

EXT. LONDON STREET - DAY

LONDON 1910

FRANKIE DOBBS, early 30s, stout brown haired man with a shirt and jacket holds the reins for a horse drawn carriage as a costermonger. The carriage is filled with groceries and produce. MRS. DOBBS, early 30s, with jet black hair and pale complexion sits next to him. A young MAISIE DOBBS, 10, sits between the two. She is the spitting image of her mother with sharp blue eyes.

The horse turns down a corner and Frankie nudges and jokes with Maisie. Frankie gets down from the horse. He removes several brown paper wrapped parcels of food and brings them into a neighboring house. Mrs. Dobbs pats Maisie's head. She tries to fix a few curls that come out from the cap she wears. Frankie returns with six shillings that he gives to Maisie. Maisie pockets the money and smiles.

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

Maisie places the shillings she received into a tin container. The container is marked EDUCATION. The room is coated in soot and a small fire lights the area. Mrs. Dobbs pats Maisie's head as they set a table for a meal.

EXT. LONDON STREET - DAY

Frankie pets and feeds his steed on the side of the street. A taller 13 year old Maisie watches her father next to him.

A man stumbles down the road. His clothes are askew and there's dirt on his face. He holds a bottle in his hand.

Maisie watches him as he gets closer. She moves out of his way but follows his path. He stumbles into a man with a top hat and cane. The top hat man pushes him away. The askew man carries down the street.

Maisie runs up to the top hat man and motions to his pocket. The man turns it out but nothing is there. He runs after the askew man. A scuffle, off screen, can be heard. The top hat man returns holding a leather wallet. He pats Maisie on the head and gives her a pound note.

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

Maisie puts the pound note into the tin container. The container is now almost completely full with, shillings, sixpence and a few pound notes.

Frankie stands over a pot stirring something he smiles at Maisie.

Maisie takes the container and goes into a back room. She opens a door. The only light comes from the kitchen she just left. From the doorway a sliver of light shows Mrs. Dobbs coughing on her bed. Maisie looks down at the tin of money and then back at her mother.

EXT. SEASIDE PATH - DAY

The Dobbs family strolls along a mossy cliff path. The waves crash nearby. Ahead of them lie the cliffs of Dover. Maisie holds her mothers hand and Frankie leads the way.

Frankie turns around to see Maisie and his wife sitting on the side of the path. Mrs. Dobbs is breathing heavy. Frankie sits down next to them. They embrace each other for a moment as the waves crash against the cliff below.

INT. COTTAGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maisie lies in the same cot her mother laid in. Her mothers dark blue cap lays in the bed with her.

INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Frankie sits at a table in tears. He holds up a sepia photo of Mrs. Dobbs holding a baby Maisie. He strokes the photo and kisses it. The tin container lies on it's side on the table. It's empty.

Frankie walks to the ajar door of the bedroom. Maisie's back is to us. He looks at his daughter and down at the empty tin in his hands. He looks back at her.

INT. COTTAGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maisie begins to tear and wipe her eyes. She sinks her head deeper into the pillow. She pinches her arm three times.

INT. COMPTON MANOR KITCHEN - MORNING

Frankie hands out brown wrapped parcels of food to the kitchen staff inside a regal kitchen. Copper pots hang from the ceiling and a spotless marble counter gleams in the window. A cook and a couple maids come into help.

LADY ROWAN, 50s, plump of a woman wearing a beautiful dress and her hair done up shakes the hand of Frankie. She begins to give orders to her staff. She turns around to see Frankie

is still there.

Frankie takes off his cap and holds it in his hands. His mouth quivers though he doesn't say anything.

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

Maisie and Frankie sit at the table that seems full with just the two of them.

MAISIE

I can't go. You need me here!

FRANKIE

The Compton household is a fine place to work. Very fine. And that Lady Rowan. She seems stern but she's a hell of a woman. Got some spark in her she does. With plenty of contacts.

MAISIE

I helped when mom was ill. I can get another job.

Frankie slams his hand on the table. They both are a bit startled.

FRANKIE

I got you a job. And it wasn't easy. Felt like I was beggin at one point. It's a good job.

Frankie looks at his daughter and grabs her arm.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

I'm all out. There's nothing left love. And there's still more to pay. I don't even know if I can keep this house.

Maisie puts her head down.

MAISIE

If I take this job, I'll send money back. We'll make enough to pay the bills and I'll come back here.

Frankie begins to laugh.

FRANKIE

You are a joy. Is that what you would  
(MORE)

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

do? No love, you don't want to be back here. Get out of the smoke. Your mother and I wanted so much more for you.

Frankie grabs Masie's head and strokes the side of her cheek.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

We know use was so much more. You're meant for something more love, and this is the only way I know how to give it to you.

Maisie grabs her father by the waist. She says the next lines into his jacket.

MAISIE

Dad. I'll do it. You're right.

(beat)

I won't let you down.

FRANKIE

Oh, love.

Frankie brings her daughter out from his jacket so he can see her face. A few curls come down her forehead and he tries to push them back.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

You could never let me down.

They hug each other. We move over to Mrs. Dobbs blue cap on the side of the table.

EXT. LONDON STREET - MORNING

LONDON 1929

The blue cap flashes by as an older Maisie walks onto the street from Warren Street tube station. A few strands of hair still curl out from the cap. Her jacket color matches her eyes along with her pleated dress.

Maisie pulls on black gloves as she makes her way down the street. A worn black documents case tucked under one arm. She stops at a newspaper vendor and hands him money.

As she walks away with the paper, the man at the vendor eyes her. He scrunches his brow.

EXT. MAISIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Maisie stops in front of a dark door to an ill kept Gregorian terraced house. She takes a moment to look it over and smiles. A key is removed from her document case and she jumps up the small flight of stairs to the front door.

Maisie runs her hand along the name plates on the left side of the door before giving the door a little shove and stepping in.

INT. MAISIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Maisie's office is very barren when she steps in. She takes a deep breath. It's one room with a gas fireplace and two lit gas lamps on each wall. A single large window stands behind an oak desk and chair.

Maisie put her paper and document case down on the desk and walks over to the window. She throws open the sash to reveal the building next door and other rooftops.

MAISIE

Yes. This will do.

BILLY (O.S.)

Oh good miss you 'ere.

BILLY BEALE, 30, over six foot, muscular with light hair steps into her office. He wears a cap and some scuffed trousers and a light jacket.

BILLY

Lit the lamps for you. Knew you said you'd be in today.

Maisie turns around to address him. She studies him.

MAISIE

You must be the caretaker.

Maisie brings out her hand. Billy runs over with the slightest of limps in his right leg.

BILLY

Billy Beale. At your service.

MAISIE

Maisie Dobbs. Thank you Mr. Beale.

BILLY

Billy Miss. You can call me Billy.

MAISIE

Well Mr. Beale I wish I could offer you a chair but as you see I have none so I'll have to get on that.

BILLY

Of course miss. What you think about adding in a burner in the old cupboard here.

Billy points to a larger dark cupboard in the corner of the room.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Can't have folk up 'here for work without offering 'em a cuppa the ol' char. Can you?

MAISIE

I suppose you're right Mr. Beale.

BILLY

Billy, Miss.

MAISIE

That would be lovely, thank you.

BILLY

No problem at all.

Maisie sits down at her new desk.

MAISIE

And I shall need a name plate outside.

BILLY

Already got one ready just need to know what to put on it.

Maisie take off her cap and scratches her head.

MAISIE

Yes I was wondering that too.

Billy get closer to Maisie's desk.

BILLY

And where would you like it Miss? Left  
(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)  
or Right of the door? The other  
business are on the left 'here.

MAISIE  
Let's put it on the right then, shall  
we.

BILLY  
Right away.

Billy goes to leave but turns back and looks Maisie over. He  
takes off his cap. Maisie starts to rub her neck with her  
head down.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
Miss.

MAISIE  
Yes, Mr Beale.

BILLY  
Billy. But I feel like I know you.

Maisie looks up now from her desk and realizes Billy is  
staring. She changes her face.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
Did you help. In the war?

MAISIE  
I was a nurse yes.

BILLY  
I thought so.

MAISIE  
Were you injured?

Maisie looks at Billy's leg. Billy blushes.

BILLY  
That. Oh yea. Thought I hid it well  
miss.

MAISIE  
It's my job to see what people are  
trying to hide, Mr. Beale. Did we meet  
in the war?

Billy looks at Maisie. He takes a moment and then shakes his

head.

BILLY

Per'aps. Maybe not. Thought you just  
looked familiar.

Maisie watches Billy hang his head and play with his hat.

MAISIE

Billy. Thank you for you help.

Billy nodded and gave her a wink before adorning his cap and  
stepping away.

Maisie rubs her neck again.

FLASHBACK

EXT. MILITARY HOSPITAL - NIGHT

FRANCE 1917

Maisie walks in the spaces between the moonlight hospitaal  
tents. The ground is muddy. Along side her is CAPTAIN SIMON  
LYNCH, 25, with dark hair tall stature, and chiseled jaw  
line. They both wear blood spattered aprons and have white  
arm bands with red crosses. Gun fire is heard in the  
distance.

MAISIE

I feel sorry for the ones that are  
left

SIMON

Yes. But its the one with terrible  
injuries. The ones who wouldn't last if  
they did come back that trouble me.

Someone exits one of the tents nearby. Maisie and Simon  
shift.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Yes thank you for the update nurse.  
Could you get me some more guase for  
triage 4.

They wait until the figure disappears. They breath again,  
they look at each other and giggle.

MAISIE

When I was in the London hospital I  
(MORE)



MAISIE (CONT'D)  
remember when families were so  
relieved when their loved ones passed  
away. They had wounds they couldn't  
cope with.

Simon looks towards the gunfire heard miles away.

SIMON  
It'll be over soon. It can't go on  
like this.  
(beat)  
Sometimes I feel like I'm a doctor for  
a slaughter house.

Maisie grabs Simon's hand. Simon grabs her in close for a  
kiss.

SIMON (CONT'D)  
I still think of you in the blue silk  
dress. And I still wait for an answer.

Maisie smiles and shakes her head.

MAISIE  
Simon. It's so hard to see a future  
right now. Ask me when the war is  
over.

Simon chuckles and looks out again. He looks back at Maisie.

SIMON  
Yes. When the war is over.

INT. MAISIE'S OFFICE - DUSK - PRESENT

Maisie's desk now sits at a different angle. A new black  
telephone sits on the corner of her desk and two large wooden  
chairs sit in front of it. Various files and papers are  
strewn about. A cup of tea steams in front of Maisie. She  
reads over one of the files.

A hanging bell above her office door rings, breaking through  
the quiet. Maisie looks at it before going back to her files.  
It rings once more.

EXT. MAISIE'S OFFICE - DUSK

The front door swings open to reveal CHRISTOPHER DAVENHAM,  
40s, tall man with tweed jacket, shined leather shoes, and  
slicked back dark hair. The man checks his watch for a

watch.

MR. DAVENHAM

Good evening. I'm here to see Mr. Dobbs. I don't have an appointment but was told I could see him.

MAISIE

Mr. Dobbs is a tad bit older in a cottage in Kent I'm afraid.

Maisie dobbs reaches out her hand.

MAISIE (CONT'D)

Maisie Dobbs at your service.

Mr. Davenham is taken back. He look at her hand.

MR. DAVENHAM

But you're a woman!

MAISIE

Very astute. You can trust me 'being a woman' will not impede my quality of work at all Mr. Davenham.

Mr. Davenham shakes Maisie's hand still looking her over.

MR. DAVENHAM

Right. Well You come highly recommended.

Maisie offers Mr. Davenham to come inside.

MAISIE

What is it I can help you with?

Mr. Davenham crosses the threshold into the office building.

MR. DAVENHAM

Well. It's. It's My wife.

Maisie closes the front door.