy)
Why are these here?

IZZY
Papa left them there earlier. Are they yours?

After a beat, Kinvara puts the pills in her bag.

IZZY (CONT'D)
We should probably push off? Papa's in a vile mood. He won't thank us if we make him late.

68 EXT. PALL MALL - DAY 10

68

Strike makes his way towards the SOUND of a crowd cheering for arriving stars.

69 INT/EXT. LIMOUSINE/ROAD - TRAVELLING - DAY 10

69

Chiswell is in the car, having joined Izzy, Kinvara and Robin.

IZZY
I do think we might have invited Raff.

CHISWELL
Didn't want him trailing after Venetia like a dog in heat.

KINVARA
It's only bitches who go into heat.

CHISWELL
You'd be the expert.

An appalling silence. Chiswell and Kinvara stare at each other until Kinvara breaks off first and looks out of the car's window.

IZZY
I am *ready* for some champers!

70 EXT. PARA-ATHLETE RECEPTION, PALL MALL - DAY 10

70

Flick pulls up a bandana to cover the lower part of her face.

FLICK
It's his car next.

Digby, Shanice and other CORE members are holding a thick rolled banner. They begin to unfurl it.

71 INT/EXT. LIMOUSINE - TRAVELLING / PARA-ATHLETE RECEPTION, 71 PALL MALL - DAY 10

A CROWD OF SPECTATORS line the approach to the reception venue: a mansion, with red carpet laid out by the PRESS PEN.

A WHEELCHAIR ATHLETE rolls down a ramp from a limo. He turns and waves to the crowd, poses for photographs, then wheels to sign an autograph for a FAN.

Chiswell's limousine slows. There is another car stopped just ahead of them, its door open, a wheelchair ramp being fitted. They'll be next out for carpet and flashbulbs.

72 EXT. PARA-ATHLETE RECEPTION, PALL MALL - DAY 10

72

Strike spots C.O.Re and pushes through the crowd towards them.

Their banner is unfurled; they are waiting for their moment before raising it. Strike can't see it from this angle.

Strike notes the heavy police presence.

Flick takes up a corner of the banner.

FLICK

Get ready.

The passenger door of the car in front of Chiswell's limo is re-closed and the car drives off (down the exit-to-street channel). The way is clear for Chiswell's entrance.

Chiswell's car glides forward. Nearly at the red carpet.

Strike steps in front of Jimmy.

STRIKE

Hello, Jimmy.

Strike now has a view of the banner in full. It depicts: Chiswell, hanging from gallows that have a white horse icon painted across its long beam.

Jimmy drops his end of the banner and steps close to Strike. Full of coiled aggression.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

There's police everywhere. I wouldn't.

Jimmy kicks Strike's walking stick. Strike GRUNTS in pain, but then straightens and stares Jimmy down. Angry now.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

The girl buried behind your dad's cottage. Did you know her name?

Jimmy explodes -- swinging a vicious hook at Strike's chin. Strike sees it coming and head-butts Jimmy before the blow lands, knocking Jimmy backwards--

Flick drops her corner of the banner and piles in, the banner getting knocked to the ground as the crowd scatters, frightened, some of them SCREAMING --

Jimmy comes back at Strike -- with the rest of CORe also closing in on him, Digby kicking at Strike's right leg and Flick pounding her fists into Strike's head. Strike elbows Digby in the face-- but he's overwhelmed--

He tries to stay on his feet but there are five of them on him -- he buckles at a punch to his gut, trying to protect his injured leg --

But--

The COMMOTION has drawn POLICE and SECURITY, who now sprint to intervene as the fight breaks through the barriers.

INSIDE THE LIMO

As it halts, ready for them to disembark, Robin spots Strike.

ROBIN

Oh my God.

Chiswell follows her gaze. Sees Strike. He opens his door.

KINVARA

(re: Strike)

What's going on..?

CHISWELL

He works for me.

Chiswell climbs out of the limo and walks to the Police, who are now escorting a bloodied Strike, Jimmy and the rest of C.O.Re away from the scene.

CHISWELL (CONT'D)

(to the Police)

Hoi! The one with the stick. He's a guest of mine. Let him go.

The POLICEMAN holding Strike glances at Chiswell's official car and at the minister -- then at his colleagues --

CHISWELL (CONT'D)

Come on! Chop chop!

The Policeman lets go of Strike. Chiswell waves him over.

Strike limps to join Chiswell.

CHISWELL (CONT'D)
What were you doing?!

STRIKE
Protecting you.

On the other side of the limo, Izzy, Robin and Kinvara cautiously disembark.

FLICK
(shouting at Chiswell)
He put the horse on them, Chiswell,
you bastard!

Suddenly Flick breaks free of a Policeman's grip. She runs at Chiswell.

FLICK (CONT'D)
Murderer!

Flick is tackled to the ground by a POLICEWOMAN, brought down just a few yards from Chiswell. The Press Photographers light up Flick's arrest.

Chiswell hurries away towards the main doors of the venue. Keen to be away from the photographers' flashes. As he and Strike pass them, Robin, Izzy and Kinvara join and follow.

KINVARA
What did that girl say?

CHISWELL
Will you shut up, you *stupid bitch!*

73 OMITTED

73

74 INT. DISABLED TOILET, PARA-ATHLETE RECEPTION - DAY 10

74

Robin cleans the blood off Strike.

Strike looks at Robin's reflection in the mirror.

STRIKE
Nice dress.

Robin moves to carefully wipe blood from Strike's eyebrow. It puts them in close proximity.

STRIKE (CONT'D)
He had a banner with the white horse on it.

Robin pauses. Then digs out her phone.

ROBIN

Someone sent Izzy this. I got it out of her deleted emails.

Robin PLAYS the video file:

Billy (in the Alma Grove bedroom) carves a white horse motif into a thick wooden chopping board. He looks to camera:

BILLY

I put the horse on them.

BACK ON STRIKE AND ROBIN

STRIKE

Chiswell's running out of time.
Which means we are, too.

Blood trickles down Strike's cheek. Robin examines his scalp for wounds. There is an intimacy to it.

ROBIN

You've got a cut on the back of
your head that might need a stitch.

(beat)

I didn't think you were coming
tonight.

STRIKE

I heard there'd be a buffet.

ROBIN

(smiling)

I'm afraid they lied to you.

STRIKE

That's politicians.

75

INT. PARA-ATHLETE RECEPTION - NIGHT 10

75

The reception event is in full swing -- a glamorous, classical venue in which WAITING STAFF circulate with glasses of champagne and canapes. GUESTS in evening-wear talk in groups, clustered around STAR ATHLETES.

Robin approaches ELSPETH CURTIS-LACEY.

ROBIN

Hello. I'm Venetia Hall. You're Dr
Curtis-Lacey, aren't you?

DR ELSPETH

That's right. Are you involved on
the political side..?

ROBIN

Actually it's the Winn's charity I wanted to talk to you about.

Robin is watching Elspeth's face carefully; she sees the shadow. Dr Elspeth is already politely pulling away...

ROBIN (CONT'D)

You're a trustee there, aren't you?

DR ELSPEETH

I was. I've resigned. So perhaps I'm not the *best* person to--

ROBIN

Did you resign over financial irregularities?

Dr Elspeth looks sharply at Robin.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

What I'd really like to discuss is Geraint Winn.

DR ELSPEETH

(beat)

I'm sorry. Who are you?

ROBIN

I'm a private investigator. I'm not accusing *you* of anything. But it'd be best if you were honest with me.

DR ELSPEETH

That sounds rather like a threat.

ROBIN

I know you're an old friend of Della Winn's. There's probably still a way for her to come out of this with her career intact.

(beat)

Like I say, it's Geraint I'm interested in.

DR ELSPEETH

I see.

(beat)

Oh, God. Can I have a think?

ROBIN

Not really, no.

76

INT. PARA-ATHLETE RECEPTION - NIGHT 10

76

Strike chews a mini-burger as Chiswell and Kinvara argue in a hushed but clearly furious exchange. Kinvara breaks away and heads for the exit doors.

Robin rejoins Strike. Chiswell is also headed for them.

Strike sees that Curtis-Lacey has gone to talk to Geraint.

ROBIN

She basically confirmed it.

Chiswell interrupts.

CHISWELL

What did she have to say?

STRIKE

(beat)

We'll do better to gather hard evidence before--

CHISWELL

Spit it out! What's he done?

ROBIN

We think he's defrauded their charity. Trustees are resigning.

Chiswell takes that in. Slowly smiling.

CHISWELL

Yerse. That'd do it.

STRIKE

Before you do anything we need to--

Geraint walks over to interrupt the three of them.

GERAINT

Who are you, *Venetia*?

Strike intervenes, offering his own hand with a smile.

CHISWELL

Evening, Geraint. This is Cormoran Strike. He's a private investigator.

Geraint is glassy-eyed, still staring at Venetia.

GERAINT

What are you? What have you done?

CHISWELL

You've been taking money out of your own charity, Geraint.

(MORE)

CHISWELL (CONT'D)

That'll ruin you, if it gets out.
You and Della both.

GERAINT

(devastated)

It's a loan...

CHISWELL

No, it's not. And your trustees
might try and slip off quietly, but
they won't lie to the police.

(beat)

You'll tell Jimmy Knight that you
can't get your evidence after all.
And I'll forget to call the Charity
Commission about your accounts. Do
we understand each other?

A long beat.

GERAINT

Yes.

CHISWELL

Off you go then.

Geraint turns and stumbles away.

CHISWELL (CONT'D)

(to Strike)

Come and see me at Ebury Street
tomorrow, will you? 10am. I think I
might have another job for you.

Chiswell turns away from Strike and seamlessly enters into
another conversation.

Strike and Robin are left alone.

ROBIN

I feel a bit bad about that...

STRIKE

Maybe it's time we went home. See
you at Ebury Street.

Strike parts from Robin. He's not terribly agile with his leg
in this condition. He has to ask people to please excuse him,
and they duly part, until one woman doesn't -- and instead
she turns--

-- and Strike finds himself face-to-face with Charlotte. He
sees that she is heavily pregnant

CHARLOTTE

Corm.

STRIKE

Hello, Charlotte.

Their mutual shock at finding each other here is genuine.

CHARLOTTE

What are you doing here?

STRIKE

(beat)

Celebrity amputee. You?

CHARLOTTE

Jago's niece rides. The one with--

STRIKE

Cerebral palsy.

CHARLOTTE

She's remarkable actually.

Incredible rider. Obviously she is.

This whole room's full of...

Charlotte's hand is shaking with nerves. The glass of water she is holding spills onto her belly.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Her father's in Hong Kong so her mum invited me along instead. I like her side of the family. Jago's side I could do without. He's not here either. He's in the States.

(beat)

I got my dates all wrong. I'm not really dressed for this, am I? But then I didn't have time to change.

Charlotte finally abates.

STRIKE

Well, nice to see you.

Strike attempts to go -- but she steps to him, resting her hand briefly on his. Then quickly removing it.

CHARLOTTE

Don't go.

(beat)

Are you here with anyone?

STRIKE

No.

(re: her belly)

Who've you brought?

CHARLOTTE

Twins. That's why I'm huge. They're not due for ages.

IZZY

Oh my God, Charlie!

Izzy swoops on them, delighted. Charlotte less pleased.

CHARLOTTE

Izzy. How are you?

IZZY

Oh, you know, sort of all over the place. I know all your news from Raff.

(to Strike)

Raff had a little wing-ding with one of Charlie's friends.

CHARLOTTE

(disinterested)

Is he well?

IZZY

He's incorrigible. There's the girl who plays trumpet, the arty girl on a houseboat, the baronet's daughter. The list goes on!

Strike makes another bid for the exit, only now Charlotte goes with him.

CHARLOTTE

(calling back)

Bye, Izzy.

STRIKE

I don't think I'm going your way.

CHARLOTTE

Well unless you're tunnelling out, we're both heading for the door.

77

INT. MAIN STAIRCASE, PARA-ATHLETE RECEPTION - NIGHT 10

77

Charlotte takes Strike's arm at the top of the stairs.

CHARLOTTE

High heels...

(beat)

There are some things I'm not prepared to give up.

They begin to descend together.

Charlotte holds Strike's arm a little tighter.

He notices the bracelet she is wearing on her wrist. He looks away from her, and from it.

EXITING THE TOILETS

Robin sees Strike and Charlotte appearing to head out together. She hangs back, watching them, wondering.

78 EXT. ENTRANCE HALL, PARA-ATHLETE RECEPTION - NIGHT 10 78

Strike firmly shrugs Charlotte off.

CHARLOTTE

Share a cab?

STRIKE

No.

He turns into the night on his own.

CHARLOTTE

Where's the cane I gave you?

STRIKE

(not looking back)

You kept it.

79 INT/EXT. BLACK CAB - NIGHT 10 79

Strike travels on his own. Deep in thought--

80 INT. CHARLOTTE'S BEDROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK) 80

In bed together, in her Holland Park apartment.

Strike presents Charlotte with a small, pretty case. She opens it to find -- (the same) bracelet.

STRIKE

Happy birthday.

She kisses him. Then, teasing--

CHARLOTTE

It's completely beautiful. Not at all your usual thing...

STRIKE

(pulling her to him)

Not true.

81 INT/EXT. BLACK CAB - NIGHT 10 81

Strike leans forward to talk to the CABBIE.

STRIKE

Any chance I can smoke?

82

INT. BEDROOM, ROBIN AND MATT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 10

82

Robin sets down her evening bag. Matt rises from the bed.

ROBIN

I can smell the booze on you.

MATTHEW

Bit of lubricant. Let's get this thing off you.

ROBIN

I'm not sure if I feel--

He cuts her voice off with a hard kiss to the mouth. His hand reaches for the zipper down the back of the dress. He tugs it hard -- Robin hears the fabric rip. She breaks off from his kiss. Matt shrugs. Testing her.

MATTHEW

It's only a dress.

He kisses her again, and tugs harder at the zip -- now deepening the tear. Robin pushes him away.

ROBIN

I don't want to. I'm tired.

Matt LAUGHS, sour, and turns away. The breeze from the open window catches the back of Robin's dress, now in ruins.

83

INT. BEDROOM, LORELEI'S FLAT - NIGHT 10

83

Lorelei lies in Strike's arms. In this moment, he is grateful for the simplicity -- the generosity -- of what they are.

STRIKE

Thanks for having me here this week. It's been good.

LORELEI

I've liked it too.

STRIKE

I want you to know... I really like what we have. This is good, isn't it? This is what... people look for.

She smiles. Cups his face.

LORELEI

I love you.

(beat)

Did you hear me?

STRIKE

(beat)

Yeah. I did.

A long beat. Then Lorelei quietly gets up and leaves the room. Strike is left with the beginning of the end.

84 EXT. LORELEI'S FLAT - NIGHT 10

84

Strike exits Lorelei's building.

85 INT. STAIRS, THE AGENCY - NIGHT 10

85

Strike trudges slowly back towards his upper storey lair, setting his bag down every few stairs...

85A INT. STRIKE'S BEDSIT, THE AGENCY - NIGHT 10

85A

Strike chuck's his bag down and slumps onto a chair. Staring into space.

85B EXT. MILITARY PHYSIOTHERAPY CENTRE - DAY (FLASHBACK) - 85B
PREVIOUSLY SCENE 60

Strike's old friend NICK sits with Strike on a bench, a pair of crutches propped against it.

Strike's facial injuries have mostly healed. Nick cracks open a pair of beers for them. Strike lights a cigarette.

STRIKE

I'm going to marry Charlotte.

NICK

Good move. 'Shame to waste all that combat training. Slightly increased risk of getting killed though.

Strike grins. Sure, though, that he's right about her.

86 INT. STRIKE'S BEDSIT, THE AGENCY - NIGHT 10

86

Just before 2am. Strike is not asleep. He sits at his kitchenette table with a beer. His phone RINGS. He picks up:

STRIKE

Strike.

BILLY (V.O.)

(on phone; filtered)

I-- I wanted to say I'm sorry I got you involved. I'm sorry. If you're not what Jimmy says I'm sorry--

STRIKE

Billy, where are you?

BILLY (V.O.)

I see her every night. I can't hack it. I can't keep running.

In the background of Billy's call, a distinctive set of CHIMES begins to ring...

Strike begins to pull on his prosthesis, gathering clothes, ready to leave again.

BILLY (V.O.)

I only ever did things 'cos my dad made me. I never wanted to...

STRIKE

What did he make you do, Billy?

The line CLICKS dead. Strike SWEARS softly. In a rush now.

87

EXT. LEICESTER SQUARE - NIGHT 10

87

Strike hurries on foot, walking with his stick. He reaches the Swiss Glockenspiel Clock, as it CHIMES again.

There are several homeless people in nearby doorways, tucked up alleys. Strike flicks a torch beam over them...

Only one sleeper seems to lack any kind of shelter...

Strike hurries to the curled-up figure in a doorway.

STRIKE

Billy?

Strike carefully lays his hands on Billy. Billy MOANS softly, on the fringes of consciousness as Strike turns him.

Blood is soaking through the front of Billy's T-shirt. He has lost a lot of blood.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Oh shit. Billy?

Billy is too far gone to reply. Strike tries to assess the wound, but Billy's stomach is a livid mess. Strike tries to put pressure on the wound even as he dials 999.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

(on phone)

I need an ambulance. I think a man's been stabbed.

(MORE)

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Leicester Square, where it meets
Wardour Street. He's lost a lot of
blood.

DISSOLVE TO:

88 EXT. EBURY STREET TOWNHOUSE - DAY 11

88

Robin is alone on the pavement, waiting. She checks the time on her phone again, then calls.

ROBIN

(on phone)

Cormoran, are you close? It's just
he's got a real thing about
punctuality.

STRIKE (V.O.)

Go in. I'm stuck in traffic. Been
up all night. Explain when I see
you.

Robin pockets her phone and walks to Chiswell's front door.
She KNOCKS.

She waits, then KNOCKS again.

She hears something that might have been a muffled call --
perhaps from inside, perhaps from nearby...

She notices that the door isn't quite fully-closed. She gives it a budge with her shoulder and it unsticks.

ROBIN

(calling in)

Hello? Minister?

89 INT. FRONT HALL/RECEPTION ROOM, EBURY STREET TOWNHOUSE - 89
DAY 11 (CONTINUOUS)

Robin steps quietly down the hall, towards the kitchen (visible at the far end of the house). A RADIO PLAYS classical music at a low volume.

Robin pushes the door closed again -- it catches but doesn't fully-shut. She leaves it like that.

ROBIN

(calling out)

Minister? It's Robin from the
agency.

The drab wallpaper is peeling in places.

As she passes the door to the FRONT RECEPTION she sees--

Jasper Chiswell, sitting in a Queen Anne chair in the shuttered room, his head shrink wrapped in a clear plastic bag. (NB - we never see how it's been tied). There is a stain at his groin where his bladder has emptied.

He has a hole in one sock.

Robin can barely comprehend what she is seeing.

END OF PART TWO