

OLD
40

TV PLAY
FORBIDDEN AREAS

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by

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CHARACTERS

FRED POWELL

JACK

MABEL

GEORGE

CLIFF

LIL

DOREEN

MR WILLOUGHBY

MRS WILLOUGHBY

MR MANSFIELD

THREE CHILDREN, NEIGHBOURS ETC.

FORBIDDEN AREAS

The opening dialogues of this piece may appear confusing unless it is understood that in their conversations with each other the village inhabitants are constantly avoiding reference to certain subjects which intimately concern their own lives. Their chat about farming techniques, jobs and home-life is a device, as it were, to fill up the silence and make accidental references to certain FORBIDDEN AREAS unlikely. Thus the very chumminess of their conversation is a source of tension, distrust and, in the end, hatred.

1.

OPEN COUNTRYSIDE ON A FINE DAY IN MIDSUMMER. PAN LEFT OVER COUNTRY-SIDE AND DOWN TO ROADWAY WHICH STRETCHES LIKE A STRAIGHT CABLE BETWEEN FIELDS AS FAR AS WE CAN SEE. IN THE DISTANCE A BLACK CAR APPEARS, QUITE ISOLATED IN THE PLAIN. THE PACE IS LEISURELY, DENOTING UNDYNAMIC COUNTRY HABITS. WAIT FOR IT TO DRAW TO A HALT JUST BELOW: THE DRIVER IS IN SHIRT SLEEVES, A STRAW HAT PUSHED FORWARD OVER HIS EYES. IT IS A TAXI OF THE COUNTRY TYPE. HE SWITCHES THE ENGINE OFF AND THE FULL SILENCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE ESTABLISHES ITSELF.

UNDYNAMICALLY, THE PASSENGER, FRED POWELL, GETS OUT OF THE TAXI, STANDS FOR A MOMENT LOOKING ROUND WHILE HIS HAND SEARCHES HIS POCKETS FOR MONEY.

HE LOOKS TOWARDS THE CAMERA'S RIGHT AND FIXES THERE, GAZING UPWARDS, QUITE STILL.

PAN RIGHT ALONG THE ROADWAY AND THERE NOT MANY YARDS FURTHER DOWN IS A TALL WOODEN ARCH SPANNING THE ROAD, PAINTED WHITE AND BEARING THE WORDS IN BLACK PROMINENCE, 'MILITARY ZONE'. NO SENTRY. NOTHING TO LEFT OR RIGHT OF THE SIMPLE ARCH BUT COUNTRYSIDE. AND THE ROAD CONTINUES LIKE A STRAIGHT CABLE ON THE OTHER SIDE AS FAR AS WE CAN SEE.

CUT BACK TO FRED AND THE TAXI. HE IS TAKING A SUITCASE AND FISHING TACKLE OUT. THEN AFTER A NOD TO THE DRIVER HE BEGINS WALKING IN THE DIRECTION OF THE ARCHWAY. AS HE DOES SO THE TAXI BEGINS A SLOW AND LABORIOUS REVERSE IN THE NARROW ROAD TO GO BACK THE WAY IT CAME.

PAN WITH FRED APPROACHING THE ARCH.

CUT BACK TO TAXI WHICH IS HALF TURNED IN THE ROUND. THE DRIVER IS WATCHING FRED POWELL THROUGH THOUGHTFUL EYES; HE IS PALE, SWEATING, HIS ARM LEANING ON THE WINDOW LEDGE.

CUT BACK TO FRED POWELL WALKING. HE IS JUST PASSING UNDER THE ARCH. WE HEAR THE TAXI GRINDING BEHIND HIM AND THEN IT LEAVES. FRED WALKS ON, TOWARDS OPEN COUNTRY, PAST THE ARCH NOW. THE TAXI ENGINE DIES AWAY.

NOW THE TITLES ROLL UP. WHEN THEY ARE FINISHED HE IS IN THE DISTANCE AND WE SEE HIM TAKING OFF HIS JACKET AND THROWING IT OVER HIS SHOULDER, A BIT ENTANGLED WITH SUITCASE AND FISHING TACKLE.

LS OF THE ROAD SHOWS IT DESERTED FROM END TO END, EXCEPT FOR FRED.

THE PROGRESS OF HIS WALK IS SEEN IN A SERIES OF SHOTS. THE COUNTRYSIDE BECOMES LUSCIOUS, WITH TREES, SMALL LAKES, WOODED DIPS. HE IS HOTTER WITH EACH SHOT.

CUT TO HIM ARRIVING AT A MILESTONE. HE BENDS DOWN AND PEERS AT IT. THE WORDS HAVE BEEN SCRUBBED OUT. HE PASSES HIS HAND OVER ITS FACE, PEERS AT IT AGAIN. THEN HE GETS UP AND CONTINUES WALKING.

CUT TO LS OF A FARMHOUSE. THEN FRED IN THE DISTANCE COMING TOWARDS IT.

CUT TO HIM ARRIVING IN THE YARD. THE FRONT DOOR IS OPEN. HE LOOKS UP AT THE WINDOWS, PEERS IN AT THE DOOR. KNOCKS TENTATIVELY. NO ANSWER.

FRED: Jack!

CUT TO JACK ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE YARD; WATCHING FRED FROM BEHIND. HE IS IN FARMER'S GAITERS WITH HIS SHIRT SLEEVES ROLLED UP.

CUT BACK TO FRED AT THE DOORWAY.

FRED: Jack!

JACK WALKS FORWARD. AND THEN FRED TURNS.

JACK (SOLIDLY) Well if it isn't Fred Powell. How are you Fred?

FRED: How's yourself?

THEY SHAKE HANDS.

JACK: Did you walk then?

FRED: Yes, I had to. The taxi wouldn't bring me, not past the----

JACK: Well come in and make yourself at home. You'd like a cup of tea I expect.

FRED: I wouldn't mind.

JACK: Fancy dropping out of the sky like that---Fred Powell---let me have a look at you!

HE STOPS AND STUDIES FRED WITH A FIRM SMILE.

JACK: What is it, five---six years?

FRED: Near on. (LOOKING ROUND)
You've got a big establishment here then----

JACK: Not a bad old place is it?

THEY ADMIRE IT MUTUALLY. A SHOT OF THE EFFICIENT OUTBUILDINGS.

JACK: I reckon it's worth treble what I gave for it.

FRED: Well you was always a worker Jack.

JACK: If I sleep past the clock of a morning I'm miserable all day---feel wretched---!

THEY WALK INTO THE HOUSE.

JACK: Mabel!

CUT TO THE NEAT, SPACIOUS LIVING ROOM WITH A LOUD TICKING CLOCK AND SOLID SUITE. JACK AND FRED ARE JUST COMING IN. THE CURVED WINDOWS COMMAND THE YARD THEY HAVE JUST COME FROM.

JACK: She might be down at the chickens---Mabel!

FRED: Have you moved them them?

JACK: The chickens? I'll say! No more pecking and dirtying the house. I don't go in for this broiler house stunt because to my mind it don't produce a tasty egg, but I like to confine 'em a bit---sit down mate.

FRED SITS DOWN.

JACK (TAKING A SHEET OF NEWSPAPER MECHANICALLY) Yes I like 'em free range but not so free as to dirty my frontyard (WITH A CHUCKLE AS HE SPREADS THE NEWSPAPER ON ONE OF THE ARMCHAIRS AND SITS DOWN).

FRED: You haven't changed Jack. Same kind of humour.

JACK: Can't say you're different. Lined round the eyes. City life, I suppose.

FRED: That's it.

JACK: Wife all right?

FRED: Yes thanks.

JACK: And what brings you here?

FRED: Just to see the old faces. Not much work comes in this time of year so I thought I'd drop down to the old place, see how it's changed.

JACK: You found work all right then?

FRED: Yes, well they fixed that up after they----

JACK: Good pay?

FRED: Oh yes. Not rich but I don't have to worry. I've got three boys now.

JACK: Go on!

FRED: The eldest wanted to come but I put my foot down. I thought I'll have a few days all on my lonesome for a change. Well you can't feel free can you, not with a kid around, I mean it's different if your wife's with you but, well, anyway, he wanted to see the manoeuvres, God knows where he got the idea, he's mad on soldiering---- nine years old!----

JACK (GETTING UP) And where would he find manoeuvres?

HE GOES TO THE WINDOW.

FRED: Well you know----

JACK: I haven't even got a shotgun.

Mabel! (OPENING THE WINDOW FURTHER)
Oh, there you are.

MABEL (OUTSIDE) I heard you the first
time----

JACK: It's Fred. You remember---
Fred Powell. From down the old Castle---

MABEL (COMING INTO FRAME OUTSIDE THE
WINDOW, WITH BUCKET AND RUBBERED HANDS)
Fred---! Well I never! Here I'll
just drop this and I'll be in!

JACK (TURNING FROM THE WINDOW) Knew
she'd be surprised.

FRED: My wife's always on about Mabel
and her cakes, and the way she used to
throttle a bird----

MABEL COMES IN, WIPING HER NOW UN-
RUBBERED HANDS ON HER APRON.

MABEL: Well how are you mate?

FRED: All right. How's yourself?
You look a treat!

JACK: Now then, now then!

MABEL: Leave him alone! I don't get
many compliments! How's Rachel then?

FRED: Oh she's fine. I was telling
Jack, we've got three now, three boys----

MABEL: No go on, have you really?
Well that's nice---! Now then, what
shall I get you Fred? Would you like
a cup of tea?

JACK: 'Course he would!

MABEL: I know you would.

JACK (TO FRED) I take it like a
sponge, all day.

FRED: Yes I remember you was always
a big tea-drinker, funny how these
little things come back to the memory,
isn't it?

MABEL: I didn't hear no taxi!

FRED: No I was saying to Jack, he
wouldn't come no further than the
archway. He said----

MABEL (ON THE WAY OUT) I'll get you

tea, mate, just you sit there and make yourself comfortable. (WITH A SUDDEN GALVANISING GLANCE AT JACK'S CHAIR) You put newspaper down then?

JACK (SUBSIDING INTO THE CHAIR AGAIN AND ONLY HALF ADDRESSING HER AS SHE GOES AWAY) Well wouldn't you, with a wife like mine?

MABEL (FROM OUTSIDE) Oh go on!

FRED: You're both the same. It's nice to see people who haven't changed. We get so many changes nowadays we can't hardly keep pace, can we? I never thought five years ago I'd move away from here but there you are, fate, in the form of----

JACK: Oh I shouldn't worry! Moving's all right. Wish I'd done a bit of it.

FRED: Get fed up with the same old place sometimes?

JACK: No not really. Can't say I do, not really.

FRED: Lovely day, Jack. I was sweltering coming over that hill. Quite like the old summers eh, when we used to----?

JACK: Oh the summers are all right. ----

FRED: Remember the fishing, down at the old Castle?

JACK: I'll say.

FRED: Still get down there do you?

JACK: Well to tell you the truth I don't get the time any more.

FRED: Sunday mornings, nice and brisk and early, poling down to the river...

JACK: That's right. I've got a big place here Fred, you see. It's a night and day job. Couldn't leave it if I wanted to.

FRED: Go on---you farmers are all the same.

JACK: Well look at the cattle alone. I might get a birth in the middle of the night. You can't leave cattle----

FRED: What about holidays Jack?
Do you get any?

JACK: Holidays!

FRED (ENJOYING IT) Never?

JACK: Not me! I don't think Mabel
and me has ~~xxxx~~ seen the sea since
turned six years, when your Rachel had
her uncle over and we all stayed down
at the coast----

FRED: What, not since then?

JACK: Well first I reckon the air
here's as good as any sea air and
second I haven't got the time so----

FRED: But you're allowed to, like?

JACK: Allowed? to go on holiday?

FRED: Yes.

JACK: Well of course we're allowed!
Who's to stop us?

FRED: No I just thought----

JACK: Cliff gets away regular.
He's got the old blacksmith's house
down in the village.

FRED: Go on! Old Cliff?

JACK: I'm a grandad of---how many---
oh about fifteen now!

FRED: Well good luck to you. I don't
reckon there could have been a better
dad than you was to the kids.

JACK: Oh they deserved it. Good
bunch really. And now they've all
gone it's even better (WITH A CHUCKLE).
She's a bit narky now and then but so
am I, so it evens out all right by the
end of the week. Good sort, old
Mabel----

FRED: That's right. Good worker
too.

JACK: Work? She's up before I am
in the morning. And I don't think
she's been ill a day touch wood since
you left.

FRED: Go on!

CUT TO THE KITCHEN WHICH IS AS SOLID
AND CLEAN AS THE LIVING ROOM. TEA

IS ON THE BOIL AND MABEL HAS JUST FINISHED PREPARING GIANT SLABS OF BREAD AND BUTTER. SHE WIPES HER HANDS ON HER APRON AND GOES BUSILY ACROSS TO WHERE THE WALL TELEPHONE HANGS, AFTER A QUICK, THOROUGH GLANCE INTO THE CORRIDOR OUTSIDE. SHE DIALS THREE NUMBERS.

MABEL (INTO THE PHONE) George!
George! Are you coming up? (AFTER
A PAUSE) There's a visitor! A
visitor!

SHE PUTS THE PHONE DOWN WITH A WALLOP AND PEEPS ROUND THE DOORWAY AGAIN BEFORE GOING BACK TO THE STOVE.

CUT BACK TO THE LIVING ROOM.

JACK: No there's never an animal crosses this yard now Fred, not like the old days. What with chicks under your feet and the odd pig turd and a calf got loose you never knew where to put yourself. Besides, the muck. I used to sluice this yard down regular night and morning. Never touch it now, bar once a week. Rain does the rest.

FRED: It's certainly spotless Jack. Still I like to see a bit of livestock about. Gives atmosphere.

JACK: Yes and a pretty thick one too! (WITH HIS CHUCKLE) No Fred you can keep your atmosphere, I like a clean yard and a clean place to live in.

FRED: Oh I'm with you there. Can't say I caught a whiff of livestock coming in.

JACK: Well I've got it all mechanised mate. I reckon I put fresh hay down for thirty head of cattle inside an hour, and get the muck deposited out of sight and out of mind in about the same time.

FRED: Go on----

MABEL COMES IN WITH THE TRAY.

MABEL: I've cut you some bread and butter Fred like you used to like it.

FRED: Well that's nice Mabel. Tell you the truth, I haven't had a bite since early morning. Caught the first train out.

MABEL (SPREADING A PAPER NAPKIN ON THE ARM OF FRED'S CHAIR) That's right. Here, rest your plate there.

JACK (STILL FIXED ON FRED) The only time an animal passes across that yard is on the way to slaughter, is that right, Mabel?

MABEL (GETTING THE TEA) Yes Fred, we're a damn sight cleaner than the old days, remember the muck we put up with?

JACK: Yes you can keep your atmosphere Fred. (TO MABEL) He says a bit of muck gives atmosphere.

MABEL: No you give me a clean farm. Labour saving!

FRED (TAKING A PIECE OF BREAD AND BUTTER) Yes I suppose it is. Of course I remember my old dad, he used to say there was nothing better nor healthier than the smell of muck.

JACK: Your dad never managed sixty head of cattle without farmhands!

FRED: Is that what you've got?

JACK: As true as I sit here. Is that right Mabel?

MABEL: Sixty-one be next Monday or Tuesday if she gives birth.

FRED: Well how do you manage for God's sake?

JACK: It's the mechanisation Fred. Of course I've got girls coming in for the milking. But it's all built in you see Fred. Automatic sleuces for the urine, hatch under every animal for the heavy stuff, and fresh hay comes in on a track down the middle.

FRED: Well all I can say it's changed a bit since I was here!

JACK: I'll say.

FRED: They must have given you a pretty penny to get it all going eh?

JACK: Oh we got the capital.. All that's capital, ain't it?

MABEL, HAVING FINISHED MINISTERING TO

FRED, SITS DOWN ON AN UPRIGHT CHAIR, LIKE SOMEONE TO WHOM SITTING DOWN COMES HARD.

FRED: Well good luck to you, that's all I can say. I mean none of us was all that well off, were we? So I suppose it did a bit of good as well. It uprooted us, and messed us about, and we wasn't asked our opinion, we was just kind of shot out and that was that, we found ourselves on the doorstep didn't we, minus a job and minus a roof over our heads. Unless we had biggish farms like you. Of course I was slow starting up in the narsery business; there was no call for it here really, was there, after the----?

HIS SENTENCE IS CUT SHORT BY THE APPEARANCE OF GEORGE, SMALL AND PLUMP AND JOVIAL IN FEATURE.

MABEL (GLAD TO JUMP UP) Why hullo George! Didn't see you cross the yard! Do you know Fred Powell, used to live down in the village---he popped over to have a look at us all!

GEORGE: Oh how do you do?

FRED (IN A CONFUSION OF CUP AND SAUCER AND PLATE AND PAPER NAPKIN AS HE TRIES TO RISE) How are you Mr----?

GEORGE: Just George. They all George me here.

MABEL: That's right!

JACK: Busy down the village, George?

GEORGE: Not so bad (SITTING DOWN).

MABEL (TO FRED) George sorts the mail.

FRED: Oh yes? I was saying to Jack and Mabel here, it's all changed a bit since my time, by all accounts. Is the post office mechanised as well?

JACK: I've been telling him about my new installations George----

GEORGE SIMPLY LOOKS FROM ONE TO THE OTHER AS THEY SPEAK.

FRED: They gave me a certain amount of compensation but it could have been more. (TO GEORGE) Whereas what I'm saying is, the people who stayed here,

like Jack, got a better deal, with all this machinery and streamlining. I just got the boot, and I had to----

MABEL: Would you like a cup of tea George?

GEORGE: No thanks.

FRED: Still I mustn't grumble.

JACK (WITH RELIEF) That's right.

MABEL (TO GEORGE) He's got three lovely boys.

JACK (ALSO TO GEORGE) I reckon he took the prettiest girl in the village, anyway, eh Fred?---I don't reckon many could have come up to young Rachel--- she was a peach when she was a kid, I remember the whole village was wooing her at one time----

MABEL: Now then! you'll say a bit too much, eh George?

JACK: Oh, not that Rachel looked to, right or left. She waited for her man. And there he was. And she stuck to him. She never pickled about like some of these girls, eh Fred?

FRED (TO GEORGE) Well, you know, we got married early, and then there was the kids, and we're both hard workers, so----

THERE IS A BRIEF SILENCE.

MABEL: Would you like another cup Fred?

FRED: No thanks Mabel, that was very nice, and I like your butter.

JACK: Made in my own machines. They're a sight to behold, I can tell you. Like a show-round Fred?

MABEL: That's it, then I can get this place in shape, I haven't been round with the duster this morning!

JACK: I reckon you've been round it half a dozen times already--- (TO GEORGE) House-proud, she never sits still a minute!

THE MEN ALL GET UP. JACK LEADS THE WAY WITH FRED AND THEN GEORGE BEHIND HIM.

CUT TO MABEL WATCHING FROM THE SITTING ROOM, HER HAND UP TO HER MOUTH, MUSING HARD, AS THE MEN CROSS THE YARD OUTSIDE.

CUT TO THE MEN ENTERING ONE OF THE NEAT OUTBUILDINGS. GEORGE IS ALWAYS A LITTLE BEHIND.

CUT BACK TO LIVING ROOM. MABEL REMOVES THE NEWSPAPER FROM JACK'S CHAIR AND SLAPS THE CUSHIONS. THEN SHE TAKES THE TRAY OF TEA THINGS AWAY.

CUT BACK TO THE YARD WITH THE MEN NOW STROLLING ACROSS TO ANOTHER OUTBUILDING.

FRED: And the sliding doors---I've never seen such an outfit! It must have cost a bomb!

JACK: Not so bad is it? Now the pigs are right down there (POINTING) where their smell only bothers themselves. Now as I expect you remember Fred I've never believed in an unexercised pig and I've got well nigh three acres down there with electrical fencing all round and automatic drainage, where they can root and roll as much as they please. And how many head of pig do you reckon I've got there George? About two hundred and fifty?

GEORGE NODS A GENIAL YES.

FRED: But how do you run it all?

JACK: Well for the muck I get a special clearance squad in once every forty-eight hours, and the slaughtering looked after too, all I do is sign a duplicate saying weight and age and sex and the following morning the job's done and I don't even see the animal, just get an invoice as they pass across the yard in a truck, and the next week a cheque comes in regular as clock-work, eh, George?

FRED: Blimey you see some changes don't you? When I tell my wife all this she won't believe a word! The village is still there OK is it?

JACK: Like a run down there now? You remember my Cliff don't you?

FRED: Remember him? (TO GEORGE) We was best pals in the village I reckon! We was always up that old castle tower, I reckon we brought

more bricks down off it than was ever put up!

JACK: Well he married Lil Fields, you remember the Fieldses, do you, they moved too, they're in the hotel line if I heard right----

FRED: Go on?

JACK: Cliff'll be just coming in for his dinner, shall we push off down then, it'll make a nice break for me too---- half a minute I'll just tell the wife---

HE MOVES AWAY FROM THEM TOWARDS THE HOUSE.

FRED: Been in the village long George?

GEORGE: Oh yes.

FRED: Work down at the post office you say?

GEORGE: That's right.

CUT TO JACK IN THE HALL OF THE HOUSE.

JACK (CALLING) Just taking Fred down the village!

CUT TO MABEL AT KITCHEN DOOR.

MABEL: Don't be late for your dinner. And no drinks!

JACK: I'd like to see you drink with George at your elbow!

HE GOES AWAY BUT STOPS AGAIN.

JACK: Er---Cliff comes in a^bout now don't he?

MABEL: What, you taking ^{him} over there? He'll just be sitting down to his dinner!

JACK: Oh well, once in a while. We don't get many visitors.

CUT BACK TO FRED AND GEORGE. FRED IS SHOWING SIGNS OF POOR MORALE, HAVING BEEN ALONE WITH GEORGE.

GEORGE: That's right.

JACK COMES INTO FRAME.

JACK: Well let's push off shall we? I reckon Cliff'll be glad to see you.

FRED: Yes it's a long time you know---five years---

JACK: His kids are at school, which if you knew 'em you'd think a mercy, because they're the noisiest set of blighters in the village; though I am their grandfather, eh, George?

JACK UNLOCKS A FLAPUP DOOR AND IN ONE EASY MOVEMENT HAS THE GARAGE OPEN. INSIDE THERE IS A DOORLESS VEHICLE THAT COULD BE A LAND ROVER WERE IT NOT FOR ITS PECULIAR WING ATTACHMENTS AND STRIKING WHITE PAINTWORK.

FRED: Blimey what the hell's that, an aeroplane?

JACK: Goes like one. Half a jiffy, I'll just back her out. (AS HE GETS IN) She'll go up a muddy one-in-three without even coughing, and there's no gear-change!

FRED: Go on!

JACK BACKS THE VEHICLE OUT AND FRED STUDIES IT. HE GIVES HIS ATTENTION TO THE LICENCE PLATE WHICH IS M4000.

FRED: That's a quaint licence plate isn't it?

JACK: Oh that's a village number. Got our own classification now, well you see we needed it, with the re-organisation, it stood to reason! eh George?

FRED (AS THEY GET IN) Have you got four thousand vehicles in the village then?

JACK: Four thousand? (WITH A LOOK AT GEORGE) I should say six thousand, to be on the safe side, eh, George?

FRED: What---in this----?

JACK (STARTING UP LOUDLY) Hold on to your seat mate, this is a rough bit of path!

HE TAKES THEM AWAY WITH A JOLT AND THE LAST OF THE SHOT IS FRED CLUTCHING THE SIDES OF HIS SEAT.

CUT TO ROAD AS M4000 DRIVES ON TO IT.

IS OF SMALL VILLAGE WITH M4000 APPROACHING IT ON A DOWNWARD SLOPE AT SPEED.

MS OF VILLAGE SHOWS IT PEACEFUL,
HUGGED WITH TREES.

CUT TO M4000 DRAWING UP IN THE
TINY MAIN STREET WHICH IS REALLY AN
AVENUE BETWEEN DETACHED HOUSES OF
VARIOUS EPOCHS ON EITHER SIDE.

FRED (GETTING OUT) Well I think
you deserve a drink after that, Jack.
Bumpy but fast.

JACK: Marvellous isn't it? Smooth!
Why I don't reckon I've been in a real
de luxe saloon car that's smoother.

FRED (LOOKING ROUND) Well this
hasn't changed! I don't reckon a
tree's been felled even!

JACK: That's right. Cliff's got
that little house----(POINTS)

FRED: Where the blacksmith used to
be?

JACK (AS THEY WALK DOWN THE GARDEN
PATH) It was like the black hole
of Calcutta when they took it over.
You ought to have seen it! I reckon
the old chap hadn't put a broom to the
place for nigh on thirty years, let
alone a scrubbing brush. No lavatory.
He had one tap of cold water; God
knows how he managed for a shave on
a frosty morning. Well they ripped
open the insides and it's like a
palace now!

JACK LOOKS IN AT THE FRONT WINDOW.

JACK: You there Lil? (TAP TAP ON
THE WINDOW)

LIL'S VAST VOICE: Eh?

JACK: It's Jack!

LIL'S VAST VOICE: He's just de-
greasing hisself!

JACK: Well open up, it's visitors!

LIL'S VAST VOICE: Visitors?

A WINDOW IS PUSHED OPEN WITH GREAT
VIOLENCE UPSTAIRS AND LIL BURSTS ON
US.

LIL: Oh hullo George. (TO JACK)
He's in the bathroom.

JACK: Remember Fred Powell?

LIL: Fred---? Well bless my soul,
it's Fred Powell! Here Cliff----!
(CALLING OUT BEHIND HER) Your old
pal's back Cliff! (TO FRED) He
talks about you a rare lot---you wait
till he sees you! (AT A LOSS WHETHER
TO PUT HER HEAD IN AND CALL CLIFF OR
STAY BELLOWING DOWN AT FRED) Cliff!
(TO FRED) He's getting the grease
off! CLIFF!

SHE PULLS HER HEAD IN BUT JUST AT THAT
MOMENT CLIFF APPEARS AT THE WINDOW TOO,
THE TOWEL HE IS WIPING HIMSELF ON ALMOST
AS BLACK AS HIS FACE AND HANDS. HE
PEERS DOWN AT THEM RATHER LIKE A MECH-
ANIC INTO A CYLINDER HEAD, WITH LIL
AT HIS SIDE.

CLIFF: Well would you believe it!
It's Fred! Old Fred!

JACK: He dropped in this morning.
Talk about surprise!

CLIFF: Well come in mate. Would you
believe it, old Fred Powell. I'd
given you up for good mate. How's
Rachel, all right?

FRED: Yes thanks Cliff! You don't
look so bad yourself!

LIL: Here come on, don't stand talk-
ing at the window all the time.

CLIFF: She'll be down to open up.

THEY LEAVE THE WINDOW.

JACK: Of course I forgot you two was
rare playmates. (TO GEORGE) Talk
about larks, you ought to have seen
these two!

LIL OPENS THE DOOR.

LIL: Come in! I was just getting
his dinner on the table.

FRED: Look duck don't you worry about
me, I had a platefull of bread and butter
down at your in-lawses---

LIL: Don't talk silly, you'll have a
bite with us, I don't promise anything
special but----

CUT TO GLEAMINGLY NEAT BACK ROOM
OPENING THROUGH FRENCH WINDOWS ON TO

A SUNNY GARDEN AS THEY ALL COME IN.
THE TABLE IS LAID FOR TWO.

FRED: Well this is nice.

LIL: It wasn't when we moved in, eh,
Jack?

JACK: I was just telling him----

LIL: I reckon the builders was a
week getting the dirt off the walls,
before they started replastering!

FRED: Go on!

LIL: He never looked after hisself
after his wife died, you see.

CLIFF CLUMPS INTO THE ROOM, HIS
SLEEVES ROLLED UP.

CLIFF: Well how are you Fred?

FRED (AS THEY SHAKE HANDS) Not so
dusty! I don't see as you've changed
much!

CLIFF: Just a bit more grease, that's
all.

FRED: You've made this place anyhow.

CLIFF: You ought to have seen it when
we moved in, eh, dad?

JACK: Yes I've been telling him.

FRED: Still working at the Barn Cliff?

CLIFF: Barn? No! Didn't dad tell
you?---I started up on my own. I
reckon I've got forty vehicles standing
in my place at the moment.

FRED: Go on!

CLIFF (AS THEY ALL PREPARE TO SIT
DOWN IN THE PORCHWAY BEYOND THE FRENCH
WINDOWS) Come and take a seat
George. You know George do you Fred?

FRED: Oh yes.

CLIFF: Yes I've got a place down by
the church----

FRED: Go on, where the stables used
to be?

CLIFF: That's right. I ripped out
the stables----(TO JACK) they as good
as fell apart, didn't they?

JACK: I'll say!

CLIFF: Then I sunk a few repair bays underground, pressure-gear and all. Oh there's nothing missing in my place, not for up-to-date equipment. I'll show you after we've had a bit of dinner.

JACK: I reckon Fred'll be fed up with being shown round, after my place, eh, Fred?

FRED (TO CLIFF) Your dad's place has changed too eh? I don't know how he gets the work done!

CLIFF: Well same as me. It's all system nowadays. I never have to worry about getting rid of my used oil like I used to. None of them blinking barrels full of oil lying round half a year like we used to at the Barn. They come and collect it----

FRED: Go on?

CLIFF: Oh yes, it's all organised nowadays. Well that leaves me free to do the job, you see. In the old days you never knew what was coming in and what was trying to get out---the barn door never got closed in thirty years I reckon, there was always a truck or half a dozen broke-down tractors stuck in front of it.

FRED: That's right.

CLIFF: And how about you Fred? life treating you all right?

FRED: Oh not so dusty. It was a bit of a break, moving away like that. Well it is, isn't it, if you've been born in a place, and we was always like one big family really, wasn't we? I mean, it wasn't really dull.

JACK (WITH A WINK AT GEORGE) You two saw to that!

FRED: What I would have liked would have been to get a job in town and keep the place here---it's only ten miles down the road, after all.

CLIFF: That's right.

FRED: But no, some bloody great bulldozing scheme comes along and the human beings don't get considered,

I mean I know I got compensation
but---

CLIFF: Would you like a drink
George?

GEORGE: No thanks.

CLIFF: What about you Fred?

FRED: Oh well.

CLIFF: I've got some beer in the
cellar. How about that?

FRED: Yes well, that's very nice.

CLIFF GETS UP AND CROSSES THE LIVING
ROOM WHILE THE OTHER THREE CONTINUE
TO SIT THERE, IN SILENCE. FRED JOGS
HIS LEG, JACK TAKES HIS HANDKERCHIEF
OUT AND BLOWS HIS NOSE, GEORGE SITS
QUITE IMPASSIVE. A SLOW FADE.

OPEN AGAIN ON CLIFF'S LOFTY GIRDERED
GARAGE, WHICH IS FULL OF M4000-TYPE
VEHICLES, ALL PAINTED WHITE, WITH
THEIR STRANGE WING ATTACHMENTS. AT
FIRST WE ONLY SEE CLIFF AND FRED, AND
IN THE BACKGROUND YOUTHFUL MECHANICS.
SOUND OF SPRAYS AND HAMMERING.

FRED: These attachments, Cliff,
what kind of purpose do they serve like?

CLIFF: Oh well, you know, they're
safe. If you go over sideways on one
of these tricky slopes you need wings
to my mind.

FRED: Yes I suppose you do.

CLIFF: You see (AS THEY WALK ON),
what we did was trim things down to
their basics.

FRED: Oh yes.

CLIFF: Instead of equipping our-
selves with every car on the market
we put in an order for this lot,
custom built. Well, it stands to
reason, we've got all the spare
parts, we can streamline the mainten-
ance right down.

FRED: Still, I'm surprised everybody
wants the same vehicle though. They've
got no doors either.

CLIFF: Well they're all purpose like.

FRED: They wouldn't be all purpose for me. Bloody draughty I should think.

CLIFF: Yes I can strip one of these down and get it back on the road inside an hour, even if it's a differential.

FRED (TAPPING ONE OF THE WING ATTACHMENTS) They look like machine-gun grips if you ask me.

CLIFF: Machine guns! Listen to that!

AT THAT MOMENT, AS THEY PASS BETWEEN THE VEHICLES, GEORGE APPEARS, WAITING FOR THEM.

CUT TO THE THREE OF THEM WALKING ALONG THE DESERTED VILLAGE STREET, RETURNING TO CLIFF'S HOUSE.

FRED: Still go down the Duck of an evening?

CLIFF: Oh yes.

FRED: Used to have some good times down at the Duck, eh?

CLIFF: That's right.

FRED: Of course I see it all with rose-tinted spectacles. The past wasn't all roses but still, you've got to----

CLIFF: We've got quite a big tea party by the looks of it.

SHOT OF LANE OUTSIDE CLIFF'S HOUSE WITH TWO OR THREE IDENTICAL WINGED VEHICLES PARKED.

CLIFF: Good thing Lil made a cake yesterday. I said, make a cake mate, you never know who might call! That's providence, eh Fred?

CUT TO THE HOUSE, ON THE FRONT DOOR AS THE THREE OF THEM STROLL TOWARDS IT. VOICES DRIFT OUT.

CLIFF: Not often I break off for tea.

FRED: Go on, do you good, Cliff. Mustn't turn into a machine you know. Get like your dad if you're not careful---(AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT) eh George?

CUT TO LIVING ROOM WITH CHAIRS AND

TABLE SET BEYOND THE FRENCH WINDOWS AND EXTENDING INTO THE BUSHY GARDEN. THERE ARE JACK AND MABEL, NOW DRESSED FOR THE OCCASION, LIL, NO LONGER IN HER APRON, AND ONE OTHER COUPLE, MR AND MRS WILLOUGHBY. THE TABLE IS LAID FOR TEA WITH A GREAT DARK CURRANT CAKE IN THE MIDDLE ON A PAPER DOILY. THERE ARE DAINY SANDWICHES WITH THE CRUSTS CUT OFF. IT IS ALL FARMHOUSE FARE, SERVED IN THE OLD FARMHOUSE WAY, BUT WITH GLEAMING EFFICIENCY AND A SUGGESTION OF MORE THAN RUSTIC AWARENESS.

THE THREE MEN COME IN.

LIL: Come in Fred.

FRED: Well, look at this.

LIL: Funny I should bake a cake yesterday. I usually get our cake at the stores but Cliff said go on let's have a home-made cake for a change. He must have read the stars I reckon.

CLIFF: Just what I said.

POLITE LAUGHTER.

MABEL: I expect you'll recognise some old faces Fred!

FRED: I'll say I do. How are you Mrs Willoughby?

THEY SHAKE HANDS.

MRS WILLOUGHBY: Hullo Fred. You haven't changed, has he, Arthur?

WILLOUGHBY: How long is it? (AS THEY SHAKE HANDS) Five years?

FRED: That's right.

WILLOUGHBY: Rachel keeping all right Fred?

FRED: We've got three fine boys now.

WILLOUGHBY: Go on, have you?

FRED: And how's the local police force? still waging war on delinquents like Cliff and me?

WILLOUGHBY: Well it was a bit more peaceful when you left!

SAVING CRIES OF 'OH!' FROM THE WOMEN

AND FIRM LAUGHTER.

LIL: Well sit down all. I'll help you with plates. It's better on your lap, isn't it (TO MRS WILLOUGHBY)? More informal.

MRS WILLOUGHBY: That's right.

THEY ALL SIT DOWN AND THE TEA BEGINS.

FRED (TO MRS WILLOUGHBY) Yes they gave me a week off and the wife said why don't you slip down home while I get the house straight. We always call it home. She didn't do the spring cleaning this year because mother was took bad, still she's all right now touch wood----

MABEL: Oh that's good. I liked your mum. Good sort.

FRED: She had a bit of bronchitis, I was afraid of pneumonia, still we made her comfortable, gave her one of the kiddies' rooms, with a gas-fire and all. So she didn't do so bad.

WILLOUGHBY: Got a nice place over there Fred?

FRED: Three large bedrooms, anyway.

WILLOUGHBY: Oh well, you're not doing so bad then!

FRED: To judge by what I've seen already it's you lot who've moved up a bit!

WILLOUGHBY: We haven't done so bad either, eh, George?

FRED: What beats me is how they close the blinking names! I found myself without a roof over my head---- between one day and the next.

WILLOUGHBY: I reckon it had to do with your line of work.

FRED: And then again you get other people saying it had to do with where you lived. Now our place was down by the moat and God knows how many surveyors we didn't have down, poking around. And I bet the place is still standing empty.

LIL: Here's your tea Fred.

FRED (TAKING CUP AND SAUCER) Oh that's very nice.

LIL: Help yourself to sandwiches. Don't stand on ceremony. We're still the same old family underneath!

FRED (TAKING A SANDWICH) That's what I like to hear! We had damn good times, I don't care what anybody says. I've been living a hundred miles down the line for five years now and I don't think I've ever met such a miserable set of blighters. Oh they're not so bad really, we go down the pub of a Saturday night sometimes but it's nothing like the old get-togethers we used to have down at the Duck.

WILLOUGHBY: I think you can get a lot of hate in these villages, just the same.

FRED: Oh you get that everywhere. I say we've all got hatred in us if we like to give way to it. What I mean is we was none of us angels, but we had a good life, that's all, we stuck together.

LIL IS HANDING TEA TO THE OTHER GUESTS.

MRS WILLOUGHBY: Do you remember Doreen, Fred?

FRED: Doreen? I'll say I do! Don't tell me she's got a house full of kids too!

LIL: Listen!

MRS WILLOUGHBY: She's got quite a position now I believe!

FRED: Has she really? And she still lives next door does she?

WILLOUGHBY: Oh yes.

FRED: Well that's what I mean (TO MR WILLOUGHBY). You can't say she had essential work, I mean she did a bit of embroidery and chair covers when her poor old mum died but you wouldn't call it essential!

WILLOUGHBY: I don't reckon they had the heart to shift her, myself.

FRED: Why not?

WILLOUGHBY: Well, you know, a single woman, all alone.

FRED: What, do you mean to say she never got married?

JACK: Not after she walked out with you mate!

FRED: Go on!

MRS WILLOUGHBY: You must have made an impression that stuck!

THE WOMEN ECHO THIS WITH LAUGHTER.

FRED: Well would you believe it! Now I'd never have said young Doreen was the single type, would you? She always doted on Kids.

WILLOUGHBY: Oh there's time yet I suppose. Though she is turned thirty one.

MRS WILLOUGHBY: Thirty two. She's two years younger than me.

JACK: Well that's honest! You don't often get women volunteering their ages!

WILLOUGHBY: You wait till she's turned forty, she won't be so honest then!

LAUGHTER.

CLIFF: We asked Doreen in to tea Fred. But no. As shy as ever. When you knock at the door she goes all of a tis-was. That right mum?

FRED: But fancy her not finding a husband!

LIL: She didn't even look! After you went to church with Rachel I reckon she thought she'd close up shop and live on the memory!

MORE LAUGHTER.

FRED: Well they tell me I'm not a bad looker but I've never classed myself as a Romeo.

LIL: It's not looks that decide a woman.

FRED: What is it then, character?

LIL: Well I reckon a girl who's not married by that age never intended to marry and never will!

CLIFF: She said she'd like to see you, if you had the time.

JACK: Ay ay!

MABEL: The fast hussy!

LIL: Sssh!

LAUGHTER.

FRED: I liked young Doreen though. Very sincere type of girl. But she never had much go in her. Of course I reckon her mother did that. Always 'Doreen do this' and 'Doreen do that', the poor kid never got a chance to look at herself if you see what I mean.

WILLOUGHBY: Oh she does all right you know. The cottage belongs to her like it did to her mum and she gets a month by the sea every year. I believe she'll be on the school board this next quarter.

FRED: What, is she a teacher then?

WILLOUGHBY: Inspector. Took a diploma.

FRED: Go on! It must have been after I left then because as far as I remember she was fitting chair covers.

CLIFF: She found out how clever she was. It's marvellous what you can do when you're forced to.

FRED: Why, she had her mum's money, didn't she? And the cottage is hers.

CLIFF: Well I mean she couldn't have stayed on without doing something, could she?

FRED: Why not?

A PAUSE.

CLIFF: Well she went in for these exams anyway. She had to get work, she----

THE OTHER GUESTS ARE STIFF WITH SILENCE.
CLIFF DOESN'T FINISH.

LIL: Have some more tea Fred?

FRED: Oh thanks very much.

SHE HELPS HIM TO MORE TEA.

WILLOUGHBY: You couldn't have brought better weather with you Fred.

FRED: I hope it lasts out the week. I want to get some fishing in.

JACK: Oh I noticed your fishing tackle!

FRED: Yes, we had a busy winter at the office, then mum was took bad, so I didn't get a holiday.

MABEL: It's a wonder Rachel didn't come, kids as well, just to see the old faces!

FRED: No she was dead set on getting the house straight, so I thought, well, best not to argue, she can probably do with a week less of my company anyway!

MRS WILLOUGHBY: Oh go on!

FRED: No well I mean you don't always want to be in each other's hair do you? And she knows I like a bit of fishing. Well it's no fun for her to come down here and sit on the river-bank for three hours at a time kistening to the birds is it? I mean a fisherman isn't fascinating company, not by any standards.

CLIFF: I always used to wonder at your patience Fred.

FRED: Oh well I sit and sort of half doze. It's a rest more than anything. Oh while I remember it I suppose old Mansfield still lets rooms at the Duck, eh, Jack?

JACK (TO WILLOUGHBY) How is he fixed for rooms now?

WILLOUGHBY: I doubt if the Duck lets any more.

FRED: Oh, why is that? Did old Mansfield go?

WILLOUGHBY: Oh he's still there, as large as life, but I think his brewery changed and they cut out the bed and breakfast lark.

FRED: Oh I see. More bulldozing.

WILLOUGHBY: Well there was never any

real call for it. There might be somebody wanting a room once or twice a year, and then usually a contractor or a commercial traveller, and as a rule they prefer private rooms, it's cheaper.

FRED: Still old Mansfield did you proud. I'll never forget his breakfasts. When we was moving out, or rather being shot out, he served me up one morning with three damn great slices of roast beef and a pint of wallop---for breakfast, mind---eight o'clock in the morning believe it or not. I could take it in those days. Damned if I could now. Well you get sedentary in offices. The digestion starts packing up.

JACK: Anyway you're all right for dinner tonight, Fred, along of us; it's all organised. Cliff and Lil are coming up with the kids, so we'll have quite a party. And I expect Mabel knows what you like, eh, Mabel?

MABEL: I'll say I do! Fred and his meat puddings used to be famous!

FRED: Meat pudding? Meat pudding tonight? Well bless my soul!

LAUGHTER AT HIS RAPT DELIGHT.

MABEL: It won't be the first I've made for you eh Fred, not by a long way? Remember you and Cliff creeping in at two o'clock of a morning and eating it cold in the kitchen?

FRED: I remember, but you was supposed to be asleep!

CLIFF: Sleep---mum? She always kept one eye open.

MABEL (TO MRS WILLOUGHBY) I always used to reckon it out, I'll make enough meat pudding for the boys when they come in hungry tonight at two o'clock in the morning! Talk about laugh! Of course they always used to think I didn't notice. Boys are like that aren't they? The games these two used to get up to! I was frightened sometimes. Old constable Shawley used to clump, clump across our yard in the morning sometimes, I always remember the sound of his boots, and he used to say, your son and young Fred Powell has been up to mischief again, Mrs.

FRED (TO CLIFF) And he never even put in a report did he? Good old stick, Shawley.

WILLOUGHBY: Yes, I served under him for nigh on fifteen years, and I don't think I once saw that man in a temper. And that's how you keep a village in order. You've got to be patient, and use a bit of wisdom instead of the back of your hand, however much your hand wants you to use it.

DEFERENTIAL LAUGHTER.

FRED: There's one thing I have noticed and that's how there don't seem to be many people about in the village. Now that's a big change from my day. You had to step over the kids not ten years back!

WILLOUGHBY: Well a lot moved out of course.

FRED: You mean a lot was shoved out.

WILLOUGHBY: Well we've all been mucked about a bit, the ones who stayed as well.

FRED: Oh yes, I'm not saying that. What I mean is I wouldn't like living in a deserted village----

WILLOUGHBY: Oh it's not deserted!

MRS WILLOUGHBY: The children are all at school. You wait till they get out, eh, George?

FRED: But we used to hear their voices, Mrs Willoughby! There used to be a terrific shindy across that green by the church.

JACK: You wait till Cliff's kids get going up at our place tonight mate. You'll be dreaming of deserted villages then.

WILLOUGHBY (TO FRED) The school buildings are new, that's why. They've got a wall fifteen feet high so the noise don't penetrate. They've got swimming, all sorts, down there. They can do what they like! In fact, they're on holiday, and they still go down there.

FRED: Yes well I suppose there's the positive side too. I can tell you what does beat me though and that's the vehicles you drive about in.

WILLOUGHBY: Oh, our village cars!

FRED: Now suppose I'd decided to drive over, wouldn't my jalopy look eccentric? It's got doors to start with. And it don't look as if it wants to take off all the time.

CLIFF: Well you wouldn't have got it through mate.

FRED: Eh? Not past the arch you mean?

CLIFF: That's right.

FRED: What; you mean you never get another vehicle in?

CLIFF: - Well, the delivery trucks. But aside from that not much comes in, without a special permit that is, eh, dad?

FRED: But what about your friends? Suppose they want to slip over for an evening's nag or a game of cards? What happens then?

CLIFF: Well we usually meet them at the gate and drive them in ourselves. The point is this, the village is streamlined, it's cut right down to its essentials, and if we had all the vehicles under the sun---

JACK: And then the sightseers! We've had them, eh, George, in their hundreds?

CLIFF: You can't stop people walking over but you can limit the cars. At one time I can remember a hundred or more cars parked outside here, you couldn't move, as for driving in or out you'd had it.

FRED: Yes I suppose you couldn't function really; not if you didn't have some kind of bar.

CLIFF: Then they'd start breaking down, and being the only garage in the village it'd all fall on me. I've got as much as I can do coping with this lot, let alone cars from outside.

LIL: I can see what Fred means though. We used to be more of a family----I don't suppose we have a sit-down like this more than once or twice in a twelvemonth, eh, Mr Willoughby?

JACK: There's no time, to start with!

FRED: But surely to God you have holidays?

CLIFF: Oh they send us off for a month or a couple of weeks, everything paid.

FRED: 'They'? Who's 'they'?

CLIFF: Well, I mean we're organised right up to the hilt, down to the hotel bookings and all, and....

HE STOPS, WITH EVERYONE'S EYES ON HIM.

GEORGE: Got another cup of tea there Lil?

ALL EXCEPT FRED SEEM TO TAKE GEORGE'S INTERJECTION AS A REPROOF.

GEORGE HOLDS OUT HIS CUP AND SAUCER WHILE LIL POURS. THE OPERATION IS DONE IN SILENCE.

CU OF FRED GAZING ACROSS AT GEORGE.

FRED: You always been in the post office line George?

JACK: No; he only started up, when was it George, a couple or three years ago?

GEORGE, STIRRING HIS TEA, NODS GENIALLY.

FRED: And do you like it here, George?

MABEL: He's on the go so much I don't suppose he gets time to ask hisself, eh George?

GEORGE NODS AGAIN.

FRED (LEANING FORWARD) But George, what made you come here?

GEORGE (IN SOME CONFUSION) Well I just come.

FRED: Oh!

CLIFF (GETTING UP) I'll take you across to Doreen's, Fred, she'll be dying to see you. She asked me specially.

JACK (ALSO GETTING UP) Well I'll have to push back. We're inactive but the animals ain't, I always say! (TO WILLOUGHBY) Wouldn't it be nice if animals stopped producing muck for just an hour, to give us a rest?

WILLOUGHBY (RESPONDING WITH AS MUCH GOOD CHEER AS HE CAN MANAGE) That's right!

FRED: But you mean you come with the army George----?

CLIFF (GRABBING HIM) Come on mate!

FRED GETS UP RELUCTANTLY AND IS MORE OR LESS PROPELLED OUT BY CLIFF'S ARM AND THE COLLECTIVE WILL OF THE GUESTS. THEY HAVE ALL RISEN NOW AND CROWD TOWARDS THE LIVING ROOM, TRYING TO MAKE IT SEEM THE NATURAL END OF ANOTHER TEA PARTY. GEORGE'S GENIAL EXPRESSION IS SETTLED AGAIN AND HE FOLLOWS BEHIND THEM AT A DISTANCE.

CUT TO FRED AND CLIFF LEAVING THE HOUSE.

FRED: But what's the matter with him? He needs a good talking to if you ask me! Damn cheek, sitting there soaking up the tea like a bloody sponge and not saying a word----

CLIFF (PULLING HIM DOWN THE GARDEN PATH) Come on Fred, don't be a chump. He's a lovely man when you get to know him.

FRED: And how long does that take, for Christ sake?

CLIFF HAS GOT HIM OUT INTO THE LANE AND WITH A RELIEVED GLANCE BACK SEES THAT NO ONE IS BEHIND THEM.

CLIFF: Blimey, you haven't changed have you? No wonder we used to call you the firelighter!

FRED (WITH GLANCES BACK) Bloody cheek...

CLIFF TURNS IN AT THE NEXT GARDEN GATE.

CLIFF (WAITING FOR HIM) She's made the garden nice, hasn't she?

FRED GIVES THE GARDEN A MENACING GLANCE AS IF EVERY FLOWER WERE A GEORGE. CLIFF KNOCKS AT THE DOOR AND ALMOST AT ONCE DOREEN, IN A WHITE BLOUSE ALL PLEATS, HANDSOME IN A WAY NO LONGER INTENDED FOR MALE LOVE, OPENS THE DOOR WITH A SERENE SMILE.

DOREEN: Well!

FRED: Hullo Doreen! Nice to see you again!

DOREEN: Come in, Fred.

FRED (AS THEY GO IN) Well, you've made this place nice!

CUT TO THEM ENTERING THE LOW CEILINGED FRONT SITTING ROOM. HERE IS QUITE A DIFFERENT STYLE FROM THE OTHER TWO HOUSES---BOOKSHELVES, A FOLDING RACK FOR MAGAZINES ON THE FLOOR, POUFS AND MUCH WELL POLISHED COPPER, IN FACT THE ATMOSPHERE OF A NICE COUNTRY TEA ROOM.

FRED: You took the chimney away then?

DOREEN: Oh yes.

FRED (TO CLIFF) Damn great inglenook, remember?

CLIFF: Used to make lovely fires too.

DOREEN: We had cobbles on the floor then. It didn't matter clomping in and out with logs.

FRED: Times are different now eh?

DOREEN: Sit down Fred. I can't offer you a cup of tea because you've just had one. Is there anything else I can get you?

FRED (SITTING DOWN) Just tell me your news Doreen. That's all the entertainment I want.

DOREEN (WITH A HESITANT GLANCE AT CLIFF, WHO HOVERS AT THE DOOR) Well I don't have all that exciting a life!

FRED: But I hear you're a schools inspector, Doreen.

DOREEN.: That's right.

CLIFF: I think I'll push back to work now Fred. See you later. Oh---where you kipping down tonight?

FRED: Oh I'll find somewhere don't you worry. I used to live here, remember (WITH A WINK AT DOREEN).

CLIFF: OK then, see you later.

DOREEN: Cheerio Cliff.

CLIFF LEAVES.

FRED: I'll kip down at Mrs Harris's. I hear old Mansfield don't let rooms any more.

DOREEN: That's right. But Mrs Harris is dead.

FRED: Go on!

DOREEN: She was taken bad last January year. Double pneumonia. And then she didn't let rooms, not for a long time. Not since you all went away.

FRED: Go on? Yes, it's all changed. Well, how do you feel about it all Doreen?

DOREEN: In waht way?

FRED: Well I mean it seems so cut off now, if you see what I mean. And these blinking cars with no doors! Have you got one too?

DOREEN: Oh yes. They're very convenient for the muddy paths.

FRED: Still you're not going up and down muddy paths all the time.

DOREEN: And how have you been keeping Fred?

FRED: Well, you know, I'm not so sorry I left. It was a jolt at the time but, well, sometimes we need a jolt don't we?

DOREEN: Have you got a nice place over there?

FRED: Three large bedrooms upstairs, anyway.

DOREEN: Oh that's nice!

FRED: And that's not too many considering I've got three boys now.

DOREEN: Yes, so Cliff was telling me. It seems marvellous! I'd love to see them!

FRED: Rachel thought she'd get the house straight, so she didn't come over this time.

DOREEN: Rachel... We used to sit by each other at school.

FRED: So you did! I'd forgotten that.

DOREEN: I suppose I wasn't meant to have children.

FRED: Well it isn't all roses. I reckon if Rachel could see you sitting here she'd feel a bit of envy. No, straight.

DOREEN: In a way I suppose I've got lots of children. Three or four hundred. It's a responsibility.

FRED: You've changed Doreen. It's the first thing I noticed coming through that door. You've lost that timid look. You don't mind me saying that do you?

DOREEN: Oh no. I'm well aware I was timid. Because I felt I didn't belong anywhere, I suppose. And then I found the right job. I think I'm happy.

FRED: You look it. Which is more than I can say for the rest of them. As for old Cliff, I reckon all the fight's gone out of him. Of course they all talk cheery, but I can see under the surface all right. And as for that bloke with the everlasting grin----(LEANING FORWARD AND SPEAKING IN A LOWER VOICE) where the hell did he spring from?

DOREEN: Who's that?

FRED: The talkative one. The bloke who only opens his mouth to pour tea down it.

DOREEN: But what's his name?

FRED: George! George!

DOREEN: Oh George.

FRED: Talk about brazen-faced! I wish I had the neck to sit and wolf down other people's food and never give them so much as how are you!

DOREEN: Oh well, we're used to him I suppose (WITH A DELIBERATELY SLOW LOOK ROUND AT THE WINDOW). He's shy I dare say.

FRED: He's not too shy to get three sandwiches in to everybody else's one, anyway!

DOREEN (LAUGHING) Well he's shy and hungry then!

FRED: Yes; I suppose he must be. Oh well, these villages have their set

ways, don't they? I expect I must have looked a bit funny to anybody coming from the outside. I mean it's a closed life in many ways, isn't it?

DOREEN: It's not so bad. When the weather's nasty it's a bit sad sometimes.

FRED: Do you ever walk by where we used to live, Doreen?

DOREEN: Down by the Castle?

FRED: That's right.

DOREEN: I pass it sometimes. Those days seem a long way off. I expect they do for you, even more so.

FRED: I was surprised you didn't marry, Doreen, when Cliff told me just now.

DOREEN: Well when the village altered and I was on the list of permitted residents I---well, (WITH A CONFUSED LAUGH) there wasn't a man my age available, that's all there is to it!

FRED: But you should have moved! You still can! See a bit of life!

DOREEN: But I was on the list!

FRED: What do you mean, they didn't force you to stay! Did they?

DOREEN: Oh well, it was convenient, my mother left me this house and I had nowhere else to go, I didn't have the diploma then. And I couldn't see myself stitching chair covers as a living, not anywhere else.

FRED: Well all I can say is a bolshie type like me couldn't have stood it. Them vehicles for a start. They're military, with the teeth drawn! Them wings are for guns, you can't kid me! Still, if you don't ask questions you don't get no lies, I suppose.

DOREEN: Would you like to see the garden Fred?

FRED: Yes, may be we'll see some fairies (AS SHE GETS UP) or an anti-tank gun poking its head up.

DOREEN: Please, Fred!

FRED: But what's the matter with you all? Can't you talk? Aren't you free any more?

HER GAZE IS SO IMPLORING, HER GLANCE TOWARDS THE WINDOW SO FRIGHTENED, THAT HE STOPS.

FRED (WHISPERING) But what's the trouble?

DOREEN: Let's go in the garden.

CUT TO GARDEN AND WAIT FOR THEM TO COME OUT THROUGH THE KITCHENETTE FRENCH WINDOWS. THE GARDEN IS CAREFULLY ORNAMENTAL, WITH A ROCKERY AND SHALLOW GOLDFISH POOL.

FRED (LOOKING AT IT ALL) Well, an expert's been at work here, no doubt about that!

DOREEN: It's my evening occupation. (BACKTRACK AS THEY WALK DOWN THE GARDEN PATH) Pride of my life really. Apart from the children. And they change all the time. This doesn't. Look at that.

SHE POINTS ACROSS COUNTRY: A SHOT OF THE SERENE HILLS BEYOND THE GARDEN.

DOREEN: Isn't that a good reason to stay?

FRED: Oh, we've got views as good as that, down where we live. And freedom too.

DOREEN: But don't you think it's peaceful here, the house and everything?

FRED: It wouldn't be peaceful for me, duck. My mind'd be working night and day.

A SLOW FADE ON FRED IN CLOSE UP AS HE GAZES ACROSS THE COUNTRYSIDE.

OPEN AGAIN IN JACK'S LIVING ROOM THAT EVENING. THERE ARE JACK, CLIFF AND FRED, WITH DRINKS. THREE CHILDREN ARE PLAYING OUTSIDE IN THE YARD WITH THE MAXIMUM NOISE. A BALL THUMPS ON THE WALL.

CLIFF (DASHING TO THE WINDOW) Now just you watch out, you'll be putting that ball through the window if you're not careful! Blighters!

HE TURNS BACK INTO THE ROOM, WITH A HELPLESS SHRUG TOWARDS FRED, AS ONE

OF THE CHILDREN PUTS HIS FACE IN AT THE OPEN WINDOW AND IMITATES CLIFF--- 'YOU'LL BE PUTTING THAT BALL THROUGH THE WINDOW IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL.'

JACK: Now flip off!

CLIFF (SUBSIDING INTO HIS SEAT AND GRASPING HIS DRINK AGAIN) I don't know, they don't seem to learn.

JACK: You haven't got a control mate. (SHOWING HIM THE PALM OF HIS HAND) This is what they want to learn. That's what you learned when you was a kid. It's a pretty substantial method (WITH A WINK AT FRED AND A CHUCKLE).

CLIFF: You want to tell Lil that. Every time I raise my hand she goes berserk.

JACK: She could learn a bit of the same thing, it strikes me.

CLIFF: Oh it might have been all right in your day. But---oh well, I suppose we haven't got the authority eh Fred?

FRED: Well to be quite candid I've never raised a hand at my lot. I leave that side to Rachel. The thing is, they're going to have a pretty rough life, that's what I reckon, so----

JACK: Rough life? They don't know what a rough life is! Ever you two don't!

FRED: Well that depends how you look at it, don't it? Life's not mapped out all clear like it used to be, Jack.

JACK: It's clear enough to me. All I know is I've got three times the turnover I used to have, and I worked my hands to the knucklebones for it too.

CLIFF: Take car-servicing. I remember the old blacky, he used to have his nose stuck in a cylinder block for a week nor more, and nobody used to worry, leastways him. I've got vehicles coming in as the others go out.

JACK: But look at your money! And then think of his, if you can bear it.

CLIFF: He had a damn sight bigger paunch than I've got! And he didn't go grey with worry.

JACK: Oh, worry. That comes in with the damp air at night, mate. Close your windows (WITH ANOTHER WINK AT FRED).

CLIFF: If I don't get a quota of vehicles out of my shop every week, I lose my job, that's what I've got to worry about. We're all on a tightrope. I bet old Fred's the same!

FRED: Well I don't worry about my job. I just worry, generally.

JACK: There you are! That's just it!

FRED: Listen, I never worried before. How do you make that out?

JACK: You didn't have the responsibilities. (TO CLIFF) And who's going to sack you? even if you don't meet the quota?

CLIFF: It's the competition, the-----

A BALL LANDS WITH A DANGEROUS SOUNDING THUMP ON THE WALL AGAIN. CLIFF IS ABOUT TO JUMP UP BUT JACK IS AT THE WINDOW FIRST.

JACK: Come here you!

A PAUSE WHILE ONE OF THE CHILDREN COMES TO THE WINDOW.

JACK: Does your ear hurt?

BOY: No.

JACK: Well it will now.

HE REACHES OUT FOR THE EAR AND TWISTS IT. THERE ARE HOWLS OF PAIN.

JACK (RELEASING THE EAR) Now, flip off the lot of you! Round the back of that barn, quick!

HE RETURNS TO HIS CHAIR.

JACK (WITH A JUDICIAL NOD TO FRED) He learned what a thick ear is all right.

THE CHILD APPEARS IMPLACABLY AT THE WINDOW AND REPEATS 'HE LEARNED WHAT A THICK EAR IS ALL RIGHT' IN SUCH A

PERFECT IMITATION THAT THEY ALL
LAUGH.

CLIFF: That's just it, you see.
They're so damned quick. You come
home tired and their little minds
are waiting for you. Perhaps we're
the mugs. I look round the village
sometimes---- You see, Fred, the
kids know. They can see we're not
our own masters any more, we're-----!

A RING AT THE DOORBELL. SILENCE.

JACK (GETTING UP SLOWLY) That'll be
George.

FRED: Is George one of the guests
tonight then?

LIL (FROM THE HALL) It's all right,
I'll go!

JACK SUBSIDES IN HIS SEAT AGAIN.

CLIFF (TO FRED) Notice the kids?
You won't hear a whisper out of them
any more, not till we go home.

FRED (LEANING FORWARD) Why, then,
is-----?

CLIFF LOOKS ROUND AT THE DOOR AT THE
MOMENT GEORGE COMES IN.

CLIFF: Hullo George.

GEORGE: Hullo all. Hullo Fred.

FRED: Hullo.

JACK: Sit yourself down, George.
Usual chair, that's right. Get him
a drink, Cliff.

CLIFF: Will you have a glass of beer
George?

GEORGE: Yes please.

CLIFF GOES OUT AND THE THREE OF THEM
SIT IN SILENCE:

CUT TO THE KITCHEN AS CLIFF WALKS IN.
MABEL AND LIL ARE IN APRONS, PREPARING
GENEROUS FARMHOUSE FARE IN LOTS OF
STEAM. CLIFF GOES TO THE FRIDGE AND
TAKES OUT A BOTTLE OF BEER.

MABEL: Where's Fred staying the night
then?

CLIFF: He didn't say.

HE UNSTOPS THE BOTTLE AND POURS.

MABEL: He's still got his case here, and his fishing tackle.

CLIFF: We've got all them empty rooms upstairs and----!

MABEL: Well that's how it is. We didn't make the rules round here, did we?

CLIFF: I suppose he'd better stay at Mrs Harris's. I'll try and work the conversation round. (GOING OUT) I don't know; I've got enough to think about let alone lodgings!

LIL: Oh go on!

CLIFF (COMING BACK) Them kids have been playing hell too.

HE LEAVES AGAIN. MABEL GOES ON VIGOROUSLY MASHING POTATOES.

CUT BACK TO THE LIVING ROOM, ON GEORGE, HIS GLASS OF BEER TIPPED BACK IN THE COURSE OF BEING DRUNK. HE LOWERS IT WITH THREE QUARTERS OF THE LIQUID CONSUMED, AND SMACKS HIS LIPS.

CLIFF: Pity old Mansfield don't let rooms no more Fred.

FRED: Just what I was thinking. And old Mrs Harris is no more, Doreen was telling me.

CLIFF: Her place is still going though. Bed and breakfast like.

FRED: Oh? New management, then?

CLIFF: That's right.

FRED: Oh well, I'll kip down there then. As long as Jack hasn't stolen my suitcase.

JACK: Well, I only took the valuables.

CLIFF: Give us your glass Fred and I'll top it up with sour milk.

GEORGE FINISHES HIS DRINK ADROITLY.

FRED (HANDING CLIFF HIS GLASS) Number of times we used to say that, eh? Top it up with sour milk. I don't think I've used that expression since.

CLIFF: You ready George?

HE TAKES GEORGE'S GLASS AND THEN JACK'S AND HE LEAVES AGAIN.

JACK: Yes we still call it Mrs Harris's. Nice clean rooms.

A SLOW FADE.

OPEN AGAIN ON THE FRONT DOOR OF THE HOUSE, FROM ACROSS THE COURTYARD, AFTER DARK. THE DOOR OPENS AND SHEDS A STRIP OF LIGHT ACROSS THE YARD. TWO VEHICLES OF THE USUAL VILLAGE DESIGN ARE WAITING, AND CLIFF WALKS TOWARDS ONE OF THEM AS THE OTHER GUESTS AND THE THREE CHILDREN (AS GOOD AS GOLD NOW) STAND IN THE LIGHT FROM THE DOOR SAYING AND KISSING GOOD NIGHT. FRED COMES OUT WITH HIS SUITCASE AND FISHING TACKLE.

FRED: Well, thanks for a greedy evening, you two!

JACK: How was the meat pud Fred?

FRED: Don't talk about it, I want to keep it as a lovely memory!

CLIFF (REFERRING TO FRED'S FISHING TACKLE) Looks as if we're going to get fish for tomorrow's dinner!

FRED: You hope!

MABEL: Good night Fred. See you in the morning.

CLIFF (TO JACK) I'll take Fred and George then.

JACK: That's right.

THE CHILDREN AND LIL BEGIN PILING INTO THE SECOND VEHICLE (JACK'S). FRED AND GEORGE GET INTO THE FIRST, WITH CLIFF AT THE WHEEL.

CUT TO THE FIRST VEHICLE.

CLIFF: I'll take you to Mrs Harris's then.

FRED: That's it.

LIGHTS ARE SWITCHED ON AS WE CUT TO THE YARD: BOTH VEHICLES DRIVE OFF, THE CHILDREN WAVING. MABEL IS LEFT ALONE AT THE DOOR. THEN SHE CLOSES IT AND THE YARD IS ONCE MORE IN DARKNESS.

CUT TO THE TWO VEHICLES ENTERING THE

VILLAGE.

CUT TO CLIFF'S VEHICLE ARRIVING OUTSIDE A TALL VICTORIAN HOUSE BEHIND TREES.

CUT TO THE INTERIOR OF THE CAR AS CLIFF SWITCHES OFF THE ENGINE. THEY SIT FOR A MOMENT GAZING OUT.

FRED: This hasn't changed then.

CLIFF: Remember how people used to come here for their holidays, and we used to wait for the girls after tea? (TO GEORGE) They used to come here for the old Castle. Famous, wasn't it, Fred?

FRED: That's right.

CLIFF: Well Fred, you've got George to show you the works. So I'll leave you to it.

FRED: George?

CLIFF: That's right. He runs the place.

FRED: What, this place?

CLIFF: That's right.

FRED: Oh!

FRED MAKES NO ATTEMPT TO GET OUT, ALTHOUGH GEORGE'S GETTING OUT FROM THE BACK DEPENDS ON HIM.

FRED: Looks a bit dark, don't it? Did you say they do bed and breakfast?

CLIFF: That's right. All the commercial travellers stay there, eh, George? How many people did you tell me was staying here a fortnight ago?

GEORGE: I had nineteen singles.

FRED: And they all came out alive did they? Oh well, here goes. (GETTING OUT, BACK IN HIS OBSTREPEROUS MOOD) If you don't see me in the morning Cliff let Rachel know, tell her I prefer cremation will you?

CLIFF (LAUGHING DESPITE HIMSELF) You'll be all right mate. George knows how to lay things on, don't you worry about that!

GEORGE GETS OUT AFTER FRED HAS EX-

TRICATED HIS SUITCASE AND FISHING TACKLE.

CLIFF: Well good night Fred! Good night George!

FRED: Good night!

THE CAR DRIVES OFF AND THE TWO OF THEM ARE LEFT STANDING THERE IN THE DARKNESS. GEORGE OFFERS TO TAKE FRED'S SUITCASE.

FRED: No that's all right.

BUT GEORGE PERSISTS AND TAKES IT, THEN PUSHES OPEN THE GATE INTO THE FRONT GARDEN. FRED FOLLOWS HIM UP THE PATH WITH HIS FISHING TACKLE.

CUT TO THE FRONT DOOR WHERE GEORGE IS FUMBLING FOR THE RIGHT KEY AMONG A CHAIN FULL. THEN THE DOOR IS OPEN AND GEORGE HAS SWITCHED ON THE HALL LIGHT.

CUT TO THEM ENTERING THE LOUNGE, A GENEROUSLY COMFORTABLE AND ABOVE ALL UP TO DATE ROOM:

FRED: Lumme! this is nice!

GEORGE BEAMS AT HIM AND WITH A PROFESSIONAL GESTURE MOTIONS HIM TO ONE OF THE ARMCHAIRS.

FRED: Oh thanks. Let me----

GEORGE (KEEPING THE SUITCASE FIRMLY) Would you like a nightcap? cuppa cocoa whisky glass of milk?

FRED: Well, I wouldn't mind taking a cup of tea up to bed with me if it isn't too much trouble. These old rituals, you know. I do it every night. The wife says it keeps me awake but I never noticed it----!

BUT GEORGE HAS DISAPPEARED, WITH BOTH THE SUITCASE AND THE FISHING TACKLE, AND FRED IS LEFT TO ADMIRE THE FITTINGS FROM HIS SOFT DEEP SEAT. HE GAZES ROUND; FROM THE CEILING HANGS A COMPKICATED MOBILE AND HE BEGINS BLOWING AT IT. IT MOVES AND THEN DEVELOPS A PLEASANT MOMENTUM.

MIX THROUGH TO GEORGE EMERGING FROM A CAVERNOUS BUT GLEAMINGLY MODERN KITCHEN WITH A TRAY OF TEA THINGS. HE GOES

TO THE LOUNGE DOOR AND FRED IS STILL WATCHING THE MOBILE TURN.

GEORGE: I'm taking your tea up now.

FRED: Listen, don't you bother, I can take that tray up---

BUT GEORGE IS ALREADY ON HIS WAY.

TRACK BEHIND AS FRED FOLLOWS HIM UP THE STAIRS. HE TAKES IN THE PICTURES ON THE WALL, THE NEW WALLPAPER, THE THICK STAIR CARPETING, AS HE WALKS UP.

CUT TO HIM ENTERING HIS ROOM. GEORGE IS JUST PUTTING THE TRAY ON THE TABLE BY THE DOUBLE BED: EVERYTHING IN THIS ROOM TOO ARGUES QUIET UNSPARING COMFORT.

FRED (SURVEYING IT ALL) Well, I don't think I'll have trouble sleeping tonight!

GEORGE: The bathroom's down the corridor left hand side hanging light switch hot and cold water. Would you like coffee or tea for breakfast?

FRED: Well coffee'd do me fine.

GEORGE: Good night Fred.

FRED: Good night George.

THE DOOR CLOSSES BEHIND GEORGE, AND FRED GOES TO HIS SUITCASE. HE FINDS IT EMPTY AND ON INVESTIGATING FROM WARDROBE TO CHEST OF DRAWERS DISCOVERS THAT ALL HIS THINGS HAVE BEEN PUT AWAY NEATLY. TWO BOOKS HAVE BEEN SET BY HIS BED AND HE FINGERS THROUGH THEM. AND THEN HE LOOSENS HIS TIE.

CUT TO HIM IN BED SIPPING HIS TEA, WITH A BOOK OPEN BEFORE HIM. WHAT SOFT PILLOWS. HE YAWNS AND AFTER CLOSING HIS BOOK IS ABOUT TO SWITCH OFF THE BEESIDE LIGHT WHEN HE LOOKS ROUND AT THE DOOR AND DECIDES TO GET OUT OF BED AND LOCK IT. HE DOES THE OPERATION WITHOUT A SOUND, TURNING THE KEY TWICE. THEN AS HE SETTLES BACK INTO BED A SLOW FADE.

OPEN AGAIN ON THE LOUNGE DOWNSTAIRS NEXT MORNING WITH THE SUN STREAMING THROUGH THE WINDOWS AND A ROUND TABLE LAID WITH BREAKFAST THINGS FOR ONE AND A CHOICE OF TWO NEWSPAPERS.

WAIT FOR FRED TO ENTER, CLEANSHAVEN

AND FRESH. HE LOOKS ROUND,
GOES TO THE WINDOW, WHISTLES SILENTLY,
SEES THE TABLE LAID FOR HIM AND GOES
TO IT. HE TAKES A PAPER, OPENS IT
AND IS HIDDEN BY IT. HE LOWERS IT
AND PEEPS OVER IT TOWARDS THE DOOR
FOR SIGNS OF LIFE.

CUT TO GEORGE EMERGING FROM THE KITCHEN
WITH A TRAY. A WARMING LID SITS ON
THE PLATE AND THERE IS TOAST IN A RACK
AND VARIOUS OTHER DISHES. TRACK
BEHIND HIM THROUGH DOORWAY TO FRED'S
EYES PEEPING OVER THE NEWSPAPER.

FRED: Good morning George! Lovely
day-again!

GEORGE: Morning Fred. (UNLOADING
THE TRAY) Coffee toast marmalade.
(WHIPPING THE TOP OFF THE PLATE) I
don't know if you go in for a grilled
breakfast.

FRED: I'll say I do! You wait until
I tell my wife about this, she'll be
green with envy. I don't think I
moved all night (TAKING HIS NAPKIN---
A REAL ONE---AND UNWRAPPING IT), sank
down in the land of dreams and surfaced
half an hour ago----

BUT GEORGE HAS GONE AND THE PLACE IS
ONCE MORE IN SILENCE. FRED BEGINS
EATING WITH RAVENOUS ATTENTION TO
DETAILS---BUTTERING TOAST, POURING
COFFEE, PEPPERING THE YOKES OF HIS EGGS.
A QUICK FADE.

OPEN AGAIN ON THE HALL OUTSIDE AND WAIT
FOR FRED TO COME DOWN THE STAIRS WITH
HIS FISHING TACKLE. HE STOPS AT THE
FOOT OF THE STAIRS.

FRED: I'll be off George!

HE WAITS FOR A REPLY BUT THERE IS NONE.

FRED: George!

AGAIN NO REPLY SO HE WALKS HESITANTLY
TOWARDS THE KITCHEN AND PEEPS IN. A
SHOT OF THE CARVERNOUS ROOM SHOWS IT
EMPTY, EVEN OF DIRTY PLATES.

FRED: George!

THIS TIME HE GIVES UP AND WE TRACK
BEHIND HIM TO THE FRONT DOOR.

CUT TO HIM WALKING ALONG THE SUNNY
DESERTED VILLAGE STREET. A CLOSE UP
SHOWS HIM IN A SERENE MOOD, EXPECTANT

OF PLEASURE. AT THE END OF THE VILLAGE HE TAKES A TRACK BETWEEN TREES, CLEARLY KNOWING HIS WAY. TRACK BEHIND HIM AND ON A DOWNWARD PATH: HE PLUCKS OFF LEAVES FROM THE TREES, TAKES A SUDDEN SLOPE AT A RUN, PERHAPS AS HE USED TO FIFTEEN OR TWENTY YEARS BEFORE.

CUT TO THE EDGE OF THE WOODS AND WAIT FOR HIM TO EMERGE FROM BETWEEN THE TREES, COMING DOWNHILL AT A SPRIGHTLY PACE. WAIT FOR HIM TO COME INTO CLOSE UP. AND THEN HE STOPS DEAD, STARING BEFORE HIM, HIS MOUTH OPEN.

FRED: Here!

HE IS GAZING SLIGHTLY UPWARDS. A SHOT OF THE VIEW BEFORE HIM SHOWS A CLEARING, A NEAT AREA OF CEMENT FLOORING WITH NOTHING ON IT, CERTAINLY NO CASTLE. ONLY CLEAR COUNTRYSIDE BEYOND.

FRED (BEGINNING BUT NOT ENDING SEVERAL ASTONISHED SENTENCES WHICH SOUND ALL BREATH) Well I'll be bu----. Well loo----. God love a-----.

HE WALKS ON, HIS SPRIGHTLINESS GONE, SEARCHING THE GROUND. HE COMES TO THE FOOT OF THE DIP, AND A CLOSE UP SHOWS HIM GAZING DOWN AT WHAT USED TO BE THE RIVER, A NEAT CEMENT DITCH AS STRAIGHT AS A DIE WITH THE MEREST TRICKLE OF WATER. HE DIPS HIS FINGERS IN AND WATCHES A DROP FALL OFF THEM.

HE SITS DOWN, PUZZLED AND DEJECTED, GAZING AT THE CEMENT CLEARING BEFORE HIM, AND THEN HE LIES BACK, HIS HANDS BEHIND HIS HEAD.

CUT TO HIM STIRRING HIMSELF AND RETURNING TO WHERE HE HAS LEFT HIS FISHING TACKLE. HE BEGINS TO RETURN UPHILL THE WAY HE CAME, WITH SLOWER STEPS NOW:

MIX THROUGH TO HIM EMERGING FROM THE WOODS ON TO THE VILLAGE ROAD AGAIN, SWEATING, WITH NONE OF THE SERENITY THAT MARKED HIS FACE BEFORE.

CUT TO CLIFF'S GARAGE-----THE SOUND OF SPRAYING AND HAMMERING, A CLUSTER OF IDENTICAL VEHICLES.

THEN A SHOT FROM INSIDE THE GARAGE THROUGH THE VEHICLES TO THE WIDE SUNLIT ENTRANCE. FRED APPEARS IN IT, WITH FISHING TACKLE? SWEATING.

CUT TO HIM AND TRACK WITH HIM BETWEEN THE VEHICLES, UNTIL WE REACH A LONG

PAIR OF LEGS PROTRUDING FROM A
VEHICLE.

FRED (STOPPING) Cliff:

A SHOT OF THE LEGS AGAIN. THEY
SHOW SIGNS OF COMING TO LIFE, AND
BEGIN WRIGGLING, UNTIL FINALLY CLIFF,
GREASY AND ALSO SWEATING, HAS EMERGED.

CLIFF (STANDING UP) What's the matter
mate?

FRED: The Castle! It's gone! And
my place too, the old cottage---it's
gone!

CLIFF: Eh?

FRED: The castle's gone! It isn't
there! And what's happened to the
blinking river? That's gone too!

CLIFF: Eh?

FRED (STUDYING HIM WITH IMPATIENCE)
Didn't you get any of it?

CLIFF: The old Castle you say?

FRED: It's gone!

CLIFF: Well the old Castle was took
down.

FRED: Took down? Blimey who took
that down?

CLIFF: The contractors. When they
come and did the place up like.

FRED: Did it up? Is that what you
call it? And here's me yesterday
talking about the old Castle and
nobody puts me wise! Talk about a
rum blinking lot!

CLIFF: I didn't hear you talk about
no castle.

FRED: What, not about me doing a bit
of fishing and your dad saying yes he
noticed the fishing tackle?

CLIFF: Fishing yes but----

FRED: But where the hell do you
fish? They've taken the river away!

CLIFF: They diverted it Fred! It
was clogging somewhere I think-----

FRED: Clogging? A river don't
clog! It flows!

CLIFF: Something about industrial
refuse.

FRED: Then why didn't you tell me
yesterday? Blimey, sometimes I think
I'm being made a fool of round here!
They all watch me walking round with
yards of bloody fishing tackle, and
there's no river to fish in! And
none of 'em says a blime word.

CLIFF: Well the river's still there
like, they only diverted the bed.

FRED: And where did they divert the
bed to?

CLIFF: Oh it's about ten mile down.

FRED: Ten mile! And nobody tells
me I've got a ten-mile walk!

CLIFF: I thought you'd fixed it up
with George like.

FRED: George be damned! Oh never
mind. I'll fish when I get back home.
We've got an artificial lake there.

CLIFF: I could drive you down to
where the river moved to, Fred. No
sooner said than done (PICKING HIMSELF
UP OFF THE FLOOR, THEN STOPPING MIDWAY).
Oh of course you need a permit for
that. You have to go and see old
Willoughby, it might take a bit of time,
he has to send the application through---

FRED: No it's all right, mate, forget
it. Frozen fish is just as nice.

HE WALKS AWAY AND CLIFF FOLLOWS HIM.

CLIFF: This seems to be turning into
one of your disappointing holidays mate.

FRED: Oh I enjoyed the walk. But
my old place not being there----I near-
ly fell over!

CLIFF: Yes that come down too.

FRED: But what for?

CLIFF: Don't ask me!

FRED: But there's one thing. Old
George did me proud.

CLIFF (HAPPY AT THE CHANGE OF SUBJECT)
Oh he did?

FRED: Here, it don't cost a mint
does it?

CLIFF: No! Travellers' rates like.

FRED: Tea in bed. Books, hot bath,
carpets everywhere, and as for the
breakfast---you wait till old Rachel
hears about this, she'll want to come
over and lie in bed all day. (AS THEY
REACH THE ENTRANCE) Cliff---

FRED LOOKS UP AND DOWN THE DESERTED
ROAD.

FRED:----What the hell's that cement
clearing they've put there?

CLIFF: Where?

FRED: Well instead of the castle like.

CLIFF: Oh, I think it's just a base.

FRED: A base what for?

CLIFF SHRUGS. A QUICK FADE.

OPEN AGAIN ON THE ENTRANCE TO THE
VILLAGE CONSTABULARY, THE SAME MORNING.
FRED WALKS IN.

CUT TO HIM TURNING INTO THE FIRST
ROOM, WHERE WILLOUGHBY IS SITTING AT
A SIMPLE DESK IN POLICE UNIFORM MINUS
THE JACKET.

FRED: Hullo Mr Willoughby.

WILLOUGHBY: Why hullo Fred. (LOOKING
AT HIM) Anything on your mind?

FRED: No, I was just passing like.

WILLOUGHBY: Well sit down. (FRED
SITS) You've got your fishing tackle.
I see.

FRED: That's right.

WILLOUGHBY: Where did you mean to go
with it?

FRED: Well that's just it, you see.
I wake up bright and early this morn-
ing-----

WILLOUGHBY: You staying down along of
George?

FRED: That's right.

WILLOUGHBY: And how's he treating you?

FRED: Well I don't think I've ever seen anything like it Mr Willoughby. First of all the place is spotless clean, and talk about amenities---- well I don't reckon any hotel could come up to it anyhow. You ought to have seen the breakfast he give me. And not a sound. The way he pads around. He makes a lovely cup of tea too, I'm keen on my tea last thing, Rachel always laughs at me, but I don't like to put my head on that pillow until I've had my cup of tea.

WILLOUGHBY: George is a wonderful man Fred. There's nothing he wouldn't do for us. All we do is give him the signal that a bloke's OK, one of the family like, and he'll put himself out for you.

FRED: Why did they tear the old Castle down Mr Willoughby?

WILLOUGHBY (STUDYING FRED AT HIS EASE)
Well Fred, I won't say it's a delicate question. But you know as well as I do that we're top secret here.

FRED: Well I knew it was a restricted area like. I mean you've got Military Area written up----

WILLOUGHBY: We're not classed as restricted. And as for that bit of old boarding with Military Area written across it, I don't know whose idea that was but I never did think much of it. First of all it isn't strictly true. And then it doesn't keep people out, which it was intended to do. But there you are, they agree on these things at the village meetings and there's not much I can do about it.

FRED: It was agreed----in the village?

WILLOUGHBY: Oh yes.

FRED: So it needn't be there at all?

WILLOUGHBY: Of course it needn't. It's a damned show-off, between you and me. Makes people like you think they know all about it when they don't.

FRED: Know all about what?

WILLOUGHBY: Well the whys and wherefores of what happens. The whys and wherefores of the old Castle not being there, and that lovely old river being diverted----

FRED: Yes that's what----

WILLOUGHBY: Oh we all know that the old Castle had to come down, and the old river had to be diverted, but we didn't know why. I'm told the river would have flooded us out twice or three times by now if they hadn't shifted it, due to industrial refuse down the line; but as for the real reasons, you ask me and I'll ask you, and that's as far as we'll get!

FRED: Yes but----

WILLOUGHBY: You see, Fred, we have to take the rough with the smooth. We get free vehicles, petrol comes to us at very reduced rates, but we're restricted.

FRED: You get them free, them peculiar cars?

WILLOUGHBY: Householders, yes. Mind you, we pay for the upkeep.

FRED: Well I never.

WILLOUGHBY: That's what I say, Fred, when people give you a sound deal like that you've got to play along.

FRED: Yes I suppose you have really.

HE GAZES BEFORE HIM. A SLOW FADE ON HIS FACE IN CLOSE UP.

OPEN AGAIN ON THE LOUNGE OF MRS HARRIS'S THAT EVENING. FRED HAS JUST FINISHED A SPLENDID MEAL, TO JUDGE BY THE WAY HE IS SITTING SIDEWAYS FROM THE TABLE WITH HIS LEGS CROSSED, AN AUTHENTIC, BELL-BOTTOMED BRANDY GLASS IN HIS HAND, BLOWING UP AT THE MOBILE THOUGH LESS STEADILY THAN THIS MORNING.

THE CLOCK STRIKES NINE, A COMFORTABLE, WARM SOUND FROM THE MANTELPIECE.

CUT TO THE DARK VILLAGE STREET. A VILLAGE-VEHICLE BLAZES A WHITE TRAIL DOWN IT AND COMES TO A HALT OUTSIDE MRS HARRIS'S. WILLOUGHBY, FLASHING DIMLY IN HIS UNIFORM, WITH A BRIEFCASE IN HIS HAND, GETS OUT AND WALKS DOWN

THE GARDEN PATH.

CUT BACK TO FRED SITTING THERE SERENELY. SUDDENLY THE DOORBELL RINGS AND HE JUMPS FOR HIS LIFE. THEN HE RECOMPOSES HIMSELF.

HE GETS UP AND GOES INTO THE HALL, PEERS INTO THE KITCHEN AS HE DID THIS MORNING AND AGAIN FINDS NO GEORGE, ALTHOUGH ALL THE LIGHTS ARE ON.

THE DOORBELL RINGS AGAIN. SO HE DECIDES, NOT WITHOUT HESITATION, TO ANSWER IT HIMSELF. TRACK BEHIND HIM AND HE OPENS THE DOOR TO REVEAL WILLOUGHBY STANDING OUTSIDE.

WILLOUGHBY: Hullo Fred. Thought I'd drop round.

FRED: You come to see me? In your nob's gear too?

WILLOUGHBY: Just to get a few particulars.

FRED: Oh. Well, come in. I'm just finishing my supper.

WILLOUGHBY COMES INTO THE HALL.

WILLOUGHBY: Good cook, old George, eh?

FRED: I'll say! I don't know how he does it.

BACKTRACK AS THEY WALK TOWARDS THE LOUNGE TALKING.

WILLOUGHBY: He did a course of course. Got determination that man.

CUT BACK TO THE LOUNGE WHERE WILLOUGHBY SITS DOWN IN ONE OF THE ARMCHAIRS AND OPENS HIS BRIEFCASE. FRED STUDIES HIM AND WITH HIS EYES STILL ON HIM SITS DOWN IN HIS OLD PLACE SLOWLY.

WILLOUGHBY: Now then. (PULLING OUT PAPERS) What have we got here? Name, birth, occupation---and all that bilge. Well Fred. This is the usual form we ask a visitor to sign. How long they're going to stay etc.

FRED: I see.

WILLOUGHBY: Don't ask me the why and the wherefore, because I can't tell you. And if anybody like your old friend

Cliff ventures an opinion on the subject, take it from me he don't know what he's talking about. Now (RISING AND TAKING THE PAPERS TO FRED) if you'll fill these up---any time'll do, just let me have them first thing tomorrow morning.

FRED: Oh yes (GAZING AT THE FORMS). But you know, I only come back to see the old village, just to shake hands like and get a bit of fishing in!

WILLOUGHBY: Well I don't see anything wrong in that.

FRED: No but I mean what's it got to do with filling in forms?

WILLOUGHBY (SITTING DOWN AGAIN COMFORTABLY) Listen Fred. I just want to put a few of of the facts of life. When they offered you compensation you took it, didn't you?

FRED: Yes.

WILLOUGHBY: You bought a house on it and you're very comfortable.

FRED: Yes.

WILLOUGHBY: Now suppose they'd have wanted you to stay. Would you have stayed?

FRED: Yes.

WILLOUGHBY: And if they'd signed over the house you was in to you, as your personal property, and done it up for you free of charge, with washing machine and hot and cold and central heating, would you have accepted that?

FRED: Well yes I suppose I would really. Why, did they do all that for you?

WILLOUGHBY: Yes they did! And we accepted it. Doreen Peck accepted it. And in return for what they did by way of repairs and installation and refitting the roof and tearing out the floorboards that was eaten through with dry rot she took on a job----

FRED: Oh, is that why she's a schools inspector?

WILLOUGHBY: You see, Fred, everything fits---wheels in wheels, and rough in

smooth. Now before my house was turned into a little palace I never had hardly a form to fill in from one end of the year to the other. Now I have. I have to keep a check on the visitors we get. In a place that's Top Secret, is that such a terrible thing? Just signing your name and giving your birth and stating how long you want to stay. And on that buff form underneath----

FRED PUTS HIS GLASSES ON FOR THIS, WITH A LOUD CLICK OF THE GLASS-CASE. HE FINDS THE BUFF FORM AND STUDIES IT.

WILLOUGHBY: That's right. Now on that form you'll find various questions like where do you work, are you on holiday, your income tax group, trade union and all that, and underneath there's a declaration that you mean to go back to your old job.

FRED: Well of course I do! Just because I come back home for a week doesn't mean I'm giving up my blinking livelihood! What a lot of damned rot!

WILLOUGHBY: Listen Fred. Just after this village started settling down again, we got a lot of visitors. They all wanted jobs like ours, and houses like ours. This village was clogged with cars. Old Mansfield's pub was booked up week in and week out. We thought they'd be arriving in charabangs if it went on. That's why we clamped down on our own accord. That's why we put this Military Area sign up, although as I say I think it does more harm than good.

FRED: Well I can tell you straight, I wouldn't move from my job to this place, not for love nor money, so there's no danger from me!

WILLOUGHBY: No but you see why we like people to sign it?

FRED: Oh yes.

WILLOUGHBY: We had to clamp down Fred. You won't believe it but we had 'em squatting---in the old Castle, of all places---squatting, if you can believe it!

FRED: Go on! Is that why they tore

it down, then, the old Castle?

WILLOUGHBY (WITH A TWINKLE) Well just between you and me, that might have had something to do with it. I reckon the contractors might have let it stand if we hadn't put in a little word.

FRED: Well I never.

WILLOUGHBY: No, Fred, it isn't easy being a model village. (GETTING UP) Well Fred, what do you say to a drink up at the Duck, now business is over?

FRED: As a matter of fact I told Cliff I might be strolling up there when I'd had a bite to eat.

WILLOUGHBY: 'Bite'! (AS HE PASSES THE TABLE) It looks like a banquet!

FRED'S ATTENTION IS ON ONE OF THE FORMS.

FRED: Here---what does that stamp mean?

WILLOUGHBY (PEERING) The stamp? Oh that's PERSONA GRATA. Means you're OK, you're in, on the level, one of the family! I have to stamp all the forms before they go out. But not always the same stamp. Sometimes (WITH A WINK) it's persona NON grata and then they're out of town inside two hours.

FRED (STILL LOOKING AT THE FORM)
GO ON!

PUSH IN FOR A SHOT OF THE FORM WITH THE STAMP PERSONA GRATA.

MIX THROUGH TO A SHOT OF THE DUCK OUTSIDE: AN EFFICIENTLY LIGHTED SIGN SHOWS A DUCK WADDLING WITH A LEAD ROUND ITS NECK. THE LANE IS DESERTED AND THERE IS A DIM LIGHT SHOWING THROUGH THE CURTAINS OF THE PUB.

WAIT FOR WILLOUGHBY'S VEHICLE TO BLAZE ITS WHITE WINGED TRAIL DOWN THE LANE AND HALT OUTSIDE. HE AND FRED GET OUT: FRED STANDS LOOKING AT THE PUB WITH PLEASURE.

FRED: Same old sign I see.

WILLOUGHBY: Oh we wouldn't have that taken down.

CUT TO THE INTERIOR OF THE DUCK WHICH IS THE OPPOSITE OF ANY IDEA WE MIGHT HAVE OF THE SNUG VILLAGE PUB. ITS LINES ARE GENEROUS, WITH CONCEALED WALL LIGHTING AND FITTED CARPET AND ROUND-BACKED CHAIRS AND A LONG SWEEPING BAR WITH MR MANSFIELD IN SHIRT SLEEVES. VARIOUS VILLAGERS ARE SITTING ABOUT: NO ONE IS STANDING AT THE BAR. THE ATMOSPHERE IS ONE OF ORDER AND QUIET, DEFINITELY SUBDUED. CLIFF AND JACK ARE SITTING AT ONE OF THE TABLES WITH GEORGE.

CLIFF: Well look who's here!

FRED: Hullo all! Hullo George, I wondered where you'd got to. (TO CLIFF) You ought to have seen that supper he dished up for me!

GEORGE SMILES GENIALLY AT THEM AND IN HIS CONFUSION DRINKS. WILLOUGHBY HAS GONE TO THE BAR AND IS TALKING TO MR MANSFIELD.

JACK: I'll have to try one of these famous dinners of yours George!

CUT TO THE BAR WHERE WILLOUGHBY IS JUST TURNING AWAY FROM ELBOWS-ON-THE-BAR CHAT WITH MR MANSFIELD.

WILLOUGHBY (AS MANSFIELD MOVES TO POUR OUT A PINT GLASS OF BEER) What's it going to be Fred?

FRED (COMING INTO FRAME) Hullo Mr Mansfield!

MANSFIELD (FIRMLY FINISHING THE GLASS AND SCOOPING THE FROTH OFF) Hullo Fred my old cock, how are you keeping, all right?

THEY SHAKE HANDS.

FRED: Well you haven't changed.

MANSFIELD: The times have though, thank God. I'm not run off my feet like I used to be. Well what's it going to be old son?

FRED: I'll have a pint of wallop.

MANSFIELD POURS AND SCOOPS AND WILLOUGHBY PAYS.

MANSFIELD: I expect you find it

quiet here, eh Fred?

FRED: Well I could do with some fishing.

MANSFIELD (WIPING THE BAR) That's right.

WILLOUGHBY HAS TAKEN THE BEER AWAY TO THE TABLE.

CUT BACK TO THE TABLE AS HE DEPOSITS THE GLASSES.

JACK: That's the stuff.

FRED COMES TOO AND THEY ARE ALL SEATED. UP GO THE GLASSES-----

WILLOUGHBY: Down the hatch.

FRED: All the best.

-----and mouths are licked, the beer savoured.

FRED: Nice drop of beer.

CLIFF: They used to come from miles around, just for the beer, remember?

FRED: That's right.

WILLOUGHBY: I was telling Fred how many holiday makers we used to get, and squatters.

JACK (TO FRED) You couldn't hardly walk through the village, cars bumper to bumper, eh, George?

GEORGE NODS.

CLIFF: And half of them seemed to break down bang in front of my garage.

WILLOUGHBY: It gave you a bit of extra pocket money.

CLIFF: What would I do with that? There's damn-all to spend it on in this place.

JACK (WITH A CHUCKLE) Keep it for your kids!

CLIFF: Kids is all I've got! Talk about a thrilling life!

WILLOUGHBY: Go on, you don't know when you're lucky.

CLIFF: Oh no? I wouldn't mind

trying my luck elsewhere for a change---if I could---and I know damned well if I tried I-----!

WILLOUGHBY: Here! (ALMOST RISING)
What's come over you?

CLIFF IS SILENT.

JACK (WITH AN ATTEMPTED CHUCKLE) He's always like this after a bit of overtime!

WILLOUGHBY: No. His old pal's back in the village. It makes him feel he's missing life. Eh Cliff?

CLIFF: Yes there might be something in that.

WILLOUGHBY: I expect Fred has his worries too though.

FRED: Too true.

CLIFF (GETTING UP) What you going to have George?

GEORGE: Same please.

CLIFF: You dad?

JACK NODS AND CLIFF TAKES EMPTY GLASSES TO THE BAR.

JACK: Talk about nag!

WILLOUGHBY (TO FRED) He drives himself too hard if you ask me.

FRED (TO JACK) I could find him a decent job down at our place, if he wanted it.

WILLOUGHBY: Has he suggested it then?

FRED: Who, Cliff? No.

WILLOUGHBY: I just wondered.

JACK: Oh, you don't want to listen to his talk Fred.

WILLOUGHBY (TO JACK) It's understandable in a way. He sees Fred here kicking his heels for a week and sipping his after-dinner brandy down at Mrs Harris's and he thinks why can't I do the same.

FRED: But he gets his holidays don't he?

WILLOUGHBY (PROUDLY) A month a year, everything paid, sea-front hotel booked up in advance----

FRED: Blimey, that's more than I get! Here (AS CLIFF RETURNS WITH THE BEERS) what you grumbling at? You get a month's holiday, and I get a fortnight!

CLIFF: Well to tell you the truth the last holiday we had gave me the pip. Walking the kids up and down the front every morning, and most of the people in the hotel seemed to be from this village----

JACK: Oh well, some people are never satisfied. Me and Mabel have a lovely time down there.

CLIFF: So this year I thought we'll stay at home. And Lil agreed with me too. Cheers.

HE RAISES HIS GLASS TO WILLOUGHBY WHO REMAINS MOTIONLESS WATCHING HIM. A SLOW FADE ON WILLOUGHBY IN CLOSE UP.

OPEN AGAIN ON WILLOUGHBY AT HIS CONSTABULARY DESK IN SHIRT SLEEVES THE NEXT MORNING. HE IS STUDYING A FORM. SUNLIGHT POURS THROUGH THE DOOR.

HE LEANS BACK, SCRATCHES HIS EAR IN A LEISURELY WAY. PUSH IN TO SEE THE FORM HE IS STUDYING. IT IS PRINTED ACROSS THE TOP RESIDENTS. BRING UP THE NAME CLIFF MARTIN, OCCUPATION GARAGE MECHANIC, AGE 34.

MIX THROUGH TO A PILE OF EXERCISE BOOKS WHICH DOREEN PECK IS MARKING IN HER FRONT SITTING ROOM. PULL AWAY TO SHOW HER WEARING SPECTACLES, WHICH GIVE HER A HINT OF THE VIELLE FEMME. ESTABLISH THE ORDERLY QUIET OF HER ROOM.

A RING AT HER DOORBELL. SHE LOOKS UP SLOWLY, WITHOUT MOVING, THEN TAKES OFF HER GLASSES AND LAYS THEM ON THE OPEN EXERCISE BOOK. SHE GOES TO THE WINDOW.

SHOT OF FRED STANDING OUTSIDE, THROUGH THE WINDOW.

CUT TO HER OPENING THE FRONT DOOR.

DOREEN: Hullo Fred, come in. I must say you've brought some nice weather with you.

FRED (COMING IN) I don't do bad do I?

CUT TO THE SITTING ROOM AS THEY COME IN.

FRED: Still at your school books?

DOREEN: That's right. Can I get you some coffee?

FRED: No thanks duck. I not long ago had breakfast. I'm not like you lot, nose to grindstone soon after dawn----I'm on holiday.

DOREEN: I was beginning to wonder what had happened to you.

FRED (SITTING DOWN) Well the main adventure was not finding the old Castle there.

DOREEN: Oh yes. It was demolished some years ago now.

FRED: But didn't I tell you I was going fishing down at the Castle, like old times? and you never said a word about demolition.

DOREEN: Oh I expect that's because we all talk about the Castle as if it's still there----we mean that end of the village----

FRED: But there's not a trickle of water either. How did you expect me to fish in cement?

DOREEN (TAKING IT AS A JOKE) Oh well, I suppose we're absent-minded round here!

FRED: I reckon you are. To send me down fishing where there's no blinking water! I said the same to Cliff. But I don't know---(SHAKING HIS HEAD) old Cliff----he don't seem a happy man to me!

DOREEN (GAZING ACROSS AT THE WINDOW) I don't remember a summer like this, not for years.

FRED: And another thing, I still haven't seen any kids in this village, apart from Cliff's three. Where do you keep them all for God's sake?

DOREEN (SMILING) Would you like to see them?

CUT TO CHILDREN PLAYING RAUCOUSLY
IN A FIELD BELOW MODERN-SHAPED SCHOOL.
PAN R ACROSS CHILDREN SLOWLY TO
DOREEN AND FRED STANDING WATCHING
THEM.

DOREEN: We make it a rule. No
children at home unless they're sick.
Even in the holidays.

FRED: And you call that freedom?

DOREEN: Pardon?

FRED (ABOVE THE SCREAMS) I said is
that freedom?

DOREEN: Well, it's freedom for the
parents; and the children love it;
that's all I know.

FRED NODS, HALF WAY TO BEING CONVINCED.

ANOTHER SHOT OF THE CHILDREN.

CUT BACK TO FRED SCANNING THEM.

FRED: Where are Cliff's kiddées then?

DOREEN: Cliff Martin's? Oh they're
absent today.

FRED: What, sick after all that meat
pudding the night before last? I've
never seen kids eat like them three!
Talk about wolf! They even beat old
George!

DOREEN: No I think they've gone on
holiday.

FRED: What without Cliff?

DOREEN: No Cliff's gone too. At
least I think so.

FRED: I was with him last night!
He said he was giving the sea a miss
this year!

DOREEN (WITH A SHRUG) Well, the teach-
er reported them absent, and said
they'd gone on holiday.

FRED: But he wouldn't go off with-
out saying a word, surely to God?

DOREEN (IMPASSIVELY) I could be
mistaken. But their grandad told
me too.

FRED: Who, Jack?

DOREEN: That's right. -

FRED: Well would you believe it?

CUT BACK TO WILLOUGHBY AT HIS DESK TAKING A BLACK STAMP AND BRINGING IT DOWN FIRMLY ON THE FORM BEFORE HIM. PUSH IN TO SHOW THE STAMP PERSONA NON GRATA ABOVE CLIFF MARTIN'S NAME. BRING UP THE NON.

MIX THROUGH TO FRED WALKING ALONG THE DESERTED VILLAGE STREET TO CLIFF'S GARAGE. HE LOOKS IN AT THE ENTRANCE AND SHOUTS ABOVE THE DIN.

FRED: Cliff!

A SHOT OF THE INTERIOR OF THE GARAGE SHOWS NO SIGN OF CLIFF, ONLY MECHANICS WITH THEIR HEADS DOWN. TRACK BEHIND FRED AS HE WALKS SLOWLY BETWEEN THE VEHICLES, PEERING DOWN AT THE LEGS OF MECHANICS TO VERIFY IF THEY ARE CLIFF, AND THEY NEVER ARE.

CUT TO FRED AT CLIFF'S COTTAGE, RINGING AT THE DOOR. THERE IS NO ANSWER. HE PEERS IN AT THE WINDOWS WHICH ARE CLOSED TIGHT. HE RINGS AGAIN. HE WALKS BACK DOWN THE GARDEN PATH, LOOKS UP AND DOWN THE DESERTED ROAD, LOOKS BACK AT THE HOUSE.

MIX THROUGH TO HIM ARRIVING ON FOOT, SWEATING, AT THE YARD OF JACK'S FARM. THE DOOR OF THE HOUSE IS OPEN AS USUAL AND HE PEERS IN.

FRED: Anybody at home?

CUT TO THE KITCHEN WHERE MABEL IS MIXING FLOUR FOR A CAKE. SHE LOOKS UP, DANGLES HER WHITE HANDS HELPLESSLY FOR A MOMENT AND THEN BELLOWS.

MABEL: Who is it?

FRED (FROM THE FRONT DOOR) It's me!
Fred!

MABEL: Come in Fred! I've got my hands in the flour!

SHE CONTINUES MIXING. FRED APPEARS AT THE DOOR.

FRED: Hullo.

MABEL: Come in Fred. Nice to see you again.

FRED: Jack about?

MABEL: He's down at the pigs. It's muck-clearance morning.

FRED (SUBSIDING INTO ONE OF THE KITCHEN CHAIRS) Oh I see.

MABEL: Weather's holding.

FRED: That's right.

MABEL: How's things down at Mrs Harris's, all right?

FRED: Yes, fine, thanks.

MABEL: He's treating you all right is he?

FRED: Oh yes.

THERE IS SILENCE AND SHE GOES ON MIXING.

FRED: Cliff gone then?

MABEL (RUSHING HER EXPLANATION UNNATURALLY) Oh he's off on his holidays, you know. They always fall about now.

FRED: What, he went off without saying a word of goodbye? That's funny for Cliff isn't it?

MABEL: I reckon he hardly knew what he was at Fred. He's been working that hard.

FRED (GETTING UP ABRUPTLY) Oh well, I'll be pushing back.

MABEL: Won't you wait for Jack? He'll be disappointed.

FRED: No. I think I'll go and do some fishing down at the old Castle. (WITH A FIRM LOOK AT HER)

MABEL (BREEZILY) Oh that's nice. All right then. Look after yourself Fred. (AS HE DISAPPEARS DOWN THE PASSAGE) AND BRING US A COUPLE OF NICE FAT TROUT EH?!

SHE CEASES MIXING AND STANDS LISTENING. HIS FOOTSTEPS DIE AWAY. SHE BEGINS MIXING SLOWLY AGAIN.

MIX THROUGH TO MORE KITCHEN WORK, THIS TIME AT MRS HARRIS'S: THE QUICK INDENTATIONS OF A KNIFE ON THE EDGE OF AN APPLE PIE. FULL BACK TO SHOW

GEORGE AT WORK IN AN APRON. FRED IS STANDING BY THE DOOR.

FRED: Nice-looking pie you've got there.

GEORGE NODS GENIALLY.

FRED: Sean Cliff today?

GEORGE SHAKES HIS HEAD.

FRED: Heard he'd gone on his holidays.

GEORGE: Oh yes?

MIX THROUGH TO APPLE PIE NOW COOKED AND DIMINISHED BY A QUARTER ON THE TABLE BEFORE FRED IN THE LOUNGE.

FRED CROSSES HIS LEGS; GAZES BEFORE HIM, YAWNS. AND HE BEGINS BLOWING UP AT THE MOBILE AGAIN. FADE SLOWLY.

OPEN AGAIN ON THE EXTERIOR OF THE DUCK AFTER DARK. WAIT FOR FRED TO WALK DOWN THE LANE. HE ENTERS THE PUB.

CUT TO THE INTERIOR OF THE PUB WHERE MABEL, JACK, WILLOUGHBY AND GEORGE ARE SITTING AT A TABLE. FRED WALKS IN.

MABEL: Hullo Fred! Any trout?

FRED: No. The cement wears their fins off. Not tasty after that is it?

MABEL (BREEZILY) That's right!

TRACK AFTER FRED TO BAR. MANSFIELD IS WAITING, ELBOWS ON BAR.

MANSFIELD: Same as usual, Fred?

FRED: That's right.

CUT TO THE TABLE WHERE THE OTHERS ARE SITTING. THEY NOD AND SMILE TO EACH OTHER.

WILLOUGHBY: I see in the paper today this might hold out till the autumn.

MABEL: Go on?

JACK: Good for my corn. No acts of God this year, I hope. (WITH A WINK) So expensive for the insurance companies.

FRED ENTERS THE FRAME WITH HIS DRINK.

WILLOUGHBY: Well Fred, I don't suppose you'll be sorry to leave us at the end of the week, it gets a bit quiet!

FRED: It wasn't quiet when I used to live here.

WILLOUGHBY: Well some people might say there was a damned-sight too much noise. I remember when the kids used to play football against the constabulary wall anyhow. We scotched that lark.

FRED: I'm not so keen on noise myself, really. It isn't that. But I think we were a friendlier bunch, all said and done. Present company excepted, it don't seem to me there's much give and take here, not like where I live.

WILLOUGHBY: It's all give and take Fred. You can't judge by the appearances mate.

FRED: I can judge if my best pal walks out of a place without a blime word, after I haven't seen him for five years nor more. I can judge that.

WILLOUGHBY: Oh----Cliff. He needed a change. Eh, Mabel?

MABEL: Yes. I was telling Fred this morning.

FRED: But he sits here last night telling everybody he's going to miss his holidays this year, and next morning first thing he's packed up and gone! Blimey if that's not strange I don't know what is!

WILLOUGHBY: I think you're strange not seeing the look on his face----

FRED: Yes he was scared!

WILLOUGHBY: Oh don't talk rot Fred. Drink your beer up like a good boy and I'll get you another one.

JACK: He was getting irritable with the kids.

WILLOUGHBY (GETTING UP) Anybody for a game of darts?

GEORGE NODS GENIALLY AND THE MEN GET UP WITH THE EXCEPTION OF FRED.
WILLOUGHBY PUTS HIS HAND ON HIS SHOULDER.

WILLOUGHBY: You play along of me, Fred. We can beat these old baskets any day of the week.

FRED GETS UP AND THE DARTBOARD LEAVES ARE OPENED. THEY CHOOSE THEIR DARTS.

MIX THROUGH TO THE EXTERIOR OF THE PUB AT CLOSING TIME. QUITE A LITTLE CROWD ON THE PAVEMENT. PUSH IN TO OUR GROUP.

WILLOUGHBY: Well good night all.

HE TAKES FRED'S ARM AND DRAWS HIM AWAY AS IF THEY HAD ARRANGED TO WALK HOME TOGETHER.

FRED: Good night!

MABEL: Good night Fred!

JACK: Sleep tight!

WILLOUGHBY AND FRED WALK OFF DOWN THE DARK STREET. STAY ON THEM UNTIL THEY ARE A GOOD WAY OFF, WALKING RATHER APART.

CUT TO THE INTERIOR OF THE CONSTABULARY, WITH WILLOUGHBY SWITCHING ON THE LIGHT. FRED COMES IN BEHIND HIM.

WILLOUGHBY (SITTING DOWN AT HIS DESK)
Right now, Fred, take a seat. The walls haven't got no ears here.
(ELBOWS ON DESK MATTER OF FACTLY)
Listen, do you like getting people into trouble?

FRED: Me? of course I don't!

WILLOUGHBY: Well you heard Cliff last night----

FRED: All he said was he didn't want a holiday, he was fed up and wanted a change, not the same old seaside hotel with all the same faces----

WILLOUGHBY: Yes, I know he did. And I'd like to talk like that sometimes too. I mean it's good to shoot your mouth off now and again. If you can get away with it. But I wonder if we can. In a Top Secret area. You can. But I wonder if we can. Now supposing I shot my mouth off? It might be quick march for me. Might be. I don't know. You see, Fred, I did this for Cliff's good. I said get out, tonight. And he got.

FRED: Oh, so it was your idea!
But what beats me is where you get
the blinking right, sending people
away, it's like a dictatorship!

WILLOUGHBY: Who sent him away?
I asked him to go. And he went.
That's all. I expect he was scared.
But not of me. Because I'm scared
too!

FRED: But what of for God's sake?

WILLOUGHBY: Well, of putting a foot
wrong I suppose. Because once you've
done it, Fred, it's too late! And
then there's George.

FRED: What about George? surely to
God you're not scared of him?

WILLOUGHBY: Well, you know, we always
ask his advice before we make a move.

FRED: And did he advise you on this
one?

WILLOUGHBY: Oh yes.

FRED: Well I'll be blessed!

WILLOUGHBY: You see, Fred, I always
think to myself (WITH A GLANCE AT THE
DOOR) you never know what power there
is behind somebody. Here's a man
comes to the village along with a
contractor's firm, a shy, fat little
man, you'd think he was trying to
hide all the time. But he sticks.
He just stays here. He takes over Mrs
Harris's. Gets a job in the post
office. Listens. Notice that?
Listens all the time. Never says
a word. (WITH ANOTHER GLANCE AT THE
DOOR) He's a good chap, George...

MIX TO GEORGE OPENING THE FRONT DOOR
OF MRS HARRIS'S TO FRED A LITTLE LATER.

FRED: Hullo George.

GEORGE: Come in Fred.

CUT TO THE LOUNGE AS THEY WALK IN.

GEORGE: I'll get you a cup of tea,
shall I?

FRED: I've just been with Mr Will-
oughby. He said he sent Cliff away
on your advice.

GEORGE: Oh yes. I'll just get your

tea.

HE LEAVES BUT FRED WALKS AFTER HIM.
TRACK BEHIND THEM TO THE KITCHEN.
GEORGE GOES STRAIGHT TO THE KETTLE.

GEORGE (NOTICING HIM) I had it nearly
on the boil.

HE TAKES DOWN THE TEA CADDY. FRED'S
TEA TRAY IS ALREADY NEATLY LAID.

FRED: They tell me you used to be in
the contracting line, George.

GEORGE: That's right.

FRED: And are you a sort of boss
round here?

GEORGE: Boss? (LAUGHING) No.
Would you like a game of cards?

FRED (GAPING) OK.

GEORGE: I'll just get your tea.

FADE QUICKLY.

OPEN AGAIN ON THEM PLAYING CARDS IN
THE LOUNGE. THEY HAVE BOTH HAD TEA.
TICK-TOCK OF THE CLOCK. THE SLIGHT
SLAP OF CARDS ON THE TABLE. FRED
WATCHES GEORGE.

MIX THROUGH TO THEM SOME HOURS LATER
STILL AT CARDS. THE CLOCK STRIKES A
COMFORTABLE THREE.

GEORGE (STUDYING THE CARDS) Yes, I
liked the old village so I stayed.

FRED (GIVING HIM A PUZZLED LOOK) Oh yes.

PAUSE WHILE THEY CONTINUE PLAYING..

GEORGE: I'm shy. That's my trouble.
And greedy too. Makes enemies some-
times (BUSY WITH HIS CARDS).

FRED: But what made you come to a
Top Secret area George?

GEORGE GENIALLY PLAYS HIS CARD WITH-
OUT ATTEMPTING TO MAKE AN ANSWER.

FRED: And why does everybody ask
your advice?

GEORGE (LAUGHING) Yes, why!

WITH A QUICK LOOK AT FRED HE GETS UP
AND GOES TO THE WINDOW, PEEPS BEHIND
THE CURTAINS AND SATISFIED THAT THERE
IS NO ONE THERE RETURNS TO THE TABLE.

GEORGE (WITH GREAT EFFORT SO THAT HE SWEATS) I just say yes or no. I don't give 'em advice!

FRED: But how do you know which to say?

GEORGE: I say whichever they want.

FRED: Oh! So you never advise 'em against their will like?

GEORGE SHAKES HIS HEAD WITH A SILENT LAUGH, SWEATING PROFUSELY.

FRED (AS THEY GO ON PLAYING) I've been thinking it over George. I'm going to cut my holiday short. I'll be off tomorrow morning. My wife'll be---well, she might be anxious.

GEORGE IS SILENT, BUSY WITH HIS CARDS.

FRED: You see, it's funny, George, I like you all, but I don't feel at home. I don't know where I am, things aren't clear to me like they are down at our place---do you see what I mean?

GEORGE (PUTTING DOWN HIS HAND OF CARDS SLOWLY AS IF ALL THE HAPPINESS HAD DRAINED OUT OF HIM) Oh yes.

FRED: I think you've done marvels. I do really. I'll bring my Rachel over one day, and the kids. But old Cliff leaving like that, I mean it did upset me.

GEORGE IS MOTIONLESS.

FRED: We're finishing the game aren't we?

GEORGE SHAKES HIS HEAD IN SILENCE, GAZING DOWN AT THE TABLE WHERE HIS HAND OF CARDS LIES ABANDONED.

A SLOW FADE.

OPEN AGAIN ON FRED COMING DOWN THE STAIRS NEXT MORNING. FOLLOW HIM INTO THE EMPTY LOUNGE. HIS BREAKFAST IS ALREADY LAID. HE LOOKS ROUND. NO ONE ELSE ABOUT. HE SITS DOWN AND BEGINS BUTTERING TOAST WITHOUT MUCH ZEST. THEN HE NOTICES A BILL FOLDED ON A PLATE. HE TAKES IT AND OPENS IT, THEN COUNTS OUT SOME NOTES FROM HIS WALLET.

HE POURS HIMSELF SOME COFFEE AND THEN SITS BACK AS IF LITTLE INTERESTED. HE LOOKS UP AT THE MOBILE AND SETS IT IN MOTION WITH A BLOW OR TWO.

PAN UP TO THE MOBILE. IT TURNS AND TURNS, SLOWING GRADUALLY.

PAN DOWN TO THE TABLE AGAIN WHICH IS NOW WITHOUT FRED. BREAKFAST IS FINISHED. THE BILL AND BANK NOTES REMAIN THERE.

FRED (FROM THE PASSAGE) George!

CUT TO THE PASSAGE WHERE FRED IS STANDING WITH HIS SUITCASE AND FISHING TACKLE. HE LOOKS IN AT THE KITCHEN BUT THE CAVERNOUS AREA CONTAINS NO GEORGE.

FRED: George, I'm off!

AS THERE IS NO REPLY TO THIS HE TAKES HIS BAGS AND GOES TO THE FRONT DOOR. IT CLOSES BEHIND HIM.

MIX TO DOREEN OPENING HER FRONT DOOR TO FRED WHO IS STANDING THERE WITH HIS SUITCASE AND FISHING TACKLE.

DOREEN: Hullo Fred!

FRED: I've come to say good bye.

DOREEN: Why, are you leaving already then?

FRED: You was right about Cliff. He went off.

DOREEN: That's right.

FRED: Well Doreen, I'll remember you to Rachel.

DOREEN: Yes give her my love. And bring her over some time won't you?

FRED (ABOUT TO GO) Oh Doreen, I couldn't find George, so I left the money on the breakfast table. He put a bill with my egg like this morning.

DOREEN: I'll tell him. Don't worry about it Fred. It's been good to see you again.

FRED: Well I brought some good weather anyhow.

DOREEN: I only hope you don't take it away again!

FRED: Well cheerio Doreen. Er----
(LOOKING ROUND) does this village run to taxis, do you know?

DOREEN: Well not after the old smithie died---

FRED: Oh well.

DOREEN: Listen why don't you give Jack a tinkle? He might run you to the edge.

FRED: Yes, well, I could try.

DOREEN: Come in a moment.

CUT TO THEM STANDING BY THE PHONE IN THE FRONT SITTING ROOM.

DOREEN: It's---Oh well, let me dial it for you.

SHE DIALS THE NUMBER.

DOREEN: Is that you Jack? It's Doreen. (PAUSE FOR REPLY) Hold on, I've got Fred here. Fred Powell.

FRED (TAKING THE PHONE) Morning Jack. Listen Jack, you can't run me to the sta---to the edge, can you?

A PAUSE WHILE THE OTHER PARTY REPLIES.

FRED: Oh I see. I thought it was muck-clearance yesterday. (PAUSE) Oh I see. Yes, well, forget about it, Jack. Thanks very much.

HE PUTS THE PHONE DOWN.

FRED: He's got muck-clearance two days a week and it has to have his whole attention like.

DOREEN: Oh I forgot about that.

FRED: I'll walk then. It's not so far.

DOREEN: I'd drive you myself (AS THEY WALK TOWARDS THE FRONT DOOR) if I didn't have a lesson.

FRED: That's all right Doreen.

DOREEN: You could put your head in at the garage and ask one of the

mechanics. He'll pop you to the edge.

FRED: Yes, all right, I'll do that.

CUT TO HIM OUTSIDE AGAIN, PICKING UP HIS BAGS.

FRED: Well good bye Doreen. All the best.

DOREEN: All the best, Fred.

SHE WATCHES HIM LEAVE BUT HAS CLOSED THE DOOR BEFORE HE REACHES THE END OF THE GARDEN PATH. HE BEGINS HIS TRUDGE TO 'THE EDGE'.

CUT TO HIM NEARING CLIFF'S GARAGE. HE IS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LANE FROM THE GARAGE. TRACK AFTER HIM AS THE SOUNDS OF SPRAYING AND HAMMERING APPROACH. HE BEGINS CROSSING THE LANE TO THE ENTRANCE. THEN HE STOPS DEAD.

A SHOT OF THE INTERIOR OF THE GARAGE SHOWS CLIFF WORKING AT ONE OF THE VEHICLES. HE IS LIFTING A CYLINDER HEAD OUT OF A BATH OF PETROL.

FRED (BEGINNING TO SHOUT) Cl----!

BUT HE STOPS. DID CLIFF LOOK ROUND FOR AN IMPERCEPTIBLE MOMENT, MEET HIS EYES AND THEN RETURN ABRUPTLY TO HIS WORK?

CLOSE UP OF FRED SHOWS HIM IN PUZZLEMENT, GAZING.

FRED (ALMOST TO HIMSELF) Cliff....

HE BACKS TOWARDS THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LANE AGAIN SLOWLY. AND HE WALKS ON. THEN HE STOPS, GLANCES BACK, WALKS ON AGAIN.

MIX TO HIM WALKING ACROSS COUNTRY AS AT THE BEGINNING.

A LS OF HIM WALKING.

HE COMES TO THE MILEPOST HE EXAMINED AT THE BEGINNING AND SITS DOWN ON IT, RESTING.

CUT TO HIM HOT AND UNTIDY NOW, WALKING AGAIN.

A LS OF HIM APPROACHING THE WOODEN

ARCH AT 'THE EDGE'.

CUT TO HIM WALKING TOWARDS THIS ARCH. TRACK BEHIND HIM. HE STOPS SUDDENLY. CLOSE UP OF HIM WIPING HIS BROW, HIS CASES DOWN AND THEN STARING HARD BEFORE HIM, STRAINING HIS EYES TO MAKE SURE OF SOMETHING.

A SHOT OF THE ARCH SHOWS THE WORDS 'MILITARY AREA'. THEREFORE HE IS WALKING OUT OF THE MILITARY ZONE INTO--- THE MILITARY 'ZONE??' AND HE NEVER KNEW IT BEFORE??

HE PICKS UP HIS BAGS AND APPROACHES THE ARCH WITH HIS EYES FIXED ON THOSE WORDS. HE GOES UNDER THE ARCH, PEERING UP ALL THE TIME, AND THEN, ON THE OTHER SIDE, HE LOOKS UP: AGAIN THE WORDS 'MILITARY ZONE' AS HE SAW THEM ON ARRIVAL IN THE TAXI.

HE RETURNS UNDER THE ARCH AND LOOKS UP AGAIN. WALKS THROUGH THE ARCH AGAIN AND ONCE MORE SEES THE WORDS. AND THIS TIME HE STANDS STILL, TRYING TO THINK IT OUT.

HE LOOKS UP THE ROAD TOWARDS THE VILLAGE, THEN TURNS TO LOOK AT THE ROAD HE ARRIVED BY IN THE TAXI. THEY SEEM IDENTICAL. THEY STRETCH INTO THE DISTANCE, QUITE DESERTED, IN PRECISELY THE SAME WAY. HE TURNS, TURNS AGAIN, BEWILDERED.

CUT TO HIM CONTINUING HIS WAY. TRACK BEHIND HIM IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE ROAD BEFORE HIM LOOKS IDENTICAL TO THE ROAD HE TOOK ON ARRIVAL. HE TURNS IN CLOSE UP, LOOKS BACK.

BACKTRACK IN FRONT OF HIM IN CLOSE UP AS HE CONTINUES HIS WAY. HE IS GAZING DOWN, HIS FACE QUITE CHANGED WITH PERPLEXITY CLOSE TO PANIC. WE SEE THE ARCH BEHIND HIM.

INTERCUT A SERIES OF SHOTS WITH HIM STOPPING AND LOOKING BACK AS THE ARCH GRADUALLY DISAPPEARS INTO THE DISTANCE.

CUT TO ANOTHER BACKTRACKING CLOSE UP WITH HIM STILL PERPLEXED AS IF HE IS RETHINKING ALL OF LIFE ON A NEW BASIS.

A LS OF HIM WALKING ALONG THE DESERTED ROAD AS THE TITLES COME UP.