

SUFFOCATING

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. THE LAWNS OF ASHWORTH HOSPITAL - DAY

Soft music box music heard as the camera zooms slowly towards an upper window of the hospital. Charlotte stands there in a worn looking dressing gown, nightie and slippers. She is a woman in her 40s.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

I was like any other child back then.
I had my hopes and dreams of happily ever after.
But it wasn't to last.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE WATERLOO STATION, LONDON - DAY

As the dissolve occurs a loud train noise is heard and smoke billows covering the transition.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

I remember it well, the day I lost
Faith in people.

CUT TO:

INT. INSIDE WATERLOO STATION, LONDON - DAY

We see the back of NICOLA, (a young woman in her early 20s wearing a short skirt, vest top, jacket and heels) holding YOUNG CHARLOTTE'S hand (6 years old wearing a red and white spotted dress, black winter coat and black shoes) by the hand. Over NICOLA'S shoulder we see MAN (Early 30s wearing a suit shirt and trousers with a heavy coat and stubble on his chin) leant against a pillar smoking a cigarette. We see NICOLA and YOUNG CHARLOTTE approaching him.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

The day that I find out the world wasn't fair.
The day that I realised no one could be trusted.
That day my fairy tale ended.

By this time NICOLA and YOUNG CHARLOTTE have reached MAN and the camera cuts to in front of them. We can now see that NICOLA is wearing a lot of makeup and has a healing black eye. NICOLA is seen to be hesitating.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

I realised that day that I was to be entirely

Alone for the rest of my life.

MAN coughs impatiently and NICOLA quickly reaches out and places YOUNG CHARLOTTE'S hand in his before quickly turning and walking away.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)
I was six years old.

A sound effect of a child's voice shouting "Mummy!" is heard as the scene is faded out to reveal the title of the film 'SUFFOCATING' as though it has been scratched into a wall.

CUT TO:

INT - NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

JEREMY is sat at his desk in front of a computer staring, un-inspired at a blank word document headed with 'Reach out your lonely heart'. There are a pile of letters beside him, he picks one up, looks at it for a few seconds before sighing and putting it down.

JEREMY (V.O.)
Once being a writer meant everything to me.
Once all I wanted was to get away from the
Never ending tediousness of The Lonely Hearts
Colum. Sure, I put up with it because I was
The new boy, the rookie. I hadn't expected to
Be breaking open stories of depraved politicians
Or black hearted killers but facing the same
"Charming and friendly woman seeks enthusiastic
Young man to rock her world" was enough to drive
Any man to question his career. I had been facing
Those letters for six months and all I wanted
Was my big break.
(Pause)
Or so I thought.

A loud bang causes JEREMY to jump as HENRY bangs his office door from across the room. JEREMY instantly takes up a letter and starts to read.

HENRY (Shouting)
Jennings!

JEREMY
Yes sir?

HENRY
My Office! Got something for you.

We see JEREMY smile for a moment.

HENRY (CONT'D) (Shouting)
Now Jennings!

JEREMY
Yes sir, right away sir!

JEREMY grabs his notebook and pen before heading over towards HENRY'S office.

CUT TO:

INT - HENRY'S OFFICE - DAY

JEREMY walks into the office as HENRY is sitting down in his chair putting a piece of quit smoking chewing gum in his mouth and chews momentarily before slamming his fist on the desk.

HENRY
Goddam it!
(Looking up at JEREMY)
You smoke Jennings?

JEREMY
Afraid not sir.

HENRY
Nothing to apologise for kid.
Was gonna say you're lucky you
Don't have to eat this crappy stuff!

JEREMY
Well your doctor will have advised..

HENRY
Pffft! Doctors don't know what they are talking about!

JEREMY
So why are you..

HENRY
The wife kid, my Mrs has laid down the law.
Either the fags go or I do.

JEREMY
Seems a tad extreme sir.

HENRY

Ah she's just a worry wart because she loves me.
After all the heart stuff I had a few years back.

JEREMY
Oh yes I was told.

HENRY
Now there were some good doctors. Fixed my ticker right up.

JEREMY
I can see that sir.

HENRY
I mean if something like that teaches you anything..

JEREMY
Sir?

HENRY
What kid? What did you want?

JEREMY
You asked me to come in sir.

HENRY
I did?
(Beat)
Oh right yea course I did.

HENRY takes up a file off his desk

HENRY (CONT'D)
Well sit down kid, sit down.

JEREMY sits down opposite HENRY. HENRY tosses the file across the desk and JEREMY catches it awkwardly. He adjusts to holding it flat and opens it. The front page reveals a picture of a woman in her mid-twenties with wild hair in a mug shot and underneath is a picture of a living room in a flat covered in blood.

JEREMY
What's this?

HENRY
You mean you don't know?
I suppose it was before your time.

JEREMY lifts the pictures looking at the top page of a report underneath labelled 'Sentenced - February 2 1992'.

JEREMY

I'd have been fourteen when her sentence was laid down.

HENRY

Aye, four years from crime to sentence.
Bloody longest trial of my life.
Nearly drove me and the Mrs apart but
No such luck!

JEREMY

Who was she?

HENRY

Is, she's still up at Ashworth Hospital.
That kid is Charlotte Dawson.

JEREMY looks up at HENRY from the file

JEREMY

The Charlotte Dawson?

HENRY

You know any other?

JEREMY

Her case was all over school.
I remember my parents talked
About her.

HENRY

They wouldn't have been the only
Ones. That case got national press.
Every reporter and photographer clamouring
For every piece of information they could get.
All for a girl who wouldn't say anything.

JEREMY looks back at the photograph of the flat in the file

JEREMY

She stabbed him.

HENRY

(Scoffing)

She did a bloody great deal more
Than that. When the police arrived
He was already dead, 76 stab wounds
Was the last count but no one knows
For sure.

JEREMY

How do you mean?

HENRY

She was still going when the police arrived.

INT - MAN'S FLAT - NIGHT - 1988, FLASHBACK

The camera comes up as the police kick the door in. They all take a few steps in.

POLICEMAN

Alright stay where you..

(Beat)

Jesus Christ!

The camera pivots to where a young woman is knelt over a man's body, she is covered in blood and screaming as she violently stabs him.

HENRY (V.O.)

Coroner said he'd been dead for over an hour when the police arrived. Which means she'd just kept killing him. Every artery was severed and there wasn't a section of skin that hadn't been sliced.

END FLASHBACK

INT - HENRY'S OFFICE - DAY

JEREMY

(Still looking through the file)
Makes you wonder what he did to
Make her that angry.

HENRY

That's it though, all we can
Do is wonder right now.

JEREMY

(Glancing up from the file)
How do you mean?

HENRY

According to statements from when they
Found her, the moment she was pulled off
His body she just
(Pause)

Stopped.

JEREMY
Stopped stabbing?

HENRY
Stopped everything, stopped talking, stopped moving
And she's been that way ever since.

JEREMY
Brain damaged?

HENRY
Nah, she's holding onto something.

JEREMY
How do you know?

HENRY
I saw her, at the trial...

INT - COURTROOM - DAY - 1992, FLASHBACK

The court is full of people. The sound of the solicitor talking to someone on the stand (who can't be seen) is muffled. The camera pans to look up at a younger HENRY (mid-twenties) who is looking down at CHARLOTTE at the table. The camera moves to CHARLOTTE (Mid 20s) who is staring into space not moving or saying anything.

HENRY (V.O.)
All through the trial she just
Sat there. Didn't react when
The prosecution witnesses were
Calling her a junkie and a whore.
She was never asked anything, never
Testified and never said anything to
Her own defence. It was like she'd
Accepted it all before hand, like
She was almost
(Beat)
At peace.

END FLASHBACK

INT - HENRY'S OFFICE - DAY

HENRY is now at the window staring out. The camera is looking over his shoulder so you can still see JEREMY

JEREMY

But you don't think that
Was the case?

HENRY

(Turning to look at him)
Doesn't matter what I think.

JEREMY

And she's not spoken since?

HENRY

Well, someone said she'd opened up
To a nurse in the hospital but it
Turned out to be a load of crap.
That's why you have to be careful
This time.

JEREMY

Me?

HENRY

Next week will be ten years since that
Girl was sentenced. She's been in a secure
Hospital all that time, saying nothing to
Anyone. Maybe she's ready to talk about it.

JEREMY

(Dryly)

Just in time for her anniversary

HENRY

(Angrily)

Look! You have been moaning for
your big chance well this is it.
Imagine it. You could finally shed
Some light over why she did it.

JEREMY

And suppose she won't talk to me?

HENRY

(Walking around and helping
Him out of his seat and
Ushering him out.)

Of course she will. I have every
Faith in you.

CUT TO:

INT - NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

The camera sees HENRY push JEREMY out of his office.

HENRY

I'll expect a report by the
End of the week, that's alright
Right?

JEREMY

But sir...

HENRY slams the office door. JEREMY sighs and looks down at the file opening it and looking at CHARLOTTE'S picture.

CUT TO:

INT - JEREMY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

The camera cuts to JEREMY looking at the same picture in his kitchen. There are two plates of Indian take away on the side.

JEREMY

(Sighing, to himself)
How do you even start to ask
Why she killed a man?

VANESSA (O.S.)

Come on love, I'm bloody starving!

JEREMY shakes his head and closes the file. He tucks it under a plate of take away on a tray. On the tray there is also another plate of take away, a bag of naan bread, a glass of milk and a bottle of beer. JEREMY takes up the tray and walks out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT - JEREMY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

JEREMY walks into the living room. There is a television on (muted) a sofa opposite and a lamp at the end of the sofa (turned on). There is also a coffee table in front of the sofa VANESSA is sat on the sofa. She is heavily pregnant and wearing a maternity dress. JEREMY puts the tray down and take his plate and glass off the tray.

JEREMY
Sorry love.

VANESSA
(Reaching out and taking up
The file off the tray)
What's this?

JEREMY
Just some work stuff.
A New assignment Henry
Wants me to look at.

VANESSA
(Opening the file)
Oh, what kind of assignment?
(Looks at the file and grimaces
Before closing it)
Jesus!

JEREMY
The anniversary of a murder.

VANESSA
(Tossing the file onto the table)
I could have gone my whole
Life without seeing that.

JEREMY
(Taking up the tray and offering it to her)
Here, have something to eat.

VANESSA
(Taking the tray from him, kissing him)
Thanks love.

VANESSA begins eating as JEREMY turns and moves over to sit on the floor before he also starts to eat.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
You said it was an anniversary?

JEREMY
I thought you didn't want to talk
About it?

VANESSA
No, talking about it is fine. It's
Just the visual aid I didn't need.

JEREMY

It's been ten years since Charlotte
Dawson was sentenced.

VANESSA

No! Has it really been ten years?
I remember a girl at my school
Talking about her, apparently her
Sister used to see her around.

JEREMY

You never told me that.

VANESSA

Well our connections with serial
Killers has never come up.

JEREMY

Technically she is just a murderer.
Only one body.

VANESSA

Oh I'm sure that makes it so much better.

JEREMY

Henry reckons I will be able to get her
To open up about why she
(Beat)
Did what she did.

VANESSA

How do you mean?

JEREMY

Well, she hasn't spoken to anyone about
What happened since the police found her.

VANESSA

No way.

JEREMY

Well, Henry knows she didn't aid in her
own defence and since then she's not spoken
to any of the doctors at the hospital. Only
she really knows what happened in that flat.

VANESSA

Well her and him.

JEREMY

The only living person.

VANESSA

You wanna be careful you know.

JEREMY

I don't think she's going to
Stick me as soon as I say hello.

VANESSA

That's not what I meant but thank
You for putting that horrible image
In my head.

JEREMY

I didn't mean it love.

VANESSA

Well I did, girl like that, holding onto
Secrets for so long. She could tell you
Anything.

JEREMY

If she does say anything I doubt she's
Going to want more lies printed about her.

VANESSA

They may not have been lies.

JEREMY

I was always taught, if you want the
Whole story you go to a reliable source.

VANESSA

And a mentally unstable addict murderer is
That reliable source?

JEREMY

She knows something babe, I can feel it.
(Opens the file and looks at her picture)
And I am going to find out what.

Camera moves to over JEREMY'S shoulder so you can see
CHARLOTTE'S picture. The Camera slowly zooms in on the
picture.

DISOLVE TO:

EXT - DRIVEWAY OUTSIDE ASHWORTH HOSPITAL - DAY

The camera shows JEREMY driving up the drive in a battered old car. The camera then moves to an upper window, where the shadow of a figure can be seen.

CUT TO:

INT - JEREMY'S CAR - DAY

JEREMY drives up to the hospital as the sat nav says "You have arrived at your destination". JEREMY stops the car and looks up at the hospital.

JEREMY

Yes, it would appear I have.

CUT TO:

EXT - UPPER WINDOW OF ASHWORTH HOSPITAL - DAY

The camera zooms slowly in on CHARLOTTE'S face watching JEREMY.

CUT TO:

INT - CHARLOTTE'S ROOM - DAY

The camera is just on the inside still looking at CHARLOTTE'S Face as she watches JEREMY.

CHARLOTTE

I'm not afraid of you

The camera moves to look over her shoulder as you see JEREMY through the window getting out of his car with his file and notepad.

CUT TO:

EXT - THE SPACE OUTSIDE ASHWORTH HOSPITAL - DAY

The camera shows JEREMY checking his note book.

BETTY

(Calling)

Yoohoo!

JEREMY looks up as the camera moves to over his shoulder. BETTY (A nurse in her late 30s) is walking over towards him. As she gets close she continues speaking.

BETTY (CONT'D)

Ah here you are! You must be Mr Jennings. Dr Abbots told me that you were coming. Of course he would have been here to meet you himself but he's always such a busy man, busy busy busy! Well, shall we get you inside to get things started?

JEREMY

That would be great, Mrs...?

BETTY

Oh just call me Betty dear, I don't believe with all this standing on false ceremony.

(Turns and walks back towards the hospital)

Now lets get you inside and all settled.

JEREMY

(Following her)

Thank you

As BETTY walks towards the building with JEREMY following her he looks up at the hospital. The camera appears over his shoulder looking up at the window and zooms in to where Charlotte is standing. Jeremy stops and stares.

BETTY

(Calling)

You coming dear?

JEREMY looks at her as though he has been broken from a trance.

JEREMY

Yes, of course. Sorry

JEREMY starts to follow her again.

BETTY

I must say, I think its all very exciting
Its not often we get members of the press here

JEREMY

Well, with the anniversary..

CUT TO:

INT - HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

BETTY is now leading JEREMY up a busy corridor with open doors on either side. JEREMY is staring around him in bewilderment.

BETTY

Oh yes of course I know that
Dear. Remember the day she first
Came here. Quiet as a mouse she was.
Still is. That's why this will be good for her.

JEREMY
Sorry, who?

BETTY
For Charlotte, she's not had..
Well any visitors since she's been
Here apart from doctors and occasionally
A man from the press like yourself but...

JEREMY
(Opening his notebook)
Has she not family to speak of then

BETTY
Well her mother is still alive
Last she knew.

JEREMY
(Reading from the notebook)
Oh yes, a...Nicola Dawson?

BETTY stops in the corridor and turns to face him.

BETTY
A piece of advice dear.
If you do actually want her to
Say something, I wouldn't mention
That name in her presence.

JEREMY
Consider me warned.

BETTY turns and continues to walk

BETTY
But its good for her to have a visitor
All the same. She says she prefers to
Be on her own but...

JEREMY
She speaks?

BETTY
(Laughing)
Of course she does dear. She's actually
BETTY (CONT'D)

Quite funny sometimes, if you like that
Style of humour.

JEREMY
But my boss said...

BETTY
Oh she talks dear, just not about the past
And if you ask me that's her right to.
But as I said its good for her to get a visitor.
I've said to her many times 'Charlotte it's not
Right for you to shut yourself away'.
(Beat)
Well more than she's shut away already.

JEREMY
Right

BETTY stops before a door.

BETTY
Well here you are dear

BETTY opens a door and walks into CHARLOTTE'S room. JEREMY
follows her.

CUT TO:

INT - CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

BETTY walks into CHARLOTTE'S room with JEREMY close behind
her. CHARLOTTE is still stood by the window staring out. The
room consist of a bed by the door with a bedside table with a
lamp and book on it. Over by the window there is one large
armchair and one smaller chair with a table between them.

BETTY
(Busily moving to the bed and neatening the pillow)
Charlotte dear, you have a visitor.

Camera moves to in front of CHARLOTTE'S face looking back over
her shoulder at the two of them

CHARLOTTE
I told you before.
I am not talking to that
Quack again. I have seen
More understanding from
Serial killers.

BETTY

(Laughing)
My you are feisty today!
(To JEREMY)
What did I tell you? Such
A sense of humour

JEREMY
Yes quite

BETTY
Come now dear, aren't you going
To say hello?

CHARLOTTE turns to look at BETTY and JEREMY. The camera moves to in front of her face. On seeing him she frowns in confusion.

CHARLOTTE
Not my usual quack then Betty?

JEREMY
I'm not a doctor.

BETTY
He's just here to talk to you dear.
Not a doctor at all.
(Beat)
Well, I'll leave you two to get acquainted.
(To JEREMY)
Just give me a call if you need anything
Dear.

BETTY turns and walks out of the door closing the door behind her.

CHARLOTTE
Betty is an interesting soul don't
You think?

JEREMY
Yes, she...

CHARLOTTE
Is a normal chatterbox nurse.
Normality is very important in here.
So they tell me.

JEREMY
You don't believe them?

CHARLOTTE

Normality is something I abandoned
Some time ago so it is fairly
Insignificant to me.

JEREMY

Yea, I can understand why you'd
Feel that way.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

(Glances over at the bedside table seeing
A copy of 'Pride and Prejudice')
Reading Austen?

CHARLOTTE

You expected 'Cat in the Hat'?

JEREMY

No, no not at all!
I'm sorry if that sounded..

CHARLOTTE

Relax, I'm not going to pounce
On you for offending me.

(CHARLOTTE moves to her armchair, Beat)

Yet

(CHARLOTTE sits down in her armchair)

So, if you are not a doctor then why
Are you here? Young kid like you must
Have better things to do with your day
Then satisfy, what I can only assume is
A morbid curiosity with the damaged human
Mind.

JEREMY

(Moving towards her)

You see yourself as damaged?

CHARLOTTE

It's how the world sees me.

May as well not disappoint

Them.

(JEREMY reaches the side of her
Chair and she glances at him and
Then at the wedding ring on his
Hand)

You married?

JEREMY

What?

(Looking down and lifting his
Hand to look momentarily at his
Wedding ring)

Oh yea.

CHARLOTTE
Not for long then.

JEREMY
How do you...

CHARLOTTE
Because when a man has been married
For a long time he can practically
Feel the ring burned into his hand.
A constant reminder so he used to say.

JEREMY
Was that...

CHARLOTTE
Kids?

JEREMY
Not yet, my wife's due in a
Few months.

CHARLOTTE
You hate her yet?

JEREMY
What?! No! Why would you...

CHARLOTTE
Given you weren't married that
Long ago, I assume the pregnancy
Came either just before the wedding
Or just after. No man wants to go
Straight into babies after he gets
Married but you'd committed to it now
So what could you do? You sat there
As weeks led into months, playing the
Dutiful husband. Being up at all hours
For her whims and deep inside you just
Think 'maybe I could just go, go out to
Work one day and not come back'.

JEREMY
NO! I love my wife!

CHARLOTTE
They all do kid.

JEREMY

What makes you think...
(Beat, JEREMY smiles)
You're deflecting, trying to keep me focussed
On me.

CHARLOTTE

(Sarcastically)
Clever monkey!

JEREMY

(Sitting down on the other chair)
Look! I am here to talk to you.
JEREMY (CONT'D)
I'm not a doctor and I...

CHARLOTTE

So who are you?

JEREMY

My name is Jeremy Jennings

CHARLOTTE

(Laughing)
No one has a name like that!

JEREMY

What?

CHARLOTTE

Well, unless they have escaped
From a children's book of course.

JEREMY

You're deflecting again.

CHARLOTTE

You sure you're not a shrink?

JEREMY

Very sure.

CHARLOTTE

Interesting.

JEREMY

What?

CHARLOTTE

I've never met anyone with such
An avid hatred of head doctors

Before.

JEREMY

I don't...

(Beat, irritated sigh)

Look I am just looking to

Get the story of...

CHARLOTTE

Oh, so you're a bottom feeder.

JEREMY

Excuse me!

CHARLOTTE

A journalist, come here to stare

At the freak and then go back to

Your office and mostly make up the

Facts that sells the most newspapers.

JEREMY

It's not...

CHARLOTTE

(Sarcastic)

No, of course not.

You are a man of integrity

Who secretly hates his wife

For tricking him into domesticity

After a marriage he probably wasn't

Ready for.

JEREMY

You couldn't be more wrong.

CHARLOTTE

No?

JEREMY

(Getting to his feet angrily)

Look! I didn't ask to come here

Ok?! My boss offered me my first

Big break away from the Lonely

Hearts column by getting me to come

Here and speak to you and I am

Trying...

CHARLOTTE

Oh sit down for god's sake before

You give yourself a heart attack.

JEREMY
(Confused)
I...

CHARLOTTE
I will talk to you, just stop
Stropping about it.

JEREMY
I wasn't...

CHARLOTTE
Sit!

JEREMY sits down and opens his note book and takes out his pen.

JEREMY
So the night that you...

CHARLOTTE
No.

JEREMY
What?

CHARLOTTE
You want to know my story?

JEREMY
You know that.

CHARLOTTE
Then I will talk about anything
In my life, up to the events that
Led to that night.

JEREMY
But I...

CHARLOTTE
That's all you're getting spunky
So take it or leave it.

JEREMY
(Impatiently)
The story is about...

CHARLOTTE

Me and unless you want to go back
To your boss with nothing you'll
Do this my way.
(JEREMY attempts to stare her down)
Tick Tock.

(JEREMY looks at her in silence for a moment before sighing
wearily.)

JEREMY

Alright, alright we'll do this your
Way.

CHARLOTTE

Very wise decision.
(Beat, CHARLOTTE moves back in her
Chair, getting comfortable before
Looking at JEREMY)
Ask away.

JEREMY

(Putting his pen to notepad)
So, what can you tell me about your
Childhood?

CHARLOTTE

So you can figure out if an over
Friendly relationship with my
Father let to my current dysfunctionality?

JEREMY

I'm not a shrink I told you.

CHARLOTTE

But you make judgements, about me.
Everyone does, you can't help it.
Not every day you stare into the
Eyes of a killer.

JEREMY

But you didn't start out that way.

CHARLOTTE

So you are fishing for the point
That made me a killer?

JEREMY

I'm not fishing for anything.

(Beat)
So...how did you meet...

(JEREMY looks at his notepad for the name)

CHARLOTTE
Don't.

JEREMY
(Glancing up)
What?

CHARLOTTE
Mention his name.

JEREMY
What? Why?

CHARLOTTE
Because I said so.

JEREMY
Now there is a rational argument.

CHARLOTTE
We killers don't tend to think
Rationally.

JEREMY
You must have heard his name before.

CHARLOTTE
Of course I have.

JEREMY
So why can't I...

CHARLOTTE
(Shouting)
BECAUSE I SAID SO!

(JEREMY looks at her in silence as the sound of fast walking
is heard outside before BETTY opens the door.)

BETTY
Everything alright in here dear?

CHARLOTTE
I don't know Betty

(Looks meaningfully at JEREMY)
Is it?

(There is a moment of silence between the two.)

JEREMY
Yea, everything's fine.

CHARLOTTE
(Cheerfully)
You see that Betty? Everything is fine.

BETTY
(Unsure)
If you say so dear.

CHARLOTTE
I do Betty.

(BETTY looks from one to the other before slowly leaving the room closing the door.)

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
Glad we have reached a compromise
On that.

JEREMY
Hardly a compromise if you get
What you want.

CHARLOTTE
You want something from me so I
Get to set the rules. It's the way
I like it.

JEREMY
Fine.
(JEREMY takes up his note pad again)
So how did you meet...man?

CHARLOTTE
He was an...acquaintance of my...Nicola.

JEREMY
(Shocked)
Oh!

CHARLOTTE
Not the response you expected?

JEREMY
Betty said that you...

CHARLOTTE
Betty says a lot.

JEREMY
That you don't like talking about her.

CHARLOTTE
You mean Nicola?

JEREMY
Yea, are you sure you...

CHARLOTTE
I haven't disclosed the deep darkest points
Of my relationship with her. I simply told
You how the threads of our lives met through
Our mutual acquaintance.

JEREMY
And you're not going to tell me anything else?

CHARLOTTE
Nothing to tell.

JEREMY
You're kidding right?!

CHARLOTTE
I never kid Mr Jennings.

JEREMY
You said yourself that your mother introduced
You to the man you...

CHARLOTTE
(Laughing)
Introduced? That's an interesting way of putting it.

JEREMY
How would you put it?

CHARLOTTE
I wouldn't.

JEREMY
So what happened then? How did you come to know her
acquaintance?
(Beat, CHARLOTTE sits in silence)

What was her relationship with him like?

CHARLOTTE

I was young at the time, I wouldn't know.

JEREMY

You must have had some idea.

CHARLOTTE

Six year olds don't tend to get involved
In their mother's affairs.

(Beat, CHARLOTTE turns to look out the window)
In most cases.

JEREMY

What does that mean?

CHARLOTTE

Nothing.

(Looks round at him)
I'm tired now.

JEREMY

But I still have more questions.

CHARLOTTE

I'm not going anywhere kid.
Speak to that arse doctor and
I am sure he would be happy to
Oblige you with another...session.

JEREMY

You want me to come back?

CHARLOTTE

Sure, beats staring at the walls or
Out the window.

(Beat)

Providing you stick to the rules.

JEREMY

Don't use his name and Don't ask about
That day.

CHARLOTTE

You got it.

JEREMY

You really don't want to make my job easy do you?

CHARLOTTE
Call it, character building.

JEREMY
Can't you give me something? How did your mother
Meet him?

CHARLOTTE
I suggest you go and ask her.

JEREMY
You really want me asking your mother about your
Past?

CHARLOTTE
(Laughing)
I'll be surprised if she can remember most of it.

JEREMY
So she was a drunk.

CHARLOTTE
A 'Party Girl' was her preferred title.

JEREMY
So how did she...

CHARLOTTE
(Firmly)
I am going to tell you this once more Mr Jennings.
If you want to ask about Nicola, go and speak to her
Or I will call Betty back in here and you will never
Get back into this building again. You understand me?

(There is a moment of silence between the two of them before
JEREMY gets to his feet.)

JEREMY
Fine, you win.

CHARLOTTE
Mr Jennings, I haven't won anything.
(Beat)
Ever.
(Cheerily)
Same time tomorrow?

JEREMY
(Laughing)
Sure, why not.

(JEREMY turns to go towards the door)

CHARLOTTE
(Calling after him)
Hey!

(JEREMY turns to look at her as CHARLOTTE gets up and moves over to her bedside table and opens the drawer, taking out a small scrap piece of paper. As JEREMY watches his eye is drawn to a set of letters, all unopened, fastened together with an elastic band. The camera shows these zoomed in before CHARLOTTE closes the drawer and walks over to JEREMY with the piece of paper in her hand and handing it to him.)

CHARLOTTE
Here. This was the last address I
Had for her.

JEREMY
Why do you...

CHARLOTTE
(Bitterly)
So they have somewhere to send my
Notification of death.
(CHARLOTTE turns and walks back to her chair)
Now sling your hook.

JEREMY
You're a ray of sunshine you
Know that?

(CHARLOTTE pauses at her chair and looks over at him)

CHARLOTTE
(Smiles)
Oh I know.

(JEREMY walks over to the door to CHARLOTTE'S room and pauses at the door to look down at the piece of paper. Camera shows zoomed in shot of the address.)

CUT TO:

EXT - NICOLA'S HOUSE - DAY

(The camera remains focussed on the piece of paper and when it moves down the setting has changed to outside NICOLA'S house. JEREMY stares up at the house before walking up the drive and ringing on the doorbell. There is the sound of footsteps approaching before the door is opened, revealing NICOLA. She

is a woman in her mid-50s wearing simple, let elegant make up with dyed red hair and wearing a simple dress with an apron and she has a smudge of flour on her cheek.)

NICOLA

Can I help you?

JEREMY

Mrs Nicola Dawson?

NICOLA

No. I don't know anyone by that name.

(NICOLA slams the door. JEREMY pauses and takes the file out of his back before flipping through it and taking out a photograph. He then puts the file away and rings again on the door bell multiple times quickly. NICOLA quickly comes and opens the door.)

NICOLA

(Impatiently)

What?

JEREMY

(Lifting the picture)

So this isn't you leaving the Crown Court
Nearly ten years ago after your daughter
Was sentenced.

NICOLA

(Firmly)

I don't have a daughter.

JEREMY

I know that's what you want the world to think.
After all, it was you who introduced the two of
Them, wasn't it?

NICOLA

(Pulling the door open fully

And stepping out to face him)

You don't have a bloody clue what
You are talking about so don't you stand
There and tell me..

JEREMY

Look, I am not trying to cause trouble
For you Ms Dawson.

NICOLA

That is not my name!

JEREMY

Sorry. It's Cartwright now isn't it?
Does your husband know about your
Interesting past?

NICOLA

Of course he does. If you'd have done
Your job you'd have known he was with
Me at the trial.

JEREMY

Now see, that's one thing I don't
Understand.

NICOLA

What?

JEREMY

Well if you didn't care what happened
To her...

NICOLA

Of course I cared.

JEREMY

Really? You've got a funny way of showing it.

NICOLA

You don't understand, when I was at the trial
She looked up at me.

INT - COURTROOM - DAY - 1992, FLASHBACK

(The courtroom is full but the noises of the talking is all
muffled. The camera is on NICOLA'S face as she looks down from
where she is sat.)

NICOLA (V.O.)

I hadn't seen her since she
Was six years old until that day.
I wouldn't have known anything
But for what was in the papers.
She never gave the police my
Contact information. Said we
Were estranged so there was no
Need for anyone to call I suppose.
I debated on going at all but
I suppose closure and curiosity
Got the better of me.

(The camera zooms out from NICOLA)
As I was standing there, I could
Feel her watching me. It felt
Like someone had pumped ice into my
Veins.

(NICOLA looks down as the camera switches
To a close up of CHARLOTTE'S face)
As I looked into her eyes, I could see it
The dead feeling. The baby girl I knew
The bright and bubbly child I'd not seen
NICOLA (CONT'D) (V.O.)

For seventeen years was gone and there
Was no way she was ever coming back.
I knew that look, the feeling like you
Were worth nothing, the gut wrenching
Sickness that reminded you of all
You'd done but at the same time the
Numbness that meant you weren't
Afraid because you just didn't feel any
More. I saw it in her eyes and I knew
There was nothing I could do.

END OF FLASHBACK

EXT - NICOLA'S HOUSE - DAY

(As the Flashback ends the camera reveals a close up of
NICOLA'S face.)

NICOLA

I knew at that moment that she was lost
To me forever and that I had made her
That way.

(To JEREMY)

So don't you dare tell me you don't
Understand about my life or my
Relationship with my daughter
Because you will never understand it.

JEREMY

So help me to understand. I am trying
To make sure that the whole story is
Told. So people don't just see her as
An addict and a killer.

(Beat)

Please, help me.

(NICOLA looks at him before sighing wearily)

NICOLA

(Opening the door)

Fine, come in but you have
To be gone before my husband
Gets home.

JEREMY
Thank you

(NICOLA turns and walks into the house and JEREMY follows her
in closing the door behind him)

CUT TO:

INT - NICOLA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

(NICOLA is entering the room as the scene is revealed carrying
two cups. She has now removed her apron. JEREMY is sat on the
sofa with his notepad and pen on the table, the pad open.
NICOLA walks over to him with the cups.)

NICOLA
(Offering him one of the cups)
It was black with two sugars right?

JEREMY
(Taking the cup)
Thanks

NICOLA
(Sitting down with her own cup)
I don't know how you can drink it
Like that. Must be like drinking
Rocket fuel.

JEREMY
(Laughing)
It ensures I stay awake during the
Day.

NICOLA
(Nodding in understanding)
Ah, Kids?

JEREMY
Very pregnant wife.

NICOLA
3am cravings are a bitch aren't they?

JEREMY
(Half laughs)

Just a bit

NICOLA
So, how long have you been married?

JEREMY
Interesting.

NICOLA
What?

JEREMY
She deflected too.

NICOLA
What are you talking about?

JEREMY
Charlotte, when she doesn't want to
Talk about something or it makes her
Uncomfortable she deflected.

NICOLA
(Sharply)
Well it's not easy having someone
Prying into your private life.

JEREMY
She was quick to get hostile too.

NICOLA
Look! I..
(Beat, NICOLA sighs)
I'm sorry, I guess I always just
Got used to hiding from my problems.
(Pause as NICOLA takes a deep breath)
OK, what do you need to know?

JEREMY
Maybe you should start from the beginning.

NICOLA
(Laughs)
It's hard to know where it all started.
(Beat)
Or where it went wrong.

JEREMY
Did you grow up in London?

NICOLA

Yea, on a housing estate in Hackney.

JEREMY

(Putting his coffee down and taking up
His notepad.)
With your parents?

NICOLA

(Smiling to herself)
My nan, she was this crazy old lady who
Thought everything could be resolved by
A nice cup of tea, a good sit down or a
Thorough talking to.

JEREMY

(Writing)
Sounds like quite a character.
What happened to your parents?

NICOLA

Dad was a waste of space who left
Before I was born, that's what nan told
Me anyway. Never questioned it and
Never thought about him.

JEREMY

You never thought to look him up?

NICOLA

Never really bothered me but...
Then he took me to see him.

JEREMY

(Looking up suddenly)
He...found your dad.

NICOLA

Said I should know where I came from.

INT - RUN DOWN BAR - NIGHT, 1966 FLASHBACK

(As the flashback fades in you see YOUNG NICOLA (15 years old and slightly pregnant) open the door and walk into the bar. The bar is a mess and filthy, MAN follows her in but the camera is zoomed in so all you see is his chest and his hand when he places it on YOUNG NICOLA'S shoulder after he closes the door. YOUNG NICOLA stares around the room as the camera turns to pan the room with her.)

NICOLA (V.O.)

He found him in some dive
In South End. It was his
Local apparently. I remember
As I walked in, despite everything
I was excited. Forget the fact that
He abandoned me, he was still
My dad and I wanted him to want
Me.

(The camera stops panning on an old man (about 60) in the corner of the room. He is well built with short black ragged hair and a rough beard. He is wearing a work shirt and trousers. His tie and jacket are on the table and he is sipping a whiskey. YOUNG NICOLA'S eyes sets on him and then the camera sets to a wedding ring on his hand.)

NICOLA (V.O.)
He'd remarried when I saw him.
Never met his new wife or knew
If I had any brothers or sisters.
I was so excited to know them then
Though.

(The camera goes back to YOUNG NICOLA'S face as she smiles and goes to move towards him. The hand hold her shoulder holds her back and she frowns turning to look at the man behind her but then a high pitched girl's laugh is heard and she turns back. The camera goes back to the man as a young girl (about 17) walks out of the back room. She is just wearing underwear and a silk robe. She walks over to him and kisses him passionately as he takes some folded notes from his pockets and hands them to her. She takes his hand and leads him out of the room, him taking the whiskey with him. The camera then goes back to YOUNG NICOLA'S face as tears start to flow down her face.)

NICOLA (V.O.)
He didn't even see me as he
Sat there, drinking and pawing
Over her. She couldn't have been
Much older than me but there he
Was, slobbering over her like some
Kind of animal.

(MAN'S mouth moves into view close to YOUNG NICOLA'S ear.)

NICOLA (V.O.)
All I kept thinking was, that's
Where I came from. That animals
Genes were inside me.
(Beat)
And then he said it.

MAN

(Whispering)

You don't need him darling. It's
Just you and me against the world.

(The camera moves back to see MAN turn and leave in a blur so his features can't be made out. YOUNG NICOLA pauses for a moment before turning and leaving after him.)

END OF FLASHBACK

INT - NICOLA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

NICOLA

And he was right. At that point I
Really believed he was the only one
Who cared about me. Guess that made
It easier for him. Make me totally
Dependant.

JEREMY

So you were already pregnant when
You met him?

NICOLA

(Laughs)

Oh yea, quick fumble in some pub
Toilets or in the park. Those were
My specialities.

JEREMY

Did you ever tell Charlotte who her
Father was?

NICOLA

Didn't know. At first that scared me
Shitless but then he came along and
It didn't really matter.

JEREMY

So, how did you actually meet him?

NICOLA

Supermarket.

JEREMY

What?

NICOLA

(Laughing)
Yea I know, sounds daft now to thing
This all started over...

INT - SUPERMARKET - 1966 FLASHBACK

(Cut into Flashback of the cashier's face in Tesco looking impatient.)

CASHIER
£2.20. Come on love I've got
People waiting.

(Camera moves out to reveal YOUNG NICOLA (about same age as previous FLASHBACK) stood at the register in a supermarket searching through a battered purse. There is a queue of people behind her looking impatient. Camera moves to MAN walking over to her. He is about 30, wearing a smart suit and carrying an open wallet in his hand he walks over to the CASHIER and hands her a £5 note.)

MAN
That should cover it right?

NICOLA (V.O.)
He was my knight in shining armour
That day. I'd only discovered I
Was pregnant the week before and..
Being me I had not bloody idea what I
Was going to do.

(During the voice over the cashier gives him the change and the receipt to YOUNG NICOLA. The two of them walk out of the supermarket.)

CUT TO:

EXT - A PUBLIC ROAD - DAY, 1966 FLASHBACK

(Camera Shows YOUNG NICOLA and MAN walking along together. He is carrying her shopping and the two are talking but so sound can be heard.)

NICOLA (V.O.)
I was flattered I suppose. That a
Man like him could be even interested
In a girl like me. My nan had always
Taught me to be wary of men offering
Favours but I never got that vibe
From him. At first he always made
Me feel happy and safe.

MONTAGE: Music plays as a series of shots showing YOUNG NICOLA and MAN first moving into a flat, having dinners out together and dancing. This is followed by a brief moment of YOUNG NICOLA in a hospital giving birth and collapsing back onto a hospital bed.

END OF FLASHBACK

INT - NICOLA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

(As we re-enter the scene NICOLA is now over by the window staring out, coffee in hand.)

NICOLA

After she was born, all the glitzy side of it seemed to just end. We never went out any more and I was working two jobs but the money was never enough.

JEREMY

No one ever said having a child was Easy.

NICOLA

(Angrily turning to him)
Don't you think I know that!
Do you really think I would have let
It get that bad if I thought I had
Any other choice at the time.

JEREMY

There is always another choice.

NICOLA

Look! If you are going stand there
And lecture me about the crap mother
I was then you can get out!

JEREMY

I'm sorry, look I didn't mean it like
That. I just...you seemed like a good kid
Who just got swept up by a man's charms.

NICOLA

I only wish it had stopped there.

JEREMY

So what happened after she was born?

NICOLA

Everything went to hell. I was working
All the hours I could. At first nan looked
After Charlotte but then she died and...

JEREMY

Drugs?

NICOLA

Pills first, he said he knew this mate of his.
(Camera at this points shows NICOLA'S
face and an image of MAN'S mouth faded by her ear.)
I knew it was wrong but he just made it sounds so
Easy.

MAN (V.O.)

Come on babe, you've had a long day. It will make you
Feel better you know it will. You've been so uptight
Lately. You just need to unwind. Don't worry about
The money, I'll sort it.

JEREMY

And when did he stop "sorting it".

NICOLA

Charlotte was six years old, she was due to start
School. I suspect that's why he did it. So she
Didn't get into the system.

JEREMY

(Looks at Nicola horrified)
Wait...so he...

NICOLA

Don't look at me like that.
I know what you're thinking.

JEREMY

I'm not thinking anything.

NICOLA

(Puts her coffee down on the window sill)
No! You shouldn't be either.
You weren't there. You
Didn't know what he was capable of.

JEREMY

Nicola I am honestly not thinking
Anything.

NICOLA
(Shouting and crying)
Yes you are!
I can see it in your eyes.
Some junkie who couldn't get her
Next high so she offered up her
Daughter on a plate.

JEREMY
(Putting down his coffee
and getting up to move to her)
Nicola I am honestly.

NICOLA
(Still shouting and crying)
You are!
I know you are!
I know because I see it every day
When I look in the mirror.
I was stupid and I was selfish
And I will never forgive myself.
Is that what you wanted to hear!

(NICOLA drops to her knees crying as JEREMY moves quickly to her. He kneels down and takes her by the shoulders lifting her to look at him.)

JEREMY
Listen to me, you were a kid
You got sucked into his world
And she paid the price. You
Know that but you can't change it.
All you can do is to try and make
This right.

NICOLA
(Crying softly)
I can't, I can't.

JEREMY
(Gently)
You already have.

NICOLA
(Looking up at him)
What?

JEREMY

The truth of what happened to her
Will make people see what happened
Charlotte and to you as the horror
That it was. They will see that
She is not what they made her out
To be ten years ago and they will
See that it wasn't your fault.

NICOLA

You think so?

JEREMY

I will make sure so.

NICOLA

(Breathing deeply)

Ok

(JEREMY helps NICOLA to her feet.)

JEREMY

You up for a few more questions?

NICOLA

Yea I will be...

(The sound of the front door

Opening is heard)

That's my husband!

You have to go!

JEREMY

But I...

MARK (O.S.)

Honey, are you here?

NICOLA

(Wiping her eyes)

Please, I can't have him knowing

I'm going back into this again.

(Mark walks into the room)

MARK

(Upon seeing JEREMY)

Hi.

(To NICOLA)

What's going on?

NICOLA
Erm, this is...

JEREMY
(Offering Mark his hand)
Chris Jenkins, I live on the
Next road over. I had my car
Stolen the other day and I
Am just asking around if
Anyone saw anything.

MARK
Oh. Well I didn't see anything.

NICOLA
I was just telling him that

MARK
(Walking over and taking NICOLA'S
Cheek gently)
You ok honey? Have you been crying?

NICOLA
Oh, I just had a cold, that's all.

JEREMY
(Moving over and gathering his things)
Anyway, I should be going and just hope
The police can find something.
(Standing and moving to the door)
Thank you for your time Mrs Cartwright.

NICOLA
You're welcome, I hope everything works
Out ok.

JEREMY
Thanks
(To MARK)
Nice to meet you. I'll show myself out.

(JEREMY turns and leaves the room. MARK and NICOLA stand watching him until the sound of the front door slamming is heard. MARK take NICOLA in his arms and hugs her gently.)

MARK
You sure everything's ok?

NICOLA

Yea, yea everything's fine.

CUT TO:

INT- JEREMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

(Camera shows JEREMY tossing and turning in bed from above while VANESSA sleeps soundly next to him.)

YOUNG CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

No...No...Don't go...mummy...where are you going?

Don't leave me mummy, please! Please!

Mum, mum I'm here. Can't you see me? Mum wait!

I wasn't a bad girl mummy, honest.

Mummy please don't leave me.

(Screaming)

MUMMY!

(As the scream sounds JEREMY jerks awake and sits up sweating, the Camera close up on his face. VANESSA sits up beside him putting her hand on his shoulder.)

VANESSA

(Concerned)

Honey are you ok?

JEREMY

(Bewildered)

Wha...where?

VANESSA

It's ok, you were having a nightmare

JEREMY

(Breathing a sigh of relief)

Thank god!

VANESSA

(Feeling his face)

You're sweating, what were you
Dreaming about?

JEREMY

Charlotte. I went to see her mother
Today.

(Beat)

She was so...

VANESSA

What?

JEREMY
Normal

VANESSA
Well, what did you expect her to be?

JEREMY
I don't know but the hospital said she's
Never been to visit her and apart from
At the trial she hadn't seen her since
She was six years old. I just expected
Her to be this cold hearted bitch who
Didn't give a damn but she was just a
Kid, fifteen years old, who got out
Of her depth with drugs and..

VANESSA
Honey, are you sure you want to keep
Going with this? If its affecting you
In this way?

JEREMY
(Turning to look at her)
What? No I'm fine. There's just a lot
More to this than I first thought.

VANESSA
If you're sure?

JEREMY
Yea, I'm going back to see Charlotte at
The hospital tomorrow. Hopefully she'll
Tell me more.

VANESSA
(Dryly)
If you stick to her rules I can't imagine
That will be a problem.

JEREMY
It's her choice what she wants to talk about
Babe.

VANESSA
And it can be her choice to keep dragging you
Along to get you sucked into her world.

JEREMY
She's not like that.

VANESSA

You've only met her once and from
What you told me, mind games is
Exactly what she has in mind.

(Beat, sighs)

I just worry about you, you know that.

JEREMY

I know babe and as I said

(Kisses her)

I will be fine, trust me.

VANESSA

Ok, if you say so.

JEREMY

(Lying down with her)

Come on, go to sleep.

(The two of them lie down and VANESSA turns over on her side away from him. The Camera zooms on her concerned face as she lies there not sleeping.)

FADE TO:

INT - CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

(Camera reveals a close up of JEREMY'S face as he yawns before drinking coffee.)

CHARLOTTE

Late night?

(Camera pans back revealing the two of them sat in the chairs by the window. JEREMY puts his coffee down on the table and takes his notepad and pen from his bag.)

JEREMY

Just didn't get enough sleep.

CHARLOTTE

Wifey keeping you up?

JEREMY

Something like that.

CHARLOTTE

Interesting.

JEREMY

I would hardly say so.

CHARLOTTE

Yesterday you leapt to the defence
Of your wife when I suggested your
Domesticity was anything less than
Perfect, but today...

JEREMY

Yesterday you said I'd hate my wife
And child for changing my life. I
Would hardly classify a comment about
Her keeping me awake as the same thing.

CHARLOTTE

And If I'd said "the bitch who is bearing
Your spawn keeping you up"?

JEREMY

Doesn't have quite the same ring to it.

CHARLOTTE

(Lengthening the 'In' syllable)
Interesting

JEREMY

You know, for someone who hates shrinks
You could probably make a good living from
It.

CHARLOTTE

Because I said Interesting?

JEREMY

Well that's all they do isn't it? Say
'Interesting' and silently judge you?

CHARLOTTE

Ah but that's human nature isn't it?
Our relationships are made of people who
Judge us and will often suggest they know
What's best for us. It's quite funny really,
People pay a fortune to have someone in their
Social circle would probably do for nothing.
We all have our own shrinks.

JEREMY

Did you have one?

CHARLOTTE

Oh I have several. Dr McKenzie on a Monday, Dr...

JEREMY

I mean before all of this happened.

CHARLOTTE

You would describe the events in
That feel as 'all of this'?

JEREMY

You're not answering the question.
It doesn't go against your rules
Does it?

(There is a moment of silence between them.)

CHARLOTTE

No, I don't believe it does.

JEREMY

So, who looked out for you? Thought
They knew what was best?

CHARLOTTE

(Half smiling)
Linda

JEREMY

(Taking up the file and glancing through it)
I don't think I know her.

CHARLOTTE

No one did. Apart from me.
(Beat)
And him.

JEREMY

(Taking up his coffee and takes a sip)
And how did she know him?

CHARLOTTE

She was his wife.

JEREMY

(Spluttering his coffee)
What?

CHARLOTTE

It's not a complicated concept. Even he

Is entitled to get married I suppose.

JEREMY

(Putting down his coffee and taking up
His notepad)
So how did you meet her?

CHARLOTTE

She lived with him, was there when he
Brought me home.

JEREMY

(Bitterly)

You make it sound like you were
Some stray dog.

CHARLOTTE

Suppose that's how it felt at first.

CUT TO:

INT - MAN'S FLAT - BATHROOM - DAY, 1971 FLASHBACK

(YOUNG CHARLOTTE (age 6) is sat in a bathtub and LINDA is knelt beside the bath wiping a flannel over her shoulder. CHARLOTTE has a badly bruised face and is crying.)

LINDA

Now, now love that's not going
To do you any good. Will only
Make him angry.

(Tilts YOUNG CHARLOTTE'S face to look up at her)

And you don't want that now do you?

(YOUNG CHARLOTTE shakes her head and LINDA smiles)

After we've got you all cleaned up, we'll
Get you some ice cream, would you like that?

(YOUNG CHARLOTTE nods)

(LINDA continues to clean YOUNG CHARLOTTE as she lets go of her face.)

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

Suppose when I arrived I was looking
For anything that reminded me of mum
And Linda did. She always smelt of
Expensive perfume and baby powder.
I used to think that was odd because
They never had a baby of their own.
Those first few weeks she was the
Only thing that made it bearable.

(YOUNG CHARLOTTE stands in the bath as LINDA wraps a towel around her and the two leave the room.)

CUT TO:

INT - MAN'S FLAT - LIVING ROOM - DAY, 1971 FLASHBACK

(YOUNG CHARLOTTE and LINDA enter the room. MAN is sat in the corner of the room on an armchair in front of the television but he is hidden from view by shadows. LINDA grabs a child's nightgown off a chair by a kitchen table and putting YOUNG CHARLOTTE behind her, obstructed from MAN'S view as she puts the night gown on her.)

MAN
She clean?

(Camera shows LINDA face with a tear flowing down it before she moves YOUNG CHARLOTTE over to a chair and sitting her on it and walking over to MAN, a smile plastered on her face.)

LINDA
Course she bloody is.
You wanna be careful though.
Anyone outside sees her face
You'll have social at the door.

MAN
Well that aint going to be a problem
(Man takes out a pill bottle
And hands them to LINDA)
Is it?

(LINDA looks down at the pills before looking back up at him and smiles again.)

LINDA
Course not

(LINDA takes the pills and walks over to the freezer. When she reaches it she opens it and takes out a tub of ice cream putting it on the side. She spoons out some ice cream and putting her back to YOUNG CHARLOTTE she opens the pill box and drops two on the ice cream. MAN gets to his feet, picking up a jacket off the chair and putting it on)

MAN
I'm going out
(Walking over to LINDA
And putting his arms around
Her as she turns to look at him)

You alright to take care of
(Beat, looks at YOUNG CHARLOTTE)
Everything?

LINDA
(Kisses him)
Yea, we'll be fine.

MAN
(Kisses her again)
Good. So I'll see you
Later?
(LINDA nods and MAN moves
Over and around the table
To YOUNG CHARLOTTE)
See you later yea?

(YOUNG CHARLOTTE looks frightened up at him and then over at LINDA, who gives her a meaningful glance and nods. YOUNG CHARLOTTE nods quickly and MAN kisses her on the cheek, YOUNG CHARLOTTE wincing.)

MAN
Good

(MAN goes to leave as LINDA brings over the ice cream with a spoon and puts it down.)

YOUNG CHARLOTTE
(Half smiling looking at
The ice cream)
Smarties?

MAN
(Pausing at the door
Smiling)
Yea, Smarties kid.

(MAN leaves the flat and LINDA sits at the table as YOUNG CHARLOTTE starts eating the ice cream.)

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT - CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

(CHARLOTTE is half smiling as the camera appears over her face.)

CHARLOTTE
In spite of everything.
Linda always tried to make

Things feel normal.

JEREMY

(Looking up from his notepad)
There is nothing normal about
What she did.

CHARLOTTE

What are you talking about?

JEREMY

She is just as much to blame as
He was.

CHARLOTTE

No, that's not right. She did
Everything to make me happy.

JEREMY

No kid can ever have been happy
With what they did to you.

CHARLOTTE

(Angrily)

Linda didn't do anything
To me!

JEREMY

She didn't do anything for
You either. She could have
Gone to the police?

CHARLOTTE

He wouldn't let her.

JEREMY

Do you know that? All those
Years and she.

CHARLOTTE

She didn't stay.

JEREMY

What?

CHARLOTTE

When I had been there a few
Months she went. We planned
It together.

JEREMY

And what was that plan?

CHARLOTTE

That she would go and get help
And come back for me when it
Was all sorted and the police
Could arrest him.

JEREMY

And when was that?

CHARLOTTE

I...I'd just turned seven.

JEREMY

So sixteen years before you...

CHARLOTTE

(Abruptly)

I told you I am not talking about
That!

JEREMY

Well I'm sorry but she betrayed you.

CHARLOTTE

(Angrily)

NO! She looked after me! She made sure
I was clean.

JEREMY

(Getting angry)

For him and his friends?!

CHARLOTTE

(Shouting)

It wasn't like that! She made me feel better
And gave me sweets and...

JEREMY

(Getting up Shouting)

She pumped you full of drugs so you would be
Quiet and not make a fuss.

CHARLOTTE

(Getting up and walking away from him)
You don't know what you're talking about.

JEREMY

Your mother told me what he was like.
He was all charms and friendly to her

At first and then when he'd got he
Exactly what he wanted from her he took
You.

CHARLOTTE
I want you to go.

JEREMY
He took you just before you started school.
So no one knew you existed. It was perfect
For him. He knew your mother wouldn't talk
And then he got his own wife to play mummy
So he could make money giving you drugs and...

CHARLOTTE
(Shouting)
Get Out!

JEREMY
You know it's true Charlotte. She and him
Were in it together. Using violence and
Drugs...

CHARLOTTE
(Moving into the corner of the room, panicked)
No...they were just sweets. Made me feel
Better.

JEREMY
(Concerned moving towards her)
Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE
(Backing to the wall and dropping to the floor
Still Panicked)
All the colours shining everywhere.
Red...Yellow...Pink...Green...

JEREMY
Are you...

CHARLOTTE
I don't want the colours to melt
Away.
(Looking up at him)
Please don't let them go away.

JEREMY
(Walking up and going to place
His hand on her)
Charlotte Its...

CHARLOTTE
(Getting to her feet angrily)
Don't touch me!
(Barging past him)
I'm not going to let them melt away
(Moving to her bedside table and
Throwing things off it)
I won't let in the pain, and the hurt and the aching!

JEREMY
(Running over to the door)
Can I get some help in here.

CHARLOTTE
(Putting her hands on her chest
And scratching at the skin)
I hold onto it, tight, not letting go.
(Balling her fists and hitting her
Own chest)
Never...never...never

(Betty and two male security guards run into the room. The gaurds go and grab Charlotte's arms.)

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
(Fighting)
No I'm big and grown up like my mum.

(Betty walks around to her and takes out a syringe.)

BETTY
Its alright Charlotte we are just going
To give you some medicine.

CHARLOTTE
(Fighting)
NO! No Medicine.

BETTY
Don't be silly, it will make you
Feel better.

CHARLOTTE
(Fighting)
NO! You're lying!
You're a liar!
She's a liar!
You're all liars!

BETTY

It's alright Charlotte.
It's alright.

(BETTY injects her in the arm. CHARLOTTE slowly stops fighting as the GAURDS lower her onto the bed.)

CHARLOTTE
(Falling asleep)
Big...and grown up...
Like...mum

(BETTY and the GAURDS move away from her towards JEREMY.)

BETTY
I think you should go.

JEREMY
(Gathering his things)
Yea, of course.
(Once he's finished and turns to BETTY)
She...will be ok won't she?

BETTY
I suspect so.
What exactly happened?

JEREMY
I think it just got too much for
Her. I...shouldn't have pushed her.

BETTY
Yes...well...

JEREMY
I don't think she's really ever
Thought about what happened to her.

BETTY
Being honest dear, would you want to?

(They all walk over towards the door. GAURDS and BETTY leave and BETTY pauses outside while JEREMY looks over at CHARLOTTE.)

JEREMY
No, no I don't think I would.

(Camera briefly shows a close up of CHARLOTTE'S sleeping face.)

CUT TO:

INT - HENRY'S OFFICE - DAY

(Camera shows HENRY sat at his desk working on his computer. After a moment his door opens and JEREMY walks in. He is wearing a suit and carrying a bag but his face looks tired.)

HENRY
You look like hell.

JEREMY
(Walking over and sitting
Down at in a chair)
It's been a long two days.

HENRY
Vanessa?

JEREMY
Partly.
(Takes his notebook out of
His bag)
I need to ask you about a
Name in connection with
Dawson's case.

HENRY
So you think you're getting
Somewhere?

JEREMY
Maybe...She mentioned a Linda who
Was around initially while she
Was staying with...him.

HENRY
Him?

JEREMY
Charlotte doesn't like using his
Name when I speak to her.

HENRY
(Starts to work on the computer)
Well I can understand that.

JEREMY
Apparently this Linda was his
Wife. She was there for the
First few months.

HENRY
Mother figure?

JEREMY
Hardly! She stood there while her
Fella abused the kid from age six.

HENRY
(Pausing to look up at him)
Jesus!

JEREMY
Giving her drugs with ice cream to
Keep her quiet and because no one
Knew she was there no one did anything.

HENRY
What about her mother?

JEREMY
Who do you think gave her to him?

HENRY
Please tell me you're kidding!

JEREMY
I wish I was.

HENRY
How does no one know about this?

JEREMY
Her own mother hadn't seen her
Since she was six so had no idea
Where she was. She wouldn't talk
About anything that happened to her
Solicitor and I very much doubt he
Left a receipt in the flat "one six
Year old paid for with drugs".

HENRY
Christ!
(Starts working on the computer)
So this Linda...?

JEREMY
I'm just looking to find out the whole
Truth about what happened to her. I
Don't want this blowing up in our face.

HENRY

Fair point.

(Typing)

Linda...hmmm

(Beat)

There was a Linda Barnes who her solicitor
Wanted to speak to as she'd been seen in the
Area the day of the attack.

JEREMY

(Leaning forward)

What! There was someone else in the area and
They never said.

HENRY

They never found her and the guy who said he
Saw her was old so they just dismissed it.

JEREMY

So where is she now?

HENRY

Why so interested?

JEREMY

I'm just...

(He gets up and proceeds to pace)

The more I hear about this the more I realise
That this kid is nowhere near the vicious addict
And killer she was written off to be and maybe
If we can get the right people to see that we
Can actually do something..

HENRY

Jennings...

JEREMY

I mean there is more to it obviously but I...

HENRY

Jennings!

(JEREMY stop and turns to look at him)

Linda Barnes died in December 1992.

JEREMY

(He moves back to his chair)

The same year Charlotte was sentenced.

HENRY

Suicide, she threw herself off a flat balcony.

(Beat)
Of that flat

JEREMY
(Sighing as he sits down)
So all I've got is the say so of a perceived
Guilty party.

HENRY
What about the mother?

JEREMY
She can only tell me what happened before Charlotte
Left her. I need someone who was there.
(Slams his fist on the desk)
Damn it! I thought I could do something.

HENRY
Who says you can't?
(JEREMY looks up at him as HENRY
Scribbles down an address and hands
It to him)
That's the exact address where the
Murder took place. Area has never been
Re-developed, still home mostly to the
Poor and the lowly.

JEREMY
So?

HENRY
So I very much doubt any of them will have
Had the cash to move.

JEREMY
(Getting up and taking his bag)
Could be worth a try.

HENRY
If you need anything more you know where to
Find me.

JEREMY
(Walking towards the door)
Right.

HENRY
Jennings!
(JEREMY pauses to look at him)
Get some sleep.

JEREMY
Right

(JEREMY walks out of the room and closes the door behind him.
HENRY shakes his head watching him go.)

CUT TO:

EXT - DIRTY LONDON STREET - DAY

(The street has blocks of flats on one side and a few shops, a pub and laundrette on the other. There is rubbish on the street and a few people about. JEREMY pulls into shot in his car and gets out, taking his bag. He looks around at the people before locking his car. He looks up at the flats before looking over at the shops and pub. As he does an old woman unlocks the pub door and opens them. She looks over at him.)

GINNY
What you staring for?

JEREMY
(Walking towards her)
Sorry! I didn't mean to stare.

GINNY
Should think so too. You
Coming in for a drink?

JEREMY
Oh, no thanks. I'm driving.

GINNY
Well you can buy me one then.
(Turns to go back inside)
Come on.

(JEREMY smiles and walks over following her inside.)

CUT TO:

INT - MAIN ROOM OF A BAR - DAY

(GINNY walks into the room, followed by JEREMY. The bar has a bar along the left wall. There are 4 tables with chairs around them and two booths fixed to the opposite wall. The bar is very clean, which JEREMY notices as he comes in.)

JEREMY

(Looking around)

Wow this is...

GINNY

(Stopping and turning to
Look at him)

Just because that lot out there
Choose to leave in swill doesn't
Mean the rest of us feel the same way.

(She walks over and behind the bar
And pours herself a large brandy before taking
A seat on a tall stool, puffing as she does so)
God! These old legs weren't what they used to
Be.

JEREMY

(Moving towards a stool on the opposite
Side of the bar)
You ok?

GINNY

Oh yes dear I'll be fine. Been running this place
For 30 years on the same pins so they will do me
For a while yet. You have a seat dear.

(JEREMY sits down)

Now, what you doing round here?

JEREMY

Well I'm just looking for someone.

GINNY

Well you come to the right place dear. I know
Every face that goes in or out of this area.
(JEREMY takes out his file and puts the picture
Of CHARLOTTE on the bar. GINNY takes up a pair
Of glasses on a chain, puts them on and inspects
The picture)

Oh yea, I remember her poor cow.

(Hands JEREMY back the picture)

She came in here once or twice, fragile looking thing.

JEREMY

She talk to you?

GINNY

Only the once, it had been raining for days and I was
Just closing up. She came in wanting to use the loo.
Said her dad had the flat keys and he was still at work.

(She scoffs)

Dad indeed!

JEREMY

She say anything else?

GINNY

Not really, I gave her some of the
Left over cottage pie we had.

(Laughs)

You should have seen her devour it.
I'd never felt so appreciated. I
Did try to ask her about where she
Was from. Thought she might not speak
English or something. I'd seen her around
Before but she never really spoke.

JEREMY

Did she tell you anything else?

GINNY

(Shaking her head)

No, I think I spooked her cause she wanted
To leave very quickly after that. I made
Her take some left overs with her. She
Wanted to say no but I insisted. Can't have
A girl like that all skin and bone.

JEREMY

And when did you see her next?

GINNY

(Frowning)

I didn't. He came in the next day.

JEREMY

Her...dad?

GINNY

Yea, didn't like him. There was a nastiness
Behind his eyes.

JEREMY

What did he say?

GINNY

Not much, he put my box back on the bar. Food
Hadn't been touched and he told me that if
She came in here again I was not to feed her.

JEREMY

He give a reason why?

GINNY

Just said she had to learn. Nonsense if you ask me
And I told him so.

JEREMY
Then what happened?

GINNY
(Taking out a handkerchief)
Well...the next night my Bill was on his way home
From work and he was attacked. The broke both his
Legs and left him for dead. He was in hospital for
Weeks after and he was never the same.

JEREMY
Did he report the attack?

GINNY
Bill wanted to but I told him I was not going to
Be burying my husband because of his pride.
(Beat)
Wish I'd let him now.

JEREMY
I'm so sorry.

GINNY
I felt so sorry for her. I just wish I'd said
Something, anything but then after what happened
To Bill I...

JEREMY
Could I possibly speak to your husband?

GINNY
Oh he was taken last year dear, his heart gave out.

JEREMY
My condolences.

GINNY
Thank you dear.
(Getting up off the bar stool)
Oh! Where are my manners?
Can I get you a coffee or a juice dear?

JEREMY
Coffee would be lovely, black two sugars.

GINNY
(As she walks into a back room behind
The bar)

Just the way Bill had it, man's coffee
He used to call it.

JEREMY

So did you ever see her outside
The flat again?

GINNY (O.S.)

All the time. She was walking the streets
In all kinds of weather. Such a waste.

JEREMY

What about him?

GINNY (O.S.)

Oh he was there, watching her. I used to tell
Bill it was bloody disgusting. Using a poor
Girl like that who don't know better.

JEREMY

Did you ever see any of the men she was with.

GINNY (O.S.)

Oh I can do you one better than that dear.
(GINNY walks out of the room and starts
Rummaging under the bar.)
Bill thought that it wouldn't be long before
The coppers figured out what was going on by
Themselves so once he was in the wheel chair
He started keeping notes of comings and goings.

JEREMY

What kinds of notes?

GINNY

Oh you know, things that made them noticeable,
Clothing, hair, distinguishing marks.

JEREMY

Any licence plates?

GINNY

(Taking a book out from under the bar and blowing
The dust off it)
Mostly they were all on foot dear, flashy cars get
Noticed around here.
(Opens the book)
But there was one.
(She flips over the pages and scans it before pointing

A finger)

There it is.

(She turns the book towards JEREMY)

Right thug he was, always roared in here on his motorcycle.
Woke everyone up. My Bill always said he had a feeling about
Him.

(JEREMY starts to note down the licence plate.)

Oh no dear, you keep it. Maybe it will help.

JEREMY

(Taking up the book and getting up off the stool)
That's perfect. If you don't mind, I'll leave the
Coffee but thank you for everything.

GINNY

Not at all dear, only sorry I didn't do anything
Sooner.

(JEREMY turns and heads towards the door)

Dear?

(JEREMY turns to look at her)

If you see her again...will you tell her...I'm sorry.

(JEREMY nods before turning and leaving the pub closing the
door.)

CUT TO:

EXT - PLEASANT SUBURB STREET - DAY

(JEREMY is seen to be looking down at a piece of paper before
looking up at a nice looking house. He walks up the drive
running his hand over the motorbike in the driveway. When he
gets to the door he rings the bell. Footsteps are heard and
then MIKE answers the door. He is dressed in T-shirt and jeans
and neatly shaved with neat hair.)

MIKE

Can I help you?

JEREMY

Mr Donnegan?

MIKE

That's me. Do I know you?

JEREMY

No.

(Turning to point at the bike)
That your bike?

MIKE

Yea that's her. Beauty isn't she?
Had her pretty much my whole life.

JEREMY
I thought so.

MIKE
You a bike man?

JEREMY
Kind of. You see I've been looking
For that bike for a while. Collectable
Is it?

MIKE
Suppose because of its age it's hard
To come by, why?

JEREMY
Well you see I remember seeing a bike
Just like it and I always set my
Heart on finding one just like it.
(Beat)
Maybe it's the same one?

MIKE
Very much doubt it mate.

JEREMY
Well I'd seen it outside the Dog and
Duck pub in 1982 or 3.

MIKE
(Laughing)
Well I'm hardly going to remember that
Am I?

JEREMY
Well I say I saw it, a friend of mine
Did. Quite regularly actually.

MIKE
(Getting defensive)
That right?

JEREMY
(Taking the photograph of CHARLOTTE out
Of his pocket)
Yea, maybe you might recognise her.

MIKE

After all these years? Not likely.

JEREMY
Humour me.

(JEREMY lifts and shows the picture of CHARLOTTE to MIKE.
Camera shows MIKE'S face visibly tighten)

JEREMY
You do know her then?

MIKE
(Leaning forward in a threatening
Tone)
Look pal I don't know what you
Are trying to pull but I don't...

KELLY (O.S.)
(Calling)
Mike? Who's at the door love?

MIKE
(Calling back to her)
No one love, I'll be there in
A minute.
(Turns back to JEREMY)
Look, I don't know how you found
Me but I don't know anything about
Her.

JEREMY
Then you won't mind me discussing
This in front of your wife?

MIKE
(Threatening)
I am warning you...

(KELLY, MIKE'S wife appears at the door behind her husband.
She is wearing a floral dress and is very pregnant.)

KELLY
Come on darling your dinner will
Get cold.

MIKE
I'll be there in a moment love.

KELLY

(Seeing JEREMY)

Hello.

(To MIKE)

Who's this?

MIKE

Oh...this is the...dealer, about the bike
You remember I told you?

KELLY

(To JEREMY)

Oh! You reckon you'll be able to take
It off his hands? I've been trying to
Convince him to get rid of the blooming
Thing for ages. They're so dangerous you
Know.

JEREMY

Well, like I was saying to your husband
I may have a buyer lined up but I was
Just after a little more information.

KELLY

Oh Mike can tell you everything about
That machine. He's had it for years.

(To MIKE)

Haven't you love?

MIKE

Yea.

JEREMY

But if this is a difficult time I can
Come back.

(Looking meaningfully at MIKE)

I can always come back.

MIKE

No, that won't be needed. We can discuss
This now if you want to..

KELLY

Oh but you're dinner will get cold love and
I made it special.

(To JEREMY)

Sheppard's Pie, his favourite.

JEREMY

Oh I wouldn't dream of interrupting your
Evening meal. I have an appointment shortly
So I could meet you later?

MIKE

Yea sure.

(To KELLY)

You don't mind do you love?

KELLY

Course not.

(To JEREMY)

Was nice to meet you.

(KELLY turns and goes back into the house.)

JEREMY

(In a whisper to MIKE)

The Larkin Pub on Church Street.

Half 8.

(Leaning into him)

Don't make me come back here.

(MIKE nods silently before JEREMY turns and walks away from the house, pausing by the motorbike turning to look at MIKE before MIKE closes the door.)

CUT TO:

INT - THE LARKIN PUB BAR ROOM - NIGHT

(The Larkin is a typical Weatherspoons looking type pub. Its not too busy as MIKE opens the door walking in. He sees JEREMY in the corner booth as he walks over to the bar, orders a large whiskey and walks over. JEREMY is sat there with a pint and his open notebook.)

JEREMY

Glad to see you came.

MIKE

(Sitting down)

You didn't give me much choice.
So what is this then? You can't
Be a copper or you'd have shown
Your badge, Mrs or not.

JEREMY

My name is Jeremy Jennings. I'm
A reporter.

MIKE

You ain't putting my name in
The paper! I only came here
To keep this from this Mrs and

If you...

JEREMY

Calm down. I've no interest in revealing
Your sordid past to your wife. That's
Your ghost you have to live with.

MIKE

Then what are you interested in?

JEREMY

I want to know what happened to her.

MIKE

You know what happened, she killed him.
Christ the whole bloody country knows that.

JEREMY

And she's never told anyone why. I am starting
To think there is more to this than her just
Killing him because she could.

(Beat)

So how did you meet her?

MIKE

Mate I used to work with. He said there was
This girl down by the old estates who would
Rock your world.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(Scoffs)

Thought he was pissing me about at first.
Until I found her.

FADE TO:

EXT - DIRTY LONDON STREET - NIGHT - 1983, FLASHBACK

(Camera shows YOUNG MIKE pulling up on the motorbike. He stands there looking across the road. The Camera pans round to see CHARLOTTE (age 18) half walking, half stumbling out of a small walkway between two blocks of flats. She is wearing a short skirt, vest top and bra with high heels. She is moving the vest & bra strap up her shoulder as she emerges. A business man in a suit walks out behind her as he fastens his tie.)

MIKE (V.O.)

She wasn't like anything I'd seen

Before. A few of the girls up
Soho way have rules about what they
Do, not her. Well not that he'd have
Allowed it.

(YOUNG MIKE gets off the bike and parks it and walks over past CHARLOTTE to MAN who is standing in a doorway about 50 yards from her. MIKE stops in front of MAN and takes out two £20 notes and hands them over. MAN examines them briefly before looking at him.)

MAN
Half hour.

(MAN whistles at CHARLOTTE who turns and walks over to YOUNG MIKE. As she reaches him she looks up into his eyes. Her make up is smudged and her eyes are blood shot and bleary. She then takes his hand and guides him over and into the same walkway she has just emerged from.)

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT - THE LARKIN PUB BAR ROOM - NIGHT

(MIKE now has two empty whiskey glasses in front of him with another in his hand and JEREMY has a second pint and is writing in his notebook.)

JEREMY
So how often did you see her?

MIKE
Every week, was my Friday treat
To myself.

JEREMY
(Dryly)
Beats a few pints with the lads
I suppose.

MIKE
Look! I know what you're thinking
But I was not as bad as some of
Them.

JEREMY
(Looking up at him with raised eyebrows)
Oh this is going to be good.

MIKE

I may have been wrong. I probably
Should have said something.

JEREMY
Might have been an idea.

MIKE
But you didn't see what he was like.
He controlled her. Even if I'd gone
To the police and gotten myself arrested
She would probably have not even testified
Against him.

JEREMY
So you just kept seeing her, to save
Your own skin?

MIKE
I never hurt her. I never did anything
She didn't want to do.

JEREMY
(In whispered anger)
And did you ever stop to think for one
Moment that she didn't want to be there
At all?

MIKE
Well she...never said.

JEREMY
(Slamming his fist on the table)
She was dosed up to her eyeballs
On pills and god knows what else
From the age of 6 you bloody idiot!

MIKE
Look! I'm not proud of what I did
But I never touched her until she was 18.

JEREMY
What do you want? A damn medal!

MIKE
I am telling you everything I know alright?

JEREMY
(Beat)
Fine.

(Beat as he looks back at notepad)
So there were others?

MIKE
Course, she was a favourite of all sorts.

JEREMY
Did you know any of the others?

MIKE
(Shaking his head)
The only thing we had in common was her.
So we didn't exactly become Facebook friends.

JEREMY
(Dryly)
Must have been a disappointment to you when
She got arrested.

MIKE
How do you mean?

JEREMY
To lose your Friday night pick me ups after
Nearly five years.

MIKE
Last time I saw her was New Years Eve of 86.

JEREMY
86? You sure?

MIKE
Definitely, I remember thinking it was a hell
Of a way to bring in 1987.

JEREMY
So what happened?

MIKE
(Shrugging)
All I know is next time I came around a few months
Later he said she wasn't around anymore.

JEREMY
Few months?

MIKE
Worked up north for the spring, came back just before
Easter and that's the message I got.

JEREMY

So he moved her?

MIKE

(Shaking his head)

Heard the landlady of The Dog and Duck talking to her
Husband a few times about how sad it was that a young
Girl was trapped in that flat all day.

JEREMY

So she just stopped seeing you?

MIKE

Not just me, ran into a few of her regulars when I
Went round to see if I could catch her away from him.

(Beat)

No such luck.

JEREMY

And then what?

MIKE

(Shrugging)

Next I heard she was in the paper for murder. Maybe
Those pills he had her on back fired.

JEREMY

Mmmmm...maybe.

MIKE

(Downing the last of his whiskey)

Look...was that all you needed? I gotta head home or the
Wife will kill me.

JEREMY

Yea, yea fine.

MIKE

(As he gets to his feet)

And I'm not going to be named?

JEREMY

Your dirty little secret is yours to take
To the grave.

(MIKE turns and leaves the pub. JEREMY looks at his notepad as
the Camera turns showing the page with "31st Dec 86 - 88
stopped???" circled. JEREMY can be heard to sigh.)

CUT TO:

INT - JEREMY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

(JEREMY is sat on the floor of the living room with his notes spread across the floor. The television is on. VANESSA walks in carrying a beer and a cup of tea. On seeing her JEREMY gets quickly to his feet.)

JEREMY

(Taking the tea and beer from her)
You shouldn't be doing that love.
You know what the doctor said.

VANESSA

(Moving to the sofa and sitting down)
Jeremy I am having a baby. Women have
Been doing it for quite a long time
With minimal breakages. I think I
Can manage getting a tea and a beer.

JEREMY

(Handing her the tea)
I just worry.

VANESSA

(Taking the tea)
Thanks. I know you do and I think its
Adorable.

JEREMY

(Kissing her on the cheek)
Not quite the approach I was going for.

(JEREMY sits back on the floor and takes a drink from his beer.)

VANESSA

How's it going?

JEREMY

It's...going.

VANESSA

Hard to believe that all these men
Just did what they did and didn't
Think to...

JEREMY

Don't remind me.

VANESSA

So you nearly there you think?

JEREMY

The pictures clearing. Just could
Really do with talking to Charlotte
Again.

VANESSA

Can't you speak to Henry? Get him to
Talk to the hospital.

JEREMY

I doubt that she'll ever want to see
My face again. I pushed her too hard
And I just didn't see it.

VANESSA

Babe you just wanted her to see...

JEREMY

She said she didn't want to talk about
It.

(Beat)

I should have just respected her wishes.

VANESSA

You...

JEREMY

I made her face it. I made her do something
She didn't want to do.

(Beat)

I'm no better than them.

VANESSA

You know that's not true.

JEREMY

Do I?

VANESSA

They abused her and took advantage. All you
Want is to understand what she went through.
How can you do that if she won't talk about it?

JEREMY

Yea...maybe.

(JEREMY'S phone rings from where it is on the floor.)

VANESSA

If that's Henry tell him you are allowed a

Home life.

(JEREMY answers the phone.)

JEREMY

Hello

(Beat)

Yea this is.

(Beat)

Really? Well that's great!

(Beat)

Yea, I can do tomorrow. 10 is
Perfect.

(Beat)

No, thank you

(JEREMY hangs up the phone.)

VANESSA

Well?

JEREMY

That was the hospital. Charlotte
Wants to see me.

VANESSA

Well clearly you didn't scare her
Off that badly.

JEREMY

No, I guess not.

VANESSA

(Patting the sofa)

Come on, work time is over.
Its wife time now.

(JEREMY smiles and gathers the documents into the file and
puts it back into his back before sitting on the sofa beside
VANESSA.)

JEREMY

You're not mad at me that this
Thing has been taking up so much
Of my time?

VANESSA

(Turning and smiling at him)

If it gets you your big break
It's more than worth it.

(JEREMY smiles and leans in to kiss her, eyes closed. The two start to kiss as JEREMY starts to see flashes of images of CHARLOTTE with MIKE, firstly walking with her into the flat, then of him kissing her neck and when she shrugs him off he slaps her in the face and pushes her down. The images then fade to black as struggling noises are heard before CHARLOTTE's voice shouting "Mummy!". As this happens JEREMY breaks out of the kiss turning away from VANESSA.)

VANESSA
Hey! I was enjoying that!
(BEAT)
Jeremy? You ok?

JEREMY
(Turning back to look at her)
Huh?

VANESSA
Are you feeling alright?

JEREMY
Yea, yea I'm fine. I just thought
I heard someone outside.
(Getting up)
I'll go and have a look.

VANESSA
Do you want me to...

JEREMY
No you wait here, I'll only be a sec.

(JEREMY walks quickly out of the room as VANESSA looks after him, confused and concerned.)

CUT TO:

INT - JEREMY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

(JEREMY walks into the kitchen and closes the door. He leans against it for a moment before walking over to a cupboard and opening it he takes out a bottle of whiskey and a glass. He pours himself a glass and leans on the work surface drinking.)

JEREMY
(Sighing)
What am I doing?

CUT TO:

INT - CHARLOTTE'S ROOM - DAY

(The room appears with CHARLOTTE lying in the bed looking unwell. JEREMY walks into the room.)

CHARLOTTE
Thought you'd abandoned me.

JEREMY
(Moving towards the bed)
After last time I didn't expect
You to want to see me.

CHARLOTTE
I...wasn't sure I wanted to keep
Going but what you said. It's the
First time anyone has actually
Cared about my past.

JEREMY
I told you I wanted to get to the
Truth.

CHARLOTTE
Well I suppose you had better sit
Down then.

(JEREMY moves to bring the smaller chair over to the bed and sits down.)

JEREMY
Are you unwell?

CHARLOTTE
Just a cough nothing really but Betty
Will fret.

JEREMY
I suppose they have to, with health and
Everything.

CHARLOTTE
So, what interesting activities have you
Been up to since we last met?

JEREMY
I thought I could find Linda. Spoke to my
Boss. He was at your trial.

CHARLOTTE
The whole thing? Blimey! His Mrs must have

Hated me. Suspect yours feels the same.

JEREMY
She's alright.

CHARLOTTE
So...did you find her?

JEREMY
Yea.
(Beat)
She died.

CHARLOTTE
Oh.
(Beat)
When?

JEREMY
December of 92. The same year you were..

CHARLOTTE
Yea, I know.
(Beat)
How did it happen?

JEREMY
Suicide.

CHARLOTTE
At least she's at peace now.

JEREMY
Maybe.

CHARLOTTE
Any other mysteries of my life you've
Uncovered?

JEREMY
I went back to the old estate.

CHARLOTTE
Bet it's the same old dump as before.

JEREMY
Just a bit. I met an old acquaintance of
Yours.

CHARLOTTE
I can't think of anyone I'd want to associate
With from there.

JEREMY
Landlady from the pub.

CHARLOTTE
Ginny?

JEREMY
Yea that's her, she told me you'd met.

CHARLOTTE
I remember she was mad as a box of frogs
But she was lovely.
(Beat)
I felt horrible about what his mates did
To Bill.

JEREMY
It wasn't your fault, you know that?

CHARLOTTE
He always made me feel like it was.

JEREMY
Well you'll pardon me if I don't
Value his opinion.
(Beat)
Ginny asked me to pass on a message.

CHARLOTTE
Oh?

JEREMY
She asked me to tell you she was sorry.

CHARLOTTE
What for?

JEREMY
Well, she lived across the road. All
The time you were there. Suspect she
Feels guilty. Seeing what she saw and
Not saying anything.

CHARLOTTE
She'd have been mad going against him.
(Beat)

I found that out.

(Beat)

So any other blasts from the past?
(JEREMY takes out a picture of MIKE
And hands it to her. CHARLOTTE looks
And splutters with laughter)
Is that Mike?

JEREMY

You knew his name?

CHARLOTTE

He was the only one who carried a driving
Licence on him when I saw him. He had to,
The bike you know?

JEREMY

And how did you know Mike?

CHARLOTTE

(Looks up at him angrily)
Don't patronise me!
If you've spoken to him you know
How we 'knew' each other.

JEREMY

I have his side of the story.
This is about you remember?

CHARLOTTE

How can I bloody forget!

JEREMY

(Getting up)
I can go if you want. I'll
Just print everyone else's
Stories and to be damned with
The...

CHARLOTTE

(Angrily screwing up the paper and
Puts it on the bed)
We had sex alright!
Every Friday from 6:30 to 7 for
The precise amount of £40. Unless
He'd gotten a bonus. Then he paid for
The full hour. Happy!?

JEREMY

(Sitting back down)

Not the word I'd use no.
He said there were others.

CHARLOTTE
Of course there were.
(Bitterly)
He was an excellent business man.

JEREMY
How many?

CHARLOTTE
Eighteen regulars across the week.
Weekend was mostly 'walk ins' and then
Occasionally I'd be the centre piece at
A birthday or office function.

JEREMY
Jesus!

CHARLOTTE
No never had him.

JEREMY
When did he start you on the streets?

CHARLOTTE
11...no...12. Summer of 77 I started.
Remember the heat more than anything.
Eleven years...

JEREMY
Nine

CHARLOTTE
What?

JEREMY
Nine years, or thereabouts.

CHARLOTTE
I think I would remember...

JEREMY
Mike said he came back in April of 86 and
He was told you weren't around.

CHARLOTTE
Well Mike must have got it wrong

JEREMY

The landlady was heard to say you were
Being kept shut up in the flat.

CHARLOTTE
She must be confused.

JEREMY
So he's wrong and she's confused?
From Spring of 87 to February 88 you
Were still there they just couldn't see
You.

CHARLOTTE
I don't know.

JEREMY
Thought you would remember?

CHARLOTTE
I had...things to take care of.

JEREMY
Not with family, your mother..

CHARLOTTE
(Firmly)
Nicola

JEREMY
Hadn't seen you in years.

CHARLOTTE
No I was...

JEREMY
(More insistent)
What?

CHARLOTTE
I don't want to talk about this anymore.

JEREMY
But you...

CHARLOTTE
(Firmly)
I said, I don't want to talk about this
Anymore.

JEREMY
(Putting his note book away)

Fine

(JEREMY gets up and puts the chair back.)

CHARLOTTE
Where are you going?

JEREMY
(Walking back to the bed)
I am not going to stand here and
Waste my time when you clearly
Aren't going to give me anything
Helpful.

(JEREMY walks over to the door.)

CHARLOTTE
Don't be an idiot.
You need me.

JEREMY
(Looking back at her from the door)
No I need a story, doesn't have to
Be yours.

JEREMY walks out and slams the door. Charlotte picks up the screwed up piece of paper and opens it looking at MIKE'S picture.

CUT TO:

INT - JEREMY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

JEREMY is sat on the floor by the coffee table with his notes and papers spread before him. VANESSA walks in with a coffee.

JEREMY
(Getting quickly to his feet)
Oh love, you shouldn't be
Doing that.

VANESSA
(Handing him the coffee)
It's coffee not a three course dinner.
(Kissing him on the cheek)
Stop fretting.
(Sits down on the sofa)
So, getting anywhere?

JEREMY

(Putting the coffee down on
The coffee table and sitting
Down)

No, I know there is something
Staring me in the face. I just
Can't seem to get a clear picture
Of it.

VANESSA

(Taking up the original file and
Opening it and reacting again to
The photograph)
All I know is, it would take a hell
Of a lot of rage to want to do that
To a person.

JEREMY

Well from what's she's told me so far
She had plenty of reasons to want him
Dead. I just wonder what took her so
Long.

VANESSA

Well, he was all she had.

JEREMY

He was hardly a doting father or loving
Husband.

VANESSA

Maybe not but think of it this
Way. People do crazy shit for
People they love right?

JEREMY

I doubt she could love him.

VANESSA

She was with him for seventeen years.
You don't go through that without feeling
Something. And from what you have told
Me, he was a very clever man.

JEREMY

How do you mean?

VANESSA

Odds are, he was nice enough to her often
Enough for her brain to just keep thinking
He wasn't like her regulars or the walk ins.
He was special because he made her feel special.

And then, just when she was feeling like a
Human being again, he'd smack her around or
Pump her full of drugs or make her the centre
Piece at some party. For a brain to go through
That cycle for years, it's amazing she know how
To feel anything.

JEREMY

You sound like...you know.

VANESSA

I was a councillor for five years before I grew
Whale sized remember? It used to be the same
Conversation we'd have with battered wives. Every
Week they'd come in with a black eye or busted
Lip and they'd say "but he's different, he doesn't
Mean it, he bought me flowers and said sorry" and
When they left you'd wonder how long before they
Were being taken to the morgue over a hospital.

JEREMY

But surely there must be something that can break
A hold like that.

VANESSA

Sure, a couple of things but a lot of the time they
Need to have a solid support circle. From what you
Told me, she had no one and no one said anything so
He could just let it go on.

(Looking down at the picture of Charlotte)
12 years old and working the streets.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

How many did you say it was?

JEREMY

Eighteen regulars and then, walk ins.

VANESSA

Jesus! And they were just normal guys?

JEREMY

According to Mike they came from all
Walks of life but the only thing they
Talked about or had in common was her.

VANESSA

Talking about her like she was a footie
Team no doubt. Raise and decline in
Performance.

(Slaming down the file)
It just makes me so Angry!

JEREMY
(Getting up and walking over to her)
Hey!
(Sits down behind her and hugs her
Gently moving the file to the coffee
Table)
Don't upset yourself.

VANESSA
It's just not right is it?

JEREMY
None of what happened to her is right.

VANESSA
God, could you imagine if she'd had a
Kid to one of these bastards?

Pause, zoom to JEREMY'S face of realisation.

JEREMY
Say that again.

VANESSA
It's just, you can't imagine raising a
Child you only had because their father
Paid for the privilege.

JEREMY
But if she was working, surely he'd take
Precautions?

VANESSA
I would imagine so but...he couldn't possibly
Watch her or every guy she was with that
Closely.
(Beat)
Didn't you say she disappeared just after
Christmas?

JEREMY
Yea but she didn't kill him until a year and
A few months after that. Doesn't make sense.

VANESSA
Maybe he took her away for a while. Take the
Heat off and by the time he realised. It was
Too late to do anything about it under the

Normal channels.

JEREMY

(Standing up and going to take up the book
From GINNY and flipping it open.)

I know I saw something...here...Just after New
Year in 87 Ginny's husband saw him bundling
Charlotte into the back of a van with two
Or three young looking girls.

(Sighs)

No licence plate. But then a week or so later
The police came in with photos of the other
Girls. But nothing of Charlotte

VANESSA

Makes sense if no one really knew she existed.

JEREMY

No mention of Charlotte again until...

(Reads through the book before pointing)

Ha! There April 87! The white van returned
Late at night and he took her immediately
Inside. Mike said it was shortly after that
When he came around and was told she wasn't
Available.

VANESSA

They probably came back because he realised
She was pregnant. Does it say anything else?

JEREMY

(Scanning the book)

Not until...November. There was screaming and
Shouting from the flat. No one called the
Police of course but there we a couple of
People seen coming and going. No-one local
According to Ginny's husband.

VANESSA

So when did he next see Charlotte
Or the baby?

JEREMY

He didn't.

VANESSA

He must have let her carry to term and
Then...

JEREMY

Sold the baby.

VANESSA
And with what Nicola did to Charlotte it
Would cause her to snap.

JEREMY
That's it! It has to be.

(JEREMY starts gathering his papers into his bag.)

VANESSA
Where are you going?

JEREMY
(Taking up his bag)
I have to know.

VANESSA
You can't go there at this time
Of night.

JEREMY
This is the last piece of the puzzle.
I have to know.
(Kisses VANESSA)
You're a genius!

VANESSA
(Laughing)
I know. Now go.

(JEREMY turns and leaves the room with his bag. A few seconds later the sound of the front door closing is heard).

CUT TO:

INT - CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

(CHARLOTTE is lying in her bed, still awake staring at the ceiling. There is the sound of fast approaching footsteps.)

ORDERLY'S VOICE (O.S.)
Sir! You cannot go in there.
She is not even awake.

JEREMY (O.S.)
Then I will wake her up.

(JEREMY walks into the room. CHARLOTTE sits up turning to him.)

CHARLOTTE

Well this is an interesting turn
Of events.

(JEREMY turns on the light and walks
over to her bed sitting down. The
ORDERLY walks into the doorway.)
It's alright David, we won't be long.
Go and make a tea.

(The ORDERLY looks hesitantly from CHARLOTTE to JEREMY and
then leaves the room. JEREMY sits down on the bed. CHARLOTTE
moves to a sitting up position as she coughs.)

JEREMY

You still not well?

CHARLOTTE

Just a chest cough. Will be fine.
But I am sure you haven't come here
To enquire about my health.

JEREMY

You had a baby.

CHARLOTTE

Not recently.

JEREMY

Don't be smart with me. He took you
Away somewhere with some other girls
Just after Christmas of 86.

CHARLOTTE

I don't remember.

JEREMY

(Taking out and showing her the notes
Of the descriptions of the girls)
Well Bill did, he noted the description
Of those other girls and the fact that the
Police called around a while later looking
For them.

CHARLOTTE

(As she reads)

Oh yes, we went north to Manchester for a
While. Police had been sniffing around apparently.
Didn't know much of the details, he wasn't...

JEREMY

(Cutting across her angrily)

You came back in April and he wouldn't
Let any of your clients near you.

CHARLOTTE
I wasn't well.

JEREMY
(Insistent)
You were pregnant.

CHARLOTTE
You don't know what you are talking
About.

JEREMY
Where is your baby Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE
What?

JEREMY
Who did he sell her to?

CHARLOTTE
What are you talking about?

JEREMY
Well I'm assuming it was a girl.
Could turn a profit on the sale
That way...

CHARLOTTE
Don't talk about her like that.

JEREMY
Oh so it was a girl.

CHARLOTTE
I don't know!
(Beat)
I always thought...

JEREMY
No you didn't think, you knew. He
Took her from you.

CHARLOTTE
Stop it!

JEREMY
You knew you were never going to see

Her again.

CHARLOTTE
You don't know what you are talking about.

JEREMY
You couldn't bare her going through
What you had been through.

CHARLOTTE
Please, just leave this alone.

JEREMY
What if I can find her?

CHARLOTTE
You can't.

JEREMY
How do you know?

CHARLOTTE
I just know.

JEREMY
Where is she Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE
I don't know.

JEREMY
You do.

CHARLOTTE
No, I don't.

JEREMY
You're her mother. How can you not want to
See her?

CHARLOTTE
Please, you just don't understand.

JEREMY
No! You're right! I don't understand!
You're mother abandoned you when you
Were just a child.

CHARLOTTE
Don't bring Nicola into this.

JEREMY

And now you have the one chance
To see your child again.

CHARLOTTE

I can't see her again.

JEREMY

Of course you can, I can just...

CHARLOTTE

(Screaming and crying)
SHE DOESN'T EXIST!

(Pause)

JEREMY

But...she has to...

CHARLOTTE

What does she have to? Because
That will mean I get a cheerful
Reunion and a happily ever after?
Real life doesn't work that way.

JEREMY

Then what...?

CHARLOTTE

(Pointing to a space on the book)
That night, the neighbours were
Hammering on the walls to shut
The noise up, but no police came.
(Beat)

No one came.

INT - MAN'S FLAT - DAY - 1987, FLASHBACK

(CHARLOTTE is moving away from the fridge with a glass of milk
in her hand in a nightgown and she is visibly pregnant.)

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

After we came back from Manchester
I expected him to make me get rid
Of it but he just dropped me off
In the flat and took off. He was hardly
Around after that. Dropped in food
And stuff every week or so but that was

It. My life started to feel almost, normal
Like I was just an ordinary woman about to have a baby.

(The sound of the door opening is heard and CHARLOTTE turns towards the door. MAN stands there in the shadows. CHARLOTTE'S eyes go wide in fear as she drops her milk and runs to the window.)

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)
I remember seeing that look in his eyes
Like he was some kind of animal.

(We see CHARLOTTE hammering on the window and screaming before MAN grabs hold of her hair and pulls her back from the window and over into the bathroom closing the door. While this is happening the muffled sound of CHARLOTTE screaming.)

FADE TO:

INT - CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

(As the scene fades in we hear a close up of CHARLOTTE'S face crying and the muffled sound of the screaming can still be heard.)

CHARLOTTE
He beat and kicked me for hours. After
The first few blows I just lay there
Huddled and desperate to protect myself
And my baby.

JEREMY
Jesus!

CHARLOTTE
When it was over, all I could feel was
Pain. She said I'd already lost the
Baby but he kept going after.
(Bitterly)
Probably just to be sure.

JEREMY
She?

CHARLOTTE
One of his mates had a girl who used
To be a mid-wife in Croatia. He sent her
Round to see to me. He'd gone out and
She found me lying there just bleeding
And crying. Don't think she knew what
To do at first.

JEREMY

Did she not call an ambulance?

CHARLOTTE

And risk the same treatment? No.
She patched me up, cleaned me and
Put me back into bed.

JEREMY

Did he come back?

CHARLOTTE

Not for a while, she said he'd gone
North to finish sorting some business
Out but I don't know. To be honest
I didn't care.

JEREMY

I don't blame you.

CHARLOTTE

For weeks after, all I felt was pain.
I thought I was going to die and at
First I didn't care.

JEREMY

At first? What changed?

CHARLOTTE

Once the physical pain started to go away
That was when it settled in. What he
Had done. My baby, the first person who
I had felt love for in a long time, was dead.

JEREMY

So what did you do?

CHARLOTTE

I waited while my body healed and then I just
Waited.

JEREMY

For him to return?

CHARLOTTE

February 14th 1988, Valentine's Day. He'd told
His mate that he wanted to come back specially
To be with me.

(Over the next section of dialogue you can see a faded image of CHARLOTTE, crouched in the dark by the table. She is wearing all black and clutching a kitchen knife in one hand.)

CHARLOTTE

It was nearly eleven before he got back.
He was drunk, barely managed to get the
Door open. I just waited and watched him.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

He tried the lights first and when they
Didn't work he just stumbled on

(The sounds of thumping can be heard.)

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Cupboard...table...chair...fridge.
He walked straight passed me towards the
Window. I looked up and I actually
Saw him for the first time and I felt it.
(Voice breaking)
Every moment of shame and disgust I felt
Towards myself over every moment of my
Life was his fault. The pain of losing my
Baby, was his fault and I was not going to
Let it go on.

(A faded image of CHARLOTTE screaming and violently lashing out with the knife. She stabs at MAN again and again, getting splattered with blood in the process. This is covered with powerful music. This goes on for 30 seconds or so before the image fades.)

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

And when the haze finally lifted I was in
Cuffs in a holding cell. I don't remember
Anything after seeing him at the window.

JEREMY

You never told anyone that did you? Your solicitor?

CHARLOTTE

There was no point.

JEREMY

What are you talking about? There was every point.

CHARLOTTE

What good would it have done? They tested my blood,
I was on drugs. Anyone in that building would have
Told them I was there, willingly every day and apart

From the one row they'd never suspected anything.
I was clearly just a very troubled young woman.

JEREMY
I can tell them now.

CHARLOTTE
I don't need people to be told.

JEREMY
What are you talking about? Everything you have
Been through?
Everything the papers and the police said about you.
The truth has to be told so people know that...

CHARLOTTE
What? What will the truth do?
It will drag everyone involved into my past
Into this mess and taint them with the same
Brush that I was tainted with.

JEREMY
It won't be like that, I promise you.

CHARLOTTE
Whatever. I'm tired, you should go.

JEREMY
But I...

CHARLOTTE
Please Jeremy, just go.

JEREMY
(Getting up)
I am going to make this alright.

(CHARLOTTE doesn't respond, she just turns over and lies down.
JEREMY goes to the door and turns out the light before leaving
the room and closing the door.)

CUT TO:

INT - HENRY'S OFFICE - DAY

(HENRY has just finished a phone call and hangs up the phone
before JEREMY walks in with a copy of his article in a
folder.)

JEREMY

(Dropping it on his desk)
There, done. We've really done it
This time Henry.

HENRY
What the hell did you think you were playing at?

JEREMY
What?

HENRY
Storming into the hospital at night. I have just
Had the doctor on the phone. They are threatening
To sue for un-due stress to their patients.

JEREMY
Oh they don't give a damn about their patients.
(Leaning forward and tapping the article)
It's all there Henry. Every word of what she went
Through. Being sold to him when she was six years
Old. The drugs. The beatings. The prostitution. Of
Course I couldn't use the names of her mother or
Mike but it doesn't matter.

HENRY
Jennings...

JEREMY
I can't wait until this hits the papers. This is going
To be huge. One of the biggest cases and this could
Expose everything.

HENRY
Jennings...

JEREMY
More than that even. It will actually make people think.
How many people sat there while that girl suffered?
This will make those people really take a long hard
Look at themselves and...

HENRY
(More insistent)
JENNINGS!
(JEREMY looks at him)
It's not going to print.

JEREMY
WHAT!? Why?

HENRY

(Taking up a form and handing
It to him.)

Custody of Charlotte was signed over to
The hospital. They make medical decisions
For her and they have power of attorney.

JEREMY

So?

HENRY

Charlotte's statements to you weren't
Authorised by them so they won't release them.
If we publish, they sue.

JEREMY

But, they knew we were interviewing her.

HENRY

(Shrugging)

Maybe they didn't think you would get that far.

JEREMY

But...can they do this?

HENRY

They already have. I'm sorry.

(JEREMY takes the form from him and reads it before shaking
his head.)

JEREMY

No...no.

(Dropping the form)

NO! They are not getting away with this.

(JEREMY turns and heads for the door.)

HENRY

Where are you going?

JEREMY

I'm going to do what I promised I'd do.
To get the truth told.

(JEREMY slams the door as he leaves HENRY'S office.)

CUT TO:

EXT - OUTSIDE ASHWORTH HOSPITAL - DAY

(JEREMY has just pulled up outside of the hospital and gets out of his car and starts to walk towards the main doors. BETTY comes out to meet him.)

BETTY
Dr Abbots would like to see you.

JEREMY
(Sarcastic)
Finally agreed to grace me with his presence?

BETTY
(Briskly)
There is no need for sarcasm Mr Jennings
(Turns)
Follow me.

(BETTY leads JEREMY across the car park into the building.)

CUT TO:

INT - DR ABBOTS OFFICE - DAY

(JEREMY is sat in a chair on one side of a large desk. There is an empty chair the other side. After a few moments the door opens and DR ABBOTS walks in.)

DR ABBOTS
(Walking around to sit in the empty
Chair)
Ah Mr Jennings, so sorry to have
Kept you waiting.

JEREMY
I want to see Charlotte.

DR ABBOTS
I'm afraid that will not be possible.

JEREMY
Oh, so trying to keep the truth from her
Now as well?

DR ABBOTS
We have never deceived Ms Dawson, Mr Jennings.

JEREMY
You're telling me that she knows you are trying
To cover up all the horrible things that

Happened to her?

DR ABBOTS

Mr Jennings, you have managed to get Ms Dawson
To open up more than anyone has in the last ten
Years. What Charlotte revealed to you is nothing
Short of horrific and I for one would want nothing
More than to see those responsible exposed.

JEREMY

Then why have you tied up the article in paperwork?

DR ABBOTS

(Handing him a note across the desk)
Because I respect the wishes of my patients.

(JEREMY looks down at the note that reads "I, Charlotte Dawson
expressively forbid the events of my life to be published in
print." JEREMY shakes his head.)

DR ABBOTS

I told her that written evidence
Wasn't needed but she said you'd come storming in
Like a bull in a china shop demanding answers so she
Thought this would be easier.

JEREMY

Why would she?

DR ABBOTS

She said she didn't want to leave a
Mess for others behind.

JEREMY

What do you mean behind?

DR ABBOTS

That's why I'm afraid you can't see her
Mr Jennings. Charlotte passed away early
This morning.

JEREMY

What?

DR ABBOTS

I'm terribly sorry.

JEREMY

How?

DR ABBOTS

We'll know the exact details after her autopsy
But I suspect her heart gave out.

JEREMY

What are you talking about? She wasn't even
That old.

DR ABBOTS

It takes more than just age to damage a heart
Mr Jennings. The many years of drug use coupled
With physical and emotional stress. In the end
She just could not take it anymore.

JEREMY

So...that's it? The world goes on and no one
Actually knows the truth.

DR ABBOTS

You do and she did.

JEREMY

Like that matters.

DR ABBOTS

(Taking a sealed letter from his desk and handing
It to him)
It's what mattered to her.

JEREMY

(Taking the letter)
What's this?

DR ABBOTS

She left it for you.

(JEREMY stares at the blank envelope for a moment before
getting to his feet.)

DR ABBOTS (CONT'D)

She did have one request.
That you open it sitting in Waterloo Station.

JEREMY

Waterloo station? Why?

DR ABBOTS

You knew more about her than most.

(Pause)

JEREMY

Thank you, Doctor.

DR ABBOTS

Not at all, I am as sorry as you are
That this has come to light too late.

(JEREMY looks at him and nods before leaving the office still
looking at the letter.)

CUT TO:

EXT - WATERLOO STATION - DAY

(JEREMY walks into the station and sits down on a bench before
putting his bag down and opens the letter and starts to read.)

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

Dear Jeremy, If you have listened to
Dr Abbots then by now you will be sat in
Waterloo Station. Look around you...

(JEREMY looks up briefly before going Back to the letter)

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D) (V.O.)

This was the last place I saw my mother
Before I was handed over. You know the
Events of my life since then. Until you
I have not discussed those events but I
Am glad that I did. I know you will be angry
That your article is not going to print.
Please don't be. My only want since my mother
Left me in this place is that someone will
Listen to me and believe me. You believed
In my story and that led you to the truth.
Now I need you to listen. My life has
Been one occupied by fear then disgust then
Rage. Once my life with him was over, there
Was no peace. My revenge was done but I did
Not feel satisfied or in any less pain about
The loss of my child. I would beg you not
To follow the same path. Your wife and child
Will need you to be there for them. I have
Been selfish but now it is their turn to be
So. Take care of them, nurture them and love
Them with everything you have.

(JEREMY takes a smaller folded note from the envelope.)

CHARLOTTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

There is another letter here for my mother.

It feels odd even writing after so many years
Of calling her Nicola. I want her to know that
I do not blame her for what happened and that
I still love her. That is part of the reason
I could not let you print your article. There
Are so many people who looked away from what
Happened and I do not want what happened to
Linda to happen to them.

(JEREMY gets to his feet, smiling and walks over to a pillar.)

CHARLOTTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I want you know that my sharing with you was
One of the most joyous moments of my life and
I hope that your child brings you as much joy
as writing this letter brings me.
I finally feel that I can look in a mirror and
See who I am. Unafraid for the first time and that
Is something you brought me. Do not be afraid
For your own future Jeremy, I am not.

(JEREMY takes a single pink rose out of his bag and lays it at
the foot of the pillar before turning to walk away. Camera
stays on the pillar.)

CHARLOTTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I know that my time has come. I will be welcomed by
People, people who understand me. I finally understand
And can believe. It's all ok now.

(A child voice singing 'Rock a bye baby' is heard.)

FADE OUT

THE END