

GET CARTER

Screenplay by Mike Hodges

Based on the novel
Jack's Return Home by Ted Lewis

Revised Draft, 1971

Copyright (c) 1971
Turner Entertainment Co
All Rights Reserved.

Copyright (c) 1971
Mike Hodges
All Rights Reserved.

FADE IN:

EXT. PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - LONDON - NIGHT

Framed in the large picture window stands JACK CARTER, alone, looking out at the night. He turns away as the heavy satin curtains close, wiping him from view.

INT. FLETCHER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A blinding beam of light cuts across the room. One pornographic slide after another hits the screen at the opposite end of the room. They show a dowdy group in some anonymous bedroom, frozen in various stages of a sexual orgy.

GERALD FLETCHER is slumped on a sofa. His young wife, ANNA, is curled up beside him.

SID FLETCHER, operating the projector's remote-control, has the same flaccid appearance as his twin brother.

Jack Carter, drink in hand, watches from an armchair.

Clunk. Another slide hits the screen. Gerald is getting turned on. He runs his hand along his wife's stockinged leg. Anna shudders momentarily. She obviously finds his touch repulsive. Carter watches Gerald's hand.

GERALD
 (removing the cigar
 from his mouth)
 Bollock naked with his socks still
 on?

SID
 (thoughtfully)
 They do that up North.

GERALD
 What for? Protective purposes?

He laughs.

SID
 Ask me?

GERALD
 Ask Jack. It's his old stamping
 ground.

Carter turns sharply away to the cocktail cabinet. Lights and sweet music happen when he opens it.

Clunk. The slide changes.

SID
 Must be a bloody contortionist

Still looking at the screen, Gerald continues.

GERALD

We don't want you to go up the
North, Jack.

Jack and Anna look at each other momentarily. There is
definitely something between them.

JACK

No.

Clunk. The slide changes.

GERALD

(groans)
Not suede boots!

SID

Knock it off, Gerald.

GERALD

What? And get the clap?

Clunk. The slide changes.

GERALD

You work for us, Jack. We have
connections in those parts. I'd
hate you to screw 'em up.

Clunk. The slide changes.

GERALD

What's that? A python.

Sid laughs raucously. Clunk. The slide changes.

GERALD

What are you going for?

JACK

To find out what happened.

Clunk. The slide changes.

GERALD

Some hard nuts operate up there,
Jack. They won't take kindly to
someone from London poking his
bugle in.

JACK

Too bad.

GERALD

I smell trouble, boy.

Clunk. The slide changes.

SID

The law was satisfied.

JACK
Since when was that good enough?

Clunk. The slide changes.

GERALD
Think again, Jack.

JACK
I will.

EXT. RAIL TRACK - DAY

Express train plunges into a tunnel Blackness.

BEGIN TITLES:

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - DAY

The compartment is full. Jack Carter sits in one corner, reading a Raymond Chandler paperback, Farewell My Lovely.

EXT. RAIL TRACK - DAY

The train speeds northwards. In the distance the stacks of a lonely power station belch a continuous stream of brown smoke.

INT. TRAIN CORRIDOR - DAY

Carter steadies himself as he comes along the corridor.

EXT. RAIL TRACK - DAY

A massive iron bridge crossing a river whips past. Its mesh sides create an almost hypnotic effect.

INT. TRAIN TOILET - DAY

Carter tips his head back and dispenses drops into his nose.

EXT. RAIL TRACK - EVENING

The train breaks from another tunnel. Evening light cuts across the track as the train hurtles on.

INT. TRAIN RESTAURANT CAR - EVENING

Carter pours himself a glass of water and takes out a small phial of brown pills. He swallows one.

EXT. RAIL TRACK - NIGHT

A chemical factory, brightly lit, passes by and the outskirts of the city appear.

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

The train moves slowly along the platform and stops. Carter collects his coat and briefcase from the rack.

EXT. NEWCASTLE STATION - NIGHT

The street is fairly deserted.

Carter exits with other passengers from the train. He pauses and looks about before crossing to the pub opposite.

INT. THE LONG BAR - NIGHT

A couple of youths are playing records on the juke box. An old man sits in the corner reading a newspaper.

Carter enters through the swing door and a weedy BARMAN comes to serve him.

CARTER

Pint of bitter.

The barman picks up a glass mug and begins to draw the beer. Carter snaps his fingers at him.

CARTER

In a thin glass.

The barman sighs petulantly, transfers the beer into a thin glass and puts it on the counter.

A telephone rings. The second barman answers it.

BARMAN

Is there a Mr Carter in the room?

CARTER

Yes.

Carter walks to the far end of the bar and picks up the receiver.

CARTER

Hello?

(pause)

Margaret?

(pause)

Why the hell aren't you here?

(he lights a
cigarette.)

What time?

(pause)

Is Doreen at the house?

(pause)

Who's with him then?

(pause)

When can I see you? Will you be
there tomorrow?

(pause)

Now listen, Margaret...

The line goes dead. Carter hangs up.

INT. FRANK CARTER'S HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

A key hanging inside the letter box starts to move upwards and out through the flap. A moment later, the door opens. Carter is standing at the bottom of a flight of stairs in a worker's terraced house. He closes the door and climbs the stairs.

INT. FRANK CARTER'S HOUSE - LANDING - NIGHT

Carter moves cautiously. His eyes scan the peeling wallpaper, the mildew on the banisters. A roof leak hits an unseen bucket with depressing regularity.

INT. FRANK CARTER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

An unmade bed with pyjamas on it, a beaten-up wardrobe, a dressing table and chair are about it. Carter hears a vehicle stopping on the street below. He eases back the ancient net curtain. Two men in a Land Rover are looking up. They see him and quickly drive off.

Carter looks around the room. On top of the wardrobe there's an old shotgun. He reaches up and brings it down. Memories flood back. He reaches up again and finds a box of cartridges. More memories, Jack and Frank grew up here. He leaves the gun on the bed and returns to the landing.

INT. FRANK CARTER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Pitch black.

An overhead light snaps on to the face of a dead man FRANK CARTER. He is lying in a coffin. His eyes are closed, his skin made-up, like porcelain.

Carter stands over the coffin. He gently touches his brother's crossed hands and folds the shroud over his face. He exits, turning out the light and closing the door.

Darkness returns.

INT. 'LAS VEGAS' BOARDING HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - NIGHT

The landlady, EDNA GARFOOT, is climbing the stairs. She's well built, sexy, experienced. Carter follows with his baggage. He watches her appreciatively from behind.

CARTER

I won't be using the room tonight.

EDNA

(stops and turns)

I see.

CARTER

I'm staying with a friend.

EDNA
(continuing up the stairs)
Her husband docks tomorrow, does
he?

CARTER
(smiles)
It's not like that, luv.

EDNA
It never is.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door opens and the light goes on. It's a big room
overlooking the road, furnished cheaply but comfortably.

Edna and Carter enter, talking.

EDNA
Are you a traveller?

CARTER
(smiling)
Definitely.

EDNA
(surveying the room)
Will this do?

CARTER
(looking around)
Very nice. (He takes his wallet
out.) I'll pay you for tonight as
well.

EDNA
Don't be bloody silly. You're the
first since Monday.

CARTER
You sure?

Carter gives her the money.

EDNA
Ta.

CARTER
(feeling the mattress)
I'll bet this one's seen some
action.

Carter smiles and looks straight at her. Edna returns his
look, dead pan.

EDNA
I'll give you the key when you
come down.

She closes the door.

INT. FRANK CARTER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Carter moves around the coffin as he shaves. His electric razor is plugged into the lamp above his dead brother.

INT. FRANK CARTER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The coffin lid is being screwed down.

Carter stirs a cup of instant coffee while watching the undertakers at work.

CARTER

Was he in bad shape?

UNDERTAKER

They come worse.

INT. HEARSE - DAY

The hearse is parked outside the row of terraced houses. A youthful UNDERTAKER is minding it. He turns and looks through the back window as a young girl walks up the street.

DOREEN CARTER is sixteen and, like most girls of her age, tries to look older. She wears all the right gear but it's cheap and doesn't fit properly. Her long hair is lank. There's something sad and embarrassing about her appearance. The young undertaker watches as she enters Frank's house.

INT. FRANK CARTER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The door opens slowly. Doreen stands there looking at the coffin. Carter sees her.

CARTER

Doreen?

She seems mesmerized by what's going on.

CARTER

All right, are you?

Doreen doesn't answer.

CARTER

Been staying with a friend?

Doreen nods. The undertaker coughs and thrusts another screw into the coffin.

CARTER

Sorry about your father.

DOREEN

(pause)

Yeah.

CARTER

Tell me, Doreen, did the police say anything?

DOREEN
(dazed)
They said he was drunk.

INT. HEARSE - DAY

The young undertaker is still in the hearse listening to the radio. In the driving mirror he sees the Land Rover moving slowly tip the road. It stops by the house. Two men suss the scene and drive off.

INT. FRANK CARTER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

CARTER
How's school?

DOREEN
I left last year.

CARTER
Oh, what you doing now?

DOREEN
Working at Woolworths.

CARTER
That must be interesting.

DOREEN
Yes.

Carter and Doreen look at each other awkwardly.

CARTER
What you going to do? Live with
Margaret?

Doreen looks at him nervously, shakes her head and fumbles in her bag for a cigarette.

Carter continues, slightly indignant.

CARTER
Well, why won't you come with us
to South America? My fiancée won't
mind,
(pause)
Your dad would have wanted it.

The undertaker puts the final screw in.

UNDERTAKER
(to colleague)
Get Hughbert up, will you?
(to Carter)
We're ready now, sir.

EXT. FRANK CARTER'S HOUSE - DAY

The undertakers struggle with the coffin down the narrow staircase into the street. Outside Carter and Doreen wait with two men. EDDIE APPELYARD, a middle-aged man, is wearing a shabby tweed suit, cap and black tie. KEITH LACEY is a young barman who worked with Frank.

EDDIE

We weren't sure where it was taking place, like.

CARTER

Nice of you to come.

EDDIE

No. Frank was a good bloke.

KEITH

He was that.

EDDIE

One of the best.

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

Through the windscreen of the following limousine Carter can see his brother's coffin in the hearse as it moves slowly through the streets of the city. Sitting in front on fold-out seats are Eddie and Keith.

KEITH

I couldn't believe it when I heard. Carter is suddenly attentive.

CARTER

What?

KEITH

I mean, I was surprised when he didn't turn up for work. He was always on time.

CARTER

Did you work with him, Keith?

KEITH

At the Half Moon.

EDDIE

(not to be left out)

It's a bloody funny thing. You know a bloke for six bloody years and all the time he's as calm as gentle Jesus...

(pause)

...then he goes and does a thing like that.

(he shakes his head.)

It's a bloody funny thing.

CARTER
(quietly)
Yeah. A bloody funny thing!

EXT. CREMATORIUM GATES - DAY

As the cortege drives into the crematorium, it passes the Land Rover parked outside. The same two men who passed Frank's house are in it. A long and expensive-looking funeral cortege passes out as they move up the driveway.

INT. CREMATORIUM - DAY

Carter, Doreen, Eddie and Keith are in the front pews facing the catafalque on which Frank's coffin rests. The vicar is already midway through the solemn words of the 'committal' when a woman enters. The clunk of her high heels cuts through the silence. Everybody looks round.

CARTER
(whispering to Doreen)
Is that Margaret?

Doreen nods. Frank's coffin sinks out of sight.

INT. CREMATORIUM COMMITTAL CHAMBER - DAY

Two men in long grey coats wait in silence. The coffin appears. Expertly, they take it and swing it on to a trolley. They push it up the wide corridor towards the furnace. One of the men starts whistling cheerfully.

EXT. CREMATORIUM - DAY

MARGARET is thirtyish, blonde, attractive in a tarty kind of way. Her heels are too high and she is wearing a cheap pair of sunglasses. She walks quickly away, down the cloisters, past the memorial tablets and urns.

Carter comes out of the chapel and sees her.

CARTER
Margaret.

Margaret stops and looks round. Carter joins her. I thought you weren't coming.

MARGARET
Changed me mind.

They face each other in silence. Margaret looks past Carter and sees Doreen watching them at the end of the cloisters. She turns away and starts walking slowly. Carter moves with her. Margaret continues nervously.

MARGARET
Everything go off all right?

CARTER

Fine...

(pause)

I want to talk to you.

MARGARET

What about?

CARTER

Doreen.

Margaret stops in her tracks and looks back at Doreen.
She's still watching them.

MARGARET

(adamantly)

She's nothing to do with me.

CARTER

(puzzled)

What do you mean? You've been
Frank's bird ever since her mother
cleared off. You're closer to her
than anyone.

MARGARET

(shaking her head)

No. No. It's not like that. I've
got a husband, you know.

Margaret starts walking again, fast.

Carter catches hold of her arm and stops her.

CARTER

Hold it! Hold it!

(looking her in the
eye)

Who killed Frank, Margaret?

MARGARET

(nervously)

Killed? I don't know anything
about it.

She moves off rapidly. Carter catches up with her.

CARTER

Really.

MARGARET

I must go. I'm in a hurry.

CARTER

I want to talk to you later.

MARGARET

I can't.

CARTER
 Tomorrow morning, then?

Margaret dithers.

MARGARET
 Well, all right then. Twelve o'clock
 on the Iron Bridge.

Margaret walks off as calmly as she can, her high heels clicking as she goes. Carter watches her disappear. Doreen watches too.

INT. CREMATORIUM COMMITTAL CHAMBER - DAY

Frank's coffin is slid inside the furnace. Flames start to lick it as the steel trap closes.

INT. THE HALF MOON PUB - DAY

It's a large room with a horseshoe bar in the centre, a real boozier. A handful of hard drinkers are already in position.

Carter, Doreen, Keith and Eddie are sitting alone. Their table is already covered with glasses. Doreen appears to be slightly drunk on Babycham, Eddie on whisky and Keith on beer. Carter is stone-cold sober.

EDDIE
 Absent friends.
 (He raises his glass
 and drinks, then
 continues
 thoughtfully.)
 You don't think he might have done
 it on purpose?

KEITH
 What? You mean, like, kill himself?

Eddie and Keith look at each other.

Doreen watches them. She is getting very upset by the conversation.

KEITH
 Naw. Frank? Kill himself? You what?

Carter stares at Keith, who is getting uncomfortable.

KEITH
 I mean, what for?

CARTER
 That's what I was wondering.

KEITH

Come off it. Frank was... well... straight. He had no worries I know. Hell, we worked together every day for a year. It would have showed.

CARTER

Why would it?

KEITH

It just would. He was always the same.

CARTER

Since when did he drink whisky?

KEITH

Don't know.

CARTER

Nobody seems to know.

Doreen is now crying openly.

EDDIE

(finishing off his
drink)

Bloody good bloke. One of the best.

DOREEN

(blurts out)

How would you know?

(She suddenly jumps
up and empties her
glass in Eddie's
face.)

Or you? Or you? None of you knew.
I knew. He was me dad.

She runs off out of the door crying. Keith goes to follow.
Carter puts his hand out to restrain him.

CARTER

Let her go. She'll be OK.

(to Eddie)

Sorry about that.

EDDIE

(wiping his face
with a handkerchief)

Don't worry. She's bound to be
upset.

CARTER

(to Eddie)

Have another?

EDDIE

No. I'll be off now. I should be
at work.

Eddie stands up, cap in hand. Carter pulls out a wad of money.

CARTER
Look, look.
(He peels off a
note.)
Get your suit cleaned.

EDDIE
No. It's all right.

CARTER
(standing, pushes
the note in his
top pocket)
Thanks for coming.

EDDIE
Frank was a good bloke. It's the
least I could have done.

Eddie leaves.

CARTER
You work here, Keith?

KEITH
Yes.

Carter thinks for a moment, then leans forward to Keith.

CARTER
Keith, if anybody comes in here
and asks for me, you let me know.
Right?

KEITH
Right.

CARTER
I'm at the Las Vegas. Behind the
dance hall.
(He casts an eye
around the bar.)
Do you know a man called Albert
Swift?

KEITH
Yeah. He comes in here a bit.

CARTER
Where would I find him?

KEITH
Today? At the races. He always
goes.

Carter takes out his phial of pills.

KEITH
How'd you know Albert?

CARTER
Went to school with him.
(smiles)
He was leader of our gang. He'll
know what's going on in this town.

EXT. RACE TRACK - DAY

The rain has just stopped. Bookies and punters lower their umbrellas. Horses thunder towards the finishing post. Turf flies in all directions as the jockeys whip their mounts in a last desperate effort and the crowd roars.

EXT. TRACK ENCLOSURE - DAY

Albert Swift is standing by a bookmaker's marking his race card with a biro. A hot dog is sticking out of his mouth, like a cigar. A man of about thirty-five, he appears much older, probably from an excess of booze and women. He looks up, and his mouth drops open, the hot dog falling to the ground. He has seen Carter.

EXT. TRACK ENCLOSURE - DAY

Carter is pushing his way along the line of bookies, all the time looking about him. The track loudspeaker announces the winner of the last race.

EXT. TRACK ENCLOSURE - DAY

Albert pales. He holds his race card in front of his face and disappears into the crowd. As he moves off, his foot steps on the hot dog and tomato ketchup oozes out.

EXT. TRACK SADDLING ENCLOSURE - DAY

Carter stands alone, casting an eye over the punters. His eyes rest on someone the other side of the saddling ring ERIC PAICE. Dressed in a grey chauffeur's uniform, cap, dark glasses and gloves, he is standing close to three well-heeled-looking men with binoculars and shooting sticks.

Horses for the next race are being led around the enclosure. Carter approaches from behind. He looks at Eric closely before speaking.

CARTER
Grey suits you, Eric.

Eric swings round, startled.

ERIC
Good God!

Carter smiles.

CARTER

Is he?

ERIC

Jack Carter.

CARTER

(amused)

Eric. Eric Paice.

ERIC

What you doing around here then?

CARTER

Didn't you know this is my home town?

ERIC

No, I didn't know that.

CARTER

Funny, that.

Carter takes out his cigarettes. Eric takes one.

ERIC

Thanks. So what're you doing? On your holidays?

CARTER

No. I'm visiting relatives.

ERIC

Oh, that's nice.

CARTER

It would be. If they were still living.

ERIC

Meaning what?

CARTER

A bereavement. A death in the family.

ERIC

Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

CARTER

That's all right, Eric.

Carter flicks bis lighter and gives Eric a, light.

ERIC

Well, well. Small world, isn't it?

CARTER

Very...

(pause)

So, who you working for these days
Eric?

ERIC

Oh, I'm straight.

(indicating uniform)

Respectable.

CARTER

(smiling)

What are you doing? Advertising
Martini?

ERIC

Oh, you've been watching television.

CARTER

Yeah,

(pause)

Come off it, Eric. Who is it?

Eric smiles back.

CARTER

Brumby?

Eric shakes his head.

CARTER

Kinnear?

Eric shakes his head

ERIC

What's it to you anyway?

CARTER

I've always ad your welfare at
heart, Eric. Besides which, I'm
nosy.

ERIC

That's not always a healthy way to
be...

CARTER

And you should know, if I remember
rightly.

A track announcement interrupts them.

CARTER

So you're doing all right then,
Eric. You're making good.

ERIC

Making a living.

CARTER

Good prospects for advancement, is there? A pension?

(He can't resist it any longer. He lifts the sunglasses off Eric's nose and looks into his eyes.)

Do you know, I'd almost forgotten what your eyes looked like.

Eric stares back.

CARTER

They're still the same. Piss holes in the snow.

ERIC

Still got a sense of humour?

CARTER

Yes, I retained that, Eric.

(He moves towards the saddling ring and turns to Eric.)

Do you know a man called Albert Swift, Eric?

ERIC

Can't say I do.

Carter looks across at the track.

CARTER

Don't miss the start on my account.

EXT. RACE TRACK - DAY

Starting gates slam open and the horses leap out.

INT. HIRE CAR - AFTERNOON

Carter is driving along a country road. Ahead, two cars are between him and a Cadillac with dark-tinted windows. The Cadillac turns on to a minor road. Carter follows.

INT. CADILLAC - LATE AFTERNOON

Eric Paice is driving. In the back sit the three men seen with him at the race track. The drinks compartment is open and they are helping themselves to champagne. Racing results come over the car radio.

INT. HIRE CAR - LATE AFTERNOON

Carter follows the Cadillac at a safe distance. It turns into a driveway. Carter slows down and reads a sign by the entrance: The Heights.

He drives on and parks.

EXT. THE HEIGHTS - LATE AFTERNOON

Carter comes through a wooded area. He pauses by a lake, now overgrown with weeds. A big man stands tossing stones into the water. Carter silently picks up a dead branch then runs at the man. Carter whacks him on the head and he collapses unconscious into the lake. Carter moves on towards the house. MARTY and RAY the two men previously seen in the Land Rover, are playing with an Alsatian on the spacious lawn fronting the house. It's a Victorian building surrounded by acres of woodland.

Carter breaks from the trees and darts for the side door. One of the men notices and shouts after him.

INT. THE HEIGHTS - LATE AFTERNOON

Carter runs into the house and slips into a small service room. Ray and then Marty charge inside but miss seeing Carter.

INT. THE HEIGHTS - SITTING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

A game of poker is in progress. Seated around the table are the three men with Eric at the race track. With them is an elegant man, CYRIL KINNEAR. On the sofa are GLENDA, a sexy-looking young woman, and Eric Paice.

Ray bursts in.

RAY

Carter's here.

Eric jumps up.

ERIC

Where?

RAY

I don't know.

ERIC

You stupid shit!

Carter walks past Ray, blowing him a kiss.

Kinnear watches with some amusement.

KINNEAR

You see what it's like these days,
Jack. You can't get the material.

Carter looks at Eric.

CARTER

Yes, I can see your problem, Mr
Kinnear.

KINNEAR

Sit down, Jack,

(pause)

I could weep. I really could.

Sometimes I think I'll retire.

Just piss off to the Bahamas and

let somebody else employ them,

(to girl)

Glenda, get Jack a drink. What is it, Jack?

CARTER

(to Glenda)

Scotch, please.

KINNEAR

(to bouncer)

Piss off, Ray.

Ray closes the door behind him.

Glenda brings Carter his Scotch. He looks at her as she sits beside him.

KINNEAR

Eric told me of your bereavement.

CARTER

Yep.

KINNEAR

Do you know, I never knew he worked in one of my places!

CARTER

No? Funny that. Neither did I.

KINNEAR

If I'd known, I'd have fixed him up with something better.

CARTER

Yeah.

KINNEAR

Nasty way to go.

CARTER

Yes.

One of the three men sitting around the table with Kinnear gets impatient. PETER, LES AND HARRY are well-heeled, middle-aged, northern businessmen.

HARRY

Are we here to play cards or talk about the old days?

KINNEAR

Harry! Jack, I don't want to be rude, but these men have brought a lot of money with them. Glenda, you don't offer a man like Jack a drink in those piddling little glasses. Give him the bloody bottle.

(He picks up his cards.)

Now, where are we?

Harry keeps a cold, wary eye on him.

KINNEAR

Oh... I think I'll stay as I am.

HARRY

(shaken)

You're bluffing, you bastard!

KINNEAR

That's what you pay to find out. Right, Jack?

CARTER

Right. If you can afford it.

HARRY

(to Carter)

Thought you were going soon.

CARTER

Soon. When you've lost your money. Won't take long.

HARRY

Clever sod, aren't you?

CARTER

Only comparatively.

KINNEAR

Harry, I don't like to push, but could you let us know how much your hand's worth?

Harry looks at his cards. Glenda tucks her legs up, making sure that Carter gets an eyeful.

GLENDA

You know Sid Fletcher?

CARTER

What?

GLENDA

You know Sid Fletcher?

CARTER

I work for him.

GLEENDA

Do you?

CARTER

(amused)

Yes, I do.

Carter looks back at the table. Kinneer pushes in some money.

HARRY

What's that? A hundred?

KINNEAR

That's right, Harry.

HARRY

Your hundred, and another hundred.

Kinneer lays more cash on the table.

HARRY

What's that?

KINNEAR

That, Harry? That's another hundred - twenty-five pounds notes of the realm.

HARRY

Three hundred altogether?

KINNEAR

Three hundred altogether, Harry.

Glenda attracts Carter's attention again.

GLEENDA

I know him too.

CARTER

Who?

GLEENDA

Sid Fletcher.

CARTER

(sending her up)

Oh, do you?

GLEENDA

(dumb)

Yes.

CARTER

No, do you really?

Carter turns to the table yet again.

Harry nervously puts another hundred on the table. Kinnear purses his lips.

KINNEAR

I'll follow that and go two hundred.

Harry looks sick.

KINNEAR

You can always see me, Harry.

Harry sweats and then smiles nervously.

HARRY

All right. Two hundred.

KINNEAR

(raises an eyebrow)

Ha.

Kinnear takes a wad of notes out of his pocket. Glenda, shifts herself on the sofa.

GLENDA

Yes. I met him last year.

CARTER

Go on.

GLENDA

Oh yes. When he came up on business.

CARTER

Really?

GLENDA

He came to see Mr Kinnear.

CARTER

No.

Carter, getting bored, looks back at the game.

HARRY

(panicking)

What's that?

KINNEAR

That's six hundred pounds, Harry.
Two hundred to follow you, and
I've raised it four hundred.

Harry sweats some more.

HARRY

Four hundred?

KINNEAR

That's right.

HARRY
You're not seeing me?

KINNEAR
No.

Harry smiles nervously. He counts some money out.

HARRY
I'll see you, then.

KINNEAR
Calling my bluff, are you, Harry?

Harry nods.

Glenda speaks, but this time Carter keeps his eyes on the table. Kinnear lays out his hand – a hearts flush, queen high.

GLENDA
We went about together.

CARTER
Really?

GLENDA
Yes, while he was here.

CARTER
While he was here. You went about together?

GLENDA
He was here for four days.

CARTER
Was he?

GLENDA
Could you do me a favour?

CARTER
Yeah, I'll do you a favour.

GLENDA
Could you please put my glass on the table?

Carter smiles and does just that.

KINNEAR
Oh, come on, Harry. I haven't won, have I? Go on, you're pulling my leg.

Kinnear leans across to pick up Harry's cards. Harry grabs them and puts them in the pack. Kinnear turns to Carter.

KINNEAR
How about that, Jack? Old Harry
thought I was having him on.

HARRY
Shut up.

Carter gets up from the sofa.

KINNEAR
Not going, Jack?

CARTER
I have to. Things to see to.

KINNEAR
Of course, of course. Well, any
time, just drop by.

CARTER
Yeah, I'll do that.
(He points at Harry.)
Told you it wouldn't take long,
didn't I?

Eric opens the door and follows him out.

INT. THE HEIGHTS - HALLWAY - EVENING

Carter moves towards the front door.

ERIC
Jack! I didn't like that.

CARTER
You should have told me who you
were working for.

ERIC
Cyril didn't like it, either.

CARTER
Oh, Cyril, eh? So it's all girls
together, is it?

ERIC
He's thinking Sid and Gerald won't
like it much when they hear you've
been sticking your nose in.

Carter carries on walking to the front door. He opens it.

CARTER
He's right. Tell him to save the
cost of the phone call.

Carter leaves. Eric signals Ray to follow him.

EXT. SCRAPYARD - DAY

Huge metal claw catches hold of an old car and lifts it like it was a toy. The yard is beside the River Tyne. In the distance a train crosses the Iron Bridge.

Carter is examining a beaten-up Hillman when the yard owner, BILLY LAWS, approaches.

BILLY
(suspicious)
What do you want?

CARTER
What happened to this car?

BILLY
What's it got to do with you?

CARTER
This is my brother's car.

BILLY
Oh ay?

CARTER
Yeah.

BILLY
Well, he drove it into the river.

CARTER
Was the steering faulty?

Billy shakes his head.

CARTER
What about the brakes?

BILLY
Fine. Nowt wrong with them.

CARTER
How'd it happen, then?

BILLY
He was drunk. Drunk as a lord.

CARTER
Was he?

INT. THE HALF MOON - NIGHT

A big, busty pub singer is performing on the small stage. A trio on her right plays a good, grinding, up-tempo number.

Carter comes through the door. He pushes his way through the packed drunken crowd to the bar. Keith serves him.

KEITH
What you having, Jack?

CARTER

Large Scotch.

Carter watches the singer. The customers cheer and whistle. Keith returns with the Scotch. He looks nervously around and speaks to Carter quietly.

KEITH

Heard of a man called Thorpe?

CARTER

Old Thorpey? Haven't seen him in a long time.

KEITH

(picking up Carter's money)

That's what he was saying about you.

Keith takes the money to the till. The music grinds away. Keith returns.

KEITH

Said he'd heard you were up in town. Wondered if I knew where you was staying. Wanted to look you up. Old time's sake.

CARTER

That's nice. What'd you tell him?

KEITH

Nowt.

CARTER

Good lad.

Carter watches the singer, then finishes his drink.

CARTER

See you later.

KEITH

Where you off to?

CARTER

(smiling)

Las Vegas.

Carter makes for the door. The singer is now moving through the tables. She pauses to give some man a kiss. Everybody cheers.

The woman sitting with the man snaps. She picks up his glass of beer and throws it over the singer; then grabs her hair and pulls her to the ground.

Carter stops to watch. The two women roll on the floor, punching and scratching.

Carter smiles and leaves.

EXT. ALLEY IN TOWN CENTRE - NIGHT

On the corner is a neon-lit snack bar. Doreen and another young girl are sitting inside sucking milk shakes. Somewhere a drunk is singing. His voice echoes up the alley.

Carter draws alongside and notices Doreen. He stops and watches her. She hasn't seen him so he goes to the window and knocks on it. She looks up and he beckons her outside. Reluctantly, she comes.

CARTER
(gently)
You all right now?

DOREEN
Yeah.

CARTER
You coming to South America?

DOREEN
No.

Carter's hurt and slightly irritated by this rejection.

CARTER
Where you going to live, then?

DOREEN
At me friend's house.

CARTER
Where's that?

DOREEN
Wilton Estate.

CARTER
Nice family, are they? Church-goers
and all that?

Doreen nods.

CARTER
Good. I'm off tomorrow, so I don't
suppose I'll see you again.
(He pulls out a wad
of money, and peels
off some notes.)
There. Go and get your hair done.

DOREEN
(Can't believe it)
Thanks.

He lifts her chin with his finger and looks at her.

CARTER

Be good. And don't trust boys.

Doreen blushes and turns away. She rushes back to the snack bar with the money to show her friend.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - HALL/SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

The front door opens and Carter enters.

Standing on the hall table is a small wooden casket with an envelope taped to it. Carter pockets the envelope and picks up the casket.

EDNA (O.S.)

That was left for you this evening.

Carter walks past her into the sitting room.

EDNA

What is it?

CARTER

My brother, Frank.

EDNA

Is he staying the night?

CARTER

Funny.

(He puts the casket
on a side table.)

Can I phone London?

EDNA

It'll cost you.

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna is undressing. She's alone. Pulling the short black-silk underslip over her head, she stands in front of a long mirror, clad only in black panties, bra and tights. She looks at herself appreciatively. The phone rings. She flops on the bed and picks up the receiver.

ANNA

Hello.

A voice speaks on the end of the line.

ANNA

How I miss you.

(She stretches
herself out sexily
and smiles.)

Stop it, darling.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

It's a cosy room. Carter is on the telephone. EDNA sits in a rocking chair.

CARTER
(looking at Edna)
I fancy you. I wish I was touching
you right now...

Edna turns towards him. Carter fixes her with his eyes.
Edna rocks herself gently. Carter continues softly.

CARTER
...making love to you. I want to
stroke you and kiss you all over.
Where are you?

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna is lying full-length on the bed.

ANNA
In the bedroom.

Carter speaks on the other end.

ANNA
My black underwear.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Edna rocks backwards and forwards.

CARTER
(quietly)
The sexy, silk ones?

Anna replies. He continues softly.

CARTER
Take your bra off.
(pause)
No, go on.

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna unhooks her bra. There's a flash of breasts.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

The scene as before.

CARTER
Now hold them. Gently.

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna's hands cover her breasts. Her head moves slowly from
side to side, eyes closed.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Scene as before.

CARTER

Slowly. Imagine it's me.

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna's hand caresses the inside of her leg. Her head rolls from side to side slowly. She's breathing heavily.

CROSS-CUT between Edna's head rocking backwards and forwards and Anna's head moving from side to side.

CARTER (V.O.)

When we're in South America, we'll
make love in the sun. Roll over...
and make love again... and again...
For me... I fancy you...

THE SPEED OF THE CUTTING BUILDS.

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Suddenly the door opens and Gerald comes in. He sees Anna groaning on the bed.

GERALD

What's the matter? You got gut
trouble or something?

Anna sits up abruptly and puts her hand over the receiver.

ANNA

No, darling. Just doing some
exercises,
(into telephone)
Listen, Janet, Gerald's just got
in, so I must ring off.
(pause)
Yes. Yes. I'll come tomorrow.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Scene as before.

CARTER

Save it till Sunday. I'll be back
then.

Carter replaces the receiver. He still holds Edna's eyes. She rocks to and fro. The rocker creaks.

The front door bell breaks the mood.

CARTER

That'll be for me.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

Carter opens the door. Keith is outside. He's sweating. His tie is somewhere round the back of his neck and his suit is covered with dirt.

KEITH
Thorpey. They were waiting for us
in the car park.

CARTER
How many?

KEITH
Four of them.

Carter pulls Keith inside and turns out the light.

A Ford Zodiac comes along the road. It stops. Four faces
peer into the darkness where they're standing. Nobody gets
out. The back window winds down. Thorpe's nervous voice
floats out.

THORPE
Jack?

CARTER
Good evening.

THORPE
I'd like a word with you, Jack.

CARTER
That's nice.

THORPE
Confidential, like.

CARTER
You stay in the car. I'll come and
listen. (
 (He leaves the
 darkness and walks
 to the car.)
What you want to tell me, Thorpey?

Thorpe holds out his hand.

THORPE
I've been asked to give you this.

He hands Carter a railway ticket. Carter smiles.

THORPE
Train goes at four minutes past
twelve. You've just got time.

CARTER
That's very kind of somebody. Who
do I have to thank? (pause) What
happens if I miss the train?

THORPE
I've been asked to make sure you
don't.

CARTER

Oh, really. You're getting very optimistic in your old age, aren't you, Thorpey?

One of the men inside mutters.

MAN

Let's stop pissing about.

THORPE

Are you coming, Jack? It'd be best.

Carter tears the ticket in half and drops it in the gutter.

THORPE

Right lads.

The front passenger door starts to open. Carter grabs it and pulls it wide open. With all his force, he slams it against the man as he gets out. The window shatters over his head. Blood spurts everywhere. The driver panics. He accelerates away as the man in the back is getting out. His foot is trapped in a safety belt. He's upended and dragged along the tarmac, his head dangerously close to the back wheel. His yells make the driver brake. In the confusion Thorpe escapes from the car and makes off. Carter spots him and begins to run.

CARTER

(roars)

Thorpe!

Thorpe turns into the main road. He makes for the dance hall and disappears inside. Carter follows.

INT. DANCE HALL - NIGHT

The dance floor is full, mainly with miniskirted girls, their handbags at their feet. A rock band play mechanical music to match the dancing.

Thorpe vanishes into the crowd circling the floor. Carter arrives. He scans the place, then sees Thorpe as he disappears down into the gents' lavatory.

INT. DANCE HALL - GENTS' LAVATORY - NIGHT

Carter enters. There's no sign of Thorpe. He checks the cubicles until he finds the one that's occupied, then goes into the next one. He climbs on the seat and looks over the partition. Thorpe is sitting down looking at the door. Carter quietly leans across and pulls the chain. Thorpe jumps up, terrified.

CARTER

Time's up, Thorpey.

Carter smiles.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHT

Keith kicks broken glass into the gutter while he waits. Edna's next-door neighbour, an OLD WOMAN, watches. Carter and Thorpe come down the street.

CARTER

Hello, Keith,
(pause)
Stay there, Thorpey.

He knocks on Edna's door. It flies open. Edna is furious.

EDNA

What the bloody hell do you think
you're at?

CARTER

(smiles)
I'm sorry.

EDNA

You don't look it.

CARTER

No. Really, I am.

EDNA

Don't come that bloody flannel
with me. If you're a traveller,
I'm bloody Twiggy.

(She points at
Thorpe.)
And who's he?

OLD WOMAN

What's going on? Have you no thought
for others?

CARTER

We're going inside.

EDNA

Inside? Why should I give house-
room to your sort?

CARTER

Up the stairs, Keith. The door on
the right.

OLD WOMAN

Everybody knows you, Edna Garfoot.
Everybody knew there'd be trouble
when you moved in.

Carter, Keith and Thorpe enter the house.

EDNA

You keep your trap shut, Ma.

OLD WOMAN

I'll send my old man to see you!

EDNA

And wouldn't he love it!

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

Carter, Thorpe and Keith are climbing the stairs. Carter stops to pick up Frank's casket. Edna rushes in and slams the door.

EDNA

Where do you think you're going?

Carter opens the door to his room.

CARTER

Why don't you go and make us all a nice cup of tea?

Carter shoves Thorpe into the room. Keith follows.

EDNA

And what you going to do?

CARTER

Make us a nice cup of tea and I'll tell you. I might even let you watch.

EDNA

I'll call the police.

CARTER

(He knows she fancies him)
No, you won't.

Carter closes the door.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Carter carefully places the casket on the chest of drawers.

CARTER

Well now, Thorpey. It seems I've got a secret benefactor.

(He moves into the room and opens his briefcase, which is lying on the bed.)

It's nice to know that. Isn't it, Keith?

(He takes out a bottle of whisky.)

There's only one trouble, I don't know who to thank.

Thorpe looks longingly at the bottle of Scotch. Suddenly Carter punches him hard in the stomach. He grunts and collapses into a chair.

CARTER

Now, I want to know who it is,
Thorpey.

Carter tosses the whisky bottle to Keith and continues wearily.

CARTER

All right. If you like, Thorpey,
we'll stop mucking about. Somebody
doesn't want me poking my nose
into something and I happen to
know what that something is.

(pause)

Now stand up.

Thorpe looks at him, terrified. Slowly he stands. Carter grabs him by the testicles and applies pressure. Thorpe screams.

CARTER

Who paid you to see me off?

THORPE

I can't Jack. How can I?

CARTER

Yes you can.

Carter applies more pressure. Thorpe screams.

THORPE

No, don't Jack, don't.

CARTER

Who sent you, Thorpey?

THORPE

(desperate)

Brumby!

Carter gives him a final squeeze and lets go. Thorpe groans and slips to the floor, doubled up in agony.

CARTER

There you are, you see. Now you
could, couldn't you?

(pause)

And quickly.

There's a knock on the door. Carter lets in Edna, who is carrying the teatray.

CARTER

Ah, Edna, come in. Join the tea
set.

KEITH

Who's Brumby?

CARTER

Cliff Brumby. Ever been to Westsea?

Keith nods.

CARTER

Ever been into an arcade there and put a penny in the slot machine?

KEITH

Yeah.

CARTER

Ten to one, it belonged to Cliff Brumby, and like as not the bloody arcade as well. Right along the coast. Isn't that right, Thorpey?

Thorpe drags himself painfully to a chair.

CARTER

Where's he living these days?

THORPE

He's got a new place at Burnham.

CARTER

Address?

THORPE

On the Durham Road. The Pantiles.

EDNA

(furious)

Suppose you tell me what the bloody hell's going on. It's my house, you know.

CARTER

Yes, Edna, and I must say you've been great about the ...

EDNA

Stick the soft soap. Let's be having it.

Thorpe's plaintive voice interrupts.

THORPE

Can I go now?

CARTER

You must be joking,
(to Keith)

Keep him away from the telephone.
I'm going out for a bit.

EDNA

Now just a minute...

CARTER

Ta-ra.

THORPE

Don't let on I told you, for God's sake.

Carter laughs and closes the door.

EXT. THE PANTILES - NIGHT

It's a large, new, ranch-style house, set back from the road. The front garden is a landscape gardener's nightmare, with its phoney brick and wrought-iron wishing well, porcelain dwarfs, lily pond, the lot. Fairy lights hang over everything.

There's a party going on. Lights are on in every room and the rock music is loud. The drive is lined with sports cars.

Carter parks and gets out.

Out of a side door a young man stumbles towards the lily pond. There, he promptly throws up.

Carter watches from behind a tree.

His attention shifts to the white Bentley turning into the drive. It brakes sharply and the driver jumps out.

CLIFF BRUMBY has been to a police ball. He is impeccably dressed in tuxedo and white scarf. Now he's hopping mad.

BRUMBY

Jesus wept!

MRS BRUMBY cowers in the passenger seat.

MRS BRUMBY

Now, Cliff, don't get mad.

BRUMBY

I'll murder the little bitch!

MRS BRUMBY

Cliff ...

Brumby roars up to the front door, banging it furiously. A young woman in a party dress, expecting to greet a latecomer, is stunned to see who it is.

SANDRA

Daddy!

BRUMBY

That's right, bloody Daddy.

SANDRA

I wasn't expecting you until three o'clock.

BRUMBY

And this is what you call having a few friends back for coffee, is it?

Brumby pushes past her into the house.

BRUMBY

Running bloody riot over my bloody furniture, drinking my bloody booze...

The rest is lost as he disappears inside. He then powers out through the side door

BRUMBY

... spewing over my fucking goldfish.

He aims a kick at the young man's backside, sending him face-down into the lily pond.

Mrs Brumby gets out of the car and hovers for a moment. As she approaches the house, people pour out. Brumby appears at the door with a boy pulling up his trousers.

MRS BRUMBY

Cliff ...

Brumby throws the boy out.

BRUMBY

Shut up, Phyllis.
(He walks back into the house.)
Sandra!

Mrs Brumby goes into the house and closes the door. Brumby passes an upstairs window as Sandra locks herself in a bedroom.

BRUMBY

Sandra! Unlock the door, you bitch.

Carter pauses outside the front door and listens to the row going on upstairs. He opens the door and goes in.

INT. THE PANTILES - NIGHT

Carter passes silently through the hall into the large sitting room. Mrs Brumby is sitting in an armchair.

Brumby is still yelling at his daughter upstairs.

CARTER

Good evening.

Mrs Brumby jumps. The front door is open.

MRS BRUMBY
(standing)
Who are you?

CARTER
I'm an old friend of Cliff's. I
want to see him.

Mrs Brumby looks at her watch irritably.

CARTER
It's urgent.

MRS BRUMBY
What's it about?

CARTER
Business.

MRS BRUMBY
I know all about Cliff's business.

Carter moves further into the room.

CARTER
Yeah, well, tell him the Fletchers
sent me.

Mrs Brumby is uncertain what to do. Carter sits in an
armchair to make his point. She leaves. A moment later
Brumby storms into the room.

BRUMBY
What the bloody hell's all this?

Carter doesn't move.

BRUMBY
You know what the bloody time is!
(pause)
It's two o'clock in the bloody
morning!

CARTER
I know.

BRUMBY
Well?

Carter still doesn't move.

BRUMBY
The wife says the Fletchers sent
you.

Carter just looks at him. Weighing him up.

BRUMBY

What's so bloody important it
couldn't wait till the morning?

Carter starts to laugh. He realizes Thorpe has lied to
him. Brumby isn't his man.

BRUMBY

Listen, I'm not in the mood for
bloody silly buggers.

Carter stands.

CARTER

I made a mistake.

BRUMBY

What?

CARTER

I made a mistake.

BRUMBY

What about?

CARTER

Never mind.

Brumby looks confused.

BRUMBY

It's not business?

Carter moves to the door.

CARTER

See you.

Brumby moves between him and the door.

BRUMBY

Listen, I don't like it when some
hard nut comes pushing his way in
and out my house in the middle of
the night.

Carter again makes to leave. Brumby stops him.

BRUMBY

Bloody well tell me who sent you.

CARTER

You're a big man, but you're in
bad shape. With me, it's a full-
time job. Now behave yourself.

Brumby swings at him. Carter moves away from the punch,
then applies several sharp blows to Brumby's head and neck.
Brumby groans and collapses into the armchair, hurt.

Carter walks into the hall and out of the front door.

CARTER

Good night, Mrs Brumby.

EXT. 'LAS VEGAS' BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHT

Carter walks up the deserted street to Edna's place. He finds the front door unlocked.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

Carter enters cautiously. There is no sound. He closes the door quietly and pauses at the foot of the stairs. Still there is no sound. He waits. A sudden rustle attracts his attention. Quietly, he moves to the sitting-room door.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Carter switches on the light. Edna is pressed against the far wall, holding a poker. Her dress is torn and her hair dishevelled. When she sees Carter, she sighs with relief.

EDNA

You sod.

CARTER

They came back?

EDNA

(sarcastically)

No.

Carter helps himself to a glass of water from the tap. Edna looks at her torn dress.

EDNA

Look at this. You bastard.

Carter puts the glass on the table.

EDNA

You don't care a stuff, do you?

Carter takes out his phial of pills.

CARTER

I'll buy you another.

Carter swallows a pill.

EDNA

What about the lad? They took him away.

Carter shrugs his shoulders.

EDNA

What'll they do to him?

CARTER

Don't ask me.

Edna rubs her wrists.

EDNA
They bloody hurt me.

CARTER
You're lucky. They kill as well.

EDNA
(mocking him)
And what about you? Did you kill
Brumby?

Carter shakes his head.

EDNA
Thorpey nearly died laughing.

CARTER
That little shit!

EDNA
What about Keith?

CARTER
What about Keith?

EDNA
What you going to do?

CARTER
Pension him off.

EDNA
You're a bastard.

CARTER
(angry)
What am I supposed to do? I don't
know where they've taken him. Do
you?

Edna shakes her head.

CARTER
So shut up.

EDNA
What's that gun doing in your room?
Suppose I phoned the police and
told them there's a bloke staying
in my hotel who's planning to shoot
somebody?

CARTER
You wouldn't.

EDNA
How'd you know I wouldn't?

CARTER

(smiling)

'Cos I know you wear purple underwear.

EDNA

What's that supposed to mean?

CARTER

Think about it.

Carter takes hold of her torn blouse and rips it open. She is wearing purple underwear.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

It's Sunday morning. A girls' marching band rehearses on the wasteground in front of the terraced houses. The Pelaw Hussars march back and forth carrying their proud banner, led by the drum majorette.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Above the bed hangs a sign 'What would Jesus say?' In the bed lie Carter and Edna. The distant sound of the marching band helps them surface.

EDNA

Are you awake?

CARTER

No.

EDNA

Do you want breakfast?

CARTER

You must be joking. I never eat breakfast,

(pause)

Did you sleep well?

EDNA

Uh-huh.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

The Pelaw Hussars keep on marching. The back of their banner a stirring motto For Youth and Valour.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Scene as before.

EDNA

Did you sleep well?

CARTER

Yes, thank you.

He puts his arm around her and moves on top.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

As the band executes another movement, a red Jaguar slides to a halt outside Edna's house. Two men get out. PETER the Dutchman and CON MCCARTY are definitely not local lads. They look, and are, lethal. They try Edna's front door. It opens.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Scene as before.

CARTER

Are you tired?

EDNA

No. Are you tired?

CARTER

No. I'm not tired,

(pause)

Do you eat breakfast?

Edna laughs. They start to make love. Gently. Below the undulating bedsprings rests a large chamberpot and, beside it, Carter's shotgun. Beyond is the bedroom door. It opens slowly and the two men enter. Only their legs are visible.

CON (O.S.)

Put us in it, Jack.

Carter is off the bed, and Edna, in a flash. Edna screams and tries to stop the bedclothes following Carter on to the floor. Peter and Con stand beside the bed smiling. Peter is a queer and dressed fancy in a leather coat, wide-bottomed trousers and a loud silk scarf. His hair is bleached blond. Con is more traditional, more butch. He's in a camelhair overcoat, suit and tie. Both are in their thirties.

PETER

Don't let us interrupt you, Jack.

CARTER

I might have guessed.

CON

Sorry about this. But there you are. Orders are orders.

CARTER

And what orders would they be, Con?

Carter's hand runs over the carpet. It's going towards the chamber pot instead of the gun.

CON

Gerald phoned us in the middle of the night, said he'd heard you've been making a nuisance of yourself.

PETER

We've got to take you back to London.

CON

He said it'd be doing him a big favour.

Carter's hand finds the chamber pot and quickly moves on towards the gun.

CON

We know why you're all steamed up, and so do Gerald and Sid.

PETER

But they have to be diplomatic.

Carter pulls out the gun and jumps up.

CARTER

Right. Now take me back to London.

CON

(smiling)

It'd be best if you got dressed first.

Carter moves around the bed towards them. He's naked.

CON

Put it away, Jack. You know you won't use it.

PETER

The gun he means.

Both men are laughing.

CARTER

Out.

Peter and Con back down the stairs. Peter looks up at Carter's cock.

PETER

If Anna could see you now.

CARTER

Out.

CON

Now, Jack. Be reasonable. You know we're going to take you back - sooner or later.

CARTER

Out.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Con is the first to emerge from the front door.

CON
Mind you don't catch cold.

Peter follows.

PETER
I hope she's got understanding
neighbours.

Then Carter comes out, shotgun held across his chest.

CON
See you when you've got your drawers
on.

The old woman next door chooses that moment to come out for her milk. As she straightens up, she sees Carter. The bottle flies from her hand and smashes on her doorstep. Carter, never taking his eyes off Peter and Con, slowly backs into the house.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Carter watches from the window as he pulls on his jacket. The gun lies across the armchair. Outside, he can see Peter and Con talking by the Jaguar. Con exits.

Edna, now in her dressing gown, enters.

CARTER
Do us a favour?

EDNA
What, and get myself beaten up
again?

CARTER
No chance of that.

EDNA
Not much.

CARTER
They're friends of mine.

EDNA
And that'll make me feel better?

CARTER
I don't want to get rough, do I?

Carter picks up the gun. He hands Edna, his case and the casket.

INT. REAR OF BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Edna comes out of the back gate into an alley, carrying the casket and case. Con emerges from his hiding place holding a handgun.

CON
Hold it! Where do you think you're going?

Carter appears from the gate next door, covering Con with the shotgun.

CARTER
Strawberry Fair.

He takes Con's handgun and signals him to go into Edna's yard.

CARTER
In. Turn right.

(He points the gun
at the coalshed.)
Open that door.

Con unbolts the door.

CARTER
And go inside.

Con goes in. Carter closes and bolts the door. He moves quickly back to Edna and the car.

EDNA
What you going to do?

CARTER
I'm going to sit in the car and
whistle 'Rule, Britannia'.

Carter jumps into the car.

EDNA
You coming back?

CARTER
How could I stay away?

The car roars off.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - DAY

Washing hangs behind each house as far as the eye can see. Carter drives full tilt through it, collecting towels and sheets on the windscreen.

EXT. EDNA'S YARD - DAY

The coalhouse door is getting a terrible battering. It finally gives and Con bursts out. He runs into the alley,

following after Carter.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE FRONT - DAY

Carter's car screeches as it corners from the alley on to the road. Peter is leaning against the open door of the Jaguar. When he sees Carter coming straight at him, he scarpers for the pavement. Carter hits the Jaguar's door at speed, tearing it off. It flies up and crashes on to the tarmac as Carter careers over the wasteground. Soon he is out of sight.

Con comes running. Peter is looking at the damage.

PETER

Where were you, then?

Con sees what's happened to the car and is not pleased.

CON

Bollocks.

EXT. BACK STREET - DAY

Carter pulls up outside a house and gets out. He takes the washing off the car's bonnet, and throws it into a neglected garden.

EXT. FRONT DOOR - DAY

Carter presses the bell. The door's opened by a young man, SHAMIR.

CARTER

Keith in?

SHAMIR

(shouts)

Keith.

No answer. Shamir watches Carter as he walks into the hall.

CARTER (O.S.)

Which is his room?

INT. KEITH'S ROOM - DAY

Carter enters and closes the door. Keith is in a bad way, his face like a piece of raw steak. He is lying on a bed, still in the clothes of the night before.

CARTER

What happened to you, then?

KEITH

How'd you find me?

Keith lifts his head painfully from the pillow.

CARTER

Did they give you a rough time?

KEITH

No.

(He lowers his head
to the pillow.)

You bastard. You knew they'd come
back.

CARTER

No, I didn't,

(pause)

Does Albert Swift still live over
the ferry?

KEITH

Get knotted.

CARTER

All right. All right. I want to
square things with you first.

KEITH

Oh yes? How?

Carter takes out of his wad of money. Keith's bloodshot
eyes watch him through the surrounding puff of flesh.

KEITH

Stuff it! My girl friend's coming
from Liverpool tonight. Nice
surprise, isn't it?

CARTER

I'm sorry. Here. This'll pay for a
course in karate.

He throws some money on the bed. Keith tries to kick it
off, but it's too painful. He clutches his testicles.

KEITH

Frank said you were a shit and he
was bloody well right.

Carter turns to leave. Keith continues, crying and angry.

KEITH

You even screwed his wife, didn't
you?

Carter shuts the door, leaving Keith shouting after him.

KEITH

The poor bastard didn't even know
if the kid was his.

He falls back on to the bed, crying out in pain.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - DAY

A wide road runs alongside the Tyne. It passes below the
vast steel bridges that link the two parts of the city. A

carpark lies at the foot of the 'Iron Bridge'. Carter pulls up and parks. He gets out and moves quickly.

EXT. THE IRON BRIDGE - DAY

The bridge is a, massive structure. The traffic lanes are flanked each side by pedestrian walkways. It is here that Carter and Margaret have arranged to meet.

CARTER

How were things between you and Frank?

MARGARET

He was all right to me.

CARTER

Nothing more? Just another feller?

MARGARET

Nicer than most.

CARTER

But he was just another feller, wasn't he?

MARGARET

Yes.

CARTER

Though nicer than most?

MARGARET

Yes. I can't help the way I am.

CARTER

(ignoring the statement)

Why'd you see him so regular?

MARGARET

Once a week?

CARTER

I call that regular.

MARGARET

He was gentlemanly. I like that.

CARTER

Once a week you like a gentleman?

MARGARET

(angrily)

Look, I'm me, right. You're not. We are what we are, like it or not.

(She turns and walks slowly along the bridge.)

Why all the bloody needle?

CARTER

What was bugging Frank?

MARGARET

He wanted me to leave Dave and marry him. Last Friday I told him it wouldn't work. Dave would have killed us both!

(pause)

He followed me home and kicked up a stink in the street,

(pause)

I had to tell Frank I couldn't see him any more. It was getting too dodgy. That was on Sunday.

(She stops and looks over the bridge.)

He said he'd kill himself. I was frightened what you might do.

They look at each other for a moment. Carter shakes his head. He gently takes the sunglasses from Margaret's face and folds them up.

CARTER

I don't believe you, Margaret. Frank wasn't like that.

(pause)

I'm the villain in the family, remember?

MARGARET

It's the truth.

Carter snaps her glasses in two and throws them away.

MARGARET

It is. Honestly.

CARTER

(shouting)

You bloody whore. Frank was too careful to die like that. Who killed him?

MARGARET

I don't know nothing.

Carter holds her arm. She winces like she's been hit before.

CARTER

Listen, the only reason I came back to this craphole was to find out who did it. And I won't leave until I do. You understand?

Behind Carter Peter's Jaguar comes slowly along the bridge. It stops. The passenger side is a gaping hole.

CON

Hello, Jack.

Carter swings round to see them, then swings angrily back to Margaret.

CARTER

You bitch! It was you who told them I was here, wasn't it?

He smacks her hard across the face. Margaret cries out. The car draws alongside. A steel mesh separates the pedestrian way from the traffic, so the two men can't get to Carter until he reaches the end of the bridge. Con leans out, his usual cheery self.

CON

Peter's very upset about his car. He's going to shit all over you.

CARTER

I'll catch up with you later, Margaret.

And with that he vaults over the handrail on to a corrugated roof. Con jumps out of the Jaguar.

PETER

(shouts above the revs)
Come on, get in.

Con does and they race off.

EXT. WASTELAND - DAY

Carter arrives at the top of some narrow, steep, overgrown steps leading down to the river road, where his car is parked. He leaps down the steps as the Jaguar screeches to a halt at the top. Con leaps out of the Jaguar and gives chase. Peter backs the Jaguar and roars off.

EXT. RIVER ROAD - DAY

Carter comes running down the steps with Con not far behind. He arrives at the river road. In the distance, he can see his parked car.

As he nears the car park, Peter's Jaguar comes down the hill. It's going to cut Carter off from his car.

A Sunbeam Alpine sports car waits there. Its engine roars into life and it races out of the car park. It reaches him just before the Jaguar and slows down.

GLENDA

Over here, Jack.

Carter sees that the driver is GLENDA. The hood is down, so he vaults into the car as it accelerates off.

The Sunbeam swings round, narrowly missing the oncoming Jaguar, and roars away. Peter hasn't a chance. He's facing the wrong way and has little room to manoeuvre.

Glenda laughs as the car swings wildly around a corner at the top of the hill.

INT. SUNBEAM - DAY

Every movement Glenda makes is sexually charged manual gear changes, steering, even braking. Carter can't take his eyes off her.

GLEND A

You didn't know you had a fairy godmother, did you?

CARTER

No. I didn't know that.

GLEND A

A fairy godmother, all of your own. Aren't you lucky?

CARTER

So where are we going, Princess?

GLEND A

To the demon king's castle, of course.

CARTER

Of course. Where else?

The car screams off the road into a multi-storey carpark.

INT. MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK - DAY

Glenda really puts her foot down. The car hurtles around each deserted floor.

CARTER

How'd you know where I'd be?

GLEND A

You were seen parking your car. The demon king waves his wand and I was dispatched to bring you to him. Lucky for you I waited.

CARTER

Very lucky, I should think. You're drunk!

GLEND A

Nasty.

CARTER

He must have been pretty sure I'd come.

GLENDA

Oh, he was. He told me a magic spell that would make you come.

CARTER

(smiling)
And what was that?

GLENDA

We're there now.

She brakes to a split-second stop.

INT. PENTHOUSE RESTAURANT - DAY

It's one large empty concrete box with big picture windows all the way round. Wires are hanging from the ceiling and walls where the lights will eventually be fixed.

A tall figure stands at the opposite end, facing the setting sun. He is just a silhouette.

Carter and Glenda enter and walk towards the man. The silhouette turns as he nears it. It's Brumby.

BRUMBY

A new venture of mine. It's going to be a restaurant.
(pause)
Do you like it?

CARTER

Yes.

BRUMBY

Last night, after you'd gone, I did a little bit of asking around. Seeing as you weren't very forthcoming,
(pause)
It seems that you are concerned about the death of your brother?
(pause) I got to thinking it would be nice if the bloke you were after was the same bloke I wanted off my back,
(pause)
You know my life. Machines. The arcades. Nice business. Looks after itself. People put money in. I take it out. Not much rough stuff. It's a business that makes me very happy. But recently, I've had a spot of bother,
(pause)
One of my lads gets a bit over-anxious and flogs some machines in a club that's already got some. The upshot is I've had to eat shit and stop flogging my machines to other clubs.

(pause)

So far as I'm concerned, that's it. Apparently not. These people I've offended get the idea that it would be good to take over my whole outfit,

(pause)

So I'm worried. I can't fight them - I haven't that kind of set-up. But I've got to fix them before they fix me. Trouble is, if I try and they find out, I'm dead.

Brumby picks up a black briefcase. He holds it up to Carter.

BRUMBY

Five grand. It belongs to you. Along with a little name I'm going to give you.

CARTER

What name?

BRUMBY

Kinnear. Cyril Kinnear.
(pause)
Kinnear did it.

CARTER

Why?

BRUMBY

I don't know. All I know is that people were shitting bricks up at his place last Saturday. Your brother's name was mentioned. Next day, he was dead.

CARTER

Why?

BRUMBY

I don't know. That's all I was told.

Carter takes a last look at Glenda and walks slowly back towards the entrance.

CARTER

That's not good enough.

BRUMBY

Christ, what...

CARTER

(shouting)

Do me a favour. You don't really expect me to fix Kinnear on your say-so?

(pause)

Just because they tried to get me

on you last night, don't think you can pull the same trick. Stroll on.

BRUMBY
Jack, you're wrong.

CARTER
Good afternoon, Mr Brumby. Carter exits.

BRUMBY
Jack...

EXT. MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK - DAY

Carter steps out of the elevator as Glenda's Sunbeam comes down the bottom ramp fast. The car brakes hard and stops. Carter opens the door and gets in. Not a word is said.

INT. GLENDA'S APARTMENT - DAY

The apartment is one of many in a modern block and Glenda has only recently moved in. There is a mattress on the floor. A large mirror leans against the wall behind it and a film projector stands close to the window, which has makeshift curtains.

Carter and Glenda are on the mattress. The bedding is all over the place. They have just finished fucking.

CARTER
(looking around)
Who's setting you up in this place?

GLENDA
Brumby.

CARTER
Is he coming here?

GLENDA
Don't worry. He's meeting the architects at the restaurant.

Carter plays with her hair.

CARTER
Aren't you scared Kinnear will find out?

GLENDA
He won't. He thinks I'm simple.

Carter kisses her neck.

CARTER
What does he want that bloody great country place for?

GLEND
(knowingly)
Entertaining.

CARTER
What kind of entertaining?

GLEND
Now you're asking.

Carter looks at the film projector by the bed and points.

CARTER
Does Brumby get a kick out of that
crap?

GLEND
(giggling)
Especially when I play the lead.

Carter wraps his arms about her.

CARTER
Did Kinnear say anything? After
I'd left the other night?

Glenda sits up sharply.

GLEND
That's why you waited for me.

CARTER
(kissing her on the
neck)
Not entirely. No.

GLEND
You sure about that?

CARTER
Sure I'm sure.

Glenda pushes him away and gets out of the bed.

GLEND
You bastard.

Glenda leaves for the bathroom. Carter, curious, looks at the film projector. It's loaded. He switches it on. A beam of light hits the opposite wall. He settles down to watch the film. The leader flashes by, then a title being chalked on a school blackboard 'The Teacher's Pet'. A zoom back reveals Glenda, bare-breasted, holding the chalk. This is followed by a long shot of a young girl, dressed in school uniform, waiting at a bus stop. A car approaches and stops. A woman driver offers the girl a lift. The woman is Margaret. The identity of the girl not revealed.

INT. GLENDA'S BATHROOM - DAY

Glenda is in the bath. Lots of foam. The hot water is still running. She's smoking. She leans forward, turning off the tap.

INT. GLENDA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Carter is sitting up on the mattress, amused by the soft porn unfolding on the white wall in front of him.

The schoolgirl accepts the lift and the car drives off. The door to an anonymous apartment opens and Margaret comes in with the girl. Her school hat still hides her identity. Glenda is there to greet them.

The girl is very awkward. Glenda tries to make her relax, sitting her down and showing her a magazine.

Glenda brings her into a bedroom. She takes her own top off and goes to do the same with the girl. She takes her hat off. A close-up shows that it is Doreen.

Carter tenses but never flinches from what's happening in the film. Margaret comes into the bedroom and feigns shock at what she sees. She slaps Glenda and they start fighting, eventually rolling off the bed.

The apartment door opens and a man smoking a big cigar comes in.

Carter sits up. It's Albert Swift.

Albert opens another door, looking for someone. He leaves. Another door opens and he's in the bedroom. He sees the two women fighting on the floor, but on the bed is his prize Doreen. Carter watches.

Doreen bites her nails and looks terrified. Reflected in the mirror behind Carter is the image of Albert taking off his trousers. The reel runs out and flaps like a fish. Carter doesn't move. Tears form in his eyes. He looks old and defeated. His is a wasted life. Then the anger that drives him explodes again and he throws back the bedclothes.

INT. GLENDA'S BATHROOM - DAY

Carter, now dressed, moves slowly towards her in the bath.

CARTER

I want to give you an Oscar.

GLENDA

(laughs)

You've been watching the film.

CARTER

Tell me about the girl.

GLENDA

What girl?

CARTER
The young girl. Who pulled her?

GLENDA
I don't know.

CARTER
Was it Albert?

GLENDA
Shouldn't think so.

CARTER
Is it one of Kinnear's films?

GLENDA
Yeah.

CARTER
Who set it up? Eric?

GLENDA
Yeah.

CARTER
Then he must have pulled her.

GLENDA
Expect so.

CARTER
Did my brother Frank find out?

GLENDA
Your brother? What you talking
about?

Carter's fury bursts. He's out of control. He seizes Glenda and plunges her under the bathwater, holding her there.

CARTER
You're a lying bitch.

Carter lifts her up, out of the water. She is spluttering, nearly drowned.

CARTER
Now tell me the truth.

GLENDA
The girl's name was Doreen. That's
all I know.

CARTER
And you didn't know her last name?

GLENDA
No.

CARTER
 Well, it's Carter. That's my name,
 (pause)
 And her father was my brother. And
 he was murdered last Sunday. Now
 get up and get dressed.

He pushes her ahead of him.

EXT. GLENDA'S APARTMENT BLOCK - DAY

Carter manhandles Glenda towards her Sunbeam. He opens the boot.

CARTER
 Get in.

Glenda climbs in and he slams the boot shut. The car scorchs away.

EXT. JETTY. TYNE FERRY - DAY

Carter parks the sports car as the ferry docks. He moves down the gangway towards it.

INT. CAFE - DAY

A girl with a baby in a pram is having a cup of tea. The door slams open. There's Carter.

CARTER
 Where's Albert?

The girl is numb with fear, unable to answer. Carter grabs her by the throat.

CARTER
 Where's Albert?

The girl is frozen with terror. He lets go as suddenly as he grabbed her.

CARTER
 I know where I'll find him.

EXT. BACK STREET - DAY

Carter walks fast. There's the sound of a phone being dialled. It's the GIRL in the cafe.

GIRL (V.O.)
 Eric, he's come for Albert,
 (pause)
 I don't know, (pause) On the ferry,
 I reckon.

Carter reaches the front of a betting shop. He walks in.

INT. BETTING SHOP - DAY

Carter closes the door. Race results and odds are coming over the Tannoy. He moves into the shop until he reaches ALBERT SWIFT. Albert is making out a betting slip and doesn't see him.

CARTER
Hello, Albert.

Albert looks like he's going to be sick.

ALBERT
Hello, Jack,
(snivelling)
I don't know anything, Jack.

CARTER
Yes, you do, Albert. Talk or I'll
kill you.

ALBERT
I know. I know.

Carter sees a door at the back. There's a sign for the toilets.

CARTER
Do you want to go to the toilet,
Albert?

At first Albert doesn't understand.

CARTER
Do you want to go to the toilet,
Albert?

This time it clicks. Albert moves to the door and Carter follows.

EXT. BETTING SHOP BACKYARD - DAY

Carter turns to close the door. Albert runs for it. He reaches the high double-gate at the end. It's locked and he tries to climb it. No luck. Carter easily pulls him down. Albert faces him.

CARTER
You can't get away from me, Albert.

ALBERT
I know.

He feels for his cigarettes but can't find them.

ALBERT
For Christ's sake, give us a fag.

Carter takes out his cigarettes. Albert takes one.

ALBERT

I didn't know who Doreen was.
Thought she was just another bird.

CARTER

Did Eric Pake pull her?

ALBERT

Yes.

CARTER

How?

ALBERT

I dunno. He's got his ways. He
knows Margaret.

CARTER

When did you find out?

ALBERT

A couple of weeks back.

CARTER

How?

ALBERT

No choice. I had a visit from
somebody.

CARTER

Who?

ALBERT

Cliff Brumby. He'd seen the film.
He wanted to meet Doreen.

CARTER

And you told Brumby?

Albert nods.

CARTER

Who killed Frank?

Albert doesn 't answer.

CARTER

Do you want to be dead, Albert?

ALBERT

Last Sunday afternoon, Eric and
two of his boys arrive with Frank
and tell me that he's rumbled.
Somehow, he's seen the film and
was about to shoot his mouth off.
They ask me for some whisky and
start forcing it down his throat.

(pause)

I thought they'd just duff him up
a bit. Honest.

CARTER

What did you do? Albert?

ALBERT

Nothing. What could I do?

CARTER

Did Eric know that Frank was my brother?

ALBERT

Yes. I told him.

CARTER

What did he say?

ALBERT

'Good.'

Albert draws deeply on his cigarette.

They drove Frank away in a car.

CARTER

Is that all there is?

Albert nods.

CARTER

Then that's it, Albert.

Carter takes something from his pocket. There's a loud click. It's a knife.

ALBERT

Jack, for Christ's sake ...

He falls to his knees.

CARTER

You knew what I'd do.

ALBERT

(crying)

Yes, but listen. Christ, I didn't kill him.

Carter drives the knife into him with all his might.

CARTER

I know you didn't kill him.

(and again.)

I know you didn't.

A ship's horn calls mournfully from the harbour. Albert leans back. Blood seeps from his chest. He pitches forward, twitches, and is dead.

INT. BETTING SHOP - DAY

Carter comes in from the back and walks calmly through to the street. A blind man is at the counter placing a bet.

EXT. JETTY - TYNE FERRY - DAY

The Sunbeam waits in the car park. Eric, Con and Peter arrive in the Land Rover and park behind it. They go down the gangplank to the floating jetty. A ferry is chugging across the water.

INT. FERRY - DAY

Carter sits, watching the other passengers. A mother and two young children take his attention. His look is tinted with regret even remorse.

EXT. JETTY - DAY

As the ferry comes alongside, Eric, Con and Peter move up to the rail. The passengers disembark, leaving Carter standing alone. He's holding Con's handgun.

Eric, Con and Peter hack slowly away to the steel shelters. Peter, impatient as ever, pulls a sawn-off automatic shooter from under his coat, cocks it and fires. Too late. Carter is already safely behind the ferry's superstructure. Eric shouts.

ERIC

No shooters. Cyril said no shooters,
you stupid bastard.

PETER

Get stuffed. He's reloading.

CON

Gerald wants to see him first.

PETER

Shut up.

Carter is listening to all this.

CARTER

(shouting)

Are you coming in? Or do we piss
about all day?

Eric laughs.

ERIC

You're finished, Jack. You know
that, don't you? I've bloody
finished you.

CARTER

Not till I'm dead, Eric.

Eric laughs.

ERIC

Oh, you've still got your sense of humour? Tell him how I've fixed him, Con.

CON

He's told Gerald about you and Anna.

ERIC

Didn't believe us at first, did he, Con? Then Peter talked to him.

PETER

Didn't even say goodbye. Just asked us to take you back - alive.

ERIC

He's probably talking to her right now. Are you still going to fancy her when Gerald's finished with her face?

Carter shows no emotion. Or are his eyes just that bit sadder? Peter lets rip again. Another window is shattered. Carter ducks back, allowing Peter time to board the ferry.

Carter catches a glimpse of Peter as he climbs up the ferry's superstructure to the roof. By the time he heaves himself into position, Carter is waiting.

CARTER

Stay where you are, Peter.

Peter is helpless, clinging to the roof, unable to even raise his shooter.

PETER

(screaming)

Don't.

There's a long pause while Carter looks at him, then he cold-bloodedly shoots. Peter is blown away. By the time he hits the deck, he's dead.

Con and Eric panic. They run up the gangplank, safely out of range.

ERIC

Carter, your car needs a wash.

Eric signals to the driver in the Land Rover to bump the Sunbeam into the water. Two hits and the task is done. Glenda's screams are lost as the river wraps itself around the sinking car.

Carter watches impassively.

EXT. BRUMBY'S RESTAURANT COMPLEX - DAY

Carter's hire car corners at speed into the high-rise carpark.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Brumby and two architects in a site meeting. Plans are laid out on a table.

BRUMBY

I don't want them cooking in here.
You can put a hatch in that wall.

INTERIOR DECORATOR

Yes, it's all a question of ...

The sound of a car screeching up the ramps interrupts him.

BRUMBY

Who in Christ's name is that? It's
a bloody madman.

He strides away to investigate.

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Brumby comes out to the top tier. On the floor below, Carter, unseen by Brumby, has parked and is now making for the concrete spiral staircase.

EXT. STAIRCASE - DAY

Brumby pounds down to the first level. Carter comes around the corner.

BRUMBY

Jack!

Carter slams his fist hard into his gut.

CARTER

You shouldn't have shown the film
to Frank.

BRUMBY

I had to. It was the only way I
could get at them.

INT. BACK STREET POST OFFICE - EVENING.

It's a combined shop and post office. Carter is on the phone.

CARTER

The guy on the swing-bridge?
(pause)
OK.

Carter hangs up. He takes a can of film from his pocket and slips it into a large envelope. At the counter two women are talking.

FIRST WOMAN

They don't know how it happened.

SECOND WOMAN

How far did he fall?

FIRST WOMAN

What did Betty say... Ninety floors,
I think it was.

SECOND WOMAN

Really. Was he dead?

FIRST WOMAN

Oh, yes.

The envelope is passed across to the post office assistant. It is addressed to Vice Squad, Scotland Yard, London Sw1.

SECOND WOMAN

Better to go quick like that.

EXT. SWING-BRIDGE - EVENING

The huge steel superstructure pivots on a large man-made island in the middle of the river.

On top is a structure not unlike a small lighthouse, from which a man operates the bridge. Carter climbs the outside ladder. A man waits for him at the top.

The man hands him a small cloth package. Carter opens it. Inside is heroin and a hypodermic. He wraps it up again and hands over an envelope. The man checks the money as Carter disappears down the outside ladder.

INT. BINGO HALL - NIGHT

The hall is crowded. The compere calls the numbers. The atmosphere is tense as the audience look at their cards. Someone calls, 'Bingo.' A buzz goes round the hall as everybody starts talking again.

Carter enters, surveying the audience. Eventually, his eyes alight on the person he's been looking for Margaret. She's involved with a woman friend and doesn't see him.

The next game starts up.

EXT. BINGO HALL - NIGHT

Crowds of people come pouring out. It's the end of the evening's entertainment. Margaret walks out with her friend. Carter follows them and turns up a side street.

EXT. STEPS LEADING TO BACK STREET - NIGHT

The place is deserted. Margaret and her friend descend the steps. The clomp of their high heels is the only sound. Carter follows discreetly. At the bottom, Margaret and her friend chat for a moment and part.

Carter follows Margaret.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

The clomp of Margaret's shoes is heard in the distance. She appears. Carter is following behind. He slips into another dark alley to get ahead of her. As she reaches her home Carter's arm shoots out from behind a pillar. It's holding Con's handgun.

CARTER

I've come for you, Margaret.

INT. THE HEIGHTS - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

There's a big party going on. The music is loud. It's mainly rich-looking middle-aged men and young dolly birds. Different things are obviously going on in different rooms in the house. Dancing in one room, blue movies in another, etc. Kinnear flits from one to another. Eric Paice is on the phone. He puts the receiver down and crosses to Kinnear.

ERIC

Gerald Fletcher wants a word with you Cyril.

Kinnear crosses to the telephone.

KINNEAR

Hello, Gerald.

EXT. VILLAGE TELEPHONE KIOSK - NIGHT

Carter stands in the dimly lit kiosk with Margaret. The hire car is parked alongside.

CARTER

It's Carter. Listen carefully, you hairy-faced git. I've got the film and enough evidence to put you away for a long time. All it takes is one call to the police.

INT. THE HEIGHTS - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Kinnear listens.

KINNEAR

Really?

(pause)

So?

EXT. VILLAGE TELEPHONE KIOSK - NIGHT

Carter into phone.

CARTER
I'll do a simple deal with you.
All I want is ...

INT. THE HEIGHTS - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Kinnear is still listening to Carter. He looks over at Eric, who's fixing a drink.

KINNEAR
I see. I think that can be arranged.

Kinnear continues listening.

INT. VILLAGE TELEPHONE KIOSK - NIGHT

Carter into phone.

CARTER
... but I don't want him there
until six in the morning. OK?
(pause)
Right.

Carter hangs up. He pushes Margaret towards the car.

INT. THE HEIGHTS - LIBRARY - NIGHT

The noise of the wild party is heard off. Eric comes into the room.

ERIC
You want something, Cyril?

KINNEAR
Yes, Eric. A word with you.

EXT. DESERTED WOOD - NIGHT

Headlights, through the thick trees, as Carter's car comes bouncing over rough ground.

INT. HIRE CAR - NIGHT

Carter stops in a clearing and leaves his headlights on. He turns to Margaret.

CARTER
Get out.

Carter and Margaret get out. They appear in the beam of the headlights and move further into the wood.

EXT. WOOD - NIGHT

Carter and Margaret stop.

CARTER
Take your clothes off.

Margaret is confused. Take your clothes off. Margaret does just that: coat, blouse, skin. She goes to remove her knickers.

CARTER
Keep your pants on.
(pause)
Lie down.

Again she obeys.

He kneels on her, pinning her arms with his knees, then stuffs a gag in her mouth.

He takes out the hypodermic, places it against her arm, and injects the heroin into her. She struggles, her eyes moving frantically about. She screams, but its muffled by the gag. Carter holds her down and she quickly goes under. Carter removes the gag. He stands, picks her up and walks into the darkness with Margaret in his arms.

INT. THE HEIGHTS - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Kinnear is alone, speaking on the telephone quietly. The party is still going on.

KINNEAR
I want you to listen very carefully.
Jack Carter,
(pause)
You know what he looks like?

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

A bedside light is on. A man in bed is listening on the phone.

MAN
Yes.

He taps his cigarette against the ashtray. On his middle finger is a large ring with the initial 'J' on it. He listens until the line goes dead.

The woman beside him stirs. He stubs out the cigarette and switches off the light. Darkness.

EXT. THE HEIGHTS - DAWN

Eric comes out of the front door. Inside the party is still in progress. He gets into a Cadillac and drives off.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAWN

Carter is parked where he can see the drive up to Kinnear's house.

The Cadillac appears and swings on to the road.

There's the sound of a phone being dialled.

CARTER (V.O.)

Police.

EXT. THE HEIGHTS - DAWN

A long line of police cars move slowly up the drive, followed by a police bus. They park by the front door and around fifty policemen pour out. They move silently around the building. A chief constable opens the front door and walks in.

INT. THE HEIGHTS - DAWN

The police move through the house and grounds. In the bedrooms they find groups of people in bed together. The men in particular protest and are obviously concerned about being identified. The police find evidence of drugs, pornography and so on.

Outside, police are combing the grounds. In the long grass leading down to the lake they find women's clothes. They follow the trail until they discover a woman floating naked, face downwards, in the lake. A policeman with waders goes in and pulls her to the side. As others heave her out, we see that it's Margaret.

EXT. THE HEIGHTS - DAWN

The house is surrounded by police measuring and photographing, and outside the house are police cars and ambulances. The lawn is crowded with the party crowd. In the early-morning light, they look like dolls.

Kinnear comes out of the front door with two plain-clothes officers and gets in a police car. Sirens going, it comes down the short drive to the gate.

INT. HIRE CAR - DAWN

Carter is driving along a coast road. The sea and a wide beach lie on his right. Long rows of houses are to his left.

The sun is still low. It's very quiet. He arrives at a harbour and drives on until he reaches the end of a vast wooden jetty running out into the estuary. It's a coal loader for tankers.

This jetty is very high, a complex of wooden staves and pillars, interwoven with steps and gangways. On its top tier is a complex of railway lines, signals and black coal chutes.

EXT. COAL JETTY - DAWN

Carter parks his car and picks up the shotgun and a bottle of Scotch off the back seat. He get out and walks over to the jetty and along a lower gangway. At the far end, a man is standing. It's Eric Paice. Eric turns around abruptly. He sees Carter and disappears up the nearest stairway. Carter follows.

At the top he stops to listen, but can see and hear only the harbour waters lapping below.

Carter looks back to the coal jetty, just in time to see Eric scamper down to the level below. Eric sprints for the roadway. Carter waits and then starts running directly above him.

Eric keeps running. Carter stays always overhead. He's playing cat and mouse with Eric.

CARTER
(calling out)
You couldn't win an egg and spoon
race, Eric.

ERIC
(wheezing)
Sod off.

Paice darts down another staircase to ground level and makes for the roadway. Carter stops above the roadway. Below, Paice makes for the parked car. Carter holds the gun up. Eric stops and looks up.

CARTER
Stay away from the car or I'll
blow you apart.

Eric darts under the jetty. Carter runs on down the steps. He can see Eric scampering along the row of cottages towards the beach. Carter starts after him.

EXT. BEACH - EARLY DAY

Eric runs out on to the beach. The only sounds are his feet pounding the pebbles and his hurtful panting.

In the distance, factory chimneys belch out smoke. Carter appears. For a moment he watches Eric stumbling along at the far end of the beach. He climbs down to the beach and starts running.

EXT. BEACH - EARLY DAY

Carter is gaining on Eric rapidly. Eric looks round and panics. He stumbles and falls over.

He gets to his feet quickly and disappears round the headland. Carter follows.

EXT. BEACH - EARLY DAY

On the other side of the headland, the scene is extraordinary. The deserted beach is like the edge of the world. The sand is black as far as the eye can see. It's littered with rubbish. Several old lorries are sunk deep in the sand. High, grass-covered cliffs flank it on the left. It's deserted.

In the distance, a continuous line of giant black buckets move, like cable-cars, out to sea, before they deposit their load of coal slag and move inland again. The coal mine itself is inland, hidden away behind the cliffs. The sea, like the sand, is black as it crashes on to the shore.

Eric is half-way along the beach, struggling in the mud. Carter closes on him.

EXT. BEACH - EARLY DAY

Eric nears the line of buckets and cuts inland towards the mine. Carter has nearly caught up. The buckets grind and crash as they move along the cable.

Eric scrambles up the narrow valley down which the coal slag travels. He is panting horribly. Carter is close on his heels. Near the top, where the buckets are practically at ground level, Eric stumbles and falls. He is too exhausted to get up.

Carter stands over him.

CARTER
(panting slightly)
Stand up, Eric. Stand up.

Eric just manages it. Carter pulls the bottle of Scotch out of his pocket.

CARTER
I bet you could use a drink, could you, Eric?

He throws the bottle to Eric.

CARTER
Eh? Have a drink.

ERIC
Still got your sense of humour.

Eric takes the cap off and looks at Carter. He's in a terrible state.

CARTER
Drink up, Eric. Drink up. I want you to drink all of that. Do you understand? Drink up. Just like it was with my brother, Frank. Go on, son. Drink up.

Eric pours the whisky into his month. It spills over and runs down his face.

CARTER
Drink up, Eric.

Eric begins to stagger about.

CARTER
It was you who poured it down him.
Eh, Eric?

Eric takes a breather and looks pathetically at Carter. No mercy there.

CARTER
Did you all have a good laugh, eh?
Did you have a good laugh when he was spewing it up? The whisky is pouring all over Eric's face and suit.

It's disgusting to watch. Suddenly, he retches, but nothing comes up.

CARTER
Drink it! Drink it! Did you all pass the bottle round after the car went over the top?

Eric is choking.

CARTER
Don't stop, Eric.

Carter leans forward and with his free hand lifts the bottle up to Eric's mouth again. In the other, he holds the shotgun. Eric chokes and retches. Carter has seen enough.

CARTER
Goodbye, Eric.

Carter raises the butt of the gun and brings it down on Eric's head.

EXT. BEACH - EARLY DAY

Eric's body, loaded on to a a coal bucket, moves off on it's final journey. Carter, laughing, walks beside it, gun riding on his shoulder. The bucket shudders and grinds as it moves along the cable. Eric's body moves of on its final journey. It reaches the end of the line, where an automatic catch tilts it. Eric's body drops into the sea. The coal slag follows in a cloud of black dust. The waves pass over and everything is gone.

Carter stands for a moment, turns and walks back along the beach. He stops, looks at the shotgun, and decides to get rid of it.

EXT. CLIFF TOP - EARLY MORNING

Below, Carter moves slowly by the edge of the sea. He raises the shotgun to throw it away. High on the cliff top a rifle and telescopic lens line up on Carter. A finger curls around the trigger. On the middle finger of the same hand is a large gold ring with the letter 'J' engraved upon it. It is the man Kinnear contacted after sending Eric to his death.

The finger tightens on the trigger and pulls it. There's a quiet, whooshing sound. Carter drops to the ground.

EXT. BEACH - EARLY MORNING

Carter lies on the beach. The waves lap around his head. A small trickle of blood pours out of a hole in his temple. He's dead.

EXT. CLIFF TOP - EARLY MORNING

Kinnear's hit man coolly dismantles his rifle. He carefully wraps it in a cloth fishing-rod carrier. He walks off and is soon lost as he drops out of sight.

FADE OUT:

THE END