

MEMOIRS OF A STALKER

by
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and
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Based on the novel
by
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PROLOGUE: HOW TO BE NAKED

INT. DRAWING ROOM - AFTERNOON

SOUNDTRACK: LOU REED SINGING "PERFECT DAY"

Curtains are drawn but it's the middle of the day, which gives the room a soft, interior light like the inside of a beating heart. On the TV, *Blue Peter* plays.

A naked man, JACK, 30, watches the screen. He has a shaved head, strong shoulders and a smooth, articulated abdomen. In his hand he holds the remote control. At length he sighs, turns off the TV, and leaves the room.

INT. KITCHEN. CONTINUOUS - AFTERNOON

At the sink, JACK washes up a mug. Dries it and puts it away, adjusting its position in the cupboard so the handle faces a certain way. Then he dries the inside of the sink.

He drops to the floor and does some press-ups.

BEEP - A tumble drier ends its cycle. JACK moves to the door of the kitchen, stops and turns. On his iPhone, he brings up a photograph of the kitchen and compares it with what he can see in front of him.

INT. BASEMENT. CONTINUOUS - AFTERNOON

JACK removes from the tumble drier the only item of clothing it contains, a pair of skin-coloured cycling shorts. He puts them on. Then, with silent agility, he sprints upstairs to the top of the house.

INT. BEDROOM. CONTINUOUS - AFTERNOON

It is the typical bedroom of a girl in her 20s. In other words, a mess. Magazines lie open on the floor. A collage on the wall shows drunken nights out at uni. JACK crosses to the cupboard that occupies the farthest corner. He climbs into it and locks the door on himself.

JACK (V.O.)

I never intended to break into my ex-girlfriend's house. That wasn't my plan. The only plan I had was to spend the afternoon fucking her mother.

ACT 1. HOW TO BE ROMANTIC

EXT. CARLUCCIO'S. TWO WEEKS EARLIER - DAY

JACK (V.O.)

It was a chance meeting. A surprise greeting. Mills's mother. Her dumb, her big-gummed mummy. Her dummy.

JACK, bedraggled, holds a Carluccio's menu; turns and sees MRS HOWARD – an upper-class nightmare, all hairspray and pearls – as she emits a braying laugh that has to be heard to be believed. Her nostrils are flared, her gums huge.

MRS HOWARD

If only Camilla were here...

INT. CARLUCCIO'S. CONTINUOUS - DAY

JACK and MRS HOWARD are sitting in a bustling Carluccio's.

JACK

You don't mind the beard?

MRS HOWARD

I've never been a big fan of facial hair on men.

JACK

How about on women?

MRS HOWARD laughs like a ambulance.

MRS HOWARD

(flirtatiously)

Oh, Jack. You always were *hilarious*. And that's such an attractive quality in a man, I always think. But then, you're terribly handsome, as it is.

JACK

You're not so bad yourself.

MRS HOWARD

If only I were a few years younger!

JACK

(a glint in his eye)

Would you like another glass of wine, Mrs Howard?

MRS HOWARD

You're so *bad*, Jack. Leading me astray--

JACK (V.O.)

And that's when the idea began to form. Revenge. For all that Mills had put me through, I was going to do it with her mum. Get my own back by plumbing her mother. And it didn't get plumper than that. It was perfect. 1) She was drunk, 2) she lived just round the corner.. Back to her place, her on her back, legs around my waist, wasted.

(MORE)

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry, but if you knew, if you only knew it, the things that Mills had put me through, you wouldn't be so shocked.

MRS HOWARD takes a long sip of white wine.

JACK (V.O.)
 It wasn't the knock-back of getting dropped, no, getting ditched, getting dumped, no longer getting humped, fucked up by no longer getting fucked.

MRS HOWARD enacts a series of increasingly overt flirtation tactics.

JACK (V.O.)
 It was the fact that though Mills knew the effect, though she knew it shipwrecked me, and knew that I was going down, SHE DID ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO HELP.

MRS HOWARD
 (drunkenly)
 It was such a shame when you and Mills broke up. You had such a good influence on her. And of course, she was devastated--

JACK
 (affectless)
 Yes. It was sad.

MRS HOWARD
 You were always my favourite of her boyfriends...

JACK (V.O.)
 I always knew she had a crush on me. It was going to be sweet. Simple. Neat. Japaneasy.

MRS HOWARD gets the bill. They rise to leave.

MRS HOWARD
 (indicating shopping bags)
 You wouldn't-- help me home with these?

Their eyes meet. JACK turns to CAMERA: *I'm in there.*

EXT. THE HOWARDS HOME - EVENING

The porch of the Howard home. It is large, white-pilastered, practically Palladian.

MRS HOWARD

You'll come in for a moment? I know
Mills would love to see you--

JACKS eyes widen. Shocked.

JACK

Mills? Is she--

MRS HOWARD

I imagine she's back from work.
Shall I go and see?

JACK

(looking at an imaginary
watch)

No, it's just-- I didn't realise it
was so late. Christ! Listen, it was
lovely to see you, Mrs H. Have a
fantastic time in India.

MRS HOWARD

(looking at a real watch)

Oh golly, yes! It's already gone
six. I'm going to have to *dash* to
catch my plane--

They kiss goodbye. MRS HOWARD goes inside and JACK retreats
to the gateway. He turns on the pavement, and looks back at
the house.

JACK (V.O.)

Why did I stay? Who can say for
sure? I hoped to catch some sight
of her. A glimpse at a window. A
glance from a stair. So I stood and
stared. And then, as I did that,
the door opened. And she was there.

JACK moves out of sight behind a tree as MILLS makes her
first appearance. She's lovely, peaches and cream, chatting
on her phone as she passes through the gateway and heads off
down the street.

JACK (V.O.)

It was the sight of her walking
away. Her shimmy. Her damned
sashay. Her smooth round peach of
an arse, it made an S motion as she
went. And who was I to say no to
that? So I followed her. That's
right. I became her follower.

EXT. THE STREETS OF NOTTING HILL - EVENING

MILLS proceeds through the streets of Notting Hill. JACK follows at a distance — until she reaches a restaurant, where she is met at the door by BERNHARD, an outsize Austrian in a camel-hair coat. Long-haired, sleek, reeking of money.

JACK (V.O.)
And Christ I wish I hadn't.

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

A romantic ambience. MILLS and BERNHARD consult menus. In the background, a table for one. Its diner's face obscured by the menu; lowers to reveal JACK. Then he raises it again just as MILLS is crossing the room. She stops by his table and peers round the side of his menu.

MILLS
(without malice)
Jack? Is that you?

JACK
Hello, Mills.

MILLS
What are you doing here?

JACK
I'm stalking you.

MILLS laughs. JACK laughs too. Then they stop laughing.

MILLS
No, but seriously.

JACK
I was just-- working late-- at work. And since it was late, I--

MILLS
I thought they sacked you.

JACK
Oh, they did. They did. But then they found--
(meaningful look)
they couldn't live without me.

MILLS
(not getting it)
They took you back?

JACK
They took me back, Mills.

MILLS
That's great news.

JACK
 (too intensely)
 It is, isn't it. It's really great
 news. It's *great news*, Mills.

An awkward pause. MILLS glances back at BERNHARD who raises
 an eyebrow.

MILLS
 Well, I'd better--

JACK
 (too quickly)
 Where are you going?

MILLS
 (blushing)
 I'm just going to the--

JACK
 Ah. The Lou Reed.

MILLS
 (remembering)
Perfect Day.

JACK
 (wretchedly)
 Our song.

MILLS
 Well, it was-- nice to see you.

JACK doesn't reply. MILLS glances at BERNHARD, who frowns.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 I'd better be--

JACK still doesn't say anything.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 I like the beard, by the way.

JACK
 (crushed)
 Thanks.

MILLS goes off in search of the loo. JACK takes his empty
 wine glass and, looking at BERNHARD, bites it so hard that it
 cracks, cutting his gums. BERNHARD is appalled.

JACK hides behind his menu again.

JACK (TO CAMERA)(CONT'D)
 For this is what kills, you see.
 This grim gap, this chilling gulf
 between what you think and what you
 say.

(MORE)

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 Between the poetry that sings
 inside your soul, and your stunted
 actions. The way you stutter and
 you stammer. When all you really
 want to say is: I love you, I love
 you, I love you, I love you...

EXT. THE FRONT OF THE HOWARD HOME - NIGHT

It's raining cats and dogs. A taxi pulls up. BERNHARD steps out, holding up an umbrella for MILLS. Together, they totter up to the porch of the house, and go inside.

Lights rise through the house. The CAMERA pans across the street, and walks down the corridor at the side of the house.

EXT. THE HOWARD'S BACK GARDEN - NIGHT

JACK is standing in the middle of the lawn. His arms half-raised on either side, he cuts an almost priestly figure.

He is gazing up the back of the house at the window of MILLS's room. Sinking to his knees, JACK contorts in animal pain, as if he can't bear to imagine what must be going on and crawls towards the house.

Then something catches his eye. The store room window. It's open a crack. He tries it. SWOOSH. It opens. He climbs in and as he does the lower half of the sash window slams shut.

FADE TO:

INT. STORE ROOM - THE FOLLOWING MORNING

JACK is lying on the floor. His eyes open, and he looks straight at the camera.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
 I know what you're thinking. You're
 thinking: *what were you thinking?* I
 mean, what the fuck was I thinking,
 right, climbing into my ex's house?

He breaks off, alarmed. He has caught sight of the bared teeth of an old-fashioned wooden painted rocking horse, which looms over him. JACK is in a store room, crammed with stuff.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 (sitting up)
 Let me make this absolutely clear.
 I was taking shelter from the rain.

He moves to the door and listens.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 I had no intention of staying.

He shoulders his backpack and, carefully, tries the handle. The door opens.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 Or not for very long.

He climbs the stairs to the ground floor, moving slowly, ready to retreat at the slightest sound.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 But you have to remember, I'd gone out with Mills for two whole years. The house held memories for me.

He pauses in the hall. Glances at the front door. Then looks at the doorway into the drawing room.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 Each room was a kaleidoscope.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - FLASHBACK. TWO YEARS AGO - NIGHT

A party is being given not by MILLS but by her parents. From the throng emerges JACK. He looks younger, dressed in a suit, as handsome as hell. He catches sight of the CAMERA.

YOUNGER JACK
 (charmingly)
 Great to see you again.

He is talking to an elderly man, half-mad with senility.

MAD OLD MAN
 What on *earth* are you talking about?

YOUNGER JACK
 (taken aback)
 I just--

MAD OLD MAN
 I've never seen you before in my life.

YOUNGER JACK
 I think we might--

MAD OLD MAN
 (pushing past)
 Impudence.

JACK, at a loss, catches sight of MILLS across the room looking stunning in a dress. She mouths the words: "I. Want. You."

INT. HALL - PRESENT - DAY

JACK is alone again in the hall.

JACK (V.O.)
 I just wanted a look round. I have
 a talent for nostalgia. Or at
 least, I used to have.

He climbs the stairs to the first floor. A door is ajar. He pushes it and it opens with a creak.

INT. LIBRARY - FLASHBACK. TWO YEARS AGO - EVENING

The same door shuts as, on the inside, YOUNGER JACK pushes YOUNGER MILLS up against it, kissing her passionately.

YOUNGER JACK
 What is it-- about old people--
 that makes me-- want to fuck?

YOUNGER MILLS
 It's so naughty of us.

YOUNGER JACK
 (kissing her)
 Upstairs?

YOUNGER MILLS
 (kissing him)
 Upstairs.

INT. FIRST-FLOOR LANDING - PRESENT - DAY

JACK (TO CAMERA)
 (indicating upstairs)
 Shall we?

INT. SECOND-FLOOR LANDING - DAY

JACK arrives up the last few steps of the staircase. He pauses in front of the doorway to MILLS's bedroom.

JACK (V.O.)
 I knew this was where, the night
 before, she'd been given a flesh-
 pounding by her date. Her cash-rich
 bed-mate, who'd made her gasp and
 mew. But I didn't care. For me, as
 I stood there, it meant one thing.
 It was where we'd done it, Mills
 and me, a thousand million times.

He enters the room, lost in the past.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM - FLASHBACK. TWO YEARS AGO - NIGHT

Downstairs the party is in full swing. More to the fore are the sounds of JACK and MILLS's love-making. She has left her dress on, and he has just unzipped his flies.

MILLS

Please, Jack. Oh please.

The love-making increases in intensity.

MILLS (CONT'D)

Please. Oh god. Please. Please.

Please. Please, Jack. Please.

The intensity reaches a climax. At which point, the vision is shattered by the sound of a phone ringing.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM - PRESENT - DAY.

JACK finds his iPhone under one of MILLS's pillows. The caller's name is BERNHARD. JACK lets it go to voicemail. Meanwhile, he picks up a book, half-hidden by the duvet. It turns out to be a scrapbook MILLS kept while they were going out, a monument to their relationship. On each page MILLS has scrawled notes in a childish hand, something to remind her of the significance of their time together.

JACK dials 901 and listens to MILLS's voicemail.

BERNHARD'S VOICE

(in his Austrian accent)

Camilla. Hello. It is Bernhard on the phone. Yes, so-- I just wanted to say that I am sorry about last night. I should not have done what I did, or said what I said. Please do forgive me. And call me, when you have time. Goodbye.

VOICEMAIL WOMAN

To delete the message, key 3.

JACK presses 3.

Then he applies himself to the scrapbook. There is a photo of YOUNGER JACK mucking about by wearing several pairs of sunglasses at the same time. Beside it, MILLS has written "Hilarious!" JACK flicks through the scrapbook, finding more and more pictures of himself. A smile spreads over his face.

JACK (TO CAMERA)

She was still in love with me. It was obvious. First of all, there was this message from Bernhard.

(darkening)

Bernhard! Christ! I couldn't believe she was replacing me with a guy called Bernhard--

(lightening)

But the message made it clear: they'd had a blazing row. *They hadn't slept together.* And why?

(MORE)

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 Because she'd seen me in the
 restaurant. And then, as soon as
 he'd gone, she'd turned to this
 book, this literary shrine. It was
 obvious. *Mills still loved me.* And
 I knew what I should do.

JACK gets up and does a John Travolta-style dance move. Then he runs out of the room and goes galumphing down the stairs.

INT. HALL - DAY

JACK opens the front door, and dashes out.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DUSK

JACK'S backpack is on an armchair near the bay of the window. The drawing room is exotically decorated. There are African throwing spears in a stand against the wall. Objects, artefacts, books and family photographs.

CLINK, CLINK - someone's in the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - DUSK

Wearing an apron, JACK is preparing a dinner for two. He removes a pair of chicken fillets from the hot pan and pops them in the oven. He splashes sherry into the pan, and after a minute or two, adds half a carton of double cream.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
 Which she always loved.

INT. DINING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - DUSK

The dining room lies between the drawing room and the kitchen, linked by archways rather than doors. JACK lights two tall candles in the centre of the dining room table.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
 Which all girls love.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - DUSK

JACK has two slim flute glasses and a bottle of expensive Veuve Clicquot Champagne. He eases out the cork - POP.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
 Which I'm kind of partial to
 myself.

He pours himself a glass, takes a sip. Then tidies the room in preparation for MILLS'S arrival. She has left her laptop out, open at her Facebook page. JACK picks it up, and as he does, a Chat message pops up at the bottom of the screen.

It's from BERNHARD: "Am I forgiven?"

JACK hesitates, and then "defriends" BERNHARD. He takes up a standing position beside an armchair, facing the doorway into the hall. With one hand resting on the back of the chair, the other holding up his glass of Champagne, he tries out a series of possible ways to greet MILLS.

JACK (CONT'D)
(in a singsong voice)
Surpriiiiiise!

He tries another.

JACK (CONT'D)
(debonair)
Surprised?

He tries a third variation.

JACK (CONT'D)
(quietly, nodding)
Surprise.

We hear a jangle of keys at the front door.

JACK panics. Sits. Stands again. Raises his glass in readiness. But as it turns out, he is the one surprised.

A GIRL'S VOICE
Mills?

Beat.

A GIRL'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Mi-ills?

It isn't Mills. JACK freezes in horror, before reversing out of the drawing room silently. He moves out of sight just as CLARE, a slim, slightly built girl enters the drawing room. She turns on the TV and flops in front of it. JACK peeks out from his inadequate hiding place, but only enough to see the back of her head. After a moment she gets up again and goes out into the hall to climb the stairs.

JACK leaps into action. He extinguishes the candle flames. He takes the food out of the oven and, not knowing what else to do with it, hides it on top of one of the cupboards.

He makes for the hall but just as he reaches the front door, a second set of keys can be heard. Behind him, CLARE is descending the stairs.

JACK dodges back into the drawing room.

The front door opens revealing a cold and damp MILLS.

MILLS
Hello!

CLARE
 (American accent)
 Hey, sweetie. We got five.

MILLS
 I thought we were going to miss it.

CLARE
 Over my dead body.

CLARE is American dry. She isn't as pretty as MILLS but she's cleverer. She's also sharper-tongued, and not as nice.

They go into the drawing room, where the TV shows *Strictly Come Dancing*. MILLS adjusts an armchair to face the screen. Behind her, on another chair, we can see JACK's backpack, which he has forgotten. CLARE goes through into the kitchen. She notices nothing strange until she opens the fridge.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - DUSK

CLARE appears in the archway from the dining room, holding an opened bottle of Veuve Clicquot Champagne.

MILLS
 Champagne?

CLARE
 No shit. Must be your mom's.

MILLS
 (grinning)
 She's away for ages.

CLARE
 Right. Festival hopping.

MILLS
 It's *such* a relief.

CLARE turns to fetch glasses. Behind MILLS, JACK's backpack start to move, as if drawn by an invisible thread. Without MILLS noticing, the backpack levitates out of sight behind the large heavy floor-length curtains.

CLARE comes back in and pours the Champagne.

EXT. THE FRONT OF THE HOWARD HOME. CONTINUOUS - DUSK

In the bay of the front window, JACK is hunched on a ledge, concealed by the heavy curtain, but not concealed from anyone passing in the street. An old woman walking her dog stops to stare at him. Her dog starts to yap loudly. JACK, turns and puts a finger to his lips. Then he makes his fingers into claws and bares his teeth, to indicate he is playing some kind of friendly game. The dog yaps even more loudly and furiously and its owner, looking unamused by JACK's antics, drags her pet away down the street.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - DUSK

MILLS and CLARE watch *Strictly Come Dancing*.

MILLS
I hate my job.

CLARE
I hate you.

MILLS
(humbly)
I know you do.

CLARE
You don't know how lucky you are,
doing your temping shit. At least
you get paid properly. Oh, by the
way, how was last night?

MILLS
Oh, Clare, it was a disaster.

CLARE
Excellent. What happened?

MILLS
Well, at first it was really nice.
You know I really like him and he's-
- well, he's sort of grown-up. Do
you know what I mean?

CLARE
I think I have a handle on that
concept. What does he earn?

MILLS
He's completely loaded.

CLARE
So what's the problem?

MILLS
Well, nothing at first. But then we
bumped into Jack.

CLARE
Your ex?

MILLS
I know. What are the chances?

CLARE
He was probably stalking you.

MILLS

No. Because that's what he said. I asked him what he was doing and he said, "I'm stalking you." I thought it was quite funny, actually.

CLARE

Hilarious. It must have been seriously awkward.

MILLS cringes.

MILLS

So then we finished our dinner and came back here.

MILLS pays attention to the TV. The judges deliver their verdict on a performance.

CLARE

And... what happened when you and Bernard got back?

MILLS

His name isn't Bernard. It's *Bairn-hard*.

CLARE

(grinning)
Okay. Burn-hard.

MILLS

I don't know. It was really strange. I don't know if it was seeing Jack in the restaurant. But somehow I just couldn't-- And then he got really aggressive about it. So I asked him to leave.

CLARE

Do you think you're still in love with him?

MILLS

Who? Bernhard?

CLARE

No, douche-bag. With Jack.

MILLS

(shaking her head)
Definitely not.

CLARE

Sure about that?

MILLS

Absolutely sure. The other day, I found this scrapbook that I kept while Jack and I were together. And it reminded me-- I was completely in love with him. But I was so young back then, you know? I know we only broke up a few months ago, but when we started going out, I didn't know anything. I didn't know anything about anything.

CLARE

But you're older and wiser now.

MILLS

Exactly.

CLARE

And what about Bernard?

MILLS

Bernhard.

CLARE

Him too.

MILLS

I don't know. It was really horrible, the row we had last night. And he hasn't called or-- Actually, I left my phone--

MILLS gets up and leaves the room. JACK takes a peak from behind the curtain.

CUT TO:

MILLS comes back into the room, phone in hand.

MILLS (CONT'D)

Nothing. And no email.

CLARE

Sounds like he's being a dick.

MILLS

He *is* being a dick. But I wish he wasn't. I don't know why, but I really like him, Clare.

CLARE

Jack?

MILLS

No. Bernhard.

CLARE

You need some more Champagne.

The girls fall silent, sipping their Champagne and watching *Strictly Come Dancing*. We focus on the curtain, wondering how JACK's coping behind it. MILLS goes to bed. CLARE stays up, smoking and drinking, and checking her phone from time to time, to see if she's received any messages. Finally she leaves too, turning out the light as she goes.

There's a long pause.

The curtains stir and JACK steps out, collapsing on to the floor. One of his legs has gone to sleep.

It slowly becomes clear, though, that he is crying.

JACK (V.O.)

Everyone has a lie they tell themselves, which makes their life bearable. And if that lie is taken away from you, it can feel like you have nothing. That's how I felt that night--

CUT TO:

JACK sits in an armchair in the gloom of the drawing room, staring into space.

JACK (V.O.)

I felt as if I had nothing. Nowhere to go. Nothing to do. No one in my life. And then something happened. Something extraordinary.

As he sits there, completely still, a mouse emerges from behind the TV. It comes forward slowly, tentatively, unaware of his presence. JACK doesn't move a muscle, but watches the mouse as it creeps across the carpet.

Suddenly, it stops. It seems to notice him.

JACK

(aloud)

Hi.

The mouse flees.

FADE OUT.

ACT 2. HOW TO BE INVISIBLE

INT. HALL - THE FOLLOWING MORNING

CLARE descends the stairs then stops by the hall table and looks through the post. MILLS hurries by.

MILLS

Bye!

MILLS leaves for work.

CLARE

Bye!

A moment later, CLARE does the same. The house is silent. Then JACK emerges from the basement.

JACK

(looking at the front
door)

Bye.

He goes into the dining room (NB There are doorways from the hall into the drawing room and the dining room) and then into the kitchen. He opens the fridge and takes out a piece of cheese cutting an almost transparently thin sliver.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

I began with first principles.
There were certain things a man
needed to do in order to survive.
First of all: he had to eat.

He takes a tiny bite of the cheese.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

I was allowed to take a small
amount of something from a packet,
if the packet had already been
opened. If there were a large
number of apples in the fruit bowl--
(taking an apple, throwing
it up and catching it)
--I could take one.

He walks through into the dining room.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

Secondly, he had to drink. I stuck
to water, straight from the tap.

CUT TO:

INT. DOWNSTAIRS LAVATORY - MORNING

JACK drinks water from the tap.

JACK (TO CAMERA)

Which makes me want to piss.

INT. STORE ROOM - NIGHT

JACK urinates into a large plastic bottle.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

JACK pauses in front of a stuffed full-size grizzly bear, rearing for the kill. JACK takes a bite of his apple, and makes as if to offer the apple to the bear's yawning mouth.

JACK (TO CAMERA)

And then of course there was the more serious business of taking a crap. Do bears use loo paper? Nor did I. You just have to remember to stick to the same hand. And be sure to eat with the other.

He glances at his left hand, which has the crumbs of cheese in it. He frowns, and moves on through into the drawing room. Crosses over to the TV, kneels, and places the cheese in the corner from which the mouse emerged the previous night.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

The mouse was my saviour, my inspiration. He gave me the idea. Because think, for a second, about mice. Wherever you are, whatever you're doing, there's probably a mouse within a couple of metres of you. But you don't know they're there. You aren't aware of them. And why aren't you aware?

He unsheathes a long African throwing spear from the stand by the wall, and points it at the camera.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

Because they're clever. They live by certain rules. And that was the challenge, as I saw it. Could a man live like a mouse? Could I share this house with two other people, without being detected? That was my project, my irresistible dare.

He returns the spear to its place on the stand; glances to his left; then throws himself to the floor. In the street, the old woman from the night before is out with her dog.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

(looking up from floor)

But I never meant to win Mills back. That wasn't why I went there. I'd heard what she'd said about me, and it had crushed my heart.

(MORE)

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 In any case, I knew that any such
 project was doomed to failure. Why?
 Because love is like innocence. You
 can't ever get it back.

He holds eye-contact with the camera for long enough to
 undermine the force of this assertion.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 Eating. Drinking. Pissing.
 Shitting. Sleeping. Five things.
 Like the five senses by which we
 can be perceived.

He does some press-ups, continuing to talk as best he can.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 When the girls were home I-- stayed
 in my room-- like the mouse behind
 its-- skirting board-- I had a key
 to the-- so there was no danger of--
 being disturbed-- and in any case--
 they couldn't disturb me--

He sinks to the carpet, unable to do any more.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I was already disturbed.

INT. LANDING OUTSIDE MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

JACK opens a door and peers into a room. It is the master
 bedroom, large and ornate, with a double bed, and windows
 looking out on to a balcony.

JACK (V.O.)
 Her parents' bedroom. Her daddy was
 dead, which was a damn shame. Her
 mum was conveniently absent.

INT. BATHROOM OFF MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

JACK is standing naked in the bath, washing himself. He
 lowers himself into the water to wash off the suds.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
 After Mills and I broke up, I went
 mad for a time. I wanted to kill
 myself, and I think I could have
 done, at first.

He pulls out the plug and reaches for a towel.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 But gradually, I'd been getting
 better. And where better to get
 better than 69 Milton Road?
 (MORE)

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 It was a nice old house. Well-
 stocked with books. It was
 peaceful.

He finishes drying himself and uses the same towel to dry the sides of the bath.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 All I had to do, I thought, was
 stay out of sight while the girls
 were around. The rest of the time,
 I had the run of the house.

He climbs out of the bath.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 That was what I thought.

He drapes the towel around his neck, and walks into the bedroom just as a woman enters from the other side. It's the middle-aged Yemeni maid, AISHA, carrying a pile of freshly laundered sheets. When she sees JACK, she screams and throws them in the air. JACK screams back, a deeper note, covering his genitals with his hands.

JACK (CONT'D)
 (hoarsely)
 I can explain.

JACK takes the towel from his neck and wraps it round his waist. AISHA has backed away against the door, about to bolt.

JACK moves forward, and as he does so, his towel slips.

JACK (CONT'D)
 (doubling up)
 Oh. God. No, wait!

AISHA screams again. JACK wraps the towel around his waist again and takes another step towards her. AISHA grabs a hairbrush off the dresser and points it at him as if it were a knife. JACK, one hand holding his towel, raises his other hand pacifically.

JACK (CONT'D)
 (after a pause)
 Sorry. Look. I'm a friend of Mills.
 Of Camilla, I mean. And, um--
 (clicking fingers)
 --Clare.

AISHA keeps the hairbrush pointed at him. JACK stoops to pick up one of her discarded sheets. He offers it to her.

AISHA
 (jabbing at his towel)
 Why like that?

JACK
Mills said I could take a bath.
We're really old friends.

AISHA
(her face softening)
Miss Mills very nice girl.

JACK
(heartfelt)
She's the best.

Uncertainly, AISHA replaces the hairbrush on the dresser.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I asked Aisha to give me five
minutes to finish up in the
bathroom. That was their cleaner's
name. Aisha. We got on rather well
in the end. I even persuaded her to
do a little ironing for me.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. HALF AN HOUR LATER - DAY

AISHA, smiling, irons JACK's trousers. JACK consults MILLS's laptop. He is on her Facebook site, going through some old pictures of them together. At length, he clicks to close the internet window. It disappears, and he looks up to see that AISHA has disappeared too.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
And the encounter persuaded me of
one thing, at least.

He pulls on his freshly ironed combat trousers.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
I was going to have to take it all
a lot more seriously.

He disconnects his iPhone from MILLS's computer. He points it at us like a camera.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
Smile.

We hear the camera-click sound, as he takes a photo of us. He shows us the screen, which merely shows a picture of the room behind us, as if we are insubstantial, or don't exist.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
(smiling to himself)
After the girls left for work, I
took pictures of every room in the
house. And each time I left a room,
I made sure it was in the same
state as when I entered.

He takes a series of pictures of the drawing room. Standing by the book shelves, he runs his fingers along a line of CDs, and picks one. It is the BBC charity cover version of *Perfect Day*, JACK slides it into the CD player and presses play.

INT. STAIRS FLIGHT 1 - DAY

Overlaid image of JACK's thumbs typing into his phone, while the words at the bottom appear gradually as he types them, in the manner of subtitles. JACK stands halfway up the flight of stairs that leads down to the basement, testing each part of each step to see if it creaks.

IPHONE NOTE AP
(appearing as subtitles)
"Day 2. There are five ways by
which a man may be perceived,
corresponding to the five senses of
sight, sound--"

JACK discovers a creaky step. He makes a note of this in a notebook, in which he has drawn a map of all the flights of stairs, labelled 1 (basement to hall), 2a and 2b (hall to first floor, divided by a half-landing), 3a and 3b.

IPHONE NOTE AP (CONT'D)
(appearing as subtitles)
"--smell, touch and taste."

Also in the notebook he has sketched the lay-out of all the rooms in the house.

JACK (V.O.)
The first two were primary. I might
be seen. I might be heard. The best
way to avoid being seen, I knew,
was just to lurk in my room when
the girls were around.

INT. STORE ROOM - EVENING

JACK unlocks the door. He moves up the stairs taking care to avoid the step he knows is creaky. MILLS and CLARE are chatting in the sitting room.

JACK (V.O.)
But as the days went by, I felt
frustrated by this limitation. I
wanted to move around more, even
when they were in the house.

JACK pauses a couple of steps from the top.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
(in a whisper)
I wanted to hear the sound of human
voices.

CLARE (O.S.)
Has Bernhard been in touch?

MILLS (O.S.)
Not a word.

CLARE (O.S.)
What a jerk.

MILLS (O.S.)
I know. He's a total jerk. It's
really upset me, actually.

JACK puts a hand on his heart. His face grimaces with unfathomable pain.

He calms himself, then climbs the last two steps, and walks through the dining room into the drawing room. The girls aren't there anymore. A time shift has taken place. It's now daytime.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
I was at my happiest, I found, in
the morning. I had my routines.

CUT TO:

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY

JACK draws the curtains in the bay window.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL AND STAIRCASE FLIGHT 2A - DAY

JACK runs up Flight 2a, dodging strangely from side to side, to avoid stepping on any place that creaks.

CUT TO:

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY

JACK completes a set up of press-ups.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

In the dimly lit dining room, JACK steps back into the shadowy corner behind the grizzly bear. A moment later, he is completely invisible, enshrouded by darkness.

INT. HALL AND STAIRCASE FLIGHT 2A - MORNING

JACK runs down Flight 2a, reversing his manoeuvre. At the bottom, he pauses. He is dressed only in a pair of combat trousers. He takes a step and stops. He is listening to the sound of the material brushing together.

It is a small sound, but it bothers him. He takes off his trousers, underneath which he's wearing a pair of skin-coloured cycling shorts.

JACK takes some steps, satisfying himself that he now makes no noise at all. He catches sight of himself in the oval gilt-edged mirror that hangs in the hall and examines intently his own reflection.

INT. BASEMENT LAVATORY - MORNING

It is a luxurious Victorian lavatory. The loo-seat is square, made of heavy mahogany. On a side table is a set of ivory-backed hair brushes, and a long slim pair of silver scissors.

JACK is shaving off his beard.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
I'll be honest with you, though.

JACK clips away at his hair with the silver scissors.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
The afternoons could kind of drag.

JACK sprays shaving foam over his almost-hairless scalp.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
If it wasn't for the mouse, I don't know what I should have done.

JACK starts to shave his head.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - MORNING

Beardless and shaven, JACK lies on his front, facing the corner of the room behind the TV. He has laid down a trail of tiny crumbs of cheese. At the far end of it, the mouse nibbles.

JACK (V.O.)
My only friend.

The mouse finishes one crumb of cheese. Hesitates. Then moves forward, in order to nibble on another.

JACK (V.O.)
He didn't judge me. He didn't look into my soul and find me wanting. And we had so much in common.

The mouse squeaks, as if in agreement.

JACK (V.O.)
We both lived in the hiding places. We knew the tricks of self-annihilation.

JACK has his hand out in front of him, in the centre is a tiny piece of cheese. After long hesitation, the mouse climbs on to his hand. Very slowly, JACK moves his other hand and with the tip of his index finger, strokes its fur.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
We knew how to disappear.

The doorbell rings. JACK and the mouse both turn their heads quickly, with equivalent alertness.

INT. HALL. CONTINUOUS - DAY

JACK unlocks the front door. There's a pizza delivery guy standing there, a little fellow, his face obscured by a moped helmet. It is HELMET MAN.

JACK
Hi.

HELMET MAN nods his helmet.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The mouse was my friend, but I couldn't speak to him.

HELMET MAN hands over the pizza.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
To improve my social skills, to practise my verbal exchanges, I had to rely on Helmet Man.

JACK takes the pizza box and opens it to check it contains the right kind of pizza.

JACK (CONT'D)
How are you?

HELMET MAN
(in a Pakistani accent,
muffled by his helmet)
Fine thanks. How are you?

JACK
I'm good.

They nod at each other. JACK opens his mouth as if to say something else, then decides against it. HELMET MAN backs away, and JACK returns into the house.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY

JACK is seated on the floor in the mouse's corner of the room, eating his pizza. He has broken a small piece of his pizza off and is allowing the mouse to nibble at it.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
 (munching on his pizza)
 I shared my food with the mouse.
 And what did he share with me? His
 skills. His expertise.

INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

The room is dark apart from a table lamp. JACK is cross-legged on the floor beside the table, reading a copy of *The Quiet American* by Graham Greene. The house is silent.

JACK (V.O.)
 He taught me the power and
 potential of stillness.

Suddenly the door opens and CLARE walks into the room. Without noticing JACK, who stays completely still, she walks over to one of the bookshelves, which holds a complete set of the novels of Graham Greene - complete, that is, apart from *The Quiet American*, which JACK has in his hands.

CLARE pauses as she sees the gap in the line of books. Then she dismisses the thought, and selects a book for herself. She turns abruptly and moves over to the table. JACK has disappeared. She switches off the light and leaves the library in darkness.

In the darkest part of the room, an iPhone screen lights up, illuminating JACK's eerie, shaven-headed features. He moves forward to the bookshelf and scans the line of Greene novels.

JACK
 (softly)
The End of the Affair.

INT. STORE ROOM - MORNING

JACK is on his back, clad in an Albanian costume like that once worn by Byron. Pizza boxes are stacked up next to him, as well as a bottle of urine.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
 It's movement that catches the eye.
 You see this in the animal kingdom
 everywhere you look, not only among
 those who are likely to be preyed
 upon, but also among those who
 stalk. This silky stillness.

He holds up his hand in front of his face. It is entirely still, he moves his other hand, and reaches for the urine-filled bottle at his side. He unscrews the cap and puts it to his lips as if about to drink it.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
 (smiling)
 I'm not completely insane.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM - DAY

JACK enters, naked, wearing nothing but a tool belt. He opens the door of one of the wardrobes, and removes the toys from MILLS's childhood and takes out the shelves. Then he drills a hole in the door.

This done, JACK turns and pretends to shoot us with the drill. Then he sets about drilling a second hole, in a different place. A place where there is a natural knot in the wood, so it will show up less at a glance. The noise of the drill increases to become the sound of a pneumatic drill used by workmen in the street.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY

JACK lies naked on the floor of the drawing room, staring at the ceiling. The sound of the pneumatic drill is loud, then softens to allow us to hear his meditative thoughts.

JACK (V.O.)

When you spend all your days in silence, sounds are amplified. Cars drive past like waves breaking on a seashore. The whine of an insect is loud as a pneumatic drill.

JACK sits in an armchair, watching TV. *Blue Peter* is on, showing the same footage we saw in the Prologue.

JACK (V.O.)

In my state of heightened sensitivity, I became conscious of the littlest of things. The clicks and exhalations of the house. Its sad vocabulary.

BEEP - the tumble drier ends its cycle.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM - EVENING

The room appears empty. The door of the wardrobe is closed.

INT. INSIDE MILLS'S WARDROBE - EVENING

It's almost entirely dark in the wardrobe. Suddenly, there's movement - It's JACK.

JACK (V.O.)

Most nights, when it got dark, the girls would come home and slump in front of the TV. That evening was different. Mills didn't come home till late. I was stuck in that fucking wardrobe for ages.

Under his breath, he starts to sing.

JACK

Just a perfect day-- Drink Sangria
in the park-- And then later, when
it gets dark, we go home--

Then darkness of the wardrobe is broken by three thin shafts of light. The bedroom light has been turned on.

JACK moves his eye to each of the peep-holes. Peep-hole 1 reveals nothing but the full-length mirror directly opposite the wardrobe. Peep-hole 2 is directed at the chair in front of the dressing table. No one's there. Peep-hole 3 points at the bed. There's MILLS, or part of her.

She leans back, relaxing on the bed, restricting his view.

MILLS

Oh. That's so lovely.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM - EVENING

MILLS lies on her bed, fully clothed, her eyes closed.

MILLS

(singing out of tune)
Just a perfect day--

She rolls sideways, and falls off the bed on to the floor.

MILLS (CONT'D)

Oopsy-daisy!

She lies there, laughing. Then she picks herself up.

MILLS (CONT'D)

(singing babyishly)
Drink Sangria in the park--

INT. MILLS'S WARDROBE - EVENING

JACK looks through Peep-hole 1 to see MILLS's empty bed. He moves to Peep-hole 2. There is no sign of MILLS here either. Moving to Peep-hole 1, he can see a limited circular section of MILLS's body. She removes her top. Shimmies out of her skirt in readiness for bed.

She reaches behind her back to undo the clasp of her bra, but before she can do so, her phone starts to ring.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM - EVENING

MILLS picks up her iPhone. It's BERNHARD. She silences the ringing, and tosses the phone away from her. It continues to flash up with his name. Then she puts on her dressing gown quickly, and answers.

MILLS
 (coldly)
 Hi.

Beat.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 No. I just got back, in fact.

Beat.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 That's none of your bees-wax.

Medium pause.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 What? What are you talking about? I
 never--

Beat.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 I promise you I didn't.

Medium pause.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 Look. Bernhard, will you just
 listen to me? I never got it.
 I'd never do anything so mean--

MILLS goes out of the room as she talks to BERNHARD. She makes for the bathroom to brush her teeth, but we stay in the bedroom. We can't hear what she's saying.

A minute passes.

MILLS comes back in, smiling.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 No, I'd *really* like you to come.
 Thursday. Seven of us. Eight, if
 you come.

Short pause.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 So I'll see you Thursday? Okay. And
send me a friends invite! Okay.
 Bye, Bernhard.

After hanging up, MILLS can't stop smiling to herself as she climbs into bed and turns the light out.

INT. MILLS'S WARDROBE. LATER - EVENING

A key turns in a lock. The door opens and JACK climbs out. He moves forward and kneels beside the sleeping MILLS, his face only inches from hers.

BEEP - MILLS's phone beeps with a message. JACK retracts his hand, and picks up her phone. The message is from BERNHARD. It says: "I'm really looking forward to dinner on Thursday." JACK deletes it.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
Let's go to work.

CUT TO:

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY

JACK carefully squeezing glue round the tray of the hi-fi.

CUT TO:

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY

JACK doing press-ups.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

JACK dabbing a spot of washing-up liquid on a cooking pot.

CUT TO:

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY

JACK doing sit-ups.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

JACK blowing a spit-ball at a target through a straw.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL AND STAIRCASE FLIGHT 2A - DAY

JACK running up Flight 2a in his strange way.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL - DAY

JACK 'ninja chopping' at his own reflection.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL AND STAIRCASE FLIGHT 2A - DAY

JACK running down Flight 2a in similar fashion, before disappearing on down into the basement.

INT. STAIRCASE AND HALL - EVENING.

MILLS comes down Flight 2a dressed for her dinner party, and looks stunning. She pauses in front of the mirror in the hall and eyes her reflection cynically. Then she opens the door.

A couple is waiting in the porch. The boy, CHARLIE, has a small body and a big head and is wearing a suit. The girl, BRIDIE, is taller than him, and has a big mouth and small breasts. Both carry umbrellas. It is raining hard.

CHARLIE
Millsworth!

MILLS
No one's come--

She is blushing as they kiss hello.

MILLS (CONT'D)
Three people cancelled. We're only five.

CHARLIE
That's perfect. I can't stand other people.

From a plastic bag he produces a bottle of red wine, which he hands to MILLS, and a six-pack of lager, which he keeps.

MILLS
Hello, Bridie.

BRIDIE
Hello! Hello!

MILLS
I'm sorry about the rain.

CHARLIE
It's hardly your fault, old sausage.

BRIDIE
But isn't it beastly, though?

As they dispense with coats etc, CLARE descends the stairs. She hasn't bothered to dress up, and doesn't greet CHARLIE or BRIDIE with much enthusiasm. They are MILLS's friends.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. A MINUTE LATER - EVENING

CHARLIE
 (holding up a can)
 Mind if I tuck in?

BRIDIE
 You're looking gorgeous in that
 dress, Camilla. Who's the
 mysterious fifth guest?

DING DONG - The doorbell rings.

INT. HALL. A FEW SECONDS LATER - EVENING

BERNHARD is waiting in the porch. He holds his umbrella like a sword. In his other hand he carries a plastic bag. MILLS steps forward to kiss him, but he makes a formal bow, snapping his heels together, bending at the neck.

BERNHARD
 So sorry to be late.

MILLS
 You aren't late.

BERNHARD
 I am a little late.

MILLS
 Okay. Well, you're forgiven.

BERNHARD
 (handing her plastic bag)
 I brought you these.

MILLS
 That's so sweet of you.

MILLS unwraps the first of two wrapped gifts, to discover that it contains a packet of rodent killer.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 Gosh. That's really--

BERNHARD
 (hanging up Barbour)
 You said that you had mice.

MILLS
 How practical.

She unwraps the second gift. It contains chocolates.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 (smiling)
 My favourite!

She kisses BERNHARD on the cheek. Then on the mouth. While they kiss, we view them from above, as if someone might be spying on them while clinging to the ceiling. MILLS takes BERNHARD's hand and leads him into the drawing room.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

CHARLIE
(offering a hand)
I'm Charlie.

BERNHARD
(taking it)
Bernhard.

CLARE
(offering no hand)
Hey. I'm Clare.

BRIDIE
Bridie.

BERNHARD
(making sure)
Bridie?

BRIDIE
It's terrible. When I was little, everyone called me "Bridle" as I was obsessed with horses. Bridie's an improvement, don't you think?

CHARLIE
(taking a sip of beer)
She also sounds like a horse.

He glances at his girlfriend, and then neighs like a horse. BRIDIE glares at him, then decides to find it funny. When she laughs, she actually sounds a bit like a horse.

MILLS (O.S.)
(calling from kitchen)
Clare? Do you know what's happened to the corkscrew?

CLARE sighs. We follow her into the dining room. But then we duck under the dining room table and view the bottom halves of MILLS and CLARE, in the kitchen, from that POV.

CLARE
(rummaging in a drawer)
That's really weird. It was definitely here yesterday.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

CHARLIE, BRIDIE and BERNHARD smile at each other. CHARLIE is the only one who has a drink.

He sits on a large red chest, which stands in front of the curtains. The chest is large enough that it might conceivably hold a person.

CHARLIE
(making chit-chat)
Ghastly weather we've been having.

BERNHARD
This is London, after all.

BRIDIE
What's that got to do with it?

BERNHARD
England is rather famous for its rain, isn't it?

BRIDIE
And I suppose it never rains in Germany.

BERNHARD
Austria.

BRIDIE
What?

BERNHARD
I am from Austria.

CHARLIE finishes what's in his glass.

CHARLIE
I'd better give the girls a hand.
If we can't find the corkscrew,
there's always the old thumb trick.

He waggles his thumbs as he goes out. BERNHARD and BRIDIE are left in the drawing room. She sits in an armchair. He stands, pretending interest in the African throwing spears.

MILLS comes back in to find the room silent.

MILLS
(cheerfully)
Shall we have some music?

When she tries to eject the CD tray, it's stuck. She tries several times, but with the same result. CHARLIE reappears, a glass of beer in one hand, a bottle of wine in the other, the cork pushed in. CLARE accompanies him, carrying four glasses.

MILLS (CONT'D)
The tray won't come out.

CLARE
Just play whatever's in there.

MILLS presses play: *Just a perfect day: Drink Sangria in the park*. The CD in the machine is the BBC charity cover version of *Perfect Day*.

MILLS
(sniffing)
I always loved that song.

CLARE
But not this version, right?

MILLS
Isn't it strange, the way music--

CLARE
(gleefully)
Mills? Are you crying?

MILLS
(turning away)
No. Of course not.

CHARLIE
Do you want me to turn it off?

MILLS
No. Leave it on.
(distracted)
Leave it on. I like it.

The CAMERA moves around the room, as if searching for someone. Behind a chair. Under a table. Then it moves out into the hall and rests on Flight 2a. A single bare foot is visible on the top step and slowly withdraws.

INT. KITCHEN. A LITTLE LATER - EVENING

Perfect Day still plays in the background. MILLS is at the stove, stirring a pot of soup. Behind her, out of focus, what appears to be a naked man moves into the dining room from the hall, and is then lost from view. Oblivious, MILLS tastes the soup and frowns. Something's not right. She adds salt.

INT. DINING ROOM. EVEN LATER - EVENING

The dining room is lit solely by tall candles in the centre of the dining table. *Perfect Day* continues to play, on repeat.

CUT TO:

BERNHARD looking down at his soup.

CUT TO:

BRIDIE looking up at the ceiling.

CUT TO:

CLARE forcing herself to take a sip, without pleasure.

CUT TO:

MILLS looking from one to the other of them in dismay.

CUT TO:

CHARLIE devouring his soup with evident relish.

CHARLIE
(glancing up)
What?

MILLS
(to the others)
It tastes of soap, doesn't it?

CLARE
Maybe a teensy bit.

BRIDIE snorts with mirth. BERNHARD smiles, but not convincingly.

CHARLIE
Is there any more?

BRIDIE
I don't know how you can eat it.

MILLS
It's so awful! I'm so sorry!

CHARLIE
(taking a slurp of beer)
You're all talking rubbish. I think
the soap's delicious. The soup, I
mean.

BRIDIE and CLARE laugh. MILLS smiles nervously, and looks at BERNHARD for support. He doesn't get it.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(rising to his feet)
Mind if I help myself?

CLARE
Don't forget to use your soap
spoon.

CHARLIE
In my opinion, it's the soap of the
day.

CLARE
The soap du jour, you mean.

MILLS reaches across and squeezes BERNHARD's hand.

MILLS
Are you okay?

BERNHARD
Of course.

MILLS attempts to force a smile from him, which doesn't immediately come. At last BERNHARD smiles and reaches over to squeeze her hand. The song comes to an end in the drawing room. A pause. *Perfect Day* starts again.

BERNHARD (CONT'D)
Forgive me. May I?

MILLS
But it's stuck.

BERNHARD
We can listen to the radio.

He strides from the room. CLARE and BRIDIE exchange looks.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A burst of laughter.

MILLS
I've got a good one. Can I tell you mine?

The music playing is classical, more cheerful. They are close to finishing their main course, and the only indication that there is anything wrong with it is the way they all, apart from CHARLIE, have left their onions on one side.

MILLS (CONT'D)
What do you get if you put a baby
in a blender?
(beat)
An erection.

CHARLIE laughs. CLARE smiles. BRIDIE doesn't get it. BERNHARD gets it, but he doesn't particularly like it.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

They have moved on to cheese. CHARLIE'S head droops a little. Four empty cans stand by his plate. There follows a medium-length silence, of the kind you don't get if a dinner party is going really well.

CHARLIE
(rising clumsily)
Think I might move on to wine, if
it's all the same with you.

BERNHARD takes out his iPhone. He checks the screen.

BRIDIE
Can I ask you something?

BERNHARD
Of course.

BRIDIE
What do you do?

BERNHARD
(pocketing the phone)
I'm a banker.

BRIDIE
Yes, I know, but what do you
actually do?

CHARLIE
(appearing with a new
bottle of wine)
Ta-dah!

CHARLIE attempts to push the cork of the bottle in with his
thumb.

BERNHARD
It's a little hard to explain.

BRIDIE
Give it a go.

BERNHARD
(looking at MILLS)
I try to make money for people who
already have a lot of money.

CHARLIE succeeds in forcing the cork into the bottle.

BRIDIE
Yes. Thank you. I know what it
means to be a banker. But what do
you, specifically, do?

POV CHANGE. We are viewing the scene from further away,
looking up at the table from a level below it. We can hear
suppressed breathing. It becomes clear we are viewing events
through the eyes of someone hidden behind the stuffed bear.

BERNHARD
As I said, it's rather difficult to
explain.

CHARLIE
(topping up CLARE's glass)
Give the guy a poor-- I mean, give
the poor guy a break.

BRIDIE
I'm only asking him what he does.

CHARLIE
(topping up MILLS's glass)
I know. But that really is one of
the most boring questions you can
ask someone.

BRIDIE
It's only boring if the answer's
boring.

From our POV, we can see a straw being raised, and pointed in
the direction of the dining table. Specifically, it is aimed
in the direction of BERNHARD.

CHARLIE
(topping up BRIDIE's
glass)
Do you know what Dai Llewellyn used
to say, when people asked him what
he did?

CLARE
No. What did Dai used to say?

CHARLIE
When people asked him what he did,
Dai Llewellyn used to say, "I fuck
Alsations in lifts."

CHARLIE and BRIDIE burst out laughing. CLARE smiles, shaking
her head. MILLS glances at BERNHARD, who is wincing. Still
laughing, CHARLIE reaches forward with the bottle of red wine
to fill BERNHARD's glass.

We hear a sharp exhalation.

BERNHARD
(pushing back his chair)
God in heaven!

He rises to his feet, legs apart, arms held out, gazing down
at the front of his white shirt, which is now speckled with
red wine. CHARLIE stares in dismay at what he thinks he has
done. BERNHARD, who also assumes the wine must have splashed
as CHARLIE poured it, glares at him, furious.

CHARLIE
Lord. Sorry.

BERNHARD
You're a fucking idiot, you know
that?

He looks down again at his wine-marked shirt, his mouth twitching, as if he's struggling to control himself. Then he leaves the room.

BRIDIE lets out a loud raspberry.

MILLS
It's not funny, Bridie.

BRIDIE
It's *quite* funny.

CHARLIE
I don't know what happened. I was just pouring the wine--

A paper pellet, soaked in wine, lies under the table near BERNHARD's chair. No one suspects anything is amiss - except for CLARE, who has noticed a line of red specks crossing the table at an angle. She turns and looks at the grizzly bear, as if she thinks it might be responsible. She approaches, then peers behind it, squinting into the shadows.

There's no one there.

INT. BASEMENT LAVATORY - NIGHT

BERNHARD is sprinkling water on his shirt front and wiping at the red wine stains. He mutters his annoyance in German.

A noise makes him turn and look at the door. The glass is frosted. There is no sign of anyone on the other side.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

The classical music on the radio is growing louder. BRIDIE has the remote control in her hand.

CHARLIE
A waltz!

He grabs CLARE and starts to waltz her round the room. MILLS is seated on the sofa, smoking, casting glances at the door, through which she expects BERNHARD to re-enter.

INT. BASEMENT LAVATORY. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

BERNHARD is still examining his shirt front, tutting to himself. Again, a noise makes him turn and look at the door. Again, there is nothing to see. He moves to the door. It won't open. He tries the handle again. Locked.

BERNHARD
Hello? Is anyone there?

There's no response.

BERNHARD (CONT'D)

Charlie?

(Beat)

Look. I'm sorry I lost my temper--

He tries the door more forcefully. It still won't open. He bangs on the glass with his palm.

BERNHARD (CONT'D)

Let me out. This isn't funny.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

The music is loud enough that no one would be able to hear if someone were calling for help from the basement. BRIDIE has grabbed one of the African spears from the wall and is dancing round the room with it, warrior-style.

INT. BASEMENT LAVATORY. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

BERNHARD

(shouting)

Camilla? Hello?

He hits the door with his fist and turns away sitting on the lavatory, his head in his hands.

INT. BASEMENT. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

The only light in the basement comes from the lavatory door. In the darkest corner of the basement, we can make out a pair of feet. They approach the lavatory door. A hand reaches out holding a key.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

The music is even louder. BRIDIE is whooping with her hand to her mouth like a Red Indian. As CHARLIE waltzes with CLARE, he reaches out and grabs hold of MILLS's hand. She tries to resist, but has no choice but to be drawn into the dancing.

INT. BASEMENT LAVATORY. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

BERNHARD is reading a book of cartoons by Giles.

INT. BASEMENT. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

The key moves to the lock and turns silently, unlocking the door. The hand doesn't open the door, however. It retreats.

INT. BASEMENT LAVATORY. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

BERNHARD puts the book down and runs over to the door, grabbing the handle. His surprise on finding that it opens is surpassed by his even greater surprise at the sight revealed by the opened door. Just a few feet away is a semi-naked figure, caught in the act of creeping away. It's JACK.

BERNHARD
Who are you?

JACK
Please--

BERNHARD
Who the fuck are you?

JACK
(approaching)
Please. Don't tell her.

BERNHARD
(pushing past him)
This place is a mad-house.

JACK
(grabbing his arm)
No!

BERNHARD, who is bigger than JACK, shakes him off, and starts to climb the stairs. JACK lunges after him, grabbing hold of his ankle. BERNHARD falls - BANG - slides down the stairs.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

The music is wilder than ever. MILLS and CLARE have seized spears like BRIDIE, and the three girls are now dancing round CHARLIE, who is pretending to be a victim pleading for mercy.

INT. BASEMENT. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

BERNHARD is on his feet again. He pushes JACK away and turns to climb the stairs. But JACK is after him. This time, when BERNHARD falls, he hits his face on a step. He touches his hand to his cheek and finds he is bleeding. BERNHARD advances on JACK and grips him round the throat. JACK's eyes widen. His hands are round BERNHARD's wrists, trying to prise him off. Then one of his hands moves behind his back, reaching on the side table that holds a set of ivory-backed hairbrushes and a pair of silver scissors.

A moment later, it is BERNHARD's turn to widen his eyes. He releases JACK and takes a step back, looking down. The light from the lavatory reveals a new stain spreading across his shirt. A brighter red. JACK is coughing. One of his hands is at his neck, where he was being throttled. In the other, the scissors gleam wetly. BERNHARD doesn't say anything.

He bends forward, his hands on his stomach, and turns to climb the stairs. He doesn't get far. JACK is on his feet, with the scissors in his hand. He slams them into BERNHARD's back. BERNHARD falls again. BANG. JACK crouches astride him and with difficulty, he pulls the scissors out. Then, with both hands, he thrusts them down again.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

The music is reaching its climax. The girls are pretending to sacrifice CHARLIE with their spears. CHARLIE clutches his stomach, then his chest, and falls theatrically across the coffee table. As he does so, he knocks over a glass of red wine, which he tries unsuccessfully to prevent from spilling.

MILLS

Charlie!

CHARLIE

Oh Christ. Sorry.

CLARE

I knew that was gonna happen.

BRIDIE

Quick. Someone get some salt.

CLARE

No. Salt doesn't do shit.

BRIDIE

What are you talking about? Of course it does.

MILLS comes back into the room with table salt.

CLARE

Have you got any white wine?

BRIDIE

(taking the salt)

Here. I'll do it.

MILLS

Will someone turn that music off?

CHARLIE picks up the remote and silences the radio.

CLARE

(to CHARLIE)

Not your lucky night.

CHARLIE

Well, if you will insist on stabbing me to death, what do you expect?

They watch BRIDIE pour salt over the wine stain.

MILLS

I hope Bernhard's alright.

CLARE

Did he go downstairs?

CHARLIE
 (nodding)
 To check his hair.

MILLS gives him a look.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 --I mean, to clean up.

MILLS
 I know. But he's been gone for
 ages.

CHARLIE
 (under his breath)
 He's got a lot of hair.

MILLS
 I'd better go see if he's okay.

BRIDIE
 No. Let him sulk for a while. He'll
 come back up when he's ready.

MILLS hesitates.

BRIDIE (CONT'D)
 Right. I think that's all I can do.

The wine stain is now completely covered with white salt.

BRIDIE (CONT'D)
 (getting to her feet)
 Would anyone else like coffee?

MILLS
 Would you make it, Clare? I really
 think I should check on Bernhard.

CLARE
 Why do I have to do it?

A pause.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 Okay, fi-ine.

INT. BASEMENT. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

MILLS descends the stairs. The basement is dark. She tries to turn on a light but it doesn't work. There is no sign of BERNHARD. Nor, in the gloom, is there any sign of a struggle having taken place.

MILLS
 Bernhard?

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

MILLS appears in the doorway.

MILLS
He's gone.

CHARLIE
What do you mean, gone?

MILLS
Well, he's not downstairs.

BRIDIE
You mean he just buggered off?

MILLS
(nodding unhappily)
It looks like it.

BRIDIE
How unbelievably rude.

CHARLIE
(blaming himself)
Millsworth, I'm so sorry.

MILLS
I know, but I can't believe he just went.

CHARLIE
You're sure he's not upstairs?

MILLS
(shaking her head)
His coat's gone.

VRRR...VRRR. A phone vibrates, making them all jump. It's MILLS's, which is on a shelf beside the music system.

MILLS (CONT'D)
(picking it up)
It's from him.

CHARLIE
What does it say?

MILLS
(reading)
"I'm so sorry that I left. I just felt that you would all have a more enjoyable evening if I was not there."

CHARLIE
How very peculiar.

BRIDIE
It's still jolly rude. I hope
you're not going to reply.

MILLS
(dejected)
No, you're right. It's really rude.

CLARE
(appearing with a tray)
Coffee.

INT. STORE ROOM - NIGHT

The rocking horse has its face concealed by a Barbour coat, which has been thrown over it. An umbrella leans against its flank. In the centre of the room is BERNHARD's body, stripped to the waist, face-down, his shirt soaked in blood. Crouched in a corner, as far away from BERNHARD as possible, is JACK, covered in blood. He is hugging his knees, shivering. In his hand he holds an iPhone in a white protective case. He looks at its screen, then he throws it away towards the body of BERNHARD, where it lands on the blood-stained shirt, pausing for a moment, before sliding back down on to the floor.

FADE OUT.

ACT 3. HOW TO GET YOUR EX-GIRLFRIEND BACK

INT. STORE ROOM. FANTASY - NIGHT

JACK suffers the tortures of the damned.

As once before, his face grimaces with unfathomable pain. When he opens his eyes, the body of BERNHARD has disappeared.

There is a knocking at the door, to which he doesn't respond.

When he blinks, DEAD BERNHARD is there again. When he blinks again, he has vanished, and JACK sees him astride the rocking horse. HA-HA-HA: The sound of mocking laughter. DEAD BERNHARD, grim-faced, holds the reins of the rocking horse with one hand. With the other, he holds out the plastic bottle, filled with JACK's urine. Voices echo in JACK's head.

VOICE 1 (JACK'S ECHOED FROM EARLIER)
I'm not completely insane.

VOICE 2 (MILLS'S ECHOED FROM EARLIER)
Leave it on. I like it.

There is a knocking at the door, to which he doesn't respond.

VOICE 3 (CLARE'S ECHOED FROM EARLIER)
Do you think you're still in love
with him?

VOICE 2 (MILLS'S ECHOED FROM EARLIER)
Leave it on. I like it.

DEAD BERNHARD shakes the urine bottle at JACK.

DEAD BERNHARD
Prost! *Prost!*

Again a knocking at the door, to which he doesn't respond.

Reluctantly, JACK takes the bottle from DEAD BERNHARD and unscrews the cap. He takes a sip of urine followed by a series of gulps. DEAD BERNHARD slaps his face in retribution. Then wrests the bottle from him and pours it over his head.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM. FANTASY. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

MILLS and JACK in bed, making love.

MILLS
(smiling up at him)
You're so fucking fit.

There is a knocking at the door. Jack turns to look: nothing. He turns back. It's not MILLS but BERNHARD he's in bed with.

DEAD BERNHARD
(smiling up at him)
You are so fucking fit.

INT. STORE ROOM. FANTASY. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

JACK cowers in the corner of the store room, one hand to his mouth. He vomits through his fingers. Tries to catch the spilling vomit in his other hand.

CLAP CLAP CLAP: The sound of applause. Turning, he sees not faces but hands at the window: pairs of hands clapping, applauding his performance. JACK looks for DEAD BERNHARD, in order to conceal him, but he is nowhere to be seen.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK: once again, there's a knocking at the door, to which he doesn't respond.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM. FANTASY. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

JACK is in the darkness of MILLS'S wardrobe, looking through one of the peepholes. Suddenly, on the other side of the peephole, another eye appears, staring back at him.

INT. STORE ROOM. FANTASY. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Roaring like a monster, JACK trashes the store room, pulling over free-standing book shelves, smashing pictures, breaking up furniture. He stops when he notices the mouse creeping in through a crack at the foot of the door. Overcome with pity, JACK stoops to pick the mouse up. He holds it in his cupped hand like a jewel. Then quietly he starts to cry.

The door handle of the store room turns.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

CLARE (O.S.)
Hello? Is anyone there?

INT. BASEMENT - MORNING.

CLARE stands outside the door to the store room. She tries the handle again, but it's definitely locked. She climbs the stairs and goes out the front door.

EXT. THE BACK OF THE HOWARD HOUSE - MORNING

CLARE goes round to the back garden. Arriving at the steps that lead down to the store room, she hesitates, nervous.

She continues down and looks in through the window. There's no one to be seen. The store room is as it was before. She tries the window and it opens. Realising she can't lock it from the outside, she closes it, and goes off to work.

INT. STORE ROOM - MORNING

JACK edges his body out from underneath a long low coffee table. He gets dressed, shoulders his backpack and takes a last look round the room, as if saying goodbye to his home. Then locking the door, he leaves.

INT. HALL - MORNING

JACK climbs the stairs to the hall. He glances at his reflection in the large oval mirror. Then, instead of leaving the house, he turns and continues on up the stairs.

INT. TOP LANDING. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

JACK goes up to the top floor. In the ceiling over the landing is a trap-door. Balancing on the corner of the banisters, he can just about reach it. He pushes it up with his fingers and it falls back with a bang.

CUT TO:

INT. TOP LANDING - DAY

JACK practises raising himself into the attic with greater speed and agility.

CUT TO:

INT. ATTIC - DAY

JACK finds a light switch. A single bare bulb ignites. The attic is pyramidal and divided at intervals by wooden rafters filled with yellow insulation foam, which JACK treads over cautiously.

He moves to the single dormer-style window with rusty metal bars obstructing it. It's locked. Through the window he can see the blank roof of the house next-door.

CUT TO:

INT. ATTIC. FLASH FORWARD - DAY

JACK practises running the length of the attic, treading only on the rafters. The rafters are marked in places by yellow post-it notes. By the end he can sprint from one end to the other efficiently without making much sound.

CUT TO:

INT. ATTIC. PRESENT - DAY

JACK continues exploring the attic. There are also some loose wooden boards, and a single orange moulded-plastic chair. As he walks back, he finds another trapdoor. JACK lifts up the trapdoor to find himself looking down on MILLS's bed. He glances up, above his head is an old rusting winch, suspended from the ceiling.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY. FLASH FORWARD - DAY

JACK practises leaping over armchairs and climbing around the room from book shelf to book shelf. He does so with only semi-convincing agility.

INT. ATTIC. PRESENT - DAY

JACK nails the wooden boards across the space between the two end rafters. Having finished, he lies on them, testing them. He seems satisfied with his new bed.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY.

On YouTube, JACK watches an introductory video about Parkour.

DAVID BELLE (ON SCREEN)

Le parkour, c'est une méthode
d'entraînement, de préparation
physique aux obstacles. Au cas où
tu as un problème, pour toi, pour
te protéger, toi ou ta famille,
c'est--

Subtitles: "Le Parkour is a method of training in the physical preparation for obstacles. In case you have a problem, for yourself, to protect yourself, your family-- It's--"

Looking up from the screen, JACK notices something in the corner of the room. A tiny shallow plastic tray.

INTERVIEWER'S VOICE
C'est parcours du combattant.

Subtitles: "So this is soldier's training."

JACK gets up and goes over to investigate. The little tray contains mouse poison: the "gift" that BERNHARD gave to MILLS on the night of the dinner party.

INT. KITCHEN. CONTINUOUS - DAY

JACK searches contents of kitchen cupboard until he finds a small bottle of lurid-coloured food dye - the same color as the poisonous morsels in the tray. He replaces them with crumbled cornflakes splashed with the food dye, and puts the plastic tray back where it was in the drawing room.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

JACK moves from rafter to rafter, marking with yellow post-it notes the places that make a sound under his weight.

INT. STAIRCASE - DAY

JACK sprints up and down the stairs using Parkour methods.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY.

JACK sits on the sofa, reading CLARE's copy of Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair*. On the arm of the sofa lie two mobile phones: his and BERNHARD's. Inside the book, CLARE has made pencil notes in the margin. One says, "*The poetry of hate.*" Another says, "*There are places where Greene's style is so perfect, it's as if he disappears completely.*"

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

The room appears empty. JACK suddenly bursts out of one of the cupboards, drops to the floor and rolls under the bed, disappearing behind the valance. The room appears empty.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

JACK drills a hole through the trapdoor above MILLS's bed.

INT. STAIRCASE - DAY.

Sprinting upstairs, JACK attempts a particularly difficult Parkour move that ought to involve leaping up, grabbing an overhead part of the banister, and wrenching himself upward, spinning round in mid-air and catching on to the topmost part of the banister, before bouncing on up into the attic. The first time he tries, JACK misses his hand-hold and falls heavily on the stairs. The second time he misses his second hand-hold. He falls even more painfully.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY.

JACK lays down the copy of *The End of the Affair*, and picks up his phone. He sends a text to MILLS: "Drink tonight?"

He picks up the book again, and carries on reading it.

BEEP - An iphone text: "Hello! Really sorry but am busy tonight. Hope your really well. X."

Then JACK picks up BERNHARD's phone and sends MILLS another text: "Are you free for a drink this evening?"

He is about to pick up his book again, BVRRRRR. BERNHARD's phone vibrates: "Sounds good. When and where? X."

JACK regards the camera through cynical half-closed eyelids.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - EVENING.

CLARE sits on the sofa. She has a G&T and a cigarette, and is reading *The End of the Affair*. The door bell rings.

INT. HALL. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

CLARE opens the door, to find JACK in the porch. Apart from his shaved head, he looks relatively normal.

JACK
Is Mills in?

CLARE shakes her head.

JACK (CONT'D)
Oh. Okay. I was just-- Do you mind
if I come in and wait for her?

She hesitates, then stands back to let JACK enter the house.

JACK (CONT'D)
Thanks.

He hangs up his overcoat and turns to talk to CLARE. But she has already gone back into the drawing room.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

She has her book in one hand, her drink in the other. What's left of her cigarette smoulders between her lips.

JACK
(in the doorway)
I'm Jack, by the way.

She looks at him. Then stubs out her cigarette

CLARE
Do you want one of these?

She indicates her depleted G&T.

JACK
Sure. That'd be good.

CLARE
Okay. Gimme a second.

She heads for the doorway into the dining room.

JACK
I'll give you two.

A phone vibrates in JACK's pocket. He takes it out. It is BERNHARD's phone. A text from MILLS: "I'm here. Where are you?" He taps a reply: "Can you get me a gin and tonic?"

INT. KITCHEN. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

CLARE pours gin and tonic into a tumbler. Adds a couple of ice cubes, turns and jumps: JACK is in the doorway.

JACK
You should put the ice in first.

CLARE
I was looking for a lemon, not a lesson.

JACK
I'll show you.

CLARE finds a lemon in the fridge. As JACK takes it from her, his fingers touch hers for a second longer than is necessary. He empties her glass into the sink. Then he fills it with ice cubes, pours in some gin, and adds the tonic water.

JACK (CONT'D)
If you put the ice in first, you can be sure of filling the glass to the right level.

He cuts a slice of lemon and squeezes it over the drink.

JACK (CONT'D)
The more ice you have in, the colder the drink is. The colder the drink is, the less the ice melts. And the less the ice melts--
(handing her the drink)
The stronger the drink stays.

CLARE
Do you work in the drinks industry by any chance?

JACK
No. I'm a writer.

CLARE
Oh yeah. Mills told me.

A pause. She has admitted she knows who he is.

CLARE (CONT'D)
Cheers.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - EVENING

CLARE
So what are you writing?

JACK
Can I have one of your cigarettes?

CLARE
(giving him one)
You know I'm a literary agent?

JACK
(lighting up)
I didn't know that, in fact.

CLARE
Actually, that's a lie. But I work
for an agency. Peters, Frederick,
Davenport, Carter & Edmonds.

JACK
P.F.D.C.E.? Impressive.

CLARE
I hold your future in my hands.

JACK
So what would I have to do, to
persuade you to take my book on?

CLARE
Sleep with me, obviously.

JACK
You're sure that would help?

CLARE takes a puff on her cigarette.

CLARE
So did you actually arrange to meet
Mills tonight?

JACK
Not exactly.

CLARE
What do you mean, not exactly?

JACK
I said I might drop by.

In his pocket, BERNHARD's phone vibrates. JACK takes it out.

CLARE
Who is it?

JACK
It's nobody.

He pockets the phone again

JACK (CONT'D)
I see you're reading *The End of the Affair*.

CLARE
I love Graham Greene.

JACK
I can't disagree with you. And that's a pretty good one too.

CLARE
Isn't he just the best?

JACK
I don't know how he manages it, but--
- there's so much tenderness in the bitterness. It's like--
(he fumbles for a phrase)
--a kind of *poetry of hate*.

CLARE looks at him. She decides not to comment further.

CLARE
I just really like the way he writes. It's like sometimes, you know, for just pages on end, he doesn't put a word wrong.

JACK
So then it becomes almost like a movie. D'you know what I mean? It's like he *disappears completely*.

CLARE rests her cigarette in the notch of the ashtray.

CLARE
Are you playing games with me?

JACK
What do you mean?

She searches through the book until she finds what she's looking for. She holds it open, showing him her notes.

CLARE

What you just said. It's what I wrote. About "the poetry of hate", and the author "disappearing".

JACK seems unimpressed.

CLARE (CONT'D)

So you saw it, right? You read it while I was out of the room--

JACK

Nope.

CLARE

But don't you think that's completely incredible?

JACK

I think both observations are kind of obvious.

In his pocket, BERNHARD's phone vibrates. Jack gets up.

JACK (CONT'D)

(heading for the door)
Excuse me. I just have to--

CLARE

You know where you're going?

He stops and looks at her.

JACK

I think I can remember.

INT. BASEMENT LAVATORY - EVENING

JACK reads his text from MILLS. It says: "What happened to you? I'm waiting at the bar like a great big gooseberry." He switches BERNHARD's phone to airplane mode.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. HALF AN HOUR LATER - EVENING

JACK

So Clare--

CLARE

So Jack--

JACK

Would you like to have a drink with me sometime?

CLARE

Aren't we doing that now?

JACK

Yes, but I mean somewhere else.
Just the two of us.

CLARE

It *is* just the two of us.

She takes refuge in a drag of her cigarette.

CLARE (CONT'D)

Anyway. I'm not sure my darling
housemate would approve.

JACK

She has a boyfriend.

CLARE

So you know about him.

JACK

We had-- an encounter.

CLARE

And what did you think?

JACK

I thought I'd like to kill him.

CLARE

So you're completely over her,
then? That's good to know.

JACK

I was joking.

CLARE

No--

(stubbing out cigarette)

It's just that I don't want--
anything, if you're still-- If
she's the one you like.

JACK

You've been hurt before?

CLARE

I'm serious, Jack.

JACK

So am I.

CLARE

I can't even tell when you're being
serious. You fucking English,
you're all so fucking dry.

JACK

That's rich, coming from you.

CLARE

What?

JACK

I'm serious, alright? As a rule of thumb, I'm serious. Unless I specifically inform you to the contrary, you can assume that everything I say is one hundred per cent serious.

CLARE

So when you met Mills's boyfriend, you wanted to kill him?

JACK

I wanted to rip his fucking head off.

CLARE

Are you serious?

JACK

No.

JACK goes over to the window and draws the curtains. When he comes back, he sits on the sofa next to CLARE. He pulls his knees up and faces her, patting his pockets to check the various mobiles.

JACK (CONT'D)

But if I can be serious for a moment, I thought the two of them were actually quite well suited.

CLARE

In what way?

JACK

There's this Woody Allen movie, where he goes up to this beautiful couple and says, "You look happy. How do you account for it?" And the guy says, "I'm very shallow and have no ideas and nothing to say." And the girl says, "I'm the same."

CLARE

That's harsh.

JACK

But you see where I'm coming from.

CLARE

Oh completely. She's a total ditz.

JACK

When I asked her if she liked Donatello, she said, "I love the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles."

CLARE

(laughing)
She never said that.

JACK

(laughing harder)
When I asked her to name her favourite Impressionist, she said Rory Bremner. And you realise-- she studied-- history of art--

CLARE

(laughing harder)
Bullshit!

They don't hear MILLS's key when it turns in the front door. Nor, when she comes into the drawing room, do they notice straightaway. Then they notice. Their laughter dies.

JACK

Mills.

MILLS

What are you doing here?

CLARE

(rising to her feet)
Hey, honey. We were just--

MILLS

What happened to your hair?

JACK

(touching his scalp)
It went away.

CLARE

I think it suits him.
(catching MILLS's eye)
Can I-- Jack's taught me how to make the perfect G&T. I'm going to get you one.

She goes out.

JACK

Hi.

MILLS turns and goes out into the hall. When she comes back in, she has dispensed with her coat.

MILLS

Why are you here?

JACK
Didn't you get my text?

MILLS
(lighting a cigarette)
Didn't you get mine? I said I was
meeting someone for a drink.

JACK
I never got it.

He breaks off as CLARE comes back into the room with three drinks. She looks from one to the other of them.

CLARE
Jack's staying for supper. Aren't
you, Jack?

There's an awkward pause. They wait for MILLS's response.

MILLS
Who's going to cook?

CLARE
I will.

MILLS
You've never cooked before.

CLARE
That is completely untrue.

JACK
Sounds great.

CLARE glares at MILLS, then leaves the room.

MILLS
She never cooks.

JACK
Are you sure you're okay with me
staying for dinner?

MILLS
It's fine. Make yourself at home.

JACK thinks something, but doesn't say it.

MILLS (CONT'D)
I'm just a bit surprised.

JACK
I guess I just thought that it
would be nice to see you.

MILLS

(relenting)

It *is* nice to see you, Jack. Of course it is. Even if you haven't got any hair.

JACK

It's not just my head, I can tell you. I've been familiarising myself with the all-over body wax.

MILLS

Oh, gross. I don't want to know.

JACK

When I go swimming, they have to cordon off a special lane for me, I go so fucking fast.

MILLS

You were always an amazing swimmer.

There's a pause. They look at each other.

MILLS (CONT'D)

I feel I haven't seen you in ages.

JACK

I've been around.

CLARE drops something in the kitchen.

MILLS

I should go and help.

INT. DINING ROOM. HALF AN HOUR LATER - NIGHT

They are eating some pasta accompanied by a bottle of red wine. JACK is at the head of the table, with CLARE and MILLS on either side.

CLARE

In fact, Bernhard has been conspicuous by his absence.

MILLS

(glancing at JACK)

Let's not talk about it.

JACK

It's fine. I don't mind.

There's a pause.

JACK (CONT'D)

Really. It's fine.

MILLS

I was supposed to meet him tonight.
We had a date to meet at Oriels.
But he never showed.

JACK

Really? How bizarre.

MILLS

He even texted, saying he was on
his way. But isn't that even more
bizarre? To say you'll be there in
two minutes, and then not show?

CLARE

Maybe he was in a car accident.

JACK

Have you checked your phone?

MILLS goes into the drawing room to find her phone. For a moment, JACK's eyes go scarily inward-looking: cold and dead. Then they become animated again as MILLS walks back through, reading aloud a message on her phone.

MILLS

"Dear Mills. I am an idiot. I said
to meet in Oriels when what I meant
was Muriels." What's Muriels?

JACK

It's a little trattoria, just off
Berkeley Square.

MILLS

Oh. I see.
(forehead puckering)
Do you mind if I--?

She goes back into the drawing room to call BERNHARD. JACK's eyes go dead again. A phone vibrates in his pocket.

Eventually, it stops ringing. MILLS comes back in.

MILLS (CONT'D)

He didn't pick up.

JACK rises to his feet, dabbing his mouth with a napkin.

JACK

You should give him another chance.
You clearly like him. And he's very
good-looking.
(after a pause)
But look. I really have to go.

JACK smiles at MILLS. MILLS smiles back at JACK. CLARE looks from one to the other of them. He kisses MILLS goodbye.

JACK (CONT'D)
Thank you for being so sweet about
my gate-crashing your evening.

He kisses CLARE goodbye.

JACK (CONT'D)
That drink we were talking about--
I'll Facebook you, okay?

CLARE
(glancing at MILLS)
Okay.

MILLS smiles, but not convincingly. JACK smiles at her,
lingering over the moment. Then he hurries out.

CLARE (CONT'D)
(calling after him)
Let us know if you spot anyone
dodgy lurking around outside.

In a finger-click, he appears again in the doorway.

JACK
What was that?

MILLS
Clare thinks there's some homeless
guy living in our basement.

MILLS gets up and goes into the kitchen.

JACK
What are you talking about?

CLARE
There's a junk room down there. The
key's disappeared. But I swear to
god, I heard someone weeping in
there a few days ago.

JACK
That's-- Wow.

CLARE
And there's this really weird,
unpleasant smell.

JACK
I don't know what to say.

CLARE
You should go. But--

She mimes tapping a message into a keyboard.

JACK

Will do.

He forces a smile. Then leaves.

EXT. THE PERIMETER OF THE HOUSE. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

JACK goes out the front door, closing it behind him. Then, instead of descending the steps, he vaults between two of the pillars that support the porch, landing in the front garden.

Trailing a hand along the surface of the wall, he skirts the exterior of the house until he reaches the back garden. He descends the steps and lets himself into the store room. Closes the window again behind him. Unlocks the door into the basement. Stands at the foot of the steps. He can hear female voices.

MILLS (O.S.)

No, it's not okay. I'm sorry.

CLARE (O.S.)

It'll just be a drink. Chill out.

INT. DINING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

CLARE is seated. MILLS stands in the doorway to the kitchen.

MILLS

I'm really sorry, Clare. But he's my ex-boyfriend.

CLARE

And now you have another boyfriend. And he's called Bernhard. And he's very tall and he makes shitloads of money. And I don't see why I can't be allowed to go for an innocent drink with Jack, who--

MILLS

Who what?

CLARE

Who I have a real connection with.

MILLS

(covering her ears)
Please. I don't want to hear it. It makes me feel sick.

CLARE

Oh my god, you're such a diva!
Okay, fine. Whatever.

MILLS

Fine?

CLARE

I won't see him. If you don't want me to see him, I won't see him.

MILLS

You promise?

CLARE

(rising to her feet)

You know what I hope? I hope that there *is* some guy living in our basement. And I hope that in the middle of the night, he creeps up to your room and strangles you.

MILLS is taken aback.

CLARE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. But there are times when you can be a selfish little bitch.

CLARE leaves the dining room and heads upstairs. At the foot of Flight 1, in the basement, JACK lurks in the shadows.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

JACK leaps from a standing position up onto the side-board, clinging with his hands to the top of a kitchen cupboard.

INT. ATTIC - MORNING

A shaft of morning light enters the space through the single window. JACK does a series of sit-ups on his make-shift bed.

EXT. BACK GARDEN - MORNING

Dressed for work, CLARE descends the steps to the basement window. She produces from her pocket a roll of sticky tape. Tears off in her teeth a small piece and sticks it down over the join where the window opens. To test it, she opens the window, and one side of the sticky tape becomes detached. When she closes the window, the detached side is snagged and gets pulled down into the join between the two halves of the window. She manages to remove it, and then applies a fresh piece of sticky tape. Satisfied, she goes off to work.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

JACK completes his sit-ups routine.

JACK (TO CAMERA)

My main concern is for the mouse.

He leaps up and sprints the length of the attic. Raises one of the trapdoors and lowers himself through it, dropping to the floor with silent agility.

INT. TOP LANDING. CONTINUOUS - DAY

JACK (TO CAMERA)
I haven't heard from him. He
doesn't call. He doesn't write.

INT. BASEMENT. ONE MINUTE LATER - DAY

JACK carries two iPhones. Their shapes are visible through the sleek material of his cycling shorts. He extracts his phone and takes a photograph of the basement carpet.

JACK (TO HIMSELF)
And if you don't hear from someone,
you start to worry.

He pockets his phone, sniffing the air. He grimaces. JACK rolls back the carpet and prises out the nails in the floorboards, to reveal the misshapen corpse of BERNHARD, grotesquely swathed in cling film. With difficulty, JACK raises the heavy body from its hiding place.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
It doesn't take much, to put your
mind at rest.

His arms around BERNHARD's chest, JACK manages to get him to the top of Flight 1.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
A text. A multiple-recipient email.

He almost gets BERNHARD to the top of Flight 2b, but at the last moment he stumbles and BERNHARD slips from his grasp. His body tumbles down the stairs.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
(out of breath)
Just something to explain your
absence. To break the silence.

He examines BERNHARD. The cling film has torn.

JACK (TO HIMSELF) (CONT'D)
Imagine silence is a bone. A thin-
as-whiplash wish-bone. And with a
word you break it. So it snaps.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM - DAY

He has got BERNHARD up into MILLS's room. From the trapdoor hangs a rope. JACK takes an end of it and loops it under BERNHARD's arms.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
And then you can make a wish.

He starts to raise BERNHARD towards the attic.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

JACK picks up a small plastic tray of mouse poison. He glances at the camera, his face contorted in disgust. Then he goes over and empties it into the rubbish bin.

JACK (V.O.)
I'd been so silent for so long. It was time to make some noise.

He opens a drawer and takes out a roll of cling film.

INT. STAIRCASE. FLIGHT 3B - DAY

JACK attempts his complicated manoeuvre, to get to the top banister of the top flight of stairs. Again he fails.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - EVENING

MILLS reads CLARE's copy of *The End of the Affair*.

INT. BASEMENT - EVENING

JACK unlocks the door of the store room and enters. He moves over to the window and opens it carefully. He doesn't notice the piece of sticky tape that is detached on one side by this action. He does not notice when it snags and is then tucked between the two halves of the window, as he closes it again.

EXT. PORCH. SHORTLY AFTERWARDS - EVENING

JACK rings the doorbell. MILLS opens the door.

MILLS
(surprised)
Jack.

JACK
Hi, Mills.

Casually he comes forward and kisses her on both cheeks, before turning to hang up his coat.

MILLS
What do you want?

JACK
(laughing)
Sorry. Sorry. Is Clare in?

MILLS
Clare?

JACK
(entering drawing room)
Yes. Your housemate Clare. American girl. Dry as a Matzo.

MILLS
That lying bitch--

JACK
She didn't know I was coming
tonight. You don't mind, do you?

MILLS
Why should I mind?

JACK
We'll be out of your hair as soon
as-- What time does she get back?

MILLS
I'm going out, actually.

JACK
So *that's* why you're looking so
lovely. Seeing Bernhard, I suppose.

MILLS
No. I'm going to the cinema with
Charlie.

JACK
Charlie who works at No 10? How is
the old geezer?

MILLS
I thought you hated Charlie.

JACK
No, no. I did. I do.

They both fall silent at the sound of CLARE arriving back
from work.

CLARE
What are you doing here?

MILLS
He's decided to move in.

CLARE
Really?

She sees the look in MILLS's eye.

MILLS
I should go. I hope you both have
an incredibly nice evening.

She leaves the house quickly.

CLARE
You're a trouble-maker.

JACK
(smiling)
I enjoyed our Facebook exchange.

CLARE
(flopping on the sofa)
I am so-- fucking-- tired. But I'm
really glad you're here.

JACK
I'm glad I'm here too.

CLARE
No. I mean, because-- You know that
thing you were saying about the guy
in our basement? When you went off
on one about how he might not be a
common-or-garden homeless dude.

JACK
My Royakovsky theory.

CLARE starts to laugh.

CLARE
The retired Boyishly ballet dancer.

JACK
He was actually with the Kirov.
What about him?

CLARE
It made me remember-- Last night, I
was awake in the middle of the
night. And I heard a noise.

JACK
What sort of noise?

CLARE
It sounded like-- and I know you're
going to say it was just my
imagination. But it sounded like
someone was in the attic.

JACK
It could have been Mills.

CLARE
At three in the morning?

JACK
You think it was Royakovsky?

CLARE
I want you to search the attic.

JACK

In case there's a retired ballet dancer up there, in the midst of a bisexuality-related breakdown?

CLARE

Exactly. In case it's Roy.

There's a pause.

JACK

(changing the subject)
Hi, by the way.

CLARE

(kissing him)
Oh, hi. So will you do it?

JACK

Sure. I'll do it now.

CLARE

(rising to her feet)
Great. I didn't want to go up there on my own. I can hardly reach the gondola What?

JACK

(looking at her)
What are you doing?

CLARE

I'm coming too.

JACK

You want to meet him in person? You want to shake his delicate hand?

CLARE

(smile fading)
There's no one really up there.

JACK

Of course there bloody isn't.

CLARE

Well, stop talking as if there is. You're making me feel spooked.

JACK

You started it.

He goes over to the stereo.

CLARE

Common. Just to put my mind at rest.

There's a pause. When JACK turns round, he's smiling.

JACK

The trouble is, now you've got me feeling spooked. Shall we have a drink first? Dutch Courage.

INT. DINING ROOM. A COUPLE OF HOURS LATER - NIGHT

There is the detritus of dinner. Two empty wine bottles on the table. A third half-drunk. Room full of smoke.

CLARE

You totally have a messiah complex.

JACK

All I said was I wanted to rewrite the New Testament in the first person. It's a valid approach.

CLARE

(laughing)

What do you think Roy's doing now?

JACK

Why are you changing the subject?

CLARE

What do you think he *does* up there all the time?

JACK

I think he runs through in his mind the glories of the past.

CLARE

I think he's just biding his time.

JACK

Before doing what?

CLARE

Well, you know.

(suggestively)

There are two girls in the house, sleeping peacefully. Nothing to protect them but the soft cotton of their Pads

JACK

Right. I see what you're--

CLARE

--Over their bare, warm skin.

JACK

I think Roy is probably gay.

CLARE laughs, and then looks at JACK with a slightly manic *kiss-me* face. JACK does nothing.

CLARE
(eventually)
Okay. I'm going to go and check out
the attic.

JACK
What? Now?

CLARE
Every time I bring it up, you make
some excuse. It's fine. If you're
scared of some faggot of an ex-
ballet dancer.

She turns to leave the room. He grabs her arm.

JACK
You're being ridiculous. You really
think someone crawled into the
attic like a mouse, and is living
up there-- How would they eat?
(after a pause)
Okay. Fine. I'll go and have a
look. If you want me to have a
look, I'll have a look.

JACK and CLARE climb the stairs. At the top, they look up at the trapdoor. With a display of difficulty, JACK climbs onto the corner of the banister, and reaches up and across. He pushes at the trapdoor with his fingertips. It doesn't budge.

JACK (CONT'D)
It's locked.

INT. ATTIC. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

The body of BERNHARD has been propped at the end of the attic, in macabre fashion, on an orange plastic chair.

CLARE (O.S.)
There's another trapdoor. In
Mills's room.

JACK (O.S.)
I know. But I don't really like to
go in there without permission.

INT. TOP LANDING. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

CLARE
Are you serious?

JACK
I think you're forgetting. I did go
out with her for two years.

CLARE

And?

JACK

And I don't think she'd like me creeping around in her room.

It's stand-off.

CLARE

You're being really weird.

She turns to go into MILLS's room. JACK catches her arm.

JACK

I don't think you're showing a lot of respect for the fact Mills and I used to be in a relationship.

CLARE

You're right. I'm not showing any respect for it. And you know why? Because I don't have any respect for it. You guys went out for a while. Big deal. *Move on.*

She tries to turn again, but JACK pulls her back and kisses her. It's a one-way kiss. She doesn't really react.

Then she jumps him. Literally. Her legs round his waist, him taking her weight. She kisses him like crazy. JACK is taken aback by the force of her desire. Then, downstairs, they hear the sound of a door slamming. JACK puts CLARE down.

INT. KITCHEN. A MOMENT LATER - NIGHT

MILLS is pouring a glass of water from the tap. She turns, sees JACK in the doorway, and spills her water.

MILLS

Jeepers creepers! I thought you guys had gone out.

JACK

No. We-- How was the film?

MILLS

Where's Clare?

JACK

I don't know. I just went to the loo, and-- The smell seems to have improved in the basement.

CLARE appears behind him.

CLARE

Hey, honey. How was the film?

She glances at JACK. JACK avoids her eye. MILLS looks at them both. She grabs a cloth and wipes up the spilled water.

MILLS

It was terrifying, actually. Really disturbing and horrible and gross.

(after a pause)

I loved it.

Mills looks at JACK and CLARE.

MILLS (CONT'D)

I think I'm going to bed. I'm *really tired*.

She refills her glass from the tap. CLARE and JACK watch her.

MILLS (CONT'D)

Okay, then. Nighty night!

JACK

Night, Mills.

She goes out. They listen to her going up the stairs. Then CLARE moves closer to JACK.

CLARE

Do you think she could tell?

They kiss.

CLARE (CONT'D)

Yesterday-- I got the impression you still liked her, that maybe you wanted to get back together.

JACK kisses her harder, puts a hand on her arse, pulling her in towards him. They kiss. He puts a hand on her breast. She presses her hand against the crotch of his trousers.

JACK

Let's go upstairs.

CLARE

Okay. But quiet like mice.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MILLS sits propped up in bed, reading a magazine. Gradually, we can hear the sound of CLARE being fucked.

First moans; then, increasingly, words...

CLARE (O.S.)

Oh god. Oh. God. Oh fuck. Yes. Oh god, oh god. So, fucking, good.

MILLS covers her ears with her hands.

CUT TO:

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM. LATER - NIGHT

MILLS has her headphones in, listening to loud raucous music. Nevertheless, she can hear the sound of CLARE in the throes of yet another orgasm. Tears begin to run down her cheeks.

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

Conspicuous in the middle of a cooked breakfast is a large Cumberland sausage. JACK cuts off the tip of it and forks it into his mouth with evident relish. He washes it down with a slurp of coffee.

JACK
So. Fucking. Good.

He speaks loudly, as if trying to draw attention to himself. MILLS comes into the room, dressed in her work clothes. She looks pale after a sleepless night. She ignores JACK, and walks straight through into the kitchen.

JACK (CONT'D)
(calling through)
Morning!

There is no response. JACK continues tucking into his fry-up. Eventually MILLS reappears in the doorway.

JACK (CONT'D)
(talking with mouth full)
Clare had to go to work. She said it would be okay if I helped myself to whatever was in the fridge.

MILLS doesn't say anything.

JACK (CONT'D)
(taking a slurp of coffee)
There's still some bacon left, if you're interested.

MILLS
How could you, Jack?

JACK
How could I what?

MILLS
I don't understand how you could do something like that.

JACK
Something like what? I don't know what you're talking about.

MILLS

Please just get out of my house.

JACK

Now hold on a second.

MILLS

(losing it)

Get out! Get out of my fucking house, Jack! I don't want you here! I don't want you in my house! If you want to see Clare, you do it somewhere else! Okay? I don't want to see you two together! I don't want--

(starting to cry)

--to hear you two screwing each other.

JACK

Mills--

MILLS

(shouting)

It was horrible! It was horrible!
It was horrible!

She breaks off, racked by sobs. JACK looks grim, genuinely contrite. He moves towards her, about to apologise. Then he hardens his heart.

JACK

I would say that I'm sorry, Mills. But the truth is, I've got nothing to feel sorry about. And if I seem heartless, that's because you took my heart, and you fucking ate it. *You ate it, Mills.* And so forgive me if I don't think you're in a position to tell me who I can and can't spend the night with.

For a moment they look at each other.

MILLS

(whispering)

Please. Just. Leave.

With stubborn slowness, JACK finishes -his coffee and leaves.

INT. HALL. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

JACK opens the front door as if about to leave. But he doesn't leave. He stays in the hall, slamming the door so that MILLS will think he's gone. Silently he moves into the drawing and stands by the doorway between the drawing room in a place from which he can see MILLS but she can't see him.

INT. DINING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

MILLS is seated at the dining room table, her head in her hands. After a moment she makes her hands into fists and lets out a scream of pain and anguish. She picks up JACK's plate and throws it at the wall.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

JACK backs away towards the door into the hall. He reverses out of sight just as MILLS enters the drawing room.

INT. HALL. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

JACK sidesteps, stroking the wall with the pad of an index finger, as far as the doorway into the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

He moves to the doorway between the dining room and the drawing room, and watches MILLS from a vantage point. She stands in front of the stereo. Then we hear the BBC charity cover version of *Perfect Day*. Leaving it playing, MILLS goes into the hall. We hear the front door slam.

JACK enters the room. He silences the stereo.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
 (singing softly)
 You're going to reap just what you
 sow--
 (nodding sadly)
 You're going to reap just what you
 sow--
 (in full operatic style)
 YOU'RE GOING TO REAP JUST WHAT YOU
 SOW!

INT. DINING ROOM. A MOMENT LATER - MORNING

With his iPhone, JACK takes a photos of the shards of plate on the floor, smeared with fat and egg yolk, which MILLS has not cleared up. He takes a photo of the setting of the table.

INT. KITCHEN. A MOMENT LATER - MORNING

He takes a photo of the kitchen.

His phone beeps with a text message, which JACK reads, although we aren't permitted to see what it says. He returns his phone to camera mode, and zooms in. The camera picks out, beneath the heavy wooden kitchen table, a small dark shape, not immediately easy to identify.

JACK (V.O.)
 And that was when I saw him.

On hands and knees, JACK draws out, with the tenderest of touches, the lifeless body of the mouse.

JACK (V.O.)
I lied when I said Mills ate my
heart. She didn't. She poisoned it.

He weeps. He carries a tear on the tip of his finger and touches it to the fur of the dead mouse, as if anointing it. Then he looks up, with an expression of twisted malice.

JACK (TO CAMERA)
The bitch will have to die.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - EVENING

Water thunders into a bubble bath. The tap is old-style; on it, we see the reflection of a naked girl. Steam fogs the room, painting condensation on the mirror over the sink. In front of the mirror, a hand reaches out and wipes a stripe of clarity, in which we can see the girl's face. It is CLARE. She wipes another stripe, to reveal one of her breasts.

CLARE lowers herself into the bath tenderly. The bubbles hide the nakedness of her body. She reaches for her copy of *The End of the Affair*, which is on a chair beside the bath, and commences reading. The tap drips at intervals. CLARE notices this. She reaches with her toe and turns the tap firmly.

She settles herself back again with her book. Then she notices JACK standing in the doorway.

CLARE
(splashing wildly)
Oh my god! Oh my god! Oh my god!

Her fear gives way to embarrassment.

CLARE (CONT'D)
(laughing)
You gave me *such* a fright!
(after a pause)
How did you get in? Is Mills back?

JACK leans against the door-frame casually. Combat trousers. T-shirt. Sweater slung over his shoulders, hands behind back.

CLARE (CONT'D)
Of course not. She's at that work thing. It's her last day temping. As of tomorrow, she's going to be looming around the house. What's that behind your back?

JACK
Nothing.

CLARE
Is it a present for me?

JACK
No. It's nothing.

CLARE
Let me see your hands.

JACK shows her his right hand, which is empty.

CLARE (CONT'D)
Now the other one.

His left hand is empty too.

CLARE (CONT'D)
Oh, how dull.
(after a pause)
So, actually, how *did* you get in?

JACK
Royakovsky let me in.

CLARE
Ha ha. No, but seriously.

JACK
The front door was open.

Their eyes meet. CLARE becomes self-conscious about her nakedness. She covers her breasts with her hands, and slides down deeper below the bubbles. Then, with one finger, she beckons him to her. JACK casts a glance over his shoulder. Then he comes in, closing the door behind him. He takes off all his clothes apart from his cycling shorts.

CLARE
No. Get in behind.

He does as he's told. They arrange themselves.

JACK
So your text said--

CLARE
Yeah, I'm such a detective, aren't I? I put this bit of tape over the window downstairs, so if anyone climbed in, they'd break the seal. And this morning, when I checked-- Well, I already told you.

JACK touches her face with his fingers. She puts her hands on his hands. He puts his hands over her eyes.

JACK
And you're going to tell the
police.

CLARE
Yup.

JACK
But you haven't yet.

CLARE
Nope.

JACK
Did you speak to anyone else about
it?

CLARE
Nope. Not yet.

He starts to massage her scalp.

CLARE (CONT'D)
I haven't had time. It was crazy at
work today, and I was *so exhausted*
that I thought-- Mmm. That feels
good. Do I get a kiss?

With difficulty, she turns and manages to kiss JACK on the
mouth. Then she turns back and faces the front again.

JACK
I saw Mills this morning, after you
left. She seemed pretty upset.

CLARE
You know what? I genuinely don't
give a fuck.

JACK
I know you don't.

A pause.

CLARE
(smiling)
Do you remember that scene in *The
English Patient*? When they're in
the bath together, and he's behind
her. Or actually, no. I think he's
in front. Whoa! Role reversal--

JACK starts to massage her shoulders.

CLARE (CONT'D)

--Oh god, that's so good. And Ralph Fiennes says, "What do you love?" And Kristin Scott Thomas says, "Marmite" and "Water" and "Fish in it" and stuff like that-- And then she says, "My husband." Which is completely unnecessary, in my opinion. And you can tell he thinks so too. And then he asks her, "What do you hate?" And she says, "A lie." By the way, you don't need to do that *quite* so hard. Jack, please-- You're hurting me.

JACK.

My name is Roy.

He moves his hand to around her neck.

CLARE.

What?

JACK.

I'm Roy, Clare. It's me.

CLARE.

That isn't funny. And please-- don't squeeze so hard. You're hurting me!

JACK.

It's not a joke, Clare. I'm Roy. It's me. My name is Roy.

CLARE.

Jack, stop it. I can't-- breathe.

JACK pushes himself up from under CLARE. As he does so he forces her underwater. His hands are round her neck.

JACK.

I'm Roy. I'm Roy. Call me Roy. You named me. You decided my name was Roy. That's who I am. I'm Roy, Clare.

A violent struggle ensues, as CLARE fights for air, but JACK is too strong for her. Limbs bang and rub against the bath. The violence grows. Then gradually CLARE's pupils dilate as water fill her lungs and she slips away. Silence. JACK gets out of the bath, and as he does, a lone bubble floats from CLARE's mouth and explodes as it hits the surface.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM - MORNING

We view MILLS, who is fast asleep on her bed, through the peephole JACK made in the trapdoor. Then we descend into the room. When she wakes, she wakes languidly, like a princess stirred from an enchantment. A clock gives the time as 11.30.

INT. LIBRARY. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

JACK sits cross-legged on a table, reading *The End of the Affair*. He looks up at a mirror and stares at himself. Then he returns to his book. The mirror's reflection doesn't, and stays looking at Jack before turning to the camera.

JACK

You want to know what love is? What it can make you do? Just read *The End of the Affair*. I'm serious.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

MILLS puts on a dressing gown. She enters the bathroom. She brushes her teeth. Nothing is amiss in the bathroom.

INT. LIBRARY. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

JACK glances up from his reading. He does a double-take, as if surprised to find us there.

JACK (TO CAMERA)

(indicating the book)

How is it that we sympathise with the protagonist of *The End of the Affair*? On the face of it, let's face it, he isn't all that nice. He's an adulterer, to start with. He's had a startling affair with the wife of a civil servant. Which wasn't very civil of him, was it. And even within the confines of their relationship, he wasn't very likable. He was prey to furious jealousies, frenzied fears, stirred by insults of his own invention.

INT. KITCHEN. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

MILLS pours herself a bowl of Rice Crispies.

INT. LIBRARY. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

JACK (TO CAMERA)

And then, when she decides to *end the affair*, he goes crazy. All his love turns to hatred. He hates her. He wants to hurt her. He wants to *hurt her heart*. Did you ever notice how similar those words sound?

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

MILLS eats her cereal while watching TV. No job to go to.

INT. LIBRARY. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

JACK (TO CAMERA)

He even hires a private detective. Can you imagine? He has his former lover followed, convinced there is some new man in her life. Imagine finding someone had done that to you. Could you forgive them?

INT. KITCHEN. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

MILLS walks through, carrying her empty bowl. Something catches her eye: a note attached by a magnet to the door of the fridge. The note is apparently from CLARE.

CLARE (V.O.)

Dear Mills, I'm really sorry, but I've decided I need my own space. I didn't know how to tell you, so I'm just getting the hell out.

JACK (V.O.)

No hard feelings, I hope. Clare.

MILLS, shocked, leaves the kitchen.

INT. TOP LANDING. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

MILLS opens the door to CLARE's bedroom. Her stuff has gone.

INT. LIBRARY. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

JACK (TO CAMERA)

And yet we *do* forgive Bendrix. We can't explain why, but we do.

(ruminatively)

Unless it has something to do with the use of the first-person narrator.

A mobile phone starts to vibrate.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Give me a second.

He takes an iPhone from his right-hand thigh pocket. It's a phone we haven't seen before, flashing up the name "MILLS". After a while, it stops ringing, and the "wallpaper" is revealed. It's a picture of CLARE and her family.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

(pocketing the phone)

She must have found the note.

Another phone vibrates. Frowning, JACK extracts it from his left-hand thigh pocket. It is BERNHARD's. He grimaces, and presses the button to "decline". Pockets the phone again.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
Where was I? Novels. Narrators. The
aesthetics of forgiveness.

A third mobile phone vibrates with a text. Rolling his eyes, JACK takes his own iPhone from his left-hand hip pocket. The text is from MILLS: "You owe me a housemate." JACK holds up an index finger, requesting our patience. He calls her.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

MILLS re-enters the drawing room, answering her phone.

INT. SPLIT-SCREEN. JACK IN LIBRARY, MILLS IN DRAWING ROOM - MORNING

MILLS
She's left.

JACK
Who?

MILLS
You know who.

JACK
I promise you I don't.

MILLS
Why are you whispering?

JACK
(glancing round)
I'm-- in a library.

MILLS
Did you honestly not know that
Clare had moved out?

JACK
What are you talking about? That's
crazy. When did this happen?

MILLS
All her stuff's gone from her room.

JACK
I promise you I didn't know. So
have you two been arguing? What's
been going on?

MILLS
If we had, it wouldn't be difficult
to guess the reason why.

JACK

You're right. And I wanted to apologise, in fact, for yesterday morning.

MILLS

I'd rather not talk about it.

JACK

No, but it's important I tell you this. I felt horrible all day. And then I realised: what gives you pain gives me pain. The idea of you being unhappy makes me unhappy.

MILLS

Well, next time, you might try not having sex with my housemate within an inch of my head.

JACK

It wasn't within an inch of your head.

MILLS

You know what I mean.

JACK

That really would have been inconsiderate.

MILLS

(laughing)

That would have been *awful*.

(plaintive)

Oh, Jack, I feel as if everyone's leaving me, as if I'm going to be left all alone. First Bernhard--

JACK

You haven't heard from him?

MILLS

He texts me sometimes. And occasionally I get an email. But it's always so vague.

JACK

Well, you know these Austrians.

MILLS

And now Clare.

JACK

Do you want me to come round?

MILLS

You don't have to do that.

JACK

No, I want to. I feel I-- haven't been seeing enough of you.

MILLS

No, I'm fine. Honestly. It's sweet of you, but I think I probably just need to be alone.

JACK

There's little chance of that.

MILLS

What do you mean?

JACK

Just that you have so many friends. There'll always be people who want to spend time with you.

MILLS

You're such a liar. But thanks. We'll speak again soon. Okay?

There's a pause. Then MILLS hangs up.

INT. LIBRARY. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

JACK walks over to the bookshelves to return his copy of *The End of the Affair*.

JACK (TO CAMERA)

You know how they say that every end is a beginning.

He slides the book back in among its fellows. Moves his finger along the sequence. Picks out *The Ministry of Fear*.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

And every exit is an entrance, somewhere else. Well, they're right.

He leaves the library.

INT. FIRST-FLOOR LANDING - MORNING

Then JACK appears from the library.

JACK (TO CAMERA)

But sometimes there's a delay.

SCREEN SPLITS into FIRST-FLOOR LANDING and STORE ROOM.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

Sometimes there has to be.

SCREEN SPLITS again into quarters, also including MASTER BEDROOM and DRAWING ROOM, in which MILLS sits at her laptop.

JACK (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)
Ideas need time in which to grow.

SCREEN SPLITS again and again until every room in the house is represented. JACK and MILLS go about their respective days, moving from room to room, making food, watching television, but without running into each other.

In the evening, some of the segments are dark (rooms in which the lights are not turned on) and some are lit.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And in that time, I had to keep
Clare and Bernhard alive by texts
and emails. Which I could do, as I
had their mobile phones. I updated
his Facebook profile status.

Subtitles appear: "BERNHARD GASSINGER Vienna, baby."

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I laid *her* low with flu.

Subtitles appear: "I won't be coming in today."

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And so on. And so forth.

In one of the sections of the screen, JACK's mobile vibrates with a text message. It's from MILLS.

MILLS (TEXT)
Clare has just made friends with
Bernhard on Facebook.

JACK types a reply.

JACK (TEXT)
How do you know it was *her* who made
friends with him?

Gradually the sections of the screen go dark as MILLS prepares for bed, until only JACK is left, reading Graham Greene by the light of a small side-light. He turns it off.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DUSK

MILLS looks terrified. She moves towards the bay window, where the curtains are open. She scans the street, then draws the curtains impulsively. Pauses. Then runs through into the kitchen and pulls down the blind of the window. She takes out her phone and thumbs for "Favorites". She has only one Favorite. His name is "Jack Parker".

INT. DINING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - DUSK

JACK, materialises from the shadows. One of his pockets glows. He slides from the room.

JACK (V.O.)
I'd been planning to leave it one more day. But *she* called *me*.

INT. HALL. SOON AFTERWARDS - DUSK

The front door is open. JACK is standing in the porch. He is fully dressed, and perhaps a little out of breath.

MILLS
Blimey. That was quick.

She leads him through into the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

There's a bottle of wine on the table, the cork already drawn. Two glasses. MILLS pours one and hands it to JACK.

JACK
So what's all this about?

MILLS
(pouring her glass)
Something weird has happened. I know you're going to think I'm paranoid, but I started to get suspicious about Bernhard. So I called his office.

JACK
(wincing)
You did?

MILLS
They said he was off sick. But he's been telling me that he's up to his eyeballs in some deal.

JACK
Really?

MILLS
Why would he tell me he was at work, if he wasn't?

JACK
There could be loads of reasons.
(after a pause)
I can't think of any.

MILLS

Then, yesterday, he said he was visiting his family in Vienna.

JACK

What's strange about that?

MILLS

Nothing, but-- I called Charlie. He boasted to me once that if I ever needed to track anyone down, he could locate their mobile.

JACK

Is that even legal?

MILLS

I don't know. But listen, Jack. Charlie says Bernhard's phone is within a 500m radius of this house.

JACK

Can't he be more specific?

MILLS

(almost in tears)

Jack, I'm scared. Look at his Facebook status. It says he's in Vienna. *That's what it says.*

JACK

That is a bit strange.

MILLS

Should I call the police?

JACK

No. Definitely not.

(after a pause)

He hasn't actually done anything wrong. The police can't do anything unless the guy has threatened you. Damage to property. Physical assault. He has to have done something.

MILLS

But why would he be hanging around outside my house?

JACK

When did Charlie tell you this?

MILLS

Half an hour ago. He's in America, or he'd have come round himself.

JACK

Which means he could still be out there now. Which means he would have seen me arrive. Unless--

Jack thinks.

MILLS

What, Jack? Tell me.

JACK

When was the last time you saw him?

MILLS

Here, at that dinner party. It was weeks ago.

JACK gets to his feet and drains his drink.

JACK

I need to ask you something. You're pretty keen on this guy, right?

MILLS

What's that got to do with it?

JACK

Well, you've been obsessing about him for weeks. It's fine. I just want to know the answer.

MILLS

(after a pause)

He's totally different from you, Jack. But yes, I do like him. I think that's *why* I like him, in fact. Don't get me wrong. You're amazing. But I like Bernhard almost because he's *not* amazing. He's just normal. Do you know what I mean?

JACK turns away. For a few seconds, MILLS can't see his features, which contort into an expression of limitless anguish. Then he sits down on the sofa.

JACK

(turning back)

That makes perfect sense. Which is why you're not going to like what I'm going to say next. We need to consider the possibility that he could be *in the house*.

MILLS

(covering her ears)

What do you mean?

JACK

You remember what Clare said, about hearing someone in the basement.

MILLS

That's just silly. He can't have--

JACK

He could have done.

MILLS

Please, Jack. You're scaring me.

JACK

We need to consider every possibility. Which is why I'm going to do a thorough search.

MILLS jumps up and grabs JACK's arm.

MILLS

No, Jack, please. Don't leave me on my own.

JACK

(smiling)

You don't have to be scared. First of all, I agree with you. The chances he's here, they're pretty small. And secondly, I'm here.

MILLS

I know you are. I'm *so glad*.

JACK

So while I'm gone, can you-- What do you say we order pizza? I'll have a Meat Feast.

INT. ATTIC. SOON AFTERWARDS - EVENING

The trapdoor opens, and JACK raises himself into the gloomy space. He turns a light on and lowers the trapdoor, before making his way to the far end, where BERNHARD sits in his chair, swathed in cling film. Beside him, on the floor, sits CLARE, similarly swathed. JACK hesitates, then suddenly swings his fist, punching BERNHARD as hard as he can.

JACK

What the fuck have you done to her, you fucking Kraut? You sausage-munching squarehead? You sour sauerkraut-sucking fucking Nazi-loving mother-fucker? I'm serious. She's totally obsessed with you.

(Beat)

Are you listening, Fritz?

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)
 We didn't win two world wars so you
 could waltz in and steal our
 frauleins. So hands off, Hans.
 Hans, *off*.

He continues punching BERNHARD until he works up quite a sweat. The body is soft with decomposition and it absorbs these shocks quite comfortably.

JACK (CONT'D)
 (to CLARE'S corpse)
 And you can take that smile off
 your face.

DING DONG - The doorbell rings.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL. A MOMENT LATER.

JACK walks down the stairs, MILLS joins him as he opens the front door.

JACK
 It's Helmet Man!

HELMET MAN stands there. He has two pizzas and some drinks.

HELMET MAN
 Hello, Sir. And how are you today?

JACK
 We thought you were someone else.

HELMET MAN
 No. I am me.

JACK
 (to MILLS)
 Can you get this?

MILLS
 (producing wallet)
 Do you two know each other?

JACK
 (taking her wallet)
 Here. Let me do that.

HELMET MAN
 Of course. I know him very well. We
 are very good friends.

JACK
 (paying him quickly)
 I think that's overstating it a
 little. Keep the change.

HELMET MAN

He always has a Meat Feast.

JACK closes the door. MILLS looks at him strangely.

JACK

(returning her wallet)
Sorry. I don't have any cash.

MILLS

How do you know that guy?

JACK

Helmet Man? He's sweet, isn't he.
He's the guy who delivers to my
office. If we're working late.
(opening a pizza box)
Man! This looks good!

INT. DRAWING ROOM.

Empty pizza boxes. Empty beer bottles. On the TV, they're watching the ending of *The Third Man*.

JACK – naked to the waist and wearing, for some reason, a Second World War military hat – takes a swig from a bottle of beer. *The Third Man* ends.

JACK

Can I ask you a question?

MILLS

That depends what it is.

JACK

Why did you break up with me?

MILLS

Oh, Jack. Not this again.

JACK

I just want to know. Was it
something I did? Was it something I
didn't do?

MILLS

Oh my god, you're such a dick. I
didn't break up with you, Jack. You
broke up with *me*.

JACK

At first maybe.

MILLS

No, Jack. Not at first. At first,
at second and at third. You broke
up with *me*.

(MORE)

MILLS (CONT'D)

And then, a month later, you're back, because your life's not going so well. And no, by that stage, I don't want you back. But that doesn't mean that I broke up with you.

JACK

It amounts to the same thing.

MILLS

No, it doesn't. Just listen to me, for once in your life.

JACK

That's not fair.

MILLS

I've had to listen for months to you moaning on about how miserable I made you. But what you never admit is-- when you did what you did, it absolutely massacred me. I was so in love with you, it felt like my heart was too big for my body. You were my world. Just everything to me. And when you left me, I had nothing. I still feel like that now. My life is so light, it isn't even there.

(starting to cry)

I hate that.

JACK reaches out to touch her, but she brushes him away and gets to her feet. She collects plates and empty pizza boxes and carries them out towards the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN. A FEW MINUTES LATER.

MILLS is washing up at the sink. JACK appears in the doorway behind her.

JACK

I'm sorry.

MILLS

(without turning round)

I know you are.

JACK

No, you don't. I'm really sorry.

MILLS

I know. I believe you.

JACK

No. Listen to me. I'm sorry.

MILLS

You've already said that.

JACK

I'm sorry for hurting you. I'm
sorry for fucking everything up.
I'm sorry for not listening, for
not being the boyfriend you wanted
me to be, the kind you deserve--

MILLS finally turns round. She is crying.

MILLS

You took the best thing that had
ever happened to me, and you turned
it into the worst. You fucked it up
so badly, it can't ever be fixed.

JACK

(coming forward)

I'm sorry.

MILLS

(laughing despite herself)

Stop saying that.

She throws a tea towel at him. He catches it.

MILLS (CONT'D)

(sniffing)

And make yourself useful.

But JACK draws her in towards him for a big I'm-really-sorry hug. She trembles at first, before relaxing in his arms.

JACK

(hugging her)

I'm sorry. For everything.

(to camera)

I'm sorry for everything I've done.

After they stop hugging, there's a moment when they still have their arms around each other. She's looking up at him. He's looking down at her. Then he disengages.

MILLS washes the second plate in soapy water. JACK picks up the first plate and dries it.

There's a silence between them for a moment then they smile at each other. But MILLS looks sad. They finish the washing and the drying and let the water drain away out of the sink. Only when everything is perfect do they seem satisfied.

JACK (CONT'D)

Shall we open another bottle?

MILLS

I might just go to bed. Sorry. I'm exhausted all of a sudden.

(after a pause)

How are you going to get home?

JACK

I'm not going home.

MILLS

What do you mean?

JACK

I'm not leaving you here on your own. I know I said earlier it was all obviously just a joke. And probably that's what it is. But let's just play it safe. Some men can be pretty fucked up.

MILLS

Some girls too.

JACK

I don't like the thought of you being here on your own.

MILLS looks as if she's about to cry again.

MILLS

You're so-- nice.

JACK

No, I'm not.

MILLS

You are, Jack.

JACK

I'm not, Mills. Believe me. I'm not nearly as nice as you think.

MILLS

You're the nicest, kindest-- You are. You're amazing. Can I just say-- that I *like* you. I like you, okay? You're wonderful.

JACK

I'll crash on the sofa.

MILLS

(quietly)

You can sleep in my room if you like.

Beat.

JACK
That's probably not a good idea.

MILLS
Why not?

JACK
Because if you and I shared a bed, Mills, I'd end up wanting to have sex with you. And I don't think that's what either of us wants.

MILLS
(hurt)
You're right. It was a stupid idea. I don't know what I was thinking.

JACK
It wasn't stupid. It was a brilliant idea. As ideas go, it was a stroke of fucking genius.

MILLS
But it wasn't a *good* idea.

JACK
(shaking his head)
It was a terrible idea.

They look at each other, each wanting nothing more than to tear the other's clothes off. MILLS is waiting for JACK to make a move, but he doesn't.

MILLS
(finally)
Night, Jack.

She comes forward and kisses him awkwardly on the cheek. Then she leaves the room without another word.

JACK listens to her climbing the stairs. He goes into the hall and looks up the stairs. Hesitates. Then turns out the lights in the hall. He does the same in the kitchen and also in the dining room. Then, after arranging the duvet over the sofa, he turns out the lights in the drawing room.

He climbs in under the duvet. Darkness. Silence. After a while, JACK pushes the duvet away from him and lights one of the candles. Its flame illuminates his face spookily. He makes a decision.

He extinguishes the flame between finger and thumb.

ACT 4. HOW TO FUCK EVERYTHING UP

INT. HALL. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

JACK climbs the stairs. On the landing, he pauses. MILLS is descending. Without a word, they fall upon each other. Their movements are urgent, almost violent. Finally JACK picks her up and carries her up the stairs towards her bedroom.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

JACK lays MILLS down on her bed, and supports himself over her as they kiss. She undoes the button of his trousers. He pushes them down with a hand and then kicks them off with his feet. The trousers hang off the bed, and unperceived by JACK, a phone slips out of a pocket, falling on to the floor.

They face each other. JACK strokes MILLS's face with a finger, tracing her lineaments in amazement.

They kiss. Then he turns the light on.

MILLS
(shielding her eyes)
Is that necessary?

JACK
I wanted to see you.
(after a pause)
And I need a glass of water.

MILLS
Can you get my cigarettes, while
you're at it? They're in the
drawing room.

He's on his feet, smiling down at her. Then he grabs his trousers off the bed to cover himself.

He pulls them on and leaves the room. Smiling, MILLS touches the place on the pillow beside her.

INT. KITCHEN. SOON AFTERWARDS - NIGHT

JACK fills two glasses with water. He's about to dry the inside of the sink, then realises he doesn't have to.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. SOON AFTERWARDS - NIGHT

He finds MILLS's cigarette packet, lights a cigarette and sits down. He makes to slide the cigarette packet into his pocket, and he checks his four pockets, to be sure that he has his three iPhones. One's missing - BERNHARD's.

JACK tears apart the sofa. He searches everywhere, under furniture, along the shelves-- nothing. He takes out the two phones he has, and uses CLARE's to access BERNHARD's Facebook site. His mobile number is shown among his "Info".

Using his own phone, JACK calls that number. He holds his phone away from his face and looks around the room, waiting for the phone to ring.

Someone answers.

MILLS'S VOICE
(faintly)
Jack? Hello? Jack, is that you?

JACK hangs up, absorbing the horror of what he has done. Then he sprints from the room. Up the stairs. Hits the landing, and bursts into MILLS'S bedroom.

INT. MILLS'S BEDROOM. CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

She is sitting up in bed, BERNHARD'S phone in her hand.

MILLS
I don't understand.

JACK
Give me that.

MILLS
(holding it away)
It's Bernhard's.

JACK
No, it isn't.

MILLS
It is. It's Bernhard's phone.

JACK
I can explain.

MILLS
Why have you got his phone?

JACK
I don't. You do.

MILLS
It fell out of your pocket, Jack. I heard it when it hit the floor.

JACK
I know, but-- that's what I'm trying to tell you. It wasn't me that had it. Not at first.

MILLS
Who was it?

JACK
(after a pause)
It was Clare.
(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)
 (warming to his lie)
 It was Clare. She had Bernhard's
 phone. I found it in her room, and
 I confronted her with it.

MILLS
 What are you talking about?

JACK
 She killed him, Mills. I'm sorry
 you had to find out like this, but
 it's true. It was the night of the
 dinner party. She killed Bernhard,
 and that's why she had his phone.

MILLS
 Why are you saying this?

She's on her feet, pulling on her knickers and T-shirt.

JACK
 That was why she left the house.
 She was afraid you'd find out.

MILLS
 I don't believe you and I just-- I
 want you to go, Jack. I don't want
 you here anymore.

JACK
 I'm not leaving you here. I have to
 stay, to protect you from Clare.

MILLS is on her feet. The bed is between them.

MILLS
 Please just leave.

JACK
 I have a responsibility-- I have to
 teach you, to explain--

MILLS
 Just get out of my house please.

JACK
 Everything that has happened, has
 happened because I love you.

MILLS
 (starting to cry)
 Please just go.

JACK
 I love you, Mills. I love you so
 much, you have no idea. You're the
 only thing that's real for me.
 (stern)
 (MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

But you have to understand. Actions have consequences.

MILLS

Jack, I want you to go.

JACK

(raising his voice)

No, Mills. No. This is my home now. If you love something, you own it. And I love this house. I think maybe I'm in love with it. Would you just sit down for a moment?

She sits down on the end of the bed.

JACK reaches into his back pocket and brings out a weird object. The decomposed body of the mouse. He brandishes it in MILLS's face.

MILLS

What *is* that?

JACK

It's my heart, Mills. Do you see what you did? You fucking poisoned it. You poisoned my heart.

He drops his head. And at that moment, MILLS jumps up and makes a run for it. But she slips and wipes out, smacking her face against the wall. She's out cold. JACK kneels beside her and checks her pulse. Then he looks up at the ceiling.

INT. ATTIC - THE FOLLOWING MORNING

MILLS regains consciousness to find herself in the attic. There is a blanket over her. She winces and touches her face.

The single window provides a little light. She moves to the end of the room, where the two trapdoors are. Tries each of them - neither of them budge. As she tugs at the handles, we catch focus behind her, and can see at the farther end of the attic the corpses of CLARE and BERNHARD.

INT. DRAWING ROOM, ETC. CONTINUOUS - MORNING

The drawing room is trashed. On one of the walls, someone has scrawled, in blood, NOTHING'S REAL BUT LOVE. JACK sits on MILLS's duvet surrounded by knives, which he is sharpening. Faintly, we can hear the sound of a girl screaming.

When he's done, he places some of the sharpest knives conspicuously on tabletops and shelves around the room. Then he does the same in the dining room, the library, and the master bedroom. Afterwards he descends into the basement. In the lavatory he picks up the pair of silver scissors.

CUT TO:

INT. DRAWING ROOM - EVENING.

JACK is watching a violent movie. While he watches, he blunts the edges of the scissors deliberately, occasionally testing them with a finger. A clap of thunder catches his attention. He turns to look at the window and sees something yellow and flimsy brush against the glass. Then it's gone. He gets up and goes over to the window. As he does so, a second yellow thing descends. On this occasion it sticks flat against the glass, held by moisture. JACK opens the window and peels it from the back of the glass. It's a yellow post-it note, and although the writing is smudged, the message can be read:

"I'M HELD PRISONER AT 69 MILTON ROAD. PLEASE HELP!"

Looking out the window, JACK can see many other yellow post-it notes littering the front garden. Another flutters past as he looks. He scrunches the note up in his hand, and looks directly at the camera.

He starts to climb the stairs.

JACK
(bellowing)
I'm coming, Mills! Do you hear me?
I'm *co-ming!*

INT. TOP LANDING. A MOMENT LATER - EVENING

JACK is looking up at the trapdoor.

JACK
(shouting)
Okay, Mills! I know you're in there! You better brace yourself, because I'm coming up now!

Gripping the scissors in his teeth, he reaches up and pushes back the bolt he has fixed to the underside of the trapdoor. In one swift movement, he raises himself into the attic.

INT. ATTIC. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

There is no sign of MILLS. The single window, which is open, bangs in the wind behind its rusty iron bars.

JACK
It was clever of you, throwing those notes out of the window. But it can't be allowed to continue.

He closes the trapdoor again and bolts it. JACK starts to move forward, checking behind each rafter.

JACK (CONT'D)
You may as well come out. I'm going to find you sooner or later.

MILLS appears from her hiding place in the furthest corner. In her hands, she holds a heavy metal pipe.

JACK (CONT'D)

Okay. Okay. Pipe beats scissors.

He leans sideways to put the scissors down on a ledge, and MILLS chooses this moment to strike. She swings the pipe and WHACK, catches him smack across the head. He goes down on one knee, one hand to his head, the other held out.

JACK (CONT'D)

Fuck! That was-- good!

MILLS brings her weapon down again - BANG - as hard as she can, on top of his head. After a pause, JACK collapses on the floor, unconscious.

MILLS starts to run the length of the attic. She reaches the end, but picks the wrong trapdoor-- it's bolted from below.

She moves to the other trapdoor. Fumbles with the bolt. Gets it open and lowers herself.

INT. TOP LANDING. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

MILLS lands badly, hurting herself. She starts to run down the stairs.

INT. ATTIC. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

JACK opens his eyes.

INT. FIRST-FLOOR LANDING. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

MILLS pulls herself round the corner of the banister, and continues down the stairs.

INT. ATTIC. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

With reptilian suddenness, JACK is sprinting for the trapdoor. Through it, lands, and is on his way down, moving so fast his feet don't seem to touch the floor.

INT. HALL. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

MILLS reaches the front door. But before she can grasp it, JACK appears in bullet-time. He forward-rolls past the hall table and, stretching with his hand, grabs the back of MILLS's T-shirt, wrenching her backwards.

MILLS

(back against wall)

No, please, Jack. Please don't hurt me. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. Just please, please don't hurt me.

JACK puts his face close to hers and roars like a grizzly bear. She screams, flinching away. Ducks under his arm and flees into the drawing room, then the dining room. He makes for the dining room from the hall, cutting her off. She shrieks and takes refuge on the far side of the table.

There is a knife on the table in front of her, which JACK planted there earlier. She grabs it: *how do you like me now?* JACK seems undeterred. He takes a step one way. She takes a step the other. He moves back that way. She returns to where she was. Then he grips the table and starts to push the whole thing towards her, to trap her against the wall.

MILLS moves just in time, and ducks as he swings an arm over her head, which he does slowly, like a monster in a Scooby Do cartoon. As she pushes past him, MILLS slashes his side with the knife. Dropping it in her panic, she makes not for the front door but instead heads back up the stairs.

JACK pauses before the stairs, halted by his reflection in the mirror. There's trickle of dried blood on his cheek. And now he's bleeding from his side. He touches a finger to the blood and examines it. He applies it to his lips, reddening them. Then paints a circle around each of his nipples.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

MILLS, out of sight behind the bed, is talking.

MILLS (O.S.)
(urgently)
That's right. 69. The house number
is 69 Milton Road--

JACK moves round the bed to find MILLS talking on the landline.

MILLS (CONT'D)
Oh god, he's here. Please--

JACK wrenches the phone out of her hand. MILLS cowers away from him, into the corner.

JACK
That was really stupid.

MILLS
Jack, please. I don't know what you
think I've done to you--

JACK
It isn't what you did. It's what
you didn't do. When you break up
with someone, you have to make sure
they're okay. You can't just leave
them-- with nothing.

MILLS

I know. I'm sorry.

JACK

It's too late for sorry now. Now
you've called the *fucking police!*

He throws the phone against the wall. She screams and lunges past him, making for the door. He lets her go.

With his fingers he counts - 1, 2, 3 - then goes after her.

INT. FRONT DOOR. - EVENING

MILLS gets to the front door again, this time she gets her hand on the handle and opens it. But JACK's there, slamming it shut with his full weight. He grabs her hair and twists her head back.

JACK

I'm sorry, Mills.
(tightening his grip)
But one of us-- has-- to *die*.

When he releases her, she falls to the floor and begins to crawl away from him. Instead of hurting her he smashes things beside her, overturning the hall table, ripping pictures from the walls. MILLS runs into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

MILLS finds the biggest knife in the house. JACK's onto her. She turns and points the big knife at him in two hands. JACK drops to his knees, holding out a hand to her. He shuffles forward and takes hold of her wrists and pulls her to him, until the point of the knife is touching his chest.

JACK

Do it, Mills! Do it, you fucking
wimp! Do it and get it done!
(losing his temper)
I SAID DO IT!

She can't. The knife falls, and she drifts from the room, swooning, weeping. JACK picks up the knife and follows her, pushing her, hassling her, holding out the knife.

JACK (CONT'D)

(shouting)
DO IT!

He cuts her off when she makes for the door into the hall, and ends up backing her into the corner of the room.

MILLS notices the African spears beside her, and grabs one. JACK drops his knife and holds his arms open, inviting her to strike. She throws the spear, it misses. He jumps onto a table in front of her.

She grabs another spear and juts it towards him. The point nudges his torso, but she can't bring herself to do more.

JACK (CONT'D)
 (exhausted, wretched)
 I'm a loser, baby, so why don't you
 kill me?

He collapses to the floor. MILLS drops her spear, and runs for the door. Just before she reaches it, JACK launches one of the spears at her. It catches her between the shoulder blades. She goes down, the spear embedded in her back.

EXT. THE STREET. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

A police van draws up, its roof-lights flashing.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

JACK crouches over MILLS.

JACK
 Say something.

The spear sticks up out of her back. Blood spreads in a circle around the wound. But she isn't dead.

JACK (CONT'D)
 I swear to god, I didn't mean for
 this to happen. It was supposed to
 be me. You were meant to kill me.

Beat.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Say you understand. Please, just--
 say you understand--

MILLS says nothing.

EXT. THE STREET. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

Four police officers have climbed out of the van: three men and a woman. POLICE OFFICER 1 carries a taser gun. They open the gate that guards the entrance to the front garden.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

JACK weeps and rages.

EXT. FRONT GARDEN. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

POLICE OFFICER 2, stoops and picks up one of the post-it notes that litter the garden. The others climb the steps into the porch. POLICE OFFICER 3 (the woman) peers into the drawing room through the front window.

JACK crouches over the wounded MILLS. He's naked but for his skin-coloured cycling shorts. His lips are red with blood and we can see the red circles around his nipples.

POLICE OFFICER 3
Jesus Christ. He's stabbed her.

POLICE OFFICER 4
(into personal radio)
Bravo Sierra. Active message. We're going to need an ambulance here as soon as possible.

POLICE OFFICER 3
Open that door for me.

POLICE OFFICER 4
A girl's been stabbed.

POLICE OFFICER 2 moves the others aside. Then he gives a hefty kick to the front door. It opens to reveal the hall--trashed. POLICE OFFICER 1 readies his taser gun. POLICE OFFICER 4 reaches back with his hand, and flips open a leather holster, which contains a can of CS Spray.

INT. HALL. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

They enter and find MILLS motionless on the floor of the drawing room. JACK has disappeared. POLICE OFFICER 3 kneels at MILLS's side. The others fan out to search the house.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

POLICE OFFICER 3
Alright, love. We're here now.
There's an ambulance on its way.

MILLS doesn't say anything.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

POLICE OFFICER 2 approaches the dining room.

INT. STAIRCASE AND HALL - EVENING

POLICE OFFICER 1 descends into the basement.

INT. HALL AND STAIRCASE FLIGHT 2A - EVENING

POLICE OFFICER 4 heads upstairs.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

POLICE OFFICER 2 enters, and is given a fright when he sees the full-size stuffed grizzly bear, rearing for the kill.

INT. BASEMENT - EVENING

POLICE OFFICER 1 tries the door of the store room and finds it locked. He shoulders the door, it crashes open. Its empty. Raising his taser gun, he opens the door of the lavatory. It's empty.

INT. FIRST-FLOOR LANDING - EVENING

POLICE OFFICER 4 levels his can of CS spray with his left hand. With his right, he pushes open the door to the library. The place is a mess. There's no sign of JACK.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

POLICE OFFICER 1 enters the master bedroom. Cupboard doors stand open and the floor is littered with clothes. But what attracts his attention is a sound coming from the bathroom. Running water.

He approaches, holding his CS spray in both hands.

POLICE OFFICER 1
If you're in there, I don't want
you to panic, okay? I'm armed. So
just-- stay completely calm. And
then no one will get hurt.

He slowly moves forward into the bathroom. It's empty. A tap runs. He reaches to turn it off.

INT. DRAWING ROOM. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

POLICE OFFICER 3 is crouched over MILLS, speaking to her gently. She is watched by POLICE OFFICER 2, who is talking into his radio, asking about the ambulance.

POLICE OFFICER 3
Can you tell me his name, darling?

We can't hear MILLS's reply, but we can see her lips move. POLICE OFFICER 3 lowers her head, so she can hear better.

POLICE OFFICER 3 (CONT'D)
(to POLICE OFFICER 2)
She says his name is Jack.
(to MILLS again)
And this Jack-- he's your
boyfriend, is he?

After a pause, MILLS nods.

INT. HALL. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

POLICE OFFICER 1 appears from downstairs. POLICE OFFICER 2 leans out of the drawing room. POLICE OFFICER 1 shakes his head. POLICE OFFICER 4 descends from upstairs.

POLICE OFFICER 2
She says his name is Jack.

POLICE OFFICER 3 (O.S.)
Have they tried the attic?

POLICE OFFICER 2
(glancing back)
What's that?

POLICE OFFICER 3 (O.S.)
Is there an attic of some kind?

POLICE OFFICER 2
(to the other two)
Is there an attic of some kind?
(glancing back)
Or maybe a cellar?

POLICE OFFICER 1
The cellar's empty.

Suddenly, the semi-naked JACK appears as if by magic, and starts to sprint up the stairs toward them. BULLET TIME: in hyper-slow-motion, JACK gymnastically twists, and as POLICE OFFICER 4 levels his can of CS Spray, he knocks it from his hand, while at the same time leaping and placing one of his bare feet on the turn of the banister. He continues towards POLICE OFFICER 1, who aims his taser gun: the gun is fired. The Taser darts detach, but JACK miraculously avoids them.

He continues up the stairs until, at the top, he successfully pulls off the manoeuvre that always eluded him-- leaping up and in mid-air turning, grabbing onto the banisters above him, and flipping himself up, with a last leap, through the trapdoor, into the empty space of the attic.

INT. HALL. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

The POLICE OFFICERS stare at each other. The probes from the taser are imbedded in the wall of the staircase.

POLICE OFFICER 2
What the *fuck* was that?

His words spur the others to action, and they both clatter up the stairs. At the top landing, they look up and see the open trapdoor. They can hear a banging noise coming from above.

With the help of POLICE OFFICER 4, POLICE OFFICER 1 climbs onto the banister and reaches up for the trapdoor. He almost misses it, pressing the ceiling with his other hand. Then he grabs it. Hangs for a moment.

POLICE OFFICER 1 tries again, and this time - with difficulty, and helped by POLICE OFFICER 4 - succeeds in raising his head and shoulders into the attic.

INT. ATTIC. CONTINUOUS - EVENING

JACK is hitting the rusty bars of the window with a length of piping. With his last two hits, he successfully smashes them, and then pulls away what remains, before climbing out through the window on to the roof. POLICE OFFICER 1 tries to stop him but is too late. He climbs out after him.

EXT. ROOF - EVENING

The roof slopes to an edge littered with post-it notes. It's a stormy night. The wind picks up post-it notes and swirls them around. JACK is at the far end of the roof, gauging the distance of the gap between the Howards' home and their neighbour's.

He moves sideways a pace and looks down at the drop.

POLICE OFFICER 1
(holding out a hand)
Don't do it, mate. It's not worth
it.

JACK
(without looking round)
I'm not going anywhere.

And with that, he stretches out his arms, like someone perched on a high-diving tower-- and dives. POLICE OFFICER 1 looks away, putting up a hand against the unimaginable act. An ambulance siren can be heard. Eventually he moves to the edge and looks down. There is no sign of JACK's body. He catches one of the post-it notes as it flutters past him. POLICE OFFICER 4 emerges onto the roof from the attic.

EXT. FRONT OF HOWARD'S HOUSE - MORNING

Subtitles: "SIX MONTHS LATER"

It's a beautiful spring morning. Crisp; dew gleaming in the sunlight. Peaceful. A robin sings on a yellow false acacia tree. But through whose eyes are we viewing the house?

JACK (V.O.)
Think, for a moment, about houses.

We can see into the drawing room. Everything is neat and tidy, as it was before JACK came along.

JACK (V.O.)
I mean the houses of the rich,
which stand as empty as their heads
for most of the day, and almost as
idle, as they sidle off to work.

At the back of the house, we see iron bars have been installed over the window into the store room.

There is also a CCTV camera. Is JACK, perhaps, in the garden? We catch a glimpse from the CCTV's POV. The garden is empty.

JACK (V.O.)

All those empty homes. All those empty rooms. Made beds and pies in fridges. While under bridges people die of cold. Think about it.

Up on the roof, we can see that the window into the attic has been bricked up. A startled pigeon flaps away.

JACK (V.O.)

This is the task of the artist.

We view the street through a second CCTV camera, which has been installed above the porch. A car drives past.

JACK (V.O.)

The task of the writer. To find a brighter way to live.

The front door opens and MILLS steps out.

MILLS

Okay. I'll see you tonight.

Behind her, MRS HOWARD, her mother, looks concerned.

MILLS (CONT'D)

I'm fine. Really.

MILLS closes the door behind her. As she descends the steps, we see that she has a bit of a limp. She heads off to work. We stay, looking at the house.

JACK (V.O.)

To find new space and claim it. To make it yours.

We zoom in on an upper window of the house, to see that JACK is there, peeking out from behind a curtain.

The song *Perfect Day* by Lou Reed starts to play.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM. CONTINUOUS

As the credits come down, we see JACK, in terrific shape, executing a series of spectacular Parkour moves about the master bedroom. MRS HOWARD, meanwhile, potters about in the kitchen, oblivious. JACK does cartwheels around the room in sheer exuberance at being alive. Down in the drawing room, MRS HOWARD does a bit of dusting. JACK executes ninja-style moves, his beautifully fit physique shown off to best effect. MRS HOWARD plumps the cushions. *Perfect Day* continues to play.

Eventually, as the song and the credits are coming to their end, MRS HOWARD starts to make her way upstairs to the master bedroom, where JACK is leaping around. She finally reaches the door and opens it. The room is empty.

THE END