

Four

By

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FADE IN

INT. CAR - DUSK

LOUISE, A beautiful pale skinned woman with short blonde hair in her late 30's is at the wheel.

PAUL, a handsome, muscular, blonde man of a similar age with piercing blue eyes sits beside her.

The stereo is on at a low volume.

Louise glances towards Paul, taking her eyes off the road briefly.

LOUISE  
You look nervous.

She takes one hand off the steering wheel and places it on his thigh.

LOUISE (CONT'D)  
Are you sure you want to do this?

Paul turns his head away from her and looks out of the side window. His voice sounds distraught.

PAUL  
I'm not sure. What if it fucks  
everything up?  
(Sighs)

LOUISE  
How is everything gonna get fucked  
up?  
(reassuringly)  
We know them, they're good friends.  
I thought this had always been your  
fantasy?

He turns towards her.

PAUL  
It has, but I'm just thinking that  
sometimes fantasies should stay as  
fantasies, ya know?

LOUISE  
(smiling)  
Don't worry babe, it's just nerves.  
A few drinks to loosen you up and  
you'll be fine. Trust me. You'll be  
in your element.

He forces a smile back to her and turns up the volume on the car stereo.

He turns to look out of the windscreen at the road ahead.

EXT: COUNTRY LANE- DUSK

Their red Jaguar drives away into the distance.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE- DUSK

The exterior of the house, there is a 4x4 and an Audi parked on the drive. The Jaguar pulls up beside them.

Louise gets out of the car shortly followed by Paul.

She hands the keys to Paul, He presses the key fob and locks the doors.

They walk arm in arm towards the door.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- KITCHEN/DINING ROOM

There is a flurry of activity as AMANDA, a strikingly tall, good looking brunette in her late 30's, and GREG, a middle aged, averagely built man with greying hair are flitting between the kitchen and the dining room.

They prepare the huge table, which is set for four people, pouring wine and making last minute checks that everything is perfect.

They hear a knock on the door in the distance, look at each other and smile.

GREG

I'll get it, you finish what you're doing.

He walks out of the dining room to answer the door.

Amanda checks her breath by cupping her hand over her mouth and nose.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- CORRIDOR

A long corridor with framed pictures on the walls.

Greg walks towards the frosted glass door, through which the blurred silhouette of two people can vaguely be seen.

He runs his fingers through his hair and opens the door to greet Paul and Louise.

GREG

Louise, you look stunning.

He leans towards her, and kisses both her cheeks.

LOUISE

Thank you Greg. You smell delicious!

GREG

(Laughs)

Thank you Louise. I think it's the one you got me for my birthday actually.

Greg steps aside allowing Louise to walk past, and down the corridor. He leans towards Paul and offers out his hand. The handshake turns into a awkward hug.

GREG

Good to see you buddy.

Paul slaps him on the back three times, and they part. He steps in past Greg as the front door is closed and bolted.

EXT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- NIGHT

It is now twilight.

The house is in darkness apart from a lantern emitting ambient light next to the front door.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE-DINING ROOM

The hosts and their two guests are sat at the dining table finishing off their meals. Paul picks up his wine glass and downs the remains.

AMANDA

More wine I think, or would you prefer Gin, Louise? I love a drop

AMANDA  
of the old 'mothers ruin',  
personally!

LOUISE  
No, Wine will be lovely, thanks.

AMANDA  
Greg, go and get another bottle of  
red from the cellar please.

She gestures towards the cellar.

Greg, following orders, goes off in search of more wine.

AMANDA (CONT'D)  
Lets go through to the living room,  
or shall we...cut out the  
middleman?  
(Laughs)

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE-BEDROOM

The bedroom is lavishly decorated, with vases of fresh flowers on the dresser, and a huge bed in front of the windows.

The Venetian blinds are closed by Amanda, as Paul and Louise perch awkwardly on the side of the bed.

GREG (O.S.)  
Where are you?

AMANDA  
(shouting)  
We're up here. Bring the wine.

Greg's footsteps can be heard coming up the stairs getting gradually louder until he enters the room.

GREG  
Here you are!

Greg offers the open bottle of wine to the guests who hold out their empty glasses which are swiftly and clumsily filled.

He passes the remains of the bottle to Amanda, and she pours herself a drink and sets the now empty bottle on the dresser.

Greg fumbles around in his pocket, producing a lighter, and travels around the room igniting the many candles scattered around the bedroom.

Amanda sits down next to the others on the bed as Greg turns off the lights, and the room is bathed in a warm, soft glow by the candlelight.

He approaches Paul, raising his glass.

GREG  
Happy birthday, Paul.

AMANDA  
Any many more.

Paul raises his glass towards Greg.

PAUL  
Thanks. Thank you.

Greg walks away to the side of the room and switches on the Hi-Fi and quickly makes a selection from the neat pile of CDs at the side.

As he nears the bed, he sees that Paul is now shirtless.

Louise and Amanda are stripped down to their underwear kissing Paul's neck and face from both sides, both competing with their hands to roughly grope his chest.

Paul smiles as the women caress him noisily. He looks towards Greg, and winks, still smiling.

Greg hurriedly takes off his top, and hops about trying to remove his trousers, stumbling.

The two women pull Paul backwards, he lies flat on the bed. Kisses travel down from his neck, over his chest and stomach, slowly working down.

Greg climbs on the bed to get himself amid the action.

MONTAGE:

Brief, blurry images of the sexual liaison.

FADE OUT

EXT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- MORNING

In the early morning light birdsong can be heard in the trees around the house.

The three cars are still parked on the drive.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE-BEDROOM

Various items of discarded clothing, used condoms and empty wine glasses are scattered around the floor.

Amanda, Louise and Greg are still soundly asleep and entwined in each other. Paul is wide awake and staring blankly at the ceiling.

We move closer to a lingering shot of Paul's face as he fixes his eyes on the ceiling, trying to make sense of the whole situation.

EXT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- DAY

The front door opens and Paul and Amanda step outside, blinking, into the sunlight, closely followed by Greg and Louise.

Paul unlocks the car with the key fob which is already in his hand, ready for a quick getaway.

He opens the driver's side door, and gets into the car silently, closing the door behind him, leaving Louise stood outside the front door with the hosts.

LOUISE

Thanks for a great night, the meal was to die for.

Louise walks towards the car, and Amanda and Greg follow.

AMANDA

You're more than welcome.  
(laughing)  
It was OUR pleasure!

Louise opens the passenger door and gets in.

Greg walks around to the driver's side and gestures to Paul to wind the window down.

Paul starts the ignition and the engine purrs, he opens his side window, and turns towards the vague direction of Greg, squinting in the sun.

GREG  
Thanks for that, you'll have  
to...ahem come again!

PAUL  
(half-heartedly)  
Yeah... I might just do that.

GREG  
Well it's my birthday coming up  
soon. Be a nice present...

Paul nods and smiles as he rolls the window back up.

Greg walks back to join Amanda, putting his arm around her waist.

The car reverses, turns, and heads away from the house.

INT. CAR

Louise turns around as best she can to wave goodbye to the couple, who are still stood waving enthusiastically.

EXT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE

Greg and Amanda, still waving as the car pulls away. They speak without looking at each other.

AMANDA  
That went down well.

GREG  
(laughing)  
I always do, given the chance!

Amanda groans, continuing waving.

INT. CAR

Paul shifts his focus to the rear-view mirror without moving his head, to take a final glimpse of the couple, before they join the road, and are away out of sight.

LOUISE  
(turns to Paul)  
Well?

Paul responds to the question without taking his eyes from the road

PAUL  
Well what?

LOUISE  
Did you enjoy yourself? Was it  
everything you imagined?

PAUL  
Yeah, I guess.

He leans over and turns on the stereo, turning up the volume, not wanting to speak.

EXT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S HOUSE- DAY

An averaged sized house in a pretty little suburban area.

Two large baskets hang either side of the front door, their flowers and foliage spilling out, decorating the wall.

On the front yard there is a blue mini, and a space for another vehicle. The Jaguar pull in beside the mini and Paul and Louise get out.

Paul locks the car and they head towards the front door in silence. He fumbles through his keys until he finds the right and unlocks the door.

Louise enters, followed by Paul, still in complete silence.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S HOUSE-KITCHEN

The kitchen is tastefully decorated, with a large granite island in the middle of the room with bar stools around it, and a fruit bowl in the centre.

Paul drops the keys into the fruit bowl, which contains no fruit at all, to join a pen and the other set of keys already in there.

Walking over to the kettle, he picks it up and goes to the sink to fill it with water.

PAUL  
(shouting)  
Do you want a drink?

LOUISE (O.S)  
Yes please, Babe.

He stares out of the kitchen window whilst the kettle is filling, lost in thought.

The kettle overflows and it takes a few seconds for Paul to register what has happened.

PAUL

SHIT!

He switches off the tap, and empties a little of the water from the kettle and carries it back and continues making the coffees.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S HOUSE-LIVING ROOM

Louise is curled up on a large leather sofa, reading a magazine. The television is on in the background.

Paul enters and sets Louise's drink down on the coffee table in front of her silently.

She reaches for her mug and takes a gulp.

LOUISE

(disgusted)

My God! How many sugars have you put in this?

PAUL

Umm, one I think.

LOUISE

Taste it. There's about four in here, it's undrinkable!

Paul takes the mug from Louise.

He takes a sip and replies without any obvious reaction.

PAUL

Yeah, I must have given you mine.

He goes back into the kitchen and returns with another mug.

She takes a sip, and relaxes back onto the sofa with her magazine.

Paul goes through into the hallway, leaving the other drink on the table and we can hear the sound of his footsteps going up the stairs.

## INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S HOUSE-BATHROOM

A large minimally furnished bathroom with tiled walls and floor and a big white roll-top bath in front of the window.

Paul enters and walks over to the bath, turns on the tap, holding his hand under the running water until it turns warm, then puts in the bath plug.

## INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S HOUSE-LIVING ROOM

Louise is now watching a documentary about crime scene investigations.

Hearing a muffled melodic beeping noise, Louise gets up and retrieves her handbag from the coffee table.

Sitting back down, she searches through her bag, and pulls out her mobile phone.

## CLOSE UP: MOBILE PHONE

The screen reads 'One new message'

Louise presses a button and reads the text message. She smiles to herself, looks around suspiciously and breaks into a huge grin.

## CLOSE UP: MOBILE PHONE

We see the text message which had given Louise such delight. It reads 'Can't stop thinking about you. Need you. Want you. Meet me soon. Just us xx'

Still smiling to herself, she types the response feverishly.

## CLOSE UP: MOBILE PHONE

We see the reply to the message 'Me too. What a night. Sort something soon xx'

Louise, still smiling, places the phone back into her bag, and lies back on the sofa and watches the T.V.

## INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S HOUSE-BATHROOM

Paul lies in the bath, only his face sticks out of the water, again he is staring into the distance, lost in himself.

A vibrating noise startles Paul from the trance, sitting up, he looks towards his trousers, which are in a heap on the floor with the other discarded clothes.

He strains to grab them without getting out of the bath, and pulls them along the floor towards him.

Blotting his hands dry on the fabric, he takes the phone out from his trouser pocket, lifting it up towards him.

CLOSE UP: MOBILE PHONE

The screen reads 'One new message'

Paul slowly reads the message on his phone, and his face turns to a look of sheer panic.

CLOSE UP: MOBILE PHONE

The message reads 'Loved last night. Want to see you again. Never felt like this. Text back x'

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- DAY

Both vehicles are parked in front of the house.

A cat basks in the sun, lying on a chink of light on a shadow on the ground cast by branches of a tree.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- LIVING ROOM

The living room is huge, with white walls adorned with paintings and lots of expensive looking antiques scattered throughout.

Greg and Amanda sit on separate sofas; He on a two seater, she reclining on a full size.

A plasma television hangs on the wall commanding their attention. As they watch the trashy daytime television programme, Greg suddenly stands up.

AMANDA

Where are you going?

Greg turns to Amanda.

GREG

I'm going to the gym for a bit.

AMANDA

O.K. honey, what time will you be back?

Greg looks up towards the clock on the wall, seeing that the time is 16:32, then turns back to Amanda.

GREG

Dunno, about seven-ish, is that O.K.? I really can't stomach anymore daytime telly!

Amanda cranes her neck around to check the time, then resumes watching television.

AMANDA

Yeah, fine. Will you bring me a bottle of Gin on your way home?

Greg stoops to pick up his mobile phone from the chair arm, and heads to the door.

GREG

No probs...Later.

He dashes upstairs to get his gym bag. He gets his kit and heads away.

AMANDA

(shouting)

Bye

She picks up the remote control for the television, turning down the volume, and strains to hear the front door bang shut, followed shortly by the car door.

She smiles to herself and takes her mobile phone from out of her trouser pocket.

The annoying little beeps can be heard as Amanda searches through the address book.

EXT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- DAY

The fumes are spilling out of the exhaust of the 4x4, and the engine is ticking over.



INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- LIVING ROOM

Amanda is still sitting on the sofa, television on muted volume. She is talking into her phone.

AMANDA

Do you wanna meet up? Greg's out for a couple of hours.

(beat)

Yeah, the gym. You're only 25 minutes away, we could meet midway.

(beat)

I know it's only been a few hours, but I need to see you, every time I close my eyes you're there. Just want to talk about it.

INT. 4X4

Greg continues his conversation as he drives along one handed

GREG

Look, I've told her I'm going to the gym 'til 7, meet me, we can talk things through.

(beat)

I know it's fucked up, but talking isn't a sin.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S LIVING ROOM

Louise is still on the phone, she stands up and heads towards the kitchen.

LOUISE

O.K., a quick chat. THAT'S ALL.

(beat)

I'm gonna leave him a note.

She tears a piece of paper from the notepad next to the house phone in the living room, and walks through to the kitchen.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S KITCHEN

Louise walks into the kitchen and grabs a pen out of the fruit bowl, still holding the phone to her ear.

She writes 'Gone to Mum's, Back at 8'.



EXT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S HOUSE- DAY

Paul and Louise's house stands empty. Both cars missing from the front.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. OFFICE- DAY

The office is a hive of activity, as phones ring, faxes are received and smartly dressed people type onto their computers. Greg is one of these office workers.

He is in mid flow entering data onto a spreadsheet as the desk phone makes him lose his concentration with a shrill ring.

He stops typing and picks up the phone.

GREG

Hello, Greg Ford speaking.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- LIVING ROOM

Amanda is sat in her usual position on the sofa, T.V. on and magazines sprawled on the table. She speaks into the phone.

AMANDA

Hi Greg, it's only me. Can you pick a take-away up on your way home? I haven't had time to go shopping.

INT. OFFICE- DAY

Greg looks incensed that his wife had interrupted him with such a trivial matter.

GREG

(annoyed)

Yeah, sure. Indian or Chinese?

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- LIVING ROOM

Amanda looks pleased at the response.

AMANDA

Errr Chinese. Oh and can you pick  
me up a bottle of Gin please.

She bites her bottom lip, unsure of the reaction.

INT. OFFICE- DAY

Greg rolls his eyes at the request.

GREG

Yes. Bye Amanda.

He slams down the phone before Amanda could even bid  
farewell, and goes back to filling in the spreadsheet,  
hitting the keys heavily.

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S HOUSE- DUSK

The sun is just setting as the Jaguar swerves from the road  
to pull up alongside the Mini.

The engine is turned off and Paul emerges from the car,  
slams and locks the doors, then walks towards the front  
door.

He walks in through the entrance hall and into the living  
room.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S HOUSE-LIVING ROOM

Louise is lying on the sofa watching T.V.

PAUL

Hi.

Amanda stays focused on the television, as she  
half-heartedly responds.

LOUISE

Hi.

Paul approaches the sofa, and gestures for Louise to move  
her feet so he can sit down, which she grudgingly does.

He sits down and Louise puts her feet back into the position  
they were in previously, laying them heavily over Paul's  
legs.

There is a long awkward silence as they both stare at the television.

PAUL  
What's for tea?

LOUISE  
Lamb casserole, it's in the oven,  
be ready in twenty minutes.

PAUL  
Have I got time to jump in the bath  
then?

LOUISE  
Yes, if you're quick.

Paul scoops up Louise's legs and swings them down from his lap, gets up, and disappears to the bathroom.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- LIVING ROOM

Amanda is in her usual position - sprawled out on the sofa, watching television and flicking through trashy magazines.

Greg returns from work, paper bag filled with steaming food in one hand, and a large bottle of gin in the other.

GREG  
Are we having trays or eating at  
the dining table?

AMANDA  
Just get trays. I can't be bothered  
to set the table.

Greg walks through towards the kitchen as Amanda stays focused on the T.V.

GREG (O.S.)  
Haven't you even got the plates and  
cutlery out? What the fuck do you  
do all day?

Amanda heaves herself off the sofa and stomps towards the kitchen.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- KITCHEN

Greg is unpacking the food from the paper bag as Amanda enters the room and notices the Gin on the work surface.

She pushes past him and opens the cupboard, takes out a glass, and slams it down next to the bottle.

Greg watches her, a look of anger growing on his face.

GREG

Oh yes. See to yourself. I thought you were actually coming to help, but no, not when there's alcohol to be had.

Amanda tips the bottle and fills the glass nearly to the top.

AMANDA

Go fuck yourself!

GREG

(angry)

I might as well go fuck myself, I'm not getting any sex from you. Gin. That's all that matters to you.

AMANDA

(snarling)

I don't know how you dare. The first thing you do when you come in is pour yourself a Jack Daniels, but that's O.K. I suppose!

Greg hurls down the carton of food onto the floor, which bursts leaving a steaming pile of noodles on the tiles.

He barges past her, grabs a glass from the cupboard, and stomps over to the bottle of Jack Daniels next to the fridge.

His hands are shaking as he pours a shot of the Bourbon.

GREG

(voice steadily raising)

I have one shot when I get in from work. One fucking shot. Not the whole bottle. I can't handle this anymore, I've about had enough.

Amanda doesn't look phased by this at all, she knocks back the remainder of the Gin in the glass, and pours herself another.

AMANDA

(strangely calm)

You know where the door is if  
you've had enough. I'm not going to  
stop you.

Greg slams down his now empty glass on the work surface, and  
steps towards her.

GREG

No, I bet you're not.

He points nastily towards her face, snarling.

GREG (CONT'D)

I'm not gonna walk away from all  
this am I? You've got me by the  
fucking balls with that fucking  
pre-nup.

Amanda smiles ever-so slightly.

GREG (CONT'D)

If I go, I walk away with nothing.  
I know that's what you want.

(beat)

Well I've worked bloody hard for  
all this, and I'm certainly not  
handing it all over to you on a  
plate. I'd rather stay, and make  
your life hell!

Her smile widens.

GREG (CONT'D)

Yeah well just remember, if you  
leave, you'll get fuck all either.

Her smile drops a little, as Greg spins around and thunders  
away out of the house and into the car.

EXT. 4X4- MINUTES LATER

Greg sits for a while and gathers himself, fighting back  
tears.

He leans over to the glove compartment, and pulls out a  
tatty packet of cigarettes. He feels a pang of guilt as he  
effortlessly takes one from the packet and up to his mouth.

From the glove box he also produces a zippo lighter, strikes  
it and slumps back, blowing out plumes of grey smoke,  
enjoying the flavour he'd missed for so long.

GREG  
(under his breath)  
God, I've missed you!

He takes another long, satisfying drag on his cigarette, and slowly gets up out of the car, clouds of smoke escaping around him, slams the door, and returns to the house.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- LIVING ROOM

As Greg enters back into the house, he sees Amanda sitting on the sofa, half empty glass of Gin in one hand, mobile phone in the other.

The Gin bottle is resting on the coffee table, half empty, little pools of alcohol dotted all around the glass surface.

Greg sits himself down on the two seater, safe from the glare of Amanda.

She raises her glass to her lips, he notices her make-up has run slightly- she'd been crying too.

GREG  
(sympathetically)  
Amanda, I'm worried about your drinking.  
(beat)  
Look I know you're unhappy at the moment. I'm unhappy too.

Amanda gazes down into her drink, listening.

GREG (CONT'D)  
I know things aren't right, but the Gin's just making it worse. You can't even bear to be in the same fucking room as me, how do you think that makes me feel?

AMANDA  
(still staring into her glass)  
You drink JD everyday. That's OK?

Greg sighs, not bothering to retaliate, it being pointless.

AMANDA (CONT'D)  
I....I've got a lot on my mind, that's all. I think I... might be depressed.

GREG  
(sarcastically)  
You think?  
(beat)  
Look, we're going to have to work  
through this. We've been together  
too long, something's got to be  
worth saving.

She slowly looks up, tears flooding down her cheeks.

AMANDA  
I don't know if it is. I can't just  
walk away though, I have to see  
things through.

GREG  
(surprised)  
What do you mean?

She shrugs, and takes another sip.

GREG (CONT'D)  
You mean that fucking pre-nup don't  
you? Trying to drive me away. Think  
again, Amanda.

He stands up, composes himself and sits down next to Amanda.

GREG (CONT'D)  
I'm not at work tomorrow, why don't  
we have a day out, a nice meal  
somewhere, just us? Eh? Clean  
slate. I know I've not been around  
a lot recently, but neither have  
you. Let's have a date. Start  
again.

AMANDA  
I've made arrangements for  
tomorrow.

She sips the last of her drink.

GREG  
Yeah, well, you know what?  
(shouts)  
SO HAVE I!

He gets up and heads for the door, and turns around to face  
her before he goes up the stairs.

GREG (CONT'D)  
Thanks for the effort!

He slams the door behind him.

Amanda casually picks up the bottle, pours herself another drink, and checks her phone.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S LIVING ROOM

Paul and Louise are sat side by side on the sofa, eating the casserole from a lap tray as they watch television. They eat in silence.

The advertisements finish and the next programme starts.

The intro sequence to a programme called 'Wife swap'.

Hastily Paul grabs the remote from the chair arm almost knocking the meal from his lap, and flips channels to some true life crime investigation show, looking uncomfortable.

They continue eating.

PAUL  
Day off tomorrow, thank God. It's been all work and no play lately.

LOUISE  
Oh shit! I forgot you'd got a rest day, Mum's asked me to go shopping in the City tomorrow, you know she doesn't like driving in the City, and she's shit at parking! You don't mind do you?

PAUL  
No, don't worry about it, I gonna dig the old golf clubs out and and have a few rounds at Kings' green with the lads.

Louise nods, and they finish eating whilst watching the programme.

Paul stands up, takes the tray from Louise's lap and goes through to the kitchen.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S KITCHEN

Paul places the trays down on the island, fills the sink to wash the dirty pots and takes his phone out from his pocket.

CLOSE UP: MOBILE PHONE

The words appear on the screen as Paul types them 'Day off tomorrow, she's out. All alone :( x'.

He places the phone back in his pocket and places the pots in the sink and washes them, placing them on the draining board to drip-dry.

He checks his phone again and smiles.

CLOSE UP: MOBILE PHONE

The message reads 'So am I. Hook up tomorrow. Need you again. Call me in morning :) xx'.

Grinning from ear to ear, he switches his phone off, replaces it in his pocket, and returns to the living room.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S LIVING ROOM

Paul sits back down, and they continue to watch the television.

Paul snuggles up to Louise and tries to nestle into her, but she silently pushes him away.

WE FOCUS ON THE TELEVISION

The programme on is called 'The perfect murder?', and consists of a montage of quickly edited images accompanied by the voice-over of the HOST.

We see a photograph of a middle aged man.

HOST (V.O.)

...when Adrian's lifeless body was discovered two days later, slumped in his potting shed, no trace of any poisonous substance could be found. Had he simply had a heart attack or passed away painlessly in his sleep?

The image changes to a flame-haired middle aged woman.

HOST (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Janet mourned the death of her husband, but quickly got on with her own life. Almost too quickly! She was re-married within six months, and soon, once again, Janet was in the spotlight.

The image on screen changes yet again, to show a picture of a man in his late fifties.

HOST (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Janet's new husband, Kirk, fell ill at work, and was rushed to the hospital by the emergency services, where he was continually monitored as his condition rapidly deteriorated.

A bustling Laboratory is now on screen, with people in white coats and latex gloves go about their business.

HOST (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
..And it was here, in this lab that the shocking discovery was made- Kirk's blood samples showed a high dosage of a chemical called 'D4 Complex', which, although outlawed in this country, is still used throughout Europe in ant powder.

The image changes to that of a container of high strength ant killer.

HOST (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
The D4 complex is completely tasteless and odourless, and attacks the body's central nervous system when ingested, leaving no trace within as little as 24 hours.

We see the picture of Janet again, with cage bars crudely superimposed over it, with the words 'BUSTED!'

HOST (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Janet pleaded guilty to the attempted murder of Kirk, and also owned up to poisoning her last two husbands, All for the inheritance.

RETURN TO SCENE

Paul stands up, as the sequence finishes, and goes off into another room.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S HOUSE- DAY

It is another fine autumn day, both cars are parked in front of the house.

The front bedroom curtains are quickly drawn back by Louise.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S BEDROOM

The bedroom is a decent size, cream painted walls with framed pictures and photographs hanging on them. A double bed, and wardrobes opposite.

Louise lets go of the curtains and turns around towards the bed, which is empty and unmade.

She tightens the cord on her dressing gown, and plumps up the pillows and pulls the quilt tidy.

She gives a pillow a final plump, and heads to the wardrobe, taking out a pair of blue denim jeans, and a scarlet coloured top, and places them neatly on the foot of the bed.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S LIVING ROOM

The room is in darkness apart from the flickering light from the television in the corner.

Louise creeps into the room, now fully clothed, and walks over to the curtains and heaves them open.

Paul awakes with a start on the sofa, curled up under a blanket. He blinks, and shields the sun from his eyes with his hand.

PAUL  
(half asleep)  
Ugh. Morning. Any chance of a  
coffee?

Louise walks past him and through into the kitchen. He hears faint clinking noises, as she prepares a drink.

Paul sits up and starts flicking about the various channels on the Television, not really paying much attention.



FADE IN

EXT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- DAY

Outside the 4x4 stands alone on the drive.

We hear the sound of a car in the distance, getting louder and louder until eventually the rumble of gravel under the tyres, as the Mini comes into view, and parks beside the 4x4.

The engine stops.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- BEDROOM

Greg, still in the bed, sits up with a jolt, an excited look upon his face- almost a wry smile.

He listens intently to the car door being slammed shut, the footsteps across the gravel, and leaps to his feet almost instantaneously with the knocking on the door.

Dressed only in boxer shorts, he skids across the floor, racing to the stairs, stopping only to put a photograph of himself and Amanda face down, on the dresser.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- CORRIDOR

Greg's clumsy footsteps can be heard hurrying down the stairs, towards the front door, through which a blur of scarlet and blue can be seen.

He stops in his tracks momentarily, gathers himself, and walks calmly towards the door, reaching for the handle.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- BEDROOM- LATER

The blinds are now closed, Greg is lying on the bed, smiling and eyes closed.

He opens his eyes for a moment, looking down, guiding with his hands. He grabs lustfully, slightly pulling, then pushing, his lovers hair cascading out between his fingers.

We hear Greg's thoughts.

GREG (V.O)  
Is this wrong?  
(beat)

GREG (V.O)

No-ones getting hurt.

(beat)

What is cheating anyway? A kiss? A quick fumble round the back of a bar? When I'm with Amanda, I'm with someone else mentally anyway, Is that cheating?

(beat)

Where does the line start, and how do I know when we've crossed it?

He hunches forward, throws his head back, and groans contentedly.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S KITCHEN- NIGHT

Paul is sat in a white dressing gown at the island in the centre of the kitchen on a bar stool, casually sipping a beer whilst flicking through a golf magazine.

He looks across towards the living room door after hearing activity in the hallway.

Louise breezes into the kitchen, opens the fridge to take out a jug of water, and pours herself a glass.

PAUL

You're late, it's nearly ten..

LOUISE

(snappily)

I didn't know I was being timed.

She takes a big swig from her glass, finishing it, and places the empty glass in the sink.

PAUL

How was your Mum?

LOUISE

Fine.

PAUL

You didn't buy anything?



GREG (CONT'D)

I need to get out. Clear my head,  
I'll be back later.

(beat)

You're fucking killing me, Amanda.

He shuts the door hard, causing Amanda to move her gaze from the television slightly.

She hears the front door slam, and resumes her viewing and drinking.

EXT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S HOUSE- NIGHT

The stars are twinkling, a warm, clear, full-mooned night. Both cars are parked in front of the house.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S LIVING ROOM

The room is in darkness, apart from the light being emitted from the television.

Paul lies on the sofa under a blanket, smoking and drinking beer from the bottle.

He slowly inhales, deep in thought, and blows two strands of smoke out of his nostrils, which flickers under the light from the television.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S BEDROOM

Louise lies in the bed, half clothed, thumbing through a magazine.

Her phone rings, and she searches for it under the crumpled bedclothes. She answers in a whisper.

LOUISE

Hello?

She looks pleased, smiles, and looks around to make sure the bedroom door is closed.

LOUISE (CONT'D)

Hello, You! I had a fantastic day  
today....

She slowly slides her hands down the front of her knickers.

LOUISE (CONT'D)  
I can still smell you!

She giggles slightly, and throws herself back onto the bed.

LOUISE (CONT'D)  
I need to be with you too, once a  
week is not enough. I hate my life  
here. I fucking despise him.

She takes her hand from out of her underwear, and leans up  
on her elbows, listening.

LOUISE (CONT'D)  
(almost shouting)  
Are you fucking with me?

She realises her voice is getting louder with excitement,  
and forces herself to whisper again.

LOUISE (CONT'D)  
Are you fucking with me? Don't fuck  
with me.

She looks around suspiciously, checking Paul is not within  
earshot, and smiles.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE- NIGHT

Greg stumbles along the semi-lit, deserted lane, holding his  
mobile phone up to his ear. He looks left, then right,  
checking.

GREG  
(quietly)  
I can't handle being with her  
anymore. I need to be with you. I  
need us. She's fucking poison!

He heads to a little wall at the side of the lane, and  
perches uncomfortably on it.

GREG (CONT'D)  
I mean it, true to God, I'm gonna  
do her in. Don't know how, but it's  
the only way, the bitch is going to  
fucking die.

A tear rolls down his cheek, although his face shows no  
emotion.

He concentrates to hear the conversation, suddenly his  
expression becomes puzzled.

GREG (CONT'D)  
(loudly)  
Ant Powder?

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S BEDROOM- MORNING

The curtains are drawn, to little effect, as the sunlight pours through the thin, cream fabric.

Louise lies motionless in the bed, blocking out the light with an eyemask.

She is suddenly awoken by a banging on the front door, sitting up with a jolt and hurriedly slipping the mask up over her head.

Another knock on the door, and Louise is up on her feet and scurrying downstairs in her nightclothes to answer the door.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S HALLWAY

Louise comes skidding down the stairs towards the impatient rapping at the door.

The door is unlocked, and opened by a curious Louise.

She is cheerily greeted by the postman

POSTMAN  
Good morning! Packages to sign for.

He hands over a little hardbacked notepad, and points where to sign.

POSTMAN (CONT'D)  
Here and here love.

She scribbles her signature in the boxes and hands back the notebook.

LOUISE  
Thank you.

He pops the book into his pocket, puts the pen behind his ear, and hands over two parcels.

LOUISE (CONT'D)

Thanks. Bye.

POSTMAN

Bye, love.

He turns and heads back to the road, and climbs into the postvan, as Louise excitedly checks the parcels.

The package addressed to Paul Vickers is placed down on the floor next to the various shoes cluttered about.

She scans the address label on the brown package in her hands, she sees that it is for her, and rips open the top, excitedly.

She peers inside and a look of panic spreads over her face, slowly changing into a smile.

She reaches in, and takes out the white plastic container. On the front is printed in big garish letters 'Ant Away', with a picture of an ant within a red circle, with a red line running across it.

She turns the container to see the back.

CLOSE UP: ANT POWDER BOTTLE.

Louise's finger scans the ingredient panel, and stops halfway the list on 'Active ingredient: D4 Complex Compound'.

She taps the word with her fingernail, reassuringly.

RETURN TO SCENE

She looks relieved, drops the carton back in the package, and runs upstairs.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S BEDROOM

Entering the bedroom, Louise flings open the wardrobe containing her clothes, and stuffs the package behind a pile of neatly folded tops on the shelf.

She closes the wardrobe, and heads back towards the bed, searching for her mobile phone, eventually locating it under the pillows.

She frantically presses buttons on the phone, looking excited, then nervous.

CLOSE UP: MOBILE PHONE

We read the message she has typed; 'Its here! He's out til 5, come round if you can x x x :)

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- KITCHEN- DAY

Greg, in his dressing gown, opens the cupboard and takes out a small white saucer, placing it down on the worktop.

He gently fills it with milk and replaces the carton in the refrigerator.

He crouches down, searching in the cupboard under the sink, rummaging amongst the various household items, finally laying his hands on the container stashed away right at the back.

He turns around checking he is still alone, then brings out the container of ant powder.

Standing up, he carefully opens the container and sprinkles a small amount into the saucer of milk, stirring it with his finger.

Replacing the container to its hiding place under the sink, he washes his hands, and picks up the saucer.

EXT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- DAY

Greg appears from around the side of the house, and places the saucer down in the shade of a tree.

The nearby bushes rustle, and the cat emerges, affectionately rubbing its body around his shins, purring.

Greg steps back, and the cat, noticing the milk, strolls towards the saucer and begins lapping it up, finishing in no time.

Greg bends over, picks up the empty saucer and walks away.

FADE TO

EXT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- NIGHT

Greg's 4x4 pulls to a halt outside the house.

He gets out and quickly scans the drive, struggling to see in the darkness, before entering the front door.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- KITCHEN

Greg walks in and notices Amanda in tears, make up streaming down her face, glass of Gin in hand.

GREG

Amanda?

She takes a big swig of her drink.

AMANDA

(sobbing)

Sooty's dead. I found him in the garden.

Greg gets a glass from the cupboard, and pours himself a shot of Bourbon.

GREG

My God, he was only 6. What happened to him?

Amanda replies, fighting back the tears.

AMANDA

I don't know, I thought he was asleep on the garden, and I kept shouting him and shouting him, but he didn't move.

Greg hugs Amanda, consoling her.

GREG

Where is he?

AMANDA

I buried him at the bottom, next to the pond.

Greg smiles slightly, still hugging his wife, rubbing her back.

She pulls away to top up her drink, still sobbing.

AMANDA (CONT'D)  
I'm going to bed, I've had enough  
today.

She leaves the kitchen, glass in hand.

Greg waits until he hears her slow, heavy footsteps ascending the stairs, and takes out his phone, dialing a number.

GREG  
(whispering)  
Can you talk?  
(beat)  
O.K. I'll be quick, It fucking  
worked!  
(beat)  
Yeah, she buried it today.  
(beat)  
Of course I am! It's the only way  
we can be together. I've got a  
training weekend coming up, I'll do  
it then.  
(beat)  
You come with me, it's only in the  
next county.  
(beat)  
You'll think of something.  
(beat)  
Yep, In the Gin!

FADE TO

BLACK SCREEN

FADE IN

EXT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- DAY

The boot of the 4x4 is open, as Greg places a small suitcase inside, and heads in through the open front door.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- KITCHEN

Amanda is in the kitchen, making coffee, as Greg enters, placing a small weekend bag on the work surface.

He picks up a pile of paperwork and folders, a pre-packaged sandwich from the fridge, and a bottle of Bourbon ,placing them in the bag.

AMANDA  
You away then?

GREG  
Yeah, I'll be back monday.

He reluctantly kisses Amanda on the cheek, smiling slightly at the bottle of Gin on the worktop.

He picks up the bag, and heads out the door.

INT. PAUL AND LOUISE'S BEDROOM- DAY

Paul is lying on the bed, half clothed, as Louise finishes packing her weekend bag.

LOUISE  
Right I'm all packed. Two days of  
girlie fun! I can't remember the  
last time I went on a hen party.

PAUL  
(laughing)  
You have a good time, don't drink  
too much!

LOUISE  
I won't! The city won't know what  
hit it!

Paul smiles, as Louise zips up her bag, gives him a peck on the cheek, and heads downstairs.

PAUL  
(shouting)  
Be good!

AMANDA (O.S.)  
I will!

The door slams in the distance.

FADE TO

EXT. CONFERENCING CENTRE- DAY

A huge old building, bustling with activity, as cars pull into the large car park, and people enter and emerge from the main reception doors.

Smokers gather to the side of the entrance.

INT. HOTEL ROOM- DAY

A large comfortable hotel room, with a double bed, a chest of drawers with a T.V on top, and a writing desk, where Greg is seated, wearing a smart grey suit.

He reads through paperwork, occasionally stopping to check the time on his wristwatch.

A gentle knocking is heard at the door. Greg turns his head.

GREG  
(raising his voice)  
It's open

We hear the door slowly open.

GREG (CONT'D)  
Hi!

CLOSE ON: LOUISE

LOUISE  
(nervously)  
Have you done it, the ant powder?

CLOSE ON: GREG

GREG  
(smiling)  
Oh yes! Four big spoons full!

CLOSE ON: LOUISE

LOUISE  
In the booze?

The camera pulls away to reveal Louise is actually standing in Amanda's bedroom, with Amanda sitting smiling on the bed.

AMANDA  
Yes, In his Jack Daniels. One  
swig...  
(laughing)  
And when they find his lifeless  
body slumped at the training  
centre...

Amanda rises from the bed, and embraces Louise passionately.

AMANDA  
...we can be together...

INT. HOTEL ROOM- DAY

GREG  
...forever!

Greg stands up from the desk, and grabs Paul, who is dressed in denim jeans and a bright red T-shirt, in a slow, lingering embrace.

He reaches for the bottle of Bourbon, and pours two glasses, offering one to Paul, he takes it, shaking slightly.

GREG (CONT'D)  
This calls for a little  
celebration!

He charges his glass against Paul's.

GREG (CONT'D)  
Cheers!

PAUL  
Cheers!

They knock back their drinks.

INT. GREG AND AMANDA'S COUNTRY HOUSE- BEDROOM

Amanda carefully pours two large glasses of Gin, handing one to Louise.

They charge their glasses.

AMANDA  
To us!

LOUISE  
To us!

FADE OUT