It'll Be All Wrong On the Night

By Cenarth Fox

A laugh-out-loud comedy where an actor loses his voice, the guy in the bio-box takes his place, and everything goes wrong.

One of the funniest plays we have done in years.
A huge success. The couch scene was a scream. The last scene was absolute chaos. Cast and crew had a ball and audience response was amazing! A Great Show!! **Yass Rep**
The scene where Amanda and Brad get to know each other rather well on the sofa produced fits of laughter. It was a very successful production. **HATS**
*I found the show one of the funniest we have done in years***. Peter Evans**
All Wrong On the Night *was very well received by our audiences and especially the second half*. **Wibke Puls**
All Wrong on the Night *was extremely well*
received by our audiences and we will definitely recommend the play to other groups.
SADOS



It'll Be All Wrong On The Night

A play by Cenarth Fox

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Synopsis

It'll be All Wrong on the Night is about staging a play when things don't go as planned. It's a nightmare for every actor, director, bio box operator and stage manager. An actor gradually loses his voice during the play and, at interval, is replaced by the sound and lighting operator. He in turn is replaced by a person in the audience who is a friend of one of the actors. The result is that the new actor performs with his nose in the script and the sound effects and lights don't work or do when they shouldn't. Gradually the effects become worse and the performance by the end had descended into farce. A door jams, lights and sound effects miscue and the set catches fire. (Well it looks like it does). Apart from that, everything runs to plan.

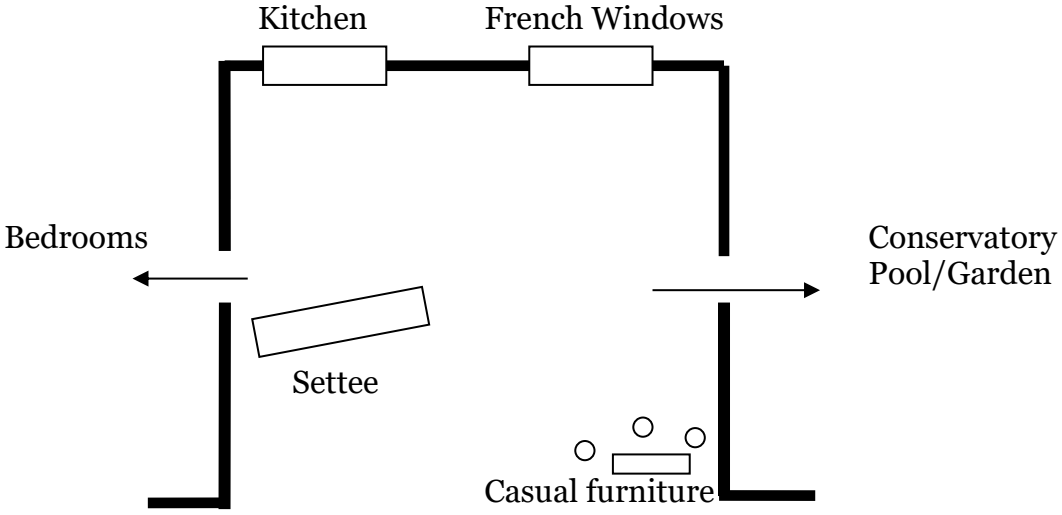
Time and Place

The time is the present. The place is a house in an affluent suburb in a major city.

Stage Setting

It's the interior of the lounge/sitting-room of an expensive home. Upstage are French doors which are used as an entrance for people rather than the front door, plus a swing door to the kitchen. LC is exit to conservatory and garden. RC is exit to bedrooms/bathroom. A settee faces front behind which hiding takes place. There is a casual furniture setting DL. Pot plants and expensive furnishings decorate the room.

Your set could look like this.



Characters

JAN – young middle-aged, Tim's second wife and stepmother to Amanda and Kirsten
TIM – older middle-aged, Jan's husband and father of Amanda and Kirsten
KIRSTEN – 20s, daughter of Tim, Amanda's older sister
AMANDA – late teens/early 20s, daughter of Tim, Kirsten's sister
BRAD (Bradley) – 20s, Amanda's boyfriend
STAGEHAND – stagehand called in to play part of Bart in Act 2 (Brad in disguise?)
ROSA – 50+, Tim and (more recently) Jan's long-serving Spanish housekeeper

Note. The actor playing Brad could also play the stagehand playing Brad. You would need things like glasses, a wig, beard, padding, etc. Alternatively have a different actor who only appears in Act 2, and the original Brad has an early night.

THE PLAY

(Curtain rises on late Sunday summer afternoon. JAN enters from garden closely followed by TIM. Both are dressed in casual clothes. They are arguing)

Jan No. I've told you I won't do it. *(She fusses over indoor plants)*

Tim *(Following JAN)* But she's got to be told. Please Jan. The guy's bad news. He's using her.

Jan She's *your* daughter. *You* tell her.

Tim She won't listen to me.

Jan Well she won't listen to her wicked stepmother. She thinks I'm the dragon from hell.

Tim It's not a father's thing. It has to come from a woman. And someone like you who's ….

Jan Who's what? Someone with an impressive CV when it comes to men?

Tim I didn't say that.

Jan You didn't have to.

Tim She likes you.

Jan Ha!

Tim Okay, she's a little distant.

Jan *(Scoffs)* A little?

Tim But I know she respects the way you're so organised. She loves the way you've got your life together.

Jan *(Faces him)* Tim, both your daughters see me as the evil bitch who broke up their parents' marriage.

Tim That's not true.

Jan The only reason they're still living at home is to make sure I don't take you to the cleaners and pinch their big fat inheritance.

Tim That's ridiculous!

Jan Even if I gave great advice, they'd reject it because it came from me. *(Emphatic)* I am not their mother.

(ROSA enters from kitchen with vacuum cleaner. She prepares machine, starts it and vacs upstage)

Tim Jan, please, it's serious. Mandy's still a kid. She's nuts about this guy and I know he's gunna hurt her.

Jan Then here's your chance to play Dad. Tell him to get lost.

Tim Oh very clever. He's a fitness fanatic and, if I interfere, Mandy'll leave home just to spite me.

Jan But it's okay if *I* interfere?

Tim I don't want you to *interfere,* just tell her the facts of life.

Jan Tim, your daughters know more about life than the two of us put together. I think they've both been round the block—twice.

Tim *(Offended)* And what's that supposed to mean?

Jan It means they're old enough to know what they want, and anything we say will be ignored.

Tim So you don't care? Is that what you're saying?

Jan *(Angry. Sits on casual furniture, reads magazine)* Give it a rest.

Tim *(Follows)* Jan, you married into my family. The girls are part of it. And when families hit trouble, they expect help from their own.
(ROSA starts vacuuming in their direction. They raise their voices a little)

Jan I am not their own.

Tim So you want Mandy left alone with some creep who's only interested in one thing. That's a bloody disgrace.

Jan *(Angry)* No, Tim, a disgrace is you putting words in my mouth, treating your daughter like a child, and asking me to do the impossible. And don't shout at me.

Tim *(ROSA switches off machine just as TIM roars)* I'm not shouting! All I'm asking is for a .....
(Pregnant pause. Silence is deafening. Couple turn to ROSA who is not disturbed. She's used to shouting in this house)

Rosa You want me to come back when you finish your little chat?

Jan *(Exiting through conservatory)* No, Rosa. This little chat is over. *(She's gone. ROSA starts vac again and TIM calls)*

Tim Rosa. *(Louder)* Rosa! *(She hears and stops machine)*

Rosa Okay, sorry. I finish kitchen first.

Tim No, come here. I want to ask you something.

Rosa *(Doesn't understand)* I sorry, I no understand.

Tim Rosa, please, come over here.
(He beckons and she moves down to him)

Rosa You not happy? You lost something? Again?

Tim No, this is something else. I'm worried about Amanda.

Rosa *(Worried)* What has happened? Has there been the accident?

Tim No, nothing like that. *(Pause)* Amanda's keen on a young man who is not a nice person. I think he's told her all sorts of romantic things when really he doesn't mean them.

Rosa Are you talking about Brad?

Tim *(Shocked)* You know him?

Rosa Of course, he comes here all the time.

Tim *(Worried, staggered)* What!?

Rosa He brings me flowers. He is a nice young man.

Tim Flowers? He comes here all the time?

Rosa Si. When you at work, in another city, Brad comes and stays here.

Tim *(Stunned)* He *stays* here? Overnight?

Rosa Oh no, he not like that. He too much like a gentleman.

Tim Rosa, Brad is not nice. He is a creep, a con-merchant. *(She doesn't understand)* He's a Don Juan.

Rosa *(Laughing)* Oh no, Brad is nice boy. You should meet him.

Tim I have. That's why I'm worried. He reminds me a lot of someone I knew thirty years ago. *(He means himself)* Rosa, I want you to be absolutely honest. Have you ever seen Brad being friendly with my daughter?

Rosa You want I spy on your family?

Tim No of course not. But Rosa, please, I'm Amanda's father. If my daughter's in danger, I need to know. Tell me, have you ever seen Brad being Don Juan in this house?

Rosa *(Takes her time)* Hmmm. Maybe.
Tim Maybe? What the hell does that mean? You can't be a little bit Don Juan. Was he friendly with Amanda?
(French windows fly open and AMANDA enters with style. She's home from shopping, coffee with friends and has a few carry bags)
Amanda Hi Dad, Hi Rosa.
Tim *(TIM gives her an embarrassed wave)* Hi, kiddo. Been shopping?
Amanda *(Heading RC)* Just a few odds 'n ends.
Tim Great.
(She heads off RC to her room. The OTHERS watch her. She stops and turns to watch them)
Amanda *(Suspicious)* What's going on?
(She moves to them tossing/dropping carry bags on settee)
Tim Nothing. I'm just having a chat with Rosa.
Amanda You never chat with Rosa.
Tim *(Offended)* Yes I do.
Amanda You say, "Good morning" and "more toast." So what's going on?
Rosa *(Changes topic)* You go shopping, Amanda. Lots of beautiful things.
Amanda This is about family isn't it? You've finally twigged and now you want Rosa to confirm it.
Tim No. I was chatting about …
Amanda You've always had your suspicions, Dad. And now you've asked Rosa for proof. Well go on, Rosa. He won't like it but it's time for the truth.
Rosa *(Worried. This is getting out of hand)* I not sure what to say.
Tim No, Rosa, Amanda's right. Time we got everything out in the open.
Amanda Brad is the sweetest man I've ever met, and anything funny going on in this house has nothing to do with him.
Tim Anything funny? I didn't say anything about Brad.
Amanda Tell him, Rosa. Tell him about the pathetic attempts at seduction going on in this very room.
Tim Seduction? What seduction? *(Aghast)* In here?
Rosa I not sure. This not my business.
Tim *(Angry at AMANDA)* Explain yourself, young lady.
Amanda You tell him, Rosa, every sordid little detail.
Rosa *(Starts to exit)* I have special meal to make. Excuse please.
Tim Just a minute. Rosa! *(She stops)* Come back. *(Points to spot next to himself)* Here. *(Pause. ROSA returns)* What the hell is going on? *(At ROSA)* You said Brad's been playing Don Juan and that he's …
Amanda Don Jaun! That's a joke. *(Starts to leave collecting bags en route)* Rosa, you tell him about the sex-mad hostess with the mostest. *(Turns before exiting RC)* Tell him about his wife! *(She's gone)*
Tim *(Stunned)* My wife!?
Rosa This definitely not my business.
Tim *(Poleaxed)* My wife was seduced by Brad!? In this room!!
Rosa Amanda is, how you say, jealous. She thinks something happened when really is nothing. Señora Grey, she is always respectable.
(JAN, now wearing bathers enters from garden - just offstage, and calls)
Jan Rosa, have you seen my new towel?

Rosa *(Calls back while moving)* No, madam. Sorry. *(Collects vacuum cleaner. Exiting to kitchen)* I have something on stove. Excuse please. *(Exits UR)*

Jan *(Enters looking for towel)* Well it'll be stupid asking you.

Tim So that's why you wouldn't speak to Amanda.

Jan *(Looking)* I'm looking for my new towel.

Tim And is that the outfit you wear for Brad?

Jan Oh you're not still on about that. *(Turning)* I'm going for a swim.
(Turns and exits to garden)

Tim *(Going after her)* Hang on. I want a word with you. Jan. *Jan! (Exits)*
(Pause. French windows open, KIRSTEN enters. She realises the room's empty so goes back to French windows and speaks offstage)

Kirsten Come on, there's no-one here. *(Pause. BRAD appears. He's nervous)* Look, do you want to save them or not?
(She takes his hand and leads him towards settee)

Brad *(Being led)* Kirsten, I'm fine. I'll just duck back home and get changed. I'll be twenty minutes. Max.

Kirsten *(Dragging him DR)* Shut up and give me y'jeans.

Brad What? Here?

Kirsten It's grease, Brad. It needs cleaning now. Rosa'll have something in the laundry. Hand them over or do I have to remove them myself?
(Pause. Reluctantly BRAD unbuckles his jeans and starts removing them. He has slip-on shoes and now bare feet)

Brad This is not necessary.

Kirsten No, it's absolutely necessary.

Brad *(He has trouble removing them)* Look, can you help me, please?

Kirsten *(She does)* Of course. Which part of you should I hold?

Brad *(Finally removes jeans)* Oh ha bloody ha. Just take them will you?
(Hands jeans to an admiring and amused KIRSTEN)

Kirsten Thank you. Now you amuse yourself while I get Rosa to work her magic.
(She exits to kitchen)

Brad *(He calls)* And don't be long, Kirsten. Please.

Kirsten *(Starts back to him, pointing)* What about your briefs? Can I help you with them?

Brad *(Panics and points)* Just go!
(She laughs and exits. BRAD is uncomfortable in his tee-shirt, bare feet and underpants. He wanders upstage and looks out the French window. JAN enters conservatory still in her bathers. We can't see her but can hear her)

Jan *(Offstage)* Just grow up, Tim. You've got Brad on the brain. *(BRAD panics and races downstage to crouch behind the settee)* I told you the truth. Nothing happened. Not in this room or any other room. He's always behaved impeccably. *(She enters lounge and heads towards kitchen looking for ROSA. Calls)* Rosa. *(Suddenly gets fright seeing BRAD'S head crouched low)* Brad!

Brad *(Remains crouched)* Oh. Hi, Jan. How are things?

Jan My God! You gave me a fright. What are doing down there?

Brad *(Flustered)* Ah, looking for my keys.

Jan *(Goes to help him)* Well I'm looking for a towel but your keys are more important.

Brad *(Louder to stop her getting closer)* No!
Jan *(She stops)* Brad! *(Worried)* What's wrong?
Brad Nothing. I'm fine. Or will be … soon.
Jan Listen, *(Looks back in case TIM is behind her)* Tim's got some crazy idea that you and I are having an affair.
Brad What? *(Pretending to look)* Oh where are those damn keys?
Jan He thinks you're some kind of sex machine who's working his way through every female in this house.
Brad *(Shocked)* A sex machine?
Jan Tim thinks every time you drop in, you drop your daks*.
*(*Word for trousers)*
Brad *(Still looking)* I'm sure they're here somewhere.
Jan Let me help.
Brad *(Loud)* No! *(She moves towards him so in desperation he points)* There it is! *(Points to DL)*
Jan *(Turns to look)* What? What is?
Brad I think I can see your towel. Over there behind the pot plant.
(JAN looks back suspiciously at BRAD but decides to collect her towel. It's not there. As soon as her back is turned BRAD dashes to kitchen but doesn't quite make it as ROSA enters with missing towel, sees BRAD and screams. Not dramatically, more in surprise. BRAD grabs towel and wraps it around waist. JAN turns then moves towards BRAD and a startled ROSA)
Rosa Brad! You give me the fright.
Brad Hi, Rosa.
Jan That's my towel. *(BRAD has the towel as his security blanket)*
Brad Great towel, Jan. Beautiful material.
Jan Thanks. I'm going for a swim so if you don't mind.
(Holds out hand expecting towel)
Brad Oh I don't think you should go swimming. It's pretty cool out there.
Jan Cool? What are you talking about?
Brad And Rosa found grease on it. Didn't you, Rosa?
Rosa *(Confused)* On the towel?
Jan Grease?
Brad So I'll take the towel to the laundry.
Jan Brad, what the hell is going on?
Brad *(Sees TIM approaching via conservatory. Groans)* Oh no.
Tim *(Enters from LC)* What was that scream? *(Sees BRAD)* Ah, it's Don Juan.
Brad Mr Grey. Hi. *(Goes to raise his hand but has to grab towel)*
Tim The phantom philanderer. And in casual dress.
Jan Brad was thinking of going for a swim.
Brad *(Takes a second or two to catch on)* Ah, yes. *(Indicates towel)* Jan very generously has lent me her towel.
Amanda *(Enters DR)* I thought I heard somebody scream! Brad!
Brad Mandy! Hi. I just dropped in to see you and …
Jan To go for a swim.
Brad And to go for a swim.
Tim Well don't let us stop you. *(Indicates LC)* The pool's that-a-way.

Brad Right. Um. I was wondering if I could have a cool drink. Water. Anything. I'll just duck into the kitchen. Be back in a mo.
(BRAD starts to back into kitchen. KIRSTEN appears holding his jeans. BRAD is almost at the door)

Kirsten Brad, hi! *(BRAD freezes)* Care to swap?

Brad Kirsten!

Amanda *(Grabs towel)* Brad! *(OTHERS react to the semi-dressed BRAD)*

Tim Well I'll say this much for him, he's got balls.
(Brief moment of panic as BRAD thinks he's exposed himself)

Brad *(Tries to explain)* Ah, these are my new bathers and I thought I'd try them out in your pool. If that's okay.

Tim No way. You and your budgie smugglers can stay out of my pool.

Amanda *(At KIRSTEN)* What are you doing with Brad's jeans?

Kirsten Well I tried them on and they're not my size so I'm giving them back.
(BRAD takes jeans and struggles to replace them)

Rosa You don't put jeans over bathers.

Tim Right, I'm gunna get to the bottom of this.
(BRAD struggles and bends over on cue with posterior on show to JAN)

Jan Nice bottom to get to.

Amanda *(To her sister. Insistent)* How come you had Brad's jeans?

Kirsten Well I said "Drop 'em" and he did. I have this effect on men.

Amanda *(Going to attack KIRSTEN)* You bitch! *(The sisters scrap and ROSA and TIM try to stop them. Dialogue overlaps)*

Kirsten Mandy!

Rosa *(Trying to stop them)* No! Please! You must stop!

Tim Hey! Stop that! Hey!
(Ad lib attempted fight with appropriate threats and pleas to desist. BRAD finishes dressing while TIM and ROSA hold the sisters apart. TIM yells.

FX *Mobile phone rings*
Everyone talks at once. TIM'S takes mobile from his pocket and answers it moving DL as he speaks whilst the bun fight continues elsewhere)

Brad *(Is bumped whilst trying to get dressed)* Hey! Watch it!

Amanda *(Threatens her sister)* I'll get you for this!

Jan Girls! That's enough!
(Now the fight or almost-fight goes on. AMANDA trying to get at KIRSTEN. ROSA and JAN trying to keep them apart with BRAD hopping around getting dressed. Choreograph with ad-lib comments from all concerned. TIM is on the phone. As his conversation builds so the fight slackens off until you have the OTHERS forgetting their dispute and concentrating completely on TIM and his phone call. A gradual well-choreographed situation)

TIM *(Into phone)* Yes? … Yes that's me. Sorry, who are you? … Well, were you there? Did you see what happened? … I don't believe I'm hearing this. I did absolutely nothing. You were the one in the wrong. … Don't you threaten me, pal. … Listen, creep, I'll have the cops onto you so fast …. Oh that's very brave. That's really tough talk, you moron. … Look, I've got your number, pal and I'll trace you. … You what? *(OTHERS now transfixed with TIM)* If you touch a hair on their heads I'll kill you. Do you hear me!? I'll kill you, you bastard!!
(Phone call ends. TIM is shaking. He looks at phone. OTHERS transfixed)

Jan Tim.
Kirsten Dad?
Amanda What's happened?
Tim *(Fuming)* Can you believe that? He threatened me. And my family.
Jan Who?
Tim If I get my hands on that creep, I'll …
Rosa This terrible.
Tim He's a nut case. You know that moron actually threatened me.
Kirsten We can see that, you're still shaking.
Amanda Dad! What moron?
Brad *(Jeans and shoes finally on)* Can I help?
Jan *(Taking TIM to settee)* Come and sit down. *(To ROSA)* Rosa, brandy. *(ROSA gets brandy from cabinet)*
Kirsten Dad, what the hell happened?
Amanda Look at you. You're shaking.
Jan Take a deep breath. *(He does. ROSA arrives)* Drink the brandy. *(ROSA hands him brandy)* Don't gulp it. Slowly
(He drinks brandy and hands glass back to ROSA)
Tim I was driving home and got into this argument. *(OTHERS despair. TIM overreacts to other drivers)* It wasn't my fault.
Kirsten It never is.
Jan What happened?
Tim This guy stopped in front of me at a red light. He was chatting to a woman in the front seat.
Amanda *(She knows)* You gave him a serve.
Tim The lights change. He ignores them. *(OTHERS despair)* He's too busy making out with the blonde. In the meantime, I'm running late.
Kirsten How many times have we told you not to stir other drivers.
Tim I gave one small toot. One. A soft one. Nothing loud. Nothing long. Just, you know, "Excuse me mate, the light's green, could you please stop chatting and drive on".
Jan And he gave you the finger and you lost it.
Tim He went ballistic. He abused me. Hands, language, the works.
Kirsten And in return you gave him a spray. You'll never learn, Dad. Those guys are idiots. *(Emphatic)* Leave them alone.
Tim So I miss an appointment because this goose can't drive? Why is it my fault? I was polite. I did him a favour.
Brad Was that him on the phone?
Tim He's traced me. Must have got my mobile from the office.
Amanda Dad, your mobile is on every *House for Sale* sign in five suburbs. You've even got it on that sticker on your car.
Jan So what did he say?
Tim I dunno. I can't remember.
(OTHERS groan. He can. He doesn't want to think about it)
Rosa Mister Grey, let me get one more brandy.
Tim *(Rises and heads DC)* No, Rosa. I'm fine. I'll ignore him.

Kirsten Dad, he threatened you.
Amanda And you haven't told us what he said.
Tim It was the usual mindless garbage.
Brad If you don't mind me saying, Mr Grey, he seems to have given you a real fright.
Tim I do mind you saying because I'm a big boy and can look after myself. *(Looks outside)* I need some air. *(Exits LC)*
Jan *(Calling)* Tim!
Rosa This not like Mister Grey. He very upset I think.
Kirsten He was literally shaking.
Amanda We need to find out what that creep said.
Brad You need to find out who he is. *(OTHERS look at him. This is family, mate)* I mean, sorry but you can't deal with someone who's anonymous.
Kirsten *(Sarcastic)* Ah, thank you, Mister Bleeding Obvious.
Brad Sorry. I'm only trying to help. *(He coughs a little)*
Jan I'll talk to him. I'll go and change.
Brad No, I'll go. *(OTHERS turn to BRAD. He twigs)* I've done it again.
Kirsten You sure have. Just because you drop your daks, doesn't make you part of the family.
Brad What I meant was, if it's okay with you, I'd like to help if I can.
Jan Thanks Brad. We appreciate your concern.
Brad Maybe it's a blokey thing.
Amanda *(Groans)* Oh not male bonding.
Brad Sometimes blokes find it hard to talk about things to women. No offence to present company of course.
Kirsten You've got a cheek.
Jan He's got two cheeks. We just saw them.
(This breaks the tension and the women are amused)
Brad Please, can we drop the underpants bit.
(More laughter and stirring at unintentional pun. BRAD mock despair)
Jan Brad, you're right. Tim is Mister Independence. He'll rarely admit he needs help and never to a woman. Please, go and do your male bonding.
Kirsten Find out exactly what happened.
Brad *(Exiting after TIM)* Can do. Won't be long. *(He coughs as he exits)*
Amanda Talk about a backflip. When I came home, Dad was grilling Rosa about Brad the seducer.
Rosa Nobody grilling. *(Indicating kitchen)* Stove turned off.
Kirsten I hope you put my father right, Rosa. It's Mandy who's been seducing Brad. *(AMANDA whacks – gently – her sister)* Ow!
Amanda I want words with you.
Rosa Can I make coffee? *(OTHERS all agree)*
Jan You can, Rosa. Strong and black.
(They all head to kitchen)
Kirsten Thanks for helping with the jeans, Rosa. We must try that again.
Amanda Over your dead body.
Jan Any of your chocolate slice left, Rosa?

(They are gone. The last one or two lines could be delivered offstage. Room is empty. Pause. TIM speaks offstage)

Tim Come in, they've gone. *(TIM enters from conservatory followed by BRAD)* Fancy a beer?

Brad Ah, thanks, but not now.

Tim *(Heads to chair DL)* You're right. Need a clear head. Grab a pew.

Brad *(Joins him DL)* And you say this guy actually threatened to hurt Kirsten and Mandy.

Tim Shhh. Keep it down.

Brad *(Softer)* But how did he know you had two daughters? And their names?

Tim Nutters are obsessed. They find your details then use them to scare you. That's how they get their kicks. And to be honest, he's got me shitting bricks.

Brad Look, Mr. Grey, if it's that serious ….

Tim Tim. Call me Tim.

Brad *(Slight pause. Boy, things have changed)* Ah, Tim, look I reckon you have to call the cops.

Tim Don't be stupid. What can they do? The guy's a loony. He's all talk. He's done his thing, now he'll forget it. If I ignore him, he'll go away.

Brad You hope.

Tim *(More serious)* Yeah, I hope. God, some of the things he said he'd do. He knows my name, where I live, my daughters' names, my wife's name.

Brad You've gotta go to the police.

Tim I'm gunna look stupid. I didn't get his name or his number. I've got a vague description of the car and it mightn't even be his. I can remember more about his bird.

Brad So he knows about you and your family, and where you live.

Tim He knows my damn mobile.

FX *Mobile rings.*

(The men look at one another. TIM takes out phone, looks at it)

Brad Can you can record it?

Tim *(TIM shakes his head)* Not sure.

Brad How about a trace? *(BRAD removes his phone)* What do I do?

Tim Wait till I get him talking then call emergency.

Brad Okay. Go.

(TIM takes breath, hits button which stops phone ringing then speaks into it)

Tim Hello*? (Pause then relief)* Patrick! How ya going? *(BRAD twigs it's okay)* How'd the inspection go? … Great, that's fantastic. … Okay, fine. Thanks for letting me know … We'll talk it over tomorrow. See ya.

(Both men pocket their phones)

Brad Obviously not the moron.

Tim One of my sales reps.

Brad Sounds like your real estate business is going well.

Tim It is, but what's your line of business? Apart from seducing women?

(Mood change as TIM gets heavy again)

Brad Look, I can explain that. My car was sounding rough. I had a look and like an idiot, got grease on my jeans.

Tim *(Smiling)* It's a good move that. *(BRAD ignores this)*

Brad Kirsten arrived just after I got here, dragged me inside saying Rosa could remove the grease.

Tim I pulled that stunt 30 years ago. Worked a charm. Beautiful body. And the car was okay too.

Brad You wouldn't be winding me up?

Tim *(Giving advice)* The secret's in having no-one at home. You got your strides off but were in a house full of extras. And one of them was her old man. That, Bradley, is a definite no-no.

Brad *(Very uncertain)* Ah, I'm not real sure what's going on here.

Tim I'm giving advice. You don't have to take it but old Oscar once said something like "The trouble with youth is it's wasted on the young".

Brad Are you telling me how to seduce your daughter? *(A slight cough)*

Tim One thing to remember; if a bloke gets inquisitive about his wife or daughter's boyfriend, especially a prospective son-in-law, it's because that bloke's got something to hide.

Brad I think I'm gunna need a translation on that.

Tim The friendly, trusting father is a man without a past.

Brad Right. I almost understood that. *(He's still confused)*

Tim So let's talk about you. You're currently Amanda's boyfriend but as a fall back, you're keeping your hand in with both Kirsten and Jan.

Brad *(Shocked)* What? No! I really did have a problem with the car.

Tim What about Rosa?

Brad Rosa?

Tim Is she on the list as well?

Brad *(Upset, rises)* Bloody hell, I didn't come here to be insulted and accused of something I didn't do.

Tim Sit down, sit down. *(Pause. BRAD sits)* Take no notice. I'm only jealous.

Brad Jealous?

Tim Yeah. It comes from being middle-aged, twice married and the father of eligible daughters.

Brad *(Uncertain)* Ah, I think I'm back on the 'not sure what to say' routine.

Tim Listen Brad, many years ago, I was young and hormonally active. I could've written a book on chatting up women. So don't start any of this "I got some grease on my jeans" crap. It just won't wash.

Brad Well it did actually. *(Indicating spotless attire)* See.

Tim *(Likes his response)* Sense of humour, very important. *(Changes tack)* Look I know I'm having a go at you one minute and doing the old mate routine the next, but it's that damn phone call.

Brad I'd be upset too.

Tim Funny though. If that moron hadn't rung, I'd probably be giving you the third degree about chasing my wife and daughters. *(BRAD starts to protest)* Just kidding, just kidding. I know you're only interested in Mandy.

Brad I am, for sure. She's great. And she thinks the world of you.

Tim Woah! Now it's grease the old man routine.

Brad No, I'm serious. She often talks about her fantastic father.

Tim *(Serious)* Who's so fantastic he attracts some nut case who wants to attack his wife and daughters.

Brad Look, how about on my way home I tell the cops. At least they'll know what's happened and can maybe send a patrol car round.

Tim *(Extends hand and they shake)* Thanks, Brad. I appreciate that.

Brad At least you'll sleep better knowing the cops are out there.

Tim I should've known my daughter would go out with a decent bloke. *(They laugh)*

Brad Now who's doing the greasing? *(They laugh again and BRAD coughs)*

Tim You know there's no training for some of life's experiences.

Brad Sorry, you've lost me again.

Tim Well, you're young trying to understand your girlfriend's old man. I'm middle-aged checking out the young bloke keen on my daughter.

Brad *(Confused)* Right. And?

Tim How do we behave? What are the rules? Where do we learn how to handle these situations?

Brad You mean a night school class on how to win over prospective fathers-in-law.

Tim Exactly. How to impress the father of your bird. *(They both like this and are amused)* I mean you can study anything today. Play the flute, learn Chinese, write a novel …

Brad Repair your car's engine.

Tim Without getting grease on your clothes. *(More laughter)* But where's the course on chatting to your daughter's boyfriend?

Brad I guess there isn't one.

Tim I could really stuff up your relationship with Mandy. I'm new to this caper. Kirsten or Mandy bring home their bloke. What do I do? What do I say? Nobody's told me about this. And is there a different way of behaving if you've got a son and he brings home his girlfriend?

Brad Or his boyfriend.

Tim Oh God, it's hard enough as it is, don't complicate things.

Brad So are you starting a business on human relationships?

Tim Ha! That'll be the day. But just imagine the catalogue. *(Pretends to announce/read title)* How to hit it off with your children's sexual partners. *(Pause. Slight embarrassment)* Ah *potential* sexual partners. *(They laugh)*

Brad Or, How to Behave with your partner's parents. *(They are amused)* *(Door to bedrooms opens and AMANDA appears. She watches then beckons to KIRSTEN and JAN who silently enter and watch. They are amused)*

Tim How to behave when a hoon taunts you in his car.

Brad Was that taunts or toots? *(More Laughter)* And how to get a woman to remove your clothing. *(More laughter)*

Tim How to make a complete idiot of yourself in front of your family. *(More laughter. WOMEN fascinated, rib one another)*

Brad How to behave in a suave and sophisticated fashion with your elders.

Tim How to stay hip and cool with the younger generation.

Jan How to act macho and be one of the boys. *(Women laugh and move to men who turn and face the women)*

Tim Ladies, come and join us. Brad and I were just discussing a few home truths.
Amanda Talk about hypocrites. You men are unbelievable.
Brad Aw come on. *(BRAD coughs)* That's not fair.
Kirsten Half an hour ago, Dad, you had Brad deflowering your darling daughter. Now he's the son you never had.
Tim I'll ignore that. Brad and I were having a free exchange of views.
Jan You were being blokey and macho. Now go and change your shirt. We're due next door for drinks.
Tim *(Groans)* Oh no, do we have to?
Jan We promised, now go.
Tim *(Heads to door to bedrooms. Sarcastic)* Bliss. Catch you later, Brad. *(Exits)*
Brad Yeah, sure thing, Tim.
Women Tim!?
Amanda You're calling my father, Tim?
Brad He asked me too. *(Slight cough)*
Kirsten I suppose you were boasting about the grease-on-the-trousers routine.
Jan Look I've gotta go. Our neighbour loves showing off her latest art acquisition.
Amanda She's a snob. She buys paintings just to flaunt her excessive wealth.
Brad You mean she's really loaded?
Kirsten As Grandpa used to say, she's as rich as creosote. *(Old family joke)*
Brad Don't 'spose she's got a daughter? *(AMANDA goes to whack/prod him)*
Jan Just a house full of valuable paintings.
Kirsten Plus the most sophisticated alarm system money can buy.
Jan Tim and I won't be long. I hope you'll stay for tea, Brad. Especially now you and Tim are bosom buddies. *(Sisters laugh)*
Brad Mandy and I thought we'd eat out tonight.
Kirsten Eat out? You'd pass on one of Rosa's Sunday roasts?
Amanda Don't listen to her. Sunday night is Rosa's night off and we suffer one of Dad's infamous barbecues.
Brad Well I'm easy but …
Kirsten We know that. We've seen the shorts.
Brad I am never listening to you again.
Kirsten Actually Rosa *is* cooking tonight. She told me all about it and I reckon you'd be mad to miss her roast.
Jan *(Exiting UR to kitchen)* Well you lot please yourself. Hope to see you soon, Brad.
Brad Yeah, sure thing, Jan. Bye.
Amanda *(Teasing)* Ooooh. Jan and Tim. Right little charmer aren't we? *(They kiss lightly)*
Kirsten Yes, well, three being a crowd. *(To BRAD)* Let's know if you need a hand cleaning your clothes, Bradley. *(AMANDA goes to whack her sister as KIRSTEN exits)* And remember, I love to handwash smalls. *(Exits)*
Amanda Go. *(They're alone)*
Brad Listen, Babe, I'm sorry about m'jeans.
Amanda *(Puts her arms around him)* I bet you say that to all the girls. *(They kiss)*

Brad You know I'd *really* like to take them off for you right now.
Amanda *(She slaps his arm playfully)* Behave. *(Leading him to settee)* Come and tell me all about your little chat with Dad.
Brad I'd rather talk about us.
Amanda All in good time. So what did Dad say?
Brad *(Romantic)* I'd rather say things to you. I'm crazy about your gorgeous body. Let me tell you what I *really* like. *(He stifles cough)*
Amanda Flattery will get you everywhere. *(They are about to kiss but are interrupted)*
Kirsten *(Enters)* Anyone seen my … oops, sorry. *(About turns and exits)*
Brad *(Coughs a little. Rises)* C'mon babe, let's get outa here.
Amanda *(Pulls him back, strokes his arm)* No, you give up too easily.
Brad *(Their foreheads touch)* I'll never give up with you. You are the sexiest woman alive. *(They kiss but again are interrupted)*
Jan *(Enters from Kitchen)* Rosa *is* staying in and … *(Spots the couple)* Oh. I'll tell Rosa you're here.
Amanda I thought you were going out.
Jan I am. *(Exits to conservatory)* I'm not here. Bye!
Tim *(Enters from door to bedrooms)* The sooner we leave the …. Hey!
(TIM beckoned by JAN who orders to follow her)
Jan This way.
Tim *(Being hustled)* All right. *(Exits)*
(Pause. BRAD and AMANDA look at one another. Both see the funny side)
Brad How about we try the middle of town? *(Slight cough)*
Amanda No, it's a test.
Brad A test?
Amanda Yes. Abstinence makes the heart grow fonder.
Brad You are definitely the sexiest woman in the world.
Amanda You said that before.
Brad And tonight I'll tell you things that'll blow your mind.
Amanda Oh so I have a mind. For a while there I thought you were only interested in my body.
Brad Whatever gave you that idea?
Amanda Hmm. Who cares? *(They kiss but are interrupted again and fall apart)*
Rosa Oh I very sorry.
Amanda Rosa!
Brad *(Frustrated)* Come in, Rosa. We've been waiting for you.
Rosa For me? I no understand.
Amanda It's not your fault, Rosa. Brad and I have been … having a chat, but everyone keeps dropping in.
Rosa Well I dropping in to see how many staying for tea.
Brad Count me in, Rosa. I've had no luck in the romance department so I might as well sample your fabulous grub.
Rosa *(Distressed)* Grub? There no grub in my food. Who say this?
Amanda *(Rising and leading BRAD to conservatory)* Come on, let's have a look at the garden.
Rosa I say something wrong?
Amanda *(Calls back)* No Rosa. Everything's fine. It's just that Don Juan here needs a bit of room to strut his stuff.

Brad *(To ROSA)* See you later. *(They exit giggling with BRAD coughing)*
Rosa Okay. *(Plumps cushions and is about to leave)*
Kirsten *(Pokes head past door to bedrooms. Whispers)* Have they gone?
Rosa Who?
Kirsten Everyone.
Rosa Your father and step-mother have gone to next door and your sister and Brad are in garden.
Kirsten *(Enters, approaches ROSA)* Good. Let's get cracking.
Rosa *(Departing for kitchen)* Well be quick if you want to finish.
Kirsten Not in there. We have to do it here.
Rosa *(Stops)* Here? How can we do it here?
Kirsten In the kitchen, someone might discover us. This is a secret, remember? *(Removes small notepad and pen/cil)* Now I've got questions. When do I add the garlic?
Rosa I worry, Kirsten. This is not easy dish. You need to watch carefully.
Kirsten And it has to be extra virgin olive oil, yes?
Rosa And do not cook onions and carrots too long. Just enough to prepare for main sauce later.
Kirsten I'm excited, Rosa. Can you imagine what they're going to say when they discover who the chef really is?
Rosa I can imagine what they say if you make terrible disaster.
Kirsten Disaster? I have the world's greatest chef to show me how to prepare the cuisine fantastique. It will be a triumph.
Rosa God willing.
Kirsten Now how do I know when to paste?
Rosa Paste? What is paste? *(Looks at KIRSTEN'S notepad)* That is baste.
Kirsten Paste, baste. Who cares? I need to know when to do it. I think you said every twenty minutes.
Rosa That for the main course and there is no timetable. Kirsten, cooking is like art. You either know or don't know when it is time.
Kirsten So teach me.
Rosa In five minutes? Here, in sitting-room? How can I do these things?
Kirsten Sit down, come on, sit. *(ROSA sits on settee)* Rosa, this is important. Please try and understand. To my family, I am scatter-brained.
Rosa Scatter-brained?
Kirsten Ah, dumb, useless, good for nothing. Stupida!
Rosa No, you are not good for nothing. At some things you okay and other things you good.
Kirsten At shopping yes, at removing the clothes of my sister's boyfriend, yes. But when it comes to practical things – cooking, sewing, repairing anything - I'm useless. I didn't fix Brad's jeans. *You* did.
Rosa You help him take them off.
Kirsten *(Impressed)* Rosa! A back-handed compliment.
Rosa And you good businesswoman. You working in stock market.

Kirsten Not the same thing. My father and sister, even my mother when she was here, all laughed at me when I tried to do anything around the house. They still do and even my charming stepmother has joined the chorus. Well, now's the time to show those smirking wise guys I'm not so dumb after all. I'm going to cook a meal that'll take their breath away.

Rosa Not curry. You must not use curry.

Kirsten No, 'take their breath away' means to impress them, to make them stop stirring me. Do you understand?

Rosa I think maybe you stirring me.

Kirsten So tonight, when they sit down to what they think is a fabulous feast prepared by wonder cook Rosa, it will in fact have been created by little old me. Yours truly.

Rosa Tonight?

Kirsten Tonight.

Rosa You very brave.

Kirsten Not brave, determined. Now tell me about oven settings. And do I put the dish in the middle of the oven, the bottom, or the top? Where?

Rosa I could show if we go in kitchen.

Kirsten No! Dad and Jan could turn up, and Brad and Mandy too.

Rosa I think I upset Amanda and Brad. They kissing and I stopped them.

Kirsten Me too.

Rosa *(Shocked)* You kissing Brad? This is definitely not correct.

Kirsten No, no. I also interrupted them. They were snogging right where you're sitting, and Muggins here sort of cramped their style.

Rosa Snogging?

Kirsten Yes. Smooching, canoodling, hug and kiss time.

Rosa That is snogging?

Kirsten Amongst other things. Now they're probably up to round three outside by the pool. Hey! *(Heads to conservatory)* Let's try and catch 'em at it.

Rosa *(Follows)* No, you must not. That spying and not correct.

Kirsten Rosa, where's your sense of adventure? Come on. *(Reluctantly ROSA joins KIRSTEN offstage. We hear them)* There they are. Keep back, they might see us. Ohhhh, isn't that romantic?

Rosa Kirsten, I do not like this thing.

Kirsten I think any woman would like a handsome hunk like Brad doing that to them. *(They return to lounge)* Come on Rosa, you were young once. Don't tell me you didn't enjoy a quick bunk up.

Rosa We did not have bunks.

Kirsten *(Thinks then decides not to explain)* Okay. forget it.

Rosa My parents very strict. In my family, it big disgrace to behave like that before you married.

Kirsten Rosa, they're kissing. They're simply doing what is natural and normal. I can't believe you're such a prude.

Rosa There are things you should keep private. *(KIRSTEN exasperated)* And there is another matter I like to talk about.

Kirsten Rosa, I've told you this before. You don't have to play Mother now that my real mother has flown the coop.

Rosa Please, what is flying coop?

Kirsten *(Taking ROSA back to settee)* No, I mean that because my mother is no longer here, don't feel you have to look after Mandy and me.

Rosa I not try to be your mother. I do not like you and Amanda talking about the new Mrs. Grey like she some terrible person.

Kirsten But she is. Rosa, I didn't choose her, she's not my mother, and as this is my house, I'll talk about her any way I like. *(Pause. ROSA shocked not so much by the answer but by the way it was spoken. KIRSTEN realises this and backs down)* I'm sorry. I didn't mean it like that. You're right. I am being bitchy. I'll try and be civil. Polite. *(ROSA smiles)*

Rosa Thank you. I telling you this because I think it right and because I am working for your family since you a baby. I feel very close to you all.
(Pause. The women embrace in a sincere feeling of warmth and affection)

Kirsten And we love you very much. But now, back to the cooking. When do I add the vegetables?

Rosa *(Back to being worried)* Oh, I not sure this good idea.

Kirsten Rosa, you promised to help me make this meal and tonight's the night.

Rosa And I forget something else.

Kirsten I'm sorry, I won't accept any excuses.

Rosa The oven, it breaking down.

Kirsten What!? Now you tell me. I've spent all week preparing to silence my smarmy family once and forever and now you say the stove is stuffed.

Rosa It working but there is funny noise.

Kirsten Noise? What sort of noise?

Rosa It maybe something loose. I telephoned man to look but he cannot till tomorrow.

FX *Telephone rings. It is situated by indoor furniture)*

Rosa I will answer. *(She moves to phone)*

Kirsten If that's for Dad, take a message. He should be back soon.

Rosa *(Into phone)* Hello. … Yes but Mr. Grey not home. Can I take message? … I sorry, can you say again. … Please, no shouting. I no understand.

Kirsten Rosa?

Rosa *(Holds up hand)* Now if you speak like that, I not give message to Mr. Grey. … Then you a stupid man and you should mind your language. … And the same to you, you … Bastardo! *(Crescendo begins)* Desgenerado! Desgraciado! Bestia!!!
(ROSA slams down phone and is obviously upset. KIRSTEN is stunned not only by the conversation but also by ROSA'S out of character turn of phrase)

Kirsten Rosa. Who was that?

Rosa I not know or care. Some man swearing and say ridiculous things.

Kirsten Rosa, you're shaking. Was it that man who rang Dad before?

Rosa He drunk. He saying terrible things about me and my family.

Kirsten *Your* family!? But how does he know about *your* family? How does he even know about *you*?

Rosa I not know and not want to know.

Kirsten Come and sit down.
Rosa No, I do things in kitchen. *(She exits)*
Kirsten Rosa! *(Goes after her)* Rosa wait. We have to talk. *(ROSA ignores this and exits. KIRSTEN calls)* Well please don't forget tonight. I have to do this.
Jan *(Entering LC)* Have to do what?
(JAN followed by TIM enter. KIRSTEN covers her tracks)
Kirsten Dad, we've just had another phone call.
Tim *(JAN and TIM worried and shocked)* What!
Kirsten Rosa took it.
Jan Not that idiot who rang before?
Kirsten I think so. Rosa's upset. She said the guy threatened her family.
Tim *Rosa's* family!?
Kirsten Rosa swore at him and hung up.
Jan Rosa swore?
Kirsten She gave him heaps. You wouldn't need to speak Spanish to work out she was really slagging him off.
Tim I'd better talk to her. *(Exits to kitchen)*
Jan This is getting out of hand.
Kirsten You've gotta get the cops involved.
Jan Your father says he can handle it.
Kirsten Well if he won't, I will.
Jan Kirsten, don't! *(KIRSTEN stops and looks at her step-mother)* Please. *(Pause. JAN has asked politely and KIRSTEN acquiesces)* Look, can we talk? *(Another pause. KIRSTEN moves back to JAN. They sit)* This is hardly the best time but I don't want to go on like we are at present.
Kirsten *(Cool)* I don't know what you're talking about.
Jan It's not easy. I know you and Amanda hate me.
Kirsten We don't hate you.
Jan I'll re-phrase that. Since I married your father, you and Amanda have not exactly hit it off with your new step-mother. Is that fair?
Kirsten *(Thinks about it)* More or less.
Jan All I'm asking is that you hear my side of the story.
Kirsten We're not interested. Our father makes his own decisions. He chose to divorce my mother and marry you. End of.
Jan Yes but if we're going to live together, maybe it's best if we clear the air.
Kirsten Meaning?
Jan Let me try again. I think there's a possibility that you and Amanda believe I broke up your parents' happy marriage. I think you see me as the bimbo who went after your father's money. How am I doing so far?
Kirsten I'm just giving you the rope.
Jan Well here's my side of the story. I met your father more than three years ago. He approached me at a conference I was running. At the time he and your mother were supposedly happily married.
Kirsten They *were* happily married.
Jan If you say so.
Kirsten I *know* so.

Jan Your father asked for my business card and then rang me a week later and asked for a date. I said no. Then he sent me flowers and again asked me out. I'd checked his background and heard he was married. When he rang me the next time, I told him I knew he was married and he said his marriage was a sham and he was getting divorced.

Kirsten You expect me to believe all or just some of this?

Jan Believe what you like. You could ask your father but maybe that'd cause more trouble than its worth.

Kirsten Have you finished?

Jan I don't deserve the gold digger tag, especially as I've got much more money than he has. And if anyone was out to marry for money, there's a pretty strong case against your dear old pa.

Kirsten Are we done?

Jan I think so. Any questions?

Kirsten Not now and not likely to be. As they say, we'll agree to disagree.

Jan About what?

Kirsten *(Shrugs shoulders)* Who knows? Life in general.

Jan Fair enough. I've said my piece. But can we agree on one thing?

Kirsten What thing?

Jan This crank call business has to be handled by someone other than your father.

Kirsten Agreed. But he won't listen.

Jan Let's try weight of numbers. We gang up and force him to let the police know what's going on. And the sooner the better.

Kirsten Okay. Who's first?

Jan I'll go. You follow in a couple of minutes.
(JAN exits to kitchen. KIRSTEN ponders latest news about her father's behaviour. BRAD and AMANDA enter through conservatory. They are tingling from their touching)

Brad Hey, why aren't you washing some poor guy's jeans?

Amanda *(Knows her sister is upset)* Kirst? What's happened?

Kirsten There's been another weirdo phone call.

Amanda But we weren't supposed to answer.

Kirsten I didn't. Rosa answered and got really upset. She was almost in tears.

Brad This has gone too far. We've gotta call the cops.

Kirsten He even made Rosa swear.

Amanda Rosa swore?

Brad Does Tim know?

Kirsten Jan does and she's in with Rosa now. Look, Dad needs to be told. He can't handle this on his own.

Brad *(Coughs)* I'll tell him *(Exits to kitchen, coughing)* Leave it to me.

Amanda *(Calling)* Don't push him, Brad. Let him feel he's still in control.

Kirsten Sit, sit, sit.

Amanda *(Sits)* Oh, I'm all ….

Kirsten A-quiver.

Amanda Something. I've just had a close encounter with my gorgeous guy and now I'm worried sick about these lunatic phone calls.

Kirsten Well add another dimension because it gets worse. You know those opinions we expressed about the evil bimbo, Jan.
Amanda What's happened?
Kirsten I've just had a most interesting conversation with our stepmother.
Amanda And? *(Suddenly disgusted)* Oh no, she's not pregnant?
Kirsten *(Suddenly thrown)* My God! Of course, that's it! She couldn't come straight out with it so she started on some new tack.
Amanda What new tack?
Kirsten She tried the "I wanna be your friend" routine so as to prepare me for the news about the baby.
Amanda Oh brilliant. That's all we need - zoo mobiles and crappy nappies.
Kirsten No, she didn't say that. We're jumping to conclusions – again.
Amanda *Again?* What'd she say?
Kirsten Heaps. Scary, scary stuff.
Amanda Tell me.
Kirsten What would you say if I told you Dad was a bit of a playboy?
Amanda *(Stunned)* She told you that?
Kirsten She reckons he made all the running, that he chased her even when he was still married to Mum.
Amanda She's lying.
Kirsten Jan said she kept refusing Dad's invitations and even confronted him about his marriage, and that Dad said his marriage was over and he was getting a divorce.
Amanda But Dad said he didn't even meet Jan until after he and Mum split.
Kirsten Someone's lying. And it gets worse.
Amanda Hang on. She's saying this to hide the fact she's after Dad's money.
Kirsten No, and here's the kicker. Jan has her own money.
Amanda *(Shocked)* What?
Kirsten Big bucks. She's wealthy and if anyone married for money, it was Dad.
Amanda Bloody hell!
Kirsten Now why would she make that up? She knows we can check. If she's lying, we'd expose her once and for all. I think she's telling the truth.
Amanda I dunno which is worse. Jan being a rich bitch or Dad being a liar.
(Pause. At times now the women chat less to one another and more to themselves. They are thinking aloud)
Kirsten I was shocked. I didn't know what to say.
Amanda What *did* you say?
Kirsten Oh we got onto crank calls and agreed to pressure Dad to call the cops.
Amanda *(Thinking aloud)* You know, when you're a kid, your parents are sort of God like. Then as you get older you see them for what they are. Human, with faults.
Kirsten Maybe Dad told us what he did to protect us.
Amanda Protect us?
Kirsten Well he could hardly say, "Look girls, me and your Mum hate each other's guts and I'm currently on the prowl for a bit on the side".
Amanda Is that what you believe? Is that what you think he was doing?
Kirsten According to Jan he was. She implied he was a randy womaniser.

Amanda You mean you inferred.
Kirsten *(Shrugs)* Whatever, he wouldn't be the first.
Amanda Maybe it was just with Jan and maybe he loved her.
Kirsten And maybe pigs can fly and maybe we misjudged Jan.
Amanda You say she's wealthy? How wealthy? Is it cash, real estate, what?
Kirsten She didn't say. But Dad's not exactly broke and from what she said, she could buy and sell him several times over.
Amanda *(Shaking her head)* Wow! What are we gunna do?
Kirsten I don't think confronting Dad is ever a good move and besides …
Amanda Not Dad, Jan. How are we going to get into her good books without having to grovel. I hate grovelling. It's against my religion. But if she's loaded, stuff the principles.
Kirsten You're unreal.
Amanda What? You don't want her money?
Kirsten Okay, we do nothing now. If we do, Jan'll think we're weak and only interested in her money.
Amanda We *are* weak and only interested in her money.
Kirsten Let's try the sisterhood routine. You know, us women have got to stick together. We're sorry we misjudged you and whilst we can never be your daughters, we'd like to be your friend.
Amanda Oh chuck! *(Sudden change of attitude)* Do you think she'll go for it?
Kirsten Dunno. *(Noise from upstage)*
Tim *(Offstage)* All right, all right. I'll call the cops.
Kirsten But say nothing for now.
(TIM enters followed by JAN and BRAD)
Tim *(To his daughters)* I suppose you heard. We've had another call.
Kirsten I was here when Rosa took it.
Jan Your father's agreed to call the police.
Tim I'll go there. Over the phone they'll think I'm some crank.
Brad I'll go with you, Tim.
Jan It'd be quicker to just pick up the phone and …
Tim I said I'll go in person.
Jan *(Doesn't want to upset him)* All right, only trying to help.
Amanda Go easy, Dad. Jan's only trying to help.
Kirsten Yes, Dad. Jan obviously cares about you and wants the best for you.
(Pause. What are these two step-daughters saying? They seem sincere. JAN and TIM look at the sisters. Their comments are weird)
Brad *(Breaks the silence)* We can take my car.
Tim Yeah, okay, don't rush me. *(Steps aside to think)* Brad and I'll go to the police. Jan, you pop next door and warn Googie.
Jan Googie? Why would we involve her?
Amanda Yes Dad. Jan's right. The fewer people who know about this the better.
Tim Because if that creep drops in, his best approach is through Googie's enormous garden, and if Googie has her whizz-bang alarm system switched on, we'll get plenty of notice.
Brad Good thinking. *(He coughs)*

Jan So you want me to tell Googie to switch on her alarms because we're expecting a homicidal maniac? She'll have a fit.
Kirsten C'mon Dad, be fair. Listen to Jan. Her idea is much better.
Tim What idea? *(Suspicious of daughters)* And what's going on here?
Kirsten *(Making it up as she speaks)* Ah, telling Googie that we're thinking about investing in the same alarm system and could she make sure it's on so we can hear it if it ever goes off.
Tim That's even more ridiculous than telling the truth.
Jan Actually it's not a bad idea.
Amanda It's a great idea. Trust the women to come up with a sensible solution.
Tim *(Suspicious)* There's something not right here. I smell female conspiracy.
Kirsten You're paranoid, Dad. Relax. "You look after the ice cream van and we'll run the Grand Prix.'
Brad Oh *(Coughs)* I like that. *(Coughs)*
Amanda Well come on you two. Enough of the chat.
Tim Okay, Brad and I'll hit the gendarmes, Jan, you make sure Googie's got her alarm on in the garden and …
Kirsten We'll stay here and hold the fort.
Tim Don't open the door, and don't answer the phone.
Kirsten *(Don't fuss)* Dad! Don't fuss.
Tim I'm serious.
Amanda Father knows best.
Kirsten Oh and Dad. *(Gives him slip of paper)* Can you grab these things please?
Tim Shopping!
Kirsten It's for tonight.
Tim I'm cooking a barbecue.
Kirsten Rosa's staying in. She asked me to ask you to get these things.
Tim But I always cook on a Sunday night.
Amanda *(Buttering up her father)* Dad, Brad's staying for tea. It'll be his first meal here and you'd like him to taste the wonderful Rosa's cooking.
Tim Brad's a bloke. He'd love a barbie and a beer, wouldn't you Brad?
Brad *(Unsure)* Ah, whatever.
Tim *(Suspicious)* There's something not right here.
Jan Darling, why don't you have a night off? Rosa will produce something special. Besides, it's going to rain.
Kirsten Yes big storm tonight, father. We can't have soggy snags.
Tim *(Unhappy)* Well we can't have poor old Timmy getting wet. Just do as you're told, Timmy. *(Exiting UC)* Come on, Brad. We'll take my car.
Brad Sure. *(To WOMEN)* Bye ladies. *(Waves to women, exits slight cough)*
Jan Okay, I'll pop next door and see Googie. Nice idea of yours, Kirsten.
Amanda Kirsten? It was your idea, Jan.
Jan Well it doesn't matter. If it keeps your father happy, we'll give it a go. *(JAN starts to exit via conservatory but stops when AMANDA calls)*
Amanda Jan. I was wondering if I could ask you something?
Jan Sure. About Googie?
Amanda No. It's ah, something personal.

(JAN returns but KIRSTEN makes signals behind JAN'S back trying to tell AMANDA not to push things)

Jan Sure, what's up?

Amanda I'm thinking of leaving home. *(Pause. No response from JAN)* And I am thinking of starting up a business.

Jan Great. Good for you. *(KIRSTEN horrified)* Is it something involving Brad?

Amanda Ah yes, but he doesn't know I'm super keen—yet. *(Pause. This sounds weird)* I mean we've discussed it—obviously—but I haven't told him my decision so please don't let on, if you get my meaning.

Jan Of course. Mum's the word.

Kirsten Mandy, I don't think Jan wants to hear about your personal business ventures.

Jan No, I do, I'm interested. And I'd love to help if I can.

Amanda Thanks. I appreciate it. But I have a problem. I need some start-up capital and I was going to ask Dad.

Jan Go for it. I can't speak for your father but I'm sure he'd love to help.

Amanda It's a bit delicate. I don't want to ask him and somehow, embarrass him.

Jan You won't embarrass him.

Amanda Yes but I'm not sure if he's got cash to spare right now and I'd hate to put him on the spot. You see what I mean?

Jan *(She's not sure)* I think so.

Amanda If I knew he had the money or could get it easily from somewhere, I'd feel much happier about asking him. I don't want him to use some phony excuse rather than admit he hasn't got the cash.

Jan I don't think you've got a problem, Mandy. In fact I *know* you haven't. Put your proposal to Tim and I'm sure he'll be thrilled to help you. *(Starts to exit to conservatory)*

Amanda *(Brighter)* Thanks Jan, thanks a lot.

Jan *(Turns back)* You go ahead and ask. We girls have gotta stick together. *(Smiles, winks. Exits)*

Kirsten *(Calls)* Thanks Jan.

Amanda *(Pleased)* You're right. She *is* loaded.

Kirsten You idiot. What are you trying to do?

Amanda Very nicely, if I say so myself.

Kirsten She's not stupid, Mandy. She knows what you're doing.

Amanda So? All's fair in love and war.

FX *Phone rings. WOMEN alarmed. ROSA enters looking distressed*

Rosa I want to answer telephone.

Kirsten No, Rosa. Dad said we leave it.

Rosa But I must speak to horrible person.

Amanda You can't Rosa. Dad's gone to the police. He told us to leave it.

Rosa I not care. I going to speak. *(She goes to phone)*

Kirsten Rosa! *(Too late, ROSA has picked up phone)*

Rosa Now listen you miserable scumbag person. You are criminal. Do you hear? Criminal! A gilipollas cojudo! And you coward! If I meet I spit on your filthy face. You are criminal!

Kirsten Rosa, hang up. *(Pause. ROSA looks mystified)*
Amanda Rosa?
(ROSA hands phone to KIRSTEN who steps forward and takes it. Pause)
Kirsten *(Covers mouthpiece)* What'll I do?
Amanda Just hang up.
Rosa No. You answer.
(KIRSTEN uncertain then slowly raises phone and hesitatingly answers it)
Kirsten Hello. *(Pause. Huge change)* Dad?
Amanda Dad!?
Rosa *(Distressed)* Oh my God, what I say? *(The sisters are very amused)*
Kirsten It's okay. Rosa thought you were that idiot. .... No, we're fine. ... What? ... Chardonnay. Can't you read? ... No, we haven't got any and we need it for the meal tonight. I mean, Rosa needs it. ... Because Rosa's cooking a special dish. ... Look, just get the things on the list. And hurry up. ... No, we'll sort Rosa. ... Okay. See ya. *(Hangs up)*
Amanda *(Amused)* Oh Rosa, you should see your face.
Rosa Estoy tan avergonzado. Perdóname, por favor.
(Translation: I'm so ashamed. Please forgive me.)
Kirsten Rosa, Dad was laughing so much I couldn't get him to understand those things for tonight.
Amanda I wish I'd recorded it. *(ROSA horrified)*
Kirsten I told him about the wine and he's got the other stuff.
Amanda Why are you so interested in Rosa's cooking?
Jan *(Enters through conservatory)* Googie's fine. She's switched on the alarms in her garden. *(Sees others)* What's happened?
Kirsten You'll never guess.
Amanda Rosa's just called Dad a scumbag, a coward and a filthy criminal.
Kirsten And a cojudo.
Amanda A gilipollas cojudo!
Rosa Oh, please. *(She exits to kitchen in distress)*
Kirsten Rosa! *(Goes after her but puts up hand to stop others. Exits)*
Amanda The phone rang and Kirst and I refused to answer it like Dad said. Then Rosa bursts in, grabs the phone and gives the caller this almighty blast about being a creep and everything.
Jan And it was your father?
Amanda Poor old Dad didn't get a word in.
Jan What did he say?
Amanda What *could* he say? Rosa didn't stop for breath. Now, of course, she's all upset and probably crying in the kitchen.
Jan That bloody phone call. And all because your father tooted his horn.
Amanda Yes but we're okay as Dad and Brad are with the cops.
Jan Dad and Brad - there's a pair for you.
Kirsten *(Pokes head round door)* Rosa's fine. I'll stay with her but it'd be best if no-one else comes in.
Amanda Why?
Kirsten She's highly embarrassed. Just leave us alone. Okay?
Jan Fair enough.

Kirsten And could you do the same with Dad and Brad. No trespassers in the kitchen. *(Gets her own unintentional joke)* Dad and Brad. *(Deeper voice)* Dad and Brad. *(Pleased with herself)* I like it. *(Exits)*

Amanda And I like Brad.

Jan Don't look now but it shows.

Amanda Yeah, but he *is* nice.

Jan He's lovely. You deserve each other. *(Pause. Nice conversation between these two is rare)* And your father obviously likes him. Even if he did think Brad was the local playboy.

Amanda *(Weak laugh)* Takes one to know one.
(Pause. Oops. Not a safe topic at present if at all)

Jan I wonder what gave him that idea?
(TIM and BRAD appear UC. They have been caught in a sudden shower and are wettish. We can see them through the French windows. They go to open the doors which are stuck. They try to open them without making a fuss. Pause because TIM and BRAD have missed their entrance)

Jan *(Invents a line)* Oh, … I think the boys should be back soon.

Amanda *(Looks upstage and invents a line)* Yes, here they are now.
(WOMEN look upstage as MEN finally get door open and enter. TIM carries bag of groceries. Both brush rain from their clothes/hair)

Tim *(Inventing a line)* Damn door. Must get that fixed.

Jan What happened with the cops?

Tim Fine. They told us to call if there's any more trouble.

Brad *(Croaky voice, clears throat)* *If* we get another call.

Amanda If the cops heard Rosa on the phone, she'd be in the slammer, Dad.

Tim I thought she was mad. *(Looks around)* Where is she?

Jan In the kitchen with Kirsten. But don't go in there. Rosa's pretty upset and Kirsten wants to be alone with her for a while.

Tim Well Rosa needs this stuff. Kirsten was very insistent.

Amanda Yeah there's something funny going on. Why is Kirsten interested in food?

Tim Only one way to find out. *(Heads towards kitchen)*

Jan Tim! Go easy.
(He enters kitchen. Moments later there is a scream and TIM comes flying out sans shopping. He's been pushed. KIRSTEN follows and yells from door)

Kirsten I told you not to come in here. All of you. Rosa wants to be alone.
(OTHERS stunned)

Tim Bloody hell, Kirsten.

Rosa *(Appears)* I terribly sorry, Senor Grey. I not know you on telephone.

Tim You and Kirsten make a good team. One *in*sults, the other *as*saults.

Jan It's okay, Rosa. We've contacted the police, we're safe now.

Rosa Oh I hope so.

Jan This horrible business is over. Terminado.

FX *Siren from alarm next door is heard. EVERYONE freezes, looks worried. BRAD scampers LC, looks offstage. KIRSTEN and ROSA come into room)*

Tim What the hell is that?
(BRAD turns and speaks to the company)

Brad *(Husky voice)* There's someone in the *(Coughs)* garden. *(General fear)*

Jan Oh my God! It's him!

(OTHERS look stunned, afraid as curtain falls quickly/Blackout. BRAD coughs)

End of Act One

(Just before the second act begins, an announcement is made. Wait until the audience is seated and the house lights have dimmed. The announcement could be pre-recorded or delivered live)

Act Two

Announcer Ladies and gentlemen—you may have noticed one of our actors has been having problems with his voice. Well we regret to announce that .....*(Insert name of actor playing Brad)* has lost his voice completely and cannot continue. But rather than cancel the play, one of our wonderful backstage crew members, the lighting operator, has agreed to step in and play the part of Brad for the second act. It means he'll be using the script but we're sure you'll understand. And a friend of one our actors, who is in the audience, will operate the lighting and sound cues. So, we're all set and ready to roll. After all, the show must go on. Please enjoy Act 2 of *It'll Be All Wrong on the Night*.

(Pause. Curtain rises. Alarm is sounding. It's the same scene as at the end of the first act. Actors in same positions. BRAD—now played by the sound/lighting operator and holding a script—moves back from investigating alarm. The actor playing BRAD is far less confident, has trouble getting out the right words on cue. He almost reads each word at a time. Forget interpretation. It might help if he's nothing like the actor previously playing BRAD. The new actor could be the antithesis of a leading man - he's now short, fat and unattractive, with apologies to the actor now cast as BRAD. Perhaps milk bottle glasses which keep slipping and being pushed up would be the icing on the fake, or, he could be the same actor in disguise)

Brad There's someone in the garden. *(General fear)*

Jan Oh my God! It's him!

Kirsten Is it that moron?

Jan Tim, call the police.

Brad *(Checking script, he's lost already)* There's someone in the garden. *(OTHERS grimace. "This is a bad idea". BRAD turns page searching for right place)*

Rosa This crazy man kill us. We all die!
(Much distress)

Tim Don't panic. Stay calm. It could be a false alarm.

Brad I think there were at least two of them. *(More distress)*
(Pause as we await the sound effects)

Tim *(ad lib, louder)* I said, "Don't panic"!

Amanda *(ad lib)* I thought I heard the phone ring.

FX *Doorbell chimes*

Tim *(Ignores incorrect FX and goes to phone and answers it)* Yes? Who is it? …. Oh Googie.

FX *Phone rings*
(TIM looks at phone, then at bio box then replaces receiver. Phone FX stops. TIM picks up receiver and continues conversation as if nothing has happened)

Tim Yes we can hear the alarm. … Yes, it *is* very loud. … *(Shocked) We've* got some trespassers? …. What? Your nephews? …. Well thanks very much but could you please turn it off. …. I said, 'Please turn it off" *(Alarm stops)* Thank you. *(Alarm starts again. TIM furious. Alarm stops again)* Yes, Googie, I appreciate you running an experiment to see if the alarm works. …. Yes, we'll definitely buy one. Tomorrow. …. What? Now? … Oh all right. In five minutes. Yes, thanks, Googie. See you soon.
(He hangs up)

Jan What's going on?

Tim Googie sent her two nephews out to trip the alarm. *(OTHERS react)*

Amanda She's mad, certifiable.

Tim Now she wants us to go over and see how to turn it off.

Jan But *she* can turn it off. It's her alarm.

Brad *(Slight pause with head in script)* I thought you said it was very expensive.

Amanda It is. It's the best you can buy.

Tim Googie's going out tonight and wants us to learn how to re-set the thing in case it goes off again.

Kirsten So does that mean you won't be eating in tonight? Because if so I think it's damn rude to ask Rosa to cook something special and then just walk out.

Brad I'm staying.

Jan We're all staying, Kirsten.

Tim We'll be five minutes. The cops know what's going on, we've got Googie's alarm in the garden so let's forget about that road rage idiot and enjoy Rosa's cooking. *(Exiting through conservatory)* Come on, Jan.

Jan Five minutes, Rosa. I promise. *(Exits after TIM)*

Kirsten I'm starving. *(Ushers ROSA)* Come on, Rosa. I'll help you dish up.

Rosa *(Being half-pushed into kitchen)* All right, I going. Okay, okay.
(Pause. BRAD and AMANDA alone. She moves to settee and beckons to him)

Amanda Hey, handsome. Get y'buns over here.

Brad *(Sits on settee and holds script)* Is your family always like this?

Amanda Forget about my family. You just concentrate on me.
(She moves to kiss him. Momentary pause as he checks script, realises they should kiss so they do, awkwardly. He breaks free and looks at script)

Brad Hmmm. You have a very kissable month, … *(Corrects himself)* mouth.

Amanda Well my mouth'll do for starters. What else can you find?

Brad *(Navigating her caresses and the script)* Don't rush me. Half the fun is feeling your … *(Turns page)* way around. But how can I get serious when you've got the cock running? *(Corrects himself)* *Clock* running?

Amanda I thought you were a fast operator.

Brad *(Slowish)* Oh I am fast all right. I could have you ravished and wrapped in two minutes.

Amanda Two minutes? You slow-coach. What happened to the sprinting stud?

Brad *(Sarcastic)* Oh ha ha.
Amanda Well come on. Prove it. I reckon you're all talk.
Brad Amanda. Your father's next door and your sister's in the next room.
Amanda *(Moves to curtains and closes them. Lights dim)* So? Time's running out, Big Boy.
Brad What are you doing?
Amanda A bit of scene-setting. Now come on. You've got ninety-five seconds. *(Lights dim except for light from conservatory. BRAD struggles to see script. Does he produce a small torch?)*
Brad Hey! I was only kidding. Amanda. Stop mucking … *mucking* around.
Amanda *(Back to BRAD. She removes her slacks)* Get your gear off, gorgeous. The clock's running.
Brad Amanda! Oh God. Oh yes! Oh you're fantastic.
(He struggles to remove his clothes holding the script)
Amanda Seventy seconds, sexy. You'd better keep the foreplay to a minimum.
Brad These bloody jeans. My zipper sucks … *(Corrects himself)* zipper's stuck.
Amanda Ohhh, Brad. I'm all yours.
Brad Give us a hand, babe.
Amanda Adrenaline and hormones. I'm on a high.
Brad Damn these jeans. *(Jeans removed)* They're off. Oh baby. Come here.
FX *Front door chimes.*
Brad Shit! There's someone at the door.
Amanda F'get it. Rosa will answer it. Kiss me.
Brad But … oh f'get Rosa, you're beautiful.
Amanda Not there.
Brad Sorry. Not where?
Amanda There. Yes. There. There! Ohhh!
Brad Is it always like this for you, baby? I mean this is sensational for me. I think I'm feeling … *(turns page of his script) falling* in love.
FX *Thunder clap followed by sound of rain which continues*
Brad *(Excited)* Bloody hell! What was that?
Amanda The Earth is moving for me. Is it moving for you?
Brad Something's moving. Can you just shift your hand? *(Pause)* No, the other one. Oh yes, thanks. Oh that's fantastic.
Amanda *(Giggles)* I hope you're not timing this.
Brad *(Giggles)* I hope you're not miming this.
Amanda *(Laughs)* I'm not. I'm not. *I'm not!*
Brad *(Laughs)* Tell me, ma'am. Do you come here often?
Amanda *(Giggles incorporated)* What, here on the settee?
Brad *(Laughter is infectious)* Now I bet you say that to all the boys.
(Shriek from AMANDA. The laughter has built in intensity. AMANDA is building to hysteria whilst BRAD is guffawing in a stilted way as BRAD is being played by a nervous and unrehearsed actor)
Amanda Wait till Kirsten hears about this.
FX *Front door chimes.*
Brad Oh no! There *is* someone at the door.
Jan *(From conservatory. Calling into garden)* Hurry up, Tim. Just leave it.
Brad Shiiiiit!

(Courting couple disengage. AMANDA grabs her clothes and BRAD'S jeans)

Amanda It's Jan and Dad. Let's get outa here!

Brad I'm getting! I'm getting! Where's my … ow! *(Stubs his toe in the dark)*

Amanda God! This is a turn-on!

Brad *(Sarcastic)* Oh sure, wonderful. *(Panics)* Where are my jeans?

Amanda Come on, lover. We can finish this upstairs. *(She exits to door to bedrooms)*

Brad Sure but I can't find my jeans? *(Still searching for jeans, doesn't notice she's gone)* Amanda. *Amanda!*

Jan *(Enters wearing some moisture from the rain)* What's going on? Kirsten? Amanda?

(JAN goes to light switch. BRAD ducks behind settee. Lights come on)

Brad *(Is dying)* Not again.

Jan Who's there? *(No response so heads towards kitchen)* Rosa. *(Suddenly gets fright seeing BRAD crouched low)* Brad!

Brad Oh. Hi, Jan. How are things?

Jan Not fixing the car again?

Brad You're not going to believe this.

Jan You're right. So, should I slip into something more comfortable?

Brad You're wet.

Jan Yes it's called rain. You haven't got my towel down there I suppose?

Brad I wish I had.

Rosa *(Enters)* Did somebody answer the door bell? *(Sees BRAD)* Brad!

Brad Oh, hi, Rosa. Ah, Rosa, did you know it's raining? Outside I mean.

Jan Brad, you're missing something.

Rosa *(Shocked)* Where are jeans?

Brad You've heard of the "No smoking day" and the "No diets" day.

Rosa Whoever at door gone away.

Brad Well today is "No jeans" day.

Tim *(Enters wetter than JAN and shakes water from clothes, hair)* Bloody hell, it's bucketing down out there.

FX *(Sound of rain suddenly becomes quite loud. OTHERS look a little embarrassed. Rain sound then soften but continue)*

Jan Not on the carpet, Tim.

Tim *(Sees OTHERS)* What's happened?

Rosa It Brad. He on floor.

Tim *(Suddenly panics thinking BRAD's been bashed)* Oh no! Not that moron. Did he break in? Brad, are you hurt?

Brad No, I'm not hurt. Not yet anyway.

Tim Well what are you doing down there? *(Twigs)* Oh no. I don't believe it. Not the grease on the trousers again!

Kirsten *(Enters from kitchen)* Rosa, can you come back …. Oh, Dad, you're all wet and … *(Sees BRAD crouching)* Brad's got grease on his jeans again.

Tim What the hell is going on?

Amanda *(Enters holding BRAD'S jeans)* Oh, full house. *(To BRAD)* Here they are, Brad, all nice and dry. *(Shows jeans to OTHERS)*

Jan Nice and dry?

Amanda Yes, it's raining. Brad's jeans were wet. *(Pause. No-one believes any of it)* You do know it's raining?
(New audio engineer thinks another cue has been missed)
FX *Sound of rain suddenly increases then decreases. Actors can only grimace and bear it.*
Kirsten Funny how the rain just happened to land on his jeans but missed the rest of him.
Brad *(Head still buried in script)* Yes, I dodged the drops.
Amanda Sorry to be so long, darling. Here you are.
(BRAD takes jeans and rises holding them. This is not easy as he's also holding his script. Finally he puts script on settee and puts his jeans back on)
Kirsten *(Naughty actor. Ad libs)* I think you've changed your shorts, Brad.
Brad *(Grabs script. Thrown completely)* What? Ah … *(Hopping with a leg in jeans)*
Kirsten *(Continues ad lib. Very unprofessional)* When you undressed for me before, you had white shorts. Now they're blue.
Jan *(Decides to get script back onto rails. Ad lib)* That's enough, Kirsten. Leave the poor boy alone.
(TIM resumes what they have rehearsed)
Tim *(Shaking head)* You've gotta be kidding, Brad. What is it with you?
Jan Tim, you're wet. You'll get a cold.
FX *Thunder clap.*
Kirsten Rosa, shouldn't you be back in the kitchen?
Amanda So how was Googie's alarm? Are you both now alarm-literate?
Jan Yes. Your father and I can now set and re-set the most expensive security system money in the world.
Tim If anyone creeps into our garden tonight, they'll set off Googie's alarm in stereo and the whole world'll know.
Kirsten Rosa. You've left that pot on the stove.
Rosa *(Worried exiting to kitchen)* Oh, my goodness!
Kirsten Well don't just stand there. Rosa's made a special effort to cook something special tonight. Go and get ready. Dad, you need a towel.
Tim *(Moving to door to bedrooms)* Yeah and Brad needs a cold shower.
Kirsten I'll just see if Rosa needs a hand. *(Exiting to kitchen)* You lot get ready.
Amanda That is amazing.
Jan What, Brad undressing for two different women in the one afternoon?
Brad Aw please. I promise to keep my clothes on for the rest of the night.
Amanda *(Mock anger)* That's not what you said before.
Tim Brad, I'll give you some tips, mate.
(Gives thumbs up and exits to bedrooms)
(OTHERS laugh. Not BRAD)
Amanda What's with, Kirsten? She never helps Rosa.
Kirsten *(Re-enters)* I heard that. Look, Rosa wants us to dine alfresco.
Jan Outside? In this weather?
Kirsten I mean casual, in here, not in the dining-room. So get a move on.
(Re-exits back to kitchen)
Jan Well, I'll freshen up. *(Stops at door)* Should I knock before I come back in?
Brad No thanks, Jan. We'll be fine.

Jan Well try and keep your pants on until *after* we finish eating.
(JAN exits. BRAD winces)
Amanda *(All smiles and happiness, collapses on settee)* Wow! That was unreal!
Brad Unreal? More like *surr*eal! Your whole family caught us in the middle of a very intimate experience.
Jan *(Deadly serious)* Yes and wasn't it fantastic? We must do it again.
Brad Amanda! Get serious. We were trying a bit of how's y'father in *front* of your father. Your entire family had front row seats.
Amanda *(She's purring)* Hmmm. I like performing.
Brad *(He's confused)* You what?!
Amanda Come on, you loved it. Admit it. You *loved* it.
Brad It was exciting all right, but I'm too young to have a heart attack.
Amanda *(Pats settee)* Come here, you.
(BRAD checks his script, mutters "Move to settee" then sits next to her)
Brad You know, you are a very dangerous lady.
Amanda So Big Boy, what was the best bit?
Brad *(Studies script, gets lost. Smiles. Sighs. Says her line)* So Big Boy, what was the best bit?
Amanda *(Ad libs)* Don't look now but I think your enthusiasm's showing.
Brad *(Looks at script then at AMANDA then his jeans)* Oh hell.
Amanda Did you see the look on Jan and Kirsten's faces? They were spewing.
Brad I saw the look on your father's face. I've definitely blown it with him.
Amanda *(Cuddling)* Just so long as you haven't blown it with me.
Brad God, you are in … *(He has trouble with the word)* … in …
Amanda *(Whispers)* Insatiable
Brad *(Thinks he knows)* Inflatable.
Amanda *(Back to script)* Mmmm and ain't life grand?
Brad Mind you, it was funny. I thought you were going to wet yourself when we started laughing.
Amanda *(Amused)* I did.
Brad What?
Amanda That's the effect you have on me, sexy.
Brad Phew. I'm all tingly and *(Turns page)* you smell ….
(Pause. Both actors know this is wrong. She nods slightly at script. BRAD has turned over two pages. He flicks one back)
Brad Ah, I'm getting all tingly and turned on again.
Amanda Fancy a quick trip to the conservatory?
Brad No!
Amanda *(Hurt)* No?
Brad I mean, fair go, baby. Once was pushing our luck, twice, well …
(KIRSTEN enters and gongs a small dinner gong)
Amanda Saved by the bell.
Kirsten Dinner is served. *(To couple on settee)* Sorry to break up the party.
Amanda There's something funny going on here.
Kirsten Yes. It's Brad. He's still got his jeans on. *(She exits back to kitchen)*
Amanda *(Stroking BRAD)* So, am I losing my touch?
Brad No, and I'm never gunna live this down.
Amanda *(Gives up the seduction. Offended)* Oh trust a man to put his ego first.

Brad No, Amanda. I didn't mean that.
Amanda *(Thinking aloud, goes behind BRAD)* Kirsten's planning some scheme. She's cooking up some scam.
Brad I don't like Spam. *(AMANDA whacks him)* Ow! *(He wasn't expecting that)*
Amanda *(From behind BRAD, in his ear)* Well come on. The sooner we eat the sooner we can get back to the main event.
Jan *(Enters refreshed)* Not interrupting anything am I? *(AMANDA pulls back and gives false smile)* Brad, there's something wrong.
Brad Sorry?
Jan You're fully dressed.
Amanda We were just discussing Kirsten's strange behaviour. What's going on?
Jan No idea.
Kirsten *(Enters with serviettes, cutlery and bowl of nuts)* Right, folks. First course is about to be served.
Brad Great. I'm starving.
Kirsten *(Heading to casual furniture)* Over here. It's a la casual but I'm sure the food will be fantastic. *(OTHERS follow. They nibble on the nibbles)*
Jan Amanda was just commenting on your new-found culinary interests.
Kirsten *(Putting serviettes on side table)* Me? Cooking? Don't be mad. I'm just helping Rosa relax after that dreadful man was rude to her.
Amanda And after she was rude to Dad.
Kirsten You should have seen her face when she called Dad a schmuck.
Brad I wish I could swear in another language.
(They sit DL. BRAD stands waiting to be asked)
Jan Come on, Brad. You can sit next to me. I'm the only one you haven't undressed for—yet. *(OTHERS amused. Not BRAD)*
Brad *(Sitting)* Can we give the Brad and his jeans routine a rest, please?
Others Ohhh. *(They tease him).*
Tim *(Enters, dried off but with slicked hair)* Right. We're not having one of father's famous barbies, so what *are* we having?
Kirsten I'll just go and check with Rosa. *(Exiting)* Just talk among yourselves.
Tim *(Joining the group DL)* Brad. Jeans *on* I see.
Amanda Dad. Can we skip the jokes about Brad and his jeans?
Tim It's not a joke. I'm jealous. Now, where's the wine list?
Jan It's all coming courtesy of Rosa and Kirsten.
Tim Kirsten! What's she doing in the kitchen?
Amanda Nothing, we hope. She failed boiling water.
Jan And listen. Go easy with Rosa. She's very upset about the phone calls.
Tim Well hopefully that moron's disappeared.
Jan Especially since she finished up abusing you.
Tim Most of it was in Spanish. For all I know, she could have been calling me a sweet and wonderful bloke.
Amanda You said you knew a little Spanish.
Tim *(Finger to lips)* Shhhh.
Jan In fact the less said the better. Just talk about her cooking.
Tim Her cooking?
Jan If you rave about the meal it'll take her mind off that phone call.

Tim Got it. Don't talk about the creep on the phone but go overboard about the food.
Amanda Here they come.
Kirsten *(Opens and holds kitchen door)* Dah-dah!
(ROSA enters with tray. Excited KIRSTEN tagging along)
Rosa I sorry to be so long but today I have problems.
Tim Yes, Rosa we know …
Jan *(Interrupting TIM)* Rosa, we're starving. What's on your delicious menu?
Kirsten You'll love it. It's gourmet eating at its finest.
Amanda You've tried it. Trust you, garbage guts.
Kirsten Just a quick bite.
Jan So that's why you've been helping Rosa in the kitchen.
Kirsten I haven't been helping. I've just been there having a chat. Haven't I Rosa?
Rosa You having some chat.
Brad *(This time he gets the line right)* Well it smells great, whatever it is.
Rosa Kirsten please pass plates, I serve food.
Kirsten Oh sure. *(Takes plastic plates and hands them to ROSA)* Here we are.
Rosa One at a time, please.
(Laughter. KIRSTEN upset. AMANDA teases her sister)
Amanda Oh, sister, you know a lot about matters domestic.
Kirsten *(Nasty)* Shut up.
Tim Hey! Enough of that.
Kirsten Well I'm sick of you all having a go at my efforts around the house. You're always picking on me, always having a laugh.
Amanda We only say it 'cos it's true.
Tim All right, shut it. *(Pause. Awkward silence)*
Brad I'm a bit of an idiot …. *(Turns page)* when it comes to doing things around the house.
Jan Except dropping your daks. *(This breaks the tension)*
(ROSA serves food onto plate and hands it to JAN)
Rosa Maybe is time to eat.
Jan Thank you, Rosa. You're right again and this looks magnificent.
Tim What is it?
Rosa *(Serving another)* Maybe you try first then have guess.
Amanda *(Taking plate)* Thanks Rosa. It certainly looks … unusual.
Kirsten Maybe Rosa's tried something new, showing her versatility.
Tim Well I'm sure it'll be fabulous. *(Takes plate)* Thanks, Rosa. Your cooking is legendary.
Brad I've heard so much about your cooking, Rosa. I'm honoured to taste it.
Amanda Well come on, take it. *(BRAD takes plate, smiles, nods juggling script)*
Jan Don't forget yourself, Rosa. *(ROSA serves herself)*
Kirsten Okay, away you go. Get stuck in.
Amanda Where's yours? Don't tell me you're back on that starvation kick?
Kirsten No, I'm not real hungry. *(Others react. This is not like KIRSTEN)* Okay, okay. Just a small serve, please Rosa.
(ROSA serves KIRSTEN)

Tim Where's the wine?
Kirsten Oh sorry. It's in the kitchen. I'll be right back.
Tim No leave it. I'll get some from the cellar.
Kirsten *(Miffed)* Why? I can get some from the kitchen. Don't you trust me?
Tim Of course but I've got bottles downstairs which need drinking. Let's eat first. C'mon. Tuck in. *(They eat)*
(ROSA may sit but KIRSTEN may remain standing. Everyone eats. They use a fork and eat a pasta/rice type dish. Much of the following dialogue is spoken with mouths full or partly full. BRAD has script on lap. KIRSTEN is looking at others waiting for a response. Awkward pause)
Brad Hmmm. Yum.
Tim Yes. What is this?
Jan I think this is something new, Rosa. I can't remember this before.
Rosa No, you correct. I definitely not cooked this before.
Amanda It's got a lot of, um, … I think it's garlic ….
Kirsten Yeah but just enough.
Amanda It's different though, I'll say that.
Kirsten Yes all right. It's new and different with garlic but what do you think?
Tim *(At KIRSTEN)* Why? Are you some food critic now?
Kirsten Well if Rosa's tried something new, I think we should tell her what we think of it. You'd like to hear wouldn't you, Rosa?
Rosa I suppose.
Jan Well we all know that everything Rosa cooks is superb.
Tim Yes, Rosa, we never get tired of raving about your cooking.
Brad I've never tasted anything like this before. *(KIRSTEN despairs)*
Amanda Rosa, don't take this personally but after today's events and …
Jan Mandy. Not now. We agreed not to talk about the phone calls.
Rosa No, please, it okay. I over my afternoon troubles.
Jan Are you sure?
Rosa I sure. It all behind me. *(OTHERS pleased)*
Tim *(Teasing)* Really? I mean do you really want to live and work in the house of a criminal?
Kirsten Dad!
Jan Tim. It's not funny.
Rosa *(Upset)* Oh, Senor Grey, I so embarrassed.
Tim *(Continues ribbing ROSA)* Of a monster? Of a gilipollas cojudo! *(ROSA is horrified)* Sorry, my dear Rosa but you forget I have a Spanish speaking salesman. *(TIM laughs and teases ROSA)*
Rosa *(Shaking head in embarrassment)* Ohhh.
(OTHERS—not KIRSTEN—amused and relieved)
Jan You must teach me, Rosa. I need some new expressions to shout at him.
Rosa Oh you must never speak those words, never. They very bad words which I ashamed to speak. Please.
Tim It's over, Rosa. We had a fright but now it's done. Rosa. Listen to me. Forget what happened. Okay?
Rosa *(Nods)* Gracias.

Kirsten *(Peeved)* Look could we please get back to the subject in hand. *(Awkward pause. Silence. All look at KIRSTEN)* We were discussing the merits of tonight's meal. And so much for the agreement not to talk about those filthy phone calls in front of Rosa.
(KIRSTEN'S attitude and language shocks everyone. Awkward silence)

Tim Yes, okay, Kirsten, keep y'shirt on.

Brad Well I just think it's great that Rosa can laugh about it.

Kirsten Oh shut up, Brad. Just stick to the undressing.

Jan *(Shocked)* Kirsten!

Amanda *(Attacks her sister)* That's right. Let it all out. Little Miss Jealousy.

Kirsten Jealous! Of you! You're a joke!

Tim Okay, that's enough. I'm sick of you two mouthing off. You're supposed to be bloody adults. Why don't you try acting like one. *(Pause. Things settle)* Starting with an apology.

Kirsten *(Mumbles)* Sorry, Brad.

Amanda *(Equally mumbled)* Yeah. Sorry, Brad.

Tim Now, how about changing the subject?

Amanda *(Changes tack)* You know, Rosa, about this meal. There's something I have to say.

FX *Phone rings.*

Jan Oh my God. It's him.

Tim Jan, don't be ridiculous. That other business is over. It could be anyone. *(Rising)* Just stay calm.
(TIM crosses to phone. Everyone freezes. TIM picks up phone and speaks)

Tim Hello. *(The FX continues. This is not meant to happen and TIM is thrown)* Hello. *(Phone keeps ringing. TIM loud)* Hello! *(Phone stops ringing)* Who? … Say that again. … No, you've got the wrong number. *(TIM hangs up and heads back to OTHERS)* Wrong number.

Jan Are you sure? Was it a man? Did you recognise the voice?

Tim Yes. No. I mean I didn't recognise the voice and yes, I am sure. It wasn't our maniac. He wanted Carlos …. Loopydoz or someone.

Rosa *(Stunned)* Lopendez!

Tim Something like that. Why?

Rosa That is my mother's cousin's maiden name!
(Everyone stunned perhaps more by ROSA'S anxiety)

Tim Rosa. Please. It was a wrong number.

Jan It was him!

Tim Jan! It could have been anyone!

Rosa *(Distressed)* This is pésimo. That man is trying to hurt me.

Tim No, Rosa. It's not you. It's me. I'm the one who upset him. I'm the one he wants to hurt. But that wasn't him!

Kirsten I don't suppose anyone wants seconds? *(Ignored)*

Jan Ring the police, Tim. Tell them we've had another call.

Amanda But have we? It could have been a real wrong number. *(They look at her)* Dad heard the name, and it really was a wrong number.

Tim Exactly. Look, the bloke had a thick accent. And Rosa, I mean your mother's cousin, well ….

Jan Maybe we're so jumpy we jumped to the wrong conclusion.
Brad Things are never like this at my place. *(Ignored)*
Kirsten Look, don't let this spoil our meal. Amanda.
Amanda What?
Kirsten You were about to tell us something about tonight's cuisine.
Amanda Oh yes, but I don't want to upset Rosa.
Kirsten Why would you upset her?
Rosa It okay. I perhaps wrong before. The man on phone was wrong number. Come, Amanda, what will you say?
Jan Are you sure, Rosa? We can check this out for you.
Rosa No, I sure. I little bit jumpy.
Amanda Well you've had a really rough afternoon.
Kirsten We know that, Mandy. We've finished with the phone calls. Now let's talk about the food.
Amanda Okay. I'll say exactly what I think. Rosa, it's good you're sitting down.
FX *Explosion in kitchen. Everyone shocked*
Tim What was that?
Rosa The oven exploded!
Others What!
(General panic. It is not a huge explosion but enough to cause concern)
Rosa *(Rising)* The oven it making a noise.
Tim There might be a fire. *(More concern)*
Rosa No, it okay. You stay here finish meal. I know what happened. I fix.
(She exits to kitchen)
Brad Can I do anything?
Amanda No, Brad, leave it.
(They settle but are concerned)
Jan There's something wrong. Rosa would never leave the oven on like that.
Kirsten *(Feeling guilty)* She might. She's not perfect.
Tim It's those bloody phone calls.
Jan Tim, we're *all* upset. And that's what the creep wants. Not to physically hurt us but to make us afraid. We have to forget him, forget the phone calls and get back to our normal, everyday lives.
Brad Are kitchen explosions normal around here?
(OTHERS look at BRAD then laugh. This has relaxed the mood)
Tim Nice one, Brad. Thanks.
Amanda Yes but it's not just the mess out there in the kitchen. There is something radically wrong with this food.
Kirsten *(Snaps)* No there's not.
Amanada Are you kidding?
Kirsten I think it's fine. This is Rosa's cooking at its best.
(OTHERS scoff. BRAD not so sure)
Jan Kirsten, Rosa is obviously upset. There has to be something wrong with your taste buds.
Kirsten No there's not. I really like this … whatever it is.
Tim Kirsten, this food is tasteless stodge. It's bland, overcooked, with beginner written all over it.
Brad I think it's okay.

Kirsten No there's not. I really like this … whatever it is.
Tim Kirsten, this food is tasteless stodge. It's bland, overcooked, with beginner written all over it.
Brad I think it's okay.
Amanda You would. You've got a takeaway stomach.
Tim I can't believe Rosa prepared this meal.
Jan She obviously wasn't thinking. Kirsten, you were with her. Was she doing anything strange in the kitchen?
Kirsten Well, yes … and no. I mean she wasn't doing her usual thing but then …
Amanda What are you talking about?
Kirsten *(Annoyed. Gives in)* Oh, all right, it was never going to work anyway.
FX *Thunder clap. Increase sound of rain.*
Tim Well aren't we glad we cancelled the barbecue?
Jan You were saying, Kirsten?
Kirsten Yes. I was. I am.
FX *(Phone rings)*
Tim *(TIM freezes. Pause)* Oh not again.
Jan *(Rising, grabs TIM)* I'll get the phone. You go and check on Rosa.
Tim But it might be that monster.
Jan And it might be my mother.
Tim *(Softish)* Same thing.
Jan *(Pushing him)* I heard that. Just go and see what's happened in the kitchen.
(TIM heads to kitchen, JAN to phone)
FX *Lightning flashes and lights suddenly cut. BLACKOUT. Dim lights are used for safety*
(Fear amongst group. Phone still ringing)
Brad The lights have blown.
Kirsten Good one, Brad.
Tim There's a torch over there.
Brad I'll get it. *(He stumbles and falls knocking furniture)* Ow!
Amanda Brad! Are you all right?
Brad I think I've hurt my leg.
Kirsten Quick, take off your jeans.
Amanda Shut up, Kirsten!
FX *Thunder clap*
Jan I'll get the phone, Tim, go and check on Rosa. Just go!
Kirsten I'll get the torch.
FX *(LIGHTS RESTORED)*
Tim *(At kitchen door)* Thank God for that. *(Opens door and smoke comes out)* Rosa! My God, the kitchen's on fire! *(Disappears inside)*
FX *Burglar alarm sounds and keeps sounding.*
Amanda *(Worried)* That's the alarm in the garden.
Kirsten *(Very worried)* There's someone outside!
Tim *(Racing back into room)* That's the alarm.
Jan *(By the phone)* What about Rosa?
Tim She's okay. She'd left a pot on the stove and it caught fire.
Kirsten Not the dessert! *(Races to kitchen)* Rosa, not the dessert! *(Exits)*

Tim *(To JAN)* Don't answer it. *(To BRAD)* Brad, see if there's a vehicle outside.
Brad Right. *(Turns page. Looks for instructions. Moves to French windows)*
Tim Get their rego. *(Goes to JAN and the phone)*
Brad Okay! Leave it to me! *(He struggles with French windows)*
Amanda You shouldn't answer the phone in a storm.
FX *TIM picks up receiver. Phone stops ringing. Thunder clap*
Tim *(Speaks into phone)* Could you hold the line please?
(Covers mouthpiece. BRAD has trouble opening door. It opens in, he's pushing it)
Jan Maybe Googie's just testing her alarm again.
Kirsten *(Pokes head around door)* The bloody pudding's burnt to crisp. *(Exits)*
Tim Amanda. Look in the garden.
Amanda Okay. *(Exits via conservatory)*
FX *Thunder clap*
(BRAD has given up trying to get out the door so suddenly heads to conservatory)
Brad *(ad lib)* The door's jammed. I'll go this way. *(Exiting to conservatory)*
Tim *(Into mouthpiece)* I'll be with you in just a minute. *(Covers mouthpiece)*
(BRAD collides with AMANDA returning. She ad libs "Brad". He ad libs "Sorry" and they continue their journeys)
Amanda *(Trembling)* There's someone outside. He's coming round the front.
(Everyone turns and looks upstage. BRAD appears outside French windows And waves to those inside)
Jan Answer the phone, Tim. It could be important.
Tim *(Into phone)* Hello? Hello? *(To OTHERS)* They've hung up.
(TIM hangs up)
Amanda You'll have to call the police. Dad! Something's wrong.
Jan Do it, Tim.
Tim *(Puts phone to ear)* It's dead. The phone's dead.
FX *Phone rings (It should have been thunder)*
Tim *(Ad lib)* No, I think it's working again. *(Phone to ear)* Hello? … They've gone.
FX *Thunder clap.*
Amanda Here's Brad.
(They turn to BRAD UC. He has trouble with the door this time trying to get in)
Kirsten *(Enters in panic)* We need a fire extinguisher.
Tim It's in the laundry. *(KIRSTEN exits)*
Brad *(Still holding script, speaks through the glassless French doors)* There are two blokes in the front garden and one of them's got a gun! *(Panic)*
Tim A gun!
FX *Modern car horn (should have been a gunshot)*
Tim *(Ad lib)* It sounds like they're in a car.
FX *Old-fashioned car horn (should have been a gunshot)*
Tim A very old car.
FX *Train whistle (still can't program the gunshot)*
Jan *(Ad lib)* Or maybe they came by train.
FX *Alarm sound stops*
Amanda The alarm's stopped.
FX *Alarm starts again*

(Ad libbing all the rage)

Amanda That means we're safe.

Tim No, it cuts out after a certain time.

FX *Alarm stops*

Brad *(Still speaking through the set from upstage)* I think they also had rocks or stones or something. *(Causes distress. TIM closing in on panic)*

Kirsten *(Enters)* I can't find the fire extinguisher! What'll we use? *(Exits)*

Brad I can fix it! I can fix anything.
(BRAD finally opens door and exits to kitchen)

Tim *(Giving order)* Everybody down. Take cover if they throw things.
(Immediately TIM, AMANDA and JAN crouch in anticipation. Pause. Nothing)

Jan *(Ad lib)* Maybe you were mistaken.

FX *Sound of breaking glass.*
(They scream and crouch even more)

Tim *(First to look up. Ad lib)* I think the window stopped the rock.
(Pause. Suddenly two tennis balls lob in from LC. It should have been a brick)

Amanda *(Ad lib)* It's forty love and balls to you.

Brad *(Enters)* Is the red extinguisher okay for electrical fires?

FX *Phone rings. Keeps ringing*

Tim Leave it. Let it ring.

Jan Tim, it might be the police trying to contact us.

Brad I'll get it. *(Goes to phone)*

FX *Thunder clap.*

Kirsten *(Enters)* Brad! Quickly!
(KIRSTEN goes to exit back into kitchen but the door jams. She pushes. Then beats on the door and calls) Rosa! Rosa!

Brad *(Phone stops ringing. Answers phone)* Hello? … Ah, he's busy right now. Can I take a message?

Tim Who is it? *(BRAD holds up hand as stop sign as he listens)*

Kirsten *(Beating more loudly. Ad lib)* Rosa? Rosa? *(More pushing and beating)*

FX *Car horn quickly followed by train whistle*

Brad *(Hands over phone)* They say you've been selected to win over two thousand dollars' worth of food and wine from various restaurants.

Kirsten *(Desperate beating on door)* Rosa!!!

Jan Hang up, Brad then call the police.

Tim No, take their number. Tell them I'll call back.
(Kitchen door opens and smoke comes out. KIRSTEN coughs and waves the air then exits via door to bedrooms)

Amanda Dad, the kitchen's on fire. Dad!

FX *Voice on loud hailer. "Attention, you in the house. This is the police."*

Others The police!

Brad *(Into phone)* Can we call you back?

Kirsten *(Enters with red plastic buckets with FIRE on them)* This is all I could find!

FX *Strauss waltz is played by mistake, is killed when loud hailer FX begins again*

Amanda Brad, help Kirsten!
(BRAD replaces phone and takes one bucket)

FX *Voice on loud hailer. "Attention, you in the house. This is the police."*

Jan The police think we're the burglars. We need to get outside. Come on.
(JAN heads upstage to French windows)

Tim No, Jan. It might be a trap! *(JAN stops at doors)*

Rosa *(Enters looking dishevelled. Speaks with normal voice – no accent)* Call the real fire brigade! The bloody smoke machine's blown up!

FX *Smoke from UR comes in in more liberal doses*

Jan *(Furious with jammed doors. Now as herself)* Bloody doors! Who built this set! *(JAN pulls at French windows and one door swings open)*

FX *The song The Laughing Policeman starts playing and continues*
(TIM rushes up stage and points to kitchen)

Tim In there, throw it in there.

Brad I've got it!
(BRAD starts towards kitchen, trips and heaves bucket of water. A shower of confetti goes over TIM. The drama has become a farce and the actors have lost control. Smoke billows from kitchen. Chaos reigns. It's no use pretending. It'll be all wrong on the night. All the actors crash through the fourth wall. KIRSTEN heaves the second bucket of confetti over BRAD. Blame him. AMANDA throws cushions and the others return fire. The Laughing Policeman increases in volume. ROSA uses feather duster trying to tidy the room. She's gone mad. Lights dim or curtain falls as the festivities are in full swing. Add a medley of sound effects as follows)

FX *(overlapping) Voice on loud hailer. "Attention, you in the house. This is the police." Burglar alarm, Phone ringing, Glass breaking, Thunder clap, Car horn, Train whistle*

Curtain

(Just how the curtain calls are taken depends on the state of your set and the appearance of your actors. The actors could bow then resume throwing cushions, confetti and possibly chase one another offstage)

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More Comedies

Agatha Crispie



This production is an hilarious spoof on the writings of Agatha Christie and is impressively directed by Winston Williams. All the characters are extremely stupid and the plot is as improbable as those of the original Agatha, but it is a cleverly constructed little play and is performed by a talented bunch of actors who will have you laughing out loud and listening for those ridiculous references to some of Christie's book titles such as the absolutely essential "body in the library", the extremely thick and overconfident policemen, the enigmatic and sharp Miss Mary Mead (Miss Marples), Hercules, and, of course – The Mousetrap!! **Yass Rep**



The Merry Widows



Congratulations to Encore for a wonderful, heartwarming, thought-provoking and beautiful production of *The Merry Widows*, this under the direction of the playwright Cenarth Fox. Great writing, superb casting and beautifully nuanced delivery gave us an inside seat in the lives of *The Merry Widows*. The sadness, the joy, the laughter and pain and with a twist in the tail, it's a mystery again. Encore Theatre Company at the Clayton Community Centre Theatrette 1300 739 099. Go, go, go, 'tis a wonderful show. **Marie Ryan 96.5**

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