

FOUR WEDDINGS

AND

A FUNERAL

By

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SPRING1. INT. CHARLES'S BEDROOM. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 1.

A WEDDING COAT hangs on the door of an old wooden wardrobe.

The wardrobe is in a bedroom. The bedroom is white, and tall. There is ornate plaster work on the ceiling, but at ground level, clothes are thrown about on a minimum of furniture. CHARLES is asleep. His alarm clock goes off. His hand sweeps up and switches it off. He stays asleep.

2. INT. TOM'S BEDROOM. TOM & FIONA'S HOUSE. DAY. 2.

Another alarm clock is ringing - TOM sits bolt upright in his pyjamas. He is a very high spirited, very affectionate and very stupid aristocrat. He reaches for a shirt and tie, with the tie already tied round the neck, and the shirt three-quarters buttoned - in one movement, he slips them on together, like a late school boy.

3. INT. KITCHEN. MATTHEW & GARETH'S HOUSE. DAY. 3.

MATTHEW in a very elegant nightgown, making a pot of tea. He is 33, clean shaven and very intelligent with a very kind face.

4. INT. CHARLES'S BEDROOM. CHARLES & SCARLET'S HOUSE. DAY. 4.

CHARLES is fast asleep.

5. INT. FIONA'S BEDROOM. TOM & FIONA'S HOUSE. DAY. 5.

FIONA is tall, attractive, intelligent, aristocratic, 33. Tom's sister and his utter opposite. She holds up two dresses - she puts one in front of her and looks in the mirror - pulls a disapproving face - then holds up the other - pulls a face at that too - she doesn't like either of them.

6. INT. BEDROOM. MATTHEW & GARETH'S HOUSE. DAY. 6.

MATTHEW is buttoning up his detached collar. He wears wedding trousers, braces, a white shirt. At which moment GARETH passes behind him. He is about 45 - overweight, bearded, with rosy cheeks and disposition. At this moment he is wearing absolutely nothing.

7. INT. CHARLES'S BEDROOM. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 7.

CHARLES is still asleep.

8. INT. UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR. TOM & FIONA'S HOUSE. DAY. 8.

TOM now fully dressed in his wedding coat. He emerges from his bedroom door. Emerging from the door on the opposite side of the corridor is BERNARD, his best friend, also in his wedding gear.

It is a rather grand, beautifully decorated big house in Eaton Square. TOM knocks on FIONA's bedroom door - she wears a third dress. They're completely ready.

9. INT. CHARLES'S BEDROOM. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 9.

CHARLES, rolling over, smiling, still fast asleep.

10. EXT. MATTHEW & GARETH'S HOUSE. DAY. 10.

FIONA, TOM and BERNARD pull up in their car outside Matthew and Gareth's charming small brick house where MATTHEW and GARETH are waiting for them. It looks like a little country cottage but in the middle of a London suburban street. GARETH points to his watch, implying they're just a little late. He is now wearing a luscious waistcoat portraying two naked golden cherubs, kissing across the buttons. Now DAVID walks coolly down the street towards them: he's about thirty, slender, very good looking.

11. INT. CHARLES'S BEDROOM. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 11

A car horn blasts in the street and CHARLES turns, and wakes. He reaches over sleepily, grabs his alarm clock and looks at it.

CHARLES

O, fuck.

CHARLES is thirty to thirty five, fairly good-looking, fairly ironic.

12. INT. SCARLETT'S BEDROOM. CHARLES & SCARLETT HOUSE. DAY. 12.

If you thought Charles's room was untidy, you hadn't seen this one. It is a massive mess, with pink and orange clothing everywhere. A scrawny blonde girl, Charles's friend, SCARLETT, 26, lives there. CHARLES taps her on the shoulder: she is deeply asleep, and, when woken, confused.

CHARLES picks up her watch, which is pink and by the bed, and shows it to her. She peeks through sleepy eyes. She's not from London and not at all upper class.

SCARLETT

Fuck.

13. INT. KITCHEN. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 13.

CU on SCARLETT trying to force a wedge of bread into the toaster - it is much too large.

SCARLETT

O fuck.

14. INT. CHARLES'S BEDROOM. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 14.

CU CHARLES fingers connecting his braces to the back of his wedding trousers. He bends to tie his shoes, and the braces ping off the back of the trousers.

CHARLES

Fuck.

15. EXT. MOTORWAY. TOM & FIONA'S CAR. DAY. 15.

TOM and FIONA's car calmly joining the motorway.

16. INT. KITCHEN. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 16.

SCARLETT, wearing her gold-rim glasses, is now using a big knife to attack the huge wedged piece of bread in the smoking toaster.

SCARLETT

Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck!

17. EXT. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 17.

CHARLES & SCARLETT charge out of the front door of their house. It is a little run down in a beautiful street. SCARLETT is holding a pink and orange dress, and CHARLES is holding his tail coat and waistcoat. They run round the corner, then stop.

CHARLES

Did you lock the door?

SCARLETT

No, did you?

PAUSE.

CHARLES

Fuck it.

And they run on.

18. INT/EXT. CHARLES'S CAR. DAY. 18.

CHARLES and SCARLETT are sitting in a seedy looking old Jaguar. The engine chortles - it won't start.

CHARLES

Fuck. We'll have to take your car.

SCARLETT

But she only goes 50 miles per hour.

CHARLES raises a "want a bet" eyebrow.

19. EXT. SCARLETT'S CAR. MOTORWAY. DAY. 19.

Scarlett's tiny Mini Cooper 'S' is speeding along the motorway at a tremendously illegal speed. It is shaking with the effort.

SCARLETT (V/O)

(surprised and delighted)

Well, fuck me.

20. INT. SCARLETT'S CAR. MOTORWAY. DAY. 20.

CHARLES

What exit?

SCARLETT faffs a little, picking up the map for the first time. They shoot past an exit sign.

CHARLES

It better not be 13.

She finds it proudly.

SCARLETT

It's exit 13.

CHARLES

Fuck.

CHARLES jams on the brake. Reverses 50 yards back up the motorway. Almost dies, then shoots up the sliproad of exit 13.

21. EXT. SCARLETT'S MINI. COUNTRY LANE. DAY. 21.

An idyllic stretch of summer countryside - suddenly the Mini shoots into shot and out.

22. EXT. WEDDING 1. COUNTRY CHURCH. DAY. 22.

It is an idyllic sun-soaked small country church, in Berkshire. Scarlett's mini screeches up, jams on the brakes and skids into a lay-by 100 yards away. CHARLES and SCARLETT leap out of the car, and dress in their formal gear. CHARLES zips up the back of SCARLETT's dress and it catches.

CHARLES

Fuck, fuck, fuckity fuck.

SCARLETT straightens his tie - then holds his shoulder and looks at him.

SCARLETT

Yes - fuckable.

Over her shoulder a large Rolls Royce appears and shoots past them. It is the bridal car. They look at each other. Tiny pause.

CHARLES

Bugger.

They sprint towards the church. THE BRIDE is just getting out of the car. CHARLES and SCARLETT whip past, with a smile and a friendly wave.

23. INT. WEDDING 1. COUNTRY CHURCH. DAY. 23.

The Church is glowing white and be-decked with flowers. CHARLES and SCARLETT survey the weddingly scene of hats and big shoulders. Finally their eyes fall upon their friends, who we've also been following. They head for them. CHARLES knows he is late...

FIONA

There is a sort of greatness in your lateness.

CHARLES

Thanks. I try.

SCARLETT slips in - CHARLES acknowledges them all with a wave and heads on quickly up the aisle to where the groom is standing. His name is ANGUS and he's a little tense. He has a small crafted orange beard.

CHARLES

Christ I'm sorry, Angus. Inexcusable. I'll be killing myself after the service, of course.

ANGUS

Doesn't matter - Tom was standing by...

CHARLES

Thank you, Tom. You're a saint. And..disastrous haircut.

TOM

Thanks.

TOM gives an enthusiastic thumbs up and heads back down to join the friends.

ANGUS

As long as you haven't forgotten the rings.

CHARLES

Nope.

CHARLES pats his pocket confidently. When ANGUS looks away we see a look of concern slip over CHARLES's face - he has just patted an empty pocket.

At that moment there is a slam of the heavy church doors - everyone turns around and a GIRL WITH A LARGE BLUE HAT walks in, and down the aisle. She vaguely uses the hat to shield herself against curious eyes.

CHARLES

Tssk. I hate people being late.

ANGUS appreciates the effort to relax him and gives Charles a half smile, and at that moment the Wedding March starts.

CHARLES

Here we go...

ANGUS turns to look down the aisle at his bride. CHARLES feels his top pocket - no luck there either.

CUT TO:

The Bride, LAURA, on the arm of her father, with two little and one fully grown bridesmaid, LYDIA. LAURA looks a little over-fulsome - the row of friends turns as she passes.

SCARLETT

O, isn't she lovely!!

FIONA

Scarlett, you're blind. She looks like a big meringue.

ANGUS smiles at CHARLES to share in the joy at his beautiful bride. CHARLES smiles back, slightly nervously.

CUT TO:

The Couple as the VICAR starts the service.

VICAR

Dear friends - what a joy it is to welcome you to our Church on this wonderful day for Angus and Laura.

CHARLES looks around behind him, trying to find a way out of his dilemma. His eyes land on the GIRL IN THE BLUE HAT. Her hair is lit by a ray of light coming through the stained glass

window. CHARLES can only see part of her face. Then he remembers: he's got a more important immediate problem.

VICAR

Before we start the wedding service,
let us sing hymn number 135.

They stand - there is a slight wobble on the organ, and a grinding up to tempo as we hear the intro to "Jerusalem".

GARETH

Great grandmother on the organ.
That's nice.

MATTHEW

Quiet.

CUT INTO:

The singing. CHARLES is trying to attract the attention of his friends, all in their row. Finally MATTHEW sees him - CHARLES manages to mime the problem. MATTHEW smacks his head in mock despair. CHARLES does a little plea. He needs help.

MATTHEW whispers something in GARETH'S ear. GARETH holds out his hands to reveal no ring. He in turn whispers to FIONA.

CUT THROUGH: Four pairs of ring-less hands.

MATTHEW

(Loud whispering)
Scarlett?

SCARLETT gives him a big innocent smile - she is the last resort.

VICAR

Dearly beloved - we are gathered
here in the sight of God and in the
face of this congregation...

CHARLES

(To Angus)
Back in a sec...

ANGUS looks alarmed as CHARLES walks right to the side of the Church. MATTHEW comes to meet him - they stop at THE BLUE HAT GIRL. MATTHEW does the subtle hand-over, without us seeing the rings.

VICAR

Therefore if any man can show any
just cause or impediment why they
may not be lawfully joined together,
let them speak now...

CHARLES stops for a second - doesn't want to make any noise

and be mistaken for an objector.

CARRIE - THE BLUE HAT GIRL
 (To her neighbour)
 I suppose the fact he's a terrible
 lay doesn't count?

CHARLES hears the comment - now he likes her even more. But he has to concentrate on the matter in hand.

VICAR
 Do you promise to love him, comfort
 him, honour and keep him in sickness
 and in health, and forsaking all
 others, keep thee only unto him, so
 long as ye both shall live?

LAURA
 (With total love)
 I do.

CHARLES slips in comfortably next to Angus.

CUT ON: A little later

VICAR
 Do you have the ring?

THE VICAR moves towards CHARLES, holding open the Bible, CHARLES takes a little step forward and puts the still unseen rings on the book. THE VICAR looks slightly surprised.

VICAR
 With this ring I thee wed, with my
 body I thee worship and with all my
 worldly goods I thee endow..

ANGUS
 With this ring I thee wed, with my
 body I thee worship and with all my
 worldly goods I thee endow..

ANGUS slips the ring on to LAURA'S finger. It is a huge piece of pink and purple junk jewellery. ANGUS looks startled. CHARLES plays innocent, and very formal. Then LAURA slips hers onto ANGUS' hand - it is a skull and cross-bones.

CUT TO:

A 35 year old man with not much hair.

GEORGE
 "If I speak with the tongues of men
 and of angels but have not love, I
 am become a sounding brass, or a
 clanging cymbal."

GARETH

Good point.

CUT TO:

A couple (CLAUDIA & CRAIG) with an acoustic guitar playing John Denver's classic hit "Annie's Song". It is a sister and her boyfriend filling in while the couple sign the register.

CLAUDIA & CRAIG

"You fill up my senses like a night
in a forest..."

GARETH has his head in his hands in despair. A baby starts to talk.

GARETH

(Raising his head)
O, bravo.

FIONA

This is the sort of song that makes
you cry, isn't it, Scarlett?

SCARLETT

(In tears)
Is it?

CUT TO:

The newly-weds leave the Church, the Toccata plays and babies cry in harmony. CHARLES stands at the door as the guests leave. Everyone knows him. CARRIE passes...

CHARLES

Great hat.

CARRIE

Thanks - I bought it specially...

She moves on, with a slightly wry smile. She's American. He likes her.

24. EXT. WEDDING 1. COUNTRY CHURCH. DAY

24.

The wedding photos are being taken. Six quick stills of the family. In the course of the shots a 6 YEAR OLD BOY goes under the skirt of LAURA and emerges smiling. Then is hit.

Meanwhile, CHARLES'S friends gather on the sidelines, a real group, comfortable: MATTHEW, GARETH, FIONA, SCARLETT, TOM, BERNARD, DAVID. As CHARLES approaches he speaks to DAVID in sign - DAVID is his brother - and deaf. (NOTE: all underlined lines of dialogue will appear on the screen as subtitles)

CHARLES

Same old stiffs

DAVID

Yes - how did we get stuck with this
shower as lifelong friends?

CHARLES

You're lucky, you don't have to talk
to them. (He turns) Fiona - you're
looking fucking beautiful - I
couldn't tell you earlier in
Church, because of the 'fucking'
bit.

FIONA

Thank you Charles.

TOM

Splendid, I thought, what did you
think?

BERNARD

I thought splendid.

CHARLES

Any idea who that girl in the blue
hat is?

They look across at CARRIE who is listening considerately to
a grandmother.

FIONA

Name's Carrie.

CHARLES

Pretty.

FIONA

American.

CHARLES

Interesting.

FIONA

Slut.

CHARLES

Really?

FIONA

Used to work at Vogue. Lives in America now - only goes out with very glamorous people - out of your league.

CHARLES

That's a relief.

He sees CARRIE walking away from the Church. She removes her exotic blue hat and casually throws it into a dustbin. She then leans over, slips off her dark blue tights and throws them away too. She walks on - CHARLES watches her go.

GARETH

Right - reception?

They all turn to go.

25. EXT. COUNTRY LANE. DAY.

25.

The guests are heading down a lane away from the church towards a huge barn. There is a lovely, rural feeling to everything, as though the wedding is a harvest festival. There are pink bows on the sheep they pass. They chat as they walk.

TOM

Anyone else tread in a cowpat? No - thought not - see you in a mo. Don't want to blow my chances for romance by smelling of dung all the way through the reception.

FIONA

Do you think I'd hate him as much if he wasn't my brother? God. I never know what to say in these wretched line-ups.

GARETH

O, it's a cinch - just say the bride looked beautiful and isn't it a lovely day.

To the side, we see TOM rub his foot violently against a bale of hay. Then another bale gently topples onto him.

FIONA

We can't do better than that?

MATTHEW

Traditionally, no. Unless you want to try "you must be very proud".

26. INT. BARN. RECEPTION LINE. DAY.

26.

Wife LAURA is hugely gushy, laughy, hugging everyone. Husband ANGUS is smiling, which is unusual for him. Then there are the FOUR PARENTS. At the end stand various sisters, brothers and bridesmaids.

FIONA

(So sincerely)
You must be very proud.

TOM

(Slightly hay-covered)
Hello.

GARETH and MATTHEW just arriving at the PARENTS' end of the line.

GARETH

Quite superb - it's made Matthew and I think quite seriously about the possibility of getting married.

FATHER OF THE BRIDE

Really? And which are the lucky young ladies?

GARETH is about to explain that isn't exactly what he means when MATTHEW interrupts.

MATTHEW

Unfortunately they were busy.

GARETH

Yes, the life of the air hostess is not an easy one.

THE MOTHER OF THE BRIDE is a little over made-up

CHARLES

(Whispered to Scarlett)
Clothes by Coco Chanel, make-up by
Coco the Clown.

CHARLES now reaches THE MOTHER OF THE BRIDE and is as charming as possible.

CHARLES (cont)

She was very beautiful - although perhaps not as lovely as her mother...

MOTHER blushes happily and introduces him to CLAUDIA, the John Denver singer.

MOTHER OF THE BRIDE
 Why thank you - this is Claudia:
 she's done all the catering.

CHARLES shakes the hand of the over-excited Claudia.

CHARLES
 Excellent. If it's anything like
 your music, we've really got
 something to look forward to.

SCARLETT is just behind.

SCARLETT
 I thought she looked unbe-fucking-
 lievably pretty didn't you?

MOTHER OF THE BRIDE
 Ah, yes.

SCARLETT
 I'm surprised your son just didn't
 give her one on the spot, there and
 then.

FATHER OF THE BRIDE
 Well, quite.

SCARLETT has no real sense of what is the right or the wrong
 thing to say at any given time.

27. INT. BARN. RECEPTION. DAY.

27.

The barn is decked out with beams and flowers and ribbons -
 full of tables, with a long table at the end on a slightly
 raised dais. Expensive, but with a nice homey feeling to it.
 The family are upper middle class: there are lots of guests
 wearing dark suits, not wedding coats - and there are lots of
 flower pattern dresses.

Throughout the reception, the background action is full of the
 business of weddings: pairs of old people standing saying
 nothing - old person talking to young person and yawning -
 people burning fingers on little sausages - children fighting
 and pulling table cloths and skirts down.

CUT TO:

OUR GROUP, in their wedding coats and frocks, ready for the
 fray - a wedding Magnificent Seven (actually 8). They stand
 by a large, proud flower arrangement.

MATTHEW

Right - synchronise watches - we meet back here in, shall we say - 6 hours time. Who's going to drive - i.e not drink?

GARETH

Heads it's not one of us 5. Tails it's Tom.

He spins a coin.

GARETH (cont)

It's Tom.

TOM

Ah well, can't win'em all.

He doesn't sense there might be a trick.

GARETH

Right - let's mingle. And remember - be careful - it's a jungle out there.

They all spread out through the party, like 8 errant knights.

CHARLES

You coming?

DAVID

No, I'll hang out looking enigmatic.

CHARLES

Please yourself - I'm a man with a mission.

CHARLES winds through people looking out for CARRIE - standing on his toes he sees her, grabs a glass, and moves towards her - but at the last moment, another man joins her.

CHARLES

Damn.

GARETH

Is that for me?

Reaching for the spare glass.

CHARLES

If you like.

GARETH

Thanks. I've spotted an ex. I'm going to be so amusing, ten minutes from now he will die of regret.

CHARLES spies CARRIE, but again she is headed off by another good-looker - she is clearly much feted by men.

CHARLES

Bastard.

CHARLES heads for the drinks table to stock up again, by the time he turns, she's alone again. He makes it to her, with a few rushed 'Hellos' on the way.

CHARLES

Hello - wine?

CARRIE

Thank you.

CHARLES

Ahm...

Just as he's searching for what to say, an acquaintance, glimpsed in the Church, slips into shot: he's rather a stiff, 38 going on 60, stockbroker.

JOHN

Hello, Charles.

CHARLES

Hello John - this is...sorry, I don't know your...

CARRIE

Carrie.

JOHN

Delighted, I'm John.

Tiny pause - who's to talk?

CHARLES

So tell me John - how's your gorgeous girlfriend?

JOHN

She is no longer my girlfriend.

CHARLES

O dear - still, don't be too gloomy - rumour has it she never stopped shagging old Toby de Lisle, just in case you didn't work out.

JOHN

She is now my wife.

CHARLES

Excellent. Excellent.

CARRIE takes in totally that this is the most embarrassing moment and leaves them to it, amused.

CARRIE

Excuse me.

She leaves them. Tiny pause.

CHARLES

Ahm...any children or anything?

CARRIE moves away - she helps herself to a drink. She looks around and there in the corner, sees CHARLES deliberately hit his head against the wall, once.

When he stands straight again, an old lady passes his line of vision. He clearly knows her, and smiles politely.

CHARLES

Hello, lovely to see you.

CUT TO:

FIONA nearby, talking to an innocent looking fellow, with a pudding basin hair cut.

FIONA

The thing I love about weddings is the crying children. They recruit each other in creches: "I'll take the sermon - could you fuck up the vows" What do you do?

GERALD

I'm training to be a priest.

FIONA

Good Lord. Do you do weddings?

GERALD

Not yet - I will though, of course - damn nerve-racking.

FIONA

Like the first time you have sex.

GERALD

Well, I suppose so...

FIONA

Though less messy, of course...and far less call for condoms.

GERALD
(Embarrassed) Aaahm...

He chokes a little on his canape.

CUT TO:

CHARLES still shaking his head, face to the wall.

DAVID
How are you doing?

CHARLES
Remember that time I was helping Dad
get the boat in, and you switched on
the motor and the propeller cut my
leg to shreds?

DAVID
Yes.

CHARLES
Things are worse.

CUT TO:

A PRETTY RED HAired GIRL who has been watching them - she stands next to MATTHEW.

SERENA
Who's that boy over there?

MATTHEW
His name's David.

SERENA
He's something of a dish, isn't he?

MATTHEW
I've always thought so.

SERENA
Why were they...? (mimes signing)

MATTHEW
The dishy one can't hear.

SERENA
O. Gosh.

MATTHEW
Silent, but deadly attractive.

A bang on the table.

FATHER OF THE BRIDE
Ladies and gentlemen - dinner is
served.

A quick shot from above shows people moving around and to
tables.

CUT ROUND:

The friends: they sit down at their different tables. All
have quite pleasant companions.

MATTHEW

Hello, I'm Matthew. And this is
David - he's deaf, which means he
reads lips and understands
everything you say.

DAVID raises his hand politely - 'Hi'.

TOM

Tom - splendid to meet you - very
exciting.

GARETH

Hello, I'm Gareth. I've got an
instant feeling we're going to be
friends for life.

SCARLETT

Hello, I'm Scarlett (She gives the
total stranger a kiss on the mouth).
Warn me if I'm getting pissed, will
you?

CARRIE sits down between two good looking boys. CHARLES is
watching her - a little fed up. He glides into his position
on the long, raised-up top table and introduces himself to the
very old indeed MAN, next to him.

CHARLES

How do you do - my name is Charles.

OLD MAN

Don't be ridiculous, Charles died 20
years ago.

The food is put down in front of him. It does not look appetising - the sister strikes.

CUT TO:

Wide shot of the eating arrangements. Along from CHARLES are the Bride LAURA and Groom ANGUS, between parents in law, uncles and vicars. Knives and forks going into mouths. Everyone looking unhappy.

WAITER

More?

MAN 1

No thank you.

CHARLES is watching CARRIE and listening to the OLD MAN... The camera lingers on CARRIE while the OLD MAN talks.

OLD MAN (V/O)

I was married once myself, you know
- beautiful girl - eyes like a blue
sky, hair like wheat, cheeks like a
soft peach -

CUT BACK:

To OLD MAN

OLD MAN (cont)

- brain like a small pea,
unfortunately, so it didn't last.

CHARLES

O, I am sorry.

CHARLES takes a bite of food - not tasty. All round the bites of the grisly-looking food get smaller and smaller. The waiters still however have to do their rounds.

WAITRESS

More?

WOMAN 1

No thank you.

WAITRESS

More?

GARETH

I would rather eat my father's
testicles.

WAITER

More?

TOM

Absolutely. Splendid tuck.

Sound of a banging spoon: CHARLES stands. He speaks in a very self-effacing manner.

CHARLES

Ladies and gentlemen - I'm sorry to drag you from your delicious desserts: there are just one or two little things I feel I should say as best man.

The guests turn to listen to him.

Before I start my speech, can I just say this - I am, as ever, in bewildered awe of any couple who make the commitment that Angus and

Laura have made this morning. True love is a very rare and splendid thing - and I think we see it here today.

ANGUS and LAURA are touched.

This is only the second time I've ever been a best man. I hope I did the job all right that time - the couple in question at least are still talking to me. Unfortunately, they're not talking to each other - the divorce came through a couple of months ago.

CUT TO:

CARRIE laughing brightly - then back to CHARLES.

CHARLES (cont)

But I'm assured it had absolutely nothing to do with me. Apparently Belinda knew that Anthony had slept with her younger sister before I mentioned it in the speech. The fact that he'd also slept with her mother came as a surprise - but I think it was incidental to the nightmare of violence and recrimination which became their two week marriage. Anyway - enough of that. Angus has asked me to talk a little bit about his...romantic past.

Laughter. CHARLES looks back to where CARRIE was - but she's gone.

CUT ON TO:

CHARLES (cont)
Ladies and gentlemen - the adorable couple.

ALL stand to toast.

ALL
The adorable couple!

FATHER OF THE BRIDE
Thank you Charles. Now please, everyone, do just enjoy yourselves - we trust there will be dancing till dawn. Twist away!

CHARLES turns to the OLD MAN.

CHARLES
Catch you for a bop later.

He sets off purposefully.

CUT TO:

The slightly dodgy Rock'N'Roll band starting 'Semi-detached Suburban Mr Jones':

"So you finally named the day wedding bells will chime. I was sorry to hear you say, they're going to be his, not mine"

The newly-weds, LAURA and ANGUS, come out and dance. Everyone applauds. She dances rather exotically, he as though this is the first time he has ever heard pop music.

SCARLETT
Come on Charles - give us a dance - no other bugger will.

CHARLES
Try Tom.

SCARLETT
Okay.

CHARLES is clearly looking for CARRIE - but then there she is on the dance floor with one of her dinner companions.

CHARLES
Damn.

SCARLETT starts dancing wildly but enthusiastically with TOM, the worst dancer in the world but the keenest.

Beside them is GARETH twisting with great vigour with a 50 year old lady.

CHARLES sits down and looks back at CARRIE and her man, dancing quite close. MATTHEW sits down beside him. As they talk, we intercut with the dance floor.

MATTHEW

I remember the first time I saw Gareth on the dance floor, I feared lives would be lost.

GARETH now doing a Saturday Night Fever style dance.

MATTHEW (cont)

But actually he's surprisingly safe.

SCARLETT is now dancing very badly indeed. Beside her is a ten year old boy really getting down, then joined by GARETH, doing exactly the same Hi-energy dance. Beside them is CARRIE.

MATTHEW

Pretty girl, the one you can't keep your eyes off. Is it love at first sight?

CHARLES is slightly thrown by Matthew's perception.

CHARLES

Good lord no - it's the bloke she's dancing with - I'm sure I played rugby with him at school - trying to remember which position he played.

GARETH is now doing the bump with a hefty grandmother.
Bump!

CHARLES (cont)

Though, let's say one did take a fancy to someone at a wedding: do you think there really are people who can just go up and say - "Hi - I'm Charles - this is your lucky night"?

MATTHEW

If there are, they're not English.

CHARLES

Quite - 3 weeks is about my question-popping minimum.

CUT TO: LATER THAT NIGHT

LAURA, near an exit - emotionally talking to and hugging some distant cousins: another hour or two have passed. She's in her about-to-leave gear.

LAURA

You know I love you, Jean, don't you. I love you, I love you, I love you and Mike, I don't know you very well, but I love you very much, I really do.

ANGUS remarks to MATTHEW who stands next to him.

ANGUS

Ignore her - she's drunk. (pause)
At least I hope she's drunk.
(worried pause) Otherwise I'm in real trouble.

In the corners of the room people are a little tired and emotional.

CUT TO:

BERNARD speaking to the fulsome bridesmaid LYDIA.

BERNARD

How's it going, Lyds?

LYDIA

Bloody awful.

BERNARD

O dear.

LYDIA

I was promised sex - everyone said it - "You be a bridesmaid, you'll get sex. You'll be fighting them off". But not so much as tongue in sight - the amount I paid for this dress - and zero. Zilch. Doodle squat.

BERNARD

Well, look - I mean, if you fancy...or anything, I could always...

LYDIA

O don't be ridiculous - I'm not that desperate.

She gets up and goes.

BERNARD

No, right, fair enough, good point.

General clapping as the couple head out: the bride throws her bouquet. SCARLETT reaches for it, FIONA dodges it - it is caught by LYDIA.

28. EXT. BARN. NIGHT. 28.

The married couple approach a Rolls Royce with a string of cans attached to it - and 'Just Married' and '3 Months pregnant' in fake snow on the windscreen. They open the door, and a big white sheep with a bow on jumps out, accompanied by chickens - a roar of delight.

CUT TO:

A big cheer as they drive away. CHARLES sees CARRIE walk away with a man. As he heads disconsolately back into the barn...

29. INT. BARN. NIGHT. 29.

TOM joins CHARLES keenly.

TOM

Where are you staying tonight, Charles?

CHARLES

Scarlett and I are at some pub - The Lucky Boat or something. Aren't we all?

TOM

Ah-no- slight change of plan - the others are in fact coming back to my place: I wondered if you'd like to join.

CHARLES

Well, no, that sounds lovely - is there room for Scarlett too?

TOM

O absolutely. 137 rooms actually.

CHARLES

Tom - are you the richest man in England?

TOM

Oh - no, no. I believe we're about 7th. The Queen obviously, and that Branson bloke is doing terribly well. Well, excellent news - I'll go tell Scarlett.

As TOM walks away

CHARLES

(Not hopeful)
That's unless I get lucky.

TOM

(Hopeful)
Absolutely!!

And suddenly, CARRIE is right at his shoulder.

CARRIE

Hi.

CHARLES is taken aback.

CHARLES

I thought you'd gone.

CARRIE

No - not yet. I was just wondering - where you were staying tonight?

CHARLES

Well, I was going to stay at a pub, the Happy Boat, or something...

CARRIE

The Lucky Boatman.

CHARLES

That's right. But now I'm going to stay at some friend's house...with some friends. Well, I say 'house' - I think 'enormous castle' is a more accurate description.

CARRIE

O, that's a pity. I'm at the Boatman.

CHARLES

O.

PAUSE.

She doesn't give CHARLES quite enough time to recover. It's quite a direct invitation.

CARRIE

Well, it was really nice not quite meeting you. I'm going now.

CHARLES

O, no, you mustn't - we could meet now - the evening's just getting going.

They survey the fallen-bottle, toppled-chair mess.

CARRIE

I think we both know that's a big lie.

She walks away.

CHARLES

Fuck.

LATER: The camera pans over the proceedings - the sister and her boyfriend are back with 'Stand by Your Man'. Two exhausted hugging couples are still on the dance floor, trying to dance to it. Couples are kissing. Drunk people are asleep.

CLAUDIA AND CRAIG

"You'll have bad times,
he'll have good times.
Doing things that you don't
understand."

The Friends are back at the spot where they swore to meet 6 hours earlier. The flower arrangement has wilted.

GARETH

I think the Castle beckons. Tom,
are you sober?

TOM

Absolutely.

TOM gives a thumbs up and then trips as they walk out, jackets slung over their shoulders: CHARLES, TOM, GARETH, MATTHEW, DAVID, FIONA picking up an exhausted SCARLETT as they go. They pass a couple kissing passionately. Hold on them: they split: It's LYDIA and BERNARD whom she so recently spurned. She's quite breathless.

LYDIA

Bernard!

30. EXT. CAR. COUNTRY LANE. NIGHT.

30.

Wide beautiful shot of the countryside and a small car winding down a country lane. From it ring the strains of STAND BY YOUR MAN.

ALL

Stand by your man
Give him two arms to cling to
And something warm to come to

GARETH

(almighty bass solo)
When nights are sad and lonely...

31. INT. CAR. COUNTRY LANE. NIGHT.

31.

MATTHEW, SCARLETT, GARETH, TOM, DAVID, CHARLES and FIONA all squeezed in together. All yelling except Charles, who is looking worried.

ALL

Stand by your man
And say you love him only
And give him all the love you can
(Big trouble with the top note)
STAND BY YOUR MAN!!!!

CHARLES

Ahm, Tom, could you stop the car.

The car stops dead.

CHARLES (cont)

You know, I think I might just stay
in that hotel after all.

TOM

Why on earth?

CHARLES

I'll tell you years from now.

ALL of them make a teasing Police siren sound.

CHARLES (cont)

No seriously, I'm doing some
research into pubs with the word
'boat' in the title. I hope to
produce the definitive work.

32. EXT. CAR. COUNTRY ROAD. NIGHT.

32.

CHARLES is standing in the middle of the road, in the middle of the night in the middle of nowhere.

As the car drives away - they start to shout the chorus of 'Without You'.

ALL

Can't liiiiive if living is without
you
Can't giiiiive, can't give any
more!!!

CHARLES is left totally alone.

CHARLES

Right. Odd decision.

He heads back along the road.

33. EXT. TOWN SQUARE. NIGHT.

33.

A charming town square. The Boatman is a pleasant, large pub hotel, white, with an archway through which cars can drive and park at the back. The name of the Hotel is on big carved gold letters outside. CHARLES enters.

The sign shows the lucky boatman getting a blowjob from a mermaid, while his friends are being eaten by sharks.

34. INT. RECEPTION. THE BOATMAN. NIGHT.

34.

It is now about one in the morning. Very quiet. CHARLES sees the bell to ring on the front desk, but just before he does so looks left, and sees a plume of smoke rising from a large leather armchair in the sitting room next door. CHARLES walks towards it.

CHARLES

Hello?

CARRIE leans over - and looks at him quizzically.

CHARLES

In the end it turned out there
wasn't room for all of us.

CARRIE

You said it was a castle.

CHARLES

Yes, that's right. Very small
castle. Tiny. Pocket size. One up,
one down.

Enter a late night waiter.

WAITER

A drink, sir?

CHARLES

I'll have a glass of port, thank you. You?

CARRIE

I'll have a glass of port too, thanks.

CHARLES turns to the waiter

CHARLES

And another one for the lady.

WAITER

Sir.

WAITER leaves and CHARLES turns back to address CARRIE - but she's disappeared. It's clear why, when GEORGE enters, the confident balding, plump, annoying man who read the lesson in Church.

GEORGE

You haven't seen Carrie have you?

CHARLES

(In a fluster)
Who?

GEORGE

Carrie. American girl. Lovely legs. Wedding guest. Nice smell.

CHARLES

Sorry - no.

GEORGE

Blast. I think I was in there.

CARRIE pops up from behind the sofa and pulls a face - he very clearly was not 'in there'.

GEORGE (cont)

Look, if you see her, could you tell her I've gone to my room.

CHARLES

Certainly. Dear fellow.

WAITER comes in, just as GEORGE is about to leave.

WAITER

Your port Sir, and one for the...

CHARLES

...road, excellent.

GEORGE

Actually, I might have one of those.
Mind if I join you?

CHARLES

Ahm...no, no, go ahead.

GEORGE

(to the waiter)
Another port, thanks. And a cigar
(To Charles) Might as well settle
in. Let's see if we can get through
till dawn, shall we, eh?

They settle, CHARLES in the chair, GEORGE on the sofa. CARRIE raises from behind the sofa and looks humorously exasperated at CHARLES .

GEORGE

Lovely wedding

CHARLES

Yes.

CARRIE appears behind GEORGE, crawling towards the door.

GEORGE

I was at school with his brother
Buffy - tremendous bloke. I was his
fag. Bugged me senseless, but it
taught me a thing or two about life.

Reaction off CHARLES. Meanwhile CARRIE, on her knees, is almost at the door. The WAITER comes in again. She makes a 'shush' sign at him, and beckons him to follow her.

GEORGE

Where do you know them from?

CHARLES

University.

He sees CARRIE now talking to the WAITER outside the room.

GEORGE

O splendid, splendid. Yes. Didn't go myself...couldn't see the point. When you're working the money markets, what use are the novels of Wordsworth going to be, eh?

CHARLES

Good point. Shakespeare's short stories equally pointless.

WAITER re-enters formally.

WAITER

Excuse me, sir - your wife says, could you come upstairs at once. Room 12 in case you're so drunk you can't remember.

CHARLES

My wife?

WAITER

Yes sir.

CHARLES

O dear - yes - my wife.

GEORGE

You are drunk if you can't even remember you've got a wife!!

CHARLES

Yes... (does a little drunk mime - then, excusing himself) Do you mind, if I...? (points upstairs)

GEORGE

O no - off you go - best of luck. Lucky bachelor me, think I might have another search for that Katie creature.

CHARLES

Carrie.

GEORGE

That's right. Damn fine filly.

35. INT. CORRIDOR. THE BOATMAN. NIGHT.

35.

CHARLES knocks on the door of room 12. CARRIE opens it. CHARLES is slightly nervous.

CARRIE

Hi.

CHARLES

Hello. Sorry about that...

CARRIE

No, that's fine - he was hard to get rid of. (Pause) It's a sad day when a girl's got to ask a boy up to her bedroom to get any privacy.

CHARLES

Yes - perhaps we could skulk around here and then go back down.

CARRIE

That's a thought - I don't usually skulk a lot, but I suppose I could skulk if skulking was required. Do you skulk regularly?

CHARLES

No, I don't normally think of myself as a skulker.

CARRIE

Okay, so just come in, and skulk for a while, and we'll see...

36. INT. ROOM 12. THE BOATMAN. NIGHT.

36.

CARRIE

I noticed the bride and groom didn't kiss.

CHARLES

No - it doesn't always happen. "You may now kiss the bride" isn't actually in the Book of Common Prayer.

CARRIE

I always worry that I'd go too far.

CHARLES

How far do you think too far would be?

CARRIE

I don't know...I think.. (gives him a peck on the cheek) that...would be all right.

CHARLES

O yes - I think so. In fact, it might be thought a little...dismissive...

CARRIE

Maybe. Maybe this... (a kiss on the mouth) would be better.

CHARLES

Yes. You wouldn't want to take it any further. I mean...(a long kiss) That might be taking it a little far. And...

This becomes a voice over, as we pan across her bedroom.

CHARLES

....what about this - do you think the vicar would think things had slipped a little out of his control?

They are naked and making love on the bed.

CARRIE

I think he might...I'd be very surprised if we weren't enjoying ourselves more than the honeymoon couple.

CHARLES

I'm sure we are.

CARRIE

Why do you think it was called a honeymoon?

CHARLES

I'm not sure - I suppose 'honey' because it's as sweet as honey - and 'moon' because it was the first time a husband saw his wife's bottom.

She laughs - for all his early unsureness, she makes him relaxed, by being so totally relaxed herself.

37. EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. DAY. 37.

The beautiful landscape outside waking up in the dawn, birds, dew, a stream.

38. INT. ROOM 12. THE BOATMAN. DAY. 38.

We see the edge of the bed, knee level, CARRIE's legs. Her hand reaches down and picks up her dress. Then her shoes. We move round to see CHARLES still fast asleep. He slowly wakes, opens his eyes and looks up. Again, her face is caught in beautiful light.

CHARLES

What's happening?

CARRIE
I've got to go.

CHARLES
Where to?

CARRIE
America.

CHARLES
When are you going?

CARRIE
Three hours.

CHARLES
That is a tragedy.

He flops his head onto the pillow.

CARRIE
Just before I go - when are you
thinking of making the announcement?

CHARLES
What announcement?

CARRIE
The engagement.

CHARLES
Whose engagement?

CARRIE
Ours. I assumed since we'd slept
together and everything, we'd
probably get married. What were you
thinking?

CHARLES
Ah, gosh, look, this sort of thing
takes a lot of thought, I obviously
ahm...

Then he suddenly sees she's smiling.

CHARLES (cont)
You're joking?

She nods.

CHARLES (cont)
God for a second there I thought you
were Glenn Close - I thought I was
going to get home and find a rabbit
on the stove.

CARRIE

No - but I think you just missed a
great opportunity. Bye Bye.

She winks and is gone. He turns over, sinks his head into his
pillow, and then the alarm clock goes off again.

SUMMER

39. INT. CHARLES' BEDROOM. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. 39.

It is bright daylight - the alarm clock is ringing. Finally CHARLES's hand comes up and switches it off. He takes it and brings it down to his eyes to see. He opens them, then looks at the clock.

CHARLES

O fuck.

CAPTION: 3 MONTHS LATER

40. INT. SCARLETT'S BEDROOM. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. 40.

The door of Scarlett's room: It is kicked open. CHARLES grabs SCARLETT's shoulder, her profoundly mascara'd eyes open: CHARLES is clearly not happy.

SCARLETT

O fuck.

41. INT. KITCHEN. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 41.

CHARLES and SCARLETT in their pants only - both frantic. CHARLES helping himself to orange juice. SCARLETT buttering an incredibly burnt piece of toast - the atmosphere is heavy with smoke.

SCARLETT

All very well for you - I'm a blooming bridesmaid.

CHARLES

Don't worry - it's not far. Seven minutes should be loads of time.

42. EXT. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 42.

The two of them sprint out - still dressing. SCARLETT is pulling on a huge and ridiculous peach-coloured satin off the shoulder number.

CAPTION: 6 MINUTES LATER

SCARLETT

Car or taxi?

CHARLES

Taxi. We could never park.

43. EXT. PAVEMENT. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 43.

The two of them standing on the sidewalk, stock still. Nothing is coming along the road. Pause.

BOTH
(simultaneously)
Car seems a good idea.

CUT TO:

Them at her car. It is clamped.

BOTH
Fuck.

44. EXT. REGENT'S PARK. DAY. 44.

TWO JOGGERS are pacing each other, going fast - then, in full wedding gear, CHARLES & SCARLETT whip past them, her dress ballooning in the wind. In fact, a huge piece falls away. They stop. PAUSE.

SCARLETT
Don't worry - no one will notice.

They hit the street - PAUSE for breath. At that moment, a large Church bell rings 11 O'clock.

SCARLETT
O shut up!

They sprint along. The two of them are going full pelt, when a very grand car draws up with them, slowly. The window rolls down.

VOICE
Come on, hurry up you two!

CHARLES
Fu...o, hello Lydia.

It is the bridal car.

SCARLETT
O, you couldn't give us a lift could you, Lyd?

LYDIA
No need - we're here.

They turn the corner, and there in front of them is a glorious shining beautiful Catholic London Church.

CHARLES
 Thank the Lord (kisses Scarlett)
 Good luck, don't trip up and show
 everyone your bottom.

45. INT. WEDDING 2. CATHOLIC CHURCH. DAY. 45.

In one row are FIONA, MATTHEW, GARETH, DAVID. They've politely left a space for CHARLES. An OLD MAN heads up the aisle: CHARLES walks quickly after him...but it ain't fast enough. The OLD MAN just reaches the seat one second before CHARLES.

CHARLES
 F...Damn.

He looks around, sees a spare place and moves swiftly into it. At last he has a moment of rest. Then, from beside him, a voice...

CARRIE
 Hi.

CHARLES looks round, and there she is sitting right next to him.

CHARLES
 O. Hello. Welcome back. No hat.

CARRIE
 No. You cut it fine.

CHARLES
 Yes, I'm a big idiot.

CHARLES settles himself and then looks back at CARRIE and smiles at her - he's going to enjoy her company.

CHARLES
 Do you live here now?

CARRIE
 I'm just moving back.

CHARLES
 Wonderful news.

Up at the front, the young priest steps forward into position to conduct the service. It is FATHER GERALD from the last reception. He looks a little tense. His cape is slightly awkwardly slung over his shoulders - it's a little tangled. He seems to be rehearsing the service to himself.

CUT TO:

TOM, up in position as Best Man - he turns and gives CHARLES a little wave. Produces a ring from his pocket - gives

CHARLES a thumbs up. CHARLES smiles back. TOM points to his radical new haircut. CHARLES gives a glazed smile and a nod - he doesn't want to break TOM's confidence. TOM is delighted - double thumbs up. Music begins.

CUT TO:

The Bride walking down the aisle to Handel's 'Arrival of the Queen of Sheba'. It is LYDIA who kissed Bernard at the end of the last wedding. She wears a big dress. Behind are three tiny satin peach bridesmaids and SCARLETT - SCARLETT wears a huge smile. It is noticeable as she passes that her dress has no back, and you can just see the top of her bottom. The page boys follow, unruly as usual, wandering all over the shop.

CARRIE

Why do page boys always look like they're on drugs?

CHARLES

They are - the priest gives them a tab of Ecstasy to get them in the mood.

LYDIA arrives at the front - THE FATHER steps aside- BERNARD the groom steps forward. He grins wildly.

FATHER GERALD

In the name of the Father and of The Son and of The Holy Spirit.

ALL

Amen.

FATHER GERALD

Let us pray. Father - you have made the bond of marriage a holy misery, mystery, a symbol of Christ's love for his Church. Hear our prayers for Bernard and Lydia, through our son, Jesus Christ, your Lord - sorry, your son Jesus Christ our lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Goose, Ghost, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

CARRIE

It's his first time. Friend of the family.

CHARLES

O.

CHARLES looks around - all his friends have noticed the problem - they give a unison thumbs up to him - they're enjoying it.

FATHER GERALD

Bernard and Lydia - I shall now ask you if you freely undertake the obligations of marriage. Bernard, repeat after me... I do solemnly declare

BERNARD

I do solemnly declare.

FATHER GERALD

that I know not of any lawful impediment

BERNARD

that I know not of any lawful impediment...

FATHER GERALD

Why I, Lydia

BERNARD

Why I, Bernard

FATHER GERALD

Sorry - why I Bernard Godfrey Saint John Delaney...

BERNARD

Why I Bernard Geoffrey StJohn Delaney (pronounced 'Sinjoen')

CUT AWAY TO CHARLES and CARRIE - loving it. Then..

CUT BACK TO:

FATHER GERALD

may not be joined in matrimony to Lydia John Hibbott

BERNARD

May not be joined in matrimony to Lydia Jane Hibbott

FATHER GERALD wipes his brow

FATHER GERALD

Lydia repeat after me... I do solemnly declare

LYDIA

I do solemnly declare

FATHER GERALD

that I know not of any lawful impediment

LYDIA
that I know not of any lawful
impediment..

FATHER GERALD
why I Lydia Jane Hibbott

LYDIA
why I Lydia Jane Hibbott..

FATHER GERALD
may not be johned in marriage

LYDIA
may not be joined in marriage

FATHER GERALD
to Bernard Geoffrey SaintJohn
Delaney (just tries saying it
faster)

LYDIA
to Bernard Geoffrey St John Delaney
(perfect sinjohn once again)

LYDIA and BERNARD now join their right hands.

FATHER GERALD
I call upon those persons here
present to witness

BERNARD
I call upon those persons here
present to witness

FATHER GERALD
that I, (pause) Bernard... Delaney

Both CHARLES and CARRIE laugh

BERNARD
(smiling)
that I, Bernard Delaney,

FATHER GERALD smiles back with relief

FATHER GERALD
do take thee Lydia Jane Hibbott

BERNARD
do take thee Lydia Jane Hibbott

That went fine too - all smiles and relief

FATHER GERALD
to be my awful wedded wife

BERNARD
to be my lawful wedded wife

FATHER GERALD
That's right.

CUT ON:

FATHER GERALD
May Almighty God bless you all, the
Father and the Son and the Holy
Spirit.

ALL
Amen.

FATHER GERALD
Go in peace to love and save the
Lord, sorry, serve him.

ALL
Thanks be to God.

GARETH starts to applaud, thrilled they've made it through.
The whole congregation joins in.

FATHER GERALD
We will now have the signing of the
register.

46. INT. WEDDING 2. CATHOLIC CHURCH. REGISTRY ROOM. DAY. 46.

They move into a small room - we see FATHER GERALD reach into
his pocket and remove a pen for the signing.

47. INT. WEDDING 2. CATHOLIC CHURCH. DAY. 47.

Five minutes later the couple are walking down the aisle -
accompanied by perky organ playing. LYDIA's dress is totally
covered in ink from FATHER GERALD's pen.

As the newly weds leave the Church, the usual sudden surge of
chatter. There is a new bond forged between CHARLES and
CARRIE because of the disasters during the service. We
suspect things are going to go very well between them.

CHARLES
I thought you'd gone to America. We
could've been married by now if
you'd just rung me.

She turns to the man beside her. He's 50 - older - silver
haired - respectable, inaccessible.

CARRIE
This is my fiancée: Hamish.

CHARLES doesn't register a moment's hesitation or embarrassment, despite the fact that this is a bad moment - his hopes had risen high.

CHARLES

Excellent - how do you do, Hamish - delighted to meet you. What a charming surprise to find Carrie back in the country.

HAMISH

Yes, well, she took some persuading. Come on darling, let's not actually be the last people out of the Church.

CARRIE

Okay (turns to Charles and pulls a face) Bossy!

But then goes off happily.

48. EXT. WEDDING 2. CATHOLIC CHURCH. DAY. 48.

A series of snapshots of the happy couple. First just them, then plus 6 others, then plus 14, then 150 people, the hugest group of relatives ever. Tom is right in there, organising it. Then a final snap just of the happy pair - except there is one collapsed Grandmother just at the edge of frame.

CUT TO:

CHARLES, nearby: he watches CARRIE and HAMISH walk away from the Church together.

49. INT. HOTEL. ENTRANCE HALL. DAY. 49.

The Reception takes place in a beautiful large London Ballroom, downstairs in an expensive Hotel. This is a very aristocratic wedding. All men are in full wedding gear, there's a lot of silk and posh voices.

At the entrance there is a table where people put their gifts. GEORGE, from the Boatman, approaches the table with a huge present, beautifully wrapped. He puts it down and heads to join the line.

Next GARETH sweeps in - he puts down a very small unimpressive looking gift. He inspects the other gifts, looks around to check no-one is watching and swaps the card on his with the card on George's present. He smiles happily and heads down the sweeping staircase to the ballroom.

He passes the long queue and simply joins his friends at the front near the beginning of the receiving line. The bride is in her still splattered dress.

Standing at the front of the line is someone 'liveried', The Master of Ceremonies. He dips his head and has a word with every guest, very discreetly...

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

I think you should know that Lord Hibbott is a little deaf, sir.

MATTHEW

O thank you

He moves on - and after shaking hands with the wife, gets to the first father, Sir John Delaney

MATTHEW

(Very loud)

EXCELLENT WEDDING - I WAS IN HEAVEN

SIR JOHN

I'm delighted

MATTHEW moves on and FIONA approaches SIR JOHN also shouting

FIONA

THE BRIDE LOOKED STUNNING! YOU MUST BE VERY PROUD!

SIR JOHN

Yes, I am (he leans across to his wife) Why is everybody shouting at me?

CUT THROUGH TO:

MATTHEW talking to the next Father.

MATTHEW

I thought the Church looked exquisite.

LORD HIBBOTT

Didn't she? Beautiful tiara I thought.

MATTHEW

(worried) Yes.

MATTHEW moves on. LORD HIBBOT looks angrily down the line at THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES. FIONA approaches.

FIONA

I thought your son looked very handsome.

LORD HIBBOTT
 (worried but trying hard)
 Yes, I believe the prawns are
 delicious.

Meanwhile GARETH approaches the exasperated first father

GARETH
 BRAVO - AN ABSOLUTELY SPLENDID
 OCCASION ALL ROUND.

SIR JOHN
 (fuming) Thank you.

CHARLES
 LOVELY WEDDING! EXQUISITE FLOWERS IN
 THE CHURCH.

SIR JOHN
 (shouting) For heaven's sake, stop
 shouting at me! I can hear
 perfectly well!! It's that deaf
 idiot there you should be shouting
 at!

CHARLES stumbles forward to a waiting GARETH

GARETH
 Dear me. Drink?

CHARLES
 (bit shaken) Yes. Excellent. That
 or cyanide.

50. INT. HOTEL. BALLROOM. DAY. 50.

They move forward into the ballroom, and CHARLES glimpses
 CARRIE and HAMISH again.

CHARLES (cont)
 I've got a bad feeling about this
 wedding.

CUT TO:

Two very well bred little Honourables.

10 YEAR OLD LADY JANE
 Where do you fit in?

9 YEAR OLD RIGHT HONOURABLE HARRY
 I'm the groom's brother. You?

LADY JANE
 I'm the Bride's cousin.

HON HARRY

O. When I was little, I went into my brother's bedroom, and he was pushing his willie into another boy.

LADY JANE

O. I must tell Lydia - she says she wants to know everything about Bernie.

CUT TO:

GARETH, MATTHEW, DAVID, CHARLES. GARETH is sipping the excellent Champagne.

GARETH

Ah, that's better. Marriage: it's like the Masons isn't it. You can't ask to join the club. You just have to wait till true love knocks on your door and gives you the funny handshake. Then suddenly, there you are, saying 'I do'.

CHARLES

Precisely - it's so random there's no point looking in my opinion.

MATTHEW

I'm not sure about 'random' - I do think handsome boys tend to marry handsome girls..

GARETH

Not a rule, though, is it - Prince Philip's a good-looking man, while on the other hand, the Queen...

TOM passes by, looking busy about his duties.

GARETH

Ah Thomas, how's the speech?

TOM

Pretty good I think - something for everyone - tears, laughter...

GARETH

Excellent.

TOM does a double thumbs up and heads on.

CHARLES

If like does marry like, where do I fit in then?

GARETH

Well, I'm better on men than women:
for instance...him (very pretty boy)
no chance, whereas him (old man) you
could probably do better.

CHARLES

And girls...

GARETH

Well, let's see. Her (a total
beauty) I wouldn't get over
optimistic

CHARLES

No..

But suddenly the pretty woman heads straight towards him

CHARLES

O my God..

GARETH

Stay calm. I feel a funny handshake
coming on - I'll make myself scarce,
look I'm gone.

CHARLES

No, st.....

He turns and finds that GARETH isn't there any longer.

PRETTY WOMAN

Hi - you probably won't remember me
- we met at a party at Lydia's.

CHARLES

God yes, that's right. Having a
good time?

PRETTY WOMAN

So so, so far...

And over her shoulder is GARETH with a big thumbs up and
CHARLES raises his eyebrows - yes there may be something here.

GARETH turns and walks through a crowd of chattering upper
class voices - lots of 'splendid' 'Roderick!' and 'Do you know
Geraldine?' He passes the Priest and acknowledges him

GARETH

Father: sublime service.

Actually FATHER GERALD is talking to SCARLETT.

SCARLETT

Yes, you were great.

FATHER GERALD

Did you think so? I thought I cocked it up a little.

SCARLETT

Well, now you say it, you did totally - but don't worry - it's usually so boring, and I really enjoyed it this time.

CUT TO:

CHARLES and THE PRETTY WOMAN are getting on famously. They take a nibble each as a tray passes by.

CHARLES

...almost had enough of weddings actually. I've been to 7 this year.

PRETTY WOMAN

You must get bored of champagne and salmon.

CHARLES

Yes, catering's always the problem. The worst one I went to, the sister had done it. Unbelievable - though at least one knew who to lie to.

PRETTY WOMAN

Yes.

CHARLES

It just seems as though it's impossible to get it right. I mean look at this. Suppose it's meant to be asparagus - but it looks and tastes like a dead man's penis. Now, tell me, what do you do?

PRETTY WOMAN

I'm a caterer.

CHARLES

Good Lord - so you know what I'm talking about. Do you ever do weddings?

PRETTY WOMAN

Yes.

CHARLES

They should have asked you to do this one.

PRETTY WOMAN

They did.

CHARLES

God - I wish you hadn't turned it down.

PRETTY WOMAN

I didn't.

LONG PAUSE.

CHARLES

Excellent. Excellent. If you'll just excuse me a moment, I think this knife should be sharp enough for the de-testiculation process.

As he moves away, he again is passed by CARRIE and HAMISH.

CUT ON TO:

GARETH

Don't worry - let's have a look - I'm sure you'll be sitting next to someone marvellous.

They inspect the seating plan. They can't believe it.

CHARLES

O God. This must be a joke.

CHARLES shakes his head - everything is going wrong for him.

CUT TO:

Spoon banging on a table.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

My Lords, ladies and gentlemen. Dinner is served.

CUT TO:

Everyone sitting down. At the top table, TOM is busy correcting his speech with a confident smile on his face.

CUT TO:

GARETH's table. GARETH approaches, talking to GEORGE.

GEORGE

I always take a lot of trouble over the present. I think it really matters, don't you?

GARETH who stole the present replies...

GARETH

O yes. It's months, isn't it, months to get it right.

At his table are many of the friends... and CARRIE.

GARETH

Hello, I'm Gareth - and you look divine.

CARRIE

I'm Carrie.

GARETH

This is Matthew, this is Fiona, this is Scarlett - they're my closest friends. O I think we're all going to be very happy together...

CUT TO:

CHARLES sitting down - actually his table looks all right. It's 4 girls, 3 men, all presentable and his age. And DAVID.

CHARLES

Hi.

TONY

Hello, I'm Tony. And I believe you know Veronica.

CHARLES

Yes.

He's uneasy about something.

CUT TO:

FIONA chatting to a rather grand MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN at the table.

MRS BEAUMONT

And tell me, are you married?

FIONA

No.

MRS BEAUMONT

Are you a lesbian?

FIONA

Why do you say that?

MRS BEAUMONT

Well, it's one of the possibilities with unmarried women, and a bit more interesting than saying - "O dear, just haven't met the right chap, eh"?

FIONA

Good on you, I always assume middle-aged people are dull and totally the same - it's lovely to meet one who isn't.

MRS BEAUMONT

Thank you.

FIONA

No, truth is, though, I have met the right man - unfortunately, he doesn't love me - and until I stop loving him, no-one else stands a chance.

MRS BEAUMONT

Bad luck.

FIONA

Isn't it? I was a lesbian once, at school - but only for an hour and a half, so I don't think it counts.

CUT TO:

CHARLES'S table - DAVID seems to be relishing the situation.

TONY

So there are 400 different kinds of tea and that isn't including all these so-called fruit teas. I took Veronica out to India to have a look at the plantations at Christmas.

CHARLES

Excellent.

CHARLES is just that little bit tense. He looks over and sees CARRIE laughing with the others.

TONY

I believe you and she went out there once.

CHARLES

That's right.

VERONICA

Charles was vile - he insisted on cracking jokes all the time I was being sick.

CHARLES

I was trying to cheer you up.

NIKKI

O, you're THAT Veronica.

VERONICA

Which Veronica?

CHARLES looks a little panicky.

NICKI

O well, when Charles and I were going out he told me he'd had this.. 'interesting' journey round India with 'Vomiting Veronica' I think that was it.

CHARLES

Seriously, I don't remember ever mentioning it.

IRIS

O come on Charles, I don't think I've ever been out with anyone less discreet.

The true horror of the situation is now becoming clear.

IRIS (cont)

I remember you going on about this girl Helena, was it, whose Mother made a pass at you.

MARTHA

I remember this - you couldn't work out whether it would be impolite not to accept her advances.

NICKI

That's right! Mrs Piggy - Helena was Miss Piggy, so her mother was Mrs Piggy.

CHARLES

Yes, I think perhaps...

Everyone can't but notice that he is looking massively uncomfortable. They all turn to the final girl on the table.

HELENA

We've both lost a lot of weight since then.

CHARLES in total despair.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Ladies and gentlemen - the Best Man.

CHARLES

Ah - excellent, the speeches.

DAVID

Did you pork Mrs Piggy?

CHARLES

No, I did not!!!

CUT TO:

TOM standing, convinced he's on to a winner.

TOM

Ahm...when Bernard told me he was getting engaged to Lydia, I congratulated him because all his other girlfriends had been complete dogs - although, may I say how delighted we are to have so many of them here this evening.

CHARLES shakes his head, GARETH is delighted.

CUT TO:

The drinks table, later. All of them gathered.

GARETH

We had the most fabulous girl on our table - called Carrie-

CHARLES

Don't tell me - I know.

GARETH

She asked us all round to dinner. Apparently her fiancée is terribly grand and owns half of Scotland. How were you?

CHARLES

I seem to be stuck in the wedding from hell. The next thing you know, I'll bump into Henrietta and the horror will be complete.

From behind him comes a voice

HENRIETTA

Hello, Charles.

He turns around, and there is a strained looking girl.

CHARLES

Hello, Hen. How are you?

PAUSE. Then her face just collapses. She bursts into tears...

CHARLES (cont)

O Hen..

HENRIETTA'S FRIEND

Look, can't you just leave her alone - haven't you hurt her enough?

And takes her away. CHARLES turns to GARETH.

CHARLES

Excuse me - I think I better be where other people are not.

As CHARLES walks out, he passes DAVID.

CHARLES

Just saw Henrietta.

DAVID

You ruined her life, you heartless bastard.

CHARLES

Thanks for your support.

CHARLES then passes SERENA and the camera stays with her. She approaches DAVID, easing up to him as before, via the canapes. She misjudges it and bumps into him.

SERENA

I'm sorry.

He waves it away - no matter. She stands opposite him. Pause. Then she starts to sign, very slowly. The subtitles translate.

SERENA

Hello, my name is Serena.

DAVID laughs sweetly.

DAVID

Hello, Serena.

She looks totally confused. He repeats it, very slowly, in finger sign..

DAVID

H-e-l-l-o. You sign very well.

SERENA

Thank you. I'n just learning. I'n progagly naking lobs of nistakes.

DAVID shakes his head.

DAVID

No, perfect.

He does a little mime, which asks her if she fancies a dance.

SERENA

Yes that would be mice.

51. INT. HOTEL. CORRIDOR. NIGHT. 51.

CHARLES, with the sound of music in the background - he looks along a corridor, then nips into a little room, where he can be alone.

52. INT. HOTEL. ROOM. NIGHT. 52.

It contains just a bed and a dressing table. On the bed is a suit, and a girl's skirt and blouse. He goes to the window, and, peaceful at last, looks out over London.

There is a sound - he turns around, and sees the door opening. BERNARD and LYDIA enter the room - they don't see him - but turn and quickly lock the door. It is in fact the room for changing into their going away clothes.

CHARLES is a little worried by this.

BERNARD

I'll turn off the light - don't want to attract attention.

CHARLES nods. The light goes out, in the darkness we hear rustling.

LYDIA

Wait a minute, this is no fun! I want to see my lovely husband.

The light goes on again. They are half undressed and CHARLES is stranded directly behind them: they do not see him.

CUT IN: close on them, then pan around - and CHARLES has disappeared. The couple are now almost naked: The camera moves down to under the bed, where we expect CHARLES to be. There seems to be nowhere else in the room where he could fit.

Finally he emerges from a suitcase, as behind him the couple are having sex. He crawls towards a dressing table, which has little curtains under it. He crawls between them - at last he is protected. He looks at his watch. This could be a long haul...

53. INT. HOTEL. BALLROOM. NIGHT.

53.

SCARLETT is under a table with her 8 year old fellow bridesmaid, FREDA. SCARLETT talks to her straight, as she does to everyone.

SCARLETT

Have you got a boyfriend?

FREDA

Yes.

SCARLETT

What's his name?

FREDA

Dolph. He's good at table tennis. What about you?

SCARLETT

No. 'Fraid not.

FREDA

Why not?

SCARLETT

I don't know - chaps I fancy think I'm stupid, so they just shag me and leave me. And chaps who fancy me, I think they're stupid and can't even be bothered to shag them.

FREDA

I see.

PAUSE. SCARLETT taken up in her thoughts about this rather accurate self-analysis.

FREDA

What's 'shagging'?

SCARLETT

O don't be stupid, you know, when a man and a woman take off their clothes and...

FREDA

O, 'fucking'.

SCARLETT

That's right.

FREDA

You should forget about fucking. It's nothing but trouble.

54. INT. HOTEL. BEDROOM. HOTEL. NIGHT. 54.

CHARLES is still concealed. There is an orgasm in the background. CHARLES checks his watch.

BERNARD

O, I love my wife.

LYDIA

And I love my husband.

BERNARD sighs contentedly. Beneath his dressing table, CHARLES looks relieved.

BERNARD

Still, we better be going back.

CHARLES nods.

LYDIA

Yes. Or we could just wait a few minutes, and have another go.

CHARLES shakes his head in intense disagreement.

BERNARD

Well, there's a thought. You naughty, naughty little rabbit.

CHARLES'S head in his hands

BERNARD and LYDIA on the bed. CHARLES politely steps out from the dressing table. He walks past them. They are very surprised. He holds up a pencil.

CHARLES

Found it.

55. INT. HOTEL. CORRIDOR. NIGHT.

55.

As he shuts the door behind him, CHARLES turns and bumps straight into HENRIETTA. She is very beautiful - but tonight, very highly strung.

HENRIETTA

Charles, we must talk.

CHARLES

(trapped, but kindly)
Must we?

HENRIETTA

It's just I'd like to help you.

CHARLES

That's awfully kind, Hen, but...

HENRIETTA

The thing is, Charlie, I've spoken to lots of people about you.

CHARLES

O God -

HENRIETTA

Everybody agrees - you'll never really love anyone, because you never let them near you. You're sweet to them, and affectionate to them... you were even sweet to me and you thought I was an idiot.

CHARLES

I did not!

HENRIETTA

You did. I thought U2 was a type of submarine.

CHARLES

Did you?

HENRIETTA

But it's like from the beginning of every relationship, you're looking for a way out.

CHARLES

Well, sometimes, I admit - I mean, take that girl with the big knife.

HENRIETTA

Be serious Charles! You must give people a chance. You don't have to think "I must get married" - but you mustn't think "I mustn't get married".

CHARLES

Hen, you know me - most of the time I don't think at all - I just potter along.

HENRIETTA

O Charles (She suddenly puts her arms around him) - the way you used to look at me. I just misread it, that's all - you were thinking about leaving - O Christ... this is so ridiculous.

She walks away. CHARLES is left, slightly stunned. Suddenly at his shoulder.

CARRIE

She looked happy.

CHARLES

Yes, it's a great night. Up there with my father's funeral for sheer entertainment value.

CARRIE

I'm off - keep me company.

This is kind of her, a little protective. They head for the top of the stairs.

56. INT. HOTEL. BALLROOM STAIRS. NIGHT. 56.

Everyone is at the bottom - clearly waiting for the bride and groom to come down. MATTHEW raises a quizzical eyebrow at GARETH. HENRIETTA bursts into tears again. It just gets worse.

When they're half way down, everyone applauds and BERNARD and LYDIA come downstairs.

ALL

Bravo!!!!

Beneath her jacket LYDIA reveals a t-shirt with the slogan "BE GENTLE, I'M A VIRGIN".

MATTHEW

Excellent t-shirt.

GARETH

Yes. I suspect not technically true.

Much cheering. LYDIA throws the bouquet. GARETH jumps for it enthusiastically, high above the rest. He catches it - and then graciously hands it to the first lady by his side - it's CARRIE.

GARETH

Madam.

CARRIE

Thank you (whispered to Charles)
Definitely time to go. Share a cab?

CHARLES

Husband?

CARRIE

Fiancee - gone to Edinburgh on the sleeper.

CHARLES

Okay. Though I promised I'd give Scarlett a ...O sod it. I'm sure she's fine.

57. INT. HOTEL. BALLROOM. NIGHT. 57.

SCARLETT, not very sober, in conversation with FATHER GERALD.

SCARLETT

Just checking: your kind of vicar - I know you can't get married, but how do things stand vis a vis just sort of, you know, sex in general, I mean, are you allowed to?

FATHER GERALD

Not really.

SCARLETT

O bad luck. Still - worth asking, eh? Just in case.

58. EXT. HOTEL. NIGHT. 58.

A taxi stops for CHARLES and CARRIE. Being with her has put him in a good mood.

CHARLES

Here we go.

CARRIE

Thank you.

A voice interrupts them from behind. It's GEORGE from The Boatman.

GEORGE

'Scuse me - not going to
Knightsbridge are you?

CARRIE

Yes, go on, hop in.

CHARLES closes his eyes in horror.

GEORGE

Good Lord - it's you - Kathy - how
are you?

CARRIE

Very well...

59. INT. TAXI. LONDON STREETS. NIGHT. 59.

GEORGE

Splendid bloke Bernard -

CHARLES

Yes.

GEORGE

I was up at Eton with his brother
Rupert. Bugged the living
daylights out of me - but taught me
a lot about growing up.

PAUSE

CARRIE

Did you enjoy your schooldays
George?

GEORGE

O yes indeed, best days of my life.

60. EXT. TAXI CAB. LONDON STREETS. NIGHT. 60.

GEORGE being let out of the cab.

GEORGE

Excellent - thank you very much -
goodnight, Kerry - and Charles -
send my regards to that wife of
yours.

61. INT. TAXI CAB. LONDON STREETS. NIGHT.

61.

CHARLES

I'm glad I wasn't at his school.

She laughs

CHARLES

God, it's lovely to see you. How are you, how are you and what fucking total disaster of a disaster has led to the situation where suddenly you're married?

CARRIE

Engaged.

CHARLES

Same thing really.

CARRIE

Here we are ...come on in (the taxi stops) Have a night cap.

PAUSE. He looks at her hard.

CHARLES

Do you really think I should?

CARRIE

(with huge irony) I think we can risk it. I'm pretty sure I can resist you - you're not that cute.

CHARLES

Okay. (genuinely embarrassed)

62. INT. CARRIE'S FLAT. NIGHT.

62.

The flat is in darkness. The lights aren't on. When finally we do reach them, they are just about to kiss. Haltingly, almost trying not to.

CARRIE

O dear...

CHARLES has his arm round her waist. Love theme plays.

63. INT/EXT. ROLLS ROYCE. NIGHT.

63.

BERNARD and LYDIA also kissing, in the back of the car. She's naked.

64. INT. BEDROOM. MATTHEW & GARETH'S HOUSE. NIGHT. 64.

GARETH and MATTHEW, asleep, cuddled.

65. INT. CARRIE'S FLAT. BEDROOM. NIGHT. 65.

CHARLES and CARRIE are in bed.

CARRIE

I kind of knew this would happen.
The moment I said 'yes' to Hamish,
I had an awful suspicion there'd be
one final fling.

66. INT. FIONA'S BEDROOM. TOM & FIONA'S HOUSE. NIGHT. 66.

FIONA, awake, in bed reading.

66a. INT. TOM'S BEDROOM. TOM & FIONA'S HOUSE. NIGHT. 66a.

TOM, asleep, flat on his back, pyjamas buttoned to his chin.

67. INT. KITCHEN. CHARLES AND SCARLETT'S HOUSE. NIGHT. 67.

SCARLETT, drunk and asleep under the kitchen table.

68. INT. CARRIE'S FLAT. BEDROOM. DAWN. 68.

CARRIE

I think it's time you went.

CHARLES

But it's 5 in the morning.

CARRIE

And at nine in the morning my
sister-in-law comes round. We're
discussing bridesmaids.

CHARLES

You're right. I've got very little
to contribute on that one.

Silently CHARLES dresses.

CHARLES (cont)

Would you like to go out
sometime....

CARRIE

(not lifting her head from the
pillow) No thanks.

CHARLES

Why?

CARRIE

Too dangerous. I love my fiance.

CHARLES

Good reason. You see, this is my whole argument against marriage - even when I'd found the right girl - I'd keep bumping into people like you.

His hand comes up and waves him goodbye. He hesitates and then turns to go. An alarm clock rings.

AUTUMN

69.INT. CHARLES BEDROOM. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY.69

CHARLES sits up and switches off the alarm with a smile - then smugly goes back to sleep again.

CAPTION: 2 MONTHS LATER

His door opens. It is SCARLETT wearing a t-shirt that says "I Love John Major". She carries a cup of tea - and some toast.

SCARLETT

Morning. Tea. Mail. Junkmail. Toast
- sorry, it's a bit burnt.

CU a very very burnt piece of toast entering Charles's mouth.

CHARLES

Thanks.

CHARLES takes a big, white envelope and tears it open. It is a formal invitation.

CHARLES

O no. I can't go to any more weddings - they last too long and my waistcoat doesn't fit. (He reads it): "Mr and Mrs Gregory Hartnell the Third invite you to the wedding of their daughter Judith Caroline to Sir Hamish Banks" (He is mystified) Who are these people?

SCARLETT takes the invite and inspects.

SCARLETT

O look - it says 'plus guest' - can I come?

CHARLES goes on eating and talking.

CHARLES

It's a novel idea isn't it - sending wedding invites to people you don't know. "Dear Greg, Thanks very much for your totally charming invitation. Unfortunately, I've never fucking heard of you or your daughter Judith, so I fear I shan't be attending". Christ - what a cheek - they've even put in a wedding list!

We now glimpse the back of Scarlett's t-shirt. It says "Only Joking".

SCARLETT

Actually, I think it's that American girl you slept with at Laura's wedding. Her name was Carrie, wasn't it?

CHARLES

Yes - but this one's called Judith.

SCARLETT

Second name Caroline.

CHARLES

Good Lord. I think you're right. Dammit. Why didn't I marry her? Can you remember?

SCARLETT

Because you only met her twice, and you rather threw away the chance of a deep and meaningful relationship by banging her on both occasions.

CHARLES

O yes.

70. INT. KITCHEN. CHARLES AND SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 70.

CHARLES

Right - I'm going out.

SCARLETT

OK- but over here first...(she stands him in front of her)...because you've been cutting it a bit fine recently, haven't you?

CHARLES

Yes. And everyone's starting to hate me.

SCARLETT

Right. Who are you meeting today?

CHARLES

David.

SCARLETT

When?

CHARLES

At 4 o'clock.

SCARLETT

What time does that mean you have to be there by?

CHARLES

5 at the very latest.

71. EXT. LIBERTY'S. DAY.

71.

CHARLES outside.

71a. INT. LIBERTY'S. DAY.

71a.

CHARLES walks in to the Oriental Department. It is a room full of ceramic tigers, exotic carpets, woven baskets, beautiful silks, wooden carvings. He approaches an assistant. She is very snooty. She feels Charles's casual shirt and sneakers don't fit in with the spirit of the store.

CHARLES

Hello, I'm here to maybe buy something off a wedding list.

ASSISTANT

What's the name, sir?

CHARLES

It's Hartnell, I think, or Banks.

ASSISTANT

Banks, o yes, sir, we have a Banks. Lovely list.

CHARLES

Could you tell me some prices?

ASSISTANT

Certainly, sir - there are some beautiful things about the £1000 mark.

CHARLES

Yes, I was thinking about something more like, well, 50.

ASSISTANT

So, you'd like to buy tthree knives and a fork?

CHARLES

That's what I get for 50 quid?

ASSISTANT

Yes - for £51 you get two knives and two forks - but we don't want to smash through your budget barrier. Or you could have that ceramic leopard over there...

CHARLES

Ah, excellent, that's more like it.

ASSISTANT

If you can find someone to chip in £11,950.

CHARLES smiles.

ASSISTANT

Or our carrier bags are £1.50 - you could just get 33 of them.

CHARLES

Actually, I think I'll leave it. Thanks very much. You've been very helpful.

He turns and bumps straight into CARRIE. She's just in jeans and a white t-shirt, her hair down, very different: much plainer, but still, in her way, lovely. She's in a very good mood.

CARRIE

Whatcha get?

CHARLES

Nothing yet - just deciding.

CARRIE

It's so great this! I should have married years ago. I love getting presents. (To the Assistant) Anyone go for the leopard yet?

ASSISTANT

No. The young man was thinking about it.

CHARLES nods thoughtfully.

CARRIE

O no - just get me a knife and fork or something. Hey, you haven't got half an hour have you?

CHARLES

Surely - I've got to meet my brother
at...five..thirty..but I can be a
bit late.

CARRIE

Great. You've got an important
decision to make.

As they walk away

CARRIE (V/O)

I've waited all my life for this
particular shopping experience.

72. INT. STORE CHANGING ROOM. DAY.

72.

CARRIE(V/O)

All right - now the most important
thing is that you mustn't laugh.

CHARLES

Okay.

She emerges in a plain, formal, typical... WEDDING DRESS.
She is, despite herself, quite shy about it.

CARRIE

What do you think?

He looks at her, and then laughs gently...as if there's any
question...

CHARLES

Divine.

CARRIE

Okay - that's a start - let's go.

Music starts - you can guess the style of the wedding dress
from the dialogue.

CARRIE emerges again.

CHARLES

Gorgeous....not quite my style.

CARRIE

Meringue.

CHARLES

Rather.

CARRIE in a white satin hot pants suit.

CHARLES

You're kidding.

CARRIE

But it would be great, wouldn't it.

CHARLES

If I were your husband, I would die of pride.

CARRIE

Yeh, I think Hamish would die full stop.

She emerges again.

CHARLES

That's it - perfect - sexy and yet traditional.

CARRIE

It's the petticoat.

CHARLES

Ah.

She walks out - it's a little bo-peep type - lots of lace and silk bows.

CARRIE

This is the dress. What do you think?

CHARLES

Ahm...

CARRIE

I knew it - I knew it -

She goes back in.

CHARLES

But if you can get a little staff it would be very good for looking after sheep.

CARRIE (V/O)

Don't be rude. A lot of people have been very happy in that dress.

She comes out in bra and pants and poses for a split second like a fifties model

CARRIE

And then there's always the beach look.

And runs straight back in again.

CHARLES

It's no wonder husbands aren't allowed to see this - they would realise they were not worthy.

CARRIE (V/O)

Right - ignore the dress - it's trains we're talking about now. What do we think?

CUT TO:

CARRIE is standing at the door of the store - the train stretches right back into the changing room - 30 feet.

CHARLES

You look mad.

CARRIE (V/O)

Second to last. I think it might be a bit sexy.

She emerges in a silver-sequined full length sheath - staggering, she looks like a mermaid. It is divinity.

CHARLES

I'm speechless.

CARRIE

Yeh - I kind of figured.

CHARLES

I mean, I adore it - but there's nothing in the world more off-putting at a wedding than a priest with an enormous erection.

CARRIE (V/O)

Ok, and finally, kind of traditional, but kind of nice.

She comes out - it is beautiful - for the first time she is wearing a veil. CHARLES is silent. She lifts the veil slowly. It is a magical moment. Beyond comment.

73. INT. TEA ROOM. DAY.

73.

It's polite and old-fashioned. On the table in front of CHARLES and CARRIE is a pot of tea and a slice of Battenburg cake. Outside, it is pouring with rain.

CHARLES

Do you mind the fact that it's always raining in England?

CARRIE

I love it - when we were young and it rained, my Dad always took us out in big yellow coats, with no umbrellas and we'd fool around 'till the rain stopped - so for my family, rain's a happy thing.

CHARLES

That's a sickeningly wholesome story - what did your Dad do when it was sunny?

CARRIE

He locked us in the basement and beat us with sticks.

CHARLES laughs. During the scene, they are both eating the slice of cake - but neither will finish it. At first this is quite reasonable - they each take little pieces with their forks, leaving enough for the other. But finally they're actually dividing the crumbs.

CHARLES

One really strange thing is thinking you'll never sleep with anyone else. You don't think you'll ever be unfaithful?

CARRIE

No - not once we're married - I've told Hamish I'll kill him if he is - so I think I better stick by that.

CHARLES

Quite right. Although just before he died John Betjeman was asked if he had any regrets in life and he said he wished he'd slept around more.

CARRIE

No - I reckon I've had a fair run at it.

CHARLES

How many is a fair run these days?

CARRIE

O, I don't know - more than... one.

CHARLES

Like - how many? I've seen the dress - I can take anything now.

CARRIE

Well...

At first she's unwilling, but then she gets drawn in, counting them out on her fingers.

CARRIE (cont)

Okay - let's see. Right - 1 - not easily forgotten. Kind of nice. 2 - mistake, hairy back. 3 - lovely, getting into the swing of it now. 4, 5, 6, that was my birthday present.

CHARLES

Which birthday?

CARRIE

Sixteen I think.

CHARLES

We've only reached sixteen?

CARRIE

That's right: I was brought up in the country - endless fooling around in barns. Then there was 7 - yummy - 8 - yummy yummy - 9 - against a fence - really uncomfortable - don't try it...

CHARLES

I won't.

CARRIE

Then 10 - ah, 10 - he was the really annoying one we all have, when you say, "o no, why didn't I know all this stuff before?" - I wasted one to nine. 11 - obviously, in the circumstances, very disappointing.

CARRIE (cont)

12 - still recovering. 13 - o, so there's even more to it. 14, 15, 16, 17 - the University years - lovely, intelligent, sensitive boys - sexually speaking, a real low patch. 18 - he broke my heart. Long years of yearning.

CHARLES

I'm sorry.

CARRIE

After which came 19 - who I don't remember, but my room-mate said we definitely did it - 20 - long one - 3 years. 21 - my Fatal Attraction.

CHARLES

He went crazy?

CARRIE

No, he looked like Michael Douglas. 22 - that was my first year in England - I love English guys - 23 and 24 together, which was something...

CHARLES

You're joking.

CARRIE

No, it was a holiday, I was brown, they were foreign, sure beat conversation, and we're still ages before AIDS. 25 - gorgeous - older man. 26 - dreadful - older man. 27 - that was a mistake.

CHARLES

Suddenly at 27 you make a mistake?

CARRIE

He had a really bad cold - I thought it wouldn't matter - it did. Actually there are a few nasty ones round here - lots of rather grand Frenchman I thought were glamorous. Very nearly gave up on the whole thing. But Spencer changed my mind, that's 28. His father - 29...

CHARLES mouths 'HIS FATHER!!!'

CARRIE (cont)

Then 30 - he shouted a lot, which I found odd, 31 - fine, 32 - lovely. And my fiancée - 33.

CHARLES

So I came after your fiancée

CARRIE

No, you were 32.

CHARLES

O thank you.

CARRIE

So there we have it - something to tell my daughters. Now what about you?

CHARLES

(panic) Me?

CARRIE

Yes - how many girls have you slept with?

CHARLES

O God, ahm, well, nothing like that many. I don't know what the fuck I've been doing with my time actually. Work probably - that's it. Work.

CARRIE

Well, go on.

CHARLES

Ahm, well, lets see -

He counts on his fingers - 1,2,3. Pause. 4th finger. Long pause.

CHARLES

O, it must be about twenty.

CARRIE

No, go on, try harder.

CHARLES

(He just can't come up with the numbers) Five... six... all right, about 15.

CARRIE

My husband says he's slept with 84.

CHARLES

That's a lie - he's lying. He's a filthy liar.

CARRIE

Apparently not. He was very perky in his 30's.

CHARLES

Was he? O, God. I've wasted my life! Here I am, having tea when I should be out scouring the streets. Look, do you mind if I pay 'n' run, I've got serious shagging to do.

She laughs. Both of them just stop talking. CHARLES watches her sipping her tea, and smiles. Something's happened. She has a bite of cake - then looks at him calmly - he snaps out of it.

CHARLES

Sorry - Sorry. (Pause) I wish I'd rung you. (She smiles) But then you didn't ring me either. You ruthlessly slept with me twice, and then never rang me.

CARRIE

(gentler) That's another strange thing about getting married - you look back on all the people you've been with, and...you get sentimental about them, and you think about other decisions you might have made.

They look at each other. Pause. She decides to break it.

...Who knows, maybe I should have given the guy with the hairy back another chance - there are creams.

They both laugh. These are two people who should be together.

CARRIE

I have to go soon.

CHARLES

O Christ - (looks at his watch) - come with me - be my excuse.

74. EXT. OXFORD STREET. DAY.

74.

DAVID is waiting outside. As they approach - DAVID signs from afar...

DAVID

Whatever your excuse, you're doomed.
I disown you, and if you ever have
children I intend to abuse them...

CHARLES

Carrie this is David, my brother.
David this is Carrie.

CARRIE

Hi

DAVID

I've seen you at a couple of
weddings.

CHARLES

He says he's seen you at a couple of
weddings.

DAVID

Christ she is absolutely adorable,
isn't she?

CARRIE look at CHARLES to translate it

CHARLES

He says it was Lydia and Laura's.
I was looking for her wedding
present when I bumped into her.
That's why I'm late.

DAVID

Pathetic. Who's she marrying?

CHARLES

Some total penis.

DAVID

What is it about total penises that
they get such great wives?

CHARLES

I just told him you were getting
married - he says your husband must
be a pretty special person.

DAVID

Didn't you do it with her once?

CARRIE

What did he say?

CHARLES

Where are you doing it?

CARRIE

Scotland.

DAVID

Beautiful breasts.

CHARLES

He says it's a beautiful country. Hilly. Excuse me a second. I've got an awful feeling about this girl...she's wonderful. I mean I like everything about her. I like her as much as (to her) Sorry - this is really dull for you. I've got this problem with my car - David's an expert.

DAVID

You should tell her. This time next week she'll be Mrs Penis.

CHARLES nods thoughtfully as though maybe DAVID is right.

CHARLES

He says I should do something now - by next week it'll be ruined.

CARRIE

Look, guys - I've got to be going. I'm expected at a rehearsal.

CHARLES

Bugger - she's off.

DAVID

Say something - this is your last chance.

CHARLES

Say what?

DAVID

"Ditch the prick, marry me instead"

CARRIE

Thanks for the tea. I really enjoyed it. See you at the wedding.

CHARLES

Yes, great.

CARRIE

Goodbye David, I hope you can get the car fixed.

CHARLES

(absentmindedly)

Goodbye - hope you get the car fixed.

DAVID

What car?

They watch her as she walks away down Oxford Street.

DAVID

As a brother I've got to say, I think you may regret this for the rest of your life.

CHARLES

O yes and fat chance she's going to do anything except.... o fuck it!

And he sprints off after he...his mind made up. He turns the corner - no glimpse of her.

75. EXT. HANOVER SQUARE. DAY. 75.

He runs into Hanover Square - there she is - he dodges traffic and ends up right in front of her.

CHARLES

Ahm look -

CARRIE

Hi.

CHARLES

I know this is a stupid question - particularly in view of our recent shopping trip - but I just wondered whether you're sure - well, of course you're sure, but I just wondered whether there's any chance - I mean, obviously not, I'm just some git who's only slept with 9 people but I just wondered whether - I know I'm going to regret this even as I say it, but I really feel...ahm...in short, in a slightly clearer version - in the words of David Cassidy in fact - 'I think I love you' and I wonder whether you wouldn't by any chance like to...no, of course not, that's the answer really isn't it - I'm an idiot, he's not. Fantastic. Lovely to see you. Sorry to disturb you - better get on. Fuck.

PAUSE

CARRIE

That was very romantic....

CHARLES

Well I thought it over a lot, wanted to get it just right...

CARRIE

No, I mean it.

CHARLES

The thing is...I just feel...you don't just feel do you...

CARRIE

I'm getting married in 14 days time...

CHARLES

Yes. I agree. I just wanted to have said it -

CARRIE

Said what?

CHARLES

Well, (absolutely rushes it) would you like to marry me...just in case you're being forced into this marriage by some kind of hideous blackmail... If that's the case - if there's some grotesque plot to make you marry a man you absolutely hate, I'm willing to step in and save you.

CARRIE

Thank you. I really appreciate that. You're lovely.

She kisses him and walks away. He is left on the streets. The alarm goes off.

76. INT. WEDDING 3. SCOTTISH CHURCH. DUSK. 76.

A church in Scotland. It is evening, and it looks like a dream, like a fairytale, completely lit with candles. CARRIE is at the altar. Her wedding dress is the loveliest that we have seen.

VICAR

Therefore, if any man can show any just cause or impediment why they may not be lawfully joined together, let them speak now.

There is a bang at the back door. The congregation turns - it is CHARLES.

CHARLES

(mouthing)
Sorry.

The service continues.

VICAR

Do you take this man to be your lawful wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forth as long as ye both shall live?

CARRIE

I do.

CUT TO:

CHARLES, taking it in.

CHARLES

(Last gasp of exhausted defeat)
Fuckadoodle-doo.

A song plays in V/O:

YVONNE FAIR

It should have been me!
It should have been me!
You know, it should have been me!
Baby how can you do this to me?

CUT TO:

The rather irksome Best Man is reading the lesson.

FREDERICK

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become a sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.

DURING THIS, pan across a smiling row of guests - then reach CHARLES, his head in his hands on 'But have not love'.

77. EXT. WEDDING 3. SCOTTISH CHURCH. DUSK.

77.

CHARLES walking alone in a crowd through an avenue of torches guiding guests to the reception. The Church is in the grounds of the Scottish Manor House Hamish owns. Sad music plays.

78. INT. SCOTTISH MANOR HOUSE. RECEPTION LINE-UP. DUSK. 78.

CHARLES shakes hands

CHARLES

You're a very lucky man.

HAMISH

I know.

CHARLES

(To Carrie)

You looked beautiful. Not a
meringue in sight.

CARRIE

Thanks. Let's hope tonight we can
resist our usual wedding behaviour.

CHARLES

Yes...

He moves on - he is stopped by a photographer.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Sir - if you'd like to just step
over here - we're taking pictures
for the couple.

He is led over to a corner, where the photographer is set
up with props and lights and a particularly rich tableau,
with deer, and kilted wax figures.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Please yes - how about you hold the
spear - that's right. And the
haggis, yes, very funny.

CHARLES deeply gloomy.

PHOTOGRAPHER (cont)

Now smile - show them how delighted
you are - that's right - a great big
grin for the bride and groom to
remember you by.

He grins - it is the direct opposite of what he is feeling.

CHARLES

Yes, look excuse me, I just
remembered I have to ring my mother:
she's in a coma...

And he moves on. He turns the corner and...

79. INT. SCOTTISH MANOR HOUSE. RECEPTION. DUSK. 79.

CHARLES

Good lord.

...before him is an extraordinary sight...

The entire Hall has been transformed into a Medieval Scottish World, of roasting animals, and burning braziers - strange tableaux of scenes from Scottish history threaten in the corners.

In the corner are a Scottish band all ready to suggest that the people spend the evening dancing reels.

CUT TO:

The friends - as in the first wedding, gathered to survey the scene: GARETH at his most exuberant.

GARETH

What can one say - it's sodding Macbeth!

SCARLETT

Do you think those deer are real?

FIONA closes her eyes at this.

GARETH

Dearest things - I've decided to set you all a challenge: as you know, there is at the moment not a wedding ring between the lot of us - which is particularly disappointing in the case of the heterosexuals here present -

TOM

Well, don't look at me: I've asked hundreds of people. (He points out various girls) I've asked her and her - I asked her twice - and her sister.

SCARLETT

You haven't asked me.

TOM

Haven't I?

SCARLETT

No.

TOM

Well, yes, I mean, of course, Scarlett, would you like...you

TOM (cont'd)
know...I haven't got much to offer,
but erm...

SCARLETT
No thanks, Tom. But nice of you to
ask.

TOM
No, any time.

GARETH
Be that as it may - I want to set
you a challenge - find husbands and
wives. Weddings are the ideal time
for it. Matthew and I are in a
slightly special position, and we
will try to entertain the Americans
- but the rest of you - please -
conjugate! I'd like to go to the
wedding of someone I really loved
for a change.

TOM
Fair enough - I'm game. What about
you Fifi - spot a potential hubby in
the throng?

FIONA
Fuck off, Tom.

TOM
Quite right.

SCARLETT
I'm game. I can see 4 or 5
candidates.

A champagne tray comes round.

GARETH
A toast before we head into battle -
to true love - in whatever shape or
form it comes. May all of us in our
dotage be proud to say " I was
adored once too."

ALL
True love.

GARETH
Right - as David Bowie said so
brilliantly before he went
completely off the rails - "Let's
dance!".

GARETH rubs his hands in glee - he's going to misbehave - we can see that MATTHEW actually loves this in him.

DAVID

You presumably won't be pursuing this with particular relish.

CHARLES

No. I think I'll just sit here and wait for my wife to find me.

DAVID raises an eyebrow and walks away - CHARLES sits down on his own near a large stuffed warrior. A voice comes from behind him...

HENRIETTA

Hello, Charles.

CHARLES

O, Hen, no please - I couldn't bear a scene today. I know I'm a total shite, I deserve repeated torture...

HENRIETTA

Did I behave that atrociously last time?

CHARLES

Do you remember when we were on holiday in the Caribbean and I got attacked by that enormous stingray...?

HENRIETTA

Yes.

CHARLES

It was worse.

She laughs. She is in a good playful mood - you can now see why they might have once gone out - they are comfortable as old boyfriend and girlfriend.

CHARLES

Christ, I'm depressed - how are you?

HENRIETTA

Well, cheerful actually - I've got a divine new boyfriend who is over there (cutaway to her good looking boyfriend) and I weigh almost nothing.

CHARLES

Yes, you look wonderful... Perhaps you were right, Hen - perhaps we should have got married.

HENRIETTA

Absolutely not - you'll never marry anyone, Charles. What you are is a serial monogamist: kind and lovely - but always in transit...

CHARLES

I'm sure I could change: right girl, right railway station...

HENRIETTA

And besides - marry you and you have to marry your friends - and I'm not sure I could take Fiona.

CHARLES

Fiona loves you..

HENRIETTA

Fiona calls me the Attractive Duck...

CHARLES

Does she? So all round - I'm not a good bet

HENRIETTA

No - nice for a year, but...

CHARLES

Thanks for that, Hen - I was depressed, but you've really cheered me up. I think I'll go die now.

HENRIETTA

Please come and have lunch sometime - ring me... (pecks him gently on the cheek).. Still cute.

CUT TO:

GARETH dancing with terrific gusto with a 60 year old woman. And now CARRIE joins in the dancing.

CUT BACK TO:

CHARLES, watching her. FIONA joins him.

FIONA

How was the Duck?

CHARLES

Good form, actually. Not too mad. How's the challenge going...?

CUT TO:

TOM, talking to a VERY PRETTY WOMAN.

TOM

Apparently an enormous number of people actually bump into their future spouses at weddings...which is...ahm...interesting.

MARRIED WOMAN

Yes, I met my husband at a wedding.

TOM

(Disappointed) Ah. (He takes a big gulp of drink) Good Lord, I seem to have finished my drink. If you'll excuse me...

CUT TO:

SCARLETT standing in front of the best-looking man at the wedding.

SCARLETT

Hello, my name's Scarlett. Named after Scarlett O'Hara, but much less trouble. What's your name?

AMERICAN GOOD-LOOKER

Rhett.

SCARLETT

No - not really?!

AMERICAN GOOD-LOOKER

No, not really. In fact it's Weston.

SCARLETT

You kidder - for some reason or other you imagine Americans are going to be dull as shit - and of course you're not are you? I mean Robin Williams is American, isn't he?

WESTON

Yes, he is.

SCARLETT

You're lovely.

CUT TO:

GARETH, in conversation with an ORANGE-HAIRED AMERICAN LADY.

CARRIE'S AUNT

Do you actually know Oscar Wilde?

GARETH

Not personally, no - though I know someone who could get you his fax number.

CUT TO:

More ferociously exuberant dancing - TOM is now dancing with someone to whom he gives the fruity eye.

CUT TO:

CHARLES and FIONA. A bagpipe plays to announce speeches. GARETH returns.

GARETH

How's it going - any rings on any fingers?

FIONA

No - but there's a charming man over there with no hair who I think might be a contender.

GARETH

It's a bit of a nightmare out there - Matthew's trapped with an evangelist from Minnesota.

CUT TO:

MATTHEW with a man with a stars and stripes waistcoat: he has his eyes closed and his hand on Matthew's shoulder. He may be exorcising him. MATTHEW looks quizzical.

FREDERICK - THE BEST MAN (v/o)

Ladies and gentlemen - please charge your glasses. First, rather unusually, we have a word from the bride.

Enthusiastic applause - particularly from GARETH.

GARETH

Excellent. I love this girl.

CHARLES looks up at GARETH - who shrugs his shoulders - he knows Charles's secret.

CARRIE and HAMISH are at the end, on a sort of raised platform.

CARRIE

Thank you. Forgive me if I'm a little hesitant - the last really important speech I made was to my mother and father explaining exactly what a packet of condoms were doing in my bedside table.

LAUGHTER

CARRIE (cont)

I really only want to say 3 things. The first is how overjoyed I am to see all of you here - I would have thought that not living in the same country was a perfect excuse for not turning up to a wedding - and yet here you Americans are. Thank you. And as for the locals - I would have thought the fact that lots of frightful Americans were flying in was the perfect excuse for staying away - so thank you too.

CHARLES looks at her with affection

CARRIE (cont)

Point number 2 is a private thing between me and my sister - I always told you I'd tell you on my wedding day - and the answer is - yes, I did - 3 times - and I'm really sorry.

The third point is the important one - if my darling Dad had been here today, he would have been speaking now - and I know what he would have said - "cute dress, babe, but why the hell are you marrying the stiff in the skirt?"

TOM roars with laughter - he's very impressed at her cheek.

CARRIE (cont)

And I would have given him the same answer I give you - 'because I love him.' As John Lennon, who died the same year as my Dad, said - "Love is the answer - and you know that for sure". I do know - and I'm sure.

They all clap as she sits down. CHARLES can't believe he let her go.

CHARLES

This is the last wedding I'm going to - I mean it.

DAVID quietly pats his brother's shoulder. Now the applause dies down and CARRIE just gets to her feet again.

CARRIE

O, final thing - someone here asked me to marry them last week - and the answer is - 'yeh, okay, if this doesn't work out'.

It's an outrageous thing to say, and HAMISH roars with laughter. CHARLES looks at her.

FREDERICK - THE BEST MAN

Splendid. And now, my Lords, Ladies and gents, my dear friend and yours, Mr Hamish Banks.

CHARLES shakes his head in dismay. HAMISH is smooth, confident in his years and social position.

DAVID

I mean, how old is he? 2,000, 3,000 years old?

HAMISH

Anyone involved in Conservative politics over the past 20 years has got used to being upstaged by a woman. But I didn't expect it to happen on my wedding day. That said, it couldn't have been done by a more wonderful woman, one by whom I am quite happy to be upstaged for the rest of my life.

Loud "Bravo!". In the background there is a slight clatter.

CUT TO:

GARETH has stumbled backwards.

CUT BACK TO:

HAMISH (cont'd)

First, I'd like to extend my compliments to the bridesmaids - and of course the excellent page boys - they did their duties superbly - and obviously I intend to use you all every time I get married from now on.

He looks at CARRIE - he has teased her back. More laughter.

CUT TO:

GARETH. He falls further, pulling a table cloth. A bottle falls and smashes as he tugs it. Then back...

HAMISH

O dear, barracking at the back - so it is a political speech after all!

Most of the audience are still listening to him, and most laugh. CHARLES moves to GARETH. DAVID and TOM are with him.

CHARLES

We're going to need a Doctor. Tom.

DAVID cradles GARETH's head on his knee. The fuss at the back is now discreet.

TOM

All right - leave it to me.

TOM is suddenly another version of himself - responsible, caring - this is how he will be with his family, on his farm.

CUT TO: The podium

HAMISH

One expects the unexpected at a wedding - but I must admit heckling comes as a genuine surprise. But you know, these Scottish Nationalists are very determined.

Some laughter.

CUT TO:

GARETH. THE DOCTOR is right there. He has a feel of GARETH's neck pulse.

DOCTOR

(very quiet and calm)
Let's move him into the next room.

They begin to move him.

CUT BACK TO:

HAMISH has no idea what's occurred.

HAMISH

I'd also like to thank all the wonderful ladies of the parish who did the flowers in the Church - the stern old building took on a look of

HAMISH (cont'd)
flushed youth today - more I fear
than can be said for the bridegroom.

Everyone laughs.

80. SCOTTISH MANOR HOUSE. DRAWING ROOM. NIGHT. 80.

This is the room they have moved Gareth to. It is huge and empty. There is a sharp contrast between the two rooms - one absolutely packed and full of laughter, the other still, with six small figures alone in a big space. We see GARETH's fabulous waistcoat being unbuttoned. FIONA, DAVID, CHARLES, TOM are there.

CHARLES

Is he going to be all right?

THE DOCTOR looks at him, with no hope in his face.

81.INT. SCOTTISH MANOR HOUSE. RECEPTION. NIGHT. 81.

HAMISH(cont'd)

...twice her age, half her brains..

Big roar of laughter. Powerful music plays.

82. SCOTTISH MANOR HOUSE. DRAWING ROOM. NIGHT. 82.

In the room next door something has happened. It is like a tableau. FIONA is trying desperately not to cry. TOM is standing with his hands behind his neck. DAVID is holding GARETH'S head. There is a kerfuffle at the door and SCARLETT sprints inelegantly into the room, runs towards them and slips across the polished wooden floor, like on ice.

83.INT. SCOTTISH MANOR HOUSE. RECEPTION. NIGHT. 83.

We see CHARLES, his face white, walking through the crowds of people laughing. HAMISH still talking in the background...

HAMISH

I looked in the mirror this morning when I was shaving, and I thought to myself - I must learn to shave without looking in the mirror. However - if as the years go by I can look in the mirror and see my beautiful bride behind me - then I'll put up with anything...

CHARLES sees MATTHEW and walks towards him. Just before he reaches him, he hesitates - it's a hard moment.

84. INT. SCOTTISH MANOR HOUSE. DRAWING ROOM. NIGHT. 84.

The tableau in the other room.

85. INT. SCOTTISH MANOR HOUSE. RECEPTION. NIGHT. 85.

The end of CHARLES'S hesitation. He moves forward, takes MATTHEW'S arm, and whispers in his ear.

CUT AWAY as we take in MATTHEW'S reaction to the news.

86. EXT. LAKE DISTRICT. DAY. 86.

Dramatic shots of the Lake District, in all its ill-tempered winter beauty. After 30 seconds, we see CHARLES' car driving. It turns the corner.

87. EXT. FUNERAL CHURCH. LAKE DISTRICT. DAY. 87.

There, in the middle of the mountains, stands a rough stone chapel. Outside it are parked lots of cars. CHARLES is last again. SCARLETT and he both get out and walk swiftly. SCARLETT is dressed all in black, except for pink shoes.

CHARLES

Sorry I'm.....

DAVID

Don't worry. We told you the wrong time. It starts in ten minutes. You're early.

CHARLES

Thanks. Tom. Good to see you.

TOM

Wonderful to see you, Charles, as always. Darling Scarlett.

SCARLETT'S face just creases with sorrow. TOM seems to have changed into a slightly different figure, still foolish, but a good member of the community.

88. INT. FUNERAL CHURCH. LAKE DISTRICT. DAY. 88.

They all walk in together. CHARLES sees MATTHEW.

CHARLES

I'm sorry I'm late.

MATTHEW

Not at all - Gareth would have been deeply wounded if you'd broken a lifetime's tradition.

CHARLES moves past many faces we recognise: ANGUS, LYDIA, BERNARD, LAURA and more. We also see some older people. University colleagues - and two slightly meek, older people, understood to be Gareth's parents.

CHARLES sees that CARRIE is there, in the far corner of the church. She looks plain, un-made up - a beautiful but rather startling contrast to the high flush of her wedding day. But CHARLES sits where TOM gently guides him, next to FIONA. DAVID slips in next to him...

Music begins to play. The service begins. The coffin is there, in the middle of the aisle. The music comes to an end. The local PRIEST speaks.

PRIEST

Before I begin, I have asked Matthew to say a few words.

MATTHEW steps forward. He has a few papers.

MATTHEW

Gareth used to prefer funerals to weddings. He said it was easier to get enthusiastic about a ceremony one at least had an outside chance of eventually being involved in.

Everyone laughs, they are immediately at ease. CHARLES discreetly signs MATTHEW'S words for DAVID.

In order to do my research for this speech I rang round to get a general picture of how Gareth was regarded by those who met him. "Fat" seems to be a word people most connected with him. I rang a couple of libraries and asked if they remembered him. "No." - "He was fat..." - "O yes, of course!". "Terribly rude" also rang a lot of bells. When I told the emotional Italian in our local sandwich shop that Gareth was dead, his first reaction was "Thank God for that" - before, of course, bursting into tears and closing the shop to mourn. So, "very rude and very fat" seems to have been the stranger's viewpoint. And I'm sure the maker of his waistcoats would like me to add "very demanding and, of course, quite mad".

On the other hand, some of you have been kind enough to ring me, and

MATTHEW (cont'd)

tell me that you loved him - which I know he would have been thrilled to hear. You remember his fabulous hospitality and his strange, experimental cooking - the recipe for Duck a la Banana fortunately goes with him to his grave. Most of all, you tell me of his enormous capacity for joy, and when joyful, for highly vocal drunkenness. His full bass version of "Shaddupa Ya Face" is something we will all, tragically, never forget. But I hope joyful is how you will remember him. Not stuck in a box in a church. Pick your favourite of his waistcoats and then remember him that way: the most splendid, replete, gaudily dressed, weak-hearted as it turned out, and jolly bugger most of us ever met.

As for me, you may ask how I will remember him, what I thought of him, and, unfortunately, there I fall rather short of words. Perhaps you'll forgive me if I turn for my own feelings to the words of another splendid bugger, W.H.Auden...

He recites a poem by Auden. At first he modestly reads it, and then looks up and speaks it, not consulting the paper in front of him. Cut aways during the poem should include GARETH'S parents - it would be nice to feel they understand MATTHEW.

This is actually what I want to say:

"Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone.
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone.
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead
Scribbling on the sky the message He is Dead,
Put the crepe bows round the white necks of the public
doves,
Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.

He was my North, my South, my East and West
My working week and my Sunday rest
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song,
I thought that love would last for ever: I was wrong.

The stars are not wanted now: put out every one

MATTHEW(cont'd)

Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood
For nothing now can ever come to any good".

A long silence as MATTHEW folds his piece of paper. As he goes and sits down, a little child cries out, fed up.

MATTHEW

Quite right.

CUT TO FIONA reading the lesson.

FIONA

If I speak with the tongues of men and angels, but have not love, I am become a sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love - I am nothing.

CUT TO CHARLES translating the last sentence for DAVID. They both know how true it is.

89. EXT. FUNERAL CHURCH. LAKE DISTRICT. DAY. 89.

People are kissing and getting back into their cars. DAVID leaves CHARLES and walks away with SERENA. SCARLETT comes up to CHARLES.

SCARLETT

I'm going back with David.

CHARLES nods. As SCARLETT walks away, she comes across FIONA, who puts her arm over SCARLETT'S shoulder. Then SCARLETT slips an arm round FIONA'S waist. It is the first time we've seen them affectionate.

CARRIE approaches CHARLES...

CHARLES

It was good of you to come - must have been the shortest honeymoon in history.

CARRIE

No, it's fine. We're going to take it some other time.

Pause: there are things to say.

That thing you said in the street...

CHARLES

I'm sorry about that - it was the tea,... tea always.. - it's like LSD with me, I don't know what I'm doing.

CARRIE

No - I liked it. I liked you saying it.

CHARLES

Well, likewise your speech - I'll hold you to it.

CARRIE

Okay.

Long pause.

I'd better be going.

CHARLES

Yes. Bye.

He puts out his hand - to shake - but she comes forward and kisses him - it is awkward like two uncomfortable lovers... Then she walks away.

FIONA

Walk, Charlie?

CHARLES

Yes. That would be lovely.

90. EXT. NEAR FUNERAL CHURCH. LAKE DISTRICT. DAY. 90.

FIONA and CHARLES are overlooking the hills.

FIONA

You like that girl, don't you?

CHARLES

Yes - yes - it's a strange thing when at last it happens.

He looks at her with truth - without irony - then shakes his head.

What about you, Fifi - when are you going to show your cards?

FIONA

O, really they're there for all to see. I've been in love with the same bloke for ages.

CHARLES

Who's that?

Pause.

FIONA

(Very casually) You, Charles. It's always been you, since first we met, o so many years ago.

He is sad, perplexed. She takes a puff on her cigarette.

FIONA

I knew the first moment. Across the crowded room - or lawn, in fact.

Pause for another puff.

Doesn't matter. Nothing either of us can do on this one. Such is life.

She looks straight at him. She's calm, glad to have said it. He looks out, still confused. Then turns and looks at her thoughtfully - she is calmly surveying the scene ahead. Pause.

FIONA

"Friends" isn't bad, you know. Friends is quite something.

CHARLES

Yes...So what do we do? Let our parents decide who we should marry? Take the first girl and boy coming over the hill?

FIONA

No, but perhaps, you know, change the goalposts - look for something different - look for someone we can live with, rather than someone we adore.

TOM

Hello, you chaps. Not butting in am I?

FIONA

(Almost tenderly) No, come on, Tom.

They get up and begin to stride.

TOM

Gosh, that was some display, wasn't it - never felt like that - I mean, something vaguely similar for Jilly when I was young...

CHARLES looks for explanation. FIONA explains...

FIONA

Labrador.

TOM

In a way I think it's hardest for the parents, don't you? I hope I die before my children.

CHARLES

Tom - one thing I find really touching is your total confidence you will get married. What if you never find the right girl?

TOM

Well I don't know, Charlie, truth is - unlike you, I've never expected the thunderbolt - always hoped I'd just meet some nice, friendly girl, like the look of her, hope the look of me doesn't make her physically sick - then pop the question and settle down and be happy.

CHARLES and FIONA exchange a look - maybe he's right.

It worked for my parents..well, apart from the divorce and all that.

CHARLES

Dear Tom, you're very wise. I give you six months at the outside. Don't want the responsibilities of Best Man: but can I be chief usher?

TOM

Dear fellow. That would be splendid.

And, as they walk on...

TOM (cont'd)

I shall miss Gareth most awfully.

...an alarm clock rings.

SUMMER91. INT. CHARLESS' BEDROOM. DAY.91.

CU the alarm clock ringing.

Caption: 20 months later.

A hand comes up. And slams the clock off. We follow the arm down. It belongs to CHARLES: he's slept in his shirt and trousers. He rolls over and hugs a figure in bed next to him. A shout, and TOM sits up in bed.

TOM

What the hell's going on?

CHARLES

(Waking) O my God

He looks towards the clock

Tom, I think it's time to get dressed.

CUT TO two white shirts: one hung up - the other scrunched into a pile in the middle of socks. Two hands picking them up.

CUT TO TOM putting braces over his shoulders in a sprightly manner.

CUT TO CHARLES, giving up on braces and putting a belt round his trousers.

CUT TO TOM taking black shoes out of a box: they are new and beautifully shone.

CUT TO CHARLES reaching into a pile of old gymshoes. He finally finds his black shoes - they are mud-filthy.

CHARLES

Excellent.

92. INT. KITCHEN. CHARLES'S HOUSE. DAY92.

TOM, looking crisp, enters.

MATTHEW

Ah, Thomas, bravo - are we ready for the big day?

TOM

I think we are. How do I look?

MATTHEW

Divine. Scarlett, I think you better get up - the service begins in an hour.

A voice from under the kitchen table

SCARLETT

Here I come - ready in 11 seconds.

It's clearly a lie. Her naked leg drifts out from under the table.

TOM

Splendid waistcoat, Matthew.

MATTHEW

Thank you - a good tradition, I think.

For MATTHEW is wearing one of GARETH's old waistcoats.

TOM

God - if people knew how much organisation goes into weddings, no-one would ever get spliced.

Enter DAVID - in wedding trousers and a white shirt.

MATTHEW

Ah, time for the champagne, I think - there we go - let us toast the groom.

TOM

Splendid, absolutely splendid.

They take glasses. Enter CHARLES, chaotic - messed hair, one brace on, shirt untucked.

CHARLES

Sorry I'm late, trying to clean these bloody shoes.

MATTHEW

We were just about to have a toast. Ladies and gentlemen - the Groom.

And they all turn towards CHARLES: all with beaming smiles.

CHARLES

Thanks - can I have a glass too - I'm dying of thirst. How's my chief usher?

TOM gives him his traditional double thumbs up.

TOM

Ticketty-boo.

93. INT. ROOM IN PRIVATE HOUSE. DAY. 93.

A fantasy of flowers, petticoats, bridesmaids in dresses. Clearly the bride is being prepared. We see hands, flowers, lace - but not the bride's face.

94. INT. KITCHEN. CHARLES'S HOUSE. DAY. 94.

The breakfast table - they're all seated, with lots of burnt toast.

MATTHEW

Only a few hours from now, I'm going to be standing up and making a speech about what a wonderful day this is for this unbe-fucking-lievably perfect couple.

ALL

Bravo!!! Fine turn of phrase!

MATTHEW

But here, amongst friends, I'm sure we'd all agree that it's time for a little more honesty.

CHARLES

Shame.

MATTHEW

I for one had totally given up on Charles getting married. I thought - the only way for him ever tying the knot would be to team up with some equally desperate ex, and make the best of a bad job.

CHARLES

Your honour I object.

MATTHEW

Either that - or he'd marry someone for their looks and accept the fact that he's basically married to us lot - the only problem being we refuse to have his babies.

TOM

I don't know about that...

MATTHEW

And the truth of the matter is -
he's gone and done both - settled
for some desperately attractive
desperate ex.

ALL

Bravo!

MATTHEW

And we all wish you the best of
luck, you tragic sad act...

95. INT. ROOM IN PRIVATE HOUSE. DAY. 95.

The crown of flowers that we have just seen being prepared:
it's finally ready - it is carried - and laid on to the
head of HENRIETTA.

HENRIETTA

What do you think?

BRIDESMAID

You look divine.

HENRIETTA

Thank you.

HENRIETTA smiles.

96. INT. KITCHEN. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 96.

The kitchen table - and CHARLES replying on his own behalf.

CHARLES

Well, I'd like to thank Matthew for
that charming tribute to myself and
my future wife. I wonder if I can
just pass on to you before the day
starts a little private message from
her to you all:

TOM

O, this is exciting.

CHARLES

She says - "any of you come near our
house, I'll set the dogs on you"

ALL

Bravo!!!

CHARLES

As you know, the passage to the altar has not been the most peaceful for me and Hen - but in the end, for all my imperfections, she took me with no conditions at all apart from the fact that I shouldn't be late to the service - so I reckon it's a pretty good deal. What time is it by the way...

MATTHEW

10.45

CHARLES

Jesus - we're meant to be there!!!
Why didn't anyone tell me?

MATTHEW

Please, dear boy, don't panic - we made allowances.

CHARLES

What..?

A very noisy sound from above. He looks out the window.
A helicopter is landing.

CHARLES (cont)

... the hell is that?

SCARLETT

(with a huge grin)
Don't worry. Tom paid.

Huge grin from TOM.

97. EXT. ROOF. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. DAY. 97.

They are all climbing up on to the roof, with the helicopter above, CHARLES signs to DAVID....

CHARLES

By the way, it's really noisy.

98. EXT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. LONDON. DAY. 98.

A beautiful, large London Church. As they approach, TOM grabs CHARLES by the shoulder.

TOM

I just want to say, before everything, how deeply honoured I am to be your usher.

CHARLES

You're welcome, Tom. After all, it was you who introduced us all those long complicated years ago.

TOM

No, but really. I'm glad to be your friend.

CHARLES

(Touched)
Thank you.

TOM immediately loses the intimate moment, and drifts off back into his cheerful old mood.

TOM

And actually, I'm pretty damned delighted to get an invitation to anything these days. You see, my damn relatives keep marrying each other - so I get half as many invites as normal people.

They catch up with the others. MATTHEW in organising mode.

MATTHEW

Okay troops - gather ye round - one last go through before the horrible hordes begin to gather. And George - over here.

GEORGE

Splendid - just hope me damn sister turns up, that's all!!!

It is he, from the cab and the Boatman - he's Henrietta's brother. While the boys gather, with SCARLETT, who has actually dressed in tails, FIONA arrives.

FIONA

Charles.

CHARLES

Fifi.

They have been through their own war.

FIONA

You see that I am wearing black.

CHARLES

O yes, so you are.

FIONA

But tomorrow, I'll be all the colours of the rainbow. Think I'll go find someone who fancies me for a change.

She smiles - it is all right. TOM approaches in his formal capacity.

TOM

Right, let's get going. Fiona, bride or groom?

FIONA

O fuck off, Thomas.

CUT TO: 5 minutes later

The guests are starting to arrive. SCARLETT stands next to CHARLES. Then she screams. She has spied her tall American - she rushes up to him, and jumps up, with her legs around his waist.

MATTHEW

Unusual behaviour for an usher.

CUT TO:

ANGUS and LAURA from the first wedding arriving with twins. Followed by LYDIA and BERNARD.

CHARLES

(To Angus)
I had no idea!

ANGUS

Neither did bloody I - for heaven's sake - it's ridiculous.

LAURA

O ignore him - he adores them - you should see him with them in the bath.

Behind her back, ANGUS mimes a drowning motion.

ANGUS

(whispering as he passes)
The thing is to make it look like an accident.

They keep arriving.

LYDIA

We've got a lovely gift for you.

CHARLES

Can't wait. As long as it isn't
another salad bowl, I'll be
thrilled.

They both laugh very naturally at this. CHARLES moves
away. Their faces fall in grief.

LYDIA

Honestly Bernard! (imitating her
husband) "He always loved salad!"

99. INT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. DAY. 99.

MATTHEW with CHARLES's mad OLD MAN.

MATTHEW

Bride or groom?

OLD MAN

It should be perfectly obvious that
I'm neither.

MATTHEW is sweetly tolerant.

MATTHEW

If you'd like to sit here, sir.

OLD MAN

Anywhere I can see the screen.

He is sat down next to a MIDDLE AGED LADY.

OLD MAN

Love Schwarzenegger - go anywhere to
see one of his films.

He takes out his glasses and looks eagerly towards the
altar.

100. EXT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. DAY. 100.

CHARLES shaking the hand of GARETH's father.

101. INT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. DAY. 101.

TOM at the door with a sweet-looking, slightly awkward
girl.

TOM

Bride or groom?

DEIRDRE

Bride.

He looks at her - it is love at first sight.

TOM

Ahm, yes. Fine. You know, I've got a feeling we've met before.

DEIRDRE

We have - about 25 years ago. I'm second cousin Harold's daughter, Deirdre. You're Tom.

TOM

Good lord. So you're family.

DEIRDRE

Yes.

Love is in their eyes.

DEIRDRE

But very distant.

TOM

Well, yes, of course. You said you were... 'bride'.

DEIRDRE

Yes.

TOM

Yes. Well, do sit, do sit here, Deirdre.

He walks away, dazed.

TOM

Golly. Thunderbolt City.

TOM walks past CHARLES - CHARLES look up - and there walking towards him is CARRIE, very quietly dressed. Beautiful.

CARRIE

Hi.

CHARLES

Hello.

CARRIE

You look lovely: but then, as you know, I always liked you in wedding gear.

CHARLES smiles

CARRIE

And on time.

CHARLES

It's an extraordinary thing.

She smiles. So does he. They're happy with this.

CHARLES

How's Hamish?

CARRIE

O he's fine...I believe.

CHARLES

You believe?

CARRIE

Yes. (pause) Wasn't the man for me after all.

CHARLES

(worried)
You left him?

CARRIE

We left each other. It was charming. Very polite. Fine (she's just a little precarious now)

CHARLES

When?

CARRIE

O, a year or so. Yes. March was hell. By April it was sorted. (trying to make light of it) That's absolutely the last time I marry someone twice my father's age.

MATTHEW interrupting - it's all go.

MATTHEW

Time to travel, Charles...

CHARLES

(distracted) Yes, yes...(then polite) Coming, good. (To Carrie) Why didn't you get in touch with me?

CARRIE

Well, you know, I did think about it. Wanted to... but I was in a state...

She clearly has remembered him intensely. But she gathers herself.

CARRIE (cont)

...Then I heard about this - so I thought better not. (And now she's breezy again) Anyway, mustn't hold you up - see you afterwards - though I fear that once again, we'll have to break our lovely tradition.

CHARLES

Yes, fine, excellent.

She smiles and walks away. CHARLES is stunned.

CHARLES

No...

He may be about to say something very important - but no...

CHARLES

...let me show you to your seat...
(passing Matthew) I'm just showing her to her seat.

They walk along in silence for a few seconds, down the aisle. They reach the end of the pew - then, just before turning into it:

CHARLES (cont)

You probably should have rung.
Despite what you heard.

CARRIE

Should I?

CHARLES

Yes. Yes, you should.

This is a restatement of his love for her.

CARRIE

Our timing really has been bad,
hasn't it?

CHARLES

It's been bad.

CARRIE

It's been a disaster. (She loves him too)

CHARLES

It has, as you say, been very bad indeed. God, it's lovely to see you.

PAUSE

CARRIE

Thank you. Good luck. It's pretty easy - just say 'I do' whenever anyone asks you a question.

CHARLES

Thanks.

CHARLES walks away and meets MATTHEW.

MATTHEW

Shall we leave the ushing to the ushers and take our positions up front.

CHARLES

Yes - look, just give me a second will you, Matthew?

...It's clearly not all over.

MATTHEW

Certainly, freshen up at will.

102. INT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. CORRIDOR. DAY. 102.

He walks down a corridor in this big church - and opens a door - there are the choir, all warming up...

CHOIR

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling!!!

CHARLES

Sorry.

He heads out and goes in the next door. It is two nuns, who look at him angrily.

He goes back into the corridor.

103. INT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. VESTRY. DAY. 103.

Then he enters the next room. It is a big, beautiful, empty ecclesiastical room. He goes in and shuts the door.

CHARLES

Dear Lord - I ask you to forgive me for what I am about to say in this magnificent place of worship. Bugger! Bugger! Bugger! Bugger! Bugger!

After each 'bugger', cut to another slightly surprised looking religious icon - The Virgin Mary, The Crucifix, and a final one which should be exceptionally angry, disapproving, or is a man being pricked by forks in hell.

CHARLES

Bugger!

A very sweet-natured verger pops his head out from behind a curtain where he has been washing his hands.

VERGER

Can I help at all?

CHARLES

No thanks. No, no, fine, just letting off some steam.

VERGER

Excellent - often do the same myself - not exactly the same vocabulary obviously. Rather more 'blasts' and 'bothers'. I'll leave you.

104. INT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. DAY. 104.

GUESTS arriving. Now down to the last seats. SCARLETT guides someone into a position right flat totally behind a pillar.

SCARLETT

It's not as bad as it looks, if you bend a little. (It's a lie).

Panning across we glimpse CARRIE, looking serious. A tad vulnerable, with no idea what is going on.

CUT TO:

The door of the Church

MATTHEW

The bride is arriving.

TOM

O fabulous.

MATTHEW

Only one problem, we've lost the groom.

TOM

Ah...

MATTHEW

Stall her - I'll go find him.

TOM

Roger. Wilko.

A tiny pause - then he thinks up a brilliant plan, and goes on.

105.INT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. CORRIDOR. DAY. 105.

MATTHEW heading down the corridor, opening the same series of doors - interrupting the same things. In the first room, THE CHOIR

CHOIR

Lord of all peacefulness, Lord of all calm!

Then, in the next room, the nuns.

MATTHEW

Sorry.

NUN

O, for Heaven's sake, Harriet, it's like Piccadilly Circus round here.

106. INT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. VESTRY. DAY. 106.

Then MATTHEW reaches the third room and there is CHARLES - lying on an ancient grave in an alcove.

MATTHEW

(totally calm)

Ah, Charles, good to see you.

CHARLES

Hello Matthew. What was the name of that low budget sci-fi film, 1980's, where the hero had a watch which sort of slowed down time - so he could run around at real speed, while everyone else was in slow motion.

MATTHEW

O yes, I remember. Damn - yes. Good film.

CHARLES

Very good film.

MATTHEW

Not "The Hidden"?

CHARLES

No. One word title..."Trancers", that was it.

MATTHEW

That's it - that's the baby.
Excellent film. What about it?

CHARLES

Well, you haven't got one of those
watches have you?

MATTHEW

Not actually on me at the moment.
Why?

CHARLES

I need time to think.

107. EXT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. DAY. 107.

The front gate of the church. HENRIETTA emerges, beautiful
in her dress, with her FATHER in attendance.

108. INT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. VESTRY. DAY. 108.

CHARLES and MATTHEW in the Vestry

CHARLES

It's just...what do you think about
marriage?

MATTHEW

Excellent - if you love the person.

CHARLES

Well quite. All these weddings -
all these years - here I am on my
own wedding day, and I'm
still....thinking.

MATTHEW

Can I ask what about?

CHARLES

No, I think best not.

109. EXT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. DAY. 109.

TOM heading off HENRIETTA and her FATHER

TOM

Yes, I'm terribly sorry - we've got
a bit of a delay: there's just a
slight problem with the flowers.

HENRIETTA

The flowers?

TOM

Well, yes. Unfortunately we seem to have quite a few hay-fever sufferers in the congregation, and they've been stuck next to the damn flowers, so we're just moving them - the congregation, not the flowers - but anyway, with any luck, it will be all right in a jiffy, I'm absolutely convinced. I'll report back pronto...

He rushes back into the Church. HENRIETTA raises her eyes sceptically - this chaos is rather what she expected of Tom's ushering.

110. INT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. DAY. 110.

TOM reaches MATTHEW and DAVID.

MATTHEW

How are you doing?

TOM

I think I've fooled them so far. The great advantage of having a reputation for being stupid - people are less suspicious of you. What's happening?

MATTHEW

We'll have to wait and see. He's along the corridor. He's thinking.

TOM

What about?

111. INT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. VESTRY. DAY. 111.

There is a knock on the door.

CHARLES

Enter.

TOM

Ah - Charles - we wondered if we could lend a hand.

MATTHEW, TOM, DAVID enter. CHARLES smiles. SCARLETT sneaks in behind.

SCARLETT

What's the problem, Charlie?

DAVID

What's the problem?

CHARLES

O, look, it's really nothing... (simultaneously to David)... I'm fucked.

MATTHEW

Charles... (really concerned)... no matter what it is, you can tell us... you really can...

He looks at them - they are waiting to help him - he is about to speak, when suddenly there is a knock on the door - they're all terrified - 'Is it the bride?' is the basic fear.

MATTHEW

(calling out)

Hello.

The VICAR enters

VICAR

Hello. Thought I'd come in and shove on the gear. You chaps having a final smoke, are you, before the proceedings?

MATTHEW

Yes, sort of spiritually speaking.

VICAR

Well, don't be too long - the bride'll think you don't want to marry her.

They exchange glances - at the last moment, defeated by politeness and etiquette. The VICAR talks away, while CHARLES signs to DAVID..

VICAR (V/O CHARLES & DAVID's conversation)
Seeing you all in here reminds me of a terrible time, I had a groom who had rather overdone it with the alcohol the day before, and found he couldn't help throwing up into the font. Problem was, no-one knew, and the next Saturday, someone rather carelessly filled it up with water for a Christening without checking inside. No wonder the poor blighter cried when he got dunked.

What we're watching is CHARLES talking to DAVID...

DAVID

Give me an update.

CHARLES

This is so embarrassing...

DAVID

I was with you the day you wet yourself during the school Carol service.

CHARLES

I just saw Carrie and she's separated and it suddenly reminded me...

DAVID

O Jesus. Charlie, it's your wedding day...

CHARLES

I know...What's your advice?

DAVID

3 choices: go ahead with it...

CHARLES

Yes...

DAVID

Go outside and say, "folks, bad news it's all off"...

CHARLES

Not tempting...

DAVID

And...I can't think of a third...

CHARLES

Damn.

VICAR

Well, togs on - are we all ready to face the enemy?

MATTHEW

Are we?

They all look at CHARLES.

CHARLES

Yes. Excellent.

112. INT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. CORRIDOR. DAY. 112.

Outside the door of the vestry - the most emotional music plays. The door opens. They are all standing there - trim, smiling, ready.

113. INT. WEDDING 4. CHURCH. DAY.

113.

CHARLES walks along to the top of the aisle with MATTHEW. Meanwhile, at the back...

SCARLETT

What was that about?

TOM

Bugged if I know.

As CHARLES looks forward, the light breaks through the stained glass windows on to CARRIE. He looks at her, and walks on, up the aisle to his fate.

MATTHEW checks in his pocket for the rings. He pretends to have lost them - then remembers they're in his back pocket, with a great show of mock relief. He turns. TOM is at the front door and gives him a thumbs up - everything is A.O.K. for action.

The Wedding march starts.

CUT TO HENRIETTA, walking down the aisle - she looks beautiful. Her father by her side, holding her arm.

HENRIETTA

Not so tight.

She arrives. The PRIEST steps forward. CHARLES smiles at him.

VICAR

Dearly beloved. We are gathered here together in the sight of God and in the face of this congregation to join together this man and this woman in holy Matrimony -

CUT TO SCARLETT absolutely totally beaming with pride - and probably crying already.

VICAR (cont'd)

which is an honourable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocence, signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church...

CUT TO ANGUS and LAURA

and therefore is not by any to be enterprised, nor taken in hand unadvisedly, lightly or wantonly

CUT TO BERNARD and LYDIA

But reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God. Therefore, if any man can show any just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him speak now, or else hereafter for ever hold his peace.

The usual pause. Settle on CHARLES. And then there is a knocking from behind, knuckles on wood.

CHARLES looks startled. The BRIDE looks to him alarmed. So does MATTHEW.

VICAR

I'm sorry - does someone have something to say?

CUT TO DAVID, who raises his hand. CUT between him and CHARLES.

CHARLES

I think he might. (He starts to sign) What in the name of...

DAVID

I thought of a third option.

CHARLES

What?

DAVID

Will you translate?

CHARLES

Translate what?

VICAR

What's going on?

CHARLES

Ahm, he's asking me if I'll translate what he's saying.

VICAR

O excellent. What is he saying?

CHARLES

He says... (and he watches David)
'I suspect the groom is having doubts: I suspect the groom would like to delay. I suspect the groom... I suspect the groom..

DAVID
...really loves someone else.
That's the truth, isn't it Charlie?

CHARLES doesn't sign back.

DAVID (cont)
Because, Charlie - this is for the
rest of your life - in the end, if
you marry at all - you've got to
marry the person you totally love.

CUT TO: CHARLES and then DAVID again.

DAVID (cont)
And by the way - your flies are
undone.

CHARLES just does a tiny look down

VICAR
 What's he saying?

CHARLES
 He says, he suspects that the groom
 loves someone else.

VICAR
 And do you? (Pause) Do you love
 someone else? (Pause) Do you
 Charles?

PAUSE

CUT ROUND: Everyone - SCARLETT, TOM, HENRIETTA, FIONA, THE
 FATHER OF THE BRIDE. Then like someone saying his vows...

CHARLES
 I do.

The camera holds on CHARLES and then moves slowly high up
 into the Church.

114. INT. KITCHEN. CHARLES & SCARLETT'S HOUSE. NIGHT.114.

Same set up as at breakfast, only 10 hours later. The
 champagne bottle is still lying there. CHARLES, FIONA,
 SCARLETT, DAVID, TOM, MATTHEW. Total silence. They're in
 shock about what happened in church.

More silence.

SCARLETT
 Blimey.

Pause

TOM

(optimistically)
At least it's one we won't forget.
I mean a lot of weddings just blend
into each other, don't they, but
this is one that will really stick
out in the memory.

MATTHEW

For not actually including a wedding
service.

TOM

Well, that amongst other things.
(pause)
I'm not surprised he hit you.

CHARLES

(who has a black eye)
No, I think it was the right thing
to do.

FIONA

Poor girl.

CHARLES

O God.

TOM

Though, let's face facts - I mean if
you weren't sure you wanted to marry
her today of all days, i.e. your
wedding day, it must be the right
decision, mustn't it?

FIONA turns to him to deliver her usual 'Fuck off Tom' -
then just brushes his cheek affectionately.

CHARLES

None of you happened to see...no,
nothing.

SCARLETT

It was a lovely dress though, wasn't
it. (little pause) I'm sure she'll
find it useful for parties.

DAVID speaks

DAVID

I blame myself.

ALL
 (simultaneously)
 No absolutely not/ No, you did the
 right thing/No, you mustn't/ On the
 contrary, you're the hero...

CHARLES looks up at him

CHARLES
They all blame you too.

PAUSE. A doorbell rings. They all get up, all relieved to
 have an excuse to move.

ALL
 (simultaneously)
 I'll get it.

CHARLES
 No, let me. If there's music to
 face, I should be facing it...

He goes downstairs, gathers his strength and opens the
 door. It is CARRIE. Full romance in the look and music of
 the moment.

CARRIE
 Hi.

CHARLES
 Hello.

PAUSE

CARRIE
 Tell me, what was that about this
 morning?

CHARLES shakes his head and looks up.

CHARLES
You.

PAUSE

CARRIE
 (seriously)
 Good...although a disaster.

CHARLES
 Unspeakably disastrous.

They look hard at each other and then can't resist a gentle
 smile.

CHARLES
Come on in - it's raining...

CARRIE
No - let's stay out...

Smiling, remembering the rain conversation

CHARLES
Okay...

115. EXT. CHARLES' HOUSE. NIGHT. 115.

They stroll for a moment - then stop.

CHARLES (cont)
I want to ask you a question - a
huge question, an important
question.

CARRIE
Okay - what is it?

CHARLES
Do you think, in time, you might
possible agree....never to marry me?

CARRIE
I do.

They kiss in the rain.

THE END.