

Weeper

By

Susan Gordon

45' TV Pilot

FADE IN

EXT. LONDON - QUIET STREET - EARLY EVENING

MUSIC: A haunting solo flute, Claude Debussy "Syrinx"

A quiet street around Bankside, away from the bustle. A FIGURE walks, playing the tune. He is in a colourful, striped costume of red, gold and green.

His instrument is a baroque flute - a simple, black wood design dating back to the 17th century. It comprises of three pieces, it has only six holes and one key.

In nearby streets, a SHOP WORKER, a CYCLIST, an AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER, and a gaggle of TOURISTS stop what they are doing and where they are going. They turn and go in search of the sound.

A TAXI DRIVER waiting on a rank hears the flute in his cabin. He turns off the engine, steps out, and joins the forming crowd.

They are following the 'Pied Piper'.

EXT. BLACKFRIARS BRIDGE - CONTINUED

They stream after the Piper, who is now crossing the bridge. He and the crowd move at a uniform pace. They are some distance from him, but their collective gaze remains locked on him.

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NORTH SIDE - CONTINUED

Cars slow to a stop in the road, their drivers answering the Piper's call. Doors are left open, valuables unguarded. Soon the concrete is littered with abandoned cars, a lorry, bicycles.

A flower stand is left unsupervised.

The music STOPS playing. The Piper is descending steps to the Thames, and then wading in knee-deep water to a powerboat. The assembled crowd find their way to the shore, and wait at the water's edge.

The boat slowly motors out. He picks up the flute again.

EXT. LONDON - QUIET STREET - CONTINUED

MUSIC: None

The same street the Piper walked down earlier. But now there is only the sound of traffic.

A small figure, with a muted, delicate face, and tightly wound hair, takes shelter in a corner. This is MARISSA.

MARISSA

(on the phone)

I got on the wrong bus! I'm on my way. Sorry. Bye - bye - bye.

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NORTH SIDE - CONTINUED

The Piper PLAYS, seated on the boat. The crowd begin walking and wading INTO THE WATER, intent on following the Piper. They are apparently unaware of the cold and increasing depth. Soons, heads and shoulders are disappearing under the murky surface.

The Piper STOPS playing. He scrutinises the faces in the water, turning from one to the next. For some, the spell is already broken, and they are fighting for air or struggling back to the shore.

The Piper turns and charges away in the boat at top speed. The flute rests across its case, which lies open.

The Piper races away, with a satisfied smile.

OPENING CREDITS

INT. UNDERGROUND TRAIN - 8.42AM

The train is packed. The eagle-eyed may notice that every person on it is wearing headphones.

As we close in on different faces, all with blank, passive expressions, we hear their thoughts.

COMMUTERS

(various)

(V/O - 1st)

Lucy hasn't sent the slides...I'll have to make some excuse. How has she clung on after all these years?! Belongs on the scrap heap...Sorry-not-sorry to say it.

(CONTINUED)