

IN POSSESSION

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51. (Contd)

From: SYLVIA screams.

Together she and FRANK run down the passage and out of the front door.

51a. INT. LANDING. DAY

FRANK and SYLVIA run out of the flat and down (or up) the stairs.

Now this sequence takes on a genuine nightmare' appearance and feel with the DALYS, in SLOW MOTION, running down seemingly endless flights of stairs and past innumerable landings arid always with DONALD PRENTICE just behind them humping the heavy trunk, a step at a time, down to the front door; the sound of the trunk, thudding onto each stair, echoing throughout the building.

51b. INT. GROUND FLOOR HALL. DAY

In SLOW MOTION, the DALYS come off the stairs and run for the front door but it gets further and further away from them.

Exhausted, they stop running and lean against the wall. They look back.

PRENTICE heaves the trunk off the last stair and drags it along the corridor toward the front door.

The DALYS cower back in horror against the wall as, as if they weren't there, he drags the trunk past them and out through the door and onto the top step down into the street.

FRANK and SYLVIA run after him.

FRANK
(SHOUTING)

Stop him! Stop him!

Before they can reach the open front door however it slams shut on them.

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FRANK wrestles with the door but it will not open.

He shoots a look at SYLVIA and then they run back down the passage ringing the doorbells and beating on the doors of all the ground floor flats.

There is no response.

Still in SLOW MOTION, the DALYS run back up (down) the stairs.

51c. INT. THE STAIRS. DAY

As, in SLOW MOTION, the DALYS approach the first floor landing, they see up ahead of them the BLONDE WOMAN about to enter the Mervyns' flat.

She is struggling with a large paper bag full of groceries and fumbling with the front door key.

51d. INT. FIRST FLOOR LANDING. DAY

The DALYS run up to the WOMAN but she makes no sign of being aware of their presence.

SYLVIA

Help us! Please! Help us!
For God's sake, help us!

Desperately she clutches at the WOMAN's sleeve but cannot make contact with it and the WOMAN opens the front door and enters the flat. The front door closes behind her.

The DALYS hear a sound and look back.

PRENTICE is climbing the stairs and coming toward them.

In SLOW MOTION they run for the stairs, horrified.

51e. INT. SECOND FLOOR LANDING. DAY

Continuing in SLOW MOTION, the DALYS run up the stairs and onto the landing.

PRENTICE is only just a little way behind them.

The front door of their flat stands open and FRANK and SYLVIA run inside.

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51f. INT. PASSAGEWAY, DALY FLAT. DAY

At normal speed.

FRANK slams the front door shut behind them and then he and SYLVIA stand listening for any sound out on the landing.

We hear a key put into the lock from the other side of the door and the door edges open.

Desperate and whimpering, the DALYS throw their weight against it but, under the pressure applied from outside, the door begins to open.

Realising that they can't hold the door shut, FRANK and SYLVIA start to run up the passageway.

Behind them the front door is firmly closed once more and no attempt is being made to open it.

The bathroom door is open and as the DALYS draw level with it they glance in and then pull up sharply and we take their POV.

51g. INT. BATHROOM. DAY

DONALD PRENTICE is drowning his wife in the bath in exactly the same way as he was in the earlier scene 51.

51h. INT. PASSAGEWAY. DAY

The DALYS, close to collapse, blunder on up the passageway.

51i. INT. THE SITTING ROOM. DAY

FRANK and SYLVIA run up the passage and into the room.

They stop abruptly and recoil in horror.

An open coffin is standing on trestles in a corner of the room.

Lying in the coffin, her arms folded across her chest, is JESSICA PRENTICE. And standing alongside it is her husband. He is wearing a dark mourning suit and a black tie and gazing down at the body.

Slowly he turns to the DALYS.

Mesmerised once more they slowly edge their way around the room until they have their backs to the kitchen door.

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PRENTICE

I know how you feel, Mrs. Hunter.
Believe me there are no words to
express my grief. Your sister and I
were so close. Closer than most
married couples I think. I will miss
her so. As I know you will.

He takes a step toward them and the DALYS back away.

PRENTICE

What a terrible time this is. For
all of us. Such a tragic accident.
How she got to the canal we'll never
know. And, although I know I
shouldn't, I blame myself. The way
she was I should have watched her
more closely and I cannot forgive
myself for failing in that.

He pauses and beckons.

PRENTICE

But she is at peace now. Come. See.
And then I imagine that you and your
husband will want to be alone with
her for a while.

His hand outstretched, he advances on them again.

The DALYS retreat before him and then turn and run into the
kitchen.

51j. INT. KITCHEN. DAY

As the DALYS blunder in.

JESSICA PRENTICE, frightened and confused, is sitting at the
kitchen table which is laid for breakfast.

There is a pen and a legal looking document lying on the table
in front of her.

DONALD PRENTICE is standing with his back to her, gazing out of
the window.

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PRENTICE
(MENACINGLY)

Do not argue with me, Jessica. Sign
it! I have told you.
It is for the best.

Reluctantly JESSICA picks up the pen and goes to sign the document but she cannot.

PRENTICE rounds on her, sees her hesitation and, furious, crosses to the table, grabs hold of her savagely and drags her up onto her feet.

PRENTICE

Sign it! Do you hear me! Sign it!
And be grateful that I bother about
your welfare at all.

The DALYS turn and run back into the sitting room.

51k. INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY

As the DALYS re-enter.

The coffin is no longer in the room.

DONALD PRENTICE is standing beside the 0110 cage. The cage door is open.

PRENTICE has one of the birds in his hands and he is wringing its neck.

Scattered on the floor around him are the other canaries, all dead.

Sickened, with their eyes fixed on him and hugging the wall, the DALYS make their way over to the bedroom.

They have almost reached it when PRENTICE looks across at them and scowls.

PRENTICE

I warned you, Jessica. Filthy,
disgusting things! What's that? What
die you say? Don't stand there
snivelling. I warned you, didn't I?
Come here. (ANGRILY) Come here when
I tell you.

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He throws down the dead bird and advances on them threateningly.

The DALYS run into the bedroom.

51l.INT. BEDROOM. DAY

FRANK slams the door and then throws himself against it and tries to lock it but the key will not turn.

PRENTICE
(OOV AND CALLING)

Jessica! Jessica!

Despite FRANK's efforts the bedroom door begins to open under the pressure from inside the sitting room.

PRENTICE
(OOV AND CALLING)

Jessica! Open the door.
Do you hear me? Open the door.

Sobbing, SYLVIA puts her weight against the door too but still it is not enough to stop it inching open.

Frantically SYLVIA looks back over her shoulder looking for something suitable with which to wedge the door shut.

C.U. SYLVIA

Aghast, her mouth open to scream again.

Across the room DONALD PRENTICE is dragging JESSICA's senseless body off the bed as in scene 45.

C.U. SYLVIA

Her eyes roll up and she faints.

OVER we have a long drawn out, anguished scream which we carry over into;

51m.EXT. THE HOUSE. DAY

SYLVIA's echoing scream

52. INT.THE BEDROOM. DAY

As is.