

Curiosity

By Phil Willmott

CHARACTERS.

KATE.

MOIRA / SARAH

MILES / Ged (a cat) / Stephen / Nick

MORGAN / Fang (a rat) / Newsreader / Chris

WAYNE / Louie (a cat) / Walter

SIR BRUTUS TATE / Halifax (a Cat) / Detective inspector Hartly /
Sir Gladstone Tate.

(All the characters are in their twenties except SIR BRUTUS'S
who are middle to late middle age.)

Notes.

It is essential that the parts are doubled as suggested.

The Characters doubled by the actor are often a comment on his
or her main part (in Capital letters, above) or blatantly part
of a dream, however every effort should be made to create a
truthful three dimensional portrait of each.

All the animals walk upright on two legs!

THE SETTING.

Scenes should merge quickly and seamlessly as in a dream, with light and shadows snapping in and out to suggest changes in locations.

This is played out on a set dominated by a huge, gothic elevator cage, through which, when appropriate characters can emerge Narnia like.

Around the cage and suspended above are the twisted, rusting shapes of a graveyard of Office furniture, some of it Modern some of it Edwardian. When light hits it from various angles it throws menacing shadows. Any chairs, desks telephones etc. required come from here.

ACT ONE.

WAYNE:

Last night I had the dream again. They came for me. Hundreds of them in the darkness. Scuttling, scratching. Nearer and nearer until I could see their red eyes and they could smell me. Smell that I was shit scared and there was no escape.

SARAH:

February 5th 1915. Walter, I've got so much to tell you, I don't know where to begin. Have you read? Now all the men are at the front they're putting us women to work in the offices and the factories. They asked if I could run things and here I am, in charge. They're sending another woman too. She's been to university, only she's not quite right in the head they say. Shell Shocked it's called. She was at the front for a time, a nurse. I hope she'll be alright.

Write to me. Please.

KATE:

Have you ever been tired, not just tired really tired. So tired you can't sleep at night, so tired that things begin to blur around the edges, where if you let yourself you could fall asleep at any moment, over the word processor or the photocopier or the coffee machine but you have to keep going, only sometimes you do fall asleep just for a few moments, your eyelids get heavy and you actually fall asleep and you can't always tell what's real and what's a dream.

Miles and I met when I was working at the advertising agency. It wasn't love at first sight or anything like that it was just...well, I suppose I was the new girl, finding my feet and I became aware that there was this bloke, okay looking, smiling at me, helping me to settle in, nothing too pushy. One night he asked me out for a drink and I thought why not.... and we talked... I mean really talked, like I hadn't done for years. He

has this way of listening, you see, that makes you feel everything you say really matters to him and somehow it's easy to listen back, you want to carry on sharing somehow. We went for a meal, we went back to his place and the sharing became touching, caressing, kissing, softly, lingering kisses. We didn't fuck that night, we just fell asleep in each others arms. The next day was Friday, he made me breakfast, we went into work together. It seemed so natural and everything that happened that day I couldn't wait to tell him about. We met in the evening, but we didn't go for a drink we went straight back to his flat and then we fucked, we fucked like we wanted to devour every piece of each other inside and out. THE next day he took me up to Hampstead Heath, showed me his favourite places, favourite views, it was a sharp winters day, we walked huddled together, our breath freezing in little clouds, later an old movie at The Retro, I didn't stand a chance. A month later I moved in. That was two years ago. We'd been together eighteen months the night I slept with Morgan. Morgan Tate.

MORGAN ENTERS A WINE BAR AREA STAGE RIGHT.

That was three months ago. Do I seem obsessed with time? It becomes important you see, when your tired, simple tasks seem to be taking for hours, actual hours fly by in a daze and separate events, facts conversations somehow get muddled together.

KATE IN THE MIDDLE SWITCHING BETWEEN TALKING WITH MORGAN IN THE BAR AND WITH MILES BACK AT THE FLAT, SOME HOURS LATER.

MORGAN:

I don't know why we haven't done this before.

KATE:

(TO MORGAN) Two reasons Morgan. One, I'm knackered and two, you're supposed to be seeing Moira and I'm supposed to be...

MILES:

Hello love. You're home late.

MORGAN:

Loosen up.

KATE:

(TO MORGAN) Loosen. I'm beyond needing to loosen, I need to slip into a coma.

MORGAN:

It's not looking good is it?

MILES:

I expected you home hours ago.

KATE:

(TO MILES) Oh, loosen up Miles. Or tighten or.. I don't know.

MILES:

Kate, are you drunk?

KATE:

(TO MORGAN) It's tough. It's not like before. The time scale.

MILES:

Have you been in the bar since five?

KATE:

(TO MILES) I worked late.

(TO MORGAN) I should be working late tonight. I just need a break. Clear my head. Put my feet up.

MILES:

Put your feet up.

KATE:

(TO MILES) Don't hassle me.

MORGAN:

You can do it.

KATE:

(TO MORGAN) It's all very well for you and Sir Brutus to say that but there are complications.

MORGAN:

There are always complications.

MILES:

I'm afraid we've run out of coffee.

KATE:

(TO MILES) Not again!.

(TO MORGAN) It's different this time. It's not an industry. It's a dinosaur. Have you looked around headquarters. It's an Edwardian maze. Even heating the headquarters is a drain, for god sake!

(TO MILES) Look at the state of this flat.

MILES:

Yes I know, I meant to tidy up really I did.

MORGAN:

You look great.

KATE:

(TO MORGAN) Morgan, I'm a mess. I've been slogging away under a mound of directors reports and feasibility studies non stop for the past week.

(TO MILES) Why don't you say anything nice to me any more.

MILES:

What?

KATE:

(TO MILES) Just...I don't know, Tell me you love me.

MILES:

Of course I love you.

MORGAN:

I know that, don't you think I know that. That's why I think it's so fantastic. There's a sort of magnetism, an energy that surrounds you.

KATE:

(TO MILES) I'm knackered, Miles. I'm going to go straight to bed.

MORGAN:

I'm being serious. I've been thinking a lot about us.

MILES:

I've missed you.

KATE:

(TO MILES) Yes, it looks like it.

(TO MORGAN) Us.

MORGAN:

Yes, us. I look across at you in the office. you're like a tower of strength there. Your amazing.

KATE:

MORGAN!

MILES:

It's true. Do you know what I was thinking about tonight, waiting for you.

MORGAN:

I want to take you away from all this.

MILES:

Do you remember. When we finally crawled out of bed that first weekend. We went to to see Casablanca at The Retro. We sang that song all the way home. "You must remember-"

KATE:

(TO MORGAN) This. Take me away from all what?

MORGAN:

That weekend at the conference, when we spent the night together. Do you ever think about it.

KATE:

(TO MORGAN) I can not tell a lie-

MILES:

- is still a sigh.

KATE:

(TO MORGAN) It was wrong.

MORGAN:

wrong!?

KATE(TO MORGAN) I'm sorry. I'm old fashioned. I think in a relationship-

MILES:

"The fundamental things apply"

MORGAN:

But as time goes by?

MILES:

"As time goes by"

KATE:

(TO MILES) Shut up Miles!

MILES:

But as time goes by, Kate. Do you realise it's two years ago next friday? Our first kiss.

KATE:

(TO MORGAN) I couldn't see beyond my nose. As time goes by things do change.

MORGAN:

And?

KATE:

(TO BOTH) What do you want me to say?

MORGAN:

Kate, I just want you to know, that I find you incredibly sexy. I can't keep sitting opposite you day, after day. Bottling it all in and not say how I felt.

MILES:

Bull shit. I don't know how to say how I feel about you. I run the lines in my head but it all sounds like so much bullshit. It doesn't do any of it justice.

KATE:

(TO MILES) Please, Miles I'm really tired can we do all this in the morning. No I'm in early, tomorrow. Tomorrow evening then, late. No, isn't that your poetry workshop? At the weekend. If things have slackened off a bit. But please I've had a hell of a time-

MORGAN:

Tonight. I want you tonight.

MILES:

I want to talk to you.

KATE:

(TO BOTH) Not tonight.

MILES AND MORGAN:

When?

KATE:

(TO BOTH) This is all too much.

MORGAN:

I know you think I'm a jerk. But give me a chance to prove your wrong. Come home with me tonight.

KATE:

(TO BOTH) I need to sleep.

MILES:

Alright, sorry.

KATE:

(TO MILES) Is that it then? Your just going to give up.

MILES:

I thought you wanted-

KATE:

(TO BOTH) I don't know what I want.

MORGAN:

You need someone who appreciates you.

MILES:

Can I get you a coffee.

KATE:

(TO MILES) THERE IS NO COFFEE!

MORGAN:

Why don't you come back to my place for coffee.

KATE:

(TO MORGAN) Said the spider to the fly.

MILES AND MORGAN:

I just want to see more of you.

MORGAN:

Pamper you.

MILES:

Talk.

MORGAN:

Fly you away from all this.

MILES:

We could go to the park. If you're not too tired.

KATE:

(TO MILES) I...I...It's not working... us. I need some space, time to think.

MILES:

About what?

MORGAN:

Bermuda.

KATE:

(TO BOTH) What?

MORGAN:

We've got a place out there. Let's take some time off. I'll OK. It with father. I'm sure he'll see the advantages in us having a break from all this. We can take a fresh look at things when we

get back.

KATE:

(TO MILES) I need time to take a fresh look at things. I'm going away for a while, to sort myself out. I don't want you to contact me.

MILES:

How long for.

MORGAN:

A few weeks.

KATE AND MILES:

A few weeks!

MORGAN:

I love you.

MILES:

I... I lov.. No, please.

KATE:

(TO MILES) I'm just not sure we're right-

MORGAN:

You'll see. I'm Mr Right-

MILES:

If that's what you want but at least, let me write-

ALL THREE:

As time goes by.

MILES:

I have to write things down you see, that's the problem, I can't just "out with things" I know what I want to say and I wait

until there's a gap in the conversation but by that time, what I wanted to say has got all mixed up.

I used to work for an advertising company where we'd get set these projects, have a few days to work on them and report back. It was no problem for me. I'd go away, think things through and I could always, always come up with something, maybe not the flashiest idea but there always was an idea. Kate joined the firm. I thought even more about each project. I was brilliant. We started dating. She gave me time to talk.

I used to love fucking her. You know, really slowly, rhythmically, making sure every stroke hit the spot. Then holding her until it was time to begin again.

The firm got into trouble and we had to really compete in the market. There was no time to think anymore so my work was crap. We went bust. She got a new job, fairly quickly actually, she's got brilliant business mind, all aspects of business, it's very high powered, what she does now.

I love

I took the time to become a poet. We could afford it.

I wish there'd been time to read her my poems, but she doesn't have time. No time to talk.

No time to fuck.

Before she left I used to make her lunch to take to work. Little balls of pink Salmon in pastry, apples I'd chosen, and I'd wrap it in a love poem to her.

But I'd find the little bundles still tied up in the rubbish. She's too busy for lunch.

I can't believe she's gone.

KATE:

Morgan, It's Kate. We'll talk. Tomorrow night. Your place. After work.

KATE GOES TO FIND WAYNE. HE'S NOT IN HIS ROOM. SHE FEELS UNCOMFORTABLE AMONGST THE FILTH.

KATE:

Hello!

WAYNE EMERGES.

WAYNE:

Oh Hi. (SNEEZES)

KATE:

Let me just make sure I'm in the right place. Pest control?

WAYNE:

Yeh. (SNEEZES) I know who you are. Are you going to give me the boot.

KATE:

I'm not here to give anyone the boot.

WAYNE:

I read about you in the staff magazine. you've come to stream line us. so they can sell us of.

KATE:

Well, yes but that doesn't necessarily mean job cuts. We often find ways of making departments more effective with out loss of man power.

WAYNE:

Right. (SNEEZES)

KATE:

That's a very nasty cold you've got.

WAYNE:

I'm used to them, I can't remember not having one. It's the damp.

KATE:

This building!

WAYNE:

Well, just this bit.

KATE:

How long have you been working for us Wayne?

WAYNE:

About six months. In this job.

KATE:

And you're our only-

WAYNE:

Rat catcher, yeh.

KATE:

I beg your pardon.

WAYNE:

Rat catcher. (SNEEZES)

KATE:

Just a minute. (NERVOUSLY LOOKING AROUND) There's rats?

WAYNE:

Well, yeh.

KATE:

Rats, in this building?

WAYNE:

Please don't sack me, please. I'll try harder really I will. I'm getting better.

KATE:

Rats?

WAYNE:

Hundreds of the bastards.

KATE LOOKS VERY UNEASY.

Oh don't worry, they don't come up here. It's too damp. That's why I've sort of set myself up in here. I can pretend then, see, that there aren't any.

KATE:

Don't they live in damp places? I mean.. cellars, that sort of thing. What about Wind in The Willows? that one lives in boats.

WAYNE:

A Rat with a boat!

KATE:

Yes.

WAYNE:

Shit.

KATE:

Well, I mean it's just a children's story.

WAYNE:

Even so...Shit. When I was a kid we went to the theatre at christmas. There was a fucking huge rat in that, I couldn't sleep for ages.

KATE:

Oh, The Nutcracker? Saddlers Wells?

WAYNE:

No, Dick Whittington. Les Dawson. My kids wanted to go last year, I said no way, You know what they're like at that age. you can't get them to sleep at the best of times. Are you sure rats don't mind the damp?

KATE:

I don't know.

WAYNE:

I've never seen one up here.

KATE:

Where do they-

WAYNE:

Hang out?

KATE:

Umm yes.

WAYNE:

Most of the basement. (SNEEZES) And the lower basement- I don't dare go down there.

KATE:

But your the...

WAYNE:

Rat Catcher? Yeh I know but please don't sack me. I've got to pay off my debts. They're all after me you see.

KATE:

Just a minute. Who's after you?

WAYNE:

I used to work upstairs. In display.

KATE:

Oh yes. That went didn't it?

WAYNE:

Yeh, yeh. It's been tendered out. I was being trained you see. They were going to bring me in. We got a mortgage, I got myself some plastic, had a good time. Why not? Then the department got axed (SNEEZES) I hadn't finished my training so no body else wanted me. They can have who they like nowadays. But I've got behind with the mortgage and I've got to pay off all the plastic. thousands there is. So I took this. It's the only thing I could get.

KATE:

I do have to make some cuts in domestic services.

WAYNE:

But we've been cut. There used to be three of us.

KATE:

These are tough times. The thing is not to be selfish about these things. a few nips and tucks can mean someone elsewhere keeps there job.

WAYNE:

(SNEEZES) I wouldn't want anyone to loose there job.

KATE:

Right. Me neither.

WAYNE:

Nips and tucks?

KATE:

Yes. What is your departmental budget?

WAYNE:

Eh.

KATE:

How much do you spend say per week. On ...pest control?

WAYNE:

Nothing.

KATE:

Nothing?

WAYNE:

Well, I've got this old cricket bat to thump them with but now I'm on my own I find it best to sort of keep out of their way.
(SNEEZES)

KATE:

So you don't actually catch any vermin?

WAYNE:

Well, they don't come up here.

KATE:

I see.

WAYNE:

You should see them. They're as big as dogs some of them. If you take the lift below ground level you can hear them scratching. It used to be alright when there was three of us. You could shine the torches all round you, but they come up so fast you see and you wouldn't want to corner a rat that size.

KATE:

This is ridiculous. Two entire floors of this building are inoperable due to vermin infestation and we have a pest control officer who's afraid of rats. It doesn't look good does it?

WAYNE:

(QUIETLY) No.

KATE:

I don't want to give anyone a hard time. But I've been called in here to make this disaster area an attractive proposition when the shares go on sale. Now if I don't manage that I lose my job. Would you say a head office where two whole floors were unworkable was a very good advertisement for this industry?

WAYNE:

(QUIETLY) No.

KATE:

I want the basements clear of rats. If you can't manage it then we'll have to put the contract out to tender. I'm sorry that's just the way it is. We can't afford someone who's incapable of doing their job.

WAYNE:

I don't know what to do.

KATE:

Well, my predecessor obviously thought you could manage. There must be rat poison.

WAYNE:

Maybe I could get a book on them from the library. What was it? Something in the Willows? (SNEEZES)

MOIRA ENTERS KATE'S OFFICE WITH FILES FOR HER.

MOIRA:

Sir Brutus and Young Mr Tate are on there way over. This is all I could find on the distribution history. Apparently up until the first world war deliveries used to go out from this building.

KATE:

Really? Did you know we had Rats in the cellar Blanche?

MOIRA:

Sorry?

KATE:

Oh, it's from an old film, "What Ever Happened to Baby Jane? Do you know it?

MOIRA:

I've heard of it.

KATE:

That's one thing I won't miss with Miles. Having to sit through any film over thirty years old that flickers to life at The Retro.

MOIRA:

Have you and Miles split up?

KATE:

I left him last night.

BUT SHE IS INTERRUPTED BY SIR BRUTUS THUNDERING DOWN THE CORRIDOR.

SIR B:

(OFF) Good Morning! Good Morning!

MOIRA GOES OUT TO HIM.

MORGAN ENTERS.

MOIRA:

(OFF) Sir Brutus. Could You just sign these before the meeting.

HE'S DETAINED OUTSIDE.

MORGAN:

(WHISPERS TO KATE) My place tonight then?

KATE:

Yes.

Morgan, I've left Miles.

MORGAN:

Probably a good thing.

SIR BRUTUS ENTERS.

SIR B. Do you know that's the third time that girls had me sign those agreements?

KATE:

She's not very good at typing. We read them through and they have to be done again.

SIR B:

Why did I hire her then?

KATE:

I have no idea, Sir Brutus.

SIR B:

Good Morning Kate.

HE LOOKS AT HER.

I hope you don't mind me saying but when was the last time you had a good nights sleep? You're all eyes.

KATE:

Pressure of work, Sir Brutus.

SIR B. Well, don't let it get to you. Sail boats you know. that's what I dream off. Couple more of these and It's the lake district for me. Hiring out little sail boats on the water. Treasure Island, playing at pirates.

HE PICKS UP A PAPER KNIFE AND USES IT FOR A CUTLASS AT KATE.

Sat in my little hut. Collecting the fifty ps. You've got to have something to look forward to.

MORGAN:

I thing Kate could do with a holiday father.

SIR B:

Yes, yes, dare say she could. Well, Let's get this one in the bag and we can all give our selves an expensive pat on the back.

MOIRA COMES IN AND HANDS A MEMO TO MORGAN.

MOIRA:

Sorry to interrupt. A phone message for you Mr Tate. they said it was urgent.

MORGAN:

Ah, yes. Thank you Moira. If you'll excuse me, Kate, father.

HE LEAVES WITH MOIRA.

WE CAN NOW SEE AND HEAR KATE WITH SIR BRUTUS AND MOIRA WITH

MORGAN.

MORGAN:

Couldn't this have waited?

MOIRA:

Until when you big Shit? You've changed your home phone number.

MORGAN:

Every few months. Policy.

MOIRA:

You smug git.

SIR B:

Morgan's heard all this in the lift so I'll start with out him. I'm not happy Kate. We're just not reaching deadlines. What's going on?

KATE:

Of all the projects this is the one with the biggest public service potential. everything's so finely balanced, It's amazing it's kept going as long as it has. You pull at one thread and the whole thing starts to unravel.

MORGAN:

Moira, Moira! Look at you, you're over worked. I don't think we really appreciate all the work you do for us.

MOIRA:

Cut the crap and give me my money back.

MORGAN:

Moira. One hears that name so seldom.

MOIRA:

I gave you two thousand pounds of my savings because you said you were in trouble. Now I want it back.

MORGAN:

Of course, of course. I've got a surprise for you.

MOIRA:

What surprise?

SIR B:

(A DEEP SIGH) Time was when there was an art to all this, a skill, like taking a part an old clock, reassembling the gleaming pieces and watching the mechanism spin into new momentum. Now we just charge in chuck a bucket of white was over the whole thing and run for it. It's only the company's work for the disabled that gives me any satisfaction.

MORGAN:

Moira, do you think I've wanted to be apart from you? It's been agony waking up in that cold bed, yearning to curl my body around yours, run the tip of my tongue around the back of your neck, discover you again with my fingers, waking you slowly.... from the inside out.

MOIRA:

Why haven't you called me?

MORGAN:

Kiss me! Do it.

MOIRA:

No.

MORGAN:

Do it!

Come here!

HE GRABS HER HAND AND PLACES IT ON HIS CRUTCH.

MORGAN:

Richard III, Moira. I played it at prep school.

Squeeze. Go on. Crush me if you want.

"Nay do not pause: For I did kill King Henry-
But twas thy beauty that provoked me.
Nay, now dispatch;'twas I that stabbed young Edward-
But twas thy heavenly face that set me on"

Squeeeeeeeaze!.

PAUSE

SHE BEGINS TO RUB. HE MOANS. HE GRABS HER. SNOGS HER.

SIR B. Look at the expenditure.

SIR BRUTUS TURNS FOR A MOMENT INTO A HUGE CAT

MIAOW!

KATE STARTS UP.

KATE:

(ASIDE) Oh my God! Sir Brutus has turned into an enormous cat!

SIR B:

(AS NORMAL) Kate? I fear I don't have your full attention. Please try and get some sleep tonight.

KATE:

Yes Sir Brutus. Sorry.

MORGAN:

Now, you don't want your two grand back. You don't want that money, Moira. You want that money to go with mine. To buy us a new life together. We're going to get the hell out of this. We're going to Bermuda. I'm not kidding. I've got the contacts over there. It's all set up. That's why I haven't been in touch, I wanted to get it all perfect for you. Well, now the cat's out of the bag because of you, you silly girl, doubting me. but I'm glad because I've been dying to tell you.

MOIRA:

I want to see you tonight.

MORGAN:

Tonight. Yes, tonight. Your thighs are going to glisten in the moonlight. Tonight my cock will sing a hymn to you!

Oh shit! No sorry can't make it tonight. Boring businessy thing. Not here. Country club businessy thing. But tomorrow my darling.

SIR B:

Let us start with the housekeeping, even of this building. This is the head office, our show case. half of it isn't even operational. Did you know distribution used to operate from this very building? Why can't it again. Why can't we just close down Fairfax Rd. and operate out of here. It'd be a damned impressive start.

KATE:

I'll look into it Sir Brutus.

SIR B. And we have got to halve the running costs of this place.

KATE:

Yes Sir Brutus.

SIR B:

Halve! When can you have the projections for me?

KATE:

Well, it's a bit late in the day...first thing tomorrow morning.

SIR B:

Excellent.

MOIRA LOADS PILES OF PAPERS ON TO KATE'S DESK. KATE WADES THROUGH THEM. AS WE SEE MORGAN ON THE PHONE.

MORGAN:

Tomorrow night. I'll have the money for you tomorrow night. Yes I know I said that before. But this time...Yes I understand...ALRIGHT! ALRIGHT! YOU DON'T NEED TO SPELL IT OUT TO ME!

WHO EVER IT WAS HAS HUNG UP. MORGAN LOOKS PETRIFIED.

Oh christ.

SOME TIME LATER:

KATE:

Moira. You get off home. I won't need you anymore tonight

MOIRA:
Are you sure?

KATE:
Yes. Good night.

MOIRA:
Good night.

WAYNE PASSES ACROSS THE DARKENED STAGE WITH HIS TORCH AND CRICKET BAT.

WAYNE:
(SNEEZES)

SOMETIME LATER. KATE HAS HAD ENOUGH. SHE UNCEREMONIOUSLY STUFFS PAPERS INTO A PLASTIC BAG.

MORGAN'S FLAT. ALL SOFT MUSIC AND ROMANTIC LIGHTING.

MORGAN ALONE.

MORGAN:
When I started at boarding school there was this blonde kid who wrote stories.

I was jealous. I wanted to write stories too. But when I got so far with them the characters were so extraordinary that I'd get stuck and I'd write "And then I woke up and it was all a dream."

Sometimes when I looked around me at all the stupid other kids,

it used to make me sad that my world couldn't be in real life, and that I always had to write, "And then I woke up" I wondered why the teacher kept giving me A's and the blonde kid who wrote the proper stories would only get B's and C's and then I noticed that the English teacher used to look at me in a funny way.

And as I got older I began to notice that when we went swimming it was in The Sir Brutus Tate swimming pool, and when we did experiments they were in the Sir Brutus Tate Science block and that some kids had a Tate scholarship, all things paid for by my family. So when they came to do the school play in the Tate Hall naturally I wanted to be the king.

But the English teacher had started looking at the blonde kid in a funny way too. So I let him fuck me and all of a sudden I was the king, in front of the whole school, in my family's hall, and I discovered it was possible to be as enormous as the people in my stories...

... because of who I was.

... And the way I look.

So I fucked the blonde kid as well, the first year, most of the lower sixth and half the rugby team.

Well, some one told me it was just a phase so I thought I'd better make the most of it.

But it wasn't really. Now I do it with women but the important bit has stayed the same. I can still have anyone I want.

Which in my current financial crisis and until I marry into my adoring, chinless, fiancees vast inheritance, is a jolly good thing.

I once fucked this girl. Somehow she got my number.

"Hello it's me"

and I had to explain everything to her. She couldn't believe someone like me actually existed. Her "worst nightmare" she said.

And I said "exactly"

"Sorry about that!"

THE DOORBELL. IT'S KATE LOOKING MOST UNLOVELY IN A CAGOO. WITH HER PLASTIC CARRIER.

MORGAN, RATHER DISMAYED AT THE VISION BEFORE HIM, HELPS HER OFF WITH HER COAT.

MORGAN:

Darling where have you been? Have some champagne.

KATE:

The domestic budget for Head office. I've got to get it sorted.

MORGAN OPENS AND POURS THE CHAMPAGNE.

MORGAN:

Sweet heart don't worry about that now. you're with me.

KATE:

Sir Brutus is expecting it first thing.

MORGAN:

The old bastard. Why doesn't he retire? Fuck off to his sailing boats on Windamere? Do you know how big a salary he draws?

KATE:

Yes of course I know.

MORGAN:

We don't need him. I should be running the firm.

KATE:

Your father is a genius.

MORGAN:

Yeh, yeh. And you know how much I earn. Do you think that's a fair reward? I don't have to stay with this firm, you know. I've been head hunted, dozens of times. But I stay with the old Buzzard because I believe in loyalty, Kate. I would do anything for my father.

KATE:

I'm sure he feels the same way about you.

MORGAN:

No, no he doesn't. I'm in trouble, Kate. Big financial trouble. I know for a fact there's enough money in the office safe alone to get the sharks off my back for a few months, till I get myself sorted out but will he help me? Will he fuck. He'd rather pay the BUPA fees to fix my about to be broken limbs.

KATE:

It can't be that bad.

MORGAN:

Kate, We're not talking overdrawn on your Marks and Spencer charge card here. I'm mixed up with some very unpleasant people. I'm desperate. I'd mug the old git if I thought I could get away with it.

KATE:

So you won't be splashing out much when we go to Bermuda.

MORGAN:

Oh I will, Bermuda Kate, that's separate. That's about you and me. I've got the money for that.

I've been thinking. What is it that keeps us here? We're the back bone of one of the most influential firms in Britain. Why don't you and I take all that and set ourselves up over there? A whole new life in the sun. We'd clean up. There'd be no one to even touch us. I've made enquiries. We just need an initial capital outlay and we could be away.

KATE:

What sort of figure.

MORGAN:

Chicken feed. but I'd like to start putting feelers out. Grease a few palms. I could put up a sizable sum if you could come up with... say five K. just to make it look like you had a stake in it.

KATE:

I'll think about it.

MORGAN:

I could meet you tomorrow lunch time. We could go to the bank together. Sign me over the money and I'll get the ball rolling.

KATE:

Tomorrow! I'll need longer then that, your asking me to change my whole life.

MORGAN:

Yes, yes I am. This is a once in a life time opportunity. Take a deep breath and get me that money tomorrow. You won't regret it.

KATE:

Morgan, how can I think about the rest of my life, when I can't even balance the books for tomorrow.

MORGAN:

Have another glass of champagne.

KATE:

And then will you help me with this.

MORGAN:

You bet. Finnish this glass

SHE DOES. HE TAKES IT FROM HER.

Look why don't you make yourself comfortable. Take off some of those clothes.

HE GOES BEHIND HER. BURIES HIS FACE IN HER NECK AND SLIPS OFF HER JACKET.

MORGAN:

Bermuda Kate. You and I on the beach, under the stars. away from all this shit.

HE BEGINS TO UNDO HER BLOUSE. SHE MELTS INTO HIM, BUT THEN PULLS AWAY.

KATE Morgan, the budgets!

MORGAN:

Right, you have come to the right man. Budgets? Eat em for breakfast. Let me just fix us those drinks.

HE POURS THE CHAMPAGNE. HE HANDS HER THE GLASS.

Down in one please.

KATE I couldn't.

MORGAN:

No "down in one". No help.

KATE:

Alright.

SHE DOES HER BEST. HE DOWNS A GLASS. REFILLS THE GLASSES.

MORGAN:

Right, close your eyes.

KATE:

Morgan!

MORGAN:

Trust me.

THE CHAMPAGNE IS GOING TO KATE'S HEAD. SHE GIGGLES.

KATE:

Alright.

MORGAN:

Now hold out your hands.

SHE DOES SO. HE SLIPS HANDCUFFS ON HER.

KATE:

MORGAN! What are you doing!

MORGAN:

(AGGRESSIVE) Shut up!

KATE:

Morgan!

MORGAN:

SHUT THE FUCK UP! alright we're going to play halve the budget.
Ready? I said ready?

KATE:

Yes.

MORGAN:

Sit down!

HE SITS HER IN A CHAIR. HE STANDS BEHIND HER WITH THE PAPERS.

(FROM BEHIND) Right, I have in my hand a departmental budget.

HE HOLDS IT TO HER EAR AND RIPS IT SLOWLY UP.

KATE:

No!... Morgan I have to work with those figures.

MORGAN:

Tough. Do you know what that was Kate? That was the canteen payroll. Gone.

KATE:

Ten peoples jobs.

MORGAN:

Let em eat sandwiches.

HE HOLDS UP ANOTHER PIECE OF PAPER.

Do you know what I have here Kate? I have In house security.

HE STARTS TO RIP.

KATE:

No!

MORGAN:

I see. strong feelings about in house security. Do you know what I say Kate? I say Fuck the lot of them. Sack them and put the whole thing out to tender.

KATE:

Doesn't work. We've tried that else where. We just get ripped

off.

MORGAN:

And everybody remembers who made the cut eh? Well, I think we might have to do a deal here. What are you going to give me to stop me sending our little peaked capped, white socked security friends after the dinner ladies to the great paper shredder. What are they worth to you Kate? Are they, for instance, worth sucking my Dick for?

KATE:

No!

HE RIPS UP THE BUDGET.

KATE:

Stop!

MORGAN:

Too Late.

ANOTHER PAPER.

In house Magazine.

SILENCE FROM KATE, THOUGH SHE'S SQUIRMING. HE RIPS IT UP. ANOTHER.

Maintenance.

NOTHING FROM KATE. HE RIPS IT UP. ANOTHER.

Creche.

AGAIN.

Training.

AGAIN.

MORGAN:

What do we have hear? Cleaners!

KATE:

Stop!

MORGAN:

Stop? We like the cleaners do we? But do we like them enough.

KATE:

Yes.

MORGAN:

Yes what?

KATE:

Yes. Yes, I'll do it.

MORGAN:

Do what?

KATE:

Give you a blow job.

MORGAN:

Not good enough. I'm afraid the price has gone up.

KATE:

What do I have to do now.

MORGAN:

Lick my balls first.

PAUSE.

KATE:

Alright.

MORGAN:

For fifteen minutes.

And it goes with out saying...

KATE:

What?

MORGAN:

When the time comes. You swallow.

KATE:

No, I'll do the rest but I won't swallow.

MORGAN:

I'm a fair man. In that case, you get to keep your cleaners. but you loose..

HE SELECTS A BUDGET AT RANDOM.

Pest Control.

HE RIPS IT UP. STARTS TO TAKE OFF HIS TROUSERS.

I'd rather cum in your face anyway.

MOIRA MEETS MILES BY ACCIDENT IN A BAR. HE IS QUIETLY, GENTLY, SWEETLY DRUNK.

MOIRA:

Miles? are you alright?

MILES:

Hello Moira.

MOIRA:

Miles. You don't look very good at all. Do you want me to call you a cab.

MILES:

I admit it. I'm a cab (HE GIGGLES)

MOIRA:

What? Oh I see, yes very funny. Are you on your own.

MILES:

I was hoping Kate would be in here.

MOIRA:

She was at the office but I've just called. she seems to have left.

MILES:

Where is she? I love her. She...do you believe me Moira?

MOIRA:

Yes, yes of course. Look these things work themselves out. I've got to get back to my friends.

MILES:

I told my mother we broke up. Do you know what she said Moira? Do you know?

MOIRA:

No.

MILES:

She said there's plenty more fish on the beach. No I've got that wrong, there's plenty...Moira! I don't want to go out with any of the other pebbles! I love Kate. Please help me to find her...(HE STARTS TO CRY).

MOIRA:

Sweet heart! come here. (SHE HUGS HIM) The best thing to do is leave her alone for a while. she's overworked. Once things settle down she'll see sense. I'm sure she will.

MILES:

Things never settle down. She's tired all the time. In a rush. That frightens me Moira. I'm no good at rushes. Do you know what I do for a living Moira.

MOIRA:

Kate mentioned something about being a poet.

MILES:

No, no Moira. I'm not a poet. I wish I was. Poets, they can write beautiful little parcels of words about how they feel, tie it up neatly. 'specially those little Japanese fuckers...any way, NO! no Moira I'm not a poet I'M a lyrical poet. Do you know what that means? That means that all my life I have been incapable of saying anything, even the slightest little thing in anything less the twenty five stanzas. So why did I have to fall in Love with a woman who hasn't even got time to read my initials.

MOIRA:

I know how you feel.

MILES:

You do?

MOIRA:

My bloke..sometimes...I don't know. Oh I've got nothing to complain about really. I'm not supposed to tell anyone but...well, he's taking me to Bermuda. We're going to start a new life out there. You won't tell anyone will you? I don't want Sir Brutus to know yet.

MILES:
Bermuda?

MOIRA:
Yes. Isn't it wonderful?

INTRODUCTION TO THE WALTZ STARTS. THE BLUE DANUBE.

MILES:
Kate's going to Bermuda.

MOIRA:
Is she?

MILES:
Yes. To think things through. That's a coincidence isn't it? Oh well, good luck Moira. If you happen to see Kate over there could you just tell her-

MOIRA:
Just a minute. Kate's going to Bermuda?

MILES:
Yes.

MOIRA:
when did she tell you this?

MILES:
The night before last.

MOIRA:
When... was she thinking of going.

MILES:
Soon, I think.

MOIRA:
I see. Miles, have you ever met my boy Friend? Sir Brutus's son,

Morgan.

MILES:

I don't think so. Do you love him Moira?

MOIRA:

Miles, I think we may have more in common than either of us realised.

THE WALTZ PROPER BEGINS. KATE AND MORGAN DANCE ON. THE MUSIC SUBSIDES SLIGHTLY.

KATE:

I haven't fucked like that in ages.

MORGAN:

I am very good aren't I.

KATE:

Morgan!

MORGAN:

I haven't started yet.

KATE:

I want to sleep now. I've got a pass key so I can get in early.

MORGAN:

You've got a pass key?

KATE:

Yes.

MORGAN:

Kate, I'm going to fix it that you sleep so deeply you wouldn't hear if a bomb went off.

HE STARTS TO LEAD HER INTO THE WALTZ AGAIN.

KATE:

No Morgan. I want to sleep. No

MORGAN:

Kate, Kate trust me. Let yourself go. Relax.

SHE GETS CARRIED ALONG WITH THE MUSIC.

There doesn't that feel good?

KATE:

Morgan..I... Oh yes! yes!

MORGAN:

Do you want me to stop?

KATE:

No, No.

MORGAN:

Are you sure.

KATE:

Yes. Oh God! Oh yes, yes!!

THEY WALTZ OUT.

MOIRA:

Miles, Kate and Morgan work together.

MILES:

Do they?

MOIRA:

Yes. All the time.

MILES:

What does he look like?

MOIRA:

He looks...good.

MILES:

Good?

MOIRA:

Good.

MILES:

And you think... Bermuda?

MOIRA:

It doesn't look..

BOTH:

Good.

MOIRA:

No.

THE BLUE DANUBE STARTS AGAIN. (TRACK 1 '.38).

Miles, what are you drinking?

MILES:

Southern Comfort.

MOIRA:

I'll have a double.

MORGAN AND KATE WALTZ THROUGH AGAIN. BREATHING HEAVILY.

AFTER A WHILE:

KATE:

Don't you need to rest now?

MORGAN:

My record is fourteen times in a row.

KATE:

Oh God!

THEY WALTZ OUT. MOIRA SINGS TO THE BLUE DANUBE:

MOIRA:

Why do I never learn?
You'd think I'd have known,
That you can't trust a git
With a portable phone.
If they pencil you in,
Be brave, rub them out.
Mark his Filofax,
With an Axe.

Oh forget them,
Let them,

(SPOKEN) They don't deserve us, Miles.

MOIRA DANCES WITH MILES, KATE WITH MORGAN TO THE CLIMAX OF THE WALTZ WHICH HAS KATE FAINTING INTO MORGAN'S ARMS AND BEING CARRIED OFF.

COMPLETE CONTRAST:

WAYNE:

Tonight the dream changed. Instead of the piercing squeals around me, there was silence and then from far below me there was one shriek, long, hungry, desperate, making my blood run cold, and then a scratching from far away, getting nearer and

nearer, I tried to run. Down corridors, a maze, smeared with shit, reeking, smelling of their shit, all the time the scratching getting nearer, until I reached a dead end. The scratching stopped. Silence. Slowly I turned to face emptiness and then from beneath me, in a cloud of debris the earth belched him up. One great rat. Eyes flaming through the clouds of dust. His mouth opened on his decaying rows of razor sharp teeth, his breath like the touch of death. He threw back his head and screamed with hunger.

SARAH TICKLING THE EARS OF SIR BRUTUS WHO IS NOW A HUGE CAT, HALIFAX. HE IS ASLEEP.

SARAH:

February the 7th 1914.

Dear Walter, Why don't you reply to my letters, surely if something had happened to you they would have sent word. Perhaps your too busy.

I can imagine what it must be like in France. I've seen pictures of the beautiful vineyards, are there beautiful women there too?

Have you forgotten me. I don't want to think about that. You wouldn't leave me would you?

Here, the weather is bitterly cold. Halifax the cat and I are huddled in the office.

It's getting very late now. I'll go home soon. I don't like being alone here after dark. You should see the damage the rats do at night. Thank god they have not called up cats. Halifax has to do the job of ten.

There is till no sign of my assistant. I have contacted the authorities and they promise me soon. I hope she is not too,

what's the word they use, Shell shocked. Apparently I am not to take too much notice of what she says.

Oh well, it's time for me to go home now and leave Halifax to the night shift.

THERE IS A CRASH.

(FRIGHTENED) What was that? who's there? Is anybody there!

SHE SCREAMS.

SHE SEES A HUGE RAT, FANG, WE RECOGNISE IT LOOKS LIKE MORGAN.

FANG:

HUNGRY. RUTHLESS. I WANT. I WANT. GIVE ME! GET OUT OF MY WAY!
CUNT! WHORE! GIVE ME! FUCKING BITCH! HUNGRY! FOOD! GIVE ME!

SARAH:

(RUNS OUT)

Halifax! Wake up! There's a rat! Kill it! Halifax !

HALIFAX STIRS FROM HIS SLEEP. FANG IS TOO PREOCCUPIED IN HIS SEARCH FOR FOOD TO NOTICE HALIFAX.

HALIFAX:

Stir. stretch. sniff the air, tense, listen, smell, arch HISSSS!

FANG TURNS TO SEE HALIFAX. THEY CONFRONT EACH OTHER.

HALIFAX:

Rat.

FANG:

Cat.

FANG LEAPS ON TO HALIFAX'S BACK. HE LIFTS HIS HEAD, OPENS HIS MOUTH AND BURIES HIS TEETH INTO THE BACK OF HALIFAX'S NECK.

HALIFAX'S LEGS GIVE IN, HE COLLAPSES AND DIES WITH FANG ON TOP OF HIM.

BLACK OUT.

A DOOR BELL RINGS. AND THEN AGAIN AND AGAIN. MORGAN'S FLAT THE NEXT MORNING.

KATE EVENTUALLY EMERGES BLEARY EYED, IN A DRESSING GOWN. SHE CROSSES THE STAGE TO THE HALLWAY OFF. WE HEAR HER OPEN THE DOOR TO DETECTIVE INSPECTOR HUNTLY.

HUNTLY:

Does a Mr Tate live here?

KATE:

Yes.

HUNTLY:

I'm Detective Inspector Huntly. Is Mr Tate around.

KATE:

Yes. Umm, perhaps you'd better come in.

HUNTLY:

Thank you.

THEY ENTER.

KATE:

If you'll just wait there.

SHE GOES OFF TO THE BEDROOM.

KATE:

(RETURNING) I'm sorry you must have missed him, hours ago. I had

no idea it was so late. I've badly overslept.

HUNTLY:

Do you have any idea where I might find him?

KATE:

Well, I presume he'll be at work.

HUNTLY:

No, no. Mr Tate hasn't been at his work place all morning. I've just come from there. He's missing, along with a Miss Gregson.

KATE:

I'm Miss Gregson.

HUNTLY:

You are?

KATE:

Yes.

HUNTLY:

I see. Good friend of Mr Tate's are you? At the office they gave us an address for you in Finsbury park, I've just been round there. I should telephone your boyfriend if I were you I'm afraid I got him rather worried.

KATE:

What's going on? Has something happened at work?

HUNTLY:

I'm afraid I have some rather shocking news for you. Your boss, Sir Brutus Tate has been murdered.

KATE:

No!

HUNTLY:

It looks like he disturbed a thief. They seem to have lashed out at the nearest thing to hand. A paper knife.

KATE:

No.

HUNTLY:

Obviously we're anxious to trace his son to give him the bad news. Can I take it you and Mr Tate spent last night together.

KATE:

Yes.

HUNTLY:

All night?

KATE:

Yes.

HUNTLY:

Well, I'm sure we'll track him down. He can't have gone far.

KATE:

No.

HUNTLY:

If you don't mind me saying so I think they could do with you at work. One of the pass keys is missing and nobody can trace what's happened to it. You don't have it by any chance?

KATE:

Yes, yes I have. I work late you see, sometimes I go in early. It's a huge building sometimes security are patrolling away from the main entrance.

HUNTLY:

I expect you've had to make cuts. Security, often the first to go.

KATE:

Yes.

HUNTLY IS REPLACED BY MOIRA.

MOIRA:

Kate.

KATE:

I...

MOIRA:

Have they traced Morgan yet?

KATE:

I don't think so.

MOIRA:

Where can he be. Didn't he say anything?

KATE:

When?

MOIRA:

I know he was with you last night. Miles and I worked it out.

KATE:

Miles?

MOIRA:

I met him in a wine bar last night looking for you, he was out of his tree. Morgan had cancelled a date with me.

KATE:

I'm sorry

MOIRA:

When I heard you were going to Bermuda..... You see, I thought I was.

KATE:

Going to Bermuda?

MOIRA:

With Morgan. I wonder how many other stupid bimbos swallowed that one.

KATE:

Now just a minute.

MOIRA:

He was just screwing us for money

KATE:

No!

MOIRA:

Face it. Did he ask you for any money?

KATE:

No he didn't. Very far from it. He offered me a business partnership. you've got it all wrong, Moira. He was going to Bermuda with me to set up in business. Obviously he was asking you along to work for us

MOIRA:

Kate, don't be a fool. He was desperate for money. He charmed it out of us. there's nothing to be ashamed of. He's very persuasive. The most important thing is that you don't loose Miles because of this. And tell the police everything you know.

KATE:

What do you mean?

MOIRA:

It's obvious isn't it?

KATE:

What?

MOIRA:

Morgan came back to do the old mans safe over.

KATE:

Are you suggesting Morgan, killed his father.

MOIRA:

All I know is he was desperate. He'd never set out to, no. But if he was disturbed in the act, and he was frightened and it was dark...don't you think it's possible?

KATE:

No I do not. have you told anyone about this ridiculous idea.

MOIRA:

Of course not. But you understand don't you...it doesn't look good.

KATE:

It looks how it is. An absolutely ludicrous idea. Morgan was with me last night.

MOIRA:

All night?.

KATE:

All night.

MOIRA:

Kate, you've got a pass key haven't you.

KATE:

Yes.

MOIRA:

Morgan's never had one.

KATE:

I've heard just about enough of this.

MOIRA:

And did he sleep with you all night or could he have sneaked out.

KATE:

I would have woken.

MOIRA:

Would you? How many times did he have you? I know what he's like Kate, in bed.

KATE SLAPS MOIRA IN THE FACE.

KATE:

THAT'S ENOUGH! I've heard enough! Now listen you won't breathe a word of that jealous filth to anyone, you hear?

MOIRA:

Jealous? I'm not jealous. I wish you well of him.

KATE:

He is your employer, and I am your superior. If I hear you breath a word of this to anyone I'll have you out on you arse so fast you'll strike sparks against the pavement and I'll make sure you couldn't even get a checkout position at Kwick save. Is that clear!?

MOIRA JUST LOOKS.

MUSIC:

(FUMING STILL) Sir Brutus Tate is dead. A man I have worked for, looked up too and respected for many years. I think we all owe it to his memory to carry on business with the efficiency and ferocity that he would wish. Now if you're ready I should like to instigate the cuts I have made in the domestic budget.

MOIRA AND KATE BECOME SOULLESS, MECHANICAL TO THE MUSIC.

MOIRA:

This is Miss Gregson's Secretary, Could you step up to her office please she would like to discuss the future of - our security

THE ABOVE SPEECH REPEATED WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING ENDINGS.
Canteen/ Magazine/ Creche/ Training/ Maintenance/ Cleaning...

REPEATED OVER THE TOP OF THIS:

KATE:

Thank you for coming to see me, Please take a seat. IT is always an urksome task to have to be the bearer of bad tidings. As you may have heard we are, with much reluctance having to make some cuts in the running of this organisation. Please believe me when I say that I have been wrestling with the figures for days now to try and find an alternative strategy but this has proved impossible and it is with great sadness that we are going to have to let you you go.

KATE:

And I can assure you that no one has found these decisions harder to swallow than myself.

We've missed one. Where's that boy from pest control?

MOIRA:

He hasn't been on his extension all day.

KATE:

WELL GET HIM UP HERE!

MOIRA:

Kate, it's seven o'clock. There's no one left in the building. Could I get off now please?

KATE:

Yes I suppose so. Bring me the paperwork for Fairfax street. I want to get through that by tomorrow morning.

MOIRA:

There's mountains of it. What about Miles? Don't you think you ought to-

KATE:

That will be all Moira! Bring me the paperwork and then go home.

MOIRA:

Yes Kate.

KATE IS BROUGHT THE PAPER WORK AND PLOUGHS INTO IT. MOIRA LEAVES.

AS KATE WORKS.

NEWSREADER (MORGAN):

Tributes have been paid by the business world today to Sir Brutus Tate head of the Tate group of companies, who was murdered last night. Sir Brutus who was fifty six is thought to have surprised thieves late last night in his central London Office. Police are anxious to trace his son Morgan Tate who has not been seen since the incident. This Evening Detective Inspector Owen Hartly appealed for information.

HARTLY:

Somebody knows where the Murderer is. Where is he? Is he sitting

opposite you? is he in your home? at your table? did his eyes meet yours on the tube this morning? Is he standing right behind you? Can you touch him? have you kissed him? have you felt his breath against your cheek? have you taken him inside you? Do you want him there with you now, caressing you, reassuring you, holding you? Where is he? Where is he? Somebody's husband, Somebody's son.

THE PHONE RINGS. KATE JUMPS. ANSWERS IT.

HARTLY:

Miss Gregson,

KATE:

Yes.

HARTLY:

Detective inspector Hartly. I'm glad I managed to catch you before you left. Sorry to disturb you so late.

KATE:

Have you found Morgan.

HARTLY:

Young Mr Tate? No I'm afraid not, yet. No, I just wanted to let you know that someone will be round early tomorrow to collect your pass key for examination. Just a formality but yours, some how, got missed today. You do still have it don't you?

KATE:

Yes, yes of course. It's in my bag.

HARTLY:

Right you are. Good night Miss Gregson.

KATE:

Good night inspector.

SHE PUTS THE PHONE DOWN AND RETURNS TO HER WORK.

AFTER A WHILE SHE LOOKS UP. LOOKS TOWARDS HER BAG.

PICKS IT UP. OPENS IT AND LOOKS FOR THE PASS KEY.

IT ISN'T THERE. SHE SCRABBLES MORE DESPERATELY ROUND FOR IT.

KATE:

No! It must be here. It can't be true. he didn't steal it.

SHE BEGINS TO FRANTICLY GO THROUGH HER POCKETS.

SHE GETS DOWN ON HER HANDS AND KNEES TO SEARCH AROUND HER DESK.

IN THIS POSITION SHE TURNS ROUND AND FINDS HERSELF EYE BALL TO EYE BALL WITH A LARGE RAT. (WE CAN'T SEE THE RAT, THIS TIME)

KATE:

(UNDER HER BREATH) Oh my god!

WAYNE APPEARS. SHE CAN ONLY HEAR HIS VOICE.

WAYNE:

Careful! Don't panic, you mustn't panic a rat. They Smell it. Move slowly to the door. You mustn't let them feel cornered. That's when they'll eat your face off. Don't panic them. Move slowly to the door. Don't look back. Move to the lift. Don't look back.

KATE BACKS AWAY, RUNS TO THE LIFT.

SHE PUNCHES THE BUTTON TO CALL IT.

KATE:

Please, please, come on.

SHE LOOKS AT THE DIAL ABOVE THE DOORS.

Come on. (READS) First floor, 2nd, 3rd, 4th 5th, 6th, 7th!

THE LIFT HAS ARRIVED. SHE STEPS IN.

THE DOOR CLANGS SHUT BEHIND HER.

SHE PRESSES THE BUTTON.

IT SHUDDERS INTO ACTION.

6th, 5th, 4th. 3rd, 2nd, 1st. Ground floor.

BUT THE LIFT ISN'T STOPPING.

Ground Floor! Ground floor! Stop! I don't want to go any further. Stop (READS) Basement! Lower Basement. Still going down Speeding up! What's happening. Somebody help me, Help me! Please!

SHE SCREAMS. BLACK OUT.

LIGHTS UP IMMEDIATELY.

KATE SQUATTING, HER HANDS COVERING HER FACE.

SARAH STANDS OVER HER.

SARAH:

(KINDLY) Hello, you must be Kate, the assistant they promised me.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT ONE.