

HOLYWELL STREET

PILOT 1x01

"A PARTICULAR PLAIN BOY"

DRAMA/COMEDY

60 MINUTES

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PUNE, INDIA

INT: VICTORIAN CARRIAGE, 1878

LADY RUTHERFORD (45), a stately blue-eyed and blue-gowned woman daintily flips through a book as the rain pours outside.

LADY RUTHERFORD

My lord sir, how long until we reach our new destination? I am positively famished after our long, tiring day helping the poor and downtrodden rise above themselves.

She talks like she's giving a sermon. THE EARL OF BEDFORD (55), an equally dignified man with sanctimonious frown and a stern mouth us man sitting across from her looks up from his writing.

EARL OF BEDFORD

Dear lady wife, do not fret. We are mere yards away from Lyndhurst, where our humble castle resides. I have instructed our scores of servants to lay out the most lavish dinner for us and our darling boy, James.

LADY RUTHERFORD

No no, my lord. Remember Proverbs twenty-two nine, the generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor. Our dinner should never go to waste, if we can help those less fortunate.

The carriage stumbles over something jostling LADY RUTHERFORD out of her seat. THE EARL OF BEDFORD catches her around her waist and places her back on the cushion delicately.

EARL OF BEDFORD

Careful dear. Forgive me, I should not have touched you so-intimately.

LADY RUTHERFORD

Oh my.

LADY RUTHERFORD blushes like an ingenue, unused to her husband of twenty five years touching her so...impolitely. This is a Victorian couple after all.

HIGHWAYMAN

Stand and deliver!

LADY RUTHERFORD screams as a dark shadow appears on the glass of the carriage window. There is the shadow of a gun.

EARL OF BEDFORD

Down madam!

THE HIGHWAYMAN shoots through the glass. THE EARL OF BEDFORD covers his wife as the bullet shatters the glass inside the carriage.

THE HIGHWAYMAN

As I said my lord, stand and deliver your valuables.

EARL OF BEDFORD

Samuel?

SAMUEL smirks and removes his mask to reveal a brown-eyed man with a big nose and a scar running across his left cheek. With the smirk and the scar and the brown eyes, he could not look more Victorian villain-esque.

SAMUEL

Yes, it is me. Your faithful servant of fifteen years, the one you dismissed unfairly-

SAMUEL freezes like a statue. The scene rewinds like a DVD. It restarts at the carriage stumbling.

EARL OF BEDFORD

I expected less than nothing and yet somehow you have dragged us down even further- what in the world!?

LADY RUTHERFORD

(snidely)

Is it your gout again my lord? The roads of Devonshire must rest heavy in your -

LADY RUTHERFORD is interrupted by a loud neigh from the horses. The driver yells something indistinguishable as a gunshot cracks through the sounds of the rain. A shadow appears in the carriage's window and points a gun at the posh couple.

SAMUEL

I have no choice my lord. I have been driven destitute by my reckless and immoral gambling and I need to pay off

my creditors.

EARL OF BEDFORD

You have been like a member of our family Samuel, do not do this. Let us help you.

SAMUEL opens his mouth but the voice that comes out is different. The dream is breaking.

SAMUEL

Mister du Petrie? If you'd like to say something-

THE EARL OF BEDFORD opens his mouth but a feminine voice comes out, one clearly deepened and made rough with age and illness.

EARL OF BEDFORD

Cecil, it's time. Remember. Save the house Cecil. Do this right if you can't anything else.

THE EARL OF BEDFORD reaches a hand across to the highwayman, who now has CECIL's face and shakes his shoulder once, twice. The camera zooms in on him as the exterior changes.

EXT: KENSAL GREEN CEMETERY, DAY

FATHER BEDFORD

Cecil. Cecil.

CECIL DU PETRIE (early 20's) a tall fey-looking handsome but haggardly pale white man looks at Father Bedford blankly. He is standing near a freshly dug grave with a coffin being placed slowly into it. Slowly he seems to come back to his reality and gives a shaky polite smile.

CECIL

Father- Father. Yes apologies. I was-thinking about-something.

FATHER BEDFORD, a stern man in his 60's with angry eyebrows looks skeptical.

FATHER BEDFORD

Should I continue with your mother's last rites or would you like to finish the thought?

CECIL flushes with embarrassment.

CECIL
 No. No. Continue. Please. Apologies.
 Again.

FATHER BEDFORD resumes, this time accompanied by the high pitched scraping of a man inscribing on the blank headstone.

FATHER BEDFORD
 The lord is my shepherd, I shall not
 want. He maketh me to lie down in
 green pastures. He leadeth me above
 the waters-

CECIL
 Beside-

FATHER BEDFORD
 Beside the waters-

CECIL
 Still waters.

FATHER BEDFORD gives him the most Are you taking the piss now' stare. CECIL points to his bible and gestures for him to continue.

FATHER BEDFORD
 Beside the still waters- (MUTTERING)
 blue-blooded little..

CUT TO:

EXT: HOLYWELL STREET, EARLY MORNING

Two boys holding a stack of books dodge passerbys as they take the left into the narrow and twisting alleyway. The street feels like a throwback to the Elizabethan times with dingy bookshops packed in like sardines.

A handsome Spanish woman in her 30's stands outside her shop, named "Cordona's Books". She looks worried as she consults her pocketwatch and the closed shop with a peeling yellow board "Jennifer's Morning Glory" in front of her.

CUT TO:

EXT: MARTINS, BANK EAST END, SAME MORNING

ANOUSHKA DESAI-RICHARDSON (early 30's), a medium-height curvy, light brown-skinned Indian woman sits across a bespectacled portly banker. He peers across his half-moon

glasses at her, clearly disapproving of her twice-stitched gown, a heavily scrubbed broad face with heavily rouged lips and tight bun of black hair.

She is staring him down with a blank expression in her eyes, but her fingers are twitching in restless order, like she's counting in the air.

BANKER

Why does a bookshop require a camera
Miss Richardson?

Anoushka's face tightens at the banker's condescending tone but she carries on in accented fluent English.

ANOUSHKA

Miss Desai-Richardson Mr Smith. There is a nascent business for photographs of people and their activities with these new cameras. Of course it'll be a very uh selective trade and cost only two percent of the shop's yearly discretionary expenses-

BANKER

What kind?

ANOUSHKA

Sorry?

BANKER

What kind of photographs?

ANOUSHKA

Uh-Biology.

BANKER

(skeptically)
Biology.

ANOUSHKA

Do you know otherwise Mr Smith?

The banker flushes at her knowing stare and gets back to examining her financial statements. ANOUSHKA continues her blank face into the distance but her fingers have clasped with the others.

CUT TO:

EXT: KENSAL GREEN CHURCH

CECIL reluctantly unhooks his pocketwatch from the lapels of his suit and hands it over to the inscriber of the headstone. The inscriber opens it to show an inscription of Cambridge's motto. He nods and then continues working on the half-complete headstone which reads "LADY DU PETRIE LOVING MOTHER-".

CUT TO:

INT: MARTINS', EAST END

BANKER

Miss Richardson, as you know as a reputable institution, we have the power to discern those...tradesmen uh tradeswomen who have the most requirement for financial assistance. Based on their finances, their goods and services, their...general surroundings and reputation and such and such, we have to ensure that the assistance given will be to those who have...shown a sincere dedication to not just earning an honest living but also not-

ANOUSHKA

Just stamp.

BANKER

I'm sorry?

ANOUSHKA

Thank you Mr Smith for your time.

ANOUSHKA rose from her chair to tower over the banker. He gave her a look of half-disgust, half-fear at her tall stature and stamped a "REJECTED" stamp over her application. She snatches it and walks out, leaving the Times on her chair that's open to a page saying "THE STRAND'S SECRET SHAME: HOLYWELL STREET".

CUT TO :

EXT: HOLYWELL STREET, LATER THAT MORNING

JUNO JONES, a short, fair woman in her late 20's, rosy-cheeked and smiling waited outside Jennifer's Morning Glory. She looked impatient and annoyed. She met the gaze of the

Spanish woman in the shop opposite and shrugs. She scribbles something in her notebook. A man in the shop diagonal to Jennifer's sticks his head out.

MAN

Miss Jones! How was Northumberland?

MISS JONES

It was lovely Adam. I met a very nice woman who let me stayin' her little inn and told me all about how her husband had convinced her for years that if she orgasmed, it meant she was infertile.

ADAM

Was it the same man who likes to visit Alex's little friend from the mollyhouse to be whipped across his arse?

A teenage boy pops his head out from the window from the shop right next to Jennifer's.

TEENAGE BOY

That was three months ago old man, keep up. Is it that one who thought the stones of Holywell were covered with writhing bodies and the French disease Miz Jones?

MISS JUNO JONES took the newspaper and turns it to read it as a carriage makes a sharp turn into the street, nearly falling off but at the last minute, the horses right themselves right at Cordona's books.

CORDONA

Miss Jones, look at the Times! They mentioned our shops by name this time.

ADAM

Really?

TEENAGE BOY

Can you read it out to us Miz Jones?

MISS JUNO JONES took the newspaper and turns it to read it as a carriage makes a sharp turn into the street, nearly falling off but at the last minute, the horses right themselves right at Cordona's books.

The carriage door opens to ANOUSHKA who is smiling shortly but politely as she flips a guild to the carriage driver but it quickly sours as she sees JUNO waiting.

ANOUSHKA

Don't.

MISS JONES

I didn't say jack.

ANOUSHKA

When did you come back anyway? Thought you'd find your perfect specimen in Northumberland, naïve and confused sheltered women galore to bring into the Christian light.

ANOUSHKA reached beyond JUNO to unlock the big rusty lock hanging on for dear life on the door. She struggles with the key a little bit.

MISS JONES

How'd it go?

ANOUSHKA

(shortly)

He had your newspaper.

Juno's face fell and she awkwardly reached out to pat Alexandra's hand.

MISS JONES

Well...who knows maybe there'll be some randy young lad who'll read it and consider selling filth a viable career option?

ANOUSHKA

One can only hope.

ANOUSHKA and Juno laugh shortly and bitterly as she finally shoved the door open. She walked in without looking at JUNO once but holds the door for her to enter.

MISS JONES

I missed you too Lex.

As the door closes behind her, JUNO flips the "Closed" sign to "OPEN".

CUT TO:

INT: GARDINER HOUSE, LATE EVENING.

CECIL watches from the hall as the attendees of his mother's wake leave. His manuscript lies in front of him as he chews on the end of his pen. He catches snippets of conversation between the two men.

STRANGER NO 1

The death of her husband, that
business with her son and Cambridge-

STRANGER NO 2

I don't know who he's trying to fool
with the curtains-

STRANGER NO 3

The cakes are like stone-

His face closes, as he looks down at his manuscript, not seeing anything except a long list of obligations and failures. The tall butler closes the door in the hall and approaches him cautiously.

THOMAS

Sir, can I get you anything? Bacon-

CECIL

I'm fine Thomas. Has there been any
message from the publishers yet?

THOMAS

Not yet sire. But there have been
several from Drummonds' and a few pawn
shops as well.

CECIL

Yes of course. Of course. I will take
them in the study after the day's
proceedings.

THOMAS

Along with my reference?

CECIL

As well as your reference Thomas.

THOMAS

Lord Kendall had approached me this
afternoon with an exceedingly generous
offer and the maids were talking about
the house being put on sale-

CECIL

Of course.

THOMAS

I'm sorry sir. But- my Erin and Christopher are bright. They have a chance to go far, become teachers or scholars. And Lord Kendall has promised me he will give his recommendation for Christopher to attend Eton for the summer.

CECIL

I see.

THOMAS

Should-should I let him in?

CECIL

Yes. Goodbye Thomas.

THOMAS opens his mouth to say something but walks away to open the door. CECIL reluctantly gets upright as he plasters a genial smile on his face and rises as he hears a strident voice coming through the corridor.

LORD EASTERBROOK walks through the door. A man in his early 50's, tall and slightly greying hair and the arrogant stance of someone who's spent his life in righteous moral judgment over others. He looks down at CECIL and the hall with that same judgment.

CECIL

Lord Easterbrook?

LORD EASTERBROOK

Mr du Petrie. My condolences on the death of your mother.

CECIL

Thank you. Would you like to-

LORD EASTERBROOK

I can find a chair myself du Petrie.

CECIL

Of course of course. I-I don't remember my father owing you-forgive me my lord I can try-

LORD EASTERBROOK

Sit down boy. You owe me nothing, though I do commend your honesty and dedication in not shirking off your obligations. A man may not be his parents' keeper but if their wealth is his to keep so are their debts to fulfil.

CECIL

Thank you Lord Easterbrook. I- its been a long time since a word of encouragement has been said to me on this matter.

LORD EASTERBROOK says nothing as he observes CECIL who gets more nervous by the second, twitching in his chair. He spies a manuscript by the table and picks it up.

LORD EASTERBROOK

Owen did say you had a talent for entertaining prose.

CECIL

How is Owen?

LORD EASTERBROOK

Perfectly well. He has taken a renewed interest in business and will be taking over at Yarnold's. He has also begun to court the eldest daughter of Lord Kendall.

CECIL

Good...Good for him. I am glad.

An awkward pause ensues as LORD EASTERBROOK ignores him and flips through the manuscript.

LORD EASTERBROOK

Have you heard of Holywell Street Mr du Petrie?

CECIL

No?

LORD EASTERBROOK

Hmm. I understand the last couple of months with your mother's declining health would have had your head firmly in this house, with no real knowledge

of London's true nature. But I would have hoped you might have at least taken a look at today's Times.

LORD EASTERBROOK picks up the folded edition from behind him and hands it to Cecil.

LORD EASTERBROOK
Page six. Look above the advertisements.

CECIL
The Strand's secret shame-

LORD EASTERBROOK
There's nothing secret about it. An open secret in the worst kept conditions with the city's most unwanted and maliciously unchristian businessmen all residing under one street. The cockroach that defies time and modernity itself.

CECIL
I'm sorry?

LORD EASTERBROOK
Wasn't your late mother a great purveyor of rare books du Petrie?

LORD EASTERBROOK takes out a book they have innocuous covers of trees and nature settings with Mr Pickwick's Papers on it. CECIL opens them to flip through them.

LORD EASTERBROOK
Tell me what you think of these.

CECIL
Uh, sir I am not an expert on binding and covers-

LORD EASTERBROOK
Cecil. I don't want an opinion on quality. I need an opinion on the text.

CECIL
All- all right.

CECIL opens the book gingerly and thumbs his finger through the text on the first few pages.

CECIL

Uh yes sir, where did you happen to find these novels. The cover seems very ordinary and not bound in a style that I would expect from most first editions-

He stops. He peers at a passage.

LORD EASTERBROOK

Read it out Cecil.

CECIL

I don't want to.

LORD EASTERBROOK

It's an order Cecil.

CECIL looks distressed but LORD EASTERBROOK is unyielding. He gulps and looks down and starts reading haltingly.

CECIL

"I should like, my angel," says Charlie, "to crush my whole being into your sweet body; in your velvet mouth. This- this isn't-

CECIL drops the book and shuts up. The book is opened to a passage that is from "A GIRL'S GUIDE TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL."

LORD EASTERBROOK

I thought you might have recognised the passage.

CECIL is trembling with fear.

CECIL

My lord, I have nothing whatsoever - I promised my mother-

LORD EASTERBROOK

I know. But I also know no one else who knows these obscenities better than you when you and your little friends sold them in Eton.

CECIL

Please. Please Lord Easterbrook.

LORD EASTERBROOK

Calm down son. I'm not here to rub your face in your failure again. I'm here to offer you an opportunity. To atone for your sins and return to the life you were meant to live.

CECIL

What could I do? I was removed from Cambridge at your order and I have no- I have nothing to give anymore. No reputation, no friends to call mine and soon not even the house seven generations of my family lived in. Even my great-grandfather who had five different mistresses and four different aristocratic wives on the Continent!

LORD EASTERBROOK

Are you casting blame on me sir?

CECIL swallows but his fear takes the better of him and he shakes his head numbly. He stops fiddling with the tea tray and reaches for the tumbler of scotch and leaves the tumbler of scotch on the table in front of Lord Easterbrook.

After a beat, he picks up a second glass from behind him and pours one for the man in front of him. Cecil takes a big swig of his scotch as he holds his manuscript in a vise grip.

LORD EASTERBROOK

To your mother Mr du Petrie.

CECIL

I don't know what I could do. I have confessed and apologised. I have done penance with Father Bedford since every week in church. I don't know what more-

LORD EASTERBROOK

Cecil. I may have approached this- indelicately. After thirty years of dealing with the scum and lowlife of this city has caught up with me. I am not here to condemn you- I am here to offer you an opportunity to banish your demons. Literally.

CECIL

How?

LORD EASTERBROOK

Be my man in that world. You will offer yourself as a clerk in one of the shops, gather information about its customers, their printing, the source of their obscenities and report back to me or my subordinate Mr Xavier every two weeks. And when the time is right and we have a firm location on the printer who sold you those books, we will finally shut down that place for good and punish those who flagrantly break the law and disturb London's moral fabric.

CECIL

What about me?

LORD EASTERBROOK

You will regain your reputation and I will ensure that you are received at Almack's like the gentleman your mother wanted you to be. I'm sure Owen will help you find a titled lady with a substantial dowry who will be willing to shoulder your burdens.

CECIL takes a big swig of his scotch as he holds his manuscript in a vise grip.

CECIL

There must be someone else. I- I can't willingly-I can't go back to working with that kind of filth and obscenity-

LORD EASTERBROOK

Even if I am willing to publish your manuscript?

CECIL pauses and looks up at him and down at his manuscript.

LORD EASTERBROOK

A regular slot as one of our writers, pending review and edits of your book. But only after you find the printer and the shop of course.

LORD EASTERBROOK rises.

LORD EASTERBROOK

You have a duty Cecil. They saw a life for you, the man who you were meant to be. Fulfill it.

CECIL looks up at him and his manuscript in his hand again. He can hear the clock tick away.

CUT TO

INT: ALEXANDRA'S APARTMENT, SAME EVENING.

ANOUSHKA locks the door behind her as she collapses onto a wooden chair. She fills a cup with water to rub off her lip rouge and to clean her shaving blade.

Once she's done shaving her 5' o'clock stubble and removing her make-up, she sits down on the ratty chair and takes out a small wad of pound notes, and divides the wages up into different boxes labeled "Eating" "Rent" "Theatre" "Camera" on the table and thumps her head down on the small table.

ANOUSHKA

Fuck you Sam.

INT: JENNIFER'S MORNING GLORY, NEXT MORNING.

ANOUSHKA stands behind the counter of the bookshop. She surveys the shopfloor like it's a battlefield. The interior is dingy and musty. Books and manuscripts and engravings are piled up on shelves, and on windowsills, blocking the view from the outside. There are five people scattered around the shop.

A young man nose-deep in a manuscript, his eyes wide on the left. A well-dressed woman runs her finger across manuscripts and engravings on the right corner of the shop, her face disinterested but her fingers feeling the books like searching for treasure. Two old black women checking a piece of paper and taking books out one by one and putting them back in.

ANOUSHKA

Sir, your ten minutes is up.

THE YOUTH looks up, scared and flushed.

THE YOUTH

But ma'am, it's just so interesting-

ANOUSHKA

Are you planning to buy it then sir?

THE YOUTH gulps and runs out of the shop.

WOMAN

Ya know, you're not supposed to run off the customers miss.

ANOUSHKA

You're still here aren't you?

WOMAN

You don't scare me Miss Desai-Richardson. Turn your disgruntled face to someone else.

ANOUSHKA tries to glare but breaks into a small genuine smile. The bellrings and CECIL walks in. He is dressed as conservatively as possible, which for this area means he looks definitely out of place and way too rich.

ANOUSHKA

Can I help you sir?

CECIL

Um, I- I heard that you are in need of a clerk. I am here to offer my services.

ANOUSHKA

Your name?

CECIL

Cecil. Cecil Quentin du Petrie.

ANOUSHKA

Alexandra. Pleased to make your acquaintance. Look Mr du Petrie, I don't know which one of your blue-blooded little friends dared you to venture here but I am running an actual business here. I don't have time to indulge your little jokes.

CECIL

It's no joke madam. I am here to work. As a clerk. In Jennifer's- this shop. I have recommendations from several other -stores I have worked at including a few bookstores-I assure

you I am adequately qualified.

CECIL presents a just stupid number of letters of recommendation. Like he really overprepared for this and he really doesn't know it.

ANOUSHKA

You worked at Featherington and Guard's? The house that just published Lady Smeathers' tell-all about the Prince of Wales?

CECIL

Yes madam.

ANOUSHKA

And now you want to work at Holywell Street.

CECIL

Yes madam. A business of books is no different from any other- business of books.

Even CECIL knows he doesn't sound convincing at all. He winces and waits for her to catch him out. Just then a customer enters and stomps up to the counter.

CUSTOMER

Excuse me, I'm looking for A Girl's Guide To Good and Evil?

ANOUSHKA

Don't have it sir.

CUSTOMER

Why not? I came in yesterday and you said you didn't have it and told me to come in today. And now you're saying-

ANOUSHKA

It happens like that sometimes sir. Can I interest you-

CUSTOMER

Are you fucking joking?

ANOUSHKA

You see me laughing?

CECIL

Sir.

The customer looks at CECIL next to him. He notices the same thing that ANOUSHKA and the woman does. Posh. Blue-blooded. Rich as hell. His attitude becomes more deferential.

CUSTOMER

I don't see how this is a problem of yours sir. But I have been turned away twice and I am tired of being fucked with by this useless, sack of woman-

ANOUSHKA

Watch your tongue or I'll cut it out-

CECIL

Sir. It is still early in the day. I'm sure it is the fault of the suppliers in this rain and mud. How about Miss and I make you a cup of tea and possibly draw up a list of options based on your-tastes?

The customer stares at CECIL like he's just spoken in Greek. ANOUSHKA stares at CECIL like he's just laid golden eggs and sprouted peacock feathers.

CUSTOMER

I-I- we can do that?

CECIL

Of course sir. Right- miss?

ANOUSHKA

Sure... Cecil. How about you settle-

CUSTOMER

Thompson.

ANOUSHKA

Mr Thompson on a chair here and you can talk like men about how we can-come to a compromise.

CECIL

Maybe figure out something else that's to your liking

The customer nods mollified between the promise of tea and a compromise. ANOUSHKA draws Cecil near her, out of the

customer's earshot.

ANOUSHKA

Okay.

CECIL

I'm sorry to- what?

ANOUSHKA

That desperate to please? That gentlemanly way of talking that makes people feel important when you give your undivided attention? That's good.

CECIL

I'm sorry?

ANOUSHKA

Get that man to spend his hard earned money at the workhouse today and the job's yours.

CECIL

Thank you.

CECIL can't believe what just happened and just stands there frozen looking between ANOUSHKA and Mr Thompson as ANOUSHKA moves to the back to bring out an old tea set and a list of books.

ANOUSHKA

Take this and get moving Petrie.

CECIL

Su-Sure. All right.

ANOUSHKA just raises an eyebrow at him as she busies herself heating the water for the tea. Cecil gulps and puts on his most Sunday schoolboy charming look and pulls up a chair near the customer, who's fiddling his thumbs looking in half-awe and barely hidden want with the books. ANOUSHKA quickly finishes putting together tea for Mr Thompson and puts it on the counter for them to drink.

ANOUSHKA

I'll be back in a few seconds with the sugar.

CECIL

So Mr Thompson, why don't you regale me with the kind of books you like to

read. I personally am a huge fan of Charles Dickens and Jules Verne's adventures.

MR THOMPSON

I don't know any of those books sir. I mean I've heard of the Frenchie and how fantastical they sound with all those exotic places but the workhouse doesn't really give us all that time to read.

CECIL

(puzzled and awkward)

Okay. Then A Girl's Guide to Good and Evil?

MR THOMPSON

Oh it is a favourite among the lads on my floor. The way Maud, the girl in the book rides the tutor lad's cock drove all the lads mad...to think someone like her, so respectable could do things like that. So well written sir. Though of course not as much as Colonel Spanker's book with the cull whipping the girl-

Mr Thompson blushes for the first time, looking down at his tea missing Cecil's look of horror. ANOUSHKA returns with a small pillbox-sized container of sugar. Cecil takes a full spoon whereas Mr Thompson takes a pinchful.

CECIL

I-I see. I understand how that could be- edifying for a non-reader of sorts, especially after a long day's hard work at the workhouse such tales of...debauchery.

MR THOMPSON

(uncomprehending and still enthusiastic)

We didn't even know that ladies did such things or such things could be done lad. All those doctors saying that our cocks were to rut between my wife's thighs when we wanted children but Maud or the girl don't care about children or nothing when they were gamahuching their cocks or getting

tied up and whipped like in Colonel Spanker's-

CECIL
(faintly)
Gamahuching-

He suddenly stood up.

MR THOMPSON
Sir?

CECIL
Um, uh according to my list here I think you can buy Colonel S-Spanker's Experimental Lecture today sir? If that's suitable for your-needs.

MR THOMPSON lights up and nods enthusiastically, his pique and anger having forgotten in gushing about the acts in the books and having a seemingly willing ear to discuss this. Cecil bows stiffly and with whirling thoughts and teetering legs he went up to ANOUSHKA on the counter.

CECIL
Mr Thompson would like uh-

He silently points the book on the list, unable to say the words again. ANOUSHKA looks amused at his obvious scandalised and half-horrified face.

ANOUSHKA
Very well Mr Thompson. It's a good choice. I'll give you one with the green and gilt bound one for half the price for all your troubles sir.

ANOUSHKA takes out a green and gilt-bound book behind her and slips into a plain brown paper bag.

MR THOMPSON
Thank you ma'am.

ANOUSHKA
Not a problem sir. Have a good day.

Anoushka smiled a fixed polite smile at Mr Thompson which dropped immediately he was out of eyesight. Cecil stared at the door, his mind screaming at him at where he's ended up, the words "gamahuching" and a whip whirling in front of him and a tied up girl whirling in front of his eyes.

ANOUSHKA

Even the most cynical or experienced of us finds it difficult talking to Mr Thompson.

Cecil looks at ANOUSHKA whose looking at him with sympathy and small bit of amusement. It was genuine, as opposed to the polite smile she had on while dealing with Mr Thompson.

ANOUSHKA

He doesn't have all that many people to talk to so when he comes here he always talks the ear off me describing in detail of all the things he's read and didn't know about before.

CECIL

I-I hope I was a good ear.

ANOUSHKA

You did fine.

She dumped a bunch of papers on the desk.

ANOUSHKA

All these people will be coming in to pick up their orders. Run them up on the machine there and make a note on the list here with a small circle and line through it of which books don't go sold. Understood?

CECIL

I-I believe.

EXT: HIGHWAY ROAD, MORNING

A masked highwayman waits in the bushes. He tests for the strength of the rope of the trap as a carriage comes thundering down. As the carriage approaches the hidden trap, he pulls the pile of stones that comes tumbling down. He jumps out of his hiding place. It's the same dreamscape.

HIGHWAYMAN

Stand and deliver lords and ladies!

The carriage driver comes down to fight him but the highwayman dispatches him with ease. He leaves the incapacitated fellow nearby and goes towards the carriage window.

HIGHWAYMAN

My lord, if you value your life you'll-

The curtain falls and he sees two naked, writhing people furiously fucking, the woman moaning loudly. The highwayman removes his mask. Its Cecil.

HIGHWAYMAN

I-Excuse me?

The highwayman turns around and he sees there are multiple carriages around him now. All of them with the windows open and couples in various forms of sexual positions. All of them ask various questions.

MAN

Do you have Colonel Spanker's?

LORD NO 1

Do you have one of those where the older man ties up-

LADY NO 2

I can't remember the name. The man's face was swarthy and he had this really gruff look-

LADY NO 3

There's one with two men and one woman that man who looks like Lord Easterbrook's son, so dark-eyed and pretty-

ANOUSHKA

What the fuck are you doing?

CECIL snaps out his dreamscape back into the shop. He's lying down among boxes, his unfinished manuscript next to him, a quill next to it. He also has a scrap of paper with "possible locations for the printer" on it. He looks up to see an irate ANOUSHKA glaring at him. He hastily tucks the paper away in his pocket.

CECIL

Oh, my apologies madam. I-

ANOUSHKA

Fell asleep? At two in the afternoon? After taking a two-hour break for what exactly?

CECIL

Well-I you had left the shop so I believed that this would be a good time to work on my personal work-

ANOUSHKA

Get up.

ANOUSHKA takes the arm of a very abashed CECIL and drags him out to the counter.

ANOUSHKA

Mate. What do you see?

CECIL

Nothing?

ANOUSHKA

You ran off five people this afternoon because you couldn't stop quoting the bible at two of them like you were their fucking priest. What happened to you?

CECIL

I I am sorry-I didn't mean to.

ANOUSHKA

I don't know if you think you're too good for this place. Probably you do think that. But if you're here you're going to damn well behave like your livelihood depends on it or go home.

CECIL

I'm sorry-

ANOUSHKA

Holy mother of God, stop apologising and- get out. You're done.

CECIL

Please. I don't know what to do.

ANOUSHKA

Clearly.

ANOUSHKA picks up his stuff and puts it in his arms.

ANOUSHKA

Go home du Petrie. This ain't your

stopover.

CECIL looks back at her and the shop. His heart is sinking as he realised he blew his chance on the first day itself. He sees her implacable look and sees all his dreams shatter one by one. He walks out silently. The street is dark as the shops have mostly closed since.

INT: EASTERBROOK MANSION, LATER THAT NIGHT

FOOTMAN

Lord Easterbrook is having his dinner sir. If you could come back in the morning-

CECIL

No please I have to speak to him. It's about an urgent matter.

FOOTMAN

He is busy at the moment sir and you do not have an appointment-

LORD EASTERBROOK

(from the other room)
What is happening there Lee?

CECIL

(with a raised voice)
It's me! It's Cecil du Petrie my lord.
I need to speak to you.

There is a slow creak of wood as Lord Easterbrook slowly gets out of his chair and comes up to the door.

LORD EASTERBROOK

I said every two weeks Cecil.

CECIL

I know sir. But I-

LORD EASTERBROOK

Are you drunk du Petrie?

CECIL

No. No. It was- a difficult day. I thought I had it but then- I didn't. I said things. She let me go.

LORD EASTERBROOK

Who?

CECIL

She was-abrupt. And rough. Miss Anoushka. She is the rudest, roughest woman I've ever known.

LORD EASTERBROOK

Anoushka? Jennifer's official paperwork states a man named Sam R owned the shop.

CECIL is pacing agitatedly as he walks into the drawing room.

CECIL

All those people, sweating and eager, queueing up, asking me for books about- men doing that to women and men doing that to each other. In detail! What possesses those people, those writers to write that? What possesses someone to publish that??

LORD EASTERBROOK stares at CECIL until he subsides.

CECIL

Sorry sir. I-

LORD EASTERBROOK

I was wrong.

CECIL

I'm sorry. I didn't intend to. I am planning to go back tomorrow and beg for the job back. I'll do what it takes my lord.

LORD EASTERBROOK

Not about that Cecil. When you were expelled, I thought you were a dilettante. A man no different from those booksellers who corrupt the oldest form of communication for their sexual iniquity. But I underestimated your zeal. Your understanding of what our mission is.

LORD EASTERBROOK got up and put a hand on his shoulder.

LORD EASTERBROOK

This is- this is good. Very good. I didn't think I would be able to trust you. But you've actually brought us

useful information for once out of all the informants I've sent. And you see the corruption of the influence of those rabble-rousing indecent common filth.

CECIL

Yes sir! Wait no sir!

Cecil opens his mouth to say more but doesn't know what to say. LORD EASTERBROOK looks at his half-shout with a half-puzzled but still approving look.

LORD EASTERBROOK

Footman!

Lee comes rushing towards him.

LEE

Yes sir.

LORD EASTERBROOK

Send a note to Mr Xavier to meet me heretomorrow morning and show Mr du Petrie out.

FOOTMAN

Of course. Sir if you'll follow me.

CECIL is gently led away by JORDAN and THE FOOTMAN but not before he sees a card on the table previously occupied by LORD EASTERBROOK. CECIL turns it over to see writing "OWEN EASTERBROOK AND CECILE SAYER-KENDALL ARE PLEASED TO INVITE YOU TO THE POSTING OF THE BANNES. THIS SATURDAY 6'O CLOCK".

FOOTMAN

Sir. Come with me.

CECIL

Owen is getting married. Ha. Lucky him. Lucky her.

JORDAN leads a suddenly subdued CECIL out but not before he swipes the bottle of sherry from Lord Easterbrook's house, hiding it in his big winter coat.

CUT TO:

INT: APARTMENT, HOLYWELL STREET

ANOUSHKA crosses across four bars on her wall. Her accounts

book open. She calculates silently. CECIL'S old manuscript lies nearby. It's half-open. She furtively looks at it.

ANOUSHKA

It's complete sanctimonious twaddle.
Not even the fun kind.

JUNO turns over, stretching and yawning in her bed.

JUNO

You know if it was any other gal in here, she'd think you're loony for writing on your walls when you have a perfectly good notebook there. Also it is twaddle. But it's the boy's twaddle. You'll need to give it back.

ANOUSHKA

I thought loony's your type Juno. That and around London.

JUNO

What's yours?

ANOUSHKA

Don't know yet.

JUNO

Well gee thanks.

ANOUSHKA

You know what I mean. I mean you tried with Carmilla and see what happened.

JUNO

Carmilla left me. I'm just here to honor our tradition of drowning our sorrows in cheap ale and each other. No deeper fear of intimacy like yours, love. I'm just moping.

ANOUSHKA

Well I'm still working. So mope away if you want. I'll join you later.

JUNO

You know the shop can't love you back right.

ANOUSHKA gives her the two-finger salute and goes back to silently calculating. JUNO turns over and goes back to sleep

when they hear a loud voice singing drunkenly and rattling the bars on the shop. They both look at each other in puzzlement as well as alarm as they go down to run into a very drunk CECIL.

CECIL

I-I forgot my manuscript here. Give it back. I need my manuscript.

CECIL falls face first near their feet as JUNO and ANOUSHKA look at each other in incredulous confusion and mild annoyance.

INT: ALEXANDRA'S APARTMENT, MORNING

CECIL wakes up groaning, his head pounding away as he wakes up on a bedsheet on the floor with a thin blanket over him. He turns around wildly but sees nothing but a bed, small dressing mirror and papers and books stacked in every corner of the apartment. He looks down to see himself shirtless and panics a little bit. The door unlocks to show Juno coming in.

CECIL

Oh God. My apologies miss I don't know-

CECIL tries to cover himself with the thin blanket, thoroughly embarrassed at appearing so indecently in front of her. Juno just looks amused as she picks up his shirt from the floor near the door and throws it to him.

JUNO

Put it on Mr du Petrie. No virtues were stolen. Ani is waiting for you downstairs.

Downstairs, ANOUSHKA reads a short message as she stands behind the counter. It reads "I'm back in London. I missed my best friend. Will be at Covent garden. Michael." JUNO, dressed and walks towards the door, yawning.

JUNO

Same time next week?

ANOUSHKA

Depends on if you see Carmilla tonight.

JUNO

She left me.

ANOUSHKA

Which is why I'm keeping my schedule open.

JUNO

Why did I get a friend like you?

ANOUSHKA

No one else wants to have me.

JUNO

I'll see you this evening. I have to see a man about a whore. Thanks for the books.

JUNO picks up the stack of books on the shelf nearby and gives a casual wave behind her as the door closes. ANOUSHKA looks at the note again.

ANOUSHKA

Yeah.

Sometime later, Cecil makes his way downstairs fully clothed to see ANOUSHKA writing and calculating on her fingers on a massive book.

ANOUSHKA

You can go now.

CECIL

I-I apologise Miss Richardson. I-I did not put my best foot forward yesterday and ending up at your door...like that was shameful and wrong of me.

ANOUSHKA

I don't have time for your extended jape poshboy. You can leave.

CECIL

I'm not a posh boy.

ANOUSHKA

Your name is Cecil.

CECIL

It was my great-grandfather's name.

ANOUSHKA

Well I never got anything from mine except an affinity for ale and two

left feet. All this- I've made myself. Everything and everyone here has made this place their own, by their own. We don't want your judgement here risking our livelihood, the Suppression of Vice people have that slot filled.

CECIL

I-I don't mean to demean your work Miss Richardson. It was-high-handed and rude of me especially after you gave me a chance.

ANOUSHKA

If I hadn't seen the way you could soothe someone into sympathy with those eyes and castle-raised manner of yours, I might actually believe you. But I did and I can't save my world with someone who doesn't want the same.

ANOUSHKA turns away to go inside but stops when CECIL yells out.

CECIL

What did you think of it?

ANOUSHKA

Your novel?

CECIL

Yes, I realised after I returned home that I had left it here and I was- was wondering if you had read it by any chance. I mean if things like Colonel Spanker's can be sold here I was thinking we could come up with something and sell mine from your printer too. It would- be a nice change of pace.

ANOUSHKA looked at this tall man holding out a manuscript in front of her suddenly looking very small and wan and confused. She takes out the manuscript from under the counter and looks at him back again.

ANOUSHKA

Come back in the evening.

CECIL
I'll- Can I stay?

ANOUSHKA
The castle too small for you?

CECIL
Too big for just one of me.

ANOUSHKA looks up at him at that and sees the lines of exhaustion and finally notices the lines of exhaustion and black mourning suit he is in. She pushes a chair ahead next to the edge of the counter.

ANOUSHKA
Sit in the corner there. Don't talk to anyone. Take a gander on the books if you want or don't, I don't care.

CECIL
Okay. What else can I do? I can tell you of the dream and idea-

ANOUSHKA
Cecil. For once in your life, shut up.

CUE musical montage of CECIL sitting by the corner as people of all walks of life come in and out. CECIL observes ANOUSHKA as she interacts with all of them with the gruff kindness and loyalty of a hardened matriarch.

CECIL looking furtively here and there as he browses through the titles, his eyes popping wider and wider.

CUT TO:

CECIL getting up from the chair only to subside and sit back down at ALEXANDRA's sharp glare.

CUT TO:

CECIL reading through a novel and side-stepping ANOUSHKA as she goes inside the room behind him to bring a massive bat. The light is considerably darker as its nearing evening.

CUT TO:

CECIL is drooping over the book in his lap as the last customer departs and ANOUSHKA flips the sign from open to closed. ANOUSHKA looks back at the drowsy CECIL wryly. She grabs the manuscript and taps him on his forehead.

CECIL
Whuh? Sorry- did I fall asleep?

ANOUSHKA
Come on. Take this.

She shoves an olive green coat in his hand.

CECIL
What did you think of-Was it that bad?

ANOUSHKA puts on a dark navy coat and opens the door behind her.

ANOUSHKA
Have you ever seen Don Giovanni?

CECIL
Yes.

ANOUSHKA
Well then this should be at least
halfway familiar to you. Come on.

CECIL follows ANOUSHKA past Holywell and hails for a carriage. ANOUSHKA shakes her head.

ANOUSHKA
How about a walk? It's not that far.
Also by the looks of it, you don't
seem like you can afford that many
carriages.

CECIL
How did you-

ANOUSHKA walked ahead of him, taking long strides as Cecil catches up to her.

ANOUSHKA
Your manuscript. The ink is fading on
the corners of your letters, like your
pen is breaking. You haven't bought a
new pot of ink in two years- I'm
presuming.

CECIL
A year and a half. Not since my mother
fell ill.

ANOUSHKA

Why Holywell? I'm sure you could have asked your friends or any of your uncles and aunties to help you out.

CECIL

Mother didn't have any brothers or sisters left. Father died too many years ago with too many grudges so the title and investiture was mine to have.

ANOUSHKA

And to lose.

CECIL

Yes.

They continue walking in silence for fifteen minutes until ANOUSHKA makes a turn towards Drury Lane.

CECIL

Where are we?

ANOUSHKA

Your new muse.

CECIL

I don't understand. I thought the manuscript was plenty...licentious. My footman gave in his notice when he saw me writing it!

ANOUSHKA stops near a green door and looks back at him.

ANOUSHKA

Look, I am not a writer, but I know stories and I know what I sell. They're-erotic and intimate and arousing and downright even illegal sometimes depending on how eclectic the author is. And that's what makes them fun. Your story- it was reaching for something you think is interesting- But it's actually joyless. So in lieu of taking you to a brothel, which even I'm not that much of a sinner to do so, I'm going to show you how we do theatre.

CECIL

I-I'm in mourning. And I can't- I shouldn't be seen here.

ANOUSHKA

Because everyone here will tell on you how exactly?

CECIL

It's- its not proper. For either of us. What if we get caught?

ANOUSHKA

I don't care.

CECIL

You don't care if you go to prison, lose your precious shop of obscenities for what exactly? A few moments of cheap, empty pleasure?

ANOUSHKA

They've already locked us in our stations for life, with nowhere to go but down Cecil. But they can't take my passion, the ability to squeeze the tit of life until I see the stars. So if you don't want to come I won't force you. But I have one life.

ANOUSHKA shoves a poster of the play in his hand and walks inside, leaving the door slightly propped open as CECIL stands in the cold air. He can hear the cacophony of music, shouting and singing from the basement.

He looks down at the poster in his hand and looks at the women and men in fancy but gaudy theatre attire run across the cobblestones as they enter and exit via the stage doors into the underground theatre.

THEATRE AUDIENCE

When teacher says why do you bring
That little pet of yours? I tell her
that I bring my cat Along with me...

Cecil smiles sadly as he sings the song under his breath.

CECIL

But I'd rather have a bow-wow...Wow, wow-

The door opened again from the inside out to show ANOUSHKA looking at CECIL with a considering eye.

ANOUSHKA

It's not a bad thing you know? To want.

CECIL

Not when you're the only one.

ANOUSHKA

I'm right here. And so are a lot of us, down here.

CECIL

Promise?

ANOUSHKA

Good Christ Cecil-

CECIL chuckles and walks inside.

CECIL

All right. But this better mean I get the job.

ANOUSHKA

That's up to you.

CECIL

How is that-

What ANOUSHKA says in reply is indistinguishable as the door closes behind her.

INT: DRURY LANE THEATRE ROYAL

CECIL walks behind ANOUSHKA as he sees a swathe of people standing around below the stage whispering loudly and talking to each other, their attire is the same as ALEXANDRA'S-sensible and thrice-stitched.

He bobs and weaves and nudges his way following ALEXANDRA'S lead as she makes her way through the crowd, with every fifth person clapping her on her shoulder.

STRANGER NO 1

The Indian is here!

WOMAN NO 6

Alexandra!

MAN NO 7

Is that her new beau?

WOMAN NO 9

Oi ANOUSHKA where's Sam? Ran off again
did she?

ANOUSHKA

Or something.

CECIL misses the tense smile on ALEXANDRA'S face as he gets distracted by the theatre itself. He gapes at the brightly lit stage with velvet curtains drawn and vines draped across the panels on either side of the stage.

JUNO

Alexandra! Oi, get here.

CECIL and ANOUSHKA turn to the right to see juno waving at her and jumping over the much taller crowd. ANOUSHKA beckons to CECIL silently to follow herto where JUNO is standing.

GRUMPY OLD MAN

That's my foot girlie!

JUNO

Sorry! Sorry!

ANOUSHKA reaches her and raises her eyebrows intimidatingly at the man until he grumbles and looks away to his wife next to him.

JUNO

Who's the boy?

ANOUSHKA

He'll tell you later.

JUNO AND CECIL

He'll tell you-

JUNO looks at CECIL with an appraising stare as CECIL looks anywhere but ather.

CECIL

Madam. If you don't mind, could you
tell me which performance are we going
to see here?

JUNO

Madam? Since when did your lackeys get

blue-blooded?

ANOUSHKA
How's Carmilla doing?

JUNO
Doesn't loyalty and compassion just
shine from her?

CECIL
It's Cecil madam. Cecil du Petrie.

JUNO
Juno Jones. I own The Health Study
magazine at the edge of Holywell.

CECIL bows, realises there's not much place so stops half-way
and jerks his head towards an amused JUNO who raises her
eyebrows at ANOUSHKA on the other side.

ANOUSHKA
Cecil.

CECIL
Hmm?

ANOUSHKA
Tell me what happens in Don Giovanni.

CECIL
It's the tragedy of a libertine. Don
Giovanni is a young licentious
dissolute who ruins the lives of the
innocent around him who fall in love
with him for the sake of his own
pleasure, escaping punishment and
censure due to his charm at every turn
until the devil comes for him. It is a
tragedy of epic proportions,
melodramatic and terrifying but
eventually we see those who put their
needs above others' well-being are
always destined to be
abandoned...There are also some funny
bits.

ANOUSHKA
Hmm.

CECIL
Mama loved this opera.

The audience hubbub starts subsiding as the magnesium lighting goes off, giving the darkened vision of a sunset.

The curtains start drawing open as the overture plays. A young man dressed as the servant Leporello paces up and down in the garden.

LEPORELLO

Notte e giorno faticar per chi nulla
sa gradir; piova evento sopportar,
mangiar male e mal dormir!

CECIL

(whispering to ALEXANDRA)

Night and day I slave, for one who
does not appreciate it.
I put up with wind and rain, eat and
sleep badly.

A young actress in breeches comes onto the stage chasing after a tall bearded man in a long coat who theatrically is trying to shake her off.

DONNA ANNA

Non sperar, se non m'uccidi,
ch'io ti lasci fuggir mai!

CECIL

Donna Anna loves him. She's telling
him she'll never let her go. Her fatal
flaw. Don Giovanni feels nothing. Even
someone as beautiful as her.

ANOUSHKA

Maybe his heart and soul cries out for
something more...something else.

The young actress playing DONNA ANNA grabs onto the bearded actor's arm. CECIL stares at DON GIOVANNI's face getting angrier and angrier.

DONNA ANNA

Come furia disperata, ti saprò
perseguitar! ecc.
Scellerato! Gente! Servi! Come furia
disperata, ecc

CECIL

What else is there?

Suddenly DONNA ANNA stops singing mid-aria. The orchestra

pauses. DON GIOVANNI looks puzzled.

DONNA ANNA

I don't want to die again. Especially
for this rich foreign sot.

DON GIOVANNI looks theatrically confused at the audience who titters. CECIL just looks plain confused at the turn of events. ANOUSHKA AND JUNO try not to laugh at his puzzlement.

DON GIOVANNI

It's the last performance of the night
Donna Anna. We still have the rest of
the opera to do. So one, two-

He sings a note of his aria but DONNA ANNA just folds her arms and shakes her head.

DONNA ANNA

No. You know what pretty boy, I have
another idea. How about instead of
another night of this tragic Italian
nonsense about devils and going to
hell, we tell you another story. The
story of Nell and her Johnny.

The audience titters and cheers as DONNA ANNA unpins her gown that falls apart to reveal breeches. She whips out a banjo and strums it.

DONNA ANNA

By the light of a candle I happened to
spy,

A pretty young couple together did lie

She closed in on the actor playing DON GIOVANNI and put her foot on the bench next to him, smirking like a lothario at him. He clearly blushes and turns away like a young girl.

DONNA ANNA

Said Nelly to John if you'll pull up
my smock-

She dramatically winks at the audience as the audience joins in with her on the lyric.

DONNA ANNA/AUDIENCE

You'll find a young hen full as good
as your cock!

The audience cheer and sing along with her as DONNA ANNA jumps around singing the song. CECIL looks half-horrified, half-fascinated by this suddenturn of events.

ANOUSHKA

You see?

CECIL

I am seeing something.

ANOUSHKA

I meant are you seeing what you're missing.

CECIL

(aghast)

Butchering a classic tale?

ANOUSHKA

Making it fun. We're common as muck down here Cecil. We're here to be entertained. And its not going to be by a snooty opera in a language most of us don't even know that tells us we're monsters to want and makes desire to be a failing.

CECIL looks incredulously at the actors and back at ANOUSHKA and gestures in "But this?".

ANOUSHKA

We all hate ourselves plenty Cecil. Don't let what you write add on to it. Or atleast if you still wanna, do it like they do. Make it fun. Send that boy in your book to hell...but make sure he has one hell of a time there.

CECIL turned back to the couple rollicking and chasing around, the roles flipped with donna anna as the licentious man and DON GIOVANNI, now in a gown running around like a frightened maiden and can't help but laugh as DONNA ANNA dips him.

DONNA ANNA/DON GIOVANNI

I burst into laughter and spoiled the fun,

But Nelly kept crying push it in John,

The scene switches between the actors on stage kicking their

heels up with other barely-clad dancers who join in and the audience cheering, drinking big swills of their beer and singing along.

ACTORS/AUDIENCE/ALEXANDRA/JUNO/CECIL

Then John fell a laughing at Nell on
her back, And swore he'd no more be
plagued with a cat! Oh!

CECIL looks at ANOUSHKA and JUNO and the audience singing along with genuine glee and enjoyment at the bawdiness of the song and cheering along with the antics of the actors.

CECIL

The joy.

As CECIL turns to ANOUSHKA with his newfound revelation he suddenly a tall, broad-shouldered mannish person in a gown comes out on the stage running.

TALL PERSON

COPPERS!

The audience breaks into panic. People start dropping their drinks and scatter into different directions. The actors pick up their instruments and run backstage. There's a loud crash as the police, led by an intimidatingly blank-faced man break the doors open.

JUNO

Alexandra! Cecil! Here!

ANOUSHKA runs after JUNO , CECIL not far behind her. JUNO pushes through the stampeding crowd as the police start catching people and cuffing them.

JUNO

Since when are the coppers interested
in Drury Lane?

ANOUSHKA

Haven't a monkey's. Where the fuck do
we get out from?

JUNO looks at each exit in front of her, all manned by the police, grabbing people trying to leave from them. They look at each other and run for the backstage, hiding behind the panels.

JUNO

This is a fucking disaster.

INSPECTOR XAVIER
Search every single one of them!

CECIL freezes the horribly familiar voice from the queue earlier that morning. He looks for guidance or hope from ANOUSHKA and JUNO one behind him and the other one on the other side of the stage.

OLLY
Oi! You fuckwits, get out here!

All three of them turn to see the actor playing DON GIOVANNI, now minus the beard peeking his head from a trapdoor below the floorboards beckoning them. ANOUSHKA pushes CECIL in front of her and half-yells to JUNO.

ANOUSHKA
Juno! Get here!

JUNO nods frantically as she waits for an opportunity to make a run for it without getting the notice of the cops as ANOUSHKA starts climbing down into the trapdoor right after CECIL.

OLLY
Do we have one of the Ton in my humble little theatre here? And with such a pretty lass too.

ANOUSHKA
I- Can we move please?

ANOUSHKA is almost fully in as she's about to close the trapdoor when she sees JUNO running for it across the stage but is caught by a copper. She is yelling and kicking as he drags her away.

ANOUSHKA
JUNO!

CECIL
Alexandra! Don't!

ANOUSHKA
She's my friend, I can't just-

OLLY
Fight to live another day girlie. I know where these coppers will take them. Go in the morning and get her out of there. But for now, move.

ANOUSHKA looks at OLLY and CECIL who nods frantically at her and moves ahead behind the actor through the tunnels.

ANOUSHKA
This happen a lot?

OLLY
Only when we do Italian. Olly.

ANOUSHKA
Alexandra. You- you were real good.
Thanks for saving us.

OLLY
Thanks love. Now to get my mind off
the fact that a lot of my people are
still above getting carted away, tell
me how does a sensible girlie like you
come to my world with a lad who sounds
like he takes tea with the Queen?

They reach a red door. OLLY takes out a big iron key from her cleavage and opens it.

ANOUSHKA
He's-

CECIL
I work for her.

OLLY and ANOUSHKA look at him with similar expressions of astonishment but in very different veins of it.

ANOUSHKA
Yeah. He's my new shop boy.

ANOUSHKA and CECIL step out into the back alleys of Drury Lane.

OLLY
West End. They'll be spending the
night at the West End station.

ANOUSHKA
Thank you.

As CECIL watches OLLY close the door behind him, the scene gets temporarily replaced by a vision of a red door and OLLY in a resplendent red suit inviting people in as hellfire burns behind him.

ANOUSHKA

Cecil.

CECIL

Huh.

ANOUSHKA

We need to go back.

CECIL

Yes, yes.

As CECIL follows ANOUSHKA into the lamp-lit main road, he looks back to the door and ANOUSHKA thinking about everything he'd seen here and that sudden vision of that door into hellfire.

EXT: THE STRAND, AFTERNOON, DREAMSCAPE

A newspaper boy stands near a newspaper stall and yells to the street as people walk by. Carriage drivers yell at their horses to move. A tall, handsome but bedraggled man stands wetly and miserable in the rain as CECIL over voiceover narrates.

CECIL

(V.O)

The writer of this account was walking through the Strand on a rainy afternoon. Deeply in debt and on my last shirt, I unsuccessfully tried to hail many carriages, but I could not afford any of them. Until a black carriage stopped in front of me, the door opening to reveal a brightly coloured lure in the form of a beautiful woman.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

Oh good sir. You seem to be in the most terrible straits. Walking around in the rain like this. Please join me and let me take you where you wish.

The camera focuses close-up on the woman's features as CECIL narrates from his clothes to his face and eyes.

CECIL

(V.O)

Dressed in breeches, her sparkling eyes filled with a kindness I had lost

the right to invoke for many years. As the carriage lurched slowly forward, we fell silent, my eyes falling on a mysterious shadowy man in the corner, dressed resplendently in black. When he came into the light, I caught a glimpse of a surprisingly delicate face, windswept blonde hair and blue eyes that seemed to penetrate my very soul. Suddenly I was both repelled and desperate to make his acquaintance and glean his nature.

MAIN CHARACTER

Thank you madam. Sir for allowing me to accompany you in this carriage. But I do apologise. I do not have any way to return the favour or anywhere to go.

The BEAUTIFUL MAN leaned back, showing his powerful thighs and a cane he drummed his fingers on as he spoke in a lilting baritone.

BEAUTIFUL MAN

Oh dear boy! That is a dreadful situation. Let us help you. My rooms are right near Baker Street where you can rest your lovely head for the night.

NARRATOR

You are truly a man of honor sir. I cannot express my gratitude enough. But why did you take a fancy to me?

The BEAUTIFUL MAN smiled lazily, his smile so artless and charming every instinct of mine urged me to trust him.

BEAUTIFUL MAN

You seem a fine figure, and so evidently well hung that I had quite a fancy to satisfy my curiosity about it.

The BEAUTIFUL MAN'S eyes sharpened in want.

THE BEAUTIFUL MAN

Lilith.

The woman reached for THE NARRATOR'S thumb and sucked it in

her mouth.

THE BEAUTIFUL MAN

Is it real or made up for show?

NARRATOR

As real as my face, sir, and a great deal prettier.

The WOMAN bends down to be crotch-level for the MAIN CHARACTER out of camerasight as the carriage keeps moving.

CECIL

(V.O)

He did not allow me to lie with his eyes words or with the woman's tongue. Gently gamahuching me as the beautiful man stroked the woman's breasts with one hand, his eyes burning with something I could not recognise, she slowly drove me into a frenzy, aided by the bouncing of the vehicle that could not get us to his rooms fast enough.

BEAUTIFUL MAN

Oh sir! Let us hold! You will hold! We shall wait.

NARRATOR

No! Keep going, by God!

BEAUTIFUL MAN

What will you give sir?

NARRATOR

By Jove! I'm about to spend.

CECIL

(V.O)

The beautiful man reached over and put an index finger under my chin forcing me to look at him, his eyes suddenly burning with a fire I hadn't seen before, his full pink lips turned in a wicked smile, telling me I had walked into my doom.

BEAUTIFUL MAN

Only if I can help it sir! Tell me, what will you do?

NARRATOR
Anythin- Anything.

CECIL
(V.O)
The beautiful man smiled so
beatifically I felt like I was being
blessed as the woman returned her
mouth to my cock. As I spent all
over the carriage floor, the carriage
suddenly stopped. I grabbed his arm
and stepped out only to see myself in
front of a red door. Where was I?

The scene cuts to ANOUSHKA AND CECIL in Jennifer's morning
glory. It's morning and CECIL is standing on the other side
of the counter and reads from his manuscript to a rapt
ALEXANDRA.

ANOUSHKA
Well? Where was he?

CECIL
Hell. And he's never had a more
pleasurable journey.

A slow smirk grows on ALEXANDRA'S face.

ANOUSHKA
Well fuck me blue on a Sunday du
Petrie.

The doorbell rings as a customer comes in.

CUSTOMER
Excuse me I'm here for a bulk order of
The Lustful Turk For a Mrs Tyler.

CECIL and ANOUSHKA look at each other and back at the
customer.

ANOUSHKA
Of course madam. I'll be out in a
second. How about my assistant here
make you a cup of tea while you wait?

We zoom out of the shop as CECIL and ANOUSHKA continue with
their day's work to show Holywell Street, dingy, old and open
for business as always. We keep zooming out to show the
strand, glitzy and modern and the pride of Victorian London,
Drury Lane, etc and then it finally zooms out to London to

show the grim smoke casting a shadow over the buildings.

THE END.