

RICHARD

Just between us, this is really
much more up my street.

KAREN

Yeah, mine, too. I'd forgotten.

She squeezes his hand, favors him with a beautiful smile.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Thanks.

A perceptible thaw has occurred. He is smitten.

INT. THE HOUSE UP FOR SALE -- AFTERNOON

Richard and Rob, in dirty jeans and tee shirts, work on the pipes, having made a huge, ugly hole in the wall. Or rather, Richard works, Rob relaxes with tea and sandwiches. A can of baked beans with a spoon in it sits beside him.

ROB

(sings, Irish tenor)
*"The pipes, the pipes are
callin'..."*

RICHARD

Don't strain yourself, mate.

ROB

I need me nourishment. House is
one great bloody leak.

RICHARD

Jack's a good bloke. And besides--

ROB

I know, I know. Money is money.
Get busy with that widow woman,
why don't you?

Beat. Richard looks a little uncomfortable.

RICHARD

I'm doing my best.

EXT. THE HOUSE UP FOR SALE -- CONTINUOUS

Justin rides by on his bike and notices Richard's rental car in the driveway. Curious, he dismounts and sneaks up to the house. He hears a loud noise. He peers through an open window, sees Richard on his knees banging on the pipes. Justin's puzzled and a little amused.

Richard grunts, trying to wrench a rusted joint free. It gives way, spouting rusty water all over him. Justin hoots with laughter. Richard thinks it's Rob.

RICHARD

Oh, good, am I entertaining you?

Justin ducks out of sight. Filthy and disgusted, Richard dabs at his shirt with a rag. The phone rings.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Hello?

EXT. JACK'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Jack is on the cell phone in his BMW, stuck in traffic.

JACK

Richard, thank God.

RICHARD

What is it?

JACK

There's a couple on their way to see the house. I can't get there. You'll have to show it.

RICHARD

Me?! But I don't know anything about showing real estate!

Jack is desperate, pleading.

JACK

We talked about it the other day, remember? Colonial, 6 bedrooms, 5 baths, a pool...Oh, shit, Richard, say *anything*.

Back in the house, Richard scans the mess, the broken wall and his own not-so-dapper appearance.

RICHARD

But--there's the matter of this rather large hole, and that leak...

JACK (V.O.)

Keep them out of that room. I really need you to do this, buddy.

Richard hesitates. Rob, back with the mop, listens to Richard's end of the conversation with alarm.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We could work out some deal on the commission.

RICHARD

Glad to help. What are their names?

Rob frantically mouths "No!" Justin, listening in from outside, does the same.

JACK

Philips. Nelson and Linda Philips. They'll be there at 4 O'clock.

RICHARD
4 O'clock. We'll look after them.

JACK
Thanks, I owe you one, pal.

Richard hangs up.

ROB
Are you *daft*?

RICHARD
Relax. *Bags* of time.

He looks at his watch, crusted in gunk. Ten to four.
Justin looks at his. His eyes widen.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Bloody hell!

EXT. THE HOUSE, THE STREET -- MOMENTS LATER

A Volvo containing a couple in their 60's, NELSON and LINDA PHILIPS, drives up the street. Linda holds a King Charles Spaniel and the directions. Nelson looks grumpy.

INT. THE HOUSE UP FOR SALE -- CONTINUOUS

Rob bundles the lunch things into the kitchen trash bin.

Richard tears off his filthy tee shirt and puts it on backwards to show the clean side, blue blazer over it. Justin watches this with amazement.

Through the Philips's windshield, the house comes in view.

Richard slicks back his hair, picks out bits of debris.

In the driveway, Nelson helps Linda out of the car. Justin wheels his bike around the back of the house.

Rob finds a gardener's smock in the shed outside. He shakes it out, releasing a flock of moths.

The Philipses march up the walk to the front door.

Rob mops near the hole in the wall. The doorbell rings. Richard stuffs the toolbox into the hole.

EXT. THE FRONT DOOR

Nelson and Linda wait at the front door. It opens. Richard, looking calm and suave, smiles graciously.

RICHARD
Mr. and Mrs. Philips. Do come in.

INT. THE HOUSE UP FOR SALE -- CONTINUOUS

LINDA

You're not the young man we met
with before.

RICHARD

No, he was called away, I'm afraid.
I'm his associate, Richard Lester.

LINDA

Charmed.

She clearly is. Her husband looks around, all business.

RICHARD

May I offer you something? Tea?

LINDA

Oh, a cup of tea would be lovely.

PHILIPS

Nothing for me.

RICHARD

My man will see to it.
(calling)
Oh, Robert!

Rob emerges solemnly from the kitchen, his gardener's
smock buttoned up like a uniform, his hair wet-combed.
Justin sees this and silently cracks up.

ROB

You called, sir?

RICHARD

Would you fix a cup of tea for
Mrs. Philips, please?
(to Linda)
How do you take it, Ma'am?

LINDA

Milk and two sugars.

Rob smiles uncertainly. Richard glares at him. Rob bows.

ROB

Right away, sir.

Rob shoots him a dark look on his way into the kitchen.

LINDA

We were hoping to learn something
about the *history* of the place.

He glances at Philips, who shrugs. This is Linda's thing.

LINDA (CONT'D)

You know, who lived here, what
their lives were like...

RICHARD

You wouldn't like to see the pool?

Linda sits down, stares at him. She will not be put off.

INT. THE KITCHEN/THE LIVINGROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Rob puts a battered pot on to boil and fishes a soggy tea bag from the trash. He unsquashes it and blows off dust.

Back in the living room Richard paces the room expansively.

RICHARD

Well, the house has a rather sad history, Ma'am. It originally belonged to a Captain...

He hides his crushed pack of cigarettes with his foot.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

...Kent. He lived here with his wife, Clara and their son...

He sees Rob's empty tin of beans in the potted palm.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

...Heinz.

LINDA

Heinz Kent?

RICHARD

Named after a Prussian general in your War of Independence, Ma'am.

LINDA

I see.

RICHARD

Sea. Yes. He was often at sea...

He looks out the window. Justin slips out of sight just in time. There's a construction crane in the distance.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

At the helm of the Clipper...Crane.

Justin turns and sees the crane. He smiles, getting it.

In the kitchen, Rob opens a crumpled pack of biscuits. He picks out the unbroken ones and puts them and two mugs of tea on a "tray", an oven rack with a dishtowel draped over it. One mug has a Brown University logo and the other demonstrates sexual positions with a sheep.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Clara would walk this balustrade, watching for his return.

Rob glides in with the tea tray, laid out quite nicely.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Thank you, Robert.

Rob makes a point of giving the naughty sheep mug to Richard, who conceals the design with his hand.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

On those days, this house was full of rejoicing. But one day, Kent did not return. The Crane had been attacked by pirates.

Rob mouths, "Pirates?" in disbelief. Richard ignores him. Outside, Justin also mouths "Pirates?"

RICHARD (CONT'D)

To save his ship and his crew, the Captain gave himself up. The pirates took him and the cargo, leaving the Crane to find her way home, empty of gold and of spirit.

He shakes his head sadly. Linda is at the edge of tears. Her husband snores open mouthed in an armchair.

LINDA

Oh, *no*. And Clara?

RICHARD

She could not imagine life without her husband. She climbed up to this spot one last time, and hurled herself onto the rocks below.

LINDA

Oh *dear!*

Justin snorts. A loud clatter is heard from the kitchen, jolting Philips awake.

ROB (V.O.)

Sorry!

RICHARD

But the Captain did *not* die at the hands of the pirates. He taught them better seamanship... knots, that sort of thing. And in gratitude they let him go, giving him a rich share of treasure. It took the Captain months to reach his beloved home, only to find Clara dead, young Heinz disappeared and this poor house abandoned.

Linda sniffles, reaching into her purse for her hanky.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

He had that put up in her memory.

He gestures to a very sexy marble nude by the swimming pool. The lady's eyes widen. So do Justin's.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Err..apparently theirs was a most *passionate* relationship.

Philips wanders off into the other room, alarming Richard.

LINDA
Nelson, did you hear that?
(To Richard)
And you tell it so beautifully.

RICHARD
Well, a house does have a soul,
don't you agree?

PHILIPS (V.O.)
Forget soul, what about this *hole*?

LINDA
A hole?

JUSTIN AND RICHARD
(Each to himself)
Oh, shit.

Richard and Linda go to the other room where Philips has discovered the plumbing works.

PHILIPS
Yes, right here in this wall.

RICHARD
You weren't supposed to see that.

PHILIPS
I *bet* I wasn't!

LINDA
Is something *wrong* with this house?

RICHARD
Wrong? No! No, indeed! Actually,
one could call it an excavation.

PHILIPS
An *excavation*?

RICHARD
You remember the pirate treasure
Captain Kent brought back?

Rob is listening in the kitchen, incredulous. Justin also waits to see how he is going to get out of this.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Legend has it that it was gold
doubloons worth millions today.
(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)

The previous owner, a naval historian, had reason to believe it was hidden in this house.

PHILIPS

But he never found it.

RICHARD

Alas, no. He died before he could complete a thorough search.

He reaches into the hole and pulls out his own toolbox.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Here are his tools, poor fellow.

Justin cracks an admiring smile. Now Philips is very interested. He shoots Linda a glance.

LINDA

We've taken enough of your time.

RICHARD

Not at all, a pleasure.

As they leave, Justin grabs his bike and cycles away. Rob emerges from the kitchen. The men collapse next to the hole, exhausted from their "performance."

ROB

"Heinz Kent?"

He giggles. Just then, the pipes burst all over them.

INT. JACK AND ROZ'S DINING ROOM -- EVENING

Jack presides over the festive table. Roz, Karen and Richard, Pam and her boring-looking husband, Chip and his blonde social x-ray date, two other couples. Richard talks to Pam, who lights up like a Christmas tree. He shares a quick secret glance with Karen across the table. Chip loudly expounds to anyone in earshot on his favorite subject, himself. Karen, sitting next to him, takes the opportunity to whisper teasingly to Richard.

KAREN

So, you're in the plumbing business, too, I hear?

Richard jumps.

KAREN (CONT'D)

My spies are *everywhere*. Don't worry, I know it's hush-hush.

She gives him a cute, saucy look.

KAREN (CONT'D)

You're pretty handy, Mr. Lester. I wonder what *else* can you do?