

Chequered Justice
Screenplay by
John & Mary Bartlett

Based on Dark Horse & Chequered Justice by John Bartlett

© John Bartlett
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44 1622 754280

BLACK SCREEN:

A red digital clock displays **+19:59:30** on bottom of an otherwise blank screen. Urgent background SOUNDS/voices from inside BBC control room. Current affairs programme, PANORAMA about to go live.

VIDEO CONTROLLER O/S
(powerful and assured)
Thirty seconds!

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR O/S
Standby camera three!

VIDEO CONTROLLER O/S
Ten seconds!

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR O/S
Robin, about twenty seconds to you...

VIDEO CONTROLLER O/S
(powerful and assured)
Six, five, four, three, two...

Digital clock reaches: **19:59:59** - *MUSIC KICKS IN HARD*
Aujourd'hui C'est Toi (Panorama theme), then SILENCE.

A small 4:3 ASPECT RATIO B&W SCREEN. BBC ARCHIVE - PANORAMA
05/04/1993 with ROBIN DAY and PAUL CONDON (Commissioner,
Met. Police).

SUPERIMPOSE:

1993

BBC PANORAMA MARCH - FAIR COPS?

PAUL CONDON (ARCHIVE)
I think there was a time when a minority of officers were prepared to bend the rules. I think they were prepared to massage the evidence. Not for personal gain or not even, in their own terms, to tell lies about people. But I think elaborating on things that were said in a way to make sure that the case had the strongest chance of going through to a conviction, often the truth was the casualty in the process of convicting criminals.

CLOSE on PAUL CONDON'S lips. Grainy image
I think there was a time when a minority of officers were
(MORE)

PAUL CONDON (ARCHIVE) (CONT'D)
*prepared to bend the rules. I
 think they were prepared to
 massage the evidence...*

END ARCHIVE INSERT

FADE IN:

SUPERIMPOSUR:

*Based on the novels: **DARK HORSE & CHEQUERED JUSTICE** by
John Bartlett. This film is a dramatized reenactment of
 real events, relying on documents from police, solicitors
 and both public and personal records from that time.*

Opening scenes (Study, Boxing Ring, Brighton
 Promenade) shot in 60s "Kodachrome" style.

1 INT. BOYS SCHOOL - CORRIDOR/STUDY - DAY - 1962 1

SUPERIMPOSUR:

SPRING, 1962 - BRIGHTON, EAST SUSSEX

Camera passes school motto: **school motto: 'altiora peto',
 striving, always, to seek higher things.** Pass wall of B&W
 photos of former boys in school uniform, towards
 HEADMASTERS STUDY. Background boys choir sings **He Who
 Would Valiant Be.**

2 INT. HEADMASTERS STUDY - DAY - 1962 - CONTINUING 2

Desk with Army prints and campaign medals. Distant SOUND
 of RHYTHMIC MARCHING - BOOTS POUNDING - REGIMENTAL
 BELLOWS. SCHOOL STUDY and BOXING RING mainly shot using
 extreme close-ups alternating two sets; eyes, tub of
 Players Digger mixture, fingers stuffing tobacco strands
 into old briar pipe, nicotine stained thumb packing
 tobacco, match STRIKE and FLARE, blue pipe smoke.

CLOSE on bright blue 7-year-old boy's eyes, one bruised
 and swollen. 1960s school uniform, short grey trousers,
 white collared shirt, red/white striped tie, red school
 blazer. Bent over desk, boy can't move, pinned down by
 elderly, overweight female teacher.

HEADMASTER

Your reading remains appalling,
 your spelling inexcusable and
 your handwriting illegible. Also
 I have to say your behaviour in
 the ring was most underhand!

FLICKS wispy bamboo cane.

You have little respect for your
 elders and no respect whatsoever

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HEADMASTER (CONT'D)
for rules, Middleton. You dealt
Rife a very low blow in the ring
yesterday!

WILL MIDDLETON (BOY)
But I couldn't reach his head,
sir...

HEADMASTER
(interrupts)
That's irrelevant, boy

WILL MIDDLETON (BOY)
But, sir...

HEADMASTER
... do not speak unless spoken
to, boy!

WILL MIDDLETON (BOY)
(Wriggling, muttering
defiantly)
But you did spoke to me, sir!

3 INT. SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - BOXING RING SEQUENCE - DAY 1962 3

A) Will and gangly boy, RIFE, twice his height, in 60s gym
kit, both wear boxing gloves, Will's oversized, shorts too
big.

B) BELL RINGS. BAM - BAM - BAM! Combination of powerful
jabs from Rife IMPACTS Will's head.

C) EGGED ON by CRONIES, Rife plays to admirers; twisting
head side to side, loosening up, throwing punches at
shadows, with SHORT exaggerated GRUNTS. Punch hits Will in
eye.

D) Spectating boys JUMP up CHEERING.

E) Headmaster delighted

HEADMASTER

Dressed as referee
That's it, Rife! Aim for his
head, boy! His head!

4 WILL MIDDLETON'S P.O.V - BOXING RING: 4

Will MIDDLETON'S P.O.V: - Stunned, everything slows down;
lights flicker. Can't reach up to punch Rife's head. Will
STAGGERS, tries to hold up gloves against onslaught.
DISTORTED CHEERS - LOUDER. Rife - SLOW MOTION - BOUNCING
around Will. Image drifts in and out of focus. With every
bounce Will sees unrestrained target bouncing around in
Rife's shorts. Brief recognition in Will's eyes...

(CONTINUED)

BACK TO SCENE - NOW, IN REGULAR MOTION

5 SEQUENCE OF SHOTS 5

A) THUD! Will explodes left glove into Rife's groin!

B) Rife CRUMPLES to knees, a collapsing tower block.

C) Now at eye level Will's right cross instantly CONNECTS bridge of Rife's nose. BRIEF SLOW MOTION - CRUNCH! Impressive eruption of blood.

D) CHEERING STOPS. Bully lies foetally, WHIMPERING, hands cradling groin, blood pumping from nose.

E) Headmaster peers down on Rife. Turns to Will who's broadly grinning, over-sized gloves raised in victory.

HEADMASTER

My study, 10.30 tomorrow!

6 INT. BOYS SCHOOL HEADMASTERS STUDY - DAY - CONTINUING 6

SEE and HEAR HEADMASTER SCRAPING chalk stick methodically along bamboo cane.

HEADMASTER

(matter-of-fact tone)

Do you have anything of merit to add in your defence before punishment is administered, Middleton?

WILL MIDDLETON (BOY)

Yes Sir, I do, Sir!

HEADMASTER

I'm waiting, boy.

WILL MIDDLETON (BOY)

Now fighting back tears

It's not fair, sir!

HEADMASTER

You'll amount to nothing in this life, Middleton... do you hear me... Nothing!

HEAR SWISH and CRACK of cane. SEE Will's eyes wincing, watering, now registering increasing defiance. Background, RHYTHMIC MARCHING slowly blends with each cane CRACK. ANGLE SHIFTS to reveal, through window, military kitted boys paraded around playground by ex-Regimental Sergeant Major. Background choir: **He Who Would Valiant Be.** Cut back to headmaster's eyes as continues to sadistically cane.

PULL BACK THROUGH STUDY WINDOW TO REVEAL...

7

EXT. AFTERNOON - BRIGHTON PROMENADE - DAY - 1962

7

Bird's-eye view, clear blue sky, floating in FLOCK of NOISY seagulls. Below SEE waves CRASHING against seashore. Occasional glimpse of small Will in school uniform, exuding energy, hand held by NANNY, blonde, slight, mid-twenties, in typical 60's outfit walking along seafront. Camera circles closer on Will. SOUNDS SLOWLY RECEDE.

SUPERIMPOSUR:

CAVENDISH PLACE, BRIGHTON, ENGLAND.

Will, age 7, school cap askew, half-mast long socks. Being led by up hill to small hotel by frustrated nanny. Will defiantly pulls away. RUNS to white DAIMLER DART sports car REVERSING into parking space. CLOSE ON WILL'S FACE. Eyes wide with wonder. Car door OPENS. Racing driver GRAHAM HILL emerges, collects case from boot. Walks to hotel entrance.

WILL MIDDLETON (BOY)

Mister

Will motions towards car

WILL MIDDLETON (BOY)CONT'D

What car's this?

Hill turns as nanny's hand gives THUNDEROUS SLAP to back of Will's head. He winces but doesn't cry.

WILL MIDDLETON (BOY)CONT'D

Who's that man?

NANNY

That's Mr Hill. He's a famous racing driver. He's staying at your father's hotel.

Before nanny stops him, Will sticks his thumb of free hand against his freckled nose, pokes out his tongue, waggles remaining outstretched fingers mischievously.

WILL MIDDLETON (BOY)

(very determined)

One day, when I grow up, I'm going to be a famous racing driver, just like you!

Nanny drags Will off by ear. Hill watches, head cocked slightly, winks at Will. Raises thumb to his nose, grinning, returns salute. Nanny self-consciously nods apology. Hill smiles at Will.

(CONTINUED)

Extreme close up of Will's excited sparking blue eyes...

OVER THIS:

NANNY (O/S V/O)

*If you don't learn to behave,
Master Middleton, I doubt you'll
survive long enough to get a
licence!*

Extreme close up. Will's eyes slowly morph into adult Will, racing driver, 30s. "Kodachrome" effect ENDS. Camera pulls back to reveal Will, in race helmet, strapped into cockpit of Tiga Group C Prototype. COSWORTH DFV ENGINE SCREAMING GRADUALLY BUILDS. Midfield in World Championship race. An underdog, fighting in underfunded, unreliable car, almost falling apart...

8 EXT. SANDOWN RACE TRACK, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA - DAY - 1988
8

SUPERIMPOSUR:

**SANDOWN INTERNATIONAL RACE TRACK, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA
NOVEMBER 1988 (26 YEARS LATER).**

Archive film and commentary (Duke Archive 3606ED) from Melbourne WSPC race intermixed with SERIES OF SHOTS - Archive COMMENTATOR informs race positions. Fast edits, alternating between high speed and ultra slow motion on turbos, sparks and suspension breakage.

OVER THIS:

9 SEQUENCE OF SHOTS 9

A) Shot of Will's rev counter flicking to 9,000 accompanied by stomach wrenching high-pitch engine scream

B) Shot of Will's right foot twitching across to jab brake pedal. Brake pads explode onto glowing red carbon discs

10 WILL MIDDLETON P.O.V - FIGHTING TO CONTROL RACE CAR: 10

Track BLURS past. Will fights to control car; on the ragged edge, can't push any harder.

D) Sparks showering from cars skid blocks

F) CGI of inner workings of rear suspension - something breaking.

G) Will's RIGHT hand snatches a gear. Race leader shoots past.

H) CGI of TURBOS POPPING, flames billowing

(CONTINUED)

I) Will's car twitches violently. Without warning section of rear suspension EXPLODES through bodywork.

J) Car SLEWS sideways across track, sends up dirt rooster tail. Car stops in GRAVEL trap.

Inside cockpit Will removes helmet, peels off balaclava and gloves. Eases into bright sun. RUNS across track, JUMPS Armco barrier separating track from pits. Pretty BETH, Will's wife (age 28), wearing frayed cut-off jeans and team race shirt RUNS up, worried look on face. Holds clipboard and stopwatch.

BETH

Are you okay, darling? What happened?

Hands him red sport towel. He rubs dry wet sweaty hair.

WILL MIDDLETON

Age 30, tanned, athletic
Just another crap part!

Will's team in background - less than quarter size of other teams in pit lane. Team Manager walks over, resigned look on face. Will nods acknowledgement.

TEAM MANAGER

You broke it... again!

WILL MIDDLETON

Your second-hand bits broke!

TEAM MANAGER

You were pushing the old crate too hard.

WILL MIDDLETON

Everything my end was under control...

TEAM MANAGER

Raising eyebrows, grins

I'd hate to be running you when everything was out of control! If you'd find some more money, we wouldn't have to use everyone's castoffs!

WILL MIDDLETON

Grins

Believe me... I'm working on it!

Will tosses team manager his helmet, places arm around Beth. Kisses her. They turn to walk off.

(CONTINUED)

TEAM MANAGER

So... where are you two going?
So... where are you two going?

Will and Beth smile back over shoulders.

WILL MIDDLETON

Season's over... we're off for a long overdue honeymoon!

TEAM MANAGER

Walks to pit garage, grinning
So! I'll sweep up the debris shall I?

DISSOLVE TO BLACK

SUPERIMPOSUR:

BATU FERRINGUI BEACH, PENANG.

FADE IN:

11 EXT. AERIAL SHOT - BATU FERRINGUI BEACH, PENANG - DAY - 1988 11

Low level shot along two-miles of coral sand. Camera dives towards sea, CUT TO: Two Scuba divers, Will and Beth, rolling off boat, descending into tropical blue water, Beth in skimpy bikini, Will in trunks. Follow directly above divers bubble stream as they head spiralling, like a dance, towards wreck remains.

12 MONTAGE SEQUENCE - WILL & BETH HOLIDAY - IN LOVE 12

DIVERS ascending from depth to beach. We track Will & Beth on holiday over a series of locations; sunbathing, swimming, jet skiing, eating, loving.

END MONTAGE

13 EXT. HOTEL STABLES - BATU FERRINGUI BEACH - DAY - BATU FERRINGUI BEACH - DAY - 1988 13

Will stands by very frisky black ARAB STALLION with wild eyes. Ominous storm clouds and GALE FORCE WINDS BLOWING. Beth clearly uneasy about Will riding today. Will hoists up into saddle, gathers up reins, adjusts leathers. Sweat glistens on stallion's coat, BUCKS irritably, SNORTING, shaking head. Will RIDES out of stable yard, onto beach. Tightens girth. GALLOPS off.

14 SERIES OF SHOTS - WILL RIDING ALONG BEACH 14

Alternating between normal speed and ultra slow motion:

- A) Sideways TROTting
- B) GALLOPING full speed
- C) Horses neck stretched out horizontally
- D) Sweat sticking Will's shirt to back
- E) Foam flecks forming in horses mouth
- F) Will reining horse to standstill by CROWD watching FAT EUROPEAN PARASAILOR
- G) BEACH MERCHANTS YELL instructions to parasailor swinging around perilously beneath billowing sail

END SERIES OF SHOTS

BEACH MERCHANTS

Kiri, kiri. Tolak kiri, bodoh!

BEACH BOY tries to climb rope - sudden BLAST of wind jerks him from rope. Lands with SPLASH in sea below. Suddenly VIOLENT GUST inverts red canopy, sends it FLAPPING into sky. In stallion's wild eyes SEE para-sailor SPLASH down into sea. Horse LEAPS sideways in horror, REARS up. Ground RUSHES up. BLACK

SUPERIMPOSUR:

2 YEARS LATER

FADE IN:

15 MAIN TITLES RUN THROUGHOUT MONTAGE - END OF 80S ERA 15

Archive TV News reports show stock market meltdown 1989/90. Stock market screens turn RED, signal dramatic downturn. Newspaper headlines: **Record unemployment, Crumbling economy, Freddie Mercury dead!, Robert Maxwell found dead!** Intercut with **archive race footage** of "Will". **Executives walking from offices carrying boxes,** worried yuppies on mobiles. Long unemployment queues. End on Thatcher leaving Downing Street in tears

END MONTAGE

16

INT. NATIONAL CHARTER BANK - MANAGERS OFFICE - DAY

16

Will sits opposite manager. A fly BUZZES in death vortex on window sill. Will's fixated by fly - "tuned-out". CLOSE on managers lips. Dialogue distorted, slowed. VOICE drops out for a moment; overpowered by buzzing.

BANK MANAGER
(background dialogue
distorted, slowed)
Who could've foreseen the
collapse of the economy? The
team's clearly insolvent now it's
assets are unrecoverable and
written off.

Fly buzzing STOPS abruptly

BANK MANAGER (CONTINUING)
Will! Will!

WILL MIDDLETON
Yes...

BANK MANAGER
You do understand what I'm
saying, Will?

CLOSE on Will

WILL MIDDLETON
(looks distracted but
speaking clearly)
Yes... You're saying Team
Capricorn owes forty grand. Its
debtors have filed for
bankruptcy, so we won't be
getting what we're owed. My teams
effectively insolvent and you
won't lend any more... I think
that was the gist?

BANK MANAGER
And there's the matter of the
personal undertaking you gave
us...
(beat)
...for twenty grand.

WILL MIDDLETON
Oh, yeah... and of course
theirs that!

BANK MANAGER
You understand, it's not my
decision, Will.

(CONTINUED)

WILL MIDDLETON

I know.

BANK MANAGER

So, what are your plans?

WILL MIDDLETON

Join the growing unemployed, I suppose. At least our mortgage and car finance are protected...

BANK MANAGER

Knowing you, Will, I'm sure you'll come up with something new the moment you step out this door!

17 EXT. NATIONAL CHARTER BANK - STEPS OUTSIDE - DAY 17

Will stands on bank steps, staring ahead, totally deflated, all seems lost. Customers push past. 80s generation pager BLEEPs. CLOSE ON pager display showing: **ROB ALLAN**. Will grimaces, irritated.

18 EXT/INT. SERIES OF SHOTS 18

Will arrives home, despondent. Walks into study. Looks at photos on wall: family, holidays, racing. Turns away, sits, head in hands.

Outside Job Centre, Will watches downcast as hopeless unemployed men queue outside.

OVER THIS:

JOB CENTRE STAFF O/S

And your last job was driving racing cars!... for 13 years?

WILL MIDDLETON O/S

Yes

JOB CENTRE STAFF O/S

Why did you leave your last job?

WILL MIDDLETON O/S

I didn't, the Company went bust... and I had an accident.

JOB CENTRE STAFF O/S

But you're fit to do other types of work?

WILL MIDDLETON O/S

Yes

Will dejectedly sits in car. Collects kids from school. Car phone rings. Will just listens...

(CONTINUED)

WILL MIDDLETON
 (pessimistically cynical)
 And that's your idea!?

DISSOLVE TO BLACK:

NARRATOR (WILL MIDDLETON AGED) (O/S
 V/O)

(slow, reflective)
*What do you do when you hit rock
 bottom? Look for a way back up!*

SUPERIMPOSUR:

TWO YEARS LATER

19 SERIES OF SHOTS - SUN - WPA GROUP 19

A) Sun Newspaper - Wapping Press plant - Massive printing machines run off new edition. Overhead conveyers whirr carrying hundreds of tabloids

B) MAN flicks switch on console - finished tabloid rattles down chute into booth. Opens paper. Scans page. CLOSE ON ARTICLE: **"WPA Bank pays racing driver £4000 for bouncing cheque"**

C) PULL BACK from article - LONDON STREET - LEE BURTON twenty-eight, smart, trim, well dressed, stands at news stall reading tabloid article. Folds it inside FT. Camera PULLS BACK to impressive, tall, ultra modern glass office block - sign above: **WPA GROUP - WORLD LEADERS in PPI**

D) Burton in elevator, whisked to executive floor.

END SERIES OF SHOTS:

20 INT. CHAIRMAN & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE - WPA GROUP - DAY 20

ALEX FINNIGAN, a man with anger problems. Mid 70s, myopic eyes, heavy horn-rimmed spectacles, sits in darkened office, yelling incredulously into phone. SECRETARY shows Burton into office. Leaves.

ALEX FINNIGAN
 (spits word to Burton,
 without lifting his eyes, as
 if to a dog)
 Sit!

Finnigan continues, Ignoring Burton. HEAR one side of conversation.

ALEX FINNIGAN (CONT'D)
 It's going to get ugly, very
 ugly, and we have no contingency
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALEX FINNIGAN (CONT'D)
plan whatsoever. We're *fully*
exposed. All our eggs are in this
one shitty PPI basket and they're
about to get scrambled!

Urgent voice on end of phone arguing. Finnigan listens for
moments. Butts in...

ALEX FINNIGAN (CONT'D)
Stop talking, man and listen to
me... Read section three of your
own report. For the past
forty-forty-eight months we've
been packaging these products
into tradable securities and
they're now bloody worthless,
thanks to this *Consumer*
Alert rubbish. Take my word for
it, it's the thin end of the
wedge. The PPI market *thin end of*
the wedge. The PPI market will
crash and if we're not careful,
we'll be left holding the biggest
bag of shit the city has seen in
a decade!

Voice on end of phone argues. Finnigan's complexion
changes to crimson. Facial twitch as anger increases.

ALEX FINNIGAN (CONT'D)
Bullshit! I don't care what the
rest of the board thinks. I'm the
chairman and chief executive of
this company and I'm instructing
you to sell the lot to whoever
will buy... dump it all, and get
us out of this shitting market!

Finnigan HANGS UP, frustrated. Slight pause... opens a
humidor. Removes expensive Cohiba cigar, clips end. Lights
it. Smoke fills room. Slowly Finnigan turns to Burton.

ALEX FINNIGAN
You have the article?

Burton hands over tabloid.

ALEX FINNIGAN (CONT'D)
(sneeringly)
Wasn't aware this was one of your
literary pleasures!

LEE BURTON
A friend works at the Wapping
plant. He phoned me when he saw
it.

ALEX FINNIGAN

You have friends in low places...
they can be useful.

Finnigan studies tabloid. Heading reflects in his thick lenses: **"WPA Bank pays racing driver £4000 for bouncing cheque"**. Fin's nose, inches from article, almost sniffs words from page.

TEXT REFLECTING IN FIN'S SPECTACLES:

WPA Bank to pay racing driver Will Middleton £4000 damages for bouncing an £18 cheque! Will, who lives in a half million pound manor house, complained when the cheque was mistakenly bounced. WPA claimed it was a computer error and settled out of court.

Finnigan discards article. Burton hands file & photos of Will, Beth, kids & house.

ALEX FINNIGAN

Glancing at photos
(sinister)
Nice house. Cute kids.

You're confident this slippery
bastards the one that triggered
the broadcast?

LEE BURTON

Without question; he warned us he
was about to do it in a letter.
There's a copy in his claim file

ALEX FINNIGAN

And yet... And yet... you decided
to sign off on this bounced
cheque business? This trouble
maker was seriously in debt,
hanging on by his fingernails. He
was so close to bankruptcy, he
only needed a shove. The heat
turning up, not a bleeding
handout! There was no way he
could have sued us.

LEE BURTON

But he was suing us... with one
of our own legal costs policies!

ALEX FINNIGAN

Finnigan's complexion changes to crimson. Abruptly stubs
cigar into tabloid. GLOWING embers scorch page. Finnigan's
lips quiver, seethes with anger.

The bastard was suing us... with
one of our own policies?

(CONTINUED)

LEE BURTON

There was no other option. It was checkmate. Either we settled, or we went to court paying both his and our legal fees. Combined costs would have been four times the settlement figure... we'd have lost the case anyway! We've no defence for bouncing his cheques; at the time his account was well within agreed limits.

ALEX FINNIGAN

Cases are not won or lost on evidence alone. More that some lawyers are smart, others not. This unknown racing driver is having a laugh at our expense. Now he's claiming for this injury and redundancy... how? He's got no idea he's broken his back, only that he's got some kind of injury. Our policies contain wonderfully nebulous words... it's called small print. Use it!

LEE BURTON

But he has a claims negotiator, and he's fighting hard, he suspects something; the negotiator wants the medical report.

ALEX FINNIGAN

Hmmm... an ambulance chaser who thinks he's a lawyer. I want this bastard monitored... and you can start with his phone.

LEE BURTON

Removing a pen and notepad from his pocket.
I'll get it arranged. What trigger words?

ALEX FINNIGAN

Start off with: "PPI", "BBC", "Consumer Alert", "WPA", "redundancy" and "legal". There may be others. Also...

Softly at first, but voice gradually rises with anger as he speaks.

Don't release the medical report, it's ours. Bury it! Find reasons to delay his redundancy payments. Turn up the heat and stop paying

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALEX FINNIGAN (CONT'D)
 his bloody car finance. I want
 his car repossessed. I want him
 to watch helplessly as everything
 he's ever worked for simply
 drains away.

I want him followed. I want to
 know **every**thing. I want every
 bit of dirt, every skeleton, all
 the background, his family, where
 his kids go to school, the lot.
 If he scratches his fucking ass,
 I want to know!

DISSOLVE TO BLACK:

SUPERIMPOSUR:

THE OLD GRANARY, TORTINGTON, ENGLAND

EARLY MORNING - FEBRUARY 1993

21 EXT: GROUNDS OF THE OLD GRANARY - EARLY MORNING - 1993 21

Thin shroud of drifting mist. Shadowy, shabbily dressed
 MAN lies, concealed behind hedge. HEAR distant WHINNYING,
 HOOVES on cobbles, DOG BARKING. Man has long lens, trained
 on subjects. In viewfinder, young couple lead horses out
 stables. HEAR camera CLICKING throughout scene. Man
 MUTTERS as shutter clicks. Viewfinder image FREEZES in
 B&W.

SHADOWY FIGURE

Beautiful... now just mount up!

Camera CLICKS like automatic weapon as man hoists into
 saddle.

SHADOWY FIGURE (CONT'D)

That'll do nicely! Now for you,
 me little darling...

Hand reloads 35mm film into camera. We see strange ALL
 SEEING EYE tattoo on first knuckle-joint of first finger.
 Camera zooms to girl's backside, hoisting herself onto
 horse.

SHADOWY FIGURE (CONT'D)

Let's have some nice shots of
 those tight little buns!

Nice! One for the private
 collection. Thanks me dear.

DISSOLVE TO BLACK

SUPERIMPOSUR:

5:32am - TWO WEEKS LATER

22 EXT: SUSSEX - WINDING COUNTRY LANES - DUSK - EARLY MORNING
22

Following police car, TRAVELING at SPEED. Blue strobes flash (NO SIRENS). ANGLE SHIFTS to reveal second... third then several more police cars, racing towards OLD GRANARY - Cars SKID to halt. One hits toddlers Micky Mouse walker, WEDGING under it's wheel. Officers surround house. DC BARNET POUNDS on front door.

DC BARNET

Open the door NOW... or we'll
force entry!

23 INT. THE OLD GRANARY- EARLY MORNING - 1993 - CONTINUING 23

Large dark lounge, punctuated by eerie iridescent blue strobe flashes. WILL'S MOTHER, BETTY, SCARED, 80 years, flannelette nightdress, STUMBLES to door, passing wall of trophies, family photos and pictures of former barn conversion to Granary.

DC BARNET (O/S VOICE OVER)

*I have to caution you that we
have a warrant to enter these
premises and to arrest one
William Middleton.*

24 EXT: THE OLD GRANARY - EARLY MORNING - 1993 - CONTINUING 24

A specialist team prepare to force entry. DC Barnet POUNDS on door. Door CRACKS open, police BARGE in. Betty KNOCKED to ground, BANGS her head. More police SWARM in. DC Barnet moves into house. A FEMALE OFFICER rushes to help Betty. Concerned. CALLS for ambulance on radio.

SUPERIMPOSUR:

SAME TIME - ST ALBANS, LONDON

25 EXT. ROB ALLAN'S HOUSE - SAME TIME 25

Iridescent police strobe flashes in background. Officer pounds on glass front door of small terraced house in St Albans, London.

26 INT. ROB ALLAN HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUING 26

ROB ALLAN, Age 33, athletic, in bed with girlfriend, ANNA, Age 28, curvaceous. Wake abruptly. Allan leaps out of bed, runs downstairs, cracks open door

(CONTINUED)

ROB ALLAN
What the hell's going on?

27 INT: THE OLD GRANARY - WILL'S STUDY - CONTINUING 27

Office with racing memorabilia, racing photos, picture Beth and sons on oak desk. Another frame contains Will's old school tie, chopped into bits, with Albert Einstein quotation "*The only source of knowledge is experience*".

DC Barnet tries office photocopier. It jams. Display flashes **ERROR**. Barnet hits it. Gives up. FLICKS through papers and files on desk. Stack TOPPLES to floor. Papers spill out. DC TURNER appears looking worried.

DC TURNER
We've gotta problem. Middleton's not here and the old lady's in a bad state. An ambulance is coming.

DC BARNET

DC Barnet shrugs engrossed. Picks up frame of Will's old tie, CONFUSED.

What d'you make of all this?

DC TURNER shrugs.

DC BARNET (CONT'D)
I know the type... fucking big 'ouses; flashy cars; his own bleeding stables...

Barnet gives Turner a knowing look
...jaunts to the **Far East**! Living way beyond 'is means. None of it ever adds up.

Rodney... my bollocks are tingling...

Turns to face DC Turner.
...and that don't mean rain!

DC TURNER
What're you thinking?

DC BARNET
I'm thinking our man is up to a lot more than a little insurance scam!

A nervous looking, Allan, sits on settee with Anna. Two police officers stand over them, menacingly.

POLICE OFFICER 1

Your mate'll be having his rights read to him about now. Any plans you two may 'ave had are gonna have to go on hold for a few years... if you know what I mean!

POLICE OFFICER 2

You need to decide if you want to be in the dock with your friend, Mr Allan... or assisting the Crown

POLICE OFFICER 1

So, Mr Allan, here's the rub... We need to know how much you know about Will Middleton?

ROB ALLAN

Glances knowingly at Anna, who looks uncomfortable and embarrassed. Pulls a blanket around herself, stairs at floor. Something unsaid passes between them.

(nervously)

Everything... I know everything!

SUPERIMPOSUR:

TWO WEEKS LATER

Stark cream cinder block walls, linoleum floor - Will solemnly sits at desk. SOLICITOR, TOBY JACKSON by side. Two officers ENTER, DC BARNET (cockney) and DC TURNER. Will sizes them up.

OVER THIS:

NARRATOR (WILL MIDDLETON AGED) (O/S

V/O)

(slow, reflective)

*We all like to think we can
judge between right and wrong,
good and bad, the truth or a lie.
Don't we?*

*Trouble is, a masterful
illusionist can trick the mind,
divert our attention. A slant
placed here and another there.
Sometimes the fundamental truth
can be twisted... lost.*

(CONTINUED)

Well... I hope you're sitting comfortably? You see, my story may take a little time to tell... it's not terribly complicated. It was just made to appear that way! A strange journey that still possesses me, twenty-years on from when it all began...

Bizarre happenings that'll forever sweep the pathways of my mind. Happenings that were ultimately dismissed officially as just a string of coincidences, flukes and regrettable errors.

Those errors changed my perception of the British justice system forever. For reasons that may become apparent, despite supposed freedom of speech, I was officially warned to never speak of what happened... but they couldn't stop me writing a novel or a fiction based on my story...

(laugh)

So! What follows is a film based on my novels... novels founded purely on my own So! What follows is a film based on my novels... novels founded purely on my own personal experience...

I trust you're following me?

DC Barnet enters. Cocky, officious. DROPS thick file onto desk.

DC BARNET

Been a little creative of late, haven't we Mr Middleton?

WILL MIDDLETON

Me creative? You lot almost killed my Mother!

DC Turner looks concerned. Drags metal chairs along floor. Both sit. Barnet switches on recorder, checks watch.

DC BARNET

Mr Middleton, I must first advise you that you are not obliged to say anything, but anything you do say will be taken down and may be used in evidence against you. Is that clear?

(CONTINUED)

WILL MIDDLETON

Yes.

DC BARNET

This interview will be recorded. For the benefit of the tape, it's now 10.43am on 23rd February 1993 and this will be our first interview with Mr William Middleton of The Old Granary, Tortington in West Sussex. Present in the room are Mr Middleton, his legal advisor, Mr Toby Jackson, myself, Detective Constable Barnet and Detective Constable Turner.

Nice place you live in Mr Middleton.

WILL MIDDLETON

It is now, but it wasn't always like that.

DC BARNET

No, it wasn't. I believe it was an old barn and you converted it?

WILL MIDDLETON

That's correct.

DC BARNET

Suspicious

Must have cost a small fortune to do something like that?

WILL MIDDLETON

We did most of the work ourselves.

DC BARNET

Is that so? And you managed this epic project on your own, despite having a serious back injury?

WILL MIDDLETON

We brought the place more than eight years ago when I wasn't injured.

DC BARNET

CCourse you did... that **explains** it then! Still... must have cost you a few bob, what with all the building materials. Not to mention buying it in the first place...

(CONTINUED)

DC Barnet makes show of flicking open file.

DC BARNET (CONT'D)
...strange thing is, you don't appear to have earned more than... what, four grand a year over that period. Can you explain quite 'ow you managed it?

TOBY JACKSON

Interrupting

I'm not quite sure I understand the relevance of this line of examination! I understood my client, who's attended today voluntarily, was to be questioned in relation to a horse riding accident in Malaysia and his subsequent WPA insurance claim?

DC BARNET
(contemptuously)
Thank you for reminding me, Mr Jackson. I was just about to come to Mr Middleton's 'orse riding and his *alleged* accident!

Nice stables you 'ave at your place, The Old Granary. You like riding 'orses, don't you Mr Middleton?

WILL MIDDLETON
Yes! So..?

DC BARNET
Despite suffering from a serious injury... an injury that prevents you from working. Is that right?

WILL MIDDLETON

Shrugs

I suppose so, yes... But then, I haven't ridden for ages.

DC BARNET

Hint of smirk

So... when **was** the last time you rode, Mr Middleton?

WILL MIDDLETON
Not since the day of the accident, some time in December eighty-eight.

(CONTINUED)

DC BARNET

DC Barnet gives Will smug we've got-you look. Opens another file. Dramatically flicks several papers before sliding over photo. DC Turner smiles, amused.

DC BARNET (CONT'D)

Leans back in chair. Interlocks fingers - LOUD CLICK.

For the benefit of the tape, I'm showing Mr Middleton a copy of exhibit B5701. How Mr Middleton, do you explain this photo, taken by private detectives, employed by your insurers, World Protection Association, less than three weeks ago, of you and your wife riding your 'orses out of How Mr Middleton, do you explain this photo, taken by private detectives, employed by your insurers, World Protection Association, less than three weeks ago, of you and your wife riding your 'orses out of your stables!

WILL MIDDLETON

Leans over with Toby to examine exhibit. Will smiles, tauntingly. Adopting exaggerated accent from *Pink Panther Strikes Again*:

Oui, monsieur, but that is not my 'orse!

TOBY JACKSON

(sotto voce)

Behave, Will! This is serious...

A pause.

WILL MIDDLETON

It's the couple that rent our stables! Tom and Carol... Mr and Mrs Carter. They pay us fifteen pounds a week to use the stables and paddock. Carol's a blond; my wife's definitely a brunette!

DC BARNET

(taken aback)

Barnet looks at DC Turner - shrugs. Barnet SNATCHES back exhibit, irritated. Examines it. Brief uncomfortable silence, staring blankly ahead in disbelief. Turns, whispers something to Turner. Barnet SMILES CALMLY. SCRAPE of chairs as both abruptly rise.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DC BARNET (CONT'D)
Could you be anymore
condescending?

WILL MIDDLETON
(grining)
Yes!

DC BARNET
This in'erview will be terminated
to allow Mr Middleton and his
solicitor a short fifteen-minut
recess.

Barnet switches off recorder and leaves. Brief silence...

TOBY JACKSON
That spoilt their day!

WILL MIDDLETON
I want to sue, Toby! I want all
this to go public...

TOBY JACKSON
That won't help you. My best
advice is to keep calm, be nice,
answer their questions and don't
mention suing.

Will gets up. Paces around. See Will now has pronounced
right leg limp.

WILL MIDDLETON
They raided my home, Toby. They
almost killed my mother! My boys
are having nightmares...my whole
family's been affected! I want
those tossers to realise what
they've done... for them to know
what it's like to have their
reputations obliterated in just a
matter of hours.

TOBY JACKSON
My advice is it's not a good
idea! The Met. won't take that
lightly. And they won't like any
of this going public. At the
moment they're the ones on the
back foot and they're scared
you're going to sue. Walk away
and move on, Will. If you don't,
they have the power to hit back
much harder than you can ever
imagine!

(CONTINUED)

WILL MIDDLETON

Toby, my son's are being bullied at school... kids are saying their dad's a criminal! Beth's in tears. Any chance I had of building the new team's been wiped out. The police are in the wrong! Arrogant, blinkered, sarcastic, pushy...

TOBY JACKSON

Grins

Hmm... who does that remind me of?

WILL MIDDLETON

Toby... I'm **not** walking away from this!

27

INT. CORRIDOR, OUTSIDE POLICE INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

27

DC BARNET

What the 'ell just 'appened? What a fucking charade. How the fuck didn't we know it wasn't him... didn't anyone think to check?

DC TURNER

How? Nobody'd seen Middleton 'til he turned up today. WPA said it was him in the photo...

DC BARNET

Rodney... do you get the impression that slimy, arrogant, egotistical git is attempting to take the piss?

DC Barnet walk away before Turner can respond.

DC TURNER

Still holding photo exhibit, he calls after Barnet
Err... so what d'you want done with this, boss?

DC BARNET

Still walking away, not looking back
That condescending bastard'll sue our arses given half a chance. Bury it... and find something to charged him with!

(CONTINUED)

DC TURNER

Perplexed

Like what?

DC BARNET

Glancing back

Dig deep. They'll be something...
there always is!

CUT TO:

SUPERIMPOSUR:

SEPTEMBER 1984

28 INT/EXT. FERRARI 308 GTS - SUSSEX - WINDING LANES - DAY
1984 28

Will driving Old Ferrari, Beth in passenger seat. Golden Retriever in foot-well, head peeking out open roof, tongue lolling. Car running badly.

Will and Beth see big sign: **For Sale by Auction, Sealed Bids by October 2nd.** Will pulls over. OLD GRANARY, elaborate Victorian Gothic style barn. Grounds bordered by weathered fence, ponies roam behind. Beth in tapered blue jeans, red and blue plaid shirt, white trainers, ponytail jumps out with dog. Stare at old barn in awe.

29 EXT. OLD GRANARY BARN - DAY - 1984 29

BETH

(word's hushed)

Oh Will, it's wonderful!

WILL MIDDLETON

Will slips arm around her waist.

It is amazing! I wonder what
it'll go for.

BETH

Wanders off towards gate, tentatively pats pony. COSSI bounds behind.

Let's look around the back!

Darts off, rampages in deep grass to rear. Will chases after. SEE barn built on slight rise.

30 WILL MIDDLETON P.O.V - DYSLEXIC: GRAPHICAL, 3D THOUGHTS 30

Will looks back into natural dip. Mirage-like, brighter, weeds subside, broken tiles on ground clear. Swimming pool with patio appears. GEORGE, son and Beth splashing about in the water.

BACK TO SCENE:

BETH

Explores inside. Re-appears from ivy obscured opening. Calls to Will, breaking day dream.

Will, come and see! It's incredible inside.

31 INT. OLD GRANARY BARN - DAY 1984 31

Will and Beth sit on straw bale, gazing out through huge gothic arches at countryside. Will places arm around Beth.

BETH

This would be our lounge, and through there the dining room...

WILL MIDDLETON

...Beth! If we were to get a place like this it would take every penny for the next... ten years to convert; we wouldn't be able to afford to go out, no holidays.

Will looks lovingly at his old, battered roadster. I'd have to sell that for a start!

BETH

It takes most of your time to keep it on the road darling!
(longingly)
But just look at this place, Will! It's what we always dreamed of, it's the perfect place to bring up our kids. We could live out of a caravan for the first year or so; it'd be worth it!

WILL MIDDLETON

Kids, pleural... as in another one... in a caravan?

BETH

Okay, perhaps not another *immediately*, but we could live in cheap old caravan.

(CONTINUED)

WILL MIDDLETON

Thoughtfully...

There's no water, no electricity,
no drainage. Today's warm and
sunny, but what about when winter
comes and it's freezing and we're
cut off with snow?

BETH

Cuddling up to Will

Hmmm... we could be cut off for
weeks, we'd have to snuggle under
quilts.

Beth snuggles onto Will's lap, eyes sparkling seductively,
whispers face to face

Just think of what we'd have to
do, to keep ourselves warm?

Nibbling Will's ear, who's still gazing at old Ferrari,
Beth murmurs

...remember darling, you always
say, where there's a Will,
there's a way!

Beth pushes Will back into straw. Stands up, removes top
and shorts. Will grins up excitedly. Cossi wanders over.
Lies down.

32 TIME-LAPSE SEQUENCE 32

Sun going down, clouds moving fast, moon rising, darkness.

33 INT/EXT. OLD GRANARY BARN - DAY/NIGHT - CONTINUING 33

Owl HOOTS. HEAR tyres on gravel. Will jumps up. Land Rover
pulls up. Wellies appear as door opens. FARMER points
flashlight. Walks hesitantly into barn. HEAR Cossi
growling.

FARMER

(gruffly)

Hello... who's there?

Disheveled Will appears out of gloom. Shields eyes from
beam.

FARMER (CONT'D)

Points light at Will

What are you doing in here? This
is private property.

Beth appears with Cossi. Pulls on jacket. Stands behind
Will.

(CONTINUED)

WILL MIDDLETON

I'm sorry... we were just looking around the place. Are you the owner?

FARMER

(abrupt)

No

WILL MIDDLETON

(joking)

So... you're trespassing as well?

FARMER

I bloody farm the place!

WILL MIDDLETON

Oh, I see. Do you know who owns it?

FARMER

Some big insurance company... Why?

WILL MIDDLETON

We'd like to make an offer. Any idea what they're asking?

FARMER

I wouldn't bother... the place is falling apart. It'll cost a fortune to fix up. Anyway, a group of property developers are after it.

DISSOLVE TO BLACK

37 INT. WILL & BETH'S HOME - YAPTON SUSSEX - DAY - LATER 37

Small semi-detached house. Will writes list at paperwork covered table. One year old George, in high chair, smears food over tray and dog.

WILL MIDDLETON

So! The bank will lend us fifty-grand, secured on the barn over ten years. Plus I'll clear five grand for the Ferrari once repaired and I've repaid the finance. We'll get another two thousand on our cards.

BETH

And around five thousand on this place, once it's sold and the mortgage repaid.

(CONTINUED)

WILL MIDDLETON
That's sixty-seven thousand.

BETH
What do the agents reckon it'll
sell for?

WILL MIDDLETON
Around sixty-eight! The auction's
only three weeks away and they'll
be all sorts of extra fees to pay
on top. That's if it doesn't go
for more! We'll also need to get
a caravan plus we'll need some
kind of buffer. I think it's time
to talk to parents!

BETH
(hesitantly)
Will... I don't want to go to the
auction!

WILL MIDDLETON
Why ever not?

BETH
I couldn't cope with it... what
if we don't get it? And how does
this sealed bid thing work? We've
never done anything like this
before. It would be terrible to
lose it!

WILL MIDDLETON
We won't Beth, I promise you...

BETH
You're just saying that! How can
you know? What are the odds of us
winning if all the bids are
sealed? And how do we know what
to offer, to guarantee getting
it?

CLOSE ON WILL MIDDLETON'S EYES - pupils dilate,
contracting. Eyes fixated, mind wandering back...

38 WILL MIDDLETON P.O.V - DYSLEXIC: GRAPHICAL, 3D THOUGHTS 38

OVER THIS:

Beth's VOICE diminishes. Will watches her lips
continue to move. Strange DRONING grows in his ears rises
sharply in pitch. Stops abruptly as more DISTANT VOICE
tunes in... Will's old MATHS TEACHER:

(CONTINUED)

MATHS TEACHER (O/S V/O)
Chances or probabilities!

CUT TO:

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

39 INT. BOYS SECONDARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY - 1964 39

Class of boys. Teacher, scribbling on blackboard.

$$P(A \cap B) = 0$$

$$P(A \cup B) = 20\% + 15\% = 35\%$$

At back, Will (age 14), bored, distracted. Formula reflects momentarily in his eyes. A snapshot.

MATHS TEACHER

So, boys... probabilities or chances! First... the definition of a probability:

Teacher scribbles another formula:

Probability of event happening = Probability of event happening = Number of ways can happen

Total number of outcomes

Now, let's look at this formula another way... What's the chance of... William scoring the winning goal this afternoon?

BOYS

(collectively)

None whatsoever, sir!

TEACHER

Well, let's take a look at our formula.

Teacher taps blackboard with stick

The event probability of William scoring a goal is the measure of the chance that the event will occur! The probability of an event A is the number of ways event A can occur, divided by the total number of possible outcomes. The probability of an event A, symbolized by $P(A)$, is a number between 0 and 1, inclusive, that measures the likelihood of an event in the following way:

Scribbles:

(CONTINUED)

If $P(A) > P(B)$ then event A is more likely to occur than event B.

If $P(A) = P(B)$ then events A and B are equally likely to occur.

Room darkens. Adult Will - out of body type experience - stands by side of class. All recede into background - leaving Will and illuminated teacher, talking to him.

WILL MIDDLETON (ADULT)

Sir, what's the chance of us securing the winning bid when we don't know how *much* to bid?

MATHS TEACHER

Your probability equation, William, is: The number of **ways bids are accepted** by the auction house, over the total of the number of different outcomes.

WILL MIDDLETON (ADULT)

There are just two possible outcomes, sir. Either we win or we don't win, so how can we win if all competing bids are sealed?

TEACHER

You control the outcome by ensuring only *your* bid can be accepted, William!

END FLASHBACK:

NARRATOR (WILL MIDDLETON AGED) (O/S

V/O)

(slow, reflective)

Somehow, my unconscious mind had found **Somehow, my unconscious mind had found a memory I didn't even know existed.**

(laugh)

One of the little perks of dyslexia... a great long-term memory, at the expense of virtually no short-term memory. My cortex is pumped full of all sorts of useless crap, a sparkling cocktail. They call them "engrams" or memory traces. All I need is a trigger and it **One of the little perks of dyslexia... a great long-term memory, at the expense of virtually no short-term memory. My cortex**

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR (WILL MIDDLETON AGED) (O/S V/O) (CONT'D)
*is pumped full of all sorts
of useless crap, a sparkling
cocktail. They call them
"engrams" or memory traces. All I
need is a trigger and
it happens... mental pictures
replay in my brain, like
recordings.*

TEACHER O/S V/O

Teachers words echo in Will's brain
*...ways bids are accepted by the
auction house...*

Will gives Beth a wry smile. Takes the Tender Card.

40 WILL MIDDLETON P.O.V - DYSLEXIC, GRAPHICAL, 3D VIEW: 40

Studies card carefully. Text reflects in Will's eyes.
Words appear to stand out, illuminate and lift, letters
reversed. PULL BACK ON Will, still staring at card who
scribbles short sentence onto card. Beth looks
quizzically at words.

WILL MIDDLETON

Trust me!