

Liam I mean that's not a problem, is it? Stripping off? I mean, that is what you "do"?

A beat. Chris has to turn to her troops and put on a brave face. None of them WERE aware this was the score

Chris Absolutely!

Liam Absolutely! (*Into his walkie talkie*) Andy? Take these lights up forty percent.

Liam goes

There is a pause

Chris Right. OK. I hadn't realized.

Beat. A ferocious key light comes on. Unsympathetic, hard, it is the antithesis of the light the night they took the photos in here. They all wince

OK.

Ruth Right. Well —

Chris leads from the front and starts to undo her clothing

Annie Don't touch a button.

Chris Annie/ just —

Annie Put your coats on. We're out of here.

The girls don't know what to do

Do NOT touch ONE BUTTON.

Chris (*out of the side of her mouth, gesturing "carry on"*) Girls ...

Cora, Ruth, Jessie and Celia de-flower themselves and leave, murmuring "sorry", slightly on eggshells

Is there a problem?

Annie doesn't answer. She packs

Yes?

Annie doesn't answer

Are you going to answer m — ?

Annie Please don't ask me if there's a problem, Chris, when we're selling soap wearing dayglo sunflowers.

Chris For a photoshoot, I am. For John.

Annie snorts a little laugh

(Getting narked) What?

Annie "For John." That's good. That you still think that.

Chris Yes. I do. And I think John'd think you were acting —

Annie Let me tell you what I think John'd think, OK? "Annie, you're a woman who once took her clothes off because of me, and who now takes them off because 'that's what she does'."

Chris Is this 'cause I've organized it? Got us a sponsor. Finally followed through on something? Finally made this calendar a success?

Annie No, y'see what's actually happened, Chris, what's *actually* happened is that this calendar's made YOU a success.

This hurts

Chris And not YOU of course? Not bloody — Florence Nightingale. Sleeping in churches. Answering letters. LOADS of people lose partners to this disease. I bet THEY don't get FAN MAIL. Wouldn't you say THAT's made YOU a "success"? A very successful ... "bereaved woman"? A — a — a "celebrity widow"? *(Beat)* "Saint Annie of Knapeley"? Eh? *(Beat)* Hey?

Annie I'm not a saint. Because I would rob every penny of this calendar to buy one more hour with him. *(Beat)* And you've still got yours.

Annie starts to cry. And it's the crying she always needed to do

(In tears) And you're here!

Chris was the cloudbuster, who now can't go to her because of the Grand Canyon that's opened up between them

Annie leaves

Liam comes in

Liam Hello?

Chris (*attempting a brave face*) I think — might be a problem with some of the er ... (*She dries up*)

Liam assesses the situation

Liam Right. Well. (*Beat*) Looks like it's just you. (*He clears the other "sunflower" girdles*) I'll let the agency know but they'll be cool with that. End of the day all they want is someone from the WI, nude. That's all it's about, isn't it, all this? That's the — *frisson*. **ANDY, CAN YOU CLEAR THE KITCHEN?** (*To Chris*) Little bit of privacy. (*He hands her the washing powder*) You cool with it? Being just "you"? (*Smiling*) Don't mind being the "star"?

Liam goes

Chris (*quietly*) I never have.

Chris goes off

Music plays: "Jerusalem"

SCENE 7

The church hall. Late summer

Cora, Jessie, Celia, Annie and Marie enter, singing a multi-part vocal arrangement of "Jerusalem" over the music

The girls are dressed in summery clothes and singing with optimism and verve. Under Cora's instruction, the song is transformed — as though they've remembered how beautiful it was. Marie leads them on. Celia, Jessie, Annie and Cora seem to be dressed light and liberated somehow. Maybe it's just a new self-confidence they exert

Everyone (*singing*) And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among those dark satanic mills?