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NIGHT GALLERY

"THE CATERPILLAR"  
(Formerly #33569)

Teleplay by  
Rod Serling

Based on the short story  
"Boomerang"  
by Oscar Cook

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#A-33596

NIGHT GALLERY  
"THE CATERPILLAR"

CAST

RHONA  
WARWICK  
MACY  
TOMMY  
DOCTOR

SETS

INTERIOR:

WARWICK LIVING ROOM  
" DINING ROOM  
VILLAGE SALOON  
BEDROOM

EXTERIOR:

BAMBOO HOUSE

NIGHT GALLERY"THE CATERPILLAR"

FADE IN:

1 EXT. BAMBOO HOUSE, BORNEO - DAY 1

A tropical rainstorm is in progress: a cascading, drenching sheet of water that pours down from a slate-gray sky with a dull, monotonous constancy. The house is typical of circa, early 1900's - a veranda, much lush jungle foliage, but with the accompanying air of putrifying rot that attends all jungles.

2 INT. WARWICK LIVING ROOM - DAY 2

"A last outpost of civilization" type of room with mid-Victorian furniture, kerosene lamps and all the other accoutrements to time and place. An old fashioned wind-up gramophone plays in the corner - a scratchy, discordant chamber music item that is as constant as the methodical dripping of the rain outside, visible through the shaded window openings. Rhona - very British, very lovely, very Victorian - sits in a chair knitting. Her husband, Warwick, sits near the gramophone, reading and occasionally listening to the music. The room is full of the merging sounds: clicking needles, music, rain, the turning pages of Warwick's book. O.s. sound of footsteps up the gravel path outside, then onto the wooden porch steps, then across the steps. The door opens and Macy enters - a tallish younger man - at least much younger than Warwick. He carries a tension around him like a cloak - or, better, a semi-lit fuse, ready to blow. He looks briefly at Warwick, then turns toward the woman.

MACY

Does it ever stop raining?

RHONA

(smiles)

Sometime around March the fourth --  
give or take a few weeks.

WARWICK

You'll get used to it, old chap.  
Really, after awhile you ignore it.

Macy, in the midst of hanging up his dropping rain slick,  
turns to him, suppressing impatience and anger.

MACY

I can assure you that I won't  
get used to it, I won't ignore  
it, and a couple more days of this.

CONTINUED

2 CONTINUED

2

MACY (cont'd)

I'll go absolutely wonky and you  
can ship me back to merry old  
England trussed up like a guinea hen!

Warwick looks up, smiles patiently.

WARWICK

The unfortunate thing, lad, is that  
you don't have much choice. Either  
you learn to live with it, force  
yourself to ignore it, or your  
tour of duty here will be a vastly  
unpleasant thing for you.

MACY

(spitting this out)

What bloody bilge that is! My  
"tour of duty" here was a vastly  
unpleasant thing as of the moment  
I stepped off the boat!

3 ANOTHER ANGLE

3

Having hung up his sodden pith helmet as well, Macy walks  
across the room, pausing to glare out at the rain.

MACY

I don't know how you can stand it.  
I really don't.

(a glance to Rhona)

And I don't understand how poor  
Mrs. Warwick stands it either.

RHONA

(looks up, softly)

Poor Mrs. Warwick stands it very  
well, thank you.

Warwick rises, moves over to her, puts gentle and affectionate  
hands on her shoulders.

WARWICK

I count myself a lucky man, Macy.  
Young, beautiful, and very patient  
with an old Colonial like myself.

Rhona reaches up and touches Warwick's hand on her shoulder,  
smiling up at him with genuine warmth.

CONTINUED

RHONA

You're really not a bad sort for an old Colonial, and I think I'd rather have you than anyone else in Borneo.

Macy's laugh is more of a snarl as he turns away.

MACY

I give it to you. The both of you. Borneo, the China and Java Seas and the whole bloody Malay archipelago. Take it all with my blessings!

Warwick good naturedly turns to him, slaps him on the back.

WARWICK

The first few weeks are the hardest.  
(checks an ancient pocket watch)  
I'm going out to check the north sheds...see if we plugged up that leak. Wet tobacco leaves aren't pushed very easily in the market.

RHONA

Put your coat on, John, and bundle up.

WARWICK

(smiles at her)  
My darling, I am not sixteen -- I am sixty-six.  
(winks at her)  
I'll be back in a quarter hour.

He moves out of the room to another portion of the house. Macy waits a moment, then moves over to a chair to sit near Rhona, studying her very intently. She looks up from her knitting.

RHONA

You're a moody one, Mr. Macy. You go from outrage to silence as if it were a quick tram ride.

He doesn't respond for a moment, then jerks his head up, looking toward the gramophone. Compulsively rising, he goes over to it, removes the player arm, then turns to her.

MACY

This place is conducive to moods.  
(indicates gramophone)  
And the scratchings of that misera-

CONTINUED

3

CONTINUED - 2

3

MACY (cont'd)  
ble antique don't help any of them.  
(returns to her)  
How do you stand it?

RHONA  
What? The music? You make it  
sound like medicine.  
(shakes head)  
I don't stand it. I enjoy it. I  
take comfort from it.

MACY  
(studying her)  
How incredibly easy you are to  
please.

4

PAST MACY TO RHONA

4

She looks up at him, smiling, but a little archly.

RHONA  
And that means what?

MACY  
That means you're under twenty-  
eight years of age -- you're an  
absolute knockout -- and you waste  
away here in a Borneo jungle five  
thousand miles from everything you  
know, with a husband old enough to  
be your --

She puts down her needles, her head jerking up sharply.

RHONA  
No more of that, please. We judge  
things very differently, Mr. Macy.

MACY  
Please call me Stephen --

RHONA  
I'll call you Mr. Macy. And if ever  
again you mention my husband, or  
me, or the discrepancy in our ages  
-- I shall call you something else,  
Mr. Macy. As you go out the door  
with your suitcase -- you'll hear  
what it is!

CONTINUED

4

CONTINUED

MACY

(looks away; his  
voice diffident)

I beg your forgiveness --

RHONA

(rising)

You have my forgiveness, Mr. Macy.  
But my suggestion to you is to  
take each day as it comes.

(a small smile)

Stop counting time. In a year,  
suddenly, it'll all be over...  
Then you can return to England and  
the rains of Borneo will be but a  
small, insignificant, historical  
footnote to your whole life.

5

REVERSE ANGLE

5

Macy eyes her steadily, as if seeking a chink in her armor.

MACY

Is that the way you do it?

RHONA

(shakes head)

Hardly. John and I shall remain for  
for all our days. Our life is here.

MACY

Thank Heaven, mine isn't!

(moves to window,  
staring out)

People like us don't belong here.  
We become like jungle vegetation.  
We mildew and rot and grow soggy  
...our brains and our insides --

(turns to her)

I'd not force a wife of mine to  
stay!

RHONA

(tersely)

If you had a wife who loved you,  
Mr. Macy -- force wouldn't enter  
into it. Marriage is love -- not  
capitulation. I'm here by choice.

(a beat)

And by love. Now, if you'll ex-  
cuse me -- I have to prepare dinner.

CONTINUED

5 CONTINUED

She starts to move past him. He takes a step closer to her, touches her arm, stopping her.

MACY

I meant nothing personal. I signed a contract for a year -- and I shall honor it. And if I were to lose your friendship, Mrs. Warwick, that would remove the only pleasure I find in this place.

(holds out his hand)

We are friends, aren't we?

6 CLOSEUP - RHONA

6

who looks up into his face, feeling an unbidden wave of sympathy. She shakes his hand.

RHONA

Of course we are, Mr. Macy...

7 ANOTHER ANGLE - TWO SHOT

7

as they stand there for a moment, hands touching. Whip pan over to the front door. There stands Tommy Robinson, a local cockney - a drunk, a reprobate, a weasel of a man - wearing a smirking, knowing, dirty little smile. Both Rhona and Macy immediately drop their hands as if caught in some flagrant act of assignation.

TOMMY

Well, now -- didn't mean to barge in -- really I didn't. But I've got me a load of kindling out there in the cart, Mrs. Warwick. With the wet weather and all -- I thought maybe you and Mr. Warwick might need some.

RHONA

We've got quite enough kindling, Mr. Robinson.

TOMMY

(half petulant,  
half persistent)

But you never know what your needs might be a month or so from now. Rain's the 'eaviest I've ever seen it.

RHONA

Then ask my husband.



8

MOVING SHOT - RHONA

8

as she moves to a door which leads to the kitchen area.  
There she pauses, turns, looks back toward Robinson.

RHONA

And, Mr. Robinson -- we don't  
observe too many of the social  
graces out here -- but knocking  
before entering a room is still  
considered de rigor.

9

TOMMY

9

again, the leer.

TOMMY

I've no doubt, Mrs. Warwick. I've  
no doubt at all.

10

RHONA

10

flushing, she sweeps stiffly from the room.

11

ACROSS MACY TO TOMMY

11

as Tommy turns to Macy, speculatively appraising him.

TOMMY

I don't believe we've met. Tommy  
Robinson's the name. Kindling's  
the trade. Odd jobs, personal  
services, almost anything in the  
way of an aid to my fellow man.

MACY

(reading the man  
right off)

I'll keep it in mind, Mr. Robinson  
-- as one of your fellow men.

TOMMY

(sidling closer)

You're the new chap who just arrived  
a week ago. Saw your baggage on  
the docks. 'Ow you finding it?

MACY

(turning away)

Wet, humid, buggy and hot.

CONTINUED

11

CONTINUED

TOMMY

(shrill falsetto laugh)  
I've no doubt. No doubt at all,  
young gentleman. Been 'ere twenty  
years, myself.

MACY

(turning to him)  
Twenty years?!

TOMMY

I 'ad me a choice: it was either  
a London jail -- or a Borneo jungle.  
(laughs again)  
A choice that really is no choice  
at all.

(cocks head)

What about you, young gentleman?  
What are you escaping from?

12

REVERSE ANGLE - THE TWO

12

MACY

I thought from convention and from  
dullness. But, dear God, how wrong I  
was!

TOMMY

Well, you must come down to the  
village sometime and 'ave a snifter  
or two with me and a chat. Not too  
many Europeans, you know, in these  
parts. Sometimes it's good for a  
man to be with 'is own.

(looks briefly  
toward kitchen)

Pity I can't offer you something  
of your own -- like what just left  
the room.

He looks steadily at Macy who finally nods agreement.

MACY

That is a pity.

13

CLOSEUP - TOMMY

13

TOMMY

'Owever -- there's ways and means  
and methods --

14 MACY

MACY

I'm afraid that eludes me...

15 TOMMY

TOMMY

Then we'll talk of it again, Mr. Macy. We'll talk of it again, young gentleman.

He bows, backs out of the room. The screen door closes, and we hear o.s. footsteps moving down the wooden porch steps. Then, abruptly:

WARWICK'S VOICE

What do you want here, Tommy?

TOMMY'S VOICE

I 'ad a bit of kindling to sell, Mr. Warwick --

WARWICK'S VOICE

Sell it elsewhere, please -- and stay away from here. I thought I'd made that sufficiently clear on other occasions.

Then more o.s. footsteps up the stairs; the screen door opens. Warwick enters, immediately removing his wet slicker and dripping hat. Shaking them out, he glances toward camera.

WARWICK

I take it you've met our village entrepreneur.

16 PAST WARWICK TO MACY

MACY

Robinson?

WARWICK

(nods)

The only rodent with a Christian name.

MACY

What's he do around here -- besides peddle kindling?

CONTINUED

16 CONTINUED

WARWICK

(hanging up slicker)  
Scurries back and forth. Sells  
contraband to sailors. Occasionally  
panders. Frequently steals. And  
when he goes without whisky for  
more than six hours -- he winds up  
here with a cartful of kindling.  
Stay clear of him, Macy. He'll do  
you or anyone else no good at all.

Rhona re-enters the room, kisses her husband.

RHONA

Dinner in half hour, darling.

WARWICK

Excellent. I'm famished.  
(a look to Macy)  
What about you, Macy? An appetite?

MACY

(eyes on Rhona)  
Slowly growing.

17 CLOSEUP - RHONA

17

who gets the inference, turns abruptly away.

WARWICK'S VOICE

Excellent! We'll put some candles  
on the table tonight -- make it  
a bit festive.

Angle widens slightly as Warwick leans into frame, kissing  
Rhona on the side of the face.

WARWICK

Have to wash up, darling. Back in  
a jiff.

He withdraws himself from frame, and we hear his o.s. foot-  
steps exit the room. Camera continues to hold Rhona in a  
loose closeup. She stands there a moment, then compulsively  
lifts her head, looking in the direction of Macy.

RHONA

Mr. Macy --

18 PAST RHONA TO MACY

18

as he looks questioningly at her.

CONTINUED

18

CONTINUED

18

RHONA

Perhaps I do you an injustice.

MACY

Perhaps you do.

RHONA

Then I offer my apologies ahead of time. But -- I'm not a child. I have some idea of what loneliness can do to a man. Loneliness and... and...abstinence.

MACY

(hope dawning)

Go on, Mrs. Warwick.

19

RHONA

19

RHONA

I offer this as a suggestion. A friendly suggestion...

20

MACY

20

almost holding his breath.

MACY

Please go on --

21

RHONA

21

RHONA

Take a cold bath, Mr. Macy.

With which, she turns and regally exits the room.

22

MACY

22

staring after her with a look composite of hunger, lust and overpowering disappointment.

DISSOLVE TO:

23

thru  
32

MONTAGE - SERIES OF CUTS - PASSAGE OF TIME

23  
thru  
32

The rain...stock shots of the Borneo jungle...the three of them seated at a dinner table...more rain...a leopard screams...Macy stares at Rhona...Rhona averts her look...a spider

CONTINUED

23  
thru  
32

CONTINUED

monkey cowers in a tree...rain...and, finally, Warwick contemplates Rhona and Macy with just a small germ of understanding of what's happening.

23  
thru  
32

DISSOLVE TO:

33

INT. VILLAGE SALOON - NIGHT

33

This is a grubby little bar catering to sailors and a few of the wealthier natives. At this moment it's empty save for Tommy Robinson, sitting at a table. He looks up as Macy enters, then rises, grinning.

TOMMY

Over 'ere, Mr. Macy. Over 'ere,  
young gentleman.

Macy, looking haggard, tired, older, comes over to the table, takes off his wet slicker. The rain, as always, can be heard pounding down outside.

TOMMY

Now what can I offer you?

MACY

Nothing.

TOMMY

(smile fading)

If not whisky...then what?

MACY

(sitting down)

What had you in mind, Mr. Robinson?

TOMMY

What 'ave I in mind? I rather  
thought you might 'ave something.

(takes a folded  
piece of paper  
from his pocket)

This did come from you, didn't it?  
(reads from note)

"Should like to talk to you at  
your earliest convenience. Stephen  
Macy."

(crumples note,  
pockets it)

I rather thought you 'ad something  
definite in mind that we might  
discuss.

CONTINUED

33

CONTINUED

MACY

I...I really didn't have anything specific. It's just that I'm so bloody bored over there that --

TOMMY

(filling it in)

That you sought out a bit of companionship this evening.

(as Macy nods)

Understandable, young gentleman. Understandable. A man can't be by 'imself all the time. That's not 'ealthy. That's not 'olesome.

MACY

It isn't just being by myself. It's --

TOMMY

(again completing it)

-- being close to 'er. Close enough to touch. Close enough to fondle. And a beautiful thing she is. And married to that old man.

(shakes head)

Criminal. That's what it is.

34

FAVORING MACY

34

who looks away.

MACY

And night after night we sit across a table and we talk about the tobacco crop and the amount of rainfall, and the payroll. And as the hours go by...as the hours go by, I...I find it very difficult to --

TOMMY

(reaches over, touching his arm)

I quite understand, young gentleman. I quite understand.

(gestures)

Now what's to do?

MACY

I haven't an earthly.

TOMMY

(knowing smile)

I think you do. I think you 'ave

CONTINUED

TOMMY (cont'd)

a very good idea.

(taps fingertips  
together)

Now let's examine it, shall we?  
The problem -- the solution --  
the possibilities. 'Ere we 'ave  
three people in a 'ouse. An old  
man, a young man and a young woman.  
Triangle, you might say. A crowded  
triangle. Now the answer, in my  
view -- 'ypothetical, mind you.  
Altogether 'ypothetical. But the  
answer is arithmetic.

MACY

(frowns)

What the devil are you talking about?

TOMMY

Arithmetic, young gentleman. We  
subtract one from three -- to leave  
two.

MACY

You bloody fool! I'm not solicit-  
ing an assassination --

as Tommy reacts with a horrified expression.

TOMMY

Oh, come now, young gentleman! An  
assassination? I shudder at the  
very word. I've no appetite for  
killing, Mr. Macy. Why, the thought  
of a bludgeoning or a shooting --  
that palpitates me, is what it does.  
It sends proper shivers up and down  
my body.

(a beat)

No, young gentleman -- nothing so  
bloody and violent as all that.

(leans forward, putting  
both hands on the  
table)

What I 'ad in mind was more...more  
an act of...well...destiny, you  
might call it. Act of God. Maybe  
malaria. Maybe a spider bite.  
Maybe a spot of dysentery. Now,  
if that was to occur -- and the



5

CONTINUED

TOMMY (cont'd)

poor old gentleman -- Mr. Warwick  
-- 'e's not the strongest man on  
earth...

MACY

So what do we do? Get the natives  
out in a tribal dance and pray for  
malaria?!

TOMMY

Not 'ardly. But let me tell you  
something about Borneo, Mr. Macy.  
We 'ave 'ere a kind of earwig --

MACY

A what?

TOMMY

An earwig. A kind of...caterpillar.  
A thing almost as fine as a spider's  
web. And it lives on wax. Feeds  
on the innards of flowers. And  
it 'as a decided liking for the  
'uman ear. The natives 'ereabouts  
'ave a proper terror of it, they do.  
Because it moves and rests so  
lightly on a 'uman being that one  
is practically unconscious of it.

36

36

CLOSEUP - MACY

his eyes feverish.

MACY

Go on.

37

37

TOMMY

TOMMY

Well, now...if one of these earwigs  
was to be placed in a man's 'air...  
just above the ear --

MACY'S VOICE

(dry and hoarse)

What happens then?

TOMMY

Well, now...once in an ear -- it's  
a thousand-to-one chance of it  
ever coming out the same way. You

CONTINUED

37 CONTINUED

37

TOMMY (cont'd)  
see, Mr. Macy, it would not be  
able to turn -- backing out would  
be an impossibility. And so it  
continues to feed as it goes. It  
crawls right inside of the 'ead.  
With the result that --

38 MACY

38

who closes his eyes, clenching them tight.

MACY  
No more! Oh, dear God -- no more!

39 ACROSS MACY TO TOMMY

39

TOMMY  
But think of it, young gentleman.  
Ultimately...ultimately...now, of  
course, I'm talking in a 'ypotheti-  
cal fashion -- ultimately it gets  
into the brain. With the result --  
(snaps fingers)  
-- the end of it. The complete  
end of it.

MACY  
But while it's happening --

TOMMY  
(a little shrug)  
Oh, while it's 'appening -- it's  
a living torment, is what it is.  
A torture. But the net result,  
Mr. Macy...ah, there -- there is  
the beauty of it...the net result  
is --  
(holds out hands  
in an expansive  
gesture)  
-- is what it is we're looking for!

MACY  
(rising slowly)  
I want no part of any such thing.

a careless shrug, leans back in his chair.

TOMMY  
only talking 'ypothetical.

40 MACY - MOVING SHOT

40

as he turns, crosses the room to the swinging doors. Over his shoulder we see the rainy night and hear the ponderous, steady sounds of the incessant downpour.

41 CLOSEUP - MACY

41

standing there, at the doorway, his face grim, mask-like, staring out at the rain. Very slowly he turns to look across the room at Tommy. Camera swings with his gaze to include Tommy, who watches him steadily, sans expression.

MACY

...How?

TOMMY

'Ow? You mean... 'ypothetical like.  
'Ow do we get the little earwig  
into Mr. Warwick's 'air?

(shrugs)

Well, now, young gentleman... I 'ave  
me friends, I 'ave. Stealthy chaps,  
you might say. Walk on cat's feet,  
is what they do. Now I could send  
one of them over there in the dead  
of night. And I could tell 'im  
what was needed. And by morning...  
well, young gentleman -- by morning  
...poor old Mr. Warwick would 'ave  
a visitor inside 'is 'ead.

42 PAST TOMMY TO MACY

42

who is torn apart.

MACY

But...the...the pain --

TOMMY

'Orrible. No doubt of that.

MACY

For how long?

TOMMY

I'm told...two weeks sometimes. Or  
three. The longest three weeks a  
man could ever spend.

MACY

And the cost?

CONTINUED

42 CONTINUED

42

TOMMY

I'm not a man to 'aggle, Mr. Macy.  
That's not my nature.

43 REVERSE ANGLE

43

as Macy retraces his steps back over to the table.

MACY

The cost.

TOMMY

A 'undred pounds.

MACY

Done.

(a beat)

When?

TOMMY

This very night, if that's your  
pleasure.

MACY

(in a tight, strangled,  
tortured voice)

None of this...none of this is my  
pleasure. Call it...call it my  
ultimate desperation.

TOMMY

(quixotic smile)

Then that's what we'll call it...  
if it's just a question of words.  
And as to what you're paying for  
...we won't call this assassination.  
We'll just call it...prodding fate.  
That's what we'll call it.

MACY

Call it what you bloody well please!

44 UPSHOT - MACY - TOMMY'S POINT OF VIEW

44

Reaching into his pocket, Macy takes out a battered wallet,  
removes all the bills that there are, counts them out, flings  
them on the table.

MACY

And then...after it's finished...  
I don't ever want to see you again.  
You understand?

45 DOWNSHOT - TOMMY - MACY'S POINT OF VIEW

45

TOMMY

Young gentleman...with your fine  
airs...and your London drawing room  
manners...and your Fleet Street  
proper talk -- down deep, you're a  
treacherous, murderous animal like  
the rest of us. The only difference  
being -- you disdain a bit of blood  
on the 'ands. You like to keep a  
clean shop.

(beat)

So as to seeing one another again  
-- I've no 'unger for your com-  
pany either.

46 MACY

46

as he turns very slowly and walks out of the saloon.

DISSOLVE TO:

47 INT. WARWICK HOUSE DINING AREA - DAY

47

Outside the rain continues, and in the dining room, Warwick  
and Rhona are sitting over coffee. Macy enters, rubbing the  
sleep from his eyes, nods briefly at Rhona, then sneaks an  
intent look at Warwick.

WARWICK

Sit down, old chap. How did you  
sleep?

MACY

Fine, thank you. And you?

WARWICK

(sipping coffee)

First rate, thanks. Spot of break-  
fast?

MACY

Just coffee.

Rhona pours a cup, hands it to Macy across the table as he  
sits down. Macy swipes at his ear, scratches, then sips his  
coffee, again staring searchingly across the table at Warwick.  
There is silence. Warwick studies Macy briefly in return.

WARWICK

It could be my imagination, but  
I'd say the rain had let up just a  
bit during the night.

CONTINUED

47

CONTINUED

47

Macy glances toward the window opening, scratches at his ear again.

MACY

I can't be the judge of it. It sounds the same to me.

Again he scratches his ear, then reaches for a napkin, flicks at the side of his head, puts the napkin down - and then suddenly is aware of it.

48

THE NAPKIN - ZOOM SHOT

48

to a spot of blood on the white linen.

49

MACY'S FACE - ZOOM SHOT

49

to his wide-eyed, horrified reaction.

RHONA'S VOICE

What's the matter, Mr. Macy?

50

THE SCENE - INCL. RHONA AND WARWICK

50

as Macy rises, still staring at the napkin. Warwick regards him, his voice full of concern:

WARWICK

You've a bit of blood on your ear, Mr. Macy. Rhona, darling -- fetch some iodine from the cabinet. Looks like some kind of bug bite --

51

MACY

51

who claws at the side of his head, scratching, digging, pulling, his face contorted with terror.

MACY

It's in my ear! The bloody thing is in my ear!!

52

RHONA AND WARWICK

52

as they exchange a look.

CONTINUED

gc

#A-23596

21

52

CONTINUED

52

RHONA

What? What's in your ear?

Angle tightens on Warwick as he, too, rises. Now his face is altogether grim.

WARWICK

Oh, my dear God -- not an earwig!

53

CLOSEUP - RHONA

53

horrified.

RHONA

It couldn't be --

54

PAST RHONA TO WARWICK AND MACY

54

Warwick quickly circles the table, takes Macy by the arm.

WARWICK

We'd best get you to bed immediately.  
Come on, lad. To bed.

Macy, in a violent gesture, shrugs off Warwick's helping hand, whirls around to face Rhona.

MACY

Oh, dear God...my dear God...they put  
it in my ear!

(then, screaming)

They put it in MY ear!!!

He breaks away, running across the room.

55

THROUGH WINDOW OPENING TO GREEN SET

55

We see Macy stumble down the steps, stagger into the jungle.

56

REVERSE ANGLE - FRAMING WINDOW OPENING

56

Rhona stands at the window, staring out, past camera, toward the jungle. She is joined in shot by Warwick.

WARWICK

What in heaven's name is he talking  
about?

Angle tightens on Rhona's face as she replies:

CONTINUED

56 CONTINUED

RHONA

I...I'm afraid to guess!

We hear an o.s. piercing scream from outside - a scream that reverberates, and then is overlapped by yet another scream, until it is a long, drawn-out, protracted shriek of agony. Rhona closes her eyes tightly.

DISSOLVE TO

57 EXT. WARWICK HOUSE - DAY

57

A horse and wagon are parked outside. A Doctor comes out of the house, carrying his black bag, moves toward the wagon. There is an o.s. scream from inside the house. The Doctor just grimly shakes his head. Tommy enters shot.

TOMMY

Doc?

DOCTOR

(turns, reacts)

What do you want, Robinson? I thought Mr. Warwick told you to stay off his property.

TOMMY

I've heard of their misfortune. The young gentleman with the... with the earwig --

DOCTOR

(looks briefly toward the house)

You can't help them. No one can.

TOMMY

It's been two weeks now...

DOCTOR

(nods grimly)

Two weeks of hell.

TOMMY

Oh, I've no doubt. I've no doubt of that. The idea of that...that thing crawling into the brain --

DOCTOR

(sharply)

I don't require your analysis, Mr. Robinson. I'm quite aware of what's happening to that poor soul. To

CONTINUED



57

CONTINUED

DOCTOR (cont'd)

lie there with his hands bound to  
keep him from tearing his own face  
apart --

(beat; a sigh)

But I think it's almost over now.

TOMMY

Might 'e 'ave a visitor?

DOCTOR

You? What for? The man is half  
insane now. As you or I or anyone  
else would be -- with that monstrous  
thing in his head.....!

He stops abruptly, climbs into the wagon and drives off.

58

CLOSE SHOT - TOMMY

58

who looks briefly at the front door, then, camera following,  
moves around to the side of the house.

59

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

59

We see Tommy's face appear in the window opening. He reacts  
with a grimace. Camera pulls back to include the bed. Macy  
sits up. He looks like a ghost. His hands have been tied  
to the bedposts behind him. His face is contorted, his head  
moving back and forth. He groans, cries, sobs, and tries to  
scream, tears rolling unchecked down his face. There is  
a look of madness in his eyes.

TOMMY

Young gentleman, I've come to offer  
up apologies. Can you 'ear me?  
Can you understand? The native  
chap I sent over 'ere that night...  
obviously got into the wrong room.

MACY

(strains forward,  
staring at Tommy)

I...I want to die --

TOMMY

Oh, you'll die all right, young  
gentleman. 'Ave no fear of that.  
You'll die. It's just that I re-  
gret what 'appened. The mistake,  
I mean. I distinctly told the  
native chap which room it was...

CONTINUED

59 CONTINUED

TOMMY (cont'd)

but there is this language difficulty,  
you know.

(smiles, shrugs)

Mistakes will 'appen, you know.  
Nobody's fault, really. But I'm  
truly sorry -- if that does any  
good. Truly sorry.

(another smile; waves)

Got to be off now.

(a beat)

But I did want to pay my respects.  
And you might comfort yourself,  
young gentleman. It won't last too  
much longer. It really won't. Not  
much longer at all.

60

EXT. WARWICK HOUSE - DAY

60

Tommy turns from Macy's window to find himself an arm's  
length away from Warwick who holds a revolver in his hand,  
steadily trained on Robinson.

TOMMY

I...I was just passing by, Mr.  
Warwick. I wanted to pay my re-  
spects to the poor unfortunate  
young gentleman --

WARWICK

You'll pay your respects to the  
Magistrate in the village, Mr.  
Robinson -- if you don't leave here  
immediately.

(a beat)

Supplying the means of murder makes  
you an accomplice.

TOMMY

(wets lips)

I 'ave no idea what you're talking  
about, Mr. Warwick. No idea at all.

WARWICK

Don't you?

(waving gun)

On your way, Robinson. The next  
time I see you, I won't offer you  
the luxury of choice. I'll pull  
this trigger and rid Borneo of  
a hundred and fifty pounds of dog  
meat!

CONTINUED

60 CONTINUED

As Tommy scurries off, camera swings to angle through the window opening into Macy's bedroom. During ensuing, with Tommy's voice gradually fading off into the distance, camera will move steadily in until it holds Macy's face in closeup:

## TOMMY'S VOICE

Now, Mr. Warwick...no need for violence...no need at all, sir. You 'ave my assurances, sir -- you 'ave my solemn assurances -- that you've seen the last of Tommy Robinson! My assurances, Mr. Warwick, sir -- the very last!

Macy's eyes suddenly go wide. He lets out one loud, piercing scream.

ABRUPT CUT TO:

61 INT. WARWICK LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

61

Rhona stands near Warwick. Sitting across from them is the Doctor. All three resemble mourners at a wake.

## WARWICK

I still don't understand, Doctor --

## DOCTOR

Quite simple, really. The earwig traveled through the ear -- and through the brain -- and...  
(looks at Rhona)  
...your forgiveness --

## RHONA

Continue, please.

## DOCTOR

(nods)

It came out the other ear.

Rhona closes her eyes and looks away.

## WARWICK

And the...the damage?

## DOCTOR

To the brain -- we can only conjecture. Perhaps little. We don't know.

## ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING MACY

who enters. Warwick, Rhona and the Doctor glance up, reacting. Macy is pale, cadaverous, ghostlike.

MACY

No need to stop on my account. I  
...I understand what's happened.

DOCTOR

(rising)

Do you understand that you've been  
the recipient of a miracle? And an  
undeserved one, at that. In my  
experience, Mr. Macy, I know of no  
man who has survived what you have  
survived.

MACY

Or suffered as I have suffered.

DOCTOR

As you would have had --  
(indicates Warwick)  
-- this gentleman suffer.

Rhona reaches out to take Warwick's hand. Softly:

RHONA

Mr. Macy -- did you believe that  
once a widow -- I would immediately  
turn to you? And for this, you  
were willing to commit murder?

MACY

(defiantly)

Or two or three. If you were ex-  
pecting contrition, Mrs. Warwick  
-- you may cease the expectations.  
What I did, I did for love.

RHONA

(appalled)

My dear God -- love?! Have you any  
remote idea as to the meaning of  
the word??

MACY

Whether I do or don't -- I paid  
a price, haven't I? I've been two  
weeks in hell, haven't I?

(looks from one to  
the other)

All right. What happens now? The  
Magistrate comes with a couple of  
Colonials and places me under  
arrest -- is that the idea?

63

REVERSE ANGLE - THE SCENE

The Doctor looks toward Warwick who gently responds:

WARWICK

Not at all, Mr. Macy. You'll not be arrested.

MACY

(surprised)

Really?

(then, a knowing look)

Of course. The scandal. Quite. Good show.

(a beat)

Then I presume I can leave here.

WARWICK

At any time. There's a boat tomorrow afternoon.

MACY

Fine. I'll be on it.

(turns to Doctor)

For your professional interest, Doctor -- since I appear to be the first person who's survived -- I'll tell you what it's like. It's an agonizing, driving, itching pain...

(unbidden, one hand goes to the side of his head)

It is simply not bearable. Anything is preferable. To be flayed alive. To be burned at the stake. To be put on a rack. To be hanged, even, would be an act of mercy!

64

CLOSEUP - RHONA

who averts her eyes, profoundly affected. She shudders.

64

65

BACK TO SCENE

Warwick has observed his wife's reaction - as has Macy, who appears to be slightly nonplussed. Macy starts to say something, but Warwick speaks first:

WARWICK

I've told you, Mr. Macy -- you are free to go.

65

CONTINUED

65 CONTINUED

65

Macy looks at Warwick, then at Rhona, then at the Doctor, a vague suspicion slowly gathering in his eyes. The silence is heavy, pregnant. The acute discomfort of everyone is a living thing, coiled, waiting to spring. Slowly:

MACY

You've told me...but there's also obviously something you're not telling me --

66 RHONA

66

who briefly meets Macy's gaze, then quickly looks away.

67 WARWICK

67

who puts an arm around his wife protectively.

68 THE DOCTOR

68

who stares at the floor.

69 MACY

69

his eyes flicking from one to another. An idea registers.

MACY

When I step off the boat in England -- that's when you mean to have me arrested!

No response. And the words have hardly left his mouth, when Macy knows in his heart that they are untrue. His own intuitive antenna force him to acknowledge the presence of some as-yet-unidentified nightmare. Suddenly, he shouts:

MACY

Damn it all! Somebody speak!  
Somebody say something!!

70 WARWICK

70

looking suddenly far older than his years. He compels himself to encounter Macy's eyes - and to reply:

CONTINUED

70

CONTINUED

WARWICK

No, Mr. Macy, we have no intention  
of bringing about your imprisonment  
-- neither here nor in England.  
We will not bring you to trial.  
We will not see you flayed alive,  
burned at the stake, or hanged.

(a beat)

Though any one of these might prove  
an act of mercy.

(a beat)

Considering.

71

MACY

sweat beading on his forehead. Hoarse, tremulous:

MACY

...Considering what?

71

72

THE SCENE

Clearing his throat, the Doctor indicates a chair.

DOCTOR

Sit down, Mr. Macy.

MACY

No need.

DOCTOR

I think there is. Sit down.

Macy slowly sinks into a chair. Angle tightens.

DOCTOR

As follows, Mr. Macy. I took a  
look at the...the earwig that came  
out. I killed it, as a matter of  
fact. I squeezed it.

MACY

And?

WARWICK

(turning to Rhona)

Rhona, darling, I think you'd best  
leave.

She nods silently, rises, moves out of the room, her eyes  
avoiding Macy. The Doctor waits until she's gone, then,  
turning again to Macy - slow, measured, infinitely solemn:

CONTINUED

72

CONTINUED

72

DOCTOR

It was a female, Mr. Macy. The  
earwig. A female.

(beat)

And a female lays eggs.

73

CLOSEUP - MACY

73

A moment of dead silence as the implications register.

74

EXT. WARWICK HOUSE - NIGHT

74

The rain pours torrentially down. And, suddenly, from within  
the house, we hear a scream.

FADE OUT

THE END