

Whittington Manor

By

Claire Voet
&
Lee O'Connor

Based On The Novel
Whittington Manor
by
Claire Voet

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Email: lee.a.oconnor@gmail.com

CARD: 1945

FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRY LANE - WHITTINGTON MANOR ENTRANCE - DAY

Clouds are gathered, rain spits, heavy winds blow against a naked oak tree that stands beside a rusty iron gate. Hedges are overgrown, its branches weave in and out of the bars. By the gate, a wooden board has been absorbed by shrubbery and is unreadable.

A lady in a long navy coat approaches, this is SARAH WHITTINGTON, 23, bags under her eyes. The war years have not been kind.

Sarah tears away the overgrowth on the wooden board - It's a sign, it reads - WHITTINGTON MANOR. Smiles from the corner of her mouth - a place of familiarity. She pushes through the gate.

EXT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - DRIVEWAY (CONTINUOUS)

Once a well maintained garden, but now, as time has passed, overgrowth of weeds and grass has taken over, swallowing any evidence of such pruning.

A BRANCH lies on the wet ground, Sarah bends to pick it up. She swings the branch side to side, making a clearing, heading up the driveway.

She stops swinging, looks up - a burnt out, four hundred year old stately building - WHITTINGTON MANOR.

CROWS CAW from inside. Sarah scans the building - the second floor windows have completely gone. The roof is caved in destroying the main structure, only the front few rooms and entrance in tact.

She makes her way to the entrance. A wooden plank blocks the front door which hangs from it's hinges. She moves the plank and pushes through the creaky door.

INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - FOYER

Sarah halts, cups her mouth in shock, looks up at what was once a beautiful sweeping staircase, now, just a pile of rubble.

She presses her foot down on a wooden floorboard, checking it will hold. She steps inside, glances to her left down the hallway which leads to the kitchen - nothing but ruin - pots, pans and utensils lie on the black, dusty floor by the door.

Sarah stands in the doorway of the kitchen, focuses on the arger, thinking. Remembering.

INSERT CUT: WARM, LIGHT AND AIRY - HOUSEKEEPER, ANNIE PHILPOT, 47, TAKES A FRESHLY BAKED CAKE FROM THE ARGER.

BACK TO SCENE:

She turns, heads to the drawing-room, tearful. Her every step CREAKS and ECHOES throughout the building.

The drawing-room door is missing, she enters with caution.

INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - DRAWING-ROOM

A CROW shrieks past. She instinctively jumps, holds her chest, breathing heavy, scared to death.

It's dark. Dust sparkles in the strip of LIGHT that seeps through the red velvet curtains, hanging from a huge sash window.

She runs her fingers over the Chesterfield sofa that is covered in dust and rubble, lost in thought, reminiscing. The grandfather clock lies on the floor, broken, and a grand piano sits in the corner, unscathed.

Sarah opens the piano top - it's in perfect condition. She closes her eyes.

INSERT CUT: ELEGANTLY FURNISHED ROOM WITH WARM COLOURS AND PLENTY OF LIGHT. SARAH PLAYING THE PIANO - CHOPIN NOCTURNE.

BACK TO SCENE.

The stool is tipped over, puts it back on its feet, wipes away the dust from the seat and places it under the piano.

From the corner of her eye she notices a little brown book on the floor, picks it up, looks at the cover - it's a medical journal. A whisper of a smile appears on her face.

Sarah flicks through the pages, comes across a picture of a BADLY BURNT ARM -

INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - SARAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

SUPER: 1st SEPTEMBER 1939

A picture of a severely burnt arm.

EMMA (O.S)

Disgusting! That's truly ghastly,
Sarah.

Sunlight pours through the window onto a younger Sarah, 17, and her best friend, EMMA, 17, who lie on the bed. They look through a medical journal.

SARAH

Oh you are so squeamish, Emma,
really.

Emma closes the book, jumps off the bed and looks out the window.

EMMA

Such a wonderful day. Where do you
want to go?

SARAH

Portsmouth Hill? We've not been
there for months.

Emma turns, enthusiastic.

EMMA

Come on then.

INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - KITCHEN

Bright and well kept. Wooden cabinets full of crockery are lined against the wall, labelled jars of herbs, jams and sauces stand on display.

Housekeeper, Annie, plump, with rosy cheeks, is stood by the arger. She rolls bread doe on the kitchen worktop.

Sarah and Emma burst in with excitement.

SARAH

Annie, we're going out for a walk.
I don't know where Mama is, can you
tell her please?

Annie speaks over her shoulder.

ANNIE

I'll be sure to tell her. And be
home before dark, mind.

Sarah and Emma hurry out the door like little kids.

INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - DRAWING ROOM

A NEWSPAPER drops onto a coffee table, the headlines read -
"GERMANY INVADES POLAND"

WILLIAM (O.S)

Take a look at this mornings
headlines.

Sitting on a Chesterfield sofa is LADY LAURA WHITTINGTON,
late 40s, well groomed. She picks up the paper, as she does,
an unmissable DIAMOND RING SPARKLES on her left hand. She
reads the headlines, then looks up to -

LORD WILLIAM WHITTINGTON, late 50s, broad with a full head
of Grey hair. Everything about William, his demeanour and
appearance, is distinguished. He sits next to her on a
leather armchair, smoking his pipe.

LAURA

Oh good heavens no. They can't do
that.

WILLIAM

I'm afraid they have, Laura.

LAURA

But what will that mean, William?

Laura grows more distressed.

WILLIAM

War, one can only presume.

LAURA

It really doesn't bare thinking about. What does that mean for Thomas, or even Charles? We haven't had a letter from Thomas in weeks.

William places his hand on hers.

WILLIAM

Thomas joined the Navy, it was his choice. It's Charles I'm more concerned about, the last thing he needs right now is to go to war, after just opening the accountancy firm.

They exchange a look of concern.

EXT. TOP OF PORTSDOWN HILL - DAY

Sun beams over the countryside - Portsmouth harbour in the distance - WAR SHIPS docked - others head out to sea.

A young BOY sits alone on a large stone, sketches the city and harbour below, this is JOE LAMBERT, 19, blonde curly hair, handsome, wearing hand me down clothes.

EXT. NEAR THE TOP OF PORTSDOWN HILL

Sarah and Emma trek up the hill, heading towards the large stone.

EMMA

With Father's heart condition it's better for us if we go to Devon, especially now as war looks inevitable.

SARAH

Devon? Emma, how on earth am I going to see you if you are in Devon?

EMMA

I don't know Sarah, But we can write.

Emma sighs.

They reach the top of the hill.

EXT. TOP OF PORTSDOWN HILL (CONTINUOUS)

Sarah and Emma place their coats on the ground and sit near the large stone. They marvel at the view.

From the corner of her eye, Emma spots Joe perched on the stone. She nudges Sarah.

EMMA

What do you think he's drawing?

They study him, interested.

Joe turns, feeling someone watching him - takes a quick glance at them. The girls look away, giggling. Joe turns just as quick, embarrassed.

EMMA

Why don't you ask him?

SARAH

No. We're not even acquainted. You ask him?

Sarah giggles.

EMMA

Alright...I will.

Emma stands.

SARAH

No Emma, please don't. I was teasing!

Emma clears her throat.

EMMA

Excuse me!

SARAH

Oh this is awfully embarrassing.

EMMA

Sorry to interrupt you.

Joe faces her, surprised.

JOE

Yes.

EMMA
My friend and I...

SARAH
(loud whisper)
You were.

Emma ignores Sarah, carries on.

EMMA
We were just curious as to what you
are drawing.

JOE
Just the view.

His eyes lock on Sarah, who hides behind Emma. Sarah blushes. He looks back at Emma, shy, afraid to make eye contact.

EMMA
May we look?

Joe motions them over. Sarah's mortified, Emma tugs on her arm to follow. He shows them his drawing.

EMMA
It's wonderful, isn't it Sarah.

Sarah nods, peeking from behind Emma.

SARAH
Yes, it certainly is.

EMMA
What is your name?

Joe's a little reserved and nervous from all the attention.

JOE
Joe Lambert.

Emma stretches out her hand. They shake hands.

EMMA
Emma Howlett and may I present to
you my dearest friend, Sarah
Whittington.

Sarah shakes his hand, gingerly. Their eyes lock again, instant chemistry.

SARAH

So are you an artist, Joe?

JOE

Me? No, not a real artist. I don't sell my pictures or anything. I work down at the dock yard with me Dad and Brother.

He continues to draw. The girls observe.

SARAH

Do you draw people?

Joe looks up at Sarah. Grins.

SARAH

Yeah Sometimes. I could draw you if you like?

Sarah's disconcerted.

SARAH

You mean now?

JOE

Well it's a little late now, it will take me a while. I could on Sunday...Sunday morning. That's if you ain't going to church.

Sarah hesitates.

SARAH

We only go to church on special occasions. My parents aren't awfully religious.

JOE

Mine neither. So what do you say? Sunday?

Emma nudges Sarah encouragingly. Whispers in her ear -

EMMA

Go on, you are acquainted now.

SARAH

Why not? That would be most kind.

Joe gapes deep into her eyes. It's love at first sight.

JOE

The morning light can be beautiful
up here.

Sarah holds his stare. The feeling is mutual.

Emma links arms with Sarah and leads her away.

EMMA

Well, bye Joe, it's been a pleasure
meeting you.

Emma gives a cheeky grin. They pick up their coats and walk
down the hill. Joe's eyes are fixated on Sarah. Sarah turns,
smiles at him, gives a little flirtatious and more confident
wave.

EXT. PORTSMOUTH DOCK YARD - DAY

A BELL RINGS from a shipyard factory. It's the end of a long
shift. WORKERS exit, Joe among them with his older brother,
TOMMY LAMBERT, 21, cheeky, charming and his Father, FRANK
LAMBERT, 45, broad and tall. They pause and look around -
It's bedlam - SHIPYARD WORKERS, SAILORS, ARMY PERSONAL move
in every direction.

FRANK

This is mayhem.

TOMMY

Something must be going on?

JOE

Question is, what?

They pass a dozen docked war ships, a few in the middle of
construction - numerous WORKERS weld and hammer the main
structure. The NOISE of metal on metal is deafening.

The Lambert's hurry down the dock, weaving in and out of the
crowds.

EXT. PORTSDOWN ROAD - PORCHESTER - DAY

A small working class estate. Modern semi-detached houses
sit at the crest of a hill surrounded by fields. The view of
Portsmouth in the distance - large Navy boats docked at the
harbour.

Joe, Tommy and Frank appear from down the road, hands in their pockets.

Two pretty GIRLS, 17, walk in their direction, linking arms. They spot Tommy, turn all giddy. Tommy grins, excited, adds a bit of swagger to his walk.

They chat whilst passing.

CATHY

Still on for tonight, Tommy?

TOMMY

I wouldn't pass up the chance to take you out, Cathy. I'll pick you up at seven.

The Lambert's pass Cathy and her friend.

CATHY

Look forward to it.

PRETTY GIRLS #2

Hello Joe.

Joe forces a smile, shy, turns away.

The girls carry on, sniggering to themselves.

Tommy checks out her backside as she passes.

Frank chuckles.

They approach a three bed semi-detached house. Frank pushes through a black iron gate that hangs off it's hinges, Tommy and Joe follow.

EXT. LAMBERT HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN

Overgrown with weeds, a TABBY CAT sits on the garden wall. A wooden plaque with "THE LAURELS" inscribed, hangs by the front door.

Joe, Tommy and Frank enter.

INT. HALLWAY

A row of shoes lined up along the wall, coats hang. Not enough space. Joe, Tommy and Frank take off their muddy boots.

INT. FRONT ROOM

Sparse with only basic furniture that has seen better days.

Joe, Tommy and Frank enter.

AUDREY LAMBERT, 45, bags under her eyes, she's been up all night, stands with her hands on her hips.

AUDREY

What time d'you call this? Tea has been ready ages.

TOMMY

Good, I'm starving.

Tommy pushes past Audrey and makes a bee-line for the dining table.

FRANK

It's a mad house in Pompey. Everyone's leaving, since bloody 'Itler's invaded Poland. They're all convinced war will break out now.

JOE

It'll be like a bleedin, ghost town come tomorrow.

Frank gives Audrey a peck on the cheek, then heads into the kitchen.

MAUREEN, 16, sits with a face like thunder on the sofa.

MAUREEN

Can you lot shut-up! You're gonna wake the baby in a minute. It's taken me hours to get her off to sleep.

TOMMY

Shouldn't have got yourself knocked up then.

Tommy grins. Joe laughs as he passes her, heading for the dining table.

AUDREY

Come and sit down and eat your tea.

Audrey disappears to the kitchen.

Maureen frowns at Joe as she sits opposite him.

MAUREEN

I don't know what all the bloody fuss is about. Poland is a long way from here.

Her frown deepens.

MAUREEN (CONT'D)

Ain't it where polar bears come from, Poland?

Joe and Tommy laugh.

JOE

Yeah that's right, Sis, it's where all them big grizzly polar bears live.

TOMMY

Yeah vicious they are. 'Itler will soon be running scared out of Poland.

Maureen cottons on to their mick taking.

MAUREEN

Oh piss off, the pair of you!

Audrey returns, placing Tea cake on the table.

AUDREY

What did I tell you about swearing Maureen? Nice girls don't swear, do you 'ere me?

Frank walks in and sits down at the table.

TOMMY

What are you talking about Mum? She ain't a nice girl. She got pregas at sixteen with some sailor boy.

Maureen stands, furious, her fist clenched - she THROWS A PUNCH at Tommy. Audrey catches her arm mid air.

AUDREY
Tommy! Maureen!

FRANK
Sit down!

Maureen huffs, then sits. Tommy returns to his cake, unfazed.

Frank looks over to Tommy, assertive.

FRANK
Tommy, you take things too far. I will not tolerate nastiness under my roof.

An uncomfortable silence. Everyone takes a bite of their cake.

Frank turns to Audrey, she smiles gratefully.

JOE
Dad, Do you reckon there will be a war?

FRANK
After yesterdays news, I'm sure of it.

Maureen sits closer to Frank, worried.

MAUREEN
Will we be safe 'ere Dad?

All eyes are on Frank, waiting for a reassuring answer. Frank looks at them - sees worry in their eyes. He contemplates his answer.

FRANK
Well, we are safer than those poor sods in Pompey.

Audrey picks up the tea pot and pours Frank a cup.

AUDREY
Some of those poor sods, as you call them, are our family. I'm worried about Mum and Dad, Frank. They're old, they won't cope with a war. I can't look after them so much living here.

FRANK

Your sister will look after them,
she's only down the road.

Frank takes a big bite of cake.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(mouthful)

You know moving from summer street
to 'ere was the best decision we
ever made. We got a nice 'ome,
don't we?

JOE

Yeah, all thanks to our Maureen for
getting in the club, bringing shame
on the family.

Maureen glares at her brother.

AUDREY

What did I say, we don't speak
about that no more. And if anyone
asks, Maureen's husband is away at
sea.

TOMMY

Like anyone's gonna fall for that
old chestnut.

Frank flashes a warning look at Tommy to shut-up.

A BABY CRY from upstairs. Maureen rolls her eyes.

MAUREEN

I just sat down for me tea.

AUDREY

Go and get her, and I'll watch her
while you finish your tea.

Maureen sighs, then heads upstairs.

AUDREY

(whispers)

There's talk about evacuating
mothers with babies. D'you think
they should send our Maureen and
baby Nancy?

JOE & TOMMY

Yes definitely!

Frank shakes his head, ignores the boys.

FRANK

No, like I said, it will be safer
'ere than Pompey, and they're
building air-raid shelters
everywhere. No need to panic.

EXT. PORTSMOUTH TRAIN STATION - DAY

A train WHISTLES ready to depart. It's chaotic. PARENTS and
SCHOOL TEACHERS gather CHILDREN and organise an orderly line
- ready to board.

Children carry little brown boxes with gas masks inside.
Some cry uncontrollably, others, solemn and forlorn - They
start to board - Parents SHOUT to their children.

PARENT

Be good. And look out for each
other!

A WHISTLES BLOWS - a stampede of people board.

The Whittington's are to the side avoiding the rush. They
say there farewells to the HOWLETT FAMILY. William shakes
hands with ADMIRAL HOWLETT, late 50's. Laura embraces
FLORENCE HOWLETT, late 40s. Sarah hugs Emma.

WILLIAM

Take care old chap. I will have a
large scotch waiting for you on
your return, you can count on that.

ADMIRAL

Less of the old. You are not far
behind me, may I remind you.

They chuckle, then a sombre mood takes over once more.

ADMIRAL (CONT'D)

Take care of yourself, William.

William nods, releases the handshake then embraces him.

Sarah stands with Emma.

SARAH

I'm going to miss you so much. What
will I do without my wonderful,
dearest friend?

They hug again, tearful.

EMMA

I shall miss you too. Promise me
you will write, Sarah.

SARAH

Of course I will, silly. Every week
without fail. I promise.

EMMA

Be sure to keep me informed about
Joe. I want to know everything.
Every little detail.

They giggle and hug again.

The Howlett's board the train.

The train WHISTLES, then CHUGS out of the station.

Children lean out of the carriage windows, waving.

Emma waves to Sarah.

William places an arm around Sarah as she returns the wave,
watching Emma disappear into the distance.

Sarah lets out a small sob.

WILLIAM

We will visit them my dear. Come
on, dry your eyes.

William hands her a clean, white handkerchief - She accepts
it and dabs her eyes. Laura pats Sarah's shoulder trying to
offer a little affection, but with unease.

SARAH

Oh Papa, I do hope so. I'm going to
miss Emma so much.

LAURA

It might be all over by Christmas.
Probably a storm in a tea cup,
something over nothing, you'll see.

Laura pushes her shoulder's back, stiff upper lip and walks
on. William unconvinced look, takes Sarah's arm in his own.

WILLIAM

Come on, let's go home and have a
nice cup of tea. I'm sure Annie has
baked one of her delicious cakes.

INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

The Grandfather clock TICKS. Sarah sits in absolute quiet, deeply engrossed in her medical book.

Laura enters, beverage in hand.

LAURA

How are you dear? Feeling a little less glum?

Sarah doesn't make eye contact.

SARAH

I'm fine, Mama.

Laura steps forward, notices the book Sarah is reading.

LAURA

Oh Sarah, why do you continue to read those ghastly books? Surely your time can be better spent learning something else.

Sits on the Chesterfield opposite.

Sarah glances with annoyance at Laura from over her book, then back to the book while she talks.

SARAH

I want to be a nurse, Mama. You know that.

LAURA

We've spoken about this so many times Sarah. It's too dangerous, even more so now.

Sarah snaps the book closed, ready to front Laura out.

SARAH

This country will need all the nurses it can get. It's not dangerous for me, it's dangerous for all those poor men putting their lives on the line.

Laura places her drink down on an oval wooden coffee table in front, sighs heavily.

LAURA

Sarah, I understand that. It's just it's not what your Father and I had in mind for you.

SARAH

So what exactly did you and Father have in mind for me? Oh I remember now, marry me off with the next eligible bachelor!

Sarah folds her arms defiantly.

LAURA

And what is so wrong with getting married to a desirable, educated, young man?

Sarah glares at her incredulously.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I was seventeen when I met your Father. It's only right you find your match, a decent young man that will make you as happy as your Father has made me. Yes, definitely time for us to start looking at the prospect of marriage for you.

SARAH

It's not your decision to make. We don't live in the dark ages of arranged marriages. And I wish you would refrain from shoving me in front of all those pompous, sanctimonious men at every single party or social event we attend.

LAURA

Pompous? Sanctimonious? Rupert Harvey is delightful. The Harveys are enormously respected, you could do a lot worse. Rupert will run for parliament one day, you mark my words.

SARAH

If he doesn't bore me to death first.

LAURA

Or, you he, with your medical books.

Laura raises her eyebrows, tongue in cheek. Holds Sarah stare for a moment.

Sarah irritated, picks up her book, and leaves.

SARAH
 (under her breath, whilst
 leaving)
 Rather stick pins in my eyes than
 marry Rupert Foxwell.

INT. WHTTINGTON MANOR - KITCHEN

Annie, stands by the arger, baking a cake, covered in
 flour.

Still in a strop over her Mother, Sarah marches in.

Annie looks over her shoulder - observes Sarah with
 curiosity. Sarah slumps down on the kitchen table, places
 her head in her hands.

ANNIE
 Something wrong Miss Sarah?

SARAH
 Life isn't fair, Annie.

Sarah grabs a home-made biscuit from the middle of the
 table.

ANNIE
 Oh, you are right there my love.

Annie wipes her hands on her apron and puts an arm around
 Sarah, giving her a little hug.

SARAH
 I want to do something with my
 life, Annie. Is that so bad? I just
 want to be a nurse but it seems
 impossible for Mama to understand
 that.

Annie gives her a warm smile and looks Sarah in the eyes.

ANNIE
 Your Mum, and your Dad too, just
 want to keep you safe, that's all.
 If that 'itler carries on marching
 through Europe, taking over every
 country he pleases Gawd only knows
 what will 'appen.

Sarah nibbles on her biscuit.

Annie walks back over to the arger, continues with her baking. Sarah follows in her step.

SARAH

I know, Annie, and that's exactly why I want to become a nurse. I want to help, not stay hidden away in this cocooned world that I live in.

Sarah stands gnawing her biscuit, Annie pours milk into a glass covered in flour, hands it to her.

ANNIE

I know how much you love milk with your biscuits.

Sarah sips the milk, smiles gratefully.

ANNIE

Better now?

Sarah shrugs.

SARAH

Not really, but talking to you always helps.

ANNIE

It's good to get things off your chest, no good bottling things up.

Annie looks at Sarah with affection.

INT. LAMBERT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Audrey sits with Tommy and Joe at the dinner table, eating tea and cake.

INSERT CUT: SARAH'S HAZEL EYES AND BEAUTIFUL SMILE.

BACK TO SCENE:

Joe, seemingly in a trance, smirk on his face. Audrey notices.

AUDREY

What are you grinning about?

JOE

Oh...Uh...Nothing, Nothing Mum.

Frank strolls in from the hallway with a large piece of paper rolled in one hand and a pencil in the other.

AUDREY

What the 'ell is that?

Frank pins it to the wall - it's a map of the world.

FRANK

This is a map of all the countries in Europe. I'm gonna put a circle round each country that 'itler has taken over...so we can keep a close eye on the bugger, know what's happening so to speak.

AUDREY

We don't need no stupid map to find out what's happening, go outside and hear everyone talking on the street.

Audrey pours herself a tea from the pot.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

I saw Rose Gladstone this morning. She was in bits the poor mare. Her Collin has just gone and joined up, he's leaving in a few days.

She tutts taking a sip of her tea.

Tommy looks at Audrey, sheepish.

TOMMY

Mum, I've, well um... I've got a bit of news.

AUDREY

Oh yeah and what's that? Found yourself another girlfriend? Hope you treat her better than the last one. Lovely girl Amy was, I don't know why...

TOMMY

Mum, will you listen.

Frank turns around. Grabbing his parents full attention.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

I've signed up with the Navy. I was going to tell you sooner only I didn't want to upset you both.

Audrey ogles at him in disbelief, her mouth open, completely lost for words.

FRANK

Well, that's a good choice son, better than the army.

Frank turns back to his map and draws a circle around Poland.

Audrey's less than happy with Frank's comment.

AUDREY

Good choice son. Is that all you can say?

She stands, knocks her tea over and storms into the kitchen. Frank with a look of guilt, puts down the map and rushes after her.

INT. KITCHEN

Audrey is bent over the kitchen sink, crying. Frank takes out her handkerchief from the front pocket of her blue pinafore, hands it to her, she blows her nose.

AUDREY

It's 'appening already, Frank. Our family is being torn apart.

He envelopes her.

INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Plans of an air-raid shelter spread over a table. William and his son, CHARLES WHITTINGTON, 25, handsome, and every inch his Father's son, discuss the layout.

CHARLES

I think we should have three beds on this side, and here is an area for a table and some chairs.

William nods along, agreeing.

A KNOCK at the door.

William and Charles simultaneously turn - It's Sarah. She stands in the doorway.

SARAH

Papa, I can't find mother, can I...

WILLIAM

Sarah, your Brother and I are discussing something important, can this wait?

Sarah, a little disheartened by her Father's attitude, leaves and pulls the door to.

William and Charles resume their discussion.

INT. HALLWAY

Sarah steps away from the door, takes a breath and shrugs off her Father's attitude, she's used to being dismissed. Behind her is a mirror next to a small table, she looks at herself -

CHARLES (O.S)

If, or should I say, when war is declared on Germany, we can be sure of air-raids. It may not be comfortable, but I suppose comfort will be the least of our worries and essentially unimportant.

WILLIAM (O.S)

I disagree, comfort is vitally important.

- straightens her blue dress and fiddles with her hair, then heads down the hall.

INT. KITCHEN (CONTINUOUS)

Sarah marches past Annie who is stood chopping vegetables.

SARAH

I'll be home before luncheon.

She dashes out the back door, before Annie could say anything.

EXT. TOP OF PORTSDOWN HILL - LATER

Joe waits, pencil tucked behind his ear, pad in hand, perched on the stone. He stares at the view - A PINK MORNING SKY.

Behind - Sarah stops to catch her breath, spots Joe, her mood instantly changes - happy. She sits on the grass next to him.

Joe grins.

JOE
So, you still want me to draw you
then?

Sarah blushes, glances at him from the corner of her eye.

SARAH
Yes please.

She positions herself in front of him, sits with her body angled away, hands on her lap, she looks right at him.

Joe takes his pencil from his ear.

JOE
Just tilt your head a little.

She does just that.

Joe makes a sketch on his pad.

JOE
So where d'you live, Sarah?

SARAH
I live in Whittington Manor.

A look of realisation sweeps over Joe.

JOE
Of course, Sarah Whittington. Your
name is Whittington. The other day
I... well I never picked up on
that.

Joe drops his pencil, clumsily picks it up, lost for words.

Sarah watches with amusement.

He continues to draw.

JOE

Um...So... did you go to school nearby?

SARAH

No, I study at home, although I would have much preferred to go to school. One can make more friends that way, so I've been told.

JOE

Well I dunno...I hated school and I don't have many friends neither.

Sarah studies him, gazes at his green eyes and strong arms.

JOE

So what's it like studying at home?

SARAH

Boring. Apart from my studies, I play piano and read medical books.

JOE

Medical books?

SARAH

Yes. I want to be a nurse. It's been my dream since I was a little girl.

Her eyes sadden, she looks the other way. Joe stops drawing, concerned.

JOE

Why are you sad about that?

SARAH

Am I?

She turns back with a fake smile.

JOE

Your eyes look sad.

SARAH

My parents have forbidden me to be a nurse. They say it's too dangerous now that we could be at war.

JOE

But that's even more reason to be a nurse. We're gonna need nurses if things get any worse.

SARAH

My point exactly. But my parents don't see it that way.

Sarah shrugs, air of nonchalance.

SARAH

Anyway, I have already decided. I will be a nurse no matter what they say. They will just have to get used to the idea.

Joe draws her with intense concentration.

SARAH (CONT'D)

So. What about you? What's your dream?

JOE

Me?

He chuckles.

JOE (CONT'D)

I used to dream of being an artist, when I was young that is, but round 'ere. Well. Working at the dock is the best I can get.

SARAH

Well maybe for the moment, but you must never give up hope on becoming an artist one day.

JOE

You're right. I shouldn't. To be honest all I keep thinking about is being called up for war.

SARAH

Well we are not at war yet.

JOE

Soon will be.

SARAH

My Brother is in the Navy. We haven't heard from him in quite a

(More)

SARAH (Cont'd)
while now. His whereabouts are kept
secret.

She wells up.

JOE
It'll be for intelligence reasons.
I'm sure he's fine.

Joe gives a reassuring smile.

Sarah wipes her eyes and gives a small smile back. She waits
for Joe to finish the drawing.

JOE
There you go. Miss Sarah
Whittington.

He hands Sarah the portrait. Her eyes light up.

SARAH
Joe that's truly magnificent, it
looks as good as a photograph. You
are without a doubt, a talented
artist.

Joe's thrilled she likes it. He sits on the grass beside
her. They admire the view behind them, their arms
accidentally brush against each other, they fidget -
awkward.

SARAH
I should go.

Sarah stands, as does Joe.

JOE
I'll walk you back if you like?

Before she reacts - Joe frowns, squinting at her hair.

JOE (CONT'D)
Stay still. Don't move, there's
something in your hair.

Joe cups his hand on the side of her head. Sarah stands
frozen to the spot.

SARAH
What is it?

Remains still, anxious.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Oh Joe. What is it?

Joe pulls away his clenched fist and pretends to release something behind her back.

JOE
It's just a ladybird, that's all.

Joe gently strokes her face with the backs of his fingers. She feels the same as he, intense chemistry. He slowly moves in to kiss her lips. She hesitates, then gives in, kissing him back. They look at each, pulling away, bewildered, speechless.

SARAH
I...uh...I Shouldn't...

Joe places his finger over her lips, silencing her. Takes her hand in his own and they walk down the hill. They exchange a glance, exploding with happiness.

Sarah suddenly stops, turns -

SARAH
I didn't really have a ladybird in my hair did I?

Joe struggles to keep a straight face, shakes his head, then bursts out laughing.

SARAH
Joe!...

Joe runs down the hill. Sarah chasing after him.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Joe!

EXT. BOTTOM OF PORTSDOWN HILL

An OLD LADY, 70, walks along - suddenly, Joe comes out of nowhere, colliding with her, almost knocking her over. She clutches on to her handbag, thinking he's a thief, she SLAPS him with her handbag.

OLD LADY
Get away! Go on, be off with you!

Joe sprints away, cheeky look on his face.

Sarah bolts past the old lady, she watches the pair run away, shaking her head with distaste.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE

Sarah catches up with Joe. They stop, panting for breath, almost crying with laughter. They calm down. Joe looks into her eyes, gently takes her hand, slipping his fingers through hers. She can't help but smile.

They walk down the country lane, holding hands.

EXT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - ENTRANCE (MOMENTS LATER)

Joe and Sarah stop near an old oak tree by the huge iron gate.

SARAH

I had so much fun today, Joe.

JOE

Me too, Sarah. Can I see you again?

SARAH

Yes, I would like that very much.

JOE

Can I see you Sunday next?

Sarah nods.

Joe leans to kiss her, she gives him her cheek, conscious of it being a bit close to home, she looks behind, then heads to the manor.

Joe leans on the tree, watching her make her way down the winding driveway, passing GARDENERS who prune the hedges and trim the perfectly symmetrical lawns that lead to the manor house.

He is besotted with her, ignoring her luxurious home.

INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - FOYER - (MOMENTS LATER)

Sarah enters with a spring in her step. Laura walks down the sweeping staircase.

LAURA

You look a little flushed my dear.
I hope you are not sickening for
something?

SARAH

I'm fine, Mama. Absolutely fine.

She grins from ear to ear.

Laura frowns.

LAURA

I'm pleased to see you are a little
chirpier than yesterday.

Sarah rushes up the stairs to her bedroom.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM

Sarah flops onto her bed, smiles uncontrollably, gives a
little shriek and kicks her legs with sublime happiness.

INT. LAMBERT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Maureen and Tommy sit on the sofa. Frank tunes in the
wireless that sits on the coffee table.

Audrey comes from the kitchen and hands everyone a cup of
tea. She sits in between Tommy and Maureen.

Joe enters, merry.

JOE

Morning all.

FRANK

Shh...Take a seat lad.

Joe bunches up on the end of the sofa.

JOE

(as he sits)

What's going on?

FRANK

Chamberlain is about to give a
speech.

Frank tunes in and get's the right channel, he falls back in his armchair.

They huddle up and listen.

CHAMBERLAIN (V.O)

I am speaking to you from the Cabinet Room at ten Downing Street. This morning the British Ambassador in Berlin handed the German Government a final note stating that, unless we hear from them by eleven o'clock that they were prepared at once to withdraw their troops from Poland, a state of war would exist between us.

MONTAGE:

- INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY - William, Laura and Charles sit on the Chesterfield, listening to the wireless. Sarah enters. William motions her to sit. She sits by Laura.

CHAMBERLAIN (V.O) (CONT'D)

I have to tell you now that no such undertaking has been received, and that consequently this country is at war with Germany.

Laura grabs Williams hand, scared.

- INT. LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS) - Audrey's face fills with worry, she looks at Frank.

CHAMBERLAIN (V.O) (CONT'D)

You can imagine what a bitter blow it is to me that all my long struggle to win peace has failed. Yet I cannot believe that there is anything more or anything different that I could have done and that would have been more successful.

- INT. DRAWING ROOM (CONTINUOUS) - Sarah looks at Laura with dismay, Laura's attention is on Charles.

CHAMBERLAIN (V.O) (CONT'D)

When I have finished speaking, certain detailed announcements will be made on behalf of the government. Give these your closest attention. The government have made plans under which it will be

(More)

CHAMBERLAIN (V.O) (CONT'D) (Cont'd)
 possible to carry on work of the
 nation in the days of stress and
 strain that may be ahead...

- INT. LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS) - Maureen moves to Frank,
 hugs him, frightened.

CHAMBERLAIN (V.O) (CONT'D)
 Now may God bless you all. May He
 defend the right. For it is evil
 things that we shall be fighting
 against - brute force, bad faith,
 injustice, oppression and
 persecution - and against them I am
 certain that right will prevail.

Frank turns off the wireless, the Lambert's sit silent, in
 thought.

END OF MONTAGE.

INT. DRAWING ROOM (CONTINUOUS)

William switches off the wireless - SILENCE, Jolts his head
 to Charles to leave, they head out the room.

Laura makes her way to the liquor cabinet. She pours herself
 a drink and takes a gulp, standing in self pity.

Sarah sits alone, worried.

INT. LAMBERT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Rain hits against the window. The atmosphere tense. A clock
 TICKS on the wall.

Maureen sits with baby NANCY, 1, next to Tommy, watching him
 eat his full English breakfast - her expression full of
 worry. Joe and Frank sit opposite with a cup of tea.

Tommy glances at her.

TOMMY
 Don't worry our Maureen, I'll be
 alright. You never know, I could be
 a war hero.

Tommy cheekily grins.

FRANK
Hold out your hand lad.

Frank pulls out a penny farthing.

TOMMY
I won't be needin' no pocket money
where I'm off to.

He chuckles.

JOE
I'll 'ave it.

Joe sticks his hand out.

FRANK
Get out of it. It's not pocket
money, you daft sod, it's me lucky
farthing. It kept me alive in the
first war and it's gonna keep you
alive through this one.

Tommy takes the penny.

TOMMY
Thanks, Dad.

He has his last bite, puts the knife and fork together.

TOMMY
Well, I s'pose it's time.

Tommy stands. As does everyone.

Audrey appears from the kitchen, her eyes swollen from
crying.

Tommy flings his arms around her.

TOMMY
Bye, Mum.

Swallows his tears.

Audrey sobs, so do Maureen and baby Nancy.

AUDREY
You take good care of yourself, and
don't skip meals, you'll need to
keep your strength up. And I want a
letter every week, d'you 'ere me?

TOMMY

Yes Mum. Don't worry, I'm going to
be just fine.

Audrey pulls Tommy away.

Tommy hugs Frank.

FRANK

Take care, son.

JOE

Best place for you on a ship, away
from girls.

TOMMY

God help the girls when I get back,
that's all I can say.

They exchange a brotherly hug.

Tommy moves over to Maureen, she hesitates, then grabs him,
not able to control her emotions.

TOMMY

Alright, Sis, steady on. You're
squeezin' the living daylights out
of me.

She releases her grip and steps back, embarrassed.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Bye little Nancy.

Tommy kisses the top of Nancy's head.

Grabs a small bag by his chair, takes a look back at his
family and smiles, then leaves.

EXT. PORTSDOWN ROAD (CONTINUOUS)

Rain spits, Grey clouds above.

The Lambert's stand in the doorway, watching Tommy stroll
down the hill - he looks back, gives a wave, then carries
on.

EXT. TOP OF PORTSDOWN HILL - DAY

SUPER: TWO MONTHS LATER.

Windy and cold, a burst of sunlight seeps through the Grey clouds.

Stood in a tweed coat and scarf, Sarah tries to take a photograph of Joe - he keeps moving and pulling funny faces.

She laughs.

SARAH

Will you just keep still for one moment.

JOE

What, and have you break your new camera? I can draw you a picture of myself instead. How about that?

SARAH

And how would you do that?

JOE

Simple, just look in the mirror.

SARAH

No. A good as your art is, I still want a photograph of you. I'm going to get one if it's the last thing I do.

Joe smiles, giving up, he stands still in front of the large stone - Sarah takes his picture.

She walks over to him. Shivering.

SARAH

It's freezing.

Joe rubs his hands against the cold.

JOE

Come here.

They cuddle, keeping warm.

JOE (CONT'D)

I've been thinking. I don't want to keep you a secret no more. Sarie, I want you to come home with me and meet my family.

SARAH

Meet your family? Oh I don't think that's wise. I mean...

JOE

Look, I don't care if your Dad is Lord Whittington or the King of England. I love you. You are my Sarie and I want the whole world to know it. Will you come home with me?

Sarah contemplates the idea.

SARAH

Are you sure?

JOE

I've never been more sure of anything in my life. My Dad won't be home from the allotment yet but Mum and our Maureen will be, oh and baby Nancy.

SARAH

You have a baby sister?

JOE

No niece. Nancy is my niece. So come on then, what we waiting for?

Sarah looks even more worried than before.

SARAH

You mean you want us to go now? Right this moment?

JOE

No time like the present.

EXT. LAMBERT HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN - DAY

Joe closes the garden gate behind Sarah. She looks around at the overgrown grass and weeds, he picks up on her expression. Worry sweeps over him.

JOE

I should have warned you, the house is really...well small, bit messy too, what with our Maureen and the baby. Look perhaps this ain't a good idea after all.

She places her finger over his lips.

SARAH

I'm honoured that you want to bring me home to meet your family. I just hope they like me.

Joe opens the front door, turns to Sarah.

JOE

Like you? They'll love you.

Takes her shaking hand.

AUDREY (O.S)

Is that you, our Joe?

JOE

(whispers to Sarah)

Are you ready?

Sarah smiles, nervously.

JOE (CONT'D)

Yeah, it's me, Mum. I've brought someone home to meet you.

INT. LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS)

The wireless plays in the background.

Maureen sits on the sofa stroking the cat. Beside her is a pile of socks waiting to be darned. The table is littered with junk, a hair brush, Nancy's doll, newspapers and dirty tea cups. Audrey sits on the arm chair, knitting.

Joe and Sarah enter.

Audrey stands bolt upright, turns off the wireless. Throws the pile of darning on the floor behind the sofa, embarrassed.

JOE

Mum, this is Sarah.

She gives Sarah the once over, impressed by her clothes and hair.

Sarah drags her attention away from the mess on the table and smiles politely.

A moment of awkward silence as Audrey and Maureen are lost for words.

Joe gives Audrey a look of - "stop staring and say something"

AUDREY
Nice to meet you, Sarah.

SARAH
It's a pleasure to meet you Mrs
Lambert.

Audrey and Maureen dazzled by her posh accent.

AUDREY
Sorry about the mess.

Audrey puts Nancy's doll in a cupboard together with the newspapers and brush. Turns to face Sarah again.

AUDREY
W...Would you like a cup of tea?

She picks up the empty cups ready to take them to the kitchen.

SARAH
Yes please.

Audrey rushes off to the kitchen - Joe hastily throws the cat off the sofa. Maureen watches with amusement and moves up to make room for Sarah.

JOE
Have a seat Sarie. I'll be right
back.

Sarah sits down by Maureen, a little bewildered.

Joe dashes to the kitchen.

Maureen sniggers, eyes her up and down. Sarah too busy absorbing everything to notice. The novelty of being in a working-class family house.

INT. KITCHEN

Audrey puts the kettle on the stove. Joe leans on the worktop.

JOE

What do you think of her Mum? She's a really nice girl you know.

AUDREY

I'm sure she is. But she's very la-di-da. And that coat must of cost a bob or two.

She grabs a few cups from the cupboard.

Joe smirks.

JOE

Well she can afford nice clothes, what with her Father being a Lord...and...

AUDREY

Her Father's a lord?

JOE

Yeah, Lord Whittington. You know Whittington Manor.

AUDREY

She's Lord and Lady Whittington's daughter?

Joe nods, finding it all amusing.

Audrey drops a cup -

SMASH.

AUDREY

Oh my Gawd! How...how did you meet her?

She flutters around like a headless chicken.

JOE

Portsdown hill.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Why didn't you tell me you were bringing her home? The house is a mess, what will she think of us?

JOE

She won't be bothered.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Don't just stand there, fetch the best china.

JOE

Mum. Mum. Relax! She's not here to judge us. Alright so she's got a posh accent but she's a really nice girl. Sarah is just a normal person like me and you.

AUDREY

I doubt that. She'll have servants, lots of them. I bet her 'ouse ain't a mess.

INT. LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS)

Awkward silence.

Sarah avoids eye contact with Maureen and scans the room. Maureen contemplates on what to say, she clears her throat.

MAUREEN

So *Sarie* how long you known my brother then?

SARAH

A while.

Maureen's eyes widen.

MAUREEN

A while?

SARAH

Yes, we met on the top of Portsdown Hill.

Sarah changes her tone, enthusiastic.

SARAH (CONT'D)

He drew a picture of me. It's amazing.

Maureen titters.

MAUREEN

I bet it is. I hope you kept your clothes on?

Sarah fidgets, embarrassed.

MAUREEN (CONT'D)

Our Joe's a quiet one, but it's the quiet ones you got to watch out for. Our Tommy on the other hand, well he's different, Gawd only knows what they see in him. You'll meet him when he gets leave. 'Ere you better be careful with our Joe, you don't want to end up in the club.

Sarah's baffled.

SARAH

What club would that be?

MAUREEN

The club for mothers.

Sarah still doesn't follow. Maureen rolls her eyes.

MAUREEN (CONT'D)

Pregnant. If you can't understand me, how d'you understand our Joe. Don't you two speak?

SARAH

Well of course we speak.

MAUREEN

I suppose the language of love is all you need.

Maureen laughs.

Sarah frowns, insulted.

SARAH

Look. I can assure you...

Joe and Audrey return.

Sarah looks at Joe, relieved.

Audrey places a tray on the table with the best china and biscuits neatly placed on a plate.

AUDREY

Now how d'you like your tea, my love? Joe likes his as weak as nats p...uh dishwater.

SARAH

I like my tea weak too Mrs Lambert.

Audrey pours Sarah her drink and hands her the cup with a shaky hand.

Maureen chuckles, enjoying the entertainment.

Joe sits down between Maureen and Sarah, glares at Maureen, giving her a warning nudge.

AUDREY

So...This is nice. Joe tells me your Father is a Lord. How exciting. We've never met anyone of nobility before.

MAUREEN

What's nobility? And what's a Lord exactly?

AUDREY

Never you mind.

Sarah turns shy. Joe gives her a reassuring smile.

AUDREY

So, you live in Whittington Manor, beautiful house, always admire it whenever I walk past. Lots of history.

SARAH

Yes it has. The manor has belonged in the Whittington family for nearly three hundred years.

AUDREY

Really. If walls could speak, hey!

Audrey laughs.

Maureen nudges Joe, whispers to him -

MAUREEN

Oh my Gawd, she's loaded. You done alright for yourself there our Joe.

Joe throws her a dagger look of disgust.

MENS VOICES from outside.

Audrey faces the front door, wondering.

AUDREY
What's all that noise?

The FRONT DOOR OPENS.

Frank enters.

Sarah places her tea down, rises, ready to greet him.

AUDREY
Oh it's you, you daft sod, making
all that racket.

Frank stands at the doorway, quickly takes his hat off,
noticing Sarah.

Audrey stands.

AUDREY
Frank this is Miss Sarah
Whittington.

Sarah, nervously shakes his hand.

SARAH
It's a great pleasure to meet you
Mr Lambert.

Frank is taken aback by Sarah's etiquette.

Maureen giggles, Joe quickly glares at her - she shuts up.

AUDREY
Sarah's our Joe's friend and she
lives at Whittington Manor. She's
Lord and Lady Whittington's
daughter.

Frank, momentarily speechless.

FRANK
Well it's a great pleasure to meet
you too Miss Whittington.

SARAH
Oh please, just call me Sarah.

FRANK
Sarah it is then, and please just
call me Frank.

AUDREY

And Audrey is good enough for me my love.

MAUREEN

But you can call me Miss Lambert.

Joe nudges her in the ribs to shut-up.

MAUREEN

Ow! That hurt!

JOE

(loud whisper)

It was supposed to, and I can think of other things to call you.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE (LATER)

Joe and Sarah walk hand in hand, they stop.

JOE

Sorry about Maureen. I shouldn't have left you alone with her, she's a bit, well you've seen for yourself.

SARAH

That's quite alright.

JOE

I hope my family haven't put you off me.

SARAH

Not at all. Quite the contrary. I wish my family were as easy-going as yours.

Joe pulls her in close, brings her hands against his chest, his eyes grazing with hers.

Sarah blushes.

SARAH

What?

He shakes his head, with a small smile.

JOE

Nothing.

The kiss.

Sarah opens her eyes.

SARAH

I better head back.

They kiss again, she steps backwards, Joe doesn't let up.

SARAH

(whilst kissing)

I will see you tomorrow.

He lets go, her hands slides from his. She reluctantly walks away, finally turning and heading towards Whittington Manor.

INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - KITCHEN - DAY

Annie chops fresh vegetables on the worktop next to a pot of boiling water on the stove.

A DOOR OPENS.

Annie looks behind - it's Sarah. Annie gives her a greeting smile.

Sarah sits at the kitchen table.

Annie picks up a Carrot, peels it.

SILENCE.

Annie takes a peek over her shoulder - sensing something on Sarah's mind.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

What do you want to talk about?

SARAH

About what?

ANNIE

About what's clearly on your mind.

SARAH

Do you promise not to tell a soul?

Annie puts down the knife, looks at her.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Do you promise me?

ANNIE

Well I don't know what it is yet.

SARAH

Oh Annie please, it's important.
Just promise me that what I'm about
to tell you, you will keep it to
yourself.

ANNIE

Alright Miss Sarah, I promise.

Sarah's relieved.

SARAH

I'm in love.

Annie's surprised.

ANNIE

And who might you be in love with?

SARAH

His names Joe Lambert.

Sarah shuts the door.

ANNIE

I'm presuming your parents don't
know about Joe Lambert?

Sarah sits back down, lowers her voice.

SARAH

Of course not Annie. Joe's...
well...different, certainly not the
type of man they have in mind for
me.

ANNIE

Oh come on now Miss Sarah, I'm sure
that's not true. They will want you
to marry a man you love.

Annie reverts back to peeling her Carrot.

ANNIE(CONT'D)

So, tell me about this Joe Lambert
then, what makes him different.

Sarah can't help but smile.

SARAH

He's different for many reasons.
He's so handsome Annie. He's funny,
kind, and he's a great artist.

ANNIE

Oh an artist. Is he well-known?

SARAH

No, not yet, but he will be one
day. He...

She hesitates, wondering if she can continue or not.

ANNIE

He what, Miss Sarah?

SARAH

He works at the dock yard in
Portsmouth. He's an apprentice.

Annie gives a look of - "my dear wait till your parent find
out"

ANNIE

I see.

SARAH

His family are really nice. His
mother, Audrey is always so kind to
me. They come from Portsmouth you
know, just like you do.

Annie stops what she is doing, thinks.

ANNIE

Wait, did you say Audrey Lambert?

SARAH

Yes. Audrey Lambert.

ANNIE

I knew an Audrey Lambert once.
Audrey Barnes was her maiden name.
She used to live down the road from
me. We went to the same school.
Although she was two years below me
mind. She married a chap
called...now what was his name.

Annie cackles.

ANNIE

All I remember is that they used to call him Lambert the Lamb, cause he was quiet as a lamb.

Sarah stifles a laugh.

SARAH

Frank Lambert, was that his name?

ANNIE

Yes that's it.

SARAH

They're a lovely family aren't they?

ANNIE

Yes they are.

Annie returns to her vegetables, saying no more on the matter.

SARAH

I fear he will receive his service papers soon. The time we have together is very precious. I don't relish the idea of my parents ruining things for us, so I've decided I'm not going to tell them about Joe until he comes back from the war.

ANNIE

That would be most wise, Miss Sarah.

EXT. LAMBERT HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - DAY

In a hurry to get out of the cold, Audrey hangs her washing.

A lady leans on the garden fence, curlers in her hair and wears a large coat over her flowery pinafore, this is PHYLLIS GRIMSHAW, 55.

Audrey hasn't noticed her, it's all quiet until -

PHYLLIS

Can't seem to get any washing done with this bleedin' weather.

Audrey rolls her eyes, glances over her washing line.

AUDREY

Morning Phyllis. Well it's a little milder today.

PHYLLIS

No sign of proper war yet then.

Audrey throws a disapproving look, continues to peg up her bed sheets.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)

I mean there's still nothing happenin'. I reckon it'll all be over in a couple of months anyhow.

Audrey sighs, pulls down the washing line, speaking over the bed sheets.

AUDREY

Well it maybe quiet around 'ere, but overseas there is plenty happenin'. The papers are full of what's going on right now.

Phyllis opens her mouth to speak but Audrey continues -

AUDREY (CONT'D)

And another bit of information you might wish to know. They're calling up our lads left right and centre. It's only a matter of time before our Joe gets his papers n'all. Things are getting worse.

Phyllis's expression turns to worry.

PHYLLIS

Really? I had no idea it was getting worse.

AUDREY

Well, the next time you think about saying there's nothin' 'appening, Phyllis Grimshaw get your facts straight.

Audrey continues to peg her washing, leaving Phyllis talking to her bed sheets. Phyllis shrugs off Audrey's tone - she's too thick skinned.

Audrey picks up her empty basket and walks to the back door, stops when she hears Phyllis talking again, she turns.

PHYLLIS

'Ave you heard about these rationing books? What nonsense. What I've heard is you've got different coupons for different foods. Like dairy, meat and so on. You can only use a few at a time.

AUDREY

That'll be to make sure everyone gets their fair share I s'pose.

Phyllis stops leaning on the fence.

PHYLLIS

Fair? They ain't nothing fair about rationing. Anyway, I can't stand here chatting all day, much as I'd love to. I've got me windows to clean. Always do me windows on Tuesday. Cheerio.

Phyllis walks off.

Audrey's insulted - "what cheek" opens her mouth to reply but thinks better of it. She walks back to the house, mutters to herself.

AUDREY

Bloody cheek of it. Can't stand chatting all day. I bet even bloody 'itler wouldn't stop her cleaning her windows on a Tuesday.

INT. LAMBERT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Audrey enters, stands for a moment, looks around - clean, tidy and quiet, just the clock TICKING.

She moves to the mirror on the wall, a LETTER is wedged in the frame, looks at the black bags under her eyes, sighs. She reaches for the letter, takes a seat on the sofa, opens it and reads.

Audrey wipes a tear from her cheek, a smile from the corner of her mouth appears. The words - *LOVE TOMMY X* written across the bottom. She folds the letter and places it back in the frame.

INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - LIBRARY - DAY

Charles sits, reading the newspaper. The front page reads -
"NAZIS TERRORIZE JEWISH LOCALS"

William reads a letter at his desk opposite. Charles brings the paper down and addresses his father.

CHARLES

Father, have you read page two?

William's focused on his letter, preoccupied.

WILLIAM

Page two? No, not sure that I have.
Why?

CHARLES

It says the Nazis have smashed and looted Jewish shops and homes, also destroyed synagogues and terrorized locals. It then goes on to say that some thirty thousand Jews have been taken off to labour camps. It's despicable. It really is.

William puts his letter down.

WILLIAM

Well it's no secret that the Nazis don't like the Jews. That's why we declared war, Charles, to abolish evil.

Charles places the paper to one side.

CHARLES

Father, there is something I have to tell you.

Takes a deep breath.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

My papers arrived this morning. I am to report to Hilsea Barracks for duty on Monday morning.

William sits back in his chair. Sadness grows in his eyes.

WILLIAM

This was to be expected, Charles. When are you planning on telling your Mother?

CHARLES

Perhaps this evening, over dinner.
Sarah will be there too, so I think
it will be the appropriate time to
break the news.

William gives him a proud nod, walks over to Charles, takes
a seat next to him, places a hand on his shoulder.

WILLIAM

Charles, your Mother is not going
to take this lightly. Remember how
she was when Thomas went away?

Charles nods.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

I'm just glad that we've received a
letter to say that he's safe, like
your Mother, I was beginning to
fear for his well-fare. Charles I
could speak to the authorities. I
know people in high places. I'm
sure there will be a loop hole
somewhere...If I...

Charles stands.

CHARLES

No Father. I must go. It's my duty.
I can not stand back and let those
Nazi animals take over the world. I
want to serve my country. I could
live with myself if I didn't help.

William sighs, looks away, hiding his emotion, then turns
back at Charles.

WILLIAM

I'm very proud of you son, I hope
you know that.

Their eyes lock momentarily. Charles takes a deep breath.

CHARLES

I'll need to get my affairs in
order before I go away. I want the
accountancy business protected,
plus my stocks and shares, and I'll
have to make a will too. I Never
thought I would be making a will
this early in my life.

Charles smirks, nervously. Lights a cigarette, brings the flame towards the tip, his hand shakes.

William takes a pen from inside his jacket pocket, writes on a piece of paper, hands it to Charles.

WILLIAM

Edward Hamilton is the chap. He's a young fellow but knows his stuff, just like his Father did. His Father dealt with our family affairs for years, he was a good man.

William reminisces for moment, then turns his attention back to Charles.

Charles looks at the paper.

CHARLES

Edward Hamilton. I will contact him in the morning, thank you Father.

William stands in front of him, takes a good look at his son and offers a handshake, dearly clutching his sons hand.

INT. LAMBERT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Joe and Sarah sit on the sofa.

Audrey pops her head through the door.

AUDREY

I'm popping out to the shop.

She leaves.

The front door CLOSES.

Joe grins.

JOE

Looks like we're alone.

They passionately kiss. Joe's hands caress her body, he nuzzles his head into her neck and fondles with her breasts as Sarah strokes his hair. Joe moves on top of her.

FOOTSTEPS from the hallway

They jump apart, Sarah is flushed, her hair ruffled and Joe's shirt is undone.

Maureen enters, clearly amused.

MAUREEN
 (in a posh accent)
 Oh...I beg your pardon, did I
 interrupt something?

She struts off into the kitchen with her nose in the air.

JOE
 I hate her.

SARAH
 No you don't, she just annoys you.
 Charles annoys me quite often.

Sarah grabs his hand, holds it close to her face.

SARAH (CONT'D)
 I'm going to miss you so much.

JOE
 I'll miss you too.

They kiss. Joe slides his face to her ear and whispers -

JOE
 I love you, Sarie.

She looks deep into his eyes, a moment of real heart-felt
 tenderness, sealed with a kiss.

Maureen returns.

MAUREEN
 Oh for goodness sake, put her down.

She leaves the room, cup of tea in hand.

Joe opens his mouth ready to shout until -

A door OPENS and CLOSES.

MOVEMENT FROM THE HALLWAY.

Audrey enters with a bag of shopping.

Joe and Sarah glance at each other, chortle at the thought
 of getting caught in the act.

AUDREY
 Feet are killing me, that hill
 never gets any easier.

She smiles at them in passing, heading to the kitchen.

AUDREY (O.S)
Anyone like a cuppa?

JOE
Yes please, Mum.

SARAH
Please, Audrey.

NOISE from the kitchen.

Audrey returns, sits on the sofa, waits for the water to boil.

AUDREY
That's better.

Joe and Sarah exchange a look of - "that's our time alone now over."

EXT. PORTSDOWN ROAD - LAMBERT HOUSE - DAY

Frank strolls up the path, a POSTMAN heads his way.

POSTMAN
Morning Frank. For you Joe, I'm
afraid.

The Postman gives him a pained smile and hands him a LETTER. Frank looks down at the letter, his face drops, "JOE LAMBERT" written in Green letters.

INT. LAMBERT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS)

Frank, Sarah and Audrey sit, drinking a cup of tea.

Front door OPENS.

AUDREY (CONT'D)
That must be your Father.

Frank enters, disheartened, holds the letter.

Audrey eyeballs him.

AUDREY
Frank, what's wrong?

Joe stands.

JOE
Dad, what's that?

Frank swallows, looks up from the letter, then at Joe. He hands him the letter.

Audrey rises, concerned.

AUDREY
Frank is that...

Frank gives her a sombre look.

Tears fill her eyes, Audrey heads to the kitchen.

Joe stares at the unopened envelope for a moment, opens it, pulling out the letter.

SARAH
Joe?

Joe turns to Sarah.

JOE
It's me service papers.

Sarah sheds a tear.

INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Dinner is in full flow. William, Laura, Charles and Sarah are dining. A MAID pours more wine into William's glass as he holds it up to her for a refill.

WILLIAM
According to the papers, things are going to get a lot worse before it will get better.

William sips his wine thoughtfully.

CHARLES
Yes I read that too, it's certainly not moving in the direction it is supposed to be going in...I think Chamberlain...

LAURA

I thought we agreed that we wouldn't talk about the war over dinner. It's not a subject I relish speaking about.

Sarah looks at her mother with distaste.

WILLIAM

Yes quite right my dear. Apologies. There's enough misery out there without me bringing it in here.

Charles puts his head down and continues to eat.

Sarah plays with her food.

Laura notices.

LAURA

Everything OK, Darling? You've hardly touched your food.

William reaches over and places his hand on Sarah's.

WILLIAM

There's nothing to worry about sweetheart. We'll be fine.

Sarah eyes sadden.

SARAH

That's just it, we'll be fine. But what about the poor men that are going to defend our country, and their families?

(to Laura)

You are so oblivious to what is happening. You haven't given a second thought to the sacrifices those men are making.

LAURA

What in heavens name are you talking about? I'm very much aware of what is happening.

CHARLES

Sarah's right to a degree, Mother. We can't be blind to what is happening out there. And I know you don't like speaking about the war, but whilst we are on the subject, I have something to tell you both.

Laura frowns, scared of what's coming.

Charles takes a deep breath - looks at Sarah, then Laura.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I have received my service papers.

Laura drops her utensils on the plate, closes her eyes, fighting hard not to show any tears.

Sarah looks down, trying to fight her emotions too.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I am to leave by Monday.

Charles and William lock eyes, apprehensive.

Charles takes his Mother's hand.

INT. LAMBERT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A blizzard wind WHISTLES through the gaps in the door, snow sets on the windowsill.

Joe sits with Sarah on the sofa, she has her arms folded keeping herself warm.

JOE

Apparently, I'm gonna be in the gunners and I've got me training in Whale Island.

SARAH

Whale Island, that's only down the road, it's near the Isle of White. Does that mean I can still see you sometimes?

She looks hopeful.

JOE

I don't think so, Sarie. It might only be down the road, but I've heard they work you hard and then as soon as you are trained, you're off to Gawd knows where.

Sarah takes Joe's hand and puts her head on his shoulder.

SARAH

I just don't know what I'm going to do without you, I will be going out of my mind with worry. Charles has left and now you.

She faces him, teary eyed.

JOE

I don't fancy it meself, if I'm honest. I hate to leave you, Sarie.

They kiss tenderly.

JOE

Sarie, it's getting late, I'll walk you back.

He grabs her coat and assists putting it on.

EXT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - ENTRANCE (MOMENTS LATER)

Joe and Sarah stand under the oak tree, taking shelter from the snow.

JOE

Sarah, I need to ask you about something. Please be honest with me?

He takes her hands.

JOE (CONT'D)

Are you ashamed of me?

Sarah horrified by that comment.

SARAH

Joe, why would you think such a dreadful thing?

JOE

It's just, you've never taken me to meet your parents, like I did.

Joe turns away, facing Whittington Manor. She pulls his face back towards her.

SARAH

These past few months have been so precious to me and well if they had known about us...

Sarah pauses.

JOE

You mean they wouldn't approve of me.

SARAH

No. Well yes. I mean. Look, that's their problem, I know better and it's what I think that matters. I love you Joe and nobody will get in the way of my love for you. Not my Father or my Mother. No one. You must always remember that.

Tears roll down her face.

JOE

Then if you are so sure and really love me...will you marry me when this stupid war is over?

Sarah glances at the manor in the distance, hesitant, then smiles broadly.

SARAH

I want to marry you Joe, more than anything in the world, but my parents won't allow it, and I'm too young to get married without their consent.

Sarah fills with glee.

The snow falls harder. Joe gets down on one knee, takes her hand.

JOE

I need to do this properly, so you will remember the moment and cherish it forever.

Sarah's positively beaming.

JOE (CONT'D)

Sarah Whittington, will you do me the great honour of marrying me?

His hands shake.

Tears of joy run down her cheeks.

SARAH
Yes! Joe Lambert. Yes!

Joe picks her up and swings her around. She shrieks with happiness.

JOE
You know what this means don't you?
He places her back on the ground.

SARAH
What?

JOE
It means we're engaged. I don't have a ring to give you now, but I will when I get back. You'll see. You'll have the best ring. The very best for my girl.

They kiss passionately.

The wind picks up and the weather worsens.

Sarah shivers.

SARAH
Promise me you'll write, Joe.

Her tears of happiness turn to tears of despair.

JOE
I will, all the time.

They kiss once more.

SARAH
Stay safe Joe, come back to me.
Promise you will come back to me.

JOE
Of course I'll come back to you,
we're getting married.

SARAH
Say the words I promise.

JOE
I promise Sarie. With all my heart.

Sarah throws herself into his arms.

JOE
Everything will be alright.

SARAH
I love you Joe.

JOE
I love you too. Now go! It's
freezing, you're shivering, you'll
catch your death.

Joe breaks away from the hug and walks away from the tree.
He brushes the tears away from his eyes.

Sarah walks up the driveway.

Joe rushes back to the oak tree, watches her one last time.

INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - FOYER - (MOMENTS LATER)

Sarah returns home, sniffing and shivering. Laura appears
from the Drawing-room.

LAURA
And where have you been? My
goodness you are frozen to the
bone.

Laura eyeballs her up and down in horror.

LAURA (CONT'D)
I will ask Annie to make you a cup
of cocoa, and your Father and I
want to speak to you in the
drawing-room.

SARAH
Oh please, not now, Mama,

Sarah eyes are red, wipes away her tears.

Laura surveys her closely, not sure if the tears are from
the weather or not.

LAURA
The fire is lit and you need to
warm up. Off you go.

INT. DRAWING ROOM

A warm, cozy ambiance. Candles are lit and the fire roars.

Sarah sits on the leather sofa near the fireplace, she warms her hands, she fights back tears.

William and Laura enter, followed by Annie.

Annie hands Sarah a cup of cocoa with a look of concern.

SARAH

Thank you Annie.

LAURA

That will be all, Thank you Annie.

Annie leaves.

William sits in his armchair opposite, puffs on his pipe, frowning. Laura sits down next to William.

WILLIAM

Now, young lady. I think you have got some explaining to do.

Sarah's forlorn and really not having the energy to do this.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

You've been seen fraternising with a young man, on more than one occasion. You disappear for hours on end, without mention of where you are going to, and today you walk in after dark, shivering from the cold may I add. Sarah what on earth is going on? And who is this boy, you've been seen with?

Sarah stares at the fire.

LAURA

Your Father asked you a question. Who is this boy, Sarah?

Sarah faces her parents.

SARAH

His name is Joe Lambert.

WILLIAM

And who is this Joe Lambert? What's his profession?

Sarah rolls her eyes.

SARAH

He is a craftsman and works in
Portsmouth naval Dockyard. He's
also a very talented artist.

William leans forward, angry.

WILLIAM

So if he is a very talented artist,
why is he working at Portsmouth
dockyard?

SARAH

Well...he just needs time to get
his work noticed. Papa this is all
very irrelevant, I love Joe and he
loves me.

WILLIAM

Do you honestly think I have spent
good money in educating you, for
you to mix with the likes of this
Joe Lambert?

Sarah raises her voice.

SARAH

So if he was a banker, an
accountant, a solicitor, a doctor
maybe, then that would be alright.
It's all down to money and status
as far as your concerned, isn't it
Father?

LAURA

Sarah, have some respect. How dare
you speak to your Father in such a
manner.

William softens his voice, takes a more tactful approach.

WILLIAM

Sarah, ask yourself, what kind of
future can he give you? You are
used to a different way of life to
him, and you deserve the finer
things in life. You are a
Whittington, my dear.

SARAH

Unlike you Father, I don't care about money.

WILLIAM

Maybe so, but I am certain that Joe Lambert cares about money.

SARAH

What's that supposed to mean?

WILLIAM

For goodness sake Sarah, wake-up! Can't you see why he is interested in you?

SARAH

Is it so hard for you to comprehend that he loves me not for my name, status or money, but he loves me for who I am.

William and Laura glance at each other, pessimistic.

LAURA

What your Father is trying to say...

SARAH

What my Father is trying to say is that Joe is a gold digger. Well I won't have him spoken about in such a way. He is kind, honest and comes for a sincere hard working family.

Sarah stands and paces the room in frustration.

SARAH (CONT'D)

And I'll tell you something, his family knows what love is!

WILLIAM

And so does this family.

SARAH

No, neither of you know what love is. And least of all you, Mama.

LAURA

How dare you!

William rises to his feet, SHOUTS, points at Sarah with his pipe.

WILLIAM
Apologise to your Mother at once!

SARAH
No I won't. And I will tell you something else. Joe and I are engaged. We shall be married when this dreadful war is over, so stick that in your pipe and smoke it!

She storms out.

WILLIAM
Sarah, come back here this instant!

William sits back in his chair, clutches his chest as he pants for breath.

Laura rushes towards him.

LAURA
William, are you alright?

He gasps for breath.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Shall I call the doctor, William?

No reply.

LAURA (CONT'D)
William, speak to me.

WILLIAM
No, stop fussing woman, I'm fine. The pain is going now. It's just an anxiety attack.

William sits back up, breathing normal.

INT. LAMBERT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Joe sits at the table with Frank and Maureen, he takes the last few bites from his full English breakfast.

SOBBING comes from the kitchen.

FRANK
This feels like deja vu.

Joe politely smiles.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Now, I gave your brother me lucky farthing, and you're the lucky one, cause I'm gonna give you me lucky shilling, But I want it back mind, when you return home.

Frank passes Joe the shilling.

JOE

Thanks Dad.

MAUREEN

Are you gonna be alright?

FRANK

Of course he will, won't you son?

Joe nods, finishes his breakfast. Frank checks his watch.

FRANK

You'd better make tracks, the bus will be leaving soon.

Joe stands, picks up his bag next to the sofa.

Frank opens the kitchen door.

FRANK

Aud, it's time.

Audrey comes from the kitchen, her eyes full of tears. She hugs Joe, crying and then kisses his forehead.

AUDREY

You keep safe, d'you 'ere me?

JOE

Mum, if Sarah comes to visit you, look after her for me, and if anything should 'appen to me, be sure to tell her.

Audrey pulls away.

AUDREY

Now don't you go talking like that Joe Lambert. You're gonna come 'ome safe and sound.

JOE

I know but...well you know. If...

AUDREY

We'll always take good care of Sarah.

FRANK

She's always welcome here, you have our word son, so don't go worrying yourself about that.

Audrey hugs him again.

Frank moves closer, hugs Joe.

FRANK

You're gonna be just fine, you got me lucky shilling. Oh and don't forget, it's only on loan. If I run out of money you might have to nip back with it.

Frank ruffles his hair playfully.

Joe moves over to Maureen, she wipes away her tears.

JOE

Bye Sis and give a kiss to Nancy from me when she wakes up.

Maureen grabs him and holds him tight. Joe holds back his tears, she releases her grip. He walks out the door.

MONTAGE

- EXT. LAMBERT HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN - Cold with melted snow. Joe shuts the door. He strokes the cat who sits on the wall before opening the gate.

- EXT. WHITTINGTON MANOR - DRIVEWAY - DAY - William, Laura and Sarah say their farewells to Charles. A FOOTMAN, 30, carries his suitcase to a parked automobile. Plonks them in the boot and stands by the rear passenger door. Laura hugs him tightly, desperately fighting back tears. William gives Charles a firm handshake, then a heart felt hug. Charles hugs Sarah, then heads to the car. The footman opens the door and Charles hops in.

- EXT. PORTSDOWN ROAD - Joe wanders down the road, looks around one last time, back at his house - Frank with his arms around Audrey and Maureen who cry openly, they give a wave goodbye.

- INT. WHITTINGTON MANOR DRIVEWAY - CAR - MOVING - Charles peers out of the rear window - his family wave to him from the doorstep.

- EXT - WHITTINGTON MANOR - DRIVEWAY - The automobile exits the grounds. William and Laura turn to head inside, suddenly Sarah runs down the driveway. William SHOUTS after her.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. PORTSDOWN ROAD (CONTINUOUS)

Joe stands waiting at the bus stop. He takes a deep breath, nerves are settling in. He clocks someone running towards him - it's Sarah.

He drops his bag, ecstatic, full of rapture, takes a few steps towards her, opens his arms.

Sarah pounces into his arms, holding him like she will never let go.

SARAH

I couldn't let you go without giving you this.

She kisses him.

A BUS approaches, pulling up at the bus stop.

JOE

I'll not wash my lips until I'm back.

They laugh through their tears.

Joe picks up his bag, heads towards the bus, then rushes back for one last kiss. He reluctantly steps onto the bus.

The bus pulls away - Sarah WAVES him off - Driving down the country lane - PORTSMOUTH HARBOUR in the distance - NAVY BOATS at sea - GREY CLOUDS and THUNDER on the horizon.

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE.