<u> 1977</u>

Written by

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AŒNT:

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I would like to gratefully acknowledge the following books and their authors which helped in the writing of this play;

Malcolm Williamson A Mischievous Muse by Anthony Meredith and Paul Harris.

Conundrum by Jan Morris.

Angela Morley's own writings on the film which can be found at www. angelamorely.com

Interview with Terry Rawlings by Ben Simon to be found at animated views.com

The following films and documentaries were also used for research;

Watership Down (1978) Written and Directed by Martin Rosen based on the book by Richard Adams.

Watership Down 2002 DVD interviews with Terry Rawlings and Martin Rosen.

I also would like to thank the following who aWeAarch0.81 Tc -0.0

CHRISTINE let's herself in the front door, calls out.

CHRI STI NE

Angela? Angela? Are you there? I've bought a table from that junk shop in Chorleywood and I need a hand with it. It's in the car. Angela?

ANGELA calls her from another room, it's the office, she sounds odd. Something on her mind.

ANGELA

In here!

CHRISTINE makes her was into the office, opens the door. ANGELA has the telephone in her hand.

CHRI STI NE

Ch, sorry. You on the phone?

ANGELA

I was.

She replaces the receiver.

CHRI STI NE

What's wrong? You look like you've seen a ghost.

ANGELA

I have Sort of.

CHRI STI NE

Not bad news is it?

Beat.

ANŒLA

It was the BBC.

2

CHRI STI NE

And they want you to appear?

ANGELA

Peter is insisting on it, apparently.

CHRI STI NE

Well you don't want to let Peter Sellers down -

ANGELA gets up.

ANŒLA

I can't do it. There is no way I can/do it!

CHRI STI NE

Don't make a decision now. Think about it -

ANŒLA

I don't to think about it -

CHRI STI NE

Your instinct, always, when offered anything new, is to say no - you know that -

ANGELA

Christine, the last time they saw me -

CHRI STI NE

I know. But this is a knee jerk reaction with you. You always do this, think the worst then you panic. Now... come and help me with that table and then we'll talk about it -

ANGELA

I don't need to talk about it. Appearing in public...? On TV? In front of people that - knew me...? That can not happen.

The opening 6 bars of Bright Eyes by M ke Batt (before the vocal kicks in) from Watership Down plays. Title sequence.

2 INT. A RECORDING STUDIO IN LONDON, ENGLAND OCTOBER 1977

TERRY RAWLINGS (FILM EDITOR/SOUND EDITOR) and MARCUS DODS (CONDUCTOR) are listening to the recording of Bright Eyes.

MARCUS

Terry, it's beautiful.

TERRY (CONT'D)

And they say to you, 'Where do you want me to put the tree?' I loved all that. They'd say, 'Where do you want us to put the sun'? The sun! Ch it was brilliant! And then after that we got the actors back in and let them see what we'd done and we recorded all the voices again.

MARCUS

Well, however you did it it's turned out brilliantly. I'm rather feeling the pressure now.

TERRY

On come on Marcus, how many times have you done this?

MARCUS

Too many times. But I always feel a little nervous before I see the score. And it's Malcolm Williamson so it could be tricky.

TERRY

When do you see what he's done?

MARCUS

Malcolm? Tomorrow morning. That gives me enough time to prep before Monday.

TERRY

You've conducted his work before haven't you?

MARCUS

Ch yes. But it was a while ago now.

TERRY

I can't wait to hear what he's made of it.

MARCUS

Oh me too. I've heard great things about his Jubilee pageant. He had 17,000 kids singing in the sunshine in Liverpool.

TERRY

Here's to Monday then.

MARCUS

Nearly there eh Terry?

TERRY

Nearly there.

3 INT. THE MONKS TOLLETS IN THE CLOISTERS OF GLOUSTER CATHEDRAL

MALCOLM is furiously writing out musical parts on manuscript paper. He sings out the notes as he desperately composes. We can hear the orchestra rehearsing his music for Mass of Christ the King off.

MALCOLM

E, F, A minor. No. Not that. That's - oh for - count, yes right. Violins. Four beats and rest a bar and then -

He scribbles madly as JOHN SANDERS the conductor can be heard calling MALCOLMS name off, as he descends some stone stairs to the toilets.

JOHN

Mal col m? Mal col m?!

MALCOLM

Ch go away go away. Let me finish!

JOHN

Malcolm? Malcolm

JCHN swings open the heavy door. Spots MALCOLM at last.

JOHN (CONT'D)

My god man, what are you doing in here?

MALCOLM tries his best to be pleasant through gritted teeth.

MALCOLM

John. Dear dear John Sanders and how are you?

JOHN

For the last hour we have turned this cathedral upside down looking for you. We were worried you'd left!

MALCOLM

Well you've found me now. Congratulations. If you could just give me a moment -

JOHN

What on earth are you doing hiding in the monks toilets?

MALCOLM

I'm not John. I'm wor ki ng.

JOHN

You're not - writing out parts are you? Oh for God's sake!

JOHN snatches the music off him

MALCOLM

Give that back.

JOHN

We can't possibly work like this Malcolm It's insane!

MALCOLM

Do you want me to finish this mass or not?

JOHN

I have never in all my life worked with someone so... so - disorganized so - last minute so pathologically -

MALCOLM

John, we have but a few hours until the first performance.

JOHN

You don't think I'm aware of that?!

MALCOLM

Now, If you don't give me back that manuscript there won't be a first performance.

JOHN

I'm sorry Malcolm, but enough is enough. As your conductor I have to draw a line somewhere. I will take no more late additions. We will only perform what we have rehearsed.

MALCOLM

But that would mean cutting the Gioria, the Psalms and the Credo. The work isn't complete without -

JOHN

The performance is hours away! We have not rehearsed those movements because for what ever reason you have not written them! Now, it is my duty -

MALCOLM grabs JOHN, pins him up against the wall. JOHN reacts.

MALCOLM

Now listen! You stupid little -

JOHN

Ah!

He shakes him

MALCOLM

Have you any idea what it's like being me?! DO YOU?

JOHN

Let me go Malcolm!

MALCOLM

Since the beginning of this year. This this this - jubilee year I have written or struggled to write -

JOHN

Let me go!

MALCOLM

A violin suite, A religious pageant, a

JOHN

Mal col m

MALCOLM

A Christmas Carol. Hours and hours of music for a radio series -

JOHN

Help!

MALCOLM

A tribute for Ben's memorial a symphony! Well I've - not really finished the Symphony yet but that's quite a lot, isn't it John? John! Wouldn't you say?

JOHN

Let me go

MALCOLM

I am a very very busy very important man. And as Master of the Queens Music I am not prepared to have my music performed in a format suggested by you. Do you understand?!

He tightens his grip.

Ch god no no there's something else. What the hell is it? Come on Malcolm, what have you for gotten?

Pause as it suddenly dawns on him

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
On no. On God. The rabbits...

MUSIC FOR CHRIST THE KING crashes in then fade into

4 EXT. THE FRONT DOOR OF MALCOLM'S FLAT AT THE BARBICAN. 4
MARCUS is banging on the door.

MARCOBs ious MARCUSMARCule1 0 pick u6j 1 0 0 1 10 Malcolm? Malcolm Are you in there old chap? Malcolm Look it's me Marcus. Marcus Dods? I've come to pick up the score for - Malcolm? Come on I know you're in there?

MALCOLM, the worst for wear, opens the door just a little.

MALCOLM

Scores... Yes about that... there's been a bit of a hold up.

MARCUS

A hold up? What do you mean?

MALCOLM

I can't give you them today.

MARCUS

But you have to Malcolm We record Monday. I need to see what I'm conducting. We've had this date in the diary for weeks.

MALCOLM

Weeks?

MARCUS

Yes.

MALCOLM laughs hysterically.

MALCO14 ay.

MARCUS

Listen Terry... I've just been to see Malcolm Williamson. Are you sitting down...?

6 INT. A RESTAURANT IN LONDON - EVENING

6

TERRY is in shock.

TERRY

Two pieces?

MARCUS

More like one and half.

TERRY

But he's had the cues and the movi eol a for 8 months!

MARCUS

That's not the worst of it, I'm afraid. What he's given me, I can barely read and from what I can make out - they're not even pieces really just - sketches. Malcolm being a classical composer clearly intended to orchestrate everything himself. But he doesn't seem to have got round to that.

TERRY

So the two pieces we do have aren't orchestrated?

MARCUS

They're sketches.

TERRY

So how much music are we talking here? Time wise?

MARCUS

It's hard to tell but... it probably amounts to no more than 7 minutes.

TERRY

7 M nutes?! But it's a 90 minute film!

MARCUS

I know.

TERRY

What the hell are we gonna do? Can he write the rest before Monday?

MARCUS

Maybe? I don't know. Look, Malcolm has always been a little - last minute. But you know what some composers are like. They need to be up against it before inspiration strikes and 1977 has been a very busy year for him He has had to produce a hell of a lot of work for the jubilee and he gets paid next to nothing for it. And he does have a - tendency to get over excited about things. What ever he's just been offered that's want he most wants to do. He also has a problem saying no. I'm not entirely sure he's in the best of health. Either physically or mentally.

TERRY

So what do you think we should do?

MARCUS

Well, he's given us something. I know it's only two pieces -

TERRY

Sket ches -

MARCUS

But, if I can find someone to orchestrate what we have got then at least we could record that. Then we better pray he delivers the rest of it by Monday.

TERRY

And if he doesn't?

MARCUS

You've got a very expensive orchestra sitting around with no score to play.

TERRY

That absolutely can not happen Marcus. The budget only stretches to -

MARCUS

I know. Look, the way I see it - we have two choices. Plan A and Plan

TERRY

What's plan A?

MARCUS Find someone to orchestrate what we

CHRI STI NE

Would you like a drink Marcus?

MARCUS

Thank you.

CHRI STI NE

Scot ch?

MARCUS

Yes please and make it strong

ANŒLA

Oh dear. That bad is it?

MARCUS

I'min dire straits I'm afraid.

ANŒLA

I knew it. Go on.

He sits.

MARCUS

So they're making an animated film of that book Watership Down. Do you know it?

CHRI STI NE

It's the one with the rabbits. I've read it.

ANGELA

Rabbi ts?

MARCUS

Yes. Little bunnies. It's terribly good. Anyway, they've commissioned Malcolm Williamson to write the score. He's been given several months to do it in and that several months expires this coming weekend and we have an orchestra booked into CTS next week and I'm supposed to be conducting. I've been trying to get my hands on the scores to prepare them for Monday but the thing is... there aren't any.

CHRI STI NE

What do you mean?

MARCUS

All Malcolm has written are a couple of sketches.

ANGELA

Lasting how long?

MARCUS

6 or 7 minutes.

CHRI STI NE

But it's a big book. It must be a feature film?

MARCUS

It is.

ANGELA

What on earth is he playing at? 7 minutes won't get you very far.

MARCUS

Chit's a long story. But we really are in trouble I'm afraid and I need your help. Do you think you'd be able to make something out of Malcolm's sketches? Or chestrate them so at least we have something to record on Monday?

ANŒLA

Monday? What day is it today?

CHRI STI NE

Thur sday.

ANGELA

It's very short notice. How complicated are they?

Beat, he knows they are complicated.

MARCUS

It's nothing you can't handle. What do you think?

ANŒLA

Alright, fine. But I'll need to see Malcolm and the sketches by tomorrow at the very latest.

MARCUS

Thank you. Thank you! You won't regret this.

ANGELA

I'm sure I will.

MARCUS

Do you mind if I call the Film's editor? Let him know we're on?

CHRI STI NE

Of course, telephone's in here.

8

MARCUS and CHRISTINE start to exit off

MARCUS

I'll tell him to meet you, me and Malcolm tomorrow at the Watership Down office. We can go through everything then. It's in Warren Street.

ANŒLA

Street? You are kidding?

8 EXT. MALCOLM S FLAT AT THE BARBI CAN- MORNI NG

MARCUS is once again banging on the front door.

MARCUS

Malcolm Malcolm Ch come on Malcolm Let's not do this again old chap. Open up! Malcolm!

He bangs again. A WOMAN arrives.

WOMAN

There's no point in banging on that door. He's not there.

MARCUS

He is. He just likes to hide -Malcolm It's 10 o clock and we need to -

WOMAN

I told you, he's not there. They've gone away. Left yesterday af t er noon.

MARCUS

Gone away? Are you sure?

WOWAN

Look , I've got the key. It's my day to come in and clean up.

WOMAN starts to open the flat door.

MARCUS

Wait a minute. How long are they away for? The weekend?

WOMAN

Ch no no no. He's got a symphony to finish. They'll be gone for weeks.

MARCUS

WOMAN

His work requires complete quiet and concentration. Can't be having people knocking on his door, people like you, interrupting him

MARCUS

You don't happen to know where he's gone do you?

WOMAN enters the flat.

WOMAN

Yes. The Camargue.

She slams the door.

9 INT ANCELA AND CHRISTINE'S HOUSE. DAY

ANGELA is pouring over the sketches.

CHRI STI NE

MARCUS

That's what she said.

CHRI STI NE

Why on earth has he gone to the Camargue?!

MARCUS

9

He's only put in the barest amount of information and even then it's difficult to read. See.

She shows the manuscript to CHRISTINE

CHRI STI NE

It looks as if three spiders have wandered across the page.

MARCUS

This is why we need him here. The Camargue indeed. Honestly, I ask you!

ANGELA

If we're going do this by Monday I'm going to need some help. Can we call Larry Ashmore see if he's free?

MARCUS

ANŒLA

His reputation will be ruined if he doesn't. It's for the Palace, all eyes will be on him

MARCUS

I think he's having some sort of breakdown. The pressure to complete all the work on time has then lead to panic and then emotional collapse. He's drinking heavily and

MARCUS

Excel I ent!

CHRI STI NE

I've got him on the line. Do you want to fill him in?

ANGELA gets up to take the phone.

CHRI STI NE (CONT'D)

He says he's happy to do it as long as you give him the easier one.

MARCUS laughs, ANGELA goes to the phone.

ANGELA

It's Malcolm Williamson there is no easier one!

We hear her off pick up the phone to LARRY.

CHRI STI NE

You think those two can sort it out?

MARCUS

They're the best. If they can't do it. No one can.

CHRI STI NE

What's going to happen to the orchestra after Monday?

MARCUS

I have no idea.

10 INT LARRY ASHMORE'S HOUSE. DAY

ANGELA

Are you ready Larry?

LARRY

Remember, I asked for the easier one.

ANŒLA

Well you've not got it. Sorry. I think the prologue plays more to your strengths. I have the sweeter part.

He laughs.

LARRY

Go on then, hand it over.

10

ANŒLA

Just - remember, it's a sketch.

She hands him the manuscript. He looks at the music.

LARRY

It looks like -

ANGELA

Three spiders have wandered across the page?

LARRY

Well -

ANGELA

Thank you, for doing this. I could never have done this on my own.

LARRY

How on earth did Malcolmthink -

ANGELA

Ch don't. It terrifies me just thinking about it. Writing like that, composing all those hours, all alone. It takes you to the brink.

LARRY

Are they going to find someone new?

ANGELA

They'll have to. God only knows who that will be. But that's not our problem Today, our problem is this. Think we can do it?

LARRY

We'll just have to follow our noses.

ANŒLA

Trust our instincts?

He looks at the music again, it looks hopeless but...

LARRY

It's all we've got.

A note begins. Something abstract, spiky? They are now in different rooms. Each working out what to do. They scribble out the arrangement/ sing along to Malcolm's sketch.

LARRY (CONT'D)

Strings, full orchestra and -

ANŒLA

One two three four - cor anglais

LARRY

One two, four.

ANŒLA

Gentle - gentle, take your time

LARRY

Da da da da da da. There's a folk dance in there. Isn't there Mal col m?

He scribbles

LARRY (CONT'D)

LARRY

But first they must catch you. Change time signature. Digger, listener, runner, prince with the swift warning.

ANGELA

It is a an f natural.

LARRY

Be cunning and full of tricks and your people will never be destroyed.

ANGELA

And... done.

Count 1234

LARRY

Done.

11 INT STUDIO RECORDING BOOTH - CTS. MONDAY

TERRY

It's a miracle Marcus. An absolute miracle. The guys name is Jeff Wayne. He's making a concept album out of the War of the Worlds and he just so happens to need an orchestra for two days.

MARCUS

Who'd have thought it? Finally, a lucky break -

TERRY

On don't get too excited. Martin called me. The backers want to see the film in three weeks.

MARCUS

Not with music?

TERRY

Yep.

MARCUS

So you need a replacement fast?

ANGELA arrives

11

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Ah, here comes the hero of the hour. Am I pleased to see you Angel a?

They kiss on the cheek.

ANŒLA

Hello Marcus, OK Terry. We're ready to go when you are.

TERRY

I don't know how you did this Angela. I saw those sketches. How did you make sense of them in such a short space of time?

ANGELA

Ch it was Larry who did all the hard work. He sorted out your prologue.

TERRY

That was very tricky?

ANŒLA

It was difficult to see what notes ANGELA

TERRY

Marcus told me you're a composer too.

ANGELA

Did he?

TERRY

Says you've worked with everyone. Scott Walker, The Goons. Written loads of stuff for the BBC. He said you composed the theme tune to 'Hancock's Half Hour.

Beat

ANGELA

I di d.

He stops adjusting knobs, turns to her.

TERRY

You know, it's funny, but when he said that I thought he'd got it wrong.

ANGELA

Did you?

TERRY

I always thought the theme tune to Hancock's Half Hour was written by Wally Stott. You know, Wally Stott and his -

ANGELA

I think he's ready.

TERRY

Um?

ANŒLA

In there. Marcus, ready to go.

TERRY

Ch, yes. Sorry, here we go then.

TERRY pushes the tannoy button. The voice of MARCUS comes on the tannoy in the studio. We can hear the orchestra tuning up on the studio floor.

MARCUS

Hello Terry? Can you hear us?

TERRY

Loud and clear Marcus.

TERRY (CONT'D)

You've known her a long time. You're her friend.

13 I NT ANŒLA AND CHRISTINE'S HOUSE. NI GHT.

13

ANŒLA

No.

CHRI STI NE

Think about it.

ANGELA

No.

MARCUS

Please Angela.

ANGELA

No! For a start it's 3 weeks! Three weeks to write 90 minutes of film music.

MARCUS

It's not 90 minutes it's 82. You've forgotten Malcolm's bit.

ANGELA

Well now you're being ridiculous -

MARCUS

Am I? Mal col m's given you a start. Now all you have to do is take up the baton. It's English, pastoral music -

ANGELA

It's rabbits! Or at least you tell me it's rabbits. It could be about anything for all I know. It could be about - fish or birds!

CHRI STI NE

There is a bird actually, he's called Keehar.

ANŒLA

You see! I am not prepared! There isn't time to get familiar with the stories, the situations, the characters. There's no time to develop ideas, motifs -

MARCUS

You're not as prepared as you'd like to be -

ANŒLA

They want it in THREE WEEKS and I haven't even read the book.

MARCUS

But you managed to orchestrate the main theme over night!

ANŒLA

That's completely different. You know that. Or chestrating its-that was Malcolm's work.

MARCUS

And you made it live! Think of all the work you've done. All the work you have composed as - you can do this.

ANGELA

I can't.

Beat she means it. He knows to back off.

MARCUS

Alright, if that's your decision.

He gets up.

ANGELA

It is.

MARCUS

But... to be clear... is this-

MARCUS

Oh can you not talk to her, Christine? Maybe she'll listen to you.

CHRI STI NE

And what would I say? You know what she's like. You just saw it. If she doesn't think she can do it then -

MARCUS

This job, this is a big one. If she says yes to just - one thing in her life. Right now, this is it. I've seen that film It's something really special. If she does this... who knows where it could lead. Don't let this opportunity slip by. It could change things for her, for you.

She cuts him off.

CHRI STI NE

Good night Marcus.

He goes.

MARCUS

Good night.

INT OFFICES OF WATERSHIP DOWN, WARR73pn12ssER Tc - 0.033 Tw (This5d, p

MARCUS

You're not going round there?

TERRY

l've got an idea. It might just work.

MARCUS

What is it?

He gets his coat on, makes move for the door.

TERRY

I'll call you after l've talked to her.

MARCUS

Hang on a minute. Before you do anything... there's something you should know.

15 I NT ANGELA AND CHRI STI NE'S HOUSE. DAY

15

CHRI STI NE

She's in the back. Watching TV. I hope you've got a plan. Marcus got nowhere.

TERRY

Oh I've got a plan, don't worry.

CHRISTINE squeezes his hand, conspirators together.

CHRI STI NE

Then good luck. Angela, Terry Rawlings is here to see you.

ANGELA

Terry?

TERRY

Hello Angela.

CHRI STI NE

I'll leave you two to talk.

She goes.

ANŒLA

What are you doing here? Don't tell me Marcus has sent you?

TERRY

No. I've come of my own accord thank you.

ANGELA

If you've come to persuade me to -

TERRY

I have intention of persuading you to do anything.

Pause

ANGELA

Then why are you here?

Beat

TERRY

You know you said you hadn't read the book, Watership Down.

ANŒLA

That's right. I haven't.

TERRY

Well, why don't you let me show you the film? Our film, that we've made. If you see the film you won't need to read the book.

ANGELA

Ch now come on -

TERRY

Please. I'm not asking you to write the music. I'm just asking you to let me show you the film

Pause.

ANGELA

That's all. Seriously?

TERRY

Not hing more.

Pause

ANŒLA

When?

TERRY

Tomorrow. First thing.

16 I NT RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

TERRY is about to show ANGELA the film

TERRY

Can I get you anything? Tea, coffee?

ANGELA

No. It's alright. Thank you Terry.

TERRY

We'll start then, shall we?

ANŒLA

You're going to stay? Watch it with me?

TERRY

Do you want me to?

ANGELA

Yes, please.

She's nervous. Doesn't want to be alone.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

In case I have any questions.

TERRY

I thought it might help if at the beginning we had Malcolm's music. After the opening credits there's... nothing else - music wise.

ANGELA

Just the abyss.

TERRY

Except there's also the animators work, Martin's work, the actors performances, all the work the sound team have done -

ANGELA

I didn't mean -

TERRY

It would be real pleasure to work with you on this Angela.

Pause

ANGELA

We're just watching the film, Terry. That's all.

TERRY

I know you're a very brave woman. Writing a score in three weeks... (MORE)

TERRY (CONT'D)

you can do that standing on yer head.

Pause

ANGELA

Wally Stott did write the theme tune to Hancock's Half Hour. You were right, you know?

Pause

TERRY

I know.

ANGELA

Marcus told you.

TERRY

This film is about so many things. It's about what happens when a group pulls together, it's about heroism tolerance, hope and faith. It's about friendship, loyalty and about overcoming adversity. I think you understand that.

Pause

ANGELA

Let's watch it.

He presses a button.

17 I NT RECEPTION AT THE RECORDING STUDIO - LATER THAT DAY. 17

CHRI STI NE

That's right Terry Rawlings and Angela Mbrley? They were due in for 10. I thought they might be finished by now?

RECEPTI ON

They're signed in but they don't seem to have left yet. You can wait here in reception if you like?

Through the doors come ANGELA and TERRY

CHRI STI NE

Ah, here they are?

ANŒLA

Christine? What are you doing here?

CHRISTINE
I thought I'd come to meet you for lunch. All go well?

TERRY I think so. Angela?

ANGELA
Ch, the rabbits are quite extraordinary. I identified very strongly with Hazel.

19

19 I NT ANGELA AND CHRI STI NE'S HOUSE. NI GHT

ANGELA at her piano. CHRISTINE is with her.

ANGELA

It's 8 o clock.

CHRI STI NE

How long shall I give you?

ANŒLA

Let's see if I can sketch something out in a couple of hours.

Christine glances at her watch.

CHRI STI NE

You've got till 10 then.

ANŒLA

If only all composers had you by their side.

CHRI STI NE

You're thinking about Malcolm?

ANGELA

Oh God... all that pressure he was under. The fear of the blank page. It's terrible. Makes me feel sick just thinking about.

CHRI STI NE

Then don't. You're not Mal col m and this might be a good film but it's a small animated picture about rabbits. It's not for the Queen. Now... come on.

She moves to leave.

ANGELA

Wish me luck.

CHRI STI NE

You know full well you don't need it.

CHRI STI NE LEAVES.

ANGELA

OK. Angela, prove yourself.

She sighs.

ANŒLA (CONT'D)

English pastoral music.... Well at least give it a title.

She scribbles the title at the top of the manuscript paper.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Call it - 'Venturing Forth'.

She laughs to herself.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

We're in it together now Hazel. Alright... gently does it. Start with... harp.

The fully finished version of Venturing Forth by Angela Morley starts to play underneath.

ANGELA (CONT'D (CONT'D)

Then... flut e... l't's green fiel ds, Big... open sky...

20 INT ANGELA AND CHRISTINE'S HOUSE - NIGHT.

20

Later that evening, ten. CHRISTINE puts her head round the door.

CHRI STI NE

It's ten o clock. How's it going?

ANGELA

It's done. Well that section. Look. Venturing forth.

CHRI STI NE

Was it difficult?

ANGELA

No, actually.

She comes into the room

CHRI STI NE

So what now?

ANŒLA

If I'm going to do this I'll need to keep on schedule. That's the best thing you can do for me. Don't let me run over.

CHRI STI NE

I won't. I'll be here all the time if you need me. I'll listen to your ideas if you want me to and I can suggest sources to go to if that might help and I'll make sure you eat and drink.

No al cohol though. When I'm done. Then we celebrate.

CHRI STI NE

You're really doing this then?

Beat

ANGELA

Call Marcus and cancel everything in the diary for the next three weeks.

Keehar's Theme plays then continues underneath the following Montage.

21 INT ANGELA AND CHRISTINE'S HOUSE. MONTAGE

21

ANŒLA

Right. I've done Fiver's Vision, The Chief Rabbit, Into the Mst, Crossing The River. Now, the rats in the barn - I need something... something spiky, furious - whose done that?

CHRI STI NE

Bartok?

ANŒLA

Yes, very good, the quartet. Have we got it?

CHRI STI NE

Of course.

CHRISTINE dashes off to get the record, Keehar's theme still under neath.

Anot her day.

ANGELA

Cowslip, Bigwig Snared, Raid on the Farm, Cat Chase... Efrafa.

CHRI STI NE

General Woundwort. It's all about threat and fear.

ANŒLA

How do rabbits fight?

CHRI STI NE

They scratch and bite I suppose.

Scratching and biting though... is it enough?

CHRI STI NE

What if you imagine... crocodiles...

ANGELA

Yes!

Anot her day.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Now, what about Keehar?

CHRI STI NE

The seagul I.

ANŒLA

Zero Mostel voices it. I want something - very different. No English pastoral charm here. I need something European.

CHRI STI NE

What about alto sax?

ANGELA

My first instrument. Yes. And a Viennese novelty waltz. One two three, one two three/one to three.

CHRI STI NE

One two three, one two three

THEY waltz together.

ANGELA/ CHRI STI NE

One to three one to tree one two three. One to three one two.

Keehar's theme comes to an end.

22 I NT. ANGELA AND CHRI STI NE'S HOUSE.

22

ANGELA at her piano calls out to CHRISTINE who is in the kitchen.

ANŒLA

Christine? Can you pour me a drink?

CHRI STI NE

You've finished?

ANGELA

Looks like it.

ANGELA comes through to join CHRISTINE.

CHRI STI NE

And you said it couldn't be done in three weeks. You're ahead of schedule.

ANGELA

I nearly wasn't. There was this one bit... took for ever.

CHRI STI NE

What was that?

She pours the drink.

ANŒLA

It's when the rabbits get to the down for the first time. They start to climb it, it's a real struggle but when they reach the top, there's this wonderful shot of the fields and - well... they know they've found their new home. I wanted to blend something I had with the theme Malcolm wrote for the beginning.

CHRI STI NE

But why struggle with that?

ANŒLA

I don't know. Felt like the most important bit to me I suppose. Them finally finding a new home. Wanted to do it justice.

They drink.

CHRI STI NE

Where you'd only meet new people. Somewhere far away where they'd be no more explaining.

ANGELA

What? Leave England you mean?

CHRI STI NE

Why not?

ANŒLA

You'd want to do that?

CHRI STI NE

If you wanted to.

Pause

The danger isn't over once the rabbits get to their new home though, is it? It's only halfway through the film It's not the end. They've a big battle to fight before they're finally happy.

CHRI STI NE

You're nervous about the recording?

ANGELA

And everything that comes afterwards. Writing the music, that's the easy bit. Will you come to the studio? Be there with me?

CHRI STI NE

Would it help?

ANGELA

Enor mously.

23 INT THE RECORDING STUDIO, STUDIO FLOOR - DAY

23

The orchestra are sitting ready to perform, getting out music, tuning up.

MARCUS

So, here we are ladies and gentlemen. We have before us, a complete score to Watership Down. Now, before we start I just wanted to say a few words. As some of you know this has been quite the journey but finally at last we are here.

The orchestra reacts, they know this has been a big feat.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Now all we need to do is play it. But first, where's Angela? Terry, have you seen her?

24 INTOUTSLIDE THE RECORDLING STUDIO - DAY

24

CHRI STI NE

Are you ready?

ANGELA

What if it's all rubbish?

CHRI STI NE

You know it isn't. You've heard it in your head everyday for the last month. It'll be perfect.

ANŒLA

How can it be? It was all written in a splurge.

CHRI STI NE

Sometimes the best things are written quickly.

Suddenly TERRY arrives

TERRY

Angela, there you are. They're about to start rehearsals. Marcus is looking for you -

CHRI STI NE

She's coming.

TERRY

Are you alright?

ANŒLA

Yes. Yes... Thank you, Terry. I'll be alright. God, this films been held up long enough by it's composers hasn't it?

TERRY

Ch don't worry I've not come to chivvy you. I've come to see if you will let me accompany you to the studio floor.

ANŒLA

Ch, I would love that.

TERRY

C mon then, take my arm

She does.

25 I NT THE STUDIO FLOOR.

MARCUS on the podium

MARCUS

Let's go then shall we.

TERRY

Wait! Wait. Marcus. She's here.

25

ANGELA

Don't start without me Marcus for goodness sake.

MARCUS

Angela, look, get up here on the podium will you?

She does

ANGELA

Ladi es and Centlemen of the orchestra, your composer. Mss Angela Morley.

The orchestra all at once stand to their feet and applaud.

TERRY

Would you look at that Christine? Everyone's on their feet!

CHRI STI NE

She deserves it. Does this mean you're nearly there then?

He sighs. He's exhaust ed.

TERRY

Nearly there.

The appl ause fades.

26 INT ANGELA AND CHRISTINE'S HOUSE. EARLY EVE. MONTHS LATER. 26

> Bedroom ANGELA is getting reading for the Royal Command Performance of Watership Down. A phone can be heard ringing. It's picked up by CHRISTINE (OFF)

> > CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Thank you. We'll be ready.

She shouts up the stairs.

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

That's the car. It'll be here in two minutes.

ANGELA

I'm not ready!

CHRISTINE heads up the stairs.

if we don't leave on time.

ANGELA appears at the top of the stairs.

Oh look at me. I'm a mess.

CHRI STI NE

What? Don't be ridiculous -

ANŒLA

This dress it - it's all wrong and these gloves. So over the top. It's too much -

She exits back into the bedroom CHRISTINE follows her.

CHRI STI NE

It's a royal command performance. You'll meet Prince Charles. Gloves are perfect. Just let me, make some adjust ment s.

ANŒLA Ch I can't stand this!

CHRI STI NE

Keep still will you.

ANŒLA

MALCOLM

We've worked together, have we?

Beat. She laughs.

ANŒLA

Yes. Yes we've worked together.

MALCOLM

Was it fun?

ANŒLA

It was, actually.

MALCOLM

Good. You off on holiday?

ANŒLA

No. I'm - I'm emigrating. You?

MALCOLM

Off to France, Lourdes. Have you been? I find that when things get really difficult it's the best place to be. 1977 was a terrible year for me. Frightful. But then I'm sure you've heard. It was in the papers...

ANGELA

Your Jubilee symphony.

MALCOLM

Yes. Cancelled, for all the world to see... trying to complete that dammed thing was sheer hell! I'd be poised in that moment between the brain conceiving and the notes going down on paper and the bloody phone would ring asking me to judge a brass band competition!

ANGELA

You know what Malcolm.. maybe, sometimes, you should just say no.

MALCOLM

Say no? Oh you should never say no. I magine the adventures you'd miss...

He seems distracted, talking to himself almost.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

l'd like to be a beachcomber though... really. Not a composer. Anything's better than writing music. Sound of the tannoy (off) boarding of flight.

ANŒLA

I better go.

She moves to go.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

It was... good to see you, Malcolm Look after yourself.

MALCOLM

Don't forget your book.

ANŒLA

Ch yes. The book.

She picks up the book from off the shelf.

MALCOLM

I've read that one.

Beat

ANŒLA

Of course you have. Goodbye.

TANNOY

Would passengers Morley and Parker please proceed to Gate 23 where your flight to Los Angeles is now boarding.

ANŒLA

Oh God that's us!

CHRI STI NE

Ch no! Can you run?

ANGELA laughs (this is a line from the film)

ANGELA

I think not.

CHRI STI NE

C' mon!

They begin to run.

ANŒLA

I think not!

Keehars Theme begins to play again as the sound of a plane takes off. The music continues over the closing credits.

The End.