

The Johnstown Project

By

Mark Sheeky

Copyright (c)2013 by Mark
Sheeky

Mark Sheeky
Web: www.marksheeky.com
Email: contact@marksheeky.com
Tel: 07748 842133

1

INT.WRITERS STUDY.NIGHT

A moth wheels onto the screen with a dull fuzzy fluid sound. It curls about a dark room, a room lit by a brassy 1930's lamp with a green shade, a glowing computer screen, other lighty pretty things. These objects rest on a large antique desk and to the moth this is a mock city, beautiful and alluring, a city we at first see through the moth's blurred vision. A modicum of credits can appear during this bit, white writing on silent black pages.

The moth hits the computer monitor and falls to the desk, stunned. It flickers like a broken helicopter.

The WRITER sits before the computer, a ginger fuzzy haired man with wire spectacles, his face lit by the glow of the computer screen his vision is locked upon. He is typing at a word processor. He pauses, stuck for the next word.

WRITER

People don't write intelligent
horror films. It's ironic. It
should be easy. Life is horrific;
it's fundamentally meaningless.
We're born alone and we'll die
the same, convinced that
something we create will persist.

A close up of the moth shows it in spasm, dying. It stops.

Offscreen we hear a match struck to light a cigar. Smoke drifts into view, and from unseen shadows behind the WRITER an American voice speaks, a 1940's style DETECTIVE straight from a Raymond Chandler novel. He's wearing a grey suit and wide brimmed hat that shadows his face in eternal blackness.

DETECTIVE

I guess without that line of
thinking I wouldn't be here.

WRITER

True. All artists have a love
hate relationship with isolation.

DETECTIVE

Sharp. Maybe that's your angle?

2

INT.CONCRETE CELL.DAYNIGHT

DAVID'S eye is asleep under thick grey bedsheets. His eye opens and flits around anxiously.

3 BLACKNESS

CAPTION: The Johnstown Project

Black white letters on black background in the same style/font as in the film From the Life of the Marionettes (1980).

4 BLACKNESS

Silence. A metal disc with a hole in it, a flat toroid (that's a ring shape, folks) of rusty metal with a black background. We see it for a few seconds.

5 INT.CONCRETE CELL.DAYNIGHT

DAVID wakes up on an iron bed, only parts of his head emerged, the rest cloaked with thick grey woollen blankets. The bed is in the corner of a cell, its right edge and top are pressed up against smooth hard concrete walls.

DAVID sits up and releases a GOLD KEY he was clutching while asleep. He looks startled and afraid at the surroundings and clumsily bangs himself on the unexpected walls. He pushes himself into the angular corner and looks around in confusion.

DAVID

Wha... hello? Hello? Can anyone hear me?

The yellowish electric light that illuminates the cell flickers.

We see the the light-fitting up close, an oval yellow glass, surrounded by a black wire cage in the centre of the square ceiling. There are no windows or doors here. There's a bed, a toilet, a lidded plastic tube running up about a metre of one wall, a small metal stool. Everything is clean, neat, cold.

DAVID

(shouting)

Hello! Where am I!

Silence. There's a buzzing sound as a small red light set into the wall to DAVID's left flashes and buzzes three times. There are three large red buttons spread across the wall that look like emergency stop buttons on industrial machines. Below each button is a white sign with black writing, and below each sign is a stark hole about the size of a shoebox. The blinking light was above the left button. The wall is laid out before us. The signs read FOOD, WATER, DEATH.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID
(shouting, getting anxious
now)
Is there anybody there!

David is now standing on his bed. The ceiling light flickers alarmingly.

DAVID
(shouting in panic)
Anyone!!!!

The wall and the three signs are seen once more as the scene fades to blackness along with DAVID's cries.

6 INT.OFFICE RECEPTION.DAY

An ugly chatty old woman with makeup and hair so bright it would make a clown jealous, MAUREEN is talking like a dictionary-machine-gun to angelic Japanese woman AKO. (AKO is pronounced Ay-ko, as in letter A, by the way).

MAUREEN
...well I said to her you don't want to have anything to do with him. If he's been caught doing it once he'll do it again, that's what they all do, if they do it for you they'll do it to you one day. And another thing, she told me that Jack was up in her room again, you know HER room, Angie. How about that one?

AKO
(not sure what to say)
Well...

MAUREEN
Didn't I tell you?

MAUREEN sees shy, sheepy CHLOE appear.

MAUREEN
(smiling warmly)
Oh, here we are. Ako, this is Chloe Fox.
(patronisingly at CHLOE)
Chloe, this is Ako. She'll be working with you on the communication systems.

AKO extends a welcoming business hand.

AKO
Hello Chloe, pleased meet you.

CHLOE
(shyly)
Hello.

MAUREEN
(patronising at CHLOE again)
You go with Ako dear, she'll
bring you out of your shell a
bit.

AKO and CHLOE walk off.

7 INT.OFFICE CORRIDOR.DAY

AKO and CHLOE walk to AKO's office.

AKO
Is this your first day?

CHLOE nods shyly.

AKO
It can be a bit intimidating at
first, all the new people, but
you'll soon fit in. I'll look
after you.

CHLOE
(smiling)
Thank you. Did she say your name
was acorn?

AKO
Ako.

CHLOE
(awkwardly)
Sorry.

They reach the door to AKO's office and enter.

8 INT.AKO'S OFFICE.DAY

The office of an interior designer. There are two desks
one for AKO and one for CHLOE. A third desk in the middle
of the room has an architectural model of a pastoral
landscape on it, little more than grassy mounds.

AKO
This is your desk Chloe. Do you
know what you're doing?

(CONTINUED)

CHLOE

Yes, I think so... I've got to work on the aerial... I mean the transmitter design.

(blush)

AKO

Yes, that's right. I'm working on the look of it and your working on the control systems. I don't know any of that technical stuff, it's way over my head. I normally work with interior design, the decorations, pretty papers and paints and that sort of thing. That's about my level! We'll be in the same room. I'm sure we'll be good friends.

CHLOE smiles.

A red light on AKO's desk buzzes three times and she presses a button on the intercom.

INTERCOM

Hi Ako. This is Mandy. Mister Tanter wants to see you right away.

AKO

(into intercom)

Okay I'll be right there.

9

INT.VIC'S OFFICE.DAY

VIC and AKO are beside a model of a modernist building, a steely cube with a few trees and trimmings around it, and some greenery on the roof too, like a rooftop garden.

VIC

And here's the gas storage unit, twice the capacity of this place. What do you think?

AKO

Honestly?

VIC

That depends.

AKO

On what?

VIC

How much you love it?

(CONTINUED)

AKO
It looks cold, sterile...

VIC eyes AKO amorously. AKO doesn't like it.

VIC
It's beautiful. It's big. It's powerful. I love it. I want to kiss it.

VIC pressures AKO until her back is to the wall. He's uncomfortably close.

VIC
What do you say?

AKO
I don't like it.

VIC withdraws quickly.

VIC
Well, like it or not I've approved it. It's taken years to get this far.
(presses intercom)
Mandy, tell Statler to go ahead with the Johnstown project. Full steam ahead.

10 INT.AKO'S OFFICE.DAY

CHLOE and AKO are at their desks. CHLOE is working on a model on hers, the model of the English garden, DAVID'S GARDEN from a later scene.

CHLOE
I want it to be a wonderful paradise.

We see the garden model up close.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
I want a lawn here, and some special trees here.

AKO
I thought you were working on the transmitter?

CHLOE
Oh yes, I am, well, I was. Mister Manners wanted me to help with this. We must help him if we're asked, mustn't we?

(CONTINUED)

AKO

Oh, David. I like him.

CHLOE

I like David too.

(whispering at AKO)

I don't like Mister Tortoise though.

AKO

(laughs)

Mister Tortoise! You mean Vic? He's a real creep. Don't let him get you alone.

CHLOE

He's scary.

AKO

I think he's scary too. Don't worry, we'll look after each other, shall we? Hey. Send me a text so I can get your number.

AKO fumbles her smart white mobile phone out of her neat probably black bag.

AKO (CONT'D)

In an emergency we'll text each other as an excuse to leave the room, if he's got one of us trapped!

CHLOE

(texting)

You are clever.

AKO'S phone makes a ding-dong sound like a doorbell.

AKO

Okay, got it.

CHLOE places a sundial in the pretty garden model.

11 INT.CONCRETE CELL.DAYNIGHT

DAVID sits on a disheveled bed, sweaty, red eyed, anxious. He's been in the cell a few hours now.

He moves towards the FOOD button and looks at it. He feels a breeze and looks up and right to see an air vent in the ceiling, a 20cm square, grilled hole. He steps beneath it and raises a hand to feel a breath of cool air. He looks around and grabs the small metal stool from the end of the bed and stands on it to get closer to the grille.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID
(cried down the vent)
Hellooo!

His words echo metallically.

DAVID
(to himself)
I wonder where that goes.

SETH
As good as nowhere.

SETH speaking calmly, is a man dressed neatly and rather eccentrically in a red velvet coat and carrying a black cane. In manner and speech he resembles a character from *The Importance of Being Ernest*, a late Victorian or Edwardian dandy. DAVID remains completely unfazed by the interjection. David sees a light switch on the distant wall.

DAVID
(to himself)
Where is this place?

SETH
I don't know. Some kind, of
prison, it seems.

DAVID
Prison? Who runs it?

SETH
Who do you think?

DAVID
The government..?

SETH
I don't know... perhaps. Seems a
little sterile for the
government... and... why? What
would be the point? Does this
place have a budget..? A
regulator..? A minister in
charge? That doesn't seem right
to me.

SETH knocks on a wall with his cane.

SETH
This seems more sinister.

DAVID
I think so too. It must be
"them".

SETH

Them? Who are they?

DAVID

The others. You know.

SETH

(confused)

The others..? I'm not sure I...

DAVID

They've finally got me... finally
got me trapped.

DAVID bends down as he speaks and looks at the FOOD button up close. He presses it and a small white packet drops down into the hole below. The packet looks it contains a hamburger. DAVID takes it, stands, and unwraps part of the paper. We see a glimpse of bread. He puts it back in the cavity for now.

DAVID

So, how long am I here for?

DAVID spreads his arms and circles about the empty cell.

DAVID

(shouts to the sky)

How long am I here for?

SETH

Perhaps we should prepare for the
long haul.

DAVID

(ignoring SETH, staring at
the grille in the ceiling)

There's got to be a way out.

SETH has vanished. DAVID presses the WATER button and a white plastic cup appears and half fills with water.

DAVID drinks and looks at the empty cup. A flimsy lid on the tube that runs up the wall rattles to alert DAVID. DAVID moves to it, presses a foot pedal and it opens. Air sucks into the tube. He throws the cup in and the lid slams shut.

DAVID

(shouts to the sky)

Let me out of here!

SETH

(offscreen)

I don't think anybody is coming.

DAVID wanders below the yellow orb of the ceiling light, transfixed by it. It's way out of reach but he reaches for it.

12 EXT.SUMMER SKY.DAY

The small BOY DAVID's tiny hand reaches at a jet plane that streaks across a perfect summer blue sky dotted with fluffy clouds.

13 EXT.ENGLISH FIELDS.DAY

Tiny BOY DAVID (five-ish, six-ish) is sitting in the branches of a tree in a rough wild English countryside. He waggles his wellingtoned legs for a few blissful seconds and clambers down.

He strokes the rough bark, enjoying the sensation. He finds a thin branch on the floor and tries to snap it but fails.

14 EXT.WOODLAND.DAY

We see a small fox in the undergrowth of some trees. It's cute. We like looking at this special rare sight. No other characters are here.

DAVID'S MOTHER
(shouted from a distant
offscreen)
David...

15 INT.CONCRETE CELL.DAYNIGHT

DAVID is pausing to think, head cocked like a curious parrot. He taps the walls of the cell with his fingers, listening, feeling for anything hollow sounding, a hint of escape. He taps the floor. SETH is wandering around giving a commentary.

SETH
Seems solid.

DAVID looks at the three buttons for a few seconds. He reaches inside the FOOD hole, putting his arm up the tube behind as far as he can. We see his hand grasp at nothing inside. He turns and looks at the two buttons, focusing on the DEATH button.

SETH
I wouldn't recommend dying. All
the dead people I know are
frightfully tedious.

(CONTINUED)

(more seriously)
Perhaps that button is a trick.
Perhaps pressing that one will
actually let you go.

DAVID
Maybe. Would you want to try?

SETH
That's the thing about death.
It's a one way trip. It doesn't
matter if there is life after it
if you can never come back and
tell anyone.

(pause)
No matter what you do, that
button will be a one way trip.

DAVID
Unless it does nothing. I'll save
that one for later.

He moves and looks at the WATER slot carefully. We see the tip of a dripping tap that looks like the kind of thing a pet rabbit or hamster is fed with. DAVID's finger presses the WATER button.

16 INT.BUS.NIGHT

A finger presses the stop button on the lower deck of a night bus. It's a scruffy OLD MAN, standing next to AKO, gripping the pole. AKO isn't that bothered about the conversation but doesn't mind getting involved.

OLD MAN
Like I was saying, that's what
life is like nowadays. You get
up. Go to work. Work. Eat. Come
home. Eat. Watch telly for an
hour, if you're lucky. Sleep, if
you're lucky, then get up and do
it all over again, if you're
lucky. You either work and have
no time to do anything or stay at
home and have no money to do
anything. It's a trap.

AKO
I suppose, yes, but work is doing
something...

OLD MAN
I mean doing something you want
to do.

(CONTINUED)

AKO

I'd have thought...

OLD MAN

(now ranting)

I mean, no offense, you look posh, like. I bet you like your job but for most ordinary people it's horrible. It's just something you have to do. Not that I work. I'm not one of these scroungers, like. Don't get me started on them!

The bus grinds to a hissing halt.

OLD MAN

(whispers)

They're everywhere.

The OLD MAN gets off.

17 EXT.BUS STOP.NIGHT

The bus pulls up at AKO's stop and AKO steps off.

18 EXT.CAR PARK.NIGHT

AKO walks across the car park to the entrance door of her apartment building. A gang of five youths loiter in the medium distance next to a wall. She hurries to the building front door.

19 INT.AKO'S BUILDING HALLWAY.NIGHT

The security camera silently shows AKO enter the building and open the door to her flat. (Yeah, I know, I'm directing, I canne help it captain, slap).

20 INT.AKO'S FLAT HALL.NIGHT

The door opens and AKO steps in and flicks the light on. She removes her shoes and places them on a neat rack in the small entrance hall. On the wall are three small square electronic screens in a row. One shows a drifting blue summer sky. AKO touches it and it cycles between images; the air vent in DAVID'S CELL, a white ring on a black background, an oak tree, a cute hamster. She settles on the hamster. The flat splinters into several rooms from here. AKO leaves to enter the living room.

21 INT.AKO'S LIVING ROOM.NIGHT

The square main living room is largely empty in the middle apart from a white rug that looks like it's made of feathers. The decor is white, clean, angular, modernist, expensive looking. AKO enters and grabs a discarded 1950's headscarf, a crumb-filled plate, and a glass cup of cold milkless tea from the morning. She leaves.

22 INT.AKO'S KITCHEN.NIGHT

AKO puts the cup in a microwave and clicks it on. We watch the tea turn as the soundtrack plays a grainy recording of Daisy Bell sung by the Bell computer. After 30 seconds of this captivating audio-visual experience the vocals appear and for the next 30 seconds we see AKO undress, shower, put on a white kimono and go to the front room. The music stops.

AKO bends down before a tiny hamster in a cage on a side table. AKO opens the door to feed it.

AKO

Hello Archie! How are you today?

We see the hamster twitch anxiously. AKO feeds the hamster and shuts the cage door. We see the hamster nibble. We see the hamster drink. We see the hamster run around its wheel which plays Daisy Bell as it turns in a plinky plonky metal music box sound.

23 INT.CONCRETE CELL.DAYNIGHT

DAVID is exercising in his cell. Montage of press ups, stretches, star jumps, and other movements, all to the plinky soundtrack of the hamster wheel.

He stops (as does the music) and presses the FOOD button. A package falls. He unwraps a soft bun sandwich and bites, enjoying it.

DAVID

Ah, ham salad today.

(shouts to the sky)

My compliments to the cook!

SETH is leaning against a wall.

SETH

Nobody is listening.

DAVID looks at the soft bun sandwich.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID

But somebody must care about me.

(bite)

Somebody is paying the electricity bill. And keeping the water machine in cups. And checking the light bulb.

SETH

Do you think people sneak in when you're asleep?

DAVID

Maybe... Hey, are you psychoanalysing me?

SETH

I wouldn't dream of it.

DAVID

Whose side are you on here?

SETH

Whose side are YOU on here?

DAVID smiles.

SETH

I am trying to help you, old chum.

DAVID

How the hell did I get here!

24 EXT.ENGLISH FIELDS.DAY

The small BOY DAVID, is running alone about a landscape of hills and stone walls, country roads that criss cross the outskirts of a village in Yorkshire or Wales or some North England rural location. All looks blissful and perfect.

25 EXT.FARMYARD.DAY

BOY DAVID runs in through the gate and to a whitewashed farmhouse. He freezes as he rounds the corner to the muddy back yard. He has seen his FATHER there. David's father looks like VIC, same actor, so I'll call him VIC DAVID'S FATHER. He has sideburns and is dressed in 1950's farm work clothes; brown trousers, white shirt, with sleeves rolled up. He looks intimidating. VIC DAVID'S FATHER stands next to a small chicken shed with feathers scattered around like snow, some bloody.

(CONTINUED)

VIC DAVID'S FATHER
David! Look what I caught 'ere.

Wrapped in a white towel we see a tiny fox, panting, anxious.

VIC DAVID'S FATHER
He wer' after our chickens the little bastard. I came out to a frightful racket. He got himself stuck in the shed 'ere. Killed one I think. There's blood about any road. I'll have to check later.

BOY DAVID is fascinated by the fox. He takes a step towards it and extends an arm to stroke it before being shouted back.

VIC DAVID'S FATHER
Stay back, you! What do you think we do with little thieves eh? EH!

BOY DAVID
(afraid, quiet)
Dunno.

VIC DAVID'S FATHER
Well let's see, shall wi? You, stay there.

VIC DAVID'S FATHER unwraps the fox as best he can and pulls out a foreleg, keeping most of the rest of the animal wrapped in the towel. He grabs a saw that was leaning against the chicken shed and puts the fox down on a tree stump, holding it down with one enormous left hand so that the leg sticks out.

VIC DAVID'S FATHER
Now, watch this.

He puts the saw to the leg. We see BOY DAVID's terrified face and hear the fox scream as the leg is cut into. The boy closes his eyes tightly and turns away.

VIC DAVID'S FATHER
No! You look. You stay right there and see what happens to thieves. Don't YOU bloody move.

We hear the yelps of the fox as the leg is sawn. BOY DAVID'S terror grows until he turns and runs into the house through an open door behind him.

VIC DAVID'S FATHER
Oy! You little runt!

26 INT.FARMHOUSE STAIRWAY.DAY

BOY DAVID thunders up the stairs.

27 INT.FARMHOUSE BEDROOM.DAY

BOY DAVID runs into the bedroom and closes the door.
There's no lock. He leans on the door to hold it shut.

DAVID'S MOTHER
(offscreen, downstairs)
What did you have to show him
that for?

VIC DAVID'S FATHER
(offscreen, downstairs)
Shut it!

Smack sound.

VIC DAVID'S FATHER
(offscreen, shouted upstairs
to BOY DAVID)
David! You get down 'ere. Don't
make me come up there!

Agonising pause.

VIC DAVID'S FATHER
(shouted upstairs)
Right - you asked for it!

The thunderous sound of boots climbing the stairs. Tiny
BOY DAVID pushes hard on the door. His father would easily
push through the door, the fear is in this anticipation.

28 BLACKNESS

VIC DAVID'S FATHER'S VOICE
(offscreen, heard as though
it's right next to our ear,
softly but menacingly)
Da-vid.

29 INT.AKO'S OFFICE.DAY

CHLOE is quiet and tearful at her desk, withdrawn like a
small child. AKO's tries to coax her into saying what the
problem is.

AKO
It's important to tell friends
our problems, it helps them go
away. We are friends aren't we?

(CONTINUED)

CHLOE
(sniff)
Yes, you're a nice friend Ako.

AKO
Is this about your mum?

CHLOE
No. It's alright. I don't want to
talk about it. I'll be okay.

The song Wooden Heart by Elvis Presley begins to play starting with the "Treat Me Nice" line. CHLOE mouths the words. AKO has vanished.

CHLOE
(silently mouthed to
recording)
Treat me nice, treat me good,
treat me like you really should
'cause I'm not made of wood,
and I don't have a wooden heart.

CHLOE lifts her right arm and puts it on the desk with a thud. It's crudely made of wood like a dolls arm, a wooden mannequin, old, vintage, yellow, flaky varnish.

We see a lifesize wooden doll as CHLOE, a bit like a ventriloquist's doll but more roughly cut from wood, a mannequin with a painted smile, gazing eyes. We mainly see the grinning face where CHLOE should be. The head is on fire, burning.

30 INT.VIC'S OFFICE.NIGHT

We see a frightened CHLOE trapped against the wall of a dark VIC'S OFFICE. VIC is uncomfortably close to her panicky face.

31 INT.AKO'S OFFICE.DAY

CHLOE is tearful and withdrawn again, being comforted by AKO, continuing the conversation from the above scene.

AKO
Alright, as long as you're okay.
You can take the rest of the day
off if you want?

CHLOE
(more pulled together)
No, I'm alright. I just had a bit
of a shock, that's all. I'll get
back to work.

(CONTINUED)

AKO

Would you like me you get you a drink?

CHLOE

Actually, yes please.

We gaze at a spider walking around the model garden. There is a cubic topiary bush in it now, like the cubic bush DAVID cuts in the future garden scene.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

(offscreen, spoken matter of factly)

I'd like a weak cup of sweet tea in a lemon yellow china cup with a gold rim with a ring of gold on the inside. I want it poured from a metal enamel tea pot like something from the Second World War.

32 EXT.DAVID'S SUMMER GARDEN.DAY

A perfect English summer garden in the sun, the one from the model CHLOE was making, beautiful, sublime. A pretty red butterfly flies into the garden in an exact and deliberate echo of the moth from the opening scene of the film. It spirals and curls, the pretty garden mirroring the city of the opening scene too. It lands on a pedestal sundial like the one CHLOE put in the model. The butterfly suns itself.

33 INT.WRITERS STUDY.NIGHT

The WRITER draws a spider's web with a gold pen, a fancy fat pen, kind of like a cigar. The branches of the drawing represent connections between different characters so it's not exactly like a spider's web but it is web-like. Beside the WRITER stands the DETECTIVE. The DETECTIVE puffs on his cigar.

WRITER

See what I'm doing?

DETECTIVE

Enlighten me.

WRITER

I'm lining up the dominoes.

DETECTIVE

Looks kind of like a spider's web to me.

(CONTINUED)

WRITER

No, it's dominoes. Each thread is a connection between colours, and the colours are people.

DETECTIVE

You're one hell of a deep guy. How come the people are colours?

WRITER

If not, they'd be boring. Everyone has to be a different colour.

DETECTIVE

I only deal with black and white people in my normal line of work.

WRITER

You're one hell of a shallow guy.

DETECTIVE

You got that right. If I see a broad I kiss her. If I see a meat-head I give him false teeth.

WRITER

(drawing a red connection between points)
That's because you're a colourful character.

DETECTIVE

I try my best. So, what's next?

34 INT.DAVID'S BEDROOM.MORNING

We see DAVID'S closed eye, asleep under bedsheets. His eye opens and flits around anxiously in a mirror of the scene at the start of the film, but now he is in his sunny bedroom.

35 BLACKNESS

CAPTION: The Morning Before The Event

36 BLACKNESS

Silence. A metal disc with a hole in it, a flat toroid of rusty metal is on fire on a black background. It burns for a few seconds.

37 INT.DAVID'S FRONT ROOM.DAY

FELICITY is adjusting a painting on the wall. It's a big painting about one metre wide by one and a half tall in a moderately heavy gilt frame.

FELICITY is dressed in garishly bright clothes like a 1950's pin up, with vintage head-scarfed hair, pointy-cornered glasses. The room is festooned with sewing in a vintage 1940's/1950's style and garish patterned material, dotty, gingham etc. The room is bedecked with bunting and piles of stuffed butterflies and pillows, some with butterfly motifs. The painting is above a comfy chair.

FELICITY flips opens a compact and applies a bit of fire-engine red lipstick. In the reflection we see a glimpse of the painting which we haven't really seen until now. It's of an angel holding a gold key. We don't see the angel's face.

FELICITY teeters out of the room on pointy scarlet high heels.

38 INT.DAVID'S KITCHEN.DAY

FELICITY walks in to see her identical twin daughters AMY and BEEMY at the breakfast table, wagging dangling legs, aged six-ish I guess, dressed in pretty bell dresses in a 1950's style, like fairies on the tree. They're munching toast messily with sticky jam fingers, faces, etc. FELICITY is mildly horrified at the mess.

FELICITY

Amy darling, where is your father? Or are you Beemy? I never know which is which.

AMY

I'm Amy. She's Beemy.

BEEMY

(overlapping)

I'm Beemy.

AMY (CONT'D)

I don't know where he is. He made us toast.

FELICITY

(disapprovingly)

So I can see.

BEEMY

I think he's upstairs.

39 INT.DAVID'S DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY.DAY

FELICITY
 (shouting upstairs in a posh
 ringy voice)
 David! David are you up there?
 (to herself)
 Honestly I don't know what to do
 with that man. Absolutely
 useless.

40 INT.DAVID'S KITCHEN.DAY

FELICITY waddles back in.

FELICITY
 (to BEEMY)
 Amy darling could you run
 upstairs and find daddy? There's
 a poppet. I can't walk in these
 shoes.

BEEMY
 I'm Beemy.

FELICITY
 Sorry, would you go please. Now
 there's a good girl.

FELICITY walks to the sink for a damp cloth as BEEMY gets up.

FELICITY
 Wait!

...and FELICITY wipes her fingers and face as BEEMY leaves. She wipes AMY and the table.

41 INT.DAVID'S BEDROOM.DAY

BEEMY peers in though the open door. DAVID is not there. This will acquaint us with this room which is pretty and full of bright fabrics, garish colours, all very neat and clean.

42 INT.DAVID'S STUDY.DAY

BEEMY pokes a head into the empty room again. The study is more sombre in decor and has a desk to work on with a computer. There is a big table like the one in VIC's office and sure enough on it is the Johnstown building model, the sleek silver cube in a grassy landscape. There's a hat stand here and a hat like the DETECTIVE wears is on it. BEEMY is only here for a second or two but

we can linger over the model if you want so that we can see that it's the same as the one we've already seen.

43 INT.DAVID'S KITCHEN.DAY

Through the kitchen window FELICITY sees DAVID in the garden, which the back door opens into.

FELICITY
 (to herself)
 Oh, there he is.
 (shouts behind her)
 It's alright Amy darling I've found him.
 (to AMY)
 Beemy go and tell Amy... oh never mind.

44 EXT.DAVID'S SUMMER GARDEN.DAY

DAVID is clipping a potted topiary bush with hand shears, shaping it into a cube. We see a tiny ant running along a branch to a leaf, separated from the colony. The branch and leaf are deliberately snipped away to send both tumbling earthwards.

DAVID
 That Vic, he's going to steal it from me. After all the work I've put into it.

SETH is suddenly around.

SETH
 Hang on a minute are you sure it was Vic?

DAVID
 Of course it was Vic. He's been after my idea since day one. You should have seen his eyes bulge out when I first showed it to him. Oh God! I wish I'd never told him about it. I wish I'd never told anyone!
 (snip)

SETH
 Perhaps you should have protected yourself more.

DAVID
 Yes, you're right!
 (snip)
 But it's too late for that now.
 The Johnstown project was my
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DAVID (cont'd)
idea. Mine! I've been working on that for years. My heart and soul went into it. And now he's going to steal it right from under me.

SETH
So, what can we do about it?

DAVID
I'm too trusting. I hate Vic. I hate him!

DAVID snips a violent snip then moves back to look at the perfectly cubic result with pride.

SETH
Hating Vic won't help. Perhaps you're not trusting enough?

DAVID
How do you mean?

SETH
Perhaps you could do with some help with the project, an ally?

DAVID
(pensive)
Hey... that's not a bad idea.

SETH
It would give you someone to bounce ideas off, new input, fresh blood. It would give you more leverage over Vic at least.

DAVID
Yes... I rather like that idea!
Maybe... wait!

DAVID puts the shears on top of the cube bush and darts into the house.

45 INT.DAVID'S KITCHEN.DAY

DAVID dashes in through the back door and out to the hallway.

AMY AND BEEMY
(in unison as DAVID passes)
Daddy!

46 INT.DAVID'S STUDY.DAY

DAVID enters the study. He looks at the Johnstown model thoughtfully.

DAVID

Yes. You know what, I think it could use a communications array.

SETH is magically here. He doesn't speak but peers at the model with interest.

DAVID opens a desk drawer. We see a gun inside, a 45 A.C.P., the sort of thing a 1940's detective might carry. A mobile phone is inside too. DAVID grabs the phone, closes the drawer and makes a call.

DAVID

(into phone)

Hello Maureen? It's David Manners. Is that new girl there, Chloe?

MAUREEN

(offscreen on phone, apparently to someone else at a million words an hour)
...and I told her exactly what I thought of her, right to her face, I said...

DAVID

(to phone)

Hello? Can you hear me?

MAUREEN

(offscreen on phone)

Oh I am sorry. Do excuse me Mister Manners. Was it Chloe you wanted, the quiet little girl? I don't know if she's come in yet. Shall I buzz her?

DAVID

(to phone)

No, you're alright. Tell her to see me as soon as she gets in tomorrow, it's important. Is that okay?

47 INT.OFFICE RECEPTION.DAY

MAUREEN scribbles a message, speaking as she writes

(CONTINUED)

MAUREEN

Go. And. See. Mister. Manners.
As. Soon. As. You. Get. In. It's.
Important. For little Chloe.
Alright I'll pass that right
along! Will that be all?

(pause)

Oh good. Goodbye Mister Manners.

MAUREEN hangs up and pauses in the longest silence she's had in years, then wheels round to continue gossiping with another chatty old woman who could be her clone, DOREEN

MAUREEN

That Mister Manners, he's so nice. A bit odd though, he keeps talking to himself.

At this point I might have DOREEN raise a brief eyebrow at the camera, but yes that's directing, slap.

MAUREEN (CONT'D)

(continues her race)

Now, where was I... oh yes, the thing that really gets me about her is the way she's always putting it about...

LATER:

CHLOE enters reception late for work. Reception appears to be empty. She tip-toes around, trying not to be noticed.

48 INT.OFFICE CORRIDOR.DAY

CHLOE sneaks along the corridor to her office like an alert heron in a minefield.

49 INT.AKO'S OFFICE.DAY

CHLOE peers in. It's empty, phew. She sneaks in and suddenly bam! AKO bursts in kicking the door open because her arms are full of wallpaper samples. CHLOE jumps in shock.

CHLOE

Ako, you mustn't do that to me!

AKO

Sorry! I had my hands full. Oh, Maureen was here, she said you have a message. She left it on your desk.

We see the message clearly written: GO AND SEE MISTER MANNERS AS SOON AS YOU GET IN IT'S IMPORTANT.

(CONTINUED)

CHLOE

It's from David, he wants to see me, I thought he was at home today?

AKO

(dumping papers)
He is. Let's have a look.
(peering at the note)
Tell you what, I'll call him.

AKO gets out her white mobile phone and presses it a bit.

AKO

(into phone)
Hello, David. Yes, fine
thank-you. How are you? Good.
Chloe is here, she got a message
about seeing you...

50 INT.DAVID'S STUDY.DAY

DAVID is in his study, at all times staring at his model from every angle. He's talking on his mobile.

DAVID

(to phone)
Oh, yes. I wanted to see her
about adding a communications
array to the Johnstown
building...

DAVID carefully places a model flower into the gardeny roof of the model while he pauses to listen.

DAVID

Actually, no, you're right. I
would like to see her today. And
yes, I know, I do really need to
speak to Vic about it first.
(pause)
Okay, I'll be in later. Tell
Chloe to see me when I get there.

SETH, suddenly in the room, picks up the flower with his gentleman's gloved hand.

SETH

Why did you have to mention Vic?

DAVID

(suddenly a nervous wreck)
I know... I don't know! He's in
charge. I have to see him first,
don't I!? Oh what have I done!

SETH crushes the flower.

51 BLACKNESS

CAPTION: The Afternoon Before The Event

52 INT.VIC'S OFFICE.DAY

DAVID is seated. VIC is pacing and ranting.

VIC

Right. I've made a pile of revisions. Here's what you're going to do. You're going to take off all of that green garden shit on the roof and use metal tiles instead. In fact, I want some windows in it, I want to see what's going on in there. Lots of windows. And I want cameras too.

DAVID

I can't take the grass off, it's part of the communications array.

VIC

Communications array? What twat ordered a communications array?

(pause)

I bet it was you, wasn't it!
(of course he knows)

DAVID

I think it's important.

VIC

Look, mate, you've got to be with me on this one. You don't seem to understand what I'm trying to do here. I don't want people like you messing things up for me with all of your "why not add this" and "howabout that"...

The intercom buzzes. VIC presses the button.

VIC

(to intercom)

What is it Mandy? Can't you see I'm in a meeting!

MANDY

(on intercom)

There's a little girl here who says she wants to see you, Chloe, Chloe Fox.

(CONTINUED)

VIC
(suddenly sheepish)
...Chloe...

MANDY
(on intercom)
She says it's important.

VIC pauses for an eternity, suddenly quiet, guilty, pensive, anxious.

VIC
Tell her she's fired. Tell her to
clear out her desk and leave
immediately.
(unclick)

VIC (CONT'D)
(to DAVID)
And you get rid of that grass.

VIC sweeps the grassy bits off the building model with his arm.

53 INT.VIC'S OFFICE RECEPTION

A devastated CHLOE walks away in slow shock.

54 EXT.FARMYARD.DAY

We see BOY DAVID'S terrified face from the earlier fox sawing scene.

55 INT.VIC'S OFFICE.DAY

We see the Johnstown building model as it is now, a shiny pure cube of metal.

56 BLACKNESS

Silence. The burning metal disc with a hole in it is still wreathed in flame but now there is less of it, it's burning away.

We see up close that the disc has a black skull shape on it; death.

57 EXT.SUMMER SKY.DAY

In a clone of an earlier shot. The small BOY DAVID's tiny hand reaches at a jet plane that streaks across a perfect summer blue sky dotted with white fluffy clouds.

58 EXT.DAVID'S SUMMER GARDEN.DAY

FELICITY emerges into the garden, squishing her heels into the lawn. AMY and BEEMY are here chasing a butterfly. She moves to a blanket on the lawn that has a wicker basket containing brightly coloured material inside. Other sewing things lie on the blanket. A vintage sewing book with pretty fashions is flopped open. She moves to sit on the blanket.

FELICITY

Come on girls! Pip pip! Do stop running about. Let's play a game!

FELICITY sits down and the girls flop nearby.

FELICITY

I'll say a word and you say the first word you can think of. So if I say ice you might say...

AMY

cream!

FELICITY

Yes, very good Amy, or are you Beemy?

AMY

I'm Amy.

BEEMY

(almost at the same time)
I'm Beemy.

FELICITY

Be as quick as you can! Grass.

BEEMY

Trees.

FELICITY

That's good. Sugar.

BEEMY

Sweets!

AMY

I want sweets.

(CONTINUED)

FELICITY
Honey.

AMY AND BEEZY
Bee!

BEEZY
Buzz buzz buzzy bee buzzy bee.

FELICITY
Life.

BEEZY
Death.

FELICITY
Death? Do you know what death is?

BEEZY
Yes, it's when you fall down like
this!

BEEZY flings her arms up then falls to the floor writhing.

BEEZY
Agh! I'm dead! I'm dead!

AMY
I want to die. I want to hang
myself!

FELICITY
Amy! Why do you say that!? You
mustn't say such things!

BEEZY
Buzz buzz buzz buzz buzzy bee
buzzy bee. (chanting) Amy dead!
Amy dead!

FELICITY
Beemy, stop it! Stop that AT
ONCE!

BEEZY
I won't I wont!
(in DAVID'S FATHER'S voice)
I won't you little runt!

59 INT.CONCRETE CELL.DAYNIGHT

In a cell of a design like DAVID's we see FELICITY, naked,
cowering in a corner facing away. She is shivering. SETH
is here, nicely dressed and standing around, as ever.

(CONTINUED)

SETH

Strange to see you human for a change, Felicity? I didn't know you had human feelings. I haven't... we haven't seen those in years.

FELICITY

(sobs)

Let me go.

The song Wooden Heart by Elvis Presley begins to play again starting with the "Treat Me Nice" line, now twisted and in steely reverberation like a blurry childhood memory.

SETH extends a gloved hand and grasps a fist full of Felicity's dark swirling hair. He twists his hand to reveal her face, she is the wooden doll, painted with bright makeup and a permanent smile.

60

EXT.DAVID'S SUMMER GARDEN.DAY

FELICITY and the girls are sitting on the blanket on the lawn once more, happily playing their game.

FELICITY

Fly.

AMY

Bird. Or a fly. Like a buzzy fly.

BEEZY

Or a butterfly. A fly made from butter!

FELICITY

Yes! That's good - I'd not thought of that. I wonder why butterflies are called butter flies? Perhaps it's because of buttercups. I've always thought buttercups were a most elegant flower.

BEEZY

I'm tired of this game.

FELICITY

Me too, let's cut out some butterflies, shall we? Help me pick the material. I want to make lots and lots for the front room.

The game is over. FELICITY pulls together her sewing supplies and begins to sort out material with the girls. A fabric butterfly that had been previously cut out flops onto the blanket.

61 INT.CONCRETE CELL.NIGHT

DAVID holds up a ragged white paper butterfly, torn from the paper the food comes wrapped in. He is on the bed, bearded, dirty, ragged, without dignity or hope.

He eats it, salivating messily, large lumps of it falling from his crusty yellow-toothed mouth.

He sits up in unwashed bedclothes wearing underwear and scratches a check-mark into the wall using the GOLD KEY. The mark is one of hundreds in the wall. "DAVID" is seen scratched into the wall.

We see a moth bashing itself into the ceiling light repeatedly in futility.

We see him on the wrecked remains of a bed he has partly dismantled and broken. DAVID is slow, depressed, disgusting. SETH is standing in the cell, a well-dressed eccentric paragon of civility.

SETH

Good morning and how are we today!?

DAVID

Not too good. Not good at all. My tooth's still playing up.

DAVID winces.

SETH

My my, we are in a sorry state, aren't we?

DAVID

Yes, we are in a sorry state. I am sorry.

SETH

I'm not surprised, you look disgusting.

SETH looks at the DEATH button.

SETH (CONT'D)

Maybe it's time to try this button?

(CONTINUED)

DAVID

(insulted by that)

I'm not that desperate. Where there's life, there's hope. Life. Yes.

SETH

But what can you do here? In this box. In this sealed box. This tomb of solitude?

DAVID

Isn't that life? Aren't we all in tombs of solitude, as you put it. One way or another? Besides, I've got you, old chum.

SETH

Me!

(laughs)

My my we are desperate. It's true though, imagination can be such a great liberator. I like this streak of positive thinking. Do continue.

DAVID

I've got free food too, and water and shelter. That's more than some people have.

SETH

Perhaps. Or do they? Most people have food and shelter. In fact everyone will have food and shelter until they die, they're just too stupid and too scared to see it. There's more to life than food and shelter.

DAVID

I can scratch on the wall.

SETH

Ah! An artist! But, there's nobody to see it.

(peers at some scratchings)

This is a very exclusive gallery.

DAVID

One day, maybe...

DAVID glances at a hole hacked into in the concrete wall, about 40cm across and as deep. SETH moves to that too and peers in.

(CONTINUED)

SETH

Ah, is that it? The hope of escape? Of freedom? Is that what you cling to? Is that ALL you cling to now?

DAVID

Yes, of course.

SETH looks into a square mirror stuck to the wall. It shows DAVID's reflection.

SETH

Mirror mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of them all...

DAVID smiles.

DAVID

Where there's life, there's hope. Hope!

(stands up)

You know, in Pandora's box, hope was all that was left. It was a moth, you know, described as moth-like, if I recall.

SETH

Perhaps it's because it chases the moon? Hope and lunacy are often close associates.

DAVID

(getting cheerful)

Clever. But no, I think it's more of a freedom thing. You see, no matter what the present is like, you can always escape into a better future.

SETH

What if the future isn't better?

DAVID

Well, that's the point. The future doesn't exist, only as your belief of it and in it. The actual future can't exist, I mean, for people, for us, because as soon as we're in it, poof, it's gone. It only exists as a concept in our minds, a belief, an expectation, good or bad. There's really no reason to ever think of a bad one, it would only ever make us feel worse!

(CONTINUED)

From apparently nowhere the moth from the ceiling flutters down and lands on DAVID (have fun with this one, film-makers) it opens its wings and looks brightly coloured now, more like the butterfly than the brown old moth.

SETH

(now peering into the hacked hole in the wall, the tunnel)

Shall we make a move?

DAVID

Yes, it's a good day! I suddenly feel incredibly happy to be human! So lucky to see a great future, the heaven ahead, no matter what the present looks like.

DAVID stretches and grabs a metal spike made from part of the bed. He moves towards the hole and continues to chip away at the tunnel. The butterfly takes off and flies in a circle. The Daisy Bell tune plays subtly in the soundtrack, to remind us of going round in circles, but the music isn't over the top because too loud would indicate madness, when the mood is now jovial.

62

INT.WRITERS STUDY.NIGHT

The soundtrack continues and the WRITER'S computer monitor shows a black and white images of the cell with DAVID starting to cut a tunnel. There is a rotating music box like a miniature carousel turning. The WRITER puts out a hand to stop it and the music stops.

WRITER

He's losing contact.

DETECTIVE

(offscreen)

Is that a good thing?

WRITER

Yes and no. He keeps talking to himself.

DETECTIVE

Is that a bad thing?

WRITER

Happens all the time.

DETECTIVE

You're good.

(CONTINUED)

WRITER

It's sad though, so incredibly sad. He was such a clever child, such a nice kind boy, before it all happened.

DETECTIVE

Sure, before it all happened.

63 INT.1950'S LIVING ROOM.EVENING

The room is a bit like DAVID'S STUDY but set in the 1950's. The crackly-sounding radio is playing the end of Daisy Bell. DAVID'S FATHER is reading a newspaper in an arm chair and DAVID'S MOTHER is hand sewing. DAVID'S MOTHER looks and acts like FELICITY, in full 1950's attire, but perhaps a bit more plain. On a table BOY DAVID is delicately working on a cardboard model, a skeletal early version of the Johnstown architectural model.

BOY DAVID puts a small red outfitted tin soldier inside the cube.

DAVID'S MOTHER

What are you making David darling?

BOY DAVID

It's a model.

DAVID'S MOTHER

Yes, I can see it's a model dear, but what is it a model of?

BOY DAVID

(quietly, engrossed)
The world.

DAVID'S MOTHER

Speak up darling mummy can't hear you.

BOY DAVID

The world. I'm making a model of the world. Look here's the taps where the water comes out and here's...

DAVID points out the details of the model.

DAVID'S MOTHER

It's here ARE the taps darling.

DAVID'S FATHER

Let's have a look.

DAVID'S FATHER raises his head to have a quick look.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID'S FATHER

World? Looks like a funny looking world to me. Besides, the world's not square, it's round. Every bugger knows that. It's round. What do they teach you at that school!

BOY DAVID remains engrossed and transfixed by his model.

BOY DAVID

(whispered to himself)
It's the world.

64 INT.WRITERS STUDY.NIGHT

The WRITER flicks through the pages of a film script.

WRITER

What's next, do you think?

DETECTIVE

You're my client. You tell me.

WRITER

Sometimes you have to break things before you can fix them.

DETECTIVE

You mean the girl?

WRITER

I'm considering it. What do you think?

DETECTIVE

I think we should leave her out of it.

WRITER

I think she'll understand.

A puff of cigar smoke from the DETECTIVE appears. The WRITER clicks a switch on the keyboard before him to change our scene.

65 EXT.PARK BENCH.AFTERNOON

CHLOE is sitting on the bench, sad, with her bag and other office stuff packed up. She looks up at someone coming. It's DAVID, she gets happier. We see DAVID and CHLOE sitting beside each other talking, DAVID on her right. They talk (we don't hear). They make each other smile. This is the start of a romance. We see CHLOE take the GOLD KEY from her bag and give it to DAVID.

66 INT.BUS.NIGHT

It's warm, and AKO is sitting on the top deck of the double-decker bus in a light jacket, and a white blouse that has the top few buttons undone. She gazes at the blackness beyond the window. The lights flicker off for a few seconds, revealing the world beyond the glass which looks like the world seen by the moth in the WRITER'S STUDY in the opening scene. The lights come back. AKO gets up and presses the stop button.

67 EXT.BUS STOP.NIGHT

AKO exits the bus with others. She is checking her mobile phone and bumped violently by a passenger getting on. She drops her phone and it tumbles away to the ground and smashes. AKO bends and picks up the pieces.

The passenger who knocked her is shown to be the WRITER dressed in disguise as an ordinary passenger. The doors close and the bus pulls away.

68 EXT.CAR PARK.NIGHT

AKO is walking home towards her building. Five hooded youths including young woman SANDY are meandering near a wall outside. One is vomiting. AKO hurries. VIC PUNK steps out from the shadows very close to her. He is the same actor as VIC but he's a new character now, more of a cockney rebel than his office self.

VIC PUNK
Hello darlin'.

AKO says nothing and hurries on.

VIC PUNK
Hey, don't go.

AKO speeds up. VIC PUNK runs up and grabs her arm tightly.

VIC PUNK
Stop, I only want to get close.

AKO
(screams)
Help! Let me go.

The youths show up and for an instant AKO thinks they are there to save her.

VIC PUNK
She wants us to help her, let's help her home.

AKO looks horrified.

(CONTINUED)

VIC PUNK (CONT'D)
Relax darlin', We're not gonna
'ert you. Just having a bit of
fun that's all.

AKO
Let me go at once you brute!

VIC PUNK
(amused)
Brute? I like it. Sounds a bit
lah-di-dah. I like posh girls,
me.

SANDY, a girl from the gang speaks up.

SANDY
Just let her go Vic.

VIC PUNK
(suddenly mental)
You shut the fuck up. Don't you
fucking tell me what to do you
dumb fuck.
(to AKO)
Sorry lady. I must watch my
fucking language.

VIC PUNK laughs then stares menacingly at the terrified
AKO.

AKO
L-let me go.

VIC PUNK
You look terrified. A big grown
woman like you scared shitless.
I've not done nothing.

Tiny AKO screams and struggles hard, trying to pull free
but her right arm is held in the vice-like grip of the
monster Vic. The gang laughs.

VIC PUNK
There there. What do think I'm
going to do eh?
(moves close to her face)
Get close?
(looks down her blouse)
Get inside there?

SANDY
Leave her alone, that's enough.

VIC PUNK
Enough? Hmm.
(pause)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VIC PUNK (cont'd)
 Oh no. It's not nearly fucking
 enough!
 (laughs)
 Come 'ere. Let's have a party at
 your place. It's over 'ere innit?

He drags AKO across the car park to the building entrance.
 SANDY is worried. SANDY doesn't go with them.

69 INT.AKO'S ENTRANCE HALL.NIGHT

The silent security camera shows the gang bundling AKO in
 and to her flat.

70 INT.AKO'S ENTRANCE HALL.NIGHT

The gang bundle in with AKO like a flood of water through
 a sluice.

71 INT.AKO'S LIVING ROOM.NIGHT

At this point AKO is attacked but I don't want to show
 anything nasty, so...

The gang swarm in. Surfin' USA by the Beach Boys starts to
 play and everyone starts to dance, including AKO, well
 choreographed together, everyone happy. The flat might get
 damaged a bit during the affray, but it's fun not violent.

The music stops abruptly at some point and we see AKO's
 naked dead body on the bloody feathery rug, among the now
 wrecked remains of her flat. The gang are filtering out.

VIC PUNK
 (suddenly frightened at what
 he's done)
 Come on, let's beat it.

On a shelf we see a tin soldier ornament, red outfit so
 he's a bit like SETH, a bit like the steadfast tin soldier
 from the Hans Christian Anderson tale.

72 INT.CONCRETE CELL.NIGHT

DAVID sits on the bed, bearded. Some years have passed
 since he arrived. The cell is full of rubble. He has a
 vacant insane stare. The butterfly is seen dead.

DAVID
 (sings depressively and out
 of tune)
 Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer
 do. I'm half crazy all for love
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DAVID (cont'd)
of you. It won't be a stylish
marriage...

73 INT.DAVID'S LIVING ROOM.EVENING

DAVID is neatly dressed in a white shirt and trousers like his father, waltzing with FELICITY around the room. There are balloons and streamers and bright coloured lights. They dance to an audience of AMY, BEEMY, DAVID'S FATHER, OLD BEEMY, JOHNNY, EDDIE, ELVIS and OLD FELICITY (in order of how many will fit in the room!) The music is Daisy Bell, playing from an old record.

(MUSIC)
...for I can't afford a
carriage...

FELICITY looks stiff, like her fixed smile on her heavily made up face. Her grin hardly changes when she speaks.

FELICITY
Come on David darling move to the
beat. Move to the music.

DAVID
I'm trying dear, I'm trying. I
just don't have natural rhythm.

FELICITY
Just follow me.

We see FELICITY'S feet, moving badly and not at all in time or with DAVID. The pair fumble an awful dance. The record ends and the room full of people applaud.

FELICITY
(whispers to DAVID)
Really David you really are the
worst dancer in history!

DAVID appears to ignore FELICITY and smiles broadly to the audience as the couple bow. Surfin' USA by The Beach Boys begins to play.

74 INT.CONCRETE CELL.DAYNIGHT

DAVID'S gaze is wide, vacant, lost. The Beach Boys are still playing faintly and DAVID'S lips are quivering gently to the words but no sound emits from them. SETH is in the cell, still active and on his feet.

SETH
Come on David old chum. Shake a
leg.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID looks almost comatose. SETH looks into an eye and waves a hand before DAVID's glassy gaze.

SETH

I know there's somebody home
somewhere, or I wouldn't be here.

DAVID comes to and looks at SETH.

DAVID

What's the point?

SETH

(ducking the question)
I wonder how long we've been here
now. Feels like years. It
probably has been years, hasn't
it?

SETH looks along the wall at a lot of check marks.

DAVID

About five or six years, I
reckon.

SETH

Five or six years. My my, has it
really been that long? That's a
jolly long time, isn't it?

DAVID

(sarcastically)
Yes, it's a jolly long time. A
very jolly jolly long time
indeed.

SETH

Sarcasm is the lowest form of
wit.

We see the wall with the three buttons. The red food light beeps three tones. We fix on that unchanging wall for a bit.

DAVID

Oh God.

DAVID jumps up and presses the DEATH button. A card the size of a postcard made of thick card falls into the hole below. The card is dark blue with white writing. DAVID grabs the card and reads it. SETH peers over his shoulder and reads the words aloud.

SETH

Hold the button for a count of
five to release the gas. You must
be certain that you want to die.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SETH (cont'd)
When you release the gas there is
no going back.

75 BLACKNESS

CAPTION: The Night Before The Event

76 INT.CHILDS BEDROOM.NIGHT

The room is lit in pink light by a weak lamp. AMY and
BEEZY are in the same bed beside each other with FELICITY
reading to them.

FELICITY
The tin soldier stood there
dressed in flames. He felt a
terrible heat, but whether it
came from the flames or from his
love he didn't know. He'd lost
his splendid colors, maybe from
his hard journey, maybe from
grief, nobody can say.
(to the children)
Grief is sadness, but bigger.
(back to the book)
He looked at the little lady, and
she looked at him, and he felt
himself melting. But still he
stood steadfast, with his musket
held trim on his shoulder. Then
the door blew open. A puff of
wind struck the dancer. She flew
like a sylph...

AMY
(interrupting)
What's a sylph?

FELICITY
A sylph? It's a sort of fairy.

BEEZY
Like a window sylph!

AMY
Or a sil-fer necklace.

FELICITY
Yes very funny.

BEEZY
Or a si...

FELICITY

Yes that's quite enough. Do let me finish the story. I'm really right at the end.

(continuing with the story)

She flew like a sylph, straight into the fire with the soldier, blazed up in a flash, and was gone! The tin soldier melted, all in a lump. The next day, when a servant took up the ashes...

(away from the book)

I wish mummy had a servant to pick up the ashes.

AMY

You've got daddy.

FELICITY

(sarcastically)

Yes, quite.

(back to the book)

She found him in the shape of a little tin heart. Because he loved her. And that's the end.

FELICITY snaps the book shut.

FELICITY

Right, are you ready to sleep now?

AMY

Does daddy love us?

FELICITY

Don't be silly darling, love doesn't exist in real life. It's just a story.

AMY

But I thought...

FELICITY

You mustn't think of silly things. You'll understand when you're older. It's time to go to sleep. Mummy's had a long day and wants to rest.

FELICITY tucks the children in.

FELICITY

Now go to sleep quietly like good little poppets.

77 BLACKNESS

Silence. A burning metal disc with a hole in it is melting, dripping hot metal in splotches onto a cold flat surface. The drops are forming a heart shape, casting a metal heart as in the story.

78 INT.DAVID'S STUDY.NIGHT

DAVID is typing on his computer. FELICITY comes in to see what he is doing.

FELICITY

That's the children off to bed.
What are you doing David dear?

DAVID

I'm working on the final few
plans for the project.

FELICITY sees the GOLD KEY on DAVID's desk. She picks it up with curiosity.

FELICITY

What's this key to?

DAVID

Oh, I don't know. Chloe gave it
to me.

FELICITY

(instantly jealous)
Who is this Chloe?

DAVID

(instantly anxious)
Um, from the office. She is...
she was... helping me with the
communications array.

FELICITY

What a strange looking key it is.
What does it open?

DAVID

I don't know. Maybe it's just for
decoration, she's a designer. I
don't know what it opens. Maybe
nothing!

FELICITY

Nothing? Really David, do you
expect me to believe that this
Chloe woman gave you a key...

(CONTINUED)

Silence. Mid sentence FELICITY stops making a sound. Her mouth keeps moving but we hear nothing. We still hear DAVID when he speaks though. DAVID is amazed.

DAVID

Wow!

FELICITY keeps chattering at DAVID, making no sound. SETH is suddenly there, invisible to FELICITY.

SETH

You can say that again.

DAVID

Wow! What just happened?

SETH

I don't know. I think... yes...
look!

We see the Johnstown project building model with no foliage at all, it looks like a pure shiny metal cube. A light is shining on it so that it looks especially angular, shiny, clean.

SETH (CONT'D)

The Johnstown project, it's
activated!

FELICITY finger wags, mouthing something about DAVID ignoring her. DAVID is blissful.

DAVID

I always knew it would work. I
knew it. I knew it!

DAVID pinches his fingers together.

DAVID

(joyously)

I feel nothing! Nothing at all! I
wonder if this is what God feels
like?

DAVID looks at the model again. FELICITY finally gives up, flaps a dismissive hand, and toddles off out the room.

LATER:

DAVID is slumped asleep over his desk. The hand of CHLOE reaches out to touch him on the back, awakening him at contact. She instantly vanishes. DAVID checks the time. He picks up the GOLD KEY and leaves the room.

79 INT.DAVID'S BEDROOM.NIGHT

DAVID slips into bed beside the sleeping FELICITY, still clutching the GOLD KEY. The scene ends with a shot of DAVID's eye closing, a mirror of the one of it first opening in the cell right at the start of the film.

80 CLIMAX

Yes, there's no scene heading. This is it, the film's big crescendo. There have been a few climaxes before but everything has been leading up to this point.

The scene starts with the burning metal disc. We fly through the hole.

Then we see a special montage and animation, with previous characters and scenes building a vast cube like a cathedral that grows to enormous proportions, awe inspiring, imposing, beautiful. The music is dramatic, choral, powerful, vast (I will probably compose this). The whole sequence lasts about five minutes. I'll work out the full sequence later.

But when it ends there is a dramatic contrast between its loud darkness and the silent whiteness of the next scene.

81 INT.CONCRETE CELL.DAYNIGHT

DAVID is now an old man, thin, grey bearded, toothless. OLD DAVID is sleeping in the cell, he awakes. The cell looks more organised and civilised. A makeshift washing line holds some rags. The bed is in one piece, tied into shape with torn strips of bedclothes and balanced on piles of concrete. SETH wakes him.

SETH

Come on old friend, it is time.

OLD DAVID

Yes. Let's get out of here.

OLD DAVID creaks upright and moves to the hole in the wall, now quite a substantial tunnel. He crawls in.

82 INT.BLACK VOID.NIGHT

DAVID'S hand appears through a hole, grasping in blackness.

83 INT.CONCRETE CELL.NIGHT

DAVID crawls into the tunnel, there's a hammering sound as he cuts away the last fragments of opening.

84 INT.AKO'S FLAT.NIGHT

OLD DAVID's head emerges into a dark room lit primarily from his cell. He blumps (that's now a word) onto the floor. He knocks a lamp over and finds a switch, clicking it to reveal that he is in AKO's flat, wrecked after the attack, he had tunneled in through the wall. Her body lies there, stiff, grey, dead.

OLD DAVID touches the cold body and recoils.

OLD DAVID
Crap. Shit.

SETH
(suddenly in the room with
him)
My goodness.

SETH stares at the hamster cage. The hamster is gone, the bars have been bent to make an escape hole. A drop of water falls from its bottle. OLD DAVID sits back, dejected.

OLD DAVID
That's it. There's no escape.

OLD DAVID buries his face in his hands and begins to cry. A light buzzes and blinks three times. We see that a wall of the flat has the three buttons like his cell, FOOD, WATER, DEATH. OLD DAVID looks up and sees the tin soldier on a shelf.

We see a brief flashback of BOY DAVID putting the tin soldier in his childhood model.

OLD DAVID has a revelation. He gets up and pushes and holds the DEATH button.

SETH
Are you sure you want to do this?

The hiss of gas fills the room.

OLD DAVID
No.

OLD DAVID collapses to the floor.

85

INT.DAVID'S BEDROOM.MORNING

OLD DAVID awakens in his warm home bed. An old woman wanders into the room wearing a nightgown beneath a dressing gown and slippers. She looks familiar, like FELICITY would be if she had aged as much as DAVID, and indeed it is his old wife. OLD FELICITY is wearing rollers and carrying a breakfast tray. She screams when she sees OLD DAVID.

OLD FELICITY

Who are you? Get out of my bed!

OLD DAVID

(groggy, sits up)

Felicity? Is that you? It's me, David.

OLD FELICITY

David? I don't know any David.

OLD DAVID

Your husband!

OLD FELICITY

Husband? He died... hang on... yes... I remember you. David! My Gosh! I thought you'd gone.

OLD DAVID is waking up, he's amazed, shocked, to be home. He sits up and looks around, at his hands, his pyjamas, the room...

OLD DAVID

I can't believe I'm home. I mean look, I'm home. I'm just, home!

OLD FELICITY

(amazingly unbothered)

I've not heard from you in years and now you suddenly turn up, like a lost dog.

OLD DAVID

It's been hell. You don't know what I've been through.

OLD DAVID relaxes back and starts to cry.

OLD FELICITY

It's too late for that now, David.

OLD DAVID

I'm sorry. I'm sorry I wasn't here.

(CONTINUED)

OLD FELICITY
(doesn't remotely know why
DAVID is sorry)
Sorry? I want you to know that
I've burned all of your things.
There's nothing left.

OLD DAVID
You burned everything?!
(pause)
I don't care. I'm back now and
that's all that matters. I'm
back. I'm back. I'm back! You
have no idea what I've been
through. No idea! And now it's
over. I'm just so...
(tearful)
happy.

OLD FELICITY
Come on, get out of bed. Let's
find you some clothes.

OLD FELICITY dumps the tray on a dressing table, moves over to a wardrobe, and opens a few drawers. She removes vintage looking clothes and holds them up for size.

OLD FELICITY (CONT'D)
There are some of Trevor's
clothes in here. That ought to
do.
(throws a white shirt on the
bed)
And these.

Grey trousers are thrown onto the bed too. The clothes look 1940's era like the DETECTIVE outfit. A new drawer opened and peered in.

OLD FELICITY (CONT'D)
There are some undies in here,
and a jacket. Help yourself.
Trevor was my second husband... I
think it was Trevor. He's gone
now, bless him.

OLD FELICITY stops to think.

OLD FELICITY
Come to think of it I don't think
his name was Trevor. Come to
think of it.
(pause)
I didn't burn his things though.
Not yet.

86 INT.DAVID'S DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY.DAY

OLD FELICITY is on the telephone as OLD DAVID comes downstairs stroking his newly shaven face. DAVID is now dressed like the DETECTIVE, without the hat though.

OLD FELICITY
 (into phone)
 Yes he says his name is David.
 (pause)
 That's what I said.
 (pause)
 That's what -I- said.

OLD DAVID comes down the stairs
 OLD FELICITY (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 Okay darling, see you soon.

OLD DAVID
 Who was that?

OLD FELICITY
 Beemy, my daughter. She's on her way.

OLD DAVID
 Beemy!

OLD FELICITY
 Oh yes... you're her father aren't you? Gosh my memory is awful. Funny though, she couldn't remember much about you either. Go into the kitchen and I'll make you some breakfast.

87 INT.DAVID'S KITCHEN.DAY

OLD DAVID is given a plate of bacon and eggs which he eats while gazing at a newspaper on the table beside them. The plate and all of the decor is 1950's now and painted lemon yellow. OLD FELICITY washes the dishes in a frilly apron.

OLD FELICITY
 It's no fun, old age. All you have to look forward to is death. Most of my friends are dead. The rest are all ill. All we talk about is doctor's appointments, tests for this and that. I take about fifty pills.

She stops to grab a pill box, tipping a couple out and filling a glass with water before taking them.

(CONTINUED)

OLD FELICITY
Do you want any?

OLD DAVID
Uh, what?

OLD FELICITY
(joking)
You can have some of mine if you
like?

OLD DAVID
(still reading the paper)
I've been away a long time.

Some toast pops up and OLD FELICITY sits down and starts to butter it, taking the odd bite here and there.

OLD FELICITY
Beemy is an air hostess now, you
know.

OLD DAVID
Really?

OLD FELICITY
She went to university and
everything. She has a doctorate
in philosophy but she wanted to
be an air hostess. Strange, don't
you think?

OLD DAVID
I don't know. If she studied
philosophy then she should know
what the best job is.

OLD FELICITY
She'll be here in a bit, with her
husband and little Elvis and
Eddie. They're my... our...
grandchildren.

OLD DAVID
Husband? I've missed so much.
(closing the paper)
So much. I feel dead. As good as
dead.

OLD FELICITY reaches for a metal enamel tea pot like something from the Second World War and pours a weak cup of sweet tea in a lemon yellow china cup with a gold rim with a ring of gold on the inside. (That's right, like CHLOE described in an earlier scene).

OLD FELICITY

This will perk you up. You mustn't worry. You're back with us now. Back in the land of the living.

OLD DAVID

It must have been hard, for you, I mean, without me.

OLD FELICITY

(distant, unsure)

Yes...

OLD DAVID

Sorry.

OLD FELICITY

All's well that ends well. Let's not dwell on the past. We mustn't dwell, must we?

OLD DAVID

Wait, what about Amy?

The back door suddenly swings open and the burly JOHNNY bursts like an explosion with the thirty-something OLD BEEMY and two boys of nine or ten or eleven-ish; ELVIS and EDDIE. JOHNNY is a large jovial man with a goatee beard and a biker jacket.

JOHNNY

Hello mate, Dave isn't it, how you doin'? I'm Johnny.

OLD DAVID stands and accepts JOHNNY's extended hand.

OLD DAVID

Hello...

JOHNNY

Put it there pal.

OLD BEEMY steps forward and the pair embrace warmly. The children run around the adults in circles.

OLD BEEMY

Mum said something about a prison?

OLD FELICITY

Shush darling, we don't want to encourage him. You know what the doctor said.

OLD DAVID

What?

OLD FELICITY

(patronisingly at DAVID)

You're doing very well David.

JOHNNY

Hey you look smashin'. Meet the kids, this is Elvis and this little tearaway is Eddie, named after Eddie from Eddie and the Hot Rods. I like me music, me.

OLD DAVID sees a cube on the window sill, a grey square cube like the Johnstown model building but smaller, about the size of a Rubik's cube.

OLD DAVID

(suspiciously)

What happened to the building?

OLD BEEMY

The building?

OLD DAVID

You know, the Johnstown project, the building I was working on that night? Did it get built?

Everybody freezes and looks nervously at each other at the mention of this taboo.

OLD BEEMY

It got built, dad. Remember...?

OLD DAVID pauses in deep thought.

OLD DAVID

Amy... What happened to Amy?

The atmosphere remains tense and awkward.

OLD BEEMY

She used to work as an interior designer...

OLD FELICITY

Please don't, David. We've been over this.

OLD DAVID thinks. He has a revelation.

OLD DAVID

That's it.

(pause, then excited)

That's it! Of course.

OLD DAVID gets up and runs for the door out of the kitchen.

88 INT.DAVID'S DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY.DAY

OLD DAVID runs from the kitchen.

89 INT.DAVID'S KITCHEN.DAY

JOHNNY

I knew he'd find out. Didn't I tell you!

OLD BEEMY

Oh shut up John!

90 INT.DAVID'S FRONT ROOM.DAY

The room is now filled with sewing, with pillows, butterfly toys, dolls, bunting. Things are piled so high that when the door moves they topple down. The door moves as OLD DAVID pushes his way into the room.

OLD DAVID is standing before the painting, staring at it. We see it. It's a full length portrait of a smiling AKO as an angel in a heavenly setting of white clouds, a golden sky. She is holding the GOLD KEY in her left hand. There is an oak tree behind her too. We see that the picture frame has a key hole in it. OLD DAVID sees it too and darts from the room.

91 INT.DAVID'S STUDY.DAY

OLD DAVID enters the study, a room now clean and neat. He pauses. There is no model, no table, just the desk. DAVID looks at the desk and moves to it quickly, frantically pulling open the drawers.

We see the GOLD KEY and the 45 A.C.P. inside one drawer. OLD DAVID takes the GOLD KEY, pauses, then takes the gun too. Putting it inside a shoulder holster that we didn't even know about before.

He's about to dash out of the room when he stops. We see the wide brimmed hat like the DETECTIVE wears hanging on the hat stand. DAVID grabs it and leaves the room.

92 INT.DAVID'S FRONT ROOM.DAY

OLD DAVID pushes into the front room again, now wearing the hat and fully dressed like the DETECTIVE.

He puts the key into the lock in the painting frame and twists it. The side of the frame pulls away, the picture is a door and it's opening. The painting swings open and OLD DAVID climbs into the black square hole.

93 INT.WRITERS STUDY.NIGHT

A shaft of daylight enters the room. A rectangular hole of light opens in one dark wall of the eternal night of the WRITER's study.

The WRITER is writing with his gold pen. He turns to see the door and see OLD DAVID climb in through it, now looking for all the world like the DETECTIVE, which he will be called from now on in this scene, and from now on OLD DAVID adopts the DETECTIVE's accent and persona. The DETECTIVE sees the startled WRITER. He takes his 45 A.C.P. out.

WRITER

You..! You're not supposed to be allowed in here.

DETECTIVE

(in a bad mood)

Shut up. See this.

The DETECTIVE waves the gun.

WRITER

(with expected anxiety at the gun)

What do you want me do to?

DETECTIVE

Over there.

The DETECTIVE points to a distant wooden cafe chair on his left then grabs a small round cafe table with his gunless hand, stabbing it hurriedly down before the seated writer. He grabs the brassy lamp from the desk and puts it on the table, focusing the beam on the WRITER, then finds a second chair for himself, facing the WRITER.

The DETECTIVE sits on the chair and puts the gun down on the table. The DETECTIVE leans back into shadows. He lights a cigar with a match that illuminates his OLD DAVID face briefly. Soon all that occupies that space now is the red spot of his smoke as he resumes the accent and persona of the 1940's DETECTIVE.

(CONTINUED)

WRITER

Are you going to shoot me with that?

DETECTIVE

Probably.

The WRITER puts his fancy pen on the table.

DETECTIVE

I wouldn't rate your chances. What's the deal with the cell?

WRITER

What about it?

DETECTIVE

Why'd you put me there? Some kind of entertainment.

WRITER

Who said I put you there?

DETECTIVE

Don't play funny with me. I'm not the kind of guy that likes jokes.

WRITER

I'm not joking. You put yourself in the the cell.

DETECTIVE

That's the screwiest thing I've heard all day. I spent thirty crappy years in that hole, and for what? I've lost everything; friends, family. My lungs are shot and I've got a bad feeling about my mind.

SETH appears standing by the table, he bends to speak intimately to the WRITER.

SETH

He talks to himself all the time you know.

SETH is gone. We see the cigar glow. Smoke puff.

DETECTIVE

So what have you got to say about it? Don't give me any of that "I didn't do it" crap.

He pauses while we see the pen.

(CONTINUED)

DETECTIVE

I know who pulls the strings to this puppet.

WRITER

You told me you wanted a story about isolation.

DETECTIVE

Yeah! I didn't mean me! Besides, I thought we were going to have a bit of fun. Just, I don't know, a knife maniac or something, people vanishing, something silly, mindless...

WRITER

(interrupts)

superficial? Why? It's been done a thousand times before. A million.

DETECTIVE

So?

WRITER

Why say the same thing over and over? It's stupid. What's that got to do with life, with anything? I mean, what's the point of a story at all? You have to say something about what it means to be alive.

DETECTIVE

Like I said, you're a pretty deep guy. Deep. Why don't you give us shallow guys what we want? After all, we outnumber you. What most people want is best. That's democracy.

WRITER

What, pander to the lowest tier, crawl and stab and car chase and explosion my way to popular success?

(pause)

Because you either pull society down or pull it up. They are the only two options.

The DETECTIVE stubs out his cigar on the table next to the gun. He casually picks up the gun, not pointing it at the WRITER yet.

(CONTINUED)

DETECTIVE

Yeah. I bet that's what you'd like to think, that you've got two options.

The WRITER looks at the pen.

DETECTIVE

But there's only ever one.

Bang! The DETECTIVE shoots the writer in the chest. The WRITER falls backwards to the floor.

The WRITER lies gasping, gargling with a frothy blood. The DETECTIVE bends over the dying man.

DETECTIVE

Well, you'll be dead soon. What do you think? How did it go?

The WRITER chokes and gargles with a deathly stare.

FELICITY appears behind the DETECTIVE as his moll companion.

FELICITY

(in an American accent)

It's what he always wanted.

The writer gasps and blinks, then in a shock move stops dying.

WRITER

(smiling, to camera)

No. That's not how it ends.

94 INT.AKO'S FLAT.NIGHT

We see AKO's body as seen after the attack. SANDY enters the room and touches her naked flesh.

SANDY

Are you okay?

AKO blinks, she is alive!

95 INT.CONCRETE CELL.DAYNIGHT

DAVID is sitting on the bed looking bored. The room is quite orderly; no check marks on the wall, no tunnel, no rubble. Slowly with a grating jerking push, a door in the wall opens. Someone is pushing it open from behind. DAVID sits up, shocked. CHLOE steps in smiling.

CHLOE and DAVID are standing before each other in the middle of the cell. They smile and kiss. The cell behind them vanishes and becomes a blue summer sky.

96

EXT.DAVID'S SUMMER GARDEN.DAY

We now see DAVID and CHLOE in the summer garden. All of the cast are here as a group except the DETECTIVE, all smiling and looking their best and looking at the happy couple. VIC is here who now looks friendly and nice. He warmly hugs AKO as she runs into the group smiling. BOY DAVID is smiling too and looks up at VIC. The WRITER is among the group. He lifts his pen and smiles as us.

WRITER

There is always another option.

End credits roll, initially typed with white letters on the blue sky background in our usual From the Life of the Marionettes font (you mean you didn't notice it was Courier?).

THE END