

1: EXTERIOR - ALLEYWAY- NIGHT

A dark ill lit alleyway, Dickensian in its dingy sordidness.

Deep black puddle, reflecting the harsh yellow light from the street lamps.

Camera cranes up to find dustbin.

Suddenly a hand stuffs a package into the dustbin.

The sound of footsteps running away.

From another angle, the camera tightens on a small Victorian painting, an elegantly crafted female nude, not much bigger than a large postcard.

FADE UP TITLE OVER PAINTING

“STRIPTease”

FADE TO BLACK

2: EXTERIOR - PARK - DAY.

A tall thin, young black man about 30 is walking purposefully across a park. He is dressed in tight shiny black suit; more appropriate for apprentice American style gangsters than a petty villain operating out of Kings Cross. He glances at his watch, an imitation gold Rolex, he shakes his head in disbelief; the watch has stopped.

DAVE runs down the street and finally stops outside a rundown building. He disappears into an open door.

3: INTERIOR - BEDROOM.

The room is empty. The camera pans across a rumpled duvet, over fluffy animals onto a novel, 'The One That Got Away' by CHRIS RYAN face down on the bedside cabinet. A shower sounds in the background.

The telephone rings.

3a: INTERIOR HALL.

DAVE is breathless from having run up several flights of stairs too quickly. He is standing at the in front of a door decorated with old Christmas decorations. He straightens his clothes then presses the bell; 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' sounds inside. DAVE looks disgusted.

3b: INTERIOR BEDROOM

Wide shot telephone ringing -unheard- it stops.

3c: INTERIOR STUDIO.

C.U of a white canvas with black Zebra stripes.

CHRIS, a big man nursing a hangover, leaves off painting and opens the door.

Dave pushes past him into the Studio.

DAVE

Jesus I'll have a heart attack climbing those stairs!

CHRIS

I'm an Arab and this is my tent

DAVE (he's heard it all before)

Cobblers. You're an Arab then I'm Lenny Henry.

4: INTERIOR BATHROOM

We can see a young woman in the shower. The telephone rings again, this time she hears it, a long slender arm sensuously reaches out for a towel.

5: INTERIOR - STUDIO.

An artist's studio, it's part work space, part temporary home.

CHRIS is boiling water in an ancient electric kettle.

CHRIS

Brew?

DAVE is standing in front of a large abstract painting. it could be Zebra stripes or prison Bars.

His eye catches the painting's title

DAVE

IN THE FRAME?

CHRIS is still preoccupied with making tea. He answers casually.

CHRIS

Sugar..

DAVE

What frame are we interested in here Chris ? The National Gallery or the West-Midlands Serious Crime Squad?

CHRIS

Chris pours hot water from kettle. Dunks tea bag into cup.

CHRIS

Cut the bollocks, tea 's up.

DAVE

Coffee! A cup of your tea is like drinking arctic mud.

Chris takes out the half dunked teabag: then spoons two large dollops of instant coffee into DAVE'S mug.

CHRIS
(defensively)

There's nothing wrong with my tea.

DAVE (looking out of a window)
I hate this country when it's cold.

DAVE is still concentrating on the Zebra picture, trying to make sense of it.

CHRIS delves under the kitchen table, on which is a green Harrods bag. He pulls out a small Victorian picture.

He thrusts it into Dave's hand and then disappears back to the kettle.

DAVE holds it up against the light. It is the painting from the first scene.

CHRIS reappears with a mug of steaming black coffee. DAVE is still intent on the picture.

DAVE

Hot.

CHRIS nods his head.

DAVE

How hot?

CHRIS

Burning up.

DAVE

I'll have to get Jimmi the Gent.

CHRIS thrusts the cup at DAVE who has his hands full with the painting.

CHRIS (alarmed)

The Gent! That'll cost me an arm and a leg!

He slams the coffee down on the table.

DAVE

Relax you're as nervous as a virgin in a brothel.
Jimmi and me've got history.

CHRIS

That's what I mean history; it ain't Simon Schama.

DAVE

This is too good to pass up.

DAVE lifts the painting up to the light and grins broadly.

DAVE (with warmth)
Gaurenteed, then it's 'beautiful south'.

6: INTERIOR BEDROOM

Looking over her shoulder we can see the girl, wrapped in a bath towel, concluding her call.

She reaches out for a pad next to the telephone.

GIRL

OK, got it.

She replaces the pad back on the bedside table. She looks up; we can see her face for the first time.

7: EXTERIOR POLICE STATION

Outside a police station

Detective Sergeant McCabe, WPC DEAN and DC Feast (overweight and jovial) are coming out of the station door. They rush down the steps toward an unmarked car in the street.

FEAST

What I can't see guv is why the Chief Super's breathing down our necks?

McCABE

Serious Crimes think it's our local flannel-foot. Antiques are Squad business, and they say visit 'Jimmi the Gent'.

DEAN

(raising two fingers a quarter inch apart)

The Gent! Is he stupid? Jesus that one's tighter than Margret Thatcher's jockstrap.

McCabe opens the car door.

McCABE

Most probably. We have good intelligence where our boy'll be tonight. Ok people, move!

Across the top of the car.

WPC DEAN

Why is she called the Jimmi the Gent?

They clamber in.

FEAST

She always says thank you afterwards.

8: EXTERIOR STREET EVENING.

DAVE is trying to call somebody on his mobile phone. He shakes the phone and tries to dial again. The phone battery conks out. DAVE looks disgusted.

8a INTERIOR TELEPHONE BOX.

DAVE is in a red telephone box, clutching the Harrods bag, he seems agitated

DAVE

I know you're busy but can you fit me in?

He gestures furiously.

DAVE

OK, I'll be along in ten minutes JIMMI.

Dave hangs up the phone. He glances up at the tarts calling cards, chooses one with obvious pleasure then clutching card and Harrods bag he elbows his way out of the box.

Straight into a Young WPC and her male companion

For a second DAVE is panic stricken. He hold's up the card, with a disgusted look on his face, then screws it up obviously intending to throw it away. The WPC gives him a strange look. So he goes to the nearest rubbish bin and drops the card in among the rubbish. The cops stare after him, then move off in the opposite direction.

DAVE breathes a sigh of relief, hugs the painting to himself and walks on.

9: INTERIOR BEDROOM.

The girl is dressing; dark stockings and white blouse. She takes a police uniform from her wardrobe.

9a: INTERIOR STUDIO

Close Up of knife stabbing table top.

CHRIS is caught in a viscous headlock by an ugly gangster somewhat incongruously dressed in a pinstripe suit. He is struggling to say something to another similarly dressed man idly playing with a large flick knife in front of the black and black and white striped painting.

CHRIS

Gengiz.

The thug squeezes CHRIS'S neck tighter.

CHRIS (trying again)

Jack.

GENGIZ COEN flicks open the knife.

CHRIS

Mr. Coen.

GENGIZ (mildly)

Chris I'm disappointed in you. We had an arrangement and I believe in keeping arrangement's, don't you?

He gently places the tip of the knife under CHRIS'S throat.

GENGIZ

My money tonight.

Satisfied Gengiz smiles.

The other thug grunts and releases Chris.

Laughing they leave.

Then without warning GENGIZ slashes the big painting in one stroke.

Chris drops to the floor in front of his painting.

10: EXTERIOR HOUSE- DAY.

We are looking through the viewfinder of a telephoto lens.

DAVE is in front of a nondescript house in a good part of town. (Great Percy Street, N1.) He looks around checking the street. He's feeling cocky and in control again.

As he presses the doorbell the camera clicks, and takes several shots, door opens he goes in.

11: INTERIOR -HOUSE- DAY.

Heavy breathing .

Close Up. A semi-naked hooded man is chained to a bondage frame. We can hear muffled voices.

DAVE.

It won't take long.

'Jimmi the Gent' is at work. Looking very menacing, a fat young woman dressed in leather S/M gear is carrying a whip in her hand. DAVE barges into the room. His eyes open in amazement.

JIMMI

What are you gawking at? I said I was busy.

DAVE

Jimmy don't be like that.

JIMMI the Gent coils her whip menacingly.

JIMMI

Stand still you sniveling little wretch.

DAVE who has been shuffling about stands still.

JIMMY

(looking at DAVE)

Not you idiot!

She whacks the hooded man with the whip. He groans, whether with pleasure or pain is difficult to tell.

JIMMI pointing the whip handle at DAVE.

JIMMI

Through there. Now!

DAVE goes into another room. It's JIMMI's dressing room; there are various costumes hung up on racks. They range from a nun's habit to a traffic warden's uniform.

JIMMI

God, I'm gasping for a cuppa, flogging always makes me thirsty.

DAVE looks even more aghast.

JIMMI

I told you I was busy. I don't normally do two jobs at once.

If a thing's worth doing, it's worth doing all by its lonesome.

DAVE takes the painting out of the Harrods bag. JIMMI lifts it up to the light.

JIMMI.

Exquisite. After Titian.

DAVE

You'll do it.

There is the sound of rustling chains.

JIMMI
(shouting to the other room)
If I catch you moving, you dog turd; I'll brand your arse.

The sound of the chains stops.

JIMMI
No

DAVE
No, what do you mean no? Two grand! It's worth three times that.

JIMMI
More

She pauses for emphasis, DAVE looks expectant.

Read my lips. (mouths no) The Rozzers have been here. For all I know they're still out there. It's not worth it. Next month, next year maybe, but not now.

DAVE
Jimmi it's very collectable.

JIMMI
I know and the boys in blue will collect you if you're not careful. Now David its time to be off, run along and be a good boy (she hefts the whip menacingly) mummy's got to get a teensy- bit medieval now.

She shoos DAVE out of her dressing room. Back in her dungeon she grins evilly at the hooded man as she cracks the whip loud enough for him to hear.

JIMMI
Right! If that todger's stiff, you're for it my lad!

The chains rattle.

12: EXTERIOR EVENING.

Outside a block of flats looking up at a window.

13: INTERIOR - BEDROOM

The young woman puts on her police hat, checking in the mirror to see if it's straight, then leaves.

14: INTERIOR -POLICE CAR- STREET- EVENING.

An unmarked car is parked in a quiet side street near a pub. McCabe and Feast are sitting in the front of the car watching the other side of the street. Jenny Dean is reading a magazine in the back.

FEAST

We should be watching Miss Whiplash.

McCabe jerks slightly.

McCABE

And what rough beast slouches toward Bethlehem to be born.

DEAN

A metaphor for the Chief Super sir?

McCABE

I doubt he can spell metaphor.

FEAST

Bollocks to Bethlehem! Somebody's coming . Up on the right.

McCabe grins, he's already seen the shadowy figure.

McCABE

Bang on time my son!

Instantly they are alert and ready.

15: INTERIOR - PUB

C.U snooker balls, the triangle shatters as the cue ball careens into it.

Three men, some of life's losers, are playing snooker. Half drunk pints around the table.

A group of four young professional women are having a noisy birthday party.

Bar man is collecting empty glasses.

CHRIS is sitting alone, glumly sipping his beer. He has abandoned the caftan in favour of a gaudy leather jacket covered in bright multicoloured badges (Does established trait business)

A young woman is sitting reading the Socialist Workers party newspaper by the wall.

DAVE enters carrying the picture in the Harrods bag.

Her looks about for CHRIS and walks over to sit down next to him.

We can overhear snatches of conversations. A very sexy 19 year old, in a tank top and tight leather skirt is lambasting the barman. She is with a young man who doesn't know where to put himself.

GIRL

..... Do I look like some kind of stupid laddette?
I'm a Girlie. A Macho Slapper. We get bevvied
with our mates. We have tattoos and wear tight
clothes, the tighter the better- Red leather! Rubber
and no knickers (Quietly) Sometimes I go about
stark naked. So I don't want some pimple faced
wanker giving me a hard time when I'm trying to
get a Bloody Mary. Capiche.

Proffer's the money and the barman takes it. The young man is still trying to make himself
invisible.

Two old men are talking about football.

Loud noises from the party in the corner. One of them is telling a rude joke about lesbians.
The three guys are struggling to overhear it.

CHRIS.

Two grand. Bollocks. It's worth double.

DAVE

She wouldn't touch it.

CHRIS

(alarmed)

Jesus! Putney's answer to cat woman you said .
No problem you said. Then it's, 'Beautiful South'
you said.

DAVE

I know what I said- and now we're up
to our arses with the filth .

CHRIS

It's not the filth we have to worry about. It's Gengiz Coen.

DAVE (incredulously)

GENGIZ COEN! What's he got to do with it.

CHRIS (almost in desperation)

It's his bloody painting. I knicked it for him.

DAVE

You what.

CHRIS

I had to. I burned one of his cars for the insurance,
and never gave him the money.

DAVE
How much.

CHRIS
The painting?

DAVE (incredulously)
The car!

CHRIS
£500... A Ford Granada.

Dave looks horrified.

16: INTERIOR NIGHT.

The three cops are still in the car.

DEAN
We'll lose it if we don't go now.

McCABE
OK lets move we'll catch him from behind.

