



Lethal White

Episode 3

By Tom Edge

Adapted from the novel by Robert Galbraith

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1

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

1

Robin begins taking photos of the body.

CREAKS and CITY NOISES unnerving her.

The DOORBELL rings, startling her.

ROBIN
(calling out)
It's open.

Strike enters -- sees her expression.

STRIKE
Are you okay?
(beat)
Where's Chiswell?

ROBIN
He's-- uh...

Strike walks down the hallway. Sees the body.

STRIKE
Have you called the police?

Robin shakes her head.

ROBIN
There's no pulse. I checked that.

STRIKE
Got a spare pair of gloves?

Robin rummages in her bag and passes him a pair of fresh,
bagged latex gloves. Strike puts them on.

STRIKE (CONT'D)
I'm going to have a quick look
around. Make sure no-one's still
here.

Strike hurries out of the room, dialling as he goes...

STRIKE (CONT'D)
Police, please.
(becoming O.S.)
My name's Cormoran Strike. I've
come for a meeting with a
government minister and I've found
him dead. Can I give you the
address?

Robin takes out her camera-phone and begins to move around
the scene.

She photographs a note on Ebury Street letterhead notepaper. The handwriting is feminine. She reads it:

KINVARA (V.O.)

"You've been stressed and unpleasant for a long time and I've tried to help you, but tonight was the final straw. How stupid do you think I am, putting that girl from your office right under my nose? I've had enough. I've gone back to Oxfordshire. Once I've made arrangements for the horses, I'll clear out for good. K."

A glass with a few millimetres of orange juice pooled in its base rests on the glass coffee table by Chiswell's armchair. When Robin photographs it, her flash lights a powdery residue on the side of the glass.

Strike re-enters.

STRIKE

The place is empty.

ROBIN

I think he drank something. There's a residue in the glass.

STRIKE

There are crushed-up pills in the kitchen.

The WAIL of sirens approaching.

Robin photographs Chiswell's body. His face distorted beneath the plastic bag.

DISSOLVE TO:

2 MOVED TO SCENE 8A 2

3 INT/EXT. LAND ROVER - TRAVELLING, OXFORDSHIRE - DAY 12 3

The Land Rover winds through Oxfordshire country lanes.

SUPERIMPOSE: Two weeks later

Inside the car Robin and Strike are headed towards Woolstone.

ROBIN

Has Wardle heard anything else?

STRIKE

If he has, he can't say.

(wry)

(MORE)

STRIKE (CONT'D)

DCI McMurran called him. He's not allowed to talk to me. She's done the same with every Met detective I've worked with. She rang Carver.

ROBIN

I thought Carver hates you?

STRIKE

He does! She's being thorough. I suppose a dead Government minister isn't a case you want to mess up.

They park in front of a pub, The White Horse, and alight. Strike's PHONE BEEPS with a message.

(NB - Strike is no longer using his cane).

3A

EXT. WHITE HORSE PUB, WOOLSTONE - DAY 12 (CONTINUOUS)

3A

The pub's hanging sign is the Uffington Horse motif.

STRIKE

(reading his phone)

Billy's been moved out of critical care.

ROBIN

That's good. Can we see him?

STRIKE

(sceptical)

We can try.

Through the pub window, they spy Izzy. She is sitting alone, sombre, tired -- still grieving.

4

INT. THE WHITE HORSE PUB, WOOLSTONE - DAY 12

4

Strike and Robin sit with Izzy at her table. Izzy is nursing an untouched glass of wine. Robin has water, Strike a pint.

Izzy hands Strike a filled-out cheque.

IZZY

That's Papa's last invoice, paid in full.

STRIKE

It's appreciated. Thanks, Izzy.

IZZY

The police think it might still be suicide. It's not true. Papa would never have killed himself.

(MORE)

IZZY (CONT'D)

He always said it's the coward's way out.

(beat)

Kinvara murdered him.

Beat. Then, measured:

STRIKE

Do you have any evidence for that?

IZZY

I just know she did. I want to hire you to prove it.

STRIKE

I'm afraid we can't take a job on those terms. Either you want the truth, however it turns out, or you need to find a different agency.

IZZY

(frosty)

I'm just trying to save you some time. Seeing as I'll be paying for your time. But... okay.

STRIKE

Can I ask you a question then? We were told the police did some digging on your family's estate--

IZZY

Oh my God, that? That was so bizarre. They swooped in and dug up one of our old pets.

Beat.

STRIKE

What kind of pet..?

IZZY

It was, like... a miniature pony we had? It got buried behind the handyman's cottage. The police wrote to Papa and apologised.

Strike is still struggling with this profound reversal.

ROBIN

How did the pony die? Do you know?

Izzy's warmth dies away a little.

IZZY

It was an accident.

STRIKE

What kind of accident?

For a moment Izzy looks annoyed, like she won't answer. But she looks at Strike, who shows no sign of backing down.

IZZY

Freddie was doing target practice with his rifle and... Well. Papa wasn't very happy, even if he didn't mean to hit her. You don't do that to an animal, do you?

(beat)

So look, will you help me? Please?

5 INT/EXT. LAND ROVER, TRAVELLING -DRIVEWAY OF CHISWELL HOUSE 5
- DAY 12

Strike and Robin follow Izzy's car down the long drive to Chiswell House.

STRIKE

...horse bones...!

ROBIN

Billy still saw a girl strangled though, didn't he? If he was close enough to see her wet herself, he can't have been wrong about that?

Strike is deep in thought.

STRIKE

You bury a pet in the middle of the night because you're in a hurry to get rid of it.

ROBIN

Because you've used it for target practice, because you've run out of women to humiliate. And his father protected him!

Strike glances over at her. Her deep anger is showing through.

STRIKE

We don't know that.

Beat.

ROBIN

You didn't see how Chiswell talked to Izzy and Kinvara. They're not men. They just didn't matter to him.

6 EXT. CHISWELL HOUSE - DAY 12

6

Strike and Robin approach the front door with Izzy.

Outside on the lawn a YOUNG BOY and GIRL, dressed in old-fashioned-posh clothes, pursue a fat black Labrador and a Norfolk terrier.

From inside there is the sound of an ongoing ARGUMENT -- one that ceases as Izzy RINGS the doorbell before opening up. A clear cue to her family to prepare to receive visitors.

7 INT. MAIN RECEPTION ROOM, CHISWELL HOUSE - DAY 12

7

Robin and Strike are ushered in by Izzy. "Mare Mourning" is still hanging over the chimneypiece.

Gathered today are FIZZY (mid-40s) and her husband TORQUIL. Raff and Kinvara stand far apart from each other. All of them are drinking something.

ROBIN

Hi Raff.

RAFF

(unsmiling)

It's Robin, isn't it? Do I have that right..?

IZZY

Everyone, this is Cormoran Strike. I'm pleased to say that he's agreed to look into Papa's death.

(to Strike/Robin)

This is my sister Fizzy and her husband, Torquil.

Strike and Robin dutifully shake hands.

FIZZY

Izzy said you used to see Charlotte Campbell, is that right?

TORQUIL

Lucky man.

Strike doesn't even acknowledge hearing that.

STRIKE

If we could start with a few general questions--

TORQUIL

I have to say, with apologies to the gels, but it's completely bloody obvious the old boy felt he couldn't go on anymore.

(MORE)

TORQUIL (CONT'D)
Blackmailed by this Jimmy Knight
chap. It got too much for him.

KINVARA
You didn't help in that regard.
(to Strike)
Jasper took investment advice from
Torquil. Almost ruined us.

Their row quickly breaks back into rapid-fire barb-trading:

FIZZY
Kinvara, we've been through that!
He wanted high-yields and that
always comes with a high-risk.

KINVARA
And now it's *your* child who'll
inherit what's left! Well, not
until I'm dead. I have the right to
stay. Jasper promised me.

FIZZY
(to Kinvara)
Beyond Papa's personal effects, you
have no claim whatsoever. The
estate goes to the next male in
line.

RAFF
And no bastards allowed!

TORQUIL
(to Kinvara)
You'd need an income for upkeep.
How would you even pay the bills?

IZZY
Everyone, please, can we just--

RAFF
Yes, let's focus on the real issues
while we have guests, namely what a
shit our Dad could be--

FIZZY
You are only here by *invitation*.

RAFF
(to Strike)
Go on, get your notebook out and
we'll start listing the shittiest
things Dad did while--

TORQUIL
That's enough, boy!

RAFF
Don't call me "boy".

KINVARA
(to Strike, re: Raff)
Little Raffy's upset that he got
written out of the will.

RAFF
I already knew you'd seen to that.

KINVARA
Jasper didn't need any persuasion
from me. Believe me!

IZZY
Could everyone please--

TORQUIL
(to Izzy)
I've tolerated this nonsense
but I can't see--

RAFF
(to Robin)
Welcome to the family.

KINVARA
This isn't a family.

FIZZY
Really? Do we have to involve
strangers in our--? *

IZZY
This isn't about us!

TORQUIL
Waste of bloody time. *

STRIKE
(loudly)
Keys.

They stop and turn to him. He opens his notebook.

STRIKE (CONT'D)
How many keys were there for the
house on Ebury Street?

KINVARA
(beat)
There were three. Mine, Jasper's,
and the cleaner had one. Jasper let
her go when we were tightening our
belts. She forgot to give it back.

STRIKE
When was that?

KINVARA
I don't know. A few weeks before he
died?

STRIKE
What was her name?

KINVARA

I don't know. Never met her. She was Polish. I know that. Jasper wrote her a note and she had one of those surnames where there are C's and Z's all over the place.

STRIKE

But you don't know her first name?

KINVARA

Town was Jasper's concern. I was hardly ever there.

STRIKE

Were there any copies of the keys?

KINVARA

No. And you can't copy them. They're restricted. On some kind of central register.

STRIKE

When was the last time you spoke to your husband?

KINVARA

I went back to Ebury Street after that thingy for the disabled athletes and... well, I left a note for him, and then I came back here. Got the train from Paddington.

(to Izzy)

Look, he treated me horribly. I am not to blame for his doing *that*.

IZZY

(icy)

It's alright, Kinvara. I don't believe for a second he'd have killed himself over you leaving him.

A long beat.

KINVARA

(to Strike)

Look, can't you just borrow the police's notes? We've *done* this.

FIZZY

Just answer his questions.

KINVARA

You treat me like a guest in my own home! Well, no! You're the guests.

(MORE)

KINVARA (CONT'D)
I'm going for a ride and when I
come back I want all of you gone.
You're no longer welcome here.

Kinvara stands and walks out.

RAFF
(to Strike)
I'm sure our charming hostess means
to offer you tea at some point...

TORQUIL
(to Izzy)
We'll have to sue to get her out of
here, if it comes to it.

IZZY
Please. Can we just..?

Strike stands to signal their departure.

STRIKE
Thank you for your time, everyone.
We'll be in touch to follow up
individually. Sorry for your loss.

RAFF
(de-frosting?)
So long then, Venetia.

Strike picks up on a tone from Raff that makes him bridle.

8 OMITTED

8

8A INT. WARD CORRIDOR, NHS PSYCHIATRIC WARD - DAY 12
(PREVIOUSLY SCENE 2)

8A

Strike and Robin stand with a psychiatric doctor, KAMILA MUHAMMAD.

DR MUHAMMAD
He presented with severe psychosis.
Just managing his physical injuries
has been a real challenge.
(beat)
He's not talking much, but he
mentioned you. It's a good sign
that you're real.
(beat)
He can't have visitors. Not until
we're confident he's in recovery.

ROBIN
Are you sure his wounds were all
self-inflicted?

DR MUHAMMAD

No, but they weren't typical for an assault. They were more like... well, I don't know quite how to describe it.

Strike quickly sketches something in his notebook and holds it upside down -- an inverted white horse. The doctor is surprised; obviously Billy's wounds are exactly this.

DR MUHAMMAD (CONT'D)

How did you--?

STRIKE

Billy asked us to remember this shape. When he first came to see us. It's a prehistoric horse. There's one on the hill near where he grew up.

DR MUHAMMAD

What does it mean to him?

STRIKE

I'd like to ask him the same question. Could we just have five minutes? We'll leave if he gets upset.

DR MUHAMMAD

Sorry. We really can't. He doesn't have the capacity to approve visitors. It wouldn't be ethical.

Strike is disappointed, but pragmatic.

STRIKE

Is this ward secure?

DR MUHAMMAD

He's not going to run away again if that's what you're worried about.

STRIKE

I was thinking about people trying to get in. He witnessed a crime.

DR MUHAMMAD

(beat)

We'll keep him safe.

Strike shakes her hand.

Strike and Robin walk away together.

STRIKE

Our one lead can't talk to us. The police aren't letting us near the evidence. I'm not sure where that leaves us.

ROBIN

(beat)

I could talk to Vanessa Ekwensi? She won't be on McMurran's radar in the same way your contacts are. It'd be a big ask though.

STRIKE

She's a Detective Sergeant, isn't she? Maybe ask her if she's angling for a promotion.

ROBIN

Can we offer her *that*..?

Strike holds open a door for Robin. Grinning.

STRIKE

I think maybe we can...

9

INT. MAIN OFFICE, THE AGENCY - NIGHT 12

9

Robin shows Vanessa Ekwensi into the office.

EKWENSI

You're sure you can keep my name out of it?

ROBIN

Absolutely.

Blu-tacked to the wall of the office are a number of photos taken at the Ebury St scene (before the police arrived).

Strike puts an envelope on the table.

STRIKE

Ian Nash.

EKWENSI

Really?

ROBIN

Who's that?

EKWENSI

He's a people-smuggler. We've been after him for ages.

STRIKE

That's the detail on how he launders his money. Names and addresses. The lot.

EKWENSI

Who's your source?

STRIKE

Someone I've known since I was a kid. He knows what he's talking about. And I paid him. A lot.

Satisfied, Ekwensi takes out her notebook.

EKWENSI

Okay, so, Chiswell's cause of death. Antidepressants, crushed up and dissolved in orange juice. That affected his heart but it's the bag over his head that killed him.

STRIKE

Fingerprints?

EKWENSI

His fingerprints were on the glass and on the carton. The rest of the carton tested negative for the drugs, which points to him mixing-up the powder in the glass.

STRIKE

And time of death?

EKWENSI

Pathology gives it a window of 6-8am, but he missed two calls around seven. So, probably before then. I've got phone records for you.

Vanessa passes a print-out to Robin.

ROBIN

Is it easy to get hold of the pills?

EKWENSI

They're ones his wife uses. She's got a prescription for them.

ROBIN

Is she missing any?

EKWENSI

She says she's got packets everywhere and she wouldn't have noticed if some went missing.

Strike examines their photos -- the OJ glass with a residue in it. The crushed up pills in a bowl in the kitchen. The OJ carton in the fridge.

STRIKE

Our client thinks it was murder.
What do you think?

EKWENSI

Well, to get a bag over his head I think you'd at least have needed to drug him first? The thing on that is, apparently he's a proper creature of habit. Gets up same time every morning. Always has a glass of orange juice to kick off.

STRIKE

So you poison the carton at night. Then in the morning you swap it for a fresh one. After he's dead.

ROBIN

Do antidepressants taste of anything?

STRIKE

They're bitter. But Chiswell's tastebuds didn't work. I saw him turn down mustard because he wouldn't be able to taste it.

(beat)

So that's two things you'd have to know about him. He always drank a glass of juice first thing, and he wouldn't taste anything. That's someone who's close to him. Family or a close friend.

ROBIN

Kinvara then. Especially if they were her pills.

EKWENSI

Yeah, but her alibi's watertight. It's all on CCTV.

STRIKE

Can you get that for us?

EKWENSI

Not a chance. Sorry.

(consulting her notes)

She got the train home to Oxfordshire and her stable-girl stayed over to help out the farrier first thing. Her name's Tegan Barrow.

STRIKE

(to Robin)

Billy mentioned her family.

EKWENSI

Apparently the floorboards creak and Tegan would have definitely heard it if Kinvara moved about. It's a solid alibi.

STRIKE

(to Robin)

Izzy's not going to like that. What about alibis for the names we gave you?

Ekwensi refers to her notes again.

EKWENSI

(to Strike)

Jimmy Knight got cautioned after he hit you. He says he went back to his girlfriend's. Geraint Winn was at home with his wife and an employee of theirs called Aamir Mallik. They had dinner and he stayed over. Does that quite a lot, apparently.

Strike looks at a photo of a note written on Ebury St headed notepaper -- Kinvara's note announcing that she was leaving.

STRIKE

And the rest of the Chiswell family?

EKWENSI

All checked out, or they're home asleep alone. Kinvara rang them to break the news when the police arrived. They were all at home when she rang. Again, the mast records check out.

STRIKE

What time was that?

EKWENSI

Ten thirty.

STRIKE

And she had her key on her?

EKWENSI

Yep.

Strike looks at a photo of Chiswell, sitting pale and dead in his chair.

STRIKE

You didn't find this Polish cleaner of theirs?

EKWENSI

She's vanished. Guys, that's everything I've got. You've rinsed me.

Ekwensi pockets Strike's envelope, then Robin escorts Ekwensi to the door. They hug goodbye.

ROBIN

Thanks, Vanessa. It's appreciated.

Robin closes the office door as Ekwensi takes the stairs.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

She's great, isn't she?

Strike is reading the phone records print-out.

STRIKE

Just looking at those 7am calls. Henry Drummond and a Christopher Barrowclough-Burns.

ROBIN

Drummond's the one who was selling their paintings. Chiswell got back from his place just before we went off to the athletics thing. I think maybe they argued? He came back in a horrible mood.

STRIKE

We'll talk to him.

Strike returns to the photo of the OJ carton in the fridge. He frowns at it. Putting pieces together.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Let's say someone poisoned the carton of juice. Chiswell gets up in the morning and he pours himself a glass of juice, like he always does. But in order to make it look like a suicide someone *has* to come in afterward to set up the crushed-up pills and replace the drugged carton with a fresh one, do the fingerprints and the rest of it. But that's all easy once he's dead. You just need access.

(beat)

(MORE)

STRIKE (CONT'D)

But Kinvara's got her key on her when the police get to Chiswell House, and the second one is found on the Minister.

ROBIN

The cleaner's got the only other key.

STRIKE

This might be a bit of a long-shot, but I've heard Jimmy's girlfriend speak a bit of Polish. And I heard her complain about Jimmy *making her* scrub toilets. What do you reckon?

10 EXT. CAMDEN MARKET - DAY 13

10

CROWDS of TOURISTS, LOCALS, METALHEADS, TEENAGERS...

It takes awhile to find Robin amongst them. She is wearing a short black dress, with torn tights, grey fingernails, and eyes heavily rimmed with black kohl. A strand of her otherwise black hair has been bleached and dyed candy-pink.

11 INT. CAMDEN JEWELLERY SHOP - DAY 13

11

The shop sells cheap silver necklaces and pendants -- jewellery in the shape of pentagrams and marijuana leaves -- along with tarot cards, black candles and astrology tat.

Robin enters and the owner, CAROLINE (50s, green velvet dress, black hair with silver roots) looks relieved.

ROBIN

(thick Yorkshire)

Alright? I'm Becca.

CAROLINE

At least you're on time. My other girl-- every day she's got some new excuse. I just don't need it! The stalls are the hard work. This is the easy job!

ROBIN

Thanks for giving me a go.

FLICK now enters, in a PUSSY RIOT T-shirt and ripped jeans.

CAROLINE

What time is this?

FLICK

Tube was delayed.

CAROLINE

Of course it was!

ROBIN

No, there were some delays. I tried getting here proper early. Got stuck as well.

Flick glances at the new girl -- glad to have her bullshit backed-up, but curious as to who this person might be.

CAROLINE

This is Bibi--

ROBIN

Becca.

CAROLINE

She's doing a trial-day for me. Show her how everything works. Two things: shoplifters? You go for them. No messing about. Lunch is twenty minutes each, and you take it separately. If Eddie tells me the shop got shut I'll-- I just don't need it, okay?

Caroline sweeps out, leaving the two younger women together.

Flick slings her bag onto the counter and checks her phone.

FLICK

Why'd you wanna work *here*?

ROBIN

I went round all the shops. She said yes, so that were it. I need work. Got sacked last week.

(beat)

Don't tell her that.

FLICK

Who by?

ROBIN

Amazon.

FLICK

What happened?

ROBIN

Didn't make my daily rate. You've got targets for packing and scanning and if you get behind they're straight onto you. Me Dad would have been like: well, what did you expect?!

(beat)

(MORE)

ROBIN (CONT'D)

I dunno. It's not a nightmare, is it?

FLICK

I'll show you how the till works.

ROBIN

Thanks.

12

INT. MAIN OFFICE, THE AGENCY - DAY 13

12

Strike is on the phone, sounding frustrated:

STRIKE

If Jimmy hasn't got a legal responsibility for his brother I don't see how--

(listening)

Alright. No, yeah, I understand. Send Billy my best.

Strike hangs up.

Robin enters in her Camden costume -- torn fishnet tights, black dress, kohl eyes. A long beat.

ROBIN

(self-conscious)

Don't...

STRIKE

No, it looks good. Who are you?

ROBIN

(thick accent)

Becca. Needed a job. Workers rights activism runs in my family.

STRIKE

Favourite band?

ROBIN

The Cure. But nothing after 1989.

STRIKE

Favourite album of theirs?

ROBIN

"Head on the Door."

STRIKE

Favourite track on *that* album?

ROBIN

"Push." Hands down, mate. No contest.

(her own voice now)

(MORE)

ROBIN (CONT'D)

And if someone puts it on, I can sing along word for word.

STRIKE

(laughing)

You win.

ROBIN

Does Barclay know I might run into him got up like this?

STRIKE

I've moved him onto Dodgy Doctor. We needed someone on it or we'd have lost the client.

Robin goes and perches on her desk beside him.

ROBIN

How was your day?

STRIKE

I just spoke to Billy's doctors. Jimmy's invoked next-of-kin stuff to make sure we can't see Billy.

(beat)

And I called Izzy's sister for a follow-up.

ROBIN

Raff got in touch with me as well. We're meeting for dinner in a few days.

STRIKE

You're liking Raff then?

Rather than answer that, Robin turns to the wall where Strike has pasted various faces along with a big timeline around Chiswell's death. Robin hops up and examines it more closely.

ROBIN

What's all this?

STRIKE

Pinned some time and date stuff up. Mostly the files on Geraint and Jimmy.

Robin looks again at the dates. At "13th".

ROBIN

The text message that I saw on Aamir's phone? In Geraint's office. It had him going over to someone's place on the 13th. For 8pm, something like that.

STRIKE

He wasn't with Della and Geraint?
Who was he with?

ROBIN

I didn't see the phone number. They
signed-off as CBB.

Strike sits back. Then walks to the "phone records" print-out
Ekwensi gave them.

STRIKE

People who rang Chiswell the
morning he died. There's a CBB.
Christopher Barrowclough-Burns.

ROBIN

Who's that?

STRIKE

I'll start finding out.
(beat)
What are you up to tonight?

ROBIN

Revising, I suppose. One band's not
really enough, is it? Just makes me
look obsessive when I'm aiming for
"harmless and not that smart".

Strike LAUGHS again.

13 INT. LANDING, ROBIN AND MATT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 13 13

Robin pauses at the threshold of their bedroom. Matthew is
asleep already.

14 INT. SPARE ROOM, ROBIN AND MATT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 13 14

Robin goes to bed alone in the spare room.

15 EXT. DENMARK STREET - DAY 14 15

Strike exits his building, to find--

LORELEI waiting for him with two cups of coffee.

LORELEI

Hello, stranger.

STRIKE

Morning..?

LORELEI

Have you got five minutes? Stupid question really. I know you haven't, but all the same...

16 EXT. BENCH NEAR DENMARK STREET - DAY 14

16

Lorelei and Strike sit drinking coffee together.

LORELEI

I'm sorry for saying "I love you."

STRIKE

Christ, you don't need to--

LORELEI

No, listen. I wish I could take it back but... these things happen. Can we go back to how things were? Hanging out. Having fun.

STRIKE

I'm sorry. This case has been... I was going to call you.

(beat)

Anyway. Yes, let's have dinner. Tomorrow night?

LORELEI

Okay. Great. Cheers! That was easy.

She raises her coffee cup. They toast. Still, Strike looks ill-at-ease around the edges.

LORELEI (CONT'D)

How's your day looking?

STRIKE

I've got to go round to someone's house and call them a liar. You?

LORELEI

Trying to sell more dresses.

17 EXT. WESTMINSTER STREET - DAY 14

17

Strike watches Aamir exit the House of Commons. He begins to discretely tail him.

18 EXT. ALMA GROVE - DAY 14

18

As Aamir turns onto Alma Grove -- the road sign visible -- Strike realises *exactly* where Aamir is heading.

19

INT. CAMDEN JEWELLERY SHOP - DAY 14

19

Robin-as-Becca and Flick are at work again. It's quiet. Flick seems ill at ease.

ROBIN

You alright?

FLICK

Me? Yeah, why?

ROBIN

I don't know. You're a bit quiet.

FLICK

No, I'm cool.

(beat)

My boyfriend's being...

ROBIN

Say no more, mate. Half the time I wish I were a lesbian.

FLICK

I was bi for a long time, actually.

ROBIN

You thinking of dumping him..?

FLICK

No. Like, our life is my whole life. No, it's just--

(beat)

We've gone through some mental stuff... Jimmy's brother just tried to kill himself and we've been, like... trying to prove how the people who make our laws are the ones *doing* the illegal shit, but... like, I think maybe it's having a lawyer as a mum it makes you super-aware of how stuff can go.

ROBIN

What's Jimmy got you doing?

FLICK

(shutting it down)

I'm fine. Don't worry about me, I'm, like, fully fourth-wave feminist. I *own my own shit*.

ROBIN

I wish I had your balls. I get so freaked out by everything.

(beat)

London's just proper hard, int'it? Nobody talks to you.

(MORE)

ROBIN (CONT'D)

If I'm honest, I'll end up sticking with this job forever because... you know... at least *this* is alright. Hanging out.

FLICK

(beat)

Do you want to come out tomorrow? I'm having a party.

ROBIN

I don't want to be a--

FLICK

No, you'll love it. My mates are amazing. They're just massively inclusive. It's all about your politics not, like, your race or class or beliefs, you know? There's loads of people coming. So come.

ROBIN

Alright. But if I make a tit of myself--

FLICK

You're cool. I'll look after you.

20 INT. KITCHEN, ALMA GROVE HOUSE - DAY 14 20

Aamir makes himself a cheese and pickle sandwich in the kitchen. He has the remains of a black-eye fading.

The DOORBELL goes. He goes to answer it.

21 INT. HALLWAY, ALMA GROVE HOUSE - DAY 14 21

Aamir opens the door to Strike. His face falls as he recognises him.

STRIKE

Hello, Mr Mallik.

AAMIR

What do you want?

STRIKE

I'm Cormoran Strike. I'm an investigator. Jasper Chiswell's family have hired me. Can I come in?

AAMIR

Um... I--

STRIKE

I won't take up much time. And it'd mean a lot to his family.

AAMIR

Uh... okay.

With palpable reluctance, Aamir steps aside to let Strike in.

22

INT. KITCHEN, ALMA GROVE HOUSE - DAY 14

22

Strike is offered a seat at the breakfast table. He notes the half-made sandwich on the chopping board. Aamir hovers.

STRIKE

Don't let me get in the way of your lunch.

AAMIR

It can wait.

STRIKE

What's really good with cheese and pickle is those crunchy fried onions. You can buy them in tubs.

AAMIR

It was your partner who pretended to be Chiswell's intern, wasn't it?

Strike nods pleasantly.

STRIKE

Spot on. Could I have a glass of water, please?

Aamir complies. He hands it to Strike and then sits. Strike allows the tension in Aamir to build. Aamir is tense. Fidgeting.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Mind if I take notes?

AAMIR

I've not got anything to say.

STRIKE

(taking his notebook out)
Easier for me to have it to hand.
In case that changes.

AAMIR

So you think I had something to do with Chiswell's death?

STRIKE

If you want to blurt out a
confession, feel free. You'll save
me a lot of work.

Strike grins.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

I'll tell you something I know.
Maybe we can start from there.

(beat)

You were helping Geraint Winn to
blackmail Jasper Chiswell.

AAMIR

I wasn't.

Strike slowly and deliberately makes a note.

STRIKE

So you never met up with Jimmy
Knight? For example.

AAMIR

(beat)

Who's Jimmy Knight?

Beat.

STRIKE

He's the brother of the man who was
staying here. Billy? Has a thing
about horses?

Aamir tenses. Worried now. Strike tries something--

STRIKE (CONT'D)

This is a big place for one guy.
How much do the Winns help you out?

The tension in Aamir is rising to an acute pitch.

AAMIR

It's-- London's expensive, so--

STRIKE

Who's Mrs Collier?

AAMIR

That was Della's mum. She died
recently so it's empty. It's all
legal.

Strike lays various print-outs from Facebook onto the table.

STRIKE

This photo used to be on the
Foreign Office website.

(MORE)

STRIKE (CONT'D)

They took you on as part of a diversity scheme. There you are, next to the man they assigned as your mentor. Christopher Barrowclough-Burns. CBB, as his friends call him.

Aamir's hands are shaking. Strike stares at them pointedly. Aamir moves them into his lap.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Where were you at 6am on the 14th?

AAMIR

At the Winns place. I stayed there.

STRIKE

With Geraint.

AAMIR

And Della. Yeah.

STRIKE

So you're all each other's alibi?

AAMIR

If you want to call it that.

STRIKE

What made you leave the Foreign Office, Aamir?

AAMIR

You keep going back-and-forth...
(beat)
I didn't enjoy it.

STRIKE

How did you meet the Winns?

AAMIR

I've had enough of this.

STRIKE

Your family disowned you around the time that you left the Foreign Office. Isn't that right? That's when the Winns found you.

Strike lays another FaceBook photo on the table.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

There you are graduating from LSE. Your whole family with you. That's before they started writing homophobic comments about you.

Aamir gets to his feet and tries to impose his will.

AAMIR

Out.

Strike rises to meet the challenge. Still genial.

STRIKE

Why are you lying to me about where
you were at 6am on the 14th?

AAMIR

Get out now.

STRIKE

You'd stayed the night with
Christopher Barrowclough-Burns.

Aamir swings a punch at Strike, which Strike easily parries
before shoving Aamir backwards.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Don't do this.

Aamir grabs a lamp and hurls it at Strike, who ducks. It
shatters on the wall behind him.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Enough!

Aamir grabs the butter knife from the counter and approaches
Strike.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Are you going to butter me?

AAMIR

Get out!

Strike instead walks towards Aamir. Aamir moves his knife-
holding arm. Moving very swiftly, Strike has that arm
disabled and put into a painful lock. Aamir CRIES OUT.

STRIKE

Try and hurt me again and I'll snap
it. Now listen to me, or I'll call
the police and have you up for
assault on top of everything else.

Strike releases Aamir with a shove that sends Aamir sprawling
to the floor.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

Stay down.

23

INT. CAMDEN JEWELLERY SHOP - DAY 14

23

The door to the shop opens -- and JIMMY steps in.

FLICK
What're you doing here?

JIMMY
I need to talk to you.

Beat.

FLICK
(to Robin)
Could you mind the shop for a bit?

ROBIN
You know that Caroline's hanging
about across the road?

FLICK
Is she? Shit.

ROBIN
I can be out front if you want the
stockroom? I can say you're off
doing stock-taking or sommat?

JIMMY
(to Flick)
Who's this?

FLICK
My mate Becca. Her dad was a trade
unionist.

ROBIN
Well, he was a rep.

JIMMY
(to Flick)
Come on then.

ROBIN
Can I just get a till roll? Then
it's all yours.

Robin slips into--

24 INT. STOCK ROOM, CAMDEN JEWELLERY SHOP - DAY 14 24
(CONTINUOUS)

Robin grabs a till-roll from a shelf -- takes out her mobile
phone, sets the "voice recorder" to record, and hides the
phone behind boxes on a shelf.

25 INT. CAMDEN JEWELLERY SHOP - DAY 14 (CONTINUOUS) 25

Robin pops back out.

ROBIN

All yours.

Jimmy follows Flick into the stock room. Closes the door.

26

INT. BACK ROOM, ALMA GROVE HOUSE - DAY 14

26

Aamir sits where he was told to, in tears now, as Strike towers over him.

STRIKE

You're a bad liar, Aamir. And that'll get you sent to prison if you don't start telling the truth. They won't let you share a cell with Geraint and Della either.

AAMIR

Leave her out of it. Please. Della had nothing to do with anything.

It's an opening. Strike presses immediately--

STRIKE

Don't you know what happens when an MP gets caught lying to the police? It's over for them.

Aamir buries his face in his hands, CRYING freely now. Strike half-hates himself for doing it, but all the same--

STRIKE (CONT'D)

So one last time, before I have to make those calls and ruin her. Where were you at 6am on the 14th?

AAMIR

At his flat.

STRIKE

Whose?

AAMIR

You know!

STRIKE

Say it.

AAMIR

(beat)
Christopher's.

STRIKE

Why did you go there?

Aamir sags.

AAMIR

I was trying to get something off his computer. Some stuff Geraint wanted. I swear Della had nothing to do with it.

STRIKE

Where was Geraint?

AAMIR

I don't know. I met him later.

STRIKE

And Della lied to the police.

AAMIR

Yeah, but she only did that for me.
(beat)
Please don't get her in trouble.

Strike looks down at Aamir with pity.

STRIKE

Why was Billy Knight staying here?

AAMIR

Jimmy needed somewhere to put him where you wouldn't find him. But he was... fucking nuts. We made Jimmy take him back.

Strike puts his notebook into his pocket.

STRIKE

Did you get the files Geraint wanted?

AAMIR

No. Christopher caught me.

Aamir gestures to his black eye.

STRIKE

What were these files?

AAMIR

I was told to search for a keyword, "Murape". I didn't get much further than doing that.

Strike goes to leave. Then turns for one last question--

STRIKE

Did Geraint ever tell you why he was blackmailing Chiswell?

AAMIR

He blames the Chiswells for his daughter's death.

STRIKE

He told you that?

(beat)

Did you believe him?

AAMIR

I don't know why he'd lie.

(beat)

They don't ever talk about her.

STRIKE

(beat)

Alright, Aamir. Finish your sandwich. I'll see you around.

Strike exits.

27

INT. CAMDEN JEWELLERY SHOP - DAY 14

27

Robin helps a HIPPIE CUSTOMER with their purchase of essential oils.

HIPPIE CUSTOMER

Is the lavender oil cold-pressed?

ROBIN

Very cold. Fifteen quid, please.

From inside the stock-room comes the muffled sound of RAISED VOICES. The Hippie Customer is unabashedly curious.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

We've run out of CBD oil.

Everyone's getting right shirty.

The stock-room door opens and Jimmy stalks out, leaving the shop without a backwards look.

A moment later Flick comes out, trying to hide the fact she's crying and angry.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

What's he done to you?

FLICK

No, it's what I'll do to *him* if he keeps on like this... I can get him fucking put away and he knows it!

(defensive)

I'm cool. Just mind the shop.

28 INT. LIVING ROOM, ROBIN AND MATT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 14 28

Robin gets home tired in her Camden attire.

Matthew is waiting for her. He hands her a brown paper package tied with a bow.

MATTHEW
Interesting new look.

ROBIN
It's just work. What's this?

Robin opens the package. Inside is-- her green dress.

MATTHEW
I tried to find a replacement but they're sold out. I got this one mended as best they could.
(beat)
I'm sorry.

ROBIN
(beat)
Thanks. It's nice of you to try.

She can barely look at it. It's ruined for her.

MATTHEW
I don't want you sleeping in the spare room. That's not what it's for. Will you come back?

ROBIN
I keep feeling like you want to punish me for something.

MATTHEW
That's not true.

He takes her hands.

ROBIN
Why do you want to be with me, Matt?

MATTHEW
Because you're my girl.

Robin lets him hold her. There is no warmth though.

29 INT. MAIN OFFICE, THE AGENCY - DAY 15 29

Strike sits by Robin at her desk as she transfers the audio file and turns on her computer's speakers.

Strike's phone rings: LORELEI. He lets it ring out on silent.

STRIKE

Go on.

Robin presses play. They listen:

FLICK (V.O.)

Hey! Don't go through my bag!

Muffled sounds of keys etc. being emptied out

FLICK (V.O.)

I've checked there.

JIMMY (V.O.)

I had it in my wallet--

FLICK (V.O.)

So you've dropped it somewhere.

JIMMY (V.O.)

Yeah, or someone took it.

FLICK (V.O.)

Why would I take it?

JIMMY (V.O.)

Insurance policy?

FLICK (V.O.)

Oh my fucking God-- why would I-- I was only there because of you! You've dropped it somewhere. Go through your *own* wallet.

JIMMY (V.O.)

Get this through your head! That note proves we had access. It's got Billy's fucking name on it! Someone just needs to see Ebury Street on it and remember that from the news and then we're fucked!

FLICK (V.O.)

Jimmy, I haven't got it!

A door SLAMS. Flick starts CRYING.

Robin turns to Strike.

STRIKE

Yeah, he's a keeper.

ROBIN

If he thinks she's hiding something... Her mum's a lawyer and she's not stupid. It could be true.

(beat)

I could try and have a look for it?

(MORE)

ROBIN (CONT'D)

She's invited me to a party at her place.

STRIKE

You're going to do a search during the party?

ROBIN

I'd be subtle. Besides, Jimmy doesn't think much of women. Pretty sure he won't see me coming.

Strike smiles at Robin.

30 EXT. DELLA WINN'S HOUSE - DAY 15

30

The small front garden features a few plants and three dog turds. From inside the darkened house comes MUSIC -- Brahms' Symphony Number One in C Minor. Strike approaches.

STRIKE

(on the phone)

I'm sorry. I'll-- I'll call you tomorrow and we'll get dinner organised somewhere.

31 INT. MAIN ROOM, LORELEI'S FLAT - DAY 15

31

Lorelei pins a dress that she is adjusting, her phone pinned between ear and shoulder as she speaks to Strike.

LORELEI

If you're too all-over-the-place for dinner you could just come here? We can have breakfast in the morning. Everyone loves breakfast.

32 EXT. DELLA WINN'S HOUSE - DAY 15

32

Strike RINGS the doorbell.

STRIKE

(still on the phone)

Sounds good. I'll call you.

As Strike hangs up, DELLA WINN opens the door, accompanied by her guide dog. She is in a purple housecoat, wearing dark glasses. No lights are on in the house.

STRIKE (CONT'D)

It's Cormoran Strike. We spoke on the phone earlier.

DELLA
(unsmiling)
Yes. Come in, then.

Strike steps into--

33 INT. HALLWAY, DELLA WINN'S HOUSE - DAY 15 (CONTINUOUS) 33
It's gloomy inside. Strike steps carefully past Della.

STRIKE
Would you mind if I turned on a
light?

DELLA
Just remember to turn them off on
your way out. No sense in burning
the planet needlessly. Go through
to the sitting room.

34 OMITTED 34

35 INT. SITTING ROOM, DELLA WINN'S HOUSE - DAY 15 35
Two opened bottles of wine sit on a sideboard, with glasses.
Della feels her way to the sofa and sits.

DELLA
We have a Châteauneuf-du-Pape, 2010
open. Would you pour me a glass of
that? And there's a Château Musar,
2006, if you prefer.

STRIKE
Thank you. Very kind.

As he pours two glasses, Strike notes a small framed photo of
teenage Rhiannon standing on the sideboard.

DELLA
Are you from the West Country?

STRIKE
I spent a lot of time in Cornwall.

DELLA
I can hear it in your vowels.

Strike hands her a glass, her fingertips feeling for the
stem.

STRIKE
Geraint not home this evening?

DELLA

He's moved out. We're getting divorced.

STRIKE

(beat)

I'm sorry to hear that.

DELLA

Thank you. It'll be in the papers next week.

STRIKE

Do you know where he's gone?

DELLA

No.

Strike settles onto a chair near Della.

STRIKE

I know that you lied to the police, Mrs Winn. Aamir wasn't here on the morning of Chiswell's death. He wasn't here for dinner the previous evening. He didn't stay the night.

(beat)

I've spoken to Aamir. He admits it.

DELLA

When did you speak to him?

STRIKE

He was at pains to let me know you hadn't done anything wrong. Apart from lie about his alibi to the police.

DELLA

May I have another glass of wine?

Strike refills her glass, then sits back down.

DELLA (CONT'D)

Ask me your questions then.

STRIKE

Where was Geraint the morning that Chiswell was killed?

DELLA

He went out before breakfast to meet Aamir.

(beat)

We agreed to say he was here.

STRIKE

Why did Geraint send him to
Christopher Barrowclough-Burns?

For the first time her voice betrays her.

DELLA

To steal information. I don't know
what.

STRIKE

Does the word "Murape" mean
anything to you?

DELLA

No.

STRIKE

Given it's the Foreign Office, I
thought it might mean Samuel
Murape. He was a British teenager.
Went missing on his gap year in
Zimbabwe. That ring any bells?

DELLA

No. Sorry. Not my department.

(beat)

Aamir could go to prison for this!
I have rarely been so angry with
another human being. All because
Geraint needs someone to blame.

STRIKE

Blame for what?

A long beat.

DELLA

We had a daughter.

STRIKE

Rhiannon.

DELLA

Geraint wanted her to make friends
with a wider circle. He thought
that way she'd mix with "people
with connections".

Strike hears the scorn in her voice. Masked anger, too -- *an old resentment? Blame, even?*

DELLA (CONT'D)

He pushed her into things. She
wanted a pony but we couldn't
afford it so fencing was his idea.
She was unhappy but he promised her
they'd come to like her.

(MORE)

DELLA (CONT'D)

And in the end she killed herself.

(beat)

Geraint blamed the Chiswell family.
Easier than blaming himself.

(beat)

I was born blind. I've always known
what it is to struggle and to have
to fight twice as hard as anyone
else. Rhiannon was more like her
father. Sensitive. I knew who she
was, better than Geraint ever did.

(beat)

Aamir's been like a son to us. And
Geraint would have sacrificed him.
One child for another. How could
that ever be justified? I won't
ever forgive him.Strike finds himself moved. And, unusually for an interview,
he doesn't have to hide it.

36

INT. FLICK'S FLAT - NIGHT 15

36

The party is HEAVING -- the small two-bed flat a sweaty,
raucous jostle of ANARCHISTS, TRUSTAFARIANS and GEEKY THEORY-
NERDS. Thumping GRIME RECORDS play. Joints are passed. Most
lights are turned off, with fairy lights strung instead.

Flick leads Robin through the jostle into the--

KITCHENETTE

Flick pulls Robin into the orbit of a pierced blonde girl,
HAYLEY, who is prepping a bong in the sink.

FLICK

Hayley, what do you reckon about my
mate Becca getting Laura's half of
the room once she--

HAYLEY

Shanice asked already.

FLICK

She didn't ask me!

HAYLEY

D'you wanna tell her 'no'?

FLICK

(to Robin)

Sorry, mate. It's gone. I--

Another dreadlocked C.O.Re compadre, ALFIE (21), reaches over
and taps Flick on the shoulder.

ALFIE
Jimmy's arrived.

Flick's face drops a little. Some anxiety, perhaps. She pushes off to find Jimmy.

Robin begins her subtle search of the flat, stooping to the under-counter area housing the bin. She has a quick feel around the back of the cabinets. Nothing.

37 INT. FLICK'S BEDROOM, FLICK'S FLAT - NIGHT 15 37

Robin has plenty of darkness to operate in. Nobody pays her much attention at all as she moves to a pile of ancient plush toys. She begins checking their stitching.

38 INT. HALLWAY, FLICK'S FLAT - NIGHT 15 38

Robin jostles past people. A poster is blu-tacked to the wall. She contrives to accidentally unstick it as she passes - checking the back of it before tacking it back in place.

JIMMY (O.S.)
Becca, was it?

Robin finds Jimmy has arrived next to her.

ROBIN
Yeah. What was your name?

JIMMY
Jimmy.

ROBIN
'Ow you doing, Jimmy? I'm a bit pissed.

JIMMY
What was your last name?

ROBIN
You what?

JIMMY
Your last name.

ROBIN
Cunliffe. D'you need my birth certificate? I'm old enough to drink if yer worried about losing yer license.

Robin LAUGHS at her own joke.

JIMMY

It's cool. We've had some issues
with the security service recently.
We check the newbies out.

Jimmy stares at Robin, who GIGGLES again and feigns a stumble
against the corridor wall.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Nice meeting you, Becca.

Jimmy fixes her with the kind of gaze that she knows she's
meant to find flattering, sexual and dismissive. She ducks
his gaze, as if shy.

ROBIN

You too.

Jimmy walks on with a squeeze to the top of her arm.
Immediately she fills with a greasy, thick panic that she
struggles to contain.

As soon as he is past her she presses on towards the
bathroom.

The door is closed. She KNOCKS on it. From inside is the
faint sound of SHAGGING.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Oi! Hurry oop!

Robin glances back down the corridor. Her anxiety high. She
now feels that time is ticking...

39 INT. HALLWAY, FLICK'S FLAT - NIGHT 15

39

A TRASHED COUPLE stagger out of the bathroom, half-shrugging
an apology to Robin as they go. She goes in--

40 INT. BATHROOM, FLICK'S FLAT - NIGHT 15 (CONTINUOUS)

40

Robin locks the door with the slide-bolt. It's a brightly-
lit, tiny space. A shower, sink and three cluttered shelves.

Robin surveys them -- and has an idea. She reaches for a half-
empty packet of sanitary towels and carefully extracts it
from the teetering mess. She opens it up -- and finds what
she's looking for. The outlier: one towel replaced with, upon
careful inspection, a folded piece of paper.

Robin eases it out of its packaging.

She jumps as someone POUNDS on the door.

PERSON OUTSIDE (O.S)

Don't take all night!

ROBIN
(calling back)
Won't be long!

41 INT. LIVING ROOM, FLICK'S FLAT - NIGHT 15 41

Jimmy sprawls across a sofa, rolling a joint and half-watching as Digby taps bits and pieces into his phone.

Flick and Hayley dance nearby, oblivious.

DIGBY
There's lots of hits for Cunliffe
and Yorkshire. What's Becca short
for?

JIMMY
Are you fucking kidding?

DIGBY
Alright. Let's assume Rebecca.

42 INT. BATHROOM, FLICK'S FLAT - NIGHT 15 42

Robin smooths out the folded note. Written on a sheet of Ebury St headed notepaper is a cryptic list, done in Chiswell's spidery handwriting.

Robin photographs it carefully, then begins putting it back.

A fist SLAMS into the door. Robin jumps again -- dropping the note onto the wet floor.

PERSON OUTSIDE (O.S)
What are you doing?! I'm going to
piss myself!

Robin picks up the note and blots the wet corner dry with the hem of her dress.

ROBIN
One minute!

Robin's hands are shaking as she tries to re-fold it.

43 INT. LIVING ROOM, FLICK'S FLAT - NIGHT 15 43

Jimmy has swivelled to share his joint with a SHAVED-HEAD GIRL (18) who he seems quite taken with.

Digby is tapping in Google queries on his phone.

Cunliffe Cormoran Strike

And gets--

A couple of results. *The Ripon Gazette*. Someone's Instagram.

Digby sits up. He plonks a finger on a search result and READS the news article that it leads to:

DIGBY
(muttered aloud)
...the wedding of Miss Robin
Ellacott to Mr Matthew Cunliffe,
both from Masham. Mr Cunliffe is a
qualified accountant. Miss Ellacott
has a somewhat unorthodox
employment, being a partner at...
(to Jimmy)
Jimmy.

JIMMY
Not now.

DIGBY
She's a fucking spy.

Digby throws Jimmy his phone.

Flick grins, noticing the joint in Jimmy's other hand.

FLICK
Hey. Don't bogart that!

JIMMY
Who the fuck is she, Flick?

FLICK
What?

Jimmy shows Flick the photo of Robin on her wedding day.

DIGBY
Hashtag Robin Ellacott, Hashtag
Robin Cunliffe. Works for Strike.

Flick takes a moment to understand.

JIMMY
The fuck have you done?! You dumb
bitch.

SHANICE
Say that word again, dickhead!

JIMMY
Fuck off!

His rage shuts Shanice up.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
(to Flick)
Where is she?

44 EXT. FLICK'S ESTATE - NIGHT 15 44

Robin realises she has taken a wrong turn. It's a maze of walkways and dark cut-throughs.

She takes a few deep breaths to quell her anxiety, then turns to re-trace her steps.

45 INT. HALLWAY, FLICK'S FLAT - NIGHT 15 45

Jimmy shoves people aside, looking into the kitchenette. He sees Alfie hanging out in there.

JIMMY
Where's Becca?

ALFIE
She was in the loo. Allie had to--
hey, what's up?

Jimmy strides to the bathroom door. Tries the handle. Locked.

JIMMY
Open up.

VOICE FROM INSIDE (O.S.)
Occupied.

JIMMY
Open the fuck up.

VOICE FROM INSIDE (O.S.)
I'm in here. I'm taking a--

Jimmy shoulder-barges the door, splintering the bolt off. The door flies open -- to reveal a DREADLOCKED WOMAN on the loo.

DREADLOCKED WOMAN
What the fuck are you--!?

Flick glances at the shelf -- her sanitary towels -- can't say anything now. Jimmy drags her away towards the flat's front door.

46 EXT. FLICK'S ESTATE - NIGHT 15 46

Robin is almost out of the estate, finishing a phone call as she walks:

ROBIN
(on the phone)
Thanks, Vanessa. I appreciate it.

She bags her phone up and shivers slightly in the cool night air. Robin SIGHS. Tired. The street is empty -- it's well past midnight.

47

EXT. FLICK'S FLAT / ESTATE - NIGHT 15

47

Jimmy looks murderous, gripping Flick's arm tightly. Digby hurrying to keep up.

DIGBY

This is some deep-state shit.

JIMMY

Shut up, Digby.

FLICK

What are you going to do if we find her though? Jimmy?

Jimmy won't answer her. They reach a balcony. Jimmy looks downwards.

ROBIN

glances up. Sees them. She sees Flick's expression.

And then she knows.

So she turns and sprints.

JIMMY

sprints down a flight of steps in pursuit of Robin.

Flick and Digby are left behind -- perhaps reluctant to be party to whatever is about to happen.

ROBIN

is fast. She doesn't mess around -- she pumps her arms, driving her body in a straight line along the empty pavement.

But Jimmy is fast too. He is strong, and angry.

ROBIN

glances back -- and sees him gaining.

She swerves back into the estate -- better to try to lose him if she can't outpace him. Straining. Focused. Adrenaline coursing. Fear -- raw terror -- mounting to fill her.

She swerves--

JIMMY

can hear her FOOTSTEPS. He knows he is gaining. He is working brutally hard. His lean, tough body; his gritted teeth. Intent on not letting her get away. Frightening in his intensity.

Then her FOOTSTEPS are gone. He races around a corner -- where Robin is crouched -- and at full pace his shins catch on her ribs -- he goes flying, landing on face and hands -- and Robin is up again, running in the other direction, breathing hard. She gains twenty feet before he is after her again.

Not a trick she can repeat. And she's exhausted now.

Jimmy, face grazed and bleeding, powers after her.

JIMMY

Bitch!

He's nearly on her again. His face a contorted snarl. He is just a few feet from her now.

Robin sprints back out of the estate and into the street, flying across the road -- narrowly missing the car that draws up from the side-street. Jimmy is not so lucky -- at full pace he smashes into its bonnet and is sent flying.

It is a police car.

Robin stops. Collapses to her knees on the pavement on the far side of the road and vomits from the sheer effort.

The police car doors open -- TWO POLICE get out.

ROBIN

I'm Robin Ellacott.

(panting)

I called Vanessa Ekwensi.

(a breath)

He's...

In the distance the WAILS of other police cars arriving.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

He's Jimmy Knight.

Jimmy GROANS and rolls over.

POLICEWOMAN

(to Jimmy)

Easy now. Just lie still in case your neck's injured.

She slips handcuffs onto Jimmy then RADIOS an ambulance.

POLICEWOMAN (CONT'D)

We've got a male, conscious and breathing. Can we get LAS on scene?

Meanwhile, the other Policeman goes to attend Robin, who is in the grip of a hardcore anxiety attack. Vision dimming.

POLICEMAN
(to Robin)
You alright there?

Robin struggles to look at Jimmy. He is staring at her with undisguised hatred.

BACK DOWN THE ROAD

Another police car draws up. OFFICERS disembark -- but these ones race up the estate's steps towards--

FLICK AND DIGBY.

FLICK
Oh shit oh shit...

48 INT. FLICK'S FLAT - NIGHT 15

48

SIX POLICE OFFICERS push their way into the party. Four of them herd the Partygoers out of the hallway and into the main room.

Two of them put on gloves. One takes out a camera. They open the bathroom--

49 INT. BATHROOM, FLICK'S FLAT - NIGHT 15 (CONTINUOUS)

49

While one Officer records it, the other Officer carefully reaches for the packet of sanitary pads.

They open it, confirm the presence of the hidden note, and then bag the whole packet in a tamper-proof evidence bag, which they seal in front of the camera.

50 INT. MAIN OFFICE, THE AGENCY - DAY 16

50

Robin is zoned-out, still processing things, as the printer HUMS into life, printing a copy of the photo Robin took in Flick's bathroom: the Ebury St. note.

Robin jumps as Strike brushes her arm stooping for the print-out. She is immediately ashamed of her reaction.

STRIKE
You okay?

ROBIN
Yes. I'm fine.

STRIKE
(beat)
You seem a bit jumpy.

ROBIN

You startled me. Can we get on with this?

Beat. Then he acquiesces. Takes the print-out.

STRIKE

How did you guess where she hid it?

ROBIN

I know where women hide things when we don't want men finding them. Lots of men are squeamish about that sort of thing.

Strike nods in appreciation. Learning new things.

STRIKE

DCI McMurran rang this morning.

ROBIN

Have they been charged?

STRIKE

Still being questioned. They'll get an extension to 36 hours.

(beat)

Mostly she was ringing to say thank you. In a round-about way. I said I'd pass it on.

Robin smiles, and returns her attention to the photograph of the note.

The letterhead gives the Ebury St address. Then beneath it is written:

Blanc de blanc

Suzuki (ticked)

Bill (heavily circled)

ROBIN

It's definitely Chiswell's handwriting.

STRIKE

Jimmy Knight owns an old Suzuki. I got a photo of him driving Aamir.

(beat)

I'm assuming Bill means Billy? Jimmy obviously thinks it does.

ROBIN

What's "blanc de blanc"? White from white?

STRIKE

Blanc de Blancs is a champagne made from a hundred percent Chardonnay grapes.

(wry)

Something they teach you at Oxford.

(beat)

There's a chance this is a shopping list.

ROBIN

The Suzuki though. That's not a coincidence, is it?

Strike remains skeptical.

STRIKE

Bill might mean a bill. As in, something he had to pay.

Robin returns to her computer keyboard, typing...

STRIKE (CONT'D)

What--

ROBIN

I've seen "Blanc de Blanc" before. It's such a weird phrase.

(searching...)

Yes! Look.

Strike leans in.

STRIKE

What's this?

ROBIN

It's Matt's instagram. Where we went for our anniversary was only an hour from Chiswell House.

Robin pulls up a picture of her door and its name.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Let me just... I'm sure I remember it being one of them...

A KNOCK at their door. They both freeze.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Nobody buzzed...

Strike gets up to answer it. It's Lorelei.

LORELEI

Someone let me in. I thought it was my best chance of actually seeing you.

Strike attempts to shepherd her into his private office, but she's having none of it.

STRIKE

Do you want to--

LORELEI

Here's fine.

(beat)

I've called. I've texted. You stood me up.

STRIKE

Can we just--

LORELEI

If you want a hot meal and a shag with no human emotions involved, there are restaurants and brothels. But if you're not prepared to pay for it, at least have the decency to treat that person with the minimum of respect.

(beat)

A phone call to say you won't be calling again. Breaking up with someone by *telling* them, not just hiding.

(beat)

This is how it should be done, you fucking coward. Face-to-face.

She storms out.

Robin avoids Strike's eye.

ROBIN

Blanc de blanc is one of the hotel rooms there.

51 EXT. DENMARK STREET - DAY 16

51

Strike and Robin leave the office together.

STRIKE

That was a bit awkward.

Beat.

ROBIN

She should really have buzzed-up first. It's not fair to take someone by surprise... like that...

(filling silence)

When you live above your office... It's that work/life balance thing people talk about, isn't it?

They lapse back into mortified silence.

52 EXT. LE MANOIR HOTEL - DAY 16 52

Establishing. Strike and Robin have parked the Land Rover nearby. They approach the hotel.

53 EXT. GARDEN SUITES, *LE MANOIR* HOTEL - DAY 16 53

Robin shows Strike a door painted with the words "Blanc de Blanc".

ROBIN

I suppose it's a play on words?
Because Raymond Blanc's the owner.

STRIKE

Yeah, it's a corker.

ROBIN

(laughing)
Is that *another* wine-based pun?

STRIKE

(embarrassed)
Never mind.

The HOTEL MANAGER walks to join them.

HOTEL MANAGER

Miss Chiswell's happy for us to
share the records, so if you'd like
to come through..?

54 INT. PRIVATE RECEPTION ROOM, *LE MANOIR* HOTEL - DAY 16 54

The Hotel Manager flicks through various print-outs.

HOTEL MANAGER

We have to keep it all in case
there are insurance claims.

(beat)

So you have the room... one
registered guest, Kinvara Chiswell.
Dinner for two. Afternoon tea taken
in her room.

ROBIN

How about cars? Do you have to sign
in vehicles in the car park?

HOTEL MANAGER

Yes, we're strict about that. She
had a BMW.

(MORE)

HOTEL MANAGER (CONT'D)
And a guest of hers registered a
Suzuki with the main reception. Do
you need their registration
numbers?

ROBIN
Yes, please.

The Hotel Manager scribbles them down and passes them to
Strike.

Strike reads them and grins at Robin.

STRIKE
It's Jimmy Knight's Suzuki.

55 EXT. LE MANOIR HOTEL - DAY 16

55

Strike and Robin head back towards the Land Rover in raised
spirits.

ROBIN
You don't think they're sleeping
together, do you? Kinvara and
Jimmy?

STRIKE
Maybe? I reckon Chiswell knew she
was sleeping with someone. The note
Flick took was basically everything
he'd found out. Who she was meeting
up with and where. He just hadn't
pieced it all together.

ROBIN
Kinvara poisons the carton of juice
then leaves for Oxfordshire. Jimmy
uses Flick's key to get into Ebury
Street and stage the suicide after
Chiswell's dead. It works, doesn't
it?

STRIKE
Merits a sit down with McMurran.
She can thank you in person.

56 EXT. ROBIN AND MATT'S HOUSE - DAY 16

56

Robin, tired, parks the Land Rover outside. The lights are
off at home.

57 INT. LIVING ROOM, ROBIN AND MATT'S HOUSE - DAY 16

57

Robin sloughs off her coat as she talks to Matthew on her
phone.

ROBIN

...Okay, so will you want dinner?

MATTHEW (V.O.)

(on phone)

No, I'll get something with Tom and that lot later. We're going to be awhile sorting this shit-storm out.

ROBIN

Okay. Well, I'm back now, so I'll probably get an early night. I'm completely done.

Robin hangs up and ambles towards the kitchen...

58

INT. BEDROOM, ROBIN AND MATT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 16

58

Robin, in pyjamas, pads towards bed. No sign of Matt.

As she steps on the deep-pile rug at her bedside--

ROBIN

Ow!

She raises her foot -- something sharp has punctured the sole of her foot.

She gets down on her knees to find the offending article. And finds--

A single diamond stud earring.

She holds it up in the light of the bedside lamp. Her face losing colour as she looks at it.

She places it on the bedside table.

Sits back.

59

EXT. ROBIN AND MATT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 16

59

Matthew arrives home. All the lights are on.

60

INT. LIVING ROOM, ROBIN AND MATT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 16

60

Matthew finds Robin sitting, dressed, on the sofa.

MATTHEW

Thought you'd be asleep.

ROBIN

No. I'm awake.

MATTHEW

Right. Well, d'you want a cup of tea?

Matthew notices that a small suitcase is standing in the corner of the room.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Are we going on a mini-break or--

ROBIN

I'm leaving you.

MATTHEW

(beat)

Sorry?

ROBIN

You heard me.

MATTHEW

You want to *leave* me?

ROBIN

No, I am leaving you.

MATTHEW

Why?

ROBIN

Because you're sleeping with Sarah.

Matthew begins to feign incredulity--

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Don't bother. You're no good at it.

(beat)

Let's just sort out a few practical things, then I'm going.

MATTHEW

You're actually serious about this?

Matthew walks and sits beside her. He tries to take her hand -
- but as he does so, he instead finds himself holding a diamond stud earring.

ROBIN

She's not stupid. She pointed these out to me at our party. And then magically one gets left on my side of the bed. I suppose you promised her you'd say something to me eventually? Well, she got bored waiting. Good for her.

MATTHEW

Have you spoken to Tom?

ROBIN

Oh, Matt. Anxious about your prospects for promotion?

MATTHEW

No, it's not--

ROBIN

I have spoken to him. You said you were eating with him tonight. Or have you forgotten which lies you've told? He said he wasn't with you. Didn't have plans to see you.

A long beat.

MATTHEW

I was ending it with Sarah. That's where I've been.

Robin's phone RINGS. It's *Cormoran*.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Don't answer that.

Robin answers it.

ROBIN

Hi, *Cormoran*.

STRIKE (V.O.)

(on phone)

We've got a sit-down with the DCI tomorrow morning. Nine a.m.

Matthew grabs the phone out of Robin's hand.

MATTHEW

(into the phone)

Now's not the fucking time, alright?

Robin grabs her phone back off Matthew.

ROBIN

(into the phone)

Sorry about that.

STRIKE (V.O.)

(on phone)

Is everything alright?

ROBIN

It's fine. I'll see you in the morning. Text me the address.

Robin hangs up.

MATTHEW

We're trying to save our marriage
and you're taking calls from him?

ROBIN

I'm not trying to save our
marriage.

MATTHEW

Well I am! Everything that happened
with Sarah was--

ROBIN

Matthew. The problem is *I don't*
care that you're cheating again. I
don't want you. We should have
split up on the honeymoon. We
shouldn't have got married.

(beat)

I thought I owed you this face-to-
face... but I don't.

Robin stands to leave. But Matt rises too.

MATTHEW

How do you think your life looks to
other people?

(beat)

You bailed out on uni. Now you're
bailing out on us. You're a flake.
You're a Peeping Tom for a living,
and you managed to get fired from
that! He only took you back because
you're cheap.

Robin feels winded. Hammered. Tries not to show it.

ROBIN

Thank you. You've made this easy.

The SOUND of a car drawing up outside. They both hear it.
Robin heads for the door -- but now Matthew blocks her.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Let me past.

MATTHEW

No.

ROBIN

Get out of the way.

MATTHEW

I won't let you.

ROBIN

That's not your decision. And I'm
not that person any more.

MATTHEW

You're my wife. I've got a right to fight for this.

Robin tries again to pass him, but he blocks her again. Panic begins to rise in her. She is shaking.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

I'm not going to let you fail. Not with this one. We're going to work it out together. So sit down.

(beat)

Look at you shaking. You're a mess, Rob. Trust me, you don't want to be on your own.

ROBIN

My taxi's here. I'm leaving now. You'll have to hurt me to keep me here, and then I'll have you arrested for assault. And that'll ruin you.

MATTHEW

You won't do that.

He is still fixed-smiling. Trying to dominate her. So she reaches for the hardest, most-truthful thing she can say -- the thing you can't ever come back from.

ROBIN

I was falling out of love with you at university. We'd have broken up, but... then I got attacked and I needed to feel safe, and you gave me that. But it's not enough. I don't love you.

(beat)

The truth is, I would never have married you if I hadn't been raped.

Matthew is grey, queasy with shock and pain. Robin quietly picks up her case and walks to the front door.

61 INT/EXT. MINICAB, ROBIN'S ROAD - NIGHT 16

61

Robin climbs into the back of the Minicab with her case beside her. She locks her door. The Minicab Driver (female, 50s) looks back.

MINICAB DRIVER

All set?

Robin bursts into tears.

ROBIN

I'm sorry. I've just left my
husband.

MINICAB DRIVER

Yeah? I've left two. It gets easier
with practice.

She passes a packet of tissues back to Robin.

THE END.