

Saturday Night and Sunday Morning, Part III

Karel Reisz , Dir. (1960)

The next scene opens in Jack and Brenda's house. Brenda is putting on her lipstick. Her husband is reading the newspaper.

"Are you off again?" he asks her.

"Mmm," Brenda replies as she applies powder to her face. "I'm going up to Winnie's for a bit. She's expecting her baby next week."

"You've been seeing a lot of her lately," Jack comments.

Then he looks up from his paper and says: "It isn't much fun being on nights. We never seem to get out together these days."

"Well, how much longer do you think it will last?"

"It might be another six months."

"You don't mind it all that much, do you?"

"Well, it means more money and that's useful. We might even be able to get a television set. Then you won't have to go out so much, will you?" Jack says hopefully.

"No, I won't," she responds as she closes her pocketbook, and steps away and adds, "I won't be long, love. Peggy will be in in a minute to look after Tommy."

Brenda goes out and Jack looks after her, a worried expression on his face.

Brenda and Arthur are walking in the woods, ducking under branches. We hear the roar of a motorbike.

Brenda says, "That sounds like Jack's bike."

"It can't be," replies Arthur. "Jack hasn't been at the club for weeks."

They pause to get themselves tidied up. Arthur combs his hair. Brenda straightens up her clothing under her coat. She brushes some leaves off her coat. Apparently, with nowhere else to go, they've been having sex in the woods.

"Are you fit?" he asks her.

"Yeah. You've got a bit of lipstick on you, love." She responds, then she licks her fingers and wipes it off.

They start walking, arm in arm.

"I wonder if Jack does know anything," Brenda remarks.

"Of course he doesn't."

They continue to banter about whether or not Jack might suspect. Arthur finally concludes, with a kiss, that they are too cunning. She giggles.

“I wonder what we’d do if he did find out,” she muses.

“We could always get married.”

“I can’t imagine that. Anyway, he wouldn’t give me a divorce anyway. I know Jack. As long as you and I go on loving each other, that’s all that matters, isn’t it?”

He pauses, looks at her and in response – or instead of responding – he gives her another kiss. Then they continue walking contentedly along.

Suddenly Brenda stops. In surprise, she says, “That *is* Jack’s bike, isn’t it?”

They both stare in front of them. It is his bike! Quickly, they make a plan. Brenda will go to her sister’s, since that’s where she told Jack she was going. Arthur will go inside the club so that Jack won’t suspect anything.

They say goodbye. Brenda hurries off. Arthur gazes at her and then heads into the club.

He breezes up to the bar and orders himself a pint. He sees Jack sitting off to the side and asks what he’s drinking, then he buys him a beer.

Seeing a union man at the bar, Arthur asks him when the next strike will be.

“There’s nothing to strike about now, lad. I expect you’re too busy with the young women for that, anyway.”

“Not me, I spend my time at the bookies.”

Back at Jack’s table, Arthur asks, “How are you getting on, Jack? How’s Brenda these days?”

“All right,” Jack replies. “Can’t grumble.”

Taking a swallow of his beer, Arthur says it tastes like it came from the river.

“Mine’s all right,” responds the mild-mannered Jack.

“I don’t suppose you get out much now that you’re on nights. It sounds like a dog’s life, if you ask me,” says Arthur.

“I wouldn’t say that. I’m going out this weekend. My brother’s coming over on leave. He’s in the service. He’s a big, broad lad, strong as a bull. You wouldn’t think we were brothers. His pal’s coming over as well. I expect we’ll have a night out somewhere.”

“Yeah, it’s good to get out a bit. I do a spot of fishing now and again. Will your brother be here long?”
“Two weeks.” Jack pauses and then continues, “There’s one thing about him, though, you know. He’ll always help me if I’m in any sort of trouble. If anybody does anything against me, I can always rely on him.” Jack has already made a point of saying how strong his brother is. Is this a warning?

Arthur suddenly looks around, makes a sound of disgust and stands, saying, “This place is more dead than alive.”

“Do you want another?”

“No, I’ve got a date.”

Arthur and Doreen come down the stairs in the movie theater, chatting about the film they’ve just seen. Arthur – with a jacket and tie, his hair pomaded and well-groomed – is carefully buttoning his jacket.

In the background, the director has positioned a poster for *Pillow Talk* with Doris Day and Rock Hudson – about a womanizer and a single woman in conflict. Arthur says, “Pictures always make me thirsty. Do you fancy a drink?”

“No,” replies Doreen. She has a different idea. She drops a bombshell on Arthur. “Let’s get a bus home so you can meet Mum. She’ll give us some supper.”

“Will she mind you bringing me back?”

“No, she likes company.”

After a pause, Arthur agrees, he takes her arm and off they go.

We catch up with them again at Doreen’s house. The visit is over, and Doreen is walking Arthur to the door.

“Don’t be long out there, Doreen!” her mother calls out off-screen.

“I shan’t.”

“How about tomorrow?” asks Arthur.

“If you like.”

“I thought we could go to The White Horse for a drink.”

“I’m not all that keen on boozing,” she answers, frowning.

“All right then, I’ll get somebody else for tomorrow.”

“See if I care.”

Arthur has met his match.

“Don’t get like that, duck.” Arthur moves toward Doreen, but she quickly steps back into the house. Doreen’s mother calls out sharply, “Come on in and shut that door.” Arthur and Doreen agree to meet again the following Wednesday. Arthur reaches out for her, but it’s too late: the door is almost shut.

Arthur pauses outside the house and picks up the lid of a rubbish bin, as we hear Doreen’s mother scolding her for lingering on the porch. He slams the lid and, with a fantastic match cut, we find ourselves in the noisy and crackling factory.*

**A scene is cut so that the sound or image matches the sound or image in the next scene as it opens.*

“Now if you’ll spare me a minute, I’ll pay you your wages.”

“I won’t say no, Mr. Robboe.”

“You’d be the first one that ever did.”

“How much this week?”

“More than the tool setters get. I wouldn’t like anyone here to know how much you’re taking home. They’d all be at my throat asking for a raise.”

“Well you could sack them then, couldn’t you? Just like in the good old days.”

Back at home, Arthur is in the kitchen, where his mother and father are drinking tea with Aunt Ada. Arthur hands over some cash to his mother. “Here you are, Mum, my board. Take four this week and buy yourself something.”

“Thanks, Arthur dear.”

“He’s a good lad to you, isn’t he, Vera?” says Ada.

“Yes, he is.”

“He takes after his dad, being a hard worker, doesn’t he?”

Arthur’s father asks his wife for another cup of tea. His cousin, Bill, runs in, and Arthur starts roughhousing with him. Arthur’s mother, teapot in hand, tells him not to be so rough. Arthur teases Bill by dangling money just beyond his reach. The boy manages to snatch the money and runs out the door.

Arthur takes off after him and we’re treated to a view of local working-class backyards of that time – a style that no longer exists. Brick outhouses line the alley. White clothing hung on clotheslines draws the eye in this gloomy urban scene.

As Arthur chases Bill down the street, we see two women chatting in a doorway. Their dog looks with interest at the running boy. Two children sit on the sidewalk with their feet in the litter-strewn gutter. Industrial chimneys loom at the end of the cobblestone street.

In the nearby grocery store, Mrs. Bull, the cross lady with the headscarf whom we've met already, is placing an order. Just as she backs up, deep in thought, Arthur and Bill come bursting in, and Arthur collides with her.

"Look where you're going," she snaps.

"Sorry, I didn't see you!" says Arthur. Then he orders some candy for Bill.

"You think you own the place."

"What are you talking about? You're daft."

"I'm not so daft that I don't know about your game. I've seen you going about with someone you shouldn't. Not for the first time, either."

"Well, I know about you too. You're not past having a bit of rum yourself, are you? But I'll bet your old man doesn't know about it."

They trade insults back and forth until Arthur and the boy leave.

We move to Doreen's house. While she and Arthur are in the other room, Bert is in the kitchen flirting with Betsy, Doreen's girlfriend. He wants her to kiss him, but she's not interested.

Doreen and Arthur start to dance. Suddenly the door opens. It's Doreen's mother.

"It looks like you've been having a birthday party," she says disapprovingly. Then she goes on to complain about the mess in the house, which Doreen had promised to clean up.

Doreen explains that she's just brought her pals up for a moment. "You know Arthur, my young man, don't you?"

Arthur greets her: "How do you do, Mrs. Greatton?"

She doesn't even acknowledge him. "Look at this mess. You might help me a bit, Doreen."

"I was just going to clear up in a minute."

"I'm sure you were," she says sarcastically.

Arthur and Bert know when they're not welcome. They take off.

The two younger women, looking subdued and a little guilty, help to tidy the room.

"Since when has he been your young man?" demands Doreen's mother.

"Not long."

“He looks a bit rough, if you ask me.”

“Well, anyway, I like him,” says Doreen.

Arthur and Brenda are walking.

“What’s up with you?” asks Arthur.

“Oh, stop it,” says Brenda, “You make too much fuss.”

“What’s the matter with you tonight?”

Then she stops and finally tells him what’s on her mind. “I’ll tell you what’s the matter with me, Arthur. I’m pregnant. And it’s your fault.”

“Oh, it’s bound to be my fault, isn’t it?”

“Of course it is. You never take care, you just don’t bother. I always said this would happen one day.”

“How do you know?”

“I’m 12 days late. That means it’s dead sure.”

They stop walking. He leans against a fence, his expression guarded. She faces away from him.

“How do you know it’s mine?” he challenges her.

She turns abruptly to face him. “Don’t you want to take the blame now? Are you backing out or something?”

“What blame? I’m not to blame.”

“It’s yours for sure. I haven’t done anything with Jack for a couple of months or more. And I don’t want to have it. I can tell you that now.”

“Have you tried to take care of it?”

“Yes, some pills, but it didn’t work. They cost me a lot of money, too, right down the drain.”

“God almighty!”

“Look, you’ve got to do something, you know.”

“Don’t you want to have the kid?”

“I suppose you’d like me to have a kid by you.”

“Well, another one won’t make much difference, will it?”

“Don’t talk so daft,” she retorts angrily. “What do you think having a kid means? You’re sick for nine months. Your clothes don’t fit. Nobody will look at you. And all that’s not too bad, but then you’ve got to look after it for the rest of its life.”

“Well, if that’s how you feel ...”

“How do you expect me to feel?”

“I’ll go and see my Aunt Ada. She’ll know what to do. She has 14 kids of her own and I’m sure she’s got rid of as many others.” He smiles, bringing some lightheartedness to their conversation.

Brenda softens then, too. “I hope she’ll know something, love. Because if I don’t get rid of it, there’ll be a hell of a row, I can tell you that.”

“Don’t worry, love. You’ll be as right as rain in a week or two. I’ll go and see about it tomorrow.”