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SF PERUSALS

THE HOMECOMING

A Play in Two Acts

by Harold Pinter

SAMUEL FRENCH

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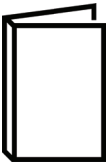
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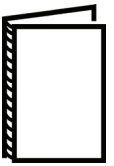
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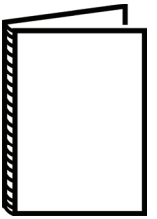
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Harold Pinter was born in London in 1930. He lived with Antonia Fraser from 1975 until his death on Christmas Eve 2008. (They were married in 1980).

After studying at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art and the Central School of Speech and Drama, he worked as an actor under the stage name David Baron. Following his success as a playwright, he continued to act under his own name, on stage and screen. He last acted in 2006 when he appeared in Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape* at the Royal Court Theatre, directed by Ian Rickson.

He wrote twenty-nine plays including *The Birthday Party*, *The Dumb Waiter*, *A Slight Ache*, *The Hothouse*, *The Caretaker*, *The Collection*, *The Lover*, *The Homecoming*, *Old Times*, *No Man's Land*, *Betrayal*, *A Kind of Alaska*, *One For The Road*, *The New World Order*, *Moonlight* and *Ashes to Ashes.* Sketches include *The Black and White*, *Request Stop*, *That's your Trouble*, *Night*, *Precisely*, *Apart From that* and the recently rediscovered, *Umbrellas*.

He directed twenty-seven theatre productions, including James Joyce's *Exiles*, David Mamet's *Oleanna*, seven plays by Simon Gray (one of which was *Butley* in 1971 which he directed the film of three years later) and many of his own plays including his last, *Celebration*, paired with his first, *The Room* at The Almeida Theatre, London in the spring of 2000.

He wrote twenty-one screenplays including *The Pumpkin Eater*, *The Servant*, *The Go-Between*, *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and *Sleuth*.

In 2005 he received the Nobel Prize for Literature. Other awards include the Companion of Honour for services to Literature, the Legion D'Honneur, the European Theatre Prize the Laurence Olivier Award and the Moliere D'Honneur for lifetime achievement. In 1999 he was made a Companion of Literature by the Royal Society of Literature. Harold Pinter was awarded eighteen honorary degrees.

THE HOMECOMING

Produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Aldwych Theatre, London, on the 3rd June 1965, with the following cast of characters:

(in the order of their appearance)

MAX	Paul Rogers
LENNY	Ian Holm
SAM	John Normington
JOEY	Terence Rigby
TEDDY	Michael Bryant
RUTH	Vivien Merchant

Directed by Peter Hall
Designed by John Bury

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

The action of the play passes in the living-room of an old house in North London

ACT I

Scene One	An evening in summer
Scene Two	Night
Scene Three	Morning

ACT II

Scene One	Afternoon
Scene Two	Evening

Time—the present

ACT I

Scene One

SCENE—*The living-room of an old house in North London. An evening in summer.*

It is a large room, extending the width of the stage. The back wall, which contained the door, has been removed. A square arch shape remains, with the hall beyond. In the hall, a staircase, running up and off left, is well in view. The front door is right of the hall, with a small window beside it. Below the staircase, there is a passage giving access to the kitchen off left. In the main room, there is a window up right. A large sideboard is against the wall down right, with a chair above it and below the window. A dresser stands up right centre, right of the arch. An upright chair is up left centre, left of the arch. A radiogram is against the wall up left, with a chair below it. A mirror hangs on the wall down left. A large sofa is left centre and large armchairs stand centre and right centre. The armchair right centre has a small table right of it. A standard lamp is up left centre. In the hall, at the foot of the stairs, on the back wall, is a row of coat-hooks.

When the curtain rises, the stage is in darkness, then the lights come up. **LENNY** *is seated on the sofa, with a newspaper and a gold pencil in his hand. He is in his early thirties, and wears a dark suit. He makes occasional marks on the back page.* **MAX** *enters in the hall from left. He is aged seventy and wears an old cardigan and cap. He carries a walking-stick. He goes*

to the sideboard, opens a drawer, rummages in it, closes it then moves down centre and stands looking around the room.

MAX What have you done with the scissors? *(He pauses)* I said I'm looking for the scissors. What have you done with them? *(He pauses)* Did you hear me? I want to cut something out the paper.

LENNY I'm reading the paper.

MAX Not that paper. I haven't even read that paper. I'm talking about last Sunday's paper. I was just having a look in the kitchen. *(He pauses and moves to left of the armchair centre)* Do you hear what I'm saying? I'm talking to you. Where's the scissors?

LENNY *(looking up; quietly)* Why don't you shut up, you daft prat?

MAX *(lifting his stick and pointing at* **LENNY**) Don't you talk to me like that. I'm warning you. *(He sits in the armchair centre)* There's an advertisement in the paper about flannel vests. Cut price. Navy surplus. I could do with a few of them. *(He pauses)* I think I'll have a fag. Give me a fag. *(He pauses)* I just asked you to give me a cigarette. *(He pauses)* Look what I'm lumbered with. *(He takes a crumpled cigarette and a box of matches from his pocket)* I'm getting old, my word of honour. *(He lights his cigarette)* You think I wasn't a tearaway? I could have taken care of you, twice over. I'm still strong. You ask your Uncle Sam what I was. But at the same time I always had a kind heart. Always. *(He pauses)* I used to knock about with a man called "MacGregor". I called him "Mac". You remember Mac? Eh? *(He pauses)* Huhh! We were two of the worst hated men in the West End of London. I tell you, I still got the scars. We'd walk into a place, the whole room'd stand up, they'd make way to let us pass. You never heard such silence. Mind you, he was a big man, he was over six foot tall. His family were all MacGregors, they came all the way from Aberdeen, but he

was the only one they called "Mac". *(He pauses)* He was very fond of your mother Mac was. Very fond. He always had a good word for her. *(He pauses)* Mind you, she wasn't such a bad woman. Even though it made me sick just to look at her rotten stinking face she wasn't such a bad bitch. I gave her the best bleeding years of my life, anyway.

LENNY Plug it, will you, you stupid birk, I'm trying to read the paper.

MAX Listen! I'll chop your spine off, you talk to me like that. You understand? Talking to your lousy filthy father like that.

LENNY You know what, you're getting demented. *(He pauses)* What do you think of "Second Wind" for the three-thirty?

MAX Where?

LENNY Sandown Park.

MAX Don't stand a chance.

LENNY Sure he does.

MAX Not a chance.

LENNY He's the winner. *(He ticks the paper)*

MAX He talks to me about horses. *(He pauses)* I used to live on the course. One of the loves of my life. Epsom? I knew it like the back of my hand. I was one of the best-known faces down at the paddock. What a marvellous open-air life. *(He pauses)* He talks to me about horses. You only read their names in the papers. But I've stroked their manes, I've held them, I've calmed them down before a big race. I was the one they used to call for. "Max", they'd say, "there's a horse here, he's highly-strung, you're the only man on the course who can calm him." It was true. I had a—I had an instinctive understanding of animals. I should have been a trainer. Many times I was offered a job—you know, a proper post, by the Duke of—I forget his name—one of the dukes. But I had family obligations, my family needed me at home. *(He pauses)* The times I've watched those animals thundering

past the post. What an experience. Mind you, I didn't lose, I made a few bob out of it, and you know why? Because I always had the smell of a good horse. I could smell him. And not only the colts but the fillies. Because the fillies are more highly-strung than the colts, they're more unreliable, did you know that? No, what do you know? Nothing. But I was always able to tell a good filly by one particular trick. I'd look her in the eye. You see? I'd stand in front of her and look her straight in the eye, it was a kind of hypnotism, and by the look deep down in her eye I could tell whether she was a stayer or not. It was a gift. I had a gift. *(He pauses)* And he talks to me about horses.

LENNY *(rising and moving to left of* **MAX***)* Dad, do you mind if I change the subject? *(He pauses)* I want to ask you something. That dinner we had before, what was the name of it? What do you call it? *(He pauses)* Why don't you buy a dog? You're a dog cook. Honest. You think you're cooking for a lot of dogs.

MAX If you don't like it get out.

LENNY I am going out. I'm going out to buy myself a proper dinner.

MAX Well, get out. What are you waiting for?

LENNY *looks at* **MAX** *in silence for a moment.*

LENNY What did you say?

MAX I said shove off out of it, that's what I said.

LENNY You'll go before me, Dad, if you talk to me in that tone of voice.

MAX Will I, you bitch? *(He grips his stick)*

LENNY Oh, Daddy, you're not going to use your stick on me, are you? Eh? Don't use your stick on me, Daddy. No, please. It wasn't my fault, it was one of the others. I haven't done anything wrong, Dad, honest. Don't clout me with that stick, Dad.

There is a silence. **MAX** *sits hunched. The front door is heard to slam.* **SAM** *enters in the hall from right. He is a small man aged sixty-three and wears a chauffeur's uniform. He removes his hat, hangs it on the hooks in the hall and comes into the room.*

Hullo, Uncle Sam.

SAM Hullo. *(He moves to the armchair right centre, sits in it and sighs)*

LENNY How are you, Uncle?

SAM Not bad. A bit tired.

LENNY *(moving to the sofa)* Tired? I bet you're tired. Where you been?

SAM I've been to London Airport.

LENNY All the way up to London Airport? What, right up the M-four.

SAM Yes, all the way up there.

LENNY Tch, tch, tch! Well, I think you're entitled to be tired, Uncle.

SAM Well, it's the drivers.

LENNY I know. That's what I'm talking about. I'm talking about the drivers.

SAM Knocks you out.

There is a pause.

MAX I'm here too, you know.

SAM *looks at* **MAX**.

I said I'm here, too. I'm sitting here.

SAM I know you're here. *(He pauses)* I took a Yankee out there, today—to the Airport.

LENNY *(sitting on the sofa)* Oh, a Yankee, was it?

SAM Yes, I been with him all day. Picked him up at the *Savoy* at half past twelve, took him to the *Caprice* for his lunch. After lunch I picked him up again, took him down to a house in Eaton Square, he had to pay a visit to a friend there, and then round about teatime I took him right the way out to the Airport.

LENNY Had to catch a plane there, did he?

SAM Yes. Look what he gave me. He gave me a box of cigars. *(He takes a box of cigars from his pocket)*

MAX Come here. Let's have a look at them.

SAM *passes the box to* **MAX.**

(he takes a cigar from the box, pinches it and sniffs it) It's a fair cigar.

SAM Want to try one?

MAX *keeps one cigar and returns the box to* **SAM.**

You know what he said to me? He told me I was the best chauffeur he'd ever had. The best one. *(He puts the box on the table beside his chair)*

MAX From what point of view?

SAM Eh?

MAX From what point of view?

LENNY From the point of view of his driving, Dad, and his general sense of courtesy, I should say.

MAX Thought you were a good driver, did he, Sam? Well, he gave you a first class cigar. *(He lights his cigar)*

SAM Yes, he thought I was the best he'd ever had. They all say that, you know. They won't have anyone else, they only ask for me. They say I'm the best chauffeur in the firm.

LENNY I bet the other drivers tend to get jealous, don't they, Uncle?

SAM They do get jealous. They get very jealous.

MAX Why?

There is a pause.

SAM I just told you.

MAX No, I just can't get it clear, Sam. Why do the other drivers get jealous?

SAM Because—A—I'm the best driver, and because—B—I don't take liberties. *(He pauses)* I don't press myself on people, you see. These big business men, men of affairs, they don't want the driver jawing all the time, they like to sit in the back, have a bit of peace and quiet. After all, they're sitting in a Humber Super Snipe, they can afford to relax. At the same time, though, this is what really makes me special—I do know how to pass the time of day when required. *(He pauses)* For instance, I told this man today, I was in the second world war. Not the first. I told him I was too young for the first. But I told him I fought in the second. *(He pauses, takes a cigar and lights it)* So did he, it turned out.

LENNY *rises, moves to the mirror on the wall down left, looks in it and straightens his tie.*

LENNY He was probably a colonel, or something, in the American Air Force.

SAM Yes.

LENNY Probably a navigator, or something like that, in a Flying Fortress. Now he's most likely a high executive in a world-wide group of aeronautical engineers.

SAM Yes.

LENNY Yes, I know the kind of man you're talking about.

LENNY *moves up centre and exits in the hall to left.*

SAM After all, I'm experienced. I was driving a dust cart at the age of nineteen. Then I was in long distance haulage.

I had ten years as a taxi-driver and I've had five years as a private chauffeur.

MAX It's funny you never got married, isn't it? A man with all your gifts. *(He pauses)* Isn't it? A man like you?

SAM There's still time.

MAX Is there?

SAM *(after a pause)* You'd be surprised.

MAX What you been doing, banging away at your lady customers, have you?

SAM Not me.

MAX In the back of the Snipe? Been having a few crafty reefs in a lay-by, have you?

SAM Not me.

MAX On the back seat? What about the arm-rest, was it up or down?

SAM I've never done that kind of thing in my car.

MAX Above all that kind of thing, are you, Sam?

SAM Too true.

MAX Above having a good bang on the back seat, are you?

SAM Yes, I leave that to others.

MAX You leave it to others? What others? You paralyzed prat!

SAM I don't mess up my car. Or my—my boss's car. Like other people.

MAX Other people? What other people? *(He pauses)* What other people?

SAM *(after a pause)* Other people.

MAX *(after a pause)* When you find the right girl, Sam, let your family know, don't forget, we'll give you a number one send-off, I promise you. You can bring her to live here, she

can keep us all happy. We'd take it in turns to give her a walk round the park.

SAM I wouldn't bring her here.

MAX Sam, it's your decision. You're welcome to bring your bride here, to the place where you live, or on the other hand you can take a suite at the *Dorchester.* It's entirely up to you.

SAM I haven't got a bride. *(He rises, moves to the dresser, takes an apple from a bowl, and bites into it)* Getting a bit peckish. *(He moves and stands above the armchair right centre)* Never get a bride like you had, anyway. Nothing like your bride—going about these days. Like Jessie. *(He pauses)* After all, I escorted her once or twice, didn't I? Drove her round once or twice in my cab. She was a charming woman. *(He pauses)* All the same, she was your wife. But still—they were some of the most delightful evenings I've ever had. Used to just drive her about. It was my pleasure.

MAX *(closing his eyes; softly)* Christ!

SAM I used to pull up at a stall and buy her a cup of coffee. She was a very nice companion to be with.

There is a silence, broken by the sound of the front door slamming.

JOEY *enters in the hall from right. He is in his middle twenties and carries a duffle bag. He hangs the duffle bag on the banister rail, comes into the room, moves down centre, removes his jacket, tosses it on to the sofa and stands down left centre. There is a silence.*

JOEY I feel a bit hungry.

SAM Me, too.

MAX Who do you think I am, your mother? Eh? *(He pauses)*

LENNY *enters up left in the hall, comes into the room and stands up centre.*

Honest. They walk in here every time of the day and night like bloody animals. Go and find yourself a mother.

JOEY I've been training down at the gym.

SAM Yes, the boy's been working all day and training all night.

MAX What do you want, you bitch? You spend all the day sitting on your arse at London Airport, buy yourself a jam roll. You expect me to sit here waiting to rush into the kitchen the moment you step in the door? You've been living sixty-three years, why don't you learn to cook?

SAM I can cook.

MAX Well, go and cook.

There is a pause.

LENNY *(moving to right of* **MAX***)* What the boys want, Dad, is your own special brand of cooking, Dad. That's what the boys look forward to. The special understanding of food, you know, that you've got.

MAX Stop calling me "Dad". Just stop all that calling me "Dad", do you understand?

LENNY But I'm your son. You used to tuck me up in bed every night. He tucked you up too, didn't he, Joey? *(He pauses)* He used to like tucking up his sons. *(He turns and moves up centre)*

MAX Lenny.

LENNY *(stopping and turning)* What?

MAX I'll give you a proper tuck up one of these nights, son. You mark my word.

MAX *and* **LENNY** *look at each other in silence for a moment.*

LENNY *goes into the hall and exits to right. The front door is heard to slam.* **SAM** *sits in the armchair right centre. There is a silence.*

JOEY *(moving behind the sofa)* I've been training with Bobby Dodd. *(He pauses)* And I had a good go at the bag, as well. *(He pauses)* I wasn't in bad trim.

MAX *(after a pause)* Boxing's a gentleman's game. *(He pauses)* I'll tell you what you've got to do. What you've got to do is, you've got to learn how to defend yourself, and you've got to learn how to attack. That's your only trouble as a boxer. You don't know how to defend yourself, and you don't know how to attack. *(He pauses)* Once you've mastered those arts you can go straight to the top.

JOEY *(after a pause)* I've got a pretty good idea—of how to do that.

JOEY *picks up his jacket, goes into the hall, picks up his duffle bag and exits up the stairs. There is a pause.*

MAX Sam—why don't you go too, eh? Why don't you just go upstairs? Leave me quiet. Leave me alone.

SAM I want to make something clear about Jessie, Max. I want to. I do. When I took her out in the cab, round the town, I was taking care of her, for you, I was looking after her for you, when you were busy, wasn't I? I was showing her the West End. *(He pauses)* You wouldn't have trusted any of your other brothers. You wouldn't have trusted Mac, would you? But you trusted me. I want to remind you. *(He pauses)* Old Mac died a few years ago, didn't he. Isn't he dead? *(He pauses)* He was a lousy stinking loudmouth. A bastard uncouth sodding runt. Mind you, he was a good friend of yours.

MAX *(after a pause)* Eh, Sam—

SAM What?

MAX —why do I keep you here? You're just an old grub.

SAM Am I?

MAX You're a maggot.

SAM Oh, yes?

MAX As soon as you stop paying your way here, I mean when you're too old to pay your way, you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to give you the boot.

SAM You are, eh?

MAX Sure. I mean, bring in the money and I'll put up with you. But when the firm gets rid of you—you can flake off.

SAM This is my house as well, you know. This was our mother's house.

MAX One lot after the other. One mess after the other.

SAM Our father's house.

MAX Look what I'm lumbered with. One cast-iron bunch of crap after another. One flow of stinking pus after another. *(He pauses)* Our father? I remember him. Don't worry. You kid yourself. He used to come over to me and look down at me. My old man did. He'd bend right over me, then he'd pick me up. I was only that big. Then he dandle me. Give me the bottle. Wipe me clean. Give me a smile. Pat me on the bum. Pass me around, pass me from hand to hand. Toss me up in the air. Catch me coming down. I remember my father.

The lights black-out.

The action of the play is continuous. **MAX** *and* **SAM** *exit in the black-out.* **RUTH** *and* **TEDDY** *enter in the black-out.*

Scene Two

***SCENE**—The same. Night.*

The lights come up on the hall.

When the lights come up **TEDDY** *and* **RUTH** *are standing in the arch.* **TEDDY** *is in his middle thirties and* **RUTH** *is in her early thirties. They are both well dressed in light summer suits and light raincoats. Two suitcases are on the floor beside them. They look at the room.* **TEDDY** *tosses a key in his hand and smiles.*

TEDDY Well, the key worked. *(He pauses)* They haven't changed the lock. *(He pauses, moves to left of the arch and switches on the lights)*

RUTH No-one's here.

TEDDY *(moving into the hall and looking up the stairs)* They're asleep. *(He pauses and comes into the room)*

RUTH Can I sit down?

TEDDY Of course.

RUTH I'm tired.

TEDDY *(after a pause)* Then sit down.

RUTH *does not move.*

(he moves to the armchair centre and touches it) That's my father's chair. *(He moves down left centre)*

RUTH That one?

TEDDY *(smiling)* Yes, that's it. Shall I go up and see if my room's still there?

RUTH It can't have moved.

TEDDY No, I mean if my bed's still there.

RUTH Someone might be in it.

TEDDY No. They've got their own beds.

There is a pause.

RUTH Shouldn't you wake someone up? Tell them you're here?

TEDDY Not at this time of night. It's too late. *(He pauses and moves to left of the armchair centre)* Shall I go up? *(He goes into the hall, switches on the landing light, looks up the stairs, then returns to the room)* Why don't you sit down?

There is a pause.

I'll just go up—have a look.

TEDDY *goes into the hall and exits stealthily up the stairs.* **RUTH** *stands for a moment then moves slowly to the sofa.*

TEDDY *re-enters down the stairs, switches off the landing light, comes into the room and stands down centre.*

It's still there. My room. Empty. The bed's there. What are you doing?

RUTH *looks at* **TEDDY.**

Blankets, no sheets. I'll find some sheets. I could hear snores. Really. They're still here, I think. They're all snoring up there. Are you cold?

RUTH No.

TEDDY I'll make something to drink, if you like. Something hot.

RUTH No, I don't want anything.

TEDDY *(moving right)* What do you think of the room? Big, isn't it? It's a big house. I mean, it's a fine room, don't you think? *(He moves up right)* Actually, there was a wall, across there—with a door. We knocked it down—years ago—to make an open living area. The structure wasn't affected, you see. My mother was dead.

RUTH *sits on the sofa.*

Tired?

RUTH Just a little.

TEDDY We can go to bed if you like. *(He moves and stands right of the armchair centre)* No point in waking anyone up now. Just go to bed. See them all in the morning—see my father in the morning.

RUTH *(after a pause)* Do you want to stay?

TEDDY Stay? *(He pauses)* We've come to stay. We're bound to stay—for a few days.

RUTH I think—the children—might be missing us.

TEDDY Don't be silly.

RUTH They might.

TEDDY Look, we'll be back in a few days, won't we? Nothing's changed. Still the same. *(He pauses)* Still, he'll get a surprise in the morning, won't he? The old man. I think you'll like him very much. Honestly. He's a—well, he's old, of course. Getting on. *(He pauses)* I was born here, do you realize that?

RUTH I know.

There is a pause.

TEDDY Why don't you go to bed? *(He sits in the armchair centre)* I'll find some sheets. I feel—wide awake, isn't it odd? I think I'll stay up for a bit. Are you tired?

RUTH No.

TEDDY Go to bed. I'll show you the room.

RUTH No, I don't want to.

TEDDY You'll be perfectly all right up there without me. *(He rises and stands right of his chair)* Really you will. I mean, I won't be long. Look, it's just up there. It's the first door on the landing. The bathroom's right next door. You—need

some rest, you know. *(He pauses)* I just want to—walk about for a few minutes. Do you mind?

RUTH Of course I don't.

TEDDY *(with a step up centre)* Well—I'll show you the room.

RUTH No, I'm happy at the moment.

TEDDY You don't have to go to bed. I'm not saying you have to. I mean, you can stay up with me. Perhaps I'll make a cup of tea or something. *(He moves to right of the armchair centre)* The only thing is we don't want to make too much noise, we don't want to wake anyone up.

RUTH I'm not making any noise.

TEDDY I know you're not. *(He moves to* **RUTH** *and squats down beside her. Gently)* Look, it's all right, really. I'm here. I mean—I'm with you. There's no need to be nervous. Are you nervous?

RUTH No.

TEDDY There's no need to be. *(He pauses)* They're very warm people, really. Very warm. They're my family. *(He rises)* They're not ogres. *(He pauses)* Well, perhaps we should go to bed. After all, we have to be up early—see dad. Wouldn't be quite right if he found us in bed, I think. *(He chuckles)* Have to be up before six—come down—say "hullo".

There is a pause.

RUTH I think I'll have a breath of air.

TEDDY Air? *(He pauses)* What do you mean?

RUTH *(rising)* Just a stroll.

TEDDY At this time of night? But we've—only just got here. We've got to go to bed.

RUTH I just feel like some air.

TEDDY But I'm going to bed.

RUTH *(moving centre)* That's all right.

TEDDY But what am I going to do? *(He pauses)* The last thing I want is a breath of air. Why do you want a breath of air?

RUTH I just do.

TEDDY But it's late.

RUTH *(moving up centre)* I won't go far. I'll come back.

There is a pause.

TEDDY I'll wait up for you.

RUTH Why?

TEDDY I'm not going to bed without you.

RUTH Can I have the key?

TEDDY *moves to left of* **RUTH** *and gives her the key.*

Why don't you go to bed?

TEDDY *puts his arms on* **RUTH***'s shoulders and kisses her. They look at each other, briefly. She smiles.*

I won't be long.

RUTH *goes into the hall and exits to right.* **TEDDY** *moves to the window and peers out after her.*

LENNY *enters in the hall from left and comes into the room. He wears pyjamas and dressing-gown. He watches* **TEDDY**. **TEDDY** *half turns from the window, stands a moment, suddenly chews his knuckles, then turns and sees* **LENNY**. *There is a silence.*

TEDDY Hullo, Lenny.

LENNY *(moving down centre)* Hullo, Teddy.

TEDDY *(after a pause)* I didn't hear you come down the stairs.

LENNY I didn't. *(He pauses)*

TEDDY *takes out his pipe and fills it.*

I sleep down here now. Next door. I've got a kind of study, work-room-cum-bedroom next door now, you see.

TEDDY *(moving down right centre)* Oh. Did I—wake you up?

LENNY No. I just had an early night tonight. You know how it is. Can't sleep. Keep waking up.

TEDDY *(after a pause)* How are you?

LENNY Well, just sleeping a bit restlessly, that's all. Tonight, anyway.

TEDDY Bad dreams?

LENNY No, I wouldn't say I was dreaming. It's not exactly a dream. It's just that something keeps waking me up. Some kind of tick.

TEDDY A tick?

LENNY Yes.

TEDDY Well, what is it?

LENNY I don't know.

TEDDY *(after a pause)* Have you got a clock in your room?

LENNY Yes.

TEDDY Well, maybe it's the clock.

LENNY Yes, could be, I suppose. *(He pauses)* Well, if it's the clock I'd better do something about it. Stifle it in some way, or something.

There is a pause. **TEDDY** *lights his pipe.*

TEDDY I've—just come back for a few days.

LENNY Oh, yes? Have you?

TEDDY *(after a pause)* How's the old man?

LENNY He's in the pink.

There is a pause.

TEDDY I've been keeping well.

LENNY Oh, have you? *(He pauses)* Staying the night then, are you?

TEDDY Yes.

LENNY Well, you can sleep in your old room.

TEDDY Yes, I've been up.

LENNY Yes, you can sleep there. *(He yawns)* Oh, well...

TEDDY *(moving up centre to the suitcases)* I'm going to bed.

LENNY Are you?

TEDDY Yes, I'll get some sleep.

LENNY Yes, I'm going to bed, too. *(He moves to the foot of the stairs)*

TEDDY *picks up the cases.*

I'll give you a hand.

TEDDY No, they're not heavy. *(He goes into the hall)*

LENNY *switches out the lights in the living-room.*

LENNY *(moving to* **TEDDY***)* Nothing you want?

TEDDY Mmnn?

LENNY Nothing you might want, for the night? Glass of water, anything like that?

TEDDY Any sheets anywhere?

LENNY In the sideboard in your room.

TEDDY Oh, good.

LENNY Friends of mine occasionally stay there, you know, in your room, when they're passing through this part of the world. *(He switches on the landing light)*

TEDDY *(going up the stairs)* Well, I'll see you at breakfast then.

LENNY Yes, that's it. Ta-ta.

TEDDY *exits at the top of the stairs.*

LENNY *exits in the hall to left. There is a silence. The landing light is switched off. The only light now is the dim light in the hall and the reflected glow of it in the living-room.*

LENNY *enters in the hall from left carrying an alarm clock. He comes into the room puts the clock on the sideboard and looks out of the window. After a moment he turns from the window, goes to the standard lamp and switches it on. He then sits on the sofa, at the downstage end of it, and lights a cigarette.*

RUTH *enters in the hall from right and comes into the room. She sees* **LENNY** *and stands up centre.* **LENNY** *looks at* **RUTH** *and smiles.* **RUTH** *moves slowly down centre.*

(he rises) Good evening.

RUTH Morning I think.

LENNY You're right there. *(He pauses)* My name's "Lenny". What's yours?

RUTH "Ruth." *(She puts up her coat collar)*

LENNY Cold?

RUTH No.

LENNY It's been a wonderful summer, hasn't it? Remarkable.

There is a pause. **RUTH** *sits in the armchair right centre.*

Would you like something? Refreshment of some kind? An aperitif or anything like that?

RUTH No thanks.

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