



**PREVIEW SCRIPT**

# **Honeymoon Suite**

by

**Tony Layton**

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## The Plays

These three plays can either be performed together as a composite, or individually, they stand up in their own right as a set of three one-act plays.

## Cast

### **‘Something Old, Something New’**

Porter     Irish, a wise old ‘fool’.  
Jet         A middle-aged rocker.  
Pat         35, smart, quick-witted, PA to Jet.

### **‘Something Borrowed’**

Porter     Irish, a wise old ‘fool’.  
Gaynor    30’s, a northern lass.  
Sam        40’s, a natural comedian, a barrow boy from Southend.

### **‘Something Blue’**

Porter     Irish, a wise old ‘fool’.  
Paula      astute, an attractive middle-aged woman.  
Enrico     suave, a middle-aged ‘Romeo’.

NB : The option exists that the suite can either be played by the same three actors or any combination up to seven actors.

## Set

The action takes place in the honeymoon suite of a five star country hotel, somewhere off the M4. The room is a riot of pink and white. The main entrance to the room is by a door stage left, which leads to a hallway. Stage Right are French windows which look out on a balcony. Down Stage Right is a door which leads to the bathroom. The stage is dominated by a large bed, Centre Stage. Behind the bed is a mural of a flying cupid. Stage Right of the bed is a small table and two chairs. On each side of the bed there are bedside cabinets and on one cabinet there is a telephone, on the other is a radio cassette player. Up stage of the table is a small drinks cabinet, well stocked. Down stage left there is a dressing table with mirror and, on this, there is a portable television set.

## Time

The present.

## ACT ONE / 'SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW'

*Porter enters carrying two large cases, followed by Jet and Pat. Jet is wearing all black gear; an open black shirt with a gold medallion, black leather trousers (too tight) and a long black coat slung over his shoulders. He has a long blonde wig with hair down to his waist. Pat is wearing a light pastel coloured mini-skirted suit, with a large straw hat.*

**Porter** I don't believe it. Wait till I tell the kids ... Jet Rush. Times I've seen you on Pop of the Tops.

**Jet** Top of the Pops.

**Porter** Right. Many a time. Don't tell me ... 1967 ... "Hey, shake it and a roll it!"

**Jet** You got it.

**Porter** And I'll tell ya how I know that? That was the year we had our Seamus. The wife's idea ... the name. Never liked it myself. I wanted Elvis. Anyway, soon as he popped out I was down the record shop buying it.

**Jet** A fan.

**Porter** And tell me if I'm wrong, but didn't it reach the top twenty.

**Jet** Close enough.

**Porter** *(Singing, out of tune)* "Hey, shake it and a roll it! / Shake it and a roll it! / Shake it and a roll it, now!" *(Jet hands him a tip)*. Oh, ta very much. Very kind, Mr Rush. *(He points to the bathroom door)*. The loo, sauna and ...

**Jet** I think we can find our own way around.

**Porter** Fair enough. Now, anything you need ... anything ... give me a bell. Francis. I'm always around the desk. You name it, I got it, you know what I mean?

**Jet** We'll do that.

**Porter** Can't get over it. I saw you on the telly on the one o'clock news.

**Jet** Did you?

**Porter** Terrible scrum that was; cameras practically poking your eyes out. I couldn't be doing with that.

**Jet** You get used to it. Look, Francis, you can do me one favour. *(He hands over another tip)*.

**Porter** Anything at all. Anything.

**Jet** Don't let anyone know I'm here. Got it?

**Porter** Got it.

**Jet** Papers! You know what they're like.

**Porter** Do I.

**Jet** Anything for a scoop.

**Porter** Vultures.

**Jet** All I want is peace and quiet.

**Porter** And that's what you shall have ... you and your good wife here. As far as I'm concerned, I don't know who you are. Jet Rush doesn't exist. I've never heard of Jet Rush. "Jet Rush? Who's he?" How's that?

**Jet** Too much.

**Porter** Too ...?

**Jet** Too much. No need to go over the top. If any reporters ring, all you say is, "He's not here!" End of story.

**Porter** Got it! "He's not here". That'll do it. That'll throw them off the scent.

**Jet** And I warn you now, Francis....

**Porter** Yes sir! What's that, sir?  
**Jet** They'll try dropping a few carrots in your lap. You could make a packet.  
**Porter** Or an Irish Stew, is that not a ... no.  
**Jet** You know what I'm saying?  
**Porter** Of course, sir, I do. I do! Carrots might take in a donkey, but not me. You're not here ... that's an end to it.  
**Jet** Good.  
**Porter** Avarice, get thee behind me. "What's the use of worldly wealth if you don't have self respect", as my old priest used to say.  
**Jet** Exactly.  
**Porter** "Wealth is not what you hold in your hand, but what is contained in the soul".  
**Jet** Right on.  
**Porter** "One gold coin won't squeeze you through the gates of heaven", and, as Father Muldoon used to say, if ...  
**Jet** Francis! Say no more. I'm convinced. I know I can rely on you.  
**Porter** That you can, sir. Rest in peace ... or ... keep cool, as you'd say. Bye for now.

*Exit Porter. Pat goes to the drinks cabinet.*

**Pat** I need something strong.  
**Jet** *(Picking up the phone)* Outside line! *(He dials)*. Jacky! We're all set up. Get the circus rolling! *(Pause)*. Yep! There's a geezer called Francis ... a porter. Give his name. My guess he'll do anything for a Guinness. *(Pause)*. Don't take too long. This fresh air's gettin' to me. We want to be out of here by tonight. See ya! *(He replaces the phone)*.  
**Pat** Does sire require some liquid refreshment?  
**Jet** Get me a soda water. My guts are playing up.  
**Pat** You're nervous.  
**Jet** I'm not nervous. Concerned, worried, anxious ... but not nervous.  
**Pat** You're nervous. You're always the same. I know you.  
**Jet** You know me? You think you know me.  
**Pat** I should know you, after all I've only been your secretary for the last fifteen years.  
**Jet** You don't know me, no-one knows me, even I don't know me.  
**Pat** Whatever you say.  
**Jet** And don't do that.  
**Pat** What?  
**Jet** Patronise me.  
**Pat** I ...  
**Jet** You always do that. You always say that: "Whatever you say"! It gets right up my nose.  
**Pat** Sorry for talking.  
**Jet** And that.  
**Pat** What?  
**Jet** "Sorry for talking". That's another one. Any sign I'm losing my cool you come out with "Whatever you say", or "Sorry for talking". And don't call yourself a secretary. You are not a secretary. You can't type; you can't take shorthand. You're not a secretary.

**Pat** So, what am I?

**Jet** You're a PA; 'Girl Friday'.

**Pat** You mean general dogsbody.

**Jet** Whatever fits.

**Pat** After fifteen years I get a job description. Is that: Dogsbody first class, or second class? That's all you think of me, isn't it? That's the sort of respect I get.

**Jet** Don't get your knickers in a twist.

**Pat** I follow you around at concerts with soda water and Motillium ...

**Jet** Here we go.

**Pat** I make sure you get the right diet, I answer your mail, I collect your laundry, I arrange appointments, I even drive your car when you're drunk. But that does not mean I'm a dogsbody. I don't come when you whistle. *(She hands him a soda water)*. Look at your hands. You're nervous. In your position, I'd be nervous. Anyone would be nervous. It's natural to be nervous.

**Jet** Will you stop saying that word.

**Pat** If my career was going down the tube I'd be ... concerned.

**Jet** Down the tube? Get one thing straight. This marriage is purely a business arrangement. That's it. Nothing more. So don't start spinning any wifely homespun advice. That's not in the deal.

**Pat** And now you're angry.

**Jet** I am not angry. I'm stating the facts of life. That is not anger.

**Pat** You sound angry to me. Then you always did have a short fuse. Everyone knows that.

**Jet** That a fact?

**Pat** Fact.

**Jet** You'd know if I was angry ... I promise.

**Pat** Recently you've been angry at least once every day without fail.

**Jet** Perhaps that says something about the morons who hang around me, day in day out.

**Pat** Am I included in that?

**Jet** Let's say you play your part.

**Pat** And let's say, to put up with your ... peculiar behaviour day in day out, requires the patience of a saint.

**Jet** *(Knocking back his drink)* When this fiasco is over you won't have to put up with my 'peculiar behaviour' any more. *(He hands the glass back to Pat)*.

**Pat** I get the strong impression you don't want to consummate this marriage.

**Jet** Spot on.

**Pat** Suits me.

**Jet** Good. We agree about something.

**Pat** Good! *(Pause)*. I'll go my way, you go yours. *(She returns the glass to the cabinet)*.

**Jet** Absolutely.

**Pat** Neat.

**Jet** Clean. *(Pause)*. What peculiar behaviour?

**Pat** Pardon? Are you talking to me? Shouldn't you be whistling or clicking your fingers or something?

**Jet** I said, what peculiar behaviour?

**Pat** Is there any point in talking? Is there?

**Jet** What else can we do? We could be stuck here for hours.

**Pat** You ask me what peculiar behaviour ... I tell you ... you deny it; we argue, then silence ... and your silences are monumental as you well know. So let's take a short cut. Keep it silent.

**Jet** Shall I tell you something? I argue more with you than with anyone else I know.

**Pat** No-one else has the balls to face up to you.

**Jet** That a fact?

**Pat** Not only that, no-one else would have put up with you for fifteen years.

**Jet** Don't kid yourself. One ad in 'The Stage' ... they would have been lined up.

**Pat** Dream on!

**Jet** Could have got rid of you years ago.

**Pat** Ha!

**Jet** Ha! ... Ha, ha, ha!

**Pat** I must have been crazy. Why did I save your arse so many times?

**Jet** You were well paid.

**Pat** Scraps!

**Jet** Well paid.

**Pat** Remember Berlin?

**Jet** Perhaps I don't understand Germanic humour.

**Pat** Goose stepping around the stage was not funny, Jet.

**Jet** That was purely spontaneous.

**Pat** And the Carnegie Hall riot? Was that spontaneous too?

**Jet** That was a political statement about black repression.

**Pat** I know that's what you told the papers. From where I was standing it was simply you flashing your backside at the public.

**Jet** Got me on the front page didn't it?

**Pat** And into jail.

**Jet** Didn't mind the old nick. Gave me a bit of street cred.

**Pat** I went through a week of hell getting you out of that place. They really were trying to sew you up.

**Jet** You're a martyr.

**Pat** I saved you from the wolves and you give me scraps. Then I suppose that's what you give dogs, scraps.

**Jet** You're breaking my heart.

**Pat** If it hadn't been for me you would have been washed up years ago ... on the scrap heap with all the rest of the plastic geriatric teenagers.

**Jet** Is there one ounce of plastic on my body? Can you see plastic? Can you? No! What you see is what you get.

**Pat** Only don't get too close.

**Jet** I don't mind close ups.

**Pat** You should.

**Jet** They can put the lens right up my nose. I've got nothing to hide.

**Pat** Only wrinkles.

**Jet** I haven't got wrinkles.

**Pat** They're everywhere. And crows feet.

**Jet** Where? *(He goes to the mirror).*

**Pat** Under the eyes. Where else?

**Jet** Rubbish! They're laughter lines, that's all they are.

**Pat** Then you'd better keep smiling. *(Jet smiles at himself and then pulls a straight face to see the difference. He does this in quick succession several times).* How old are you, Jet? *(Pause).* See that! You can't face it. Your eyes glazed over. I could see your brain working overtime, "What do I say? What can I get away with?".

**Jet** I'm forty-two. Satisfied?

**Pat** And the rest. You're fifty-one. And don't try to deny it. I saw your birth certificate in the Registry Office. Yes. Thought I hadn't noticed didn't you.

**Jet** I don't give a toss what you saw. In here I'm nineteen. That's what counts. *(He takes a final look in the mirror).* A few lines give character.

**Pat** Whatever you say.

**Jet** A rugged look ... masculine.

**Pat** I'm all for it. Perhaps you could get a few pockmarks grafted on. Go for it. The older look's in.

**Jet** I'm not ready for the older look.

**Pat** You're not alone, you know. The business is full of big kids like you. They don't know when to hang up their platform soles.

**Jet** When "The Best Of Jet" comes out this year, you'll see. You'll see who's over the hill or not. It's going to be big. You'll see.

**Pat** Will I?

**Jet** I've seen 'em come and go. Can't stand the pace most of 'em. Overnight success, one hit, then they're off. No quality. The punters know when they see my name, I give 'em what they want. Good old rock and roll.

**Pat** Right! It's old.

**Jet** It's old, it's good, it's basic, it's raw, it's me. I don't hide behind synths and back-tracking.

*Jet doubles up with pain. Pat goes to his side and places an arm around him. Then she gets a glass of soda water, takes a box of pills out of her bag and helps him to take a couple. She rubs his back gently. He leans against her and she holds him with both arms wrapped around him.*

**Pat** All right? *(Jet nods).* 'Faynights', as we used to say?

**Jet** Who did?

**Pat** Kids. Pals. Couldn't stand being chased. Especially up stairs. My brother used to run up the stairs after me, and I'd whiz round and shout 'faynights', then he couldn't touch me. I was protected by magic.

*Jet looks at her closely. He is about to kiss her, but then sits up.*

**Jet** Let's go through the plan.

**Pat** Not again.

**Jet** What's the time?

**Pat** Ten past four.

**Jet** Jacky will have done her bit. All the media will know where we are by now. They'll all be on the blower to our Irish friend, Francis. He'll be shouting his little mouth off ten to the dozen. We wait till the place is crawling with reporters; Jacky arrives in the 'copter, I carve my way through the crowd ... punch a couple of the gits ... Jacky's idea that. Looks macho. We don't make

any comments. “Stay enigmatic”, as she says. Cameras rolling. Big splash! Evening news. The business. Image back. Back on line.

**Pat** Was this Jacky’s plan?

**Jet** Some of it. Well, all of it. It’ll work. Look what she did for Red Storm. Inspirational! He was dead and buried before she got hold of him.

**Pat** I don’t call doing a streak across the Oscar ceremony, inspirational. He was sent down for two years.

**Jet** And what happened in those two years? His career took off.

**Pat** That woman’s got you just where she wants you. Anything for publicity.

**Jet** She knows what’s good for me. That’s her job. She looks after me.

**Pat** She looks after your money, Jet. She doesn’t care how stupid you look as long as she gets her twenty per cent.

**Jet** She makes me look stupid? Is that what you think? When has she made me look stupid? When?

**Pat** You’re getting angry again.

**Jet** Answer the question. When has she made me look stupid?

**Pat** I refuse to answer on the grounds that it might lead to another flaming row.

**Jet** That’s a cop out. Do you know what I think?

**Pat** What?

**Jet** I think you’re jealous.

**Pat** Ha!

**Jet** She’s successful, loaded, independent. You’re jealous!

**Pat** She’s overweight, losing her hair and has a classic case of halitosis. Me jealous? And her teeth aren’t her own.

**Jet** I’ve noticed when she comes in the office, you’re always there, spying.

**Pat** Sure! I’ve got the desk bugged, the phone bugged ... even her car. When she makes her first move I’m going to tear in and rip her heart out. Grow up, Jet!

**Jet** She comes in ... you bang drawers, you faff around with filing cabinets ... as soon as she speaks, you ask some stupid moronic question about contracts or something ... always poking your nose in ... and you always give her that lousy cracked cup.

**Pat** If I do it’s not intentional. It must be subliminal.

**Jet** Subliminal, my bum. You have a certain look ... a stare, like this.

*He demonstrates and walks around her. Pat cracks up and laughs at him.*

**Pat** Your face.

**Jet** Now you know what it looks like.

**Pat** Wish I had a camera.

**Jet** Funny isn’t it. Hilarious. Now you know.

**Pat** Like this is it? *(She stares intensively at him, trying to contain herself).*

**Jet** She thinks you ought to be put away.

**Pat** She would, naturally.

**Jet** She thinks I should have got shot of you years ago.

**Pat** *(Backing off)* Perhaps she’s right.

**Jet** Perhaps she is.

**Pat** What else does she say about me?

**Jet** She doesn’t say anything about you.

**Pat** Oh, no?

**Jet** What is there to say? All she knows about you is the stare, the banging and the cracked cup. That's it.

**Pat** I bet you talk to her about me.

**Jet** All the time. What a wonderful, understanding, kind person you are; what you do in your spare time; what music you like ... all that stuff. Do me a favour! Why should we talk about you? We've got better things to do. It's a business relationship, for God's sake.

**Pat** Better things to do. I see.

**Jet** Correct!

**Pat** I thought at least you might have told her about the times I've saved your neck.

**Jet** That's between you and me. Doesn't concern her.

**Pat** It would if she'd lost her twenty per cent. Remember Claudine? (*French accent*). "Ah, mon cher! 'Ow marvellous to be with you at last. I 'ave loved you for so long".

**Jet** How was I to know? She looked older. Fourteen year olds can look very mature.

**Pat** I liked the little teddy she carried in her rucksack. A dead giveaway. And she giggled a lot.

**Jet** So do lots of women.

**Pat** She giggled all the time. She wouldn't stop giggling.

**Jet** She was a breath of fresh air ... soft; innocent.

**Pat** She was giggling all the way to the papers when I stopped her.

**Jet** There was nothing to hide. I didn't touch her.

**Pat** And who'd believe that?

**Jet** By the way, what did you say to her?

**Pat** Not a lot. Basically, I told her the facts of life according to Saint Jet; plus ... well, I suppose I did threaten violence, but only at a basic feminine level.

**Jet** What facts of life? What did you tell her about me?

**Pat** I can't remember. I made something up to frighten her.

**Jet** Such as?

**Pat** I can't remember. What are you looking at me like that for?

**Jet** When was the last time we played New York?

**Pat** What's that got to do ...?

**Jet** When was it?

**Pat** Eighty-seven. July. (*Change year as appropriate*).

**Jet** Venue?

**Pat** Madison Square Garden. You know where we were.

**Jet** What did we take?

**Pat** After the split we made five-hundred thou. You gave twenty to Cancer research; two-hundred thou went to the crew; two-hundred thou on musicians, and you blew the rest.

**Jet** That's the reason I kept you on. You've got a mind for detail. You never forget times, dates, appointments, names; your brain's full of telephone numbers from all over the world. You never forget. So, what did you say to her?

**Pat** I told her ...

**Jet** Go on.

**Pat** I said I'd take her teddy bear away from her.

**Jet** *(Prompting for what she really said)* What did you say to her?

**Pat** I told her you were gay.

**Jet** You told her ...

**Pat** It was spontaneous. I had to say something. I could have told her you had some nasty transmittable disease, but then I thought that's a little too much over the top.

**Jet** You told her I was gay?

**Pat** She certainly stopped giggling.

**Jet** You told her I was gay ... and you threatened violence.

**Pat** Only threatened. I said if she saw you again or went to the papers I'd pull her nipples off.

**Jet** You'd ...

**Pat** Naturally, I'd never do that. I couldn't do that. I'm basically a non-violent person.

**Jet** Wait a minute. What if ... what if she'd simply walked away and gone straight to the papers. She could have ruined me with a story like that. My whole image is macho. I've built it up over the years. People think of me and they think "macho" ... black leather ... energy ... a ladies man. I advertise jeans for God's sake.

**Pat** She wouldn't have done that.

**Jet** What was stopping her?

**Pat** Okay. It wasn't spontaneous. There was no threat of violence. I paid her off. She signed a contract. She disappeared back to France.

**Jet** How much?

**Pat** She settled for two-hundred thousand.

**Jet** Francs?

**Pat** Pounds.

**Jet** I know I'm going to regret asking this. Where did the money come from?

**Pat** First of all I took it out of our running expenses fund, and then ...

**Jet** Go on.

**Pat** And then I sent off a load of your old rubbish to the fan club and they auctioned it off.

**Jet** What rubbish?

**Pat** Shirts, medallions ... couple of guitars ... that sort of stuff.

**Jet** That rubbish is valuable. That's all sentimental value stuff, and you get rid of it, just like that.

**Pat** Have you missed it? No!

**Jet** That was important stuff. That was all going in my 'Hall Of Fame'. That was my 'Graceland'.

**Pat** You never mentioned that to me.

**Jet** It's all in my will. When I snuff it I want this place built ... white marble.

**Pat** A mausoleum?

**Jet** No. A sort of ... Mecca.

**Pat** You mean a dance hall?

**Jet** I mean an ivory palace. You walk in and there's this massive, great hologram ... me singing my hits. It'll be a living museum. The fans'll buy copies of my

torn shirts and blonde wigs and leather stuff and posters. That was not rubbish.

**Pat** Thought I was doing what was best. Sorry.

**Jet** “Sorry’s” not good enough, Pat.

**Pat** Sorry!

**Jet** That’s your job, to think of me; to think about my best interests.

**Pat** Sorry!

**Jet** When I go I want to be remembered. I want something here, something people can touch, something they can see. I want to be here ... with them; always.

**Pat** Sorry. *(Jet realises pat is being flippant. Pat sighs and responds with some sincerity).* Sorry.

**Jet** That’s the trouble with life.

**Pat** What?

**Jet** It’s got a rotten ending.

*There is a knock on the door. Pat answers it. Enter Porter.*

**Porter** Message for Mr Jet Rush.

**Pat** Yes?

**Porter** Can you tell him I’ve done the business.

**Pat** The business?

**Porter** The business! With the reporter chappies. The phone hasn’t stopped. I told ‘em he wasn’t here and ...

**Jet** *(Moving across)* What did you say to them?

**Porter** Ah! Hello, sir. I was tellin’ your missus here that I’ve sent the whole lot of ‘em on a wild goose chase. But they’re clever little devils, I’ll give ‘em that. How they found out the name of this place is a mystery, I can tell you.

**Pat** They have their methods. Very devious, aren’t they, Jet.

**Jet** Yeah!

**Porter** Somehow they knew you were in the area so I sent ‘em all up to Rutter’s Farm. Rutter’s a cantankerous old bastard, so he is. A very unlikeable man. I don’t know a soul who likes the fella. I’d love to see his face when his shitty yard’s full of reporters and cameras. Did I do all right, sir?

**Jet** What can I say? Look, thanks ... err ...

**Porter** Francis.

**Jet** Francis. *(He gives him a tip).*

**Porter** Not at all, sir. It’s a pleasure. I enjoyed it, I really did. Anything you need, you know, just ...

**Jet** *(Closing the door on him)* Now; of all times, we get an honest porter. Who’s ever heard of an honest porter? *(He goes to the phone).*

**Pat** Honesty! I remember honesty. Happy days! *(She goes into the bathroom).*

**Jet** Outside line! *(He dials).* Jacky! We’ve got a hitch. You won’t believe this. The porter here’s a fan of mine. *(Short pause).* I know! Of all the luck. And on top of that, he’s honest, would you believe that? He’s sent them to a place ... Rutter’s Farm. *(Short pause).* Rutter! Right! Get ‘em over here will you before I go agoraphobic or something. Make sure that bitch Delia Carr is in on it. *(Short pause).* She is? Wonderful! Catch you later! *(He replaces the phone, and goes to the window to take in a breath of fresh air. He chokes on it. He replenishes his glass*

*of soda then moves to the bathroom door*). Jacky's sorting it. And Delia Carr is with 'em. I want to see her face. I want to see it twisted in agony when we tell her. She's going to pay for what she did to me. They think they can ruin a career with a few slick words and get away with it. Not with this chicken. She is going to regret the day she wrote that vomit. *(The toilet flushes)*. Her career is going right down the toilet. She'll pounce in here, all mouth and silk scarf ... 'darling' this, 'darling' that, baring her nicotine teeth, searching for the jugular ... then I'll drop it right in her lap ... the story that'll rip her head off.

- Pat** *(Entering)* You'll have a coronary the way you're going on.
- Jet** I've never ever hated anyone like this before.
- Pat** If I said 'Delia Carr' loud enough, you'd have a heart attack.
- Jet** She syndicated that story. It went everywhere. I've had calls from all over. Jerry in New York thought it was marvellous. Then he would. "Anything perverse is good publicity", he said.
- Pat** You did ask for it.
- Jet** Sure I asked for it. I went down on my bended knees and begged. "Delia, please! Drag my name through the mud! Crucify me! Please!".
- Pat** You were set up. You lost.
- Jet** When I went into that bar and the blonde came across to me; how was I to know?
- Pat** I thought men knew these things.
- Jet** Number one; I was slightly pissed.
- Pat** Practically senseless.
- Jet** Number two. I was lonely and ...
- Pat** ... wanted lots of huggy-wuggies and kissy-wissies to make him feel better-wetter.
- Jet** I do need comfort you know. I do occasionally need some love and tenderness.
- Pat** You get more love and tenderness in a month than most men get in a lifetime.
- Jet** Here we go! Same old song.
- Pat** It's what I see.
- Jet** I can't help it if women throw themselves at me.
- Pat** Bonk, bonk, bonk! Next please! It's indecent.
- Jet** Do you think I enjoy it?
- Pat** I imagine you do get something out of it ... even if it's only acute soreness.
- Jet** I look on it as a ... whatyoucallit ... a service; a public service.
- Pat** That's a new name for it.
- Jet** I know where they come from these women. I've been there. I've lived there. It's grey, it's grotty, it's ordinary life. It's back-to-back, stuffed together, no hope, bugger all, bugger off. So they dream ... and I give 'em a fantasy. Keeps 'em going.
- Pat** Very noble. It must be like being on some sort of religious mission.
- Jet** Go ahead. Laugh! I don't get anything out of it. It's all part of the game. It means nothing. One body's much like another.
- Pat** That a fact.
- Jet** I'm haunted by bodies. I dream about bodies, d'ya know that. I see this woman ... she's got three heads, blonde, ginger, brunette. They're all talking

at once. They're saying, "Take me! Take me!". She opens these enormous thighs and there's this tunnel with a light shining in it. And my head's squeezed into it until I can't breathe.

**Pat** Sounds like a corny sex movie.

**Jet** I wake up sweating.

**Pat** A shrink would have a field day with you.

**Jet** Do you think I enjoy being a sex symbol?

**Pat** Yes!

**Jet** Wrong! Do you know what I'd like? I'd like to walk down the street, go to a restaurant, be alone, by myself, without a crowd of women around me. That's what I'd like.

**Pat** Who're you kidding? You go into a bar, this blonde picks you up, takes you back to her flat ... her carefully bugged flat with Delia Carr and a photographer behind a curtain.

**Jet** Don't remind me.

**Pat** The blonde takes her wig off and you're too drunk to notice. 'She' has suddenly become 'he' in full panoramic colour, and you lie there with a stupid grin on your face. Click, click, click! End of that great macho sex symbol.

**Jet** That's the point. I'll decide when it's the end, not Delia Carr.

**Pat** She might have done you a favour.

**Jet** Whose side are you on?

**Pat** Jet, you're fifty-odd. How much stamina have you got? Your body needs a rest. It can only take so much.

**Jet** There's nothing wrong with my body. I'm in great shape.

**Pat** For fifty-odd you're not bad.

**Jet** I can do what I did twenty years ago. It's all in working order.

**Pat** Hey! You're talking to me. Pat! Remember? I know you. Look! *(She takes bottles of pills out of her case)*. What are these? Pills for cramp; for blood pressure; heart burn; headaches; tiredness; stomach ache; stamina; diarrhoea and piles. Every afternoon, it's a nap ... same in the evening. And, in the morning, you sleep in. You didn't do that ten years ago, you didn't do it five years ago. Jet, face it! You've got to slow down.

**Jet** That'll be the day.

**Pat** If you don't ... you'll burn yourself out. You'll go just like that. You'll be in Elvis's rhythm section.

**Jet** No way! I've got five more good years, at least.

**Pat** You psychic as well?

**Jet** I know. I've got gut feelings.

**Pat** Yes! We've got pills for it.

**Jet** Jacky's on my side. She knows my plans.

**Pat** Sure.

**Jet** We've got this world tour idea. I've got it all worked out. The set'll be a knockout. There'll be waterfalls, pink waterfalls, bouncing, playing with the music. The backing group'll do one of those 'Busby Berkeley'-type routines in the water. I come out of the water, like neptune, holding my guitar like a trident. We'll have a full string orchestra ... shimmering strings ... all that. And in the background there's this hologram of me with lasers playing around it.

**Pat** Oh, that hologram. The one you'll put in the museum.

**Jet** What's wrong with it?

**Pat** Any idea what all that's going to cost?

**Jet** I can get backers. I can pick up that phone and the cheque'll be in the post, today.

**Pat** Try it!

**Jet** As soon as we get back to London, I'll ...

**Pat** Do it now!

**Jet** You don't think I could do it, do you. If I had Bernie Stern's number on me I would do it ... now.

**Pat** Bernie Stern? *(She takes a pad out of her handbag and writes down some numbers).* There we are. That's his number. His office number and his home number. And if he's not in, there's Solomon Isaacs' number in New York ... and his LA number just in case.

**Jet** OK! OK! Watch and learn. Watch!

**Pat** I'm watching.

*Jet goes to the phone.*

**Jet** Outside line, please. Thank you.

*He dials. Pat pours herself a drink and sits at the table stage right. She raises her glass to him.*

**Pat** Cheers!

**Jet** Watch and learn, sweetie! ... Bernie! Is that you? ... It's me ... Jet ... Jet Rush! ... Jet Rush! Remember? ... Yeah! Been a long time ... That's right! How are you? ... I'm fine. Fine. You sound close. It's remarkable, I'd swear you were in the next room ... What a world, eh? Technology! ... What's that? ... Sure! Still plucking away. Look Bernie, how'd you like to make some money, I'm talking big money, world tour extravaganza money. You interested? ... You might be? *(He makes a 'thumbs up' sign to Pat).* That's great. We'd need eight, ten million dollars to set it all up; get it rolling. Can we raise that sort of budget? ... Not out of the question. Fantastic. I've got this idea for a sea world thing, with waterfalls and full string back up. Lots of girls in bikinis and ... Pardon-me? Who's the star? I'm the star, Bernie. Who else? What I'll do, I'll let you have an outline and a breakdown of costs with a basic itinerary ... What's that, Bernie? *(As he listens, his head drops).* Sure! Sure! I understand. I know all about the market, Bernie. You couldn't risk it. Hey, I've got this CD coming out, 'Best Of Jet'. It could ride on that ... You don't think so ... Not commercial ... No, I appreciate your honesty, Bernie ... Not the right time. That's the business we're in ... Fair enough. Another time ... We'll do that. Nice talking to you. I appreciate it, Bernie ... Same to you. Bye, Bernie.

**Pat** Bye, bye Bernie. *(Jet walks to the window).* I guess there won't be a cheque in the post.

**Jet** Say nothing. Nothing!

**Pat** *(Pausing)* Jet, I'm sorry. I ...

**Jet** He said I was too old. "Time to relax and put your feet up", he says. "Let the youngsters take over". Suddenly I'm something old. He needs something new. I could give him something new. I could blow his mind with 'new'.

**Pat** So, try Solomon.

**Jet** Leave it!

**Pat** Bernie's only one ...

**Jet** Leave it, Pat. You've made your point. I want to ... I want to, to think it through. He didn't know who the hell I was.

**Pat** He's probably cock-eyed on coke; or could be senile dementia. He's not a young man anymore.

**Jet** I've got to ... work out a ... a strategy. That's it. I've got to have it all worked out; slick ... polished ... glossy cover. Do some artwork. What am I thinking about? You can't ring up people like Bernie out of the blue and get a result. You've gotta be more subtle. The personal approach. Face to face. *(Pat goes to him and places an arm around him. He shrugs it off)*. You're stupid, do you know that? Happy now? What the hell are you doing, anyway? Have you thought about it? Why are you here?

**Pat** I think I'm ...

**Jet** What are you doing here with me now? I'm using you. Understand? That's all it is. I'm using you. That's it. What sort of woman are you? I'm walking all over you and you let it happen.

**Pat** All part of the job. I take the rough with the smooth.

**Jet** For better for worse?

**Pat** Something like that.

**Jet** You're through, Pat. You stink of failure. All I hear from you is, "take it easy, slow down".

**Pat** I'm through?

**Jet** You're through. A month's notice as from now. Should have done it years ago. I need youth. I need vitality around me. It's all in the mind. Think young, be young.

**Pat** Jet, I accept my notice with gratitude and pleasure.

**Jet** We'll both be happy.

**Pat** Relief at last. Now I can start thinking about me for a change.

**Jet** Retire to the country. Take up knitting.

**Pat** I don't have to think young. You forget, I am young. I'm thirty-five. Not in my prime yet. The best is yet to come. Do you know what colour my eyes are?

**Jet** What?

**Pat** My eyes. These things. What colour are they?

**Jet** I don't know ... bluey.

**Pat** Brown. You know the problem with your eyes?

**Jet** I've got a feeling you're going to tell me.

**Pat** They face the wrong way. They look inward. Me! Me! Me!

**Jet** That a fact.

**Pat** Reality too bright for you?

**Jet** That's it. Have a dig. Enjoy yourself. Consider it a bonus. I suppose after fifteen years you're entitled to something.

**Pat** I could write a book. 'Forever Teenager' or how about 'Flying With Jet: The Truth Beneath The Leather'.

**Jet** You wouldn't.

**Pat** The traumas, the tensions, the inner torment, the perversions.

**Jet** What perversions?  
**Pat** I could think of something. I'd make it up. As you say, honesty doesn't sell.  
**Jet** Revealed! Pat, the bitch!  
**Pat** I am what you made me. Felt sorry for you just now, on the phone. Seen it coming. You've got some sad years ahead, my friend.  
**Jet** That tells me one thing. You don't know me. When those morons, those bloody critics and leeches in the media see me married they'll be forced to swallow their own crap. I'll be back with the old image. That's what my fans want. That's what I want. That's what I'm going to give 'em. All this sleaze'll be down the river.  
**Pat** And that's how fairy tales end.  
**Jet** Seriously, Pat, you try to make waves and I'll have you.  
**Pat** You know, that's sad. Here I was thinking you knew me. I thought a bluffer knew a bluffer when he saw one. Don't worry, Jet. I'll leave quietly when the time comes. No waves. Not even a ripple. Think my mascara's starting to run.

*She takes a vanity bag out of her handbag. She goes to the bathroom leaving her handbag open on the bed. Jet sees a large diary sticking out of the bag. He opens it up. (As above, the dates below can be adjusted as required).*

**Jet** *(Reading)* "February 14th, 1978. Valentine's Day. Manchester. Jet was on top form. Stage thick with roses. I planned a quiet meal in the hotel for him. He met a 'Louisa'. Didn't see him until noon the next day". Louisa? No. Gone. *(He flicks through the pages)*. "June 10th, 1985. New York. Great concert. Jet really rocked. I think I love him. Can't tell him". "October 7th, 1990. London. Poor ticket sales. Jet looks exhausted. Wish I could get closer to him". "November 4th, 1991. Paris. Why do I bother? He puts me down in public. I'm only a hired hand. Sod!". "December 13th, 1993. Birmingham. Think I'd better resign. This downward spiral is destroying everything. He won't give up. I love him more than ever". "January 21st, 1996. Cardiff. Show cancelled. The media's had him for breakfast, the swines. He's planning some desperate publicity stunt, some sort of marriage charade. I'll put on a brave face and go along with it". *(The bathroom door opens. He places the diary back in the bag. Pat who is clearly still upset goes to look out of the window)*. What's the matter?

**Pat** Must be hayfever. I'm hopeless in the country.

*There is a knock on the door. Jet lets in the Porter.*

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**... the remainder of this act/play has been deleted from this preview copy ...**

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END OF ACT 1 / PLAY ONE

*During the short interact, chambermaids (stage crew) enter the room to replenish flowers, see to the drinks, generally tidy up etc. This should be done with some style and humour, in fact choreographed with suitable music.*

## ACT TWO / 'SOMETHING BORROWED'

*Porter leads the way in, carrying two cases, one of which is plastered with stickers, the other is plain. Gaynor and Sammy follow.*

**Porter** *(Laughing loudly as he enters)* Good one that. That is a good one.

**Sam** The old ones are the best, mate.

**Porter** Is that an old one now? Sure I've never heard it before. I'll have to remember that one.

**Sam** *(Looking around the room)* Hey! Not bad, eh? This is definitely 'A-OK'. What you think, darlin'? Is this plush, or what?

**Gaynor** It's right nice in't it.

**Sam** This is bloody nice, this is. I could live 'ere. I could park 'ere, no problem. Suit me down to the ground this would.

**Gaynor** Look at that view.

**Sam** Now that is somethin'. I mean ... you can't buy that can you. That is nature that is. That is pure nature.

**Porter** My problem is they go in one ear and out the other. I just cannot remember jokes. Funny that.

**Sam** Look at all that green. Could do with a month of this lot.

**Gaynor** At three hundred pounds a night? You're jokin' aren't ya!

**Sam** P'raps not at the moment, love, but one day soon. I promise ya!

**Porter** The bathroom's through there. Sauna and Jacuzzi.

**Gaynor** Jacuzzi? Ooh! Let's have a shuft. *(She goes into the bathroom).*

**Porter** What was the punch line again? It's gone. Completely gone.

**Sam** The old fella says, "So this London solicitor tells me that the will's in the hands of a geezer called Probate and if I try to get my hands on the money, I'll be executed. So you won't bloody well catch me going back there. They're all bleedin' psychopaths in London".

**Porter** That's it. "... bleedin' psychopaths in London". What I'll have to do, now, is keep repeating that over and over until I get home. The wife'll love that one. "They're all bleedin' psychopaths in London".

**Gaynor** *(Entering)* It's really lovely. There's cupids on the towels and everything. *(She sits on the bed and bounces up and down).*

**Sam** So what you think, darlin'? Is this all right, or is it all right?

**Gaynor** I love this bed. It's gorgeous. I could live on this bed. I love it.

**Sam** How much for the bed, squire? We'll take it with us.

**Porter** If you don't mind me saying so, Mr King, I can see that you and Mrs King here, are going to be very happy together.

**Sam** Well, we certainly hope so, don't we, Gaynor.

**Porter** Call it intuition, call it what you like ... but I can see you sharing many happy hours together. Laughter is a very precious thing ... as Father Muldoon used to say, "It's no use havin' all the money in the world, if you're as miserable as sin".

**Sam** Very true ... err ...

**Porter** Francis.

**Sam** Francis. Very true. But on the other hand, I'd be much happier being miserable and rich, than miserable and poor.

**Porter** There is that. On the other hand, I'd rather be poor and healthy, than rich and sick.

**Sam** Francis, mate, you are not wrong. You are not wrong. However, on the other hand, I'd rather be rich and sick, than poor and sick. Yeah?

**Porter** That's right. That is absolutely right. There's no gettin' away from that.

**Sam** Havin' said that we'd all like to be happy wealthy and healthy.

**Porter** A full house.

*Gaynor is now flat out on the bed, stretching out.*

**Sam** A royal flush. Gamblin' man? Am I right?

**Porter** I dabble occasionally.

**Sam** I bet you know your horseflesh.

**Porter** I confess I have a nose for it. Not that I'm addicted to it, mind. The only thing I'm addicted to these days is work.

**Sam** Listen! 'Something Borrowed'. Got it?

**Porter** "Something Borrowed" ...?

**Sam** He's up with 'Flying Picket' in the two-thirty at Newmarket. Twenty-five to one. He's carrying no weight ... gonna coast it.

**Porter** That right?

**Sam** I know the stable. They've run him in France and Ireland. Been holding him back, you know.

**Porter** That a fact.

**Sam** Now the price is right ... whoosh; he's gonna go.

**Porter** 'Something Borrowed'.

**Sam** He's gonna bury 'Flying Picket'. Not in the same class. Do me a favour Francis ... put at least a tenner on. Get you and your missus a nice little bundle for a weekend break or somethin', know what I mean.

**Porter** I could be well tempted, Mr King.

**Sam** Only, err ... keep it close to the old hairy vest, compendi? Don't want the bookies to get too much of a sniff on it. They've got enough of my money as it is.

**Porter** I'll have to have a little poke around in my piggy bank, see if I can scrape together a few pennies.

**Sam** Here, Francis! *(He hands the Porter a tip)*. Put this in your piggy bank; alright mate?

**Porter** Thank you, sir. I appreciate it. Two-thirty; Newmarket. *(He makes to leave)*. Will you be coming down for dinner, sir?

**Sam** What do you think, darlin'? Down or up?

**Gaynor** I think I'd rather have it up.

*Sam laughs. Porter coughs to hide his embarrassment.*

**Sam** Would you? That's nice. I'll have to see what I can do, eh, Francis? I'll have to see what I can do.

**Gaynor** That's not what I meant, you cheeky bugger.

**Sam** It's all right, love. I know what you meant. Plenty of oysters down there have you, Francis ... and whelks and that?

**Porter** Everything you could possibly desire, sir. Whelks, oysters, mussels, jellied eels ...

**Sam** Really? I was brought up on whelks and jellied eels. My old man, his old man, his old man before him ... all of us in the whelk trade in Southend.

**Gaynor** 'King's Whelks. A Royal Feast'.

**Sam** That's my callin' card she's talkin' about. Here, Francis! Have one. *(He gives him a card)*. If you're ever down Southend mate, call in. I'll give ya a basin-full.

**Porter** Thank you, sir. I must say, I've never ever been that way.

**Sam** So, do yourself a favour, Francis. Get down there. Nothing like it. Breath of the old salty Fred Astaire; pint of Guinness, and a plate of whelks ... can't whack it, mate.

**Porter** Sounds like my idea of paradise, so it does.

**Sam** That's what I keep tellin' my beautiful northern lass 'ere. We're off to live in our own little Garden of Eden in Paradise.

**Gaynor** I can't wait.

**Sam** Neither can I love. It's all the whelks an' tha'. Makes me frisky. *(He tickles her)*. Eh? You like that?

**Gaynor** Stop it, Sammy!

**Sam** What about your toes? Do they want a tickle? They do don't they. They want a tickle.

**Gaynor** No, Sammy! No! You dare! No!

*Sammy stops the tickling.*

**Porter** I'll bring you up a menu, sir, madam.

**Sam** And don't forget.

**Porter** Sir?

**Sam** 'Something Borrowed'.

**Porter** I'll get on to it right away. Thank you, sir.

*Exit Porter. Sam looks at his watch and shakes it.*

**Sam** What's the time, love?

**Gaynor** Two-fifteen. Why?

**Sam** I don't believe it. My bleedin' watch 'as stopped. That is a new watch, that is. *(He goes to the phone)*. 'Arry sold me that. Bargain, he said. Swiss, he said. Twenty quid that was, down the market. Calls himself a mate. I'll be round his barra next week and ring his soddin' neck. He doesn't pull one on me and get away with it. No way. Outside line please, darlin'. Ta! *(He dials)*.

**Gaynor** Who you ringin'?

**Sam** Pete Flynn ... every man's hope in time of trouble.

**Gaynor** Who?

**Sam** Bookie, love. Personal friend. *(Gaynor undresses to her underwear during the phone call then puts on a long silk housecoat. She lies on the bed seductively)*. 'Ello mate. Sammy King here. Look! Do me a favour will ya? ... Wha' you mean, 'again'? Cheeky beggar! Anyway, stop gabbin' and listen. 'Something Borrowed'; two-thirty; Newmarket. What you got it at? Twenty-five to one? Thought so. Good. Listen, Pete. I'm feeling lucky ... Yeah! I got married ...

Yeah, me. I know. I don't believe it myself. I want to lay fifty thou on it, on the nose ... Fifty thousand! That's right. Fifty thousand to win ... I know it's a bit late, I know that. My watch stopped. Straight up ... Naturally you got to spread it. I understand all of that. You've gotta be sensible, haven't ya ... Course you 'ave. Better pull your finger out an' get on with it ... What's that? Gaynor! No you don't know 'er. She's from up north. Oldham ... Will do. Talk to you later. *(He puts the phone down)*. What's this then?

**Gaynor**

What's what?

**Sam**

What's this I see?

**Gaynor**

What do you think it is?

**Sam**

I'm not sure.

**Gaynor**

Why don't you come and find out?

**Sam**

I might do that.

**Gaynor**

So, wha' you waiting for?

**Sam**

What if I'm dreamin'?

**Gaynor**

What d'ya mean?

**Sam**

What if I get on there and you disappear?

**Gaynor**

You never know, do ya. I might.

**Sam**

There's only one way to find out, ain't there.

**Gaynor**

Come on then. *(Sam leaps onto the bed grabbing Gaynor. She screams)*. Your bloody hands are freezin'.

**Sam**

Not for long.

**Gaynor**

They're like ice. Gerrof!

*She escapes from the bed by rolling onto the floor. Sam rolls after her. She rolls under the bed.*

**Sam**

*(American accent)* There was no escape. Sam King, the lusty Sam King, had a pencil full of lead. He was ready. Nothing could stop him.

**Gaynor**

Touch me and I'll snap your pencil.

**Sam**

The icy fingers stretched out towards their prey.

*He reaches out under the bed. Gaynor rolls out from under the bed, crosses over the bed and lands on Sam's back pinning him down.*

**Gaynor**

Hi yo, Silver!

*She rides on Sam's back as he bucks and neighs like a rodeo pony. There is a knock on the door. They don't hear it. The knock is repeated. Sam neighs loudly in what sounds like "yes" and the Porter enters.*

**Porter**

Whoops! I'm terribly sorry. I do beg your pardon. I thought I heard someone say come in.

*Sam stands up quickly. Gaynor slides off his back landing in an ungainly heap.*

**Sam**

We were just ...

**Porter**

Honestly, sir. There really is no need to explain. I see nothing, I hear nothing.

**Sam**

... er ... playing.

**Porter**

What I say is, you paid for the room; it's your room, you do what you like. It's certainly not my business. *(Gaynor pulls herself off the floor and stands behind Sam)*. There's the menu, sir. The chef recommends the crab soup, the Steak Diane with anchovy salad followed by a Baked Alaska. I'll leave it with you. There's no rush. Take your time. I'll let you get on with ... it. *(He exits)*.

**Gaynor**

I feel right stupid. What must he think?

**Sam** Who cares what he thinks? We can do anything we want. As he says, it's our room; we do what we want. Hey! *(He laughs)*. The state of your boat race.

**Gaynor** Yer what?

**Sam** Your mush. This is not a tragedy you know, gal.

**Gaynor** I bet he can't wait. It'll be all over the shop by tonight.

**Sam** I can't wait either. Come 'ere! Give us a kiss.

**Gaynor** I'm not in the mood. *(She pulls away from him)*.

**Sam** I think you are.

**Gaynor** No, I'm not.

**Sam** Wanna bet?

**Gaynor** Sammy, behave! I'm not in the mood. I'll tell you when I'm in the mood. *(Sam holds his hands up and backs off. He goes to get Gaynor a drink)*. I'm sorry, Sam. I've got to be in the mood.

**Sam** Scotch?

**Gaynor** Glass of milk if there is one.

**Sam** You don't want milk. Have a scotch. It'll help you relax.

**Gaynor** I don't like scotch.

**Sam** 'Course you like scotch. The first time we met you drank nothing else.

**Gaynor** That's because I was nervy. I was sick as a pig the next day.

**Sam** What were you nervy for? Did I make you nervy?

**Gaynor** I didn't know what you were going to be like, did I. I mean, I'd never been on a blind date before.

**Sam** You knocked back six scotches that night. I remember. And you didn't like 'em?

**Gaynor** I couldn't very well ask for milk, now could I, be honest. It's hardly sophisticated is it, sitting in a cocktail bar with a pinta.

**Sam** Shall I tell you what I think?

**Gaynor** What?

**Sam** In this life you do what you want, gal, and sod the rest. If you want milk, you get milk. *(He picks up the phone)*. Room service? Pint of your best gold top if you would love. Yes love, we're talking milk. Mr King, Honeymoon Suite. Ta! *(He replaces the phone)*. On its way. How's that?

**Gaynor** I'm glad I found you.

**Sam** *(Placing his arms around her)* Who says north and south don't mix? They know nothin'! *(They kiss)*. Hungry?

**Gaynor** I've got too many butterflies to be hungry.

**Sam** *(Picking up the menu)* How d'ya fancy Steak Diane?

**Gaynor** Can I have a mushroom omelette?

**Sam** Hey, darlin'; this is the big night. We want this to be special, don't we?

**Gaynor** But I don't like steak.

**Sam** You don't ...

**Gaynor** All that should have been on my information sheet. Was it not on?

**Sam** Don't remember.

**Gaynor** 'Cos I told the woman; what's her name ...

**Sam** Crystal?

**Gaynor** ... Crystal, yeah. I asked her to make sure it were on. Ever since I saw that film about calves in crates I've been right off meat. I can't bear to look at it.

When I go by a butcher's window I see raw chopped up bodies. I never used to be like that. I mean, I'd see a bit of kidney or liver and think nothing of it, as if it hadn't been part of an animal, sort of thing. Now I just see dead bodies on slabs. It's a nightmare.

**Sam** So what if I wanted steak for dinner? What happens? You're saying you can't cook it?

**Gaynor** I'm good at omelettes and pancakes and salad ... and there's this nut roast recipe I found, that ...

**Sam** But I like steak. Sorry and all that, love, but that's the way I am. Saturday night it's a few bevvies with the lads and a twelve-ounce steak, rare; the more blood the better.

**Gaynor** Sammy!

**Sam** Sorry, love, but I've got to be honest, haven't I. I mean, the way I see it, a man needs steak, don't he, to give him a bit of the old 'umph', if you know what I mean. 'Cos basically, when you look at it, we're all animals really, aren't we. I mean, I love nature as much as the next man, don't get me wrong, but you tell me, have you ever seen a lion eating a salad.

**Gaynor** Course not.

**Sam** That's my point. If it's normal for a lion, it's normal for us.

**Gaynor** I'm not stopping you eating meat, what I'm saying is I'd rather you didn't do it in the house.

**Sam** I can't eat meat in the house?

**Gaynor** I'd rather you didn't.

**Sam** What do I do? Sit in the shed?

**Gaynor** Sammy, don't be silly. There are restaurants.

**Sam** I put this on my form, you know. I said, one of my luxuries was to watch 'Match Of The Day' in my underpants, lying on the floor, eating a steak sandwich.

**Gaynor** I don't remember that.

**Sam** I put it in because it's one of my fantasies to have a girl beside me in her underwear, on the floor, watching 'Match Of The Day' and sharing my steak.

**Gaynor** I couldn't do that.

**Sam** I realise that, now.

**Gaynor** Football drives me crazy. It's all you get these days. That's all the men talk about when I cut their hair. "Did you see that goal Giggs scored on Saturday, Gaynor?", "Did you see Cantina's superb pass?". I tell 'em, "Look lad, I don't mind cuttin' your 'air so you look like something escaped from Strangeways, but don't bore me with football. Talk about art or films or books or something, but not bleedin' football all the time".

**Sam** *(He sits on the bed)* Think I'm getting a headache.

**Gaynor** Come on! Lie on the bed. *(She helps Sam up onto the bed and sits astride him, massaging his temples)*. That's it. How's that?

**Sam** Nice.

**Gaynor** Wonder what brought this on?

**Sam** No idea. Mmm! That's good.

**Gaynor** I went on this course once ... masseuse.

**Sam** You're very good.

**Gaynor** They said I had natural touch.

**Sam** You have.

**Gaynor** And warmth. They said I could have healing hands.

**Sam** You're doin' me a world of good. I've got this warm feeling spreadin' all through me. Wonder what it is?

**Gaynor** Oh yeah?

**Sam** I've got this sudden urge to throw all my clothes off. In fact ... *(He grabs hold of Gaynor and pulls her down. There is a knock on the door. They don't hear it because Gaynor is screaming with laughter. There is another knock).* Yes! Now I've got you.

*The door opens and the porter enters carrying a bottle of milk.*

**Porter** Oops! My mistake! I really am sorry. *(Sam and Gaynor freeze looking at him).* Thought I heard you say ... no, as I say, my mistake. Sorry!

**Sam** You're timing's right off today, mate.

**Porter** I'm terribly sorry, sir. It won't happen again. *(The Porter moves around the bed, discreetly looking the other way. He places the milk on the drinks cabinet and sidles back around the bed).* By the way, sir, I put a bet on. Here's hoping.

*Exit Porter. Gaynor rolls off Sam. They are now lying side by side. Sam sits up.*

**Sam** Milk!

*Sam pours out a glass of milk for Gaynor, who sits up at the end of the bed.*

**Gaynor** It's a dead cert, is it?

**Sam** Yeah! You and me tonight, we're off to paradise, gal.

**Gaynor** The horse I'm talkin' about.

**Sam** Oh, the horse. 'Something Borrowed' you mean. Very appropriate, don't you think? Good omen I thought.

**Gaynor** What did you put on it? Fifty quid, was it?

**Sam** Well, not exactly, love, no.

**Gaynor** Good. Must have misheard. Fiver was it?

**Sam** Gaynor, I've got to tell you something. Apart from being the President of the Market Traders Association, I do have another little sideline.

**Gaynor** What's that?

**Sam** You could call me a financial investor.

**Gaynor** Like on the Stock Exchange and that?

**Sam** Well ...

**Gaynor** That definitely wasn't on your form.

**Sam** Well, no ... you see, Gaynor, love, I didn't want you to get the wrong impression.

**Gaynor** Aaah! Sweet. You're a right cuddly-dudley.

**Sam** Am I?

**Gaynor** You're a love and I love you.

**Sam** And I love you. *(They kiss).* You see, some times first impressions are the wrong impressions.

**Gaynor** Not with me. I knew straight away you were the one.

**Sam** Did you?

**Gaynor** I did. You're one in a million, d'ya know that Sam King?

**Sam** I'm the luckiest man in the world.

**Gaynor** We're both lucky.

**Sam** But I'm luckier, 'cos I've got you.

**Gaynor** We're as lucky as one another.

**Sam** But I'm feeling extra lucky today. I haven't had this feeling since I won a tidy bundle on 'Red Rum'. I get this peculiar ache in the pit of my stomach. It never fails. That's why I knew that it was safe to take a risk.

**Gaynor** You've got an ache in your stomach?

**Sam** It's been there since last night.

**Gaynor** Oh, my poor love.

**Sam** No! I was over the moon. I mean, I couldn't believe it. It was like destiny. Getting married and this all on the same day and, and on top of that the horse was called 'Something Borrowed'. Now if that ain't an omen, I don't know what is.

**Gaynor** So, you decided to have a little flutter? Nothing wrong with that.

**Sam** Gaynor, love, the way I look at it, is, I'm not like your regular punter. Half of 'em couldn't tell a horse from a zebra. No, I'm a ... scientist.

**Gaynor** You're an investor and a scientist, then.

**Sam** What I do ... what I do, is ... I invest scientifically; in other words I reduce the odds until they're in my favour. I study the form. You tell me a horse, any horse racing at Newmarket today, and I can tell you what stud they came from, their current form and what weight they'll be carrying. I can tell you the name of their trainer and owner and I can even tell you what the trainer likes for breakfast.

**Gaynor** You're a gambler.

**Sam** Gaynor, in a few minutes time ...

**Gaynor** You're a gambler!

**Sam** Yes. In a few minutes ...

**Gaynor** Financial investor my arse. How much did you put on?

**Sam** Let me explain.

**Gaynor** How much?

**Sam** Few quid.

**Gaynor** How much?

**Sam** Fifty thousand.

*Gaynor knocks back the milk and walks to the window to get some air. She turns to face Sam.*

**Gaynor** Again, slowly.

**Sam** Fifty thousand. *(She goes to the drinks cabinet, pours out a whisky and knocks it back in one).* Multiply that by twenty five. We're talkin' one million, two hundred and fifty thousand big ones. We are talking 'millionaire' here. No more wheel stall for me, no more hairdresser's for you; for us, it's the free and easy.

**Gaynor** *(Screaming, and getting louder)* Fifty thousand! FIFTY THOUSAND! FIFTY THOUSAND POUNDS!

**Sam** Think millionaire.

**Gaynor** I'm thinking bankrupt. I don't believe it.

**Sam** Gaynor, trust me. I know what I'm doing. I've got a sixth sense about these things.

**Gaynor** Sammy, I've been to your house, our house. I've seen your whelk stall. It's a lovely whelk stall. I've seen your little van with 'King's Whelks' on the side, with that little crown on top. I love that little crown. It's cute. And I like hairdressing. It's what I do. I'm good at it. I don't want to be a millionaire. Where did you get fifty thousand pounds?

**Sam** I can see you're a bit upset, but ...

**Gaynor** A bit?

**Sam** ... in a few minutes, you'll be laughin' all over your face.

**Gaynor** Sammy! Listen! Answer me! Where did you get fifty thousand pounds from?

**Sam** I raised it.

**Gaynor** Where from? How do you raise fifty thousand pounds?

**Sam** Where else. From a bank. I borrowed it.

**Gaynor** And they let you 'ave it just like that.

**Sam** Well I did use a sawn-off shotgun and threatened to blow them to kingdom-come if they didn't hand it over.

**Gaynor** You did ...

**Sam** Jokin'!

**Gaynor** Now he's jokin'. Very funny. Tell me when to laugh. Sammy, I know banks. I'm not stupid. Because we talk different, doesn't mean we're a few ounces short of a pound. Bank don't hand over that sort of loot unless ... what ...

**Sam** Unless you've got collateral. Is that the word you want?

**Gaynor** What did you agree to, Sam?

**Sam** Gaynor, you've got to understand, love, the manager's a mate of mine.

**Gaynor** Sure.

**Sam** He is, honest! He knows my business. He knows it's a rock solid, traditional, well-established enterprise.

**Gaynor** You've put your business up as collateral!

**Sam** In a word, yeah!

**Gaynor** Your business is on the back of a horse? Your whelk stall is in the two-thirty at Newmarket. I don't believe it. I don't believe it. *(She sits stunned)*.

**Sam** Sit there, Gaynor love! Watch and enjoy! *(He turns on the television set)*. This is it. They're already running This damn watch.

*They sit on the edge of the bed. Sam helps Gaynor to cross her fingers. She sits as though in a trance. Sam crosses his fingers. They stare at the television set.*

**Commentary** And it's 'Dirty Lad' followed by 'Molly's Folly' followed by 'Flying Picket' closely followed by 'Something Borrowed'. And they're at the two furlong marker, and 'Molly's Folly' is blocking 'Something Borrowed' who was trying to make a move. And it's still 'Dirty Lad', still out in front by a head. And now they're bunching together with only a furlong to go. And it's 'Something Borrowed' storming through on the outside. This horse has come from nowhere. He's striding out, looking comfortable ... and it's 'Something Borrowed', the outsider, racing ahead of 'Dirty Lad' and ... he's down, 'Something Borrowed' is down. And at the finish it's 'Dirty Lad' from 'Molly's Folly', followed by 'Flying Picket' followed by 'Rasputin's Revenge', 'Legal Tender', 'Pied Piper' and 'Idle Jack'. And there we see it again. 'Something Borrowed' was clear on the outside and his legs went from under him. A bad fall for jockey Sid Banks there ... hope there are no bones

broken. The horse is showing no signs of getting up. He fell badly and I'm afraid it doesn't look good for 'Something Borrowed'. This was a horse who had never won a major race, a rank outsider who was giving his all. We see again how the legs go, in slow motion this time, how they appear to fold underneath, and down he goes, nose first into the turf. That was a very nasty fall, and, I'm afraid, one must fear the worst for this game little horse.

*Sam turns off the television. They sit in stunned silence for a few seconds.*

**Sam** Bloody hell!

**Gaynor** I feel sick.

**Sam** Bloody hell! Bloody, bloody hell!

**Gaynor** My mum said, "Be Careful", she said, "You hardly know the lad. Six weeks is nothin'. Wait on".

**Sam** He must have been nobbled. He must have been got at.

**Gaynor** I told her I knew what I was doing. I've never been lucky with men. If they weren't married, they were out of work dossers, or students with nowt.

**Sam** Maybe he couldn't spread the bet. That is a strong possibility. *(He goes to the phone).* Outside line.

**Gaynor** Don't think I know anyone else as unlucky as me with men. Ralph sticks in the gut. Used to bring flowers to the shop, regular as clockwork. Had a lovely car, a Jag; big house in Cheshire. Found out he was a pimp.

**Sam** Hiya, Pete!

**Gaynor** Wanted me to go on the game.

**Sam** You were about to ring me? Right! You got it on then, all on?

**Gaynor** Wanted me to dye my hair blonde and work from a cocktail bar in Manchester.

**Sam** No problem, mate. Easy come, easy go, you know wha' I mean.

**Gaynor** I kneed 'im in the balls. He didn't come back. Missed the flowers, though.

**Sam** See you Monday! Cheers! *(He replaces the phone, and pours himself a drink).*

**Gaynor** When I think on, if it hadn't been for bad luck I wouldn't have had any luck at all.

*Gaynor holds out her empty glass. Sam takes it and fills it with a large scotch.*

**Sam** One thing, they serve a good malt here. None of your blended rubbish.

**Gaynor** Thank God for that. I mean blended would have just ruined the weekend.

**Sam** What can I say? *(He hands Gaynor her drink).*

**Gaynor** If you don't know what to say, say nowt, that's what I always say. Up yours! *(She knocks back the drink in one).*

**Sam** That was pure malt.

**Gaynor** I like it pure. There's no other way. *(She hands out the glass to be recharged).* Fill it up, Sammy boy.

**Sam** Gaynor, love, listen. I'm sorry! I know you're upset. I understand that. I'm upset. I'm very upset.

**Gaynor** You cocked it up, didn't ya lad.

**Sam** I cocked it up. I did. I admit it.

**Gaynor** My glass is still empty. D'ya mind?

**Sam** *(Taking the glass and re-filling it)* I know this is gonna sound stupid, Gaynor, but I believe in fate. I'm a strong believer in that ... fate.

**Gaynor** My friend Lorna warned me about honeymoons. She said they're not all they're cracked up to be. Her and Norman didn't talk for three weeks after. I reckon we could break that record, that's if we're still together.

**Sam** (*Handing Gaynor the drink*). What I believe is, that fate has stepped in, it's the crossroads, a turning point, and who knows what's around the corner.

**Gaynor** Bankruptcy court, most like, and life on the dole.

**Sam** Not me love. You don't get me on the Old King Cole. I know the boys. I can wheel and deal, know what I mean. You don't get me sitting on my arse all day watching Pebble Mill. I'm out there, duckin' and divin'. If it comes to the worst, I get a barra, prime site, I sell anything. The dole's a non-starter.

**Gaynor** What if I can't get a job? How do we pay the mortgage?

**Sam** Don't worry! Somethin'll turn up.

**Gaynor** Somethin'll turn up.

**Sam** It will. Believe me. In fact I've already got this plan churning around in the old Petticoat Lane.

**Gaynor** What?

**Sam** Brain. Petticoat Lane ... Brain.

**Gaynor** Another scientifically worked out plan, is it?

**Sam** Watch this! What you think of this? (*He goes out of the door and comes back in as a bouncy stand up comedian*). Thank you, thank you, thank you. Don't clap. Throw money. Are you laughin' missus or 'ave you just had a face lift? Here! Talk about ugly? In fact, talk about anything you like. Doesn't worry me. I've heard 'em all before anyway. No, but seriously, I haven't always been suave like what I am now. When I was kid we were so poor we all slept in the same bed, that's four brothers, three sisters and mum and dad, or pater and mater, as what I say now. They all wet the bed, in fact I could swim before I could talk. Mum and dad never made love. They practised synchronised swimmin'. Course they could, couldn't they. They slept in the deep end. I never wore jim-jams. They gave me one of them buoyancy aid things. No, but seriously ...

**Gaynor** What's this?

**Sam** My routine. Saturday night, down the pier, I can earn a few bob.

**Gaynor** Doin' that?

**Sam** They love it.

**Gaynor** It's crap.

**Sam** You've got to have the atmosphere, haven't you. You can't do it cold. Got to wait till they've had a few jars.

**Gaynor** Won't pay the mortgage will it.

**Sam** Who knows? Why not? Could go pro. Give it a go. Do the clubs an' that.

**Gaynor** And I could have a chain of salons all over Europe. Perhaps I'll start in Paris.

**Sam** What you do; you set your sights and go for it. That's what I do. It's all out there. All you gotta do is reach out and grab it.

**Gaynor** What 'ave I married?

**Sam** Don't worry about it. We'll pay the mortgage.

**Gaynor** I'd go home now if it wasn't for mother. I can hear her now. "I told you so. You never listen. You always know best". She'd go on for months.

**Sam** We won't starve.

**Gaynor** We won't starve he says. To think I left a damn good job for this.  
**Sam** I promise, Gaynor, you won't regret it.  
**Gaynor** Every week I had my regulars. I was famous for my bouffant, you know. You don't get a reputation like that in five minutes. Some of 'em cried when I told 'em I was leavin'. Sobbed their hearts out. Mrs. Thornton was very good. She gave me an extra week's wages. She didn't have to do that. Thrown it all away.

*She knocks back her drink and holds out her glass to be filled. Sam takes it and fills it.*

**Sam** Mrs. Thornton. Who's she?  
**Gaynor** The owner. Who else pays my wages?  
**Sam** Thought you owned the joint.  
**Gaynor** I didn't own it. I only managed it. Where would I get the cash to buy a place like that? Couldn't borrow it. Hate being in debt.  
**Sam** *(Handing her the glass)* Had a mate once. He was always in debt. People always bangin' on his door for their money back. I said to him, "How can you live with all that aggro, Len boy? Don't you worry?" And he turned round and he said, and he was always smilin'; he said, "Why should I worry, Sam? It's the poor sods I owe the money to should worry".  
**Gaynor** Some people can live like that. I can't. Sam, I'm feelin' peculiar. I need the loo.

*There is a knock on the door. Sam moves to the door. Gaynor tries to stand up, but immediately falls to her knees. Sam opens the door to the Porter.*

**Porter** Sorry about the horse, sir. That was bad luck.  
**Sam** I'm sorry too, mate. Hope you didn't lose to much.  
**Porter** Well, I did lose fifty-p, but I'll try not to lose too much sleep over that.  
**Sam** Fifty-p!  
**Porter** Naturally, I won't tell the missus. She'd have a blue fit. Got to keep the peace.  
**Sam** I know what you mean.  
**Porter** I've come to ask if ... *(he sees Gaynor on all fours crawling towards them)* ... if you'd like to order ... your evening meal, sir.  
**Gaynor** Loo! Loo! *(She hauls herself up Sam's trousers and hangs around his neck).*  
**Sam** 'Scuse us a mo. Won't be a tick. *(He turns and lifts Gaynor in a fireman's lift and starts to take her to the bathroom).*  
**Porter** Is there anything I can do, sir?  
**Gaynor** God, I feel Uncle Dick.  
**Sam** *(To Porter)* Give me a second.

*He carries Gaynor into the bathroom. The door closes and the porter moves over and presses his ear against it.*

**Gaynor** *(Offstage, screaming)* WHAT ARE YOU DOING?  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* I'm trying to help, for gawds sake.  
**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* I don't want a shower ...  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* You'll feel better.  
**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* Let go!  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* Take this off.  
**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* Let go! I can take it off if I want it off. I want it on.  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* Leave it on then.

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* What you doin'?'  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* Get in!  
**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* I can't swim.  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* It's a jacuzzi. It's not deep. You're hurting my arm.  
**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* If I go, you go.  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* Don't be ... aaaahhh!

*Both scream as they plunge into the jacuzzi.*

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* You swine! You soddin' swine. Look at me.  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* Let go of my hair.  
**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* You're on my foot.  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* You're pulling me down. Let go.  
**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* I can't breathe.  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* Course you can breathe. I can breathe, you can breathe.  
**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* I can't swim.  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* It's not deep. Ouch! That's my ear.  
**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* Pull me out. Pull me ...  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* All right! All right! There.  
**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* No! Look at my underwear. It's ruined.  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* I told you to take it off.  
**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* Can I be alone, please, if you don't mind?  
**Sam** *(Offstage)* If you say so.  
**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* And I want some dry things ... please. Look at me! Ugh!

*The Porter moves smartly away from the door as he hears Sam approaching. Sam comes out of the bathroom soaked through, wearing a shirt and boxer shorts.*

**Porter** Everything under control, sir?  
**Sam** She's feeling much better, ta. I told her not to drink on an empty stomach. They don't listen, do they.  
**Porter** They always know best, sir. *(Sam takes off his shirt and puts on a dressing gown).* Would madam like something to line her stomach, do you think, sir? The chef does a wonderful concoction, a sort of herbal soup.  
**Sam** I'm sure she'd love it.  
**Porter** I'll get on to it right away. And the meal. sir?  
**Sam** I'll go along with the steak and the rest.  
**Porter** If it's any comfort at all, sir, the first week of my marriage was sheer hell. Purgatory wasn't in it.  
**Sam** That a fact.  
**Porter** Talk about cat and dog. When we weren't at it hammer and tongs, we were grindin' our teeth at one another.  
**Sam** That bad.  
**Porter** You don't know the half of it so you don't. Doubt if we had a single thing in common. Not one thing. I couldn't dip my bread in my soup; she went on all day about etiquette. Yap, yap, yap! She loved an argument. I've never known a woman like it. She could talk the hind legs off a donkey without drawing breath. Aye! It's a skill she has. If you ask me, she's a born politician, so she is.  
**Sam** How long have you been married, Francis?

**Porter** Had our silver wedding last year.

**Sam** Well done, mate. What's the secret? Any advice?

**Porter** Advice? Don't know about that, sir.

**Sam** I've seen all my best mates get hitched. Not one got through five years. Not one.

**Porter** That's very sad, sir; so it is.

**Sam** So you must be doing something right.

**Porter** Tell you the truth, I've been keepin' my head down most of the time.

**Sam** Why didn't you scarper ... bugger off.

**Porter** I've been tempted more than once, I can tell you. But no sir, I could never leave her. I suppose what it is; I love her, the mad woman that she is. Of course whether she loves me is another thing all together.

**Sam** Course she does, she must do mustn't she. You're a lucky man, Francis.

**Porter** Aye! That's the truth. What I will say to you is this, something Father Muldoon once said to me. He said, "Marriage is like wine. First of all you need a good vintage, then you look after it. If you do that it gets better as it gets older. However, a poor vintage won't last long and will soon turn to vinegar". That's the gist of it anyway.

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* I'm waiting!

**Porter** She's got a wonderful pair of lungs, your missus.

**Sam** I'll be in touch about dinner.

**Porter** Don't you trouble yourself, sir. Take your time. Enjoy yourself. That's what it's all about. *(He exits)*.

**Sam** What do you want, darling?

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* Pass my case in. I'll do it myself.

**Sam** *(Passing her case in through the door)* There you are, my love. *(The case is snatched from him)*. By the way, love. Do you like wine?

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* Can't stand it. Gives me headaches.

**Sam** What about champagne?

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* Sam, if you mention alcohol once more I'm gonna spew up. Shut it!

*During the following dialogue Sam puts on a black shirt, white tie and white trousers with braces*

**Sam** Gaynor, love, listen! I'm sorry! Right? I'm sorry! I've been right out of order. I don't know what came over me. Honest. What you've seen today is not me, alright? Put it down to excitement, or somethin'. I mean, this marriage lark; well, it's all pressure, isn't it. I reckon I've been bloody lucky to meet you, bloody lucky. When I joined that dating agency I never thought I'd meet someone like you. At best, I thought I'd pick up a tired old bag who was out for a good time, you know what I mean.

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* What'd you call me?

**Sam** I didn't call you nothin', love. I said, I thought I'd pick up an old bag who was out for a good time.

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* When?

**Sam** What?

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* When do you plan to do this?

**Sam** No, love. I was talkin' about before I met you.

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* Is that what you did before you met me, you picked up old bags?

**Sam** No! What I said was ...

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* Wait till I see that Crystal woman. I told her, I said, “I don’t want no rubbish; no head cases. I don’t want an Adonis or anything. All I want is a bloke I can trust who has his head screwed on”, and look what I get.

**Sam** I said I was sorry. What do you want? Blood? Give me a couple of bricks and I’ll castrate myself.

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* You don’t sound sorry.

**Sam** Gaynor, believe me, I’m sorry. I’m very sorry. I’ve never been so sorry. Imagine how I feel. I’ve been livin’ for tonight. I’ve thought of nothing else for weeks. Now look at me. I’ve lost my business, my livelihood; my fault, I know. On top of that, you’re givin’ me a hard time, not that I don’t blame you, mind.

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* If you’re sorry, go down on your knees.

**Sam** On my knees?

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* On your knees.

**Sam** You’re not serious are ya?

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* Knees!

**Sam** *(Kneeling)* OK! I’m down on my knees. I’m down here. Now what?

**Gaynor** *(Offstage)* Beg!

**Sam** *(To himself)* For cryin’ out loud. *(To Gaynor)*. OK! OK! Gaynor, I beg you, I’m begging you; please forgive me. I’m very sorry.

*Enter Gaynor. She is dressed in slacks and a sweater. She kneels down in front of Sam. She places her arms around him and kisses him. They roll over onto the floor.*

**Gaynor** I forgive you, Sammy King.

**Sam** Thank you, Mrs King. *(He kisses her and helps her to stand up)*.

**Gaynor** Whoops! I still feel dizzy.

**Sam** Come here, love. Sit in this chair by the window. Look out at the swans. I’ll put some music on.

**Gaynor** Nothing loud.

*Sam puts on a CD or Cassette of some romantic string music.*

**Sam** How’s that?

**Gaynor** Perfect.

**Sam** Can I get anything for you my love? We’ve ordered some special herbal soup for you. Help to settle your stomach.

**Gaynor** Thanks, Sam.

**Sam** Let me know when you want it and I’ll call Francis.

**Gaynor** I couldn’t touch a thing. All I want to do is sit here quietly and relax.

**Sam** Gaynor, love?

**Gaynor** Yes, Sam.

**Sam** You know you said you never liked to borrow money.

**Gaynor** Can’t be doin’ with debt.

**Sam** Right! I’m with you there.

**Gaynor** Nowt worse than debt. I’ve seen too much of it.

**Sam** What about Barclaycard? Do you ‘ave a Barclaycard?

**Gaynor** What you workin’ up to, Sam? You’re workin’ up to somethin’. What is it?

**Sam** What it is, and I know what this is going to sound like, and believe me, if I could think of a way round it ...

**Gaynor** What is it, Sam?

**Sam** Thing is, I planned to pay the bill with my business account. I mean, it makes sense, doesn't it. I can claw back tax relief against entertainment, and that.

**Gaynor** You claiming tax relief for your honeymoon?

**Sam** I mean, why throw money away?

**Gaynor** That's rich coming from you. Hold on! I know what's coming next.

**Sam** What?

**Gaynor** There's nowt left in your business account, so you can't pay the bill with that account. Right?

**Sam** Right.

**Gaynor** What have you got in your personal account, dare I ask?

**Sam** I haven't got one. I pay everything through my business account.

**Gaynor** I see. Now what do we do?

**Sam** Have you got any cash with you?

*Gaynor goes to her handbag and empties the contents onto the table.*

**Gaynor** Dig through that lot.

*She flops onto the bed whilst Sam sifts through the contents.*

**Sam** Fifty pounds, two hundred euros ... and an old threepenny bit.

**Gaynor** My good luck charm. I take it everywhere. This proves it doesn't work. What's the bill?

**Sam** We're talkin' hundred quid a night.

**Gaynor** For two?

**Sam** Each. That's all the grub thrown in.

**Gaynor** *(Sitting up)* Each? One hundred quid each? *(She flops back)*.

**Sam** I've got this idea.

**Gaynor** Forget it, Sam.

**Sam** No, listen. We've only been here an hour, if that. All we gotta do is to think of something to complain about. Say we don't like the room and clear off.

**Gaynor** *(Getting off the bed)* You want me to lie? You want me to lie, on my honeymoon?

**Sam** A little white lie. It's not going to hurt them is it. They've got plenty of money, they have.

**Gaynor** This marriage is not going to begin with a lie, Sammy King, and that's that.

**Sam** So what do we do? You tell me.

**Gaynor** What about that Mercedes of yours outside.

**Sam** The Mercedes?

**Gaynor** The Mercedes. Sell it.

**Sam** I can't.

**Gaynor** Why not?

**Sam** It's not mine. Joe Marks lent it to me. I borrowed it. He owed me a favour.

**Gaynor** You borrowed it?

**Sam** It was either that or drivin' here in the whelk van. Couldn't see you goin' for that.

**Gaynor** At least it would have been honest. Why the hell did we come here anyway? A 'B&B' in a guest house would have done me.

**Sam** I wanted it special. I wanted it to be different. I wanted a bit of class.

**Gaynor** *(Using the phone)* Hello! Could you ask the porter to come up to the honeymoon suite please. Yes, this is Mrs King. Thank you!

**Sam** What you doing?

**Gaynor** We tell them the truth. We say we can't pay the bill, sorry and all that, but that's how it is. What can they do? Shoot us?

**Sam** Hold on! Hold on a minute! You're my wife. I don't want you having to slide out of here with people laughing at you. I won't have that. There's got to be another way.

**Gaynor** If people laugh, that's their problem.

**Sam** I can ring Joe. He'll see me right. That's it! I'll give him a tinkle right away. He'll sort it. A few hundred's nothing to him.

**Gaynor** Sam! We're not borrowing. Forget it.

**Sam** They'll laugh at you.

**Gaynor** Let them! *(She quickly packs the cases).*

**Sam** Hold on!

**Gaynor** What?

**Sam** I've just realised something.

**Gaynor** What's that?

**Sam** We've been married almost three hours now and not once have I had my own way yet.

**Gaynor** You will.

**Sam** When?

**Gaynor** When you're right.

**Sam** What you mean is when you think I'm right.

**Gaynor** Something like that.

**Sam** Bloody stroll on!

**Gaynor** I'll check the bathroom.

**Sam** Hold on a minute. Hand me your lipstick!

**Gaynor** What for?

**Sam** Just hand me your lipstick. I wanna show you somethin'.

**Gaynor** What?

*Gaynor searches for the lipstick on the table. Sam takes his shirt off and wears his braces over his bare torso. Gaynor hands over the lipstick.*

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**... the remainder of this act/play has been deleted from this preview copy ...**

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END OF ACT 2 / PLAY 2

## INTERVAL

### ACT THREE / 'SOMETHING BLUE'

*The Porter enters carrying two small weekend cases, followed by Paula and Enrico. Paula is wearing a large sun hat, sunglasses and a tight floral dress. Enrico is wearing a white suit, a multicoloured tropical shirt, a panama and sunglasses.*

**Porter** This is it! They've all been 'ere. Kings ... pop stars ... Presidents! We've had 'em all 'ere. This your first?

**Enrico** Pardon? First?

**Porter** Your first go. Your first marriage.

**Paula** } { No!

**Enrico** } { Yes!

**Paula** } { Yes!

**Enrico** } { No!

**Paula** Yes!

**Enrico** Yes! Of course, yes! First time. For us the first time.

**Paula** First time. Yes! For us. For me it's the second time ... for me ... and for him ... isn't it.

**Enrico** Yes ... darling!

**Porter** I see! Once upon a time it was always first-timers ... confetti and blushes all over the shop. Now we get all sorts. Had a Mormon here last week. Tall, skinny bloke he was ... no flesh on him. From Salt Lake City. Four wives he had. Four!

**Paula** Really?

**Porter** Don't ask me where he got his energy from. They lived on salads and fruit juice for three days. *(He puts the bags down)*. One week we had six lots of Smith's staying here ... not all at the same time. I knew one of the Mrs Smith's. Sally Purdoe, estate agents wife. Me ... I see and hear nothing. What people do with their lives has nothing to do with me. As long as they tip well, they can do anything they like. The sauna's through there ... and the Jacuzzi! Drinks cabinet's there. Massage parlour's down the corridor. Not that you'll be needing that. No! Right! Call if you want a top-up! Anything you want, give reception a bell and ask for me, Francis ... and I mean anything. You know what I mean. Special food, drink, substances of any kind, anything to make your stay go with a swing, it's only a phone call away. *(He holds out a hand for a tip. Paula nudges Enrico who reluctantly digs into his pocket for a tip. He gives it to the Porter)*. I'll leave you to it, then.

**Paula** }  
**Enrico** } Thank you!

*Exit Porter.*

**Paula** Talk about tongue-tied. He knows.

**Enrico** Nonsense!

**Paula** He knows!

**Enrico** How can he?

**Paula** You saw the way he looked at me. He knows!

**Enrico** He knows nothing! Absolutely nothing. He can't know anything. You've never been here before, have you?

**Paula** He's seen me ... somewhere. He recognised me.

**Enrico** What do you mean? I know you and I don't recognise you. Look at yourself! Go on! Look in the mirror! (*Paula moves to the dressing table stage left*). See! Your own husband wouldn't recognise you.

**Paula** (*Removing her sunglasses*) And you called me "darling". Please don't call me that. I've never been called that.

**Enrico** Thought it was a nice touch, myself.

**Paula** Wrong! Look at me! A nervous wreck! Bags everywhere.

**Enrico** You're beautiful.

**Paula** Huge black bags. I look gross.

**Enrico** Gives your eyes character.

**Paula** I look old. Ugh!

**Enrico** I like a woman to look ... mature.

**Paula** I am not mature, thank you very much. Mature women wear sensible shoes and 'Queen Mother' hats. I need a drink.

**Enrico** Good idea!

*Paula sits on the bed. Enrico goes to the drinks cabinet.*

**Paula** What did you put in the register ... out of interest?

**Enrico** Smith! (*Pause*). Joking! Mr and Mrs Costello. A half-truth at least.

**Paula** Tell me something! Why me?

**Enrico** We've got gin, sherry, whisky, Martini, rum, soda water, ginger ...

**Paula** Why me, Mr Costello? Why me?

**Enrico** Please Paula, try to relax. We're not in the office so it's Enrico, OK?

**Paula** Enrico.

**Enrico** What's your poison, Paula? Gin? Whisky?

**Paula** Whisky! Large! Neat! So?

**Enrico** Mmm?

**Paula** Why me? Why not Sally Carter? She drools into her pot noodle every time you go by.

**Enrico** I never notice her. I only see your eyes.

**Paula** And Mandy Warburton ... she's another one. She practically has an orgasm when you talk to her.

**Enrico** As I say ... they don't have your eyes.

**Paula** Look at this room. Could you live with these colours?

**Enrico** It's supposed to be romantic. Don't you like pink?

**Paula** Something 'Barbara Cartland' about it. Reminds me of candy-floss. I get sick when I eat candy-floss.

**Enrico** So whatever you do, don't lick the wallpaper.

*Enrico laughs. Paula laughs feebly in response.*

**Paula** Couldn't believe it when you asked me. Couldn't believe myself. I've never done this before, you know. Never!

**Enrico** I believe you.

**Paula** Pardon me?

**Enrico** I believe you ... when you say you have never done this before. Perhaps you might have wanted to now and again ...

**Paula** Absolutely not ... never! Never ever! That's not to say I haven't been, what you call, approached.

**Enrico** Propositioned?

**Paula** Yes, propositioned ... many times.

**Enrico** Doesn't surprise me. *(He hands Paula a drink)*. You're a very attractive woman, Paula. *(He sits on the bed)*.

**Paula** Thank you.

**Enrico** To us!

**Paula** To us! When I say many times ... I mean twice. First time was my butcher, Eddie Sparks.

**Enrico** Oh yes.

**Paula** It was at his wife's funeral ... she was a close friend of mine ... his wife ... Gloria Sparks. Driving back from the cemetery he put his hand on my knee and said he needed a shoulder to cry on.

**Enrico** Unbelievable. What did you say?

**Paula** At first I thought, well, he needs a friend; he's in shock; he wants support. I told him I'd be his friend. I'd be there if he needed me.

**Enrico** As any sensitive person would.

**Paula** Next thing, his hand whips up my skirt like a demented ferret.

**Enrico** My God!

**Paula** Can you believe that? At his wife's funeral.

**Enrico** *(Placing a hand on her knee)* He must be an animal.

**Paula** We came to traffic lights; I jumped out, *(pushing his hand away)* and walked home in the pouring rain. I couldn't eat meat for months.

**Enrico** That's ... that's an experience. His wife's funeral and everything. And when was the other time?

**Paula** Don't know if I can tell you.

**Enrico** You tell me and I'll tell you one of my secrets.

**Paula** Hold on! Wait a minute. *(She stands, then moves away from the bed)*. I'm crazy! I hardly know you. You're my boss ... the manager, the man in the glass cage. What am I doing?

**Enrico** I hope you're going to be a close friend.

**Paula** This isn't right. From the beginning I knew it wasn't right. When you first asked me I thought ... trouble.

**Enrico** Come back here. Sit down. Relax!

**Paula** I'm not a fool you know. I know what I am. I'm certainly not the romantic catch of the year, that's for sure. I'm a middle-aged married woman. I've been faithful to the same man for twenty-five years. How boring can you get?

**Enrico** *(Going over to her)* Shall I tell you why I asked you? Every day I sit in that stuffy office looking through those glass walls feeling dead inside.

**Paula** Really!

**Enrico** What's my life? Production costs, profit margins, projections, take-overs ...

**Paula** Yes!

**Enrico** Exchange rates ... interest rates ... what's the Yen doing? What's the Dollar up to? Drives you crazy.

**Paula** I don't understand all that stuff.

**Enrico** Who does? My family, they come from Stresa in Italy. There is beauty. There is romance. It's everywhere. In the buildings; in the lake; in the music ... in the people. Without romance what are we. Machines? I look through the glass ... see you ... and I feel my soul being reborn. My heart burns again. *(He places her hand on his heart and holds it there)*. In your eyes I see the lake ... I hear the music. In your eyes I see life reborn. That's why I asked you and not the others.

**Paula** I see. *(She pulls her hand away)*. Have you ever asked the others?

**Enrico** Never! They don't compare.

**Paula** I know. They're younger ... slimmer.

**Enrico** So.

**Paula** I'm still married, middle aged and baggy-eyed. Missed the boat long ago.

**Enrico** You are an attractive, sensuous woman. Those skinny, feeble-minded bimbos ... Sally Carter and Mandy Warburton ... not in the same league.

**Paula** Those sun-glasses must be powerful.

**Enrico** *(Taking off his sunglasses with a flourish and moving close to her)* So, what was the other experience you were going to tell me about?

**Paula** *(Moving away)* Nothing really.

**Enrico** Come on!

**Paula** It's nothing. Harry, my eldest son, brought back this friend for a weekend break. He was nineteen. I was having a shower and I'd left the door open. He walks in, sees me and kisses me ... and I didn't resist. That's all it was ... a simple kiss. Spontaneous! It took my breath away.

**Enrico** I can imagine.

**Paula** I felt terrible for weeks ... because I'd enjoyed it. That's it!

**Enrico** You're a very warm woman, Paula. I like that.

**Paula** So what's your big secret?

**Enrico** My big secret! My big secret is that I was a virgin when I got married.

**Paula** Really?

**Enrico** Absolutely. I was ashamed. Who could I tell? I'd make up stories about this affair and that, and, you know, I'd elaborate, as young men do, on what I did and who I did it with. In the end I got quite a reputation. I found it paid to lie. Sad, but true.

**Paula** Sad is right!

*He kisses her unexpectedly on the lips.*

**Enrico** I love your lips.

**Paula** *(Pulling away)* Two-thirty. He'll be watching the rugby now. He'll have just finished his pre-match snack ... cheese and tomato roll ... and halfway through his mug of tea.

**Enrico** Who will?

**Paula** Peter ... my husband. You've never met, have you.

**Enrico** Let me touch those lips again.

**Paula** Rugby mad he is. He sits there and jumps up and down all afternoon. Pointless trying to talk to him.

**Enrico** Paula, I'm very glad you came.

**Paula** One day he'll have a heart attack, I'm sure.

**Enrico** Paula! *(He raises his glass, she raises hers)*. To a wonderful weekend.

**Paula** Weekend! Oh, I can only stop one night.

**Enrico** I booked for two. We're down for two. We agreed ... two nights.

**Paula** I know. I should have told you. There was no time. Harry's coming home for the day tomorrow.

**Enrico** Harry, your son.

**Paula** I've got to be there. He likes roast beef and all the trimmings. He eats like a mouse at college, and ... er, well, he adores my Yorkshires. And my apple pie.

**Enrico** What can I say? I'm devastated.

**Paula** I'm sorry! I'm very, very sorry.

**Enrico** Paula, I've got to say I'm very, very disappointed.

**Paula** I'm very sorry.

**Enrico** We planned this three weeks ago.

**Paula** I know.

**Enrico** Couldn't you have said something ... some sort of excuse?

**Paula** I did try. I said, "Harry, any chance of you coming next week?". But he insisted. It had to be this week.

**Enrico** He insisted?

**Paula** Probably cash-flow problems. Usually is.

**Enrico** *(Standing and moving away to SR)* Wish I'd known this earlier.

**Paula** I meant to phone. I tried to tell you. I really did. I just ... *(She stands and moves to SL)* ... well ... I've been so confused. I haven't slept.

**Enrico** I could have gone to that party in Richmond ... and then it was on to Paris for breakfast.

**Paula** Even Peter noticed it. Then he would.

**Enrico** Fiona said she'd be there. Haven't seen her for years.

**Paula** He's always picking me up on something or other

**Enrico** Wonder if the flame still burns?

**Paula** The way I make Lasagne ... the way I sip my tea ...

**Enrico** Perhaps it's not too late.

**Paula** The way I make love!

**Enrico** What?

**Paula** Even that. What do men expect after twenty-five years? I think he needs a gymnast.

**Enrico** Let me top you up. *(He takes Paula's empty glass and goes to the drinks cabinet)*.

**Paula** I told him ... what do you want? Do you want me to fly in on a trapeze cracking a whip? 'Cos if you do, forget it. In my opinion sex should be about warmth ... tenderness ... loving ... those things ... not a circus act. *(She moves to the window)*. Where is this? Where are we?

**Enrico** About ten miles north of the M4.

**Paula** Very peaceful out there. Perfect spot for a ... for a "honeymoon". I'm actually in Bristol at the moment.

**Enrico** Oh?

**Paula** Sandra ... an old school chum. She's ... we're ... having a get together.

**Enrico** That's what you told him ... Peter.

**Paula** I don't know how I did it? I looked him straight in the face over the cornflake packet and it all rattled out. "I'm off to see Sandra next week," I said, as calm as you like.

**Enrico** What did he say?

**Paula** Nothing. Grunted and looked out of the window at the birds as usual. The first time I've ever lied to him ... and he didn't even notice. Do you believe that? The first time. And Sandra sounded peculiar when I asked her to cover for me. "An affair! How exciting!". Can't understand it. She used to be so straight-laced.

**Enrico** Here! *(He hands her a filled glass).*

**Paula** I won't do it again. I can't lie again and I can't use my friends like this. I've been feeling dirty all week.

**Enrico** I'll wash all those feelings away.  
*He tries to kiss her neck but she moves forward.*

**Paula** Look! There are swans on the river. Ghostly galleons! "*The swan can swim whilst sitting down; / For pure conceit he takes the crown. / He looks in the mirror over and over, / And claims to have never heard of Pavlova!*". Edith Sitwell.

**Enrico** I see. They're right on time! I ordered the swans for the day. Tonight the nightingale will sing outside our window.  
*He kisses her neck. She turns to face him.*

**Paula** Enrico, please. Could we take it in small steps. Do you mind?

**Enrico** Sure! How small?

**Paula** Can we try very small?

**Enrico** *(Holding her closely)* Why not. We've got all afternoon, all evening, all night.

**Paula** *(Pulling away)* I'm no good at this.

**Enrico** Good! I'd be worried if you were. More exciting.

**Paula** I've got to warn you ... I just can't do it, just like that. I need to feel something ... romance ... love ... something. I hardly know you.

**Enrico** We've worked together for ... how long ... nine months?

**Paula** More or less.

**Enrico** So ... we're not exactly strangers.

**Paula** I see you working in your office ... I see you dictating letters ... having conflabs ... coffee breaks ... and I see you driving home in your posh company car. I can count on one hand the times you've talked to me.

**Enrico** So, let's talk! Come on! Sit on the bed. *(They sit on the bed. He places a hand on Paula's knee. She removes it and moves slightly away from him).* So? Fire away! Talk! The ball's in your court.

**Paula** Now I feel awkward. What do we talk about?

**Enrico** Anything you like.

**Paula** *(Pause)* I've never stayed in a five star hotel before.

**Enrico** You don't have to talk. Sometimes words get in the way.  
*He places a hand on her knee. She immediately pushes it off.*

**Paula** What about books? Do you like books? Do you read?

**Enrico** I read the papers ... the sport ... finance ... but books, no. Life's too hectic. Why? Do you like books?

**Paula** I adore books. I collect them. Before I married I took a degree, you know. English Literature and Journalism.

**Enrico** You've got a degree?

**Paula** Why the surprise? It's all on my file. I wanted to be a foreign correspondent ... somewhere oriental, somewhere mysterious. Write my novel, make a fortune and bask in golden success.

**Enrico** Why filing clerk?

**Paula** I've done all sorts. I've worked in bakeries, supermarkets, hotels ... drove a taxi once. All part-time. No career for me. No time.

**Enrico** Devoted to house and home. A martyr to the family.

**Paula** You mocking me?

**Enrico** I'm applauding you.

**Paula** You sure?

**Enrico** To sacrifice yourself for the family ... that's very admirable. Very feminine. I like that. Very Italian.

**Paula** It wasn't a sacrifice. I chose to do it. I wanted to do it.

**Enrico** I think you're rather special.

*He leans across to kiss her. She shifts away.*

**Paula** What about hobbies? Do you have any hobbies?

**Enrico** Hobbies! Hobbies! There's a ... well there's squash I suppose. Cars ... hunting!

**Paula** You hunt? What do you hunt?

**Enrico** That look tells me you're against it.

**Paula** I don't like cruelty. That's it. There's no need for it.

**Enrico** Is it cruel to kill vermin?

**Paula** I know all the arguments about control and all of that ... and perhaps I'm too sentimental ... all the same, I don't like it ... especially when people get pleasure out of it. It's wrong.

**Enrico** Paula, why did you come this weekend? You didn't come just to talk.

**Paula** No.

**Enrico** Let me guess. There you are ... married, what is it? Twenty years?

**Paula** Twenty-five in May.

**Enrico** Twenty-five years. Christ! Murderers only get fifteen. So, twenty-five years ... you've loved, honoured and obeyed like a good wife.

**Paula** Some of the time. Love's been a bit thin on the ground ... and as far as obeying ... well ... who does?

**Enrico** *(Standing and pacing)* First few years ... great. Everything's rosy. Prospects good! Health good! Kids come along. Fabulous! Aren't they wonderful! No-one's ever had kids as bright as these kids. Right so far?

**Paula** Near enough.

**Enrico** They go to school. Then it's the Measles, Chicken Pox ... you name it they get it. We move on a few years. Things aren't so good. Everywhere you turn there's tension. Your husband's moaning about work. He's been passed over again. The kids ... they're moaning about exams. And all those little things you used to laugh at together, slurping the soup, picking your toes, squeezing the toothpaste in the middle ... all those things ... suddenly they are serious. My God are they serious. To start off it's a minor disagreement once a month;

then it's an argument once a month. In no time it's every week, then at the peak it's every day. Suddenly, it's silence. You've stopped talking. You're asking yourself, "What am I doing with my life? Where am I going? Where's the excitement?". Then the kids leave home. Who'd want to live in that atmosphere anyway? And there you are, the two of you, staring out of different windows wondering what might have been. Close?

**Paula** Some of it.

**Enrico** Tell you something. I've been married ... twice. I made the same mistakes twice. Didn't take me twenty-five years; four the first time ... seven the second. Now I'm alone.

**Paula** I'll be alone with Peter in two weeks. Not sure how I'm going to handle it. Bobby, my youngest, he's leaving. Harry's already left. In a few weeks it will be our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. He always buys me a piece of porcelain. Something blue. Dutch usually. Delft. Always blue. He likes blue. Up the stairs we've got these twenty-four blue plates spelling out the years. All those years spread out.

**Enrico** Mmm! Face to face, alone, in the same house. Scary!

**Paula** I'm not sure if I can talk to him anymore.

**Enrico** Sometimes I didn't talk to Samantha for weeks on end. It was perfect. I drew up a timetable. She had the lounge Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; I had it Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. On good weeks I never even saw her.

**Paula** What happened on Sundays?

**Enrico** I played Bridge ... she went to her mothers.

**Paula** Peter wouldn't like that. He likes me being there.

**Enrico** How old are you Paula? Forty? Forty-two? Forty-four?

**Paula** Near enough.

**Enrico** You're still a young woman.

**Paula** Sure!

**Enrico** You've done your bit. Raised the kids. Now it's time for a change. A renaissance. A re-birth. Change your space.

**Paula** That's one reason I came this weekend. I needed a little space.

**Enrico** Course you do. You need lots of space. Only natural. What else do you need? *(Pause)*. You going to tell me?

**Paula** When I'm ready.

**Enrico** You play games?

**Paula** Sometimes.

**Enrico** I like games ... if I know the rules.

**Paula** You'll pick them up as we go along.

**Enrico** One problem.

**Paula** What's that?

**Enrico** I'm a bad loser.

**Paula** So am I.

*Enrico tries to kiss Paula but she turns away.*

**Enrico** Not sure I like that rule.

**Paula** That's the way it is. I need time.

**Enrico** So I see. You know ... you can solve your problem just like that. "A1" solution. Fly away Peter; fly away Paula! Clean slate. Free as a bird.

**Paula** Yes! Easy! Disappear. Fly away twenty-five years. Gone! All the sacrifices, all the holding together, all for nothing. Whoosh!

**Enrico** There was this personal management course a couple of months ago.

**Paula** Oh, yes!

**Enrico** We all had to make a list ... all the things that cause tension ... you know, bad relationships, bad news, money problems, mortgages, that sort of thing. Then we had to plan how we'd get rid of all these things one by one, until all we had left was a list of good things in our lives.

**Paula** If only it was that easy.

**Enrico** It can work.

**Paula** It's all pie in the sky. You'd make a good politician you would. "It's easy folks! Get rid of your mortgage. Be happy! Live in a tent. Better still ... be homeless!"

**Enrico** You sell up ... take a few risks and drift. Find out who you are.

**Paula** I knew a girl who did that. Sold up ... went to Brighton ... lost the lot ... ended up on the game.

**Enrico** Some lose, some win.

**Paula** Knowing my luck I wouldn't last twenty-four hours. They'd have my picture on Crimewatch. "Have you seen this woman?". They'd have this actress acting out my last moments thumbing a lift on the A38. They'd find my naked body in a ditch a few weeks later. No thank you.

**Enrico** No risks ... no fun!

**Paula** I suppose you take risks all the time.

**Enrico** Some of the time. I like every day to be different. I get a buzz on change.

**Paula** Do you?

**Enrico** Oh yes! I can't stand still. I need change. My first wife knew that ... Samantha. When we divorced we celebrated. We had a second honeymoon.

**Paula** I never even had a first.

**Enrico** This was better than our first. We agreed it was the best thing for both of us. She knew me. A new beginning. "Why suffer?", she said. "Life's too short".

**Paula** Sensible woman.

**Enrico** She was. Good gardener too. Full of homespun wisdom. "When the roots have perished, plant new seed. Life begins anew".

**Paula** What if you're out of seeds?

**Enrico** Believe me, there's one inside everyone ... waiting for the right moment to germinate.

*He places an arm around her. She moves away.*

**Paula** And what about your second wife?

**Enrico** Hannah? She was different. Possessive? She wouldn't let go. Would you believe she wanted to kill me.

**Paula** No!

**Enrico** She wanted me dead. Listen to this! When I said I was leaving she stood at the end of the bed, kitchen knife in her hand, waving it in the air, screaming! "You're not leaving me you effing bastard! I'll top you first!". Absolutely out of her mind. Crazy!

**Paula** That's terrible!

**Enrico** I was honest as I could be with her. As soon as I started an affair I was straight ... I told her right out.  
**Paula** That's honest.  
**Enrico** She couldn't take it. Blew her mind.  
**Paula** What happened to her?  
**Enrico** She got religion ... some oddball cult. They managed to calm her down eventually. Now she just sticks pins in a clay doll every night. I know 'cos I always get this peculiar pricking sensation when I'm in bed.

*They share the joke.*

**Paula** Funny how things work out.  
**Enrico** Hilarious! She got the house, the car and my best friend ... and long may they suffer together. Talk about possessive.  
**Paula** You've never had kids, have you?  
**Enrico** Not the way you think. My kids are all around me. My cars, my paintings ... my antiques; they're my kids. My children  
**Paula** That's very sad.  
**Enrico** No. That's the way I want it. You should see my place. It's an Aladdin's cave. It's all part of me. I created it all ... brought it all together.  
**Paula** Things break ... grow old. They don't give you love.  
**Enrico** I can buy that.  
**Paula** Can you?  
**Enrico** Anytime. Look at you. Are you in love?  
**Paula** My boys give me all the love I need.  
**Enrico** What about the other kind?  
**Paula** It's over-rated and I can live without it.  
**Enrico** And that's why you're here with me. *(He places an arm around her)*. You're bored out of your mind with Peter. You might as well be dead. Love grows old ... dies ... drags you down. *(He tries to kiss her)*.  
**Paula** Can I have a top up, please? *(She hands her glass to him)*.  
**Enrico** *(Moving to the drinks cabinet)* You know ... my married friends, every one of them, everyone ... divorced. How's that for love? Obvious isn't it! That hot passion depreciates a lot faster than my Porsche or my Louis Quinze chaise-longue. My love for them only grows. Why don't you get into bed?  
**Paula** I'm not ready.  
**Enrico** How long does it take?  
**Paula** I'll let you know.  
**Enrico** OK. How about some food? Club sandwich ... anything you want?  
**Paula** Not hungry. Yes ... I can see how some girls would be impressed by all this.  
**Enrico** Look, why don't you relax and let's try to enjoy it. The good life! *(He hands a drink to her)*.  
**Paula** To fat expense accounts. Cheers!  
**Enrico** What's that supposed to mean?  
**Paula** That's what all this is isn't it! It's all on the firm.  
**Enrico** *(Smiling at the revelation)* Just one of the perks. I've earned it.  
**Paula** I am Yokohama Software Incorporated; quote: "a potential new client in the forefront of micro chip development. These will be exploratory talks"; unquote.

**Enrico** Where did you get that? Who told you that?

**Paula** Enrico, come on! Give me some credit. We're all computer-literate as you like to call it. It's a cinch to tap into company accounts and records.

**Enrico** That's confidential information. You need a password.

**Paula** Correct!

**Enrico** So, how'd you get it?

**Paula** Like you, I cheated. What are you going to do? Tell?

**Enrico** What else do you know? If you broke into Accounts what else are you in to.

**Paula** Practically anything I want ... personal files, medical records!

**Enrico** My files ... my records?

**Paula** Especially your files.

**Enrico** Which files?

**Paula** For instance I know why you haven't got kids.

**Enrico** You do?

**Paula** Yes.

**Enrico** You've seen those files.

**Paula** I've seen the doctor's reports. We know you're impotent.

**Enrico** We? Whose we?

**Paula** It's been a sort of a game with the girls in the office. We've built up this dossier on you. It's all very thorough.

**Enrico** I don't believe this.

**Paula** You'd be impressed if you saw it. All those courses we had on communications technology ... they've all come in handy. Makes it dead easy to access all sorts of information.

**Enrico** You're joking. What is this dossier? What's in it?

**Paula** Everything. Where you go. What you do. Who you see. What you like.

**Enrico** Hold on! What do you mean ... what I like? Such as?

**Paula** Well we know everything you like from "breakfast to arsehole", as the girls say. Aftershave, music, food, beer, wine, blue movies, which you only like watching when you're alone.

**Enrico** Where is all this stuff from? Where did you get it? Is this what they've been telling you?

**Paula** The kinky bits are interesting. You like melting chocolate and pouring into your girlfriends naval then licking it off ... but you always make love with the light off.

**Enrico** Melted chocolate? Who told you all this rubbish? They're lying. They're making it up. It's fantasy. Pure fantasy.

**Paula** You're the liar, Enrico. You lied a few moments ago.

**Enrico** What did I say?

**Paula** You told me you hadn't asked any of the other girls out. That's a whopper! The truth is, I'm the last on the list, aren't I. I'm the final conquest. True?

**Enrico** What do you know?

**Paula** I know everything. What you do; you single out your prey, as you did me ... you get them in your office and swear them to secrecy, as you did me. You promise promotion, bonuses, special perks and off they go for the weekend, always a hotel, always five star, always the honeymoon suite, and never the

same place twice. Back at the office you drop them like a hot brick, as you will with me.

**Enrico** I see! I see! So, if you knew all this why did you come?

**Paula** I like playing games. Thought it would be interesting to find out for myself. Hadn't anything better to do this weekend.

**Enrico** What if I said ... it's not the same with you.

**Paula** Then I'd say ... that's exactly what I expected you to say.

**Enrico** Okay! Okay! We're two mature people. I admit I've got a healthy appetite. I love women. I take them out, give them a good time; spend a few quid. They enjoy themselves. I enjoy myself. Bit of spice. Bit of luxury. They get a good deal. Everyone's happy.

**Paula** They're not happy. Enrico, you tell lies.

**Enrico** Come off it, Paula. These girls know the score. They're out for a good time. They know the rules. You have a good time ... you don't get too close ... too involved ... and you don't blab ... you don't spread it around. Too dangerous.

**Paula** We've got a theory, the girls and I.

**Enrico** About what?

**Paula** About why it's always the honeymoon suite.

**Enrico** What about it?

**Paula** We think you're angry. You're hitting back.

**Enrico** Ridiculous!

**Paula** Is it? You don't love women. You make love to them to hurt them.

**Enrico** Is that a fact?

**Paula** And we think we know why.

**Enrico** Go on!

**Paula** Mandy Warburton bumped into your ex in a night club.

**Enrico** Which one? Samantha?

**Paula** No, the other one.

**Enrico** Not Hannah. Not that idiot. What did she say?

**Paula** She said it was like living with a little boy, a Peter Pan. You never grew up. You were always flying around looking for some excitement ... and never really happy. It's got to be the Honeymoon Suite hasn't it. A way of hitting back at failed marriages.

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THE END