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Look, No Hans!

A Comedy

John Chapman
and
Michael Pertwee

Samuel French - London
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LOOK, NO HANS!

First presented at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford, by arrangment with Michael Codron. Subsequently presented by Michael Codron at the Strand Theatre, London, on 4th September, 1985, with the following cast of characters:

Fisher	David Jason
Kurt*	Tom Eastwood
Heidi	Heather Alexander
Monica	Lynda Bellingham
Cadwallader	Richard Vernon
Mitzi	Anita Graham
Tregunter-Jones	Charmian May
Foot†	Michael Shilling

Directed by Mike Ockrent
Designed by Poppy Mitchell

The action of the play takes place in a combined living-room and office in a large apartment in West Berlin

ACT I A hot morning in August
ACT II Immediately following

Time—the present

*The part of Kurt is voice only
†The part of Foot is optional (only his legs need be seen)

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(See also page ii)

ACT I

A combined living-room and office in a large apartment in West Berlin. A hot August morning

It is a large, spacious apartment of pre-war German architecture. All the doors are of solid mahogany. About three feet below the back wall is a large wooden-framed archway almost the width of the room. Through the arch, in the centre of the back wall, is the front door, which has a letter box and a bell. There is an exit off to L *of the front door, which leads to bedrooms and bathrooms. To one side of the front door is a hat-stand with the odd hat and coat on it. The entire hall behind the archway is on a raised dais*

In the L *wall of the room are two doors. One* UL *leads to a large walk-in cupboard. Below that is another door which leads to the kitchen. The cupboard opens onstage, the kitchen door offstage. Below the kitchen door is the drinks table. In the angle of* R *wall and back wall there is an impressive, high window with french windows opening on to a balcony outside.* DR *an archway leads to a bedroom*

On stage R *is a knee-hole desk and chair with telephone and an intercom with loudspeaker. Centre stage is a sofa. There are one or two other chairs and occasional tables and a filing cabinet. A connection with the motor business is indicated by a poster which shows a brand new model of a car under bold printing:* MIDLAND MOTORS - NEW CYCLONE. *Behind the desk on the wall is a large coloured poster of the Matterhorn*

When the Curtain rises, the stage is empty and the radio is playing "The Ride of the Valkyries". The french windows and front door are open, the other doors are closed

Peter Fisher enters carrying a handful of assorted letters; he is sifting through them. Fisher is a pleasant fellow, perhaps not too bright, but willing and cheerful despite the fact that he is trying to sell British cars to the Germans. The top drawer of the filing cabinet is open. He pops some papers and letters into it and shuts it. As he walks away to turn the radio off, the second drawer slowly opens. He doesn't notice it. He turns the radio off

The intercom speaker bursts into life with Kurt's Voice. Kurt is only a voice throughout the play and has a strong German accent

Kurt's Voice Kurt from showroom calling Herr Fisher. Kurt from showroom calling Herr Fisher.

Fisher goes to the desk and flips the switch

Fisher Yes Kurt?

Kurt's Voice Ah, guten morgen, Herr Fisher. Happy birthday. Der showroom is empty.

Fisher Any other cheering items of news?

Kurt's Voice Nein, but it has gone ten . . .

Fisher (*copying the German accent*) And you want your elevenses.

Kurt's Voice Ja. I am going to the Weinstube.

Fisher OK, and when you come back like a lion refreshed, you can do me a favour.

Kurt's Voice Anything.

Fisher I am well aware that trying to sell British cars in Germany is like selling pork chops at a barmitzvah, but it doesn't help to have the showroom window so filthy that people can't even see what they're not going to buy.

Kurt's Voice You are making a very good point there.

Fisher Glad you agree – so wash it!

Kurt's Voice Herr Fisher, I am a salesman, not a window cleaner.

Fisher You've been promoted.

Kurt's Voice (*without realizing*) Oh, thank you!

Fisher Don't mention it. (*He flips the "Off" switch, then sifts through the letters*) Bills . . . bills . . . bills. (*Then, with a chuckle*) Oh well, they're not mine. They're Bill's. (*He drops them into a waste-paper basket, sits at the desk and suddenly notices an envelope half hidden under some papers*) What's this? (*A quick glance at it causes him to react nervously. He rips open the letter and looks at it*) It's the damn code! Codebook . . . codebook . . . (*He hurries to the filing cabinet, sifting through the keys in his pocket. He eventually finds the right one, turns to insert it into the second drawer and is surprised to see it is open*) Oh, that's handy. (*He takes out a codebook, returns to the desk, sits down and starts decoding the letter*) Four–five–seven–three. (*He checks with the codebook*) "Dear". Seven–eight–one–two–eight–seven–seven. (*He checks the codebook*) "Flasher". (*He reacts and checks again*) Oh, "Fisher". Three–two–three–five–one–zero. (*He checks the codebook*) "Operation imminent". (*He reads again*) "Dear Fisher, Operation imminent . . ."

There is a ring at the front doorbell. Hastily, Fisher puts the letter and paper into the book and runs to the filing cabinet, where he puts the book into the 2nd drawer. He begins to close drawer 2—it sticks. Drawer 1 opens (both drawers are open together). Fisher tries to close both drawers. Momentarily they stick, then close. He opens the front door

Outside stands Heidi, a glamorous German girl with an attractive accent. She is casually but expensively dressed, and carries a handbag and a small parcel

Heidi Peter, darling! Happy birthday!

Heidi kisses him, presents him with the small parcel, then immediately hurries DS *to the sofa*

Come here, my liebchen, and I will give you another present.

She removes her jacket, kicks off her shoes, with the evident intention of getting down to a romantic session straight away. Having closed the door, Fisher sees what she is up to and reacts in dismay

Fisher Heidi! Are you crazy? Everything's off. Put everything on. My wife may walk in.

Heidi (*startled*) You said she was going to England!

Fisher She was—is—but the plane's been delayed a couple of hours. She's just out shopping. (*He undoes the present*) Oh, hankies, how lovely, just what I always wanted.

Heidi In that case I am going up on the roof to sunbathe. Join me as soon as you can.

Fisher But your husband . . .

Heidi Otto will not be back until twelve. That gives us two hours; enough to make love four times!

Fisher Give or take three . . . Listen, Heidi, didn't you get my flowers?

Heidi Oh yes, such a beautiful big bunch of orchids, but I threw them out of the window into the canal. (*She indicates out of the window, below which we assume is the canal*)

Fisher I can't say I blame you, but I just felt I had to send you some little memento.

Heidi If Otto comes back and sees orchids he would go mad. He would kill anyone who looked at me.

Fisher Kill? I don't want to carp, but I wish you'd mentioned that before.

Heidi It is so sad I had to throw your flowers away, but at least I have kept your little card, and it made me so happy.

Fisher (*staggered*) It did? It shouldn't have.

Heidi It means you are going to leave your wife and we shall run away together, no?

Fisher (*almost a shriek*) No! How . . . (*He controls himself*) How could you read that into it?

Heidi I remember every word. I have kept the card here, next to my heart. (*She delves for the card in the top of her dress*)

Fisher Could I have a peep? I forget the exact words.

Heidi takes a white card from her cleavage. She reads from it

Heidi (*reading*) "I am counting the hours until we are together again. Life without you is no life at all. All my love, Peter."

Fisher (*snatching the card from her*) The idiots! They mixed the cards!

Heidi Mixed them? (*Furiously*) You are sending flowers also to another voman?

Fisher No! Yes! Not to a *voman*—to my vife.

Heidi You gave her also orchids?

Fisher No! No! A simple little posy.

Heidi Then what did my card say?

Fisher (*awkwardly*) The fact is . . . I felt we might be getting too fond of each other . . . that we should break if off before someone got hurt . . . after all, I do love Monica, and you love Otto . . .

Heidi I hate him!
Fisher Oh. Well, perhaps he may grow on you.
Heidi (*eyes brimming*) You think I would have given all of myself to you if I had still loved Otto? (*She hangs her handbag on Fisher's arm and uses one of the handkerchiefs bought for him to blow her nose*)
Fisher Well, at the time I didn't give it much thought.
Heidi I can see now. You have just been toying with me.

They both blow their noses noisily

Fisher Let's be fair, Heidi, I only toyed once.
Heidi Let's make it twice.
Fisher All right. But only once. And later! Now please go, Heidi. (*He starts to push her to the front door*) I've got to call that damned flower shop. If Monica reads what I wrote on your card, she'll hit the roof.
Heidi All right; but remember, I am *on* the roof. As soon as I see her leave, I shall come down for you.
Fisher Yes, yes.

Fisher pushes Heidi out of the front door and closes it. He notices her bag on his arm, opens the door and gives it back to her

Heidi Danke.

Heidi exits

Fisher Danke. (*He shuts the door*) Why do we do these things? (*He sits at the desk and dials a number, reading from the card*) Sieben, sieben, zwei, zwei, acht! What a messy language. (*He wipes the desk. While waiting he pours himself a large whisky from a bottle concealed in a drawer of the desk. He takes a gulp, neat. On the phone*) Hello? Ja. Could I speak to the Fraulein who speaks English, please? . . . She's aus? . . . Oh, damn! Well, here goes. Allo! Ich bin Herr Fisher, und early this morgen I telefunkened du fur zwei bunchen of blumen fur zwei different damen—ein grosse und ein kleine . . . No! Not grosse dame! Eine grosse und ein kleine bunchen of *blumen* . . . Ja. Und du hast ge-cockened it up. . . . Well fur ein start der kleine bunchen hasn't even been ge-livered yet, und when it dost there will be ein grosse bangen. . . . Why? Because du hast attached der second carten to der firsta grosse bunchen; so the wrong dama got it . . . Get it? Good. Zo, der pointen ist, has du jetzt sent der firsta carten mit der kleine bunchen of blumen to the other dama, or is there still time to stop it? . . . Du hast? (*He visibly slumps*) Und der isn't? . . . Danke. You have just dropped me in the blumen ge-fertiliser. (*He slams down the phone*)

Simultaneously, the front door opens to reveal Monica Fisher, who enters with a shopping basket. Monica is the well brought up daughter of a vicar; naïve at times, over-effusive at times, and a thorough-going "good sort"

Ge-God! Ge-Monica! Good-morning! Why am I saying good-morning? We said that already.
Monica Are you all right? What's that you're drinking?
Fisher It said whisky on the label.

Monica At ten-thirty in the morning?
Fisher It says it all the time. You look radiant. (*He looks at his watch*) Shouldn't you be going back to the airport?
Monica Not just yet. (*Accusingly*) Who's been a naughty boy? (*She brandishes a large salami, and he chokes on his drink*)
Fisher (*guiltily*) When?

Monica takes a modest posy of flowers from her shopping basket, holds it up

Monica Look!
Fisher Oh, f . . . f . . . flowers!
Monica You're naughty! *I* should be giving flowers to the birthday boy. I bumped into the man from the flower shop and he gave them to me. They're beautiful. You shouldn't.

Monica kisses him. He draws her close and her head is over his shoulder, facing the audience. He tries, surreptitiously, to get the card all the time during the ensuing scene

Fisher Why not, my little "Mini Moke"? Absence makes the heart grow "Honda".

A look of acute pain crosses Monica's face, indicating that she is allergic to his jokes

Monica That was lovely, Peter! You should add that to your list of jolly jokes.
Fisher (*modestly*) I have. (*He gestures to the flowers*) I thought about a big bunch of orchids, but these are small enough to take on the plane. Give them to your folks. They'll brighten up the vicarage.
Monica It's a lovely thought, Peterkins.
Fisher Shall I put them in water for you?

Fisher grabs at the card with the flowers, but Monica manages to hang on to them

Monica No! I want to see what my Peterkins has said to his Moo-Moo.
Fisher Don't strain your eyes, I'll tell you. (*He tries to grab the card but fails*)
Monica If you wanted to tell me, you wouldn't have bothered to enclose a card, would you? (*She holds the card up and reads aloud*) "This is goodbye, but thank you for a wonderful experience. I know it'll hurt for a while, but I'm sure it is better and cleaner this way. Peter."

Monica looks at him. He smiles weakly

Fisher Not very original I'm afraid, but it came from the heart.
Monica "This is goodbye"?
Fisher Sorry? I don't understand.
Monica Neither do I. What on earth does this message mean?
Fisher (*temporizing*) Doesn't it speak for itself?
Monica Not to me it doesn't.
Fisher You're leaving. I'm just saying "good-bye".

Monica Sounds like a suicide note!
Fisher That's how I feel when you go away.
Monica After all these years? You sentimental old thing!

Monica moves towards the kitchen door, taking the flowers and her shopping bag. Fisher utters an audible sigh of relief. Then Monica stops and turns

What will hurt?
Fisher Hurt? (*He pats his heart*) The old ticker, my darling. It gets that awful "going-back-to-school" feeling when you leave.
Monica (*touched*) Aaaah! (*She turns to go and stops again*) Peter, I'm still a bit puzzled. What "wonderful experience" are you talking about?
Fisher Well, you know—us, together.
Monica When?
Fisher Oh, come on, my little "Alpine". Guess!
Monica (*wracking her brains*) Alp . . . Kitzbuhel?
Fisher Got it in one!
Monica But that was our honeymoon.
Fisher (*sexily*) Yes. Do you remember what I whispered in your ear as we lay close on the ski slopes?
Monica Vividly. It was some terrible joke about snowballs.
Fisher (*laughing*) Good Lord! I'd completely forgotten that one.
Monica I wish I had. I'll just pop these things into the kitchen.

The telephone rings. Fisher picks up the receiver

Monica exits to the kitchen

Fisher (*on the phone*) Fisher. . . . Oh, hello Charlie! How are things with Midland Motors in Hamburg? . . . Really? Same sad story here, but at least you bachelors have all those strip joints to wile away the boring hours. . . . No, Monica hasn't gone yet. Her plane was delayed. We're on our way now. So what can I do for you? . . . You're sending me a present? That's very nice of you. I never remember your birthday. What is it? . . . Oh, come on! Give me a clue. . . . Arriving this morning, and it's three nine, two six, three six?

Monica enters as Peter says the numbers

God! Another code to remember. . . . (*He sees Monica*) Must fly, Charlie, a little bird's just flown in. . . . Bless your heart, me old luv. (*He hangs up*) That was dear old Charlie from Hamburg.
Monica Was that somebody's telephone number Charlie was giving you?
Fisher Telephone number?
Monica Thirty-nine, twenty-six, thirty-six.
Fisher Oh, that? No, some stupid clue about a birthday present which is arriving this morning.
Monica Well, he can afford to buy presents, can't he? He does occasionally sell a car.
Fisher Steady my little "Thunderbird". Do I detect a slight touch of the bitters? Business has increased a hundred percent this year.

Monica A hundred percent of one is still only two. (*She goes to open the front door*)
Fisher But it's a start. Shall I drop you at the airport?
Monica No. Just help me to the lift, and Kurt can grab me a cab outside. Now, Peter, you will promise me that you'll eat properly while I'm away. You never eat enough.
Fisher It's all right, I've got boxes and boxes of stuff in the kitchen.
Monica Yes, and they all say "whisky" on the label. I mean *eat* properly.

Fisher picks up Monica's vanity case and goes to the door with it, leaving her to cope with the suitcase

Peter!
Fisher Oh, sorry darling. Let me hump it for you.

Monica goes out of the front door

Fisher goes to the suitcase and attempts to lift it. It is very heavy. He is caught off balance and it falls down the two steps with him

Monica re-appears at the door from the hall

Monica Quickly, darling, the lift's here!
Fisher Moo-Moo, what have you got in here?
Monica Only a few dresses.
Fisher You might have taken them out of the wardrobe first.

They both exit into the hall with "good-byes". Fisher re-appears

Good-bye, darling.
Monica (*off*) Good-bye, darling!
Fisher (*yelling after her*) Give my love to your mother. (*Then, to himself*) With a mallet.

He closes the front door, hurries to the filing cabinet. He opens drawer 2, takes out the book and papers, and closes it. As he walks down to the sofa, drawer 1 opens slowly. The front doorbell rings. He walks nervously to the door, and notices the drawer is open, so he closes drawer 1. Drawer 2 opens slowly. Fisher closes drawer 2. Drawer 1 opens fast and hits him on the head. Fisher closes drawer 1. Simultaneously drawer 4 opens fast and gets him on the shin. He kicks it shut and then hobbles to open the door

Cadwallader, a man of middle age, stands outside in a sombre city suit and bowler hat. He sports a military moustache and carries a briefcase

Cadwallader Mr Fisher?
Fisher Yes?

Cadwallader clears his throat portentously

Cadwallader I've—come—about—a—car.
Fisher (*pleasantly surprised*) Good God . . . Good-morning. Come in.

Cadwallader enters. Fisher closes the door and joins him

So, sir, you want a car?

Cadwallader No.
Fisher Sorry, I could have sworn you said you'd come about a car.
Cadwallader I did.
Fisher But you don't want a car?
Cadwallader No.

Cadwallader's face suffers a twitch. Fisher gives a start and moves back nervously

Fisher So may I ask what you do want?
Cadwallader (*deliberately*) I've come about a car.
Fisher (*blank*) Oh Lord!

Cadwallader's eyes narrow. If possible, his face looks grimmer

Cadwallader Repeat. "I've come about a car."
Fisher Oh, all right. "I've come about a car."
Cadwallader (*yelling*) No! You're not supposed to repeat that.
Fisher You just told me to.
Cadwallader We may have got off on the wrong foot. Forget this ever happened.

Cadwallader turns and walks smartly out of the front door and slams it

Fisher They should never have let him out.

The front doorbell rings. Fisher opens the door

Cadwallader stands outside

Cadwallader Good-morning. "I've come about a car."
Fisher What, again?
Cadwallader No! No! Wrong! You haven't seen me before.
Fisher I was hoping I'd never see you again.
Cadwallader Come here. I'll give you one more chance. Now think! "I've come about a car." And you say . . .? (*He waits, looking hopefully at Fisher*)
Fisher (*hesitantly*) "No, you haven't"?
Cadwallader NO!
Fisher I give up.
Cadwallader (*a snarl*) Oh, do you?
Fisher Yes, well, thank you very much for coming. I won't keep you any longer. Your ambulance must be waiting.
Cadwallader Of course you've never heard of BSI?
Fisher (*hoarsely*) British Security of Industry?
Cadwallader Yes.
Fisher I may have. (*Suavely, à la Bond*) Something to do with industrial espionage, but I really wouldn't know. I'm just in the old motor trade, aren't I?
Cadwallader (*gripping Fisher by his lapels*) Do you deny that you are a BSI agent?
Fisher (*a jump ahead*) Oh no, you don't catch me like that, squire—not an

old campaigner like yours truly! I didn't get where I am today falling for a trap like that, Sunny Jim. I don't open *my* trap until I get the correct password.

Cadwallader You've had the correct password a dozen times! "I've come about——"

Fisher (*realizing*) "—a car"!

Cadwallader Yes! To which you should have replied, "I have just the model for you".

Fisher Oh, sorry. "I have just the model for you."

Cadwallader Didn't you decode your instructions?

Fisher Well—to be honest, I got a bit behind and I was starting to decode it only a few minutes ago.

Cadwallader How far did you get?

Fisher "Dear Fisher, Operation imminent."

Cadwallader Oh, well done!

Fisher But I do remember last week's message. It was a bit vague, but it said there was a senior agent from Intelligence Headquarters coming here one day this week.

Cadwallader It wasn't vague at all. It said Monday, not "one day". *Monday* this week.

Fisher Oh, silly me! Then that's today—roughly.

Cadwallader Not roughly—precisely. Where did they dig you up? We don't expect genius, but we do look for a modicum of intelligence.

Fisher Oh, I think I can manage a modicum.

Cadwallader Don't you know there's a war on?

Fisher (*shocked*) Good Lord! There was nothing on the news this morning . . .

Cadwallader Not a shooting war. I mean a war on the industrial front. Forget about military intelligence, your James Bonds and Smiley's People. Chaps like us—we are the new élite.

Fisher I say! Are we really?

Cadwallader So you should walk tall and be proud of what you're doing.

Fisher I am. Rely on me. I'm tougher than I look. (*He gives Cadwallader's chest a hard, friendly thump. He then turns quietly pale, as he nurses very bruised knuckles after hitting something very hard*) What've you got under there?

Cadwallader Something I rely on a lot more than I do you. (*He produces a gun and shows it before replacing it*)

Fisher You haven't seen me in a tight corner yet. I've done the course, you know. (*He demonstrates with a string of athletic movements which involve karate chops and Thai boxing. He finally goes to lean casually on the back of the sofa, misses it, falls and disappears from sight. He re-appears shamefaced*) That was the Suma Sofa fall.

Cadwallader I still prefer this. (*He taps his chest*) Did you read last week's instructions carefully?

Fisher Absolutely. To the letter. Know them by heart. But just refresh my memory.

Cadwallader Since your apartment is the nearest to the Berlin Wall, it is to be the rendezvous for an important visitor, coming over the Wall from the East.

Fisher It may seem a stupid question but surely the Wall isn't there any more.

Cadwallader (*impatiently*) Just a figure of speech. Actually, he'll be coming *under*, using a tunnel.

Fisher Why? When all he has to do is walk straight through.

Cadwallader Because that's the way he prefers it! So stop asking stupid questions. We are calling it "Operation Hans".

Fisher Oh course. I remember reading that in the instructions.

Cadwallader No, you don't. It wasn't in the instructions.

Fisher (*quickly*) Correct. Just checking. (*He gives Cadwallader a condescending pat*) Well done! Carry on.

Cadwallader (*acidly*) Thank you. Hans will be bringing us details of the most amazing and revolutionary discovery since the harnessing of nuclear power, which is why the apartment has got to be empty.

Fisher Oh, it is. I mean, it will be. I hope. (*He moves to the drinks table*)

Cadwallader There's no room for hope in our game, Fisher. The apartment *will* be empty, or you're for the high jump. If the Russians get wind of this meeting they'll blow this building and everybody in it to Kingdom come.

Fisher nervously squirts soda from the siphon on to the carpet

Fisher (*hiding his nerves*) Would you join me in a drink?

Cadwallader (*nodding*) Gin.

Fisher I'll try to get yours in the glass. (*Pouring drinks*) I must say, sir, that it's not been easy combining my work with Midland Motors and BSI.

Cadwallader I hear rumours that Midland Motors are in trouble.

Fisher No. Just a minor gearbox fault with the new Cyclone. I'm expecting a Rep any time now with details of modifications. They're not in any trouble.

Cadwallader Hope you're right.

Fisher Thank you and, by the way, thanks a lot for being so understanding about the decoding. I'm damned lucky. You could have been that monster hatchet man of theirs.

Cadwallader Who would that be?

Fisher You must know him. Everyone says he's a psycho, a real nut-case. He's got a terrible twitch. What's his name – *Wallader*!

Cadwallader You mean Cadwallader.

Fisher No! Cadwallader? (*He chuckles*) I never realized; always thought they were talking about "that frightful cad Wallader"! (*He laughs*) Anyway . . . (*he proffers the glass*) . . . what's your name?

Cadwallader Cadwallader.

Fisher's hand jerks convulsively and he hurls the contents of the glass into the air. He quickly recovers poise

Fisher What a coincidence! Any relation?

Cadwallader merely glares

Have another drink? The old Beefeater, wasn't it? (*He pours another drink*) Have you come straight from London?

Cadwallader No, Bremen.

Fisher Old Tubby Fanshaw is our BSI agent there, isn't he?

Cadwallader goes for his gun

Cadwallader You're not supposed to know that.

Fisher leaps at Cadwallader and pulls his hand away from the gun

Fisher Don't panic.

During the ensuing speech Fisher carefully unclenches Cadwallader's fingers, slides his hand into his right-hand jacket pocket. He then buttons up the jacket into the wrong buttonhole, giving the jacket a lopsided look

Tubby being in the motor trade, too, we foregather from time to time. Got a bit pi . . . pi . . . plastered one night and it all came out. But don't worry. We haven't told anyone else. (*He tries to straighten the jacket, patting it and jerking it but finally gives up*) You must give me the address of your tailor some time. (*He then goes back to the drinks table*) How is old Tubby? How is the old reprobate?

Cadwallader Gone.

Fisher finishes pouring the drink

Fisher Oh? Retired? Back to the UK?

Cadwallader No, he was shot.

Fisher's drink shoots into the air again, and he manages to catch some of it

Fisher (*enquiringly*) Er—how? Was it suicide—or——?

Cadwallader (*tapping his hidden gun*) No comment.

Fisher thrusts the half empty glass into Cadwallader's hand

Fisher Hang on to that. Try not to spill it this time. (*He goes to pour himself a drink*) I'm really sorry to hear that. I liked old Tubby. We had some good times together. What was his problem?

Cadwallader He was a married man but got sexually involved with a stripper from Hamburg.

Fisher (*with a guilty start*) Hamburg!

Cadwallader Some tart with a loud mouth and a big bust.

Fisher (*sudden realization*) That's Charlie . . . thirty-nine . . . twenty-six . . .

Cadwallader What?

Fisher Goodness me! Look at the time! It's thirty-nine, twenty-six. (*He takes Cadwallader's glass, looks at his watch and in so doing inadvertently pours the contents of Cadwallader's glass into his own empty glass. He quickly drinks the contents and gives a little shudder*) Well, you'd better be going now. She'll be . . . I mean, you'll be wanting to beetle off and book in somewhere.

Cadwallader I'm staying here. The deadline is any time after midday.

Fisher Oh, my God!

Cadwallader perches on the desk with his seat near the speaker of the intercom, which suddenly gives voice very loudly, causing him to jump up

Kurt's Voice Bitte! Herr Fisher. Are you there?

Fisher flips the "On" switch

Fisher Yes?
Kurt's Voice Kurt from the showroom calling Herr Fisher.
Fisher Yes, I know who you are. What do you want?
Kurt's Voice I am going now for my lunch in ten minutes.
Fisher Oh, you're back from coffee then? Guten appetit.
Kurt's Voice Danke, and do you want I am bringing back a tart for you?
Fisher Not today, thank you. (*He flips the "Off" switch*) That's my assistant in the showroom. And when he says tart, he doesn't mean tart. He . . .
Cadwallader (*sharply*) He'd better not. Can he overhear what goes on in this room?
Fisher Only when this switch is on. Look here, sir, I suggest you take a walk.
Cadwallader Why?
Fisher I don't like the look of you.
Cadwallader I don't like the look of you, either, but for the present we're stuck with each other.
Fisher No, I meant you don't look yourself. Why not go for a stroll down the Kurfurstendamm and bring a bit of colour to your cheeks? (*He opens the front door*)
Cadwallader (*opening the kitchen door; closing it*) No thanks. I tell you where I would like to go.
Fisher Anywhere! Just say the word and I'll direct you.
Cadwallader (*opening the cupboard door and closing it*) Your lavatory.
Fisher (*clutching at straws*) That's not my lavatory. That's my cupboard. I've got a better idea. There's a marvellous new public convenience on the corner of Kaiserdamm and Charlottenstrasse . . .

Fisher starts to push Cadwallader through the front door. Cadwallader resists. The door remains ajar

Cadwallader I don't want to go to a public lavatory!
Fisher You mustn't miss this one. Pilgrims come from all over the world to see it. Magnificent – a symphony in pink and grey with the most tasteful mosaics in the shape of a target . . .
Cadwallader I am not interested in public lavatories. (*He looks at him sharply*) And I hope you aren't. Where is it?
Fisher I told you, at the corner of Kaiser——
Cadwallader The one here!
Fisher Oh, the one here is there. (*He points*) But I've bad news about that lavatory.
Cadwallader I don't want news about it. I just want to use it.

Cadwallader exits UL

Fisher (*calling after him*) On your own head be it! It's got a dodgy cistern.

Heidi enters round the front door and starts to caress Fisher

Heidi Peter, darling, what is keeping you? Now we only have one and a half hours until Otto comes back.

Fisher Not now, Heidi. The doctor's here. I'm having a check-up.
Heidi I can't think why.
Cadwallader (*off*) Fisher!
Fisher That's him! The doctor! He mustn't see you, he'll say you're bad for my heart.

Fisher pushes Heidi out of the door, leaving her handbag on his arm

Cadwallader enters and reacts to seeing Fisher casually swinging a handbag

Cadwallader Is that someone at the door?
Fisher (*involuntarily*) Wrong knockers.

Cadwallader accepts this and exits again

Fisher opens the door and gives the bag to Heidi, both say "Danke"

Heidi exits

Fisher hurries to the desk and flips the "On" switch

Kurt!
Kurt's Voice Bitte?
Fisher Thank heaven you're still there! Now listen carefully. There is a young lady from Hamburg . . .
Kurt's Voice Aha! I don't think I know this one. I hope it is as good as "There was a young lady von Buckingham . . ."
Fisher Shut up! This is a Red Alert, Kurt. I'm expecting a young lady to arrive. If she comes in your way, head her off. It's a matter of life and death.
Kurt's Voice Why? Has your wife come back?
Fisher No, and don't even mention things like that. Tell the lady I'm out and will contact her later. Oh, and get her address.
Kurt's Voice Ja. What size?
Fisher Oh God! Where she's living.
Kurt's Voice I don't know where she's living. Where *is* she living?
Fisher I don't know! That's why I want you to get her address.

Pause

Have you got it?
Kurt's Voice Oh come on, do you think I'm Superman or something? How can I get it so quick? I am not going out yet.
Fisher Oh, forget it!

Fisher flips the "Off" switch. The front doorbell rings, and the phone rings simultaneously. He dithers between the two, and answers the front door first

Outside stands a masculine-looking figure in crash helmet, goggles and overalls, with a paper in one hand

Kommen sie in. Ich musta ze telefunken maken.

Fisher runs to answer the telephone and answers it with his back to the front door. The figure enters and swiftly removes crash helmet, goggles and

overalls to reveal Mitzi, a gorgeous Juno-esque creature dressed in black stockings, suspenders and a sexy corselet. She tosses her gear behind the hatstand, then moves DC, *getting ready to sing*

(*On the phone*) Hello. . . . Oh, Charlie. . . . No, nothing has arrived, but I know what that "nothing" is and I could murder you. If I don't head her off, I'm in the——

Mitzi sings Happy Birthday. Fisher turns and sees her. He gives a great start and, unthinkingly, shoves the telephone in his trouser pocket. He rushes across and puts a hand over her mouth. He then removes the telephone from his pocket

(*On the phone*) It's no good shouting. I'm deaf in that pocket.

Fisher replaces the phone. Mitzi starts to sing again. Fisher rushes back to her

Quiet! Please!

Cadwallader (*off*) Fisher!

Fisher pushes Mitzi on to the couch

Fisher That is him! Now lie down on this settee . . .

Mitzi Look, I know it's your birthday but can't we have a chat first?

Fisher No, I don't mean that. Just lie there and don't say anything until I speak to you.

Fisher covers Mitzi with cushions

Cadwallader enters UL

Fisher immediately runs up and starts to mask him from the sofa, by clasping his hands behind his head

You called?

Cadwallader There's nothing wrong in that lavatory.

Fisher Who said there was?

Cadwallader You did.

Now Cadwallader dodges past him and starts to circle the room with Fisher still using himself as a shield between Cadwallader and the sofa

Fisher Did I?

Cadwallader Yes, you said you had bad news in there.

Fisher That's right. I was in there when the bad news came.

Cadwallader What bad news?

Fisher I'd rather not discuss it. It's still very painful.

Cadwallader (*shaking his head*) There's something very fishy.

Fisher In the loo?

Cadwallader About you. The way you're carrying on. If you're trying to hide something from me I shall find it. I've eyes in the back of my head.

Fisher quickly puts his hand behind Cadwallader's head

Fisher Hiding something? What on earth would I want to hide from you?
Cadwallader I don't know—yet. But I suggest you give me the answer to a few pertinent questions. What goes on in the public convenience in Charlottenstrasse? Why did you want me there? What is it about the lavatory here? Why didn't you want me to go in there? Why do you jump guiltily at half the things I say?

They have now moved quite a way from the sofa and Fisher relaxes a little

And Fisher?
Fisher Yes?
Cadwallader One other minor matter you may care to explain.
Fisher Pleasure, sir, what?
Cadwallader What is that woman doing on the sofa?

Fisher looks at the sofa and then back at Cadwallader

Fisher Nothing very much. Just lying there. (*He takes Cadwallader's arm*)
Cadwallader Who is she?
Fisher A very pertinent question.
Cadwallader And the answer had better be your wife.
Fisher (*relieved*) Brilliant. Yes! Of course it is. Who else?

On the sofa, Mitzi looks astonished at this, but says nothing. She sits up as Fisher leads Cadwallader back to her

Now let me introduce you. This is my wife . . . M . . . er . . .
Mitzi Mitzi.
Fisher Mitzi! Yes, my dear old dutch. Just back from her old-time dancing class. She's a vicar's daughter, believe it or not.

Cadwallader is eyeing Mitzi broodingly

Cadwallader Yes, I know. I am fully cognizant of your lady wife's background. (*To Mitzi*) Mitzi, eh?
Mitzi That's right.
Cadwallader I thought your name was Monica?
Fisher It was: but she has another moniker now. It's Mitzi—for short.
Cadwallader How do you do?
Mitzi Very well, thank you.
Fisher My love, I'd like you to meet a most important gentleman from BSI.
Cadwallader (*tempted to throttle him*) Fool!
Fisher (*smoothly changing gear*) And BSI, as you may have guessed, stands for British Sanitary Inspector.
Cadwallader (*mollified*) First class!
Fisher I do beg your pardon. (*To Mitzi*) In this case British Sanitary Inspector, *First Class*.
Mitzi Then what's he doing here?

Fisher He's been sent here on a course, and he's fixed us with new washers on all the taps. (*He turns to Cadwallader and slips him a tip*) Thanks for your trouble, Mr Fawcet. (*He tries to lead Cadwallader towards the door*) Nice of you to drop by. My regards to Mrs Fawcet and all the little drips—drippers—nippers . . .

Cadwallader resists being shoved out and pushes Fisher away

Cadwallader I am not leaving until I have made a *certain connection*. And I'd like a word with you in private . . . (*hating this*) *Sir*!

Fisher Oh? Mopsy, darling, pop into the kitchen and make us a cup of coffee.

Fisher has moved close to Mitzi and contrives to make conspiratorial faces at her

Mitzi (*at a loss*) The kitchen?

Fisher (*gesturing vaguely* R) Yes, where you run me up all those delicious meals. (*To Cadwallader*) She spoils me. (*To Mitzi*) Hop along, Moosie, and shut the door.

Mitzi moves R *and walks straight into the walk-in cupboard before the horrified Fisher can stop her, and shuts the door. Some crashes are heard*

Cadwallader registers this. He looks at Fisher and his face twitches. Fisher gives him a smile and whistles casually. Quite a long pause, then there is a knock on the cupboard door

(*Blandly*) Come out!

Mitzi comes out of the cupboard, looking sheepish

Fisher now surreptitiously indicates the kitchen door

Mitzi exits into the kitchen closing the door

Cadwallader Fisher——?

Fisher (*cutting in*) And you may well ask why Mumsie walked into that cupboard.

Cadwallader Why did Mumsie walk into that cupboard?

Fisher You may well ask.

Cadwallader I did.

Fisher She's as blind as a bat without her glasses, and this is her first day without them on—in. Either that, or she's got them on the wrong way round.

Cadwallader You're talking gibberish.

Fisher No! It's her new contact lenses. She's going through hell with them.

Cadwallader I don't know why I'm bothering with trivialities like that, anyway.

Fisher I don't either.

Cadwallader Because you're a dead man, Fisher. Tubby Fanshaw's transgression with his stripper was peanuts compared to this.

Fisher She's not a stripper! She's my wife. You said so yourself.