INSPECTOR GEORGE GENTLY 7
FILM 1

"GENTLY BETWEEN THE LINES"

by

Timothy Prager
Blue Amendments
22nd March 2013
FADE IN ON:

EXT. A STREET. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 1 1645

AN EIGHT YEAR-OLD BOY, ROBBIE SEDDON, blue eyed freckled faced, innocent fills the screen. He’s wearing a shirt that’s been handed down a few times before it got to him. He’s sweet to look at - and then he speaks:

ROBBIE
Hadaway with ya, you stupid knacker.

The BOY throws a brick and we follow its trajectory to -

A LINE OF UNIFORMED POLICEMEN
No riot shields in sight. They wear their helmets and a look of alarm, bewilderment, anger and on the face of some outright fear. We focus on four Policemen in the line - all members of the same shift, all close friends: PC MICHAEL ASHTON looks astonished by the behaviour of the protestors who are slinging rocks and bottles. PC DAVID BAIRD tries to hide his concern but isn’t very successful. PC CHRIS STOCKDALE and PC NEIL SIDWELL share a look of absolute amazement at what they’re experiencing.

BEHIND THE POLICEMEN are bulldozers and several huge trucks ready to cart away the debris the bulldozers will create.

IN FRONT OF THE POLICEMEN are the slum houses they are intending to level. LOCAL PEOPLE are assembled. Some watching, others actively resisting the demolishing. BUT there is also a group of “agitators”: Students, Anarchists, drunks. Hanging off the wall of one of the buildings are banners and bedsheets with protest slogans on them: “GIVE PEACE A CHANCE” - A FLAG flies with a “Peace Sign” on it. The image of A CLENCHED FIST and a tattered bedsheet that looks as though it predates the others with the makeshift plea - “SAVE OUR STREET”.

A bullhorn announces:

BULLHORN (V.O.)
Please, will you clear the area.
For your own safety. Clear the area.

A BULLDOZER’S ENGINE SPUTTERS to life.

THE POLICEMEN walk forward. Bricks and stones begin to rain down on them, thrown by a GROUP OF MEN and BOYS who hide their faces with NEWCASTLE UNITED scarves and standing in front of the soon to be demolished buildings.
THE POLICE LINE BREAKS
CONSTABLES rush forward intending to arrest the rock throwing protestors. The protestors flee, throwing bottles, rocks, bricks, as they retreat.

MICHAEL ASHTON
is hit in the middle of his back by a broken brick. He turns and sees his assailant - a YOUNG MAN (CHARLIE SEDDON) - whose angry epithets are muffled by the scarf he’s wearing. THE YOUNG MAN darts into the part ruined terrace of slum houses.

ROBBIE
the eight year-old hurls a rock and turns and tears away. He SLIPS AND FALLS face first onto the rubble spilling into the street by the ruined houses. He’s skinned his knees and elbows and it hurts.

A HAND
reaches down to help him up. Robbie grabs it and see PC DAVID BAIRD. They know each other well.

ROBBIE
Cheers, Davy.

BAIRD
Robbie, what ye doin?

ROBBIE
Protecting my street.

BAIRD
Whey aye. Me too. I’m gonna tell your mum...

There’s a panicked look in Robbie’s eye before he turns and runs into the building shouting back at Baird:

ROBBIE
Get lost ya knacker!

Baird reacts with concern for the boy’s well-being.

BAIRD
Robbie! No! It’s not safe....

BAIRD walks forward to the entrance of the ruined building -

BAIRD (CONT’D)
Robbie! Come out of there!

He hesitates for a moment before following Robbie into -
INT. A RUINED BUILDING. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 1 1647

Baird enters the building. Moves to room inside. Doesn’t feel comfortable. It is too dangerous. He shouts:

BAIRD
ROBBIE!

But nothing. He hears movement in the next room. He moves forward carefully into -

ANOTHER ROOM
Shafts of light cut across the darkness of the room from the damaged roof.

He sees A FIGURE disappear into the darkness further into the ruined building. He thinks about following but decides against it. He turns to leave and finds -

MICHAEL ASHTON
collapsed on the ground, his dark blue uniform bearing the marks of the bricks that have hit him. He’s bleeding from a head wound. BAIRD shouts:

BAIRD (CONT’D)
Help! Aa need help! Help!

SIRENS approach.

EXT. A RUINED BUILDING. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 1 1658

BAIRD, STOCKDALE and SIDWELL carry ASHTON’S BODY from the building. A molotov cocktail (bottle filled with petrol; lit rag as a fuse) hits the ground and there is a flash of flames. More bottles and rocks hit the ground around them as they hurry ASHTON away to safety. STOCKDALE says quietly as they move through the riot.

STOCKDALE
Hang on, Ash. Hang on. We got ye...

They reach the waiting AMBULANCE and deliver ASHTON. BAIRD turns back and sees the fighting still going on.

EXT./INT. A RUINED BUILDING. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 1 1710

More POLICEMEN run past to engage in the fray. We find BAIRD, STOCKDALE, and SIDWELL, with their truncheons at the ready, as they dodge flying objects and dash into the ruined building.
STOCKDALE grabs a fleeing suspect, (TERRY HANSON, 40s), and smacks the back of his legs with his truncheon. HANSON falls to his knees.

BAIRD drags a Long Haired Bearded Man (SIMON THOMAS) out of his hiding place under a run of stairs.

SIDWELL moves toward RONNY HANRATTY (50s), who waits for him with his hands in the air and a smirk on his face.

STOCKDALE, BAIRD, and SIDWELL lead their respective suspects to the waiting Black Marias and the chaos of the street becomes -

**INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHARGE ROOM - DAY 1 1810**

The chaos of the booking suite. The POLICE have made dozens of arrests. There are voices raised: “What did I do?” “What you arresting me for” Police shouts of “calm yourself”. Suspects struggling against their handcuffs.

STOCKDALE is with a hard looking fifty year old suspect, TERRY HANSON, standing in front of STATION SERGEANT, ARCHIE DAWSON, in his shirt sleeves, and sweating heavily:

HANSON
We have a right to protest...We have a right to assemble...

HANSON shouts to the others being arrested in the custody suite:

HANSON (CONT’D)
You are taking away our right to democracy!

A cheer goes up from the others. DAWSON finishes filling in the form. He nods for Stockdale to move Hanson on. STOCKDALE shuts Hanson up by pulling his handcuffed arms up behind their back.

HANSON (CONT’D)
Leave it out. There’s no need.

SIDWELL delivers another suspect to Dawson.

DAWSON
Name?

A hard looking fifty year-old, RONNY HANRATTY, stands in front of DAWSON.
RONNY
Hanratty, Ronald. J.

DAWSON takes out a fresh PINK CHARGE SHEET and begins to fill it in.

RONNY (CONT’D)
You’ve have all been bought off, haven’t ye? You can tell me. T Dan has you lot paid for, don’t he?
Tearing down our homes for a promise... Promise he’s never gonna keep. We see what’s happening to others...moved on with nowhere to go...We’re not blind.

DAWSON begins to fill in a form.

DAWSON
Address?

RONNY
Now there’s a problem -

Ronny includes the rest of the room as he tells Dawson:

RONNY (CONT’D)
- as some of us don’t have an address anymore, do we?

THERE’S an ANIMAL LIKE SCREAM which takes our attention to BAIRD who is wrestling to control a LONG HAIRERD BEARDED MAN in his twenties (SIMON THOMAS). THE LONG HAIRERD MAN thrashes trying to escape Baird’s grip. DAWSON sees what is happening and moves to help BAIRD saying to the FEMALE POLICEWOMAN behind the counter, WPC RACHEL COLES:

DAWSON
Rachel?

DAWSON moves around the counter to help Baird. RACHEL looks at RONNY who starts again:

RONNY
You’ve have all been bought off, haven’t ye? You can tell me.

BAIRD drives THE LONG HAIRERD MAN to the ground. STOCKDALE and SIDWELL help him. DAWSON joins in. They physically subdue him by putting all of their weight on him and pressing him to the floor. They each grab a limb and carry/drag him to the holding cells. The LONG HAIRERD MAN thrashes about, crying and yelping like an animal calling out:
SIMON
Please...Mum help me...please...
Mum! Mum! They’re hurting me!
Please mum...please help me...

It is distressing and terrifying and eerily the rest of the booking suite goes quiet as THE LONG HAIRIED MAN is thrown into a cell. THE POLICE come out and the door slams and all they can hear is the muffled cries of:

SIMON (CONT’D)
Please mum...please...

DAWSON, BAIRD, STOCKDALE and SIDWELL turn to move back into the custody suite where they see every face staring at them. Silent. And then the cry of the LONG HAIRIED MAN from the cell:

SIMON (O.S.) (CONT’D)
Please...mum...help me...

INT. A CRITICAL CARE UNIT. HOSPITAL - DAY 1 1900

MICHAEL ASHTON lies in bed attached to machines. A ventilator keeps him alive.

SIMON (O.S.)
Help me...please...

A NURSE is assigned to stay in the room with him. He is obviously very very ill. And then there is silence except for the ventilator’s draw and hiss as it breathes for Ashton. Through the window of the door to his room we see the face of BAIRD looking in on him.

EXT. ST. CUTHBERT’S CONVALESCENT HOME - DAY 1 1905

The solitary figure of Detective Chief Inspector GEORGE GENTLY stands smoking a cigarette. He’s leaning against a sign but we can’t read it at the moment.

He glances at a letter that he is holding in his hand. He flicks his cigarette away. He tucks THE LETTER into his pocket.

He pushes himself away from the sign he’s leaning against and begins to walk up the path toward an austere looking convalescent home. We see the concern he has about Detective Sergeant John Bacchus etched on his face. And then we see what was written on the sign he was leaning against:
Gently stands at the reception desk. The place has a clinical feel. It looks like the sort of place that you might go to die in Victorian times. An attractive uniformed nurse, “Margaret” at the reception recognises Gently when he enters. She answers without being asked:

Margaret
He’s in the day room.

Gently
The day room. Okay.

He’s nervous to ask but does anyway:

Gently (cont’d)
How has he been...

Margaret smiles weakly at him and says in a practiced apologetic way:

Margaret
I’m not a doctor.

Gently moves down the corridor past several police officers in varying states of injury – A leg lost in a motorcycle accident, broken arm, bandaged wounds.

He arrives at a closed door. Gently opens the door with some trepidation and finds –

A cloud of cigarette smoke hangs over five men around a table playing poker. There’s a bottle of whiskey and glasses of beer dotted around the table. Bacchus is running the game with some ferocity.

Bacchus
It’s the moment ye put up or shut up.
The two players still in the game lay their cards down - two pairs, queens and fours, for the first, three nines for the second. Bacchus lays his cards down. Full house Aces over jacks. There's an equal amount of cheers, jeers and groans as JB pulls the coins and notes in the pot towards him.

JB glances up and sees GENTLY watching. He nods an acknowledgement and then begins to deal the cards for the next hand.

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
Two shillings to buy a seat...

Coins are tossed into the centre of the table. GENTLY moves to the table and throws two coins in. A CHAIR appears and JB deals Gently in.

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
Five card draw...

Gently nods. Bacchus looks at the others and indicates Gently:

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
Have you met? Gentlemen, this is Mister Gently.

Gently goes around the table introducing the other men. These are a general chorus of “Wat Cheor” from the men at the table.

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
Mister Gently this is “Roy”. Car crash. Jimmy “H” from Hexham. Fell off a roof.

JIMMY H
I was chasing a suspect.

BACCHUS
We heard he was chasing you.

Laughter from the men as Bacchus keeps going:

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
St. Stephen, burned hisself being a hero. “Robert Mitcham” ran into a knife.

JIMMY H
“John Bacchus”, Syphilis.

BACCHUS
Which I got from your mother.
ROY
And you Mr. Gently?

Bacchus looks at him and says with a bit of an edge:

BACCHUS
Mr. Gently’s just visiting.

Gently refers to the deck of cards and says tersely:

GENTLY
Deal.

EXT. GROUNDS. ST. CUTHBERT’S CONVALESCENT HOME – DAY 1 1925

GENTLY and JB walk through the grounds. The roar of the ocean underscores their conversation.

BACCHUS
Canny lads here, all of them. They
don’t judge. Friendly. And they’re
shite at poker.

GENTLY
Handy.

BACCHUS
Keeps me in Tabs.

Gently takes out THE LETTER from his pocket.

GENTLY
What is this?

Bacchus knows it is why he came. He says with understatement:

BACCHUS
You got it.

GENTLY
I got it.

A MAN about Bacchus’ age in a wheelchair is pushed toward
them. He’s slack-jawed, dazed, vacant – his head wound is
prominent. Bacchus visibly reacts to the man as Gently
continues:

GENTLY (CONT’D)
You couldn’t tell me to my face?

BACCHUS
Resignation has to be in writing,
doesn’t it?
GENTLY
Yes. It does.

BACCHUS
It’s in writing.

The two men study each other. After a moment Bacchus says quietly:

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
Shall we go back inside?

GENTLY
Fresh air’s good for you. Helps you think.

BACCHUS
They keep telling me. Can’t say I’m convinced.

GENTLY
What are you doing, John?

BACCHUS
I’m leaving here end of the week and I have to make some...

Gently tries to make sense of his decision as he says:

GENTLY
You’ve been in here too long.

Bacchus stays resolved as he explains:

BACCHUS
...I have to make some decisions about my future.

GENTLY
Why didn’t you speak to me?

BACCHUS
There’s no point. I don’t think I can be a policeman anymore...

GENTLY
Don’t think you can or don’t want to...

BACCHUS
What difference does it make? I’m done.

GENTLY
What else will you do?
Bacchus thinks for a moment trying to answer the question honestly.

BACCHUS
There are lots of things...you know...

Gently leaps on the lack of specifics:

GENTLY
Lots of things? There’s only one thing you want to do...only one thing you can do...

BACCHUS
No...I’ve been thinking...

GENTLY
It helped me getting back to work.

BACCHUS
‘Course it did. That’s who you are.

GENTLY
It might help you too. To come back.

Bacchus turns on Gently - he’s too harsh:

BACCHUS
I’m not coming back. I am not you, Detective Chief Inspector. Can you understand that? I am not you.

Silence. Gently considers what to do.

GENTLY
One month.

BACCHUS
What?

GENTLY
Your notice. You’re obliged to give one month’s notice. I’ll expect you to work it out.

There’s a moment of silence as the men look at each other.

INT. BACCHUS’ ROOM. ST. CUTHBERT’S CONVALESCENT HOME – DAY 12 1935

BACCHUS looks down from his window at GENTLY as he walks away from ST. CUTHBERT’S.
There’s a knock at his door. MARGARET enters carrying a small tray with A BOTTLE OF PILLS and a glass of water on it. She joins him looking out the window.

Bacchus lets the drape go and turns to MARGARET.

MARGARET
Ready for your medicine?

She walks over to him. He takes her in his arms and they kiss passionately.

Then he turns his attention to MARGARET in earnest and begins to unbutton her uniform. She unbuttons his shirt and as she begins to unbutton his trousers we see -

THE SCARS OF HIS STOMACH WOUNDS
both where he was shot and where the surgeons had to open him up to save his life.

But he still has his eye on the window and the ghosted image, through the drape, of GENTLY’S CAR driving away.

INT. A GYM - EVENING 1 2030

GENTLY, alone, works a heavy bag. Hitting it with a combination of punches. Trying to stay on his toes as exhaustion arrives. Grimacing as his weak arm sends shooting pains through his body.

INT. GENTLY’S BEDROOM - NIGHT 1 2320

GENTLY lays in his bed resisting sleep. Staring at the ceiling. The scars on his leg are visible.

EXT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION - DAY 2 0600

We see POLICE OFFICERS and civilians walking by the front of the station. A couple of uniformed officers enter the station house. We follow them in.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHARGE ROOM - DAY 2 0602

WPC RACHEL COLES checks on the prisoners still occupying the cells. She looks into each and says:

RACHEL
Morning.

She sees each of them sleeping or sitting eyes closed on the slabs in the cells.
She moves to the LONG HAIRED MAN’S cell. Looks through the small window in the door.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CELL - DAY 2 0602

THE LONG HAIRED MAN is collapsed on the floor. RACHEL quickly moves to him and checks his vital signs.

RACHEL
Sergeant!? Sergeant!!!

DAWSON arrives at the door of the cell. Rachel looks up at him saying with bewilderment:

RACHEL (CONT’D)
I think he’s dead.

OMITTED

INT. POLICE HQ. RECEPTION TO GENTLY’S AND BACCHUS’ OFF. - DAY 2 0745

GENTLY walks through the reception area on his way to his office. TAYLOR sees him and gets up from his desk:

TAYLOR
Sir?

GENTLY
Morning, Constable...

INT. POLICE HQ. GENTLY’S AND BACCHUS’ OFFICE - DAY 2 0745

GENTLY enters his office. His desk is perfectly tidy, in contrast to the desk of BACCHUS which has been used a table to store a thousand useless things that no one can be bothered to clear away.

TAYLOR
Sir? Assistant Chief Constable Hale needs to speak to you right away.

GENTLY
Why?

TAYLOR
Do you think he’s going to tell me?
Sir?

Gently looks at the cluttered desk of Bacchus.
GENTLY
Could you tidy this up for me, Constable?

Taylor moves to the cluttered desk.

TAYLOR
Is he coming back, Sir?

Taylor looks to the doorway. BACCHUS is standing in it – still quiet. Taylor erupts:

TAYLOR (CONT’D)
Sergeant Bacchus! Welcome back...How ye feeling?

Bacchus looks over to Gently. Gently glances over at him but immediately returns his attention to looking for the ACC’s phone number.

BACCHUS
Fine. I’m good.

Taylor beams at him.

TAYLOR
We’ve missed ye.

Bacchus nods a thank you to Taylor but he is still looking at Gently. Taylor quickly moves the clutter off the desk as he says:

TAYLOR (CONT’D)
Not having you here...like having an arm cut off...maybe that’s a little extreme...but you get the idea...?

Bacchus sits down behind it – looking ill at ease driving his desk.

BACCHUS
Aye. I’ve got it.

There’s an awkward pause before Taylor goes. Bacchus continues to look at Gently as he says:

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
One month.

Gently nods his understanding. He picks up the telephone and dials. He says into the phone.
Detective Chief Inspector Gently returning your call... How can I help you, sir?

GENTLY listens. But his eyes stay on Bacchus.

INT. POLICE HQ. OUTER OFFICE - DAY 2 0746

GENTLY has his coat and is heading from his office to leave the building.

GENTLY

John?

BACCHUS arrives at the door of the office and asks him:

BACCHUS

You want me?

GENTLY

I expect you.

EXT. POLICE HQ. DURHAM - DAY 2 0747

GENTLY emerges from the building and moves briskly to his car as Bacchus follows - several steps behind. He’s just going through the motions.

BACCHUS

What are we doing?

GENTLY doesn’t answer. He steps into his car.

EXT. TYNE BRIDGE. NEWCASTLE - DAY 2 0755

GENTLY’S CAR moves along the Newcastle street with Tyne Bridge in the background as they make their way to Rye Hill.

INT. GENTLY’S CAR. NEWCASTLE. APPROACH TO RYE HILL - DAY 2 0805

GENTLY glances over. BACCHUS looks out the side window. They don’t connect.

GENTLY answers the question BACCHUS asked in Durham:

GENTLY (O.S.)

Death in custody. They want a thorough independent investigation by a Senior Officer...
GENTLY and BACCHUS arrive in his car outside the police station. It’s a modern building - obviously different from the station in Durham.
INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHARGE ROOM - DAY 2 0816

GENTLY, followed by BACCHUS, moves into the station. CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT RAY LEWINGTON joins them.

LEWINGTON
Chief Superintendent Ray Lewington.

They shake hands.

GENTLY
Detective Chief Inspector George Gently.

Gently looks to Bacchus. Bacchus does not immediately introduce himself - Gently does it.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
Detective Sergeant Bacchus...

Lewington speaks to Gently as though Bacchus is not there:

LEWINGTON
Thank you for helping us with this.

Gently nods. Aware of the odd notion of being “thanked”.

Heads turn as they move toward the police tape near the cells.

SERGEANT DAWSON is standing to one side of the room with WPC COLES. He says quietly to her with derision in his voice after they pass:

DAWSON
Rubber Heel Mob...

GENTLY, LEWINGTON and BACCHUS arrive at the crime scene.

They look at the body of the LONG HAIR RED MAN still in the position that Rachel Coles found him - covered by a blanket.

Gently uncovers the body and inspects it for signs of obvious injuries.
What’s the name of the deceased?

Apparently, we don’t know. Might be better for everyone if we leave it that way...

Gently glances at him – unimpressed.

How did he die?

Lewington shrugs.

We need to get the body out of here...can’t afford to stay out of business much longer.

Gently

Why was he arrested?

I believe he was arrested under the ways and means act.

Gently glares at him. He understands the “code”.

You were looking for a way or means to charge him later?

Lewington continues:

A section of the hill was scheduled for clearance yesterday. It’s been delayed twice because of squatters and protestors... The council wasn’t having more delays. We were asked to secure the area so the bulldozers could get to work.

Gently covers the LONG HAIRd MAN’S face with the blanket.

Was he a squatter? A “protestor?"

The Station Sergeant should be able to answer your questions.
ARCHIE DAWSON, a bear of a man, stands behind the custody desk. He sticks his paw out to shake Gently’s hand.

DAWSON
Sergeant Archie Dawson.

GENTLY
Hello, Sergeant.

DAWSON smiles at him broadly.

DAWSON
I’m here to help anyway I can.

GENTLY
Thank you. Who found the body?

DAWSON turns and calls over to WPC RACHEL COLES on the other side of the custody desk.

DAWSON
Rachel? Could you come over, pet?

WPC COLES moves to join them.

DAWSON (CONT’D)
WPC Coles. Doing her rotation with me this month. Just finished her probation.

Bacchus exudes his easy charm. He makes eye contact with her:

BACCHUS
Congratulations.

RACHEL
Thank you.

Rachel looks away and continues:

RACHEL (CONT’D)
I was doing the morning check. When I saw he was...

She can’t quite bring herself to say it:

GENTLY
Dead.

RACHEL
Dead. I told Sergeant Dawson immediately.
GENTLY
Do you have the pink charge sheet?

DAWSON
Aye.

Dawson produces it. He hands it to Gently.

DAWSON (CONT’D)
No name on it, of course, because we didn’t have it...

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHARGE ROOM. – DAY 1 1810 (FLASHBACK)
The Long Haired Man is carried, struggling and crying out, across the Charge Room on his way to the cells.

DAWSON (O.S.)
No ID on him. Wouldn’t tell us who he was...On drugs, I figure.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHARGE ROOM – DAY 2 0820

DAWSON
Didn’t want to hurt him. Put him in a cell to calm down.

GENTLY
That didn’t happen...

DAWSON
No. What happened was a great tragedy.

Dawson is hoping to wrap it up and end the conversation. He starts to guide them out of the custody suite.

DAWSON (CONT’D)
If there is anything more we can do...Any other questions you have... I’ll fill in my report and get it over to you...

GENTLY
Personal effects?

Dawson looks to Rachel.

DAWSON

Rachel moves to get the dead man’s personal effects.
GENTLY
Mug shot? Fingerprints?

DAWSON
Never got a chance to take a photo or prints. Pathologist will do it.

BACCHUS
Much easier to handle now...

GENTLY
Did he scream all night?

DAWSON

RACHEL returns and hands GENTLY a small box with the personal effects of the Long Haired Man.

RACHEL
Here you are, sir.

Gently looks in the box – there are old knotted shoelaces, and a belt – as he continues:

GENTLY
He calmed down?

DAWSON
Aye.

Gently is moving towards the cells.

GENTLY
If he calmed down – why wasn’t he booked in? Why no mug shot?

DAWSON
He wasn’t on the top of my list to be brutally honest.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHARGE ROOM – DAY 1 1810
(FLASHBACK)

The chaos of the charge room on the day of the protestors.

DAWSON (O.S.)
We were knackered. Full up with arrests from that lot obstructing the clearance.
INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CELLS - DAY 2 0822

They arrive at the cells.

DAWSON
Organised, it was. That’s what I think. Set out to hurt somebody.

Gently moves to the body. He uncovers it. Rachel turns away. Bacchus notices.

DAWSON (CONT’D)
Not had any trouble with the other clearances.

Bacchus asks quietly:

BACCHUS
You okay?

Rachel waves him off - embarrassed that he’s asked.

RACHEL
Aye.

Gently begins to search the body as Dawson continues:

DAWSON
I think it was agitators like him from elsewhere just looking for trouble. Not going to be local is it? I mean those people will be getting nice shiny new houses, won’t they? Won’t be them complaining.

Gently finds A SMALL BOOK OF POETRY in the zip pocket of his jacket.

BACCHUS
You think he was an “agitator”?

Dawson speaks as Gently opens the book...

DAWSON (O.S.)
How would I ken to that? But no one knows who he is and any one of us could tell you the name of every family living in every house on Rye Hill.

....and finds that it is from the Library of “Newcastle University” with a pocket for the lending card and the date in which the book was to be returned written on it.
DAWSON (CONT’D)
People from ‘round here know each other. They don’t like outsiders meddling.

He’s says his last comment warmly but there is no doubt who the target is. There’s a beat before:

DAWSON (CONT’D)
Can we move the body then?

Gently nods.

GENTLY
We’re done for now.

DAWSON
I’ll walk you out, shall I...

DAWSON walks them toward the exit. They pass an accumulation of cards and a Collection box. It catches Gently’s and Bacchus’ attention.

BACCHUS
What are ye collecting for?

DAWSON
“Ash” One of our boys. In hospital. It was in all the papers.

BACCHUS picks up a local newspaper – NEWCASTLE MORNING TRIBUNE – near the collection box and shows it to them. We see a photograph of MICHAEL ASHTON in uniform next to a LARGE PHOTOGRAPH of the POLICE ARRESTING PROTESTORS with the headline:

“POLICEMAN INJURED IN DISTURBANCE”

DAWSON (CONT’D)
Everyone liked him. We thought we’d do something for his family.

Then to clarify:

DAWSON (CONT’D)
He’s got a young family...

Dawson opens the door for them to leave. They nod their “goodbyes”. Once they’re alone Bacchus says quietly to Gently:

BACCHUS
I don’t remember anyone doing a collection for me.
GENTLY
Perhaps no one liked you.

BACCHUS
They do one for you..?

We know from the look that its a “no”.

EXT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION - DAY 2 0830

GENTLY and BACCHUS watch as THE BODY of the Long Haired Man - in a coffin - is wheeled out of the police station on a gurney and pushed toward the black coroner’s ambulance.

GENTLY
First Dawson said he was a “drug addict” and then he was “an agitator”...can you be both?

BACCHUS
If you organise your time well.

They see DAWSON speaking privately to CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT LEWINGTON by the front of the station. Gently is trying to get his head around the situation:

GENTLY
They’ve already decided it’s not worth bothering over. They hardly think it’s worth finding out who the victim is...

BACCHUS
Is he a victim, Guv?

GENTLY
He went in the cell alive and came out dead. Either by design or neglect. That makes him a victim to me.

BACCHUS
Sounds like he brought it on himself....

Gently looks at him sharply. Bacchus continues ironically:

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
But we’ll find a way to make it the fault of the police, won’t we...

GENTLY turns on his sharply.
GENTLY
We’ll find a way to find out what happened.

Bacchus deflects his anger with a dismissive despair:

BACCHUS
What kind of job is this?

GENTLY
One that has to be done.

BACCHUS
Whatever we do won’t be good enough, will it?

Bacchus points at the local police constables:

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
They’re going to hate us. The public resent us...

GENTLY
That must make it easier for you.

Bacchus looks at Gently as though he must be mad:

BACCHUS
How is it easier?

GENTLY
To justify your decision to resign...

BACCHUS objects talking over Gently.

BACCHUS
I’m not struggling with my decision.

Gently keeps pursuing his logic:

GENTLY
...there’s no virtue in serving. It’s all pointless...It’s easier if you just don’t care.

BACCHUS
I don’t care, Guv. I don’t. I had six months laying in a bed teaching myself not to care. Getting myself to a place where I can say it out loud: “I – don’t – care.”

Bacchus’ words cut Gently. He tries not to react.
Gently hands the BOOK of POETRY he found on the dead man’s body to Bacchus. Bacchus opens it and finds the lending page and the stamp of Newcastle University.

GENTLY
Let’s try and find out who the victim is...Give him back his name.

EXT. THE LIBRARY. NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY - DAY 2 0900

GENTLY and BACCHUS approach the library:

LIBRARIAN (O.S.)
It is significantly overdue...

INT. THE LIBRARY. NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY - DAY 2 0900

BACCHUS and GENTLY stand at the counter as the YOUNG LIBRARIAN, who has yet to let her hair down, shuffles through the stack of lending cards until she finds the one that matches the book.

LIBRARIAN
Here it is.

She shows GENTLY the card.

LIBRARIAN (CONT’D)
Nine shillings, thrupence.

BACCHUS
Does it have a name on it?

GENTLY
“Simon Thomas”.

Gently looks at the Librarian.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
You wouldn’t happen to have his home address...?

The Librarian looks in a file. She takes out a student record sheet which has a small passport sized photo stapled to it. The Librarian hands the sheet to Gently.

LIBRARIAN
If you do speak with him could you ask him to return the other books please...?

Gently looks at the clean-cut, fresh-faced image of Simon Thomas at the top of the sheet.
LIBRARIAN (CONT’D)
He has eleven unreturned books.
It’s irresponsible.

BACCHUS
The youth today.

He smiles at her - she glares at him, not buying the charm. Gently and Bacchus turn to go.

LIBRARIAN
Who’s going to pay the fine?

Without hesitation Gently gestures to Bacchus.

GENTLY
He will.

33
EXT. A PROSPEROUS DETACHED HOUSE. PONTELAND - DAY 2 1000

GENTLY and BACCHUS arrive in Gently’s car in front of the gated drive to the house.

They get out of the car and look at the house and grounds.

BACCHUS
You sure this is the right place?

Gently moves toward the gates and sees an older woman, face aged by worry, KATHERINE THOMAS standing on the entry porch watching with a motherly concern.

KATHERINE THOMAS calls with a resigned certainty from the entry porch:

KATHERINE
You’ve come about Simon.

34
INT. A PROSPEROUS DETACHED HOUSE. SITTING ROOM - DAY 2 1005

GENTLY and BACCHUS are with KATHERINE. We see a photograph of SIMON on the mantelpiece in the sitting room.

KATHERINE
I decided, last year, that I would not intervene the next time he found himself in trouble. I don’t think I’m doing him any favours. Drugs are a terrible thing. He’s a bright boy one can only hope that he will eventually figure out how to live his life...
Gently nods to Bacchus to tell her. He’s uncomfortable:

BACCHUS
Mrs. Thomas...

Bacchus struggles to say it. The words take too long to come out. He feels them staring at him.

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
Your son is dead.

KATHERINE THOMAS stares at him. She doesn’t allow any emotion to show.

KATHERINE
How did he die? Did he die from drugs?

Bacchus sees Gently looking at him with concern but he can’t do anything about it and then the world rights itself as he hears Gently:

GENTLY
We don’t have a definitive cause of death. Not yet. The Coroner has ordered a full post mortem...

Katherine nods her understanding.

KATHERINE
He slipped away from me. You hold them for so long and then you have to let go and you have to hope they make good choices. You hope that they chase dreams...but with Simon...I let go and he fell...fell down...down...into nothingness...into meaninglessness. He just slipped from my hands and there was nothing I could do...I tried everything. I did. He was paranoid, disorganised, manic energy and then terrible dark moods. He couldn’t be in a room. He felt the ceilings and walls closing in on him. Can you imagine the terror? Where was he when you found him? Please tell me he wasn’t alone in some alleyway. Thrown out like the rubbish. Tell me he was not abandoned.

She waits fearing the worst.
GENTLY
He died in Rye Hill Police Station.

It takes her a moment to digest this. Her tenor changes:

KATHERINE
In your custody?

GENTLY
In police custody.

KATHERINE
Aren’t the police meant to keep us safe? Isn’t that what they do?

EXT. A PROSPEROUS DETACHED HOUSE - DAY 2 1010

The gates open and GENTLY and BACCHUS leave the house.

BACCHUS
He was abandoned. His family abandoned him. That’s the reality his mother can’t face. You’re family’s meant to keep you safe - not the police. We’ve given him a name I think that’s the best we’ll do.

GENTLY
She has a right to expect us to look after him...

BACCHUS
If they can’t take care of their own why should they expect the police to do better?

GENTLY
Do you?

They reach the car. Bacchus is frustrated and angry.

BACCHUS
Why did you make me tell her?

GENTLY
It’s your job.

They hear the wailing of KATHERINE THOMAS as she finally lets the grief wash over her. Gently looks Bacchus in the eye:
INT. GENTLY’S CAR. A PROSPEROUS DETACHED HOUSE – DAY 2

BACCHUS stares out the window. Gently checks on him. He thinks about how to reach out to him before:

GENTLY
Have you ever let someone “just slip away”, Sergeant? It’s not a good feeling to live with. You fight for them – even when you’re not sure how to.

He starts the car – and then challenges Bacchus:

GENTLY (CONT’D)
I’m not going to abandon him, John. Are you?

Bacchus looks at Gently. He knows he is trying to force him to re-engage fully.

BACCHUS
I’m not changing my mind....

INT. ROYAL VICTORIA INFIRMARY. MORTUARY – DAY 2

There are numerous bruises visible all over the upper half of Simon Thomas’ body – (the bottom half is still covered). BOB ANDERTON (50s), a forensic pathologist, stands with GENTLY looking at the body of SIMON THOMAS on the slab. Bacchus remains detached – standing across the room from them.

ANDERTON
I extracted fragments of stone from an area of his scalp...and residue of what I believe to be red brick where the skin is broken here on his shoulder...

Gently looks to Anderton.

GENTLY
May I?

Anderton nods. Gently lifts to look at the underside of his arm. There are a number of marks, cuts and bruises.
ANDERTON
It looks as though he was trying to protect his head with his arms.

GENTLY
During the riot?

ANDERTON
Reasonable to presume. Recent anyway. Some of the marks are historic...he lived rough?

Gently nods.

GENTLY
Cause of death?

ANDERTON
We won’t have anything definitive until I’ve completed a full postmortem. We had the bloods back...Analysis of the vitreous fluid revealed high levels of adrenalin - understandable for someone under stress...but he tests negative for the presence of THC. In fact, he tests negative for all narcotics...not even cough medicine. Nothing.

GENTLY
The station sergeant believed he was “on drugs”. Are you sure there’s no mistake?

ANDERTON
No mistake. He was not intoxicated - no drugs or alcohol.

Gently’s surprise almost immediately becomes concern.

EXT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION - DAY 2 1120

GENTLY’S CAR arrives:

BACCHUS (O.S.)
“Struggling, disoriented, violent...

BACCHUS and GENTLY get out of the car:

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
...“screamin’ like a mad thing.”
That’s what that Sergeant said.
They walk toward the station.

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
He presumed he was a drug addict.

GENTLY
His mother said he couldn’t bear to be in a confined space. A cell is a confined space. He’s struggling against that. The terror of being locked up kills him.

BACCHUS
He didn’t scream all night...

GENTLY
Why does he calm down?

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE - DAY 2 1125

LEWINGTON smiles warmly at GENTLY and BACCHUS but there is something about him that suggests he can’t understand why this investigation is still cluttering his life.

GENTLY
We don’t have enough evidence to reach any definitive conclusion on Mr. Thomas’s death...

LEWINGTON
That’s disappointing. I’ll let the Assistant Chief Constable know. Perhaps “misadventure” was the best we could ever expect...

GENTLY
We’d like to speak to the arresting officers.

LEWINGTON
Your investigation is about the suspect’s death, not his arrest, isn’t it, Detective Chief Inspector?

GENTLY
Yes.

Lewington looks at Gently steadily. He picks up his phone and dials - never taking his eye off Gently.
EXT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION - DAY 2 1135

GENTLY and BACCHUS wait by Gently's car. WPC RACHEL COLES walks from the station house to join them.

RACHEL
Detective Chief Inspector? Sergeant asked me to take you over to the shift at Rye Hill.

EXT. A STREET. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 2 1155

GENTLY, BACCHUS and RACHEL move from GENTLY'S car toward the area where the disturbance took place.

RACHEL
The staging area for the police was just here. We were called up for safety - no one expected any trouble. As the morning wore on we had to bring more shifts in. Had reports there were people occupying a building further along.

GENTLY
Where?

RACHEL
I'll show ye.

The buildings have been reduced to rubble.

GENTLY
There's not much of a community left.

BACCHUS
It wasn't a community. It was a slum.

RACHEL points to a spot where all that remains is rubble as they keep walking.

RACHEL
They're intending to put blocks of flats just over there. The vision T Dan Smith had when he ran the council...amazing really...my mother used to say that he made her proud to be from here. He made us modern. Twenty floors soaring into the sky. Imagine the views.
GENTLY
There are some who can’t imagine
they’ll ever see those views.

RACHEL
We’re losing our faith in things,
aren’t we? You can see it all
around.

RACHEL points to a row of uncleared houses sealed off by
police ropes and spigots and still standing. Surrounding them
is debris and building work.

RACHEL (CONT’D)
That’s where the trouble was.

Gently and Bacchus look -
They continue to walk forward:

EXT. A STREET. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 2 1156

FURTHER ALONG THE STREET
There are a few large sheets with different protest slogans
hanging from the still extant side of a ruined brick
building. The flag with a “Peace Sign” on it. The image of a
clenched fist and the tattered sheet saying: “SAVE OUR
STREET”. From the look of the street the plea was apparently
in vain.

RACHEL
We never had any trouble before -
ever. We grew up respecting the
police. We knew they had taken an
oath to serve us, to protect us.
They were people you could trust.
That’s why I wanted to join. I
wanted to be that sort of
person...someone you could trust.
Someone people looked up to.

UNDERNEATH THE BANNER
A crowd of a dozen or so local people are congregated arguing
with PC BAIRD, PC STOCKDALE and PC SIDWELL as STOCKDALE tries
to take the banners down. A hard looking TERRY HANSON snarls
at Stockdale.

HANSON
You don’t have the right to take
these down...

OTHERS watch from the ruined buildings a distance away.
Hostility is bubbling up.
STOCKDALE
We’re taking them down because
they’re inciting trouble...

RONNY HANRATTY, calm as can be, as he rolls a cigarette,
calls out to him.

RONNY
It’s youz who are inciting trouble
not a sheet with some words on it.

Sidwell tries to dissuade his colleague:

SIDWELL
Leave it, Chris...

We hear a YOUNG MAN’S VOICE shout from a part destroyed
building:

BOY’S VOICE (O.S.)
Kill the pigs!

ON RACHEL, GENTLY AND BACCHUS
They hear the shout as they move toward the gathering.

RACHEL
Why do they call us “pigs”?

The question hangs as –

UNDERNEATH THE BANNER
A brick pings off the wall barely missing STOCKDALE.
Stockdale, furious, turns in direction of where the brick
came from in time to see a YOUNG MAN (CHARLIE) dart behind
cover.

IRENE SEDDON, mother of Robbie and Charlie, chips in from the
crowd.

IRENE
What bother is it to you if we have
a protest sign up?

STOCKDALE
They’re coming down. All of them.

RONNY
Ye won’t be doing that, lad.

STOCKDALE
Shut it.

RONNY
I’m warning ye and I won’t be
warnin’ ye twice.
STOCKDALE starts to try and pull the sheet and rip it down. The crowd becomes agitated telling him to stop. ANOTHER brick is thrown. RONNY puts his hand on Stockdale’s arm to stop him.

STOCKDALE whips around and strikes him across the face with his truncheon. RONNY goes down. IRENE moves to help RONNY.

IRENE
What was that about, Chris? What were ye thinking?

STOCKDALE
He don’t listen. You don’t do ye?

RONNY
And ye don’t learn, lad...

Baird and Sidwell try and disperse the crowd.

BAIRD
Move along now. All of you move along.

STOCKDALE rips the sheets down and as he bundles them up under his arm he sees:

GENTLY and BACCHUS watching. The local people begin to disperse except for the kids watching from the ruined buildings. Baird calls to them:

BAIRD (CONT’D)
Hadaway from those buildings! It’s dangerous...Hadaway from there!

A LAD’S voice shouts back:

ROBBIE (O.S.)
Piss off!

IRENE helps a still dazed RONNY HANRATTY.

BAIRD, STOCKDALE and SIDWELL physically prod the group to disperse them. As they reach GENTLY and BACCHUS -

BAIRD
Rachel?

RACHEL
This is Detective Chief Inspector Gently, and Detective Sergeant Bacchus.

Baird’s attitude changes immediately.
BAIRD
PC Baird. Chris!? Neil!? Detectives! Sergeant told us we might be seeing ye.

STOCKDALE and SIDWELL arrive. Baird introduces them:

BAIRD (CONT’D)
PC Stockdale. PC Sidwell. They’re the Detectives. We was trying to find witnesses – anyone that might have seen what happened to “Ash”.

Rachel helps explain:

RACHEL
Constable Ashton.

Gently pushes the conversation forward:

GENTLY
Any progress?

BAIRD
Nowt.

STOCKDALE
No one is talking.

Referring to what he just saw.

BACCHUS
Not surprising if you’re baiston ‘em.

SIDWELL
They were asked politely.

BACCHUS
Before or after you hit them?

STOCKDALE
Bastards want to kill us. They need to know we’re not afraid of them.

GENTLY
Is that how you do it?

STOCKDALE
Aye. It is.

BAIRD
Can we help you with anything Detective Chief Inspector?
GENTLY
We’re investigating Simon Thomas...

BACCHUS
The long haired fella...

SIDWELL
Oh aye. We think he’s probably the one that did Ash over and put him in hospital...

STOCKDALE
Just need a witness.

GENTLY
We’re looking into his death.

STOCKDALE is outraged.

STOCKDALE
We’re spending time and brass on that. Why? Makes no difference to anyone.

GENTLY
Maybe that’s why it should make a difference to us.

Sidwell and Stockdale walk away. Baird says quietly and forcefully to Gently and Bacchus.

BAIRD
Don’t judge him...You remember what it was like with your shift when you were in uniform? Brothers. They’re my brothers...like. They’re my blood. People here tried to kill Ash. People he grew up with, went to school with, who knew his family.

Baird gestures to the local people watching:

BAIRD (CONT’D)
They’d kill me. They’d kill you. Because of what we do. Not who we are.

Sidwell shouts back to him.

SIDWELL
Come on, Bairdo.
GENTLY
You the one who arrested Simon Thomas?

BAIRD
Aye. I did.

GENTLY
Where? Where was he when you arrested him?

BAIRD
He was hiding. Over there...near where I found Ash...

He points to a mound of debris further along the street - bricks, wood, stone. Wherever he was hiding before is now gone.

BAIRD (CONT’D)
If I hadn’t arrested him, he would have stayed hiding there. Bulldozer would have knocked it down. Killed him.

Bacchus sees this as a risible self-justification by Baird.

BACCHUS
You saved his life?

Baird shrugs.

BAIRD
I did my job.

GENTLY considers his answers as he watches Baird join Stockdale and Sidwell and the three Constables walk away.

EXT. A STREET. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - LATER. DAY 2 1200

It’s an odd sight. On one side it is rubble. On the other the houses are still standing and people are going about their business. THERE are dozens of people standing in front of the houses that are still standing watching and chatting. RACHEL is talking to a group of women as GENTLY and BACCHUS move further along the street.

We hear IRENE SEDDON call out:

IRENE (O.S.)
Robbie! Robbie?! Where are ye?

She’s walking through the debris and partly demolished buildings looking for her son - concerned.
IRENE (CONT’D)
Robbie!?

She sees Rachel, Gently and Bacchus.

IRENE (CONT’D)
You haven’t seen my wee boy have ye?

GENTLY
What does he look like?

IRENE
He looks like the one who just threw a rock at ya or called you a name. Robbie!!?

IRENE surveys Gently and Bacchus before asking:

IRENE (CONT’D)
You from the council?

BACCHUS
Police.

IRENE
Makes a change. You here to pick up your bungs from the builders...

BACCHUS
Those are normally delivered to the office.

Irene laughs.

IRENE
‘Course. They wouldn’t want to get their shoes dirty.

Irene looks around at the ruins.

IRENE (CONT’D)
Nice area...they say it’s on the way up. Be too good for us lot soon, won’t it? Need a better class of person to live here so they’ll fit in.

GENTLY
Did you know this man?

Bacchus shows Irene a photograph of Simon Thomas from the crime scene.
IRENE
Aye. “Crazy man”? It’s what the kids called him. Why are you all so interested in him?

GENTLY
We’re investigating his death.

RONNY HANRATTY moves to join them. RONNY looks at the photograph.

RONNY
He’s dead is he?

BACCHUS
Was he “an agitator”?

Ronny doesn’t know what he’s on about. Bacchus elaborates:

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
A protestor? A squatter?

OTHER PEOPLE ON THE STREET begin to gather as Irene talks. TERRY HANSON joins the group:

IRENE
We had plenty of protestors who would turn up during the day and go back to their warm homes at night. We had students squatting here.

HANSON
Council pushed everyone out and then just left the buildings... Whose idea was that?

IRENE
And that lot with the drugs...

RONNY
We sorted them...

There is the rumble of agreement from those gathered.

IRENE
Used to know every soul...people that lived here...people that worked here...Good, kind people, aye. Didn’t need the council to tell us what to do or how to live. They tear it all down and tell us they’ll give us a new place -
HANSON
Some are going to lose out. You can be sure.

IRENE
And they let the squatters move in...Like “Crazy Man”...

HANSON
Folks disn’t like him.

RONNY
Aye. Lot of folks.

Ronny looks around. His friends all agree with him.

GENTLY
Why didn’t they like him?

RONNY
Thought he might be a kiddie fiddler.

Gently clocks the remark.

IRENE
He never did nothing, Ronny.

RONNY looks around and plays to the crowd.

RONNY
Used to take care of things like that ourselves.

TERRY HANSON says angrily:

HANSON
These streets...they ran straight down to the Tyne...They’re changing them. Look, what they’ve done... ripped the heart out of us...

BACCHUS
This was a slum. It wasn’t fit to live in.

RONNY glares at Bacchus as though he might attack him.

RONNY
What are you? Twenty-nine, thirty? You weren’t in the war. When you go away, thinking it’s to die, it changes how you feel about where you’re from.
HANSON
You don’t know what it’s like to suffer, so maybe we shouldn’t blame you.

RONNY looks at Bacchus and Gently and shakes his head.

RONNY
You boys work for the council and their cronies now...not for us...not for the people.

RONNY reaches up to the blood trickling down his face.

RONNY (CONT’D)
Used to be, the police protected everybody.

EXT. A STREET. RUINED BUILDINGS. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY

RACHEL and BACCHUS are talking as they move toward Gently’s car.

GENTLY is apart from them looking at the ruins trying to understand the geography of the events. He thinks he hears a cry of “help” in the distance. He turns to look. He hears the cry again. GENTLY moves toward the cry. He shouts to BACCHUS:

GENTLY
Sergeant!?

GENTLY moves toward the entrance to a dangerous looking ruin of a building. He hears the cry of “help” again coming from inside.

BACCHUS moves to assist him. Quickly at first.

GENTLY looks into the darkness of the ruin. He hears the boy’s cry. Without hesitation he enters.

BACCHUS sees GENTLY enter the building. He slows as he reaches the dark void of the doorway.

BACCHUS starts to enter the building. He looks into the darkness. He stops. He’s initially bewildered by his inability to go into the building – he’s surprised – and then terrified.
INT. RUINED TERRACE OF HOUSES. A STREET. RYE HILL - DAY 2

GENTLY moves into the ruin and carefully moves up the treads of a decrepit staircase to get to the second floor. His foot goes through the broken tread and he nearly falls.

GENTLY arrives at the second floor. He looks over and sees broken floorboards around A BOY (ROBBIE) precariously perched on an open beam. There’s no floor. The building itself looks like it is in danger of imminent collapse. It looks dangerous and ROBBIE looks terrified.

Robbie is frozen. Trembling.

GENTLY
You all right, lad?

Robbie doesn’t look at him.

ROBBIE
I can’t get down.

Gently edges toward him and extends his hand.

GENTLY
Grab my hand.

The boy moves to grab Gently’s hand. He steps, the floorboard gives way and Robbie begins to fall through the joists.

Gently with his weak arm grabs the boy. With great effort and in great pain he pulls him up to safety.

We see for the first time that Robbie is clutching A BOOK to his body.

EXT. A STREET. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 2

ROBBIE runs out of the house and scampers off as though nothing has happened.

Then GENTLY follows him out. GENTLY sees BACCHUS staring at the ground by the door. It is obvious that Bacchus is traumatized - and humiliated to feel that way. Gently starts to say something to him - Bacchus shakes his head. He doesn’t want to hear it. Gently decides to try and reach him:

GENTLY
John...?

BACCHUS
(quietly)
Don’t say anything.
GENTLY
John you have to...

Bacchus snaps. He can’t control his anger and frustration:

BACCHUS
Don’t you feel anything? Don’t you suffer? We were both shot! We both bled. Or don’t you bleed? Doesn’t anything affect you? Maybe that’s what’s wrong with you! Nothing affects you.

Bacchus and Gently sense someone watching and look over to find ROBBIE watching them:

ROBBIE
You slop?

BACCHUS
Aye, but we mean you no harm.

ROBBIE
I didn’t see nothing. Or hear it.

We hear Irene’s voice in the distance:

IRENE (O.S.)
Robbie!? Robbie!

We see IRENE hurrying across the rubble. Robbie goes. Gently tries one more time.

GENTLY
John?

BACCHUS
Don’t. Just don’t talk.

They start to go as Robbie’s mother IRENE arrives. She screams at her son:

IRENE (O.S.)
What were you doing in there?

Gently and Bacchus arrive to see IRENE slap him upside the head.

IRENE (CONT’D)
What were you thinking?

ROBBIE
I was looking for something.
IRENE
What were you looking for?

She whacks him again and as he tries to protect himself he drops his book.

GENTLY picks it up for him and looks at it: “Mersey Sounds”. He hands it back to him.

GENTLY
You used to play in the old houses?

ROBBIE
Played “everys” in ‘em. We all liked goin’ there.

Gently refers to the book Robbie’s holding:

GENTLY
Where did you get the book?

Robbie reacts defensively:

ROBBIE
I didn’t steal it.

GENTLY
Why would I think you’d stole it?

ROBBIE
‘Cos that’s how police are, aren’t they? Think you’ve always done something.

IRENE
Tell him where you got it!

ROBBIE
Crazy Man give it me. Has poems in it by Roger McGough. Scouser, but he writes good poems.

Robbie points to the building where he was standing.

ROBBIE (CONT’D)
He used to live in there after they made everyone leave. Folks thought he was mad crazy, aye. As a hatter. We thought he was a villain at first. He weren’t no villain. Crazy Man used to sit in there reading beuks...poems. Talking to hiself...I think he was a genius or a hippie or something.
You like poetry, Robbie?

Whey aye. Not the old kind with words nobody uses and no one knows what they mean. But this kind, aye.

You have a favourite?

Lots. He liked Roger McGough.

Robbie points to a poem in the book. Gently begins to read:

"Let me die a young man’s death, not a clean and in between the sheets..."

Robbie begins to recite with him:

...holywater death, not a famous-last-words peaceful out of breath death.”

They look at each other when they stop:

Don’t know anymore. Crazy man taught me it. Said it was a famous one. That everyone knew it. Don’t think he got that right.

Robbie thinks about Crazy Man and his books for a moment.

He had lots of beuks. That’s what I was looking for. He had lots of them. Now they’re gone. He’s gone too. And I don’t think he’s coming back. Do ye know what’s happened to ‘im?

Gently and Bacchus stand beside the covered body of Simon Thomas as they listen to Bob Anderton.
ANDERTON
His liver function markers were very high...as though he’d had some trauma. It’s what we see in car accidents. Advanced liver damage can cause Hepatic encephalopathy. Toxins in the blood normally cleared by the liver make their way into the brain.

GENTLY
If he appeared disoriented? Violent? Hallucinating? Could these be reactions to liver failure?

ANDERTON
Yes. They could be. We know he suffered some sort of trauma to the organ. Let me show you...

ANDERTON removes the sheet, exposing SIMON THOMAS’ lower back. ANDERTON begins to point out the bruise on his body.

ANDERTON (CONT’D)
There is a large haematoma here above the liver. When I examined the liver in the post mortem it had suffered a serious injury.

ANDERTON shows them a photograph of a partly ruptured Liver.

ANDERTON (CONT’D)
I am confident in declaring liver failure as cause of death.

GENTLY
How did it happen?

ANDERTON
It’s obviously a blunt force injury...Fists. Rocks. Bricks. The skin isn’t broken so it is difficult to know with any certainty.

GENTLY
A truncheon?

INT. ROYAL VICTORIA INFIRMARY. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE MORTUARY - 49
DAY 2 1335

GENTLY and BACCHUS walk along the corridor.
GENTLY
Someone beat him to death.

BACCHUS
In the cell? It’s impossible...
Someone would have heard...

GENTLY
They would have heard.

BACCHUS
Duty officer would have reported it.

They pass a stack of copies of the NEWCASTLE MORNING TRIBUNE. We see the headline on the top copy:

“RYE HILL CONSTABLE REMAINS CRITICAL”

GENTLY
Unless they were part of it.

BACCHUS
Here we go.

Gently looks at Bacchus.

GENTLY
Sidwell thought Simon Thomas assaulted Ashton...they just needed a witness prove it.

The idea is too horrible to contemplate for Gently:

GENTLY (CONT’D)
They beat him to death in his cell and no one says a word... They cover it up.

BACCHUS
(finds it risible)
All of them?

Gently looks at him. He’s going to make Bacchus eat his doubting words.

DAWSON is sitting on the edge of his desk. Body language suggests he’s getting tired of their questions.

GENTLY
Was Mr. Thomas checked hourly in his cell?
DAWSON
Whey, Aye. Of course.

GENTLY
He was agitated?

Dawson laughs derisively - he was more than agitated.

DAWSON
Aye. I’d say so!

GENTLY
You thought he was on drugs?

DAWSON
Aye. Why are we wasting so much time and effort on this? I don’t understand it. It’s not going to make any difference to anyone.

BACCHUS looks at him coolly before:

GENTLY
What time did you call the police surgeon?

Gently registers the fact that Bacchus has asked a question. Dawson looks at Bacchus coldly. He sees the trap.

DAWSON
I didn’t call him...

Bacchus gives him no escape.

GENTLY
If he was on drugs, shouldn’t you have called the police surgeon?

DAWSON
I just wanted to get him into a cell to calm down.

BACCHUS
Aren’t you meant to make sure they are safe?

Dawson raises his voice to overwhelm Bacchus...

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
Isn’t that your responsibility? Don’t patronise me.

DAWSON
Son, when someone’s arrested, it is stressful. Puts a strain on them. People can die from that...

Bacchus doesn’t back down.
BACCHUS (CONT’D)  DAWSON
...it’s your duty.  ...doesn’t take anything else.

DAWSON
Don’t you talk to me about duty...

Silence. Dawson looks at Bacchus with concern:

DAWSON (CONT’D)
You’re one of us, aren’t you lad?

BACCHUS
Aye.

Gently regards them both for a moment before -

GENTLY
No. He’s one of us.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. OUTSIDE CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE - DAY 2 1425

GENTLY and BACCHUS are waiting for LEWINGTON outside the door of his office. Gently says quietly to Bacchus.

GENTLY
I like you when you’re a bastard. And you’re quite good at it.

Bacchus answers deadpan.

BACCHUS
I had a good teacher.

LEWINGTON arrives. He’s not happy to see them.

LEWINGTON
Gentlemen?

He glares at GENTLY.

GENTLY
We’d like to see pocket books of arresting officer Baird and the other members of his shift and I’d be grateful if you could make them available for interview.
INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 2 1440

WPC RACHEL COLES enters carrying a box of the CONSTABLE’S NOTEBOOKS.

She sets the box on a table. GENTLY takes each of the “pocket books” out and lays them on his desk.

GENTLY opens one of the pocket books and begins to read.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 2 1500

PC SIDWELL comes into the interview room. GENTLY greets him.

GENTLY
Sit down, Constable.

SIDWELL sits at the table across from Gently. Gently lets him sit in silence for a moment while he continues to look at his notebook.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
The day of the clearance...?
It seems like a very tough day.

Sidwell nods.

SIDWELL
Yes sir.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 2 1505

Gently is doing his best to make SIDWELL relaxed.

GENTLY
How long had there been tension?

SIDWELL
Ages. It weren’t new. Some people were excited but there were others that didn’t take to all the talk about being Brasilia or whatever...“Milan of the north”. Most people went gladly but there were some that weren’t having it. We knew about the squatters...We’d been sent down to clear them before. But we didn’t expect this...
EXT. A STREET. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 1 1645 (FLASHBACK)

SIDWELL is covering his head and face with his arm as bottles and rocks and bricks rain down on him.

SIDWELL (O.S.)
Didn’t have the gear for it.

He looks up and sees a kaleidoscope of angry faces and hears disjointed sounds of angry people screaming and spitting at him.

GENTLY (O.S.)
You were angry?

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 2 1508

GENTLY watches his reaction closely:

SIDWELL
Course we were angry. I’m still angry. Look what happened to Ash.

EXT. A STREET. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 1 1648 (FLASHBACK)

The disturbance is in full swing - SIDWELL sees BAIRD come out of the building screaming:

BAIRD
I need help!

Sidwell begins to sprint toward the building.

SIDWELL (O.S.)
That could have been any of us.
That could have been me.

He stumbles picks himself up and keeps running.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 2 1508

Sidwell shakes his head in dismay.

SIDWELL
Of all the people...for it to happen to him...Mike actually cared about them...he wasn’t just doing a job...he actually cared...

Gently nods. He’s warm when he asks:
GENTLY
You liked Mike...?

SIDWELL
Top man. Proud to serve with him.

GENTLY
You thought Simon Thomas had assaulted him?

Sidwell stops talking.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
You wanted to pay him back...for what he did...

SIDWELL
Is that what you think? That I would give up my career in order to give a drug addict a kicking? You don’t know anything about me, do you? You don’t know anything about any of us.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 2 1530

GENTLY and BACCHUS listen as PC CHRIS STOCKDALE relates:

STOCKDALE
The truth is - if people would just do as they are told there wouldn’t be any trouble. Simon Thomas should have left the buildings when he was told...You’re investigating us but the way he was...What he did...

Stockdale shakes his head.

BACCHUS
What did he do?

STOCKDALE
You’ve got the whole of Newcastle moving this way...all together...in one direction...and him...going that way. He resisted, that’s what he did.

BACCHUS
You’d told him before to leave the building?
STOCKDALE
Told everyone. They can’t knock it
down if there’s people inside can
they? Expensive business keeping
all those men and that equipment
waiting.

BACCHUS
So you’d seen him before?

Stockdale considers his answer.

STOCKDALE
No. I mean – we’d catch glimpses of
him. We heard he was in there – had
complaints from local people who
were scared of him. We’d look for
him but never found him.

GENTLY
According to your notebook you
visited the street seventeen times
in the last six weeks. That’s just
your shift.

STOCKDALE
Did we?

GENTLY shows Stockdale the notebook.

GENTLY
Your call outs were almost always
at the end of your shift.

STOCKDALE
It was Ash’s idea...

GENTLY
What was Ash’s idea? To go to the
street? To look for Simon...

Stockdale cuts across him.

STOCKDALE
I know what you’re trying to do but
I don’t know why you’re trying to
do it. We had nothing to do with
him dying. You saw what he looked
like. He spent his life trying to
kill himself. Don’t try to put it
on us. Not on us. We were just
trying to do our job...
INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 2 1600

Constable Baird thinks about the events of that night.

BAIRD
They were angry...why at us? Do they think we have power? We don’t have any power. We just do what we’re told to do. They are the same as us! Don’t they see that?

GENTLY
Were you frightened?

BAIRD
Yes.

As BAIRD reflects we see:

EXT. A STREET. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 1 1645 (FLASHIMAGE)

PC MIKE ASHTON about to confront the protestors. He’s astonished.

BAIRD (O.S.)
Mike wasn’t frightened.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 2 1600

Gently and Bacchus watch Baird closely:

BAIRD
He should have been. More amazed. None of us worried about being injured.

GENTLY
Who do you think assaulted Constable Ashton?

BAIRD
Simon Thomas.

BACCHUS
Why did he do it?

BAIRD
I can’t tell you. Makes no sense. I don’t think he knew what he was doing.

BACCHUS
Why do you think that?
Mainly because he was acting crazy. We were asked to move people on. It wasn’t safe there. Maybe Mr. Thomas didn’t want to be moved...

BACCHUS
How did you move people on?

BAIRD
Spoke to them.

GENTLY
Did you threaten them? Hit them?

BAIRD
We did what it took.

GENTLY
You didn’t mind a little violence?

Baird shrugs. What a ridiculous question:

BAIRD
This is Newcastle.

BACCHUS
All of you?

BAIRD
Aye. We gave back what we were given. None of us shied away from the rough stuff if we had to...to defend ourself.

GENTLY
Always “defend yourself” at the end of your shift?

Baird is confused.

BAIRD
Sorry?

GENTLY
Bit of sport at the end of your shift? Go over to the hill, break some heads. Seventeen times in six weeks? “Ash’s idea”?

Baird is wrong footed. He tries to make a lame explanation.

BAIRD
We were meant to keep the area safe.
GENTLY
Ash enjoys mixing it up with vagrants and squatters...good fun. The rest of you get a taste for it. You didn’t shy away from the rough stuff at the end of your shift and you didn’t shy away from the rough stuff after you got Simon Thomas in a cell did you?

BAIRD
I don’t know what you’re on about.

GENTLY
You got him alone and set about to teach him a lesson. Pay him back for what he did to your friend...

BAIRD
And when was it I was doing this “pay back”?

GENTLY
The night Simon Thomas died.

BAIRD
I was at the hospital praying that Ash made it through the night. And youse two, if you had anything about you, would know that because you would have done the same. But you wouldn’t know much about what it’s like to see your colleague... your friend... in a hospital bed hooked up to machines that are keeping him alive. You seem to care more about that drug addict, squatter than one of your own. Does Ash need to die before you care about him? Is that what needs to happen?

GENTLY
You beat him to death in his cell! You were all part of it...

BAIRD
Go to hell. I’m not going to listen to this. Arrest me and prove it or let me go back to work.
INT. POLICE HQ. GENTLY AND BACCHUS’ OFFICE/CORRIDOR – DAY 61AA

GENTLY is walking purposefully. BACCHUS, carrying a box containing the PC’s notebooks, is a few steps behind him – heckling him:

BACCHUS
They work all hours... put themselves in danger...

GENTLY
Someone must have seen or heard something...

Bacchus can’t hide his contempt.

BACCHUS
...their friend, their “brother officer” is in hospital and we treat them like this...?

Gently turns on Bacchus and snarls at him.

GENTLY
Without favour or affection.

Silence.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
That’s what we do. That’s who we are. There is no other way to be.

BACCHUS
I can’t be the things you want me to be. I never could.

BACCHUS dumps the NOTEBOOKS on TAYLOR and busies himself in the outer office. TAYLOR starts to log the notebooks.

GENTLY, at his desk, watches BACCHUS through the glass partition. Then he turns away.

EXT. POLICE HQ. DURHAM – DAY 61A

BACCHUS is alone. Outside the station smoking a cigarette. Trying to find a way to go inside but struggling.

INT. POLICE HQ. GENTLY’S AND BACCHUS’ OFFICE – DAY 62

GENTLY is searching through the notebooks on his desk.
GENTLY

Bacchus?

No response.

GENTLY (CONT’D)

Taylor!?

PC TAYLOR enters.
TAYLOR

Sir?

Gently looks at him for a moment and can’t remember why he called him.

GENTLY

I didn’t want you.

Taylor nods and says phlegmatically:

TAYLOR

Not many do, sir.

Taylor turns around to go. At the door he adds:

TAYLOR (CONT’D)

Those that do, are satisfied.

Gently remembers:

GENTLY

Constable Ashton’s pocket book?

TAYLOR

Haven’t seen it, Sir.

GENTLY

He’ll have written notes...if there was history between him and Simon Thomas it will be in his pocket book...where is it? I thought I had all of their pocket books.

Taylor offers:

TAYLOR

If the Constable was taken directly to hospital wouldn’t his current notebook be with his personal effects at the hospital?

Gently looks at him and realises he’s right. Taylor nods in muted celebration before:

TAYLOR (CONT’D)

I’m wasted here.

EXT. POLICE HQ. DURHAM - DAY 2 1738

GENTLY’S on his way to his car. He glances over at BACCHUS.

GENTLY

Bacchus!
Bacchus slowly moves to join him.

EXT. ROYAL VICTORIA INFIRMARY - DAY 2 1750

GENTLY and BACCHUS move toward the entrance of the large hospital. Silence. The wound still raw.

INT. CORRIDOR. ROYAL VICTORIA INFIRMARY - DAY 2 1752

BACCHUS and GENTLY walk down the corridor toward the Critical Care Unit. They are not speaking to each other. Gently moves with clear intention. Bacchus is reluctant – almost anxious about being in a hospital.

INT. CRITICAL CARE UNIT. HOSPITAL - DAY 2 1755

GENTLY and BACCHUS arrive in the unit. One of the NURSES moves to greet them and speaks in hushed tones.

NURSE
Can I help you?

Gently shows his warrant card.

GENTLY
We need to recover Constable Ashton’s notebook from his personal belongings.

BACCHUS looks at the Police Constable sitting outside the door of Michael Ashton as the Nurse moves behind the nurses’ station.

The Nurse calls to Gently:

NURSE
Detective Chief Inspector?

Gently moves to the Nurse who is standing by a small open locker. Inside are ASHTON’S UNIFORM, neatly folded, HIS HAT, his personal effects in a plastic bag, his TRUNCHEON and his NOTEBOOK.

NURSE (CONT’D)
Does this look like what you’re after?

She hands him ASHTON’S NOTEBOOK. Gently checks it before:

GENTLY
Thank you.
The Nurse nods.

GENTLY (CONT'D)
Constable Ashton...? How is he? Do you expect him to recover?

The Nurse smiles. She glances around to see if any Doctors are nearby before offering a despairing look and a shake of the head. Gently nods.

He turns to rejoin Bacchus clutching the notebook. Bacchus is nowhere to be found.

INT. A ROOM. CRITICAL CARE UNIT. HOSPITAL - DAY 2 1800

MICHAEEL ASHTON lies in the bed. The ventilator still keeping him alive.

WE FIND -
BACCHUS standing at the end of the bed contemplating ASHTON, and feeling a kinship with a man he has never met.

INT. CORRIDOR. CRITICAL CARE UNIT. HOSPITAL - DAY 2 1801

GENTLY arrives at the door to ASHTON’S ROOM. He looks in and sees -

BACCHUS standing by Ashton’s bed.

Gently doesn’t disturb him.

INT. CORRIDOR. CRITICAL CARE UNIT. HOSPITAL - DAY 2 1805

BACCHUS comes out of Ashton’s room and finds GENTLY waiting for him. Nurses and Doctors go about their work. They look at each other in silence for a moment before:

GENTLY
It affected me, John. It still affects me. But it won’t change me. I won’t let them change me, John. I won’t give them that power.
(a beat)
Will you?

Bacchus looks back at the door to Ashton’s hospital room.

BACCHUS
How much luck do I have left?

GENTLY looks at Bacchus intensely - piercingly:
GENTLY
You saved my life...I never told
you I was grateful.

This is awkward for Bacchus.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
I’m grateful. If you let them
change who you are, then they
killed you in the Cathedral. You’re
a survivor. We’re both survivors.
You’re more like me now than you
ever wanted to be.

Bacchus looks back to Gently.

They walk together as they leave the hospital.

INT. POLICE HQ. GENTLY’S AND BACCHUS’ OFFICE - DAY 2 1820

GENTLY is looking through Ashton’s notebook.

GENTLY
Stockdale says they went to the
slums seventeen times in six
weeks...It was “Ash’s” idea. But
Ash doesn’t mention it.

He throws the notebook onto his desk. It doesn’t make sense.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
There’s nothing.

BACCHUS glances at the Newspapers. He sees the photograph of
the disturbance and people being arrested. He picks up the
newspaper and walks to Gently’s desk:

BACCHUS
There were other people in the
police station that night. Sergeant
Dawson said the cells were full up.

BACCHUS hands the newspaper to GENTLY. We see a photograph of
MICHAEL ASHTON in uniform next to a LARGE PHOTOGRAPH of the
POLICE ARRESTING PROTESTORS with the headline:

“POLICEMAN INJURED IN DISTURBANCE”

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
Witnesses.

GENTLY
But you don’t think they did it?
BACCHUS
And the witnesses will prove it.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHARGE ROOM - DAY 2 1830

BACCHUS watches as RACHEL gets out the files which are in perfect order - incredibly efficient.

BACCHUS
How many arrests were made?

RACHEL
I would have to check with the Sergeant but I would guess fifteen to twenty. Some were arrested and released because we don’t have the space. If the charge was serious or we thought they were a danger to others or to themselves we kept them in...

RACHEL lays the files down on the counter.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHARGE ROOM - DAY 2 1845

BACCHUS and RACHEL are going through the PINK CHARGE SHEETS.

RACHEL
Frank Connor....

BACCHUS
Charge?

RACHEL
Breach of the peace.

BACCHUS
Address?

RACHEL
Aye.

She hands it to him.

RACHEL (CONT’D)
Jericho.

BACCHUS
Jericho? What’s he doing over here?

RACHEL
Agitating?
DAWSON enters. He sees them going through the booking sheets.

BACCHUS
This one.

RACHEL
Terry Hanson. Breach of the peace. He has a Rye Hill address.

BACCHUS
What cell was he in?

RACHEL
Seven.

Dawson interrupts:

DAWSON
What are you doing Constable?

RACHEL
We’re matching mug shots to the photos from the Tribune.

BACCHUS
Not everyone who was at the disturbance was arrested...I’m trying to categorize suspects. Those that were in the cells... Those that were cautioned...

Dawson nods.

DAWSON
Scientific.

BACCHUS
Not really. Just isolating who was in the custody suite.

DAWSON
Carry on then. It seems important.

Dawson moves to his desk. Bacchus asks him.

BACCHUS
Can we have the duty roster for that night, Sergeant?

DAWSON
Of course.

Bacchus turns his attention to Rachel.
BACCHUS
Who was in the cell next to Simon Thomas?

EXT. THE SEDDON’S FLAT. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 2 1900

GENTLY and BACCHUS arrive at the SEDDON’S flat next to the church. BACCHUS knocks on the door. ROBBIE opens the door. He has a black eye and a swollen cheek. Behind him is his brother CHARLIE.

ROBBIE
Hiya. Mum!!

ROBBIE half smiles and nods at Gently. Gently returns the greeting.

ROBBIE (CONT’D)
Have ye come back for the rest of the beuks?

ROBBIE picks up A STACK OF BOOKS from a table just inside the door.

ROBBIE (CONT’D)
I found them. I found them all.

IRENE arrives at the door. She smiles weakly at them.

IRENE
Hiya.

GENTLY
What happened to you, lad?

ROBBIE
I fell down.

IRENE
I told him not to play in the rubble. Dangerous.

Robbie tries to give the books to Gently:

ROBBIE
You can give them back to “Crazy Man” for me.

GENTLY
“Crazy Man’s” real name was Simon Thomas. He’s dead Robbie.

ROBBIE
Deed?
GENTLY
We’re trying to find out how he died...

Robbie is trying to get his head around what “dead” means when RONNY HANRATTY appears at the door.

BACCHUS
Mr. Hanratty...?

RONNY
Aye?

BACCHUS
We wondered if you could help us with our enquiries in the death of...

Hanratty looks at GENTLY and BACCHUS. Smiles and says apologetically:

RONNY
I don’t respect ye, so I can’t help ye...

He closes the door.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHARGE ROOM - DAY 2 1900

DAWSON is sitting at his desk pre-occupied - troubled. He looks at the photograph of his family on the desk.

He looks over at RACHEL COLES filling out forms at the counter.

He opens his drawer and pulls out A COMPLETED FORM which says in bold letters on the top: DUTY ROSTER. He crumples the sheet of paper into a ball.

He takes a BLANK DUTY ROSTER FORM out and threads it into his typewriter.
BAIRD comes down the stairs from his room and finds DAWSON.

DAWSON
Bairdo? Can we have a word?

Baird goes to them unsure what they want.

GENTLY and BACCHUS wait at the door of the flat. The door opens. TERRY HANSON, answers.

GENTLY
Mr. Hanson, I’m Detective Chief Inspector Gently...I wondered if you could help.

HANSON
No. I don’t trust you. When you start weighing in and beating people because they disagree with the government you’re not fit to be trusted.

HANSON starts to close the door. BACCHUS stops him with his foot.

BACCHUS
A Man died. We’re trying to solve it...

HANSON
In the cells?

BACCHUS
Aye.

GENTLY
Did you hear anything at all?

HANSON
I heard him crying. It was the worst thing I ever heard in my life... Hearing a grown man cry like that.

(MORE)
HANSON (CONT’D)
No one came to see what was wrong. They just left him. No one helped him.

BACCHUS
We’re trying to help him now.

HANSON
You’re too late. What’s there to solve? He’s dead.

He closes the door on them. A beat. Bacchus sees the information as exoneration of the Police officers.

BACCHUS
No one beat him.

Gently sees it differently:

GENTLY
No one helped him.

EXT. SECTION HOUSE. - NIGHT 2 2005

RACHEL is on her way back to the section house. BAIRD steps out of the shadows.

BAIRD
Hiya pet.

He frightens her at first. She calms down as they kiss. RACHEL breaks the kiss smiles and says:

RACHEL
Hiya.

They kiss again. She sees he’s distracted:

RACHEL (CONT’D)
What is it?

Baird looks at her for a moment – then speaks very quietly – this is something he doesn’t know how to say:

BAIRD
Rachel...Sergeant has asked me to have a word...

Rachel’s face as she listens.
GENTLY looks truly disturbed. In his hand is a bottle of whiskey.

GENTLY
This is where we are. This is what we’ve become. The people they don’t trust. We’re the enemy.
(a beat)
How did this happen?

BACCHUS studies Gently and the pain he is in.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
Maybe you’re right to quit.

BACCHUS
What do we know, Guv?

Gently looks at Bacchus and slowly realises that he has become fully engaged in the case.

GENTLY
We don’t know when he died and we don’t know why...

BACCHUS
We know that he wasn’t beaten in the cells. The people we’ve seen...they don’t trust us...but they’d be quick to shout if a policeman had beaten him. So we know more than we think.

GENTLY
Then where was he beaten? Why didn’t the custody officer realise he was in jeopardy? Why didn’t they check on him?

BACCHUS
We start again tomorrow?

BAIRD sits in front of GENTLY and BACCHUS. He is composed. Focused.

GENTLY
You put Simon Thomas in the cell and that was the last time you saw him?
BAIRD
Aye. That’s correct.

BACCHUS
Do you remember who was on duty in the custody suite that night?

BAIRD
No.

GENTLY
I’m right in thinking that you all knew who Simon Thomas was?

BAIRD

GENTLY
You had history with him?

BAIRD
Aye. I guess...

GENTLY
So did Michael Ashton?

BAIRD
Aye.

GENTLY
He doesn’t mention him in his pocket book.

BAIRD
Doesn’t he?

GENTLY
Constable Stockdale seems to remember going seventeen times. Ashton doesn’t mention it at all. Was he bent?

BAIRD
What?

GENTLY
Why all the visits?

Baird is silent.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
You don’t know? You don’t remember? Stockdale called it “Ash’s idea”? Did you shake people down? Collect money? Sell drugs?
Baird looks Gently dead in the eye:

BAIRD
That’s what you think?

GENTLY
There was history between them. Ashton didn’t like Simon Thomas. No one liked him. No one cared about him. Ashton would come down at the end of his shift and knock him around - try to get him to leave...to move on. That’s why you think Simon Thomas attacked Ashton. He had a chance to get even during the riot.

Baird considers what Gently has said and shakes his head in dismay at how wrong he is.

BAIRD
Ash’s idea was to leave food. Aye, at the end of our shift. A blanket when it was cold. He thought being a policemen was some sort of social work. I didn’t agree with him. It encouraged them being deadbeats and it was against the rules - we were meant to move them on not make them comfortable. If the Chief had found out we would have been disciplined. That’s why we didn’t put it in our pocket books.

GENTLY
(incredulous))
You gave food to Simon Thomas...

BAIRD
That’s why it’s so hard to get your head around it, isn’t it? Ash was good to him. He had history...but not like you think.

Gently is wrong footed. He’s not sure where to take the interview. Silence. Bacchus takes over for him:

BACCHUS
Where was Simon Thomas when you arrested him?
BAIRD
He were sitting beneath a run of stairs. Quiet, like. Looked a bit dazed to be honest.

BACCHUS
Inside one of the houses?

BAIRD
Aye.

BACCHUS
Why did you go in the house?

BAIRD
To try and disperse the protestors.

EXT. A STREET. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 1 1645(FLASHBACK)

The day of the disturbance.

BAIRD (O.S.)
A wee lad I know from the street...

ROBBIE is running from the advancing group of Police Constables.

BAIRD (O.S.) (CONT’D)
A wee imp, he falls, cuts his face, skins his knees and elbows...

BAIRD watches him slip and fall face first onto the rubble skinning his knees and elbows.

BAIRD (O.S.) (CONT’D)
I help him up and try to warn him off being there...

BAIRD reaches down and helps him to his feet.

ROBBIE turns and runs into the building. Baird reacts with concern for the boy’s well-being.

BAIRD (CONT’D)
Robbie! No! It’s not safe....

BAIRD follows Robbie. He walks forward to the entrance of the ruined building -

BAIRD (CONT’D)
Robbie! Come out of there!

He hesitates for a moment before following Robbie into -
BAIRD (O.S.) (CONT’D)
I was worried for him. Didn’t want him being hurt so I went after him...

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 3 1031 85

BAIRD emphasizes the point to GENTLY and BACCHUS:

BAIRD
That was the thing you see. Anyone in them buildings when they were knocking ‘em down wouldn’t survive would they?

A beat before he continues:

BAIRD (CONT’D)
And as I go in I see someone trying to get away...I think it’s Robbie, but maybe it’s not...

INT. A RUINED BUILDING. RYE HILL. - DAY 1 1645 (FLASHBACK) 86

IN ANOTHER ROOM
Shafts of light cut across the darkness of the room from the damaged roof. He sees A FIGURE disappear into the darkness further into the ruined building. He thinks about following but decides against it. He turns to leave and finds -

BAIRD (O.S.)
I didn’t want to follow them on my own - I turned around to leave and I saw him...

BAIRD sees ASHTON collapsed on the ground bleeding from a head wound.

BAIRD (O.S.) (CONT’D)
I called for help.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 3 1032 87

BAIRD smiles tightly at the perversity of the universe.

BAIRD
Robbie, the wee imp, led me to him. I didn’t see Mike go in. Nobody did. I wouldn’t have known otherwise. Robbie saved Mike’s life...He called me a “Knacker” and saved his life.
Baird shakes his head at the impossible perversity of it all:

BAIRD (CONT’D)
That’s the world.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM – DAY 3 1055

GENTLY and BACCHUS are alone. Gently is thinking about what Baird has said. Bacchus is looking at a sheet of paper. He sets it in front of Gently.

BACCHUS
Duty Roster.

GENTLY
Who was on duty?

Gently looks at the sheet of paper.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
I want to speak to her now.

INT. SECTION HOUSE. ENTRY HALL – DAY 3 1100

DAWSON answers the ringing pay phone.

DAWSON
Section House.

There’s a pause.

DAWSON (CONT’D)
I’ll let her know.

INT. SECTION HOUSE. STAIRCASE TO ENTRY HALL – DAY 3 1105

RACHEL starts down the stairs. The MALE CONSTABLES stop and watch her - lining the corridors and the staircase.

RACHEL holds her head up high as she comes down. She says nothing. She meets the gaze of SIDWELL and then STOCKDALE.

She turns on the landing to go down the last set of stairs and sees DAWSON standing by the PAY PHONE, BULLETIN BOARD and DUTY ROSTER he nods a greeting to her from the base of the staircase.

She arrives at the BULLETIN BOARD, where there are notices for the Police Benevolent Fund and St. Cuthbert’s Police Convalescent Hospital, and SIGNS OUT in the LOG BOOK.
She starts to leave as BAIRD enters. They look at each other. She goes leaving Dawson’s and Baird’s faces full of concern.

**INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 3 1115**

GENTLY and BACCHUS are still waiting. Bacchus checks his watch.

GENTLY
Get her in.

**EXT. SECTION HOUSE. NEXT TO THE POLICE STATION - DAY 3 1120**

BACCHUS moves toward the front door.

**INT. SECTION HOUSE. NEXT TO THE POLICE STATION - DAY 3 1120**

BACCHUS comes into the entry area. He glances at the pay telephone and the DUTY ROSTER on the bulletin board; the Log book. DAWSON comes down the stairs to greet him.

BACCHUS
I’m looking for WPC Coles.

DAWSON
She’s not here.

Bacchus suspects he’s being fobbed off:

BACCHUS
Why don’t I go up and have a look?

DAWSON
Because I can’t allow ye.

Dawson points at a sign further up the stairs:

“No men beyond this point”

He’s a stone wall.

DAWSON (CONT’D)
Rules.

BACCHUS
Where would we be without them?
Bacchus draws himself very close to Dawson and says with a threatening hush:

    BACCHUS (CONT’D)
    Are you obstructing me in the execution of my duty?

Dawson’s eyes narrow. He glares at him for a moment before -

    DAWSON
    She’s not here.

    BACCHUS
    Where is she?

    DAWSON
    She resigned.

BACCHUS is stunned.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE -
DAY 3 1330

CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT LEWINGTON stands in his office with GENTLY and BACCHUS.

    GENTLY
    Can you tell us why she resigned?

    LEWINGTON
    I think she had the reputation of the police in mind.

    GENTLY
    We’d like to speak to her.

    LEWINGTON
    I don’t believe that the Assistant Chief Constable and I, when we asked ye to tackle this, envisaged this sort of...

Lewington searches for the word:

    GENTLY
    Diligence?

    LEWINGTON
    Persecution. ‘Short rede is good rede’. We were looking for this to be a simple and speedy. It was a tragic death but it’s not as though Simon Thomas will be a loss to humanity.
There’s a knock at the door. ARCHIE DAWSON enters. Archie nods to Lewington.

DAWSON
Sir.

LEWINGTON
As it turns out, ye seem to have uncovered an unacceptable level of neglect on our part which we will duly acknowledge and take steps to remedy. I want to thank you for the work you’ve done in bringing the failure of Woman Police Constable Coles to our attention.

GENTLY
WPC Coles?

LEWINGTON
The prisoners were her responsibility. She failed to check the cells hourly as instructed. I’m hoping we can keep this an internal matter. We felt that we might let her resign, with immediate effect, and see the end of it.

DAWSON
She was a good girl. It was a careless mistake.

A beat.

LEWINGTON
What you’ve done will highlight some of the ways we can make our training more effective.

Gently looks at Bacchus. They share a look of dismay. Lewington opens the door to his office to let them out. He looks at them - hoping the meeting is over. Gently and Bacchus don’t move.

LEWINGTON (CONT’D)
I think we’re done. You’ve got your scalp.

EXT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION - DAY 3 1440

BACCHUS and GENTLY come out of the station. Bacchus isn’t satisfied.
BACCHUS
She’s not careless. He said Rachel was careless. She didn’t check on Simon Thomas because she was careless. She’s compulsively organised.

GENTLY
She’s on the duty roster.

BACCHUS
It doesn’t make sense.

GENTLY
She knew we were investigating what happened that night. She never said she was on duty...

BACCHUS
Is she a liar?

GENTLY
Apparently.

BACCHUS
Could you tell? Could you tell she was a liar?

GENTLY
The women I know don’t lie.

BACCHUS
The women I know lie all the time. And I couldn’t tell...

Bacchus shakes his head and reaches a conclusion.

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
No. She’s not careless and she’s not a liar...

Gently regards him carefully waiting for Bacchus to decide what to do -

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
I need to get an address.

On Gently watching Bacchus go.

EXT. A HIGH RISE TOWER BLOCK. NEWCASTLE - DAY 3 1505

GENTLY and BACCHUS are standing by the car. They see RACHEL approaching carrying a basket of shopping.
GENTLY moves toward her. She seems bewildered but not concerned by their presence:

BACCHUS
WPC Coles?

RACHEL
Not anymore.

She smiles thinly. Bravado intact.

BACCHUS
Could we have a word?

RACHEL
I don’t have anything to say.

She keeps moving. Gently watches her for a moment and then decides:

GENTLY
I’m arresting you in connection with the death of Simon Thomas...

Rachel’s bravado is gone. The blood drains from her face. Bacchus didn’t know this was coming – he’s surprised:

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHARGE ROOM - DAY 3 1555

GENTLY leads RACHEL into the police station to the Station Sergeant’s desk. DAWSON sees them. He doesn’t know what to think. GENTLY looks DAWSON in the eye and says:

GENTLY

DAWSON looks at RACHEL and can’t hide the guilt he feels.

DAWSON
Detective Chief Inspector...

GENTLY
Please do it, Sergeant. I’d like to interview as soon as possible.

RACHEL stares at Dawson trying to understand how he could have done this to her.
RACHEL is sitting at the table. She’s anxious. Bacchus has his pocket book to write notes.

GENTLY
Did you try to comfort Simon Thomas after he was put in the cells?

RACHEL
No. Sergeant thought he was dangerous. We put him in an isolation cell and just left him to pass it out of his system.

GENTLY
Were there any indications that he was unwell?

RACHEL
Besides the fact he was kickin’ and screamin’ and acting like a mad thing?

GENTLY
When did he stop screaming?

RACHEL
I don’t know.

GENTLY
You must have a general idea. Ten at night? Two in the morning?

Bacchus looks at her closely - reads her unease.

BACCHUS
You did check on him hourly?

Rachel hesitates. She wrestles with what to do.

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
Sergeant Dawson says you did. He says you checked him hourly. Did you?

GENTLY
Answer the question!

Rachel stays quiet.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
The coward’s way out...hiding behind silence...I didn’t think that’s who you were.
Rachel is struggling with what to do. Gently explodes:

**GENTLY (CONT’D)**
Did you check him!!!

**RACHEL**
No.

**BACCHUS**
Why not?

**RACHEL**
I wasn’t there.
I wasn’t on duty.

She looks to Gently who regards her with coolly.

**GENTLY**
Are you a liar?

Rachel gasps a little as she is taken aback by the bluntness of the question.

**RACHEL**
No!

**GENTLY**
I have a duty roster which indicates you were on duty in the Custody suite on the night Simon Thomas died.

**RACHEL**
That’s not true.

**GENTLY**
I have it here. In Black and White.

**RACHEL**
It’s still not true. I was not on duty.

**GENTLY**
Why does the duty roster say you were?

**RACHEL**
I don’t know. I wasn’t there.

**GENTLY**
Where were you?

**RACHEL**
In the Section House. Because I wasn’t on duty...
BACCHUS
Did anyone see you there?

RACHEL
I was with another Constable.

BACCHUS
Sleeping with ‘em?

RACHEL
Consoling him. Our friend was in critical condition in hospital.

BACCHUS
Who were you with?

Rachel considers whether she should answer. She says nothing.

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
Is this another lie?

RACHEL
I’ve not lied. I’d prefer not to say.

GENTLY
You don’t have a choice, Constable.

RACHEL
I have a choice. A Hobson’s choice. I was not on duty. I won’t hurt anyone else the way they have hurt me. I wanted to be a police officer so badly...

GENTLY
You don’t deserve to be a Police Officer.

RACHEL
Aye. That’s what they said to me. Women shouldn’t be working...should be at home...only fair that a man should have the job. I had to resign or they would say it was my fault that no one checked on that poor, terrified man...Resign or be blamed. That, Chief Inspector, is when you don’t have a choice. They wanted me to prove I deserved to be a police officer - just like you...These men, these lying men, have taken my dream away from me.
GENTLY
A man died in custody. He has no more dreams...

RACHEL
And if I had been on duty I would have done my best to prevent it. I was not. All you have is my word.

GENTLY
It’s not enough.

RACHEL
It should be. I swore an oath.

GENTLY
It won’t be.

RACHEL
Ask yourself what it means to swear it, Detective Chief Inspector. It obviously means more to me than it does to you. I gave my word, “to serve without favour or affection...”

Resignation written on her face, Rachel continues:

RACHEL (CONT’D)
Then ask them. Ask them what the truth is, as I’ve got no proof and you won’t believe me.

INT. POLICE HQ. GENTLY’S AND BACCHUS’ OFFICE - DAY 3 1730

BACCHUS is pacing as he flips through ASHTON’S NOTEBOOK, agitated and frustrated. Suddenly he throws the notebook across the room, getting GENTLY’s attention.

BACCHUS
Are you always bloody right!?

GENTLY looks at him blankly for a moment before he says:

GENTLY
Yes.

GENTLY studies the newspaper photographs of SIMON THOMAS being arrested.

BACCHUS takes a deep breath.
BACCHUS
Who was Hobson?

GENTLY
Who?
TAYLOR enters. He sets some papers down on BACCHUS’ desk.

BACCHUS
“Hobson’s choice.” Who was Hobson?

Gently and Bacchus share a look before:

TAYLOR
Ran a stable in Cambridge. You rode the horse you were given.

Taylor explains the documents to Bacchus:

TAYLOR (CONT’D)
From Personnel. Termination and separation, pension. You need to go through them and return them as soon as possible.

GENTLY watches without comment. Taylor hands a report to GENTLY.

TAYLOR (CONT’D)
Just came over from Dr. Anderton.

Gently opens the envelope:

GENTLY
Why do they set her up for dereliction of duty and neglect?

BACCHUS
That’s what they think they’re guilty of...

Something in Anderton’s report gets Gently attention:

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
What is it?

GENTLY
According to Dawson he is out of his mind on drugs. “Disoriented. Hallucinating. Violent”. Baird says when he arrested him he was sitting quietly. Anderton says that liver failure could be gradual after the trauma... 6 to 12 hours is possible.
Gently arrives at a new possibility:

GENTLY (CONT’D)
He became disoriented and agitated as the damage to his liver took its toll. The injury didn’t have to happen in the cell.

He looks at Bacchus.

INT. SECTION HOUSE. ENTRY HALL - DAY 3 1755

GENTLY and BACCHUS come into the Section House. They pass the pay phone and the bulletin board. They look around. STOCKDALE and SIDWELL come out of the DINING ROOM.

STOCKDALE
Can I help you?

GENTLY
I’d like to speak to Constable Baird.

STOCKDALE shrugs.

STOCKDALE
I haven’t seen him.

He looks to the bulletin board. BACCHUS follows his eyeline to THE DUTY ROSTER pinned on the board. STOCKDALE checks the Roster.

STOCKDALE (CONT’D)
He’s not on duty. I’ll check in his room.

STOCKDALE starts up the stairs calling out:

STOCKDALE (O.S.) (CONT’D)
Bairdo!?

BUT BACCHUS’ eyes are on the DUTY ROSTER. He moves to it and begins to dig through the pages looking for the Duty Roster on the day that Simon Thomas died in his cell.

We can tell from the way he compares the sheets there is a gap in the days.

BACCHUS
There’s a gap...

SIDWELL
Sometimes the sheets fall down... or get lost...
GENTLY looks up and sees STOCKDALE leading BAIRD down the stairs. BAIRD is cold eyed.

BAIRD
What do you want?

101 INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 3 1825
BAIRD sits. The table divides him from Gently and Bacchus. GENTLY describes what he thinks happened, punctuated by flash images of the events we’ve seen:

GENTLY
You saw your friend on the ground bleeding from a head wound and you were angry. You wanted to make sure someone paid.

102 EXT./INT. A RUINED BUILDING. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 1 1708 (FLASHBACK)
BAIRD truncheon at the ready going back in the building.

GENTLY (O.S.)
You went back in looking for someone to blame and you found Simon Thomas hiding.

103 INT./EXT A RUINED BUILDING. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 1 1708 (FLASHBACK)
SIMON THOMAS hiding under the run of stairs. BAIRD drags him out.

104 INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 3 1826

GENTLY
You dragged him out and you beat him. You didn’t hit him in the head or the face - you didn’t want anyone to see the marks as you dragged him out of the building. No - you hit him in the back...

BACCHUS thrusts the photograph of the bruises on SIMON THOMAS’ back above his liver.

BACCHUS
Your shift, “your brothers” joined you in exacting your revenge.
THE DOORS to the POLICE PADDY WAGON open. SIMON THOMAS’ FACE fills with terror.

GENTLY (O.S.)
You didn’t beat him in the cells.
You did it at the scene - no one would notice. No one would ever find out.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 3 1826106

SIMON THOMAS’ FACE is replaced by - BAIRD’S FACE as he denies the accusations:

BAIRD
I never hit him. Chris and Neil...they never hit him...

GENTLY erupts.

GENTLY
Who hit him? Tell the truth, son.
Have enough self-respect to tell the truth!

BAIRD
That is the truth.

GENTLY
Who were the other prisoners?

Baird shakes his head.

BAIRD
I don’t know. I don’t remember.

GENTLY
You don’t remember? You were trying to pay him back for Ashton. No one else was going to know.

THERE’S A KNOCK ON THE DOOR and before Gently can answer the door opens. CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT LEWININGTON enters. Gently snaps at him:

GENTLY (CONT’D)
We’re in the middle of an interview.

LEWININGTON
Gentlemen.
Gently tries desperately to control his anger. His voice low, quiet, restrained:

**GENTLY**

We...are...in an interview.

**LEWINGTON**

Constable Ashton has died.

Baird visibly reacts to the news. He fights back tears.

**LEWINGTON (CONT’D)**

I’m sorry, David...We’re all sorry.

Lewington looks to Gently and Bacchus and gestures for them to leave with him.

**LEWINGTON (CONT’D)**

Detective Chief Inspector Gently? Can I speak to you please?

---

**INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT’S OFF.**

Gently and Bacchus follow Lewington into the room as Lewington tells them:

**LEWINGTON**

Let’s draw a line under this, Detective Chief Inspector...

**GENTLY**

We need to finish the interview so that we can complete our report.

**LEWINGTON**

You don’t have enough to pursue this matter further, do you? I’ve spoken to the ACC. He agrees with me.

As they speak Bacchus’ eye alights on the newspaper on Lewington’s desk –

**A NEWCASTLE EVENING TRIBUNE HEADLINE:**

“Mentally ill Vagrant linked to Attack on Constable”

**GENTLY**

You don’t know what we have.

Bacchus reaches out and picks up the newspaper as Lewington forcefully tells Gently:
LEWINGTON
We think it wise if your investigation is superceded by a full investigation into the death of Constable Ashton.

BACCHUS hands the newspaper to Gently:

LEWINGTON (CONT’D)
We don’t want to muddy things. I’m sure you understand.

GENTLY looks at the headline and asks Lewington:

GENTLY
What is this?

LEWINGTON
A conclusion.

GENTLY
There’s no evidence that Simon Thomas had anything to do with Constable...

Lewington puts his hands up.

LEWINGTON
Let me stop you there. There is evidence. We have a statement from a member of the public who saw Simon Thomas assault Constable Ashton.

GENTLY
Who?

Lewington pushes a hand written statement across his desk to Gently.

LEWINGTON
A local woman. Irene Seddon.

GENTLY looks at the statement. Lewington looks at Gently pointedly:

LEWINGTON (CONT’D)
Go home. You’ve done enough.

EXT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION - DAY 3 1910

GENTLY and BACCHUS about to get into his car. BACCHUS looks at GENTLY and the thoughts flooding across his brain.
BACCHUS
They didn’t really want a robust investigation, did they?

GENTLY
No. If they did I don’t imagine they would have chosen Detectives who were recovering from serious injuries. Do you?

Gently offers a grim smile at Bacchus.

RACHEL comes out of the police station. DAVID BAIRD is standing outside waiting for her. They look at each other.

He reaches out to her. She moves away before he can touch her. BAIRD looks bereft as she walks away.

BACCHUS
We haven’t “done enough”, have we?

GENTLY and BACCHUS share a look. That they have a common cause is in no doubt.

EXT. THE SEDDON’S FLAT. RYE HILL NEWCASTLE – NIGHT 3 2000

GENTLY and BACCHUS arrive at the SEDDON’S flat next to the church. BACCHUS knocks on the door.

IRENE answers the door a crack and checks to see who it is. BACCHUS presses the door open and they see that IRENE’S face is bruised as though she’s been punched.

GENTLY
Mrs. Seddon? We need to ask you a few questions about the events...

She looks at Gently as though he’s mad and stops him dead saying:

IRENE
He’ll hurt my children...

SHE CLOSES the door.
A SMALL STONE hits the wall by the front door. GENTLY turns and sees ROBBIE across the street. Once their eyes connect, ROBBIE is on the move. Gently follows. Bacchus goes with him.

EXT. THE OLD CHURCH. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - NIGHT 3 2005

ROBBIE passes the Old Church. He looks back to make sure that Gently and Bacchus are following. He crosses the road and heads for the street and ruined buildings where the demolition is taking place.

EXT. A STREET. RUINED BUILDINGS. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - NIGHT 3 2010

GENTLY and BACCHUS wander through the rubble looking for Robbie. They look around the darkness of the ruined slum and can’t see Robbie.

GENTLY
Robbie!

GENTLY’S VOICE drifts into the night air.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
Robbie!

They pass FLOWERS and a NOTE in a child’s handwriting: RIP “Crazy Man”.

BACCHUS
Robbie!

GENTLY is hit in the back by a STONE. He turns and sees –

A FIGURE at the doorway of the ruined building. THE FIGURE goes inside. GENTLY follows instinctively going into the ruined building. BACCHUS hesitates - he begins to tremble as he struggles against his fear.

INT. A RUINED BUILDING. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - NIGHT 3 2012

GENTLY continues to follow THE FIGURE as it moves through the labyrinth of corridors and broken walls. GENTLY is having trouble keeping up.

GENTLY
Robbie!

But the figure keeps moving. GENTLY moves deeper and deeper into the ruined building of the slums.
BACCHUS is overwhelmed by his fear. He tries to will himself to go forward but he can’t.

INT. A RUINED BUILDING. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - NIGHT 3 2016

GENTLY climbs a section of stairs that looks like it might collapse at any moment. When he gets to the top, he sees THE FIGURE up ahead in the shadows of a section of the building whose roof has collapsed. GENTLY moves toward the figure slowly – there’s something not right. The figure looks to big to be a boy.

GENTLY
Robbie??

GENTLY reaches out to touch “Robbie” when THE FIGURE turns around and we discover it is –

INT. A RUINED BUILDING. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - NIGHT 3 2016

BACCHUS turns and finds ROBBIE and his brother CHARLIE.

ROBBIE
We couldn’t speak to ye at our house. If he finds out he’ll hurt mum...Charlie and me saw it...

BACCHUS suddenly realises that GENTLY has followed HANRATTY into the house.

INT. A RUINED BUILDING. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - NIGHT 3 2016

THE FIGURE TURNS around GENTLY discovers RONNY HANRATTY. Hanratty is calm as can be.

RONNY
What’d the little shite, tell you?
What’d he talk to you about?

GENTLY
Poetry.

Hanratty nods.

RONNY
You expect me to believe that? You think you’re funny?
HANRATTY has a lump of wood in his hand which he’s holding like a club. He moves around Gently shutting off any route of escape. Gently verbally prods him.

GENTLY
You attacked Ashton?

RONNY
They say they are making this a better place...they’re talking about buildings not people and you come along with your badges and your laws...

GENTLY
You lured him into the building during the riot...?

RONNY
...and you wonder why we hate you...

He lashes out at Gently, hitting him with the club and knocking Gently off balance.

GENTLY
What did Simon Thomas do to you?

Gently uses the question to buy time as he looks around for a way to escape. The dust and debris is everywhere.

RONNY
He got in the way. They let that squatter live here but not us...us lot they move on...Ashton brings that kiddie fiddler food and blankets...makes him comfortable, That’s what Ashton did. Pervert was dangerous. We wanted him away!

BACCHUS shouts:

BACCHUS
Put it down!

HANRATTY turns and sees BACCHUS. He feigns to put the club down and then suddenly smashes BACCHUS across the shoulders. He loses his balance, falls forward and off the edge of a part demolished room. BACCHUS dangles in the air holding on desperately:

HANRATTY raises the lump of wood to attack GENTLY. GENTLY throws a handful of dust into HANRATTY’S EYES – blinding him. Then he steps forward and throws a vicious punch to Hanratty’s face.
Pain shoots up through Gently’s weak arm across his body. HANRATTY’S hands go to his face. He staggers backward and his foot and leg disappear through a broken floorboard. HANRATTY is trapped – he tries to pull himself back up.

GENTLY rushes over to BACCHUS and reaches down to grab his arms. He holds on tight preventing Bacchus from falling.

HANRATTY drags himself up to his feet. He picks up the piece of wood with vicious LONG NAILS protruding from it.

GENTLY sees him coming. If GENTLY protects himself he’ll drop BACCHUS. He’s got to make a decision as HANRATTY comes within range and is about to swing the club down hard on his HEAD –

A STONE smashes into the side of HANRATTY’S HEAD. He collapses and falls through a the open beams and flooring crashing into the debris below.

WE SEE who threw THE STONE – ROBBIE. SIRENS can be heard in the distance.

119

INT. A RUINED BUILDING. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE – NIGHT 3 2040

BACCHUS – against a wall – smokes, gathering himself. In the background, GENTLY watches as HANRATTY is taken away on a stretcher in handcuffs. GENTLY approaches BACCHUS.

GENTLY
Are you okay?

BACCHUS
I’m good.

GENTLY
You are.

GENTLY touches BACCHUS’S shoulder and moves off. ROBBIE and CHARLIE are waiting for him. GENTLY smiles at ROBBIE as he draws near.

ROBBIE (O.S.)
He was going to get ‘em... and teach ‘em a lesson...

Robbie’s voice becomes –

120

EXT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION – DAY 4 1005

– Gently’s as GENTLY and BACCHUS walk from his car toward the police station.
GENTLY (O.S.)
They lured him into the building.
Away from anyone else...

INTERNATIONAL. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE - DAY 4 1020

LEWINGTON listens as GENTLY and BACCHUS explain:

GENTLY
He wanted to kill Ashton. He wanted him alone and vulnerable.

EXT. A STREET. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 1 1645 (FLASHBACK)

MICHAEL ASHTON is hit in the middle of his back by a broken brick. He turns and sees his assailant - CHARLIE SEDDON - whose angry epithets are muffled by the scarf he’s wearing.

GENTLY (O.S.)
The boys didn’t know what he intended...they had to do their part or he’d beat them.

CHARLIE SEDDON darts into the part ruined terrace of slum houses. ASHTON gives chase.

INT. RUINED HOUSE. RYE HILL - DAY 1 1646 (FLASHBACK)

CHARLIE SEDDON runs into the ruined house and keeps going. ASHTON follows him into the dark forbidding space. From the darkness a brick is thrown and hits ASHTON in the head. He drops his truncheon and sinks to his knees.

Shafts of light allowed in by the damaged roof cut through the darkness and allow us to see ASHTON’S body as HANRATTY stONES him.

He cries out in pain but the noise of the disturbance, and the sirens and the rumble of the bull dozers drowns it out. ASHTON’S body collapses, prone, on the ground. The bricks and debris continue to rain down.

ROBBIE (O.S.)
Simon didn’t kill no one...he wasn’t like that...he was soft...

SUDDENLY A FIGURE appears from the darkness - SIMON THOMAS. SIMON tries to shield ASHTON’S BODY with his own. Trying to help him - to drag him - to safety.
ROBBIE (O.S.) (CONT’D)
I liked that about him

GENTLY (O.S.)
He tried to shield Ashton with his body...

HANRATTY, calmly walks forward from the darkness, he picks up ASHTON’S TRUNCHEON and smashes SIMON in the back. SIMON crumples.

GENTLY (CONT’D)
Hanratty arrived...

HANRATTY hits him repeatedly in the back with the truncheon as Simon falls face forward into the debris we see what will become the fatal blow. WE HEAR BAIRD’S distant VOICE from outside:

BAIRD (O.S.)
Robbie! Come out of there!

HANRATTY turns and sees ROBBIE watching him from the doorway. HANRATTY drops the truncheon and calmly walks away into the darkness. ROBBIE moves to SIMON. He gets down with his face next to his. WE HEAR BAIRD’S VOICE getting closer:

BAIRD (O.S.) (CONT’D)
Robbie!

ROBBIE
Crazy Man...Crazy Man! Get up!

SIMON pulls himself up to his feet. ROBBIE helps him away as - BAIRD arrives in the ruined house.

GENTLY (O.S.)
Simon Thomas’ liver had ruptured.
He was dying but he didn’t know it.

BAIRD sees the figures of ROBBIE and SIMON moving away into the darkness. He turns and sees ASHTON’S BODY.

EXT. A STREET. RYE HILL. NEWCASTLE – DAY 1 1710 (FLASHBACK)

The doors to the Van open. Simon looks inside. He begins to panic.

GENTLY (O.S.)
When he was arrested he didn’t struggle.

(MORE)
He was growing disoriented... he didn’t know what was happening... it was only when the van doors opened that he became terrified...

SIMON’S POV
RONNY HANRATTY is in the back of the wagon waiting for him. He smiles and the smile is menacing.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE - DAY 4 1021
GENTLY is with LEWINGTON. He sets the report on Lewington’s desk.

LEWINGTON
Can you prove Hanratty struck Simon Thomas?

GENTLY
We have witnesses and physical evidence...

OMITTED

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE - DAY 4 1022
BACCHUS explains to Lewington.

BACCHUS
Hanratty’s fingerprints were found on the murder weapon.

GENTLY
The failure to check on Simon Thomas while he was in the cells contributed to his death.

LEWINGTON
So our conclusion really doesn’t change.
BACCHUS and GENTLY share a look. They know this isn’t either true or just.

EXT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION - DAY 4 1030

GENTLY and BACCHUS come out of the Police Station. They discover DAVID BAIRD waiting by GENTLY’S CAR.

BAIRD
Thank you.

Gently and Bacchus don’t respond.

BAIRD (CONT’D)
He was my friend. You found out who was responsible.

Baird can’t look them in the eye. Gently and Bacchus say nothing. BAIRD hands BACCHUS a folded piece of paper. Bacchus unfolds it. He sees the heading: “Duty Roster”

BAIRD (CONT’D)
The original. Rachel wasn’t on duty. Dawson had a drink with us. More than one. He fell asleep. He thought you would come and go. Not pay any attention. He asked us to protect him. We did. We lied. No one checked on him. We all lied about it — except her. When did I become a villain? I’ll do whatever you want me to do.

GENTLY and BACCHUS look at each other.

BAIRD (CONT’D)
She’s the only one who deserves to wear the uniform.

INT. RYE HILL POLICE STATION. CHARGE ROOM - DAY 4 1055

GENTLY and BACCHUS come into the Charge Room. DAWSON looks at them with contempt. Then CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT LEWINGTON enters. Gently and Lewington move toward Dawson.

LEWINGTON
Sergeant Dawson...?

GENTLY
I’m arresting you on suspicion of being involved in the death of Simon Thomas.
Dawson face falls as his world collapses around him.

INT. GENTLY’S CAR. RYE HILL POLICE STATION - DAY 4

GENTLY and BACCHUS glance at each other.

BACCHUS
The letter I gave you?

Gently waits for the rest -

BACCHUS (CONT’D)
Can I have it back?

Gently nods. There’s no fuss. No celebration. Gently starts the car. As drives there just the glimmer of a smile.

EXT. A HIGH RISE TOWER BLOCK - DAY 5

GENTLY walks up the steps until he arrives at a flat near the top of the building. HE KNOCKS on a door and then turns to look out at the view across NEWCASTLE - astonished. THE DOOR OPENS revealing RACHEL COLES. She looks him up and down.

RACHEL
Lost?

Gently nods.

GENTLY
Do you remember the oath you took?

INT. CATHEDRAL. NEWCASTLE - DAY 5

THE FUNERAL of MICHAEL ASHTON is in progress. STOCKDALE, SIDWELL and BAIRD act as pallbearers for ASHTON’S coffin. LEWINGTON watches on.
EXT. A SMALL CHURCH. NEWCASTLE - DAY 5 1255

ROBBIE, dressed in his best clothes, sits on a wall and watches the COFFIN of SIMON THOMAS carried into the church. GENTLY sits next to him. Robbie nods at the COFFIN:

ROBBIE
Crazy Man.
(a beat)
I gave him his name, you know.

GENTLY
Did you?

ROBBIE
Aye. He liked it.

He thinks and then explains:

ROBBIE (CONT’D)
It weren’t ‘cos he was a nutter.

Gently waits for the explanation:

ROBBIE (CONT’D)
Something would happen or he’d read a poem or somebody’d say somethin’...he’d think about it and he’d shake his head and he’d say: “That’s crazy, man.” Always said it. About everything.

ROBBIE looks at the COFFIN as it disappears into the Church. He shakes his head as Simon Thomas would have and says:

ROBBIE (CONT’D)
That’s crazy, Man.

INT. POLICE HQ. - DAY 5 1300

TAYLOR is working at his DESK when WPC RACHEL COLES enters. She looks around.

TAYLOR
Can I help you?

RACHEL
Hi. I’m new.

INT. A SMALL CHURCH. NEWCASTLE - DAY 5 1330

The very small FUNERAL of SIMON THOMAS is taking place in the side chapel of the church.
A PRIEST and KATHERINE are among a handful of people. ROBBIE SEDDON sits in the back of the chapel. The Priest beckons him forward. ROBBIE walks forward to the small raised pulpit and can barely see out over the top of it.

ROBBIE

"Let me die a young man's death,
not a clean and in between
the sheets holywater death,
not a famous-last-words
peaceful out of breath death."

GENTLY stands watching from the back of the small chapel.

FADE OUT.

-END OF FILM-