

Castle For Keeps

An original screenplay by

David Whitehead

WGAW 1525686

Email:elstree2002@yahoo.co.uk

+44 (1482) 844021

CASTLE FOR KEEPS

FADE IN:

EXT. SANTA MONICA/CALIFORNIA - DAY.

SUPER: "SANTA MONICA BEACH - CALIFORNIA"

A blazing hot Californian afternoon in this popular spot. Beach babes cook, while hunks parade hoping to attract admiring female glances.

At the water's edge, eighteen-year-old, BEN TAYLOR, and his thirteen-year-old brother, DANNY(Dan), emerge from the sea, surfboards in hand.

Ben is a well built handsome guy whom six-packs were named after. Danny has yet to achieve the same qualities. His freckled face and tousled hair still have some way to go.

Both boys are bronzed by the Californian sunshine.

BEN

Time for home, little bro.

DANNY

'Spose so. Anyway the surf's not up to much.

BEN

We can always try again tomorrow.

As they walk up the beach Ben gets admiring glances from the babes and envious stares from the dudes.

A GIRL calls out to Ben.

GIRL

Hi Ben - ya coming to the party tonight?

BEN

You bet.

GIRL  
Be there eight o'clock. My place.

Ben waves.

DANNY  
Can I come Ben?

He smiles and puts his arm round his brother.

BEN  
It's not that kind of party, Dan.

DANNY  
I'll bet it's drugs and crazy  
sex.

BEN  
What do you know about drugs and  
crazy sex?

DANNY  
I've heard you on the phone.

BEN  
I don't do drugs.

Ben gives Danny a playful push.

DANNY  
Boy, wish I could come.

EXT. PALLISADES BEACH ROAD, SANTA MONICA - SAME TIME

Their classic sixties red T-Bird convertible is parked on  
Pallisades Beach Road, Santa Monica.

They throw the boards in the back of the car and climb in.  
Ben retrieves the key from under his floor mat.

He starts the engine and turns to Danny.

BEN  
Dan, don't mention the party to  
Dad. I'll tell him I'm going to a  
girl's twenty-first.

DANNY  
(giggling)  
What's it worth to keep quiet?

BEN  
You say anything and I'll tell  
him about Mary-Lou.

DANNY  
What about her?

BEN  
I saw you the other night.

DANNY  
I only kissed her.

BEN  
Yeah, and the rest.

The boys laugh, Ben shifts into drive and the car scoots off.

EXT. LINCOLN BOULEVARD, VENICE - DAY

Ben turns on to the double drive of their two story house in a swish part of Venice. Already there is a large Lexus.

BEN  
Dad's home early.

The boys leave the car, walk to the main door and go inside.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

A large framed photo of Ben in fencing mode hangs prominently.

BEN  
Hi Dad, we're home.

MATT (O.S.)  
Hello boys. Be right down.

The sound of hurried footsteps on the stairs and MATT TAYLOR appears. He's forty-something, dressed down in an old pair of jeans and a sloppy T-shirt.

MATT

I'm glad you're back. You remember me telling you I had to go to England to sort out some problems in our company?

BEN

Yeess.

MATT

Well, now's the time. We leave on the 6.05 tomorrow for London.

BEN

What!

MATT

Sorry boys. That's the way it is.

Matt shrugs his shoulders.

MATT

Seems the problems are much worse than we thought.

BEN

But I can't, I mean...

DANNY

(interrupting)

What about your party Ben?

MATT

What party?

BEN

Oh it was just a party.

MATT

You can forget about that.

BEN

Guess I've no option.

Matt looks quizzically at the boys.

MATT

Look, get yourself a takeaway. Then an early night. We've got to be away at 4 o'clock.

DANNY

That early. Does Mom know?

MATT

I've called her. She says grandma isn't getting any better. Told her we'd be away for at least a month.

BEN

DANNY

MATT

Might not be that long. Anyway you're both on summer vacation so what's the problem?

(beat)

I'd better finish packing. Throw some things in a suitcase.

DANNY

What's it like in England, Dad? Will we be able to take our boards?

MATT

Sorry son, 'fraid not. We'll be staying in the country. AMG Corporation has fixed us up with a nice country cottage.

BEN

Can't we stay here Dad? I can look after Dan.

MATT

Look, I've booked the flights and we're all going. Okay?

Matt climbs the stairs, stops halfway.

MATT

Some mail for you Ben. Usual place.

BEN

Thanks Dad.

Ben goes off to collect his mail.

Danny swats imaginary flies.

BEN (O.S.)

Yes! Yes!

He comes rushing back, letter in hand.

BEN

Dad, I've got it.

Matt comes down.

MATT

Got what?

BEN

Got my place at California  
University.

Matt shakes Ben's hand.

MATT

Congratulations, son.

DANNY

What's all the fuss about?

MATT

Ben's gonna train to be a lawyer.

DANNY

Oh great. An accountant and a  
lawyer in the same family.  
Boring.

Danny smiles mischievously.

Matt bounds back upstairs.

DANNY

Does that mean I'll not have to  
worry about getting a speeding  
ticket when I start driving?

BEN

I'll make sure you're found  
guilty.

DANNY

Anyway, why couldn't you have chosen something interesting like spying -- or film directing?

BEN

There's more to life than movies and James Bond, Dan. Hey, I'd better phone Angie and tell her the bad news about the party.

DANNY

Looks like your night of crazy sex'll have to wait.

BEN

Who knows? I've heard some of those English chicks can be pretty fruity.

DANNY

You wish.

BEN

I'm going to look for my passport. You, get on the phone and order a pizza -- here's a twenty.

Ben hands Danny a bill.

DANNY

Would sir prefer a pepperoni -- or perhaps a fruity one?

Ben throws Danny a playful punch.

DANNY

Anyway, you'd better go and find your passport.

Danny chuckles, then picks up the phone.

INT. BEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ben is ransacking a cupboard. He tosses things carelessly on the floor.

He runs to a bookcase, throws books on the bed.

He stands still, scratches his head.

The door opens and Danny enters.

DANNY

Bet this is what you're looking  
for.

He holds up a passport.

BEN

Where...?

DANNY

You gave it me for safe keeping  
after your Paris trip --  
remember?

BEN

You've let me search for the past  
hour, you little brat.

Ben picks up a large paperback.

DANNY

So sue me.

He laughs hilariously and makes a quick exit.

Ben throws the book at the door which lands with a loud  
thwack.

INT. ON BOARD TRAIN - NIGHT

The traveler's are in a first class car. Matt is reading an  
English newspaper. On the table is a copy of the Los Angeles  
Times.

Ben and Danny are on the opposite seats. They are wired into  
their iPods which emit the tsk-tsk noise.

Both boys have their eyes closed. Danny wears his L.A.  
Dodgers baseball cap.

A woman attendant stops at their position. She smiles as she  
sees the boys and turns to Matt.

ATTENDANT

You've time for another coffee  
before you leave the train.

MATT

Yes, thank you that would be nice.  
Are we on time?

ATTENDANT

We certainly are. Do you think the  
boys'll want anything?

Matt taps Danny with a foot. Danny doesn't stir.

MATT

Guess they're okay, thank you.

The attendant pours the coffee.

ATTENDANT

Black isn't it?

MATT

Yeah, that's just fine.

ATTENDANT

I'll give you a call when we're  
getting near your stop. Enjoy your  
holiday.

The attendant moves off.

MATT

(to himself)  
Some holiday.

Matt drinks his coffee, winces slightly at the taste. Picks  
up his newspaper again.

Ben and Danny haven't stirred.

ATTENDANT (V.O. P.A.SYSTEM)

The next stop is Howston. Howston  
in five minutes. Please ensure you  
have all your belongings when  
leaving the train. Thank you for  
traveling with us today.

Matt leans over and shakes Ben's shoulder.

MATT

We're getting off. Wake Dan.

Ben stirs himself, yawns, then shakes Danny violently.

BEN  
Come on Danny.

DANNY  
What's up? Where's the fire?

BEN  
Under your butt if you don't move.

Danny looks around, familiarizing himself.

DANNY  
Where are we?

BEN  
Dad'n'me are getting off. Don't  
know about you.

The train begins to slow. Matt stands up and exits his seat.

MATT  
I'll get the cases. You two shake  
yourselves.

Matt walks towards the exit. The two boys prepare to follow him.

As they walk down the car both boys begin to sway to the music still blasting in their ears.

Danny clicks his fingers in time to the music.

Two sweet OLD LADIES sitting together watch the boys.

OLD LADY #1  
(to second old lady)  
Are they on drugs?

OLD LADY #2  
No dear, they're Americans.

OLD LADY #1  
Oh!

The train stops. The attendant stands by the door.

As the door opens, so do the heavens. Rain falls like a mini Niagara

The attendant retrieves a large corporate umbrella and hands it to Matt.

ATTENDANT  
With our compliments sir.

MATT  
Thanks. Tell me, can I get a cab  
here?

ATTENDANT  
Try the house next door.

She points to a former station depot house.

EXT. HOWSTON STATION - NIGHT

Matt steps on to the platform and unfurls the umbrella.

The boys follow, dragging the suitcases with them. They try to shelter under its cover. Shivering in the cool night air.

MATT  
Come on boys. Just a short walk.

He hands the umbrella to Ben.

The three cower under the umbrella. Matt drags the cases.

The warm, cozy train rumbles off into the night.

At the end of the platform the three turn left and approach the house.

EXT. HOUSE - SAME TIME

MATT  
Guess this is it.

BEN  
Don't see a cab.

He gazes around, as he does he swivels the umbrella sending a stream of water down Danny's neck.

Danny lands a kick on Ben.

DANNY  
Butt head!

BEN

First time your neck's seen water  
in ages.

Matt approaches the house and knocks on the door.

WOMAN (O.S)

Who's there?

Matt looks at the boys.

MATT

(softly)

Seems like we've disturbed the  
locals.

BEN

We need a cab.

Keys are turned and a bolt is drawn back. With a grating  
noise the door is opened and a woman of about sixty peers  
round.

WOMAN

Yes?

MATT

We were told we could get a cab  
here.

WOMAN

Oh, I see.

MATT

Well, can we?

WOMAN

My husband doesn't normally turn  
out at night.

MATT

Look can we, or can't we?

WOMAN

Where do you want to go?

Matt fishes a scrap of paper from an inside pocket, unfurls  
it.

MATT

Castle Cottage, Wissle.

WOMAN

I'll have a word with my husband.

She shuts the door.

The three males stand shivering on the doorstep.

WOMAN (O.S.)

They want to go to Castle Cottage  
in Wissle.

MAN (O.S.)

Eh. You what?

WOMAN (V.O.)

I wish you'd get your ears seen  
to. I said they want to go to  
Castle Cottage

MAN (O.S.)

I'll have a word.

Danny chuckles.

DANNY

Must be a remake of 'The Zombies  
Are Among Us'.

The door grates open again.

A man of about sixty five peers out.

MAN

You want to go to Castle Cottage?

MATT

(fed up)  
Look, how far is it to walk?

MAN

It's a fair piece -- 'bout a mile  
or so I reckon.

MATT

Which way?

The man points.

MAN

That way. Turn left about half a mile and it's on the left. Can't miss it.

MATT

Thank you. Come on boys. Won't take long.

They start to walk away. The man watches them.

MAN

(calling)

I thought you wanted a cab.

They stop.

MATT

Are you offering to take us?

MAN

Wait there. I'll go and get the old girl.

The man disappears back in to the house.

DANNY

He's not bringing that old woman out is he? She's pretty scary.

MATT

I think he means his cab, Dan.

As they wait they hear the grind of a starter motor willing an engine into life.

With a ROAR and a BANG an 80's motor comes into view.

MATT

Our chariot awaits.

BEN

Looks like it came from the same era.

DANNY

You mean we've got to get in that heap?

MATT

It's that or walking.

The man exits the car and approaches the three very wet males.

MAN

Thought she wasn't going to start.

MATT

Can we get going please?

MAN

Jump aboard. Have you at the cottage in two ticks.

The boys climb reluctantly into the back seat. Matt clambers into the front.

The driver throws the cases in the trunk. The lid takes a few bangs before it closes.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

Ben taps Matt on the shoulder.

BEN

Stinks in here.

MATT

Just put up with it. At least you're in the dry.

The man jumps in the front. Crunches the gears and the car jerks away.

EXT. THE CAR - NIGHT

The car approaches the crossroads and turns left.

EXT. CASTLE COTTAGE - NIGHT

The car comes to a halt with a squeal of brakes outside a pair of small cottages.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

MAN

Left one's yours.

He points to the unlit dwelling.

MATT

Mrs. Thomas is supposed to be meeting us.

MAN

She lives right next door. I'll honk the horn.

Two loud BEEPS shatter the quiet air.

In the adjoining cottage a curtain is pulled back. A shaft of light illuminates a well-tended garden.

The front door opens. A woman, MRS. THOMAS, dashes out, a coat over her head.

She runs up to the car.

Matt winds his window down.

MATT

Mrs. Thomas?

MRS. THOMAS

Yes.

She bends down to look in the car. Her cheerful, chubby country face exudes warmth.

MATT

I'm Matt Taylor. These here are my boys, Danny and Ben.

Mrs. Thomas looks even deeper into the car and smiles at the boys.

MRS. THOMAS

Well come on in you poor things. Must be worn out.

Matt hands the driver a £5 note.

The driver stuffs it into the top pocket of an old jacket. Pulls out a grubby card.

MAN

Here, case you need a cab again.

He hands it to Matt who passes it to Danny.

MATT

I'll get the cases.

Matt gets out and walks to the trunk. Opens the lid and lifts the cases out. The boys scramble out. Danny tries to get the umbrella up.

Matt knocks on the car window and gives the thumbs up sign.

The driver waves, then turns the car and drives off.

Danny looks at the card Matt passed to him.

INSERT: ADVERTISEMENT CARD.

"WISSLE FOR A CAB. RING 04992 554466"

BACK TO SCENE.

DANNY

Like we'd be travelin' in that  
heap of junk again.

He throws the card into a puddle.

MRS. THOMAS

Come on, I've lit the fire so it'll  
be nice and warm.

Mrs. Thomas leads the way, opens the door, leans in and turns on the light.

MRS. THOMAS

In you go.

INT. CASTLE COTTAGE - SAME TIME.

The interior is cozy. Two comfortable chairs are situated either side of a large open fire. An old sofa completes the homely scene.

A wooden table and six chairs are set further back. An ancient television sits on a small table.

The uneven stone-flagged floor has several rugs scattered haphazardly around.

The low ceiling has blackened oak beams.

Matt drops the cases, walks over to the fire. He rubs his hands happy at the instant warmth.

MATT  
Boy, that feels good.

Danny's eyes take in the sights.

DANNY  
It's a bit old isn't it?

MRS. THOMAS  
It's even older than me -- that's saying something.

Danny is jiggling around. Ben notices.

BEN  
What gives Dan?

DANNY  
I need the bathroom.

MRS. THOMAS  
The bathroom -- oh you mean the toilet. I'll show you.

She leads Danny through a door at the rear of the cottage.

MATT  
I'm next. Knew I shouldn't have had that other coffee.

Ben walks around. Gazes at the ancient TV.

BEN  
Wonder what the bedrooms are like.

MATT  
I'm so tired I could just curl up in that comfy chair.

Danny returns, Mrs. Thomas follows.

DANNY  
The bathroom's a bit weird. You have to pull a long chain to make the toilet work.

MATT  
Well it's my turn now.

Matt walks through the open rear door.

Mrs. Thomas puts an arm round Danny.

MRS. THOMAS

You'll get used to country life.  
Like I said, it's a very old  
place.

BEN

Must be at least a hundred.

MRS. THOMAS

Try four hundred.

DANNY

Wow! Four hundred years old.

MRS. THOMAS

They do say old Sir Humphrey had  
this place and mine built for two  
of his workers.

DANNY

Who's Sir Humphrey?

MRS. THOMAS

He lived in the castle just over  
the fields.

She points to the back of the cottage.

Matt returns and settles himself in the armchair.

MRS. THOMAS

His family had lived there for more  
than three hundred years.

Danny pulls a chair out from the table, squats down, his blue  
eyes wide open.

DANNY

What happened?

MRS. THOMAS

Nobody really knows. But there  
must have been a terrible tragedy.

DANNY

Oh boy! Only been here five minutes  
and we're right in the middle of  
ancient history.

MRS. THOMAS

Old country folk round here say  
they've heard noises coming from  
the ruins on moonlit nights.

BEN

What sort of noises?

MRS. THOMAS

Oh I reckon it's just the moonshine  
talking.

DANNY

What's moonshine?

MRS. THOMAS

Just strong whiskey -- and a vivid  
imagination.

DANNY

(disappointed)

Oh.

MRS. THOMAS

Here's me blathering on. You must  
be starving. Bacon and eggs all  
right?

Mrs. Thomas turns to look at Matt.

MRS. THOMAS

All right for you Mr. Taylor?

Matt doesn't answer. He's sprawled out in the chair in a deep  
sleep.

MRS. THOMAS

Bless him.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The boys are sharing a room. Ben is snoring. Danny is lying  
on his back, his eyes wide open.

He sits up, looks around. The rain has stopped and a shaft of moonlight squeezes in through a gap in the curtains.

Danny gets out of bed, walks over to Ben.

DANNY  
You awake, Ben?

Ben doesn't stir. Danny shakes him.

BEN  
Not now honey.

DANNY  
I'm not your honey.

BEN  
Whass that?

DANNY  
Ben, the moon's out now.

BEN  
What of it?

DANNY  
You remember what Mrs. Thomas said happens on moonlit nights?

BEN  
Go back to bed Dan. I'm pooped.

DANNY  
Well if you can't be bothered to take a look at the old castle I'll go on my own.

Danny goes to the window, draws back the curtain.

The castle is bathed in a soft silvery light.

It appears to be floating on a bank of fog.

DANNY  
Oh, looks real spooky.

Ben sits up. Rubs his eyes.

BEN  
Thanks Dan. Now you've got me wide awake.

He gets out of bed, looks out the window.

BEN

If you think I'm going out there  
tonight you must be nuts.

Ben gets back into bed, turns over.

BEN

(muffled voice)  
We'll take a look tomorrow.

DANNY

Don't think I'd dare go on my own.

Danny gets back into bed.

DANNY

Anyway, I'll bet nothing happens  
even if it is moonlight.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ben and Danny are at the table finishing their breakfast.

Mrs. Thomas is busying herself clearing away the dishes.

Early sun streams through the cottage windows.

MRS. THOMAS

At least you've got a nice morning.

BEN

Anything'd be better after  
yesterday.

MRS. THOMAS

What are you going to do with  
yourselves boys?

DANNY

We'll see when Dad comes down.

MRS. THOMAS

Your Dad was away at 8 o'clock. Car  
came for him. He said not to  
disturb you.

Mrs. Thomas laughs out loud.

MRS. THOMAS

He looked in on you, but you were both snoring your heads off.

BEN

Guess we were a bit tired.

DANNY

We could go and explore the old castle.

BEN

Yeah, I 'spose.

MRS. THOMAS

You just be careful. Those old ruins might be dangerous.

DANNY

Dangerous?

MRS. THOMAS

Well -- just take care, that's all.

Mrs. Thomas gives the boys a caring look, then disappears into the kitchen with the pots.

EXT. FIELD NEAR THE CASTLE - DAY

'Once upon a time' it must have been a lovely old place. Small for an English castle, but still displaying an air of very faded eminence.

Ben and Danny are walking towards the ancient pile.

Ben stops and grabs Danny's arm.

DANNY

What's up?

BEN

Just got the feeling someone's following us.

DANNY

You getting spooked already?

Danny turns and gazes around. Sees nothing.

DANNY  
You're imagining things again.

BEN  
P'raps.

DANNY  
Come on, can't wait to see inside.

The boys approach a once magnificent oak door. It swings gently on squeaking rusty hinges.

As they stop by the door, Ben turns round. Suddenly a nearby bush springs back.

BEN  
See, I told you someone's watching us.

He runs to the bush, pulls it back.

A girl of about eighteen is hiding behind it.

This is EMILY WALKER. She has long brown hair which is swept back from her pretty face with a ribbon. Her eyes stare unblinking at the boys.

BEN  
Why are you following us?

EMILY  
What you doin' here?

BEN  
I said, why are you following us?

EMILY  
Just wonderin' what you were doing, that's all.

DANNY  
We're going to explore the castle.

EMILY  
You di'nt oughta go in there.

DANNY  
Yeah, we know. It might be dangerous.

EMILY  
Yeah, well...

BEN  
Do you live round here?

EMILY  
Over there.

She points to a small cottage across the field.

BEN  
What's your name?

EMILY  
Emily -- Emily Walker.

DANNY  
I'm Danny, this is Ben.  
You coming in with us Emily?

EMILY  
Not on your life.

BEN  
Well please yourself. We're gonna  
take a look. Come on Dan.

The boys walk to the oak door. Ben pushes it open.

INT. OLD CASTLE - SAME TIME

The boys step inside and look nervously around.

The castle has lost its roof. Interior walls are bare. The floor has remnants of large tiles overladen with dirt.

Danny grabs Ben's arm.

DANNY  
Don't think I like this.

BEN  
You wanted to come. We're only  
taking a look.

DANNY  
I've taken a look, now I'm off.

BEN  
We'll just walk to the end of this  
passage and then go. Okay?

Ben walks on down the passageway. Danny leans against a wall.  
His attention is grabbed by a large spider near his foot.

In a flash the wall gives way. Danny falls into a hole.

DANNY (V.O.)  
Ben -- Ben!

Ben is walking on. Suddenly a large crow startles him,  
flapping its wings and CAWING loudly.

BEN  
Jeez!

Ben turns to check on Danny.

BEN  
Danny! Stop larking about. Where  
are you?

Ben retraces his steps.

BEN  
Dan.

Ben returns to the top of the passageway. Spots the hole.

BEN  
Danny.

DANNY (O.S.)  
Down here Ben.

BEN  
Well come on out.

DANNY (O.S.)  
I can't get out. I just sorta fell  
in.

BEN  
Are you hurt?

DANNY (O.S.)  
No, I fell on something soft.

BEN  
That'd be your head then.

Ben kneels down, peers down into the hole.

BEN  
Can't see you.

DANNY (O.S)  
I can see you. 'Bout ten feet away.

BEN  
Be back in a minute.

Ben runs through the creaky old doorway.

EXT. CASTLE DOOR - SAME TIME

Emily is sitting on the grass. She looks bored.

EMILY  
Where's the little 'un?

BEN  
Can you run home and get some  
rope -- and a torch. No time to  
explain.

Ben runs back inside. Emily starts off for home.

INT. OLD CASTLE - SAME TIME

Ben runs up to the hole in the wall.

BEN  
Have you out in a jiffy.

DANNY (O.S.)  
Oh no hurry. I'm getting to like  
it down....

Danny's voice tails off.

BEN  
Dan?

DANNY (O.S.)  
Something just ran over my feet.

BEN

'Praps it's the castle ghost.

DANNY (O.S.)

Ha, ha. Like it's funny being  
down here.

Ben walks to the doorway. Looks around. Walks outside.

EXT. CASTLE DOOR - SAME TIME

He sees Emily running back.

BEN

Thank God.

Emily approaches with a long plastic rope.

EMILY

All I could find. It's Mum's  
washing line.

She hands the line to Ben together with a torch.

EMILY

And this is off Dad's bike.

BEN

You come and hold the torch for  
me while I pull Danny out of the  
hole.

EMILY

Hole?

BEN

Yeah. He sort of fell in. Come on  
-- let's get the little brat out.

EMILY

You want me to go in -- there?

She points to the castle.

BEN

I need your help, Emily.

EMILY

Will it take long?

BEN

No.

Ben walks inside.

Emily cautiously follows.

INT. OLD CASTLE - SAME TIME

Ben points to the hole.

BEN

Shine the torch.

Emily switches the torch on. Points it in

THE HOLE

Danny is sitting on what looks like a pile of old rags.

BACK TO SCENE

Ben flings the rope into the hole.

BEN

Grab hold Dan.

IN THE HOLE

Danny grabs the end of the rope.

DANNY

Okay. Pull away.

Ben pulls on the rope, pulls hard.

BEN (O.S)

Cut out the burgers Dan. You weigh  
a ton.

BACK TO SCENE

Danny's head appears, he scrambles out.

His shorts and T-shirt are thick with grime. His face  
streaked with dust, forces a weak smile.

DANNY

That's the last time I lean on a  
wall.

Ben coils the rope, hands it to Emily.

BEN  
Thank your Mum.

EMILY  
She doesn't know.

Emily fidgets.

EMILY  
Can we get out of here, it's scary.

The three walk out of the castle.

EXT. CASTLE DOOR - SAME TIME

Ben catches Emily's arm

BEN  
Thanks Emily. Dan'ud still have  
been in there if you hadn't hung  
around.

DANNY  
Aw! You're not going to do all that  
soppy stuff are you?

BEN  
Take no notice of him. Ungrateful  
little squirt.

Ben shuffles his feet. Looks at Emily.

BEN  
How d'ya fancy meeting up tonight  
when the moon's out? I want to  
know what goes on here.

EMILY  
Not me. It's bad enough in daytime.

BEN  
Danny'n'me are coming back tonight.

DANNY  
Less of the Danny'n'me, big boy.

BEN  
(to Danny)  
You said you wanted to.

DANNY  
That was then.

Ben makes clucking noises, flaps his arms.

BEN  
Who's a little chicken?

Danny shuffles uneasily. Emily looks at Ben.

EMILY  
All right -- I'll come.

BEN  
Great! Just me and you then.

DANNY  
And I'll get a good night's sleep  
without you snoring.

BEN  
(to Emily)  
Pick you up at midnight by the  
gate.

EMILY  
(unsure)  
Okay.

EXT. ENTRANCE TO CASTLE FIELD - NIGHT

It's a brilliant moonlit night as Ben and Danny walk to the gate. Danny is carrying a large torch, a coil of rope hangs off a shoulder.

Ben checks his watch.

BEN  
Just on midnight.

DANNY  
D'ya think Emily'll come?

BEN  
I didn't think you were coming.

DANNY

Yeah, well, I couldn't leave you alone with a girl. Never know what you'd get up to.

An owl HOOTS in a nearby tree.

Danny shivers in the cool night air.

DANNY

Don't like them things. Always makes me think of those old Dracula films they keep showing on TV.

The sound of footsteps crunching on gravel causes the boys to turn their heads. They see a shadowy figure approaching.

BEN

That you Emily?

EMILY

Course it's me.

BEN

Hope you didn't wake your people up getting out.

EMILY

There's only Mum at home and she was snoring like mad when I left. Dad's on the night shift at work.

The three look across to the castle. A greenish colored fog is creeping across the field.

DANNY

Well, are we going or not?

BEN

(to Emily)

You all right with this?

EMILY

I'm with Danny. If we're going, let's go.

As they open the gate a police car draws up.

The three give a cursory glance and walk through the gate into the field.

A policeman, CHRIS BLAKE, gets out of the car and follows them.

He's about twenty-five and slightly built for a cop.

EXT. FIELD NEAR THE CASTLE - NIGHT

CHRIS

What's the game?

BEN

We're just going to explore the castle.

CHRIS

At five past midnight?

BEN

I know it sounds stupid but we've heard some strange things go on in the castle on moonlit nights.

CHRIS

And I've heard of some strange burglaries that happen on moonlit nights.

BEN

Do we look like burglars?

CHRIS

You're a bit young, I'll give you that. Anyway where you from, that accent's not local?

BEN

I'm Ben, this is Danny, my brother. We're from California. Dad's here to visit his company.

The policeman shines his torch on the trio.

CHRIS

Go on then. But I'll be watching.

Chris watches as they get nearer to the fog.

Ben puts an arm round Emily's shoulders.

BEN  
Hold my hand if you're  
frightened.

Emily pushes him away.

EMILY  
I'm not frightened.

BEN  
It was just a thought.

EMILY  
It was a nice thought -- but I'm  
okay thanks.

Danny has walked on into the fog.

BEN  
You okay Danny?

Ben looks around for his brother.

BEN  
DANNY. WHERE ARE YOU?

Chris hears his call and runs up to Ben and Emily.

CHRIS  
What happened?

BEN  
Danny -- just disappeared. It's  
getting to be a habit.

CHRIS  
Let's go on, he can't be far  
away.

Chris shines his torch into the impenetrable fog. Its  
denseness reflects the beam back.

CHRIS  
Come on we'll have to go through.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FOG.

Danny stands alone.

DANNY

I've never seen fog like that  
before.

He turns round, no one is to be seen.

DANNY

Ben, stop fooling around. You're  
not getting smoochy are ya?

THE FIELD - CONTINUOUS

CHRIS

That fog's weird.

EMILY

Dad says we get it here 'cos of  
the river.

BEN

Green fog?

EMILY

Never seen it green before.

BEN

Bet Dan's got lost in it.

CHRIS

Well we'll go in, see if we can  
find him.

BEN

Better stick together.

CHRIS

Yeah, you're right.

They walk into the fog.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FOG.

Danny looks worried. He turns left and right. Tries the  
torch, which doesn't work. He clicks it on and off, again  
and again.

Suddenly, Danny sees apparitions appearing.

Distorted voices frighten him.

He runs to a large bush and cowers behind it.

Suddenly, Ben, Emily and Chris appear like ghosts emerging from the thick fog.

BEN

DANNY!

DANNY (O.S.)

That you Ben?

BEN

Where the hell are you?

DANNY (O.S.)

Over here.

Ben looks around.

BEN

Perhaps you'd care to join us.

Danny leaves his hiding place, runs up to Ben, puts an arm round him.

DANNY

Never thought I'd be so glad to see you.

BEN

Yeah well, next time stick close.

DANNY

Next time?

CHRIS

Now we've found Danny I suggest we go back.

BEN

Well we've come this far so we might as well take a look inside.

CHRIS

As you all seem to be okay I'd better get back on duty.

BEN

We'll be okay, thanks.

CHRIS

Take care.

Chris waves then walks into the fog.

DANNY

The castle looks different --  
sort of lived in.

Ben points to the main door.

BEN

That creaky old door -- it's,  
it's ....

EMILY

Shut.

BEN

When we came earlier it was sorta  
hanging off.

Ben walks up to the door, gives it a push. It opens easily.

BEN

Coming?

They are about to step inside when they hear a loud  
distorted voice.

EMILY

What the hell is that?

DANNY

That's how it sounded when you  
were in there.

EMILY

Don't like it -- it's spooky.

Chris re-appears.

CHRIS

It won't let me through.

BEN

What d'ya mean?

CHRIS

It was like something was pushing  
me back.

DANNY

You mean we're trapped?

CHRIS  
That's about it.

Emily starts crying.

EMILY  
Knew I shouldn't have come.

Ben puts an arm round her.

BEN  
We'll be all right.

CHRIS  
I'll call control. Let them know  
where I am.

Chris removes his radio from the clip on his shoulder.

CHRIS  
(into radio)  
Control. This is 337 reporting  
in.

Chris waits for a reply, but the radio is dead.

CHRIS  
(into radio)  
Control. Are you receiving me?

Silence.

DANNY  
The torch doesn't work either.

Chris tries his torch. It doesn't light.

He peers at his watch.

CHRIS  
That's funny. It was 12.03 when I  
spoke to you at the gate. It's  
still 12.03.

Ben checks his watch.

BEN  
So's mine.

Danny checks his watch.

DANNY

And mine.

They all cautiously enter.

INT. OLD CASTLE - SAME TIME

As they step inside a swirl of dust is raised by a huge blast of air from deeper inside the castle.

Candles light up in sequence in the passage.

The door bangs shut, bolts top and bottom grate into the holders causing them all to jump.

An iron key turns in the lock, extracts itself and floats away out of sight.

DANNY

Tell me I'm dreaming this please.

Chris tries his radio again.

CHRIS

(into radio)

Control over.

But the radio is still dead.

Emily holds on to Ben tightly.

CHRIS

Let's get out -- NOW!

They turn to the door. As they do so, the floor vibrates under their feet and red tiles lay themselves along the passage

Walls sprout upwards. Ceilings appear, and a majestic staircase rises a tread at a time until it culminates in a large landing.

A JINGLING noise above their heads makes them jump.

An iron chandelier with twenty large candles drops slowly from the ceiling and lights up the hallway.

The brown stone walls are lined with paintings, and here and there a tapestry.

The four stare at each other in shock and horror.

From out of nowhere two large Irish Wolfhounds come bounding towards them, snarling viciously.

They stop ten feet away, their open mouths baring very large teeth.

The four of them cling to each other.

Suddenly a NOISE on the landing causes them to look up.

They see a large figure dressed in white from head to toe, shuffling along.

It moans as it moves. The figure gets to the head of the stairs and stops.

DANNY

A g-ghost.

Chris runs to the door, pulls back the bolts. But the door is still securely locked.

The figure moves slowly down the stairs towards them.

A few steps down it halts, lifts an arm.

Chris tries his radio.

CHRIS

Control, control -- come in for  
God's sake.

Ben and Emily hold on tightly to each other.

Danny stares at the figure. His mouth open in fear.

The figure begins advancing down the stairs again.

SIR HUMPHREY

You there. What is the meaning of  
this intrusion?

The dogs snarl, Ben regains his composure.

BEN

You gave us a fright.

DANNY

We thought you were the castle  
ghost.

SIR HUMPHREY

I asked, why you have entered my  
home?

Sir Humphrey descends to the hall. He is dressed in a white  
nightshirt. On his head a white nightcap with a long  
bobble.

He shuffles towards them, squinting in the light.

SIR HUMPHREY

'Pon my soul. What in God's name  
have we here?

BEN

We're as shocked and surprised as  
you.

DANNY

We just came to explore that's  
all.

SIR HUMPHREY

Explore! Explore!

His eyes narrow.

SIR HUMPHREY

Methinks you are here on  
Cromwell's business.

BEN

Who's Cromwell?

Sir Humphrey wags a finger at Ben.

SIR HUMPHREY

Do not shillyshally with me boy.

Ben turns to face the others, shrugs his shoulders.

DANNY

Wow! This only happens in the  
movies.

BEN

Cut the joking, Dan. This is no  
movie.

Ben turns to Sir Humphrey.

BEN  
Sir, I'm Ben.

He points to Danny.

BEN  
This is my brother Danny. We're  
from California -- on vacation.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Calif -- what?

BEN  
California, U.S.A.

SIR HUMPHREY  
And where might that be?

He shuffles closer to the four. Glances at them, then steps  
back a few paces.

BEN  
America sir.

DANNY  
You know -- America. Land of the  
brave and home of the free -- or  
somethin' like that.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Next you'll be telling me the  
wind blew you here.

DANNY  
No -- we came in a great big jet.

Sir Humphrey sits on the bottom tread of the stairs, puts his  
head in his hands.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Too much feasting. Too much wine  
and cheese. Never a good idea.

He looks up, rubs his eyes.

SIR HUMPHREY  
But it wasn't a nightmare, you are  
still here.

He shuffles over to Ben. Pinches an arm. Ben recoils.

Chris stands by the door, chewing his nails.

CHRIS  
If you'll just let us out -- and  
call off the dogs.

His voice tails off.

SIR HUMPHREY  
And let Cromwell's bully boys in.

DANNY  
Who's this guy Cromwell?

SIR HUMPHREY  
He's not Guy Cromwell. It is Satan  
himself, Oliver Cromwell.

DANNY  
Never 'eard of him.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Bless me! I declare the boy is a  
simpleton.

EMILY  
We read about him in school...

CHRIS  
(butting in)  
He started the Civil War -- but  
he's been dead over three hundred  
years.

SIR HUMPHREY  
You think so? I tell you this --  
he's very much alive. Hang the  
man!

EMILY  
So you're a Monarchist?

SIR HUMPHREY  
Yes young madam, I was knighted  
by the fair hand of King Charles  
himself.

DANNY  
What's this knighted mean?

CHRIS

You know -- the king taps you on the shoulder and makes you a sir. A knight of the Realm.

DANNY

Wow! You mean this guy's a real sir?

SIR HUMPHREY

(pompously)

I am Sir Humphrey Berkley, and this is my home.

Danny looks sheepish.

DANNY

Sorry sir. Didn't mean to be discourteous.

SIR HUMPHREY

That blackguard Cromwell wants to tear it down.

Sir Humphrey dabs his eyes.

SIR HUMPHREY

He declares it could be defended and stop him capturing the city.

Ben is leaning on a large hall cupboard.

Danny points to the wall.

DANNY

That's where I fell into a hole.

SIR HUMPHREY

The castle was built in 1388. That hole was a small prison.

Danny shivers.

DANNY

You mean I...

SIR HUMPHREY

(sniffs)

Had it blocked up.

DANNY

You didn't do a good job.

Ben gives him a look which conveys 'shut up.'

Chris is still trying the front door.

The dogs are keeping a watchful eye on them all.

CHRIS

Can we leave now sir? I have to go back on duty.

Sir Humphrey gives him an inquisitive look.

SIR HUMPHREY

What is that strange garb you wear?

CHRIS

I'm a policeman -- or at least I was.

SIR HUMPHREY

Are you on the kings duty?

CHRIS

No sir, on Queens duty. Queen Elizabeth.

SIR HUMPHREY

This is all too much for me.

Sir Humphrey shakes his head.

Then a smile crosses his lips.

SIR HUMPHREY

Then you are a Royalist too. You must help me.

CHRIS

How?

Ben walks over.

BEN

Don't you see. This guy's in terrible trouble.

Ben walks over to Sir Humphrey, holds out a hand.

Sir Humphrey gingerly stretches out, shakes Ben's hand.

BEN

I don't understand what's happened or why we're here. I don't care. All I know is, where we come from we help the little guy.

Ben blushes.

BEN

Oh, begging your pardon sir.

SIR HUMPHREY

Granted.

Danny walks over.

DANNY

We'll help sir. Tell us what you want us to do.

CHRIS

But what we can do? I don't see how we can help.

BEN

You're a cop. Surely you must have some ideas.

CHRIS

I've only been a cop for a few months. I'll get fired if I don't report in.

Ben turns to Sir Humphrey.

BEN

How can we help?

SIR HUMPHREY

I only have two men, Walker and Thomas. And there's old Joshua, but he's past it.

Sir Humphrey mops his brow.

SIR HUMPHREY

With you four and those two we  
may be able to scare them off. At  
least for the time being.

DANNY

Yeah, a fight.

SIR HUMPHREY

They return the day after  
tomorrow.

EMILY

Excuse me sir. It's already today  
-- that means they'll be back  
tomorrow.

SIR HUMPHREY

I'm an old man. Memory's not what  
it was. You are correct young  
lady.

BEN

How many came last time?

SIR HUMPHREY

Six, seven maybe.

BEN

Mmm. Six against seven. Do you  
have any weapons?

SIR HUMPHREY

Swords and a small armory --  
flintlocks mostly.

BEN

And bullets?

SIR HUMPHREY

Bullets?

BEN

For the guns.

SIR HUMPHREY

(loudly)  
Balls.

BEN

Pardon me?

SIR HUMPHREY

Balls, for the guns.

DANNY

It's the old-fashioned gun, Ben.  
I read about them on the  
internet.

BEN

What were you doing learning  
about guns?

DANNY

No matter. You load gunpowder in  
one end and ram a ball down the  
muzzle. Then a spark lights the  
powder and the ball shoots out.

Danny strokes his chin.

DANNY

Phew, what I'd give for a Magnum.

Sir Humphrey surveys the party.

SIR HUMPHREY

The hour is late. What will you do  
for a night's rest?

BEN

Well we can't get home.

Sir Humphrey looks intently at them.

SIR HUMPHREY

Might I suggest you spend the  
night here?

BEN

That's very kind of you sir.

SIR HUMPHREY

I have bedchambers, if you will  
follow me.

Sir Humphrey turns, begins walking upstairs.

The others follow.

On the stairs Ben points to a portrait of a beautiful woman in her twenties.

BEN  
Your wife, sir?

SIR HUMPHREY  
Ah, my wife. Lost her in  
childbirth many years ago. We  
longed for a son and heir. T'was  
not to be.

Sir Humphrey sighs deeply.

INT. ON THE LANDING - CONTINUOUS

They all stand on the landing.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Moonlight's all the illumination we  
have up here.

BEN  
We'll manage.

Sir Humphrey points to Ben and Danny.

SIR HUMPHREY  
You two take that one. The young  
lady in here.

He opens the nearest door. Emily peers in.

EMILY  
I'm scared.

BEN  
I'll come in with you -- get you  
settled.

DANNY  
He never misses a trick does he?

BEN  
Zip it Dan.

EMILY  
Just help me to the bed, then I'll  
be all right.

DANNY

You heard her Ben. Just help her to  
the bed.

Ben and Emily walk into the bedroom.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The moon casts a silvery glow over bare wooden floorboards  
that CREAK as they walk.

In the dim light they make out the shape of a small four-  
poster bed and walk towards it.

Ben puts an arm round Emily. She leans her head on his  
shoulder.

BEN

This is surreal. I mean what the  
hell is going on?

EMILY

Hold me tight Ben.

Ben puts his arms around her.

In a shaft of moonlight they kiss deeply.

BEN

Sleep tight, my lovely.

In the doorway Danny has seen it all.

DANNY

Watch him, he's a fast worker.

Ben doesn't answer back. He helps Emily on to the bed, leans  
over and kisses her again.

BEN

I'm only next door if you need me.

He strokes her hair, then walks out to

THE LANDING

Sir Humphrey, Chris and Danny are waiting.

SIR HUMPHREY

She will be comfortable in there.

BEN

She's just a bit nervous that's all.

DANNY

Who wouldn't be with you planting smackeroos on them.

Ben gives Danny a withering look.

SIR HUMPHREY

(to Chris)

You sir, in the end room.

CHRIS

Thank you sir. Good night all.

Chris walks off.

SIR HUMPHREY

I'll bid you a peaceful rest.

Sir Humphrey begins to shuffle off to his own room.

DANNY

Excuse me sir. Where's the bathroom?

Sir Humphrey peers at Danny in the gloom.

SIR HUMPHREY

Bathroom?

DANNY

You know, the toilet, lavatory. Where do you go for a pee?

Sir Humphrey clicks his fingers.

SIR HUMPHREY

Ah, you mean relieve yourself. Under the bed.

DANNY

Under the bed?

SIR HUMPHREY

You'll find a pot -- under the bed.

Danny shakes his head.

DANNY  
Thank you sir.

BEN  
Come on Dan, let's get some  
shuteye.

DANNY  
Don't think I'll be able to sleep.

BEN  
Uh.

DANNY  
What with having to find a pot  
under the bed, and you all fired  
up with passion.

Danny ducks as Ben throws a smack his way.

Sir Humphrey shakes his head, makes off for his room.

INT. BEN & DANNY'S BEDROOM - DAY

A deep yellow sun streams in through a large leaded window.

The two boys are lying on top of a massive bed.

Ben is on his back, his eyes wide open, his hands behind  
his head.

He turns to look at Danny. He's on his back too, mouth  
wide open, eyes tightly closed in a deep sleep.

Ben smiles mischievously, sits up, puts an arm round Danny  
and shakes him gently.

BEN  
(softly)  
Oh Emily, Emily, kiss me Emily.

Danny grunts, licks his lips.

BEN  
Kiss me Emily.

Danny wakes suddenly, sees Ben leaning over him.

DANNY  
Geroff, you dork.

BEN

There was me, dreamin' you were  
Emily.

DANNY

Yeah, well dream's over.

BEN

Sorry -- just teasing.

DANNY

And get on your own side of the  
bed.

Danny sits up, looks at his surroundings.

The walls are lined with dark paneling.

The ceiling is covered in decorative plasterwork.

DANNY

My watch still says 12.03. Wonder  
what the real time is.

A knock at the door startles them.

BEN

Come in.

The door is opened by JOSHUA THOMAS. He's a small man with  
beady eyes and a furtive servile manner.

He wears well-cut clothes of the period.

In his hands is a bowl with a jug in it. A towel is draped  
over an arm.

JOSHUA

Sir Humphrey thought you would  
like to freshen up young  
gentlemen.

Joshua places the bowl on a small oak table.

BEN

What's the time?

JOSHUA

Past seven o'clock in the forenoon.

BEN

You don't seem surprised to see us.

JOSHUA

Sir Humphrey has explained all. It is not my place to question him.

BEN

Are the others awake?

JOSHUA

I have left the same outside the young lady's room. The man at the end has been awoken too.

He bows stiffly and exits the room.

Ben leaps off the bed, runs to the door.

INT. ON THE LANDING - CONTINUOUS

Joshua is on the stairs.

Ben leans round the door.

BEN

Is there any grub going?

JOSHUA

Grub sir?

BEN

You know -- food.

He mimics putting food in his mouth.

JOSHUA

Come down when you are ready. Martha will make you something.

INT. BEN & DANNY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ben goes to the table, puts water in the bowl, splashes his face then wipes it dry on the rough towel.

BEN

Your turn Dan.

DANNY

I'm not using that water. Never  
know what I might catch.

BEN

Suit yourself. The only time you  
ever got washed was when Mary-Lou  
was coming round.

DANNY

(dreamily)

Mary-Lou. I'll bet she's missing  
me.

BEN

Probably glad of the rest.

Ben picks up the bowl, walks towards Danny.

DANNY

You wouldn't dare.

As Ben advances he trips on an exposed floorboard.

The bowl and its contents land squarely on Danny.

DANNY

Of all the brainless idiots.

BEN

You got your wash after all.

DANNY

Throw me that towel.

Ben throws the towel, Danny mops his face.

BEN

Sorry Dan. Didn't mean to do  
that.

Ben sits on the bed, looks at Danny.

BEN

Don't know what Dad's gonna  
think. I mean with us out all  
night.

DANNY

Probably not noticed.

BEN

I'm worried about how we'll get back. I mean, this can't be happening in our time can it?

DANNY

God! Hadn't thought about that.

Ben gives Danny a playful punch.

BEN

Come on little bro'. Let's see if we can get some grub.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Ben and Danny enter. The cook, MARTHA, is seated on a wooden chair by a large open fire.

She looks up as the boys enter.

BEN

Hi!

MARTHA

Good morning sirs.

DANNY

I'm Danny, this is Ben.

MARTHA

It's a strange going on is it not?

BEN

We can't explain what's happened.

Martha dabs her eyes with the large apron she's wearing.

MARTHA

Those evil men! That wicked captain killed old Benjamin right there.

She stands and points to a spot on the rough stone floor.

MARTHA

Right there, in front of me. I thought I was a goner too.

BEN  
That's terrible.

DANNY  
We're gonna give 'em a fright  
when they come back.

MARTHA  
I hope so -- I hope so.  
'Specially that captain.

Martha walks across the kitchen, picks up a large meat cleaver.

Danny's eyes widen in fear.

MARTHA  
Why if he were sitting at that  
table I'd -- I'd take his head  
off.

She swings the cleaver down into a wooden block, thwack.

The cleaver stays upright.

MARTHA  
That's what I'd do.

BEN  
Thank God we're not Cromwell's  
troops.

Martha calms down.

MARTHA  
Can I get you some ham and bread  
-- or cheese?

BEN  
Ham'ud be fine, thank you.

Martha goes to a large cupboard, brings out a joint of ham, sets it on the table.

She places a carving knife by the ham and lays two pewter plates for the boys.

MARTHA  
Tuck in -- it's very tasty.

Ben cuts two slices off the joint, places one on each plate.

Martha puts a round loaf on the table.

BEN

How do we cut the bread?

MARTHA

Just break off what you want.

Danny breaks off a lump.

Ben picks up his ham, bites off a chunk.

BEN

It's very nice.

Martha busies herself with the fire.

Ben picks up his ham and stuffs it in his pocket.

Martha turns and sees Ben's empty plate.

MARTHA

Why sir, you must have had an empty belly. Please have some more.

BEN

(panicky)

No, no thank you. There's a heavy day ahead.

Ben pats his stomach.

Danny tries his ham. He chews, his eyes roll.

He pretends to cough and spits the ham into his hand.

The door opens and Sir Humphrey enters.

SIR HUMPHREY

I really thought you were a figment of my imagination. I am so relieved to find you were not.

BEN

Good morning sir. We're here to help, remember?

SIR HUMPHREY

How do you think we should rout these rascallions?

DANNY

Pardon me sir, I thought they  
were Republicans.

Sir Humphrey gives Danny a look that conveys "lunatic".

BEN

If we're gonna scare them off we  
need to secure the castle.

SIR HUMPHREY

Just what I was thinking.

BEN

How many entrances are there?

SIR HUMPHREY

Just two. Front and back.

BEN

Then they need strengthening.  
We'll place heavy items against  
them.

SIR HUMPHREY

Oh, no need for that. My doors  
are made of stout English oak.

BEN

But even if they break the doors  
down we should still be able to  
hold them off.

Danny jumps up.

DANNY

Can't we drop boiling oil on  
them?

Sir Humphrey and Ben ignore him.

DANNY

I saw it in a movie once.

BEN

Then we must gather all your guns  
and ammunition -- and we should  
have the swords handy.

DANNY

Give you a chance to practice  
what you learnt in Venice, Ben.

Sir Humphrey pricks up his ears.

SIR HUMPHREY

Venice you say. A delightful spot  
-- visited more than once.

Sir Humphrey wrinkles his nose.

SIR HUMPHREY

Stinks in summertime.

Danny rolls his eyes, gives a why bother to explain look.

BEN

May we take a look around sir?

SIR HUMPHREY

Is your repast over?

Ben looks puzzled.

BEN

Repast?

SIR HUMPHREY

Your meal.

BEN

Oh yes, thank you Sir Humphrey.  
It was delicious.

SIR HUMPHREY

Good, good, follow me.

INT. PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Sir Humphrey leads the way, his hands clasped behind his  
back.

Danny trails behind him mimicking his walk.

Ben notices.

BEN (MOS)

Stop it.

SIR HUMPHREY  
I'll show you where we can defend  
the castle.

They cross the

HALL.

Sir Humphrey opens a small door.

Stone steps lead up.

Sir Humphrey walks in.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Follow me.

INT. CIRCULAR STEPS - CONTINUOUS

Sir Humphrey starts to climb. Ben and Danny follow.

SIR HUMPHREY  
(panting)  
Not as young as I was.

BEN  
Take your time sir.

DANNY  
We'll catch you if you fall.

EXT. CASTLE BATTLEMENTS - DAY

Sir Humphrey exits, panting, followed by Ben and Danny.

Danny rushes to the edge and looks round.

DANNY  
Wow! You can see for miles.

He points.

DANNY  
I can see our cottage. But it  
looks different. Can't see any  
soldiers though.

SIR HUMPHREY

All the better for that. Walker  
can be stationed here. Give us  
warning when those devils appear.

Ben looks carefully around.

The tower is off to the left of the main entrance and gives  
a clear view all over the small castle and beyond.

BEN

If we have the cop and one of your  
men up here with guns we might be  
able to hold them off. Emily can  
help by doing the loading.

DANNY

And what am I supposed to be doing?

BEN

I've got a special job for you --  
tell you later.

DANNY

Special job -- oh great.

BEN

I haven't seen the cop or Emily  
yet.

SIR HUMPHREY

The young lady and the strange  
man went out walking.

BEN

Oh no!

SIR HUMPHREY

They wished to leave.

Ben turns to Danny.

BEN

You know what this means?

DANNY

What does this mean?

BEN

They think they can resume their normal lives.

DANNY

Do you think...?

BEN

I'll bet Emily's gone to her cottage looking for her Mom. The cop'll think he can get back on duty.

Ben stamps a foot in frustration.

BEN

The damn fools.

DANNY

They must realize...

BEN

They don't.

Sir Humphrey looks on in puzzled amusement.

SIR HUMPHREY

Young sirs, you leave me flummoxed.

BEN

Must go and look for them.

DANNY

You mean go out?

BEN

They might be in danger.

DANNY

All right, long as we stick together.

BEN

I'm sorry Sir Humphrey. We must find them.

SIR HUMPHREY

Mmm! Of course. I shall instruct Walker to seek them too.

BEN  
 Thank you sir.  
 (to Danny)  
 Come on Dan.

The boys race down the spiral stairs.

EXT. CASTLE DOOR - SAME TIME

Ben and Danny tear out of the door.

EXT. FIELD NEAR THE CASTLE - DAY

The boys start to run in the direction of the entrance gate.

EXT. SITE OF THE GATE - DAY

Ben and Danny arrive at the gate.

But the gate isn't there any more.

And the road is just a deeply rutted cart track.

BEN  
 We'll try this way first.

Ben points right in the direction of Emily's home.

EXT. CART TRACK - CONTINUOUS

The boys march briskly along the track.

Suddenly they hear loud voices.

CHRIS (V.O.)  
 You have no right to threaten us  
 like this. We mean you no harm.

The four men, ABE, JOE, NAT and WILLIAM, laugh out loud.

ABE (O.S.)  
 He means us no harm lads.

The unseen others jeer.

EMILY (O.S.)  
You let us go. I'll tell Sir  
Humphrey.

The jeers rise again.

Ben looks at Danny.

BEN  
(softly)  
Hope there's not too many of  
them.

Some large bushes obscure the mob holding Chris and Emily  
hostage.

Ben walks up to a bush, gently parts it.

Four rough looking men have surrounded Chris and Emily.

They hold large lumps of wood at a menacing angle.

Ben looks at Danny.

BEN  
Any ideas?

DANNY  
Not right now.

Ben looks thoughtful.

BEN  
You were the sprinting champ at  
school.

DANNY  
Yeess.

BEN  
Well you'll easily outrun this  
bunch of losers.

DANNY  
Don't think I'm gonna like what's  
coming next.

BEN  
I'll hide in the bush, shout and  
scream; make out like there's ten  
of us.

DANNY

And...?

BEN

When they turn, you jump out and call them some abusive names.

DANNY

What you mean like...

BEN

(hastily)

Not now. Just say whatever comes into your head.

Ben places a hand on Danny's shoulder.

BEN

Some of 'em are bound to follow. So run like hell back to the castle.

DANNY

You don't think I'd be stopping to pick daisies do you?

Ben peers through the bush.

The men are still menacing Chris and Emily.

BEN

It's now or never, Dan.

Danny looks frightened.

DANNY

Okay.

Danny walks gingerly from the hiding place.

Chris and Emily see him.

Danny motions 'keep quiet'.

Ben whoops, hollers, makes threatening noises.

The men turn in alarm and see Danny.

DANNY

Ya, ya, ya. You stink.

He pulls his mouth open and sticks his tongue out.

JOE  
All that noise from such a little  
mouse. Get him lads.

Nat and William peel off, make for Danny.

Danny turns, runs like hell.

The two men run past Ben's hiding place.

BEN  
(softly)  
Go Dan, go.

Ben leaves his retreat and walks quietly up to the two remaining men.

BEN  
Try me for size.

He beckons to Chris.

BEN  
Chris, help me.

Chris nods.

ABE  
Uh! What?

He doesn't get a chance for more as Ben places a well aimed kick that lands in his airway.

He falls to the ground gasping for breath.

Joe advances on Ben.

Chris runs up to Joe, rabbit chops him in the back of the neck.

He screams in pain, wobbles to turn to Chris but falls to the ground.

BEN  
Handcuff them together.

CHRIS  
Do you think I should.

BEN  
Why the hell not?

CHRIS  
I might be in trouble when I get  
back to the station.

BEN  
In case you hadn't noticed, you  
ain't getting back -- at least  
not yet.

Emily runs sobbing up to Ben. She puts her arm round his  
neck.

EMILY  
Thanks Ben.

BEN  
Just knew I'd need my taekwondo  
training one day.

A worried look crosses Ben's face.

EMILY  
What's wrong Ben?

BEN  
It's Dan.

EMILY  
Oh God.

CHRIS  
To hell with it.

He takes his handcuffs and shackles Abe and Joe together.

CHRIS  
(triumphantly)  
Now get out of that.

Abe and Joe spit and scream. Joe tries to stand, dragging Abe  
with him.

Suddenly Danny's voice is heard.

DANNY (O.S.)  
Get off you dorks -- ow -- you're  
hurting me.

Ben ushers Emily to hide.

Nat and William appear holding Danny by his hair.

When they see Ben and Chris they throw Danny to the ground and charge them, screaming abuse.

Ben stands his ground.

Chris removes his truncheon flicks it to its full length.

BEN

I don't like people hurting my brother.

NAT

You're next I'm thinking.

He gives a vicious smile displaying a mouthful of rotting teeth.

ABE

Leave 'em be Nat. Help us out of these chains.

He lifts his arm. Joe yells in agony as the handcuffs bite into his wrist.

BEN

(to Nat)

You'll get the same. Now let us be.

NAT

Remove the chains and we won't give no more trouble.

BEN

No!

NAT

Then it's a taste of my weapon.

Nat moves menacingly towards Ben.

Ben turns to Chris.

BEN

Throat and neck?

Ben and Chris push clenched fists together.

Ben advances on Nat, who raises his club menacingly.

William urges Nat on.

Ben looks squarely at Nat then raises his left leg high.

Nat laughs out loud.

NAT

Look mates, he wants to dance  
with me.

Nat bows mockingly.

Ben drops his left leg spins round then lands a crippling  
blow on Nat's neck with his right.

Nat's face turns purple as he gasps for breath. He drops to  
his knees, clutching his throat.

WILLIAM

We didn't mean no harm.

He turns sharply and runs off.

ABE

Let us go mister. Ain't right to  
keep us in chains.

Ben takes Chris, Emily and Danny to one side.

BEN

We could do with extra hands  
tomorrow. What do you think?

Chris shrugs his shoulders.

DANNY

Don't know what Humph would think  
having those morons about.

BEN

Sir Humphrey to you Dan --  
remember?

DANNY

Still don't think he'd like it.

BEN

I reckon if the soldiers see this  
lot they'll be running scared.

Ben walks back to the three remaining rough men who look subdued.

BEN

Do you want to earn some money?

ABE

What do we need money for? We live in the woods yonder.

He points to a large clump of trees.

JOE

We live off the land. Don't owe nobody nuthin'.

BEN

Tomorrow, Cromwell's troops are coming to tear Sir Humphrey's castle down.

NAT

Him as lives in the big house?

BEN

We want you to help fight them off.

JOE

Risk our lives for him?

BEN

Have you ever done anything good in your miserable lives?

Ben looks at Chris, Emily and Danny who all look worried.

BEN

Well I guess we could leave you like this -- chained together.

Ben looks at Nat who is still rubbing his neck.

BEN

I could fix the other side for you.

Ben lifts a leg again.

NAT  
(whining)  
No, no mister.

Ben motions to Chris, Emily and Danny to leave the rough men.

BEN  
Come on, we've got work to do.

ABE  
Don't leave us like this. Say  
what you want us to do.

BEN  
Be at the castle door at sun-up  
tomorrow -- but no dirty tricks  
and I promise you'll be rewarded.

JOE  
Let us go. We'll be there.

BEN  
And bring your friend -- the one  
who ran off.

Ben motions to Chris to unlock the handcuffs.

Chris shrugs his shoulders.

CHRIS  
If you're sure Ben.

Chris walks warily over to the two handcuffed men. Unlocks  
the cuffs.

Abe and Joe rub their wrists.

BEN  
They're just simple guys really.  
I think we can trust them.

EMILY  
What if they turn on us at the  
castle?

BEN  
Then we'll shoot 'em.

INT. CASTLE - DAY

Ben and the others return. Sir Humphrey is pacing up and down.

He smiles as he sees them enter.

SIR HUMPHREY

I was worried you would not come back.

BEN

We gave you our word that we'd help, sir.

SIR HUMPHREY

Then I shall instruct Martha to make us a grand feast tonight. Pheasant, goose and all the trimmings.

Sir Humphrey's eyes twinkle.

SIR HUMPHREY

And perhaps a glass or two of port to wash it down. For tomorrow -- who knows?

BEN

You'll feel better after a few glasses of port, sir.

Sir Humphrey puts an arm on Ben's shoulder.

SIR HUMPHREY

You're a good lad, Ben. You could have been my heir.

Danny turns to Chris. Puts his fingers in his mouth, feigns puking.

DANNY

(to Chris)

I hope there won't be any of that crappy ham.

Chris looks on bemused.

CHRIS (MOS)

Crappy ham.

He shakes his head.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A large table is set for dinner for five.

Silver cutlery and napkins, glasses and silver candelabra adorn the table.

Paneled walls and paintings complete a scene of some grandeur.

The double doors open and Sir Humphrey enters followed by Ben, Emily, Danny and Chris.

SIR HUMPHREY

Sit yourselves down my friends.

He waves his arms expansively.

They all sit, with Sir Humphrey at the top of the table.

Ben and Emily on one side, Chris and Danny the other.

Sir Humphrey picks up a small bell and RINGS it loudly.

Danny covers his ears.

DANNY

(to Chris)

Back home we just shout.

Chris smiles.

CHRIS

The landed gentry you know. They like to do things properly.

The doors open and Joshua and Walker enter carrying large servers with goose and pheasants on them.

Then they return with more dishes; baked hare and chicken pie.

The dogs slink in and sit down expectantly.

SIR HUMPHREY

Don't stand on ceremony, just tuck in. We have a Momentous day tomorrow.

Sir Humphrey leans over the table and breaks a leg off a goose.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Capital, capital. Done to a turn.  
And I can vouch for the chicken  
pie.

He looks round, sees the others just watching.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Well come on, come on. Can't eat  
it all meself.

Ben leans over, breaks off a leg for Emily, then gets one for himself.

Danny picks on a pheasant. Chris goes for goose.

BEN  
This meat is delicious, sir. Is  
it turkey?

SIR HUMPHREY  
Turkey?

BEN  
You know, the stuff we have at  
thanksgiving.

SIR HUMPHREY  
It's goose. Keep some birds here.  
Better than dogs at giving a  
warning if anybody is on the  
prowl.

BEN  
We could make use of them when  
the soldiers return.

Sir Humphrey nods.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Now who's for some port?

He picks up a flagon containing a dark brown liquid.

BEN  
I'll try a little sir.

He holds his glass out. Sir Humphrey fills it to the brim.

BEN

Whoa, sir. That's more than enough.

SIR HUMPHREY

Nonsense. Got to keep your strength up.

Sir Humphrey gets up, walks round the table with the flagon, fills everyone's glass.

Danny's eyes twinkle.

DANNY

Wow. Never had a real drink before.

Danny finishes his pheasant leg, tosses it to the dogs who snarl over it.

BEN

Manners, Dan.

DANNY

Saw it in a film about an old king who did that.

CHRIS

That'd be Henry the Eighth.

DANNY

Really.

Danny takes a huge slurp of the port. He goes cross-eyed and starts coughing.

BEN

You're supposed to sip it crumb-head. It ain't Coke.

DANNY

Now -- you-- tell-- me.

SIR HUMPHREY

Finish it all off. There's plenty more if you need it.

Sir Humphrey rings the bell again.

Joshua enters.

SIR HUMPHREY  
What's for dessert?

JOSHUA  
Baked apple, sir.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Who's for that?

BEN  
I couldn't eat another thing sir.

Chris and Emily agree.

DANNY  
I'll try some please. I love  
apple pie.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Two helpings Joshua, if you  
please.

JOSHUA  
I'll see to it right away sir.

He exits the room.

Danny breaks wind noisily.

DANNY  
Oh, begging your pardon, sir. I  
think it must have been the  
drink.

Chris and Emily smile. Ben winces and gives Danny a  
withering look.

Sir Humphrey laughs out loud.

SIR HUMPHREY  
At least the young man enjoyed  
his food.

He turns serious and looks at his guests.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Now my young friends. About  
tomorrow. Have you any plans?

BEN  
I've hired some extra help sir.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Who might they be?

BEN  
Four local men. They wanted to  
help you.

Sir Humphrey beams.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Local men eh? They wanted to help  
me eh. Just goes to show. There's  
good in all men.

Sir Humphrey lifts his glass.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Except blasted Republicans!

He laughs heartily, then belches loudly.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Let's drink a toast to King James  
and all good loyal Englishmen.

DANNY  
You've got two Americans here as  
well. Don't forget them.

SIR HUMPHREY  
And two Americans -- whosoever  
they are.

They all laugh and raise their glasses.

INT. HALL - DAY

Abe, Nat and Joe are squatting down murmuring quietly to  
themselves.

William stands, looking on.

Their heavy clubs lie by their side.

Sir Humphrey is pacing up and down muttering quietly to  
himself. His hands are clasped behind his back.

Ben, Danny, Chris and Emily are standing quietly in a group.

Tension shows on their faces.

Joshua stands on his own.

Sir Humphrey stops and looks at Ben.

SIR HUMPHREY  
The waiting, that is the worst  
part.

BEN  
We're as prepared as we can be  
sir.

Sir Humphrey walks closer to Ben.

SIR HUMPHREY  
Are you sure about these -- these  
scoundrels?

He nods his head in their direction.

BEN  
Having them might be the  
difference between winning and  
losing.

Sir Humphrey nods agreement.

Ben notices Danny is missing.

BEN  
Anyone seen Danny?

Everyone shakes their heads 'no'.

BEN  
I'll kill the little brat when I  
find him.

CHRIS  
Careful what you say in front of  
a cop, Ben.

Ben looks round anxiously.

EXT. CASTLE GARDEN - DAY

(NOTE: Livestock -- twelve geese needed)

Danny is creeping towards the goose pen.

The geese CACKLE loudly as they see him.

Danny checks out the surroundings.

He satisfies himself that all is clear. Undoes a clip holding the pen shut.

Two dozen geese storm towards freedom.

Danny runs for his life and reaches safety just as the geese, necks outstretched fly for him.

EXT. BATTLEMENTS - SAME TIME

Walker scours the countryside.

He looks left, right, left.

The sun beats mercilessly down. Walker yawns.

By each slit a gun stands, primed, ready and waiting.

Walker takes another look. Satisfied that all is clear he slides down onto his butt. He yawns again.

His eyes close.

INT. HALL - DAY

All is deathly quiet. Even Danny's normally cheery face wears a worried look.

Ben and Emily sit together on the stairs. Emily's head on Ben's shoulder. He puts an arm around her.

Chris stands and bites his nails.

Sir Humphrey has walked down the passageway out of sight.

The rough men say nothing, but keep a watchful eye on the dogs close by.

Danny takes his baseball cap off, looks at it carefully then brushes off some imaginary dust before replacing it back to front on his head.

One of the dogs scratches itself.

Suddenly, three loud BANGS on the door galvanize the group into action.

The dogs bark and jump around excitedly.

The rough men jump up in alarm. Abe looks through a small window.

BEN  
How many Abe?

Abe holds up both hands.

The BANGS come again.

FAIRFAX (O.S.)  
Open up!

BEN  
Everybody go to their positions.  
Come on Chris and Emily. Danny,  
go and keep guard on the rear  
door.

Danny gives a mock salute and runs down the passageway.

Ben, Chris and Emily run to the small door and clatter up the circular stairs.

EXT. BATTLEMENTS - SAME TIME

Ben, Chris and Emily emerge. Walker is stirring himself.

BEN  
So much for a lookout.

WALKER  
Sorry sir. Must have dozed off.

Ben peers over the battlements. The horsemen are grouped together.

BEN  
(to Fairfax)  
Push off. We're not opening the  
door.

One of the soldiers raises a musket and aims it at Ben.

The musket FIRES and a ball chips some masonry off the wall close to Ben's head.

Ben picks up a pistol, aims it at the soldier. The pistol FIRES with a large puff of smoke.

The ball hits the soldier's steel helmet, ricochets off and hits the breastplate of another soldier. From there the ball rebounds onto the flank of a horse.

The horse rears, suddenly taking off towards the river. The soldier clings on in desperation trying to bring the horse to a stop.

At the rivers edge it comes to a sudden halt, catapulting the soldier head first into the water.

The soldier surfaces, spluttering a hatred of all things equine and spitting out a mouthful of muddy brown goo.

The other members of the troop laugh out loud. Except Fairfax.

FAIRFAX

(shouting to Ben)

Be warned, boy. This is one fight you cannot win. Now open up in the name of Oliver Cromwell.

BEN

Oliver who? We're not scared of you punks.

Chris and Walker each pick up a pistol and fire on the soldiers.

The soldiers retaliate by firing back.

Emily is reloading.

ON THE GROUND.

Fairfax motions to Sergeant Lampley and three of the soldiers to close up with him.

Fairfax points. The soldiers dismount and run to the door. They begin kicking and heaving at it with their shoulders, but the door remains firmly closed.

BEN

(to Fairfax)

Nice try. If you break it down  
we've got a wonderful reception  
waiting for you.

Fairfax scowls and beckons his troop to follow him some way  
off from the castle.

Suddenly geese round a corner of the castle, wings  
outstretched, SCREAMING at the top of their voices.

They see Fairfax and his troops and make for them.

The soldiers look on uneasily.

FAIRFAX

Stand your ground men. They're  
only a few geese.

Several of the soldiers retreat.

The horses are restless. Some WHINNY, others just paw the  
ground.

Some of the geese make for Fairfax and begin pecking his  
legs.

Fairfax withdraws his sword and begins slashing at the  
birds.

The soldiers are running with more geese chasing them.

ON THE BATTLEMENTS

Ben and Chris are laughing fit to bust.

BEN

Looks like we've got some great  
helpers. They might frighten them  
off all by themselves.

WALKER

They're savage little devils.

CHRIS

That's the funniest thing I ever  
saw.

Ben looks at Chris and Walker.

BEN  
I'm going back down. Make sure  
the door is okay. Keep your eyes  
on them Walker.

WALKER  
(laughing)  
I will.

Ben makes off down the circular stairs.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Ben rushes out into the hall.

Nat is by the door, swinging his club.

NAT  
Come on, I'm ready.

BEN  
They'll have guns and swords Nat.

Walker runs into the hall.

WALKER  
They're coming back -- and some  
soldiers are carrying a tree  
trunk.

BEN  
What happened to the geese?

WALKER  
Fairfax killed one of 'em. The  
others just got bored and made  
off.

BEN  
Go get the guns and tell Chris to  
come down.

WALKER  
And me?

BEN  
Yes -- and tell Emily to stay up --  
but out of sight.

Walker nods and runs back up the stairs.

Danny comes haring into the hall.

DANNY

They've gone round the back with a tree trunk.

BEN

How many?

DANNY

Three -- I think.

BEN

Go back and keep an eye on them.

Danny runs off down the passageway.

BEN

(to Nat)

Can you handle a sword?

NAT

Never needed to...

He swings his club round.

NAT

...This is all I've ever needed.

Chris and Walker join Ben.

They carry the pistols and ammunition between them.

CHRIS

If the back door goes we've had it.

BEN

How many guns have we?

CHRIS

Five, all loaded -- I've left one on the battlements.

BEN

Give one to Nat.

CHRIS

(quietly to Ben)

Not sure about that.

BEN  
(sharply)  
Give him a gun.

Chris hands Nat a gun.

Ben shows him how to handle it.

BEN  
Don't fire unless the door goes.  
Then just pull the trigger and  
aim for a leg where there's no  
armor.

Nat nods and smiles.

CHRIS  
Where's Sir Humphrey?

BEN  
I'd forgotten about him -- I  
don't know.

Suddenly there's an almighty CRASH from the rear of the castle that shakes the walls to their very foundations.

Danny runs back.

DANNY  
I don't think it's gonna hold.

BEN  
Take two guns and two swords.

Danny picks up the guns and swords.

BEN  
Then come back here -- okay --  
OKAY?

DANNY  
(grudgingly)  
Okay.

The sound of BREAKING GLASS from the library makes them all jump.

Nat runs to the library door.

INT. LIBRARY - SAME TIME

A leg is dangling over the casement as a soldier attempts to climb in.

Nat runs into the library and smashes his club on it.

A SCREAM of pain (V.O.) The leg is hurriedly withdrawn.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Nat comes back. He taps his club.

NAT  
My weapon! All I need!

He waves it menacingly in the air.

BEN  
Keep an eye on that window.

NAT  
Aye, I'll do that.

Danny comes running back.

DANNY  
(panting)  
The door is starting to break up.

BEN  
Here's your special job. Go up there...

He points to the stairs.

BEN  
...Stay with Emily. She'll be scared witless.

DANNY  
I'll miss all the action.

BEN  
For once in your life Dan, do as I say. And keep out of sight.

Danny slinks off.

The CRASHES are getting louder from the rear of the castle.

Ben picks up the guns and swords, motions Chris to follow him.

INT. REAR DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Ben and Chris arrive and see the door coming apart.

Ben looks through a small window sees Sergeant Lampley directing three soldiers who are manipulating a tree trunk, battering the door.

Splinters of wood fly off.

BEN  
Cock your guns.

EXT. BATTLEMENTS - SAME TIME

Danny peers over the edge.

Emily sits on the floor - terrified.

Fairfax and several soldiers are grouped together.

Fairfax looks up and sees Danny.

Danny picks up the pistol, cocks it and aims it at Fairfax.

He FIRES, but the ball is wide of its mark.

Two soldiers FIRE back. The balls dig harmlessly into the masonry.

DANNY  
(to Emily)  
I'll get him next time.

INT. REAR DOOR - CONTINUOUS

The door is almost shattered.

The faces of the three soldiers show their determination.

Old Joshua looks grief stricken at the mess.

JOSHUA  
This is a terrible day.

BEN

We're gonna win Josh.

JOSHUA

We'll never beat the likes of  
Cromwell's army.

BEN

Then we'll go down fighting.

Joshua just shakes his head.

JOSHUA

Perhaps, sir, t'would have been  
better to let them have their  
way.

BEN

No! These people are thugs and  
murderers.

EXT. BATTLEMENTS - SAME TIME

Danny and Emily sit together. He puts his arms round her.

DANNY

We'll be okay Em. Don't worry.  
There's enough of us to see 'em  
off.

EMILY

Don't think so.

She starts to cry.

EMILY

Wish I could go home and see mum.

Danny pulls her close to him.

Suddenly a loud metallic noise makes them jump.

Danny turns and sees a grappling hook digging into a slit  
in the masonry.

He peers over. Three soldiers are down below. One of them  
pulls on the rope attached to the hook, testing that it is  
safely secured.

He nods to the others and begins to climb.

Danny picks up the gun and cocks it.

DANNY

That's far enough. Any further  
and I'll make little meatballs  
out of your brains.

The soldiers on the ground laugh.

SOLDIER # 1

Listen to the young pup.

SOLDIER # 2

He's the one I'm going to teach a  
lesson in manners when this is all  
over.

Danny points the gun at the climbing soldier.

He squeezes the trigger. But the gun doesn't fire.

DANNY

(to Emily)

Quick Em, reload.

EMILY

Can't. Chris has taken all the  
ammunition.

Danny goes to the grappling hook and tries to dislodge it.

The weight of the soldier prevents it.

The soldier is now half way up the wall.

DANNY

Look round Em. See if you can  
find something to get this thing  
off the wall.

Emily looks round.

EMILY

There's nothing.

Danny watches as the soldier gets nearer.

He holds the barrel of the pistol ready to strike the  
soldier.

As the soldier's head gets level he crashes the butt onto his helmet.

The soldier shakes his head, gives Danny an evil look.

His gloved hands grasp the top of the masonry.

Danny smashes the pistol butt on them.

The soldier cries out, lifts his head.

Danny swings a right hook onto the soldier's jaw, causing him to lose his grip, and he falls back to earth with a METALLIC CRASH.

As he falls, Danny loosens the grappling hook and pulls the rope up.

He turns to Emily, grinning.

Then he grimaces and shakes his hand

DANNY

Wow, that hurt.

EMILY

Well if you will play macho man.  
But they're not going to give up  
that easy.

INT. REAR DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Fairfax has joined the soldiers and is urging them on.

The door is in bits.

FAIRFAX

In you go lads.

BEN

Aim at their legs.

William and Abe are stationed either side of the doorway, clubs in hand.

Sergeant Lampley and two soldiers push through the shattered door.

Chris and Joshua FIRE. Joshua misses and the ball digs into the soft wall.

Chris hits with his shot and Sergeant Lampley falls to his knees whimpering.

The other soldier pushes in, Abe crashes his club down onto his head.

He goes down like a falling tree.

Two more soldiers push past the door debris, swords flashing in the sunlight.

Ben fires at the first, the ball ripping through his boot.

He screams in pain and lunges at Ben, his sword aimed at Ben's chest.

William puts him out of his misery, crashing his club on the back of the soldier's neck.

Ben sees Fairfax stamping his feet in rage. Draws his sword and motions to the other two soldiers to follow him.

Fairfax is slashing his sword left and right, bends down and rushes in.

Ben points his gun at him.

BEN

One more step and you'll be  
joining your men on the floor.

FAIRFAX

(screaming)

Pipsqueak! You dare to threaten a  
captain of Cromwell's army.

BEN

I don't give a stuff about you --  
or that idiot Cromwell.

Fairfax advances on Ben.

Ben aims his gun at Fairfax's fleshy legs.

BEN

You'll be singing in a squeaky  
voice if you get any closer.

Fairfax still moves closer to Ben.

BEN  
I warned you.

Ben squeezes the trigger, but the gun refuses to fire.

FAIRFAX  
Ha! Now who has the upper hand?

Fairfax turns to Chris, Abe and William.

FAIRFAX  
Keep your distance.

Fairfax sneers.

FAIRFAX  
I want to take this young  
gentleman as a prisoner. One  
false move by you and his heart  
will be ripped out.

Chris looks on in horror.

CHRIS  
Captain, I beg you to let him go.

FAIRFAX  
Beg all you like. This young man  
will be returning to the garrison  
with me.

He gives a mocking laugh.

FAIRFAX  
He'll be well treated -- before  
we hang him.

Fairfax motions to the remaining two soldiers who are  
hovering just outside.

FAIRFAX  
Come on men.

He beckons to Chris, Abe and William.

FAIRFAX  
Let them pass, or...

He puts the tip of his sword closer to Ben's chest.

Ben flinches.

Two soldiers cautiously enter. Fairfax waves them on up the passageway.

FAIRFAX

Open the main door. Let the others in.

The two soldiers run up the passageway.

INT. CASTLE DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Two soldiers are at the door struggling to get it open.

One turns and sees Walker.

SOLDIER # 2

Where's the key?

WALKER

The key?

SOLDIER # 2

The key for the door, clod.

WALKER

My master keeps it about his person.

SOLDIER # 2

Fetch it.

WALKER

My master is in his chambers. He does not wish to be disturbed.

The soldier advances towards Walker. He holds his sword menacingly.

SOLDIER # 2

FETCH IT!

Walker turns on his heels and makes for the stairs.

INT. REAR DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Ben looks at Chris, then at a sword dropped by a downed soldier.

Chris picks it up. But Fairfax has noticed.

FAIRFAX  
Drop that weapon.

Chris drops the sword but nods his head at Ben to move backwards.

Ben steps back two paces. Chris picks up the sword by the blade and tosses it to Ben.

Ben catches the handle and crashes it down on Fairfax's.

BEN  
Now we're equal.

FAIRFAX  
So, you still want to fight?

BEN  
As a choice between living and dying, yes.

FAIRFAX  
Then I suggest you make the most of the time you have left.

Ben adopts a fencing pose. Fairfax advances, smashing his sword on to Ben's.

BEN  
(panting)  
Chris, go see if Dan and Em are okay.

Chris runs up the passageway.

Ben is forced into

THE PASSAGEWAY

by the desperate slashing of Fairfax's sword.

Ben slashes his sword round above his head. The blade slices through three candles on the wall.

The candles roll onto the floor.

Fairfax stands on one which causes him to lose his balance, and he falls backwards.

Ben advances, places his sword close to Fairfax's chest.

BEN  
Call off your men.

FAIRFAX  
Never.

BEN  
Then I'll run you through.

Fairfax rolls sideways, drags himself off the floor.

Ben turns and runs into the

HALL.

Fairfax runs after him.

FAIRFAX  
You have nowhere to hide, boy.

Ben runs to the small open door.

BEN  
(shouting)  
DANNY -- you okay?

Fairfax runs over, Ben turns and is just in time to avoid a fearsome downward slash of his sword.

Ben and Fairfax clash swords again.

Chris is standing in the small doorway.

Ben sees him. Chris mouths and nods 'okay'.

Fairfax slashes, Ben parries, then lunges at the chest of Fairfax.

Fairfax leans back and makes a downward slash at Ben.

Ben sidesteps and the two swords CLASH.

Fairfax lunges again.

Five soldiers, guarding Nat, Joe and Walker, cheer him on.

The dogs are snarling.

Fairfax lunges at Ben who retreats towards the stairs.

As Fairfax lunges Ben stumbles backwards, his sword held high to protect himself.

Fairfax gives a mighty swipe at Ben's sword which snaps the blade.

The force of the blow causes Ben to fall back on the bottom steps.

FAIRFAX  
(triumphantly)  
Advantage to me, I think.

BEN  
Think again, schmuck.

Ben rolls sideways, stands, then head down butts Fairfax in the stomach.

Fairfax's eyes roll as he stumbles, winded.

A soldier with his sword aloft advances on Ben.

Ben points beyond the soldier.

BEN  
Behind you!

The unsuspecting soldier turns his head long enough for Ben to kick him very hard in the crutch.

The soldier drops the sword and holds himself.

Ben picks up the sword and marches up to Fairfax.

BEN  
Where did we get to?

Fairfax crashes his sword onto Ben's. His blow rips Ben's arm open and blood gushes out.

Ben holds his arm and wraps a handkerchief round the wound.

He staggers back, loses his footing and falls to the ground.

Fairfax raises his sword.

FAIRFAX

Why waste time hanging you. I've raised the first blood. Now let me finish you off.

He places the sword close to Ben's throat.

FAIRFAX

Any last thoughts?

INT. LANDING - CONTINUOUS

Sir Humphrey has seen everything.

SIR HUMPHREY

(shouting)

Leave him be. 'Tis me you're seeking.

FAIRFAX

Ah, Sir Humphrey. How kind of you to join us.

Fairfax's sword is still dangerously close to Ben's throat.

FAIRFAX

But first I have some unfinished business.

SIR HUMPHREY

Spare him and you can do as you please.

FAIRFAX

(screaming)

Spare him, spare him -- I think not.

Ben's face is a mask of horror.

Fairfax lifts his sword to plunge into Ben's chest.

The dogs are ready to pounce on Fairfax.

As they leap they freeze in mid air, their mouths open and teeth bared.

Ben closes his eyes.

But Fairfax stands motionless, his face twisted in a vicious sneer. The soldiers, Nat, Joe and Walker are like statues. Then they crumble to a pile of dust.

Sir Humphrey fades away.

Fairfax crumbles.

Ben opens his eyes. He surveys the scene.

The sword in Ben's hand fades to nothing.

Sunlight streams through the open oak door.

Suddenly day becomes night.

Walls and ceilings crash down. The tiled floor retreats.

The stairs disintegrate.

Now bright moonlight graces the scene.

In the gloom Ben sees Chris transfixed.

BEN  
(shakily)  
You all right Chris?

CHRIS  
Not too sure.

BEN  
God! Dan and Em.

Ben rushes to the circular stairs. But they are just a pile of rubble.

BEN  
DANNY!

DANNY (V.O.)  
We're trapped. What the hell happened?

BEN  
Don't move. If you've still got the torch shine it down. But don't get too close to the edge.

DANNY (V.O.)  
Okay.

A small gleam of light shines into the hall.

BEN  
Is Emily okay?

DANNY (V.O.)  
Yeah.

Suddenly Chris's radio crackles into life.

RADIO OPERATOR (O.S.)  
337.

CHRIS  
My God -- we're back in real time.

RADIO OPERATOR (O.S.)  
337.

CHRIS  
Go ahead.

RADIO OPERATOR (O.S.)  
Where are you Chris?

CHRIS  
I'm looking for a couple of kids  
at Wissle Castle.

RADIO OPERATOR (O.S.)  
Give us a shout if you need any  
help. Gary's on standby. Oh  
Chris, don't forget to call in at  
the all night cafe for my bacon  
sandwich when you go off shift at  
two.

CHRIS  
I hadn't forgotten.

Chris switches his radio off. Looks at Ben. He shakes his head in disbelief.

BEN  
Shine your torch up there Chris.

He points to where Danny and Emily are trapped.

The torch picks out the face of a frightened Danny.

DANNY  
Is it all over Ben?

BEN  
Not till we get you and Em down.

EMILY (V.O.)  
I'm all right Ben, Danny's  
looking after me.

BEN  
I'll bet he is.

Ben turns to Chris.

BEN  
Any ideas?

CHRIS  
I'll call the fire service.

He pushes the button on his radio.

CHRIS  
(into radio)  
Sue, it's Chris. Can you call the  
fire service please. There's two  
kids trapped on a ledge at Wissle  
Castle.

RADIO OPERATOR (O.S.)  
What the hell are two kids doing  
out at ten past midnight?

CHRIS  
It's a long story.

RADIO OPERATOR (O.S.)  
I'll call 'em. See you later.

Ben walks out through the creaky old door.

EXT. CASTLE DOOR - SAME TIME

Ben sits on the grass, rests his head on his legs.

Chris joins him.

CHRIS

Can you believe it? All we've  
been through happened in a minute  
of real time.

BEN

I just get the feeling that I'm  
going to wake up and find it was  
all a dream.

CHRIS

So how can you explain the kids  
up there?

BEN

I can't.

The handkerchief falls from Ben's arm revealing that the  
sword cut has miraculously healed.

BEN

It gives me the shivers to think  
we've been mixing with ghosts --  
and I didn't believe in them.

He shakes his head in disbelief.

They both sit in silence.

In the distance a late night train rushes by.

A plane whines in the cool night air.

Its vapor trail leaves a long plume in the moonlight.

Chris and Ben look at each other. Shake their heads.

BEN

Never thought I'd be so glad to  
hear normal things like trains and  
planes.

CHRIS

But do you feel you've changed  
because of what you've been  
through?

BEN

Yeah. I got so close to being a goner with that lunatic captain. I'm just glad to be alive.

CHRIS

All these things happened. But they didn't really happen -- did they?

BEN

Yeah, guess you're right. Never thought of it like that. But when you look at the old castle, Cromwell won in the end.

CHRIS

We couldn't change history. What happened all those years ago couldn't have been altered.

In the distance, the RUMBLE of the fire engine and flashing blue lights.

CHRIS

That was quick.

The engine turns in at the gate, rocks and bounces on the uneven field.

Chris stands and shines his torch.

The engine turns to the light and stops with a squeal of brakes.

The fire captain leaps out and approaches Chris.

FIRE CAPTAIN

Where are they?

Chris shines his torch. Danny leans over.

FIRE CAPTAIN

Soon have them down.

He turns to Chris.

FIRE CAPTAIN

Little buggers -- they should be in bed. Two boys is it?

CHRIS  
Boy and girl.

FIRE CAPTAIN  
Well it's a bloody silly place to  
go for a bit of nooky.

CHRIS  
No -- it's not like that.

FIRE CAPTAIN  
(smiling)  
Things have changed since my day  
then.

The fire captain turns to his crew.

FIRE CAPTAIN.  
Pump ladder up there.

He points to where Danny is leaning over.

FIRE CAPTAIN.  
Two teenagers, boy and girl.

The firemen nod 'okay'.

The ladder begins to elevate and HISSES and CLUNKS  
metallically.

FIRE CAPTAIN.  
Martin'll go up. Can't send young  
Eric -- he's a right randy sod.  
He'd want the girl's phone number  
before he brought her down.

Ben looks on anxiously.

FIRE CAPTAIN.  
Up you go Martin.

The fireman nods, then climbs the ladder.

At the top he helps Emily on to the rungs then guides her  
down.

Ben chews his nails.

On the ground Emily runs to Ben, flings her arms round his  
neck and sobs quietly.

BEN  
You're safe now.

EMILY  
I'm glad it's all over.

BEN  
You know something? So am I.

EMILY  
What happened with all the  
fighting?

BEN  
Tell you tomorrow.

Emily lifts her face, gives a weak smile.

EMILY  
It's tomorrow now.

BEN  
Reckon I must be losing my marbles  
like poor old Sir Humphrey.

Danny is down and runs up to Ben and Emily.

DANNY  
That was exciting.

BEN  
Should'a thought you'd had enough  
excitement.

Ben gives Danny a quizzical look.

BEN  
By the way, how did the geese get  
out?

Danny shrugs his shoulders.

DANNY  
Search me.

Ben gives Danny a knowing look.

Eric walks over to Emily.

ERIC

Hi. If you need any help to get over what you've been through you can always give me a call at the fire house.

EMILY

Thanks, but Ben will look after me now.

ERIC

It's just that I've been through a counseling course for this sort of thing.

EMILY

Thanks.

BEN

I'm not letting you out of my sight young lady!

EMILY

(under her breath)

Fine by me.

She hugs Ben tightly.

The fire captain approaches.

FIRE CAPTAIN.

Right you two, I'm placing you in the bobby's hands. Hope he locks you up.

(to Eric)

OK mate. Let's go.

CHRIS

Don't worry chief, they're gonna get a good tongue lashing.

FIRE CAPTAIN.

Well, job done. We'll be on our way -- see you.

(to Eric)

Come on -- now would be good.

ERIC

Don't forget, if you need help.

BEN

Thanks. We'll be all right.

The ladder retracts back on to the engine with a metallic CLANG.

The fire captain leaps aboard the engine which turns and makes its way out of the field.

Chris puts an arm round Emily, Danny and Ben.

CHRIS

Right you three, to bed. Me, I've got to get back on my rounds.

They walk in the moonlight back towards the gate.

CHRIS

I don't know whether I'm pleased or sorry that I didn't stop you from going in that damn castle.

DANNY

Wouldn't have missed it for the world.

EMILY

I live here. Every time I look at the place now I'm going to think about what happened.

BEN

At least we all got out okay.

EMILY

Now all we've got to do is get home without waking anyone.

BEN

Then we've got to try and get to sleep.

DANNY

No bother. I could sleep standing up.

BEN

We'll leave you here then, shall we?

DANNY  
Wouldn't worry me.

Ben gives Danny a playful smack on the head.

EXT. CASTLE GATE - CONTINUOUS

Chris takes the car keys from his pocket.

CHRIS  
I'll call later today -- see  
you're all okay.

BEN  
Thanks for everything Chris.

They shake hands.

CHRIS  
Just another day in a copper's  
life.

They all laugh. Chris enters his car and scoots away.

Emily gives Ben a peck on the cheek.

Ben pulls her close to him and gives her a deep kiss.

Danny gets a hug from her.

DANNY  
Wow, I'll have to protect you from  
evil forces again some time.

EMILY  
My brave little man.

She kisses Dan on the cheek.

Dan blushes.

EMILY  
See you later boys.

She runs the few yards to her home.

Ben and Danny watch as she goes through her garden gate, then  
turn and make their way to Castle Cottage.

BEN  
(dreamily)  
She's some girl.

Danny gives him an evil look.

DANNY  
You know what? I'm going to write  
a movie about all of this -- make  
a million bucks.

BEN  
Uh, uh.

DANNY  
Reckon it'd be a blockbuster.

BEN  
You'd be wasting your time Dan.  
Nobody'd ever believe it.

He puts an arm round Danny's shoulders.

BEN  
Beddy-byes. God I'm tired.

They walk off together.

FADE OUT.

THE END

