

MRS WILSON

Inspired by the true story of
Alison and Alexander Wilson

EPISODE THREE

Shooting Script

By Anna Symon
Directed by Richard Laxton

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Snowed-In
Productions

0A INT. ALISON'S HOUSE, KITCHEN, 19TH JULY 1963 - DAY 0A

Alison sits in the kitchen just as we left her. The food on the table in front of her, the coffee pot smashed. Spilt coffee has soaked into the Blakefield letter on the floor.

But the sun is now streaming in through the window. And she is turning the rosary over in her hands, making a decision.

1 INT. ALISON'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM, 19TH JULY 1963 - CONTINUOUS

She goes to the sewing basket and takes the key out. She pulls out the wallet from its hiding place.

Heart pounding, but trying to retain her composure, Alison opens the wallet.

She searches it - pulls out a pound note - stamps - receipts - a photo of her with Alec - a photo with the boys - she examines everything minutely -

We can see this means everything to her - and now she's getting increasingly desperate - nothing - nothing -

She's about to discard the wallet - until - as she rubs her fingers over it -

There's something hidden inside the lining.

Excited, she opens the bureau and reaches inside Alec's spy kit. [the roll of cloth where she found the forgery stuff in ep one]. She gets out a small, sharp knife.

As neat as a surgeon, she cuts open the stitching.

Inside the lining, she carefully, slowly eases out a card. Now we can see her excitement mounting. What is it?

An old, yellowed business card. It's a pawn brokers in Paddington.

Alison looks at it, puzzled, disappointed. It's not what she hoped for.

GORDON (V.O.)

Who was he, Mum? I have genuinely no idea who Dad was.

She turns the card over in her hands, memories returning.

2 **OMITTED** 2

3 **INT. PADDINGTON, BOARDING HOUSE, ROOM, 25TH OCT 1944 - DAY** 3

Alison is sitting on the bed, the evening paper on her lap. She looks skinny and exhausted. Her hair dull from lack of washing.

Gordon, a toddler now, sits on the edge of the bed, manically scratching behind his ears. His hair is crawling in lice. Baby Nigel (6 months) is lying next to him, grizzling. It's a real picture of poverty, deprivation.

CAPTION: London, 1944

And now we see what Alison is reading. Splashed across the front page: DISGRACED OFFICER ALEXANDER WILSON FACES NEW CHARGES: THEFT. A photo of ALEC.

She folds the paper and sits there. The abyss yawning below.

Nigel starts to cry harder.

Alison picks him up and puts him to her breast. He cries, frustrated. She puts her hand up into her worn bra and tries to squeeze her breast - but her milk supply has dried up.

Alison sits there - watching her two sons - overwhelmed -

4 **EXT. BRIXTON PRISON, 26TH OCT 1944 - DAY** 4

Large, forbidding gates. Above them, a sign: HM BRIXTON.

5 **INT. BRIXTON PRISON, RECEPTION AREA, 26TH OCT 1944 - DAY** 5

Alison stands in a very crowded room of women, queuing to see their men inside.

She assesses the women: some are silent, with ravaged faces, teeth missing, old before their time; others are rowdy, from criminal families, prostitutes. They laugh and joke, cat calling, shouting over each other.

Alison shrinks away from them. A male OFFICER arrives.

PRISON OFFICER
Right ladies, an orderly queue.

The women shove and jostle. The officer spots Alison - conspicuously out of place - and gestures her forward.

Alison walks to the front, grateful.

PRISON OFFICER (CONT'D)

Raise your arms.

Alison lifts her arms up and he slowly, lasciviously body-searches her.

A couple of the women wolf-whistle. Alison flushes scarlet.

6 **INT. BRIXTON PRISON, VISITOR'S CUBICLE, 26TH OCT 1944 - DAY 6**

Alison walks in to the cubicle to find Alec sitting down, bars between them. Both are shocked to see each other here.

The distant, grim sound of prisoners' SHOUTS across the landings, echoes around them.

ALEC

I'm sorry - you have to come here -

Alison sits down, silent, very weary.

ALEC (CONT'D)

(lowering his voice)

There are fascists interned here - Mosley's followers - I need to get in with them, gather intelligence.

A crumb of hope.

ALISON

So the charge - the theft - isn't true?

ALEC

Of course it's not - oh Alison - you didn't think?

ALISON

It said in the paper you're here on remand -

Alec nods: yes, that's what it says. Alison, still dubious.

ALISON (CONT'D)

So they're going to try you for a crime you haven't committed?

ALEC

There won't be a trial - I'll stay
here until I get what I need - and
then I'll come home.

Alec puts his hand up to the bars - Alison reaches hers to
join his - they can touch - awkwardly hold hands -

A moment. Alison removes her hand.

ALISON

I can't do - this - any more -

ALEC

Don't visit me - it's fine -

Alison shakes her head: it's not just that.

ALISON

I'm leaving you, Alec.

Alec is thrown, panic-stricken.

ALISON (CONT'D)

I need money - the rent's overdue.
We've got no food.

Alec looks down, unreadable. Alison wants to hurt him.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Your children are hungry, Alec.

ALEC

I'll sort something out, send you
some cash -

ALISON

But why don't they pay you
properly? Why do we have to live
like this?

ALEC

It's my cover - you know that -

Alison looks hard at Alec: really? Alec reflects. He looks to
be on the verge of disclosure.

They stare at each other, swallowing hard.

ALEC (CONT'D)

When I'm out of here, I'll sort it
all out, I promise you.

Alison shakes her head.

ALEC (CONT'D)

Don't go - Alison -

Unexpectedly, tears come to his eyes and start to course down his cheeks. She returns to him, emotion welling up inside.

ALEC (CONT'D)

I've lost so much already - I need you, Alison -

Alison puts a hand through the bars and wipes away his tears, feeling herself drawn back to him, compelled to help him in his hour of need.

She sits for a moment, thinking, forces herself to be strong.

Alison makes a decision. She slips off her wedding ring.

ALISON

I'm going to sell this - I need money for train tickets. I'm taking the boys back to Cumberland.

ALEC

Wait - no - they've taken my things - but as soon as I get out, I can show you - in my wallet - there's proof of my work.

Alison gets up to leave.

6A

INT. ALISON'S HOUSE, KITCHEN, 19TH JULY 1963 - DAY

6A

The wallet - its lining un-stitched - sits on the table. Alison clutches the business card - thinking hard -

She turns the card over - holds the blank side up to the window - nothing to see - but still - we can tell she's had a thought - her eyes light up - she kneels down to the cupboard below the sink -

Pulls out masses of cleaning products - bleach, caustic soda -

Finds a bottle of iodine solution.

She carefully dabs the solution over the back of the card -

- and slowly, but clearly words are revealed: "Undercover Work" and underneath a phone number: KIL 5089.

Alison looks up to the heavens and makes a sign of the cross.

7 **OMITTED (MATERIAL MOVED INTO SC6A)** 7

8 **INT. ALISON'S HOUSE, HALL, 19TH JULY 1963** 8

There's a whole new energy to Alison as she walks through to the hall from the kitchen.

Eyes shining, she picks up the receiver and dials. It rings. RING RING. RING RING. RING RING.

She tries again. It rings out. Alison isn't too disappointed - She puts on a hat and gloves, picks up her bag and walks out.

9 **EXT. DARTMOUTH ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE, 19TH JULY 1963 - DAY** 9

Alison - smart in hat and gloves - looks up.

She's standing beneath the vast, iconic college, built in 1863. It has an imposing position high above the town and harbour. The sea, with a few boats bobbing, glitters below.

A group of NAVAL CADETS run neatly along the ramparts, past highly polished brass cannons.

Alison starts to walk up the wide stone steps.

10 **INT. DARTMOUTH ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE, ENTRANCE HALL, 19TH JULY 1963 - DAY**

Alison is seated on a bench in a large entrance hall. She looks nervous.

Gordon comes in, looking harassed, prickly -

He sits down next to Alison. They speak quietly - they're in a public area - officers and cadets walking past -

GORDON

What are you doing here?

ALISON

Gordon - I did write that letter -
I'm so sorry.

She puts a hand over his. He lets her. A moment. He moves his hand away, but not unkindly.

GORDON

Why, Mum?

ALISON

I couldn't believe Dad didn't own
Blakefield-

Alison takes a shaky breath -

ALISON (CONT'D)

When I opened that letter - I was
so disappointed - I didn't want you
to feel like that - to feel that
way towards your father -

GORDON

So everything was a lie.

ALISON

No - my life with Dad - his work -
we had to live with secrets - it's
complicated, Gordon -

GORDON

It's pretty simple to me. Dad made
it all up - even his work -

ALISON

Not his work.

GORDON

Then why was there no record of him
at the foreign office?

ALISON

You think they give out the names
of their employees over the phone?
Come on -

GORDON

So you think he did work there?

ALISON

I told you - that's where we met. I
promise you -

Gordon reflects - looks at Alison -

GORDON

But that man at the funeral, the
chap from the hospital -

ALISON

What about him?

GORDON

He seemed to know Dad pretty well -
as if they worked together.

ALISON

Or as if he looked after him when
he was a patient.

GORDON

I saw Dad once - at the hospital -
pushing a trolley - in a porter's
uniform.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Years ago, when Nigel broke his leg. He said he was volunteering as a porter for a day - I believed him -

Gordon looks at her, dubious.

ALISON

(lowering voice)

For his work - he had cover jobs -

Gordon wants to hope as much as Alison.

GORDON

So you really think -

ALISON

You said it yourself at the funeral - men of the silent service die quiet, even shameful deaths -

GORDON

(losing confidence)

Words he himself made up -

ALISON

He lived to serve his country. We have to have faith in him, Gordon.

Alison looks at Gordon, steely. He looks at her, vulnerable -

GORDON

I just want to know who he was.

Alison opens her arms and hugs Gordon tightly - real intimacy between them now - whispering into his hair -

ALISON

I know, I know you do - I'll find out what I can - about his connection with Blakefield, I'll look for that porter -

Gordon pulls away, assesses her. Kind but firm.

Alison now sits in the front row of the pews, looking up with devotion at a statue of the Virgin Mary, as Father Timothy again sings the Latin service.

She is still there, some time later, now with her head bowed, as all the other congregants have left.

Father Timothy comes to find her. He sits down in the pew next to her.

FATHER TIMOTHY
You're attending mass every day.
(Beat)
Are you ready to join us?

He smiles. Alison turns on him, vulnerable, questioning.

ALISON
How can you believe in him without evidence? Sacrifice your whole life without any proof?

FATHER TIMOTHY
It's not always easy but I believe in God's goodness, I see it all around me.

ALISON
You never doubt him?

He looks at Alison, wondering where this is coming from.

FATHER TIMOTHY
We all doubt Him at times. That's normal, something we all live with.

Alison thinks. Yes. She nods, tension draining out of her.

Without another word, she rises and starts to walk back down the aisle. Father Timothy follows her, confused.

FATHER TIMOTHY (CONT'D)
Mrs Wilson? We should talk, perhaps study the Bible together.

ALISON
Yes, I'd like that.

15 **EXT. CUMBERLAND, COUNTRY CHURCH, 29TH OCT 1944 - DAY** 15

A Norman stone church, deep in the Cumberland Fells. An organ processional can be heard coming from inside.

Caption: Cumberland, 1944

Alison stands at the gate. She looks like a beggar. A small bag of belongings at her feet. Gordon and Nigel are one on each hip. All of them look thin, tired and broke.

The doors of the church open and the parishioners start to come out. A couple stare at Alison, trying to place her.

MRS MCKELVIE emerges, chatting with a friend. A model of respectability. Alison watches her, heart in her mouth.

At first, Mrs McKelvie looks straight through her - but it is only because she hasn't recognised her.

Once she does so, Mrs McKelvie breaks away from her friend and walks briskly towards her. Alison stands there, ashamed, expecting reprimand.

But Mrs McKelvie simply opens her arms.

16 **INT. CUMBERLAND, MCKELVIE HOUSE, ALISON'S ROOM, 29TH OCT 1944**
- NIGHT

Alison shares a bedroom with the boys - two twin beds and a cot.

Alison leans over a china basin on a wash stand. She douses her wet hair with a strong chemical treatment for head lice.

She rises, her hair slick and dripping on to her shoulders. She's wearing her mother's drab, oversized housecoat.

Mrs McKelvie comes in without knocking. She is brisk, practical. She hands Alison a nit comb and a towel. She screws the lid on the head lice treatment.

MRS MCKELVIE
I've boiled all your clothes.

ALISON
Thank you.

MRS MCKELVIE
We can mend them in the morning.
And I've got some flannel, I'll
make up smocks for the boys.

Alison nods, but she looks desolate. Mrs McKelvie sees this. She goes to Alison, affectionate now, perhaps tucking a piece of wet hair behind her ear.

MRS MCKELVIE (CONT'D)
You've always been a dreamer -
believed the best in people.

ALISON
You don't know the whole story,
Mum.

MRS MCKELVIE
I know he's in jail for theft.
You've done the right thing.

17 **EXT. CUMBERLAND FELLS, 12TH MARCH 1945 - SUNSET**

17

It's a windy Autumnal day. Alison walks across the fells in khaki breeches. She looks much healthier, well-slept, with colour in her cheeks.

Six Months Later

The McKelvie home is visible in the distance. It starts to rain, first spitting, then pouring.

Alison begins to run, wanting to get home before dark and wet overcome her.

18 **EXT. CUMBERLAND, MCKELVIE HOUSE, 12TH MARCH 1945 - SUNSET** 18

A soaking wet but exhilarated Alison runs up to the front door. Before she can get her key, Mrs McKelvie opens it.

MRS MCKELVIE
Alec's here.

Alison stands there, shocked for a moment.

ALISON

Where?

MRS MCKELVIE

With the boys.

19

**INT. CUMBERLAND, MCKELVIE HOUSE, ALISON'S ROOM, 12TH MARCH 19
1945 - NIGHT**

Alison stands at the door, looking in. It's a cosy, warm bedtime scene: Gordon, aged 3 in his pyjamas, sits on Alec's lap as Alec tells him a story. Nigel, now 9 months, lies in a cot, asleep.

Alec hasn't seen Alison. He and Gordon are completely wrapped up in each other, and in the story.

ALEC

And Gordon was a brave soldier. He wasn't scared of the enemy, was he?

Entranced, Gordon shakes his head.

ALEC (CONT'D)

No - Gordon was the best soldier in the land. He was going to win the war for his country. He led his men over the highest mountains, across the widest rivers, marching onwards, march, march, march.

Alec puts actions in - marching his fingers across Gordon's legs. He squeals, delighted.

ALEC (CONT'D)

"The march to victory" -

Alison can stay quiet no longer.

ALISON

Alec.

Alec looks up at Alison, drinking her in. They look at each other, filling with emotion.

But Alison visibly closes herself down. She walks away.

20

**INT. CUMBERLAND, MCKELVIE HOUSE, DRAWING ROOM, 12TH MARCH 20
1945 - NIGHT**

Alison, Alec and Mrs McKelvie sit around the fire. Mrs McKelvie passes around apple tart. The room is large but austere, sparsely furnished.

MRS MCKELVIE

I don't suppose you got homemade puddings in Brixton.

Alec accepts a dish.

ALEC

It's a real treat, thank you.

It's extremely tense. Alison tries to lighten the mood.

ALISON

Gordon's been out on a tractor.

ALEC

Gosh, I bet he was thrilled.

MRS MCKELVIE

He loves it here. And Alison's old nanny has come back to help out.

ALEC

I'm very grateful for everything you've done while I've been away.

MRS MCKELVIE

Alison and the boys can stay as long as they like.

ALEC

I've found us a new flat and I've been given a pay rise.

Alison looks at him, weighing this up. Mrs McKelvie turns to Alec, keen to wrest back control.

MRS MCKELVIE

You must be tired after the long journey. I've made up the spare room for you.

Alec looks to Alison. She nods: it's what she wants.

21 **INT. CUMBERLAND, MCKELVIE HOUSE, ALISON'S ROOM, 13TH MARCH 21
1945 - NIGHT**

Alison lies in bed, awake, writing her diary, with the ink pen. Suddenly, she hears shouts of distress, chilling screams.

ALEC (O.S.)
No - no - get off me -

22 **INT. CUMBERLAND, MCKELVIE HOUSE, LANDING, 13TH MARCH 1945 22
NIGHT**

Alison and her mother, both in thick nightdresses, meet on the landing as Alison heads towards Alec's bedroom.

A worried Mrs McKelvie tries to stop Alison, stay her with an arm. But Alison brushes her mother off and walks in.

23 **INT. CUMBERLAND, MCKELVIE HOUSE, SPARE ROOM, 13TH MARCH 23
1945 - NIGHT**

Alec lies on top of the covers, asleep, naked from the waist up, drenched in sweat, flailing his arms away from his body. He's having a nightmare.

She gently wakes him -

He comes to and sits bolt upright, fear in his eyes. Seeing Alison, his face relaxes, he lies back again.

ALISON
The same dream? In the Somme?

Alec swallows, closes his eyes, trauma draining him.

Alison traces her finger over the long scar on his chest. She clearly wants to get into bed with him but instead she pulls the eiderdown over him and tucks him in, like a child.

ALEC
Stay a minute -

Alison lies down next to him, but on top of the covers. They are silent, listening to the fire crackle in the hearth.

24 **INT. CUMBERLAND, MCKELVIE HOUSE, DRAWING ROOM, 14TH MARCH 24
1945 - DAY**

A needle pokes in and out of stiff fabric. The thread is pulled tight. Mrs McKelvie embroiders a blouse. Alison sits on the floor by the fire, toasting a crumpet on a fork.

MRS MCKELVIE

He could come and visit, it's not as if you'd never see him again.

ALISON

But my life - up here - what would I do?

MRS MCKELVIE

Bring up those lovely boys. And I'm not getting any younger, I'll need looking after soon enough.

ALISON

Is it his age or the fact he's a Catholic that you hate so much?

MRS MCKELVIE

For God's sake, Alison, wake up - can't you see who he is?

A moment. Alison tries once more to defend him.

ALISON

I told you - it's his job -

MRS MCKELVIE

He's a crook and a liar. I don't believe a single word he says.

25 **INT. CUMBERLAND, MCKELVIE HOUSE, ALISON'S ROOM, 14TH MARCH 25
1945 - NIGHT**

Alison sits up in bed, awake, desperately torn. The boys are asleep.

A light KNOCK on the door and Alec comes in. He takes her wedding ring out of his pocket and puts it on the bedside table. They whisper.

ALEC

It was still at the pawnbrokers.

Alison smiles wanly but doesn't take it.

ALISON

A farmer my own age from a good,
local family - that's who I should
have married.

ALEC

You'd be bored silly - you said
yourself you'd go mad up here -

Alec makes a face. Alison can't raise a smile.

ALISON

It's the boys - here they get fresh
air - proper meals - a routine -

ALEC

Life will improve - they've assured
me there'll be no more work in
prison. They've found me a cover
job locally - so I'll be at home
more to help out.

Alec stretches out a hand. They lace their fingers together.

ALEC (CONT'D)

I've got to go back, I'm leaving on
the morning train.

Alison is surprised. He leans in to her, love in his eyes.

ALEC (CONT'D)

Come with me -

ALISON

How can I when you give me no
reassurance? - first arrested for
fraud and then jailed for theft -

ALEC

Go to the courts, Alison - see if
you can find a single conviction
against me.

Alison looks at him, weighing this up.

ALEC (CONT'D)

What are you so afraid of?

ALISON

That mother's right - that you -
everything - it's all just a lie -

ALEC
Then why would the service still
employ me?

ALISON
How do I know that they do?

ALEC
(frustrated)
Follow me when we get home - maybe
then you'll trust me -

Alison stares at him, heart pounding. Sombre, Alec walks out.

26 **EXT. CUMBERLAND, MCKELVIE HOUSE, 15TH MARCH 1945 - DAY** 26

Alison, Alec and the two little boys wave goodbye to a
uniformed nanny and Mrs McKelvie. Mrs McKelvie is covered in
anxiety. She tries to hide it for the sake of the boys.

The family turn and walk down the farm track to the road.
Alec looks jovial, kicking a pebble to Gordon as they walk.
Alison looks straight ahead, unreadable.

26a **INT. TRAIN, 15TH MARCH 1945 - DAY** 26a

Alison on the train with Alec, Gordon and the two boys.

27 **EXT. TRAIN STATION, 15TH MARCH 1945 - DAY** 27

Alison, carrying Nigel, and holding hands with Gordon, exits
the station. She follows Alec who slips into the crowd ahead.

Alison hurries to keep him in her sight. As he turns a
corner, she catches up with him.

And there, in a doorway, hunched over and smoking, is
Coleman. Alec's handler.

Coleman acknowledges Alec with a nod and they walk off
together in a conspiratorial huddle.

Alison is overwhelmed with relief: here is the proof that
he's still working in intelligence.

28 **INT. NEW BOARDING HOUSE, ROOM, 15TH MARCH 1945 - NIGHT** 28

The new boarding house looks marginally nicer than the last
one, although it's dark, so we can't really see much.

The two boys are asleep in make-shift cots and Alec and Alison silently make love in their brass bed.

Alec moves on top of Alison but we are close on their faces, their eyes absolutely locked on each other.

Alison looks at Alec, assessing him, searching his expression. His gaze is utterly honest, committed: trust me.

She nods, closes her eyes: yes, she does trust him. It feels like the start of a new contract between them.

29 **INT. NEW BOARDING HOUSE, ROOM, 16TH MARCH 1945 - DAYBREAK** 29

An early morning light washes over Alison as she wakes. She looks across to the kitchen table to find Alec up and dressed, writing, while Nigel is on his lap having a bottle.

She watches him, content. He sees her and comes over.

ALEC

My shift ends at five, I'll be back
by six.

Alison nods. Alec blows a raspberry on Nigel's tummy who giggles with delight. He hands Nigel over to Alison, squeezing her hand tight as he does so.

She watches him leave, full of love for him.

29a **INT. TUBE TRAIN, 15TH AUG 1963 - DAY** 29a

Alison on the tube train.

30 **EXT. TUBE STATION, 15TH AUG 1963 - DAY** 30

A determined Alison comes out of the tube station. She looks up the road and hails a taxi.

ALISON

Central Middlesex hospital, please.

31 **EXT. CENTRAL MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL, BACK ENTRANCE, 15TH AUG 1963
- DAY**

Porters etc are milling around outside.

Alison approaches a porter who gestures her towards Bert (the porter from the funeral).

32 **INT. CENTRAL MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL, CANTEEN, 15TH AUG 1963 - 32
DAY**

Alison carries a roast beef lunch on a tray. She sets it down in front of Bert.

Alison sits down and watches him as he tucks his napkin into his sweater.

ALISON

So my husband worked here - as a porter?

BERT

Oh yes - for many years -

Alison looks around, trying to imagine Alec here, working with this man.

ALISON

Can you remember his hours?

BERT

Well, it was shift work.

ALISON

Was he full time?

BERT

I don't think so - he was always in and out, in and out.

Alison nods: good.

BERT (CONT'D)

I do remember he left very suddenly, about eight years ago.

ALISON

Was there a problem?

Bert considers this - for rather too long -

ALISON (CONT'D)

Was he sacked?

BERT

No, no - he couldn't do enough for the patients. 'At your service.' That was his line. They all loved him.

Bert laughs. Alison nods bitterly, she can imagine that -

Bert leans in, confiding.

BERT (CONT'D)

I saw many a sick lady rise from the dead.

Alison stares at him, taking this in. He winks.

BERT (CONT'D)
Nothing untoward, Mrs Wilson.

He looks away. Alison feels he is keeping something back.

ALISON
He was just a normal porter? He
wasn't involved in anything else?

He's conspicuously silent. Alison stares at him again.

ALISON (CONT'D)
You see, he had other business -
other work when I married him - and
I need to know - I have to know if
he was still involved -

BERT
(lowering his voice)
I covered for him. He used to meet
up with a lady -

He pauses. Alison stares at him, heart racing.

BERT (CONT'D)
She used to hang around, waiting.
He dropped everything for her.

ALISON
How often did he see her?

BERT
Every week. He called her 'the
boss'. Old lady, chain smoker.

Alison closes her eyes, dizzy with emotion.

ALISON
Coleman.

33

INT. COLEMAN'S FLAT, 16TH AUG 1963 - DAY

33

An enigmatic Coleman sits hunched up on a kitchen chair, smoking. She gives nothing away as a furious Alison paces in front of her, venting her anger.

ALISON
Twenty years he worked for you -
and if I hadn't inherited from my
mother, we'd still be in a rented
room, scraping to eat. Don't you
see the harm you did? The doubts
you seeded? Why didn't you pay him?

Coleman holds Alison's eye, steady now.

ALISON (CONT'D)
I have a right to know. My sons
have a right to know.

Coleman starts to laugh, smoke escaping from her nostrils.

COLEMAN
This is the British intelligence
service. You don't have any rights.

Alison's eyes blaze with fury.

ALISON
We sacrificed - Alec sacrificed -
his name, his happiness, everything
for you.

Coleman leans forward, icy now.

COLEMAN
There's things you don't know.

ALISON
Tell me -

COLEMAN
- you don't want to know -

ALISON
Tell me.

COLEMAN
You'll regret it -

ALISON
Tell me the truth.

Coleman stubs out her cigarette.

COLEMAN
I'm giving you one last chance to
walk away from this. Live the rest
of your life in peace.

Alison looks at Coleman: get on with it.

COLEMAN (CONT'D)
You lived in poverty because - with
a criminal record - Alec was only
employable in the lowest positions.
(Beat)
(MORE)

COLEMAN (CONT'D)

We fired Alec from the service in 1942.

Alison stares at Coleman, unable to take it in.

ALISON

But - no - but he uncovered the traitors at the Egyptian Embassy - I typed it all up - I heard it.

COLEMAN

You typed up his translations. But he didn't translate what he actually heard.

ALISON

What?

COLEMAN

He embellished the facts. He spun us a fantastic web of intrigue - a wonderful spy story - but none of it was actually true -

Alison stares at Coleman, appalled, unable to believe it.

ALISON

He helped us win the war -

COLEMAN

No, no he didn't. MI5 spent months - precious, wasted months - trying to track down this so-called Egyptian spy ring.

ALISON

But - he went to Alamein - I saw his passport - the stamps -

COLEMAN

Faked. He was in prison for fraud.

ALISON

No -

COLEMAN

Jailed again in '44. You should have stuck to your guns, left him.

ALISON

Stop -

COLEMAN

In fact, Alec's skills of deception were judged to be so dangerous that the service decided to watch him for the rest of his life.

Coleman sits back. Alison clutches at the final straw -

ALISON

You're lying. You were his handler. I saw you, people saw you with him, at the hospital, they bloody saw you.

COLEMAN

I did meet Alec every week. But not as his handler. As I said, the service decided to watch him. He was under my surveillance.

In despair, Alison rises - in turmoil - hardly able to think - she's at the door -

ALISON

I don't believe you. I can't -

COLEMAN

I think you already do.

Alison is already walking out the door.

34

INT. EALING CATHOLIC CHURCH, 16TH AUG 1963 - DAY

34

The abbey is empty. Alison walks up the aisle. She kneels before the altar on the cold floor.

She reaches into her bag and pulls out her rosary. Her voice shakes with emotion. She turns one bead.

ALISON

Forgive me father for I have sinned. I have been trusting -

She turns the next bead, sorrow turning to anger -

ALISON (CONT'D)

Forgive me for I loved my husband -

And the next and the next - becoming increasingly manic -

ALISON (CONT'D)

For I tried to understand him - For
wanting to protect my sons - For
being weak - For having faith -

Alison pulls at the rosary - wrenching it - breaking it -
scattering the beads - they bounce across the tiled floor.

She looks up at the crucifix above the altar.

The malevolence in her expression.

Alison turns - her fury needing somewhere to go - THUD - she
punches a stone pillar.

Again. Now both hands - punching, pummelling the stone -

Even as her hands start to bleed -

Even as her fists open up into a bloody pulp, she continues.

Wanting the pain to overwhelm her until -

Everything outside falls away - no memories, no hurt -

- just this moment -

And now - it's all blurring -

As the tears cloud her vision - and the pain takes over -

Alison closes her eyes.

BLACK.

A few moments pass in silent darkness.

And then, a distant voice - fractured rays of sunlight -

FATHER TIMOTHY (O.S.)

Mrs Wilson? Alison?

Alison slowly comes to, she's sprawled on the floor.

35 **INT. EALING CATHOLIC CHURCH, VESTRY, 16TH AUG 1963 - DAY** 35

A blank, traumatised Alison sits at a small, wooden table
with a cup of tea and a biscuit. Her hands are bandaged.

Father Timothy busies himself in the background putting away
a first aid kit. He comes to sit opposite Alison, sympathetic
and very concerned.

ALISON

He offers you hope, so you lower
your guard. And then He disappears.

FATHER TIMOTHY

You're grieving, you feel God has
abandoned you. It's natural. You
loved Alec so very much, didn't
you?

Alison says nothing.

FATHER TIMOTHY (CONT'D)

Time will help. What you need now
is to get some rest, sleep -

ALISON

Rest?

FATHER TIMOTHY

There's a community of servite
women who take others in for
retreat. I could call them?

Alison shakes her head, rises. He reluctantly follows suit.

FATHER TIMOTHY (CONT'D)

God is testing you. Be patient.
Search for a chink of light. It
will come. And when it does, open
yourself up and let God in.

Alison nods, comforted a little by this.

36 **OMITTED**

36

37 **INT. ALISON'S HOUSE, BEDROOM, 16TH AUG 1963 - DAY**

37

Alison walks into the bedroom.

She lies on the bed, fully dressed. The curtains are closed.
It's as if she's given up. The photo of herself at Blakefield
lies abandoned on one side of her.

She stares at the ceiling. She turns off the light.

A few moments pass. And then the phone on the bedside table
rings. RING RING. RING RING. It goes on. Alison lets it.

It stops. Starts again. RING RING. Finally, Alison picks up.
Her hands sore and bandaged from hitting the church pillar.

ALISON (ON PHONE)
Hello.

NIGEL (O.S. ON PHONE)
(off her voice)
Mum - what's wrong?

Alison says nothing.

NIGEL (CONT'D)
Gordon said you're OK now - that
you've been to see him -

She closes her eyes.

ALISON
I'm fine. How's Oxford?

NIGEL
It's great - my digs are really
nice -

ALISON
Good. That's good.

NIGEL
Mum -

ALISON
Yes.

NIGEL
I know you miss Dad - but me and
Gordon - we're always here -

Alison is moved - we can see a little something return -

ALISON
Thanks Nigel - always thinking of
others.
(Beat)
Where did you learn such kindness?

NIGEL
From you, Mum.

A moment.

ALISON
I love you -

Mrs Wilson Episode 3 - by Anna Symon 28A.

Nigel laughs, embarrassed at this affection.

NIGEL
Look, I'd better go -

ALISON
I'll call you at the weekend.

NIGEL
Chin up, Mum - keep going -

ALISON
I will - bye -

Buoyed up, Alison puts the phone down. Next to the receiver, the phone number on the business card.

Alison reflects, picks it up. One more go.

She dials.

Two rings - and then it's picked up -

SHAHBAZ KARIM (O.S.)
Hello.

Alison is so shocked she can't speak.

SHAHBAZ KARIM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Who is this?

ALISON (ON PHONE)
I got this number from my husband -
he left me a card in his wallet -

SHAHBAZ KARIM
Then we need to have another talk,
Mrs Wilson.

A moment.

ALISON
Mr Karim, is that you?

SHAHBAZ KARIM
Yes, I've just got back from
Lahore.

38	OMITTED	38
39	OMITTED	39
40	MOVED TO 83A	40
41	MOVED TO 83B	41
42	MOVED TO 83C	42
43	MOVED TO 83D	43
44	MOVED TO 83E	44
45	MOVED TO 83F	45
46	MOVED TO 83G	46
47	MOVED TO 83H	47
48	MOVED TO 83I	48
49	MOVED TO 83J	49
50	OMITTED; MATERIAL MOVED TO SCENE 37	50
50a	EXT. COUNCIL BLOCK, 16TH AUG 1963 - DAY Alison approaches the Council Block.	50a

51 INT. COUNCIL BLOCK, STAIRCASE, 16TH AUG 1963 - DAY 51

High on adrenaline, Alison heads up a dingy, concrete staircase, taking the steps two at a time.

The block is run down and feels creepy. Alison passes two figures in a shadowy stairwell.

She flicks her eyes towards them, paranoid, but it's just a couple of spivs doing a deal. She hurries on.

52 INT. / EXT. COUNCIL BLOCK, 16TH AUG 1963 - DAY 52

We see an anxious Alison, enlarged and distorted, through Karim's spy hole in his front door.

ALISON
It's me, Mrs Wilson.

Karim, in slippers and *shalwar kameez*, opens the door.

53 INT. COUNCIL BLOCK, KARIM'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM, 16TH AUG 1963 - DAY 53

Karim's living room is small, but cosy. An oasis, with a number of house plants giving it an almost tropical look.

ALISON
If you know something about Alec's work, why didn't you tell me before?

SHAHBAZ KARIM
I'm sorry - I made Alec a promise many years ago. Let me explain.
(Beat)
Here we are - please have a seat - can I offer you a cup of tea?

Alison nods, looking round. It's not what she imagined. He smiles cheerfully, making her tea as he chats away.

SHAHBAZ KARIM (CONT'D)
I'm on my own, I don't need much. Just enough for the odd visit home and the subscription to my club.

Alison sits down. Karim brings the tea through. He looks at her hands.

SHAHBAZ KARIM (CONT'D)
You've been in the wars.

Mrs Wilson Episode 3 - by Anna Symon 31A.

ALISON

It was all a lie - everything Alec
told me - I feel so stupid -

Karim watches her, compassionate.

ALISON (CONT'D)

I've no idea what you can add - I know Alec was sacked for lying in 1942.

Shahbaz pours some tea into his saucer and swirls it around.

SHAHBAZ KARIM

He was sacked for telling the truth, Mrs Wilson.

ALISON

What do you mean?

SHAHBAZ KARIM

There was a group of agents in MI5 who wanted control of Alec's phone line to the Egyptian embassy.

ALISON

Why? Couldn't they just read his transcripts?

Karim takes a sip from the saucer, narrows his eyes.

SHAHBAZ KARIM

Don't assume everyone in the service was on the same side.

Alison looks at Karim, intrigued now, her weariness fading.

SHAHBAZ KARIM (CONT'D)

Have you read about Guy Burgess and Kim Philby? All the traitors at work in our security services -

Alison's jaw drops.

ALISON

You think Alec was set up by double-agents working inside MI5?

SHAHBAZ KARIM

I don't think so, I know it.

Stunned, Alison thinks about this.

ALISON

Why?

SHAHBAZ KARIM

They said that Alec was fabricating material in order to get him sacked.

(MORE)

SHAHBAZ KARIM (CONT'D)
(beat) With their own man on the
line, they could send intelligence
straight through to Moscow.

ALISON
But how could they get away with
it? With smearing Alec?

SHAHBAZ KARIM
That was the easy bit - he was a
story teller - and he didn't help
himself, you see - the complicated
love life - the reckless
exaggerations about his background -

Alison looks down, trying to grapple with it.

SHAHBAZ KARIM (CONT'D)
Please - your tea is getting cold.

But she looks up, her face darkening.

ALISON
What a good friend you are, Mr
Karim, protecting Alec like this.

SHAHBAZ KARIM
Mrs Wilson - it's all true -

ALISON
And yet Coleman's never said a word
about it.

SHAHBAZ KARIM
Then she's part of the cover up.

Alison looks at him, unsure.

SHAHBAZ KARIM (CONT'D)
Keeping you in line, no doubt, with
threats to your future - or to the
boys' careers?

Karim looks back at her evenly.

Alison heads to the door. She opens the door and walks out.

Alison stands outside Karim's flat looking down over the
estate. A few workers coming home, kids playing out. Ordinary
lives continuing, as hers feels rocked to its foundation.

Alison rests her head on the rail, overwhelmed. Karim comes out and joins her. She looks at him, vulnerable.

ALISON

You're asking me to hope again.

SHAHBAZ KARIM

Please - come back inside.

55

**INT. COUNCIL BLOCK, KARIM'S FLAT, LIVING ROOM, 16TH AUG
1963 - DAY**

55

Time has passed. Alison sits with piles of letters and paperwork that Karim has assembled, another cup of tea.

SHAHBAZ KARIM

He wrote letters pleading his case but, as soon as he made progress, they framed him - planted stolen goods on him.

Alison looks back at Karim, unsure.

SHAHBAZ KARIM (CONT'D)

You surely can't believe he was capable of theft?

Alison thinks about this.

Alison may not believe in Alec yet but Karim certainly does. Fury against the service rising up in him.

SHAHBAZ KARIM (CONT'D)

A man of his abilities, the finest linguist of his generation, working as a hospital porter - for God's sake - he gave everything to the service and they broke him - cast him out without a penny.

ALISON

But - why didn't he tell me the truth?

SHAHBAZ KARIM

He wanted to protect you -

Alison looks back at Karim, a little doubtful.

SHAHBAZ KARIM (CONT'D)

And then I think he let the lie take root in his own head - till he almost believed it himself.

Alison nods -

ALISON

Because if he wasn't a spy, then
who was he?

(Beat)

Who was I?

A moment passes.

SHAHBAZ KARIM

He wanted you to think the best of
him, I know that much.

Alison thinks that through.

SHAHBAZ KARIM (CONT'D)

That's why he made me promise to
only tell you all this if you came
looking for it.

Alison turns to Karim.

ALISON

I want to believe you Mr Karim, I
really do - but it's so incredible -
is there someone else I can talk
to?

Karim starts to chuckle softly.

SHAHBAZ KARIM

I cannot introduce you to the KGB.

ALISON

(almost to herself)

Then how do I know who to believe?

Karim reflects. He looks back at Alison.

SHAHBAZ KARIM

Have you read much G K Chesterton?
A man of letters - a very wise man -

Alison shakes her head.

SHAHBAZ KARIM (CONT'D)

"To love means loving the
unlovable. To have faith means
believing the unbelievable."

Alison thinks about this.

Alison hurries towards her. Before she has even sat down -

ALISON
I've just come from Marylebone Court. I met an archivist, nice fellow, couldn't have been more helpful.

Coleman screws her fag butt under foot and lights another.

ALISON (CONT'D)
There are no records of the 'crimes' you say he committed during the war. Why is that?
(Beat)
Why were there no trials?

COLEMAN
You were married to a pathological liar, Alison - accept it.

ALISON
(calm)
You can't answer my question, can you?

COLEMAN
And now you're on a wild goose chase, led by his great friend Karim.

ALISON
You sacked an agent, destroyed him. Covered it up for twenty years.

COLEMAN
We fired your husband because his transcripts were make-believe.

ALISON
Why would he listen to one thing and make up another?

COLEMAN
Fiction. It's what he did.

ALISON
Jeopardise his career? Let alone the war effort? For the sake of a story?

COLEMAN
It's who he was.

ALISON

He loved his country. Why would he do that?

Coleman says nothing.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Why?

The two women look at each other. Alison, furious. Coleman looking back at her, the mask slipping a fraction.

COLEMAN

You think I haven't wondered that myself?

Alison, softening.

COLEMAN (CONT'D)

I watched him for twenty years. And I never found any answers.

Coleman shakes her head, puts the mask back on.

COLEMAN (CONT'D)

I won't meet you again. Believe what you want. You'll never find a scrap of evidence.

Alison leans forward, thinking she senses weakness.

ALISON

My boys are fine, aren't they? Their careers were never in any danger.

Coleman looks back at her, unreadable. Alison rises.

ALISON (CONT'D)

I know Alec had other wives before me. I know he lied about his background, his family home, his education. He lied to me so many times.

(Beat)

But not this. He loved his country. I know who he was.

Coleman watches her leave, reluctantly impressed.

65 **EXT. ALISON'S STREET, 15TH OCT 1963 - DAY**

65

A cheery Alison returns home laden with shopping bags. She stops to give a cheery wave to Olive and her husband.

ALISON

The boys are coming back for the weekend - you'll have to come in for a drink.

OLIVE

Alison, we'd love that.

Alison walks on, optimism in her eyes.

As she turns into her front door, she sees a BOY, about 8, hanging around on a bicycle on the opposite side of the road to her house. He's got a school satchel round his neck and rocks back and forth on his pedals.

He looks over at her. She smiles at him and goes inside.

66 **INT. ALISON'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM, 15TH OCT 1963 - DAY**

66

Alison comes in with her bags of shopping. She dumps them on a table under the window.

Also on the table is a sheaf of handwritten notes for Gordon and Nigel. The ink pen [Alec gave her] next to it.

Alison looks at the notes, tidies the pages. We can see the odd word about "Dad's work" etc.

She turns her attention to her shopping and pulls out wrapping paper, a birthday card and the record she bought Nigel. Light of mood - puts it on.

She listens - clearly prepared to hate it - but in fact she does like it - as the infectious tune builds, it's as if some vestige of youth, of carefree joy, is released within her -

She turns it right up and stands in the middle of the room - enjoying herself - carefree - revelling in the LOUD -

She comes to - and heads to the gramophone to get the record -

As she does so, she sees the boy who was outside when she arrived is still there. He's not on his bike anymore, he's standing right outside her house, shifting from leg to leg. He looks chilly.

67

EXT. ALISON'S HOUSE, 15TH OCT 1963 - DAY

67

Alison approaches the young lad. She smiles. But the boy, DOUGLAS, is shy; he looks down at his feet.

ALISON
Are you all right?

DOUGLAS
Yes, thank you.

ALISON
What's your name?

DOUGLAS
Douglas.

ALISON
How old are you, Douglas?

DOUGLAS
Eight.

ALISON
Are you waiting for someone?

DOUGLAS
My mum - I'm meeting her here after
work -

He looks down. Alison says nothing. He looks up, awkwardly.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)
We're looking for my dad -

A twinge of anxiety from Alison, covered with a smile.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)
We thought he lived here -

ALISON
(faint)
What do you mean?

DOUGLAS
We need to see him - he's stopped
sending us our money -

He looks down again. Alison swallows hard, can hardly speak -

ALISON

What does he do, your dad?

DOUGLAS

He's a doctor.

Alison turns away - but there - in the distance - a woman in nurse's uniform, ELIZABETH, 35, is walking towards them.

Alison says nothing. She holds on to her gate post, heart thumping out of her chest, watching Elizabeth get closer.

Douglas turns to gesture his mum to hurry up.

Elizabeth hurries towards them, raising an arm in greeting.

But to Alison, time is slowing down -

She looks - in agony - from Elizabeth - her successor - to Douglas.

Douglas - seeing Alison's expression, not understanding it, but trying to explain -

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

He's probably in Lahore - he's got a big house there -

Elizabeth is nearly with them, closer and closer. Her face coming into focus - kind, beautiful, a little anxious -

Alison turns back to Douglas.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

He even taught me to count in Urdu.
Ek, do, teen, chaar, paanch, che -

Alison turns and walks inside.

68

INT. ALISON'S HOUSE, HALL, 15TH OCT 1963 - CONTINUOUS

68

Alison goes into survival mode -

She shuts and bolts the front door.

From outside, the sound of footsteps coming up the path. Voices.

Now rapping on the front door. KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

Alison stands there, in shock.

Mrs Wilson Episode 3 - by Anna Symon 42A.

ELIZABETH WILSON (O.S.)
(through letter-box)
Hello - is the bell not working?

Doorbell again. BRIIIIIING.

ELIZABETH WILSON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Hello. I'm looking for my husband.
My name's Mrs Wilson -

Alison walks into the kitchen.

79 **INT. ALISON'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM, 18TH APRIL 1966 - DAY** 79

Gordon, 24, now definitely a grown up, stands alone in the completely empty living room. No pictures on the walls.

There's no furniture. He looks around, sad, memories washing over him.

Nigel, now 21, walks in holding a silver photo frame. He's turned from boy to man. A graduate and a smartly dressed guy.

He's struck by the empty room - looks round, taking it in -

GORDON

What have you got there?

Nigel shows him the photo of Alison at Blakefield.

NIGEL

I found it - shoved right to the back of Mum's wardrobe. It must be the only photo she kept.

Gordon turns away, unreadable. A moment.

GORDON

Come on - Susan will kill me if she goes into labour before I get back.

Nigel laughs. The two men walk out.

80 **EXT. SERVITE ORDER, 30TH APRIL 1966 - DAY** 80

Deep within the countryside, a walled religious community. It's a peaceful place. A couple of nuns in habits work in the vegetable garden. A bell sounds.

80A INT. SERVITE ORDER, ALISON'S ROOM, 1966 - DAY 80A

A white washed room. A crucifix hangs over a narrow bed.

Alison, now 47 sits at a desk by a window writing an essay with the ink pen. Her text is religious; she consults a bible. She is dressed plainly. She looks industrious, content.

A bell sounds. She rises calmly. We get the sense that Alison finds peace in this new rhythm and rituals.

80B INT. SERVITE ORDER, CHAPEL, 1966 - DAY 80B

Alison, kneels at the alter rail in the chapel. She puts her hands out and receives the chalice. She drinks.

ALISON

Amen.

Alison rises and walks back to the pew.

81 INT. SERVITE ORDER, ALISON'S ROOM, 30TH APRIL 1966 - DAY 81

A nervous Alison looks at her watch. Rises to powder her nose. She looks at her watch again, starting to look excited.

A knock.

Alison quickly opens the door.

Nigel and Gordon, carrying new born baby Deborah, come in. Alison rushes towards them.

ALISON

Oh goodness, you're beautiful, oh
hello you, hello Deborah. Can I?

Before he can speak, Alison has picked up Deborah and is cradling her in her arms. A totally besotted grandmother. A new and softer side than we have seen of her before.

Gordon and Nigel watch her, moved. She looks up, tears in her eyes.

ALISON (CONT'D)

It's so good of you - to bring her
up here to meet me.

Later, Alison walks through the tranquil, shaded grounds of the community with Gordon and Nigel. She pushes Deborah in a pram. As they walk, they pass a couple of nuns.

ALISON

Thank you for organising the sale -

NIGEL

I didn't know what to do with your
and Dad's clothes -

A fleeting nostalgia crosses Alison's face. Banished.

ALISON

Chuck them.

(Beat)

I'm splitting the proceeds of the
house between the two of you.

GORDON

Mum?

Alison has thought about this deeply.

ALISON

I want to help you each to buy a
place of your own. I won't have
your children growing up as you
did.

NIGEL

It's all right - we can sort
ourselves -

ALISON

I've already arranged the bank
transfers.

NIGEL

But what will you live on?

ALISON

Oh, I don't need anything.

GORDON

Not now - but -

ALISON

I didn't want to tell you until I
was sure - but I've been here long
enough now to make a decision -

NIGEL
Three years, Mum.

Alison smiles.

ALISON
I've decided to stay here for good.

Nigel looks shocked.

ALISON (CONT'D)
It's all right - I've found peace.

Nigel is still a little concerned.

NIGEL
As long as you're happy?

ALISON
I am - I'm consumed with joy.

She links her arm through his. He smiles. They walk on.

Gordon reflects - disappointment, unfinished business in his eyes. Alison sees this.

ALISON (CONT'D)
We'll still be able to meet. Talk.

Alison looks away, walks on.

83

EXT. SERVITE ORDER, 30TH APRIL 1966 - SUNSET

83

Nigel and Gordon are preparing to leave, putting their jackets into the boot of Gordon's car.

Alison watches, holding baby Deborah.

Gordon rises and puts his hands out for Deborah and Alison reluctantly hands her over.

ALISON
Bye bye, Deborah, bye bye.

Gordon puts Deborah into a carry cot on the back seat.

Meanwhile, Nigel gets the photo of Blakefield out of the boot. He shows it to Alison.

NIGEL
I found this - in case you want it -

ALISON

Bless you -

Alison hugs Nigel goodbye and takes the photo without looking at it. Nigel goes to sit in the car.

Gordon returns from strapping Deborah in to say good bye to Alison.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Look after yourself, love.

They hug briefly but there's tension there. He looks back at his baby daughter in the car.

GORDON

When Deborah grows up, what will I tell her about Dad?

Alison says nothing. Very frustrated, he gets in the car.

Alison watches them drive away.

83A	OMITTED	83A
83B	OMITTED	83B
83C	OMITTED (SCENE MOVED TO 86C)	83C
83D	OMITTED (SCENE MOVED TO 86D)	83D
83E	OMITTED (SCENE MOVED TO 86E)	83E
83F	OMITTED (SCENE MOVED TO 86F)	83F
83G	OMITTED (SCENE MOVED TO 86G)	83G
83H	OMITTED (SCENE MOVED TO 86H)	83H
83I	OMITTED (SCENE MOVED TO 86I)	83I
83J	OMITTED (SCENE MOVED TO 86J)	83J
84	OMITTED (SCENE MOVED TO 86A)	84
85	OMITTED (SCENE MOVED TO 86B)	85

Distant birds fly in great arcs across the azure sky. Below them, the sea rolls across a shingle beach.

Alison sits on a bench, on the prom, looking out to sea. She watches as Dennis approaches. Neat, fastidious as ever. Hair neatly combed and slicked down. A hanky in his top pocket.

ALISON

Hello - how kind of you to meet me -

DENNIS

How are you? And Gordon and Nigel?

ALISON

Fine. We're all fine. Gordon's just had a baby actually.

A proud Alison can't resist showing him a photo.

DENNIS

She's got the Wilson eyes.

ALISON

Yes, yes she has. Deborah.

DENNIS

(almost to himself)

A new cousin for my two kids -

A moment. Alison, thinking deeply. She turns to Dennis.

ALISON

Don't you ever wish you hadn't found out about us?

A moment. He reflects.

DENNIS

No. I'd rather know the truth - who Dad really was.

It's what Gordon said to her. Alison looks at him, vulnerable as she was when they first met.

ALISON

I've kept it from them for so long -

Dennis lightly touches her hand; an echo of when he bandaged her cut hand (in ep one).

DENNIS

You're a good mother. They will understand.

86A INT. SERVITE ORDER, CHAPEL, 4TH MAY 1966 - NIGHT

86A

Previously scene 84

It's the middle of the night. There are no lights on - and we can hardly see - but Alison is on her knees at the altar rail, praying. She looks to be in real anguish: on the horns of a dilemma.

Time passes. Early dawn light smudges the stained glass.

A distant bell sounds.

Alison rises.

86B INT. SERVITE ORDER, ALISON'S ROOM, 5TH MAY 1966 - DAY

86B

Previously scene 85

A sludge green, institutional china cup is lifted with slightly shaking hands. Alison drinks tea with Father Timothy.

FATHER TIMOTHY

What's on your mind?

ALISON

I cannot wait to take my vows - to give myself to God completely -

FATHER TIMOTHY

I'm so proud of you Alison -

ALISON

With the ceremony next weekend - the boys are coming and, as you know, they mean everything to me - their happiness - their future -

FATHER TIMOTHY

You can see them whenever you wish - live outside the community if you choose to.

ALISON

I know. I know that.

A moment. Father Timothy watches her, trying to figure out what she is struggling with. She looks up.

ALISON (CONT'D)
How can I give myself to God with
lies in my heart?

FATHER TIMOTHY
What do you mean?

ALISON
There's things I still haven't told
the boys - about Alec -

FATHER TIMOTHY
Then it's time to talk to them.

ALISON
Yes, I know, I want to - but it has
to be in the right way - with
kindness, compassion.

A moment. Father Timothy is thoughtful, soft.

FATHER TIMOTHY
You're asking me how you can
forgive Alec?

ALISON
Yes.

FATHER TIMOTHY
Understanding comes first, Alison,
then forgiveness.

Alison nods, thinking about this.

86C

EXT. BLAKEFIELD HALL, DRIVE, 2ND MAY 1966 - DAY

86C

A car drives up. Parks. Alison gets out. She looks up at the grand house, and then nervously rings on the bell. The MATRON, in her 70s, answers the door.

MATRON
Hello - Mrs Wilson? Come in - tell
me how I can help -

Alison walks in, grateful.

86D INT. BLAKEFIELD HALL, MAIN ROOMS, 2ND MAY 1966 - DAY 86D

The matron and Alison walk through empty rooms, furniture covered in dust sheets.

ALISON
You must have spent time with Alec
when he was a young man -

Matron smiles.

MATRON
Yes, of course.

ALISON
What was he like then? How did you
even know him?

Matron looks at her, puzzled. Alison, embarrassed now.

ALISON (CONT'D)
I mean to say, I'm not sure I
really understand how Alec was
connected to this house -

MATRON
It was used as a military hospital
during both wars - Alec convalesced
here when he came back from the
Somme.

Alison nods: of course.

MATRON (CONT'D)
Only a teenager when he arrived
from the front - poor lad - we were
all terribly fond of him.

Matron opens a door to a scullery and gestures Alison in.

86E INT. BLAKEFIELD HALL, SCULLERY, 2ND MAY 1966 - DAY 86E

A cosy, steamy little room. Tea towels dry over a wooden horse. A kettle hisses on the range. Alison sits at a table while Matron warms a teapot.

MATRON
We'd be in here on our break - hear
him crying out - he was very low -
the things he'd seen -

ALISON
He had nightmares his whole life -

MATRON

I'd go and read to him - take his
mind off it - romances, mysteries,
you name it - we went through the
whole night sometimes -

She smiles at that and sits down with the teapot.

MATRON (CONT'D)

One morning, a doctor brought him
in a typewriter. And that was it -

ALISON

He started writing here?

MATRON

A story about a young officer -

ALISON

Can you remember anything of it?

MATRON

It was a fantasy really - this chap
saved all his men, helped win the
war - now then, what was it called -

86F **INT. MRS MCKELVIE'S HOUSE, ALISON'S ROOM, 12TH MARCH 1945** 86F
FLASHBACK - NIGHT

This is 3/19 - Alec telling the story to Gordon.

ALEC

*Over the highest mountains, across
the widest rivers, marching
onwards, march, march, march -*

Alec puts actions in - Gordon watches him, delighted.

86G **INT. BLAKEFIELD HALL, SCULLERY, 2ND MAY 1966 - DAY** 86G

ALISON

"The March to Victory".

MATRON

That's the one.

Alison sits perfectly still, moved.

MATRON (CONT'D)

He started eating again - walking
in the gardens - he came back to
life - it was remarkable.

ALISON

Did you ever ask him about it?

MATRON

He said writing took away the fear
inside him. He could fiddle with a
story, give it a happy ending.

Alison nods, tears brimming in her eyes.

MATRON (CONT'D)

Did he carry on with the fiction?

ALISON

Until the very end.

86H **EXT. BLAKEFIELD HALL, FRONT DOOR, 2ND MAY 1966 - DAY** 86H

Alison stands there, memories flooding over her.

86I **OMITTED** 86I

86J

EXT. BLAKEFIELD HALL, FRONT DOOR, 2ND MAY 1966 - DAY

86J

Alison grips her rosary tightly. Her fingers unconsciously start to turn the beads over the worn leather.

As if something has been exorcised, as if she found a way to forgive Alec, she closes her eyes and exhales.

We see the tension drain out of Alison. At peace.

Mrs Wilson Episode 3 - by Anna Symon 54.

Mrs Wilson Episode 3 - by Anna Symon 55.

87 INT. SERVITE ORDER, ALISON'S ROOM, 12TH MAY 1966 - DAYBREAK 7

A nervous Alison opens a fresh pack of white paper. Her hands tremble as she rolls a sheet into the Smith Corona.

Next to her, propped up against the wall, is the framed photo of her at Blakefield. She looks at it - that joyful, innocent face - and then -

She starts a letter - we close in on the words: "Dear Gordon and Nigel, forgive me for keeping this from you until now."

She types on - fast and fluent - clear about what she has to say -

ALISON (V.O.)

The truth is so complicated - and
it felt kinder to keep it from you.
But the lies must end with me.

88 INT. SERVITE ORDER, CHAPEL, 12TH MAY 1966 - DAY

88

Sun streams in through the stained glass on Father Timothy as he officiates in Latin.

He gestures Alison in the front pew -

A serene Alison rises and walks forward to say her vows of dedication. Her eyes are bright and hopeful as she speaks -

ALISON

In the name of the Father, the Son
and the Holy Spirit, I Alison
Wilson have lived the life of the
Servite Secular Institute for three
years, and I now desire to make a
more stable commitment.
Therefore... I Alison Wilson vow to
live... in Chastity, Poverty and
Obedience according to the
Constitutions of the Servite
Secular Institute.

[This is the majority of the text but the words fade at some point as the voice-over comes up.]

ALISON (V.O.)

Only with the truth can I tell you
that you have a greater family. And
how can I deprive you of that? The
chance to get to know your own
flesh and blood.

We reveal Gordon and Nigel in the pews among a small congregation of lay people and nuns.

ALISON (V.O.)

Maybe, when the hurt has faded, you
will look up your brothers. Or, in
years to come, your children will
find their cousins, make friends.
Perhaps some good can come of this.

Alison kneels at the altar rail.

ALISON (V.O.)
You must decide for yourself who
your father really was.
(Beat)
But you should know that, with
God's help, I have forgiven him.

She rises and walks back down the aisle towards us.

ALISON (V.O.)
I hope, one day, you may be able to
do the same -

89 INT. SERVITE ORDER, ALISON'S ROOM, 12TH MAY 1966 - DAY 89

Alison pauses, pulls the carriage return and finishes.

ALISON (V.O.)
This is the true story of our life.

Alison extracts the sheet.

She places the memoir in a large envelope and writes on the front: "Gordon and Nigel" using her ink pen.

She looks at the pen - we see the ghost of a memory, a glimpse of the raw pain inside -

She banishes it and screws on the lid of the pen.

Alison slowly exhales. And we FADE UP the sound of a party.

90 INT. FAMILY REUNION LOCATION, 23RD JUNE 2018 - DAY 90

BLACK CARD:

Alison Wilson dedicated her life to God in 1967. She died in 2005.

In 2007, the children from Alexander Wilson's four marriages found each other and made friends.

Photographs of Alexander Wilson's children - Dennis, Gordon, Nigel, Douglas, Michael.

The extended Wilson family come together for a photograph.

BLACK CARD:

The family continue to try to discover the truth about Alexander Wilson's intelligence career. In 2018, the Foreign Office refused to release their file on Alexander Wilson, stating that it is still security sensitive.

FINAL CARD:

In memory of Gladys, Dorothy, Alison and Elizabeth Wilson.

THE END