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Make and Break

A Play

Michael Frayn

Samuel French – London
New York – Sydney – Toronto – Hollywood



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MAKE AND BREAK

First presented at the Lyric, Hammersmith on the 18th March, 1980. Subsequently presented by Michael Codron at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, on the 24th April 1980 with the following cast of characters:

Tom Olley	James Grout
Frank Prosser	Peter Blythe
Colin Hewlett	Glyn Grain
Mrs Rogers	Prunella Scales
Verhaeren	Ray Edwards
Shariq	Ian Gray
Third Customer	Gary Fairhall
Ted Shaw	Anthony Roye
Anni	Catherine Neilson
John Garrard	Leonard Rossiter
Dr Horvath	David Graham
Peter Davis	Donald Morley
Doctor	Paul Gregory

The Play directed by Michael Blakemore

Setting by Michael Annals

The action takes place on an exhibition stand at a trade fair

Time—the present

ACT I

An exhibition stand at a trade fair

The stand is displaying a partitioning system intended for use in offices and other public buildings. The system consists of what appears to be completely solid walling, finished in veneered panels. But sections of the wall can be moved and turned into new positions. The system includes a number of doors

Signs announce:

MODUS—the complete wall system for all your walling problems

MODUS—das vollständige Wandsystem für alle Ihre Wandprobleme

MODUS brings you the TOTAL INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

MODUS—die totale Innere Umwelt!

MODUS—the only integrated walling and Bürolandschaft system

MODUS—das einzige integrierte Wand—und Bürolandschaftssystem

The stand has been set up in the sitting-room of a large hotel suite, so that it forms a kind of room within a room, complete with a desk for the sales staff and a drinks table. The suite has a door giving access to the corridor, and another opening into a bedroom

Four members of the Modus sales force are on the stand: Olley, the Sales Director, mid-fifties; Prosser, the Publicity Manager, forty; Hewlett, one of the reps, mid-twenties; and Mrs Rogers, Olley's secretary, forty. There are also three customers: Verhaeren, who is Belgian, and who is being dealt with by Olley; Shariq, an Arab businessman, who is being seen to by Prosser; and a Third Customer, of Far Eastern appearance, who is with Hewlett

Mrs Rogers is dealing with the telephone, the paperwork, and keeping the customers' glasses filled. Olley, Prosser and Hewlett are all talking to their respective customers simultaneously

Olley Now it all depends what you're looking for. I can quote you thirty-five pounds a metre delivered. What's that in

Belgian francs? —sixty francs to the pound, that's sixty times thirty-five—brain's not working at the end of the day—well, let's say roughly two thousand francs a metre. Fine—if you can get away with a flaxboard core and semi-solid doors . . .

Prosser Now you want full demountability and you want full recoverability. But you don't want to end up with some kind of temporary accommodation for homeless families. Because you've looked at some of those demountable partitions on the floor down there, and you think a demountable partition's going to look demountable and feel demountable . . .

Hewlett Now as far as facings go, we can supply a standard hardboard facing for site finishing. Or, if you want a painted wood finish, we can do a rotary-cut birch at a very competitive price. Or we can supply ex-stock all the hardwood veneers you can see on the stand here, plus a number of others you don't. If you look through the catalogue, you'll see we are offering, ex-stock . . .

There is a distant explosion. Everyone stops for an instant, and turns his head to listen. Then business at once resumes. As the conversations continue—consecutively, not simultaneously, from this point on—the three salesmen and their customers appear and disappear through the doors in the stand, or emerge and become audible as the movement of the movable sections is demonstrated

Olley And for that price you're getting a fire-rated wall, mind, a thirty-minute fire wall that you can put in place with one hand . . .

Hewlett A full range of hardwood veneers—abura, afrormosia, agba, bird's eye maple . . .

Prosser Where were we? Oh yes—you think, right, a demountable partition's going to look demountable and feel demountable . . .

Olley But if you want a sixty-minute fire wall, then you've got to go to plasterboard and steel . . .

Hewlett . . . koto, limba, mansonia, okume, paldao, and zebrano . . .

Prosser Well, just forget partitions. Partitions are things that rattle when you slam the door. These are *walls*. This is a *wall system*. Fully demountable, fully adjustable walls combined with a range of fully uniform finishes for your load-bearing

elements. Movable solid walls. You can't see where the structural element stops and the movable element starts until I unlock it and turn it . . .

Olley . . . not cheap, no one's saying it's cheap, but for that price you're getting steel, you're getting a sixty-minute fire wall. In fact it's rated sixty/sixty—sixty minutes stability and sixty minutes integrity . . .

Mrs Rogers Whisky and soda, wasn't it, Mr Verhaeren?

Verhaeren (*to Mrs Rogers*) Very kind of you. (*To Olley*) But I think on the Zwijndrecht site our big problem will be sound transmission.

Olley Sound transmission? This core will give you a sound reduction of forty-seven decibels! You won't get more than forty-five decibels with hundred-mil brickwork! And look, I just unlock it and turn it . . .

Hewlett . . . the standard core is inert European flaxboard, but of course if the overriding consideration is the floor loading, then you're going to choose extruded chipboard as your core option . . .

Prosser . . . bird's eye maple, Columbian pine, Honduras mahogany, idigbo, iroko, koto, limba, mansonina . . .

Olley . . . and the point is that this is a piece of factory-made precision engineering . . .

Mrs Rogers Here you are, Mr Verhaeren—whisky and soda.

Verhaeren Very kind.

Olley You can't get this standard of workmanship from the chippies on the site. You can't work to these tolerances in on-site conditions . . .

Shariq Now, on the question of delivery dates.

Prosser In Abu Dhabi? Well, we're promising ten weeks anywhere in Western Europe, but for the Gulf, I'll have to consult our shippers.

Mrs Rogers (*to Shariq*) Let me just top up your lemon squash.

Shariq Thank you.

Prosser So if I could just put your name and the address of your company down in our book . . .

Shariq I'll give you my card . . .

Olley . . . mansonina, okoume, paldao, or zebrano, or if you're going to paint it then specify plain birch. The rotary cut is the cheapest, of course, but if you want a clear finish you might

find you'd rather go for the quarter cut, which is the straight grain showing the most figuring, or the crown cut, which shows off the heart features of the wood . . .

Hewlett I mean, *is* floor loading a consideration?

The Third Customer laughs charmingly

The floor loading—is it important . . .? *Floor loading . . .*
 Floor . . . (*He demonstrates the floor*)

The Customer laughs

Excuse me, may I ask what language exactly . . .?

Customer Oh, yes.

Hewlett Which? Language. Which language?

Customer Oh, please, yes.

Mrs Rogers Another?

Customer Thank you, yes.

Hewlett Just a moment—we've got a lot of stuff translated into French and German . . .

Prosser . . . No, just between ourselves, we think we've got a winner here. That's why we've only got a token display down there in the hall with the rest of them. We reckon if people are interested they'll come back here to the hotel and have a drink and take a good hard look at what we've got to offer . . .

Olley . . . No, I'll be frank with you. The point as far as *you're* concerned is lower site costs, because two semi-skilled blokes can install a twenty-metre run of this stuff complete—facings on and doors hung—in two to three hours. But the point of the system as far as *we're* concerned—and I'll be quite frank—is the bigger the unit we sell you, the bigger the profit margin . . .

Hewlett (*with leaflets*) . . . We've got this one in Spanish.

Customer Thank you.

Hewlett Or we can do Swedish.

Customer Thank you.

Mrs Rogers Dry Martini.

Customer Thank you.

Hewlett Anyway, if I can just have your name and address, I'll get something sent off. Through here . . . What's your name?

Olley . . . because I'll be frank with you—we're really a door firm . . .

Prosser . . . doors—that's what we're known for . . .

Olley That used to be our entire trade—doors.

Prosser Ajax Doors—ask anyone in the British building trade.

Olley Then we all went into door sets.

Prosser Then we pioneered the door set.

Olley Lower fixing costs.

Prosser Meet the new fire regulations.

Olley But really to sell you a frame as well as a door.

Prosser Now we're extending the advantages of the door set to the entire wall area.

Olley Come back in two years time and we'll sell you the floor and ceiling as well.

Prosser Anyway, you've got my card . . .

Olley You've got all the bumph . . .

Hewlett You've got my card . . . *Card . . .*

The Third Customer laughs

Hewlett sees him out and returns

Prosser I'm not giving away any secrets when I tell you we've got a slump in the building trade at home. We've come over here to Frankfurt because we need the business.

There is a second explosion. Once again heads briefly turn, and then the conversation resumes

No, we've come to exhibit at a big international fair because we're really serious, believe me. So there won't be any trouble about delivery dates, I'll give you my word on that.

Olley . . . Ah, well, now, I'm not the expert on that side of the business. For that we'll have to consult Mr Prosser, our Publicity Manager . . . Frank . . . excuse me . . . Can I interrupt a minute?

Prosser Hold on, Tom . . . *(To Shariq)* Anyway, look, you've got the catalogue, you've got the price-list. What else can we give you?

Olley *(to Hewlett)* Beauty you've got there.

Hewlett I think he was quite interested in the extruded chip-board. *(He sits)*

Olley Don't worry. All good practice.

Prosser Right, then, Tom. What's the problem? *(To Hewlett)*
My word, Colin, you do pick 'em, don't you?

Olley Frank, this is Mr Verhaeren.

Prosser How do you do, Mr Verhaeren?

Olley Mr Verhaeren's building two big leisure complexes in the Antwerp area—

Prosser Yes, I've been reading about it.

Olley —and he wants to go out this evening and test his fire-resistance.

Prosser Fire-resistance?

Verhaeren laughs

Olley Take in a bit of the local night-life. I told him you're the firm's expert on wining and dining.

Prosser Leave it to me, Mr Verhaeren. I've got all the technical data on Frankfurt on the desk here. If you want something really outrageous there's always *Rheingold* at the Opera House.

Olley (*to Shariq*) Do you mind? Let me at least freshen up that lemon squash for you . . .

Shaw enters. He is in his fifties, and wears his glasses some way down his nose to make clear his benevolent, patriarchal nature

Hewlett rises to deal with him

Hewlett Good afternoon. Can I help you at all? Or are you just looking round? Do you speak English?

Shaw (*staring*) Well, bless my old cotton socks. They've asked me some damn funny questions since I've been here, but no-one's asked me that.

Hewlett Oh, sorry. Only . . .

Shaw What's your name, then?

Hewlett Hewlett. Colin Hewlett.

Shaw (*looking at Hewlett's lapel badge*) Hewlett. Oh yes. Mr Hewlett. How are you, Mr Hewlett?

Hewlett Fine. Fine. And you're . . .? (*He tries to see Shaw's lapel badge*)

Shaw I'm fine too, Mr Hewlett. *You* speak English, do you, Mr Hewlett?

Hewlett Yes, yes . . .

Shaw We shall get along very well then.

Hewlett I'm sorry. It's just that . . .

Shaw They've left you in charge of this impressive display, have they, Mr Hewlett?

Hewlett Well, I think the others are just . . .

Shaw Round the back?

Hewlett Yes, so if I can . . .

Shaw They'll rot their livers, Mr Hewlett.

Hewlett I don't know whether you've any particular—

Shaw Well, as long as there's one of the party still fit to drive.

Hewlett —any particular problems or queries you'd got in mind, or whether . . .

Shaw As long as there's one member of the firm still sober enough to sell the partitions.

Hewlett Ah, well now, that's rather interesting, because as a matter of fact these aren't partitions. This is a wall system—a fully integrated wall system.

Shaw Is it indeed?

Hewlett Yes, because what this system offers you is a complete internal environment.

Mrs Rogers (*bringing a drink*) Whisky, is it, Mr Shaw?

Shaw That's my lass.

Hewlett All right, it comes as fully demountable, fully recoverable units that can be unlocked and shifted in a matter of seconds. But it also comes in the form of fully uniform finishes for your load-bearing walls.

Shaw Fully uniform are they?

Hewlett Fully uniform.

Shaw You're not going to tell me, are you, Mr Hewlett, that these units have a core of inert European flaxboard?

Hewlett Inert European flaxboard, yes.

Mrs Rogers I think Mr Olley is free to see you now, Mr Shaw.

Olley (*seeing Shariq out*) Anyway, you've got my card . . .

Hewlett Or where the floor-loading is the overriding consideration, extruded chipboard.

Shariq exits

Mrs Rogers draws Olley's attention to Shaw. Olley watches him and Hewlett

Or if you have a fire-rating problem, then the answer is our Firemode range in plasterboard and steel, which will give you sixty/sixty fire resistance, and incidentally a sound attenuation of around forty-seven decibels . . .

Shaw (*glancing at Olley*) Which is more than you get from the traditional brick wall.

Hewlett Which is more than you get from the traditional brick wall.

Shaw Got your order-book?

Hewlett Beg your pardon?

Shaw Take an order, can you?

Hewlett An order? Yes—yes . . .

Shaw Handle thirty thousand square feet?

Hewlett Thirty thousand . . .? Yes—yes . . .

Shaw Where's your book, then?

Hewlett turns to fetch his book and sees Olley

Hewlett The book, the book . . .

Olley Speaks English, does he, this one?

Hewlett Yes, quick, where's the book?

Olley (*shaking hands with Shaw*) I see you're in form, then, Mr Shaw.

Shaw You've got a good one here, Tom.

Olley Not his day. Is it, Colin?

Shaw No, he almost sold it to me. Thirty thousand square feet. I don't know what of.

Olley Colin, this is Mr Shaw. Mr Shaw's the managing director of Securex.

Hewlett I'm sorry, I thought you were . . .

Olley Heard of Securex, have you, Colin?

Hewlett Yes, I . . .

Shaw One of the Group, Mr Hewlett, one of the Group.

Hewlett Yes, I . . .

Shaw Took one look at me, thought I was Japanese.

Hewlett No, I . . .

Shaw What's your territory, then, Mr Hewlett?

Hewlett South-West.

Olley Out of Bristol.

Shaw I'll bet you can't get the orders out of the warehouse fast enough to keep up with him.

Olley He's all right.

Shaw Colin, is it? You'll do, Colin, you'll do.

Olley So how can we help you, Mr Shaw?

Shaw Oh, just looking in, pick up a few tips on how to do it. All right for some, isn't it, relaxing in a suite at the best hotel. Some of us less fortunate mortals are sweating it out down there in the hall, crying our wares in the market-place.

Olley We've got a stand down there, too, you know.

Shaw What, ten by ten? One girl and three pieces of Marler-Haley? Trust old John—tuck you away up here and save himself fourteen and sevenpence.

Prosser All right, then, Mr Verhaeren. Eight o'clock at your hotel.

Olley Excuse me, Mr Shaw. (*To Verhaeren*) All fixed up for tonight?

Verhaeren Paint the town red. Correct?

Prosser Red, blue, primrose yellow—you name it—we'll paint it.

Verhaeren And tomorrow—nine o'clock, here, and we talk business.

Olley Nine o'clock.

Prosser Red, blue; abura, afrormosia, agba, bird's eye maple . . .

Verhaeren What?

Prosser The town. Any finish the customer wants.

Verhaeren exits in a jovial mood

Shit.

Olley What?

Prosser I'd got a ticket for the Opera. It's *Rheingold*.

Shaw You'll just have to keep your mind on the building trade instead.

Prosser Hello, Mr Shaw. (*Shaking hands*) The building trade? That's what *Rheingold*'s all about! They build bloody Valhalla!

Shaw Frank could have sold them some partitions.

Olley Yes, well, Verhaeren's building *two* bloody Valhallas.

Prosser Bloody Belgians.

Shaw Still binding away, Frank? Used to work for me. Know that, Colin? (*To Prosser*) Why you wanted to come and work for some tin-pot little firm like this, sell all this rubbish. I was just saying to Tom, John's trying to save a few quid, is he, tucking you all away up here? Why you want to come and work for a miserable old mule like John . . . Can you hear me, John? Where is he? Is he over?

Olley Coming tomorrow.

Shaw Recognize him, will you, Colin? Your managing director?

Hewlett Yes.

Shaw Don't go selling the partitions to him.

Hewlett No.

Shaw So it's tomorrow the bomb falls. Do a cheap excursion on Wednesdays, do they? I'll tell you what, though—I shouldn't all line up at the airport to meet him, because if old John says he's coming tomorrow you can be sure of one thing—it won't be tomorrow, it'll be the day after. Or else it'll be yesterday. Wasn't yesterday, was it?

Olley You want to see him, do you, Mr Shaw? It's really him you're looking for?

Anni enters. She is German, and in her early twenties

Shaw Want to see John? Why should anyone want to see an ugly old monkey like John? I've come to see Anni. (*He puts his arm round her*)

Anni You're not all still working?

Shaw Of course we're working. We're English. We're not idle Germans, like you.

Anni It's after six o'clock! Everyone sit down! Everyone start resting and enjoying! You poor tired businessmen!

Shaw (*putting his arm round her*) I could just eat you for supper, do you know that?

Prosser You know Mr Shaw, do you, Anni?

Anni I know Mr Shaw. Sit down! Why is everyone standing up? You like work, or something? I know—I'll bring you all a drink. No, no—you were drinking all day. Drinking is working. I'll get some coffee.

Prosser Coffee, yes!

Olley Coffee for me.

Mrs Rogers Coffee? I'll make the coffee.

Anni Sit down!

Mrs Rogers If people want coffee, I can perfectly well make coffee.

Anni makes coffee

Anni (*to Olley*) You got Mr Shariq, I suppose?

Olley That was the Arab gentleman?

Prosser Hospital job. Abu Dhabi. Twenty thousand pounds worth, I should think, to someone.

Anni Then there was some man from some place—I'm sorry, I couldn't get his name. I couldn't make him understand not one word.

Hewlett We got him.

Anni I received some questions.

Prosser Inquiries.

Anni Inquiries. I wrote them all down in the book.

Olley Anything interesting?

Anni Yes, quite interesting. What do I do in the evening? How much rent do I pay? Am I some kind of Communist?

Prosser Who was this?

Anni Oh, some crazy man. I must telephone. Did you hear those explosions?

Olley Yes, what were they?

Prosser The whole stand shook.

Anni I don't know. (*Dialling*) Some people, I suppose, were exploding some things. Some shops, some U-Bahn station, I don't know.

Mrs Rogers sits and works at the small table behind the display stand

Olley What, you mean terrorists?

Anni Some crazy people.

Shaw Same everywhere these days. What a world.

Anni Why? What does it matter? Plenty of shops. Plenty of things for exploding. (*Into the telephone*) *Du Scheissker! . . . Was machst du die ganze Zeit? . . . Ich klinge schon seit einer halben Stunde . . .*

Shaw (*wistfully*) Doesn't give a damn, does she?

Prosser Why should she? She's a student. Doing some kind of law degree. Week's work with us at the fair, and she's made enough to live on for a month.

Shaw Not a tuppenny damn about any of us.

They watch her. She laughs at something on the telephone

Olley I suppose they're pals of hers letting off the bomb, are they?

Shaw Letting off a few bombs herself, I shouldn't wonder. Look at her. Little anarchist you've got there, Tom.

Olley Not all alike, you know, these students.

Shaw Little terrorist—look at her. Well, why not? Get to my age and you wouldn't mind seeing half of it go up in smoke.

Anyway, some of us have work to do, some of us have products to sell. Take care, then, Tom.

Olley You, too, Mr Shaw.

Shaw Look after yourself, Frank. Oh, and Davis found his way up here all right, did he?

Olley I beg your pardon?

Shaw Davis.

Olley Davis?

Prosser What, our Davis?

Shaw He did find you?

Olley How do you mean, find us?

Shaw I thought he might have been looking for you.

Olley What, here? In Frankfurt?

Prosser He's in New York this week.

Shaw Well, then, I've got news for you gentlemen.

Olley Good God. We haven't . . . ?

Prosser No—no . . .

Olley Have you, Colin?

Hewlett Who is this? Sorry.

Prosser Peter Davis.

Olley Our new group managing director.

Prosser Our new whizz-kid.

Hewlett I haven't seen him.

Olley (*to Shaw*) What would he be doing in Frankfurt?

Shaw That's what *I'd* like to know.

Prosser You've seen him, have you?

Shaw He hasn't been near me. I thought it might have been you lot he was favouring. I thought he and John might have been having little chats.

Olley No, no. No Peter Davis—no John.

Shaw I'll believe you; thousands wouldn't. That's all I wanted to find out. Knew I was after something, didn't you? Well, now you can relax and drink your coffee in peace—I'm there at last.

Got my little ways, haven't I, Frank? Always take my time. Frank'll tell you. Nice to meet you, Colin. And I should be leaving with your card in my pocket, you see.

Hewlett Oh—yes—I . . .

Shaw Don't worry, Colin. You'll learn. Look after yourselves, then.

Olley And you, Mr Shaw.

Shaw Just say ta-ta to Anni. (*He kisses her free ear*) Don't forget—back of the bandstand at eight o'clock . . . (*To the others, apropos Mrs Rogers*) Oh—a bit of a look from the lady there. (*To Mrs Rogers*) Never mind, my sweetheart, we'll go rock-and-rolling together another night.

Shaw exits

Prosser Bloody old humbug.

Olley What was all that in aid of?

Prosser Always on the snuffle.

Olley I wish he'd keep his fingers off our Anni.

Prosser Always on the wink. Always on the hug and squeeze. Always slipping it to you out of the back of the hand. And in fact they're taking that firm to pieces all around him. Ridiculous, really. They make security fencing—they can't keep their own stocks secure! When I was there—you won't believe this—they put in dogs to stop the thieving and what happened?—someone walked off with all the dogs' bloody food—ten cases of bloody dog meat! Security fencing?—They couldn't sell a rope to a drowning man. No dividend again this year.

Olley He thinks Peter Davis and John are up to something behind his back.

Prosser The whole world's going on behind his back.

Anni (*into the telephone*) *Schuss.* (*She puts the telephone down*) You're not working again? I told you to sit down! Sit, sit, sit!

Olley Yes, what *are* we standing up for? We've been standing up all day. (*He sits*) Ah.

Anni Oh, it's so good to hear this sound! (*To Prosser and Hewlett*) Now you, please.

Prosser I've been saving it up.

Prosser and Hewlett sit. Mrs Rogers comes to the desk and starts to tidy it and empty ashtrays

Ah.

Anni It's like the sound of making love.

Prosser Oh, tell us more.

Anni I'll make some more coffee. (*She does so*)

Hewlett Gets you in the stomach, doesn't it?

Prosser Just over the kidneys, me.

Olley It's my smiling muscles.

Prosser I'll never get my face straight again.

Olley Inert European flaxboard. I'll be saying it in my sleep.

Prosser Inert European flaxboard.

Olley Inert European flaxboard.

Prosser I'll tell you what, though. It's lovely just sitting here and saying it and not meaning it.

Olley Inert European flaxboard. Yes, it is.

Prosser Inert European flaxboard. It's very soothing.

Olley No, it's a wonderful thing, work.

Prosser If it wasn't for work you'd never have the pleasure of stopping.

Olley Colin's looking very thoughtful about all this.

Hewlett Sorry? No, I was just wondering what Sandra's doing.

(*He looks at his watch*) Bathing the kids, I expect. Whole bathroom awash. Driving her out of her mind.

Olley That's the trouble with stopping work. You start worrying.

Hewlett No, I was just wondering. Actually, Jonathan's probably not having a bath tonight. He was starting a cold on Sunday.

Anni (*bringing the coffee*) What's this? Everyone's so stiff, everyone's behaving so proper. I don't call this relaxing. (*She puts the coffee down, and sets to work on Olley*) Lean back.

Olley I'm fine.

Anni Come on. Undo your tie.

Olley I don't want my tie undone.

Anni (*setting a chair*) Feet here.

Olley I don't want my feet there!

Anni I'm putting your feet here!

Prosser She'll have you in the bath in a minute, Tom, like Colin's kids.

Olley What's happening?

Anni I'm taking your shoes off.

Prosser Isn't she a honey?

Olley I don't know what she is.

Anni Other foot.

Prosser Hold on to your trousers, Tom.

Olley You're shocking Mrs Rogers.

Prosser Look at him, though! He loves it, he loves it!

Anni There! Isn't that better?

Olley No.

Anni kisses Olley

Prosser Oh, and a kiss as well!

Olley (*pleased*) Oh, bloody hell!

Anni (*to Prosser*) Now you.

Prosser Certainly, my love. First the kiss.

Anni First the shoes. (*She takes off his shoes*)

Prosser Oh, but that's lovely—someone picking up your feet for you.

Olley That's what I call service—being handed your own feet.

Prosser You know what I'd like to be in my next incarnation?—a ventriloquist's dummy. Somebody else moving my jaw up and down. Somebody else thinking the thoughts. I could really sit back and enjoy that. (*To Anni*) Don't forget the tie, love.

Anni (*loosening his tie*) Oh, this one is a very good patient.

Olley Don't worry, Colin—you'll get your turn in a minute.

Hewlett (*recollecting himself*) Sorry?

Prosser Not brooding about his family again, is he?

Hewlett No, I was just thinking, when I'm away overnight at home I usually give Sandra a ring about seven. See if they went to bed all right.

Prosser How old are they?

Hewlett Mark's four, Jonathan's nineteen months.

Prosser Don't often stay out all night yet, do they?

Anni No, that's good to think about his family. (*She kisses Hewlett*)

Prosser Don't do that!

Anni Not?

Prosser He's religious.

Anni Yes? (*She steps back from him, hands off*)

Prosser Yes! He saves people's souls! They've just had some big do in tents down in Exeter. How many souls did you save down there, Colin?

Olley Dry up, Frank. We all know you're a heathen.

Hewlett No, that's all right. I don't mind.

Anni He doesn't mind. (*She puts Hewlett's feet up and undoes the laces*)

Hewlett (*trying to stop her*) No—thank you—no . . .

Olley (*reasonably but firmly*) Anni—Anni . . .

Anni (*desisting*) Not?

Hewlett I mean we had over a thousand people coming forward.

Prosser That firm orders, though, or just inquiries?

Olley (*warning*) Frank . . .

Prosser He doesn't mind talking about it.

Olley I do, though. Hey, what about Mrs Rogers? Why hasn't she got her feet up?

Anni and Prosser turn their attention to Mrs Rogers, who is still tidying the stand. Hewlett is left to tie up his shoes

Anni (*to Mrs Rogers*) Stop! Stop! Stop!

Prosser Not going to take Mrs R's shoes off, is she?

Olley Does she do ladies?

Anni Sit down, please!

Mrs Rogers I think I'll just finish this, thank you, Miss Friedrich.

Mr Garrard won't be very pleased if he arrives tomorrow and finds overflowing ashtrays everywhere.

Anni If who arrives tomorrow?

Prosser Mr Garrard.

Olley The Managing Director.

Prosser Now there's a real challenge for Anni!

Anni What? What?

Olley (*laughing*) Yes, you won't get John's shoes off, I'll tell you that.

Anni Why? He's another religious?

Olley and Prosser laugh

Olley No, he's not a religious.

Prosser Nothing in his head but walls and doors.

Olley I wouldn't say that. I'm the one who thinks about walls and doors.

Prosser True. What he cares about is profits.

Mrs Rogers Mr Garrard? He doesn't care twopence about money.

Olley She's right, you know. He doesn't.

Olley and Prosser laugh again

Anni So what's funny about this man?

Prosser Tell her, Tom. You've known him for thirty years.

Olley Thirty-two.

Prosser Go on, then.

Olley just laughs and shakes his head

Anni What? What? What?

Prosser I'll tell you the first thing he'll do when he walks in here.

He'll rearrange that display. Fiddle, fiddle, fiddle, while he goes on about the emptiness of the order book and the price of paper-clips.

Olley Never stops, that's the thing about John.

Prosser We shan't be sitting around in our socks once he's arrived.

Olley You get John Garrard to put his feet up for five minutes, Anni. Be a public blessing.

Prosser (*grinning*) What do you bet she gets his shoes off?

Olley I'll bet you five pounds she *doesn't*.

Anni Five pounds? For me? If I get his shoes off?

Prosser No, for me. The bet's with me.

Olley Ten pounds, if you like.

Prosser All right.

Anni And what do I get?

Prosser You get a kiss from me. And half my winnings.

Anni Five pounds?

Prosser Five pounds.

Anni All right.

Prosser Got one deal set up here, anyway. And you're coming out tonight with me and Mr Verhaeren?

Olley She's coming out with me and Mr Goetz. Aren't you, my dear?

Anni No, tonight I must make something with some people. So you know what I'm going to do now?

Prosser Shoot up into the sky and burst out in coloured stars.

Anni I'm going to take a shower. Is that OK?

Prosser As long as you don't take it to extremes.

Anni What?

Olley Take it, take it.

Anni exits into the bedroom

Prosser smiles

Hewlett As a matter of fact three hundred and forty of them declared.

Prosser (*stopping smiling*) I beg your pardon?

Hewlett Three hundred and forty of the people who came forward.

Prosser Yes?

Hewlett Declared for Christ.

Prosser Oh.

Hewlett You were asking about it.

Prosser So I was. (*He begins to smile again*) Anni, though. "I must make something with some people." *Make* something!

Olley Make trouble.

Prosser (*smiling*) Make trouble for someone.

Olley Make a few explosions.

Prosser Oh, Ted Shaw wouldn't know an anarchist from an anabaptist.

Olley I can see Mrs Rogers thinks she's going to blow us all up.

Mrs Rogers She shouldn't be using the shower.

Olley gazes at her

Well, she shouldn't.

Olley (*turning to Prosser*) Ten years now, is it, since Mrs Rogers did me the honour of becoming my secretary?

Mrs Rogers You know perfectly well she shouldn't.

Olley But still she continues to amaze me.

Mrs Rogers It's Mr Garrard's shower.

Prosser Don't be embarrassed, Colin. They go on like this all the time.

Mrs Rogers This is Mr Garrard's suite. It's booked in his name. That's his bedroom and that's his bathroom.

Olley But he's not here, Mrs Rogers, my precious! And we are!

Mrs Rogers We have the use of the sitting-room. But the bedroom and the bathroom are his.

Olley But my sweet lovely woman, we all use the bathroom! I use the bathroom! *You* use the bathroom!

Mrs Rogers We don't use the shower. You wouldn't use the shower. Mr Prosser wouldn't use the shower.

Prosser (*to Hewlett*) They're devoted to each other, really.

Olley (*to Prosser*) No, but it's amazing the way her mind works.

Mrs Rogers I simply think it's a bit odd that she can come waltzing in here and just take the whole place over.

Olley Oh, it's not the shower she's worried about.

Mrs Rogers Well, it is ridiculous, you know, to see her making fools of you all. Because that's what she's doing. She's simply showing she can twist you round her finger.

Olley John won't be worried about the shower. I'll tell you what he cares about. It's not money. It's not the product. I've watched John in action now for thirty-two years, and I'll tell you what he cares about . . .

Garrard enters. Like Olley, he is in his mid-fifties. He is carrying an overnight bag

Everyone gazes at him in astonishment. But he ignores them. He is absorbed in the door by which he has entered. He pushes it to, and watches it close. Then he opens it and watches it close again

Mrs Rogers (*rising*) Hello, Mr Garrard.

Hewlett gets to his feet. Olley and Prosser struggle to theirs

Hewlett Mr Garrard . . .

Prosser Mr Garrard . . .

Olley John . . . I thought it was tomorrow?

Prosser I was going to meet you at the airport—I'd booked a car . . .

They put their feet back into their shoes. But Garrard is still absorbed in the operation of the door

Garrard Chair.

Olley What?

Garrard Chair, chair.

Prosser fetches a chair. Garrard puts down his bags, raps on the door in a couple of different places, then climbs on to the chair and examines the top edge of the door

Olley What, a semi-solid, is it? (*He raps*) No, softwood laminate?

Garrard When did they get this contract, then?

Olley Who?

Garrard Parker Matthews. This is a Parker Matthews door. (*He looks round the room*) Repro job, was it?

Olley I don't know, I'm afraid, John.

Garrard Done, what, five years ago? How long have Parker been into the German market?

Olley Just about five years, I think. Isn't it, Frank?

Prosser I don't know.

Garrard Parker Matthews throughout, is it? Restaurant? Ballroom?

Olley I have to confess, John, I haven't looked.

Garrard (*getting off the chair*) What about Verhaeren? Has he come through?

Olley Verhaeren? Frank's taking him out to dinner tonight . . .

Garrard But nothing yet?

Olley Nothing definite. I'm dining with a contractor who's doing a lot of the Westphalia schools programme.

Garrard Uh-huh. No messages from London?

Olley No. Colin here thought he'd got an order for thirty thousand square feet, but it just turned out to be Ted Shaw playing the fool.

Garrard Uh-huh.

Olley You remember Colin Hewlett, don't you? Bristol office.

Garrard Yes, yes. But what about the Arabs?

Olley Lot of interest. *Lot* of interest.

Prosser If you just run your eye over the inquiries book.

Olley Oh, the fallout from this fair is going to be fantastic. And we've got the Libyan contract in the bag.

Garrard That was last week. What did Ted Shaw want?

Prosser Oh, he was just on the snuffle.

Garrard Uh-huh. How many hotels are there in this group?

Olley I've no idea.

Garrard I wonder if Parker Matthews got the contract for the whole chain.

Prosser I'll make some inquiries, if you're interested.

Garrard Should have had a stunt, shouldn't we.

Olley A stunt?

Garrard Ridgways had got a great crowd round their flame-thrower stunt.

Prosser Oh, you had a look at the exhibition, did you, Mr Garrard?

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