

STEEL ROSE

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. CANTEEN - DAY - 1940

Low humming noise.

Cups of half-drunk tea sit beside a dirty, mouldy sink.

From the end of a broken tap, mucky water drips.

Fag-ends litter the floor and cracks run down dank walls.

Attractive female ROSE BARKER (ROSE), early-twenties, sits and fiddles with her wedding ring.

The red hair bandana in Rose's hair provides a stark contrast to the overall dull decor of the room around her.

Another woman sits and chews gum at break-neck speed; CONNIE FULLER (CONNIE), late-teens, is a young lady with movie star good looks that are completely understated by her roller-haired, plain appearance.

Across the room, a fuller-figured woman sits. MARJORIE BROWN (MARJORIE), late thirties, has an out of place happiness about her demenour.

Elsewhere; impeccably presented and with an almost regal posture, sits JOAN BECKETT (JOAN), late-twenties.

Joan looks down her nose as she checks her make up in a pocket mirror and adjusts the elaborate hat that sits on her head.

A door clangs open and breaks the tense silence; the women look up, in unison.

A leather-skinned male skulks in.

Completely hunched over, the weathered lines in his forehead crease as he studies the women with a disapproving eye. ERNEST SMELT (ERNEST), early-fifties, looks much older than he actually is.

Ernest beckons the women.

Rose notices heavy scars and burns on Ernest's forearms as she stands and walks towards him.

Joan and Connie follow suit.

Marjorie takes a cardigan from the back of a chair.

ERNEST

Won't be needing that.

Like a scolded child, Marjorie puts the cardigan back on the chair.

Rose and Connie exchange looks and Joan holds her head high as Ernest leads them out into a steel-works

FURNACE SHED

Rose, Connie, Marjorie and Joan shield their eyes as arc furnace fires roar and illuminate the dark factory with intermittent bursts of orange, red and white.

A sweaty MALE STEEL-WORKER curses as he taps the back of an arc furnace with a metal pole.

He takes a deep breath and gives the arc furnace a hard prod; he dives out of the way as molten metal pours out of it into a ladle.

Ash clouds rise as steam hisses and adds to the smoke-filled air.

Rats scatter across the filthy, debris covered floor as another STEEL-WORKER strains and pushes a train full of scrap metal past the furnace.

Ernest shouts over thunderous noise as a crane drops a large, empty ladle onto the ground in the distance.

ERNEST (CONT'D)

Nah then.

Rose looks at Ernest.

Ernest scowls.

ERNEST (CONT'D)

Time to do some proper graft.

The hell-like furnace highlights the trepidation in Rose's face.

Rose looks down, at her hand, and twists the wedding ring on her finger.

Blackness.

SUPER: THREE WEEKS EARLIER

EXT. ROSE'S STREET - DAY

STREET NAME SIGN

'Heeley Bank View'

A row of terraced houses line a cobbled street. Smoke pours out of chimneys as the sun rises. The area is clearly close to the centre of an industrial, English city.

Washing hangs from a line as YOUNG BOYS kick a football against a wall.

An OLD LADY steps out from an outhouse and shoo's them away.

The Young Boys pick the football up and run off just as a PAPER-BOY cycles past. He stops outside the end terrace house and drops his bicycle.

The Paper-Boy takes a paper from his bag, rolls it up and walks towards the door.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - SAME

KITCHEN

Rose is run off her feet as she makes cups of tea and butters slices of toast.

Noticeably, Rose does not wear the bright, red bandana as in the previous scene.

A letter-box rattles and a newspaper lays on the doormat.

Rose's husband, JOHN BARKER (JOHN), male, mid-twenties, sits at a table and twiddles his thumbs.

JOHN

Get us that will you, petal?

Rose gives John a sharp look as she speaks with a strong Yorkshire accent.

ROSE

Please?

Rose rolls her eyes as she picks up the newspaper and hands it to John.

JOHN

What would I do without you?

Rose mutters under her breath as she resumes breakfast duties.

ROSE

Starve.

John sits back in his chair, crosses his legs and reads the newspaper.

An infant's cries.

Rose looks over at John, who completely ignores the noise and turns the page of the newspaper.

Rose slams the teapot down and spills hot water all over the kitchen side.

Rose marches out of the kitchen.

John watches Rose leave and smiles to himself.

Rose re-enters and carries a young boy, roughly two years old. This is HARRY BARKER (HARRY), Rose and John's son.

Rose comforts Harry as she sits him in a high chair at the table and gives him a kiss on his forehead.

John turns a page of the

NEWSPAPER

where a headline reads 'Britain's Battles Depend on The Steelworks of Sheffield - And They Depend Now on Sheffield Women'

BACK TO SCENE

John chuckles.

Rose puts a plate of toast in front of John, who puts the paper down and tucks in.

JOHN

Never heard such nonsense in my life.

Rose frowns as she dries pots. John speaks with a mouthful of toast.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Clean that side before you're off out. House is filthy at the minute.

Rose slams a plate on the side. Harry cries.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Now look what you've done.

Rose comforts Harry.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Leave the little bugger be. Molly-
coddling won't make a proper bloke
out of him.

Rose puts Harry back in the chair then puts on her coat.

John holds a slice of toast between two fingers and gives it
a once over.

JOHN (CONT'D)
When it's black it's buggered.

Rose storms towards the door and slams it as she exits.

EXT. ROSE'S STREET - CONTINUOUS

Rose stomps down the street.

As she reaches the end of it and turns off towards the city
centre, a bus pulls up.

The doors open and a tall, rugged male, mid-twenties, steps
off onto the cobbles. The stubble on his jaw looks so
brittle you could strike a match on it.

GEORGE ENGLISH (GEORGE) carries a large military bergen,
which he places on the ground.

George puts his hands on his hips and sighs as he takes in
the sights, sounds and smells of an all too familiar place.

As the bus drives away, George takes a cigarette from behind
his ear. A PASSING MALE walks by.

GEORGE
Got a light, pal?

George's broad Yorkshire accent catches the Passing Male's
attention, who obliges him.

George nods his head in gratitude and absorbs the city sights
one final time as he picks up his bergen and walks away.

INT. BUTCHER'S SHOP - DAY

Rose talks to her friend, VALERIE WILSON (VALERIE), female, early-twenties, who she stands behind in a queue.

Valerie holds a wicker basket which a BUTCHER fills with meat.

ROSE
He's just like my dad.

Valerie steps aside and Rose hands over a ration card to the Butcher.

VALERIE
That's blokes for you.

ROSE
All the same.

VALERIE
Suppose they have some uses.

The Butcher drops a large sausage on the counter.

Rose and Valerie giggle.

As the Butcher chops up meat and slides it towards Rose, she realises that she has left her wicker basket at home.

ROSE
Flamin' Nora.

Valerie puts her basket down and takes off her cardigan.

She holds it out for Rose, who looks confused.

Valerie folds the cardigan into a sling and puts the meat into it.

VALERIE
Things that aren't built for the
job can sometimes surprise you.

Rose smiles as she takes the meat-filled cardigan from Valerie.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

The sights of a nineteen-forties industrial city pass them by as Rose and Valerie walk towards a tram crossing.

Two trams pass, in opposite directions. Rose watches one of them clang off into the distance.

ROSE
You ever wonder?

Valerie raises an eyebrow.

ROSE (CONT'D)
About taking a different path.

VALERIE
Take us longer to get home.

Rose and Valerie cross the tram tracks and walk along the street.

ROSE
If we'd made different choices. I
got my teaching qualifications
before--

VALERIE
John.

Rose sighs.

ROSE
It's just...I don't know.

VALERIE
It's a man's world. All we can do
is make the best of it.

A football bounces in front of Rose and Valerie. A TEENAGE BOY shouts.

TEENAGE BOY
That ball. If you can.

Rose scowls as she collects the ball.

She puts the cardigan down on the cobbles and performs an impressive number of kick-ups with the football.

The Teenage Boy's jaw drops.

Rose kicks the ball high in the air and volleys it straight towards the Teenage Boy.

The ball smashes into the Teenage Boy's crown jewels.

Valerie looks as surprised as the Teenage Boy, who clutches his balls and gasps for breath.

VALERIE

Where did you learn that?

Rose walks away, cardigan slung over her shoulder.

ROSE

A man's world.

EXT. GEORGE'S STREET - DAY

George plods up a steep, cobbled road; the industrial backdrop of the city some way off in the distance behind him.

Two YOUNG BOYS, around ten years old, play up ahead. They see George and run towards him.

George tosses the cigarette he smokes to the floor and hides his right hand from view.

The Young Boys fuss around George as he forces a smile and gives them high fives with his left hand.

YOUNG BOY ONE

Why you back so soon?

YOUNG BOY TWO

Mam said t'only way you'd be back were in a box.

GEORGE

Them Jerry's were that scared when they 'eard yours truly were in town they all up and did one. No bugger left to feight.

George winks at the Young Boys then quickly changes subject.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Any road, how's them Blades gettin' on, youth?

YOUNG BOY ONE

Shite.

YOUNG BOY TWO

Worst footy in years.

George rolls his eyes.

GEORGE

Nowt's new then, is it?

George ruffles Young Boy Two's hair.

YOUNG BOY ONE
Glad you're back, Georgey Boy.

George's expression suggests he does not share the same sentiment as he walks away and his forced smile quickly fades.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

George's mum, IRENE ENGLISH (IRENE), mid-forties, dusts the room.

Footsteps are heard.

Irene stops dusting and looks over her shoulder.

George enters.

Irene stares, motionless, as tears fill her eyes. Eventually, she runs towards George and throws her arms around him.

George hugs Irene but keeps his right hand behind his back.

Irene cries as she grabs George's face and gives him a long kiss on his forehead. She steps back and registers George's miserable expression.

Irene points towards a

FRAME

hung above a fireplace. In it is a letter, a photograph of a man in his early twenties and a Victoria Cross medal.

The name 'Thomas English' is clearly visible above the photograph.

BACK TO SCENE

IRENE
That's all that's left of him.

GEORGE
Gordon Bennett, Mother, I've only just walked--

IRENE
A war hero lives on, long after his death. But so do those who loved him.

George admires the photograph of his father.

Awkward silence.

George changes the subject.

GEORGE
Gerrin' a brew on then, or what?

Irene, eventually, smiles.

IRENE
No different to when you left.

Irene gives George another hug. As she does, she catches his hidden right hand.

George grimaces.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - DAY

KITCHEN

Rose enters and closes the door behind her.

ROSE
Alright, duck.

No answer.

Harry sits in the high chair, vomit down the front of his clothes.

Rose tosses the cardigan and rations on the table and rushes towards him.

Rose wipes vomit from around Harry's mouth with a handkerchief.

ROSE (CONT'D)
John?

Faint giggles and playful screams.

Rose tosses the handkerchief on the table and marches out of the room.

BEDROOM

Much louder female laughter and playful giggles.

Male and female clothes scattered across the carpet and on furniture.

Rose enters like a bull in a china shop.

She grabs the duvet and yanks it off the bed; John and JOHN'S MISTRESS, mid-twenties, are revealed in their underwear.

ROSE (CONT'D)
In our bed?

John jumps out of the bed and grabs his trousers and braces from the floor.

John's Mistress exits the bedroom, clothes under her arms.

Rose screams in John's face.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Your son's downstairs, throwing up
on himself, and you're having it
away with some slag?

John clutches his clothes as he pushes past Rose.

KITCHEN

John pulls on his shirt as he heads towards the door.

Rose enters behind him.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Don't you dare walk away from--

Rose grabs John's shoulder. John spins around and slaps Rose across the face.

Rose trembles, her shaking hand touches her red cheek.

John breathes heavily.

Rose raises her head and looks at John.

ROSE (CONT'D)
A proper bloke.

Rose shakes her head as John gets in her face.

JOHN
Go on then.

Rose looks tempted but exercises restraint.

John scoffs.

JOHN (CONT'D)
No fight at all.

ROSE

People fight for something that's
worth it.

Arrogance personified, John buttons up his shirt.

JOHN

When you don't have two pennies to
rub together, you'll come begging.
All the same, you lot.

John swaggers out of the house as Harry bawls.

Rose takes Harry from the high chair and holds him close to
her chest.

INT. PUB - NIGHT

An old, dirty working class pub, completely empty, save for
George and his friend, WALT, male, mid-twenties, who stand at
the bar and drink pints of beer.

GEORGE

Given me my job back, Smelt has.

WALT

Not so bad.

GEORGE

You havin' a laugh?

George finishes his pint and signals for another.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

All I'm good for now is babysittin'
useless twats and apprentices,
accordin' to him.

WALT

At least you don't have to get your
hands dirty.

George glares at Walt.

The BARMAN, mid-forties, puts a pint in front of George.

Two YOUNG FEMALES, mid-twenties, enter.

Excessively caked in make-up, they gossip as they sit down at
a table.

Walt nods towards the Young Females.

WALT (CONT'D)

A decent bird's what you need.

George rubs his hands together. On his right hand is a black, leather glove.

GEORGE

A reet crackin' pair of tits they are, an' all.

George winks at Walt, takes a big swig of his pint and struts over towards the Young Females.

George stands, like a peacock flashes its feathers, beside them.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

What brings you fine mademoiselles to this death 'ole?

Although one of the Young Females looks flattered, the other does not look interested in the slightest.

Walt speaks, deliberately loud.

WALT

Spends a few months abroad and thinks he's a fucking expert.

George does not look impressed.

GEORGE

Ge'ore with the blue.

George turns his attention back towards the Young Females.

YOUNG FEMALE ONE

You were on the front line? You must have been very brave.

Young Female One blushes as George leans in towards her.

GEORGE

Well, I--

YOUNG FEMALE TWO

The brave ones don't come home.

Young Female Two looks at George with suspicious eyes.

YOUNG FEMALE TWO (CONT'D)

Probably done himself in so he gets an early bath.

George's swagger immediately disappears.

Crest-fallen, he walks towards the bar, picks up his pint and downs it.

WALT

Went well?

GEORGE

Dizzy birds. Don't belong in
boozers, any road.

George signals the Barman for another pint.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - DAY

KITCHEN

Rose sits at the table, staring at nothing in particular.

Valerie sits opposite her and glances through old newspapers before she tosses them into a bin.

Harry entertains himself in the high chair.

Rose twists the wedding ring on her finger as she stares at nothing in particular.

VALERIE

Is that really it then?

A loud, heavy knock on the door snaps Rose out of her trance. She goes towards the door and opens it.

The LANDLORD, male, early-fifties, barges past a surprised Rose into the kitchen.

ROSE

I'm looking for a job, you--

LANDLORD

Looking doesn't pay the rent. Your
father never missed a week.

Valerie defends Rose.

VALERIE

She's an unemployed, single mother.

ROSE

Still married mother.

LANDLORD

Out on her arse mother, if she's
not careful.

The Landlord's glare does not soften as Rose takes Harry from the high chair. He points directly at her.

LANDLORD (CONT'D)

If I don't see King George's face
staring up from my palm by the end
of the week, and every week after
that...

The Landlord nods towards the open door.

ROSE

You'll get what you're due.

The Landlord exits and slams the door behind him.

Rose cuddles Harry and kisses him on the forehead.

VALERIE

You can't keep burying your head.

Rose gazes out of the window.

VALERIE (CONT'D)

I heard they need a barmaid down at
the picture house. I could look
after Harry--

Rose swiftly turns and faces Valerie.

ROSE

Reckon I've played the part of the
serving girl enough already.

Valerie tosses another newspaper in the bin and notices the headline on the next one in the pile.

VALERIE

Might not end up with a choice.

Valerie holds up the

NEWSPAPER

where a headline reads 'Britain's Battles Depend on The
Steelworks of Sheffield - And They Depend Now on Sheffield
Women'

BACK TO SCENE

Rose's eyes widen as Valerie looks disgusted.

VALERIE (CONT'D)
Imagine working in all that filth.
No place for a woman.

ROSE
So I've heard, duck.

Rose takes the paper from Valerie and scans it with interest.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Dad would turn in his grave.

Valerie snatches the paper from Rose and tosses it in the bin.

VALERIE
Which is exactly why you need to
sort yourself out.

A thoughtful look crosses Rose's face.

EXT./INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - ROSE'S DREAM - DAY

A group of YOUNG BOYS, all around ten years old, play football directly outside the house.

A lone girl, similar age, has a football at her feet.

She dribbles through the Young Boys like a knife through butter and smashes the ball past the male GOALKEEPER, between jumpers that act as goal posts.

YOUNG ROSE celebrates as the Young Boys tease the Goalkeeper.

The Goalkeeper barges past the Young Boys, scowl on his face.

YOUNG ROSE
Don't have the face on...again.

The Goalkeeper pushes Young Rose.

GOALKEEPER
Piss off, dyke.

Young Rose frowns and pushes the Goalkeeper back.

A scuffle ensues as the Young Boys crowd around and encourage the fight.

ROSE'S DAD, male, late-twenties, wades in between the Young Boys and pushes them aside.

The Goalkeeper cowers on the ground as Young Rose hits him repeatedly.

Rose's Dad pulls Young Rose away and lifts her over his shoulder.

YOUNG ROSE
What are you doing?

ROSE'S DAD
Helping.

Rose's Dad marches towards the house.

YOUNG ROSE
I don't need help.

ROSE'S DAD
Never said you did.

The Goalkeeper wipes blood from his nose as the Young Boys point and laugh at him.

Rose's Dad enters the

KITCHEN

and puts Young Rose down.

Still angry, Young Rose runs towards the door but Rose's Dad restrains her.

ROSE'S DAD (CONT'D)
Listen. I'm sick of telling you.
Football isn't for lasses.

ROSE'S MUM, late-twenties, cooks. She wears a red bandana in her hair.

ROSE'S MUM
She's better than them lot put
together.

Rose's Dad gives Rose's Mum a hard stare.

ROSE'S DAD
Did I ask you?

Rose's Dad turns his stare towards Young Rose.

ROSE'S DAD (CONT'D)
Some things a man does and some
things a lass does.

Rose's Mum scoffs.

Rose's Dad stands, walks towards her and grabs her by the hair.

ROSE'S DAD (CONT'D)
Something you want to get off your chest?

Young Rose runs towards Rose's Dad. She punches and kicks him.

Rose's Dad pushes Young Rose away and she tumbles to the floor.

Rose's Mum defends Young Rose and gets a hard slap across the face from Rose's Dad.

Rose's Mum stumbles into the stove and burns her hand.

Rose's Dad advances on Young Rose, hand raised high in the air.

ROSE'S DAD (CONT'D)
Learn your place, girl.

Young Rose cowers as Rose's Dad swings his open palm towards her.

Rose's Mum looks away as we hear the sound of a hard blow land.

Young Rose cries and clutches her face as Rose's Dad exits.

Rose's Mum runs her burnt hand beneath cold water. She dries it on a tea towel and rushes towards Young Rose.

Upset and in a state, Young Rose hangs her head, hair in her eyes.

Rose's Mum crouches down before her, lifts her chin and wipes the tears from her eyes.

Rose's Mum takes the red bandana from her hair.

She folds the bandana and lays it across her palm.

ROSE'S MUM
The strongest, most powerful colour...

Rose's Mum ties Young Rose's messy hair with the bandana.

ROSE'S MUM (CONT'D)
...symbolic of spirit and
determination.

She ties the bandana off in a knot and tucks loose strands of Young Rose's hair behind her ears.

ROSE'S MUM (CONT'D)
A fiery, steel will that gives
confidence to those who lack
courage.

Rose's Mum looks deep into Young Rose's eyes and smiles.

ROSE'S MUM (CONT'D)
My beautiful Rose.

A single tear falls from Rose's Mum's eye.

ROSE'S MUM (CONT'D)
Don't ever let that fire burn out.

Young Rose gazes into Rose's Mum's eyes as we move back into

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - DAY

BEDROOM

Rose awakens.

She throws the bed covers from her, gets out of bed and runs towards a chest of drawers that she opens and searches through.

Rose tosses the contents of the drawer all over the room until she finds what she wants.

A red bandana.

Rose admires the bandana in the palm of her hand before she ties her hair up with it.

Rose stares at her reflection in a mirror.

Rose's innocent expression changes into one filled with grit, purpose and determination as we move back into the opening scene in the

INT. STEELWORKS - DAY

FURNACE SHED

Rose gazes across the furnace shed floor as a crane drops a large slag pot on the ground and sends a thunderous echo throughout the factory.

ERNEST

Nah then.

Rose looks at Ernest, who scowls.

ERNEST (CONT'D)

Time to do some proper graft.

Rose looks at her hand and twists her wedding ring as she walks towards Ernest.

Rose, Connie and Marjorie stare in awe as Ernest leads them through the furnace shed. Joan stares straight ahead, head held high.

They walk past a furnace where BILL and BEN, male, late-forties, work.

Bill taps Ben, who pumps air into the furnace with bellows, on the shoulder.

They exchange looks of disbelief then look over towards the women.

Bill cat calls.

BILL

Wanna see some proper steel,
flower?

Bill grabs his balls and gives them a shake through his trousers.

Ben laughs.

Ernest stops dead in his tracks and glares at Bill and Ben. The women bunch up behind him.

ERNEST

There's fellas giving life and limb
abroad.

Bill straightens himself up and clears his throat.

BILL

Sorry, gaffer. Give us the tools
and we'll finish the job. That's
what Mr. Churchill said, right?

Ernest scowls.

Ben's face lights up as he points towards something in front of Ernest and the women.

Bill looks and notices, on the wall beside where Ernest and the women stand, a

SIGN

'CAUTION - HOT SLAG CROSSING'

BACK TO SCENE

Bill and Ben laugh their heads off.

ERNEST

See how pissing funny it is when
you two dick-heads are a shilling a
piece light.

Ernest hobbles away.

Connie looks very distressed and concerned. Rose notices and puts an arm around her.

Marjorie smiles.

MARJORIE

Like my old nan-nan always said,
you've got to make the best of a
bad situation.

CONNIE

Bad? This is terrible. Look at
them.

Bill bends Ben over and simulates a sex position on him.

Joan looks down her nose at Connie and then back towards Bill and Ben.

JOAN

Those two miscreants shall be
eating out of the palm of my hand.

Joan blows Bill and Ben a kiss.

CONNIE

Not them.

Connie touches the rollers in her hair.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

My rollers are melting.

Ernest shouts from off in the distance.

ERNEST

If you're going through hell,
ladies, keep going.

Rose reassures Connie and the women walk into a

ROLLING MILL

where APPRENTICE SMITH, male, late-teens, uses a long pair of tongs and turns a white hot steel block beneath a drop hammer, under George's supervision.

A DROP HAMMER OPERATOR, also male but in his late fifties, operates a large lever which lowers the hammer onto the steel.

Apprentice Smith shields his eyes from loose metal shavings that fly dangerously as the hammer makes contact with the steel block.

George has a cigarette tucked behind his ear and he smokes another as he watches Apprentice Smith work. He wears a thick glove on his right hand.

George looks up as Ernest hobbles towards him, women in tow.

ERNEST (CONT'D)

This lot are for you.

George gives Rose, Connie, Marjorie and Joan a quick glance.

GEORGE

Not my cup of tea, to be honest.

ERNEST

Best change your taste then.

Ernest points towards Apprentice Smith, who beavers away, and speaks cynically.

ERNEST (CONT'D)

Since you're doing such a fine job.

George takes a drag on the cigarette as he scans the women, thoroughly.

George tosses the cigarette to the floor then looks back towards Ernest and raises an eyebrow.

GEORGE

You havin' a laugh, or what?

Ernest's scowl suggests the latter.

George protests.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Gordon Bennett, gaffer. Like
stickin' a load o' Jews in the
middle of a Nazi rally.

Connie looks at the other women.

CONNIE
He must be on about one of you.
I'm Church of England, me.

George rolls his eyes.

GEORGE
Won't last five minutes.

Ernest steps towards George and whispers in his ear.

ERNEST
No one ever thought chucking carbon
in with iron would make steel but
here we are.

George looks sheepish.

ERNEST (CONT'D)
They're your responsibility. Make
it work.

Ernest completely ignores the women as he hobbles past them.

Suddenly, he stops.

Ernest bends down and picks up a piece of scrap metal.

He dusts it off as he turns towards Rose, Connie, Marjorie
and Joan and holds it up.

ERNEST (CONT'D)
This is more than just scrap...

Ernest glares at the women.

ERNEST (CONT'D)
...it's King and country.

Ernest skulks away, scrap metal in hand.

Rose, Connie, Marjorie and Joan turn, simultaneously, and
face George.

The deafening sounds of the works mask what would be an awkward silence.

Apprentice Smith stops what he is doing and wipes sweat from his forehead.

APPRENTICE SMITH

Fucked.

George gives Apprentice Smith a clip round the back of the head.

GEORGE

Use that language in front of yer mother, do yer?

George highlights the presence of the women to Apprentice Smith.

Apprentice Smith shakes his head.

APPRENTICE SMITH

Usually fathers in here though.

George points towards the Drop Hammer Operator.

GEORGE

He's still liftin' so yer still turnin'.

Apprentice Smith kisses his teeth as he reluctantly resumes work.

George turns his back on the women and picks up a pair of tongs with his left hand.

George takes the cigarette from behind his ear and puts it between the ends of the tongs. He holds it up, next to the steel bar, until it lights.

Connie and Marjorie exchange confused looks with Rose and shrug their shoulders.

Rose steps forward and taps George, which he ignores.

Rose looks back towards Connie, Marjorie and Joan. Marjorie encourages her to persist.

Rose taps George again, harder this time.

George sighs as he turns around.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Watch.

Rose frowns.

ROSE

Watch?

George takes a drag on the cigarette, blows smoke then speaks with a much firmer tone.

GEORGE

Watch. And admire the goods.

George winks as Rose pushes smoke from her face.

Marjorie observes, mesmerised.

MARJORIE

How exciting.

Joan scoffs and turns her nose up.

She looks around the rolling mill and sees numerous filthy ROLLING MILL OPERATORS, males, early fifties to early sixties, who operate large sets of rollers that repeatedly flatten white hot bars of steel as they roll in between them.

JOAN

This is why Queen Victoria never walks down Oxford Street.

Rose steps around George, closer to the drop hammer.

ROSE

Doesn't look that difficult, let me have a--

A metal shaving shoots off from the steel bar.

Apprentice Smith screams as he drops the tongs and clutches his face.

George gives Rose an "I told you so" look.

GEORGE

If yer want to keep that face pretty, yer goin' to have to trust me.

Rose frowns as Marjorie and Joan back away from the hammer.

Connie faints.

EXT. STEELWORKS - NIGHT

Faces filthy with dirt and sweat, Rose, Connie, Marjorie and Joan look shattered as they stand outside the main entrance.

Smoke from the factory pumps into the sky above.

Bill slaps Joan on her backside as he and Ben walk by.

BILL

I know somewhere else you can get
hot and sweaty, flower.

Joan looks down her nose at Bill.

JOAN

The wife of the finest doctor in
Yorkshire shall not be getting into
bed with the likes of you.

BILL

Bed?

Bill and Ben exchange looks of confusion.

BILL (CONT'D)

I meant my kitchen.

Bill and Ben laugh their heads off as they walk away into the night.

Joan adjusts her hat and storms away.

Connie pulls pieces of dirt from her hair and touches her rollers.

CONNIE

Do you think I'm going to need some
new ones?

MARJORIE

At least we live to fight another
day.

Marjorie wipes dirt from her forehead and observes it on her hand.

MARJORIE (CONT'D)

Our Neil won't even notice if he's
been in the pub.

Rose politely smiles as she walks away from Marjorie and Connie down a

CANAL PATH

beside which the mucky canal water ripples in the moonlight.

Rose crosses her arms and shields herself from the cold breeze.

Connie approaches from behind Rose and walks beside her.

CONNIE

You don't mind? Strength in numbers and all that.

ROSE

I hope your bloke's got the fire on.

CONNIE

Bloke? Oh, no. My dad will, though.

ROSE

Well, suppose a stunner like you doesn't want tying down just yet.

Connie holds out her ring finger.

CONNIE

Got called up a few months ago. Getting married when he gets back.

Connie looks up towards the sky, as if in a daydream.

ROSE

He's a lucky bloke.

CONNIE

What's he won?

Rose smiles.

ROSE

You sell yourself short.

CONNIE

He always says, when we have kids, if they get my brains and his looks they'll never forgive us.

Rose and Connie share a friendly giggle.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

What about you? There a man in your life?

Rose ponders.

ROSE

My son.

A few moments pass before Connie responds.

CONNIE

Oh.

Rose stops and faces Connie.

ROSE

What's wrong?

CONNIE

No, it's just...

Rose's wedding ring glistens in the moonlight.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

...what's that? If you don't mind
me asking?

Rose raises her hand and looks at the ring. She fiddles with it and looks thoughtful.

Eventually, Rose settles and gives Connie a serious look.

ROSE

Motivation.

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

A) INT. STEELWORKS - FURNACE SHED - DAY - Rose, Connie, Marjorie and Joan enter the factory, dark silhouettes against a background of ever-changing colour from the roaring furnace fire.

B) INT. STEELWORKS - FURNACE SHED - DAY - A huge steel arm takes scrap metal along a rail track. George directs Rose as she grits her teeth and pushes it towards the furnace. She stops, out of breath, as Bill walks by and scoffs.

Determined, Rose pushes the arm again; it barely moves and George, hands on hips, shakes his head.

C) INT. STEELWORKS - FURNACE SHED - LATER - Connie approaches the furnace. She holds a long, metal spoon, easily six feet long. Bill and Ben show off their muscles for her but Connie completely blanks them.

George guides Connie as she sticks the spoon into the furnace. As she removes it, Connie turns away from the shower of sparks that spit out from the fire and drops the spoon.

Molten metal pours over the floor as Bill and Ben run away from the spillage.

D) INT. STEELWORKS - ROLLING MILL - DAY - George introduces Joan to a BAR STRAIGHTENER WORKER, male, late forties.

As George exits, Joan flutters her eye lids at the Bar Straightener Worker.

E) INT. STEELWORKS - FURNACE SHED - DAY - Rose operates a crane which hauls a glowing ingot of steel out of the mould.

George guides Rose through the process and signals her to take her time.

Rose disregards George and loses control of the crane.

The white hot block swings, like a pendulum.

George jumps out of harms way and presses himself against a wall as he glares at Rose.

F) INT. STEELWORKS - BILLET SHOP - DAY - Connie and Marjorie stand, side by side, in a hole in the floor, up to their necks.

They chip away at imperfections in the steel bars with chisels as they are showered with oil and water.

G) INT. STEELWORKS - ROLLING MILL - DAY - The Bar Straightener Worker repeatedly lifts and lowers a large metal pole that drops heavy weight onto a thick steel bar. He stops, out of breath.

Joan adjusts her hat and admires her nails.

The Bar Straightener Worker glares at Joan.

George approaches and Joan jumps up, pushes the Bar Straightener Worker out of the way and operates the machine.

George exits and Joan sits down. She flutters her eyelids at the Bar Straightener Worker, who rolls his eyes and picks up the pole.

H) EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - DAY - Rose puts a key in the door. The Landlord appears beside Rose and rubs his thumb and forefinger together.

Rose reaches into her pocket and takes out some coins. She smiles as she shoves them into his palm, enters the house and slams the door in his face.

In the palm of his hand, several silver coins with King George VI's head on look up at the Landlord.

The Landlord points at Rose and mouths the words "every week" then walks away.

I) INT. STEELWORKS - ROLLING MILL - DAY - Marjorie and Connie feed a sheet of steel into a machine. A machine clamps down on the sheet and cuts it in half.

Rose takes the smaller sheet of steel out of the machine and holds it up for George, who inspects it.

George signals that it is okay, but could be better.

J) INT. STEELWORKS - FURNACE SHED - DAY - Rose, Connie and Marjorie are directed by George as they steadily push a large ladle, full of molten steel along rails until it rests over a pair of moulds.

They breathe huge sighs of relief as it slides into place.

With George's instruction, Rose opens the nozzles to a thunderous roar as molten steel pours out of the ladle and fills the moulds.

Rose, Connie and Marjorie look towards George who, eventually, nods in approval.

Rose high fives Connie and Marjorie.

Joan scowls as she watches on.

INT. STEELWORKS - DAY

Rose, Connie and Joan operate a drop hammer. Rose lifts the hammer and lowers it onto a steel ingot that Marjorie turns with a huge pair of tongs.

Bill pesters Connie, who completely ignores him. Eventually, he gives up and walks away in a huff.

ROSE

You are allowed to interact with other blokes, even if they're old enough to be your dad.

CONNIE

Wouldn't want folk to talk. You know how gossip gets around.

Rose looks at Connie and raises an eyebrow.

ROSE

You make the Virgin Mary look like the village bicycle.

Rose does not look impressed as Joan sits on her backside and adjusts her hat.

ROSE (CONT'D)

No wonder they all think we're useless.

Joan looks down her nose at Rose.

JOAN

I don't see any other doctors' wives doing the work of a peasant.

ROSE

Surprised you see anything from that high horse.

MARJORIE

The more we all muck in, the sooner this hellish war will end.

George, who smokes a cigarette, approaches with Apprentice Smith, who has stitches in his face.

GEORGE

Yer see, youth, that's the thing with steel. Needs mouldin' and hammerin' into shape. But, once it cools...

George knocks on the side of the drop hammer.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

...rock solid. Damn near unbreakable. Nowt else like it.

Apprentice Smith nods and walks away.

George observes Joan do nothing other than adjust her hat.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

'Scuse me, love.

Joan is taken by surprise and she jumps up.

JOAN

Oh, erm, jolly good job, ladies.
Bravo.

George points towards a rolling machine.

GEORGE

Make yerself useful.

Joan scowls and stomps away. She deliberately brushes past a Male Steelworker and flutters her eyelids.

George follows and ushers her along.

Rose drops the hammer on the steel block as Connie switches roles with Marjorie.

MARJORIE

You ladies fancy coming to my knit
and natter night?

Rose chuckles.

ROSE

Knit and natter?

MARJORIE

I preferred bitchin' and stitchin'
but my old nan-nan didn't like that
language.

Connie whispers to Rose.

CONNIE

Does she know that's still English?

Suddenly, an air raid siren sounds. It drowns out the noise of the works and reverberates around the factory.

Rose, Marjorie and Connie exchange worried glances.

Panic ensues amongst the women. They run around with no real idea of where to go or what they should do, like a spider trapped in a glass.

In the commotion, Rose stumbles over a large piece of scrap and falls to the floor.

Rose lays on the floor and coughs in a cloud of dust.

George appears with Ernest, who does not look impressed.

George sees Rose on the floor and quickly runs towards her.

ERNEST

What the hell's going on?

Ernest grabs Connie, who runs past him in distress.

CONNIE

Dear God, he's gone hard of hearing
now to boot.

Ernest scowls at Connie.

ERNEST

Them pissing rollers must be in too
tight, woman.

GEORGE

There any need, gaffer?

Ernest clips George round the back of the head.

CONNIE

Don't you think we should be going
to the shelter?

ERNEST

Front line don't go running when
the bombs start falling.

Ernest points towards a

CLOCKING IN MACHINE

where a blue light flashes above it.

BACK TO SCENE

ERNEST (CONT'D)

Blue light, we stay. Red light, we
go. Loss of production is loss of
life.

Ernest lets go of Connie and points towards George, who
fusses around Rose.

ERNEST (CONT'D)

You've done about as good a job
with this lot as you did in Africa.

George looks hurt by the comment as Ernest marches away.

George holds out his left hand towards Rose, which she pushes
away.

GEORGE
Suit yerself.

George exits as Rose dusts herself off.

Marjorie and Connie approach Rose.

MARJORIE
At least we'll have plenty to
natter about later on.

Joan walks by.

ROSE
You going to grace us with your
presence, duck?

Joan turns her nose up, scoffs then exits.

CONNIE
She must be busy.

INT. MARJORIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

LIVING ROOM

Rose, Connie and Marjorie gossip as they knit and drink wine.

MARJORIE
That George is a bit of a dish.

Connie sighs.

CONNIE
Not a patch on my Jim.

Connie stares into space as she knits away.

ROSE
Same as every other bloke.

Marjorie grins like a Cheshire cat.

MARJORIE
You like him.

Rose puts the knitting down and looks towards Marjorie.

ROSE
You are to mind reading what Hitler
is to diplomacy.

MARJORIE

Reckon he likes you as well. Look
how he came to your rescue.

Rose laughs but clearly contemplates the thought.

ROSE

Behave yourself.

Rose quickly changes the subject and nods towards Connie.

ROSE (CONT'D)

She's the one who's got blokes
practically throwing themselves at
her.

Connie blushes.

CONNIE

Only one man for me.

Connie stares into space like a love-drunk teenager gushes
over the latest boy-band.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

When I saw him from the stage, I
knew he was the one.

Rose and Marjorie look confused.

MARJORIE

Stage?

Connie nods.

CONNIE

He was at one of my shows.

MARJORIE

Nothing blue, I hope.

Connie dismisses the claim.

CONNIE

Oh, no. Singing. You know, in
pubs and dance halls.

Rose and Marjorie smile.

ROSE

Hope you take them rollers out.

Connie shakes her head.

CONNIE
Not anymore. My Jim didn't like
other men staring at me.

Rose scowls.

MARJORIE
Sing us something.

CONNIE
Oh, I don't know, our John--

ROSE
He's not going to hear you in North
Africa, duck.

Connie clears her throat and, beautifully, sings a verse of
'Somewhere Over The Rainbow.'

Rose and Marjorie look amazed as Connie finishes.

ROSE (CONT'D)
You're a fool.

MARJORIE
Like my old nan-nan used to say,
love makes fools of us all.

Rose raises her wine glass.

ROSE
I'll drink to that.

Connie looks hurt.

CONNIE
What have you done with your life
that makes me such a fool?

Awkward silence as Rose fiddles with her wedding ring.

A door slams.

MARJORIE
Hellish.

Marjorie looks horrified as uncoordinated footsteps thump
progressively louder.

The living room door swings open and in stumbles Marjorie's
husband, NEIL, late thirties, blind drunk.

Neil takes an age to survey the room and his speech is
heavily slurred.

NEIL

Who the chuff are these?

Marjorie jumps up, like a dog obeys its master.

MARJORIE

I didn't think you'd be back so soon. I haven't--

Neil stumbles across the room and points a finger towards Marjorie.

NEIL

I shouldn't have to come home to this shite when I've had a hard day at work.

Rose jumps to Marjorie's defense.

ROSE

Sinking pints for hours on end must be quite a strain.

Neil turns towards Rose.

NEIL

You what?

Rose stands her ground.

Connie looks concerned as Neil sways towards Rose on unsteady legs.

CONNIE

Should we go?

Neil gets in Rose's face.

NEIL

If you've got something to say, say it.

Rose shakes as she looks over Neil's shoulder towards Marjorie, who looks away and hangs her head.

Rose backs down and exits with Connie.

INT. STEELWORKS - DAY

OUTSIDE ERNEST'S OFFICE

An ANGRY MOB, fronted by Bill and Ben, shout and wave their fists in the air as they follow Ernest.

George protects Ernest, who hobbles towards an office door, as the Angry Mob closes in on them.

BILL
Fucking joke, gaffer.

BEN
A piss-take is what it is.

Rose, Connie and Marjorie observe from a distance.

Joan approaches.

JOAN
It would seem that our male colleagues are not happy with the pathetic rate at which we are compensated for our endeavours.

Connie smiles.

CONNIE
Good on them. About time someone stood up for women's rights around here.

Rose frowns.

As Ernest and George reach the office door, Ernest turns and addresses the Angry Mob.

ERNEST
Nah then. I'll knock sixpence off what they get but that's your lot.

Rose's eyes widen as she hears the comment.

A group of shattered FEMALE STEELWORKERS, varied ages, walk over and stand beside Rose, Connie, Marjorie and Joan.

ROSE
I don't think so.

MARJORIE
Better than a kick in the chops.
My old nan-nan got next to nothing.

Rose cannot believe Marjorie's response.

ROSE
It's already next to nothing.

Rose marches towards the Angry Mob and pushes them out of the way. They make fun of her as she walks past them.

Rose taps Ernest on the shoulder as he half opens the office door.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Is this a joke?

Ernest turns and scowls at Rose. The cracks in his weathered face seem deeper and he looks more serious than ever before.

Awkward silence as Ernest's glare burns holes through Rose, who searches for her next words.

ERNEST
Get back to work.

Ernest turns his back on Rose, who turns around and looks through the Angry Mob towards Connie, Marjorie, Joan and the Female Steelworkers.

A look of determination descends over Rose's face as she takes a deep breath and blocks Ernest's path.

ROSE
We work just as hard, if not
harder, than the bloke's in here.

The Angry Mob jeer.

Rose turns towards George.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Tell him. We pull more than our
weight.

George looks like he agrees.

GEORGE
To be fair, the numbers are...

George's optimism fades to uncertainty as the Angry Mob glare and close in on him, like sharks circle their prey.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
...okay, I suppose.

Rose shakes her head as she looks at George through disappointed eyes.

George deliberately avoids Rose's gaze.

BILL
Okay isn't worth the same as us,
flower.

The Angry Mob laugh and point at Rose.

Rose looks towards George for support but he looks away.

Rose glances up towards Connie, Marjorie, Joan and the Female Steelworkers, who all cut hopeless figures.

The laughs and jeers of the Angry Mob grow louder until, suddenly, Rose sits down on the filthy floor and crosses her arms.

ROSE

Fine. See how you do without us.

Ernest stands over Rose.

ERNEST

Striking's illegal during war-time.

Rose sits firm.

ROSE

Call the bobbies on us. You're already clutching at straws.

ERNEST

Us?

Rose looks all around her and realises she is alone, completely surrounded by the Angry Mob, who chant.

ANGRY MOB

On your own, on your own, on your own.

Ernest smiles and chuckles.

ERNEST

I'll get your cards.

The Angry Mob parts as Marjorie and Connie push past them and join Rose on the floor.

Gradually, the Angry Mob's chants fade as the other Female Steelworkers join Rose's protest, one by one.

Ernest's smile fades.

Finally, Joan, who avoids any physical contact, struts between the Angry Mob.

Joan snatches a jacket from Bill, tosses it onto the floor and sits on it, much to his annoyance.

JOAN

I shall not be the only one getting
my nails dirty whilst you lot sit
on your posteriors.

Rose smiles and looks up at Ernest.

ROSE

Loss of production is loss of
life...

Ernest scowls.

ROSE (CONT'D)

...gaffer.

Ernest storms into his office as the Angry Mob protest and
hammer on the door.

George observes Rose, who is congratulated by Marjorie,
Connie and the Female Steelworkers.

A glimmer of a smile crosses George's face.

EXT./INT. STEELWORKS - DAY

The sun rises and illuminates a smoke-filled sky above the
works.

OUTSIDE ERNEST'S OFFICE

Rose, Connie, Marjorie, Joan and the Female Steelworkers yawn
and rub their eyes. They sit in the exact same positions as
in the previous scene.

INSIDE ERNEST'S OFFICE

Ernest sits at a desk and snatches a piece of paper from
George.

GEORGE

Can I tell 'em to get back to work
then?

Ernest ignores George as his eyes scan the paper.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

We're well behind demand already
and it's only been--

Ernest bangs his fist on the desk and growls as he screws the
paper up into a ball and tosses it to the floor.

OUTSIDE ERNEST'S OFFICE

The door opens and Ernest hobbles out.

Rose and the others look towards Ernest.

George steps out of the office and stands beside Ernest, hand hidden behind his back.

Ernest eyeballs the women, individually.

ERNEST

Not a penny less nor a penny more.

The women stand and cheer as Ernest hobbles back into his office and slams the door.

Rose is congratulated and hugged by everyone, except Joan who maintains a stoic look and wanders away.

Bill and Ben watch on and scowl.

GEORGE

We gerrin' back to it then, or what?

Marjorie, Connie and the Female Steelworkers exit, like sisters in arms, smiles on faces.

George stands side by side with Rose and watches the others walk away.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Yer've got balls, I'll give yer that.

Rose looks at George and raises an eyebrow.

ROSE

Good job somebody around here does.

George does not see the wry smile that appears on Rose's face as she holds her head high and walks away.

INT. STEELWORKS - DAY

Rose works on a chipping station as George supervises.

As Rose chips away at the steel bar with a hammer and chisel, she drops the chisel.

George picks the chisel up.

GEORGE

Yer holdin' it at too high an angle. Let me show yer.

Rose snatches the chisel from George and shrugs him away.

George shakes his head as Rose continues in the same manner as before. Within a few seconds, Rose drops the chisel.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Typical bird.

Rose and George both crouch down and grasp the chisel with one hand each.

ROSE

Spoken like a typical bloke.

Rose pulls the chisel but George does not let go.

GEORGE

Yer know nothin' about me.

George pulls the chisel but Rose does not let go.

ROSE

I'm sure we would see you mucking in if there was suddenly a shortage of housewives.

George pulls the chisel and, once again, Rose does not let go.

GEORGE

Yer'd be surprised what they teach yer in the army.

Rose smiles, like an idea has just popped into her head.

ROSE

Tell you what. If you can do all the jobs I do at home on top of all this, I might believe you.

George looks down at Rose's hand that grasps the chisel. He nods towards her ring.

GEORGE

Yer sure yer fella will want puttin' to shame?

Rose's expression changes as she lets go of the chisel and admires the ring on her finger. She fiddles with the ring, which George notices.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

We aren't all the same, yer know.

Eventually, Rose looks up at George, a serious look on her face.

ROSE

We'll see about that.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

KITCHEN

Dirty pots and pans sit on a work-top next to a plate of half-eaten food.

A pile of clothes ready to be ironed, lay on the floor.

Cleaning products lined up on the kitchen table.

A knock at the door.

Rose enters the kitchen, steps over the pile of clothes and answers the door.

George enters and admires the kitchen. His eyes settle on the pile of clothes.

GEORGE

Gordon Bennett, love. Yer could've at least given me a challenge.

George winks at Rose then rubs his hands together.

Rose notices the glove on George's right hand.

ROSE

Cold?

George disregards the comment.

GEORGE

We gerrin' started then, or what?

Rose points towards a clock on the wall.

ROSE

An hour. That's your lot.

George notices the solitary plate on the side.

GEORGE

Lets make this interestin'. I do
it, yer let me take yer out.

Rose fiddles with her wedding ring.

ROSE

It definitely will not be a date.

George picks up the pile of clothes and smiles.

GEORGE

Gerra brew on then.

LATER

The kitchen is spick and span.

The pile of clothes are neatly folded.

George dusts the top of the table, tosses the cloth aside and
dusts off his hands as he looks at the

CLOCK

where the big hand sits just before the hour mark.

BACK TO SCENE

George smiles.

Rose inspects the ironed clothes.

ROSE

Okay.

Rose looks at George and quotes his words from earlier.

ROSE (CONT'D)

I suppose.

George looks sheepish as he sits down at the table.

Rose sits, beside George.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Shame someone as handy as you isn't
allowed on the machines.

George looks at his gloved right hand.

George's hand fills up the screen as we hear muffled booms
and explosions that, gradually, become louder and louder.

EXT. TRENCH - DAY - GEORGE'S FLASHBACK

Chaos.

Intermittent bouts of gunfire.

Dirt, debris and a DEAD SOLDIER tumble into the trench.

Rain hammers down and pools on the ground, a filthy mixture of mud, water and blood.

George, no glove visible on hand, runs through the puddles and climbs a ladder.

Another SOLDIER, late twenties, grabs George and pulls him back.

SOLDIER
Are you fucking insane?

GEORGE
There's fellas dyin' out there.

George climbs the ladder.

Another explosion and George tumbles from the ladder.

George crashes on top of the Soldier, into the mud.

George gets to his feet but the Soldier stays down and clutches his leg, in pain.

SOLDIER
My knee. It's fucked.

A grenade lands in the trench, bounces around and settles several metres away from George and the Soldier.

A SARGENT, mid-thirties, sees this and waves his arms, manically.

SARGENT
Move, now.

The Sargent abandons his position.

George looks towards the grenade then heaves the Soldier over his shoulder, in a fireman's carry position.

The Soldier's body shields George's head and upper back.

George runs through the trench, away from the grenade.

The grenade explodes and George crashes to the floor, face first into a puddle. The Soldier lays on top of George and pins him to the mud.

A high-pitched ring reverberates as George, shell-shocked, pulls his face from the puddle.

Muddy water and blood runs from George's face.

George rolls onto his back and pushes the Soldier's body from on top of him.

George breathes heavily as he looks into the Soldier's lifeless eyes.

George grimaces and shakes as he brings his right hand in front of his face.

The screen blurs and distorts an image of George's hand.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

KITCHEN

George's gloved hand fills the screen.

He removes the glove and reveals a disfigured hand, forefinger and middle fingers missing. The thumb is nothing but a stump.

George shakes the glove and a number of pebbles fall out from the thumb, forefinger and middle finger.

Rose watches on, engrossed, as George stares vacantly at his hand.

A tear rolls from George's eye.

GEORGE

My old man got the Victoria Cross.
All I got were a knackered hand and
an honourable discharge.

Rose helps George put the pebbles back into the glove and he puts it back on.

ROSE

You don't have to be a soldier to
be a hero.

Harry stands in doorway and rubs his eyes.

HARRY

Daddy?

Rose stands and picks Harry up. She carries him over towards the table and sits down with him on her lap.

ROSE

Harry, this is George.

George immediately perks up.

GEORGE

Eh up, little youth.

George holds out his right hand but thinks better of it and holds out his left instead.

Harry shakes George's hand.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

You must be the man of the house.

Harry turns away from George and hides his face in Rose's chest.

George looks around the kitchen and sees a football in the corner. He goes over towards it.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Bet yer can't do this.

Harry peeks as George performs kick ups.

George loses control of the ball and it hits the ceiling.

The ball rebounds and smacks George in the face.

Harry laughs.

Rose looks towards George through much softer eyes.

INT. STEELWORKS - DAY

ROLLING MILL

Joan flirts with Bill, who does her work for her. He does not look happy about it.

BILL

Can't keep doin' this, flower. I'm getting none of my own done.

Joan flutters her eyelids as she pushes her chest out and reveals some cleavage.

BILL (CONT'D)
Then again, I do owe you.

Joan looks confused as Bill realises what he has just said.

BILL (CONT'D)
Forget I said that.

Joan grabs Bill by the collar.

JOAN
People should not be thinking I owe you anything.

Joan releases her grip.

BILL
I didn't mean like that. I might have let your secret slip to George.

Joan grabs Bill by the collar again and gets in his face.

JOAN
You did what?

Bill holds his hands up.

FURNACE MAN 1
Seems a trustworthy bloke.

Joan looks over Bill's shoulder and sees George approach Rose, who works alongside Connie.

GEORGE
Still on for our date tomorrow then, or what?

ROSE
It's not a date.

GEORGE
Whatever yer need to tell yerself, love.

George winks at Rose and walks away, a spring in his step.

Connie giggles like a schoolgirl as she approaches Rose.

CONNIE

He looked at you just like my Jim
looks at me.

Joan lets go of Bill.

JOAN

I do hope, for both our sakes, that
your workmanship is better than
your ability to keep your lips
sealed.

Joan pushes Bill aside and marches towards Rose, equipped
with fake smile.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Love is in the air.

Connie sniffs.

CONNIE

That's what that is?

Rose plays the comment down.

ROSE

Just keeping my word.

Joan puts her arm around Rose, who looks suspicious.

ROSE (CONT'D)

You alright?

Joan pulls Rose away from Connie and they walk, side by side.

JOAN

A bit of dutch courage beforehand
wouldn't go amiss.

Rose looks thoughtful.

ROSE

It has been a while.

Joan smiles.

JOAN

Jolly good. I shall meet you at
the dance hall at, say, eight?

Rose looks uncertain but, eventually, nods.

ROSE

Thanks.

Joan smiles.

As she walks away, Joan's smile transitions into her usual stuck-up expression.

Joan exits just as Marjorie enters.

Rose notices that Marjorie has her head down.

ROSE (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

Marjorie avoids eye contact with Rose.

MARJORIE
Me? Oh, nothing. Just admiring
the beautiful...floor.

Rose looks at the junk and filth covered floor then back at Marjorie with a doubtful eye.

Eventually, Marjorie raises her head and reveals a black eye.

Rose's eyes widen.

ROSE
Flamin' Nora.

MARJORIE
It's nothing. Honestly.

Rose studies the injury.

ROSE
He did this.

Marjorie makes a poor attempt at being surprised.

MARJORIE
Of course not.

Rose shakes her head.

ROSE
You need to wake up and move on.

MARJORIE
Forgive me for saying but, like my
old nan-nan used to say...

Marjorie glances at Rose's wedding ring.

MARJORIE (CONT'D)
 ...the words pot, kettle and black
 come to mind.

Marjorie raises an eyebrow and walks past Rose, who is speechless and twists her wedding ring.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - DAY

KITCHEN

Rose looks content and in high spirits as she sits at the table and feeds Harry.

A wireless radio report plays in the background.

NEWSREADER (O.S.)
 Following last night's air raid in
 Coventry, Sheffield is bracing
 itself for similar heavy shelling.

Rose pays little attention to the news report as she hums a tune and wipes food from Harry's mouth.

NEWSREADER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 If the city's steel industry is
 targeted, this could prove to be a
 catastrophic blow to Britain's war
 effort.

A knock at the door.

Rose answers and the Landlord stands in the doorway with his hand held out.

Rose opens a cupboard and takes out a jar of money. She empties the contents into the Landlord's hand and slams the door in his face.

Pleased with herself, Rose notices the football in the corner of the kitchen and goes towards it.

Harry watches as Rose performs several kick ups with the football.

HARRY
 George?

Rose loses control of the ball and it rolls across the kitchen floor.

Rose picks Harry up from the high chair.

ROSE

Just us.

HARRY

George?

Rose cuddles Harry as her lips curl upwards into a smile.

INT. DANCE HALL - NIGHT

Several COUPLES dance on a wooden floor as a slow, nineteen-forties song echoes around the room.

Rose and Joan sit at a bar, drinks in hands. Joan sits cross-legged and her little finger points as she drinks a fancy cocktail.

ROSE

You come down here with your bloke?

Joan's expression changes to one of disbelief as she leans forward.

JOAN

Unbelievable.

Joan stares onto the dance floor.

Rose follows Joan's stare until her eyes notice what Joan has seen.

Equally surprised, Rose laughs.

Ernest holds his wife, EDITH, female, late-fifties, close as they sway along with the music. He gazes into her eyes and she smiles back at him.

ROSE

That the same bloke?

The song ends and Ernest bows towards Edith.

An upbeat, swing song plays and Ernest shows off some dance moves; his limp does not limit him or slow him down.

Rose watches on, clearly impressed.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Flamin' Nora. Like a shoe-string
Clark Gable.

Joan finishes her drink.

JOAN
I shall get us another tippie.

Rose checks the time on a clock on the wall.

ROSE
It's alright, duck. Best be off.

Joan puts a hand on Rose's shoulder and looks at her with puppy dog eyes.

JOAN
You want to leave now, with the entertainment that is on offer?

Rose looks uncertain.

JOAN (CONT'D)
Forget steel. This is pure gold.

Rose smiles.

ROSE
One more won't hurt.

Joan smiles.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Just nipping to the loo.

Rose exits and Joan orders the drinks.

A BARTENDER puts the drinks on the bar and Joan picks up Rose's.

Joan checks that no one watches as she takes a hip flask from her bag and pours alcohol into Rose's glass.

EXT. PICTURE HOUSE - NIGHT

A hard frost on cobbled ground.

George stands, hands in pockets. Steam puffs from his mouth and nose as he breathes.

A jovial YOUNG COUPLE, early-twenties, walk by, hand in hand.

George sighs as he checks his watch. He looks down the street, left and right, then storms away.

INT. STEELWORKS - DAY

ROLLING MILL

Connie looks concerned as she works alongside Marjorie.

CONNIE

Do you think something's happened
to her?

MARJORIE

Probably off sticking her nose in
everybody else's business.

George enters and smokes as he walks by Connie and Marjorie.

MARJORIE (CONT'D)

Wasn't she meeting you last night?

George stops and glares at Marjorie.

GEORGE

This a gossip factory for fish-
wives now, or what?

Connie whispers to Marjorie.

CONNIE

Don't think it went well.

Bill walks by and giggles.

BILL

It's alright, Georgey Boy. Spared
your blushes if things had gone
further than a smooch.

Bill holds his hand in front of his face and wiggles his
fingers.

George loses his temper and a scuffle erupts.

As George and Bill tussle, Rose enters. She looks hungover.

George sees Rose and pushes Bill aside, who straightens
himself up and exits.

GEORGE

Time keepin's not yer strong suit,
is it?

ROSE

Don't know what happened. I--

George sniffs the air.

GEORGE
Heavy night?

Rose rubs her head.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Yer sacked.

Rose looks shocked, as does Marjorie. Connie leaps to her defense and prods George in the chest.

CONNIE
You can't do that. You aren't the
foreman.

Connie looks with uncertainty towards Marjorie.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
Is he?

Marjorie shakes her head.

Rose frowns.

ROSE
Can't get sacked for being late
once.

GEORGE
Yer can for being drunk on the job.
Could get someone killed in 'ere.

ROSE
Bit rich.

George scowls at Rose.

GEORGE
Gaffer would agree.

Rose looks towards Marjorie, who looks as though she feels sorry for her.

MARJORIE
You reek of alcohol.

George whispers in Rose's ear.

GEORGE
I'm already a laughin' stock.
Didn't realise yer were in on it
an' all.

ROSE
It's not like that--

GEORGE
No need to justify yerself, love.

George looks sullen as he walks away from Rose.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Yer not my problem anymore.

Rose hangs her head as Joan, a hint of regret on her face, watches from a distance.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - DAY

KITCHEN

Rose feeds Harry as she stares vacantly towards the football in the corner of the room.

A knock at the door.

Rose answers.

The Landlord.

ROSE
Not now.

The Landlord does not look happy.

LANDLORD
I can't afford to have you in arrears again. What with it coming up to Christmas.

ROSE
It'll get sorted.

The Landlord looks at Harry, who obliviously smiles.

The Landlord frowns as he looks at Rose with unforgiving eyes.

LANDLORD
Three days or that's it. No time for debtors.

Rose closes the door. She ruffles Harry's hair and sighs before she slumps into a chair.

INT. CONNIE'S HOUSE - DAY

A knock at a door.

Connie sings to herself as she walks through the room and answers it.

A YOUNG MAN, late teens, stands in the doorway.

YOUNG MAN
Miss Fuller?

Connie nods.

The Young Man frowns as he holds out a telegram.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

Connie smiles as she takes the telegram from him.

CONNIE
Don't be daft. Don't get surprises
very often.

Connie closes the door and sings to herself as she opens the telegram.

Connie reads the letter and her facial expression gradually contorts.

Connie gasps for breath as tears well in her eyes. She stumbles backwards into the wall and slumps onto her backside.

The letter falls from Connie's hand as she cries.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

KITCHEN

Rose sits with Harry on her knee as Valerie reads a

LETTER

'Arrears'

BACK TO SCENE

Valerie frowns as she puts the letter on the table.

VALERIE

Forgive me for saying but, John is Harry's dad. Surely that entitles you to--

Rose cuts Valerie off.

ROSE

And prove him right?

VALERIE

Cutting your nose off to spite your face won't keep a roof over your head.

A heavy knock at the door.

ROSE

Flamin' Nora.

Rose hands Harry to Valerie and walks towards the door.

ROSE (CONT'D)

If it's him again I'll swing for--

Rose opens the door and is surprised as Marjorie stands with her arm around Connie. They shiver in the cold, winter breeze.

MARJORIE

Can we come in?

Rose stands aside and invites Marjorie and Connie into the house.

Marjorie and Connie enter as Rose closes the door behind them.

MARJORIE (CONT'D)

Get your coat.

Rose looks confused.

MARJORIE (CONT'D)

We're a team and, at the minute, we're one short.

Rose shakes her head.

ROSE

You heard what he said.

MARJORIE

If you go, we go. Simple as. Got
to stick together.

Rose notices Connie's sullen expression as Marjorie pulls her close.

MARJORIE (CONT'D)

Especially in times like these.

Rose looks uncertain.

ROSE

I don't know. I--

MARJORIE

It's like my old nan-nan used to
say - you don't ask, you don't get.

Rose looks at Harry, who smiles as he bounces happily on Valerie's knee.

VALERIE

I can babysit.

Rose ponders for a moment then smiles.

ROSE

Thanks, duck.

Rose takes her coat from a hook behind the door.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Lets show those blokes who wears
the trousers.

Marjorie smiles.

EXT. JOAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A large house; much larger than any of the dingy terraced houses we have seen so far.

A female hand taps a gold door knocker on a black door.

The door opens and reveals an OLD MAN, late sixties, wearing nothing but a white vest and underpants.

Rose, Connie and Marjorie, who stand on an icy doorstep, are taken aback.

ROSE

Mr. Beckett?

The Old Man laughs.

OLD MAN
If only there was still some lead
left in the old pencil.

The Old Man waves his crotch around as Marjorie shields
Connie's eyes and Rose looks away.

ROSE
Must have the wrong address.

Rose, Connie and Marjorie turn away.

The Old Man looks over his shoulder, into the house, as he
shouts.

OLD MAN
Joan. Visitors.

Rose, Connie and Marjorie stop and turn back towards the
door.

Joan appears and pushes the Old Man aside.

JOAN
What is all the fuss?

Joan is lost for words as she sees Rose, Connie and Marjorie.

JOAN (CONT'D)
What in heaven's name are you doing
here?

ROSE
He's a doctor?

The Old Man can be seen over Joan's shoulder. He sits at the
bottom of a staircase and bites his toe nails.

JOAN
Jesus Christ, you think I would
associate myself in common law with
that?

MARJORIE
Bet he's a lovely fella.

The Old Man chews a toe nail then spits it out onto the
floor.

MARJORIE (CONT'D)
Filthy, but lovely.

Joan steps out into the street and leaves the door slightly ajar.

JOAN
He's my tenant.

Rose, Marjorie and Connie all look confused.

Joan takes a deep breath and buries her head into her hands.

JOAN (CONT'D)
Do you have any idea how much it costs to pay a mortgage on a house like this?

CONNIE
But, your husband's a doctor? Surely he--

JOAN
He's not.

CONNIE
Not a doctor?

JOAN
Not my husband.

Awkward silence.

JOAN (CONT'D)
Not anymore.

Rose, Connie and Marjorie exchange confused glances.

JOAN (CONT'D)
You think I want to be in that hell-hole of a job for the rest of my life and have that for company?

OLD MAN (O.S.)
Shut the door. Freezing my bollocks off.

Joan shouts over her shoulder.

JOAN
Put some bloody trousers on.

Joan slumps onto the frozen step.

JOAN (CONT'D)
I need a man who can provide for me.

Rose sits beside Joan.

JOAN (CONT'D)
 No well-off man of standing is
 going to look twice at a dirty,
 working class female steelworker.

ROSE
 Depends on your definition of well-
 off.

Rose puts a hand on Joan's shoulder.

ROSE (CONT'D)
 Any bloke worth bothering with will
 see past the dirt, grime and all
 the other shite.

Joan wipes her eyes as they meet Rose's. This is the first
 time Joan does not look down her nose at Rose.

ROSE (CONT'D)
 Don't be something you're not just
 to please some other bugger.

Rose stands beside Marjorie and Connie then holds out a hand.

Joan contemplates as she looks at Rose's hand.

Eventually, Joan takes Rose's hand and gets to her feet.

JOAN
 I'm not on shift tonight.

OLD MAN (O.S.)
 You seen my other kecks? Skid-
 marks galore in these.

JOAN
 Although, I do suppose a bit of
 overtime wouldn't go amiss.

Rose, Connie and Marjorie chuckle as they welcome Joan into
 the group with open arms.

EXT. STEELWORKS - NIGHT

The works pump smoke out into the frosty, winter sky as the
 moonlit silhouette's of Rose, Connie, Marjorie and Joan march
 towards the entrance.

INT. STEELWORKS - NIGHT

ERNEST'S OFFICE

The door swings open as Rose, Marjorie, Connie and Joan march straight up towards Ernest, who sits at his desk, scowl on face as ever.

Rose reaches the desk and stands before Ernest, who stands and leans over the desk.

ERNEST

Piss off. Don't need drunks around here.

Defiant, Rose quotes Winston Churchill's 'We Shall Fight On the Beaches' speech.

ROSE

We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans.

Marjorie steps forward, beside Rose.

MARJORIE

We shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air. We shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be.

Connie stands beside Rose.

CONNIE

We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds.

Rose and Marjorie part and Joan steps in-between them.

JOAN

We shall fight in the fields and in the streets. We shall fight in the hills.

ROSE

We shall never surrender.

Silence as Ernest, emotionless, looks the women up and down.

GEORGE (O.S.)

Never said owt about fightin' in a steelworks, did he?

George enters and stands beside Ernest. He looks at Rose, still angry.

ERNEST

He didn't. But, truth be told,
this war will only be won if every
man does his duty.

ROSE

And woman.

GEORGE

Bit hard to do yer duty when yer as
rough as a badger's arse.

Rose scowls at George as Joan hangs her head.

ROSE

Does taking it out on me help re-
forge that damaged ego of yours?

An air raid siren sounds.

Ernest hobbles past everyone and opens his office door. He looks towards the

CLOCKING IN CLOCK

where the light flashes blue.

BACK TO SCENE

Rose, Marjorie, Connie, Joan and George gather behind Ernest and observe the

CLOCKING IN CLOCK

After a few tense moments, the light turns red.

BACK TO SCENE

Intermittent flashes of red highlight the worried looks on everyone's faces. Only Ernest remains stalwart.

ERNEST

Shut down the shop and get to the
shelter.

The siren continues as we hear the heavy drone of planes fly over-head.

Distant explosions.

Rose's worried expression fills the screen.

Blackness.

INT. STEELWORKS - DAWN

Eerie silence.

Production has ceased entirely and everything is still.

The whole factory is a bland dark grey colour; no longer a mixture of intermittent red, orange and white.

The furnaces look dull and cold.

Empty ingots and abandoned machinery.

Turned over wheelbarrows and scrap metal cover the floors.

Despite looking like the aftermath of a nuclear holocaust, there is no bomb damage to be seen anywhere.

A large metal covering on the ash covered floor is pushed open.

Ernest emerges from the bomb shelter. He hobbles across the factory floor towards a large switch, which he flips.

The lights clunk and clank back to life as Ernest shields his eyes.

Gradually, Steelworkers, male and female, emerge from the bomb shelter. They squint as they admire the factory.

Bill and Ben follow on.

George emerges and rubs his eyes.

Finally, Rose, Connie, Marjorie and Joan emerge from the shelter.

They look around the works, a mixture of surprise and relief on their faces.

Despite the relief, the mood is sombre.

Ernest approaches Rose. He beckons George over.

ERNEST

Dodged a bullet there.

George follows Ernest, who stands face to face with Rose.

Ernest looks considerate.

ERNEST (CONT'D)

This is why we need all hands on deck.

Ernest grabs George by his ear lobe and drags him in front of Rose.

ERNEST (CONT'D)

Sort it. Then get back to work.

George rubs his ear then folds his arms, like a defiant child.

Rose does the same and turns her nose up at George.

Joan, sheepishly, raises her hand.

JOAN

Since forgiveness seems to be in the air, I find this to be an appropriate moment to perhaps help rectify this whole unfortunate situation.

Rose and George both turn and face Joan, who looks uncharacteristically nervous.

JOAN (CONT'D)

It was my fault.

Rose and George look confused.

GEORGE

What were?

JOAN

You getting stood up, her being drunk. Look, it all pales in insignificance in light of current events.

Joan turns away but George and Rose both march around her and block her path.

Joan sighs and her usual stiff upper lipped demenour shrivels.

JOAN (CONT'D)

I did not want her finding out about my situation. I thought that, once you had a few tipples, it might slip out.

Rose looks annoyed.

ROSE

You got me drunk to make me miss
our date?

George smiles, smugly.

Rose notices and gives George daggers. He quickly re-assumes
his previous expression.

Joan is apologetic.

JOAN

I did not think for one second he
would give you the sack. He
obviously likes you a lot more than
I thought.

GEORGE

Steady on, love.

Joan looks down her nose at George.

JOAN

Oh, come off it. You'd have to
have bricks for eyes not to have
noticed.

Rose looks disappointed and refuses to look Joan in the eyes,
who tries her hardest to make amends.

ROSE

The only thing we've always had in
here is each other's backs.

Joan hangs her head as Rose shrugs her aside and exits.

George glares at Joan then pursues Rose.

Joan looks for forgiveness towards Marjorie and Connie, who
both disapprove and turn their backs.

Joan is completely alone; an image of remorse.

EXT. STEELWORKS - CONTINUOUS

Rose exits the works then stops. She stands, open-mouthed.

George catches up with Rose and stands, side by side, with
her; a mirror image of equal surprise.

The city centre burns in the distance.

Black clouds fill the sky and the stench of burning and death causes Rose and George's noses to turn up.

Fire engine and ambulance sirens are audible.

GEORGE

Them Jerry's need to learn to read
a map, or summat.

ROSE

Or the works were never the target.

The Paper-Boy cycles past.

GEORGE

What's the word, youth?

The Paper-Boy skids to a halt.

PAPER-BOY

Some reight damage t'city centre.

George and Rose look concerned.

ROSE

Anywhere else?

PAPER-BOY

Some of the surrounding estates.
Heeley Bank View's had a reight
pasting, by all accounts. Loads
dead.

George forces a smile and nods at the Paper-Boy, who cycles away.

Rose trembles.

George frowns as he notices.

GEORGE

Yer alright, love?

Ernest hobbles out of the works towards them.

ERNEST

Nah then. Steel's not going to
forge itself.

Tears stream down Rose's face as Ernest stands right in front of her.

Rose shakes as she stares at Ernest.

ERNEST (CONT'D)

Go on, then.

Rose looks determined as she pushes Ernest aside and sprints away, towards the city.

Marjorie and Connie appear from out of the works, closely followed by Joan.

Marjorie and Connie look sullen.

MARJORIE

Just heard on the wireless. Sounds hellish. At least it's confined to the city centre.

A look of realisation comes over George's face as he looks towards Marjorie.

GEORGE

Heeley Bank View.

Tears stream down Connie's face.

CONNIE

We left her lad in the house with her friend.

George's eyes widen as Marjorie consoles Connie.

Joan barges past Ernest and George. She looks towards Marjorie and Connie.

JOAN

Well?

Joan marches off in pursuit of Rose.

Ernest frowns.

ERNEST

You've all got duties here.

Marjorie stands face to face with Ernest.

MARJORIE

There's something else that we've all got a duty towards.

Ernest looks confused as Marjorie pulls Connie close.

MARJORIE (CONT'D)

Some of us have lost enough of it already.

Marjorie and Connie turn and follow Joan, leaving Ernest flabbergasted.

ERNEST

Letting your country down.

Marjorie shouts back without turning around.

MARJORIE

Sod off, twinkle-toes.

Embarrassed by the comment, Ernest quickly checks no one else has heard.

Ernest smiles, sheepishly, at George and pats him on the back.

ERNEST

At least us blokes have got a sense of perspective.

Ernest turns and hobbles towards the works entrance as George walks off in the opposite direction, towards Marjorie and Connie.

ERNEST (CONT'D)

What the pissing hell do you think you're doing?

George walks away, regardless.

GEORGE

Keepin' on top of my responsibilities.

Ernest stands, hands on hips as he watches George catch up with Marjorie, Connie and Joan.

ERNEST

Women.

Ernest sighs.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Tearfully, Rose wanders alone, surrounded by death and destruction.

A derailed tram lies on it's side; bodies hang out of the smashed windows.

MEDICS cough and splutter as they push smoke from their faces and carry WOUNDED MEN, WOUNDED WOMEN and WOUNDED CHILDREN through the streets.

A YOUNG GIRL, covered in ash and dirt, clings to a teddy bear as she screams and calls out for help, surrounded by bricks and wood.

Rose pays little attention to FIREMEN who spray a water cannon onto the remains of a building.

Rose looks down at a watch on her wrist as she picks up her pace into a jog.

George, Connie, Marjorie and Joan wander through the same streets in pursuit of Rose. They observe the horrors that surround them.

An INJURED MAN helps pull an INJURED WOMAN from beneath a pile of rubble. He moves further down the street and assists the Medics.

Connie shakes her head.

CONNIE

Does it always take disaster to
bring people together?

George spots Rose up ahead and runs towards her.

George slows his pace as he runs beside Rose, who completely disregards his presence.

Marjorie, Connie and Joan catch up with them and follow on just behind.

Marjorie is out of breath and struggles with the pace. She falls behind.

Connie turns around and approaches Marjorie. She puts her arm around Marjorie and smiles as she assists her.

EXT. ROSE'S STREET - DAY

Tears fill Rose's eyes as she looks towards the end of the street.

Rose sprints away as George arrives and, wide-eyed, observes the devastation.

Rose stands beside a huge pile of bricks and debris. She picks up a

STREET NAME SIGN

'Heeley Bank View.'

As the sign is lowered, the remains of Rose's house are revealed.

Half of the house still stands, barely. It looks incredibly unstable.

Rose tosses the street sign onto the pile of rubble and cries.

George, Connie, Marjorie and Joan join Rose's side. George puts his hands on Rose's shoulders.

GEORGE

Gordon Bennett.

MARJORIE

If they got into the shelter, they could still be down there.

Tears stream down Rose's face.

MARJORIE (CONT'D)

There's always a chance.

Rose clambers over the debris as George gives what remains standing of the house an uncertain once over.

GEORGE

Looks about as sturdy as a one-legged donkey, that does.

George follows Rose.

Connie follows suit and scrambles over the debris. She shouts towards Rose and George, who both lift and toss away bricks and rubble.

CONNIE

Don't take too much away from here. It could be all that's keeping that upright.

Marjorie looks at Joan.

MARJORIE

Ready to get stuck in?

Joan looks determined as she shoves past Marjorie and climbs over the rubble.

Marjorie smiles and follows on.

Time passes as Rose, George, Connie, Marjorie and Joan all pitch in and clear the rubble.

Rose suddenly stops.

Faint cries for help are heard.

Rose clammers over the rubble towards the standing remains of the house.

There is a large slab of concrete that partially blocks a hole that goes beneath the ground. Rose stands beside it and listens.

ROSE

They must have gone down the cellar.

Rose pushes the slab. It does not move an inch.

George, Connie, Marjorie and Joan help and the slab moves slightly. As it does, bricks fall from the standing remains.

GEORGE

Stop.

George stands and puts his hands on his hips. He admires the remains, which look more unstable than before.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

If that goes...

George points towards the concrete slab.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

...that goes, an' all.

George points towards the standing remains.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Could do with another pair of hands.

ROSE

No time to waste.

Rose, Marjorie, Connie and Joan push the slab. The remains wobble and more bricks fall from them.

George stands on the slab. Rose looks up towards him, clearly annoyed.

ROSE (CONT'D)
They could be running out of oxygen
down there.

George crouches down and gazes into Rose's eyes.

GEORGE
Yer don't have to prove anythin' to
me, love.

Rose's expression softens.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Trust me.

Rose looks up towards the unstable remains then back towards
George.

Eventually, Rose stands up, face to face with George.

ROSE
Fair enough.

George smiles.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Even though there's no other bugger
around to help.

ERNEST (O.S.)
Mr. Churchill also said something
else.

Rose, George, Connie, Marjorie and Joan all turn around and
see Ernest hobble over the rubble towards them.

ERNEST (CONT'D)
Let us go forward together with our
united strength.

Rose smiles.

ERNEST (CONT'D)
Consider this an extended break.

George pats Ernest on the back and Ernest scowls at him.

George quickly removes his hand.

GEORGE

Erm, right. Reckon if we lift this and prop it up against the wall, it might keep that from cavin' in long enough for me to go down and get them out.

Rose nods her head.

ROSE

There's two of them down there.

George nods.

GEORGE

Together, then.

Rose, George, Connie, Marjorie, Joan and Ernest dig in and heave the slab upright.

It props up against the wall of the standing remains. Ernest pushes his back up against it and strains as he holds it in place.

A stone stair-case that leads beneath the foundations of the house is revealed.

George and Rose step into the hole.

INT. CELLAR - CONTINUOUS

George and Rose descend the dark, uneven stairs. They both squint in the darkness.

Rose and George reach the bottom of the staircase.

In the far corner of the cellar, Valerie sits, curled up in a ball. She cuddles Harry and holds him close.

ROSE

Val? You there, duck?

Valerie looks incredibly relieved.

VALERIE

Thank God.

Rose smiles as she sees Valerie and Harry, battered and bloody. She runs towards them.

VALERIE (CONT'D)

Careful.

Rose slows her pace as part of the ceiling falls in ahead.

Rose tip toes the rest of the way.

George scans the room as he follows behind.

Rose takes Harry from Valerie, kisses him hard on the forehead and pulls him close.

EXT. ROSE'S STREET - SAME

Ernest, Marjorie, Connie and Joan hold the slab in place.

Suddenly, the top part of the standing remains give way and tumble to the ground, narrowly missing Ernest and the women.

INT. CELLAR - SAME

A loud thud sound as cracks appear in the roof and dust sprinkles down towards the cellar floor.

GEORGE

Berra gerra move on.

Rose lifts Harry over her shoulder as George helps Valerie to her feet.

As they make their way towards the staircase, a wooden beam gives way and crashes down.

The beam smashes George in the back, who pushes Valerie out of the way, as he tumbles onto the floor.

George lets out a cry as debris lands on his legs.

EXT. ROSE'S STREET - SAME

Ernest's feet slip and torturously give way beneath the weight of the slab.

INT. CELLAR - SAME

Rose turns and faces George, who shakes the debris from his leg.

Rose places Harry down on the floor.

ROSE

Wait here.

Harry looks terrified.

Rose runs towards George and helps him up to his feet. With Rose's assistance, George hobbles towards Valerie.

GEORGE

I'll be fine from here.

Rose looks into George's eyes and nods.

George helps Valerie up the staircase.

Rose beckons Harry towards her but he appears too terrified to move and shakes his head.

More of the cellar roof beams collapse around Harry. Rose grits her teeth and moves towards him.

EXT. ROSE'S STREET - CONTINUOUS

George and Valerie emerge from the cellar and stumble across the rubble.

Ernest looks at Marjorie, Connie and Joan through strained eyes.

ERNEST

I'll hold it as long as I can.

The women let go of the slab and follow George and Valerie over the rubble towards safe ground.

Ernest strains beneath the weight.

INT. CELLAR - SAME

Rose covers Harry's head as she rushes up the staircase.

EXT. ROSE'S STREET - SAME

Ernest lets out a cry as he moves away from the slab.

The unstable remains creak and groan.

George collapses on the cobbles and Valerie kneels beside him.

Connie, Marjorie and Joan watch in anticipation as Rose emerges from the cellar, Harry pulled in close to her chest.

The standing remains topple completely and tumble downwards as Rose and Harry are enveloped in dust that fills the screen.

The dust spreads out over the cobbles. George coughs as he struggles up to his knees and clears the dust away from his face.

Marjorie puts a hand on Valerie's shoulder as she, Connie and Joan look like they fear the worst.

Ernest collapses on the cobbles, completely out of breath.

Tears well in George's eyes.

Connie clings onto Marjorie, who does not look optimistic for a change.

The dust settles and a lone figure can just about be seen.

George's eyes widen and he gets to his feet.

From out of the dust, battered and bruised, holding a young child comes the figure...

Rose.

Rose staggers towards the group, completely overwhelmed.

George smiles as tears of joy stream down Rose's face.

Rose sinks onto the floor with Harry firmly in her embrace.

The Landlord appears, horrified.

LANDLORD

My houses.

George watches on, out of breath, as Marjorie, Connie and Joan gather around Rose and form a protective circle.

Ernest pulls himself together and takes a deep breath.

George observes for a moment as the women embrace each other and fuss over Harry.

George turns, the happy scene of the women visible over his shoulder.

Valerie looks towards George and shouts.

VALERIE

Thank you.

George stops, turns and looks towards Valerie, who smiles at him.

George nods his head in acknowledgement then turns away.

George smiles to himself as he walks away into the distance, clearly content with the lack of fanfare.

INT. STEELWORKS - DAY

CANTEEN

Completely empty, save for a wireless radio that plays to itself.

Half empty mugs of tea and coffee sit beside a sink.

Cracks run down the dirty walls

NEWSREADER (O.S.)

One month on since the blitz and the city continues to rebuild itself. Hitler, hell bent on destroying the will of the people, has inadvertently caused the opposite. Never before has a city embodied its own nickname more so than our steel city as men, women and children all pull together and demonstrate an unbreakable community spirit.

A loud horn sounds and the door swings open.

Rose, Connie, Marjorie and Joan all wipe their brows and gossip as they enter.

Joan's body language is much more relaxed and she also looks more down to earth.

An ATTRACTIVE STEELWORKER, male, early thirties, also enters.

Rose, Connie and Marjorie sit down, completely at home, as Joan walks towards a tea pot.

JOAN

Brews?

ROSE

Could nail one.

MARJORIE

Always.

CONNIE

Why not?

ATTRACTIVE STEELWORKER

Not for me.

The Attractive Steelworker slides himself towards Joan.

ATTRACTIVE STEELWORKER (CONT'D)

I will have a proper drink with
you. This weekend, maybe?

Rose, Connie and Marjorie all raise their eyebrows as they observe like a bunch of school-girls.

Joan looks down her nose at the Attractive Steelworker and eyeballs him for a few moments.

JOAN

Why the devil not?

Rose, Connie and Marjorie cheer and wolf whistle as Attractive Steelworker exits.

CONNIE

That reminds me. I'm singing this
weekend, down at the dance hall.

Rose and Marjorie nod in approval.

MARJORIE

Could come down. Nothing better to
do since I've booted sad sack out.
It's like my old nan-nan used to
say--

Rose rolls her eyes.

ROSE

She said an awful lot.

Marjorie nods her head.

MARJORIE

Ironic that she died of throat
cancer.

Rose is taken aback.

Marjorie looks towards the heavens for a brief moment, then chuckles to herself, as if reflecting on something.

MARJORIE (CONT'D)

Taken me all these years to realise
what that woman was banging on
about.

Marjorie looks towards Rose.

MARJORIE (CONT'D)

We need actions, not words.

Rose smiles.

ROSE

That, we do.

A tear rolls down Connie's cheek.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Sure he'll be watching on, duck.

Connie wipes the tear away and puts on a brave face.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Just promise me one thing.

Rose puts an arm around Connie.

ROSE (CONT'D)

You won't sing with them flamin'
rollers in.

Rose, Marjorie and Connie chuckle as Joan brings the pot of
tea over, sits down and joins in the conversation.

George enters, arm around the back of a NEW APPRENTICE, male,
late teens.

GEORGE

Yer see, youth, that's the thing
with steel. Needs mouldin' and
hammerin' into shape. But, once it
cools...

George picks up a fork from the side and bends it. It does
not move.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

...rock solid. Damn near
unbreakable. Nowt else like it.

Rose, Marjorie, Connie and Joan laugh and joke in the middle
of the canteen.

George looks thoughtful as he observes the camaraderie of the women.

The New Apprentice exits.

Rose notices George and approaches.

ROSE
 Alright.

Rose stands, face to face with George.

GEORGE
 Alreet.

Awkward silence.

ROSE
 Thank you.

GEORGE
 I'd give anyone time off in same
 situa--

ROSE
 Not for that.

Rose gives George a long overdue kiss on the lips.

Rose smiles as she looks into George's eyes.

ROSE (CONT'D)
 Anyway, it's the foreman who gives
 time off.

George rolls his eyes.

Rose takes George's hand and realises he no longer wears the glove on it.

Rose admires and caresses his disfigured hand then looks him in the eyes.

ROSE (CONT'D)
 Could do with more like you out at
 the front.

George smiles.

ROSE (CONT'D)
 A proper bloke.

GEORGE
 I'm fine just where I am, love.

George winks at Rose.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Reet, come on you lot. Let's have
yer.

Rose, Connie, Marjorie and Joan make their way through the door and out into the

FURNACE SHED

The four of them walk by as the furnaces roar and illuminate the factory.

Bill and Ben shovel scrap metal into a furnace. They stop and give Rose, Marjorie, Connie and Joan a respectful nod.

Rose, Connie, Marjorie and Joan return the acknowledgment.

Suddenly, Rose stops right in front of one of the furnace fires.

MARJORIE

Everything alright?

Rose nods.

ROSE

I'll catch up.

Marjorie walks away with Connie and Joan.

Rose waits until they disappear into the distance and then removes her wedding ring.

Rose stares into the white hot fire; the flames highlight the features of her face.

Rose fiddles with the ring for a few moments and admires it in the palm of her hand.

Finally, Rose tosses the ring into the furnace.

The ring sinks into the roaring mass of molten metal and melts away.

Rose turns away from the fire and marches confidently through the furnace shed; a proud smile firmly imprinted on her face.

FADE OUT.