

The Accidental Serial Killer

1 INT CHURCH NIGHT

A violent storm rages all around while inside a vast, candle-lit gothic church a dark, desperate, wild-eyed young man grins fiendishly, brandishing a hammer, about to crucify a blood-soaked victim on a cross standing high above the altar, sporadically silhouetted by lightning flashing behind the stained-glass windows. An attractive, sweet, young woman runs into the church and screams as he drives in the nails.

FADE TO:

2 EXT TENEMENT BUILDING NIGHT

We close on a bleak, modern block of flats somewhere in the centre of Glasgow, where, curiously, the sound of hammering continues. We view, briefly, a DIY enthusiast putting up shelves and then pan along to the next window where we see a young man working at a computer.

CUT TO:

3 INT FLAT NIGHT

The young man at the computer is typing the church scene. He leans back and looks at the screen, lights a cigarette and takes a sip from a glass of wine. Eventually he resumes his work, typing the following dialogue. We fade into the action as he types.

FADE TO:

SUSAN

(distraught)

You fiend! You terrible, diabolical fiend!

BLACKMAN

(disdainfully casting aside the hammer)

Did you really believe that the good guy would win? Do you really think that that is how the world is? You poor misguided wretch, look at him, he's dead, (maniacally) dead as a doornail.

BLACKMAN climbs up onto the window ledge and stands with arms outstretched just below a stained glass depiction of Christ on the crucifix.

BLACKMAN

There is no God. There is only me, me and you and Mr Dead down there. Here we are in the house of God and what do you know? There's nobody home.

SUSAN rushes towards him picking up a large heavy bible and throwing it at him. He tries to fend it off but falls back through the window just as lightning strikes a tree behind the church. BLACKMAN lies, slightly dazed, on the ground as the stricken tree begins to creak and falls crushing him, the branches lying in the shape of a cross over his prostrate, dying frame.

We fade back to the writer as he is typing the words, 'THE END'. He leans back in his chair looking hugely satisfied. He gulps down the remains of his wine, takes a long draw on his cigarette and stands up to survey the room. It is untidy and dirty, there are magazines, plates, books, ashtrays, clothes all over the room. This is TOMMY, he is a single man, thirty or so years old, scruffy but only a shower, a shave and a clean sweater short of being fairly good-looking and, all in all, reasonably content. He has a dark complexion, unkempt, straggly, dark hair, an intense sort of a look about him with eyes bright, alive and hopeful. He pours himself the dregs from the wine bottle, lights another cigarette, flops down on the couch and switches on the TV. An entertainment show flickers to life and we are presented with a still photo of a beautiful actress. It is the same actress who has played SUSAN in TOMMY's imagination.

CUT TO:

A fluffy blond TV presenter.

PRESENTER

And so the Italian American beauty finds herself without a man once again. Rumours are afoot that Brian is already seeing someone else and that that someone could be the co-star of his new movie, Mission Ridiculous 2. Melinda herself refused to comment but a neighbour said this morning that she heard a violent row sometime in the small hours of yesterday...

TOMMY

(to himself)

Never mind Melinda, darlin', I'll rescue you.

TOMMY switches off the TV, runs his fingers through his hair, pulls a jacket from the detritus on his couch, picks up his cigarettes and heads for the door.

CUT TO:

4 INT PUB NIGHT

TOMMY, a wistful look on him, sits in a public bar sipping a pint. The bar is fairly busy although he seems oblivious to his surroundings and is staring into space. His daydream begins to take shape;

FADE TO:

A large country house at dusk. TOMMY steps out onto a veranda where MELINDA (SUSAN) stands gazing at a full moon. A rather suave, confident and slick, clean-shaven TOMMY is immaculately dressed in smoking jacket and neck scarf.

TOMMY

Don't worry darling, I'll protect you. That brute can't touch you now.

MELINDA

I know darling, it's just that, well, I feel so afraid, so vulnerable, like a little butterfly in a raging storm...

TOMMY

Our love is strong my darling, so very strong...

MELINDA

Oh Tommy, oh Tommy...

They fall into a passionate embrace.

FADE TO:

The bar, where TOMMY is approached by a young woman, MARY, not entirely unlike MELINDA, although perhaps, by comparison, a little dowdy and bookish.

MARY

Tommy, (rousing him from reverie) Tommy...

TOMMY

Oh hello Mary, how are you? I didn't know you came to these places.

MARY

Librarians drink too you know.

TOMMY

Do they? I wasn't aware of that, I imagined that you must drink water and eat dry bread, perhaps a cake on Sundays.

MARY

No, no we lead double lives, don't you read the newspapers? Librarians are the new grey.

TOMMY

Well, well, all these months you were living downstairs I thought you were reading Jane Austen, having baths, pure thoughts and early nights.

MARY

God no, I've been stealing cars, taking drugs and mutilating horses. I do have baths and early nights but not when I'm alone.

TOMMY

You know, I was thinking of heading home now, maybe even having a bath, what do you think?

MARY

Is that an invitation?

CUT TO:

5 INT MARY'S FLAT NIGHT

TOMMY sits on a settee in a very well appointed flat, similar in size to his own but beautifully decorated. He sips at a glass of whisky and smiles quietly to himself. In the soft lighting MARY emerges from behind a door. Her appearance is jaw-droppingly different. She is wearing stockings and suspenders with a basque and looks like a whore. TOMMY is having a very good day.

CUT TO:

6 INT MARY'S FLAT NIGHT

TOMMY and MARY are having sex, doggy-style, on the carpet in the living room. MARY is screaming at the top of her voice. TOMMY looks as though he can't believe his luck. He is having sex with a librarian.

CUT TO:

7 INT MARY'S FLAT NIGHT

TOMMY and MARY are now in the bath.

TOMMY

Do you read books? I mean when you're working.

MARY

Strangely enough, no, I don't, I think about it all the time, well, when I'm not thinking about sex, so, about a quarter of the time maybe, but somehow when there are so many books you just become complacent about Dostoevsky and Dickens and all these sort of people.

TOMMY

I would think Dostoevsky's a bit of a bugger anyway. And I've always thought Dickens was over-rated. And as for Jane Austen, well, that's just potboilers in a different century.

MARY

(a little unhappy about this)

Jane Austen was a great writer.

TOMMY

(unwilling to argue)

Yes I suppose she was. (pause) You know I've been writing.

MARY

(with genuine interest)

Really?

TOMMY

Yeah, I wrote a screenplay.

MARY

A screenplay? Doesn't everyone do that? What's it about?

TOMMY

Well, it's about a serial killer who kills people in the manner of the great plagues of Egypt, you know, the Old Testament.

MARY

I don't want to piss on your chips here but hasn't that whole biblical serial killer thing been done before?

TOMMY

Actually, that was the point, it seems to be a successful formula, and anyway I've given it a sort of camp humour...

MARY

What are the plagues?

TOMMY

Well the first one is water into blood, then frogs then lice and so on.

MARY

Sounds gruesome, you're bound to become famous.

CUT TO:

8 EXT STREET DAY

It is a bright sunlit day, TOMMY, script in hand, is striding purposefully down the street heading for the Post Office. We follow him inside as he puts the script into an envelope and joins a queue.

CUT TO:

Same scene a little later, TOMMY is being served by an officious, bespectacled young woman.

YOUNG WOMAN

That'll be six pounds seventy-two. Is there anything else?

TOMMY

(handing over the money)

No that'll be fine. (slipping a ten pound note under the glass partition) There we are, and have one for yourself.

YOUNG WOMAN

I'm sorry?

TOMMY

Have one yourself, (pause) it's a joke.

YOUNG WOMAN

I see. What you're saying is that it might be funny if I sent a package to America, paid for by you.

TOMMY

Yes, I suppose so, (pause) 'and one for yourself', it's what people say, don't they?

YOUNG WOMAN

Not in the Post Office. Not in here.

TOMMY

Well. That's what's funny. Well it was, before this all started.

YOUNG WOMAN

Some people send live organs to America, do you think that's funny?

TOMMY

No.

YOUNG WOMAN

Well maybe you'll think about that the next time you think about making a joke at the expense of the Postal Service.

CUT TO:

9 INT LIFT DAY

TOMMY enters the lift in his block. A distressed woman hurries towards him laden with shopping and two snotty-nosed kids. This is CHRISTAL, she is a single mum, young, care-worn but somehow determined.

CHRISTAL

Hold the door Tommy. (TOMMY does so and she squeezes in, breathless, with her entourage) Thanks, Tommy. Haven't seen you for a while.

KID

(before TOMMY can speak)

Mum, Sandy's got Spiderman, he's smelling his bum.

CHRISTAL

Spiderman hasn't got a bum.

TOMMY

Not so bad, darlin', how're you?

SANDY

How does Spiderman do a poo?

TOMMY

He doesn't go to the toilet, he's made of plastic.

CHRISTAL

(as the doors open on her floor,)

Fancy a coffee?

TOMMY

Yeah, why not?

SANDY

(as they leave the lift)

Where's Spiderman's willy?

CUT TO:

10 INT CHRISTAL'S FLAT DAY

CHRISTAL's flat is much as we might have expected but is, nonetheless, clean and comfortable. There are toys everywhere. TOMMY is sitting uncomfortably on the settee reading a tabloid newspaper, he takes a batmobile out from where he is sitting and puts it on the floor. CHRISTAL, clearing two further spidermen from a coffee table, puts a mug of coffee in front of him.

CHRISTAL

What're you reading?

TOMMY

Ten things I didn't know about Ben Affleck, the actor.

CHRISTAL

(smiling)

Go on then tell me something I didn't know. What's thing one?

TOMMY

His hobbies are knitting and going to the toilet.

CHRISTAL

(laughing)

It doesn't say that

TOMMY

It does, thing five is that he is actually an orang-utan. He was shaved some years ago after a promising cameo in the movie, *Three Idiots In The Jungle*. They taught him how to read and write and the next thing they knew he'd come up with a screenplay and wanted to expand his acting range.

CHRISTAL

Poor Ben Affleck, they should send him back to the jungle.

TOMMY

Exactly, I can't open the fridge without finding out ten things I didn't know about him. (pause) It's one of these new computerised fridges, it tells you when your milk's gone sour and ten things you didn't want to know about Ben Affleck.

CHRISTAL

(still laughing)

You don't like celebrities, do you?

TOMMY

Depends on the celebrity, some of them are okay, I suppose, the ones that don't take themselves too seriously, or the ones that have obvious talent, but the rest of them, well, you can't escape them, there's more of them than us now, eventually *we'll* become celebrities because we're not famous. We'll be hunted down by the tabloids, we'll live in a world where it'll be compulsory to famous, a bit like national service.

CHRISTAL

(after a pause)

So, are you working just now?

TOMMY

Er, not really, I was thinking of getting something casual, for a couple of months or so, then I was hoping to go abroad...

CHRISTAL

Really, where d'you want to go? I was thinking of taking the kids to Spain for a while, maybe getting a job teaching or housekeeping or something.

TOMMY

Actually I was thinking of going to the states.

CHRISTAL

America? You don't want to go there, it's full of celebrities, you'd hate it.

CUT TO:

11 TOMMY'S FLAT NIGHT

TOMMY is sitting working away at the computer. He is posting synopses and loglines on internet movie sites and comes across a website entitled, 'Tomorrow Hollywood!' As he scrolls down he learns of a screenwriting competition. It only costs \$50.00 to enter. He proceeds.

CUT TO:

Same scene a little later. TOMMY is watching TV and drinking wine. The celebrity gossip channel is on. TOMMY is engrossed. The fluffy blond presenter is on again.

PRESENTER

Soooo, Paula, it looks as though Brian and Melinda's movies will be in direct competition with each other over the summer and the media execs at Lion Eyes Pictures are already counting their millions. In other news, popstar turned actress Juicy Woodhead is having a baby, aw, I know, isn't it lovely, and Simply Stars magazine have paid her a whopping two and a half million dollars for the rights to photograph the actual birth, apparently they get to see the baby before she does. And we've just heard this morning that 85-year-old transsexual and former Nazi war criminal turned game show host Bernie Horstweiner has decided after all that he will run for governor of Texas. This follows the success of his horse, Hitler, in the Belmont Stakes over the weekend. He has the full backing of the Republican Party, a spokesman said, 'Bernie's an inspiration to anyone in pursuit of the American dream.'

TOMMY's eyes begin to glaze over.

FADE TO:

A yacht somewhere in the Mediterranean. MELINDA gazes admiringly at TOMMY as he hooks a huge fish. He hands the rod to two manservants who struggle to hold on to it and grabs MELINDA round the waste, kissing her passionately. Eventually they break.

MELINDA

I'm amazed that you can be so rugged and manly and yet such a gentle and sensitive lover.

TOMMY

(thoughtfully)

Yes, well, my years in Tibet taught me many things...

MELINDA

(turning away for a second)

I sometimes feel quite inadequate with you, you have had such a rich past and so many lovers, are you sure I'll be able to give you all that you need?

TOMMY

(drawing her close to him)

My darling, I have never known a love such as ours...

VOICE

You have email.

FADE TO:

Reality. TOMMY's computer is speaking. He walks over to his desk and opens the email. It reads, 'Dear Tommy, found your synopsis quite interesting please send the full script as a word document and we'll take a closer look. Regards, Kurt Michaels.' TOMMY is elated and says a little, 'Yes' to himself with clenched fist. He drains his wine glass and lights a cigarette, looks round the room for a second, picks up his jacket and heads out.

CUT TO:

12 EXT MARY'S DOORSTEP NIGHT

TOMMY waits as MARY unlocks and opens her door. She is in a dressing gown.

TOMMY

Fancy a drink or something.

MARY

Well, as it so happens I've nothing on tonight.

TOMMY

Great, where d'you fancy going.

MARY

(opening the dressing gown, exposing herself)

Oh, I'm not going anywhere, I mean, I've nothing on, not a thing. I'm a defenceless girl at the mercy of any man coming to the door, I mean, you could just push your way in here and fuck me, if you wanted to.

CUT TO:

13 INT MARY'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT

TOMMY and MARY lie on the carpet breathless, having just had sex.

MARY

Well, that wasn't too bad for a writer of serial killer movies.

TOMMY

And you, as a librarian, have provided an excellent service, could you categorise sex, d'you suppose?

MARY

It would come under nudity and eroticism. I may have to keep it under the counter. If the library members knew that this was available, well, they'd all want to take it out.

TOMMY

I'd keep you until you were overdue and then I'd renew you.

MARY

(tenderly)

Would you? How sweet of you.

TOMMY

D'you fancy going out sometime, I mean, on a date, for a drink, or something?

MARY

Oh no! We fuck, darling, that's what we do.

CUT TO:

14 INT TOMMY'S FLAT DAY

TOMMY is working away feverishly on the computer again, still ploughing through production company databases. The DIY fanatic is hammering away next door. TOMMY grimaces as an electric drill joins the cacophony. His computer announces that he has email and he immediately reads it. It is a rejection, to which he mutters the word, 'fuckers' and carries on. The drilling becomes louder and eventually TOMMY stands up and hammers on the wall with his fists screaming, 'Shut the fuck up' just as the drilling stops. There is silence for a moment or two and then a knock at the door. We follow TOMMY through a hallway to his front door. He opens it to a very large DIY fanatic.

DIY FANATIC

(menacingly)

Got a problem?

TOMMY

Well it's the noise, I was trying to work.

DIY

And I wasn't trying to work? Are you sayin' your work's better than my work? What are you? A fuckin' brain surgeon?

TOMMY

Yes, I'm a brain surgeon and I'm actually in the middle of a very delicate procedure, so if you don't mind...

DIY

Funny fucker, eh? You know what I think you are?

TOMMY

A sensitive, intelligent brain surgeon being who's trying to make the world a better place?

DIY

A fuckin' poof. Ah've seen you, fuckin' poofin' about up the street wi' your poofy clothes an' your poofy shoes on.

TOMMY

How would you know what kind of shoes poofs wear? Unless you're one.

DIY punches TOMMY squarely on the nose.

TOMMY

You fucking shit.

TOMMY tries to fight back but is almost immediately laid out with another pile driver punch, this time knocking him to the floor. DIY leaves, his work done. TOMMY gets up and goes back to living room where he pours himself a glass of wine and shakily lights a cigarette.

CUT TO:

15 INT CHRISTAL'S FLAT DAY

TOMMY is nursing his bruises while CHRISTAL sits regarding him. The kids are at school.

CHRISTAL

You could phone the police.

TOMMY

He's probably one of them. I'd have to report him to himself.

CHRISTAL

Tommy, what are you doing?

TOMMY

How d'you mean?

CHRISTAL

Well, are you working?

TOMMY

Well, there's the screenplay, that's about it, I've a few quid in the bank. Not that much but...

CHRISTAL

There's work at the shoe factory.

TOMMY

Lovely, I spend six months writing, for nothing and I go to work in the shoe factory. Are they making poofy shoes?

CHRISTAL

What?

TOMMY

Oh, nothing.

CHRISTAL

You don't stay there, you make enough money to go and do something else. I'm going next week.

TOMMY

How much does it pay?

CUT TO:

16 INT SHOE FACTORY DAY

TOMMY and CHRISTAL stand, side by side, on a production line. They are putting shoes into boxes. Over and over again.

TOMMY

I'll never wear another shoe.

CHRISTAL

(laughing)

Yes you will.

TOMMY

Well, then, I'll never eat another shoe. Where do all these shoes go anyway?

CHRISTAL

They go to countries where people have no shoes.

TOMMY

I think that's where I want to go, I'm going to hide in a shoebox and hope for the best.

CHRISTAL

Mm, I might join you, I'll get into the right and you can have the left. We might be shoe-shaped when we get there but you never know it might be the fashion.

CUT TO:

17 INT TOMMY'S FLAT DAY

TOMMY is checking his email, he has received two more rejections and is unhappy about it. He slumps down on the couch and switches on the TV. The entertainment channel introduces a young man, trendily attired, rock-star hair, talking earnestly into the camera.

YOUNG MAN

Well, I certainly didn't expect all this attention. I mean I'm just a wee laddie fae Govan! You know I just saw the news report and I thought, 'this is a great story' and, well, Tom Cruise was interested and everything else is history.

REPORTER

So here we have it, the Hollywood dream, coming true in Govan as young Callum Di Stefano becomes the latest Scottish screenwriter to find success in Hollywood.

TOMMY is immediately furious. He punches the couch, which makes an ominous splintering sound. TOMMY is unmoved, however, and continues to storm about punching things and repeating the words 'fucking wanker' over and over.

CUT TO:

18 INT MARY'S FRONT DOOR NIGHT

TOMMY is standing outside MARY's flat as we hear the sound of a door being unlocked. MARY appears wearing what seems to be a Greek slave girl costume and is somewhat out of breath.

TOMMY
(smilingly)

How did you know it was me?

MARY

Actually Tommy, I'm a bit busy at the moment, I've, er, a few, er, friends in.

TOMMY

Oh, I see, er, well, er, I don't suppose, are you doing anything tomorrow?

MARY

Well, let me see now, actually yes I think I do have something on tomorrow, er...

The sound of a horse neighing is heard in the background, then a man's voice.

VOICE

Mary! For God's sake.

FEMALE VOICE

I, Clytemnestra, demand your presence.

The horse neighs again.

TOMMY

Okay, I can see you're, er busy, maybe another time.

MARY

(as she closes the door)

I could be free on Friday.

TOMMY walks away somewhat deflated.

CUT TO:

19 INT FLAT NIGHT

TOMMY sits on the settee looking a little forlorn. He closes his eyes and begins to daydream.

FADE TO:

TOMMY and MELINDA walking along a beach, hand in hand.

MELINDA

They were such fools to ignore your talent for so long,
you're a magnificent writer.

TOMMY

I know I am, the great ones always suffer I suppose, but
we're here now, we have everything we could ever want.

MELINDA

I know, isn't money wonderful? How much did you earn this
week?

TOMMY

Seventeen and a half million dollars, you?

MELINDA

Oh I don't count it, I have a man to do that for me, but he
says I have almost enough for another yacht, isn't that
lovely?

TOMMY

(smiling at her)

Yes it is darling.

MELINDA

Tommy, you could give me the rest of the money, couldn't
you, I really need another little yacht and a new car.

TOMMY

But darling you already have nine cars.

MELINDA

(becoming a little petulant)

Well if you won't even give me a measly two hundred
thousand dollars, well, it's, it's just mean, that's all.

CHRISTAL appears in the distance, picking up seashells and putting them into a basket, as she comes closer TOMMY becomes fixated on her. Her skirt is hitched up and she is barefoot, wisps of hair hang engagingly down over her face, she has a beautiful, dreamy expression.

CHRISTAL

See my pretty shells? People buy them you know. I'll soon have enough money to go to Spain, and if there's any left over I'll just give it to the poor.

TOMMY is oblivious to MELINDA and watches as CHRISTAL recedes into the distance and disappears. Suddenly MELINDA's voice can be heard loud and clear.

MELINDA

Tommy! Honestly, sometimes I don't think you listen to me. I want another yacht, I have to have it, I must have it. Tommy! Tommy! Are you listening?

FADE TO:

TOMMY waking up, he has fallen asleep. He looks around the room. All is silent. He goes over to his computer and clicks on email, he has no messages.

CUT TO:

20 INT POLICE STATION DAY

A grizzled old detective (McGRIVEN) stands staring out of a window in an office in central Glasgow. He is world-weary but wise, going a little grey, clothes not quite fashionable but beyond his caring about it. He scratches his chin and turns his attention, perhaps a little mischievously to a junior detective (WILSON) and a sweet, naïve, young clerk (MISS SMENTH) who sit close by.

McGRIVEN

There's something in the air.

WILSON

What do you mean sir?

McGRIVEN

Evil. There's evil in the air, Watson, an evil the likes of which I don't think we've seen.

WILSON

Er it's Wilson, sir. Evil sir?

McGRIVEN

Evil, boy, an evil; out there somewhere, a beast in the skin of a man.

SMENTH
(distressed)

That's horrible sir.

McGRIVEN

Aye, that it is Miss Smenth but we must hold ourselves together and fight with gut and sinew.

SMENTH

Oh sir. I'm a bit scared.

McGRIVEN

We must all be afraid, Smenth, afraid and vigilant.

WILSON

I'll be vigilant sir.

McGRIVEN

Good man Thomson.

McGRIVEN returns to the window and continues to gaze into the heartland of Glasgow.

WILSON

Wilson, sir.

CUT TO:

21 INT TOMMY'S FLAT NIGHT

TOMMY sits, despondent, looking at another rejection letter, we focus on the words, 'biblical serial killings are a thing of the past'. There is just a hint of anxiety about him now; he is unshaven, hair a bit greasy, his eyes a little darker, losing the sparkle of confidence and optimism.

CUT TO:

22 EXT FLAT FRONT DOOR NIGHT

TOMMY stands expectantly at the door of another flat. A corpulent, smug, wealthy-looking man answers the door. This is HARRY THE HORSE, businessman and purveyor of drugs. TOMMY enters the flat and sits down in the living room where HARRY pours them both a drink. The living room is tastefully decorated if a little dark and there is a preponderance of crucifixes and Virgin Marys.

HARRY

The minions have dispersed, I believe Glasgow Rangers have a crucial footballing encounter this evening.

TOMMY

Any hash?

HARRY

Tommy, Tommy, why the vulgar recourse to business? You must have a glass of wine and relax, we shall discuss terms in the fullness of time.

HARRY is in the final stages of rolling a joint.

TOMMY

I thought you went to the football Harry?

HARRY

I have no desire to watch a, what would be the collective pronoun for protestants, I wonder? A misery, a German perhaps, a funeral, no, a disgrace, a disgrace of protestants defiling the beautiful game.

TOMMY

(looking at the religious artefacts)

Ah, of course. Sectarianism alive and kicking.

HARRY

Tommy, Tommy, how crude you are tonight. I enjoy the cut and thrust of a keenly observed rivalry but I am not a violent man. God has given us Glasgow Celtic and the devil has, for his part, chosen to vomit forth Glasgow Rangers. We who pursue the Corinthian ideals follow our hearts to Parkhead, the poor misguided fools who trudge along to Govan of a weekend must endure their misery with a heavy heart but I shall not meet their sorrow with anything more or less than disregard. In short, I do not hate.

TOMMY

(sucking on the joint)

Highly commendable, Harry.

HARRY

Indeed, now, I have an excellent selection for you this evening. Thai grass, the usual formulaic camel shit and, wait for this; la piece de la resistance, Nepalese temple ball. A thing of great beauty, I'm sure you'll agree. The Nepalese comes in at fifty a quarter but when you taste its fruits you will see God.

TOMMY

Is it as good as seeing Celtic score a goal against Rangers?

HARRY

A rather different experience.

TOMMY

I suppose so, That'll be more Mexican red mist I imagine, you being an observer of religious conflict as opposed to a participant.

HARRY

You are becoming impossible. My dear boy, I am Claudius, not Caligula.

TOMMY

Indeed Harry, not the best of days so far, you know...

HARRY

(in an avuncular manner)

Indeed my boy, all part of life's rich tapestry, are you a follower of the Catholic faith? I always imagined you to be a man of some discernment.

TOMMY

Well I was born one I suppose but I can't really be bothered with all that shite now.

HARRY

Not shite, my boy, light. It is the path to salvation.

TOMMY

Harry, for fuck sake, I only want to buy some dope.

HARRY

But you must see that I am a reasonable man, a scholar, a theologian.

TOMMY

But Harry how can you be a reasonable man if sectarianism is such a big part of your life? You hate, sorry, dislike the protestant faith.

HARRY

Dislike? Question perhaps.

TOMMY

Question? Why? Does God wear green and white? What difference does it make to you if someone else wants to interpret the bible slightly differently to yourself?

HARRY

Well, it's a little more complicated than that.

TOMMY

You're not going to start telling me about consubstantiation are you?

HARRY

No indeed not, I'm going to tell you that I believe in a Christian approach to life, an approach you seem to be unable to adopt this evening.

TOMMY

But, Harry, you have no regard for anyone other than yourself. You get fat on the misery of lost souls.

HARRY

(standing)

No sir, your vile insinuations are unwelcome, you, sir, have outstayed your welcome.

TOMMY
(standing)

You, 'sir', are a fat fuck and I hereby conclude my business.
Sell smack to unhappy prostitutes if you must but here our
paths must diverge.

HARRY picks up a statue of the virgin Mary and tries to hit TOMMY. He misses and falls to the ground and TOMMY heads for the door. HARRY runs after him and they fall into the bathroom. TOMMY lies on the floor as HARRY finds a cutthroat razor and brandishes it.

HARRY

We will find a compromise here my boy if it is only your
violent and untimely demise.

TOMMY springs to his feet and grabs at the oncoming HARRY's arm. There is a bit of flailing about and in the ensuing struggle he succeeds only in slitting HARRY's throat from ear to ear. There is blood everywhere and HARRY falls to the ground twitching and spluttering to a desperate death. Eventually he is still and TOMMY, breathless and in a state of shock just stands and stares. After a few seconds TOMMY regains his composure and slides him into the bath and, on a whim, fills the bath with water, leaving the tap running and, using his finger and HARRY's blood, writes the words, 'and the rivers shall run with blood' on the wall behind the bathtub. He smiles quietly to himself and turns and heads for the door before stopping and turning round. We see him going through drawers and looking under beds until eventually he finds a tin containing money, a lot of it. He leaves the apartment just as the water in the bath overflows and mingles with the blood on the floor, seeping through the floorboards.

CUT TO:

23 INT FLAT NIGHT

In the flat below HARRY's a sweet, frail, old couple are having their tea at a kitchen table. It is a picture of domestic bliss, the old man, pushes a dinner plate to one side and smiles at his wife.

OLD MAN

Is there any pudding tonight, dear?

OLD WOMAN

As it so happens I bought two strawberry tarts when I
was at the bakers.

The OLD WOMAN puts a strawberry tart on a plate down in front of her husband and as he turns to look at her in appreciation a drip from the ceiling falls directly onto the strawberry tart. It is HARRY's blood dripping from a light bulb. The OLD MAN doesn't notice and takes a bite from the tart.

OLD MAN

Bloody marvellous.

OLD WOMAN

George! What language!

Another drip falls onto the tart but the OLD MAN still doesn't notice and takes another bite before the drips finally become more regular and draw his attention. He looks up to see where

they are coming from and then looks down at his plate to find a little pool of blood forming around the remains of his strawberry tart.

CUT TO:

23 INT HARRY'S FLAT NIGHT

The police are looking into HARRY's murder. McGRIVEN and WILSON are standing over the body. It is still in the bath. The bathwater, obviously, is blood red.

McGRIVEN

Jesus. What a mess.

WILSON

(looking at the writing on the wall)

What do you suppose this means?

McGRIVEN

Not sure for the moment, let's hope it's just a message from a rival dealer and nothing more sinister.

WILSON

(almost hopefully)

It could be sinister, sir, though, couldn't it?

McGRIVEN

(thoughtfully)

Yes, I suppose it could.

CUT TO:

24 INT OFFICE DAY

The police station is as before, MISS SMENTH is busy at a computer and then looks up.

SMENTH

(wide-eyed)

I'm awfully scared, sir.

McGRIVEN

Have you any business with frogs Miss Smenth?

WILSON

Sir, I thought I should tell you we found an empty tin in Harry's place with the perpetrator's prints on it.

McGRIVEN

Would've been cash more than likely, a new face on the drug dealing scene would stick out a mile, wouldn't have been worth his while taking it. (pause) So he took some cash, our boy's short of a few quid, at least he was.

WILSON

Er, frogs, sir?

McGRIVEN

Aye Cranston, frogs.

WILSON

Wilson, sir, why frogs?

SMENTH

I haven't a frog Mr McGriven.

McGRIVEN

Just a thought. The first of the great plagues of ancient Egypt stipulates that the rivers will run with blood. I've a feeling there'll be a frog involved if another victim emerges, blood-soaked and cold. A shell of a human being, naked and dead, the plaything of an animal.

WILSON

The second plague is frogs is it sir?

McGRIVEN

Indeed laddie, frogs, although I think we can safely assume that he doesn't intend to apply a literal interpretation to all of this. (pause, gazing out of the window at a Glasgow today under a heavy, threatening cloud) We've drawn a blank with all the usual suspects to coin a phrase, so who did it? And does he intend to do it again?

SMENTH

(very unhappily)

Oh sir, there's a terrible man out there.

McGRIVEN

That there is young Smenth, and a man who intends to act obscenely with a frog, unless I'm very much mistaken.

SMENTH

(desperately)

Oh, sir.

CUT TO:

25 INT TOMMY'S BEDROOM DAY

TOMMY wakes up and looks around the room. There is a half empty wine bottle by the bed. He reaches down and takes a swig. He then sees his blood-soaked clothes on the carpet and suddenly he sits bolt upright; he remembers. He wanders through to the living room and switches on the TV. After flicking through a few channels he comes up with the news.

NEWSREADER

A man was brutally murdered in his own home in Glasgow last night. The man, Harold Archdeacon, commonly known as Harry the Horse was found dead in his Byers Road flat at around midnight last night. Police are unwilling to say more at this stage but believe the killing may have been drug-

related. In other news, a 53-year-old woman from Inverurie has married a cat.

TOMMY switches the TV off and wanders around the room for a moment. He sits down and thinks. Suddenly he leaps up and storms round the house stuffing evidence, clothes etc into a plastic bag. He sits down again and relaxes for a second or two before leaping out of his chair again in response to a knock at the door. He opens the door to CHRISTAL.

CUT TO:

Same scene a little later. TOMMY and CHRISTAL sit talking in the living room. TOMMY's agitation is worrying but not overwhelming, so far.

CHRISTAL

They'll sack you if you don't go in.

TOMMY

Sacked from the shoe factory? So, they're going to give me the boot?

CHRISTAL

Tommy don't be funny, you could do something with the money, you could go abroad, or something.

TOMMY

(trying to be sympathetic to her point of view)
I know, Christal but, well, I have a little money, enough to get me where I'm going for now anyway and the shoe factory just wasn't me somehow.

CHRISTAL

Tommy, d'you know how crap that place is without intelligent company?

TOMMY

You'll be telling me I was the life and soul of the place next.
(pause) Am I being a bit of a heel?

CHRISTAL

Stop it, it isn't funny now. I, well, I, well, I'll go to Spain, I think, so call me if you want to come, I'd like you to come, there aren't many decent people around here and you're one so, you know...

TOMMY

I know, I've just been a bit preoccupied lately. (They smile at each other but neither makes a move, TOMMY knows he could but is unwilling to give up his Hollywood lifestyle for a flat in Spain and a bar job) I've got plans, you know, the script and everything, I might go to America.

CHRISTAL

(getting up to leave, disappointed)
Well, if you get in the papers give me a call.

CUT TO:

26 INT TOMMY'S FLAT NIGHT

TOMMY sits, asleep on the couch, CHRISTAL has gone, the TV and the computer are on.

FADE TO:

27 INT AEROPLANE DAY

TOMMY is sleeping on an aeroplane, he is on his way to America. He wakes up and takes a drink from the glass of whisky in front of him then looks around to see a young woman, they exchange a smile. She is, rather predictably, large-breasted with gleaming straight, white teeth, blonde hair and long legs. TOMMY smiles to himself, soon he will have lots of these in a swimming pool somewhere in California.

CUT TO:

28 INT HOTEL ROOM NEW YORK NIGHT

TOMMY reclines on a bed in a fairly decent hotel somewhere in Manhattan. He is drinking wine and smoking a cigarette, blowing smoke up towards the ceiling, smiling to himself, it'll be five star hotels from now on. He gets up and goes over to a laptop and checks his email. He has received another rejection. He is unhappy but not quite so furious as he was before, taking a swig of wine and blowing smoke into the air. A smoke detector goes off and a few seconds later there is a knock at the door. TOMMY answers and is confronted by a clerk.

CLERK

This is a no smoking hotel, sir. Could you put out the cigarette please?

TOMMY

No.

CLERK

Please put out the cigarette sir, or I'll have to phone the authorities.

TOMMY

The authorities? Which authorities deal with crimes of this magnitude? Are you going to have me arrested? For smoking? I can go down the street and buy a gun and you're going to have me arrested for smoking?

CLERK

Yes sir.

TOMMY

Do you have a gun detector anywhere in the hotel?

CLERK

No we don't sir, if you could put out the cigarette I could look into that gun thing for you.

TOMMY puts out the cigarette on the door and hands the stub to the clerk.

TOMMY

Really, you'd really do that?

CLERK

No, sir, I wouldn't really.

TOMMY

(darkly)

You wouldn't know where I could get a gun would you?

CLERK

(leaving)

No, sir, I wouldn't.

TOMMY goes back inside and slumps down on the settee and switches on the TV. It flickers to life and an entertainment show, inevitably, appears. A picture of MELINDA materialises, she is looking cool and independent, bravely coping with the end of her relationship while her erstwhile boyfriend is captioned with a stunning, large-breasted blonde. The sound is turned down but we really don't need to hear the commentary. TOMMY's eyes glaze over and he begins to fall asleep.

FADE TO:

29 INT PALACE NIGHT

TOMMY is standing staring into silk veils leading into a Cleopatraesque palatial boudoir. MELINDA reclines on an enormous bed as two raggedy, sad children give her money and then leave. TOMMY turns around to see that he is at the head of a long queue and immediately ahead of CHRISTAL. He turns to talk to her.

TOMMY

Why are you here? What is this?

CHRISTAL

Oh I brought the kids, you know, they wanted a new games console, so, well, you know how kids are, you don't want to say no to them, especially at Easter.

TOMMY

What's going on, I don't understand.

A security guard appears and beckons to them.

GUARD

Are you together?

TOMMY

I suppose so, do you want to come in with me? Melinda and I are together.

CHRISTAL

(laughing)

Yeah, I heard that.

They walk in to the boudoir and approach MELINDA who still reclines luxuriantly on the bed. She smiles at them all.

MELINDA

Tommy! How beautiful of you to come and see me at work.

MELINDA turns to CHRISTAL and the kids and is now less than effusive.

MELINDA

(impatiently)

Alright what do you want?

CHRISTAL

(meekly)

Well if don't mind could we have a games console and a signed DVD?

MELINDA

(snappily)

How much money do you have?

CHRISTAL

(quietly, sadly)

Three hundred and twenty-seven pounds, (quickly, apologetically) I know we should have more but Sandy, that's the wee one, well, he was sick last month and I couldn't do any overtime at the factory, and, then...

MELINDA

Do you think I care about your fucking life? Give me your money, give it to me. Take the games console but no DVD, have a signed photograph of me instead. (to a security guard) get these people out of here.

CHRISTAL hands over a wad of cash which MELINDA dismissively throws into a wheelbarrow by the side of the bed. CHRISTAL and her kids are ushered unceremoniously out of the boudoir, leaving TOMMY and MELINDA alone.

TOMMY

What's going on?

MELINDA

Oh, well, the banks and the retailers are all on strike or something so I have to collect my own money, isn't it vulgar? I didn't realise there were so many poor people out there paying for my, well, my, things. Still it's nice to see that the company gives them something for their money, you know; calendars, posters, DVDs and so on. I used to wonder where my million dollars an episode came from, I imagined they were all nice, well-educated, affluent middle-class types but, well, look at them. (surveying the queue, it is clear that they are anything but) Anyway, it really is so tiresome to have to lie here and do this.

TOMMY and MELINDA look through the silk veil at the long queue formed beyond. The people are dressed in rags, miserable and emaciated; all waiting patiently in line for their games consoles and their satellite TV subscriptions.

TOMMY

Mm, well, don't worry I'm sure you'll be able to, sorry, we, we'll be able to go skiing again soon, or something, there must be something...

FADE TO:

30 INT HOTEL ROOM NIGHT

TOMMY wakes up with a start as the TV confronts him with a smug, smiling male celebrity enjoying a blonde girl with large breasts.

CUT TO:

31 EXT STREET DAY

TOMMY walks purposefully along a Manhattan side street, pauses, checks a piece of paper and enters a small tenement building which has been converted into offices.

CUT TO:

32 INT OFFICE DAY

A slick, self-assured, immaculately attired executive, BOB, sits at a desk staring at four very attractive young women. They all appear to be in a state of nervous expectation, the executive drums a pencil on his desk and then stands up very abruptly, almost jumping out of his seat. The girls are clearly startled and one just stifles a scream.

BOB

You are girls one to four. You have been short-listed for the position of hostess on a daytime TV game show. You will twirl and gesture, you will (shouting the next word) not (the girls gasp and jump again) speak. You will smile sweetly, you will wear fabulous (twirling, breathlessly) dresses, you will be invited to dinner by rich men, (pretending to eat) yum, yum, yum; you will appear in celebrity magazines, your adolescent sexual indiscretions will be revealed in tabloid newspapers, (a further gasp from the girls) and ultimately you will disappear into the ether that is known in the business as 'has been'. (Two of the girls look at each other and giggle, BOB shouts) Pay attention girls one to four. Now, by that time, if you are sensible, you should have made enough money to buy the local saloon in whichever mid-Western anachronism you came from. (The girls wince as he walks very quickly straight towards them) The girl I have chosen is (pointing to a girl whose breasts are bigger than the other three put together) you.

The three disappointed girls traipse out and big breasts stays. BOB circles her for a moment then speaks.

BOB

We will have dinner tonight to discuss your future and indeed your past. (the girl looks a little apprehensive) Fear not my dear, you have just stepped onto the red carpet. Now, go, go (theatrically) and dream of the stars.

Big breasts trips happily out of the office and BOB sits down and smiles quietly to himself. There is a small plastic frog on his desk which croaks when he presses it. BOB smiles at this and a few seconds later there is a knock at the door and in comes TOMMY.

TOMMY

Bob Frost?

BOB FROST

Yes, how did you get in here?

TOMMY

Your, er, secretary was busy with a girl with big breasts.

BOB FROST

I will (again shouting at the top of his voice) fire her for this. I will not speak to you, I do not speak to the public. I make decisions and I hire girls with large breasts. Who are you?

TOMMY

My name's Tommy, I sent you a screenplay a few months ago and I hadn't heard anything so I thought I'd just take a chance on coming up here.

BOB FROST

Nobody comes up here unless I invite them...

TOMMY

It was called Blackman's Plague, it was about a serial killer...

BOB FROST

Stop right there, a serial killer movie...

TOMMY

...about a guy who kills people in the manner of the great plagues of the old testament...

BOB FROST

Well, how original, a serial killer movie with a religious motif. D'you know what I'm going to do Tommy?

TOMMY

No, what are you going to do Bob?

BOB FROST

I'm going to write a movie about an executive producer who kills writers who write movies about serial killers who read

the bible. (shouting again) Is there a fucking serial killer out there who *doesn't* read the bible?

TOMMY

No but it's all sort of tongue in cheek, kind of satirical, you know, at the end he's kind of standing in front of a cross laughing like a maniac and he dies after the heroine throws a bible at him...

BOB FROST

The cross only appears in the new testament Tommy, you're getting confused, I mean, which testament were you aiming for?

TOMMY

Well, that's the thing you see it's meant to be funny, it's meant to be ridiculous.

BOB FROST

Well, it's certainly ridiculous. As are you. Get out.

TOMMY

(starting to get a little angry)

Fuck you Bob, you haven't even read this, have you? you're just dismissing it out of hand. Where the fuck do you people get off sitting up in your ivory towers passing out judgements on those of us who happen not to be lucky enough, well enough connected or good-looking enough to have made it. Because that's it isn't it? It's not about talent, not really, not in the vast majority of cases. It's about who your Daddy is, what school you went to, or whose locker's next to yours in the fucking tennis club. Okay this is not Shakespeare, but not much is, is it? Bob? It's alright for you isn't it Bob, all you have to think about is the lowest common denominator. What will all the sit-com loving, reality TV addicted drones want to see this summer? A nice pair of tits and an idiot with a problem. Does everyone think he's gay? Maybe he's been cursed and falls in love with a fat girl, or is he a wacky inventor that no one takes seriously until he goes out with the girl with the dazzling smile and the big tits? You choose don't you Bob?

BOB

Now you're getting it. You see to an extent you are entirely correct but to a greater extent I don't care. I'm here to make money and little else, in fact I'm very good at it which is why I will never read your serial rubbish. You are a serial writer, there are millions of them out there, typing away feverishly at keyboards all over the world, more screenplays are being written than children are being born. Think about that Tommy. Startling isn't? They can't all be good, so if they aren't, as you rightly point out, well-connected or just plain lucky, they have to be better than everything else out there, not as good as, not even a little better, they have to stick out in a crowd, they must roll into town on a brightly

painted caravan bedecked with ribbons and balloons and followed by fat ladies, jugglers, clowns on bicycles and barking dogs, they must leap into the air and scream out the words 'I am exceptional' but as soon as I hear the words 'serial killer' Tommy, I just go to sleep.

TOMMY

(becoming very irate)

But Bob you haven't even fucking read it.

BOB

I don't have to fucking read it, you'll be telling me next you've written a slasher movie about a car load of teenagers who run out of gas on a deserted country road and have to spend the night in the haunted mansion back up the road a ways. (runs his finger tips over his lips and makes a fake scary noise) ooh, scary.

TOMMY

(losing his temper completely)

You're a real piece of shit aren't you? You're everything that's wrong with the world. A cynical, money obsessed, mindless, idiot.

BOB

Heard enough now, please go.

TOMMY, now entirely consumed by frustration and rage, moves towards him and clearly has no intention of going, there is a menacing look in his eyes. TOMMY is not the man he was a few weeks ago, there is a detached almost maniacal expression on his face that we have not seen before. BOB suddenly looks a little afraid and steps back. TOMMY continues to advance and lunges grabbing BOB by the throat. BOB is not a big man and flails wildly shouting 'okay, okay, I'll read your script', but TOMMY is not impressed and pushes BOB down on the desk. BOB starts to splutter and chokes out the words, 'secretary', 'help' and finally, 'girls one to four'. TOMMY, on the other hand, is relentless and continues to choke the last breaths out of BOB. As he does so he sees the small toy frog on the desk, picks it up, laughing excitedly, as if he can't believe his luck and rams it down BOB's throat with a pen. He holds BOB down as he struggles to breathe.

TOMMY

What's wrong Bob? Cat got your tongue? No, that's not it. Bee in your bonnet, flea in your ear? No, a frog in your throat, that's what you've got. A frog in your throat. You see Bob I'm really quite a funny bloke when you get to know me.

TOMMY finally releases a, now, lifeless BOB. He wanders around the office for a moment, there is none of the shock in evidence after the killing of Harry the Horse. Now he is a murderer, a cold acceptance of his role seems to have taken over. He wipes down surfaces where there may be fingerprints, takes out BOB's wallet and steals his money, wipes the wallet and carefully replaces it. Lastly, he finds a marker pen and writes the number '2' on BOB's forehead.

CUT TO:

33 INT OFFICE DAY

TOMMY, wearing BOB's clothes and a hat pulled down over his eyes, leaves BOB's office. He doesn't look round as he walks past the reception area. The secretary looks up at him but just raises her eyebrows as he walks out.

CUT TO:

34 INT HOTEL NIGHT

TOMMY lies on his hotel bed watching the news. He is drinking whisky and seems relatively content, all things considered. He closes his eyes and a dream begins to take shape.

FADE TO:

35 EXT ALLEY NIGHT

In a dark alleyway a man stands over a prostrate body, silhouetted by a streetlight. He turns and begins to walk towards the camera, a gun in his hand, this is a rugged, handsome version of TOMMY, bloodied but unbowed. MELINDA, runs out of the shadows and into his arms.

MELINDA

Oh, Tommy, you've killed him, thank God.

The body groans and tries to get up but TOMMY fires a shot straight into his forehead.

TOMMY

That's one producer who won't be making any more sub-standard formulaic action movies.

MELINDA

I'll never have to participate in scenes of gratuitous sex and violence ever again, oh darling, thank you for killing that executive, you're so brave and handsome.

FADE TO:

36 INT HOTEL ROOM NIGHT

TOMMY opens his eyes to a flickering TV set. The news is on, a reporter, SALLY, stands outside BOB's office block.

SALLY

Yes, Tim, the killing took place earlier today of Lion Eyes media executive Bob Lucreman. As far as we know Bob was involved in some sort of argument in his office with person or persons unknown at this stage, an argument which led to violence and ultimately to Bob's death. Police are unwilling to release further details at this stage but have launched a murder enquiry and would like to speak to anyone who may have information regarding this afternoon's events. Bob was a major player in Lion Eyes' New York operations and we spoke to their CEO Dave Grip earlier...

CUT TO:

DAVE GRIP, a young, grim-looking executive and SALLY...

SALLY

Dave can tell us a little about Bob Lucreman?

DAVE GRIP

Lucreman was a fine executive who made us a lot of money. He will be a hard man to replace.

SALLY

What kind of man was he?

DAVE GRIP

He was, as I say, a fine man. A man who made a great deal of money for the company, a first rate employee.

SALLY

Can you think of any reason why anyone would want to kill him.

DAVE GRIP

Yes I can Sally, he was a ruthless businessman and I suppose there are any number of fellow executives who would've been happy to see him strangled.

We revert back to the original report and Sally.

SALLY

Well, that was Dave Grip, a little later we spoke to one of Bob Lucreman's relatives.

CUT TO:

JIM LUCREMAN, a caption describes him as 'cousin of strangled executive'. He looks very like DAVE GRIP.

SALLY

Jim, this must be a terrible time for your family, you are Bob's cousin, aren't you? Can you tell us a little bit about him?

JIM LUCREMAN

Lucreman was a fine family member who contributed a great deal of money to his family. He will be difficult to replace.

Back to SALLY who looks a bit lost.

SALLY

Well, Tim, clearly colleagues and relatives alike distraught by the news of Bob Lucreman's death. It seems he will be difficult to replace.

We pan out to see TOMMY lying on the bed still holding onto a glass of whisky. He just stares glassily at the TV, unwashed, unshaven. He slips back into a daydream.

FADE TO:

37 GOTHIC MANSION NIGHT

TOMMY, dressed immaculately in smoking jacket, paces around an enormous reception room in his mansion. There is a huge log fire burning brightly, MELINDA saunters in looking cheery.

MELINDA

Oh Tommy, make love to me.

TOMMY

Yes, darling, immediately.

Suddenly a loud siren goes off. They both turn and look at the wall where a large screen flickers to life and an old man in glasses wearing a slightly moth-eaten suit straightens himself up in a chair.

OLD MAN

There is a grave crisis I am afraid. An in house writer is about to create a terrible situation comedy about two sets of twins who marry and then go to live next door to each other. One of them has a cleaning compulsion, one is a palaeontologist and one of them is an aspiring actor. I don't need to tell you about the gravity of this situation, the man must be eradicated immediately or the world will be plunged into fifteen years of darkness. The artistic avenger must act, now!

The screen blinks off and TOMMY and MELINDA turn to face each other.

TOMMY

My God, the horror, the inflated egos, the million dollars an episode, the sanitised, predictable humour, the ruthless, exploitative merchandising, this is a calamity, I must fly, my darling, fly into the night and slay this inane beast.

MELINDA

(unimpressed)

If you go and save the world I'm going sleep with the butler.

TOMMY throws off his smoking jacket to reveal a Batman-like costume complete with a giant 'A' on his chest. He presses a button to reveal a secret door with a pole which he jumps on and slides down.

TOMMY

(as he disappears, voice receding)

I haven't got a butler, you'll have to sleep with the milkman.

MELINDA walks gingerly over to the secret door and peers down into the gloom.

MELINDA

You git.

TOMMY

(from a distance)

I heard that.

CUT TO:

38 EXT ROOF NIGHT

TOMMY, still in dream mode, is on the rooftop of a large art deco style office block. It is dark but we have the impression that we are now in the 1920s. He is still dressed in superhero attire and climbs over the edge of the building down onto a window ledge some forty storeys high. He deftly inches along towards a window and peers in to see a rather intense-looking writer typing away at a computer. He, the writer, looks up and we see almost a caricature with brightly coloured smoking jacket and neck scarf, wild, long dark hair, smoking a cigarette in an outrageously long cigarette holder. He throws his head back and laughs maniacally before suddenly spotting the silhouette of TOMMY in the window. There is a brief silence before TOMMY crashes in through the window and they stand face to face.

TOMMY

The scribbler, I might have guessed.

SCRIBBLER

(he walks towards TOMMY, two scantily clad young starlets appear and take his arm)

My dear avenger, how kind of you to join us, I imagine you must have discovered my plans, overheard them in a bar, perhaps?

TOMMY

I don't go to bars, Scribbler, my information is clean.

SCRIBBLER

Of course it is, no smoking, no drinking, no sex, I don't suppose, do you masturbate?

TOMMY

Superheroes don't masturbate. And soon, neither will you.

SCRIBBLER

Why so, my ridiculous friend? Writing isn't a crime, and anyway how do you know I haven't turned over a new leaf, got down to that novel I always talked about.

TOMMY walks menacingly towards the SCRIBBLER who backs off and picks up a remote control and points it at the TV.

SCRIBBLER

One more step and the TV goes on, a rerun of American idol.

TOMMY

My God, you fiend, in the name of all that's decent, even you wouldn't go that far.

SCRIBBLER

Oh, wouldn't I?

The SCRIBBLER switches on the TV and we immediately hear a cacophony of sound, screaming, cheering etc, TOMMY falls to the ground holding his ears while the SCRIBBLER and his friends run for the door. TOMMY crawls desperately towards the remote control and finally manages to switch off the TV. He follows the SCRIBBLER out the door and up a flight of stairs onto a rooftop where the girls are getting into a helicopter as SCRIBBLER waits. TOMMY grabs him by the scruff of the neck.

TOMMY

Going somewhere?

The SCRIBBLER wriggles free and backs away before picking up a large plank of wood. Brandishing this he runs at TOMMY who deftly flips him over his shoulder and off the side of the roof. TOMMY walks calmly over to the edge and peers over just in time to see the helicopter swoop down and catch the SCRIBBLER before he falls to his death.

SCRIBBLER

(laughing, from the helicopter)

The game's not over yet, you weirdo, get a new suit you look ridiculous.

CUT TO:

39 INT MANSION NIGHT

TOMMY is back in the mansion standing by the fireplace still in superhero attire. MELINDA rushes into the room and into his arms.

MELINDA

Oh darling I'm so glad you're safe, did you catch the fiend?

TOMMY

No, it was the scribbler alright, but he got away (pause as TOMMY sniffs the air) have you been smoking?

MELINDA

(suddenly flaring up)

Yes and what of it? You're never here, are you? I was bored and, and, well, we sit never down together for a proper meal, and why are you always wearing these ridiculous clothes?

TOMMY

Alright, alright, calm down, I wish people would stop going on about my clothes, I'm a superhero amn't I?

MELINDA

(working up a head of steam)

Why can't we go out to dinner with friends, like normal people?

TOMMY

We are normal people.

MELINDA

No we're not, how am I supposed to introduce you, 'hello I'm Melinda and this is my boyfriend, Batman'

TOMMY

(huffily, walking out)

Well, I'm going to bed.

MELINDA

That's right just walk away.

FADE TO:

40 INT HOTEL BEDROOM NIGHT

TOMMY wakes up with a start still holding on to his glass of whisky. He drains the glass and walks over to the window, stares out over the city and sighs.

CUT TO:

41 INT SITTING ROOM NIGHT

WILSON and MISS SMENTH are sitting together on a TV, casually dressed, slippers on, munching chocolates and watching the TV.

SMENTH

I don't think you should have your hands down my pants when the antiques roadshow's on. It just doesn't seem right somehow. They don't expect you to do this sort of thing on this programme.

WILSON

(somewhat deflated)

Well, they won't know will they?

SMENTH

I'll know, it's just not right.

WILSON

I'll change the channel then.

WILSON takes the remote control and changes channel, an entertainment show appears, SALLY is standing, about to speak, in front of the building in which BOB was killed.

CUT TO:

SALLY

More details have come to light regarding the murder yesterday of Bob Lucreman, in the building behind me here. It has emerged that the number 'two' was written

on Bob's head and that a small plastic frog was found in his mouth. Clearly speculation has since abounded that we may in fact be dealing with a serial killer. Police have refused to confirm or deny this but have suggested that anyone one working in the entertainment industry be especially vigilant at this time. I myself have hired extra security and have issued guns to both of my children. That son of a bitch comes near our house we'll blow his goddam head off.

CUT TO:

The living room where SMENTH and WILSON stare open-mouthed at the TV.

CUT TO:

42 INT POLICE STATION DAY

McGRIVEN is sitting at a desk listening intently as WILSON speaks.

WILSON

And the frog, sir, just like you said, I mean it could be, couldn't it, sir?

McGRIVEN

That it could, laddie, that it could. Our first move should be, well, what do you think Wilson?

WILSON

Contact the airports, sir?

McGRIVEN

Indeed, laddie, indeed, but before that we must speak to New York, see if we can establish an MO. Find a link. Get me the man in charge of the case in New York.

WILSON

It's getting quite exciting isn't it sir?

McGRIVEN

Mm.

CUT TO:

43 INT POLICE DEPARTMENT NEW YORK

CHARLES McKAY, another wizened, gruff, middle-aged detective sits in an office in a busy police precinct. He gazes through the glass wall panels at the bustle of activity outside and then down at some paperwork. A young executive sits opposite him looking a bit edgy.

McKAY

So what you're saying to me here is that anything you don't want; resumes, scripts, letters of enquiry, etc are all shredded once they've been rejected.

EXECUTIVE

That's pretty much it. Why would we hang on to stuff we don't want?

McKAY

Mm, I see your point, only now the chances are that Bob Lucreman might have destroyed the one piece of evidence that could've caught his killer. He certainly pissed somebody off.

He scratches his chin and produces a pipe, which he puts in his mouth but doesn't light. After a few seconds, PENNY, a female officer in uniform comes in and sits down as the executive gets up and leaves. She, too, looks a bit world-weary but is significantly younger and better looking than McKAY.

PENNY

You can't smoke that.

McKAY

I know, I know. I just like to think about it. I'm a smoker, you know, some people just are. (pauses and looks out of the window onto a sad, ugly street) Well, what do you have?

PENNY

A guy phoned, this is a bit weird, from something called Strathclyde Police, I think it might have been in the UK.

McKAY

That's Glasgow. (pause, by way of explanation) Scotland.

PENNY

Yeah, well anyway, McGriven he said his name was and he muttered something about a foul beast in the shape of a man, wasn't sure about that, but then he tells me about this murder in Glasgow and the words, 'and the rivers shall run with blood' written on a wall and apparently some biblical reference to the great plagues of Egypt.

McKAY

Drowned in a pool of blood?

PENNY

A bathtub, the great plagues of Egypt?

McKAY

And the rivers shall run with blood, etc.

PENNY

Etc?

McKAY

Plagues of locusts, flies, a whole bunch of stuff.

PENNY

Frogs?

McKAY

My guess would be that that's number two. Better get me McGriven on the phone.

CUT TO:

44 INT McGRIVEN'S OFFICE DAY

McGRIVEN is on the phone to McKAY.

McGRIVEN

It's only a theory of course but the DNA samples should get here by morning and we should be able to confirm or deny by the afternoon. The question then is, do I come over there or do you come over here?
(pause) aye, quite, speak to you tomorrow and if our suspicions are correct I'll book a flight and see you in a couple of days.

CUT TO:

45 INT McGRIVEN'S OFFICE DAY

A breathless WILSON runs into McGRIVEN's office.

WILSON

There's a match sir, we've got a serial killer.

McGRIVEN

Calm down laddie, it's not a day out at the circus and frankly without a criminal record, this fellow remains as big a menace as he was five minutes ago, indeed more so because now we have the headache of working out which side of the Atlantic he's on.

WILSON

(still pretty breathless)

Are you going to New York sir?

WILSON

That I am laddie, that I am. I'll need all the relevant files to be faxed to McKay's office straight away.

WILSON

I'll get onto that straight away sir.

McGRIVEN

And get Miss Smenth to book me onto the next available flight to New York, I suspect we're going to have to move quickly with this business.

WILSON

Absolutely sir, he may strike again at any moment.

CUT TO:

46 EXT AIRPORT DAY

McGRIVEN is walking through customs in New York, he spots McKAY holding up a sign bearing the name JACK McGRIVEN. McGRIVEN approaches him and they shake hands.

CUT TO:

47 INT TAXI DAY

McKAY and McGRIVEN sit in the back of a taxi as it edges through the traffic in central Manhattan.

McKAY

First time in New York?

McGRIVEN

Aye.

McKAY

Well it's not such a bad place when you get used to it.

McGRIVEN

You know I've lost count of the number of times I've had to defend Glasgow in the same way, its reputation precedes it.

McKAY

And here we are, looking for a killer.

McGRIVEN

But is he one of ours or is he one of yours?

CUT TO:

48 INT HOTEL NIGHT

TOMMY lies on the bed in his hotel room staring into space. He is still drinking whisky and looks as though he hasn't moved for days. He looks pale and drawn, still a little manic but now, also, there is a sad look in his eyes, as if he knows there is no going back from this. The hope he lived on at the point of finishing his screenplay has all but vanished.

FADE TO:

49 INT MANSION NIGHT

TOMMY, still in superhero costume, now dishevelled, is leaning against the fireplace drinking whisky and smoking a cigarette. MELINDA saunters in eating a hamburger with excessive gusto. She has put on a little weight.

MELINDA

Drinking again, Batman?

TOMMY

(drunkenly)

I am the Artistic Avenger. I avenge the arts. I protect the artist integrity of the whole world, I am not a murderer, I am an artist.

MELINDA

You're a piss artist.

TOMMY

Bitch.

MELINDA

My we are in a mood tonight. I hope you're not going to drive the Batmobile, you'll get nicked, wouldn't that be embarrassing. 'Name, please' 'Er, Batman.'

TOMMY

(lurching towards her and falling over a chair)
(as he lies on the ground) I am the Artistic Avenger, and I will strike a blow for aesthetic values, I will strike again, I will strike again.

CUT TO:

50 INT BEDROOM NIGHT

WILSON and MISS SMENTH are preparing for bed. It is a modest room but they seem happy. MISS SMENTH is in bed, WILSON is undressing.

WILSON

...and then I said, 'He may strike again at any moment'. (pause) I've always wanted to say that, 'he may strike again at any moment'. And he might.

MISS SMENTH

I'm scared, you will protect me won't you?

WILSON

(getting into bed and onto MISS SMENTH)
Of course I'll protect you.

MISS SMENTH

Oh, protect me, please protect, oh, darling protect me, give a good hard protecting.

CUT TO:

51 INT POLICE STATION NEW YORK DAY

McGRIVEN and McKAY sit in McKAY's office going through the evidence.

McGRIVEN

No CCTV?

McKAY

No, unfortunately, it wasn't an office block as such, just an apartment converted into an office in a tenement building, I don't suppose they would've thought there was a need for one. Nothing in Glasgow?

McGRIVEN

Not in that place, Harry the Horse had an aversion to exposure of any kind as you can no doubt imagine. What about the toy frog?

McKAY

Yeah, nothing there either, he's not stupid, that's for sure. If it was his he bought it the US alright but it could have been bought in any one of about a thousand places on the eastern seaboard, three or four hundred in the tri-state area alone. We're going through all the possibilities but my guess would be he knows all about CCTV, used a disguise and paid cash, if he didn't steal it or find it somewhere. Even if we do track down the point of sale I doubt if it'll tell us much. (pause) I have the horrible feeling that we're going to be sitting here scratching our heads until he kills another one.

McGRIVEN

Indeed, is there anywhere we can go for a quiet drink, I'm not sure if there's much more we can take from evidence we have.

McKAY

Yeah, let's call it a day.

CUT TO:

52 INT BAR NIGHT

McGRIVEN and McKAY sit at the bar in a downbeat New York pub drinking whisky. There are a few people dotted about but it is quiet and has a friendly welcoming feel to it.

McKAY

Got long to go before you retire.

McGRIVEN

Two years. Although I'd go tomorrow if I could. You?

McKAY

About a year and a half, got a place over in Ireland, my family came from there, 18 blood-soaked months

and then I'm free to fish and play golf to my heart's content.

McGRIVEN

Aye that sounds perfect, maybe I'll come over and join you, tell the wife I'm having one of these mid-life crises.

McKAY

A mid-life crisis. Nobody just seems to accept life as it is, I mean we all hit a point where we realise that this is it, our jobs, our families our whole lives aren't going to change that much, it's just, well, is it so bad?

McGRIVEN

Aye, I suppose it occurred to me when I realised I was never going to play football for Hamilton Accies. Not such a terrible tragedy, I don't suppose, possibly even a blessing. I always swore I would never turn into one of these old men who complain about the world just because it's moved on a bit and I don't agree with much of what happens but honestly, it seems as if life isn't worth living nowadays if you can't be a film star or a pop singer. And the irony of it is that they don't know they're born, living the way they live now, to us, what they take for granted we would have considered to be the life of a film star.

McKAY

Yeah, but you know what? I'm glad I did the job I did, I'm ready to retire now, sure, but I wouldn't change anything, why would I? I've had a long successful career doing the thing I'm good at, if you can say that, well, you know what I mean.

McGRIVEN

Aye, I know exactly what you mean. D'you suppose that's what's wrong with our killer? Frustration. Lured in by the promise of fame and fortune and sex and money, pouring over the glossy magazines and the action films and the pretty actresses showing off their sweet little bums.

McKAY

I think you may well be right, but what about Harry the Horse, I just can't see where he fits in.

McGRIVEN

No, neither can I. I think we just have to work on the assumption that it was a fight that ended badly. It certainly looked like it. Even if our boy wasn't a violent man when he went into Harry's house that night, *Harry* certainly wasn't averse to using a knife in the heat of an argument, of that I'm sure.

McKAY

Where's he going now? Back to Glasgow? Another country? (pause) He'll do it again.

McGRIVEN

Aye, he'll do it again alright but where? Where are you going, young man?

CUT TO:

53 INT AIRPORT NIGHT

TOMMY is sitting in an airport bar with his ticket in front of him. It indicates that he is flying from Boston to Heathrow. There are a few other passengers sitting at the bar, a bright, friendly sort of a place, but, to TOMMY, it's as if they aren't there.

CUT TO:

54 EXT STREET DAY

A typically grey London morning finds TOMMY walking through Leicester Square with his bag slung over his shoulder, he is perhaps a little less despondent than he was, occasionally stopping to look around as if there may be someone following him or possibly he just doesn't know where he's going.

CUT TO:

55 INT HOTEL DAY

A pile of papers, hand-written notes and rejection letters are spread out on a bed in a hotel room. TOMMY sits adjacent to them looking at a little bundle of names written on pieces of paper which he then puts into a teacup. He stirs them round with his fingers and draws one out.

TOMMY

(quietly, to himself)

This week's prize fund is a one-way ticket to the afterlife. (unfolding the piece of paper and looking at the name JOE CARPENTER) It could be you.

TOMMY gets up, puts on a hat, sunglasses and a long dark raincoat and leaves the room.

CUT TO:

56 INT OFFICE DAY

JOE CARPENTER is slumped over a desk in a rather shabby, rundown office. His secretary, MARIE, is stroking his hair as he sobs uncontrollably.

JOE

I am a failure, a big, fat, miserable failure.

MARIE

No you aren't, the next movie'll be a hit, you'll...

JOE

(miserably)

There won't be a next movie, my father was right, I should've been a bank clerk, only I would've failed at that too. (sobs again).

MARIE

Shh, now, you would not, you would have made a fine bank clerk.

JOE

(tamely defiant)

I would not, I would've lost all the money, oh God, (more sobbing).

MARIE

Now, you're just feeling sorry for yourself, you'll have to calm down a bit, the people we rented the conference room to are here and they don't want to hear a lot of crying and also the accountant's coming this afternoon, so, well, let's have a nice cup of tea and try to get things into perspective.

JOE

(maniacally, at the top of his voice)

Yes! Yes! A cup of tea. That'll solve everything. Why oh why do the British imagine that in times of crisis and tragedy a cup of warm, brown, tasteless muck will act as some kind of panacea. The day my father died I went into the hospital and the first thing they said after they'd told me he was dead was, 'do you want a cup of tea?' (shouting again) Why? Why in God's name? What the fuck is a cup of tea going to do? Bring him back to life? Is it going to turn back time? War has broken out, the world is awash with fire, flood and pestilence, (leaping up onto his desk and throwing his arms in the air) bring on the tea.

MARIE

(as she leaves the room)

I'll take that as a no, then.

JOE

(calming down)

Marie, maybe I will have a cup of tea, I'm sorry.

MARIE turns round and smiles at him in a warm, understanding way, she's probably quite used to this.

CUT TO:

57 INT JOE'S OFFICE DAY

TOMMY walks into the foyer of JOE's office. He takes off his hat and sunglasses and stuffs them into his pocket, MARIE is in a kitchen making tea and TOMMY, unable to see anyone,

follows the sound of voices towards the conference room. He stands in an open doorway somewhat confused by the scene he confronts. A middle-aged man in corduroy trousers and an open-necked shirt is speaking in soft, warm almost apologetic tones to a silent and very attentive group.

MAN

...which brings us back to our old friend, incontinence. It's the difficult one, isn't it? We've all had that lovable old uncle who, over the years, has become (pausing for effect) moist.

TOMMY realises he must be in the wrong place and about turns only to be confronted by MARIE.

MARIE

Are you the accountant? (TOMMY looks blank) looking for Mr Carpenter?

TOMMY

(thinking for a second)
Yes, yes, that's me (pause) is he around?

MARIE

He's in there (indicating JOE's office) and be nice.

TOMMY

(entering the office and closing the door behind him)
I can't promise anything.

TOMMY enters what appears to an empty office and wanders around for a second or two before noticing an open window. He approaches this and peers out only to find JOE sitting precariously on a ledge.

TOMMY

Joe? Joe Carpenter?

JOE

Yes, what do you want?

TOMMY

I'm the accountant, you're not just getting a breath of air, I don't suppose?

JOE

How perceptive of you. I am going to jump. I've had enough.

TOMMY

(sympathetically for a moment)
Yes I know how you feel.

JOE

(suddenly flaring up and looking round)
No you don't. Ten fucking years I've been in this business, ten years, six feature films, four shorts and

an advert for shampoo. And where am I? Broke, unsuccessful and alone.

TOMMY

At least you've had a chance.

JOE

A chance? A chance? No I fucking haven't. What chance did I ever have when the mindless hoards out there are swarming in their millions to see movies about superheroes and idiotic blondes with big tits fumbling their way through moronic romantic so-called comedies.

TOMMY

Yes, well, I won't argue with any of that but surely, well what about thrillers, you got a good script recently about a serial killer.

JOE

What? Not that awful rubbish about the old testament? Wait a minute, who are you?

TOMMY's sympathy has now, quickly evaporated, he grabs JOE by the hair and writes the number '3' on his forehead and takes a matchbox out of his pocket and thrusts it inside JOE's shirt.

TOMMY

I'm the writer of awful rubbish, and you my friend are about to have a big hit.

TOMMY pushes the struggling JOE from the ledge and watches as he plummets to his death on the pavement below. A distressed-looking MARIE comes into the room having heard JOE's scream.

MARIE

Where's Joe? What was that scream?

Seeing TOMMY looking dishevelled and somewhat manic she rushes over and looks out the window and screams.

MARIE

What've you done? What've you done?

As she leans too far forward for her own good, TOMMY quickly pushes MARIE out of the window to much screaming as she, too, falls to her death. TOMMY looks round the room and finds a CD player and a rack of twenty or so CDs. He smiles as he finds the white album by the Beatles and puts it on, writing the number '4' on the CD case before he goes.

CUT TO:

58 INT/EXT LOBBY DAY

The lobby of the building is full of people dashing out to see what has happened, a few are speaking on mobile phones, TOMMY, collar turned up, head down, walks quickly, quietly

through the lobby and out onto the street. A crowd has already gathered and stands gaping at the carnage, many taking photographs. The faint strains of 'Happiness is a Warm Gun' can be heard in the background just as sirens drown it out and police cars and an ambulance draw up. TOMMY has gone.

CUT TO:

59 INT JOE'S OFFICE DAY

Some days have passed, McGRIVEN and McKAY are standing in the office surveying the scene.

McKAY

Well, he doesn't like movie producers that's for sure.
What d'you think? Actor, writer...

McGRIVEN

I'd think so. The last guy was a development executive. This ones an independent producer/director. Who do these guys need most of all? Not actors so much as scripts you would have thought.

McKAY

We could take a chance, issue a statement saying we're looking for a screenwriter or a small time director, these guys never keep these things quiet. Someone's bound to know a struggling artist type trying to break into the film industry who recently travelled from Glasgow to New York.

McGRIVEN

Might be the answer. Of course it could just as easily be someone already in the industry who's just a bit pissed off. A cameraman who can't find work. If he *was* a writer, for the sake of argument, it's our best guess at the moment, couldn't we find his script?

McKAY

Thought about that in New York, apparently they destroy them if they decide they don't want them. If we go looking for a script we've got more problems because it seems that there are millions of them out there and a good half of those involve serial killers and that's always assuming we're even right about him being a writer. It's a problem. And then if we say he's a writer and he's actually a stuntman or an engineer we're practically giving him an alibi.

Another detective, Corcoran, comes in. He is much younger than the other two, tall, good-looking, self-assured.

CORCORAN

(by way of introduction although the other two aren't particularly impressed) DI Corcoran. Well the DNA matches but I suppose we guessed that already, there

was a matchbox full of woodlice inside his shirt, number three as I understand is a plague of lice so that explains that but four and the Beatles album, the fourth plague was flies.

McGRIVEN

There's more than one version of the bible laddie; flies, wild animals or beetles. He had no time to prepare for poor Marie but he'd done his homework alright, she just got in the way, the Beatles album was just blind luck.

CORCORAN

(producing a video tape)

I have the CCTV footage sir.

CUT TO:

Same scene a little later.

The three detectives sit watching CCTV footage of the lobby. The corridor initially is empty but quickly starts to fill up as people rush out of their offices to see what has happened. TOMMY comes into view and disappears out of the building.

McKAY

Stop, right there, now go back about five seconds.

CORCORAN rewinds the tape and we see TOMMY leave the building again in slow motion.

McKAY

That's him, right there, I'd put money on it.

CORCORAN

How do you work that out.

McGRIVEN

That's seconds after it happened, watch as he leaves the building, not only does he go in the opposite direction to the main attraction outside but even though people are screaming, waving their arms pointing and all gathering round the victims, well (going over the footage again) you see.

CORCORAN

He doesn't even look round.

McKAY

Can we see his face?

McGRIVEN

Not on the way out. Can you go back about fifteen minutes?

Same scene a little later. They are watching footage of the lobby around fifteen minutes earlier. After a moment TOMMY enters the lobby wearing sunglasses and his hat down over his face. It is more or less impossible to identify him.

CORCORAN

That must be him I suppose.

McGRIVEN

Mm, I feared as much. Well we'll give it a day or so and see what we can come up with but I suspect your idea of a statement is our best hope of a lead for now.

McKAY

Where's he going next, I wonder?

McGRIVEN

It's a conundrum, as sure as a cat's a hairy beast. Time for a review and small glass of amber nectar to oil the wheels I think.

McKAY

You read my mind.

CUT TO:

60 INT TOMMY'S FLAT DAY

TOMMY has returned home and is slumped on the couch staring into space. There is a knock at the door at the sound of which TOMMY jumps out of his skin. He cautiously peers through the spy hole and sees CHRISTAL.

Same scene a little later, TOMMY and CHRISTAL are sitting having coffee.

CHRISTAL

So you didn't find fame and fortune then?

TOMMY

(startled)

Eh? No, pretty uneventful, really.

CHRISTAL

That's a shame.

TOMMY

Yeah, don't know what to do now.

CHRISTAL

Come to Spain, I'm leaving in a few weeks. Should have enough money saved by then. Think about it, it's better than here, it can't be any worse.

TOMMY

Oh I don't know, I've tried New York and London and quite frankly I've come to the conclusion that life's just about how you see it, not where you are.

CHRISTAL

(getting up to leave)

Well, I'm not so sure, I think I'll see it as a much brighter place in Barcelona than I do in Glasgow.

CUT TO:

61 INT OFFICE DAY

Two men, SMITH, a producer in a suit and DELACROIX, a fat, balding, middle-aged writer, sit opposite each other in a London office. Neither seems happy.

SMITH

Shit, that's what this is, shit.

DELACROIX

No it isn't, you're so used to shit that when you see anything else you can't tell what it is. He wants to find himself, to think about where life has taken him, we don't have to kill off Cindy's character...

SMITH

(angrily)

It's a fucking soap opera for Christ's sake, you're not Anton fucking Chekov, get over yourself. He finds his wife in bed with his mother, murders them both in a fit of rage, puts them in a freezer then goes back to work in the local butchers shop and slowly gets rid of their bodies by selling them as sausages to the customers. What's wrong with that? It'll be on the front pages of the tabloids for months.

DELACROIX

The murders I can take, just about, but I draw the line at sausages. Honest to God, can you hear yourself?

SMITH

(raging)

It's a fucking soap opera, what kind of people do you think watch this programme? Nobel prize winning scientists? It's meant to be sensational, our viewers read the Sun, if they read anything at all, they watch Big Brother, endless repeats of Friends, Richard and Judy and us. That's it; we cater for the lowest common denominator, end of story, end of conversation.

DELACROIX

So I have no option, I do what you say or I get the sack?

SMITH

Basically, yes.

DELACROIX

Does it ever occur to you that people like this shit because we tell them to like it. Does it ever occur to you that if we raise the standards a little bit and give people something a bit more thought-provoking or intellectual that they might actually like it, get used to it and look back on all this rubbish we've been spewing out for years and say, 'what did we ever see in that crap?' The problem with the world today is not that Big Brother is watching us, it's that we are watching Big Brother.

SMITH

Forget it, they have options now, there's a million channels out there but they still tune in to us every Tuesday and Thursday at eight-thirty. Our show works and it works because sex sells, the more sensational the better. There's nothing the sexually repressed, inhibited, morally superior mind likes more than to gorge themselves on scandal. It's nothing very much more than small-town, small-minded gossip on a national scale. People love it.

DELACROIX

No compromise? What about Cindy?

SMITH

I don't care, I want those women turned into sausages by a week on Tuesday or I'll have your head on a plate.

DELACROIX stares fixedly at SMITH, a grimly determined look on his face. He gets up and walks out of the room muttering the word, 'arsehole' as he does so. SMITH just smiles.

CUT TO:

62 INT BAR NIGHT

McGRIVEN and McKAY sit in a quiet London pub drinking whisky. They are deep in conversation.

McKAY

Well, it's your country, maybe you should make the statement.

McGRIVEN

My country's actually about five hundred miles north of here but yes I suppose so, what do we make him?

McKAY

Something generic, man working on the fringes of the entertainment industry, something like that.

McGRIVEN

I think we should give him a dark personality, fire imaginations a bit, suggest a few possible scenarios,

could be an aspiring actor, a struggling writer trying desperately to sell a screenplay, that sort of thing.

McKAY
(jokingly)

A beast in the skin of a man?

McGRIVEN
(laughing)

No, I save that stuff for the kids in the office.

McKAY

You could be an actor yourself.

McGRIVEN

Well, I'll get my chance tomorrow and you never know, I could be getting a call from Steven Spielberg within the week.

McKAY
(laughing)

Yeah, you better watch out though, he might make you the next on his list.

They both laugh before a silence falls over them.

McKAY

What is next on the list?

McGRIVEN

Diseased livestock. I shudder to think what he's going to come up with.

McKAY

Unless we catch him.

McGRIVEN

Do you think we will?

McKAY

Honestly? No, not unless we're lucky.

McGRIVEN

Mm, I'm inclined to agree, another whisky?

McKAY

Yeah, what the hell...

CUT TO:

63 INT OFFICE NIGHT

DELACROIX sits at a desk in a large, open-plan office staring at a computer screen. It is late but a few souls sit at desks typing or talking on telephones. A few are gathered together playing football with a scrumpled up piece of paper. A young woman saunters in attracting

much attention from the young men in the office. This is CINDY, the doomed soapstar. She wanders over to DELACROIX's desk.

CINDY

Hey, Bill, I got a message from Smith but I can't get a hold of him, don't suppose you know what it was?

DELACROIX

Oh, nothing, Cindy, you know, probably just wanted you for some PR stunt.

CINDY

Jesus, I hope it's not that bloody awful jungle thing.
(pause) Are you sure? I get the horrible feeling I'm out of a job.

DELACROIX

No, not you. You're the best thing about this show.

CINDY

(smiling)

Really, do you really think so?

DELACROIX

Yeah, I really do. And anyway, I'm the writer, I won't let them sack you.

CINDY

(giving him a hug)

You're a lovely writer, thank you.

CINDY turns and begins to walk away.

DELACROIX

Cindy, (pause) would you like to go out for a drink somewhere?

CINDY

(thinking quickly)

Oh, Bill, I can't tonight, I have a thing, they're opening an envelope or something, (laughing) you know how it is?

DELACROIX

(smiling back, a little sadly)

Yeah, I know, maybe another time.

CINDY

Yeah, yeah of course we will.

CUT TO:

64 INT DELACROIX'S APARTMENT NIGHT

DELACROIX's apartment is a pretty standard affair, expensively fitted out, sparse but stylish décor and many, many pictures of CINDY. She looks down from a poster above his desk in a Marilyn Monroe pose as DELACROIX sits at a computer reading about TOMMY's reign of terror. The media has, now, found out about the plagues of Egypt connection. Speculation abounds and he scrolls through pages of articles before switching to a page listing, in order, the ten great plagues of ancient Egypt. He reads this with great interest before getting up, putting on a raincoat and stepping outside.

CUT TO:

65 EXT LONDON SUBURB NIGHT

DELACROIX hovers around outside a very large house on a quiet suburban street. He seems nervous but after a second or two, seeing that there is no one around, he walks up the driveway and rings the doorbell. SMITH answers.

SMITH

What on earth are you doing here? You've come to my house. I can't allow that.

DELACROIX

I thought you might reconsider the Cindy thing, we could talk about it.

SMITH

No we couldn't, good God man, what are you thinking? Go, go now before I have you arrested. This is extremely inappropriate, I might have had guests, you vulgar little gargoyle.

DELACROIX

Oh well then, there was just one other thing.

SMITH

(angrily)

What?

DELACROIX takes a large kitchen knife from inside his coat and stabs SMITH in the throat. The effect is startling even to DELACROIX who stands stock still as blood squirts everywhere and SMITH staggers back into the house and collapses on the floor. He wriggles about for a few seconds and then is still, blood continuing to ooze from his throat. DELACROIX enters gingerly and closes the door behind him. He carefully tiptoes around the corpse, takes a marker pen from his pocket and writes the number '5' on SMITH'S forehead. He then reaches into his coat again and takes out a carrier bag from which he produces a dead rabbit which looks suspiciously like roadkill. He throws this down on the floor next to SMITH, has a final look around and leaves quietly.

CUT TO:

66 INT HOTEL ROOM DAY

McGRIVEN is standing in front of a mirror wearing a pair of tartan boxer shorts.

McGRIVEN

(practising his statement)

...and I must stress this point; the public, particularly those working in the media, must regard this individual as extremely dangerous. (scratches his chin)
This man should be considered extremely dangerous and should not be approached under any...

He is interrupted by the telephone and wanders over to his bed to answer it.

McGRIVEN

McGriven, (pause) yes (pause) Jesus, straight away (pause) right, we'll need to postpone the press conference, get a car over here as soon as you can (pause) okay.

McGRIVEN puts the phone down and sighs.

CUT TO:

67 EXT/INT SMITH'S HOUSE DAY

A police car draws up outside SMITH'S house and deposits McGRIVEN and McKAY. They walk up to the front door where a forensic team are scrutinising the scene. CORCORAN appears from inside the house.

CORCORAN

Well, it's him alright, number five written on the forehead, dead rabbit lying on the floor.

McKAY

Not very imaginative is it?

McGRIVEN

No, still, anything else?

CORCORAN

No prints, we'll have to wait for DNA tests. There's a lot of blood but it looks like it all belongs to the victim.

McKAY

Have a look at the rabbit, how dead is it?

CORCORAN

(unconvinced)

How dead?

McGRIVEN

Does it look like roadkill, laddie, did he just pick it up from the side of the road?

CORCORAN disappears inside and returns with a stiff rabbit corpse inside a plastic bag. The two old detectives look at it and then at each other.

McGRIVEN

Are you thinking what I'm thinking.

McKAY

I hope we're wrong.

CORCORAN

What? What the bloody hell are you on about now?
Don't tell me the rabbit did it.

McKAY

Just calm down and think about this. How long since
the last murder?

CORCORAN

A week or so, ten days maybe.

McGRIVEN

Here is a serial killer, not without imagination. We're
onto death number five, he's had at least seven days to
come up with something to represent diseased
livestock, we would have to presume, if it was him,
that he knew who his victim was going to be, and yet
he was murdered at his doorstep, messy to say the
least, and the diseased livestock is a dead rabbit he
could've picked up anywhere.

CORCORAN

Doesn't mean it wasn't him.

McKAY

No, you're right, but it does mean we have to consider
that, for the moment, we might have two killers out
there.

CUT TO:

68 INT TOMMY'S FLAT NIGHT

TOMMY is sitting watching the TV and drinking whisky from the bottle. He looks pale and gaunt; a sad, drunk man about ready to give up, if it didn't mean going to jail. Suddenly he becomes a little more animated as we focus on the TV which is broadcasting a report from outside the house of SMITH, the murdered producer. TOMMY turns up the volume.

REPORTER

...and it appears to be the work of the Old Testament
killer although the police have been reluctant to
confirm or deny this I can reveal that the number '5'
was written on the forehead of the victim and so it
seems that the notorious serial killer has struck again.

TOMMY sits bolt upright, greatly confused.

TOMMY

No I haven't. Jesus Christ I can't even keep a job as a serial killer.

He slumps back down on the couch and has another slug of whisky.

CUT TO:

69 EXT THE WILD WEST DAY

TOMMY is dreaming. We are in a silent movie where MELINDA is being tied to a railroad track by an evil villain, the SCRIBBLER, now dressed in black with dark, sunken eyes, thin moustache and black, very pointed goatee beard. Having secured MELINDA to the tracks he steps back, rubs his hands with glee then takes a whip from inside his coat and thrashes her a couple of times just for good measure

MELINDA
(IN CAPTION)

You brute!

We cut, briefly to a scene of an oncoming steam train then back to MELINDA who is struggling to escape as the evil SCRIBBLER stands back admiring his work.

MELINDA
(CAPTION)

You terrible fiend!

We cut to TOMMY who is tied to a chair in a hotel room. He manages to free himself and dashes out onto the street where a trusty white stallion awaits. He mounts his steed and gallops off to save MELINDA. We cut back to the predicament of our seemingly doomed damsel where, out of nowhere, a masked man, not TOMMY, leaps from an even more striking white stallion, lays out the SCRIBBLER with one punch and frees MELINDA just as the train hurtles past. She runs into his arms and they kiss passionately.

MELINDA
(CAPTION)

My hero!

TOMMY eventually trots up on his horse just as MELINDA is being hoisted up into the saddle behind the masked man. The happy couple ride off into the sunset leaving TOMMY looking somewhat crestfallen.

TOMMY
(CAPTION)

Fuck!

CUT TO:

70 INT TOMMY'S BEDROOM NIGHT

TOMMY wakes up with a start. He is pouring with sweat, wide-eyed and maniacal. He sort of comes back to reality, reaches down the side of the bed where he finds a bottle of whisky and some cigarettes. He lights up then takes a deep draught from the bottle without even coughing, sighs and rests back in his bed.

CUT TO:

71 INT TOMMY'S FLAT DAY

TOMMY, looking only a little more composed, is gazing at a toy merry-go-round. It is a pretty thing, lit-up and colourful, TOMMY seems quite mesmerised as he watches it go round and round. Eventually he switches it off and it slowly comes to a halt. We gradually focus on the little horse opposite TOMMY which has a piece of paper stuck to it with a name which TOMMY looks at then smiles.

TOMMY

Miles Prendergast, you are going to die.

CUT TO:

72 INT McGRIVEN,S OFFICE DAY

McGRIVEN and McKAY are sitting drinking coffee sifting through piles of paperwork.

McGRIVEN

Not a bloody thing, you wouldn't bloody believe it.

McKAY

Mm, it must be a different man, I mean, the one thing he hasn't cared a damn about so far, DNA and fingerprints is the one damn thing we can't find a shred of.

McGRIVEN

I'm inclined to agree but it puts the bloody kybosh on a press conference. If there is only one killer and we say that there's two or indeed vice versa we'll give ourselves more trouble than it's worth.

They both sit back and scratch their chins for a moment or two before a breathless WILSON rushes into the office.

WILSON

It's a phone call, sir, for Mr McKay, I think it's from America, someone called Lenny. You can take in here if you like, sir, just pick up the phone and that'll be you through to America.

McKAY smiles and picks up the phone.

McKAY

Penny, (pause) yeah, yeah I thought it might be you. (pause) go on (pause) okay well just keep checking to make sure but I'll have to stay here for now, (pause) okay, goodbye.

McKAY puts the phone down and looks up at McGRIVEN with raised eyebrows.

McKAY

Three attempted homicides, two in Los Angeles one in Chicago, all claiming to be the Old Testament killer. One of them was actually caught in the act of trying to

nail a TV producer to a cross. He'd got his testaments mixed up.

McGRIVEN

Dear God, no DNA matches I don't suppose.

McKAY

No, just idiots. An actor and two singers, none of whom had made it, obviously, all of whom blamed everyone else but themselves. One of the singers, also caught in the act, burst into a rendition of 'My Way' after being read his rights.

McGRIVEN

God bless America.

CUT TO:

73 INT OFFICE DAY

MILES PRENDERGAST sits in a huge office staring into space. He is an older executive but still very much an executive; power tie, expensive suit, tidy hair. In the centre of the office, on a small coffee table sits a model steam traction engine. He gets out of his chair, wanders over to this and starts it up. After a few seconds, when it is going at full steam he blows the whistle, smiles benignly at the little engine and then goes back to his chair. MILES still seems somewhat dissatisfied however and shifts around in his chair a bit before pressing a button on what transpires to be an intercom.

MILES

Marjorie?

MARJORIE

Yes, sir?

MILES

There's a man in Albania who juggles with live cats. What do you think of that Marjorie?

MARJORIE

I don't think it's a very good idea sir.

MILES

Mm, perhaps not, anyway I want you to get a helicopter and tell them to bring a bungee rope, I'm going to leap, Marjorie.

MARJORIE

Leap?

MILES

Yes Marjorie, I'm going to make death-defying leap.

MARJORIE

That's very exciting sir, but...

MILES

There are no buts Marjorie, I am a man inspired, I must leap this afternoon, (pause) better get MacPherson to come up here, just to be on the safe side.

MARJORIE

I'm not sure if he'll be terribly enthusiastic sir, he's only just got out of hospital and that bed of nails business is still rankling a bit with his wife.

MILES

MacPherson is a short man, Marjorie, short but resolute, just the man for this job. As for his wife, we'll send her a soft toy of some description, that should cheer her up.

MARJORIE

There's a man out here sir, says he wants to talk to you.

MILES

A man. What kind of a man? Is he a short man?

MARJORIE

I would say he's slightly taller than average sir.

MILES

Hmm, well, send him in anyway there may be something I can work with.

TOMMY enters cautiously, looking around the room. It is fairly dark, the blinds are drawn and there appears to be no one there. He wanders over to a desk, looks under it, looks again around the room. Eventually MILES is heard to speak.

MILES

I have decided to speak to you from inside my cupboard. Who are you?

TOMMY

I came to discuss a project.

MILES

Are you prepared to leap from a helicopter?

TOMMY

I might be. Are you prepared to come out of the cupboard?

MILES

(stepping out of the cupboard, extending a hand towards TOMMY)

Miles Prendergast.

TOMMY

John Smith.

MILES

(resuming his position behind his desk)

I had a short man in mind for this job but it occurs to me that a short man test-driving my bungee leap may prove to be a mistake. If I miscalculate by six inches, for example, MacPherson would be fine but I may sustain a nasty bump to the head. You see my dilemma.

TOMMY

Indeed, actually I wanted to discuss a script that you received...

MILES

Oh I don't have anything to do with all that, I have men to do it for me. Not all short men you understand, it's not that I have an unhealthy obsession with shortness or anything of the sort. It's just that my man for testing, well, things, is a short man. Resolute though, short but resolute, an excellent combination and not one that is easy to find these days. Edinburgh used to be full of short, resolute men, you could have found one on any street corner, not now though, now all I have is MacPherson, dear, faithful, short MacPherson. (pause) He tests my plans out for me before I execute them, apparently that bed of nails business is still rankling a bit with his wife

TOMMY

Yes, I was hearing about that.

MILES

You were? How on earth did you hear about it?

TOMMY

(thinking fast)

I'm a magician, actually that's really why I'm here, I thought you might be able to use me.

MILES

(genuinely delighted)

A magician, how fabulous, what things you must have seen, what wonders you must have performed.

TOMMY

Oh, I've performed a few miracles alright.

MILES

Could you perform now? Here? Perhaps you could produce a rabbit, no, that isn't terribly interesting, could you saw Marjorie in half?

TOMMY

Well, I might, but first things first, could you just turn your back for a second?

MILES

(turning round to face the window behind the desk)
Of course. (pause, TOMMY pulls a chain from his pocket and draws close up behind MILES) Do you know I'm terribly excited.

TOMMY

You should be, in a moment you will see God.

TOMMY, directly behind MILES, quickly puts the chain over his head and pulls tight. There is a bit of thrashing about but MILES goes weak and then limp before TOMMY allows his body to fall to the floor. TOMMY, wearing gloves this time, conceals MILES's body behind the desk and takes a flask from his coat. He takes the top off the flask and produces an ice cube, which he then rolls up in the centre of a scarf before pressing the intercom button.

TOMMY

(impersonating MILES as best he can)
Marjorie, could you come in here for a moment?

MARJORIE

I'll be right through.

TOMMY jumps up out of the chair, runs over and stands behind the door. MARJORIE comes in and TOMMY immediately garrottes her from behind with the scarf. When she, too, lies dead on the floor, TOMMY wanders around the room, finally coming to rest on the chair behind the desk. He sighs and stares glassily into space then takes a can of lighter fluid from his pocket, sprinkles a bit on MILES's face and sets fire to it. Tommy stares into the surreal little fire for a few seconds until it begins to subside and then puts on a hat and sunglasses and leaves the room.

CUT TO:

74 McGRIVEN'S OFFICE DAY

The two old detectives are scratching their heads looking at a wallboard with names and places delineating murders one to five when WILSON bursts in all full of excitement. The two old men stare at him without saying anything.

WILSON

There's been another two murders, sir, sorry, sirs.

McKAY

Jesus, where this time?

WILSON

Edinburgh sirs. Another media executive and a secretary. I think she must have got in the way, sirs, what do you think?

McGRIVEN

Lets go then laddie, the sooner we get there, the sooner we'll find out, I suppose.

CUT TO:

75 INT BACK OF POLICE CAR MOTORWAY

McKAY and McGRIVEN are in the back of a police car driving along the M8 to Edinburgh, WILSON is driving.

McKAY

So, what've we got?

McGRIVEN

Well, it looks like him alright, numbers six and seven written on the palms of their hands.

McKAY

The palms of their hands?

McGRIVEN

Aye, wait till you here this, victim number one, or number six, I suppose, the media man, was strangled and he was found with his face on fire. Firemen found him after the smoke set off the alarm.

McKAY

Boils?

McGRIVEN

I would imagine so.

WILSON

Number six was a plague of boils sirs, is that it? And the fire would make his skin blister, is that it?

McKAY

(to McGRIVEN)

He's getting better at this.

McGRIVEN

Aye, it'll no be long till he's applying for a promotion.

WILSON veers off a straight path in his excitement and has to brake very suddenly, his passengers remain entirely calm and straight-faced.

McKAY

Not the traffic department, though.

McGRIVEN

No.

CUT TO:

76 MILES PRENDERGAST'S OFFICE DAY

A fireman, two local detectives, McKAY, McGRIVEN and WILSON stand surveying the crime scene.

McGRIVEN

Time of death?

1ST DETECTIVE

About 2.30pm, sir, the forensic guys have just left, we thought we should wait until you arrived.

WILSON

You can go if you like, I think we can take it from here.

McKAY and McGRIVEN exchange a raised eyebrow although the local men look at McGRIVEN for confirmation.

McGRIVEN

Aye off you go lads, forensic report as quick as you like, mind.

2ND DETECTIVE

(as they leave the room)

No problem, sir.

McGRIVEN

So, our first body was found behind the desk, strangled with a chain or a belt or something of that nature. Body number two, the unfortunate Marjorie Dundee, was found, also strangled (pointing towards the door) over there just in front of the door, a wet scarf, almost certainly the murder weapon, lying by her body. Preliminary reports suggest no fingerprints and I'll wager, no DNA.

McKAY

Murderer number one has come back into the fray.

WILSON

Are you sure, sir, I mean, no DNA or fingerprints, it could be the second one.

McGRIVEN

Could be, if there is a second one, but it's unlikely. You see he's chosen a place of work, strangulation, no hesitation in killing a possible witness. Murder number five took place at a home, which suggests familiarity, the angle at which the blow was struck, the footprints we found all suggest a smaller man than the one we saw in the CCTV footage. It was a rash act borne of anger, committed almost on the spur of the moment. Different MO altogether, probably a different man.

McKAY

You get a feel for these things son, even if you can't identify the killer physically, he leaves a sense of his personality behind at the scene. You add all this stuff up and what you come up with is two different killers.

McGRIVEN

A wet scarf?

WILSON

You don't think he...

McKAY

What?

McGRIVEN

(exchanging a smile with McKAY)

Well, out with it, Wilson, it could be a breakthrough, you never know.

WILSON

Well, sir he might have, you know, it might be some of his, well, fluids. He might have...

McGRIVEN

(loudly)

Masturbated? Just say the word laddie, we all do it. (pause) No, I doubt it, whatever he's thinking about it isn't sex, bag it anyway and see what the forensics come up with.

CUT TO:

77 INT BAR NIGHT

McKAY and McGRIVEN sit at a bar about to order their drinks.

McKAY

Two malts please, Laphroaig if you've got it or any Islay malt will do.

McGRIVEN

Aye your pronunciation's coming on.

BARMAN

Ice?

The old men look at each other knowingly. McGRIVEN takes out his mobile phone and dials.

McGRIVEN

Aye it's me, laddie, (pause) yer boss ye daft bugger. Listen, see if you can get the pathologist to have a look at the ligature marks on the dead secretary, specifically we are looking for an ice cube shaped mark on her throat (pause) yes I did say ice cube, more importantly

I want the moisture on that scarf to be tested. I'm fairly certain it's tap water and we want to know, as near as we can be sure, which part of Scotland it comes from, the greater Glasgow area would be a good place to start. Also I think I heard somebody say there might be CCTV footage, I don't suppose it'll tell us much more than it did the first time but get it to my office by morning anyway. (switches his phone off and looks at McKAY) the bugger thought I was his Grandad.

McKAY

Jesus, how old are we again?

McGRIVEN

(looking down at his whisky)

Depends how many of these I've had.

CUT TO:

78 EXT FRONT DOOR TO DELACROIX'S APARTMENT NIGHT

CINDY stands waiting to be buzzed in, she seems anxious, fidgeting about with her nails, looking in her handbag. Finally the buzzer goes and she pushes in hastily. As she enters a young man runs up behind her and joins her in the lobby as they wait for the lift. He looks a couple of times and then speaks.

YOUNG MAN

Are you, er, Cindy, Cindy isn't it? From the tele?

CINDY

(apprehensively)

Yeah, that's me.

YOUNG MAN

Oh it's alright I'm Bill's next door neighbour.

CINDY

(relieved)

Ah, sorry, there's a lot of nutters out there, you never know if someone's just being friendly or just about to pull a knife.

The YOUNG MAN smiles as the lift arrives and they both step in.

CUT TO:

79 INT DELACROIX'S APARTMENT NIGHT

BILL DELACROIX is pacing around his living room as CINDY walks in, throws her bag on the couch and sits down and sighs before looking up at DELACROIX.

CINDY

Okay, Bill, what is it?

DELACROIX

(nervously, pacing up and down)

D'you want a coffee or something, some wine, I might have some wine.

CINDY

I don't have a lot of time, Bill, you sounded serious on the phone.

DELACROIX

Well, I just wanted to tell you, that, (pause) are you sure you don't want a glass of wine?

CINDY

I've never been surer of anything in my entire life.

DELACROIX

(trying to lighten things up a bit)

Isn't that what you said when you dumped that footballer.

CINDY

Which one?

DELACROIX

Oh, I can't remember now, the second one? I never liked him, I must admit.

CINDY

Bill, what's this all about?

DELACROIX

(taking a deep breath)

Well, the thing is I thought you should know that before Smith died, they, well, he really, was going to sack you.

CINDY

Sack me? Bastard, serves him right (pause, even with CINDY's limited faculties the wheels keep turning albeit slowly) so, are you telling me that I'm going to be off the show? Oh my God how long have I got? Oh my God.

DELACROIX

No, no, it's not that. I didn't want you off the show I wanted to write some really good stuff for you, life-changing decisions, profound dilemmas, shaking you to the very core of your being.

CINDY

Yeah, yeah, am I off the show, how far did this get?

DELACROIX

Well, that's it you see, only Smith knew about it, it was his idea, he wanted you to be butchered and turned into sausages.

CINDY

Sausages?

DELACROIX

Yeah, I'm afraid so, it was ridiculous, he was ridiculous, but now that he's gone we'll have time to develop your character, we can be a team, I could write things especially for you, I can make the whole thing revolve around you. Just you and me, the king and queen of British drama.

CINDY

The king and queen?

DELACROIX

Cindy, I just wanted you to be part of my life, (pause) I couldn't let him take you away from me.

CINDY

(starting to get it)

Bill, what are you saying here exactly?

DELACROIX

Give me a chance, Cindy, we could be great together.

CINDY

Bill, what did you mean, 'I couldn't let him take you away from me' did you have something to do with Smith's murder?

DELACROIX

I did it for you, for us so we could be together, so you could see me in a different light, maybe as someone you could be with...

CINDY

Are you crazy? You killed him? (getting up and going towards the door) I'm out of here, I wouldn't go out with you if you were the last footballer on earth.

DELACROIX bars her way and pushes her back into the middle of the room. CINDY suddenly looks terrified, DELACROIX seems, now, detached from reality, his dreams in tatters he is desperate to take something from the wreckage and lunges at her. CINDY manages to sidestep him and runs for the door but he catches her arm and pulls her close trying to kiss her. CINDY starts to scream and shout for help but this only seems to further inflame DELACROIX who shouts at her to shut up before grabbing her by the throat squeezing and shaking her violently. CINDY kicks and flails at him to no avail as he continues shaking her, now utterly consumed with rage, until there is a sickening crack and poor little CINDY, the footballers friend, goes limp in his hands. DELACROIX drops her to the floor and sinks to his knees and begins to cry.

CUT TO:

80 INT LOBBY OUTSIDE DELACROIX'S FRONT DOOR

The YOUNG MAN to whom the ill-fated CINDY spoke is knocking at DELACROIX'S door. Eventually DELACROIX comes to the door somewhat dishevelled and out of breath.

DELACROIX

Oh, hi, how are you?

YOUNG MAN

Ok, Bill, er is everything okay, I, er, saw Cindy in the lift and well, to be honest I heard a lot of screaming and I was a bit worried, is everything okay?

DELACROIX

Oh, that yeah, yeah, er we were going through a few scenes for the show, you know the sort of thing, soap stuff, you know?

YOUNG MAN

(not at all convinced)

Could I see Cindy, Bill, I've a mate who's a big fan, he'd love her autograph.

DELACROIX

You know she just left, sorry about that but, well, there you are, soap stars, busy lives you know... (pause) well, I have to get on.

DELACROIX turns to go back in and reveals, as he does so, a heavy, bloody scratch on the side of his neck. The YOUNG MAN spots this as he, too, turns to go.

YOUNG MAN

Okay, then Bill, I'll see you around.

CUT TO:

81 INT APARTMENT NIGHT

The YOUNG MAN is on the phone. It doesn't look good for DELACROIX.

YOUNG MAN

Yeah, well, the thing is, okay, the screaming could have been a lot of things, okay but then he said she'd just left, well, I was in the hallway trying to figure out what was going on and deciding whether or not to knock on his door. Nobody came out, he told me she'd just left and she hadn't, why would he lie? And on top of that he had a long scratch on his neck (pause) yeah, there was blood on it, it had obviously just been done. (pause) screaming, yeah and it was real, this wasn't acting, (pause) listen mate I've seen that programme and she isn't that good an actor.

CUT TO:

82 INT DELACROIX'S APARTMENT NIGHT

DELACROIX is pacing about wringing his hands, wiping sweat from his brow. He goes to his desk and finds a marker pen and writes a number eight on CINDY's forehead then goes over to his computer and after a few seconds typing leans back in his chair and sighs.

DELACROIX

Locusts, for fuck sake, where am I going to find locusts? Why couldn't he just have used Beatles songs or the seven deadly sins like any normal serial killer?

DELACROIX is startled by a knock at the door, he panics and rushes about the room before going to look through the spy hole. To his great dismay, he sees two policemen. Knowing now he's in serious trouble he runs back into the living room as they knock again, this time more forcefully.

POLICEMAN

(from outside the door)

Mr Delacroix, we can hear you in there, could you please come and open the door or we will have to use force to gain entry. (more loud knocking) Mr Delacroix?

BILL DELACROIX rushes around for a second or two before slumping down on his couch. He sighs, gets up again and goes through to his kitchen where he finds a sharp knife. Picking up his marker pen he walks calmly through to a bathroom where he gazes into the mirror, writes the number '9' on his forehead, closes the bathroom door and switches the light off, leaving himself in total darkness. From outside the bathroom we hear the sound of a body slump to the floor then after a few seconds blood starts to ooze from underneath the door.

CUT TO:

83 INT TOMMY'S APARTMENT DAY

It is now the following day and a bewildered TOMMY sits watching the news on TV. A reporter is relating the details of DELACROIX's last exploits.

REPORTER

And so, England's sweetheart, Cindy St Claire was found dead in the apartment block just behind me, the last, tragic act of the notorious Old Testament serial killer who we now know to be writer Bill Delacroix. The carnage, sadly has not stopped there as three young men and a teenage girl have committed suicide apparently in a state of grief following Cindy's death. People all over the country are distraught at the news of this terrible tragedy, wondering how life can go on without our dear, sweet, princess of the airwaves, flowers adorn the streets of every city, town and village. A spokesman for Sheffield United said that the players will be wearing black armbands during Saturday's home game against Manchester City.

TOMMY switches off the TV, a bemused expression on his face. He lights a cigarette, gets out of his chair and paces about for a moment or two before coming to rest in front of an open window. He takes a long draw on his cigarette and blows the smoke out into the street.

CUT TO:

84 INT McGRIVEN'S OFFICE DAY

McGRIVEN and McKAY are sitting looking wistfully at two long cigars.

McKAY

They're Cuban, we'll smoke them when we catch him.

McGRIVEN

Alright, let's go through this again, are you sure you don't want to do it?

McKAY

It's your patch, Jack.

McGRIVEN

Aye, I know, I suppose I'd better get on with it. Alright where are we?

McKAY

Well, we can say with reasonable certainty that he killed victims five and eight and made himself number nine, reasonable certainty seems the right wording. We are looking for a man probably living in the Glasgow area, about five foot ten, maybe six feet, average build, trying to break into the film industry, could be a writer or possibly an actor, director, even a photographer or someone on the technical side, working on the fringes of the industry, has recently travelled to the US, has spent some time in London, probably fairly intelligent, well-educated, a likelihood that he lives alone, may by now be showing some signs of stress, possibly drinking heavily.

McGRIVEN

Speaking of drinking heavily. Fancy a drop before dinner?

McKAY

Yeah, definitely time for a 'wee dram'.

CUT TO:

85 INT TOMMY'S APARTMENT NIGHT

TOMMY has passed out, an empty bottle of whisky lying beside him on the couch.

FADE TO:

86 INT THERAPIST'S OFFICE DAY

TOMMY is lying back on a couch staring at the ceiling as CHRISTAL now in the guise of a therapist sits beside him in a chair, taking notes.

CHRISTAL

...and when did you first realise that there was another killer, trying to 'take over your patch' as you put it?

TOMMY

About a month or so ago but it didn't matter so much then, now he's killed a soap star and it's in all the papers. They think he's me.

CHRISTAL

And how does that make you feel?

TOMMY

I feel angry, inadequate, I mean he's taken my job, I don't know what to do next, should I kill someone even more famous, should I retire?

CHRISTAL

Do you feel impotent?

TOMMY

Yes, I suppose I do, as if nothing I ever do will be good enough. (becoming upset, almost tearful) I mean who do I have to kill to be recognised for the deluded sociopath that I am. I mean, it's all so unfair, why me? (starting to cry) All the other serial killers are laughing at me.

CHRISTAL

(leaning over and stroking his brow)

There, there, now I'm sure they're not, you're a terrific serial killer, I mean, think about it, how many people have you killed now?

TOMMY

(cheering up a bit)

Six.

CHRISTAL

And how many did this other man kill?

TOMMY

Only three.

CHRISTAL

Well there you are then, you're much better at this than he is. You mustn't put yourself down so much, don't compare yourself to other people, take pride in the murders you *have* committed. You're an extraordinary human being, how many people out there can say they've killed six times? Not many I'll

wager. Now you get out there and kill someone else, have a little faith, believe in your abilities. You can kill anyone you want. You just have to put your mind to it.

There is a knock at the door which rouses TOMMY from his reverie. He looks round the room, a little disoriented for a second before going to the door to be confronted by the real CHRISTAL.

CHRISTAL

(walking straight past him into the flat)

Jesus, Tommy you look terrible, what have you been doing?

CHRISTAL sits down on his couch, finding an empty whisky bottle and putting it on the floor as she does so. TOMMY slumps into an armchair but doesn't really look at her.

CHRISTAL

Tommy, my kids can look after themselves better than this.

TOMMY

I know, I know, I've just had a bit of a rough patch, you know. I was seeing someone and it didn't work out and I haven't been able to find a decent job and, well, things just seem to have got away from me lately, you know how it is?

CHRISTAL

Well, I suppose so, but honestly, Tommy, you're better than this.

TOMMY

(darkly)

You don't know the half of it.

CHRISTAL

Listen, I've got a job in Spain and I'm going next week. I don't expect you to come with me or anything but keep in touch at least and in a few weeks or so when I'm settled, you know, you could come out and see how it is. (pause, speaking firmly) I won't ask you again, Tommy, we've been mates for a while, I'm just saying, you know, we get on well, we could give it a go.

TOMMY

Sure you're not just scared because you're stepping into the unknown and you want someone to hold your hand?

CHRISTAL

Of course, that's part of it, but the other stuff was true aswell.

There is a silence as they look at each other and smile sadly, as if somehow they both know that it's never going to happen. CHRISTAL stands up to go and TOMMY suddenly goes to her and hugs her tightly.

TOMMY

You know, you're just about the best human being I know.

They break and CHRISTAL smiles at him again and quietly leaves. As the door closes TOMMY sinks down into the couch and starts to cry.

CUT TO:

87 INT CONFERENCE ROOM DAY

McGRIVEN is coming to the end of his press conference. McKAY sits at his side.

McGRIVEN

And so in conclusion it almost goes without saying that this man, if encountered should be treated with extreme caution and particularly this week, as I understand there is a film premier in Glasgow, I would ask that those working in the film industry be especially vigilant. (looking at McKAY) Anything more to add, Charlie?

McKAY

No I think that about covers it.

McGRIVEN

Thank you ladies and gentlemen, that concludes our statement.

The two old detectives get up and leave the room to the usual frenzy of flash photography and general hubbub.

CUT TO:

88 INT CAR DAY

McGRIVEN and McKAY are in the back of a police car driving through Glasgow.

McKAY

It's ironic isn't it? I mean, here we are enjoying our fifteen minutes of fame on the back of some other poor deluded guy's inability to get his fifteen minutes.

McGRIVEN

Aye it's been a fine old problem all together.

McKAY

I'll have to be off in a few days, Jack, I can't really justify hanging around much longer.

McGRIVEN

Tell you what. Come over for dinner tonight and we'll have a look through these security tapes again, there must be something we can pin down, even if it is only the best part of a bottle of malt.

McKAY

Sounds good to me. Sure the wife won't mind?

McGRIVEN

She's put up with it for forty years, I don't think she's about to start complaining now.

McKAY

Great, hopefully by that time the press conference'll have thrown up a few possibles.

McGRIVEN

Aye, you'd think we'd be bound to get lucky soon, there can't be that many people fitting that description who have recently travelled to New York and London.

CUT TO:

89 INT CHRISTAL'S FLAT DAY

It is teatime and the news is on, CHRISTAL's kids are causing mayhem as she tries to lay the table in the kitchen. She comes through to the living room and switches the TV off, screaming at them to sit down and shut up just as McGRIVEN is about to start giving his press conference.

CUT TO:

90 INT MARY'S FLAT DAY

At the same time in MARY'S living room, she, too, is watching the news. Just as McGRIVEN is saying the words, 'this man has recently travelled to...' MARY, clad only in stockings and suspenders, switches the TV off in response to a knock at the door. We follow her through to the front door which she opens to a tall, attractive man with a large box who smiles and walks straight in without a word being said.

MARY

(closing the door)

Did you bring the monkey?

CUT TO:

91 INT McGRIVEN'S HOUSE NIGHT

McGRIVEN and McKAY sit back on a comfortable couch in a warm, comfortable home. McGRIVEN's wife, NANCY, too, has a warm, comfortable look about her. A coal fire glows and the two men stare into it with glazed, satisfied expressions.

McKAY

Well, Nancy, that was the best meal I've had in Scotland, thank you very much.

NANCY

You're more than welcome. It would've been better if this old devil had given me a bit more notice, (pause) anyway I'll away up the stairs now and let you get on with your work (getting out of her armchair and kissing McKAY on the cheek) it was nice to have met you Charlie, don't drink too much whisky Jack, don't let him drink too much whisky.

McKAY
(smiling)

I won't, good night.

NANCY
(leaving the room)

Good night. Jack, I've marked that bottle.

McGRIVEN growls a bit as NANCY leaves the room then, having listened to her ascend the stairs, he feels about in the bottom of a cupboard eventually producing an unopened bottle of malt whisky.

McGRIVEN
Twenty-five years old, ha ha.

CUT TO:

SAME SCENE A LITTLE LATER

The boys are well into the whisky, reviewing CCTV footage.

McGRIVEN
(leaning back in his chair)

Okay, time for some wild guesses. Let's say he's in his thirties, unsuccessful, probably out of work, going by the empty tin with his fingerprints on it in Harry's gaff he's got some money, he goes to America, kills Bob whatshisname, comes home, kills two more and so on. I'd say he's middle class, single, scruffy, is now drinking a lot of whisky and somehow manages to avoid us through all of what's happened. Lives in a studenty sort of area. Byers Road, where Harry the Horse was living although we went door to door there already but I suppose also Great Western Road, Kelvingrove, in that ballpark.

McKAY
The clothes, I find kind of interesting, we get him twice on CCTV, murders three and four, then again murders six and seven. They look more or less identical but the forensic guys are telling us they're different sets of clothes, at least the coats and the

pants. D'you think he's been dumping his clothes each time?

McGRIVEN

(sipping his whisky)

Christ that's good stuff, aye I think you might be right, if he watches a lot of TV and I'll bet he does, he's probably making sure we can't identify him by what's in his house, we could put him in the time and place but if he denies everything he could wriggle out of it without more solid evidence or witness testimony. (pause) So where does an impecunious layabout living in the Byers Road area buy a new set of clothes every few weeks?

McKAY

Charity shops?

McGRIVEN

I would imagine so, and who's just had his thunder stolen by Delacroix, even though he must know by now that we're still looking for him it must have been a bit of a shock.

McKAY

So if it's all about ego, a desperate, albeit perverse attempt to get recognition, how do you top killing a soapstar.

McGRIVEN

There's a film premier tomorrow night.

McKAY

If we're right, unless he did it today, our boy is going to go out and buy some new clothes tomorrow.

McGRIVEN

We could be completely wrong you realise that don't you?

CUT TO:

92 INT TOMMY'S FLAT NIGHT

TOMMY sits drinking whisky out of the bottle, watching TV. The entertainment show is on and a fluffy blond presenter sits in a studio with a backdrop of Los Angeles and the Hollywood sign.

PRESENTER

So it seems that Brian is now dating actress Juicy Woodhead after seeing her give birth to her son, Achilles, live on cable last month. Simply Stars magazine are apparently going to have rights to exclusive photographs of the first time they have sex. In a related story the Jerry Springer show is having a

one-off special on whether or not it's right for celebrities to have sex openly in the street in an attempt to boost their flagging careers, as a number have been doing recently (laughing) no, not me, that pool boy thing was a total accident, (smiling) I know, I did get half the profits from the video but hey, I earned it. Anyway apparently three of the losing finalists from American idol will have sex live on the show, one of them with the host himself, (chanting) Je-rry, Je-rry, Je-rry. Personally I think I'd stick with the pool boy, no offence, Jerry. So Melinda, presumably in an attempt to distance herself from it all for a while has jetted off to Glasgow Scotland for the British premier of her new movie, 'Love Me, Love My Dog', which, so far, (making a face) has made less money than me and the pool boy. Go Sancho!

TOMMY's eyes begin to glaze over as he slips into a drunken sleep.

FADE TO:

The SCRIBBLER, complete with feathered headdress, cloak of gold and jewelled sceptre stands on a primitive altar in a vast, garishly lit, smoky underground cavern. Before him is a wildly enthusiastic audience of natives dressed in animal skins and loincloths. He raises his arms and a giant screen above him flickers to life bearing the title of a TV show, 'America's Funniest Cat Videos'. The crowd roar their approval and we pan down from the screen to see, tied to stakes before the altar and trying to avert their eyes, TOMMY, now in Indiana Jones mode, and MELINDA, again, very much a damsel in distress. After a moment or two's adulation the SCRIBBLER motions to two bronzed assistants who hold up large signs saying 'Quiet Please' and the crowd begins to settle down.

SCRIBBLER

(addressing TOMMY)

So, Avenger, you thought you could foil the greatest writer/producer of mindless drivel of the century (to the crowd) of any century (much cheering, still playing to the crowd) What do you want?

CROWD

Mindless drivel.

SCRIBBLER

When do you want it?

CROWD

Saturday night.

SCRIBBLER

(turning back to TOMMY and MELINDA)

You see, it's useless to resist, you might as well join us.

The SCRIBBLER draws a whip from under his cloak and begins to lash TOMMY, who unseen by the SCRIBBLER has freed himself. He grabs the whip and pulls the SCRIBBLER

towards him. They fall to the ground grappling and roll around for a moment before breaking and facing each other.

TOMMY

Join you? Never.

The SCRIBBLER picks up his whip and lashes MELINDA a couple of times laughing maniacally.

MELINDA

You beast.

SCRIBBLER

We're not so very different you and I, Tommy. You do see that don't you?

TOMMY

We're worlds apart. I don't whip innocent, defenceless girls, Scribbler, I don't cynically pursue wealth and power by means of mind-numbing, crass television shows.

SCRIBBLER

Mere details Tommy, the means may be different but the motives are the same, you see we're yin and yang, you and I, two sides of the same coin if you like, think Tommy, think of why you're really doing all of this. Is it really artistic integrity, do you really want to write that great novel you keep talking about? And what of Melinda, why is she even in this fantasy? It's the money Tommy, the money, the adulation and the girls, you and I, Tommy are the same person.

The SCRIBBLER takes off his headdress and wipes the paint from his face to reveal that he is identical to TOMMY. MELINDA shrieks and TOMMY falls to his knees screaming, 'No, no, dear God, no'.

CUT TO:

93 EXT STREET CORNER DAY

McGRIVEN and McKAY stand on a Glasgow street sipping cups of coffee. It is a residential area, pretty studenty in appearance, lots of tenements, an occasional ethnic food shop, charity shops and an odd pub. They are hung over.

McKAY

No, it's not working, I can still taste the whisky.

McGRIVEN

You'll be fine by lunchtime.

McKAY

If I make it to lunchtime.

McGRIVEN

Och, don't be such a big lassie.

McKAY

Mm, well (noticing the approaching WILSON) let's hear what the boy's got to say.

WILSON

Not much to report, sirs. We've covered four streets, got a few maybes and could bes but nothing worth following up.

McGRIVEN

Alright, keep at it, we'll keep an eye on the charity shops and the cafes.

WILSON departs looking as though he would rather be keeping an eye on the cafes and charity shops.

McGRIVEN

No point in having a dog and barking yourself.

McKAY

About the café thing. Fancy a bite to eat?

CUT TO:

94 INT CAFÉ DAY

McGRIVEN and McKAY sit eating eggs and bacon in a small basic sort of a café.

McKAY

(pushing a plate of half-eaten food to one side)
Well, you make good whisky but the eggs, (regarding a fat, greasy woman slouching behind a counter with a fag and a Daily Record) dear God, what did she do to them?

McGRIVEN

(cleaning his plate with a soggy piece of bread)
Aye, it's grand stuff, now, d'you suppose we should inform the film premier people now and risk a media frenzy by tonight or wait till later and run the risk of getting blamed for a strangled executive.

McKAY

Tricky but I think we should wait at least until after lunchtime. They can hardly blame us when it's only really a theory.

McGRIVEN

Let's hope so. Either way there's going to be a lot of nervous first-born media people.

McKAY

The slaughter of the first-born, what d'you think he'll do, something extravagant no doubt.

McGRIVEN

It's the word 'slaughter' that concerns me, he might have more than one person in mind. Christ you don't think he'd set off a bomb do you?

McKAY

No, he wouldn't would he? He hasn't given any indication that he'd do anything like that, Jesus, that's the last thing we need.

McGRIVEN

(pensively)

No, you're right, I'm just getting paranoid. You know he's out there sitting in a lonely wee flat hatching a plan. We know or at least think we know what's driven him to this, what kind of person he is, roughly where he lives and quite possibly where he's going to strike next but I just can't think of how we can find him.

McKAY

He could be dead already, maybe he's the first-born and that's the last act. He's lying dead in a pool of blood somewhere.

McGRIVEN

Do you really think so?

McKAY

No, not for a moment but I think we're getting to the point where he might get careless. He's probably close to insanity now, I mean how in touch with reality can you be after all this?

CUT TO:

95 INT TOMMY'S FLAT DAY

TOMMY is watching TV. The evening news is drawing to a close with the customary nod to the world of celebrities. MELINDA steps jauntily out of a taxi to be met by a group of reporters at whom she smiles as she walks up the steps and into her hotel. The TV then cuts to a reporter.

REPORTER

Well, there we saw Melinda Chase, star of the film, 'Love Me, Love My Dog'. Melinda is widely reported not to have wanted to come to Glasgow and leave her new boyfriend, bodybuilder turned rock musician, Brad Strongbow in New York, but disappointing box office receipts have prompted the studio to pull out all the stops in order to recoup some of their losses.

TOMMY turns the TV off and wanders through to his kitchen where he sits at the table staring into the toy merry-go-round. He seems utterly mesmerised. Once again there are names on the little horses although they are indistinct as we fade into another daydream.

FADE TO:

96 INT MANSION NIGHT

TOMMY, home from another mission, strides purposefully into the great drawing room in his mansion. The log fire burns bold and bright, TOMMY pours himself a drink and surveys the room with a sense of satisfaction. After a second or two, MELINDA comes in with a guest, a very handsome young man with spectacular teeth, muscles rippling under a tight T-shirt and a guitar slung over his back.

MELINDA

Tommy, this is Brad Strongbow, he's teaching me how to exercise.

TOMMY

(immediately disdainful)

Brad Strongbow, what kind of a name is that?

MELINDA

There's no need to be rude.

TOMMY

Yes there is, you've been exercising with this man.

MELINDA

(defiantly)

Well, what if I have? (trying to be diplomatic) Look Tommy, I know you've saved me from certain death seventeen times, but, well, it's just not working is it?

TOMMY pulls out a gun and points it at the exercisers.

TOMMY

How dare you come into my Gothic mansion and exercise with my wife.

BRAD

I'm sorry, sir, I just, well she said it was okay.

TOMMY shoots BRAD right between the eyes.

MELINDA

(rushing to the prostrate BRAD)

Dear God you can't do that, you can't kill people like that.

TOMMY, still brandishing his gun, closes on MELINDA who screams as TOMMY aims at her head and pulls the trigger.

TOMMY

Yes I can, I can kill anyone I like.

FADE TO:

97 INT TOMMY'S FLAT DAY

Back in reality, TOMMY is staring at his toy merry-go-round which finally comes to a halt revealing the name MELINDA CHASE. There is a chillingly detached look on his face now and he is completely submerged in his own world. He takes the piece of paper from the little hobby-horse and gazes at it.

TOMMY

I can kill anyone I like.

CUT TO:

98 EXT STREET DAY

It is late afternoon, McKAY and McGRIVEN amble slowly up a side street in the Kelvingrove area. They stop and go into an Oxfam shop, wander around looking at the other customers of whom there are four or five, see nothing of interest to them and make for the door. Just as they are leaving they bump into TOMMY going into the shop. Tommy mutters, 'sorry' as he brushes past them. They look at him but say nothing. Outside the shop they stand and look around.

McKAY

Well, it looks like we go to the premier and hope for the best.

McGRIVEN

Aye, we'll give it another hour and call it a day.

CUT TO:

99 INT TOMMY'S FLAT DAY

TOMMY, now back in his flat, is looking at a website on MELINDA, he focuses on her biography which tells us that she has two younger sisters. Tommy, wearing dark clothes, a change from those he was wearing in the charity shop goes through to the kitchen and takes a large knife from a drawer. There is a look of grim determination on his, now, very drawn, sad and desperate face as he returns to the living room and dons a long dark coat and a hat and puts a pair of sunglasses into his pocket. He conceals the knife in his coat and goes through to the bathroom and stares into the mirror smiling at his reflection.

TOMMY

The slaughter of the first-born.

CUT TO:

100 EXT STREET DAY

McKAY and McGRIVEN are walking along a quiet residential street, very much like the others. As they are approaching the corner, TOMMY comes out of one of the tenement buildings, puts on his sunglasses and runs past them and round the corner. They stop and look at each other for a second as both realise where they have seen TOMMY before.

McKAY

You don't think...

McGRIVEN

I'll see if I can catch him, you go and start making enquiries.

McGRIVEN runs round the corner onto a main street following TOMMY but to no avail, he is nowhere to be seen. He runs up and down the street a few times looking in shop windows but sees no one.

CUT TO:

101 INT TAXI DAY

TOMMY sits in the back of a taxi unaware of the drama unfolding behind him.

TOMMY

Marriott Hotel please pal.

CUT TO:

102 INT TOMMY'S TENEMENT BUILDING DAY

McKAY is joined in the stairwell by a breathless McGRIVEN. They are about to knock on MARY's door.

McGRIVEN

Anything?

McKAY

Not so far.

McKAY knocks on the door. After a few seconds MARY answers wearing a negligee and not much else.

MARY

(with delight, seeing McGRIVEN's handcuffs sticking out of his pocket)
Well, hello, what can I do for you?

McGRIVEN

Hello, we're, er conducting a few enquiries regarding a series of murders and we were wondering if you happened to know of any of your neighbours who may have been in America recently, possibly also London.

MARY

Oh, I think Tommy was in America, he might've stopped in London on the way back I can't honestly remember.

McKAY

Would Tommy happen to be about six feet tall, dark hair, mid-thirties, a bit scruffy in appearance maybe?

MARY

That sounds like him, don't tell me he's a serial killer, I thought you caught that guy anyway.

McGRIVEN

Not really, there were two of them.

MARY

Goodness me, I had no idea, a bit like the old London bus, isn't it, you wait for ages then two come along at once, oh well, he lives in number eight.

McKAY

Just one other thing you wouldn't know if Tommy has any interest in the film industry at all, writing, acting, something like that?

MARY

Yeah, he does, sort of anyway, he was writing a screenplay, some serial killer thing about the bible or God told him to do it or something, you know the sort of thing, there's hundreds of them out there, he said it was all meant to be satirical or something, if you ask me...

McGRIVEN

Number eight, okay thank you very much, you've been very helpful.

MARY

Are those real handcuffs? (as they turn to leave)
Would you like to come in for a coffee or something, anything.

McKAY

(as they are walking away)

No thank you, we're in a bit of a hurry.

They follow the stairs up one more flight to number eight and knock on the door to which there is no answer. They knock again very loudly and shout 'Tommy, this is the police'. Again, of course, there is no response.

McKAY

How are you at breaking doors down?

McGRIVEN

Not as good as I used to be.

DIY from next door emerges to see what the noise is about.

DIY

Are yous the police?

McGRIVEN

Yes, you wouldn't happen to have a crow bar would you?

DIY

Aye, is this about him being a poof, ah kent there was something funny about him.

DIY goes back inside and returns with a crow bar and immediately applies it to the door before stopping and turning to the detectives.

DIY

Hi, wait a minute, yous aren't a couple of poofs are you? Cause ah'm no lettin' you in there just to start doin' poofy stuff.

McGRIVEN shows him ID and looks at McKAY as if to say 'we've got a right one here'. A few seconds more and the door splinters and they force their way in.

McKAY

(to DIY as they enter the flat)

That'll be fine now, thank you.

DIY

If there's too many poofs in there, just shout and I'll come and sort them oot.

McKAY

We'll do that.

McGRIVEN and McKAY walk into the flat and wander around. The computer is still on and McKAY sits down at it and starts to go through recent internet searches. As he is doing this McGRIVEN goes through to the kitchen and finds the merry-go-round with MELINDA's name on one of the little horses. McKAY shouts out 'Jack' and he rejoins him at the computer.

McKAY

Recent searches on Melinda Chase, the big star at the premier and one or two on the plagues of Egypt. A lot of stuff on the murders... (pause) Jesus, look at this, a synopsis of a screenplay based on the great plagues...

McGRIVEN

You should see what's in the kitchen.

McKAY

It's him then?

McGRIVEN

Has to be. (takes out a mobile phone and dials) Hamish, Jack McGriven here, listen I need a favour, can you tell me which hotel Melinda Chase is staying in, (pause) can't tell you now, Hamish, and no press for the moment, but I'll see what I can do, (pause) The Marriott, right, good man, see you later. (to McKAY) The Marriot, what time is it?

McKAY

Five o'clock, she'll be getting ready in her room, what time does the premier start?

McGRIVEN

Seven, better phone Wilson, see if there's anybody in the area, come on we can get a taxi, with any luck we'll be the first there.

CUT TO:

103 INT TAXI/INT OFFICE DAY

McGRIVEN is speaking to WILSON from the back of a taxi.

WILSON

They won't give out her room number over the phone, sir, or put her through to us, apparently a lot of people do this sort of thing to try to get to see celebrities, they said they thought I sounded suspiciously like the guy from the Daily Record, but I know that guy, sir, he doesn't look anything like me...

McGRIVEN

Get on with it Wilson.

WILSON

... but anyway, there's two uniformed guys in the area, they should be getting there about now.

CUT TO:

104 INT HOTEL MANAGERS OFFICE DAY

It is now around teatime a rather stressed and irritable MANAGER is sifting through paperwork, scratching his head and looking very unhappy. The ASSISTANT MANAGER, a slightly younger and significantly less unhappy man, enters with a piece of paper in his hand.

MANAGER

(irately)

What now?

ASSISTANT MANGER

Room 745 wants a salad with a load of stuff in it I'd never even heard of. What is a mung bean?

MANAGER

I don't fucking know, fucking celebrities.

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Well, anyway, that and then it all just sounded like a foreign language, also, room 106 wants a Star Wars chess set, he was very specific about the Star Wars thing. I said that it might not be possible to get that at

short notice and he started to cry. Room 223 would like some pot pourri and she wants it to contain the scent of the Peruvian white musk orchid or it's just a waste of time apparently. Sean Connery phoned, he just wants a bed and a steak. I asked him how he wanted it and he said just cut off its horns and wipe its arse. I wonder what he would say if we actually did that.

MANAGER

Peruvian fucking musk orchid, she's in the middle of fucking Glasgow.

ASSISTANT MANAGER

White musk orchid.

MANAGER

(even more irately)

Fucking fuck (pause) is that it?

ASSISTANT MANAGER

There's two coppers outside, they think there might be a serial killer in room 549.

CUT TO:

105 INT HOTEL LOBBY DAY

TOMMY is walking along a hotel corridor. He comes to a corner, stops and spies two large security guards standing outside a door. He goes back along the corridor a bit and comes to a storeroom, which he enters. He looks around for a second before finding a janitors coat, which he puts on, a key and some coffee cups. He smashes the cups against the wall making as much noise as possible then dashes round the corner to see the security guards already walking towards him at pace.

TOMMY

Round here, there's a guy with a knife.

The guards follow TOMMY to the storeroom and he stands back as if afraid.

TOMMY

I think he went in there.

They both charge into the room whereupon TOMMY immediately locks the door behind them.

TOMMY

That was too easy.

TOMMY marches up to the door of MELINDA's room and knocks quietly. A female voice with an American accent says, 'Who is it?'

TOMMY

Room service.

MELINDA comes to the door with dressing gown on and a sort of quizzical look.

MELINDA

It's not more flowers is it?

TOMMY

(bursting in and taking out his knife)

No, it definitely isn't more flowers.

Once inside MELINDA backs away, clearly terrified, TOMMY brandishes the kitchen knife and stares at her angrily.

MELINDA

What do you want, is it money? I have money. (pause as TOMMY just stands and stares) Please don't hurt me, please.

TOMMY

Hurt you, why would I want to hurt you?

MELINDA

I don't know, look you can have all my money, anything take anything you want, but please, please leave, please don't hurt me.

TOMMY looks at her as if suddenly he doesn't really know what to do with her.

TOMMY

You look different without make-up on. You just look normal, like everyone else. I imagined you'd be dazzling, a shining light in the sky. (pause) but you're just a person aren't you? Just a person like all the rest of us. You're not even all that good-looking. Brad Superman or whatever his name is can have you. (pause) I think I'll go to Spain.

As he turns to walk out there is a knock at the door. TOMMY looks through the spy hole and sees two uniformed policemen. He motions to MELINDA to be quiet but the policemen knock again.

1st POLICEMAN

(from outside)

Miss Chase, we know you're in there Miss Chase. Are you alright?

MELINDA

(with prompting from TOMMY)

I'm fine, it's alright you can go.

1st POLICEMAN

I'm afraid we can't do that Miss Chase, we have to see you to make sure you're okay. Could you open the door please it'll only take minute.

TOMMY grabs MELINDA and holds the knife to her throat and forces her to the door. She opens it and is then pulled back into the room by TOMMY.

TOMMY

(to the policemen)

Alright, get in here and close the door. (they do as he says) Now handcuff yourselves to the radiator (they stand motionless for a moment before TOMMY pulls MELINDA tightly to him) Do it now or I'll slice her fucking head off. (MELINDA screams and the policemen do as they have been told)

CUT TO:

106 INT HOTEL FOYER DAY

McGRIVEN and McKAY burst into the hotel foyer, holding out their ID to be met by an extremely upset hotel manager.

MANAGER

What the fuck is going on here, two of your guys just ran in here and asked for Melinda Chase's room number and then said she was the Old Testament killer's last victim. For Christ sake, there was a guy from the Daily Record standing right behind him. I haven't seen him that happy since Raith Rovers beat Celtic in the League Cup final.

McKAY

Have they come back down?

MANAGER

No they fucking haven't, I didn't want to do anything till somebody got here and told me what the fuck was going on. We've got Sean fucking Connery coming here tonight.

McGRIVEN

The way things are going we might need him. Do you have a pass key for her room?

MANAGER

Yes, I've one right here (handing it to McGRIVEN) and this the other key.

McGRIVEN

The other key?

MANAGER

She has two adjoining rooms, it's a suite. You arseholes better not fuck this up I'm having a nightmare in here tonight as it is. How long is this going to take anyway?

McKAY

We'll ask the serial killer how long he's going to be and let you know.

MANAGER makes a face and walks away in a mood.

CUT TO:

107 INT HOTEL DAY

McGRIVEN and McKAY are running along the corridor leading towards MELINDA's suite. As they go past the storeroom, just behind them, the two security guards finally burst through the door. They look round and wait for them to catch up. Again they hold up their ID.

McKAY

(a little sarcastically)

Police, have you come across anything suspicious, I mean apart from being locked in a cupboard?

1ST SECURITY GUARD

There was a guy, he locked us in here. It his (indicating his partner) fault.

2ND SECURITY GUARD

It was your fault.

McGRIVEN

(interrupting before they get carried away)

Alright it doesn't matter whose fault it was, did he have a gun or a weapon that you could see?

1ST SECURITY GUARD

Don't think so, what do you want us to do?

McKAY

(thinking for a second)

Could you just go back into the cupboard and wait for him to come past, he'll probably come running past in a few minutes.

2ND SECURITY GUARD

(enthusiastically)

Sure (they both go back into the store room) is this okay?

McKAY

(as he and McGRIVEN walk away)

That's perfect, you're doing a great job. (aside to McGRIVEN) best place for them.

The two detectives approach MELINDA's door and stop and listen, TOMMY is in full swing.

TOMMY

(as heard from outside)

You fucking celebrities are like kids in a sweet shop, ooh, I'll have that one with the big muscles, and I'll have a suave one on the side...

McGRIVEN

Alright, here's what we'll do, you go in the other door and find your way through to the adjoining door, I'll get myself in and try to get him as close to the door as possible. I'll let you know what kind of weapon he's got, assuming he's got one, although he must have if the two idiots who arrived earlier are in there. When I say the word 'go' at the end of a sentence and then pause you'll know you can open the door and get a hold of him.

McKAY

'Go'?

McGRIVEN

That's it. Best keep it simple.

McKAY goes to the next door along and lets himself in, McGRIVEN knocks on the door in front of him.

TOMMY

Who is it?

McGRIVEN

Tommy, it's the police, the hotel is surrounded, I'm alone and unarmed, I just want to talk to you.

There is silence for a second before TOMMY speaks again.

TOMMY

What is there to talk about?

McGRIVEN

Just let me in, Tommy, maybe things aren't as bad as you think.

TOMMY

I don't see how they could be much fucking worse.

McGRIVEN

Tommy, I'm going to let myself in. All I ask is that you listen to what I've got to say.

TOMMY

(after another pause for thought)

Alright but just you.

McGRIVEN lets himself into the room with the pass key to find the two uniformed policemen handcuffed to the radiator and TOMMY still with a knife at MELINDA's throat. He walks into the room and round to face TOMMY so that he backs away to be directly in front of the adjoining door with his back to it.

TOMMY

That's far enough, now what do you want?

McGRIVEN

It's over, Tommy, there's nowhere else for you to run to, nothing else for you to do. You might as well give up now before anyone else is killed, none of us want that to happen.

TOMMY

(defiantly)

I do.

McGRIVEN

No you don't, Tommy, not really, I don't think you ever really did, Harry the Horse was just an accident wasn't it? A deal that went wrong, something like that and then things just took on a momentum of their own and before you knew it you were in another world, is that fairly close?

TOMMY

Fairly, I suppose but who are you to say what psychological world I inhabit, I could still kill her, why not?

McGRIVEN

Because you can't avoid confronting reality now, Tommy, you're going to be caught whatever you do, there's no point in making it worse than it already is, in all honesty, as things stand no one is really going to care all that much about the people you've killed, they weren't really famous and they were the sort of people who often generate a great deal of hostility from the public, you give up now and you'll be a cult hero, (TOMMY is listening fairly attentively, his grip on the knife and MELINDA loosening a little) I'd put money on it but you slit the throat of America's sweetheart (MELINDA's eyes widen but she says nothing) or kill a cop and all that just vanishes, come on, Tommy, (pause) Let my people go.

The door handle behind TOMMY begins to move. Slowly, noiselessly the door opens and McKAY steps into the room. Suddenly he grabs TOMMY's arm and twists it away from MELINDA who runs to safety. McGRIVEN helps push TOMMY to the ground and they disarm and handcuff him.

CUT TO:

SAME SCENE A FEW MINUTES LATER

The two uniformed policemen are unlocking their handcuffs, TOMMY sits meekly on the edge of the bed in something of a daze. McKAY is on the hotel phone speaking to the manager.

McKAY

Alright, it's all over, you can come up now, no, nobody was hurt.

CUT TO:

108 HOTEL CORRIDOR DAY

The MANAGER is striding purposefully up the corridor towards MELINDA's room. As he goes past the storeroom the two security guards burst out and tackle him with some brutality, pinning him to the floor.

1ST SECURITY GUARD
(shouting)

We've got the bastard.

CUT TO:

109 INT HOTEL FOYER DAY

McGRIVEN and McKAY escort MELINDA out of the lift and into the foyer. The place is teeming with reporters and onlookers. MELINDA looks distraught and speaks to no one although she has clearly applied her make-up in the interim. In the general confusion suddenly, from out of the crowd, a reporter thrusts a piece of paper in her face.

REPORTER

Simply Stars magazine Miss Chase, half a million for exclusive rights to the story.

MELINDA suddenly looks somewhat less distraught and quickly signs the piece of paper before resuming her traumatised look.

CUT TO:

110 INT HOTEL FOYER NIGHT

It is much later in the day, the onlookers, the press and most of the police have all but gone, McGRIVEN and McKAY stroll out onto the street in front of the hotel. McKAY takes two cigars out of his jacket pocket and hands one to McGRIVEN. They light up and stand silently for a moment, silhouetted by the city lights, blowing smoke into the night sky.

McKAY

Back to New York tomorrow, pimps and drug dealers and kids snatching handbags.

McGRIVEN

Serial killers?

McKAY

No doubt. The country's full of them. Come over and act as a consultant. I'm sure the Scottish taxpayer

would stand you a few nights in the Plaza Hotel. And bring some of that Laphroig.

McGRIVEN

Aye, well, sounds fine, for a minute there I thought you were going to say, 'we're getting too old for this'.

McKAY

Not a bit of it, how old are we again?

McGRIVEN

Oh, late forties I think, something like that.

WILSON appears.

WILSON

Thank God that's over, sirs. D'you think they'll make a film about it?

McGRIVEN

They've already spoken to us about it, my boy, Charlie's going to be played by Paul Newman and Sean Connery's going to play me.

WILSON

(impressed)

Brilliant. Who's going to be me?

McGRIVEN

Sharon Stone.

CUT TO:

111 INT PRISON DAY

A long-legged woman walks down a corridor in a prison. We can't see her face but she seems very elegant, classy and oozing with sexiness. We follow her into a visiting room where an expectant-looking TOMMY awaits. She sits down and crosses her legs arousing much interest from the other inmates. Finally we see that it is MARY.

TOMMY

Hi, how are you?

MARY

Pretty good, the tabloid newspapers have been very kind.

TOMMY

Mm, so what did you want?

MARY

Well, here's the thing. I want the rights to your story, you tell me everything from start to finish, we write a best seller and I get to be rich.

TOMMY

And what do I get? Not much use to me now is it?

MARY

Oh, I don't know, I'll send you my underwear, a sexy letter or two, I want letters back mind, I want to know exactly what goes on in the showers.

TOMMY

You're obsessed, (pause) d'you really think it'll sell?

MARY

Already got a publishing deal, all you have to say is 'yes'. And you never know they might let you out in twenty years or so. I'll save you a few quid. There's bound to be a movie.

TOMMY

A movie? Do you think so?

MARY

Bound to be.

MARY gets up and walks off, looking back and smiling as she does. TOMMY's eyes start to glaze over and his surroundings become blurred so that all we can see is MARY. She stoops down and picks up a glass of champagne and saunters back over to TOMMY. MARY appears, now, to be MELINDA and she and TOMMY are on board a large yacht moored off a beautiful tropical island.

MELINDA

Oh, Tommy, I'm so glad you've decided to stop killing people. Not that they didn't deserve it mind, but really, it was all too much.

A rather downtrodden version of BRAD STRONGBOW appears wearing a butlers uniform and holding a tray of cocktails.

TOMMY

Strongbow, be a good fellow and swim over to island and get me a banana.

STRONGBOW dives into the water and sets off for the island. Suddenly there is a scream from MELINDA as she sees the SCRIBBLER appear, stroking a cat and looking like a James Bond villain. He pulls out a gun.

SCRIBBLER

So, Mr Bond, we meet at last, last being the operative word, for you.

MELINDA

Oh, Tommy, you didn't tell me you were really James Bond.

TOMMY

(voice starting to sound a bit like Sean Connery)
Yes my dear, you see, all those people I killed were
Russian spies.

SCRIBBLER

Yes Mr Bond but you forgot about me didn't you and
now, you die.

The SCRIBBLER prepares to shoot but not before TOMMY picks up a spear gun and fires it
straight into his chest and knocking him over the side. MELINDA rushes into his arms.

MELINDA

Oh, Tommy, oh Tommy oh Tommy...

FADE TO:

112 INT PRISON CELL NIGHT

TOMMY lies back on his bunk staring out at the stars through a barred window, for a second
he smiles, a sad, little smile and then closes his eyes.

THE END