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# HOUSE & GARDEN

Two Linked Plays

by Alan Ayckbourn

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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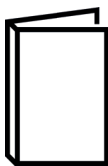


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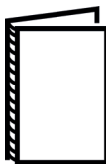
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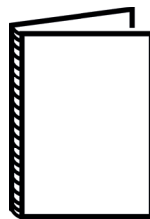
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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Alan Ayckbourn has worked in theatre as a playwright and director for over fifty years, rarely if ever tempted by television or film, which perhaps explains why he continues to be so prolific. To date he has written more than seventy-nine plays, many one-act plays and a large amount of work for the younger audience. His work has been translated into over thirty-five languages, is performed on stage and television throughout the world and has won countless awards.

Major successes include: *Relatively Speaking*, *How the Other Half Loves*, *Absurd Person Singular*, *Bedroom Farce*, *A Chorus of Disapproval* and *The Norman Conquests*. In recent years, there have been revivals of *Season's Greetings* and *A Small Family Business* at the National Theatre, in the West End *Absent Friends*, *A Chorus of Disapproval*, *Relatively Speaking* and *How the Other Half Loves*. In 2015, Chichester mounted a very successful revival of *Way Upstream*.

Artistic Director of the Stephen Joseph Theatre from 1972 to 2009, where almost all his plays have been first staged, he continues to direct his latest new work there. In recent years, he has been inducted into American Theatre's Hall of Fame, received the 2010 Critics' Circle Award for Services to the Arts and became the first British playwright to receive both Olivier and Tony Special Lifetime Achievement Awards. He was knighted in 1997 for services to the theatre.

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

*House & Garden* are two plays intended to be performed simultaneously by the same cast in two adjacent auditoria. They can be seen singly and in no particular order.

## AFTERWARDS

### The Curtain Calls

The curtain calls are best solved by dividing the company, half of them starting in *House* and half in *Garden*. By bowing in groups of two and three (without undue haste) we found that the changeover from one theatre to the other operated fairly smoothly.

### The Garden Fête

In both the original Scarborough production and the subsequent Royal National Theatre production of *House & Garden* the plays were followed by a garden fête in the two theatres' shared foyer (and in the Scarborough case on the stage of *Garden* itself as well).

This really became a "third act", uniting both the audiences and company who manned the stalls and side-shows. At the RNT we also kept a close watch each night for anyone in the audience who was even remotely a "celebrity" and prevailed upon them to open the fête.

It is hoped that all future productions will also include some similar event. Besides providing a perfect ending to the evening (matinees were difficult) it also proved a great boost to ticket sales quite apart from the income derived from the sale of home-made produce and the side-show charges.

In addition, it was an opportunity to include local charities, who manned their own nightly stall.

### Curtain Call Speeches

To publicize this (and to facilitate curtain calls) both Giles and Teddy made speeches from the stage.

In the smaller Stephen Joseph Theatre (where the travel time between the two auditoria was approximately 40 seconds) these were made at the end of the calls, by Teddy from the set of *House* and Giles from the set of *Garden*.

In the larger RNT (where the travel time between the two auditoria was around 1 minute 30 seconds), these speeches were made in the middle of the curtain call in order to allow the other actors to catch up. In this instance, by Teddy from the set of *Garden* and Giles from the set of *House*.

Below are the two speeches as used at the RNT, penned by the author, although it is anticipated that the details are likely to vary. Please note though that the 1 minute 30 seconds travel time (at a brisk walk) is the maximum distance for which the play(s) were designed.

The speeches for the RNT version were as follows:

**TEDDY** Ladies and gentlemen, the weather, thank heavens, looks as if it's brightening up a bit so I'd just like to take this opportunity to remind you about our magnificent annual fête and to ask you, as you leave, please to look in and have a bit of fun. Remember, it's all in a very good cause. There's home-made produce, alcoholic refreshment, first-rate games including my own particular favourite, the hoop-la stall – though I have, alas, to inform you that the bottle of scotch has already been won! Nonetheless don't miss it whatever you do. Especially since tonight I'm delighted to announce, owing to the indisposition of Madame Lucille Cadeau, a very special last-minute guest has kindly stepped in and consented to launch the proceedings – none other than... (*Name*)

Finally, do remember, if you haven't yet visited our fascinating House, it is regularly open to the public and tickets are still available through the normal sources.

Thank you very much. Hope to see you there. I think the other lot have just about made it now so – on with the curtain call!

**GILES** It looks, as far as one can judge, as if the rain's finally cleared at last so I do hope that before you leave you'll find time to look round our garden fête. Remember, it's all in a very good cause. There's home-made produce, alcoholic refreshment, wonderful games and side-shows including my own particular favourite, Bat the Rat. Many of us will be there, too, so please don't miss it whatever you do. Most especially since tonight I'm delighted to announce, owing to the indisposition of Madame Lucille Cadeau, we have a

special last-minute guest who has generously consented to launch the proceedings – none other than... (*Name*)

Finally, I have been asked to remind you, if you haven't yet visited the wonderful Gardens here, they are regularly open to the public and tickets are available through the usual channels. Of special interest is the unique and quite fascinating range of shrubbery.

Thank you very much. I hope we'll see you there. I think we're mostly just about set to continue now – so, on with the curtain call!

### **Note**

On matinee days when there was no fête following the afternoon performance, but when it was still necessary to make the speech, we modified it announcing that although it was still too wet underfoot following the rain, we would be holding the fête as usual, later on that evening for those who were staying. The guest opener, if unknown, became a “special mystery guest”.

## HOUSE & GARDEN

First performed at the Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough,  
on 17 June 1999, with the following cast:

<b>TEDDY PLATT</b>	Robert Blythe
<b>TRISH PLATT</b>	Eileen Battye
<b>SALLY PLATT</b>	Charlie Hayes
<b>GILES MACE</b>	Barry McCarthy
<b>JOANNA MACE</b>	Janie Dee
<b>JAKE MACE</b>	Danny Nutt
<b>GAVIN RYNG-MAYNE</b>	Terence Booth
<b>BARRY LOVE</b>	Simon Green
<b>LINDY LOVE</b>	Alison Senior
<b>LUCILLE CADEAU</b>	Sabine Azema
<b>FRAN BRIGGS</b>	Alexandra Mamie
<b>WARN COUCHER</b>	Peter Laird
<b>IZZIE TRUCE</b>	Antonia Pemberton
<b>PEARL TRUCE</b>	Jennifer Luckraft
<b>MAYPOLE DANCERS AND BANDSMEN</b>	

Directed by Alan Ayckbourn  
Designed by Roger Glossop  
Lighting designed by Mick Hughes  
Costumes designed by Christine Wall  
Music by John Pattison

A new production was subsequently presented at the Lyttelton and Olivier Theatres at the Royal National Theatre, London, on 9 August 2000, with the following cast:

<b>TEDDY PLATT</b>	David Haig
<b>TRISH PLATT</b>	Jane Asher
<b>SALLY PLATT</b>	Charlie Hayes
<b>GILES MACE</b>	Michael Siberry
<b>JOANNA MACE</b>	Siân Thomas
<b>JAKE MACE</b>	James Bradshaw
<b>GAVIN RYNG-MAYNE</b>	Malcolm Sinclair
<b>BARRY LOVE</b>	Adrian McLoughlin
<b>LINDY LOVE</b>	Suzy Aitchison
<b>LUCILLE CADEAU</b>	Zabou Breitman
<b>FRAN BRIGGS</b>	Alexandra Mamie
<b>WARN COUCHER</b>	Peter Laird
<b>IZZIE TRUCE</b>	Antonia Pemberton
<b>PEARL TRUCE</b>	Nina Sosanya
<b>MAYPOLE DANCERS AND BANDSMEN</b>	

Directed by Alan Ayckbourn  
 Designed by Roger Glossop  
 Lighting designed by Mick Hughes  
 Costumes designed by Christine Wall  
 Music by John Pattison



**HOUSE**

## CHARACTERS

**TEDDY PLAT** - a businessman; 40s  
**TRISH PLATT** - his wife, a designer; 40s  
**SALLY PLATT** - their daughter, a schoolgirl; 17  
**GILES MACE** - a doctor; late 30s  
**JOANNA MAC** - his wife, a teacher; late 30s  
**JAKE MACE** - their son, a student reporter; 19 or 20  
**GAVIN RYNG-MAYNE** - a novelist; late 40s  
**BARRY LOVE** - a shopkeeper; 30s  
**LIND** - his wife, a shopkeeper; 30s  
**LUCILLE CADEAU** - an actress; of a certain age  
**FRAN BRIGGS** - her driver  
**WARN COUCHER** - a gardener; late 50s/early 60s  
**IZZIE TRUCE** - a housekeeper; late 50s  
**PEARL TRUCE** - an occasional cleaner; late 20s  
**MAYPOLE DANCERS AND BANDSMEN** - several children of  
about 7 or 8 years old

## SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

The action of the play *House* takes place in the summer sitting room of the house of **TEDDY** and **TRISH PLATT**

### ACT I

**Scene One**      A Saturday in August. 8 a.m.  
**Scene Two**      11 a.m. the same day

### ACT II

**Scene One**      2 p.m. the same day  
**Scene Two**      5 p.m. the same day

Time - the present

## ACT I

### Scene One

*The summer sitting room of the house. 8.00 am. A Saturday in August.*

*This is an impressive ground-floor room at the back of a Georgian building, overlooking a terrace and small formal garden. Beyond the garden is a flight of stone steps leading down to the less formal Lower Meadow. The room itself has a number of floor-to-ceiling windows, two of them French windows which lead on to the terrace. Two other doors lead off, one to the hall and rest of the house; and double doors into the dining room. These latter are normally closed but, when open, the end of what appears to be a long dining table can be seen. The room is comfortably furnished in the tastefully shabby, cluttered, casual English country house tradition; a sofa, table and telephone feature. There is an old portrait of a woman with a dog among the pictures on the walls.*

*The sky beyond the windows is unsettled.*

*In a moment, **TRISH**, a woman in her forties whose soft English beauty has only very faintly faded, enters from the hall. She surveys the room and its clutter, sighs, sniffs the air with mild distaste, goes to the French windows and opens them. She makes for the hall door again, then pauses to pick something up, straighten a cushion. A token gesture towards tidying the untidyable.*

*As she does this TEDDY, a rather red-faced man, also in his forties, appears outside the French windows. He is wearing old clothes and boots.*

**TEDDY** I'm just taking Spoof for a run in the meadow. All right?

**TRISH** *continues her tidying, appearing neither to hear nor see TEDDY at all.*

So, if anyone phones, can you take a message? Tell 'em I'll ring 'em back in a minute? OK?

*No response.*

Trish?

**TRISH** *finishes what she is doing and goes into the dining room, disappearing from view during the following.*

*(as TRISH goes)* It's just possible Ryng-Mayne may call to give me an update when he'll— *(as it becomes apparent that she is not hearing him)* Oh, for God's sake, Trish! We can't keep on like this, woman! Trish!

**TRISH** *exits.*

*(yelling after TRISH)* This is a very important day for me, you know. If you cock it up for me, I'll never forgive you. Do you hear me, Trish?

*Outside somewhere Spoof, a large dog, barks with pleasure at the sound of his master's voice.*

All right, Spoof, that'll do! Spoof! Stop that at once!

*Spoof barks happily on.*

Spoof! *(he gives up; muttering)* Oh, give me strength! I don't know. I'm the bloody invisible man round here. Nobody takes a blind bit of notice. Might as well not be here at all. Just a hole in the ether, these days.

**TEDDY** *heads off through the garden. So does Spoof.*

(as he goes) SPOOF! Will you just simmer down, you stupid dog.

**TEDDY** (and Spoof) exit into the garden.

*There is silence in the empty room for a second.*

**SALLY** enters from the hall. She is **TRISH**'s and **TEDDY**'s only child. Seventeen and still at school, she is a serious, sometimes rather intense girl who has recently grown very concerned with *Life and The World*. She is wearing her school uniform and carries a briefcase. She comes into the room and stops, listening. She frowns. She sits on the sofa and opens her briefcase. She pulls out a sheet of paper and studies it.

**SALLY** (reading, softly and dramatically)

How can I ever hear a heart,

My head denies with such insistence?

How do I ever trust a heart,

Which doubt drowns out with such persistence?

How will I ever feel my heart,

Whilst caution proffers such resistance?

How could I ever give my heart

When I deny its whole existence?

**TRISH** enters. **SALLY** hastily returns her poem to the briefcase.

**TRISH** Oh, good morning, Sally... Were you talking to me?

**SALLY** No. What was all that about just now?

**TRISH** When?

**SALLY** Was that Dad...?

**TRISH** ...what are you doing, up and dressed?

**SALLY** ...I heard him shouting...

TRISH ...it's not even midday.

SALLY ...yelling his head off.

TRISH What are you up to? It's Saturday, had you forgotten?

SALLY I've got a meeting at nine. Don't say you didn't hear him?

TRISH No. I heard Spoof.

SALLY Yes. And Dad.

TRISH No, I only heard Spoof.

*SALLY gives up with a sigh.*

I think we'll have to use the big table. We always have this problem, don't we? The small table's too small and the large table's too large. We either have to have three people to lunch or forty-six. What meeting's this, then?

SALLY Up at the school.

TRISH Oh, is that why you're all dressed up?

SALLY I'm dressed up because we have enlightened teachers who encourage all sorts of activities outside normal school hours but a reactionary head teacher who won't allow any pupil on the premises unless they're in school uniform...

TRISH What's the meeting? Anything important?

SALLY Senior Political Group.

TRISH Oh. We'll never get nine of us round the small table. We'd all be eating off each other's plates.

*During the following, TRISH moves around in the dining room as she tries out various table lay-outs using table mats as markers. Occasionally she vanishes from sight, sometimes stopping in the doorway to speak to SALLY directly.*

SALLY Have I got to be here? For lunch?

TRISH You certainly have.

SALLY I could eat in the kitchen...

TRISH You'll eat with us...

SALLY ...if it would help. I could eat with Izzie.

TRISH Sally, you're eating with us, please.

SALLY Thought it might help, that's all.

TRISH Well, it wouldn't... I need you to...converse and...pass things... (*She lingers in the dining-room doorway, surveying the table.*) No, I'll put us all up this end. If we're spread out, we'll be yelling our heads off.

SALLY French film stars are not exactly my strong point, you know...

TRISH Nor mine. That's beside the point. You speak French, anyway...

SALLY ...I mean, I haven't even seen her film...

TRISH I don't think anyone's seen her film. Not round these parts...

SALLY ...Jake probably has...

TRISH ...by the time they get round to showing a film here most of the stars are dead...

SALLY ...Jake's bound to have seen it. What's it called, anyway?

TRISH The - hang on I did know - "*The Un* - " "*The Un* - " something or other.

SALLY Is it French?

TRISH No, English, I think. Well, American.

SALLY And how come she's in this neck of the woods?

TRISH I'm not quite sure. She was suggested by her agent. Our committee originally wanted the other one - that very famous one who was also in the film. But she was unexpectedly unavailable - "*The Unexpected*", that's it! - so they suggested this one instead. Lucille - thingy. Who

isn't really famous at all but is apparently very, very good. According to her agent.

**SALLY** Just nobody's ever heard of her.

**TRISH** Don't ask me, I've never heard of anybody. Anyway, she's agreed to open our fête, which was more than the other one was, which makes her OK in my book. Can you man the tombola as usual, please?

**SALLY** Oh, you're not going to make me stand out there all afternoon in the pouring rain like last year, are you?

**TRISH** It's not going to rain...

**SALLY** Of course it's going to rain...

**TRISH** Nonsense. The forecast says—

**SALLY** ...it always rains. Last year that tombola drum was full of water. All the tickets were floating...

**TRISH** Come on, Sally, for goodness' sake. Lighten up, darling. Everything's such an effort, isn't it? You're young. Enjoy that while it lasts.

**SALLY** Standing in the rain?

**TRISH** That's all part of it...

**SALLY** Selling soggy tickets for prizes people won last year and have put back this year, praying they won't win them again?

**TRISH** Absolutely. All part of the fun.

**SALLY** (*softly mocking*) When I was your age—

**TRISH** Yes, all right.

**SALLY** —we used to dance all day. On the lawn. In our night-dresses. (*pause*) I'm amazed you still bother, really.

**TRISH** How do you mean?

**SALLY** With all – this...going on?

**TRISH** What?

SALLY All this – that we're not supposed to talk about but we all know about anyway.

TRISH I don't know what you mean.

SALLY I've noticed.

TRISH What time's this meeting of yours?

SALLY You two want to get yourselves sorted out, you know. Instead of giving me lectures on lightening up.

TRISH If it's at nine o'clock you'd better get moving...

SALLY You hear what I'm saying, Mum? I'm serious.

TRISH ...you know what the buses are like on Saturdays.

SALLY Jake's collecting me. Listen, if you—

TRISH You take advantage of him far too much, as well.

SALLY What?

TRISH Jake. He trails round after you like a lost puppy. You just use him when it suits you.

SALLY (*indignantly*) I do not.

TRISH Yes, you do.

SALLY I don't ask him to follow me around, do I?

TRISH You don't send him away either, do you?

SALLY It's what makes him happy.

TRISH It's called using people, Sally. They – care about you, you care nothing for them but you use them because it suits you.

SALLY That's terrible. What a terrible thing to say!

TRISH It's all right. I'm not blaming you especially. Lots of us have done it. All I'm saying is, try not to. For one reason, it'll rebound on you later. It always does.

SALLY What are you talking about?

TRISH I'm saying that – in my experience – life pays you back. Sooner or later. Believe me, I know. You behave badly...

thoughtlessly towards someone...as if their feelings weren't important...then one day...

**SALLY** They behave like that to you? Well, I'm not letting that happen to me, I can tell you that. Never lose control. That's the secret, keep control.

**TRISH** Of other people?

**SALLY** No, of myself. Don't let yourself get used, get manipulated, taken advantage of. And of course, no, don't do it to others either. Which I don't, as it happens. I don't use them, not at all.

**TRISH** Even more alarming if you don't even realize you're doing it. (*She looks back at the table*) Yes, we'll lay it up like that.

**SALLY** It's another "get Sally" morning, isn't it? And don't you dare put me next to that man, either.

**TRISH** What's that?

**SALLY** Gavin whosit-whatsit. I'm not sitting next to him.

**TRISH** Why on earth not? I seem to remember he was very charming.

**SALLY** Oh, yes?

**TRISH** Novelist, political wheeler-dealer. Right up your street, I'd have thought.

**SALLY** Sorry. Hardly my kind of politics, Mother.

**TRISH** Oh, well. Karl Marx wasn't free for lunch, unfortunately.

**SALLY** Really... I'd love to know what he's doing here.

**TRISH** He's coming for lunch.

**SALLY** What, travelling two hundred miles from London just to have lunch? All this "I'm-an-old-friend-of-Dad's". Highly suspicious.

**TRISH** (*drily*) Being a contradiction in terms, you mean?

**SALLY** Listen. Seriously, if you want to talk about things, about what's happening... It affects all of us. Not just you, Dad and Joanna. But there's Jake's father as well, isn't there? There's Giles. And then there's Jake. (*slight pause*) I am thinking about other people, you see. (*pause*) And me. There's me. You see? So we have to talk, don't we?

**TRISH** I don't know whether to use the cloth or the plain wood with mats. This surface is totally wrecked. We should never have used it as a ping-pong table...

*At this moment JAKE, about nineteen or twenty years old, appears on the terrace. He is shy, slightly nervous and clearly besotted with SALLY.*

*SALLY sees JAKE. He waves through the window to indicate that he's there.*

**SALLY** (*seeing JAKE*) Oh, hallo... (*During the following she opens her briefcase and sorts through some papers*)

**JAKE** (*tentatively entering the room*) Hi!

**TRISH** Who's that? Oh, Jake. Good morning.

**JAKE** Good morning.

**TRISH** I'll shut the door. Leave you in peace. Sally's got something to say to you.

**JAKE** Has she?

*TRISH closes the dining-room doors.*

*SALLY sorts through papers.*

I parked the car down by the gate. Walked up through the garden.

**SALLY** Why d'you do that?

**JAKE** Well, I just thought...it might be nice...for us to...walk through the garden. (*He looks out of the window*) Seeing as it's such a... It's a... As it's not raining.

(Pause.) What did you want to tell me, then?

SALLY What?

JAKE Your mother said you had something to say to me.

SALLY Did she?

JAKE What is it, then?

SALLY I've no idea. Ask her. (*She studies her papers*)

JAKE What's that?

SALLY It's my speech.

JAKE Ah.

SALLY For the meeting. I was up half the night with it. Some of them are so stupid, if you don't spell things out in words of one syllable...

JAKE (*sympathetically*) Yes. I know our features editor always says—

SALLY What I'm trying to get across, is that in politics, any sort of politics, local or national – these days it's tactics. It isn't always simply a question of voting for what you want...

JAKE No.

SALLY Sometimes, you have to vote for what you positively don't want in order to achieve the longer term aim of getting something you do want. You see?

JAKE Tactical voting?

SALLY (*waving a sheet of paper*) Fact. Colin Theaker is the most unpopular MP this constituency has had since records were started. He wasn't that popular when he was elected and in four and a half years he's managed to halve that support. Pretty remarkable, even for Colin Theaker...

JAKE I know. We ran that article recently...

SALLY Mind you, he's a crook, which doesn't help.

**JAKE** Well, we don't know that for certain...

**SALLY** He is. He's a crooked little shit.

**JAKE** You're not going to say that in your speech, are you?

**SALLY** Of course I'm not. But even his own party, which is made up almost entirely of crooks, is a little nervous about him. They'd replace him tomorrow, only if they did it would amount to a tacit admission they knew he was a crook. The point is if Theaker remains their candidate at the General Election there could be a complete turnround. They could find themselves out on their ear. The whole lot of them. We'd be in. For the first time. Ever. Think of that.

**JAKE** Lot of ifs.

**SALLY** Dave Bales could be our next MP. Think of that.

**JAKE** Yes, I met him once. He's OK, he's quite—

**SALLY** But you see if that's to happen, it's vital they're not panicked into replacing Theaker. With someone with a bit more—someone new who might just swing it for them.

**JAKE** They might replace him anyway.

**SALLY** They might. I think it's unlikely. That would be a virtual admission that some of the rumours about him are true. No, they'll stick with him if they possibly can. So. QED. I'm going to propose we cool our campaign. Which isn't going to be very popular with some of our lot. But you see my point?

**JAKE** Theaker must stay?

**SALLY** For the time being. Still. Sixth Form Senior Political Society. What are we going to change?

**JAKE** Voters of the future.

**SALLY** Sure. We've been given a voice, use it.

**JAKE** I feel a bit sorry for Theaker, actually.

**SALLY** What? Come on...

**JAKE** Well, he had a tough act to follow. Two tough acts. Your grandfather, your great grandfather...

**SALLY** Things were different in those days...

**JAKE** Still, you can't help wondering. If, say, your father had decided to stand for instance...

**SALLY** Well, they asked him originally. Dad's not interested, though. Never has been. He told me once, he thinks all politics are boring.

**JAKE** You take after your grandfather...

**SALLY** He had a passion, yes. I share the passion, if not the same views.

**JAKE** Would you ever want to stand? As an MP?

**SALLY** Maybe. One day. Who knows. If I thought I could be useful. I'd be a very good one. Change things for the better.

**JAKE** (*adoringly*) You'd be fantastic.

**SALLY** Come on, I'm going to be late. (*She packs up her things during the following*)

**JAKE** I saw them again just now, by the way. My mother and your father.

**SALLY** Oh, God. Where?

**JAKE** In the garden. As usual.

**SALLY** Where did you see them...? They weren't – you know—?

**JAKE** Oh, no. They were just standing about. Pretending to talk about bushes, you know.

**SALLY** I don't know what we can do, Jake. I really don't. I've tried talking to my mother but she won't even acknowledge it's happening.

**JAKE** How about your father?

**SALLY** I gave up talking to him years ago. After what he's done to my mother, I never want to speak to him again. Have you managed to talk to your mother yet?

**JAKE** No, she's... She's – quite an emotional sort of person, you know...

**SALLY** Yes, I have noticed. If you don't mind my saying so, I think she's seriously unstable, actually...

**JAKE** Well. Maybe a bit. And my father – I'm sure he still doesn't know.

**SALLY** That's incredible. Where does he live? In a plastic bag?

**JAKE** No, he's... Well, he trusts her, you see. He trusts most people. Actually, he trusts everyone, that's the trouble. The thing about my father is – well, it sounds a bit boring but I think he's just a very, very nice man.

**SALLY** He's a bloody sight nicer man than my father, anyway. Oh, what's the point of talking about it? They'll have to sort it out between them. There's nothing we can do.

**JAKE** I wish there was, though. I was wondering if... Are you going to be at the fête this afternoon...?

**SALLY** Unfortunately. Or risk the wrath of my mother...

**JAKE** I was just wondering – because I'm going to have to be there – I've got to interview this film actress, you see – and I just wondered, you know – if afterwards – if you – if you – we could drive out to this place I –

**SALLY** Probably not this evening, Jake.

**JAKE** Right.

**SALLY** I have – lots to do. Revision and so on.

**JAKE** Yes.

**SALLY** Shall we go?

**JAKE** Sure. I cleaned the car out, by the way. You'll be relieved to hear. I know last time you said it smelt a bit odd...

**SALLY** It did. Disgusting.

**JAKE** I think it was some old pizza. I found it under the passenger seat...

*They head out through the French windows.*

**TEDDY** *enters through the French windows, meeting them.*

**TEDDY** (to **SALLY**) Oh, hallo. What are you doing up this early?  
Been a fire drill, has there?

**SALLY** *walks past TEDDY, totally ignoring him.*

**JAKE** She's just going to a meeting.

**TEDDY** Is she? What's that? WIs?

**JAKE** Political, I think.

**TEDDY** (*yelling after SALLY*) Waste of time! Complete waste  
of time!

**JAKE** (*as he goes*) I'm driving her there.

**TEDDY** Jolly good.

**SALLY** and **JAKE** *exit into the garden.*

**TEDDY** *is alone in the room for a second.*

*The dining-room doors open abruptly and TRISH sticks  
her head out.*

**TRISH** Would you both like a cup of – (*She looks round the  
room and appears to see noone*) oh, nobody here.

**TRISH** *closes the doors again before TEDDY can speak,  
and exits.*

**TEDDY** (*angrily*) Oh, for God's sake! (*He marches to the dining-  
room doors and flings them open*)

**TRISH** *is not in view.*

(*shouting into the apparently empty room*) I'm not putting  
up with this much longer, you know. I've had just about  
enough!

**IZZIE**, *the housekeeper, enters from the hall. She is a  
woman, probably in her late fifties, stern-faced and*

*unsmiling. Somebody who feels their lot to be less than a happy one.*

IZZIE You calling me, were you?

TEDDY No, no, Izzie. I was just – talking to my wife. In the dining room.

IZZIE *(looking into the dining room)* She's not in here.

TEDDY Isn't she? Well, fancy that. *(He reties his shoelaces during the following)*

*IZZIE goes into the dining room. TEDDY, intent on his shoelaces, is unaware she is no longer in the room.*

Listen, Izzie. Pay attention. I want you to listen very carefully. This is a major day for me. For all of us. All right! And I want it all to go like clockwork, you understand? Like a precision implement. As smooth as silk off a – off a whore's back. So you tell that daughter of yours, you tell Pearl I want her on peak form, today. OK? Tell her as far as her silver service goes, she'd better set about raising her game, you hear me? I don't want a repeat of Christmas lunch last year with the Lord Lieutenant. We've still got bloody Brussels sprouts stuck to the ceiling in there. I don't want all that again.

*IZZIE returns from the dining room.*

IZZIE You saying something?

TEDDY Oh... Never mind! *(muttering)* Save your breath.

IZZIE I'll shut these doors.

TEDDY Fine.

IZZIE So Pearl can get on hoovering in there.

TEDDY Right.

IZZIE *(closing the dining-room doors)* If she ever turns up.

TEDDY Oh, dear. Gone AWOL again, has she?

**IZZIE** Don't know where she's gone. Needs her feet nailing to the ground, that one. That or a father.

**TEDDY** Bit late to find one of those for her, isn't it?

**IZZIE** (*heading for the hall door; darkly*) I'm working on it.

**TEDDY** Listen, Izzie, I'm expecting Giles – Dr Mace to join me in a minute.

**IZZIE** Oh, yes?

**TEDDY** Could you make us some coffee when he comes?

**IZZIE** Give me a call.

*IZZIE goes out.*

*TEDDY goes to the hall door, opens it swiftly, listens, then closes it. He moves to the dining-room doors and is about to do the same with them when they burst open.*

*TRISH enters through the dining-room doors, now with gardening gloves and secateurs.*

*Simultaneously, GILES appears on the terrace. He is a pleasant, affable if somewhat ineffectual man in his late thirties.*

**TEDDY** (*to TRISH*) Oh, there you are. Will you kindly not walk away from me every time I—

*But TEDDY is seemingly invisible to TRISH. She sweeps past him with no acknowledgement and goes straight out through the French windows.*

**TRISH** Good morning, Giles. Bit early for lunch, aren't you?

**GILES** Good morning, Trish. No, I was looking for Teddy, actually, is he—?

**TRISH** No idea, Giles. I haven't seen hide nor hair of him this morning, I'm afraid...

**GILES** Oh.

TRISH *exits towards the garden.*

GILES *looks cautiously into the room and sees TEDDY.*

*(a trifle surprised)* Ah!

TEDDY *(grimly)* Did you witness that?

GILES What?

TEDDY You see what I mean?

GILES Say again?

TEDDY Clear evidence. With your own eyes. She comes in. I see her. I speak to her. She fails to reply, utterly ignores me. She goes out. Meets you. Greets you. You ask where I am. She says she hasn't seen me when less than five seconds earlier, she'd just walked straight past me. Tell me. Is that normal behaviour? Is that the decorum of a sane woman?

GILES See what you mean. Yes.

TEDDY What's your opinion?

GILES Well, I'd have to examine her, of course. At least talk to her, but even then... It seems to me more of a... In the mind. As it were.

TEDDY A basket case?

GILES No, no, no... I don't think that. I don't really know, really. Not having...talked to her, Teddy. But...

TEDDY I appreciate as a professional you want to hedge your bets but at least you'll agree it's not usual?

GILES No. Not altogether usual...

TEDDY For a wife to declare her husband invisible? That is abnormal behaviour. Surely? In anyone's book?

GILES It does happen but—

TEDDY Does it?

GILES Occasionally.

TEDDY Can you ever recall it happening?

GILES No, not offhand...

TEDDY Has it ever happened to you? With Joanna?

GILES Well, over brief periods. I mean that's marriage, isn't it? Over the years there are always sticky patches where you tend to ignore each other for a short while. Jo's gone a bit quiet on me now and then for a couple of hours sometimes but... How long's it been like this for you?

TEDDY Three weeks.

GILES Yes, that is a long time, isn't it?

TEDDY I mean, there's got to be something radically wrong, Giles, hasn't there? I mean, three weeks. I'm not a medical man, I don't know all the technical terms but it doesn't take a brain surgeon to see she's out of her tree. She's bloody good at it, mind you. Very hard to catch her out. I made her blink once or twice but that doesn't mean anything. Apart from stamping on her foot I can't think of any way to catch her attention.

GILES What about – in bed?

TEDDY Bed?

GILES Does she ignore you then?

TEDDY I've no idea. We sleep in separate rooms.

GILES Ah. Sorry.

TEDDY It was her idea. She claimed I was – disruptive in the night.

GILES I see. Teddy, I hate to suggest this, but do you think that that might be at the bottom of it?

TEDDY Bottom of what?

GILES Well, bluntly, sex?

TEDDY Well. Anything's possible where sex is concerned, I suppose.

# WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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