

THE THIEF, HIS WIFE AND THE CANOE

EPISODE FOUR

Written by

Chris Lang

PRODUCTION DRAFT 23.02.21
PRODUCTION DRAFT V2 15.03.21
SHOOTING SCRIPT 30.03.21

Story Films,
Berkshire House,
168-173 High Holborn,
London
WC1V 7AA

1 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - ANNE'S CELL - DAWN 1

The thin watery light of dawn starting to peek through a single tiny high up window.

And lying on the thin hard mattress of a police cell, is ANNE. Wide awake, has not slept a wink all night.

That sense, once again, of her profound loneliness.

2 INT. PRISON VAN - DAY 2

JOHN being driven along the coast road from the remand prison he is being held in, to Hartlepool nick.

On him. Alone now and not playing to any gallery, we might glimpse some fear. Some vulnerability.

3 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 1 - DAY 3

ANNE waiting in a room on her own.

And then the door opens, and in walks NICOLA FINNERTY, ANNE's solicitor.

NICOLA
Anne, hello, I'm Nicola.
(extending a hand)

ANNE
(taking her hand, quiet as
a mouse)
Hello, nice to meet you.

NICOLA
Nice to meet you too.

And she sits and starts to get out her files. When -

ANNE
How long will I get?

And NICOLA looks up. To catch sight of the very purest terror in ANNE's eyes.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Do you think? In prison? How long
might I get?

And out.

- 4 SCENE OMITTED 4
- 5 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - HUTCH'S OFFICE - DAY 5
HUTCH walking in to his office, where D.S PHIL BAYLEY and D.S PAUL SAMPSON wait.
- HUTCHINSON
So, very simple. We stick her in
one room, we stick him in another,
and we play 'em off.
- 6 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 1 - DAY 6
And so here we are. A terrified looking ANNE, with FINNERTY and D.S. SAMPSON.
- SAMPSON
('nice')
Bottom line, Anne, the more honest
you are with us, the more
information you can give us, about
what's actually happened here, the
quicker we can get all this sorted.
Okay?
- ANNE
Yes.
- SAMPSON
Good.
- BAYLEY (O.S.)
And so we are interviewing her at
the same time as speaking to you.
- 7 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 2 - DAY 7
JOHN with his brief, MIKE FOWLER, and D.S BAYLEY.
- BAYLEY
Which means the answers you give
us, we will be checking with her,
to see if they tally up, and vice
versa, does that make sense?
- JOHN
Yes.
- BAYLEY
Good.

JOHN

Although do bear in mind Anne does not have a very sophisticated grasp of financial matters.

BAYLEY

Right.

JOHN

Just the one brain cell you see.

BAYLEY

(a beat, then)

Your wife of 34 years.

JOHN

('all fellas together')

Tell me about it.

SAMPSON (O.S.)

Would you like me to repeat the question, Anne?

8 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 1 - DAY 8

ANNE, NICOLA and SAMPSON.

ANNE

(almost inaudible)

No, I heard the question.

On her. Whatever the question is, it is causing her a long pause for thought. Then finally -

ANNE (CONT'D)

When I started the insurance claim, I still believed him to be dead.

SAMPSON nods.

SAMPSON

You took a long time to answer that.

NICOLA

But she did.

SAMPSON

I just wonder why you hesitated?

NICOLA

She's answered the question, can you move on please.

SAMPSON

Just remember this is *your* interview, Anne, your chance to tell your side of things.

On her. Then -

ANNE

He turned up half way through.

JOHN (O.S.)

Not true. I turned up *after* they'd been paid out.

9 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 2 - DAY 9

JOHN, FOWLER, BAYLEY.

BAYLEY

I thought you said you couldn't *remember* when you'd turned up.

JOHN

The specific *month* I said.

BAYLEY

But you *can* specifically remember it was after the claim was settled.

JOHN

Yes.

BAYLEY

Which month was the claim settled then?

JOHN

(smiles)

Ah. Nice try. I don't remember.

BAYLEY

John this isn't the 'yes no' game, your wife has already told us you never had amnesia.

JOHN

She's mistaken.

(a beat, then)

Perhaps *she's* forgotten.

ANNE (O.S.)

Yes, he told me he'd faked the whole thing.

10 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 1 - DAY 10

As before.

SAMPSON
His disappearance?

ANNE
Yes.

SAMPSON
For financial reasons?

ANNE
Yes.

SAMPSON
Did he tell you where he'd been?

ANNE
No. 'Around and about' he said.

SAMPSON
For over a year.

ANNE
Yes.

SAMPSON
Okay. And so why did you not just go straight to the police at that point?

ANNE
He said if we went to the police, we'd have to pay the insurance money back immediately, and then we'd be back where we'd started.

SAMPSON
Facing bankruptcy.

ANNE
Yes.

SAMPSON
So what was his plan at that point?

ANNE
For me to sell all the other houses, and *then* hand himself in, when we were in a position to pay the money back.

BAYLEY (O.S.)
Okay. And how's that plan going?

11 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 2 - DAY 11
As before.

JOHN
Well I'm here aren't I?

BAYLEY
(eyes narrowing)
I'm not with you.

JOHN
Why else do you think I returned?

BAYLEY
I don't know, why did you?

JOHN
To pay back the money.

BAYLEY
Right. And so ... you've made
contact with the insurance
companies have you?

JOHN
Well I *would* have, if you hadn't
arrested me.

BAYLEY
Oh okay. So it's *our* fault. We
spoilt your plan.

JOHN
You and the press.

BAYLEY
Well apologies.

JOHN
Accepted.

BAYLEY
Can I just ask though, if your plan
was to sell all the properties,
with the intention of paying all
the money back when you got
straight, why did you move to
Panama?

He tightens.

JOHN

No comment.

BAYLEY

And buy a flat there?

JOHN

No comment.

BAYLEY

And a plot of land?

JOHN

No comment.

SAMPSON (O.S.)

And why did you just go along with this, Anne...

12 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 1 - DAY 12

ANNE with SAMPSON.

SAMPSON

...why didn't you tell him it was wrong and dishonest.

ANNE

I should have. And I should have told the boys at that point. But he said if I went to the police, he'd tell them I was in it from the start.

SAMPSON

But you were an adult, you could have refused.

ANNE

And I bitterly regret my decision. But he was hard to resist, John was very forceful.

SAMPSON

Why don't you just tell us the truth, Anne, you were in it from the start weren't you.

NICOLA

She's answered your question, can we move on please.

BAYLEY (O.S.)
The life Insurance policies you
took out...

13 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 2 - DAY 13
JOHN and BAYLEY

BAYLEY
...just three months before you
went missing. Is that date
relevant, John?

JOHN
You tell me.

BAYLEY
(*'what??'*)
No, you tell *me*, that's how this
works. Is that date relevant?

JOHN
No.

BAYLEY
So it's pure coincidence is it,
that you took out a life insurance
policy in December 2001, which then
allowed your wife to make a very
large claim, just twelve weeks
later?

JOHN
Yes.

BAYLEY
And is it also a coincidence, that
on a computer hard drive taken from
your house just after your
disappearance, we have since found
a downloaded file titled 'Missing
Persons and Police Investigations'?

On JOHN. Wilts a little, FFS.

JOHN
One of the boys probably downloaded
that.

BAYLEY
It's dated a month *before* you went
missing.

A beat.

JOHN
Fair play that *is* a tricky one.

SAMPSON (O.S.)
Okay, I'm now showing Anne exhibit
AD01...

14 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 1 - DAY 14
ANNE as before.

SAMPSON
...which is a copy of a library
card, registered to Hartlepool
library, in the name of 'John
Jones'. Anne, can you tell me who
you see in the photo?

ANNE
(she looks, then)
It's John.

JOHN (O.S.)
Except this fella has a beard.

15 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 2 - DAY 15
JOHN looking at the same copy of the card.

BAYLEY
Right. I presume you can *grow* a
beard though.

JOHN
Yes.

BAYLEY
Okay. So is that you then, but with
a beard?

JOHN
It may be.

BAYLEY
(wearily, this man)
I'm just asking if you can identify
yourself, John.

JOHN
No comment.

BAYLEY

(a deep sigh of
existential ennui)

Okay, well perhaps you could read
two things out for me then. The
date it was issued, and the
address.

JOHN

(reading off the card)

22nd April 2002. Address, number 3,
The Cliff, Seaton Carew.

BAYLEY

Okay, so just four weeks after you
went missing, a man who looks very
like you - but with a beard -
applies for a library card, and
gives the address as number four
the Cliff, Seaton Carew.

*
*

JOHN

(looks up, frowns)

This man's called John Jones
though.

BAYLEY stops himself punching him. Then -

SAMPSON (O.S.)

Come on, Anne, he was living at
number 4 from day one wasn't he?

16

INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 1 - DAY 16

ANNE with SAMPSON.

ANNE

No.

SAMPSON

And you *knew* from day one.

ANNE

I didn't.

SAMPSON

Were your boys in on it too?

ANNE

(passionate)

No! Absolutely not...

SAMPSON

...because our economic crime unit
are finding all sorts of things.

ANNE

What things?

SAMPSON

Money transfers to Mark and
Anthony, fake property sales to
Mark - basically money laundering,
very serious offences...

ANNE

(sobbing)

...all of that was just an
inheritance tax thing, please, they
never knew anything about *any* of
this, *please*.

SAMPSON

Interesting how upset you're
getting - and let me tell you I do
not want to be bringing your lads
in....

ANNE

Please don't.

SAMPSON

...so help me, because the best way
to head that off, is if you tell us
the whole truth. You were in this
from the start weren't you...

ANNE

No.

SAMPSON

...and you knew John was perfectly
fine when you dialled 999 and said
he was missing. In fact, I'm
surprised the officer attending
didn't see wet footsteps going up
the stairs. Am I right?

And we are on her. Tracking slowly in on her. Her opportunity
to save her boys.

An endless wait. And then -

ANNE

No comment.

And we sense that the only person more baffled by that response than SAMPSON, is ANNE herself.

17 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - A ROOM - NIGHT 17

NICOLA with ANNE in a room in the police station.

ANNE

No. No bail.

NICOLA

(frowns)

You do understand what happens now don't you, Anne. Anyone not released on bail is kept in a prison, on remand, until their trial.

A beat. Close on ANNE. Her shame.

ANNE

Where would I even go?

Eyes remaining down.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I only have one friend. And she won't speak to me now. Obviously none of my family would want me. So where would I even go?

And there is no real answer to that.

18 EXT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - NIGHT 18

ANNE, in cuffs, being led out to a prison van, which is transporting her to a remand prison.

This mousey little doctor's receptionist, who has never even had a parking ticket, being led into a meat wagon.

19 INT. PRISON VAN - NIGHT 19

Each prisoner held in their own little cubicle, within the Prison Transport Van.

OFFICER

In you go.

To the one with the open door. And in she goes, like livestock being ushered into a stall, and then as she sits, the officer removes the cuffs and then shuts the door.

And we stay on her as he then exits. White and sick with fear.

And then the van starts to pull her away to take her to prison.

End of part one

Part two

20

INT. HOTEL SUITE - BASINGSTOKE - NIGHT

20

An unshaven and stressed looking ANTHONY pacing a small hotel suite (bedroom and small sitting area) when there is a gentle knock on the door and he spins.

ANTHONY
(edgy as fuck)
Yes?

MARK (O.S.)
It's me.

And he relaxes a little, and then walks to the door and opens it to reveal MARK.

ANTHONY
Hey.

MARK
Heya.

But ANTHONY walks past him and looks down the corridor.

MARK (CONT'D)
It's all good, no-one's followed me.

ANTHONY
I know you think I'm overreacting but last night there were about fifty of them outside the house. Lou's had to go and stay with her parents.
(walking in, Mark following)

And they walk in to the sitting area.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)
So I just spoke to the police
again.

MARK
And?

ANTHONY
They will want to interview us at
some point. As 'witnesses'
apparently now.

MARK
Yeah well, we do nothing without a
solicitor.

ANTHONY
(dryly)
I'll call 'my lawyer' shall I.

MARK
Uncle Michael's sorting us out with
one.

ANTHONY
How is he?

MARK
(shrugs)
Same as all of us - in pieces?
Grandad Ron can't stop crying
apparently.

And ANTHONY turns to the window to hide *his* tears from his
brother. Stares down to a pissy rainy Basingstoke car park.

ANTHONY
I just can't stop thinking about
the ...literally *hundreds* of times
we went up there, Mark...

21 EXT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - NIGHT

21

The prison van driving through the gates of Low Newton
prison. Over this we hear.

ANTHONY (O.S.)
...to support *her*, to keep *her*
spirits up, whilst we were dying
inside. And you know what it makes
me feel, mate, it makes me really
hate her.

22 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - PROCESSING AREA - NIGHT 22

ANNE being stripped and searched in a cubicle, a prison officer waiting outside with the curtain left open. We will hear all or some of -

OFFICER

...okay please stand in the cubicle
and hand me just the top part of
your clothes.

As each item is passed over, the officer ensures nothing is concealed in them, and also visibly checks over the top half of ANNE's body and hands back items. Over this we hear -

ANTHONY (O.S.)

I mean I'm raging about them *both*,
but at least he only told *one* lie,
an evil horrible one, but it was
just one.

OFFICER

Okay, put those back on now and
then take off your bottom half and
pass those to me, including socks
and shoes, please.

And she starts to take off her trousers, socks, knickers etc. and the process is repeated. Jump to her out of the cubicle.

ANTHONY (O.S.)

She lied to us every day for five
and a half years. Every single day.

Jump to the prison officer standing in front of her.

OFFICER

Open your mouth please..
(she does)
..lift your tongue..
(she does)
...show me your hands.

23 SCENE OMITTED 23

24 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - PROPERTY AREA - NIGHT 24

ANNE, now in grey regulation tracksuits, taking off her wedding ring, and putting it in an envelope for when she is released.

ANTHONY (O.S.)
And then you start thinking well if
she could lie so easily about
that....

25 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - WING - WALKWAY - NIGHT 25

ANNE being walked along a walkway of her wing, to her cell.

ANTHONY (O.S.)
...about our actual *dad* being dead,
what *else* could she have lied
about?

And into her cell.

26 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - ANNE'S CELL - NIGHT 26

And the door slams shut on her

ANTHONY (O.S.)
And then I think, wow, is it *all*
some.... fucked up lie? Our family,
our childhood, our whole life with
them? Did either of them ever even
genuinely *love* us?

On her. Maybe asking herself a similar question.

27 INT. HOTEL ROOM - BASINGSTOKE - NIGHT 27

As we were, MARK and ANTHONY.

ANTHONY

So that's me. Thinking she's an
evil cow. My own mam, that's where
I am, mate.

And we stay on this deeply destructive tableau.

28 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - ANNE'S CELL - NIGHT 28

ANNE, in her single cell, one tiny, barred window, on her
knees, praying.

ANNE (V.O.)

And here I was. Where I'd feared
ending up all my life. Utterly
alone.

And through the window she sees snow. We might even hear a
distant carol.

29 SCENE OMITTED 29

30 INT. ANTHONY'S HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - BASINGSTOKE - DAY 30

And here is ANTHONY, back at home now, and in his sitting
room, reading a prison letter from her. We hear -

ANNE (O.S.)

I wanted to write to you again, to
tell you how profoundly sorry I am
for what I have done...

And then we see him rip it in to pieces and drop it into a
bin. In the bin we might see yesterday's letter torn up.

31 INT. ANNE'S PARENTS HOUSE - NIGHT 31

ANNE's mam and dad, CATHERINE and HENRY, being read the
letter by ANNE's brother, MICHAEL.

ANNE (O.S.)

...I will never be able to explain
my actions, because what I did was
as inexplicable as it was
unforgiveable...

Out on their copious tears and disappointment.

32 INT. MARK'S FLAT - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT 32

MARK sitting on the edge of a sofa, reading a letter.

ANNE (O.S.)

...but what I can say is that I love you so much, I always *have* loved you, and I always *will* love you. Even if you never want to see me again. Which I fully expect to be the case.

MARK letting the letter fall to the floor, and his head going into his hands, as he weeps quietly on his own.

New day

33 EXT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - DAY 33

Rain drumming down on a carpark. And walking across it, too slowly, and getting soaked, are ANNE's very elderly parents, HENRY and CATHERINE. *

They head toward a queue of prison visitors.

34 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY 34

ANNE walking into a prison visiting room, she looks pale and thin, and then she sees them, across the room, her mam and dad, waiting. They then see her. *

And they smile, these lovely, kind, good people, they all smile, even though they all also look kind of broken.

And as she slowly walks over towards them, and then as they one by one stand to hug her, we hear.

ANNE (V.O.)

And now these good, good people, my flesh and blood, who had been so shamed and let down by me, all told me that whatever I'd done, they still *loved* me. That they would *always* love me. And it was this moment that finally gave me the courage to accept what I should have years before. That the only way forward was truth.

35 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 1 - DAY 35

ANNE with SAMPSON and NICOLA FINNERTY

ANNE

I lied.

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I *was* in on it from the very start.

And it's almost like she is saying the words as baldly as possible to punish herself.

SAMPSON

So you knew, before he went out in the canoe, that he intended to fake his own death?

ANNE

Yes I did.

SAMPSON

And when you reported him missing?

ANNE

I knew he was fine. In fact I'd picked him up from North Gare beach about two hours before, and then driven him to Durham station, where he got the train to the lakes and camped by a stream for three weeks. He then came back to Seaton and lived between numbers three and four for the next five years.

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I never *wanted* to do any of it. And I tried constantly to persuade him not to.

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

But I *did* do it, I was in on it from the very beginning. And I'm very, very, sorry.

36 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM 2 - DAY 36

JOHN sitting with BAYLEY. Who has clearly just told him what ANNE has just said.

JOHN sitting in silence, arms crossed, weighing up all his options, and finding none.

JOHN

Okay. Yes. I faked it all.

And it's done.

37 INT. HARTLEPOOL POLICE STATION - ANNE'S CELL - DAY 37

ANNE, in between interviews, sitting in a cell, alone, and then the sound of the door being unlocked, and she looks up to see.....JOHN.

ANNE

(standing)

Oh my God John.

JOHN

(walking in)

They said I could see you for two minutes....

ANNE

...who did....

JOHN

(putting his arms around
her)

...why haven't you replied to my letters?

ANNE

(resisting his advances)

...John, please...

JOHN

(kissing her face and lips
now)

...cos we're all we have now, love,
each other...

ANNE

(trying to pull away)

...John someone could...
('...walk in')

JOHN
 (his hands all over her
 now)
 ...so we have to stick
 together.....

JAILOR
 ...okay that's enough, fella...

And the officer who let him in now stands at the door. And now JOHN detaches himself.

JOHN
 I also wanted to tell you I forgive
 you, Anne, I do.

And before she can respond, he turns and walks out.

JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (from the corridor)
 Call me!

And then her cell door shuts, leaving her alone, fairly stunned, and very shaky.

38 SCENE OMITTED. 38

39 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - MEETING ROOM - DAY 39

ANNE sitting with NICOLA following on from the confession.

ANNE
 But I *am* guilty.

NICOLA
 Well, that's what I'm saying, if we
 can prove that you were coerced,
 then no, you're not.

ANNE
 I didn't *have* to do anything, I was
 an adult, I made my own choices. He
 never threatened me, he never hurt
 me...

NICOLA
 ...physically no, but emotionally?
 Every day of your life together as
 I understand it.
 (MORE)

NICOLA (CONT'D)

And I think I can argue that that wears a person down, day after day year after year, till they no longer have the *strength* to resist.

A beat. On ANNE. And here is the fear again.

ANNE

So what *would* I get? For a guilty plea I mean.

NICOLA

Maybethree years?
(off Anne's flinch)
Four, four and a half if you go *not* guilty and lose. Which I should stress *is* entirely possible - it's a tough defence to prove.

She nods. A beat.

ANNE

But if it succeeded?

NICOLA looks up.

NICOLA

Well, then you'd walk free.

And out on that extraordinarily tantalising prospect. And we sense ANNE's mind is shifting.

39A INT. RONNIE DARWIN'S HOUSE - DAY

39A

RONNIE's carer, a young eastern European woman, reading his son's only letter.

CARER

(reading)
Dear, Dad, just to let you know,
please don't worry.

And RONNIE looks up.

RONNIE

Carry on.

And the carer looks vaguely appalled.

CARER

Sorry that's it.

On RONNIE, his hopeful eyes dimming, the shock and hurt almost touchable as tears pool. And out.

40 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - ANNE'S CELL - DAY 40

Close on a calendar, 14th March, Mother's day.

Pull slowly back to see ANNE sitting at her small table in her cell, writing a letter, as the post trolley goes past her open cell door. Trying not to look.

And it doesn't stop. Of course. And her head falls. And fat tears splash on to the letter she is writing.

NICOLA (O.S.)
So your initial hearing's in a
couple of weeks now...

41 SCENE OMITTED. 41

42 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - MEETING ROOM - DAY 42

And here is NICOLA with ANNE having another conference with her, in the prison.

NICOLA
...and basically, we need to make a
decision about how you want to
plead.

And we track in slowly on ANNE.

ANNE
I'm so scared my parents will die
before I get out.

And she looks up. And again, NICOLA sees that raw fear she saw in her first meeting.

ANNE (CONT'D)
And I think, if I could just see my
boys, talk to them, maybe I
could....

And she trails off, because maybe she could *what*. And her eyes stay down and her voice quietens.

ANNE (CONT'D)
...and he *did* make me do it, he
really did, I tried to stop him so
many times.

And then finally, she says it, almost in a whisper now, and clearly already aware it is the *wrong* decision, but, as ever, one she is sort of unable to stop herself making.

ANNE (CONT'D)
I want to go not guilty.

And out.

End of Part Two

Part Three

43 INT. TEESIDE COURT - HOLDING CELL - DAY 43

ANNE alone in the holding cell beneath the Victorian court. *

ANNE (V.O.) *
And finally the day arrived. I'm *
not sure what I was more scared of, *
the trial itself, or seeing my boys *
in court - a torment John had *
avoided by already pleading guilty. *
I was on my own. *

Then the cell door opens. *

OFFICER *
Time.

And as she stands on shaky legs, we hear -

ROBERTSON (O.S.)
Members of the jury, the defendant
stands before you, charged with
fifteen counts of deception and
money laundering.

She walks out.

44 INT. TEESIDE COURT - CORRIDOR - DAY 44

ANNE walking along a narrow subterranean corridor.

ROBERTSON (O.S.)
Mrs Darwin's defence is one of
'Marital Coercion', but for this to
succeed it must be shown that her
husband was present each time an
offence was committed.

(MORE)

ROBERTSON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It is the Crown's submission that not only was her husband very often *not* present, but that over a period of five and a half years, with multiple opportunities to end the deceit, she in fact repeatedly offended willingly, individually, and actively.

And then up rickety stairs and into -

45 INT. TEESIDE COURT - COURTROOM - DAY 45

- the court. And everyone's head cranes towards her as she makes her way to the dock.

ROBERTSON (O.S.)

We will furthermore show that far from being a submissive and coerced wife, Mrs Darwin was a clever and ingenious liar, who was able to effortlessly deceive on an almost industrial scale.

The already assembled jury, the jam-packed press gallery, the public gallery, all watching her.

ROBERTSON (O.S) (CONT'D)

To the police, to a Coroner's Court, to work friends and colleagues, and, perhaps most shamefully, to her own children.

The women (the older ones) looking at her with early judgement in their eyes. The men too, imagining if this was *their* mother.

ROBERTSON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

And lastly, members of the jury, as sons, daughters and mothers yourself, I will ask you when you look at that infamous photo in a Panamanian estate agency.

CLERK

All rise.

And the court rises as the judge now walks in. And we stay on ANNE, shaking, eyes down, petrified.

ROBERTSON (O.S.)

....If you see a *terrified* woman, coerced in to telling her children their father was dead....

46 INT. TEESIDE COURT - COURTROOM - DAY 46

And now we are actually on prosecuting counsel, ANDREW ROBERTSON, as he concludes his opening statement to the jury.

ROBERTSON

....or if you see a devious and
wily woman, smiling at the prospect
of her new life, in a tropical
paradise, paid for with the fruits
of her dreadful fraud.

And now we will watch a flowing intercut 'best bits' of the trial. As we should regularly cut back to a fairly appalled jury, this case was won on emotion. We will not follow the chronological order of a real court case.

(Italicised lines indicate the cross fade-able line)

MARK

It crushed my world, of course it
did, I loved him, he was a great
dad, *it crushed my entire world.*

Cross fade to -

ANNE

It might have appeared like I took
control, but I didn't really. It
was only ever within the confines
of what *he* ultimately wanted.

*

Cross fade to -

ROBERTSON

Are you a good liar, Mrs Darwin?

ANNE

I hope not.

ROBERTSON

Did you convince your sons for five
and a half years their father was
dead.

ANNE

Yes.

ROBERTSON

And the police?

ANNE

Yes.

ROBERTSON

And the Coroner?

ANNE

Yes.

ROBERTSON

And the press?

Cross cut to

WATERS

...so you are telling the court, on oath, that he forged your signature?

ANNE

He made a footer template of it on his computer.

WATERS

So any letter, any instruction to a bank or lawyer or whoever, *he* could write it and it would appear to be from you?

ANNE

Yes.

Cross cut.

*

ROBERTSON

So you had no idea at all?

MARK

She told me it was to do with inheritance tax.

ROBERTSON

And you believed her?

MARK

She was my mother.

And he shoots her a look of pure hatred. Cross fade to -

WATERS

And was money important to him?

ANTHONY

Yes.

WATERS

And the appearance of it?

ANTHONY

Maybe.

WATERS

And your mother?

ANTHONY

I'd always thought the opposite.

Cross fade to

*

WATERS

'Generally I only ever take her out
to vote'. He actually said that.

*

*

ANNE

Yes.

WATERS

To a friend of his, in front of
you.

ANNE

Yes. *I think he thought it was funny....*

Cross fade to

ROBERTSON

....and, sorry, just to be clear, where was John when you roped your unwitting children into laundering money for you?

ANNE

He was in Panama.

Cross fade to

MARK

...all sorts of emotions I suppose - angry, betrayed, stupid, I felt all of that. I still do, every single day I still have very negative.....

And he looks at her with contempt. Cross cut to -

ROBERTSON

...my point is he wasn't standing over you, as you spoke to the bank, forcing you to commit a criminal act, was he?

ANNE

He didn't need to actually be in the room, he was on the end of an e-mail, or phone, or just in my head.

ROBERTSON

You can argue your corner can't you.

ANNE

I can now.

ROBERTSON

Under immense pressure, in a public trial.

(MORE)

*

*

*

ROBERTSON (CONT'D)

But not at home apparently, with
your non-violent husband.

*

Cross fade to

ANTHONY

...it took me a long time to even
believe the photo was real, that
any parent could have done such a
thing, it took me a long time to
accept that, *I'm not even sure I
have, maybe I never will....*

*

Cross fade to

ROBERTSON

...*in which case can I ask* why you
didn't just leave him, this man you
claim was an oppressive bully?

ANNE

I wanted to keep the family
together.

ROBERTSON

'You wanted to keep the family
together?' Oh the irony, Mrs
Darwin.

*

Cross fade to

WATERS

...*so you are saying that he* gained
access to *all* your bank passwords?

ANNE

Yes.

WATERS

And basically controlled all the
bank accounts.

Cross fade to

*

ROBERTSON

...and let me ask you this, if you hadn't have picked John up from North Gare, if you had have said to him on the phone, "Oh, I can't go through with this I'm not doing this to my boys", what were you frightened was going to happen to you for disobeying his request? Was he going to beat you up?

ANNE

No.

ROBERTSON

Were you scared that when he got home, he might 'manipulate you' a bit?

ANNE

I was frightened that he might leave me.

ROBERTSON

But surely the way you claim he was treating you, that would have been a good thing? Surely, if, as you have repeatedly said....

Cross fade to

ANNE

...it was on an email, he said to bring my bikini and my one brain cell. Again, I suppose he thought it was funny but.....

Cross fade to.

ROBERTSON

...and this is what you replied is it not - 'I cannot wait to join you, my darling, missing you so much, all my love. Kiss kiss kiss.' Who wrote that?

ANNE

I did.

ROBERTSON

To the man you claim manipulated and controlled you.

ANNE

Yes.

ROBERTSON

(reads it again)

"I cannot wait to join you, missing
you so much, all my love, kiss,
kiss, kiss".

(he looks up, looks at the
jury, then the judge)

No further questions.

And we track slowly in on ANNE.

ANNE (V.O.)

The jury took less than four hours
to reach a verdict.

*

Cross fade to -

JUDGE WILKIE (O.S.)

I accept that your husband, John
Darwin, was the driving force
behind this deceit, but you, Anne,
although perhaps initially
unconvinced, went on to contribute
to its success and play your part
very efficiently. In my judgment,
you operated as a team, each adding
something to the joint venture. And
it is the *duration* of the
offending, its multi-faceted nature
and in particular the grief
inflicted over the years to the
real victims, your own children...

Wide to see MARK and ANTHONY watching (in the relatives area)
with bleak loathing, their mother.

ANNE's own mam and dad, CATHERINE and HENRY, and her brother
MICHAEL, are also all there, to witness her final shame.

And here is ANNE standing in the dock.

JUDGE WILKIE (CONT'D)

...that make this a case which
merits a particularly severe
sentence. Anne Catherine Darwin, I
sentence you to a term of six years
and six months.

On the shock of the whole court. ANNE stunned.

JUDGE WILKIE (CONT'D)

Take her down.

ANNE (V.O.)

It was three months longer than
John got....

As they start to take her down.

ANNE (V.O.)

...but then I was their mother.

47 SCENE OMITTED. 47

48 INT. PRISON VAN - DAY 48

ANNE in her cubicle, being driven to Low Newton.

ANNE (V.O.)

I think most people felt I'd got
what I deserved. *

49 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - WING - WALKWAY - DAY 49

ANNE walking back to her cell.

ANNE (V.O.)

And so it began. Six years and six
months, minus parole.

New day

50 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - LAUNDRY - DAY 50

ANNE working the laundry.

ANNE (V.O.)

I tried to keep busy. Keep myself
distracted.

51 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - ANNE'S CELL - DAY 51

ANNE at her desk writing.

ANNE (V.O.)

I continued to write to the boys,
never really expecting a reply.
John continued to write and call...

52 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - PHONES / INT. JOHN'S PRISON - PHONES
- DAY

ANNE on the phone. *Italics are the fade down.*

ANNE (V.O.)

...and I wanted to cut him off, I really did, but it was *hard*, after thirty five years, and with nothing else in my life...

JOHN

...I really don't think you've given any thought as to what it's like for *me*, Anne, an ex prison officer, in prison. *I've had my food spat in, I've been punched, abused verbally, whatever you think it's like for you, it's so much worse for me....*

ANNE (V.O.)

(as we fade down on him)
...and even a *bad* future felt better than none whatsoever.

53 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - ANNE'S CELL - DAY 53

ANNE kneeling in prayer, cheeks wet with tears, she looks pale and thin, hollow rings under her eyes.

ANNE (V.O.)

And then eight months into my time inside, the prison chaplain suggested I speak to a counsellor, because I could not rid myself of thoughts of death.

54 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - THERAPY ROOM - DAY 54

ANNE sitting with GRACE, a prison counsellor.

She has been asked a question 'what do you want from these sessions?'. A long beat and then -

ANNE

I suppose to wake up every day not hating myself would be a start.

A beat.

GRACE

And how do you think you could get to that place?

A beat.

ANNE

Through my family? My children? By, somehow showing them that...this is not who I am. That I did a terrible, terrible thing but I don't *think*.....that I'm a terrible person?

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I don't expect forgiveness, I never expect to be forgiven, I'd just ask...for a second chance. To show them that I could be a good mother again.

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Be the person I used to be. Or should have been. Could maybe even *still* be.

Said more in hope than expectation.

GRACE

And who was that? The person you used to be.

Good question. Which seems to slightly flummox her.

ANNE

She was kind. I think. And loving. With a conscience - she knew right from wrong.

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

And she didn't want much. A happy family. Enough money to pay the bills. A simple life.

And how far did she drift.

GRACE

So how do you get back to her?

ANNE

I don't know.

A beat.

GRACE

Well, how about we re-wind a bit.

55 INT. MARK'S FLAT - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

55

MARK coming off his mobile.

MARK

...okay, take care, mate.

And he puts the phone down. Takes a moment, and then turns into the sitting room, where FLICK is sitting, reading. She looks up.

FLICK

How is he?

MARK

Same. Angry. Sad. Laughing about it. Then crying. Fucked up basically.

A beat.

FLICK

And you?

A long beat. He looks lost.

MARK

It feels like they're *both* dead.

A beat.

MARK (CONT'D)

And I'm not sure I can bear that.

And he looks up to her. Movement?

56 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - THERAPY ROOM - DAY

56

ANNE in the therapy room with GRACE.

ANNE

I was *never* a confident person. Even at school, I'd be the last to put my hand up.

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I remember I won a local beauty contest once, in our little town, when I was 14 or 15, and I was just so *surprised*, the idea that anyone could think I was *pretty*.

On her as she delves back in to the past.

ANNE (CONT'D)

It's interesting, when I look back, my first encounter with him, John, was when I was fourteen, on the bus, and he knocked my school hat off...

Tears pricking her eyes.

ANNE (CONT'D)

...it was just a silly joke, and I'm sure he didn't mean to but...he made me feel stupid...

(a beat)

...*more* stupid - I was already very aware I wasn't 'academic' like him. But maybe that....'set the tone' as it were.

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Because he was the only boy I ever...

(she shrugs, 'you know')

...and I went straight from my parent's house to living with him after we got married so....

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

....I never knew anything but him. How he spoke to me, how he regarded me. And I think that's been.... quite a thing for the last 35 years.

Oh indeed.

57 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - ANNE'S CELL - DAY 57

ANNE writing a letter in her cell.

OFFICER (O.S.)

Anne?

And she swivels in her chair, a prison officer at her door, with a letter in her hand.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

(smiles)

Postmarked London.

(handing it to her)

Hope it's good news.

ANNE

Thank you.

And she walks on as ANNE quickly opens it with a shaking hand to read -

MARK (V.O.)

Dear Mum, I hope you are well and
not finding things too
difficult....

58 INT. MARK'S FLAT - KITCHEN - DAY 58

Tilt up from a dozen screwed up attempts, to where MARK is writing the one ANNE is reading.

MARK (V.O.)

...we are all still trying to
adjust to what has happened, which
has not been easy. But I'd like to
come and see you, so I will send a
request today. Look after yourself.
Mark.

And he finishes. And before he can screw it up puts it in an envelope and seals it.

59 INT LOW NEWTON PRISON - ANNE'S CELL - DAY 59

ANNE, head down, the letter clutched to her chest, sobbing her heart out.

60 INT. ANTHONY'S HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - BASINGSTOKE - DAY 60

ANTHONY watching TV, LOUISE sat next to him (We should notice she is heavily pregnant).

ANTHONY

I'm just not where he is.

He turns to her.

LOUISE

You don't have to apologise.

He still looks tearful.

ANTHONY

Maybe it's the baby. Just knowing I could never do *anything* to hurt him, but either way, I'm just not there.

LOUISE

And no-one's expecting you to be. If it comes, it comes. And if it doesn't, no-one would judge you, no-one.

And she grabs his hand and then he leans forward and hugs her tight.

61 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY 61

ANNE waiting in the visiting room.

And she looks petrified. Everyone else's visitors have arrived. It's ten past the hour. He's not coming.

62 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON CAR PARK - MARK'S CAR - DAY 62

MARK sitting outside the prison in his car. Not getting out. Can't do it.

63 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY 63

Half past. ANNE, waiting, head down. Knows he is not coming, then.

MARK (O.S.)

Mum?

And she looks up, to see her boy.

Part three**Part four**

64 EXT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - DAY 64
Establisher.

65 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY 65
MARK, eyes down. Her the same.
Two people unable to look at each other.

MARK

...we didn't even know 'til the trial that you'd been in on it from the start. That when you hugged me that first night I came up, you *knew*.

Fuck.

ANNE

I'm so sorry.

On him, Really struggling to hold it together.

MARK

Everything we've found out, you've made us find out in *public*. Online, in newspapers, in a bloody *court* room, mam.

ANNE

And there is no excuse.

MARK

Just a *reason* would help. Why after everything you'd done, you *still* kept lying.

ANNE

For the same reason I *ever* did, Mark. Just...the *shame*. The terrible, terrible guilt and shame I felt.

MARK

So it was about *you* was it. About how telling the truth would make *you* feel?

ANNE

I knew it would break your hearts,
love....
(and she is struggling not
to cry)

MARK

...no no no, don't you cry...

ANNE

....I'm sorry....
(swallowing it down)
...and I just kept thinking,
hoping, *praying*, all along, that
there would be some way I could fix
it before that had to happen. But
there just never was.

And he just looks at her. Shades of that hatred again. But salted with grief now. The loss of the mother he knew.

MARK

Well you were probably too pre-occupied, drinking Pina Coladas on the beach.

On her, head down. Nothing she can say.

And then he stands and walks out.

And we stay on her utter shame.

66 EXT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - CAR PARK - DAY

66

Wide on MARK.

Standing in the middle of the grim, grey, rainy car park. No more tears now.

Just dull pain. That was so much harder than he even thought.

67 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - THERAPY ROOM - DAY

67

ANNE with GRACE. She looks utterly devastated.

GRACE

What did you expect?

ANNE

No more than what I got.

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

But I suppose I thought I might be
left feeling a tiny scrap of
..hope.

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

And again, I know I don't *deserve*
that. But it doesn't stop me
yearning for it.

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

It's been so long.

And out.

68

INT. JOHNS'S PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY

68

MARK now sitting opposite his father. And, perhaps un-
surprisingly, the general tenor of the conversation is very
different.

JOHN

Am I *sorry*? That I got caught, yes,
very.

And he chuckles, as ever, woefully misjudging the mood. But
MARK is not laughing. MARK is looking at him with disbelief.

And now JOHN rearranges his features into some semblance of
seriousness and contrition.

JOHN (CONT'D)

But seriously. Of course, if what I
did upset you, then yes of *course*
I'm sorry.

And he waits for acceptance. Waits for 'okay let's put this
behind us'. But what he gets is -

MARK

Tell me about the American woman.
And all the others you've been
writing your shabby little letters
to.

And he scuds a News of The World across the table at him.
JOHN look down to see the headline 'CANOE MAN'S SEX FANTASY
WITH PRISON PEN PAL'.

And JOHN looks up, indignant, defiant. 'How dare he.'

69

INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - THERAPY ROOM - DAY

69

ANNE and GRACE again.

GRACE

...and if you could go back, in time, to just before you met him. D'you think you'd be a different person now? If you'd married someone else?

ANNE

Oh I'd hope so.

GRACE

You really don't like who you've become?

ANNE

Oh lord, no, who would?

A beat.

GRACE

And so, how do you think you could change, how do you think you could start to repair what you see as the damage.

A beat, as she considers. Then -

ANNE

Well I know what *should* be the first step.

GRACE

'Should'?

ANNE

Well, because whether I *could* actually do it or not, I don't know.

GRACE

And what are we talking about?

A beat, then -

ANNE

Ending it. Leaving him.

GRACE

Okay. And why might you not be able to do that?

ANNE

(shrugs)

I find the idea petrifying.

GRACE

Despite all the wrongs you feel he's done you?

ANNE

Yes.

GRACE

And what specifically are you scared of?

And she thinks. Then -

ANNE

Everything?

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I've never lived any part of my life on my own. I wouldn't know how to....even *be*. Who I even *am*. I mean for my entire *adult* life, I've just been...an extension of him really....

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

...or not even that. Just...a nothing. Invisible.

A beat.

ANNE (CONT'D)

And so...starting again, from scratch, trying to create...a 'new me', at the age of ...nearly sixty...

(a beat)

...it makes me sick with fear, Grace.

On GRACE. A beat.

GRACE

Okay. Slightly different tack. Does John make you *happy*?

A beat.

ANNE

He has done. At times in our life. I'm not happy now, obviously, and haven't been much in the last ten years or so, but before that, yes.

GRACE

But on balance, would you say he has been good for you?

A beat.

ANNE

He gave me two beautiful sons.

A beat.

ANNE (V.O.)

I knew what she wanted me to say. But, ridiculous as it might seem, I still wasn't ready....

JOHN (O.S.)

...money's not going to be an issue, love, trust me, our story sells...

70

INT. JOHN'S PRISON - PHONES - DAY

70

JOHN on the phone talking at her. *Fade down in italics.*

JOHN

...and I think I've found a bloke who'll publish my autobiography and funnel the money back to me secretly. *So fear not, we play our cards right, we are going to be sitting pretty....*

ANNE (V.O.)

...I just didn't feel strong enough to be on my own.

71

EXT. PARK - BASINGSTOKE - DAY

71

ANTHONY pushing his baby in a stroller. MARK walking alongside him, the wives walking up ahead, through a park.

MARK

He's beautiful, mate - must've got Lou's genes.

ANTHONY

Well I bloody hope so, wouldn't want too many of our side in there.

MARK

No, fair enough.

Almost a smile. They can almost make a joke about it.

ANTHONY

Flick was just saying you saw her again last week.

MARK

Yeah.

ANTHONY

(nods)

And how was it?

MARK

Still hard. I mean I'm not quite sure what I'm hoping for I just.....

(a beat, and then he shrugs)

...I think I've just come to the conclusion that I'd prefer to have her in my life than not.

And ANTHONY nods. Fair enough.

ANTHONY

And Dad?

MARK

(nods, thinks, then)

Harder. I'm not sure he really gets it. Or ever will.

A beat.

ANTHONY

So I wrote to her yesterday.

(Mark turns)

Requested a visit.

MARK

Okay.

And his brother nods. Cautiously happy for him.

MARK (CONT'D)

So all I'll say...

A beat. How to frame this.

MARK (CONT'D)

...just don't expect any...blinding
moment of forgiveness. Cos my guess
is that ain't gonna happen. I think
it's just going to be this.....very
long and slow...

(looks for the right word)

...'accommodation'.

A shared moment of understanding. And on they walk.

73 INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY

73 *

ANNE waiting. The doors opening. And all the visitors streaming in, ANNE looking up hopefully.

And then here is MARK. Spots her. Raises a hand. Smiles. Then turns to wait for someone *else*.

Which is when she sees ANTHONY.

And in his arms, his four month old son.

ANNE's first grandson.

Who, from her expression, we will guess she did not know about.

And MARK and ANTHONY walk over, and she is in pieces of course.

ANTHONY

Hello, mam.

ANNE

Hello love. Thank you so much for coming, I'm so pleased to see you.

ANTHONY

Well, I couldn't not let you meet this little fella could I.

ANNE

Oh Anthony, I don't know what to say, how old is he?

ANTHONY

Four months now.

ANNE

He's beautiful.

ANTHONY

Takes after his mother. Who asked me to say 'hello' and that she sends you her love.

And she goes. So much happiness.

ANNE

That's incredibly kind of her.
Please send her *my* love and huge
congratulations.

And she stares into the baby's eyes, all sorts of memories
coming back. And then -

ANTHONY

Would you like to hold him?

And she is almost overcome. The trust he now places in her,
which she obviously feels is utterly undeserved. And yet it
is given.

ANNE

I would. Very much.

And he hands over his baby.

And she holds him, rocks him, nurtures him.

And we watch ANTHONY and MARK, watching their mum, right now,
be what they need her to be.

It is a cathartic moment for them all.

ANNE (V.O.)

It was an extraordinary act of
generosity, that I didn't deserve.

74

INT. JOHN'S PRISON - PHONES - NIGHT

74

JOHN dialling a number at the bank of prison phones.

ANNE (V.O.)

And it finally gave me the strength
to do what I had needed to do for
so long.

ANNE

Hello?

JOHN

Anne?

75

INT. LOW NEWTON PRISON - PHONES /INT. JOHN'S PRISON -PHONES/5-
NIGHT

ANNE on the phones. Cut between the two of them.

ANNE

Hello, John.

JOHN

What the hell's going on, you've stopped writing, you haven't been taking my calls.

ANNE

I know.

JOHN

Why?

A beat. On her. Still struggling. Even now.

ANNE

I don't want to be with you any more.

JOHN

(a beat, then)
Don't be ridiculous.

ANNE

You don't make me happy, John. I think you haven't for many years, you don't hear me, you don't listen to me but.....

JOHN

(interrupting)
...that is total rubbish, Anne, you don't know what you're ...

ANNE

...you're not listening now. Just stop talking. Please. Just stop always talking. And listen.

And fuck, he does.

ANNE (CONT'D)

...'but' - much more important than any of that, I don't think you love me, John.

JOHN

I do.

And we sense that even now, even after everything, she still feels his pull.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I do love you, Anne, very much. Or
why would I have stayed with you
all these years.

A beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Don't do this. Don't throw thirty
six years and two smashing boys
away. We can be happy again. I know
we can. I *promise* we can.

A beat.

ANNE

No. I don't think you *do* love me.
Or maybe you just don't know what
proper love is.

JOHN

Please.

ANNE

And either way, I don't love *you*
any more. You've hurt me too much.

JOHN

You do love me.

On her. A long beat. And then

ANNE

No. I don't. And I want a divorce.

JOHN

Anne.

And she has already put the phone down, before she can change
her mind. Stay on her. Shell-shocked.

And we stay on this tableau.

Head bowed, hand still on the phone.

And then we start to draw slowly, slowly, away from her, down
the prison corridor.

And back at JOHN's prison, we do the same. JOHN left holding
the receiver, stunned, dislocated, left alone. We draw back
and back.

Cut back to ANNE.

It is the most significant moment in her life since she picked up another phone, over eight years before. At the end of that pull back, we hear -

ANNE (V.O.)

About eight months before my release, I was transferred to an open prison, to help prepare me for my return to normal life...

76 INT. ASKHAM OPEN PRISON - RELEASE AREA - DAY

76

ANNE at a leaving area, placing the wedding ring she is being given back, into her bag before putting on a coat.

ANNE (V.O.)

...and then in March 2011, a few days shy of nine years since John paddled out to sea, I was released to a halfway house in Leeds.

And now she picks up a small overnight case with all her stuff in it, and is taken towards the front doors of the prison.

77 EXT. ASKHAM OPEN PRISON / BUS STOP - DAY

77

And here she is walking out, on her own, walking away from the prison, her bag in hand, her coat wrapped around her against an early March frost.

And now she walks out onto the main road, looks left for the bus stop and sees it two hundred yards up the road in the distance.

ANNE (V.O.)

I was finally free.

And she turns and starts to walk toward it. Down the long, long road ahead.

ANNE (V.O.)

I'm not sure I'll ever truly understand why I made the choices I did. It was, as my counsellor said, complicated. My children still struggle and will certainly never be able to forget what I did to them, nor should they.

ANNE (V.O.)

We all know we're on a journey that will last the rest of our lives but we are at least on that journey and for that gift, both undeserved and unexpected, I remain more grateful to them than it will ever be possible to express.

A noise. We see ANNE look behind, to see the bus trundling down the road towards her. And she starts to run towards the bus stop, one hand outstretched in alert, the other holding on to her small suitcase.

ANNE (V.O.)

They say the opposite of love is not hate, but indifference, which is what I now feel for my ex husband. We divorced in 2012, and I have not seen or spoken to him since that last phone call...

And then the bus stops at the stop and waits for her to catch up.

ANNE (V.O.)

...but I wish him well and sincerely hope that he finds happiness. I will try to do the same.

And now we see her board the bus as we kind of catch up, so we are outside looking in, as she gets on and finds a seat.

And just as the bus clicks into gear and is about to move away, she turns to us, and looks straight down the lens.

ANNE (V.O.)

I will also keep trying to find *me*.

And then the bus pulls away out of frame, and we watch it slowly disappear down the long winding road ahead.

Fade to black

Caption.

'In 2015 John Darwin remarried and now lives in the Philippines with his second wife.'

*
*

'Anne is now retired and lives in the north of England.'

*

She continues to rebuild her relationship with her sons.'
