

AN EDUCATION

By Nick Hornby

Adapted from the article 'An Education' by Lynn Barber

1	INT. SCHOOL. DAY	1	*
	JANUARY 1962. MONTAGE		*
	A nice girls' school in a south west London suburb. We see girls doing what girls did in a nice girls' school in 1962: walking with books on their heads, practising their handwriting, making cakes, playing lacrosse, dancing with each other.		* * * * *
1A	INT. CLASSROOM. DAY	1A	*
	In one of the classrooms, MISS STUBBS, an attractive, bright, animated schoolteacher, is talking to a small group of sixteen-year-old girls. Some of these girls seem to be daydreaming - looking out of the window, examining their fingernails. A couple, including a bespectacled girl who looks five years younger than everyone else in the class, write down everything the teacher says. Only one, JENNY, beautiful and animated, seems to be listening in the spirit in which Miss Stubbs would like her to listen. She's smiling, eyes shining - she loves Miss Stubbs, and these lessons. Miss Stubbs asks a question, and Jenny puts up her hand - the only one in the class to do so.		* *
	MISS STUBBS (mock-sighing) Jenny. Again.		* * *
	JENNY Isn't it because Mr Rochester's blind?		* * *
2	INT. BEDROOM. DAY	2	*
	Jenny's bedroom. Books about ponies, a much loved teddy bear; a cello huge in the small room leans against the wall.		
	Jenny is bent over a small desk. Victorian novels, Latin primers and dictionaries teeter in huge towers either side of her. She stands and stretches as she turns to us.		
	She kneels and flicks through her half-dozen or so LPs on the floor near a cheap record player - they're all classical, mostly by Elgar, apart from a Juliette Greco record. This is the one she chooses. As the music begins, she sings along.		
	Immediately there is a thumping noise - someone underneath her is banging on the ceiling impatiently.		
	MAN'S VOICE (O.S.) I don't want to hear any French singing. French singing wasn't on the syllabus, last time I looked.		

Jenny sighs, and reaches for the volume control. She turns the music down so low that she has to lie down and put her head right next to the Dansette to hear it.

Close on Jenny as she silently mouths the words along with the almost inaudible track.

3

INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY

3

Jenny, her mother and father are finishing Sunday lunch. Jenny's father JACK is in his forties, MARJORIE, her mother is slightly younger than Jack, but every bit as middle-aged. The food is grey and brown, in keeping with the colour scheme of the house. They aren't talking - they're listening to Mantovani on the radio. Jenny gets up from the lunch table.

*

JENNY

I've got an English essay to do by tomorrow morning.

JACK

I don't want to hear anything through the ceiling this afternoon, apart from the sound of sweat dripping onto textbooks.

JENNY

Cello?

JACK

No cello.

JENNY

I thought we agreed that cello was my interest or hobby?

JACK

It's already your interest or hobby. When they ask you "What's your interest or hobby?" at your Oxford interview, you can say, "Cello". That wouldn't be a lie. You don't need to practise a hobby. A hobby is a hobby.

JENNY

Or interest.

JACK

(ignoring her)

You don't need to be good at it. You just have to be interested in it.

JENNY

Can I stop going to the youth orchestra, then?

JACK

No. The orchestra shows you're a joiner-inner. Universities like joiner-inners.

JENNY

Ah. Yes. But. I've already joined in. So now I can stop.

JACK

Well, if you stop, that shows the opposite, doesn't it? That shows you're a rebel. They don't want that at Oxford.

JENNY

No. They don't want people who think for themselves.

JACK

(missing the sarcasm, as is his wont)
Course they don't.

4 INT. SCHOOL HALL. DAY

4 *

Jenny with cello sits in the string section. Everyone is getting settled, tuning up, latecomers still arriving. Along the row from Jenny, tuning his violin, is a nice-looking boy of her age, GRAHAM, and she waves at him. Two 13 year old boys sitting between them wave too, parodically, and then blow kisses, much to Graham's embarrassment and Jenny's fury.

The silly boys dissolve in fits of giggles: this is clearly one of the funniest moments of their lives - until one of them farts noisily and, it would appear from all the frantic gesturing, pungently. The comic value of the fart tops even the comic value of the wave, and they are scarcely able to stay seated, such is their mirth.

5 EXT. SCHOOL. DAY

5 *

Jenny and Graham are talking while he struggles to take his bike out of a bicycle rack slightly unbalanced by the violin strapped to his back. Graham is nervous, chronically unconfident and shy.

GRAHAM

Should I wear, you know, Sunday best?

JENNY

You'd better, I'm afraid. Just to show my father you're un jeune homme serieux, not a teddy boy.

GRAHAM

Oh, God.

JENNY

It'll be all right. I won't wait. It's going to bucket down in a minute. I'll see you at the weekend.

*
*
*
*

Jenny moves as quickly as she can towards the street.

GRAHAM

Oh, yes. Bye.

The two silly boys from before arrive to blow more kisses.

SMALLER BOY 1

Goodbye, darling! See you at the weekend! I will miss you with all of my heart!

*
*

Graham blushes. Jenny swipes the chief offender over the head with her sheet music.

6

EXT. BUS STOP. DAY

6

The rain has begun. Jenny attempts to cover herself. A mother and two children cross the road in front of her, and a beautiful, sleek red sports car - a Bristol - stops to let them across. David, possibly in his mid-thirties, dapper, and almost but not quite handsome, is driving the car. David, distracted, impatient, spots Jenny at the bus stop.

*

In front of the car a small wellington boot drops off the foot of one of the children, further slowing down their painfully slow progress across the road.

Jenny is wet. David makes eye contact. Jenny smiles ruefully, and enchantingly. David sighs, and then hesitates for a moment. The window of the Bristol slowly rolls down.

DAVID

Hello.

Jenny ignores him.

DAVID

Listen. If you've got any sense, you wouldn't take a lift from a strange man.

Jenny smiles thinly.

DAVID

I am, however, a music lover, and I'm worried about your cello. So what I propose is, you put it in the car and walk alongside me.

*
*

JENNY

How do I know you won't just drive off with the cello?

DAVID

Ah. Good point.

He winds down the other window and waves on the cars that have stopped behind him.

DAVID

How much does a new cello cost? Twenty pounds? Thirty? I don't know. Let's say thirty.

He pulls out a wallet, takes out three ten-pound notes, hands them to her.

DAVID

There. Security.

Jenny laughs and waves the money away.

*

7 EXT. STREET. NEAR SCHOOL. DAY.

7 *

Later. The cello is in the back seat of the Bristol. Jenny is trotting alongside the car, while David leans nonchalantly across the passenger seat to talk to her while driving.

DAVID

I'm David, by the way.

She says nothing.

DAVID

And you are...?

JENNY

Jenny. (Beat) I've never seen a car like this before. C'est tres chic.

DAVID

It's a Bristol. Not many of 'em made.

Jenny nods, but doesn't know how to respond.

DAVID
How did the concert go?

JENNY
It was a rehearsal. The concert's
next Thursday.

DAVID
What are you playing?

JENNY
(making a face)
Elgar.

DAVID
Ah, Elgar. I often think it's a
shame he spent so much time in
Worcester, don't you? Worcester's
too near Birmingham. And you can
hear that in the music. There's a
horrible Brummy accent in there,
if you listen hard enough.

Jenny looks at him and smiles. She hadn't expected him to
be able to make Elgar jokes.

DAVID
Anyway, I'm not sure Elgar and
Jews mix very well.

*
*

JENNY
I'm not a Jew!

DAVID
(smiling)
No. I am. I wasn't...*accusing*
you.

JENNY
Oh. (She smiles awkwardly.) Can I
sit in the car with my cello?

David stops the car.

DAVID
Jump in.

8 INT. CAR. DAY

8

Jenny shuts the door and sinks approvingly into the white
leather seat. David regards the dripping girl with
amusement.

JENNY
It's even nicer on the inside.

DAVID
Where to, madam?

Jenny makes a face.

JENNY
I only live round the corner.

DAVID
What a shame. We'll just make it
last as long as we can.

9 EXT. STREET. NEAR JENNY'S. DAY 9 *

The Bristol is crawling along the road at walking pace.

10 INT/EXT. CAR JENNY'S HOUSE. DAY 10 *

David reaches across Jenny while driving slowly, opens the
glove compartment and takes out a packet of cigarettes. *

DAVID
Smoke?

JENNY
I'd better not. I'm a bit close
to home.

David lights one for himself.

DAVID
I suppose cellists must go to a
lot of concerts.

JENNY
We don't go to any concerts. We
don't believe in them. *

DAVID
Oh, they're real.

JENNY
So people say.

DAVID
Why don't we believe in them?

JENNY
I suppose...What would he say?

DAVID
Your father, this is?

JENNY

(Darkly)

Oh, yes. He'd say there's no point to them. They're just for fun. Apart from school concerts, of course, which are no fun at all, so we go to those. The proper ones don't help you get on.

*

DAVID

Which of course is what is so wonderful about them. Anyway, you'll go one day.

*

JENNY

(heartfelt)

Yes. I will. I know. Sometimes it seems as though that's what all this slog is for. If I get to University, I'm going to read what I want and think about what I want and listen to what I want. And I'm going to look at paintings and go to French films and talk to people who know lots about lots.

DAVID

Good for you. Which University?

JENNY

Oxford. If I'm lucky. Did you go anywhere?

DAVID

I studied at what I believe they call the University of Life. And I didn't get a very good degree there.

Jenny smiles.

JENNY

This is me. Thank you.

She gets out of the car with the cello. David stares after her for a moment, then drives off.

11 INT. JENNY'S SITTING-ROOM. AFTERNOON

11

Jenny, her parents and Graham are eating afternoon tea - neat fish-paste sandwiches, Battenberg cake, best china.

MARJORIE

How's your mother, Graham?

GRAHAM

She's fine, thanks. She sends her best, by the way.

JACK

Where are you applying, Graham?

Jenny looks embarrassed. She knows what's coming.

GRAHAM

I'm not sure yet.

JACK

Well, when will you be sure? You can't let the grass grow under your feet, you know. Otherwise you'll be at the back of the queue.

JENNY

(deadpan)

I suppose so. I suppose the growing grass would knock you off balance, and then you'd fall over, and by the time you picked yourself up, there'd be a queue.

Her father shoots her a look - is she being cheeky?

GRAHAM

I might take a year off.

Jenny winces. Jack looks at him as if he's just said he'll take all his clothes off.

JACK

What for?

GRAHAM

(mumbling)

I don't know. Maybe do some travelling, that sort of thing.

JACK

Travelling? What are you, a teddy boy?

Close-up of Jenny - she knows what's coming, and can't bear it. Beat.

JACK

(nodding at Jenny)

You know she's going to Oxford, don't you? Oxford. English. If we can get her Latin up to scratch.

Jenny sighs.

JACK
 So she's studying English at
 Oxford while you're a wandering
 Jew...

Jenny looks at him curiously. Graham steels himself to speak.

GRAHAM
 Mr Mellor...I'm not a teddy boy.
 I'm an homme serieux. Jeune. An
 homme jeune serieux homme.

Jenny winces again. Her father stares at Graham. Graham blushes.

12 INT. JENNY'S HOUSE. EVENING

12 *

It's the night of the youth orchestra concert. Jenny, her mother and father are on their way out of the door. Jack is carrying the cello. Jenny is in her school uniform, with her hair scrubbed back in a severe ponytail. The three of them are flustered. Jenny opens the front door for her father and he stumbles outside.

JENNY
 Oh!

12A INT/EXT. JENNY'S HOUSE. EVENING

12A *

She has seen something on the doorstep, and she stoops to pick it up - a large bunch of flowers.

JENNY
 They're for me!

MARJORIE
 (curious)
 Who are they from?

Jenny opens the card that's attached to them.

JENNY
 Gosh. Him.

MARJORIE
 Who's 'him'?

JENNY
 Just...A chap I met.

MARJORIE
 A chap who sends flowers? So he's
 a man-chap?

JENNY
Yes, he is, really.

Jack stares at the flowers in disbelief. The bunch of flowers has created in Jack the kind of panic and fear more typically associated with a biochemical attack. *

JACK
What's going on here?

MARJORIE
(drily, knowing the trouble this will cause)
Jack, I'm afraid Jenny has been sent some flowers by a chap.

JACK
A chap? What kind of chap? Who? Why?

JENNY
(patiently)
He's wishing me luck for tonight.

JACK
Are you sure that's all he's wishing? And where does he get the money from?

JENNY
He earns it, I expect.

JACK
What do you mean, he earns it? Why isn't he at school? What does he do?

JENNY
Can we just go? Otherwise the bunch of good-luck flowers will actually be responsible for me actually missing the concert. Which would be ironic, n'est ce pas?

JACK
Well I don't like it.

MARJORIE
Objection noted. Jenny?

JENNY
Noted.

JACK

Ten bob's worth of luck, I reckon. That's a lot for a schoolgirl. You can't leave them out here, anyway. I'd burgle a house that had flowers outside. They'll think we're made of money.

12B INT. JENNY'S HOUSE. EVENING 12B *

Jenny sighs, puts them inside the house, shuts the door. *

13 INT. COFFEE BAR. DAY 13

Jenny and two school friends, HATTIE and TINA, are sitting at a table in a typical late-50s coffee bar, sipping cappuccinos. Jenny is easily the most attractive of the three - and also, we will see, possibly the cleverest. HATTIE is slower than the other two, and a lot frumpier; TINA is pretty, and sharp rather than clever. She is also the least middle-class of the three - she's clearly a scholarship girl. They are all dressed in an unflattering and unambiguous school uniform - no attempts to disguise it with more fashionable accessories. Jenny is smoking pretentiously, and seems to be practising some kind of pout. Tina starts to slurp the froth from her cappuccino with a spoon, inelegantly and noisily. Jenny tuts her disapproval. Tina sighs, and puts her spoon down.

JENNY

The whole point about him is that he doesn't feel. *

TINA

We still don't have to like him.

JENNY

Camus doesn't want you to like him. What he's trying to say is that feeling is bourgeois. Being engagee is bourgeois. His mother dies and he doesn't feel anything. He kills this Arab and he doesn't feel anything.

TINA

I wouldn't feel anything if my mother died. Does that make me an existentialist?

JENNY

No. That just makes you a cow.

HATTIE

Une vache.

Laughter.

14 EXT. STREET/COFFEE BAR. DAY

14 *

Jenny, Hattie and Tina emerge from the cafe, talking.

JENNY

Well I'm going to be French. I'm going to Paris and I'm going to smoke and listen to Jacques Brel and wear black. And I won't speak. Ever. C'est plus chic, comme...

She breaks off. Parked outside a tobacconists on the other side of the road is the red Bristol. She looks towards the shop, and David emerges with a copy of the Times and a packet of cigars. Jenny crosses the road to talk to him while the others watch.

DAVID

Hello.

JENNY

Hello. Thank you.

DAVID

How did it go?

JENNY

Oh, fine. I think. I mean, I didn't mess my bit up, anyway. And no-one got thrown out of the orchestra afterwards.

DAVID

Always the mark of a cultural triumph. Listen. I'm glad I ran into you. What are you doing on Friday?

JENNY

Going to school.

DAVID

I meant the evening.

JENNY

(embarrassed)

Oh. Yes. Of course. Nothing.

DAVID

Because I'm going to listen to some Schubert in St John's, Smith Square. My friends Danny and Helen will be going too, so it wouldn't be...I'll tell you what. I'll come and pick you up, and if your mother and father disapprove, then you can have the tickets and go with one of them. How does that sound?

*
*
*

Jenny doesn't know what to say. She looks at David, and his eagerness to please seems to convince her.

JENNY

Thank you. And I'd like you to take me. I'd like to go with someone who knows when to clap.

DAVID

I usually watch Danny. He knows that sort of thing.

Jenny smiles.

DAVID

Seven? And we'll probably go for a spot of supper afterwards, if you...But if you, if that's not...Well, we can always put you in a taxi.

JENNY

(flat disbelief)
Supper.

DAVID

If you want.

JENNY

The trouble is, we'll already have eaten.

DAVID

Well. I mean, if you'd like supper, then, perhaps on Friday you could...not eat?

JENNY

(embarrassed again)
Oh. Yes. Of course.

Jenny smiles, and rejoins her friends on the other side of the road. Tina and Hattie are standing there almost with their mouths open, amazed. She doesn't say anything and starts to walk on.

TINA

I'm sorry. I just had the strangest dream. I dreamed you crossed the road and spoke to a handsome man with the most beautiful car I've ever seen. And then you came back and you didn't mention it.

Jenny smiles enigmatically. Tina grabs Jenny mock-urgently.

TINA

'Oo wazzee?

JENNY

(light, playful)

Just a man who's been trying to pick me up. We're going to a concert on Friday night. And then we're having a spot of supper.

TINA

(shrieking)

A spot of supper? *

JENNY

You've heard of supper?

HATTIE

We've heard of it. But we've never eaten it. *

JENNY

Neither of you is interested in the concert part, I notice.

HATTIE

No. Of course not.

TINA

Oh my God! I've only just realised! That's what's going to happen to you, isn't it? Look at her! Men are going to pick her up in the street and take her out to supper!

HATTIE

God, you're right, Tina. I hadn't thought of that. Look at her.

JENNY

Don't be so daft.

TINA

We're trying to attract the attention of boys.

And she's fighting off men.
 Anyway. You're going to have to
 tell us more than that.

JENNY

Why?

HATTIE

Because no man's ever going to
 ask us out to supper. Not until
 we're ladies, anyway. You're
 going to have to tell us
 everything. Otherwise it's not
 fair.

JENNY

There won't be anything to tell.

TINA

Well, make something up, then.

15 INT. JENNY'S HOUSE. EVENING

15

Jenny is dressed up for her evening out. She looks good,
 but also stiff, uncomfortable - she's not herself in her
 dress, which looks too old for her. Her father is standing
 in front of her, shouting.

JACK

I won't allow it!

JENNY

(coolly)

Fine. He's quite happy for you to
 take me.

JACK

(uncertainly)

Right. I will.

JENNY

Good.

JACK

Where is it?

JENNY

St John's Smith Square.

*

JACK

Where's that?

JENNY

I don't know. I'm sure we could
 find out.

Marjorie comes into the room.

MARJORIE

It's in Westminster. Just around
the corner from the Abbey.

*
*

Jack looks at her as if she'd just given directions to the
nearest opium den.

JACK

How d'you know that?

MARJORIE

I had a life before we were
married, you know.

JENNY

He soon put a stop to that.

JACK

There we are.

JENNY

Where are we?

JACK

Near Westminster Abbey. I'm not
going all the way over there.

*
*

JENNY

The trouble is, that's where St
John's Smith Square is.

*
*

JACK

And I've just said. That's where
I'm not going. There must be
something on locally. Where's the
paper?

MARJORIE

Jack, she wants to see someone
who can play. She doesn't want to
see Sheila Kirkland scratching
away. I'll take her.

JACK

And how are you going to get over
there? RAF helicopter?

*
*

The doorbell rings.

JENNY

That's him. Now what?

JACK

Oh, bloody hell.

MARJORIE

Jack!

Jenny starts towards the door, and then turns.

JENNY

Oh, and by the way...David's a Jew. A wandering Jew. So watch yourself.

She goes to the door.

JACK

(panic-stricken and shouting)

What's she talking about? I've never said anything like that in my life! Anyway, it's just an expression! I'm not against the Jews!

Jenny comes back in with David, who is dressed stylishly in his early-60s young executive leisurewear - sports jacket, slacks, cashmere sweater. He looks out of place - he is brighter and brasher than his surroundings, the most colourful thing in the room, and he seems intimidatingly exotic.

David has obviously heard Jack's last line.

DAVID

(pleasantly)

I'm glad to hear it. Hello. David Goldman.

*
*

He offers his hand.

JACK

I didn't mean I'm not against you... Actually, I did mean that, because I'm not, but...

JENNY

Dad!

David's hand is still extended - in his confusion and embarrassment, Jack hasn't yet taken it. He does so now, and shakes it for way too long.

JACK

I'm sorry. What I'm saying is that you're not the sort of, of person I'd be against, if I were the sort of person who was against...people. You're not an old...Oh, dear. I'm Jack, and this is Marjorie.

DAVID
 (deadpan)
 You didn't tell me you had a
 sister, Jenny.

General confusion, until David chuckles naughtily. Marjorie giggles, and then offers her hand.

DAVID
 You're a lucky man, Jack.

JACK
 I suppose I am, yes.

They all sit down.

DAVID
 So. Gosh. (He looks around
 approvingly.) This is lovely.

Marjorie smiles.

MARJORIE
 Thank you.

JACK
 I'm sorry, David. Can I get you a
 drink?

DAVID
 I'd love one, Jack, but we're
 running a little late. If Jenny's
 ready, perhaps we'll shoot off.

Jenny looks at her father, and takes a calculated gamble.

JENNY
 Ah. Well. Dad's got something to
 tell you.

JACK
 No, no, nothing...It was more of
 a question, really. How would you
 get to St John's Smith Square
 from here? For future reference?

*

DAVID
 Oh, it's a pretty straight run,
 really. Up to Hammersmith, take
 the A4 through Kensington and
 you're there.

*

*

*

JACK
 Simple as that.

DAVID
 Simple as that.

Jack smiles broadly.

MARJORIE

(playfully)

So shall I book some tickets for something?

*

JACK

(still smiling)

No.

Beat.

JACK

Back by ten, please, David. She's usually in bed by then.

Jenny winces.

DAVID

I was hoping Jenny would come with me afterwards to have a bite of supper with my aunt Helen.

Jenny studies him carefully. Suddenly his friends Danny and Helen have become 'Aunt Helen'.

JACK

Oh, well, I suppose...

DAVID

How about if I promise to have her in by eleven thirty?

JACK

Well, it's Friday night. And if you're going out to the West End...

DAVID

Thanks, Jack. I appreciate it. See you again.

They exchange warm handshakes. He turns to Marjorie. Marjorie extends her hand. David takes it, but kisses it suavely, leaving her a little flustered.

MARJORIE

Have a nice time.

JENNY

Bye.

Jenny and David leave.

JACK
 (sniffing the air)
 What's that smell? Has he got
 perfume on?

MARJORIE
 It's called after-shave, Jack.
 And it makes a change from
 carbolic soap.

JACK
 At least there's no confusion, if
 you smell of carbolic soap.

Marjorie rolls her eyes.

MARJORIE
 Nobody's ever going to get
 confused about you, dear.

15A EXT. ST JOHN'S, SMITH SQUARE. NIGHT 15A *

Jenny and David walk toward the beautiful hall. Jenny suddenly looks young in the dress that looks too old for her - other adults are milling around outside, and the women don't look like girls dressed up. David makes for an incredibly glamorous and attractive couple in their late twenties who are waiting outside - DANNY and HELEN. Helen is as far from anyone's idea of an aunt as one can get. She's no more beautiful than Jenny, but she's dressed both appropriately and spectacularly, in early-60s, pre-hippy Bohemian gear. She turns heads in a way that Jenny is not yet able to. Danny too is attractive, but soberly so. David and Jenny are, in a way, paler, less striking versions of these two. *

DAVID
 Hello hello. Are we late? *

HELEN
 I was hoping we'd miss the beginning, and then it wouldn't be worth going in, and we could go off dancing or something. *

DANNY
 Helen is one of the more reluctant members of tonight's audience. *

Jenny and David laugh politely. *

DAVID
 Jenny, these are my friends Helen and Danny. *

Jenny shakes hands with the two of them. They both give her fascinated and clearly appraising looks. They have heard about her.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Shall we?

They walk into the hall.

16 INT. ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE. NIGHT

16

It's a beautiful hall - Jenny is dazzled by the surroundings and the company. She's particularly bowled over by Helen.

HELEN

Look. We can leave our coats over there. I want to get rid of this.

She nods at the coat she's carrying. Jenny looks thrilled at the prospect of spending a couple of minutes with Helen. Danny hands Helen his coat, without saying anything. The girls walk over to another reception table a few yards away, behind which is a cloakroom. A lady is exchanging overcoats for tickets. Almost involuntarily, Jenny touches the sleeve of Helen's velvety jacket. She stops herself. Helen notices.

JENNY

I'm so sorry.

HELEN

(amused)

That's OK. It's nice, isn't it?

JENNY

It's beautiful. Where did it come from?

HELEN

Oh, South Ken somewhere.

Helen looks at Jenny's outfit, her frumpy 'smart' dress, apparently wanting to return the compliment.

HELEN

(nodding at the dress)

This is...Well, it's good for this sort of concert, isn't it?

JENNY

(quietly)

Thank you.

Helen is now at the front of the queue, and hands her coat over imperiously.

HELEN

We should go shopping together one day, if you want.

She takes a ticket from the cloakroom lady.

*

JENNY

That would be nice. But South Ken... C'est beaucoup trop cher pour moi.

They stare at each other. Helen is bewildered, Jenny embarrassed.

HELEN

Sorry?

JENNY

I just said....It was too expensive for me.

HELEN

No you didn't. You said something completely different.

JENNY

I just...Well, I said it in French.

HELEN

In French? Why?

Jenny feels humiliated; she is yet to realise what we can see - that Helen is simply very dim.

JENNY

I don't know.

Jenny looks away. Helen stares at her. The performance bell rings, and they make their way back to the men. To Jenny's surprise and pleasure, Helen links arms with her as they walk.

HELEN

Anyway. It's too expensive for me, too. We don't have to worry about that. If you want something in South Ken, get David to take you shopping.

JENNY

Why on earth would he want to take me shopping?

Helen makes a knowing face.

17 INT. ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE. NIGHT 17 *

David, Jenny, Danny and Helen in a row in the middle of the auditorium, watching the stage and listening to the music. Jenny can't concentrate - she's too excited by the occasion and the company. Jenny sneaks a glance at Helen, who stares straight ahead, unblinking and enigmatic. David is smiling, as if he's trying to communicate enjoyment; Danny's eyes flicker across the stage - he understands the music, its component parts, which musicians are contributing what. Jenny takes it all in.

18 EXT. ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE. NIGHT 18 *

Jenny, David, Danny and Helen emerge with the other concert-goers.

DAVID

I booked a table at Juliette's.
Will that kill the mood, do you think?

*

HELEN

Oh, I do hope so.

*

The others laugh.

HELEN

I always think I'm going to my own funeral when I listen to classical music. (Tentatively)
That was classical, wasn't it?

DANNY

Yes. Very classical. As classical as you can get.

Helen looks pleased.

DAVID

Juliette's it is, then. Heaven forbid that we should end the evening reflecting on our own mortality.

Jenny smiles in delight. She's never met people like this.

19 INT. JULIETTE'S. NIGHT 19 *

A singer in the Julie London mould is singing 'I'm In The Mood For Love' while cigarette girls and glamorous waitresses patrol the tables.

*

Jenny is sitting with the others at a table in the club, eating and talking. She looks about twelve, but she's thrilled to be there. We know now that her life can never be the same again, and there will be no going back to fish-paste sandwiches with spotty Graham. *

DAVID
Have you never heard "Chante
Francoise Sagan"?

Jenny shakes her head. Her eyes are wide - she's clearly awe-struck. David offers her a cigarette - a Gitane - which she takes. He lights it for her while she's listening. *

DANNY
Oh, it's wonderful.

JENNY
I've only got....Well, I think
it's just called 'Juliette
Greco'. The one with the eyes on
the sleeve. I saved up and got my
French conversation teacher to
bring it back after Christmas.

HELEN
You've got a French conversation
teacher?

JENNY
Yes.

HELEN
Is that why you suddenly speak
French for no reason?

DANNY
(ignoring her)
You must have seen her sing? *

Jenny shakes her head again and smiles. Where would she have seen Juliette Greco? Danny, meanwhile, is baffled. Who hasn't seen Juliette Greco? *

DAVID
She's marvellous.

DANNY
But you should see her in Paris,
not here. David will take you.

DAVID
I'd love to. You'd fit right in.

HELEN
(sympathetically)
Better than here, really. *

DAVID

It's wonderful to find a young person who wants to know things. There's so much I want you to see.

They sip their drinks pensively, possibly to allow time for the double-entendre to disappear into the smoke.

DAVID

Are you still all right to come and have a look at that Pembroke Villas place with me on Friday, Danny?

DANNY

Oh. No. Can't do it. There's a Burne-Jones coming up at Christie's on Friday. And I want it.

*
*

JENNY

(laughing in disbelief)
You're thinking of buying a Burne-Jones? A real one?

DANNY

I just have a feeling that the pre-Raphaelites are going to take off.

JENNY

I love the pre-Raphaelites.

DAVID

(excited by her education)
Do you?

JENNY

Yes, of course. Rossetti and Burne-Jones, anyway. Not Holman Hunt, so much. He's so garish.

Danny looks at her. There's clearly more to this schoolgirl than he thought.

DAVID

Absolutely! Why don't we all go to the auction? Wouldn't that be fun?

JENNY

An auction. Gosh. How exciting.

DANNY
Next Friday morning. David will
pick you up.

JENNY
(crestfallen)
Oh. Friday.

DANNY
You're busy?

JENNY
Well. Yes.

She doesn't want to explain why. *

DANNY
Tant pis. *

Helen looks at him aghast. Why has he started speaking
French? *

DAVID
Are you sure you're busy?

Jenny hesitates.

JENNY
No. I'm sure I could....re-
arrange. That would be lovely.

20 INT. JENNY'S HOUSE. NIGHT

20

Jenny lets herself quietly into the house. The hallway is
dark, but she can hear noises from the kitchen. She pokes
her head round the corner, and sees her mother doing the
washing-up.

MARJORIE
Oh, hello, love. Did you have a
nice time?

JENNY
What are you doing?

MARJORIE
I can't get this casserole dish
clean. We had hot-pot tonight,
and it's all burnt round...

JENNY
It's twenty-five to twelve. We
finish tea at seven. *

MARJORIE

I know what the time is. How was your evening?

JENNY

It was...It was the best night of my life.

MARJORIE

And he took you home in his car? Right to the door?

Jenny looks at her. She doesn't seem to have heard what Jenny has just said.

JENNY

Goodnight, Mum.

MARJORIE

And I'm glad you enjoyed the concert.

21 INT. CLASSROOM. DAY

21

Jenny, Hattie and Tina are sitting on their desks, waiting for the start of a lesson. Nine or ten classmates are scattered around the room, talking distractedly, but Jenny's group is much more animated: Tina and Hattie are leaning forward, listening to Jenny, their eyes bright. They are clearly awestruck by Jenny's tales of the outside world.

TINA

(to Hattie)

I'm not interested in Schubert. I want to know what else was on the programme.

Laughter.

JENNY

There was nothing like that. He was the perfect gentleman. He just said he wanted to take me places and show me things.

TINA

Things plural? Oh my Gawd!

More laughter. The English teacher, MISS STUBBS, young and fresh-faced and lively-looking, enters, and picks up on the excitement of Jenny's coterie.

MISS STUBBS

I knew that in the end 'Jane Eyre' would work its magic upon you. I'm presuming that's what you're so animated about.

The students start to sit down at desks in a more conventional arrangement.

JENNY

Of course.

TINA

'Jane Eyre' and Jenny's new boyfriend.

JENNY

He's not my "new boyfriend". God.

TINA

It's true. He's more a man-friend, isn't he? He's got a sports-car, Miss Stubbs.

MISS STUBBS

Ah. A Mr Rochester figure.

TINA

I think he must be as blind as Mr Rochester.

Laughter. Jenny pulls a face at her.

MISS STUBBS

Is there no end to your thirst for literary understanding, Jenny? As you may have noticed, I'm attempting to turn the subject away from Jenny's lurid love-life and towards the matter in hand.

She starts to hand out essays.

MISS STUBBS

And it's quite clear on this evidence that most of you know much too much about the former, and almost nothing about the latter. Reluctantly I must concede that Jenny is evidently an expert on both matters. Excellent as always, Jenny.

Miss Stubbs slaps an essay down on Jenny's desk. We can see that it's marked 'A+'.

22 INT. JENNY'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 22

Jenny at her desk, working. She puts down her pen, distracted.

23 INT. DAVID'S CAR. DAY 23

David sitting in his Bristol, waiting.

24 EXT. SCHOOL. DAY 24

We see the Bristol parked outside, and Jenny walking towards it, a small figure in a large playground. She's clearly just changed out of her school uniform, and she's making last-minute adjustments to her civvies. A teacher walks towards her, and Jenny almost freezes - but the teacher merely smiles pleasantly and walks past. Jenny keeps walking at a measured pace for a moment and then breaks into a run.

25 INT/EXT. CAR/DILAPIDATED HOUSE. DAY 25 *

Jenny and David are driving along a North Kensington street.

JENNY

How do you know Danny?

David is distracted. He's driving slowly, apparently looking for an address.

DAVID

Oh, you know. We kept bumping into each other, and we became pals, and we've ended up doing a bit of work together, when it suits us.

JENNY

What kind of work?

DAVID

Property. A bit of art dealing. Some buying and selling. This and that...

He stops the car.

DAVID

I'll be two seconds.

He gets out of the car, and Jenny watches him as he crosses the road.

Outside a dilapidated house covered in scaffolding stands a large West Indian family, mother, father, three or four small children and a dog. They are surrounded by what appears to be all their worldly goods. David squats down on his haunches, talks to the kids, tousles the hair of the smallest. Then he takes out a bunch of keys and ushers the family down the path. He unlocks the door and leads them inside.

In an upper window of the house, we see an old lady peering down anxiously.

26 EXT. STREET/DILAPIDATED HOUSE. DAY 26 *

David emerges from the house, jangling his keys.

27 INT. CAR. DAY 27

Jenny opens the glove compartment where David keeps his cigarettes, takes out the packet, removes one for herself, offers the packet to David as he gets into the car. He lights them both.

DAVID
I'm sorry about that.

JENNY
How do you know those, those
...Negro people?

DAVID
They're clients.

JENNY
Clients?

DAVID
Jenny darling, even schwarzers
have to live somewhere. And it's
not as if they can rent off their
own kind, is it?

He starts the car and drives off.

JENNY
I'm not sure I quite understand
what you do.

DAVID
You don't need to. It's too
boring. All you need to know is
that I work in property so that I
can take you to nice places.

Jenny's POV of the black family in one window, and the little old lady disappearing from another.

28

INT. CHRISTIE'S. DAY

28

Danny intent on a catalogue, Helen gazing dreamily into space, as David and Jenny push their way through the crowded auction room. The auctioneer bumbles on in the background.

*
*

DANNY

You nearly missed it.

Jenny is in awe of rich London in all its finery. The auctioneer clears his throat.

AUCTIONEER

We turn to lot 41, The Tree of Forgiveness, by Sir Edward Burne-Jones. This is a rare opportunity to purchase a key work of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Who will start me off at five hundred guineas?

*
*

*
*

Jenny glances at Danny. He makes no move at this price. Neither does anyone else. He's poised and listening hard.

AUCTIONEER

Two hundred?

A middle-aged lady, the epitome of the middle-aged contemporary Sloane, twin-set, pearls and a lot of face powder, raises her hand.

AUCTIONEER

Thank you, madam. Three hundred?

*

A man raises his hand.

*

AUCTIONEER

Do I hear three-fifty?

*
*

The middle-aged Sloane nods.

*

AUCTIONEER

Over to you sir. Four hundred guineas? Thank you. Four hundred and fifty...

*
*
*
*

Danny continues to sit there. Jenny is confused. The middle-aged lady bids four-fifty. David, sitting next to Danny, whispers something to him. Danny nods.

*
*

DAVID

(whispers to Jenny)

Your turn.

Jenny looks at him.

AUCTIONEER
No further bids?

DAVID
Quick!

Jenny raises her hand high, just as she'd do at school.

AUCTIONEER
Five hundred guineas from the
very eager new bidder.

*
*

People look round and smile when they see who has come in.
Jenny blushes, but stares fixedly ahead.

AUCTIONEER
Five hundred and fifty, madam?
Thank you.

*
*
*

Jenny looks at David, who nods.

*

AUCTIONEER
Six hundred guineas.

*
*

Jenny gestures more economically.

*

AUCTIONEER
Six-fifty? Thank you, madam.
Seven hundred...

*
*
*

Jenny is almost insouciant this time.

*

AUCTIONEER
Seven hundred?

*
*

The middle-aged lady shakes her head and purses her lips.
when asked if she wants to bid £700.

*
*

AUCTIONEER
Sold for six hundred and fifty
guineas. Thank you.

*
*

He brings down the gavel, and a murmur goes around the
room. Jenny is excited and giggly. David pats her on the
back.

AUCTIONEER
Your name, please?

*
*

Jenny looks at Danny.

*

DANNY
You know who you are.

*
*

JENNY
(to Danny)
Jenny Mellor.

*
*
*

DANNY
I know who you are, too. Tell
him.

*
*
*

JENNY
(louder, to auctioneer)
Jenny Mellor.

*
*
*

DANNY
Thank you. Couldn't have bought
it without you.

*
*
*

DAVID
Well done. A nerveless
performance.

Jenny beams. She's thrilled.

29 INT. DANNY'S FLAT. DAY

29

A beautiful, large, airy sitting room in the first-floor flat in Bedford Square. The flat is unusually and tastefully decorated, opulent and indicative of Bohemian good taste. Jenny is sipping a glass of white wine and walking around the room enthralled, looking at Danny's existing Pre-Raphaelite art collection; he has three or four big paintings proudly displayed on his walls. Danny is talking her through them while Helen and David, sitting on the sofa, watch - David proudly, Helen impassively.

DANNY
A couple of years ago you could
pick these up for fifty quid, you
know. Nobody was interested.

JENNY
Really? Fifty pounds? I don't
believe you.

Suddenly Jenny sees a cello in the corner of the room - a good one.

JENNY
That's not a Lockett-Hill!

DANNY
There aren't many people who come
in here and say that.

HELEN
Certainly not me.

JENNY
It's beautiful. Do you play?

DANNY

I used to. I vowed to myself that one day I'd own one of these. And now I own one and never touch it. It's vulgar to put it on show, really.

HELEN

Give it to Jenny.

DANNY

That would be even more vulgar.

DAVID

Play for us, Jenny.

JENNY

Gosh, no. One day. When I'm good enough for it.

DAVID

She's good enough now.

JENNY

Oh, David. You've never heard me.

Danny stands up and stretches.

DAVID

I shall come to hear you in St John's Smith Square. Or in Oxford, when you get there.

*
*

DANNY

We should all go and spend a weekend in Oxford. Straw boaters, punting, cream teas, antiquarian bookshops. Bit of business, if we can find it. What about next weekend?

DAVID/HELEN

Yes!

JENNY

A weekend away? I wouldn't be allowed to do that.

They all look at her.

DAVID

I'll find a way. I'll talk to them.

JENNY

Who?

DAVID
Jack and Marjorie.

JENNY
About what?

DAVID
Oxford.

Jenny hoots with derision.

JENNY
You're going to ask my father if
I can go away with you for the
weekend? He'd have you arrested.

DAVID
We'll see.

JENNY
I'll bet you you can't do it.

DAVID
How much?

DANNY
(amused)
Be careful, Jenny. You don't know
who you're dealing with.

JENNY
Half-a-crown.

DAVID
You're on.

They shake hands. Jenny suddenly notice the clock on
Danny's mantelpiece.

JENNY
Mon dieu! You must take me back
to school. And I've got to change
back into my uniform.

There is a silence. Danny and David make momentary eye
contact - they are clearly contemplating the erotic
possibilities of Jenny's last sentence. Helen notices.

HELEN
Oh, behave yourselves.

Jenny looks at them all, mystified.

30 INT. CLASSROOM/LATIN. DAY. 30 *

Jenny is in her Latin class, waiting for the lesson to begin. Tina and Hattie aren't with her, and she sits on her own -the atmosphere of the class is very different from Miss Stubbs' English lessons. The girls are different, more serious, less fun, and the atmosphere is more sombre. The teacher, MRS WILSON, is older, plainer, stricter. She pulls some papers out of her bag. *

MRS WILSON *
 Test results for the Virgil
 translation. We will start from
 the bottom...Patricia.

Jenny puffs out her cheeks. She's not last.

MRS WILSON (CONT'D) *
 Absent. Margaret. 48%. Jenny...

Jenny winces.

MRS WILSON (CONT'D) *
 52%. That would just about scrape
 a pass in the exam proper. Not
 good enough for Oxford
 candidates.

31 INT. JENNY'S HOUSE. DAY 31

Jenny and her mother are sitting on the sofa, staring into space, clearly upset. On the coffee table in front of them is the test, covered in red ink. They hear a key in the lock, and they look at each other.

MARJORIE
 I'll talk to him.

Jack enters, back from work. He's wearing a suit and carrying a battered briefcase. He looks at them, and then notices the essay on the table.

JACK
 It's her Latin, isn't it?

MARJORIE
 The test didn't...Well, it didn't
 go as well as we'd hoped.

He picks up the paper.

JACK

And you still say I shouldn't go down there and have it out with whatsername? The Latin teacher? Because this is hopeless.

JENNY

How are you going to "have it out" with her? What are you going to do? Shout at her until she decides I'm much cleverer than she thinks?

MARJORIE

Everyone's doing their best, Jack.

JACK

What if their best isn't good enough, though, eh? What do we do then?

JENNY

We don't go to Oxford. Any of us. Not even you, Dad.

JACK

Perhaps it's all a waste of time and money anyway.

MARJORIE

You don't mean that.

JACK

Well, what's she going to do with an English degree? And if she's going to spend three years playing that bloody cello and talking in French to beatniks, then I'm throwing good money after bad. I suppose she might meet a nice lawyer. But she could do that at a dinner dance tomorrow.

JENNY

Oh, yes. That's the whole point of an Oxford education. It's the expensive alternative to a dinner dance.

MARJORIE

What about private tuition?

JACK

Is anyone listening to me? How much is that going to cost me?

MARJORIE

Five shillings an hour. Maybe a little more for A-level.

JACK

Five bob! But... we could spend five bob on this and five bob on that, and before we know it that's our savings down the drain.

MARJORIE

And what else are we spending five bob on? What else are we spending sixpence on?

JACK

Oh, nothing. (He gestures round the room.) It's all free. That vase was free.

MARJORIE

It was, actually. It was a present from Auntie Vi.

JACK

That chair was free. The sofa. We don't have to pay for anything. And even if we did, we don't have to work for it. That's the beauty of life, Jenny. Everything's free. Grows on trees. Wonderful, isn't it? (He warms to his theme, and grows progressively more berserk.) We've got a lovely Oxford tree in the garden, lucky for you, so that's Oxford taken care of. And a whole orchard of school trees, so that's all free. I'm sure there are some private tuition trees out there. I'll go and have a look.

He stands up.

MARJORIE

Jack...

JACK

No, no, won't take me a minute. I think I saw some at the back there, right next to the pocket money tree. I'll just nip out and check, see that they're doing all right.

Don't want anyone climbing over
the wall and scrumping, do we?
And you never know. Maybe
there'll be a man with deep
pockets growing out there.
Because God knows we need to find
you one.

He leaves the room, apparently to look in the garden for
the mythical trees.

31A INT. JENNY'S HOUSE 31A *

Jenny and her mother move to the window to watch him
talking theatrically to the trees.

32 EXT. STREET/COFFEE BAR. DAY. 32 *

Jenny, Hattie and Tina are walking back from school.

TINA

You could always go to
secretarial college with Hattie.

JENNY

(sarcastic)
Oh, thanks.

HATTIE

Charming!

JENNY

Oh, no.

Hattie and Tina follow Jenny's eyes, and they see Graham
coming towards them pushing his bike, red-faced, trousers
tucked into socks.

GRAHAM

Hello.

JENNY

Oh. Graham. Hello.

GRAHAM

I haven't seen you for ages....It
all went wrong, didn't it? The
tea-party, I mean. Was it because
of the year off?

JENNY

No, no. It's just...I've got so
much to do if I'm going to get
the grades I need.

TINA

Yes. She's got no time for boys.

Hattie and Tina try to suppress giggles. Graham turns an even brighter shade of red. Hattie and Tina enter the coffee bar. Jenny feels sorry for him, is on the verge of inviting him to join them...And changes her mind.

*
*
*

JENNY

(quickly)

Bye, Graham.

*
*
*

She follows the girls inside.

*

33 INT. JENNY'S BEDROOM/UPPER HALLWAY. NIGHT

33

*

Jenny is deep in her schoolwork. She has a Latin vocabulary propped open on the window-ledge. She looks at it, walks away, mutters to herself, attempting to memorize. Her concentration is broken by a sudden gale of laughter from downstairs.

34 INT. JENNY'S HALL. NIGHT

34

She stands outside the living room for a moment, listening. She hears a man's voice that does not belong to her father, and then more laughter from her father and mother.

35 INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

35

David is in the middle of demonstrating his ability to mimic all of the Goons. Jack and Marjorie are laughing so hard that they can hardly see - they certainly miss Jenny's entrance.

JENNY

(curious)

Hello.

JACK

Oh. Hello. David does the most brilliant Bluebottle, Jenny. Actually, he can do all the Goons.

*
*

DAVID

I don't think I'm very good at Eccles.

*
*
*

JACK

Oh, no, you've got him...

*
*

JENNY
 (impatiently)
 But what's he doing here?

*

DAVID
 I wasn't going to disturb you. I
 knew you'd have your nose to the
 grindstone.

JENNY
 (incredulous)
 You came to see Mum and Dad?

JACK
 Is that so hard to imagine?

Jenny spies an open bottle of wine on the coffee-table.

JENNY
 And you're drinking? But it's not
 Christmas!

JACK
 Hark at her! Makes us sound as
 though we've signed the pledge.
 You don't know everything about
 us, you know. We had a life
 before you came along.

JENNY
 Yes, that's true. I'm only going
 on what I've seen over the last
 sixteen years.

MARJORIE
 I'm trying to think what you
 missed. Nothing much comes to
 mind.

JACK
 They can't stand to see me
 enjoying myself.

JENNY
 Anyway. Would you excuse me? I've
 got a huge pile of Latin
 translation to do.

JACK
 You didn't tell me David went to
 Oxford.

Jenny looks at David, who stares back at her straight-
 faced.

JENNY
 No. I didn't.

DAVID
For all the good it did me.

JACK
What did you read?

DAVID
Oh, English. Just like every
other semi-employed layabout in
London.

JACK
(marvelling at the
coincidence)
English! Which college?

DAVID
Merton.

MARJORIE
Isn't that funny?

JENNY
Extraordinary.

DAVID
I was just telling Jack that I'm
going back next weekend. I go and
see my old professor every now
and again.

JACK
That's what you need, Jenny.
Someone on the inside track. It's
not always what you know, is it,
David?

DAVID
Too true. And Clive would love
Jenny. Have you ever come across
Clive Lewis?

JENNY
Dad has never come across anyone.

DAVID
I just thought he might know some
of the books.

JENNY
Dad has never read any books.

JACK
(stung)
What's he written?

DAVID

He wrote a children's book called 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' that did very well, I believe.

MARJORIE

CS Lewis? That's the Clive you're talking about?

DAVID

Well, to us he was just the old codger who taught Medieval literature. But I came to know him very well. We just...got along, do you know what I mean?

Everyone murmurs their comprehension.

MARJORIE

Jenny used to love those books.

DAVID

Gosh. That dates me. He was writing them when I was there.

JENNY

I'd love to meet him.

There is a pause. Jack and Marjorie look at the floor. Somehow, David has manoeuvred a situation where, effectively, he is the one being asked.

DAVID

I'm sorry. I'm being slow on the uptake. Would Jenny like to come with me at the weekend?

JACK

Well, I don't know about this weekend. But one day, yes, thank you.

JENNY

How often do you see him?

DAVID

Oh, once every couple of years. But next time, eh?

JENNY

(disappointed)
Hopefully I'll be there by then. So that won't be much use.

JACK
 (dubiously)
 Well, I suppose...Would she have
 to stay the night?

DAVID
 Well, I wouldn't want to drive
 back after one of those Oxford
 dinners.

Jack chuckles knowingly.

DAVID
 Clive will get her a room in
 college. That's easy enough.

MARJORIE
 Sounds like too good an
 opportunity to pass up.

JENNY
 Please, Daddy. It would be so
 helpful to know something about
 the place.

JACK
 Would it be a bother to you,
 David?

DAVID
 I'd be delighted.

Jack, Marjorie and Jenny all beam.

36 INT. HALLWAY. NIGHT

36

Jenny opens the door for David.

JENNY
 (sotto voce)
 That was scandalous.

DAVID
 I told you. You owe me half-a-
 crown.

He kisses her on the cheek and disappears into the night.

37 INT. DANNY'S FLAT. DAY

37

David and Danny are waiting for the girls to get ready.
 Danny is sitting sprawled in an armchair; David is pacing
 up and down.

DAVID

Come on!

38 INT. HELEN'S BEDROOM. DAY 38

An ornate four-poster bed occupies most of the space in the room. Helen is doing something to Jenny, but we can't see what.

HELEN

Nearly ready!

39 INT. DANNY'S FLAT. DAY 39

DAVID

How can they only be nearly ready?

DANNY

I wouldn't be surprised if three of them come out, you know. That's the only explanation. They're making themselves a friend. LADIES! Let's go. Please.

40 INT. HELEN'S BEDROOM. DAY 40

Jenny is wearing a floaty print dress that she has borrowed from Helen, and there are lots of other beautiful clothes strewn about the place. Jenny is sitting at the dressing table, being made up by Helen. Jenny looks three or four years older, more sophisticated....more like Helen. She can't believe it. She looks in the mirror, and for a moment, she forgets to breathe.

HELEN

There. You'll do. You can keep it. I can only wear so many every day.

Jenny emerges from her reverie.

JENNY

(thrilled)
Really? Thank you.

HELEN

What about tonight? Will you be needing a nightie? Or not?

JENNY

A nightie?

Jenny suddenly understands what Helen means.

JENNY
Will we be sharing bedrooms?

HELEN
You're not sleeping with him?

JENNY
No. I'm...No.

HELEN
Good for you.

JENNY
Really? Do you think so?

HELEN
You're only sixteen. And you
don't want to get into the
family way, do you?

JENNY
Oh, I'd make sure that didn't
happen. I'm going to do it when
I'm seventeen. On my seventeenth
birthday, hopefully.

HELEN
With David?

Jenny pauses.

JENNY
Well...Golly. I suppose it will
be with David, won't it?

HELEN
When's your birthday?

JENNY
April. *

HELEN
Oh, he'll be around in April. If
that's what you want. Anyway.
I'll find you a nightie. *

Jenny stares at herself in the mirror again.

41 INT. DANNY'S FLAT. DAY

41

The girls emerge. Both men are entranced by Jenny's
transformation. David can't take his eyes off her.

DANNY
(thoughtful)
Shall, we, ah... Make a move?

He gets to his feet.

42 INT/EXT. CAR COUNTRY ROAD. DAY. 42 *

The Bristol on the country road to Oxford.

43 INT/EXT. CAR OXFORD DAY 43 *

The Bristol drives through Oxford. Jenny catches a quick glimpse of a dreaming spire.

DANNY

Imagine spending three years here.

HELEN

I know.

She shudders, as if someone has walked over her grave.

JENNY

Can we stop?

*
*

DAVID

Maybe later. There are a couple of things we have to do.

*
*

44 INT/EXT. CAR OXFORD BACK STREET. DAY. 44 *

Jenny and Helen in the back seat of the car, which is parked outside a house in the back streets of Oxford. There's no sign of Danny and David. Jenny sighs impatiently.

HELEN

Oh, it's always like this. There are millions of places I've never seen because I've been stuck in here.

JENNY

You never get out?

HELEN

There's never anywhere to go in the places they stop.

Jenny looks out of the window. This is self-evidently true.

45 INT. PUB. EVENING. 45

Helen and Danny, Jenny and David are standing in a quiet, old-fashioned pub, warming themselves at an open fire.

David has a pen in his hand, and he's holding a book - 'The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe'.

DAVID

So. Now. Is he Clive, do you think? Or CS?

HELEN

I'm confused now. I thought you'd made him up?

DANNY

(attempting, briefly, to be patient)
No, we...Never mind.

David walks over to the nearest table and writes in the book.

DAVID

There.

He stands up, hands the book to Jenny.

JENNY

(reads)
"To dear Jenny. With the pleasure of meeting you. Come and see me again soon. Clive."

HELEN

Dirty old man.

Laughter. He takes a long drink from his pint of bitter. A group of students enter, all carrying musical instruments. They stand at the bar, waiting to be served. Jenny stares at them with longing - she wants to be one of them. Helen, meanwhile, stares at them as if they were aliens.

HELEN

(sotto voce)
Why are university girls so strange-looking?

Helen's right. The girls in the group are all bespectacled and frumpy. The others laugh.

HELEN

It's true. And they can't all have started off that way, can they? Most girls aren't ugly, but most girl students are. So there must be something about those places that, you know, makes you fat, or spotty, or short-sighted.

DAVID

Well, if you look at it that way...I mean, that's proper scientific analysis. And you can't argue with science.

Helen looks pleased.

HELEN

I'm still not quite clear on what you want to do when you get here.

JENNY

I want to read English.

HELEN

Books?

JENNY

Sorry?

HELEN

You want to read English books?

JENNY

Oh. Yes. Reading English is just another way of saying...

DANNY

I wouldn't worry, Jenny. You're wasting your breath.

DAVID

Anyway, tomorrow we'll try to get more of a feel for the place.

DANNY

Absolutely. This would be a good place to do a little business.

David catches Jenny's eye. This isn't what he meant by "getting a feel for the place."

DANNY

All those little old ladies wandering around...I'll bet this place is rife with stats.

JENNY

Please explain what stats are. You're always going on about them.

DAVID

All right. Think of a number. Now think about the most boring lesson you've ever had at school.

*
*

Now double it. Done? Doubled? Now multiply it by the number you first thought of, and there you are. That's the official boredom content of stats.

*
*
*
*
*

Jenny laughs.

46

INT. B & B BEDROOM. NIGHT

46

A rather grotty and certainly unromantic B&B bedroom - so unromantic, in fact, that it even has the same fusty curtains from Jenny's sitting room. David is in bed, his hands behind his head, waiting for Jenny. As far as we can tell - he's wrapped up in the sheets quite tightly - he's in his underwear. The bedroom is lit unromantically by the 40-watt overhead light. Jenny comes into the room wearing one of Helen's nightdresses, a glamorous satiny item quite inappropriate for the occasion or the surroundings. She looks nervous.

JENNY

We've got exactly the same curtains at home.

DAVID

Let's not talk about curtains. You look beautiful. You really are a princess.

Jenny was about to get into bed, but his tone makes her pause at the edge of the bed.

JENNY

There's something you should know, David. I'm...Well, I'm a virgin. And I want to stay that way until I'm seventeen.

DAVID

I think that's good. I think that's right. And for your seventeenth birthday I'm going to take you to Paris or Rome or Florence and make you feel like the most beautiful princess in the kingdom of love. But we can still be romantic, can't we?

JENNY

Well, yes. Of course we can. If it doesn't mean...

DAVID

Minnie....

JENNY

Is that me?

DAVID

Yes. You're my Minnie Mouse, and I'm your bubbalub.

JENNY

Oh. If that's what..

DAVID

Minnie.

JENNY

Yes, David?

DAVID

(prompting)
Bubbalub...

JENNY

Sorry. Yes, bubbalub?

DAVID

Would you mind if I had a look at what might one day be mine? Just a peek?

His eyes stray to her breasts. Jenny stares at him.

JENNY

You just want to see them?

DAVID

I just want to see them.

Jenny, flustered and nervous, looks at her nightgown - she doesn't know what to do.

DAVID

Let it fall from your shoulders.

She does so. He stares.

DAVID

Thank you.

He sits up, and lovingly lifts the straps back up. He smiles at her. Relieved, she smiles back.

47

INT/EXT. CAR COTTAGE. DAY

47 *

The Bristol, containing David and Jenny in the front seats and Danny and Helen in the back, passing through a pretty Oxfordshire village. It pulls up outside a country cottage with a 'FOR SALE' sign outside.

48 INT. CAR. DAY 48

DAVID
Might be worth a look.

49 EXT. CAR COTTAGE. DAY 49 *

The four get out of the car, and Jenny follows David and Danny to the front door of the house. Helen hangs back. *

HELEN *

Jenny... *

Jenny turns around. *

JENNY *

Aren't you coming? *

HELEN *

We don't go in. *

JENNY *

What are you talking about? *

DANNY *

Helen will look after you. Go and find a nice cup of tea somewhere. *

Jenny is mystified. *

JENNY *

I don't need looking after, thank you very much. David, I want to see... *

David ignores her. *

DANNY *

I'm not going to tell you a second time. Now. Run along. *

49A EXT. BENCH. DAY 49A *

Helen and Jenny waiting for the boys. Helen is blithe, chatty; Jenny has a face like thunder. *

HELEN *

They won't be long. Either way. *

JENNY *

"Either way"?

HELEN

Sometimes they find something,
sometimes they don't.

In the distance, David is waving at them urgently.

HELEN

And when they do find something,
we usually have to leave quite
quickly. They can be a bit
naughty, sometimes. Anyway. It's
nice to have company. I'm usually
outside on my own.

Jenny stares at Helen. She's beginning to realise who she
is dealing with.

50 SCENE OMITTED 50

51 SCENE OMITTED 51

52 INT/EXT. CAR NEW COUNTRY ROAD. DAY 52

An old picture of some kind is wedged between Helen and
Jenny on the back seat. Jenny, furious, is staring out of
the window. Helen attempts to peer around the partition,
but settles for a wave.

HELEN

Coo-ee. Jenny.

Jenny doesn't respond.

DANNY

Sorry about being a little brisk
back there, Jenny. We have our
way of doing things. Silly,
really.

Still no response.

DAVID

Oh, come on, Jenny. Let's not
spoil things.

JENNY

(disbelieving)
Me? I'm spoiling things?

DAVID

I think there must be some kind
of misunderstanding.

Jenny shakes her head bitterly. They continue driving in
silence.

53

EXT. DANNY'S FLAT. DAY

53 *

The Bristol pulls up outside Danny's Bedford Square flat.

DANNY

Who wants to come up for a drink?

DAVID

Jenny?

JENNY

(still furious)

No thanks. You go. I'll find my own way home.

Jenny gets out of the car and starts up the road. David gets out and starts to chase after her.

DAVID

Jenny!

He catches up with her in the street.

DAVID

It was an old map. A Speed. It was cooped up in that miserable little cottage, and she didn't even know what it was. What a waste! It shouldn't spend its life on a wall in wherever the hell we are. It should be with us. We know how to look after it properly. We liberated it.

Jenny snorts derisively.

JENNY

Liberated! That's one word for it.

DAVID

(quickly and passionately)

Oh, don't be bourgeois, Jenny. You're better than that. I know you have fun with us. I can see it. You drink everything I put in front of you down in one, every last drop, and then you slam your glass down on the bar and ask for more, and it's wonderful. We're not clever like you, so we have to be clever in other ways, because if we weren't, there would be no fun.

We have to be clever with maps, and..and.. You want to know what stats are? Stats are old ladies who are scared of coloured people. So I move the coloureds in and the old ladies move out and I buy their flats cheap. That's what I do. So now you know.

Jenny nods reluctantly.

DAVID

And if you don't like it, then I will understand, and you can go back to Twickenham and listen to the Home Service and do your Latin homework. But these weekends, and the restaurants and the concerts..They don't grow on trees.

*

Jenny looks at him, startled. Trees again?

DAVID

Do you understand? Of course you do. This is who we are, Jenny.

He turns to face her and holds out his hand. On Jenny: is she in or out? Jenny takes his hand. David pulls her towards him, holds her around the waist and begins to dance with her. Further up the pavement, Helen and Danny watch, laughing.

54 EXT/INT. CAR JENNY' HOUSE. NIGHT

54 *

David pulls up in the Bristol outside Jenny's house, and they sit in the dark for a little while.

DAVID

I suppose you have homework to do.

JENNY

Gosh. Yes. Loads. (Beat) Thank you. I had a nice time.

DAVID

(surprised, despite his speech earlier)
Really? In spite of the, the incident? With the map?

JENNY

As you said in the car, it was a misunderstanding.

DAVID
Exactly. A muddle.

JENNY
You have no idea how boring
everything was before I met you.

DAVID
I hope that there's something
more than excitement to our
relationship.

JENNY
Excitement's a lot, when you're
at school and you live in
Twickenham.

DAVID
You know what I'm trying to say.
I want you to like me for who I
am, not just what I can do for
you.

JENNY
But that is who you are. I've
never met anyone like you. Action
is character, our English teacher
says.

DAVID
What does that mean?

JENNY
I think it means that if we never
did anything, we wouldn't be
anybody. And I never did anything
before I met you. And sometimes I
think no-one's ever done anything
in this stupid country, apart
from you.

DAVID
That's a good place to end the
weekend. I'll give you a tinkle.

JENNY
Thank you.

They look at each other. David is clearly smitten. He moves towards her. He wants to kiss her, but he doesn't want to frighten her - in the end, Jenny makes it easy for him and moves towards him. They kiss gently and tenderly. Flustered, Jenny breaks it off, gets out of the car and goes inside while David watches.

55 INT. JENNY'S HOUSE. NIGHT

55

Jenny enters the sitting room with her overnight bag to find the radio on, her father reading the paper and her mother knitting. When Jenny comes in, Jack beams. He has clearly turned some kind of corner.

JACK

Here she is! The wanderer returns!

MARJORIE

Did you have a nice time?

JENNY

Lovely, thank you.

JACK

Was he nice to you?

Jenny unzips her bag and pulls out her copy of the book. She hands it to her father.

JENNY

Look inside.

Jack examines the inscription.

JACK

Well I never. Look at this, Marjorie.

He hands it to her. She examines it reverently.

MARJORIE

"Clive"...Lucky girl. What was he like? *

JENNY

He was just...normal. Kind.

MARJORIE

And did he show you round?

JENNY

Oh, he was busy. David did, though.

MARJORIE

What did you think?

JENNY

Beautiful.

MARJORIE

Did it make you want to work harder?

JACK

Never a dull moment with David, is there? If it's not concerts, it's famous authors. Bit different from that lad you brought home for tea, isn't he?

MARJORIE

David's a lot older than Graham.

JACK

Graham could live to be two hundred, and he still wouldn't be swanning around with famous authors. Hasn't got it in him.

JENNY

He might *become* a famous author, for all you know.

JACK

Being one isn't the same as knowing one, is it? Anyone can *be* one. But if you move in those circles...

JENNY

What?

JACK

Well, it says something about you, doesn't it? It says you're going places. It says you're well connected. He's an impressive young man, that David. I like him more and more.

MARJORIE

Well, they say opposites attract, don't they? I wouldn't have thought he was your sort.

JACK

He wasn't. And now he is.

MARJORIE

Is that how you feel, Jenny?

JENNY

I feel....I Feel I should do my homework.

She leaves the room. Marjorie watches her go thoughtfully.

56

EXT. PARK. DAY

56

A group of girls cross-country running. Jenny and her friends are at the back of the group, and the gym teacher, jogging backwards, gesticulates at them to get a move on.

*
*
*

GYM TEACHER

Ladies, please. Christmas is coming.

*
*
*

They put on enough of a spurt to satisfy her, and then immediately stop when the teacher is no longer watching. Seeing an attractive bench, they sit down. From somewhere under a skirt, Jenny produces a packet of exotic-looking cigarettes and offers them around.

*
*
*

HATTIE

What the hell are those?

JENNY

Russian Sobranies.

Hattie and Tina make snooty faces. Jenny takes a cigarette. The others follow suit. Jenny lights them, and they all grimace. The contrast between the sophisticated cigarettes, and the unsophisticated smokers and context is pronounced.

HATTIE

Where did they come from?

TINA

She might have bought them from the Savoy, or Claridges, or the opera, or some fancy nightclub. Who knows, with Jenny?

JENNY

Paris. You can't buy them here.

TINA

(suddenly looking at her suspiciously)
You never bought them yourself?

JENNY

(mimicking Tina's grammar cruelly)
No. I never.

TINA

Shut up, you stuck-up cow.

JENNY

But I'll bring you some back, if you want.

TINA
You're joking.

JENNY
Non.

HATTIE
He's taking you to Paris?

JENNY
(smiling smugly)
Oui.

HATTIE
This term?

JENNY
Peut-etre.

TINA
Isn't it your birthday next
Tuesday?

*

JENNY
Might be.

The two friends shriek and jump up and down.

HATTIE
Oh, my God! Your birthday!

TINA
I wouldn't like to be you. All
those dinners you've had off him.
Ouch.

JENNY
You have such a Victorian
attitude to sex, you two.

TINA
Oh, sorry, Dr Kinsey. We're not
all as experienced as you. I
mean, you've done it...(She
counts on her fingers) I make it
never! Can that be right?

HATTIE
But your parents are just going
to let you swan off like that?

JENNY
They don't know yet. David's got
a plan, he says. He usually has
something up his sleeve.

TINA

I've noticed that. What did he tell them when you had your weekend in Oxford?

JENNY

(animated by the memory)
Oh, it was....(She changes her mind) David went to Oxford. Merton. English. And he offered to show me round.

HATTIE

So you have a good-looking boyfriend with pots of money, brains and a nice car.

JENNY

Apparently I do.

Tina makes a bitter face.

TINA

And they tell us there's a God.

Laughter. Jenny glances off into the distance, and spots a portly middle-aged woman heading in their direction.

JENNY

Sod. Miss Davies.

They stand up, grind their Sobranies into the mud, kick them under the bench, and set off at a brisk trot. The Sobranie stubs come to rest near a pile of dog poo.

57 INT. JENNY'S HOUSE. DAY

57

Breakfast on Jenny's birthday. Jenny is at the table buttering toast. Jack is reading the paper, Marjorie is cooking him eggs and bacon.

JACK

Is David taking you somewhere special tonight?

JENNY

Not that I know of.

MARJORIE

I've asked Graham round for tea and birthday cake.

JENNY

Graham?

JACK

What do we want him round for?

MARJORIE

I happened to be talking to his mother about something, and...

JENNY

What did you happen to be talking to her about?

MARJORIE

I thought it would be nice.

JENNY

What if David turns up?

MARJORIE

Are we expecting David to turn up?

Jenny shrugs.

JACK

It might not be a bad thing if he did.

MARJORIE

(doubtful)

Really?

JACK

Well, if you think about it, there's more than one way of skinning a cat.

JENNY

And who's the skinned cat, in this enchanting image? Me? *

JACK

No, of course... *

JENNY

I have an education to pursue. *

58

INT. JENNY'S HOUSE. EVENING

58

Graham, Jenny and her father are at the dinner table, sitting in the dark. Marjorie kicks the door open with her foot and comes in holding a birthday cake with seventeen candles burning on it. She puts it down carefully on the table.

JACK

Blow them out, then, before the
whole place burns down.

Jenny closes her eyes, makes her wish, blows out her
candles. Her father and mother both look at her, apparently
attempting to read her mind. Jack gets up to turn the
lights on. We can see that by Jenny's side are two
unopened, carefully-wrapped presents, both exactly the same
size - clearly books.

MARJORIE

Who'd like a piece?

In truth, the cake is a rather sorry and unappetising
specimen. There isn't enough icing on the top. She cuts a
couple of slices which immediately collapse.

GRAHAM

Never mind. I'll have one of
those.

JACK

Come on. Presents.

Without any real enthusiasm, Jenny opens the first one of
the two, from her mum and dad. It's a Latin dictionary.

JENNY

Oh. Thank you. I needed a new
one.

GRAHAM

(crestfallen)

Oh dear.

*

The doorbell rings. Jenny perks up. Jack goes to answer it,
and immediately the house is energised: it's David.

58A	INT/EXT JENNY'S HOUSE	58A	*
	Jack answers the door to David.		*
58B	INT. JENNY'S HOUSE	58B	*

JACK (O.S.)

Good grief. You won't believe
this, Jenny. Did you leave
anything in the shop?

David enters. You can hardly see him for all the parcels
and flowers he's carrying.

DAVID

It's a special day.

He and Jenny exchange a glance. Jack comes in behind him.

JACK
She's a special girl.

DAVID
Oh, I know it. (to Graham) Hello,
young man.

JENNY
This is Graham.

DAVID
Graham, a pleasure. I'm David.

They shake hands. Graham suddenly looks five years younger.

JACK
Makes your dictionary look a bit
feeble, eh Graham?

Graham looks pained. Marjorie notices.

MARJORIE
And ours too, come to that.

JACK
Well, we're not the ones trying
to impress her.

JENNY
Clearly.

JACK
David, what can I get you to
drink?

DAVID
What's everybody else having?
What have you got there, Graham?

JACK
I've given him a glass of pop.

GRAHAM
(stung)
I'd better be going I have a
stack of homework to do.

Graham says his goodbyes. He tries to catch Jenny's eye,
but she looks away. Marjorie shows him to the door.

*
*

DAVID
Yes. Well. You can put the pop
away now. What is there for the
grown-ups?

JACK
A glass of something warming?

DAVID
You know me so well.

Hearty laughter from the two men.

JENNY
Can I open anything yet?

Marjorie comes back into the room.

MARJORIE
Wait for me.

DAVID
Before you start on that little lot , I have a surprise. Next weekend, we're all going to Chez Georges to celebrate Jenny's birthday.

JACK
(flatly)
Lovely.

DAVID
Chez Georges is in the Boulevard St Germain. In Paris.

Jenny giggles her delight. Jack's smile is a little more forced.

JACK
How d'you mean, Paris?

JENNY
You know the one, Dad.

JACK
(panic rising)
But..We haven't got any French money. And I'm not sure...I just don't think it would agree with me.

JENNY
Dad!

JACK
They don't like us, the French, you know. John Sutton at work went once. They were very rude to him. I'm not sure I'd like that.

Jenny understands David's ploy perfectly, and the role she must play. Her eyes fill with tears. Jack notices.

JACK

I don't want to spoil anyone's fun, but...It's not for me, Europe. We'll go another time.

JENNY

(bitterly)

You've just said you don't like Europe. What's going to change? It'll have to be Europe, won't it? Because it isn't going to be you.

MARJORIE

I can take her.

JACK

(genuinely indignant)

To France? And leave me here on my own?

JENNY

Oh, for God's sake.

Jack looks cornered. He needs to find a way out.

DAVID

Listen, I'm really sorry to have caused all this to-do. I just thought it might be nice. But I'll go with Aunt Helen and Uncle Daniel. They can have your tickets.

Jack looks at him.

JACK

Aunt Helen? The one who went to the concert with you?

*
*

DAVID

Yes, that's the one.

JACK

(relieved)

Well, there we are.

DAVID

(perplexed)

Where are we?

JACK

Aunt Helen! Don't you see? If Aunt Helen's going to be there...

DAVID

(the penny apparently dropping)
Of course!

JACK

I didn't want to put a spoke in anyone's wheels. But if you look at it from my angle...A bachelor, taking my daughter off to Paris...

*

DAVID

Oh, impossible. I hadn't thought it through properly. I do apologise, Jack. Would you prefer it if Helen took Jenny on her own? I don't mind. I've been to Paris before.

JACK

Oh, I couldn't possibly ask...No, no. If Aunt Helen's going...

He smiles broadly. He's off the hook. Jenny catches David's eye and smiles.

59

INT. CLASSROOM. DAY

59

*

Hattie, Tina and Jenny are sitting on their desks, waiting for a lesson to start. Hattie shows Jenny a piece of paper which apparently contains some kind of shopping list.

TINA

There are some things you must buy for us, and some things you only have to buy for us if you're a proper, true friend. (She points at Hattie, then at herself.) Chanel perfume, Chanel perfume. (She repeats the gesture) Chanel lipstick, Chanel lipstick. What have I forgotten?

HATTIE

Those funny cigarettes you were smoking. Sobranies. Ten packets each.

A very small girl, twelve or thirteen, comes in to the classroom and approaches Jenny.

SMALL GIRL
Are you the girl going to Paris?

Tina, Hattie and Jenny stare at her.

SMALL GIRL
Well are you or aren't you?
Because I'd like some perfume.

Miss Stubbs comes into the classroom carrying books and essays. She sees the small girl and shoos her out. She then approaches Jenny and whispers discreetly into her ear.

MISS STUBBS
Jenny, the headmistress would like a word at the end of the lesson. I'm afraid that the legend of Mr Rochester may have travelled further than you intended.

Jenny looks at her, startled and a little sick.

60

INT. HEADMISTRESS'S OFFICE. DAY.

60

The office is dark, wood-panelled, foreboding, apparently designed to put all visitors ill-at-ease. The headmistress would probably choose to be wood-panelled if she could. She's tweedy, bespectacled, severe. There is a knock at the door. She doesn't look up from her paperwork.

HEADMISTRESS
Come.

Jenny enters, looking young and frightened.

HEADMISTRESS
Ah. Miss Mellor.

Jenny tries to look back at her with all the courage she can muster.

HEADMISTRESS
We're all very excited about your forthcoming trip to Paris. Our excitement, indeed, knows no bounds. Some of us can talk of little else.

Jenny looks at her feet.

HEADMISTRESS
An older man, I understand. A word of warning, Miss Mellor.

There may well have been the odd sixth-form girl who has lost an important part of herself - perhaps the best part - while under our supervision. These things happen, regrettably. If, however, we are made aware of this loss, then of course the young lady in question would have to continue her studies elsewhere, if she still has any use for 'A'-levels. Is that clear?

JENNY

Can I go now?

HEADMISTRESS

Please.

*

Jenny turns round and walks out without saying another word.

62 INT. HOTEL BEDROOM. EVENING

62

*

62PT 1

*

Through the window of a hotel suite, we see a BEA jet soaring into the sky.

*

*

62PT 2

*

David and Jenny aren't on it, though. They are letting themselves into the room. Jenny stares at the featureless sitting room.

*

JENNY

There's no bed.

DAVID

Ah. I pushed the boat out and got us a suite.

JENNY

A suite!

*

*

DAVID

Well, if work stops us getting to Paris until tomorrow, then work can buy us a nice hotel room. Anyway, it's a special occasion, isn't it?

*

*

*

JENNY

I would have thought that tonight of all nights we only need a bedroom.

Close on David's reaction - she hasn't forgotten that tonight's the night.

63

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM. NIGHT

63

David and Jenny in bed, in a dimly lit bedroom. They are kissing - David more passionately than Jenny. He is making little whimpers of excitement, and Jenny is clearly trying hard to hide her nerves. We're acutely aware of her age, and of her virginity. Suddenly David breaks off.

DAVID

Hold on a second. I've got something.

Rather absurdly, he half-disappears over the side of the bed, reaching for something on the floor. He comes back with a banana. Jenny stares at him.

JENNY

What on earth is that for?

DAVID

I thought....I thought we might want to practice.

Jenny shrieks with horror.

JENNY

With a banana?

DAVID

I thought we'd get the messy bit over with first.

JENNY

David, I don't want to lose my virginity to a piece of fruit.

DAVID

I'm sorry.

David attempts to kiss her again. Jenny wriggles clear.

JENNY

Let's wait until we get to Paris. I think the moment might have gone.

DAVID

I'm sorry, Minnie. I'm such a fool.

Jenny doesn't deny it.

JENNY

And David..... if tomorrow night
does happen, it will never happen
again, so...

DAVID

(alarmed)
Why won't it ever happen again?

JENNY

Because the first time can only
happen once.

DAVID

(relieved)
Oh.

JENNY

So, please...No Minnies. No baby-
talk. I'm not old enough for baby-
talk. Treat me like a grown-up.

David looks chastened.

JENNY

(brightly)
I know. Let's go and sit in our
sitting-room. *

DAVID

(cheered up)
Hooray! I'll order some
champagne.

Jenny looks at him with what might, from one angle, be
construed as fondness.

MONTAGE SEQUENCE - PARIS

64 EXT. LEFT BANK. DAY.

64

Juliette Greco on the soundtrack. Jenny leans against a
wall, the Seine and Notre Dame behind her. David takes her
picture. She looks fantastic in the clothes David has given
her for her birthday.

65 INT. ART GALLERY. DAY

65

A crowded Left Bank gallery. Jenny is sitting on the floor
watching an impossibly handsome young Frenchman paint black
the body of an impressively passive naked woman. The young
man sitting next to Jenny gives her an appraising look.
David, standing at the back and looking square and
uncomfortable, notices.

66 INT. RECORD SHOP. DAY 66

We see three listening booths, all containing customers. Jenny and David are in the middle booth, listening to the Juliette Greco song on the soundtrack. (For a moment, the sound quality changes - soundtrack becomes source music, seamlessly.) Jenny is studying the sleeve. She wants to hug herself, she's so excited.

67 EXT. CAFE. EVENING. 67

A Left Bank cafe - David and Jenny are eating steak frites outside, drinking vin ordinaire, watching the world go by. They are both anticipating the night ahead.

68 EXT. VIEW OF SACRE COEUR/MONTMARTRE 68

69 EXT. PARIS HOTEL. DAWN 69 *

Jenny is smoking at the second-floor window of a simple, pretty Parisian hotel, wearing a glamorous-looking slip and looking at the street life below her.

70 INT. HOTEL ROOM. DAWN 70 *

The bedroom is simple and romantic - everything the airport hotel wasn't. David is lying amid rumpled sheets, smoking what is clearly a post-coital cigarette, and watching Jenny from behind.

DAVID

Do you still feel like a schoolgirl?

Jenny turns round, smiles, shakes her head.

DAVID

And it wasn't too uncomfortable?

JENNY

Not after the...first bit. It's funny, though, isn't it? All that poetry, and all those songs and films, about something that lasts no time at all?

David looks at her. She isn't being cruel. She just doesn't know any different. She returns to her people-watching. He smokes ruminatively.

71 EXT. PARK. DAY

71

...Jenny in her games kit, smoking her Sobranie with her friends on the park bench again. Hattie and Tina are examining their bottles of Chanel reverently. Jenny is back to being her seventeen-year-old self; somehow her seventeen-year-old self looks comical, and no longer appropriate.

TINA

How can you go back to double French when you've had a weekend with an older man in a posh hotel in Paris? You wouldn't catch me coming anywhere near this dump.

JENNY

(artfully)

It wasn't all glamour. We spent half the weekend at Heathrow in a hotel suite .

HATTIE

A suite? Oh my God. Your life.

They smoke their Sobranies ruminatively.

TINA

You're going to miss it. All the swanning around in posh hotels.

JENNY

Why will I need to miss it?

TINA

When you go to Oxford. Unless you're planning on being with David forever.

Jenny doesn't say anything.

HATTIE

You're not, are you?

JENNY

(distracted)

God, no.

TINA

So? Won't you miss it?

Jenny shrugs. Clearly she will, and clearly she hasn't thought about it before.

HATTIE

We'll miss it.

Jenny laughs.

72

INT. CLASSROOM. DAY

72

Jenny's English class file past Miss Stubbs at the end of a lesson. Miss Stubbs stops Jenny.

MISS STUBBS

Jenny, could I have a word?

JENNY

Of course. (To Hattie and Tina)
I'll catch you up.

Miss Stubbs waits until the room empties.

MISS STUBBS

You can do anything you want, Jenny. You know that. You're clever and you're pretty... But sometimes those things fight. I'm worried that at the moment clever Jenny and pretty Jenny are fighting.

JENNY

What do you mean?

MISS STUBBS

I couldn't bear it if clever Jenny lost. It's because of people like you that I plough through illiterate essays by Sandra Lovell about her pony. And there aren't many of you, I can tell you. One every few years. Is your boyfriend interested in clever Jenny?

JENNY

I think so.

MISS STUBBS

Interested enough to let her do what she wants?

JENNY

He couldn't stop me.

MISS STUBBS

He might not have to stop you. That's what I'm trying to tell you.

JENNY
(frustrated)
I'm not sure what you're trying
to tell me.

MISS STUBBS
I'm telling you to go to Oxford.
No matter what. Or you'll break
my heart.

Jenny looks at her.

JENNY
(quietly)
Where did you go?

MISS STUBBS
Sorry?

JENNY
(louder, bolder)
Where did you go? Which
university?

MISS STUBBS
Girton. Cambridge.

JENNY
Oh.

MISS STUBBS
What does that mean? 'Oh'?

JENNY
You're clever. And you're pretty.
So presumably, Clever Miss Stubbs
won. And here you are, reading
all those pony essays. I don't
know. These last few months, I've
been to Paris, and to jazz clubs,
and I've eaten in wonderful
restaurants, and seen wonderful
films, heard beautiful music...

MISS STUBBS
I'm sure you have. But I was
filled up with beautiful things,
books and music and conversation,
in exactly the same way at
Cambridge. And I didn't have to
pay the same sort of price. Are
you taking precautions, Jenny?

Jenny stares at her angrily.

JENNY
It's nothing to do with that.

MISS STUBBS

Isn't it?

JENNY

Maybe our lives are always going to end up with pony essays. Or housework. And yes, maybe we'll go up to Oxford. But if we're all going to die the moment we graduate, maybe it's what we do before that counts.

MISS STUBBS

I'm sorry you think I'm dead.

JENNY

I don't think you're dead. But...

MISS STUBBS

(coldly)

You'd better get to your next class.

She turns her back on Jenny.

73

EXT. CAR. NIGHT

73

Helen, Danny, Jenny get out of David's Bristol, which is parked outside a nightclub called Esmerelda's Barn. David has parked next to a white Rolls-Royce.

JENNY

(looking at the Rolls-Royce)

And we know the person who owns this?

DAVID

Yes. Perc Rachman. He's a....

DANNY

A bastard.

Danny and David laugh.

DAVID

He's a business acquaintance, and we need to talk to him.

JENNY

I gathered that much. But why do we have to crawl around the West End looking for his car? Why don't you just make an appointment, if you want to see him?

The men snigger.

DANNY

What? Ring his office? Talk to his secretary? That isn't how it works with him, dear.

74

INT. CLUB. NIGHT

74

The four walk in and take their coats over to the cloakroom. The club is a smoky West End club, full of smartly-dressed and dubious-looking men, and young, glamorous, dubious-looking women. Jenny and Helen look out of place - Helen too ethereal, Jenny too innocent. There is jazz playing.

*

DANNY

There he is.

We see a nasty-looking man in his late 30s/early 40s. He is wearing a white sharkskin suit and smoking a big cigar. He's standing by the roulette table, talking to an even nastier-looking man in a dark suit.

They find a table at the back and sit down. A waitress comes over to their table.

DAVID

A bottle of champagne, please.

DANNY

Oh-ho. Champagne, eh?

He looks at Jenny and David expectantly.

DAVID

Don't be bashful.

HELEN

No. Be Sneezy.

Everyone ignores her.

DAVID

All right, then. If you won't tell them I will. Jenny got two As and a B in her mock-A levels.

DANNY

Fantastic.

HELEN

Congratulations.

JENNY

Thank you.

DAVID

The B was in Latin. But it's much better than it was, isn't it, Minnie?

Rachman is now standing on his own. Danny nudges David, and they go over to talk to him just as the champagne arrives. The waiter pops the bottle of champagne and pours two glasses. The girls smile and clink glasses.

HELEN

Don't worry.

JENNY

About what?

HELEN

Someone told me that in fifty years no-one will speak Latin, probably. Not even Latin people. So you shouldn't mind too much about your B.

Jenny stares at her, trying to think of a response.

75

INT. CLUB. NIGHT

75

Danny and David are at the bar, having just finished talking to Rachman. Danny puffs out his cheeks and shakes his head.

*
*

DANNY

Well, I'm not sure you'd want him to marry your sister. I'm not even sure you'd want to talk to him in a night-club, come to that.

*
*
*
*

They both chuckle. There is a silence for a moment.

DANNY

(gently)

You do know what you're doing, old chap? With Jenny?

DAVID

This is the one, Danny.

DANNY

We've heard that before.

DAVID

You can see she's different. She's got everything. You've got Helen, and....

DANNY
 (drily)
 And you've got Helen with brains.

DAVID
 (rumbled)
 Yes.

DANNY
 I don't want to see her hurt.
 They make their way back to their table.

76

INT. CLUB. NIGHT

76

While David and Helen watch, Danny and Jenny dance. Danny's a good dancer; Jenny is nervous at first, but becomes more comfortable and more expressive, with Danny's help.

JENNY
 (knowing that she should
 make conversation, as
 all the couples around
 her are doing)
 Have you...Have you bought any
 more paintings recently?

DANNY
 Have I? Let's think? Oh, I picked
 up a little Piper the other day.
 A good 'un, I think.

JENNY
 I'm still trying to work out what
 makes good things good. It's
 hard, isn't it?

DANNY
 The thing is, Jenny, you know,
 without necessarily being able to
 explain why. You've got taste.
 That's not even half the
 battle. That's the whole war.

Jenny smiles at him with gratitude. There is a sudden closeness between them. David is watching them carefully. They return to their table.

DAVID
 Jenny, we should go. It's late.

JENNY
 (disappointed)
 Oh. Yes.

DANNY

Alas. One day, school will be over forever, and we can talk about art all night.

DAVID

(to Danny)

You're all right in a taxi, aren't you?

He guides Jenny firmly out of the club.

77

EXT. CLUB. NIGHT.

77

Jenny is about to open the passenger door of the Bristol, but David stops her.

DAVID

Wait there.

He runs to the back of the car, opens the boot and starts rummaging through it. It seems to be full of everything but the thing he's looking for.

JENNY

What are you doing?

He slams the boot shut and comes back empty-handed.

DAVID

Will you marry me?

Jenny stares at him for a moment, then laughs.

JENNY

What were you looking for?

DAVID

I thought I had a ring. It wouldn't have been the right one. But it would have done for tonight.

JENNY

(eyes twinkling with amusement)

Oh, David.

DAVID

I'm serious.

JENNY

You're very sweet.

DAVID

What do you think?

JENNY
 (helplessly)
 Please take me home.

She gets into the car. We see the desperation in David's face, lit by the headlights of a passing taxi, as he slams the door on Jenny after she's got in.

78 EXT. SCHOOL YARD. DAY

78 *

Jenny, Tina and Hattie all smoking in the school toilets. Jenny is distracted, and standing apart from the others. Tina looks at her.

TINA
 How do you say 'A penny for your thoughts?' in French?

HATTIE
 A franc is too much, isn't it?

TINA
 For her thoughts, yes. You'd be overpaying by about ninety-nine centimes.

Suddenly the door bursts open and the Latin teacher comes in.

79 INT. HEAD'S OFFICE. DAY

79

The three girls are lined up in front of the headmistress, hands by their sides.

HEADMISTRESS
 I'm surprised that you two are standing in front of me. I'm not surprised to find you here, Miss Mellor, though I do feel rather like the judge who sent Al Capone to prison for tax evasion. We take a very dim view of smoking. We take an even dimmer view of some of your other behaviour, which as far as we know has taken place off school premises. Your appearance here today, however, allows me to remind you that we are trying to teach you how to become young ladies, not nightclub hostesses. In reality, of course, you are neither. You are merely silly little girls. Detention after school. Go away.

Jenny's face sets hard. Something in her shuts down.

80 EXT. JENNY'S BALCONY. EVENING 80 *

Jenny is smoking on the balcony. *

80A INT. JENNY'S BEDROOM. 80A *

Jenny is at her desk in her bedroom, trying to work, but she can't concentrate. Her hair is tied back in a pony-tail. She gets up, pulls back the curtains, looks out of the window. We see what she sees: a sleepy suburban street at night. She looks back at her desk. It looks even more boring than the street. She looks at her scrubbed seventeen-year-old face in the mirror - so much younger than the Jenny we have seen with David. She makes herself up, and she gets older and more glamorous before our eyes. In her make-up and her school uniform, she's half-woman, half-child. We hear the noises drifting up from the kitchen: the radio, the washing-up, occasional muffled conversation. Jenny walks out of the bedroom and slips downstairs. *

81 INT. KITCHEN. EVENING 81

Jenny's mother and father are doing the washing up and listening to the radio. They have their backs to the door. Jenny enters the room quietly and watches them for a moment

MAN ON THE RADIO

They do need some looking after, but nothing that will require too much work. Just leave them in your potting shed for a couple of weeks, and they'll look after themselves.

JACK

Oh, aye. The potting shed. Who does he think I am? Prince Rainier of Monaco?

JENNY

What if I got married instead of going to college?

Jack and Marjorie turn around and stare at this strange apparition wearing too much make-up and a school uniform.

JACK

Married?

JENNY

Married.

JACK
It would depend who it was,
surely?

JENNY
Would it? That's interesting.

JACK
Course it would. I wouldn't want
you married off just for the
sake of it.

JENNY
Thanks.

MARJORIE
Has somebody asked you?

JENNY
Yes.

JACK
Who?

Marjorie rolls her eyes.

MARJORIE
What did you tell him?

JENNY
Nothing yet.

JACK
David?

JENNY
No. A man I just met walking his
dog.

JACK
David's asked you to marry him?
Bloody hell. Pardon my French.

MARJORIE
Do you have any choice? Or is it
too late.

She looks at her daughter knowingly. Jack merely looks
confused.

JACK
Of course she's got a choice. But
it's an interesting one, isn't
it?

JENNY

This is where you're supposed to say, "But what about Oxford?"

JACK

Well. Looked at it one way, you wouldn't really need to go now, would you? He's a man going places. And say what you like, but they know how to take care of their money, don't they? He'll see you're looked after.

JENNY

(quietly, turning the words over in her mouth)

I wouldn't need to go. Would you like to expand on that?

JACK

You know what I mean.

Jenny laughs bitterly. She can't believe it.

JENNY

All that Latin! All those essays! What was the point? Why didn't you just send me out prowling round nightclubs? It would have been less trouble. And I might have had more fun.

JACK

We don't know about nightclubs. We knew about education. Anyway, it all turned out for the best.

JENNY

How?

JACK

He wouldn't have wanted you if you were thick, would he?

Jenny stares at them and walks out.

English. Miss Stubbs is standing at the front of the class, holding a copy of King Lear, and listening as various members of the class massacre the text. Some are messing about by overacting; others read to the best of their ability, tonelessly and with no understanding of the words.

Lear himself is being read by Ann, the bespectacled girl from the first scene. She's no King Lear, and she's one of the bad readers. *

GIRL 1

May not an ass know when the cart
draws the horse? Sings whoop jug
I love thee.

MISS STUBBS

Yes, when it says 'Sings', it
means he sings those words.

Girl 1 looks at her blankly.

MISS STUBBS

Never mind. Lear...

ANN *

Does any here know me. This is
not Lear. Does Lear walk thus?

TINA

(sotto voce, to Jenny,
in the seat next to
her)

No.

Jenny starts to giggle.

ANN *

Speak thus?

Tina shakes her head.

ANN *

Where are his eyes?

Tina doesn't need to say anything - she just looks at Jenny, makes a pair of spectacles with her fingers and squints. Jenny's giggling fit increases in intensity.

ANN *

Either his notion weakens, or his
discernings are lethargied. Ha!
Waking? Tis not so. Who is it
that can tell me who I am?

Jenny's arm shoots up, as if to answer the question.

JENNY

Ooh. Miss. Me. I can.

Miss Stubbs looks at Jenny more in sorrow than in anger - Jenny's behaviour now is something new in their relationship. Jenny stares back at her defiantly. Suddenly Miss Stubbs notices something glinting on her hand: an engagement ring.

MISS STUBBS

Oh, Jenny.

She is, as she promised she would be, heartbroken.

JENNY

What?

MISS STUBBS

Take it off.

Hattie, who is sitting behind Jenny, notices the ring, too, for the first time.

HATTIE

Oh my God. Is that really what I think it is? I'M GOING TO BE A BRIDESMAID!

There is an excited susurrantion in the classroom.

MISS STUBBS

You know there's a school rule about jewelry.

JENNY

Half the girls in this room are wearing jewelry.

MISS STUBBS

Yes. But none of it is going to ruin their lives.

JENNY

(coolly)

We have a difference of opinion on that.

Miss Stubbs stares at her. Jenny can only just steel herself to stare back.

MISS STUBBS

Let's see who's right. Come with me.

Jenny doesn't move.

MISS STUBBS

Please don't make me drag you out like a child.

Jenny gets to her feet. Teacher and pupil leave the room, while the rest of the class watches.

83

INT. HEADMISTRESS'S OFFICE. DAY

83

HEADMISTRESS

How far advanced are these ridiculous plans? Have you set a date? Have you decided on a church?

JENNY

We won't be getting married in a church. David's Jewish.

The headmistress stares at her, dumbfounded.

HEADMISTRESS

Jewish? He's a Jew? You're aware, I take it, that the Jews killed our Lord?

JENNY

(beginning to feel less intimidated by her surroundings)

And you're aware, I suppose, that our Lord was Jewish?

The headmistress snorts scornfully

HEADMISTRESS

I suppose he told you that. We're all very sorry about what happened in the War. But there's no excuse for that sort of malicious and untruthful propaganda.

Jenny smiles to herself.

HEADMISTRESS

Anyway, I can now see that you are even more in need of responsible advice than I realised. Is it true that you don't intend to sit for your exams? And therefore you won't be applying for University?

JENNY

Yes, that's right.

HEADMISTRESS

What do you think you're doing?

JENNY

Nobody has been able to explain to me the point of University.

Therefore I don't see the point of the exams, either.

HEADMISTRESS

Nobody does anything worth doing without a degree.

JENNY

And nobody does anything worth doing with one, either. No woman, anyway.

HEADMISTRESS

So what I do isn't worth doing. Or what Miss Stubbs does, or Mrs Wilson, or any of us here.

Jenny doesn't say anything. The headmistress takes her silence as an admission of defeat.

HEADMISTRESS

Because none of us would be here without our degrees, you realise that, don't you? And yes, of course studying is hard, and boring, and...

Jenny can't contain herself any longer.

JENNY

Boring!

HEADMISTRESS

I'm sorry?

JENNY

Studying is hard and boring. Teaching is hard and boring. So you're telling me to be bored, and then bored, and then finally bored again, this time for the rest of my life. This whole stupid country is bored. There's no life in it, or colour in it, or fun in it. It's probably just as well that the Russians are going to drop a nuclear bomb on us any day now. So my choice is either to do something hard and boring, OR to marry my... my Jew, and go to Paris and Rome and listen to jazz and read and eat good food in nice restaurants and have fun. It's not enough to educate us any more, Mrs Walters. You've got to tell us why you're doing it.

HEADMISTRESS
Because without formal
qualifications...

She grinds to a halt. She has never had to answer this question before.

HEADMISTRESS
It doesn't have to be teaching,
you know. There's the Civil
Service.

Jenny stands up.

JENNY
I don't wish to be impertinent,
Mrs Walters. But it is an
argument worth rehearsing. You
never know. Someone else might
want to know what the point of it
all is, one day.

She leaves the office.

84 EXT. SCHOOL. DAY

84

Jenny is half-walking, half-running, towards the school gates. She's scared, of course, but exhilarated, too. All that pressure, and all those years of education, suddenly over, unexpectedly, and certainly unceremoniously. She looks neither left nor right, but other girls, younger girls, watch her through the windows as she leaves. Jenny doesn't even look round when she goes through the school gates.

85 INT. KITCHEN. EVENING

85

Later. Jenny and Marjorie are sitting at the kitchen table. Jack is standing over them; he hasn't even taken his coat off, or put his briefcase down.

JACK
How d'you mean, left?

Jenny doesn't answer.

JACK
What about your exams?

JENNY
I'm not sitting them.

JACK
What are we going to tell people?

JENNY
 (witheringly)
 Oh, telling people. I'd forgotten
 that what we tell people is more
 important than anything.

JACK
 All that...

Marjorie knows what he's going to say, and doesn't want him
 to.

MARJORIE
 Jack!

JACK
 No. No need for Jack. She should
 hear it. All that money! Do you
 know how much it's cost me for
 you to go through school and take
 no exams?

JENNY
 I'm sure David will pay you back.
 Send him a bill. As you said, he
 wouldn't have wanted me if I was
 dim, so he should fork out. Just
 tell me why there's a point in
 sitting my exams, and there's no
 point in me going to University.

Jack gapes at her. He's floundering.

JACK
 You know what your trouble is,
 don't you? You're too clever by
 half.

JENNY
 In which case I should have left
 school years ago, shouldn't I?
 Ask them for the money back. If
 I'm too clever by half, you
 overpaid by a third.

86 INT. DANNY'S FLAT. NIGHT

86

Danny, Helen, David and Jenny are in Danny's flat; we have
 just missed The Announcement - there is champagne already
 open. Danny glances quickly and discreetly at David, who
 catches his eye.

HELEN
 That's...Gosh. That's fantastic
 news.

Danny isn't so pleased.

DANNY
(cool)
Congratulations.

There is much chinking of glasses.

HELEN
I thought you'd see sense about
university.

Jenny smiles.

HELEN (CONT'D)
You'll stay pretty now.

Laughter from David and Jenny.

JENNY
Am I still allowed to read?

HELEN
English? Books?

More laughter.

HELEN (CONT'D)
You won't be laughing when she
goes all specy and spotty,
David.

Helen is bemused by their mirth. Danny watches David
thoughtfully.

87 EXT. DANNY'S. NIGHT

87 *

David and Jenny come out of Danny's flat and approach
David's car. *

*
*

JENNY
Danny didn't seem very pleased
about our engagement.

DAVID
I thought that, too! I was
wondering whether he might be a
bit jealous.

JENNY
(trying not to be
pleased)
Jealous?

DAVID

You may have noticed that Helen's not really Oxford material. I'm going to keep him out of your way.

They both smile. David opens the door for Jenny and she gets into the car. *

87A INT. JENNY'S KITCHEN. DAY

87A *

Jenny is making David a cup of tea. Her mother is keeping an eye on Jenny - in Marjorie's mind at least, this is a rehearsal for something. *

DAVID *

I haven't put my...my stamp on it yet. Haven't had time. It needs a woman's touch, really. And if you don't like it, we can move. Just say the word. *

JENNY *

Where is the flat again? *

MARJORIE *

You have to put the cosy on straight away. *

Jenny sighs and rolls her eyes. She picks up the hand-knitted tea-cosy and puts it on her head. *

JENNY *

Like that? *

David laughs. *

MARJORIE *

(oblivious) *

No. On the tea-pot. *

JENNY *

(deadpan) *

Ah. *

She puts the tea-cosy on the tea-pot. *

DAVID *

Just down from Russell Square. Two minutes' walk from the underground. *

MARJORIE

Jenny! We could walk to...(She tries to think of somewhere Jenny might find interesting.) We could walk to the British Museum!

Jenny gives her a look.

MARJORIE

I'll leave you to it. Don't let it stew.

She leaves the room.

JENNY

And this is where you're living?

DAVID

I've stayed there for the last couple of nights. (Beat) On and off.

JENNY

You've stayed there two nights "on and off"?

DAVID

Is that tea ready? One sugar, please.

JENNY

(frustrated by his evasions)
David!

DAVID

I'm sorry. You must think I'm very odd.

JENNY

No, but.... You seem to float around. I never know where you are.

She hands him his tea.

DAVID

A wandering Jew.(He pauses to take a sip.) If I tell you something, will you promise not to laugh?

JENNY

It depends on how funny it is.

DAVID
 (mumbling)
 I live at home.

JENNY
 We all live at home.

DAVID
 No. I mean...I live at home...in
 the same way that you live at
 home.

JENNY
 But I live with my mother and
 fa...(It clicks.) You don't mean
 it.

David nods, shamefacedly.

JENNY
 Your mother and father?

DAVID
 Just my mother. My father's dead.
 I've been meaning to tell you,
 Minnie, and it would have been
 much better than all those silly
 lies. But...

He looks quite upset. We warm to him. Jenny leans over and
 takes his hand.

DAVID
 Anyway. You can see how much I
 need you. And you won't regret
 this, I promise. We'll have so
 much fun. And just think. When we
 get married, you won't have to
 wait in the car while I do my
 business.. You'll be waiting at
 home, looking at the Burne-Jones
 on the wall. Home, Minnie. Our
 home. Can you imagine?

Close on Jenny. She can't imagine, really.

90 INT. COFFEE BAR. DAY

90 *

Jenny, Tina and Hattie in the coffee bar. Jenny is eagerly
 scanning the English literature exam paper.

JENNY

Did you do this one? "Show from any TWO scenes in 'Pride and Prejudice' how far it is true that Jane Austen's methods are 'essentially dramatic'".

HATTIE

Three scenes.

JENNY

It says two here. Look.

She shows the paper to Hattie. Hattie slumps onto the formica table and groans.

HATTIE

Two. Two. Two. I can't believe it.

Tina rubs Hattie's head sympathetically.

TINA

It was an unfair question. You're hopeless at maths. What do you do all day, anyway, Lady Muck?

Jenny shrugs.

JENNY

I've been looking at flats. I've been to look at dresses. I've been reading a lot, too.

*

TINA

Reading, trying on dresses... Where did we go wrong?

JENNY

What's this afternoon?

TINA

French. The translation paper.

Jenny is lapping it all up. She might even be envious.

91 INT. JENNY'S HOUSE. EVENING

91

Jenny and Marjorie are in the sitting room, all dressed up and waiting for David to come and pick them up. Jenny looks great, as usual; her mother looks smart, if somewhat old-fashioned.

MARJORIE

Don't worry. He'll find a nice place in no time. He sees plenty of them.

*
*
*

JENNY

I'm not sure he sees plenty of nice places.

*
*
*

Would you like a radiogram for a wedding present? We love ours.

Something about this depresses Jenny. Marjorie notices.

MARJORIE

You won't be bored, you know. He's not boring.

Now they are both thoughtful. As if on cue, Jack comes into the sitting room, pulling at his tie, looking apprehensive. He appears to be wearing Brylcreem. He looks like a little boy who has been made to put on his Sunday best.

JACK

What sort of things can you have for starters? I mean, how will I know what are starters and what aren't? I'm all right if it's soup or fruit juice. But if it's anything more than that...

JENNY

We've been through this, Dad. It'll be quite clearly marked on the menu.

The doorbell rings. Jack stiffens. Jenny goes to answer the door.

JACK

Why don't you three go out? I'll be happy here with a tin of...

David enters the room. He is relaxed, happy. He has worn a tie, possibly because he knew that Jack would wear a tie. Jack and Marjorie stand, and they exchange greetings.

DAVID

Everybody ready? I think you'll like this place, Jack. Their wine list is as good as anything I've seen in London.

JACK

Someone told me that.

JENNY

David, probably. Who else would
it have been?

92 EXT. STREET/JENNY'S HOUSE NIGHT 92 *

Jack and Marjorie approach David's Bristol.

JACK

I was hoping you'd take us in
this.

DAVID

Oh, you won't want to go in
anything else after tonight. Mind
you, it drinks petrol. I'm afraid
we'll have to stop on the way in
to town.

He opens the back door for his future in-laws.

DAVID

Madame. Monsieur.

They get in, he closes the door, runs round to open the
front passenger door for Jenny.

93 INT. CAR. NIGHT 93

David starts the car, and glances in the rear-view mirror.

DAVID

Everyone happy?

JACK

I feel like Eamonn Andrews.

DAVID

Is that a good thing?

MARJORIE

Of course. Eamonn Andrews is the
poshest person that Jack can
imagine being.

94 EXT. STREET/PETROL STATION. NIGHT 94 *

The Bristol cruises down a London arterial road.

95 INT. CAR. NIGHT 95

We see, from David's POV, a petrol station approaching.

DAVID
Sorry about this.

He slows the car and turns in to the garage.

96 EXT. GARAGE. NIGHT 96

David gets out of the car as the attendant comes over.

ATTENDANT
How can I help you, sir?

DAVID
You might as well fill her up.

David looks around and spots a phone box just outside the garage. He leans in through the open car window.

DAVID
I'm just going to make a quick call. I'll be two ticks.

97 INT. CAR. NIGHT 97

Jenny watches him walk towards the phone box.

JACK
Do you think we should offer him some petrol money? Or would he feel insulted?

Jenny watches David as he dials the number. He notices her, waves, puts the money in the slot.

JACK
He'd feel insulted, probably. He said tonight was his treat. That must include the petrol, for God's sakes?

David starts to talk, and turns away, as if he's frightened that someone in the car can lip-read.

JACK
What do you think?

Nobody pays him any attention. They lapse into silence. Jack starts to fiddle with the features in the car - a table springs down from the seat in front of him, much to his alarm.

JACK
God almighty. What have I done?

Jenny opens the glove compartment, looking for the cigarettes that David always keeps there. She finds the cigarettes, and closes the glove compartment. But she has seen something in there, so she opens it again. She takes out some letters and papers and starts to look through them.

98 EXT. GARAGE. NIGHT

98

David has finished his phone call and is walking towards the car. He sees Jenny looking through letters and papers, sees the open glove compartment, starts to run across the forecourt.

DAVID
(desperately)
Jenny!

It's too late. We see Jenny's stricken face, gleaming in someone else's headlights.

99 INT. CAR. NIGHT

99

David gets into the car.

DAVID
Jenny, I...

JENNY
(as cold as ice)
Take us home.

JACK
What's going on?

DAVID
There's been a...Jenny's had a
bit of a shock.

Jenny laughs, mirthlessly, then starts to weep.

JACK
What's happened?

JENNY
It's another one of David's
little muddles and
misunderstandings.

DAVID
Jenny, it's not...

JENNY
I don't want to hear another word
from anybody. Take me home. NOW.

Marjorie and Jack look at each other. David swings the car around and they drive home in silence; Jenny cries constantly, without making a sound.

100

EXT. JENNY'S HOUSE. NIGHT

100

The Bristol draws up outside Jenny's house. David jumps out of the car and lets Marjorie and Jack out. Jack starts to walk towards the house and then stops.

JACK
(desperately)
You can sort this out, can't you,
David?

Jenny gets out of the car too.

DAVID
Of course I can. She's just got
the wrong end of the stick about
something.

JENNY
Go inside, Dad.

Jenny and David watch Jack and Marjorie go into the house. The moment the door is closed, Jenny walks towards David. She's holding a bunch of letters that she took out of the glove compartment. She starts to throw them at him, one by one.

JENNY
Mr and Mrs David Goldman, Mr and
Mrs David Goldman, Mr and Mrs
David Goldman, Mr and Mrs David
Goldman..

*
*
*
*

When she has thrown the last one, she flies at David - she slaps him, punches him, scratches him. David tries to grab her hands, but she's too wild.

DAVID
Just let me...

JENNY
You're MARRIED!

DAVID
Legally, yes, but...

Finally he manages to subdue her. She leans against the car, distraught.

JENNY
When were you going to tell me?

DAVID

Soon. It just - it never seemed the right time. You seemed so happy, and I was happy, and...It would have spoiled everything. What can I do, Minnie? What can I do? How can...

JENNY

"Oh, Jenny. I'm just too busy to find somewhere to live...I live with my mummy." You were living with your wife! All this time!

DAVID

Jenny...

JENNY

What's your address?

David gestures vaguely.

JENNY

Where?

DAVID

Byron Avenue.

JENNY

Byron Avenue! It's no wonder we kept bumping into each other, then, is it? What number?

DAVID

There's no point..

JENNY

(screaming)
WHAT NUMBER?

DAVID

Seventeen.

Jenny picks one of the envelopes up off the ground and looks at it.

JENNY

(bitterly sarcastic)
Good grief. It's the truth.

DAVID

Please. You have to understand. I was with you just about all the spare time I had.

JENNY

Spare time? *Spare time?* I can't tell you how grateful I am.

DAVID

Don't be like this.

JENNY

I have nothing. I left school. I didn't take my exams. Where's it all gone, now? I gave my life away.

*

DAVID

Jenny, I can get a divorce. Everything will turn out for the best. You'll see.

We can see Jack and Marjorie peering through the lace curtains anxiously.

JENNY

Go and tell them. Go and tell them, then go and tell your wife. I want to see you. I want to stand there and watch.

David stands on the pavement, looking towards the house. He looks away; he can't make eye contact with Jenny's parents.

DAVID

They're not going to listen to me now. Let me come round tomorrow. When everyone's calmed down a bit.

JENNY

(suddenly desperate)
Please don't leave me to tell them on my own. Please. You owe me that much. You owe them that much.

DAVID

(sadly)
I owe them a lot more than that. I owe them everything. They gave me you.

He opens the boot. It's full of cases of whiskey. Jenny doesn't even bother asking what they are doing there. David takes one of the bottles, opens it, takes a long slug.

JENNY

Two minutes. And then I'll come out and drag you in.

Jenny marches into the house and slams the door. The camera stays on David. He gets back into the car and takes another slug of whiskey. Then his shoulders begin to shake, and he cries and cries.

101 INT. JENNY'S HOUSE. NIGHT

101

Jenny comes in, leaving the door open for David. Her parents are standing in the sitting room, looking at her anxiously. Their coats are still on, and they haven't put the lights on yet.

JACK
What's going on?

JENNY
He's helping himself to some Dutch courage before facing you. Stolen Dutch courage, from the look of it. He has something to tell you.

She stands, pale and young-looking again, opposite her parents. Suddenly they are all three lit up by headlights. Shot from their POV of the Bristol roaring off up the street.

JACK
He just drove off.

We close slowly in on Jenny's face. But of course he'd drive off!

JACK
(pathetic)
Can you tell us? Please? Jenny?

Jenny can't deal with her own pain, let alone his. He already looks like a broken, foolish old man. They should hug. But they don't.

102 EXT. STREET/DAVID'S HOUSE. DAY

102 *

A suburban street, full of semi-detached houses, not far from Jenny's house. Jenny walks down the road tentatively - she's looking at the numbers on the houses. She looks young again - tired, no make-up, no elegant clothes. She can't bring herself to wear anything that David bought her.

She hesitates at the top of the driveway to the house, steels herself to walk down. But just at that moment the door opens; there's a homely-looking woman, early 30s. She is holding the hand of a three-year-old. Jenny is stunned. But there's more to come.

The woman deposits the child in the drive, goes back into the house, comes out behind an enormous 1950s pram. David has found time to father another baby.

WIFE

Oh. Hello.

JENNY

(almost inaudible)

Hello. I'm sorry. I think I must have the wrong house.

The woman stares at her.

JENNY

Yes. I wanted number...It's my cello lesson. Silly. I...

She dries up and looks at the woman helplessly.

WIFE

Oh, no. Don't tell me. Good God. You're a child.

Jenny blushes. Beat. She turns and tries to walk back up the driveway, but the woman won't let her go.

WIFE

No. No. You stay here. If you're old enough to sleep with him, you're old enough to look at me.

JENNY

I can't.

But she doesn't move, either.

WIFE

You didn't know about any of this. Presumably.

Jenny shakes her head.

WIFE

No. They never do. Did he ask you to marry him?

Jenny nods.

WIFE

Yes. Of course he did. You're not in the family way, are you? Because that's happened before.

Jenny shakes her head.

WIFE

Thank God for that. At least you can escape intact. (Beat) Relatively speaking. Not all of them have done.

She nods at the children.

WIFE

That's why he never goes through with anything. He does love them.

JENNY

(looking into the pram)
She's beautiful.

WIFE

Thank you. He. (Bitterly) He's four months old.

Jenny does the maths. It's all she can do to stop herself from reeling backwards - she's visibly shaken.

JENNY

Four months!

WIFE

Yes. Babies often are that sort of age. Perhaps you can remember a night four months ago when he seemed a little distracted. Anyway. If you'll excuse us.

She pushes past Jenny and leaves her standing bereft on the path.

103 INT. JENNY'S HOUSE. DAY

103

Marjorie and Jack are in the kitchen. Marjorie is sipping tea, shoulders hunched, defeated. Jack is pacing around the room, furious. Normal life has clearly been suspended during this crisis. Jenny walks in.

MARJORIE

Did you see her?

JENNY

I saw her. I didn't talk to her. There wasn't any need.

JACK

Well we've got to have this out. If you won't do it, I will.

He starts for the door.

JENNY
 (contemptuously)
 Sit down.

JACK
 I beg your pardon? I'm still your
 father, Jenny.

JENNY
 Oh, you're my father again, are
 you? What were you when you
 encouraged me to throw my life
 away? I'm a silly schoolgirl.
 Was, anyway. Silly schoolgirls
 are always being seduced by
 glamorous older men. But what
 about you two?

JACK
 We didn't...

He gives up hopelessly. Marjorie says nothing.

JENNY
 And now I've got nothing.
 I'm...I'm broken.

Jack looks at her.

JACK
 That doesn't mean...what I think
 it means, does it? It can't.

JENNY
 What are you talking about?

JACK
 Just tell me that you
 didn't...you haven't, you
 know...You didn't....

*

Jenny looks at him in disbelief.

MARJORIE
 (to Jack)
 I wondered how stupid you were.
 Now I know.

Jack stands outside Jenny's bedroom door with a cup of tea.
 He knocks tentatively.

105 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT

105

Close-up of the floaty print dress that Helen gave her. The dress is suddenly jerked out of shot, and we pull back to reveal a weeping Jenny stuffing it violently into an already full box of things she is throwing out. The contents represent her now-despised, David-created adult self. We can see Juliette Greco albums, photos, expensive-looking jewelry boxes. She continues to stuff things into the box. There's a knock on the door.

JACK (O.S.)

Jenny.

She continue to put her David-life away into bags. She ignores him.

106 INT. UPPER HALLWAY. NIGHT

106 *

Jack is almost in tears.

JACK

There's a cup of tea for you here.

No answer. He puts the tea on the floor, and sits down next to it.

JACK

I know I made a mess of everything.

He waits for an answer - nothing.

JACK

All my life I've been scared, and I didn't want you to be scared. That's why I wanted you to go to Oxford. So that if someone asked you out to a nice restaurant, you wouldn't panic about what was a starter and what was a main course. And then David came along, and he had money, and he knew famous writers, and he knew how to get to classical music concerts. But he wasn't who he said he was. He wasn't who you said he was, either.

*
*

107 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT

107

Jenny is about to rip a poster off the wall, but she pauses.

108 INT. UPPER HALLWAY. NIGHT 108 *

JACK

The other day, your mother and I were listening to a programme about CS Lewis on the radio, and they said he moved to Cambridge in 1954. And I said to Marjorie, Well, they've got that wrong, because how would our Jenny get her book signed, if he wasn't in Oxford?

109 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT 109

Jenny's face crumples. She knows he's right.

JACK (O.S.)

Jenny, I'm sorry.

109A INT. DANNY'S FLAT. DAY 109A *

Jenny is sitting on the sofa in Danny's flat. Danny and Helen are in dressing gowns; there are newspapers strewn around. Danny pours her a brandy. Helen is sitting next to her, holding her hand. *

HELEN *

I don't really understand what difference it makes. When I found out that... *

DANNY *

Helen! Not now. *

Helen shrugs. *

DANNY *

I tried to tell him. I'm not speaking to him now, if that's any consolation. *

JENNY *

(bitterly) *

It's a funny world you people live in. You both watched me... *carrying on* with a married man, but you don't think it's worth saying anything. *

DANNY

Ah, well if you want that sort of conversation...You watched David and I help ourselves to a map, and you didn't say much, either.

*
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*
*
*

He holds Jenny's gaze. She looks away.

*

110 INT. HEADMISTRESS'S OFFICE. DAY

110 *

Jenny has put on her school uniform for this meeting; it completes a circle. She's back where she started from, or would like to be, anyway. If she seems older than she did when we first met her, it's because things have happened to her, and they've left a mark on her face. She's worried and tired. The headmistress, meanwhile, is delighted by her return - but only because of the opportunities for smugness and schadenfreude it provides.

HEADMISTRESS

So. Your Jewish friend turned out to be married already, I understand. How unfortunate.

Jenny doesn't say anything. She has clearly decided to swallow anything she has to.

HEADMISTRESS

Anyway. How do you think we can help?

JENNY

I'd like to repeat my last year at school. Start all over again.

HEADMISTRESS

I got the impression the last time we spoke that you didn't see the point of school. Or of me, or of any of us here.

JENNY

I know. I was stupid.

HEADMISTRESS

So what is the point?

JENNY

I know that I need to go to university.

HEADMISTRESS

And what happens if some other chap wants to marry you during your studies next year?

JENNY

(laughing bitterly)

Some other chap? There won't be any other chaps. Not for a long, long time, anyway.

HEADMISTRESS

I'm afraid I think you're the sort of young lady who attracts chaps whether she wants to or not. No, I think the offer of a place at this school would be wasted on you. You showed how little you valued us only weeks ago. And I must confess that it gives me a sort of grim satisfaction to return the sentiment now.

JENNY

(bitterly)

Is it really so grim, your satisfaction?

HEADMISTRESS

It gives me no pleasure to see our schoolgirls throw their lives away. Although, of course, you're not one of our schoolgirls any more. Through your own volition.

JENNY

I suppose you think I'm a ruined woman.

HEADMISTRESS

Oh, you're not a woman.

Beat. Jenny stands up and leaves without saying a word. The headmistress is pleased with her final line.

111

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT

111

Jenny working hard in her room. It's been completely stripped bare of everything except schoolbooks. She has become ageless, genderless - her life is now monastic.

112

EXT. PARK. DAY

112

*

Jenny walking alone through her old park.

*

113 INT. COFFEE BAR. DAY

113 *

Jenny on her own, smoking nervously. Hattie and Tina come in. They obviously haven't seen her since it all happened. They both hug her sympathetically and sit down. Nobody knows what to say.

TINA

I'm sure my uncle knows someone who could kill him. If that would help.

Jenny smiles wanly, and briefly.

HATTIE

We should have stopped you.

JENNY

Did you want to?

TINA

Of course we didn't. Why would we stop you? Restaurants, hotels, foreign cities, no exams...

JENNY

(Bitterly)

Yes. Who'd have thought there'd be a down side to all that? I could tell you all about the imagery in Jane Eyre. But I couldn't see that a man who stole maps from old ladies might be a liar.

They look at her. This is new information.

HATTIE

Well, if you'd told us that we might have tried to stop you.

JENNY

There are a lot of things I didn't tell you. I was dreaming.

TINA

That's the thing about our lives, isn't it? It's so easy to fall asleep, when there's nothing to keep you awake.

Beat.

HATTIE

Are you getting on with the work all right on your own?

Jenny thinks.

JENNY
(heartfelt)
No. No, I'm not.

114 EXT. STREET MISS STUBBS FLAT. DUSK. 114 *

Jenny in a suburban street. She's looking for an address. She finds the house, walks down the path, rings on a bell. Miss Stubbs comes to the door.

MISS STUBBS
Jenny!

It's a warm greeting. She ushers her inside.

115 INT. MISS STUBBS' FLAT. DUSK. 115

It's a proper Bohemian flat, up in the eaves. There are books and papers and paintings covering every available surface. Jenny looks around. Finally, for the first time, we see her in somewhere she can feel at home.

JENNY
This is lovely.

Miss Stubbs makes a face.

JENNY
But it is. Really. I'd love to live somewhere like this.

Miss Stubbs laughs.

MISS STUBBS
Oh, it's not hard. Go to Oxford and become a teacher and this is what you end up with.

JENNY
But all these books and pictures....

MISS STUBBS
Penguin paperbacks. Posters and postcards.

JENNY
(apparently understanding something)
Yes, but...That's all you need, isn't it?

Just a place to...I'm sorry I
said those silly things. I didn't
understand.

MISS STUBBS
Let's forget all about it.

A poster catches Jenny's eye.

JENNY
A Burne-Jones.

Miss Stubbs laughs.

JENNY
What?

MISS STUBBS
You make it sound as though it's
an original. Do you like him?

Jenny pauses.

JENNY
Yes. I do. Still.

MISS STUBBS
Still? Gosh, you sound very old
and wise.

JENNY
(heartfelt)
I feel old. But really not very
wise. Miss Stubbs, I'm....I need
your help.

MISS STUBBS
I was so hoping that's what you
were going to say.

116 EXT. STREET IN OXFORD. DAY

116

Eighteen months later. Swelling orchestral music. Close on
Jenny cycling, absorbed, happy, the cello strapped to her
precariously. The camera pulls back to show her cycling
through the streets of Oxford. She's done it. We follow her
for a little while. She dismounts outside a church and
leans the bike against a wall. Just as she's about to leave
it, she sees something and freezes. We follow her gaze:
it's the red Bristol, parked a little way down the road
just in front of her. She scans the street to see if she
can find David. She can - he's coming round a corner, a
littler further down the street, unwrapping a packet of
cigarettes. Jenny moves into his eye-line. He sees her,
stops, then walks towards her.

*

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*

DAVID

Jenny.

Jenny says nothing.

DAVID

Jenny. Minnie. I wanted to tell you that I am going to ask my wife for a divorce.

Jenny looks at him disbelievingly.

JENNY

Don't you understand what you've done?

David looks at her. This isn't going to be as easy as he thought.

DAVID

I can see my behaviour must have been... confusing. But we've never sat down and had a proper chat about it all. About the whys and wherefores. They can wait. The important thing is that you're still my Minnie Mouse, and I love you, and you had fun. You know you had fun.

JENNY

Yes. I had fun. But I had fun with the wrong person, at all the wrong times. And I can't ever get those times back, now. (Beat) Look, David. I'm in Oxford. Every day I wake up and pinch myself. And when I think how close I came...

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She looks at him and shakes her head, as if awaking from a dream. A young man stops behind her on his bike, dismounts, leans his bike against the wall next to hers, waits for her to finish. She turns her back on David, and the young man offers her his arm. They walk away together, and David stares longingly after them.

THE END