"PRESS GANG"

SECOND SERIES

EPISODE 6

"AT LAST A DRAGON"

Script by STEVEN MOFFAT

Producer

SANDRA HASTIE

(c) RICHMOND FILMS & TELEVISION LTD.
87 Charlotte Street
LONDON W1P 1LP
01 631 5424

Pinewood Studios
Iver Heath
Bucks. SL0 ONH
(0753 651700)

1.3.1989
REVISED 29.3.1989
"AT LAST A DRAGON"

CAST

LYNDA
SPIKE
COLIN
SOPHIE
LAURA
MR SULLIVAN
MATT KERR
CAMPBELL'S BUTLER
MR ADAMS
MR MAYER
CAMPBELL
MRS CAMPBELL

BREAKDOWN OF DAYS

NIGHT 1 (WEDNESDAY) Scenes 601 to 637
This sequence of CUTS is taken fast, each SHOT on just long enough to establish what is happening. There should be a general feeling of tension - the calm before the storm.

601  INT. SPIKE'S BEDROOM. EVENING

SIKE is sprawled on his bed, hands behind his head, staring at the ceiling.

CUT TO:

602  INT. LYNDA'S BEDROOM. EVENING

INTERCUT WITH SC.601

LYNDA sits on the end of her bed, chin propped on hand, staring morosely into space.

Lynda feeds her goldfish.

CUT TO:

Spike paces his room. He takes a book from a shelf as he passes it, starts flicking through it.

CUT TO:

Lynda reads a book. After a moment she tosses it irritably aside.

CUT TO:

Spike as we first saw him - sprawled on the bed, hands behind his head.

CUT TO:

Lynda as we first saw her - sitting on the end of her bed. She looks round at her alarm clock again. She reacts to the time, stands, walks out of shot.

CUT TO:

603  INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE NEWSROOM. DAY

We continue movement from above as Lynda walks round her desk, rapping out orders to Kenny.

LYNDA
Kenny, cut the page two buses and get more pollution from Sarah. And could you get something done about the sign outside? I don't think 'trespassers will be exterminated' is really the image we're trying to project here.

KENNY
Okay, boss.

Spike has been watching Lynda appreciatively. He rises from his chair in pursuit.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. SPIKE'S BEDROOM. EVENING

Again, continuing the motion, Spike gets off his bed. He goes out of the room, leaving the door open. We hold the shot of the doorway as we hear Spike open another door and then a bath being run.

INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE NEWSROOM. DAY

FLASHBACK: FIRST STORIES - EPISODE 1

Spike sits himself on Lynda's desk.

SPIKE
Hello? Hi. Excuse me?

Lynda turns.

SPIKE
I'm, er, having some problems filling out this form, you couldn't give me a hand could you?

INT. LYNDA'S BEDROOM/LANDING. EVENING

Lynda's landing. Lynda, in her dressing gown, heads down the landing into the bathroom, closing the door behind her. We hear a shower start.
INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE NEWSROOM. DAY

FLASHBACK: FIRST SERIES - EPISODE 1.

LYNDA
What's your problem?

SPIKE
Some of the questions are kind of hard you know.

LYNDA
What questions?

SPIKE
Well like, ah...

Shot of Spike's doorway as before. We hear splashes and Spike singing.

Shot of Lynda's bathroom door; the shower noise continues.

RESUME FLASHBACK

SPIKE
Name?

LYNDA
Well I've a suggestion. Get your mother to write it on the back of your hand every morning.

INT. SPIKE'S BEDROOM/LANDING. EVENING

Shot of Spike's doorway. Spike emerges from the bathroom in his dressing gown, towelling his hair.

INT. LYNGDA'S BEDROOM/LANDING. EVENING

Lynda's landing. Lynda comes out of the bathroom, a towel round her hair.

Shot of Spike, on his bed, rubbing his hair with the towel.
Lynda, drying her hair with a hair dryer, a thought slowly occurs to her; she frowns worriedly.

LYNDA
(VO FROM FLASHBACK)
Spike Thomson!

CUT TO:

610 INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE NEWSROOM. DAY
FLASHBACK: FIRST SERIES - EPISODE 1.

LYNDA
Of course, the American.

SPIKE
Well, an American. There's more than one of us, you know.

LYNDA
Staying long? Or is this a flying visit?

SPIKE
I've been here for four years.

611 INT. LYNDA'S BEDROOM/HALLWAY. EVENING

Sitting on the bed, Lynda comes to a decision. She throws down the hair dryer, heads for the door.
Lynda goes hurrying down the stairs. She turns into the hallway, picks up the phone.

INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE NEWSROOM. DAY

FLASHBACK: FIRST SERIES - EPISODE 1.

LYNDA
Weren't you the one at the school dance who... that was disgusting!

SPIKE
I thought so.

Spike in his bedroom. He turns as he hears the phone ring downstairs.

RESUME FLASHBACK

SPIKE
Hey, can I tell you something? I mean, I know this could be embarrassing coming from a guy you've just met, but I really think it's something you should know.

INT. SPIKE'S HALLWAY. EVENING

Spike comes down the stairs, answers the phone.

SPIKE
Hello?
INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE NEWSROOM. DAY

FLASHBACK: First series - episode 1.

SPIKE
If this was the olden days if this was like thousands and thousands of years ago ... I'd kill a dragon for you.

INT. LYNDÄ'S HALLWAY. EVENING

Lynda on the phone.

LYNDÄ
I want to make one think perfectly clear to you, Thomson. Maybe you're taking me out, maybe I have to go ... but just don't think you get to kiss me goodnight.

She slams down the phone.

Spike winces at the noise. He looks at the receiver in his hand, shakes his head and replaces it. He turns to go.

INT. JUNIOR GAZETTE NEWSROOM. DAY

FLASHBACK: First series - episode 1.

SPIKE
In fact, I'm going to make you an offer right now. If you'll go out with me some night this week, I'll make a definite commitment to kill the first dragon I see.

EXT./INT. LYNDÄ'S FRONT DOOR/HALLWAY. EVENING

Shot of doorbell. Spike's hand comes into shot and presses it.

A wider shot. Spike is very smartly and formally dressed. He carries a bunch of flowers.

Fade up episode title:

AT LAST A DRAGON

Lynda opens the door. She too is dressed for the evening and looks stunning. Spike takes this in.
SPIKE
I'm a great kisser, Lynda. Seventeen years and never dribbled.

LYNDA
I expect you practise a lot on your own.

SPIKE
Absolutely. I have this pair of rubber lips.

LYNDA
I can see that.

SPIKE
Cute! Can I come in?

LYNDA
Why don't you wait in the garden? There's a little gnome you can talk to.

SPIKE
Because I'd rather come in. There's a little gnome there I can talk to.

LYNDA
Is that a joke about my height?

SPIKE
I wouldn't stoop so low.

LYNDA
(Stepping back)
Come in - if you can reach the step.

SPIKE
(Entering)
Is that a joke about my height?

LYNDA
Of course not. You haven't got any.

SPIKE
Oh, you think so? Actually I'm six-foot-three. I've just been standing in a hole since I was seven.
LYNDA
Yes, I've often thought of you that way.
They have gone through the hallway into the kitchen.

INT. LYNDA'S KITCHEN. EVENING

LYNDA
Do you want a coffee or something?

SPIKE
Sure. Aren't you going to ask me about these flowers?

LYNDA
(Making Coffee) Whose garden did you get them from?

SPIKE
A blind old lady's. She'll never miss them.

LYNDA
You have a very sick sense of humour, you know that?

SPIKE
You should've seen me blindfold her guide dog! I wonder where they both are now ...

LYNDA
Why do you have to be so totally sick?

SPIKE
Self defence. (Holds up flowers) I didn't take them from a garden.

They hold a look, Lynda drops her gaze.

LYNDA
I'm on edge. Sorry.
SPIKE
It's okay, it suits you. You're very pretty when you're angry.
Of course, I've never seen you any other way. Maybe you're angry when you're pretty.

She looks at him a moment.

LYNDA
(handing him coffee)
Interesting.

SPIKE
What?

LYNDA
Whenever I make you nervous you start cracking jokes at me.

SPIKE
I was cracking those jokes at myself, you just stood in front of me.

LYNDA
Look, can we please stop this? Can we for once just be two normal people?

SPIKE
I can be two normal people if you can.

LYNDA
Stop joking!

They look at each other for a moment.
SPIKE
Stop making me nervous.

He walks over, presents her with the flowers. She takes them, looks up ruefully apologetic at Spike.

LYNDA
These are lovely.

Spike smiles

SPIKE
I was going to make a joke there but I didn't.

LYNDA
I appreciate it.

SPIKE
It was a very funny joke

LYNDA
I'm sure it was.

Spike opens his mouth to say something.

No, I don't want to hear it anyway.

SPIKE
Could I write it down?

She looks at him shrewdly.

LYNDA
Was that a joke?

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY. EVENING

Spike leans against the wall in the hallway, waiting. Lynda is descending the stairs wearing a jacket over her dress - the two don't go together particularly well.
LYNDA
(As she descends) Couple of things, Spike. This party's a big deal for me. There's a lot of people I want to ... well, impress. And I just want to be sure you - ...

She has reached the bottom of the stairs. She breaks off as she realises Spike is staring at her jacket.

LYNDA
Something wrong?

SPIKE
I like your dress.

LYNDA
What about the jacket?

SPIKE
I like your dress.

LYNDA
Do you think the jacket goes?

SPIKE
I hope it does.

CUT TO:

Spike is again leaning against the wall as Lynda descends the stairs wearing a different jacket.

LYNDA
(As she descends) The point I'm trying to make is if I'm talking to somebody important and you start up your usual ...

She breaks off. Spike is again staring at her jacket.

CUT TO:

Spike leaning against the wall, waiting. Lynda appears at the top of the stairs, hold up two jackets. Spike considers them.

SPIKE
What was the first one again?
EXT. LYNDAs HOUSE. EVENING

A taxi is pulling up outside as Lynda and Spike come out of the front door, Lynda in her original jacket.

LYNDA
(calling behind her into house)
Mum, we're off!
(closes door. To Spike:)
Mr. Kerr's going to be there, Mr. Campbell the owner - it's his house we're going to... a lot of newspaper people...

SPIKE
And you want to do some serious grovelling, right?

LYNDA
I do not grovel! When have I ever grovelled?

SPIKE
That guy from the Guardian. You were all over him.

LYNDA
Oh, rubbish!

SPIKE
(opening taxi door for her)
You smiled and laughed more in one conversation with him than in the whole time I've known you. In fact, twice.

LYNDA
I did not grovel!

SPIKE
I had to wipe your chin every time you looked at him.

LYNDA
You just don't understand the concept of building a career, do you, Thomson?

SPIKE
I've made a career of it.
EXT. ROAD. EVENING

Shot of the taxi as it drives along.

LYNDA (VO)
You know Kenny forced me to go to this party with you. And all I'm trying to say is that it's important to me.

INT. TAXI. EVENING

Shot of Spike and Lynda on the back seat.

LYNDA
So just don't get up to any crazy stuff.

SPIKE
When have I ever done that?

LYNDA
The school dance.

SPIKE
Apart from the school dance.

LYNDA
The sixth year social.

SPIKE
And the sixth year social.

LYNDA
The fifth year social, the fourth year social...

SPIKE
Apart from those...
Spike is at the driver's window paying the driver, Lynda is at the other side of the car on the pavement.

LYNDA
Sarah's birthday party, Julie's birthday party, Kevin's birthday party ...

SPIKE
Yeh, yeh - but - ...

LYNDA
The school sports day, the staff/pupil social.

Spike has paid off the taxi driver. As the taxi drives off he now joins Lynda on the pavement.

SPIKE
(Puzzled frown) I don't remember the staff/pupil social.

LYNDA
That's part of the problem.

They stand facing one another on the pavement for a moment.

SPIKE
Lynda, I'm not going to let you down.

LYNDA
You'd better not!

SPIKE
For the record, you're about the last person in the world I would ever let down. I thought you'd have worked that out by now.

There is a moment between them. Lynda doesn't know how to respond. She resorts to sidestepping the whole issue with a sudden cheery smile.

LYNDA
Well! Shall we go in?

She heads off out of shot. Spike looks after her, registering the side-step. After a moment he follows.
Lynda is standing at the large and impressive gates leading to the drive up to Cameron Campbell's house. The house is also large and impressive. Spike joins her.

SPIKE
Don't you think the front lawn is just crying out for an airport?

Abruptly Lynda lets out a loud hiccup.

SPIKE
Huh?

LYNDA
Nothing!

SPIKE
I thought you...

LYNDA
I didn't.

SPIKE
But I thought you...

LYNDA
(firmly)
Everything's under control!

A car horn sounds behind them. They part to allow a long black expensive looking car to roll up the drive between them.

SPIKE
Driving up to the door - why didn't we think of that?

Lynda hiccups again.

SPIKE
You all right?
I'm fine!

Spike shrugs. He looks up the driveway again. The car has stopped at the door. The chauffeur is opening one of the rear doors. As Spike and Lynda walk up the driveway they see an Arab in full national dress get out of the car and go to the front door.

Looks like there's some interesting guests, huh?

Hic!

I'm going to go out on a limb here. You got the hiccups?

(Miserably) Not really.

Not really?

Lynda abruptly turns and starts heading back down the driveway.

I need a walk.

What?

Coming?

Where are you going? (Catches her by the arm) Come on, this is your big moment ...
SPIKE
(Looks curiously at her) ... you've
got a lot of important people to meet ...

LYNDA

Hic!

Spike looks shrewdly at Lynda. He considers for a
moment, then experiments.

SPIKE
Big moment.

LYNDA

Hic!

SPIKE
Important people

LYNDA

Hic!

He tries the clincher.

SPIKE
Social occasion?

LYNDA

Hic!

Spike stares at Lynda in wonder.

SPIKE
Well what do you know! A nervous hic!

LYNDA
(Bristling) It's under control!

SPIKE
Yeh?

LYNDA

Of course!

Spike leans mischievously over to her.

SPIKE
Goodnight kiss!
Lynda doesn't hiccup.

LYNDA
What's that got to do with big moments or important people?

SPIKE
It might make a nice social occasion.

LYNDA
Hic!

She glares briefly at Spike, then turns and heads back up the drive. Spike shakes his head amused and follows.

A shot of the front door as Lynda arrives at it. She stands there bracing herself for a moment. Spike arrives next to her. She looks at him defiantly, plainly very nervous but trying to hide it.

SPIKE
Relax! You're going to be great!

He reaches over and presses the doorbell.

LYNDA
(Instantly) Hic!

SPIKE
Relax!

LYNDA
Hic!

SPIKE
Lynda, what's —

LYNDA
(Turning to go) I can't go in just now!

SPIKE
What?

LYNDA
I can't go in!
As Spike watches in astonishment Lynda disappears round
the side of the house. At the same moment the door
opens. Spike turns to see a BUTLER in the doorway. He
hesitates for a moment.

SPIKE
Listen, I'm going to be ringing this bell
in a moment or two, could you open the
door when I do that?

The butler stares at him.

SPIKE
Thanks! Great working with you!

He pulls the door shut again.

He looks round

A shot of the corner where Lynda disappeared.

LYNDA
(From off) Hic!

Spike smiles, bemused. He walks round the corner.

He finds Lynda leaning miserably against the wall. She
glances at him, looks quickly away. Spike watches her,
saying nothing.

LYNDA
(Finally) I suppose this must look
pretty funny.

Spike shrugs.

LYNDA
I'm not very good at ... social stuff.

SPIKE
(Smiling) No?

LYNDA
(Looking resentfully at him) No!

SPIKE
(Taking her arm) If you get scared,
you can stand behind me.
LYNDA
(Pulling away) Let's just forget this. Let's go somewhere else!

SPIKE
What? This is a big deal for you, remember?

LYNDA
Hic!

SPIKE
Stop that! (Gentler) Now come on!

He leads her firmly round the corner. We hold the shot, letting them go out of sight.

LYNDA
(From off) Hic!

Lynda promptly walks back round again. Spike's arm reaches into shot and virtually drags her back round again.

Shot of the front door as Spike and Lynda arrive at it again. Spike rings the bell.

LYNDA
Surprised?

SPIKE
At what?

LYNDA
Me.

The door is opened by the same butler. He looks ironically at Spike.

SPIKE
(Grins at him) You've worked this door before, I can tell.

He guides Lynda in. We hold on the door as it closes behind them.

LYNDA
(V.O.) Why aren't you more surprised?
We are panning round a very large and opulent room. It is filled with guests, all very formally dressed, with waiters weaving in among them. Although we do not particularly note them SULLIVAN, MATT KERR and the Arab are there.

SPIKE
(OS: during pan)
The school dance, the sixth year social, Sarah's birthday party, Kevin's birthday party, Julie's birthday party...

We have come to Spike and Lynda standing in the doorway. They both have drinks.

LYNDA
What about them?

SPIKE
You were never there. I figured there was a reason.

LYNDA
Hic!

SPIKE
Exactly.

LYNDA
(looking miserably round room)
I'm not good at this kind of thing. All these people...

SPIKE
Shall we mingle?

He starts to head into the room. Lynda catches him by the arm.

LYNDA
I can't! I don't do conversation! Anything I say comes out like an order. I say 'hello' and people salute.
SOPHIE
(Off) Hello!

Spike and Lynda turn. SOPHIE and LAURA are standing next to them beaming. They are both dressed as waitresses, complete with aprons and little hats.

SPIKE
Sophie, Laura ... !

LYNDA
What are you doing here?

SOPHIE
Catering!

SPIKE
What?

LAURA
For our cookery project.

SOPHIE
Mr Sullivan arranged it - when the science department wouldn't lend us their rabbit.

LYNDA
Why did you want their rabbit?

SOPHIE
For our cookery project.

Spike and Lynda stare at them. Sophie beams.

SOPHIE
That was a joke!

LYNDA
(Relieved) Oh, right, good ...

SPIKE
We knew that ...

SOPHIE
The science department don't have a rabbit.

LAURA
(As they turn to go) Not any more.

They giggle. Spike and Lynda watch them go, worriedly.
SPIKE
(to Lynda)
I know three guys in fifth year who pay them protection money.

SULLIVAN (OS)
Are they on the same rates as the staff?

SULLIVAN has appeared next to them.

SPIKE
Mr. Sullivan, how could you let those two in where there are people?

LYNDA
Have you tied down everything breakable and movable?

SPIKE
Which is everything except those two.

SULLIVAN
Don't be unreasonable. They've done a lot of work for this, they've cooked a lot of stuff.

SPIKE
Anyone we know?

SULLIVAN
That's enough.
(to Lynda)
You know there are rather a lot of people here tonight anxious to meet you. Newspaper people.

LYNDA
Hic!

Sullivan stares at her.

SPIKE
That was nothing. I know, she told me.
SULLIVAN
(Slightly confused) Well anyway!
Matt's over there talking to some of
his old colleagues. Shall we join them?

Lynda looks over. MATT is talking and laughing with
some people.

LYNDA

Hic!

SULLIVAN
(To Spike) Was that nothing again?

SPIKE
You heard it too?

LYNDA
Look, ah ... I've got to, ah ...
Excuse me!

She turns on her heel and heads quickly away.

SPIKE
Sir, you've known Lynda a lot longer
than I have. She is mad, isn't she?

SULLIVAN
(As if it were obvious) Oh yes!

SPIKE
(Starting after Lynda) Fine.
Just so long as I know.

Sullivan watches him go, smiles.

Lynda is standing agitatedly over in a corner of the room
by a large plant pot.

Spike joins her, looking at her with gentle irony.
Lynda glances at him, noticing him for the first time.

LYNDA
(Flustered) I was just, ah ... going
to the toilet.

SPIKE
Do you want me to pull the potted plant
closer?
She glares at him. She sets off at a vigorous pace to the door. Spike follows.

LYNDA
(as she goes)
Why do you have to keep following me?

SPIKE
Mostly, the view.

She glares at him over her shoulder, goes out the door.

INT. CAMPBELL'S HALLWAY. EVENING

Lynda appears out of the door from the reception room, Spike close behind her. Lynda rounds on him.

LYNDA
Spike, I'm going to the bathroom. You can't come with me.

SPIKE
No. But I can make sure it's not an excuse for you to slip off and go home.

LYNDA
Why would I...

Suddenly Sophie and Laura are between them, each with a sausage roll.

SOPHIE
Could you try these please?
As Spike and Lynda open their mouths to reply

SPIKE
Look - ...

LYNDA
Sophie - ...

Sophie and Laura reach up and pop sausage rolls into their mouths. Spike and Lynda register surprise and indignation for a moment - then, with no real alternative open to them, they start to chew. Sophie and Laura watch expectantly.

SPIKE
(Still chewing: surprised) Not bad.

LYNDA
Quite reasonable, really.

SOPHIE
Can you taste any disinfectant on them?

Spike and Lynda freeze in mid-chew.

LAURA
Carpet fluff?

SOPHIE
Axle grease?

Spike and Lynda stare at the two of them, alarmedly.
Sophie and Laura take silence for a negative.

SOPHIE
Good! (To Laura, as they go) Told you they'd be all right.

They disappear off together. Spike and Lynda stare at one another for a moment, still frozen in mid-chew.
In one fluid movement, Spike grabs a vase from the table next to them, holds it out between them so they can both deposit their sausage rolls in it, then replaces it.
Cont'd

SPIKE
Right! The waiter said the bathroom was at the end of the hall.

LYNDA
You know, usually I do this alone.

SPIKE
No wonder you never make friends.

LYNDA
(Flaring) I do so make friends.

SPIKE
Into what?

She glares at him, starts to head down the hall. She stops, turns.

LYNDA
(Annoyed) Are you going to wait there till I come out?

SPIKE
Absolutely. Ready to jump you if you make for the door.

LYNDA
(Eyes him) As ever.

She opens the door next to her, checks it is the bathroom, goes in. Spike doesn't move. A moment later the door opens again and Lynda pokes her head out, checking he is still there. She withdraws again.

Spike shakes his head, amused. He turns, goes back into the main room.

INT. CAMPBELL'S BATHROOM. EVENING

Lynda leans against the bathroom door. Slowly she slides down it, till she is sitting on the floor.

LYNDA
Hic!
A look of utter self-disgust passes over her face. Impulsively, she picks up her handbag and flings it at the opposite wall. From off screen there is a crash and tinkle.

Lynda stares in horror.

INT. CAMPBELL'S RECEPTION ROOM. EVENING

A shot of Spike in among the party. He is looking round as Sullivan appears beside him.

SULLIVAN
Where's Lynda?

SPIKE
Mentally speaking, the third moon of Jupiter. Which is currently located in the bathroom at the end of the hall.

He glances at the two drinks Sullivan is holding

SPIKE
Two drinks? (Smiles knowingly)
Found a friend?

SULLIVAN
I'm, ah ... cultivating one.

He nods over at the far side of the room. Spike looks over. A very glamorous woman of about Sullivan's age.

SPIKE
(EYEING HER APPRECIATIVELY) Hey, she's female, isn't she? I've heard about that. (Looks at Sullivan)
A fiver says you haven't got a chance.

SULLIVAN
What have I told you about betting, Spike?
SPIKE
What?

SULLIVAN
Never try it with me. A five it is.

He heads over. Spike watches him go, smiles.

He looks round. The Arab is standing with his back to him, pouring over a table decked with food. A mischievous look comes over Spike's face. He strolls over.

SPIKE
Hell of a car you've got out there.
I've seen shorter traffic jams.

The Arab stiffens, slowly turns. Spike stares. Looking out from the Arab head-dress is -

SPIKE
...Colin?

Colin stares at him for a long moment, aghast, not sure what to say. Finally he manages:

COLIN
Who?

ADAMS (OS)
Mister Hafiz!

Mr Adams has appeared next to them, a middle-aged business man type, he has some papers in his hand.

ADAMS
(indicating papers)
Very interesting proposal, Mister Hafiz. I feel sure your uncle and I can do business.
COLIN
(Bowing gratefully) May all your camels be bountiful.

ADAMS
Ah, yes, indeed. (Seeing Spike)
Oh, sorry, is this a friend of yours?

COLIN
No.

SPIKE
Yes! (Taking Colin by arm: To Adams)
Excuse me! One of his mothers wants to see him!

Adams watches baffled as Colin is dragged away. A moment later Spike briefly steps back into shot and takes the papers from Adams.

SPIKE
You'll thank me!

INT. CAMPBELL’S BATHROOM. EVENING

Shot of waste bin as a couple of small broken bottles are dropped into it. We pan up to Lynda clearing some more small broken bottles from the shelf above the sink. Her face holds an expression of abject misery.

She catches her own eye in the mirror over the sink. She stares at herself miserably.

LYNDA
Hic!

She closes her eyes in despair.

SCENE CUT
INT. CAMPBELL'S STUDY. EVENING

A book lined study. Spike bundles Colin through the door and against a wall; he starts going through the papers he took from Adams.

COLIN
Who is this Colin Mathews? I am Nabeel Hafiz. I'm an Arab. From Arabia.

SPIKE
(Looking at papers) Oil? Under Norbridge High School???

COLIN
(Snatching back papers) I hadn't got to that bit yet!

SPIKE
And you're not going to!

He snatches off Colin's headgear.

COLIN
So. You saw through my disguise!

SPIKE
A tablecloth, with a headband round it? No, I just took a lucky guess!

COLIN
It's a lovely little deal, Spike! You wouldn't believe what these guys will fall for!

Colin starts to wander round the room, looking at it appreciatively.

SPIKE
(Following) Where did you get the car?

COLIN
My uncle. He's in on this.

SPIKE
And the invite?

COLIN
Well I'm a business partner, aren't I?
SPIKE
Colin, Lynda's at the party. She's here to make an impression. And it's not going to look too good if her financial adviser turns up as an Arabian Knight selling Secondary Comprehensive oil fields. So you cut it out. Now.

He stands menacingly close to Colin. Unusually, Colin doesn't cower. Instead he stares at Spike in wonder—then slowly grins, understanding.

COLIN
You know, a year ago you'd have loved this stuff. Look at you now!

SPIKE
Colin...

COLIN
You're a mug, Spike! You think you can get her?

Spike stares at him. Colin shakes his head, takes the headgear back from Spike.

SPIKE
What?
COLIN
Think about this, Spike. We're all leaving school in a few months. You think you'll ever see her again?
(Spike frowns)
I mean, what's tonight about? Her career. And she's a viable commodity, that one - she'll take off like a rocket. Kid, you're just helping out on the launch pad.

Close shot of Spike's face. The truth of all this is hitting home. He drops his gaze.

Colin seizes the opportunity. He puts a comforting hand on Spike's shoulder.

COLIN
Women, eh?
(He puts a paternal arm round Spike's shoulder)
I know what you're going through, kid. Heartbreak city, right?
(Spike breaks away from him impatiently)
Listen, what you need's a little business deal to take your mind off it. I've got something good for you, Spike. And it's straight down the middle legit. Of course, you'd have to wear a blonde wig and a dress.

SPIKE
Get out!

COLIN
What?

SPIKE
(Bundling Colin to the door)
Get out!

He slams the door behind Colin. For a moment he stands there, unsure what to do, thinking furiously about what he has just heard.

The door suddenly opens again and Colin pokes his head round with his best salesman's smile.
COLIN
I can tell you're thinking about it!

Spike lunges for the door and Colin withdraws like lightning.

INT. CAMPBELL'S HALLWAY. EVENING

The bathroom door opens, Lynda comes out, pale-faced and miserable. She barely glances up as an Arab heads down the hall. However, a second after he passes she double-takes and stares after him as he enters the reception room. She thinks about it, shakes her head - it couldn't have been.

She is about to head down the hall herself when Sophie and Laura appear hurriedly out of the reception room, go straight to the vase on the table and start scraping a plateful of food into it.

They turn and go back into the reception room. Lynda stares for a moment, then goes cautiously to the vase and looks in. She winces away in disgust. A look of uncertainty crosses her face. She goes to the reception room, opens the door, looks in.

INT. CAMPBELL'S RECEPTION ROOM. EVENING

A shot from Lynda's pov. She looks round a moment before she sights Sullivan and Matt. They are talking concernedly and looking around - plainly for her.

INT. CAMPBELL'S HALLWAY. EVENING

LYNDA

Hic!

She quickly withdraws, closing the door. She thinks for a moment, hard - then evidently comes to a decision.

She crosses to where the coats are hanging, finds her jacket among them. She hesitates for a second, then puts it on. Her mind made up, she turns for the door - and freezes.

Spike is standing there watching her. For a moment neither says anything. Lynda smiles nervously.

LYNDA
Caught in the act, eh?

Spike looks at her for a moment.

SPIKE
You really can't face it?

She shrugs helplessly.
LYNDA
Don't make me.

Close shot Spike. He is caught between his desire to help her and his desire to keep her. It doesn't take him long to resolve the dilemma.

SPIKE
Okay. Let's go.

He takes his coat, starts to put it on.

LYNDA
You mean it?

SPIKE
Sure. You can't deal with it, you can't deal with it. No big deal, right?

He leads the way to the door.

LYNDA
You won't tell anyone about this - at the newsroom?

SPIKE
(Opening door) Of course I won't.

LYNDA
Spike ...

Spike turns in the doorway.

LYNDA
I appreciate this.

Spike can't quite meet her eye.

SPIKE
Yeh, well ... come on!

He leads the way out.
Spike and Lynda come out through the door. We track with them down the drive.

LYNDA
Weird, isn't it?

SPIKE
Weird?

LYNDA
Me and parties. Me and people.
I just don't know how to... well, socialise.

Spike says nothing.

LYNDA
You know, when I was fourteen I pretended I was ill at my own birthday party. Kenny came up to my room and we played chess all evening.

SPIKE
Good old Kenny.

LYNDA
He won three games in a row and I threw him out.
(she looks at Spike, smiles)
Good old Spike.

Spike comes to a halt, stares at her.

SPIKE
What?

LYNDA
Well, you got me out of there, didn't you?
SPIKE
You're grateful?

LYNDA
Well of course I'm grateful!

SPIKE
(Appeals to heavens) Gimme a break! Gratitude! Now she does gratitude!

LYNDA
Spike - ...

SPIKE
What a lousy trick!

LYNDA
What's the matter - ... What are you doing!

Spike has grabbed her by the wrist and is virtually dragging her back up the driveway.

LYNDA
Spike, let go of me! Spike! I'm not going back in there!

SPIKE
Yes you are! (Rings doorbell) And believe me, Lynda - this is going to hurt me more than it hurts you!

LYNDA
Have you gone off your head?

SPIKE
Completely. Sad, isn't it?

The Butler answers the door. Spike immediately drags Lynda through.

SPIKE
(To butler) I caught this one trying to escape - dug a tunnel with a cocktail stick.
A shot of Matt moving through the party, looking around, puzzled. He sees Sullivan.

MATT

Bill?

Sullivan turns from a drinks waiter, again holding two glasses.

MATT

(Eyeing the two glasses) Sorry to interrupt you. Have you seen Lynda?

SULLIVAN

Not since she arrived.

SPIKE

(Off) Mr Kerr!

They both look round. Spike approaches, still discreetly dragging Lynda.

SPIKE

Mr Sullivan!

He 'presents' Lynda.

SPIKE

The Editor will see you now!

MATT

Hello, Lynda - you're looking lovely! And it's nice to see you at last.

LYNDA

And you, sir.

MATT

And Spike - not looking such a hoodlum as normal, I see!

SPIKE

And you, sir.

MATT

Well, I'm glad I've managed to find you. I've been boasting about you all evening, it would've been very embarrassing if you hadn't made an entrance.
LYNDA
Well I'm sorry but I - ...

MATT
In fact, here's someone I've been boasting to!

An elderly, distinguished looking gentleman has appeared just behind Lynda. This is ROBERT MAYER.

MAYER
(Taking Lynda's hand) You must be Lynda Day.

MATT
This, Lynda, is Robert Mayer. Rather a big name in the newspaper business.

LYNDA
Oh! (A little nervously) Do you have a column I would have read?

MATT
No. He has a newspaper.

LYNDA
(Embarrassed) Oh, I see ...

MAYER
(To Lynda) Listen, could we have a quiet word. I've got to be leaving soon and I'd appreciate a chat.

LYNDA
A chat?

MAYER
About your future - since Matt's been telling me all about your past. (To others) You don't mind me stealing her away for a minute or two, do you gentlemen?

MATT
Oh no ... 

SULLIVAN
Not at all ...
Close shot of Spike. He minds a lot but he's fighting it.

MAYER
(Taking Lynda by the arm, leading her away)
Matt's been showing me some of your work and I have to say ...

A shot of Sullivan, Matt and Spike watching the two of them go off together.

SPIKE
We have lift-off!

SULLIVAN
What?

SPIKE
Nothing.

A glass breaks loudly behind them.

SPIKE
(Hearing this) Don't look at me.
That wasn't my heart!

He goes. Matt and Sullivan exchange a look.

SULLIVAN
Oh dear.

A shot, from a distance, of Lynda and Mayer. Mayer is talking animatedly, Lynda listening intently. She is starting to smile.

A closer shot of Spike grimly watching them. After a moment he turns and walks off through the party. We track with him.

As he goes an ELDERLY WOMAN crosses behind him, goes to a man.

MRS. CAMPBELL
Cameron, where are the car keys?

CAMPBELL
In the vase in the hall.
She goes. As we continue tracking with Spike, Sophie and Laura cross in front of him. Laura supports Sophie who looks a little ill.

LAURA
I told you not to eat the ones with the green bits! Lucky you made it to that vase in time!

Spike sees something ahead. He stops, calls.

SPIKE
Nabeel!

A shot of Colin, still in his Arab gear, looking round in alarm. He is talking to several business types.

SPIKE
(Going over) Nabeel Hafiz. How the hell are you? (Puts arm round Colin) Sorry to interrupt, guys, but me and this little fella go back years, don't we Nabby?

COLIN
Well - ...

SPIKE
(To others) Hey, have you guys heard Nabby here on the subject of his native culture? He is so interesting! I just learned so much!

A 'thought' occurs to him.

SPIKE
Listen, Nabby, why don't you give us a little run-down now. (To others) You're going to love this!

There is a general murmur of approval and assent. Colin looks at his 'audience' in horror.

SPIKE
Come on, Nabby, don't be shy. Give us the lot! In detail. From the start. Now!
He smiles maliciously at Colin.

A close shot of Colin's stricken face. We freeze-frame on it.

There is a burst of laughter.

EXT. LYNDAS STREET. NIGHT

Lynda and Spike come staggering into shot, helpless with laughter.

LYNDA
No!

SPIKE
It's true!

LYNDA
I don't believe it!

SPIKE
I'm telling you, it's the truth.

LYNDA
He said the capital of Saudi Arabia ... 

SPIKE
Yup.

LYNDA
Of Saudi Arabia ...

SPIKE
Yup.

LYNDA
... was Brigadoon.

SPIKE
He did.

They launch into further gales of laughter.

DISSOLVE TO:
EXT. LYNDIA'S HOUSE. NIGHT

Spike and Lynda are just arriving at the gate.

LYNDA
Well! Home at last! (Turns to Spike)
Why didn't we take a taxi - you said you
had money, you said you had a fiver.

SPIKE
I, ah ... lost it.

LYNDA
Oh, well! (Looks very directly at Spike)
I had an amazing time tonight.

SPIKE
So I hear. Everybody wants Lynda.

LYNDA
(Shrugs modestly: smiles) You know
how it is.

SPIKE
(Looks at her a moment) Yeh.

There is a pause.

LYNDA
I wouldn't have had an amazing time
if it hadn't been for... you.

Spike looks away, almost embarrassed.

LYNDA
You were wonderful.

SPIKE
(Making a joke of it) I'm a
wonderful guy!

LYNDA
(Looks at him a moment) Yes.
You are.

There is another pause.

LYNDA
Well! Here we are!
SPIKE
Yup. This is here. I remember it.

They stand looking at one another, neither quite sure what to do. After a moment Lynda makes the first move.

LYNDA
(ironically)
Well, I suppose we could shake hands...

SPIKE
What?

She takes a step closer, looks at him expectantly.

Looking untypically nervous, Spike also steps closer. They are now in position for a kiss. Lynda looks at him mischievously.

LYNDA
You're shaking.

SPIKE
Me? I'm rock steady. That's just the world.

They both lean forward to kiss. At the last moment Lynda pulls back. She looks at Spike, considering.

LYNDA
I think you're getting the wrong idea about this kiss.

SPIKE
I'm not, Lynda, honest. It's just a kiss between friends, right? A thank you kiss. It doesn't mean a thing - I know that.

He stares anxiously at Lynda. Lynda looks back at him for a moment, smiles.

LYNDA
I knew you were getting the wrong idea.

As the implications of this settle into Spike, Lynda pulls him over and they kiss for as long as the time slot will allow. When they part, Spike looks distinctly fazed.
LYNDA
Now, remember your name?

She turns, opens the front door, turns in the doorway.

LYNDA
Well?

SPIKE
Spike - right?

LYNDA
Oh! Is that who you are?

They hold a look for a moment. Both smile. She withdraws again, closing the door.

Spike stares at the door for a moment, unable to stop smiling. He turns and walks down the path. He comes to the gate. He snaps his fingers and it swings open for him. He goes through it. It closes behind him.

Spike looks up at the lamp post in the street outside. It is out. He licks his finger, presses it against the side. The lamp flares into life.

He turns, starts to walk away from us down the street. After a moment, he lets out a great whoop of joy, leaping into the air and throwing his fist.

FREEZE FRAME.

END TITLES.