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Caught in the Net

The sequel to *Run For Your Wife*

A Comedy

Ray Cooney

Samuel French — London
New York - Toronto - Hollywood



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CAUGHT IN THE NET

First produced at the Theatre Royal, Windsor, on 24th October, 2000, with the following cast:

Gavin Smith	William Harry
Vicki Smith	Katia Linden
Barbara Smith	Helen Gill
Mary Smith	Carol Hawkins
John Smith	Paul Nicholas
Stanley Gardner	Trevor Bannister
Dad	Ray Cooney

Directed by Ray Cooney
Designed by Douglas Heap

Subsequently produced by Bill Kenwright Ltd, at the Vaudeville Theatre, London, on 29th August, 2001, with the following cast:

Gavin Smith	William Harry
Vicki Smith	Beccy Armstrong
Barbara Smith	Helen Gill
Mary Smith	Carol Hawkins
John Smith	Robert Daws
Stanley Gardner	Russ Abbot
Dad	Eric Sykes

Directed by Ray Cooney
Designed by Douglas Heap

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(See also page ii)

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CHARACTERS
(In order of appearance)

Gavin Smith
Vicki Smith
Barbara Smith
Mary Smith
John Smith
Stanley Gardner
Dad

The action of the play takes place in the Wimbledon home of John and Mary Smith and, simultaneously, in the Streatham home of John and Barbara Smith

ACT I Mid-afternoon on a warm summer's day
ACT II Immediately following

Time — the present

AUTHOR'S NOTE

In the London production Mary's area UL, including the carpet, was blue. Barbara's area was yellow and the communal area was green (with the exception of Mary's phone which was blue and Barbara's phone which was yellow). The settee, armchairs and cushions in the communal area were of ranging shades of green. Again, in the London production, Mary's and Barbara's upstage areas were on a slightly raised level (approximately a nine inch rostrum) and there was a step down into the communal area.

*Other plays by Ray Cooney
published by Samuel French Ltd*

Funny Money
It Runs in the Family
Out of Order
Run For Your Wife
Two Into One

With Gene Stone
Why Not Stay for Breakfast?

With Arne Sultan and Earl Barret
Wife Begins at Forty



Set design by Douglas Heap

ACT I

The Wimbledon home of John and Mary Smith and the Streatham home of John and Barbara Smith

The Wimbledon front door is in the rear wall ULC. There is a letter box in the door. To the L of the front door there is a flight of stairs leading upstairs. Under the stairs is a cupboard, containing coats, hats and scarfs

The Streatham front door is in the rear wall URC. There are no stairs in this area but, to the R of the front door, is a hallstand with hooks, and a chest. On the hooks are coats and a leather motorbike jacket. UR there is a window

The Wimbledon front door area and the Streatham front door area are decorated in an entirely different style and are only used by the characters when they're in either Wimbledon or Streatham

DS is the "communal" area of the set. There is a kitchen door, DL and upstage of the kitchen is the dining-room door. There is a main bedroom door DR and upstage of the main bedroom is a second bedroom door. The main bedroom door serves as both Mary's and Barbara's door and the second bedroom serves as both Vicki's and Gavin's room. All the doors have keys in their locks. There is a settee, C, with a large cotton throw over the back. In front of the settee is a large rug. There are two armchairs DLC and DRC. The settee and armchairs must be solid and secured to the floor to sustain the "business" throughout the play. There is a small chest of drawers between the kitchen and dining-room doors and a small table with a mirror above it between the two bedroom doors. Today's newspaper is set on the small chest of drawers

The Wimbledon telephone with a long lead is on a table to the L of the settee. The Streatham telephone, cordless, is on a table to the R of the settee. There is a narrow table behind the settee and a small chair above the second bedroom door

Nowhere, in any area of the set, are there family photographs — just pictures, prints and plants, etc.

The Wimbledon front doorbell and telephone bell have a different sound from the Streatham bells. John's mobile telephone plays a tune

Frequently, throughout the action of the play, action will be simultaneously taking place in both Wimbledon and Streatham but the inhabitants of each home are, naturally, oblivious to the others

When the CURTAIN rises, it is mid-afternoon on a warm summer's day

After a moment Gavin Smith, aged sixteen, enters excitedly from the dining-room, ULC. He carries a print-out from his computer

Gavin (calling) Mum!

Vicki Smith enters excitedly from the second bedroom, URC. She carries a print-out from her computer. Vicki is fifteen years old and is wearing a school summer uniform

As Gavin is in Streatham and Vicki is in Wimbledon, they don't react to one another

Vicki (calling) Mum!

Gavin } (together; calling) Mum!
Vicki }

Vicki and Gavin walk past each other and stop

Gavin } (together; calling) Mum!
Vicki }

They then move on — Vicki to the dining-room and Gavin to the main bedroom

Vicki Mum!

Gavin opens the main bedroom door

Gavin Mum!

Vicki opens the dining-room door

Barbara appears in the main bedroom doorway. She is in her forties and is wearing a dressing-gown and a shower cap

Vicki moves to c

Barbara *(to Gavin)* Gavin. I'm trying to take a shower.

Vicki *(calling towards the main bedroom)* Mum!

Barbara Your dad and I are going out tonight.

Gavin No, this is amazing.

Barbara Gavin!

Vicki moves to the kitchen door and opens it

Vicki *(calling into the kitchen)* Mum!

Gavin Won't take a second.

Gavin pulls Barbara to the settee

Mary appears in the kitchen doorway. She is in her forties

Mary *(to Vicki)* I'm doing your dad's sandwiches.

Vicki pulls Mary to the settee

Vicki No, this is brilliant.

Mary He's got to be off in five minutes.

Barbara Dad'll be home in ten minutes.

Vicki Won't take a second.

Mary Honestly, Vicki!

Barbara Honestly, Gavin!

Gavin sits Barbara R of settee and Gavin sits on the R arm. At the same time Vicki sits Mary L of settee and Vicki sits on the L arm

Gavin *(to Barbara)* It's really unbelievable.

Vicki *(to Mary)* You're not going to believe this.

Gavin I've just signed off from Vicki.

Vicki I've just signed off from Gavin.

Barbara *(to Gavin)* Who's Vicki?

Mary *(to Vicki)* Who's Gavin?

Gavin } *(together)* Mum!

Vicki }

Vicki I told you about Gavin.

Gavin You know Vicki Smith.

Vicki Gavin Smith.

Gavin } *(together)* Oh, yes ——

Vicki }

Barbara You had an email from her.

Mary He sent you an email.

Gavin } (together) Right!

Vicki }

Gavin Well, you know I said it was a bit of a coincidence ——

Vicki And I told you it was really funny, yeah ——

Gavin } (together) That we were both called Smith.

Vicki }

Barbara Smith's a common name, Gavin.

Mary There's a lot of Smiths, Vicki.

Gavin Well —— !

Vicki Well —— !

Gavin } (together) — today.

Vicki }

Gavin I started telling her about dad.

Vicki I got talking about dad.

Gavin It's just amazing.

Vicki It's really astonishing.

Mary } (together) What is?

Barbara }

Gavin } (together) What our dads have in common.

Vicki }

Gavin Look at this print-out!

Vicki Get a load of this, Mum!

Each hand their print-out to their mother

Gavin } (together) Both called John!

Vicki }

Barbara Probably a million John Smiths in London.

Mary Thousands of John Smiths around.

Gavin } (together) Middle name "Leonard"!

Vicki }

Barbara (laughing) Really?

Mary (laughing) That's good!

Gavin Hang on, it gets better ——

Vicki No, it's fantastic ——

Gavin Do you know how old Vicki's dad is?

Vicki How old do you reckon Gavin's dad is?

Mary and Barbara both shrug their shoulders

Gavin } (together) Forty-three!

Vicki }

Barbara } *(together, laughing)* No!

Mary

Gavin } *(together)* Yeah!

Vicki

Gavin But the best bit is ——

Vicki But the greatest thing is

Barbara } *(together)* What?

Mary

Gavin Guess what Vicki's dad's job is?

Vicki Do you know what Gavin's dad does?

Gavin } *(together)* He's a taxi driver!

Vicki

Mary } *(together)* He's not!

Barbara

Gavin } *(together)* Yes, he is!

Vicki

Gavin We couldn't believe it!

Vicki I mean, what a coincidence.

Gavin There's Vicki's dad in Wimbledon.

Vicki Gavin's dad in Streatham ...

Gavin } *(together)* Same name.

Vicki

Gavin Drives a taxi ——

Vicki Taxi driver ——

Gavin Married with a kid ——

Vicki Married with a kid ——

Gavin } *(together)* — and both aged forty-three!

Vicki

Mary *(looking at her watch)* Yes, well, I've got to see your dad off.

Barbara *(looks at her watch)* Yes, well, I must get ready for your father coming home.

Mary and Barbara rise simultaneously

Vicki Hold it a second, Mum ——

Gavin No, hang on, Mum. She's invited me round for tea.

Barbara *(scolding)* Gavin!

Vicki I've asked Gavin to come over.

Mary *(scolding)* Vicki!

Gavin OK, isn't it?

Vicki He sounds really nice.

Barbara You don't know anything about her, Gavin.

Gavin She sounds great.

Barbara } (together) You should have asked your father.
Mary }

Gavin Come off it!

Vicki I'm fifteen, you know.

Gavin I'm sixteen, for God's sake.

Mary Better just check with him that it's OK.

Vicki It's only a cup of tea!

Barbara I've left the shower running.

Mary } (together) Speak to your dad.
Barbara }

Barbara moves forwards to the main bedroom as Mary moves towards the kitchen

Gavin } (together) { Give over!
Vicki } { Honestly!

Vicki angrily throws herself into the armchair DL

Gavin puts his print-out on the table behind the settee, and moves towards his bedroom

Mary stops and turns

Mary He'll be leaving for his night shift in a minute.

Barbara opens the main bedroom door. She stops and turns to call after Gavin

Barbara He'll be home from his day shift in a minute!

Gavin exits into his bedroom

John Smith, a very ordinary but cheery man in his forties, comes in from the main bedroom as Barbara exits into the main bedroom — as John is in Wimbledon and Barbara is in Streatham they don't react to one another

John (as he enters; to Mary, brightly) Right, I'm off, sweetheart.

Mary I'll get your sandwiches. Cheese and pickle and ham. Oo ... a packet of crisps. And a slice of that cream cake.

John Yummy, yummy!

Mary (to Vicki) Go on, ask Dad.

Vicki Honestly, Mum, you'd think it was a drugs and sex orgy.

John What's that, the latest TV sitcom?

Mary (to Vicki) Ask him!

Mary exits into kitchen

John (*to Vicki*) Ask me what?

Vicki It's a boy I met on the Internet.

John It's not good for your eyesight all that computer stuff.

Vicki I told you about him, remember?

John Did you?

Vicki You know I did! Pretty amazing. We're both called "Smith".

John Oh, yes. (*Sarcastically*) Astonishing. Two Smiths!

During the ensuing dialogue John gets his jacket from the cupboard, UL and puts it on

Vicki Well, it got even better.

John Got better, did it? Good. What did?

Vicki The coincidence. Now, there must be — what — at least one hundred and twenty-five thousand "Smiths" in the London area, yeah?

John At least. If I'm not awake when you leave for school in the morning, come in and give me a great big hug.

John kisses Vicki and moves to the kitchen

Vicki Well, this is the brilliant bit, Dad. Of the one hundred and twenty-five thousand "Smiths" in the London area —

John London area, yeah.

John opens the kitchen door

(*Calling through*) Mary, don't forget the KitKat and the Mars Bar.

Vicki — the boy I logged on to has a father who's called John Leonard Smith and drives a taxi.

John turns from Vicki to close the door then realizes what she's said. There is a pause then John, still with his back to Vicki, closes the kitchen door

He only lives in Streatham.

John turns: his face blank. He then emits a foolish laugh

And you're both aged forty-three!

There is a pause as John's mind whirls — then he emits another foolish laugh

And we met surfing the Internet.

She holds out the print-out. John hesitates then, dumbly, takes it

Isn't that the most amazing coincidence?

John (*laughing*) Amazing! (*He walks past her scrutinizing the print-out*)

Vicki And Streatham's just round the corner!

John Yes!

Vicki Wicked, isn't it? Me in Wimbledon. Gavin in Streatham.

John You in — er — and — er — Gavin in — er —

Vicki Streatham, yeah!

John And — er — you and — er — Gavin have been — er — on the — er —
— (*He indicates the print-out*)

Vicki On the Internet. He's sixteen and he sounds pretty sexy.

John No, he's not! I mean — er — he's probably not.

Vicki He sounds it. Really cool.

John No, he isn't! I forbid it!

Vicki Forbid what?

John Everything. What you've been doing.

Vicki We haven't been doing anything.

John Yes, and it's got to stop.

Vicki (*perplexed*) What has?

John What you're doing. On the Internet. All this swimming — surfing!

Vicki Don't be daft! (*She takes back the print-out and sits in armchair DRC*)

John I won't have it! Logging on to strangers!

Vicki Have you flipped?

John No, I have not flipped! I knew those machines were dangerous. Full of weirdos and cranks.

Vicki Gavin's not a weirdo!

John Yes, he is! I'm not having my daughter getting involved with weirds and cranks!

Mary enters with a lunch-box

Mary Sandwiches!

John (*jumping*) Ahh!

Mary You all right, precious?

John adopts a light-hearted attitude

John Fine. You can leave this to me. I'll sort it out.

Mary Sort what out?

John pushes Mary towards the kitchen

John Nothing. There's nothing to sort out. Just go back into the kitchen, please.

Vicki Dad's totally lost it.

John I have not lost it.

Mary Lost what?

Mary crosses in front of John, searching. John pulls her back across him

John Will you please go into the kitchen!

Mary I've finished in the kitchen. *(She hands John the lunch-box)*

John I want more than this. We've got some of that Indian left over left over, haven't we? *(He thrusts the box back at Mary)*

Vicki rises

Vicki *(to Mary)* Mum, tell him I can see Gavin!

John *(to Vicki)* This is nothing to do with your mother.

Mary I said it was best to ask if he could come round.

John Mary, will you please — *(realizing)* come round? Who's coming round?

Vicki I don't know what you're getting so excited about.

Mary *(to John)* The young Smith boy's coming over for tea that's all.

John *(to Mary; mortified)* From Streatham?

Vicki Yes.

John *(to Vicki; mortified)* To Wimbledon?

Vicki Yes.

John How did he get our address?

Vicki How do you think? I emailed it to him.

John *(ashen)* You gave him our address?

Vicki Yes.

John *(hoarsely)* In Wimbledon.

Mary That's where we live, John.

Vicki He's coming between four and five.

John *(to Vicki)* Ring him up.

Vicki What?

John Tell him not to come.

Vicki Why?

John Because I say so.

Mary It's not all that serious is it, Johnny?

John It's bloody serious! *(He pushes Mary towards the kitchen)*

Mary I thought it was pretty interesting really. Another taxi driver called John Leonard Smith.

John I don't find that interesting. I find that totally boring.

Mary Both aged forty-three!

John Totally bloody boring! *(To Vicki)* You're not getting involved with him and that's that.

Vicki All I'm doing is giving the bloke a cup of tea.

John Yes, that's how it starts. *(He moves to the telephone L of the settee)* Ring him up now and tell him not to come.

Vicki I won't!

John All right. I'll ring him up. *(He lifts the receiver)*

Vicki You don't know his number.

There is a very brief pause

John You're right, I don't. *(He replaces the receiver and carries the phone to Vicki)* You ring him up.

Mary I think you're being a bit unreasonable, John.

Vicki *(sitting in armchair DRC)* Bloody unreasonable!

John *(to Vicki)* You mind your bloody language, young lady. *(To Mary)* I'm not having *that* boy in *this* house.

Mary For heaven's sake!

John I'm not having our daughter subjected to the whims of an on-line sexual deviant!

Vicki What?!

John Now you call him immediately and say if he pesters you any more your father will put the police on to him.

Mary You go and do your night shift —

John I'm not going anywhere until this is sorted out.

Vicki *(angry but tearful)* It's sorted! He's coming over!

John Vicki, go to your room.

Vicki Come off it!

John Go to your room this instant!

Vicki *(rising; crying)* You're a great big bully!

Mary runs past John to Vicki

Mary It's all right, sweetheart. *(To John)* I'm sure you're wrong about the boy. *(To Vicki)* What's his name again?

Vicki *(still crying; confused)* What? I don't know. Gary.

John It's Gavin! *(Realizing)* It doesn't matter what his name is! *(To Mary)* And I'm not wrong about him! He should be doing his homework instead of pestering the one hundred and twenty-five thousand Smiths who live in the London area.

Mary Really, John —

Gavin enters from the second bedroom

Gavin (*calling*) Mum!

John I'm the man of the house here and I say who's welcome and who isn't.
And that sexual pervert is not welcome!

Gavin closes his door and opens the second bedroom door

Gavin Mum!

Vicki bursts into tears and runs towards the second bedroom

Barbara, in dressing-gown and slippers enters from the main bedroom

During the following, John replaces the phone on the table L of the settee

Vicki Oh, Dad.

Mary (*running towards the departing Vicki*) Vicki!

Barbara What now?

Gavin Is Dad back?

Barbara No, he's not. He's late, too.

Vicki goes into the bedroom and slams the door

Mary (*to John, testily*) Do you really want to take the Indian left over?

John (*moving towards Mary*) Yes, I do!

John propels Mary towards the kitchen

Gavin Well, I'm going round to Vicki's place, you tell Dad.

Barbara No. Wait and ask your father. He'll be home any minute now. And
Gavin, I'm trying to get ready.

Mary You're being a real pain today, John.

Gavin You're being a real pain today, Mum.

Gavin slumps off into the second bedroom as Barbara exits into the main bedroom and Mary exits into the kitchen

John slams the kitchen door and leans his back on it

John Oh, my God! (*He quickly takes out his mobile phone and dials*) You
wretched boy, Gavin!

The phone in Streatham rings

Come on, Barbara, come on!

The Wimbledon front doorbell rings. John looks towards the front door in horror

Oh—my — God!!! It's Gavin!

Barbara, now dressed in a towel, runs in from the bedroom and moves to phone

John shuts the mobile and puts it in his trousers pocket as Barbara reaches the phone. The Wimbledon doorbell rings again. John dithers not knowing what to do

Barbara *(into the phone)* Hallo?!

John hurries to open the kitchen door

(Into the phone) Hallo?!

John *(calling through the door)* I'll get it!

Barbara *(into the phone)* Hallo?!!

John slams the kitchen door closed and hurriedly tiptoes towards the front door to listen

Vicki enters from the second bedroom. She watches John for a brief moment

Vicki Dad ——!

John *(yelling)* Ahh! Vicki! Go to your room.

Vicki If that's Gavin for me ——

Barbara *(into the phone)* Hallo!

John I'll deal with Gavin! Go to your room, this instant!

Barbara OO!

Vicki OO!

Barbara slams the phone down and exits into main bedroom as Vicki exits into the second bedroom, both slamming the doors

The Wimbledon doorbell rings

John Wretched boy!

John quickly turns the key in Vicki's bedroom lock. He grabs an anorak from the cupboard and puts it on. He pulls the hood completely over his head to hide his face. The Wimbledon doorbell rings again. John edges towards the front door

Mary enters from kitchen with the lunch-box

Mary (*as she enters*) John!

John freezes with his back to Mary

John (*turning*) Yep!

Mary is surprised to be confronted by John totally enveloped in the anorak

Mary What on earth are you doing?

John I felt chilly. (*He moves down a pace away from the front door*)

Mary It's about seventy degrees out there.

John I think I've got a cold coming on. (*He moves down another pace*)

Mary steps towards John

Mary Well, there's your supper. That'll do you good. (*She hands him the lunch-box*)

John Where's my Indian left over?!

Mary (*indicating the box*) I've given it to you!

John Well, where's my drink?

Mary Can of Coke in your box.

John Coke?! I want tea.

Mary Tea? You never take tea.

John I want tea today. And some of your soup. (*He starts to push Mary towards the kitchen*)

Mary stops

Mary Soup?

John Yes, some of your super soup. Super soup.

John pushes Mary but she stops again

Mary Hang on a second. Didn't I hear the doorbell go just now?

John No. (*He turns to Mary*)

The front doorbell rings again. Mary turns back

Maybe you did.

Mary It might be that Gavin.

John If it is I'll get rid of him.

Mary Don't do anything stupid!

John You leave that nasty little pervert to me! (*He pushes Mary towards the kitchen*)

Mary is pushed into the kitchen

John slams the kitchen door closed

John puts the lunch-box on the table, UL. The doorbell rings again. He makes sure that the anorak hood is completely masking his face. He then opens the door about a foot and turns his back to the door

(*Disguising his voice with a thick German accent*) Go away young man. Zis is Herr Schmidt! You are not velcome here! My family vish to have nuzzing to do viz you!

Stanley Gardner, aged in his forties, slowly edges through the door clutching two large shopping bags. He looks bewildered. Stanley is a "good soul" but not overly bright

John, averting his face, continues the Germanic diatribe which gets increasingly manic

Zis is private property and I demand zat you leave ze premises immediately. Failure to remove yourself vill result in unpleasant force being perpetrated upon your person. Go — now! Und never darken our doorstep again!

Stanley (*firmly*) Is that from *Saving Private Ryan*?

John slowly turns to Stanley, then throws off his hood

John Stanley, it's you!

Stanley Couldn't find my keys. (*Indicating the anorak*) You got a cold coming on?

John Yes! And it could develop into double pneumonia.

John pulls Stanley down a pace and slams the door

Stanley Why, what's up then?

John Disaster!

Stanley Oh, dear. I'll just nip up to the flat, dump this lot, then you can tell me about it.

John There's no time.

Stanley crosses John to go upstairs

Stanley Won't take a second. I'll unpack the ——

John pulls Stanley to DL of the settee

John Stanley! I'm going to need your help.

Stanley John, you know me. Always willing to lend a ——

John (*interrupting*) Yes, I know you are. (*He takes out his mobile while continuing to talk*) I've got to make a very important phone call.

Stanley Important phone call.

John (*pressing on*) But it's going to be safer to make it when I'm in my taxi ——

Stanley In your taxi.

John (*pressing on*) So I'm going to leave you holding the fort.

Stanley Holding the fort.

John Will you stop interrupting and *listen*.

Mary enters from the kitchen with a flask of tea and a flask of soup

John quickly puts the mobile into a pocket of the anorak

Mary (*as she enters*) Was that Vicki's young ——? (*She sees Stanley; tersely*) Oh, it's you, Stanley. (*She angrily bangs the kitchen door shut*)

Stanley Yes, your favourite lodger.

Mary I don't know what gives you that idea.

Stanley (*chuckling*) Mary!

John pulls Stanley across him and moves to Mary

John (*to Mary*) You're making me tea, Mary.

Mary I've *made* it. Soup. Tea. (*She thrusts the flasks at him*)

John No, I want a *cup*. *Now*.

Mary Well pour one from that! (*She points to flask*)

John No. That's for the road. I want a nice cup of your lovely special "Johnny-I-love-you" cups.

Mary Can't you make your own cup?

John No, Stanley wants to talk to me, don't you?

Before the bemused Stanley can reply John presses on

And it's private, Mary. He's got this very personal emotional problem, haven't you?

Before the bemused Stanley can reply John presses on

(*To Mary*) And he needs my advice.

John tries to push Mary to the kitchen but she returns to Stanley

Mary Advice on how to get a job would be more useful.

Stanley Now, Mary, if you're worried that I haven't paid this month's rent yet ——

John She isn't!

Mary No, I'm not worried about this month's rent.

John I told you.

Stanley Oh, good.

Mary It's last month's and the month's before.

Stanley Now, Mary. We can discuss this ——

John Discuss it later. You make the tea while I sort out Stanley's personal emotional problem.

John opens the kitchen door for Mary

Stanley (to John) Considering I've been a lodger here for nearly eighteen years, I think Mary's being very unreasonable.

John It doesn't matter!

Mary You've been a lodger for eighteen years and paid the rent for about ten.

John Mary ——!

Stanley I might have missed the odd month.

John Stanley ——!

Mary You're dead right. You pay the rent on the even months and miss the odd ones.

John Will you make the tea please! (*He pushes Mary towards the kitchen*)

Mary is pushed into the kitchen

John slams the kitchen door

(To Stanley) Now, listen ——

Mary returns

Mary And another thing —— (*She bangs the kitchen door shut*)

John God!

John breaks, puts the flasks down on the table behind the settee and continues R, removing his anorak

Mary (*to Stanley*) I thought you were going on holiday today.

Stanley I am. I've just been shopping for the trip, organizing myself for the delights of Felixstowe. (*He puts the shopping bags on the settee and sits*)

John puts his anorak on chair DR and moves DRC

John (*interrupting*) Forget Felixstowe!

Stanley (*starting to remove some of the holiday items, pressing on*) Sun hat, sun cream, mosquito repellent, Imodium Plus —

John We don't need an inventory, Stanley.

Stanley Snorkel, mask, water wings. It's never too late to learn, you know.

Mary I hope you've left your flat tidy.

Stanley (*proudly*) You know me, Mary.

Mary (*flatly*) Yes. I hope you've left your flat tidy.

John Please, Mary! Make the tea! This personal emotional problem of his is very pressing!

Mary If he got himself a wife and moved out of our house *all* his personal and emotional problems might be solved.

Stanley (*rising*) I don't have a personal emotional problem!

John (*to Mary*) It's more of an intimate sexual problem, actually.

Mary Oh. (*To Stanley*) I suppose you want a cup of tea as well, do you?

John No, he doesn't want a cup! (*To Stanley*) Do you?!

Stanley Better not. I'm leaving in about ten or fifteen minutes and I don't want to be caught short on the motorway. Although, I'm picking Dad up from Clapham first — he's coming with me to Felixstowe — he loves it there ... So, I could always spend a penny while I'm in Clapham — I must make sure Dad spends one, too, with his bladder and that journey, and he's getting very forgetful these days. Only last week in the High Street —

John Shut up! (*To Mary*) Just make the tea! (*He pushes Mary off*)

Mary exits

Stanley, I've got to be brief and very fast!

Stanley Fine by me, John.

John Our Vicki's found out about me and Barbara.

Stanley Who's Barbara?

John Barbara, Streatham!

Stanley (*thinking*) Barbara Streatham. No. Name doesn't ring a bell.

John Barbara *Smith*!

Stanley No, I can't say I know a Barbara ... (*Realizing*) Smith?!

John Ssh!

Stanley, mortified, crosses John and points to kitchen

Stanley You mean your other ——? (*He indicates his wedding ring finger*)

John (*interrupting*) Yes! Vicki's found out about Gavin, too!

Stanley (*aghast*) When you say, "Gavin", you mean ——?! (*He indicates the height of a young boy*)

John Yes!

Stanley Ahhh!

John Well, she doesn't know she's found out but she has. She's invited him round for tea. (*He feels his pockets*) What did I do with my mobile?

Stanley (*aghast*) Your son's coming over to Wimbledon?

John She met him in that computer of hers.

Stanley (*confused*) Met him where?

John Through that Internet thing.

Stanley Bloody hell!

John Two million subscribers and my stupid daughter has to log on to my stupid son. Where the hell is my mobile? (*He starts to look around the room, moving ULC*)

Stanley I told you ages ago you couldn't get away with this double life forever.

John I've got away with it for eighteen years.

Stanley moves URC to John

Stanley Bigamy is still a criminal offence, you know.

John I don't want a sermon, Stanley!

Stanley "He who dares to tell a lie — 'Shall be smitten.'"

John Shut up! Where is it?

Stanley (*pointing to the Wimbledon phone*) Why don't you use *that* phone?

John Don't be daft. I never use the home phone here or in Streatham.

Stanley Why not?

John Too dangerous. I always use the mobile to call Mary or Barbara.

Stanley (*in awe*) Blimey!

John Where the hell is it? If it's not too late, I've got to stop Gavin leaving the house. (*Realizing*) Of course! I put it in my anorak.

John pushes past Stanley, grabs his mobile from his anorak and, during the ensuing dialogue, dials. He moves DR of the armchair as Stanley moves UL of it

Stanley, if those two kids meet the truth is bound to come out. Mary and Barbara will be mortified. Vicki and Gavin horrified. As for me ——
Stanley Petrified.

John Bloody crucified.

John thrusts the anorak on to Stanley who throws it on to the back of the settee

The Streatham phone rings

It's ringing. I've got to go. If I miss Gavin in Streatham and he turns up here, get rid of him. (*Into the mobile*) Come on, Barbara.

John moves DS of the armchair to run out. Stanley hurries above the settee and they meet ULC

Stanley What do you mean get rid of him?

John That's where *you* come in. (*To Stanley*) Don't let Gavin in the house!

Stanley I'm taking Dad to Felixstowe!

There is loud banging from the second bedroom door

Vicki (*off*) Hey!

Stanley looks to John

John Ignore it.

There are more bangs

Vicki Hey, Dad!

Stanley Is that your Vicki?

John I've locked her in.

Stanley Bloody hell!

Vicki (*off*) Let me out, you stupid, stupid man!

Stanley I think she's getting cross.

Gavin enters from the second bedroom, shutting the door. He gets a motorbike jacket from the hallstand

John (*calling to Vicki*) Won't be a moment, sweetheart. I'm looking for the key. Thanks, Stan, you're a real pal. (*With the mobile to his ear, he turns to go*)

Stanley grabs him

Stanley Hold it!

Gavin (*calling*) Mum! The phone's ringing.

John Why isn't Barbara answering?

Stanley marches John DLC

Stanley I need instructions!

Gavin (*opening the main bedroom door*) Mum, phone!

John I've given you instructions. Don't let Gavin in the house.

As John moves to go Stanley grabs him

Barbara enters from the main bedroom and heads for the phone. She is now dressed in a towelling dressing-gown

Gavin moves to the mirror between the bedroom doors and checks his appearance

Barbara (*as she enters*) Are you incapable of answering the phone, Gavin?

Stanley What if he won't take "no" for an answer?!

Barbara (*into the phone*) Hallo?!

John goes to speak

Mary enters from the kitchen carrying a mug of tea

Mary One tea!

As Mary turns to close the door John neatly throws his mobile over his shoulder to Stanley who, equally neatly, throws it over his shoulder. It lands on the settee amongst Stanley's packages. John sits down on the arm of the chair DL and Stanley sits down on the L arm of the settee. Mary turns back to be confronted by John and Stanley looking relaxed and totally innocent. Mary crosses to Stanley

(To Stanley) You still here?

Stanley Er — yes.

John (*rising*) Yes. His sexual problem is bigger than I thought.

Barbara (*into the phone*) Hallo!

Mary hands John his tea

Mary There's your tea.

John Where's Stanley's tea?

Mary He said he didn't want one.

John pulls Mary across him

John He's changed his mind, he's desperate for one.

John pushes Mary off into the kitchen

Mary exits

Barbara Hallo?

Gavin (*turning from the mirror*) Is it Dad?

Barbara Ssh! Hallo!!

John (*to Stanley*) Where's my mobile?

Stanley I threw it over my shoulder.

John Why the hell did you do that?

Stanley Because that's what *you* did!

John Twit! Quick!

John puts his mug of tea on the table behind the settee as they frantically start to search for the mobile behind the settee

Barbara (*into the phone*) OO! (*She angrily bangs the phone down and heads for the main bedroom*)

Gavin Who was it?

Barbara God knows!

Gavin I'm not waiting for Dad any longer. Tell him I've gone round to Vicki's place.

Barbara Hang on! I'd better ring her mother and say you're coming over.

Gavin Please yourself. Their phone number's on this print-out. (*He hands her the print-out and heads for the front door*)

Barbara You going on your motorbike?

Gavin (*in the doorway*) Yes, I know, drive carefully!

Gavin exits through the front door

Barbara checks the print-out and Stanley finds John's mobile

Stanley One mobile!

John (*grabbing the mobile*) Numbskull! You're in charge, Stan.

Stanley I'm collecting Dad from Clapham.

John You're staying here in case Gavin arrives. "Re-dial"!

John hits the re-dial key as Barbara starts to dial

Vicki (off) Dad! Have you found that key?!

John (calling) Very nearly! (He starts to move but stops) Hell, it's engaged!

I'd better get round there quick.

Stanley John!

John hits the off key, puts the mobile in his pocket and starts to move as the Wimbledon phone rings. John quickly picks up the phone

John (into the phone) Yeah?

Barbara (into the phone) My name's Barbara Smith.

John (with a strangled cry) Ooo!! (He removes the phone from his ear and looks at it, horrified)

Barbara (into the phone) Hallo?

Stanley (to John) What's the matter?

Barbara (into the phone) Can I speak to Vicki's mother or father please?

John (with a strangled cry) Ooo!! (In one movement he removes the phone from his ear, looks at it horrified, and returns it to his ear)

Barbara (into the phone) Hallo!

John (finally, into the phone; in a Chinese accent) Hallo, this is Blue Dragon Chinese restaurant.

Barbara looks surprised. Stanley looks amazed

(In a Chinese accent) Can I help you, please?

Barbara (into the phone; confused) Do Mr and Mrs Smith live there?

John (into the phone, in a Chinese accent; with false anger) No, this Blue Dragon! Mr and Mrs Hung Lo. (To Stanley) It's Barbara!

Stanley Barbara!

Carrying both receiver and cradle, John moves to DC of the settee to get away from the kitchen. Stanley moves down to John's left

John (into the phone, in a Chinese accent) And you no ring this number again! We no do take-away.

Barbara sits in the chair L

Barbara (into the phone) I'm sorry!

Mary comes in from the kitchen carrying a mug of tea. She stops on seeing John on the phone talking in a Chinese accent

John is oblivious to Mary. She walks slowly to Stanley's L

John (*into the phone; in a Chinese accent*) We no believe in take-away! This telephone number only for our personal customers. No riffraff. We do very special Chinese food here. Excellent Peking duck. Chop suey with soy sauce ——

Barbara (*into the phone*) Could you tell me what your telephone number is, please?

John No! We do sweet and sour fish. Sweet and sour pork. Sweet and sour duck. Crispy noodles. We have very extensive menu

Stanley sees Mary, smiles and taps John on the shoulder. John shrugs him away and presses on

Barbara (*into the phone*) I'm sure I dialled the right number ——

John (*interrupting*) We also do fried rice, boiled rice, spicy rice.

Stanley tugs at John's sleeve. John pulls away and carries on. Mary crosses to John, intrigued

(*Into the phone; in a Chinese accent*) And also poppadoms, chapati and vindaloo —— (*He sees Mary*) OO! Ah, so! (*Into the phone; in a Chinese accent*) And he be round to collect it right way. (*He replaces the receiver; to Mary*) She only understands Chinese.

John hands Mary the telephone. Mary thrusts the telephone on to Stanley. A confused Barbara switches off her phone. Stanley moves ULC and puts the phone on the table L of settee, as John pushes Mary towards the kitchen

(*To Mary*) Stanley's taking a Chinese for him and his dad to eat on the way to Felixstowe. Love Chinese, don't you, Stan, and your dad?

Stanley (*flatly*) Love it.

During the following, Barbara rises, checks the telephone number on the print-out and dials again. Mary crosses John to Stanley

Mary (*to Stanley*) Here's your tea. (*Flatly*) It's India not China.

Stanley (*taking the mug*) Lovely.

John I've got to get going!

There is a banging from the second bedroom

Vicki (*off*) Hey! Have you found that key?!

John (to Mary) Don't let her out until she promises never to contact Gavin again.

Mary Really, John!

John You make her promise! And don't take her word. Get her to sign something. I've got to go! (*He pulls Mary across him and starts to go*)

Mary picks up John's lunch-box from the table ULC

Mary What about your supper?

John I won't have time ——! (*Quickly*) Of course, I will! (*He takes the lunch-box*)

The Wimbledon telephone rings. John and Stanley look at it, look at each other, look to Mary, look back to each other, then look back to Mary and laugh foolishly

Gavin hurries in from the Streatham front door

Gavin Mum, have you seen my crash helmet?

Barbara (*furiously waiting for the phone to be answered*) In the hallstand, I think.

Gavin goes up and looks in the hallstand chest UR

Mary (to John) Well, aren't you going to answer it?

John Yes. (*He lifts the receiver; into the phone*) Yep?

Barbara (*into the phone*) Is this the right number for Mr John Smith?

John thinks for a very brief second and replaces the receiver

(*Angrily*) OO!

During the following Barbara dials again

Mary (to John) Why did you do that?

John It was a heavy breather.

Mary Heavy breather?

John It's happened several times. Very upsetting. You've had it, haven't you, Stanley?

Stanley (*pointedly*) Yes, I've had it!

Gavin moves from the hallstand and towards the second bedroom

Gavin (*as he goes*) Must be in my bedroom.

Gavin exits into the second bedroom

John I've got to go!

The Wimbledon phone rings. John and Stanley look to each other. An angry Mary goes to answer it

Mary For heaven's sake!

Stanley } (together) No!!

John }

Mary (*jumping*) Ah!

John (*to Mary*) It could be him again. You know —— (*He does quick heavy breathing then grabs the phone to his ear*)

Barbara (*into the phone*) Hallo!

John immediately bangs the phone down. During the following dialogue a furious Barbara checks the print-out and dials once more

John (*to Mary*) It was him again. Disgusting! Don't you find him disgusting, Stanley?

Stanley (*at a loss*) I think I feel sorry for him, actually.

John takes Mary to the second bedroom

John (*to Mary*) Look, it might be a good idea, darling, if you went and comforted Vicki. Let Stanley guard the telephone, eh? I really must get going. (*To Stanley*) If that heavy breather rings again just slam the phone down. And if that pervert Gavin turns up march him round to the nearest police station.

John opens the front door and picks up his two flasks from the table behind the settee

Stanley What about my poor old normal dad in Clapham?!

John He'll keep!

The Wimbledon phone rings. John hesitates then picks it up. He does some quick heavy breathing into the receiver and slams it down

(*To Mary*) See how they like it!

John rushes out through the front door

Stanley (*calling after him*) John! JOHN!

During the following dialogue, a fuming Barbara dials again. Vicki bangs on the door

Vicki (*off*) Have you found that bloody key?!

Mary moves to Vicki's bedroom

Mary (*calls*) It's all right, sweetie! (*To Stanley*) If you've finished your tea, you can pick up your father and push off to Felixstowe.

Stanley (*dithering*) I'm not quite sure ——

Mary Well, I am!

Mary unlocks Vicki's bedroom door

Vicki, angry and tearful, storms in

Vicki Where's that stupid father of mine?!

Mary He's left for his night shift.

Vicki sees Stanley

Vicki Oh, hallo, Uncle Stan. I thought you were going on holiday to Felixstowe with your dad.

Stanley So did I!

Mary (*pointedly*) Stanley's just leaving.

Stanley gives Vicki a little wave. The Wimbledon telephone rings. Stanley looks at it, horrified. Mary moves towards the phone but Stanley rushes to it and picks it up. Mary looks surprised and Stanley stares at her. He then breathes heavily into the phone and slams it down. Stanley proudly looks at Mary

Stanley (*defiantly raising his fist*) Yes!

Barbara OO!

Barbara storms off into the main bedroom with the phone, leaving the print-out on the table

During the following, Stanley looks out of the front door in case Gavin arrives

Vicki (*blankly*) Why did Uncle Stan do that, Mum?

Mary Why does Uncle Stanley do anything? You go and bathe your eyes. Mummy will get you an aspirin.

Vicki (*defiantly*) I'm seeing Gavin when he arrives!

Mary Of course you are.

Stanley closes the front door and looks through the letter-box of the closed front door

Vicki exits into the second bedroom

Mary heads towards the kitchen but stops to glare at Stanley

(*Pointedly to Stanley*) Goodbye, Stanley!

Stanley I've been thinking about Vicki and Gavin ——

Mary (*sternly*) Have a nice holiday, Stanley!

Stanley moves DLC

Stanley Er — Mary, if Gavin is a sexual pervert I really don't think ——

Mary (*interrupting*) Stanley! If I were you I'd forget other people's sexual problems and concentrate on your own!

Mary exits into kitchen

Stanley sits on the chair, DL

Stanley Well, nice way to start a holiday. (*He takes a swig of his tea*)

John rushes in from the front door

John Stanley!

Stanley (*spluttering tea*) Ahh! Please, don't do that.

John moves DLC

John Would you believe it!

Stanley (*rising*) What's happened?!

John Half a minute down the road and the bloody taxi gets a puncture! Give me the keys to your car.

Stanley Eh?

John I've got to get over to Streatham. Now!

Stanley I need my car. I'm taking Dad to Felixstowe!

Barbara enters dialling on her phone, closing her door. She moves to R of the settee and sits on the arm

John I'll be back in twenty minutes. Give me the keys!

Stanley Bloody hell.

Stanley gives John his mug and starts to feel for his car keys

Gavin enters from the second bedroom carrying his crash helmet

Gavin Found it! Who are you calling? *(He looks in the mirror URC and during the following secures his helmet)*

Barbara Your father on his mobile. It's so unlike him to be late.

John *(to Stanley)* Come on! Come on!

Stanley All right, all right!

Before Stanley finds his car keys, John's mobile rings a merry march tune

What the hell's that?

John My mobile.

John hands Stanley the mug and grabs the mobile out of his pocket. Stanley puts the mug on the table ULC

(Into the mobile) Yeah?

Barbara *(into the phone)* Johnny! Where are you, pumpkin?

John *(relieved, into the phone)* Thank heavens! My little boobie boo-boos!

Stanley turns

Stanley Boobie boo-boos??

John It's Barbara.

Stanley Barbara?!

John *(to Stanley)* Where the hell are your car keys?

Stanley I can't find them!

John God!

Gavin *(turning from the mirror)* Dad OK?

Barbara I think so, yes.

John Where's Mary?

Stanley In the kitchen.

Barbara rises and, during the following, moves above the settee and sits on the L arm of the settee

Barbara *(into the phone)* You there, Johnny?

John *(into the mobile)* Yes, pumpkin. I'm in the taxi on the way home.

Stanley Bloody hell!

John (*to Stanley*) Keep Mary out of here for a minute!

John starts to push a resisting Stanley towards the kitchen

Stanley What? How?

Barbara (*into the phone*) Johnny!

John (*into the mobile*) Sorry, darling. I keep losing you. (*To Stanley*) Tell her a funny story!

Stanley I don't think I know any —

John (*interrupting*) Make one up!

Barbara (*into the phone*) You there, Johnny?

John (*into the mobile*) I lost you again. I'm in the Blackwall Tunnel.

John opens the kitchen door

Stanley Blimey, it's like a James Bond movie.

John pushes Stanley into the kitchen and slams the door

Eyeing the kitchen, John moves to DC of the settee

John (*into the mobile*) I'm out now! I've been trying to phone you for ages. Where's Gavin?!

Barbara (*into the phone*) I'm not surprised you couldn't get through. I've had the most crazy telephone calls.

John (*into the mobile*) Yes, where's Gavin?! Is he there?

Barbara (*into the phone*) I've had three wrong numbers, two heavy breathers and a Chinese restaurant.

Gavin (*to Barbara*) Bye, Mum.

Barbara rises

Barbara Bye.

John (*into the mobile*) Barbara!

Gavin Say hallo to Dad for me.

Barbara and Gavin kiss across John

Barbara OK. (*Into the phone*) Yes, I'm with you.

John (*into the mobile*) Is — Gavin — there?!

Barbara (*into the phone*) Yes.

John (*into the mobile*) Thank heavens! Put him on.

Barbara (*into the phone*) He's just about to leave actually. He sends his love. (*She waves goodbye to Gavin*)

Gavin exits by the Streatham front door

John (*into the mobile*) What?! No! Grab him. Stop him! I want to talk to him now.

Barbara crosses John and sits in the chair DR

Barbara (*into the phone*) I think he's made a date, actually. You'll laugh when I tell you!

John (*into the mobile*) Barbara!

Barbara (*into the phone*) Do you know how many Smiths there are in the London area?

John (*into the mobile*) Yes, not enough! Get Gavin!

Barbara (*into the phone*) Well, he's going round to see this Vicki Smith whose father is also called John Leonard and drives a taxi!

John (*into the mobile*) Please — get — Gavin!

Barbara (*into the phone*) Won't it keep until tonight?

John (*into the mobile; frantically*) Just get — Ga — !

Mary storms in from the kitchen, carrying a glass of water and a bottle of aspirins

John stops in mid-shout

Mary (*over her shoulder; off*) That's the unfunniest joke I've ever heard!

Stanley enters awkwardly

Stanley It's the only one I know, actually.

Mary (*turning*) John —

Barbara (*into the phone*) John!

Mary (*to John*) Are you talking?

Barbara (*into the phone*) John, have you gone into a tunnel again?

John (*to Mary*) I'm holding on for someone. One of my account customers.

(*To Stanley*) Stanley! Car keys! (*To Mary*) Taxi's got a puncture.

Stanley I don't know where I could — (*He feels in his pockets*)

Mary (*to Stanley*) Have you told John your stupid joke?

Stanley I don't think I have, no.

Barbara (*into the phone*) John, if you can hear me, I'll hang on until you're out of the tunnel.

John (*to Stanley*) Hurry up!

Mary (*to Stanley*) Go on. Tell him your joke.

John I don't want to hear it, Mary!

Mary (*to Stanley*) Just tell him!

Mary pulls Stanley across her and pushes him to John

Stanley A man goes to the vet. The vet says, "Open your mouth and say, 'Ahhh.'" The man says, "Why?" The vet says, "Your dog's just died."

John and Mary look totally blank. Stanley looks from John to Mary

(*Stressing the point*) A man goes to the vet ——

John and Mary still look blank

It's the only one I know.

Mary holds out the aspirins

Mary John, take these aspirins to Vicki. Make it up with her.

John No! (*To Stanley*) Stanley!

Stanley I can't think what I could have done with them! Oh, yes I do! I put them in one of my shopping bags for safety.

John God!

During the following, Stanley sits on the settee and empties out the contents of his shopping bags

Barbara (*into the phone; impatiently*) John, I don't know if you can hear me but I'm going to hang up.

Barbara rises

John (*into the mobile*) No! I'm still here.

Barbara (*into the phone*) Good, shall I see if I can catch Gavin and give him a message?

John (*into the mobile*) Yes, I think that would be the most practical arrangement. Tell him to stay exactly where he is. Not to move. (*To Mary*) I've got to pick up this old age pensioner from Tesco's. (*Into the mobile*) Tell him not to go anywhere until I arrive.

Barbara (*into the phone*) Won't be a second then. (*Still holding the cordless phone, she starts to move towards the front door*)

Mary (*to John*) Take these to Vicki. Tell her she can just see this Gavin boy for five minutes.

John No.

Mary All right! (*She moves towards the second bedroom*)

Gavin's motorbike is heard starting up. Barbara stops in the doorway

Barbara (*into the phone*) Hang on. I think I heard Gavin's motorbike starting up.

John (*into the mobile*) No!

Mary stops

Mary (*turning*) All right, I heard you.

Mary exits into the second bedroom

John rushes above the settee to UR

John (*shouting after Mary*) She's not to leave her room! (*Into the mobile*) Barbara! Stop him. Don't talk. Just go and stop him. I'll be there in three minutes.

Barbara (*into the phone; with surprise*) From the Blackwall Tunnel?

John (*into the mobile*) Say five minutes. (*He switches off his mobile*)

Barbara exits through the Streatham front door

John hurries to Stanley who is now surrounded by his holiday items

For God's sake, Stanley!

Stanley I know they're here somewhere. (*He holds up a rubber bathing cap*) Bathing cap to protect my head from the sun.

John pulls Stanley up

John Never mind your bathing cap. I need your car. Let me look! (*He thrusts his mobile at Stanley to hold, pushes him DLC and starts madly searching through the holiday items; while searching*) And remember. Don't move till I get back.

Stanley I'm not happy about this, you know. If I'm late for Dad it'll totally confuse him.

John Never mind your dad!

Stanley He's confused enough as it is.

John Stanley! My life is at stake here!

Stanley I want to get to Felixstowe before it's dark.

John (*finding the car keys*) These them?

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