

V FOR VENDETTA

by

Larry and Andy Wachowski

Based on the graphic novel by Alan Moore

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SECOND DRAFT

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DARKNESS

In the darkness we hear a voice, a woman's voice. Her name is Evey.

EVEY (V.O.)

'Remember, remember the fifth of November, the gunpowder treason and plot. I know of no reason why the gunpowder treason should ever be forgot.'

The voice has a strength that is metered by calmness; a deep centered peace that resonates in its timbre.

EVEY (V.O.)

But what of the man?

In the darkness we FIND a lantern.

INT. CELLARS - NIGHT

Guy Fawkes, a dangerous-looking man who wears a goatee, is struggling with a wheelbarrow stacked with barrels.

EVEY (V.O.)

I know his name was Guy Fawkes and I know in 1605 he attempted to blow up the houses of Parliament.

The wheelbarrow bumps over the thick-mortared stones that pave the cellar floor.

EVEY (V.O.)

But who was he really? What was he like? What kind of things made him laugh? Or cry? Had he ever been in love?

From the dark throat of the cellar we hear the BARK and BAY of DOGS. Guy begins to panic.

EVEY (V.O.)

- We are told to remember the idea and not the man because a man can fail. He can be caught, he can be killed, and forgotten.

Lanterns chase toward him from both sides. He barely has time to unsheathe his sword before the dogs are on him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY (V.O.)

But four hundred years later, an
idea can still change the world.
I have witnessed firsthand the
power of ideas.

Guy fights for his life, struggling even as he is pinned
to the stone floor with the clatter of pike and poleaxe.

EVEY (V.O.)

I have seen people kill in the
name of them. And die defending
them.

EXT. LONDON TOWER - DAWN

In a square outside London Tower a gallows has been
erected.

EVEY (V.O.)

But you cannot kiss an idea. You
cannot touch it, or hold it.

In the crowd there is a woman watching the only man she
has ever loved being marched up the stairs.

EVEY (V.O.)

An idea will never bring you
flowers or cook you breakfast. It
won't sing to you, or dance with
you.

A coarse loop of rope is snug to Guy's throat. He
searches the crowd until he finds her face.

EVEY (V.O.)

Ideas do not bleed. They do not
feel pain and they do not love.

They will never look into one another's eyes again and
they hold this final moment until --

The lever is thrown and with the CLAP of WOOD and the
SNAP of HEMP, her heart is torn away from her.

EVEY (V.O.)

And an idea cannot be taken from
us like life can be.

Guy's body hangs, a shadow against the gray predawn
light.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY (V.O.)

It is not an idea that I miss. It is a man. A man that made me remember the fifth of November. A man that I will never forget.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. EVEY'S APARTMENT - CLOSE ON A TELEVISION - NIGHT

Where Lewis Prothero, the archconservative host of a news program called, "The Voice of London," is ranting.

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

So I read that the United States is so desperate for medical supplies, that they have allegedly sent several containers filled with wheat and tobacco. A gesture, they said of good will. You wanna know what I think?

A young woman sits in her small flat, at a makeshift makeup mirror, readying herself for the most important date of her life.

This is EVEY.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - NIGHT

Prothero continues his diatribe on another television. This dressing room is more elaborate and ornately decorated.

A man sits at a large theater-style makeup mirror placing over his face a mask; it is like something from a masquerade ball, with an exaggerated goatee, harlequin cheeks, and a smile, forever fixed, at once beguiling and bedeviling.

This is V.

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

You're listening to my show, so I will assume you do. I think it's high time to let the colonies know what we really think of them and the plague-infested crap they're crying to bugger into this country:

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROTHERO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I say it is payback time for a little tea party they threw for us a few hundred years ago. I say we go down to those docks tonight and dump that shit where everything from the Ulcered Sphincter of Asserica belongs! Who's with me? Who's bloody with me?!!

Applause.

INT. EVEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Evey slips into her best dress, smoothing it over her hips as she checks herself in the mirror.

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

Did you like that? USA? The Ulcered Sphincter of Asserica? I mean, what else can you say? Here was a country that had everything, absolutely everything, and now twenty years later, is what? The world's biggest leper colony. Why? Godlessness. Let me say that again. Godlessness. It wasn't the war that they started. It was ADZ. It was Judgment.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - NIGHT

V pulls on his soft leather boots and matching gloves.

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

No one escapes their past. No one escapes judgment. You think He is not up there? You think He is not watching over this country? How else can you explain how we came through? He tested us but we came through. We made the hard choices.

INT. EVEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Evey clips her earrings on and begins brushing out her hair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

We did what we had to do.
Isslington. Enfield. I was
there. I saw it all. Immigrants.
Muslims. Homosexuals.
Terrorists. Disease-ridden
degenerates. They had to go!
strength through Purity, Purity
through Faith! I am a God-fearing
English-man and I am God-damned
proud of it!

Applause.

She can't stand it any longer.

EVEY

That's quite enough of that, thank
you very much.

She switches OFF the TELEVISION just as --

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - NIGHT

V switches OFF his TELEVISION.

EXT. EVEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Evey checks herself one last time. Around the edges of
the mirror are several photographs including one of her
parents.

EVEY

Listen... he's a very nice man.
He makes me laugh. He promised me
a nice dinner, real beef he said,
I know it's late, but I've been
out after curfew before. I can
take care of myself. You ought to
know that by now.

She grabs a small piece of paper from the frame on which
is scribbled an address and heads for the door.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - NIGHT

V places his hat on his head, smoothing the brim.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V
'Not Mars' sword, not war's quick
fire, shall burn the living record
of your memory.'

He turns to a bust of Shakespeare.

V
Don't wait up for me, Bill. I
intend to enjoy myself tonight.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Evey is walking in one direction --

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - NIGHT

V is walking in the other.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Evey stops for a moment, seeing a dark figure moving
toward her. She turns down a cobblestone alley.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Her pace quickens. She glances back several times. As
she nears the end of the alley she is not looking forward
when she runs smack into a MAN wearing a TWEED COAT.

TWEED COAT
Whoa, and excuse me, Miss.

EVEY
I'm sorry, I didn't see you --

TWEED COAT
In a hurry, are we?

EVEY
I was just --

TWEED COAT
After curfew you know.

EVEY
My uncle... he's very sick.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TWEED COAT

Sick uncle, is it? What you think on that, Willy?

WILLY approaches from behind.

WILLY

Load of bollocks, what I think.

Evey knows that she is in trouble. She slowly puts her hand in her pocket.

EVEY

I made a mistake: I shouldn't be out after curfew, I know that.

TWEED COAT

Well maybe you could take care of us before getting back to your uncle. See my friend here, well he's kinda sick, hehe. Ain't you, Willy?

WILLY

Oh yeah, real sick. Bad case of the blues. Here, you can feel them.

He takes her hand and tries to press it between his legs but she tears free, yanking a canister of pepper spray from under her pocket.

EVEY

Don't touch me.

TWEED COAT

Look at that, Willy. Kitty's got claws.

Willy smiles, gaps in his teeth as black as his heart.

EVEY

This is PDC.

The two men mockingly "Ooooh..."

EVEY

It'll burn your face off.

TWEED COAT

That it will, that it will. Controlled substance, you know. Class G offense. You know what that means?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He pulls out a badge.

TWEED COAT

It means that we exercise our own
judicial discretion --

WILLY

And you get to swallow it.

EVEY

Oh God, you're Fingermen.

TWEED COAT

She's getting the picture.

EVEY

Oh no, please, I didn't know --
I'm sorry --

TWEED COAT

Not yet, you're not.

Willy watches a third FINGERMAN slip quietly up behind
her.

TWEED COAT

But you will be. By sun-up if
you're not the sorriest piece of
ass in all London, you'll
certainly be the sorest.

She turns to run but runs smack straight into the third
Fingerman who twists her arm behind her back, forcing her
to drop the pepper spray.

EVEY

Oh God! No! Please don't do
this! I'll go home! I won't do
it again, I swear! Please!

FINGERMAN #3

Whatcha think, fellows?

Willy begins pulling down his pants.

WILLY

Spare the rod, spoil the child.

The three men laugh as they force her to her knees, but
as Willy stands over her they suddenly realize that they
are no longer alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V

'The multiplying villainies of nature do swarm upon him.'

FINGERMAN #3

What the hell --

V

'And fortune on his damn quarrel, smiling showed like a rebel's whore.'

TWEED COAT

We're Fingermen, pal!

WILL

Bugger off!

V

'Destaining fortune with his brandished steel, which smoked with bloody execution.'

In V's clenched fist of black leather we see a flash of steel.

FINGERMAN #3

He's got a knife!

V attacks and at once we know this is no normal human being. A single blow sends the largest of the Fingermen flying backwards. But more than his strength, it is his speed.

A gun is cocked, but before the hammer falls, a knife is buried in Tweed Coat's chest.

It takes only a handful of seconds and two bodies lay dead. V picks up the black police baton while Willy in an animal-like panic, struggles to get up, his pants tangled around his ankles.

The shadow of V closes over him like the closing lid of a casket.

WILLY

Jesus Christ! Mercy -- please!
Mercy!

V

'We are oft to blame in this, 'Tis too much proved, that with devotions visage, and pious action we do sugar o'er the devil himself.'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLY

Wha... whas that mean?

V

Spare the rod.

The baton slaps down with a nasty wet crunch.

It is only when V turns to her that Evey realizes that she is still on the ground.

He steps toward her and she quickly reaches for the pepper spray that fell nearby.

V

I assure you that I mean you no harm.

EVEY

Who -- who are you?

V

Who? Who is but the form following the function of what, and what I am is a man in a mask.

EVEY

I can see that.

V

Of course you can. I am not questioning your powers of observation, I am merely remarking upon the paradox of asking a masked man who he is.

EVEY

Oh, right.

V

But on this most auspicious of nights permit me then, in lieu of the more commonplace sobriquet to suggest the character of this Dramatis Persona. Viola!

He gestures grandly.

V

In view, a humble vaudevillian veteran, cast vicariously as both victim and villain by the vicissitudes of Fate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He indicates his mask.

V

This visage, no mere veneer of vanity, it is a vestige of the vox populi, now vacant, vanished, as the once vital voice of the verisimilitude now venerates what once they vilified. However, this valorous visitation of a by-gone vexation, stands vivified, and has vowed to vanquish these venal and virulent vermin vanguarding vice and vouchsafing the violently vicious and voracious violation of volition.

He pauses for effect.

V

The only verdict is vengeance; a vendetta, held as a votive, not in vain, for the value and veracity of such shall one day vindicate the vigilant and the virtuous. Verily, this vichyssoise of verbiage veers most verbose vis-a-vis an INT.roduction, and so it is my very good honor to meet you and you may call me V.

He bows.

EVEY

Are you like, a crazy-person?

V

I am quite sure they will say so. But to whom might I ask am I speaking?

EVEY

... I'm Evey.

V

Evey? Of course you are.

EVEY

What does that mean?

V

It means that I, like God, do not play with dice, and do not believe in coincidence. Are you hurt?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

No, I'm fine. Thanks to you.

V

In such terrible times we are all in need.

EVEY

Yeah, well, thank you.

V

I only played my part but tell me, do you enjoy music, Evey?

EVEY

I suppose.

V

You see, I am a musician of sorts, and on my way to give a very special performance.

EVEY

What kind of musician?

V

Percussion instruments are my specialty, but tonight I intend to call upon the entire orchestra for this particular event and would be most honored if you could join me.

EVEY

Oh, I don't think so. I think I should be getting home.

V

I promise you it will be like nothing you have ever seen and that afterwards you will be home safely within the hour.

There is something magnetic in his voice.

EVEY

... Alright.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

It is a gorgeous view of the London cityscape. The Old Bailey and Madame Justice figure prominently.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

Gosh, it's beautiful, up here.

V

A more perfect stage could not be asked for.

EVEY

I don't see any instruments.

V

Your power of observation continues to serve you well but it is not with drum nor trumpet with which I shall embed my music upon the memory of yon slumbering berg. But first --

With the alacrity of a magician he whips a conductor's wand from his sleeve.

V

The overture!

He steps to the parapet..

V

It is to Madame Justice that I dedicate this concerto, in honor of the holiday she seems to have taken from these parts and in recognition of the imposter that stands in her stead.

The statue of justice stands, a marbled symbol of imperviousness.

V

Tell me, do you know what day it is, Evey?

EVEY

Uhh... November-fourth?

In the DISTANCE the midnight BELLS begin to TOLL.

V

Not anymore. 'Remember, remember the fifth of November, the gunpowder treason and plot. I know of no reason why the gunpowder treason should ever be forgot.'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He taps his wand upon the brick of the parapet and as the BELLS FADE he widens his arms as though summoning the attention of a massive orchestra.

The moment hangs in suspension until his arms flap down calling, as a conductor does, for the first notes of music.

Evey stares at the Bugs Bunny-like performance.

V

Listen carefully... Do you hear it?

EVEY

I don't hear anything.

His wand continues, trying to coax music from the silent city, until we hear STRINGS so soft as to seem imagined.

EVEY

Wait...

It RISES as a mist from the depths of the city.

EVEY

I hear it.

It continues to SWELL until we recognize the opening bars of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture; the MUSIC is rich and powerful, SWELLING like a deep breath that fills the chest.

Evey rushes to the parapet, trying to locate the source.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The emergency SIREN located at the top of a street lamp SINGS to the empty street below.

EXT. TENEMENT WINDOW - NIGHT

A LITTLE GIRL with thick glasses opens her alley window overlooking another SINGING MEGAPHONE at the top of a telephone pole.

LITTLE GIRL

Mommy! It is music! Outside!
They're playing music!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

People spill out of the darkness of their doors onto the street.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

Evey looks back at V, smile as bright as a moonbeam.

EVEY
How did you do that?

V
We all have our gifts, Evey.

EVEY
Incredible. But this is --

V -
Wait. Here comes the crescendo.

The MUSIC CLIMBS to its inexorable climax as --

KA-BOOM.

Madame Justice EXPLODES, her scales vanishing into a cloud of angry fire.

The MUSIC RISES again, CYMBALS CRASHING, as the Old Bailey is suddenly leveled by a series of THUNDERING EXPLOSIONS.

V
Beautiful... is it not?

Evey cannot believe what she is seeing, as two landmarks, buildings that have helped define the face of London for centuries, crumble and disappear into billowing clouds of smoke and dust.

As the deafening ROAR begins to FADE, a final denouement sparks high above the night sky. Evey gazes up as a firework credits the man responsible with a single sparkling letter --

"V."

Eyes wide with awe, she turns to him, but he is already gone.

EVEY
V? V?

From every direction she hears the sound of SIRENS.

INT. CHANCELLOR'S CABINET ROOM - DAY

Large double doors burst open as Chancellor ADAM SUTLER barges into the conference room adjacent to his office. A military detail shuts the doors behind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUTLER

You've had four hours, gentlemen.
You'd better have results!
Creedy!

PETER CREEDY, a government guard dog, has been up all night, his eyes red as if stained by the scent of blood.

CREEDY

The Bailey area is quarantined. Standard issue demolition barriers have been erected. A recording device was found wired into the central emergency broadcast system. The DCD was Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture --

SUTLER

Add it to the black list. I don't ever want to hear that music again.

CREEDY

Yes, sir.

SUTLER

Mr. Etheridge.

ETHERIDGE is a small man with large ears.

ETHERIDGE

We were able to triangulate the fireworks launch for Mr. Finch. Presently we have doubled our random sweeps and are monitoring a lot of phone surveillance, indicating a high percentage of conversation concerned with the explosion.

SUTLER

Mr. Dascomb, what are we doing about that?

ROGER DASCOMB sits, looking peevisly perfect, his tailored suit nary a wrinkle; a wolf in wolf's clothing.

DASCOMB

We're calling it an 'emergency demolition.' We have spin coverage on every channel, including several experts who have already been lined up to testify on the crumbling roof.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUTLER

I want Prothero to speak tonight on the dangers of these old buildings and how we must avoid clinging to the edifice-of a decadent past. Perhaps he should conclude that the New Bailey will become a symbol of our time and the future that our conviction has rewarded us.

DASCOMB

Great, sir. Great.

SUTLER

Make sure he mentions that construction plans have already been completed. Mr. Heyer!

CONRAD HEYER, a man who is difficult to even notice, nervously hands Sutler an envelope with several photos inside.

HEYER

Our surveillance cameras captured several images of the terrorist, though the mask obviously makes retinal identification impossible.

The ghost-white mask seems to smile up at the camera.

SUTLER

Rubbish!

He crumbles the picture and throws it away. Beneath it there is a picture of Evey.

HEYER

We also managed to get a picture of the girl that Creedy's men were... uh... detaining.

SUTLER

Who is she, Mr. Finch?

Chief Inspector FINCH sits slightly apart from the others.

FINCH

Not sure yet, but we are working on several leads.

SUTLER

Anything else?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FINCH

We located the fireworks launch and found traces of the explosives used at both sites. Unfortunately it appears that despite the heavy level of sophistication, these devices were homemade with over-the-counter chemicals, making them very difficult to trace. Whoever he is, Chancellor, he is very good.

SUTLER

Save your professional annotations, Mr. Finch. They are irritating and irrelevant.

FINCH

Apologies, Chancellor.

SUTLER

Gentlemen, this is a test. Moments such as these are matters of faith. To fail is to invite doubt into everything we believe and into everything we have fought for. Doubt will plunge this country back into chaos and I will not let that happen. Last night someone did the unthinkable. Someone hurt us. It is imperative that our response be swift and decisive. I want this terrorist found, gentlemen, and I want him to learn what terror really means.

He looks specifically at Creedy, then stands.

SUTLER

England prevails.

A chorus of "England prevails" answers.

EXT. JORDAN TELEVISION TOWER - DAY

A modern skyscraper with a towering antenna jutting at its peak.

INT. NEWS STUDIO - DAY

Two perfectly-pleasant smiling faces, one male, one female, sell the morning news. The set simulates a casual atmosphere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The MALE NEWS-POPPET grins with effortless plasticity.

MALE NEWS-POPPET

On the lighter side of things, seems that the crew responsible for the demolition of the Old Bailey wanted to give the old girl a grand, albeit improvised, sendoff. Though the demolition had been planned for some time, the music and the fireworks were according to the crew chief 'definitely not on the schedule.'

Both news-poppets chuckle.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY

Dascomb's assistant PATRICIA whispers to him as the news-poppets wrap up the show.

PATRICIA

You really think people will believe that?

DASCOMB

My dear, this is the FBBC. Our job is to report the news, not fabricate it. That's the government's job.

She smiles.

DASCOMB

When his highness drags his flabby ass in this morning, I want him in my office immediately. And get me another espresso, it's going to be a long day.

INT. P.A. ROOM - DAY

A TV monitor is mounted in the corner of the room that functions as the grease trap for the station; everything flows through here.

Evey is in the room, sorting schedules and daily paperwork. Vicky, another PA who is helping her, shakes her head at the television.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICKY

Do you believe that bloody load of bollocks? No bleedin' demolition. I saw it. The whole thing. Everyone in my flat did. Jessie said it was the Americans on account of them being crazy with the ADZ. Bollocks what I said to her. Did you see it?

EVEY

... no, last night I...

VICKY

Oh, that's right. You went to Mr. Deitrich's, didn't you? Come on, spill, spill.

Before Evey can even answer, Patricia hurries into the room.

PATRICIA

Evey, there you are. You are still working for me, aren't you?

Evey grabs for her radio, switching it on.

EVEY

Sorry, Patricia.

PATRICIA

I need two espressos and three coffees from downstairs. And Deitrich is ready for his tea.

Vicky smiles at Evey as Patricia leaves.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Finch's office is as rumpled as his suit coat. He is reading through the stack of reports from the different informational departments.

Dominic, his lieutenant, sits across from him at a desk that is far more organized.

DOMINIC

I don't get it. Why does he wear a Guy Fawkes mask and then blow up the Bailey? Didn't Fawkes try to blow up Parliament?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FINCH

It's not too late. He's still got another twenty hours. Maybe he's just getting started.

The PHONE RINGS and Dominic answers it, while Finch stares down at the photo of V and his devilish grin which seems to stare back at Finch.

Dominic slams the phone down, jumping up from his desk.

DOMINIC -

A lead on the girl.

Finch drops the photo and leaps after him.

INT. DEITRICH'S OFFICE - DAY

Gordon Deitrich is an older man who was hired by the government to produce a daily variety show. Despite heavy censorship, he manages to make it funny and as a result, he is successful as his office proves.

He is, like any good producer, always on the phone.

DEITRICH

Look, don't get me wrong; I love it, a cow getting crucified; it's hysterical. But we'll never get it approved.

Evey enters carrying a tray with a tea service.

DEITRICH

You gotta rewrite it. Okay?
Gotta go.

He hangs up as Evey sets the tray down. He crosses to her.

DEITRICH

Glad to see I can still get a cup of tea around here.

EVEY

Mr. Deitrich --

DEITRICH

Gordon, please. I don't need 'Mister' to make this body feel any older.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

Gordon, I was on my way last night, but there were Fingermen and I got a little scared and went home.

DEITRICH

Just as well. Last night was crazy, wasn't it?

Evey nods, as her RADIO CRACKLES.

PATRICIA (V.O.)

Evey, I need you downstairs to receive some boxes for wardrobe. Probably for his majesty. Over.

EVEY

Sure thing, Patricia. Over.

DEITRICH

Are you coming to the taping?

EVEY

I'll try.

She turns and leaves.

INT. EVEY'S APARTMENT - DAY

The door EXPLODES open as Dominic and Finch enter her small flat, guns drawn.

Finch notices the mirror with her photographs. He pulls a picture from the frame.

FINCH

Gotcha.

INT. TELEVISION SECURITY STATION - DAY

An elevator opens and Evey pushes a hand cart up to the security counter. The cart is filled with a stack of perfectly uniform boxes marked "Fed-Co." These ubiquitous boxes, distinguished by their green and black generic-like stripe are a part of the government's mail system.

Fred, the large security guard, is craning around to watch the latest episode of "Storm Saxon" on a corner mounted monitor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

Hey, Fred.

FRED

Evey. All that been x-rayed?

EVEY

Nope. They're filled with bombs.

FRED

Well, wait till commercial to set them off, okay?

Evey signs the docket.

EVEY

I can't believe you watch that shit.

FRED

What? Laser Lass is hot.

INT. WARDROBE DEPARTMENT - DAY

The WARDROBE MISTRESS is busy dressing several women in Vegas Style showgirl costumes. Evey pushes the trolley toward her.

WARDROBE MISTRESS

What's all that?

EVEY

Not sure. They just arrived, marked for stage three.

WARDROBE MISTRESS

Must be Prothero. I wish someone had the balls to tell that brat that this station ain't his playground.

She grabs a box from the stack and tears it open. Inside is a mask and a long black cape.

Evey immediately recognizes the face of V.

WARDROBE MISTRESS

What the hell is this?

Evey can barely breathe.

WARDROBE MISTRESS

Just put them over there until I can figure out what they're for.

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

Finch is reading Evey's history on the car's computer system.

FINCH

This looks serious. Her parents were political activists. They were 'detained' when she was twelve.

DOMINIC

What happened to her?

FINCH

Juvenile Reclamation Project for five years.

DOMINIC

Shit..

FINCH

We're going to need backup. But keep it minimal. I want to stay under Creedy's radar.

DOMINIC

You sure about that, sir?

FINCH

I just want a chance to talk with her before she disappears into one of Creedy's black bags.

INT. P.A. ROOM - DAY

Evey slips into the room carrying a secret she wished she didn't have. Vicky knows something's wrong.

VICKY

What is it? What happened?

EVEY

I -- I don't feel well. I think I have to go.

INT. TELEVISION SECURITY STATION - DAY

Fred continues watching television unaware that one of the monitors suddenly fritzes into static. After a moment a second does the same.

INT. P.A. ROOM - DAY

Evey starts grabbing her things, stuffing them into her bag.

VICKY

Was it Deitrich? What that old pervert say?

EVEY

No, nothing like that. I just have to go.

She goes.

INT. TELEVISION SECURITY STATION - DAY

Fred finally notices several screens lost to the snow of static.

FRED

What the hell --

DING.

The elevator opens; a white mask born upon a gray cloak glides out.

FRED

Who's that?

V moves at Fred, who quickly grabs for his gun.

FRED

I ain't playing. You show me ID or I get Storm Saxon on your ass.

V opens his cloak, revealing rows of dynamite sticks strapped to his chest, the detonator in his hand.

FRED

Fuck all.

The smiling mask nods.

EXT. JORDAN TOWER - DAY

Finch arrives with several flashing police cars.

INT. NEWS STUDIO - DAY

Everyone is frozen as though playing a game of statue maker with only V and Fred in motion; V floating with his detonator held out, Fred in front of him, pushing Evey's hand cart of FEDCO boxes.

INT. TELEVISION SECURITY STATION - DAY

Evey hurries toward the elevator; her gut clenches again as she realizes that Fred is gone and the room eerily empty.

She hits the elevator button just as --

INT. NEWS STUDIO - DAY

V reaches out and pulls the fire alarm.

INT. JORDAN LOBBY - DAY

The ALARMS BLARE and the elevator shuts down. The police all reach for their guns.

FINCH

You two cover these elevators.
The rest of you, follow me.

INT. NEWS STUDIO - DAY

V drives a heavy hex bolt with an electric drill through the metal door and into the jamb, sealing it shut.

INT. TELEVISION SECURITY STATION - DAY

People begin flowing into the halls, Evey immediately being caught up with them.

INT. HALL - DAY

Dascomb charges toward the door just outside the main news studio. There is a small crowd outside the door.

DASCOMB

What in the bloody hell is going
on here?

SECURITY MAN

It's jammed.

DASCOMB

Break it down.

INT. MAIN HALLWAY - DAY

Evey is swept along with them flowing toward the stairwell as Finch and his cops push out the stair door, fighting against the tide. He edges along the wall until --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: -

He sees her.

FINCH

Dominic!

Finch points and Dominic who is closer, although on the opposite side of the hall, surges into the river of people toward her.

Panic seizing her, Evey twists away, pushing back against the flow of the crowd.

FINCH

Police! Get out of the way!

Evey fights toward a corner, pushing, shoving until she slips around it, out of sight. Finch and Dominic reach the corner a moment later, but it is a moment too late.

FINCH

Damn it! You go right, I'll go left.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY

A DCD disk is in the sweaty palm of a young technician. He looks up at V as though V just asked him to shoot himself.

V

The wonderful thing about countdown is that they allow us to fully realize the precious, finiteness of each and every second. Ten... Nine... Eight...

The technician looks to several older men in suits cowering in the corner. V continues counting and one of them finally nods.

The technician almost breaks the disk trying to load it.

INT. P.A. ROOM - DAY

Dominic barges into the room, people still flowing behind him. The room is empty save the LAUGHTER of a sitcom.

As he leaves, we FIND Evey hidden beneath a desk by boxes of files.

Suddenly, above her, the laugh track goes dead, swallowed by the BUZZ of STATIC.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She looks up and like all of London, she is arrested by the lack of an image.

EXT. PICCADILLY CIRCUS - DAY

A large outdoor Jumbotron glows with the gray noise.

INT. TENEMENT - DAY

The Little Girl that we saw earlier sets her dolls down and looks up over the couch, sensing that something is wrong.

INT. BAR - DAY

The TELEVISION HISSES STATIC into the dark pub as everyone stares, waiting for something to happen.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

Two old men fiddle with the antenna of a TV as a crowd of pinochle-playing pensioners watch and wait.

INT. MIDDLE-CLASS HOME - DAY

The family sits poised around the television.

BOY

What's wrong with the telly?

INT. P.A. ROOM - DAY

The television winks at Evey as it suddenly fills with a closeup of V.

V (V.O.)

Good evening, London.

Evey shrinks away.

INT. HALL - DAY

The security men are still trying to break down the door as Dascomb sees the "on-air" light turn on. V's voice can be heard everywhere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V (V.O.)
I do apologize for this
interruption.

DASCOMB
That's the emergency channel!

He bolts to find a television.

INT. TELEVISION OFFICE - DAY

Finch, searching for Evey, is stopped dead by the smiling
mask on the television.

V (V.O.)
And I do want you to know --

FINCH
Bloody hell.

INT. MIDDLE-CLASS HOME - DAY

They stare at the television.

V (V.O.)
That I understand the comforts of
the everyday routine --

BOY
Mamma, who's that?

MAMA
Shhh.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

The pensioners look blankly through their bifocals.

V (V.O.)
The security of the familiar --

INT. BAR - DAY

The alcohol-inured stare wordlessly.

V (V.O.)
The tranquility of television. I
enjoy them as much as any bloke.

EXT. PICCADILLY CIRCUS - DAY

V's face looms over the urban landscape.

V (V.O.)

But in the spirit of commemoration, whereby those important events of the past, usually associated with someone's death or at the end of some awful, bloody struggle, are celebrated with a nice holiday --

INT. VTV - DAY

V sits behind a generic desk. A logo behind him consists of the letter "V" in a circle spray-painted over the FBBC logo.

V

I thought we could mark this November fifth, a day that sadly is no longer remembered, by taking a day out of our daily lives to sit down and have a little chat.

INT. SUTLER'S OFFICE - DAY

The double doors open as Sutler's ASSISTANT enters.

ASSISTANT

Chancellor, sir, I am sorry to interrupt but I think you'd better see this.

Behind him V continues speaking on the conference television.

V (V.O.)

There are of course, those who do not want us to speak.

INT. TELEVISION OFFICE - DAY

Several guards and Patricia stand waiting, watching the television and Dascomb, who is pacing in front of it.

DASCOMB

Let me think, let me think.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V (V.O.)

I suspect right now orders are being shouted into phones and men with guns will soon be on their way.

A CELL PHONE RINGS and Patricia answers it.

PATRICIA

It's Chancellor Sutler.

DASCOMB

Goddamnit!

INT. HALL - DAY

V's VOICE ECHOES in the hall as two big cops try unsuccessfully to force open the door with a crow bar.

V (V.O.)

Anything and everything will be done to stop me from talking to you.

INT. TELEVISION SECURITY STATION - DAY

Finch stands alone watching the monitor in the corner as Dominic runs up.

DOMINIC

We're going to need a torch.

Finch nods, listening more to V.

V (V.O.)

Why? Because while the truncheon may be used in lieu of conversation, words will always retain their power.

INT. P.A. ROOM - DAY

Evey remains transfixed, feeling as if he were talking directly to her.

V (V.O.)

Words offer the means to meaning and for those who will listen, the enunciation of truth.

INT. SUTLER'S OFFICE - DAY

Sutler is on the phone.

DASCOMB (V.O.)

You designed it, sir. You wanted
it fool-proof. You told me every
television in London --

Sutler screams and slams the phone down as V stares
accusingly.

V (V.O.)

The truth is there is something
terribly wrong with this country
isn't there?

SUTLER

Where's Creedy?

EXT. FINGER HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Creedy stands beside a tactical military transport as
dozens of heavily-armed men jump inside.

V (V.O.)

Cruelty and injustice, intolerance
and opposition.

INT. TELEVISION SECURITY STATION - DAY

Policemen haul a large acetylene torch from the elevator.

V (V.O.)

And where once you had the freedom
to object, to think and speak as
you saw fit --

Almost reluctantly Finch follows them.

INT. TELEVISION OFFICE - DAY

Uncharacteristically rattled, Dascomb yanks his jacket
off.

V (V.O.)

You now have censors and systems
of surveillance, coercing your
conformity and soliciting your
submission.

Suddenly, Dascomb has an idea.

DASCOMB

Cameras! We need cameras!

INT. VTV - DAY

He opens his hands as though asking the camera.

V

How did this happen? Who is to blame? Certainly there are those who are more responsible than others and they will be held accountable, but again, truth be told --

INT. P.A. ROOM - DAY

Evey's reflection can be seen in the screen of the television.

V (V.O.)

If you are looking for the guilty, you need only look into a mirror.

INT. MIDDLE-CLASS HOME - DAY

The parents continue to, their children growing bored.

V (V.O.)

I know why you did it.

BOY

Mom, I want to watch 'Storm' --

MAMA

Shut up!

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

The old people have put down their cards.

V (V.O.)

I know you were afraid.

INT. TENEMENT BUILDING - DAY

The Little Girl stares at V, mesmerized.

V (V.O.)

Who wouldn't be?

EXT. PICCADILLY CIRCUS - DAY

The square hangs suspended in time, no traffic, no movement, almost no sound except V's voice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V (V.O.)

War. Disease. Food and water shortages. There were a myriad of problems --

INT. BAR - DAY

The cigarette ash falls unnoticed.

V (V.O.)

Which conspired to corrupt your reason and rob you of your common sense.

INT. VTV - DAY

Even his mask cannot hide V's disappointment.

V

Fear got the best of you and in your panic you turned to former prime minister, now Chancellor --

INT. SUTLER'S OFFICE - DAY

Rage has begun to unbalance him.

V (V.O.)

Adam Sutler.

SUTLER

Shut up!

V (V.O.)

With his gleaming boots of polished leather and his garrison of goons.

Sutler rushes back to his desk.

V (V.O.)

He promised you order. He promised you peace.

In the desk drawer is a gun.

V (V.O.)

And all he demanded in return was your silent, obedient consent.

(CONTINUED).

CONTINUED:

SUTLER

Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!

He charges into the room FIRING, BLASTING BULLETS into the face of the TELEVISED V.

INT. VTV - DAY

V remains unperturbed.

V

Now if that's true, if it was just a mistake, how can that which has been done, be undone? How indeed?

INT. P.A. ROOM - DAY

Two policemen enter and Evey freezes, her breath snatched away as they search.

V (V.O.)

Four hundred years ago a great citizen made a most significant contribution to our common culture.

The police move on.

INT. HALL - DAY

Finch watches as they slowly cut the door lengthwise. They are halfway through.

FINCH

Anyone find the girl?

Dominic, who is on his radio, shakes his head.

V (V.O.)

Although forged in secrecy and stealth, this contribution is best remembered with noise and bright light.

Molten metal spits from the center of the fire-worked flame.

INT. VTV - DAY

V leans forward.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V

Last night it was my intention to remind this country of what it has forgotten.

INT. MIDDLE-CLASS HOME - DAY

V (V.O.)

It was I who serenaded you with the sounds of Tchaikovsky ---

INT. BAR - DAY

V (V.O.)

And it was I who was responsible for the detonation of Old Bailey.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

V (V.O.)

I did it to inaugurate a year of remembrance.

INT. TENEMENT - DAY

The family remains as rapt as their daughter.

V (V.O.)

A year during which I hope to see a return of justice and an end to tyranny.

EXT. PICCADILLY CIRCUS - DAY

V (V.O.)

But it cannot be done alone. That is why I am here, -to offer you a second chance.

INT. VTV - DAY

V

I have come to ask you to join me, to end your complicity. One year from now at the gates of parliament, where you must bear witness to the fulfillment of a four hundred-year-old promise.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V (CONT'D)

I am asking you to stand beside me
when their walls come tumbling
down with all manner of sound and
fury signifying nothing less than
our emancipation from a government
that has gone wrong, a government
that has forgotten itself as well
as the power of truth.

INT. HALL - DAY

The door almost cut, Dascomb arrives with a small video crew.

FINCH

What are you doing?

DASCOMB

My job.

V (V.O.)

For now I will bid you adieu --

INT. P.A. ROOM - DAY

Evey grabs a set of keys from a rack on the wall and bolts.

V (V.O.)

Until the fifth of November when I
hope that we all once more,
remember.

INT. HALL - DAY

The torch slices through the last of the heavy sound-proofed door and the police kick it in. A thick cloud of fog belches into the hall.- It is too much smoke to be caused by the torch.

Finch tries to peer into the studio but it has vanished beneath the thick blanket of fog. In the quiet created by the absence of V's voice the HUM of a small ENGINE can be heard.

DASCOMB

Kerosene fog. He's using our
smoke machine.

Finch whispers to Dominic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FINCH

Cover the exits.

Dominic nods and leaves.

FINCH

You two stay here. No one gets out. The rest of you follow me.

They step into the mouth of fog, Dascomb and his crew following.

INT. NEWS STUDIO - DAY

Shadowed forms of lights and equipment haunt them as they edge into the cavernous studio.

DASCOMB

The control booth is to the right.

Suddenly, MOVEMENT is heard, a STRUGGLE. Guns and cameras are aimed into the impenetrable mask of smoke.

FOOTSTEPS come RUNNING toward them as a CLOAKED FIGURE emerges shouting at them.

CLOAKED FIGURE

Don't shoot! Please don't shoot!

The mask of V suddenly becomes visible rushing at them. Behind Finch the other police OPEN FIRE --

The figure goes down under the hail of BULLETS. Finch rushes to V who lies strangely on his side, writhing in pain from the bullet wound in his leg.

The cloak is open and Finch sees that his hands are zip-tied behind his back.

Finch pulls off the mask revealing one of the old EXECUTIVES.

EXECUTIVE

He put masks on all of us.

FINCH

Jesus --

They hear more SHOUTING as figures come rushing at them from all directions, all bleating, "don't shoot, dear God, don't shoot!"

The police begin to panic, as Finch shouts to everyone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FINCH
Freeze! Nobody move!

The shadows all stop.

FINCH
If you are wearing a mask get down
on your knees. NOW!

The shadows crumble.

- FINCH
Get their masks off!

The police cautiously begin moving toward the kneeling
figures.

KNEELING V
Please hurry!

Finch pulls the mask off. It is the young TECHNICIAN.

TECHNICIAN
He's got dynamite wired to the
timer in the control booth.

DASCOMB
What? Oh no.

He bolts for the booth.

FINCH
Bloody Christ. Jones, get anyone
not wearing a mask out of here.
Marshal, help carry this man.

Finch heads after Dascomb.

FINCH
Everyone else let's go!

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY

Dascomb rushes inside, his crew still following.

The red LED lights of a clock glow through the fog, the
numbers rushing backwards, counting down from six
minutes. Wires snake from the open panel to the vest of
dynamite that V had been wearing.

DASCOMB
Good God.

INT. HALL - DAY

Jones and Marshal quickly guide the unmasked from the studio.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY

Finch enters the booth where Dascomb is kneeling as if in prayer to the bomb. Dascomb has a pair of wire cutters.

FINCH

Dascomb!

DASCOMB

Do you have any idea how long it would take to rebuild this station?

FINCH

Do you know what you're doing?!

DASCOMB

You better pray that I do.

INT. HALL - DAY

Jones is about to go back in when he hears --

V

Wait! Don't shoot! Wait for us!

Two more Vs come rushing through the door. Jones jumps back aiming his gun at the same time as the two other guards.

The first V lurches into the hall, scattering back the police as the second V stumbles awkwardly, his hands fixed behind his back as he falls to the ground yelling --

GROUNDED V

Shoot! Dear God, it's him!
Shoot!

The standing V spins around as the cops aim to fire.

JONES

On your knees! Get on your knees!

The standing V remains silent as it sinks down.

With his gun held like a crucifix before a vampire, Jones reaches toward the mask --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ripping it off, revealing Fred with a gag in his mouth.
Before the realization allows them to react --

V strikes.

Leaping off the floor cobra-quick, his hands search for
the flesh that hides behind the steel of GUNS --

FIRING wildly into the formless shadow and cloak as --

The retort of GUNS becomes the sound of toys when heard
against the CRACK of BONE and the screams of frightened
men.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY

Sweat gathers in Finch's eyebrows as he watches Dascomb
during potentially the last minute of their lives.

DASCOMB

Here we go.

Dascomb cuts the wire just before the clock hits 0:00.
the final seconds drain away but when the clock stops --

Nothing happens.

DASCOMB

I did it! I did it!

FINCH

That's too bad, 'cause now I gotta
catch that bastard.

INT. TELEVISION SECURITY STATION - DAY

V glides through the deserted room heading for the
elevator, carrying a crowbar. He begins to force open
the elevator doors when --

DOMINIC

Freeze!

V freezes.

DOMINIC

Drop it and get your hands on your
head! Do it now or I shoot!

V slowly places his hands behind his head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V

I must say that I am rather astonished by the response time of London's Finest. I hadn't expected you to be so johnny-on-the-spot.

V watches as Evey emerges from behind the security counter, quietly lifting a chair behind Dominic.

DOMINIC

We were here before you even got started. Bad luck, chummy.

V

Oh, I don't know about that.

CRACK. The CHAIR SPLITS against Dominic's head, knocking him unconscious.

Evey jumps back, surprised at what just happened.

EVEY

I can't believe I just did that.

V

We meet again, though with gratitude upon the other foot.

EVEY

They came here looking for me --

V

But they caught me instead.

EVEY

After what you did for me I had to do something.

V

It would seem that we are even now and I thank you, but I am afraid I really must run.

He turns back to the elevators.

EVEY

No! wait! You can't go that way. I heard their radios. Come with me.

She turns, muttering to herself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

Why am I doing this?

V follows, his mask smiling, "Why indeed?"

A moment later, Finch arrives finding Dominic on the ground. He grabs a radio from a trailing policeman.

FINCH

This is Inspector Finch. We have a man down, in need of medical attention. Stay alert. The terrorist is still at large.

INT. PROTHERO'S OFFICE - DAY

The power of stardom has survived the horrors of the future. The suite gleams with marble and finishes of precious metal. There is nothing that is not the most expensive of its kind.

Evey leads V, her eyes darting about.

EVEY.

It's Prothero's office. You know Prothero.

V

Oh yes. 'The Voice of London.'

EVEY

Biggest shaggin' asshole you will ever meet. This is his private elevator.

EXT. JORDAN TELEVISION TOWER - DAY

The military TRANSPORT SCREECHES to a halt among the flashing police cars already packed. Heavily-armed men burst out of the double doors.

Creedy, his face squeezed like a fist, gets out of his unmarked sedan, addressing his sergeant.

CREEDY

I want this building surrounded. Immediately!

INT. PRIVATE GARAGE - DAY

The elevator opens, V and Evey entering Prothero's private space in the building's garage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

There is a separate exit over there --

POLICEMAN

Freeze!

Two COPS leap out, guns trained as V and Evey stop.

V

Let me guess, hands in the air?

With the slightest flick of his wrist, a flash of metal spins through the air and embeds itself into the arm of Cop #1, who --

FIRES, missing even as V is moving, closing fast, another knife filling his hand while --

Cop #2 turns towards him, leaving Evey unwatched, enabling her to throw herself at him, knocking him off balance.

Cop #1 screams as V swallows him, his cloak like a moth filled with glinting metal teeth.

Cop #2 twists free of Evey, his elbow cracking across her face, dropping her to the ground as he spins to find V but finds a knife instead.

V stands again alone; a seemingly passionless mask staring down at the unconscious Evey.

INT. TELEVISION SECURITY STATION - DAY

The crowbar that V had wedged into the elevator doors falls to the ground as the elevator opens. Creedy strides out, flanked by his men.

CREEDY

Finch! Do you have him?!

FINCH

We think he's still in the building.

CREEDY

Think?! Is that what you've been doing up here?

Creedy's Sergeant gets a call, handing him the radio.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SERGEANT

It's Bravo One.

CREEDY

This is Creedy. You got something?

INT. PRIVATE GARAGE - DAY

The military men stand over the two fallen cops.

BRAVO ONE

Yes, sir, but you're not going to like it.

But V and Evey are gone.

INT. SUTLER'S OFFICE - DAY

Two maintenance workers lift the murdered television and set it onto a trolley.

SUTLER

This is a nightmare! What has happened on your watch, what you have just allowed to happen, is a goddamn disgrace.

Sutler storms around his desk, railing at the tiny, undefended intercom.

SUTLER

He made an ass of you! Do you understand that? He made asses of all of you which means he made an ass of me. He made an ass out of this government! And he did it in front of the entire goddamn country! Do you comprehend the magnitude of your failure? He took our credibility. He took our respect! And I want to know just what the hell you are going to do to get it back!

DASCOMB (V.O.)

Chancellor, sir?

SUTLER

Dascomb, you'd better be offering something more than an excuse!

DASCOMB (V.O.)

Yes, sir, I think I have an idea.

INT. NEWS STUDIO - DAY

The MALE NEWS POPPET puts on his "grim face" as the red camera light blinks on.

MALE NEWS-POPPET

We are interrupting your regularly scheduled program to bring you this terrifying report of a terrorist takeover which ended moments ago here in Jordan Tower.

INT. MIDDLE-CLASS HOME - DAY

The banner logo in the corner of the television reads: "Crisis at Jordan Tower."

MALE NEWS-POPPET (V.O.)

A psychotic terrorist identified only as the letter V attacked the control booth with high-powered explosives and other weapons that he used against unarmed civilians in order to broadcast a message of hate.

INT. BAR - DAY**MALE NEWS-POPPET (V.O.)**

We have just received this footage of a daring police raid.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

In the handheld grainy footage from Dascomb's camera crew, we see the "executive V" being shot.

MALE NEWS-POPPET (V.O.)

This is only an initial report but at this time it is believed that during this heroic raid the terrorist was shot and killed.

INT. TENEMENT BUILDINGS - DAY

The Little Girl frowns.

MALE NEWS-POPPET (V.O.)

Again, from what we have been told by authorities, the danger is now over and the terrorist is dead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LITTLE GIRL

Bollocks!

Grabbing her doll, she leaves the room.

INT. V'S GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Evey wakes to a dull throbbing pain as though someone were rapping against her temple with a rubber mallet. She reaches for her head and finds a cool compress covering the small red welt where she was hit.

As she touches the bump, the memory of what happened rushes back to her. She looks about realizing that she is not in her bed, let alone in her apartment.

The room seems to have no walls, only bookshelves that pile up from the stone floor with the density of bricks so that it seems that they are supporting the low, vaulted ceiling which feels almost like a stone canopy over the bed.

There are stacks of books everywhere, like mounds of snow shoveled roughly after a blizzard.

The only door is slightly ajar, allowing a warm candle-colored light to spill into the room and across the bed.

Beyond the door, she hears MUSIC; a blues melody, soft and mellifluous, floating like dust in a ray of sunshine.

She gets out of bed.

INT. UNDERGROUND HALL - NIGHT

Following the MUSIC, she moves down the hall which feels like a wine cellar until it opens up into --

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - NIGHT

It is filled with an amazing collection of human culture. There is art that spans from before the renaissance to the painted covers of eerie comics; there is literature that ranges from Shakespeare to Spilane, philosophy from Plato to Foucault.

There are movie posters everywhere, an entire wall is filled with DVDs, videos, CDs, cassettes and LPs.

A JUKEBOX stands in the far corner CROONING its blues lullaby.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V emerges from the dark edges of the room, startling her.

EVEY

Oh, you scared me.

V

My apologies. Are you feeling alright?

EVEY

Yes, thank you. What is this place?

V

My home. I call it the Shadow Gallery.

EVEY

It's beautiful. Where did you get all this stuff?

V

Here and there. Much of it from the vaults of the Ministry of Objectionable Materials.

EVEY

You stole them?

V

Heavens no. Stealing implies ownership. You cannot steal from a censor. I merely reclaimed them.

EVEY

God, if they ever find this place --

V

I suspect that if they do find this place a few bits of art will be the least of my worries.

EVEY

You mean, after what you've done -- oh, God... you killed that policeman --

The day's events suddenly take the floor from under her.

EVEY

I saw you do it, I... helped you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V

Yes, you did.

EVEY

I hit that detective with a chair --

V

Thanks again for that.

EVEY

Oh my God. What have I done?

V

You did what you thought was right.

EVEY

No. I shouldn't have done it. I must have been out of my mind.

V

If you hadn't of done it someone else might have died. Someone who might have been me.

She looks at him feeling in her bones that man behind the smiling mask is exceptionally dangerous.

EVEY

I have to get out of here. I have to go.

V

May I ask where?

EVEY

Home. I have to go home.

V

You said they were looking for you. If they know where you worked, they certainly know where you live. I'm afraid that home is no longer an option for you.

EVEY

I have friends, I could stay with them.

V

I am afraid that won't work either.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns away from her.

V

I want you to understand, Evey, that I did not want this for either of us, but I couldn't see any other way. You were unconscious and I had to make a decision. If I left you, right now you would be in one of Creedy's interrogation cells. They would imprison you, torture you and in all probability kill you in the pursuit of finding me.

His words fall like a death sentence.

V

After what you did, I couldn't let that happen. I picked you up and carried you to the only place I knew that you'd be safe. Here. To my home.

EVEY

I won't tell anyone. I swear. You know you can trust me --

V

I'm sorry but I can't take that risk. Have you ever been tortured? People say things they believe they never would.

EVEY

But I don't even know where this is. We could be anywhere.

V

You know it's underground. You know the color of these stones. That would be enough for a smart man.

EVEY

What are you saying? That I have to stay here?

V

Only until I'm done. After the fifth, I no longer think it will matter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

You mean a year from now? I have to stay here for a year?

V

Would you have preferred Creedy's detention cell?

EVEY

I don't want either. I want to go home. I want my life back. I want this nightmare to be over.

V

I know this is difficult, but I swear to you, you will be well cared for --

EVEY

No!

She bolts to the large wooden door, seizing the handle, only to discover that it is locked. She pounds her hand against it.

V

I'm sorry, Evey. I just didn't know what else to do.

EVEY

You should have left me alone! Why didn't you just leave me alone!

With tears already blurring her vision, she runs to her room, slamming the door behind her.

V stands alone amidst the treasures of the past, listening to Evey sob.

INT. V'S KITCHEN - DAY

A toad in the hole SIZZLES in butter.

A hand reaches in with a spatula. The hand is horribly scarred, as if from severe burn damage. On the counter, beside the stove we see V's black gloves.

INT. V'S GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

Evey, looking as if she did not sleep very much, smells the frying eggs.

INT. V'S KITCHEN - DAY

V stands across the kitchen from the door with his BACK TO us. He is not wearing his cloak, only the high-collared shirt, pants and boots, along with the wig and mask.

Around his waist is tied an apron.

EVEY

V?

He turns, holding the pan and spatula.

V

Oh, good morning.

EVEY

I just wanted to apologize for my reaction last night. I understand what you did for me and I want you to know that I am grateful...

Her voice trails off as she notices his hands.

EVEY

Your hands?

V

Oh yes --

He quickly sets the pan down and grabs for his gloves. He turns away from her, hiding his hands as he pulls his gloves on.

V

There, that's better. I hope I didn't put you off your appetite.

EVEY

No, please. It's just, are you, alright?

V

It's fine. Fine.

EVEY

Can I ask what happened?

V

There was a fire. A long time ago. Ancient history, for some. Not really very good table conversation. Would you care for a cup of tea and some eggs?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

Yes, thank you. I am starving,
actually.

She sits at the small breakfast table and he sets a plate
down before her.

V

Please, enjoy. I've already
eaten.

The eggs are hot in her mouth.

EVEY

Mmmmm... ees deelishus...

V

Good.

EVEY

Oh God, I haven't had real butter
since I was a little girl. Where
did you get it?

V

A government supply train. It was
on its way to Chancellor Sutler.

She almost chokes on it.

EVEY

You stole it from Chancellor
Sutler? You are insane.

V

'I dare do all that may become a
man, who dares more is none.'

EVEY

Macbeth.

V

Very good.

EVEY

My mum... she used to read his
plays to me and ever since I've
always wanted to act. Be in plays
or in movies. When I was nine I
played Viola in Twelfth Night. I
never felt so alive. Like
anything was possible.

She smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V

I must tell you that you have the most remarkable smile. You certainly brought the night to life for me yesterday.

His sincerity makes her a bit uncomfortable.

EVEY

... thank you. Can I ask you about what you said on the telly? Did you mean it?

V

Every word.

EVEY

You really think blowing up Parliament is going to make this country a better place?

V

There is no certainty. Only opportunity.

EVEY

Well, one thing I'm certain of is that if anyone does show up, Creedy will black bag every one of them.

V

People should not be afraid of their government. Government should be afraid of their people.

EVEY

Maybe that's true, but that's not how it is.

V

It was before and it can be again.

EVEY

Listen, if you want my opinion, art affects people. Art can change people's lives in a way that a bomb never can. If you want to change the world, do what Shakespeare did, write a play. Better yet write thirty to forty of them.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY (CONT'D)

Write a good part for me and I'll be in it. But right now, please don't talk about changing the world. I heard it enough when I was growing up. It was like hearing about Santa Claus and I don't believe in him anymore either.

She stands up.

EVEY

Thank you very much for the eggs. I think I will go back to my cell now.

V watches her leave; the smile on the mask seeming wider than before.

V

(Shakespeare quote)

INT. V'S GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

Evey is searching for something. She dumps the contents of her bag onto the bed but it's not there. Frustrated, she heads for the door.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY

In the corner of the gallery there is a swanky TV lounge. V sits, watching the evening news.

EVEY

V?

He half turns toward her, keeping one eye on the TELEVISION.

EVEY

I can't find some of my things.

V

Perhaps they were lost in the scuffle with the police. Your bag did fall to the floor and I didn't have time to see if anything had fallen out.

At this point, Evey is no longer listening because she is staring at her face on the television.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALE NEWS-POPPET (V.O.)

The nationwide search for Evey Hammond intensifies this evening as sources report that she is believed to be still in this country. Authorities are offering a reward for any information that may lead to the apprehension of this dangerous terrorist.

EVEY

... my life is over.

She turns and walks from the room as soundlessly as a ghost.

INT. STUDIO HALL - DAY

A red "recording" light turns off above a studio door where a group of executives and assistants wait silently.

At once they look up as the studio door bursts open, a sweaty and agitated LEWIS PROTHERO emerging.

PROTHERO

You fucking people are trying to kill me! Mary -- !

A woman edges into the crowd clotted around him as he storms down the hall.

PROTHERO

My migraine pills -- My head is pounding. Where the fuck is Roger --

Roger Dascomb, as if on cue, exits the control booth, joining Prothero's dotting handlers.

PROTHERO

There is a major fucking problem here, Roger!

DASCOMB

Central air was on the fritz but I think we've nipped it --

PROTHERO

What? Nipped it? You've nipped it?

Prothero drags a napkin across his forehead, which comes away caked in sweat and fleshy makeup.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROTHERO

Do you see this? Do you know what it is?

He shows him the napkin.

PROTHERO

Effort, Roger. Effort!

His assistant drops some pills in his hand which he swallows with a gulp of bottled water.

PROTHERO

The problem isn't that the fucking air conditioner went out, it's the who, what, when and why it went out.

DASCOMB

Everyone's giving their best,
Lewis --

They reach Prothero's office door, his assistant already pulling out her security card.

PROTHERO

'Their best?' I couldn't squeeze a dump out with 'their best.'

Prothero opens his private office door.

PROTHERO

England prevails because I say it does! And so does every lazy fuck that works on this bloody show. And so do you, Roger.

INT. UNDERGROUND HALL - DAY

V stands outside of Evey's bedroom door. He knocks softly.

EVEY (O.S.)

Please leave me alone...

V

I apologize for this intrusion but I wanted to let you know that I have to go out for a moment.

He listens for a response but there is none.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V

I won't be gone long, but if you decide to leave your room, please be careful. The floors and ceilings of this place are not as dependable as you might expect. There is food in the kitchen if you get hungry. Otherwise, good night.

Again, no response.

INT. PROTHERO'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

A V-disc spins, plays back Prothero's show, bathing the lavishly-mirrored room in blue. Prothero's face is everywhere.

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

I'm not sure if I mentioned this on yesterday's show or not --

Thick fingers drop ice cubes into a tumbler of Irish Whiskey.

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

But I had my annual health checkup today.

Prothero crosses, his own reflection lost among the myriad television images. A greedy hand reaches over the array of liquor to the mirror which pops open like a medicine cabinet.

Behind the mirror are rows of prescription bottles.

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

My PCB and ADZ immunizations were holding rock solid, well enough for my doctor to proclaim I was as healthy as a bull.

The television audience applauds as Prothero dumps several pills into his hand and knocks them down with the whiskey.

PROTHERO

Amen.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

The playback continues on built-in monitors, reflections bouncing off of mirror and chrome.

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

But it made me take pause as I left his office.

The lights blink on and the room turns a murky blue to white brilliance as Prothero enters.

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

You see, Ladies and Gentlemen, the scourge of our recent past is not just a health issue. Our nation too has had a checkup of sorts --

He cranks the waterfall shower and begins to peel off his clothes.

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

In this very building, our ideologies, our very way of life was confronted by a spectre of our past.

Prothero finishes his drink nodding to himself in the mirror.

INT. PROTHERO'S PENTHOUSE

Amidst the chorus of Protheros, the elevator quietly glides open.

INT. PROTHERO'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Even here, Prothero watches himself on a waterproof monitor in the enormous shower.

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

This so-called 'V,' along with his accomplice, Evey Hammond; neo-demagogues spouting their message of hate --

Thick steam coagulates around him like ectoplasm.

PROTHERO (V.O.)

(on TV)

A delusional and aberrant voice --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROTHERO
Aberrant and abhorrent --

PROTHERO (V.O.)
(on TV)
Delivering a terrorist's
ultimatum!

Prothero's television-self has him wrapped around his own
finger.

PROTHERO
Treason!

PROTHERO (V.O.)
(on TV)
An ultimatum that was met with
swift, surgically precise justice!

PROTHERO
Justice!

PROTHERO (V.O.)
(on TV)
I can assure you, this country
passed its checkup with flying
colors.

Prothero grabs a fluffy towel as he gets out of the
shower.

PROTHERO
As always, England prevails.

He CLICKS OFF the MONITORS, but when they go dead he sees
something else reflected in their black glass --

A bone-white smile.

He spins around and V is right behind him.

PROTHERO
Holy Christ!

Prothero's legs fly out from under him on the slick
marble before slapping down wetly at V's feet. He looks
up, sobering adrenaline pumping through his veins.

- V
Good evening, Commander Prothero.

PROTHERO
Oh my God! How did you get in
here?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Prothero scrambles back reaching for a bath towel eyeing the phone by the toilet.

V
 Don't worry, I've made sure our reunion won't be disturbed by any late night pesky phone calls, Commander.

PROTHERO
 Stop that. Why do you keep calling me that?

V
 That was your title, remember?

V leans in.

V
 When we first met, all those years ago.

Prothero begins to sweat.

V
 You wore a uniform in those days. You looked very good in it.

FLASHBACK - INT. LARKHILL

We see a series of horrifying images; naked human beings kept in cages, treated like animals, while a young Lewis Prothero trods the bloodstained ceramic floor in his fine-fitting uniform.

INT. PROTHERO'S BATHROOM (PRESENT)

Prothero's eyes go wide with recognition.

PROTHERO
 ... you?

FLASHBACK - EXT. LARKHILL

A faceless silhouette is set against a howling inferno of flame.

INT. PROTHERO'S BATHROOM (PRESENT)

Horror freezes Prothero's face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROTHERO

It is you.

V

The Ghost of Christmas past.

INT. UNDERGROUND HALL - NIGHT

Evey's door cracks open and she sticks her head out.

EVEY

V?

She waits, then calls again louder. When no one answers, she steps out of her room.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - NIGHT

She tries to open the main door but it is locked.

INT. V'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

There is another large door in the back of the kitchen but it too is locked.

INT. UNDERGROUND HALL - NIGHT

A DOOR across the hall from her door opens with a large CLICK.

INT. V'S OFFICE - NIGHT

It is a small room with a collection of wooden desks. On one desk there is a laser printer methodically printing out mailing labels.

On another desk there is a thick London telephone directory open to the "V"s; beside that is a laser scanner.

Evey flips through the first part of the directory. Most of the names have been blacked out with marker. Many however are highlighted with yellow.

She flips to the "H"s and finds her own name and lined in yellow.

When she turns back to the door she finds V standing there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V
You're still up?

EVEY
I couldn't sleep.

V
Perhaps this will help.

He hands her a present wrapped in simple tissue paper.

EVEY
What's this?

V
A trifle. Something I thought
might help your spirits.

She opens it and finds a beautiful old copy of Twelfth
Night.

EVEY
V... thank you. That's very kind
of you.

V
Your life isn't over, Evey. A
year from now I suspect you will
feel it's just beginning.

EVEY
Right now I can't see that.

V
I know.

She steps past him.

INT. FINCH'S FLAT - NIGHT

A TELEPHONE begins to RING.

After a moment of fumbling, Finch flips the light and
answers it, staring sleepily with one eye.

FINCH
This is Finch.

The panicked voice of Roger Dascomb bleats in his ear.

DASCOMB (V.O.)
Finch, it's Dascomb --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FINCH

Dascomb, what --

DASCOMB (V.O.)

I've already called the chancellor
and I think we have control of the
situation --

Finch rubs his eyes.

FINCH

What situation?

INT. PROTHERO'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

The two men stand over Prothero's lifeless body.

A single Carson rose sits like an offering to the fresh
corpse.

DASCOMB

Chancellor Sutler agreed for
obvious reasons, that we have to
keep this discreet, Inspector.
You understand.

Finch kneels to look at the flower, its blood red petals
against white ceramic tile.

DASCOMB

A stroke -- No, no, too horrific.
No, a quiet dignified death in his
sleep.

Green foam bubbles from his nose and mouth, eyes empty
and fixed.

DASCOMB

Better ratings.

INT. HALL - DAY

V knocks politely.

V

I thought you might be getting
hungry, so I made you a little
dinner.

After a moment she opens the door.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY

In the middle of the room, a beautiful table is set, including a single glowing candle.

EVEY

That's very nice of you.

V

I promised you'd be well cared for.

He pulls her chair and as she sits she notices the table is only set for one.

V

Would you like some music?

EVEY

Actually, if you wouldn't mind, do you think you could turn on the telly? It's about time for the 'Deitrich Variety Hour.'

V

A bit of bread and circus?

EVEY

He's a friend and I could use a laugh.

V

Of course.

Using the remote he clicks ON the TELEVISION.

FEMALE NEWS-POPPET (V.O.)

Fans nationwide have been devastated as news of the most popular --

He starts to change the channel.

EVEY

Wait. What's this?

FEMALE NEWS-POPPET (V.O.)

-- most awarded stars in the history of the FBBC, a man known to the entire nation as 'The Voice Of London' passed away late last night from apparent heart failure.

She crosses to the television as a picture of Prothero appears on the screen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FEMALE NEWS-POPPET (V.O.)

An extraordinary talent, he had dedicated his life to his country and to his beliefs, working tirelessly at his profession. It came as no surprise to those who knew him that his body was found at his office where he often worked long hours after everyone else had gone home. Lewis, you will be sorely missed.

With her hackles rising, she feels V behind her, watching her. She looks down as he turns OFF the TELEVISION.

EVEY

Did you... take my key?

He says nothing.

EVEY

Did you kill Prothero?

V

Would it matter if I did?

EVEY

Would it matter? If you killed someone?

V

You said he was an asshole --

EVEY

You don't kill people for being assholes!

V

What do you kill people for?

EVEY

You did it, didn't you?

V

There is no court in this country for people like Prothero. There are no laws or even police to stop them.

EVEY

You're a psychopath.

She backs away from him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V
 Would you like to hear about the
 things he did?

EVEY
 No!

She again slams the door to keep him out.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS

Finch is studying Prothero's history.

FINCH
 Take a look at this. Prothero's
 military record. What do you see?

DOMINIC
 Uhh... Iraq, Kurdistan, Syria
 before and after the Plague. Then
 Sudan. Then back home. Norsefire.
 A busy little boy.

FINCH
 I'd say so except for two years.
 Right here. 2014-2016.

DOMINIC
 Just after the reclamation he was...

FINCH
 He was nowhere. Nothing exists in
 between those two dates except for
 one word. Larkhill.

INT. V'S GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

Evey is sitting on her bed staring intensely at a small
 piece of paper. She takes a deep breath as if about to
 jump from a high dive for the first time.

It is the paper she took from her makeup mirror; it has
 an address written on it.

EVEY
 You can do this.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY

V relaxes in his parlor listening to MUSIC. Evey pads
 quietly into the room and sits across from him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

Hi.

She seems poised, ready to say something, like an actor unsure of the exact line.

EVEY

I've been thinking. I've been trying to understand what's been happening, why things have gone the way they've gone, why for instance I hit that cop with a chair even though I was scared to death.

She picks at a thread on the couch.

EVEY

My father was a writer. You would have gotten along great with him. He used to say that artists used lies to tell the truth, while politicians used them to cover the truth up.

V

A man after my own heart.

EVEY

Yeah, well, he's dead. See, I had a younger brother, he caught ADZ and died and afterwards my parents became... political.

FLASHBACK - EXT. SOUTH HAMPTON - BUSY STREET

The year is 2015, Evey's father, a scruffy beatnik-looking man and her mother, are wearing, what appear to be homemade hemp clothes.

A young pig-tailed Evey hands a flyer to a businessman. The flyer shouts: "ADZ DEVELOPED BY US MILITARY FOR USE IN MIDDLE EAST."

EVEY (V.O.)

They hated what was happening to the world and more importantly what was happening to this government.

INT. SOUTH HAMPTON - LIVING ROOM

Ten-year-old Evey hugs her knees, terrified, watching the TELEVISED coverage of the riots.

EVEY (V.O.)

When Sutler was appointed Chancellor they were at the riot in New Haven. They left me with the neighbors. I watched it on the telly, thinking I was going to see my parents killed.

INT. YOUNG EVEY'S BEDROOM

Little Evey is asleep in her bed.

EVEY (V.O.)

My mother and father began to argue every night. She wanted to leave the country. He refused.

The sound of BREAKING GLASS wakes her.

EVEY (V.O.)

He said that if we ran away, they would win.

She hears heavy FOOTSTEPS and her father SHOUTING.

EVEY (V.O.)

Win. Like it was a game.

Little Evey jumps when she hears a GUNSHOT. Her mother suddenly bursts into the room, slamming the door behind her.

MOTHER

Evey! Quick, hide! Under the bed!

Little Evey scampers under the bed just as soldiers break into the room, knocking her mother to the floor. They quickly pin her arms behind her back, fastening them with plastic zip ties.

Evey is so terrified that she is unable to breathe, managing only tiny mouse-like gasps as she begins to hyperventilate.

Her mother looks straight at her just before a shiny black bag is pulled over her head.

Little Evey screams and flashlights stab under the bed as the soldiers find her.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY (PRESENT)

It is not something she talks about.

EVEY

I never saw them again. It was like those black bags erased them from the face of the earth.

V

I'm sorry, Evëy.

EVEY

I know this world is screwed up. Believe me, I know it better than most. A part of me wants so bad for the world to change, but another part of me is afraid if it does, it will be for the worst.

The mask seems to tilt down with compassion.

EVEY

I was just hoping that you'd understand why I would ask at this point. If there is anything I can do to help during this year, please let me know.

V

... I will.

EVEY

Thank you.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Finch is watching a recording of VTV when Dominic returns with lunch.

DOMINIC

Here you go, Inspector. Spam on Pumpernickel.

FINCH

You hear back from Creedy's office on Larkhill?

DOMINIC

Yeah. Said they had nothing.

FINCH

Nothing? But it was a detention facility, they should have some kind of record.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOMINIC

Couldn't find one, but there's a lot of missing records from those days.

FINCH

Doesn't that seem curiously coincidental?

DOMINIC

Maybe. But I don't think Creedy cares about anything right now but banging Mrs. Heyer.

FINCH

Helen Heyer? How do you know that?

DOMINIC

Etheridge's boys got a tape floating around.

FINCH

Does Conrad know?

Dominic shrugs.

DOMINIC

Probably just as scared of Creedy as everyone else is.

Finch nods and turns back to the television.

DOMINIC

How many times you gonna watch that thing?

FINCH

It bothers me. Specially this part.

He turns up the volume.

V (V.O.)

(on TV)

There are those more responsible than others and they will be held accountable.

He stops it.

DOMINIC

You think he's talking about Prothero?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FINCH

That's what bothers me. If he is, then the real question is, who's next?

DOMINIC

If we're lucky enough, maybe it'll be Creedy.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Creedy screams a guttural animal sound and it is uncertain whether he has just been stabbed or if he's had an orgasm.

He falls face-down on a pillow, and we conclude it is the latter.

HELEN

Yeah, that's what my baby needed, wasn't it?

She reaches to the nightstand for her cigarettes.

HELEN

This terrorist business got you all balled up, don't it, honey? He's still alive, isn't he?

He looks at her while she lights two cigarettes.

HELEN

Conrad has no secrets from me.

He takes one of the cigarettes.

HELEN

Did he really kill Prothero?

CREEDY

Christ, you're a nosy bitch, ain't ya?

HELEN

Yeah, but that didn't stop you from spillin' five seconds ago either.

He snorts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CREEDY

What I don't get is what the big deal is. Autopsies said he would be dead in a year with all the shit he was gobblin'. Makes me sick to my stomach, pillheads like him. Good riddance, I say, but not Sutler. I ain't see Chancey this pissed in years.

HELEN

What's going to happen?

CREEDY

With all the shit that went down at Jordan Tower I'd say old Roger Dodger's days are outnumbered.

INT. V'S GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

Evey is cleaning the room, trying to make it feel a bit more comfortable. Fabric hangs around the bed and over the crumbling brick wall in the corner, softening and warming the room.

She is scrubbing layers of dust from a mirror above the bureau. As she does, she uncovers a Latin inscription carved into the frame of the ornate mirror.

EVEY

'Vi Veri Veniversum Vivus Vichi.'

V steps into the open door reflected in the mirror.

V

'By the power of truth, I, while living, have conquered the universe.'

EVEY

Personal motto?

V

From Faust.

EVEY

Ahh, yes. Cheating the Devil.

V

And speaking of the devil, I was wondering if your offer to help was still standing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Evey stops scrubbing and turns.

EVEY

Of course.

V

It appears that unforeseen circumstances have accelerated my original plan. As a result I am indeed in need of someone with equal parts of courage and theatrical skill. A role that seems tailor-made for you.

EVEY

I'll do my best.

V

I believe you will.

EXT. WESTMINSTER ABBEY - DAY

The church doors open, disgorging a flow of parishioners from the late afternoon mass. Rosemary and Peter Creedy are talking to Bunny Etheridge and his wife Melinda.

ETHERIDGE

I haven't heard the Bishop that inspired since Prothero's funeral.

CREEDY

I'd say the old cunt is happy to be finally getting out.

ETHERIDGE

Out?

CREEDY

You ain't heard, Sutler finally approved his transfer back to the Vatican.

ETHERIDGE

He's been after that for years.

Helen Heyer, a woman whose beauty feels as precise and well-built as a German automobile, drags Conrad, her trophy husband, into the group.

HELEN

Melinda, darling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELINDA

Hello, Helen.

HELEN

Oh-look, there's Roger Dascomb.

There is a kind of glee in her eye as they watch the hallowed-eyed Roger Dascomb, lost in his own thoughts, pass by.

HELEN

God, he looks awful. I wonder whatever could be the problem.

Her eyes catch Creedy's.

ETHERIDGE

There's a lot of talk. That he's going to take the fall for what happened at Jordan tower.

HELEN

That dreadful terrorist business.

CREEDY

Yeah, Chancey's breakin' our balls over it, ain't he, Conrad?

HELEN

As if my Conrad had any balls to break.

HEYER

Helen --

HELEN

A joke, Conrad. A joke.

HEYER

I think we should be going.

HELEN

Of course, dear. Have to get back so that London's highest paid Peeping Tom can see what the neighbors are up to. Ciao.

Creedy smiles as they head for their car.

ROSE

She is a bit hard on him, isn't she?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CREEDY

She deserves better.

He crushes out his cigarette.

INT. WESTMINSTER ABBEY - DAY

A hand holds back a plush curtain watching as Rosemary follows Creedy like a dog down the stairs.

LILLIMAN

There they go, my happy and spiritually-contented flock. How I will miss them...

He lets go of the curtain, turning into the room.

LILLIMAN

Let's be honest, shall we; I won't miss them at all, will I, Denis?

The Bishop pours himself another large glass of wine into a jewel encrusted chalice.

DENIS

If Your Grace so desires.

LILLIMAN

What I desire is not to speak of partings that bring sweet sorrows but rather partings that bring the sweet scent of fresh joy. Tell me, has the young lady arrived?

DENIS

She has, Your Grace. However, there was some confusion at the agency and they've sent a new girl who I'm afraid is a little older than usual.

LILLIMAN

Older? Oh dear, not too old, I trust?

DENIS

That is for Your Grace to decide.

LILLIMAN

Ah well, if Job could bear his challenges, I suppose I must shoulder mine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He drains the goblet.

LILLIMAN

Lead me to her.

INT. LILLIMAN'S QUARTERS - DAY

The Bishop's bedroom is furnished somewhere between plush and pimp. Evey stands nervously wearing pigtails, a pink frilly dress, white ruffled socks and mary-janes.

LILLIMAN

Oh my.

Evey curtsies.

EVEY

Your Grace.

LILLIMAN

To think that I doubted your loveliness for an instant. Mea culpa, my child, mea culpa. You are a vision. An angel.

EVEY

Um... Thank you.

LILLIMAN

Please, come, sit with me.

EXT. WESTMINSTER ABBEY - DAY

Against the slate gray sky, a dark cloaked figure leaps to the roof of the rectory.

INT. LILLIMAN'S QUARTERS - DAY

They are sitting on his bed.

LILLIMAN

Why don't you let me help you with your dress, my child?

He reaches for her, but she brushes him back.

EVEY

Please, Your Grace, we don't have much time and I have to tell you something --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILLIMAN

A confession? I love the confessional game. Tell me your sins.

EVEY

This isn't a game, Your Grace. Someone's coming and I think he means to kill you.

LILLIMAN

Pardon me?

EVEY

I'm telling you this because I want some kind of protection, or amnesty. I had nothing to do with the Bailey and I made a terrible mistake in Jordan Tower, but I think this should balance it out.

LILLIMAN

What are you talking about?

EVEY

I am Evey Hammond. I am... I have been the prisoner of the terrorist named V for the past several weeks and I am telling you that any moment he is going to come through that door because I unlocked the window in the room where Denis told me to get ready.

Lilliman stares at her, the whites of his eyes bright with fear until --

He begins to laugh.

LILLIMAN

Wonderful! A game I've never played. What a delightful mind you have. I hope the rest of you is just as interesting.

He reaches between her legs.

EVEY

No, please, you have to believe me --

LILLIMAN

Oh I do, I do, let me show you the firmness of my beliefs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He forces himself on top of her.

EVEY

Stop it! Get off of me!

LILLIMAN

Seems like I've captured the dangerous terrorist. Now, how best to procure her confession --

Evey twists under him, freeing her leg. She brings her knee up soundly cracking the eggs between his legs.

He screams, grabbing for his jewels as she slugs him across the face --

Sending him sprawling, spitting blood and venom --

LILLIMAN

Ahhh! You little bitch! You filthy little whore!

He crawls toward his nightstand when --

The DOOR JAMB SHRIEKS of BREAKING WOOD and V rushes in, a swirl of cloak and frozen smile.

V

Good evening, Bishop. I see the flesh remains as weak as ever.

Lilliman's eyes grow wide with terror.

LILLIMAN

Oh my god, she wasn't lying. It is you.

V pauses, as though struck by the words. He looks at Evey.

EVEY

I... I...

LILLIMAN

Denis, help me!

His mask tilts... slightly, as though with disappointment.

EVEY

I'm sorry, I couldn't -- I'm afraid --

She bolts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V

Evey?

He turns toward her and Lilliman sees his chance. Leaping to his nightstand he throws open a Bible, revealing that it is hollow. Inside is an ivory-handled gun.

He spins back to fire when V moves with the speed and violence of a shark bite --

The GUN FIRES TWICE into the inky cloak and then there is only the DRY SNAP of the Bishop's WRIST and the gasping howl that follows as he goes to his knees.

V stands above him in a portrait of absolution. The Bishop lifts his head.

LILLIMAN

Who are you?

V

You once said I was the Devil incarnate. Remember that, Bishop? You remember Larkhill, don't you?

The word stops Lilliman's heart.

LILLIMAN

Oh dear god, have mercy.

V

Not tonight, Bishop. Not tonight.

The dark cloak envelops the terrified kneeling man of God.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Evey flees West Minster, trying to get as far away as fast as she can.

She dashes out from an alley, but then quickly ducks back when she sees one of the Ear's prowling surveillance vehicles.

It has black-tinted windows and is heavily-armored like a Brink's truck. On the roof, there are cameras and several large mounted devices that look like satellite dishes.

Evey cowers in the alley as it passes by.

INT. SURVEILLANCE VEHICLE - NIGHT

The inside of the truck glows with all manner of industrial surveillance electronics. On a small monitor we see the infrared figure of Evey crouching in the alley which goes unnoticed by the two OPERATORS.

OPERATOR #1

Look what time it is!

OPERATOR #2

Ho ho. Time once again for children's hour at the Abby.

OPERATOR #1

With your host the Bishop of buggery. Who knew communion could be so...

OPERATOR #2

Sordid?

OPERATOR #1

Salty.

They tune the dials until they hear the Bishop's voice.

LILLIMAN (V.O.)

Oh no. Don't do this. I beg of you.

V (V.O.)

Open your mouth and stick out your tongue.

OPERATOR #1

What the -- ?

LILLIMAN (V.O.)

I don't want to die.

The BISHOP'S SCREAM pierces their ears.

OPERATOR #1

This is surveillance one-zero-nine. We have an emergency!

INT. LILLIMAN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

There is a foam of greenish white vomit in a puddle of brackish blood staining the Persian rug.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Bishop's lifeless body lies outlined in chalk. The circled bloodstain floats above the head like the last word balloon of a crude comic strip character.

On his chest lies a Violet Carson rose.

FINCH
Nothing else has been touched?

DOMINIC
No, sir.

Wearing rubber gloves, Finch plucks the rose and deposits it in a plastic evidence bag.

FINCH
Okay, get him out of here.

Two cops set a stretcher beside the body as Finch moves away.

FINCH
Where's that music coming from?

DOMINIC
There's a V-3 player over there.

FINCH
Beethoven.

DOMINIC
Yes, sir. Apparently he had the Bishop turn it on. Presumably to cover their voices.

FINCH
Da, da, da, dum. You know what that is?

DOMINIC
Uh... it's 'The Fifth' I believe.

FINCH
It's also Morse code. For the letter 'V.'

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Evey hides in an alcove, looking up at a beautiful town home which has several lights still on. She waits for her nerve to finally pick her up and carry her to the front door.

EXT. DEITRICH'S TOWN HOME - NIGHT

She presses the DOORBELL and tries to keep herself from running. After a moment, Gordon Deitrich opens the door.

DEITRICH

Evey? Good-God!

EVEY

I am sorry -- I didn't know where else to go --

He scans the streets quickly then grabs her.

DEITRICH

Come on quick, come inside, before someone sees you.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

High above the street, V watches as Evey steps into the warm glow of Deitrich's home and slams the door shut.

INT. DEITRICH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A pair of glasses are filled with Scotch. Evey is sitting on the couch.

DEITRICH

Then V is still alive?

EVEY

Yes and I think he meant to kill Bishop Lilliman.

DEITRICH

No great loss there.

EVEY

How can you say that?

DEITRICH

I've met one of his victims. Here, drink this.

He hands her a stiff drink which she summarily drains.

DEITRICH

Cheers.

He follows her lead, then grabs the bottle to refill.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

Gordon, I know every cop in this country is looking for me. I know it's horrible of me to come here, to put you in this situation --

DEITRICH

Evey --

EVEY

If they find me here you could be in terrible trouble --

DEITRICH

Evey, listen to me. If the government ever searched my house, you would be the least of my problems.

Evey looks at him, not understanding.

DEITRICH

Let me show you.

INT. DEITRICH'S WINE CELLAR - NIGHT

A pull CHAIN CLICKS and a naked light bulb reveals a beautiful stone wine cellar filled with racks of dust-covered dark bottles.

DEITRICH

I've always said in public that I don't make art, I make fun of it. But the truth is I love art and I do whatever I can to protect it.

He twists one of the old bottles and the entire rack swings open like a door revealing --

INT. DEITRICH'S SECRET LIBRARY - NIGHT

Inside is a small version of V's collection: books, music, paintings and rows and rows of movies both in reels and on disks.

Featured on the far wall is a painting of Adam Sutler dressed like Queen Elizabeth though with more décolletage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

Oh my god! That's 'God Save The Queen!' My parents took me to it when they hung it at Gallery 12. I thought Sutler had it destroyed.

DEITRICH

He believes he did. It cost more than this house, but no matter how bad I feel, it always cheers me up.

She notices a large book laid open under a glass case.

EVEY

What is that?

DEITRICH

A copy of the Qur'an, Fourteenth century.

EVEY

Are you... a Muslim?

DEITRICH

No, I'm in television.

EVEY

But why would you keep it?

DEITRICH

I don't have to be Muslim to find the images beautiful or its poetry moving.

EVEY

But is it worth it? I mean if they found that here --

DEITRICH

I told you. You'd be the least of worries.

She feels a sudden tremendous sense of relief and gratitude.

EVEY

Thank you, Gordon. Thank you so much.

DEITRICH

It's alright.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

You know that this whole thing started the night he blew up the Old Bailey. I was on my way here...

DEITRICH

Well, I'm glad you finally made it.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

A sheet is pulled over the gaunt grimace frozen onto the face of the dead Bishop.

SURRIDGE

You'll have my preliminary findings in the morning and a full report by the end of the week.

Chief Medical Examiner DELIA SURRIDGE is a smart-looking woman in her young fifties.

FINCH

Thanks, Delia.

She asks the next question without looking at him.

SURRIDGE

Are there any leads in finding this guy?

FINCH

Honestly, nothing yet. Nothing concrete. But there is something else you can help me with.

He pulls the plastic bag with the rose from his pocket.

FINCH

You started as a botanist, didn't you?

SurrIDGE nods, staring at the rose as if it were Lazarus.

SURRIDGE

It's... it's a Violet Carson. They're believed to be extinct.

FINCH

He leaves them at the crime scenes. I'd appreciate if you could take a look at it. Any information could be helpful.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SURRIDGE

... of course.

EXT. DEITRICH'S TOWN HOME - DAY

Morning sunlight chases the gray from the sky.

INT. DEITRICH'S GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

Evey wakes to beams of streaming sunlight and the sumptuous comfort of 1000 thread count sheets.

Deitrich enters with a breakfast tray.

EVEY

Oh, what's this?

DEITRICH

Thought a little breakfast might help to start the day right.

EVEY

That is so sweet.

He sets the tray beside her.

DEITRICH

Unfortunately I have to run.

EVEY

8:30 block through.

DEITRICH

I'll try to be home before eight.
Best keep the curtains closed.

He kisses her and dashes off. She smiles, looking down at the eggs.

The smile fades as there is something strangely familiar about this situation.

INT. ETHERIDGE'S SOUND STUDIO - DAY

ETHERIDGE is lost, immersed in the world of sound filling his headphones.

Finch stands in the hallway of the audio specialist. Finch taps him on the shoulder and he almost jumps out of his skin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He fumbles to take the headphones off.

FINCH

What have you got?

ETHERIDGE

Well, you know my boys caught a bit of the dialogue before the Bishop...

DOMINIC

They told us it was blurred out by the music.

Etheridge smiles.

ETHERIDGE

This kind of sound work is the same as archeology. You have to dig through layers of dirt with a toothbrush. It's tedious, painstaking work. But when you find something it always feels worth it.

He hits PLAY and we hear a THIN RECORDING of V and the Bishop. The words are just barely understandable.

LILLIMAN (V.O.)

... lease... Not my fault...
doing... told to do.

V (V.O.)

... took more than confessions...

LILLIMAN (V.O.)

Was nothing!... I did... compared to...

V (V.O.)

Guilty... You are. They are...
Everyone is guilty for Lark...
I've come back to absolve you of
your sins... Open your mouth.

FINCH

Wait, go back a bit, can you play that last line again, louder.

V (V.O.)

Everyone is guilty for
Lark...ll...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FINCH

Stop. What did that sound like to you?

DOMINIC

Larkhill.

FINCH

Son of a bitch.

INT. DELIA SURRIDGE'S BEDROOM

Delia Surridge is asleep in her bed looking at peace enough to be dead. The curtain blows gently.

INT. PAYROLL RECORDS DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Finch and Dominic wait at a desk.

DOMINIC

You really think we'll find something here?

FINCH

Worth a shot. One thing is true about all Governments; their best records are tax records. If our boy's after everyone who worked at Larkhill then the best chance at a list of the people who worked there, is here.

A bifocaled MAN enters the office, with a printout.

BUREAUCRAT (MAN)

The original records had all been deleted but I found a back-up copy in a cold vault.

Finch grabs at the report.

BUREAUCRAT

Curious detention facility by the look of it. Quite a few doctors on that list.

One name leaps off the page: Dr. Delia Surridge.

INT. DELIA SURRIDGE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Delia wakes with a start. Something stirs along the dark edges of the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SURRIDGE
It's you, isn't it? You've come
to kill me.

From the shadows, V answers.

V
Yes.

EXT. FINCH'S CAR - NIGHT

The car barrels through the winding streets of London.

INT. FINCH'S CAR - NIGHT

Finch is on the phone, Dominic driving.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
I'm sorry, Inspector, but I can't
get a response from that number.
There's a problem with the
connection.

He hangs up.

FINCH
Jesus Christ. He's there.

INT. DELIA SURRIDGE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

V floats at the edge of her bed, a dark angel.

V
Are you afraid?

SURRIDGE
No. I thought I would be, but I'm
not. I'm... relieved.

She looks up at the smiling mask.

SURRIDGE
I knew you'd come for me. That
you would come for us all.

Her voice drops to an almost confessional whisper.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SURRIDGE

What happened at Larkhill, what we did -- what I did, that I could do things like that, such terrible things... And nothing stopped me.

She looks up at him as though looking for an answer.

SURRIDGE

Power corrupts? Is it as easy as that?

V

Is that what happened to you?

SURRIDGE

I don't know. Maybe. I've wondered for so long if it was just the chaos of that time or if I had to do it again, would it be any different.

The mask waits for her to answer.

SURRIDGE

Oppenheimer changed not the course of a war but the entire course of human history. Is it wrong to hold onto that kind of hope?

V

I have not come for what you hoped to do, Delia, I've come for what you did.

SURRIDGE

Yes. I know. It's funny. I was given one of your roses today. I wasn't sure you were the terrorist until I saw it.

She manages a smile.

SURRIDGE

What a strange coincidence, that I should be given it today.

V

There are no coincidences, Delia. Only the illusion of coincidence.

He reaches into his cloak.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V
I have another rose. This one is
for you.

He hands it to her.

SURRIDGE
Are you going to kill me now?

He shows her an empty syringe.

V
I killed you ten minutes ago.
While you slept.

SURRIDGE
Is there any pain?

V
No.

SURRIDGE
Thank you.

In the distance we hear a SIREN.

SURRIDGE
Is it meaningless to apologize?

V
Never.

SURRIDGE
I am sorry.

The rose falls from her hands.

EXT. DELIA SURRIDGE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Finch's car bucks up onto the sidewalk, the door opening
before the car even stops.

INT. DELIA SURRIDGE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Finch and Dominic enter, guns drawn. Finch signals to
the stairway.

INT. DELIA SURRIDGE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The windows are open. Delia lies on her bed, her eyes
fixed. Finch sees the Violet Carson in her lap and knows
they are, once more, too late.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FINCH

Damn it.

He notices on the top of the nightstand, a journal has been laid out for all the world to see.

FINCH (V.O.)

We now have Dr. Surr ridge's journal.

INT. CHANCELLOR'S CABINET ROOM - DAY

FINCH

It was found at the crime scene, beside the bed. I believe the terrorist put it there. He wanted us to find it. He wanted us to know the story or at least part of it.

FLASHBACK - EXT. LARKHILL GATE

A large transport passes through the razor-wire topped gate. A sign above the gate reads: "Larkhill Detention Facility."

SURRIDGE (V.O.)

May 23rd.

EXT. LARKHILL SORTING STATION

The doors of the transport are opened by armed soldiers. It is crammed with people, all of them one form of minority or another.

Among them is a woman who is afraid yet remains strikingly poised. Her name is VALERIE.

SURRIDGE (V.O.)

My first batch of subjects arrived today and I have to admit that I am very excited. I can't help but wonder if this is how Oppenheimer felt. This could be the dawn of a new age. Nuclear power is meaningless in a world where a virus can kill an entire population and leave its wealth intact.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The soldiers direct the people into a series of pens like those that are used to sort cattle.

SURRIDGE (V.O.)
Chancellor Sutler is truly a visionary. Obviously without his support this would not be possible. I only hope my work can bear fruit.

INT. LARKHILL MEDICAL RESEARCH BLOCK

A younger Surridge administers injections to her research stock.

SURRIDGE (V.O.)
June 2nd: I keep wondering if these people knew how they might be helping their country, if they would act any differently.

A young black man with open sores on his face stares at the floor as though already dead.

SURRIDGE (V.O.)
They're so weak and pathetic. They never look you in the eye.

She moves to the next subject which is Valerie. Her beautiful face has also begun to develop lesions.

SURRIDGE (V.O.)
I find myself hating them.

INT. LARKHILL OVENS

Two inmate orderlies heft a sacked cadaver from a cart, tossing it into an incinerator.

SURRIDGE (V.O.)
August 18th: Of the original four dozen, over 75 percent are now deceased. No controllable pattern has yet emerged...

Another body is fed into the mouth of flame.

INT. LARKHILL MEDICAL RESEARCH BLOCK

We MOVE DOWN a long hallway where the prisoners are kept. The cell doors line the walls like tombstones, each inscribed with a Roman numeral.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SURRIDGE (V.O.)

September 9th: There is one case that continues to give me hope. He exhibits none of the immune system pathologies that the other subjects developed. There appear to be, however, several cellular anomalies that I have been unable to categorize.

SLOWLY we begin to TURN TOWARD one door.

SURRIDGE (V.O.)

I suspect this may be due to certain pre-existing elements initially found in his bloodstream. Upon questioning, the subject said he could no longer remember who he was or where he was from.

The Roman numeral on the door is "V."

SURRIDGE (V.O.)

At some point he must have worked on a farm or with a gardener because he has demonstrated a remarkable facility for such things. Prothero allows him to work in the garden behind the blockhouse and what he has created is rather amazing.

We MOVE CLOSER AND CLOSER TOWARDS the V until it finally EXPLODES into a rageful cloud of FIRE.

The EXPLOSION RIPS open the building, flame cleaving and clawing its way to freedom.

SURRIDGE (V.O.)

November 5th: It started last night. Around midnight.

People are running, screaming, terrified as EXPLOSIONS continue to shred the walls and blow apart the fences of Larkhill.

SURRIDGE (V.O.)

The first explosions tore open the entire medical section. All that work, all my work... gone.

Surrige stares at a great pillar of flame consecrating her labor. Surrige begins to search through the chaos.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SURRIDGE (V.O.)

I was trying to understand how it could have happened when I saw him.

A silhouette emerges from a curtain of fire.

SURRIDGE (V.O.)

The man from room five. He had used the things we had given him to garden, chemicals, fertilizer and ammonia to make the bombs.

He stands as Lucifer might; a majestic shadowed form set against a blaze of orange flame.

SURRIDGE (V.O.)

I saw him in the midst of the flame.

Surridge is suddenly terrified.

SURRIDGE (V.O.)

He looked at me. Not with eyes, there were no eyes. But I know he was looking at me because I felt it and, oh god, what have I done...

INT. CHANCELLOR'S CABINET ROOM - DAY (PRESENT)

Finch places the journal on the table.

FINCH

That's the last entry until six months later when Dr. Surridge is in London. She never mentions the man in room five again. Maybe she was hoping if she didn't talk about him he wouldn't come back.

ETHERIDGE

But if he's killed them all then perhaps it's over.

FINCH

I don't believe it is. He's after those who were more responsible than others and Dr. Surridge makes it very clear who was ultimately responsible for Larkhill.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUTLER
Who?

FINCH
You, sir.

SUTLER
So you believe this lunatic is
going to try to kill me next?

FINCH
I do, sir.

SUTLER
That's preposterous.

FINCH
Maybe. But so is saying you're
going to blow up Parliament. At
this point. It is reckless not to
assume that this man, if he even
is a man, is capable of doing
everything he promised he would.

INT. DEITRICH'S TOWN HOME - CLOSEUP ON V - DAY
From "VTV."

V (V.O.)
(on TV)
Certainly there are those who are
more responsible than others and
they will be held accountable, but
again, truth be told...

Evey sits alone in the curtain-drawn darkness.

V (V.O.)
(on TV)
... if you are looking for the
guilty, you need only look into a
mirror.

Deitrich enters the room.

DEITRICH
Evey?

V (V.O.)
(on TV)
I know why you did it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEITRICH
Are you in here?

V (V.O.)
(on TV)
I know you were afraid. Who
wouldn't be?

Deitrich turns OFF the TELEVISION and turns on the light.

DEITRICH
Evey? Are you alright?

She is buried in the couch.

EVEY
Yeah, I was looking for a movie in
your library and found this instead...

DEITRICH
I recorded it the moment it
started. It's unbelievable what
he did. Makes you really wonder
if what he says is possible.

EVEY
... Yeah.

DEITRICH
Is something wrong?

He sits beside her while she measures her response.

EVEY
Gordon, I want you to understand
how grateful I am for what you've
done.

DEITRICH
Uh-oh, I don't like the sound of
that setup.

EVEY
But I can't stay here any longer.

DEITRICH
Are you crazy? The whole country
is still looking for you.

EVEY
I know. That's why I have to
leave. I don't want what happened
to me to happen to you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY (CONT'D)

You're a beautiful man, Gordon.
You have a beautiful life. And it
isn't right for me to ask you to
risk it all.

DEITRICH

I told you, I'm okay with that
risk.

EVEY

But I'm not. I couldn't live with
myself if something happened to
you because of me.

DEITRICH

Are you thinking of trying to go
back to him?

EVEY

... No.

DEITRICH

Because that would be crazy.

EVEY

I have family in Australia.

DEITRICH

But how would you get there?

EVEY

I don't know. All I know is that
I can't stay here anymore.

DEITRICH

And there's nothing I can say to
change your mind?

EVEY

'Fraid not.

DEITRICH

Then can you do one thing for me?

EVEY

What?

DEITRICH

The night you were supposed to
come; I bought two steaks. Real
beef. I promised you a nice
dinner, let me keep my word.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She smiles.

EVEY

Okay.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Finch enters with several large rolled-up tubes.

DOMINIC

What's this?

FINCH

Old structural plans, got them from B&E records.

He starts to unroll several blueprint drawings.

FINCH

It's incredible, all the tunnels under London. See here? Westminster's got more holes bored in it than a block of Swiss cheese. If I was going to blow up Parliament, this is exactly how I'd do it.

DOMINIC

How?

FINCH

Load a train up with explosives and drive it straight into it.

DOMINIC

But the underground's been shut down for years.

FINCH

You think a guy who can make a bomb out of a handful of fertilizer, can't make a train run on its own power?

DOMINIC

That's a point...

FINCH

We got to start searching these tunnels.

DOMINIC

But look at 'em, that could take forever.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FINCH

We don't have forever, we got
eight months.

INT. DEITRICH'S OFFICE - DAY

Still in his makeup, he pours himself a very stiff drink
and gulps it down. He goes to his desk and grabs the
phone.

INT. DEITRICH'S TOWN HOME - DAY

Evey checks the number, then answers.

EVEY

Hey you, aren't you taping?

DEITRICH (V.O.)

Just finished.

EVEY

How'd it go?

DEITRICH (V.O.)

I think it might be the best show
I've ever done.

EVEY

Tell me.

DEITRICH (V.O.)

I'd rather surprise you. We'll
watch it together tonight. Put a
bottle of champers on ice and I'll
see you soon.

INT. DEITRICH'S TOWN HOME - NIGHT

The champagne cork pops; bubbles ejaculate.

Deitrich sits on the living room couch, pouring his
champagne into two glasses. She smiles as he hands her a
glass.

DEITRICH

If I may, I'd like to toast a
woman who I barely know and yet
may be the most extraordinary
woman I have ever met. I hope one
day fortune smiles on me and
brings her back into my life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

Gordon...

DEITRICH

Don't ruin a perfectly good toast,
my dear. It's bad form. Drink
up, show's about to start.

He sips and grabs the remote, turning UP the VOLUME on
the television.

EVEY

What's this all about?

DEITRICH

Sit. Sit.

They sink into the big overstuffed couch as the title
montage finishes. The studio audience begins to cheer as
Deitrich walks out like Johnny Carson from behind the
curtain.

DEITRICH (V.O.)

(on TV)

Thank you, thank you and good
evening, ladies and gentlemen.
We've got a really special show
tonight. You won't believe it.
I'm not sure I do. We had an
entirely different show planned
but when I got to the studio this
morning I received a phone call
from none other than our Leader,
Chancellor Sutler.

The audience gasps.

EVEY

Mr. Deitrich, what have you done?

DEITRICH

We threw out the censor-approved
script and shot a new one that I
wrote this morning.

EVEY

Oh my God.

Deitrich smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEITRICH (V.O.)

(on TV)

... what could I say except,
Ladies and Gentlemen, give a warm
welcome to our very own Chancellor
Sutler.

A look-alike Sutler steps out of the curtain, nodding
like Mussolini and the crowd goes wild.

After a beat, the CAMERA PANS FROM the cheering audience
and finds several heavily-armed soldiers aiming guns at
the audience while standing under the lit-up "Applause"
sign.

Evey almost spits her champagne out her nose.

EVEY

Gordon, you're crazy.

DEITRICH

No, just inspired.

On the television, two beautiful showgirls lead Sutler to
the arrangement of comfortable chairs where Deitrich is
waiting.

DEITRICH (V.O.)

(on TV)

So you've been telling me the
tremendous stress you've been
under since this whole terrorist
business began.

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)

(on TV)

Awful, just impossible to relax.

DEITRICH (V.O.)

(on TV)

Well, let's see what we can do
about that. Girls?

A gaggle of show girls, all feathers, smiles and high
heels, materialize on command. One of them has a small
tray with a glass of milk.

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)

(on TV)

Oh, warm milk. There's nothing
better.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEITRICH (V.O.)

(on TV)

You enjoy a glass every night,
don't you, Chancellor?

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)

(on TV)

Since I was a boy.

Several girls begin massaging the Chancellor while one
lights him a cigar.

SUTLER (V.O.)

(on TV)

Oh yes, very nice.

DEITRICH (V.O.)

(on TV)

So, Chancellor, you have a captive
audience, what is it you wanted to
say to them?

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)

(on TV)

Right. First of all, I wanted to
urge the people of this great
nation to remain committed to
their faith in this government.
It was this government that
brought this country out of the
darkness of our past and it is
this government that will triumph
over the evil-doers threatening
both our present and our future.

The CAMERA REVEALS V, sneaking through a trap door near
Sutler's chair.

INT. TENEMENT - NIGHT

The little girl smiles as V crawls between the legs of
the showgirls and begins secretly tying Sutler's
shoelaces together.

DEITRICH (V.O.)

(on TV)

So you're saying the terrorist is
still alive and active?

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The barflies chortle as V sneaks a cigar from a showgirl,
substituting a different one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)
 (on TV)
 I've said no such thing.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - NIGHT

The pensioners' smiles are as bemused as V's smile.

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)
 (on TV)
 The terrorist has been
 neutralized.

INT. DEITRICH'S TOWN HOME - NIGHT

Deitrich watches Evey, in love with the smile in her eyes.

On television, Sutler puffs on his cigar which suddenly EXPLODES with Buggs Bunny comic force. The audience screams with peals of laughter as rage boils out of Sutler's ears.

DEITRICH (V.O.)
 (on TV)
 Oh my God, Chancellor! Look!

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)
 (on TV)
 The terrorist!

Sutler leaps up, immediately prat-falling forward from his knotted laces.

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)
 (on TV)
 Get him!

Benny Hill hilarity ensues as the soldiers begin chasing V around the studio. Cameras do their best to cover the madcap chase while Deitrich remains impeccably impervious to the chaos.

Finally V is caught, wrestled to the ground by the soldiers.

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)
 (on TV)
 At last! And now for all the
 world to see --

He rips the mask off, revealing --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Another Sutler look-alike. The soldiers are stunned as Sutler Clone #2 tears free, loosing his cloak so that he is wearing the same suit as Sutler Clone #1.

SUTLER CLONE #2 (V.O.)

(on TV)

Unhand me! I am your Chancellor!

SUTLER CLONE #1 (V.O.)

(on TV)

What? How dare you! I'm the Chancellor!

SUTLER CLONE #2 (V.O.)

(on TV)

Imposter!

Sutler #2 lunges at Sutler #1 and they fall to the ground, rolling themselves into a Mobius strip of Chancellor-ness.

Finally they break apart and one of them leaps to their feet.

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)

(on TV)

Soldiers! I order you to shoot that man!

The other Sutler jumps up as the men aim their guns.

OTHER SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)

(on TV)

That man is the terrorist!

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)

(on TV)

On my mark --

OTHER SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)

(on TV)

You will shoot that traitor --

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)

(on TV)

That liar --

OTHER SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)

(on TV)

That fake --

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)

(on TV)

That fraud --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OTHER SUTLER CLONE (V.O.)
(on TV)

Ready!

SUTLER CLONE (V.O.) -
(on TV)

Aim!

BOTH SUTLERS (V.O.),
(on TV)

FIRE!

The soldiers FIRE, killing both Sutlers and as they hit the deck, the curtain crashes down just after them.

The audience bursts into applause as Deitrich steps out from the curtain.

DEITRICH (V.O.)
(on TV)

Thank you, thank you. Before I say good night, I would like to thank my special guest for being such a good sport.

INT. SUTLER'S HOME - NIGHT

A hand rigidly grips a glass of milk.

Sutler sits alone in his pajamas, staring at the television, his eyes ablaze with rage.

On the television, Deitrich bows and disappears behind the curtain. A moment later V sticks his smiling face through the slit in the curtain. The audience cheers as --

The GLASS of milk SHATTERS in his hand.

INT. DEITRICH'S TOWN HOME - NIGHT

Deitrich is on the phone.

DEITRICH
What are they going to do? Fine us? Big deal. We have the most watched show on the air... well, you're a lawyer, that's what I pay you for, protect me...

He hangs up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEITRICH

I should have hired him years ago
to be my mother.

EVEY

You're mad.

DEITRICH

I suppose I am.

He stares at her, the object of his "madness."

EVEY

Why did you do it?

DEITRICH

Maybe I'm sick of this government.
Maybe I'm sick of making people
laugh to help them forget how
screwed up this country is. Maybe
I'm sick of strength and purity
and faith and I wanted to say
something about it.

EVEY

Is that true?

DEITRICH

Maybe. And maybe I was just
trying to impress a girl.

She smiles.

DEITRICH

Did it work?

EVEY

I'd say so.

DEITRICH

Then it was worth it.

He kisses her.

EXT. DEITRICH'S TOWN HOME - NIGHT

The half moon cowers behind the cloud cover.

INT. DEITRICH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

It is much later. They are both asleep in his bed. The
sound of BREAKING GLASS wakes Evey.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY
Gordon? Did you hear that?

DEITRICH
... 's nothing. -

She continues listening until a loud THUMP and the sound of MOVEMENT start her heart pounding.

EVEY
Gordon --

DEITRICH
Shhh. I heard it.

He grabs the phone.

DEITRICH
Line's dead.

EVEY
Oh God.

Deitrich reaches into his nightstand and grabs a gun. In Evey's mounting sense of panic there is the feeling of deja vu.

Deitrich stands at the door listening.

EVEY
Gordon, don't --

Ignoring her, he slips out of the room.

Moments later a GUN GOES OFF and then there is the charging of BOOTS up stairs as Deitrich rushes back into the room, slamming the door.

DEITRICH
Jesus Christ! Hide, Evey! Quick!

Instinctively, Evey goes to the floor, scrambling under the bed. The door EXPLODES from its hinges, throwing Deitrich back as a swarm of heavily-armed para-military Fingermen flood the room.

DEITRICH
What do you think --

A rifle butt knocks the question from his mouth.

Evey watches from under the bed as several soldiers take hold of Deitrich, his bare feet seeming terribly vulnerable against the heavy black boots.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Creedy lifts his truncheon.

CREEDY

Not so funny now, is it, funny
man?

Another hit and Deitrich drops to the floor. His face is obscured for a moment in the shadow but as they force his arms back, using zip ties to secure his wrists --

A flashlight catches his face, split like the skin of a plum, revealing the meaty pulp inside.

He tries to say something, to beg them to stop but his jaw is broken and all he manages is a gurgling scream. His eyes search under the bed and lock with Evey --

Who stares back, helpless, watching it happen just as it happened to her parents. She begins to hyperventilate, trying to hold down her scream as --

As the shiny black bag is yanked over his head and pulled tight like a noose around his neck.

They haul him up and drag him barefooted out the door.

Knowing that if she stays, they will find her, she pushes herself out from under the bed.

The window is open and she crawls out onto a small roof.

EXT. DEITRICH'S TOWN HOME - NIGHT

The roof overlooks the garden behind the house. She edges her way down, until she is hanging on the edge with no other way except to let go.

She does, landing with a soft thump.

From inside the house a flashlight is shined through the window. She crawls away through the garden bush while the shadows of men search behind her.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

The alley is empty and she takes her first breath. Quietly she begins sneaking away until she is suddenly grabbed --

FINGERMAN

Gotcha!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A dark, faceless man in a Fingerman uniform twists her arms behind her back, pinning them with zip ties.

EVEY

No! No! Please!

But there is nothing that can stop the black bag from being pulled over her head. She screams as we --

CUT TO BLACK.

Where her SCREAM ECHOES and FADES, becoming --

A metal bolt that is thrown as a door opens in the perfect blackness.

FADE IN:

INT. PRISON CELL

Evey tries to push herself up. The cell is like a metal closet. There is no bed.

Two guards stand as silhouettes at the door.

ROSSITER

So this pathetic cow is the famous Evey Hammond?

EVEY

I want a lawyer --

ROSSITER

Shut up, get up and face the wall.

EVEY

You can't --

He kicks her in the stomach.

ROSSITER

We can do whatever we want, you stupid cunt. Now shut up, get up and face the wall.

Evey crawls her way up, fighting tears as she turns her face into the wall. Her wrists are cuffed behind her and a heavy hood is pulled over her head.

ROSSITER

You learn quick.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Evey is forced down into a chair, the hood yanked off. She squints against the searching bright lights aimed into her face.

- A man who is barely a shape behind the lights sits across from her.

INTERROGATOR

Do you know why you are here, Evey Hammond?

EVEY

Please...

INTERROGATOR

You are being formally charged with four counts of murder, destruction of public property, conspiracy to commit treason, terrorism and sedition, the penalty for which is death by firing squad.

Her mouth opens as if she had been punched.

INTERROGATOR

We have 120 minutes of audio and video recordings and at least 75 pages of testimonials from eyewitnesses that identify you as an accomplice to the terrorist known as code name 'V.'

She can't find the words to make him stop.

INTERROGATOR

You have one chance and only once chance to save your life. You must tell us the identity or the whereabouts of code name 'V.' If the information leads to his capture you will be immediately released from this facility. Do you understand what I'm telling you?

Evey drops her eyes.

INTERROGATOR-

You can return to your life, Miss Hammond, and all you have to do is tell me the identity or the whereabouts of 'V.'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

I... don't know.

INTERROGATOR

Process her and return her to her cell, until she's more cooperative.

INT. PROCESSING ROOM

Evey cries as a rough hand runs a pair of electric shears over her head. Huge sheaves of her hair fall to the ground.

INT. PRISON CELL

Evey lies crumpled in the hard floor, unmoving as a tray of food is slid through the slot at the bottom of the door.

She watches as a rat crosses from the hole in the wall, sniffing the murky gelatin in a wooden bowl.

INT. PROCESSING ROOM

Evey hangs limply from a set of manacles as she is washed and deloused.

INT. PRISON CELL

Evey is curled into the corner like a fetus. She has lost weight and her gaunt arms wrap around her legs.

She blinks when she hears SOMETHING MOVING in the rat hole, something that is not a rat.

Tentatively her fingers search the hole, pulling out a length of toilet paper. Over every inch is a delicately-scrawled message.

Evey reads and we hear Valerie's voice.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I know there is no way I can convince you that this is not one of their tricks. But I don't care. I am me. My name is Valerie. I am a woman.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VALERIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I have a pencil that I hid inside of me so that I could write this letter. I don't think I will live much longer and I wanted to tell someone about my life. This is the only autobiography that I will ever write and, oh God, I am writing it on toilet paper.

FLASHBACK - INT. CLASSROOM

RAIN DAPPLES and streaks a large WINDOW overlooking a dreary cottage town.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I was born in Nottingham in 1985, I don't remember much of those early years but I do remember the rain.

A young Valerie sits in a classroom, staring at the rain-streaked pane of glass.

VALERIE (V.O.)

My grandmother owned a farm in Tottlebrook and she used to tell me that God was in the rain. The sound of rain tapping on a window has always felt like home.

The girl turns from the window and looks at another girl sitting at a desk beside her.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I passed my 11 plus and went to girl's grammar.

The blonde tomboy looks up from her lesson book and sneaks a smile to the curly-haired Valerie.

VALERIE (V.O.)

It was at school that I met my first girlfriend. Her name was Sarah.

Sarah quickly slips Valerie a note and we notice Sarah's beautiful hands.

VALERIE (V.O.)

It was her wrists. They were beautiful.

Valerie opens the note which says "Sarah + Valerie" written in a large red heart.

INT. BIOLOGY LAB

A rabbit fetus floats, suspended as a nonsecretor in a jar full of chemicals.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I thought we would love each other forever.

Valerie stares at the jar while a school teacher lectures to the two girls.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I sat in biology class staring at the pickled rabbit fetus while Mr. Heard told us that it was an adolescent phase that people outgrew.

Sarah's head hangs down, ashamed.

VALERIE (V.O.)

Sarah did. I didn't.

INT. LIVING ROOM

A teenage Valerie holds the hand of her new girlfriend as her disgruntled father screams at both of them.

VALERIE (V.O.)

In 2002 I fell in love with a girl named Christina. That year I came out to my parents. I'm not sure I could have done it without Chris holding my hand.

Her mother weeps, making the sign of the cross.

VALERIE (V.O.)

A week later I moved to London to study acting. My mother said I broke her heart.

EXT. PARK

Valerie and Christina cuddle on a park bench under a London summer sky.

VALERIE (V.O.)

But it was my integrity that was so important. Is that so selfish? It sells for so little but it is all we really have.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chris nibbles Valerie's ear, who smiles, ignoring the scowling older couple sitting on the opposing bench.

VALERIE (V.O.)

It is the very last inch of us...

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM (PRESENT)

Evey's face is suspended ABOVE us in a bucket of water as the last bit of air bubbles out from her nose and mouth. She hangs frozen before her next breath which would be her last.

VALERIE (V.O.)

... but within that inch, we are free.

The Rossiter wrenches Evey's head out of the bucket and Evey gasps for air.

ROSSITER

It ends whenever you want it to.

Evey chokes, trying to find her breath.

ROSSITER

Just tell us where he is.

EVEY

I don't know.

He forces her head back into the bowl and again Evey is brought back to a single inhale away from oblivion.

VALERIE (V.O.)

London. It makes me cry to think of it.

FLASHBACK - INT. BACKSTAGE

Valerie is backstage waiting to make her entrance.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I was so happy there. The first rep work I got was playing Rosalind in As You Like It.

Valerie steps onto the stage, into the lights.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VALERIE (V.O.)

I still have the butterflies I caught that first night. They flutter in my stomach every time I remember it. Back then I wasn't very good, but I was being paid.

EXT. TRAIN STATION

Chris and Valerie kiss goodbye like every old romantic movie as the train begins to leave.

VALERIE (V.O.)

Chris inherited her father's auto shop and went back to Nottingham.

Chris breaks the kiss and jumps on the train, both women crying as the train pulls them apart.

VALERIE (V.O.)

She never liked London like I did and even though we cried our eyes out we knew it was for the best.

INT. OLD COUNTRY HOUSE

Valerie, in a 1940s housewife dress, wipes the sweat glistening her forehead as she scrubs laundry against a washboard.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I threw myself into my work. I began to get film jobs. Small roles at first. Then bigger ones.

We see that Valerie is on a film set.

VALERIE (V.O.)

In 2015, I starred in The Salt Flats.

EXT. OLD COUNTRY HOUSE

The sheets billow in the highland wind; rolling green hills set against the orange linens that crest in waves like a seascape.

VALERIE (V.O.)

It was the most important role in my life not because I was nominated for a British academy award --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Valerie turns and sees a dark figure wading through the waves of orange.

VALERIE (V.O.)

But because that was how I met Ruth.

The figure dressed in a man's suit is a woman. She stands next to Valerie who waits in breathless anticipation for her kiss.

VALERIE (V.O.)

The first time we kissed I knew that I never wanted to feel another's lips but hers again.

They kiss as the lapping waves of orange envelop them.

VALERIE (V.O.)

She moved in with me the day we wrapped the movie.

INT. VALERIE'S FLAT

Valerie drops a large box into her living room. Christina drops hers on top. They both smile, realizing the significance of the moment.

VALERIE (V.O.)

She would bring me Violet Carsons, my favorite rose, for no reason at all.

Christina returns later that night with Indian food and roses revealed from behind her back. Valerie almost bursts open with tears, she is so happy.

VALERIE (V.O.)

Those were the best years of my life. God, we had so much...

INT. VALERIE'S LIVING ROOM

They are holding each other, watching the somber television news face parrot the reports of war.

VALERIE (V.O.)

But eventually America's war came to London and with it came biotrax and the first cases of ADZ. After that there were no roses anymore.

INT. PRISON CELL (PRESENT)

Evey is shoved to the floor, the hood again pulled off as she falls.

VALERIE (V.O.)

Not for anyone.

Rossiter stands in the doorway.

ROSSITER

You won't last much longer.
You're going to die here. Why
protect someone who doesn't give a
shit about you?

He slams the door, a loud METAL BOOM REVERBERATING THROUGH her bones. She crawls to the rat hole and with a shaking hand she pulls out the hidden sheets.

By the light at the crack at the bottom of the door, she reads the letter, repeating the words as though saying a novena.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I remember the first time I saw
those uniforms.

FLASHBACK - INT. VALERIE'S LIVING ROOM

Valerie and Ruth are watching a political rally on television. Adam Sutler is flanked by his Norsefire soldiers.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I thought it was right out of some
dumb Nazi movie. It seemed like a
joke until he was appointed
Chancellor.

They take hold of each other's hand.

INT. SMALL LONDON FLAT

A young black man and his lover are jolted awake as Norsefire soldiers break down the door.

VALERIE (V.O.)

Soon after that, our friends began
disappearing.

The young man is forced to the ground and a black bag swallows his face.

EXT. ALLEY

A tin of sardines, a bag of potatoes and a bottle of water lay on the cobblestones as a black van disappears in the distance.

VALERIE (V.O.)

They took Ruth while she was out looking for food.

INT. VALERIE'S FLAT

Valerie clutches her pillow sobbing.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I've never cried so hard in my life. I still can't understand why. Why did this happen? Why do they hate us so much?

INT. VALERIE'S LIVING ROOM

The front door bursts open and soldiers swarm into the small flat.

VALERIE (V.O.)

They tortured her, burned her with cigarettes and made her give them my name.

Alone, Valerie sits on the couch. She does not resist as they cuff her.

VALERIE (V.O.)

She signed a statement saying I seduced her. I didn't blame her. I loved her, I couldn't blame her.

INT. ANOTHER PRISON CELL

A rat skitters across a floor leaving tiny red footprints.

VALERIE (V.O.)

But she did. She killed herself in her cell. She couldn't live with it. With giving up that last inch.

Ruth lies in a bright pool of her own blood, staring forever up, her wrists hacked open with a sharpened spoon.

EXT. DETENTION FACILITY

A transport passes through a razor-wire-topped fence in the country.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I was brought here.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Valerie sits just as Evey did, assaulted by bright lights and shadow-faced men.

VALERIE (V.O.)

They told me my films would be burned. That my crimes against God and nature demanded that all trace of my life be eradicated. They shaved my hair. They held my head down a toilet and molested me.

INT. DETENTION HALL

A hooded Valerie who could be Evey is dragged back to her cell.

VALERIE (V.O.)

They've injected me with chemicals. I can't feel my tongue anymore. I can no longer speak.

INT. PRISON CELL

The hood is pulled up as Valerie is dropped. Her once beautiful face is covered in lesions, pocked with sores and blue-black boils. The door slams shut.

VALERIE (V.O.)

It seems strange to me, that my life should end in such a terrible place, but for three years I had roses and apologized to no one.

Willing herself up she crawls to the small toilet. She reaches into the dirty water and pulls out a plastic bag. Inside is a tiny pencil and her letter.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I shall die here. Every inch of me shall perish. Every inch, but one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She lays on the floor by the light at the base of the door, continues to write.

VALERIE (V.O.)

An inch. It is small and fragile and it is the only thing in the world worth having. We must never lose it or give it away. We must never let them take it from us.

INT. PRISON CELL

Evey reads by the same light.

VALERIE (V.O.)

I hope that whoever you are, you escape this place. I hope that the world turns and that things get better and one day people have roses again. But what I hope most of all is that you believe me and that you understand what I mean when I tell you that even though I do not know you and even though I may never meet you, laugh with you, cry with you, or kiss you, I love you.

Tears cling to Evey's eyes.

VALERIE (V.O.)

With all my heart. I love you.
Valerie.

Evey kisses the toilet paper.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. PRISON CELL

It is later. Evey is asleep as the door opens.

ROSSITER

Get up. Face the wall.

Evey complies but even as the hood goes over her head, something is different.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Again Evey is placed in the chair in front of the bright lights.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INTERROGATOR

I have been told to inform you that you have been convicted by special tribunal and that unless you are ready to offer your cooperation you are to be executed. Do you understand what I am telling you?

Evey is very calm, her expression paradoxically soft and hard.

EVEY

Yes.

INTERROGATOR

Are you ready to cooperate?

EVEY

No.

The word sits immovable in the silence.

INTERROGATOR

Very well. Escort Miss Hammond back to her cell. Arrange a detail of six men, then take her out behind the chemical shed and shoot her.

INT. PRISON CELL

Evey holds the letter one last time. The door opens, Rossiter filling its frame.

ROSSITER

It's time.

EVEY

I'm ready.

ROSSITER

All they want is one little piece of information. Just give them something. Anything.

EVEY

Thank you but I'd rather die behind the chemical sheds.

ROSSITER

Then you have no fear anymore. You are completely free.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns and leaves.

EVEY

What?

His FOOTSTEPS FADE down the hall, the door left strangely open. Tentatively, Evey steps toward the door, sticking her head into an empty hall.

Quietly, she walks out inching along the wall until it ends. She peeks around the corner gasping when she sees a guard. There is something about the man's frozen stare that keeps her from running.

It is a mannequin.

Behind the lifeless sentry there is a door. She opens it to find where her Potempkin prison had been constructed --

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - NIGHT

V stands in the center of his home.

V

Welcome back, Evey.

EVEY

You...

Her mouth hangs open uncomprehending.

EVEY

It was you? That wasn't real...?
Is Gordon...

V

I'm sorry, but Mr. Deitrich is dead. I thought they would arrest him, but when they found a Qu'ran in his house they had him executed.

EVEY

Oh god.

V

Fortunately I got to you before they did.

EVEY

You got to me. You did this to me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She stumbles back against the wall unable to support herself.

EVEY

You, you hit me? You cut my hair... You tortured me? You tortured me?

Her rail-thin figure begins to shake.

EVEY

Why? God, why?

V

Because I love you.

EVEY

Love me? You almost killed me.

V

No, I let you believe you were going to die.

EVEY

Is that your idea of love? Torturing someone? Tricking them? That isn't love! That's evil!

V

You could have ended it, Evey. At any time you could have given them what they wanted, but you didn't.

He moves towards her.

V

Why, Evey? What were you protecting?

EVEY

I don't know.

V

Yes you do. You were protecting something, but it wasn't me.

EVEY

Stay away!

V

It's something you were born with, something everyone is born with. It gets lost, it gets bartered or stolen, piece by piece, inch by inch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

Shut up! I don't want to hear
your lies!

V

Your father used to say that
artists use lies to tell the
truth. I lied to you to help you
find a truth.

EVEY

Stop it!

V

What truth did you find in there,
Evey? Inside that prison cell,
inside the worst place that you
could've imagined, inside your
biggest fear?

EVEY

Shut up! I don't want to hear
this. I hate you!

V

That's it. At first I thought it
was hate too. Hate was all I
knew. Hate had built my world,
imprisoned me, taught me how to
eat, how to drink, how to breathe.
I thought I would die from the
hate in my veins. But something
happened. It happened to me just
as it happened to you.

She spins away covering her ears.

EVEY

No!

V

Go back, Evey. Go back into that
dark room. There's nothing to be
afraid of anymore. Tell me what
you found. Tell me how you felt.

EVEY

I didn't feel anything! Can't you
see what you did to me!?

V

Don't run from it. You've been
running all your life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

You can't judge me! You don't
know what it's like to lose your
parents -- oh God -- I can't -- b--
breathe -- -

She falls to her knees trying to catch her breath.

EVEY

Ast--asthma... When I wha-was
little...

V crouches beside her, his hand gently touching her.

V

Yes, that's it. That's fear
draining out of you. Let it come.

EVEY

Puh--please...

V

They took your parents from you.
They took your lover from you.
They put you in a cell and took
everything they could take except
your life.

Evey begins to cry like a child as he takes hold of her.

V

You believed that was all there
was, didn't you? That the only
thing you had left was your life,
but it wasn't was it?

She shakes her head, tears burning her cheeks.

V

You found something else, in that
cell you found something that
mattered more to you than life
itself because when they threatened
to take it, threatened to kill you
unless you gave them what they
wanted, you told them you would
rather die.

Cradled in his arms, her breath begins to come back to her.

V

You faced your death, Evey. You
were calm, you were still. Try to
feel now what you felt then.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

That feeling spreads warmth through her entire being.

EVEY
Oh God... I felt...

Her eyes clear.

EVEY
... like an angel.

He nods and then begins to stand.

V
Can you stand?

EVEY
I'm dizzy, cold. V, what's
happening to me?

V
Transformation, Evey. The cocoon
is breaking open and you feel the
rush of air against your new
wings.

EVEY
Where are we going?

V
The lift. It will take us to the
roof.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

Two figures stand in the door of the roof access, a
RAGING TEMPEST ROILING from a split sky.

Something draws Evey into the storm.

EVEY
Rain. God is in the rain.

V moves up behind her.

EVEY
Everything's... so different.

V
I know. Years ago I too stood
beneath a night like this, holding
something in my heart, something
I'd been given, that meant more to
me than life itself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

... love.

V

This night is yours, Evey.. The rain, the lightning and thunder. Open your arms and take hold of it.

She raises her arms to embrace the RAGING TORRENTS.

V

Become transfixed and transfigured --
A jagged bolt of lightning sears open the sky.

V

Forever.

EXT. FINCH'S CAR - NIGHT

Finch and Dominic jump from their car, using umbrellas like shields to battle the DOWNPOUR.

INT. INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

They make it inside, out of the rain.

DOMINIC

'Cor, when's she gonna let up?

FINCH

We're halfway to 40 days.

DOMINIC

Should we start building an ark?

FINCH

Nah, it'd probably be better off without us.

The Security Man looks up from his monitors.

SECURITY MAN

Can I help you?

FINCH

Inspector Finch to see Mr. Heyer.

INT. HEYER'S CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

It looks very similar to Dascomb's control booth in Jordan Tower. Heyer turns slightly from the bank of monitors.

HEYER

Over here, Mr. Finch.

Finch looks about, the room strangely familiar.

FINCH

You know, this looks like --

HEYER

Jordan Tower. Mr. Dascomb helped with some of the design. We both appreciated the irony of watching people watching television.

His laugh is as indiscernible as his personality. On the many screens behind him we see families, pensioners, and bar-flies all staring blankly at the camera hidden in their televisions.

HEYER

We finished our analysis on the probability of delivering an explosive charge to the base of Parliament with a train.

He hands him the report.

HEYER

We've concluded that due to the number of lines that have been sealed off and the fact that our sensors have not detected any apparent passageway it seems highly unlikely to the most logical method for the terrorist to use. On pages 34 through 46 we analyze the feasibility of a train or a truck being used and as you will see the probability seems obvious.

FINCH

But that's the problem with this guy. He's not obvious.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY

V is playing piano while Evey reads Kostler's The Roots of Coincidence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He coaxes the final delicate note, letting it fade just as she finishes the book.

EVEY

If there is no such thing as a coincidence, then how would you describe the first night that brought us together?

V

I would say that Fate was playing matchmaker.

He peers over his shoulder to catch her smile.

V

Ahh... there it is. Like a ray of sunshine. I've not seen that smile in months.

She stands and crosses to his bench, sitting beside him.

EVEY

V, I don't know why you did what you did for me, but I don't think I've said this enough. I don't think I ever could say it enough.

She stares into the darkness of his half-moon eyes and whispers.

EVEY

... Thank you.

She leans forward and kisses his frozen lips.

V

You needn't thank me. You did it yourself. I just provided the backdrop, but the drama was all your own.

EVEY

It was a good backdrop. I believed it. I really did. It's still a bit hard for me to accept it wasn't real. Especially the letter.

She reaches into her pocket and pulls it out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

It's a beautiful letter, V. I feel a bit foolish carrying it around with me. I know you must have written it, but I believed in her. I believed in Valerie most of all.

V

I didn't write that letter, Evey.

She looks at him.

V

Come with me.

INT. VALERIE'S SHRINE - DAY

The walls are covered in movie posters and reviews and pictures of an actress named Valerie Page. Everywhere there are flower boxes filled with blooming Violet Carsons.

EVEY

She's real?

V

Yes.

EVEY

She's so beautiful. Did you know her?

V

No. She wrote the letter just before she died. I delivered it to you as it had been delivered to me.

Evey smiles and bends to smell the roses.

EVEY

You grew them for her.

V

In memory of her.

She stands, understanding.

EVEY

Then it really happened, didn't it? You were in a cell next to her?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He nods.

EVEY

Is that what you're doing, V? Is that why you're here? To avenge what they did to you? And to her?

V

What was done to me, created me, a chain of events in harmony with a fundamental principle of the universe; that every action will create an equal and opposite reaction.

EVEY

I need you to know that I would do anything for you, V, anything in the world, except that. I won't kill for you. I can't. Not even for her.

V

'To each, according to their talents.' Perhaps what the future will ask of you will be something that I am unable to do.

EVEY

What could that be?

V

Time will only tell.

EVEY

Do you have some kind of plan?

V

More than a plan, I have a gift.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. SHADOW GALLERY

V's dressing room is empty. Directly in front of us in the brightly-lit makeup mirror. We are looking STRAIGHT INTO it but we can only see a curtain in its reflection.

We GLIDE TOWARDS it, MOVING by V's costume as though it were laid out before us, waiting for us to put them on. We MOVE PAST his cloak and hat, OVER his gloves draped on the chair and finally PAST the mask hung on a faceless cloth wig-head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We CONTINUE FORWARD until all that is left is the mirror with the black curtain in its reflection that begins to part, revealing nothing but light.

INT. FINCH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Finch wakes, his bloodhound eyes still heavy and bloodshot. He pushes himself out of bed.

There is a heavy set of drapes covering the window of his bedroom. He shoves them open revealing a dreary November dawn.

FINCH

Six months without a trace. I don't suppose you've forgotten, have you?

EXT. TRAIN YARD - DAY

The main train yard for London where the CREAK and SQUEAL of METAL bones tell us that the city has begun to wake.

INT. TENEMENT - DAY

The Little Girl pours herself a large bowl of cereal.

EXT. TRAIN YARD - DAY

A boxcar is filled with perfectly uniform FEDCO boxes.

TRAIN WORKER

Cor, gonna be a bollicker.

INT. MIDDLE-CLASS HOME - DAY

The Little Boy watches cartoons, shoveling crumpets in his mouth; while mother helps father dress for work.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A FEDCO truck is the only vehicle moving on the street.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

A blue-haired pensioner struggles to open her pillbox.

EXT. TENEMENT BUILDINGS - DAY

A FEDCO man carries a stack of FEDCO boxes up the walk.

INT. FINCH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Finch pours a hot cup of coffee, thick and black enough to have come from an old carburetor.

INT. TENEMENT - DAY

The Little Girl finishes her cereal as the door BUZZER sounds.

LITTLE GIRL

I'll get it.

INT. MIDDLE-CLASS HOME - DAY

The father pulls his freshly-ironed pants on just as the DOORBELL RINGS.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

The blue-haired woman is pouring her tea when there is a KNOCK at her door.

INT. FINCH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Finch is dressing for work, tightening the noose of his tie, when his BUZZER sounds. A bit surprised, he goes to the front door.

A FEDCO MAN stands, scanner poised.

FEDCO MAN

Eric Finch?

He grunts, nodding.

FINCH

'Sfrom the government?

FEDCO MAN

Heaps of 'em going out today. Got us buried up to the back wheels.
Cheers.

He turns and leaves as Finch shuts the door.

Inside he rips open the box and dumps the contents out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FINCH

... Bloody hell.

The face of V smiles up at him.

INT. CREEDY'S HOME - DAY

Creedy is screaming on the phone, standing in his underwear, phone in one hand, his gun in the other.

CREEDY

How in the hell did he do this? I need answers! Any minute that fat bastard is going to call me and shit down my throat over this. Do you know what that means? It means that I shit down your throat until you tell me how he did it.

INT. FINCH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Finch holds the phone away from his ear waiting for Creedy to finish, the mask still sitting on the table next to him.

FINCH

I called FEDCO. It looks like all he did was to use our ESC.

CREEDY (V.O.)

What's that?

FINCH

Our Emergency Shipping Codes. Anything we ship without a manifest: contaminated waste, guns... people...

INT. CREEDY'S HOME

CREEDY

How many of these things went out?

FINCH (V.O.)

So far eight boxcars. Several hundred thousand at least.

CREEDY

Bloody Hell.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY

V and Evey sit together in the Shadow Gallery.

EVEY

I can't believe how easy that was.
You really are a genius, V.

V

It was less a matter of genius
than common sense to rely upon the
blindness of a bureaucracy and the
timeliness of trains, when
operated by fascists.

EVEY

But what will they do with them?

V

One hopes that they, like Viola,
will discover the freedom beneath
a mask and what it is they truly
want.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

A MAN IN A V MASK shoves a gun in our face.

ROBBER V

Gimme the money! Gimme the
fucking money!

A trembling owner reaches into his cash register and
hands V the contents. The giddiness over the crime is
almost visible under the mask.

ROBBER V

Anarchy in UK!

He FIRES his GUN into the ceiling, then grabs a bag of
Doritos and runs out the door.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY

V gets up and goes to the bureau.

EVEY

What if you're wrong, V? About
people? What if tomorrow no one
shows up?

V

They will.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY
But if they don't?

V
Then I've made a mistake and my
work is far from done. And Adam
Sutler would not be the end of
this.

EVEY
Does that mean that you're
planning to kill Adam Sutler?

V
No. But I am going to watch him
die and with that, the end of this
world that he built.

From the bureau he takes out a box.

V
Tell me, do you ever play with
dominoes?

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS

Finch walks into the office in somewhat of a daze.
Everywhere PHONES are RINGING.

DOMINIC
We're under siege here. The whole
bloomin' city has gone off its
nutter.

FINCH
I know. You got to hand it to
him, he knows us better than we
know ourselves.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY

V's gloved hand sets the first domino, standing it
upright.

EXT. STREET - DAY

We see the Little Girl wearing the V costume, running,
arms spread like wings, with her glasses taped to the
outside of the mask.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS

FINCH

It feels like he's playing with us, setting everything up, just right.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY

Another domino is set, a row beginning to form.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The Little Girl spray paints an encircled "V" over a poster that reads "Strength through Purity, Purity through Faith."

INT. FINCH'S CAR - NIGHT

Finch is driving alone down a dark country road.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

FINCH

I drove out to Larkhill last night.

DOMINIC

You what? That's outside of quarantine.

EXT. LARKHILL GATE - NIGHT

In the headlights of his car, Finch stands at a chain gate that reads: "Government Property. No Trespassing."

FINCH (V.O.)

I know. I didn't care. I just wanted to see it.

He SHOTS the lock.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY

Another domino.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

FINCH

Wasn't much left of it.

EXT. LARKHILL - NIGHT

The ruins of the detention facility are barely visible.

Finch stands among several metal beams that once framed the medical section; a twisted skeleton Stonehenge jutting out of the earth like the obelisks of some forgotten necropolis.

FINCH (V.O.)

But it was strange. I suddenly had this feeling.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY

A pattern begins to emerge.

FINCH (V.O.)

It was like I could see the whole thing, one long chain of events, that stretched all the way back even before Larkhill.

EXT. HIGHLANDS - NIGHT

In a flash of images we see first the billowing of Orange sheets enfolding two women, then --

EXT. POLITICAL RALLY - DAY

Sutler taking the podium before the billowing flags of Norsefire.

EXT. LARKHILL - NIGHT

V emerges from the billowing flame.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

FINCH

I felt like I could see everything that had happened and everything that was going to happen.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The little girl turns as a Fingerman shouts.

FINGERMAN

Hey you!

INT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Finch lifts his gun.

FINCH

Stop!

INT. VICTORIA STATION - NIGHT

Creedy and his men fire at V.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY

V sits like a Buddha, the pattern of dominoes laid out before him like a stone garden.

FINCH (V.O.)

It was all there, like a pattern that I finally understood.

The dominos are laid out into an encircled V and in another FLASH OF CUTS, we see --

A V spray-painted on a wall.

A V firework lighting up the sky.

And a V on door of a prison.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Finch remains lost in that feeling.

DOMINIC

Well? Does he do it?

FINCH

Do what?

DOMINIC

Does he blow up Parliament?

FINCH

Who knows? I felt like I could. I didn't say I did. But I can guess.

DOMINIC

So guess.

FINCH

All this chaos, something stupid is going to happen.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The Fingerman FIRES and the little girl's body jerks in the air as though pulled by a string. The mask falls to the cobblestones specked by blood.

FINCH (V.O.)

When it does, things will get nasty.

INT. JORDAN TOWER - CONTROL BOOTH - NIGHT

On one of the many monitors we see a news report.

MALE NEWS-POPPET (V.O.)

A riot broke out in Knightsbridge.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The Fingerman stands over the dead girl as the people from the neighborhood slowly close in around him. He raises a gun and a man hits him with a wrench.

INT. JORDAN TOWER - CONTROL BOOTH - NIGHT

Each one of the monitors, filled with sitcoms, game shows, and toothpaste adverts is slowly filled, one by one, with the same story.

NEWS-POPPET #1 (V.O.)

A riot broke out in Chelsea --

NEWS-POPPET #2 (V.O.)

A riot broke out in Manchester --

NEWS-POPPET #3 (V.O.)

-- broke out in Brighton --

NEWS-POPPET #4 (V.O.)

-- in Liverpool --

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

FINCH

Then Sutler will do the only thing he knows how to do.

EXT. CHARMING ENGLISH STREET - DAY

A tank shoulders down a street barely wide enough to hold it.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

FINCH

Then we're right back to where
this whole thing got started, my
guess would be if he keeps his
promise; it all comes tumbling
down.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - DAY

V flicks his finger, knocking over the first domino,
sending a rushing clattering collapse through the entire
design.

When they lay flat and quiet, Evey steps in.

EVEY

But do Governments topple as easy
as dominoes?

V

It all depends.

EVEY

On what?

V

On who is running them.

V rises and heads for the door.

EVEY

Where are you going?

V

I have one last deal to make. I
shall return shortly.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Creedy hurries through the door, Helen looking up from
the vanity.

HELEN

Oh thank God you're here.

She rushes into his arms.

CREEDY

I shouldn't be with all the shit
goin' on out there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELEN

I'm sorry I called but I've been going out of my mind. Conrad just sits there. I couldn't take it. I have to know what's going on. - Where is Sutler?

CREEDY

Where you think? Hiding in a hole. One of our bunkers.

HELEN

Does he have a plan? What if this terrorist does blow up Parliament?

CREEDY

So what if he does? Take more than that to stop us.

HELEN

But what if people show up?

CREEDY

Right. How many people are really ready to die over something like this? A hundred? A thousand? Shit, I bagged twice that the first time we went through this. Which is the thing that pisses me off. We did this. And now we got to do it all over again? And it's all Sutler's fault, this bag of shit I'm holding came right out him --

The lights go out, plunging the room into complete darkness.

CREEDY

What the --

HELEN

It's okay. I've got a lighter.

CREEDY

Jussa another brown-out...

She flicks the lighter and reveals V standing at the footboard smiling pleasantly.

She screams, dropping the lighter.

CREEDY

Christ!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V

Allow me.

He switches on a high-powered flashlight, blinding them, catching Creedy deer-like as he yanks out his GUN, aims and FIRES but --

V is already where he wasn't and a boot-kicks the gun, and a knife flashes to Creedy's throat.

V

Move and die.

HELEN

Oh my God!

Anger bulges in Creedy's carotid almost enough to cut itself:

CREEDY

What do you want?

V

Sutler.

Creedy's eyes widen.

V

Come now, Mr. Creedy, that can't come as much of a surprise.

CREEDY

I can't do that.

V

Of course you can. You've done it plenty of times. A couple of zip ties, black bag, and presto, Sutler disappears. The only difference is that instead of bringing him to one of your black holes, you bring him to mine.

Creedy grinds his teeth, like a dog working a bone.

V

It won't be hard. Most of the men protecting Sutler work for you.

Helen watches Creedy carefully.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V

You can't tell me you haven't thought about it. You haven't imagined what it would be like giving orders rather than taking them. What it would be like to be on top. To be the Leader.

CREEDY

Yeah? What if I have? If I want it, what says I need you?

V

You can't be the leader without a country to lead, Mr. Creedy. Tomorrow night, with all of London watching, if I fulfill my promise, then all the tanks in England won't put Humpty Dumpty back together again. But if I fail, then the people will have no choice and without Sutler the country could be yours.

CREEDY

You're saying if I give you Sutler, you won't blow up Parliament?

V

That would seem to be the deal.

CREEDY

You're a bloody terrorist, how am I to trust you?

V

The same way thieves, murderers, and conspirators have trusted each other throughout the ages; through necessity, which as Mrs. Heyer well knows, can make for strange bedfellows.

HELEN

Peter... I think you should listen to him.

V

At 11 o'clock, one hour before midnight, bring Sutler to Victoria Station. Otherwise I will see you at the bonfire.

He kills the light, returning the room to pitch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Creedy claws for the light switch but when he hits it, V is gone. His gun sits harmlessly on the dresser. He grabs it.

She is pulled toward him with a gravitational force, wrapping her arms around his chest, pressing herself against his back.

HELEN

Peter, my God, Peter, this is it, isn't it? This is what we've been waiting for. This is our chance.

INT. GOVERNMENT BUNKER - NIGHT

Sutler sits behind his command center, addressing his cabinet.

SUTLER

A building does not make me Chancellor. A building does not run this country. I do.

His gaze aims like a gun at each of them.

SUTLER

It was force that brought us into power, and make no mistake it is force that will keep us here.

Only Finch looks away.

SUTLER

I understand this country, gentlemen, I understand its people. They need rules to follow, laws to obey. They don't want a revolution, they want their television. They are weak, lazy and gutless. And tonight most of them won't step foot outside their door.

FINCH

And those that do?

SUTLER

We will make an example of. Tonight will pass. Tomorrow the sun will come up and with God as my witness, these people will remember who is in charge. England prevails.

All of them answer as required except Creedy, who seems to be lost in his own world.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - NIGHT

V stands at the JUKEBOX, his mask reflected in its glass.
He presses a button and a SONG begins to play.

EVEY

That's the song you played the
first night I was here.

V

Yes.

EVEY

It's beautiful. And sad.

V

Yes.

He turns from the jukebox.

V

I know this may seem a strange
time for me to ask, but I was
hoping...

His head bows shyly.

V

You might like to dance.

Her surprise blooms into a smile.

EVEY

I'd love to.

She crosses to him and he takes her hand, placing the
other at the small of her back.

EVEY

It feels right, doesn't it?

V

To dance on the eve of a
revolution?

She nods.

V

A revolution without dancing is a
revolution not worth having.

They turn as newlyweds might, alone, lost in the MUSIC.
Evey presses closer to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

I love you, V. You are the most important thing that has ever happened to me. And yet I don't really even know you. I don't know where you came from, who your parents were, I don't even know what you really look alike.

She suddenly stops dancing and reaches up to unfasten his mask but he stops her.

V

Evey, please. There is a face beneath this mask, but it is not me. I am no longer that face than I am the muscles beneath it or the bones beneath that.

EVEY

I know. I am in love with who you are, not what you look like. Nothing else matters. I love you, V. And I always will.

He turns away from her.

V

Evey, I need to ask something of you.

EVEY

Anything.

V

Before you answer, follow me.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Finch looks at his watch: just after 10 P.M. He mumbles to himself.

FINCH

Looks like you beat me.

He gets up and puts on his coat.

DOMINIC

We going to head over to the big show?

FINCH

I'm going to take a walk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOMINIC
More tunnels?

Finch doesn't answer.

DOMINIC
Be careful, Inspector, it's crazy
out there.

FINCH
I know.

He checks his gun.

INT. GOVERNMENT BUNKER - NIGHT

Sutler sets his glass of milk on the console of the
command center as he answers a call from the gate above.

SUTLER
Mr. Creedy? What are you doing
here?

We see Creedy's face on the monitor.

CREEDY
I have pertinent information,
Chancellor, sir. Pertinent
information on the terrorist.

Creedy leans into the lens, face distorting as he
whispers.

CREEDY
I think I know how he's going to
do it.

SUTLER
What? Hurry up, man!

He hits another button.

INT. SHADOW GALLERY - NIGHT

They descend the last curve of a spiral staircase.

EVEY
How far down does this go?

V
This is the bottom, the last room
of my home.

He opens the door, entering --

INT. UNDERGROUND TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

A beautiful old train car sits alone, its doors open, waiting.

EVEY

The underground? I thought they closed this all down?

V

They did. It took nearly ten years to clear the tracks and lay a bit of my own.

EVEY

My God, what a beautiful old train. Where did you -- don't tell me Sutler has a train collection.

V

No, I built it. Here, let me show you.

INT. TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

It is filled with red clay rectangles wrapped in wax paper. Evey picks one up.

EVEY

What are these?

V

Gelignite.

EVEY

Wha --

She almost drops it.

V

Careful.

She begins to understand the plan.

EVEY

So those tracks lead to Parliament?

V

Non-stop.

EVEY

It's really going to happen, isn't it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V
It will. With your help.

She looks at him.

V
This button activates the train.
This handle releases the brake.
Once that's done you step off the
train and let it run its course.

EVEY
I don't understand, V. Why are
you asking me to do this?

V
Because I won't be able to.

EVEY
Why?

V
I have calculated that the train
should take twelve minutes to
reach its destination. If it
leaves at 11:48 it should hit
right on time.

He turns and leaves the train. She follows him into the
station.

EVEY
Wait! Where are you going?

V
The world built by destroyers is
almost at an end. It is time for
a new world. A world of creators.

He walks toward a passage at one end of the station.

EVEY
Don't you dare start with riddles
now, V. Tell me where you're
going.

V
Where I belong.

He steps into the dark hall and presses a button that
releases a gate that slides behind him like a prison
door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

V! V! What are you doing?

V

I don't know if I will ever see you again so I am saying goodbye.

EVEY

What? No!

V

I'm sorry, Evey, but I have to.

EVEY

No, you don't, V.

V

I do. Every moment of my life has led to this. There is no certainty, Evey. Only opportunity.

EVEY

Then let me help you.

V

You can. By keeping my promise. Goodbye, Evey. Ave atque vale.

EVEY

But, V, don't go... I love you.

He pauses, looking back at her through the prison bars of his own making.

V

I know. But love has no place in here.

He turns away and is swallowed by the darkness.

EXT. PARLIAMENT - NIGHT

The military patrols the empty streets washed white with klieg lights. The GENERAL pulls up in his Jeep.

GENERAL

Anything yet, Lieutenant.

LIEUTENANT

Not a peep, General.

Above them BIG BEN begins to TOLL the final hour.

INT. VICTORIA STATION - NIGHT

The station has not been used in years. Light trickles down through gratings and pipe gaps, spilling into small pools on the floor. Dust chokes what little air there is.

Flashlights slash against the darkness as Creedy's Fingermen nervously search the station.

FINGERMAN

You said 11 o'clock, Mr. Creedy.
It's 11 o'clock. Where is he?

V

Penny for the Guy.

The Fingerman jumps out of his skin, twisting around as the other flashlights find V, his mask glowing like moonlight.

V

Have you kept your side of the deal?

Creedy smiles.

CREEDY

Bring him down.

From the stairs there is a struggle.

CREEDY

Sorry for the precaution, Gov'ner,
but you know how it is with
thieves, murderers and
conspirators.

V

Indeed I do.

Two men half carry Sutler forward. His arms are fastened behind his back, his face missing beneath the black bag. They drop him to his knees.

As always, V smiles.

V

I want to see his face.

CREEDY

Of course.

He yanks the bag up revealing a stunned and bloody Sutler. After a moment he realizes who is staring at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUTLER

Oh dear God, Creedy. You fool.
You damned fool.

CREEDY

Fool?

He cracks Sutler with his gun, knocking him to the floor.

CREEDY

You're the jackass that made this mess. I'm just cleaning it up like I should've done a long time ago, you stupid sack of shit.

He kicks him.

V watches the former Chancellor for a moment and then kneels down close to his face.

V

I have something for you, Chancellor. A farewell gift for all the things you've done, for the things you might have done, and for the only thing you have left.

He places a Violet Carson rose beside him.

V

Goodbye, Chancellor.

SUTLER

Creedy, please, listen to me --

V

I believe Mr. Creedy is done listening to you, Chancellor. Unless... I'm wrong about you, Mr. Creedy?

CREEDY

You ain't wrong.

V

Then prove it. Prove you're ready. Prove it in the way he would prove it to you. Prove it once and for all that you are the better man.

Creedy smiles and Sutler's eyes go wild with panic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUTLER

Creedy! Dear God, Creedy.
Please. Please!

Creedy lifts his GUN and BLOWS a bright red hole in
Sutler's head.

INT. TUNNELS - NIGHT

Finch hears the SHOT ECHO out from the distant darkness.

INT. VICTORIA STATION - NIGHT

The former Chancellor's body crumples against the blood-
dusted concrete.

CREEDY

That proof enough?

V

I should say so, Chancellor.

CREEDY

Chancellor. You hear that, boys?
Chancellor. I like the sound of
that.

He nods and his boys nod back.

V

It seems unanimous, the rules and
protocols of this world having
been rigorously applied. However,
there is a final matter, one last
obstacle to overcome before your
coup becomes official.

CREEDY

What's that?

V

Me.

Creedy's body cocks like a trigger being pulled back.

CREEDY

What's this? I thought we had a
deal? I gave you Sutler.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V

And I promised I would not blow Parliament up and I will not. I promised that the country could be yours and it can be. However I did not promise that I would not stand in your way.

Creedy and his men train their guns on him, surrounding V entirely.

CREEDY

And what are you going to do? Huh? You got nothing but your bloody knives and fancy karate gimmicks! And we got eight guns!

V

No. What you have is 62 bullets. And must hope that when your guns are empty, I am no longer standing because if I am you'll all be dead before you've reloaded.

CREEDY

That's bullshit!

His men feel the slickness of palm sweat against the handles of their guns.

CREEDY

Kill him!

They OPEN FIRE.

Eight GUNS EXPLODE with a CACOPHONY of GUNPOWDER BOOMS and WHISTLING BALLS of LEAD. V's body jerks back, his head whipped side to side as BULLETS SPARK off his mask, the force of each felt like a hammer blow.

Still he stands, absorbing visible punishment yet resisting the pain until --

The automatics lock open and Creedy's revolver clicks empty in the ECHOING DIN.

V remains on his feet.

There is a moment given to silent prayer that V might collapse like some house of cards but the mask only smiles.

V

My turn.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

At once the sound of RATTLING METAL fills the room. The Fingermen trying to reload their guns while --

V moves with the silence of a cloud. The first Fingerman barely has time to react to the eight inches of steel that pierce his heart before they are gone.

Another drops his clip as the knife opens his throat.

V's cloak billows, a manta ray gliding from death to death.

Fighting to steady his hands, Creedy reloads his revolver; a man dying with each chamber he manages to fill until --

V stands alone, his knives like fangs dripping blood, the bodies of Creedy's men scattered around him.

Creedy raises his gun as V begins walking toward him.

CREEDY

No!

V continues as Creedy again OPENS FIRE.

CREEDY

Die! Die! Die!

V keeps coming, every step another BULLET closer to Creedy's last. Again the hammer clicks empty.

CREEDY

Why won't you die?

V

Beneath this mask there is more than flesh.

Creedy backs into the wall as V looms over him.

V

Beneath this mask there is an idea, Mr. Creedy.

The mask smiles.

V

And ideas are bullet-proof.

Creedy screams as the two knives flash and sink into the softness between his ribs. The screams cut out like a light being switched off and Creedy drops dead to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V stands alone, his violence resonating in the ensuing silence.

He steps forward as through drunk and pauses. Reaching under this cloak he struggles with a hidden clasp and then pulls a thin metal-like vest from his chest.

It is pocked and punctured by bullets.

He drops it and we see the inside smeared with blood. He almost falls as he staggers forward, leaving behind a trail of wet, bloody footprints.

INT. PARLIAMENT - NIGHT

The Lieutenant receives a report through his radio.

LIEUTENANT

General, sir. We are getting reports. Patrols are seeing movement.

GENERAL

Where?

LIEUTENANT

... Everywhere.

INT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Evey sits against the wall hugging her knees. She looks up at the sound of METAL SCRAPING AGAINST STONE. The cage door slides open and V staggers out of the dark.

EVEY

V!

She rises to meet him just as he falls, collapsing into her arms. Her hands are immediately wet with his blood.

EVEY

Oh, V. What have you done?

V

... What I came to do.

EVEY -

But why? Why did you do it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

V

Because... I love you, Evey. I love you... as I did not know I could... since that first night a year ago I have loved you every day, each more than the last...

His body trembles in her arms.

V

That's why I had to do it... that's why it was so important and why I wanted it so bad...

EVEY

Wanted what?

V

Another chance... for roses.

EVEY

Oh, V...

V

Now it's time... time to send me off, to let me go as we met... with music, my music and let me see you smile... once more.

His body grows heavy in her arms.

EVEY

V?

The last trace of his life seeps away and the sound of her heartbreak rings in the empty underground station.

EXT. PARLIAMENT - NIGHT

The army stares down the barren streets, bracing for their enemy.

LIEUTENANT

Patrols are confirming that people are in the streets.

GENERAL

Then arrest them.

LIEUTENANT

They say they can't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GENERAL

What? Why?

LIEUTENANT

They say... there's too many.

INT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Evey sits with the dead V alone with only memories.

EVEY (V.O.)

Who are you?... Are you like, a
crazy person?... Why am I doing
this?... What did you do to me?...
What is happening to me?... I felt
like... an angel... You are the
most important thing that has ever
happened to me and yet I hardly
even know you... I love you, V,
and I always will... I promise.

She looks at V and knows what she must do.

INT. PARLIAMENT - NIGHT

From just beyond the reach of their lights, comes a face;
the face is white and smiling.

LIEUTENANT

It's him!

GENERAL

What?

But behind the first, there is another, and another;
faces of V floating out from every corner of darkness.

INT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Evey sets the last of the Violet Carson's beside her
beloved upon a pyre of Gelignite. She checks her watch,
11:45.

She steps over to the controls when --

FINCH -

Hold it! Stop right there!

He stands outside the train, his gun in his hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FINCH

You're Evey Hammond, aren't you?

She makes no sign one way or another as he peers inside the train.

FINCH

I knew it! I knew it had to be a train.

He sees V laid out but instinctively recoils.

FINCH

Is that -- ?

Evey nods.

FINCH

Is he dead?

She doesn't answer.

FINCH

The it's over? It's over?

EVEY

Almost.

She hits the control button and the TRAIN HUMS TO LIFE.

FINCH

Whoa! Stop! What did you do?

EVEY

What I promised.

She checks her watch again and grabs the brake lever.

FINCH

No! Get your hand off that lever!

EVEY

No.

FINCH

No? I have a gun.

EVEY

In thirty-five seconds I'm going to release this brake and the only way you're going to stop me is to kill me.

EXT. PARLIAMENT - NIGHT

More and more Vs continue to materialize.

LIEUTENANT

General?

GENERAL

We will kill a few, the rest will run.

He calls out to the soldiers.

GENERAL

Ready at arms!

Like the rattling of sabers there is a great CLATTERING of MACHINE GUNS but the Vs just keep on coming.

INT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Finch continues pointing the gun as if pointing were enough.

FINCH

I will not let you do this. I can't!

EVEY

Yes, you can. You just have to decide to.

FINCH

I can't decide to let you blow up Parliament.

EVEY

You have to. One way or another.

FINCH

Listen to me --

EVEY

I've already told you --

FINCH

I don't want to shoot you --

EVEY

I have made my decision --

INT. PARLIAMENT - NIGHT

The machine guns remain ready, aimed and as fixed and solid as that metal they're made of, but behind the unwavering barrels --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The soldiers glance nervously left and right, to each other and to their leader.

INT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Finch squeezes the handle of this gun, setting his jaw as he looks for what he needs to pull the trigger.

EVEY

Six, five, four...

EXT. PARLIAMENT - NIGHT

The General stares at what must be a mirage, or at the very least a dream, because it seems to him impossible.

Hundreds of thousands of Vs, everywhere, filling the streets and bridges of Westminster, surrounding the entire perimeter of Parliament.

All starting, smiling, waiting.

GENERAL

Jesus bloody Christ.

INT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Finch narrows his eyes, sighting her over the barrel of his gun.

EVEY

Three, two, one.

He drops his gun to his side and Evey releases the brake. The train eases forward and she steps out.

Finch stares, not completely sure of what he has just done, but feeling a sense of relief because of it.

EVEY

Would you like to watch it with me, Mr. Finch?

The train disappears down the tunnel as Finch nods somewhat numbly. Evey takes him by the arm.

EVEY

Come with me.

She leads him toward the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVEY

Tell me, do you like music, Mr. Finch?

EXT. PARLIAMENT - NIGHT

Outside the gates of Parliament they begin to hear it, the first STRINGS, WHISPERING SOFTLY, eliciting a reaction like a wind that rustles through the army of ghostlike Vs.

LIEUTENANT

General, what should we do?

GENERAL

... Get out of the way.

INT. ROOF - NIGHT

Evey steps out of the elevator leading Finch as the MUSIC SWELLS.

FINCH

That music...

EVEY

Yes, his music. The first music he played to me.

She steps up to the parapet from where Parliament can just be seen.

EVEY

It's beautiful, isn't it?

Her hand lifts slightly, almost as if gently conducting.

EVEY

Ave atque vale. Hail and farewell, my love.

INT. TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

V lies ever smiling, surrounded by his roses, listening to the rise of the MUSIC, swelling into the unmistakable climactic sound of revolution as --

EXT. PARLIAMENT - NIGHT

The BUILDING ERUPTS, its walls and towers that have stood for centuries yielding to the baptismal flame of new life.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

Evey and Finch watch the orange blossom bloom against the sea-black sky.

EVEY (V.O.)

No one will ever forget that night
and what it meant to this country.

As the orange plume fades, a FIREWORK BURSTS like stars
glittering in the night.

EVEY (V.O.)

But I will never forget the man
and what he meant to me.

She looks up and in her smile we see the essence of V.

FADE OUT.

THE END

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