

MUSIC: TIMESCALES. JULIE COOPER.

WE TRAWL LONDON STREETS. IT RAINS. A LONDON SOUNDSCAPE.

HENRY JAMES.

London.

This dark and dingiest of cities

A steady deluge of rain.

Always in its uproar,

Its distractions and interruptions,

Black darkness...

A CARRIAGE PASSES CLOSE UP. CARRIAGES, PEOPLE, NOISE. WE MOVE AMONGST.

To walk London is to haunt London,

Is to imagine the whole.

See yourself a particle...

PRINCE.

What have I done?

HENRY JAMES.

A man, steps out of a high building,

A bank, a lawyer's office?

PRINCE.

I have sealed my fate.

I...

HENRY JAMES.

Too many questions, small or great

Walk the city, let the streets be your answer.

PRINCE.

(OUT-LOUD) I have sold myself to the highest /bidder.

HENRY JAMES.

/Stop before shops in which objects,

Silver and gold.

PRINCE.

(V/O) Have I sold myself?

HENRY JAMES.

This great city spreads her dusky mantle over innumerable races and creeds.

This man - an Italian, no trace in his voice of it.

PRINCE. /What is my value?

HENRY JAMES. Test it...

Taste the air.

PRINCE. What is my worth?

HENRY JAMES. And under the low magnificent medium of the sky.

The man stops.

Blurring what may or may not be a sunset.

Hung together in a confusion, a complication,

PRINCE. I hate this city.

HE WALKS BY THE RIVER THAMES.

HENRY JAMES. Yet this city...

Communicates the greatest sense of life.

Here, you can get anything.

Anyone.

You may walk out of your shabbiest corner...

LONDON PASSES BY.

And begin over.

PRINCE (V/O) I am to be married.

To be married.

My lawyers our lawyers...

Have agreed a price.

(OUT-LOUD) So why do I hesitate?

HE STARTS TO WALK AGAIN.

(V/O) I am to be married...

To a beautiful, romantic American girl.

MUSIC FADES.

Int. Offices

LONDON

AMERIGO ENTERS, MAGGIE WAITS.

MAGGIE. Amerigo.

PRINCE. You're here.

MAGGIE. Not staying for the business,
just came with father – I'll go on to the
National Gallery. You look //nervous.

RETURN TO MUSIC. MOVE TO TIMESCALE 5, QUIET UNDERSCORE.

PRINCE

(V/O) //The unknown, the unimportant Italian prince.

PRINCE. I will try to speak my best
Ameri/can.

MAGGIE. You'll be perfect.

///SHE KISSES HIM.

PRINCE

(V/O) ///Sufficed in the colour of her...

BEAT.

What is it?

Innocence?

Would you call Maggie inno/cent?

MAGGIE. /Your English is flaw//less.

PRINCE. //Is it?

MAGGIE. You speak it too well.

It's your one fault.

PRINCE

(V/O) She is the most beautiful thing.

Thing?

And her father a gargantuan of money.

PRINCE. I am practising my American
so I can learn to talk to your father.

MAGGIE. Why?

PRINCE

(V/O) His easy way with his easy /millions.

PRINCE. /He's huge.

MAGGIE (LAUGHS) Is he?

PRINCE (V/O) His warehouses filled //with treasure.

PRINCE. /Well not in form but in...

The way he he is.

MAGGIE. The American //way.

PRINCE (V/O) //His eye sharply looking you over, working //out your value.

MAGGIE. ///It's just who he is.

PRINCE. His Americanisms are what makes him most alive. I am just trying to find...

MAGGIE. A way to...

PRINCE. I don't know...

To understand him.

MAGGIE. He understands you.

PRINCE. Yes.

PRINCE (V/O) I will become part of his collection.

MUSIC FADES.

PRINCE. Too well.

PRINCE (V/O) A rarity.

MAGGIE. Here he is.

VERVER. Amerigo...

PRINCE. Good morning.

THEY SHAKE HANDS.

VERVER. Are you ready to do this little business of ours?

PRINCE. (V/O) I am an object...

Of price.

Not perhaps unique but...

Curious and eminent, so few like me...

(A Prince)

PRINCE. I am.

VERVER. Let's do this.

PRINCE

(V/O) He loves fine things,

Collects them for his museum

In good old American City.

Loves for the good of collecting,

He has not lost anything...

VERVER. Maggie, take my carriage.

MAGGIE. Papa, I'll walk.

VERVER. On these streets?

MAGGIE. Of course.

PRINCE

(V/O) Yet.

SHE KISSES HIM.

VERVER. Be careful.

VERVER GOES FORWARD.

Let's make all this possible.

PRINCE

(V/O) I will be a good husband I will be...

I am not futile.

They are just...

(American)

...romantic.

Have romantic ideas...

THEY WHISPER QUICK.

MAGGIE. I must go. Let you get on
with your bus/iness.

PRINCE. /You mustn't think too well
of me //Maggie.

MAGGIE. //Of course I must.

PRINCE. There are two parts //of
me.

MAGGIE. ///What parts?

PRINCE. All this, this this...

History.

I don't...

MAGGIE (LAUGHING) I love your history.
All those doings...

PRINCE. All the infamous waste of
money that might have come to me.

BEAT.

MAGGIE. I don't care about the
money Amerigo.

PRINCE (V/O) Today at last I can make something of...

Myself...

With all my father-in-law's money?

PRINCE. But there is another side...

MAGGIE. What other side?

PRINCE. Small.

Unknown.

Unimportant.

MAGGIE. It's not unimporttant...

PRINCE. /Except to you.

About that you know nothing.

PAUSE.

MAGGIE. That will be the occupation
of my future.

VERVER (FROM INSIDE) Amerigo...

TIMESCALE 6 HERE, CAN DRAW IN AND OUT HERE, UNTIL END.

PRINCE

(V/O) So I will have more money than my family ever did.

And you will take me, in your good faith...

The colour of your innocence,

And the colour of your imagination...

What you think I am.

MAGGIE. What are you worrying?

PRINCE. You Americans are too
romantic.

MAGGIE. Of course we are. That's
what makes everything so lovely for us.

The world...

The beautiful world.

PRINCE

(V/O) And you see me as the most /beautiful.

/My father is even worse. His whole life
over, is the most romantic thing.

PRINCE. You mean in his gathering
of beautiful things?

MAGGIE. You must go.

PRINCE. I wonder what I'll cost.

MAGGIE. I don't care.

SHE KISSES HIM.

I'd rather pay than lose you.

SHE GOES.

PRINCE. (V/O) So my papers are all in order now.
My account balanced today as it has never been in my /life.
/Why does everything keep rising //in front of me like waves?
//I am about to marry to an extraordinary girl.
(OUT-LOUD) Who but a millionaire can say what a fair exchange is
for that million?
MUSIC GONE.

Int. Sitting room AFTERNOON

THE PRINCE AND FANNY SIT DRINKING TEA.

FANNY. Why are you afraid?

PRINCE. I wait to see the monster come.

FANNY LAUGHS AT HIM.

FANNY. Amerigo...

Is marriage a monster?

PRINCE. It's a fearful thing Fanny.

SHE LAUGHS AGAIN.

FANNY. Everyone feels that the day /before their wedding.

PRINCE. /It was your idea.

FANNY. It was your idea.

PRINCE. You had it first...

You...

Had it most.

FANNY. I liked it, yes.

But you liked it your/self.

PRINCE. /So now you wash your hands of me?

BEAT.

FANNY. Why are you afraid?

PRINCE. Why do you like it?

FANNY. Don't you know yourself?

PRINCE. This beautiful girl whom I put into your possession?

PRINCE. It isn't just a matter of you handing me over.

PRINCE. You hand her over,

FANNY. Her fate, her life...

PRINCE. You risk her every/thing.

FANNY. /Now you are trying to frighten// me.

PRINCE. //It's just how I'm feeling ///today Fanny.

FANNY. ///I'm already frightened.

PRINCE. Why?

FANNY. No, nothing.

PRINCE. What is it?

FANNY. Nothing nothing...

PRINCE. Something I hadn't been prepared for...

PRINCE. What?

FANNY. It doesn't properly concern you.

PRINCE. Properly?

PAUSE. **LIGHTER MUSIC HERE. PAUL MOTTRAM. STASIS 3.**

FANNY. Charlotte Stant is in London...

PRINCE. Miss Stant?

FANNY. ...she has just been here.

BEAT.

PRINCE. Really?

BEAT.

FANNY. From America?

FANNY. This noon.

She was here for more than an hour.

LET MUSIC REMAIN BUT REDUCE.

PRINCE. And you think I have a share /in that?

FANNY. /It was you who wanted //to know.

PRINCE. //I didn't know then what the ///matter was.

FANNY. ///Is it so bad?

PRINCE. You call it bad?

FANNY. It seems to affect you?

PRINCE. You're upset?

FANNY. I didn't expect her,

No more than Maggie would have done.

PRINCE. I'm sure Maggie will be delighted.

She's her good friend.

BEAT. REDUCE MUSIC MORE. VERY QUIET.

Has Miss Stant gone to the house?

FANNY. She's gone back to her hotel to collect her things.

I can't have her staying in a /hotel.

PRINCE. /So she's staying here?

FANNY. I expect her any moment.

PAUSE.

PRINCE. Why has she come back?

FANNY. Your marriage.

PRINCE. Mine?

FANNY. Maggie's, it's the same thing.

She's lonely.

PRINCE. Did she say that?

FANNY. The thing I remember...

PRINCE. Is what?

FANNY. ...that she has no home.

Nothing.

Extraordinarily alone.

MUSIC GONE.

PRINCE. No means still?

FANNY. Small ones.

PRINCE. She doesn't like Ame/rica?

FANNY. /She has rebounded from it.

PRINCE. Whereas I feel like America will be mine.

FANNY. That is your good fortune, or will be.

Charlotte owns nothing.

BEAT.

PRINCE. Is she just as beautiful?

FANNY. Just the same.

She acted impulsively coming here,

But she acted with generosity...

Because of her great friendship /with Maggie.

PRINCE. /She acted beautifully.

FANNY. Yes.

HALF-BEAT.

PRINCE. But it troubles you?

BEAT.

FANNY. I'm not no...

Any more than you.

BEAT.

PRINCE. I'm not.

FANNY. My first impulse is always to fear complications,

(RAPIDLY) Well I don't fear them

I like them I I...

They're my element.

BEAT.

PRINCE. However there is no complication.

BEAT.

How long will she stay?

FANNY. I haven't asked....

THE FRONT DOOR IS RUNG AND OPENED FROM AFAR.

But here is your chance...

BEAT.

To ask her yourself.

CHARLOTTE ENTERS. **MUSIC. STASIS.**

CHARLOTTE. Good afternoon.

EVERYTHING SLOWS STRANGELY.

A MOMENTARY THOUGHT STRETCHED...

PRINCE (V/O) And here you are.

In motion in gesture...

THEY MOVE ROUND EACH OTHER.

So sharp,

Sharp

sharp

sharper than anything in the world.

I half breathe,

Step back from you.

HE LOOKS AT HER.

You are all the items on a list I have put away.
But one by one, (like relics)
I see them now.
Your thick brown hair...
Indescribable colour.
The way your sleeves are drawn to the wrist,
Underneath your free arms...
Your narrow hands, long fingers...
The shape and colour of your finger nails.
I know the special beauty of the line of your back.
CHARLOTTE BREAKS INTO THIS...
CHARLOTTE. You see you are not rid of me Amerigo.
How is Maggie?
FANNY. I must just arrange with the house-keeper your room.
Excuse me.
MUSIC FADES SLOWLY.
FANNY EXITS. THEY STAND, WAITING FOR HER TO GO AWAY.
CHARLOTTE. I have been thinking about Maggie.
I longed to see her happy.
PRINCE. She is happy.
It's almost terrible...
CHARLOTTE. How so?
PRINCE. ...the happiness of such a young good generous...
CHARLOTTE. She is generous.
PRINCE. I feel I still have so much to learn...
About her.
She will be glad you're /here.

CHARLOTTE. /You don't need me.
It's Maggie's hour.
That's why I didn't want to miss //it.

PRINCE. //You mustn't miss anything.
(V/O) Your singleness
Your solitude.
Your lack of means.
Your detachment,
I don't know/ I...
(OUT-LOUD) /You didn't like your own country?

CHARLOTTE. It doesn't seem like mine.
You know I always lived in Tusca/ny.

PRINCE. /You were in New York?

CHARLOTTE. Which doesn't care whether you like it or not.
No,
I didn't like// it.

PRINCE. //That doesn't encourage me.

CHARLOTTE. Are you going there?

PRINCE. American City of course.
I want to.

CHARLOTTE. Immediately after you're ///married?

PRINCE. ///In a month or two.
Didn't Maggie write to ///you?

CHARLOTTE. ///Not about that.
But of course you must go.
And stay,
As long as poss/ible.

PRINCE. /Is that what you did?

CHARLOTTE. I had no interests...

You have them on a great scale.

America is a country for interests.

If I had any I would not have left.

PRINCE. So yours are here?

CHARLOTTE. O mine they take up little room wherever they are.

PAUSE. **MUSIC. STASIS 3 RETURNS.**

PRINCE. I would have thought you would have...

Found

Your way to marrying.

CHARLOTTE. Who?

PRINCE. Some

good

kind

clever...

rich Ame/rican.

CHARLOTTE. /I tried everyone I came across.

I did my best,

Showed I had come for that.

Too much perhaps.

HALF-BEAT.

No use, no-one would have me.

BEAT.

Existence however doesn't depend on catching /a husband.

REDUCE MUSIC TO QUIET.

PRINCE. /O existence...

CHARLOTTE. You think I should argue for more?
There are things I shall be able to be,
Do,
As a single woman.

PRINCE. Like?

CHARLOTTE. Like visit friends.
I adore Maggie, how could I come here if I...
FANNY RE-ENTERS. **FADE MUSIC.**
The Prince hopes I shall marry some good person.

FANNY. Does he?

PRINCE. It's only because of what Miss Stant has been telling me.
She has been trying in America...

FANNY. Well you must bring it off Amerigo.

CHARLOTTE. And you must help Fanny.
THEY LAUGH.

PRINCE. I must go.
I dine tonight with my future father-in-law...
Have you any message?

CHARLOTTE. For Mr Verver?

PRINCE. For Maggie?
She'll want to see you early I'm /sure.
/Then I will come early.

PRINCE. Should I, she send a carriage?

CHARLOTTE. I'll take the bus it's //only a penny.
//The bus?

FANNY. Charlotte will find her way there.

CHARLOTTE. Would you do me a great favour Prince?

MUSIC. STASIS 5 TO END OF SCENE.

PRINCE. If I can?

CHARLOTTE. I want to make Maggie a marriage-present...

PRINCE. You don't have to.

CHARLOTTE. ...it's almost what I came back for.

FANNY. What is it you want to get her?

CHARLOTTE. That's what the Prince must help me decide.

FANNY. Can I not help you / decide?

CHARLOTTE. /Certainly, we must talk it over.

But I want him to go with me.

Help me choose.

That's if you can spare the hour?

BEAT.

PRINCE. If that's what you come back from America for...

I must find the hour.

CHARLOTTE. Yes,

You must find the hour.

MOVES INTO THE BACKGROUND OF THE SCENE. FANNY IS AT HER DRESSING TABLE DOING ABOLUTIONS, MR A IN BED LIGHTS HIS PIPE.

COLONEL A. I still don't understand why you are taking it so hard.

FANNY. Don't smoke in bed Bob.

COLONEL. Should I stand by it?

FANNY. Open the window at least.

HE SIGHS, GETS UP...

COLONEL. It's not your fault.

HE OPENS WINDOW. LIGHTS CIGAR.

FANNY. She wants to see Amerigo.

That isn't what troubles me.

COLONEL. So why worry yourself?

FANNY (LOWERS VOICE) Don't talk so loudly.

COLONEL. Me?

FANNY. Charlotte has just now gone to bed.

Close the window!

HE SHUTS THE WINDOW.

COLONEL. I'll just sit here smoking.

FANNY. That smoke does not soothe me.

BEAT. SIGHS. COLONEL TAPS OUT HIS PIPE.

FANNY. It's her friendship with Maggie that is the complication.

COLONEL. So that's why she came /then?

FANNY. /She came because there is no place for her.

She came because she doesn't fit in.

That anything of the past should come back now.

BEAT.

COLONEL. What took place between them?

FANNY. Charlotte and Amerigo?

Nothing.

They realised that nothing could...

That was their tragedy.

COLONEL. What did they do?

FANNY. Do?

HALF-SMILES.

They fell in love.

But...

Seeing it wasn't possible,

Gave each other up.

COLONEL. And you call that romance?

FANNY. Being brave enough to look the facts in /the face?

COLONEL. /What facts?

FANNY. They had no money.

Neither enough for two.

If they had they would have done what they could.

COLONEL. And you call that romance?

FANNY. They were completely in love.

She might have been his...

She checked herself, she even for a minute lost herself.

COLONEL. But she didn't?

FANNY. She didn't.

COLONEL. And then you came up with your idea?

FANNY. No, they had parted before he met Maggie.

COLONEL. But he knew her through /Charlotte?

FANNY. /No Charlotte never spoke of her.

BEAT.

Anyway it was I who named Maggie to him a year ago last May.

He'd never heard of her.

COLONEL. Right, do you mind if I light my pipe again?

FANNY. I do mind.

SHE COMES OVER TO THE BED.

The difficulty was that though though I knew a little I didn't know enough.

I didn't know her relationship with him had been a near thing.

That the poor girl's departure was a flight,

She went to save herself.

Don't lie down.

COLONEL. I'm listening.

FANNY. Your eyes are closed.

COLONEL. I'm contemplating.

FANNY. Sit up.

COLONEL. I am.

FANNY. You're slumping.

HE STRAIGHTENS HIMSELF. SIGHS.

At any event she escaped...

They both did.

The Ververs came to Rome alone.

Charlotte went to New York, Maggie must have helped her, paid for...

And then the field was free.

HALF-BEAT.

I mean, for Maggie and Amerigo.

COLONEL. So the Prince forgot Charlotte, just like that?

FANNY. He wanted to.

He tried to...

And you must remember then how Maggie seemed to us when we /first met her.

COLONEL. /You mean the young woman who has a million a year?

If that's what she meant to him you place it in the light.

The effort to forget Charlotte somehow can't have //been so difficult.

FANNY. //I never said he didn't like Maggie's money.

COLONEL. I never said I shouldn't like it myself.

BEAT.

So what does Maggie know?

FANNY. About them nothing.

COLONEL. Charlotte didn't tell her?

FANNY. There are things that no-one could tell ///Maggie.

COLONEL. ///She'd be scandalised?

FANNY. She'd be frightened.

She loves him.

COLONEL. Who?

FANNY. Maggie, she loves Amerigo.

COLONEL. Because his ancestors discovered America?

FANNY. Yes.

COLONEL. And the Pope, he's related to some pope?

FANNY. Maggie and I went to the library to look him up.

The charm began in Rome, she met Amerigo there.

He came up to our carriage, one day in Rome.

THE MUSIC HERE COMES A LITTLE OUT OF NOWHERE.

USE INSTEAD TIMESCALES 2 THROUGHOUT.

Ext. Outside Piazza, Florence MORNING

MAGGIE AND FANNY ARE IN A CARRIAGE. PRINCE APPROACHES.

PRINCE (IN ITALIAN). Buon giorno Signora Assingham, che meraviglia rivederti di nuovo a Firenze!

FANNY. Buon giorno, il mio carissimo Principe.

PRINCE (TO MAGGIE) Good morning.

FANNY. May I introduce Maggie Verver...

A very good friend /of mine.

MAGGIE. /Another American I'm afraid, traipsing //over your...

FANNY. //And this is Prince Amerigo...

MAGGIE. Prince?

FANNY. Once of Rome mostly now of London.

PRINCE. Good morning.

FADE MUSIC SLIGHTLY.

Ext. Carriage (open air) MORNING

MAGGIE AND FANNY LAUGHING.

MAGGIE. Who is he?

FANNY. As I said, a Prince.

MAGGIE. Is there such a /thing?

FANNY. /In Italy of //course.

MAGGIE. //And his name was what?

FANNY. Amerigo.

MAGGIE (TASTES THE WORD) Amerigo?

What a name.

FANNY. The first Amerigo was the man who followed Columbus across the sea...

And succeeded... where Columbus failed.
MAGGIE. How did he fail?
FANNY. Is Columbus the name of our country?
MOMENT. THEY BOTH LAUGHED.
MAGGIE. So the Prince is related to that /first...?
FANNY. /By same obliging woman of old...
Who was descendant of the //make-believe discoverer.
MAGGIE. //I must tell my father.
FANNY. It became a fashion amongst the family...
That some son, every generation,
Must wear the name Amerigo.

Int. Bedroom NIGHT

COLONEL. How perfect.
FANNY. For all of them, yes.
QUIET. THE COLONEL STRIKES A MATCH.
COLONEL. So Charlotte never told Maggie?
FANNY. No.
COLONEL. And Amerigo never mentioned her to Mag/gie?
FANNY. /No.
BEAT.
COLONEL. So you think Maggie in danger?
By her ignorance...
I mean if there is a danger.
FANNY. There won't be.
We'll help Charlotte.
COLONEL. Us?

FANNY. We'll see her through.
Her noble, lonely life.
But it mustn't be lonely.
All things will be all right if she marries.

COLONEL. So we're to find someone...?

FANNY. Yes.

COLONEL. And that will make up?

FANNY. It will make her magnificent.

COLONEL. Even if she's in love with someone else?

FANNY. It's the least I can do.

SHE SWITCHES OFF THE LIGHT. COMES OVER TO THE BED.

COLONEL. Can I lie down now?

FANNY. You may.

Ext. Park DAY

LONDON ALL ROUND THEM. PRINCE AND CHARLOTTE WALK.

CHARLOTTE. Now I must tell you...
I don't want to pretend I can't pretend...

PRINCE. What is it?

CHARLOTTE. I came back for this,

PRINCE. This?

CHARLOTTE. One hour with you.

BEAT.

I

Don't ask anything of you

I just...

Want to say it.

To see you once
Be with you as we are now
And we used to be...

For one small hour.

That's what I had in my head for weeks.

This is what I want.

This is what I shall always have...

And I want you to know.

I want you to understand,

No I don't care if you understand,

What I want is that I shall always be with you,

That you'll you'll never quite get rid of it,

Us.

That I was here with you where we are and *as* we are.

That's all.

PRINCE (V/O) What we had we hold...

We...

Don't need to tell anyone,

We...

I don't need to even answer...

I smile back at you but /I say nothing.

THEY WALK.

CHARLOTTE. /Let us talk of easy things.

I love these parks...

To prowl.

LONDON GROWS AROUND THEM.

The question of shops...

Of possibilities.

Of particular objects.

Ext. Street

DAY

THE LONDON STREETS GROW. THEY WALK AND STOP AND WALK AS THEY TALK.

CHARLOTTE. I could of course buy Maggie a pin-cushion from the Baker Street Bazaar, she wouldn't /mind.

PRINCE. /She would like it.

CHARLOTTE. That's too easy, to take advantage //of her...

PRINCE. //Kindness?

CHARLOTTE. She never troubles you.

PRINCE. She's not selfish at all...

Enough.

CHARLOTTE. That's what I mean.

There's nothing that she needs.

She doesn't miss things...

I mean if you love her, or she loves you...

She lets it go.

PRINCE. Let's what /go?

CHARLOTTE. /Anything you might do but you don't.

She lets everything go but her capacity to be kind.

It's herself she asks something of...

That's terrible.

PRINCE. Why terrible?

CHARLOTTE. Can you be as good as she is?

BEAT.

PRINCE. No.

CHARLOTTE. So she makes it too easy for us.

PRINCE. Us?

CHARLOTTE. People like us, easily spoilt.

We're not good enough to stand it.

BEAT, THEY WALK.

PRINCE. She believes in us, that's all.

CHARLOTTE. Yes, that's what it comes to.

PRINCE. Why is that so terrible?

CHARLOTTE. She pities us.

PRINCE. No she helps /us.

CHARLOTTE. /But we don't help them.

PRINCE. Them?

CHARLOTTE. Her and her father.

PRINCE. We can, we will we can care for //them.

CHARLOTTE. //It comes down to us refusing to be spoilt.

PRINCE. Yes, everything comes to that.

CHARLOTTE. That's what I mean.

Here. Let's go in here.

THEY ENTER A SHOP.

MUSIC. SQUIRREL PICNIC 3. QUITE QUIET AS BIT ON NOSE BUT VERY PLAYFUL, MAKES THIS SCENE MORE LIGHT.

Int. Antique shop DAY

THEY WALK THROUGH. STOP AND START AT CABINETS. IT HAS A SENSE OF ALADDIN'S CAVE. OLD AND MYSTERIOUS. IT RIPPLES IN ITS TREASURE. THEY ARE PLAYFUL, ENJOY THEIR TREASURE HUNT.

PRINCE. Ornaments?

CHARLOTTE. No.

PRINCE. Pendants?

CHARLOTTE. No.

PRINCE. A locket? Here.

CHARLOTTE. No.

PRINCE. This brooch?

CHARLOTTE. Too florid.

PRINCE SIGHS BUT SMILING.

PRINCE. A buckle then?

CHARLOTTE. Too dim.

PRINCE. A pearl!

BENDS OVER CABINET.

CHARLOTTE. Too large and too opaque.

HE LOOKS ROUND. WALKS ROUND A CABINET.

PRINCE. That miniature mounted with diamonds?

THEY BOTH BEND OVER THE CABINET.

CHARLOTTE. You like that?

HALF-BEAT.

PRINCE. No.

It has ceased to dazzle.

THEY ARE BOTH LAUGHING.

CHARLOTTE. Cups?

PRINCE. She doesn't need them.

CHARLOTTE. Trays?

PRINCE. She has hundreds.

CHARLOTTE. Hundreds?

PRINCE. Thousands.

CHARLOTTE. Of trays?

PRINCE. Silver, gold. Brass.

CHARLOTTE BENDS OVER ANOTHER CABINET.

CHARLOTTE. A few commemorative medals?

PRINCE BENDS OVER TOO.

PRINCE. Neat outline...

Dull reference.

CHARLOTTE MOVES ALONG CABINET.

CHARLOTTE. Quaint ring?

PRINCE. Show me?

CHARLOTTE. There.

PRINCE. Amethyst?

CHARLOTTE. Carbuncle.

PRINCE. Faint poetry.

CHARLOTTE. Unpersuaded.

THEY STAND UP, LOOK AROUND. **MUSIC FADE OR FINISH.**

FREEFALLING 2. RICHARD KIMMINGS.

There's nothing here she could wear.

BEAT.

PRINCE. Is there anything you could?

CHARLOTTE. No.

PRINCE. O.

CHARLOTTE. Is it your idea to offer me something?

PRINCE. Well why not, a small ricordo?

CHARLOTTE. A ricordo of what?

PRINCE. Of this, of our hunt.

CHARLOTTE. From you to me?

It's a memento of nothing.

Would you allow me to offer you something?

PRINCE. No.

CHARLOTTE. You wouldn't accept one from me?

PRINCE. No.

CHARLOTTE. And if I were to accept your ornament what would I do with it?

PRINCE. Wear it.

CHARLOTTE. Where?

Under my clothes?

PRINCE. Wherever you want.

CHARLOTTE. So if I should pin this on and go home and show it to Maggie as your present – what would be the pretext?

PRINCE. Pretext?

CHARLOTTE. This ramble we have together and not to speak of?

BEAT.

PRINCE. O yes, I remember we're not to speak /of it.

CHARLOTTE. /So don't insist.

PRINCE. I won't insist cara mia.

MUSIC FADE.

CHARLOTTE (LOWERS HER VOICE) And now the shop-keeper's listening.

PRINCE. (WHISPERS) Who is?

CHARLOTTE. The man behind the counter.

Mute as he is,

Stood there in all his patience.

THEY BOTH LOOK AT HIM, THERE IS A MOMENT.

SHOPKEEPER (TO CHARLOTTE) You've seen, disgraziatamente. Signora Principessa...

Too much.

THEY BOTH LOOK AT HIM.

PRINCE. You're Italian?

SHOPKEEPER.

No.

PRINCE.

English?

SHOPKEEPER.

From all over.

But I have something for you.

HE TURNS WITH A BOX ON THE COUNTER. PUSHING AWAY OTHER THINGS AROUND IT. THERE IS A MAGIC TO IT.

CHARLOTTE.

What is it?

HE LIFTS THE LID. LIFTS OUT A DRINKING VESSEL LARGER THAN A CUP BUT FORMED OF OLD FINE GOLD. IT RINGS A NOTE IN ITS APPEARANCE, SUBTLE AND BEAUTIFUL.

SHOPKEEPER.

A golden bowl.

HE PLACES IT ON THE COUNTER, IT RINGS AGAIN.

CHARLOTTE PICKS IT UP.

CHARLOTTE

(SURPRISED) It's heavier than it looks.

Gold...

(SHE HOLDS IT UP)

Real gold?

SHOPKEEPER.

Look a little...

Perhaps you will make it out.

CHARLOTTE.

It may be cheap for what it is, but I think too dear for /me.

SHOPKEEPER.

/I can part with it for less than its value,

I got it you see for less.

CHARLOTTE.

How much then?

SHOPKEEPER.

Do you like it?

CHARLOTTE

(TO PRINCE) Do you like it?

PRINCE.

Cos é? *(trans: what is it)*

SHOPKEEPER.

Well, signori miei, if you must know...

PRINCE.

Of course I must know.

SHOPKEEPER.

...it's a perfect crystal.

PRINCE (CYNICALLY) Per Dio!

HE MOVES AWAY.

CHARLOTTE. Cut out of a single cry/stal?

SHOPKEEPER. /I can promise you'll never find a join.

CHARLOTTE SETS IT DOWN.

CHARLOTTE. Even if I were to scrape off the gold?

SHOPKEEPER (SMILES) You couldn't - it's too well put on.

Put on I don't know when and I don't know how.

By some fine old worker and some beautiful old process.

CHARLOTTE. How then if it is so precious is it so cheap?

PRINCE. I'll wait for you out in the air.

PRINCE GOES OUT OF THE SHOP. **MUSIC RETURNS. SQUIRREL 3. UNDERScore TO END OF TRACK.**

SHOPKEEPER. I've had it a long time...

I think I must have been keeping it, madam for you.

CHARLOTTE. Because I wouldn't see what's the matter with it?

SHOPKEEPER. What is the matter with it?

CHARLOTTE. Something must be.

SHOPKEEPER. But if you can't find it isn't it as good as nothing?

CHARLOTTE. I might find it when I've paid for /it.

SHOPKEEPER. /Not if you haven't paid too much.

CHARLOTTE. What do you call not much?

SHOPKEEPER. What would you say to fifteen pounds?

CHARLOTTE. Too much.

SHOPKEEPER. That is my price.

Almost nothing.

CHARLOTTE. It's more than I can afford.

CHARLOTTE. Only then the price.
I'm poor you see very poor.
But thank you and I'll think.
I like it, I want it.
SHOPKEEPER. I'll keep it for you.
SHE GOES OUT OF THE SHOP.

Ext. Shop-front DAY

THE PRINCE SMOKES, STUBS OUT HIS CIGARETTE AS SHE COMES OUT.

PRINCE. I hope you satisfied yourself with what was wrong with that bowl.

CHARLOTTE. Nothing.
The more I looked at it the more I like it.

PRINCE. Are you serious?

CHARLOTTE. Yes.

PRINCE. You don't know?

CHARLOTTE. Know what?

PRINCE. That's why I came out...

CHARLOTTE. That old rascal.

PRINCE. Is he a rascal - his price was so mode/rate?

CHARLOTTE. /How much?

PRINCE. Five pounds.

CHARLOTTE. It would be dear at five shillings...

PRINCE. If you offered me five pence I wouldn't take it from you.

CHARLOTTE. Why not?

PRINCE. It has a crack.

BEAT. THE VIBRATION OF THE BOWL AGAIN (VERY VERY SUBTLE)

CHARLOTTE. You answer for it without looking?

PRINCE. I did look.

It told its story...

No wonder it's cheap.

CHARLOTTE. But it's exquisite.

PRINCE. Yes, that's the danger.

CHARLOTTE. The danger – I see – because you're superstitious?

PRINCE. Per Dio, I'm superstitious!

A crack is a crack.

CHARLOTTE. You'd be afraid...

PRINCE. Per Bacco!

CHARLOTTE. For your happiness?

PRINCE. For my happiness.

CHARLOTTE. For your safety?

PRINCE. For my safety.

CHARLOTTE. For your marriage?

PRINCE. For everything.

CHARLOTTE. At least then if there's a crack we know it.

To perish by cracks in things we don't know...

SHE LAUGHS.

We could never give each other anything.

PRINCE. But I do know.

By instinct I don't fail.

That will protect me.

Let's walk I must get back.

THEY START WALKING.

CHARLOTTE. What then will protect me?

PRINCE. I will.

CHARLOTTE. But I cannot accept anything from you as long as you will not from me.

PRINCE SIGHS.

PRINCE. Well then.

CHARLOTTE. I liked the bowl,

If that won't do, then there's nothing.

You must get married without a gift.

AN INTERLUDE. THE LONDON TRAFFIC PASSES THEM BY...

Or I will leave all that to your father-in-law.

He has all the gifts you will ever need.

AND THEN GROWS TO BELLS OF A WEDDING, MUSIC, CHEERING
AND THEN THE FEELING OF MOVEMENT OF TRAINS, BOATS RISING
TO CACOPHONY AND THEN GRADUALLY REDUCING TO NOTHING.

ADAM VERVER WALKS THROUGH HIS WAREHOUSE, JUST HIS FOOTSTEPS RESONATING THROUGH AND AROUND. THE MAGIC OF THE ANTIQUE SHOP, STILL PLAYS THROUGH THIS SCENE LIKE WE ARE CAUGHT ON PROSPERO'S ISLAND. DOES TREASURE SHIMMER, OR VIBRATE AGAINST THE SILENCE?

VERVER

(V/O) I hide here.

This warehouse

So quiet...

So still.

Precious objects,

All these things I collected.

Acquisition, appreciation...

Stood still.

Held breath...

THE TREASURE SUBTLY SHIMMERS IN SOUND. HE SITS DOWN ON A BOX.

I hide here.

Just so...

No-one can find me.

My daughter is married and I...

All those American women ...

The deep danger the deep de

That makes me turn cold,

That makes me hide here

Is that one might propose

That terrible issue...

Married to my money

Everything's changed.

Maggie married,

Them going away to America...

Coming back.

The Prince,

And I have a grandson.

(Why all those Americans keep visiting)

Conspiring...

I must ask Maggie what to do.

ADAM VERVER SITS OUT IN HIS GARDEN AT HIS MAGNIFICENT COUNTRY HOUSE. MAGGIE APPROACHES.

MAGGIE. Are you still hiding out here Papa?

VERVER. Are the Americans gone?

MAGGIE. You're American.

VERVER. Are the American ladies gone?

MAGGIE. They are.

Very disappointed to have not seen /more of you.

VERVER. /They looked at my grandson?

MAGGIE. Amerigo charmed them...

Walking back and forwards with the Principino until //he slept.

VERVER. //He's wonderful.

MAGGIE. Why are you hiding out ///here?

VERVER. ///Why do these American widows keep coming to see me?

The unmarried, the di///vorcees?

MAGGIE. ///You're still young.

VERVER. Not so young.

MAGGIE. You're not old.

VERVER. So you mean they'll be others?

MAGGIE. Yes they'll be others.

VERVER. Why?

VERVER. I am just a small

spare....

/stale.

MAGGIE /You're not!

VERVER. Adding each day to greater stoutness.

MAGGIE. Well...

VERVER. My hair's gone.

MAGGIE. You have beautiful eyes.

VERVER. Thank you kindly.

MAGGIE. You might try...

VERVER. What?

MAGGIE. ...not wearing the same waistcoat /each day.

VERVER. /I like this waistcoat.

MAGGIE. Evidently.

VERVER. Would you really like me to marry?

BEAT.

MAGGIE. There's...

Something that used to be right I've made it wrong.

VERVER. You haven't made it wrong.

MAGGIE. I've made a difference...

VERVER. By marrying?

MAGGIE. It's my fault.

VERVER. It's not your fault.

MAGGIE. I should offer you...

VERVER. What?

MAGGIE. ...an alternative.

VERVER. To what?

MAGGIE. What you've lost.

VERVER. What have I lost?

MAGGIE. You weren't on the market /when you with me.

VERVER. /Market!

MAGGIE. I kept people off by being with you.

Now I'm married to someone else...

You are married to nobody.

Therefore...

SHE LAUGHS, HALF-SIGHS.

People think you should marry them.

VERVER. I don't want to.

MAGGIE. Or can't be bot/hered.

VERVER. /To take somebody I don't like?

MAGGIE. If you liked somebody...

VERVER. I don't want to make a mis//take.

MAGGIE. //So you have been thinking about it?

SHE MOVES AWAY.

VERVER. What?

What?

BEAT.

You have something up your sleeve.

BEAT. **MUSIC. STASIS 3.**

MAGGIE. I got a letter this morning.

VERVER. What letter?

MAGGIE. I've been asking myself if if...

You could stand another /woman...

VERVER. /Stand?

MAGGIE. ...coming here.

VERVER. Depends who?

MAGGIE. Charlotte Scant.

VERVER. Charlotte?

MAGGIE. She writes...

Asks if we would invite her.

BEAT.

VERVER. Why not?

BEAT.

What?

BEAT.

What?

BEAT.

You want me to ask her?

MAGGIE. It would be beautiful if you /would.

VERVER. /You want me to write to her?

MAGGIE. Yes it would be kind.

If you can.

VERVER. I don't think I'm afraid of Charlotte.

MAGGIE. Then invite her.

VERVER. Where is she?

MAGGIE. Brittany.

A little bathing place...

With people she doesn't like.

VERVER. Well I guess she likes us.

MAGGIE. She likes us.

BEAT.

She has nobody in the world.

Only acquaintances who make use of her...

Or or...

Relatives who are so afraid she'll make use of them they hardly let her look at them.

BEAT.

MAGGIE. She's not afraid of anything and she...

She...

She's so brave.

Me, I never take risks.

I tremble for my life.

That's how I live.

VERVER. O love.

MAGGIE. I live in terror.

VERVER. You can't persuade me you're not as good as /Charlotte Scant.

MAGGIE. /I may be as good but not as great.

She has great imagination.

She has two-pence in the world but that has nothing to do with it.

She doesn't care.

I never saw her do anything but laugh at her poverty.

Her life her life has been harder than /anyone knows.

VERVER. /Why haven't you told me about her before?

MAGGIE. She would have liked to marry.

VERVER. Has she tried?

MAGGIE. It doesn't always come to girls who are poor.

Especially when they're Ame//rican. **FADE MUSIC AFTER BUILD.**

VERVER. //Who did she try to marry?

MAGGIE. I don't know.

VERVER. There was somebody in particular?

MAGGIE. I think there was somebody.

VERVER. How many times has she tried?

MAGGIE. I don't think the right word is try.

VERVER. Well then, what has she done?

MAGGIE. She has suffered.

VERVER. She didn't tell you who?

MAGGIE. She is all pride and silence.

I don't know what I would do if I were so lonely
What sorrow have I ever had in my life?

I don't even know if I'm proud...

VERVER. You're proud Mag.

MAGGIE. Am I?

How can I tell?

I've never had the least blow.

I don't want to know.

BEAT.

O I must go and see if Fanny has arrived.

VERVER. Fanny?

MAGGIE. She is coming to visit this afternoon.

MAGGIE GOES ON A LITTLE. **MUSIC. STASIS 5.**

VERVER. So...

She is beyond love?

MAGGIE. Charlotte?

MAGGIE MOVING AWAY, CALLING BACK.

VERVER. Beyond everything?

MAGGIE. She's beyond nothing she has nothing.

VERVER. You must have things to be beyond /them?

MAGGIE. /She's not beyond help.

VERVER. I will write to her.

HALF LAUGHS.

I always thought of her as a little girl.

MAGGIE. She's a brilliant woman.

VERVER.

Then I will write to her as that.

MUSIC FADES THROUGH BEGINNING OF NEXT SCENE.

Ext. Sitting Room

DAY

FANNY SITS DRINKING TEA. MAGGIE PLAYS WITH THE BABY. VERVER ENTERS.

VERVER.

Fanny.

FANNY.

Adam...

I am here drinking your tea again.

VERVER.

It is always my pleasure.

THEY GREET. THEN VERVER CROUCHES BY THE BABY.

How is my Principino?

That was a short nap.

MAGGIE.

Wet, I think.

SHE CHECKS.

(TO BABY) Come on you.

I'll take him to the nurse.

SHE PICKS HIM UP. VERVER KISSES HIM.

VERVER.

Sweet prince.

MAGGIE EXITS.

FANNY.

I am pouring you tea here Adam.

VERVER SITS.

VERVER.

Thank-you.

FANNY POURS.

FANNY.

Milk?

VERVER.

No.

SHE HANDS HIM.

FANNY.

May I ask you something if you don't mind me asking?

VERVER.

Anything.

BEAT.

FANNY. Who were those crumpled people leaving as I came in?

VERVER. That was Mrs Rance...

FANNY. Aah.

VERVER. ...friends of the Miss Lutches.

FANNY. Miss /Lutches?

VERVER. /Miss Lutch and Miss Lutch.

FANNY. Who were also leaving?

VERVER. Friends from America.

My wife's, before she died.

FANNY. Indeed.

BEAT.

Do you have a lot of these sort of people visiting you?

VERVER. I do.

FANNY LAUGHS. VERVER LAUGHS TOO.

FANNY. Maggie tells me you might invite Charlotte Scant?

VERVER. I think as soon as possible.

THEY BOTH SMILE.

FANNY. She'll clear them out.

VERVER. Will she?

FANNY. All the Miss Lutches in the world will gather themselves for departure, you'll see.

I almost feel sorry for them.

SHE LAUGHS SOME MORE. HE LAUGHS TOO. PRINCE ENTERS.

FANNY. Aren't I right Amerigo?

PRINCE. About what?

FANNY. Charlotte Stant...

PRINCE. Who?

FANNY. Visiting Adam.
Will scare off all these terrible /widows.

PRINCE. /Visiting when?

VERVER. I write today.

PRINCE. I thought she was in America?

VERVER. You know her?

PRINCE. No.
Well.
We've met...
She's a friend of Maggie's isn't she?

VERVER. Yes.
When we were in Italy after Maggie's mother...
She
They
Were perfect friends.

PRINCE. Charming.

FANNY. O she will be charming of course...

VERVER. And?
As she is a woman so other than these women who visit you.
They will know,
They will understand and...
They will move on.

PRINCE. They seem quite determined.

MUSIC HERE COMES OUT OF NOWHERE.

RETURN TO FREE FALLING

FANNY. But Charlotte is the real thing.
They will look at her and lose heart.

VERVER.

I will write to her now.

I will then go to London...

I will go and meet her.

THERE IS A MOVEMENT OF TRAVEL. CARRIAGE, TRAIN, LONDON.
PEOPLE, LIFE.

AND THEN A PULLING OUT AGAIN OF TIME AND SOUND. THE
VOICES OF A LONDON STREET, THE BUSINESS OF KINGS CROSS IN
ALL ITS SQUALOR FOCUSES INTO...

MUSIC FADES.

Int. Large Warehouse of treasure

DAY

ADAM PULLS THE DOOR OPEN TO THE WAREHOUSE, THEY ENTER.

CHARLOTTE.

So this is where you keep all your treasure?

VERVER

This is one of my warehouses.

The rest are buried amongst the spikes of the East End.

CHARLOTTE.

So quiet.

VERVER.

I never brought anyone here Miss /Stant.

CHARLOTTE.

/It sounded too intriguing, so near to Kings Cross.

Not to look in.

BEAT.

That man outside...?

VERVER.

He guards.

CHARLOTTE.

Day and night?

VERVER.

I think he has a knife and a gun.

CHARLOTTE.

His face says so.

SHE LOOKS AROUND. THE WAREHOUSE CHIMES AGAIN.

So many precious objects.

VERVER.

These are Italian...

CHARLOTTE.

The pictures?

VERVER. The gold.

SHE WALKS, ALL THESE THINGS SHE PASSES.

CHARLOTTE. And silver,

Enamel.

VERVER. That's majolica

CHARLOTTE. Ivory.

VERVER. That bronze is French.

CHARLOTTE. So many things.

VERVER. I let them multiply around me,

CHARLOTTE. I feel them, each in their own beauty...

VERVER. Each, waiting for show.

THE TREASURE SUBTLY SHIMMERS IN SOUND. HE SITS DOWN ON A BOX.

VERVER. I hide here.

CHARLOTTE (SMILING) Why?

VERVER. Just so...

So so

No-one can find me.

Now Maggie is married I...

Hide from

Run from

All the people from American who keep visiting my house.

CHARLOTTE. Why do they visit you?

VERVER. To see Maggie

To see the Prince,

To see my millions.

CHARLOTTE. So you run away to here?

VERVER. In this damp old warehouse...

I sit.

I smoke,

On this my small battered island,

Rife with treasure.

I... appreciate.

PAUSE.

CHARLOTTE. Everything's changed...

For you?

BEAT.

It has changed.

Maggie's married.

The Prince...

CHARLOTTE. Do you like him?

Do you?

CHARLOTTE. I've hardly met him.

He seems very grand.

He's reminds me of this Venetian state

Always perfect,

Staring down in his fullness,

MOVING ROUND IT.

50

So

So

Angular.

Like a perfect crystal.

CHARLOTTE. Is there such a thing

CHARLOTTE. And you have a grandson?
VERVER. Of all the small pieces of art I have held...
Nothing is more precious to /me.
CHARLOTTE (WALKING FORWARD) /And you have a motorcar.
VERVER. Brand new, yes.
SHE RUNS HER HAND ALONG IT.
CHARLOTTE. Now this is beautiful.
VERVER. I can't drive it.
SHE GETS IN.
CHARLOTTE. I can.

Int. Bedroom EARLY MORNING

MAGGIE IS IN BED. AMERIGO STANDS BY THE WINDOW.
MAGGIE (WAKES) Amerigo...
PRINCE. I'm here.
MAGGIE. Is the baby awake?
PRINCE (SOFTLY) No.
MAGGIE SITS UP.
Don't get up.
MAGGIE. What's wrong?
PRINCE. I can't sleep.
It's nothing.
MAGGIE COMES UP BEHIND HIM, PUTS HER ARMS ROUND HIM.
MAGGIE. What is it?
PRINCE. How long will we stay here?
MAGGIE. In the country?
PRINCE. With your father.

MAGGIE. You don't like it?

PRINCE. It's not that.

MAGGIE. You don't like all the different people coming?

PRINCE. I don't say that.

HE MOVES AWAY.

MAGGIE. What then?

PRINCE. It's just...

I heard something.

I was half asleep

Half awake.

I heard

I saw

I don't know.

Outside...

A figure, a...

Ghost.

I don't know.

A woman.

The note of a mandolin.

And then

I longed so much

So much

For Rome.

Just to see it taste it feel its heat.

MAGGIE. We can go.

We can take the baby.

PRINCE. I want my son to be there. To feel what it's like.

MAGGIE. We can go to our apartment in...

PRINCE. I could show you the traces of my family.

MAGGIE. We'll pack up, we'll go back to London.

PRINCE. Tomorrow?

MAGGIE. Don't you want to meet Charlotte.

BEAT.

PRINCE. O I forgot she was coming.

MAGGIE. It doesn't matter.

One day will be enough.

We can see her and go.

PRINCE. If you're sure...

MAGGIE. Of course.

THEY KISS.

VERVER AND CHARLOTTE DRIVE UP.

CHARLOTTE.

What an extraordinary house.

So secluded yet...

Intimate,

Friendly almost in its welcome.

VERVER.

/I think the colour of the day helps – you brought that.

THEY STARE OUT OF THE WINDOW.

The gardens are falling off into autumn.

CHARLOTTE.

Did you make that lake?

VERVER

(LAUGHS) No it's real.

CHARLOTTE.

I'd like to walk down there.

SHE PULLS UP IN THE CAR.

VERVER.

Now?

CHARLOTTE.

Why not?

VERVER.

Do you not require breakfast?

CHARLOTTE.

I will require it.

But I have been stuck inside Mr Verver.

Beside

Alongside

For so long,

I would like for a moment just to breathe...

This cold bright air.

VERVER.

Let me show you the way.

THEY HEAD OUT.

VERVER

(V/O) So much projected light...

I watch her.

MAGGIE COMES.

MAGGIE. Charlotte!

CHARLOTTE. Maggie.

THEY EMBRACE LAUGHING.

Show me this beautiful baby.

Mr Verver, the lake must wait.

VERVER. Please call me Adam.

THEY GO IN.

VERVER (V/O) I watch her go in.

With Maggie.

MAGGIE AND CHARLOTTE CAN BE HEARD LAUGHING.

(V/O) I am after all in my cold still flame...

Appreciating her beauty.

A thing so visibly perfect in its kind.

HE GOES TO GO INSIDE. MAGGIE COMES TOWARDS HIM.

MAGGIE. Papa.

VERVER. What is it?

MAGGIE. Can I speak to you?

Int. Hallway

MORNING

PRINCE COMES DOWN WITH THE BABY.

CHARLOTTE. Good morning Prince.

PRINCE. Good morning Miss Stant.

CHARLOTTE. So this is the Principino I have heard so much about?

PRINCE. It is.

Would you like to hold him?

CHARLOTTE. No I would just like to look at you both.

Ext. Drive

MORNING

VERVER. What is it?

Is something wrong?

MAGGIE. No.

VERVER Tell me...

Int. Drawing Room

MORNING

PRINCE AND CHARLOTTE WANDER
THROUGH.

PRINCE. We're going away...

We're not staying.

CHARLOTTE. /To where?

MAGGIE. /Would you mind so much...

VERVER. What?

MAGGIE. ...if Amerigo, if we...

Went,

For a month to //Italy?

CHARLOTTE. //It makes it easy.

MAGGIE. I think Amerigo is homesick.

PRINCE. Why are you here?

MAGGIE. He said he heard last night...

CHARLOTTE. To see my friend.

MAGGIE ...outside the window,

PRINCE. Adam?

A low music that /woke him.

CHARLOTTE. /Are you jealous?

PRINCE. I'm //not jealous.

//And when he got up,

Went to the window...

MAGGIE. There was nothing.

PRINCE. I'm just uneasy.

MAGGIE. He didn't know if it was a ghost or a dream.

He longs to see Rome /I think.

CHARLOTTE. /Don't be afraid.

MAGGIE. There is unease in him.

BEAT.

I don't like to leave you I feel like I am /always leaving you.

VERVER. /Of course not, you won't leave me I have Charlotte.

MAGGIE. You don't mind me abandoning you //again?

VERVER. //You never abandon me.

MAGGIE. I abandon you every day.

Ext. Front Porch of House DAY

THEIR CARRIAGE AGAIN MOVES AWAY. CHARLOTTE AND VERVER WATCH THEM GO.

CHARLOTTE. You don't mind after all letting them go?

VERVER. No, the Prince desired it.

Maggie said it was the first thing he ever asked of her.

CHARLOTTE. Except of course to marry her.

VERVER LAUGHS.

VERVER. That too, of course.

CHARLOTTE. If the Prince asked something of his wife every day of the year I think still Maggie wouldn't mind it.

VERVER. She would not.

CHARLOTTE. And after all what harm comes from a beautiful fit of homesickness.

VERVER. Italy is a balm.

CHARLOTTE. It is.

VERVER (V/O) And you yourself are a balm Charlotte.

So easy so able to make things smooth.

Int. Drawing Room **EVENING**

EVENING

CHARLOTTE SITS AT THE PIANO. VERVER SITS SMOKING A CIGAR.

CHARLOTTE. What shall I play?

VERVER. What do you like to play?

What would you like me to play?

VERVER. You can play anything,

You play everything.

CHARLOTTE. American?

VERVER. Whatever you like.

SHE STARTS TO PLAY. THE PIANO MUSIC WRAPS ITSELF AROUND HIM, SLOWLY.

PERSUASIVELY.

(V/O) Yes so easy, your music...

Merges floats...

Its surface soft to the pressure of my interest.

Easier than talking all evening...

It is balm.

THE MUSIC CHANGES SLIGHTLY IN TONE.

(V/Q) So strange so strange.

(HF RFAI ISFS) Somehow

You remind me of the Prince.

The way you use these same shades of attention and recognition

HE SITS UP

Your developed art of placing me high up in importance

THE MUSIC CONTINUES.

(V/O) You both charm me lull me in all your...

Beauty.

It is as if he has given you the power to enthrall me as he himself did.

Do you know each other?

Have you passed by each other?

CHARLOTTE STOPS PLAYING SUBTLY, BUT HE DOESN'T NOTICE.

How is it you resemble each other so much in the way you treat me
as if I were a...

(I don't know)

A king.

A...

Pope. (ridiculous)

A President.

THERE IS A SILENCE.

CHARLOTTE. Would you like me to play something else?

VERVER. No, no no no sorry

It's so late the servants have gone to bed.

Thank-you.

CHARLOTTE. Playing music for you...

Is so full of echoes,

VERVER. It is like we talk all evening.

SHE STANDS UP. HE STANDS UP.

CHARLOTTE. I must go to bed.

SHE MOVES ACROSS THE ROOM.

VERVER. Can I light you a taper?

CHARLOTTE. I have it.

VERVER. I will deal with the other candles.

SHE GOES THROUGH AND UP. FURTHER AWAY...

CHARLOTTE. Good night.

Ext. Promenade

DAY

VERVER AND CHARLOTTE WALK. SEAGULLS CRY OUT. WILD-MUSIC BURSTING OUT OF HALLS BUT CONTINUALLY CHANGES, TRANSFORMS AS THEY WALK ON.

VERVER. I would never have thought of a day-trip to Brighton.

CHARLOTTE. Brighton is never far from anywhere.

VERVER. It's loud.

CHARLOTTE. I like it.

Look, acrobatics.

VERVER. How do they not get dizzy?

A CROWD OF PEOPLE CLAP, LAUGH.

CHARLOTTE. They are troupes that travel the world...

I think I once saw them in Marseille.

VERVER. The same?

CHARLOTTE. Next she will stand on his shoulders...

And then that man,

See that small little man.

She will fling him up onto hers.

THIS ALL HAPPENS, THE CROWD OOOS.

VERVER. As you say.

PEOPLE CLAP.

Should I give them something?

CHARLOTTE. Of course.

HE DOES SO.

Too much.

VERVER.

They came a long way.

THEY LAUGH. THEY KEEP WALKING, THE WORLD GATHERS ALL AROUND THEM AND THEN AS THEY WALK AWAY FROM THE BUSINESS MOVES TO QUIETNESS.

A SEAGULL MEASURES THE PASSING OF TIME.

Ext. Bench

DAY

THEY WALK ALONG A QUIETER PATH, LOOK DOWN TOWARDS THE BEACH.

VERVER.

Shall we sit?

VERVER SITS. CHARLOTTE LOOKS BACK AT BRIGHTON.

CHARLOTTE.

Now we see the whole city of stucco.

How it hovers...

THE SEA BREAKS. SHE COMES TO SIT BY HIM.

THEY SIT.

VERVER.

It's been a beautiful day.

CHARLOTTE.

It has.

PAUSE.

VERVER.

We've had some beautiful days together.

CHARLOTTE.

We have.

PAUSE.

VERVER.

I hope it won't come as too much of a shock if I ask you...

If...

You

If if...

STOPS.

Hm.

BREATHES, TRIES AGAIN.

You could

in any way

Regard me with
With with with
Any satisfaction of being...

Erm.
As a husband.

PAUSE, SHE DOESN'T ANSWER.

This isn't sudden to me and I wondered at moments

If

If

You haven't felt it coming me coming to it.

PAUSE

I give you all the time you desire !...

Time to think

BEAT.
You mustn't think I'm forgetting that I'm not I'm not I'm not young

CHARLOTTE: That isn't so.

It's I that am old

You are young

BEAT

To me

These days have been ha-

It shouldn't be painful to them, it

bringing us here.

CHARLOTTE: I don't pretend I don't think it would be good for me to marry.

I'm so unattached so so so adrift.
I should like to have a home.
I should like to have an existence.
In fact you know I want to be married.
VERVER. So marry me?
CHARLOTTE. But I would need to do so much.
VERVER. You think it so much?
CHARLOTTE. Yes a great deal.
PAUSE.
VERVER. I know...
I'm I'm
Not the ideal, not not not not not natural.
I'm so far from the ideal,
No match to your youth /your your your beauty.
CHARLOTTE. /You don't understand me.
It's that you do all, that's what I'm thinking.
VERVER. I know what I do.
CHARLOTTE. I doubt you do.
VERVER. That I'm old at least...
I have known you a /long time.
CHARLOTTE. /You think you know me?
VERVER. Our marriage would be a reason for learning to //know you.
CHARLOTTE. //What if you learn something too ///late?
VERVER. ///I like you more for your saying these ///things.
CHARLOTTE. ///Have you exhausted all other ways?
VERVER. What ways?
CHARLOTTE. I don't see why you are not happy as you are?

VERVER. Well

Well... we'll go to Paris.

CHARLOTTE. To meet them?

VERVER. You can put it to her yourself.

BEAT.

CHARLOTTE. You take me to such beautiful places.

VERVER. It is you that makes them beautiful.

CHARLOTTE. Like this?

VERVER. Promise me, you'll do what Maggie says?

CHARLOTTE. Let's wait until she has said so.

VERVER. It gives you time...

Us time.

We'll keep on together – you'll see how I need /you.

CHARLOTTE. /I already see you have persuaded yourself.

VERVER. You will make Maggie happy.

CHARLOTTE. Happy?

VERVER. We'll go to Paris.

THE SEAS MERGES INTO A CITYSCAPE, EVERYTHING GROWS AND LOOSENS INTO OTHER SHAPES OF STREETS AND CARRIAGES, WHISTLES OF A POLICEMAN.

BUILD MUSIC.

CHARLOTTE. Coming back so /soon?
VERVER. /He's been away.
CHARLOTTE. Just long enough to see how he likes it.
He may not...
VERVER. What?
CHARLOTTE. Like,
The idea that you should give his wife a stepmother.
VERVER. Well he will have to accept what his wife accepts.
CHARLOTTE. And Maggie wires her joy only to you.
Nothing for me.
VERVER. Well that's the thing most beautiful.
She treats us already us one.
PAUSE.
Is it that you want to hear from the Prince himself?
CHARLOTTE. No.
It doesn't matter.
VERVER. You'll hear from Maggie, she will write to you.
CHARLOTTE. That would be beautiful.
VERVER. Will you promise me then to be at peace?
CHARLOTTE. I promise.
PORTRESS ENTERS.
PORTRESS. Cette fois-ci pour madame.
THE TELEGRAM IS HANDED TO CHARLOTTE.
VERVER. The telegram. As we speak!
CHARLOTTE RIPS OPEN THE TELEGRAM ENVELOPE AND READS IT.
THE MUSIC AND SOUNDSCAPE AGAIN WAY TOO PENSIVE. WE WANT TO END EPISODE ONE ON THE SIDE OF THE PRINCE AND CHARLOTTE.

TO END RUNNING ON.

TIMESCALE 12 X THREE TIMES CONSECUTIVELY.

ALLOWING END OF PRINCE'S TELEGRAM WITHOUT MUSIC.

THERE IS A MOMENT.

What does she say?

CHARLOTTE. It isn't from Maggie,

It's from the Prince.

VERVER. Then it's best of all.

CHARLOTTE. It's enough.

VERVER. It's enough for our question?

SHE LOOKS UP AT HIM.

CHARLOTTE. I will give you what you ask...

VERVER (V/O) Your face is so strange.

CHARLOTTE. ...I will marry you.

VERVER (V/O) What did he write to you?

CHARLOTTE. Do you want to read it?

BEAT.

VERVER. No.

Not if it satisfies you.

CHARLOTTE (HOLDS IT OUT) You can.

VERVER. Is he funny?

CHARLOTTE. No, grave...

VERVER. Is marriage such a grave thing?

CHARLOTTE. ...very grave.

VERVER. Well, it's the Italian history in him.

Let's go out.

I'll go order breakfast, shall we break champagne?

HE GOES DOWN THE STAIRS AND OUTSIDE.

CHARLOTTE

(WHISPER) And so my love, a new beginning.

SHE LOOKS AT THE TELEGRAM.

PRINCE

(V/O, A WHISPER) We must lead our lives as we see them.

Stop.

I am inspired by your bravery...

Stop.

And surprised at my own.

Stop.