

HMAS:
The Helen Mirren Appreciation Society
An Original Screenplay
Written by Teri Aislin

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FADE IN:

EXT - LONDON - RAINY DAY.

Three suspicious acting FOOLS in a battered mini, drive slowly into a London slum. They park and switch off the engine. As they get out of the car they look nervously around, as if expecting to be followed. Satisfied that they look sufficiently dangerous, they climb the dirty stairs.

EXT - RUNDOWN FLATS, THIRD FLOOR

The three swagger dramatically down a hallway and stop abruptly, knocking on a shabby door. The door opens slowly, the chain still latched. A puny MAN peers out of the door. The three men speak in hushed tones.

THREE FOOLS

Arthur lives.

The puny man unlatches the chain and opens the door, motioning the fools inside with a jerk of his head. He looks suspiciously around before shutting the door. A succession of locks and chains are heard.

EXT - WASHINGTON STATE - DOUBLE WIDE TRAILER HOUSE - DAWN

Front yard and exterior of a double wide trailer house. In the driveway sits a 1969 Chevy Malibu, jacked up high in the back. A pick-up truck with huge tires, and a gun rack in the window, is parked next to the Malibu. A snowmobile sits in one corner of the yard next to a pair of jet skis. On the porch, someone has made an attempt to brighten up the place with a few potted plants. A recent rain has left the place bleak and muddy.

INT - DOUBLE WIDE TRAILER HOUSE

The living room of the mobile home is furnished cheaply. Hanging on the wall above the couch is an inexpensive studio picture of a couple in their early thirties. On the wall opposite the couch is a magazine quality picture of a sophisticated beautiful blonde woman: the British actress, Helen Mirren.

We are taken down a hallway and into a bedroom decorated in Winnie the Pooh theme. There is no child, only perfectly arranged bedding with a sentry of stuffed animals.

We are taken back out to the hallway and to a bedroom. Two people lie sleeping in a gaudy waterbed with a mirrored headboard of heavy dark wood and roses painted on the glass. An alarm clock on the

headboard reads 5:29, then quickly changes to 5:30. The alarm goes off and the sound of INXS, "What You Need" plays on the radio. SAM climbs out of bed and shakes ANNIE MARSH to wake her.

SAM

Time to get up Annie!

ANNIE

Noooo. Already?

SAM

Come on Annie.

ANNIE

Five more minutes Sam, okay?

Sam pulls Annie to a sitting position. She flops back down. Sam drags Annie to standing and helps her into the bathroom.

EXT - CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS - MORNING

INT - UPSCALE HOME - MORNING

A smartly suited woman in her fifties, RUTH CHANCELLOR, collects her briefcase and purse, takes a last sip of coffee, shuts off the coffee maker, and exits the kitchen.

INT - FOYER

Ruth pauses to look at a picture hanging on the wall of the same beautiful blonde featured on the wall of Annie's home - actress Helen Mirren.

RUTH

Wish me luck, Helen.

Ruth opens the door and exits.

EXT - UPSCALE HOME - MORNING

Ruth walks to a sleek new automobile. She disengages the alarm, climbs into the car and closes the door.

INT - CAR

Ruth starts the car; the automatic seat belt wraps around her, she checks her watch and puts the car in gear.

EXT - CAR

The car drives away through an upscale neighborhood.

INT - KITCHEN

Annie and Sam wrap sandwiches in plastic bags and plop them into lunch containers.

EXT - FRESNO, CALIFORNIA - MORNING

INT - HOSPITAL - MORNING

A very tall, beautiful nurse walks down the hallway of a hospital, whistling a tune. The tag on her uniform reads CLEMENTINE JENKINS. She jauntily enters a patient room chirping "Good Morning" and throws open the curtains to reveal brilliant blue sky. She exits.

From the hallway, Clementine enters another room, checks a chart, throws open the curtains and greets the patient.

EXT - NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE CAMPUS - MORNING

INT - COLLEGE CLASSROOM

A classroom is filled to capacity. The students talk quietly while they wait. CHARLOTTE HANOVER, dressed in jeans, tee shirt, and Birkenstocks, enters the room carrying a briefcase. She takes her place at the head of the room and removes some notes from the briefcase. She turns to the chalkboard and writes "Professor Charlotte Hanover."

Charlotte puts down the chalk and moves to the podium.

CHARLOTTE

Welcome to 'Psych 401.'

INT - CHEVY MALIBU

Sam waits impatiently for Annie. He honks the horn.

EXT - TRAILER HOUSE

The door opens and Annie comes flying out of the house.

ANNIE

I'm coming, I'm coming!

Annie jumps into the car and slams the door.

SAM

Don't slam the door. You'll ruin the speakers!

ANNIE

Sorry! I forgot!

INT - HOSPITAL

Clementine enters another hospital room and opens the curtains.

CLEMMIE

Good morning! How are you two today?

CRABBY PATIENT

I slept like a whore in church!

Clemmie happily checks the patient's IV.

CLEMMIE

That's nice.

CRABBY PATIENT

The goddamn IV's been hurtin' me all goddamn night!

CLEMMIE

You know Fred; someday I'm going to be a big, big movie star. And when People magazine comes to you and they say, "what was she like? What did the two of you talk about?" You can say we talked about medication that made you vomit, food that gave you diarrhea, and bedpans that bruised your backside.

Clemmie straightens the sheets and turns to leave.

CRABBY PATIENT

Where the hell are you going?

CLEMMIE

Home, my shift is over.

CRABBY PATIENT

Don't leave me alone with that Rita! She's murder with a syringe.

CLEMMIE

I'm going to have a life and then meet some friends for a movie before I have to be back here at 11:00 to take care of the two of you.

PATIENT #2

What movie are you watching?

CLEMMIE

It's called Caligula and its X-rated. Lots of juicy sex and naked chicks. I would invite you over but you have hemorrhoids.

Clemmie walks briskly from the room. The Patient #2 looks puzzled.

PATIENT # 2

What was she talking about?

CRABBY PATIENT #1

Where's my breakfast? Clemmie?

INT - BANK - DAY

Ruth nervously sits across from a LOAN OFFICER who scrutinizes a document.

LOAN OFFICER

Tell me something Ms. Chancellor, Why would you give up a successful law practice to start a theatre specializing in - what was it?

RUTH

Jacobean tragedy. Revenge, lust, murder. Like, a man loves his sister and knows he can't have her so he cuts out his heart and throws the thing on the table! You know Ben Jonson, Webster.

Ruth realizes she has taken on the look of a fanatic and quickly regains her composure.

LOAN OFFICER

No, I don't. And, that's just one of the reasons why I don't hold out much hope for your loan application. Theatre companies are very risky ventures. A theatre company that specializes in a form of drama most people have never heard of? You can see the problem.

RUTH

Yes of course.

LOAN OFFICER

Why ARE you leaving your practice?

RUTH

(beat) I just can't... make myself answer the phone anymore.

Ruth shifts nervously and clears her throat.

EXT - LUMBER MILL - DAY

Smoke rises from two stacks. A hard rain has left deep puddles pitting the gritty landscape, and a thick hood of factory smoke hovers in the darkly overcast sky.

INT - MILL

Annie pulls sheets of veneer off a conveyer belt to a cart. A whistle sounds and within seconds a new crew of workers relieves the others. A man takes over Annie's station. The mill noise is too loud to be overheard so he nods at her and she smiles back in greeting giving him a wave as she removes her leather apron and gloves.

EXT - VIDEO STORE - DAY

Ruth sits in her car in the parking lot of a video store. She nervously looks all around her. She puts a brown scarf over her hair, and adds a pair of sunglasses. She checks herself in the mirror, takes a large breath and murmurs to herself.

RUTH

Just get it over with.

She throws open the door and exits the car.

INT - VIDEO STORE

Ruth opens the front door and enters the store. After taking a quick side to side glance, she walks to the counter. A teen-aged CLERK addresses her.

YOUNG CLERK

Yes ma'am?

Ruth stares back at him saying nothing. The young clerk looks at her, waiting. Ruth's left eyebrow slowly raises skyward. The young man repeats the physical action with an arched eyebrow of his own.

Ruth tries vainly to speak. The boy leans closer to her. She finally speaks quietly.

RUTH

You're holding some videos for me.

The boy, feeling Ruth's aura of mystery, replies quietly.

YOUNG CLERK

The name, please?

RUTH

(whispers)

Ruth.

YOUNG CLERK

(whispers)

Ruth? I need a last name, Ruth.

RUTH

Chan... ahem, Chancellor.

YOUNG CLERK

Did you say Chancellor?

RUTH

That's right. Ruth Chancellor.

YOUNG CLERK

Just a moment, please.

Ruth straightens herself and peers cautiously about the room. Nobody is in line behind her, the boy is quiet, she relaxes a bit. Suddenly a LOUD GUY walks up to the boy.

LOUD GUY

Hey man, go ahead and take your break, I'll finish this off.

The loud guy turns to Ruth.

LOUD GUY

What can I do you for Ma'am?

Ruth, put off by the loud guy, hesitates.

LOUD GUY

Yo! What can I do you for?

RUTH

You're holding some videos for me.

LOUD GUY

Name?

RUTH

Er, um ... Ruth Chancellor.

LOUD GUY

CHANCELLOR! RUTH CHANCELLOR? Was that the name? Hey Mike! Yeah, RUTH CHANCELLOR is here to pick up her tapes. You got 'em? I don't see 'em.

Other patrons begin to line up behind Ruth.

MIKE (O.S.)

Nope, not here! Look under the counter again.

LOUD GUY

Oh, here they are, stuck in the back. Yep. Okay let's see, Wuthering Heights, Romeo and Juliet, On Golden Pond and ... CALIGULA!

As the title "Caligula" comes out of his mouth, a few patrons begin to notice Ruth in her dark glasses and scarf. The clerk gives her a knowing look as well. Ruth looks like she wants to crawl under a rock.

LOUD GUY

Caligula? Caligula?! Are you sure you want Caligula? That's from the smut room you know.

As the young man says "smut room" he makes a sexual gesture with his index finger poking in and out of his closed hand. The other patrons begin snickering.

RUTH

May I have my tapes, please?

LOUD GUY

You're sure? Caligula?

INT - UNDER ROCK

Ruth suddenly finds herself hiding under a huge rock surrounded by store PATRONS. She peers out at them from under her refuge.

PATRON 1
Dirty old woman!

PATRON 2
Disgusting!

PATRON 3
You preeeever!

Patron 4 is a little old lady who makes the sexual gesture with her palm and index finger.

INT - VIDEO STORE

Ruth suddenly snaps out of it and decides to get tough.

RUTH
Look, Peewee ... Here's a twenty.
Do you want it or not?

LOUD GUY
Okay, okay. Don't get your panties
in a bunch! But don't say I
didn't warn you!

EXT - LUMBER MILL

Annie walks through the puddles to a car where Sam waits.

SAM
Hey baby.

Annie gets into the car, closes the door, scoots next to Sam and kisses him. Sam starts the car and drives away.

SAM
How was it at your end?

ANNIE
Just like your end I s'pose. Did
you get my movie?

SAM
Yes ma'am. Found it in the blue
room. Baby, what has gotten into
you?

ANNIE

I'm not watching it for the dirty pictures.

SAM

Oh yeah. Helen Mirren's in it.
It's art.

Sam smirks and leers while Annie folds her arms and gazes out the car window.

INT - COLLEGE CLASSROOM

CHARLOTTE

In conclusion, this semester we will focus on cultural idol worship. From ancient Egypt right to our present day form of idol worship, modern society's obsession with celebrities. We're out of time. See you tomorrow.

As the students file out of the lecture room, Charlotte collects her notes and opens her briefcase. The inside of the case reveals a videotape of "Caligula." She throws her notes on top, snaps the case shut and leaves the room.

INT - NONDESCRIPT ROOM.

Charlotte sits in a chair and speaks to an unseen interviewer.

CHARLOTTE

I was on a tenure track and you can't get tenure without publishing a scholarly work. Without that your career is over. One day you're lecturing to a group master's students about Freud and the next you find yourself in front of a room of high school freshman drawing pictures of human genitalia with a piece of chalk. My penises always end up looking like Florida. Oh, maybe I'm not supposed to say that! Sorry.

INT - OFFICE - DAY

A smug looking man, DEPARTMENT HEAD, sits at a desk. We hear a knock on the door.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Come.

Charlotte walks in. The man gestures to a chair, and she sits.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Charlotte.

There is a beat as Charlotte waits for some sort of pleasantry.

CHARLOTTE

Yes?

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Book?

CHARLOTTE

Book. Fine.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Sure?

CHARLOTTE

Yes. Yes.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Illuminate.

CHARLOTTE

Studying controlled group. Apply findings to modern theories of celebrity worship. Incorporate history of idol worship.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

How?

CHARLOTTE

Infiltration. Internet chat rooms. Discussion of celebrity's personal life and work.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Who?

CHARLOTTE

Helen Mirren.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Who?

CHARLOTTE

Helen Mirren.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Helen...

CHARLOTTE

British actress. Brilliant.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Mirren ...

CHARLOTTE

Shakespeare: Lady Macbeth,
Cleopatra.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Helen ...

CHARLOTTE

PBS, "Prime Suspect", Emmy award.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Mirren ...

CHARLOTTE

Oscar Nominee, "The Madness of
King George".

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Helen...

CHARLOTTE

Best actress, Cannes. "Cal",
sensitive portrayal of Northern
Ireland.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Mirren...

CHARLOTTE

"Caligula".

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Yes. Of course.

Charlotte sighs in exasperation.

INT - NONDESCRIPT ROOM

Charlotte speaks to the unseen interviewer.

CHARLOTTE

I have to admit I was pretty intrigued myself. She's fairly enigmatic. Here you have a classically trained actress who's logged nearly more screen time with her clothes off than on, who is considered one of the finest

CHARLOTTE (CONT.)

actors of her generation, venerated by others in her profession, yet virtually ignored by Hollywood. I had a feeling her fans would be interesting as well.

INT - RUN DOWN LONDON FLAT - DAY

The four fools, JAMES, GEORGE, EDWARD, and CHARLES from the opening scene sit in a messy flat.

JAMES

Right! We agree on one thing. We want independence for Cornwall or we're going to begin a reign of terror that will bring the Brits to their knees. Now, let's write that down in the communiqué. "We, the freedom fighters of the Cornwall Liberation Army, demand that-

CHARLES

Shouldn't we write it in Cornish?

GEORGE

(groan) Cornish?

CHARLES

It is our national language after all.

EDWARD

But none of us knows Cornish.

CHARLES

And whose fault is that? The bloody Brits.

EDWARD

Even if we did speak Cornish, the bloody Brits couldn't read it now could they? What's the use of a communiqué if no one can read it?

GEORGE

You've got a point. We have to tell them in English, how else will they know we've declared war on them?

JAMES

You idiot, they'll know by our wild acts of terrorism the likes of which, this island have never seen. But you're right George; we should write the communiqué in English and -

CHARLES

You're supposed to call him by his Cornish name, remember?

GEORGE

But I don't like my Cornish name.

CHARLES

What's wrong with it?

GEORGE

Well, Charles goes by Gowan, who was the boldest of Arthur's Knights. And Edward here's named after Kea, Arthur's right hand man. James, You're Milyahn, after the legendary king of Cornwall.

JAMES

Yeah?

GEORGE

Well I am called Gwynek, which means "fair little one." Makes me feel like a right nancy-boy.

CHARLES

That's not right, Gwynek. I'm Kea, Edward's Milyahn and James is Gowan.

GEORGE

That's not right at all. James is the leader of the cell that's why he's taken the name of a Cornish king, not a Cornish king's bleeding subject. James is the leader. He's the leader.

The three begin a loud argument about who is called what.

JAMES

Shut it! Can we just get the communiqué written please?

INT - DEN - LATE AFTERNOON

The interior of a den. Lights are off, a computer saver screen featuring Helen Mirren glows in the dark. Ruth enters the room still wearing the scarf and switches on a light. She sets a plastic bag with the videotapes down on the counter and removes the video. Next she goes to the computer and clicks on an icon. The screen reveals an Internet Relay Chat menu. Under the field titled, "screen name" she enters "Alice Rage."

INT - SMALL BEDROOM - EARLY AFTERNOON

Annie enters the room carrying a VCR. She plugs it into a wall and into a small battered television. She sits at her computer and clicks on the icon marked "Internet Relay Chat." She types in "Gosh Boyle" in the screen name field and points her mouse to the field marked "Chat Room". In that field she types "HM Chat."

INT - SPACIOUS APARTMENT - EVENING

Charlotte sits at a computer typing. DADDY enters the room carrying a little girl of six, ABBY.

DADDY

She's all done with her bath.

CHARLOTTE

Ready for bed, little body?

ABBY

Yes, Mommy.

CHARLOTTE

Give me a hug.

ABBY

Goodnight, Mommy.

CHARLOTTE

Goodnight, little body.

DADDY

How late will you be?

CHARLOTTE

Late, I'm afraid. I'm really
under the gun.

Daddy gives Charlotte a kiss and leaves the room with Abby. Charlotte closes the document she was working on and opens the Internet Relay Chat room. She types in HELEN MIRREN CHAT.

At the top of the screen the field reads in big, bold letters, "ALL BOW DOWN TO THE GODDESS, HELEN MIRREN." In the corner of the screen numerous names appear to announce the presence of several other people with aliases.

INT - NONDESCRIPT ROOM

Charlotte speaks to the unseen interviewer.

CHARLOTTE

We met in an on-line chatroom under names of characters Helen Mirren has played. Sometimes we would talk and sometimes we'd watch movies. The night we watched "Excalibur" there were fifty people in that chat room. It looked like the Tower of Babel meets Monty Python.

INT - CHARLOTTE'S APARTMENT

Charlotte types her name, "Lady Macbeth" on the computer screen.

LADY MACBETH

Sorry I'm late.

ALICE RAGE

Let's get on with it.

AYN RAND

Yeah, let's get it over with.

CLEOPATRA

You never know, it might be good.

ALICE RAGE

Don't hold your breath, we don't want a fatality.

TENNISON

Okay, everybody? Tapes in hand?

COLLAGE:

Six hands putting tapes of "Caligula" into their machines.

TENNISON

At the count of five, push your start buttons. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, start video!

COLLAGE:

Six fingers pushing start buttons on various VCR's.

A TV screen shows the opening credits of "Caligula". Helen Mirren's name comes up on the screen.

We see the computer screen dialogue.

ALICE RAGE

That's our girl!

MRS. TINGLE

Herself!

GOSH BOYLE

Woo-Hoo!

INT - ANNIE'S BEDROOM-LATER IN THE EVENING

The television screen shows a brief scene from "Caligula".

Annie stares with her mouth hanging open while she watches. She quickly types on the computer.

CLEOPATRA

Oh my god!

ALICE RAGE

That's just disgusting.

LADY MACBETH

Nobody said anything about
disemboweling.

CLEOPATRA

Shhh. HM's part is coming up.

GOSH BOYLE

It had better be.

We see Helen Mirren appearing on the screen.

ALICE RAGE

There she is!

CLEOPATRA

She looks beautiful!

TENNISON

Radiant.

GOSH BOYLE

It's worth it.

INT - DOUBLE WIDE TRAILER HOUSE

Annie sits at a table with a needle in one hand and Sam's palm in
the other. She is trying to remove a large sliver from his palm.

ANNIE

Hold still, Sam. I've just about
got it.

SAM

Damn that hurts.

ANNIE

They always do. I'm sure not
going to miss this.

SAM

Not this college thing again.
What's wrong with the way we live
now? We've got good jobs, haven't
had a lay off in six years. Nice
cars... a baby, someday.

Annie gives Sam a look and returns to her surgery.

ANNIE

Sam, we've been trying to have a baby for 16 years. I can't keep putting off life hoping for a baby.

SAM

You don't even know what you want to do. I mean maybe if you were going to be a nurse or a teacher.

ANNIE

I just want to read good books and know what they're about. I want to speak French and understand poetry. I want to look at a painting by Picasso and know exactly why it's great.

ANNIE (cont.)

I want to know what the rest of the world is like.

SAM

When are you going to grow up Annie, when are you going to stop being a dreamer.

ANNIE

I'm not a dreamer. I just don't want to spend the rest of my life picking splinters out of my hands.

SAM

It's this fan club putting these ideas in your head. Annie, you gotta accept who you are. We're just working class heroes and that's all we'll ever be. God meant you to be who you are.

ANNIE

What I don't understand is if I'm meant to be unimportant, why would God go to all the trouble? Isn't it more likely that in the rush He's just forgotten I'm here?

SAM

Huh?

Suddenly, Annie yanks on the tweezers and pulls out a two inch long bloody splinter and holds it up to the light.

SAM

That's not as big as the last one.

INT - CLEMMIE'S APARTMENT

Clemmie unzips the back of her uniform and wiggles out of it. She flips the switch on the stereo and starts dancing and singing with a candle as if it's a microphone.

INT - APT

Another woman, ELIZABETH, enters the apartment. Clemmie notices her but continues dancing. Elizabeth gives her an exasperated look and goes to a hall closet. She removes a suitcase and walks down a hallway. After a moment Elizabeth returns with the suitcase and starts for the door. Finally, it registers with Clemmie that something is happening. She quickly shuts off the stereo.

CLEMMIE

Whoa, whoa, what's going on here?

ELIZABETH

I'm leaving you.

CLEMMIE

Why?

ELIZABETH

Why not? Why stay?

CLEMMIE

Because we're in love, that's why.

ELIZABETH

That's right, I love you. But there's someone else who loves you more than I do and I just can't compete with her anymore.

CLEMMIE

Who else loves me?

ELIZABETH

You do, Clemmie. You love you more than I possibly could. It's all about you and your dreams. I gave up an art gallery in Carmel to be with you. In Fresno. When you're not working you're hanging out with your internet friends and when you do actually talk to me

it's about how you're going to be a big star. Yet you haven't acted in even an amateur production. I work hard at my craft and you haven't even looked at my new paintings.

CLEMMIE

Wait! You're right I've been selfish and self-centered and I haven't been paying any attention to you. Please, put the suitcase down and let's talk about this.

ELIZABETH

I think it's too late.

CLEMMIE

No. No, please, let's talk.

Clemmie takes the suitcase from Elizabeth and sets it down on the floor. She takes Elizabeth's hand and leads her to a small dining table. Clemmie takes a seat and motions to Elizabeth.

CLEMMIE

Please sit down. Please?

Elizabeth sits down and Clemmie takes her hand. Just then, the phone rings. Elizabeth gives Clemmie a look that implies that Clemmie can never let the phone just ring. Clemmie looks a bit uneasy but she lets it ring.

CLEMMIE

The machine will pick it up.

Finally the machine kicks in and a voice is heard -

RUTH (O.S.)

Hello Clemmie, this is Ruth, from Texas ... from the Helen Mirren Appreciation Society.

It's obvious that this is a very tempting call for Clemmie.

RUTH (CONT.)

I hope you don't mind that I called you, you are listed in the directory, and I thought you'd want to know as soon as possible.

Clemmie's interest is really piqued now and Elizabeth knows it.

RUTH (CONT.)

La Mirren is going to star in Antony and Cleopatra in London this coming October. I'm so excited I can hardly speak. I say we all go to London together. What do you think? Give me a call. My number -

Clemmie suddenly jumps up and grabs the phone.

CLEMMIE

Ruth! I'm here. Are you there? Yeah, it's great news! Wild horses couldn't keep me from going. All right. Hey, I've got something going on here, I'll call

CLEMMIE (cont.)

you right back. What's your number? Yep ... I've got it ... Yeah it's great! Bye!

Clemmie hangs up and lets out a whoop!

CLEMMIE

I'm going to London! I don't believe it! I'm going to London, Elizabeth! Elizabeth?

Clemmie looks around and sees that Elizabeth is gone.

CLEMMIE

Damn!

EXT - RUN DOWN LONDON FLAT - DAY

Three members of the Cornwall Liberation Army swagger to the front door of their fourth comrade. James makes a series of knocks in a ridiculously complicated and lengthy pattern that is supposed to serve as a password. The door opens and the three men enter.

INT - RUN DOWN LONDON FLAT

Inside, the four poseurs impress one another for a few seconds.

JAMES

Where's the cache?

EDWARD

Under my bed.

JAMES

let's have a look, then.

INT - BEDROOM OF RUNDOWN LONDON FLAT

Edward pulls a large wooden box from underneath his bed. He removes the lid and reveals the contents to his comrades. The fools peer in. They look at Edward with contempt.

JAMES

Where are the guns? You know, the things you need for shooting. They come in handy ...

His confidence sinking fast, Edward struggles to speak.

EDWARD

Wasn't enough money for guns. Just these.

JAMES

Rubber bullets? Our first arms deal, is a box of rubber bullets?! Who'd you buy 'em from? Some ten year-old catholic schoolgirl on holiday from Belfast? Rubber bullets?!

James goes for Edward's throat, as the other two comrades try to quell their first power struggle.

INT - DOUBLE WIDE TRAILER HOUSE - NIGHT

Annie and Sam are having their own power struggle.

SAM

No! No friggin' way! Annie, you are not going to London to see some woman in a play. We can't afford it. Just grow up, Annie, Jesus!

Annie jumps up from her chair and goes to the window.

ANNIE

Me? Grow up? Look at that yard full of your toys! Four wheelers,

jet-skis and two snowmobiles! I do the same job as you.
I make the same money as you. I
want to have fun.

SAM

To go off with a bunch of women to
London to see another woman in a
play? Jesus! This is weird Annie!
We've got that woman's picture on
the wall! Chuck asked me the other
day who she was. I told him she
was your aunt! How could I tell
him, "my wife puts pictures on the
wall of a woman she doesn't know?"

ANNIE

Chuck? Chuck's got a velvet
portrait of John Wayne.

SAM

But, it's the Duke, it's a guy
thing. Annie - you don't think you
might be a little... just a little...

ANNIE

What?! Sam! You'd know wouldn't
you? After all this time?

SAM

What about the others?

ANNIE

What others?

SAM

The other women that are going.

ANNIE

Yeah, a few of them are lesbians.
But I don't care, they're my
friends and we're going to go to
London. To England! Think of it,
Annie Marsh, Sliver Picker, is
going to see a play by Shakespeare
at the National Theatre in London,
England!

SAM

That's just great Annie! You and a
bunch of lezzies. GREAT! Okay,

you go. But maybe I won't be here when you get back. You just think about that for awhile.
Friggin' Shakespeare and lezzies!

Sam explodes out the front door of the house. We hear his motor start, rev, and race out of the driveway. Annie sits down on a chair and puts her face in her hands.

INT - AIRPORT - DAY

Charlotte, carrying her luggage, walks through a busy airport.

INT-NONDESCRIPT ROOM

Charlotte speaks to the interviewer.

CHARLOTTE

So we all agreed to meet in New York and fly to London together. As I went to meet them I thought about how people sometimes take on

CHARLOTTE (cont.)

an internet identity completely different from their real personalities. I thought, "what if these people are completely normal"? It wouldn't be good for the book!

INT - AIRPORT - DAY

Charlotte walks into the lounge to find Ruth, Clemmie, and twelve other women, all seated at a table and talking excitedly. Charlotte approaches the table.

CHARLOTTE

HMAS?(She pronounces it "H Moss").

RUTH

Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE

Are you Alice Rage, I mean Ruth?

RUTH

It's me. You'll be rooming with Annie, Clemmie, and me.

The women all stand and greet the newcomer.

Clemmie sidles next to Charlotte,

CLEMMIE

Charlotte? It's Clementine
Jenkins. Gosh Boyle.

CHARLOTTE

Clemmie?

Clemmie grabs a startled Charlotte in a big hug. The other women introduce themselves.

JANE

I'm Jane. I'm Tennison, of course.
And this Alice, Tracy, Diane
Sherie, Elaine, Melissa, Pernille,
Nina, Teri, Ann, Whitney, and
Chris. The rest haven't arrived
yet.

Charlotte greets them all.

CHARLOTTE

Did Annie make it?

A BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER answers with a bad attempt at a British accent.

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER

She's in the loo.

CHARLOTTE

Oh. Where are you from?

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER

Sioux City.

Charlotte looks away just in time to see Annie coming toward her.

ANNIE

Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE

Annie Marsh?

Annie embraces a reluctant Charlotte. Jane raises her glass.

JANE

A toast. To the greatest actress
on earth, Helen Mirren !

GROUP

Here, here!!

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER
And to bloody Cleopatra!

GROUP
Here, Here!!

ANNIE
And to HamAss!

JANE
What?

ANNIE
HamAss? It's HamAss, isn't it?
H-M-A-S? HamAss?

JANE
Certainly not! It's pronounced
"H Moss". H-M-A-S, "HMOSS".

ANNIE
Er, sorry... To H Moss!

GROUP
To HMOSS!

INT - AIRPLANE - DAY

The group of about 30 fans is seated in the plane. We get to eavesdrop on their conversations.

MIRRENEER 2
Wouldn't it be wonderful if we
actually got to meet her?

MIRRENEER 3
I'd be so nervous I couldn't think
of anything to say.

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER
I'd be dead chuffed!

We travel forward another row to a woman holding a copy of "Antony and Cleopatra."

MIRRENEER 4
What does this passage mean?

MIRRENEER 5

I've brought along a Cliffs Notes.

We move to the third row where Ruth, Annie, Clemmie, and Charlotte sit together. Ruth consults a list.

RUTH

Clemmie, did you bring the hair dryer?

CLEMMIE

Yep.

RUTH

Charlotte did you remember the curling iron?

CHARLOTTE

Yes.

RUTH

That just leaves the moleskin. Annie, the moleskin was on your list, right? Annie?

Ruth looks at Annie who is extremely pale and nervous.

RUTH

Annie what is it?

ANNIE

I'm-m-m s-s-scared.

RUTH

Fear of flying?

ANNIE

I guess s-s-so.

RUTH

What do you mean, you guess so?

ANNIE

I don't know for sure, I've never flown before.

RUTH

Annie, how'd you get to New York?

ANNIE

I took a b-b-bus.

RUTH

From Washington State? Oh god,
Annie. How long did it take you to
get to New York?

ANNIE

Five days.

CLEMMIE

I thought I smelled something.

Ruth shuffles through her baggage and finds a flask. She hands it
to Annie.

RUTH

Here, drink this, it'll help.

ANNIE

What is it?

RUTH

Does it matter?

Annie takes a giant swig off the flask. She coughs, and gags.

RUTH

Drink some more... that's a good
girl.

Annie swallows more.

EXT - AIRPLANE

The airplane races down the runway.

INT - AIRPLANE

The Mirreneers chatter excitedly except for Annie who sits in utter
but comical terror. Ruth holds her hand.

EXT - AIRPLANE

The airplane lifts from the tarmac.

INT - AIRPLANE

Annie sits with her eyes closed. She takes another drink from the
flask.

INT - RUNDOWN LONDON FLAT - NIGHT

Three "terrorists" sit in the flat, staring mindlessly at the tube as they watch Jerry Springer. Suddenly, the door bursts open and James enters excitedly, carrying a newspaper under his arm. As he addresses the others, the various shouts and bleeps from the Springer show drone on in the background.

JAMES

I've got it! I've got it! I know how to raise the funds for arms.

GEORGE

How?

JAMES

Look here in the paper. See?

EDWARD

Brilliant! A Blur reunion!

JAMES

No you daft bugger. Look there.

GEORGE

Where?

JAMES

Bloody hell. I'll read it to you. "The International Convention of Amway Distributors will be held at the Bedford Arms Hotel in Bloomsbury."

GEORGE

What? You mean we have to sell Amway products?

CHARLES

Don't scoff! My Uncle's fourth cousin got into Amway and now he drives a flash car. Got a nice place in the country. Done alright for himself out of Amway has our Alfie.

GEORGE

Doesn't that mean we have to annoy the life out of our friends and family? Sell them loads of crap they don't need?

James raps George upside the head.

JAMES

We're not going to become Amway distributors. We're going to kidnap Amway distributors and hold them for ransom. We'll get ourselves some minted Yanks, kidnap them, and all those double diamonds will have to pay to get 'em back.

GEORGE

Brilliant! Absolutely brilliant!

EXT - AIRPLANE

The airplane is fully in flight and at cruising altitude.

INT - AIRPLANE

Annie, sitting quietly and inebriated says nothing while chatter goes on around her. Ruth gives Annie a concerned look.

From down the aisle, a crabby FLIGHT ATTENDANT speaks rudely to a passenger. Ruth notices the exchange.

RUDE ATTENDANT

Sir, as you can see, I don't have my garbage cart with me. This is the drink cart. As soon as I've finished serving drinks, I will get the garbage cart and then you can dispose of your cup.

RUTH

My god, she's rude.

ATTENDANT #2 speaks into a microphone.

ATTENDANT #2

Hello Ladies and Gentlemen. We are about to start our in-flight movie. Today you have a real treat because we are running the thirtieth anniversary edition of "Gone With the Wind."

The Mirreneers all look at each other in excitement. Ruth stands up and addresses the group.

RUTH

You know what that means
Mirreneers! Six Degrees of Helen!

MIRRENEER 4

Yes, let's play.

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER

Spot On!

CLEMMIE

I've already won.

RUTH

How?

CLEMMIE

Vivian Leigh was married to Sir
Laurence Olivier and Olivier
starred with HM in "The
Collection."

JANE

Okay no fair using Olivier. He's
too easy. No Olivier.

From the other side of the plane the Rude Flight Attendant is
scolding yet another PASSENGER.

RUDE ATTENDANT

Ma'am I will get your water in
just a moment. As you can see I am
busy with other duties.

PASSENGER 2

But I asked you half an hour ago.

RUDE FLIGHT ATTENDANT

And I told you then that you would
have to wait! You are not the only
passenger on this plane, you know.

Ruth notices the rude attendant.

INT - PLANE

The passengers watch the screen. Clark Gable as Rhett Butler
appears. One Mirreneer wins out over the others.

MIRRENEER 4

Clark Gable was in "Mogambo" with
Ava Gardner; Ava was in "Pandora"

and "The Flying Dutchman" with James Mason; James Mason was in "The Age of Consent" with HM!

MIRRENEER 5

That's three, not bad!

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER

Well done! Cheers!

Olivia de Havilland's "Melanie" comes on the movie screen.

MIRRENEER 7

Oh! Oh! Let me, let me! Olivia de Havilland was in "The Swarm" with Michael Caine; Michael was in "Mona Lisa" with Bob Hoskins; Bob was in the "Long Good Friday" with HM.

INT - PLANE

While dialogue from the movie is heard in the background the Mirreneers wait with rapt attention. All other passengers relax as they watch the movie. The Mirreneers fight to be the first to shout out a six degrees.

MIRRENEER 8

Leslie Howard was in "Intermezzo" with Ingrid Bergman; Ingrid was in "Cactus Flower" with Goldie Hawn; Goldie was in "First Wives Club" with Diane Keaton; Diane was in "The Good Mother" with Liam Neeson; Liam was in "Excalibur" with HM.

CLEMMIE

The only man who ever made me wish I was straight!

The Mirreneers let out a raucous cheer! The Rude Attendant approaches the Mirreneers with a furious look on her face.

RUDE ATTENDANT

You ladies stop that right now! You are disrupting the whole flight.

JANE

I'll take care of this.

Jane stands to address the group.

JANE (CONT.)

In consideration for the other passengers ladies, I think we should suspend the six degrees game for now. Thank you.

Jane smiles at the crabby attendant who walks away just as Butterfly McQueen comes on screen.

MIRRENEER 9

Butterfly McQueen!

The attendant turns around and looks for the voice.

RUDE ATTENDANT

Who said that?

The Mirreneers freeze. Suddenly a VOICE is heard.

VOICE 1

Gone with the Wind!

RUDE ATTENDANT

Who said that?!

The Mirreneers sit stony faced. ANOTHER VOICE yells out.

VOICE 2

Mosquito Coast!

RUDE ATTENDANT

I'm getting the pilot!

The Mirreneers look back at her with a mixture of shock and contempt. A drunken Annie fixes an unfocused gaze at the rude Flight Attendant and then at Ruth.

ANNIE

She's so bitchy.

The Rude Attendant instantly points a finger in Annie's face and begins a long harangue at Annie, who is so drunk she hardly notices.

RUDE ATTENDANT

I heard that! How would you like it if we detain you in London? Hmm? I can do that you know. I can

have you detained and deported before you ever get sight of Big Ben!

Ruth has had enough of the Rude Attendant. She stands up.

RUTH

And when we get back to the United States I can file a civil suit against this airline on behalf of my client for Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress. And how would you like that?

RUDE ATTENDANT

You have no basis for a lawsuit.

RUTH

No? This is a public carrier and you have a higher standard of duty toward your passengers. You've been yelling at everyone ever since this flight got underway. Now you've threatened to detain my client, and you have humiliated her in a confined space. I'd say you've presented a perfect interpretation of a standard of "outrageous behavior." I believe we have a very strong case.

RUDE ATTENDANT

You don't. I know because my husband is a lawyer and I know that a case for Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress requires injury. She's not injured.

RUTH

My client is mortified that you have publicly humiliated her. I'm sure she'll require at least a psychiatric evaluation and will likely manifest physical symptoms.

ANNIE

Ruth, I think I'm going to be sick.

RUTH

See there? She's already feeling the physical affects of public humiliation. All these passengers are witnesses.

Annie reaches for the barf bag, unloads into it, and thrusts it into the Attendant's hand before curling into a ball and falling fast asleep in her seat. Ruth doesn't skip a beat.

RUTH (CONT.)

Is there anyone on this flight who would be willing to testify on this poor sick woman's behalf, to the outrageous threats this attendant has made?

The man who was scolded for requesting disposal of his drink glass stands up.

MAN

I saw and heard the whole thing,
I'll testify.

The woman who was yelled at for requesting water stands as well.

WOMAN

I'll be a witness. She's been down
right mean.

RUTH

Anyone else?

Several passengers raise their hands. Ruth looks back at the Rude Attendant.

RUTH

I'd say it's time to be nice or we might have a class action suit by the time this bird sets down. Now, these folks are just having a little harmless fun. Let's just see a little more of the friendly skies, okay?

The attendant stares contemptuously at Ruth for a second and then walks away with the full barf bag at arm length. The passengers applaud her retreat. Ruth takes her seat again, and checks on Annie, who is fast asleep.

INT - AIRPLANE

The Mirreneers are settled into the long flight and enjoying a nap or a little quiet conversation. Clemmie, wearing a pair of headphones looks around her, Annie is still passed out, Ruth is reading a book, and Charlotte is scribbling notes in a small notebook. Clemmie pulls out a note card and begins writing while the music playing on Clemmie's headphones is U2, "Even Better Than the Real Thing."

CLEMMIE V.O.

Dear Ms. Mirren. I was inspired by you to become an actress. I was hoping you would have time to have a cup of coffee so I can thank you and to discuss our mutual profession.

Clemmie stops writing and enters a dream world

INT - CLEMMIE'S DREAM

All the Mirreneers wait by the stage door. Suddenly Helen Mirren exits the theatre to the enthusiastic applause of her adoring fans. She thanks them graciously and begins signing autographs. Clemmie is next.

HELEN MIRREN

To whom should I address this?

CLEMMIE

To Clementine Jenkins, please.

Suddenly Helen looks up, sees Clemmie and is immediately struck by her presence. The rest of the crowd melts into a blue fog and Helen and Clemmie are suddenly dressed in beautiful evening gowns. Helen is in the arms of a hunky man but reaches out to Clemmie, leaving the hunk behind. The two of them tango romantically.

INT - AIRPLANE

Clemmie slowly comes back to reality.

INT - AIRPLANE

Ruth looks around her and sees Charlotte and Clemmie busy writing, Annie is still passed out. Ruth takes out a note and begins writing.

RUTH (V.O.)

Dear Ms. Mirren, I'm so thrilled to have this opportunity to see you perform on stage. I am

attempting to open a Jacobean Theatre Company and was wondering if we could meet for a cup of coffee and to discuss my endeavour?

Ruth stops writing and enters a dreamscape:

EXT - STAGE DOOR - DREAM

Helen exits the theatre door to enthusiastic applause from her adoring fans.

MS. MIRREN

Is there a Ruth Chancellor present? Ruth Chancellor?

Ruth steps forward shyly.

RUTH

I'm Ruth Chancellor.

MS. MIRREN

I'm so glad you are here. I am terribly excited about your Texas Jacobean Repertory Theatre. I want to give you my full support immediately. Here is my personal phone number, please do call me. Oh and don't share this with anyone else. You understand.

RUTH

Of course, Ms. Mirren.

INT - AIRPLANE

Ruth comes out of her reverie.

INT - AIRPLANE BATHROOM

Charlotte locks herself in the airline bathroom and sits on the toilet. She pulls out a note card.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

Dear Ms. Mirren, I am currently writing a book on the psychology of the cult of celebrity worship. It would be extremely valuable to me if I could get your point of view on fan clubs. I would be most grateful if we could meet to discuss this topic.

Charlotte enters her own dream sequence (in black and white) and in which everyone is wearing trench coats.

EXT - STAGE DOOR - DREAM IN BLACK AND WHITE

Helen Mirren, in a trench coat, exits the theatre to the enthusiastic applause of her adoring fans. She declines to sign autographs and begins walking away but as she passes Charlotte, she winks at her and nods as if to say, "come with me." Charlotte follows her discretely and as they get out of sight of the fans she suddenly turns to Charlotte and pulls a piece of paper from her coat.

MS. MIRREN

I received your note. Here is my contribution to your very important scholarly work. This information will blow the lid off the fan club concept. I think I speak for my fellow celebrities when I say, thank you, thank you for being an advocate for us.

Helen Mirren walks away into a film noir type fog.

CHARLOTTE

How did you know it was I?

INT - AIRPLANE

Charlotte comes back from her dream.

INT - AIRPLANE

Annie's still sleeping off her drunk, but we get a glimpse of her dreams as well.

EXT - THEATRE - ANNIE'S DREAM

Helen Mirren exits the theatre to the enthusiastic applause of her fans. As she begins to sign an autograph for Annie, she accidentally drops her pen. Annie quickly picks up the pen and cleans it off. Helen is impressed.

HELEN MIRREN

How very efficient. I wish I had a sycophant to take care of me.

ANNIE

I don't know what a sycophant is but you're so wonderful
I'll do anything you want.

HELEN

That would be lovely.

INT - HELEN'S LIVING ROOM - DREAM

Helen sits in an easy chair eating bonbons. Annie enters with a tray holding a large martini glass, a shaker, a pair of slippers, and a rolled up newspaper. She sets the tray on the table next to Helen and genuflects. Annie rises and unrolls the newspaper and smooths it out carefully before giving it to Helen. Next Annie shakes a martini and fills the large glass adding an olive to it before giving it to Helen. She kneels at Helen's feet and gently removes her spiked high heels and replaces them with the slippers. Annie then prostrates herself before Helen.

EXT - AIRPLANE

Airplane is just landing at Heathrow Airport.

INT - AIRPLANE

The passengers depart the plane. Clemmie, Ruth, and Charlotte all pass the snotty attendant with an air of contempt. As Annie passes the snotty attendant glares at her. A hung-over and disheveled Annie looks back at her, confused and nervous. She has no idea why this woman is glaring at her.

EXT - MONTAGE OF LONDON SIGHTS - DAY

The Mirreneers pose for pictures in front of Westminster Abbey, the Tower Bridge, and the Queen's Guard where Clemmie acts outrageously suggestive with the young guard, mauling his fir hat and mugging for the camera. The guard does not react but his sweaty upper lip trembles.

The group pose with several hundred pigeons at Trafalgar Square.

The group enters Harrods's Department Store.

EXT - HARRODS - DAY

The Mirreneers are escorted out of the store by a security guard. The guard answers the puzzled looks on their faces by turning Clemmie around to show her back to them. It is covered in pigeon

shit. The rest of the group turn to look at the backs of their own shit covered clothes.

EXT - OUTDOOR LONDON CAFÉ - DAY

The four women engage in conversation over coffee.

CLEMMIE

The thing about "The Cook, the Thief, his Wife, and her Lover" I don't understand is why did Georgina ever marry Albert in the first place?

ANNIE

That's easy - she was tired of being poor. He was her way out.

CLEMMIE

Georgina couldn't have been poor. She speaks French.

GILLIAN ANDERSON, the actress, takes a seat at a table next to the Mirreneers. The group pay her no attention.

RUTH

Being able to order from a French menu and being fluent in French are two different things.

CLEMMIE

But did you hear the way she pronounced "poisson". It was perfect. She said it just like this, "poisson."

Gillian Anderson leans toward the group to ask a question.

GILLIAN ANDERSON

Excuse me, may I have some cream?

Ruth passes the cream to Gillian as if she's any other person.

RUTH

Certainly.

GILLIAN ANDERSON

Oh thanks.

CHARLOTTE.

Do you realize that's -

Ruth, Annie, and Clemmie all look at her.

RUTH

Yeah?

Unaffected by the celebrity status of the diner seated at the table, they immediately return to the discussion.

RUTH (CONT.)

No, you've got it all wrong, Annie. Georgina married Albert because she wants to be the princess. She loves it that his minions have gross table manners and worse grammar.

ANNIE

That's like saying she likes the abuse.

CLEMMIE

Hey, she's into it. She loves the little suitcase under the bed with the toothbrush and the plastic train.

ANNIE

Plastic train? I thought it was a plastic drain?

CHARLOTTE

It's a train he uses on her.

ANNIE

A plastic train has sharp edges. I mean, that's sick.

CHARLOTTE

Albert is as immature as he is sadistic. And little boys play with trains. It's what they do with them that's decisive.

ANNIE

I don't want to talk about the little suitcase under the bed. Not if there is a plastic train in there.

The group, lost in thought, quietly sip their tea.

RUTH

It was definitely a train.

EXT - BEDFORD ARMS HOTEL

The sign out front prominently displays the name of the Hotel, "The Bedford Arms". The marquee also reads, "Welcome International Amway Distributors." Underneath, in smaller letters it reads, "Welcome Helen Mirren Appreciation Society".

INT - MEETING ROOM AT HOTEL - DAY

Ruth, Annie, Charlotte, and Clemmie walk into a room filled with Helen Mirren fans and choose their seats. Jane, carrying a clipboard and pen, stands front and center.

JANE

Good morning, and welcome to the First International Convention of the Helen Mirren Appreciation Society. There are 75 of us here all fans of HM. I trust you all traveled safely and have rested. On each table there are copies of our itinerary for each day and maps of London and the surrounding areas that are of interest to us. Each day has a theme. For instance, day three is one I'm sure you'll enjoy it's "Dress Outrageously Day". Where we don costumes, and comb the city for rare HM videos. The theme today is our Historical Helen Tour where we will visit all the places of HM's childhood and early adulthood, beginning with the hospital she was born in.

JANE (CONT.)

As a special treat we believe we have located her childhood home. Perhaps the current occupants will be able to clear that up for us.

MIRRENEER

What about the snake?

Clemmie hears the word snake and comes to immediate attention.

CLEMMIE

What snake?

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER

Cedric the snake. The asp that bites Cleopatra. The one she uses to commit suicide. He's done a runner.

Startled murmurs ripple throughout the room.

CLEMMIE

You mean there's a snake loose in the National Theatre?

JANE

Yes. Sadly, Cedric the snake has gone missing. But I'm sure they will find him and in the meantime they have a stand-in snake to take Cedric's place. The show will go on.

CLEMMIE

But, I'm terrified of snakes. I'm not just afraid, I am terrified, I don't know if I can even walk into the theatre let alone sit for three and half hours. Not if I know there's a snake in there.

JANE

Clemmie, Cedric's not a bit dangerous. He's an actor! And they'll find him, I'm confident. Now lets get a move on, you want to see where HM grew up, don't you? Everyone, lets meet in front of the hotel.

The Mirreneers gather their things and begin to leave the room. Ruth, Annie, Charlotte, and Clemmie remain seated.

ANNIE

It'll be okay, Clemmie, you'll see. I was terrified of flying and I made it through okay.

CLEMMIE

You were blotto! You were passed out the entire flight!

INT - HOTEL LOBBY

James, hiding behind a pair of sunglasses, sits in a chair peering over the top of a newspaper at a conference room with a sign out front that reads: "International Convention of Amway Distributors."

Just then, the conference room doors swing open and Amway Distributors come pouring out of the room.

Our intrepid group, Ruth, Annie, Clemmie, and Charlotte, get caught up in the crowd of Amway people. As they struggle to make their way through they come to the attention of James.

RUTH

Excuse us, please.

The crowd parts to let the four women through.

James watches them exit the hotel. He places a call on a mobile.

JAMES

Yeah, it's me. I think I've found
'em. Operation Fund-raiser begins.

EXT - STREET IN FRONT OF THE HOTEL

As the women walk down the street trying to catch up with the rest of the Mirreneers, James walks out of the hotel to the waiting mini and climbs in.

GEORGE

Should we follow 'em now? Kidnap
'em today?

JAMES

In a mini? Where would you
suggest we put 'em Albert
Einstein? We'll have to get a
lorry.

The mini tries to roar away but can only sputter and chug.

EXT - A SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

An elderly woman carries a tray of tea and cakes and places it at a small dining table where her husband waits. The table is placed next to a lace-curtained window that looks out to the street in front. As they are pouring their tea, the crowd of Mirreneers comes into the window frame, admiring the house and taking pictures. The couple looks at each other and then back at the group curiously.

OLD WOMAN

What are they doing?

OLD MAN

I don't know.

The Mirreneers stop taking pictures and jauntily walk up the path toward the front door. They look like a mob.

OLD WOMAN

Oh dear. They're coming up the path. Should we call the police?

OLD MAN

I don't know.

The old couple slowly make their way to the front door. The old man picks his cane up in the foyer, and raises it over his head, ready to strike. The doorbell is heard ringing.

EXT - HOUSE

The group waits for the occupants to answer. Through the door they hear a muffled voice.

OLD MAN (O.S.)

What do you want? Who are you?

MIRRENEER IN THE BACK OF THE GROUP

What did he say?

JANE

I don't know. I couldn't quite make it out.

Jane leans over to the mail slot and opens it a little.

INT - HOUSE

The old couple looks at each other fearfully as they see the mail slot move.

JANE (O.S.)

What did you say?

OLD MAN

I said, what do you want?

JANE (O.S.)

We want to see Helen's old room.

The couple look more concerned than ever at this strange request.

OLD WOMAN

Be careful Geoffrey - they're Americans. They might be one of those cults you read about - you know - homies.

OLD MAN

Go away! I have a weapon and I'm not afraid to use it.

EXT - HOUSE

CLEMMIE

Did he say he has a weapon? I thought the British were against guns! Let's go - maybe he's one of those soccer hooligans you hear about.

MIRRENEERS

Shh.

JANE

You misunderstand our intent, sir. We're members of the Helen Mirren Appreciation Society, and we just want to see her old room.

OLD MAN (O.S.)

The who?

JANE

No, not "The Who". We're not fans of "The Who". We're fans of Helen Mirren. We were told this was her childhood home.

INT - HOUSE

OLD WOMAN

Oh, they're fans of little Helen. You know Helen who lived next door - she's a famous actress now.

The old man looks puzzled. A spark suddenly illuminates the old craggy face, and he looks off dreamily for a moment. His wife hits him on the arm to bring him out of his reverie.

OLD MAN

Oh yes, little Helen.

As the old man stares in fond remembrance, the old woman leans over, opening the mail slot.

OLD WOMAN

I'm afraid you've got the wrong house. You want next door. That's the old Mirren place.

EXT - HOUSE

JANE

Oh, sorry for the inconvenience. Thanks for the information. Have a nice day!

Our intrepid group shuffles away down the path, talking excitedly.

OLD WOMAN

Why do Americans always have to insist you have a nice day? What if I don't want to have a nice day? It's oppressive.

INT - HOUSE NEXT DOOR

A young couple and their two small children sit at tea at a table next to a window overlooking the front garden. The group suddenly moves into the frame excitedly talking and taking pictures. The couple looks at each other, puzzled.

EXT - LONDON THEATRE MUSEUM - DAY

The Mirreneers gather at a building on a busy London street. A sign reads: "London Theatre Museum".

JANE

Well ladies. We should get a treat here. I'm sure we'll be able to see some very nice, very rare photos of HM's stage work. Line up, please.

INT - THEATRE MUSEUM LOBBY

A MUSEUM EMPLOYEE addresses the Mirreneers in the lobby.

MUSEUM EMPLOYEE

If you'll kindly wait here, your guide will be with you momentarily. In the mean time why not take a look at our wall of handprints in the hallway just to your left. We boast over 100 handprints of Britain's greatest thespians.

INT - MUSEUM

The Mirreneers look at each handprint.

MIRRENEER 2

Oh look, there's Mr. Bean's handprint.

CLEMMIE

He doesn't look as if his hand would be that big, does he?

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER

No, but it's quite large, at that.

From down the hall, Ruth calls out.

RUTH

It's Judi Dench's handprint! Quick! Let's find HM's handprint before the guide gets here. We can all take pictures of ourselves with our hand against hers. Spread out everyone. Search!

The Mirreneers diligently search for Helen Mirren's hand print.

ANNIE

I don't see it.

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER

Neither do I.

OTHER MIRRENEER

It's not at this end.

ANNIE

I don't think it's here.

RUTH

The man said there are over 100 on these walls. She must be here.

The museum GUIDE arrives.

GUIDE

Hello ladies and gentle ... er, ladies, hello, ladies. Shall we begin our tour?

RUTH

Where is HM's hand print? We don't see it.

GUIDE

What? Queen Elizabeth?

CLEMMIE

Not the Queen. HM. Helen Mirren, we can't find her handprint anywhere.

GUIDE

Maybe it's not here.

CLEMMIE

What do you mean, "maybe it's not here?" Don't you know? How can this be representative of Britain's finest actors and not have Helen Mirren's handprint?

GUIDE

We have Judi Dench and Diana Rigg.

At that moment KEVIN BACON and KYRA SEDGWICK - enter the museum. The Mirreneers have the hallway blocked.

KEVIN BACON

Excuse us please? Thank you.

The Mirreneers, still staring suspiciously at the Guide, move aside to let the couple pass through, but take no further notice of them. The guide does a double take.

KYRA SEDGWICK

Thank you.

CLEMMIE

We want to know why HM's handprint is not on the wall.

GUIDE

Do you know who that was? That was Kevin Bacon and -

CLEMMIE

Is there someone you could ask about HM?

The guide is preparing to tell them "No," but seeing the insistent looks on their faces lets out a frustrated sigh.

GUIDE

If you insist.

INT - HALLWAY

An attractive, nicely dressed man, TREVOR BOTHWELL, walks out of a side door. The Guide approaches him.

GUIDE

Trevor, a word please?

TREVOR

Certainly, what's wrong?

The guide moves close to Trevor and speaks quietly.

GUIDE

I have a group of very insistent ladies who want to know why Helen Mirren's handprint isn't on the wall.

TREVOR

Tell them she's in the pipeline.

GUIDE

I tried that. They're becoming a little disgruntled.

Trevor and the Guide look at the innocuous looking ladies who stare back with zealous interest. Trevor spots Annie and smiles. Annie looks back and smiles. Trevor is instantly smitten.

TREVOR

Those nice ladies over there? Disgruntled?

GUIDE

I've been with them all of one minute and I'm telling you they are disgruntled. They're Americans. You know what they're like.

TREVOR

Show them Judi Dench's handprint.

GUIDE

They've seen it.

TREVOR

Mr. Bean?

GUIDE

Yes.

Trevor walks past down the hallway past the ladies.

TREVOR

Hello ladies. I'm happy to say Helen has promised to put her handprint on the wall sometime in the next year. She's very busy, as I'm sure you know, but I promise we'll have Helen Mirren up against the wall by next year. Now if you'll excuse me?

As Trevor makes his way through the crowd of Mirreneers he becomes momentarily stuck next to Annie. There is an instant physical attraction.

TREVOR

I'm sorry, pardon me.

ANNIE

That's okay.

TREVOR

Enjoy your visit to the Theatre Museum.

ANNIE

Thanks, I will.

As Trevor slips past her and down the hallway, Annie watches him.

INT - THEATRE MUSEUM, CONTEMPORARY WING

The group and their guide enter another wing of the museum.

GUIDE

And this ladies, is our
contemporary wing covering British
theatre since the turn of the
century.

As the Guide drones on, the Mirreneers begin their search of the
wing for pictures of their favorite actress. The search is futile.
Unbelievably, there are no pictures of Helen Mirren in the London
Museum of Theatre!

CLEMMIE

Where is your Helen Mirren
section?

GUIDE

We haven't got a Helen Mirren
section.

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER

Are you taking the mickey, mate?
No Helen Mirren section?

GUIDE

Well ... we haven't got a section
for Diana Rigg or Judi Dench
either.

JANE

Well then, there must be some
photos of her somewhere.

The poor guide is nearly afraid to answer.

GUIDE

Er, I'm afraid not ... sorry.

JANE

What?!?! Not even one?

GUIDE

No.

CLEMMIE

How can that be? HM revolutionized
the role of Lady Macbeth. She was
the first to play her as a
seductress.

ANNIE

Yes, and what about her brilliant debut at the National Youth Theatre as Cleopatra at just eighteen years of age?

RUTH

She's been described as the Queen of Theatre by The Times ... the Times of LONDON-

GUIDE

It's not called the Times of London, "The Times" will suffice.

RUTH

So what?

GUIDE

Look, we don't tend to hang pictures of very contemporary artists. Diana Rigg only has one photo here. Certainly after Helen Mirren dies we will -

Loud gasps and shrieks explode from our intrepid group.

JANE

My God! What's wrong with you?!

Ruth quickly regains her composure.

RUTH

Madam, we would like to lodge a formal complaint!

GUIDE

But, but -

RUTH

We demand to speak with the curator, immediately.

The befuddled Guide stares at the group.

INT - THEATRE MUSEUM

A door with a sign reading: "Trevor Bothwell, Curator." A fist raps frantically on the door. The door opens.

TREVOR

Yes?

GUIDE

It's those Americans again.
They're lodging a formal
complaint!

TREVOR

Why?

GUIDE

They are going mental because we
haven't got a wing dedicated to
Helen Mirren. They demand we hang
at least a portrait. I've had
enough. You deal with them. This
goes way beyond my job
description."

INT - THEATRE - FOYER

Our disgruntled group waits impatiently for the Curator. Trevor
enters the foyer ready to do battle.

TREVOR

Hello again, ladies. My name is
Trevor Bothwell, I'm the curator
of the Theatre Museum. You wanted
to see me?

JANE

Mr. Bothwell, we would like to
lodge a formal complaint that your
Theatre Museum has failed to
represent Britain's finest
thespian. Ms. Helen Mirren is
neither featured nor even
mentioned in this entire museum.
We would like you to rectify the
situation by hanging a suitable
portrait of her.

TREVOR

And you are?

JANE

My name is Jane Martin, and I am
the official representative of the
Helen Mirren Appreciation Society;
American chapter. We have come
all this way to see Ms. Mirren in

the National Theatre's production Antony and Cleopatra, and we are distressed that your establishment professes to be a museum of British theatre yet you have no representation of the finest actress of the twenty-first century on display! Now, we demand that -

TREVOR

Ms, Martin, is it? Ms. Martin, If you like, I'm more than willing to make a note of your complaint, and will bring it to the attention of our directors at the next board meeting?

RUTH

Mr. Bothwell, we are going to demand our money back - all 75 of us - if we are not satisfied in this matter.

Realizing he is up against an immovable force, Trevor takes a conciliatory tone.

TREVOR

Fans of Helen Mirren, are you? Well, since you've come all this way. Ladies, please, follow me.

INT - ARCHIVES, THEATER MUSEUM

In the bowels of the Theatre Museum there are stacks of framed, covered photographs, all categorized according to play, year of production, and famous directors and actors.

TREVOR

This is where we house most of our contemporary collection. And Helen Mirren is certainly somewhere in here. We'll find a photo and display it upstairs. You can't say fairer than that, can you?

RUTH

Today?

TREVOR

Yes, today.

As the intrepid group search through the collection Trevor approaches Annie who searches diligently.

TREVOR

Let me guess, you're from the west coast?

ANNIE

Yes! How did you know?

TREVOR

Your accent. But not California. Washington?

ANNIE

Yes, yes!

TREVOR

Near Seattle?

ANNIE

Oh no. I've never been to Seattle.

TREVOR

I've been to Seattle.

ANNIE

You have?

TREVOR

Great city. I really enjoyed it. And it rains as much there as it does here.

ANNIE

Yes, it rains in Washington.

Annie continues to search through the framed photographs.

TREVOR

Staying somewhere nice are you?

ANNIE

Very nice. It's in Bloomsbury.

TREVOR

Oh, that's handy for Covent Garden.

ANNIE

Look! I found one! I found one!

Trevor helps her extract a beautiful picture from the stack. As Trevor uses a handkerchief to dust off the picture the group gathers around with reverent sighs and compliments.

CLEMMIE

Oh she's beautiful!

MIRRENEER

Duh!

ANNIE

When was this taken?

TREVOR

Unless I'm mistaken, It's from the Tempest in 1969. She played Miranda.

ANNIE

How do you know?

TREVOR

I'm the curator. It's my job. Besides, you don't think you're the only fans of Helen Mirren, do you? If you ladies are in agreement we'll hang this one upstairs.

JANE

Yes. That one will do nicely.

MIRRENEER 2

I love it. Put it up!

MIRRENEER 4

Oh yes, very nice.

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER

Cracking idea!

INT - THEATRE - CONTEMPORARY WING

The smiling group watch as Trevor hangs the picture.

CLEMMIE

Mr. Bothwell, could we get a picture of you in front of it?

TREVOR

Yes, certainly.

Trevor stands next to the photo as flashbulbs go off.

INT - PUB - EVENING

The Mirreneers are all partying at a pub. It looks a bit like an invasion. As they converse with each other as well as the locals the chatter is punctuated with references to Helen Mirren. A group of the Mirreneers led by Clemmie perform Karaoke, "Get Off of my Cloud" by the Rolling Stones. In one corner, another group of Mirreneers plays a video trivia game. A question comes up on the screen:

TRIVIA GAME QUESTION

Question:

Which year did the Profumo scandal become headline news?

Answer:

- a. 1972
- b. 1954
- c. 1963
- d. 1964

MIRRENEER 2

What's a Profumo scandal?

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER

You git, everyone knows about the Profumo scandal.

MIRRENEER 3

I've never heard of it.

MIRRENEER 4

Neither have I.

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER

What are ye, bleedin' daft? Choose
c. Trust me.

We see the game screen.

TRIVIA GAME ANSWER

The answer is C. You are correct.
Try another.

The karaoke Mirreneers perform back-up as Clemmie effects a Mick Jagger stance. She makes her lips large and pouty and shakes a

finger at the audience, then with hands on hips she struts back and forth like a rooster.

We see the next question on the trivia game:

TRIVIA GAME QUESTION

What British actress was nominated for an academy award for "The Madness of King George?"

- a. Judi Dench
- b. Vanessa Redgrave
- c. Helen Mirren
- d. Glenda Jackson

The Mirreneers look at each other as if they can't believe their own eyes. They high five and let out an enormous whoop!, bringing some stares in their direction

Ruth and Charlotte stand at the bar chatting with two men.

Annie and Trevor, who has six full pints in front of him, sit together at a table. A Mirreneer brings Trevor yet another pint.

TREVOR

No thanks, really. I've already got six here. I can't drink it all.

MIRRENEER

Oh please take it, you've been so nice to us today.

The Mirreneer leaves the pint on the table and departs.

TREVOR

Your friends are insane.

ANNIE

I know, aren't they fun?

TREVOR

What is it about Helen Mirren?

ANNIE

Speaking of insane, you mean?

TREVOR

Beside the fact that she's beautiful and talented.

ANNIE

Of course. For me, I think it's because she is a woman who is who she is, she does what she does, and she doesn't apologize for any of it. I feel like I have to explain every move I make. I want to be an unapologetic woman. Like her.

Back at the bar Ruth talks to the two men.

RUTH

And she revolutionized the interpretation of Lady Macbeth, you know. Yes of course. She was the first to play her as a seductress.

A very drunken man sits on a stool very near Ruth.

DRUNK MAN

BOLLOCKS!!

The pub goes silent at the man's outburst.

Clemmie, noticing Ruth may be in trouble, stops her Mick impersonation, and jumps from the stage. Only the strains of "Get Off of My Cloud" can still be heard in the background.

RUTH

Excuse me?

DRUNK MAN

Stupid, loud-mouthed American bitches.

Charlotte and Clemmie draw near to Ruth.

Annie and Trevor look toward the bar.

The pub patrons watch.

CLEMMIE

Are we bothering you, sir?

DRUNK MAN

Yes, you are. You stupid women with your "we're going to the theatre to see Antony and frigging Cleopatra", la-dee-da, got no life of your own, Helen Mirren this and Helen Mirren that, bunch of silly little girls, sexually frustrated housewives and embittered old cows! Dykes, the lot of you...

During the harangue, the Mirreneers have been watching with a detached interest, the personal insults are ineffective.

DRUNK MAN (CONT.)

Pamela Anderson Lee. Now there's an actress -

At this parting shot the Mirreneers become incensed. Clemmie is beside herself with outrage. She stutters and stammers.

CLEMMIE

Pam ... Ander-s-s-s ... L-L-L -

Clemmie finally leans forward and head butts the drunken man off his bar stool. He drops backwards without a fight.

The man's WIFE looks down at the floor at her prostrate husband. She leaps onto Clemmie, pulling her hair.

As the strains of the Rolling Stones get louder Annie jumps over the table.

As the Mirreneers come to Clemmie's aid, the pub erupts in pandemonium, and the Rolling Stones play:

I live in an apartment on the ninety-ninth floor of my block, and I sit at home looking out the window imagining the world has stopped. Then in flies a guy who's all dressed up like a Union Jack and says, I've won five pounds if I have his kind of detergent pack.

INT - PUB

Trevor stands up as if to help, notices something flying toward him, reaches out his right hand and catches a flying pint glass. First he is surprised and then self-congratulatory until three glasses smash in rapid succession around his head. He dives under the table. And the Rolling Stones play:

I says, Hey! You!
 Get off of my cloud.
 Hey! You!
 Get off of my cloud.
 Hey! You!
 Get off of my cloud.
 Don't hang around
 'cause two's a crowd
 On my cloud baby . . .

EXT - LONDON STREET - NIGHT

As the strains of the music fade, (Hey! Hey! You! You! Get off of my cloud!) a very wet group of Mirreneers walks down the street.

JANE

We are here to see one of the world's most respected and dignified actresses, and we end up getting thrown out of a pub. This is disgraceful.

CLEMMIE

He insulted HM.

JANE

He was completely inebriated. You should have ignored him for the cretin he is, not start a pub brawl! What if it gets into one of those awful London tabloids? We'll be disgraced and lose any chance of gaining an audience with HM. I didn't come all this way to get booted out of a pub soaked in beer, and to be called a hooligan by a bunch of ... of ... hooligans.

The Mirreneers troop off after Jane leaving the four and Trevor behind.

ANNIE

I hit a man square in the nose tonight. His eyes rolled back into his head and he started to bleed.

The others look at Annie in sympathy.

ANNIE

I want to do it again.

EXT - LONDON STREET

Annie and Trevor lag behind Ruth, Clemmie, and Charlotte.

ANNIE

I'm sorry it turned out like this.
We only wanted to thank you.

TREVOR

Don't worry, Annie. It was ...
interesting.

ANNIE

You must think we're nuts.

TREVOR

Oh no. Just barking mad.

Annie and Trevor share a laugh.

TREVOR

Annie, I'm going to an art
exhibition tomorrow evening. Would
you like to go?

ANNIE

I can't ... I'm married.

TREVOR

I didn't think you were wearing a
wedding ring just to thwart
unwanted attention. I'm not after
anything Annie. I just thought
you might enjoy it.

ANNIE

I don't know ...

TREVOR

No rush, think about it tonight.
I'll call you tomorrow. Fair
enough?

ANNIE

Fair enough.

CLEMMIE

Come on Annie, it's cold.

ANNIE

Well, good-bye Trevor.

TREVOR

Good night Annie. Good night
ladies and thank you for a very
interesting day.

EXT - HOTEL - DAY

Ruth, Annie, Clemmie, and Charlotte exit the Hotel dressed in costumes. Ruth is dressed like a punk, Charlotte like Carmen Miranda, Annie as a lumberjack, and Clemmie is dressed like a hooker complete with a feather boa.

INT - LORRY

The terrorists watch the four walk down the street from inside a lorry.

JAMES

They look like nutters to me.

GEORGE

They're Nouveau Riche, aren't
they? They always dress funny.

The four women walk with their London A-Z guide.

CHARLOTTE

I feel silly in this get-up.
Whose bright idea was it to mix
"COSTUME DAY" with "FIND RARE
VIDEOS OF HELEN DAY"? I mean
what's dressing up got to do with
Helen?

RUTH

Jane said it was an administrative
mix-up. After the trouble we
caused in the pub last night, I
didn't think it was the right time
to become dissident members of
HamAss.

ANNIE

I guess we'll just have to make
the best of it.

Charlotte consults a London map.

CHARLOTTE

Let's see, looks like they've given us the video stores in this area here. King's Cross.

The four women walk down the street abreast. Suddenly they are walking in slow motion with long strides, looking very cool like an MTV rap video.

INT - DRY CLEANERS ON SAME STREET

A CLERK hands some dry cleaning over a counter. The woman on the other side of the counter is Helen Mirren.

CLERK

Thank you Ms. Mirren, and good luck on tomorrow's performance.

HELEN MIRREN

Thank you very much.

EXT - STREET IN FRONT OF DRY CLEANERS

Ms. Mirren exits the shop to her car that is parked in front. She unlocks the door, gets inside, and closes the door.

INT - MS. MIRREN'S CAR

Ms. Mirren clasps her seat belt and looks first in her side view mirrors and then her rear view mirror. As she checks her lipstick the four Mirreneers appear in the mirror, chattering. Clemmie stops, points, shouts, and the other three look, notice that it is Ms. Mirren and the four of them start to run toward the car.

Ms. Mirren notices them, gives the mirror a closer look and when she realizes that Carmen Miranda, a lumberjack, a middle-aged punk, and a hooker are running toward her, she becomes alarmed and frantically starts the motor.

EXT - THE STREET

The four Mirreneers run for the car shouting "Wait, wait!" Just as they reach the car, Ms. Mirren roars away from the curb.

INT - MS. MIRREN'S CAR

As she drives away, she keeps an eye on the receding wackos.

INT - LORRY

The four kidnapppers give each other an alarmed look, and then glare at their leader.

JAMES

A friend of theirs?

As the three men get ready to protest James takes control.

JAMES (CONT.)

Look, they're just birds, they won't be any problem. We'll take the two on the end.

EDWARD

Which end? The two on the end next to the street or the two on the end closest to the buildings?

JAMES

The lumberjack and the slag.

GEORGE

Ahh, can't I have Carmen Miranda? She's a bit tasty, she is.

JAMES

No, Carmen Miranda is as tall as a bleedin' amazon. We'll take the short ones.

GEORGE

Oh I think Carmen there would be a lot shorter without that bowl of fruit on her head.

CHARLES

Won't the others object to our kidnapping their comrades?

JAMES

They're not comrades, they're just Yanks. They've got no Esprit d'Corps. Besides, they're not jolly well joined at the ovaries. They have to split up some time.

GEORGE

They're going into the tube station.

JAMES

Follow 'em. Call us on the mobile.

George/Gwynek climbs out of the mini and follows the women.

EXT - TUBE STATION, KING'S CROSS - DAY

The intrepid four exit the tube station, followed haltingly by George/Gwynek. Seconds later, the lorry drives slowly behind. It's beginning to look like a parade.

EXT - STREET - DAY

The four turn down a dark and sinister looking street.

CLEMMIE

I don't know. I'm still so worried. I don't care if Cedric is a fellow thespian, I don't like sna-

RUTH

Quiet! I don't like the looks of this place. Except for that little market there, it's practically deserted.

The women stop and get a good look at their surroundings. A sound of rushing wind is heard, and a tumbleweed goes floating by.

RUTH (CONT.)

Annie, are you sure this is the right street?

ANNIE

Yes, I'm sure. It's Richmond Gardens.

CHARLOTTE

I've got the map.

As Charlotte pulls the map from her pocket, her notepad falls on the ground. As Charlotte consults the map Clemmie reads Charlotte's notes.

CHARLOTTE (CONT.)

Oh Annie! We're on Richmond Terrace.

ANNIE

It's the same thing isn't it?

CHARLOTTE

No it's not the same thing - see?
There's Richmond Gardens, Richmond
Terrace, Richmond Place and
Richmond Mews! We're not anywhere
near the video store.

ANNIE

Is that any way to run a country?
What are these people thinking ...

CHARLOTTE

Don't blame it on the British that
you got us lost. Jesus Dorothy,
you're not in Kansas anymore.

CLEMMIE

(Reading from the notepad)
Ruth Chancellor, though
intelligent and successful has
succumbed to a case of mid-life
crisis. Clemmie Jenkins, beautiful
and talented wants to be a movie
star, not an actress, a movie
star - delusional immaturity.
Annie Marsh, saddest of all, the
complete opposite of her internet
name, Cleopatra. Cleo arrived
triumphantly in Rome on a
monstrous gold throne. Annie's
lucky to make it out of town in
her husband's 1972 Chevelle. The
trip to London may well be the
highlight of her life.

RUTH

What the hell is this? Why are
you taking notes on us?

CHARLOTTE

It's nothing personal.

ANNIE

Saddest of all is Annie?

CHARLOTTE

I'm writing a book on idol worship. I joined HamAss for a chapter on fan clubs and why people join them. Look I'm sorry, I'm going to change the names, no one will know it's you.

RUTH

Oh well, thanks very much, friend!
Let's go you guys.

Clemmie and Ruth walk away but Annie hesitates.

ANNIE

We can't just leave her here.

RUTH

She'll make out just fine.

CLEMMIE

Cedric isn't the only snake that's loose in London.

Clemmie and Ruth take off down the street.

ANNIE

You just pretended to like us.
Did you pretend to like Helen,
too?

CHARLOTTE

I do like you. And God help me
I've become just as big a fan of
Helen as the rest of you ... I have
no idea what that says about me.
But it's too late, if I don't
finish the book, I lose tenure.

Clemmie and Ruth yell from down the street.

CLEMMIE

Come on, Annie.

INT - LORRY

As Ruth and Clemmie round the corner at the end of the street, the terrorists seize their chance.

JAMES

NOW!! GO!! GO!!

EDWARD

Not the amazon! You said the punk
and the lumberjack.

JAMES

PLEASE, JUST GO!

The terrorists begin to exit the car.

JAMES

Wait! Put your masks on! We don't
want to be identified!

The men waste precious seconds as they frantically search for their
ski masks (men that they are, they've not kept track of their ski
masks).

CHARLES

That one's mine, you tosser!

GEORGE

No it's not, see I've put my name
on the tag. See there - it says
Gwynek.

JAMES

For Christ's sake just put them on
and GO!!!!!!

All four of the terrorists exit the car.

JAMES

Not you! You're the driver!

EDWARD

Oh yeah. Sorry.

EXT - STREET

As the fourth man gets back behind the wheel, The other three rush
up to Charlotte and Annie and seize them. Charlotte and Annie
immediately start screaming and kicking.

INT - STREET CORNER

Ruth and Clemmie stop.

CLEMMIE

We have to go back for Annie.

A blood-curdling scream is heard in the distance. Clemmie and Ruth
rush around the corner.

EXT - STREET

Clemmie and Ruth rush to the aid of their embattled companions. A macabre fight ensues as Ruth, using her spiked bracelet beats James about the face and shoulders. Annie, in her lumberjack boots, kicks George/Gwynek in the shins. A market clerk runs out of his store to have a look, but unable to determine which are the victims and which are the perpetrators, simply watches in fascination.

JAMES

The chloroform! Get the chloroform!
She's killing me!

The getaway driver grabs a bottle of chloroform from the glove compartment and sloppily pours some on a cloth. He races to the aid of his nearly fallen comrades. He hastily puts the cloth over Charlotte's face. She stops struggling. Then, he grabs Ruth and does her in as well.

EXT - STREET

Charlotte and Ruth lay out cold in the back of the van. George, Charles, and Edward work feverishly to get Annie into the van but each time they almost get her in, she manages to brace her jack-booted feet against the doors and prevent her abduction. One more push however, and they get her in while in the foreground Clemmie uses her spiked high heels on James who lies in the street in a fetal position.

George, Charles, and Edward struggle to put Clemmie into the van, but she has her feather boa wrapped around James' neck. Each time the three try to heave her into the van, the noose around James' neck tightens a little more. Finally they manage to throw her inside, James following immediately behind her, red in the face with a boa constricted around his neck.

George notices the clerk standing in the door.

GEORGE

(panting, and wheezing)
It's okay, they're our wives. It was their idea, you know - spice things up a bit.

The four men jump in the lorry with their quarry and drive away. The store clerk walks up to a ski mask left behind in the struggle and notices the name "GWYNEK" written inside.

INT - TERRORISTS HIDEOUT

We see the inside of the Terrorists hideout. The kitchen area is a mess, empty pizza boxes and Indian take-out litter the surfaces. We see the living area where the Mirreneers sit on the floor bound and gagged, a little confused and frightened but no worse for wear. We see the sofa where the four terrorists sit in a state of complete distress. Out of breath, their hair is mussed, their shirts are torn, their faces are scratched, and a few are sporting shiny black eyes.

JAMES

You ... have been taken ... captive by
... the Cornwall Liberation Army.
You are ... prisoners of ... war. We
will notify your people of your
status.

The four bewildered women look at each other.

INT - HOTEL - DAY

Two police officers, DETECTIVE HARDLY and CONSTABLE WINSOME, are interviewing an American MAN and a WOMAN in a very nice hotel room.

AMWAY MAN

We've taken a head count of all
our convention members and we
aren't missing anyone, Detective
Hardly.

Detective Hardly walks over to the Constable Winsome. He whispers in his ear, then stands back with his arms folded.

CONSTABLE WINSOME

I'm afraid we're going to have to
check those records again.

The woman lets out a groan.

AMWAY WOMAN

But we've checked the list three
times and we've already missed the
1:00 p.m. seminar, "Networking:
The Way To Make a Million Off Your
Friends and Family" -

DETECTIVE HARDLY

Madam, we are dealing with some
very dangerous characters here.
Terrorists, madam. Desperate
terrorists who will stop at
nothing.

AMWAY WOMAN

But I've never even heard of the Cornwall Liberation Army.

DETECTIVE HARDLY

That's because they're extremely secretive, very shadowy.

CONSTABLE WINSOME

I've never heard of them either, Guv.

DETECTIVE HARDLY

Shut it.

INT - HOTEL LOBBY

Trevor Bothwell enters the hotel lobby and approaches the reservations CLERK.

CLERK

Yes sir, can I help you?

TREVOR

I'm looking for a Mrs. Annie Marsh. Could you see if she's booked here?

CLERK

Certainly. Just one moment.

INT - HOTEL ROOM

CONSTABLE WINSOME

I'm sorry sir, madam, but I'm afraid we'll have to check that list again.

DETECTIVE HARDLY

And have the men check the loo for bugs.

AMWAY WOMAN

This is the best room in the entire hotel! There are no bugs in that bathroom, Detective Hardly!

DETECTIVE HARDLY

Covert listening devices ma'am. If you want to see your friends alive

again, we'll need your full co-operation. Winsome, come with me.

INT - HOTEL LOBBY

As Trevor waits by the reservations desk, Constable Winsome and Detective Hardly enter the lobby and stand nearby. The reservations clerk returns to speak to Trevor.

CLERK

I've just rung Jane Martin's room and no one has seen Ms. Marsh or her friends since yesterday.

TREVOR

Surely they haven't been out all night.

CLERK

Well it doesn't look like anyone slept in the room last night.

TREVOR

You don't think they've gone missing do you?

CLERK

That's what I asked Ms. Martin. She doesn't seem to be worried. Perhaps they went on an overnight trip.

TREVOR

Thanks, thanks very much. Could I leave a note for Mrs. Marsh?

CLERK

Certainly, sir.

As Trevor writes the note, he overhears the two detectives.

DETECTIVE HARDLY

I hope those poor women are found alive, Winsome, I really do. I like Americans. A bit loud and naive but ever so friendly. Now we don't want anyone to know that we found that ski mask. That little piece of information we'll just keep mum. No copycat

abductions, that way, right? Imagine being that daft that you have your name "Gwynek, the C.L.A.", inside.

Upon hearing the name "Gwynek", Trevor stops writing and looks directly at Detective Hardly and Constable Winsome. He puts the note in his pocket and notices the man next to him is holding a newspaper. The headline reads, "Group Claims Abductions."

INT - TERRORIST HIDE-OUT

The terrorists and their bound and gagged captives sit in the flat.

GEORGE

I don't understand why they haven't rung us. Do you think we were explicit enough?

JAMES

Call before 11:00 am or we'll kill the hostages. I'd say that's sufficiently explicit.

GEORGE

But we're not going to kill them.

JAMES

But the Amway people don't know that!

The captives react with big sighs and rolling eyes. Ruth tries to speak through the gag in her mouth

RUTH

Wook. Ve uhr nnt umay. Ve ur van od hehen muhen.

GEORGE

Why don't we take that gag off so she can speak?

JAMES

Are you joking? That one bites. That tetanus jab's only just calmed down.

James rubs his bandaged hand, and winces in pain. Ruth bangs her head against the wall in frustration.

JAMES

Now you stop that. I mean it, you stop that right this minute. I'll have none of that!

INT - THEATRE MUSEUM

Trevor walks briskly down a hallway and into his office.

INT - OFFICE

Trevor picks up the phone on his desk and dials. The phone rings twice and then picks up.

WOMAN ON PHONE (O.S.)

Hello?

TREVOR

Hello Mum, how are you?

MUM (O.S.)

Oh fine Trevor and how are you?

TREVOR

Very well, Mum. Listen, is George around?

MUM (O.S.)

Oh no. I haven't seen George for days. I think he's still staying with those nice boys from Cornwall.

TREVOR

Yes, what does he call himself these days?

MUM (O.S.)

Oh, I believe it's Gwynek - something like that. It's so nice he's taken an interest in history, isn't it?

TREVOR

Do you happen to know where he's been staying Mum?

INT - TERRORISTS HIDEOUT

All four of the women bang their heads against the wall in monotonous repetition.

JAMES

All right! All right. Jesus Christ. I'll take Carmen Miranda's gag off, if the rest of you promise to behave! Right? You promise? Right.

James gives the nod to Edward to remove the gag.

EDWARD

Why me? I've already been set upon by them mad cows. I don't want any more souvenirs to add to the ten stitches and the dislocated shoulder. You do it."

JAMES

Because I'm the commander of this cell that's why.

EDWARD

All the more reason you do it. Set an example with your bravery.

JAMES

Right.

James carefully removes the gag from Charlotte's mouth. She spends a few seconds trying to make her lips work.

CHARLOTTE

WHAT ... THE HELL ... IS GOING ON?!

JAMES

Like we said, you have been taken prisoner by the Cornwall Liberation Army -

CHARLOTTE

What? What did you say?!!! The CORNBALL Liberation Army? Jesus! We're not wealthy! We're not even Amway distributors.

GEORGE

You're not?

CHARLOTTE

No!! We're members of HamAss!

GEORGE

(shrieking)

Hamas? Hamas? You've landed us right in it! Any minute now a gang of masked Palestinians could burst through that door screaming "Death to the Cornish."

CHARLOTTE

Not Hamas, HamAss. The Helen Appreciation Society. We're here to watch her perform at the

CHARLOTTE (cont.)

National Theatre's production of Antony and Cleopatra - TONIGHT - and if we miss the performance so help me...

The three other gagged captives shake their heads and grunt their agreement. Three of the Terrorists look as if they'd rather be anywhere but there, but James begins laughing.

JAMES

Brilliant.

The four captives and the other three terrorists look completely confused. How could this be brilliant?

EXT - NATIONAL THEATRE

Shot of the Theatre Marquis reads : "Opening Night: Antony and Cleopatra, starring Helen Mirren."

INT - HELEN MIRREN'S DRESSING ROOM

Hardly and Winsome interview HELEN MIRREN in her dressing room. She is holding a letter in her hand. Hardly is playing the cop but Winsome is completely besotted.

HELEN MIRREN

I have no idea what this is about. I have a post box downstairs. I checked it today just like I always do. I thought it was a fan letter until I opened it and saw this: "We're holding four members of your fan club. Call us before six o'clock or we'll kill them. Signed, the Cornwall Liberation Army."

CONSTABLE WINSOME

You have a lovely, lovely voice
Ms. Mirren.

HELEN MIRREN

Thank you Constable Winsome.

DETECTIVE HARDLY

Well, Ms. Mirren. I think it's a
coincidence, don't you?

HELEN MIRREN

What is a coincidence?

DETECTIVE HARDLY

You know what I mean. Don't you?
Hm? Don't you? Hm?

HELEN MIRREN

What are you talking about?

DETECTIVE HARDLY

First Cedric the snake is reported
missing and now four of your fans?

HELEN MIRREN

What?

He leans closer to her to whisper to her.

DETECTIVE HARDLY

A publicity stunt, is it?

Helen looks bewildered at the asinine Detective and besotted
Constable. Suddenly, the light dawns. She is not amused.

HELEN MIRREN

This is one if those candid camera
thingies, isn't it? You're with
the BBC right? Very funny.

Ms. Mirren looks around the room for cameras.

HELEN MIRREN (CONT.)

Okay, the game's up. Get out of
there, right now! If you were
filming me while I was undressing,
you're in big trouble. There'll be
a writ in the post faster than you
can say 'nude scene'.

INT - TERRORIST'S HIDEOUT

James looking very serious holds a large bag in his hand. The women look up at him from the floor.

JAMES

I didn't want to have to do this
but you four asked for it, you
just remember that!

He pulls some items from the plastic bag.

JAMES (CONT.)

Right, Prime Suspect 1, Prime
Suspect 2, Prime Suspect 3, two
kebabs, one tandoori, and two fish
and chips. Are your majesties
satisfied?

The four hostages nod in agreement.

INT - CAR - DAY

Trevor drives down the crowded London streets. At the red light, he consults his London A to Z. The light turns green and the driver behind him honks.

INT - TERRORIST HIDEOUT

The captives sit on the sofa in the flat, the light from the television shines on their faces. They are watching Prime Suspect. The terrorists are busy cleaning plastic bullets and knives but are also becoming engrossed in the television. James however, is restless.

JAMES

I don't understand why she hasn't
called.

CHARLOTTE

Have you checked the batteries on
the phone?

James quickly checks the phone to see if it's working. It's not.

JAMES

Bugger!

The hostages shake their head at the stupidity and go back to the show. We see the television screen.

HELEN MIRREN as JANE TENNISON (on screen)

Right Sergeant, I'm not going to take any crap from you. And I am not going to stand by and let you stir things up. Now, either you're going to work with me or I'm going to have you transferred. So what's it going to be? Are you going to work with me or what?

SERGEANT OTLEY (on screen)

Look I was out of line back at Southampton Row, but having said that, I know you did a good job.

INT - CAR

Trevor continues to drive around London, looking at street names and cars.

INT - THE HIDEOUT

The group of Mirreneers sit with the terrorists on the couch. The terrorists take turns feeding the captives popcorn. We see the television screen.

MIRREN as TENNISON (on screen)

Dr. Gordon, I'm sorry to disturb you at home. I wanted to talk to you as soon as possible ... No, no, it's just that I would like to arrange a termination please ... Yes, I am aware that it's a very big decision but I ... Yes, I obviously have given it a great deal of thought, I want an abortion.

Sgt. Otley walks in on Tennison's conversation:

MIRREN AS TENNISON (on screen)

Bill would you just give me a moment or two of my own?

We see the captives and terrorists stricken faces.

GEORGE

Oh no she's crying. Is she really going to get rid of it?

CHARLOTTE

Yes. She'd be a terrible mother.

CHARLES

But she really loves Jake. And obviously she's broken-hearted about it.

EDWARD

Well she can't have Jake, can she? He's married.

GEORGE

And he lives in America.

CHARLES

But he told her he still loved her. He would come back to her if she would just say the word.

RUTH

Shhh.

EXT - LONDON SLUM - DAY

Trevor drives along and spots George's mini.

INT - HIDEOUT

Everyone in the flat watches the television intently. The captives are no longer tied up. Clemmie absentmindedly twirls her hair with an index finger while she watches the show.

The scene features a close-up of Helen Mirren while the actor playing Detective Haskons delivers his lines off screen.

DETECTIVE HASKONS (O.S)

We will, Ms. Smithey, be retaining tapes of your two meetings with Colin Jenkins as evidence. You'll be asked to sign a legal document, which bars you and your paper from printing ...

JESSICA SMITHEY (on screen)
 What?! You cannot stop me from
 printing!

MIRREN as TENNISON (on screen)
 I just did!

We see the hostages and terrorists on the couch.

JAMES
 Good on you, Jane! Bloody cheeky
 Smithey woman.

EXT - HIDEOUT

Trevor walks to the door of the hideout and knocks.

INT - HIDEOUT

We hear the knock on the door. No one wants to leave the television to answer the door. The captives are so relaxed they look like they live there. Finally, Charlotte elbows George in the ribs.

CHARLOTTE
 Get that will you, George? It's
 probably the pizza.

George walks to the door while keeping one eye on the television. He fumbles with the door lock, leaving the chain lock intact. He opens the door and finally looks from the television to the doorway.

GEORGE
 TREVOR! Hey, h-hey Trev. Well,
 this is a surprise!

TREVOR
 Open the door, Gwynek.

GEORGE
 Sorry, I can't.

TREVOR
 Why can't you, Gwynek?

GEORGE
 Because, well because Charles here
 has the flu, and -

Trevor steps back and with one swift kick takes the rotten door off the hinges. He steps inside to see the terrorists and the four Mirreneers on the couch watching Prime Suspect.

ANNIE

Hi Trevor.

TREVOR

Have they hurt you at all?

Annie quickly swallows her popcorn to answer.

ANNIE

No.

TREVOR

Are any of you hurt?

As the four Mirreneers shake their heads, Trevor looks at the bruised and skinned faces of the Cornwall Liberation Army.

TREVOR

You wankers. Come on ladies, I'll take you back to the hotel, and then I'm going to notify the police.

CLEMMIE

But Prime Suspect 3 isn't over yet. Couldn't we finish it first?

Trevor looks unbelieving at the eager hostages.

INT - TREVOR'S CAR - DAY

A chagrined George (Gwynek) sits in the back seat sandwiched between Ruth, Charlotte, and Clemmie. Annie rides in the front with Trevor. Trevor pulls up in front of the hotel. The three Mirreneers exit the back seat. Annie remains in the front. Repentant, George looks down.

TREVOR

I can't tell you how much I appreciate that you and your friends won't be pressing charges. We are very grateful, aren't we George? It'd killed his mother.

GEORGE

Oh yes, Mrs. Marsh, very grateful.

ANNIE

It's okay. It was nice meeting you George. Don't forget there's Prime Suspect 4, 5 and 6. And I'm sorry about the black eye.

GEORGE

I'm sorry I kidnapped you.

TREVOR

Annie ... will you come back - when the new Helen Mirren Wing of the Museum is finished?

ANNIE

I wouldn't miss it for the world. Good-bye Trevor.

Annie climbs out of the vehicle and watches as Trevor drives away.

EXT - NATIONAL THEATRE - EVENING

A long line of people wait to be admitted to the National Theatre. PETER FONDA, the actor, waits in line, reading a newspaper. The headline reads, "Kidnap story a hoax!" Behind him our intrepid Mirreneers, dressed in their finest clothes, wait excitedly.

CHARLOTTE

Excuse me, Mr. Fonda, do you have the time?

PETER FONDA

Why yes, it's a quarter to seven.

CHARLOTTE

Thank you.

The Mirreneers resume their chatter.

INT - THEATRE

As the ushers prepare for the evening's patrons, we look down at an open door and to the floor as Cedric slithers out and furtively crawls around the corner.

INT - THEATRE

The Usher shows a couple to their seat. As the woman places her purse on the floor next to her feet, Cedric slithers slowly past, barely missing the woman's hand.

INT - THEATRE

The Mirreneers excitedly follow an usher to their seats in the fourth and fifth rows. They settle and talk among themselves.

INT - THEATRE

Detective Hardly and the Constable are seated, and looking around suspiciously.

Below their seats, Cedric slithers happily on his way.

INT - THEATRE

The buzzing of conversation ends abruptly as the lights go down and the musical prelude fills the hall. The audience settle in for the show. The Mirreneers sit with barely contained excitement as if they are waiting for the rockets to fire on the space shuttle.

INT - STAGE

Two actors enter the stage, and begin speaking their lines

INT - FOURTH ROW

Clemmie leans forward.

CLEMMIE

Only nine more lines and she
enters the stage. Seven ... six ...
five -

RUTH

Shh, Clemmie!

CLEMMIE

Three ... two ... one.

INT - STAGE

Helen Mirren enters the stage as Cleopatra.

CLEMMIE

THERE SHE IS!!

INT - FOURTH ROW

The group shush her.

INT - STAGE

Helen Mirren, hearing the outburst stops only for a second, but quickly recovers to deliver her lines.

INT - FOURTH ROW

Clementine swoons, the rest look gobsmacked.

INT - THEATRE FLOOR

As Helen Mirren's voice is heard, Cedric slithers between the legs of a man, continues under another row, and over a woman's purse.

The Detective is keeping a close eye on things.

HELEN MIRREN (O.S.)

Nay, pray you, seek no color for
your going, but bid farewell, and
go; when su'd staying then was the
time for words; no going then,
eternity was in our lips and eyes,

INT - THEATRE - FOURTH ROW

Clemmie mouths the lines word for word.

HELEN MIRREN (O.S)

O Charmian, where think'st thou he
is now? Stands he, or sits he? Or
does he walk? or is he on his
horse? O happy horse!! To bear the
weight of Antony!

At the line, "Oh happy horse"! Clemmie dramatically throws back her head in ecstasy.

INT - STAGE

During the crucial death scene, Helen Mirren stands on stage holding the stand-in asp to her breast to administer the fatal strike.

INT - AUDIENCE

The Mirreneers sit grief-stricken.

Constable Winsome sobs uncontrollably.

INT - FOURTH ROW

Underneath Clemmie's seat, Cedric, presumably trying to make his way to his thespian mistress, slithers over Clemmie's high-heeled foot. We look up to Clemmie's tear streaked face, and then back down to her foot, as her right foot raises to scratch the foot where Cedric crawls across her ankle. He barely passes Clemmie's detection as her left foot continues to scratch her right foot.

HELEN MIRREN (O.S.)

Give me my robes, put on my crown;
I have immortal longings in me.
Now no more the juice of Egypt's
grape shall moist this lip ...

INT - AUDIENCE

Charlotte, suddenly struck with a puzzled look, peers down at the floor by her feet.

Cedric looks up into Charlotte's face as she recognizes the thing at her feet.

INT - STAGE

Looking from the Stage we see Charlotte, who suddenly jumps up from her seat holding Cedric aloft, and shouts.

CHARLOTTE

It's Cedric! I've found Cedric!

INT - STAGE

Helen Mirren stops, looks out to the audience as Charlotte's discovery is met with a momentary silence.

INT - FOURTH ROW

A startled Clemmie jumps up from her seat and lets forth a blood-curdling scream and begins climbing over the seats behind her, frantically making her escape up the center of the theatre aisles, scrambling over the patrons who react with hysteria. The other patrons begin running and screaming out of the theatre as ushers try vainly to calm them down. The theatre is in pandemonium as the place clears out faster than an air raid.

INT - AUDIENCE

The theatre is near empty, and ethereally silent. A few members of the intrepid group remain, looking at HM and back at the now almost deserted theatre.

INT - STAGE

Helen Mirren, still holding Cedric's replacement stands utterly stunned at the spectacle she has just witnessed. She stares down at Charlotte, still holding Cedric aloft.

CHARLOTTE

I found Cedric.

HELEN MIRREN

Yes, I can see that. But your timing was ... tragic.

She turns and walks quietly off the stage. The theatre is deathly quiet at the exit of Helen Mirren.

INT - FOURTH ROW

ANNIE

She spoke to you. Helen Mirren spoke to you.

Charlotte and Annie smile at each other and then notice that what is left of the theatre patrons, eye Charlotte with murder in their eyes.

JANE

You four have been a disaster ever since you got here. We, the normal members of HMAS, pride ourselves in being discerning and intelligently devoted fans of Helen Mirren. You four, on the other hand, might have done better with the Sex Pistols.

The rest of the Helen Mirren Appreciation Society haughtily exit the rows, as our heroines turn to exit, a stern USHER and Detective Hardly and Constable Winsome stop them.

DETECTIVE HARDLY

Constable Winsome, take custody of Cedric, please.

Charlotte sheepishly hands Cedric to the Constable. They turn and walk away.

The usher looks at the women with contempt.

USHER

I trust you er, ladies can find
your way out!

EXT - LONDON STREETS - LATE NIGHT

Ruth, Clemmie, Annie, and Charlotte walk on glumly.

INT - PUB

The glum group sits in a pub booth.

RUTH

Maybe Jane was right. Maybe we're
just not Helen Mirren Appreciation
Society material. We've been
fairly inappropriate.

ANNIE

I had hoped when I came here that
I would be different. That I
would be more like HM, you know?
Take charge of my life, decide my
own fate, for a change. But
everything seems beyond my

ANNIE (CONT.)

control. Maybe Sam is right, maybe
I'll never be anything but a
sliver picker.

CLEMMIE

I wanted a chance to see how she
does it. What is it she has that's
captured our attention. If I could
figure that out, maybe I can make
that same thing happen for me.
Maybe someday my work and the way
I've lived my life will make
people love me, too.

RUTH

She made me think that if I were
just brave enough and committed
enough, I can one day look back on
my life and say, "Ruth, you left
your mark. And it was one hell of
a ride."

ANNIE

Why do people join fan clubs Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE

It's a coping mechanism for people who need to believe that heroes exist. They want to feel touched by magic in a temporal world. Feeling trapped by their own existence and believing they are incapable of brilliance themselves, people have for centuries looked to others for inspiration and intervention.

CLEMMIE

That's it! I'm quitting the Helen Mirren Appreciation Society.

RUTH

I don't think we have a choice. Ten bucks says we've been kicked out of the Helen Mirren Appreciation Society.

CHARLOTTE

But, we'll still be friends right?

ANNIE

I don't think I want to be reminded of this. I just want to go home. I miss Sam.

The dejected Mirreneers look glumly into their pints when suddenly, Helen Mirren herself enters the pub and proceeds to the ladies room. Clemmie looks up and notices her.

CLEMMIE

Hey Guys! It's her. It's her!

The group watches Helen walk through the pub.

INT - PUB HALLWAY

Helen enters the ladies room.

INT - LOO STALL

Inside the stall, Helen checks her lipstick in a handheld mirror. She opens the stall door to find our heroines standing there. Startled, she turns as if to run but of course cannot because there

is only one way out of a loo. She looks warily at the group. Her eyes focus on Charlotte.

HELEN MIRREN

You! It's you!

She looks at Clemmie.

HELEN MIRREN (CONT.)

And you, you're the one who ran through the theatre screaming your bloody head off!

CLEMMIE

Ms. Mirren I am so sorry, but Cedric ...

CHARLOTTE

I'm sitting there, I feel something at my feet, I look down, and there he is looking right up at me...

ANNIE

We didn't mean to cause trouble.

RUTH

Please don't be angry with us.

HELEN MIRREN

It's all right. I'm relieved that Cedric was found safe. He's always been difficult to work with - an unrepentant scene-stealer - But I really am grateful that you found him and kept him safe during the, the er, conflagration.

Our heroines look at each other with delight.

RUTH

Miss Mirren, Could we buy you a drink at our hotel? Our small way of saying we're sorry?

HELEN

After tonight, you owe me more than one drink.

INT - HOTEL BAR

Ruth holds a phone in the downstairs bar.

INT - HOTEL ROOM

The phone rings in a hotel room full of Mirreneers, each one of them wearing a nightshirt with Helen Mirren on the front. Jane answers the phone.

JANE

Hello.

INT - HOTEL BAR

RUTH

Jane, it's Ruth Chancellor.

INT - ROOM

JANE

What the hell do you want?

INT - BAR

RUTH

We need to speak with you and the whole group, please? We're in the bar downstairs.

INT - ROOM

JANE

Absolutely not! We never want to see any of you again.

RUTH (O.S.)

Oh come on, Jane. We've got a surprise for you.

JANE

I think we've had quite enough of your surprises.

INT - HOTEL BAR

RUTH

The drinks are on us. Come on what do you say?

INT - HOTEL ROOM

Jane's eyes light up at the offer of free drinks.

JANE

Group, It's the blunder sisters.
They're downstairs and would like
to apologize and make restitution.

MIRRENEER 2

Forget it!

MIRRENEER 3

No way! Not me!

BRITISH WANNABE MIRRENEER

(losing her British accent)

Tell 'em to fuck off!

JANE

Now ladies, please! They've
offered to buy our drinks.

The members of HMAS look at each other.

INT - HOTEL BAR

The disgruntled Helen Mirren Appreciation Society walks into the bar and sees the intrepid four at a large table. Ruth stands in front of the table.

JANE

This had better be good.

RUTH

We are sorry for all the trouble
we caused and we've brought
someone along who might help you
to forget about this evening's
debacle. Ladies, we'd like to
introduce you someone we just met
tonight.

As Ruth steps aside she reveals Helen Mirren, seated and enjoying a kir royale.

HELEN MIRREN

Hello ladies. I trust you enjoyed
the performance tonight? What
there was of it, anyway.

INT - HOTEL BAR

Helen and her sycophants laugh and sip drinks.

RUTH

Ms. Mirren -

HELEN MIRREN

Please, call me Helen.

RUTH

Helen, you've made a lot of dreams come true today, we want to thank you.

HELEN MIRREN

You made your dreams come true. I can't believe that you all came such a long distance just to see the play.

CHARLOTTE

Ms. Mirren, er, Helen. I teach a psychology course on hero worship. And I guess, well that's kind of what you are for us. A hero. Can you give me your thoughts on what it's like to be the object of such devotion?

HELEN MIRREN

It's difficult to understand from my perspective because you see, much of the time I live the same way you do. I shop for groceries, prepare meals, and do dishes. When I'm working it usually means long hours, stress, and boredom. Once in a while I get to dress up and go out. So, I really don't see that my life differs so much from yours. I sometimes wonder when I look in a mirror if the person you see is the same one I see. Perhaps there are parallel realities at work.

ANNIE

Some of us are thinking of making some big changes in our lives. Have you got any words of advice you could give us?

HELEN MIRREN

Yes, I do. Ralph Waldo Emerson said: "A woman should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across her mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages. Yet she dismisses without notice her thought, because it is hers. In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts; they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to bide by our spontaneous impression with good-humoured inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else tomorrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be forced to take with shame our own opinion from another".

CLEMMIE

You mean, be your own muse?

HELEN

Yes, be your own muse.

The group contemplate Helen's profound words for a moment.

JANE

I'd like to propose a toast- to a superb actress, and a really nice person - to Helen Mirren.

The group respond with raucous cheering.

HELEN MIRREN

Thank you. Thank you. And to you wonderful people who've come all this way. I am flattered. To H -

H- H- M- M. I'm sorry, what do you call yourselves?

JANE

It's HamAss.

HELEN MIRREN

HamAss? Really? It's ... Ham Ass?

JANE

Yep. It's Ham Ass.

Helen shrugs her shoulders and gives a rousing cheer.

HELEN MIRREN

TO HAM ASS!!!

The group all let out a cheer, "To HamAss!"

Suddenly Helen looks at Charlotte quizzically.

HELEN MIRREN

Have we met before?

CHARLOTTE

No.

HELEN MIRREN

You remind me of someone.

CHARLOTTE

Who?

HELEN MIRREN

(beat) Carmen Miranda.

As the four women pretend there is no connection, Helen starts looking at each one of them. She shakes off the confusion as the four women look at each other sheepishly.

EXT - FRONT OF HOTEL - MORNING

The four Mirreneers load their luggage into the black cab. Trevor helps.

Clemmie, Ruth, and Charlotte each say goodbye to Trevor who hugs them in return. Annie says good-bye, Trevor takes her hand and gently kisses it and puts it to his cheek. Annie backs away from him and follows the others into the cab.

INT - CAB

As the cab pulls into the street, Annie looks out the back window at the receding figure of Trevor.

EXT - STREET

Trevor waves at the cab.

INT - CAB

Annie turns around and looks at her friends. Everyone smiles at each other gently, soberly - the real world awaits their return.

INT - AIRPLANE

The Mirreneers sit on the plane. Some admire their pictures of the group with Helen and the individual pictures of themselves with Helen.

Clemmie, seated next to the window looks out deep in thought.

Ruth sits back in her seat looking at the ceiling.

A sober Annie looks at her picture of the four Mirreneers and Trevor.

Charlotte looks at her note-book and slowly begins to tear up the pages.

INT - AIRPORT

Charlotte walks through the international gate and down the long hallway sees Abby and Daddy. Abby sees her mother and runs as fast as she can to Charlotte, who scoops her up in a bear hug.

INT - RUTH'S HOUSE

Ruth enters the house and immediately looks through the mail. She sees a letter from the bank and drops everything in the hallway to open it. As she reads the letter it's clear that she had been denied funding to open her Jacobean Repertory group. She is heartsick.

INT - APARTMENT

Clemmie enters her apartment with her luggage and turns on a light to reveal Elizabeth sitting on the couch. Elizabeth rises and approaches Clemmie with a smile on her face.

EXT - ANNIE'S TRAILER HOUSE - DAY

Annie arrives in a cab and gets out. The driver takes her luggage out of the trunk. She pays him and he returns to the car. As the cab drives away Annie begins to look around the yard littered with all of Sam's toys. The sky is overcast, puddles dot the landscape. Annie gets a good long look at it. She picks up her luggage, turns and walks down the road away from the trailer house.

ONE YEAR LATER

INT - NONDESCRIPT ROOM

Charlotte speaks to the unseen interviewer.

CHARLOTTE

So inspired by the fan club, I got off the tenure track, and wrote a novel instead.

INT - MORNING SHOW STUDIO

Finally we see that Charlotte is being interviewed by KATIE COURIC.

KATIE COURIC

I know you've said this is fiction but some of the newspaper accounts of your time in London have checked out. For instance there was a kidnapping report that was put down to a hoax and there was indeed a panic at the National Theatre.

CHARLOTTE

We had nothing to do with either of those events, merely coincidences that I took advantage of in forming my own story.

KATIE

Well it is a delightful romp with a cast of zany characters! In fact we have in the studio three members of the fan club who you say inspired you to write the book. This is Ruth Chancellor, Clementine Jenkins, and Annie

Marsh. Good morning to you ladies. We know how HamAss has changed Charlotte's life, have the three of you experienced similar changes in the year since you all met in London? Clemmie?

CLEMMIE

I entered an intensive therapy plan to recover from ophidiophobia and exofresnophobia.

KATIE

I know that ophidiophobia is a fear of snakes. But what is exofresnophobia?

CLEMMIE

A fear of leaving Fresno.

KATIE

Has therapy been successful?

CLEMMIE

Yes, I live here in New York now with my partner Elizabeth whose work is featured at the Sixth Avenue Gallery. And I am currently studying under an acting coach and appearing in an off, off, off-Broadway production.

KATIE

And Ruth, what have you been doing in the past year?

RUTH

I gave up a twenty year law practice to become Charlotte's literary agent. I now manage her and a few other writers as well. I really enjoy doing it, too.

KATIE

Annie, that leaves you.

ANNIE

I'm a student at open university in London, where I live with my husband, Trevor.

KATIE

And it appears you have a baby on the way.

ANNIE

If it's a girl we're going to name her Helen Charlotte Ruth Clementine.

KATIE

We understand Helen Mirren will be bringing her Cleopatra to New York. Will you folks be there?

RUTH

You can bet HamAss will be out in force. Well, maybe not Annie, because her due date is opening night-

ANNIE

Oh no, I'll be there. My doctor says that's the due date but I'm pretty sure I've got at least a week before the baby comes. I'll be there - big as life and sitting right on the front row!

KATIE

Does Ms. Mirren know you'll be there?

RUTH

We're not exactly sure ...

CHARLOTTE

... she hasn't returned any of our attempts at communication ...

ANNIE

... phone calls, letters, emails, faxes ...

CLEMMIE

Zip!

RUTH

Ms. Mirren if you're out there, we want to assure you,
and I think I can speak for HamAss
International when I say this, we
will be on our very best behavior.

CLEMMIE

Has anyone heard if Cedric is
coming?

EXT - MAJESTIC THEATRE NEW YORK - NIGHT

The marquis reads: HELEN MIRREN IN ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA."

INT - MAJESTIC THEATRE

Helen Mirren stands on stage as Cleopatra delivering her
lines.

HELEN MIRREN

Give me my robes, put on my crown;
I have immortal longings in me.
Now no more the juice of Egypt's
grape shall moist this lip ...

Suddenly a commotion is heard off screen.

ANNIE (OF SCREEN)

Oh my God! My water's just broke!

FADE OUT.