

ACT I

PLACE

The action of the play takes place in Suite 648 of the Westminster Hotel, London.

TIME

About 8.30 p.m. on a September evening.

The action of the play is continuous and there is one interval.

*SETTING: The setting for the play is the lounge of suite 648 on the sixth floor of the Westminster Hotel, London. The style is slightly faded Regency. The lounge is dominated by a single large casement window which runs at an angle from URC to DRC, taking up half the wall.*

*DR, below the window, is a door to the bedroom. UR centre is a door leading to a cupboard. In the centre of the wall DL is the main door of the suite leading into a corridor. On the opposite side of the corridor is seen the door of Suite 650.*

*Outside the window is a balcony (about three feet deep) beyond which can be seen the skyline over the Thames from Westminster. The balcony runs off UL and UR.*

*The furniture is in keeping with the style of the room. There is a low divan at DLC and a small low armchair DRC. Below the main door is a built-in cupboard in which is the radio and T.V. In addition, depending on space, there are tables, ornaments and pictures. At the left end of the divan is a table on which is the telephone. The table has a lower shelf on which can be seen the London telephone directories.*

*AT RISE: When the curtain rises the LIGHTS are on and the curtains are closed. RICHARD WILLEY is standing behind the telephone dialling a number. HE finishes dialling and looks impatiently at his watch. Richard's briefcase is on the divan.*

RICHARD. (*On phone*) Hello, darling .. Yes, I've just this second checked in. Same old suite, 648. Everything all right at home?... Good ... I wish you were too, darling, but it's an all night sitting so you wouldn't see much of me ... well, you know how Mrs. Thatcher relies on me. Look, I'd better ring off my sweet, it's half past eight and the debate was just about to get under way ... I will. And you have a nice early night with Dick Francis I must rush, darling. See you tomorrow afternoon.

(*There is a KNOCK on the hall door.*)

RICHARD. (*On phone*) Hang on, there's somebody at the door. (*Calls*) Who is it?

MANAGER. (*Off*) It's the Manager.

(*RICHARD opens the door while continuing to talk.*)

RICHARD. Coming! (*On phone*) I'd better go, my sweet, or the debate will have started.

MANAGER. (*Enters*) Good evening, Mr. Willey.

(*RICHARD holds up his hand.*)

MANAGER. Sorry, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. (*On phone*) What's that? ... It was the Manager.... (*To MANAGER*) Mrs. Willey sends her best wishes.

MANAGER. How kind. Will you reciprocate?

RICHARD. (*On phone*) The Manager reciprocates.... (*To MANAGER*) Mrs. Willey says "how kind."

MANAGER. How kind.

RICHARD. (*On phone*) I must go, darling. You curl up in bed with Mr. Francis.

(*The MANAGER raises an eyebrow.*)

RICHARD. ... 'Bye darling. Sweet dreams. (*HE puts the phone down and grabs his briefcase. During the ensuing dialogue HE takes out papers and hastily checks them.*)

MANAGER. I trust everything is to your satisfaction, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. Fine, fine.

MANAGER. We've just had this suite re-decorated.

RICHARD. The twenty years was up, was it?

MANAGER. (*Wagging a reproving finger*) Mr. Willey!

RICHARD. As long as you don't improve the plumbing.

MANAGER. The plumbing?

RICHARD. The central heating starting up in the morning is far more reliable than your alarm calls.

(*The WAITER enters with Richard's case.*)

RICHARD. Ah, thank you.

(*HE tips the WAITER a coin. The WAITER looks at it, drops the case and exits.*)

RICHARD. He's just about due for re-decorating, isn't he?

MANAGER. Would you like an early morning call, Mr. Willey?

RICHARD. Not too early after an all-nighter. Nine o'clock will be fine.

MANAGER. I'll arrange for the central heating to be turned on at nine precisely.

RICHARD. (*Is stuffing the papers into his briefcase.*) I think I've got everything for the debate.

MANAGER. Will you be making one of your blistering ministerial speeches?

RICHARD. Only if the Opposition cuts up rough. *(Indicating the door.)* You carry on.

MANAGER. Shall I hold the lift for you, Mr. Willey?

RICHARD. No, I always use the stairs. Good for the figure.

MANAGER. Quite.

*(The MANAGER pats his tummy and exits, leaving the hall door open. RICHARD moves to door and watches the MANAGER disappear down the corridor. HE then closes the door, throws his briefcase behind the divan and opens bedroom door.)*

RICHARD. *(Gleefully.)* All clear, Miss Worthington.

*(JANE appears at the bedroom door wearing a dress and carrying her shoes—one in each hand.)*

JANE. You don't think the Manager will be popping in and out all evening, do you?

RICHARD. *(Goes to hold her hands but grasps the shoes.)* Of course not. Why haven't you changed into your nightie?

JANE. I've been too busy listening at the door.

← RICHARD. Well, hurry up, you beautiful creature! *(RICHARD is left with her shoes as HE pushes HER into the bedroom. HE puts the shoes on the chair and then can't resist a look through into bedroom. Calls.)* Would you like me to help you out of your dress?

JANE. *(Off.)* No, thank you!

RICHARD. *(Watches for a brief moment.)* Are you sure? *(HE starts to move into the bedroom.)*

JANE. *(Off.)* Get out!

*(Jane's dress comes flying through the open doorway and RICHARD catches it. RICHARD has one more peek into the bedroom.)*

RICHARD. Oo!

*(HE then hurries to the telephone, throwing the dress on the divan. HE lifts the receiver and dials a London number.)*

RICHARD. *(On phone.)* House of Commons? It's Richard Willey here. Put me through to my Parliamentary Private Secretary, please ... George, it's Mr. Willey ... It's no concern of yours where I am, how's the debate going? ... *(Displeased.)* Oh! Well, listen, I don't want to be disturbed unless it starts turning into a disaster ... George! Put it this way, if Mrs. Thatcher says "Where's that idiot Richard Willey?" you can contact me ... no I'm not at home—and don't ring there whatever you do! The number here is 839-5097 and I'm in room 648. ... No it's not a hotel, it's the Reading Room of the British Museum ... Stop asking questions, George, you're my PPS, just do as you're told! *(RICHARD puts down the phone and hurries to the radio. HE starts to search for some suitable music.)*

VOICE. *(On radio.)* ... the Chancellor of the Exchequer said today that inflation will drop to below six percent by next March.

RICHARD. Bloody liar.

*(HE fiddles some more and finds some military band MUSIC. JANE comes out of the bedroom wearing a flimsy nightie.)*

JANE. (*Referring to music.*) I think that might give us hiccups, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. (*Turns, then sexily.*) Oh, you look gorgeous.

JANE. Thank you, Minister.

RICHARD. (*Switches off the radio and moves to her.*) Absolutely gorgeous! (*HE goes to embrace her but she speaks.*)

JANE. You know—this feels really naughty, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. So it should, it is naughty. Do you mind if I slip into something more comfortable? (*RICHARD picks up his case and goes into bedroom.*)

JANE. (*Calls.*) I mean you're a Junior Minister and I'm one of the secretaries over there.

RICHARD. (*Appears taking off his jacket.*) Very democratic, though. Especially as Mrs. Thatcher's my boss and Neil Kinnock's your's. (*RICHARD exits into bedroom.*)

JANE. (*Chuckling. Calls out.*) Mr. Kinnock would hit the roof if he knew.

RICHARD. (*Enters putting on his dressing gown.*) Mrs. Thatcher would go through it. (*RICHARD goes to kiss her.*)

JANE. I don't make a practice of doing this, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. Quite right! Neither do I. (*HE goes to kiss her.*)

JANE. Come off it, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. (*Hurt.*) Jane!

JANE. You should hear the jokes about you that go round the typists' pool.

RICHARD. (*Surprised.*) About me?

JANE. About you, Mr. Willey. And with a name like that some of the jokes are pretty strong, I can tell you.

RICHARD. Disgraceful.

JANE. (*Laughs and sits on settee.*) I'm only teasing you, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. Are you?

JANE. (*Teasing him.*) Don't you like to be teased, Mr. Willey?

RICHARD. Depends what you mean by—"teased." And I wish you'd stop calling me "Mr. Willey." (*RICHARD sits beside her.*)

JANE. I've never called you anything else.

RICHARD. Well, under the circumstances I think you can call me—Dickie.

JANE. (*Giggling.*) No, I couldn't.

RICHARD. All my friends call me Dickie.

JANE. No I couldn't. Not after all those jokes I've heard I'll call you "Richard."

RICHARD. Coming from you, it sounds beautiful. Now, I've laid on some champagne—

JANE. Lovely!

RICHARD. Some caviare—

JANE. Lovely!

RICHARD. And three dozen oysters.

JANE. Oysters! Aren't they supposed to do something to a chap? (*JANE rises and moves to the radio.*)

RICHARD. God, I hope so, they're damned expensive. What time do you have to be home in—er—where is it? Lewisham?

JANE. I don't. I can stay all night.

RICHARD. (*Delighted.*) All night! What have you told your husband then?

JANE. I'm visiting Auntie Rosie in Felixstowe.

(*JANE presses a button on the radio, and the intro music of "Love And Marriage" is heard.*)

RICHARD. (*Delighted*) Auntie Rosie in Felixstowe.  
JANE. She's developed severe bronchitis.

RICHARD. Poor Auntie Rosie.

JANE. And Auntie Rosie's not on the phone so—

RICHARD. So your husband can't ring up to disturb you. Lovely! (*HE goes to kiss her as Frank Sinatra starts singing "Love and Marriage."*) There must be a more suitable song than that. (*RICHARD starts to fiddle with the radio.*)

JANE. It's a beautiful warm night. Shall I open the curtains? (*JANE moves to the window.*)

RICHARD. Why not? If I remember correctly there's a beautiful view. These balconies overlook the river.

(*JANE pulls the cord to open the curtains. The curtains open to reveal the BODY of a man in a raincoat. The window has come down on his neck. His head, shoulders and dangling arms are protruding into the room with the rest of his body in a prostrate position outside the balcony. JANE steps back to look out of the window and sees the BODY. SHE emits no sound but her hands come up to her mouth and SHE staggers back a pace. SHE then turns from the window.*)

JANE. Ohh!

RICHARD. (*Is still concentrating on the radio.*)  
Breathaking view, isn't it? Nelson's column one way. Big Ben the other.

JANE. (*Finally, trying to be calm.*) Mr. Willey—

RICHARD. I've told you, "Dickie."

JANE. I think I feel sick.

RICHARD. (*Going to her.*) Can't stand heights, eh?

JANE. (*SHE grabs him.*) Oh, my God!

RICHARD. Well, six floors is pretty high.

JANE. Mr. Willey—!

RICHARD. (*Holds up a remonstrative finger.*) Dickie!  
JANE. Dickie! (*SHE moves past him.*)

RICHARD. (*Going to window.*) Well, don't look down, just look up at (*Seeing the BODY.*) Good God! (*HE kneels down to look at the man's face. Turning to JANE.*) I think we can dispense with Rod Stewart

(*JANE turns off the radio. SHE then moves to RICHARD who is feeling the man's pulse.*)

RICHARD. The window must have come down on his neck.

JANE. Oh, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. I can't feel any pulse.

JANE. He's dead, is he?

RICHARD. (*Tersely.*) That's what "no pulse" usually means.

JANE. (*Kneels beside RICHARD.*) How long's he been there?

RICHARD. (*Teichily.*) How do I know? The curtains were already closed when I arrived. I've been here about ten minutes.

JANE. Is he still warm, Mr. Willey?

RICHARD. (*Rises and back away a pace.*) Yes, he's still warm, Miss Worthington!

JANE. (*SHE rises.*) He looks awful.

RICHARD. Course he does, he's dead!

JANE. Poor man.

RICHARD. Poor man? He's obviously a burglar.

JANE. Is he?

RICHARD. Well, he's not the waiter delivering oysters, is he? Besides, we're six floors up. Of course he's a burglar.

JANE. He might be one of the guests.

RICHARD. Jane, it doesn't matter who he is, he was clearly breaking and entering. He must have somehow got onto our balcony—*(HE looks out of window.)*—it goes all round the hotel—forced the window open and *(HE mimes the window coming down.)* bang!

JANE. Must be a dodgy sash or something.

RICHARD. Well, he won't be suing the hotel, that's for sure. *(RICHARD pulls the cord and closes curtains.)*

JANE. *(Has picked up the telephone.)* We'd better ring the police.

RICHARD. Police?

JANE. About him.

RICHARD. We can't ring the police! *(RICHARD replaces the receiver.)*

JANE. We must, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. How do we explain what you and I are doing in a suite at the Westminster Hotel? I'm supposed to be attending an all-night sitting in the House of Commons.

JANE. But he's dead, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. Well, the police won't be able to bring him round, will they? *(Suddenly realising.)* God! If Mrs. Thatcher finds out—! One more scandal for the Conservatives and we'll fall below the Liberal Democrats in the opinion polls.

JANE. You can't discover a dead body and just ignore it. If you're worried about the police, phone down for the Manager.

RICHARD. What's the difference? Look, Jane, I'm thinking about you.

JANE. You're thinking about your wife, Mrs. Thatcher and your career.

RICHARD. Well, those too. *(Suddenly.)* God, I can see the headlines in the *Sun* now—Junior Minister and Kimnock's secretary in sex-orgy with dead body.

JANE. You've got to inform somebody!

RICHARD. You're right. I'll inform George. *(HE goes to phone.)*

JANE. Mr. P'gden?

RICHARD. *(Dialling.)* Yes.

JANE. What will your PPS do?

RICHARD. Whatever I tell him. *(On phone.)* Richard Willey here. Put me through to my PPS ... George, get over here right away ... never mind the debate, just get over here ... no, not the British Museum, the Westminster Hotel ... never you mind. You can be here in two minutes. Suite 648 and don't tell anyone where you're going ... Bring anything with you? Yes, your brains, George, your brains.

*(HE slams the phone down. There's a KNOCK at the door. THEY both hesitate.)*

RICHARD. *(Calls sweetly.)* Who is it?

WAITER. *(Off.)* Room Service.

RICHARD. *(Calls.)* I'm busy.

JANE. You ordered champagne, caviare and oysters.

RICHARD. I know!

WAITER. Room Service 648!

RICHARD. Go away!

*(The WAITER KNOCKS persistently.)*

WAITER. *(Off.)* Room Service! 648.

RICHARD. God, he'll have the whole hotel in here. Wait in the bedroom.

*(HE pushes JANE into the bedroom. There is more KNOCKING from outside. RICHARD sees Jane's*

shoes on the chair and quickly throws them into the bedroom, closing the door.)

WAITER. (Off.) Room Service. 648.  
RICHARD. Coming!

(RICHARD quickly checks that the curtains are covering the body then opens the door. The WAITER comes in, pushing trolley, and glares at RICHARD.)

WAITER. If this was hot it would be cold.  
RICHARD. Just leave it there.

(The WAITER pushes the trolley D.L. RICHARD sees Jane's dress, picks it up and starts to move to bedroom.)

WAITER. Hey! You've got to sign.

RICHARD. (Stopping.) All right!

WAITER. (Goes to his side pocket but his pad isn't there.) I've got it here somewhere.

RICHARD. Good!

(The PHONE rings. RICHARD hesitates. The WAITER indicates that the phone is ringing. RICHARD angrily picks it up.)

RICHARD. (On phone. Sweetly.) Yes? (Sweetly.) Mr. Willey speaking ... (Sweetly.) Oh, and what can I do for the Manager of this delightful hotel?

(During the above the WAITER has found his pad in his back pocket and offers it to RICHARD to sign. RICHARD has the phone in one hand and the dress in the other, so he gives the dress to the WAITER to hold

while he signs. RICHARD is just about to sign when HE stops.)

RICHARD. (On phone. Alert.) Seen a what? (Flatly.) An intruder?... on our—er—

(RICHARD looks at the closed curtains. So does the WAITER.)

RICHARD. (On phone.) No, no. Nothing untoward at all ... must have been somebody else's balcony ... No, there's no need to come up ... our curtains are wide open, I can see there's nobody there.

(The WAITER turns to look at the closed curtains.)

RICHARD. (On phone.) I'm just about to leave for the Commons ... No, there's no need to put yourself out ... There's obviously been a mistake. It must be some other balcony ... No, please. (To WAITER.) Go away! (On phone.) No, not you ... Hello ... Hello!

(The MANAGER has rung off. RICHARD slams down the phone. He turns to see the WAITER who is now walking up to look at the window.)

RICHARD. (Yells.) Hey!

WAITER. (Jumping.) Ahhh!

RICHARD. I'll sign that now.

(RICHARD signs and at the same time leads the WAITER to the door.)

RICHARD. Thank you.

(The WAITER hesitates, coughs and surreptitiously holds out his hand. RICHARD goes to his pocket and takes out his money clip. HE gives the WAITER a £5 note and bundles him out, neither HE nor RICHARD noticing that the WAITER is still carrying Jane's dress.)

WAITER. (Impressed with the tip.) Thank you.

(RICHARD slams the door and hurries to the window. HE pulls the cord and the curtains open to reveal the BODY still in place. RICHARD looks around quickly and then opens the cupboard door. The cupboard is shallow with a hook on the inside of the door, and a clothes rail (with hangers) in the cupboard. HE pushes the window up and heaves the BODY in. We now see that the BODY is that of a short man in his mid-fifties. RICHARD is holding the BODY "face to face" when JANE comes in from the bedroom. SHE is carrying her bag and wearing bra and pants.)

JANE. Hey, you've got my—(SHE sees RICHARD with the BODY and screams.)

RICHARD. (Jumping.) Ahh!

JANE. (Horrified.) What are you doing, Mr. Willey?

RICHARD. (Through gritted teeth.) The Fox Trot, what does it look like I'm doing, Miss Worthington!

(The window behind them suddenly falls with a loud BANG.)

[AUTHOR'S NOTE: All the window "bangs" in the production must be very loud. The best method is a separate "slap-stick" coinciding with the window falling. This applies even when one of the characters gets struck!]

RICHARD. (Reacting to the window falling.) Ahh! Well, we can see how it happened now. (RICHARD starts to drag the BODY to the cupboard.)

JANE. You can't move him, Mr. Willey!

RICHARD. It won't make any difference to our friend here where he's discovered or who discovers him or when! I'll sort it out with George as soon as he arrives.

JANE. This isn't right, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. It's not supposed to be right. It's supposed to be expedient.

(During the above dialogue RICHARD hangs the BODY on the hook on the inside of the cupboard door. JANE looks horrified as RICHARD closes the cupboard door.)

RICHARD. Now you get home to Lewisham as fast as—(HE stops.) Why haven't you put your dress on?

JANE. You've got it in here.

RICHARD. No, I haven't. I threw it into the bedroom.

JANE. You threw my shoes in.

RICHARD. I gave your dress—(Realising.)—to the waiter!

JANE. The waiter!

(There is a KNOCK at the door. THEY look at each other.)

RICHARD. (Calls sweetly.) Who is it?

MANAGER. (Off.) The Manager.

RICHARD. Quick!

(RICHARD starts to push JANE towards the bedroom.)

JANE. (Whispering urgently.) Mr. Willey, what are you doing?

RICHARD. (*Whispering urgently.*) Ssh! In the bedroom.

JANE. What about my dress?

(*HE pushes her into bedroom.*)

MANAGER. (*Off.*) Mr. Willey!

RICHARD. (*Calls.*) Coming! (*RICHARD realises he's wearing his dressing gown. HE opens bedroom door. Calls into bedroom.*) Throw me my jacket!

(*JANE enters hands him his jacket and exits into the bedroom, closing the door. RICHARD, not realising, puts the jacket on over his dressing gown.*)

MANAGER. (*Off.*) Mr. Willey!

RICHARD. (*Calls.*) Coming!

(*As RICHARD starts to move from the bedroom door, the cupboard door falls open and the BODY appears still hanging on the hook.*)

RICHARD. Oh, my God! (*RICHARD hurries to the cupboard and closes the door.*)

MANAGER. (*Off.*) Mr. Willey!

RICHARD. (*Calls, calmly.*) Coming!

(*RICHARD does up the button on his jacket and opens the door. The MANAGER storms in, slamming the door behind him.*)

RICHARD. Sorry about that.

MANAGER. This is a very serious—(*The MANAGER stops and reacts to Richard's attire.*)

RICHARD. Shall we go? I really must get back to the debate. (*Realising.*) Oh, silly me. (*RICHARD chuckles at the way HE is dressed.*)

MANAGER. This is a very serious business, Mr. Willey.

(*The MANAGER goes to the window, opens it and looks out. RICHARD gently moves the MANAGER down into the room. During the ensuing dialogue RICHARD removes his dressing gown and puts his jacket on properly.*)

RICHARD. Yes, I'm sorry I can't be of more assistance. It's been very quiet here actually.

MANAGER. A guest nearby said she'd seen a man kneeling on this balcony looking through the window.

RICHARD. Must be mistaken.

MANAGER. No, this is the balcony all right. Suite 648. She said she'd watched this man for a good ten minutes. He didn't move a muscle. He just knelt outside—staring in.

RICHARD. Good Lord! Well, as you can see, there's nobody there now. Let's forget all about it.

MANAGER. Sounds like a Peeping Tom to me or, even worse, a burglar. I'll just go into your bedroom.

RICHARD. Bedroom?

MANAGER. The balcony goes past there too. Can't do any harm to check.

(*Suddenly the window falls with a loud bang. RICHARD jumps and clutches the MANAGER.*)

MANAGER. I must tell maintenance about that. Excuse me.

(As the MANAGER starts to move to the bedroom door RICHARD quickly opens it.)

RICHARD. Allow me.

MANAGER. I'll do it, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. All right. Yes. (Loudly for JANE'S benefit.) It's a good idea for the Manager to check the bedroom window! (HE smiles at the MANAGER.)

MANAGER. (Surprised by the shouting.) Thank you.

(The MANAGER moves to go past RICHARD but RICHARD stops him.)

RICHARD. And for the Manager to check the bedroom balcony!

MANAGER. (Surprised.) Thank you.

(The MANAGER moves to go past RICHARD. RICHARD stops him.)

RICHARD. After the Manager! (Handing the bewildered MANAGER his dressing gown.) Thank you.

(RICHARD allows the bemused MANAGER to walk past him into the bedroom. There is a KNOCK at the corridor door.)

RICHARD. (Loudly, into the bedroom.) I'll just see who's at the door! (Calls.) Who is it?

GEORGE. (Off.) It's me, Mr. Willey. George.

(RICHARD opens the corridor door. GEORGE steps in, holding his briefcase.)

GEORGE. I got here as fast as I—

RICHARD. Shut up!

(RICHARD pulls the surprised GEORGE into the room and shuts the door.)

RICHARD. Now, listen, Pigden. I'm going to say this once and very, very quickly. I discovered something extremely unpleasant in my suite tonight.

GEORGE. When you say "sweet" do you mean pudding or—?

RICHARD. (Interrupting.) Shut up! This body now resides in the coat cupboard.

GEORGE. When you say body do you mean—?

RICHARD. (Interrupting.) Shut up! We will arrange for this body to be discovered at some other place later tonight by your good self.

GEORGE. I don't quite understand.

RICHARD. (Pressing on.) By which time I will be in the House of Commons lending my support to the Transport Minister and—

(There is a pause as GEORGE attempts to take it all in.)

GEORGE. Do you think I could go out and come in again?

(RICHARD sits GEORGE in the chair R.)

RICHARD. George! When the Hotel Manager comes out of that bedroom, remember—everything I've just told you never happened.

(GEORGE goes to speak but then looks at RICHARD dumbly.)

*(Richard hesitates and then nods intelligently.)*

*(George shakes his head.)*

*(The Manager comes in.)*

*(The Manager comes in.)*

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RICHARD. Actually—what would be perfect would be the suite next to this. Either side will do. Adjoining balconies. We need to be close, don't we, George?

(GEORGE hesitates a little longer than usual but then nods intelligently.)

MANAGER. I'll see if we have anything nearby, Mr. Pigten.

RICHARD. (Lightly.) Don't bother to get up, George. MANAGER. And I'll put our Security on to that intruder, Mr. Willey.

(The MANAGER moves to go. RICHARD leans nonchalantly against the cupboard door.)

RICHARD. Oh, I wouldn't bother. There's been no damage. (Unimpaired.) And not good publicity for the hotel, that kind of thing.

MANAGER. Nevertheless, I have my—you're right, it's not good publicity, is it?

RICHARD. Definitely not. MANAGER. Maybe it's a case of "least said soonest mended."

RICHARD. I'd like to borrow that phrase if I may. MANAGER. Thank you. (The MANAGER looks pleased and exits.)

GEORGE. Mr. Willey—?

RICHARD. Well done, George. Every nod was a gem. GEORGE. What on earth's going on?!

RICHARD. You're going to have a free overnight stay at a four-star hotel.

(RICHARD moves to bedroom but GEORGE stops him.)

RICHARD. There's been no intruder on the balcony. I've had a very quiet evening. There's no dead body in the coat cupboard.

GEORGE. Well, thank goodness for small mer—

RICHARD. Shut up! *(Continues.) Nothing's happened. Have you got that?*

*(There is a moment's pause and then GEORGE shakes his head.)*

RICHARD. For God's sake just agree with everything I say. Don't try to be helpful. Just look intelligent and nod your head.

*(GEORGE blankly nods his head. The MANAGER comes in from the bedroom.)*

MANAGER. Nothing unusual on that balcony either.

*(GEORGE rises but RICHARD sits him immediately.)*

RICHARD. I thought not. Oh, this is my Parliamentary Private Secretary, Mr. Pigden.

*(GEORGE gives a wan smile and nods intelligently.)*

RICHARD. Yes. I'm afraid I've lumbered George with rather a lot of detailed work so I've asked him to stay in London overnight, haven't I, George?

*(GEORGE hesitates and then nods intelligently.)*

RICHARD. Yes. So I was wondering if you could accommodate him.

MANAGER. I'll see what I can do, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. Actually—what would be perfect would be the suite next to this. Either side will do. Adjoining balconies. We need to be close, don't we, George?

*(GEORGE hesitates a little longer than usual but then nods intelligently.)*

MANAGER. I'll see if we have anything nearby, Mr. Pigden.

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*(The MANAGER moves to go. RICHARD leans nonchalantly against the cupboard door.)*

RICHARD. Oh, I wouldn't bother. There's been no damage. *(Intimately.)* And not good publicity for the hotel, that kind of thing.

MANAGER. Nevertheless, I have my—you're right, it's not good publicity, is it?

RICHARD. Definitely not.

MANAGER. Maybe it's a case of "least said soonest mended."

RICHARD. I'd like to borrow that phrase if I may.

MANAGER. Thank you. *(The MANAGER looks pleased and exits.)*

GEORGE. Mr. Willey—?

RICHARD. Well done, George. Every nod was a gem.

GEORGE. What on earth's going on?!

RICHARD. You're going to have a free overnight stay at a four-star hotel.

*(RICHARD moves to bedroom but GEORGE stops him.)*

GEORGE. I never stay out without telling mother.

RICHARD (*Grimaces.*) Well give your mother a ring. She'll be thrilled for you.

GEORGE. She's already in bed. Besides there's Nurse Foster.

RICHARD. Nurse Foster?

GEORGE. She looks after mother while I'm at work. She goes off at 9:30.

RICHARD. You can phone Nurse Foster and tell her she'll be doing some overtime.

GEORGE. I never take advantage of her like that, Mr. Willey. Anyway, mother worries herself to death if I change my plans at the last minute.

RICHARD. Your mother has been worrying herself to death for the last eighty years. The future of the Government is at stake here.

GEORGE. But why?

(*By way of an explanation RICHARD quickly opens the bedroom door.*)

RICHARD. Quickly! Out you come, Miss Worthington.

GEORGE. (*Surprised and concerned.*) Miss Worthington?

JANE. (*Appears still carrying her bag and still dressed in bra and pants.*) Have you got my dress—(*Sees*

GEORGE.) Oh, Mr. Pigden. (*JANE moves to GEORGE.*)

GEORGE. (*Mortified.*) Miss Worthington!

RICHARD. Now can you see the problem?

(*GEORGE goes to speak but decides to simply nod.*)

JANE. Good evening, Mr. Pigden.

GEORGE. (*Eying her "bra."*) Good evening, Miss Worthingtons—Worthington. (*To RICHARD.*) Mr. Willey, how could you?!

RICHARD. I haven't yet, George, but that's the least of my problems. First of all we've got to get Miss Worthington's dress back.

GEORGE. Where is it for heaven's sake?

RICHARD. I gave it to the waiter.

GEORGE. Ask a silly question.

JANE. (*To RICHARD.*) What did you tell the Manager just now?

RICHARD. Never mind. George is stepping into the breach.

GEORGE. Not until he knows all the facts.

JANE. (*To RICHARD.*) Have you told Mr. Pigden about the dead body?

RICHARD. Yes, yes, yes.

GEORGE. (*Aglast.*) you mean there is a dead body?!

You said there wasn't.

RICHARD. No, I didn't. I said to tell the Manager there wasn't.

GEORGE. I can't follow this.

RICHARD. All the Manager knows is that there's an intruder.

GEORGE. Intruder?

RICHARD. What the Manager doesn't know is that the intruder was a dead body.

GEORGE. (*Perplexed.*) The intruder was a dead body?

JANE. He was stuck in our window.

GEORGE. The Manager or the intruder?

RICHARD. The intruder!

JANE. With his neck broken.

GEORGE. Oh, I see. (*Realising.*) Neck broken?!

(*Room-door.*) Thank you, Miss  
Oh kindly wait in the bedroom while I

will know when it is safe to come out?

RICHARD. I'll shout!

JANE. I'm sorry you've got involved in this, Mr.

George. That's all right.

(*JANE exits.*)

GEORGE. (*Rising.*) I'm not involved in it!

RICHARD. (*Sits him and hurries to the phone.*) I need your help like I've never needed it before, George.

(*RICHARD is dialling Room Service.*)

GEORGE. (*Rising. Concerned.*) Wait a minute. When I arrived you told me the body was in that cupboard.

RICHARD. It is. (*On phone.*) Hello! Are you the

gentleman who's been providing 648 with Room Service...? Good. You went off with a dress just now ... I gave you a *dress!* (*To GEORGE.*) Stupid man. (*On phone.*) I want it back ... I want my dress back! 648 and hurry, you silly old bat! (*HE slams the phone down.*) (*To GEORGE.*) Next time there's a debate on euthanasia I'm voting in favour.

GEORGE. (*Fearing the worst.*) Mr. Willey, could I return to the body in the cupboard?

RICHARD. I knew you'd come to my aid, George.

GEORGE. Oh no! First of all I just want to know how it got from outside the window *there* to inside the cupboard *there*.

RICHARD. I think you'd better sit down, George.

GEORGE. (*Understanding the situation.*) Oh, no. Mr. Willey! You didn't!

(*RICHARD sits GEORGE.*)

RICHARD. (*Pleading.*) George! I had no alternative.

GEORGE. (*Mortified.*) You didn't move a dead body?

RICHARD. I had to think quickly. He's only a burglar for God's sake.

GEORGE. (*In disbelief.*) You haven't informed the police or anybody?

RICHARD. No, that's why I need your help, George.

GEORGE. (*Determinedly.*) I'm sorry, Mr. Willey.

(*GEORGE rises and moves away.*)

RICHARD. George! My wife thinks I'm in the House of Commons! It would all come out. Miss Worthington! The loi!

GEORGE. Mr. Willey—you have tampered with material evidence.

RICHARD. My wife will tamper with something else if she finds out about Miss Worthington. George, you're not married. You don't know how terrifying an angry wife can be.

GEORGE. If I was married, Mr. Willey, I would be faithful to my wife!

(*RICHARD takes his briefcase and sits him in the chair R.*)

RICHARD. That's because you're a far better person than I am, George. Now, all we have to do—

GEORGE. (*Rising.*) There's no "we" about it.

RICHARD. O.K. all "you" have to do—

GEORGE. I don't have to do anything!

RICHARD. As soon as the Manager finds you a room we transfer the body—

GEORGE. We do what?!

RICHARD. Transfer the body. To your suite. We'll arrange him on your window ledge and then—when I'm safely back in the House of Commons and Miss Worthington is in Lewisham—you will open your curtains, discover the poor unfortunate chap and report it immediately to the Manager.

GEORGE. Just like that! Move the body to my suite. Lay him out on my window ledge. You and Miss Worthington—(HE mimes "leaving.") Poor George Pigden—(HE mimes cutting his throat.)

RICHARD. George, if you won't do it for me think of Miss Worthington! The poor girl's career will be ruined. She's Neil Kincock's secretary for God's sake.

GEORGE. I've told you a hundred times where your libido would lead you.

RICHARD. (Suddenly very moved.) You'd also be doing it for our Prime Minister, Maggie. She'd be devastated. She'd have to ask me to resign. That'll be three in the last twelve months. George, the Government would never win the next election.

GEORGE. (Hesitates.) It's in the cupboard, is it?

RICHARD. Hanging on a hook.

(GEORGE grimaces. HE hesitates a moment and then moves to the cupboard door. HE stops and looks at RICHARD.)

RICHARD. You'll get a shock, George!

(GEORGE, averting his eyes, opens the cupboard door. The BODY is still hanging on the inside of the door. Slowly GEORGE turns to look inside the cupboard. The cupboard is empty. GEORGE starts to chuckle, believing that RICHARD has been playing a joke on him. Still laughing, GEORGE sees the dead body

hanging on the inside of the door. For a moment GEORGE continues laughing but then suddenly stops and screams. The MANAGER enters from hall [Without seeing GEORGE]. The MANAGER is removing his pass key from the lock.)

MANAGER. (As HE enters.) Good news, Mr. Willey! GEORGE. Ahhh!

(At the sound of the MANAGER's voice GEORGE steps into the cupboard and closes the door in one deft movement. RICHARD drops to his knees. The MANAGER surveys RICHARD on the floor.)

RICHARD. (As HE rises.) That's a very good quality carpet you have there.

MANAGER. (Decides to ignore this.) I've found Mr. Pigden a suite which is—oh, where's Mr. Pigden?

RICHARD. He's in the loo. (RICHARD leads the MANAGER away from the cupboard. Shows across to bedroom, for JANE's benefit.) I've told the Manager you're in the "loo"! (RICHARD smiles at the surprised MANAGER.)

MANAGER. I've managed to get him suite 650.

RICHARD. (Shouting.) The Manager says it's suite 650.

MANAGER. (Getting perplexed.) Right opposite.

RICHARD. (Shouting.) The Manager says it's right opposite!

JANE. (Comes out of the bedroom still in her bra and pants.) O.K., you don't have to shout as loud—oh!

(SHE stops on seeing the MANAGER. The MANAGER steps back a pace. There is a pause as RICHARD and the surprised MANAGER take in the situation.)

RICHARD. This is Mrs. Pigden.

MANAGER. Mrs. Pigden?!

RICHARD. Didn't I tell you?

MANAGER. No!

RICHARD. Yes, his wife's staying up with him tonight. *(To JANE.)* Aren't you, Mrs. Pigden?

JANE. Am I?

RICHARD. Oh, yes, the Manager's fixed it. Suite 650. Just across the corridor. *(To MANAGER.)* That was so kind.

MANAGER. I thought Mr. Pigden was staying up to assist you with your work.

RICHARD. That's right but who am I to deny him a little pleasure with his business? *(Referring to JANE.)* Can you blame him? *(Chuckling.)* A delectable wife. A suite at the Westminster. All paid for by the government. George telephoned her and she was round here like a shot. Dropped everything.

MANAGER. *(Pointedly looking at JANE.)* Yes.

RICHARD. Now you're probably wondering why Mrs. Pigden is wearing—er. *(HE indicates her state of undress.)*

*(The MANAGER says nothing.)*

RICHARD. Yes. She was in the shower. Mr. Pigden's in the loo. All nice and intimate. There you have it. *(To JANE.)* I think that sums it up, doesn't it?

JANE. I think so.

RICHARD. *(To MANAGER.)* Yes, that's about the size of it.

*(The MAID KNOCKS on the open door and enters.)*

MAID. 'Scusa, signor.

RICHARD. What is it?

MAID. *(Carefully.)* Make-bed-up.

RICHARD. *(Indicating JANE.)* No, we'll do it. *(Quickly.)* I will do it.

MAID. Oh, si. *(Sees JANE.)* Oh, Sii! *(SHE giggles.)*

RICHARD. We're busy!

MAID. *(Not understanding.)* Non capisco.

RICHARD. Go. 'Bye, 'bye.

MAID. Oh, go bye-bye. Sii! *(SHE indicates JANE and giggles.)*

MANAGER. Thank you, Maria.

MAID. Si. *(The MAID curtseys and exits.)*

RICHARD. *(To MANAGER.)* And thank you so much.

MANAGER. Yes. *(To JANE.)* Well, I'll have the key to 650 sent up. You can move in immediately, Mrs. Pigden.

RICHARD. Splendid.

MANAGER. *(To JANE.)* Or when you've completed your ablutions, that is. And then will either you or Mr. Pigden be good enough to come down to Reception and check-in right away.

RICHARD. No problem. *(RICHARD leads the MANAGER towards the door.)*

MANAGER. And I thought you were in a hurry to get back to the House of Commons, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. Yes, I'm on my way right now. I'm just waiting for the "loo."

*(The MANAGER gives RICHARD a blank look and moves to go. Behind them the cupboard door opens and, with one deft movement, RICHARD BANGS it closed.)*

GEORGE. *(Off. Yells.)* Oh!

(The MANAGER looks at RICHARD.)

RICHARD. Oh!

(RICHARD crosses his legs and holds his stomach as though anxious to spend a penny. The MANAGER looks at RICHARD and exits.)

JANE. Mr. Willey, what have you done?

RICHARD. I thought I did very well, actually. (RICHARD opens the cupboard door.) George!

(GEORGE steps out of the cupboard. HE realises HE is inadvertently holding the BODY's hand.)

GEORGE. Ahh! Oh, that was terrible.

(There is a KNOCK at the corridor door.)

GEORGE. Ahh!

(GEORGE goes to step back into the cupboard but RICHARD stops him and closes the cupboard door.)

RICHARD. Who is it?

WAITER. (Off) Room Service.

RICHARD. Great. (To JANE.) Your dress. (RICHARD opens door.) Quick!

(The WAITER steps in and gives RICHARD a sheet of notepaper. RICHARD looks at it blankly.)

RICHARD. (To WAITER.) What the hell's this?

WAITER. You asked for my address.

(RICHARD throws his hands in the air and walks away in disbelief.)

GEORGE. Mr. Willey wanted a dress.

WAITER. (Looks at RICHARD surprised.) Did he?

JANE. It's dark blue with little flowers.

WAITER. (Smiles at RICHARD.) Sounds nice.

RICHARD. You look it!

WAITER. (Remembering.) Oh, a dress.

RICHARD. Yes!

WAITER. I wondered how I came by that. You're right,

I am a silly old bat.

JANE. Will you go and get it, please.

RICHARD. And hurry!

WAITER. No sooner said—Oh—the Manager said somebody here was checking-in to suite 650.

RICHARD. That's correct. Mr. and Mrs. Pigden.

(GEORGE looks around for "Mrs. Pigden.")

WAITER. Mr. and Mrs. Pigden.

RICHARD. Yes. Mr. Pigden here. And Mrs. Pigden there.

(GEORGE looks again for "Mrs. Pigden.")

JANE. Darling.

(JANE puts her arm through George's and squeezes him lovingly. GEORGE looks at her and then can only nod.)

WAITER. (Producing key.) One key.

(RICHARD takes the key.)

RICHARD. (Handing key to GEORGE.) There we are, George.

WALTER. Do you have any bags, Mr. Pigden?

GEORGE. (Rubbing his eyes.) Not yet, no.

RICHARD. No. No bags, no cases. Nothing like that. They're on their honeymoon.

GEORGE. (Faintly.) Oh, my God! (GEORGE sits in the chair R.)

RICHARD. Yes. Married this morning. In Lewisham.

Yes. Well, the hotel's my wedding present, George. (Laughing gaily.) When I say "the hotel's my wedding present"—I mean, the suite, of course. Nice way to spend a honeymoon.

WALTER. (To GEORGE.) You're sure you want me to bother fetching your wife's dress?

GEORGE. Yes, please!

RICHARD. (To WALTER.) And we'd like it quickly.

(WALTER hesitates, holds out his hand and emits his cough. RICHARD gives him £5.)

WALTER. Most kind. (Referring to trolley.) Oh, you haven't touched your supper.

RICHARD. We don't want it, thank you.

WALTER. But you've paid for it.

RICHARD. Just take it away.

WALTER. (Takes the trolley.) Right. I'll sell it to one of the other guests. (The WALTER exits.)

GEORGE. Mr. Willey, I wish to register my strong objection to all of this.

RICHARD. Right, George, it's registered. Jane—wait in the bedroom. As soon as your dress arrives, go. (RICHARD opens bedroom door.)

JANE. I'm so sorry about tonight, Mr. Pigden.

RICHARD. He's having a ball.

(HE pushes JANE into bedroom.)

RICHARD. O.K., George. Get yourself into suite 650.

GEORGE. Wait a minute! I've got to call Nurse Foster.

(GEORGE lifts receiver and dials.)

RICHARD. Nurse Foster?

GEORGE. To tell her I'm going to be late.

RICHARD. Well hurry up for heaven's sake.

GEORGE. The world doesn't totally revolve around you, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. Never mind the sermon, George, just be quick about it.

(RICHARD opens the cupboard door and the BODY is revealed once more.)

GEORGE. (On phone.) Hello, is that Miss Foster?...

Good evening, it's Mr. Pigden here ... I'm fine, thank you

... Yes, I'm keeping very fit, thank you.

(RICHARD, who has turned from the cupboard, advances on GEORGE.)

RICHARD. She doesn't need a medical report, George!

GEORGE. (On phone.) How's mother been today?

RICHARD. God!

GEORGE. (On phone.) Oh, dear ... oh dear, oh dear.

(To RICHARD.) Mother's been a wee bit restless.

RICHARD. We're all restless, George! Tell the Nurse you're going to be late.

GEORGE. (*On phone*.) I was wondering if I could ask a small favour ... thank you. (*To RICHARD*.) She says nothing's too much trouble for me.

RICHARD. Good. (*RICHARD moves up and opens the window*.)

GEORGE. (*On phone*.) I may be a little late tonight. Something's cropped up ... that's very good of you, Miss Foster ... Ah, no! If mother wants to call me she'll have to ring me on 071-839-5097.

RICHARD. George!

GEORGE. I always like mother to know where I am in case of emergencies. (*On phone*.) And I'll either be in Room 648 or 650 ... They're Reading Rooms in the British Museum ... Thank you so much. (*GEORGE puts the phone down*.)

RICHARD. Right, George. Get into suite 650 there, open the window and then come back in here via the balcony.

GEORGE. I suffer from vertigo, you know.

RICHARD. Good, that'll take your mind off the corpse you'll be carrying.

(*RICHARD pushes GEORGE into corridor and closes door. HE then goes to the BODY as JANE comes in from bedroom*.)

JANE. Mr. Willey!

RICHARD. Ahh! Don't do that, Miss Worthington.

JANE. I've just realised I've nowhere to go.

RICHARD. What do you mean? As soon as you're dressed, go home.

JANE. I can't. My husband thinks I'm with Auntie Rosie in Felixstowe.

RICHARD. Well go to Auntie Rosie in Felixstowe! (*RICHARD looks out of the window U.L. for GEORGE*.)

JANE. She'd have a fit if I turn up in the early hours of the morning.

RICHARD. (*Turns to her*.) Then bed down with Pigden in suite 650.

GEORGE. (*Appearing at window from U.L.*) I heard that, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. Quick, George, I'll give you a hand.

(*RICHARD goes to lift BODY off hook*.)

GEORGE. I've been having second thoughts about the whole thing.

(*The MANAGER enters from the corridor. RICHARD steps into the cupboard and JANE closes the door on RICHARD and the BODY. The MANAGER is removing his pass key from the lock*.)

MANAGER. (*As HE enters*.) I can't find Mr. or Mrs. Pigden in their—

(*HE stops on seeing GEORGE kneeling outside the window. GEORGE smiles at the MANAGER and gives a friendly wave. The MANAGER advances on GEORGE who continues to smile happily and tries to look nonchalant*.)

MANAGER. (*Finally*.) What are you doing out there, Mr. Pigden?

GEORGE. Coming in.

(*Before GEORGE can move, the window descends with a loud BANG in front of his face. The MANAGER opens it*.)

MANAGER. I've just been into suite 650 looking for you and Mrs. Pigden.

GEORGE. I came over to look at the view. It's great in here. (To JANE.) Come on, darling, I'll take you back.

(GEORGE offers his hand.)

JANE. (To MANAGER.) Excuse me.

(JANE climbs out through the window and follows GEORGE off U.L.)

GEORGE. Bye 'bye.

MANAGER. (Calls.) And then will you kindly check-in at Reception immediately.

(RICHARD comes out of cupboard.)

GEORGE. (Off) Of course!

RICHARD. (To MANAGER.) Crazy honeymooners.

MANAGER. (Turns to see RICHARD standing beside him. Calmly.) You're missing your debate, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. I just need to go to the "loo" first.

(RICHARD crosses his legs and moves towards the bedroom door. RICHARD stops when HE realises that the MANAGER, instead of leaving, is watching RICHARD.)

RICHARD. After you.

(RICHARD indicates for the MANAGER to leave. The MANAGER moves. The window falls with a BANG.)

RICHARD. (Jumps.) Ahhh!

(The MANAGER returns and looks enquiringly at RICHARD, waiting for him to speak. RICHARD smiles and waves "Good-bye" to the MANAGER. As

the MANAGER moves to go the cupboard door swings open and the BODY is revealed.)

RICHARD. (Inadvertently yelling.) Ahhh!

(The MANAGER stops and turns to look at RICHARD, who smiles.)

MANAGER. Did you wish to say something else, Mr. Willey?

RICHARD. No, just "Ah." I've said it now. Twice, actually. "Ah." "Ah." No, that's all. Thank you. "Ah." "Ah." (Sings.) "Ah!!!!" (Sings.) "La Donna e Mobile!" Yes. Still there!

(The MANAGER never taking his eyes off RICHARD, and so still not seeing the BODY, exits, closing the door. RICHARD hurries to the window and opens it.)

RICHARD. (Calls off U.L.) George! (RICHARD shuts the cupboard door and returns to the window. Calls.) George! (RICHARD climbs out onto the balcony.) George! (RICHARD exits along the balcony U.L.)

(There is a KNOCK at the corridor door. After a moment, the WALTER enters holding out the dress.)

WALTER. Here we are—! Hello! Room Service!

(The WALTER hesitates and starts to go. The PHONE rings. The WALTER hesitates and then lifts the receiver.)

WAITER. (*On phone.*) Hello?... yes, this is 648 ... No it's not one of the Reading Rooms at the British Museum ... Yes, the telephone number here is 071-839-5097 but it's the Westminster Hotel ... Madam, I'd know if I worked in the British Museum ... Mr. George Pigden? Yes, I know Mr. Pigden ... Message from who ... Nurse Foster? And what's the message Nurse Foster?... His mother's a bit worried about tonight and wants to talk to him.... Well, you tell Mrs. Pigden there's no cause to worry. Her son's honeymoon is going like a bomb.

(*HE puts down the phone and exits happily into the corridor, closing the door. RICHARD, GEORGE and JANE appear outside the window from U.L.*)

RICHARD. Come on.

(*The THREE OF THEM enter through the window.*)

RICHARD. Jane, you guard the hall door. George and I will transport the cause of all our problems to 650.

(*JANE goes to the corridor door while RICHARD opens cupboard door. During the next three lines HE and GEORGE get the BODY off the hook. JANE closes cupboard door.*)

GEORGE. Oh dear! I hope my mother doesn't start worrying about me.

RICHARD. Forget your mother for five minutes! Come on, George. Don't hang about.

(*As THEY turn to the window the WAITER appears on the balcony from U.L. still carrying the dress.*)

WAITER I say!

(*In one deft movement GEORGE and RICHARD straighten up with the BODY between them. They have the BODY's arms around their shoulders supporting him, and the three of them are standing in a row. The WAITER steps over the window ledge, into the room as GEORGE and RICHARD move quickly away to in front of the settee with the BODY between them. The WAITER moves down and surveys the "tableau." By way of explanation GEORGE and RICHARD start "dancing" and singing with the BODY between them. The WAITER is mesmerised. THEY finish their brief but bright routine and JANE, who has come D.L. to watch, applauds.*)

RICHARD. Thank you, Mrs.Pigden. (*To GEORGE.*) A little more practice, George, and it will be ready for the Conservative Conference Cabaret.

(*The window suddenly falls with a BANG. GEORGE and RICHARD yell. GEORGE and BODY collapse onto the settee.*)

RICHARD. Quite right, George. You and your "brother" take a rest.

GEORGE. Oh, my God!

RICHARD. (*Lightly.*) Is Fred worn out, George?

GEORGE. Dead beat.

RICHARD. Your brother's not got your stamina, George. (*To WAITER.*) Fred was George's best man at the wedding this morning. I think he's had a few too many. Pull yourself together, Fred!

(*RICHARD slaps Fred on the shoulder. The BODY flops forward. GEORGE pulls it back.*)

RICHARD. You'll be all right, Fred. (To WAITER.) So, what's your problem?

WAITER. (Bemused.) What? Oh. Yes. I've got your dress.

(*During the ensuing dialogue RICHARD takes the dress from the WAITER, tips him a £5 note and leads him to the door. JANE moves up and opens the door.*)

RICHARD. Thank you. Most kind. If you can be of any further service tonight we won't hesitate to ring through and ask for you, personally. What's your name by the way?

WAITER. (Looking at GEORGE and the BODY.) Cromwell.

RICHARD. Cromwell, eh? What's your first name, Oliver?

(*RICHARD chuckles but the WAITER is still mesmerised by GEORGE and the BODY.*)

WAITER. No, Harold.

RICHARD. (Giving him £5.) Well, you buy yourself a little something, Harold.

WAITER. (Still looking at GEORGE.) Thank you.

RICHARD. (Gives the Waiter another £5.) Open a small guest house somewhere.

(*RICHARD turns the WAITER round and gently pushes him out of the room closing the door. GEORGE rises and steps away from the BODY, which slumps onto the settee.*)

GEORGE. (In anguish.) Oh, my God!

RICHARD. (Handing JANE the dress.) Quick, put this on, then go down to Reception and check-in as Mr. and Mrs. Pigden before the Manager blows his top.

(*During the next few lines JANE very quickly slips into her dress. RICHARD takes sunglasses from his jacket pocket.*)

RICHARD. George, stick my sunglasses on him, he'll look better.

GEORGE. (Takes sunglasses.) Oh, my goodness! (GEORGE starts to put the sunglasses on the BODY.)

RICHARD. (To JANE.) After you've checked-in go home to Lewisham. George and I will get him into 650.

(*The TELEPHONE rings. THEY all "freeze."*)

RICHARD lifts the receiver.)

RICHARD. (On phone. Brightly.) Hello?... (Tersely.)

Nurse Foster?!

GEORGE. Nurse Foster?

RICHARD. Ssh! (On phone.) No, you can't speak to Mr. Pigden.

GEORGE. Is mother all right?

RICHARD. Ssh! (On phone.) Mr. Pigden has his hands full at the moment.... I'm the Curator at the British Museum ... I'm the Curator at the British Museum and I'm staying overnight at the Westminster Hotel ... Oh!...

Ah!... I see!

GEORGE. What's she saying?

RICHARD. Ssh! (On phone.) I'll get Mr. Pigden to ring you back. (RICHARD replaces the receiver.)

GEORGE. What's happened?

RICHARD. That was Nurse Foster. Your mother's upset about you being late home.

GEORGE. Is that all?

RICHARD. Not quite. She's even more upset that you got married today without telling her.

GEORGE. Married?!

(*GEORGE rises and the BODY slumps onto the divan.*)

JANE. How on earth did she hear about that?

GEORGE. My poor mother.

RICHARD. Never mind your mother. Let's deal with the body and Miss Worthington.

(*As RICHARD takes hold of JANE the MANAGER appears outside the open window.*)

MANAGER. There you are!

(*RICHARD grabs JANE and calmly waltzes her around the room. GEORGE quickly sits beside the body back on the divan and holds it with his arm around its shoulders. The MANAGER comes through the open window and glares at the cowering RICHARD. HE taps RICHARD on the shoulder.*)

RICHARD. I'm afraid it's not an "Excuse me."

(*RICHARD continues to dance with JANE.*)

RICHARD. (Sings.) "La Donna e Mobile." It's been one helluva day.

(*RICHARD opens the door and "ushers" JANE out into the corridor. JANE still dancing exits.*)

RICHARD. (*To MANAGER.*) Rehearsing for the Conservative Conference Cabaret. Mrs. Pigden is just going down to Reception to book in. Sorry about the delay.

MANAGER. Thank you! Now, Mr. Pigden—(*The MANAGER turns and for the first time sees GEORGE sitting with the BODY beside him.*) Who on earth is that?

RICHARD. That's Mr. Pigden's brother, Fred.

MANAGER. (*Looks at GEORGE.*) Brother?

GEORGE. Fred's not staying.

MANAGER. Is your brother all right, Mr. Pigden?

GEORGE. Oh, he's fine. (*To BODY.*) Aren't you, Fred?

(*To MANAGER.*) Fine. (*GEORGE cuddles the BODY.*)

RICHARD. Fred's just had a few too many drinks.

MANAGER. Well, I suppose we could find a room for him here, Mr. Pigden.

GEORGE. Oh, no. Fred's got to get home. He's got a hell of a journey.

MANAGER. He doesn't look too good.

GEORGE. Oh, he always looks a bit pasty. Don't you, Fred?

(*GEORGE manipulates the BODY so that it gesticulates a broad gesture with one of its arms.*)

MANAGER. (*To the BODY.*) Are you sure you feel up to it, Mr. Pigden? (*The MANAGER sits down next to GEORGE.*)

(*GEORGE averts the BODY's head.*)

MANAGER. (*Calling across GEORGE.*) Mr. Pigden.

RICHARD. He's rather deaf.

MANAGER. (*Louder.*) Are you sure you feel up to it, Mr. Pigden?

(*GEORGE, holding the back of the BODY's head, turns IT's face to look at them. GEORGE grimaces at finding the BODY's face so close to his.*)

MANAGER. (*Loudly.*) It would be no trouble to find you a room.

(*There is a slight pause and then the BODY slowly shakes his head.*)

MANAGER. (*Loudly.*) Are you in a fit condition to get home?

(*The BODY nods his head.*)

MANAGER. I hope he's not driving, that's all.

RICHARD. I'm pretty sure he won't be driving. Keep death off the road.

MANAGER. (*To BODY.*) Good evening then, Mr. Pigden.

(*The BODY "waves" good-bye. The bemused MANAGER waves and exits.*)

RICHARD. You were brilliant, George.

GEORGE. I feel sick.

RICHARD. Come on, let's get him next door.

GEORGE. It's no good getting him next door now!

RICHARD. Why not?

GEORGE. Why not?!

(*GEORGE rises and the BODY falls behind the divan with a thump. GEORGE and RICHARD react.*)

GEORGE. I'll tell you "why not," Mr. Willey. Because the Manager has just spent five minutes talking to him and he thinks he's my brother, Fred! (*GEORGE holds his head in his hands and walks away in agony.*)

RICHARD. (*Realising.*) You're right, George!

GEORGE. (*Moaning.*) Why, why did I listen to you?!

RICHARD. George, we've got to think clearly.

GEORGE. You can forget the royal "we" now.

RICHARD. George, you're in this as much as I am. Who was doing the ventriloquist act with the dead body just now?

GEORGE. (*Trying to think.*) Yes, well—

RICHARD. And who's gone along with all this stuff about Mrs. Pigden and the honeymoon?

GEORGE. Yes, well—

RICHARD. And tippy brother Fred.

GEORGE. I'll tell you one thing. I'm voting Labour next time.

RICHARD. Right! Now the problem is—the Manager saw your brother Fred wearing a raincoat, scarf, suit, brown shoes, etc. and "sporting" sunglasses.

GEORGE. That's right!

RICHARD. Well, if he wasn't wearing a raincoat, scarf, suit brown shoes, etc. and sporting sunglasses, but wearing something entirely *different*—I don't think he'd be recognised as your brother, Fred.

GEORGE. (*Aghast.*) We can't strip a dead body, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. This is no time to be squeamish, George. Get him back into the cupboard for the moment.

(*RICHARD moves to telephone.*)  
GEORGE. What are you doing?

RICHARD. (*Dialling.*) Phoning Oliver Cromwell.

GEORGE. Who?

RICHARD. Harold, or whatever his name is. (*On phone.*) Is that my old friend, Harold?... Good. It's Mr. Willey her ... Yes, that's right, the rich gentleman in 648 ...

(*During the ensuing dialogue GEORGE starts to drag the BODY towards the cupboard but stops, getting caught up in Richard's conversation.*)

RICHARD. Now, Harold, a little favour ... Yes, there's plenty more where the other came from! Do you have a change of clothes in the hotel? Jacket, trousers, shoes, that kind of thing ... Excellent. Bring them to suite 648 right away ... We're collecting for Oxfam.

(RICHARD puts the phone down. *There is urgent KNOCKING at the door. GEORGE freezes with the BODY.*)

RICHARD. (*Sweetly.*) Who is it?

JANE. (*Off.*) Me, Jane. Quick, open the door.

(RICHARD does so and JANE enters looking distraught.)

RICHARD. Why haven't you left?

JANE. Because I saw Ronnie at Reception.

RICHARD. Ronnie? Who's Ronnie?

JANE. My husband!

(*There is a brief moment as RICHARD and GEORGE take this in.*)

GEORGE and RICHARD. (*Together.*) Husband?!

RICHARD. (*Aghast.*) Ronnie's in Lewisham.

JANE. Ronnie's at Reception.

GEORGE. (*Moaning.*) Ohhh.

(GEORGE sinks to his knees in despair, the BODY sinking with him.)

RICHARD. He can't be.

JANE. He is. I got the shock of my life. Thank heavens he didn't see me.

RICHARD. What the hell's he doing in the Westminster Hotel?

JANE. I don't know.

GEORGE. I knew something like this—

RICHARD. (*Interrupting.*) Oh, shut up, George! And get off your knees, it's no good you and your brother praying.

GEORGE. I think that's all that's left.

(*The PHONE rings. THEY "freeze."* RICHARD lifts the receiver.)

RICHARD. (*On phone. Brightly.*) Hello!... (*Angrily.*)

Not again, Nurse Foster!

GEORGE. I'll talk to her!

(GEORGE stands up and the BODY sinks to its knees with its head resting on the chair.)

RICHARD. You look after him. (*On phone.*) Miss

Foster, you really must stop pestering Mr. Pigden ... Mr. Pigden's mother is always having hysterics.

GEORGE. What's happened?

RICHARD. Nothing. *(On phone.)* What?... It's no concern of yours or Mrs. Pigden's who George got married to today.

GEORGE. Oh, my God! *(GEORGE hurries to RICHARD.)*

RICHARD. *(On phone.)* Mr. Pigden will be home as soon as he's completed his marital duties. *(RICHARD slams down the phone.)*

GEORGE. My mother's probably having a heart attack.

RICHARD. Well, let's hope that keeps Nurse Foster off the phone for five minutes.

*(RICHARD pushes GEORGE back to the BODY.)*

RICHARD. Now stop moaning and hang Fred back on his hook!

GEORGE. *(Lifting BODY.)* Come on, Fred! *(GEORGE "marches" the BODY to the cupboard.)*

JANE. What about Ronnie, Mr. Willey?

RICHARD. Don't let's panic. There's obviously a perfectly simple explanation for Mr. Worthington's unexpected arrival.

*(There's a KNOCK on the corridor door. They all freeze. GEORGE has just got the BODY back on its hook.)*

RICHARD. *(Sweetly.)* Who is it?

RONNIE. *(Off.)* Open the door!

JANE. *(Mortified.)* It's Ronnie.

GEORGE. Oh, my God!

*(GEORGE steps into the cupboard. RICHARD pulls GEORGE out again.)*

RICHARD. *(Sweetly.)* Is that Room Service?

RONNIE. If you don't open this door, I'll kick it in.

RICHARD. *(Whispering urgently.)* Get Miss Worthington into suite 650.

GEORGE. *(Whispering fiercely.)* That's the best idea you've had tonight. *(GEORGE starts to climb onto balcony.)*

JANE. He's got a terrible temper, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. *(Worried.)* Has he?

GEORGE. Mr. Willey can handle it, come on.

*(GEORGE pulls JANE out through window and THEY exit. There is KNOCKING at the corridor door.)*

RONNIE. *(Off.)* Hey!

RICHARD. *(Sweetly.)* Coming!

*(Without having time to close the window RICHARD moves to the door. Pulls himself together, and then opens it. RONNIE marches in past RICHARD. RONNIE is in a high state of contained agitation.)*

RICHARD. *(Pleasantly.)* Oh, I thought you were the waiter.

RONNIE. *(Grimly.)* I'm Ronnie Worthington.

RICHARD. *(Pleasantly.)* Pleasure to meet you, Ronnie.

*(RICHARD offers his hand which RONNIE ignores.)*

RICHARD. I'm Richard Willey.

RONNIE. I bloody know who you are all right.

RICHARD. *(Smiling.)* Yes, that's what comes of having the T.V. cameras in the House of Commons. You're—er—you're not one of my constituents, are you?

RONNIE. No, I'm bloody not. (RONNIE opens the bedroom door and goes in.)

RICHARD. (Calling through.) Ah. I thought that's maybe why you wanted to see me.

RONNIE. (Re-enters.) I'm Jane's husband.

RICHARD. (Lightly.) Jane?

RONNIE. Jane Worthington! (RONNIE bangs the bedroom door shut.)

RICHARD. (Lightly.) Jane Worthington?

RONNIE. She's one of Neil Kinnock's secretaries!

RICHARD. (Thinking. Lightly.) No, I can't say I remember her. Neil has so many young ladies floating about, doesn't he?

RONNIE. Look, you can drop all this. Where is she?

RICHARD. Where's who?

RONNIE. My wife! Miss Worthington.

RICHARD. Ah, Miss Worthington is your wife. Miss as in "Ms."

(RICHARD chuckles. RONNIE refrains.)

RONNIE. Where is she?

RICHARD. (Lightly dismissive.) Now what would Neil Kinnock's secretary be doing in the hotel suite of a Junior Government Minister?

RONNIE. It's no good, Mr. Willey, I've had you followed.

(Suddenly the window behind them descends with a bang.

RICHARD gives a definite but contained reaction.

RONNIE just looks at the window and back to RICHARD.)

RICHARD. Followed?

RONNIE. Little tête à tête. Corner cafes. Cups of tea—

RICHARD. Oh, that Miss Worthington! Of course.

Jane! One of Mr. Kinnock's—(Laughs.) Dear Jane.

RONNIE. I know what you've been up to!

RICHARD. Shorthand, dictation—

RONNIE. Come off it! You're a Conservative. She's in Labour.

(RICHARD chuckles at RONNIE but the pun is lost on him.)

RONNIE. So when Jane started giving me all this rubbish about seeing her Auntie Rosie in Felixstowe!

RICHARD. If you're suggesting what I think you're suggesting.

RONNIE. I'm suggesting that to get to Felixstowe you don't have to change at the Westminster Hotel!

(RICHARD digests this. The MAID knocks and enters.)

MAID. Made-bed-now.

RONNIE. (Advances on her.) There's no bloody beds going to be made tonight.

MAID. Non Capisco.

RONNIE. Push off!

MAID. (Pleasantly.) Bye, bye. (The MAID exits.)

RICHARD. Now, my dear young man

RONNIE. Don't you "dear young man" me. When you were booking in, Mr. Baker was standing right beside you.

RICHARD. Mr. Baker?

RONNIE. My Private Detective.

RICHARD. (Trying to smile.) Private Detective?

RONNIE. And while I was waiting over the road Mr. Baker clambered up the fire-escape—

*(An unpleasant thought formulates in Richard's mind and HE looks towards the window.)*

RONNIE.—got through the window of 648—and was arranging to catch you at it, my old chum!

RICHARD. While I was booking-in—your Private Detective came up the fire-escape—

RONNIE. That's right!

RICHARD. *(Looks at the window.)* And opened that window—

RONNIE. You've hit it right on the head!

RICHARD. Oh dear. *(RICHARD glances at the cupboard then back to RONNIE and smiles.)*

RONNIE. Yes! Well I've been waiting for him for over forty-five minutes so I reckon he must have seen plenty by now.

RICHARD. You don't even know your wife's in the hotel.

RONNIE. Yes I do. I've been standing opposite! I saw her sneak through after you'd checked-in.

RICHARD. Possibly you did.

RONNIE. *Definitely* I did!

RICHARD. Well, she's not with me I assure you. *(There's a fractional pause.)* She's with George Pigden.

RONNIE. George who?

RICHARD. George Pigden. I've been trying to protect him. He's my Private Secretary. Biggest ram in Westminster.

RONNIE. Don't give me that. You're the one Jane's been having all those private little meetings with.

RICHARD. That's right. To try to talk her out of her infatuation for Mr. Pigden. But it was to no avail. George is a very experienced womaniser. He's been through the female members over there like a sex-mad rabbit.

RONNIE. What do you take me for?

RICHARD. *(Takes RONNIE to the door.)* A very intelligent man, Ronnie. You go down to Reception. Check if there's a Mr. and Mrs. Pigden booked-in.

RONNIE. *(Hesitating.)* Look, if you're having me on.

RICHARD. I'm as distressed as you are.

*(RICHARD opens the corridor door as, behind RONNIE, the cupboard door opens and the BODY falls forward hanging on the hook. RICHARD sees this but RONNIE doesn't. RICHARD grabs RONNIE'S shoulders to stop him turning.)*

RICHARD. Ronnie!

RONNIE. *(Surprised.)* What?

RICHARD. I think I'm even more distressed than you are.

RONNIE. George Pigden, you say?

RICHARD. Correct. *(Sympathetically.)* I'm dreadfully sorry it's going on behind your back.

RONNIE. If you're lying to me—

RICHARD. *(Hurri.)* Ronnie, I'm a member of parliament.

RONNIE. Well, don't forget there's still Jack Baker.

RICHARD. I haven't forgotten Jack Baker.

RONNIE. He'll have kept his eyes open.

RICHARD. He won't be able to say a word against me, I assure you.

RONNIE. I'll be back.

RICHARD. The pleasure will be all mine.

*(RICHARD pushes RONNIE into the corridor making sure that RONNIE doesn't turn around. RICHARD quickly shuts the BODY away in the cupboard, goes to the telephone and dials.)*

RICHARD. *(To himself.)* Come on, George! *(On phone.)* George, get back in here with Jane, right away ... Ronnie's gone down to Reception but he'll be back. ... You can't stay in 650, that's where he's going back to ... George, there isn't time! Suffice to say that if Ronnie meets you we'll have two dead bodies on our hands. *(Puts the phone down.)*

*(There is a KNOCK on the door.)*

RICHARD. *(Sweetly.)* Who is it?  
WAITER. *(Off.)* Room Service.

*(RICHARD opens the door and the WAITER enters carrying a pile of clothes on top of which is a bowler hat.)*

✦ WAITER. Your bespoke tailor has arrived.  
RICHARD. Brilliant.

*(RICHARD pulls the WAITER across and shuts the door. HE then goes to take the clothes but the WAITER holds out his hand and gives his gentle cough. RICHARD goes for his money clip.)*

WAITER. I got married in that suit, you know.

RICHARD. *(Gives him £5.)* Yes. Now, Harold, our situation has deteriorated somewhat.

WAITER. *(Grinning.)* Marvellous.

RICHARD. Yes. I need a wheelchair.

WAITER. A wheelchair.

RICHARD. For an invalid.

WAITER. Has somebody been taken ill?

RICHARD. Several of us but—er—only one requires the wheelchair.

*(GEORGE and JANE enter along balcony and tap on window. RICHARD moves up and opens the window.)*

WAITER. Don't they know these suites have doors to them?

*(GEORGE and JANE clamber in.)*

GEORGE. *(Entering.)* What's happened?

JANE. *(Entering.)* What did Ronnie want for God's sake?

RICHARD. Wait a minute. I'm dealing with Harold.

WAITER. *(To GEORGE.)* Are you going to spend all your honeymoon to-ing and fro-ing along that balcony?

RICHARD. *(To WAITER.)* Never mind them. Can you fix me up with a wheelchair?

WAITER. Well, maybe. The hotel keeps a couple for times of emergency.

RICHARD. Time's up, Harold.

*(RICHARD pushes the WAITER who stops, coughs and holds out his hand. RICHARD takes out his money clip.)*

WAITER. £10 will suffice.

RICHARD. Oh. You've cleaned me out.

WAITER. *(Expansively.)* That's all right then.

RICHARD. *(Surprised.)* Thank you, Harold.

WAITER. American Express will do nicely. *(The WAITER exits.)*

## OUT OF ORDER

GEORGE and JANE. (*Together.*) What's going on? Who's the wheelchair for? Mr. Willey, please. What did Ronnie want?

† RICHARD. This is worse than Question Time.

(*The window falls with a BANG.*)

RICHARD. God! (*To GEORGE.*) Now do you want the bad news or the worse news?

GEORGE. Isn't there any good news?

RICHARD. No.

JANE. For heaven's sake, give us the bad news.

RICHARD. The bad news is your husband had us followed here by a Private Detective.

(*JANE and GEORGE look aghast.*)

JANE. No!

GEORGE. And you mean there's worse news than that?

RICHARD. Yes. He's the man hanging in our cupboard.

GEORGE. Oh, my God! (*GEORGE looks aghast at the cupboard.*)

† JANE. How could Ronnie behave in such a deceitful way.

(*GEORGE and RICHARD look at her.*)

RICHARD. How indeed.

GEORGE. Well, unless it's for me, I don't see where the wheelchair fits in.

RICHARD. George, he's a *Private Detective!* We can't have him discovered in *either* of our suites now, can we? We'll sit him in the wheelchair and put a blanket round his legs.

## OUT OF ORDER

GEORGE. Then what?

RICHARD. You push him to Clapham Common, George.

GEORGE. (*Is dumbfounded.*) Clapham Common?

RICHARD. (*Simply.*) It's on your way home. George, like I keep saying, the poor man's dead. It won't make any difference to him *where* he's discovered. You can walk there in under the hour. Just dump him in the bushes.

GEORGE. Dump him in the bushes?

JANE. Look! What about Ronnie?

RICHARD. Yes, that's another good reason for George to emigrate to Clapham Common. I'm afraid I told Mr. Worthington a little white lie.

GEORGE. (*Wearily.*) What?

RICHARD. That you were about to seduce his wife.

RICHARD. He found that hard to believe so he's down at Reception checking if a Mr. and Mrs. Pigden have booked in.

JANE. And we have!

RICHARD. (*Delighted.*) Suite 650, that's right.

GEORGE. Mr. Willey, do you know what you are?

† RICHARD. Well, if I go on like this I could end up the Leader of the Party.

(*There is a knock at the door. THEY "freeze."*)

RICHARD. (*Sweetly.*) Who is it?

RONNIE. (*Off.*) Ronnie Worthington!

GEORGE. Oh, my God!

RICHARD. (*Sweetly.*) Coming!

(*During the ensuing dialogue RICHARD, GEORGE and JANE whisper urgently.*)

RICHARD. Quick!

(RICHARD opens the cupboard door. The BODY is still hanging on the inside of the door.)

RICHARD. Both of you. Get in there.

GEORGE. Do we have to?

RICHARD. You can either come face to face with the body or face to face with Ronnie.

RONNIE. (Off) Hey!

(There is more KNOCKING from RONNIE.)

GEORGE and JANE. (Together.) The body.

(GEORGE pulls JANE across him into the cupboard.

RICHARD picks up the clothes brought in by the waiter.)

RICHARD. And while you're in there, put him in Cromwell's wedding suit.

GEORGE. (Horrified.) Is that really necessary?

RICHARD. Yes. It will delay identification. And hurry up!

GEORGE. God, you could teach Jeffrey Archer a thing or two.

(GEORGE takes the clothes and RICHARD shuts the cupboard door. There is more knocking at the door. RICHARD opens it.)

RICHARD. (Opening door.) No need to get impatient.

(RONNIE marches in. He is shattered. In the corridor the door of 650 opposite has one of its panels shattered.)

RONNIE. You were bloody right! Mr. and Mrs. Pigden. Suite 650. (Disbelievingly.) They're opposite.

RICHARD. No!

RONNIE. I banged on the door but there was no reply.

RICHARD. Wasn't there?

RONNIE. So I kicked the bloody door in!

RICHARD. (Glances through the open corridor door.) Bloody hell!

RONNIE. They're not in there though.

RICHARD. Aren't they?

RONNIE. Oh, my God!

(RONNIE suddenly breaks down. The pent up emotion is too much for him and HE falls to his knees, sobbing. RICHARD looks totally bewildered as the young man wails and clutches Richard's legs.)

RICHARD. Get a grip on yourself, Ronnie.

RONNIE. It's all my fault!

RICHARD. I'm sure it isn't.

RONNIE. Yes, that's why she's gone off with this bloke Pigden. He's better at it than I am.

RICHARD. No!

(RONNIE wails more as the MANAGER comes in angrily from the corridor and is about to knock on the open door when he is confronted by the scene in front of him. The MANAGER, leaving the door wide open, moves down, aghast.)

RICHARD. I'm sure you're very good at it.

(RICHARD pats Ronnie's head. The MANAGER is appalled.)

RONNIE. No, that's what the trouble is.

RICHARD. What, Ronnie?

RONNIE. (*Waiting.*) I'm no good in bed, Mr. Willey!

(*RICHARD looks embarrassed. Behind them the MANAGER looks amazed.*)

RICHARD. I'm sure you're adequate.

RONNIE. No. (*Sobbing.*) I just can't keep it going.

(*The MANAGER is incensed.*)

RICHARD. Don't. You'll only make it harder for yourself.

MANAGER. Mr. Willey!

RICHARD. (*Jumping.*) Oh, my—! I—er was just explaining—

MANAGER. I'd rather not know what you were explaining.

RICHARD. You can leave him to me. He's got a bit of a problem.

MANAGER. So I heard.

(*During the above RONNIE has done his best to pull himself together and sits in the chair R.*)

RONNIE. I don't usually behave like that in public.

MANAGER. I'm pleased to hear it.

RICHARD. (*To MANAGER.*) I'll sort it out.

MANAGER. (*Angrily.*) Well, perhaps you can also sort out Mr. Pigden next door.

RONNIE. (*Rising.*) Pigden?

RICHARD. It's all right, Ronnie.

MANAGER. No, it's not all right! The door's been kicked in and the furniture thrown all over the place.

RICHARD. Mr. Pigden will pay for any damage.

MANAGER. It's not a question of payment! I can't have this kind of thing going on at the Westminster Hotel.

RICHARD. I understand.

MANAGER. I'm all for couples consummating their honeymoon but this is appalling.

RONNIE. Honeymoon?!

(*RONNIE falls to his knees, crying and clasps Richard's legs. RICHARD sits him in chair.*)

RICHARD. Try and pull yourself together, Ronnie.

MANAGER. And neither Mr. nor Mrs. Pigden are anywhere to be seen.

RICHARD. They're probably dining in the restaurant. Why don't you pop down and have a look.

(*RICHARD starts to move the MANAGER but the WAITER comes through the open door with the wheelchair.*)

WAITER. Here we are!

(*The MANAGER surveys the WAITER and the wheelchair.*)

MANAGER. What on earth are you doing, Cromwell?

WAITER. Answering the call.

MANAGER. (*Refers to wheelchair.*) Who is that for?

WAITER. Who is it for, Mr. Willey?

RICHARD. My young friend there.

WAITER. (*To RONNIE.*) You're new around here, aren't you?

*(The MANAGER is momentarily at a loss.)*

MANAGER. *(To WAITER.)* You can go.

*(The MANAGER assists RONNIE to his feet.)*

WAITER. Oh. Well—er

*(The WAITER looks at RICHARD. HE then points to RICHARD, points to himself, holds up ten fingers and exits. During this the MANAGER lifts RONNIE to his feet.)*

MANAGER. I don't know who you are young man or what you're doing in Mr. Willey's suite at this time of night, but I must ask you to vacate the Westminster Hotel as soon as you've got a grip on yourself. *(To RICHARD.)* In future, Mr. Willey, I think it would be wiser if you were accompanied on these overnight stays by your wife.

*(The MANAGER exits into corridor.)*

RONNIE. Bloody hell, I feel lousy.

RICHARD. Go home, you'll feel better.

RONNIE. I'm not going home until I've found that bloke, Pigden.

RICHARD. Like I said he's probably downstairs in the restaurant.

RONNIE. Right! And when I find him the first thing I'll do is kick him right in the crotch. *(RONNIE exits into corridor.)*

RICHARD. *(Opens the cupboard door.)* Did you hear any of that?

GEORGE. Yes, but it was the last bit that brought tears to my eyes. *(GEORGE steps out holding his groin.)*

JANE. *(Comes out.)* Wasn't Ronnie magnificent?

RICHARD. Magnificent?

JANE. The way he declared his love for me. I've never heard him talk like that before.

RICHARD. *(Wearily.)* Oh, God!

JANE. And now he's had the guts to bring his little deficiencies into the open—

RICHARD. Jane, discuss it with your family doctor next week! *(To GEORGE.)* Did you change his clothes?

GEORGE. Well, it wasn't easy. *(GEORGE brings out the BODY who is now dressed, very badly, in the Waiter's old wedding suit and wearing the bowler hat. HE is still wearing the sunglasses.)*

RICHARD. For heaven's sake!

GEORGE. It was dark in there.

RICHARD. Stick him in that.

*(RICHARD brings the wheelchair forward and GEORGE plunks the BODY on the seat. RICHARD surveys him.)*

RICHARD. Well, I suppose we should be grateful it's not November the 5th. *(To JANE.)* Right. You go down the fire-escape and get home to Lewisham as fast as you can. *(RICHARD opens the window.)*

JANE. What am I going to say to Ronnie when he gets back?

RICHARD. Tell him Pigden dragged you here by force.

GEORGE. Thank you!

JANE. God, I don't think I can face Ronnie just yet.

RICHARD. Then go back to the House of Commons.

JANE. I can't sleep there!

RICHARD. Why not? Everybody else does.  
(RICHARD pushes her out of window and off U.R.) O.K.,  
George, this is it. (Opens corridor door.) Clapham  
Common. Walkies with Fred. I'll get the lift and hold it for  
you. Give me thirty seconds. And get our friend a blanket  
from the bedroom.

GEORGE. (Opening bedroom door.) Very well.  
RICHARD. And, George, if ever you get married and  
find yourself in a mess, you can count on me.

GEORGE. After Ronnie's finished with me I think  
marriage will be out of the question. (Exits into the  
bedroom)

(RICHARD surveys the room, pats the BODY on the  
cheek and exits.

For a moment there is silence and then the BODY begins  
to stir. HE shakes his head and then feels his neck  
which is very painful. He realises he has sunglasses on  
and his hands come up to feel them. HE takes  
sunglasses and looks at them. HE then puts them in his  
top pocket, feels his neck again and moves his head  
from side to side. This makes him wince. HE puts his  
hand to his neck and rubs it. In doing so HE touches the  
bowler hat. HE feels it, takes it off and looks at it,  
puzzled. HE replaces the hat on his head and tries to  
think. HE then looks at himself sitting in the  
wheelchair and tries to work out how he got there. HE  
stands up and then realises he is wearing strange  
clothes. He is even more surprised to find his trousers  
are on back-to-front. HE looks around the room.

He suddenly remembers the window and points to it as the  
memory begins to return. HE goes to the window and  
then steps outside. HE kneels on balcony miming what  
he remembers he did originally. HE leans back in

through the window with a  
satisfaction.)

DETECTIVE. Of course! I've got it!

(The window suddenly falls on his neck with a loud  
THUMP. His eyes close and HE slumps.)

Music—CURTAIN

ACT II

*The scene is the same. After a moment GEORGE comes out of the bedroom with blanket. HE throws it over the now empty wheelchair and then moves behind the wheelchair to start pushing. HE stops. For a moment his mind is in a whirl. HE rushes back to the front of the wheelchair and stares at it. HE grabs the blanket and looks at the empty seat. HE shakes the blanket to see if the BODY will fall out. HE then looks beneath the chair and all around it for the BODY. RICHARD hurries in behind him closing the door.*

RICHARD. George!

GEORGE. Ahhh! Don't do that.

RICHARD. I've been waiting by the lift for God's sake.

Come on.

GEORGE. He's gone.

RICHARD. *(Impatiently.)* Who's gone?

GEORGE. The Private Detective.

*(GEORGE steps away from the wheelchair and indicates the fact that it is empty. RICHARD stares for a brief moment.)*

RICHARD. Where is he, George?

GEORGE. I don't know.

RICHARD. You must have put him somewhere.

GEORGE. No.

RICHARD. *(Grabbing GEORGE.)* For safety or something!

GEORGE. No. I went to throw the blanket over him and he wasn't there.

RICHARD. You can't just go and lose a dead body!

GEORGE. I haven't done anything. He's vanished.

*(RICHARD throws his hands in the air and turns away. HE sees the BODY in the window. During GEORGE'S ensuing speech RICHARD moves up and looks at the BODY.)*

GEORGE. You went out to get the lift. I walked into the bedroom, took a blanket off the bed and came back in here. I couldn't have been gone a minute.

RICHARD. *(From the window, flatly.)* George.

*(GEORGE looks at RICHARD who points to the BODY between them. GEORGE glances down and nods but doesn't take it in.)*

GEORGE. I was less than a minute, Mr. Willey. Now he was definitely there when I went into the bedroom. He was sitting there in sunglasses and Cromwell's wedding suit —

*(HE stops, realising that he's just seen the BODY trapped in the window. HE looks at the BODY, then HE looks at the wheelchair, and then back to RICHARD.)*

GEORGE. *(Mortified.)* Mr. Willey!

RICHARD. *(Ominously.)* George, what have you done? GEORGE. I haven't done anything, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. He's back to where he was an hour ago.

GEORGE. I promise you, Mr. Willey, the last time I saw him he was sitting in that wheelchair.

RICHARD. Then somebody's on to us.

GEORGE. On to us?

RICHARD. And, George, I smell blackmail.

GEORGE. Do you?

RICHARD. Why would anyone stick him back there? Why not call the police or hotel Security?

GEORGE. I knew I should have had this evening at home with mother.

RICHARD. Don't bring her into it for God's sake.

Right. Come on. *(RICHARD lifts the window.)*

GEORGE. What are you doing?

*(During the ensuing dialogue THEY get the BODY back into the wheelchair.)*

RICHARD. It's back to plan A.

GEORGE. What's plan A?

RICHARD. Clapham Common.

GEORGE. But if somebody's on to us!

RICHARD. We've got no other choice, George.

GEORGE. Yes we have. Plan B.

RICHARD. What's plan B.

GEORGE. Tell the truth.

RICHARD. Are you mad?

*(RICHARD turns the wheelchair and GEORGE puts the BODY in it.)*

GEORGE. A lot of people do, you know! It does happen! It's quite simple, too. You and Miss Worthington found a body, that's all.

*(During the above speech RICHARD has opened the corridor door.)*

RICHARD. Do you realise what untold suffering would be caused if we resorted to the truth at this stage? Think of poor Mr. Worthington. He's in such a state he'd probably chuck himself over the balcony. There's something missing. Sunglasses.

GEORGE. (*Pointing.*) They're in his top pocket, Mr. Willey. (*GEORGE takes them out.*)

RICHARD. That'll be another sign from the blackmailer. He's playing games with us, George.

(*GEORGE has replaced the sunglasses on the "dead" BODY.*)

RICHARD. I reckon we'll get a note next.

GEORGE. A note?

RICHARD. Demanding money.

GEORGE. Mr. Willey, if there is a blackmailer—

(*The window comes down with a BANG. GEORGE grabs RICHARD in terror.*)

GEORGE. he might follow me to Clapham Common.

RICHARD. That's a chance we'll have to take.

GEORGE. Oh, will we?!

(*The WAITER enters through the open corridor door.*)

WAITER. Mr. Willey!

RICHARD. What do you want?

WAITER. (*To RICHARD.*) This is for you. (*HE holds out a sheet of paper.*)

RICHARD. What is it?

WAITER. A note.

(*RICHARD goes to take it but immediately stops and looks at GEORGE. GEORGE clutches Richard's arm. They both look at the WAITER warily.*)

RICHARD. (*To WAITER.*) A note?

WAITER. That's right.

RICHARD. Who's it from?

WAITER. Me.

RICHARD. (*Surprised.*) You.

WAITER. That's right.

(*RICHARD and GEORGE exchange another look. RICHARD takes the note and reads it.*)

RICHARD. (*Reads.*) "For supplying one wheelchair, £10" (*RICHARD angrily crumples up the note.*)

WAITER. (*Sees BODY. To GEORGE.*) Your brother's

taken a turn for the worse, has he, Mr. Pigden?

GEORGE. Yes. Poor Fred's passed on—(*Quickly.*)

passed out.

WAITER. It was all that dancing that did it.

RICHARD. Very likely.

WAITER. (*To RICHARD.*) As a matter of interest why has he changed into my wedding suit?

RICHARD. Fred's going to a wedding.

WAITER. (*Surprised.*) Is he? (*To GEORGE.*) He's

already been to yours today.

(*GEORGE nods dumbly.*)

RICHARD. He's going to his other brother's now.

WAITER. (*Delighted. To GEORGE.*) Have you got another brother?

(*GEORGE nods dumbly.*)

RICHARD. Yes, Bert.

WAITER. (To RICHARD.) And Bert's getting married on the same day as him?

RICHARD. Yes! Bert and George are twins.

GEORGE. Oh, my God!

(GEORGE sits inadvertently on the BODY. HE leaps up with a yell and we see that he has sat on the BODY's upturned hand which has "goosed" him. GEORGE rubs his backside, gives the BODY a remonstrative glance and slaps the BODY's hand.)

WAITER. I say! (Taps his watch.) It's a bit late for Bert to be having a wedding ceremony, isn't it?

RICHARD. It's performed in conjunction with Midnight Mass.

(RICHARD starts to propel the WAITER out as RONNIE storms in through the door. GEORGE quickly pushes the wheelchair and BODY into the corner by the bedroom door.)

RONNIE. Mr. Willey! I can't find Pigden or my wife anywhere.

WAITER. (To RONNIE.) Good evening, sir.

RONNIE. Who the hell are you?

RICHARD. The richest man in the hotel.

(RICHARD pushes the WAITER out into the corridor.)

RONNIE. They're hiding somewhere.

RICHARD. Why not go home, sleep on it, and sort it out in the morning.

RONNIE. (Strides into the room.) I'm going to sort it out now! Starting with George bloody Pigden!

(RONNIE stops on seeing GEORGE with his back to him standing in the corner with the wheelchair. There is a fractional pause and then GEORGE, hiding his face from RONNIE, pushes the wheelchair in front of RONNIE and out through the door. RICHARD smiles encouragingly at RONNIE.)

RICHARD. (To RONNIE.) That was Doctor Livingstone.

RONNIE. (RONNIE assimilates this.) And who was the guy in the wheelchair?

RICHARD. Oh, just somebody's brother.

RONNIE. Whose?

RICHARD. (After a slight pause.) Mine. Harrington Willey. Doctor Livingstone is with him permanently. Poor Harrington. The brain's completely gone.

RONNIE. You kind of forget other people's problems when you're up to your eyes in your own.

RICHARD. (Puts his arm around Ronnie's shoulders.) You go home. Mrs. Worthington's been faithful to you, I just know she has.

(RICHARD puts both arms around RONNIE as the MANAGER comes in behind them. The MANAGER stops amazed.)

RICHARD. And when you get home, Ronnie, go up to your wife and say—I believe in Willey.

MANAGER. (Staggered.) Mr. Willey!

RICHARD. (Closes his eyes.) I'm busy!

MANAGER. Mr. Willey I would like to remind you, most forcibly, that when you booked into this hotel, you intended to depart immediately for the House of Commons.

RICHARD. Something popped up.

MANAGER. No doubt! However, I'm sure it's now been dealt with so nothing further need detain you—or Ronnie.

RONNIE. (*Angry again.*) Don't you take that attitude with me!

RICHARD. I think the Manager's got a point, Ronnie. RONNIE. He shouldn't allow his hotel to be used for adultery in the first place!

MANAGER. Adultery?

RICHARD. Now, Ronnie—

RONNIE. Mr. and Mrs. bloody Pigden opposite.

MANAGER. Yes, well Mr. Pigden's got a lot to answer for.

RONNIE. He bloody well has.

MANAGER. I've just told him I want a full explanation for the damage done in 650.

RICHARD. I'm sure you'll get it. Come on, Ronnie.

RONNIE. (*To MANAGER.*) Have you just been talking to Pigden?

MANAGER. By the lift.

RONNIE. Bloody swine. (*RONNIE rushes out into corridor.*)

RICHARD. Ronnie! (*To MANAGER.* *Angrily.*) Now look what you've done!

MANAGER. And I've also told Mr. Pigden I want him and his wife out of this hotel immediately.

RICHARD. Mrs. Pigden's gone and Pigden's on his way. You've ruined their honeymoon, you know that.

MANAGER. And another thing. Why is Mr. Pigden pushing his brother around the hotel in a wheelchair?

RICHARD. To get some fresh air. For Fred not George. Fred came over very unwell. Far too much champagne. So George is pushing him home.

MANAGER. (*Surprised.*) To Felixstowe?

RICHARD. No, Lewisham.

GEORGE. (*Rushes in, looking petrified.*) Mr. Willey!

RICHARD. Pigden! You're supposed to be on your way to Clapham Common! (*To MANAGER.*) Via Lewisham.

GEORGE. He's risen!

RICHARD. (*Tries to assimilate this.*) Risen. Who's risen?

GEORGE. The fellow in the wheelchair.

RICHARD. What the hell are you talking about?

GEORGE. The fellow in the wheelchair!

MANAGER. Your brother, Fred?

RICHARD. (*To MANAGER.*) Would you leave us alone, please?

GEORGE. He stood up!

RICHARD. (*Tries to assimilate this.*) Who did?

GEORGE. The fellow in the wheelchair!

RICHARD. What?!

MANAGER. Well, Fred was only inebriated, surely.

RICHARD. (*To MANAGER.*) Thank you!

GEORGE. I was just about to push him into the lift and he stood—up.

RICHARD. He can't have done!

MANAGER. Why on earth not?!

RICHARD. (*To MANAGER.*) Please! (*To GEORGE.*) What did you do?

GEORGE. I ran like hell.

RICHARD. (*Looks furious.*) And what did Fred do?

GEORGE. (*Almost crying.*) He went down with the lift.

(*RICHARD looks even more furious.*)

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MANAGER. Really! He'll probably be sick all over Reception. *(The MANAGER angrily rushes out into the corridor slamming the door closed.)*

GEORGE. He's come back to haunt us, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. Oh, shut up, he's not dead that's what it means.

GEORGE. *(Relieved.)* God, do you think so?

RICHARD. And that's not good news, Mr. Willey.

GEORGE. Oh, it must be good news, Mr. Willey, surely.

RICHARD. For our erstwhile dead body, yes, but not for us.

GEORGE. It's wonderful news for us. I don't have to push him to Clapham Common! And I can go home and

relieve Nurse Foster.

RICHARD. George! Don't you realise if he's alive he'll be able to verify everything about Miss Worthington and me. *(Suddenly remembering.)* Hey, did you see Mr. Worthington in the corridor just now?

GEORGE. Yes, he looked very cross!

RICHARD. Well, you're all right there. He's looking for Mr. Pigden.

GEORGE. I know!

RICHARD. And he thinks you're Doctor Livingstone.

GEORGE. *(Goes to speak but immediately stops.)*

Doctor Livingstone?

RICHARD. Look, I must get to that detective before he bumps into Ronnie and spills the beans—*(Suddenly.)* God!

GEORGE. What?

RICHARD. I've told Ronnie that that Detective is my crazy brother, Harrington.

GEORGE. Makes a change. You've told everybody else he's my drunken brother, Fred.

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RICHARD. Now, if Jack Baker turns up before I get back—

GEORGE. Who's Jack Baker?

RICHARD. Our Private Detective! You just keep him here.

GEORGE. Oh, my goodness.

RICHARD. And if Ronnie gets back before I do—

GEORGE. Yes?

RICHARD. God help you!

*(RICHARD opens the door to leave but the WAITER comes in pushing the wheelchair.)*

WAITER. I've got a complaint.

RICHARD. It's probably your age. *(RICHARD hurries out, leaving the door open.)*

WAITER. *(To GEORGE.)* I went to a lot of trouble to get this wheelchair for your brother, Fred.

GEORGE. Thank you very much!

WAITER. And instead of him using it I find it going up and down in the hotel lift.

GEORGE. Fred doesn't need it any more.

WAITER. I'll take it back then. *(HE starts to go.)*

GEORGE. Thank you.

WAITER. *(Stops.)* But I'll keep it on stand-by for the next emergency. *(HE goes.)*

GEORGE. Thank you! *(GEORGE closes the door.)* Oh, my goodness.

*(There is a KNOCK on the door.)*

GEORGE. *(Angrily.)* What is it now?

S  
hr

(GEORGE opens the door. PAMELA WILLEY is standing in the doorway. SHE is wearing a hat and a jacket over a summer dress and carrying an overnight case.)

PAMELA. (Surprised.) Hello, George!

(SHE comes in. GEORGE is looking at her open-mouthed. SHE kisses him on the cheek and walks in front of him surveying the room. GEORGE, in a trance, closes the door.)

PAMELA. (Turning to GEORGE.) Well, this is a pleasant surprise.

GEORGE. (Dumbly.) Mrs. Willey.

PAMELA. (Puts her case down and then smiles at

GEORGE.) What are you doing here?

GEORGE. (Dumbly.) Mrs. Willey.

PAMELA. Shouldn't you be at the House of Commons with Richard?

(GEORGE goes to answer but stands there with his mouth open.)

PAMELA. (Looks at watch.) Or at home with your mother.

GEORGE. I came over—

(PAMELA waits for him to continue. HE doesn't.)

PAMELA. Came over what, George?

GEORGE. Here.

PAMELA. Yes.

GEORGE. To help Mr. Willey. He left something here. Some papers. He sent me. He—House of Commons. Me here.

PAMELA. Yes. I expect Richard's up to his eyes in it, is he?

(GEORGE hesitates and then is only able to emit a foolish laugh.)

PAMELA. You've had a long day, have you, George?

(GEORGE nods.)

PAMELA. There's nothing wrong, is there?

GEORGE. (Expansively nonchalant.) No.

(There is a KNOCK at the door.)

GEORGE. (Yelling.) Ahh!

(GEORGE leaps forward as he yells and PAMELA steps back, startled. GEORGE smiles at her and indicates that nothing untoward has happened.)

GEORGE. (Calls.) Who is it?

WAITER. (Off.) Room Service.

(GEORGE opens the door.)

GEORGE. (As HE opens door. To PAMELA.) Room Service.

WAITER. (Enters with wheelchair.) I thought you might need this after all.

GEORGE. No! No, I'm fine now, thank you. It's just left me with a bit of a limp. (GEORGE limps around for Pamela's benefit.) Yes, that's much easier. (To WAITER.) Thanks for your trouble.

(Still limping, HE gives the WAITER a £5 note. While burling on HE thrusts several more onto the surprised WAITER. PAMELA steps in fascinated.)

GEORGE. You've been really helpful. I couldn't have managed without you. It's so much better. I feel fitter than I have for years. Thank you.

(By now GEORGE has put the WAITER into the wheelchair and shoves him out through the open door. There is the sound of a LOUD CRASH from down the corridor.)

WAITER. (Off.) Ahhhh!

(GEORGE closes the door and looks innocent.)

GEORGE. Now where were we, Mrs. Willey?

PAMELA. Have you had a fall or something, George?

GEORGE. Er, yes. (HE limps around.) I fell off one of the back benches.

(PAMELA looks surprised.)

GEORGE. (Quickly changing the subject.) Mrs. Willey, I thought you were in the country.

PAMELA. (Takes off her hat and puts it on chair.) I was but I decided to drive up and give Richard a little surprise.

GEORGE. I think it'll be a big one, actually.

PAMELA. Lovely.

(PAMELA picks up her overnight case. GEORGE picks up her hat and offers it to her as he speaks.)

GEORGE. (Brightly.) So you just want to see Mr. Willey, say a quick "hello" and then drive back to the country, yes?

PAMELA. (Laughing.) Don't be silly, George. I'm staying the night.

GEORGE. The night?!

PAMELA. Yes.

GEORGE. No! I mean, Mr. Willey's got an all-sight-nitting—an all-night sitting.

PAMELA. I know. I decided I wanted to hear him speak tonight. How's the Government getting on by the way?

GEORGE. What government?

PAMELA. In the debate?

GEORGE. Oh, that Government. Fine. Fine. Limping nicely.

PAMELA. (Moves to the bedroom door.) Well, I can either go over to the Commons and watch Richard from the Visitors' Gallery. (PAMELA goes into the bedroom.)

GEORGE. (Mortified.) No, you can't do that!

PAMELA. (Returns minus her case.)—or sit here with some sandwiches and a glass of wine and watch the debate on T.V.

GEORGE. No, you can't do that either!

PAMELA. Why on earth not?

GEORGE. Because—it's much quieter next door.

PAMELA. (Surprised.) Next door?

GEORGE. The suite next door. It's mine.

PAMELA. Yours?

GEORGE. Yes. Mine. Next door. (GEORGE rushes into the bedroom.)

PAMELA. Are you staying at the hotel as well?

GEORGE. (Rushes back with her case.) It's a treat from Mr. Willey. Come on! (HE thrusts the hat on her head.)

PAMELA. What do you mean, "come on."

GEORGE. Next door. Come on. The two of us!

*(HE pushes her but SHE stops. )*

PAMELA. What are you talking about?

GEORGE. *(Hysteria creeping in.)* The two of us. We might never get another chance like this!

*(PAMELA is totally befuddled as SHE surveys GEORGE who is in a state of frenzy.)*

PAMELA. Chance for what for heaven's sake?

GEORGE. To make mad passionate love!

PAMELA. *(Amazed.)* Mad, passionate—

GEORGE. Love, Mrs. Willey!

*(HE drops the case, grabs her and kisses her wildly. While PAMELA struggles.)*

GEORGE runs his hand up and down her leg to indicate wild passion. HE finally releases HER. )

PAMELA. *(Incredulously.)* George!

GEORGE. You've driven me wild for years, Mrs. Willey. *(HE kisses her again.)*

PAMELA. I can't believe this is happening.

GEORGE. I know exactly how you feel.

*(HE kisses her again. SHE stands there breathless.)*

PAMELA. George—!

GEORGE. God, you're lovely. *(HE kisses her again.)* Don't fight it, Mrs. Willey.

PAMELA. Who's fighting it, George?!

*(SHE grabs him and kisses him. Finally SHE releases the struggling GEORGE.)*

PAMELA. Is this why you've been behaving so strangely, George?

GEORGE. You've noticed, have you?

PAMELA. And all these years you've been—

GEORGE. Holding it in, yes.

PAMELA. Come on!

*(SHE grabs his hand and takes him to the hall door.)*

GEORGE. No! Safer to use the window.

PAMELA. The window?

GEORGE. We don't want to bump into anyone, do we?

*(GEORGE opens window.)*

PAMELA. *(Clambering out.)* Good thinking, George.

GEORGE. Quickly!

PAMELA. *(Stops and leans back in.)* Oh, George. My nightie and things.

GEORGE. *(Forcefully.)* You don't need a nightie with me!

*(GEORGE starts to clamber out but SHE stops him.)*

PAMELA. Of course I do.

GEORGE. All right but we're wasting valuable time.

*(GEORGE gets Pamela's case and handbag.)* Quickly, Mrs. Willey. *(GEORGE joins her on the balcony.)*

PAMELA. George, do you think this is utter madness?!

GEORGE. I bloody well do!

*(THEY exit along the balcony U.L. There is silence for a moment. RICHARD hurries in from the hall closing the door behind him.)*

RICHARD. I can't find that damned detective any—!  
(RICHARD looks around.) George!

(Suddenly the window BANGS shut. RICHARD goes to window and opens it. HE looks off U.L.)

RICHARD. (Calls.) George!

JANE. (Appears on balcony from U.R. Tapping Richard's shoulder.) Mr. Willey!

RICHARD. (Yells.) Ah! (RICHARD straightens up and bangs his head.) Ah!

JANE. (Clambers in.) I'm sorry, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. What on earth are you doing back here?

JANE. I got lost.

RICHARD. What?

JANE. Well, I went down the fire-escape like you said—

RICHARD. (Impatiently.) Yes?

JANE. And I got out at the wrong floor.

RICHARD. God!

JANE. Well, I was trying to find my way downstairs—

RICHARD. Yes?!

JANE. And Ronnie saw me.

RICHARD. Ronnie?!

JANE. It's all right. I've managed to give him the slip.

What have you done with that dead detective?

RICHARD. When last seen he was taking the lift down to Reception.

JANE. What?

RICHARD. Our dead detective isn't dead.

JANE. Not dead?

RICHARD. Although if he meets up with Ronnie some of us might be. You get back to the House of Commons—(HE takes her to the window.)—and don't get

lost this time. I'm trying to get to that detective before Ronnie does.

JANE. What's Mr. Pigden doing?

RICHARD. God knows but he'd better not be laying down on the job, that's all.

(JANE exits along balcony U.R.)

RICHARD hurries to hall door and opens it. The

DETECTIVE is standing there holding his neck, and about to knock. HE is still wearing the bowler hat.)

RICHARD. Oh!

DETECTIVE. Oh!

RICHARD. May I—er—be of any assistance?

DETECTIVE. To tell you the truth I'm not sure. The thing is well it all sounds a bit silly really—but I seem to have lost my memory.

(RICHARD takes this in.)

RICHARD. (Broadly.) My dear fellow, do come in. (HE ushers the DETECTIVE into the room. Sympathetically.) Lost your memory? How very distressing.

DETECTIVE. Yes, I can't even remember my name.

RICHARD. (Thrilled.) That's terrible.

DETECTIVE. Yes. Or what I'm doing in this hotel.

RICHARD. That's awful!

DETECTIVE. Yes. And I've got a splitting headache.

(The window BANGS shut. THEY both react. RICHARD smiles at him. The DETECTIVE feels his neck as a vague memory stirs.)

RICHARD. (Hastily.) Well, you musn't go wandering about the place in that condition, Sir. Certainly not.

(RICHARD sits him on the divan.) You might bump into anybody. (Quickly.) Anything. Put your feet up and lay back. (RICHARD lays him back at an angle and starts to move to the corridor door.)

DETECTIVE. (Sitting up.) You're very kind.

RICHARD. (Returns and lays him back.) Always ready to give a helping hand.

DETECTIVE. It really is a most peculiar feeling. It's just that suite 648 seemed—(Suddenly alert. Sits up.) We don't know each other, do we?

(Whenever the DETECTIVE gets his "flashes" of memory he is always alert and dangerous.)

RICHARD. Never set eyes on you, Sir. But when my colleague returns he'll be able to assist you. He's a doctor.

(RICHARD lays him down and moves to door.)

DETECTIVE. (Sits up.) A doctor, that's lucky.

RICHARD. (Returns and lays him back.) Yes, isn't it.

(GEORGE enters through the window from U.L.)

RICHARD hurries to him.)

RICHARD. Ah, here's the very man.

GEORGE. Oh, thank God you're here, Mr. Witley.

RICHARD. I was wondering where you'd got to, doctor.

GEORGE. (Pressing on.) The most devastating thing has happened—

RICHARD. (Interrupting.) First things first, Doctor Livingstone.

GEORGE. She's waiting next door for me and she thinks I'm going to make mad—Doctor Livingstone?

RICHARD. You may be able to help this poor fellow.

(HE indicates the prone DETECTIVE. GEORGE turns to look.)

GEORGE. (Yells.) Ahh!

(THE DETECTIVE sits up and turns to GEORGE.)

GEORGE. (Relieved.) Oh, I thought he'd snuffed it again.

(THE WINDOW BANGS shut. GEORGE clutches RICHARD.)

RICHARD. (To DETECTIVE.) You'll be in very good hands with Doctor Livingstone. He's a neurologist.

GEORGE. Oh, my God! (GEORGE almost collapses.)

RICHARD. It's all right, Doctor. This poor fellow's lost his memory.

GEORGE. (Looks blank for a moment then turns to the Detective. Brightly.) Have you?

DETECTIVE. It's crazy. I can't even remember who I am.

GEORGE. (Thrilled.) That's terrible.

RICHARD. Yes. He can't recall what he's doing in this hotel either.

GEORGE. (Thrilled.) That's awful.

RICHARD. Yes.

DETECTIVE. (Stands up, once more alert.) I seem to remember something about this room, though!

RICHARD/GEORGE. (Together.) Oh.

DETECTIVE. And that window! (THE DETECTIVE points.)

RICHARD. (To GEORGE.) I think you should put the patient to bed, doctor.

GEORGE. That's a good idea.

RICHARD. In the suite next door.

GEORGE. That's not such a good idea.

RICHARD. (*Surprised.*) But this suite is likely to get crowded, doctor.

GEORGE. It's getting pretty crowded next door.

RICHARD. (*Getting annoyed.*) I don't quite follow you, doctor.

GEORGE. Well, That's what I was trying to tell you—  
I—er—I—(*Lifting DETECTIVE.*) I'll explain after I've put my patient to bed—in here.

RICHARD. All right!

(*As RICHARD moves to the bedroom RONNIE comes furiously through the hall door. GEORGE quickly leans on the Detective's bowler hat, pushing it down over his eyes and sitting him on the divan again.*)

RONNIE. My wife's given me the slip and I still can't find Pigden.

RICHARD. (*To RONNIE.*) Why not try suite 650

again. Mr. Pigden might have moved back in.

RONNIE. 650, yes!

GEORGE. (*Rising.*) No!

(*GEORGE stops RONNIE. RICHARD is confused again.*)

RICHARD. Surely, it's worth Ronnie trying next door, Doctor Livingstone.

GEORGE. No, it isn't! Mr. Pigden's not there.

RICHARD. (*Getting annoyed again.*) He might be! It's better for Ronnie to keep trying!!

GEORGE. NO! I was with Mr. Pigden only five minutes ago.

RICHARD. (*Very surprised.*) Were you?

GEORGE. Yes!

RONNIE. Where?

GEORGE. In the hotel swimming pool.

RICHARD. Swimming pool?!

RONNIE. Swimming pool?!

GEORGE. We were doing a few lengths together.

RONNIE I'll give him a few lengths. (*RONNIE moves to door.*)

DETECTIVE. (*To RONNIE.*) Hang on a second. Have you ever seen me before?

RONNIE. Yeah, you're Mr. Willey's crazy brother, Harrington! (*RONNIE exits into corridor.*)

(*GEORGE and RICHARD look mortified at each other. GEORGE pulls RICHARD across him to explain to the DETECTIVE.*)

DETECTIVE. (*Blankly.*) Your crazy brother, Harrington?

RICHARD. Well, you see, it's like this—

DETECTIVE. (*Moved and amazed.*) I'm your brother!

RICHARD. Yes, you are.

GEORGE. Oh, my God! (*GEORGE sits in chair D.R.*)

RICHARD. It's all right, Doctor, Harrington's just a bit confused.

GEORGE. *Harrington's* confused.

RICHARD. Yes. As to why we didn't explain to Harrington our relationship in the first place.

DETECTIVE. Yes.

RICHARD. Yes. You see—you've been ill for some time. The memory keeps coming and going. (*To GEORGE.*) You've got a name for it, haven't you doctor?  
GEORGE. (*With feeling.*) Oh, yes, I've got a name for it, all right.

*(There is a KNOCK on the hall door.)*

GEORGE. Oh, God!

RICHARD. See who that is, will you, doctor.

GEORGE. Could I just discuss something "personal" with you very quickly, Mr. Willey?

RICHARD. Later, doctor. You open the door while I put Harrington to bed.

DETECTIVE. You're very kind.

RICHARD. That's what big brothers are for, Harrington.

DETECTIVE. Are you sure its not "Jack"?

RICHARD. *(Flaily)* Jack?

DETECTIVE. It's a name that keeps coming into my head. "Jack!"

RICHARD. That's because you work in a garage, Harrington.

*(RICHARD takes the DETECTIVE into the bedroom.*

*There is a further KNOCKING from the door.)*

GEORGE. *(Apprehensively.)* Who is it?

MAID. *(Off.)* It-is-the-maid.

*(GEORGE opens the door. The MAID enters.)*

MAID. Make-bed-now.

GEORGE. No, the bed's occupied. And the bed in 650's

occupied too.

MAID Non capisco.

GEORGE. That makes two of us.

*(GEORGE pushes her out. PAMELA appears on the balcony from U.L. and taps on the window.)*

GEORGE. Oh, no! Sssh!

*(GEORGE indicates for her to go back, but Pamela taps*

*louder at the window. GEORGE lifts the window.*

*PAMELA is now wearing a negligee. SHE starts to come in and GEORGE tries to stop her.)*

GEORGE. *(Whispering urgently.)* I told you to stay next door.

PAMELA. What's taking you so long? You only came back to borrow Richard's dressing gown.

GEORGE. I couldn't find it.

PAMELA. Well, come on! I've ordered champagne and oysters. *(SHE pulls him to window.)*

GEORGE. But, Mrs. Willey!

PAMELA. Do as you're told, George!

*(SHE grabs him and kisses him as the WAITER pops his head through the window. HE is carrying a tray on which is champagne and oysters.)*

WAITER. Champagne and oysters!

GEORGE. *(Yells.)* Ahhh!

*(PAMELA and GEORGE break hurriedly from their embrace.)*

PAMELA. They're for suite 650.

WAITER. I know, but that's empty so I reckoned you'd all be in here.

GEORGE. *(Looks up to heaven.)* Take it next door!

WAITER. Right! I'll go the way I came, shall I?

GEORGE. Yes!

WAITER. Right! (To PAMELA.) Are you on the bride's side or the groom's? (Indicates GEORGE.)

(GEORGE almost dies.)

PAMELA. I beg your pardon?

GEORGE. Just do as you're told!

WAITER. Right! (The WAITER exits along the balcony U.L. with the tray.)

PAMELA. Come on! (PAMELA climbs out.)

GEORGE. Mrs. Willey, I'm a bit worried about Mr. Willey.

PAMELA. George, it's an all-night sitting. He'll be in the Commons till breakfast time.

GEORGE. (Looking at bedroom.) But he might pop in—I mean he might pop over—

(As GEORGE moves towards the corridor door, the window comes down with a BANG on Pamela's head. GEORGE stands transfixed for a moment with his back to the window. HE can't bring himself to look. HE then slowly turns and sees the prostrate PAMELA.)

GEORGE. Oh, my God! (GEORGE hurries over to the window and lifts it. HE pulls PAMELA into the room. Whispering urgently.) Mrs. Willey! Mrs. Willey!

PAMELA. (Holding her head.) Oh!

GEORGE. (Realising she's all right.) Oh, thank goodness!

PAMELA. (Smiling faintly.) What a kiss, George! (SHE slumps into GEORGE's arms.)  
GEORGE. Mrs. Willey!

(There is a KNOCK on the hall door. GEORGE staggers around with PAMELA who keeps slipping through his

arms. There is more KNOCKING from the hall door. GEORGE opens cupboard door and bundles PAMELA in. There is more KNOCKING from hall door.)

GEORGE. All right, all right!

(GEORGE opens the door. Nurse Foster (GLADYS) is standing there. SHE is wearing a private Nurse's uniform and carrying her coat. SHE strides past GEORGE into the room and looks around. GEORGE is dumbstruck. HE closes the door and gapes at her.)

GLADYS. So what have you got to say for yourself, Mr. Pigden?

GEORGE. (Dumbly.) Nurse Foster.

GLADYS. Your poor mother's worried to death, you know that!

GEORGE. (Dumbly.) Nurse Foster.

GLADYS. I'm surprised at you, really I am. You've always been so reliable until today.

GEORGE. Nurse Foster.

GLADYS. And what do you mean by getting married without telling anybody?

(GEORGE goes to speak but stops.)

GLADYS. Your mother's in a right state, I can tell you. I told her I wouldn't leave this hotel until I got some sense out of you.

GEORGE. Tell mother I'll explain when I get home.

GLADYS. Nurse Foster wants an explanation now, Mr. Pigden.

(The cupboard door opens. PAMELA steps out and comes face to face with GLADYS. PAMELA is still only semi-conscious.)

PAMELA. (As SHE steps out.) What a kiss, George. (To GLADYS.) Sorry, wrong room.

(PAMELA returns into the cupboard, closing the door. GLADYS looks at GEORGE who can only emit a silly giggle.)

GLADYS. Was that your new wife?

GEORGE. No, that's Mr. Willey's old one. (HE pulls her down from the cupboard.)

GLADYS. (Amazed.) Mr.—You mean that woman's your Minister's wife?

GEORGE. Yes.

GLADYS. She said "What a kiss, George."

GEORGE. It was something like that, wasn't it?

GLADYS. How many women have you got here?

GEORGE. I've lost count!

GLADYS. Mr. Pigden!

GEORGE. Please go home, Miss Foster! Mr. Willey's likely to come in any minute and so's everybody else.

GLADYS. (Sits purposefully in the chair R.) And where's this bride of yours then?

GEORGE. (Lifting her.) She's not my bride. She's Neil Kinno's secretary.

GLADYS. Neil Kinno's—

GEORGE. Shhh!

GLADYS. What have you been doing, Mr. Pigden?!

GEORGE. (Hissing.) I've been doing my best for everybody, Miss Foster! Now go home to mother!

GLADYS. Not without you!

GEORGE. Right! Then come next door.

(HE lifts her up and pulls her across him.)

GLADYS. Next door?

GEORGE. Suite 650. It's mine. Come on.

GLADYS. What on earth for?

GEORGE. To make mad passionate love.

GALDYS Mad passionate —?

GEORGE. Love, Nurse Foster!

(GEORGE grabs her and kisses her wildly. As GLADYS struggles GEORGE rubs his hand sexily up and down her leg. Finally GEORGE releases her.)

GLADYS. (Amazed.) Mr. Pigden!

GEORGE. God you're lovely! (GEORGE grabs her and kisses her passionately once more. GEORGE releases her.)

GLADYS. Have you gone mad?

GEORGE. Yes, you've driven me there! (GEORGE grabs her and kisses her. HE releases her.) Don't fight it, Nurse Foster!

GLADYS. Who's fighting it, Mr. Pigden?!

(SHE throws her handbag over her shoulder, grabs him and kisses him wildly, running her hand up and down his leg. Finally SHE releases him. GEORGE is almost destroyed.)

GLADYS. I always knew there was more to you.

GEORGE. Yes, there's not much left of it now though.

GLADYS. What about Mr. Willey and Neil Kinno's secretary?

GEORGE. Who wants them now you've turned up?

GLADYS. Come on! (SHE grabs him and pulls him to door.)

GEORGE. No! We always use the window.

GLADYS. The window?

GEORGE. *(HE pulls her to the window.)* It's safer. Tell you what—you go first. I'll take all my clothes off then I'll come along the balcony and join you.

GLADYS. George!

GEORGE. I want to be all naked and alluring. *(HE waggles his bottom seductively.)*

GLADYS. All right. You'll find me in the same condition.

*(SHE waggles her bottom and clambers out as GEORGE collects her handbag.)*

GEORGE. Quickly, Nurse Foster.

GLADYS. *(SHE leans back in.)* I think you can call me "Gladys."

GEORGE. Why? Oh, "Gladys." Yes, lovely.

*(Suddenly.)* Gladys, don't lean in like that!

GLADYS. *(Leans back.)* Why not?

*(The window descends with a BANG. GLADYS laughs, blows GEORGE a kiss and exits U.L. along balcony.)*

GEORGE. *(To himself.)* George, you've been wasting yourself all these years. *(HE hurries to the cupboard and opens it.)*

*(PAMELA is beginning to "come to.")*

GEORGE. Mrs. Willey!

PAMELA. Are you coming in to join me, George?

GEORGE. No, you've got to go home.

*(The bedroom door opens and RICHARD steps out with his back to GEORGE, talking to the unseen DETECTIVE.)*

RICHARD. You just lie there and relax, Harrington.

*(At the sound of RICHARD's voice, GEORGE steps into the cupboard with PAMELA and closes the door.)*

RICHARD. *(Looking round.)* George? George!

*(There is a KNOCK at the corridor door.)*

RICHARD. *(Sweetly.)* Who is it?

WAITER. *(Off.)* Room Service.

*(RICHARD opens the door. The WAITER steps D.L.)*

RICHARD. What do you want?

WAITER. Sign, please. *(HE produces his pad.)*

RICHARD. What's this for?

WAITER. Champagne and three dozen oysters. Suite 650.

RICHARD. I didn't order that.

WAITER. No. Mr. Mr. Pigden did.

RICHARD. Mr. Pigden ordered it?

WAITER. That's right.

*(During the ensuing dialogue the cupboard door falls open behind Richard's back. PAMELA is leaning up against the back wall, semi-conscious with a happy smile on her face. GEORGE is standing spread-eagled facing her with his back to the room. PAMELA has her arms around George's waist and her head on his shoulder. GEORGE looks around, horrified and sees RICHARD*

and the WAITER, who don't see him. GEORGE steps out of the cupboard and gingerly starts to close the door.)

RICHARD. He can't have done. Go away.

WAITER. He did, I tell you.

RICHARD. You've made a mistake.

WAITER. No, I haven't. Suite 650.

RICHARD. Suite 650?

(RICHARD turns to see GEORGE just about closing the cupboard door.)

RICHARD. George!

GEORGE. (Jumping.) Ah! (GEORGE bangs the cupboard door, turns, puts his hands up and moves away from the cupboard.)

RICHARD. What the hell are you doing?

GEORGE. Coming out of the cupboard.

RICHARD. What the blazes were you doing in there?

GEORGE. Seemed like a good idea at the time.

RICHARD. Silly fool. And did you order champagne and oysters for suite 650?

GEORGE. (Laughing foolishly.) Yes.

RICHARD. Why?

GEORGE. Seemed like a good idea at the—

RICHARD. (Interrupting.) Oh, shut up! Now, Harold,

Id—

WAITER. (Ignoring RICHARD. To GEORGE.) Here, it's taking you a long time to get cracking on your honeymoon, isn't it?

GEORGE. Yes!

WAITER. And was that other one the mother-in-law?

GEORGE. Yes! (GEORGE pushes him to door.)

RICHARD. (To WAITER.) Before you go, Harold I'd like to ask a little favour—

WAITER. (Rubbing his hands.) Lovely!

RICHARD. Do you by some chance have any sleeping pills?

GEORGE. Sleeping pills?

RICHARD. (To GEORGE.) For your brother, Fred. He's starting to remember too much. (To WAITER.) The stronger, the better.

WAITER. I'm sure one of the chambermaids will have some.

RICHARD. Get them here as soon as you can.

WAITER. No sooner said than done.

(The WAITER coughs and holds out his hand. RICHARD feels for his money clip but remembers it's all gone.)

RICHARD. George, do the honours, will you?

GEORGE. (Brings out a money clip. To WAITER. Holding out a £5 note.) You needn't think you're going

through my salary as well.

WAITER. The night is young. (The WAITER takes the money and goes.)

RICHARD. I'll finish putting Harrington to bed while you stand guard here in case Ronnie returns.

GEORGE. (Stopping RICHARD.) Mr. Willey! I've got to tell you something! (GEORGE looks at the cupboard and then back to RICHARD.)

RICHARD. (Impatiently.) What?

GEORGE. (Hardly able to say it.) Mrs. Willey.

RICHARD. (Not hearing.) What?

GEORGE. Mrs. Willey.

RICHARD. Mrs. Willey?

GEORGE. Ssh!

RICHARD. What about Mrs. Willey?

GEORGE. She's in the cupboard!

*(Richard's mind races as HE tries to assimilate George's remark but face remains impassive.)*

RICHARD. *(Flatly.)* Pamela's in the cupboard.

GEORGE. Yes. In her nightie.

RICHARD. Pamela's in the cupboard in her nightie.

GEORGE. Yes.

RICHARD. Drinking a cup of cocoa, I suppose.

GEORGE. No!

RICHARD. *(Flatly.)* What's she doing in the cupboard in her nightie?

GEORGE. She's waiting for me to take all my clothes off.

*(There is a pause then RICHARD suddenly bursts into uncontrolled laughter. Finally HE pairs GEORGE affectionately on both cheeks while GEORGE just stands there looking blank. RICHARD staggers to the settee, laughing. The PHONE rings. RICHARD lifts receiver.)*

RICHARD. *(On phone, still laughing.)* Hello? *(HE stops laughing.)* What do you want now, Nurse Foster?!

GEORGE. Oh, my God! *(To RICHARD.)* Let me talk to her.

*(RICHARD indicates for GEORGE to be quiet.)*

RICHARD. *(On phone.)* Look, tell Mr. Pigden's mother he'll be home before midnight ... well, where are you then? *(HE listens for a moment.)* *(To GEORGE. Flatly.)* What's Miss Foster doing in suite 650?

GEORGE. *(Hesitates.)* She's waiting for me to take all my clothes off.

RICHARD. *(After a pause.)* Then what?

GEORGE. She's expecting me to make mad passionate love.

RICHARD. *(On phone.)* Nurse Foster, I hope this service of yours is provided on the National Health! *(HE slams the phone down.)* I suppose the champagne and caviare were for Nurse Foster?

GEORGE. No. They were for Mrs. Willey.

*(RICHARD hesitates then looks at the cupboard and back to GEORGE.)*

GEORGE. I tried to tell you, Mr. Willey.

*(RICHARD opens cupboard. PAMELA steps out.)*

PAMELA. Oh, Richard, I've had such a bang.

*(RICHARD remains calm, turns PAMELA around, gently pushes her into the cupboard and closes the door. GEORGE hurries to RICHARD.)*

GEORGE. She had a bang on her head, Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. I don't need to know the position, Pigden!

GEORGE. She was hit by the window.

RICHARD. Was that before, during or after?

GEORGE. Mrs. Willey wanted to give you a little surprise, that's all.

RICHARD. She's done that all right!

GEORGE. So please get her dressed and make her go home before she meets that Detective or Ronnie.

WAITER. *(Enters with a bottle of sleeping tablets.)* Sleeping pills!

RICHARD. I'll deal with you later, Pigden.

(RICHARD goes to take the bottle of pills but the  
WALTER removes the bottle and holds out his hand.)

RICHARD. Pigden!

(GEORGE hands over a £5 note which RICHARD gives to  
the WALTER. RICHARD takes the pills and hands  
them to GEORGE.)

RICHARD. (To WALTER.) And you can go now. We  
won't be requiring your services any more tonight.

WALTER. You never know your luck.

JANE. (Rushes through open corridor door.) Mr.  
Willey!

RICHARD. (To WALTER.) Don't go away.

GEORGE. Miss Worthington! Your husband's still on  
the rampage.

JANE. And so's the Prime Minister, I'm afraid.

RICHARD. Mrs. Thatcher?

WALTER. I don't think there's room for her in here.

(RICHARD and GEORGE glare at WALTER.)

GEORGE. What's happened Miss Worthington?

JANE. Well, when I got over there the debate was  
getting out of hand and the House was in an uproar.

RICHARD. But what happened?

JANE. Well, Mrs. Thatcher started to get a bit flustered.  
Then one of the Labour Back Benchers stood up and said  
"It's a pity the Prime Minister's lapdog isn't in the House  
to protect her."

RICHARD. Lapdog?

GEORGE. That's you, Mr. Willey.

(RICHARD glares at GEORGE.)

JANE. Well, of course, when Mrs. Thatcher realised  
you weren't there, Mr. Willey, steam started coming out of  
her head. I think she actually kicked your Chief Whip's  
ankle.

GEORGE. Oh, Mr. Willey!

WALTER. Things are starting to hot up now, aren't  
they?

RICHARD. Be quiet!

JANE. Look, I've got to get back. If Mr. Kinnoch knew  
I was warning you, Mr. Willey, I'd be out on my ear.

RICHARD. You're a dear sweet girl. We'll both go.

(RICHARD moves to go but GEORGE grabs him.)

GEORGE. No! You go Miss Worthington. Mr. Willey  
will be there in two minutes. But first he's got to handle  
something—*here!*

(GEORGE flicks his finger surreptitiously across Richard's  
"crutch" to indicate the cupboard. RICHARD and JANE  
look down at George's wild gesticulation. The  
DETECTIVE enters from the bedroom and points  
dramatically at RICHARD.)

DETECTIVE. Hey!

(THEY all look at him.)

DETECTIVE. I've remembered why I came to the  
Westminster Hotel—!

(RICHARD, GEORGE and JANE exchange a quick worried glance and look back at the DETECTIVE.)

DETECTIVE.—It's no good, it's gone again.  
RICHARD. Go and he down.

(RICHARD pushes DETECTIVE into bedroom.)

JANE. What's that Private Detective doing in your bedroom?

RICHARD. Don't worry. George is dealing with him.  
WAITER. (To GEORGE.) Is your brother Fred a Private Detective?

(GEORGE glares at him.)

GEORGE. (Pleading To WAITER.) Go away!

RICHARD. (To GEORGE.) Go and give your brother those pills, George. We've got to get back to the Commons!

(RICHARD takes Jane's arm. GEORGE grabs RICHARD.)

GEORGE. But first you you've got to handle something.

(HE repeats his "flicking." RICHARD slaps his hand.)

RICHARD. I'll make a brief speech, chuck a few insults at the Labour Front Bench and be back in ten minutes.

GEORGE. (Grabs RICHARD.) The world could come to an end in ten minutes!

DETECTIVE. (Returns and points a finger at JANE.) I know you, young lady, don't I?

(RICHARD and JANE exchange a brief glance.)

JANE. (Brightly.) I don't think so.

DETECTIVE. Your face is very familiar

GEORGE. She's a very familiar young lady.

WAITER. How do you know? You haven't had a chance to find out.

(The WAITER chuckles. GEORGE glares at him.)

DETECTIVE. (To JANE.) I know I've seen you somewhere.

RICHARD. Of course you've seen her. She's married to Doctor Livingstone.

WAITER. (Looks around.) Dr. Livingstone?

(GEORGE clips him around the head. GEORGE smiles and pretends to the others to be smoothing down the WAITER's hair.)

DETECTIVE. (To RICHARD.) And you're sure my name's not "Jack"?

RICHARD. Positive.

DETECTIVE. "Willey" doesn't seem to fit either.

WAITER. Bloody hell!

RICHARD. (To WAITER.) Buzz off.

DETECTIVE. And, you know, Richard, it's damn strange but I just don't feel as though I'm your brother.

WAITER. He's Mr. Willey's brother?

(GEORGE clips him around the head. GEORGE smiles at the others and tidies the Waiter's hair.)

RICHARD. You take Harrington into the bedroom, doctor.

WAITER. Harrington? I thought his name was—

*(The WAITER stops in mid-sentence and, before GEORGE can do anything, HE hits his own head. THEY turn to look. The WAITER smiles at THEM at tides his own hair.)*

RICHARD. Doctor, will you put Harrington to bed and give him his sleeping pills! *(To JANE.)* Come on!

GEORGE. *(Grabs RICHARD.)* Mr. Willey, I'm more worried about who's going to handle—

*(GEORGE repeats his "flick" gestures. RICHARD slaps George's hand.)*

RICHARD. *(Interrupting.)* We're all worried, doctor. Just stay with the patient until he drops off.

DETECTIVE. Richard, I have no strong feelings about the doctor either.

GEORGE. *(Grimly. At RICHARD.)* Well, I've got strong feelings about a lot of people. *(GEORGE pushes DETECTIVE into bedroom.)*

RICHARD. *(Pointedly.)* Then clean out the cupboard here and the bed in 650! I'll be back as soon as I can.

*(RICHARD moves to go but WAITER stops him.)*

WAITER. Here, Mr. Willey! How can his *(Points to GEORGE.)* brother be your *(Points to RICHARD.)* brother as well?

RICHARD. We all had the same mother but George and Fred and Bert had a different father from me.

*(The WAITER looks at GEORGE. GEORGE leans his head against the wall and sobs. The WAITER moves to GEORGE and taps GEORGE on the shoulder.)*

WAITER. Just a minute, what's your relations with Mr. Willey then?

GEORGE. *(Pointedly at RICHARD.)* Very strained!

RICHARD. *(To GEORGE.)* Go and look after Fred, George!

GEORGE. All right! But I'm very glad that Fred, Bert and I had a different father from you! *(GEORGE exits into bedroom.)*

JANE. Come on, Mr. Willey. Mrs. Thatcher will be going potty.

RICHARD. Right. *(To WAITER.)* You can cope till I get back, can't you, Harold?

WAITER. Oh, yes, I reckon there's a lot of mileage in this yet.

JANE. Hurry up, Mr. Willey. *(SHE opens the door to leave but slams it shut again.)* Ronnie!

RICHARD. Ronnie!

RICHARD. *(To JANE.)* Window! *(RICHARD pushes past the WAITER banging the Waiter's head on the cupboard door. RICHARD rushes to the window and exits along balcony U R.)*

WAITER. Is Ronnie one of the good guys or the bad guys?

JANE. He's the worst!

*(JANE pushes past the WAITER, banging the Waiter's head on the cupboard door. There is a KNOCK on the corridor door.)*

WAITER. Coming. (The WAITER goes to open the door.)

JANE. (Moving back to WAITER.) Don't open that door!

(It's too late. RONNIE steps into the room. HE is dressed in only a towel and his shoes. His hair is soaking wet. JANE can't make the window, so she opens the cupboard door (the semiconscious PAMELA is happily clutching the clothes rail) and goes in. As the cupboard door closes RONNIE comes into the room, glowering. The WAITER surveys him, blandly.)

WAITER. Good evening, Sir. Are you looking for the hotel swimming pool?

RONNIE. I fell into the hotel swimming pool.

WAITER. (Nods.) I trust you're staying here. It's for hotel guests only.

RONNIE. (Ominously.) Where's Mr. Willey?

WAITER. Ah, he's just this second left.

RONNIE. I didn't see him.

WAITER. No, he took the usual route, through the window.

RONNIE. (Getting hysterical.) Well, I'm looking for his Secretary, George Pigden!

WAITER. Ah, yes, Mr. Pigden. He was here a moment ago, too.

RONNIE. In this room?

WAITER. Yes.

RONNIE. Did he have a young woman with him?

WAITER. He did indeed. His new bride.

RONNIE. New bride?!

(RONNIE bursts into tears, falls to his knees and clasps the WAITER around the waist. The WAITER stands

there at a total loss. HE doesn't know whether to comfort RONNIE or not. Finally, the WAITER, to be on the safe side, puts his hands on his head.)

WAITER. Yes. Funny thing, the Pigdens and Mr. Willey all seem to have disappeared at the mention of the name "Ronnie."

RONNIE. Right! (RONNIE moves to the window.)

WAITER. If I bump into any of them, Sir, shall I say who called?

RONNIE. Yes, Ronnie! (RONNIE clammers out of the open window.)

WAITER. Right, Ronnie. (Realising.) Ronnie?!

RONNIE. (Leans back in.) What is it?

WAITER. Just hang on a second.

(There is a pause of about two seconds and then the window descends with a BANG on Ronnie's neck.)

RONNIE. Ohhh!

WAITER. Oh dear oh dear oh dear! (The WAITER pulls the curtains across the window and then KNOCKS on the cupboard door.) (Calls.) The bad guy's bitten the dust.

(JANE comes out of the cupboard. PAMELA is seen clutching the clothes rail.)

JANE. (Closing cupboard door. To WAITER.) Thanks. (SHE runs to the hall door and then stops.) Oh, I don't know if anybody knows but there's a lady hanging in the cupboard.

WAITER. A lady?

JANE. In a negligee.

WAITER. Oh, that lady. She's your mother, isn't she?

(*JANE goes to speak but decides there's no time and exits. The WAITER takes out his pad and pencil.*)

WAITER. (Writing.) (To himself.) For eliminating one bad guy, £10.

(*The WAITER exits into corridor, closing the door. The curtains are opened by a dazed RONNIE.*)

RONNIE. Oh, my bloody head! (*HE extricates himself from the window.*) Bloody swine Pigden! (*HE starts to move to corridor door but stops on seeing the telephone directories beneath the table.*) Of course, Pigden's address!

(*RONNIE starts to sift through the appropriate book for "Pigden" as GEORGE tip-toes out of the bedroom door.*)  
GEORGE gently closes the door, hurries to the cupboard and opens the door, not having seen RONNIE.)

RONNIE. (*Finding the number.*) George Pigden!  
GEORGE. (Yells.) Ahhh! (*GEORGE slams the cupboard door closed.*)

RONNIE. (*Reads.*) 25, Kenilworth Avenue, Wimbledon.

(*GEORGE turns, closing cupboard door. RONNIE throws the telephone directory down and moves towards hall door.*)

GEORGE. (*Worried.*) What are you doing, Ronnie?

RONNIE. Going round to Pigden's house.

GEORGE. No, I'm not home! I mean *he's* not home. He's in the swimming pool, remember.

RONNIE. The only one who's been in the swimming pool is me! He's done a bunk, the crafty devil.

(*HE opens door to go but GEORGE grabs him and pulls him across him into the room.*)

GEORGE. No!

RONNIE. Let go of me, Dr. Livingstone!

(*GEORGE drops to his knees and grabs Ronnie's towel.*)

RONNIE. I'm going round to Pigden's house!

(*The MANAGER enters furiously, looking for GEORGE and stops dead on seeing GEORGE on his knees pulling at Ronnie's towel.*)

GEORGE. No! No, please! Please, please, please!  
RONNIE. Let go!

GEORGE. No, Ronnie, you can't leave me!

(*The MANAGER reacts.*)

GEORGE. Ronnie, please! Don't go.

RONNIE. I'm going to give him what he's been asking for!

(*The MANAGER reacts.*)

GEORGE. No! I want you to stay with me, Ronnie!

MANAGER. Stop that!

GEORGE. Ahhh!

(*GEORGE falls on his face, releasing RONNIE who secures his towel. GEORGE remains on his knees.*)

MANAGER. If you don't leave this hotel I shall call in our Security Officer and have you removed in handcuffs!

GEORGE. Quite right.

MANAGER. (To RONNIE.) And if Ronnie doesn't vacate the hotel immediately—

RONNIE. I'm vacating it all right.

(RONNIE strides past GEORGE but GEORGE, still on his knees, grabs Ronnie's towel from behind.)

GEORGE. No, please!

(GEORGE is pulling the towel and RONNIE is trying to hold it up.)

GEORGE. Please, Ronnie, Ronnie!

MANAGER. Now, stop that! (HE smacks GEORGE's hand.) That's naughty! Stop it, I say!

(The MANAGER gets between them to separate them and GEORGE, thinking it's RONNIE, pulls at the MANAGER's trousers which come down to his ankles.)

MANAGER. Ahhh!

(The DETECTIVE enters from the bedroom. HE now has the pajama jacket on as well as the trousers. but still wears the bowler hat. HE is very alert.)

DETECTIVE. I've got it!  
GEORGE. Ahhh!

(The melee disperses with GEORGE falling to his knees, the MANAGER pulling his trousers up and RONNIE re-securing his towel.)

MANAGER. Points at DETECTIVE! (To GEORGE.) You said he'd gone!

DETECTIVE. Baker! That's my name. Baker!

GEORGE. Go back to bed!

MANAGER. He's not staying here! (To "deaf Fred,"

Shouting.) You have another wedding to go to.

DETECTIVE. (Reacts.) I've been married to Mrs. Baker for fifteen years.

MANAGER. I'm getting Security! (The MANAGER exits into hall struggling with his trousers.)

GEORGE. (To RONNIE.) You musn't mind poor old Harrington.

RONNIE. I don't give a damn about Harrington. DETECTIVE. No, Jack Baker.

RONNIE. (Realising.) Jack Baker?

DETECTIVE. That's me.

RONNIE. Wait a minute! (HE takes off the Detective's bowler hat. Astonished.) (To GEORGE.) This bloke's my Private Detective. What the hell's happened to him?

GEORGE. (Lightly.) Nothing untoward as far as I know.

DETECTIVE. (Pointing.) You're Ronnie Worthington!

RONNIE. I bloody well know who I am.

DETECTIVE. Mrs. Worthington!

(GEORGE looks worried.)

RONNIE. Do you know where my wife is?

DETECTIVE. Oh, yes. (HE goes to speak then yawns and slumps to the floor.)

GEORGE. My patient should really be in bed.

RONNIE. (Steps across the DETECTIVE.) You keep quiet, Dr. Livingstone.

GEORGE. Of course.

DETECTIVE. I can see right up your towel, Mr. Worthington.

RONNIE. (Furiously kneels down again and grabs the DETECTIVE.) (To DETECTIVE.) Where's my wife?!

DETECTIVE. (Suddenly bright.) Window!

RONNIE. (Stops shaking the DETECTIVE and looks at the window.) My wife went out the window?

DETECTIVE. (Moves up to the window.) Window yes.

RONNIE. Right. (RONNIE starts to move to window.)

DETECTIVE. Hey, I remember everything now!

(RONNIE stops and turns. GEORGE is looking desperate. The DETECTIVE opens his mouth to speak but yawns and curls up once more on the floor to the R. of the chair with his head resting on it.)

RONNIE. (To GEORGE.) Right, first I'm going to find my wife and then I'm going to drag her round to Pigden's house.

GEORGE. There's no need to do that, Ronnie!

RONNIE. I'll have it out with both of them.

GEORGE. In that case, Ronnie, just hang on a second!

(There is a pause during which the window does not fall.)

RONNIE. What the hell is it?

GEORGE. Er—

(GEORGE hesitates and looks up, then stamps on the floor, hoping the window will fall. It doesn't, RONNIE is still waiting for GEORGE to speak. GEORGE

hesitates, stamps again and then exhibits a few Karate blows. RONNIE watches bemused. Still the window doesn't fall.)

RONNIE. (Finally.) Oh, bloody hell! (RONNIE exits U.R. of balcony.)

(GEORGE turns away furious that the window didn't fall—the window falls with a BANG. GEORGE looks angrily back at the window. GLADYS, wrapped in a towel, appears outside from U.L. balcony and TAPS on the window. SHE'S carrying Pamela's clothes. GEORGE opens window but prevents GLADYS from coming in.)

GEORGE. Nurse Foster, I told you to stay in suite 650.

GLADYS. (Angrily.) I found these clothes in a neat pile at the foot of the bed.

GEORGE. They're Mrs. Willey's, thank you. (Realising.) Where are your clothes?

GLADYS. In a neat pile at the foot of the bed! I trust Mrs. Willey's leaving.

GEORGE. Definitely.

GLADYS. And what about Neil Kinnock's secretary?

GEORGE. She's already left. You wait for me next door.

GLADYS. (Seeing DETECTIVE.) Who's that?

GEORGE. Him? Oh, he comes with the suite. You get back, Gladys. I'll sort out Mrs. Willey.

(HE turns to go towards the cupboard as the window comes down with a BANG on Gladys's neck. For a moment

OUT OF ORDER

GEORGE is transfixed and can't bring himself to look.  
Finally HE does.)

GEORGE. Oh, my God!

(There is a KNOCK on the corridor door.)

GEORGE. Ahhh! (GEORGE in his fright throws Pamela's clothes in the air.)

DETECTIVE. (Sitting up.) I think I've got it!  
GEORGE. Shut up!

(GEORGE snacks the DETECTIVE across the back of the head and he subsides. There is further KNOCKING at the door. GEORGE quickly lifts the window and pulls GLADYS in. SHE is very dazed.)

GLADYS. Oh, my goodness me.

GEORGE. Oh, thank heavens!

GLADYS. What happened, George?

GEORGE. The usual.

GLADYS. Oh, what a kiss!

(SHE falls into George's arms.)

(There is more KNOCKING at hall door.)

GEORGE. (Sweetly.) Who is it?

RICHARD. (Off.) It's me for God's sake.

Open the door, George.

(GEORGE trying to support Gladys, opens the door.)

RICHARD. The debate is going disastrously—! (HE stops on seeing GLADYS in George's arms.) Who the hell's that?

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GEORGE. Nurse Foster.

RICHARD. You don't hang about, do you? (Sees DETECTIVE.) Why isn't he in bed?

GEORGE. (Angrily.) I'm not sure!

RICHARD. How many pills did you give him?

GEORGE. One.

RICHARD. One pill?

GEORGE. No, one bottle.  
(The window falls with a BANG. In his fright GEORGE drops GLADYS.)

RICHARD. Look, I can't stay, the debate is going disastrously for the Government over there.

GEORGE. Things are going disastrously for everybody over here.

RICHARD/GEORGE. (Together.) Ronnie!

RICHARD. Have you seen my wife home?

GEORGE. No, she's still in the cupboard.

(GEORGE collects up Pamela's clothes.)

RICHARD. What?!

GEORGE. And you've got to get her dressed. And Ronnie fell into the swimming pool and the Manager's gone to get the Security Officer.

(RICHARD grabs Pamela's clothes from GEORGE and then opens the cupboard door, pulling PAMELA out. HE is acting very much the severe husband.)

RICHARD. Out you come, Pamela!

GEORGE. In you go, Gladys.

(GEORGE pushes GLADYS, who has not been noticed by PAMELA, into the cupboard.)

PAMELA. (To RICHARD.) Good evening, Richard.  
RICHARD. (Firmly.) Put your clothes on, Pamela and then go home.

(HE thrusts Pamela's clothes at her and pushes her towards the bedroom but SHE stops on seeing the DETECTIVE.)

PAMELA. Who's that?

RICHARD. That's George's brother, Fred.

GEORGE. Oh, no! (GEORGE collapses into the divan.)

PAMELA. I didn't even know George had a brother.  
RICHARD. Fred called in to see George. Before he goes to Felixstowe to see Bert.

PAMELA. Bert?

RICHARD. That's George's other brother. Now go and put your clothes on!

PAMELA. (To GEORGE.) You've got two brothers? GEORGE. (Glaring at RICHARD.) I've got three actually but I'm not talking to the third one.

PAMELA. What's happened to—er—Fred?

RICHARD. He had too much to drink at George's wedding.

GEORGE. (Holding his head.) Oh, my God! (GEORGE buries his head in his hands.)

PAMELA. George's what?!

RICHARD. Yes, George got married this morning, didn't you, George?

GEORGE. (Growing.) I suppose I did, yes!

PAMELA. (Moving to GEORGE.) Well, you sly old thing, George.

(GEORGE emits a nervous giggle.)

PAMELA. So what's your bride's name?  
GEORGE. (Tersely.) Felixstowe!

PAMELA. What?!

RICHARD. He met her in Felixstowe. Her name's Ivy.  
PAMELA. Well, Ivy doesn't seem to be very much in evidence. (To GEORGE.) Where exactly is the lucky lady?

GEORGE. (Unhelpfully.) I don't know.  
PAMELA. What?

RICHARD. (Getting desperate.) He doesn't know exactly where she is. They've been harking around playing hide and seek.

PAMELA. Hide and seek?

RICHARD. Just get dressed, Pamela, and go home!

(The window opens and RONNIE comes in. HE is still in his towel and shoes. RICHARD hastily pulls PAMELA behind him.)

RONNIE. She's given me the bloody slip again.  
RICHARD. Mr. Worthington, do you mind!

RONNIE. Yes, I do bloody mind.  
PAMELA. Richard!

RICHARD. Yes, my sweet!

PAMELA. Who is this?

RONNIE. Never mind who I am. (To DETECTIVE.) You'd better pull yourself together. (To GEORGE.) Can't you give him something, doctor?

(PAMELA who is standing next to GEORGE, looks amazed at him. GEORGE hesitates and then decides to look around for the "doctor".)

RONNIE. Oy, (Trying to get GEORGE's attention.) Dr. Livingstone!

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PAMELA. To congratulate her.  
 RICHARD. Darling, Ivy's very busy playing hide and seek.

PAMELA. I only want to meet the girl.

RICHARD. (*Blustering.*) But she doesn't want to meet you! (*Feigning sudden anger.*) And I don't want you to meet her.

PAMELA. Why on earth not?

RICHARD. Because I really didn't take to Ivy at all! (*Furiously.*) I'm sorry, George, but I have to say that I found her belligerent, bombastic and totally without charm!

GEORGE. (*Stands there considering this. Finally.*) Well I like her.

PAMELA. (*Amazed.*) Richard! That wasn't a very nice thing to say.

RICHARD. Well, that's how Ivy struck me. She's bloody ugly, George!

PAMELA. Richard!

RICHARD. I'm a forthright man, Pamela.

PAMELA. Did you let Ivy know how you feel about her?

RICHARD. Most definitely, didn't I, George?

GEORGE. Yes, he said to her, "You're bloody ugly, Ivy."

PAMELA. Well no wonder the poor girl's hiding. Go and find her, George. (*PAMELA moves to the bedroom.*)

RICHARD. Pamela!

PAMELA. You go ahead, Richard. Mrs. Thatcher will be getting impatient. (*PAMELA exits into the bedroom.*)

RICHARD. George, I think our situation has deteriorated somewhat.

GEORGE. Deteriorated?! You don't know what you've done to me! And what about poor Nurse Foster?!

RICHARD. She'll keep, she's in the cupboard.

GEORGE. I've got to get her home! And God knows what we'll tell mother.

RICHARD. Never mind Nurse Foster and your mother. Pamela won't leave this suite until we find Ivy.

GEORGE. In that case Mrs. Willey will be here for ever.

RICHARD. Wait a minute! We can find Ivy.

GEORGE. How for heaven's sake?

RICHARD. Nurse Foster! In the cupboard!

GEORGE. (*Takes a moment for the implication to sink in.*) Oh, no!

RICHARD. If Nurse Foster's prepared to make mad passionate love to you she'll do anything.

GEORGE. Mr. Willey!

DETECTIVE. (*Sits up.*) Mr. Willey!

GEORGE. Shut up!

(*GEORGE whacks him across the back of the head and the DETECTIVE subsides. RICHARD pushes GEORGE to the cupboard.*)

RICHARD. You tell Nurse Foster what she's got to do. GEORGE. Don't you think you've ruined enough lives for one evening?

RICHARD. George, the Prime Minister's waiting for me!

(*There is urgent KNOCKING on the hall door.*)

GEORGE. She's come to collect you!

RICHARD. Get in there!

(*HE pushes GEORGE into the cupboard. GLADYS is seen hanging onto the rail. RICHARD closes the door.*)

RICHARD. (*Sweetly.*) Who is it?  
 WAITER. (*Off.*) It's your favourite waiter.

(RICHARD opens the door. The WAITER hurries in.)

WAITER. I got here as fast as I could.  
 RICHARD. Nobody sent for you.

WAITER. No, but I knew there was bound to be some crisis or other. You need a Mrs. Ivy Pigden, don't you?

RICHARD. How did you know that?

WAITER. I was listening at the keyhole. (*Calls off:*)  
 Come on! (*To RICHARD.*) Close your eyes!

(The MAID enters. SHE is now wearing a bright but ill-fitting dress and a hat with a veil. The WAITER pulls her into the room and thrusts her at RICHARD.)

RICHARD. (*Referring to the MAID.*) Who's that?

WAITER. This is your erstwhile chambermaid, Maria.

RICHARD. What are you talking about?

WAITER. Mrs. Willey won't leave until she's met Ivy. (*Pleased.*) Well, meet Mrs. Ivy Pigden.

(The MAID smiles coyly. RICHARD looks aghast towards the cupboard.)

RICHARD. (*Horried.*) Get her out of here, quickly!

(RICHARD grabs the MAID as PAMELA comes in from the bedroom. SHE is now dressed. RICHARD pulls the MAID behind him.)

PAMELA. (*As SHE enters.*) Now, George, have you found—oh! You still here, Richard?

RICHARD. (*Tries to mask the MAID.*) I thought I'd hang on for you, my precious.

(RICHARD puts his arms around PAMELA and turns her away. At the same time HE indicates for the WAITER to remove the MAID.)

PAMELA. I told you I'll be over when I've said "hello" to George's bride.

WAITER. (*To RICHARD.*) You see. (*The WAITER pushes the MAID forward into the centre of the room.*)

PAMELA. (*Seeing the "Bride."*) Oh.

RICHARD. (*Glaring at the WAITER.*) Say "hello", Ivy!

(PAMELA is rather surprised at the sight of IVY. PAMELA looks at RICHARD.)

RICHARD. (*Quietly.*) I told you she was bloody ugly.

PAMELA. Richard! (*To IVY.*) Hello, Ivy.

RICHARD. Well, there you are, you've said "hello" to Ivy."

(GEORGE comes out of the cupboard with GLADYS and marches down to beside the MAID.)

GEORGE. I'd like you to say "hello to Ivy."

(EVERYBODY reacts suitably. RICHARD nearly dies.)

RICHARD. (*Flatly.*) Pamela has already said "hello" to Ivy.

(*RICHARD indicates the MAID. GEORGE looks at her. The MAID puts her arm through George's arm and smiles at him. GEORGE nods.*)

GLADYS. What's going on, George?!

GEORGE. (*Indicating RICHARD.*) Ask the vicar!

PAMELA. (*Referring to GLADYS.*) Who exactly is that, George?!

GLADYS. I'm Nurse Foster!

PAMELA. Nurse Foster?

RICHARD. They couldn't afford a Matron of Honour so they got the next best thing. Anyway, you've met Ivy.

PAMELA. Yes. (*To the MAID.*) You must be so thrilled, Ivy.

(*The MAID doesn't say anything and then looks to the WAITER for guidance. EVERYBODY then looks at the WAITER.*)

WAITER. Ivy doesn't speak any English.

(*GEORGE and RICHARD both close their eyes. GEORGE collapses onto divan and RICHARD onto the chair.*)

PAMELA. No English?

RICHARD. (*Tersely.*) Didn't you mention that to Pamela, George?

GEORGE. (*Tersely.*) I forgot.

RICHARD. (*Rises.*) Ivy's Spanish.

WAITER. Ivy's Italian.

RICHARD. Half Spanish, half Italian.

PAMELA. (*To GEORGE.*) You met her in Felixstowe, George?

GLADYS. (*To GEORGE.*) Felixstowe?

GEORGE. (*Rises.*) Yes, Felixstowe! On the beach.

RICHARD. She'd swum over from Venice!

GLADYS. Venice?

GEORGE. (*To MAID.*) Waiter take you back to suite 650, Ivy!

RICHARD. Yes, off we all go then!

(*THEY all prepare to move. The MANAGER comes in from the corridor.*)

MANAGER. If this room is not vacated within five minutes I have a Security Guard in the corridor who will arrest all of you. And when you leave, Mr. Pigden, take your brother with you.

GEORGE. Yes, of course. We're both going to Bert's wedding.

GLADYS/PAMELA. (*Together.*) Bert's wedding?

RICHARD. The Pigdens are potty about weddings.

MANAGER. The Pigdens are potty, full stop! (*To the WAITER.*) (*Angrily exasperated.*) And why do I keep finding you here, Cromwell?

WAITER. Just lucky, I suppose.

MANAGER. (*Amazed.*) (*To MAID.*) And what are you doing in here dressed like that, Maria?!

MAID. Bed. (*SHE curtseys to the MANAGER.*)

PAMELA. Maria? (*To GEORGE.*) I thought her name was Ivy.

GEORGE. It is. Ivy Maria.

(*THEY all look at GEORGE who smiles politely. The MANAGER, exasperated, grabs the MAID and exits with her into corridor.*)

PAMELA. Richard?

RICHARD. Yes, my sweet?

PAMELA. Why did the Manager take Ivy off like that?

RICHARD. It's an old Italian custom.

WAITER. Mr. Willey.

RICHARD. Yes, Harold?

WAITER. (To RICHARD.) Shall I continue to receive my emolument from Mr. Pigden?

RICHARD. Yes, Harold.

(GEORGE goes to get money from his pocket.)

WAITER. (To GEORGE.) I think a monthly Banker's Order is best thing. (WAITER exits.)

GLADYS. I don't know what I'm going to tell your mother about all this, Mr. Pigden.

GEORGE. For a start you can tell her I've met the woman I'm going to marry.

GLADYS. (Frostily.) Have you, Mr. Pigden?

GEORGE. I have, Nurse Foster.

GLADYS. And who's that, may I ask?

GEORGE. You!

GLADYS. (Looks at him dumbfounded.) Me?!

GEORGE. You've been magnificent this evening (HE takes her hands in his.)

GLADYS. (Overcome.) Have I, Mr. Pigden?

GEORGE. What a woman!

GLADYS. I think you're pretty magnificent yourself, George.

GEORGE. Do you really, Gladys?

RICHARD. Give her a kiss for God's sake!

(HE pushes GEORGE into Gladys's arms. GEORGE takes her arm and as THEY exit, Gladys's towel slips to the floor and for a brief moment we see her naked rear view. Oblivious, GEORGE and GLADYS exit, looking into each other's eyes.)

RICHARD. That reminds me!

PAMELA. What?

RICHARD. I've got to face the prime minister.

(MUSIC as RICHARD hurriedly pulls PAMELA across him and THEY exit into corridor.)

CURTAIN

(PAMELA looks amazed at GEORGE again. GEORGE looks around for "Dr. Livingstone." HE then gets up and searches under the divan for the "doctor." The window BANGS shut.)

RICHARD/GEORGE. (Together.) Ahhh!

RONNIE. (To GEORGE. Referring to DETECTIVE.) You'd better wake him up. I need him for my evidence.

PAMELA. Evidence?

RONNIE. Now where's my wife hiding? (RONNIE exits into the bedroom.)

RICHARD. (To PAMELA.) Ronnie and his wife are playing hide and seek too.

PAMELA. Who exactly is Ronnie?

RICHARD. Ronnie's on the bride's side of the family. He's married to one of Ivy's cousins.

GEORGE. Oh, my God! (GEORGE walks to the divan and collapses.)

RICHARD. Sweet boy, Ronnie.

PAMELA. He called George "Doctor Livingstone."

RICHARD. That's right.

PAMELA. Why did he do that?

RICHARD. (To GEORGE.) Why did he do that, George?

GEORGE. (Slowly stands up.) Because that's who I am! Dr. Livingstone! Fred and Bert's brother and half brother to Trickey-Dicky!

(GEORGE thrusts his face at RICHARD giving RICHARD a stony glare. RONNIE re-enters distraught, slamming the door.)

RONNIE. God knows where my wife is!

PAMELA. (Laughing.) It's not all that serious, is it?

RONNIE. Not serious?!

PAMELA. It's only a game.

RONNIE. Only a game, Mr. Willey! (RONNIE bursts into tears, falls to his knees and grabs RICHARD.)

RICHARD. There, there, you give in and have a good cry.

GEORGE. (Crying.) I think that's what we'd all like to do. (GEORGE sits on the divan.)

PAMELA. Get Ronnie a drink, George.

RONNIE. (Becoming alert.) George?

PAMELA. Yes. (Points to GEORGE.) Let Mr. Pigden here get you a drink.

(RONNIE looks slowly at GEORGE. GEORGE emits a nervous giggle. RONNIE moves to GEORGE with pent up fury.)

RONNIE. (Ominously.) Are you George Pigden?

(There is a pause.)

GEORGE. I beg your pardon?

RONNIE. Are you bloody George Pigden?

GEORGE. Ah, bloody George, yes.

RONNIE. (To RICHARD.) He's been screwing my Jane.

(GEORGE buries his head in his hands.)

PAMELA. What?!

RICHARD. I think it's a phrase used in carpentry.

RONNIE. It's a phrase used in the Westminster Hotel! He's the one (Points at GEORGE.) who's been trying to get to bed with my wife.

GEORGE. I assure you I've been trying no such thing with anybody's wife.

PAMELA. No, I suppose even George would stop at having an affair with his wife's cousin.  
 RONNIE. Look, it's no good—(He stops.) Wife's cousin?

PAMELA. Your wife is one of Ivy's cousins, isn't she?  
 RONNIE. Ivy?

RICHARD. Of course! You're Ronnie Worthington! That explains everything.

RONNIE. Does it?  
 RICHARD. Yes! Tell him, George.

(EVERYBODY looks at GEORGE For a moment  
 GEORGE looks blank.)

GEORGE. (Finally.) Well, you see, Ronnie—your wife has a mother, doesn't she?

RONNIE. Yes.

GEORGE. (With finality.) Good! (GEORGE realises that HE is expected to continue.) Well your wife's mother has a sister who has some children and one of them is a daughter called Ivy who got married today to me.

(There is a pause.)

RONNIE. I don't get it.

RICHARD. It's all very simple, Ronnie! George invited your wife here to join in the wedding reception.

RONNIE. (To GEORGE.) So why wasn't I invited?

GEORGE. It was just close family, Ronnie.

RONNIE. I think I'd better sort it out with Jane.

PAMELA. Who's Jane?

GEORGE. No trick questions, please.

RICHARD. Jane is Ronnie's wife, isn't she, Ronnie?

RONNIE. Yes. (To himself as HE goes.) I'm married to the sister of the brother who's wife has a sister who's

mother has a daughter called Ivy who's married to the man who works for Mr. Willey. (As RONNIE exits his towel catches on the door handle and slips to the floor. For a moment we see his naked rear view as he turns into the corridor.)

(EVERYBODY is agog. GEORGE removes the towel from the door handle and looks down the corridor.  
 RONNIE has gone.)

GEORGE. (To RICHARD,) I hope Ronnie looks down before he gets home to Lewisham.

RICHARD. Now please get dressed, Pamela! I've got to get back to the Commons.

(As RICHARD moves to the corridor door JANE hurries in.)

JANE. (To RICHARD. Overjoyed.) I thought you'd like to know that Ronnie and I are going to be O.K.!

RICHARD. Good!  
 JANE. We just met in the corridor and I could tell that he was really pleased to see me. (JANE exits happily, closing door.)

RICHARD. That was Jane. (Desperately.) Pamela! Put your dress on and then make your own way to the Visitors' Gallery.

PAMELA. No, I think I'd rather like to stay here and meet Ivy.

(RICHARD and GEORGE stare blankly at her for a moment then look blankly at each other and then back to PAMELA.)

RICHARD/GEORGE. (Together.) Meet Ivy?

COSTUME PLOT

RICHARD  
 GREY SUIT  
 WHITE SHIRT  
 TIE  
 BLACK SHOES  
 BLACK SOCKS  
 DRESSING GOWN  
 GEORGE  
 NAVY PINSTRIPE  
 SUIT  
 WHITE SHIRT  
 TIE  
 BLACK SHOES  
 SOCKS  
 SPECTACLES  
 PAMELA  
 CASUAL SUIT  
 BLOUSE  
 HAT  
 SHOES  
 TIGHTS  
 HANDBAG  
 NIGHTDRESS  
 NEGLIGENCE  
 SLIPPERS  
 JEWELLERY  
 JANE  
 DRESS  
 SHOES  
 TIGHTS  
 CAMISOLE  
 BRA  
 SUSPENDERS

TEDDY  
 PAJAMA JACKET  
 RONNIE  
 JACKET  
 SHIRT  
 TROUSERS  
 BROWN SHOES  
 SOCKS  
 TIE  
 TOWEL  
 MANAGER  
 BLACK JACKET  
 BLACK TROUSERS  
 WHITE SHIRT  
 TIE  
 WAISTCOAT  
 BLACK SHOES  
 SOCKS  
 WALTER  
 WHITE JACKET  
 WHITE SHIRT  
 BOW TIE  
 BLACK TROUSERS  
 BLACK SHOES  
 SOCKS  
 MARIA  
 BLACK MAIDS DRESS  
 MAIDS CAP  
 SHOES  
 PRINTED DRESS  
 HAT WITH VEIL  
 WHITE SHOES  
 NURSE FOSTER  
 NURSES DRESS  
 NURSES CAP

OUT OF ORDER

- NURSES OVERCOAT
- SHOES
- TIGHTS
- TOWEL
- HANDBAG
- DETECTIVE/BODY
- RAINCOAT WITH HARNESS
- GREY TROUSERS
- MORNING SUIT
- SHIRT
- SHOES
- SOCKS
- BOWLER HAT

OUT OF ORDER

**PROPS SETTING LIST**

ONSTAGE

- Presel
- doors closed
- hangers in cupboard set centre
- dresser with:
  - radio
  - television
  - ashtray
  - Westminster Hotel brochure (dressing)
  - telephone
  - telephone directories
- small table with:
- sofa with: Richard's briefcase with papers
- chair
- small chest

STAGE LEFT

- Richard's bag
- note (with waiter's address)
- note (for supplying 1 wheelchair)
- hotel key briefcase (George)
- overnight case (Pamela)
- hat (Pamela's.)
- handbag (Pamela)
- handbag (nurse) bottle of pills
- flowers
- tray of oysters & champagne
- trolley of champagne and oysters
- wheelchair

OUT OF ORDER

2 tea chests (Sound effect)  
bundle of clothes (wedding suit)  
dress (Jane's)

STAGE RIGHT

dress (Jane's) to be thrown  
Richard's dressing gown b  
blanket

UPSTAGE CENTRE

Pamela's bundle  
tray of oysters and champagne

PERSONALS

Richard: wallet with 6 x 5 notes  
50 pence piece  
sunglasses  
watch

George: watch  
£5 notes  
glasses

Manager: watch  
key on chain

Ronnie: watch  
handkerchief

Jane: watch

OUT OF ORDER

Waiter: watch

Nurse: watch

Pamela: watch bracelet