

Mrs Johnstone enters and immediately goes about her work

Mrs Johnstone stops work for a moment and glances into the cot, beaming and cooing. Mr Lyons is next to her with Mrs Lyons in the background, obviously agitated at Mrs Johnstone's fussing

Aw, he's really comin' on now, isn't he, Mr Lyons? I'll bet y' dead proud of him, aren't y', aren't y', eh?
Mr Lyons (good naturedly) Yes . . . yes I am, aren't I, Edward? I'm proud of Jennifer, too.

Mr Lyons beams at his wife who can hardly raise a smile

Mrs Johnstone Ah . . . he's lovely. (*She coos into the cot*) Ah look, he wants to be picked up, I'll just . . .

Mrs Lyons No, no. Mrs Johnstone. He's fine. He doesn't want to be picked up.

Mrs Johnstone Ah, but look he's gonna cry . . .

Mrs Lyons If he needs picking up, I shall pick him up. All right?

Mrs Johnstone Well, I just thought, I'm sorry I . . .

Mrs Lyons Yes. Erm, has the bathroom been done? Time is getting on.

Mrs Johnstone Oh. Yeh, yeh. . . .

Mrs Johnstone exits

Mr Lyons Darling. Don't be hard on the woman. She only wanted to hold the baby. All women like to hold babies, don't they?

Mrs Lyons I don't want her to hold the baby, Richard. She's . . . I don't want the baby to catch anything. Babies catch things very easily, Richard.

Mr Lyons All right, all right, you know best.

Mrs Lyons You don't see her as much as I do. She's always fussing over him; any opportunity and she's cooing and cuddling as if she were his mother. She's always bothering him, Richard, always. Since the baby arrived she ignores most of her work. (*She is about to cry*)

Mr Lyons Come on, come on . . . It's all right Jennifer. You're just a little . . . it's this depression thing that happens after a woman's had a . . .

Mrs Lyons I'm not depressed Richard: it's just that she makes me feel . . . Richard, I think she should go.

Mr Lyons And what will you do for help in the house?

Mrs Lyons I'll find somebody else. I'll find somebody who doesn't spend all day fussing over the baby.

Mr Lyons (*glancing at his watch*) Oh well, I suppose you know best. The house is your domain. Look, Jen, I've got a board meeting. I really must dash.

Mrs Lyons Richard, can you let me have some cash?

Mr Lyons Of course.

Mrs Lyons I need about fifty pounds.

Mr Lyons My God, what for?

Mrs Lyons I've got lots of things to buy for the baby, I've got the nursery to sort out . . .

Mr Lyons All right, all right, here. (*He hands her the money*)

Mr Lyons exits

Mrs Lyons considers what she is about to do and then calls

Mrs Lyons Mrs Johnstone. Mrs Johnstone, would you come out here for a moment, please.

Mrs Johnstone enters

Mrs Johnstone Yes?

Mrs Lyons Sit down. Richard and I have been talking it over and, well the thing is, we both think it would be better if you left.

Mrs Johnstone Left where?

Mrs Lyons It's your work. Your work has deteriorated.

Mrs Johnstone But, I work the way I've always worked.

Mrs Lyons Well, I'm sorry, we're not satisfied.

Mrs Johnstone What will I do? How are we gonna live without my job?

Mrs Lyons Yes, well we've thought of that. Here, here's . . . (*She pushes the money into Mrs Johnstone's hands*) It's a lot of money . . . but, well . . .

Mrs Johnstone (*thinking, desperate. Trying to get it together*) OK. All right. All right, Mrs Lyons, right. If I'm goin', I'm takin' my son with me, I'm takin' . . .

As Mrs Johnstone moves towards the cot Mrs Lyons roughly drags her out of the way

Mrs Lyons Oh no, you're not Edward is my son. Mine.

Mrs Johnstone I'll tell someone . . . I'll tell the police . . . I'll bring the police in . . .

Mrs Lyons No . . . no you won't. You gave your baby away. Don't you realize what a crime that is. You'll be locked up. You sold your baby.

Mrs Johnstone, horrified, sees the bundle of notes in her hand, and throws it across the room

Mrs Johnstone I didn't . . . you told me, you said I could see him every day. Well, I'll tell someone, I'm gonna tell . . .

Mrs Johnstone starts to leave but Mrs Lyons stops her

Mrs Lyons No. You'll tell nobody.

Music 10: Underscoring

Because . . . because if you tell anyone . . . and these children learn of the truth, then you know what will happen, don't you? You do know what they say about twins, secretly parted, don't you?

Mrs Johnstone (*terrified*) What? What?

Mrs Lyons They say . . . they say that if either twin learns that he was one of a pair, they shall both immediately die. It means, Mrs Johnstone, that these brothers shall grow up, unaware of the other's existence. They shall be raised apart and never, ever told what was once the truth. You won't tell anyone about this, Mrs Johnstone, because if you do, you will kill them.