

A VERY ENGLISH SCANDAL

EPISODE THREE

by

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PRODUCTION SCRIPT  
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Based on the book by John Preston

1 INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT 1

Driving through the night.

TWO CONSTABLES in the front, silent, grim. In the back,  
NORMAN. Shaken, scared. He is covered in DOG'S BLOOD.

CUT TO:

2 OMITTED 2

3 OMITTED 3

4 OMITTED 4

5 OMITTED 5

6 INT. MINEHEAD POLICE STATION, INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT 6

NORMAN, exhausted, still covered in blood, faces the TWO  
CONSTABLES. Going over it for the fifth time:

NORMAN

I'm sorry. But it's true. I had a  
homosexual relationship with Jeremy  
Thorpe, and if anybody wants to see  
me dead, then it's him -

...breaking off, puzzled, as the taller CONSTABLE, smiling,  
stands, beckons with a crooked finger for Norman to follow.

NORMAN (CONT'D)

What?

He's beckoning Norman over to the wall. Norman disconcerted,  
but he's obedient, follows. Like it's a secret conversation:

CONSTABLE

Now tell me that again.

NORMAN

I had an affair with Jeremy Thorpe -

The Constable grabs Norman's head, bangs it against the wall.

CONSTABLE

Jeremy Thorpe

(bang)

Is a Member of Parliament

(bang)

And a highly respected man

(bang)

(MORE)

CONSTABLE (CONT'D)

He is not  
(bang)  
To be abused  
(bang)  
By a lying little queer.

CUT TO:

7 INT. MINEHEAD POLICE STATION, FRONT DESK - DAY 7

Early morning. YOUNG POLICEMAN on duty as EDNA FRIENDSHIP arrives. To the rescue! Bristling, NOTEBOOK in hand.

EDNA

My name is Mrs Edna Friendship, and I'm here about Norman Scott.

YOUNG POLICEMAN

I'm afraid we're not allowing any -

EDNA

Mr Scott's would-be assassin is in his early 30's, with brown hair, and a moustache. On Sunday the 12th of October, said gentleman was seen in the vicinity of the Market Inn, Barnstaple, wearing a red rally jacket and driving a yellow Honda, registration 589 LFT. Now you can stay on the front desk all your life sonny, or you can pass this information on and get yourself promoted, which is it to be?

\*

CUT TO:

8 EXT. BLACKPOOL STREET - DAY 8

ANDREW NEWTON and GIRLFRIEND head for the YELLOW HONDA. With SUITCASES. Hurried, like they're going on the run, but...

A POLICE CAR is pulling up, opposite. Newton stashes the cases, fast. A DETECTIVE INSPECTOR and POLICEMAN get out.

DETECTIVE INSPECTOR

Mr Andrew Newton..?

ANDREW NEWTON

Maybe I am.

And he starts to swagger over to the policemen.

Then he does a little dummy feint, to the side, like he's going to run, both the D.I. and policeman feint to the side too, then stop, ha ha funny, Newton smiling, like gotcha.

And then ZOOM! He really runs! Pelts down the street!  
Police following!

CUT TO:

9 OMITTED 9

10 EXT. HOUSE OF COMMONS, COURTYARD - NIGHT 10

JEREMY and DAVID HOLMES have found a quiet corner, outside.  
Secretive. DAVID HOLMES helpless, the bearer of bad news.  
JEREMY furious, dismayed, only just holding it together.

DAVID

They've arrested Andrew Newton.  
But we can trust him, he's kept  
your name out of it, he's said that  
Norman Scott tried to blackmail him  
when he went looking for... ladies'  
services. In a magazine. Newton  
will say he got angry, shot the  
dog, it was all a silly mistake.  
It's likely he'll go to prison,  
maybe twelve months, that's  
bearable, and he'll do it, he'll  
serve the time, if he receives  
£5,000 on his release. I can pass  
the money on via John Le Mesurier,  
and that's it, we're done, we've  
bought his silence.

JEREMY

John Le Mesurier?

DAVID

Not the actor.

JEREMY

Obviously.

DAVID

Not the one from Dad's Army.

JEREMY

Obviously.

DAVID

He was married to Hattie Jacques at  
one point, wasn't he?

JEREMY

David.

DAVID

So! He can handle the transaction.  
John Le Mesurier. Not the actor.  
And it's nothing to do with us.

JEREMY

Except you know John Le Mesurier.

DAVID

Yes.

JEREMY

And you're godfather to my son.

DAVID

...yes.

JEREMY

So there's a very clear line  
leading back to me -

(explodes)

Jesus Christ, David! I don't want  
to know. Don't tell me. I don't  
know any of this. I mean, I don't,  
I don't know, do I? I never have.  
I literally do not know, and you  
will keep it that way. You idiot.

(the real problem:)

Norman Scott will *talk!*

DAVID

But he doesn't know any of this is  
connected to you.

JEREMY

Except it *is* connected to me! And  
now you've given him centre stage,  
you've put that stupid babbling man  
in court, with a gun, and a motive,  
and a dead dog, and on top of that,  
he's a bloody fairy, he'll love it!

CUT TO:

11 INT. EXETER CROWN COURT - DAY

11

NORMAN SCOTT in the dock. His day has come at last.

NORMAN

My Lord. This whole thing is a  
travesty of justice. Because  
blaming that man with the gun is  
one thing. But I blame the man who  
gave him orders. The man who wants  
me dead.

(MORE)

NORMAN (CONT'D)

The man with whom I had a vigorous sexual relationship over very many years, and that man is Jeremy Thorpe!

CUT TO:

11A INT. ORME SQUARE - DAY 11A

JEREMY steels himself. Adjusts his tie. His hat.

Across the hall, a good distance away, MARION stares at him. Cigarette burning ferociously.

And Jeremy heads out. Grim. To face -

CUT TO:

12 EXT. ORME SQUARE - DAY 12

JEREMY, heading out, walks into a SCRUM OF JOURNALISTS.

He keeps walking to his car as they follow, calling out, 'Any comment, Mr Thorpe?' 'What is your relationship with Mr Scott?' 'Do you know Andrew Newton?' 'What does Mrs Thorpe have to say?' 'Will you stand down, Mr Thorpe?'

Throughout, he remains polite. Knowing all their names.

JEREMY

Good morning, Adrian. Elizabeth.  
Hello John. Thank you. Hello  
there Simon. Alexander. Good day.

CUT TO:

13 INT. MARKET INN, BARNSTAPLE - DAY 13

NORMAN and EDNA sit with the PAPERS. Mid-morning, pub shut.

EDNA

(with the Sunday Mirror)  
This one calls you nauseous. And  
look at the News of the World...  
(finds it)  
'No one would hang a cat on his  
word.' And this is the worst...  
(Sunday Times)  
'An erratic and desperate man bent  
on character assassination.'

NORMAN

Maybe I should have some new  
photographs taken.

EDNA

Norman! Are you enjoying this?

NORMAN

No!

EDNA

You've got Fleet Street on the  
attack, and they can smell blood.  
If I were you, I'd lay low.

NORMAN

I will not. I've done enough of that, thank you very much. I just need to prove that he's lying. Cos... I had evidence. Years ago. I had letters from Jeremy Thorpe, and I gave them to the police.

EDNA

What did they do with them?

NORMAN

I don't know, they put them on file or whatever the word is. But the police keep everything, don't they? What if they're still there..?

CUT TO:

14 OMITTED 14

15 INT. JEREMY'S LEADER'S OFFICE - DAY 15

JEREMY's with his solicitor, DAVID NAPLEY, 62, sharp, shrewd. Napley hands over two sheets of paper.

DAVID NAPLEY

Two letters. From you, to Scott. Turns out, they've been locked away since 1962. These are just copies, Norman Scott has demanded the originals back, and I've got no power to stop him. I'm afraid to say, I think Scott will publish.

JEREMY

(recognising the letters)  
Oh God, not this one.  
(desperate)  
But... evidence goes missing all the time. Policemen lie. Can't this stuff just disappear?! Why is everyone suddenly so honest?

DAVID NAPLEY

I'd advise that we find a safe newspaper, and publish the letters ourselves. Accompanied by an interview entirely in your favour.

JEREMY

I can't let people see these.

DAVID NAPLEY

I can't deny, there will be consequences.

(MORE)



DAVID NAPLEY (CONT'D)  
But if you don't release them,  
Scott will. It's your version of  
events, or his.

Jeremy pointing to one particular line.

JEREMY  
But we've got to cut that bit.

DAVID NAPLEY  
We can't.

JEREMY  
Then we've got to cut that word.

DAVID NAPLEY  
What word?

JEREMY  
That word there.

DAVID NAPLEY  
(putting on glasses)  
Which one..?

JEREMY  
That one.  
(pause)  
Bunnies.

CUT TO:

16 INT. MARKET INN, BARNSTAPLE - DAY 16

SLAM! THE SUNDAY TIMES lands on the mat. Sunday 9th May  
1976, the headline: What I Wrote to Scott, by Jeremy Thorpe.

JUMP CUT TO EDNA, in her dressing gown, reading:

EDNA  
Bunnies?

CUT TO:

16A INT. URSULA'S DINING ROOM - DAY 16A

URSULA's boiled egg goes cold as she reads, with her MONOCLE:

URSULA  
Bunnies.

CUT TO:

17 INT. ORME SQUARE, DINING ROOM - DAY 17  
MARION looks up from THE SUNDAY TIMES. A terrible stare.

MARION  
Bunnies?

JEREMY sits opposite, Porridge abandoned. Seven-year-old RUPERT is also at the table, eating toast.

JEREMY  
Rupert darling, I want you to take that piece of toast and eat it in your bedroom, there's a good boy.

Rupert heads off. JEREMY quailing, as Marion reads on.

CUT TO:

18 OMITTED 18

19 INT. MARKET INN, BARNSTAPLE - DAY 19  
Empty pub, EDNA joined by NORMAN in his pyjamas.

EDNA  
"Bunnies can and will go to France,  
yours affectionately, Jeremy  
Thorpe. P.S., I miss you."  
(looks at Norman)  
So you're Bunnies, Norman?

NORMAN  
That was my nickname.  
(sad smile)  
I liked it.

CUT TO:

20 OMITTED 20

21 OMITTED 21

22 OMITTED 22

23 INT. ORME SQUARE, DINING ROOM - DAY 23  
MARION now smoking a cigarette, as JEREMY explains.

JEREMY  
Technically he was Bunny, singular.

MARION

Then why did you say Bunnies? Were there two of you? Are you a Bunny? Am I married to a Bunny?

JEREMY

No, I was using a generic noun in an imperative clause.

MARION

Well thank God it's grammatically correct. Because the whole country is reading this! Bunnies!

And she folds the paper shut, slams it down.

CUT TO:

24 OMITTED 24

25 INT. ORME SQUARE - NIGHT 25

Time has passed. The end of the next day. The flat DARK. JEREMY returns home. Heavy hearted. Shadows around him.

He removes his coat. As meticulous as ever. Taking his time. Aware of MARION, a distance away. Waiting, then:

JEREMY

I saw David Steel. Handed him my letter. I have resigned as Leader of the party.

(pause)

One bloody word brought me down.

MARION

No. It wasn't Bunnies. It's because you lied, you told the party you hardly knew Norman Scott, then the Bunnies letter caught you out. From that moment on, your position was untenable. Now, Rupert's with Alison and James, I packed that little case of his, they said he could stay the night. So that you and I can talk. About everything. I've made cod in parsley sauce.

And she walks through, expecting him to follow.

CUT TO:

26

INT. ORME SQUARE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

26

JEREMY and MARION sit with their dinner. It's tough, tense, but honest. Or as honest as Jeremy gets. But both stay clipped and tight, with huge emotions swelling underneath.

JEREMY

Before I met you. Before I met Caroline. I had... moments. Selected nights. Unfortunate nights. Involving alcohol. And with no women in the vicinity, I would... dabble. To relieve myself. And that's all.

MARION

So this thing with Norman Scott. It wasn't a relationship?

JEREMY

How could it be?

MARION

Jeremy. I'm not a fool. I practically grew up with Benjamin Britten, I've seen something of the world. I fled from Hitler, for God's sake. My own son married a hippy in a yurt. And I've toured with orchestras, I couldn't begin to tell you the things I've seen. So there's no need to protect me.

JEREMY

I made mistakes. I have stopped.  
(more passionate)  
And I swear, I had nothing to do with that gun, and the dog -

MARION

- of course you didn't, I know that -

JEREMY (CONT'D)

- it was nothing to do with me -

MARION

- Jeremy, I'm not even asking. I won't dignify it with discussion. And that's an end to it.

JEREMY

Thank you.

MARION

For what it's worth. I think people have focused on the word Bunnies. But the last thing you wrote in that letter was, 'I miss you.'

(pause)

(MORE)

MARION (CONT'D)

I think that's a wonderful thing  
for a man to say to his friend.

And that kills him: kindness. For a second, he could lose  
it. Shaken to the core. He could tell her everything, now.

But he controls himself.

MARION (CONT'D)

Are you all right?

He nods. Pause.

JEREMY

It's a very nice dinner.

MARION

Thank you.

Happier now, rebuilding:

JEREMY

I suppose... This is a new start.  
I'm still a Member of Parliament,  
there's work to be done. And the  
party could do with a change in  
leadership. There's so much new  
blood coming in. Clement Freud.  
Cyril Smith. Exciting times.

MARION

And what about Norman Scott? Are  
we finished with him?

JEREMY

Absolutely. Damn him. But there's  
nothing more he can do.

CUT TO:

27 EXT. PRESTON PRISON - DAY

27

The PRISON GATE swings open.

And ANDREW NEWTON steps out. A free man. Clutching a sad  
little bag of belongings. He walks forward, across the  
tarmac, expecting someone. And waiting for him...

STUART KUTTNER, early 30s, confident. A journalist. Waiting  
by his car, now striding forward for a handshake.

STUART

Mr Newton? Stuart Kuttner, Evening  
News. We meet at last!

ANDREW NEWTON

Longest 12 months of my life. I warn you, I want £75,000 for my story, I'm bloody Watergate, I am.

STUART

I can give you 3,000, tops. Deal?

ANDREW NEWTON

Deal.

CUT TO:

28 INT. DESK - DAY 28

SLAM! A copy of the London Evening News lands on a desk, Wednesday 19 October 1977, headline: I Was Hired to Kill Scott. Exclusive. Gunman Tells of Incredible Plot.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. ORME SQUARE - DAY 29

NOISE, JOURNALISTS, WILD, microphones, cameras, yells, POLICE holding back the CROWD. Questions being yelled, 'What do you know about this?' 'Do you know Andrew Newton?' 'What do you know about the gunman and the dog?' as JEREMY battles on, trying to get home. He no longer greets them by name.

CUT TO:

30 INT. HOUSE OF COMMONS, CORRIDOR - DAY 30

JEREMY striding, furious, DAVID NAPLEY hurrying with him.

DAVID NAPLEY

Andrew Newton can name the men who paid him, but he's never met you in his life! The police don't have any actual proof. None whatsoever!

CUT TO:

30A INT. BESSELL'S OFFICE - DAY 30A

BANG! A SLEDGEHAMMER bashes the DOOR OPEN!

The door last seen closing in Ep.2. Peter Bessell's old office, which has lain silent and forgotten, all this time. But now WORKMEN barge in. ANTHONY JOHNSON, his brother DONALD and TWO LADS. Armed with tools. They mean business.

ANTHONY JOHNSON

Right lads. Gut the place.

BANG! SLEDGEHAMMERS battering the walls. It's now revealed that Bessell's 60s office is a SHELL, built inside an old Victorian building on Pall Mall. So the veneer is easily ripped away, flimsy, the wood panelling splitting, falling.

BANG! Sledgehammers swinging!

BANG! Internal walls, collapsing.

JUMP CUT TO ANTHONY on a STEPLADDER, having a go at the CEILING. Jemmying at the lattice of CEILING TILES, and then -

Something DROPS from the ceiling -

SLAM!

THE SMALL LEATHER SUITCASE.

Anthony CHISELS OFF THE LOCK, opens the suitcase...

The LETTERS.

JUMP CUT TO ANTHONY, DONALD and the TWO LADS sit there, passing around the 17-PAGE LETTER ON BLUE NOTEPAPER, the letter Norman Scott wrote to Ursula Thorpe, long ago.

ANTHONY JOHNSON (CONT'D)  
Jeremy Thorpe. The dirty sod. We should take this to the papers.  
(of the other letters)  
Mr Peter Bessell. Who's he, then?

CUT TO:

31 OMITTED 31

32 EXT. PACIFIC BEACH - DAY 32

PETER BESSELL stands in the sunlight.

Awaiting his next visitors. More trouble from home. He's pale and frail now; time isn't being kind to him. But this time DIANE KELLY stands beside him, holds his hand, his partner and helper. And they see...

TWO MEN trudging across the sand, rolled-up trouser legs, shoes in hand. DETECTIVE CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT MICHAEL CHALLES, 50, a big, strong man, DETECTIVE SUPERINTENDENT DAVEY GREENOUGH, smaller, late 40s (they're not in uniform, they just look like British men uncomfortable in sunshine).

Bessell grim. Ready to face a tough time.

CUT TO:

33

INT. BESSELL'S OCEANSIDE HUT - DAY

33

BESSELL sits with DIANE KELLY next to him. D.C.S. CHALLES and D.S. GREENOUGH facing them, surrounded by files and papers. They have coffee, and the hut is OPEN to the sun; but it's like a pocket of dark, secretive England in here.

D.C.S CHALLES

I need to ask you, Mr Bessell, would you cooperate in bringing a case against Jeremy Thorpe? Specifically, would you appear in court, as a witness?

BESSELL

For the prosecution?

D.C.S CHALLES

Yes, sir.

BESSELL

You'll be fully aware that Jeremy Thorpe is a very good friend of mine. I would go so far as to say, my best friend. And a bloody good M.P. to boot...

But Bessell he breaks off, genuinely unwell. Diane passes him a pill, and water, stays close, supportive.

BESSELL (CONT'D)

Sorry. Not been well.

D.C.S CHALLES

Of course. And I respect your position. But we have a letter here, concerning the relationship between Mr Scott and Mr Thorpe -

BESSELL

You mean the Bunnies one? It's nothing, Bunnies, you people don't realise, public schools run on nicknames, everyone I know is a Bunny or a Beano or a Biffo -

D.C.S CHALLES

I don't mean Bunnies. I mean *this*.

And Bessell's horror, Challes hands over...

The 17-PAGE BLUE NOTEPAPER LETTER, from Norman to Ursula.

D.C.S CHALLES (CONT'D)

A letter from Norman Scott to Jeremy Thorpe's mother. 17 pages, describing his explicit relationship with her son.

(MORE)



D.C.S CHALLES (CONT'D)

(more letters)

And these. And these. Letters from Scott. To you, Mr Bessell. Detailing money which you paid to him, as a retainer. Regular payments. Over many years.

BESSELL

...where did you find them?

D.C.S CHALLES

Exactly where you left them. From your office, they went to the Sunday Mirror, from them, to us, and I get a trip to California as a result, so thank you for that.

The shock has left Bessell alarmed, a bit breathless. And Diane's taken the letters, leafing through them, scared.

DIANE KELLY

Peter, your name's all over this.

He just nods. Under pressure from all sides; his girlfriend, the police, the truth itself.

DIANE KELLY (CONT'D)

You need to ask for immunity. You need a lawyer, and you need immunity, right now.

D.C.S.CHALLES

We've agreed to consider immunity. If you speak up.

DIANE KELLY

This is exactly what your wife said. She said Thorpe would fall one day and he'd take you with him.

D.C.S CHALLES

I'm asking that you put aside that old pals' act, for something more important. The truth.

Bessell hesitant. But crumbling.

BESSELL

You must respect... I have a sense of duty. Towards Jeremy.

Pause. Bessell's old pomposity rising. And also his vanity; reduced to living in a hut, he can now be a hero.

BESSELL (CONT'D)

But beyond that. I have a greater duty. To England. And to justice.

A gleam in Challes's eye: he's got him!

CUT TO:

34 OMITTED 34

35 EXT. MINEHEAD POLICE STATION - DAY 35

A BROWN ROLLS ROYCE pulling up in the yard.

JEREMY gets out of the passenger seat, MARION out of the back; it's SIR DAVID NAPLEY's car (he's been knighted since sc.15) now getting out of the driver's side. POLICEMEN head over to escort them. Napley's confident as they head inside.

DAVID NAPLEY

Won't take long. Home for supper.  
Once they've officially questioned  
you about this Newton chap, then  
the press might finally shut up.

CUT TO:

36 INT. MINEHEAD POLICE STATION, INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 36

JEREMY sits where Norman once sat, with SIR DAVID NAPLEY.  
Door opens, D.C.S. MICHAEL CHALLES & D.S GREENOUGH walk in.

D.C.S CHALLES

Good afternoon, Mr Thorpe, Sir  
David, my name is Detective Chief  
Superintendent Michael Challes -

DAVID NAPLEY

Now I'm sure you'll appreciate that  
my client is a very busy man -

D.C.S CHALLES

- John Jeremy Thorpe, I am  
arresting you for conspiracy to  
murder Norman Scott on Friday the  
24th of October, 1975.

On Jeremy. Shock. Pressure. Like he's plunged underwater.

D.C.S CHALLES (CONT'D)

With a further charge of incitement  
to murder. I must caution you that  
you are not obliged to say anything  
unless you wish to do so, but what  
you do say may be given in  
evidence.

CUT TO:

37 INT. CORRIDORS BENEATH MINEHEAD MAGISTRATES' COURT - DAY 37

TEN MINUTES LATER, they've transferred to the MAGISTRATES' COURT, nearby. A long, subterranean corridor, JEREMY being marched along like a prisoner by D.C.S. CHALLES & POLICEMAN. But Jeremy's got his head high, holding on to his dignity...

...but as they reach the STAIRS leading up to the court, it gets worse. Waiting: a downcast DAVID HOLMES plus POLICEMAN.

DAVID

I'm so sorry.

Jeremy with eyes blazing: *shut up!*

D.C.S CHALLES

If you could just wait here. For the others.

Challes heads off, Jeremy looks round. Others? From another junction, JOHN LE MESURIER plus POLICEMAN, and GEORGE DEAKIN plus POLICEMAN, approach. All gathering at the stairs to wait; all to be charged at the same time. Jeremy has never seen these men before. These ordinary Welsh men. And this, more than his actual arrest, makes him burn with shame.

Le Mesurier's almost touching his forelock. Deakin is livid.

JOHN LE MESURIER

Mr Thorpe. Very nice to meet you, sir, very great honour. Albeit in these difficult circumstances.

GEORGE DEAKIN

Fucking mess, this is.

JOHN LE MESURIER

My name's John Le Mesurier. Not the actor. Obviously.

Pause. Jeremy dying to escape. Then to break the silence:

JOHN LE MESURIER (CONT'D)

I've always voted Liberal.

GEORGE DEAKIN

Waste of a vote.

JOHN LE MESURIER

No need to be rude.

GEORGE DEAKIN

My solicitor is from Swansea, I bet he's had his flown in from Geneva. You watch him stitch us up!

DAVID

All right now, leave it.

GEORGE DEAKIN  
And you can shut it. *David*. Or  
have we never met? Ooh, sorry, I  
don't know you, do I? You bumhole.

Challes is a long way down the corridor, calls out:

D.C.S CHALLES  
Ready for you.

And Jeremy practically RUNS up the stairs to get away!

CUT TO:

38 INT. MINEHEAD MAGISTRATES' COURT - DAY 38

Small, wood-panelled court. JEREMY, DAVID HOLMES, JOHN LE  
MESURIER and GEORGE DEAKIN in the dock. SIR DAVID NAPLEY on  
the floor. In the Public Gallery: MARION. Horrified.

CHALLES has read out the charges, and the three MAGISTRATES  
look down. The lead MAGISTRATE is 55, wiry, female:

MAGISTRATE  
How do you plead, Mr Thorpe?

JEREMY  
I will vigorously defend these  
charges and plead not guilty.

MAGISTRATE  
Gentlemen, you will be remanded  
until the 12th of September, on  
bail of £5,000 each.

CUT TO:

39 INT. CAR/EXT. MINEHEAD POLICE STATION - DAY 39

After all that formality, the INSIDE OF THE CAR is a BOX OF  
RAGE. JEREMY in the passenger seat, MARION in the back, SIR  
DAVID NAPLEY at the wheel, so frantic he's grinding gears.

MARION  
Who were those awful men?! *Who  
were they?!*

JEREMY  
For Christ's sake, just drive!

DAVID NAPLEY  
I am, I'm trying!

MARION  
They worked in carpets!

JEREMY  
I know! Since when did gangsters  
work in carpets?!

The car jolts backwards - it's in reverse -

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
Oh for God's sake!

DAVID NAPLEY JEREMY (CONT'D)  
Sorry! Sorry! Just get us out!

MARION  
And they were *Welsh!* Why were they  
Welsh?!

Car shoots forward, brakes, hard, all: WOAH!

CUT TO:

40 INT. ORME SQUARE - NIGHT

40

From the furious car, to absolute CALM. Hours later.  
JEREMY, MARION and SIR DAVID NAPLEY, with whisky.

DAVID NAPLEY  
The question is, who's going to  
represent you in court? The papers  
are trying you on a daily basis,  
you need someone remarkable. If I  
might suggest..? George Carman.

JEREMY  
We were at Oxford.

MARION  
Is he good?

JEREMY  
Well. Depends. He's a drinker and  
a gambler and his second wife left  
him for George Best.

DAVID NAPLEY  
I saw him defend the manager of  
that Big Dipper at Battersea, the  
one that killed five children. Got  
him off. Scott free. Blamed the  
nuts and bolts, it was one of the  
finest things I've ever seen.

MARION  
Not for the parents.

DAVID NAPLEY  
Quite. He was merciless.

JEREMY  
That's what we need.

DAVID NAPLEY  
It depends if he's free.

JEREMY  
He'd want this, wouldn't he?  
Surely no case could be bigger?

DAVID NAPLEY  
No, I mean it depends if he's *free*.

CUT TO:

41 INT. MANCHESTER POLICE STATION, CELLS - DAY 41

Plain Victorian tiled cells & corridor, in Manchester. The CELL DOOR swings open, and there's GEORGE CARMAN. He's 49, short, pugnacious, dangerous, wilful, joyful. And wild-haired, still dishevelled in BLACK TIE from the night before.

MANCHESTER POLICEMAN  
They're letting you go, George.  
God knows how you get away with it.

GEORGE CARMAN  
I have friends in high places. And  
even better friends in low places.  
(saunters out, calls off)  
Goodbye Dicky!

A voice calls 'Bye bye!'

MANCHESTER POLICEMAN  
Try to stay out of trouble, eh?

GEORGE CARMAN  
Oh let's not pretend. I'll see you  
next week. Get me a better  
blanket, that one is so coarse.

CUT TO:

42 INT. JEREMY'S H.O.C. OFFICE - DAY 42

GEORGE CARMAN bursts in!

JEREMY, no longer leader, has moved back to his old office. He sits behind his desk, with SIR DAVID NAPLEY waiting in a chair. Carman is loaded down with BOOKS & FILES, and a MUG OF COFFEE. He's all chaos, some of it deliberate; he's nervous and confident at the same time.

GEORGE CARMAN

Hello, good God, I'm sorry I'm late, I swear, I promised I'd be on time, I do apologise, hello, but there was this thing, I was just - never mind, sorry sorry sorry -

JEREMY

Not at all, George, it's a very good trick.

Carman swings left, swings right, where to put his coffee..?

GEORGE CARMAN

I'm just... hold on... your girl made me a coffee, she's very good, very sharp, what's her name?

JEREMY

Jennifer.

GEORGE CARMAN

I don't know where to put this without leaving a ring. Although it doesn't really matter, does it?

He puts it down on a table in front of Jeremy. Forcing Jeremy to find a coaster and slide it under the mug, during:

GEORGE CARMAN (CONT'D)

Anyway! Very great honour to see you again, Jeremy. Sir David!  
(shoves books & files down,  
with a whump!)

This is a mess, isn't it? What a bloody mess. What a great big stinking mess you've got yourself into, what trick?

JEREMY

The person who's late is immediately in charge of the room.

And it's a battle of equals between them, from now on.

GEORGE CARMAN

I want to say congratulations.

JEREMY

What for?

GEORGE CARMAN

These are the greatest charges ever levelled against a Member of Parliament.

(MORE)

GEORGE CARMAN (CONT'D)

And considering the House of Commons has had 270 years of bastards, liars, perverts, thieves, blackmailers, inbreds and arsonists, that really is quite an achievement.

Jeremy ignores the insult, takes out his NOTEBOOK.

JEREMY

Now. To business. I think the best way to undermine the prosecution is to attack them on Conspiracy to Murder -

Carman takes the notebook off him, throws it across the room.

Jeremy exasperated, looks to Sir David, but...

DAVID NAPLEY

Fair point. When the defendant defends himself, it's a disaster.

GEORGE CARMAN

You left Oxford with a Third. I left Oxford with a First.

And Jeremy, still smarting, is wise enough to back down.

JEREMY

Granted.

GEORGE CARMAN

Thank you.

JEREMY

Then I have a task. For both of you. The trial starts on April the 30th. But Callaghan's announced the General Election for May the 3rd. So I want the trial delayed.

GEORGE CARMAN

You're standing for election..?



JEREMY  
Of course I am.

GEORGE CARMAN  
Is that wise..?

CUT TO:

43 INT. QUEEN'S HALL, BARNSTAPLE - NIGHT 43

The RETURNING OFFICER - a new officer, after all these years, now a doughty 40 year old WOMAN - at the microphone.

NEW RETURNING OFFICER  
...Speller, Anthony, Conservative  
Party, 31 thousand, 811 votes.

HUGE CHEERS from Tory voters, a sea of BLUE ROSETTES.

NEW RETURNING OFFICER (CONT'D)  
Thorpe, John Jeremy, Liberal  
Party... 23 thousand, 338 votes.

The SEA OF BLUE goes WILD! All the YELLOW ROSETTES dismayed. Jeremy devastated, but he stays calm, polite, a nod to SPELLER, well done. The cheers go on, but making it worse...

NEW RETURNING OFFICER (CONT'D)  
Waugh, Auberon, Dog Lovers Party,  
79 votes.

WAUGH, on stage, owlish and gleeful - he invented the party and stood for election just to provoke - staring Jeremy down.

NEW RETURNING OFFICER (CONT'D)  
I declare that Anthony Speller is  
duly elected as Member of  
Parliament for the constituency.

Speller steps to the microphone. Holds arms aloft. The cheers & yells & howls soar. Jeremy looks down; MARION in the crowd, looking at him with a brave smile. Back of the hall, a MAN hoists up a placard, a HUGE PHOTO of MARGARET THATCHER. Tonight, she becomes Prime Minister.

On Jeremy. The new world marching on without him.

CUT TO:

44 INT. COURT NUMBER ONE, OLD BAILEY - DAY 44

THE COURT, in all its splendour. EMPTY at 7am.

CLEANERS at work. One hoovering the floor.

Another mopping between the seats in the Public Gallery.

Brass being polished.

USHERS putting out CARAFES OF WATER and GLASSES.

One USHER placing the BIBLE on the Witness Box.

8am, CLERK OF THE COURT - a 30 year old Asian woman - walks through, casting an eye. Everything ready. Big day.

These images can be intercut with sc.45 and 46:

CUT TO:

45 INT. ORME SQUARE, BEDROOM - DAY 45

JEREMY just buttoning up his shirt. Putting on his tie.

CUT TO:

46 INT. NORMAN'S BEDROOM, MARKET INN - DAY 46

NORMAN packing, fast, late, shoving shirts into his little SUITCASE and DUFFEL BAG. He's on the move again.

CUT TO:

47 INT. ORME SQUARE, BEDROOM - DAY 47

MARION stands in front of JEREMY, a little inspection. Tie, collar, lapels, all ship-shape, excellent. He kisses her. They're a good team. They'll face this together.

CUT TO:

48 EXT. MARKET INN, BARNSTAPLE - DAY 48

NORMAN runs out, all excited, throws his SUITCASE and DUFFEL BAG into an open SPORTS CAR, jumps in the back. It's driven by STELLA LEVY, with husband JACK, 30, handsome, dashing.

EDNA in the pub doorway. Sad. Wishing Norman would stay.

STELLA

Don't worry, we're old friends from way back, we'll get him to the Old Bailey! Safe and sound.

NORMAN

Bye then, Edna! And thank you!

STELLA

Love your pub, by the way! It's adorable!

NORMAN  
London calling!

And the car zooms off. Edna left behind.

CUT TO:

49 INT. COURT NUMBER ONE, OLD BAILEY - DAY 49

THE PUBLIC GALLERY now FULL. A hubbub. It's mostly JOURNALISTS, ready to scribble down every word.

MARION sits there. Bracing herself.

On the floor, GEORGE CARMAN and his assistant, CLIVE OTUNDE, 27, Nigerian, bright-eyed, a keen pupil.

Prosecution: PETER TAYLOR, 49, handsome, hawkish, grave; later to be Lord Chief Justice but, it's said, perhaps too much a part of the establishment to prosecute Jeremy fully.

Representing GEORGE DEAKIN: GARETH WILLIAMS, 38, Welsh; not some local lad, he's brilliant, later to be Lord Williams.

Also, non-speaking: JOHN MATTHEW QC representing David Holmes, DENIS COWLEY QC representing John Le Mesurier.

NB, no jury yet, before proceedings officially begin.

Mutterings in court as the ACCUSED arrive in the dock.

From left to right, facing them: DAVID HOLMES, GEORGE DEAKIN, JOHN LE MESURIER, JEREMY THORPE. They approach from the left, so Jeremy shuffles down the line first. Waiting for him, at his end, 3 RED CUSHIONS. Deakin outraged, mutters:

GEORGE DEAKIN  
How does he get cushions?

COURT POLICEMAN  
Take your place, now.

GEORGE DEAKIN  
He gets cushions and we don't!

Jeremy ignoring this. Arranging his cushions. A glance across at Marion. A brave smile.

DAVID HOLMES whispers down the line, to Jeremy, his mate.

DAVID HOLMES

We'll be fine. It's all going to be fine. I was talking to my brief. He said this could be over in three days. Five days, tops.

Jeremy furious. He has a little NOTEBOOK. Scribbles.

DAVID HOLMES (CONT'D)

In fact, he thinks there's a chance we could sue. For defamation of character. Red tops, all of them! We could actually end up, quids in.

Jeremy taps on the dock. Carman looks round, goes to him.

DAVID HOLMES (CONT'D)

Apparently, there's a witness who says Norman Scott claimed to be a ballet dancer, and he only stopped dancing when a piano fell on his toe. The man's a born liar!

Carman reads the note. Nods. Goes to David Holmes.

GEORGE CARMAN

My client asks that you do not address him in any way, shape or form. Ever.

And Carman goes back to his seat. David Holmes amazed, silent, genuinely hurt. Jeremy does not even look at him.

CLERK OF THE COURT

All rise.

All stand as the JUDGE, SIR JOSEPH CANTLEY, 68, walks in.

Jeremy, Carman, everyone studying him. Wondering. And as the Judge sits, everyone sits.

JUMP CUT, skipping standard legal submissions - and the JURY is now in place, nine MEN, three WOMEN - as GARETH WILLIAMS stands. Crucially, Carman's not expecting this.

GARETH WILLIAMS

M'lud, I would like to ask the court on behalf of my client, Mr George Deakin, to lift all reporting restrictions.

A shock. This is devastating. Carman hisses to Clive:

GEORGE CARMAN

What?!

CLIVE OTUNDE  
(rifling through papers)  
There's no mention..!

Carman stands.

GEORGE CARMAN  
M'lud, I must object.

GARETH WILLIAMS  
Mr Deakin wants it known that he  
welcomes the fullest scrutiny.

GEORGE CARMAN  
I must point out. We asked for a  
Section Seven. This trial will  
contain false allegations of an  
intimate and sexual nature.

JUDGE CANTLEY  
Nonetheless, my hands are tied.

GEORGE CARMAN  
If these proceedings are reported  
in the press, and on television, it  
will humiliate my client and damage  
his reputation for life -

JUDGE CANTLEY  
You know how the law stands, Mr  
Carman. If one party applies for  
restrictions to be lifted, then  
that must be adopted by all.

Carman sits. A murmur, all the JOURNALISTS in the gallery  
delighted. Carman dismayed. Marion mutters:

MARION  
Outrageous.

Judge Cantley glances at the dock, not amused.

JUDGE CANTLEY  
Well played, Mr Deakin.

GEORGE DEAKIN  
M'lud.

Deakin glances down the line at Jeremy, sneers:

GEORGE DEAKIN (CONT'D)  
Cushions.

It's a simple moment of spite which, more than anything  
that's happened, will define Jeremy Thorpe for the rest of  
his life. And Jeremy knows it. But he stays impassive. And  
that's the key to him for most of this trial;

his face a mask. He's too clever to give anything away. And too raw. He holds it all inside, controlled and contained.

CUT TO:

50 INT. JACK & STELLA'S FLAT - NIGHT 50

Pure 70s London flat. JACK LEVY in the background mixing DRINKS, NORMAN with STELLA LEVY and the Evening News paper.

NORMAN

Oh my God. They've lifted restrictions. It's all here, everything they're saying in court, oh my God! It's public! At last!

CUT TO:

51 INT. URSULA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 51

URSULA turns on her television.

She sits, waiting for the set to warm up. Readies her MONOCLE. Preparing herself for the worst.

CUT TO:

52 INT. ORME SQUARE - NIGHT 52

JEREMY and MARION sit, bracing themselves, Marion with a cigarette. On their TV set:

CUT TO:

53 EXT. OLD BAILEY - DAY 53

BBC REPORTER to CAMERA.

BBC REPORTER

The prosecution outlined how Thorpe and Mr Scott first met in 1961 and began a homosexual relationship.

BBC REPORTER script continues in the following scenes.

CUT TO:

54 INT. JACK & STELLA'S FLAT - NIGHT 54

NORMAN, STELLA & JACK now watching TV, armed with wine. UNDER his words, BBC REPORTER: "Mr Thorpe took Mr Scott and his Jack Russell terrier, called Mrs Tish, to the house of Thorpe's mother, Mrs Ursula Thorpe, at Oxted, Surrey..."

NORMAN  
That's me. On telly. Mr Scott.

CUT TO:

55 INT. MARKET INN, BARNSTAPLE, BACK ROOM - NIGHT 55

PUB busy in b/g, EDNA sits alone, lit only by the TV. Busily eating crisps. BBC REPORTER: "The court heard that Bunnies was a reference to their first night together, when Thorpe said that Scott looked like a frightened rabbit...'

The BARMAID, BRONTE BISAMA, African, 25, cheery, pops in.

BRONTE  
Mrs F, we've got customers.

EDNA  
I'm not missing this.

CUT TO:

56 INT. URSULA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 56

BBC NEWS REPORTER: "This night at Thorpe's mother's was the start of a homosexual affair. It is alleged that Thorpe gave Scott money, with which he rented a room at Draycott Place, Chelsea, where Thorpe was a frequent visitor."

URSULA listening. Shaken. So much damage.

In the background, her TELEPHONE starts to ring. She lets it ring. Trying to ignore it. But it will never stop.

CUT TO:

57 INT. MARKET INN, BARNSTAPLE, BACK ROOM - NIGHT 57

BBC NEWS ADR in b/g, EDNA and BRONTE staring at the TV.

BRONTE  
This is filthy.

EDNA  
I can't believe they can say this on the BBC.

CUT TO:

58 INT. ORME SQUARE - NIGHT 58

A CHILL; JEREMY & MARION watching TV. BBC REPORTER: "The court heard that Scott ordered a pair of silk pyjamas from Gieves of Bond Street, charging them to Thorpe's account...'

Jeremy stands.

Turns off the TV.

CUT TO:

59 INT. COURT NUMBER ONE, OLD BAILEY - DAY 59

PETER TAYLOR stands to address the court.

PETER TAYLOR  
My Lord, I call Mr Peter Bessell.

A thrill goes through the court. Bessell's presence will have been declared, but it's still exciting. JEREMY takes a deep breath. CARMAN's ready. DAVID HOLMES cranes his neck round, along with the entire Public Gallery, to see...

BESSELL entering the courtroom.

He looks older. Frail. Aware of the stares.

He walks to the Witness Box, knowing that Jeremy is watching, close by; the first time they've seen each other for years. And his old friend David Holmes, too. Carman's cool stare.

And in the Gallery... MARION. RANKS OF JOURNALISTS. As Bessell reaches the box... he can't help it, tired, ill and hoping for the best, he instinctively smiles at Jeremy.

The smile is met with that terrible stare.

Bessell's face falls. Realising how bad this is.

CLERK OF THE COURT  
Take the Bible in your right hand.  
(he does so)  
Repeat after me, I swear, by  
almighty God...

But on GEORGE CARMAN, scrutinising Bessell, and -

CUT TO:

60 INT. JEREMY'S WAITING ROOM, OLD BAILEY - DAY 60

FLASHBACK to the SAME MORNING, before proceedings began. A room reserved for consultations between barristers and clients. Now, GEORGE CARMAN is with JEREMY. Plotting.

GEORGE CARMAN  
Bessell. Good friend of yours.  
How d'you want me to handle it?



JEREMY

He's a Judas.

CUT TO:

61 INT. COURT NUMBER ONE, OLD BAILEY - DAY

61

GEORGE CARMAN rising to begin his cross-examination. He doesn't declaim to the rafters, it's more intimate, precise.

Throughout, Bessell unnerved by Jeremy's stare. An old friendship dying, in public, all the trust they once had, gone. And he's an ill man; he has an awful urge to confess.

Throughout: the COURT ARTIST sketches Bessell, and Jeremy.

GEORGE CARMAN

Mr Bessell. Might I ask... what prompted you to testify here today? A sense of justice, perhaps?

BESSELL

That was a factor, yes.

GEORGE CARMAN

Then if your sense of justice is so paramount, can I ask: when the Leader of the Liberal Party told you, as you claim, that he wanted a man murdered... who did you tell? Did you tell anyone in the Party?

BESSELL

No.

GEORGE CARMAN

Did you tell the police?

BESSELL

No.

GEORGE CARMAN

Did you tell Mrs Thorpe?

BESSELL

No.

GEORGE CARMAN

So you told no one that the Leader of the Liberals must be insane?

BESSELL

No. No I didn't. No.

GEORGE CARMAN

Then you lied?

BESSELL

I didn't exactly lie.

GEORGE CARMAN

Yes or no, did you lie about what you knew, to everyone?

BESSELL

...well. By omission. Yes.

GEORGE CARMAN

Then you're a liar?

BESSELL

I suppose... I have lied to many people on many occasions. Gosh. I have a credibility problem, yes.

GEORGE CARMAN

Then why should the jury believe a word you say?

BESSELL

Because I'm not lying now!

GEORGE CARMAN

Except, having been granted immunity, you could say whatever you like, did you serve in the war?

BESSELL

What..? Um. No. No I did not. I was a conscientious objector.

GEORGE CARMAN

So you only objected to acts of violence in wartime? When it saved your neck?

BESSELL

That's not fair. I did my bit.

GEORGE CARMAN

In what way?

BESSELL

I gave lectures to the armed forces. In classical music.

Low laughter throughout the court.

GEORGE CARMAN

Well no wonder we won, Mr Bessell, are you a drug addict?

BESSELL

What?!

Prosecution thrown, scrabbling for papers. What the hell?!

GEORGE CARMAN  
Are you a drug addict?

BESSELL  
No I am not!

PETER TAYLOR  
(standing)  
M'lud, I must ask you...

JUDGE CANTLEY  
No, I imagine this might be rather important.

PETER TAYLOR  
M'lud, this constitutes an attack on the witness's character.

JUDGE CANTLEY  
Let's discover that for ourselves. Mr Carman, you may continue.

BESSELL  
...what sort of drugs do you mean? D'you mean prescription drugs?

GEORGE CARMAN  
I mean a drug called Mandrax.

BESSELL  
Right. Yes. I'm sorry. It's a sleeping tablet. On prescription. But... I suppose I developed something of an addiction, yes.

GEORGE CARMAN  
Mandrax is commonly known to the police as "disco biscuits," is that right?

BESSELL  
I don't know.

JUDGE CANTLEY  
"Disco biscuits?"

GEORGE CARMAN  
Discotheque, m'lud, is a dance hall, and biscuits is a euphemism for hard drugs.

BESSELL  
But it wasn't like that, I wasn't very well. I needed them. I was taken ill, I wasn't...

(MORE)

BESSELL (CONT'D)

(pause)

I've been diagnosed with emphysema.

Even now, the stare of Jeremy Thorpe does not falter.

Carman's alert; the jury could sympathise. But he's clever.

GEORGE CARMAN

I'm really very sorry to hear that.

BESSELL

Thank you.

GEORGE CARMAN

It's fatal, isn't it?

BESSELL

Yes it is. That's why I wanted to confess. Now. At the end.

GEORGE CARMAN

That's very kind of you.

PETER TAYLOR

M'lud, I'm grateful for my colleague's sympathy, but..?

GEORGE CARMAN

Yes, of course, I'm just wondering, now you live in California, outside the National Health Service... was that your reason for signing this?

He's holding up a contract. Building to his climax.

BESSELL

I'm sorry?

GEORGE CARMAN

It's your contract with the Sunday Telegraph, do you recognise it? I withdraw that question, of course you recognise it, you've signed it! It confirms that when this trial is over, they will publish your side of the story, for the amount of £25,000, is that correct?

BESSELL

Yes.

Mutters round the court. Especially the jury. All sympathy for Bessell gone. And now, Carman can declaim:

(CONT'D)

GEORGE CARMAN

25. Thousand. Pounds. Yes?

BESSELL

Yes.

GEORGE CARMAN

Unless. *Unless!* Mr Thorpe is found guilty. In which case! They will double the amount and pay you £50,000, is that correct?

BESSELL

Yes.

Outrage! Particularly the journalists (one man from the Telegraph shame-faced). Jeremy's stare is Arctic, now.

JUDGE CANTLEY

Silence!

GEORGE CARMAN

So if you can stand in this court, and make my client appear guilty, then in the popular language of Mr Hughie Green, you win Double The Money, is that correct, sir?

BESSELL

Yes.

GEORGE CARMAN

No more questions!

CUT TO:

62 INT. OLD BAILEY, LONG CORRIDOR - DAY

62

BESSELL stands alone. Abandoned. Bewildered.

Far end of the corridor, a NOISE: JEREMY walking past, with MARION and an escort of POLICE, heavy footsteps. Bessell still wondering if he might get a nod, an acknowledgement...

But no.

They're gone. CLERK OF THE COURT walking past.

BESSELL

Um. Are you finished with me?

CLERK OF THE COURT

I think so, yes, we've heard nothing to the contrary. You can go. Thank you.

And she walks on.

Bessell alone. He wonders. He remembers.

Then he slowly walks away.

His part is done; footsteps echoing, as Peter Bessell leaves.

CUT TO:

62A OMITTED 62A

63 INT. JACK & STELLA'S FLAT - NIGHT 63

NORMAN, STELLA & JACK, and STELLA'S been reading out the court reports about Bessell from the Standard. Horrified.

STELLA

Oh my God, Norman. They're tearing people apart in that courtroom. Think what they could say about you. The Colony Room. Muriel. Francis bloody Bacon! What the hell are you going to do?

NORMAN

...shall we go out and get drunk?

CUT TO:

64 INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT 64

HARD CUT TO NORMAN. DISCO LIGHTS! MUSIC, Amii Stewart, Knock On Wood. He's dancing, dancing, dancing. With STELLA, with JACK, with anyone. Dancing to keep the world at bay.

CUT TO:

65 INT. TAXI - DAY 65

NORMAN in sunglasses, the worse for wear. He feels gruesome. STELLA and JACK, too. And as they arrive, he's dreading it.

NORMAN

Oh my head.

CUT TO:

66 EXT. OLD BAILEY - DAY 66

NORMAN gets out, followed by STELLA and JACK. JOURNALISTS shouting 'Norman! Norman!' PHOTOGRAPHERS.

Norman and friends keep their heads down, walk through.

CUT TO:

67 INT. OLD BAILEY LOBBY - DAY 67

NORMAN sits, a small figure amongst the grandeur of the lobby. STELLA holds his hand.

STELLA  
Brave heart, darling.

NORMAN  
These men. They went to Eton. And Harrow. And Oxford. I went to a secondary modern in Bexleyheath. They're going to destroy me.

THE CLERK OF THE COURT appears, with an USHER at her side.

CLERK OF THE COURT  
Mr Scott?

NORMAN  
Oh!

He hugs STELLA. Then JACK. Terrified.

The clerk walks away, leaving Norman to go with the usher. Norman adjusting his jacket. Belt. Sleeves. Everything, anything, like he's falling apart. In awe as they enter...

CUT TO:

68 OMITTED 68

69 INT. COURT NUMBER ONE, OLD BAILEY - DAY 69

NORMAN enters, with the CLERK OF THE COURT.

The size of the place. The weight. The tradition.

The people! As he walks through, the Public Gallery, everyone staring down at him. He feels tiny. And in the crowd: MARION glaring, and URSULA has joined her, glaring down, to see what this man is like. JOURNALISTS scribbling away like fury. STELLA and JACK are just arriving at the very back. And as Norman reaches the Witness Box...

JEREMY. Staring. First time Norman's seen him for years.

GEORGE CARMAN, considering the witness. Sizing him up.

As Norman reaches the Witness Box, he looks at Jeremy properly. As Bessell before, Norman is given the stare. And like Bessell did before him, Norman shrinks, intimidated.

GEORGE DEAKIN mutters across LE MESURIER, to JEREMY:

GEORGE DEAKIN  
This should be good.

JUMP CUT TO later in the testimony. PETER TAYLOR on his feet, talking Norman through the events.

Much of this played off Jeremy. Off Marion and Ursula. And also the Gallery; people ENTHRALLED. Jittery, giggly, shocked; they have never heard anything like it before. THROUGHOUT: the COURT ARTIST draws Norman, and Jeremy.

PETER TAYLOR  
...so having arrived in the bedroom, I'd be grateful if you could take us through the exact order of events. What happened next?

NORMAN  
Mr Thorpe got into bed with me. And... he had a jar. Of something it's not nice to talk about.

PETER TAYLOR  
But could you identify it for the court?

NORMAN  
Vaseline.

PETER TAYLOR  
What was the purpose of this Vaseline?

NORMAN  
It was to lubricate. Him. He put the... substance. On his penis. Turned me over...  
(indicates position)  
And... made love to me.

PETER TAYLOR  
And what was your reaction?

NORMAN  
I thought I was being sawn in half!

Open laughter all round the court, now.

PETER TAYLOR  
So what did you do?



NORMAN

There was only one thing I could do. I bit the pillow.

Huge, wild laughter, now. CANTLEY furious.

JUDGE CANTLEY

Silence in court, I must insist!

But there's too much laughter. And in Norman's eyes, a glimmer; they might be laughing, but they're listening.

JUMP CUT with a HARD CUT TO SILENCE, all grave again, as...

GEORGE CARMAN stands.

The courtroom's like a public execution. EVERYONE craning forward. Waiting for him to destroy Norman. Norman scared.

GEORGE CARMAN

Mr Scott. Good afternoon.

NORMAN

Good afternoon.

GEORGE CARMAN

Can I ask..? Are you taking any medication at the moment?

NORMAN

Why?

GEORGE CARMAN

Just answer the question. Are you taking any medication?

NORMAN

No.

GEORGE CARMAN

But you have been in the past?

NORMAN

Yes, I had a number of... emotional difficulties. But they're all behind me now.

GEORGE CARMAN

Does this explain why you've previously claimed that your parents died in a plane crash? In the Amazon? Did they?

NORMAN

No.

GEORGE CARMAN

You also said you were the son of  
the Fourth Earl of Eldon, are you?

NORMAN

No I'm not.

GEORGE CARMAN

Then why did you say it? Was it  
some form of delusion?

NORMAN

No.

GEORGE CARMAN

Then what made you say it?

And Norman, looking round, a bit lost, sees...

EDNA. Just arriving, at the back of the Public Gallery.  
Right at the back. Catching his eye. An old friend.

GEORGE CARMAN (CONT'D)

Mr Scott?

And Norman's just a bit more himself, now.

NORMAN

Well. Let's be honest. It was  
just a lie, wasn't it?

A laugh from the court in Norman's favour. Carman unsettled.

GEORGE CARMAN

Don't you think a lie is a very  
wicked thing?

NORMAN

Oh I've done lots of wicked things.

GEORGE CARMAN

Does that include today?

And now Norman's ready for him:

NORMAN

No, because I stopped doing wicked  
things ever since that wretched man  
tried to kill me. If he's done one  
good thing in this world, he's  
brought me to my senses.

Aimed at Jeremy. His stare does not flinch.

Carman's realising this cross-examination is tricky.  
Norman's honest, clever, funnier than he anticipated.

GEORGE CARMAN

Mr Scott, I want to ask you about what I'd suggest are a number of discrepancies in your statements concerning your night at Ursula Thorpe's house. To the police, in December 1962, you said, 'I am almost certain his penis did not go into my anus'. But now you're claiming that penetration did take place, to the extent that you bit the pillow, how can these versions of that same night be so very different?

NORMAN

Well that's easy. I didn't mention it in 1962 because buggery was illegal, then. I would've been arrested. And so would he!

(points at him)

Jeremy Thorpe lives on a knife-edge of danger!

Carman looks round the court like Norman is insane.

GEORGE CARMAN

Isn't this more a case of: Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned?

NORMAN

Well it would be except for one vital fact. I am not a woman!

Laughter, the court enjoying Norman. EDNA willing him on.

GEORGE DEAKIN muttering across to Jeremy;

GEORGE DEAKIN

Oh he's good, Jezz. Watch out!

GEORGE CARMAN

Moving on. I'd like to ask you about the time you went to the House of Commons with your then-partner, Mrs Parry Jones, a relationship which sadly ended in the poor lady's suicide, did you not go there hell-bent on destroying Mr Thorpe?

NORMAN

Absolutely not! All I wanted was a National Insurance card.

GEORGE CARMAN

You went all the way to David Steel for a National Insurance card?

NORMAN

National Insurance is my lifeblood!

Carman shrugs to the court like he's mad. Winning them back.

GEORGE CARMAN

Then tell me. If you're so cruelly deprived of your National Insurance card, what's your source of income?

NORMAN

Well. At the moment. It's this. I'm getting money off TV stations for interviews.

GEORGE CARMAN

Then that makes you yet another profiteer, with a vested interest in making money from savaging my client's reputation, does it not?

NORMAN

If they want to pay me, that's fine, but that's not the point -

GEORGE CARMAN

Thank you Mr Scott, we have proved your motives, I'm happy to move on -

NORMAN

No, but you need to know why!

PETER TAYLOR stands.

PETER TAYLOR

M'lud. I think the witness might be permitted to explain.

CANTLEY reluctant, but...

JUDGE CANTLEY

If we must.

NORMAN

If I'm getting paid. It's because I can say. The truth. I don't care about the money, but I do care that men like me are shoved into corners and masturbated in the dark and then kicked out of the door, like we're dirt. Like we're nothing. Like we don't exist. And all the history books get written with men like me missing. So yes, I will talk, I will be heard, and I will be seen, your honour.

(MORE)

NORMAN (CONT'D)

You can pay me, or not pay me, I don't care, cos the one thing you're not going to do, is shut me up.

(at Carman)

Thank you. You may continue.

CUT TO:

69A INT. OLD BAILEY, CORRIDOR - DAY 69A

JEREMY, furious, strides out of the court.

Overtaken by GEORGE CARMAN who HURTLES past, boiling mad, kicks a door, SLAM, which bounces back, BANG! And Carman strides on. Jeremy keeps walking, follows Carman into...

CUT TO:

70 INT. JEREMY'S WAITING ROOM, OLD BAILEY - CONTINUOUS 70

JEREMY enters. Recovering control, rapidly, as he always does. CARMAN standing there, livid. Bristling.

GEORGE CARMAN

You could have warned me. That Norman Scott is so fucking clever.

CUT TO:

70A INT. OLD BAILEY, TOILETS - DAY 70A

NORMAN locked in a CUBICLE, on the toilet, silently crying his eyes out. Remembering all he had. All he lost.

CUT TO:

71 INT. OLD BAILEY - DAY 71

And then the public, smiling NORMAN - BIG HUG with EDNA!

EDNA

You little swine.

NORMAN

Come on!

And he takes her hand, hurries Edna down the stairs, heading out, with STELLA and JACK joining them, all delighted.

STELLA

You were amazing, Norman, how the hell did you manage that?!

NORMAN  
I was rude. I was vile. I was  
queer. I was *myself!*

And at his absolute grandest, he heads for the doors -

CUT TO:

72 EXT. OLD BAILEY - DAY 72

- and NORMAN strides out into JOURNALISTS, REPORTERS, CROWD,  
his name being yelled out, questions! Anger! Joy! EDNA,  
STELLA and JACK behind him, allowing him centre stage.

And it's a proper moment of victory for him.

He stands there. Loving it.

Photos. Flash, flash, flash.

Norman's smile.

CUT TO:

72A INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE WAITING ROOM, OLD BAILEY - DAY 72A

Clink, clink, a TROLLEY rattles along. Pushed by a MEMBER OF  
STAFF. On it, SILVER CLOCHES. RED WINE. CUTLERY and  
GLASSES going clink, clink, clink, as it's wheeled along.

It's pushed into...

CUT TO:

73 INT. JEREMY'S WAITING ROOM, OLD BAILEY - DAY 73

The TROLLEY enters, JEREMY sitting, composed, controlled  
again. CARMAN, also calm, sitting a good distance away from  
Jeremy, studying him. To the MEMBER OF STAFF:

JEREMY  
Thank you very much indeed. Just  
there, thank you. Very kind.

The cloches are lifted up. RARE BEEF. A POACHED SALMON.  
The Member of Staff exits with the cloches as JEREMY flicks  
out a NAPKIN, starts piling food on to a WHITE CHINA PLATE.  
Determined to eat and be civilised, no matter what.

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
Would you like some?

GEORGE CARMAN  
No thanks.

JEREMY

From Clement Freud.

GEORGE CARMAN

I might get a sandwich later. Once I've finished my deliberations.

JEREMY

Concerning what?

GEORGE CARMAN

This is the story of a liar meeting a fantasist. But I'm not sure which one's which.

Jeremy won't be provoked. He helps himself to the food.

JEREMY

Galloway beef. From the uplands of Dumfries.

But Carman keeps staring: two equals facing each other.

GEORGE CARMAN

My problem is this: it's your turn to take the stand. I have to conduct your defence. And yet I can't help wondering... will you be as convincing as Norman Scott?

JEREMY

Good God. People will take my word rather than his.

GEORGE CARMAN

But the jury's seen him in all his glory. An open homosexual. The new world. Blazing! In contrast, you might seem a little... old. And if they prefer him, you could go to jail.

JEREMY

Then what do you suggest?

GEORGE CARMAN

That you don't take the stand.

JEREMY

But that would be worse.

GEORGE CARMAN

I wonder.

JEREMY

No. I'd look guilty. I'd look like a coward.

GEORGE CARMAN

It might be a risk worth taking.

JEREMY

Are we running? In fear? From Norman Scott? Well thank God it's not up to you, it's my decision.

GEORGE CARMAN

My case. My courtroom. I decide.

JEREMY

I could have you sacked.

But Carman bats that away, sits forward, enjoying it, now.

GEORGE CARMAN

Consider. The balance of the scales of justice above us.

(on one hand)

If you don't take the stand, you could look like a liar.

(the other hand)

If you do take the stand, you could look like a liar.

\*

And they lock stares.

Hold. Then Jeremy surrenders.

JEREMY

So which is it to be?

CUT TO:



74

INT. COURT NUMBER ONE, OLD BAILEY - DAY

74

Back in session. PETER TAYLOR on his feet.

PETER TAYLOR

Thank you, m'lud, no further witnesses. That rests the case for the prosecution.

He sits. The whole court bristling as the focus goes to CARMAN, and therefore JEREMY. All waiting...

JUDGE CANTLEY

Thank you. Mr Carman?

Carman stands. MARION waiting, and all the JOURNALISTS. Holding their breath.

But more than anyone: Jeremy waiting. Not knowing what Carman's decision will be.

And Carman considers. Decides.

GEORGE CARMAN

M'lud. On behalf of Jeremy Thorpe. I call no witnesses.

Shock! All round the room! Carman SITS!

SHOUTS, CLAMOUR, JUDGE CANTLEY trying to be heard -

JUDGE CANTLEY

Silence! I must insist! The court will resume at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning for the closing addresses.

But all of that in the background, as CARMAN closes his files, packing up. Aware he's taken one of the biggest risks of his life. He looks round at Jeremy.

Jeremy meets his stare. Wonders at what Carman's done.

Whether he's doomed him, or saved him.

CUT TO:

75 OMITTED 75

76 OMITTED 76

77 EXT. OLD BAILEY - DAY 77

BBC REPORTER to CAMERA.

BBC REPORTER

The surprise announcement means  
that Mr Thorpe won't take the  
stand, and will not be questioned  
on his role in this remarkable  
affair. He will remain silent.

CUT TO:

78 INT. JACK & STELLA'S FLAT - NIGHT 78

NORMAN, with STELLA & JACK and their guest EDNA, watching TV.

EDNA  
The coward.

STELLA  
Is he allowed to do that?

EDNA  
It's the establishment. Same as ever. This whole thing's been a stitch-up, right from the start.

But Norman's watching quietly. Wondering. Because Jeremy's silence has prevented him from destroying Norman. Perhaps.

CUT TO:

79

INT. COURT NUMBER ONE, OLD BAILEY - DAY

79

NEW DAY. And JUDGE CANTLEY gives his summing-up.

Reactions throughout; JEREMY and MARION, with CARMAN scarcely able to believe how good this is. The PROSECUTION appalled.

JUDGE CANTLEY  
This is a very serious charge and a rather bizarre and surprising case. The accused are men of hitherto unblemished reputation. Mr Thorpe is a Privy Councillor, a former Leader of the Liberal party and a national figure with a very distinguished public record. As we consider Mr Bessell's evidence, he's plainly a very intelligent man. But having sold his story in a deplorable contract with the Sunday Telegraph, he told us that he was a Christian, at the same time being sexually promiscuous. Therefore, he is a humbug. I now turn to the evidence of Mr Scott. You will remember him well. A hysterical, warped personality, an accomplished sponger, and very skilful at exciting and exploiting sympathy. A spineless, neurotic character, addicted to self-advertisement. He is a crook. He is a fraud. He is a sponger. He is a whiner. He is a parasite. Of course, I'm not suggesting you should not believe him. That is not for me. I am not expressing any opinion. But any examination of Mr Scott's motives must take into account the depth of his malice.

(MORE)

JUDGE CANTLEY (CONT'D)

You have seen this wretched Scott in the witness box, you have seen his vindictive attitude. I leave it for you to decide. As for Mr Thorpe, we may not assume that affection means buggery. And you must ask yourself if you are sure that Mr Thorpe seriously and genuinely tried to persuade others to murder Mr Scott. And if there is any reasonable doubt, you will acquit.

And he gives the jury a little wave.

JUDGE CANTLEY (CONT'D)

You may go now. Take as long as you like. We shall wait for you.

The jury starts to leave. Muttering around the court - amazement, at the speech! CLIVE OTUNDE delighted:

CLIVE OTUNDE

That was good.

GEORGE CARMAN

Old fool.

CLIVE OTUNDE

But he's on our side.

GEORGE CARMAN

These things should be won by me. Not the judge.

JUDGE CANTLEY stands to go.

CLERK OF THE COURT

All rise.

EVERYONE stands. CARMAN looks round at JEREMY.

DAVID HOLMES, GEORGE DEAKIN and JOHN LE MESURIER are filing away, Jeremy last to leave. Still giving nothing away, but a glance at Carman. A glance at MARION in the Public Gallery. Then Jeremy leaves, to face his greatest indignity.

CUT TO:

80

INT. OLD BAILEY, LONG CORRIDOR - DAY

80

CLICK! HANDCUFFS are fastened on JEREMY's wrists.

POLICE & PRISON GUARD with him, as he faces MARION & CARMAN.

MARION

We'll see you tomorrow.

JEREMY  
I'll be fine.

GEORGE CARMAN  
I've sent word ahead, that you have  
a stomach upset. They'll put you  
in the hospital wing.

Jeremy just nods. Turns. Goes, with his escort. It's a  
long, echoing corridor. Marion upset, as they watch him go.

MARION  
Is there nothing you can do?

GEORGE CARMAN  
That's the law, I'm afraid. The  
jury retires, bail is withdrawn.

CUT TO:

81 EXT. OLD BAILEY, YARD - DAY

81

POLICE & PRISON GUARDS lead JEREMY lead him towards a PRISON  
VAN, with DAVID HOLMES, GEORGE DEAKIN, JOHN LE MESURIER, all  
handcuffed, and handcuffed *together*, all linked by a CHAIN.

As they clamber up into the van:

PRISON GUARD  
Now lie on the floor, all of you.

GEORGE DEAKIN  
What for?

PRISON GUARD  
So they can't take photos, don't  
argue, get down, quick as you can.  
Come on! Down! On the floor!

And he climbs in to join them, police SLAM THE DOOR SHUT.

Awkwardly, the prisoners get on to their knees.

And then lie on the floor.

The guard bangs the side of the van, the ENGINE starts up.

Jeremy Thorpe is lying on the floor uncomfortably face-to-  
face with David Holmes, John le Mesurier trying a hopeless  
smile, George Deakin furious, as the van bumps along.

DAVID HOLMES  
I never gave them your name. All  
this time, I've said nothing.

Jeremy livid, spins on the spot, on the floor, to turn away.

Then the HAMMERING STARTS.

Journalists, outside, VOICES: "Mr Thorpe! Mr Thorpe! Mr Thorpe! Jeremy! Jeremy! Jeremy!" Banging the metal sides. The prisoners trapped inside a drum. Jeremy lies there, in the noise, bumping along. The lowest he will ever get.

CUT TO:

82 INT. PRISON, HOSPITAL WING - NIGHT 82

JEREMY sits on a thin metal BED, in prison regulation clothes. The room is stark, plain, empty.

He just sits still. Distant prison noises from off.

A BELL rings, 10pm. SLAM! The LIGHTS GO OFF.

Jeremy sits there in the dark.

CUT TO:

83 INT. PRISON VAN - DAY 83

DAYLIGHT. JEREMY, back in his own clothes, HANDCUFFED and CHAINED to DAVID HOLMES, JOHN LE MESURIER, GEORGE DEAKIN. Bumping along, sitting on seats, until they reach the court.

Jeremy's control is extraordinary.

CUT TO:

84 INT. OLD BAILEY, LONG CORRIDOR - DAY 84

JEREMY sits in the long corridor. The waiting room drove him mad, so he's sitting here. One end of the corridor leads off to the prison van, the other to the court, and freedom. He sits centre, suspended. Waiting for the verdict.

A POLICE GUARD with him, but way off down the corridor, reduced to a blur. Jeremy is a man alone.

CUT TO:

85 INT. CYPRIOT CAFE, LONDON - DAY 85

NORMAN sits alone.

It's a comedown after his victory outside court. Normal life has taken over again. He's in a small, corridor-like Central London greasy spoon. Tea urn. CYPRIOT OWNERS, a cuppa and a baklava. RADIO 2, Haven't Stopped Dancing Yet by Gonzalez.

And Norman waits.

CUT TO:

86

INT. OLD BAILEY, LONG CORRIDOR - DAY

86

JEREMY sits there...

As GEORGE CARMAN strolls up.

GEORGE CARMAN  
Nothing yet.

Jeremy just nods.

George pulls up a plastic chair. Sits roughly opposite Jeremy. In the no man's land of this long, empty corridor.

Hold the silence, then:

GEORGE CARMAN (CONT'D)  
They will be wondering. Whether  
this man wanted that man dead. Or  
whether he just *said* he wanted him  
dead, so often, that one day,  
someone listened..?

Jeremy stares at him. No reply. Because now, in private, Carman is going into forbidden territory; he is asking whether Jeremy is guilty. And yet he also knows he won't get an answer, and has something more important on his mind:

GEORGE CARMAN (CONT'D)  
But I still keep wondering  
something else. Why Norman.  
I have a particular interest.  
Between you and me...  
(leans forward; a secret)  
I've been there. With men.

Jeremy gives nothing away, but rapt with attention, now.

GEORGE CARMAN (CONT'D)  
Before I was married. While I was  
married. Next week. So I know  
what it's like. The stink of them,  
and the sweat. And the joy. So I  
wonder why a man with your power  
and privilege would choose him.

JEREMY  
Except I did not have a  
relationship with Norman Scott.

GEORGE CARMAN  
Jeremy, I kept you off the witness  
stand to save your life.  
(MORE)

GEORGE CARMAN (CONT'D)

The prosecution had evidence. They had men. From the pubs. Men from the streets. Men who know you.

JEREMY

All of them liars.

GEORGE CARMAN

And I know those men. I know they last for one night. But with Norman Scott... it went on for years. It was different, you wrote to him, you helped him. You loved him. Why that man?

Jeremy so wanting to talk. He's been disgraced. He's been mocked. He's been to prison. But still his defences are intact; this is as close to a confession as he will ever get.

JEREMY

I would imagine. I can only speculate, but...

(pause)

If you do know those men, George. Then you know those nights.

CUT TO:

87 INT. DOCKYARD PUB - NIGHT

87

Fast, vivid IMAGES.

A ROUGH PUB, full of cigarette smoke. JEREMY, 20 years ago, turning to MEET a STRAPPING BLONDE MAN, with a GRIN.

CUT TO:

88 EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

88

Darkness, shadows, JEREMY, 10 years ago, walking past a SKINHEAD. Jeremy turns back to look, and so does the man.

Eye contact.

CUT TO:

89 INT. JEREMY'S FLAT, MARSHAM COURT - NIGHT

89

JEREMY, five years ago, opens the door, expecting:

A TALL BLACK MAN. With a leer. He's been summoned.

CUT TO:



90 INT. OLD BAILEY, LONG CORRIDOR - DAY 90

JEREMY  
And you know how those nights end.

CUT TO:

91 INT. JEREMY'S FLAT, MARSHAM COURT - NIGHT 91

20 years ago, the STRAPPING BLONDE MAN is half naked, unbuttoned, JEREMY half-dressed. But panicking, the night's gone wrong, out of control - the man's drunk, lurching, clutching a WHISKY, shoves Jeremy to the floor, violent -

BLONDE MAN  
You touched me, you dirty queer,  
you fucking touched me -

He throws the whisky, Jeremy's precious ornaments, SMASH!

CUT TO:

92 EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT 92

10 years ago, THE SKINHEAD holds JEREMY by the throat, against the wall, with one hand, his other hand expertly rips out Jeremy's pocket-watch, wallet, money. Jeremy terrified.

CUT TO:

93 INT. JEREMY'S FLAT, MARSHAM COURT - NIGHT 93

Five years ago, TALL BLACK MAN on top of JEREMY on the BED - both half-dressed, as it all goes wrong, turns violent, Jeremy struggling, the man slapping his face again and again -

TALL BLACK MAN  
D'you like it? Do you? Do you?  
Do you? Do you?

CUT TO:

94 INT. OLD BAILEY, LONG CORRIDOR - DAY 94

JEREMY and CARMAN look at each other. Understanding.

JEREMY  
Given those men. It may be. I  
suppose. One could imagine...  
That Norman Scott was the best.

And they sit there, in silence.

Finally knowing each other.

Hold.

Then CLIVE OTUNDE approaches from the direction of the court.

CLIVE OTUNDE  
They're coming back.

Jeremy stands. Carman stands.

They head off.

CUT TO:

95 INT. COURT NUMBER ONE, OLD BAILEY - DAY 95

THE PUBLIC GALLERY, a fever of chat, excitement, speculation. MARION on edge, and now URSULA has joined her, with MONOCLE.

All the JOURNALISTS.

And EDNA sits upright, proud. Here to see justice done.

On the floor, GEORGE CARMAN, CLIVE OTUNDE in place, and PETER TAYLOR, along with all the other BARRISTERS. The ACCUSED in the dock. JEREMY, then JOHN LE MESURIER, then GEORGE DEAKIN, then DAVID HOLMES. Watching the JURY taking its seats.

CLERK OF THE COURT  
All rise.

EVERYONE STANDS as JUDGE CANTLEY arrives.

CUT TO:

96 INT. CYPRIOT CAFE, LONDON - DAY 96

CLOSER on NORMAN. Wondering about the verdict.

CUT TO:

97 INT. COURT NUMBER ONE, OLD BAILEY - DAY 97

Foreman of the Jury, CELIA KETTLE-WILLIAMS, 45, stands; a teacher, elected foreman because she has the clearest voice.

The ACCUSED, all STANDING.

EVERYONE hanging on every word.

CLERK OF THE COURT  
On the charge of conspiracy to murder do you find the defendant, David Holmes, guilty or not guilty?

CELIA KETTLE-WILLIAMS  
Not guilty.

DAVID HOLMES reels, almost faints.

CLERK OF THE COURT  
On the charge of conspiracy to  
murder do you find the defendant,  
George Deakin, guilty or not  
guilty?

CELIA KETTLE-WILLIAMS  
Not guilty.

GEORGE DEAKIN, of all people, bursts into tears.

CLERK OF THE COURT  
On the charge of conspiracy to  
murder do you find the defendant,  
John Le Mesurier, guilty or not  
guilty?

CELIA KETTLE-WILLIAMS  
Not guilty.

JOHN LE MESURIER gives a polite little nod.

CLERK OF THE COURT  
On the charge of conspiracy to  
murder do you find the defendant,  
Jeremy Thorpe, guilty or not  
guilty?

CELIA KETTLE-WILLIAMS  
Not guilty.

A gasp around the court, but only for a second, and JEREMY  
keeps his composure, because it's not quite over.

CLERK OF THE COURT  
And on the second charge of  
incitement to murder do you find  
the defendant, Jeremy Thorpe,  
guilty or not guilty?

CELIA KETTLE-WILLIAMS  
Not guilty.

A WHOOP and ROAR from the CROWD! Huge support for Jeremy.

Jeremy still frozen for a second. Le Mesurier grabs his arm.

JOHN LE MESURIER  
Well done!

And Jeremy's mask cracks. The tension breaks. He GRINS!  
Shucks off Le Mesurier, calls across to Marion:

JEREMY  
Darling, we did it!

MARION  
Bravo! I say bravo!

Though URSULA is simply turning to go, no celebration.

EDNA is disgusted, calls out:

EDNA  
Outrageous. It's outrageous!

Journalists rushing for the door, the court in chaos.

JUDGE CANTLEY is furious!

JUDGE CANTLEY  
Keep still! Stand still! Or  
regret it!

But he's ignored.

CARMAN shakes CLIVE OTUNDE's hand. Gathers his things.

Jeremy overjoyed, vigorous, takes hold of his three cushions.  
Slings them out into the court! One! Two! Three!

CUT TO:

98 INT. CYPRIOT CAFE, LONDON - DAY 98

NORMAN listening to the Radio 2 news, in the background.

NEWSREADER: 'The former Leader of the Liberal Party, Jeremy  
Thorpe, has today been found not guilty of a charge of  
conspiracy to murder, and not guilty of incitement...'

Many things cross Norman's face. He's upset. He could cry,  
for a second, on the edge of tears, covers his face.

But deep breath. He has a word with himself. Recovers. As  
he always does. Even a wild little laugh, for a second.

Then he eats his baklava.

CUT TO:

99 INT. OLD BAILEY, ENTRANCE - DAY 99

JEREMY, in full pomp, descending the stairs with MARION.  
Outside, the roar of THE CROWD waiting for them.

From the side, DAVID HOLMES, all desperate smiles.

DAVID HOLMES  
We did it then! We did it!

Reaching out for a handshake. But Jeremy walks right past.

DAVID HOLMES (CONT'D)  
Well done!

David is excluded. For now, and for good.

And the NOISE from the entrance doors RAMPS UP -

CUT TO:

100 EXT. OLD BAILEY - DAY 100

JEREMY steps out. The famous image: POLICEMEN link arms outside the Old Bailey, in two rows, forming a corridor. They're holding back the CROWD, JOURNALISTS, PHOTOGRAPHERS, NEWS CREWS as JEREMY walks into the corridor. And he is supreme, in this moment. Absolutely victorious.

MARION stays behind him, Jeremy stops. Holds up both arms.

The crowd wild, the policemen struggling.

Then Jeremy brings Marion forward.

They stand there, united.

CUT TO:

101 INT. CYPRIOT CAFE, LONDON - DAY 101

NORMAN's bought another CAKE for later, in a paper bag, just paying the CYPRIOT OWNER 50p, with 30p change.

CYPRIOT OWNER  
All finished for the day?

NORMAN  
I think so, yeah. Thanks.

And off he goes.

CUT TO:

101A EXT. LONDON STREET - DAY 101A

NORMAN, clutching his cake, leaves the cafe, and sees a RED DOUBLE DECKER BUS. He hurries, and hops on to it.

CUT TO:

102 EXT. ORME SQUARE - DAY 102

JEREMY, MARION and URSULA appear on high.

Orme Square has a STONE BALCONY with a carved balustrade. The three stand there, looking magnificent, and wave down.

BELOW: A CROWD, and JOURNALISTS, CAMERAS. Cheers, roars!

JEREMY waves.

MARION waves.

The CROWD cheers.

Marion leads RUPERT, now 10, over to one side...

Staying on Jeremy. And URSULA is now behind him. He doesn't look round, his mother is just a voice in his ear.

URSULA

Of course, you're ruined. You know that, don't you?

Jeremy gives no reaction. She melts away. He stays there with his head held high. Waving to the people.

And then, beyond, far away...

A RED DOUBLE BECKER BUS pulls into the street.

JEREMY looks in that direction. He can't see, he can't know, and it can't be the same bus.

But perhaps.

CUT TO:

103 OMITTED 103

104 OMITTED 104

105 INT. DOUBLE DECKER BUS - DAY 105

NORMAN sits on the bus, with his CAKE in a little bag.

Thinking about everything.

He looks off, into the distance, down the street.

He can't see Jeremy, he can't know he's there, he can't even be on the same street.

But perhaps.

INTERCUT SC.104 and 105.

Jeremy looking RIGHT TO LEFT.

Norman looking LEFT TO RIGHT.

Two men, suspended in that moment.

Their lives changed forever, defined forever, by each other.

Then...

The moment's gone.

The BUS judders, TURNS, driving away, taking Norman with it.

Jeremy watches the bus recede into the distance.

He smiles, a little.

Then he turns away.

CUT TO BLACK.

MUSIC.

END ON CARDS, against BLACK.

A photo of JEREMY THORPE. CAPTION:

*Jeremy Thorpe never returned to politics. In 1985, he was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. Marion cared for him for the rest of his life.*

CUT TO:

A photo of PETER BESSELL & DIANE KELLY. CAPTION:

*Peter Bessell never returned to Britain. He married Diane Kelly and died in 1985.*

CUT TO:

A photo of DAVID HOLMES. CAPTION:

*David Holmes became the manager of a roller-disco in Camden.*

CUT TO:

A photo of JUDGE CANTLEY. Alongside that, PLAY IN FOOTAGE, Peter Cook, Secret Policeman's Ball, his satire of Cantley. "A self-confessed player of the pink oboe..." CAPTION:

*Chief Justice Cantley was widely mocked and ridiculed.*

CUT TO:

106 INT. CHURCH - DAY 106  
This image contained within the CARDS of the final captions.  
CU on a COFFIN. CAPTION:  
*Marion Thorpe died in 2014. Jeremy died nine months later.*  
A HAT is placed on the coffin. Jeremy's famous BROWN TRILBY.  
CUT TO:

107 EXT. DEVON COTTAGE - DAY 107  
This image contained within the cards of the final captions.  
NORMAN SCOTT - the real Norman Scott - stands in the  
sunshine, in front of his 11th Century cottage. CAPTION:  
*Norman Scott is alive and well. He has 11 dogs.*  
Then add: *He still hasn't got his National Insurance card.*

END OF EPISODE THREE