THE RIVER
By Mel Dinelli

SUBMITTED BY
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"THE RIVER"

Written for the Screen

by

Mel Dinelli

Suggested from the Novel

by A. P. Herbert

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The titles and credits are seen against the background of the dark waters of a smoothly rushing river. When the last credits have gone,

FADE IN:

LONG SHOT - A SECTION ALONG THE BANKS OF THE THAMES RIVER - DUSK

A row of old and dignified houses cluster irregularly in all shapes and sizes along the banks of the river. They are of early Victorian architecture; large trees and little gardens fringe the bank across the road. Lying opposite, is the Island, along triangle of young willows, the haunt of wild duck and heron and swan. Viewed in the half light of dusk, the carved reflections of the small trees is nearly like reflected palms. The far-off outline of factories against the sky has the appearance and mystery of mosques. The general set-up has a unique, incomparable character of its own. It's not like any other street, road, avenue, garden, or any other urban unit. A stranger coming here at night-time might be puzzled by this obscure corner of a large city, and he could easily imagine himself in some Oriental place, instead of on the actual borders of London County, six miles from Charing Cross.

AS THE CAMERA BEGINS TO MOVE IN CLOSER, we are aware of the peculiar lack of activity - no tugs go by, nothing stirs, and there is no one in sight. As CAMERA CONTINUES TO MOVE, IT ANGLES ITSELF so that it seems to concentrate on the river which rushes silently and smoothly into the black heart of London - hinting at dark, unnameable things, passion and death and furtive cruelties, and all that sense of secrecy and crime which clings to the river-side of great cities the world over.

AS THE CAMERA CONTINUES TO MOVE TO A CLOSER SHOT of the river, there is a feeling of expectancy and disaster - as if horrible things might be easily accomplished beside these dark waters, then hidden and condoned by the river, carried away to oblivion in the sea.

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CAMERA HOLDS MOMENTARILY; a few twigs and bits of refuse and scum go by. Suddenly a sodden, heavy mass of something floats into SHOT, half-submerged in the water. In the dim light we are unable to identify it.

THE CAMERA MOVES QUIETLY ALONG, FOLLOWING THE OBJECT. As it hits a brighter patch of water, we see that it is some animal. With dingy, light-colored fur, and bloated belly, it floats drowned and forgotten on the oily water. CAMERA HOLDS. As it begins to float out of SHOT, a woman's voice is heard overscene.

WOMAN
(overscene; with repugnance)
Disgusting!

CAMERA SWEEPS UP from the river to the bank. An elderly woman, in a dark dress of the 1890's stands looking down into the water. This is MRS. AMBROSE. Watering can in hand, and wearing a heavy, rather soiled apron, there is an almost pained expression on her face as she turns swiftly away. A man's voice is heard overscene.

MAN
(overscene)
What's the trouble, Mrs. Ambrose?

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal STEPHEN BYRNE. He is standing on the other side of a low stone wall which separates the small, intimate gardens. He is tall and dark, with a handsome, impressive face, but there is a feeling of basic weakness about him; an almost too-glib charm about the half-smile on his face. The moment Mrs. Ambrose sees him, she begins to chatter away in a typical, gossipy fashion. It is apparent that she knows Stephen quite well.

MRS. AMBROSE
It's that thing again, Stephen! It's just floated by again .... I'm sick of it! Why couldn't we live on a decent river?

STEPHEN
(amused)
You wouldn't want to live any place else, Mrs. Ambrose .... you know that ....

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MRS. AMBROSE
(rambling)
But Stephen, the authorities know that the tide coming and going causes the same unspeakable filth to wash back and forth, back and forth .... day in and day out ....

STEPHEN
Don't upset yourself, Mrs. Ambrose. It's due to sink any day now ....

MRS. AMBROSE
(complaining)
I've seen it as far up as Richmond, and as far down as London Bridge .... maybe if we signed a petition or something ....

STEPHEN
It's the price we pay for living on the river, I suppose ....

MRS AMBROSE
I can't imagine how you ever get inspiration from it, Stephen ....

STEPHEN
I love the river, in spite of everything .... it's people who should be blamed for the filth .... not the river .....

MRS AMBROSE
(sighing)
That's the sensible way of looking at it ....
(after a pause)
How's the story coming, Stephen?

STEPHEN
Not too good .... I seem to be stuck ....

They both look up at the sudden SOUND of voices. Someone is quarreling in a house near by. The voices sound quite close, but the words are not distinguishable - in the manner of people who quarrel in hurried, angry voices.

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MRS AMBROSE
(an old hand at eavesdropping)
It's the Harvey's again .... wouldn't you think they'd know by now that every sound can be heard out here?

STEPHEN
(quietly)
We all have our quarrels, Mrs. Ambrose.

Mrs. Ambrose looks at him for a moment without speaking. When she does, there is concern in her voice and she is almost motherly in a "I-know-this-is-none-of-my-business-BUT", fashion.

MRS AMBROSE
Stephen, I've known you for a long time now, and I feel free to give you a bit of advice ....
(Stephen grimaces, and it looks as if he's about to protest, but Mrs. Ambrose doesn't give him a chance)
There wouldn't be so many quarrels between you and Marjorie, if you'd stop that drinking. Oh, I'm not going to pretend that I don't eavesdrop .... it's a major sport for an old woman with nothing to do .... every quarrel you've had lately has been over the same thing .... drinking ....

STEPHEN
(not wishing to continue the conversation)
I've got to get back to work ....

MRS AMBROSE
All right, all right .... you'd rather I didn't talk about it .... but when I see a nice young couple not getting along, you can't blame me for wanting to say something ....
(pause)
but there now, I've said enough .... I'll change the subject .... are you and Marjorie going to the Whittakers tonight?

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STEPHEN
Yes. Marjorie's over at her mother's ....
(Mrs. Ambrose lifts her eyebrows)
Oh, not because of a quarrel .... she'll be back in a few hours ....

MRS AMBROSE
I didn't mean that, Stephen .... I thought she was at home ....

STEPHEN
No. She's been gone all day.

MRS AMBROSE
That's strange ....
(she looks up toward Stephen's house)
I thought I heard someone upstairs there a while ago ....

STEPHEN
It must have been me.

MRS AMBROSE
No. I saw you working in the garden .... you were out here ....

STEPHEN
Oh. I remember now. It's the new maid ....
(he turns and looks up at the window back of him)
She's up there bathing ....

MRS AMBROSE
(surprised)
Bathing?

STEPHEN
Yes. Something's wrong with the servant's bath ... she asked Marjorie's permission to use the upstairs one ....

MRS AMBROSE
Oh, I see. And speaking of bathing, I've been puttering in this garden long enough. I must go in and brush up for the party.

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STEPHEN
I thought they weren't expecting us till nine ....

MRS AMBROSE
They're not. But at my age it takes hours to pull one's self together ....
(she turns and starts off)
Until later, then ... and think over what I've told you, Stephen ....

Stephen doesn't reply as Mrs. Ambrose turns and goes into the house. He looks after her a moment thoughtfully, then he disappears into his own garden.

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN

There is a small table set up with writing equipment in one corner of the garden. He moves over to the table and he sits. For a moment it appears as if he's going to start working, but after a moment, he reaches down under the table and he brings out an almost-full bottle. He pours a stiff slug into a glass and he drinks down most of it. Picking up a pencil, he sits with a blank expression on his face as he stares down at the pad. Then, in the manner of a bored person, he begins to doodle.

CLOSE SHOT - THE PAD

Stephen's hand is sketching out a small border of trees. They are meticulously made, as if Stephen is doing everything in the world to keep from working. As the hand continues to sketch, we

DISSOLVE TO

CLOSE SHOT - THE SAME PAD

There are many trees on the pad now, but Stephen's hand is no longer sketching trees. He is sketching the larger figure of a woman's body. CAMERA HOLDS MOMENTARILY, then

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IT BEGINS TO PULL SLOWLY BACK. In so doing, it reveals the liquor bottle which we'd seen earlier. It is no longer nearly full, but almost empty. CAMERA CONTINUES BACK until IT REVEALS Stephen. An amused smile on his face, he sketches awhile, then he looks up at the house.

MED. SHOT - THE HOUSE (FROM STEPHEN'S ANGLE)

The house is dark excepting for a single lighted window, a woman's figure is seen behind the drawn shade. In a state of undress, we get a momentary glimpse of her before she leans down and out of sight.

CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

Amused, he continues to sketch.

CLOSE SHOT - THE FRONT END OF A BATH TUB

A woman's hand comes into SHOT, and reaching down through the water, she pulls the plug out; the water begins to swirl as it goes down the drain.

MED. SHOT - THE WINDOW

It is blank for a moment, then the silhouette of the woman appears again. She reaches for a robe which she begins to put over her nude body.

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN

He is no longer sketching as he stares up at the window.

MED. SHOT - THE WINDOW

The woman having placed her robe on, she moves out of the window, and after a moment the light goes out and the window is dark.

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN

He looks up a moment longer, then he pours himself the last drink out of the bottle. Gulping it down, he rises from the table. He hesitates as we HEAR the SOUND of water tumbling down pipes. Stephen listens, then he moves in the direction of the sound. CAMERA MOVES WITH HIM as he goes. When he reaches the house, he looks down at an outside pipe. The soft gurgling of water is HEARD again. He looks for a moment at the upper floor, then he slowly starts for the house. His walk is slightly unsteady as he goes up the steps.

INTERIOR HOUSE

FULL SHOT - ENTRANCE HALLWAY

It is nicely-furnished in the traditional Victorian manner. An ornate hat stand is against one wall, and there is a massive mirror on it. Stephen enters. As he passes the mirror, he catches a glimpse of his face. He stops and he looks at himself.

MED. SHOT - THE MIRROR (STEPHEN REFLECTED IN IT)

He stares at himself rather blankly, then he almost subconsciously brushes his hair back with one hand, and he turns away.

FULL SHOT - THE HALLWAY

Stephen goes to the foot of the stairs and he looks up. The house is strangely quiet. After a moment a CREAKING is heard as someone opens a door.

MED. LONG SHOT - THE STAIRS (FROM STEPHEN'S ANGLE LOOKING UP)

As we hear the SOUND of a door opening, we simultaneously see a patch of light forming on a wall at the top of the stairs. A woman's figure is silhouetted on the lighted area. The door closes and the top of the stairs is lost in shadows again. After a moment the SOUND of footsteps

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is heard. Then a woman's foot comes slowly into view. It seems peculiarly high-lighted in the shadows. It's a small foot, very white, with no stocking, and wearing a bedroom slipper. As the foot continues down, we see a woman's leg; it is very shapely, and whatever clothing she wears is obviously short, for the full leg is revealed up to the knee.

MED. LONG SHOT - STEPHEN (FROM THE TOP OF THE STAIRS LOOKING DOWN)

There is an intense look on his face as he stares up; he seems white and drawn against the dark background.

MED. LONG SHOT - THE STAIRS (FROM STEPHEN'S ANGLE LOOKING UP - ~~ANOTHER ANGLE~~)

The upper part of the woman's body is lost in shadows. Only her legs seem white and high-lighted and shapely against the dark covering of the stairs. She seems to hesitate.

CLOSE SHOT - THE WOMAN'S NECK

Her hands go up to her wrapper and she draws the collar closer about her neck.

MED. SHOT - THE STAIRS (FROM STEPHEN'S ANGLE LOOKING UP)

The woman continues down the stairs. As she draws closer, we are able to see her by the light which comes through the front door from the outside. This is EMILY GAUNT, the new maid. She is a handsome, well-proportioned young lady in her twenties. There is a fragile look about her and she seems quite vulnerable. Her eyes, like her hair, are very dark brown. There is the soft, rosy and fresh look about her of one who has just stepped out of her bath. The frilly kimono she wears is much too tight for her, and it is far from meeting where it should.

CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

He stares up without speaking.

MED. SHOT - EMILY GAUNT

Her eyes squint in an effort to see who is below. She stands for a moment looking down, then she delicately takes her kimono and she wraps it around her more tightly - in doing so, she reveals her figure even more. She stands motionless for a moment, and then Stephen is heard overscene. He speaks in a quiet, intimate voice.

STEPHEN
Hello, Emily ....

EMILY
(coyly)
Oh, Mr. Byrne .... you frightened me ....

CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

He is smiling up at her.

STEPHEN
Did I?

MED. SHOT - EMILY

She is fully aware of her physical charm as she comes slowly down the stairs.

EMILY
I thought you were out in the garden working ....

STEPHEN
(o.s.)
Did you?

EMILY
(explaining)
Mrs. Byrne told me I could use the bath upstairs ....

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN

He steps in closer to the foot of the stairs, before replying.

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STEPHEN
Yes, I know ....
(pause)
Did you have a nice bath, Emily?

EMILY
Yes, I did, Mr. Byrne ....

MED. TWO SHOT

Emily has almost reached the foot of the stairs, but Stephen steps forward, blocking them. Emily continues down and when she is quite close, and she sees he is not going to move, she stops.

CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

He stares directly into Emily's eyes without moving.

CLOSE SHOT - EMILY

Her coquettish air is rapidly leaving her; in the manner of a young girl who's gotten in a little deeper than she'd planned. There is the first trace of fear in her eyes.

MED. TWO SHOT

They stand silently for a moment, then Emily speaks in a small voice.

EMILY
Would you please let me by, Mr. Byrne?

STEPHEN
(pleasantly)
Of course ....

Stephen steps to one side, but not quite far enough so that Emily can pass without touching him. When she moves, she brushes against him. The moment she does so, Stephen

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takes her in his arms and he kisses her firmly and passionately on the mouth. Surprised, for a moment Emily begins to submit, but as his arms go around her, pulling him to her desperately, she begins to struggle.

EMILY
Don't!

STEPHEN
(thickly)
Emily ....

EMILY
Don't, Mr. Byrne ....
(struggling)
You're hurting me .... you've been drinking ....

Emily suddenly pulls away from him, but as she does so, he makes a sudden move for her and her kimono is partially torn from her shoulder. Emily is really frightened; it's more than she's bargained for.

EMILY
Let me go!
(her voice rising)
Stop it!

STEPHEN
(suddenly afraid they'll be overheard)
Quiet! Do you want the whole neighborhood to hear you?

EMILY
(hysterically)
I don't care ... let me go!
(she starts to scream again, but Stephen's hand closes roughly over her mouth)

STEPHEN
I'm not going to hurt you ....
(suddenly very angry)
Now, shut up!

Both of Emily's arms go up to Stephen's hand which is over her mouth. But his grasp is firm and she is unable

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to disentangle herself. It appears as if she is having trouble breathing. She becomes frantic now and with sudden strength, she tears his hand from her mouth. At the same moment she lets out a high, shrill scream. But it is stopped immediately as Stephen's hands go around her throat.

STEPHEN
(his face contorted with anger)
You stupid little fool!

Emily's eyes are wide with terror. It is apparent that if he lets go of her, she'll continue screaming. She struggles and scratches, but it's no good, his hands go tighter around her throat.

STEPHEN
(through clenched teeth)
If you'd pull yourself together, I'd let you go ....

Emily's hysteria mounts as the pressure in Stephen's fingers continues. Suddenly Stephen's head turns and he looks back over his shoulder.

MED. SHOT - THROUGH A WINDOW (FROM STEPHEN'S ANGLE)

Mrs. Ambrose can be seen in the distance. She's in her garden picking up some forgotten gardening equipment. Emily's struggling and gasping can be heard overscene.

CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

A frightened expression on his face, he stares out the window. He is not looking at Emily.

STEPHEN
(whispering hoarsely)
She's out there ... she'll hear us ...

MED. SHOT - MRS. AMBROSE

She picks up several gardening tools, brushing the dirt from them. Suddenly she stops and she looks up - a quizzical expression on her face. Her head goes to one side as if she's heard something.

MED. TWO SHOT - EMILY AND STEPHEN

Stephen, turned away from Emily, is staring out the

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window. He is so concerned with the fact that Mrs. Ambrose might be hearing them, he is no longer aware of what he is doing to Emily. The latter's eyes are really bulging now, and her strength seems to be leaving her.

STEPHEN
(staring out the window)
She'll have it all over the neighborhood ....

MED. SHOT - MRS. AMBROSE

She hesitates a moment longer, then shrugging her shoulders as if she's not quite sure she's heard anything, she continues to pick up her tools. She starts for the house.

MED. TWO SHOT - EMILY AND STEPHEN

Stephen turns from the window to Emily who has stopped struggling.

STEPHEN
That's better .... all we needed was to have that old gossip hear us ....
(his hands come away from Emily's throat)

MED. LONG SHOT - EMILY AND STEPHEN (FROM TOP OF THE STAIRS LOOKING DOWN)

The moment Stephen's hands leave Emily, she falls heavily against him. Then she slithers down to the floor. Amazed, Stephen looks down at her.

MED. SHOT - EMILY ON FLOOR (FROM STEPHEN"S ANGLE LOOKING DOWN)

Her body lays limp, face downwards, and she is perfectly still. CAMERA HOLDS on her a moment, then IT SWEEPS up to a

VERY CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN (FROM FLOOR LOOKING UP)

Unable to believe his eyes, he stares down at her.

STEPHEN
(low voice)
Emily ....

MED. CLOSE SHOT - THE TWO

Stephen falls to his knees, and with a quick, nervous gesture, he turns her over on her back.

CLOSE SHOT - EMILY

Her face which had seemed youthful and appealing in life, already seems bloated and disgusting.

MED. CLOSE TWO SHOT

Terrified, Stephen begins to shake her senselessly.

STEPHEN
Emily .... don't try to frighten me ...
(he stops shaking her and he looks closely at her face)
Emily .... come out of it!
(his head goes to her breast and he places his ear against her heart; after a moment)
Good God!

Just as he speaks, a bell is heard JANGLING. It's a sharp, startling SOUND and it seems quite loud. Stephen looks up with a start.

MED. SHOT - THE FRONT DOOR (FROM STEPHEN'S ANGLE)

Someone stands at the front door.

FULL SHOT - THE FRONT ENTRANCE HALLWAY (TO INCLUDE STEPHEN AND EMILY ON THE FLOOR AND THE PERSON AT THE FRONT DOOR)

There is a long pause during which there is no sound. Frozen, Stephen stares up at the door. After a moment, there is another LOUD RING. Stephen is motionless; the person at the door waits a moment, then he moves closer to the door as if in an effort to peer through the frosted glass. Because of the construction of the door, the person outside is unable to see anything that is below the middle of the door. Stephen continues to crouch over Emily's body. The person at the door RINGS AGAIN. Moving on all fours, Stephen crawls away from Emily and into an open doorway leading off from the hall. He rises from his crouched position to a standing one. Unseen by the person at the front door, he stands waiting. There is one more RING.

MED. SHOT - FRONT DOOR (FROM STEPHEN'S ANGLE)

In this SHOT we can plainly see that the person standing there is a man. He makes one more attempt to peer through the frosted glass, then he turns and leaves. He goes down the steps, looks to the right and left, then he disappears.

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN

Relieved, Stephen hesitates a moment before moving. Then sure that the visitor has gone, he moves cautiously over to Emily's body, and he lifts her into his arms. There is a look of panic in his eyes as if he doesn't know what to do. He starts for the stairs; half way up, he comes down again and he goes down the corridor. He heads for a door through which we can see the back garden.

EXTERIOR HOUSE

FULL SHOT - THE GARDEN

It is quite dark now, and Stephen stands just inside the doorway, looking about nervously. He turns in the direction of Mrs. Ambrose's house.

MED. SHOT - MRS. AMBROSE'S HOUSE

Mrs. Ambrose can be seen in the lighted lower windows as she moves about the house.

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN

Satisfied that he'll not be seen by Mrs. Ambrose,he goes down the steps and across the garden toward the river. He has not gone far, however, when a man's voice is heard o.s.

MAN
Stephen!

CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

Shocked and frightened, he stops in his tracks.

FULL SHOT - THE GARDEN

Emily still in his arms, Stephen turns swiftly as he sees JOHN BYRNE, his brother, standing just inside a gate which leads from the street. John is not handsome, but he has a strong, impressive face which gives one the feeling of sympathy and confidence. He is not as intellectual looking as Stephen, but there is a kind of moral refinement in his adequate jaw and his steady grey eyes. His face is pale from too much office work, and there is a slight stoop about his shoulders. He does not resemble Stephen either in looks or in personality. When he speaks, his voice is soft and unassuming, and his mouth is humorous but firm.

JOHN
(continued)
Stephen! What's happened?

STEPHEN
There's been an accident ....

JOHN
An accident?

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STEPHEN
Yes. Where'd you come from?

JOHN
I rang at the front door ....
no one answered. I thought I'd
find you out here ....

STEPHEN
It's the new maid, Emily ....
she fell ....

JOHN
Have you called a doctor?

STEPHEN
No.

JOHN
Where are you taking her?

STEPHEN
I ....
(at a loss)
I ....
(he stops)

JOHN
Stephen, what's the matter with you?

Stephen stands staring at him without reply. John moves closer to him.

STEPHEN
(a whine in his voice)
They'll blame me ....
They'll say I did it ....

JOHN
Here, let me look at her ....

STEPHEN
(pulling violently away from him)
No .... there's nothing you can do. She
fell down the stairs .... she hit her
head .... they'll blame me ....

JOHN
Why should anyone blame you?

STEPHEN
I was playing the fool .. pretending I was
going to kiss her .. the little fool thought
I meant it ....
(speaking incoherently; very rapidly)
She got frightened .. then something happened.
I don't know what exactly ... she bumped her
head .... they'll blame me ....

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JOHN
(sternly)
Stop it, Stephen! Here, let me look at her ....

Stephen starts to pull away again, but John moves quickly and he takes a firm hold of his arm.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN, EMILY AND JOHN

John looks closely at Emily. A shocked look comes over his face and he places his hand on her arm.

JOHN
(slowly)
Stephen .... do you realize .... she's dead?

Stephen looks at him, then he nods his head in a dazed manner.

JOHN
Have you called the police?

STEPHEN
No.

JOHN
Why not?

STEPHEN
(frantically)
You're my brother, John ....

JOHN
That has nothing to do with it. This girl's dead. The police should be notified.

STEPHEN
(quickly)
No!

JOHN
(he moves in closer and he looks at Emily)
Stephen .... she didn't fall ....

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STEPHEN
Yes she did! I saw her.....

JOHN
(quietly; almost to himself)
She was strangled ....

STEPHEN
(hysterically; rapidly)
It was an accident, John ... it happened so quickly .... I scarcely touched her .... I hardly put my hands to her throat to prevent her screaming .... and before I knew it, she was dead .... you don't know how easy it is to strangle a person, John .... you don't know ....

John turns and he starts for the house.

STEPHEN
Wait! Where are you going?

JOHN
For the police.

STEPHEN
You can't! You can't do that to me.

JOHN
(turning)
I've gotten you out of a lot of nasty scrapes, Stephen .... but this is murder ....

STEPHEN
You've always helped me, John .... you've got to help me now ....

Stephen suddenly drops to the ground and he allows Emily to fall out of his arms. He is sobbing, and his speech is mumbled and incoherent.

STEPHEN
You can't let me down now, John .... you can't do that to your own brother ....

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John turns and starts for the house, but he doesn't get far. His pace slows, and he comes back. As he stands looking down at Stephen, we

SLOWLY DISSOLVE TO:

FULL SHOT - BASEMENT OF BYRNE'S HOME

At first the room is pitch black, but after a moment, someone opens a door at the head of a flight of stairs. As the light pours in from the upper floor, we see that the basement is used as a storage room for odds and ends of discarded furniture, packing boxes, trunks, etc. A figure comes down the stairs. AS THE CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSER, we see that it is Stephen. He has pulled himself together now, but there is still a frantic look about him as he strikes a match and he lights a candle which he carries. He peers about the room anxiously as though he were searching for something. As he moves, the light from the candle throws long, grotesque shadows against the wall. Something in the corner catches his attention, and he holds the candle higher for a better view.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - A LARGE PACKING BOX

Because of the angle it is seen from, it appears not unlike a coffin - long and narrow. CAMERA HOLDS ON IT, as the light from Stephen's candle comes closer.

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN

He looks down at the box a moment, then placing the flickering candle to one side, he begins to lift the top off the box. As he does so, there is the LOUD, STARTLING NOISE of the boards being torn loose from the nails. Stephen hesitates, and he looks up expectantly toward the stairs. When no one appears, he begins to lift objects covered with packing straw out of the box, moving hurriedly. When most of the objects are out, a sudden shadow falls across the box. Stephen looks up with a start.

MED. SHOT - JOHN (FROM STEPHEN'S ANGLE LOOKING UP)

There is a harassed look on John's face as he looks down at his brother without speaking.

STEPHEN
(whispering)
You were to stay up there with her ....

JOHN
(quietly)
I'm not going through with it, Stephen ....

There is a pause during which Stephen rises from the floor into SHOT.

STEPHEN
You're not going to help me?

JOHN
No.

STEPHEN
What are you going to do?

JOHN
I'm going to the police ... you say it was an accident ... we'll tell them exactly how it happened ....

STEPHEN
(frightened)
They'll never believe me .... why, even you don't believe me ....

John looks at him without replying.

STEPHEN
(continued)
Do you?

JOHN
I don't know what to believe .... all of your life, you've rationalized ....

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STEPHEN
(interrupting)
I thought you cared about Marjorie and me .... if not for me, maybe for her sake then ....

JOHN
I know Marjorie well enough that she wouldn't want us to do this ....

STEPHEN
(after a pause)
Did you know Marjorie went into town to the Doctor's today?

JOHN
(puzzled)
No ....

STEPHEN
She's going to have a baby ....
(there is a long pause during which the two look at one another)
Now don't you see why I have to get out of this?

Dazed, John nods his head without speaking.

STEPHEN
Will you help me now?

JOHN
(whispering; almost to himself)
Yes .... yes, I suppose I must ....

FULL SHOT - THE BASEMENT

Stephen goes quickly back to the box which he was unpacking.

JOHN
(looking about him helplessly)
Not the box, Stephen .... there must be something better than that ....

(CONTINUED

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
(looking up)
But,what? We haven't time ....
Marjorie will be home in less than
an hour ....

John picks up the candle, and he lifts it high, looking about the basement. CAMERA MOVES WITH HIM as he crosses the basement.

MED. SHOT - JOHN

He approaches a long sack which hangs against a wall. He stands looking at it. Stephen comes into SHOT.

STEPHEN
(eagerly)
That's it, John! An old wood sack ....
it'll be large enough .....

Stephen goes quickly to the sack and he takes it down; he goes about his task with a certain eagerness and a complete lack of gloom - almost as if he were engaged in an exciting escapade of some kind. His concern and seriousness of a few moments before have disappeared. John watches him with troubled eyes. Stephen turns the bag upside down and he begins to spill out its contents. CAMERA PANS DOWN to the mouth of the sack as the contents spill out; it is filled with bottles, waste paper, and discarded bits of domestic refuse. CAMERA HOLDS for a moment, then we

DISSOLVE TO

CLOSE SHOT - THE SACK (SAME ANGLE AS PREVIOUS SHOT)

It is quite dark, but we are able to see a pair of hands as they tie a cord which is threaded through a circle of ragged holes at the mouth of the sack. AS CAMERA PULLS BACK, IT REVEALS THAT there is a bulky object inside the sack now; the hands continue to tie the sack securely. CAMERA CONTINUES BACK TO REVEAL that we are in the garden; it is Stephen who ties the sack as John stands watching.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
(almost pleased with himself)
There! Now we'll take it to the boat ....
(he notices the troubled expression in John's eyes)
It'll soon be over with, John .... she'll soon be in the river and it'll all be forgotten ....

JOHN
(shocked)
Forgotten?

STEPHEN
I mean for the time being, anyway .....

JOHN
But the tide will throw it up again in the morning ....

STEPHEN
We'll weight it .... we'll take it way out, where it'll stay sunk .... come on, help me ....
(when John makes no move to help)
Come on, don't lose your nerve now ....

Reluctantly, John begins to bend down, when Mrs. Ambrose is heard calling overscene.

MRS AMBROSE
(calling overscene)
Stephen! .... Stephen! Is that you out there?

A quick, agonized look on his face, Stephen rises to his feet like a shot.

STEPHEN
(calling)
Yes, Mrs. Ambrose ....

FULL SHOT - THE GARDEN

Stephen rushes toward the wall which separates his garden from that of Mrs. Ambrose. Confused, John stands near the sack waiting.

FULL SHOT - MRS. AMBROSE'S GARDEN

The light from a half-moon picks out Mrs. Ambrose's figure as she moves across the garden. The glittering waters of the river can be seen in the background. As Stephen is seen on his side of the wall, Mrs. Ambrose starts toward him.

MRS AMBROSE
I thought I heard voice out here ....
(attempting to peer through the darkness)
Marjorie there?

STEPHEN
No .... no, she hasn't come home yet ....

MRS AMBROSE
(chattering as she comes closer)
Wanted to ask her what she was going to wear ....
(rambling)
Thought of my jet black .... still and all, it's never very dressy at the Whittaker's ....
(she has reached the wall now)
Whom where you talking to, Stephen?

STEPHEN
My brother ....
(uneasily glancing over his shoulder)
He's come to go with us tonight .... we were waiting for Marjorie ....

MRS AMBROSE
(pleased)
Oh, it's John! How is he?

STEPHEN
(calling)
John .... it's Mrs. Ambrose ....

MED. CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He is attempting to pull the sack out from the open into

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

a row of bushes. He is having difficulty, for the sack is bulky and awkward to manage.

JOHN
(as he struggles)
Be with you in a moment, Mrs. Ambrose ....

MED. SHOT - MRS. AMBROSE AND STEPHEN

It seems as if she's going to peer over the wall.

MRS AMBROSE
(pleasantly)
Where is he .... haven't seen the boy in weeks ....

STEPHEN
(quickly)
He'll be here in a moment ....

As she rises up on her tip toes, John is suddenly seen on the other side of the wall.

JOHN
Hello, Mrs. Ambrose. How have you been?

MRS AMBROSE
Just fine, John .... my, I never see you anymore .... you're looking rather pale .... too much work?

JOHN
(weakly)
I suppose so ....

MRS AMBROSE
I've been meaning to stop by the store for days .... have you the new Percy Lawler novel?

JOHN
Yes, yes .... we have ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MRS AMBROSE
Save me a copy, will you?
(laughing)
I hear it's very racy ....

STEPHEN
(interrupting; turning toward the house)
I think I hear Marjorie now .... she must be back from her mother's .... she'll wonder where we are .... will you pardon us, Mrs. Ambrose?

MRS. AMBROSE
Of course .... tell her to come over if she has a moment, will you, Stephen?

STEPHEN
Yes. I'll do that.
(turning to his brother)
Come on, John .... we'd better be going in ....

JOHN
Yes ....

MRS AMBROSE
Until later, John .... now don't go ignoring me at the party .... there are things I want to talk to you about ....

JOHN
All right, Mrs. Ambrose ....

Mrs. Ambrose turns and starts for the house. John and Stephen disappear into the latter's garden.

MED. TWO SHOT - JOHN AND STEPHEN

They stand just to one side of the wall as they watch Mrs. Ambrose go.

CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

A grave expression on his face, he studies Stephen.

STEPHEN
(o.s.; whispering)
It's all right, she's gone in the house ....

JOHN
I thought you said Marjorie had gone to the doctor's today ....

MED. CLOSE SHOT - THE TWO

It's not difficult to see that Stephen has slipped up on his stories.

STEPHEN
She did.

JOHN
You told Mrs. Ambrose she was at her mother's.

STEPHEN
(glibly)
She went both places.

JOHN
Her mother lives in the country.

STEPHEN
(angrily)
Stop quibbling! I've got a career to think of. That's the important thing. Besides the scandal would ruin all of us .... there are others to be considered now besides this dead servant girl ....

JOHN
(with irony)
You used to refer to her as "Emily" .... now she's only "a dead servant girl" ....

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
(pleading)
Don't be like that, John ....
hanging on my every word ....
can't you understand how I feel?
If I could undo what's happened ....
if I could go back .... but I can't.
I've got to think of the living
now .... my wife, my child .....

JOHN
(grimly)
All you're thinking of is yourself.

STEPHEN
(angrily)
What do you want me to do? Go
to the police? You're the only one
who knows anything .... you'd have
to testify against me ... think of
what a rotten mess that would be!
Be realistic, John .... the girl's
dead .... nothing will bring her
back .... but your helping me now
will mean life for all of us ....

JOHN
Whatkind of a life can we have with
something like that on our minds?

STEPHEN
Don't you see it's been a lesson to
me? I know I've been foolish. I've
been drinking too much .... but now
I'll change. I promise you I will.
Maybe I can even do the writing you
thought me capable of once ....

John looks at him a long time before replying.

JOHN
(sighing hopelessly)
All right, Stephen .... all right.
You've talked me into this too ....
Just like you've done thousands of
times before ....
(pause during which he
looks down at the wood
sack)

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (cont'd)
.... and cold-blooded as it may seem ... there are others to be considered ....

CAMERA BEGINS TO PAN DOWN VERY SLOWLY as he is heard o.s.

JOHN
(continued; o.s.)
.... and there's nothing we can do for poor Emily now ....

CAMERA HAS PANNED DOWN to

VERY CLOSE SHOT - THE BUSHES

Because of the manner in which the sack is pushed back into the bushes, it is hardly visible. Patches of moonlight which filter through the foliage give it an eerie, almost life-like appearance. CAMERA HOLDS FOR A MOMENT, then

DISSOLVE TO:

LONG SHOT - THE RIVER

It is dark and silent. The SOUND of a foghorn is heard in the distance, but there are no tugs visible. The river is dark only momentarily, however, because of some clouds which cover the moon; gradually, as the clouds begin to shift, we see a small row boat in the middle of the river.

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN AND JOHN IN ROW BOAT

Stephen is rowing rhythmically, and the boat is moving at a good pace. John, his face wet with perspiration, looks uneasily to the right and left. As the clouds continue to clear from the face of the moon, both men become visible. Stephen glances up irritably.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
(through clenched teeth)
That filthy moon ....

JOHN
Don't you think we've gone far enough?

STEPHEN
Yes .... have you tied the anchor to the sack?

JOHN
(almost inaudibly)
Yes ....

Stephen stops rowing.

STEPHEN
This should do it ....
(grimly)
She won't wash up from here ....
(again we see the peculiar look of anticipation on Stephen's face; his manner seems to have no correlation with the nature of the task he performs)
I suppose I should put the anchor end over first.....
(when John doesn't reply, Stephen looks up to find that he is staring at something off)
What's the matter?

JOHN
I never realized we were so close to a bridge ....

MED. LONG SHOT - A BRIDGE

It is quite dark again, and because of the fact that the bridge itself can not be seen, there is the illusion of a lighted vehicle of some kind swimming through space. As it approaches the end of the bridge, the figure of a man can be seen as he looks out over the water.

MED. TWO SHOT - STEPHEN AND JOHN

JOHN
He might be watching us ....

STEPHEN
Better wait ....

MED. SHOT - MAN ON BRIDGE

Obviously out for a stroll, there is a casual look on his face as he glances to the right and left. He apparently does not see the row boat. CAMERA HOLDS on him for a moment, then shadows fall across his face. He looks up at the moon.

MED. SHOT - THE MOON

It is moving behind clouds again. CAMERA HOLDS as several heavy clouds completely obscure it.

MED. SHOT - JOHN AND STEPHEN

It is quite dark, but we can see the two figures working frantically against time.

STEPHEN
(hurriedly)
It's all right. He didn't see us ... Quick ... if we don't get her over now, we never will .... lift her while the moon's hidden .... first the anchor ....

One of the figures is seen as he stoops down for the anchor.

CLOSE SHOT - THE SIDE OF THE BOAT

The heavy anchor is seen dimly as it goes over the side of the boat. A length of rope is then seen ; after that the shaggy end of the sack slithers over. Just as the sack disappears into the black water, the moon comes out

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(CONTINUED)

again and the slowly expanding circle of water is clearly seen in the moonlight. The few bubbles which float to the surface are high-lighted. CAMERA HOLDS on the circle of water, AS IT DOES SO, there is the illusion of the circle spinning. CAMERA HOLDS as we

DISSOLVE INTO:

CLOSE SHOT - A REVOLVING GRAPHOPHONE RECORD

As the circling water has turned into a spinning graphophone record, the tinny MUSIC of an early sound instrument is heard overscene. (CHECK RESEARCH) The music is the typical waltz tune of the period, THE MERRY WIDOW WALTZ, or something similar. CAMERA HOLDS, THEN IT BEGINS TO PULL SLOWLY BACK to a

FULL SHOT - INT. WHITTAKER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It is a typical drawing room of the period cluttered with heavy, ornate furniture, bric-a-brac, etc. Although cramped for space, everything has been shifted about; the rug has been pulled back and there are several couples dancing. The general state of the room is one which gives the impression that the party which might have started out as a simple gathering, has turned into an occasion for impromptu dancing. The SOUND of not-too-lively party chatter comes overscene, but it is topped by the tinny graphophone record beating out THE MERRY WIDOW WALTZ. The gathering has the over-all imprint of a party where guests have been invited simply because they happen to live in the same neighborhood, and not because their assemblage will necessarily mean the occasion for merry-making. Seated on the chairs lined against one wall are Mrs. Ambrose and John Byrne. The latter is seated beside a young lady whom we shall identify later.

MED.MOVING SHOT - STEPHEN AND MARJORIE

Stephen is dancing with his wife, MARJORIE; she is small and pert in a party dress of the period, and she is charming and attractive without being beautiful. As the other women dancers look over at Stephen with admiring

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(CONTINUED)

glances, we can readily see that although Stephen's charms are many, his wife, Marjorie, is not being taken in by them at the moment. There is a serious expression on her face in contrast to Stephen's smiling one.

STEPHEN
(after a pause; the smile not leaving his face)
Have I done something wrong?

MARJORIE
(exasperated)
Oh, Stephen ....

STEPHEN
But you know you love to dance, and if I hadn't suggested it, and pulled the furniture around ....

MARJORIE
(evenly)
And had about four drinks too many ....

STEPHEN
If I have to go through these dull evenings, I'm going to at least get some pleasure from them ....

MARJORIE
Why do you accept these invitations?

STEPHEN
It's neighborly ....

MARJORIE
And you can be the social lion .... the center of attention ....

STEPHEN
(quite grim, but attempting to hide it by smiling for the benefit of the other dancers)
Quit nagging me, will you?

CUT TO:

MED. SHOT - JOHN AND MURIEL TARRANT

MURIEL TARRANT is in her early twenties, she is beautiful and blonde. From the expression in her eyes we can see that she is envying the dancers; her head sways slightly as she keeps time with the music. John, however, is very serious as he looks toward the dancers. CAMERA PULLS BACK SLIGHTLY to include Mrs. Ambrose. The latter is all done up in her jet black and her best party manner. After a moment she turns and speaks to John and Muriel.

MRS AMBROSE
Why aren't you two dancing?

MURIEL
John doesn't feel he knows how well enough, Mrs. Ambrose.

MRS AMBROSE
Nonsense ....
(good-naturedly to John)
Have a whack at it, John .... stumble away .... it'll be good for you ....

John turns to her and smiles.

JOHN
No, thanks, Mrs. Ambrose.

MRS AMBROSE
Look at your brother over there .... you don't catch him sitting back like an old man ....

John rises.

JOHN
Pardon me. I'll be back ....
(he goes out of SHOT)

MURIEL
(sighing, as she looks after him)
How can brothers be so different?

MRS AMBROSE
Ever since they were little tikes it's been like that .... Johnny, always so serious and dependable .... Stephen always up to mischief ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MURIEL
Wish I could see John let go just once ....

CUT TO:

MED. TWO SHOT - STEPHEN AND MARJORIE (MOVING SHOT)

The two are still dancing. John can be seen in a doorway in the background as he watches them. After a moment, he catches Stephen's eye, and he attempts to signal him. Although Stephen is aware of it, he maneuvers himself into such a position that his back is to his brother. When Marjorie sees John, she speaks.

MARJORIE
John's signaling us, Stephen ....

STEPHEN
(irritably)
He sees we're dancing ....

MARJORIE
You've been avoiding him all evening ... what's the matter?

STEPHEN
Nothing's the matter.

MARJORIE
He seems so depressed.

STEPHEN
Have you ever seen him when he wasn't?

MARJORIE
(coldly)
Yes, I have ....
(she abruptly stops dancing)
I'm going to see what he wants ....

Reluctantly, Stephen follows her.

MED. SHOT - JOHN (WITH MARJORIE AND STEPHEN APPROACHING)

MARJORIE
(smiling, as she approaches)
Don't tell me you want to cut in on us, John ....

JOHN
Not a chance .... having a nice time?

MARJORIE
Not very. If Stephen hadn't suggested dancing, we could have left by now ....

STEPHEN
(coming up to them)
You two certainly like to pick on me ....

MARJORIE
(smiling, but meaning it)
You're always such a good subject, Stephen ....

JOHN
If you don't mind, Marjorie, I'd like to see Stephen alone for a few minutes .....

MARJORIE
Not at all. I'll go over and talk to Muriel ....
(she goes out of SHOT)

John opens a door back of him and he goes out onto a terrace. Stephen hesitates, then he follows.

MED. SHOT - ON TERRACE (RIVER IN B.G.)

The sky is clear and the moonlight glitters brightly on the river in the b.g. John closes the door back of them carefully before speaking.

JOHN
What's the purpose of all this, Stephen .... this dancing ... this drinking .....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
Don't you see what I'm trying to do?

JOHN
No. All I know is that only a few hours ago a girl was murdered ....

STEPHEN
(anxiously)
Quiet!

JOHN
Then tell me what this is all about ....

STEPHEN
Don't you see? If anything ever comes out, people will remember that we were here at the party .... acting in a normal manner .... no one will believe that we could possibly have had anything to do with it ....

JOHN
I think it's disgraceful ....

STEPHEN
Do you think I'm enjoying it any more than you are ? If it weren't for the fact that I was protecting us ....

JOHN
Us?

STEPHEN
(angry; almost without thinking)
Yes! You helped me get rid of her, didn't you? John, in spite of everything .... to the police, you're .... well, you're an accomplice ....

(stunned, John looks at him without replying)

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN (cont'd)
I'm sorry I had to remind you of that ....
(quickly opening the door)
I'm going to have another drink ...
I need it ....

Before John can stop him, Stephen has disappeared into the house. John starts after him, but then he changes his mind, and he turns to look out over the river.

MED. LONG SHOT - THE RIVER (FROM JOHN'S ANGLE)

A few tugs are seen as they move quietly along the river. A foghorn is heard in the b.g. It seems serene and peaceful. CAMERA HOLDS and we

DISSOLVE TO:

VERY CLOSE SHOT - A MAN'S HAND

The hand is holding a glass of liquid. It is quite unsteady, and some of the liquid is slopping over the brim. CAMERA HOLDS and just when it looks as though the person holding the glass is about to lift it and drink, a woman's hand comes into SHOT and it takes the glass. CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal Stephen and Marjorie. Marjorie is in the process of taking the glass from him. Stephen is quite drunk and in an irritable mood.

STEPHEN
(thickly)
What's the matter with you?

MARJORIE
You've had enough, Stephen ....
we're going home.....

STEPHEN
Don't be such a kill joy ....

MARJORIE
Everyone's gone, come on ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

At this moment, MRS. WHITTAKER comes into SHOT. She is a pleasant-looking elderly woman, and from the manner in which she speaks to Stephen, it's obvious that she's one of his more ardent admirers.

MRS. WHITTAKER
Now, Marjorie, let him stay if he likes .... the longer you stay, the more successful my party ....

MARJORIE
Really, Mrs. Whittaker, it's very late ....

MRS WHITTAKER
(to Stephen)
You writers have to relax sometime, don't you, Stephen?

STEPHEN
Of course, Mrs. Whittaker ....

MRS WHITTAKER
Do you know the whole time you were gone today, Marjorie, poor Stephen sat out there in the garden struggling over his work ....

MARJORIE
I know, but .....

MRS WHITTAKER
Come now, have one last drink .... then you can help me put the lights out and close up ....

Marjorie sighs and gives in. Stephen, smiling over his victory, takes up the glass which Marjorie had taken away from him, and he begins to drink again. As Mrs. Whittaker fusses with some glasses at a table nearby, we

DISSOLVE TO:

MED. LONG SHOT - A STREET

The houses we see are all dark excepting for one of them. A door in the lighted house opens and a shaft of light comes into the street.

MED. SHOT - AT DOOR

Mrs. Whittaker is at the door saying good night to Marjorie and Stephen. The latter is quite drunk now.

STEPHEN
(thickly)
Wonderful party .... wonderful ....

MRS. WHITTAKER
(placing her arm around him affectionately)
Thank you, Stephen .... if it was a success, you were responsible .... the dancing was a beaut ful idea ....

STEPHEN
(triumphantly to Marjorie)
See?

MARJORIE
Come on, Stephen .... it's chilly for Mrs. Whittaker out here ....

STEPHEN
'Course ....
(he kisses Mrs. Whittaker on the cheek)

MRS WHITTAKER
(enjoying it)
Good night, dear boy .....
come see me soon ....

Marjorie is completely disgusted with Stephen as she's forced to help him down the steps. Mrs. Whittaker smiles tolerantly after them as they go down the street.

DISSOLVE TO:

MED. SHOT - THE BYRNE HOME

Marjorie and Stephen are seen as they approach. Marjorie is ominously quiet, and Stephen is whistling tunelessly as they approach the house. It is dark, but as they start up the walk, a light goes on inside. Then the front door opens and a thin, gaunt-looking woman is seen peering out into the night. This is MRS. BEACH, the cook.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MRS. BEACH
(anxiously)
That you, Mrs. Byrne?

MARJORIE
What is it, Mrs. Beach?

MRS BEACH
It's Emily ....

River page 44 dissolve

Inside Hallway:

gas light half down ... hear opening door - Keys...

VERY CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

At the mention of Emily's name, he seems to sober a little.

Mrs Beach comes

MED. SHOT - AT DOOR - THE THREE

MRS BEACH
She's gone ....

MARJORIE
Gone?

MRS BEACH
When I first got home, I thought maybe you'd sent her on an errand or something, ~~or that maybe she'd gone for a walk~~ .... but when she wasn't home at midnight, I knew something had happened ....

STEPHEN
(lightly)
Oh.. Probably with her parents .....

MRS BEACH
No, Mr. Byrne. She don't get on with them.....

MARJORIE
She would have told us if she were going home ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MRS BEACH
Thing that worries me is that she didn't even take her coat ... fact is, none of her clothes are missing that I can see.

MARJORIE
None of her clothes are gone?

MRS BEACH
No, ma'am .... only thing that's missing is an old robe of mine I'd lent her this morning ... too tight it was on her too .... She wouldn't have gone off in that.

STEPHEN
(lightly)
If she's out in Mrs. Beach's robe, she can't have gone far ....
(he starts off)
.... and I'm going to bed ....

MARJORIE
Stephen!

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN (FROM MARJORIE'S ANGLE LOOKING UP)

STEPHEN
Not going to stay up because a promiscuous servant girl wants to make a night of it someplace ....
(he turns and goes up the stairs)

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

CLOSE SHOT - A NEWSPAPER

The headline reads

EMILY STILL MISSING

below it in smaller type,

WEEK-OLD MYSTERY IN AUTHOR'S HOUSE

There is a picture of Emily and one of Stephen Byrne featured in the article.

CAMERA HOLDS, THEN IT PULLS BACK to reveal

FULL SHOT - JOHN BYRNE'S LIVING QUARTERS

John is seated at a table in the living room of a modestly-furnished flat where he lives with his part-time housekeeper, MISS FLORA BANTAM. A troubled expression on his face, John seems to be studying the newspaper headlines when the door opens to reveal Miss Bantam, an old maid in her late thirties. Although she has made an attempt to brighten up her appearance with bows and bangles, she is very homely, with an expression of chronic indigestion on her face. She walks with a superior air, as if she is far above the task of serving breakfast which she is performing. When she speaks to John, we see that their relationship is an easy one.

MISS BANTAM
Good morning, Mr. Byrne ....

JOHN
(still reading)
'Morning ....

Miss Bantam goes about her business of placing John's breakfast before him. As she does so, she glances over his shoulder at the newspaper which he reads. It appears as if she would like to speak to him; she contains herself temporarily, but she finally gives in.

MISS BANTAM
Wouldn't waste my time reading that trash if I were you, Mr. Byrne ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
(looking up quickly)
Trash?

MISS BANTAM
(vehemently)
Yes! If you'll pardon my saying so, trash!

JOHN
(curiously)
Since when is the disappearance of a human being considered trash in your estimation, Miss Bantam?

MISS BANTAM
(with an injured air)
Since I've found out what a bad name that Emily Gaunt has given young women, like myself, in service ....

JOHN
Bad name?

MISS BANTAM
(letting go)
Yes. That Emily was a proper hussy! Gadding about night after night .... young men followers and the good Lord knows what all .... there's no doubt but that she was out with one of her many young men the night she disappeared..... and she went further than she meant .... but if you make your own bed, you must lie on it ....
(suddenly remembering what she's doing)
.... would you like your eggs now?

JOHN
No. I don't care for any this morning ....

MISS BANTAM
(solicitously)
Now, Mr. Byrne .... you haven't eaten proper all week ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
(interrupting)
Miss Bantam, did you know Emily Gaunt?

MISS BANTAM
No. But I know them that did.

JOHN
You seem to speak with great authority about a person you never knew.

MISS BANTAM
(defensively)
Mrs. Beach knew her, didn't she?

JOHN
I happened to be present the day the cook was questioned. She didn't give the impression that she believed Emily wasn't a decent girl ....

MISS BANTAM
Maybe that was before she knew herself ....

JOHN
(curiously)
What do you think changed her mind?

MISS BANTAM
Why, your own brother, Mr. Byrne!

JOHN
My brother?

MISS BANTAM
Yes. Mrs. Beach happened to overhear him when Emily's people came worrying around the other day ....

JOHN
(surprised)
Emily's people came to see my brother?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MISS BANTAM
Yes. Mother and father it was .... came round saying your brother owed them something, what with her having disappeared from his place and all ....

JOHN
And what did he say to them?

MISS BANTAM
(pleased)
He let 'em have it, he did .... said that he never should have let her work for him in the first place .... that she was a good-for-nothing .....

JOHN
(angrily)
That's a lie!

MISS BANTAM
Good gracious, Mr. Byrne .... wasn't me that said it .... it was your brother .....

Without replying, John rises and he goes out the door, slamming it after him.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - MISS BANTAM

Surprised at his sudden outburst, Miss Bantam stares at the closed door. Then a thoughtful expression comes over her face as if she's putting two and two together and getting much more than four.

MISS BANTAM
(sarcastically)
So, Mr. High and Mighty .... sweet on her, were you?
(her face wrinkles as though she were feeling terribly sorry for herself)
.... and decent girls like myself ....
(she bursts into tears and she sits at the table)

CAMERA MOVES IN FOR A

VERY CLOSE SHOT - MISS BANTAM

Her head buried in her arms, she begins to sob. It is apparent that Miss Bantam's feelings for John Byrne are more than those of a housekeeper. CAMERA HOLDS, THEN IT PANS SLIGHTLY to one side of her to the newspaper which John had been reading. It is still open to the front page. We see the headlines,

WEEK-OLD MYSTERY IN AUTHOR'S HOUSE

CAMERA HOLDS, then we

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE SHOT - THE SAME HEADLINES OF THE NEWSPAPER

We see the same issue of the previous SHOT, but it's held at a different angle, so that we immediately know that the newspaper is held by a different person. CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal

MED. SHOT - MARJORIE BYRNE

She is seated at the breakfast table in her home looking at the newspaper. The SOUND of the front doorbell is heard overscene. Marjorie places the paper to one side and she rises.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE

MED. SHOT - JOHN BYRNE

John is standing at the front door waiting to be admitted. The door opens to reveal Marjorie.

MARJORIE
Good morning, John.....

JOHN
Good morning .... Stephen up yet?

MARJORIE
Yes, John. But he's not here ....
he went out quite early ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
(puzzled)
Out?

MARJORIE
Yes. He was gone before I got up .... I don't know where .... will you come in?

JOHN
I'm on my way to work ....

MARJORIE
It's early ....
(pause; troubled)
Please, John, come in .... I've been wanting to talk to you .... it's about Stephen ....

John seems to hesitate, but then he goes in and Marjorie closes the door after him.

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

MED. TWO SHOT - JOHN AND MARJORIE

They are seated at the breakfast table. We have come into the middle of their conversation.

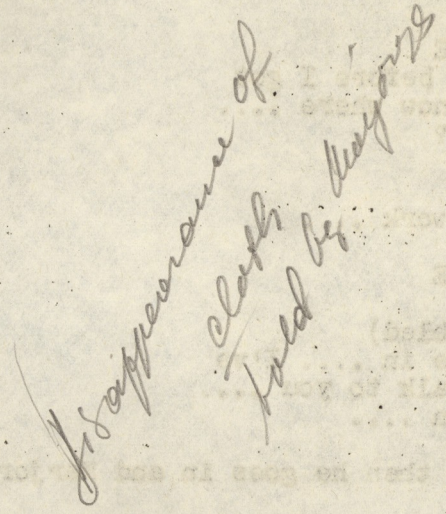
MARJORIE
(fading in; very upset)
.... to see the look that comes over his face when he's questioned about her .... it's almost as if he were actually enjoying it ....

JOHN
(quietly)
I know ....

MARJORIE
If you weren't his brother, I couldn't possibly think of telling you ....

JOHN
Yes .....

(CONTINUED)


Disappearance of
cloth
Ivled by

(CONTINUED)

MARJORIE
And the morning papers....
(indicating the paper on the table)
Hadn't they been asked not to play up Stephen's name in her disappearance?

JOHN
Yes. But I knew they would eventually .... you can't blame them .... makes a better story ....

MARJORIE
But they didn't for a whole week .... and today .... even a picture of Stephen ....

JOHN
(curiously)
How did they get hold of the picture?

MARJORIE
(suddenly)
I never thought of that ....
(she picks up the paper)
It's .... why there's only one print of that picture that I know of ....
(she rises)

John watches her as she hurries out of the room.

DISSOLVE TO:

FULL SHOT - THE LIVING ROOM

Marjorie goes to a table, and she picks up an album. She hurriedly begins to go through it.

MED. SHOT - MARJORIE

She continues to go through the pages. When she reaches a certain point, she stops abruptly.

FULL SHOT - THE ROOM

Stricken, Marjorie stands holding the album. John is seen as he enters the living room and he crosses to her, He takes the album from her hand.

CLOSE SHOT - THE ALBUM

It is the typical, old-fashioned album of the period. The page seen is filled with pictures, excepting for one conspicuously blank space. The four corners where it had been glued are torn away as though someone had hurriedly removed it. CAMERA HOLDS. All the other pictures on the page seem to blur, but the vacant space seems black and important. CAMERA HOLDS ON IT, accentuating its importance, then

DISSOLVE TO:

INSERT!

bookstore window display

VERY CLOSE SHOT - A BOOK ~~JACKET~~

Camera focuses first on the book:

~~From the preceding blank space we have dissolved into the title~~

NIGHT LAUGHTER

his st'l ?

announcement that St. Cyr autographs books from 10 - 12 noon

2. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE 2.

~~Beneath it, in important black lettering is~~

by

Stephen Byrne

cut to reflection in window of John..

CAMERA HOLDS, then IT BEGINS TO PULL SLOWLY BACK to ~~window~~ them Mr Miller is seen taking a books out of the window.

MED. SHOT - A SHOP WINDOW

The book is in a shop window. The entire display is taken up with books of the same title. The whole window features the author, Stephen Byrne. CAMERA CONTINUES BACK revealing the name on the shop, MILLER'S BOOK STORE.

Through the plate glass we see Stephen talking to a young woman. He seems very much at ease, and giving out with the old charm. After a moment, he takes a book from the woman and he autographs it, smiling as he does so.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

After a moment, John comes into SHOT. He looks through the window just in time to see Stephen autograph the book. As he's about to enter the shop, the proprietor, MR. MILLER, comes to the doorway. He is a small, shrewd-looking man who seems quite pleased with himself, and in an excellent mood at the moment.

MR. MILLER
Good morning ....

JOHN
Good morning, Mr. Miller ....

MR MILLER
(beaming at his shop window)
What do you think of the display?

JOHN
I don't understand it .... at the time the book was published, you made it clear that you didn't care for it ....

MR MILLER
(expansively)
I know ... I know. I also told you that because you were employed here, and your brother happened to write it, we weren't going to push the sale of it ... but things have changed ....
(with a knowing smile)
Matter of fact, I think it's an excellent book .... good enough to be mentioned on the front pages this morning ....

JOHN
This display wasn't up when I left the shop last night ....

MR MILLER
No. It was done at six this morning ....

JOHN
(amazed)
Six?

(CONTINUED)

wouldn't it be better to start with Steph's friend on bail for ~~£6~~ 5 years / then go into accusation x then threat?

(CONTINUED)

MR MILLER
Yes. Your brother called me last night and told me of the publicity he was expecting .... I wanted you to do it for me, but he asked me to keep you out of it .... what's the matter? You two not getting along?

JOHN
Pardon me, Mr. Miller ....
(he goes into the store)

Mr. Miller stares at him as he enters.

DISSOLVE TO:

MED. SHOT - OFFICE AT REAR OF SHOP

Stephen is seated at a desk with John standing over him. From the expression on their faces, we can readily see that the two have been having a heated conversation. Stephen is speaking as we come into scene.

STEPHEN
I tell you no one's maligning Emily ....

JOHN
Don't deny it! I've heard about some of the things you've said ....

STEPHEN
You've heard? From whom?

JOHN
Miss Bantam ....

STEPHEN
Miss Bantam! Have you gone in for servant girl gossip?

JOHN
Why didn't you tell me that Emily's parents had been to see you?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
Because I knew it would upset you. They never got along with the girl when she was alive .... all they want now is to play on our sympathies .... cash in on her disappearance.

JOHN
And aren't you cashing in on her death .... or should I say, murder?

STEPHEN
That's pretty rough talk, John.

JOHN
What else do you expect? The picture you gave the newspapers .... the display of your book ....

STEPHEN
(he hesitates, and he is very meek when he speaks)
John, don't you see, that as brutal as it might seem, I must make the best of my opportunities? It's all right for you to sit and cry over spilled milk, you're alone .... I have a wife, a family soon to think about .... don't forget that ....

JOHN
(softly; almost to himself)
What I can't forget is Emily .... everytime someone speaks to me .... everytime someone looks at me .... I see the same thing in their eyes ....

STEPHEN
You mustn't let your imagination get away with you .... you must forget ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
Forget?
(pause, during which
he seems to study
Stephen)
I believe you have forgotten what
happened ....

STEPHEN
(slowly; deliberately)
What I haven't forgotten, John,
is that whatever I did, you
were in it with me ... we're
both in it up to our necks ....
and we'd best keep our mouths
shut .... both of us ....

Enters Mrs Miller and calls him to customers

John stares at Stephen with the realization that his brother has every intention of implicating him fully in the event the murder is discovered. As the two men look at one another, we

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

FULL SHOT - JOHN BYRNE'S ROOMS - DAY

John is seated in an armchair reading as Miss Bantam enters. He looks up as she speaks.

MISS BANTAM
(distressed)
Sorry to disturb you, Mr. Byrne ....

JOHN
What is it?

MISS BANTAM
(complaining)
Like everything else your brother borrows, Mr. Byrne, he's failed to return it .....

JOHN
Return what?

MISS BANTAM
(rambling)
Well, with the cold weather coming on, I thought I'd get the neighborhood boys to gather some driftwood .... save you catching cold like last year .... but when we went to get the wood sack, it was gone ....

JOHN
When did my brother borrow it, Miss Bantam?

MISS BANTAM
Oh, several weeks ago .... his gardener came for it, but I distinctly remember telling him we wanted it back ....

JOHN
(thoughtfully)
Several weeks ago?

MISS BANTAM
Yes. And what with your name on it, you'd think your brother would see to it that we got it back ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
My name on it?

MISS BANTAM
Yes. The way we've been losing things around here, I decided to stencil everything with India ink ....

JOHN
You're sure my name was on it?

MISS BANTAM
Positive. Should I go for it myself?

JOHN
No .... no, never mind ....

MISS BANTAM
What'll I do about the boys? They're outside waiting.

JOHN
Send them away.

MISS BANTAM
But, I told them ....

JOHN
(snapping)
I don't know why you sent for them in the first place.

MISS BANTAM
(hurt)
We're out of firewood ....

JOHN
(angrily)
The collection of firewood is my business, and I'll take care of it!

Surprised and upset at his sudden angry tone, Miss Bantam turns and leaves. A tense expression on his face, John looks after her and we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STEPHEN'S HOUSE

FULL SHOT - THE BACK GARDEN

We immediately recognize the writing table in a corner of the garden as belonging to Stephen. There are papers and books piled on it but there is no one in sight. After a moment a voice is heard overscene.

GIRL'S VOICE
(overscene)
Hello .... anybody home?

After a moment, Muriel Tarrant, John's girl-friend whom we know from the Whittaker party, is seen as she comes through the garden gate. She is dressed in a soft summer dress and she looks quite pretty. Seeing no one in the garden, she looks up toward the house and she calls out again.

MURIEL
Marjorie ....

She waits a moment, then she strolls over to the writing table. She glances idly down at the pad. She becomes interested in a casual way and then she picks up the pad; but as she begins to read, Stephen is heard angrily overscene.

STEPHEN
Muriel!

Muriel looks up with a start. CAMERA PULLS BACK QUICKLY to reveal Stephen as he hurries toward her from the house.

MURIEL
Oh, hello, Stephen ....

Stephen walks quickly toward her and he takes the pad from her hand. He seems very uneasy.

STEPHEN
(irritably)
Have you been reading this?

MURIEL
Why, no .... I only picked it up ....
(curiously)
What's the matter, Stephen?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
Nothing ....
(evasively)
It's just that it's something I'm working on ... it's not ready to be read ....

MURIEL
Well, I'm sorry ....

STEPHEN
It's all right ....

MURIEL
Where's Marjorie?

STEPHEN
She's gone to her mother's.

MURIEL
Oh .... then I'll run on .... I just happened by and I thought I'd drop in for a minute ....

STEPHEN
(suddenly turning on the charm)
Stay if you like. She'll be back soon ....

MURIEL
(looking toward the desk)
I don't want to interrupt your work ....

STEPHEN
I've finished for today ....

MURIEL
(after a pause)
You know, Stephen, I'd love to be a writer ....

STEPHEN
You would? Why don't you?

MURIEL
I wouldn't know where to start ....

STEPHEN
You start by writing about things you know.

MURIEL
Is that what you did?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
No. It's something I didn't know until just lately ....
(thoughtfully)
Maybe that's why I haven't been very successful ....

MURIEL
(reassuringly)
Oh, but you're successful now.

STEPHEN
Do you think so?

MURIEL
Well, I mean you've been since Emily ....
(she suddenly stops herself)

STEPHEN
Go on ... you can say it.

MURIEL
(contritely)
Stephen, I didn't mean it that way....besides, just because there's been interest in your work since it all happened, doesn't mean it wasn't good in the first place ....

STEPHEN
(smiling)
Thank you, Muriel .... but in the future my writing will be successful because it'll be about things I know ....

MURIEL
Like what you're writing now?

STEPHEN
Yes.

MURIEL
What's it about?

STEPHEN
I don't like to talk about a story until it's finished ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MURIEL
I can understand that .... maybe it's because I write a little myself ....
(suddenly)
Oh, but I shouldn't have told you.

STEPHEN
Why not?

MURIEL
You'll laugh .... me writing ....

STEPHEN
I'm not laughing. What did you write?

MURIEL
Promise not to tell anybody?
(Stephen nods)
Especially John?

STEPHEN
I promise.

MURIEL
(hesitantly)
Well .... I wrote some poetry.

STEPEHEN
I'd like to see it.

MURIEL
Oh, no! It's not good.

STEPHEN
Has anyone read it?

MURIEL
No.

STEPHEN
Then how do you know it's not any good?

MURIEL
It's not. That's all.
(shyly)

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MURIEL (cont'd)
And from what you said, maybe it's not good because I don't know enough about -- well, about love ....

STEPHEN
That's a strange thing for a girl who's engaged to be married to say ....
(Muriel looks at him without replying)
Muriel, a while ago you said you didn't want anyone to know that you'd been writing .... especially my brother ....

MURIEL
I know.

STEPHEN
Why did you single him out?

MURIEL
Well, he just wouldn't understand .... he's always so serious and all .... he'd think it was silly ....

STEPHEN
Are you really in love with John?

MURIEL
I'm going to marry him.

STEPHEN
People who are going to be married should trust each other, don't you think?

MURIEL
Oh, I trust him.

STEPHEN
Then why don't you confide in him about your writing?

MURIEL
Because he's .... well, he's different than you .... he's so serious lately .... and ....
(suddenly)
Oh, Stephen, sometimes I can't help but wish he were more like you ....

MED. CLOSE TWO SHOT

Stephen takes Muriel's hand; she seems puzzled and a little surprised, but she doesn't attempt to withdraw.

STEPHEN
(seriously; pouring it on)
You know something, Muriel?
(pause during which he looks at her closely)
Sometimes I can't help but wish Marjorie were more like you ....

MURIEL
(very much taken in and flattered)
Really, Stephen?

Stephen nods slowly; he moves in closer. Just when it looks as if he's about to kiss her and that she's going to submit, Mrs. Ambrose is heard calling overscene.

MRS. AMBROSE
(calling, o.s.)
Stephen! You out there, Stephen?

Stephen and Muriel pull away from one another abruptly. Stephen rises quickly.

MED. SHOT - MRS. AMBROSE'S GARDEN

Mrs. Ambrose is seen hurrying toward the wall. Before she reaches it, however, Stephen is seen on his side of it as he looks over.

STEPHEN
What is it, Mrs. Ambrose?

MRS AMBROSE
Did you see what floated by out there just now?

STEPHEN
No.

MRS AMBROSE
Looked like a large wood sack .... good one, too ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
(startled)
A wood sack?

MRS AMBROSE
Yes. Weren't you borrowing one not long ago?

CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

Startled, he looks toward the river.

STEPHEN
(vaguely)
Yes .... yes, I was .....

MED. CLOSE TWO SHOT - STEPHEN AND MRS AMBROSE

MRS AMBROSE
Well, there's your chance to get one ....
(indicating the river)
See! There it is ....

MED. LONG SHOT - THE RIVER

There's no mistaking the sack; bloated in appearance, it floats half-submerged in the water.

MED. TWO SHOT - STEPHEN AND MRS. AMBROSE

MRS. AMBROSE
You might as well have it as the next ....

STEPHEN
(dazed)
Yes .... I'll the get boat .... thanks, Mrs. Ambrose.
(he disappears on his side of the fence)

MED. SHOT - MURIEL AND STEPHEN

STEPHEN
I'm sorry, Muriel .... I ....

MURIEL
That's all right, Stephen ....
I'm going anyway ....
(suddenly troubled)
Stephen, please forget what happened a moment ago .... it was horribly wrong ....

STEPHEN
(preoccupied)
What's that? .... Oh, yes .... of course, Muriel ....

As Muriel turns and hurries off, Stephen rushes toward the river. CAMERA PANS WITH HIM as he goes to his boat. As he shoves off,

DISSOLVE TO:

LONG SHOT - THE RIVER

There are a few tugs in sight, and more activity than we have seen before on the river. After a moment, a boat, smaller than any seen, comes into SHOT.

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN

He paddles at a rapid stroke. Every once in a while he looks to the right and left. CAMERA PANS WITH HIS GAZE to

MED. SHOT - THE WATER ON ONE SIDE OF THE BOAT

Aside from odd bits of wood, papers, etc., there is nothing to be seen in the rushing water. As Stephen continues to paddle,

DISSOLVE TO:

grappling hook

131 ... log of wood

the sack

the link of the dog

the rope floats away ...

Dissolve

LONG SHOT - THE RIVER (FROM HIGH UP). - NIGHT

It is night now, and there is bright moonlight. The curving river seems like a broad dark velvet band between two strips of land. In contrast to the preceding shots, there is no activity, and only the dismal SOUND of a foghorn is heard in the distance. After a moment, Stephen's boat, small and forlorn, comes into SHOT.

128 Start with Tuscal - Description — pan up to

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN no activity

He seems frantic and exhausted, and his energy is giving away, for he does not paddle very rapidly; it is obvious that he has not been successful in his search for the wood sack. ~~CAMERA MOVES WITH him a short time,~~ then something suddenly seems to catch his eye. He looks right & left.

~~CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN~~

His face covered with perspiration, he peers eagerly over the side of the boat.

129 Shore of the River at right (big near) Stephen

~~MED. CLOSE SHOT -~~ A SODDEN, HEAVY OBJECT IN THE WATER

The dark water washes ~~over the object~~ as it lies caught on a branch which protrudes from the shore into the water. ~~(~~We cannot see the object clearly.~~)~~ ~~CAMERA BEGINS TO MOVE SLOWLY TOWARD IT.~~ and it looks like the rock

130 CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

~~Frightened, and~~ yet relieved by the belief that he has found the object of his search, he puts forth extra effort and he paddles hurriedly. Turning the boat

MED. CLOSE SHOT - THE OBJECT (MOVING SHOT FROM STEPHEN'S ANGLE)

Although we are closer, we are still unable to make out what the object is. When CAMERA IS QUITE CLOSE, Stephen's oar comes into SHOT and he begins to poke away at the

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

object in an effort to dislodge it from the branch. It finally breaks away and it comes partially out of the water. Now we see that it is a burlap sack filled with tin cans, wet paper, refuse, etc.

CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

A dejected, lost look on his face, and bitterly disappointed, he stares down at it. The bright moonlight pours over his face. CAMERA HOLDS and we

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE SHOT - JOHN BYRNE

(THE CAMERA ANGLE SHOULD BE EXACTLY THE SAME AS THE PRECEDING SHOT.) Moonlight is pouring over John's face, and there is a dejected, troubled look on his face, too; but John is asleep; his head resting back on his pillow. (The light comes from a window nearby.) CAMERA HOLDS, and after a moment, his head tosses restlessly. Voices are HEARD o.s.; very faintly at first, then very clearly. They are definitely dream voices, FILTERED and varied.

WOMAN'S VOICE
(filtered; matter-of-fact)
Where is Emily?

MAN'S VOICE
(filtered; quietly)
Ask John Byrne....

WOMAN'S VOICE
Where is the girl?
(the voice begins to repeat; having the effect of a broken phonograph record)
Where is the girl? Where is the girl?
Where is the girl?
(as the voice begins to fade, an UNFILTERED, real voice is heard)

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

VOICE
(UNFILTERED and very close)
John!

John's eyelids flutter, and it looks as if he's about to waken.

VOICE
(cont'd; pause)
John!

As John opens his eyes sleepily, CAMERA BEGINS TO PULL BACK SLOWLY to reveal Stephen standing beside the bed. Disheveled and dirty, he stares down at his brother.

STEPHEN
(tonelessly)
It's come up, John....

146 Int. John Byrne's living quarters - Night. The room is lit by one desk lamp only standing next to a table x John's ~~MED. SHOT - JOHN'S BED~~

The room is dark, but we see the shadows of the two men.

pours himself a drink out of a half filled bottle

JOHN
Stephen! What is it?

At this moment a subdued urgent knocking is heard

STEPHEN
(hopelessly) (frantically)
It's come up .... Emily's come back....

It's come up John -

he puts down glass x bottle x walks toward the entrance door and opens it

JOHN
(shocked) (shocked)
What are you talking about?

Stephen is completely dishevelled and has lost all control of himself.

Stephen: (hopelessly) Emily's come back...

John: what?!

STEPHEN
(stupidly)
The wood sack .... it's come up out of the river ....

JOHN
No!

He closes the door. Stephen collapses in a chair

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

147: close Stephen !

STEPHEN (exhausted)
I've been up all night .... I chased it for six miles, but the tide was too fast ... I couldn't find it .... I almost had her once - but she got away...
(suddenly; accusingly)
It's your fault! Why didn't you tie it securely? I should have trusted you...
~~tied it myself~~ ....

148 close John

JOHN
(angrily)
Be quiet!

149 ~~close Stephen~~ Two shot

STEPHEN
(frantically)
But it'll be passing up and down the river until it's found .... up and down the river .... ~~in plain view of thousands of people .....~~ it'll go on for weeks.....

det

JOHN
(quietly)
The police will find it soon enough ....

STEPHEN
(quickly; trying to convince himself)
But they won't know we did it!
(John gives him a quick look)
I mean .... there are hundreds of sacks exactly like it .... they won't trace it to us, will they?

JOHN
(thoughtfully)
No, not to us ....
(he looks up at Stephen a moment before continuing)
They'll trace it to me, Stephen ....

150 close Stephen

STEPHEN
(puzzled)
You?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

1ST. close John

JOHN
(slowly)
Yes...My name was on it ....

~~CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN~~

1ST close. Stephen

~~An incredulous~~ look sweeps over his face, but somehow it's mingled with a look of relief. In spite of himself, his eyes shift and we can readily see that his thoughts are not exactly concerned with John's safety at the moment. CAMERA HOLDS and we

FADE OUT

Mrs B is not dismissed

FADE IN

CLOSE SHOT - THE WOOD SACK

The sack is obviously empty, and a pair of hands fold the opening back. Although the sack is muddy and wet, the stenciled words are clearly legible.

JOHN BYRNE
16 Hamilton Chase
W. 6

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal that the sack is in the hands of INSPECTOR SARTEN, a square-built, solid-looking man, with a dark moustache. He is standing outside the front door of John Byrne's living quarters. Miss Bantam is standing in the doorway.

MISS BANTAM
(impatiently)
I could have told you without looking, the sack belongs to Mr. Byrne....
(she reaches for it)

Has name + address

INSPECTOR
One moment .... I'd like to return the sack to Mr. Byrne personally .... when do you expect him back?

MISS BANTAM
He doesn't return from work until after six ....

NOTHING NEW

INSPECTOR
(turning)
I'll be back ....

MISS BANTAM
(she lets him go a short distance, then she calls out)
Couldn't you leave it? We've been wanting to get some wood, we've been without the sack quite a while ....

The Inspector stops and he turns.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

INSPECTOR
(curiously)
You've been without it quite a while?

MISS BANTAM
Yes. Mr. Byrne lent it to his brother several weeks ago and he failed to return it ....

INSPECTOR
His brother is Stephen Byrne, the writer, isn't he?

MISS BANTAM
Yes.

INSPECTOR
And you say this sack has been in his possession for several weeks?

MISS BANTAM
Yes ....
(suddenly)
Are you from the police?

INSPECTOR
(nodding)
Tell Mr. Byrne that he'll hear from us later ....
(he turns and leaves)

Miss Bantam looks after him curiously and we

DISSOLVE OUT

DISSOLVE IN:

FULL SHOT - EXT. MILLER'S BOOK STORE

There are a few pedestrians on the street, and among them we see Marjorie Byrne. She seems to be watching the entrance of Miller's Book Store.

MED. SHOT - MARJORIE

She carries several packages, and she looks cautiously toward the entrance of the store, as if she doesn't wish to be seen by anyone from within. She glances down at her watch, then up at a large clock nearby.

CLOSE SHOT - THE CLOCK

It is exactly twelve o'clock; it begins to chime out the hour.

MED. SHOT - MARJORIE

She is ill at ease, and self-conscious as she waits. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO INCLUDE the front entrance of Miller's Book Store. John Byrne is just coming out. Marjorie sees him, but instead of calling out, she watches him go in the opposite direction; he is unaware of her presence. She allows him to go a short distance before she moves after him.

MED. TRUCKING SHOT - JOHN

He seems worried and haggard. After a moment Marjorie is heard calling o.s.

MARJORIE
(o.s.)
John ....

John stops and turns. He seems surprised at seeing her.

JOHN
Why, hello, Marjorie ....

Marjorie comes up to him, CAMERA MOVES WITH THEM AS THEY WALK.

MARJORIE
This is a nice surprise ....

JOHN
It is indeed .... how are you?

MARJORIE
Very hungry .... how would you like to take a nice, pretty girl to lunch?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
(smiling)
Any around?

MARJORIE
John!

JOHN
I take it back. Where would the nice, pretty girl like to go to lunch?

MARJORIE
Any place ....
(taking his arm)
Isn't it lucky I happened by at just the right minute?

CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He looks at Marjorie knowingly out of the corner of his eye; he is aware that her opportune appearance hasn't been an accident.

JOHN
Yes .... lucky for me ....

DISSOLVE TO:

MED. SHOT - A CITY PARK

John and Marjorie are seated at a bench overlooking a small pool of water. John seems in a much better mood than he did in the previous scene. Marjorie seems relaxed, almost happy. They are silent for a moment as we come into scene.

MARJORIE
(after a moment)
I suppose we should take a walk ....

JOHN
Why?

MARJORIE
After such a huge lunch ....
exercise and all that ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
(quietly)
You think we shouldn't be seen sitting here, don't you?

MARJORIE
(after a pause; slowly)
A park's a place for lovers, isn't it?

JOHN
I suppose so ....

MARJORIE
(another pause)
Did you ever come here with Muriel?

JOHN
No.

MARJORIE
Why not?

JOHN
Well .... it's rather hard to explain .... but, well .... Muriel doesn't consider me the romantic type .... and because she doesn't, I always feel a little self-conscious suggesting romantic things ....
(looking at her)
Can you understand that?

MARJORIE
Yes. But you <u>are</u> romantic .... look at today .... luncheon at a lovely out-of-the-way place, a corsage of violets .... this lovely park ....

JOHN
(smiling)
I'm rehearsing with you so that I can give Muriel the grand treatment later ....

MARJORIE
(sighing)
Even though you do horrible things to my ego, John, I think you're very, very nice ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
(wryly)
Yes .... like mint tea when you have a cold?

MARJORIE
No. Like a friend ....

JOHN
(amused; whispering)
You mustn't let anyone hear you say such extravagant things ....

MARJORIE
(very seriously)
You know, John. I didn't meet you by accident today ....

JOHN
I know that. Why did you meet me?

MARJORIE
I wanted to talk .... and when I want to talk, there doesn't seem to be anyone in the world like you.

JOHN
What's wrong?

MARJORIE
The usual thing .... Stephen.
(pause)
You've always known that our marriage has never been .... well, exactly perfect .... but now in the last weeks, it's become impossible.....

JOHN
In what way?

MARJORIE
Aside from everything else, he's become so secretive .... at least in the past I used to share in his work .... he used to read every word he wrote aloud to me .... now he keeps his writing under lock and key .... why, I wonder?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
He's probably in one of his moods .... you shouldn't let it upset you.

MARJORIE
No. It's more than that. I have a feeling that it's something that concerns all of us ....

JOHN
You're letting your imagination run away with you.

MARJORIE
(sighing)
I suppose so ....
(pause)
Why do I bother? No one has a chance with Stephen.

JOHN
What do you mean by that?

MARJORIE
You should know better than anyone .... his only interest is himself. You're not one to take credit, John, but I know the things you've done for him .... giving him most of your share of the inheritance so that he could keep a home and go on writing ....

JOHN
Let's not talk about that, Marjorie. What is it that's <u>really</u> troubling you?

MARJORIE
I suppose it's this Emily Gaunt thing ....

JOHN
(sharply; in spite of himself)
What about it?

MARJORIE
He does nothing but capitalize on it .... in the belief that it will further the sale of his book ....
(earnestly)
Isn't that a terrible thing?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
(very quietly)
Yes, very ....

MARJORIE
He never had any recognition at all until this happened ....
(pause)
I'm beginning to think he's actually glad the poor girl was done away with ....

JOHN
Don't, Marjorie ....

MARJORIE
You're right .... I suppose I shouldn't say such things ....

They are both quiet for a moment, without looking at one another.

MARJORIE
(after a pause)
I wonder why Stephen married me at all.

JOHN
Perhaps it was because he needed you ....

MARJORIE
~~I don't think~~ Stephen needs anyone but himself ....

JOHN
Everyone needs someone.

MARJORIE
(curiously)
Even you?

JOHN
(lightly; to change the mood)
I'm the exception ....

MARJORIE
What about Muriel?

JOHN
I don't think Muriel and I need one another.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MARJORIE
What's changed you?

JOHN
It's not a good feeling to know that the person you'd hoped to marry is bored with you .... that she's always wishing you were different than you are .... almost as if she were wishing you were someone else ....
(suddenly looking up)
Look here, Marjorie, you arranged it so we could talk about you today ....

MARJORIE
I'm all finished talking about myself. My troubles always boil down to Stephen .... and nothing will ever change him I suppose ....

JOHN
(after a pause)
Perhaps you're not prepared to tell me yet .... but because you are troubled, Marjorie, I'd like you to know that I think there are circumstances which might change Stephen .... the baby coming, for instance....

MARJORIE
The baby?

JOHN
Stephen told me.

MARJORIE
He told you we were going to have a baby?

JOHN
Yes.

MARJORIE
It's not true! I wish that it were, but he's said again and again that he didn't think we should .... that a writer's life is too precarious ...
(suddenly)
Why on earth would he want to tell you a thing like that?

CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

There is an angry look on his face as he stares at Marjorie. But even now he finds himself defending his brother in spite of himself.

JOHN
Perhaps I misunderstood ....

MED. TWO SHOT

MARJORIE
(impatiently)
Don't go protecting him again, John! You must know why he lied to you ....

John rises abruptly.

JOHN
I've got to get back to work ....

MARJORIE
(very troubled)
What is it, John? What's happening?

JOHN
(taking her by the arm)
Nothing. Come along now, I'll be late ....

Marjorie is very upset as she allows herself to be led off.

DISSOLVE OUT

DISSOLVE IN

FULL SHOT - STEPHEN BYRNE'S GARDEN - DAY

Stephen is seated in his usual corner of the garden, ~~with his~~ writing ~~equipment before him~~. He is obviously ~~not~~ working, ~~and he stares into space~~. After a moment, Mrs Beach, the cook, ~~is seen entering the garden~~. ~~When she speaks,~~ Stephen looks up ~~with a start~~.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MRS BEACH
~~I'm sorry to disturb you, Mr~~ Byrne, ~~but~~ there's a gentleman to see you ~~Mr B~~

STEPHEN
~~What about?~~ ~~You know I don't wish to be disturbed...~~

MRS BEACH
~~Why,~~ He's from the police, sir ....

STEPHEN
(coolly)
Send him in, ~~will you, Mrs Beach~~ ....

MRS BEACH
Yes, sir ....

When Mrs Beach leaves, Stephen quickly picks up his pad and pencil and he busies himself at his desk - making an effort to appear busy. When Inspector Sarten appears, he starts for the end of the garden where Stephen is, but when he sees the latter apparently engrossed in his work, he hesitates, then he coughs discreetly.

STEPHEN
(looking up with an expression of "oh, yes - where-was-I?")
Oh! Just a moment, please .... (he writes a few more sentences, then he rises)
I'm sorry. But I wanted to get some thoughts down before they got away ....

INSPECTOR
(knowingly; impressed)
Of course. I know how it is.

STEPHEN
You write?

INSPECTOR
(modestly)
A bit. Can't help it with the business I'm in ....
(extending his hand)
I'm Inspector Sarten, Mr Byrne ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
(~~taking his hand~~)
~~I'm very happy to know you.~~ What can I do for you?

INSPECTOR
It's about this wood sack, sir ....
(he unwraps the sack which he's been holding under his arm)

Stephen watches him with an interested expression on his face.

INSPECTOR (cont'd)
Have you seen it before?

STEPHEN
Why .... I don't know .... wood sacks are pretty much alike ....
(taking it; suddenly)
Inspector Sarten, I believe this was the sack that was stolen from here ....

INSPECTOR
Stolen?

STEPHEN
Yes. It belonged to my brother. I'd borrowed it, and when I went to return it, I found it was gone ....

INSPECTOR
How long ago was that?

STEPHEN
Several weeks ago .... where was it found?

INSPECTOR
In the river.

STEPHEN
(innocently)
But, Inspector, this sack's of no value ....
(curiously)
why would you take the trouble to return it personally?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

INSPECTOR
Because it contained the body of Emily Gaunt ....

STEPHEN
(taking it big)
What?

A shocked expression on his face, Stephen stares at the Inspector.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

CLOSE SHOT - THE WOOD SACK

It is spread out on a hard dark table. It seems peculiarly gruesome and important as it lies there. A man's voice is heard over scene.

MAN'S VOICE
(o.s.)
.... and it was at this point, perhaps a little sooner, perhaps a little later .... that the girl's body was tied up in the sack ....

CAMERA PULLS BACK and we see that it is the CORONER who is speaking. He is a thin, reedy man, with dark, alert-looking eyes.

CORONER
So you see, Mrs Beach ....

CAMERA PULLS STILL FURTHER BACK, and we see that Mrs Beach is seated beside the table. She seems very nervous as she looks over at a CLERK who is writing at a place opposite her.

CORONER (cont'd)
.... when Emily Gaunt disappeared, it was not to go off with a young man. Rather, it was to go straight to her death and into the river.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MRS BEACH
(frightened)
Yes, Coroner ....

CORONER
And you have nothing further to tell this inquest concerning her disappearance?

MRS BEACH
(her voice small)
I've told it all, sir.

CORONER
Thank you. Step down, please ....

She rises a little uncertainly and she moves away from the table.

FULL SHOT - ROOM AT INQUEST

The room is filled with people. The JURYMEN are seated at one side in a row; A FEW POLICE OFFICIALS sit about in small wooden chairs. As Mrs Beach comes among the spectators to resume her seat, we recognize some of the people from the Chase there. Marjorie, Stephen and John are side by side. Mrs Beach sits in a row in front of them - turning to give them a weak little smile. Of the three, Stephen is the only one who acknowledges it. He seems quite sure of himself and not in the slightest bit worried or upset. John, however, is pale and wan and it appears as if he's under a terrific strain. Miss Bantam, his housekeeper, is seated in a row not far from them. She has dressed herself up for the occasion, obviously prepared to make the most of her temporary importance in the community. When she hears her name called, her face brightens and she gives the impression that she looks forward to giving testimony.

THE CLERK
Miss Flora Bantam ....

Miss Bantam rises with a self-conscious look to the right and left as she goes to the table.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - AT TABLE

Miss Bantam takes a chair.

CORONER
(turning to her)
What is your occupation, Miss Bantam?

MISS BANTAM
(grimly)
I was a housekeeper, sir, but I am unemployed at present.

CORONER
Where were you last employed?

MISS BANTAM
(glancing sourly in the direction of the spectators)
At the home of Mr. John Byrne.

CORONER'S VOICE
How long were you employed there?

MISS BANTAM'S VOICE
It would have been five years this coming winter.

CORONER'S VOICE
Why are you no longer employed by Mr. Byrne?

MISS BANTAM
(bitterly)
I should say it was a difference of opinion, sir.

CORONER
I see ....
(pause during which he moves closer to the table on which the wood sack is spread out)
Then after five years, I would say you would be well acquainted with Mr. Byrne's possessions?

MISS BANTAM
Yes, sir.

(CONTINUED)

JURY: PARENTS
reaction of mother

one juror
listens carefully -
then finally makes a note
& leans back
again taking a snuff of tobacco

change in J. since Emily's missed

(CONTINUED)

CORONER
Do you recognize the sack before you as belonging to Mr Byrne?

MISS BANTAM
I do. I identified it myself

CORONER
Tell us what you know about ~~it~~. this sack Miss B.

MISS BANTAM
It was just as Mrs Beach said, sir. The sack was borrowed by Mr Byrne's brother, Stephen, ~~Emily~~ who asked Emily over several weeks ago.

they ran out of firewood for fire wood

without Stephen"

CORONER
And to your knowledge the sack was never returned?

MISS BANTAM
No, sir ....
(hesitantly; as an afterthought)
Of course, it might have been returned without my knowledge ....

MED. SHOT - A GROUP OF SPECTATORS (TO FEATURE STEPHEN, JOHN AND MARJORIE)

good

2:05 22

The spectators turn to look at one another curiously. Stephen and Marjorie exchange glances, but John stares grimly ahead, oblivious to what is taking place.

MED. TWO SHOT - CORONER AND MISS BANTAM

CORONER Judge
What do you mean by that, Miss Bantam?

MISS BANTAM
I mean simply that it's peculiar to me that Mr ~~John~~ Byrne would have allowed the sack to remain at his brother's for any length of time at all.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

CORONER
Please explain yourself, Miss Bantam.

MISS BANTAM
(taking full advantage of her momentary place in the spotlight)
Well, sir, in the years I was employed by Mr Byrne, it was his habit to go out and collect fire wood off the river .... I should say it was what might be called a hobby .... (she seems to hesitate)

CORONER
Go on, Miss Bantam ....

MISS BANTAM
Well, recently, when I noticed that he hadn't been out for some time, I thought perhaps it had to do with the fact that he'd taken cold the last time he'd been out .... so .... doing what I thought best and thinking of Mr. Byrne's welfare, I asked some of the neighborhood boys to gather some for us. When I went for the wood sack, I found it was gone, and I told Mr Byrne about it ....
(vehemently)
He was quite rude to me, and he told me that I shouldn't have called the boys, and furthermore, the collection of firewood was none of my business ....
(hurt)
I must say it was quite a shock, sir, inasmuch as I'd always made any of the business of running the household my business ....

MED. CLOSE THREE SHOT - JOHN, MARJORIE AND STEPHEN

Marjorie seems very upset over Miss Bantam's testimony; Stephen looks puzzled, but not disturbed; John stares straight ahead, neither upset nor disturbed.

MED. TWO SHOT - CORONER AND MISS BANTAM

CORONER
(very interested)
Miss Bantam, will you tell us if, to your knowledge, Mr Byrne was acquainted with the deceased, Miss Gaunt?

MISS BANTAM
I don't know whether he was acquainted with her or not, sir....
(insinuatingly)
....but he certainly went to great lengths to defend her after she was gone ....

CORONER Judge
Please be more explicit, Miss Bantam....

MISS BANTAM
(relishing the question)
~~Well~~, from the time she disappeared, ~~Mr Byrne~~ changed completely ... ~~why~~, he became so irritable, I could scarcely speak to him and get a civil answer ....

~~CORONER~~ Judge:
~~In what manner would you say that he changed?~~

Your Honor MISS BANTAM
Well, ~~sir~~, Mr Byrne was in the habit of having a hearty breakfast in the years that I worked for him, but after she disappeared .... in fact, the very morning after she disappeared, he scarcely touched a thing ....
(all the bitterness stored up within her is pouring out)
....and when I even indicated that the girl might have gotten what she deserved ....
(her voice begins to fade)
... he practically snapped my head off ~~right~~
(as her voice continues to fade,

(CONTINUED)

End with her dismissal -- they next day when Gun... & body are

(CONTINUED)

CAMERA BEGINS TO MOVE SLOWLY IN FOR A VERY CLOSE SHOT - MISS BANTAM

CAMERA CONTINUES MOVING UNTIL ALL that is seen is Miss Bantam's rather large mouth. Her tongue is going at a rapid clip now. As her voice fades completely out, we continue to see her mouth going, but we hear nothing. CAMERA HOLDS until the exaggerated pace of the mouth has been established and we

DISSOLVE TO:

MED. CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

He is completely at ease as he sits at the chair previously occupied by Miss Bantam. The Coroner stands before him.

CORONER
(pointing)
You recognize this sack, Mr Byrne?

STEPHEN
(smiling faintly - as if the question is needless)
Of course.

CORONER
You have heard testimony that you borrowed the sack some time ago from your brother. Is that correct?

STEPHEN
It is.

CORONER
And to your knowledge, it was never returned to ~~him~~?

STEPHEN
That is correct.

CORONER
(after a pause)
Is it possible that your brother, Mr John Byrne, might have come for it at a time when you were not at home and taken it?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
It's possible, but in this case I don't believe it is probable.

CORONER
Has your brother access to your home?

STEPHEN
He has.

CORONER
You mean he has a key to your home?

STEPHEN
He has. Just as I have one to his.

CORONER
Then inasmuch as the sack was his own, would there have been anything to prevent his coming to your home and taking what was rightfully his?

STEPHEN
Nothing to prevent it, but ....

CORONER
(interrupting)
That is all, Mr Byrne ....

Stephen rises and we

DISSOLVE:

CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

A lost look on his face, he stares straight ahead. The same filtered dream voice which we'd heard in a previous scene comes over sound track.

WOMAN'S VOICE
(filtered; very faintly)
Where is Emily? .... Where is Emily Gaunt?
(as the voice fades, the very real and loud voice of the Coroner is heard)

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

CORONER
(o.s.)
Mr John Byrne.

The expression on John's face gives no evidence that he has heard his name called.

CORONER
Mr. John Byrne ....

MED. SHOT - MARJORIE, JOHN AND STEPHEN

A troubled expression on her face, Marjorie leans across Stephen and she whispers urgently.

MARJORIE
John!

John's face contorts as if he's been brought out of a day dream; he turns to look at Marjorie.

MARJORIE
(urgently)
John!

CORONER
(impatiently)
Mr John Byrne ....

John's eyes blink as if he's heard his name for the first time. He looks toward the Coroner and he rises.

FULL SHOT - ROOM AT INQUEST

All the spectators are very still as John rises and he makes his way to the table.

MED. SHOT - MISS BANTAM (TO INCLUDE MRS AMBROSE)

Mrs Ambrose is seated in front and slightly to one side of Miss Bantam. She turns and glares at Miss Bantam, an expression of contempt on her face. Miss Bantam ignores her and Mrs Ambrose turns around again.

DISSOLVE TO:

MED. CLOSE SHOT - JOHN AND CORONER

The Coroner is pacing as he speaks to John.

CORONER
(casually)
Now, as I understand it, Mr Byrne, you people living in the Chase have something of a windfall where fuel is concerned .... or rather I should say, a riverfall ....
(he smiles at his own little joke)

John watches him carefully as he paces.

CORONER
(continued)
.... and you, Mr Byrne, according to the testimony given by Miss Bantam, were in the habit of gathering this firewood at regular intervals. Is that correct?

John nods.

CORONER
You will kindly give an oral answer to the questions asked at this inquest.

JOHN
(mechanically)
I was in the habit of gathering firewood as you stated.

CORONER
And you generally used a large sack for this purpose?

JOHN
I did.

CORONER
Would you say that the sack you generally used is the one on this table before you?

JOHN
It is.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

CORONER
The sack is yours then?

JOHN
Yes.

CORONER
(after a pause)
Tell me, Mr Byrne, when was the last time you saw this sack?

JOHN
Shortly before I lent it to my brother.

CORONER
Now tell me when was the last time you gathered wood?

JOHN
Some weeks ago. It's hard to say.

CORONER
Would you say two weeks ago?

JOHN
(an expression of anger on his face)
What you mean is, about the time Emily Gaunt disappeared?

CORONER
(irritably)
I must ask you not to mind what I mean, Mr Byrne. Would you say two weeks ago .... three?

JOHN
I couldn't be sure.

CORONER
Would you say that it was near the time Emily Gaunt disappeared?

JOHN
(his voice rising)
I couldn't be sure! The collection of firewood - unlike a marriage or a birthday is not a festive moment in my life. I don't remember.

(CONTINUED)

Watch out for Stephen's e.w.s. in this scene!

(CONTINUED)

CORONER
Just so.
(pause)
You have heard testimony that the sack was stolen from your brother, have you not?

JOHN
I have.

CORONER
Does it not strike you as being rather odd that the thief at the time took nothing but this old sack .... this sack which would sell for very little at most?

Jackson the sack as when he left

JOHN
I am not here to answer riddles, Coroner.....

CORONER
(thoughtfully)
No .... I shouldn't think you were, Mr Byrne ....
(pause)
I shall be more direct then .... did you know the deceased, Emily Gaunt?

FULL SHOT - THE ENTIRE ROOM

A slight murmur goes up among the spectators; it dies as abruptly as it's come up. There is a strange silence, finally broken by someone coughing self-consciously.

CLOSE SHOT - CORONER

He stands waiting for a reply to his question.

CORONER
(after a pause)
Mr Byrne .... I asked if ....

CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

JOHN
(looking up quickly;
his thoughts obvious--
ly elsewhere)
She was employed by my brother
.... I knew Emily Gaunt by sight ....

MED. TWO SHOT - CORONER AND JOHN

CORONER
Is it usual for you to zealously defend persons whom you know "by sight?"

"snap off" a pleasure
as Mrs B. said
(or ... aired heart ?
faithful servants)

JOHN
I would defend anyone who was being maliciously slandered.

CORONER
(mumbling)
Very admirable indeed ....

JOHN
(his voice rising)
Especially when they are being slandered by persons whose bitterness ....

CORONER
(interrupting quickly)
That is all, Mr Byrne ....

John looks as though he'd like to continue his tirade against Miss Bantam, but then he rises slowly.

DISSOLVE

MED. SHOT - MRS AMBROSE

Her face flushed, she sits in the witness chair. She is obviously upset, and we pick up the scene as she's in the middle of speaking her mind to the coroner.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MRS AMBROSE
It's ridiculous, preposterous, and downright silly .... that's what it is.
(she nods her head vindictively)

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal the Coroner.

CORONER
Mrs Ambrose ....

MRS AMBROSE
(interrupting)
Now, Harry, I'm not taking advantage of our friendship, but I couldn't sit there any longer .... listening to all these insinuations and accusations against a boy who couldn't possibly harm a fly ....

CORONER
But, Mrs Ambrose ....

Marjorie

MRS AMBROSE
(waving him aside with one hand)
I've known the boy since he was a lad .... and his only fault is that he works too hard .... and as for that silly old maid, Miss Bantam .... it's as plain as the nose on your face that she was in love with him....and imagined God-knows-what about him ....

CLOSE SHOT - MISS BANTAM

Her eyes blazing, she bites her lip, looking straight ahead.

MRS AMBROSE
(o.s.)
When an old maid's in love ....

MED. TWO SHOT - MRS AMBROSE AND CORONER

MRS AMBROSE
(continued)
Heaven help the object of her affection if that love goes unrequited .... all the devils, and all the furies ....

FULL SHOT - ROOM AT INQUEST

Miss Bantam rises suddenly, and her handkerchief held to her face, she makes her way across the seated persons in her row. Mrs Ambrose stops in the middle of her tirade and watches her. Miss Bantam exits hurriedly from the room.

MED. TWO SHOT - MRS AMBROSE AND CORONER

MRS AMBROSE
(after a pause; looking up innocently at the Coroner)
Was there anything else you wished to know, Harry?

CORONER
(embarrassed)
That will be all, Mrs Ambrose ....

DISSOLVE

209 FULL SHOT -- ROOM AT INQUEST

The Foreman of the jury is standing before the long table. The room is very quiet, and we pick up the scene in the middle of the Foreman's speech.

D.A.

FOREMAN
....that the death of Emily Gaunt is wilful murder ....
(pause)
.... by person unknown ....

The room is suddenly filled with the SOUNDS of babbling and the scraping of chairs. The spectators begin to rise and file out. CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSER TO

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN, MARJORIE AND JOHN

Stephen and Marjorie rise, but John remains seated. Marjorie nudges him quickly. John looks up and then he too rises.

DISSOLVE

MED. TRUCKING SHOT - A MAN AND WOMAN

They have just left the inquest, and the man seems highly incensed as he speaks.

MAN
(sarcastically)
.... wilful murder by person unknown! I could tell 'em who ....

WOMAN
How am I supposed to feel, with a murderer loose on the street! Is that why we pay the police?

MAN
They should bring it to trial. That's what they should do ....

WOMAN
I'm entitled to some protection .... it started with that poor servant girl, but it might end with me ....

CUT TO:

MED. SHOT - TWO ELDERLY MEN

They stand on a street corner.

1st MAN
(slowly)
They proved nothing against John Byrne .... so he owned the sack .... that's not evidence ....

2nd MAN
(doubtfully)
No .... still the man seemed ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

1st MAN
(thoughtfully)
No matter how he seemed .... they proved absdutely nothing ....

The other man shrugs and they move along the street.

CUT TO:

MED. TRUCKING SHOT - TWO SHOP GIRLS

They are walking at a fast gait along the street.

1st GIRL
(her eyes wide)
Now I ask you, would you want to work for Mr John Byrne?

2nd GIRL
(shuddering; her hand going to her throat)
No ....

They both giggle nervously and they continue to hurry.

CUT TO:

EXT BUILDING WHERE INQUEST WAS HELD

FULL SHOT - EXIT TO BUILDING

Marjorie, John and Stephen are seen as they come out of the building. Groups of people eye them curiously as they start down the stairs. They are not far down when a voice calls out.

MAN'S VOICE
(calling)
Mr. Byrne ....

Stephen and Marjorie turn. A man is seen as he hurries out of the building and down the steps.

MAN
Could we see you a moment, Mr Byrne?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

Stephen and Marjorie turn to look at John, as the latter seems not to have heard.

MAN
(addressing Stephen)
You, sir ....

STEPHEN
(surprised)
Certainly ....
(To Marjorie)
You two go on, I won't be long ....

Marjorie and John continue down the stairs. As Stephen goes up them with the man, we

DISSOLVE

MED. FULL SHOT - INQUEST ROOM

As Stephen enters the room, the Coroner and Inspector Seaton rise.

CORONER
(to Stephen)
This is Inspector Seaton.....

Stephen nods.

~~INSPECTOR~~
I'm sorry to trouble you, sir .... but the police are not at all satisfied with the verdict. The case is far from being closed ....

STEPHEN
(coolly)
So?

~~CORONER~~
Are you certain that you have nothing more you'd like to say to us?

STEPHEN
Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

DA

CORONER
(kindly)
I can understand your feelings, Mr Byrne. After all, the man is your brother ....

CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

In spite of himself, he seems relieved.

there must be an answer by him...

CORONER
(continuing; off scene)
But if there's any further light you could throw on this ....

CAMERA PULLS BACK

STEPHEN
(interrupting)
There's nothing more I can say, Coroner, excepting that I'm fully convinced that my brother is innocent.
(pausing)
Was that all?

CORONER
That was all ....

Stephen nods and turns. His footsteps ring on the bare floor as he moves toward the door and exits. The Coroner and Inspector Seaton look at one another, then

Two shot

CORONER
It was foolish to call him back ....

INSPECTOR
(nodding)
As you say, the man is his brother ....

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

FULL SHOT - VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

A few pedestrians are on the street; several stop to make purchases at the stand. CAMERA PANS SLIGHTLY TO INCLUDE a view of the street. John Byrne is approaching. Although he stares straight ahead as he walks, we are aware that he is conscious of the curious stares of those who pass him. CAMERA PANS BACK to two women who stand just off the street before the vegetable stand. They are MRS FERGUSON and her daughter, EFFIE. The latter is a small, mousey-looking girl in her late twenties. She is apparently very much under the influence of her mother, a buxom, domineering type.

MED. TWO SHOT - MRS FERGUSON AND HER DAUGHTER

They stare off for a moment before speaking.

MRS FERGUSON
(after a pause)
Bold as daylight .... among all of us who know ....

EFFIE
But Papa says there's a reasonable doubt .... the inquest last week showed it ....

MRS FERGUSON
(interrupting)
Poppycock! Leave it to the men to stick together .... reasonable doubt! The advice I'd give you, Effie, is to watch out for the quiet ones ....
(mumbling)
Your Papa included ....

CAMERA LEAVES the two women and IT MOVES INTO the store.

MED. SHOT - MARJORIE BYRNE

She is looking in the direction of Mrs Ferguson and her daughter. Her face is set and angry. Before her on the counter are some purchases. A clerk comes into SHOT:

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

CLERK
(as he places some things before her)
Will there be anything else?

Marjorie turns abruptly and she starts for the open door. The clerk looks after her in astonishment as she strides out.

CLERK
(calling)
Mrs Byrne! Your purchases ....

But she is already out of sight.

MED. TWO SHOT - MRS FERGUSON AND EFFIE

Startled, they look at one another as Marjorie sweeps past them.

EFFIE
(distressed)
Oh, dear! That was Marjorie Byrne, Mama ....

MRS FERGUSON
What of it? What's true, is true!
(staring off)
Heaven knows what goes on between them ....

MED. TWO SHOT - MARJORIE AND JOHN

Eager and smiling, Marjorie approaches John on the street; at this closer angle, John seems tired and haggard.

MARJORIE
(calling)
John ....
(she catches up to him and she takes him by the arm)

JOHN
Hello, Marjorie ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MARJORIE
John, I've been so worried about you .... I haven't seen you all week ....
(studying him)
you're looking thin ....

CAMERA TRUCKS WITH THEM

JOHN
(smiling)
Perhaps it's my own cooking ....

MARJORIE
You haven't found anyone yet?

JOHN
No ....

MARJORIE
I'll go to the agency ....

JOHN
I'm afraid that wouldn't do any good ....

MARJORIE
Why not?

JOHN
I've been there myself ....
(pause; he looks at Marjorie a moment)
There is an extreme shortage of domestic help at present ....

MARJORIE
Why, that's not true .... only yesterday ....

JOHN
(interrupting; quietly)
It's true in the case of Mr John Byrne, lately acquitted of the murder of Miss Emily Gaunt....

MARJORIE
(distressed)
Oh, John ....

As the two continue to walk, we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STEPHEN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Stephen is seated before a desk in the corner. He looks up, his face abstracted, as Marjorie enters the room. She is dressed in the same outfit as the previous scene.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN AND MARJORIE

MARJORIE
(hotly)
We're going to give a party, Stephen!

STEPHEN
(puzzled)
What's that?

MARJORIE
We're going to give a dinner party ... I want everybody in the neighborhood to come ....

STEPHEN
Well, that's fine .... we owe them a dinner .... but why all the emotion?

MARJORIE
(angrily)
We don't owe them anything!

STEPHEN
Then why ....

MARJORIE
(interrupting)
I wouldn't want them in the house, except that I want to show them!

STEPHEN
Show them what? What's happened?

MARJORIE
This whole neighborhood .... everybody ... everybody thinks John murdered Emily Gaunt ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
Come now, Marjorie, I think you're exaggerating ....

MARJORIE
(wrought up)
Oh, they wouldn't say it to you or to me .... because we're close to him .... but behind our backs, they're saying that John .... our John, is a murderer ....

STEPHEN
(after a pause; looking closely at her)
You're very fond of him, aren't you?

MARJORIE
You know that I am.

STEPHEN
(quietly)
Are you in love with him?

MARJORIE
I suppose I am.

STEPHEN
How long has it been going on?

MARJORIE
Nothing's been "going on", Stephen ....

STEPHEN
This isn't going to be very flattering, my dear, but I haven't the slightest pang of jealousy ....

MARJORIE
Let's not talk about us, Stephen. We'll get nowhere ....

STEPHEN
Yes. It's a hopeless subject.

MARJORIE
It's John that I'm worried about.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
And well you should be. He's been acting very strangely.

MARJORIE
If I thought for one moment that you too believed ....

STEPHEN
What else am I to believe? He won't talk to me .... he shuns everybody ....
(pause)
Marjorie, as long as you're on such excellent terms with him, I'd suggest you tell him that unless he begins to act more normally, people are going to think, and I'm including myself, that he did have something to do with Emily's ....

MARJORIE
(horrified; interrupting)
Stephen! Aside from all he's done for you, remember he's your brother ....

STEPHEN
(after a pause; slowly)
There's a limit to this business of being brothers, Marjorie ....

Marjorie stares at him, shocked at his statement. Extremely troubled, she looks at him and we

DISSOLVE TO:

FULL SHOT - STEPHEN BYRNE'S DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Some of the people of the Chase, as well as one or two NEWCOMERS, are gathered into awkward little knots; their conversation is subdued and spasmodic. The tension in the air is that of a group of people who have accepted invitations against their better judgment, and who are now regretting it. John and Marjorie are conspicuous in that they are seated alone on the divan apart from the others. Stephen passes among the guests carrying a tray laden with drinks. CAMERA MOVES WITH HIM. He pauses at

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

a window seat, where Mrs. Ambrose is sitting with Mrs. Ferguson and her daughter, Effie, (the two women we had seen at the vegetable stand); the latter two seem ill at ease, and Effie is wide-eyed with astonishment at finding herself in her present surroundings. Mrs. Ferguson and Effie select glasses from the tray which Stephen carries, and he moves on. CAMERA HOLDS on Mrs. Ferguson and Effie.

MRS. FERGUSON
(under her breath to Effie, as she looks after Stephen)
He seems nice .... I feel sorry for him ....

EFFIE
Hardly seems like they could be brothers ....

Mrs. Ambrose notices the two whispering and she leans in closer.

MRS. AMBROSE
(pointedly)
Enjoying yourself, Mrs. Ferguson?

MRS. FERGUSON
(embarrassed)
Why, yes ....
(pause; lowering her voice to Mrs. Ambrose)
Confidentially, I've no idea why Effie and I were invited .... we're not even neighbors ....

MRS. AMBROSE
(bluntly)
Why'd you come then?

MRS. FERGUSON
Curiosity, I suppose ....

MRS. AMBROSE
(sharply)
Curiosity killed the cat ....

MRS. FERGUSON
(shuddering, as she looks about the room)
Please, Mrs. Ambrose .... you give me goose-flesh ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MRS. AMBROSE
Why, may I ask?

MRS. FERGUSON
You know perfectly well why ....
and I shouldn't have brought my
little Effie here either ....

Mrs. Ambrose turns to look at the very plain-looking Effie.

MRS. AMBROSE
(with venom)
Don't be silly, Mrs. Ferguson ...
(looking Effie over)
She'd be safe anyplace ....

Mrs. Ferguson glares at her and we

CUT TO:

MED. CLOSE SHOT - MRS. WHITTAKER

She is seated alone in a corner as Stephen comes into SHOT with the tray of drinks. As he offers her a glass, she speaks.

MRS WHITTAKER
(her voice low)
I've been wanting a word with you,
Stephen ....

STEPHEN
(placing the tray to
one side)
What is it, Mrs. Whittaker?

MRS WHITTAKER
(distressed)
Oh, Stephen, is there anything I
can do?

STEPHEN
About what?

MRS WHITTAKER
This party .... it was a mistake....
it must be so humiliating for you with
so few showing up ... my heart bleeds
for you ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN
(easily)
It isn't important, Mrs. Whittaker, we know who our friends are now ....

MRS WHITTAKER
Didn't you know that it would take more than a party to change anyone's mind about .... about John ....

STEPHEN
I'd rather not talk about it, Mrs. Whittaker.

MRS WHITTAKER
I admire your loyalty, but I don't know if it's wise, under the circumstances ....

STEPHEN
The party was Marjorie's idea, Mrs. Whittaker ....
(pause)
Perhaps it was a mistake ....

CUT TO:

MED. SHOT - JOHN AND MARJORIE

They are still seated on the divan. Marjorie watches her guests, her face set and grim.

JOHN
(turning to her)
I don't think you're enjoying your own party ....

MARJORIE
Are you?

JOHN
You know that I never enjoy parties ...

MARJORIE
Are you hurt about Muriel's not coming?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
No.

MARJORIE
Have you seen her lately?

JOHN
Not since the inquest.

MARJORIE
(pause)
John, I wish you'd get around more than you do.

JOHN
Why?

MARJORIE
Because ....
(confused)
.... because, well .... it's best not to count on any one person too much.

JOHN
I understand.

The sound of MUSIC is heard o.s.

JOHN
(continued; smiling)
Shall we dance?

MARJORIE
(pleasantly surprised)
What? Did I hear you ask me to dance?

JOHN
You did. It's the least I can do inasmuch as I seem to be the reason for your party being a failure.

MARJORIE
(quickly)
Oh, it isn't you, John ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
(grimly)
Oh, isn't it?
(rising)
Would you like to see how fond of me the people of this neighborhood are?

MARJORIE
John ....
(she's about to protest, but before she can, John goes off; troubled, she looks after him)

GROUP SHOT - JOHN, THE FERGUSONS AND MRS. AMBROSE

The three look up as John comes into SHOT.

JOHN
(smiling down at Effie)
Would you care to dance?

EFFIE
(uneasily)
Thank you ....
(she looks over at her mother)
.... but .... I'm rather tired, if you don't mind ....

JOHN
Not at all ....
(deliberately turning to Mrs. Ferguson)
.... perhaps your mother ....

MRS. FERGUSON
(glaring)
I don't dance, Mr. Byrne ....

MRS. AMBROSE
(in an effort to cover things)
Well, John, looks like you'll have to ask me ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
Would you care to, Mrs. Ambrose?

MRS. AMBROSE
(kindly)
You know I'd love to, John. But you'd be sorry once you got me on the floor.

MRS. FERGUSON
(rising; abruptly)
I think it's time Effie and I were leaving.

Mrs. Whittaker comes into SHOT. She looks curiously at Mrs. Ferguson.

MRS. WHITTAKER
Is there someone calling for you and Effie, Mrs. Ferguson?

MRS. FERGUSON
No .... no, there isn't ....

MRS. WHITTAKER
You're not leaving <u>alone</u>, are you?

MRS. FERGUSON
(uneasily)
Well .... I ....
(she seems troubled as if the thought hadn't occurred to her)

JOHN
(grimly)
I'd be happy to see you home, if you like ....

MRS. FERGUSON
(sharply)
No!

Marjorie comes into SHOT. She's obviously overheard the scene, for she seems pale and upset.

MARJORIE
(repressing the savagery in her voice)
I'll help you two with your coats.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

There is an uneasy silence in the group.

MRS. WHITTAKER
(uneasily)
It is getting rather late ....

FULL SHOT - THE ROOM

It appears as if all the guests are aware of the "scene" going on between the Fergusons and John. They are all quietly beginning to rise. The only SOUND is the MUSIC from the graphophone; it seems loud and out of place. Marjorie goes to it and she turns it off. The resulting silence is even more pronounced and disturbing.

MED. SHOT - THE FERGUSONS AND MRS. WHITTAKER

They are silent and uncomfortable as they put on their coats. Stephen comes into SHOT. He speaks quietly to Mrs. Whittaker.

STEPHEN
I'll see you home, Mrs. Whittaker.

MRS. WHITTAKER
Never mind, Stephen.

STEPHEN
It's all right. I've got to stop by the tobacco shop anyway ....

As he helps her with her coat, we

DISSOLVE TO:

FULL SHOT - THE SAME DRAWING ROOM

All of the guests have gone now. John is standing alone at one side of the room. Overscene we hear the SOUND of the subdued voices as the last guests depart. When the last "good-night" has been said, the SOUND of the outside door closing is heard. After a moment Marjorie is seen as she enters from the hallway. She looks over at John

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

and there is a long moment of silence.

JOHN
(simply; almost to himself)
Marjorie, do you know how it feels to have people actually and physically afraid of you?

MARJORIE
(sympathetically)
Oh, John ....

JOHN
They all know that I killed Emily ....
(appalled)
.... how can they believe that?

MARJORIE
(angrily)
Don't you see how vicious they are, John? You think that because they're neighbors, and you've lived among them for years, that they like you .... well, it's not true .... they don't like anybody .... they like their nasty little backstairs secrets better ....

JOHN
I'm going to see that agent again. Surely there must be one empty flat in London ....

MARJORIE
Don't run away from them, John.....

JOHN
I'm not running away from them.

MARJORIE
What, then? Are you thinking of Stephen and me?

JOHN
Not Stephen. I'm through thinking of him.

MARJORIE
I don't care what they say or think about me.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
You should. If I stay, and you keep defending me, they'll think we ....
(he hesitates as he looks at her)
I wouldn't put anything past them.

MARJORIE
Your going will only make things worse.
(her voice low)
Stay, John .... I need you ....

They stare at each other; each aware of the tremendous attraction for the other.

JOHN
(slowly; forcing himself to say it)
Marjorie, my darling .... I'd rather die than cause you any suffering ....

MARJORIE
(almost angrily)
Don't talk like that ....

CUT TO:

EXT. BYRNE'S HOME

FULL SHOT - the street. Two figures are seen approaching the Byrne home. AS THE CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSER, we see that it's Mrs. Ferguson and Effie. They hurry along toward the CAMERA.

MED. TRUCKING SHOT - EFFIE AND MRS. FERGUSON

Mrs. Ferguson seems quite angry and irritable as she speaks to Effie.

MRS. FERGUSON
It was awkward enough getting out of the place, and now <u>you</u> had to lose your bracelet ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

EFFIE
(a whine)
Can't we go tomorrow .... I don't want to go back now ....

MRS. FERGUSON
(dragging her by the arm)
You're going in there now .... you'll get your bracelet, and that'll be the last we see of the Byrnes .... believe me ....

EFFIE
(sniffling)
But I'm afraid, what if he's still there?

MRS. FERGUSON
Even if he is, Stephen'll be there too .... you've nothing to be afraid of with Stephen there.

EFFIE
But he went to take Mrs. Whittaker home ....

MRS. FERGUSON
He'll be back by now.

They have reached the house now. As they start up the steps, Effie stops dead in her tracks.

EFFIE
(her eyes wide)
Look, Mama!

MED. SHOT - THE WINDOW (FROM EFFIE AND MRS. FERGUSON'S ANGLE)

Marjorie and John can plainly be seen in the living room. Their muffled voices can be HEARD and it sounds as though they might be arguing. Marjorie's back is to the CAMERA, but John's face seems troubled and worried as he speaks. Marjorie reaches up and places a hand on his arm, but John turns away. CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Mrs. Ferguson and Effie.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

EFFIE
(frightened)
I'm not going in there ....

MRS. FERGUSON
(apprehensively)
No .... they are in there alone ....
I wonder where Stephen is ....

EFFIE
Come on, before he sees us ....

CAMERA PANS with them as they hurry down the street. As they turn the corner, the door to the Byrne's home opens. A shaft of light shoots out into the dark street. John is seen as he hurries down the front steps. CAMERA PANS with him as he goes in the opposite direction from which the Fergusons have gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHURCH

FULL SHOT - A SMALL CHURCH - NIGHT

It's a small, unpretentious church. Excepting for a few altar lights, it's dark. CAMERA PANS along the walls, over the various statues, pictures, etc. IT CONTINUES TO PAN to

MED. CLOSE SHOT - A SMALLER ALTAR NEAR THE MAIN CENTER ONE

There is a life-size statue of a saint in a niche, and below it are many vigil lights. A priest is kneeling before it. The lights flicker over his face and his lips move silently as he holds his prayer beads. After a moment he rises, and he seems to check over the vigil lights to see that they are burning properly. Satisfied, he turns and starts off. CAMERA PANS WITH HIM as he goes down the aisle. AS IT DOES SO, we see that there is a lonely figure in the last pew.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - THE FIGURE

A man, his head down and supported by his clenched hands, is kneeling in the last pew. He is unaware of the approaching priest. The priest comes into SHOT and he looks curiously over at the man; he's about to continue on his way, when the kneeling figure looks up. It is John Byrne and a look of recognition sweeps over their faces as the two see one another. The priest stops and he enters the pew, kneeling beside John.

MED. TWO SHOT - JOHN AND THE PRIEST

They sit together a while in silence, each looking straight ahead. When the priest finally speaks, it is almost in a whisper.

PRIEST
John, my boy ....

JOHN
Yes, Father ....

PRIEST
Trouble brings you here ....

JOHN
Yes, Father ....

PRIEST
Three times you've come here alone late at night .... the first time was the night your mother died .... when you were ten .... do you remember, John?

John nods.

PRIEST
Then when you were fourteen, and they were sending you off to school .... you were afraid ....
(pause)
.... and it was fear again that brought you here the third time .... when your brother had gotten himself into some sort of scrape .... and you were afraid he might be expelled from school .... do you remember them all, John ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
Yes, Father ....

PRIEST
(turning to look at him)
You came here three times, and each time God helped you .... you found some comfort here ....

JOHN
Not this time, Father ....

PRIEST
God does not forsake us at any time, my boy ....
(pause)
Won't you tell me as you always did, what is troubling you?

JOHN
I can't.

PRIEST
Why not?

JOHN
Because it would cause suffering for someone I love very dearly ....

PRIEST
Your brother again, John?

JOHN
My brother and I are no longer close, Father ....

The priest takes a Bible from the rack in front of the pew and he hands it to him.

PRIEST
When you were a boy, John, and you were unable to tell me something for one reason or another ... you used to read some passage from the Bible .... something which paralleled your own troubles ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

John does not reply. The priest hands him the Bible and John stares at it blankly .... then he opens it slowly and he begins to turn the pages; he does this for some time. Finally he stops and he begins to read. He starts off in a soft voice, but gradually his voice grows hard and harsh. Behind it is all the penned-up emotion of a man who has been unjustly accused.

JOHN
(reading)
"Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me; fight against them that fight against me. False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge dark and slippery things that I knew not. They rewarded me evil for good. In my trouble they rejoiced; they gathered themselves together against me, they did gnash upon me with their teeth, they did swallow my soul. I behaved myself as though he were my friend, my brother. I bowed down heavily ....
(he pauses then his voice breaks)
O Lord .... how long wilt Thou look on!
(he closes the Bible suddenly and he turns to the priest)
(bitterly)
Can you comfort me, Father? Can God comfort me .... can anyone comfort me?

The priest looks at John compassionately. As he lifts his hand to place it on John's arm, the latter rises abruptly and he goes hurriedly out of SHOT.

MED. LONG SHOT - THE CHURCH DOOR AT REAR (FROM PRIEST'S ANGLE)

Without turning, John goes out the door and into the dark street. The church is dark again.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET

MED. CLOSE SHOT - A DARK NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Standing well back in the shadows of a house front, we see a couple in a tight embrace. We do not recognize them immediately. As the SOUND of quick footsteps is heard overscene, the couple pull apart abruptly, and as they do so, we see that it's Stephen and Muriel. Frightened, Muriel turns and she runs swiftly into the house. Stephen steps forward into the street, pretending that he has come from the opposite direction.

FULL SHOT - THE STREET

Mrs. Ferguson and Effie are quite breathless as they approach. When they see Stephen, they immediately begin to run toward him. Puzzled, Stephen waits.

MRS. FERGUSON
(excitedly)
Mr. Byrne! We've been hunting for you .... Mrs. Whittaker said you'd ....

STEPHEN
What's the matter?

EFFIE
It's your brother .... he's in there alone with her .... arguing ....

STEPHEN
What are you talking about?

MRS. FERGUSON
They're at your home .... he looks violent ....

STEPHEN
Nonsense. My brother ....

MRS. FERGUSON
(interrupting)
It's no time to defend him .... I'd get home if I were you ....

EFFIE
(ominously)
What he's done before, he can do again ....

(CONTINUED)

plant on script -

to her

(CONTINUED)

Stephen looks as if he's going to say more, but then a thoughtful expression on his face, he starts off down the street. The two women stand looking after him and we

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE SHOT - A DESK DRAWER

The lock is broken and the drawer has been pried open, for there is a chisel nearby. CAMERA HOLDS, THEN IT PULLS SLIGHTLY BACK AND PANS to

CLOSE SHOT - A MANUSCRIPT

It is hand-written and it's turned to the last page. We get a quick glimpse of it, but the most prominent words, written in a flourish are

No!

"The End"

Dissolve insert

A pair of woman's hands comes into SHOT and they allow the first pages to flip back over the last. Now we see the first page which bears the title,

"Death On The River"

by

Stephen Byrne

CAMERA BEGINS TO PULL SLOWLY BACK over a woman's shoulder to reveal

MED. SHOT - MARJORIE

We see now that she is seated at a desk in the den of her home. A vacant, stunned look on her face, she seems terrified, as if she is unable to grasp the content of what she has read. CAMERA HOLDS, and after a moment,

IT BEGINS TO PULL SLOWLY BACK to reveal more of the room.

IT CONTINUES BACK; AS IT DOES SO, it reveals

MED. SHOT - THE BACK OF A MAN'S HEAD AND SHOULDERS
(LOOKING OVER THEM INTO THE ROOM: MARJORIE IN B.G.)

CAMERA HOLDS. Marjorie sits for some time, unaware that someone is in the doorway watching her. When she finally looks up full into CAMERA, an expression of terror sweeps over her face at what she sees. CAMERA HOLDS, THEN IT BEGINS TO MOVE SLOWLY TOWARD HER with the man in the foreground preceding IT. Petrified with fear, Marjorie stares up at the person approaching. WHEN THE CAMERA IS QUITE CLOSE TO HER,

FULL SHOT - THE DEN

We see now that it is Stephen who has entered the room; a grim expression on his face, he looks down at her with the full realization of what she has read.

STEPHEN
(quietly; after a pause)
How many times have I told you to keep away from my desk?
(Marjorie doesn't reply)
~~Well, now that you've pried the drawer open and read it, tell me what you think ....~~
(pause) + smile +
Do you think it's good?

MARJORIE
(her voice low)
How can you ask me that?

STEPHEN
(a half smile)
Can't you appreciate a thing aesthetically .... quite apart from its content?

MARJORIE
(~~softly~~)
Not when it says that my husband is a murderer ....

STEPHEN
~~So you know ....~~ I thought I had it disguised .... but you read between the lines, didn't you?
~~(Marjorie doesn't reply)~~

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEON (cont'd)
I hadn't meant for it to be read for a long time .... not till Muriel and I were safely in America .... where no one would know .... Muriel and I ....

MARJORIE
(interrupting; stunned)
I don't care about you and Muriel .... but why, why did you write such a thing?

STEPHEN
Because I had to .... because no matter how terrible a thing it is a man carries in his head .... whether it's a love affair, or a disgrace .... or a murder even .... if that man is a writer .... he can somehow get rid of it .... by writing it out of his system .... by putting it all down on good white paper, he can be clean again ....

MARJORIE
It's not that simple, Stephen ....

STEPHEN
And in addition, he can have a story which will be acclaimed one day .... because it will be about things he <u>knows</u> .... that's why I wrote it now .... while it was all fresh ....

MARJORIE
(after a pause; unbelievingly)
How could John have kept still all this time ...? ~~letting everyone~~ believe he did it?

John must love you very much to have kept still all this time — letting everybody believe he did it.

To next page

STEPHEN
(smiling)
Don't you know?
(Marjorie shakes her head)
He did it for your sake .... he's in love with you.....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MARJORIE
(despairingly)
Oh, Stephen ....

STEPHEN smiling
~~Come now .... I'm not telling you anything you don't know ....~~
(pause)
John was old-fashioned .... he believed in chivalry .... that's why he's kept still .... but you ....
(he seems to study her)
.... ~~but~~ you .... I don't think I can expect you to keep still, ~~I?~~ ~~Jean~~ Stet.

besides he ~~was in~~ loved ~~him~~ you very much...

besides he was in love with you

MARJORIE
Did you intend to go on forever letting people think John did it?
(~~Stephen looks at her without replying~~)
How would you feel if he harmed himself over this .... if he committed suicide?

STEPHEN
(confidently)
He wouldn't.

MARJORIE
He might. I waited up tonight to tell you just that ....

STEPHEN
What do you mean?

MARJORIE
He left here sick and desperate. I don't know where he went .... I was waiting for you so that we could go looking for him ....

STEPHEN
And while you waited, you decided to do a little prying, is that it?

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MARJORIE
I wanted to see what you'd been writing all these weeks in such great secrecy .... I somehow knew it would have to do with John ....

~~Stephen doesn't appear to have heard what she's said; he turns away thoughtfully.~~

STEPHEN
(~~almost to himself~~ with a smile)
If John disappeared tonight .... if something happened to him .... it would solve everything, wouldn't it?

MARJORIE
(shocked)
Stephen!

STEPHEN
Everyone would know he was guilty....

MARJORIE
(evenly)
You're forgetting about me.

STEPHEN
(looking up)
~~Of course. I'm glad you reminded me ....~~

Stephen stares at her a moment, ~~and when she makes a quick move toward the hallway door, he grabs her roughly~~ by the arm.

VERY CLOSE TWO SHOT

STEPHEN
(softly)
As Mrs. Ferguson said "what one can do once .... he can do again ...."

MARJORIE
Let go of me!

FULL SHOT - THE ROOM

Holding her firmly by the arm, Stephen moves toward the hallway door.

MED. SHOT - THE HALLWAY

There is no light in the hallway - only that which shines through from the den.

STEPHEN
(softly)
It was here ....
(looking up the stairs)
She was coming down from her bath, and we met on the stairs ....

Terror-stricken, Marjorie listens to him.

CAMERA BEGINS TO PAN SLOWLY as Stephen is heard over scene. IT PANS to

MED. SHOT - THE STAIRS (FROM STEPHEN'S ANGLE LOOKING UP)

The stairs are empty, and the light falling through the rails of the bannister gives them a peculiar highlight.

STEPHEN'S VOICE
(overscene)
She looked rather pretty, and I wanted to kiss her .... it frightened her and she screamed ....

CLOSE SHOT - MARJORIE

She stares at him, her eyes wide with terror.

STEPHEN'S VOICE
(overscene)
I had to stop her screaming .... I had no choice .... just as I have no choice now .... I must stop you from telling what you know ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MARJORIE
(her voice low)
No, Stephen ....

MED. CLOSE TWO SHOT

Stephen is bending over her.

STEPHEN
I didn't mean to kill ~~Emily~~ her ....
but I didn't realize ~~how tightly~~ that ~~I held yer ....~~ It was so easy ....
so very easy .... I hardly ~~touched~~ had to
her at all ....

Marjorie begins to struggle, but Stephen doesn't loosen his grip.

STEPHEN
(continued)
.... it's just as well that I killed her though .... or she'd have had the whole neighborhood on us .... just as you would have the whole world on me now ....

MARJORIE
(frantically)
You got away with it before, but this time everyone will know ....

STEPHEN
(evenly)
Everyone will know that what John did once, he did again ....

MARJORIE
John!

STEPHEN
Yes. Mrs. Ferguson told me to hurry home .... that you and John were here alone .... she and her Effie will make excellent witnesses .... and anything I do to John tonight when I've finished with you will be justified ....

Stephen
Yes ... he John committed suicide I saw it that

(CONTINUED)

Explaining how it would cover up the murder...

(CONTINUED)

MARJORIE
You're insane ....

STEPHEN
Don't you see, Marjorie? Your reading the manuscript has solved everything for me ....

As Stephen's hands go about her throat, she begins to scream, but she stops abruptly as he tightens his hold and we

DISSOLVE:

EXT. JOHN BYRNE'S LIVING QUARTERS

FULL SHOT - THE STREET - NIGHT

The street is empty and deserted at first, but after a moment footsteps are HEARD approaching. By the single street light which burns at the corner, we see Stephen approaching.

MED. SHOT - AT FRONT DOOR

Stephen comes up the stairs and he takes a key from his pocket and opens the door.

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

MED. SHOT - UPPER HALLWAY

Stephen moves slowly and cautiously down the darkened hallway, and when he approaches a door, he stops. Placing his head against the door, he listens. Apparently satisfied that John is asleep, he reaches into his pocket and he takes out a gun. His other hand goes to the door knob and he pushes the door slowly open.

MED. SHOT - JOHN'S BEDROOM (FROM STEPHEN'S ANGLE)
(CAMERA IS PLACED SO THAT THE DOOR SWINGS SLOWLY OPEN IN FRONT OF IT - REVEALING THE ROOM A LITTLE AT A TIME)

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

The room is dark and there is no one in sight. The bed is not in view. CAMERA MOVES IN with Stephen. VERY SLOWLY, then IT PANS to

MED. SHOT - THE BED

The bed is vacant and it has not been slept in.

CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

Puzzled not to find John there, he stares down at the bed and we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET

FULL SHOT - ANOTHER NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Stephen is seen as he approaches a corner. When he reaches it, he stops and looks in all directions down the streets. Obviously looking for John and not seeing him, he starts off again.

DISSOLVE

FULL SHOT - ANOTHER STREET

John is seen as he walks slowly along. CAMERA BEGINS TO TRUCK WITH HIM. The street appears to be dark and deserted as CAMERA CONTINUES ALONG WITH HIM. When he reaches a corner, CAMERA STOPS and John goes out of SHOT as he steps down off curb. The moment he is out of SHOT, CAMERA PANS to a wall at the corner he has just passed. A shadow is seen ominously etched against the brick wall.

LONG SHOT - A BRIDGE (STREET LEADING UP TO IT)

John is seen as he approaches the bridge. At first Stephen is not in sight, but after a moment in the distance we see a figure stealthily following John.

MED. FULL SHOT - THE MIDDLE OF THE BRIDGE

John is looking straight ahead as he walks. CAMERA HOLDS, and when he is about at the center of the bridge, he stops and looks down into the water.

MED. LONG SHOT - JOHN (FROM STEPHEN'S ANGLE)

Stephen is seen in the foreground of this SHOT as he watches John who has stopped at the middle of the bridge. (In this SHOT we clearly see the construction of the bridge - it is a series of heavy pillars.)

MED. SHOT - JOHN

He stands staring down into the water. He seems troubled and weary, and there is the look about him of one who might be contemplating suicide. A waist-high railing is between him and the water below.

MED. SHOT - STEPHEN

He watches John for some time - wondering what he is up to. Then he begins to move slowly from pillar to pillar in John's direction.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - JOHN (FROM A LOW ANGLE LOOKING UP)

Lost in thought, John stares down into the water below. CAMERA HOLDS.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - ON BRIDGE

Stephen moves cautiously closer. Seen half in light and half in shadows as he moves from one pillar to another, his face is tense and drawn.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - JOHN AND STEPHEN (FROM A LOW ANGLE LOOKING UP)

(CONTINUED)

Pisa

(CONTINUED)

Stephen is directly behind John now, and there is no mistaking his intention. Just as he's about to move, John turns suddenly - with the premonition that there is someone behind him.

JOHN
(with a start)
Stephen!

STEPHEN
(calmly)
What's the matter, John?

JOHN
What are you doing here?

STEPHEN
Marjorie ~~and I were~~ was very worried ....
she sent me to look for you ....
(pause)
.... ~~it's~~ lucky I found you,
isn't it?

JOHN
What do you mean?

STEPHEN
You might have ....
(he hesitates as he looks down over the railing into the water)

JOHN
No .... suicide would only convince everyone that they'd been right ....

CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

His eyes narrow as he stares at John; he is silent for a moment.

STEPHEN
(slowly)
I'm glad you realize that ....
(pause)
What were you thinking of as you stood there?

MED. TWO SHOT

JOHN
Of another night on this river ....

STEPHEN
You and I and Emily?

JOHN
Yes.

STEPHEN
(pause)
Do you feel it, John?

JOHN
Feel what?

STEPHEN
The difference in us .... since it all happened ....

JOHN
Did you expect to stay the same?

STEPHEN
I've suffered, John.

JOHN
(grimly)
You've suffered ....

STEPHEN
Yes. But in spite of everything that's happened, and everything that's going to happen .... I want you to know that I've gained something ....

JOHN
(amazed)
Gained something?

STEPHEN
Yes. I have more courage .... courage to do the things that need doing .... I can feel things more clearly .... everything is much sharper than it was ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN (cont'd)
(triumphantly)
I can really write now ....(where I was a fraud before ....) I've ~~really~~ written something ~~fine~~ and real ....

JOHN
It took a murder to do that ....

STEPHEN
~~Yes. But~~ doesn't the means justify the end?

John looks at him for a long time without replying. He seems to study him as if he's viewing him in a different light.

JOHN
You must be very, very ill, Stephen ....

STEPHEN
Ill?

JOHN
Yes. Sick. Otherwise you couldn't think ~~such things ....~~
(almost sympathetically; very concerned)
What's happened to you, Stephen? To your brain?

STEPHEN
(smiling)
It's like old times, John .... ~~you're~~ concerned and worried about me .... just as you've always been .... we're sharing things again .... just as we shared our youth .... our growing up .... our crime ....

JOHN
(coldly)
You don't have to remind me of that ....

STEPHEN
You know, John, I'~~d like to feel that~~ I could really trust you again .... ~~that we were brothers again .....~~

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN (cont'd)
(regretfully)
.... but I can't ~~trust you, can I?~~ Am I right?
You've come to the end of your rope, haven't you?
(his hand goes slowly into his pocket where we'd seen him take a gun from earlier)

JOHN
I should have come to the end of the rope sooner, don't you think?

CLOSE SHOT - STEPHEN

His face lost in shadows, he looks out over the water. When he speaks, it's as if he were talking to himself.

STEPHEN
(softly)
In those first days after it happened .... every morning when I'd wake up, I'd say .... today ... today I'll give myself up .... I can't let John take the blame ....
(confused)
but then .... then I couldn't bring myself to do it .... I'd go on a few more days ....
(pause)
.... but now .... tonight .... especially tonight .... it's too late to go back ....

JOHN
(curiously)
How did it feel when you lied about me, Stephen?

STEPHEN
Lied about you?

JOHN
Yes .... by your actions .... when you stepped out of Emily's death altogether .... as though you were shedding your skin .... when you shifted the blame to me ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

Stephen looks at him without replying; his hand is still in his pocket.

JOHN
(continued)
Suppose a policeman were to come up to us here .... right now. Suppose he were to ask which of us two gentlemen killed Emily Count .... do youknow what would happen?
(Stephen doesn't reply)
You'd point to me.

STEPHEN
Would I?

JOHN
Yes.

STEPHEN
(quietly)
John .... which of us would the world miss the most ... I mean if there were a choice of one of us?

JOHN
(angrily)
Blast the world! I care about me! Me, John Byrne! Who's never been anything, who has no charm, and who looks like anybody else on the street ....

STEPHEN
Then why didn't you turn me in in the beginning?

JOHN
Even if you hadn't lied and said she was pregnant, I would have done it for Marjorie's sake alone.

STEPHEN
You're very much in love with her.

JOHN
Yes.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN

~~You're in love with her~~, you've always been .... and you had the opportunity of being rid of me by going to the police that night .... why didn't you take it?

JOHN

There are things you would never understand, Stephen ....

STEPHEN

You're right, John ....
(insinuatingly)
I can't understand my own brother expecting to go on sharing my wife with me.

JOHN
(angrily)
Stephen, I warn you ....

STEPHEN
(smiling)
Don't you think I've known right along what you two have been doing behind my back?

With a sudden move, John lunges out and he strikes Stephen. The latter is too busy defending himself and he is unable to take his gun from his pocket.

MED. TWO SHOT (A LOW ANGLE LOOKING UP FROM THE WATER)

The two struggle furiously; they fight with the blind fury of two people who have finally given way to the basic hatred which exists between them. It's apparent from the beginning that Stephen is the stronger of the two. He pins John against one of the bridge pillars and he begins to give him a terrific beating. John fights back, but dazed, we see that he is being maneuvered toward the railing of the bridge; he breathes heavily as he attempts to ward off Stephen's blows.

CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

His face bleeding, he glances down to the water side of the bridge with the realization that Stephen is attempting to knock him over the side.

MED. CLOSE TWO SHOT

Stephen has succeeded in backing John to the railing; a heavy blow lands on John's jaw and stunned, he shakes his head. In the brief interval, Stephen takes the gun from his pocket; as he's about to fire, John sees him and with a final burst of strength, he strikes Stephen. Caught unaware, Stephen loses his balance; the gun goes off as he strikes his head on the railing. Obviously knocked unconscious, he goes over the railing.

MED. LONG SHOT - STEPHEN (FROM BRIDGE LOOKING DOWN INTO WATER)

Stephen's body is seen as it goes backwards down into the water.

CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

Dazed with the realization of what's happened, he looks over the side of the bridge.

LONG SHOT - THE WATER BELOW

Stephen is seen as his unconscious body sinks into the water and out of sight.

MED. SHOT - JOHN

He hesitates only a moment, then he removes his coat and dives.

LONG SHOT - THE BRIDGE

John's figure is seen as he plunges down.

MED. SHOT - JOHN

John comes up through the water and he looks about anxiously for Stephen. Taking a deep breath, he dives under again.

DISSOLVE

MED. SHOT - THE BANK OF THE RIVER

Unsuccessful at finding Stephen, and apparently exhausted by his effort, John emerges from the water and he collapses on the bank. After a moment, he rises and he begins to draw himself toward the street.

DISSOLVE

MED. LONG SHOT - EXT. STREET (STEPHEN'S NEIGHBORHOOD)

There is great activity in Stephen Byrne's house; it's a blaze of light, and some pedestrians stand in the street gaping curiously.

MED. SHOT - JOHN

Disheveled and soaking wet, his face bruised and swollen, John stops and looks toward Stephen's house. Bewildered, he starts walking toward it.

MED. SHOT - THE SPECTATORS IN FRONT OF STEPHEN"S HOUSE

The spectators are in various stages of undress. A woman wearing a night wrap, looks up to see John approaching. She quickly nudges a man to one side of her and in a moment a MURMUR goes up among them as they look toward John who approaches. As he draws closer, they are suddenly quiet. As John, oblivious of their stares, goes through a space in the crowd which is automatically made for him, they are strangely silent.

INT. STEPHEN'S HOUSE

FULL SHOT - THE FRONT HALLWAY

Mrs. Beach, the cook, wearing a robe, is talking to several policemen who stand at the foot of the stairs. She is excited and hysterical. Mrs. Ambrose also in a robe, stands to one side listening.

MRS. BEACH
(excitedly)
He was the last one here after the party ....

POLICEMAN
What did you hear?

MRS. BEACH
I heard them talking .... arguing .... then I must have dropped off to sleep .... the next thing I knew ....
(beginning to sob)
.... she was down here at the foot of the stairs ....

MRS. AMBROSE
But how do you know ....

They all look up suddenly as the front door opens and John appears. At the sight of him, a frightened WAIL goes up from Mrs. Beach.

MRS. BEACH
(hysterically)
There he is .... coming back for God knows what ....

MRS. AMBROSE
(concerned, she moves toward John)
You've been hurt ....

JOHN
Where's Marjorie?

Two of the policemen go immediately over to John and they take him by the arm. He pays no attention to them as he turns toward Mrs. Ambrose.

JOHN
Where's Marjorie?

(CONTINUED)

MRS. BEACH
You should ask that .... murderer!

MRS. AMBROSE
(angrily)
Be still!

JOHN
(showing first sign of alarm)
Mrs. Ambrose ... what's happened?

POLICEMAN
Are you John Byrne?

JOHN
Yes.

POLICEMAN
You're under arrest.

JOHN
Arrest? Why?

POLICEMAN
You come along with us. We'll do the questioning down at the station ....

MRS. AMBROSE
You've no proof of anything .... you can't take him off like that ....

POLICEMAN
(abruptly)
You'll leave that to our discretion.

MRS. AMBROSE
You've only the word of an hysterical servant girl ....

MRS. BEACH
(angrily)
Hysterical, am I? And what would you be after all I've seen in this house? First Emily, then Mrs. Byrne ... I might have been next ....

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
(breaking away
from policemen)
What's happened to Marjorie?

POLICEMAN
(roughly)
You're coming with us.

The other policemen step up as John begins to struggle.

MRS. AMBROSE
John! Don't! You'll only make
things worse ....

JOHN
(as they lead him
toward the door)
Mrs. Ambrose, tell me what
happened to Marjorie ....

They all look up suddenly as a voice is heard overscene.

DR. STANTON
(overscene)
Just a moment!

MED. SHOT - THE STAIRS (FROM A LOW ANGLE LOOKING UP)

Dr. Stanton, an elderly man wearing a stethoscope, is seen as he comes down the stairs. He waits until he has reached the bottom of the stairs before speaking.

DR. STANTON
Release that man.

FULL SHOT - THE FRONT HALLWAY

POLICEMAN
We have orders, Dr. Stanton ....

DR. STANTON
Mrs. Byrne has regained
consciousness. She has a
statement to make.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
(amazed)
Consciousness?
(quickly)
Is she all right?

DR. STANTON
Yes, John ... she's asking for you.

Before the police can stop him, John rushes past Dr. Stanton and up the stairs.

MRS. BEACH
(frightened)
Don't let him go ....

DR. STANTON
(to police)
I'll be responsible. We'll all go up.

INT. MARJORIE'S BEDROOM

FULL SHOT - Marjorie is in bed and she looks up as John enters. He crosses quickly to her side and falls to his knees.

JOHN
Marjorie .... are you all right?

CLOSE SHOT - MARJORIE

She lies back on her pillow and she seems weak and pale. When she speaks, it's with great effort.

MARJORIE
John .... John, he said he was going to kill you ....

CAMERA PULLS BACK SLOWLY to include the entire room. Mrs. Ambrose, Dr. Stanton and the police come slowly into the room.

MARJORIE (cont'd)
.... he tried to kill me ... then he was going after you ....

MED. TWO SHOT - JOHN AND MARJORIE

Marjorie reaches out toward John and she runs her hand tenderly over his face.

MARJORIE
Your face .... you've been hurt ...

JOHN
I'm all right ....

FULL SHOT - THE ROOM

Dr. Stanton crosses to the bed.

DR. STANTON
(quietly)
Mrs. Byrne, the police are here .... they were taking John away .... you'd better tell them what happened ....

MARJORIE
(after a pause; calmly)
My husband admitted to me tonight that he killed Emily Gaunt .... tonight he also tried to kill me ... he attempted to strangle me and I fainted .... John was next .... he told me so ....

POLICEMAN
Mrs. Byrne, do you have any idea where your husband might be?

JOHN
(quickly)
Can't you see that she's too ill to be questioned now?

DR. STANTON
Mr. Byrne is right. The patient has had a severe shock .... you'll have to hold questioning her until another time.

JOHN
I'll go down to the station with you. I know where my brother is ...

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

MARJORIE
Don't go, John ....

JOHN
I must, Marjorie. I must tell them everything now.

MARJORIE
Everything?

JOHN
Yes. I should have long ago.

MARJORIE
I understand .... but come back.

JOHN
Yes, Marjorie .... I'll come back .... just as soon as I can ....

As John starts for the door, THE CAMERA BEGINS TO PULL SLOWLY BACK. John exits followed by the policemen and the others. As Doctor Stanton crosses to the bed, we

FADE OUT

THE END