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SF PERUSALS

It Runs in the Family

A Comedy

by Ray Cooney

A Samuel French Acting Edition



New York Hollywood London Toronto

SAMUELFRENCH.COM

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CHARACTERS

Dr David Mortimore
Dr Mike Connolly
Rosemary Mortimore
Dr Hubert Bonney
Matron
Sir Willoughby Drake
Jane Tate
Sister
Leslie
Police Sergeant
Bill
Mother

The action of the play takes place in the Doctors' Common Room of St Andrew's Hospital, London

ACT I Three days before Christmas. 10.45 a.m.
ACT II Immediately following

Time—the present

IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY

First performed on November 21st, 1987 at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford, with the following cast:

Dr David Mortimore	John Quayle
Dr Mike Connolly	Peter Blake
Dr Hubert Bonney	Ray Cooney
Matron	Charmian May
Sir Willoughby Drake	Dennis Ramsden
Jane Tate	Una Stubbs
Rosemary Mortimore	Wanda Ventham
Leslie	Ian McCurrach
Sister	Ginni Barlow
Police Sergeant	Bill Pertwee
Bill	Derek Royle

Directed by Ray Cooney
Designed by Douglas Heap
Lighting designed by Paul Franklin

It was subsequently presented at The Playhouse, London, on 17th August 1992, by Lee Menzies and Ashley Herman by arrangement with the Theatre of Comedy in association with Charles Kelman. The cast was as follows:

Dr David Mortimore	John Quayle
Dr Mike Connolly	Michael Fenner
Rosemary Mortimore	Wanda Ventham
Dr Hubert Bonney	Ray Cooney
Matron	Jacqueline Clarke
Sir Willoughby Drake	Dennis Ramsden
Jane Tate	Sandra Dickinson
Sister	Jennifer Hill
Leslie	William Harry
Police Sergeant	Windsor Davies
Bill	Henry McGee
Mother	Doris Hare

Directed by Ray Cooney
Decor by Douglas Heap
Lighting by Mark Doubleday

ACT I

The action of the play takes place in the Doctors' Common Room on the third floor of St Andrew's Hospital, London

It is an old-fashioned, comfortable room reflecting the occupants' profession. There are double swing doors UL *leading to a corridor and another pair of double swing doors* DR *leading to another corridor. A single door* UR *leads to the toilet/bathroom and a similar door* DL *leads on to a landing. There are large windows* UC *with a panoramic view of London in the background. In front of the window is a window seat. There is a 'food and drinks' sideboard over which there is a mirror along the centre of the* L *wall. A small desk and chair are* ULC. *A telephone is on the desk. Upstage of the doors* DR *there are some hooks on which are hanging overcoats, scarves, jackets, etc. Two unmatching armchairs of differing size are situated* DLC *and* DRC. *There are various bits and pieces of medical origin scattered around the room. Intermittently snow will be seen falling outside the window*

The CURTAIN *rises on a snowy morning three days before Christmas. The room is decorated for Christmas and there is a Christmas tree below the* UL *swing doors. The clock above the swing doors* UL *shows 10:45 and the time advances with the action of the play*

David is discovered writing at the desk. He is in his early fifties, charming and slightly pompous. He is wearing dark trousers and a waistcoat (his jacket is hanging on the back of his chair). He rises and checks his written speech. After a moment he addresses an unseen audience

David "... And so at a time when the world is looking to the medical profession for guidance, for assurance, for higher standards of techniques and professionalism and dedication and — er — (*He checks with his paper*) learning — I ask you, my fellow neurologists, my colleagues from far and wide — (*he points to parts of the audience*) from Australia — Canada — Pakistan — Bulgaria. I ask you to recall the words of the Hippocratic Oath ——

Dr Mike Connolly, carrying a plate of mince pies, enters through the door DL. *Mike is an exuberant doctor in his late twenties*

Mike (*calling off*) I'll carve the turkey and tell that butcher to save his mistakes for surgery.

He chuckles and bangs the door shut. David glares at him as Mike turns and sees him

Mike 'Morning, Dr Mortimore. Have a mince pie?
David I'm busy, Connolly.
Mike Aren't we all, sir? Three days to Christmas and we're only just starting rehearsals for the pantomime. Did Sister Henderson leave a set of Victorian costumes here for me?
David I'm trying to learn this, do you mind?
Mike Is that your Father Christmas speech for the patients?
David (*flatly*) It's my lecture for the Conference this morning.
Mike (*dismissively*) Oh, that?

Mike looks in the dresser for costumes

David It may interest you to know, Connolly, that my fellow neurologists — from as far afield as Iceland and Japan — consider it worthwhile making this journey to London.

Mike crosses to the window seat and opens it

Mike I should think they do. All expenses paid and a week at the Savoy.

David goes back to his speech. Mike has found the costumes, and during the ensuing dialogue he is sorting them out and, at the same time, eating a mince pie

Here we are. What time are you on?
David (*tersely*) Twelve o'clock.
Mike (*ominously*) One hour and fourteen minutes to high noon. Good luck.
David Thank you.
Mike You nervous?
David Yes!

Mike Well, don't worry, with two hundred neurologists out there you won't go short of tranquilizers.

David gives him a cold look and then returns to his speech

David " — for higher standards of techniques, professionalism, dedication and learning, I ask you, my fellow neurologists ...

Rosemary Mortimore enters from DL. *She is an attractive woman a little younger than David. She is very smartly dressed and wearing a top coat*

... my colleagues from far and wide ... "
Rosemary Sorry to trouble you, David ——
David (*exasperated*) Rosemary, darling!
Rosemary I need some change for the parking meter.
David I'm trying to work on my speech. (*He looks for change in his pocket*)
Rosemary Sorry, sweetheart, but I'm double parked. Good-morning, Dr Connolly.

Mike is now trying on a Long John Silver pirate's coat

Mike 'Morning, Mrs Mortimore. You here for the Lecture?
Rosemary You bet. I couldn't miss my husband's big day, could I?
David Your husband's big day will be a fiasco if I don't know my speech.
Rosemary Last night you knew it backwards.
Mike I say, that will be a novelty. Have a mince pie.
Rosemary No thank you.
Mike They're very good. Made by the sister in charge of contagious diseases.
Rosemary I'll wait till Christmas Day.
David Connolly, have you any change on you? (*To Rosemary*) You're very early, aren't you, Rosemary?
Rosemary Sir Willoughby said something about you and I welcoming the delegates into the lecture hall.
Mike (*producing coins*) A couple of quid OK?
Rosemary (*taking the money*) Lovely. David will pay you back. (*To David*) If I don't get another chance, darling, "Good Luck".
David Thank you, dear.
Rosemary You'll be wonderful.

David Thank you!
Rosemary Are you nervous?
David Yes!
Rosemary I'll see you in the lecture hall, Dr Connolly.

Mike moves downstage holding a fairy costume and a wand

Mike No, I've got more important things to do than that.
David Thank you, Connolly.
Mike I'm rehearsing for the Boxing Day pantomime.
Rosemary Ah, well, that is important, of course. Are you in it this year, David?
David (*tersely*) In what, dear?
Mike The St Andrew's pantomime.
David Connolly, all I'm interested in at the moment is the Ponsonby Lecture and my two hundred fellow neurologists.
Rosemary Actually, darling, I think the two hundred neurologists might be happier if you gave them the pantomime instead of the lecture.

Rosemary smiles and exits DL

Mike laughs. David gives him a cold look

David Connolly, why don't you wave that and disappear?

Mike returns to his costumes and David to his speech

"I — I ask you, my fellow neurologists ——"

Dr Hubert Bonney enters from DR. *He is an insignificant but enthusiastic man in his early fifties*

Hubert Ah, there you are, David!
David God!

Hubert removes his white jacket and takes his suit jacket from the pegs DR

Hubert 'Morning, Mike.
Mike 'Morning, Dr Bonney. Are you all right for today's rehearsal?

Hubert Oh, yes, I'll be there. (*To David.*) Just thought I'd wish you good luck.
David Thank you, Hubert.
Hubert Big day, eh?
David Yes.
Hubert You nervous?
David Yes! But with two hundred neurologists out there I won't be short of tranquilizers, will I?
Hubert (*innocently*) Would you like a tranquilizer?
David No! Hubert, I'm trying to work on my lecture.
Hubert Ah. I'll let you get on with it then.
David Thank you.

David returns his attention to his papers

Hubert Are you memorizing the whole speech?
David I'm trying to!
Hubert (*impressed*) I say! I'm finding it difficult enough remembering my first line in Dr Connolly's melodrama. I'm the villain, aren't I, Mike?
Mike You are indeed.
Hubert I have to come on and say to Matron — she's the heroine — I have to say, "Ahoy in front and avast behind." (*To Mike.*) Are you sure that's a big laugh?
Mike A belter.
Hubert Yes. I don't quite see why.
David Hubert, shouldn't you be on your rounds?
Hubert Just finished. Well, what a day, eh? I never thought when we were students here you'd be up on that rostrum one day delivering the Ponsonby Lecture.
David If you don't stop nattering I won't be delivering anything.
Hubert Of course. My dear fellow. Would you like me to make you a nice cup of tea?
David No, thank you.

Mike puts a red hat on David's head

Mike (*as he does so*) There's your Father Christmas hat. You couldn't cope with him and play a dead body in my melodrama, could you?
David Just take your costumes and go.

Mike I suggested we borrow a real body from the mortuary but Dr Saunders wouldn't have it.

Matron enters UL *wheeling a hospital trolley on top of which is what looks like a body covered in a sheet. Matron is a large lady*

Matron Excuse me, gentlemen.
David People are in and out of here like a stomach pump.
Matron Oh, we are a grumpy Father Christmas, aren't we?
David Matron, this is supposed to be the Doctors' Common Room.
Matron Correct, and I'm taking a shortcut.
Mike Of course. Quite right. Don't apologize, Matron.
Matron I wasn't going to.
Hubert (*referring to the trolley*) Matron, is that anyone we know?
Matron (*lifting the sheet*) The patients' Christmas presents. (*She reveals a trolley full of wrapped Christmas packages*)
Hubert Very good. I'll give you a hand, shall I? (*He pushes the trolley* DR)
Matron Thank you, Dr Bonney. We're keeping them in the mortuary until Christmas Day.
Mike And don't forget, Matron, rehearsals are about to commence.
Matron Rehearsals.
Hubert Dr Connolly's melodrama.
Matron I haven't got time for that.
Hubert (*as they go*) Matron, perhaps you could explain the significance of "Ahoy in front and avast behind"?

Matron gives Hubert a severe look and they exit DR *with the trolley*

Mike (*to David*) I hope I'm not going to have to explain all the bad jokes to Dr Bonney.
David Connolly, will you either be quiet or go and rehearse.
Mike (*putting a lady's bonnet on his head*) My, but you're so masterful!

Sir Willoughby Drake enters from DL. *He is an elderly, stern gentleman*

Drake Is Dr Mortimore anywhere ...?

He stops on seeing Mike wearing the bonnet

Who are you, sir?

Mike Dr Connolly, sir. One of the housemen.
Drake Is that the headgear you're wearing this year?
Mike Mm? Oh, no, Sir Willoughby. Rehearsing for the pantomime. Would you care for a mince pie, sir?
Drake (*interrupting*) Get out. I want to speak to Dr Mortimore.

Drake pours himself a stiff whisky as Mike collects up his costumes

Mike Yes, of course. May I take this opportunity to wish you a very Happy Christmas, Sir Willoughby?
Drake Clear off!

Mike starts to go, but returns

Mike I don't suppose you'd like to play the fairy?

Drake glares at him

Mike exits DR

David Good-morning, Sir Willoughby.
Drake (*impatiently*) Yes, yes, yes. Now, Mortimore, I don't have to emphasize the importance of the Annual Ponsonby Lecture ——
David Certainly not, Sir Willoughby.
Drake Don't interrupt, please.
David Sorry.
Drake As Chairman of the Board of Governors and past Head Surgeon of St Andrew's I consider that I'm in a unique position ——
David You most certainly are. Do sit down, sir.
Drake (*ignoring this*) A unique position when it comes to selecting the Ponsonby Lecturer. This year, Mortimore, I don't think it's any secret that you were not the first choice for the role.
David (*lightly*) Well, I'd heard rumours that I wasn't top of the list.
Drake You were bottom. However, beggars can't be choosers. Against my advice Neurology was designated this year's subject. You're the senior specialist here. *Ipso facto* — you're delivering the Ponsonby Lecture. (*He tops his glass up*)
David I won't let you down, Sir Willoughby.
Drake God help you, if you do. Does your speech contain any references to the present government?

David Definitely not, sir.
Drake Well, put some in, you damn fool.
David Oh, right. Any references in particular?
Drake Complimentary ones, for heaven's sake. The Junior Health Minister's attending the lecture and we need a new scanner.
David (*writing*) Complimentary references it will be, sir.
Drake And plead poverty.
David Poverty, right.
Drake But don't let those overseas medicos think we're hard up.
David Right. Not hard up but plead poverty.
Drake And keep it brief. Neurology numbs the brain. See me in my office in five minutes. I'd better vet this speech of yours.
David Thank you, sir. Most kind. Five minutes.
Drake (*hesitating, fractionally*) The Ponsonby Lecture could be the step up to Head Physician for you here.
David Well, of course, I hadn't even allowed myself to think that far ahead.
Drake Damn liar. You know full well there's a tradition at St Andrew's that the Ponsonby Lecture is practically a direct line to a knighthood.
David (*hoarsely*) Knighthood.
Drake Why do you think I got mine?
David (*innocently*) I've often wondered about that.
Drake Five minutes!

Drake exits DR

David immediately starts to address his unseen audience

David "— Fellow neurologists — we're fortunate in this country to — er — have more than sufficient funds to maintain a robust vigorous Health Service. However, I see that we have the Junior Minister for Health in our audience — and for him I'd like to plead poverty."

Jane's head appears round the door DL, *unseen by David. She is about forty, pretty and cuddly*

"Now, although I must be — er — brief — I would like to compliment the government on — er ——
Jane Excuse me ——

David (*jumping*) For heaven's sake.
Jane Sorry, I didn't mean ——
David (*interrupting*) This is the Doctors' Common Room.
Jane Yes, I know.
David Patients' Waiting Room is downstairs in the Main Hall.
Jane It's you I want to see, Dr Mortimore.
David The receptionist will make an appointment for you and I'm afraid you'll need a note from your GP.
Jane It's me, Dr Mortimore. Jane.
David (*blankly*) Jane? (*Suddenly realizing*) Good heavens! Nurse Tate.
Jane I didn't mean to give you a shock.
David Yes — no — well, — good heavens!
Jane It's been a long time. Over eighteen years.
David Good heavens! You don't look a day older.
Jane (*grinning*) Is that why you recognized me right away?
David Well, no *more* than a day. And you were always the prettiest on the ward.
Jane And that's what you said to all the nurses.
David Nonsense, you were the prettiest, and as far as I was concerned, the most efficient.
Jane As far as you were concerned, I was certainly the most accommodating.
David Nurse Tate, please! (*He hastily closes the door* DL) I don't do — what we did — with all the nurses.
Jane Just some of them, eh?
David Miss Tate — Jane — I'm a very happily married man.
Jane You were a very happily married man eighteen years ago.
David Yes, I was, and still am. Anyway, to the best of my recollection you were perfectly willing.
Jane Yes, of course. It was wonderfully naughty and romantic. Rolling around out there on the Sluice Room floor.
David Well, it's grand seeing you, after all this time.
Jane (*suddenly*) Oh God! May I sit down? My knees are knocking. (*She sits*)
David I'm a bit worried about the time actually. I'm delivering the Ponsonby Lecture this morning.
Jane (*suddenly rising*) I should have told you eighteen years ago.
David Told me what?
Jane Didn't you ever wonder why I suddenly left the hospital? Without even saying goodbye properly?

David Well, I remember thinking that it seemed a bit abrupt.
Jane I was expecting.
David Expecting what?
Jane After what we did what do you think I was expecting?
David Couldn't have been a raise. (*He chuckles at his joke*)
Jane I left the hospital to have a baby.
David (*still chuckling*) A baby! (*Suddenly realizing*) A baby?
Jane Yes!
David We had a baby?
Jane It was my fault. Stupid. A nurse getting herself pregnant.
David Hardly brilliant for a doctor, either. Do you mind if I sit down? (*He sits*)
Jane Can I get you anything?
David Like a cigar? (*Rising*) I can't sit down, I've got to see Sir Willoughby Drake in five minutes. (*Sitting*) And my wife will be back any moment ... (*Rising*) Oh, my God, my wife! (*Sitting*) This really is one hell of a ... (*He rises*) It might not be mine, of course, Miss Tate.
Jane It is. There wasn't anyone else.
David (*sitting*) Oh, good.
Jane I so nearly told you at the time, but then I thought there was no need to make a mess of your life as well. You were ambitious. Hoping to specialize.
David Miss Tate, this really is a very busy morning for me. Why have you suddenly decided to tell me after all this time?
Jane Because of Leslie.
David Leslie?
Jane That's our son.
David Our baby's a little boy, is he?
Jane Les is quite a big boy now.
David Yes, I suppose he would be.
Jane Well, I'd always told Leslie that his father's name was Tate. And that I was Mrs Tate.
David (*curtly*) That's very good.
Jane And that Mr Tate had died when Leslie was a tiny baby seventeen years ago.
David (*curtly*) Excellent.
Jane Climbing the Himalayas.
David Himalayas?
Jane I thought it was nice for a little boy to have a picture of his daddy as a sort of romantic hero.

David Fine.
Jane Then yesterday I told Les the truth.
David (*aghast*) You did what?
Jane It was his eighteenth birthday.
David And that was his present, was it?
Jane No. I'd come round to thinking that when he was eighteen he should know the real truth about his father.
David (*mortified*) Miss Tate!
Jane I didn't say it was *you* exactly. I mean not by name.
David What *did* you say exactly?
Jane Just that I'd had an affair with a young doctor here in St Andrew's when I was a trainee nurse and that he was already married.
David That was all right.
Jane No it wasn't. I didn't appreciate what it would mean to Les. All day yesterday he went on about it. I'd never seen him like this. Laughing and crying.
David God!
Jane And as it was his birthday, we'd had some champagne. I don't think that helped.
David But you didn't actually tell him my name.
Jane No, but this morning the poor boy was in dreadful condition. He'd taken some pills last night because he couldn't sleep but they hadn't worked so he'd finished off the champagne.
David Good God!
Jane Washing down with half a bottle of gin.
David Champagne, gin and pills?!
Jane Yes.
David If you'd done that eighteen and a half years ago we wouldn't have had this problem today.
Jane He was quite hysterical. He seemed to think it was all your fault.
David My fault?
Jane For deserting me and leaving him fatherless.
David Dammit, I didn't even know about "Les" until five minutes ago.
Jane He's very confused.
David *He's* confused?!
Jane If you could have seen him this morning. I should have insisted he stayed in bed. He's only got a learner driving licence, you see.
David (*after a pause*) A learner driving licence?
Jane He said he'd made up his mind to come to the hospital and find out who his father was.

David (*aghast*) What?!
Jane And before I could stop him he jumped in my car and drove off.
David Oh, my God!
Jane I got in a taxi and followed.
David Wretched boy!
Jane He's downstairs at Reception.
David Reception?!
Jane Don't you see? Instead of his father's bones lying in some crevasse halfway up the Himalayas, you're actually alive and available.
David Oh, no I'm not! I may be alive, Miss Tate, but I'm not available. I'm delivering the Ponsonby Lecture at twelve o'clock.
Jane Just see him for five minutes.
David I can't! Sir Willoughby Drake is waiting to vet my speech! Give me your telephone number. I'll try to ring you this afternoon.
Jane That's no good.
David It's the best I can do. Just get Leslie out of St Andrew's now.
Jane I can't.
David You must!
Jane I can't! He's with the police sergeant who arrested him.
David Police sergeant?
Jane Drunk in charge, driving while unqualified, exceeding the speed limit and no insurance.

David sits and holds his head

Jane And assaulting an officer.

Hubert enters from DR

Hubert Ah, David ——
David Hubert, not now!
Hubert Sir Willoughby says ... (*To Jane*) Excuse me. (*To David*) Sir Willoughby says he's expecting you in his office.
David I'll be with him in a baby — *maybe* I'll be with him.
Hubert I think he wants to see you before the lecture.
David Go and tell him I'm coming.
Hubert Well, I'm a bit involved at the moment. Rehearsing for the melodrama. "Ahoy in front and avast behind." Connolly explained the joke to me.

He chuckles and includes Jane. Hubert stops chuckling

Good heavens! (*To David*) It's Nurse Tate!

David (*hesitating a second*) I beg your pardon?

Hubert It's Nurse Tate, surely?

David (*hesitating*) That's right, it's Nurse Tate. I didn't know you knew her, Hubert.

Hubert (*astonished*) Didn't know I ... ? We were all here together. You two were always larking around. (*He chuckles innocently*)

David (*protesting*) I don't know that we were.

Hubert Yes! Playing silly tricks on one another. In and out of the Sluice Room. (*Admiring Jane*) Marvellous! Wonderful to see you.

Jane Wonderful to see you, too, Dr Bonney.

Hubert You look super, Nurse Tate. Jane, wasn't it?

Jane That's right.

Hubert Yes, Jane Tate. Lovely! (*To David*) I must say this is a terrific Christmas present she's given me.

David Yes, she's given me one, too.

Hubert (*admiring Jane*) Super!

Jane You haven't changed, Dr Bonney.

Hubert Well ... (*Indicating his hair*) Not much up top these days.

David There was never much in the first place.

Hubert (*chuckling at David's 'joke'; to Jane*) Well, well, well. How long is it?

David Eighteen years.

Hubert Eighteen years!

Jane (*flatly*) And nine months.

Hubert (*to Jane*) So, are you here on business or pleasure, Jane?

David } (*together*) { Pleasure.
Jane } { Business.

David Half and half. She came to wish us a Happy Christmas — that's the pleasure — and the business was to see if we had any vacancies — which we haven't.

Hubert We're desperately short of nurses.

David Young ones, yes. (*To Jane*) I've already explained that, haven't I? No vacancies for old nurses. Sorry you've got to dash and don't forget to stop off in the Main Hall on your way out. Take your little basket with you.

Hubert (*to Jane*) Surely she can stop and have a Christmas drink with us.

David She doesn't drink.

Hubert If I remember correctly, she did in the old days.
David There's a lot of things she did in the old days that she's regretting now.
Hubert (*chuckling*) The parties we used to have. We hardly found time for the patients. (*To Jane*) And I bet you managed to hook yourself a handsome husband.
Jane Well ——
David (*quickly*) Yes, she did actually.
Hubert I thought so. (*To Jane*) What's he do for a living?
David He's dead.
Hubert Oh, dear.
David Jane doesn't want to talk about her private life, Hubert. Very sad. She's just told me her husband fell while climbing the Himalayas.
Hubert Oh, how tragic. (*To Jane*) And when ——?
David (*interrupting*) A long time ago.
Hubert Oh. (*To Jane*) And do you have any ——?
David (*interrupting*) No, she doesn't! She's told me all about everything. No children and definitely not a son. No family at all. She's had a rotten life. I've just heard the whole story and it brought tears to my eyes.
Hubert Dear, oh dear.
David (*moving Hubert towards the swing door* R) Hubert, you're going to be late for your rehearsals. Off you go.
Hubert (*to Jane*) You should stay for David's lecture!
Jane (*brightly*) Well, I was just thinking I might do that actually.
David And then she remembered she couldn't. She's got Christmas shopping to do for the family.
Hubert I thought she didn't have any family.
David She's got a lot of very good friends who've become family.

David bundles Hubert out DR

Hubert exits

David (*collecting Jane's hat, coat and handbag*) Now! What's your telephone number?
Jane 020 8674 3105.
David (*writing*) 020 8674 3105.
Jane But what about Les?
David I'll do my best to ring you.

Jane But what about the sergeant?
David I'll do my best to ring him as well. Wait a minute. What does he know so far?
Jane Nothing about you. Leslie's just told him what *he* knows. That his father's a doctor here.
David Good.
Jane But the sergeant says he doesn't care who Leslie's father is. He wants Leslie to accompany him to the police station for a breathalyzer test.
David That's a good idea.
Jane But Leslie says he has the right to be accompanied by his father.
David Bloody know-all!
Jane So the sergeant let me come up here to see if you were available.
David Well, I'm not. Now you tell Leslie, if he doesn't accompany the sergeant to the police station he'll get himself arrested. (*He opens the door* DL) And if I make a mess-up of my lecture, it'll be thanks to *Master Leslie*.

Rosemary appears in the doorway DL

(*Quickly, for Rosemary's benefit, to Jane*) Yes, thank you, *Mrs Lesley*. Very pleased that I was able to see you, Mrs — er — Lesley. (*To Rosemary*) Hello, darling! (*Introducing Jane*) Darling, this is Mrs — er ——
Jane (*grinning*) Mrs *Lesley*.
David Lesley, yes. (*Introducing Rosemary*) And this is my wife, Mrs — er — er ——
Rosemary (*flatly*) Mortimore.
David Yes. Mrs Mortimore.

He embraces a surprised Rosemary. Behind Rosemary's back, David indicates for Jane to go. Jane smiles and shakes her head

(*To Rosemary*) Well, darling, what have you been up to?
Rosemary (*surprised*) I've been parking the car.
David Great, keep it up, darling.

He embraces her again and once more indicates for Jane to go. Jane shakes her head and sits on chair L. *David breaks the embrace*

Well!

Rosemary Are you on the staff here, Mrs Lesley?
Jane Actually, no.
David No. Mrs Lesley's — er — visiting. Yes. She's visiting her husband. He's a patient here. Yes, Mr — er ——
Jane Lesley.
David Thank you, yes. Mr Lesley's in — B Ward, did you say, Mrs Lesley?
Jane B Ward, yes.
David B Ward. Anyway, she was on her way home when she suddenly developed palpitations in the corridor. When I say she developed palpitations in the corridor I mean she was in the corridor when she developed palpitations ——
Rosemary I know what you mean, David.

Drake enters from DR *with an empty whisky glass in his hand*

Drake Dr Mortimore!
David Ah, Sir Willoughby, I'll be with you in a nappy — *happy*, to be with you.
Drake We said five minutes, Dr Mortimore.
David Indeed we did.
Drake That was ten minutes ago.
David Yes. This lady's Mrs Mortimore ——
Drake I know Mrs Mortimore!
Rosemary Good-morning, Sir Willoughby.
David And this lady's Mrs Do Dah.
Jane Mrs Lesley.
David Yes, Mrs Lesley. This is the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Sir Willoughby doo-dah — er — Drake. (*To Drake*) Slight problem. Mrs Lesley developed palpitations in the corridor. (*To Jane*) It's nothing to worry about.
Jane I'm getting less worried all the time, actually.
David Good. Yes. Allow me to get you a refill, Sir Willoughby.
Drake I don't want a ——
David (*pressing on*) I've got the speech all worked out, sir. The political angle, you know. A nice balance between poverty on the one hand and bankruptcy on the other.

David has poured a whisky for Drake and hands it to him

Drake (*to Rosemary*) Mrs Mortimore. When your husband has dealt with the palpitations in Mrs Lesley's corridor — perhaps you'd be good enough to bring him to my office to discuss the Ponsonby Lecture.
David Why not take my wife along now, sir, and discuss it with her first?

Drake reacts and then exits brusquely DR

Rosemary (*removing her coat*) You weren't as nervous as this when you left the house this morning. (*She hangs up her coat* DR)
David No, it hit me fairly recently. (*To Jane*) Well, you seem to have recovered nicely, Mrs Lesley. I'll see you to the lift.
Jane What about the *sergeant?*

Rosemary turns

David The sergeant ? Yes, well, tell the "sergeant" that your husband will just have to miss this year's Army Reunion. Mr Lesley is definitely not up to it. I'm sorry about this, darling. Mrs Lesley wants me to give a second opinion on Mr Lesley's condition. She's lost all confidence in the doctor here.
Rosemary Which doctor's that then?
David (*politely*) I beg your pardon?
Rosemary Who's her husband's doctor?
David Er — Dr Bonney.
Rosemary Hubert?
David Yes, Hubert.
Rosemary (*to Jane*) I can assure you that Dr Bonney is most competent.
David (*to Jane*) There you are, I told you that.
Jane You can spare five minutes, surely?
Rosemary (*interrupting*) You discuss your problem, whatever it is, with the sister on the ward.
Jane (*her voice rising*) I don't want to discuss it with the sister!
David Don't give way, Mrs Lesley, whatever you do. (*Pointedly*) Not in front of my wife. She has a very delicate disposition.
Rosemary You see Sir Willoughby about your speech. I'll take Mrs Lesley back to B Ward.
David That's not a good idea.
Rosemary (*to Jane*) And if we can't find Sister, we'll have a word with Dr Bonney.

David No, Mrs Lesley doesn't want to see Dr Bonney!
Rosemary He's in charge of her husband.
David She doesn't have any confidence in Dr Bonney!!
Rosemary Nonsense, Dr Bonney is an extremely able physician.
David Dr Bonney is a nincompoop!!!

Hubert enters from the swing doors R, *wearing his beard*

David reacts angrily

Hubert (*villainously*) Ha-ha! Somebody call? (*Seeing Rosemary*) Oh, good-morning, Mrs Mortimore. (*He removes his beard*)
Rosemary 'Morning, Hubert.
David (*gaily*) We're busy, Dr Bonney!
Hubert I'm after a black hat for the villain. (*To Jane*) Oh, you're still here, that's nice.
Rosemary She's very upset about her husband.
Hubert I'm sure she is.
David We all are.
Rosemary His name's Mr Lesley.
Hubert Mr Lesley? Is that so?
Rosemary He's in B Ward.
Hubert (*after a slight pause*) Who is?
David Mrs Lesley's husband!
Hubert Mrs Lesley's husband's dead.

Rosemary is taken aback and looks at Jane to see how she will receive this news. Jane hesitates and then emits a loud wail

Rosemary Oh, my God!
David (*angrily pulling Hubert away* DR) Really, Hubert!
Hubert What?
David That was cruel. Very, very cruel.
Hubert What was?
David Delivering the news like that.
Hubert The news?
Rosemary Yes, I must say, Dr Bonney, that was abrupt, to say the least. (*To Jane*) I'm so sorry. You'd better sit down.
David She can't sit down.

Jane (*realizing the strength of her position*) It might not be a bad idea to sit down. Just while I recover from the news.

She goes to sit but David pulls her up

David No! Sitting is very bad when you've had a shock. Fresh air. Lots of it and quickly.
Hubert (*to Jane*) What's happened then?
Rosemary Her husband's died, for heaven's sake.
Hubert I know. He fell in the Himalayas.
David (*to Jane*) Oh, God!
Rosemary Fell where?
Hubert In the Himalayas.
Rosemary How on earth did he get there?
Hubert Climbed, I suppose.
Rosemary But he was in St Andrew's five minutes ago.
Hubert Who was?
Rosemary Don't be so dense, Hubert. Mrs Lesley's husband.
Hubert (*bemused*) Mrs Lesley's husband was in —— ?
David (*interrupting, brightly.*) It's all right, Hubert. There's been a slight confusion. Mrs Lesley's husband *did* die — tragically — in a moutaineering expedition to the — er — Eastern Himalayas — that was her *first* husband. Her *second* husband — Mr Lesley ——
Rosemary (*relieved*) Oh, *second* husband.
Hubert (*surprised*) Second husband?
David Yes. Mr Lesley is at this moment a patient in our hospital.
Hubert (*surprised*) Is he?
David (*quickly*) Anyway, the good news is that the lady's husband in not deceased but making a splendid recovery.
Jane Oh, thank heavens!
David So she can leave St Andrew's with a light heart and a little basket.
Hubert (*to Jane*) So that's what you were doing here this morning, *visiting?*
David That's right and visiting hours are finished.
Hubert And I thought she called to see us.
David Hubert! Of course she called to see us. She would, wouldn't she? We're her husband's physicians, aren't we? (*To Rosemary*) Well, Hubert is.
Hubert Am I?

Rosemary Lesley. B Ward.
David It doesn't matter what ward he's in, Rosemary!
Hubert (*to Jane*) Lesley, you say.
Jane (*smiling at David*) Lesley, yes.
David We don't expect you to recall every patient you're responsible for, Dr Bonney.
Hubert I'm usually very good on names. Lesley. What's he in the hospital for?
David } (*together*) { Tests.
Jane } { An operation.
David Mrs Lesley explained to me he was admitted for tests and we decided to operate.
Rosemary Oh, dear.
Hubert (*to David*) He came in for tests, you say?
David Yes, not serious. Suspected gout.
Hubert (*to Jane*) And we operated?
Jane (*flatly*) Yes. For piles.

David glares at her and she gives him a quick mischievous smile

Rosemary Good heavens!
Hubert (*amazed*) He was admitted with gout and we —— ?
David (*interrupting*) And we obviously discovered he had piles as well. We're thorough here, for God's sake, Dr Bonney. Now stop making such a fuss.

The phone rings. Hubert picks it up

Hubert Doctors' Common Room. . . . Mrs Tate? No, I don't think — oh, hang on a second. (*To Jane*) It's our receptionist downstairs. I think it might be for you. She's asking for Mrs Tate.
Jane Thank you. (*On the phone*) Hello?
Rosemary (*confused*) I thought her name was Mrs Lesley.
Jane (*on the phone*) This is Mrs Tate speaking.
David (*to Rosemary*) It is Mrs Lesley, but the fellow who came a cropper in the Himalayas was called Tate. So sometimes she's called Mrs Tate and sometimes she's called Mrs Lesley — so she was telling me.
Hubert Are you saying that Nurse Tate's first husband was also called Tate?
David Shut up, Hubert.

Rosemary (*confused*) Nurse Tate?
David Before Mrs Lesley married Mr Tate she was a nurse called Tate!
Hubert That's a hell of a coincid——
David Shut up, Hubert.
Jane (*on the phone*) Yes. I'll hang on for him.
David You really shouldn't be taking private calls in here, Mrs Lesley.
Jane The sergeant wants to talk to me.
David Well, go *downstairs* and talk to him.
Rosemary The sergeant?
David It's the one who's trying to get Mr Lesley to the army reunion.
Hubert (*surprised*) And the sergeant's called at our Reception?
David Yes, he's very keen!
Jane (*on the phone*) Yes, I am, but there's been a slight problem up here . . .
David (*to Hubert*) Dr Bonney, haven't you told Mr Lesley that he's in no fit state to attend regimental functions?
Hubert (*bemused*) No.
Jane (*on the phone*) Oh dear! (*To David*) Les is getting agitated again.
David (*growling*) Well, take him away.
Hubert Les?
David Yes. That's her little dog.
Hubert Little dog?
Jane (*on the phone*) Just look after him until I get there.
David (*to Rosemary*) It's neurotic, apparently.
Jane (*on the phone*) Very well, I'll be right down. (*She replaces the phone. To David*) I told you Leslie would crack up.
David Well, go and comfort him!
Hubert Leslie?
David Sometimes she calls the dog Les and sometimes she calls the dog Leslie!
Rosemary (*to Jane*) If you're called Lesley, isn't that rather confusing?
Jane (*flatly*) Only when my husband whistles. (*To David*) You definitely won't see him?
Rosemary Dr Mortimore's a physician, not a vet.
David I'll contact you later, Mrs Lesley. See the little fellow as soon as possible.
Rosemary Really, David.
David One has to put oneself out occasionally, darling. (*To Jane*) But whatever you do, don't let that neurotic animal get up here. What does the sign say outside the hospital, Dr Bonney?
Hubert St Andrew's.

David (*glaring at him*) It says "No Dogs Allowed".
Rosemary (*to Jane*) Dr Bonney will see you to the lift.
David (*giving Jane her coat and bag*) And no further. You've got to get back to your melodrama.
Hubert This way, my dear. (*He opens the door* DL)
Jane (*to David*) He'll probably go berserk, you realize that.
Hubert Have you ever considered castration?
David What a good idea!

Jane glares at David and storms out, followed by Hubert

(*Yelling after Hubert*) Just see her to the lift, Hubert! Don't go downstairs. Damn dog's obviously vicious.
Rosemary What an extraordinary woman.
David Wasn't she just. You'd think she'd be more worried about her sick husband than the wretched dog. Well, let's go and have a word with Sir Willoughby and then I must prepare myself to meet two hundred neurologists.

Matron enters from the swing doors DR

Matron Excuse me, Dr Mortimore, Sir Willoughby Drake says he wants you to know he's getting very cross.
David We're on our way, Matron.
Rosemary Oh, Matron, what do you know about a Mr Lesley?
Matron Lesley?
Rosemary We believe he's in B Ward.
David It's nothing to do with us, darling.
Matron Lesley — can't say it rings a bell.
David (*tersely*) It doesn't matter, Matron.
Rosemary We don't want that woman making trouble. She looked as though she could be as neurotic as her dog.
Matron Dog?
David (*crossly*) Will you go about your business, Matron.
Rosemary Could you check, please, Matron. Mr Lesley came in with gout and was operated on for piles.
Matron (*surprised*) Came in with ——
David Gout, yes!
Matron And we operated for ——

David (*shouting*) Piles! Don't tell me you haven't heard of piles, Matron?! A varicose condition of your rectum!
Matron Really!
Rosemary David!

Rosemary pulls David out DR

As Matron starts to move towards doors UL, *there is a knock on door* DL

Matron Come in.

Sister enters

Sister Oh. I was looking for Dr Mortimore.
Matron Not here, Sister, and I wouldn't bother him now.
Sister But he's Father Christmas and he'll need a list for the patient's presents.
Matron See him after the Ponsonby Lecture, he's in a foul mood. Oh, what do you know about a Mr Lesley?
Sister Lesley?
Matron Patient, B Ward.
Sister Don't recognize the name.
Matron Dr Mortimore wants to see him.
Sister What's Mr Lesley in for?
Matron Don't really know. Gout or piles, take your pick.
Sister I'll see what I can find out.

Sister exits DL. *David returns from* DR *and goes to collect his jacket*

David (*entering*) Forgot my jacket. God, what do I look like?
Matron (*coldly*) A varicose condition of your rectum.

Matron exits UL

David reacts and then picks up his speech

David "Poverty, bankruptcy..." (*He starts to move* DR *as the phone rings. He hesitates and then lifts the receiver*) Dr Mortimore speaking. . . . Miss Tate, are you still here?! . . . What do you mean, "When you got

down there, Leslie wasn't?" . . . Gone looking for you? How did he manage to get away from the sergeant? . . . Kicked him in the where? ... Oh, my God! . . . No, he hasn't come up here ——

The door DL *opens and Leslie appears. He is wearing jeans, a T-shirt and denim jacket. He also sports a punk hairstyle*

Leslie stops on seeing David and they look at each other for a moment. Leslie is out of breath and looks somewhat wild

(*On the phone*) I'd like to rephrase that last remark. (*He replaces the phone and stares at Leslie*)

Leslie Is this the Doctors' Common Room?

David Yes it is, and it's strictly for the use of the doctors.

Leslie ignores this remark and comes in, closing the door behind him

Leslie I'm looking for my mum.

David Your mum?

Leslie She's been up here talking to one of the doctors.

David Ah, yes! There was a lady on her way out when I arrived. She probably went down in the lift as you came up the stairs. (*He indicates for Leslie to leave*)

Leslie Are you one of the doctors in this place?

David (*hesitating, politely*) I beg your pardon?

Leslie (*raising his voice*) Are you a doctor here?

David Er — no. No, I'm not a doctor. No. (*Brightly*) I'm one of the patients, actually.

Leslie A patient?

David Yes. I'm recuperating. From gout and piles. Yes. And when you're recuperating they like you to do a little clerical work. Why not go and find your mother.

Leslie Rotten swine! (*He bangs his fist into the palm of his other hand*)

David Take it easy, young man!

Leslie He's a rotten swine!

David Who's a rotten swine?

Leslie My rotten dad.

David (*soothingly*) No he isn't.

Leslie How do *you* know?!

David Well, I'm sure he isn't. Dads aren't rotten.
Leslie Mine is. I'd like to thump him one.
David (*soothingly*) No, you wouldn't.
Leslie Yes I would! I'm going to stay here until I've seen every doctor in the hospital.
David You discuss it with your mother.
Leslie (*sitting*) I feel sick!
David God! Up you come.
Leslie I feel sick.
David If you feel sick, it'll be much nicer to be with your mother!
Leslie (*suddenly grabbing David*) I want to see my dad first. (*He falls to his knees*)
David I'll take you to the lift. (*He tries to get to the door* DL)
Leslie I didn't mean it, about thumping him.
David Just let go of me!

Drake enters from DR

Drake How much longer do you expect me to ... ? (*He stops on seeing Leslie, on his knees, clutching David*)
David (*after a pause*) This is private.

Drake reacts and then exits dumbly DR

(*To Leslie.*) Get a grip on yourself, for heaven's sake!
Leslie I feel sick!

Matron enters from UL

Matron Excuse me, I just wanted ... (*Seeing Leslie*) Oh.
David He's a bit upset, Matron.
Matron Upset?
David It's all right. His mother's in the hospital.
Matron (*to Leslie*) What ward's she in?
David I'll sort it out.
Leslie It's my dad I'm looking for.
Matron What ward's *he* in?
David I'm dealing with it, Matron! (*To Leslie*) It's all part of my recuperative clerical course.
Matron Recuperative clerical —— ?

David Just go on about your business, Matron!
Matron Well, actually, I came back to apologize for my rather offensive remark just now.
David It was nothing.
Matron It was very crude.
David (*taking her to the swing door* R) Most kind. Apologies accepted.
Matron Thank you, Doctor.
Matron exits R

David hesitates and then smiles sweetly at Leslie

Leslie (*to David*) She called you Doctor.
David Er — yes.
Leslie You said you were a patient.
David I am. I'm a patient who's a doctor. Of Divinity.
Leslie Divinity?
David (*laughing*) You probably don't know what a Doctor of Divinity is?
Leslie A clergyman.
David (*stopping laughing*) That's right. I'm a clergyman — recovering from gout and piles.
Leslie Why aren't you wearing a funny collar?
David I'm unorthodox. Now you go and find your mother.
Leslie I'm not going anywhere until I've seen my dad. (*He sits on the floor again*)
David But you can't stay here. The Doctors' Common Room is strictly private — unless you're a patient recuperating.
Leslie I don't care!
David Don't take that bloody attitude! (*Then sonorously*) My child.

Hubert enters from the door DL

Hubert Well, wasn't that nice seeing ... (*Seeing Leslie*) Oh. Who's this?
David He'll be all right. He's just lost his mother.
Hubert Oh dear, what did she die of?
David Never mind!
Hubert (*to Leslie*) The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.
David Never mind! (*To Hubert*) Help me take him downstairs.
Leslie (*to Hubert*) You leave me alone. And tell the vicar to leave me alone.
Hubert (*looking around*) The vicar?

Hubert looks at David, who also looks around

Leslie Yeah, get someone to put him back to bed.
Hubert (*to David*) Losing his mother's obviously affected him.
Leslie It's my dad I've lost!
Hubert Oh, not him as well!
David He's mislaid his father, that's all.
Hubert Oh, thank heavens for that. Two parents in one day would be awful.

Sisters enters from the door DL

Sister Excuse me, Dr Mortimore, it's about ——
David (*cheerfully, calmly*) Dr Mortimore — is not here.

Sister and Hubert look surprised

Sister I beg your pardon?
David Dr Mortimore is not here. Dr Mortimore *was* here — but Dr Mortimore is now enjoying his Christmas holidays.
Sister But I only wanted to ask if the patients' Christmas presents ——
David Then you'll have to ask Dr Mortimore after the holidays, won't you? Off with you.
Sister And I can't find a Mr Lesley in B Ward.
David Fine. We'll tell Dr Mortimore that when he returns. Off, off, off, off, off!

Sister backs out in confusion DL

Hubert Are you feeling all right, David?
David (*for Leslie's benefit*) No, I'm not, Doctor. And the sooner I'm allowed to return to the comfort of my bed in the sanctuary of my ward — the happier I shall be.
Hubert The comfort of ——
David My bed!
Hubert In the sanctuary of ——
David My ward! (*Growling*) Just help me pick him up.
Hubert (*patting Leslie's shoulder*) The Lord giveth and the Lord ——
David Shut up!

Rosemary enters from the swing doors R

Rosemary David ——!
David (*quickly dropping Leslie and going to Rosemary*) Yes, my darling?
Rosemary What on earth did you do to upset Sir Willoughby?
David Nothing.
Rosemary He said you can forget about any assistance from him with your speech and if you make any mistakes in your lecture, God help you.
David (*starting to push her out*) That's fair enough. You go and get a seat in the lecture hall.
Rosemary It doesn't start for another ... (*Seeing Leslie*) Who's that?
David He'll be all right.

Hubert, who has been comforting Leslie, joins them

Hubert (*to Rosemary, quietly*) His mother's just died.
David Hubert!
Rosemary Oh, no! (*Going to Leslie*) There, there, the Lord giveth and the ——
David Rosemary! (*He pulls Rosemary away*)
Leslie I want to see my dad!
David Stop that, for God's sake. (*Then sonorously*) For God's sake.
Leslie My dad's here somewhere, I know he is.
Rosemary Yes, you must be a comfort to your father now.

Leslie wails

David Rosemary! Leave this to us. Well, leave it to the doctor here. (*He indicates Hubert*)
Rosemary Was she a patient?
David Who?
Rosemary The boy's mother?
David No, she was D.O.A.
Hubert Oh dear.
Rosemary D.O.A.?
Hubert "Dead on arrival."
Rosemary What a morning! What did the poor woman die of?
David (*angrily interrupting*) Hit by a number 34 bus in Camden Town!
Hubert Dear oh dear.

Leslie (*to David*) I think I feel sick.
David Oh God — ! (*then smiling at Leslie*) — be with you.
Rosemary That'll be good for him. Into the bathroom.
Hubert Yes.

Hubert starts to lead Leslie to the bathroom. David pulls Rosemary L

David Rosemary, I really must insist you leave these hospital matters to the staff.

Mike enters from UL, *carrying the plate of mince pies, which has now been reduced to one mince pie*

Mike Come on, Dr Bonney, we're rehearsing.
Rosemary Ssh!
Mike He's the villain of my piece.

Rosemary points at Leslie who is being supported by Hubert

Rosemary His mother's just died.
Mike (*to Hubert, consolingly*) Oh, I'm so sorry to hear that, Dr Bonney.
David Connolly!
Mike (*to Hubert*) Still, she must have had a very good innings, eh, you're pushing on a bit.
Hubert (*pointing at Leslie*) *His* mother.
Mike Oh.
Rosemary She came C.O.D.

David, Hubert and Mike consider this

Hubert D.O.A., actually. (*To Mike*) Mike, help me get him into the bathroom, will you?
David Take him into one of the wards.
Rosemary Don't be silly. Get him into the bathroom.
Mike Have a mince pie, old lad.
Hubert He wants to be sick.
Mike This will bring that on a treat.
Leslie (*struggling*) I want to see my mother.
Rosemary It's all right. She's in better hands than ours now.

David Thank you, Rosemary!
Leslie She's gone downstairs.
Rosemary (*gently*) No, I'm sure she hasn't. She'll be up there somewhere. (*She looks heavenwards*)
Leslie No, she won't. The vicar definitely said she'd gone downstairs.

Rosemary looks to David who smiles and shrugs his shoulders

Rosemary What a thing for a vicar to say.
Hubert The boy needs his father here.
David No he doesn't!
Leslie Yes I do! (*He sits determinedly in the chair* DL)
Mike (*quietly*) Probably in the mortuary with the mother.
Rosemary (*to Leslie*) Is your father somewhere in the hospital?
Leslie Yes, he is. Mum was up here just now talking to him.

The others exchange a glance

Rosemary Talking to him?

David pulls Rosemary away

David That was before she passed on.
Mike (*whispering*) But I thought she was D.O.A.
David She was — but apparently one of the doctors gave her the kiss of life — and she came to long enough to say a few words — and then she succumbed again — permanently.
Leslie What are you lot whispering about?
David It's all right!
Hubert (*kneeling beside Leslie; gently*) Yes, it's all right. Your mother said a few final words to your father and then she very peacefully died.

David buries his head in his hands

Leslie (*blankly*) Mum died?
Hubert I think he's in shock.
David I know how he feels.
Leslie Mum spoke to Dad and died?
Rosemary Very peacefully.

Leslie (*suddenly angry*) That rotten bastard's killed my mum!
David (*backing away*) Steady, steady!
Hubert No, no, it was a number 34 bus.
Leslie He killed my mum with a number 34 bus?
David It was an accident!
Leslie Some bloody accident! The murdering swine! (*He rises and angrily breaks away*)
Mike OK, lad!
Hubert Easy now.

Mike and Hubert restrain Leslie

David (*to Rosemary*) Go and tell Matron to fill a syringe with Largactil.
Rosemary Largactil.
David Fifty milligrams. No, better make it a hundred. And get it here right away.

Rosemary hurries out through swing doors UL

Leslie I feel sick!
Mike Come on! The bathroom!

Mike and Hubert attempt to take Leslie towards the bathroom

Leslie Ignores her for eighteen years and then he hits her with a double decker.
Hubert Your father wasn't to blame.
Leslie (*wailing*) My father!
David Oh, shut up!
Hubert Steady, David.
Leslie He'd probably like to kill me, too.

David nods manically

Leslie (*to Mike*) I want to go and have it out with him.
Mike (*struggling with Leslie*) Steady! (*To Hubert*) I think we might need Dr Mortimore to give us a hand.
Hubert Good idea.
David (*calmly, cheerfully*) Dr Mortimore is on holiday.

Hubert and Mike exchange a glance

I keep telling everybody this. Nobody seems to listen. Dr Mortimore is enjoying his Christmas break.

Mike (*to Hubert*) Is Dr Mortimore OK?

David Dr Mortimore is absolutely fine as far as I know, but he's not prepared to work overtime and it's as simple as that.

Mike (*to Hubert*) Come on!

Hubert and Mike pull Leslie into the bathroom

Leslie (*as he goes*) How the hell did he get hold of a double decker bus?

David closes the bathroom door as the telephone rings. David lifts the receiver

David (*on the phone*) Hello! . . . Nurse Tate! . . . The sergeant's coming up here? You were supposed to be keeping him occupied. . . . No, you stay there. (*He replaces the receiver*)

Matron enters with a large syringe on a dish

Matron Mrs Mortimore asked me to prepare a syringe for a neurotic youth.

David Excellent.

Matron This is highly irregular. I haven't seen his medical card or anything.

David Just do as you're told, Matron.

Matron Matron can turn ugly!

David There's no answer to that. Go on. He's in there with Dr Connolly.

Hubert enters from the bathroom. For a moment we see Mike ministering to Leslie. Hubert closes the door

Hubert He's vomiting at the moment.

Matron Ah. (*To Hubert*) You don't think a hundred milligrams is a bit much, Doctor?

David I'd like to give him a thousand.

Matron *A thousand?*

David Just give him the injection. A hundred milligrams won't kill him.
Hubert He's in a state of shock, you see.
David Matron doesn't need a diagnosis, Hubert.
Hubert His mother was brought in D.O.A.
Matron D.O. ——?
David (*interrupting*) Hit by a 34 bus, give him the injection, you old bat!

Matron glares at him and exits into the bathroom

(*To Hubert*) And if there's any left over, stick the rest in Matron. (*He pushes Hubert off into the bathroom*)

Hubert exits as the Sergeant enters though the door DL. *He is a middle-aged man wearing the uniform of a police sergeant*

Sergeant Excuse me, sir.
David Good-morning, Sergeant. Dr David Mortimore. What can I do for you?
Sergeant I'm after a young man, sir.
David Ah. A particular young man, or will anyone do?
Sergeant (*deciding to ignore this*) A particular young man, sir. Age about eighteen years, medium build, spiky haircut, wearing an earring.
David Anything distinctive about him?
Sergeant Well, he's in a bit of a state. To do with his father.
David What's his father got to do with St Andrew's, Sergeant?
Sergeant The boy has some convoluted story about his dad secretly being one of the doctors here.
David (*in mock surprise*) No!
Sergeant Yes. The mother's down at Reception, too.
David No!
Sergeant Yes. The lad wants to find his father. But from what I can gather, this medico's not keen to be found.
David Well, I certainly haven't seen a young man up here. It's been rather a quiet morning actually. But if I come across an excitable youth I'll get in touch.
Sergeant I wouldn't advise attempting to apprehend him, Doctor. He's just gone and kicked me in the goolies.
David Dear, oh dear. Anything else I can do for you, Sergeant?
Sergeant I don't think so, sir. I'll get back to Reception in case the lad's mother's got hold of him.

There is clattering from the bathroom and shouts

Matron (*off*) Keep still!
Leslie (*off*) Get away from me!
Hubert (*off*) Steady, steady!
Mike (*off*) I'm sitting on him!
Matron (*off*) That's *me*, Doctor!

Hubert bursts in from the bathroom. For a moment we see Leslie with his trousers down, struggling with Mike and Matron. Hubert bangs the door shut

Hubert I think we need some ... (*he stops on seeing the Sergeant with David*) oh.
David (*calmly*) Sergeant, this is my colleague, Dr Bonney. How's the rehearsal going in there, Hubert?
Hubert (*after a pause*) Rehearsal?
David "Sweeney Todd" sketch, isn't it?

Hubert looks blank for a second

Or is it "Jack the Ripper" this year? (*To the Sergeant*) Patients always like that one. "Ahoy in front and avast behind."
Matron (*off*) Take his trousers down!
David It's "Mother Goose." (*To the Sergeant*) Well, sorry I can't be of any assistance, Sergeant.
Sergeant I'll say good-morning then.
David And you said it very nicely.

David ushers out a bemused Sergeant, DL

The Sergeant exits

Hubert I'm getting worried about you, David.
David Join the club! Go and give him the injection! (*He pushes Hubert out*)

Hubert exits into the bathroom. Jane enters from UL

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