

FIRST DRAFT B
Revised (ii)

WORKING CLASS HERO

by

Ray Connolly

(Previously titled Young Lennon)

(c)
Warner Brothers
135 Wardour Street
London, W1V 4AP

1 INT. CLUB BLACKPOOL NIGHT (1962) (MAIN TITLES)

A typical beat club in this northern seaside resort. The place is packed with working class KIDS, unfashionable but eager. On stage the BEATLES are performing. They are aggressive and confident. A group of FANS are squashed around the front of the stage, but there are no other signs that the BEATLES are anything more than a good local group. We observe JOHN *Lennon* closely as he plays and sings. (END MAIN TITLES)

As they play on we SUPERIMPOSE on the SCREEN: "Blackpool, 1962".

And then DISSOLVE to:

2 EXT. BEACH DAY (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

A kite made from newspaper flies high in the sky, falling and rearing. CUT TO:

3 INT. BOARDING HOUSE MORNING (1962)

JOHN's eyes open suddenly. He lies quite still in bed, remembering his dream. We see now that the room is a tip of guitar cases, stage suits, glasses, cigarette packets and clothes. There is also a half-empty whisky bottle. Quietly JOHN slips from the bed and begins to get dressed over his pyjamas. In an adjacent bed is the sleeping figure of PAUL McCARTNEY. As JOHN pulls on his overcoat PAUL opens his eyes, just in time to see JOHN leaving the room. PAUL pulls himself up in bed, and checks his watch.

4 EXT. BLACKPOOL FRONT MORNING (1962)

Early morning. We follow JOHN as he crosses the road and begins to walk along the promenade, looking down at the beach. Everywhere is quiet. A milk float pulled by a horse rattles past. JOHN stops by some steps which lead down to the beach and, leaning on the promenade railings, stares down at the sands. CUT TO:

5 EXT. BLACKPOOL BEACH DAY (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

A sunny day. A man in his mid-thirties, wearing an old naval greatcoat, is flying a home-made kite. He is FREDDY LENNON. At his side is a small boy of about five (JOHN). Scattered around them are the signs of a day on the beach: a sand castle, their shoes and socks, a deck-chair. They are happy together.

6 EXT. BLACKPOOL FRONT MORNING (1962)

JOHN stares at the empty beach, deep in thought. A LONG MOMENT. There is a football behind him. Into the SHOT comes PAUL. He moves alongside JOHN and taking out a packet of cigarettes, offers him one. JOHN lights his cigarette and inhales deeply. There is a PAUSE.

6 Continued

PAUL

Neil says it's about seven hours to London from here. We'll have to be off soon.

JOHN doesn't respond. There is a thoughtful silence.

JOHN

My dad brought me here when I was about six.

(pause)

The ignoble Alf. Someone must have told him that kids from broken homes did better in life. He tried to break me in half.

PAUL doesn't want to get drawn into JOHN's reflections. He looks towards a cafe across the street.

PAUL

Fancy a cup of tea?

JOHN

(still reflecting)

He must have been a right bastard.

PAUL

(uncertain)

Yeah, well ... I'll tell them to keep some warm for you.

PAUL wanders away across the promenade, while JOHN continues to look out across the sands.

7 EXT. BLACKPOOL BEACH DAY (1962)

JOHN walks alone across the beach, reflecting. We PRECUE the sound of FREDDY talking to him as a little boy.

8 EXT. BEACH BLACKPOOL (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

FREDDY passes the kite strings to JOHN.

FREDDY

Now hold tight ... that's it ... hold on ... or it'll fly away.

JOHN

Like this?

FREDDY

That's right, like that.

FREDDY smiles and watches JOHN flying the kite.

8 Continued

FREDDY

Let out more string. That's it.
Careful now ...

FREDDY shows him. Together they watch the kite. Suddenly it breaks free and drifts away. FREDDY lets out a sigh of disappointment.

FREDDY

Oh dear...

But JOHN is not upset. He stands quite still watching the kite until it is out of sight.

PRE-CUE the SINGER from the following scene.

9 INT. PUB BLACKPOOL NIGHT (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

A smiling PUB SINGER stands on a chair singing ^{- the end of song?} When You're Smiling.

PUB SINGER

"When you're smiling
When you're smiling
The whole world smiles with you.
When you're laughing,
When you're laughing, etc."

Below him on a table is a pint of beer and a cap into which small donations have been tossed by the dowdy PEOPLE in the pub, a working class place of off-duty SERVICEMEN and their WOMEN and a smattering of more elderly LOCALS.

During the first few lines of the song we discover we are observing the SINGER through a partly-open door, outside of which stands JOHN.

10 EXT. PUB DOORWAY BLACKPOOL NIGHT. (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

JOHN waits lonely and waiflike at the door, peering in, eating from a bag of chips wrapped in newspapers, looking for FREDDY, mesmerised by the PUB SINGER. (The pub door is propped open with a chair).

11 INT. PUB BLACKPOOL NIGHT (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

As JOHN looks in we see FREDDY moving about the pub selling nylon stockings out of an old bag.

FREDDY

(smiling and charming)
Lovely quality. Come on. Quid a pair.

11 Continued

He moves around the pub, past the SINGER, to a COUPLE.

FREDDY

Do the lady a favour. Dupont.
Lovely quality. Pound a pair.

MALE CUSTOMER

Fifteen bob. No questions asked.

FREDDY

Fifteen shillings? There's women
selling themselves for these in
London.

MALE CUSTOMER

They're black market. Fifteen bob.

FREDDY is about to argue when he notices two POLICEMEN entering
an adjacent bar from a far door. He immediately gives in.

FREDDY

All right. God loves a trier. Fifteen
bob.

Keeping a wary eye on the POLICE he quickly passes the CUSTOMER
the stockings, who immediately gives them to the GIRL with
whom he is sitting. While she examines them FREDDY takes the
money and heads quickly out of the door to where JOHN is waiting.

12 EXT. PUB DOORWAY BLACKPOOL NIGHT (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

As FREDDY emerges he takes a chip out of JOHN's bag, leading
him quickly away from the pub, with an anxious glance over his
shoulder.

FREDDY

I don't know, John, love, everybody
wants something for nothing these
days. I blame the Americans.

They walk away down the street.

13 EXT. STREET BLACKPOOL NIGHT (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

A street behind the front. A row of white, terraced houses.
FREDDY and JOHN are walking home from the pub together.

We FADE UP FREDDY's monologue as they approach. It need only
be semi-audible.

FREDDY

... the trouble with England is
everyone's so stuck up. They wouldn't
give you a push off the side. It
won't be like that there.

13 Continued

He reaches into the paper bag and takes a chip, offering the final one to JOHN. He then rolls up the newspaper into a ball and tosses it carelessly into a garden. They have reached the place in which they are staying. As they are about to go up the path, an attractive young woman, wearing a coat and a headscarf, steps out of the shadows surprising them. She has obviously been waiting. She is JOHN'S MOTHER, JULIA. FREDDY's first reaction is that he is pleased to see her.

FREDDY

Hello, love ... you should have let us know ...

JOHN looks shyly up at her. JULIA breaks in.

JULIA

I've come for him, Fred.

JOHN looks from his mother to his father.

14 INT. FREDDY'S BEDROOM NIGHT (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

We open as the interconnecting door between the sitting room and bedroom is opened and a light switched on. FREDDY guides JOHN in, turning on the radio and passing him a children's illustrated book.

FREDDY

Have a look at your book, John.
Your mum and me have something to talk about.

JOHN looks back at JULIA standing in the adjoining sitting room. None of them have taken off their coats. FREDDY closes the door on him. Immediately the sound of a row begins between FREDDY and JULIA. At first JOHN does not take much notice of it. He climbs on to the bed and opens his book, a beautifully drawn picture book of Alice in Wonderland. On the inside cover is an inscription which we see momentarily - "To John, with love from Mimi". JOHN examines the inscription and the pictures slowly. The CAMERA lingers on the surrealistic illustrations.

Gradually the radio warms up and Bing Crosby's You Are My Sunshine begins to play, largely covering the developing row in the adjacent room, snatches of which we hear over the music.

FREDDY (OOV)

What d'you mean? You can't take him.
We're going to New Zealand.

14 Continued

JULIA (OOV)

Don't talk stupid. He's coming back to Liverpool. You were only supposed to have him for a day. Mimi's been out of her mind.

FREDDY (OOV)

Eh, I'm his father, you know. Not Mimi. I think I should have some say in what he does.

JOHN fiddles with the radio, getting a clearer signal and covering much of JULIA's next lines.

JULIA (OOV)

A fine father you are. Drunk ... in jail ... deserting your ship. He's coming back with me.

FREDDY (OOV)

(now much louder)

But he's not bloody with you, is he? That's the trouble. And God knows who is half the time.

JOHN is worried by the sound of his father shouting. Holding his book he climbs off the bed and, going to the adjoining door, he opens it.

15 INT. FREDDY'S SITTING ROOM NIGHT (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

FREDDY and JULIA are now both furious.

FREDDY

You're just a bloody trollop.

JULIA

What do you expect? You disappear for months on end ... John could have been dead for all you cared ...

JOHN stands in the doorway holding his book and listening. From the bedroom comes the sound of Bing Crosby, a counterpoint to the angry mood of the scene.

FREDDY

I've been worried sick about him.

JULIA suddenly becomes aware that JOHN has been watching.

JULIA

Come on, John. We're going.

15 Continued

FREDDY blocks the way.

FREDDY
No. Look, let's be reasonable.

JULIA
(to John)
Go and get your things ...

FREDDY
(breaking in)
We'll let John decide. It's
his life.

JOHN stares up at them.

JULIA
He's too young to decide. Come
on, John.

FREDDY
He's old enough.
(he turns back to John)
Who would you rather be with ...
your Mummy in Liverpool ... or do
you want to come with me to New
Zealand?

JOHN doesn't answer.

(after a pause)
You tell us. D'you want to go
home with your mummy, or stay with
me?

JOHN looks from one to the other. Finally he moves to FREDDY's
side.

JOHN
Stay with you.

JULIA
(dismayed)
John!

FREDDY
Are you sure now?

JOHN nods.

JULIA
Are you certain ... really certain?

15 Continued

JOHN pauses, and then nods again. FREDDY looks triumphantly at JULIA. She is too emotional to speak. She moves across to JOHN and hugs him briefly, kissing his forehead. Then she turns and goes out of the door. JOHN watches her go. FREDDY smiles in satisfaction.

16 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE FREDDY'S LODGINGS (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

JULIA opens the door and steps out. FREDDY and JOHN appear in the hall behind her, JOHN still holding his book. JULIA turns to JOHN.

JULIA
(emotional)
Be a good boy for your daddy.

With that she walks into the street and starts away from the house. JOHN stares after her. Tears are now running down his cheeks.

17 EXT. BLACKPOOL STREET NIGHT (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

JULIA walks down the street. Suddenly there is a scream and the scampering of feet.

JOHN
Mummy ... mummy ... don't leave
me ...

We push the volume of JOHN's screams up searingly high as JOHN races down the street after her. JULIA stops and turns. JOHN runs up to her sobbing uncontrollably, still clutching his book.

18 EXT. RAILWAY STATION LIVERPOOL NIGHT (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

The booming sound of a STATION ANNOUNCER and the hissing of steam trains covers all the sound. SERVICEMEN jostle with CIVILIANS as JULIA walks down the platform. A tear stained JOHN trots at her side, lost and bewildered, hanging on to her hand. At the gates at the end of the platform a handsome woman in her late thirties is waiting anxiously. She is JOHN's AUNT MIMI. As JULIA and JOHN go through the barrier past the TICKET COLLECTOR, MIMI rushes to JOHN and takes him in her arms. JULIA stands back as the CROWDS buffet them.

JULIA
(leaning down to John)
You're going back to live with
Auntie Mimi, John. I'll come and
visit you, ~~sometimes~~.

JOHN looks at JULIA, not really understanding. Then JULIA begins to back away through the crowds and out of his sight. MIMI takes JOHN's hand.

19 EXT. BLACKPOOL BEACH DAY (1962)

SHOT of JOHN staring at the beach.
We PRE-CUE MUSIC and CUT QUICKLY BACK TO:

20 EXT. RAILWAY STATION LIVERPOOL NIGHT (1946) (BLACK AND WHITE)

JOHN watches JULIA disappear in the crowds. He looks up at MIMI who begins to lead him through the crowds in another direction. We bring up the VOLUME of the MUSIC. It is the JOHN LENNON record of Working Class Hero. It opens with a mournful, threatening acoustic guitar. The last SHOT in this sequence shows JOHN being led slowly away from the CAMERA - a long "moment" which sets the pace and style for the following MONTAGE.

21 CHILDHOOD MONTAGE

JOHN's childhood between six and sixteen is shown in a series of "moments" to the accompaniment of the song Working Class Hero and beginning with the last shot of the last scene. The first three quarters of the "moments" are in black and white, but during the final few we imperceptibly and increasingly bleed colour back on to the screen, so that by the end of the montage we are back in full colour.

JOHN
(singing)

"As soon as you're born they make you feel small
By giving you no time instead of it all
Till the pain is so big you feel nothing at all.
A working class hero is something to be ..." etc.

Same Night:)

- a) MIMI and JOHN walk up the path to the front door of MIMI's suburban Liverpool home. ~~It is night.~~ She is holding JOHN's hand. The door is opened immediately by UNCLE GEORGE, a middle-aged man, who, relieved to see him home, ruffles JOHN's hair as he goes past. DISSOLVE TO:
- Same Night:)*
b) UNCLE GEORGE and MIMI are putting JOHN to bed. JOHN is still traumatised by his earlier experience with his parents. While MIMI bustles in with a cup of cocoa UNCLE GEORGE opens JOHN's Alice in Wonderland book and begins to read. DISSOLVE TO:
- c) Watched by a smiling UNCLE GEORGE and AUNT MIMI, JOHN plays in the garden with their dog SALLY. He is obviously now happy. UNCLE GEORGE takes a photograph with a Brownie camera. DISSOLVE TO:
- d) JOHN sits on the arm of a chair while UNCLE GEORGE reads a strip cartoon to him from the Liverpool Echo. MIMI watches in the background. DISSOLVE TO:
- e) JOHN, now aged about twelve, is watching a Salvation Army Band playing at the nearby Strawberry Fields Children's Home. JOHN stands close to UNCLE GEORGE. Behind them stands MIMI.

21 Continued

- f) JOHN sits up in bed reading "The Wind In The Willows". UNCLE GEORGE comes in to say good-night. He turns out the bedroom light. As soon as UNCLE GEORGE closes the door JOHN produces a torch from under the sheets and begins to read again. DISSOLVE TO:
- g) JOHN is walking home from school. BOYS flank him. He is a natural leader. He turns into the front path of MIMI's house. The other BOYS carry on down the road. JOHN notices that the front curtains are drawn. He goes around to the back. The door is open. MIMI and several older PEOPLE are there looking very unhappy. MIMI is wiping away tears. ~~There is~~
~~DISSOLVE TO: NO UNCLE GEORGE. DISSOLVE TO:~~
- h) A funeral cortege pulls away from MIMI's house. ANGLE on the small bedroom above the front door. The curtains part and JOHN stares down, tears running down his cheeks. DISSOLVE TO:
- i) JOHN is in a fight in the school playground. He is obviously winning. DISSOLVE TO:
- j) JOHN is lying on the carpet at MIMI's house drawing a picture. He is now wearing glasses. MIMI watches fondly over his shoulder. DISSOLVE TO:
- k) MIMI, with a cat on her lap, is reading from an exercise book, watched by JOHN. On the book cover is the title "Sport, Speed and Illustrated. Edited and Illustrated by J.W. Lennon." JOHN is being congratulated and is very pleased with himself. JULIA enters and MIMI turns to give her the book to read. JOHN stares at JULIA, not knowing what to make of her. DISSOLVE TO:
- l) JOHN, now aged sixteen, is stretched out across the carpet writing. Alongside him we can see the title page of his exercise book "The Daily Howl". Poems and cartoons are spread out on the carpet.
- m) JOHN, wearing his school uniform, is standing up in class while a TEACHER demands that he answer an equation written on the blackboard. JOHN obviously says something silly and the other BOYS laugh. The TEACHER shakes his head in despair. JOHN grins. DISSOLVE TO:
- n) JOHN is listening to the radio, earnestly. A book has been pushed aside. MIMI asks him to turn the radio down, with an expression of amused distaste. JOHN does so but puts his ear right alongside the radio to hear better. DISSOLVE TO:
- o) JOHN is looking in a record shop window at the cover of Elvis Presley's first album. At the back of the window display some cheap guitars are hung from the wall. JOHN turns from Elvis to the guitars. DISSOLVE TO:

21 Continued

- p) MIMI is buying JOHN a guitar. The SALESMAN passes it to JOHN. MIMI tries an amused, long suffering smile. DISSOLVE TO:
- q) MIMI is reading. JOHN sits in a corner with JULIA trying to play his guitar. JULIA takes the guitar from him and demonstrates a chord. DISSOLVE TO:
- r) JOHN is practising in his bedroom. DISSOLVE TO:
- s) JOHN, now with two other BOYS (ROD and PETE) is rehearsing in the side porch of MIMI's house. ROD plays banjo. PETE has a washboard. DISSOLVE TO:
- t) JOHN and the embryonic QUARRY MEN are playing their first skiffle gig on the back of a truck at a Liverpool street fête. They are obviously not very good. DISSOLVE TO:
- u) Shots of adolescent BOYS on a cross-country run through Liverpool's Calderstones Park. We are by now in full COLOUR as we end the montage and the song Working Class Hero.

JOHN

"Yes, a working class hero is something to be.
If you want to be a hero well just follow me
If you want to be a hero well just follow me."

22 EXT. CALDERSTONES PARK LIVERPOOL DAY (1957)

As the straggle of ~~adolescent~~ SCHOOLBOYS trot forlornly by we SUPERIMPOSE "Liverpool, 1957" on the screen.

In ANOTHER SHOT we discover THREE BOYS crouched in a little circle as they light cigarettes. When they part we see that JOHN is in the middle of them, along with his friend PETE. He pushes a packet of ten Woodbines into his sock. The BOYS begin to walk nonchalantly after the running SCHOOLBOYS. We PICK UP their conversation as they approach.

PETE

Is it near Hilversum?

JOHN

Further on ... past all that frog-spawn and krautcrap ... five hundred meters ...

PETE

AFN Munich?

JOHN

Munich or Stuttgart or somewhere.
Ten till one. Night Ride ...
Straight from America every record ...

22 Continued

OTHER BOY
Night Ride. It sounds dirty,
doesn't it? Night Ride.

JOHN
(amused)
Well, yeah, if you like ...
"She was ~~only~~ a nightly ride ...
'Cause her fanny felt funny inside ..."

The other BOYS snigger. They walk on.

PETE
That fat kid in 5B said he got it
on the golf course last night. He
said she was insatiable.

JOHN
(pretend thick)
D'you mean girls like it, too?

They all smile, then notice an approaching P.E. TEACHER in
ex-army track suit jogging briskly after the runners.

P.E. TEACHER
(shouting)
Lennon!

The other TWO BOYS surreptitiously throw away their cigarettes.

Lennon!

Slowly JOHN looks around to see if the TEACHER might possibly
be calling him. He allows his cigarette to drop to the ground,
and casually slides his foot on to it.

P.E. TEACHER
(approaching)
Were you smoking, Lennon?

JOHN
No, sir.

P.E. TEACHER
Are you sure?

JOHN
Yes, sir.

The P.E. TEACHER knows JOHN is lying but cannot do anything
about it.

P.E. TEACHER
"No sir ... yes sir". You're a pest,
Lennon. You're all pests ... a
right gang of skivers. Get on with you.

22 Continued

JOHN covers a smirk. Lethargically he and his COMPANIONS begin to jog after the other BOYS. The P.E. TEACHER runs like he is in training for England, dapper and keen.

JOHN
 (humming to himself
 as he runs)
 She was only a nightly ride,
 'Cause her ...

P.E. TEACHER
 Quiet, while you're running, Lennon.

The other BOYS snigger.

JOHN
 (pleasantly facetious)
 Sorry sir.
 (a moment's pause)
 Nice day to be out, isn't it, sir?
 Very clement for this time of year.

Unsure whether or not JOHN is being funny the P.E. TEACHER glowers at him. His eyes fall on JOHN's ankles. The packet of cigarettes is poking from JOHN's sock. The P.E. TEACHER smiles to himself.

23 INT. SCHOOL SHOWERS DAY

In the steam-filled showers BOYS watch, while changing, as the P.E. TEACHER brandishes a cane as he lectures JOHN and his companions.

P.E. TEACHER
 Dishonest, disruptive, disobedient,
 lazy, insolent ... I despair of
 characters like you. Come on ...
 who's going to be first?

JOHN pushes PETE forward and the P.E. TEACHER begins to give him six of the best on his hands. The P.E. TEACHER has positioned himself so that he has his back to JOHN. Unseen by him JOHN leans forward and blows against the P.E. TEACHER's head as the caning continues, to the amusement of the watching BOYS. The P.E. TEACHER pauses between caning to flick the back of his hair. JOHN blows again. The P.E. TEACHER keeps flicking as though trying to swot a fly. Turning he sees JOHN and the BOYS laughing

P.E. TEACHER
 Right, Lennon. I'll teach you
 to laugh at me.

JOHN puts his hand out. The P.E. TEACHER brings his cane down hard on it.

23 Continued

P.E. TEACHER

I suppose you think that's funny
too, don't you?

JOHN

(determined not to show
that it is hurting)

Well, I've heard better ...

The P.E. TEACHER brings his cane down with a swish a second,
harder time. The BOYS watch. JOHN's face remains expressionless.

24 INT. SCHOOL GYMNASIUM DAY

Re d.ty
JOHN sits in a corner with PETE and ROD rehearsing the skiffle
group. PETE has a washboard and a handful of thimbles, while
ROD plays banjo. JOHN is peering carefully at the frets on his
guitar as he plays. They are playing something like Maggie May,
very primitively. During a banjo instrumental break, JOHN
blows on his fingers, still swollen from the caning.

PETE

My fingers are so swollen I can
hardly get my thimbles on.

JOHN

Try playing with your nudger.
It might sound better.

The BOYS snigger.

25&26 DELETED

27 MIMI'S LIVING ROOM DAY

A radio audience explodes with laughter. It is a summer evening.
The Goon Show is on the radio. The scene playing is something
particularly funny and surrealistic. JOHN sits with a notebook,
scribbling and doodling; but mainly giggling at the show. MIMI
sits opposite him reading some Balzac, but occasionally looking
up to smile at some silliness. It is a close family scene in
this comfortable, very bookish suburban sitting room. (JOHN
is always very, very fond of MIMI.) The radio scene is between
Seegoon, Bloodnok and Eccles, with Eccles being particularly
goofy and stupid. As the end signature tune comes on JOHN
stands up and turns the radio down.

JOHN

Admit it, Mimi, you'd rather I
became Elvis than Eccles, wouldn't
you? Be honest now.

27 Continued

MIMI

I don't know that there's very much difference ... Eccles Goon, Elvis Goon ... They're all the same to me.

JOHN

(amused)

Elvis Goon ... not bad ... I could be Elvis Goon ... That'd do, wouldn't it?

MIMI

(long suffering)

No it wouldn't, John. It wouldn't do at all. You've got a brain. I want you to use it.

JOHN

I'm saving it, Mimi ... in a goldfish bowl ... in my bedroom ...

MIMI

(amused)

John ...

JOHN

I am ... I feed it on morsels of Shakespeare and tit-bits of Einstein ...

(taking her book from her)

Balzac's its favourite, though ...

(licking lips)

yummy ... particularly his giblets.

MIMI

(giggling, and snatching her book back)

Go on with you, you clown.

JOHN smiles fondly at her.

Haven't you got any ^{homework} ~~work~~ you should be doing? ~~Examinations~~ ~~don't pass themselves, you know.~~

JOHN

(pretend disappointed in her)

Just like you, Mimi, to spoil a lovely evening.

27 Continued

JOHN goes out. MIMI returns to her book. After a moment comes the sound of guitar practise. MIMI looks up despairingly.

28 INT. PORCH EVENING

JOHN is standing in the side porch, leaning against the wall practising his guitar chords. We observe him for a few moments. Suddenly he is interrupted by a shadow at the door. He looks up. It is his mother, JULIA. She now looks (and behaves) more like an older sister than a mother.

JULIA
(smiling)
Hello ...

JOHN is very pleased to see her, almost shy, ^{as though} ~~like~~ he might be with an older girl he fancied.

How're the Quarry Men?

JOHN
Gritty ... rocky ... dirty.

MIMI has appeared behind him in the hall.

MIMI
He'll wear the wall out with his bottom if he leans against it much more.

JULIA smiles and produces a simple guitar songbook from out of her bag which she gives to him.

JULIA
This might help.

JOHN is delighted, but MIMI pretends aggravation.

MIMI
(to Julia)
That's right, you encourage him.
As if I haven't got enough trouble.

JULIA
(smiling to John)
It's good for him to want to play something.

MIMI
But not morning, noon and night,
Julia. He's obsessed!

28 Continued

MIMI and JULIA leave JOHN in the porch. He opens the Guitar Songbook, already oblivious to everything else. Now he begins to play again, studiously examining the book, which we see is open on That'll Be The Day.

29 EXT. MENLOVE AVENUE EVENING

JOHN is walking with JULIA to the bus stop.

JULIA

Mimi was saying you've got another poem in the school magazine ... she's very proud of you.

JOHN

(smiling and nodding)
They'll print anything nowadays.

JULIA

If you like writing p'raps you should be a reporter.

JOHN

Scoop Lennon of the Echo ... I cover the waterfront ... "Our man in new troublespot".

JULIA

More like our man in new spot of trouble.

JOHN cannot let a joke go by untopped. They go into a semi-routine.

JOHN

Or spot on our new man's trouble ...

JULIA

... and strife.

Slight PAUSE.

JOHN

Val Derma?

JULIA

What? I don't think I know her.

JOHN

No, well ... she's a brunette type blackhead. Not your sort really.

JULIA laughs.

29 Continued

JULIA
You're dafter than I am.

JOHN
Like mother, like son.

JULIA
I hope not.

They walk on.

JOHN
(shy to say it)
What about ... you know ... what
about, father and son? Am I like
him?

Slight PAUSE.

What was he like?

JULIA
(shaking her head, not
wanting to talk about
him)
He taught me to play the banjo, so
I suppose he can't have been all
bad.

JOHN wants to ask more questions, but JULIA neatly changes
the subject. They have stopped at the bus stop.

Listen, if the Quarry Men need
somewhere to practise, there's
always our house. The bathroom's
very echoey.

JOHN
(uncertain)
What about ...

JULIA
Bobby? Oh, he won't mind. He
won't mind at all.

30 INT. JULIA'S BATHROOM DAY

Four members of the QUARRY MEN and JULIA are crammed into a
tiny bathroom rehearsing. The acoustics have a slight echo.
JOHN is on guitar. JULIA plays banjo while PETE and COLIN
crowd in with a washboard and half a drum kit. (JULIA sits
on the toilet) JOHN is singing Rock Island Line. The music
is very primitive.

30 Continued

In the background eventually we notice the door handle being turned. It is locked. None of the QUARRY MEN notices. Then there is a knock on the door. The QUARRY MEN play on oblivious to it. At last comes a hammering on the door. The QUARRY MEN and JULIA stop and look towards the door. *Outside, we will discover, is JOHN DYKINS - known as BOBBY to JULIA. He is her lover.*

JULIA

(shouting)

What is it? What d'you want?

JOHN DYKINS (OOV)

~~(known as Bobby to Julia)~~

Have you people nearly finished in there? There's people bursting to go out here.

The QUARRY MEN look to JULIA.

JULIA

(shouting)

All right, ... ~~won't~~ *Bobby. Won't* be a minute.

(then quietly to the boys)

Just once more through.

She strikes her banjo and begins to play again. The QUARRY MEN follow her lead, ignoring the unfortunate DYKINS. We LAP OVER and MIX THROUGH the sound of JOHN singing Rock Island Line to:

31 INT. JULIA'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT

LONNIE DONEGAN is performing the record of Rock Island Line on a Saturday variety show on television. JOHN sits in front of the TV without his glasses staring short-sightedly at the screen. Behind him on a sofa sit Julia's two DAUGHTERS (aged about eight and six), while JULIA stands at the back of the room ironing a white shirt. Standing watching television and drinking a cup of tea is JOHN DYKINS, a nervous man in his early forties. He is wearing trousers and shoes and a vest as he waits for JULIA to finish his shirt.

JULIA's home is furnished in a showy, fifties, tasteless style - lots of colour and patterns, deep pile, nothing matching. The television is like an ~~altar~~ altar in the corner.

DYKINS

(oblivious to John's concentration on the music) *and indicating H.T.V.*

It's the biggest they make, you know. Not bad, eh? ...

31 Continued

JOHN doesn't know what he is supposed to say. At that moment DONEGAN goes into a guitar solo and the TV goes into C.U. on his hands. JOHN peers forward trying to see what chords are being played. DYKINS chooses this moment to start fiddling with the TV, walking in front of JOHN and retuning the contrast so that the picture goes. JOHN moves to one side trying to see around DYKINS, murmuring an anguished "No" as he does. Then JOHN waits irritated until DYKINS retunes.

DYKINS
(by way of an apology
seeing John's frustra-
tion)

... but very delicately tuned.

JULIA is aware of JOHN's frustration. She passes DYKINS his shirt.

JULIA
Come on, Bobby ... you'll have
everybody starving to death.

She holds out the shirt while he slips into it, then helps him button it up. LONNIE DONEGAN finishes his song, the TV audience applaud, and JOHN turns to watch JULIA and DYKINS. He catches an intimate little moment as she kisses DYKINS' forehead. DYKINS tucks his shirt tails into his trousers and pulls a bow tie over his head, while JULIA holds out a jacket. We see now that he is wearing a dress suit. (He is, in fact, a head waiter.)

DYKINS
Don't wait up love ...
(he turns to his
two daughters)
And you two, straight to bed ...
have you seen what time it is ...?

There are the usual grumpy complaints from the GIRLS. Noticing JOHN watching silently (left out) DYKINS pushes a hand into his pocket and produces five shillings which he puts by JOHN on the arm of the sofa.

DYKINS
Good night in tips last night ...
buy yourself some ciggies.

JOHN just looks at the money.

Well then ...

JULIA
(hurrying him along)
Bobby ...

31 Continued

He kisses her and shouting a "bye" hurries out.

JULIA
 (to her daughters as
 she turns off the TV)
 And you two, you heard what your
 father said ... come on ... up.

FIRST DAUGHTER
 Will you read us a story ...?

JULIA
 All right then ... just one ...

She shoos her two DAUGHTERS out as JOHN watches. When he is alone JOHN gets his guitar and tries out the chords to Rock Island Line again. After a few moments he stops and stares bleakly at the money. Finally he pockets it. On the mantelpiece are some photographs, one of which shows a family picture of JULIA, DYKINS and the TWO DAUGHTERS. JOHN gets up and examines it. On the inside cover of the folder is a printed sentimental message which reads "God Bless Our Family". JOHN stares unhappily at it. Then, replacing it, he sits down and tries again with his chords. We observe him sitting alone for a long moment.

32 INT. JULIA'S DAUGHTERS' BEDROOM NIGHT

Two single beds have been pushed together in this small bedroom. A low bedside light is on. JULIA has fallen asleep on the bed while reading a story to the two GIRLS, who are also asleep. The door opens, JOHN looks in. He sees JULIA asleep with the GIRLS. He watches them for some moments. They look so peaceful. He makes to leave, but stops at the door. Then he turns back and climbing on to the end of the bed curls up with them and closes his eyes.

33 INT. SCHOOL HALL DAY

An examination is in progress. BOYS are sitting in rows down the hall writing furiously, glancing at the clock at the front of the hall. Eventually we discover JOHN. His paper is only half-filled with writing, but he is in no hurry. While the other BOYS write JOHN is drawing. In V.O. we hear one of his poems.

JOHN (V.O.)
 "I'm a moldy moldy man
 I'm moldy thru and thru
 I'm a moldy moldy man
 You would not think it true.
 I'm moldy till my eyeballs
 I'm moldy till my toe
 I will not dance I shyballs
 I'm such a humble Joe."

33 Continued

An INVIGILATOR is standing in a corner of the hall by an open window. He is having a quiet smoke while watching the BOYS, making sure that the smoke goes out of the window. In C.U. we see that JOHN is drawing a gross caricature of the INVIGILATOR which shows him to have two heads and four hands - in the hands are several cigarettes, while both mouths puff away on two cigarettes each. Under the caricature JOHN has written "Mr. Nick O'Teen, the two-faced Irish Invigilator, begorrah sir."

As JOHN finishes drawing he becomes aware of a presence beside him. The INVIGILATOR is looking at the cartoon. JOHN smiles up at him. The INVIGILATOR shakes his head in mock despair, and confiscates the drawing. A bell goes signifying the end of the examination.

INVIGILATOR

Right. Will you finish the sentence you are writing ... those of you who are writing, and put down your pens.

JOHN grins, happy to play the fool.

34 INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR DAY

As the BOYS file out of the examination, chattering excitedly about the examination, a boy from another class pushes through to JOHN. He is NIGEL WHALLEY, and acts as the Quarry Men's booking agent.

NIGEL WHALLEY

John ... John ... we've got a booking.

JOHN

What is it? Las Vegas or the Coke-And-Bananas?

NIGEL WHALLEY

Woolton Village Fête. We're on a float.

JOHN

~~(thrilled)~~

Really? We're almost famous!

While they have been talking the INVIGILATOR has been met by the HEADMASTER, to whom he hands the completed examination papers. On top of the pile is JOHN's caricature.

HEADMASTER

Lennon?

The INVIGILATOR nods staring after JOHN as he and NIGEL WHALLEY walk away down the corridor. The HEADMASTER looks at the caricature. Slowly a smile breaks across his face.