

1. EXT. COMMON LAND - BRISTOL NIGHT.

A single street lamp throws a rectangle of light across an area of common land somewhere on the edge of Bristol. In the shadows, a public toilet (derelict and closed) and a bench.

Feet scrunching on the gravel. A man walking slowly, trying to look natural. Not succeeding. In his mid-fifties. Distinguished. He has attempted to dress casually but this is a man who is somehow always formal. He's nervous. His name is EDWARD PALMER.

The flare of a match. PALMER is being followed by a man of about twenty. Jeans and dirty leather jacket. A face that is cherubic and yet at the same time lived-in, far from innocent. This is MARTIN VOSPER. He has lit a cigarette. Now he strolls towards EDWARD.

MARTIN

You looking for something?

PALMER

No.

MARTIN

You sure?

PALMER

Yes. I'm quite sure.

MARTIN

Right...

PALMER'S instincts scream at him to go. He starts to walk. Then stops and turns. In that moment his fate is settled. MARTIN is also walking the other way.

PALMER

Excuse me...

MARTIN stops and turns.

MARTIN

What?

A pause. PALMER doesn't understand the ritual.

PALMER

I... (Pause) I don't know exactly how
to...

MARTIN

It's all right. (A smile) You're not
the only single man who comes
here, you know.

PALMER

(Relieved) No. I suppose not.

MARTIN

It's all right. I know what you want.
Right? (Pause) Thirty for a blow job.
A hundred quid and you get the full
service.

PALMER

What's your name?

MARTIN

Martin. (Pause) You got a car?

CUT TO

2. INT/EXT. PALMER'S CAR/ROADS NIGHT.

PALMER drives MARTIN through the darkness towards a housing estate on the edge of Bristol. MARTIN is friendly, relaxed, smoking...

MARTIN

You don't mind, do you?

PALMER

What?

MARTIN

The cigarette.

PALMER

(Surprised) No...

They drive on in silence for a moment.

MARTIN

You married then?

PALMER

No.

MARTIN

That's what they all say.

PALMER

I'm not married. I was.

MARTIN

(Knowing) Oh. (Pause) It's left here.

CUT TO

3. EXT. HOUSING ESTATE NIGHT.

PALMER'S car pulls up outside an unattractive housing estate. A narrow alleyway runs off the main road. He and MARTIN get out of the car.

MARTIN

It's just down here.

PALMER

This is where you live?

MARTIN

No. It's just somewhere I go.

PALMER hesitates.

MARTIN

It's OK. We all use it.

He goes down the alley. PALMER follows.

CUT TO

ANOTHER ANGLE

A second young man - a drug user about the same age as MARTIN - is walking down the main street and sees the two of them. His name is JACK SEDDON. He half-smiles to himself, knowing what is about to happen.

CUT TO

4. EXT. ALLEYWAY NIGHT.

EDWARD PALMER is getting increasingly nervous. The alleyway is dirty, strewn with litter, completely deserted. A chain fence on one side, the backs of houses on the other.

PALMER

How much further is it?

MARTIN

It's just down here...

PALMER

No, actually.

PALMER stops.

PALMER

This was mistake. I'm sorry...
Martin. I've changed my mind.

MARTIN

A bit late for that now, innit? You're
still going to have to pay me.

PALMER

How much do you want?

MARTIN

How much have you got?

PALMER

I'm sorry...

PALMER has had second thoughts. He turns to leave. Too late. Suddenly MARTIN spins round and grabs him. In seconds, his character has completely transformed.

MARTIN

You dirty old man! You dirty, filthy,
disgusting old man!

PALMER

What...?

MARTIN throws PALMER against the fence. What follows is a nightmare of fast cuts, distorted angles, shadows and light.

MARTIN

How much money you got on you,
then?

PALMER

Wait...

MARTIN

I want your money. I want your
sodding money. And your credit
cards.

PALMER scrambles for his wallet.

PALMER

Here...take it.

MARTIN snatches the wallet and looks in it.

MARTIN

Forty quid! That's not enough, you
old bastard.

He pulls out the credit cards.

MARTIN

I want the pin codes. What are the
pin codes on these?

PALMER

I don't know...

MARTIN

You make me sick, you know that?

MARTIN produces a flick knife. The blade flashes out close to PALMER'S face.

MARTIN

Now you'd better start remembering
the pin numbers. You know? The
pin numbers. And you lie to me, I'm
going to push this in your throat.

PALMER

Put that down!

MARTIN

(Taunting) Oh yeah...?

PALMER

I'm warning you, please...

MARTIN

You're warning me?

MARTIN brings the knife closer.

MARTIN

You old bastard...

And then, with surprising speed and strength, PALMER acts. He knees MARTIN in the stomach. One hand lashes out and catches MARTIN'S hand, enclosing the knife-blade. Then he twists the young man round, forcing the knife down and into his stomach.

MARTIN has stabbed himself. He and PALMER stand in a frozen half-embrace.

MARTIN

(A groan and a sob) Oh...

MARTIN is suddenly a child. He is crying.

MARTIN

You hurt me.

He falls forward onto PALMER. Into his arms.

MARTIN

Help me.

Blood curtains over his lips. He dies in PALMER'S arms. PALMER stands in horror, then separates himself from the body. MARTIN slumps at his feet. PALMER is covered in blood.

A pause.

PALMER reaches down and pulls the knife out of the body. Holds it. His hand is sticky with blood. Then he leans down and picks up the wallet and the credit cards.

He reels away.

CUT TO

CLOSE SHOT

He has left one of his credit cards behind. It's sticky with blood.

CUT TO

5. INT/EXT. CAR/STREET NIGHT.

PALMER drops the knife onto the floor in front of the passenger seat. He scrabbles with the keys. Starts the car. Drives off.

CUT TO

ANOTHER ANGLE

As he goes, a curtain flickers in a window with a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme sticker. A WOMAN'S face looks out.

CUT TO

6. EXT. ALLEYWAY NIGHT.

A figure moves along the alley. MARTIN VOSPER lies on his back. There is blood everywhere. The figure walks up to him. Stops.

It is JACK SEDDON. He reaches down and carefully picks up the forgotten credit card, holding it by the edges. He reads the name. Smiles.

CUT TO

7. EXT. PALMER'S HOUSE NIGHT.

EDWARD PALMER lives alone in a modern, ordinary house. Lots of books. Quiet good taste. You'd think he was a bachelor, but in fact he is divorced...a headmaster, as we will see.

He opens the front door and staggers through...

CUT TO

8. INT. PALMER'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT.

...into the living room. Neat. Pleasant. With a pale coloured carpet. It's only now that he seems to notice that he is still carrying the bloody knife, half-wrapped in a rag.

CUT TO

PALMER'S P.O.V.

He carries the knife over towards a second door. Goes in.

CUT TO

ANOTHER ANGLE

And an impossibility. The second door has led him back to where he started. He has come into the living room a second time through the front door. It's like one of those Echer drawings come to life...but this time there are bloody footprints tracking across the carpet. PALMER is still carrying the knife. This is a total nightmare. An evocation of a mind in turmoil.

PALMER stares in horror.

CUT TO

9. INT. PALMER'S BATHROOM NIGHT.

PALMER has made it to the sink. He drops the knife and the rag into the bath. There is blood on his hands and on his clothes. He turns on the tap and runs water into the sink, begins to wash his hands.

He washes and he washes. But no matter how much water flows, there's always more blood. It's like the double-door effect...a nightmare that won't stop. PALMER cannot wash away the blood. More and more of it appears on his hands.

At last he brings the palms of his hands - and a curtain of water - up to cover his face.

CUT TO

PALMER'S P.O.V.

Slowly he lowers his hands and looks in the mirror. The blood has gone.

CUT TO

10. EXT. PALMER'S BACK GARDEN NIGHT.

FLASHBACK

PALMER, in trousers and vests, bundles a plastic bag full of clothes into the bin. This was about an hour before. Somewhere a dog barks.

CUT TO

11. INT. PALMER'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT.

PALMER sits where he was, frozen, deep in thought. We do not know how long he has been there.

CUT TO

12. INT/EXT. PALMER'S CAR/HOUSING ESTATE DAY.

The following day. PALMER, smartly dressed, is on his way to work. He has purposefully chosen a route that takes him back past the scene of his crime. He slows down, looks out the window.

CUT TO

PALMER'S P.O.V.

The alleyway has become a scene-of-crime. POLICE everywhere. PHOTOGRAPHERS and FORENSICS. And leading the investigation, our first sighting of the two officers who will be the central characters in this series:-

DETECTIVE CHIEF INSPECTOR QUARRY appears as a tough, heavy-set man in creased, ill-fitting clothes. He's West Country, more like a rugby player than a policeman. Tired, seemingly unintelligent eyes. Aged in his forties. He is interviewing a local neighbour, an elderly WOMAN. This is the same WOMAN who glanced out of the window in Scene 5.

SERGEANT McCORKINDALE is taking notes. He's a Londoner: younger, smartly dressed, quietly polite. He is black, cultivated, approachable...in his late twenties. Even QUARRY will frequently defer to him.

As PALMER drives slowly past, QUARRY looks up and for a moment their eyes seem to lock. PALMER is thrown, on the edge of panic. It's as if the policeman has some kind of paranormal power...to home in on him like this. He accelerates forward, the tyres of his car momentarily screaming on the road.

McCORKINDALE glances up, alerted by the sound. QUARRY turns back to the WOMAN and continues interviewing her.

CUT TO

13. INT. BROOKLAND SCHOOL - CORRIDOR DAY.

A modern comprehensive school in St Paul's - a fairly run-down area. A bell is announcing break. Doors bang open and CHILDREN stream out into the corridors.

CUT TO

14. INT. BROOKLAND SCHOOL - PALMER'S STUDY DAY.

PALMER'S office is neat, functional...like his house. A view over the school yard - CHILDREN milling around. The atmosphere is busy as PALMER throws himself into his work. Talking on the telephone and at the same time, writing a schedule.

PALMER

(On telephone) Yes. Tuesday morning at eleven o'clock. I'll look forward to seeing you then, Mrs Anwar.

His secretary comes into the room - young, black, efficient. Her name is CAROL.

CAROL

I've just had the Western Mail, Mr Palmer. They want to know if next Thursday will be all right.

PALMER

What?

CAROL

It's about your appointment. They want a picture of you with some of the boys. I said eleven fifteen would be all right.

PALMER

Yes. That's fine.

PALMER hands her the schedule.

PALMER

I've finished the year five schedule if you can get it typed up.

CAROL is surprised he's done it so quickly.

CAROL

Right.

PALMER

And did you get hold of the Wilsons?
About Gary?

CAROL

They're in the diary.

PALMER

Good.

CAROL takes the schedule and leaves. Suddenly PALMER finds himself alone and in silence. He gets up. Goes over to the window and looks out into the school yard.

CUT TO

15. EXT. BROOKLAND SCHOOL - SCHOOL YARD DAY.

PALMER'S P.O.V.

CHILDREN playing. Playground rituals. Noise. Flashes of colour. But there is one figure in the middle of them who stands still, gazing at the window. It is MARTIN. He slumps to his knees.

MARTIN

Help me.

Blood curtains over his lip. The CHILDREN continue to play around him.

CUT TO

REVERSE ANGLE

On PALMER. At the window. Having to cope with his guilt and his shame.

CUT TO

16. EXT. ST MARY'S HOSPITAL DAY.

ESTABLISHING SHOT

A modern hospital in the centre of Bristol.

CUT TO

17. INT. ST MARY'S - GERIATRIC WARD DAY.

An attractive, slightly severe, over-possessive nurse in her mid twenties is making a bed for an old lady (MRS DAVIES) Her name is JUDITH and as we will later discover, she is EDWARD PALMER'S daughter. Helping her is her best friend, JAN. Also a nurse. Black, cheerful, likes a laugh. A television is on in the ward.

MRS DAVIES is reading a tabloid newspaper and JAN notices a page three headline: SEX SCANDAL ON THE STREET.

JUDITH

So how are you feeling today, Mrs Davies?

MRS DAVIES

I'm all right.

JAN

Who is it this time, then?

MRS DAVIES

What?

JAN

"Sex scandal on the street." Someone been caught doing something they shouldn't? Eh?

MRS DAVIES fumbles to take a look.

JUDITH

Forget it. I don't want to know.

A glance from JAN.

JUDITH

I hate that paper. You know I do. It's all just lies anyway. They make half of it up.

JAN

It's only gossip.

JUDITH

Gossip hurts people. But they never think of that.

The bed is finished.

JUDITH

All right, Mrs Davies. You can get back into bed.

JUDITH walks out of the ward as JAN helps MRS DAVIES into the bed. On the television screen, a news report. QUARRY is being interviewed back at the alleyway.

QUARRY

It is possible that this is a drugs related death but at this time we're keeping all options open. Vosper lived near here on the Branson estate and we're asking anyone who saw or heard anything last night to come forward...

CUT TO

18. INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR DAY.

JAN catches up with JUDITH in the hospital corridor.

JAN

Jude...

She reaches JUDITH.

JAN

Why are you so touchy?

JUDITH

What?

JAN

Just now. The paper. I was only...
talking.

JAN realises she's over-reacted.

JUDITH

Yeah, I'm sorry. It's just that...you
don't know what they do to you.
Newspapers. When they think
they've got something...

She shrugs.

JAN

You make it sound personal.

JUDITH

It is personal. It was a long time
ago. When my mum died. They ran
a story about her But...

JUDITH stops, not wanting to go on.

JAN

What happened?

JUDITH

It was a car accident but that wasn't
the point. (Pause) Forget about it,
Jan. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to bite
your head off.

They continue walking.

CUT TO

18A. INT. HOSPITAL - SECOND CORRIDOR DAY.

JUDITH and JAN - a few moments later.

JUDITH

What are you doing this weekend?

JAN

Sleeping ' til lunch. Then I'm seeing
Dave...

The two of them pass an open window and a sign - PHARMACY. This is where drugs are dispensed. A young, good-looking man in a white coat calls out to them. This is MIKE STOTT - a junior pharmacist with a crush on JUDITH.

MIKE

Judith!

JUDITH

Hi, Mike!

MIKE hesitates. He doesn't want to talk to JUDITH in front of JAN. She gets the message and leaves.

JAN

I'll see you.

MIKE and JUDITH are left alone.

MIKE

I wondered if you were doing anything tonight.

JUDITH

Not tonight, Mike. I'm sorry. I can't.

MIKE

Is this what they call playing hard to get?

JUDITH

It's not that. I've got to go home and see my dad.

MIKE

On a Friday?

JUDITH

He's on his own. He needs me. All right?

MIKE

How about the weekend? We could see film.

JUDITH

(Relenting) All right. Sunday.

MIKE

Yeah?

JUDITH

I said it, Mike. Don't make me change my mind.

MIKE

Great.

JUDITH walks on. MIKE punches the air - "yes!"

CUT TO

19. EXT. SCHOOL GATES DAY.

PALMER drives out of the school. It's the end of the day. CHILDREN and TEACHERS are also on their way home. One of the CHILDREN thumps the back of his car and gives PALMER a thumbs up sign. He's obviously popular.

CUT TO

20. EXT. NEWS STAND DAY.

PALMER parks his car and walks over to a news stand. There's an elderly VENDOR selling papers and magazines.

PALMER

The Evening Star, please.

VENDOR

That's thirty pence, guvnor.

PALMER

Thirty pence...?

PALMER fumbles and hands over the money.

VENDOR

Thirty for a blow job. A hundred quid and you get the full service.

PALMER looks up at the VENDOR in horror. The VENDOR looks back, quite innocent. Of course, PALMER has only imagined it. He snatches the paper and staggers away.

CUT TO

ANOTHER ANGLE

PALMER unfolds the newspaper on the front seat. And there it is on the front page:

YOUTH STABBED IN ALLEY

PALMER stares at the page in horror.

CUT TO

21. EXT. PALMER'S HOUSE/GARAGE DAY.

PALMER drives home. He sees a dustbin cart go by. The sight of it means something to him (it's taking away the evidence). A pause. Perhaps he's in the clear...

He drives into the small garage next to the house, takes the newspaper and his briefcase and gets out of the car.

CUT TO

ANOTHER ANGLE

As PALMER comes out of the garage and moves towards his front door, two more car doors open. A car has been parked in the street, outside the house. The driver and passenger move to intercept him.

DETECTIVE CHIEF INSPECTOR QUARRY and SERGEANT McCORKIN-DALE. There is something almost inevitable about this, their third appearance. They are PALMER'S Nemesis. And they are here...

MCCORKINDALE

Mr Palmer?

PALMER

Yes?

MCCORKINDALE

Edward Palmer.

PALMER

That's right.

MCCORKINDALE

I'm Detective Sergeant McCorkindale. This is Detective Chief Inspector Quarry.

McCORKINDALE shows his ID. QUARRY doesn't. He is hostile, silent.

MCCORKINDALE

We're from Avon CID.

PALMER

(Shocked) Oh yes...?

MCCORKINDALE

We want to have a word.

PALMER

With me?

QUARRY

It won't take a minute, sir. If you don't mind.

CUT TO

22. INT. PALMER'S LIVING ROOM DAY.

PALMER has set the newspaper and briefcase down. He and McCORKIN-DALE sit. QUARRY stands. With an effort, PALMER has regained some of his authority.

PALMER

You know, I'm not used to having
the police in my house.

MCCORKINDALE

We thought you'd prefer to see us
here, sir. Not school.

PALMER

(Flinching) You know who I am.

MCCORKINDALE

Actually, we've met.

PALMER

Have we?

MCCORKINDALE

My sister's boy has just started at
Brookland. His name's Johnson.
Garth Johnson.

PALMER

I... Yes. I think I know him.

MCCORKINDALE

He likes it there. He's doing very
well.

PALMER

I'm glad.

QUARRY

Nice place you've got here, Mr
Palmer. You live alone?

PALMER

Yes. I was married. My wife died a
few years ago.

QUARRY

I'm sorry to hear that.

PALMER

What is this about? Is this some-
thing to do with the school?

QUARRY

The school? I suppose that's a natural assumption, isn't it, McCorkindale.

MCCORKINDALE

Yes, sir.

QUARRY

But it's nothing to do with the school, as a matter of fact, sir. We're here in connection with the murder of a young man, Martin Vosper, who was killed last night on the edge of the Branson Estate.

PALMER

I don't know anything about that.

QUARRY

No? (Pointing) It's on the front page of your paper.

PALMER

I haven't read it yet. (Pause) He wasn't one of my students...

MCCORKINDALE

He was twenty-three.

QUARRY

A drug addict. Heroin. But that wasn't what killed him. Someone stabbed him at around about eleven o'clock last night.

PALMER

But... I didn't teach him. He was never at my school. What makes you think I have any connection with him?

QUARRY glances at McCORKINDALE.

MCCORKINDALE

One of the local residents saw your car last night, sir.

QUARRY
Neighbourhood Watch.

MCCORKINDALE
They took the number.

PALMER
My car?

MCCORKINDALE
Registration N 455 EJO.

QUARRY
Is that your registration, sir?

PALMER
Yes...

QUARRY
So you were there...?

PALMER
No.

MCCORKINDALE
Please think carefully, sir.

PALMER
I don't need to think carefully. I've
told you. I wasn't there.

A pause. QUARRY and McCORKINDALE look politely doubtful.

QUARRY
Then it would seem we're wasting
your time.

PALMER
I wish I could help. But I can't.

MCCORKINDALE
And the fact that your car was seen?
The registration?

A pause. PALMER has no answer to that.

QUARRY
They must have got it wrong.

CUT TO

23. EXT. PALMER'S HOUSE DAY.

PALMER watches as QUARRY and McCORKINDALE drive off.

CUT TO

ANOTHER ANGLE

From across the road, he in turn is being watched. JACK SEDDON has been waiting for quite a while. He smiles and takes out a mobile phone.

CUT TO

24. INT. PALMER'S HALLWAY DAY.

PALMER closes the door and goes back into the house. His telephone (with an answering machine attached) begins to ring. PALMER stares at it. He knows the telephone call means bad news.

CUT TO

25. EXT. JUDITH'S APARTMENT DAY.

JUDITH comes out of her small flat - out of uniform - and gets into her car - a Nissan Micra that's been around. She starts the engine and drives off.

CUT TO

26. INT. PALMER'S GARAGE DAY.

PALMER is sitting in his car, gazing out of the window. Shadows and light are reflected in the glass. He is deep in thought.

CUT TO

27. EXT. COMMON LAND NIGHT.

FLASHBACK

To Scene 1. The flare of a match. VOSPER lights a cigarette.

CUT TO

28. INT. BROOKLANDS SCHOOL - PALMER'S STUDY DAY.

FLASHBACK

To Scene 17. CAROL, the secretary, tells PALMER about his arrangements.

CAROL

They want a picture of you with some of the boys. I said eleven fifteen would be all right.

CUT TO

29. EXT. ALLEYWAY NIGHT.

FLASHBACK

But it's a different sort of photograph we now see. QUARRY and McCORKINDALE are watching while a police PHOTOGRAPHER takes a picture of the dead, bloody body of MARTIN VOSPER. The flashbulb lights up the entire alley.

CUT TO

30. INT. PALMER'S GARAGE EVENING.

PALMER sits, staring into space.

JACK

(Voice over)

The thing of it is, Eddy, you left something behind.

CUT TO

31. INT. PALMER'S LIVING ROOM DAY.

FLASHBACK

A scene we haven't seen. It took place just after JACK SEDDON telephoned PALMER. Now JACK is sitting in the living room, smoking a cigarette.

JACK

I knew what you was doing, the two of you. And I come by, you know, for a bit of a laugh. And there's Martin lying there, like, with a bloody great hole in his gut and - I mean - you've only gone and left your bleeding credit card! Your Barclaycard. Is that how you was going to pay? Is that it? Do it on the credit? Well, you're going to pay now if you want it back. All right? I want a thousand quid. And I want cash...

CUT TO

32. INT. PALMER'S GARAGE DAY.

PALMER turns the ignition on in the car. We think he is going to drive somewhere. But now the CAMERA tracks round to show a hose leading from the exhaust into the car, taped off at the window.

PALMER is committing suicide.

CUT TO

33. EXT. PALMER'S HOUSE DAY.

About ten minutes later. JUDITH PALMER pulls up in her Nissan and gets out. She walks to the front door. As she goes, she half-notices that the garage door is down but that there is the sound of a car engine coming from somewhere.

She reaches the door and opens it with her own key. Looks into the house. It is dark. No sign of anyone.

JUDITH

(Calling) Dad...?

CUT TO

34. INT. PALMER'S GARAGE EVENING.

Fumes fill the car. EDWARD PALMER is semi-conscious.

CUT TO

35. EXT. GARDEN DAY.

FLASHBACK

A six-year-old running through a garden. Everything is white, bleached out by the brilliant sunlight. Almost a vision of heaven as PALMER dies. The girl is JUDITH, twenty years before. She carries a teddy bear which she has bandaged up (early ambitions of becoming a nurse).

She reaches an (unseen) PALMER and holds the teddy bear up for him to see.

YOUNG JUDITH

Daddy...!

CUT TO

36. INT. PALMER'S GARAGE EVENING.

The older JUDITH breaks into the dream, wrenching open the car door and catching PALMER as he tumbles out.

JUDITH

Dad! Jesus Christ, dad! What are you...? Jesus!

CUT TO

37. INT. PALMER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM EVENING.

Later. EDWARD PALMER sits in silence on a sofa. JUDITH is with him. He has told her about the death of MARTIN. The silence stretches on. Then...

PALMER

I didn't know what I was doing, Judith. I swear to God, I have never, ever done anything like it before. (Pause) When your mother was alive, I was aware of what I suppose you might call another side to my nature. She knew it too. I

talked about it with her. Although believe me, I never wanted to talk about it with you. If I thought I was going to lose you, Judith...I don't know what I'd do. All these years, ever since your mother died...the way she did...you've sustained me. Talking to you like this...the last thing I ever wanted to do was to hurt you.

JUDITH

Go on.

PALMER

I... (Pause) You're a nurse. You must hear worse things than this. I suppose these days it's not something to be ashamed about.

It takes PALMER all his strength to put it into words.

PALMER

Throughout my life, for as long as I can remember I have occasionally been attracted, as it were, to young men. Not boys you understand. Never at school. (Pause) And anyway I never did anything about it. It was just something I had to accept. Like an illness. The fact was that I loved your mother and I would never, never have done anything to... (Pause) But then of course there was the accident and I was on my own and the feelings were still there and occasionally I thought... I fantasised, I suppose. (Pause) and then the other night, you see, I was driving home and I knew about the Common. It has a reputation. And before I knew what I was doing, I'd stopped the car and I was walking on my own and all the time I was telling myself that I wasn't going to do anything, that

nothing would happen. And then I met this young man. Martin Vosper. And even then...I don't know how one thing led to another. (Pause) But I promise you, Judith, if it makes it any easier for you, I wasn't going to do anything. I knew I'd made a complete fool of myself. All I wanted to do was to go home and forget about it. But then he took out this knife...

A long pause.

JUDITH

You killed him.

PALMER

I didn't mean to.

JUDITH

Oh God!

PALMER

Judith...

JUDITH

No, dad. Please...

JUDITH turns and leaves the room.

CUT TO

37A. INT. PALMER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN DAY.

PALMER comes into the room. Unsure how JUDITH will be. She's looking out of the window with her back to him, busying herself with small, irrelevant things. She's put the kettle on.

PALMER

Judith...

A pause.

JUDITH

He was trying to rob you. He threatened you.

PALMER

Yes.

JUDITH

And this other man...

PALMER

His name is Jack Seddon. At least, that's the name he gave me. He has my credit card.

JUDITH turns round from the window.

PALMER

I dropped my wallet and the cards. I thought I'd picked them all up but I must have left one. I've checked. I don't have it.

JUDITH

And he wants a thousand pounds.

PALMER

That's what he asked for. Otherwise he'll take it to the police.

JUDITH

You're a bloody fool, dad. How could you get messed up in this?

PALMER

Can you forgive me?

JUDITH

There's nothing to forgive. This wasn't your fault.

She kisses him.

JUDITH

I love you, dad. Always have, always will. And this doesn't change

anything. You've just got to let me help you. Right?

PALMER is a little taken aback. He's not sure that he wants to be helped by JUDITH. But how could he refuse?

PALMER

(Unsure) Right...

And suddenly JUDITH is businesslike.

JUDITH

Why did you take the knife? (Pause)
Martin Vosper's knife.

PALMER

I'd left fingerprints. I didn't know what I was doing. I just thought I'd take it.

JUDITH

Where is it now?

PALMER

Upstairs. On top of the cupboard.

JUDITH

Why didn't you get rid of it?

PALMER

I don't know. I was afraid to. Isn't that what they always find? The murder weapon?

JUDITH

What about your clothes?

PALMER

Shirt, jacket, trousers...I put them out with the rubbish.

He continues before she can state the obvious.

PALMER

The dustmen have already been.

A pause.

PALMER

I didn't want to tell you. That was all that really mattered to me. I didn't want you to know.

JUDITH

(Upset) So I was just going to come home and find you? Out there in the car.

PALMER

(Simply) I'm sorry.

The kettle boils. JUDITH makes two cups of coffee.

JUDITH

Here.

PALMER

Thank you.

JUDITH

So what are you going to do?

PALMER

I don't know. (Pause) I suppose I have to do what I should have done in the first place. I'll go to the police.

JUDITH

You acted in self defence. He pulled a knife on you. You didn't do anything wrong.

JUDITH nods. She's taken control.

JUDITH

I'll come with you.

CUT TO

38. EXT. POLICE STATION EVENING.

EDWARD PALMER and JUDITH - in JUDITH'S car - pull up outside the police station.

JUDITH

Are you OK?

PALMER

Yes. I'm feeling better now. (With
feeling) Thank you, my dear. Thank
you for understanding.

JUDITH

I love you, dad.

PALMER

I love you too. More than anything.

CUT TO

ANOTHER ANGLE

EDWARD PALMER and JUDITH get out of the car. There is a short walk to the entrance of the police station. They walk in silence. Then.

JUDITH

No.

PALMER

What?

JUDITH

No. This is wrong.

PALMER

Judy...

JUDITH looks around. There's a pub a short distance away.

JUDITH

I want a drink.

PALMER hesitates. But JUDITH is completely set. The two of them turn away from the police station and head towards the pub.

CUT TO

ANOTHER ANGLE

At that moment, QUARRY and McCORKINDALE come out of the police station. A few seconds earlier and they would have seen EDWARD PALMER. Now they walk off the other way, talking together.

QUARRY

You know what I fancy? Japanese.
One of those places where the food
goes round on a belt.

MCCORKINDALE

It's too much of a gimmick...

QUARRY

When you're eating on your own,
you need the gimmick...

A tiny glimpse into QUARRY'S private life. But then they've gone...walking into the night.

CUT TO

39. INT. PUBLIC HOUSE EVENING.

JUDITH and EDWARD PALMER are sitting in a quiet corner, close together.

JUDITH

I won't let you do it, dad. It's not fair.

PALMER

But it's right.

JUDITH

You were right not to go to the police. It was your first instinct and you were right.

PALMER

No...

JUDITH

Yes. It was self-defence. You did nothing wrong. But it won't make any difference because if you go to the police it'll get into the papers and you know what they'll do.

PALMER

Not necessarily.

JUDITH

Have you forgotten what happened with mum? Three people died in the crash...three people including her. And what did they turn her into?" "Doped up doctor in M1 horror." Doped up! She'd had two hay fever tablets!

PALMER

It won't be the same.

JUDITH

It'll be worse. A headmaster of a boy's school about to step into a big government job. A homosexual scandal. Rent boys. The local common. Murder. It's a gift!

PALMER

I'll retire...

JUDITH

Run away? That doesn't sound like you.

PALMER

Judith...

JUDITH

Think of Brookland. All your work. You know how much it means to you. Brookland. St Anthony's before that. Even when mum died you never stopped. You've given your whole life to those schools. But if you let this story break, you're just going to be remembered as that old pouff caught with his trousers down on the common.

PALMER winces, offended.

JUDITH

I'm sorry. I'm just don't want to lose you the way I lost mum. I don't want to read about you like that.

PALMER

But what can I do? What can I do?

A long pause. JUDITH thinks.

CUT TO

40. INT/EXT. JUDITH'S CAR/ROAD NIGHT.

EDWARD PALMER and JUDITH sit together in the car.

JUDITH

You pay him the money.

PALMER

A thousand pounds?

JUDITH

When did he say he wanted it?

PALMER

Tomorrow. At noon. But Judy...it won't help paying him. I can't be sure he'll give me back the card and even if he does, he could still threaten to go to the police. It's enough that he saw me there...

JUDITH

Where did you say you'd meet him?

PALMER

At the station.

JUDITH

Give him a hundred pounds. No. Two hundred. Tell him you'll need time to get the rest. Two hundred will do him to start off with.

PALMER

And then?

JUDITH

I don't know. We're just buying time. That's all that matters right now. Somehow we have to get the card back. And after that - then we'll see...

PALMER

Judith, I am so, so sorry I got you involved in this.

JUDITH

I'm glad you did, dad. I really am. I don't care what you were doing out there on the common. I don't want to know about it. You're just the dad who's always been there for me, who took me to school when mum was too ill, who read to me every night, who never ever lost his temper, not in all those years. Nothing's changed.

She kisses him gently on the cheek.

CUT TO

41. EXT. GARDEN DAY.

FLASHBACK

As in Scene 38. The sun bleaching everything out. The little girl - JUDITH AGED SIX - running through the garden with the bandaged bear, shouting.

YOUNG JUDITH

Daddy! Daddy!

CUT TO

42. INT. EDWARD PALMER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM NIGHT.

PALMER was asleep. But his eyes suddenly snap open. He's aware that somebody else is in the room.

PALMER

Who is it...?

A figure, sitting on a chair in the darkness. He recognises DETECTIVE CHIEF INSPECTOR QUARRY.

QUARRY

I'm here in connection with the murder of a young man, Martin Vosper who was killed last night.

PALMER

What are you doing here? What are you doing in my room?

QUARRY

You know we're going to get you eventually, sir. We know you did it and we'll track you down.

QUARRY turns to someone else in the room.

QUARRY

Tell him.

PALMER realises there's someone else in the room and turns...

...to find himself staring at the bloody corpse of VOSPER, sitting next to him in the bed.

VOSPER

You're gonna have to pay.

CUT TO

43. INT. EDWARD PALMER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM NIGHT.

PALMER was asleep. His eyes snap open a second time. He reaches out and turns on the light.

There's no blood. Scenes 44 and 45 were both dreams...one nightmare.

CUT TO

44. EXT. BROOKLAND SCHOOL - YARD DAY.

PALMER poses for a newspaper PHOTOGRAPHER. He is surrounded by smiling CHILDREN. A REPORTER looks on...he's lazy and badly briefed. A typical local reporter.

REPORTER

All right, everyone. Could you try giving the thumbs up. Like - "this is a really great school..."

The CHILDREN all put their thumbs up. PALMER is obviously there under sufferance. The PHOTOGRAPHER takes a few more shots, then nods at the REPORTER.

REPORTER

That's it. Thanks.

The CHILDREN break up the pose.

PALMER

Could you all please go back to your classes quietly, thank you.

The CHILDREN stream off. PALMER is left with the REPORTER. The REPORTER takes out his note-book.

REPORTER

So why Ofsted?

PALMER

I'm sorry?

REPORTER

This new job of yours. Chief Inspector. Special responsibilities for school improvement. Is that right?

PALMER

Deputy Chief Inspector. Yes.

REPORTER

Well isn't it a bit - poacher turned game-keeper?

PALMER

I don't think so.

REPORTER

It's the first time Ofsted has recruited a Deputy Chief from outside.

PALMER

So I believe.

REPORTER

A political hot potato, some might say. You know. "Education, education and education..."

PALMER

I don't see it that way. I'm just glad to be able to make a contribution.

REPORTER

Well - what would you say is the secret of your success?

PALMER

Here at Brookland?

REPORTER

Three years ago it was a failing school. It was on special measures. You come in and now it's got a waiting list that's longer than Eton.

PALMER

(A half-laugh) I can't take sole credit. It was the entire staff. And the children. Now, if you'll excuse me...

PALMER heads off for his car.

CUT TO

45. EXT. RAILWAY STATION DAY.

PALMER pulls up at a station in his car. It's a small, provincial station. Modern. Deserted.

He gets out of the car. Nobody in sight. He walks into the station.

CUT TO

46. EXT. RAILWAY STATION - PLATFORM DAY.

PALMER walks along the platform. No sign of any train or passengers. A sense of desolation. Then JACK SEDDON steps out in front of him. PALMER walks over to him. A pause.

JACK

Eddy.

PALMER

Don't call me that.

JACK

You prefer "Edward S. Palmer"? Expiry date March zero one? That's the name on the card.

PALMER

Where is my card?

JACK

Tell you something strange. I've got a mate, says he's seen the name Edward Palmer on TV. According to this mate of mine, Edward Palmer is a bit of a...you know...a bit of a hero. He's this posh headmaster, isn't he. Quite a star.

PALMER

Please. I'm begging you. Think about what you're doing...

JACK

(Mocking) I am thinking.

PALMER

Give me back the card. I didn't mean to kill your friend. He attacked me. This is all terribly wrong. If you go to the police, they

won't arrest me. They'll arrest you.
For blackmail.

JACK

The hell with you, "Mr Palmer"?
Who said I was going to the police?
I'll go to the papers. You know how
much they'll pay me for what I
know? More than a lousy thousand!
That's for sure.

PALMER

(Calming him) All right. All right.
I'll pay you...

JACK

Yeah. Only since I find out who you
were, the price just went up.

PALMER

What?

JACK

I want the thousand you got now.
And another five thousand a week
from now.

PALMER

I don't have that sort of money.

JACK

Then you can find it. You can
borrow it. Now give me what I came
for.

A pause. PALMER produces some bank notes.

PALMER

I don't have a thousand.

JACK

What?

PALMER

I only have two hundred pounds
with me...

JACK

Two...? What...?

PALMER

It's all I could get. It's all the cash machine would let me take. You should have given me more time.

JACK

Fuck you...

PALMER

Listen. I do have more money in my building society but I have to give them notice. Just a few days. I'll get the rest.

A pause. Then JACK snatches the money.

JACK

All right. This is just the interest, then. All right? This is nothing. I still want six thousand pounds. And I want it on Friday.

PALMER

Where? What time?

JACK

I'll be in touch. "Eddy."

He walks away. PALMER is left alone on the platform.

CUT TO

47. EXT. RAILWAY STATION DAY.

There is a bus stop opposite the station. JACK SEDDON comes out just as a bus appears. He walks over to the stop and waits. The bus pulls up.

CUT TO

ANOTHER ANGLE

A second figure appears and runs for the bus, gets on just as the door closes.

CUT TO

48. INT/EXT. BUS/STREETS DAY.

The figure is JUDITH PALMER, no longer in nurse's uniform. She sits down opposite JACK SEDDON. The CONDUCTOR comes along. JACK flashes a pass at him, then puts it away.

CONDUCTOR

Here - let me see that.

JACK

All right! All right!

JACK takes out his wad of notes and peels off a twenty. He's showing off his wealth.

JACK

(With a leer) Eighty pence, please.

JUDITH watches.

CUT TO

49. EXT. TOWN CENTRE DAY.

JACK SEDDON gets off the bus and walks down the street. A pause. Then JUDITH follows, keeping a distance between them.

CUT TO

50. EXT/INT. AMUSEMENT ARCADE DAY.

JACK has no idea he's being followed. He's now in a seedier, shabby part of town. JUDITH sees him go into an amusement arcade. She hurries forward to see what he's doing.

CUT TO

JUDITH'S P.O.V.

Inside the amusement arcade, JACK is talking to a SKINHEAD in dirty leather jacket, jeans. The two of them are being careful not to be overheard.

JACK gives the SKINHEAD a bundle of twenty pound notes. The SKINHEAD glances around, then hands JACK a small packet.

CUT TO

51. EXT. STREET/JACK'S HOUSE DAY.

JUDITH watches as JACK lets himself into a small, very run-down house on the corner of a road near the Branson Estate. The house has the appearance of a squat.

Hold on JUDITH. A plan is forming in her mind.

CUT TO

52. EXT. BROOKLAND SCHOOL DAY.

EDWARD PALMER drives back into the school.

CUT TO

53. INT. BROOKLAND SCHOOL - CORRIDOR DAY.

PALMER makes his way towards his office. A worried-looking CAROL appears from a doorway, intercepting him.

CAROL

Mr Palmer...?

PALMER

What is it, Carol?

CAROL

There are two men waiting to see you in your office. They're from the police.

REACTION ON PALMER. He knows, of course, who they are.

CUT TO

54. INT. BROOKLAND SCHOOL - PALMER'S STUDY DAY.

PALMER enters the room. QUARRY is standing, looking out of the window. McCORKINDALE is sitting in a chair.

QUARRY

(Turning) Mr Palmer.

PALMER

Mr...Quarry, isn't it?

PALMER moves behind his desk. He needs the authority it offers.

PALMER

The last time we met you said you weren't going to come to the school.

QUARRY

We said you'd prefer it if we didn't.

PALMER

Well...you're right. Why have you come to see me again?

QUARRY

There are just a couple of things we needed to clear up.

MCCORKINDALE

About your statement.

PALMER

I wasn't aware I'd made "a statement". (Pause) You know, this is very inconvenient, Chief Inspector. I do have a very busy day...

QUARRY

You've been out.

MCCORKINDALE

Your secretary was unable to tell us where you were.

PALMER

I was...(Thrown) Actually, it's none of your business. What do you want? Why are you here?

The tiniest of glances from QUARRY. It's McCORKINDALE'S job to deal with the niceties.

MCCORKINDALE

You do understand, sir, that it would help us greatly if we could eliminate you from our investigation.

PALMER

Yes.

MCCORKINDALE

The trouble is, we still have this sighting of your car at the Branson Estate.

PALMER

I told you...

QUARRY

You didn't actually tell us where you were that night.

PALMER

You didn't ask.

QUARRY

I'm asking now.

A pause.

PALMER

I worked late at the school. Then I drove home.

MCCORKINDALE

I don't suppose there's any chance that your route took you past the Branson Estate?

PALMER

It might have. I don't really know.

MCCORKINDALE

But this would have been around eleven o'clock.

PALMER

Yes. Perhaps. Around about then.

MCCORKINDALE

You work long hours.

PALMER

Some days. Yes.

A pause. QUARRY nods at McCORKINDALE.

MCCORKINDALE

There is something else we ought to mention, sir.

PALMER

Yes?

MCCORKINDALE

Well, you see... We thought at first this might be a drug-related incident. Vosper was a known drug user.

PALMER

Was he?

QUARRY

But since them our investigations have revealed that Vosper was supporting his habit by prostituting himself on the local common. The alleyway where he was discovered has been used by other rent-boys for sexual congress.

PALMER

Why are you telling me this? I hope you're not suggesting...

QUARRY

We just thought you'd like to be kept up-to-date.

PALMER

I never met Vosper. I know nothing about him. And I deeply resent your insinuations, Mr Quarry.

QUARRY glances at McCORKINDALE. McCORKINDALE gets up.

QUARRY

I'm sorry to have taken up so much of your time.

The two of them start to leave the office. But as they reach the door...

QUARRY

I understand you were in the army.

PALMER

Yes. I spent eight years in the Royal Marines.

QUARRY

See much of the world?

PALMER

Yes. I was on active service in Malaya.

QUARRY

You must have learned a bit about unarmed combat.

PALMER

It was a long time ago.

QUARRY

We still haven't found the murder weapon.

MCCORKINDALE

We're looking.

QUARRY

Forensic say it could have been an army knife.

QUARRY nods. The two of them leave.

CUT TO

55. INT. PALMER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM DAY.

PALMER is standing on a chair beside the wardrobe. The rag that we saw in Scene 8 is up there, in a bundle. He unfolds it to reveal the knife, the blood now dry. It's a switchblade, in fact. Not an army knife.

PALMER thinks for a minute. Should he try and get rid of it? No. Someone might be watching. He bundles the knife back up again and leaves it where it was.

CUT TO

ANOTHER ANGLE

PALMER climbs down from the cupboard and goes over to the window. He looks out, afraid, sure he's being watched. At the same time we hear static, a whisper of distant voices.

CUT TO

56. EXT. EDWARD PALMER'S HOUSE DAY.

A car is parked outside the house. Two plain clothes POLICEMEN are inside. Watching. Silent. The sound PALMER heard comes from the radio which hisses and buzzes with voices lost in the ether; faint, unintelligible.

CUT TO

57. EXT. THE HOSPITAL DAY.

ESTABLISHING SHOT

The evening of the same day.

CUT TO

58. INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR/PHARMACY DAY.

JUDITH is walking down a corridor, on her own. There's a counter ahead of her - the pharmacy. As she approaches, a door opens and a DOCTOR comes

out. JUDITH quickens her pace and reaches the door before it closes. She slips inside.

CUT TO

59. INT. HOSPITAL - PHARMACY DAY.

As JUDITH comes in, the pharmacist sees her. It is MIKE STOTT. He is concerned.

MIKE

Judith? What are you doing?

JUDITH

I came in to see you.

MIKE

That's great. But you can't come in here! You know that...

JUDITH

Mike! I want to talk to you...

MIKE

Not in here. I'm sorry. But I'll get killed if you're found in here.

JUDITH

I just wanted to see you. That's all. I was just being friendly...

MIKE

I know but...

But then - at the counter.

DOCTOR

(Impatient) Hello? Is there anyone here?

There's a white-coated DOCTOR waiting at the counter. MIKE hesitates torn between JUDITH and the DOCTOR. He's afraid she'll be seen.

MIKE

Give me a minute. All right? Just wait. And don't touch anything!

MIKE knows he shouldn't. But he leaves JUDITH and goes over to the DOCTOR who produces a list.

DOCTOR

We need these sent down to chemo...

JUDITH sees that MIKE is occupied with the list. She moves quickly - ducking into the various shelves of medicine, searching for what she wants. But there are so many bottles, so many different labels. Hurriedly, she looks, aware of the tension, aware that MIKE could return at any time.

And then she sees it. A white carton on a shelf. She takes it and slips it into her pocket, then moves the other white cartons behind it forward to cover the space. As she straightens up...

MIKE

Judith...?

Has MIKE seen her? JUDITH brazens it out.

JUDITH

I was just looking. I didn't touch anything.

MIKE

You want to talk to me, fine. I've got a break in ten minutes. We can have a coffee.

JUDITH

Yeah. OK.

MIKE

I'm sorry, Judith. But you know how it is. There are rules.

JUDITH

OK! I didn't think it was such a big thing!

JUDITH leaves. MIKE watches her go, puzzled...

CUT TO

60. INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR DAY.

JUDITH walks down a second, long corridor towards a set of double doors. She slips the pills she took out of her pocket and examines it. Then a shock...

The double doors open and QUARRY appears, on his own, walking towards her. JUDITH recognises him (from the TV, from newspapers) and she's very afraid. Has he come to speak to her? Does he know something?

He's getting closer and closer. JUDITH doesn't dare break her pace. She tries to act normally. She's certain he's going to stop...he seems somehow all-powerful.

The two of them draw abreast. JUDITH is tense. QUARRY nods amicably and continues on his way. He doesn't even seem to know who she is. JUDITH also continues and passes through the same doors that QUARRY came through.

Only then does QUARRY stop and look back. We can't be sure why. We can't even be sure that he does know her. At this moment, QUARRY seems wiser and more elusive than ever.

CUT TO

61. INT. PALMER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM NIGHT.

EDWARD PALMER and JUDITH sit opposite each other. There are two white boxes on the table in front of them.

PALMER

He was at the hospital?

JUDITH

Yes.

PALMER

You're sure it was him.

JUDITH

I've seen him on TV, dad. It was Quarry.

PALMER

But why at the hospital? Had he come to see you?

JUDITH

I'm not even sure he recognised me. It could have been a coincidence.

PALMER

Some coincidence!

JUDITH

He doesn't know anything!

PALMER

We don't know what he knows. That's the worst of it. I'm even having dreams about him. Working away. Asking questions. Doing whatever it is he does. Closing in...

JUDITH

Dad, that's why we have to do something now. Before it's too late.

A pause.

PALMER

Did you get it?

JUDITH

Yes.

A pause.

JUDITH

We know where he lives. Jack Seddon. We wait until he's asleep and then we go into his house and I inject him. He'll sleep for twelve hours. That'll give us the whole night if we need it. We find your credit card and then we go. Once he realises he hasn't got it, there'll be nothing he can do.

PALMER

What if it isn't there?

JUDITH

What?

PALMER

It might not be there. He might have hidden it somewhere else.

JUDITH

It'll be there, dad. As far as he knows, we don't even know where he lives.

PALMER

He might decide to go to the press anyway. He probably knows Quarry's investigating me. He may decide he doesn't need the card.

JUDITH

What are you saying?

PALMER

I don't know.

JUDITH

You're saying he could be a danger to you even without the card.

PALMER

Yes.

JUDITH

Well, there is another way.

PALMER

What? What other way?

A pause. JUDITH picks up the stolen medicine.

JUDITH

This is Methadose. It's a form of liquid Methadone. They use it to treat heroin addicts.

The second box...

JUDITH

Diazepam. It's what I've been giving one of my patients...Mrs Davies. It depresses the central nervous system. But if you combine them...

PALMER

What...?

JUDITH

You know what.

PALMER

No.

CUT TO

62. EXT. THE GARDEN DAY.

FLASHBACK

JUDITH running through the garden. Six years old. All in white. Laughing.

CUT TO

63. INT. PALMER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM DAY.

CLOSE SHOT ON JUDITH

As before. She explains.

JUDITH

He's a drug addict. I saw him in that arcade. He lives in a horrible, dirty squat. We get people like him in all the time. AIDS. Hepatitis. OD's...

PALMER

You help them.

JUDITH

Sometimes it's too late. Sometimes they're already dead. And nobody cares. Nobody asks any questions. It'll be the same this time.

PALMER

I can't believe you're talking like this. I can't believe we're even considering it.

JUDITH

Why not?

PALMER

Because you're talking about killing him, Judith. You're talking about murder! For God's sake! What would your mother say if she was here?

JUDITH

She'd understand.

PALMER

No. You're a nurse. I'm a teacher. We're not like that...

JUDITH

You've already killed a man, dad! You stabbed him!

PALMER

It was an accident!

JUDITH

You could have disarmed him. You could have...broken his wrist or something. But you didn't. You...

PALMER

Oh no. No, no, no...

JUDITH

I can do it, dad. I see people die every day. What are we talking about? I was going to inject him with five milligrams. Instead, it'll be fifteen. That's the only difference.

PALMER

(Lost) Judith...

JUDITH

I want to do it, dad. For you.

CUT TO

64. EXT. BROOKLAND SCHOOL DAY.

ESTABLISHING SHOT

MRS WILSON
(Voice only)

We just wanted to thank you, Mr Palmer, for everything you done.

CUT TO

65. INT. PALMER'S STUDY DAY.

EDWARD PALMER is meeting two parents. MR & MRS WILSON are very ordinary, slightly in awe of him.

MRS WILSON

Gary going into sixth form. We never would have believed it.

PALMER

It's entirely down to his own hard work. He's a credit to you, Mrs Wilson.

MRS WILSON

Nobody ever gave him a chance before. It's when he come here. I'd never have believed it.

MR WILSON

He's a different lad.

PALMER

He's got a very good brain. He enjoys maths and physics. I hope he'll consider university.

MRS WILSON

That's what he says.

PALMER glances at the clock. The WILSONS take this as a hint to go. They get up.

MRS WILSON

Thank you very much, Mr Palmer.
You're a good man.

PALMER

(Embarrassed) Please...

MRS WILSON

I don't know where that boy would
be now if it wasn't for you.

CUT TO

66. INT. JACK SEDDON'S ROOM DAY.

CLOSE SHOT

On a match burning underneath a silver spoon, dissolving white powder.

CUT TO

WIDER SHOT

JACK SEDDON is injecting heroin, on his own in his squalid, shambolic room, spending the money that he extorted from PALMER. He sucks the drug into a syringe then injects himself.

CUT TO

67. INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR DAY.

JUDITH walks down the corridor, passing the pharmacy. It's a long corridor. Her steps echo out. She is thinking and we hear her thoughts.

JUDITH

(Voice over)

I was going to inject him with five
milligrams. Instead, it'll be fifteen.
That's the only difference.

JUDITH passes the pharmacy. She glances in and she's alarmed.

CUT TO

68. INT. HOSPITAL - PHARMACY DAY.

MIKE is standing by as a HOSPITAL MANAGER takes an inventory of the various boxes and bottles, ticking off the contents of the shelves against a list.

SLOW MOTION. MIKE turns and seems to gaze straight at JUDITH, accusing her.

JUDITH hurries on.

CUT TO

69. INT/EXT. JUDITH'S CAR/JACK'S HOUSE NIGHT.

EDWARD PALMER and JUDITH are sitting in her car outside the house.

PALMER

He's not coming.

JUDITH

He may already be in there.

A pause.

JUDITH

Did you go home tonight?

PALMER

No. I went straight to you. Why?

JUDITH

I just wondered.

PALMER

You think the police might be watching me?

JUDITH

It's possible.

PALMER

Let's go home.

JUDITH

No. (Pause) We're here now. Let's take a look.

The two of them get out of the car. Making sure there's nobody in sight, they cross the road and go over to the front door of the house. JUDITH leans down and looks through the letter box.

PALMER

(Whispered) Judy...

JUDITH

(Whispered) There's a light on.

She straightens up.

JUDITH

(Whispered) This way...

CUT TO

70. EXT. JACK'S HOUSE - SIDE WALL NIGHT.

JUDITH looks through a window that's so filthy she can barely see.

JUDITH

(Whispered) There's someone in
there. I think it's him.

She continues down to a door and tries it. The door is open. She puts a finger to her lips, warning her father. She goes in.

CUT TO

71. INT. JACK'S ROOM DAY.

With PALMER standing, watching her, JUDITH examines the sleeping form of JACK SEDDON. He's clearly out.

JUDITH

It's all right. He's unconscious.

PALMER

What...?

JUDITH

Heroin. Crack. I don't know.

JUDITH has a bag with her. She takes out the two drugs and a syringe. She begins to prepare the injection. PALMER watches.

PALMER

Judith...

JUDITH

Let's not argue about this. Not here.
Not now.

PALMER

They'll know.

JUDITH

Look at him, dad! He's out it! Look
at his arm!

JUDITH lifts the arm, showing the wounds from old punctures.

JUDITH

You think the police are going to
find one more hole among all these?
He's probably dying anyway.
Hepatitis. HIV...

JUDITH has prepared the needle.

JUDITH

I'm doing this for you. I don't mind.
I can live with it.

She moves towards the unconscious JACK SEDDON.

CUT TO

CLOSE SHOT

On JUDITH. She hesitates. But then she's ready.

CUT TO

CLOSE SHOT

On the needle, approaching JACK'S arm. But then a hand closes over
JUDITH'S hand.

PALMER

No.

CUT TO

WIDER ANGLE

PALMER has seized hold of his daughter. He looks her straight in the eyes. Deadly serious.

PALMER

No, Judith. We're leaving. Now.

CUT TO

72. INT. PALMER'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT.

EDWARD PALMER and JUDITH confront each other.

PALMER

I'm sorry. I couldn't let you do it. I know you're only thinking of me. I know it's not in your nature. But it was wrong. I would never have forgiven myself.

A pause.

PALMER

I killed Martin Vosper. I didn't mean to, but I did. But I'm not a killer, Judith. I couldn't rationally, cold-bloodedly take another person's life. Not even someone like Seddon. And nor could you. I know you want to help. I know you believe you're doing the right thing. But...we can't. We're not like that. I can't believe we even went as far as we did.

JUDITH

What are you going to do?

PALMER

I'm going to do what I should have done in the first place. I'm going to go to Quarry.

JUDITH

You're going to tell him?

PALMER

Not tonight. Of course not. Tonight never happened. But the rest of it. He knows anyway, Judith. I'm sure of it. He knows what really happened.

JUDITH

You can't know that.

PALMER

I do.

Pause.

JUDITH

And what about me, dad?

PALMER

What?

JUDITH

Are you going to do this to me again? The story, the lies, the photographers...everyone looking at me like I'm some kind of freak show?

PALMER

(Shocked) But that wasn't why...?

JUDITH

(Tearful) If you go to the police, I'll lose you. They'll take you away from me. And I'll lose everything. I'll just be the pouff's daughter. A laughing stock.

PALMER

No...

JUDITH

(Losing it) It happened before! How can you let it happen again!

A pause. PALMER looks at JUDITH seeing depths he never knew were there. He gets up.

PALMER

I'm sorry, Judith. I'm so sorry about everything. But I have to do what's right.

JUDITH

When will you go?

PALMER

Tomorrow. After school.

JUDITH

Do you want me to come with you?

PALMER

No. I'll go alone.

JUDITH

Right.

JUDITH gets to her feet. She forces a brave smile to her lips. But perhaps there's something rather cold in it too.

JUDITH

Do you mind if I use the bathroom before I go?

PALMER

No. Go ahead.

JUDITH

You do what you think is best, dad.
That's what you've always done.

CUT TO

73. INT. PALMER'S STUDY DAY.

Three thirty. School has finished for the day. PALMER sits at his desk, deep in thought. In the distance, bells ring. The last time he will hear them.

Then - a movement at the door.

CAROL

Mr Palmer...?

QUARRY and McCORKINDALE are behind her.

PALMER

It's all right, Carol. (To QUARRY)
Please - come in.

QUARRY and McCORKINDALE come in.

PALMER

I was actually about to...

QUARRY

(Interrupting) It's all right, sir. We won't take up very much of your time. I just felt I should let you know, it appears we've found the man who killed Martin Vosper.

PALMER

(Shocked) I'm sorry?

QUARRY

This morning we were called to the scene of a particularly brutal murder. A man called Jack Seddon was killed last night. He was living in a squat on the Eastbury Road. Someone poured gasoline over him and set him on fire. He literally burned alive.

PALMER

Oh God...

MCCORKINDALE

It looks almost certain that Seddon's death was drugs-related. He was a known drug-user and we have reason to believe he had a large quantity of crack cocaine on him when he died. We're still investigating.

QUARRY

The point is, as we were going through the house we came upon a switch-bladed knife. We've already had forensic take a look at it and it turns out it was the knife used to kill Vosper.

MCCORKINDALE

We thought you'd like to know.

PALMER

You found the knife.

QUARRY

Vosper was involved in vice. We know that. In the days before he died, Seddon was splashing around a certain amount of money. It looks as if he stabbed Vosper and took his earnings.

MCCORKINDALE

Of course, we still don't know who killed Seddon.

QUARRY

But we know it wasn't you.

A guilty pause.

PALMER

How do you know?

MCCORKINDALE

We had someone outside your house, sir. Just routine...

QUARRY and McCORKINDALE get up.

QUARRY

Can I give you a word of advice, sir?

PALMER

Yes...

QUARRY

The Branson Estate. The Common.
Places like that. If I were you, I'd
steer clear of them in future.

PALMER

Yes...

QUARRY

McCorkindale...

McCORKINDALE turns back to PALMER

MCCORKINDALE

Is it true you're leaving Brookland?

PALMER

(Dazed) Yes...

MCCORKINDALE

That's a shame. Garth thinks a lot
of you.

QUARRY and McCORKINDALE leave. PALMER is left on his own.

CUT TO

74. INT. PALMER'S BEDROOM DAY.

PALMER is standing on a chair (as in Scene 58) searching for the knife that he had hidden on top of the cupboard. He finds the rag that it was wrapped in, but the knife has gone.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO

75. INT. PALMER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM DAY.

FLASHBACK

To Scene 64. JUDITH telling PALMER. Suddenly there seems to be something almost fanatical about her...

JUDITH

I can do it, dad. I see people die
every day.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO

76. INT. HOSPITAL - PHARMACY DAY.

JUDITH slips the stolen bottle of Methadose back into its place on the shelf. She straightens up, smiling to herself. Her face is suffused with a sort of evil radiance.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO

77. INT. PALMER'S BEDROOM DAY.

PALMER holds the empty rag. It feels as if the room is spinning around him. He is piecing it all together.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO

78. INT. JACK'S ROOM NIGHT.

CLOSE SHOT

A match flares in the darkness. It is being held by a truly nightmarish JUDITH.

Beneath her, JACK SEDDON turns - only lightly asleep. She drops the match and flames spring up.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO

79. INT. PALMER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN EVENING.

FLASHBACK

To Scene 40. EDWARD PALMER and JUDITH at the scene of confession.

PALMER

If I thought I was going to lose you,
Judith...I don't know what I'd do.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO

80. INT. PALMER'S GARAGE EVENING.

CLOSE SHOT

PALMER is sitting in his car. But we do not know this. We only see him, gazing straight ahead.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO

81. EXT. THE GARDEN DAY.

The screen is bleached out. The garden is empty. A wind rushes through, stirring the leaves. The bandaged teddy lies on the ground. But the little girl that PALMER loved has gone for ever.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO

82. INT. QUARRY'S OFFICE DAY.

QUARRY is behind his desk in a modern, nondescript office. He is studying a file. Somehow we know that this is the file on VOSPER, SEDDON and PALMER and that he is not satisfied with the result. With an air of finality, QUARRY closes the file.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO

83. INT. PALMER'S GARAGE EVENING.

Now we see that PALMER is back in his car. The (white) fumes fill the interior.

And the question is - has he committed suicide knowing the truth of what JUDITH has done? Or is this a flashback to Scene 37? Has the entire episode, from that point on, been the nightmare/dream of a dying man?

We will never know. PALMER slumps forward. The car engine turns...

END OF EPISODE