

NOWHERE BOY

By

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DULL, DISTANT EXPLOSIONS. HUSHED VOICES.

JULIA (V.O.)
You were right, Mimi. A boy.

MIMI (V.O.)
I'm always right.

FADE IN:

INT. OXFORD STREET MATERNITY HOSPITAL/BIRTHING ROOM -- NIGHT

A basement room. Makeshift. Bombproof. Power battles to light an overhead bulb, often failing plunging the room into darkness.

A WOMAN WITH RED HAIR (JULIA), 26, lies dishevelled and exhausted on a threadbare bed. Night-gown torn and matted to her body with sweat. She clasps a NEW BORN BABY to her chest, tightly swaddled, silent with new life.

A STRIKING WOMAN (MIMI), 37, tends to her, quietly and efficiently - bathing her forehead with freshly soaked bandages. In the flickering light, we gradually make out the resemblance - sisters.

JULIA
Is the doctor coming back?

MIMI
(another bomb hits)
I don't think so.

MIMI re-soaks, turns back to find JULIA with her eyes closed.

MIMI (CONT'D)
(soft)
..Julia?

MIMI checks her breathing, her pulse, then gently maneuvers the BABY from his mother's arms into her own.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Like I've nothing better than to
sit around and wait for...John
Winston Lennon..

But we can see from her eyes she hadn't - all 9 months.

JULIA
(groggy)
Mimi?

MIMI hears her but can't take herself away from the moment.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Please..I need to feel him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIMI looks up, slowly replaces him back with his mother - a weird feeling in her stomach.

BLACK

OPENING CREDITS

Clip-clip-clip-clip- The sound of heels (upper-leathers) running.

FADE IN:

1 EXT. ST GEORGE'S HALL - DAY

The colossal Graeco-Roman structure that dominates the city-centre. Huge white pillars guarding the entrance. Nothing and no-one else around.

Then in the distance, someone weaving through the pillars towards us, a BOY in SCHOOL UNIFORM, BLACK SHOES.

FIFTEEN YEAR-OLD JOHN LENNON.

The opening chorus line of the 1954 track '*Mr. Sandman*' by British crooner '*Dickie Valentine*' rings out.

Rock'n'roll who?

JOHN glances over his shoulder. As though being chased by hundreds of screaming girls. But there's no girls... and no screaming. Then, just as he's about to burst down the lens, he trips and, as he falls -

1A EXT. LIVERPOOL CITY CENTRE/VARIOUS - DAY

- we're looking up. At white fluffy things and brilliant blue. And we're moving, floating along. For a second, colours jolt into tangerine and marmalade.

'*Mr. Sandman*' still 'bung-bung-bung'-in along.

Then a heavy object falls fast through frame. Could be a person, not sure - too quick, too dark. Slowly JOHN rises into shot. His hair struggling with the wind. His face enjoying the beating.

CUT TO - St. George's Hall. A DOUBLE DECKER BUS drives past. JOHN (still in school uniform) on top of it. Surfing.

CUT TO - The roof of the bus, JOHN belting out Mr. Sandman.

JOHN

(singing)

*Sandman, I'm so alone, Don't have
nobody to call my own, Please turn
on your magic dream, Mr. Sandman
bring me a dream.*

(CONTINUED)

1A CONTINUED:

CUT TO - Several iconic Liverpool sights/buildings (TBD e.g. THE DOCKS, THE LIVER BUILDING) as this unique trip on OUR MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR BUS takes us around this port/city that founded the western world.

JOHN, larger than life, enjoying every beat.

1B EXT. MENDIPS -- DAY

The BUS suddenly in leafier environs. Suburban. It comes to a screeching halt outside an austere looking black and white house. A sign - 'MENDIPS' - on the front gate.

JOHN steadies himself. He turns to look at the house. His face taught with questions. Then sorrow. He lines himself up on the edge of the bus.

And with a sharp intake of breath, steps off.

2 DELETED

HARD CUT TO:

3 INT. MENDIPS/JOHN'S BEDROOM -- DAY

JOHN being woken by sheets being ripped off him. MIMI, now 52, stands over him.

MIMI

Do I ignore you? No. I'd like to,
but I don't. So please don't
ignore me. I've called you twice.

On a groggy JOHN curled up in a ball, freezing.

JOHN

(after her)

Sorry.

CUT TO - JOHN buttoning his shirt up. Slings his blazer on - QUARRY BANK SCHOOL - the badge, A RED AND GOLD STAG - motto:

'EX HOC METALLO VIRTUTUM' - 'OUT OF THIS QUARRY COMETH FORTH VIRTUE'.

He stuffs his thick NHS SPECS in his inside pocket.

4 INT. MENDIPS/MORNING ROOM/KITCHEN -- DAY

Breakfast neatly laid out. Large pot of tea; jam and butter. Best china. Gleaming cutlery.

MIMI sits, smoking, staring out of the window - her mind in the past. Haunted. Fag-ash teetering. She hears JOHN coming downstairs, snaps back into focus. MIMI's eyes interrogate. Looking. Always looking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN appears, school-tie crumpled in his blazer pocket.

MIMI
(wags a finger)
Uh uh. Tie.

JOHN obediently veers to a mirror on the wall, threads his tie. Mid-way, MIMI gets up finishes it for him - almost on auto-pilot - a moment where they stare at each other in the mirror. She kisses the top of his head.

MIMI (CONT'D)
(on the move)
Veronica Connor tells me her
Terence is off studying in
Edinburgh...

She disappears into the kitchen.

MIMI (CONT'D)
(heavy hint)
...the most prestigious medical
university...

JOHN moves over to the table, sits, starts pouring from the huge tea pot.

JOHN
(tongue in cheek)
Boasts a nice castle I hear. And
people from Scotland if I'm not
mistaken...

He suddenly finds he can't control the flow, spills tea on the table. From nowhere, A TEA TOWEL lands full in his face. He picks it off - no sign of Mimi (but it must have come from her).

As JOHN mops up there's a knock on the morning room window, POV: UNCLE GEORGE in his farmhand clothes, they exchange naval salutes, then suddenly George breaks into Irish dancing. Smiling, he holds up a HARMONICA. JOHN's eyes light up. UNCLE GEORGE puts his finger to his lips, points to the kitchen - 'Don't tell Mimi'. As he does MIMI appears, sees GEORGE through the window, who pretends to be scratching his chin with his finger - a stoney look delivered.

CUT TO - UNCLE GEORGE coming through the kitchen door. Humour always his best bet with his wife.

UNCLE GEORGE
Ah, my darling, favourite wife.
Your courageous husband has
returned safely from the front line
trenches of Woolton's dairy fields,
ready and anticipating his hero's
welcome.

(CONTINUED)

4

CONTINUED: (2)

He grabs MIMI for a hold.

UNCLE GEORGE (CONT'D)
That's me by the way. Your hero.

Then almost forces his lips on hers.

MIMI
You smell of cows.

UNCLE GEORGE
And you my Tinkerbell, smell of
pixie dust.

MIMI
Get rid of that jacket before you
sit at the table.

UNCLE GEORGE
(tugs his lock)
Ma'am.

UNCLE GEORGE takes his jacket off heads into see JOHN, hangs
the jacket up, gives him the CHROME HARMONICA. JOHN scoops it
up, mimes playing.

UNCLE GEORGE (CONT'D)
Very expensive.

JOHN
Really?

UNCLE GEORGE
No.

Sarcastic guffaws before JOHN gives him a hug. Genuine love.

UNCLE GEORGE (CONT'D)
First lesson tonight, front room
eight o'clock. Don't be late.

GEORGE starts giving him 'squeaks', a squeeze/tickle, making
JOHN giggle. MIMI comes out, with a tray of toast, sees the
overt affection. Something she can't give.

JOHN and GEORGE - slightly guilty looks.

GEORGE sits at the table opposite JOHN, finally MIMI seats
herself. All start eating breakfast together, passing toast,
butter and jam and the milk jug, LIKE A NORMAL FAMILY UNIT.

5

INT/EXT. MENDIPS -- DAY

MIMI, washing up in the kitchen, watches JOHN climb on his
RALEIGH LENTON bike. She bangs on the window.

(CONTINUED)

5

CONTINUED:

MIMI
Glasses, John!

JOHN tuts, digs his GLASSES out - puts them on. Follow him out front where a grinning snowy blond kid, PETE SHOTTON, 15, waits on exactly the same model of bike.

PETE
(piss taking)
Glasses John!

JOHN checks Mimi's out of view, his Liverpudlian accent deepens as a result (always).

JOHN
Funny bastard you, spunk hair.

PETE
Cheers, spunk breath.

JOHN gives him a friendly clip, takes his GLASSES off, puts them in his pocket. They set off riding down Menlove Avenue where after a few yards JOHN snatches a SCHOOL CAP off (his mate) IVAN VAUGHN's head as he walks to the bus stop.

JOHN
(school master voice)
Ivan Vaughn! Where is your school cap?!

IVAN
John, don't be a dick!

JOHN nonchalantly chucks IVAN's CAP into the middle road where a CAR runs over it.

6

EXT. STRAWBERRY FIELDS -- DAY

JOHN and PETE free-wheel past the RED GATES of the children's home. They have their own private language - nothing is said sensibly, everything has an undertone of sarcasm, piss-taking, or just plain daft. As they pass OTHER SCHOOL KIDS they shout out random insults and flick various V's signs.

JOHN
Hey, Tarbuck!

A LARGE ROUGH LOOKING KID, 16, looks over.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Keep out of the chippie, y'fat bastard!

They ride on.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

PETE
(Indian accent)
You very, very funny man, Winston.
Blady hilarious.

JOHN
(posh)
Cheers Snowball, old chap. I do
one's best to keep one's pecker up.

7 EXT. CALDERSTONES GIRLS SCHOOLS -- DAY

TEENAGE SCHOOL GIRLS congregating outside - one in particular, MARIE KENNEDY, with an ample bosom. JOHN and PETE ride by.

PETE
Marie Kennedy, nine o'clock!

JOHN looks round.

JOHN
Marie my angel-face!

MARIE turns to find where the compliment came from. Finds JOHN's eyes.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Show us your jugs!

MARIE
(grins)
Cock off Lennon!
(goads)
Or cock out?!

JOHN brakes hard, chucks his bike down, approaches MARIE whilst undoing his pants. The GIRLS go screaming into the playground.

JOHN
Where y'going? This cock's won prizes!

A SCHOOL MISTRESS, mid 30's, storms out.

MISTRESS
You! Get lost! Go on! Disgusting imbecile!

JOHN
Yes Miss, I am a disgusting and I apologise.
(shrugs)
I've seen the doctor about it.
(pause)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

JOHN (CONT'D)
I'd try a better bra, luv. You're
sagging a bit.

The MISTRESS is speechless. JOHN hops on his bike. Rides off
with PETE, wailing with laughter.

8 EXT. QUARRY BANK SCHOOL -- DAY

Establisher of a huge Victorian sandstone school. JOHN and
PETE arrive in the playground as the bell rings. They head
in amongst the throng of QUARRY BANK BOYS.

9 INT. QUARRY BANK SCHOOL/HISTORY CLASS -- DAY

'CLIPPER' SHEARS, 60, history teacher and war veteran, pounds
the blackboard about THE BATTLE OF DUNKIRK. The CLASS
struggles to copy his chalked up ramblings.

CLIPPER SHEARS
...with more than 300,000 troops
stranded on the Dunkirk beaches in
May, June, 1940. What happened
next was described as "a miracle of
deliverance" by -
(stops)
By who?

JOHN is at the back of the class, glasses on, head down,
writing. PETE next to him.

JOHN'S EXERCISE BOOK: drawings and jokes from THE DAILY HOWL
(re-creating actual cartoons and sketches).

CLIPPER SHEARS (CONT'D)
Lennon?

JOHN too engrossed in his own newspaper.

PETE
(sharp whisper)
John!

JOHN looks up. Realises the whole class is looking at him,
as well as CLIPPER.

PETE (CONT'D)
(side of his mouth)
Churchill.

JOHN
Churchill, sir.

CLIPPER SHEARS heads towards JOHN, his metal leg thumping the
floor.

CONTINUED:

CLIPPER SHEARS

Too late.

JOHN quickly puts his glasses on - checks the blackboard

JOHN

For Dunkirk? Definitely. Mind you,
the lads had a good drink whilst
waiting on the beach. So all was
not lost.

CLIPPER stands over him with his hand out. JOHN reluctantly
handing over The Daily Howl.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Unless you count France and
Belgium.

JOHN gives a famous sarcastic grin.

10

INT. QUARRYBANK SCHOOL HEAD'S OFFICE -- DAY

JOHN waiting outside. Name plaque on the door, "HEADMASTER -
WILLIAM E POBJOY".

POBJOY (V.O.)

You're really quite fond of me,
aren't you Lennon?

CUT TO - JOHN stands in front of POBJOY, 36, slick hair,
sharp, tweed suit. If he wasn't a headmaster he could easily
be a 'Ladies Man'. His back is to John. THE DAILY HOWL sits
in the middle of his desk.

JOHN

Sir?

POBJOY

Well, you're always here, in my
office. Visiting.

JOHN

I do think you're a fantastic
headmaster, sir. Visionary.

It's said with a completely straight face. POBJOY turns.

POBJOY

(slight smile)

I'm sure you do.

They stare each other out like friendly boxers.

POBJOY (CONT'D)

So you're the brains behind this
'Daily Howl' are you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN

Yes sir.

POBJOY

And you use your editorial power to
lampoon my teaching staff?

JOHN

Yes sir. Most definitely sir.

Again straight faced.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Although I must say in their
defence, they do a great job
without me.

POBJOY's loving it - but can't show it.

POBJOY

You know drawing in class is
unacceptable don't you?

JOHN

What about art class, sir?

POBJOY see's through the bait. Doesn't bite.

POBJOY

And what about your Aunt Mimi?

JOHN's face loses its cockiness. POBJOY lets this sink in.

POBJOY (CONT'D)

This is how you repay her is it?
All she's done for you?

JOHN - the thought of failing Mimi doesn't sit well.

POBJOY (CONT'D)

She tells me, frequently, that
you're a budding doctor.

POBJOY shakes his head slightly in disbelief.

POBJOY (CONT'D)

At this rate you'll be lucky to
find a job on the docks.

(pause)

Because at the moment, you're going
nowhere. Here at Quarry Bank.
Generally...

Beat.

POBJOY (CONT'D)

Nowhere.

(CONTINUED)

10

CONTINUED: (2)

He lets this sink in on JOHN.

JOHN

Is 'Nowhere' full of geniuses, sir?
Because then I probably do belong
there.

POBJOY sizes him up, can see the intelligence, the wit. But has no idea how to handle it. He picks up THE DAILY HOWL. Drops it in the waste-bin.

POBJOY

Next time you visit, we'll let my
cane do the clever talking.
Understand?
(pause)
Go.

JOHN turns and leaves. POBJOY waits for the door to shut. He digs THE DAILY HOWL out of the bin, starts reading... then smiling... then chuckling.

11

INT. MENDIPS -- EVENING

JOHN and UNCLE GEORGE rigging a SPEAKER EXTENSION from John's bedroom to the main radio in the morning room. A job for men, father and son. In a series of cuts we see:

- The SPEAKER being placed above John's headboard.
- UNCLE GEORGE on his knees tacking the extension cable in the stairs and hallway. JOHN helping - holding the wire straight - passing the tacks - holding the hammer.

They arrive at the morning room. MIMI sits reading Jane Austen, listening to PUCCINI on the WIRELESS. TITCH, the cat asleep on her lap. She eyes JOHN and UNCLE GEORGE as they connect the extension lead to the main radio.

UNCLE GEORGE

And so... judgement day.

JOHN and GEORGE rush off back upstairs to see if it all works. It's a bit of a race, JOHN giggling as he gets in front and rushes upstairs. UNCLE GEORGE - panting heavily, stops mid-way up.

UNCLE GEORGE (CONT'D)

OK... you win...

JOHN launches himself on the bed - flicks the speaker on - Puccini pours out.

JOHN

It works!

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

GEORGE comes in, sits on the bed, still trying to catch his breath. JOHN flies out, shouts down.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Mimi! It works!
(excited)
Can we turn it over? See if
something else is on?

CUT TO - The morning room.

MIMI
(shouts back up)
No John! We do not turn Puccini
over!
(mutters to herself)
Not in this house.

11A EXT. MENDIPS -- NIGHT

Exterior establisher, John's BEDROOM LIGHT ON, we hear the GOON SHOW on the wireless.

SEAGOON (GOON)
"We've come to disconnect your
phone".

THE RED BLADDER (GOON)
"I haven't got one".

SEAGOON (GOON)
"Don't worry we've brought one with
us".

11B INT. MENDIPS/JOHN'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

JOHN and GEORGE laughing. The Goon Show plays on, another joke - more laughs. GEORGE, already glassy eyed, digs out a HIP FLASK of whiskey - takes a slug. Offers it to JOHN, who readily accepts. Takes a hearty glug.

UNCLE GEORGE
Eh! Cheeky git.
(snatches it back)
You'll get me in trouble.

GEORGE takes another swig, slips it back in his pocket.

JOHN
We're always in trouble...

It's said with a tinge of sadness. GEORGE senses it.

UNCLE GEORGE
With Mimi? Don't be daft.

(CONTINUED)

11B CONTINUED:

JOHN
(pause)
She never looks happy...

UNCLE GEORGE
Ever been married to me?

GEORGE studies him, knows something's eating away. Can guess.
GEORGE avoids his eyes. Not wanting to get into it.

UNCLE GEORGE (CONT'D)
(quickly getting up)
Now go on - you're missing your
show. And I'm missing the pub.

Another GOON JOKE rifles in - they share a laugh.

GEORGE's expression suddenly drops as he reaches the door. He gets out a hanky, wipes his brow of cold sweat, face growing whiter by the second. He manages a smile but JOHN sees through it, his concern growing.

GEORGE collapses in the doorway.

12 EXT. MENLOVE AVENUE/MENDIPS -- LATER

UNCLE GEORGE being carried out on a stretcher, eyes shut, white face, oxygen breathing apparatus stuck to his mouth. JOHN - petrified, panicked. MIMI following the stretcher, eyeing the nosy neighbours.

MIMI
(to the neighbours)
He's had a fall. That's all.
There's nothing to see - really.

The MEDICS load GEORGE into the back of the AMBULANCE. JOHN tries to climb in, MIMI forces him back.

MIMI (CONT'D)
The cat needs feeding.

She climbs into the back of the AMBULANCE.

JOHN
But Mimi -

The doors are slammed - it takes off - sirens wailing.
MIMI's POV: JOHN disappears in the distance.

MIMI looks down on UNCLE GEORGE, looking like death - shakes her head, as though inconvenienced by the whole scenario.
UNCLE GEORGE manages to prize his oxygen mask off.

UNCLE GEORGE
D'you think I'll miss last orders?

13 INT. MENDIPS/LIVING ROOM/MORNING ROOM/KITCHEN -- NIGHT

JOHN on the settee, his head between his knees, half asleep. Hears the front door open and shut - the sound wakes him up.

JOHN sticks his head out, looks down the hall. MIMI sits in the morning room - staring at A FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH - GEORGE, MIMI and JOHN aged 5, posing outside Mendips.

JOHN

Mimi...

She doesn't hear him. He steps nearer.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Mimi?

MIMI

(blunt)

He's dead.

JOHN bursts into giggles... but they gradually fade. He looks around, not knowing what to do. MIMI see's he's about to cry, moves off into the kitchen, evasive. JOHN rushes after her, hugs her, cries into her shoulder blades.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Don't be silly.

(pause)

Go to your bedroom if you need to do that.

JOHN takes a deep breath, stops crying.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Just us now, so let's get on with it, shall we?

A moment while this registers. JOHN picks up the dish towel, starts drying the pots. MIMI gets back to washing up.

13A INT. MENDIPS/MIMI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Pristine and clean. Crafted oak furniture - heavily varnished. Separate single beds.

MIMI sits upright in her bed, nightgown on, no make-up. Staring into nothing.

Hold.

Finally she reaches over - turns the bedside light out. Lies down on her side, facing George's bed. Through the darkness she sees his PYJAMAS neatly folded on his pillow.

Beat.

(CONTINUED)

13A CONTINUED:

She turns the other way.

14 INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - DAY

JOHN lying on his bed, his legs twisted upright against the wall. He stares into space - morose. A hand clicks the speaker on and off over and over... the airwaves dead.

He sits up, takes the HARMONICA out of his pocket, blows random notes... trails off... thinking of GEORGE.

15 INT. MENDIPS/MIMI'S BEDROOM -- DAY

JOHN creeps in. Finds it weird - not really allowed in here.

He opens George's wardrobe, his SUITS hung up. Takes A BLACK SUIT JACKET out, smells it. The tears come, but he fights them off. Spots A BOTTLE OF WHISKEY half-full, hidden at the bottom. He undoes the cap, throws the jacket over his head and squats down back against the wall. Drinks the bottle undercover.

16 OMITTED

17 OMITTED

18 EXT. GRAVESIDE -- DAY

THE REVEREND PRYCE JONES finishing his address. JOHN and MIMI stand graveside, stoic. OTHERS around them crying.

REVEREND

God will show us the path of life;
in his presence is the fullness of
joy; and at his right hand there is
pleasure evermore.

EVERYONE

Amen.

John watches THE COFFIN being lowered into the grave. He looks away, emotion creeping up on him. Then, on the other side of the grave, through the crowd, he sees THE RED HAIR. The outline of the face. Fuzzy. He squints tight.

18A INT/EXT. MENDIPS (FLASHBACK) - DAY

THE DOORBELL ringing.

We follow a 7 YEAR OLD JOHN down the stairs, staying BACK OF HEAD (never see his face). He hesitates at the front door.

7 YR OLD JOHN

Mimi?

18A CONTINUED:

No answer. He reaches up, opens the door. Through the FROSTED GLASS of the small porch we see the outline of a WOMAN with RED HAIR.

WOMAN WITH RED HAIR
Hello? Mimi? It's me.
(pause)
Mimi?

THE WOMAN presses her hands and face to the window.

WOMAN WITH RED HAIR (CONT'D)
John?

JOHN remains speechless.

WOMAN WITH RED HAIR (CONT'D)
Oh my dream! John, it's me! Let me
in!

JOHN gulps, steps forward, reaches for the porch lock.

WOMAN WITH RED HAIR (CONT'D)
Good boy!

Suddenly JOHN is swept away from the door by MIMI, washing basket dropped at her feet. She throws JOHN into the hallway. Slams the front door shut.

Stay on the THE WOMAN WITH RED HAIR through the frosted glass.

18B EXT. GRAVESIDE -- CONTINUOUS

JOHN reaches inside his jacket for his GLASSES - puts them on, sees A WOMAN, late 30's, staring right at him - tears streaming down her face... he recognises the face, the hair, the tears.

Mother JULIA.

In an act of solidarity, she puts her own glasses on. JOHN manages a half wave which JULIA returns.

Hold.

Contact is broken as MIMI grabs JOHN's hand, leads him to throw a handful of dirt on the coffin.

19 EXT. MENDIPS -- DAY

The wake going on inside.

JOHN, alone out front, leaning against wall. Looking. MENLOVE AVENUE DESERTED except for the odd speeding car.

20 EXT/INT. MENDIPS/BACK GARDEN/KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN strides across the lawn.

His cousins, MICHAEL (8), DAVID (11) help STAN (17) knock apples from the tree. JOHN climbs up into his TREE HOUSE, gets his HARMONICA out - starts playing 'Swedish Rhapsody'.

STAN looks over at JOHN, his face full of concern.

STAN
(climbs up)
Fancy Blackpool tomorrow? Play the
arcades, go on some rides -

JOHN
- I don't need looking after, Stan.

Beat.

STAN
I'm know that. I'm asking if you
want to go to Blackpool.
(defensive)
He was my Uncle too.

JOHN looks up - steely.

JOHN
Yeah... but he was 'more than just
an Uncle' to me, wasn't he?

STAN nods sympathetically.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(struggling)
You saw her too right? The one with
the red hair?

STAN nods.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Where is she now?

STAN
Want me to ask Aunt Mimi?

JOHN nods. STAN sets off towards the kitchen where we see MIMI and THE OTHER SISTERS gossiping. They look pretty formidable.

JOHN closely watching STAN, who takes a deep breath. Speaks. All the SISTERS stop talking, stare at STAN. No-one seems to say anything. MIMI turns, looks into the garden - finds JOHN's eyes.

Hold.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

MIMI turns back to STAN. Stay with him as he returns from the kitchen, across the lawn, back to JOHN, being watched all the way by MIMI.

STAN (CONT'D)
She was busy, apparently. Things to do.

JOHN nods wearily, his emotions in check. He clambers down from the tree house.

STAN (CONT'D)
You should call her 'Mum', y'know.
'The one with the red hair'.

JOHN looks over at MIMI, chatting to her OTHER SISTERS.

21 INT/EXT. MENDIPS -- DAY

STAN and JOHN are leaving for a day out. MIMI behind them.

MIMI
Be careful. These coastal towns are riddled with all sorts.
(pause)
Where are your glasses, John?

JOHN
In my pocket.

MIMI
And is your pocket blind?

JOHN puts his GLASSES on. They open the front door, MIMI watches them walk down the path.

MIMI (CONT'D)
And don't talk to strangers.

MIMI watches them head off down Menlove Avenue. JOHN, one eye on MIMI, waiting for her to go back inside. She finally does. He stops, takes his glasses off.

STAN
Want to go and see your Mum?

JOHN, confused.

STAN (CONT'D)
I found out where she lives.
(pause)
You wanted to see her, right?

JOHN
(overwhelmed)
Yeah, but..

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

STAN
We don't have to.

JOHN
No. No...
(deep breath)
What bus do we get?

STAN
We don't. We walk.

STAN sets off. JOHN stay put - walk?!

STAN (CONT'D)
(stop and turns)
Are y'coming or what?

JOHN nods, sets off after him, in shock.

21A EXT. JOURNEY TO JULIA'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

- JOHN and STAN cut across the (Allerton) golf course.
- cross another busy main road (Mather Avenue).
- traipse over a farmers field, jump over a stile and into:

22 EXT. BLOMEFIELD ROAD/JULIA'S HOUSE -- DAY

...a pretty tree-lined road, council houses, but bigger.
KIDS run riot on the street, MUMS chatting, DADS fixing things in their gardens.

They reach the corner house. NUMBER 1. STAN stands outside the gate, looks at JOHN, who's slowed down behind, apprehensive.

STAN opens the gate, lets JOHN in first, they walk up the path get to the door. Hear Piano playing and singing from inside.

JOHN goes to knock, but can't make contact. He closes his eyes - summoning courage. But his bottle has gone. He looks around, down the street, thinks about running off. Escape. About to go, when STAN's HAND bangs on the door. JOHN looks at STAN in shock but a second later -

- JULIA opens the door. She freezes at the sight of JOHN. Then JULIA grabs hold of her son, folds him into her body, kissing, smelling his skin. Squeezing tight.

JOHN - a deep hidden smile.

23 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

JULIA rattles around the kitchen. JOHN and STAN sit opposite TWO STARING GIRLS, LITTLE JULIA, 8, and JACKIE, 6.

(CONTINUED)

23

CONTINUED:

JULIA (O.S.)
 Blackpool's loss, my gain! But we
 love Blackie don't we girls? Fun
 fun fun.

JOHN looks round the house. It is a playful tip, dressing up
 clothes and patterned fabrics for making dresses strewn over
 hand-me down furniture. Bright, loud paintings (by Julia)
 hang on the wall. A PIANO in one corner - a BANJO and
 ACCORDION propped up. A GRAMOPHONE and a large, messy
 collection of VINYL.

JULIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I knew you were coming though,
 John. Want to know how I knew?
 Because I -

She appears with a cake.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 - Baked a cake!

She shovels a piece into his mouth.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 What'd'you think? Nice, eh?
 Vanilla bun.

JOHN nods his head, mouth full. JULIA carries on handing
 cake out to the GIRLS.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 A piece for you, Julia... and
 Jackie. Have you said hello to your
 brother, girls?

They shake their heads.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 Well, go on then.

LITTLE JULIA/JACKIE
 Hello, John.

JOHN
 Hello.

JOHN finds the cake hard to swallow.

24

INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- LATER

THE GIRLS play outside. STAN plink-plonks aimlessly on the
 piano. JOHN sits opposite JULIA, she smiles and hums
 nervously, but is really at a loss for words. Finally she
 notices his HARMONICA in his shirt pocket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA

A mouthie! Let's have a look.

JOHN passes it over. She checks it out, feels the chrome, reads the etching.

JULIA (CONT'D)

A 'Hohner'. German. Boo. Down with the krauts. Good at mouthies though.

JOHN

Not so good at war.

JULIA giggles. She mimes having a blow.

JULIA

D'you mind?

JOHN shrugs.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Your spit's my spit anyway.

JULIA blasts out a few bars - tuneful, nothing specific.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Good lungs on it.

JOHN

Uncle George gave it me just before he died.

A silence at his name. JOHN can't help feel a twinge of pain.

JULIA

He'll be missed... He was a good man.

JOHN looks up, stares at her.

JOHN

(pointedly)

In what way?

The indirect mention of 'the situation' creates an awkward silence. JULIA suddenly vanquishes her bad thoughts, jumps up. Snatches the banjo.

JULIA

Listen, my party piece, well, one of them.

She launches into a great GEORGE FORMBY IMPRESSION, singing 'Mother What'll I do now'.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2)

JULIA (CONT'D)
*Mother you give good advice, Always
you mean well. Now I need it more
than ever I'm inside this cell...'*

The REAL GEORGE FORMBY takes over through the following:

25 EXT. BLACKPOOL PROMENADE -- DAY

JOHN and JULIA walking slowly, sun clipping her hair. JOHN finding it hard to keep his eyes off her, keeps glancing up - checking she's there. Like she's a ghost. The feeling she could vanish at any moment.

They come across a row of tacky stalls. DAYTRIPPERS everywhere. JULIA buys a 'Kiss Me Quick' hat, plonks it on JOHN's head, smothers him in quick kisses. Takes it off, puts it on her head - signals it's JOHN's turn to pucker up.

He kisses her slowly on each cheek. C/UP of JOHN - confused pleasure.

26 INT. HALL OF MIRRORS/BLACKPOOL -- DAY

JOHN and JULIA howling at their distorted reflections. JOHN in particular loving the grotesqueness of it all. Then the last one - a 'straight' mirror.

THEY STAND TOGETHER. MOTHER AND SON. AN UNFAMILIAR IMAGE.

GEORGE FORMBY track finishes.

27 EXT. BLACKPOOL PIER -- DAY

JOHN and JULIA strolling arm in arm, sharing a bag of chips. JOHN still stealing glances. Finding confidence in her presence.

JULIA stops - her ears prick up.

JULIA
Y'hear that?

Excited, she grabs JOHN, leads him off.

28 INT. PIER MILK BAR/BLACKPOOL -- DAY

A tiny place selling milkshakes and colorful sweets, A small dancefloor in the middle - empty. A JUKE BOX is playing IKE TURNER's 'Rocket 88' - the first Rock'n'Roll track.

JULIA immediately starts grooving her head, clicking her fingers - sings the lyrics.

28

CONTINUED:

JULIA/IKE
 (singing)
*Step in my rocket, And don't be
 late, We're pulling out 'bout half
 past eight...*

Beat.

JULIA
 Know what it means? 'Rock'n'Roll'?

JOHN shakes his head innocently.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 (mischievous)
 Sex.

JOHN's eyes light up at the word. He looks at JULIA, who as she lights up a cigarette exhales cool mystery. She wanders onto the small dancefloor, loses herself in a sultry dance. Alone. No fear. JOHN watching this woman.

End tight on the record spinning.

29

INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- EVENING

The same record spinning - on JULIA's gramophone.

JULIA and JOHN ('Kiss Me Quick' hat on) back at home, still dancing, still high. THE SISTERS asleep on the settee. STAN slumped in the arm-chair, checks his watch.

But for JOHN and JULIA it's still early.

JOHN tries to sing along. Knocks out a decent note.

A TALL, SWARTHY MAN enters from the kitchen, unseen, wears the tails of a Head Waiter - BOBBY DYKINS - Julia's long term boyfriend. He eyes JOHN suspiciously, walks to the gramophone - needle off.

JULIA
 (excited)
 Bobby! John! Here! John, remember
 Bobby?

BOBBY hold out his hand, shakes with JOHN - no smile.(BOBBY's speech is accompanied by a facial twitch).

BOBBY
 Hello John... again.

JULIA
 We've been to Blackpool, haven't we
 John? Found Ike Turner on the south
 pier.

(CONTINUED)

29

CONTINUED:

BOBBY
Was he lost?

BOBBY looks at JOHN like he's lost too. JULIA drapes herself round BOBBY, kisses him. JOHN, finding this strange.

JULIA
(quickly)
Stan brought him over. You know Stan.

A vague nod between BOBBY and STAN.

JULIA (CONT'D)
He looked after the girls while we were out.

BOBBY
Who should be in bed.

JULIA
I know. But John's here!

JOHN
Yeah, I'm here.

It's said with a glint in his eye.

BOBBY
And it's late.

BOBBY lifts the GIRLS up in his arms.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
I'll take these two up. Nice to see you, John.

He throws a quick look at JULIA then moves to the stairs. The room falls silent. JOHN not making the first move, wants to stay with JULIA - who stares into the distance.

STAN
C'mon John. It's getting dark.

JOHN still not moving.

30

EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

JOHN and JULIA together. STAN has conscientiously moved on ahead. They reach the gate. JULIA lets out a low, visceral sigh then suddenly jumps into life.

JULIA
Next time I'll make Eccles cakes, I love those! Need raisins. Bobby'll have them in his restaurant. Nick them for us.

(CONTINUED)

30

CONTINUED:

JULIA grabs JOHN close. Shuts her eyes tight.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Don't tell Mimi. Please. This is
our secret. Promise me.

JOHN doesn't say anything. JULIA breaks the hug, puts her finger to his lips. JOHN manages a nod.

JULIA (CONT'D)
We'll have an even better time next
time. OK? Go now. I love you.
You're my dream, don't forget that!

With that she quickly walks back into the house. The door shuts. JOHN watching on from the bottom of the path. He finally turns to go - catches up with STAN waiting further on up. Keeps looking back as he walks away, expecting her to rush out and take him back in. Tell him it's all been a mistake. Everything.

The door stays shut.

31

INT/EXT MENDIPS -- NIGHT

MIMI, reading 'The Happy Prince' by Oscar Wilde, every so often she looks up at the clock. Finally the doorbell rings.

CUT TO - MIMI opens up, JOHN on the step, a weird guilty look in his eye.

He steps past. MIMI follows him into the kitchen. JOHN pours himself a glass of water. MIMI spots the 'Kiss Me Quick' hat in JOHN's hands. She snatches it, puts it on his head.

MIMI
(derisory)
Suits you.

JOHN needs to get away, his thoughts and guilt too much. He pushes past MIMI, heads straight upstairs. On MIMI - sensing something.

32

INT. MENDIPS/JOHN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

JOHN sits on the window sill, in his pyjamas, glasses on - staring into the night. He fingers the 'Kiss Me Quick' hat - a memento. Remembers how she kissed him.

But her kisses have always been too quick and never enough.

Slowly he puts the hat on his head.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

33 EXT. SHABBY TOWN-HOUSE (RECURRING DREAM) -- DAY

Establisher of a bed-sit style town house. Painted red.

No sound.

SEA-GULL SQUAWKS crash in. Violently loud.

A DONKEY, like you'd find on the beach, trots slowly past.

34 INT. ROOM (RECURRING DREAM) -- DAY

5 YR OLD JOHN sits on a chair too big for him. A red front door behind him. His eyes switch to the faces of the ADULTS, which we never see.

A Grandfather Clock tick-tocks somewhere.

5YR OLD JOHN (V.O.)
Mummy... Daddy... Mummy... Daddy...
Mummy...

Close on JOHN as he repeats this mantra.

The clock stops.

5YR OLD JOHN (CONT'D)
(speaks)
Daddy.

We hear a WOMAN'S HEELS rushing across the room. Then a door bang.

5YR OLD JOHN - confused, frightened.

5YR OLD JOHN (CONT'D)
Mummy?

CUT TO - JOHN wailing at the front-door. Tears streaming down his face. Panic rising.

5YR OLD JOHN (CONT'D)
Mummmeeeyy!!

He tugs at the handle with all his might.

5YR OLD JOHN (CONT'D)
MUMMEEEEEEY!!!

But it never opens.

35 INT. MENDIPS/JOHN'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

JOHN takes a gasp of air - suddenly waking himself and falling out of bed. THUMP!

35 CONTINUED:

CUT TO - MIMI coming out of the bathroom hears the thump - rushes into John's room, finds a dis-orientated JOHN on the floor. She scoops him up back into bed, pulls the covers up tight around him - kisses his forehead.

JOHN just stares at her.

35A INT. MENDIPS/MORNING ROOM -- DAY

JOHN rifling through Mimi's hand-bag, finds her cigarettes, nicks one.

35B EXT. MENDIPS/TREE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

JOHN blazes up. Leans back on the wooden floor, looks up at the clouds floating by. Chases them with smoke. Then his eyes glaze over, his imagination taken over. He forgets about the cigarette. His mind on his Mum.

36 EXT/INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- DAY

JOHN wandering back down the street. Pensive. He wanders up the path to the house - curtains drawn. Finally knocks.

Nothing.

He knocks again - louder.

Nothing.

He moves to the window. Through a crack in the curtain he sees JULIA in her nightgown, laid out on the settee, smoking. He knocks on the window. JULIA suddenly rises up sharp.

JULIA
GO AWAY!

JULIA locks eyes with JOHN - her expression remains the same.

JOHN
...it's me.

JULIA reaches for her glasses, slowly gets up. Unlocks the door. No kisses this time, no proclamations of dreams.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Having a lie in?

JULIA
(snaps)
So? I've got Spanish blood. What time is it?

JOHN
Two.

She backs into the house, JOHN follows.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

JULIA
Pass my cigarettes please.

JOHN does so. She lights one, offers one to JOHN, who accepts.

JULIA (CONT'D)
No school?

JOHN
Teacher was sick.

JULIA
And they just open the gates?

JULIA shoots a knowing look, goes to the window, peers out.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Mimi know you're here?

JOHN
No.

JULIA turns, walks past him.

JULIA
Come on. Play me a tune on your
mouthie whilst I get dressed.

She heads upstairs.

37 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE/BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN playing '*When The Saints Go Marching In*', his playing has become more confident. JULIA in her underwear, snaps her suspenders on. JOHN trying his best not to see this as sexual. His playing tails off.

JULIA looks up. JOHN manages an awkward smile. No smile back.

JULIA
I was getting into that...

JOHN starts playing again.

38 INT. CAFE -- LATER

JOHN and JULIA walk into a raucous greasy spoon. WORKMEN immediately alerted by her sassy presence. JOHN, embarrassed and confused by their response.

JULIA
(sitting back down)
I met Bobby for the first time
here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN
Twitchy's kind of place.

JULIA
Who?

JOHN mimics Bobby's facial tick.

JOHN
Twitchy. Bobby.

JULIA, unimpressed at the joke, casts a glance over at the WORKMEN, sees them looking at her, fancying her. JULIA smiles, the male gaze cheering her up.

JOHN (CONT'D)
So... That's Bobby sorted. Where
was I at the time?

JULIA's face drops, she fidgets around for her cigarettes.

JULIA
With me.

JOHN
(sarcastic)
So I was with you when you met
Twitchy, then, suddenly, I
wasn't... interesting.

The WAITRESS butts in - LILLIAN, rough and sexy, too much lipstick.

JULIA
Tea for two please, Lillian.

LILLIAN
(flirty)
Who's this?

JULIA looks at JOHN.

JULIA
...an old friend.

JOHN can't believe what he's just heard.

LILLIAN
Doesn't look old to me. He looks
young... and cute.

LILLIAN sets off to the counter. JULIA goes all quiet.

JOHN
An old friend?!

(CONTINUED)

JULIA
People gossip, I don't want it
getting back to...
(can't say the name)
you know...

JOHN
Mimi? Your sister? My aunt?

JULIA avoids his eyes.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Don't worry. She wouldn't set foot
in this place. She's got taste.
(angrier)
Where were we? Oh yeah, 'Where was
I?'

JULIA shifts around uneasily.

JULIA
What do you want from me, John?

JOHN shakes his head in disbelief - regains composure.

JOHN
Mimi said you moved away. That's
why you stopped coming to see me. I
was about seven. Is that true?

Beat.

JULIA
Yes.

JOHN waiting for more. Nothing comes.

JOHN
'Yes'... And?

JULIA stubs her cigarette out.

JULIA
(getting up)
Today's not a good day for this.

JOHN
For what?

JULIA
Us. Me... I dunno, these bloody
awkward questions!

JOHN
Where you going?

38 CONTINUED: (3)

JULIA
To pick the girls up from school.

JOHN
You've got ages yet.

JOHN tries to grab her hand. But JULIA shakes him off,
leaves the cafe. JOHN sets off after her.

39 EXT. CAFE -- CONTINUOUS

JULIA walking off. JOHN behind her.

JOHN
C'mon!

She keeps walking.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Please...

Beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)
MUM!

The first time he's said it. JULIA stops, can't avoid that
word. Slowly she turns back.

JULIA
I can't answer those questions,
John, OK?

JOHN
But -

JULIA
- If you keep on asking then this
won't work. Understand?

JOHN forces a nod. JULIA heads back in the cafe. JOHN,
confused and uncomfortable, trails in after her.

40 EXT. CALDERSTONES PARK -- DAY

JOHN walking through the park approaching MARIE KENNEDY and
GIRLFRIENDS on a park bench.

MARIE
Here he comes. 'The Prize Cock'.

JOHN forcibly whips her up from the bench.

MARIE (CONT'D)
(excited)
Get off me Lennon!

(CONTINUED)

40

CONTINUED:

JOHN

Want a quick chat that's all.

CUT TO - A deserted corner of the park.

JOHN sits looking out across Liverpool, troubled. MARIE leans against a tree, checking her nails out, this is not what she wants or expected.

MARIE

I thought you wanted to 'chat'.

JOHN doesn't look round.

MARIE (CONT'D)

Well... here I am... to 'chat'.

MARIE sighs, sits next to him. Inches her thighs into his.

JOHN suddenly holds her, softly - his head lying in her bosom. A need for human contact. MARIE confused at first... soon settles. Strokes his head.

41

OMITTED

42

INT. MENDIPS/MORNING ROOM -- LATER

JOHN comes in, schleps down the hallway thinking the house is empty, gets to the morning room, reveal MIMI standing waiting for him, coiled like a cobra. They eye each other up.

JOHN

Didn't see you there.

MIMI

Where did you see me then?

JOHN drops his school bag

MIMI (CONT'D)

How was school?

JOHN

Alright. Killing us with homework though...

JOHN rolls with it.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Tonight we've got Maths, chemistry, physics and that famous crowd pleaser... history.

MIMI smiles at him. Suddenly she scoops an apple from the fruit bowl and it at JOHN, shaving his cheek.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIMI
Lies lies lies lies lies!

She glares him down.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Or I suppose it's Mr. Pobjoy lying
when he rings me up to ask why you
aren't in school!

Beat.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Where have you been?

JOHN shrugs his shoulders.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Where?!

JOHN, defiant. Thinks about telling her... bottles it.

MIMI (CONT'D)
An embarrassment, that's what you
are. To me, yourself.
(nasty)
Without me you'd be in a children's
home. Just remember that. Remember
all I've done for you!

JOHN
Like you'll ever let me forget?!

In a flash MIMI picks up another apple and launches it at
JOHN's head - it hits with a loud THUNK!

JOHN (CONT'D)
Ahhh! That hurt!

MIMI
Good.

They stare at each other. THE DOORBELL rings.

They still stare. It rings again.

Finally MIMI breaks off to answer. A YOUNG MAN on the
doorstep, 24, well dressed.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Not today!

MIMI slams the door shut. JOHN heading towards her.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Where are you going?

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN opens the front door, the YOUNG MAN (FISHWICK) is still standing there. JOHN walks off down the path.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Don't you walk away!?

JOHN keeps walking away.

MIMI (CONT'D)
John!

MIMI fuming. Her eyes fall on the young man.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Whatever you're selling, NO!

FISHWICK
Er...
(holds up a paper)
...the advert? For a lodger?

MIMI
Oh. Right.

FISHWICK
(holds his hand out)
Michael Fishwick.

MIMI looks him up and down.

MIMI
What do you do?

FISHWICK
Excuse me?

MIMI
(impatient)
What are you? What is it you do?

FISHWICK
Oh, I'm a student at the
University.

MIMI
What? Medicine?

FISHWICK
Biochemistry

MIMI
Oh..

MIMI finally takes the handshake.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Come in then.

43 EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- LATER

JOHN knocks on the door, still fuming. He expects Julia but BOBBY opens up blocking the door behind him.

BOBBY
You can't just turn up like this
mate, sorry, it doesn't -

JULIA appears - eyes light up.

JULIA
My dream is back...

JOHN smiling, looks up victorious at a concerned BOBBY.

"ONE, TWO, THREE O'CLOCK, FOUR O'CLOCK ROCK"

Bill Haley's 'Rock Around the Clock' strikes up. The track that lit the fuse.

44 EXT. WOOLTON CINEMA -- LATER

Track still playing. 'BLACKBOARD JUNGLE' up in cinema lights.

JULIA waiting outside. JOHN and PETE rush up, wagging it. JULIA hugs JOHN, introduces her to PETE who also gets a smothering.

45 INT. WOOLTON CINEMA -- DAY

JULIA sits in between JOHN and PETE, all eyes glued to the screen. Intercut with snippets from 'BLACKBOARD JUNGLE'.

Glenn Ford as MR. DADIER, his first day as teacher at the all-boys North Manual High. Walking through the playground, menacingly wolf-whistled by the DELINQUENT BOYS with their check shirts, drainpipe jeans, slicked-back haircuts.

CUT TO - MR. DADIER is beaten-up by the DELINQUENT BOYS in his class.

CUT TO - the TOUGH DETECTIVE trying to get MR. DADIER to press charges:

TOUGH DETECTIVE
*"Maybe the kids today are like the
rest of the world, mixed up,
suspicious, scared - I don't know.
But I do know this. The gang
leaders have taken the place of the
parents."*

CUT TO - The DELINQUENTS smashing up a WEEDY TEACHER'S beloved Jazz records.

45 CONTINUED:

DELINQUENT
"What about some Bop, Daddio!"

CUT TO - 'THE END'.

'Rock Around The Clock' kicks in again.

The HOUSE LIGHTS come up. Everyone starts bopping - including PETE and JULIA. JOHN sits still and stares at the screen.

46 EXT. WOOLTON CINEMA -- DAY

JOHN, PETE and JULIA come out. Hyped.

JOHN
We've got to see it again, yeah!
See it again, and - and, slash the
fuckin' seats up, yeah?! What d'you
think Mum?

PETE laughs nervously, expecting JULIA's admonishment.

JULIA
I'm just thinking Sidney Poitier at
the moment. Nothing else. Just
Sidney, and me, somewhere private.

She blows hot, pretends to fan herself. PETE realising JULIA's no normal Mum. He looks over at JOHN - who's staring at the film's poster with fascination.

47 INT. MENDIPS/BATHROOM -- DAY

JOHN in the mirror, seen from behind, as he finishes off his 'Ducks Arse' hairdo with dollops of Brylcreem.

48 INT. MENDIPS/JOHN'S BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN falls back in bed. Looks up at a life-sized BRIGITTE BARDOT POSTER stuck to the ceiling. It is made up in segments collected from magazines - twelve would be a complete Brigitte, John currently has six.

JOHN
Bonjour, Brigeet...

He closes his eyes, uses his imagination - his right-hand drops down his pants.

49 INT. RECORD SHOP -- LATER

JOHN's right hand still dropping down his pants, this time as he nicks RECORDS whilst PETE diverts the attention of the STORE OWNER.

50 EXT. PIER-HEAD -- MOMENTS LATER

The LADS on the waterfront. SHIPS unloading crates, DOCKERS and CUNARD YANKS milling about. JOHN flicking through his haul, most of them meet with a sneer and get chucked into the river.

JOHN
Jazz - shit.
(chuck)
Jazz - shit.
(chuck)
I've nicked the wrong stuff. Hang
on!

He pulls another record out. Looks hopeful then realises.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Jazz - shit.

CUNARD YANK (O.S.)
Hey!

A CUNARD YANK, mid 30's, (a sailor on the passenger ferries to US) catches up with them.

CUNARD YANK (CONT'D)
No man's vinyl deserves to be
tossed in the drink.

Takes the records off JOHN.

JOHN
But it's jazz.

CUNARD YANK
Jazz is cool.

JOHN
Er... No. It's shit.

CUNARD YANK flicks through the records, likes what he sees.

CUNARD YANK
Rock 'n' rollers? I got a record in
my cab that's not even out here
yet. Straight from New York City.
I'll swap you.

JOHN
Who's it by?

CUNARD YANK
Screamin' Jay Hawkins.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

JOHN
OK. We'll wait...

JOHN takes the jazz record back.

JOHN (CONT'D)
With these.

The CUNARD YANK runs back to his ship.

PETE
Never heard of him, have you?

JOHN excited at the prospect of playing it to Julia.

JOHN
I bet Mum has. Mum knows everyone.

51 EXT. BUS SHELTER/CITY CENTRE - LATER

Tight on JOHN and PETE, smoking. City scape backdrop.

JOHN
Here she comes...

Widen out to reveal they are stood on top of A BUS SHELTER outside the BUSY LIME STREET TRAIN STATION. A DOUBLE DECKER bus pulls up, the TOP DECK PASSENGERS look bemused. JOHN notices a COUPLE OF PRETTY GIRLS. Gives them a wink as THE LADS clamber onto the bus's roof.

52 EXT. BUS/CITY CENTRE/PENNY LANE/WOOLTON -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN and PETE on their backs, head to head and smoking - cool as you like.

CUT TO - BOLD STREET, known as "The Bond Street of the North".

CUT TO - the bus passing The TOWN HALL.

CUT TO - PENNY LANE and it's Barbers shop.

CUT TO - The leafier surrounds of WOOLTON.

53 EXT. WOOLTON VILLAGE/BUS-STOP -- LATER

MARIE KENNEDY, Teddy-girl look, hanging out with HER TEDDY GIRL MATES at a bus shelter with a bunch of OLDER TEDDY BOYS. MARIE is messing about with one particular ROUGH LOOKING TED, play fighting (could be mistaken for flirting).

A BUS pulls up. Two loud thumps on top of the shelter and JOHN and PETE's HEADS appear upside down - they're once perfect DA's blown into bog brushes. They flip to the ground. JOHN eyes MARIE and THE ROUGH LAD - jealous.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN
Must have forgot to lock the zoo
tonight.

JOHN and PETE whip out combs, sort their hair.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Never knew you fucked monkeys,
Marie.

There's an immediate souring of the atmosphere. OLDER TEDS
circle them. Then, the click of a FLICK-KNIFE. JOHN turns to
see the KNIFE in the ROUGH LAD's hand

ROUGH LAD
I could always fuck you instead,
dickhead?

Stand-off.

PETE
(worried)
Only joking mate.

JOHN
I don't have primates for mates.

JOHN's stare - proper fuck you.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You're obviously really clever
because you carry a big knife. But
are you clever enough to use it?

JOHN takes a step forward, so that the KNIFE is centimetres
away from his heart. ROUGH LAD so not expecting this!

JOHN (CONT'D)
C'mon Brains. It's not hard. Push.

JOHN stares wilting ROUGH LAD out.

MARIE (O.S.)
Jim.

MARIE walks in, stands close to ROUGH LAD.

MARIE (CONT'D)
That's enough.

MARIE slowly forces ROUGH LAD's knife hand down.

ROUGH LAD
Just fuck off.

JOHN smiles, backs off looking looks at MARIE with curious
affection.

(CONTINUED)

53

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN
Marie Kennedy. *My guardian angel.*

She stares back at him with wonder (at his bravery) and lust.
He grabs PETE.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(to the gang)
Lads. Always a pleasure. Let's not
leave it so long, eh?

They walk off - fast!

54

EXT. ALLERTON GOLF COURSE -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN and PETE walking home.

MARIE (O.S.)
John!

They turn to see MARIE following them. JOHN immediately KNOWS
- he grins behind the eyes. MARIE reaches the lads - her eyes
lock into JOHN's.

JOHN
Tut tut. Your boyfriend wouldn't be
happy now, would he?

MARIE
He's not my boyfriend.

JOHN
What is he then, apart from ugly?

MARIE
My cousin.

PETE's brain ticks.

PETE
You fuck your cousin?

JOHN and MARIE are too stuck into each other to hardly notice
PETE. THEY BOTH KNOW WHY SHE'S HERE. JOHN takes out
'Screamin' Jay Hawkins' from his jacket gives it PETE.

JOHN leads MARIE off by the hand.

PETE (CONT'D)
Where y'going?

JOHN
(eyes Marie)
For a quick chat...a proper one.

55 EXT. ALLERTON GOLF COURSE/SHADED TREE AREA -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN leads MARIE into the deep rough. He backs her up to a tree. They start necking and french kissing.

Through the leaves we can just make out PETE watching.

JOHN's hands clasp MARIE's tits. He swings her round, holds her from behind, MARIE arching her neck back as his hands wander south, pressing her body into his. JOHN pulling up her skirt, finding the heat between her legs.

MARIE moans, on the verge.

JOHN
(in her ear)
Hello little girl.

MARIE orgasms. JOHN lets her enjoy it.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Now... your turn to help me.

He turns her round, unbelts his trousers, gently pushes her to her knees.

MARIE starts helping. JOHN looks over at PETE perving, he holds his hands together and looks to the skies in mock prayer. An angel at his feet.

55A EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- LATER

A flushed JOHN rushes up to the door holding SCREAMIN' JAY RECORD. Excitedly rings the doorbell.

56 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

JULIA sticks the SCREAMIN' JAY HAWKINS on. JOHN slumped into the arm of the settee. Watching her. JULIA looks at the sleeve - a scary pic of Jay - bulging, mad eyes.

JULIA
Looks like Bobby after a few pints.

They laugh. Needle to the groove. 'I Put A Spell on You'.

JULIA lights up a fag - starts swaying to the slow, sexy, building beat. She slumps in next to JOHN, her head resting on his chest - she blows smoke out into the room.

They listen to the magnetic track throughout.

JOHN feeling JULIA more than ever.

Silence at the end.

56 CONTINUED:

Hold.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

56A INT. MENDIPS/JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

JOHN sat at his desk drawing his characters. Door open.
FISHWICK hovers in the landing.

FISHWICK
(small talk)
Your Aunt looked all excited for
her trip to the theatre didn't she?

JOHN ignores him.

FISHWICK (CONT'D)
You like drawing then?

JOHN
You must go to university.

Beat.

FISHWICK
What is it? The drawing.

JOHN
A big fat ugly thing with warts.

FISHWICK moves in close for a look at the drawing. JOHN looks
up at him.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Oh! I get it. Like the smell of
lavender do you ducky?

FISHWICK smiles, looks up at the BARDOT POSTER on the
ceiling.

FISHWICK
(pause)
Not really. I'd like to get a sniff
of her though.

JOHN follows his POV. The both admire the poster.

FISHWICK (CONT'D)
In the meantime...

A copy of 'PARADE' (a porn mag) lands on JOHN's desk. JOHN
can't believe it - eyes light up. FISHWICK is already coolly
walking back to his bedroom.

(CONTINUED)

56A CONTINUED:

FISHWICK
Try page 52. Vanda Hudson.

56B INT. QUARRYBANK SCHOOL/HEADMASTERS OFFICE -- DAY

A guilty looking JOHN and PETE stand in front of POBJOY. BAMBOO CANE in his hands. On his desk lies the porn mag, PARADE. He stares them out.

POBJOY
Hands.

JOHN and PETE gingerly hold their hands out. POBJOY administers pain, several times. The BOYS comfort their stinging hands beneath their armpits.

POBJOY (CONT'D)
I warned you, didn't I? After the urinating in the bins debacle I told you things would get serious. And in less than two days...

He picks up the PORN MAG.

POBJOY (CONT'D)
This.

POBJOY returns behind his desk.

POBJOY (CONT'D)
Your parents, and your Aunt, will receive letters in the post. I don't want you near this school for at least a week. Questions?

JOHN
Any chance I can have the magazine back sir?

57 INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

Close on the QUARRY BANK TIE being knotted up to JOHN's neck. MIMI comes in, takes over the tie knotting - her close proximity suddenly makes JOHN recoil.

JOHN
I can do it myself.

MIMI studies him. Leaves.

58 INT./EXT. MENDIPS -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN, school uniform on, looking out of the window, spots the POSTMAN in next door's garden, rushes out of the house to the front gate as the POSTMAN arrives.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

JOHN
(deadpan)
Nice day.

The confused POSTMAN takes a glance at the threatening clouds, hands the mail to JOHN.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Cheers pal.

He quickly looks back to check Mimi's not watching, then quickly flicks through it. POV: the QUARRY BANK SUSPENSION LETTER.

58A EXT. FIELD BY JULIA'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

JOHN takes the LETTER from his inside pocket, then the cigarette from his mouth - burns it.

59 EXT/INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN knocks on. JULIA answers in her dressing gown - a slightly manic look in her eye.

JULIA
Oh John. Thank God you're here.
He's back! He walks amongst us
again!

JULIA smiles takes JOHN by the hand leads him inside - sits him down by the GRAMOPHONE and thrusts the album sleeve into JOHN's hands.

THE FIRST PICTURE OF ELVIS PRESLEY

Eyes closed, mouth open, guitar slung, on the RCA VICTOR ALBUM - you couldn't get a more arresting picture of a Rock'n'Roller - timeless.

60 INT. WOOLTON CINEMA -- LATER

ELVIS on PATHE NEWS - storming and sexing-up the world. GIRLS and WOMEN screaming at the screen. JOHN notes the effect this guy has on surrounding FEMALES OF ALL AGES, especially JULIA.

61 INT. CAFE -- LATER

JOHN and JULIA breeze into the buzzing cafe.

JOHN
He makes Bill Haley look like a fat
copper.

JOHN swings his pelvis, Elvis style, with a pretend mic. Sings a verse of 'Teddy Bear'.

(CONTINUED)

61

CONTINUED:

Other CUSTOMERS look on, bemused. JULIA impressed at *that voice*, its depth, impact - the clarity.

JOHN suddenly plunges into mock screaming. Pulling his hair. He faints into the soft seats.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Why couldn't God make me Elvis?

JULIA
Because he was saving you for John Lennon.

JOHN
(clenched fist at the sky)
I'll get you back God, I promise!!

HE sits up straight

JOHN (CONT'D)
Fancy the ferry over to New Brighton tomorrow, fair's on.

JULIA
What about school?

JULIA gives him a knowing glance, Mimi. JOHN comes clean.

JOHN
I've been suspended. Me and Pete.

JULIA
(genuine disappointment)
Oh John.
(pause)
What for?

JOHN
(shrugs)
...showing pornography to an old lady... on a bus.

JULIA can't help a laugh. Then contains it.

JULIA
Anything else I shouldn't know about?

JOHN
Loads!
(pause)
Loads I've not been caught for anyway!

JULIA's face drops. Suddenly realises how serious this is.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: (2)

JULIA
Why am I laughing?! This isn't
funny.
(pointedly)
Is it?

JULIA looks at the uniform - it dawns on her.

JULIA (CONT'D)
You've not told Mimi, have you?

JOHN
No point going through all her
bollocks if you don't have to.

JULIA
Why? She has to go through yours.

JOHN slowly looks up.

JOHN
Well I never asked her to, did I?

The subtext is there. JULIA's turn to look away. JOHN senses an opportunity.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Can I stay with you? Just during
the day. It's covered. I've burnt
the school letter. Mimi still
thinks I'm in school. She won't
find out. I swear.

JOHN, a big Lennon smile.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Go on Mum. Please.
(pause)
I need your help here.

JOHN twisting her guilt. On JULIA in a conundrum.

62 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- LATER

JOHN's sits on the piano seat, facing JULIA, who sits on the armchair with the banjo.

JULIA
Hold the pick -

JOHN
The what?

JULIA
The plectrum, it's called a pick.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
I thought it was called a plectrum.

JULIA
Just hold it smart arse. Like this.
Arm, horizontal from the elbow,
strum from the wrist, think Bo
Diddley.

JOHN
(giggles)
'Strum from the wrist'...

JULIA
John, be serious or I'll phone Mimi
myself.

JOHN eyes her.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Please... learn.

He nods meekly.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Now... just strum.

JULIA shows him how it's done.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Try and hit all the strings.

JULIA playing softly and slowly, then suddenly busts out into
some heavy intricate playing. Intense concentration. JOHN is
gobsmacked. JULIA banging out a verse of 'MAGGIE MAY'.

Then, just as suddenly, stops. JOHN gobsmacked.

JOHN
(soft)
Wow.

JULIA coy at his reaction.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Who's Maggie May?

JULIA
(nonchalant)
A whore.

JOHN looks at JULIA a beat longer than usual.

JULIA (CONT'D)
(passing the banjo)
Your turn.

62 CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN sits the banjo correctly on his lap, fingers it carefully. Takes the pick, and a deep breath.

62A INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- DAY

JOHN on the piano stool - strumming the banjo. We are as wide as we can possibly be - showing as much of the living room and kitchen as we can.

Slowly... very slowly... we move in on him.

And as we do the working/school week passes by. Light shifts. JULIA in different clothes. BOBBY coming in from work. The GIRLS playing - going and returning from school. Breakfast lunch and dinner... loads of everyday stuff.

But JOHN doesn't move, lost in learning, lost in music. In his head and in our eyes he has been nowhere but here - on the stool practising.

And as we near... we begin to notice the playing gets better and better - the strings begin to make sense. The tune becomes more melodic... until he too busts out singing 'MAGGIE MAY'.

As we arrive in C/UP, he finishes.

A beat of silence.

It sinks in - that was pretty 'wow' too!

Then JULIA's smiling face snuggles into frame, kisses his cheek.

JULIA
That's my boy.

She exits. On JOHN, thrilled.

63 OMITTED

64 EXT. MENDIPS -- DAY

Establisher. A phone starts ringing.

65 INT. MENDIPS/HALLWAY -- DAY

MIMI answers.

MIMI
Woolton 2189.
(weary sigh)
Yes, yes, there's no need to
introduce yourself Mr. Pobjoy

Stay on MIMI's face as she realises John has been suspended.

66 INT. PETE'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

PETE watching adverts on TELLY. Suddenly MIMI and PETE's MUM march into the room.

MIMI
Where is he?

PETE - crumbling

67 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- LATER

Come off a BUDDY HOLLY ALBUM COVER - the man himself in his famous glasses. *'That'll Be The Day'* on the gramophone - slowed right down so JOHN (on the banjo) and JULIA (piano) have a chance to jam along. Both, innocently, wearing their Buddy Holly glasses. The song is three-quarters through when JULIA looks over at JOHN, then something catches her eye. She freezes.

JOHN
(unaware)
C'mon Mum, you're missing it...

JULIA doesn't hear him.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Mum.

He follows her eyeline, sees MIMI standing at the front-door (which was open).

MIMI flicks her eyes from JULIA to JOHN. JOHN looks back at JULIA, sees she's crumbling, nervously fidgeting. BUDDY HOLLY drones on eerily...

BUDDY HOLLY
That'll be the day, that I die...

...then stops.

MIMI strides across the room, JULIA instinctively stands in fear. MIMI stops, her eyes bore into JULIA's soul. JULIA eyes fixed on the floor.

JOHN frozen. Shallow breathing.

MIMI looks around the house - disgust. Then darts her eyes back on JULIA.

MIMI
No. Way.

MIMI grabs JOHN's wrist - the banjo twangs to the floor as she drags him towards the front door. He half complies, then, at the threshold yanks his arm free.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

Momentum takes MIMI a few steps down the path. She turns to JOHN - he looks guilty - the power of this woman.

MIMI (CONT'D)

JOHN!

JOHN, mustering all the courage he can, shakes his head.

MIMI (CONT'D)

I mean it!

He is pinned to the spot. In a flash JULIA appears, drags JOHN back inside and SLAM! The front door is shut, the lock turned.

MIMI staring at the door. The SHOCK. Then the ANGER bubbling up. She takes strides to the door as though about to pummel it down - at the last second she about-turns, walks down the path and away. Keeping it all inside. Pent up... but the moisture in her eyes seeps out.

68 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- DAY

JULIA sits, protective arms around JOHN's neck, clasping tight. Both are in fear of what they have unleashed.

69 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- LATER

EVERYONE sits round the dining table eating fish and chips. JOHN making the GIRLS laugh with grotesque funny faces. BOBBY sits on a make-shift wooden box, just manages to get his legs under the small table.

JULIA pours the last of the teapot into JOHN's cup.

BOBBY casts a sly glance at JOHN.

70 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE/LITTLE JULIA'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

JOHN sits in Little Julia's bed, in one of Bobby's nightshirts. He takes in his new room, the bedroom of a loved child. JULIA comes in with a glass of milk, sits on the edge of the bed.

JOHN

I've stolen Little Julia's bed.

JULIA

She's your sister... she's happy
you're here.

JOHN nods appreciatively. Builds himself up...

JOHN

How long can I stay?

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

JULIA
I need to talk with Mimi. If
she'll listen...

Worry in her face. She kisses his forehead, holds him tight.

71 INT. SHABBY TOWN-HOUSE (RECURRING DREAM) -- DAY

5YR OLD JOHN wailing at the front-door. Tears streaming.

5YR OLD JOHN
Mummmeeeyy!!

He tugs at the handle with all his might.

5YR OLD JOHN (CONT'D)
MUMMEEEEEY!!!

But it never opens.

72 INT. JOHN'S SISTERS BEDROOM -- NIGHT

JOHN flicks his eyes open from the dream. Immediately aware of arguing voices from downstairs.

JULIA (V.O.)
I'll get a job. Please Bobby. It'll
work out. Let's try.

BOBBY (V.O.)
And who looks after our girls, eh?

73 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE/UPSTAIRS LANDING -- NIGHT

JOHN creeps to the top of the stairs. Sits down quietly.

JULIA
Part-time. I'll ask at the cafe.
Anywhere. I can do it.

BOBBY
No you can't! It'll be too much for
you. Everything'll get too much,
again, and I'll lose you *again*...
and I need you. The girls need
you.

JULIA
And I need John.

JULIA starts crying.

JULIA (CONT'D)
I'm his mother.

(CONTINUED)

73

CONTINUED:

BOBBY

Mimi's been caring for him since he was four years old.

JULIA

I never wanted that!

BOBBY

But that's how it's worked out. Mimi needs John.

JULIA

I need John!

Beat.

JULIA (CONT'D)

You don't get it do you? He's mine. I need him to be mine.

BOBBY

John'll be OK. He has been so far. He's fifteen. A young man. He doesn't need his mother.

Beat.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

(softer)

Julia...come on...listen to me.....for the girls...OK? They need their Mum.

JULIA slowly nods her head.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

(forceful)

OK?

JULIA

OK.

He kisses her..It gets heavier. JULIA conceding to her man as he envelopes her. JOHN bows his head into his knees.

74

INT. JULIA'S HOUSE/JULIA JUNIOR'S BEDROOM -- LATER

JOHN awake in bed. From next door he hears the mattress springs squeak as JULIA and BOBBY make love. JOHN buries his head under the pillow to try and drown out the noise.

75

INT. JULIA'S HOUSE/KITCHEN -- MORNING

LITTLE JULIA and JACKIE eat breakfast with BOBBY. JULIA is at the sink, washing up.

JOHN walks in, dressed in his school uniform.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

JOHN
I think I'll just go... It's wrong
taking Little Julia's bed...

BOBBY nods understandingly. JULIA doesn't turn round, can't.
JOHN's eyes bore into her back.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Thanks for the banjo lessons, Mum.

JOHN leaves. JULIA takes a moment, then suddenly swings
around, makes after him. BOBBY stands, holds her back.

75A EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN walking off - a hardened, angry look.

76 INT. MENDIPS/MORNING ROOM/KITCHEN -- LATER

MIMI, staring out of the window, smoking, having hardly
slept. JOHN appears in the doorway. He avoids eye-contact.

MIMI
Any more lies you want to tell me?

JOHN shakes his head.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Have you decided where you're
living these days?

JOHN
Yeah..

He pointedly takes his coat off, sits down at the table.
Showing MIMI where home is.

MIMI
Have you had breakfast?

JOHN shakes his head. MIMI goes into the kitchen - takes a
moment on her own. Closes her eyes, we see her joy.

JOHN
I'm gonna start a rock'n'roll band.

MIMI winces at the thought.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I need a guitar.

MIMI pops her head round the door, ignoring the last comment.

MIMI
Exams coming up too. Let's find
time for those, shall we?

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

He holds her stare.

JOHN
I'm sure I'll pass with flying
colours.... if someone finds me a
guitar.

JOHN floats a Lennon-esque smirk Mimi's way.

77 INT. LIVERPOOL CITY CENTRE/STREET -- DAY

Saturday morning.

JOHN and MIMI get off a bus outside the colossal Graeco-Roman
ST. GEORGE'S HALL, on Lime Street.

CUT TO - they head into a shop, FRANK HESSY'S, its windows
full of guitars.

78 INT. FRANK HESSY'S MUSIC SHOP -- DAY

A goldmine of guitars. The shop is full of YOUNG CUSTOMERS -
the skiffle craze biting. JOHN sits with an acoustic guitar
in his hands, showing an unimpressed MIMI what he can do.

JOHN
Four chords, that's rock and roll.
Simple.

MIMI
Do you have to be simple to like
it?

JOHN
See! Funny. Well done.

MIMI
Your sarcasm worries me.

JOHN
(weary sigh)
I Know. Not up to your high
standards, but I'm working on it.

She playfully thumps him. A nice genuine moment.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(plays on)
It comes from blues and gospel... a
bit of country... cotton pickers'
music from the deep south of
America.

MIMI
Not exactly Bach is it?

THE SHOP GUY steps in.

(CONTINUED)

SHOP GUY

The 'Gallotone Champion' bangs out
a solid tune. Guaranteed not to
split. At a very good price.

MIMI

What's very good about it?

SHOP GUY

Well it's eight pounds four
shillings.

MIMI

That's not very good is it John?

JOHN

Borderline mediocre if you ask me.
Very good would be-

MIMI

- Seven pounds, cash.

JOHN

Now *that's* very good,

They both stare hard at SHOP GUY, who in the end smiles,
holds his hands up in surrender.

SHOP GUY

Just don't shoot, OK?

Takes the guitar to the counter.

JOHN steals a kiss on MIMI's cheek who peps up, like she's
been pleasantly electrocuted.

MIMI

You can't say I don't buy you
anything.

JOHN

Yes I can. 'I don't buy you
anything'.

78A INT. MENDIPS/JOHN'S BEDROOM -- LATER

JOHN comes in with his guitar, he stands it up on his bed.
Leans back against the wall, stares at it. Its potential -
musically and emotionally.

His salvation and his revenge.

78B INT. QUARRY BANK SCHOOL -- DAY

JOHN striding down the corridor - determined look.

79 INT. QUARRYBANK/TOILETS -- DAY

NIGEL, PETE, ERIC and LEN and (geeky) ROD have annexed the boys' toilets. All smoking, except ROD. JOHN struts through the doors like a peacock.

JOHN
At ease fuckwits!

Combs his Duck's Arse in the mirror. Lights up. Big drag.

LEN
What's up John?

PETE
I take it we're not here for a communal crap.

JOHN
A revolution, that's what's up. And you lucky lads are about to join my rebel army.

The OTHERS look at each other perplexed.

ERIC
Y'what?

JOHN
You've been picked to be in my band.

ERIC
Er... a band? None of us know how to really play..
(looks around)
I don't.

JOHN
It's a skiffle band. You don't have to know... What's important is I've chosen you. And we're gonna be great.

PETE
But what if we're shit ?

JOHN
Shut up tool!
(beat)
Eric, you've got a guitar, right?

ERIC shrugs a nod.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Len, T-Chest bass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEN

What the fuckinell's that?

JOHN

It's an empty tea-chest with a broom handle and string. Easy, you just do a bit of this-

JOHN just wiggles his finger a bit.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Pete, washboard.

(pause)

Rod, you said in chemistry you had a banjo.

ROD

That's right...

JOHN

And it was owned by an ex-pro...

The OTHERS stare at ROD.

ROD

My Uncle was a busker.

NIGEL

(excited)

What about me John?

JOHN looks him up and down disdainfully.

JOHN

Manager.

NIGEL, disappointed.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(pause)

All we need is someone, a drummer, who has his own kit.

Collective beat of thought.

LEN

There's a lad called Colin, lives behind me.

JOHN

Tell him he's in. First band practice Thursday at 6, Pete's air raid shelter in his back yard. If you don't come, I'll batter the lot of you's. Questions?

80 EXT. ST.PETER'S CHURCH -- DAY

The sun shining like good news. Hear the BRASS BAND of the CHESHIRE YEOMANRY. Find a POSTER stuck the sandstone wall advertising the days events - scroll down to the bottom:

"The Quarrymen Skiffle Group!! Peformances 3pm and 7.30pm"

Bunting and balloons. STALLS and SIDE-SHOWS manned by BROWNIES, CUBS, SCOUTS and GUIDES. CHILDREN in FANCY DRESS mix with MORRIS DANCERS. POLICE DOGS doing obedience displays. PLENTY OF GOOD-LOOKING GIRLS.

MIMI takes tea in the REFRESHMENTS MARQUEE with other CHURCH ELDERS.

81 EXT. ST. PETER'S CHURCH FIELDS -- CONTINUOUS

THE QUARRYMEN gathered round the back of a flat bed LORRY. JOHN downs a bottle of beer, chucks it with the other empties, nicks PETE's fag - drags on it.

JOHN

Right then. Are we ready to do this, boys?

Weak mumbles of "yeah". JOHN registers the lack of focus.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I said, ARE WE READY TO DO THIS?!

The BOYS get shook up.

QUARRYMEN

YEAH!

Beat.

JOHN

Good...

(blows a smoke ring)

Let's fuckin' do it then.

JOHN lets THE QUARRYMEN file up onto the flat-bed lorry, which is serving as the stage. JOHN pats each member on the back in encouragement.

82 EXT. ST. PETER'S CHURCH FIELDS -- MOMENTS LATER

PEOPLE waiting for the gig, including JULIA and THE GIRLS. THE QUARRYMEN take up their positions on the stage, JOHN at the front. JULIA whistles with her fingers.

JULIA

Go, Johnny boy!

JOHN pretends he can't see her, steps up to the microphone.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

JOHN
Where've you gone? Lost you...

Then, he looks in the opposite direction of JULIA, as though the crowd have magically appeared.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Oh, there you are.

Goes to say something else, but instead does a majestic sigh... teasing. He scans the field - a genteel picture of Englishness. JOHN finds JULIA's eyes fleetingly.

JOHN (CONT'D)
This song involves a woman with questionable morals.

They launch into *MAGGIE MAY*. JOHN loving the irony as CHURCH PEOPLE cross in the background, oblivious.

83 INT. TEA-TENT -- CONTINUOUS

MIMI having tea, hears the band's noise from outside. YOUNGSTERS excitedly run out.

Curious, MIMI follows them.

84 EXT. ST. PETER'S CHURCH FIELDS -- CONTINUOUS

MIMI making her way down to where the band are playing. Slowly she recognises the voice, then JOHN comes into focus.

The first time THE QUARRYMEN have become a reality to her.

JOHN spots MIMI. Worry. Then he smiles, lets it all go in the song. Making up lyrics about MIMI coming down the path.

JULIA follows JOHN's eyeline, finds MIMI who can't take her eyes off JOHN. Poker faced.

'Maggie May' comes to an end. Huge applause. JOHN - his eyes on MIMI. She nods her head politely. Containing her pride. But JOHN can tell she approves.

JOHN
Maggie May. A talented girl.

JULIA realises she's being ignored...in favour of MIMI.

MIMI finally returns Julia's gaze. JULIA smiles hopefully... MIMI looks straight through her.... knowing that John has just done the same.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Next one's by The Del Vikings...

THE QUARRYMEN launches into '*Come Go With Me*'.

85 EXT. ST. PETER'S CHURCH FIELDS -- CONTINUOUS

IVAN VAUGHN jogs across with a BABY FACED, QUIFFED-UP 15 YEAR OLD in a white sports jacket and pink carnation - this is PAUL MCCARTNEY.

They hit the periphery.

IVAN
(excited)
That's John...

PAUL nods, impressed, studying JOHN. How he plays the guitar, how he holds it, how he sings.

IVAN (CONT'D)
Not bad, eh?

PAUL
(casual)
He's making the words up.

HIGH and WIDE - JOHN on stage, JULIA and MIMI on either flank. And now PAUL in the middle.

86 INT. ST. PETER'S CHURCH HALL -- LATER

THE QUARRYMEN have taken over the empty hall, hanging-out. JOHN and PETE still drinking. IVAN and PAUL walk in.

IVAN
Everyone! Meet Paul.

No-one looks up. PAUL doesn't look that bothered.

IVAN (CONT'D)
Paul plays too.

JOHN looks up.

JOHN
With himself?

Guffaws. JOHN sees PAUL looks a bit like Elvis.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(gets up)
I do. All the time... good for the wrist muscles.

He pointedly offers PAUL his right hand.

JOHN (CONT'D)
John.

PAUL looks at the hand. Finally shakes.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (CONT'D)
Wanna beer?

PAUL
Love a tea?

JOHN
Any tea left Pete?

PETE
(sarcy)
No tea left John.

JOHN
Didn't think so.

JOHN sizes him up.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Did you watch us play?

PAUL
Yeah.

JOHN
And?

PAUL
Yeah, you were alright.

JOHN looks at PAUL with indignation - 'alright'? JOHN hands him his guitar.

JOHN
How 'alright' are you on one of these?

PAUL takes the guitar - immediately flips it over, showing his left-hand status strums it once.

PAUL
Out of tune..

PAUL wanders over to the PIANO - tunes the guitar. JOHN and THE QUARRYMEN take notice. None of them can do this.

JOHN
You're not gonna charge me are you?

PAUL
(finishing tuning)
Any requests?

JOHN
Your pink carnation?
(pause)
Very gay. Can I borrow it?

86

CONTINUED: (2)

PAUL realises he's taking the piss. Instead he launches into 'Twenty Flight Rock' by Eddie Cochran - a virtuoso performance, he knows the words perfectly, has a great American accent, PLUS he's playing the guitar upside-down!

Mid song, PAUL becomes aware of beery breath. A quick look, he sees JOHN shortsightedly studying the way his fingers hit the chords. JOHN gives him a quick Lennon smile.

PAUL finishes. EVERYONE impressed. Except JOHN, (who *is* impressed, but not showing it). He circles PAUL, takes his guitar back.

JOHN (CONT'D)

How old are you?

PAUL

Fifteen.

JOHN

When?

PAUL

Last month.

JOHN takes this in, sneers.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I can do Little Richard -

JOHN

- Sorry. Tick-tock. Nice to meet you and all, but we need to rehearse for our evening gig... so... gonna have to kick you out...

PAUL

(slightly ruffled)

I've got to get off anyway.

JOHN

Ta ta, then.

PAUL and IVAN leave. JOHN sits next to PETE - opens another bottle of beer. THE QUARRYMEN stare at JOHN in disbelief. But JOHN is more than aware what he's just seen in Paul.

87

OMITTED

88

OMITTED

89

INT. MENDIPS/HALLWAY -- DAY

The doorbell ringing - too keenly for MIMI's liking. She opens up. PAUL on the doorstep, guitar slung over his back.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

MIMI

John! You have a *little friend* at the door!

Hear rumbling from upstairs

90 INT. MENDIPS/JOHN'S BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

PAUL and JOHN, strapped, their guitar-playing a mirror image. PAUL teaching JOHN some new chords, friendly and gently. JOHN, every bit the studious learner, tries but struggles.

JOHN

Bollocks. Hang on a sec.

He reaches for his GLASSES, puts them on. PAUL is a bit taken back at how uncool he looks. JOHN notices.

JOHN (CONT'D)

It's my Buddy Holly look.

PAUL shrugs. JOHN has another go at the chords.

PAUL

Good, now add E minor.

JOHN plays the chords - '*Blue Moon*'... PAUL joins in with his guitar. JOHN starts to sing the words in the style of Elvis. The beat gets faster and faster. Feet start stomping. PAUL joins in, singing.

THE HARMONY INSTANT.

91 INT. MENDIPS/LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

MIMI trying to read but the noise has shattered any peace. The vibrations from the foot stomping shudders the BEST CHINA on the shelves almost to the point of wobbling off.

92 INT. MENDIPS/PORCH -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN and PAUL are being shepherded into the porch by MIMI.

PAUL

(nodding)

Much better acoustically.

MIMI looks at PAUL like he's taking the piss. He's not, he's deadly earnest. She shuts the door on them.

JOHN

So Mummy's cool about baby Paul wanting to be Elvis?

PAUL

She would have loved it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN
Bollocks.

JOHN not registering 'would have'.

PAUL
She's not around anymore.

JOHN's ears prick up.

JOHN
What?

PAUL
(stumbles)
She sort of died... last year.

JOHN's eyes narrow. Looks for any trace of humour like it's a bad joke, in PAUL's face. Finds none, just a soft sadness.

Awkward silence.

PAUL (CONT'D)
(upbeat)
Y'know, if we're gonna do this we should write our own stuff. Then you don't get stiffed by record companies.

JOHN
(takes this in)
I write stuff... but not songs, more poetry and stories.

PAUL
Add a tune to those, you got a song.

JOHN takes this in - makes sense.

JOHN
Have you written any?

PAUL
A couple.

JOHN - impressed.

JOHN
Elvis doesn't write his own songs.

PAUL
Yeah, but Elvis is... The King.

JOHN
(eyes him)
Why're you so clued up?

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED: (2)

PAUL shrugs innocently.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You don't seem like a rock'n'roll
kinda guy.

PAUL
Y'mean I don't go round smashin'
things up and acting like a dick.

JOHN
Yeah.

JOHN has to smile.

PAUL
It's the music. That's it. Simple.
(confused smirk)
Know what I mean?

JOHN - totally the same.

JOHN
Perhaps we both know what we mean
if you know what I mean?

PAUL
Not really.

They share a laugh. JOHN starts '*Ain't that A Shame*' by Fats Domino. PAUL joins him. Escaping in music.

92A INT. MENDIPS/JOHN'S BEDROOM -- LATER

JOHN on his own, practicing hard, his fingers raw. Stops puts the GUITAR down. Blows on his fingers. But can't wait to pick it up again and get practicing.

FADE OUT.

93 INT. MENDIPS/MORNING ROOM -- DAY

MIMI sits at the table, pensive. A bowl of soup in front of her - untouched. JOHN steams in through the backdoor. A frosty silence.

He heads upstairs.

94 INT. MENDIPS/JOHN'S BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN walks in, stops, sees the bed is empty. No guitar. He has a good search. Nothing.

95 INT. MENDIPS/MORNING ROOM/KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

MIMI taking a sip of soup as JOHN rushes downstairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN
(agitated)
Where is it?

MIMI slowly takes another mouthful.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Mimi, where's my guitar?

She produces a LETTER from her lap, throws it at him. JOHN picks it up, sees it's his EXAM RESULTS. He looks - all D's.

MIMI
You promised me hard work. Lie and cheat all you want with others, do it with me and expect consequences.

JOHN
Where is it?

MIMI
I've sold it.

JOHN
You can't!

MIMI
Of course I can and I have.

JOHN
But we've got gigs!

MIMI
What a shame.

JOHN starts filling up. MIMI detests it.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Oh boo hoo.

JOHN
But *it's my band!*

MIMI
Don't be so childish. Grow up John.

JOHN
(suddenly vicious)
- Fuck off, Mimi!

MIMI's eye's pierce into him.

MIMI
What?

JOHN
I said FUCK OFF!

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN rushes out of the house in a headspin.

96 EXT. MENDIPS -- CONTINUOUS

JOHN in a daze, tears come and go with anger. He boots the gate open, mutters under his breath. Looks at MENDIPS - spits in its general direction. Runs off down Menlove Avenue.

97 INT. FRANK HESSY'S MUSIC SHOP -- LATER

JOHN inside the shop, his beloved GUITAR up for sale in the second hand section for £5.

SHOP GUY
Help you, mate?

JOHN shakes his head, no money.

98 EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- LATER

JULIA swings open the front door. Reveal JOHN, his eyes red but no tears, he makes no eye-contact.

JOHN
I need five quid.

JULIA
Oh, John -

JULIA tries to hug him. JOHN steps back.

JOHN
No! No, 'Oh John's'. No 'dreams coming back'. I need five quid now - so will you give it me or not?

JULIA
That's a lot -

JOHN
- Yes or no!

JULIA shocked, knows she has no choice. She steps inside for her purse - opens it, finds a FIVER. JOHN snaps it out of her hand and storms off down the path.

99 INT. MENDIPS/HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

JOHN walks in with his GUITAR, heads straight upstairs, then stops. Beefs his chest out, enters the living room. Reveal MIMI sitting, knitting - she doesn't look up.

JOHN
So... I got it back.

Nothing from Mimi, which winds JOHN up even more.

99 CONTINUED:

JOHN (CONT'D)
Yeah, Mum bought it for me.

JOHN heads out. MIMI's face drops, she stops her knitting.
The threat of Julia back to burn.

100 OMITTED

101 INT. NORRISS GREEN SOCIAL CLUB -- NIGHT

THE QUARRYMEN singing '*Searchin*' by The Coasters.

THE QUARRYMEN
Gonna find her, gonna find her...
Yeah, I've been searchin', A-a
searchin'...

JOHN and PAUL stand at the front of the stage. The band all wear WHITE SHIRTS, BLACK TROUSERS and BOOTLACE TIES. However, PAUL stands out with his WHITE SPORTS JACKET.

PAUL - nervous as he plays. Clammy hands.

JULIA stands right at the front of the crowd, trying to catch JOHN's eye - him avoiding it. The song finishes to decent applause.

JOHN
Thanks, guys. PAUL
Thank you.

JOHN darts PAUL a look - he takes the thanks. PAUL intimidated, backs off the mic.

JOHN
Next, the scouse Chuck Berry will
play '*Guitar Boogie*'. I present to
you... Mister Paul McCartney!

PAUL
Thanks, John. Kind words.

JOHN
...I didn't mean them.

The AUDIENCE laugh. PAUL more nervous. He counts the band in, opens up with the difficult guitar riff - they get rocking - but suddenly Paul's playing breaks down.

PAUL
(off mic)
Shit.

Sweat beads forming on his forehead. JOHN looks out at the unimpressed AUDIENCE.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

JOHN
Sorry folks. First night on the
job and all that.

Laughs.

PAUL
(off mic)
Just give us a sec, mate.

JOHN
(off mic)
You've not got a fucking sec, mate.

PAUL desperately fingers the chords over and over, getting them right in his head. JOHN almost reveling in it.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(to barmaid)
Stick the kettle on, luv. Two
sugars.

PAUL
OK. I'm right.

JOHN
Yeah?

PAUL
Yeah.

THE QUARRYMEN open up again. PAUL - heavy concentration - this time he hits past breakdown point. By mid-song he's in THE ZONE.

THE AUDIENCE LAP IT UP. DANCING breaks out everywhere. Including the PRETTY GIRLS at the front - all eyes on PAUL.

JOHN, noticing 'the Paul effect'.

Standing in the CROWD - a YOUNG GAUNT LAD (GEORGE), hair piled high, an intense, stern look. He keeps his eyes fixed on the stage. Processing.

102 INT/EXT. NORRISS GREEN SOCIAL CLUB/BACK STAGE -- LATER

JULIA stood with an awkward looking PAUL. NIGEL is handing out wages to a chuffed ROD and LEN.

JULIA
Really fantastic... honestly...

PAUL
...thanks...

JULIA
I'm John's mum by the way.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

PAUL
Oh... hi.

JOHN appears, helping COLIN with his drum kit.

JULIA
John! I was blown away!

JOHN
Bit windy in there, wasn't it?

JOHN heads out without saying goodbye. PAUL - embarrassed. JULIA doesn't know what to do next. She quickly walks off into the night.

The YOUNG GAUNT LAD (GEORGE) meanders up to PAUL. They don't say hello - but it's obvious they're no strangers. He watches PAUL watch JULIA walk away.

103 INT. BUS -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN on the back seat eating a BIG BAG OF CHIPS, smoking at the same time. Other QUARRYMEN sit nearby. OTHER BANDS, sit in groups elsewhere. Can't budge for guitars and washboards. NIGEL is handing out wages to a chuffed ROD and LEN. Hands JOHN his.

JOHN
And the rest?

NIGEL
Oh yeah..

NIGEL rummages in his pockets, produces two fingers. JOHN raises an eye-brow. PAUL appears, tailed by GEORGE, they edge themselves on the already full seats in front of JOHN, who looks quizzically at PAUL.

PAUL
Mate of mine.

GEORGE takes a handful of JOHN's chips - no hello. JOHN not sure whether to like him, or lay him out.

PAUL (CONT'D)
He should be in the band.

JOHN
He should be in bed.

PAUL
Show him, George.

JOHN
What? Magic tricks?

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

GEORGE grabs PAUL's guitar, launches into 'Raunchy' by Bill Justis. As he plays, zoom in on GEORGE's magical hands..

MIX TO

104 INT. WILSON HALL -- NIGHT

...his hands still playing 'Raunchy'.

Pull out to reveal GEORGE on stage with THE QUARRYMEN, JOHN belting out the lyrics, tearing the place up - and the AUDIENCE, BIGGER and LOUDER. JULIA jumping up and down at the front. Next to her MARIE KENNEDY, (and friend CORRINE), awestruck at the sight of JOHN on stage. She tries to catch JOHN's eye - and we think it's working until we reveal a BARDOT LOOKALIKE - stood right behind. MARIE slowly realises JOHN's not interested in her at all.

The band finish to HUGE APPLAUSE. JOHN, PAUL and GEORGE exchange big grins. GEORGE IS FUCKING GREAT.

GEORGE
(deadpan)
Abracadabra, eh John?!

Chucks him a wink.

105 INT. WILSON HALL BACKSTAGE -- LATER

Backslapping and beer. JOHN sits stripped to the waist, smoking - taking the scene in. His band, his creation, DOING IT. He eyes up the BARDOT LOOKALIKE across the room. Then he sees JULIA, prancing around, joyfully hugging bemused band members, PETE, NIGEL, GEORGE. Then PAUL get his.

JULIA
(shouts to all)
We need to celebrate! Everything!
John's birthday soon, so let's
party! Everyone round at mine
Saturday, OK?

PETE
Can we get boozed up?

JULIA
Only if I can!

NIGEL
What about birds?

JULIA
Just keep 'em in their cages.

LEN
What d'you think, Johnny boy?!

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

All eyes on him. A long pause.

JOHN
I think... I need a piss.

He gets up and heads off. JULIA - crestfallen.

106 INT. WILSON HALL TOILETS -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN stands up to a urinal - mid piss. PAUL comes in, leans by the wash basins, stares.

JOHN
Got a ticket?

PAUL doesn't respond. JOHN zips up, heads to the basins, washes his hands. PAUL still staring.

PAUL
If you don't want her hanging about the band, do something about it.

PAUL walks out. JOHN running this through his mind.

JOHN
(mutters)
My fucking band.

106A INT. WILSON HALL/BACKSTAGE CORRIDOR -- LATER

Post gig. THE QUARRYMEN loading up gear and taking it out. PETE calls back from outside.

PETE
John! Driver's not stopping!

Beat.

JOHN appears from the toilets, zipping up and tucking his shirts in. The BARDOT LOOKALIKE sheepishly follows him out. He gives her a peck on the cheek,

JOHN
Thanks for that.

Before striding outside to PETE.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Giz a ciggie mate.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

106B INT. MENDIPS/MORNING ROOM/KITCHEN -- DAY

MIMI and FISHWICK sat at the table - reading and studying respectively and peacefully. JOHN whooshes in - looking sharp and a bit edgy.

He breezes out, MIMI watches him meet PETE waiting by the gate. She and FISHWICK exchange a look, then she gets up heads into the kitchen, ruffling his hair on the way in.

FISHWICK - big smile.

107 OMITTED

108 OMITTED

109 EXT. ALLERTON GOLF COURSE -- EVENING

JOHN and PETE wandering over the fifteenth green. Beers and cigs. JOHN is wound up, nervous.

PETE

Have you ever tried a bra on?

JOHN takes a drag of his cig. Mind elsewhere.

PETE (CONT'D)

I sometimes wish I had tits. Not in a weird way. Just to mess around with, y'know?

PETE notes JOHN's distance. Concerned.

PETE (CONT'D)

Hey Winston!

JOHN

(looks over)

What?

PETE

This party...

JOHN

Yeah?

PETE

We don't have to go...

JOHN keeps walking with intent. '*Hound Dog*' by Big Mamma Thornton bursts out.

110 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

THE PARTY. The house FULL of QUARRYMEN, GIRLS, JACKIE and LITTLE JULIA, BOBBY, NEIGHBOURS. GEORGE sits glued to the TV, the sound turned down. BOOZE flows. MUSIC LOUD.

(CONTINUED)

110

CONTINUED:

JOHN. Looking. He finds JULIA with PAUL in the kitchen. PAUL is playing the guitar, mid song - *'Love Me Tender'*. JOHN sinks more ale as PAUL finishes.

JULIA
Oh, Paul, beautiful..just..

JOHN bristles.

JULIA (CONT'D)
That's for her, isn't it? Your
mum... awful... taken away from
you... not fair.

JOHN
She had cancer. What's your excuse?

JULIA gets the jitters, brushes past JOHN into the lounge.

PAUL
Nice.

JOHN gives PAUL a sarcastic grin.

111

INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- LATER

JULIA nods to LITTLE JULIA, standing by the record player, who puts on a '78: "Oh John My Son To Me You Are so Wonderful". It's a 30's ballad - definitely not rock and roll. The room falls quiet, thinking 'what is this shiite'.

JULIA re-appears from the kitchen holding a birthday cake, 17 candles on top. She brings it to JOHN. He eyes her before blowing out the candles.

JOHN
Can someone please take that bloody
record off before I start crying.
In pain.

Music goes off.

PETE
Giz a few words, Johnny-boy.

JOHN
'Cock', 'Balls'... 'Fuck'? Is that
allowed?

Laughter. JULIA puts her hands over LITTLE JULIA's ears.

ALL
Speech! Speech!

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

(Churchill voice)

We shall fight them on the beaches,
we shall fight them on the landing
grounds, we shall fight those
bastard Garston Teds on a Saturday
night at Wilson Hall.

(he laughs)

Well, ta for turning up, you're
very special to me in that I hate
you all equally.

(eyes Julia)

Apart from you, Mum, obviously.
Thanks for all this. Big clap
folks. Julia.

Applause rings out. JOHN focuses on JULIA who smiles tightly.

JOHN (CONT'D)

And my band, what can I say... You
really are there for me; never on
time; usually looking like a pile
of shite, but nevertheless there or
thereabouts.

Laughs from his audience.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(American accent)

So tell me, where we goin', boys?

QUARRYMEN

(American accent)

To the toppity top, Johnny.

JOHN

That's right to the

(Queens accent)

"Toppity of one's topness". Except
- the boy Shotton wants out.

There are 'No!'s and 'Boo!'s from the room.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Apparently washboard players don't
get enough chicks and he feels like
a pansy wearing his mum's sewing
thimbles.

More boos.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I know... A travesty.

(pause)

But true. C'mere, Spunkhead.

111 CONTINUED: (2)

PETE wanders over - grinning. JOHN breaks the washboard over PETE's head to big cheers and laughs.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Worth a few bob when we're famous.

More Laughter.

JOHN spots something. POV: a beaming JULIA has her arm clasped tight around PAUL's waist.

JOHN's face freezes over.

112 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- LATER

Party in full swing, chairs moved back - dirty dancing with QUARRYMEN and VARIOUS GIRLS. JOHN stands alone, stares through the dancers. POV: JULIA sat with BOBBY on the piano stool, laughing, clapping with the track enjoying the party/dancers. At one point BOBBY leans in for a snog. As they break, JULIA finds JOHN's eyes through the crowd. She tries a smile.

JOHN, serious-happy-serious. Sarcastic. JULIA looks away, lights a fag up - heads outside. JOHN watches her disappear, grabs another beer...follows her.

113 EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

JULIA smoking. JOHN joins her.

JULIA
I wonder if someone's up there...
on Mars or something having a quick
cigarette like me.

JOHN rips the beer bottle cap off with his teeth.

JOHN
- Where's Dad?

JULIA, rooted to the spot.

JOHN (CONT'D)
They're called 'Dad's', right?
Most people I know have got one.

JULIA
I don't think -

JOHN
- Don't you Mum? Well I do.
ThinkThinkThink. That's all I do.
(sarcastic)
Where's Daddy, Mummy? Alf. That's
his name, yeah?

113

CONTINUED:

JULIA nods.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Where's fuckin' Alf then?

JULIA
Please don't swear, John.

JOHN
Make you feel uncomfortable does
it?
(beat)
Try being me for the last seventeen
years. When everyone asks why your
Auntie's your Mum. Now that's
uncomfortable.

JULIA starts to cry.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Oh here we go. 'Who turned the
taps on?'

JULIA
Don't be horrible to me, John.

JOHN
Me being horrible to you? I see.
(scolding himself)
Horrible John. Naughty John. Poor
Julia.

JULIA
You promised you wouldn't ask these
questions. That was the deal.

JOHN
Sounds like the deal's off then,
doesn't it?

JULIA tries to head back inside. JOHN blocks her way.

JOHN (CONT'D)
No running away. I know you're good
at it, but not tonight.

JULIA
John!

JULIA backs off, walks round, small circles - distressed.

JOHN
Where is he?

JULIA
New Zealand... maybe... I don't
know.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN
Not round the corner? Like you?

JULIA
He was in the Merchant Navy. No letters. No money. He abandoned us.

JOHN
Then you abandoned me. Thanks.

JULIA
It was a temporary thing. Mimi agreed.

JOHN
Temporary! I'm still living with her!

JULIA
I wanted you back. I always wanted you back.

JOHN
(sarcastic)
I believe you. Honest.

JULIA
She never gave you back.

Beat.

JOHN
(softer)
But surely... I'm not Mimi's to give... you're my mum.

JULIA can't answer.

JOHN (CONT'D)
It's Bobby, innit? It's him.

JULIA
(shakes her head)
He saved me. I was losing it.
(pause)
We tried to get you back... we did.

JULIA trails off, stares into the black night. John incredulous.

JOHN
You never moved away did you? You moved here. And just stopped seeing me.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED: (3)

JULIA
(quietly)
She wouldn't let me. Mimi can be so
strong. And I was so weak then.
She loves you so much -

JOHN
- Yeah, more than you.

JULIA looks at him, the statement valid, and it's killing
her. LITTLE JULIA pops her head around the door.

LITTLE JULIA
Mummy... I'm tired now..
(notices)
Are you sad again?

JULIA wipes her tears, smiles brightly.

JULIA
Mummy's not sad. Look!

Points to her fake smile.

JULIA (CONT'D)
I'm coming now, honey.

JULIA goes to embrace JOHN - but he holds back.

JULIA (CONT'D)
I love you. Believe me.

JOHN
(pause)
Believe me. I'd love to.

JOHN steps back, looks at the house, not his house, never
will be. He starts walking off down the street.

JULIA
John!

JOHN looks back.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Where you going?

JOHN
Away from you.

He carries on walking.

114 EXT. MENDIPS - LATER

JOHN stops, lights a cigarette, takes in Mendips.

115 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- - CONTINUOUS

The party still jumping. JULIA sits in the armchair - oblivious. Cigarette lit but in a daze.

116 INT. MENDIPS/DINING ROOM/MORNING ROOM/KITCHEN -- NIGHT

JOHN lets himself in. The house silent, lights on.

JOHN

Mimi?

He wanders down the hallway, smells food from the dining room. Goes in. On the table - a special birthday dinner. All cold. A Birthday Cake sits in the middle.

MIMI sits by the window, smoking - dressed up. FISHWICK stands, he was also invited.

FISHWICK

I think I'll just... got some work to finish.

Leaves.

MIMI

You said you'd be back. It was meant to be a surprise.

JOHN looks genuinely upset. MIMI nods to the corner - A BRAND NEW HOFFNER GUITAR (electric). JOHN rushes over, grabs it.

JOHN

A Hoffner! Mimi?!

JOHN puts it down, goes over, hugs her tight, with love.

MIMI

You stink of alcohol.

JOHN

Mum threw a party for me.

MIMI breaks the hug. A hug he needs more than ever from her.

MIMI

Don't be silly.

She starts clearing the table.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Such a waste...

JOHN - rejected again. He stares at her. Hardens. He is FUCKING PISSED OFF.

The doorbell rings. MIMI looks up at JOHN.

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED:

MIMI (CONT'D)
Tell your friends the party's over.

117 INT./EXT. MENDIPS - MOMENTS LATER

JOHN opens the porch door to find a forlorn JULIA. They take each other in.

JOHN
No thanks.

He slams the door shut. JOHN's mind flashes angrily, quickly he opens up again, grabs JULIA by the wrist drags her in the house.

CUT TO - MIMI as JOHN brings JULIA in. Her face drops.

JOHN (CONT'D)
We've got a gatecrasher.

JULIA can't hold MIMI's gaze.

JULIA
I needed to talk to John.

JOHN
More talking, wow...
(to Mimi)
Y'see, me and Mum have had a bit of
a heart to heart...She's told me
things, about wotsisname...Alf.

MIMI's ears prick up.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Oh..and about you, funnily enough.
(pause)
She said you stole me. What d'you
reckon, Mimi? Did you?

MIMI glares over at JULIA.

JULIA
I never said that -

JOHN
- You said, quote, "She," as in you
Mimi, "never gave you back". Now
when I do that, I've got to admit,
I'm usually stealing.

MIMI, disbelief. Secrets they promised to keep, spilt.

MIMI
I don't suppose she said *why* I
'stole' you?

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

There she is. Ask her yourself.

JULIA

Mimi-

MIMI

- Did she mention having another man's child to deal with? Another daughter?

JULIA

Mimi, please-

MIMI

PLEASE WHAT?!

JULIA shuts up, frightened.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Stop??

(pause)

Look at him Julia. You think we can stop now?

JULIA refuses.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Look at him!

JULIA is forced to look at JOHN - and we see in his eyes - the need to know.

JOHN

Whose child?

MIMI

You tell him. Seeing you're so keen for him to know the truth.

JOHN

(forceful)

What daughter?!

JULIA dumbstruck, rooted, knows it's coming.

MIMI

Julia has always needed *company*. Do you understand what I mean by company?

MIMI looks at JOHN - both don't want the word 'sex' to be said. JOHN nods, looks at JULIA.

JOHN

Rock'n'roll eh, Mum?

117 CONTINUED: (2)

JULIA winces at JOHN as he remembers her own 'sex' pseudonym.

MIMI
She found it with a young soldier
whilst your father was away.

MIMI wanting to DESTROY JULIA in her quest to keep him.

MIMI (CONT'D)
You have another sister, Victoria.

JOHN
Where?

MIMI
The Salvation Army took her.

MIMI shakes her head in disbelief.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Then after that, she, your...
mother... decides to shack up with
her fancy-man, Bobby. Still married
to your father I might add... and
then raise you like that was
normal, like that was...
acceptable?

Beat.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Even when your father came home to
save their marriage it made no
difference. She told him to get
lost. Surprise surprise....

JOHN looks up, shocked. This is what he would have wanted
more than anything in the world - TO BE IN A NORMAL FAMILY.

JOHN holds his head in his hands.

MIMI (CONT'D)
But he wasn't going that easily.
Alf. Was he, Julia?

JOHN looks up.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Feel free to join the conversation.
(pause)
No. Didn't think so.

Beat.

MIMI (CONT'D)
You were staying here when Alf
turned up out of the blue.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED: (3)

MIMI (CONT'D)
Said he wanted to take you into
Liverpool for the day - shopping.
(pause)
He took you to Blackpool instead.

118 OMITTED

119 EXT. BLACKPOOL BEACH (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

A HAPPY 5YR OLD JOHN eating an ICE CREAM on a DONKEY, being
led by ALF - an image that echoes John's recurring dream.

MIMI (V.O.)
Next stop was New Zealand. With
you. Emigrate. He'd sorted a
passage out there... a job.

120 EXT. SHABBY TOWN-HOUSE (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

The SAME RED HOUSE from John's dream.

MIMI
We hadn't a clue where he'd taken
you. I was distraught. Luckily The
Seaman's Mission had an address for
a brother in Blackpool. So we went
to get you, bring you back.

Pull back to find JULIA and MIMI looking up at the house.

121 EXT. SHABBY TOWN-HOUSE (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

The front door is opened an inch by ALF. MIMI tries to barge
through but he blocks her out.

MIMI
Alf wouldn't let me in. He said
this was between him and your
Mother.

122 INT. CAFE OPPOSITE SHABBY TOWN HOUSE (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

MIMI sits at a table by the window, her eyes fixed on the RED
HOUSE.

123 INT. SHABBY TOWN HOUSE ROOM (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

5YR OLD JOHN sits in THAT CHAIR, in THAT ROOM - looking up at
ALF and JULIA.

MIMI
As Alf pleaded. Again it was of no
use... was it, Julia?
(pause)
But what to do with you?

ALF and JULIA stop arguing - they both look down at JOHN.

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

MIMI (V.O.) (CONT'D)
So in all their great wisdom...
they decided to ask you... a five
year old boy.

Close on John.

MIMI (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And you said -

5 YR OLD JOHN
Daddy.

On JULIA as her world collapses. She collects her things,
rushes towards the door. We recognise the sound of her heels
on the floor from John's dream.

MIMI
So, knowing Alf was planning to
take you to New Zealand. And
knowing she would probably never
see you again...

JULIA leaves the room.

MIMI (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Your Mother left.

124 INT/EXT. CAFE OPPOSITE SHABBY TOWN HOUSE (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

MIMI sees the front door open, immediately gets to her feet
and sees JULIA coming out - but no John.

MIMI rushes across the road to JULIA, who keeps walking.

MIMI
Julia?

MIMI steps in front of her. JULIA looks back with guilty
eyes. ON MIMI - can't take this in.

125 INT/EXT. SHABBY TOWN HOUSE ROOM/HOUSE (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

5 YEAR OLD JOHN suddenly leaps out of his chair, heads to the
door. Scrambling to get out.

5 YEAR OLD JOHN
MUMMY! MUMMY!

Finally a guilt ridden ALF opens it for him.

5 YEAR OLD JOHN (CONT'D)
MUMMY!

JOHN appears from the house. JULIA closes her eyes, then
turns around.

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

5 YEAR OLD JOHN (CONT'D)
(sobbing)
Mummy! Mummy!

MIMI stares up at ALF who slowly heads back inside. The fight given up.

JULIA tries to smile at JOHN - but finds it hard. MIMI steps in, gently unfastens JOHN's arms from around JULIA's neck... and takes him in her own.

MIMI
That's when I 'stole' you.

126 INT. MENDIPS/BACK DINING ROOM/HALLWAY -- NIGHT

JOHN staring at MIMI in disbelief. Then at JULIA.

MIMI
And if that's stealing then... I'm
a thief.

JOHN - can't take it anymore. All of this TRUTH, this HURT, these LIES, ANGER - everything suddenly boils over, he rushes past JULIA - nearly knocking her over.

MIMI and JULIA lock eyes before JULIA rushes after him.

JULIA
JOHN! I wasn't going to leave you!

JOHN stops at the door, takes a deep breath, turns around.

JOHN
You walked out of the house!
(angry)
Down the street?!

JULIA has no answer - she starts shaking.

JULIA
Yes, yes I did. But I was ill. I
get ill, and I'm not myself-

JOHN
- You left because you were *ill*?

JULIA
I don't think straight! I don't
sleep! I've seen doctors, they
don't know, don't understand.

JULIA approaching hysteria. MIMI appears at the doorway.

JULIA (CONT'D)
I don't understand!

(CONTINUED)

JOHN can't get his head round that.

JOHN

For twelve years I've prayed for you to come back. That's all I've wanted...my mum back... because deep down I always thought you wanted *me* back.

JULIA

Me and Bobby. We got a flat together. You were with us. But then she came, with social services.

JOHN

What?

JULIA

I had no choice but to hand you over.

JOHN darts a look at MIMI.

MIMI

(unrepentant)

It was a one bedroom hovel. You were sleeping in the same bed as a stranger.

JULIA

Bobby was no stranger!

MIMI

He was to John!

(to John)

I couldn't allow that.

JOHN

Yes you could. Quite easily. You just didn't want to.

MIMI for the first time looks vulnerable.

JULIA

That's right, John!! She made me give you to her. Then when she had you, she didn't let go!

JOHN

Then you should have made her!!

This shuts JULIA up for moment.

JULIA

I'm here now, I'm here. I never meant to leave you...

126 CONTINUED: (2)

JULIA grabs him round the neck, buries her head in his chest.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Please... I love you, John. I love
you. I'm here.
(over and over)
I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

JOHN
No.

He picks JULIA's arms off and she drops to the floor,

JULIA
John!!

JOHN
I said NO!

He fixes them both. Wild stare.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Can't you see what you're doing?
I'm going out of my brain! And
that's not fair!
(shouts)
Is it?!
(looks down on Julia)
This is your fault!
(then at Mimi)
And yours!
(pause)
So why should I go mad?

Beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I've had it... It's over.

He quickly opens the front door and escapes.

127 EXT. MENDIPS -- CONTINUOUS

JOHN, tears in his eyes, sets off down Menlove, walking, then
sprinting - away.

128 INT. MENDIPS -- CONTINUOUS

MIMI looking down on his JULIA. Can't leave her like this.
She sits down next to her. JULIA puts her head in MIMI's lap.

JULIA
How long does it have to hurt Mimi?

MIMI tentatively, strokes JULIA's hair. Like a mother. For a
moment we see them as sisters. Caring.

(CONTINUED)

128 CONTINUED:

Beat.

MIMI
Go home, Julia.

MIMI gets up quickly and heads to the kitchen. We follow her as she hides away. Hear the front door slam.

CUT TO - The kitchen. MIMI breaks down crying.

129 EXT. CITY-CENTRE/MATHEW STREET - LATER

The street that buzzed this first youth cultural movement. JOHN careers down it, pissed, giggling and mumbling at himself, providing his own hilarious running commentary. Purposely bumping into GIRLS, insincerely apologising. TRYING TO FORGET THROUGH BOOZE.

He spots something. POV: a poster outside a club called THE CAVERN: "Tonight!! Rory Storm and the Hurricanes". (Ringo's band).

JOHN makes a bee-line for the door, but just before he makes it over the threshold, TWO MONKEY-MEN BOUNCERS step out.

BOUNCER
No chance. Get to fuck.

JOHN looks up at this symbol of authority. His boiling anger and bitter frustration. But he just backs off slowly - ends up still, emotionless, in the middle of Mathew Street madness.

Then in the distance he spots MARIE KENNEDY walking up with a GROUP of FRIENDS. He walks over. Blocks her way. She looks up, threatened.

JOHN
Forgive me angel.

He takes her face in his hands, kisses her gently (she lets him). Then walks off into the crowd. MARIE bemused/besotted.

130 OMITTED

131 EXT. ALBERT DOCK BENCH -- MORNING

Tight on JOHN, asleep. A dried blood trickle from his nose, slightly swollen cheek. Suddenly the blast of a foghorn opens his foggy eyes.

Reveal JOHN on the waterfront, a FERRY passing by. He still clutches a half full pint pot - not sure how he got there.

He wanders over to the waters edge, leans against the railings - sinks the rest of the pint, then hurls the glass in the vague direction of New York.

131A EXT. MENDIPS -- MORNING

Curtains on Mendips still drawn. MILKMAN delivering. JOHN ambles up the path.

132 INT. MENDIPS/EVERYWHERE -- CONTINUOUS

He lets himself in through the front door - checks for sounds of life - none - makes his way upstairs.

At the top, Mimi's bedroom door slightly ajar. POV: two pairs of legs stretched out on Mimi's single bed.

Follow JOHN as he slowly peers around the door. POV: FISHWICK and MIMI (fully clothed) asleep. His arms wrapped around her - spooning position.

IT SAYS IT ALL.

JOHN backs out. Slowly walks into his bedroom. Shutting the door quietly he sits on his bed - and stares in shock. Then in a flash of anger he gets up opens and slams his door shut. Loud.

Immediately we hear stirrings from Mimi's room (Fishwick getting the hell out of there).

JOHN lies back on his bed. Let's out a chuckle of disbelief.

133 INT. MENDIPS/JOHN'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Next day.

JOHN, lying contorted on his bed, looking like he hasn't slept. He hears the front gate slam. POV: MIMI heading out with a bunch of flowers freshly picked from the garden.

134 EXT. ST. PETER'S CHURCH -- LATER

JOHN wandering through the gravestones, finds MIMI tending UNCLE GEORGE's plot. Knew he would.

JOHN
Did you love him?

MIMI swings around frightened.

MIMI
(calmer)
You frightened me to death.

JOHN
(dry)
...right place for it.

JOHN bends down, helps out, throwing away old flowers, planting the new.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (CONT'D)

Did you?

MIMI

That's a horrible thing to say.

JOHN

You never showed it.

MIMI

Or you just didn't see it?

JOHN

(shrugs)

With my eyesight? Possibly.

(beat)

I'm not going to hold it against her... Mum... what she did in Blackpool.

MIMI

Just forgive and forget I suppose.

JOHN

Forget? I wish. Just no point hating someone you love... I mean really love...

JOHN turns his head, looks at MIMI.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(pointedly)

Is there, Mimi?

MIMI doesn't answer.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I should move out.

MIMI winces at the thought of losing him.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Mendips seems a bit crowded all of a sudden.

MIMI stiffens - is he on about Fishwick?

JOHN (CONT'D)

And I refuse to be... *this thing*... that you two war over. I'm too big for the trophy cabinet now.

Beat.

134 CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN (CONT'D)
 Maybe with me gone, you and Mum
 might remember you were sisters
 once.

(pause)
 Plus I'm all grown up now, with
 grown up feelings.

JOHN leaves the thought hanging. MIMI shifts, uneasy.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 And I fancy some decent *company*.
 And let's be honest, for a change,
 we all need company don't we Mimi?

MIMI's heart sinks. The embarrassment acute. She tries to
 look at him but can't. This strong woman suddenly devoid of
 strength.

JOHN wanders off, kissing his hand and touching Uncle
 George's gravestone as he passes. MIMI, watching him go.

134A INT. MENDIPS -- LATER

MIMI sat listening to the radio. Knowing what she has to do -
 not finding the strength to do it. FISHWICK comes down the
 stairs on his way out to lectures. He passes her.

FISHWICK
 Bloody late as bloody usual.

He leans in and gives MIMI a lingering kiss... and then
 exits. MIMI's expression drops - her lover's presence
 lingers. Her heart now softened.

She stands up, straightens her skirt, heads into the hallway.
 picks the telephone up and dials.

Beat.

MIMI
 Julia..

134B INT. CAFE -- DAY

The same raucous cafe where John and Julia met.

JULIA sits at a far table, nervously smoking, looking towards
 the door. Finally MIMI enters. JULIA manages a wave and half-
 smile. MIMI heads over, takes her coat off, sits opposite.

It's all tentative. Neither of them knowing what to say.

MIMI
 Have you ordered?

(CONTINUED)

134B CONTINUED:

JULIA
Yes. Tea.

MIMI
Earl Grey?

JULIA
No...

MIMI grimaces slightly. Looks round the shabby cafe.

MIMI
(sarcastic)
Lovely.

JULIA
(smiles softly)
John said you wouldn't set foot in
a place like this.

MIMI
You spoke to him?

JULIA
We came here not long ago.

MIMI
Well, he knows me better than most.

JULIA shifts uneasily. The TEA's are delivered.

JULIA
(to Lillian)
Thanks.

MIMI can't help a derisory look at LILLIAN as she goes. JULIA pours. MIMI stares at her through the steam.

JULIA (CONT'D)
It's nice to see you.

MIMI
It was time we sat down together.

JULIA
(pause)
Yes.

MIMI eyes her.

MIMI
I'm not here to say I was wrong
Julia. Not about John. I want to
make that clear.
(pause)
But perhaps.... I haven't always
been right.

(CONTINUED)

134B CONTINUED: (2)

Beat.

MIMI (CONT'D)
And now it needs to be right.
(pause)
John needs *us* to be right.

Beat.

MIMI (CONT'D)
I do love you... as silly as that
sounds. I hope you know that.

MIMI quickly lights up a cigarette, her honesty not easy for her. JULIA, tears in her eyes, can't help but reach for MIMI's hand across the table.

FADE TO:

135 EXT. LIVERPOOL ART COLLEGE -- DAY

A bright, sunny autumn day. A HUGE VICTORIAN BUILDING with ARTY TYPES hanging around, BEATNICKS, PEACENICKS and TEDS.

JOHN wanders out wearing one of Uncle George's jackets, collars up, drainpipes, white socks and winkle-pickers, hair piled up. Plasters cover string fingers, acoustic GUITAR slung across his back, carrying some rolled up ART-WORK. He stops at the top of the steps, breathes in the air. Nonchalantly lights a cigarette - heads down the steps.

136 EXT. MENDIPS/BACK GARDEN -- DAY

JOHN arriving home. He rounds to the back door when he stops surprised. MIMI and JULIA sit on deck chairs. Afternoon tea untouched in front of them. Both take in rays with winter coats on - eyes shut.

FISHWICK prunes privets at the back.

JOHN takes in the scene.

137 EXT. MENDIPS/BACK DINING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

MIMI and JULIA - skirts inched up above their pale calves - eyes shut. A shadow blocks the sun.

JOHN
(deep coppers voice)
Do you own a license for these
legs, ladies?

They both shield their eyes, squint towards him. JOHN has a cagey smile on his face - unsure of how to proceed.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (CONT'D)
(eye-brow squint)
Nice day for it then?

JULIA
Everything feels so different in
the sunshine.

JOHN
Yes. Usually warmer.

He looks at them both - so different, and so much the same.
MIMI and JULIA shift in their seats.

MIMI
How was college?

JOHN
A woman came in, took her kit off,
and we painted her breasts... not
actually, physically...

He coughs comically. MIMI can't help but look flabbergasted.
JULIA smiles.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Got my eye on you two.

He pretends to put an eye on each of their heads. Begins to
wander back towards the house.

MIMI
Where are you going?

JOHN
Over there somewhere.

MIMI
Sit with us a while.

JOHN
Paul's waiting for me at his. Just
dropping my art stuff off.

MIMI turn to raise her eye-brows. *Guitars.*

MIMI
What about dinner?

JOHN
Not hungry.

MIMI
You will be.

JULIA
He can have it at my house...

137 CONTINUED: (2)

JULIA stops as she realises this could become contentious.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Just with him being near... y'know,
at Paul's... I mean if you're not
making anything special, Mimi.

There's a moment, JULIA nervous she may have overstepped the mark. MIMI, as usual poker-face.

MIMI
It'd save me cooking I suppose.

Subtle relief. JOHN smiles, keeps walking in.

MIMI (CONT'D)
John.

He stops.

MIMI (CONT'D)
You've still time to sit with us.

JOHN knows he has no choice - he grabs a spare deckchair, places it next to JULIA. They all admire the sun in a soothing silence.

THE TRINITY AT PEACE.

138 INT. PAUL'S HOUSE -- DAY

PAUL stringing up JOHN's guitar, tuning it. Quick, excited. He hands it back.

JOHN takes a deep breath then launches into '*Hello Little Girl*', his first ever song. Plays it to the end. JOHN checks for PAUL's reaction. Needs his affirmation. PAUL - no expression.

PAUL
Not bad for your first one..

Then he gives him a big grin and THUMBS UP. JOHN relieved.

PAUL (CONT'D)
What's it called?

On JOHN - is he serious?

139 EXT. MENDIPS -- DAY

MIMI walking JULIA to the front gate.

JULIA
Are you around Saturday?

MIMI, noncommittal but nice.

139 CONTINUED:

MIMI

Maybe.

JULIA steals an unexpected small kiss on her sister's cheek. MIMI feels the love in it. JULIA sees it - she immediately follows it up with a tight hug.

Hold.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Don't be silly.

Then JULIA suddenly breaks and walks off down MENLOVE, doesn't turn back. MIMI watches her for a second, a slight smile, turns, heads back inside.

140 INT. MENDIPS/KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

MIMI walks into the kitchen, where FISHWICK is washing his hands. She stands next to him, washes her hands under the same tap, soon their hands are entwined. Soaped up.

141 EXT. MENLOVE AVENUE -- CONTINUOUS

JULIA, a spring in her step as she heads towards the bus-stop, meets NIGEL WHALLEY, on his bike.

NIGEL

John in?

JULIA

Paul's. I'm seeing him later though.

NIGEL

Tell him I've got a new booking down the Stanley Abattoir Social Club.

JULIA

Not there.

NIGEL

Why not?

JULIA

You'll get slaughtered.

NIGEL and JULIA laugh sarcilly at the bad joke.

He breaks off, we stay with him as he rides his bike up Vale Road. He grins again at the bad joke. JULIA, in the background, crossing the road - then suddenly the screeching of tyres

A SPEEDING CAR

(CONTINUED)

141 CONTINUED:

THUMP!

JULIA is wiped out.

142 INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - LATER

Tight on JOHN slumped back in a chair. The worst possible news just delivered. Hear tears and visceral moans off. But we just stay on JOHN - still like death.

143 DELETED

144 INT/EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- DAY

The wake. The house full of NEIGHBOURS, FAMILY and FRIENDS.

JOHN sits in the living room with MIMI and the OTHER SISTERS. He holds a large whiskey, stares at the pile of records and the gramophone.

NOTHING IS REAL

Then he hears the BANJO from the kitchen. His face clouds over, he necks his whiskey, storms in.

PAUL is strumming the BANJO, the one Julia taught John on. All THE QUARRYMEN are dotted around.

JOHN

Is it band practice? I don't think so!

He grabs the BANJO, heads outside into the garden, holding it by its neck - like a sledgehammer.

PETE

John!

JOHN raises the BANJO above his head about to smash it down, when PETE catches it - rips it off him.

PETE (CONT'D)

It's your Mum's!

JOHN

She's fuckin' dead!

PETE hangs on tight. JOHN headbutts him. PETE hits the ground - still clutching the BANJO. PAUL rushes over, checks PETE is OK. JOHN steams off.

PAUL

John!

He runs after him.

145 EXT. BLOMEFIELD ROAD/JULIA'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

PAUL

John!

PAUL grabs JOHN's shoulder, stops him. JOHN turns around, aggression burning through, fists clenched.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Wanna hit me too?

JOHN on the verge.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Go on then!

BANG! A straight right lands in PAUL's face sending him crashing into the road. He stays down, blood spilling from his mouth.

JOHN immediately remorseful.

JOHN

Paul, I'm sorry mate.

JOHN picks PAUL up in his arms. Then suddenly hugs him tight.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry...

PAUL hugs him back. JOHN's floodgates open. It all comes out. All the pain and anger, the tears that have been kept in for so long.

PAUL hugs him back.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I was just getting to know her.

PAUL

I know.

JOHN

She's never coming back.

PAUL

No... no, she's not.

JOHN and PAUL in each other's arms, lying in the street, both crying.

146 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN comes back in with PAUL. THE QUARRYMEN can tell they've both been crying. JOHN goes up to PETE, his bleeding nose wrapped in a dish towel.

(CONTINUED)

146 CONTINUED:

JOHN
I'm a dick. Soz.

JOHN starts crying again. As does PETE. Then all THE QUARRYMEN start crying. The whole kitchen at it. JOHN looks around.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(through his tears)
Right! Everyone stop fucking crying! We're meant to be a rock'n'roll band for christ's sake!

PETE starts giggling, then JOHN... soon the whole room is full of watery giggles.

BOBBY appears from the lounge.

BOBBY
John.

JOHN wanders over. BOBBY hands him an envelope with money in.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
She was saving this for you...
stuff for college I think. Paints.

JOHN takes the ENVELOPE. Knows exactly what it's for.

147 EXT. VICTORIAN TERRACED/PERCY PHILLIPS STUDIO -- DAY

Establisher. A normal house, normal street. JOHN and THE QUARRYMEN walk in carrying their instruments. OTHER BANDS stand around, smoking and waiting.

148 INT. RECEPTION/PERCY PHILLIPS STUDIO -- DAY

PERCY PHILLIPS, 60, owner and engineer, sits behind a small desk in the front room, smoking.

PERCY
Three quid.

JOHN snarls, but takes the money from the envelope. Hands it over.

PERCY (CONT'D)
Take a seat.

JOHN
How long?

PERCY
As long as it takes.

JOHN and THE QUARRYMEN find a spare corner amongst the OTHER WAITING BANDS.

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED:

CUT TO - the middle living room of the house, scattered MICROPHONES and HEAVY CURTAINS. THE QUARRYMEN sit in position ready for their first recording session. The song:

'In Spite Of All The Danger'

JOHN, PAUL and GEORGE sit close to the CENTRAL SINGING MICROPHONE hung from the ceiling.

JOHN
1,2,3,
(sings)
In spite of all the danger...

Stick with this haunting, melodic, momentous track, on this momentous occasion, all the way through. PAUL singing beautiful harmonies over JOHN's lead. GEORGE takes the guitar solo.

THEY get to the end. JOHN looks at PAUL. Both nodding.

PAUL
One take wonders or what?

PERCY PHILLIPS barges in.

PERCY
Crack on you lot! I've got three other groups waiting.

He leaves.

JOHN
No choice with that twat.
(beat)
OK. Side B... Ready?

PAUL nods.

JOHN (CONT'D)
1,2,3
(sings)
Yeah, that'll be the day when you say goodbye...

149 EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- DAY

The Quarrymen's version of Buddy Holly keeps playing over the next three scenes.

JOHN walks up the path, guitar slung over his back, THE NEW RECORD in his hands.

150 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

An empty house.

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED:

THE QUARRYMEN RECORD spinning on the gramophone - mid song.

JOHN sits on the sofa - playing and singing along with his guitar. Begins to smile through the words... closes his eyes... and he floats off in a dream...

151 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE (DAY-DREAM) -- CONTINUOUS

JULIA sits opposite JOHN - she plays along on THE BANJO, JOHN on his guitar. John's first band re-united... Both stare and smile at each other as they sing along to what is in fact

THE FIRST BEATLES RECORD

The instrumental kicks in, they get up, dance together. Jive. JOHN still with two left feet - both of them giggling.

The track finishes, JULIA and JOHN look into each other's eyes, holding both hands.

LOVE, LOVE, LOVE.

152 INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN finally opens his eyes, still sitting on the settee, the needle making a jumping noise at the end of the record - has been for some time.

JOHN - a sad smile.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

CARD: AUGUST 1960

152A INT. MENDIPS - DAY

JOHN lets himself in. House silent.

JOHN

Mimi?!

No answer. He makes his way into the morning room. Looks at himself in the mirror. Then his eyes drift off to the PHOTO of him, Mimi and Uncle George. He backs off, on the table is Mimi's CIGARETTES - he steals three.

152B EXT. MENDIPS/TREE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

JOHN smoking, staring back at Mendips.

152C INT. MENDIPS -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN exploring. Wanders into the front room, runs his eyes through Mimi's book shelves. All the classics. He picks up Oscar Wilde's 'Happy Prince' - sticks that in his jacket too.

(CONTINUED)

152C CONTINUED:

CUT TO - JOHN glancing at Van Gogh's 'Sunflowers' as he climbs the stairs.

CUT TO - his bedroom. JOHN sits on his bed - takes in his old room - no posters. He caresses the radio extension. Then lies back, contorts himself into his favourite position. Legs up against the wall.

CUT TO - MIMI's room. JOHN gingerly opens the door. The first thing he notices - a double bed (a Fishwick consequence). He moves over to the dressing table, a small framed picture of a smiling five year old John. He frowns at himself. Next to the photo, a small silver trinket box - beautiful. He opens it:

A LOCK FROM JULIA'S RED HAIR

He stares at it and through it, into the past.

He snaps out of it as we hear the front garden gate open and shut. JOHN looks out to see MIMI

153 OMITTED

154 INT. MENDIPS -- MOMENTS LATER

MIMI lets herself in as JOHN comes down the stairs. He forces a sheepish smile.

MIMI

I thought it was burglars.

JOHN

I've had a quick scout and to be honest there's not a lot worth nicking.

MIMI can't help a glimmer of smile. She heads to the morning room. JOHN following.

MIMI

You should have rung.

JOHN

We don't have a phone.

MIMI

Do you have anything of use in that hole you call a home?

JOHN

Ashtrays. Some of Stu's paintings... but ashtrays mostly.

MIMI

You'll catch something rotten.

MIMI lights her own cigarette. No kisses. No hugs.

(CONTINUED)

154 CONTINUED:

MIMI (CONT'D)
To what do I owe the pleasure?

Beat.

JOHN
I'm off to Hamburg... with the
band.

MIMI
Hamburg?

JOHN
It's in Germany.

MIMI shoots him a serious 'don't be cheeky' look.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I'll be gone a couple of months...
maybe more.

MIMI trying not to look affected.

MIMI
This with the new band? What are
they called again?

JOHN
Do you care?

MIMI
(shrugs)
They sound all the same to me.

JOHN manages a half smile.

JOHN
We leave Saturday.

MIMI taken aback. So Soon.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Have you got my birth certificate?
I need it to get a passport.

155 INT. MENDIPS/MORNING ROOM -- DAY

MIMI comes downstairs with John's BIRTH CERTIFICATE - she
leaves it on the table. JOHN digs in his jacket - gets out a
passport application form.

JOHN
Can you sign this.

MIMI gives him a 'manners' look.

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED:

JOHN (CONT'D)
Please.

He sets it out on the table, grabs a nearby pen.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Where it says 'Parent or Guardian'.

MIMI
Which am I?

MIMI signs.

JOHN
Both.

MIMI - her heart touched.

SHE GRABS JOHN FOR A HUG. TIGHT.

JOHN totally taken by surprise. Fighting back the tears - smiling at the same time. Mimi and hugs don't go together.

JOHN (CONT'D)
...don't be silly.

MIMI releases him.

He sets off down the hallway. MIMI doesn't want him to go. Wants to reach out.

MIMI
(filling up)
John!

JOHN stops by the front door, doesn't turn round, tears in his eyes too, doesn't want to show Mimi.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Glasses.

JOHN half smiles, reaches in his jacket, puts his GLASSES on. Opens the door.

JOHN
I'll call when I get to Hamburg,
OK?

MIMI
Don't forget... please.

He disappears. ON MIMI - alone.

156 EXT. MENDIPS -- CONTINUOUS

JOHN ambles down the path, through the gate. Locks himself out. Takes in Mendips.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Flick through a collage of an empty Mendips - the porch; the treehouse; The 'Sunflowers' print; the book shelf full of classics; his bedroom; the photos: the lock of red hair.

HOME.

Checks Mimi's not looking and takes his GLASSES off, puts them in his pocket... and sets off down Menlove Avenue.

Away from us - and into The Beatles.

CAPTION
JOHN CALLED MIMI AS SOON AS HE
ARRIVED IN HAMBURG...

The funeral bells of Lennon's '*Mother*', ring out.

CAPTION (CONT'D)
...AND EVERY WEEK THEREAFTER FOR
THE REST OF HIS LIFE.

FADE TO BLACK

LENNON
(singing)
Mother, you had me,
(pause)
but I never had you,
(pause)
I wanted you,
(pause)
you didn't want me,
(pause)
so I,
(pause)
I just gotta tell you,
(pause)
Goodbye.
(pause)
Goodbye.

The songs plays out. Roll credits.

THE END