JOHN CLEESE & CONNIE BOOTH

The Complete

FAWLTY TOWERS

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the complete

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John Cleese
and Connie Booth

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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the complete

FAWLTY TOWERS

A TOUCH OF CLASS

Basil Fawlty John Cleese
Sybil Fawlty Prunella Scales
Manuel Andrew Sachs
Polly Connie Booth
Major Gowen Ballard Berkeley
Miss Tibbs Gilly Flower
Miss Gatsby Renée Roberts
Lord Melbury Michael Gwynn
Danny Brown Robin Ellis
Sir Richard Morris Martin Wyldeck
Mr Watson Lionel Wheeler
Mr Wareing Terence Conoley
Mr Mackenzie David Simeon

First of first series, first broadcast on 19 September 1975, BBC2.

The Fawlty Towers reception lobby. The main entrance is at the back, with the stairs to the right. The entrance to the dining room is in the right wall; on the left, the reception desk running along the left wall, with the entrance to the office behind it. The entrance to the bar is beyond the desk.

Basil *(on the phone)* One double room without bath for the 16th, 17th and 18th . . . yes, and if you'd be so good as to confirm by letter? . . . thank you so much, goodbye. *(puts the phone down)*

Sybil *(bustling in)* Have you made up the bill for room twelve, Basil?

Basil No, I haven't yet, no.

Sybil Well, they're in a hurry. Polly says they didn't get their alarm call. And Basil, please get that picture up – it's been there for a week. *(goes into office)*

Basil It's been there since Monday, Sybil . . . Tuesday . . . Wednesday . . . Thursday . . . *(to passing guests)* Good morning . . . Friday . . . Sat – *(realizes Sybil is no longer there; goes across to Manuel who has come in carrying three breakfast trays)* Manuel! There – is – too – much – butter – on – those – trays.

Manuel *Qué?*

Basil There is too much butter **on those trays.** *(he points to each tray in turn)*

Manuel No, no, no, *Señor!*

Basil What?

Manuel Not 'on– those– trays'. No, sir – '*uno, dos, tres.*' *Uno . . . dos . . . tres.*

Basil No, no. *Hay mucho burro allí!*

Manuel *Qué?*

Basil *Hay . . . mucho . . . burro . . . allí!*

Manuel Ah, *mantequilla!*

Basil What? *Qué?*

Manuel *Mantequilla. Burro* is . . . is . . . *(brays like a donkey)*

Basil What?

Manuel *Burro . . . (does more donkey imitations)*

Basil Manuel, *por favor . . .*

Manuel *Si, si . . .*

Sybil *(coming back in)* What's the matter, Basil?

Basil Nothing, dear, I'm just dealing with it.

Manuel *(to Sybil)* He speak good . . . how you say . . . ?

Sybil English!

Basil *Mantequilla . . . solamente . . . dos . . .*

Manuel *Dos?*

Sybil *(to Basil)* Don't look at me. You're the one who's supposed to be able to speak it.

Basil angrily grabs the excess butter from the trays.

Basil Two pieces! Two each! *Arriba, arriba!!*

He waves his hand towards the bedrooms and Manuel runs off.

Sybil I don't know why you wanted to hire him, Basil.

Basil *(sitting at typewriter)* Because he's cheap and keen to learn, dear. And in this day and age such . . .

Sybil But why did you say you could speak the language?

Basil I learnt classical Spanish, not the strange dialect he seems to have picked up.

Sybil It'd be quicker to train a monkey.

Misses Tibbs and Gatsby come down the stairs.

Sybil *(turning on the charm)* Good morning Miss Gatsby, morning Miss Tibbs.

Basil *(imitating the charm ironically)* Good morning, good morning.

Sybil Basil!

Basil Yes, dear?

Sybil Are you going to hang the picture?

Basil Yes I am, dear, yes, yes . . .

Sybil When?

Basil When I've, when I've . . .

Sybil Well, why don't you do it now?

Basil Well, I'm doing this, dear *(indicating typewriter)* . . . I'm doing the menu.

Sybil You've got all morning to do the menu. Why don't you hang the picture now? . . . Well?

Basil *(jumping up)* Yes, all right, I won't do the menu . . . I don't think you realize how long it takes to do the menu, but no, it doesn't matter, I'll hang the picture now. If the menus are late for lunch it doesn't matter, the guests can all come and look at the picture till they are ready, right? *(he starts to hang the picture to the right of the dining-room door)*

Sybil Lower . . . *(he lowers it)* . . . Lower . . . up a bit . . . There! *(she disappears)*

Basil Thank you, dear. Thank you so much. I don't know where I'd be without you . . . in the land of the living, probably.

He holds the picture in position. A young couple, the Mackenzies, come hurriedly down the stairs and ring the reception bell.

Basil Yes?

Mr Mackenzie Er . . . could we have our bill please?

Basil Well, can you **wait** a minute?

Mr Mackenzie Er . . . I'm afraid we're a bit late for our train – we didn't get our alarm call.

Basil glowers at them, then puts the picture down and strides back to the typewriter.

Basil Right. I was up at five, you know, we do have staff problems, I'm so sorry, it's all done by magic.

He starts typing the bill. Sybil looks in from the office.

Sybil *(accusingly)* Basil, are you doing the menu?

Basil No, I'm not doing the menu, dear. I am doing the bill for these charming people who are in a hurry.

Mr Mackenzie *(to Sybil)* I'm sorry to cause all this trouble, but the reason we're late is we didn't get our alarm call.

Sybil Oh dear, I *am* sorry. *(sweetly)* Basil, why didn't they get their alarm call?

Basil Because **I forgot**! I am so sorry I am not perfect! There you are, there's the bill. Perhaps you'd pay my wife, I have to put the picture up . . . if there aren't any dustbins to be cleaned out . . .

He walks towards the picture again. A newspaper boy comes in and puts his papers on the tables.

Newspaper boy Newspapers!

Basil turns after him aggressively, tapping his watch – the boy exits rapidly. The Mackenzies leave; Basil's farewell smile lacks integrity.

Basil Goodbye. See you again!

Sybil Don't forget the picture, Basil.

Basil I won't, dear, leave it to me.

Sybil I'm going out now. I expect it to be up when I get back. *(she leaves)*

Basil *(through his teeth)* Drive carefully, dear . . .

He takes the papers into the dining room, and, ignoring the other guests, gives one to Major Gowen.

Basil Ah, good morning, Major.

The Major Morning, Fawlty.

Basil I do apologise for the tardiness of the arrival of your newspaper this morning, Major. I will speak to them again, see if **something** can be done.

The Major Ah, more strikes . . . dustmen . . . Post Office . . .

Basil It makes you want to cry, doesn't it. What's happened to the old ideal of doing something for your fellow man, of service? I mean, today . . .

Mr Watson *(from his table)* Mr Fawlty?

Basil Yes, I'm coming, I'm coming! *(to the Major, quietly)* They treat you like dirt, you know . . . of course it's pure ignorance, but with the **class** of guests one gets nowadays . . .

The Major Ah! D'Olivera made a hundred!

Basil Did he? Did he really? Good for him, good old Dolly. Well, well, well . . . *(Polly arrives with a cup of tea; he takes it, and gives her the other papers)* Thank you, Polly.

Mr Watson We're only staying till Sunday!

Basil Right, thank you . . . *(he picks up some food from the sideboard and goes through the lobby into the office; he has just sat down when he hears Sybil coming and hurriedly pushes his snack out of sight)* Ah, I thought you were going out, dear.

Sybil *(holding out a copy of* Country Life*)* What's this?

Basil I decided, Sybil, to advertise. I . . .

Sybil How much did it cost?

Basil Oh . . . I haven't . . . fifteen?

Sybil Forty.

Basil *(vaguely)* . . . Forty . . .

Sybil I have **told** you where we advertise.

Basil Sybil, I **know** the hotel business.

Sybil No you don't, Basil.

Basil Sybil, we've got to try to attract a better class of person.

Sybil Why?

Basil Well, we're losing **tone**.
Sybil We're making money.
Basil Yes, yes . . .
Sybil Just.
Basil Yes, but now we can try to build up a higher class of clientele! . . . Turn away some of the riff-raff.
Sybil So long as they pay their bills, Basil.
Basil Is that all that matters to you, Sybil? Money?
Sybil This advertisement is a waste of forty pounds. *(turns to leave)*
Basil One moment! One moment, please! *(proudly hands her a letter from the desk)* Well?
Sybil . . . Well?
Basil My dear woman, Sir Richard and Lady Morris, arriving this evening. For two nights. You see, they saw the advertisement in *Country Life*.
Sybil I wish they were staying a week.
Basil Well, so do I . . .
Sybil Might pay for the ad then. *(makes to leave again)*
Basil Sybil, look! If we can attract this class of customer, I mean . . . the sky's the limit!
Sybil Basil, twenty-two rooms is the limit!
Basil I mean, have you **seen** the people in room six? They've never even sat on chairs before. They are the commonest, vulgarest, most horrible, nasty . . .

But Sybil has gone. The reception bell rings. Basil goes to the reception desk; standing there is a very non-aristocratic-looking cockney, Danny Brown.

Danny 'Allo! *(Basil stands appalled)* Got a room?
Basil . . . I beg your pardon?
Danny Got a room for tonight, mate?
Basil . . . I shall have to see, sir . . . single?
Danny Yeah. No, make it a double, I feel lucky today! *(smiling appreciatively at Polly, who is passing)* 'Allo . . .
Polly *(smiling nicely)* Good morning.

Danny watches her as she leaves. He turns back to Basil who is staring at him with loathing.

Danny Only joking.
Basil No we haven't.
Danny What?

Basil No we haven't any rooms. Good day . . .
Sybil *(coming in)* Number seven is free, Basil.
Basil What? . . . oh . . . Mr Tone is in number seven, dear.
Sybil No, he left while you were putting the picture up, Basil . . . *(to Danny)* You have luggage, sir?
Danny Just one case. *(to Basil, pointedly)* In the car . . . the white sports.

Basil closes his eyes in agony. Sybil rings the bell.

Sybil Fill this in, would you, sir?
Basil *(quietly)* If you can.
Sybil I hope you enjoy your stay *(looking at register)*, Mr Brown.

Manuel arrives.

Basil *(slowly)* Er, Manuel, would you fetch this gentleman's case from the car outside. Take it to room seven.
Manuel . . . Is not easy for me.
Basil What?
Manuel Is not easy for me . . . *entender.*
Basil Ah! It's not easy for you to understand. Manuel . . . *(to Danny)* We're training him . . . he's from Barcelona . . . in Spain. *(to Manuel) Obtener la valisa . . .*
Manuel *Qué?*
Basil *La valisa en el*, er, *auto bianco sportiv . . . y . . . a la sala . . . siete . . . por favor. Pronto.*
Manuel Is impossible!
Basil What?
Manuel Is impossible.
Basil Look, it's perfectly simple!
Danny *(fluently)* Manuel – *sirvase buscar mi equipaje que esta en el automovil blanco y lo traer a la sala numero siete.*
Manuel *Señor habla Español!*
Danny *Solo un poco, lo siento. Pero he olvidado mucho.*
Manuel *No, no, habla muy bien. Muy muy bien. Formidable!*
Danny *Gracias, gracias.*
Manuel *Lo voy a coger ahora. (runs off to get the case)*
Basil . . . Well, if there's anything else, I'm sure Manuel will be able to tell you . . . as you seem to get on so well together. *(goes into the office)*
Danny *(calling after him)* Key?

Basil comes back, takes the key from the hook and slams it down on the desk. Returning to the office he sits down, and switches on a cassette of Brahms. He settles back in rapture, but hears Sybil coming and rushes back to the picture in the lobby.

Basil Hallo dear . . . just doing the picture.
Sybil Don't forget the menu.
Basil . . . I beg your pardon?
Sybil Don't forget the menu.
Basil I thought you said you wanted . . . Right! *(puts the picture down)* I'll do the menu.
Sybil You could have had them both done by now if you hadn't spent the whole morning skulking in there listening to that racket. *(goes out)*
Basil Racket? That's **Brahms**! Brahms's Third Racket!! . . . *(to himself)* The whole morning! . . . I had two bars.

In the dining room, Polly is taking Danny's order.

Polly Ready to order?
Danny Er, yeah. What's a gralefrit?
Polly Grapefruit.
Danny And creme pot . . . pot rouge?
Polly Portugaise. Tomato soup.
Danny I'll have the gralefrit. Now – balm carousel . . . lamb?
Polly Casserole.
Danny Sounds good. Does it come with a smile?
Polly It comes with sprouts or carrots.
Danny Oh, smile's extra, is it?
Polly You'll get one if you eat up all your sprouts. *(exits)*
Danny *(half registering a figure on the other side of the room)* Waiter!

Basil freezes and then comes balefully towards Danny.

Basil . . . I beg your pardon?
Danny Oh, 'allo. Can I have some wine please?
Basil The waiter is busy, sir, but I will bring you the *carte des vins* when I have finished attending to this gentleman. *(indicates the table he has just left)*
Danny Oh, fine – no hurry.
Basil *(muttering on his way to the other table)* Oh, good, how

nice, how very thoughtful . . . *(at the other table)* I trust the beer is to your satisfaction, sir?

Mr Watson . . . Yes, fine.

Basil Ah, good. May I wish you *bon appétit. (snaps his fingers)* Manuel! *(Manuel runs in)* Would you fetch the wine list, please?

Manuel *(not moving) Si, señor.*

Basil . . . The wine list. The wine . . . *vino. (Manuel starts to move)* No, no. The list! There, there, the list! *(points to it – it is on another table)* The list, there! The red . . . there! . . . There!!

He picks up the list, hands it to Manuel, then gets Manuel to hand it to him so that he can give it to Danny.

Danny 'Ave you got a half bottle of the Beaujolais?

Basil Yes.

Danny Oh, fine.

Basil withdraws the wine list with a flourish, knocking the grapefruit out of Polly's hand as she approaches the table.

Basil Right! Never mind! Never mind! Manuel – another grapefruit for table twelve please . . . Manuel! *(pointing at the grapefruit on the floor – to other guests)* I do beg your pardon . . . I'm so sorry . . .

Manuel picks up the grapefruit and cleans it. He is about to replace it on the table.

Basil . . . No! . . . Throw it away.

Manuel *Qué?*

Basil Throw . . . it . . . away!

Manuel Throw . . . it . . . away?

Basil *(miming a throw)* Throw it away!! Now!!!

Manuel throws it away; it lands on another table. Basil retrieves it, grabs Manuel, and runs with him out of the room.

Basil *(to the other tables as he passes)* Sorry! . . . Sorry! . . . Sorry!

They disappear into the kitchen. There is the sound of a slap and a yelp from Manuel. Polly appears bearing Danny's new grapefruit.

Polly Sorry about that.

Danny No, I like a bit of cabaret. *(picks up Polly's sketch pad from the table)* You left your sketch.

Polly Oh! Sorry.

Danny It's very good. Do you sell any?

Polly Enough to keep me in waitressing. *(she leaves as Basil reappears with the Beaujolais)*

Basil One **half** bottle of Beaujolais. *(he is about to open the bottle when the reception bell rings)* . . . Sybil!

Sybil *(popping her head round the door)* Someone at reception, dear. *(she vanishes)*

(Basil hurries bad-temperedly into the lobby. Melbury is standing there.)

Basil Yes, yes, well, yes?

Melbury . . . Er, well, I was wondering if you could offer me accommodation for a few nights?

Basil *(very cross)* Well, have you booked?

Melbury . . . I'm sorry?

Basil Have you booked, have you booked?

Melbury No.

Basil *(to himself)* Oh dear!

Melbury Why, are you full?

Basil Oh, we're not full . . . we're not **full** . . . of course we're not **full**!!

Melbury I'd like, er . . .

Basil One moment, one moment, please . . . yes?

Melbury A single room with a . . .

Basil Your **name**, please, could I have your name?

Melbury Melbury.

The phone rings; Basil picks it up.

Basil *(to Melbury)* One second please. *(to phone)* Hello? . . . Ah, yes, Mr O'Reilly, well it's perfectly simple. When I asked you to build me a wall I was rather hoping that instead of just dumping the bricks in a pile you might have found time to cement them together . . . you know, one on top of another, in the traditional fashion. *(to Melbury, testily)* Could you fill it in, please? *(to phone)* Oh, splendid! Ah, yes, but **when**, Mr O'Reilly? *(to Melbury, who is having difficulty with the register)* there – there!! *(to phone)* Yes, but when? Yes, yes . . . ah! . . .

the flu! *(to Melbury)* **Both** names, please. *(to phone)* Yes, I should have guessed, Mr O'Reilly, that and the potato famine I suppose . . .

Melbury I beg your pardon?

Basil Would you put **both** your names, please? . . . *(to phone)* Well, will you give me a **date**?

Melbury Er . . . I only use one.

Basil *(with a withering look)* You don't have a first name?

Melbury No, I am **Lord** Melbury, so I simply sign myself 'Melbury'.

There is a long, long pause.

Basil *(to phone)* Go away. *(puts phone down)* . . . I'm **so** sorry to have kept you waiting, your lordship . . . I **do** apologize, **please** forgive me. Now, was there something, is there something, anything, I can do for you? Anything at all?

Melbury Well, I have filled this in . . .

Basil Oh, please don't bother with that. *(he takes the form and throws it away)* Now, a special room? . . . a single? A double? A suite? . . . Well, we don't have any suites, but we do have some beautiful doubles with a view . . .

Melbury No, no, just a single.

Basil Just a single! Absolutely! How very **wise** if I may say so, your honour.

Melbury With a bath.

Basil Naturally, naturally! *Naturellement! (he roars with laughter)*

Melbury I shall be staying for one or two nights . . .

Basil Oh please! Please! . . . Manuel!! *(he bangs the bell; nothing happens)* . . . Well, it's . . . it's rather grey today, isn't it?

Melbury Oh, yes, it is, rather.

Basil Of course usually down here it's quite beautiful, but today is a real old . . . er . . . rotter. *(another bang on the bell)* Manuel!!! . . . Still . . . it's good for the wheat.

Melbury Yes, er, I suppose so.

Basil Oh yes! I hear it's coming along wonderfully at the moment! Thank God! I love the wheat . . . there's no sight like a field of wheat waving in the . . . waving in . . . **Manuel**!!!! *(he bangs the bell as hard as he can; no result)* . . . Well, how are you? I mean, if it's not a

personal question. Well, it **is** a personal . . . *(he dashes from behind the desk)* Let me get your cases for you, please allow me . . .

Melbury . . . Oh, thank you very much, they're just outside.

Basil Splendid. Thank you so much. I won't be one moment . . .

He sprints off, collects the cases, and returns to find Sybil talking to Lord Melbury at the counter.

Basil . . . Ah, Lord Melbury. May I introduce my wife?

Melbury Yes, we have met.

Basil My wife, may I introduce your lordship.

Sybil Thank you, Basil, we've sorted it out.

Basil Splendid, splendid.

Melbury I wonder, could I deposit this case with you . . . it's just a few valuables?

Basil Valuable, of course. Please let me take it now. I'll put it in the safe straight away. Sybil, would you put this in the safe, please?

Sybil I'm just off to the kitchen, Basil.

Basil *(muttering angrily)* Yes, well, if you're too busy . . .

Sybil Nice to have met you, Lord Melbury. I hope you enjoy your stay. *(she leaves)*

Melbury Thank you so much.

Basil Yes, well I'll do it then, then I'll do the picture . . . *(suddenly polite again)* I'll put this away in one moment, your lord. *(to Manuel, who has appeared at last)* Manuel, will you take these cases to room twenty-one.

Manuel . . . *Qué?*

Basil Take . . . to room . . . twenty-one. *(he surreptitiously signals the number with his fingers)*

Manuel . . . *No entender.*

Basil *Prenda las casos en* . . . oh, doesn't matter. Right! I'll do it, I'll do it. Thank you, Manuel. *(picks up the cases)*

Manuel I take them. *(grabs cases)*

Basil *(not letting go)* No, no, go away!

Manuel *Qué? (they struggle)*

Basil Go and wait!

Manuel Wait?

Basil *(indicating the dining room)* In there! Go and wait in **there**! Go and be a waiter in there! *(Manuel runs off; to Melbury)* I **do** apologize, your lordship. I'm afraid he's

only just joined us. We're training him. It'd be quicker to train a monkey, ha ha ha!

Basil's laugh freezes as Melbury does not react. Then he goes upstairs with the cases, reappearing a moment later.

Basil Do please follow me . . . I mean, if you're ready. There's no hurry . . .

Melbury Oh yes, yes, fine. *(follows Basil upstairs)*

The dining room. Guests are eating peacefully until Basil rushes in and goes to the window table where Mr and Mrs Wareing and their son are eating.

Basil Excuse me, I'm so sorry to bother you. Would you mind moving to that table?

Mr Wareing . . . What?

Basil Could I ask you please to move to that table over there?

Mr Wareing But . . .

Basil I'm so sorry to trouble you.

Mr Wareing *(getting up, protesting)* We're halfway through . . .

Basil Thank you so much.

Mr Wareing Yes, but . . .

Basil This is Lord Melbury's table, you see.

Mr Wareing What?

Basil Lord Melbury. When he stays with us he always sits at this table.

Mr Wareing Well, why did they put us here?

Basil Ah, an oversight . . . on my wife's part. I'm so sorry. He's just arrived, you see. Would you mind? – Polly! – Would you help these people to that table? Thank you, thank you so much.

The family get up very unwillingly. Polly, slightly puzzled, starts moving the dishes. Mrs Wareing is particularly slow . . .

Basil Come on! **Come on!!** . . . Thank you. *(they move; Basil grabs a vase of flowers from another table and puts it on Melbury's; Melbury enters)* Ah, Lord Melbury! Do please come this way . . . your lordship . . . I have your table over here by the window . . . as usual . . . *(gives Melbury a slight wink, but gets no reaction)* Just here . . . thank you so much.

Melbury Thank you, thank you very much . . .

Basil holds Melbury's chair, but moves it back just as Melbury sits down. Melbury falls, knocking the table over. Basil clouts Manuel, who happens to be passing.

Basil I'm **so** sorry! Oh my Lord! Oh my God!!
Mr Wareing *(to his wife)* I think he's killed him!
Basil Get on with your meals!!! Thank you so much. *(he starts trying to make amends)*

In reception: Basil is at the desk doing the pools. Melbury comes out of the dining room wiping himself down with a handkerchief.

Basil Lord Melbury, I really must apologize again for . . .
Melbury Please, please, think nothing of it.
Basil But it was so . . .
Melbury Please! It was the smallest of accidents. It could have occurred anywhere.
Basil Yes, but . . .
Melbury No, no, no, I've forgotten all about it.
Basil That's most . . . you're really . . . er, your lordship, would you allow me to offer you dinner here tonight . . . as our guest?
Melbury That's extremely kind of you. Unfortunately I have an engagement tonight . . .
Basil *(mortified)* Oh!
Melbury Oh actually . . .
Basil Yes?
Melbury There is one thing.
Basil Good! Good!
Melbury I was wondering . . . can you cash me a small cheque? I'm playing golf this afternoon.
Basil Oh, delighted!
Melbury And I'd rather not go into the town . . .
Basil Absolutely . . . I mean, er, how much? . . . er, if it's not a rude question.
Melbury Er well . . . er . . . could you manage . . . fif . . . *(looks in his wallet)* Oh! . . . a hundred?
Basil *(stunned)* A . . . h . . . hundred? *(recovering)* Oh absolutely . . . Oh yes, I mean, will a hundred be enough? . . . I mean a hundred and fifty . . . two . . . two

. . . er, a hundred and sixty?

Melbury . . . Let's see, that's, er, dinner tonight . . . few tips . . . oh, and it's the weekend, isn't it . . . is two hundred all right?

Basil *(momentarily shattered)* Oh! *(extravagantly)* Oh! Please! Yes! Oh, ha, ha! – oh, tremendous! Oh . . . I'm so happy! I'll send someone to the town straightaway and have it for you here when you get back.

Melbury Yes, well, that would be splendid.

Basil Thank you, thank you, your lordship.

Melbury Thank you so much.

Basil Oh, not at all, my privilege . . . *(Melbury exits)* . . . What breeding . . . sheer . . . ooh! *(he starts to write the cheque, but Sybil walks in; he hides the book hurriedly and gives her a peck on the cheek)* Hallo, dear.

Sybil What are you doing?

Basil I'm kissing you, dear.

Sybil Well, don't.

Basil Just thought it might be nice to . . .

Sybil I heard about lunch.

Basil What? . . . Oh, that! Oh, think nothing of it.

Sybil What?

Basil It was the smallest of accidents. Could have occurred anywhere.

Sybil Anywhere? First you move that nice family in the middle of their meal, and then you attack Lord Melbury with a chair!

Basil Look, Sybil, I've had a word with Lord Melbury about it. He was quite charming . . . Oh, it's delightful to have people like that staying here . . . sheer class, golf, baths, engagements, a couple of hundr . . . h,h,horses . . .

Sybil Well, I've never seen such tatty cases.

Basil Of **course** you haven't. It's only the true upper class that **would** have tat like that . . . It's the whole point! . . . Oh, you don't know what I'm talking about . . .

Sybil No I don't. But don't ever move guests in the middle of a meal again . . . and get that picture up. *(she goes into the office)*

Basil . . . Sour old rat. *(Polly comes in)* Ah! . . . Polly . . . would you do me a favour? When you're down in town this afternoon . . . just between ourselves, don't

mention it to my wife . . . pop into the bank and just . . . *(writing the cheque . . .)*

In the town. Polly leaves the bank, crosses the street, and walks past a parked car. She checks, looks into it and is surprised to see Danny Brown sitting in it with another man. Danny sees her, motions her urgently to get into the car; she does so. He shows her an official-looking card and points to a jeweller's shop. At that moment Lord Melbury comes out of the shop, looks round furtively and hurries down the street. Danny nods in the direction of a waiting colleague who follows Melbury. Danny and Polly watch . . .

In reception: Basil is holding the picture against the wall, marking the position with a pencil. The phone rings.

Basil . . . Could somebody answer that, please? *(it goes on ringing.)* . . . Hallo! Is there nobody who can answer that? There must be **someone** . . . *(Manuel runs in and heads for the phone)* Not you. *(Manuel goes away; Basil puts down the picture)* . . . I'll never get it up. I'll cancel my holiday . . . do it then. *(picks up the phone)* Hallo, Fawlty Towers . . .

The ringing continues. Sybil comes in and answers the other phone.

Sybil Hello, Fawlty Towers . . . Oh, hello, Brenda . . . *(to Basil)* Basil, it's six o'clock.

Basil puts down his receiver wearily as Sybil continues her conversation. Polly comes in.

Basil *(whispers)* Ah, Polly . . . did you cash it?
Polly Yes, er . . . Mr Fawlty . . .
Basil Good, good.
Polly *(urgently)* Could I have a word with you? *(hands him the money in an envelope)*
Basil What?
Polly Could I speak to you in the office for just a minute . . .
Basil Not **now** Polly!
Polly It's very important, I . . .
Basil Later! Later!

Sybil Basil!

Basil I'm just going, dear. Thank you, thank you so much, Polly.

He rushes into the bar. From behind the counter he hears someone come in. As it is exactly six o'clock he doesn't need to see who it is.

Basil Ah, good evening, Major.

The Major Evening, Fawlty.

Basil The usual?

The Major *(looking at his watch)* Er . . . er . . . oh, why not, indeed, why not? . . . I've just been watching one of those nature films on television.

Basil Oh yes?

The Major Did you know that a female gibbon gestates for seven months?

Basil Seven months? Well I never . . . there you are, Major . . . seven . . . my word . . . *(the Wareing family have come in)* Ah, good evening, Mr Wareing.

Mr Wareing *(coldly)* A gin and orange, a lemon squash and a scotch and water please.

Basil Certainly.

Mr Wareing Is there any part of the room you'd like us to keep away from?

Basil What? . . . *(false jollity)* Oh, ha ha ha.

Mr Wareing *(curtly)* We'll be over there, then.

Basil *(to the Major)* Seven! Well, well . . .

Melbury *(entering)* Evening, Fawlty.

Basil Ah, good evening, Lord Melbury.

Mr Wareing *(makes his point again)* Anywhere?

Basil Yes, anywhere, anywhere . . . Your lordship, may I offer you a little aperitif . . . as our guest?

Melbury That's very kind of you . . . dry sherry if you please. *(he wanders off)*

Basil *(to the Major)* . . . What else? . . . Such . . . oh, I don't know what . . .

The Major *Je ne sais quoi?*

Basil Exactly! Exactly! *(Sybil enters)* Ah, there you are, Sybil. *(he departs lord-wards with the sherry)*

Sybil Good evening, Major.

The Major Evening, Mrs Fawlty.

Melbury is glancing at some coins in a display case. Basil brings him his drink.

Basil There you are, your lordship.
Melbury Ah, thank you very much.
Basil I see my little collection of coins tickles your interest.
Melbury What? Oh, yes, yes.
Basil All British Empire of course. Used to be quite a hobby of mine . . . little investment too . . .
Melbury Quite . . . oh . . . talking about, er . . . did you manage to . . .
Basil Oh yes. Here you are, your lordship.

Meanwhile Polly runs out of the hotel front door and signals to Danny, who is sitting in a car; he flashes his lights in acknowledgement. Back in the bar . . .

Melbury . . . Oh yes, you know, these sorts of things, their value's soared this last couple of years.
Basil Have they really?
Melbury Yes, yes. You take my advice. Get them revalued, and insure them for the full amount.
Basil Yes, yes, I will.
Melbury Can't take any risks nowadays, I'm afraid.
Basil No, no, quite.
Melbury Well, I must be off.
Basil Thank you, thank you, your lordship. I'll certainly . . .
Melbury *(leaving)* Goodbye.
Sybil Basil!
Basil Yes, yes, I was just talking to Lord Melbury, dear . . .
Mr Wareing A gin and orange, a lemon squash, and a scotch and water please!
Basil I do apologize, I was just talking to Lord . . .
Melbury *(coming back in)* Fawlty!
Basil *(leaving the Wareings in mid-sentence)* Yes, Lord Melbury?
Melbury . . . I was just thinking . . . I'm having dinner tonight with the Duke of Buckleigh . . . do you know him?
Basil Not . . . personally, no.
Melbury Oh . . . well, he's a great expert, you know, Sotheby's and all that . . .
Basil Is he?
Melbury Well, if you liked, I could take them with me, ask him

to have a quick look at them and find out their current value.

Basil *(overwhelmed)* Would . . . would you really?

Melbury Yes, yes, certainly. Well, I'll be off in a few moments. *(he leaves)*

Basil Well that's really . . . so incredibly . . . er . . .

Sybil Basil!!

Basil I'm talking to Lord Melbury!

Mr Wareing *(slow and loud)* A . . . gin . . . and orange . . . a lemon squash . . . and a scotch and water **please**!

Basil All right! All right!

The reception bell rings urgently; it is Polly. Basil runs out clutching the coins in a box.

Polly Oh, Mr Fawlty . . .

Basil Was that Lord Melbury? Has he gone?

Polly I rang . . . Mr Fawlty, I **must** speak with you.

Basil What? . . . can't you see I'm **busy**?

Polly Please! It's very important – can we talk in there? *(indicating the office)*

Basil I can't!

Sybil *(calling from the bar)* Basil!!

Polly It's very important!

Basil *(shouting)* I'm just dealing with something important out here, Sybil, thank you. *(to Polly)* All **right**! *(they both go into the office)* Yes? Yes, right, well, yes, yes, what is it?

Polly It's about Lord Melbury.

Basil Yes?

Polly He's not Lord Melbury . . . he's a confidence trickster.

Basil . . . I beg your pardon?

Polly Mr Brown told me.

Basil *(contemptuously)* Haaa!

Polly Mr Brown's from the CID. They've been watching Melbury because he's pulling some big con trick in the town. They're going to arrest him when he leaves the hotel so as not to cause you embarrassment. But he asked me to tell you . . .

Basil *(not believing a word of it)* Oh, how **nice** of him!

Polly Please, Mr Fawlty . . .

Basil Oh, I don't know what other tales Mr Brown of MI5 has been impressing you with but . . .

Polly He's a con man!

Basil Oh of course. It stands out a mile, doesn't it. He's so **common** – unlike that cockney git whose ulterior motive will soon no doubt become apparent to you, poor innocent misguided child that you are.

Sybil *(entering briskly)* Basil, what is going on?

Basil Nothing, my dear, nothing at all.

Polly Mrs Fawlty . . .

Basil Now look!

Sybil Yes, Polly?

Basil I don't know what she's . . .

Sybil Basil!!!

Polly Mr Brown's from the CID.

Basil Hah!

Polly He showed me his identification. They're watching Melbury. He's a confidence trickster.

Sybil . . . I see. *(she goes straight to the safe)*

Basil What . . . what do you mean, you see?

Sybil Let's have a look at these valuables . . .

Basil What are you doing, Sybil? . . . Sybil, I forbid you to open the safe! *(she opens the safe)* Sybil, I forbid you to take that case out! *(she takes the case out)* Sybil, do not open that case! I forbid it! *(sits down in dismay; she opens the case)* I never thought I would live to see the day when a peer of the realm . . . entrusts to us . . . a case of valuables . . . in trust . . .

Sybil places the open case in front of him. He looks into it for a long time. Then he lifts out an ordinary house brick. Disbelievingly, he shakes it close to his ear, lifts out another and sniffs it, then clinks them together. He puts them down and emits a strange growl.

Sybil I'll call the police.

Polly They're here already, Mr Brown's outside. *(she leaves; the reception bell rings)*

Sybil Someone at reception, Basil.

Basil rises slowly and goes into reception. Hoping it is Melbury, he has clenched his fist – but it is Sir Richard and Lady Morris.

Basil . . . Ah! . . . all right . . . er . . . *(collects himself)* Good evening.

Sir Richard I believe you were expecting us.

Basil No, I was expecting somebody else. *(goes into another reverie)*

Sir Richard Sir Richard and Lady Morris.

Basil *(absently)* Yes, yes, them as well.

Sir Richard I'm sorry?

Basil How did you know?

Sir Richard What?

Basil Oh . . . you're Sir Richard and Lady Morris, I do beg your pardon. I was just think . . . er . . . *(he goes off again, thinking revenge; he comes to . . .)* Now, would you mind filling this out, please, we've given you room . . . *(Lord Melbury comes down the stairs)* Ah hah!

Melbury Ah, Fawlty!

Basil Mr Fawlty to you, Lord Melbury.

Melbury I beg your pardon?

Basil Oh, nothing, please, forget all about it.

Melbury Oh . . . er . . . well . . . here's the cheque for two hundred pounds . . .

Basil Ah, thank you so much. *(he bites the cheque and throws it away; the Morrises are transfixed)* Now, about my priceless collection of coins . . .

Melbury Oh yes . . . er, do you still want . . .

Basil Do I still want you to take them to be valued by the Duke of Buckleigh, my lord?

Melbury Er . . . yes.

Basil No, I don't. Because we've just heard that the Duke of Buckleigh is . . . dead! Yes, he got his head knocked off by a golf ball. Tragic! Tragic! *(a pause; he beams at Melbury)* Well, how are you, Lord Melbury? . . . 'Ow are yer then – all right, mate? *(pinches Melbury's cheek)* 'Ow's me old mucker? *(gives Melbury a friendly slap on both cheeks; the Morrises are totally bemused)* Any valuables to deposit, Sir Richard . . . any bricks?

Melbury rushes off in a panic. Sybil has come up beside Basil, looking anxious.

Basil *(to Sir Richard)* I do apologise . . . *(shouts after Melbury)* You bastard!! . . . *(courteous again)* We've given you room twelve with the view overlooking the park . . . I'm sure you'll like it . . . we'll have your bags brought up . . .

Melbury rushes from the bar across the lobby to the dining room, pursued by a policeman.

Basil Hello, Lord Melbury! . . . BASTARD!!

More policemen rush about.

Basil *(to the Morrises)* Please think nothing of it.

Melbury runs out of the dining room as Polly, running from the bar, knocks the table into him and catches him in an uncomfortable place. As he doubles up, Manuel comes out of the dining room carrying a chair, the corner of which repeats the attack. Melbury doubles up in agony on the floor and is surrounded by the police. Basil walks across smiling politely.

Basil *(to police)* Do please excuse me one moment. *(he puts the boot in, then retrieves the envelope with his two hundred pounds)*

Sybil Basil, the Morrises are leaving.

Outside, the Morrises are getting into their car. Basil hurtles down the steps.

Basil . . . Where are you going? . . . Where are you going?

Sir Richard We're leaving!

Basil Oh, don't – please stay – you'll like it here.

Sir Richard I've never been in such a place in my life. *(they drive off)*

Basil *(shouting after them)* You snobs! You stupid . . . stuck-up . . . toffee-nosed . . . half-witted . . . upper-class piles of . . . pus!!

He walks disconsolately back up the steps, where he meets the police escorting Melbury out.

Basil *(begging for a chance to thump Melbury)* Just one! Just one!

Policeman *(restraining him)* Sorry, Mr Fawlty.

Basil Oh just one, please.

But the police remove Melbury. Basil gives up, and steps backwards into a tub of flowers; he threatens it with his fist. As he goes into the lobby he meets Danny.

Danny Sorry, Mr Fawlty.

Basil walks past him back into the lobby.

Basil Well, I'd better put the picture up . . . Oh . . . thank you Polly for the . . . well done, Manuel.

Manuel *Qué?*

Basil Oh . . . *Olé.*

Danny *(coming back in)* I'm sorry about that, Mr Fawlty . . . can I buy you a drink?

Basil No, no, I'd better put this up, I suppose. *(picks up the picture)*

Sybil enters from the bar with Mr Wareing.

Sybil Basil!

Mr Wareing *(very loudly)* A gin and orange . . . a lemon squash . . . and a scotch and water **please**!!

Basil Right! *(he slams the picture down)* Come on, then! *(and he frog-marches Mr Wareing into the bar)*

THE BUILDERS

Basil Fawlty John Cleese
Sybil Fawlty Prunella Scales
Manuel Andrew Sachs
Polly Connie Booth
Major Gowen Ballard Berkeley
Miss Tibbs Gilly Flower
Miss Gatsby Renée Roberts
O'Reilly David Kelly
Lurphy Michael Cronin
Jones Michael Halsey
Kerr Barney Dorman
Stubbs James Appleby
Delivery Man George Lee

Second of first series, first broadcast on 26 September 1975, BBC2.

The hotel lobby. Polly is behind the desk sorting the mail. A guest approaches the desk.

Guest . . . Sorry, I forgot my key. *(Gives Polly the key and leaves.)*

Polly Oh, thanks. *(the phone rings; she answers it)* Hallo, Fawlty Towers . . . yes . . . yes . . . no, this afternoon, that'd be fine . . . no, it's **sixteen** Elwood Avenue . . . sixteen, that's it. Thank you.

She rings off. Basil comes down the stairs carrying two suitcases, followed by Sybil.

Basil I'll put these outside, shall I dear?

He goes out through main entrance. Sybil gives Polly a piece of paper.

Sybil Polly, this is where we'll be if you need us. There's the number. So if Mr Stubbs wants to know anything when he comes, just ring, but don't if you don't **have** to, love, it's the first weekend we've had off since Audrey had her hysterectomy.

Polly Not to worry. I know what they've got to do. Oh, and somebody called about a garden gnome.

Sybil Oh, yes.

Polly Well, it's in, and they're going to deliver it this afternoon.

Sybil Oh, good. *(to herself)* Golf shoes . . . *(the Major comes in)* Good morning, Major.

The Major Very well, thank you.

Sybil *(to Polly)* Now, does everyone know about dinner tonight?

Polly I think so.

Sybil But you'll be able to handle breakfast tomorrow, will you?

Polly Oh yes, there's just the ladies and the Major.

Sybil Now where are those shoes?

She makes for the drawing room (the door to which is in the rear wall to the left of the main entrance). Manuel enters from the dining room, practising English to himself.

Manuel One moment please. I will het your vill. I will . . . **hhhet** your vill.

Polly Manuel . . . Get your bill.

Manuel I will het your bill?

Polly Get, guh, guh.

Manuel Get! Guh, guh, guh!

Polly That's it.
Manuel *(trotting off)* I will get your vill.

Sybil comes out of the drawing room with her golf shoes.

Sybil Oh, Manuel – put these in the cases, will you?

She gives Manuel the shoes and goes into the office. Manuel looks at the shoes, confused. Basil comes back in.

Basil Ah, now, Manuel! While we're away . . .
Manuel *(proudly)* One moment please, I will get your bill! *(he bows)*
Basil What?
Manuel I will get your bill. *Si?*
Basil What are you talking about?
Manuel Listen, please . . . Today . . . we have veef, beal or sothahhhes!
Basil What?!
Manuel Bang . . . hhhers.
Basil Shut up.
Manuel *Qué?*
Basil Shut up!
Manuel Oh, *si, si* – 'Shut up'. Yes, I understand, yes.
Basil Well, will you shut up, then?
Manuel *Si, si*, I shut up.
Basil *(very slowly)* . . . While we're **away** . . .
Manuel Shut up.
Basil **Shut up!** . . . While we're **away** . . . gone . . . **clean** the **windows.** *(Manuel nods blankly)* Ah . . . Look . . . *Quando nosotros somos* . . . what's 'away' in Spanish?
Manuel *Qué?*
Basil 'Away' . . . You know . . . '*away*'. Away!
Manuel Oh, *si, si. (starts to leave)*
Basil No, not **you! Us!** *(catches him)* Clean the **windows!** *(Manuel stares; Basil points to the dining room)*
Manuel Green?
Basil No, look – **clean** . . . the windows . . . *(puts a handkerchief in Manuel's hand and circulates the latter)*
Manuel *(continuing the circular movement uncomprehendingly)* Clean?
Basil Go on, go on!! *(he picks Manuel up and carries him into the dining room, past the Major . . .)*
The Major Morning, Fawlty.

Basil Morning, Major. *(. . . and deposits him in front of the window)*

Basil *(demonstrating)* The window! See . . . look – clean the windows!

Manuel continues to do so. Basil turns to leave but Miss Tibbs and Miss Gatsby have blocked his exit. They look playful.

Miss Tibbs Mr Fawlty.

Basil Ah, good morning, ladies.

Miss Tibbs Ursula and I think you're a very naughty boy, don't we, Ursula?

Basil *(to himself)* Oh God . . . *(with an attempt at charm)* Oh really?

Miss Tibbs Going away for the weekend and leaving us all alone.

Miss Gatsby Tch, tch, tch.

Basil Ah, yes.

Miss Tibbs Ah, but we know where you're going – the cat's out of the bag.

Miss Gatsby *(coyly)* You and your wife!

Basil Well, it's only Paignton.

Miss Tibbs *(patting his arm)* Aah! Well, have a lovely time. It'll do you good. You need to get away from things.

Basil Yes, well, we're going together . . .

Miss Gatsby And don't you worry about us.

Basil Oh! All right! Now . . . you know men are coming to do some work here?

Miss Tibbs Oh, yes.

Basil So you have to go to Gleneagles for your din-dins tonight? Yes? And Polly will be in charge if you need anything.

Miss Tibbs Now, have a lovely weekend.

Miss Gatsby And don't do anything we wouldn't do.

Basil Just a little breathing, surely? *(he manages to get away from them)* Well, I must buzz off now. *(he goes into the lobby)*

Miss Tibbs Buzz?

Miss Gatsby Yes, you know, Abitha . . . bubbity-bumble.

Miss Tibbs Oh, buzz, buzz, buzz . . .

In the lobby, Basil is going behind the reception desk when he notices, lying on it, a drawing of Polly's. She comes in from the office as he stares at it.

Basil Polly, I've asked you please not to leave your strange

drawings lying around . . . I'm sorry, but what is this supposed to be?

Polly Oh, it's just a sketch. *(she reaches for it)*

Basil *(keeping it away from her)* But what is it, what are you trying to do, this is a junk yard, isn't it?

Polly Can I have it?

Basil Well, why's it got a collar and tie underneath?

Polly It's not finished.

Basil It's very good . . . you know, old soup tins, broken-down car, dustbins and mattresses and hoovers . . . and a nice smart collar and tie underneath. I mean, what's it supposed to **be**?!

Polly It's not important – can I have it back?

Basil *(surrendering it grudgingly)* It's irritating. I mean, do you ever **sell** any of those?

Polly I sell a few portraits now and again, thank you.

Basil Choh!

Polly *(quietly)* I haven't much hope for this one.

Basil Would you give me the stapler, please. I mean, what is the point of something like that?

Polly No point.

Basil No **point**?

Polly What's the point in being alive?

Basil Beats me. We're stuck with it, I suppose. Will you give me the **stapler** please.

Polly *(giving him the date stamper)* If you don't go **on** at me.

Basil The stapler!

Polly Sorry. *(gives him the stapler)*

Basil What's the matter with you?

Polly I didn't get much sleep last night.

Basil We **are** leaving you in **charge**.

The telephone rings. Sybil bustles in from the office and answers it.

Polly I didn't do it to spite you, I promise.

Basil Oh good! Well, you won't feel so tired then, will you.

Sybil *(to phone)* Fawlty Towers . . . *(to Basil)* Basil . . .

Basil Who is it?

Sybil *(not pleased)* It's Mr O'Reilly, Basil.

Basil *(taking the phone)* That's odd. Must be about the garden wall . . . Hallo . . . O'Reilly? Now look! When are you coming to finish the wall? We are **sick** and **tired** of

having that pile of bricks blocking . . . *(seeing that Sybil and Polly are now out of earshot)* Now listen, I told you not to call. You know my wife thinks Stubbs is doing the doors . . . Well what time will they be here? . . . Right, four o'clock . . . no, listen, if there are any problems get Polly to call me, you understand? *(hears Sybil coming back)* So next week's definite, is it? Oh good, that'll be nice, won't it – I mean, we've waited for that wall about as long as Hadrian. No, Hadrian. The Emperor Hadrian . . . oh, it doesn't matter, I'll explain it next week. Goodbye. *(rings off grandly)*

Sybil *(unimpressed)* You don't believe all that, do you Basil? We've been waiting four months, why should he do it now?

Basil Oh, I think he will this time, dear.

Sybil If you'd used Stubbs . . .

Basil We'd have had a huge bill.

Sybil Look! You get what you pay for. O'Reilly's a cut-price cock-up artist.

Basil Oh, Sybil!

Sybil With Stubbs, we may pay a little more . . .

Basil A little more?

Sybil Yes, a little. But he does a really professional job, and he does it when he says he will. You'll see. When's he coming?

Basil Oh, about four o'clock, I think, dear.

Sybil And you're going to wear that jacket, are you?

Basil Yes I am, thank you, dear, yes.

Sybil You just haven't a clue, have you.

Basil You wouldn't understand, dear – it's called 'style'.

Sybil *(spotting her friends' car drawing up)* Yoo hoo!! They're here, Basil.

Basil Oh, how fabulous!

Sybil Do try and be agreeable this weekend, Basil. Now have I got everything?

Basil *(pianissimo)* Handbag, knuckle-dusters, flick-knife . . .

Sybil Come on, Basil, don't hang about. *(she goes out)*

Basil I'm just coming, dear! . . . Quick, Polly! . . .

Polly *(coming out of the office)* Yes?

Basil Now Polly, the men will be here at four o'clock. You know what they're doing?

Polly Well, they're putting a door through to the kitchen

(indicating the right-hand wall beyond the dining room).

Basil At the bottom of the stairs. And . . . ?

Poliy . . . And . . . ?

Basil And blocking the **drawing-room door**.

Polly . . . Blocking it?

Basil Yes, **blocking it off**, girl! So we can get a bit of privacy away from the plebs. Don't you take anything in? Where's my cap? *(he is wearing it)*

Polly It's on your . . .

Basil *(casually)* Oh, and one other thing. They won't be Stubbs's, they'll be O'Reilly's. Where **is** that cap? *(he prowls off looking for it)*

Polly What? . . . **O'Reilly?**

Basil Yes, yes!

Polly Does Mrs Fawlty know?

Basil I don't know, probably not. I wouldn't mention it though, they don't quite hit it off.

Polly But . . .

Basil I had to change it. Stubbs has got a virus or something.

Polly . . . She said you were never to use him again. I don't want to be responsible . . .

Basil He's sending his best men, all you've got to do is take a quick look when they've finished. Any problems, call me. Right – have a nice weekend.

Polly If she asks me, I'll tell her.

Basil Oh, thank you, thank you Polly, so much. Yes, I've always been a great admirer of loyalty.

Basil exits. Manuel enters: he remembers something, rushes to the desk where he left the golf shoes.

Manuel I forget.

Polly Oh, it doesn't matter, Manuel . . . *de nada.*

Manuel *(seeing the drawing)* Oh! Is Mr Fawlty!

Polly Shh! Windows, *por favor!*

Manuel scampers off.

In the lobby, later that day. Manuel is posing for Polly.

Manuel Oh, Polly, finish, I **tired.**

Polly Oh, that's wonderful, Manuel – just hold it a second.

Manuel *Qué?*

Polly *Quiero ascender para dormir.*

Manuel No, no – you must speak me English. Is good. I learn.
Polly I want to go upstairs in a moment.
Manuel *Qué?*
Polly *(pointing)* I . . . go upstairs . . .
Manuel *Si.* Is easy.
Polly For a little sleep.
Manuel Is difficult.
Polly For siesta.
Manuel Siesta . . . little sleep?
Polly Yes.
Manuel Same in Spanish.
Polly When O'Reilly's men come, you must wake me.
Manuel When Orrible men . . . ? *(looks alarmed)*
Polly Now Manuel, listen. When men come here . . . Señor O'Reilly . . .
Manuel When men come . . .
Polly You come upstairs and wake me up . . . *despierteme.*
Manuel Ah! When men come, I . . . *vendre arriba para despertartle en su cuarto.*
Polly *Antes que ellos comienzan a trabajar aqui, si?*
Manuel *Comprendo, comprendo.*
Polly Finished!

She finishes the sketch and disappears upstairs. Manuel relaxes from his pose. He goes behind the reception desk and enjoys his new responsibility. He rings the desk bell in an imperious manner.

Manuel Manuel! *(picks up the phone, although it has not rung)* Manuel Towers. How are you. Is nice today. Goodbye. *(rings off as he sees Bennion the delivery man arriving, complete with a rather large garden gnome)* Ah! Hallo. Good day! How are you?
Bennion *(referring to delivery note)* Number sixteen?
Manuel *(consulting the register)* Si, si, sixteen. But no eat.
Bennion What?
Manuel Sixteen is free. But not possible . . . *(mimes eating)*
Bennion *(indicating the hotel generally)* Is this . . . number sixteen?
Manuel No no, this . . . lobby. Sixteen upstairs, on right.
Bennion Who's in charge here?
Manuel No, no, charge later. After sleep.
Bennion Where's the boss?
Manuel Boss is, er . . . Oh! I boss!

Bennion No no, where's the **real** boss?
Manuel *Qué?*
Bennion The . . . the *generalissimo.*
Manuel In Madrid.
Bennion Look, just sign this, will you?
Manuel *(signing the note)* Si, si . . . er . . . sixteen?
Bennion What?
Manuel You want room sixteen.
Bennion No, I **don't** want a room, mate, I'm just leaving **him**, right? *(points at the gnome and walks out)*
Manuel You want room sixteen . . . for **him?**
Bennion *(as he leaves)* Yeah, with a bath, you dago twit.
Manuel *(calling after him)* You mad! You . . . **mad** . . . You pay for room first . . . He crazy! *(he picks up the gnome)* Room sixteen . . . No pay, no room sixteen.

He puts the gnome out of sight behind the desk. The phone rings; as he goes to answer it O'Reilly's men – Lurphy, Jones, and Kerr – enter.

Manuel *(to phone)* Hallo, Fawlty Towers. How are you, is nice day . . . No, he not here . . . No, no, he **not** here, very very sorry, goodbye. *(rings off; to the men)* Hallo, men.
Lurphy Good day, now. *(he is Irish)*
Manuel You are men?
Lurphy *(dangerously)* You what?
Manuel . . . You are men?
Lurphy *(threateningly)* Are you trying to be funny?
Manuel What . . . ?
Lurphy I said, 'Are you trying to be funny?'
Kerr *(restraining him)* Not here, Spud, not here.
Manuel But, you are men with Orelly?
Jones . . . What?
Manuel You are Orelly men?
Lurphy *(menacingly)* What does **that** mean?
Manuel You Orelly.
Lurphy You watch it!
Manuel . . . Where Orelly?
Jones What's he going on about?
Kerr He means O'Reilly.
Lurphy *(understanding at last)* Oh yes, that's right, yes – we are Orelly men. *(to his companions)* Thick as a plank.

Manuel You wait here, please, I go . . . *(indicates upstairs; the phone rings; he answers it)* You wait too, please.

He puts the phone down, hurries upstairs and knocks on the door of Polly's room. There is no response; he knocks again. He opens the door quietly and looks inside. Polly is on the bed, fast asleep.

Manuel *(whispering)* Polly . . . Polly . . .

But she is in a very deep sleep so he decides to take care of things himself. Back in the lobby, the men are looking around. The phone is ringing; Manuel rushes down the stairs and answers it.

Manuel Hallo, Fawlty Towers, how are you, is nice day . . . oh, you again! No, I say he is not here, very very sorry, goodbye. *(rings off)* Choh! Choh!

The men are consulting the plan.

Manuel You men know what to do?
Jones Oh, I think so. This is the dining room?
Manuel *(nods)* . . . You are certain you know?
Jones It looks pretty straightforward. We've just got to block this one off.

The phone rings again. Manuel answers it.

Manuel Yes, yes, yes . . . Is you again! Listen! He not here! How many times? Where are your ears?! You great big . . . hhhalf wit, I tell you, he **not here**! Listen! *(he holds the receiver out so that the caller may register the lack of Basilic noises)* Now you understand? . . . *(sudden comprehension and horror)* Oh, Mr Fawlty! I very sorry!! I very sorry . . . is you . . . yes, is me, Mr Fawlty . . . No, no, Polly is . . . she very busy . . . Men? Yes, yes, the men are here . . . *(to men, imperiously)* You work, men . . . *(to phone)* Yes . . . Man with beard? *(to men)* Please, which one is man with beard?

Lurphy, who is the only bearded one, thinks this over for a bit and then indicates himself.

Manuel *(to phone)* . . . Yes . . . hid . . . o . . . angtang . . . tag . . . tang . . . si . . . one moment, please. *(puts the receiver on the desk and addresses Lurphy)* You are a hid . . . eous . . . orang . . . tang. *(he bows; Lurphy hits him)*

Basil's voice *(from the phone)* Well done, Manuel. Thank you very much. *(dialling tone is heard)*

The next morning; it is a lovely day. Outside the hotel birds are singing; moles frolic; weasels dance the hornpipe. Polly is still fast asleep in her room. Outside, Basil's car draws up. He leaps out and runs up the steps. He strides into the lobby.

Basil Polly!

He goes to the wall by the stairs where the new door to the kitchen should be . . . it isn't. He looks round to the door to the drawing room to see if it is blocked off. It isn't.

Basil Polly! Polly!!

He opens the new door at the foot of the stairs and is halfway up the flight when he registers that this is wrong. He comes back and examines the door with mounting fury.

Basil . . . Polly!! Polly!!! . . . **Manuel!!!**

He makes for the dining-room door . . . but there is now a blank wall there. Polly has just opened the stairs door and sees his apoplectic reaction. She tries to close the door quietly but he has seen her.

Basil What have you done with my hotel?! Polly!! . . . What have you done to my hotel?

Polly What?

He grabs her by the ear and shows her the stairs door.

Basil Look!

Polly Oh, it's nice. I like it there. *(he leads her, lobe first, to the late dining-room door)* Ow! You're hurting me. *(she escapes the ear-lock)*

Basil What have you done with my dining-room door? Where is it?

Polly I don't know.

Basil **Why** don't you know? I left you in charge.

Polly Oh . . . I fell asleep.

Basil You fell **asleep!!**

Polly It's not my fault.

Basil You fell **asleep,** and it's **not your fault!!?**

Polly He forgot to wake me.

Basil Who forgot to wake you?

Polly . . . It **is** my fault.

Basil Manuel!!! I knew it!

Polly Don't blame him.

Basil Why not?

Polly It wasn't really his fault.

Basil Well, whose fault is it then, you cloth-eared bint – **Denis Compton's**?!!!

Polly Well, you hired O'Reilly, didn't you?

A pause; Basil's eyes go oddly glazed.

Polly We all warned you . . . who else would do something like this?

Basil . . . I beg your pardon?

Polly You hired O'Reilly . . .

Basil . . . Oh! Oh, I **see**! . . . It's **my** fault, is it? . . . Oh, of course, there I was, thinking it was your fault because you had been left in charge, or **Manuel's** fault for not waking you, and all the time it was **my** fault! Oh, it's so obvious now, I've seen the light. Ah well, if it's my fault, I must be punished then, mustn't I? *(slaps his bottom)* You're a naughty boy, Fawlty! Don't do it again! *(he catches himself a real cracker across the head, staggers, and straightens up)* . . . What am I going to do? She'll be back at lunch time!

Polly Now wait . . .

Basil I'm a dead man, do you realize!

Polly *(soothingly)* Easy! . . .

Basil You're dead too. We're **all dead**!! *(he is quivering violently)*

Polly Don't panic.

Basil What **else** is there to do? *(starts crying)*

Polly We'll call O'Reilly – he made this mess, he can clear it up! *(Basil has not taken this in; she shakes him)* Oh, just pull yourself together. *(shakes him again)* Come on! Come on!

But he is worse. She pauses, takes a step back, then slaps his face. He goes to hit her back, then realizes it has done him some good.

Basil . . . Again! *(she slaps him, rather deferentially)* . . . Harder!! *(she slaps him really hard)* Right! I'll call O'Reilly. *(runs behind the reception desk and falls over something)* What is this? *(lifts up the gnome)* I mean, what is going on here?

Polly Your wife ordered it. Call O'Reilly.

Basil That golfing puff-adder . . . *(he places the gnome on the desk and starts strangling it)*

Polly *(banging the phone)* Call O'Reilly!!!

Basil What?

Polly Shall I call him?

Basil *(releasing the gnome)* No, I'll do it, I'll call him . . . *(dialling)* You go and see if the roof's still on . . . *(Polly is drawing him)* . . . What are you **doing?**

Polly Stay there!

Basil You can't do that now!

Polly Hold it, hold it.

Basil Go and see if they've started breakfast! . . . **Now!!**

Polly completes her lightning portrait and hurries off.

Basil *(to phone, silkily)* Hallo, Mr O'Reilly, and how are you this morning? . . . Oh good, good, no rare diseases or anything? . . . Oh, I do beg your pardon, Basil Fawlty, you remember, the poor sod you do jobs for . . . Well now, how are things your end . . . Oh, good. Good, good, good. Well now, how would you like to hear about things my end? . . . Oh well, up to your usual standard I think I could say, a few holes in the wall, the odd door missing, but nothing you couldn't be sued for.

Manuel *(trotting in)* Good morning.

Basil *(to Manuel)* . . . I beg your pardon?

Manuel Good morning!

Basil *(to the phone)* One moment please. *(walks round desk to Manuel)* Did you say 'Good morning'?

Manuel *Si.*

Basil I see. Well, what are you going to do now, then?

Manuel *Qué?*

Basil What . . . you . . . do . . . now?

Manuel I serve breakfast.

Basil Ah! Let's see you, then.

Manuel looks for the dining-room door, without success.

Manuel Where is door?

Basil Ah ha!

Manuel Door is gone. *(points to wall)* Door was here.

Basil Where? *(picks Manuel up and slams his head against the wall in three different places)* Here? . . . or here? . . . or here?

Manuel droops. The Major enters and strolls up to them.

The Major Morning, Fawlty.

Basil Good morning, Major. I'm so sorry, I'm afraid the dining-room door seems to have disappeared. *(knees Manuel in the back)*

The Major Oh yes, so it has. It used to be there.

Basil Yes, well, I was silly enough to leave the hotel for a few minutes.

The Major Well, these things happen, you know. Now, I wonder where it's got to? Don't worry – it's bound to turn up . . . Er, have the newspapers arrived yet?

Basil No, not yet, no, Major. Manuel! – would you please show the Major how to get into the dining room via the kitchen?

Manuel . . . Is difficult.

Basil Major, will you please show Manuel how to get into the dining room via the kitchen?

The Major Oh, yes, yes, of course . . . come here, come on . . . what's your name . . . Manuel. *(he leads Manuel off)*

Basil *(back on the phone)* . . . Now look here, O'Reilly, I want my dining-room door put back in and the other one taken out by **one o'clock**, you understand? . . . No, no, I don't want a debate about it. If you're not here in twenty minutes with my door, I shall come over and insert a large garden gnome in you. Good day. *(rings off with panache)*

In the lobby, one hour later. O'Reilly is nearly at work on the dining-room door.

O'Reilly Well, I'm sorry, Mr Fawlty, but my men won't work on a Sunday and that's the way it is. There's nothing I can do about it.

Basil Well, how long's it going to take you?

O'Reilly I'm working as fast as I can.

Basil Well, it had better be fast enough. I mean, she is back in **four hours!**

Polly *(coming through the main entrance with tea and biscuits)* Tea up!

Basil What?!

Polly Brewed a cuppa for him, guv.

O'Reilly Lovely!

Basil He hasn't got time to drink that now!

Polly Biscuits?

O'Reilly Oh, these look good.

Basil Give them to me. *(he confiscates the biscuits)* Now, will you get on with it!

O'Reilly Look, look – this lot here *(pointing to the dining-room door . . .)* an hour and a half. That one *(pointing to the stairs)* – easy. Lick of paint all round, one hour. What's the time now?

Basil Ten to nine.

O'Reilly All right. Ten to nine and two and a half hours is . . . is . . . plenty of time. Give us a biscuit.

Basil No. You can have one when you've done that door. Polly, take them away. *(to O'Reilly, confiscating the cup of tea)* You can have that when you've finished the door, too.

Polly exits with the tea and biscuits.

O'Reilly The trouble with you, Mr Fawlty, is that you **worry** too much. You keep it up like this, you'll have a stroke before you're fifty. Stone dead you'll be.

Basil Suits me.

O'Reilly Oh! That's a dreadful thing to say.

Basil Not at all. Get a bit of peace.

O'Reilly Don't be so morbid. The Good Lord made the world so that we could all enjoy ourselves.

Basil Look, my **wife** enjoys herself. **I** worry.

O'Reilly Well, let me tell you, if the Lord had meant us to worry, he would have given us things to worry about.

Basil He **has**! My **wife**!! She will be back here in four hours and she can kill a man at ten paces with one blow of her tongue. How am I supposed not to worry?

O'Reilly *(calmly)* Just remember, Mr Fawlty, there's always somebody worse off than yourself.

Basil Is there? Well I'd like to meet him. I could do with a laugh.

O'Reilly You'll have to worry for the both of us. I tell you, if the Good Lord . . .

Basil Is mentioned **once** more, I shall move you closer to him. Now, **please** . . .

Polly *(running in)* Mr Fawlty! . . . She's here!

Basil What?

Polly She's here!

Basil Oh God.

Goes to main entrance and sees Sybil. She gets out of the car, sees O'Reilly's van, and strides furiously towards the entrance. Basil runs back into the lobby.

Basil Quick – hide!! Hide!! I'll try and get rid of her! Hide!!
O'Reilly Where?
Basil *(pointing towards the bar)* In there!

O'Reilly runs into the bar.

Polly Mr Fawlty!
Basil I'll try and stall her . . . God help me! *(he strides into the forecourt)* Hallo, Sybil!
Sybil *(coldly)* Hallo, Basil.
Basil Well, you finished your golf early!
Sybil We haven't started yet, Basil.
Basil Where are you going, dear?
Sybil Up these steps.
Basil Oh, don't do that! – it's such a lovely day. Let's go for a walk. We haven't done that for years. *(she pushes past him)* Oh, Sybil, I nearly forgot! You're not going to believe this. *(he manages to get into the lobby ahead of her)* Let me show you! *(gestures dramatically at the construction fiasco)* There! . . . Look at that! That's Stubbs for you. Mind you, I warned you! But **still** . . . a reputable builder like that! Choh! Tch, tch, tch.
Sybil . . . Stubbs?
Basil Wicked. Tch!
Sybil Where's O'Reilly, Basil?
Basil *(to himself)* Criminal! . . . *(to Sybil)* Hmmm?
Sybil Where's O'Reilly?
Basil . . . **O'Reilly?**
Sybil Yes, O'Reilly.
Basil Sybil, you never cease to amaze me. Just because of this . . . you **automatically** assume that it has to be O'Reilly. You just **assume** that I have been lying all along! I mean . . . **Why** . . . O'Reilly?
Sybil Because his van's outside.
Basil Well, he's here now! Of course he's here **now**!! He's come to clear up this mess that your Stubbs has made. That's why his *(with passion)* VAN'S OUTSIDE!!! . . . on a Sunday. That's what I call service.
Sybil I agree.

Basil . . . You do?

Sybil Yes. But if Stubbs has made this mess then I think he should come and clear it up.

Basil Well, yes, but there's no point now that O'Reilly's here, dear. We want it done **straight away**.

Sybil There's no point in paying money to Mr O'Reilly when Mr Stubbs would have to do it for free. I'll call him now.

Basil He won't be there on a Sunday.

Sybil Well, then I'll call him at home.

Basil is suddenly racked by a spasm of pain from his old war wound.

Basil Aaaaaaaagh! Oooh! Getting a bit of gyp from the old leg this morning. Not to worry. Anyway, I've called him at home and he's not there.

Sybil When did you call him?

Basil Oh . . . first thing. Before I called O'Reilly.

Sybil Wasn't that rather early? For a Sunday?

Basil **And** I called him five minutes ago, just before you came in. There's nobody there. Aaagh! *(he flexes his leg; the telephone rings; he answers it)* Yes, hallo, Fawlty Towers, yes!? . . . Who? . . . Er, yes, I think you'd better have a word with my wife. *(offers her the receiver; matter-of-factly)* Ummm . . . somebody from Mr Stubbs's, dear.

Sybil *(looks dubious but takes the phone)* Hallo, Sybil Fawlty? Oh yes . . . well, it **is** a complete mess. Well, could you come over straight away and put it right? . . . *(to Basil)* Would you like to deal with this, Basil?

She gives him the phone, smiles sweetly, and goes into the drawing room . . . where Polly, pinching her nose to disguise her voice, is providing the other end of the phone call.

Polly So you see we couldn't possibly manage it for at least three weeks . . . so if you want it done straight away, you'd better try someone like . . . oh, what's his name?

Sybil O'Reilly?

Polly winces and puts her tail between her legs. Sybil takes the phone.

Basil's voice *(over phone)* Bravo, Polly. Well done, girl! But listen – where are you speaking from?

Sybil She's in here with me, Basil. *(she replaces the receiver)*
Polly Mrs Fawlty, it's partly my fault.
Sybil No it isn't.
Polly Well, I should have told you.

They go back into the lobby. Basil is shouting on the telephone.

Basil Is that somebody there trying to pretend that they're from Mr Stubbs's Company?!! . . . What sort of game do you think you're playing?!! I mean, **really**!! *(slams phone down; to Sybil)* Would you believe what some of these people will do, Sybil?
Sybil I am going to make you regret this for the rest of your life, Basil.
Basil Well, fair enough, I suppose. But I think Stubbs is partly to blame . . .
Sybil *(screaming)* BASIL!!!
Basil . . . Yes, dear?
Sybil Don't you **dare**!!! Don't you dare give me any more of those . . . pathetic lies!!
Basil Oh! Right.
Sybil What do you **take** me for? Did you really think that I would believe this shambles was the work of professional builders, people who do it for a living?
Basil . . . No, not really, no.
Sybil Why did I **trust** you, Basil?! **Why** did I let you make the arrangements?! I could have **seen** what was going to happen. *Why* did I **do** it?
Basil . . . Well, we all make mistakes, dear.
Sybil *(slapping him hard)* I am **sick to death** of you!!! You never learn, do you?! You **never, ever, learn**!!! We've used O'Reilly three times this year, and each time it's been a **fiasco**!! That wall out there is **still** not done!! You got him to change a washer in November and we didn't have any running water for two weeks!!
Basil *(reasonably)* Well, he's not really a plumber, dear.
Sybil Well, why did you **hire** him?! . . . Because he's **cheap**!
Basil Oh, I wouldn't call him cheap, Sybil.
Sybil Well, what **would** you call him, then?
Basil Well . . . cheap . . . **ish** . . .
Sybil And the reason he's 'cheap-ish' is he's **no bloody good**!! *(kicks Basil's shin)*

Basil *(hopping about)* Oh, Sybil, you do exaggerate. I mean, he's not **brilliant** . . .

Sybil Not brilliant!?!?!? He belongs in a **zoo**!!! *(kicks his other shin)*

Basil *(in some discomfort)* Sybil, you never give anyone the benefit of the doubt.

O'Reilly, refreshed by a quick drink in the bar, emerges into the lobby.

Sybil He's **shoddy**, he doesn't care, he's a **liar**, he's **incompetent**, he's **lazy**, he's nothing but a **half-witted thick Irish joke**!!!

Basil Hallo, O'Reilly . . . How funny! We were just talking about you . . . and then we got on to **another** Irish builder we used to know – Oh, God, he was awful!

Sybil I was talking about **you**, Mr O'Reilly.

Basil . . . **Were** you, dear? I thought you were . . . *(he puts his hand on Sybil's arm to calm her; she slaps it away)*

O'Reilly *(turning on his gentle Irish charm)* Now, come, come, Mrs Fawlty . . .

Sybil *(walking over to him)* I'm coming.

O'Reilly *(winningly)* Oh dear me, what have I done now?

Sybil *(pointing to his work)* That and that.

O'Reilly Not to worry. I'm putting it right.

Sybil . . . Not to worry?

O'Reilly You've heard of the genius of the lamp, Mrs Fawlty? Well, that's me.

Sybil . . . You think I'm joking, don't you?

Basil *(more to himself than to O'Reilly)* Oh, **don't** smile.

Sybil . . . Why are you smiling, Mr O'Reilly?

O'Reilly Well, to be perfectly honest, Mrs Fawlty, I like a woman with spirit.

Sybil Oh, **do** you? Is **that** what you like?

O'Reilly I do, I do.

Sybil Oh, good. *(she picks up a golfing umbrella)*

Basil Now, Sybil! That's enough.

She hits him with it, steps up to the now apprehensive O'Reilly, and whacks him. He steps back.

Sybil Come on, then – give us a smile.

She wallops him. He collapses under a flurry of blows, emitting a charming gentle Irish cry of distress. She lowers the umbrella and stands over him.

Sybil O'Reilly, I have seen more intelligent creatures than you lying on their backs at the bottoms of ponds. I have seen better organized creatures than you running round farmyards with their heads cut off. Now collect your things and get out. I never want to see you or any of your men in my hotel again. *(starts dialling the phone)* Now if you'll excuse me, I have to speak to a **professional** builder. *(to phone)* Hallo, Mr Stubbs? . . . It's Sybil Fawlty here. I'm sorry to disturb you on a Sunday but we have a problem here with a couple of doors we'd like you to take care of. When do you think you could come round and take a look at them? . . . tomorrow morning at nine o'clock? That'd be fine. See you then. Thank you very much. Goodbye. *(rings off; to Basil, who protectively gets another twinge from his war wound)* Well, I think I shall go over to Audrey's now, and I shan't be back till the morning. *(she picks up her golf shoes, then sees the gnome)* Oh, Basil?

Basil Yes, dear?

Sybil What is **that** doing here?

Basil It's a garden gnome, dear . . . isn't it nice?

Sybil Well, don't you think it would be better in the garden?

Basil Yes, dear. Good idea!

Sybil No, no, Basil . . . put him back. On second thoughts, I think I'll leave him in charge. I'm sure he's cheap, and he's certainly better at it than you are. *(she turns on her heel and exits)*

Basil *(calling after her)* Have a nice day, dear! Don't drive over any mines or anything. *(to himself)* Toxic midget. *(turns to see O'Reilly leaving)* . . . Where are **you** going, O'Reilly?

O'Reilly Well, I . . .

Basil Would you please take your tools back and continue with the work?

O'Reilly Well, in view of what Mrs Fawlty was saying, I thought . . .

Basil You're not going to take any of that seriously, are you?

O'Reilly Well, I thought I might.

Basil You **thought** you **might**?!! What sort of man are you, O'Reilly? . . . Are you going to let her speak to us like that?

O'Reilly Well, she **did**, Mr Fawlty.

Basil No, she didn't. She thinks she did, but we'll show her.

We're not just going to put this door back and take that one out, we're going to close that one off and put that one through as well. We're going to do the best day's work you've ever done, O'Reilly.

O'Reilly's enthusiasm is underwhelming.

The next morning. The lobby has been totally renovated. The dining-room door has been restored; the door across the stairs has gone; a new door has been created, leading to the kitchen; and the door to the drawing room has been blocked off. Everything has been made good and painted. Manuel is standing by the main door, looking outside.

Basil Manuel! Any sign?

Manuel *Qué?* No, no.

The Major *(coming down the stairs)* Morning, Fawlty.

Basil Morning, Major. Papers are here.

The Major Ah, good.

Basil Notice anything new, Major?

The Major Another car strike!

Basil . . . Never mind.

Polly *(polishing the dining-room door)* Good morning, Major.

The Major Good morning, er . . . *(looks closely at her)*

Polly . . . Never mind.

The Major Oh, right. *(noticing the door)* Ah, you found it! I knew you would. *(to Polly)* He lost it, you know. *(goes into dining room)*

Manuel Mr Fawlty – she come! She come now!

Basil Quick!

He puts his cassette recorder on the desk, playing 'The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy'. He disappears into the kitchen, Manuel and Polly into the dining room. Sybil strides in, turns off the cassette, then notices the new work . . . She looks closely at the dining-room door.

Basil *(popping momentarily out of the kitchen)* Morning, dear!

She turns, but he has gone. She goes to the kitchen door and looks in; he pops playfully out of the dining-room door.

Basil Did you have a pleasant evening, dear? *(sees Mr Stubbs arriving)* Ah, Mr Stubbs! My wife's just there. *(he disappears into the office)*

Stubbs Good morning, Mrs Fawlty.

Sybil *(embarrassed)* Oh, Mr Stubbs, this is most awkward . . . I'm afraid I have to apologize. My husband has put me in a rather embarrassing situation . . . once again. I **was** going to ask you to do some work here . . .

Stubbs . . . Yes?

Sybil But I was away last night and when I came back just now . . . well, it appears to have been done . . .

Basil *(coming in from the office)* Everything all right, dear?

Stubbs Oh, I see.

Sybil I mean, it'll probably all fall down by lunch time . . .

Basil Oh, do you think so, dear? Well, let's ask a real **expert**! Do **you** think it'll all fall down by lunch, Mr Stubbs?

Stubbs No, no . . .

Basil No, Mr Stubbs wouldn't agree with you on **that** one, dear.

Stubbs *(peering)* . . . It's a very good job.

Basil Oh, did you hear that, dear? . . . A very good job.

Sybil Hmmmm?

Basil Oh, none of us like to be wrong, dear. **I** certainly don't. *(to Stubbs)* And then we knocked this door here through, and closed this one off.

Stubbs *(at kitchen door)* What did you use, an RSJ?

Basil No, four by two. *(to Sybil)* Not bad, eh, dear? And **not** expensive.

Stubbs No, I mean for the lintel. Did you use an RSJ? . . . you know, an iron girder? Or did you use a concrete lintel?

Basil . . . No, a wooden one.

Stubbs But that's a supporting wall!

Sybil **What?!**

Basil **Quite.** Well thanks very much for coming over this morning . . .

Sybil Just a minute – you mean that isn't strong enough?

Stubbs That's a supporting wall, Mrs Fawlty. It could give way any moment.

Sybil Any moment?

Stubbs Yes, God help the floors above! *(closes the kitchen door)* Look, keep this door shut until I can get a screwjack to prop it up, before the bloody lot comes in . . . I don't know, cowboys . . . *(hurries to the phone)*

Sybil Basil! *(Basil has gone; she goes to the main entrance)* Basil!!! Where are you going?!!!

Basil is striding away from the hotel, carrying the garden gnome with its pointed cap foremost.

Basil I'm going to see Mr O'Reilly, dear. Then I think I might go to Canada.

THE WEDDING PARTY

Basil Fawlty John Cleese
Sybil Fawlty Prunella Scales
Manuel Andrew Sachs
Polly Connie Booth
Major Gowen Ballard Berkeley
Miss Tibbs Gilly Flower
Miss Gatsby Renée Roberts
Alan Trevor Adams
Jean April Walker
Mrs Peignoir Yvonne Gilan
Mr Lloyd Conrad Phillips
Rachel Lloyd Diana King
Customer Jay Neill

Third of first series, first broadcast on 3 October 1975, BBC2.

The hotel bar. It is about six o'clock in the evening. Sybil is sitting at the bar, deep in conversation with a customer – a conversation which is punctuated by her familiar laugh. Basil approaches the Major's table.

The Major By jove, it's warm tonight, isn't it, Fawlty?
Basil It certainly is, Major, yes.
The Major Very warm, phew!
Basil Oh! Can I get you another drink?
The Major What? . . . Oh, well, why not indeed. What a nice idea.

At the bar, Sybil laughs.

Basil Always reminds me of somebody machine-gunning a seal.
The Major The heat?
Basil . . . No, no, my wife's laugh.
The Major Ah, yes.

Mrs Peignoir enters; she is attractive, slightly flirtatious, and a person of the French persuasion.

Basil *(with much charm)* Ah, good evening, Mrs Peignoir.
Mrs Peignoir Good evening. Thank you for your map, it was so useful. I had no idea how charming Torquay was.
Basil *Enchanté.* May I ask – did you find anything of interest?
Mrs Peignoir Mmm. A few pieces I liked very much, and one . . . oh! I **had** to have it.
Basil Ah, for**mid**able. I'm so pleased. May I introduce – Major Gowen, our longest standing resident – Mrs Peignoir.
Mrs Peignoir How do you do, Major?
The Major How do you do, Madam.
Basil Mrs Peignoir is an antique dealer. She's down here for a few days, sniffing around for dainty relics.

Sybil lets out a real cackle. Basil looks round in disgust.

Basil *(to Mrs Peignoir)* Please don't alarm yourself. That's only my wife laughing. I'm afraid her local finishing school was bombed.
Mrs Peignoir Oh dear!
Basil No, no, not really, just a thought. Well now, what can I get you?
Mrs Peignoir Do you have any Ricard?
Basil *(blankly)* I'm sorry?

Mrs Peignoir Any Ricard.
Basil . . . We're just out of it, I think.
Mrs Peignoir A sherry, then.
Basil But of course. *(smiling and bowing, he moves off)*
The Major Tell me – are you by any chance – French at all?
Mrs Peignoir Yes, I am.
The Major Good Lord!
Basil *(at the bar, to Sybil)* Enjoying yourself, dear? . . . We haven't put any nuts in the bowl, have we?
Sybil Well, I haven't. I don't know about you.
Basil Well, I'll do it then, shall I?
Sybil That would be the simplest solution, dear.
Basil *(thinking of an even simpler solution)* Where's Manuel?
Sybil We've given him the evening off, dear, it's his birthday.
Basil *(to himself)* Well, I mean, how old is he? Two and a half? *(another hearty laugh from Sybil and the customer)* Excuse me, there are no nuts here, Sybil.
Customer No nuts!!! *(he and Sybil laugh)*
Sybil *(to Basil)* You'll find them in the kitchen.
Basil Oh, will I?
Sybil Well, if you can bear to tear yourself away from Mrs Peignoir you will. *(to customer)* Do go on.
Basil *(bringing the Major and Mrs Peignoir their drinks)* Did you ever see that film *How To Murder Your Wife?*
The Major How to murder your wife?
Basil Yes. Awfully good. I saw it six times. *(goes off in search of nuts; to Sybil)* Very funny.

Imitating Sybil's laugh, he meets Misses Tibbs and Gatsby in the lobby.

Miss Tibbs Are you all right, Mr Fawlty?
Basil What? Yes, yes, thank you very much. Are you all right?
Miss Gatsby Yes.
Basil Good, good. Well, we're all all right, then. *(goes into the kitchen, once more imitating Sybil's laugh)*
Miss Gatsby Must be the heat.
Miss Tibbs Yes, he is getting taller, isn't he.
Miss Gatsby I don't think he's very well, dear – I think we ought to take care of him . . .

They exit through the main door, passing Polly, who comes in arm in arm with a young man, Richard.

Polly I think I left it somewhere . . . hang on. *(goes behind the reception desk, putting her sketch-pad on it)* Ah, here it is. *(holds up a book)* See you tonight.

They kiss across the desk. They are getting deeply into it when Basil enters.

Basil Yes? *(they spring apart, startled)* A single for tonight, is it?
Polly Er, no. Mr Fawlty, may I introduce Richard Turner?
Basil *(who is not too broad-minded)* Sorry?
Polly He's a friend of mine.
Basil Oh, you know each other, do you? Just passing through, are you?
Polly *(giving Richard the book)* There you go – see you tonight.
Basil Oh, we've opened a library, have we? How nice! *(Richard leaves)* Please don't go on my account, Mr Turnip.
Polly I'm sorry, Mr Fawlty.
Basil Now look here, Polly . . .
Polly We were just saying goodbye . . . no one was . . .
Basil I mean, what sort of a place do you think this is, a massage parlour? I mean, we are running a nice, respectable, high-class . . . I'm sorry, did I say something funny?
Polly *(trying not to laugh)* No, I was just looking . . .
Basil No, no, obviously I've said something frightfully comic.
Polly No, it's just the heat.
Basil Well, so long as I amuse the staff, I mean, that's all I'm here for.
Polly *(taking the bowl of nuts)* I'll just take these in, shall I?
Basil *(registering her T-shirt)* And one other thing, Polly, I'm afraid we've abandoned the idea of the topless afternoon teas, so if you wouldn't mind changing before you go in where people might be trying to eat.
Polly I was just going to. *(starts to leave)*
Basil *(picking up her sketch pad)* Polly, would you come back here a moment, please?
Polly *(to herself)* I'm on form tonight. *(to Basil)* Yes, Mr Fawlty?
Basil I know these kind of drawings may be considered decent at Art School, but will you please not leave them lying around on display at reception.
Polly I'll put them away when I've got some clothes on.

She leaves. Basil leafs through the drawings, which are obviously permissive.

Basil I mean, really . . . *(shaking his head)* Tch! *(the phone rings; he answers it)* Hallo, Fawlty Titties? Yes, yes . . . oh, it's you, Audrey. Yes . . . oh, he's left you again, has he? . . . Oh, dear . . . oh dear . . . *(he is not riveted)* How sad . . . hmmm. *(he invents a distraction)* Ah, good evening, Major – yes, I'll be with you in just one moment. *(to phone)* Yes, well, I'll ask her to call . . . mmm . . . yes . . . well, keep your pecker up. Bye. *(rings off; to himself)* Dreadful woman.

He stoops behind the desk with some papers. Alan and Jean, an attractive couple in their mid-twenties, come through the main entrance. They are laughing, cuddling and giggling.

Jean *(giggles)* Stop it, Alan!
Alan Woof! *(seeing Basil)* Hallo . . . we've booked a room.
Basil Have you?
Alan Yes. A double one. The name is . . .
Basil One moment, please. *(looks deliberately for the register)*
Alan *(quietly)* That's a nice suit.
Basil What? . . . I thought you said something.
Alan No.

Jean giggles.

Basil *(to her)* Are you all right?
Jean Yes, thank you. *(Alan pinches her bottom and she squeaks)*
Basil Are we ready?
Alan I think we are, yes!
Basil . . . Well, may I have your name, please?
Alan Yes, it's er . . . Bruce.
Basil Mr and Mrs Bruce.
Alan That's right.
Jean *(sexily)* Is it a double bed?
Basil I beg your pardon?
Jean Has our room got a double bed?
Basil A double bed?
Jean Yes.
Basil Well, we've only got **one** double bed . . . I mean, do you want that?
Alan Very much indeed, yes.

Basil Tch! *(sighs heavily)* Well, I'll have to put you in twelve then.

Alan All right.

Basil Tch! *(gets the key, muttering)* I mean, why didn't you . . . never mind, all right . . .

Jean Has it got a breeze?

Basil Has it got a breeze?

Jean Is it airy?

Basil Well, there's air in it.

Jean *(pointing at letter rack)* Oh, I think there's a letter for me.

Basil What?

Jean There's a letter for me. There.

Basil No there isn't.

Jean Yes. Jean Wilson.

Basil *(getting the letter)* Jean Wilson. Is this you?

Alan laughs nervously. He and Jean have sensed that, unlike most, Basil will be looking for trouble.

Basil *(handing the letter over)* Now, what's going on here? You're not married, is that it? . . . Well, I can't give you a double room, then.

Alan Oh, look . . .

Basil It's against the law.

Alan What law?

Basil The law of England. Nothing to do with me.

Alan Nothing to do with you?!

Basil Nothing at all. I can give you two singles if you like . . . um . . . *(busies himself)*

Alan Shall we go somewhere else?

Jean is unwilling to go somewhere else. She is leaning on the reception desk, her elbows on some papers.

Basil Excuse me. *(takes the papers away rudely)*

Mrs Peignoir *(entering and putting her key on the desk)* Well there's my key, and now I'm off to paint the town red.

Basil *(curtly)* Thank you so much.

Mrs Peignoir *(slightly surprised)* Well . . . perhaps I'll see you later this evening.

Basil Yes, my wife and I will be up till quite late tonight. Thank you. *(puzzled, Mrs Peignoir leaves)*

Alan *(to Jean)* I don't believe a word of this. *(to Basil)* Excuse

me, we'll have two singles then, please, if that's all right with the police.

Basil Two singles. Certainly. Now . . .

Jean *(intimately)* Next to each other.

Basil Next to each other . . . Oh dear. We can't do that. What a shame . . .

Sybil *(bustles in and takes an interest)* Good evening.

Alan & Jean Good evening.

Basil Um . . .

Sybil A double, is it?

Jean We'd like a double.

Basil Two singles, dear. *(pianissimissiamo)* Not married.

Sybil What?

Basil Nothing, dear. I'm dealing with it, dear.

Sybil Well, seventeen and eighteen are free. *(to Alan and Jean)* You'd have to share a bath.

Basil Nooooo! Oh, Audrey called – *(quietly)* I'll handle it – and George has left her again.

Sybil Oh, no.

Basil *(to Alan and Jean)* Now, we've got one on the first floor and one right up at the top.

Sybil Shall I deal with this, Basil?

Basil I'm dealing with it, dear.

Sybil No, dear, that's all right . . . Now, you wanted two singles?

Basil I said I'd deal with it.

Sybil Do you mind sharing a bathroom?

Basil Look, I was here first.

Sybil *(cheerfully)* Well it's my turn now, then.

Basil I fought in the Korean war, you know. I killed four men . . . *(he leaves huffily)*

Sybil He was in the catering corps. He poisoned them.

Basil goes into the office, shuts the door to the lobby and listens at it. There is a knock at the other door.

Basil Yes? . . . Who is it?

Manuel *(outside)* Is Manuel.

Basil What do you want?

Manuel Can I go now?

Basil I thought you'd gone.

Manuel *Qué?*

Basil I thought you'd gone.

Manuel No, no, I turned it off.
Basil What?
Manuel It was about so high . . .
Basil No, I said I thought . . . *he creduto que* . . . oh, it doesn't matter.
Manuel *Qué?*
Basil It doesn't matter!
Manuel . . . Oh, you think I gone!
Basil Yes.
Manuel No, no, I go now.
Basil Wonderful.
Manuel What? Is OK?
Basil Is OK.
Manuel Thank you. *(more knocking)*
Basil Yes?!
Manuel Before I go.
Basil *(opening the door)* Yes, what *is* it?
Manuel Is my birthday.
Basil Yes, I know.
Manuel *(beginning to read a prepared speech)* I want to thank you for your beautiful present *(he is carrying a new umbrella)* . . .
Basil Oh, yes, right . . .
Manuel . . . and for your much kindness to me since I come here.
Basil Not at all, my pleasure.
Manuel Since coming here from Spain, leaving my mother . . .
Basil Outside.
Manuel *Qué?*
Basil Outside. *(he slams the door)* Thank you. *(returns to listen at the door to the lobby)*
Manuel *(outside)* Since coming here from Spain, leaving my mother, my five brothers and four sisters.
Basil *(opening Manuel's door again)* Give it to me . . . thank you. *(he tears up the speech and shuts the door; Manuel hovers outside; Sybil enters)*
Sybil Can I have it, Basil?
Basil What, dear?
Sybil I want that key.
Basil I've only got the key to room twelve, dear.
Sybil That's the one.
Basil Now look here, Sybil . . .
Sybil BASIL!!!

Basil thrusts the key at her; she goes back into the lobby.

Basil If you were my size . . .
Manuel Since coming . . .

Basil opens the door and hits Manuel. Manuel scurries into the lobby.

Basil Here we are, Manuel – number twelve please.
Manuel *Si, si.*
Sybil Basil . . . *(she and Basil go off, arguing)*

Manuel takes the bags upstairs. Alan and Jean follow; they meet Polly at the foot of the stairs.

Polly Jean!!
Jean Hello, Poll!!
Polly What are you doing here?
Jean We couldn't get in at the Bellevue.
Polly Oh, no . . . Hello, Alan! *(they hug)*
Jean It'll be fun. My parents arrive tomorrow.
Polly What, here? I warned you!
Alan Yes, we've already met the famous Fawlty!
Polly Ssh! I'm not supposed to hob-nob. *(she motions them upstairs and they follow)*
Jean Oh, I like your outfit.
Polly I'll give you the pattern.

In the upstairs corridor, Manuel is holding their door open.

Jean Are you going to be at Fiona's wedding?
Polly I can't, but I'll be at the reception, in my very own Jean Wilson creation.
Jean I want you to try it on later.
Polly OK. How's that gorgeous stepfather?
Jean Oh, I haven't seen him for a month. He's been in Singapore.
Alan Oh, blast! I forgot to get those batteries for my electric razor. Is there anywhere still open, Poll?
Polly Well, you might find a chemist.
Alan Yes, well, I'd better take a look. Won't be long.

He goes back downstairs. Manuel offers round the bedroom key.

Jean Is Richard coming tonight?
Polly Mmmm . . . we'll be along about ten.
Jean Great.

They go into the room. Manuel shrugs and tosses the key in after them. Downstairs in the lobby, Alan approaches the desk somewhat apprehensively as Basil is on duty . . .

Alan Hello again.

Basil . . . Well?

Alan We managed to get it all sorted out with your wife.

Basil Well, I wouldn't know about that. Is there something you want?

Alan Yes, look, I know it's a bit late but do you know if there's a chemist still open?

Basil *(drawing the wrong conclusion)* I beg your pardon?

Alan Do you know if there's a chemist still open?

Basil I suppose you think this is funny, do you?

Alan Funny?

Basil Ha ha ha.

Alan No, I really want to know.

Basil Oh do you, well I don't. So far as I know all the chemists are shut. You'll just have to wait till tomorrow. Sorry. Bit of a blow, I imagine.

Alan What?

Basil Nothing, you heard. Is that all?

Alan Well . . .

Basil Yes?

Alan I don't suppose you've got a couple of . . .

Basil Now look!! Just don't push your luck. I have a breaking point, you know.

Alan I only want some batteries.

Basil *(his imagination running riot)* . . . I don't believe it.

Alan What?

Basil Batteries, eh? Do you know something? You disgust me. I know what people like you get up to and I think it's disgusting.

Alan What are you talking about? They're batteries for my electric razor. I want to shave.

Basil Oh yes?

Alan Look! I haven't shaved today. See? *(shows Basil his stubbly chin)*

Basil An electric razor, eh?

Alan Right.

Basil . . . Well, I was referring to that when I said it was disgusting . . . It is of course **disgusting** that you haven't

shaved, but understandable. I mean sometimes I don't shave either and that's **disgusting** too, so I shall have a razor sent to your room straight away, thank you very much, goodnight.

Alan looks bewildered. Basil goes into the office and buries his face in his hands.

Evening; the Fawltys' bedroom. Basil and Sybil are in separate beds, both reading. Sybil is also eating chocolates. She emits three grating laughs at the contents of her magazine; Basil winces. The phone rings; Sybil answers it.

Sybil Hello . . . Audrey! Any news? . . . Oh dear, he hasn't . . . ooh! I **know** . . . He doesn't deserve you, Audrey, really he doesn't . . . exactly . . . I know you have . . . *(all this is disturbing Basil's concentration)* I **know** . . . I **know** . . . oh I **know** . . .

Basil Are you going to go on like that all night?

Sybil What was that, Audrey? . . . oh I **know** . . . I **know** . . .

Basil Well, why's she **telling** you then?

Sybil I understand, dear, I really do.

Basil Oh, I can't stand it any more. I'll go and clean the roof or something. *(gets out of bed; the front doorbell rings)* Ah! There's the front doorbell. Somebody's got back late.

Sybil *(ignoring Basil completely)* Yes . . . yes . . .

Basil I expect they forgot to get their pass key.

Sybil . . . Oh, I **know** . . .

Basil Somebody'd better go and let them in.

Sybil . . . Yes! . . .

Basil I'll go, then, shall I? *(nods several times)*

Sybil . . . Mmmmm . . .

Basil Yes, I agree. Right. I'll go, then . . . *(puts his dressing gown on; the bell goes again)* I mean, you know who that *is*, don't you. I mean, that's your pair. The Karma Sutra set. Good evening, welcome to Basil Fawlty Knocking Shops Limited . . .

Sybil No, dear, it's only Basil.

He storms out, slamming the door. He comes crossly down the stairs into the lobby. The bell rings again.

Basil I'm coming! I'm coming! *(unlocks the door angrily)* I suppose you know what time it is?

(But it is Mrs Peignoir. She is slightly and delightfully tipsy.)

Mrs Peignoir Oh, Mr Fawlty, I'm so sorry.
Basil *(immediately oozing charm)* Oh, no, it's only a quarter past eleven.
Mrs Peignoir Oh, I got you out of your bed.
Basil Oh, not at all, I just had a few little jobs to do and . . .
Mrs Peignoir Oh, you're so kind.
Basil Oh, well . . .
Mrs Peignoir Oh, I had just a lovely evening!
Basil Did you? How very nice!
Mrs Peignoir I saw some friends I hadn't seen for years and I had a little bit too much to drink, I'm afraid.
Basil Oh, no, I mean, what's life for if one can't get a bit . . . er . . .
Mrs Peignoir Blotto?
Basil Well, hardly blotto.
Mrs Peignoir Ah, Mr Fawlty, you're so charming.
Basil Ah well, one does one's best.
Mrs Peignoir I hope Mrs Fawlty appreciates how lucky she is.
Basil Well, I think probably not, in fact.
Mrs Peignoir *(dropping her purse)* Oh!

Basil is at once on his knees to recover it.

Basil Oh please, allow me . . . sorry . . . I beg your pardon . . . ah, there we are . . .

He collides with her, sinks to his hands and knees, and she inadvertently sits on his back, giggling. At this moment Alan and Jean come in. She gets up and collides with Alan.

Alan Sorry . . .
Basil *(scrambling to his feet)* Ah, there you are! Do come in.
Alan I'm awfully sorry, but we didn't realize . . .
Basil *(explaining loudly)* No, it was quite extraordinary, the front doorbell went just a moment or two ago and I thought to myself, I expect that'll be Alan and, er, and down I came and lo and behold it's not you at all, it was Mrs Peignoir – have you met? – Alan and, er, this is Mrs Peignoir, she's an antique dealer you know, I mean, she deals in antiques, she's not frightfully old or anything, ha ha ha, and so I let her in not ten seconds ago, hardly five, hardly time to say good evening, in she comes, drops her things,

just like that, so down I go and over she goes, ha ha ha, and bless my soul there you are, golly, is that the time, my goodness, I was thinking it was a quarter past ten, my God, well, I'd better get to bed, I can't stand around here talking all night, got to get an early night, goodbye . . . sorry . . . *(disappears up the stairs)*

Alan *(to Mrs Peignoir)* Are you all right?

Mrs Peignoir *(still laughing)* Yes, I am. Goodnight.

Alan Jean, I'll just make that call.

Jean Don't be too long. *(she follows Mrs Peignoir upstairs)*

In the Fawltys' bedroom, Sybil is now off the phone, back into her magazine and testing chocolates. Basil comes in, yawning noisily.

Sybil . . . Well?

Basil . . . Hmmmmm?

Sybil Who was it?

Basil It was your, er . . . pair . . . Huh! Tch! Caw!

He gets back into bed. From outside the door:

Jean's voice Good night.

Mrs Peignoir's voice *Bonne nuit.*

Sybil gives Basil a withering look.

Basil Oh, and that . . . that woman . . . er?

Sybil Mrs Peignoir.

Basil Oh, something like that, yes . . .

Mrs Peignoir's voice *Dormez bien*, Monsieur Fawlty.

An uncomfortable pause.

Basil How's Audrey?

Sybil She's in a terrible state.

Basil *(absently)* Ah, good, good.

There is a knock at the door. Basil tries to ignore it at first, but Sybil is looking pointedly at him.

Basil *(loudly)* There's someone at the door, Sybil.

Sybil Why are you shouting, Basil?

Basil Was I shouting? Sorry, Sybil! *(totally unnerved, he gets out of bed and puts his dressing-gown on)* Well, I'd better see who that is, then, Sybil. I expect it's some key who forgot to get the guest for their door or some innocent

explanation like that. Are you ready, Sybil?

Sybil *(somewhat puzzled)* I'm ready, Basil.

Basil Right. Well, I'll just see who that is, then, Sybil. Ready, Sybil? *(he opens the door about an inch; unable to see anyone, he moves out into the corridor)* Hallo?

Manuel, wearing a silly hat and some party streamers, and obviously somewhat tipsy, jumps out from round the corner.

Manuel *Olé! (Basil jumps violently and falls over)* Oh, so sorry, Mr Fawlty . . . **poor** Mr Fawlty! *(stoops to help Basil up)*

Sybil's voice Basil, are you all right?

Basil No, I'm dying, but don't get out of bed.

Manuel I hurt you, and you so wonderful, give me such beautiful present. Thank you . . .

Basil You're drunk, Manuel.

Manuel No, is beautiful, is my first one. Thank you, thank . . . *(Basil moans)* Oh, Mr Fawlty, so sorry, please . . .

Alan comes round the corner of the corridor behind them and sees Manuel and Basil grappling on the floor.

Manuel Mr Fawlty, I love you, I love you, you so kind, you so good to me. I love you, I love you!

Alan hurries off, shaking his head.

Sybil's voice Basil, I'm trying to read in here.

Manuel Since I came here from Spain, leaving my five mothers and four aunties . . .

Basil's hands reach up and attempt to strangle Manuel.

The dining room, the next morning. Basil approaches Mrs Peignoir's table.

Basil *Et maintenant – un peu de café?*

Mrs Peignoir *Ah, oui, s'il vous plaît. Café au lait.*

Basil *Café* what?

Mrs Peignoir *Au lait.*

Basil Ah! *Café . . . Olé!*

Manuel, looking terrible, appears with two cups of coffee. He sways to Alan and Jean's table and deposits the coffee, spilling some of it. He tries to mop it up but is overcome and helped back to the kitchen by Polly. Basil brings Mrs Peignoir her coffee.

Basil There we are. *Voilà sommes nous. Café pour vous.*
Mrs Peignoir *'Vous'? Pas 'pour toi'?*
Basil No, I'll probably have one later.
Mrs Peignoir *(laughs gaily)* Oh, that's very funny!
Basil Oh, good, good.
Mrs Peignoir Oh, Mr Fawlty, I forget – the window in my bedroom – I can't open it . . . er . . . could you . . . ?
Basil Oh, certainly, I'll pop up and fix it, certainly.

He walks away. Manuel appears carrying two plates of food. The sight of them has a bad effect on him and he sinks to his knees. Basil appears behind him and rescues the plates.

Basil Thank you so much. *(puts them on Alan and Jean's table)* Manuel?
Manuel *(on floor)* Is terrible.
Basil Manuel, would you go in the kitchen please.
Manuel I can't.
Basil Manuel! Go to the kitchen immediately.
Manuel Oh, no, no, no.
Basil Come on, Manuel.
Manuel No, no . . . please, I die here, please.
Basil *(to the guests)* Sorry about this. He's been working awfully hard recently.
Polly *(coming up)* Mr Fawlty, can I help?
Basil I can manage this on my own, thank you, Polly. *(he tries to pick Manuel up but falls on the floor with him)*
Alan *(to Jean)* He's at it again.
Jean Disgusting!
Basil *(still on floor)* I beg your pardon?
Jean Nothing!
Basil I thought you said something.
Alan No, no, no, carry on.
Basil *(carrying Manuel out; to guests)* Get on with your meal!

In the lobby, two newcomers, Mr and Mrs Lloyd, are at the reception desk. Sybil is dealing with them.

Sybil Thank you, Mr Lloyd. This is just for tonight, isn't it?
Mr Lloyd That's right.
Sybil Will you be taking lunch?
Mr Lloyd We won't have time, I'm afraid, we've got this wedding at half past two . . .
Mrs Lloyd I wonder, could I make a call?

Sybil Oh, please, use that phone.

Mr Lloyd Would it be possible to have some sandwiches sent up to our room?

Sybil Certainly. Here's the key. I'll have your bags brought up in a moment.

Mr Lloyd Thank you.

Mr Lloyd goes up the stairs. Mrs Lloyd starts dialling her number.

Sybil *(going into the kitchen)* Would you like coffee with the sandwiches?

Mrs Lloyd Oh, yes please.

Sybil disappears. Alan and Jean come out of the dining room.

Jean Mum!

Mrs Lloyd *(kissing her)* Hallo darling, hallo Alan.

Alan Hallo, Rachel.

Jean Where's Philip? Did he have a good trip?

Mrs Lloyd Marvellous. He's upstairs. *(to phone)* Oh, could I speak to Mrs Brice, please?

Jean I'll see you in a moment. *(she skips off upstairs)*

Alan I'm just going to finish my breakfast. *(goes to dining room)*

Mrs Lloyd Right ho, love.

Basil comes out of the dining room with Sybil, who indicates the cases.

Sybil There they are.

Basil Well, where's the key?

Sybil He's already taken it up, Basil.

Basil All right.

Mrs Lloyd *(to phone)* Anne – it's Rachel Lloyd here . . . how's everything?

Basil *(to Mrs Lloyd)* I'm going to take your cases upstairs.

Mrs Lloyd *(to phone)* Yes, I **know** . . .

Basil sighs on hearing this familiar phrase and takes the cases upstairs. In the Lloyds' room, Jean is hugging Mr Lloyd.

Jean Darling, it's **beautiful** . . . **thank** you.

She kisses him. Basil opens the door and sees this; he shuts it again in horror and runs downstairs.

Basil Sybil! Sybil! *(he sees Mrs Lloyd in the lobby, and decides to*

protect her from the goings-on upstairs) Ah! . . . Hello!

Mrs Lloyd Hallo.

Basil It's Mrs Lloyd, isn't it?

Mrs Lloyd That's right.

Basil Ah, how do you do. Fawlty. Basil Fawlty. *(shakes her hand)*

Mrs Lloyd How do you do.

Basil Oh, pretty well, really. Can't complain, ha ha ha.

Mrs Lloyd *(not understanding all this)* Good.

Basil Well . . . hah! *(indicates the kitchen door)* We . . . er . . . had this door knocked through recently . . . made rather a good job of it, don't you think?

Mrs Lloyd Yes, yes, it's very nice.

Basil Oh yes, marvellous, it's changed our lives, really. You know, we used to have to do the hundred yards through there and back again, but now we can just sort of open it . . . *(it is stuck)* Oh dear, it's not working as well as it usually does, ha ha ha . . . *(opens it)* . . . and go right in, just like that, it's marvellous. It's simple but effective. Would you like to have a go, see the kitchen and . . .

Mrs Lloyd Well, I'd love to one day, but I think just now I'd better be getting upstairs. So I'll see you later . . .

She makes to leave. Basil suddenly grabs his thigh.

Basil Aaaaargh! . . . Oooooh!

Mrs Lloyd Are you all right?

Basil Bit of trouble with the old leg. I'd better just sit down in here, just for a moment. *(he backs into the kitchen; she follows uncertainly)* Bit of shrapnel. Korean War. Still in there. Oh dear!

Mrs Lloyd Can't they get it out?

Basil Too deep. Too deep. Aaaaagh! . . . Well, this is the kitchen as you can see . . .

Mrs Lloyd What . . .

Basil The kitchen . . . Aagh! . . . Yes, we had it plastered about five years ago . . . we've got a few cracks up there now . . . *(Mrs Lloyd notices Manuel's feet sticking out of the laundry basket)* Oh, don't worry about him, he's just having a lie down. He's from Spain. Barcelona, you know. Sort of siesta. But he's fine. *(opens the lid to demonstrate this; Manuel groans; Basil closes the lid)* It was his birthday yesterday . . . so anyway, we got a few cracks up there but

nothing serious . . . so, as I say, it's not the Sistine Chapel, but we're very happy with it. *(he spots Jean crossing the lobby and stands up)*

Mrs Lloyd Are you sure he's all right?

Basil What? Oh yes, he's fine.

Manuel groans again.

Mrs Lloyd But he's groaning.

Basil Is he, is he?

Mrs Lloyd Can't you hear him?

More groans.

Basil So he is. Listen, I've just remembered I left your cases just outside your room by mistake – would you mind if I went and put them inside now . . . unless there's anything else you'd like to see?

Mrs Lloyd No, but . . . *(she looks at Manuel)*

Basil Oh, don't worry about him, my wife will deal with that. Sybil! So if you'd like to . . . come along, come along. *(ushers her out of the kitchen)*

In the Lloyds' bedroom; there is a knock at the door.

Mr Lloyd Come in.

Polly comes in with a tray.

Polly Your sandwiches, Mr Lloyd.

Mr Lloyd *(realizing after a moment who it is)* Polly!

Polly Hello!

Mr Lloyd How are you?

Polly Fantastic.

Mr Lloyd It's great to see you.

Polly You're still gorgeous.

They hug each other. Basil opens the door and sees this with disbelief. He closes the door hurriedly and wonders how to protect Mrs Lloyd.

Mrs Lloyd Is anything the matter?

Basil Mrs Lloyd . . . er . . . can I have a word with you?

Mrs Lloyd You are.

Basil *(thinking furiously)* Yes . . . there's something that I need to explain.

Mrs Lloyd Well?

Basil *(opening the door to another room)* Could we go in here?
Mrs Lloyd Oh, really, is it absolutely necessary?
Basil I'm afraid it is.

Bewildered and thoroughly disconcerted, she follows Basil into the room.

Basil Mrs Lloyd, I'm so sorry . . . but this is a much nicer room . . . than the one we've given you . . .
Mrs Lloyd What . . . ?
Basil I was saying that I was sorry that this room is so much nicer than yours . . . and I wanted to bring you in here now and show it to you . . . and to apologize . . . in case you found out about it later and got rather cross. Now, the point is . . . um . . . the point is . . . if it turns out you don't like your room, then we could always move you in here, but I don't think it's worth doing until you've definitely decided that you don't like that one as much as this one, and then we can sort of sit down round a table, discuss it, chew it over and . . . *(he looks out to see Polly leaving the Lloyds' room)* . . . and then it will be a piece of cake. Bob's your uncle. OK? Fine. *(ushers her back to her own room)* . . . Oh, sorry, sorry. *(he brings the cases into the Lloyds' room)*
Mr Lloyd Oh, thank you, thank you very much. *(to his wife)* I wondered where you were, darling. *(Basil gives him a look of hatred and departs)* Darling . . . darling – are you all right?
Mrs Lloyd But . . . this room is exactly the same as . . . that one . . .

Outside in the corridor, Basil stands fuming. Meanwhile in Alan's room Jean is massaging the back of Alan's neck while Polly tries on one of Jean's dresses.

Polly Jean, it's absolutely smashing.
Jean A bit tight over the bust.
Polly Oh, I love it.
Alan *(reacting to the massage)* Lower.
Jean *(to Polly)* Are you sure?
Polly Mmm. Can I pick it up tonight?
Alan Lower . . . Oh, marvellous! That's it! Ooh!

Polly takes the dress off and puts her own back on. In the corridor, Basil can hear Alan's voice as the massage proceeds.

Alan's voice Oh, that's amazing. That's amazing! Aaaah! Beautiful! Ooh! Oh baby, have you been taking lessons?

Polly's voice So, see you tonight.

She opens the door; Basil crouches out of sight as she comes out.

Polly For ten quid that's absolutely fantastic!

She makes off downstairs, still doing up the back of her dress. Basil is quite horrified.

Basil No, no, no, noooooooo . . . *(he rushes down into the lobby, where he meets Polly)* Polly, I want to see you at reception in one minute in your hat and coat.

Polly I'm sorry?

Basil I want to see you at reception in one minute in your hat and coat.

Polly Will they fit you?

Basil Not . . . not . . . **you!** You! *(he speeds into the office, where Sybil is working)* They're going!

Sybil What?

Basil They're going!

He races off upstairs, knocks on the Lloyds' door and opens it abruptly.

Basil I'm sorry, but you'll have to go. We made a mistake. All these rooms are taken. *(realizes that the room is empty)* Hallo?

The Lloyds, Alan and Jean are in Alan's room.

Jean She was sitting on him!

Alan Five minutes later, I saw him lying on the floor underneath the waiter!

The door opens; Basil looks in and stares at them.

Basil . . . Ah, there you are . . . Yes, yes, I might have guessed, mightn't I? Yes, I see. Of course we're a bit behind the times down here in Torquay. Well, I'm sorry but you'll have to go. We made a mistake – all these rooms are taken. I'm so sorry. *(he goes; then he comes back)* Well, actually, I'm not sorry. I mean, you come here, just like that, and well, well, to be perfectly blunt, you have a very good time at our expense. I mean, I think you know what I

mean. Hah! I mean, you have had a **very, very** good time, haven't you? Well, not here you don't! Oh, no. Thank you and goodnight!

He slams the door and races off, leaving the occupants speechless. Downstairs, he storms into the office.

Basil Well, that's taken care of that!

Sybil Basil, **what** is going on? Why did you tell Polly to get her hat and coat?

Basil Because she's going. Along with the Lloyds and that pair you let in. I've never seen anything like it in my life! **My God!!**

Sybil Basil, what are you on about? Why are they leaving?

Basil I'll tell you exactly why they're leaving. First of all, I go up there and I find that girl in his arms, in Lloyd's arms. Five minutes later Polly's in there!

Sybil What girl?

Basil That girl!

Sybil She's his daughter.

Basil What?

Sybil She's Mr Lloyd's step-daugher. They're all one family.

There is a long, long pause while the implications sink in.

Basil Well, what about Polly?

Sybil She was at school with Jean. She's known them all for years.

Basil For years, huh?

Sybil For years.

Basil . . . What have I done?

Sybil What have you done?

Basil I told them to leave.

Sybil You've told them to **leave?**

Basil Well, how was I supposed to know? Why didn't you tell me, you **half-wit?** Why didn't **they** tell me? You can't blame me for this!

Sybil *(placidly)* Go and tell them they can stay.

Basil . . . Why don't you go and tell them?

Sybil *I* didn't tell them to go.

Basil No, no, I suppose it's all my fault, isn't it?

Sybil *(firmly)* Go and tell them! . . . Now!

Basil No, I won't.

Sybil You will.

Basil No, no I won't.

Sybil *(standing up)* Oh yes you will.

Basil Oh yes I will. Right! That's right – leave it to me! Let me get you out of it. That's what I'm good for, isn't it? Basil Fawlty Limited. Other people's messes cleared up. By appointment to my wife Sybil . . . I mean, what am I going to say?!!

Sybil Tell them you made a mistake.

Basil Oh, brilliant. Is that what made Britain great? 'I'm so sorry I made a mistake.' What have you got for a brain – spongecake?

He hurtles out into the lobby. Polly is coming down the stairs in her hat and coat.

Basil Er . . . very nice. Very nice. Take them off, get back to work. 'I'm so sorry I made a mistake.'

He hurtles past the dazed Polly, and rushes up the stairs too preoccupied to notice Mr Lloyd coming down.

Basil *(to himself)* I'm so sorry I made a mistake.

Mr Lloyd looks oddly after him and starts back up the stairs. In the upstairs corridor, Basil hurtles to a stop.

Basil *(to empty space)* I'm so sorry I made a mistake.

He knocks on Alan's door and opens it. The occupants turn to look at him.

Basil I'm sorry . . . I'm so sorry, but my wife has made a mistake, I don't know how she did it, but she did, she's made a complete pudding of the whole thing as usual, it'll be perfectly all right for you to stay, I've sorted it all out, I'm frightfully sorry but you know what women are like, they've only got one brain between the lot of them, well not all of them but some of them have, particularly my wife, so please do stay and see you all later on, thank you so much. *(he spins round and sees Mr Lloyd; he is in no mood for shocks; he jumps and makes as if to hit Mr Lloyd for a split second, then pulls back, bows, and says with difficulty)* . . . I was just saying . . . please do stay . . . my wife made a most dreadful mistake. *(he exits, bowing)*

Mr Lloyd Yes, I think she probably did.

The lobby. Late evening; it is quite dark outside. Basil is at the desk. Major Gowen appears.

The Major Evening, Fawlty.
Basil Ah, evening, Major.
The Major Papers arrived yet?
Basil Oh, yes. Sorry they're so late. *(hands one over)* Didn't get here till five. I'll have to have a word with them again.
The Major Where's your lady wife this evening?
Basil Oh, she's spending the night at Audrey's. George has walked out on her again so she's in the usual state.
The Major Still, I suppose it must have upset her a bit.
Basil Yes, but she makes such a song and dance about it.
The Major You don't like Audrey very much, do you?
Basil Oh, dreadful woman, dreadful.
The Major Well, I think it's very decent of your wife to go round there and listen to all that rubbish.
Basil Couldn't do without it, Major.
The Major She's a fine woman, Mrs Fawlty.
Basil No, no, I wouldn't say that.
The Major No, nor would I. Well, goodnight, Fawlty.
Basil Goodnight, Major.

The Major goes upstairs. Basil puts his recorder on; it plays Chopin. Mrs Peignoir comes in through the main entrance.

Mrs Peignoir Ah, Mr Fawlty.
Basil Oh. Good evening. Sorry. *(turns the recorder off)*
Mrs Peignoir No, no, don't switch it off. I love Chopin.
Basil Oh, really? Hah. There's your key. *(he switches the recorder back on)*
Mrs Peignoir Ah, it's so romantic!
Basil Exactly.
Mrs Peignoir Are you romantic, Mr Fawlty?
Basil No, good God, no! *(switches off the tape)*
Mrs Peignoir Well, I think you are. I think beneath that English exterior throbs a passion that would make Lord Byron look like a tobacconist.
Basil Oh, no. No way, no, sorry.
Mrs Peignoir Oh, don't look so bashful. I won't try and sit on you again!
Basil Ah! Ha ha ha!

They begin to climb the stairs.

Mrs Peignoir And where is your charming wife this evening?
Basil Oh, she's er . . . spending the night with a friend.
Mrs Peignoir *(naughtily)* Oooh!

They are now in the upstairs corridor.

Basil A girl . . . lady friend.
Mrs Peignoir While the cat's away, eh?
Basil Oh, hardly, no. There's too much to do. *(he glances at his watch)* Oh well, goodnight.
Mrs Peignoir *Bonne nuit* . . . oh! Mr Fawlty . . .
Basil . . . Yes?
Mrs Peignoir Did you fix my window?
Basil Oh, er . . . no . . . damn.
Mrs Peignoir If you could, please – it's so hot tonight.
Basil *(cautiously)* Yes, yes. OK. Right.

They move off upstairs. After a pause, Sybil comes in through the main entrance. Upstairs in Mrs Peignoir's bedroom, Basil has lifted the sash window.

Basil There we are.
Mrs Peignoir Ah, you're so strong.
Basil Well, I'm sure you are too . . . if you put your mind to it.
Mrs Peignoir Your wife shouldn't leave you alone with strange women.
Basil Oh, I wouldn't call you **that** strange.
Mrs Peignoir Oh, Mr Fawlty, you're so charming.
Basil Oh, only a little. *(he looks hard at his watch)*
Mrs Peignoir Oh, feel that breeze, isn't it wonderful?
Basil *(backing out)* It is nice, isn't it.
Mrs Peignoir I shall sleep *au naturelle* tonight.
Basil Good idea!
Mrs Peignoir Only it's not so much fun on your own . . .
Basil Oh well, one can always pretend. Agh! A twinge from the old leg. Better go and lie down. Goodnight!
Mrs Peignoir Goodnight.
Basil Damned shrapnel.

He closes the door, leaving Mrs Peignoir giggling, and goes to his bedroom, closing the door with a sigh of relief. Meanwhile in the lobby, Sybil switches off the light and makes for the stairs; but a loud bump and moan come alarmingly from the kitchen. Back in the Fawltys' bedroom, Basil is pottering. There is a knock at the door.

Basil Er . . . who is it?
Mrs Peignoir's voice Oh, Mr Fawlty.
Basil *(opening the door a fraction)* Oh, hello.
Mrs Peignoir I'm so sorry, but I have to leave early tomorrow. Could I have a call at seven o'clock, please?
Basil Oh, yes, marvellous, is that all, absolutely, seven o'clock.
Mrs Peignoir Please don't go yet.
Basil What? *(he looks at his watch)*
Mrs Peignoir I think you've forgotten something.
Basil Did I? Damn. Well, there you go.
Mrs Peignoir Your recorder. *(gives it to him)*
Basil . . . Oh. Thank you.
Mrs Peignoir You left it in my room.
Basil . . . Oh, thank you so much.
Mrs Peignoir You left it in my room so you could come and get it, didn't you?
Basil Ha ha ha!
Mrs Peignoir *(coquettishly)* I'm not having you knocking on my door in the middle of the night!
Basil *(falsetto)* Ha ha ha ha ha . . . I should coco!
Mrs Peignoir You naughty man! Goodnight.
Basil Goodnight. *(he closes the door and locks it firmly)*

In the lobby, Sybil is listening to the strange noises from the kitchen. She hurries upstairs, and tries to open her bedroom door, but it is locked. She knocks. Basil makes snoring noises. She knocks again; he goes on snoring. She knocks again.

Basil (Oh, God!) Look, go to your room. I won't ask you again.
Sybil *(outside)* Open the door.
Basil Listen, I can't, my wife's just got back unexpectedly. She's in the bathroom. *(loudly, to an imaginary Sybil)* What, dear? I think you'll find it on the second shelf, Sybil darling.
Sybil Let me in, Basil.
Basil Look, you'll meet somebody else sooner or later. *(she hammers on the door)* Try to control yourself. Where do you think you are? Paris?
Sybil Let me in!
Basil Shut up, will you, you silly great tart! Go **away**! My wife will hear us.
Sybil This **is** your wife.

Realisation dawns. There are no first-class explanations. He opens the door.

Basil Oh, what a terrible dream!

Sybil *(her mind elsewhere)* There's a burglar downstairs.

Basil George got back, did he?

Sybil There's a burglar downstairs. Quick!

Basil What?

Sybil A **burglar**!!! Quick!

Without bothering to put his trousers back on, Basil runs downstairs to the darkened lobby, failing to recognize Manuel as he comes out of the kitchen. Basil reaches into the kitchen for a frying-pan, creeps up behind Manuel and clouts him on the head with it. Manuel collapses face down. Basil sits astride him and is about to clout him again when the back of Manuel's head seems familiar. He takes a closer look.

Basil Manuel?

The lights go on; it is the Lloyds, Alan, and Jean. Faced with the vision of Basil, in shirt and underpants, sitting across the prone Manuel, Jean is amused, Alan bewildered, and Mrs Lloyd slightly shocked.

Mrs Lloyd . . . Goodnight.

She, Alan and Jean go upstairs. Mr Lloyd, slightly drunk, surveys the scene.

Mr Lloyd **We've** been to a wedding!

He goes upstairs. Basil covers his face in his hand in mortification, and then draws back the frying pan for a revengeful clout . . .

THE HOTEL INSPECTORS

Basil Fawlty John Cleese
Sybil Fawlty Prunella Scales
Polly Connie Booth
Manuel Andrew Sachs
Mr Hutchison Bernard Cribbins
Mr Walt James Cossins
Major Gowen Ballard Berkeley
Miss Tibbs Gilly Flower
Miss Gatsby Renée Roberts
John Geoffrey Morris
Brian Peter Brett

Fourth of first series, first broadcast on 10 October 1975, BBC2.

Morning at Fawlty Towers. In the office, Basil is reading a newspaper. At the reception desk, Sybil is on the phone. She laughs – machine-gun plus seal bark.

Sybil . . . I know . . . well, it all started with that electrician, didn't it . . . a real live wire he was, only one watt but plenty of volts as they say . . .

She laughs again. The noise rattles Basil, who puts a cigarette in his mouth and looks in vain for a match.

Sybil . . . Well, anything in trousers, yes . . . or out of them, preferably. *(she laughs)* Yes . . . um . . . no, just lighting up, go on . . . I **know**, I'd heard that, with her mother in the same room.

Basil comes out and takes the matches; she takes them back from him and gives him just one. Basil is disgruntled but spots a guest coming and slips smartly back into the office.

Sybil No, no, of course I won't, go on. *(the new arrival, Mr Hutchison, stops at the desk; Sybil sees him)* Basil!

Basil *(in the office)* Yes, dear?

Sybil Oh no! . . . Who saw them? . . . **Basil!**

Basil *(trying to strike his match on the desk)* Yes, dear?

Sybil Could you come and attend to a gentleman out here, dear? *(to phone)* **nineteen?**

Basil What, you mean out where you are, dear?

Sybil Well, the last one was only twenty-two . . . he **was!**

Basil Actually, I'm quite busy in here, dear . . . are you very busy out there?

Sybil I'm on the telephone, Basil. *(to Mr Hutchison)* My husband will be with you in a moment.

Hutchison Thank you.

Basil So I'll stop work and come and help out there, shall I?

Sybil No, no, no, the Maltese one.

Basil Well, I'm glad that's settled, then. *(comes to the reception desk reluctantly)*

Sybil No, no, dear, **he** was an Arab.

Basil Darling, when you've finished, why don't you have a nice lie-down? *(to Mr Hutchison)* I'm so sorry to have kept you waiting, sir. I had no idea my wife was so busy.

Hutchison Fear not, kind sir, it matters not one whit.

Basil . . . I beg your pardon?

Hutchison *(loudly)* It matters not one whit, time is not pressing on me fortunately. Now some information please. This afternoon I have to visit the town for sundry purposes which would be of no interest to you I am quite sure, but nevertheless I shall require your aid in getting for me some sort of transport, some hired vehicle, that is, to get me to my first port of call.

Basil Are you all right?

Hutchison Oh, yes, I find the air here most invigorating.

Basil I see . . . Well, did I gather from your first announcement that you want a taxi?

Hutchison In a nutshell.

Basil *(turning away)* Case more like. *(he picks up a minicab card; Sybil finishes her call and goes into the office)*

Hutchison At two o'clock, please.

Basil *(giving him the card)* Well, there's the number of the local firm.

Hutchison Please, please – could you get it for me, because I never use the telephone if I can avoid it.

Basil Why not?

Hutchison The risk of infection . . . Now. I have a rendezvous at five o'clock at this address which I must reach from the Post Office in Queen's Square, so as the map is sadly inadequate I would be very grateful if you could draw me a diagram of the optimum route?

Basil May I ask what's wrong with the map?

Hutchison It's got curry on it.

Basil . . . Look it's perfectly simple, you go to the end of Queen's Parade, bear left . . . *(Hutchison rudely waves the pen and paper in Basil's face)* . . . Look, just *listen.*

Hutchison No, I just want a diagram.

Basil It really is very simple.

Hutchison Well, I'd rather have the diagram if it doesn't put you out.

Basil It **does** put me out.

Hutchison Well, I'd like it all the same!

Sybil *(who has come back from the office)* Basil!!!

Basil *(through clenched teeth)* . . . Right. *(he looks round for paper and pen)*

Hutchison *(brandishing his pen at Basil)* Here we are, then.

Basil We do have pens, thank you.

Hutchison What?

Basil We have actually got pens in the hotel, thank you so much . . . *(looks around vainly)* **Somewhere** . . . I mean, **where are** the pens . . . ? I mean, would you believe it?

As Basil looks around, Mr Walt, a smoothish-looking gentleman in his mid-forties, arrives at the desk; Sybil starts checking him in.

Basil I mean, there are no **pens** here! *(to Mr Walt)* I mean, this is **supposed** to be a **hotel**.

Sybil is holding out a cardboard box which she has just picked up from the desk. She shakes it. It rattles.

Basil . . . Well, what are they doing in there?
Sybil I put them there.
Basil Why?
Sybil Just sign there, Mr Walt. Because you're always losing them, Basil.
Basil I am not always losing them. People take them.
Sybil Well, they don't take them from me.
Basil They wouldn't dare . . . *(takes a pen and starts drawing the diagram, muttering)* Well, I'm sorry I didn't guess that you'd suddenly done that after twelve years, dear. I'm afraid my psychic powers must be a little bit below par this morning. *(pushing the diagram at Hutchison)* There we are.
Sybil Don't be silly, Basil. It's written quite clearly on the top of the box. *(she gets Mr Walt's key)*
Basil *(staring)* . . . 'Pens'? . . . It looks more like 'Bens' to me.
Sybil Well, when Ben comes you can give it to him. Mr Walt's in room seven.
Basil *(to Walt)* What do you think? Doesn't that look like 'Bens' to you?
Walt . . . Not really.
Basil Well, it does to me. Look, **that's** a 'P' . . .
Hutchison *(studying his diagram)* I don't understand this, where is the Post Office?
Basil It's there, where it says 'Post Office'. I'm sorry if it is confusing.
Hutchison Oh. 'P.Off.' You've used the abbreviation.
Basil Ah, the penny's dropped.
Hutchison Well, I thought it said Boff.
Basil Of course.

Hutchison Yes. I thought Boff was the name of a locale . . . you know, the name of a district. That 'P' looks like a 'B', you see.

Basil No it doesn't.

Hutchison Yes it does . . . there's a little loop on the bottom of it . . .

Basil *(taking the diagram and showing it to Walt)* Excuse me – would you say that was a 'P' or a 'B'?

Walt . . . Er . . .

Basil There. Does it say 'Boff' or does it say 'Poff'?

Walt . . . Er . . .

Basil There! There! It's a 'P', isn't it?

Walt *(unwillingly)* I suppose so.

Basil P. off.

Walt . . . I beg your pardon?

Basil P. Off. Not B. Off. Whoever heard of a Bost Office?

Manuel arrives.

Basil *(to Walt)* Nine?

Walt What?

Basil Room nine?

Walt Room seven.

Basil Manuel, would you take these cases to room seven, please.

Manuel *Qué?*

Basil takes some cards from below the desk. He shows Manuel a drawing of a suitcase.

Basil *(to Walt, indicating Hutchison)* He thinks Boff is a locale . . .

Walt He thinks what?

Basil *(showing Manuel a vertical arrow)* You know, some zone, some province . . . in equatorial Torquay. *(he shows Manuel a number '7'; Manuel holds up a card saying 'OK')*

Basil *(to Walt)* Manuel will show you to your room . . . if you're lucky.

Manuel takes Walt's cases and scurries upstairs; Walt follows.

Hutchison Excuse me, excuse me – in how many minutes does luncheon commence, please?

Basil Here, I'll write it down for you.

Hutchison You won't forget the taxi, will you . . . two o'clock. And if anybody wants me, I shall be in the lounge.

Basil . . . If anybody **wants** you?

Hutchison I'll be in the lounge. *(goes into bar)*

Basil *(calling after him)* Anyone in particular? . . . I mean, Henry Kissinger? . . . or just anyone with a big net? *(goes into the office, where Sybil sits filing her nails)* I don't know what it is about this place . . . I mean, some of the people we get here . . .

Sybil What are you on about?

Basil I wish you'd . . . **help** a bit. You're always . . . refurbishing yourself.

Sybil What?

Basil Oh . . . never mind! Never mind!!

Sybil Don't shout at me. I've had a difficult morning.

Basil Oh dear, what happened? Did you get entangled in the eiderdown again? . . . Not enough cream in your eclair? Hmmm? Or did you have to talk to all your friends for so long that you didn't have time to perm your ears?

Sybil Actually, Basil, I've been working.

Basil Choh!

Sybil You know what I mean by 'working', don't you, dear? I mean getting things done, as opposed to squabbling with the guests.

Basil I would find it a little easier to cope with some of the cretins we get in here, my little nest of vipers, if I got a smidgeon of co-operation from you.

Sybil Co-operation – that's a laugh. The day **you** co-operate you'll be in a wooden box. I've never heard such rudeness.

Basil Look, if you think I'm going to fawn to some of the yobboes we get in here . . .

Sybil This is a hotel, Basil, not a Borstal, and it might help business if you could have a little more courtesy, just a little.

Basil I suppose talking to Audrey for half an hour helps business, does it?

Sybil It **was** about business for your information. Audrey has some news that may interest you.

Basil Oh, really – this'll be good. Let me guess . . . The Mayor wears a toupée? Somebody's got nail varnish on their cats? Am I getting warm? . . .

Sybil There are some hotel inspectors in town. *(she exits)*

Basil is stunned. After a moment he runs into the lobby after her.

Basil What? What does she know?
Sybil That's **all** she knows.
Basil **How** does she know?
Sybil *(calmly)* A friend of Bill Morton's overheard three men in a pub last night comparing notes on places they'd just been in Exeter.
Basil Three men!? . . . I'll call Bill.
Sybil You don't have to call Bill, Basil. Just try and exercise a little courtesy.

She exits into the kitchen. Basil picks up the phone on the reception desk and is dialling when the Major comes in from the bar.

The Major Papers arrived yet, Fawlty?
Basil No, not yet . . . not yet, Major, sorry, sorry . . .

The Major exits. Basil sees Hutchison approaching again. He pretends not to and starts dialling again. Hutchison, ignored, starts ringing the bell insistently.

Hutchison Could you do that in a moment, please?
Basil I'm on the telephone.
Hutchison Well, you haven't finished dialling yet, have you? *(he puts his finger on the receiver rest, cutting Basil off; Basil slams the receiver down; Hutchison gets his finger away just in time)* Now listen . . . there is a documentary tonight on BBC2 on Squawking Bird, the leader of the Blackfoot Indians in the late 1860s. Now this commences at eight forty-five and goes on for approximately three-quarters of an hour.
Basil I'm sorry, are you talking to me?
Hutchison ndeed I am, yes. Now, is it possible for me to reserve the BBC2 channel for the duration of this televisual feast?
Basil Why don't you talk properly?
Hutchison I beg your pardon?
Basil No, it isn't.
Hutchison What?
Basil It is not possible to reserve the BBC2 channel from the commencement of this televisual feast until the moment of the termination of its ending. Thank you so much. *(he*

starts to re-dial, but Hutchison puts his finger on the rest again)

Hutchison Well, in that case, may I suggest you introduce such a scheme?

Basil No. *(he brings the receiver down hard, missing the finger by a whisker)*

Hutchison I'd just like to tell you that I have a wide experience of hotels and many of those of my acquaintance have had the foresight to introduce this facility for the benefit of their guests.

Basil *(unimpressed)* Oh, I see, you have had a **wide** experience of hotels, have you?

Hutchison Yes, in my professional activities I am in constant contact with them.

Basil *(dialling again)* Are you. Are you really. *(he stops; he has registered a potential connection between Hutchison and 'hotel inspector')*

Hutchison Well, then, is it possible for me to *hire* a television to watch the programme in the privacy of my own room?

Basil *(playing for time)* . . . I beg your pardon?

Hutchison Have you the facility to hire a television set to one of your guests?

Basil Er . . . good point. I'm glad you asked me that. Not . . . as such.

Hutchison Oh.

Basil However, we do plan to introduce such a scheme in the near future.

Hutchison Well, that's not much use to me tonight, is it?

Basil No, but . . . I'll tell you what. Why don't I introduce **another** scheme straight away, along the lines that you've already suggested, by which I reserve the BBC2 channel for you tonight.

Hutchison Now that's more like it.

Basil Not at all. I mean, that's what we're here for, isn't it.

Hutchison Yes . . .

Basil Is there anything else, before I call your taxi?

Hutchison Well, yes, there is. Someone in there mentioned that you have a table-tennis table.

Basil Indeed we do. It is not . . . in absolutely mint condition. But it certainly could be used in an emergency.

Hutchison Ah.

Basil It is to be found in the South Wing, overlooking the courtyard, where there is of course ample parking.
Hutchison What?

Polly has entered the main door.

Basil Ah, Polly!
Polly Yes, Mr Fawlty?
Basil Mr Hutchison, may I introduce Polly Shearman, who is with us at the moment.
Hutchison Oh . . . how do you do?
Polly How do you do.
Hutchison Wait a minute. We've met before, I think.
Polly Yes, I served you at breakfast.
Hutchison Oh yes. *(wagging his finger at her)* And you spilt the grapefruit juice, didn't you, you naughty girl?
Polly *(charmingly)* And **you** moved the glass, didn't you?
Basil *(quickly)* Thank you, Polly. *(she moves off)* Awfully nice girl. Very bright. She's a fully qualified painter, you know.
Hutchison Oh, really?

Miss Tibbs and Miss Gatsby come down the stairs.

Basil Ah, good morning . . . good morning, ladies.
Miss Tibbs & Miss Gatsby Good morning, Mr Fawlty.
Basil *(to Hutchison)* We do like to have girls of that calibre to help us out, it does add a certain . . . Well, would you care to partake of lunch now? *(he moves round to usher Hutchison into the dining room)*
Hutchison Surely it's not yet . . .
Basil Oh, goodness, we don't worry about things like that here. No fear – I mean, this is a hotel, not a Borstal!

He ushers Hutchison into the dining room. Sybil appears.

Sybil Basil?
Basil *(at the dining-room door)* Yes, dear?
Sybil It's not half past yet.
Basil I was just saying to Mr Hutchison, dear, this is a hotel not a Borstal, ha ha ha. *(he mouths the word 'inspector' at her)*
Sybil Chef won't be ready, Basil.
Basil Leave it to me, dear, leave it to me.
Sybil Did you ring Bill?
Basil No, dear, not necessary. *(still signalling)*
Sybil What?

Basil Explain later. *(winks)* But I must look after Mr Hutchison now. *(mouths 'inspector' again)*

In the dining room, Polly is taking Hutchison's order.

Polly A Spanish omelette.

Hutchison *(loudly)* And all on the plate, please, none on the tablecloth.

Polly . . . Er, excuse me, you're not by any chance the Duke of Kent, are you?

Hutchison No, no . . . oh no. You've got the wrong person there.

Basil *(bustling up)* Ah, Mr Hutchison! You've ordered, have you?

Hutchison Oh yes, I'm going to have your Spanish omelette.

Basil Splendid.

Hutchison Yes – I assume that all the vegetables within the omelette are fresh?

Basil Oh, yes, yes.

Hutchison Including the peas?

Basil Oh yes, they're fresh all right.

Hutchison They're not frozen, are they?

Basil . . . Well, they're **frozen**, yes.

Hutchison Well, if they're frozen, they're not fresh, are they.

Basil Well, I assure you they were absolutely fresh when they were frozen.

Hutchison Oh dear – there's a lot of this nowadays in hotels.

Basil A lot of what?

Hutchison Yes, I'll just have cheese salad, please.

Basil What?

Hutchison I eat only fresh vegetables, you see – I'll just have the cheese salad.

Basil Well, we could do the omelette without the peas.

Hutchison Oh, no, I always feel that the peas are an integral part of the overall flavour – might I suggest that in future you avail yourself of sufficient quantities of the fresh article?

Basil . . . Now look! We've been serving . . . *(recovers himself)* Yes, yes, good idea . . . now, something to drink?

Hutchison Yes, I'll have a ginger beer, please.

Basil A ginger beer?

Hutchison Yes, and a glass of fresh water.

The phone rings in the lobby.

Basil . . . Fresh?

Hutchison Water, yes.

Sybil *(putting her head round the door)* Mr Hutchison – a telephone call for you at reception.

Hutchison Telephone? . . . Oh dear . . . oh dear . . . *(he takes out a clean handkerchief and exits)*

Basil *(to himself)* . . . Clever . . . clever . . .

Basil goes into the kitchen. Mr Walt enters from the lobby and looks around, wondering where he should sit.

Walt *(to Manuel, who is busily putting napkins on tables)* Good afternoon.

Manuel No, is no sun. Is no good for me.

Walt I beg your pardon?

Manuel I homesick, yes?

Walt Is there anywhere you'd like me to sit?

Manuel *Qué?*

Walt I'm in room seven.

Manuel *(ushering Walt to door and pointing up the stairs)* Oh yes please, here . . . you go up . . . room seven.

Walt No, no.

Manuel Yes, please, I show you.

Walt No, look, I want a table.

Manuel A table?

Walt For one.

Manuel Ah! Table one. Oh, please – yes, table one – so sorry. *(indicates a table)*

Walt . . . Thank you.

Manuel helps Walt to sit, then gets a menu and a piece of card. He gives Walt the menu.

Manuel So sorry, but I think you say for room and I do it for I am myself not want to know it easily.

Walt I'm sorry?

Manuel No. Is my fault.

Walt Well, I'll try the pâté . . . and the lamb casserole.

Manuel *(looking at the card)* You . . . room ten?

Walt No. Room **seven**.

Manuel Seven? *Si.*

Walt Yes.

Manuel No, no, **this** is table **one**. Is Wednesday. Room seven is table five. Please. *(Walt moves patiently to Mr Hutchison's table)* So sorry . . . seven is what I think you say but one is

for table not for this one so is *come se habla en Ingles pero puedo ver las nombres solamente quando estan delante de mi.*

Walt *(stoically)* The pâté and the lamb.

Manuel *Si.* Pâté . . . Lamb . . . *(he exits muttering into the kitchen)*

Basil *(coming in and delivering the ginger beer and the glass of water down in front of Walt)* One ginger beer . . . and one glass of fresh water. *(he looks at Walt and jumps violently)* What are you doing there?

Walt . . . I . . .

Basil You can't sit there, it's **taken**. Come on.

Walt Look, I've been moved once already.

Basil Well, you're in room seven, aren't you?

Walt Yes, but the waiter said table five.

Basil Well, *this* isn't table five, is it? *(sees the plastic table number; it says 'five')* Tch. *(picks it up and moves to another table)* Would you come over here, please, this is table five. *(puts the 'five' down on the new table, takes an 'eight' off and pockets it)* . . . Come on!

Walt Look, I did ask the waiter.

Basil Well, he's hopeless, isn't he. You might as well ask the cat. Now, settle down, come on, come on.

Walt . . . I beg your pardon?

Basil Would you sit down please? *(Walt resignedly sits)* Thank you. *(moves off)*

Walt I hate to trespass further on your valuable time, but might I look at the wine list?

Basil Now?

Walt Yes, please.

Basil *(removing the Major's wine list from his grasp)* Excuse me . . . *(gives it to Walt)* Here we are. Are you happy now?

Walt Could I have an ashtray, please? *(Basil produces an ashtray)* Thank you – I'll have a bottle of the Aloxe-Corton '65.

Basil The what?

Walt *(showing him)* The Aloxe-Corton '65.

Basil *(registering the price)* Oh! The Cor**tonne**. Yes, of **course**, my pleasure. *(he returns the wine list to the Major; Hutchison re-enters, wiping his ear with his handkerchief)* Ah, there you are, Mr Hutchison! Nice to have you back again. *(fawns after him)*

Hutchison Not so close, please, not so close.

Basil Oh, sorry . . . everything to your satisfaction?

Hutchison Your earpiece was very greasy – I've wiped it out for you.
Basil Oh, thank you so much. *(exits to kitchen)*
Hutchison *(muttering)* Dreadfully greasy, it was . . . I don't know who's been using it. *(tastes his ginger beer)* Oh dear – that's **tepid**! *(Basil and Polly come in from the kitchen)* Have you got an ice bucket, please?
Basil An ice bucket?
Hutchison This ginger beer is distinctly warm.
Basil Ah, Polly – an ice bucket for Mr Hutchison, please. Thank you. *(Polly looks dazed; Basil goes to Walt's table with the bottle)* There we are – the Cortonne '65.

Clearly performing for Hutchison, he inserts the corkscrew with panache and pulls. He struggles, gamely smiles, turns his back, struggles again and it comes. Triumphantly, he pours. Alas, no wine is forthcoming.

Basil Ah . . . a bit still in there. Sorry.

He re-inserts the corkscrew, struggles, and pours again. Nothing happens. He pokes some pieces of cork out and pours. A dribble flows, followed by a torrent. Some goes in the glass.

Basil Thank you so much. May I congratulate you on your choice.
Walt *(tasting the wine)* Excuse me.
Basil Yes?
Walt I'm afraid this is corked.
Basil I just uncorked it. Didn't you see me?
Walt What?
Basil *(shows him the cork on the end of the corkscrew)* Look.
Walt No, no . . .
Basil No, you see, I took it out of the bottle – that's how I managed to get the wine **out** of the bottle **into** your glass.
Walt I don't mean that. I mean the wine is **corked**. The wine has reacted with the cork.
Basil I'm sorry?
Walt The wine has reacted with the cork and gone bad.
Basil Gone bad? May I . . . ? *(he tastes the wine and turns into the corner to cover his reaction)* So you don't want it?
Walt I'd like a bottle that's not corked.
Basil Right! Right! That's cost me, hasn't it? Well never mind – I'll get another bottle. *(he takes the bottle; on his way out, he*

addresses the guests) I do hope you're all enjoying your meals. *(no reaction)* I **said**, 'I do hope you're all enjoying your meals.' *(there is a bit of nodding)* Thank you, thank you. *(calls to Walt)* Excuse me . . . excuse me!! Table five!

Walt . . . Er yes?

Basil Are you having the lamb or the mackerel?

Walt . . . The lamb.

Basil I'll have another one standing by just in case. (*exits* con brio)

Sybil comes in, looks round for Basil, and exits. Polly comes in, followed by Basil with a fresh bottle.

Basil Let's give this one a go, then, shall we? . . . Polly, would you get Mr Hutchison his main course, please. *(to Hutchison, fawning)* So sorry to keep you waiting, Mr Hutchison. It will be with you in just one moment. Thank you.

Sybil *(looking in)* Basil.

Basil Yes, dear? *(but she's gone; he leaves the replacement bottle on the sideboard behind Walt and goes into the lobby)*

Sybil *(sweetly)* How are you getting along with your hotel inspector?

Basil . . . Fine. Fine.

Sybil He sells spoons.

Basil . . . Sorry?

Sybil I listened in on his phone call. He works for a cutlery firm. But he specializes in spoons.

Basil You listened in?

Sybil Yes.

Basil You listened in on a private call to one of our guests?

Sybil That's right, Basil.

Basil . . . The little rat! I'll get him for that.

Sybil Now, Basil . . .

Basil Trying that on with me.

Sybil Trying **what** on?

Basil Pretending he's a hotel inspector . . . 'Do we hire television sets' . . . 'fresh peas' . . . 'ice buckets' . . .

Sybil Basil, it was **your** mistake. You can't . . .

Basil Now, you let me handle this!

Sybil Basil!!! This whole inspector business was in your own imagination. It's nothing to do with him. There is no

excuse for rudeness, do you understand? . . . **Do you understand?**

Basil Yes!!!

Sybil Good. *(she turns and walks away)*

Basil, planning revenge, enters the dining room and stalks the sitting Hutchison.

The Major Papers arrived yet, Fawlty?

Basil Not yet, Major, no. *(he stands behind Hutchison)* Spoons, eh?

Hutchison I'm sorry?

Basil Sppppppppppoooooons!

Hutchison I beg your pardon?

Basil I understand you're in the spoon trade.

Hutchison Oh! Yes . . .

Basil Ah, fascinating! Fascinating. How absorbing for you.

Hutchison Yes, as a matter of fact . . .

Basil So much more interesting than being a **hotel inspector!**

He leaves. Hutchison is puzzled. Polly arrives and places an omelette in front of him.

Hutchison What . . . oh, thank you . . . *(looks at it)* No . . . Miss!! Miss!!

Polly Yes?

Hutchison I didn't order that.

Basil *(from afar)* Is there something we can get you, Mr Hutchison? A tea cosy for your pepper pot, perhaps?

Hutchison No, no. *(to Polly)* I changed the order, you see.

Basil *(coming up, aggressively)* What seems to be the trouble?

Polly Well, I thought Mr Hutchison ordered an omelette, but . . .

Basil No, he went off it, Polly, so we changed the order. It's perfectly simple . . .

Polly Well, I'm sorry, but I wasn't told.

Basil Well, I told the chef, so he should have told you.

Polly Well, he **didn't.**

Basil Well, is that my fault?

Polly No, is it mine?

Hutchison No, it's his fault.

Basil What?

Hutchison It's the chef's fault.

Basil I beg your pardon?

Hutchison Well clearly in a case like this where the order has been changed and the chef's been informed it's obviously his responsibility.

Basil You want to run the place?

Hutchison What?

Basil You want to come and run the hotel? Right! Mr Hutchison is taking over, Polly, so I'll have the omelette. *(trying to get Hutchison to his feet)* I'm sure with his natural charm and wide experience there'll be no more problems . . .

Hutchison No, no . . .

Basil Come on, then, you can't sit about all day, there's lots to be done. *(jiggling Hutchison's chair)* Come on!

Sybil *(appearing from nowhere)* What is going on, Basil?

Basil Hello, dear!

Sybil Well?

Basil *(jiggling the chair very slightly)* Is that better, Mr Hutchison?

Hutchison What?

Basil Is that better?

Hutchison Thank you, yes . . .

Basil Oh good. Well that's sorted out then. Good.

Sybil Is there something wrong?

Hutchison Yes, there is, yes . . . I have been given an erroneous dish.

Sybil Thank you, Basil, I'll deal with this . . . thank you, Polly . . . *(Basil walks innocently away)* Now, Mr Hutchison.

Hutchison Now, you see, I did order the omelette in the first place, but then I changed my mind.

Sybil I see. Well I'll just go in the kitchen and find out what happened.

Hutchison Thank you.

She heads for the kitchen. Meanwhile Basil is looking at the sideboard; the bottle has gone. He looks round and sees Manuel.

Basil Manuel!

Manuel *(running up) Si?*

Basil *(indicating sideboard)* The bottle.

Manuel Er . . . Yes!

Basil Where is it?

Manuel *Qué?*

Basil *. . . donde es . . . ?*

Manuel Oh, I take it. *(indicates kitchen)* I take it. I take it.

Basil *(beckoning gently)* Come here. *(takes a spoon from the bowl Manuel is carrying)* You're a waste of space. *(raps him on the head with the spoon and hustles him into kitchen)*

Sybil *(coming in from kitchen with some pâté)* There we are, Mr Hutchison.

Hutchison No, no, no! Just a moment, please!

Sybil Yes?

Hutchison I did not order that.

Sybil You didn't?

Hutchison I did **not.**

Sybil I'm sorry, there's an order for pâté for this table.

Hutchison Oh dear me, things do seem to be going wrong today, don't they.

Basil *(coming back with another bottle)* Hallo, Sybil, taking care of things, are you?

Sybil Yes, thank you Basil.

Basil Good . . . *(to Hutchison)* Everything all right, then?

Hutchison Well it appears that . . .

Sybil We're just sorting it out, thank you Basil.

Basil That's funny . . . you didn't order 'pâté maison', did you, Mr Hutchison?

Hutchison No I did not, I ordered . . .

Basil Well, I'll leave you to deal with it, dear.

He goes to Mr Walt's table and starts uncorking the bottle. He has done so when he notices another bottle open on the table.

Basil How did you do that?

Walt What?

Basil *(indicating Walt's bottle)* Where did you get it?

Walt Where did I **get** it?

Basil That's right! I mean, how did you get it?

Walt The waiter opened it for me.

Basil The waiter opened it for you!!??

Walt . . . Yes!

Manuel, unaware of recent developments, arrives with Walt's pâté.

Basil I've told you about him, haven't I!

Manuel starts to leave. Basil jabs him in the rear with the corkscrew. He leaves more rapidly. Meanwhile Polly is delivering a lamb casserole to Mr Hutchison.

Hutchison Oh, no, no!! For goodness sake . . .

Basil *(running up)* What is it, what is it?!!

Hutchison I did not order a lamb casserole!

Basil No, he didn't, he did not order one, Polly, so **why** . . . **has** . . . **he** . . . **got** . . . **one?**

Polly Because Mrs Fawlty told me to **give** him one.

Basil I know how she feels.

Polly I've got an order for one for this table.

Basil Who took the order?

Polly *(valiantly)* . . . I don't know.

Basil . . . **Manuel!!**

Hutchison I mean, look, how can it be so difficult to get a cheese salad?

Basil . . . You want to run the place?

Hutchison No no, I . . .

Basil Right, well shut up then.

Hutchison I beg your pardon?!

Polly I'll get you a cheese salad, Mr Hutchison.

Basil *(to Polly)* And don't listen to anyone . . . just **get him a cheese salad.**

Manuel appears.

Manuel *Si? (Basil hits him; he retires)*

Hutchison Excuse me!! I've changed my mind . . . *(rising)* I do not want the cheese salad. I wish to cancel it. I am not used to being spoken to like that, Mr Fawlty, and I've no wish to continue my luncheon.

Basil *(realising he went a bridge too far)* I do apologize if what I said just now seemed a trifle . . . brusque.

Hutchison Brusque? It was **rude**, Mr Fawlty. I said . . . **rude!**

Basil Well, I'm deeply sorry if it came over like that. I mean, nothing could have been further from my mind . . .

Hutchison You told me to shut up!

Polly *(brilliantly)* No, no. He told **me** to shut up.

Hutchison *(to Polly)* You what? He said it to me.

Basil Ah, no, I was looking at you but I was talking to Polly. *(still looking at Hutchison)* Wasn't I, Polly?

Polly *(straight to Hutchison)* Oh, yes.

Basil *(still to Hutchison)* Ah! Did you notice then . . . that I was looking at you but talking to her?

Hutchison What?

Polly *(looking at Basil)* You see, he was looking at you but talking to me. *(to Basil)* Wasn't he?

Basil *(to Polly)* Wasn't I?

Hutchison *(not sure where to look)* What?

Polly *(to Hutchison)* So you weren't being rude, were you Mr Fawlty?

Basil *(to Polly)* Absolutely not. You see?

Hutchison *(to Basil)* . . . Me?

Basil *(to Hutchison)* Yes.

Hutchison *(to Basil)* Well, if you say shut up to somebody, that's the one you want to shut up, isn't it?

Polly *(to Basil)* Not necessarily.

Basil *(to Hutchison)* . . . I'm sorry, were you talking to me?

Hutchison *(to Basil)* Yes.

Polly *(to Basil)* I beg your pardon.

A pause. Hutchison has now been successfully confused.

Basil *(to Hutchison)* There! You see how easily these misunderstandings occur.

Hutchison Er . . . yes, I do . . .

Basil So . . . one cheese salad then please, Polly.

Polly *(to Basil)* Certainly, Mr Hutchison. *(leaves)*

Basil And if there's anything else please don't hesitate to ask.

Hutchison *(after looking round for a moment to see if he is being addressed)* Yes, thank you.

Basil moves away. Manuel creeps up on Walt and removes his empty plate.

Walt *(jumping)* Aaah!

Basil *(to Manuel)* What are you **doing?** *(to Walt)* I'm so sorry. He's from Barcelona. I trust your pâté was satisfactory?

Walt Yes, yes, thank you.

Basil Oh, good, good. The chef buys it himself, you know.

Walt Buys it?

Basil Oh, insists on it. I imagine the Cortonne complemented it delightfully.

Walt Yes. It's very good.

Basil Ah! Excellent.

Walt More like a '66 really.

Basil Is it?

Walt Well, lots of body.

Basil *(picking up the bottle and expertly gauging its weight)* Quite right. It's always a pleasure to find someone who appreciates the boudoir of the grape. I'm afraid most of the people we get in here don't know a Bordeaux from a claret.

Walt . . . A Bordeaux **is** a claret.

Basil Oh, a **Bordeaux** is a claret. But **they** wouldn't know that. You obviously drink a lot . . . wine, I mean. Well, not a **lot**, a fair amount, the right amount for a connoisseur, I mean, that doesn't mean you're . . . does it, I mean some people drink it by the crate but that's not being a connoisseur, that's just plain sloshed. Oh, a Bordeaux's one of the clarets all right.

Walt One?

Manuel creeps in with Walt's casserole and skulks off.

Basil *(swiftly)* You're down here on business, are you?

Walt *(dismissively)* Yes.

Basil You're not in the wine trade by any chance?

Walt No we're not.

Basil **We're**?

Walt *(anxious to start on his casserole)* . . . I am down here on business with a couple of colleagues and we are not in the wine trade.

Basil Ah, it's just that you're obviously so expert.

Walt No . . . I am not expert.

Basil Oh, but you are.

Walt I'm not.

Basil Oh yes you are.

Walt I am not an expert!

Basil *(suddenly seizing Walt's shoulder)* **Three** of you?

Walt *(astonished)* What?

Basil Three . . . three of you?

Walt Yes . . . there are three of us . . . well, the other two aren't here. They're staying at another hotel.

Basil *(recovering his wits)* Quite! So . . . it's all all right, is it?

Walt . . . What?

Basil Well, I mean things in general . . . I mean, the wine's really good?

Walt Yes.
Basil And the pâté was all right?
Walt Yes, I said so.
Basil And the casserole?
Walt I haven't tasted it yet.
Basil *(sniffing the casserole admiringly)* Mmmmm!
Walt I've not been given the chance.

There is an explosion of complaints from Hutchison.

Basil *(to Walt)* Well, I'll leave you to your meal if I may . . . *bon appétit. (he hurtles towards Hutchison)*
Hutchison *(fortissimo)* Oh, no, come on now, this is quite absurd. I'm sorry, but I **do not want an omelette!!**
Manuel *(offering Hutchison an omelette)* Is nice!
Hutchison I don't want the bloody thing. I've sent it back once!
Basil *(whizzing up)* Here, give it to me.
Hutchison I fail to see how this sort of thing can happen!
Basil *(tearing up the omelette)* There. I've torn it up. You'll never see it again.

He deposits the remains on the Major's table. The Major gratefully tucks in.

Hutchison *(still fortissimo)* I told you I wanted a cheese salad.

Polly arrives with it.

Basil Thank you, Polly, one cheese salad, there we are, sir. I'm so glad everything is to your satisfaction.
Hutchison No it is not! It is absolutely ridiculous! I mean, you are **supposed** to be running a **hotel!**
Basil *(admiring the salad)* My, that does look good.
Hutchison I've had the omelette, a prawn cocktail with a bloody silly name . . .
Basil Look at that cheddar. Delicious!
Hutchison . . . then I had a plate of stew and then the bloody omelette again!
Basil Can we keep it down a little?
Hutchison I mean, all I wanted was a cheese salad. It wasn't as though I'd ordered an **elephant's ear on a bun**, was it!
Basil *(smiling vainly at Walt)* Thank you, thank you so much.
Hutchison I mean the whole thing is absolutely ridiculous.
Basil *(pushing him back in his chair)* Well, I'm glad we've sorted it all out now.

Hutchison . . . I mean for a man who's supposed to be running a hotel, your behaviour is totally . . .

Basil laughs genially at the other guests and places a hand across Hutchison's mouth.

Basil Well, I'm glad everything's to your satisfaction now . . .
Hutchison *(muffled)* Let me go, let me go . . .
Basil Is there anything else **at all** I can get you, sir?
Hutchison *(struggling)* Let me go, I can't breathe!
Basil *(merrily)* Ha ha ha ha ha! *(hissing)* Shut up, then.
Hutchison I can't breathe!
Basil Shut up and I'll let go.
Hutchison You told me to shut up again!
Basil Look at that **lovely** cheese! *(Hutchison starts threshing about in search of oxygen; Basil tightens his grip and assures the others)* It's all right, he's only choking. *(Hutchison leaps convulsively; Basil thumps him on the back)* Don't worry . . . bit of cheese went the wrong way. *(more convulsions and thumping; Basil beams and slips in a quick rabbit-punch; Hutchison slumps with his face in his salad)* Ah, never mind, he's fainted, poor chap. Manuel! *(to Walt)* Poor chap! Bit of cheese!
The Major Yes, please.

Basil and Manuel pick up Hutchison and carry him into the lobby.

Sybil What's happened?
Basil He fainted, dear.
Sybil **Fainted?**
Basil . . . Got a bit of cheese stuck.

They carry Hutchison into the bar, followed by Sybil.

Sybil . . . Basil, you do **not** faint from getting a bit of cheese stuck.
Basil Well, I was giving him a bit of a pat on the back and he sort of . . . **moved**, just as I was . . .
Sybil What have you **done**, Basil?
Basil Nothing, he just moved as I . . .
Sybil Oh my God! Call the doctor.
Basil Look, I can handle this.
Sybil Call the doctor!
Basil I can handle it!!

Sybil Call the doctor!!

Basil Look, I can handle it . . . right, right, I'll call the doctor, obviously I can't handle it . . . *(he goes into the lobby, muttering)* I'm just a great stupid sabre-toothed tart so we'll let my husband do it. *(picks up the phone but sees Walt emerging from the dining room)* Ah! . . . I'm so sorry to have left you, I trust you enjoyed your meal?

Walt *(peremptorily)* Yes, yes, thank you. I was wondering . . .

Basil The casserole was really good, was it?

Walt . . . Well, it was adequate.

Basil Oh, quite, yes, exactly, I'm afraid the chef at lunch today is **not** our regular, but . . . incidentally, I'm sorry about that poor chap choking himself like that.

Walt I was wondering if you had a telephone I might use?

Basil Oh, please, do use this one. *(hands him the receiver)* I don't know how he managed to do it. Ah, here he is. Good. *(Hutchison emerges unsteadily from the bar)* Ah, Mr Hutchison! **There** you are . . . What a **frightful** shame about that piece of cheese getting stuck in the old windpipe like that. *(indicating the bar)* Would you like to go in there and discuss it?

Hutchison No, I'd prefer to come in **here** and discuss it.

Basil *(retreating)* . . . Oh, fine, I'm afraid it's a little bit of a mess . . .

Hutchison comes behind the bar and hits him. Basil disappears below the desk. After a pause he stands up and smiles warmly at Hutchison.

Basil Well, that lie-down seems to have done you some good.

Hutchison hits him again and Basil reels towards Walt's end of the desk. Hutchison hits him twice more.

Basil *(to Walt)* Sorry about this.

Hutchison hits him a couple more times. He flops out of sight.

Hutchison I am not a violent man, Mr Fawlty.

Basil's voice Yes you are.

Hutchison No I'm not! But when I am insulted and then attacked, I would prefer to rely on my own mettle than call the police.

Basil's voice Do you? Do you really?

Hutchison Yes, I do, now stand up like a man, come on.

Basil's voice . . . Bit of trouble with the old leg, actually.
Hutchison Come on!

He picks Basil up. Basil has found a stapler. He shows it to Walt.

Basil Look what I've found!
Hutchison I hope I've made my point.
Basil Absolutely! *(to Walt)* I've been looking for that.
Hutchison I would just like to say that this hotel is extremely inefficient and badly run, and that you are a very rude and discourteous man, Mr Fawlty.
Basil *(happily)* Ah ha ha ha ha.
Hutchison . . . Did I say something funny, Mr Fawlty?
Basil . . . Well, sort of **pithy**, I suppose.
Hutchison Oh really . . . well, here's the punch line. *(he elbows Basil in the stomach; Basil doubles up out of sight)* Now I am going to fetch my belongings, and I do not expect to receive a bill. *(he goes off upstairs)*
Sybil *(comes in, leans over the desk and looks down at Basil)* You've handled that, then, have you, Basil?
Basil's voice Yes dear, thank you, leave it to me.

She goes off. Walt finishes his call.

Basil *(hauling himself into view)* Incidentally, I don't know if you realize, but he's a regular customer of ours . . . he loves it here, it's his second home. It's just that we always have to have this little . . . don't know why, but he seems to like it.
Walt Really?
Basil Yes, the only danger is, though, that somebody's going to think he **really** isn't satisfied about something or that the fighting's real, and tell people. You won't mention it, will you . . . we'd be delighted to offer you dinner here tonight as our guest, to show our gratitude.
Walt . . . What?
Basil Dinner tonight . . . would you . . . ?
Walt *(puzzled)* No, I can't tonight, thank you.
Basil **Tomorrow** night?
Walt . . . I shall be leaving tomorrow. Sorry.
Basil . . . All right. Fifty pounds, then!
Walt I beg your pardon?
Basil Fifty pounds not to mention it.
Walt Fifty pounds?!!

Basil . . . Sixty, then! . . . Not to write about it . . . you know, articles, books, letters . . . *(taking out his wallet)*

Walt I'm afraid I really don't . . .

Basil *(clutching him)* Please! Oh please! It's taken us twelve years to build this place up. If you put this in the book we're finished.

Walt What book?

Basil The hotel guide. Oh . . . I'm sorry, I shouldn't have mentioned it. *(emits a strangled high-pitched whine)* Oh, what have I done?

Walt Look, I think you've got me confused with somebody else. I'm nothing to do with any hotel guide. I'm down here for the Exhibition – we sell outboard motors . . . all right?

Basil *(now sobbing uncontrollably)* Outboard motors? . . . You're not an inspector?

Walt No.

Basil Not on the side or anything?

Walt No.

Basil *(grabbing him)* Swear to God.

Walt I tell you, I've nothing to do with it!

Basil Thank you, thank you, oh, thank you so much. I don't know how I can ever . . . *(he suddenly freezes; a pause)* Thanks.

He disappears into the kitchen. Walt leaves by the main doors. Three men walk into the hotel past him; they are *the inspectors.*

1st inspector Twenty-six rooms, twelve with private bathrooms.

2nd inspector Yes, well, why don't you have dinner here, and Chris and I can try the Claremont.

3rd inspector OK. The owner's one Basil Fawlty.

They ring the bell. At that moment Hutchison comes downstairs. Manuel scampers up to him.

Manuel Please, please! Mr Fawlty wants to say *adios.*

Basil strides out of the kitchen and firmly places a large squidgy pie in Hutchison's crotch and another in his face.

Basil Manuel, the cream.

He opens Hutchison's briefcase and Manuel pours a pint of best quality cream into it. The Major comes up.

The Major Papers arrived yet, Fawlty?

Basil Not yet, Major, no, sorry.

The Major wanders off. Basil shakes the briefcase thoroughly and tucks it under Hutchison's arm.

Basil Now go away. If you ever come back I shall kill you.

He propels the stunned Hutchison out of the main door, turns expansively and kisses Manuel on the forehead. He then strides triumphantly to the counter and beams at the new arrivals.

Basil Good afternoon, and what can I do for you three gentlemen? *(a pause; then the terrible truth dawns)* Aaaagh!!!

GOURMET NIGHT

Basil Fawlty John Cleese
Sybil Fawlty Prunella Scales
Manuel Andrew Sachs
Polly Connie Booth
André André Maranne
Kurt Steve Plytas
Colonel Hall Allan Cuthbertson
Mrs Hall Ann Way
Mr Twitchen Richard Caldicot
Mrs Twitchen Betty Huntley-Wright
Major Gowen Ballard Berkeley
Miss Tibbs Gilly Flower
Miss Gatsby Renée Roberts
Mr Heath Jeffrey Segal
Mrs Heath Elizabeth Benson
Master Heath Tony Page

Fifth of first series, first broadcast on 17 October 1975, BBC2.

The forecourt of Fawlty Towers. Basil is fiddling under the bonnet of his car, which is clearly a real mother of an old car. He makes a final adjustment and strides round to the driver's seat. He presses the starter twice, without results.

Basil Oh come on, is it so difficult for you to start? . . . I mean it's so **basic**. If you don't go, there's very little point in having you.

He tries again, then gives up, goes round to the front and takes a delicious-looking savoury from a small pile on the engine, pops it in his mouth and starts fiddling again. The horn jams on; he clears it.

Basil Now, just pull yourself together, right? Make the effort. *(he gets back in and presses the starter; it whines pitifully)* Come on . . . now look!

Manuel *(running down the steps)* Mr Fawlty! Mr Fawlty! Telephone!!

Basil What?

Manuel Telephone . . . telephone. *(mimes a telephone)*

Basil Oh . . . where's Sybil?

Manuel . . . *Qué?*

Basil Where's . . . *Sy* . . . *bil?*

Manuel . . . Where's . . . the bill?

Basil No! No! I own the place. I don't pay bills. Where's my **wife?**

Manuel She not there.

Basil She **is** there! *(Manuel looks helpless)* Oh, never mind, right, leave it to me, **I'll** do it! *(he strides towards the hotel)* **I'll** mend the car, **I'll** answer the telephone, then you can all handcuff and blindfold me and I'll clean the windows . . .

He steams into the lobby. Manuel gets ahead of him.

Manuel In here.

Basil Yes, I **know** it's in here!

Manuel *(indicating telephone)* This way, please. *(he goes into the kitchen)*

Basil Yes, I **know** it's this way, I **own** the place!

But just before he gets to the telephone, Sybil appears from the office and answers it herself.

Sybil Hallo, Fawlty Towers . . . Oh, André, thank you for calling. Kurt's marvellous, we're absolutely delighted with him . . . really, André, he's wonderful . . .

Basil goes to the kitchen and leads Manuel back to the desk.

Basil *(pointing to Sybil)* This Basil's wife. *(pointing to himself)* This . . . Basil. This . . . smack on head. *(demonstrates; Manuel slinks off)*

Sybil Just one moment, André . . . Basil!

Basil Yes, dear?

Sybil Have you taken the car in yet?

Basil Yes, I'm just dealing with it, dear.

Sybil You're not trying to do it yourself, are you, Basil?

Basil *(discovering a change of subject on the wall)* Have you seen this mark up here, dear?

Sybil Did you hear what I said?

Basil Yes I did, dear, it's a bit of a scratch . . .

Sybil Take it into the **garage**, Basil.

Basil *(absently)* Yes, yes, just having a look at it, dear.

Sybil *(to phone)* I'm sorry, André, where was I? Oh yes. Well, he's the best chef we've ever had – we can't thank you enough for finding him for us . . . *(Basil checks that Sybil is not looking and slips into the kitchen)* Look, can you come and have dinner on Sunday? . . . there's something we want to ask your advice about . . . OK, lovely, see you then. *(she rings off; Polly comes in)* Hallo, Polly.

Polly Can you come and have a drink, Mrs Fawlty?

Sybil Drink?

Polly I've sold a sketch!

Sybil Really? I'd love to.

They go into the kitchen, where Kurt and Manuel are preparing food. Basil is lurking by another pile of savouries.

Polly Hallo.

Kurt and Manuel Hallo.

Sybil Kurt, André **can** come on Sunday. *(to Basil)* I thought you were taking the car in . . . *(he is popping another savoury into his mouth)* Are you at those again?

Basil I just took one, dear.

Sybil *(confiscating the plate)* I think you've had enough of those, Basil. Now will you deal with the car, please.

Kurt *(seeing Basil still munching)* Good, Mr Fawlty?

Basil Superb, Kurt.

Polly *(gives Sybil a glass of wine; to Basil)* For you, Mr Fawlty?

Basil Thank you, Polly.

Sybil Are you going to do the car?

Basil In a moment, my little piranha fish. *(to Polly)* What's all this, then?

Polly I've just sold a sketch.

Basil What, for **money?**

Kurt I bought it, Mr Fawlty. She's very talented. *(Polly offers him a glass of wine)* Oh, no, Polly, I won't.

Polly Oh, come on.

Kurt No, thank you.

Polly Oh, please, I bought it to thank you.

Kurt No, honestly.

Polly Don't you like it?

Kurt Too much. But not when I'm working. You drink it for me, Manuel. *(Manuel accepts gratefully)*

Basil *(raising his glass to Polly)* Well . . . cheerio.

Sybil *(neatly confiscating his glass)* Cheerio, Basil.

Basil Well, that smelt nice.

Kurt *(showing Basil the sketch)* Here it is, Mr Fawlty. She's really got something, you know.

Basil Really.

Polly Well worth 50p anyway.

Basil Yes. Do you win a bun if you guess what it is?

Polly It's Manuel.

Basil What?

Manuel It's **me.**

Basil . . . Where?

Kurt Manuel is my friend. *(puts his arm round Manuel's shoulders)* We're good friends, eh?

Manuel Oh, *si.*

Basil *(returning the sketch)* Yes, very modern. Very socialist. *(Kurt takes the sketch and kisses it warmly)* Something to remember him by . . . you know, when he goes.

Sybil You still here, Basil?

Basil No, I went a couple of minutes ago, dear, but I expect I'll be back soon. *(exits)*

Sybil studies the sketch. Kurt sees Manuel performing some culinary misdeed.

Kurt No, no, Manuel! Look, like this . . . .

Sybil *(handing Polly the sketch)* Oh, I like that. Will you do me one?

Polly Really? . . . Of Manuel?

Sybil Yes. It'll look nice on Basil's bedside table. *(exits)*

Polly *(to Kurt)* Two in a day. That's as many as Van Gogh sold in a lifetime.

Kurt Ah, but he didn't have Manuel as a model, eh?

Meanwhile Basil, watched by Sybil from the main doors, drives out of the forecourt. He goes round the corner, out of sight of Sybil, stops, gets out, takes a handful of savouries from his pocket and once again starts poking about under the bonnet.

Sunday evening; the dining room. Sybil, Basil and André are sitting at one of the tables. Some other guests are apparent, including Mr and Mrs Heath and their eleven-year-old son Ronald. The food on the Fawltys' table looks great and is.

Sybil *(not utterly unhistrionically)* Ohh. Mmmm. This is wonderful.

André I told you – he is one of the best.

Sybil He's almost as good as you are, André. Oh!! It's absolutely **divine**, Basil. Go on, have a bite.

Basil It is good, isn't it.

Sybil Oh, listen to him. The only place I've ever really seen him eat is in your restaurant, André, and now he is stuffing it away like a hamster.

Basil Really, Sybil.

Sybil *(coquettishly)* We're going to have to buy him a great big wheel to run around in when he's got a moment, or he'll get like a big bad-tempered tomato.

Basil I believe we were discussing the Gourmet Evening, dear.

Sybil Do you know, André, he burst his zip this morning.

Basil *(in a superior manner)* Oh dear.

Sybil What, darling?

Basil You're embarrassing André.

Sybil No, dear, I'm embarrassing **you**. *(she pats Basil's stomach)* Look at that.

Basil Well, I'd better go and have a word with the guests. Why don't you have another vat of wine, dear? *(he rises and starts to circulate, coming first to the Major's table)* Good evening, Major. Enjoying your soup?

The Major Tasted a bit off to me, Fawlty.

Basil Well, it's made with **fresh** mushrooms, Major.

The Major Ah, that would explain it.

A flicker of olympian despair crosses Basil's face. He moves on to the Heaths' table.

Basil Good evening. Is everything to your satisfaction?

Mr Heath Yes thank—

Mrs Heath *(interrupting)* Well . . . *(she turns expectantly to their son)*

Ronald I don't like the chips.

Basil Sorry?

Ronald The chips are awful.

Basil *(smiling balefully)* Oh dear. What's er . . . what's *wrong* with them, then?

Ronald They're the wrong shape and they're just awful.

Mrs Heath I'm afraid he gets everything cooked the way he likes it at home.

Basil Ah, does he, does he?

Ronald Yes I do, and it's better than this pig's garbage.

Mrs Heath *(slightly amused)* Now, Ronald.

Ronald These eggs look like you just laid them.

Mrs Heath *(ineffectually)* Ronald . . .

Mr Heath *(to Ronald, friendlily)* Now look here, old chap . . .

Mrs Heath Shut up!! Leave him alone! *(to Basil)* He's very clever, rather highly strung.

Basil Yes, yes, he should be.

Ronald Haven't you got any **proper** chips?

Basil Well these **are** proper French Fried Potatoes. You see, the chef is Continental.

Ronald Couldn't you get an English one?

Mrs Heath *(to Ronald)* Why don't you eat just one or two, dear?

Ronald They're the wrong shape.

Basil Oh dear – what shape do you usually have? Mickey Mouse shape? Smarties shape? Amphibious landing craft shape? Poke in the eye shape?

Ronald . . . God, you're **dumb**.

Mrs Heath Oh, now . . .

Basil *(controlling himself)* Is there something we can get you instead, **Sonny?**

Ronald I'd like some bread and salad cream.

Basil . . . To **eat?** Well . . . *(pointing)* there's the bread, and there's the mayonnaise.

Ronald I said **salad cream**, stupid.

Basil We don't have any salad cream. The chef made **this** *(indicating the mayonnaise)* freshly this morning.

Ronald What a dump!

Mr Heath *(offering Ronald the mayonnaise)* This is very good.

Mrs Heath *(coldly)* He likes salad cream.

Ronald *(to Basil)* That's puke, that is.

Basil Well, at least it's fresh puke.

Mrs Heath *(shocked)* Oh dear!!

Basil *(indignantly)* Well, **he** said it!

Mrs Heath *(loftily)* May I ask why you don't have proper salad cream. I mean, most restaurants . . .

Basil Well, the chef only buys it on special occasions, you know, gourmet nights and so on, but . . . when he's got a bottle – ah! – he's a genius with it. He can unscrew the cap like Robert Carrier. It's a treat to watch him. *(he mimes)* And then . . . **right** on the plate! None on the walls! Magic! He's a wizard with a tin-opener, too. He got a Pulitzer Prize for that. He can have the stuff in the saucepan before you can say *haute cuisine*. You name it, he'll heat it up and scrape it off the pan for you. Mind you, skill like that isn't picked up overnight. Still, I'll tell him to get some salad cream, you never know when Henry Kissinger is going to drop in, do you. *(Mrs Heath is silenced; Basil smiles charmingly, looks at his watch and in so doing neatly elbows Ronald in the head)* Sorry, sorry! *(he moves off)*

Mr Heath Nice man.

Meanwhile, Sybil and André are deep in conversation.

André No, no, seriously, I think it's a very good idea.

Sybil You do, really?

André I promise you, people round here are getting more and more keen on good food.

Basil *(coming back and sitting down)* Well, so much for tonight's guests. Ignorant rabble.

André Oh, there's always a few, Mr Fawlty.

Basil Well, not on Gourmet Night there won't be. *(slightly too loudly)* None of those proles.

Sybil Basil!

Basil Well!

Sybil André thinks Thursday nights would be best.

Basil Thursdays?

André I think so.

Basil Right. And on the other nights we'll just have a big trough of baked beans and garnish it with a couple of dead dogs.

Sybil Well, that's settled then.

André Good. And I'm very pleased for Kurt too. It will be good for him to have something special to do . . . I'd like to have a word with him, do you mind?

Sybil No, of course not.

André rises and goes towards the kitchen.

Basil Right, well, I'll get the menus printed on Monday.

Sybil Polly can do the menus.

Basil No she can't.

Sybil Yes she can.

Basil No she can't.

Sybil Yes she can.

Basil No she can't.

Sybil Yes she can . . . she **can**! You can write the advertisement in the *Echo*, only don't make it too toffee-nosed, Basil – we don't want to put people off.

Basil I just want to keep the riff-raff away, dear.

Meanwhile in the kitchen, André and Kurt are talking; Manuel is busying himself.

André Well, good luck, my old friend. It's good to have you down here.

Kurt Thank you for . . . well, you know.

André Don't mention it . . . nice to have met you, Manuel.

Kurt *(putting an arm round Manuel)* He's my friend.

Manuel One night I cook you both paella.

They both laugh. André turns to leave.

André And, Kurt . . . *(waves an admonishing finger)*

Kurt . . . You don't trust me?

André *Ciao. (goes back into the dining room)*

Kurt *(grandiloquently)* Manuel! Together, you and I make Fawlty Towers famous for its cooking!

Manuel *Qué?*

Kurt Excellent . . . tip-top . . . *famosos* . . . oh, you are so cute! *(He kisses Manuel's forehead.)*

In the dining room; it is Gourmet Night. A hand-painted Polly-style menu proclaims 'Gourmet Night at Fawlty Towers'. Basil is adjusting cutlery on one of the tables. He picks up a spoon and looks at it.

Basil Manuel! *(Manuel takes the spoon, breathes heavily on it, wipes it on his napkin and replaces it; Basil picks it up and gives it to him again)* Get a **clean** one.

Manuel Is clean now.

Basil *(wiping the spoon on Manuel's hair)* Is dirty now.

Manuel runs off with it. The phone at reception is heard to ring. Basil studies the menu with disapproval.

Polly *(coming in)* Do you like the menu, Mr Fawlty?

Basil No I don't.

Polly Oh good.

Basil . . . What?

Polly Thank you. Thank you so much.

She exits, passing Manuel who comes in with a new spoon. He goes to put it down on the table.

Basil Give it to me, give it to me . . . thank you.

Basil puts the spoon in place. They both look at it. Basil re-adjusts it. Cautiously, Manuel reaches out towards it; Basil smacks his hand.

Sybil *(coming in from the lobby)* Well, Basil, guess who's just called to cancel at twelve minutes past seven?

Basil Who?

Sybil The Coosters.

Basil What!? All **four?**

Sybil Marvellous, isn't it.

Basil Aagh! What did they say?

Sybil One of them's ill.

Basil Well, let's hope it's nothing trivial.

Sybil You realize there are **four people** at our grand opening dinner?

Basil Never mind! Never mind!

Sybil Never **mind?** There's four people, Basil. Shall we feed them in the kitchen?

Basil But think who they **are** . . . Colonel and Mrs Hall, **both** JPs, and Lionel Twitchen, one of Torquay's leading Rotarians.

Sybil That'll put us on the map.

Basil He's this year's treasurer, dear.

Sybil I should never have let you write that advert. Fancy putting 'No riff-raff'. *(exits)*

Basil *(calling after her)* When you're presenting *haute cuisine*, you don't want the working class sticking its nose in it. *(he looks into the kitchen, where Polly is preparing some food)* Everything all right? Where's Kurt?

Polly He and Manuel are getting the wine from the cellar.

Basil goes back into the dining room, looks round proudly and rubs his hands together.

Basil Right . . . this is what it's all about. *(Misses Tibbs and Gatsby peer in from the lobby)* You two! You're supposed to be in your rooms.

Miss Gatsby Oh!

Basil You're not allowed down here tonight, remember?

Miss Gatsby Ooh, doesn't it look pretty.

Miss Tibbs What are you cooking?

Basil I'll send up a menu with your bread and cheese. Now get out. *(he shoos them out)*

Sybil *(appearing from the lobby)* They're here.

Basil What?

Sybil The Halls are here! *(she hurries off)*

Miss Gatsby & Miss Tibbs The Halls!

Basil . . . Go to your rooms!

They bustle off. Basil takes a deep breath and straightens his tie.

Manuel *(running in from the kitchen)* Mr Fawlty . . . Mr Fawlty . . . I very upset.

Basil Not now, Manuel. Later. *(he exits, leaving Manuel flapping)*

In the bar, the Halls are talking to Sybil. Mrs Hall is extremely small. The Colonel has a commanding manner and a head twitch.

Colonel Hall When I went for my jog this morning, I thought it was going to be pretty warm *(he twitches)* . . . but in the event it turned out to be pretty cool really, and then it started to cloud up this afternoon, quite contrary to the weather forecast, naturally *(he twitches)* . . . and I shouldn't be a bit surprised if we got a spot of rain tonight.

Sybil Still, it's been a lovely summer, hasn't it?

Basil *(striding in)* Ah, Colonel! How delightful to see you again.

Colonel Hall . . . Sorry?

Basil How delightful to see you again. We met last year at the Golf Club dinner dance, you may remember?

Colonel Hall No I don't.

Basil Ah, sorry, well, we didn't talk for long, just good evening really, a blink of the eye and you'd have missed it. As indeed you did. Quite understandably. *(the Colonel twitches; Basil stares, puzzled)* Sorry?

Colonel Hall . . . What?

Sybil nudges Basil.

Basil Well . . . how is that lovely daughter of yours?

Sybil *(quietly)* She's dead.

Basil *(examining the Colonel's lapel keenly)* I like your suit. Isn't it super. The way those stripes go up and down, really super. How much did that cost, then?

Colonel Hall *(irritated)* Who are you? *(Basil stares at him blankly)* . . . I mean, I don't know your name!

There is a pause.

Basil *(to Sybil, under his breath)* What is it?

Sybil What?

Basil *(in a frenzied whisper)* My name.

Sybil *(calmly)* This is my husband. Basil Fawlty.

Basil That's it!!

Colonel Hall What?

Basil How do you do.

Colonel Hall How do you do. *(Basil offers his hand; the Colonel shakes it and twitches)*

Basil May I introduce my wife?
Colonel Hall **She** just introduced **you**!
Basil Oh, what a coincidence!
Colonel Hall Yes. I don't believe you know my wife . . .

But the diminutive Mrs Hall is standing behind the Colonel and neither Basil nor Sybil can see her.

Basil *(to Sybil)* Dead? *(Sybil nods)*
Colonel Hall May I introduce Mrs Hall?

Basil and Sybil look round, puzzled, then spot Mrs Hall. She and they peer round the Colonel and smile at each other.

Basil Oh, sorry! Didn't see you down there. Don't get up. *(Sybil nudges him; he takes a closer look at Mrs Hall)*

Sybil What would you like to drink, Mrs Small? **Hall**!
Basil Yes, a short, or . . . oh!
Sybil A sherry . . . how about a sherry?
Mrs Hall A sherry – lovely.
Basil Oh good. Large, or . . . or . . . **not** quite so large?
Colonel Hall Two, small and dry.
Basil Oh . . . I wouldn't say that.
Colonel Hall What?
Basil I don't know . . .
Colonel Hall *(irritably)* Two small, dry sherries.
Basil Oh, I see what you mean! Sorry!

The Colonel twitches. The bell at reception sounds. Basil bows and withdraws.

In the lobby, Mr and Mrs Twitchen are waiting by reception. Basil sails up.

Basil Ah, Mr and Mrs Twitchen, good evening . . . welcome to Fawlty Towers.
Mr Twitchen Good evening.
Basil *(sveltely)* How very *au fait* of you to come to our little culinary *soirée* this evening.
Mr Twitchen Only too glad to support something new in Torquay.
Mrs Twitchen Such an unusual idea. I do hope it works out.
Basil Well, we have our hopes.

Polly appears from the kitchen. She looks rather agitated.

Polly Mr Fawlty!

Basil Ah, Polly! Would you take Mrs Twitchen's coat, please?

Polly Yes, of course. *(she starts helping Mrs Twitchen out of her coat)*

Basil *(with a courtly gesture towards the bar)* Thank you so much . . . would you care . . . ?

Polly Mr Fawlty?

Basil Yes?

Polly Can I have a word with you?

Basil Yes. *(to the Twitchens)* This is Polly. She will be serving you later this evening.

Polly Er . . .

Basil Well?

Polly It's Kurt.

Basil Yes?

Polly He's potted . . . the shrimps.

Basil What?

Polly He's **potted** . . . the shrimps.

Basil . . . Shrimps? We're not having shrimps tonight, Polly.

The Twitchens look at her rather oddly. Basil indicates the bar and they start to move towards it.

Polly *(tapping Basil's arm)* He's **soused** . . . the herrings.

Basil What are you on about?!

Polly *(slowly)* He's **pickled** . . . the onions and he's **smashed** the eggs **in his cups** . . . **under the table**. *(she rolls her eyes strangely)*

Basil *(to the Twitchens)* Excuse me. *(to Polly)* Have you been drinking?

Polly No, not **me!**

Basil *(hissing)* Well, will you behave yourself. *(to the Twitchens)* I'm so sorry to have kept you waiting. Would you care . . . *(to Polly, who is still trying to detain him)* Stop that and pull yourself together!

As they move off into the bar Polly pecks at his sleeve imploringly. He turns sharply and makes as if to hit her; she gives a little yelp and jumps back. The Twitchens have seen this; he covers by pretending to flick a piece of fluff from his sleeve.

Basil Now, may I offer you a little aperitif, while you make up your mind what you would like for dinner?

They move off towards the bar and this time Polly lets them go.

Mr Twitchen That's very kind of you . . . Lotte?
Mrs Twitchen Tomato juice, please.
Basil Mr Twitchen?
Mr Twitchen Yes, tomato juice for me, thank you.

They enter the bar. Basil hastens to make the introductions.

Basil Ah, good . . . oh, Colonel . . . Colonel and Mrs Hall, may I introduce Mr and Mrs Tw— *(the Colonel twitches; Basil exercises tact and suppresses the name)* Have you met?
Colonel Hall No, we haven't.
Basil *(to Mr Twitchen)* Have you?
Mr Twitchen No.
Basil Oh, good. Well what would you like to drink, then?
Mrs Hall What?
Basil To drink?
Mrs Hall I didn't catch the name.
Basil Oh, you didn't catch it? What a rotten bit of luck!
Colonel Hall Well?
Basil Fine, thanks, and you?
Colonel Hall No, we **still** don't know the **name.**
Basil Fawlty. Basil Fawlty.
Colonel Hall No, no . . . **theirs.**
Basil Oh, **theirs!** I'm so sorry, I thought you meant mine. My, it's quite warm, isn't it. I could do with a drink too. Another sherry?
Colonel Hall Well, aren't you going to introduce us?
Basil Didn't I?
Colonel Hall No!
Basil Oh, sorry! This is Mr and Mrs . . . *(mumbles)*
Colonel Hall What?!!!
Basil . . . Mr and Mrs . . . *(he lets out a little cry and faints backwards; he lies still for a couple of seconds, opens his eyes and looks up)* Sorry! I fainted. *(gets up)* Ah, I feel better for that. Now, I'll get your tomato juices. *(he heads for the bar)*
Mr Twitchen *(to the Halls)* The name's Twitchen, actually.
Colonel Hall Hall. How do you do. Would you care to join us?

They all sit down at the Halls' table. Sybil comes up with drinks and the Gourmet Night menus.

Sybil Would you like to see the menus?

Basil is at the bar recovering and pouring out more sherries. He drinks one. Polly appears at his elbow.

Basil Yes? What is it?
Polly Please put the bottle down.
Basil What do you **want?**
Polly Please put the **bottle** down.
Basil What **is** it?
Polly Kurt is drunk.

Basil stays calm but drops the bottle. It smashes. The guests jump.

Basil *(calling)* Sorry! *(to Polly)* Drunk?!
Polly Almost unconscious.
Basil Right. *(he makes a supreme effort of self control; he fails)* Aaaagh!!! *(to guests)* Sorry!! Sorry!! *(to Polly)* How?
Polly I don't know. It happened so quickly. He had a row with Manuel.
Basil Manuel?
Polly . . . He's got a crush on him.
Basil A **what?**
Polly A crush . . . you know . . . in love.

A pause. Then, in despair, Basil hits the bar counter with his fist. Unfortunately, he catches a light metal tray, which spins in the air and lands loudly. The guests jump a lot.

Basil *(to the guests)* Sorry!! Sorry! Excuse me just one moment . . . I won't be a moment. *(he steams into the lobby, pursued by Polly)* I knew I should never have hired a Frenchman.
Polly He's Greek, Mr Fawlty.
Basil Greek?
Polly Of course.
Basil Well, that's even worse. I mean, they invented it. *(he opens the kitchen door; Kurt is standing very unsteadily against the wall with a bottle in his hand; Basil approaches him calmly but with great authority)* Right. Give that to me, Kurt. Come on, give me the bottle.

Kurt *(mumbles and holds the bottle away from Basil)* No. Go away. Leave me alone.

Basil *(patiently)* Come on, give it to me. *(he reaches for the bottle but Kurt resists)*

Kurt Manuel! *(he pushes Basil, who staggers into the dining room)*

Basil *(striding back in)* Now come on, Kurt . . .

Kurt Manuel. He doesn't love me!

Basil Well, you have to give these things time.

Kurt I want Manuel!

Basil Well, I'm sure we can arrange something. Now can I have the bottle?

Kurt Oh, he's so sweet.

Basil Yes, he is sweet, I know, yes.

Kurt He's wonderful.

Basil Yes, yes, I know. *(he grabs at the bottle; they struggle; Basil falls backwards, getting his head in a plate of salmon mousse; he pushes Kurt, who staggers back and collapses; Basil slaps his face)* Kurt! Come on, Kurt! *(to Polly)* Get me some black coffee, quick.

Polly He can't drink it. He's out.

Basil No he isn't, he's only drunk half a bottle. Come on, Kurt, come on . . .

Polly takes two more empties from the sink and shows him; he starts strangling Kurt. Polly tries to restrain him.

Manuel *(from behind the dining-room doors)* Now listen to me, Kurty! I come in here but no cuddle. You hear me? *No cuddle.*

Basil *(leaves off strangling Kurt, grabs Manuel and drags him in)* Look what you've done!

Manuel *(recoiling)* Dead?!

Basil To the world.

Polly He's only drunk, Manuel.

Basil *(to Manuel)* This is your fault.

Manuel *Qué?*

Basil You only had to be civil to him.

Manuel Seville?

Basil *Nice!*

Manuel You no understand – is not enough. He want kiss me.

Basil Oh, what's one little kiss! . . .

Polly Mr Fawlty!! Call André – he can do the cooking!

Basil . . . André?! He's **open** tonight! He's open on a Thursday, you cloth-eared bint.

Polly But he could do it there and you can pick it up in the car!

Basil *(pauses to take this in.)* Oh! Brilliant! *(kisses her forehead)* Brilliant! *(grabs Manuel with similar intent, then recoils)* Yech! . . . Right! *(runs to the door)*

Mrs Twitchen . . . I **can't** resist the lobster.

Colonel Hall No, tournedos for me, every time.

Sybil Would you like another drink?

Colonel Hall No, I don't think we will – we're nearly ready to order.

Sybil I'll be back in a moment. *(she looks round for Basil)*

In the lobby, Basil is on the phone in a high state of excitement.

Basil You can't do lobster, no, right, **right** . . . but André, the **tournedos?** . . . Yes, I'm sorry, I'm **sorry** . . . I'm sorry . . .

Sybil *(enters from the bar)* Basil!

Basil Yes of course I want the duck. Yes, that's marvellous, but can you do one or two sauces? Wonderful! That's it! Thank you, thank you, André. *(puts the phone down)*

Sybil Why are you talking to André?

Basil What is it, what is it?!

Sybil They're ready to order, Basil.

Basil *(inserting a sheet of paper into the typewriter)* Well, stall them, stall them!

Sybil What!?

Basil Stall them!! Stall them, you stupid woman!! Tell them some lie. *(starts typing furiously with two fingers; one is off form)*

Sybil *(firmly)* What is going on?

Basil Ssssh!!

Sybil Will you just tell me what you're doing?

Basil *(wrestling with jammed keys)* We've got to change the menu.

Sybil Why? . . . Why? . . . **Why**!!!???

Basil *(frantically)* Listen, he's in there, he's out, flat out, so André's . . .

Sybil Who is?

Basil . . . What?

Sybil Who is out?

Basil Kurt! Who d'you think, Henry Kissinger? *(attacks the typewriter again)*

Sybil What do you mean, 'out'?

Basil He's drunk.

Sybil . . . Drunk?

Basil Soused! Potted! I mean drunk! Got it?

Sybil *(stunned)* . . . I don't believe it.

Basil Neither do I. Perhaps it's a dream. *(he bangs his head hard on the desk; nothing happens)* No, it's not a dream, we're stuck with it. *(he pulls the sheet out of the typewriter)* André's doing the cooking and I'll collect it in the car.

Sybil What's he cooking?

Basil Duck.

Sybil . . . Duck?

Basil **Duck!**

Sybil . . . **Duck!?**

Basil You know . . . **duck??!** *(he runs around flapping his arms up and down and quacking)*

In the bar; Basil enters, still quacking, attracting some attention. He slips effortlessly into his smarmiest 'Mine Host' persona.

Basil I'm so sorry to have kept you waiting.

Colonel Hall Well, we'd like to order now . . .

Basil Yes, quite . . . er . . .

Colonel Hall My wife would like the lobster as her main . . .

Basil Ah, yes! Er, excuse me . . .

Colonel Hall Yes?

Basil There is one small thing . . . I'm afraid you were given the wrong menus. This is tonight's menu.

Colonel Hall What?

Basil *(collecting the originals)* Er, yes, I'm afraid the chef changed his mind and forgot to tell us. He's like that, brilliant but temperamental.

Colonel Hall What, he's changed everything?

Basil I'm afraid so. Yes, it wasn't good enough, so he just chucked it away. He's such a perfectionist.

Mrs Twitchen The lobster?

Basil Lobster, tournedos, you name it, it's in the bin.

Mr Twitchen How extraordinary.

Basil Yes. Lucky old bin, I say! So **this** is your new menu.

Colonel Hall Duck with orange . . . duck with cherries . . . duck surprise?

Mrs Twitchen What's duck surprise?

Basil Ah . . . that's duck without orange or cherries.

Colonel Hall *(beginning to bristle)* I mean, is this all there is, **duck?**

Basil *(peers at the menu to check)* Um . . . Ye-es . . . Done, of course, the three *extremely* different ways.

Colonel Hall Well, what do you do if you don't like duck?

Basil Well, if you don't like duck . . . er . . . *(humorously)* you're rather stuck. *(he laughs non-infectiously)*

Mrs Hall Well, fortunately I love it!

Basil Oh good! So . . . that's four ducks, is it?

In the kitchen, Sybil is kneeling by Kurt's side, looking for signs of life. Polly comes up.

Sybil You were right. Now, he's getting this duck from André . . .

Polly Yes, but I don't know what vegetables he's put on.

Sybil Well, let's find out, at least we can do those.

Basil *(running in, followed by Manuel)* Three salmon mousses, Polly. And one mullet with mustard sauce, for Mrs Hall. Right . . . where is the mullet?

Polly There!

Polly points and starts preparing the mousse. Basil hurries to a dish containing some mullet, takes a couple out and puts them on a plate. The atmosphere is urgent but co-operative.

Sybil What are you doing about vegetables, Basil?

Basil Same. Same as on the other menu, dear.

Sybil André's not doing any?

Basil No, no, you do them, you and Polly . . . mustard sauce, mustard sauce . . . *(he pours mustard sauce onto the mullet and picks up the plate)* Right now, while I'm out in the car, you get them ready, right? Ready, Polly?

Polly Ready.

Basil Manuel! *(Manuel takes the mullet; Basil indicates the mousse)* Right, two of those for table nine, and one of these, and this, for table four. Come on.

In the dining room, the Halls and the Twitchens are just sitting down. Polly goes to the Twitchens' table with the

mousses, and Manuel to the Halls' with the mullet and the mousse. He puts them down the wrong way round.

Basil No, no, the other way round.
Manuel *Qué?*
Basil The other – way – round.
Manuel Ah! *(to the Halls)* Please. *(he indicates that they should change places)* Please to change.
Basil No, no, the **plates!**
Manuel *Qué?*
Basil The plates! **Change** the plates!
Manuel . . . Oh, **dirty!** I change. *(he picks up the plates and heads for the kitchen)*
Basil *(intercepting him)* No, no, come here. Look . . .

He takes the plates from Manuel and demonstrates. Manuel takes them with crossed arms, uncrosses them and puts them down exactly as before. Basil pulls Manuel away from the table and whispers to him. The Halls change their plates round themselves. Manuel returns from his briefing and changes them back.

Manuel Sorry, sorry, is wrong.

Basil sees the plates and slaps Manuel. While he is doing this the Halls change the plates round again.

Basil *(to the Halls)* I'm so sorry. He's from Barcelona. *(he changes the plates over with an air of finality; to Manuel)* I don't know what he sees in you!

The Halls look at each other, then, without a word, get up and change places. Both Basil and Manuel jump.

Mrs Hall Do you think we could have a drink, dear?
Colonel Hall May I see the wine list please, Fawlty?
Basil Certainly, Major . . . **Colonel!** *(he hurries to the sideboard; Mr Twitchen is removing a long black hair from his mouth and peering into his mousse suspiciously)* Everything all right?
Mr Twitchen *(doubtfully)* Er, yes . . .
Basil *(leaning forward)* Oh good . . . Mrs Twitchen?

Mr Twitchen catches a glimpse of Basil's scalp. He stares at it.

Mrs Twitchen Yes, yes, it's fine, thank you Mr Fawlty.

Basil Oh good. *(he moves off)*
Mr Twitchen *(nudging his wife)* He's got it in his hair!

Basil arrives back at the Halls' table. Mrs Hall is about to take her first mouthful. The Colonel has just done so.

Mrs Hall How is it, dear?
Colonel Hall Rather good, surprisingly.

Mrs Hall takes a mouthful of mullet.

Basil There's the list, Colonel.
Colonel Hall Thank you very much.
Mrs Hall *(lets out a shrill cry)* Ugh! *(Basil freezes)*
Colonel Hall What's the matter, Petal? What's the matter?
Mrs Hall Ugggh!
Basil *(cheerfully)* Is everything all right?
Mrs Hall I think I'm going to be sick!
Basil It is an unusual taste, isn't it?
Mrs Hall It's not cooked, you ignoramus!
Colonel Hall Look! What are you trying to do to us? *(to Mrs Hall)* Do you mean that's **raw**?
Basil Would you prefer a **cooked** one?
Colonel Hall Of course she'd prefer it cooked!
Basil Certainly. *(he whisks the plate away)* I'll get you a cooked one, then – it'll be even nicer.
Mrs Hall No! No!

In the kitchen, Sybil is working at the vegetables with Polly. Manuel is with Kurt who is propped up against the wall. Basil rushes in.

Basil It's raw. This mullet is raw! I mean, what do we do to it? *(they look blankly at him; he runs over to Kurt)* Kurt! Kurt, listen . . . **what do we do to this?** *(Kurt groans quietly)* Do we grill it? . . . *(Kurt opens his eyes, stares at the mullet and groans)* If we grill it, just go 'uh-huh'. *(Kurt shakes his head slightly)* All right! Do we **fry** it? Just go 'uh-huh'. *(Kurt rolls his eyes and throws up over the plate; Basil addresses the others)* . . . Going well, isn't it.
Sybil Basil, will you just get out. **I** will deal with the fish. Just go and get the duck. *(she ushers him out)*
Basil *(not unwillingly)* Right. Right. Oh! **Wine**!
Sybil What?
Basil The Colonel wants some wine. I'll just . . . *(takes a pace*

towards the dining room then checks himself) No, **you** go, Polly. He won't hit a woman. *(dashes for the front door)*

In the dining room. Polly enters and approaches the Colonel, who is peering closely at his mousse.

Polly *(tentatively)* Have you . . . have you chosen yet, Major . . . **Colonel?**

Colonel Hall Mmm?

Polly Have you chosen your wine?

Colonel Hall Oh yes, Chablis, please.

Polly *(picking up the wine list)* Thank you.

Colonel Hall Waitress!

Polly . . . Yes?

Colonel Hall *(heavily)* There's a **hair** in my mousse.

Polly . . . Well, don't talk too loud or everybody will want one.

Colonel Hall **What!!!!**

Polly Sorry. *(she snatches the mousse and hurries away with it; the Colonel twitches)*

Basil meanwhile is driving furiously, muttering at other motorists.

Basil . . . Oh, get out of the way . . . get out!

Back in the dining room, Polly hastens in with some more mousse. She puts it down in front of the Colonel.

Polly *(charmingly)* I'm sorry about that. *(to Mrs Hall)* The mullet's on its way.

Basil meanwhile draws up outside André's restaurant and races into the kitchen. André has the duck ready on a serving dish.

André Ah, Mr Fawlty . . . there you are . . . a beautiful duck for you . . . it will be – mmm – delicious. There you are, don't forget the sauces.

Basil Oh, marvellous . . .

André I hope all goes very well for you . . . good luck.

He puts a cover over the duck and hands it to Basil, together with the sauces. Basil runs out to the car, jumps in and tries to start it. It won't.

Basil Come on!

Back in the dining room. Manuel is standing attentively as the Colonel tastes his wine. The Colonel nods and twitches.

Manuel What, no good?
Colonel Hall No, no, it's very good.

Manuel puts some more wine in the Colonel's glass. The Colonel sips from it. Manuel tops it up again immediately; the Colonel jumps, spilling some. Manuel tops it up again.

In the forecourt, Basil drives up. Polly, waiting at the main door, sees the car and runs inside. Basil leaps out of the car with the duck and runs into the hotel.

Basil *(running into the kitchen)* Here it is, Polly.

Sybil starts dealing with the sauces. Basil peers at the duck. It looks fine.

Basil Right, I'll carve it on the trolley. **Well done** everybody! Manuel, get the trolley ready. Right, let's go . . .

Manuel runs through the swing doors to the dining room.

Sybil *(waving a sauce dish at Basil)* Basil!

He stops and turns. The door swings back and knocks the duck out of his hands.

Basil Oh my God! Look what you've done, you stupid great tart!
Polly Wait a minute . . . I think it'll be all right.
Basil . . . What? *(he kneels and peers at the duck; it is intact!)* Yes! You're right!

Joyfully he reaches for it. The swing door opens and catches him a fearful blow on the head. Manuel enters, treads in the duck and walks several paces with it on his foot. Basil howls, springs at Manuel and tries to get the shoe out of the duck. The duck comes off; but the poor thing is terribly injured.

Basil Look! Look at it! I mean, look at that!
Sybil Can I help?
Basil Yes! Go and kill yourself! No!!! Call André first! Tell him we need another one. *(he throws the duck at the unconscious Kurt; to Polly)* Go and talk to them!

Polly What?

Basil Entertain them or something!

In the lobby, Sybil is on the phone.

Sybil Oh, André, it's Sybil Fawlty . . . Well, I'm afraid it got trodden on . . .

In the forecourt, Basil jumps into the car and drives off. In the dining room Manuel is twanging the guitar and emitting strange Spanish sounds to the puzzled guests. Basil meanwhile rockets up to André's restaurant. He bursts into the kitchen; André puts a fresh duck onto a serving tray and covers it. Basil is about to pick it up when André distracts him by offering him some fresh sauces. As he is looking away, a waiter comes in, puts down a similar serving dish with cover, and takes Basil's duck away. Basil declines the sauces, turns and picks up the serving dish. He hurries out, vaults into the car and presses the starter. It whinges.

Basil Come on. Come **on**!

In the dining room Manuel has finished his song. Polly applauds enthusiastically; the guests applaud without enthusiasm. There is a pause, then Polly launches into her act.

Polly *(singing)* I'm just a girl who can't say 'No' . . . I'm in a terrible fix . . .

Basil meanwhile has turned into a narrow road. It is blocked by a parked van. He curses, sounds his horn, waits, gives up, reverses back and stalls. He tries to start the car again. This time it refuses completely. He becomes more frantic.

Basil Come on, start, will you!? Start, you vicious bastard!! Come on! Oh my God! I'm warning you – if you don't start . . . *(screams with rage)* I'll count to three. *(he presses the starter, without success)* One . . . two . . . *three* . . . !! Right! That's it! *(he jumps out of the car and addresses it)* You've tried it on just once too often! Right! Well, don't say I haven't warned you! I've laid it on the line to you time and time again! Right! Well . . . this is it! I'm going to give you a damn good thrashing! *(he rushes*

off and comes back with a large branch; he beats the car without mercy)

Back in the dining room, Polly is ending her performance.

Polly . . . I can't be prissy and quaint . . . How can I be what I ain't . . . I can't . . . say . . . 'No'! *(Manuel applauds loudly)*

Colonel Hall *(loudly)* Any sign of the duck?

Polly Er . . . it's just coming.

Basil meanwhile is running up the forecourt. Back in the dining room, Sybil is the next on.

Sybil So Uncle Ted comes in with this crate of brown ale, ha ha ha . . . and Mother says, 'Oh Ted, look who's here' . . . and he says, ha ha ha . . .

Basil comes flying into the kitchen, slides to a halt, and sees Polly, who has the vegetables ready.

Basil OK, Polly?!

Polly OK!

Basil Got the sauces?

Polly Got them!

Basil Right.

He enters the dining room in triumph. He places the serving dish on the trolley and wheels it ceremoniously forward.

Basil Ladies and gentlemen!! So sorry to have kept you waiting.

He sharpens his knife with panache. Then he lifts the cover and beams at the guests. Looking down, he sees, not a duck, but a large ornate pink trifle. He regards it approvingly, then does a double-take and slams the cover down. He lifts it a little and peers disbelievingly beneath. He takes the cover off and looks round the room for the escaped duck. He fails to see it. Clutching at straws, he looks on the lower shelf of the trolley. Finally he plunges both hands into the trifle and ransacks it. Unfortunately it does not conceal a duck. He turns to his guests and smiles brightly.

Basil Well, er . . . who's for trifle?

Colonel Hall What?

Basil Trifle for you, Mrs Hall?
Colonel Hall *(dangerously)* What about the duck, Fawlty?
Basil . . . Duck's off. Sorry.

THE GERMANS

Basil Fawlty John Cleese
Sybil Fawlty Prunella Scales
Sister Brenda Collins
Doctor Louis Mahoney
Major Gowen Ballard Berkeley
Polly Connie Booth
Manuel Andrew Sachs
Mr Sharp John Lawrence
Mrs Sharp Iris Fry
Miss Tibbs Gilly Flower
Miss Gatsby Renée Roberts
Large woman Claire Davenport
German guests Nick Lane
Lisa Bergmayr
Willy Bowman
Dan Gillan

Sixth of first series, first broadcast on 24 October 1975, BBC2.

A private room in a hospital. Sybil is sitting up in bed, eating chocolates. Basil is visiting.

Basil So you're sure you'll be all right?

Sybil What, Basil?

Basil I said, you're sure you'll be all right?

Sybil Will you get my bed jacket?

Basil Er . . . bed jacket *(he gets up and fumbles in the drawer beside the bed)*

Sybil In the drawer, the blue one, in the **drawer.**

Basil crosses the room to the chest of drawers, sighing a little.

Sybil Now, you won't forget the fire drill tomorrow, will you?

Basil No, I won't, dear, no, I **can** cope, you know . . . This one? *(holding up a pink bed jacket)*

Sybil That's not blue.

Basil Well . . . it's got blue things on it.

Sybil They're flowers, and I didn't ask you for the one with the flowers, did I?

Basil No, you didn't, quite right. I only picked that one up to annoy you, actually. I mean, what have you got all this stuff **for?**

Sybil What?

Basil I mean, you're only here for three days. Are you going to play charades every night? *(holding up a bright blue bed jacket)* This one?

Sybil Is it blue?

Basil It's blue-ish, I suppose.

Sybil Now, you will remember to collect the stuff from Thomas's, won't you.

Basil Yes, I will.

Sybil Oh, and I forgot to scrape the mould off the cheddar this morning, so remind Chef.

Basil Right.

Sybil And **do** try and find time to put the moose's head up. *(Basil sighs)* It's been sitting there for **two weeks**, Basil.

Basil Yes, yes, yes.

Sybil I don't know why you bought it.

Basil It will lend the lobby a certain ambience, Sybil. It has a touch of style about it.

Sybil It's got a touch of **mange** about it.

Basil That is not so.

Sybil It's got things **living** in it, Basil – it's nasty.

Basil It is not nasty, it is superb.

Sybil I'm not going to argue with you, Basil, just get it up out of the way, I don't want to snag any more cardies on it. And will you get me my telephone book, please?

Basil *(gets up and prowls about looking for the book)* I mean, it's not as though I don't have enough to do. I mean, I'm on my own, the Germans are arriving tomorrow . . .

Sybil Not till lunchtime. You could do it in the morning.

Basil I've got the **fire drill** in the morning!

Sybil Well, that only takes ten minutes. . . . In the **bag**.

Basil *(peering around for a bag)* I thought slavery had been abolished.

Sybil Don't you ever think about **anyone** but yourself?

Basil Oh . . .

Sybil In the **bag**. *(she points it out to him – it is on the bed)*

Basil Oh yes, in the bag. You let me do it. You just lie there with your feet up and I'll go and carry you up another hundredweight of lime creams . . . *(he hands her the book)*

Sybil I'm actually about to undergo an operation, Basil.

Basil Oh yes, how **is** the old toe-nail? Still growing in, hmmmm? Still burrowing its way down into the bone? Still macheting its way through the nerve, eh? Nasty old nail.

Sybil It's still hurting, if that's what you mean, Basil.

Basil Well, it'll be out in the morning, poor little devil. I wonder if they'd mount it for me, just for old time's sake?

Sybil I'm sure it's worth asking. You could hang it on the wall next to the moose. They'd go rather well together.

Basil Ha, ha, ha.

Sister enters briskly.

Sister *(to Sybil)* Ah, there you are. *(to Basil)* Come along, out you go.

Basil *(pointedly peering under the bed)* Oh, were you talking to me? I'm sorry, I thought there was a dog in here.

Sister Oh no, no dogs in here.

Basil *(looking at her closely)* I wouldn't bet on it.

Sister Oh no, not allowed. Now come along, you're in the way.

Basil Fawlty's the name, **Mr** Fawlty.
Sister *(to Sybil)* Let's sit you up a bit.
Sybil *(very sweetly)* Thank you, Sister.
Sister *(putting a thermometer in Sybil's mouth)* Now, just pop that under your tongue. *(she sees Basil)* You still here?
Basil Apparently.
Sister The doctor's coming.
Basil *(jumps up as if startled)* My God! A doctor – I mean, here, in the hospital? Whatever can we do?
Sister You can leave!
Basil Why **do** they call you 'Sister'? Is it a term of endearment?

Sybil makes a warning noise – the thermometer prevents her speaking.

Sister Now look, Mr Fawlty, I'm not going to ask you again.
Basil Presumably you wouldn't mind if I said goodbye to my wife? She is under the knife tomorrow.
Sister It's an ingrowing toe-nail!
Basil Oh, you know, do you? Well, that'll help. *(to Sybil)* Well, take care now, and if you can think of any more things for me to do, don't hesitate to call.

Another warning noise from Sybil.

Sister Finished?
Basil Just. Thank you so much.
Sister Not at all.
Basil Charmed, I'm sure . . . Ingrowing toe-nail. Right foot. You'll find it on the end of the leg. *(he sweeps out into the corridor, almost colliding with the doctor who is just about to go into the room)*
Doctor Mr Fawlty?
Basil Yes?
Doctor Doctor Fin.
Basil Oh, how do you do, doctor.
Doctor You've just seen your wife?
Basil Yes. Just said goodbye . . . well, *au revoir.*
Doctor Yes. Well, it's a very simple operation. But it will be quite painful afterwards.
Basil Will it, will it, oh dear.
Doctor Just for a time, but please don't worry.
Basil No, well, I'll try not to. . . . Quite painful?

Doctor Yes.

The doctor goes into Sybil's room. Basil rubs his hands in satisfaction.

The hotel reception. Major Gowen is in the lobby as Basil struts in and goes behind the desk.

Basil *(breezily)* Evening, Major.
The Major Evening, Fawlty. Hampshire won.
Basil Did it? Oh isn't that good, how splendid!
The Major Oh, Fawlty, how's . . . um . . . um . . .
Basil . . . My wife?
The Major That's it, that's it.
Basil Fine, absolutely fine. They're taking it out tomorrow morning.
The Major Is she? Good.
Basil Not her, the nail. They won't have operated until tomorrow.
The Major What?
Basil The nail. They're taking it out tomorrow.
The Major How did she get a nail in her?
Basil I thought I told you, Major, she's having her toe-nail out.
The Major What, just one of them?
Basil Well, it's an ingrowing one, Major.
The Major Ah well . . . if it's causing you pain . . . you have it out.
Basil Exactly. So . . . I'm on my own now, start running this place properly.
The Major . . . So you're on your own now, are you?
Basil Apparently.
The Major Well, she won't be gone for long, will she?
Basil No, no, no, not unless there's a serious mistake.
The Major Still . . . you've always got Elsie to help you.
Basil . . . Who?
The Major Elsie.
Basil Well, she . . . er . . . she left a couple of years ago, Major.
The Major Funny – I thought I saw her yesterday.
Basil No, I don't think so – she's in Canada.
The Major . . . Strange creatures, women.
Basil Well, can't stand around all day . . .

The Major I knew one once . . . striking-looking girl . . . tall, you know . . . father was a banker.

Basil Really.

The Major Don't remember the name of the bank.

Basil Never mind.

The Major . . . I must have been rather keen on her, because I took her to see . . . India!

Basil **India?**

The Major At the Oval . . . fine match, marvellous finish . . . now, Surrey had to get thirty-three in about half an hour . . . she went off to powder her . . . powder her hands or something . . . women . . . er . . . never came back.

Basil What a shame.

The Major And the strange thing was . . . throughout the morning she kept referring to the Indians as niggers. 'No no no,' I said, 'the niggers are the **West** Indians. These people are wogs.' 'No, no,' she said. '**All** cricketers are niggers.'

Basil They do get awfully confused, don't they? They're not thinkers. I see it with Sybil every day.

The Major . . . I do wish I could remember her name. She's still got my wallet.

Basil As I was saying, no capacity for logical thought.

The Major Who?

Basil Women.

The Major Oh yes, yes . . . I thought you meant Indians.

Basil No, no, no, no . . . wasn't it Oscar Wilde who said. 'They have minds like Swiss cheese?'

The Major What do you mean – hard?

Basil No, no – full of holes.

The Major Really? . . . Indians?

Basil No, **women!**

The Major Oh.

Polly comes in and bends down behind Basil looking for something.

Basil Yes, can we help you?

Polly Hello.

Basil You see. Three years at college and she doesn't know the time of day.

The Major It's . . . er . . . about two minutes to six.

Basil *(to Polly)* What are you looking for?

Polly My German book.

Basil *(to the Major)* We've got some Germans arriving tomorrow morning, Major, so Polly's brushing up another one of her languages.

The Major Germans! Coming here?

Basil Just for a couple of days, Major.

The Major . . . I don't much care for Germans . . .

Basil I know what you mean, but . . .

The Major Bunch of Krauts, that's what they are, all of 'em. Bad eggs!

Basil Yes, well, forgive and forget, Major . . . God knows how, the bastards. Still, I'd better put the moose up.

The Major You've got to love 'em, though, I suppose, haven't you?

Basil . . . Germans?

The Major No, no – **women**! Hate **Germans** . . . love women.

Polly *(rising from behind the desk)* What about German women?

The Major Good card players . . . but mind, I wouldn't give them the time of day . . . *(he wanders off, mumbling)*

Polly *(showing Basil her phrase book)* Found it.

Basil I don't know what you're bothering with that for.

Polly Well, they said some of them don't speak English.

Basil Well, that's their problem, isn't it. *(Polly exits)* I don't know why she's got to complicate everything. *(he goes into the office and picks the moose up; affectionately)* Got her cardy, did you? Hmmmmm . . .

He comes back into the lobby and climbs with the moose onto a chair by the wall where he intends it to hang. The Major emerges from the bar looking at his watch.

The Major By jove, it's nearly six o'clock, Fawlty!

Basil Is it?

The Major Yes, well, when you're ready I might have a . . . er . . . fruit juice or something.

Basil I'll open up the moment I've done this, Major.

The Major No immediate hurry . . . *(potters back into bar)*

Basil Drunken old sod. *(holds the moose head against the wall and is trying to make a pencil mark when the phone rings)* Polly! . . . Polly!! . . . Manuel!!! *(sighs heavily and gets down, carrying the moose head with him; he puts it on the desk and answers the phone)* Yes, Fawlty Towers, yes, hello? . . . *(it is evidently Sybil)* I was just doing it, you

stupid woman! I just put it down to come here to be reminded by you to do what I'm already doing! I mean, what's the point of reminding me to do what I'm already doing . . . I mean, **what is the bloody point??!** I'm **doing** it, aren't I?! . . . Yes, I picked it up, yes. No, I haven't had a chance yet, I've been at it solidly ever since I got back . . . Yes, I will, yes. No, I haven't yet but I will, yes. I know it is, yes. I'll try and get it cleared up. Anything else? I mean, would you like the hotel moved a bit to the left, or . . . yes, well, enjoy the operation, dear. Let's hope nothing goes wrong. *(puts the phone down)* I wish it was an ingrowing tongue.

Manuel comes in beaming from the kitchen.

Manuel Yes?

Basil Oh, it's the Admirable Crichton. Well?

Manuel You called, sir.

Basil Last week, but not to worry.

Manuel *Qué?*

Basil Oh, Buddah . . . Look, go and get me a hammer.

Manuel Er . . . *cómo?*

Basil Hammer.

A pause while Manuel thinks this out.

Manuel Oh, hammer sandwich.

Basil Oh, do I have to go through this every time? Look, a **hammer**!

Manuel My hamster?

Basil No, not your hamster! How can I knock a nail in with your hamster? Well, I could try – no, it doesn't matter, I'll get it, you come here and tidy, you know, tidy.

Manuel Tidy, *si.*

Basil *(striding towards kitchen)* I get hhhammmmmer and hhhit you on the hhhead with it. Hhhard . . .

He vanishes. Manuel stands behind the desk and practises his English.

Manuel Hhhhammer. How are you, sir? You see, I speak English well, I learn it from a book. Hhhello. I am English. Hhhello. *(he leans down behind the desk; the Major comes in from the bar – he can hear Manuel but can only see the moose)* How are you, sir. I can speak

English. *(Manuel stands up momentarily just as the Major turns away)* Hello, Major. How are you today?

The Major *(turns, but Manuel has disappeared again)* Er . . . er . . . er . . . I'm fine, thank you.

Manuel's voice Is a beautiful day today.

The Major *(peering closely at the moose)* Er . . . is it? Yes, yes, I suppose it is . . .

Manuel's voice I can speak English. I learn it from a book.

The Major Did you? Did you really? *(Basil comes back with a hammer)* Ah! There you are, Fawlty.

Basil Yes, I'm just going to open up, Major. *(he picks up the moose and places it on the chair)*

The Major Oh, fine . . . I say, that's a remarkable animal, Fawlty . . . where did you get it?

Basil Samsons, in the town.

The Major Really? Was . . . was it expensive?

Basil Er, twelve pounds, I think. *(starts hammering the nail)*

The Major Good Lord! . . . Japanese, was it?

Basil . . . Canadian, I think, Major.

The Major *(goes off towards bar, shaking his head)* I didn't know the Canadians were as clever as that.

Basil *(staring after the Major)* He's started early. *(he gets down from the chair as Polly comes in and places a vase of flowers on the desk)* Polly? What's that smell?

Polly Flowers. I've just got them from the garden.

Basil Well, what are you stinking the place out with those for? What's happened to the plastic ones?

Polly . . . Being ironed.

Basil picks up the moose and is about to re-mount the chair when the telephone rings.

Basil Oh, will you answer that please? I'm trying to put this up.

Polly Fawlty Towers . . . Oh, hello, Mrs Fawlty.

Basil I'm **doing** it! I'm doing it now! Tell her! **I'm doing it now**!

Polly He says he's doing it now. How's the nail?

Basil I wish it was this one! *(he hangs the moose on the nail)* There, tell the Tyrant Queen that her cardies are safe for ever. Mr Moose is up. It's done, done, done.

Polly It's up. *(the moose falls off the wall on to Basil's head)* It's down again. *(to Basil)* Did you use a wall plug?

Basil Give it to me, give it to me.

He rushes for the phone, falling over Manuel who is still messing about out of sight behind the desk.

Polly *(to phone)* No, he just fell over Manuel . . . and he seems to have got himself jammed under the swivel chair . . . and the flowers have just fallen on him . . . no, everything else is fine.

Next morning; in reception. Basil is replacing the moose. Manuel is in attendance.

Manuel Is up. Good. Up. Very good.

Basil Right, good. *(one antler sags)* Well, what is it? . . . Right! Well go on, get back to work! *(to himself)* Twelve pounds . . .

Manuel goes into the kitchen. Mr and Mrs Sharp come in through the main doors.

Basil Good morning.

Mr Sharp Good morning.

Basil You know there's a fire drill in a few minutes, do you?

Mr Sharp No, we didn't.

Basil You hadn't read the notice.

Mr Sharp . . . No.

Basil Right, well, when you hear the bell, if you'd be so kind as to get out for a few moments, we have to clear the building. Thank you so much.

Mr Sharp Oh.

As the Sharps exit Polly comes out from the dining room.

Polly Mr Fawlty, you know it's nearly twelve?

Basil Yes?

Polly Well, the fire drill . . .

Basil Yes, I haven't forgotten, you know, I've just told somebody – I can cope. I mean, you know what you're doing, do you?

Polly Help get the people out of the bedrooms upstairs.

Basil While learning two oriental languages, yes.

Polly Mr Fawlty?

Basil Yes?

Polly Who else is doing the upstairs?

Basil Only you. It doesn't take a moment.

Polly Yes, but I'm only here at mealtimes.

Basil So?

Polly Well, what happens if there's a fire when I'm not here, who does the upstairs then?

Basil . . . We'll worry about that when we come to it, shall we? What's the panic? There's always got to be an **argument** about everything. *(the phone rings; he picks it up)* Hallo, Fawlty Towers . . . Oh, what is it **now**, can't you leave me in peace? Yes, we're just going to have it, I hadn't forgotten! Yes, I know, I **know** I need the key, it's on top of the . . . *(but it isn't)* Well, **where** is it? . . . Well, what d'you put it in there for, nobody's going to steal it, are they? . . . Yes, I know that **you** know, but **I** don't, do I . . . Yes, I do now, thank you so much . . . *(puts the receiver down and goes into the office)* . . . Why has she got to complicate everything – I put something down, I know where it is, so she has to come along and move the damned thing so that I can't find it . . . *(he opens the safe and the burglar alarm goes off)* Well, what's she put **that** on for? Oh, I might have guessed . . . *(he goes into the lobby; the Major has come in)* Sorry, sorry, Major, only the burglar alarm. *(he turns off the bell)*

The Major What?

Basil *(to Miss Tibbs, who has come in with Miss Gatsby)* Sorry, Miss Tibbs!

Miss Tibbs What?

Basil That was the burglar alarm, the fire drill's not for a couple of minutes. *(to a large woman who has come into the lobby)* Sorry – excuse me!

The Major Burglars, Fawlty?

Basil No, no burglars. My wife left the . . . er . . . *(to the large woman)* Excuse me!

Large woman Yes?

Basil That wasn't the fire bell, sorry, that was just the . . . er . . .

Large woman I thought there was a drill?

Basil Yes, there is. At twelve o'clock, but not yet.

Large woman But it is twelve o'clock.

Basil Not quite, thank you. *(to the Sharps who are just going out)* Excuse me!

Mrs Sharp Yes?

Large woman Well, I make it twelve o'clock.

Basil I'm afraid that wasn't . . .
Large woman *(to the Major)* What time do you make it?
Basil Look!
The Major Burglars about, I think.
Basil It doesn't **matter** what time he makes it – it hasn't started yet.
Mrs Sharp What?
Basil It hasn't started yet!
Mrs Sharp But that was the bell, wasn't it?
Basil No!
Large woman *(to Mrs Sharp)* He means the **drill** hasn't started yet.
Mr Sharp What drill? We didn't hear a drill.
Basil No, no, look, that was the burglar alarm.
The Major See!
Large woman The burglar alarm?
Basil Yes.
Large woman Are there burglars?
The Major Evidently.
Basil Look! What's the matter with you all? It's perfectly simple. We have the fire drill when I ring the fire bell. **That wasn't the fire bell.** Right?
Mr Sharp Well, how are we supposed to know it wasn't the fire bell?
Basil Because it doesn't **sound** like the fire bell!
All It did.
Basil It didn't!
All It did.
Basil No it didn't! The fire bell is different . . . it's a semitone higher.
Large woman A **semitone?**
Basil At least. Anyway the fire drill doesn't start till twelve o'clock.
Mr Sharp It **is** twelve o'clock.
Basil . . . Well, it is now, but that's because we've been standing round arguing about it!
Large woman Look, how on earth can you expect us to tell which bell is which? We haven't heard them, have we?
Basil You want to hear them? Right! Suits me. Here's the burglar alarm. *(switches it on)*
The Major Oughtn't we to catch them first?
Basil There **aren't** any.
The Major Well, why does the alarm keep going?

Basil All right! Got that? Right! *(he turns it off)*
Large woman What's happening now?
Basil Now here's the fire bell, right? It's a completely different sound. Listen!

The fire bell rings; it is indeed a semitone higher. The guests start to leave.

Basil Well, where are you going?
Large woman Well, there is a fire drill, isn't there?
Basil No, no, no! This is just so that you can hear the bell so you know what it's like when I do ring it in a moment! **What are you doing**! Will you come **back**!
Miss Tibbs We're going outside!
Basil Not yet! Just listen to it, you old fool!
Miss Tibbs *(affronted)* What?
Basil Listen, just listen to it!!
Manuel *(comes running out of the kitchen)* Fire! Fire! Everybody out, please. Fire!
Basil No, no!
Manuel Please now out! Out!
Basil Shut up!
Manuel Is fire!
Basil Is not fire! Is only bell!

Polly runs out from the kitchen and starts to go upstairs.

Basil *(to Polly)* Where are you going?
Polly Upstairs to tell the . . .
Basil There isn't a drill yet! I'm just showing them what the bell sounds like!! Now will you go in there, go help Chef.
Manuel Chef not here.
Basil Go and . . . start the chips.
Manuel Chips.
Basil Yes. When bell go again . . . stay!
Manuel What?
Basil No fire, only practice . . . tell him, Polly. *(Manuel is despatched back to the kitchen)* Thank you, thank you so much, ladies and gentlemen, thank you.
The Major Perhaps they're upstairs, Fawlty.
Large woman What is happening now?
Basil *(switching off the fire bell)* Now . . . *(the phone rings; he grabs it)* We're having it!!! *(slams the phone down)* Now,

are we all agreed on what the fire bell sounds like? Splendid. Well, now that's settled we'll have the fire drill which will commence in exactly thirty seconds from now. Thank you so much. *(nobody moves)* Well, what are you doing? . . . I mean, are you just going to stand there?

Mr Sharp What do you suggest?

Basil Well, couldn't one or two of you go in the bar, and a few in the dining room . . . I mean, use your imagination?

Large woman Why?

Basil Well, this is supposed to be a fire drill!

Mr Sharp But there's only a few seconds.

Basil Right, right!! Just stay where you are, because obviously if there was a fire you'd all be standing down here like this in the lobby, wouldn't you? . . . I don't know why we bother, we should let you all burn . . .

Meanwhile in the kitchen, Manuel sets the chip pan alight. In trying to beat it out he sets fire to his oven gloves, and then spreads the fire around the kitchen.

Manuel Oh, no . . . no . . . please . . . Mr Fawlty! . . . *fuego, fuego, fuego!* . . .

Back in the lobby, the fire bell goes off again; the guests are leaving in an orderly fashion.

Basil No, there **weren't** any, Major, it went off by accident.

Miss Tibbs Come on, Angina.

Miss Gatsby Thank you, thank you so much.

Manuel *(erupting from the kitchen)* Fire! Fire! Fire! Fire!

Basil No! No!

Manuel *Si! Si!*

Basil Look, will you get back in there! *(throws Manuel into the kitchen and slams the door; Manuel screams and rushes out again)* Shut up – just get on with your work!

Manuel Mr Fawlty! Is fire!

Basil Did you hear what I said?

Manuel No, no, but is fire!

Basil *(shouting)* Is no fire! Is only bell!

Manuel Is fire, is fire, is fire!!

Basil pushes him back in the kitchen. Polly comes running down the stairs.

Basil Will you get back in there and stop that!
Manuel *(screaming)* Is fire! Aaaaaaaaaagh!
Basil *(locking the kitchen door)* He thinks there's a fire.
Polly Everybody's out upstairs.

Manuel is still howling.

Polly *(calling through door)* Manuel! Listen. Listen! *De nada, de nada,* **there is no fire!!** *(goes behind reception desk)*
Manuel's voice Is fire! Is fire!
Basil *(switching off the alarm)* Well, that'll keep the fire department happy for another six months. Why do we bother . . . *(to Manuel)* Will you shut up! *(he goes outside and speaks to the guests)* Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, you can come back in now.

He comes back into the lobby. Polly is on the telephone; the noise from Manuel is terrific.

Polly Yes, yes, yes . . . yes, we've just had it.
Basil Oh, shut up!
Polly Yes, I will, all right. Goodbye. *(replaces receiver; to Basil)* Have you told Chef about the cheddar?
Large woman Mr Fawlty, Mr Fawlty.
Basil Yes?
Large woman There's an awful row in there!
Basil Yes, I know, it's only . . . right, right, I'll deal with it, thank you so much for poking your nose in . . . *(he unlocks the kitchen door; Manuel staggers out clutching a frying-pan)* Now look! I've had enough of this. If you go on I'm . . . *(he sees the fire)* Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen – could I have everyone in the lobby?

The guests all return complaining and grumbling.

Basil Sorry . . . sorry . . . sorry to disturb you all like this, but . . . there is something I think I ought to mention. I'm . . . I'm not quite sure how this happened . . . this has not happened at this hotel before, and I'm not quite sure how it's started now . . . er . . .
Large woman What is it?
Basil Well . . . the point is . . . er . . . can I put it this way . . . fire!
Large woman What?
Basil F-f-f-f-f-f-f-fire!

Mrs Sharp Fire?
Mr Sharp Where?
Basil Fire! . . . Fire!!! Fire!!! Fire!!!

The guests move yet again towards the main doors. Polly has appeared.

Basil What do we do, what do we do? *(he rushes to the phone, to call Sybil)*
Polly Ring the alarm! *(she rushes out after the guests)*
Basil Ring the alarm . . . right! Right! . . . Where's the key? Where is the key? Would you believe it – I mean, would you believe it – the first time we've ever had a fire in this hotel and somebody's lost the key, I mean, isn't that typical of this place . . . *(shaking his fist at the ceiling)* Oh thank you, God, thank you so bloody much!
Polly *(racing back in)* Smash the glass!
Basil What?
Polly Smash the glass!

Basil hits the alarm with his fist and injures himself. He throws the typewriter at the glass – it misses. The phone rings; he snatches the receiver.

Basil Hello! *(uses the receiver to smash the glass and start the bell; to phone)* Thank you, thank you! *(drops phone and gets the fire extinguisher; he starts reading the instructions)* Quick! Manuel . . . pull it, man . . . pull it, man, pull it . . . open the door . . .

He sets the extinguisher off – it squirts in his face. Blinded, he drops it and doubles over. Polly rescues it and drags it into the kitchen. Basil stands up and bangs his head on Manuel's frying pan. He staggers, grabs Manuel and tries to throw a punch at him, but reels backwards and passes out on the floor.

In the hospital. Basil is lying in bed, a white turban-like bandage round his head. He regains consciousness with a series of strange expressions. He turns his head and sees Sybil sitting in a wheel-chair.

Sybil Well, thank you for coming to see me.
Basil *(very slurred)* Oh not at all, I was just . . . er . . .
Sybil How are you feeling?

Basil . . . The fire!

Sybil It's all . . .

Basil The fire!!

Sybil It's out. There's not much damage . . .

Basil Oh my God, where is it, what have they . . . *(gets out of bed)*

Sybil Basil, what are you doing?

Basil Got to get back, got to get back . . .

Sybil Basil! Will you get back into bed!

Basil Tch! Caw! What is it now?

Sybil I'm going to call someone if you don't get back into bed. Come on!

Basil Listen, Sybil, please! I'll handle this if you don't mind. Now . . . what sort of a room do you want?

Sybil Basil!

Basil Oh, there you are . . . look, I can't stand round chattering all day, I've got to get back . . .

Sybil Basil, you are not well. The doctor says you've got concussion. You must rest.

Basil I'll rest when I get to the hotel.

Sybil I've just spoken to Polly, they are managing perfectly well.

Basil . . . I mean, do you know what that fire extinguisher did? It exploded in my face! I mean, what is the **point** of a fire extinguisher? It sits there for months, and when you actually have a fire, when you actually **need** the bloody thing . . . it blows your head off!! I mean, what is happening to this country?! It's **Bloody Wilson**!!!

Sister enters briskly.

Sister . . . My my, what a lot of noise. Now, what are you doing out of your bed?

Basil Going home, thank you so much.

Sister Yes, well, we'll let the doctor decide that now, shall we? *(she guides the protesting Basil back to bed)*

Basil No, let's not.

Sister Now, come along, back into bed. *(she pushes his legs under the bedclothes)*

Basil Don't touch me, I don't know where you've been.

Sister Yes, we must have our little jokes, mustn't we?

1a Basil examines the collateral for Lord Melbury's loan

1b Basil enquires about O'Reilly's health

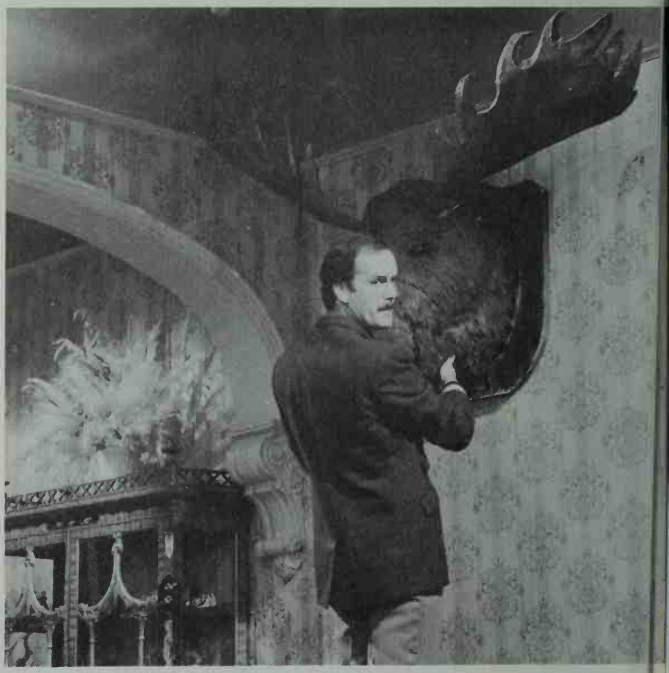
2a Basil outlines the morning's work

2b Sybil takes a critical line

3a Polly tells Basil that the chef is indisposed

3b Basil goes to the heart of the problem

4a Basil reminds Sister that Sybil's foot is on the end of her leg



4b He prepares the moose

5a He accidentally mentions the war

5b Basil wishes Manuel goodnight

6a Basil does some expert fawning

6b Basil is concerned about a hinge

7a Mrs Richards checks her change

7b Basil and Manuel embark on a tricky undertaking

8 Polly impersonates a nest of vipers

Basil Yes, we must, mustn't we . . . *(stares at her)* My God, you're ugly, aren't you.

Sybil Basil!

Sister I'll get the doctor. *(she hurries out)*

Basil *(calling after her)* You need a plastic surgeon, dear, not a doctor!

Sybil How dare you talk to Sister like that! . . . Get back into bed!

Basil *(getting out of bed again)* You do not seem to realize that I am needed at the hotel.

Sybil No you're **not.** It's running beautifully without you.

Basil Polly cannot cope!

Sybil Well, she can't fall over waiters, or get herself jammed under desks, or start burglar alarms, or lock people in burning rooms, or fire fire extinguishers straight in her own face. But I should think the hotel can do without that sort of coping for a couple of days, what do you think, Basil . . . hmmm?

The doctor comes in.

Doctor What?

Basil Oh, hello, doctor.

Doctor Out of bed, Mr Fawlty?

Basil Sort of . . . *(points vaguely at his slippers on the floor)* Ah! There they are, good! Well, better get back into bed . . . feel a little bit woozy.

Doctor You will for a time, Mr Fawlty, you will.

Basil Yes, quite, quite . . .

Doctor *(gently manipulating Basil's head to make him sleepy)* You should get as much rest as you can . . . as much rest as you can . . . as much rest as you can . . .

Basil Yes . . . absolutely . . . I, er . . . I . . .

His eyes close. Sybil and the doctor leave the room and close the door gently. A pause; then Basil opens one eye and looks around furtively . . .

The hotel reception. Polly is finishing a phone call. As she puts the receiver down, a guest approaches the desk, clicks his heels, and bows.

1st German *Gnädiges Fräulein, können sie mir sagen, wann das Mittagessen serviert wird, bitte?*

Polly *Um ein Uhr, fünf Minuten.*
1st German *Vielen dank.*
Polly *Bitte schön.*

Polly goes into the kitchen. The German retires upstairs. Misses Tibbs and Gatsby come down the stairs as Basil enters through the main doors, dressed but still bandaged.

Basil *(masterfully)* Manuel!
Miss Tibbs Oh, Mr Fawlty!
Basil Ah, good evening.
Miss Tibbs Are you all right now?
Basil Perfectly, thank you. *(handing Manuel, who has just come in, his case)* Take this to the room please, dear.

Manuel takes it, somewhat taken aback.

Miss Gatsby Are you sure you're all right?
Basil Perfectly, thank you. Right as rain.

He makes his way a little unsteadily towards the desk, but misses. He reappears, and takes up his position behind the desk.

Manuel You OK?
Basil Fine, thank you, dear. You go and have a lie down.
Manuel *Qué?*
Basil Ah, there you are. Would you take my case . . . how did you get that?
Manuel What?
Basil Oh never mind . . . take it . . . take it upstairs!
Manuel *Qué?*
Basil Take it . . . take it . . .
Manuel I go get Polly.
Basil I've already had one. Take it, take it now . . . *(Manuel hurries off)* Tch! The people I have to deal with . . .

He looks up to see a couple approaching the desk. He beams at them.

Elderly German *Sprechen Sie Deutsch?*
Basil . . . Beg your pardon?
Elderly German *Entschuldigen Sie, bitte, können Sie Deutsch sprechen?*
Basil . . . I'm sorry, could you say that again?

German lady You speak German?
Basil Oh, **German**! I'm sorry, I thought there was something wrong with you. Of course, the Germans!
German lady You speak German?
Basil Well . . . er . . . a little . . . I get by.
German lady *Ein bisschen.*
Elderly German *Ah – wir wollen ein Auto mieten.*
Basil *(nodding helpfully)* Well, why not?
Elderly German *Bitte.*
Basil Yes, a little bit tricky. . . . Would you mind saying it again?
German lady Please?
Basil Could you repeat . . . amplify . . . you know, reiterate? Yes? Yes?
Elderly German *Wir . . .*
Basil *Wir? . . .* Yes, well we'll come back to that.
Elderly German . . . *Wollen . . .*
Basil *(to himself)* Vollen . . . Voluntary?
Elderly German *Ein Auto mieten.*
Basil Owtoe . . . out to . . . Oh, I see! You're volunteering to go out to get some meat. Not necessary! **We have meat here!** *(pause; the couple are puzzled)* We haf meat hier . . . in ze buildink!! *(he mimes a cow's horns)* Moo! *(Polly comes in)* Ah, Polly, just explaining about the meat.
Polly Oh! We weren't expecting you.
Basil Oh, weren't you? *(hissing through his teeth)* They're Germans. Don't mention the war.
Polly I see. Well, Mrs Fawlty said you were going to have a rest for a couple of days, you know, in the hospital.
Basil *(firmly)* Idle hands get in the way of the devil's work, Fawlty. Now . . .
Polly Right, well why don't you have a lie-down, and I can deal with this.
Basil Yes, yes, good idea, good idea, Elsie. Yes. Bit of a headache, actually . . .
Miss Tibbs We don't think you're well, Mr Fawlty.
Basil Well, perhaps not, but I'll live longer than you.
Miss Gatsby You must have hurt yourself.
Basil My dear woman, a blow on the head like that . . . is worth two in the bush.
Miss Tibbs Oh, we know . . . but it was a nasty knock.

Basil Mmmmmmmm . . . would you like one? *(hits the reception bell impressively)* Next, please.

Two men and two women come down the stairs.

Basil *(a hoarse whisper)* Polly! Polly! Are these Germans too?

Polly Oh yes, but I can deal . . .

Basil Right, right, here's the plan. I'll stand there and ask them if they want something to drink before the war . . . before their lunch . . . **don't mention the war!** *(he moves in front of the guests, bows, and mimes eating and drinking)*

2nd German Can we help you?

Basil *(gives a startled jump)* Ah . . . you speak English.

2nd German Of course.

Basil Ah, wonderful. *Wounderbar!* Ah – please allow me to introduce myself – I am the owner of Fawlty Towers, and may I welcome your war, your wall, you wall, **you all** . . . and hope that your stay will be a happy one. Now would you like to eat first, or would you like a drink before the war. . .ning that, er, trespassers will be – er, er – tied up with piano wire. . . . Sorry! Sorry! *(clutches his thigh)* Bit of trouble with the old leg . . . got a touch of shrapnel in the war . . . **Korean**, Korean war, sorry, Korean.

2nd German Thank you, we will eat now.

Basil bows gracefully and ushers them into the dining room.

Basil Oh good, please do allow me. May I say how pleased we are to have some Europeans here now that we are on the Continent . . .

They all go into the dining room. Polly meanwhile is on the phone.

Polly Can I speak to Doctor Fin please?

In the dining room, Basil is taking the orders.

Basil I didn't vote for it myself, quite honestly, but now that we're in I'm determined to make it work, so I'd like to welcome you all to Britain. The plaice is grilled, but that doesn't matter, there's life in the old thing yet. . . . No, wait a minute, I got a bit confused there. Oh yes, the plaice is grilled . . . in fact the whole room's a bit

warm, isn't it . . . I'll open a window, have a look. . . . And the veal chop is done with rosemary . . . that's funny, I thought she'd gone to Canada . . . and is delicious and nutritious . . . in fact it's **veally** good . . . **veally** good?

2nd German The veal is good?

Basil Yes, doesn't matter, doesn't matter, never mind.

1st German May we have two eggs mayonnaise, please?

Basil Certainly, why not, why not indeed? We are all friends now, eh?

2nd German *(heavily)* A prawn cocktail . . .

Basil . . . All in the Market together, old differences forgotten, and no need at all to mention the war . . . Sorry! . . . Sorry, what was that again?

2nd German A prawn cocktail.

Basil Oh, prawn, that was it. When you said **prawn** I thought you said **war**. Oh, the war! Oh yes, completely slipped my mind, yes, I'd forgotten all about it. Hitler, Himmler, and all that lot, oh yes, completely forgotten it, just like that. *(snaps his fingers)* . . . Sorry, what was it again?

2nd German *(with some menace)* A prawn cocktail . . .

Basil Oh yes, Eva Prawn . . . and Goebbels too, he's another one I can hardly remember at all.

1st German And *ein* pickled herring!

Basil Hermann Goering, yes, yes . . . and von Ribbentrop, that was another one.

1st German And four cold meat salads, please.

Basil Certainly, well, I'll just get your *hors d'oeuvres* . . . *hors d'oeuvres* vich must be obeyed at all times without question . . . Sorry! Sorry!

Polly Mr Fawlty, will you please call your wife immediately?

Basil Sybil!! . . . Sybil!! . . . she's in the hospital, you silly girl!

Polly Yes, call her there!

Basil I can't, I've got too much to do. Listen . . . *(he whispers through his teeth)* Don't mention the war . . . I mentioned it once, but I think I got away with it all right . . . *(he returns to his guests)* So it's all forgotten now and let's hear no more about it. So that's two eggs mayonnaise, a prawn Goebbels, a Hermann Goering and four Colditz salads . . . no, wait a moment, I got a

bit confused there, sorry . . . *(one of the German ladies has begun to sob)* I got a bit confused because everyone keeps mentioning the war, so could you . . .

The second German, who is comforting the lady, looks up angrily.

Basil What's the matter?
2nd German It's all right.
Basil Is there something wrong?
2nd German Will you stop talking about the war?
Basil Me? You started it!
2nd German We did not start it.
Basil Yes you did, you invaded Poland . . . here, this'll cheer you up, you'll like this one, there's this woman, she's completely stupid, she can never remember anything, and her husband's in a bomber over Berlin . . . *(the lady howls)* Sorry! Sorry! Here, she'll love this one . . .
2nd German Will you leave her alone?
Basil No, this is a scream, I've never seen anyone not laugh at this!
1st German Go away!
Basil Look, she'll love it – she's German! *(places a finger under his nose preparatory to doing his Hitler impression)*
Polly No, Mr Fawlty!! . . . do Jimmy Cagney instead!
Basil What?
Polly Jimmy Cagney!
Basil Jimmy Cagney?
Polly You know . . . 'You dirty rat . . .'
Basil I can't do Jimmy Cagney!
Polly Please try . . . 'I'm going to get you . . .'
Basil Shut up! Here, watch – who's this, then?

He places his finger across his upper lip and does his Führer party piece. His audience is stunned.

Basil I'll do the funny walk . . .

He performs an exaggerated goose-step out into the lobby, does an about-turn and marches back into the dining room. Both German women are by now in tears, and both men on their feet.

Both Germans Stop it!!
Basil I'm trying to cheer her up, you stupid Kraut!

2nd German It's not funny for her.
Basil **Not funny?** You're joking!
2nd German Not funny for her, not for us, not for any German people.
Basil You have absolutely no sense of humour, do you!
1st German *(shouting)* **This is not funny!**
Basil **Who won the bloody war, anyway?**

The doctor comes in with a hypodermic needle ready.

Doctor Mr Fawlty, you'll be all right – come with me.
Basil Fine.

Suddenly Basil dashes off through the kitchen, out across into the lobby and into the office. He spots the doctor in pursuit and leaves by the other door into reception. He meets Manuel under the moose's head and thumps him firmly on the head. Manuel sinks to his knees. The moose's head falls off the wall; Basil is knocked cold. The moose's head lands on Manuel. The Major, entering from the bar, is intrigued.

Manuel *(speaking through the moose's nose)* Oooooh, he hit me on the head . . .
The Major *(slapping the moose's nose)* No, you hit **him** on the head. You **naughty** moose!
2nd German *(sadly)* However did they win?

COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

Basil Fawlty John Cleese
Sybil Fawlty Prunella Scales
Polly Connie Booth
Manuel Andrew Sachs
Mr Yardley Mervyn Pascoe
Mr Thurston Robert Lankesheer
Mrs Richards Joan Sanderson
Mr Firkins Johnny Shannon
Major Gowen Ballard Berkeley
Miss Tibbs Gilly Flower
Miss Gatsby Renée Roberts
Terry Brian Hall
Mr Mackintosh Bill Bradley
Mr Kerr George Lee

irst of second series, first broadcast on 19 February 1979, BBC2.

The hotel lobby. Things are busy; Sybil and Polly are dealing with guests; Basil is finishing a phone call. He goes into the office. Mr Mackintosh comes to the reception desk.

Mackintosh *(to Polly)* Number seventeen, please.

Sybil *(to her guest)* Goodbye. Thank you so much. *(he moves off; the phone rings and Sybil answers it)* Hallo, Fawlty Towers . . . Oh, hallo, Mr Hawkins . . .

Polly *(giving Mackintosh his key)* I've arranged your car for two this afternoon, then . . .

Mackintosh Thank you. *(he moves off)*

Sybil *(to phone)* Well, you did say today, Mr Hawkins.

Polly *(to Mr Yardley, who has approached the desk)* Sorry to keep you.

Yardley That's all right. You do accept cheques?

Polly With a banker's card, yes.

Sybil *(to phone)* Well we'll have to cancel the order, then . . . yes. No, no, five o'clock will be fine. *(she rings off)* Oh, Polly . . . Brenda can't start till Monday so would you mind doing the rooms till then?

Polly Oh, no, I could do with the money.

Sybil Oh, good. *(she goes into the office)*

Polly *(checking Yardley's cheque)* There you are . . . thank you, Mr Yardley.

Yardley moves off. Mr Thurston approaches Polly. Mrs Richards comes in through the main door, followed by a taxi driver carrying her case.

Polly *(to Thurston)* Oh, hello . . . can I help you?

Mrs Richards Girl! Would you give me change for this, please.

Polly In one moment – I'm just dealing with this gentleman. Yes, Mr Thurston?

Mrs Richards What?

Thurston Thank you. I was wondering if you could . . .

Mrs Richards I need change for this.

Polly In a moment – I'm dealing with this gentleman.

Mrs Richards But I have a taxi driver waiting. Surely this gentleman wouldn't mind if you just gave me change.

Polly *(to Thurston)* Do you?

Thurston No, no, go ahead.

Polly *(giving Mrs Richards her change)* There you are.

Thurston Can you tell me how to get to Glendower Street . . .

Mrs Richards has paid the driver, who exits. She turns back to Polly.

Mrs Richards Now, I've booked a room and bath with a sea view for three nights . . .

Polly *(to Thurston)* Glendower Street? *(gets a map)*

Thurston Yes.

Mrs Richards You haven't finished with me.

Polly Mrs? . . .

Mrs Richards Mrs Richards. Mrs Alice Richards.

Polly Mrs Richards, Mr Thurston. Mr Thurston, Mrs Richards. *(Mrs Richards, slightly thrown, looks at Mr Thurston)* Mr Thurston is the gentleman I'm attending to at the moment.

Mrs Richards What?

Polly *(loudly)* Mr Thurston is the gentleman I'm attending to . . .

Mrs Richards Don't shout, I'm not deaf.

Polly Mr Thurston was here before **you**, Mrs Richards.

Mrs Richards But you were serving **me**.

Polly I gave you change, but I hadn't finished dealing with him. *(to Thurston)* Glendower Street is this one here, just off Chester Street.

Mrs Richards Isn't there anyone else in attendance here? Really, this is the most appalling service I've ever . . .

Polly *(spotting Manuel)* Good idea! Manuel! Could you lend Mrs Richards your assistance in connection with her reservation. *(to Thurston)* Now . . . *(she continues to give Thurston directions)*

Mrs Richards *(to Manuel)* Now, I've reserved a very quiet room, with a bath and a sea view. I specifically asked for a sea view in my written confirmation, so please be sure I have it.

Manuel *Qué?*

Mrs Richards . . . What?

Manuel . . . *Qué?*

Mrs Richards K?

Manuel *Si.*

Mrs Richards C? *(Manuel nods)* KC? *(Manuel looks puzzled)* KC? What are you trying to say?

Manuel No, no – *Qué* – what?

Mrs Richards K – what?

Manuel *Si! Qué* – what?

Mrs Richards C. K. Watt?
Manuel . . . Yes.
Mrs Richards Who is C. K. Watt?
Manuel *Qué?*
Mrs Richards Is it the manager, Mr Watt?
Manuel Oh, manager!
Mrs Richards He **is.**
Manuel Ah . . . Mr Fawlty.
Mrs Richards What?
Manuel Fawlty.
Mrs Richards What are you talking about, you silly little man. *(turns to Polly, Mr Thurston having gone)* What is going on here? I ask him for my room, and he tells me the manager's a Mr Watt and he's aged forty.
Manuel No. No. Fawlty.
Mrs Richards Faulty? What's wrong with him?
Polly It's all right, Mrs Richards. He's from Barcelona.
Mrs Richards The manager's from Barcelona?
Manuel No, no. He's from Swanage.
Polly And you're in twenty-two.
Mrs Richards What?
Polly *(leaning over the desk to get close)* You're in room twenty-two. Manuel, take these cases up to twenty-two, will you.
Manuel *Si.*

He goes upstairs with the cases; Mrs Richards follows. Mr Firkins arrives at the desk as Basil emerges from the office.

Firkins Very nice stay, Mr Fawlty.
Basil Ah, glad you enjoyed it. Polly, would you get Mr Firkins' bill, please. Well, when will we be seeing you again?
Firkins Not for a few weeks.
Basil Oh.
Firkins You . . . you're not by any chance a betting man, Mr Fawlty?
Basil Er . . . *(looks towards the office; then, more quietly)* Well, I used to be.
Firkins Only there's a nice little filly running at Exeter this afternoon.
Basil Really?
Firkins Dragonfly. *(Polly gives him his bill)* Ah.

Basil Dragonfly?

Firkins Yes, it's well worth a flutter . . . but pay the tax on it before . . .

Basil *(seeing Sybil coming out)* Sssssshhhh! . . . Well, I'm delighted you enjoyed your stay.

Firkins Very nice.

Basil Hope to see you again before long.

Firkins *(paying his bill)* There you are.

Basil Thank you.

Firkins 'Bye, Mr Fawlty.

Sybil Goodbye, Mr Firkins.

Basil *(to Sybil)* A satisfied customer. We should have him stuffed.

Firkins *(from the main door)* Oh, Mr Fawlty. Three o'clock Exeter. Dragonfly. Right? *(he leaves)*

Basil . . . Yes. Good luck. Jolly good luck with it. *(he busies himself; Sybil stares at him; the Major wanders up)* Morning, Major.

The Major Morning, Fawlty.

Basil *(catching Sybil's eye)* Yes, dear?

Sybil What was that about the three o'clock at Exeter, Basil?

Basil Oh, some horse he's going to bet on I expect, dear. *(to the Major)* You're looking very spruce today, Major.

The Major St George's Day, old boy.

Basil Really?

The Major Got a horse, have you? What's its name?

Basil Um . . . *(to Sybil)* Did you catch it, dear?

Sybil Dragonfly, Major.

The Major Going to have a flutter, Fawlty?

Basil No-o, no, no . . .

Sybil No, Basil doesn't bet any more, Major, do you, dear?

Basil No dear, I don't. No, that particular avenue of pleasure has been closed off.

Sybil *(quietish)* And we don't want it opened up again, do we, Basil? *(she goes into the office)*

Basil No, you don't dear, no. The Great Warning-Off of May the 8th. Yes. Good old St George, eh, Major?

The Major Hmmm.

Basil He killed a hideous fire-breathing old dragon, didn't he, Polly?

Polly Ran it through with a lance, I believe.

Manuel *(running in)* Mr Fawlty, Mr Fawlty. Is Mrs . . . er,

room, no like . . . she want speak to you, is problem.

Basil *(moving off)* Ever see my wife making toast, Polly? *(he mimes breathing on both sides of a slice of bread)*

The Major Why did he kill it, anyway, Fawlty?

Basil I don't know, Major. Better than marrying it. *(he follows Manuel upstairs)*

The Major Marrying it? But he didn't have to kill it though, did he? I mean, he could have just not turned up at the church.

Upstairs, Basil follows Manuel at a good pace towards Mrs Richards' room. They go in.

Basil Good morning, madam – can I help you?

Mrs Richards Are you the manager?

Basil I am the **owner**, madam.

Mrs Richards What?

Basil I am the owner.

Mrs Richards I want to speak to the manager.

Basil I am the manager too.

Mrs Richards What?

Basil I am the manager as well.

Manuel Manaher! Him manaher!

Basil Shut up!

Mrs Richards Oh . . . you're Watt.

Basil . . . I'm the **manager**.

Mrs Richards Watt?

Basil I'm . . . the . . . manager.

Mrs Richards Yes, I know, you've just told me, what's the matter with you? Now listen to me. I've booked a room with a **bath**. When I book a room with a bath I expect to **get** a bath.

Basil You've **got** a bath.

Mrs Richards I'm not paying seven pounds twenty pence per night plus VAT for a room without a bath.

Basil *(opening the bathroom door)* **There** is your bath.

Mrs Richards You call **that** a bath? It's not big enough to drown a mouse. It's disgraceful. *(she moves away to the window)*

Basil *(muttering)* I wish you were a mouse, I'd show you.

Mrs Richards *(at the window, which has a nice view)* And another thing – I asked for a room with a view.

Basil *(to himself)* Deaf, mad and blind. *(goes to window)* This is the view as far as I can remember, madam. Yes, this is it.

Mrs Richards When I pay for a view I expect something more interesting than that.

Basil That is Torquay, madam.

Mrs Richards Well, it's not good enough.

Basil Well . . . may I ask what you were hoping to see out of a Torquay hotel bedroom window? Sydney Opera House perhaps? The Hanging Gardens of Babylon? Herds of wildebeeste sweeping majestically . . .

Mrs Richards Don't be silly. I expect to be able to see the sea.

Basil You **can** see the sea. It's over there between the land and the sky.

Mrs Richards I'd need a telescope to see that.

Basil Well, may I suggest you consider moving to a hotel closer to the sea. Or preferably **in** it.

Mrs Richards Now listen to me; I'm not satisfied, but I have decided to stay here. However, I shall expect a reduction.

Basil Why, because Krakatoa's not erupting at the moment?

Mrs Richards Because the room is cold, the bath is too small, the view is invisible and the radio doesn't work.

Basil No, the radio works. You don't.

Mrs Richards What?

Basil I'll see if I can fix it, you scabby old bat. *(he turns the radio on loudly. Manuel puts his fingers in his ears; Basil turns the radio off)* I think we got something then.

Mrs Richards What?

Basil I think we got something then.

Mrs Richards *(to Manuel, who still has his fingers in his ears)* What are you doing?

Manuel *(loudly) Qué?*

Basil Madam . . . don't think me rude, but may I ask . . . do you by any chance have a hearing aid?

Mrs Richards A **what?**

Basil A hearing aid!!!

Mrs Richards Yes, I do have a hearing aid.

Basil Would you like me to get it mended?

Mrs Richards Mended? It's working perfectly all right.

Basil No, it isn't.

Mrs Richards I haven't got it turned on at the moment.

Basil Why not?

Mrs Richards The battery runs down. Now what sort of a reduction are you going to give me on this room?

Basil *(whispering)* Sixty per cent if you turn that on.

Mrs Richards What?

Basil *(loudly)* My wife handles all such matters, I'm sure she will be delighted to discuss it with you.

Mrs Richards I shall speak to her after lunch.

Basil You heard that all right, didn't you.

Mrs Richards What?

Basil Thank you so much. Lunch will be served at half past twelve.

He sweeps out of the room with Manuel just ahead of him. In the corridor he catches Manuel up.

Basil Manuel! Manuel!

Manuel *Si.*

Basil Are you going to the betting shop today?

Manuel What?

Basil Oh, don't you start. You go betting shop. Today?

Manuel Oh, vetting shop. *Si, si.*

Basil Yes. Now put this *(gives Manuel a fiver)* on this little horse – Dragonfly *(writes it on the back of Manuel's hand)* . . . but big secret. Sybil no know . . .

The lobby, about 6 p.m. that evening. Sybil is on the phone at the reception desk; she is discussing a wig on a plastic display head.

Sybil No, no, it's lovely, it's just a bit buttery with my skin. I think I need something more topazy, for my colouring, you know, more tonal . . . Have you got *Cosmopolitan* there? . . . well on page 42 . . . you see Burt Reynolds . . . well there's a girl standing behind him looking at James Caan . . . that sort of colour . . . mmm . . . lovely, all right. *(she rings off and looks into the office where Polly is adding up bills)* Polly, I've got to check the laundry, could you keep an eye on reception for me?

Polly Sure.

Sybil goes off. Manuel comes furtively through the main doors. He dodges Sybil and peeps into the office.

Manuel *(whispering)* Polly . . . Polly . . . where Mr Fawlty?

Polly I don't know. What's the matter?

Manuel *(very agitated)* I have money for him. He win on horse. But Big Secret. Sh! Mrs Fawlty . . . Sh!

Polly Well give it to me, I'll give it to him.

Manuel gives Polly the money. He sees Sybil coming back and dashes fearfully off. Sybil looks into the office and sees Polly who, rather impressed, is counting the money. Sybil, unseen by Polly, looks at this and then goes into the lobby. Misses Tibbs and Gatsby are coming in through the main doors.

Sybil Good afternoon, Miss Gatsby. Good afternoon, Miss Tibbs.

Miss Tibbs Good afternoon.

Miss Gatsby Good afternoon.

They turn towards the stairs, down which comes Mrs Richards in a huff.

Misses Tibbs & Gatsby Good afternoon.

Mrs Richards First they give me a room without a bath, then there's no lavatory paper.

Miss Tibbs Oh.

Miss Gatsby Would you like some of ours?

Mrs Richards bangs the reception bell.

Miss Tibbs We keep an extra supply.

Miss Gatsby Would you like some of ours?

Mrs Richards continues to bang the bell. Misses Tibbs and Gatsby go upstairs.

Mrs Richards Hallo! *(Polly emerges)* Girl. There's no paper in my room. Why don't you check these things? That's what you're being paid for, isn't it?

Polly Well, we don't put it in the rooms.

Mrs Richards What?

Polly We keep it in the lounge.

Mrs Richards In the **lounge?!!**

Polly *(really trying to help)* I'll get you some. Do you want plain or ones with our address on it?

Mrs Richards **Address** on it?!!

Polly How many sheets? *(Mrs Richards looks appalled)* How many are you going to use?

Mrs Richards *(hitting the bell)* Manager!!

Polly Just enough for **one? Tell** me.

Mrs Richards Manager!! Manager!!!

Basil *(apearing from kitchen)* Yes? Testing, testing . . .

Mrs Richards There you are! I've never met such insolence in all my life. I come down here to get some lavatory paper and she starts asking me the most insulting . . . personal . . . **things** I ever heard in my life.

Polly *(to Basil)* I thought she wanted **writing** paper.

Mrs Richards I'm talking to you, Watt.

Basil . . . Watt?

Mrs Richards Are you deaf? I said I'm talking to you. I've never met such insolence in my life. She said people use it in the lounge.

Basil Yes, yes, she thought you . . .

Mrs Richards . . . Then she starts asking me the **most** . . .

Basil No, no, please listen.

Mrs Richards . . . **appalling** questions . . .

Basil . . . Please. I can explain! . . .

Mrs Richards . . . about . . . about . . .

Basil *(actually managing to shout her down)* No, no, look, you see . . . she thought you wanted to **write.**

Mrs Richards Wanted a **fight?** I'll give her a fight all right.

Basil No, no, no, no, wanted to **write.** *(he mimes writing)*

Mrs Richards . . . What?

Basil Wanted to **write.** On the paper.

Mrs Richards . . . Why should I want to **write** on it?

Basil *(giving up)* Oh! I'll have some sent up to your room immediately. Manuel! *(rings the bell)*

Mrs Richards **That** doesn't work either. What were you saying just then?

Basil Oh . . . turn it **on!**

Mrs Richards What?

Basil Turn it . . . *(furious, he writes on a piece of paper)* Turn . . . it . . . on. *(shows it to her)*

Mrs Richards I can't read that. I need my glasses! Where are they? *(they are in fact propped up on her forehead)*

Polly They're on your head, Mrs Richards.

Mrs Richards I've lost them. They're the only pair I've got. I can't read a thing without them.

Basil Excuse me . . .

Mrs Richards Now, I had them this morning when I was buying the vase. I put them on to look at it. And I had them at tea-time . . .

Basil . . . Mrs Richards . . .

Polly . . . Mrs Richards . . .

Basil . . . Mrs Richards . . . *(she looks up; they both point at her glasses)* Your glasses are there.

Mrs Richards *(looks round and sees the dining room)* There?! Well, who put them in there? *(she goes towards the dining room)*

Polly . . . No!

Basil No, no, no, on your head . . . *(Mrs Richards does not hear him)* On your . . . look . . . on . . . **on your head!!!**

Mrs Richards *(stopping and turning)* What?

Basil starts to write again, realizes, throws the paper at her and disappears into the office. Mrs Richards goes on into the dining room. Polly follows Basil into the office.

Polly I'm sorry about that, Mr Fawlty . . . Manuel asked me to give this to you. *(hands him the money)*

Basil Oh!! Thank you, Polly. Er . . . Polly . . . not a word to the dragon, eh?

Polly goes out to the lobby; Manuel is there.

Polly Manuel, get some loo paper, *muchos*, for twenty-two.

Manuel runs off towards the bar. Mrs Richards emerges from the dining room.

Mrs Richards Are you blind? They were on my head all the time. Didn't you see?

Polly Yes.

Mrs Richards Didn't God give you eyes?

Polly Yes, but I don't use them 'cos it wears the batteries out.

Mrs Richards Send my paper up immediately.

Manuel enters from bar carrying a huge stack of loo paper.

Polly Manuel, that's too much.

Manuel You say twenty-two.

Mrs Richards goes upstairs, followed by Manuel. Basil bustles into the kitchen merrily rubbing his hands together. Terry is there, vaguely preparing for the evening's cooking.

Basil Evening, Terry. *(sings a quick bit of* Cav*)* Do you like *Cavallero Rusticana*, Terry?

Terry I never had it, Mr Fawlty.

Basil Never mind. *(he sings another bit, while getting himself a snack)*

Terry You're in a good mood, Mr Fawlty.

Basil Had a little bit of luck on the gee-gees, Terry. Er . . . not a word to the trouble and strife, eh? *(prepares his snack)* De Camptown ladies sing dis song, doo dah, doo dah, the Camptown race track five miles long, doo dah doo dah day. Going to run all night . . . *(Sybil enters)* Going to run all day . . . I'll bet my money on the bob-tail nag . . . *(sees Sybil)* . . . I did it my-y way. Can't stand Frank Sinatra. 'You make me feel so young' . . . rubbish.

Sybil *(suspiciously)* You seem very jolly, Basil.

Basil Hmmm?

Sybil You seem very jolly.

Basil Jolly?

Sybil Yes, jolly. Sort of . . . happy.

Basil Oh, 'happy'. Yes, I remember that. No, not that I noticed, dear. I'll report it if it happens, though.

Sybil *(accusingly)* Well, you look happy to me, Basil.

Basil No I'm not, dear.

Sybil All that dancing about, singing and rubbing your hands.

Basil No, just my way of getting through the day, dear. The Samaritans were engaged.

Sybil I thought maybe you were in love. *(laughs)*

Basil Only with you, light of my life.

Sybil Or had a bit of luck or something . . . *(Basil reacts guiltily; then catches her eye and stares uncomprehendingly; Sybil turns to Terry)* Did Mr Hawkins deliver those tonics, Terry?

Terry Yes he did, Mrs Fawlty.

Sybil goes out into the lobby. Basil dashes into the dining room where Manuel is laying tables.

Basil Manuel, Manuel.

Manuel Your horse, it win, it win!

Basil Ssh!! . . . Manuel . . . *(putting his head close to Manuel)* You know nothing. *(Manuel is puzzled)* You know **nothing.**

Manuel You always say, Mr Fawlty. But I learn.

Basil What?

Manuel I learn, I learn.

Basil No, no, no, no . . .

Manuel I get better.
Basil No, you don't understand.
Manuel I do.
Basil No, you don't.
Manuel I do understand that.
Basil Shh . . . you know nothing about the **horse**.
Manuel *(doubtfully)* I know nothing about the horse.
Basil Yes.
Manuel Ah . . . which horse?
Basil What?
Manuel Which horse I know nothing?
Basil **My** horse, nitwit.
Manuel **Your** horse, 'Nitwit'.
Basil No, no, **Dragonfly**.
Manuel It **won**!
Basil Yes, I **know**.
Manuel **I** know it won, too.
Basil What?
Manuel I put money on for you. You give me money. I go to vetting-shop, I put money on . . .
Basil I know, I know, I know.
Manuel Why you say I know nothing?
Basil Oh. Look . . . look . . . look . . . you know the horse?
Manuel Witnit? Or Dragonfly?
Basil Dragonfly. There isn't a horse called Nitwit. **You're** the nitwit.
Manuel What is witnit?
Basil *(puts his hand round Manuel's throat)* It doesn't matter . . . look . . . it doesn't matter . . . Oh . . . I could spend the rest of my life having this conversation. Please try to understand before one of us **dies**.
Manuel I try.
Basil You're going to forget everything you know about nitwit.
Manuel No, Dragonfly.
Basil Dragonfly! Yes!
Manuel *Si, si, si* . . . eventually.
Basil What?
Manuel . . . Eventually. At the end.
Basil . . . No, no, no, forget it **now**!
Manuel Now?
Basil Well, pretend you forget.

Manuel Pretend?
Basil **Don't say anything to anyone about the horse!!!**
Manuel Oh, I know that, you tell me this morning. Tch! Choh!

Basil stares. Sybil puts her head round the door.

Sybil Basil.
Basil *(to Manuel)* So don't do it again. *(to Sybil)* Yes, dear?
Sybil It's Mrs Richards.
Basil A fatal accident?
Sybil She's had some money stolen.

Sybil leaves. Basil moves after her emitting a moan. Manuel grabs his arm.

Manuel Ah, Mr Fawlty, I tell Polly.
Basil What? Oh, that's all right. But don't tell anyone else. Not even me. You know nothing.
Sybil *(from lobby)* Basil!
Basil Yes, dear? *(he catches her up in the lobby)*
Sybil Basil, you've got to help me handle this. She's in a frightful state, I can't get a word in edgeways. She's had eighty-five pounds taken from her room, I've said we'll search everywhere but she insists we call the police. What do you do with someone like that, she just keeps on.

They go into the office; Mrs Richards is there.

Basil *(loudly)* Mrs Richards, how very nice to see you. Are you enjoying your stay?
Mrs Richards There's no need to shout. I have my hearing aid on.
Basil . . . Oh!
Sybil Mrs Richards, I've explained to my husb—
Mrs Richards I've just been up to my room. Eighty-five pounds has been taken from my bag which I had hidden under the mattress.
Basil Oh, yes? . . .
Mrs Richards It's a disgrace, I haven't been here a day. What sort of staff do you employ here?
Sybil Mrs Richards . . .
Mrs Richards If you knew anything at all about running a hotel, this sort of thing wouldn't happen! Well . . . what have you got to say for yourself?

Basil launches into a long, but entirely mimed, speech.

Mrs Richards What?

Basil continues to mime. Sybil nudges him.

Sybil *(very quietly)* Basil.
Basil *(mimes 'Yes, dear?')*
Sybil *(very quietly)* Don't.
Mrs Richards Wait. Wait. Wait, wait, I haven't turned it up enough. *(she fiddles with the control and looks at Basil; he rubs his hands)*
Sybil *(whispers warningly)* Basil!

Mrs Richards turns the control full up.

Basil *(fortissimissimo)* I said I suggest . . .

Mrs Richards reels back holding her head in her hands and bangs her head on the shelf on the wall behind her.

Mrs Richards My head!
Basil Has it come away?
Sybil *(pushing past Basil)* Get away. *(to Mrs Richards)* Did you bang your head?
Mrs Richards Yes, yes.
Sybil Oh dear, let me have a look.
Basil You'd better go and lie down before something else happens.
Sybil *(elbowing him)* Shut up, Basil.
Mrs Richards Why don't you call the police?
Sybil We will the moment we've searched the rooms.
Mrs Richards My money's been taken.
Sybil Yes, yes, I know, try not to speak.
Basil *(offering something he has found on the floor)* Is this a piece of your brain?

Sybil kicks his shin. He sits down clutching it.

Mrs Richards Eighty-five pounds.
Sybil Take my arm.
Mrs Richards I don't need your arm, thank you. I can get down the stairs perfectly well by myself.
Basil **Down** the stairs? Oh well, don't stop when you get to the basement. Keep straight on. Give my regards to the earth's core.

Mrs Richards has left the office. Sybil is looking after her.

Sybil Are you sure you can manage?

Basil And if you give us any more trouble I shall visit you in the small hours and put a bat up your nightdress. *(still rubbing his shin)* Well, that was fun, wasn't it, dear. The odd moment like that, it's almost worth staying alive for, isn't it. *(Sybil is poker-faced)* It's nice to share a moment like that, isn't it, dear. It's what marriage is all about. I know, it said so on the back of a matchbox.

Sybil Basil, sometimes . . .

Basil *(putting a hand on her waist)* Seriously, Sybil, do you remember, when we were first . . . manacled together, we used to laugh quite a lot.

Sybil *(pushing him away)* Yes, but not at the same time, Basil.

Basil That's true. That was a warning, wasn't it. Should have spotted that. Zoom! – what was that? That was your life, mate. That was quick, do I get another? Sorry mate, that's your lot.

Sybil Basil.

Basil Back to the world of dreams. Yes dear?

Sybil *(irritated)* What are we going to do?

Basil Give it another fifteen years?

Sybil About the **money**. Do you think we should . . .

Basil Oh, she's left it in her room, or she's dropped it or eaten it or something. We'll get Manuel to go through the room. Polly can check the lounge . . .

Sybil Wait a moment. I saw Polly with some money just now.

Basil Well, there you are.

Sybil It was quite a bit, too. She was counting it in here.

Basil *(gripped by sudden fear)* Well, it's probably hers.

Sybil No . . . she's been very short lately, Basil. I'll ask her.

Basil Well, you can't. You can't just ask her like that, Sybil!

Sybil Why not?

Basil Well . . . it's terribly rude asking someone if money is theirs or not. It'd be so embarrassing. *(the reception phone rings)*

Sybil Rubbish, Basil.

Basil moves into the lobby and answers the phone.

Basil Hallo, Fawlty Towers. *(he cuts off the call by putting his finger on the cradle, but continues to talk as if still connected)*

Polly Shearman? Certainly. I'll get her straight away. *(he puts the phone down and hurries towards the kitchen)*

Sybil *(calling)* Polly . . .

Basil rushes into the kitchen.

Basil Terry, where's Polly?

Terry *(indicating the dining room)* In there.

Basil goes into the dining room; Polly is putting flowers on the tables.

Basil Polly! . . . Polly, she saw you with the money.

Polly What?

Basil Sybil. She saw you counting the horse money. She's coming to ask you . . . *(Sybil enters)* Hallo dear. Here she is. Found her in here. As I was just saying, Polly, my wife would like to have a word with you about a slightly delicate matter.

Sybil It's not delicate, Basil, don't be silly. *(to Polly)* He thinks it's embarrassing for me to ask you about that money I saw you with earlier on in the office. I was wondering if someone had handed it in. Mrs Richards has lost some.

Polly The money . . . in the office . . .

Sybil You were counting it, weren't you. Did someone hand it in?

Polly Oh, no. No, it's mine.

Sybil Yours?

Polly I won it.

Sybil You won it?

Polly On the horse Mr Fawlty got a tip on. *(to Basil)* I hope you don't mind, I just . . .

Basil No, no, not at all.

Sybil I didn't know you bet on the horses, Polly?

Polly Oh, I don't . . . I was in the town, passing the betting shop, and I thought . . . well, why not?

Basil Why not indeed. *(to Sybil)* Jolly good question, eh, dear? Pity you didn't let me put something on, really. Do you realize how much we would have won? Seventy-five pounds for a five-pound stake. Still, you know best.

Sybil Those were the odds, were they, Basil?

Basil Yes, that's right, dear. Fourteen to one. I listened in on the wireless just to make sure it had triumphed. *(to Polly)* Enjoy your winnings, Polly. *(he goes into the lobby)*

Polly Thank you.

Sybil *(quietly)* Polly?

Polly Yes, Mrs Fawlty?

Sybil What was the name of the horse?

Polly Er . . . the **name** . . . I've gone blank . . .

Basil dashes to the dining-room door, behind Sybil. He mouths 'Dragonfly'. Polly stares. He points to Sybil and flaps his hands.

Polly Bird Brain.

Sybil Bird Brain?

Polly No, no, that came in third. *(Basil makes flying movements, then points at Sybil)* Fishwife.

Sybil What?

Polly No, no, not fishwife. *(Basil points at Sybil, then at his fly)* Small . . . fly! Flying . . . Flying Tart . . . no, no . . . *(Basil repeats his Sybil-making-toast mime)* No, it got off to a flying **start**, and its name was *(with relief)* Dragonfly.

Sybil Thank you, Polly. *(she goes into the lobby and turns on Basil)* If I find out the money on that horse was yours, you know what I'll do, Basil. *(she exits upstairs)*

Basil *(calling after her)* You'll have to sew 'em back on first. *(the Major appears, heading for the bar; Basil has an inspiration)* Major!

The Major *(without checking his stride)* Six o'clock, old boy.

He goes into the bar. Basil follows him.

Basil Oh, so it is, Major. Can I offer you . . .

The Major Oh, that's very decent of you. Just a quick one, going to a memorial service.

Basil Tie's a bit bright, isn't it, Major?

The Major What?

Basil For a memorial service?

The Major Oh, I didn't **like** the chap. One of those. Know what I mean. Cheers!

Basil Major . . . could you do me a favour?

The Major Well, I'm a bit short myself, old boy.

Basil No, no, no, could you look after some money for me. *(he takes it out)* I won it on that horse, only Sybil's a bit suspicious you see, and she goes through my pockets some nights . . .

The Major Oh, absolutely. Which horse?

Basil . . . Dragonfly. *(gives the Major the money)*

The Major When's it running?

Basil No, no. It ran today. I won that on it.

The Major Oh! *(starts to give the money back)* Well done, old boy.

Basil No, no, could you keep it.

The Major Oh, no, no, I couldn't do that. No, it's very decent of you.

Basil No, no, could you keep it just for tonight. It's Sybil, you see. Secret?

The Major Ah. Present.

Basil Sort of, yes. Don't mention it.

The Major Mum's the word.

Basil I'll get it from you in the morning and bank it.

The Major Understood, old boy. Cheers.

The Major makes off out of the bar. Basil pours himself a whisky and cheerfully bounces an ice cube off his forearm into the drink.

The lobby. Basil is at reception making out Mr Mackintosh's bill.

Basil There you are, Mr Mackintosh. *(gives him the bill)*

The Misses Tibbs and Gatsby appear at the foot of the stairs.

Misses Tibbs & Gatsby Good morning, Mr Fawlty.

Basil Good morning, ladies. *(the phone rings and he answers it)* Hallo. Fawlty Towers.

Mrs Richards *(off, loudly)* Watt!

Basil *(seeing Mrs Richards bearing down on him)* . . . I didn't say anything. *(to phone)* Yes?

Mrs Richards Have you called the police yet?

Basil Er, excuse me, I'm just trying to take a telephone call.

Mrs Richards Have you called them yet?

Basil *(about to say no, but changes his mind)* . . . Yes. Yes, we have.

Mrs Richards Well, when are they going to be here?

Basil As soon as possible. They're very busy today.

Mrs Richards Busy. Tch. *(she moves off)*

Basil There was a lot of bloodshed at the Nell Gwynn tea-rooms last night. *(to phone)* Hello . . . yes, certainly, yes . . . *(calling after Mrs Richards)* Mrs Richards! **Mrs Richards!!!** *(Mr Mackintosh jumps)* Sorry, sorry . . . *(to Mrs Richards as she returns)* Telephone for you. Here. *(she takes the phone; Mackintosh points at his bill)* Yes?

Mackintosh What's this for?

Basil Er . . . telephone calls?

Mackintosh But I haven't made any.

Basil Oh. Er . . . cigarettes?

Mackintosh I don't smoke.

Mrs Richards *(to phone)* Hallo!! *(to Basil)* There's nobody there.

Basil *(taking the phone)* Hallo . . . yes, yes, I know she is. Yes . . . *(to Mrs Richards)* It's your sister. *(Mrs Richards grabs the phone)*

Mackintosh Well, what **is** it for?

Basil Drinks?

Mackintosh Drinks – me?

Mrs Richards *(to phone)* Hallo. Hallo. We've been cut off.

Basil *(grabbing the phone)* Hallo . . . look, you tell **me**, and I'll tell **her** . . .

Mrs Richards *(to Mackintosh)* Even the phones don't work.

Basil Your sister says you've had an offer of eighty-seven thousand pounds for your house in Brighton.

Mrs Richards Eighty-seven? Give it to me. *(grabbing the phone back)* Don't be a fool, Stephanie. Nine two seven fifty I said and I'm not taking a penny less, you tell him that. *(slams the phone down)* Why don't people listen? *(heads off towards dining room)*

Mackintosh Well?

Basil Well, let's scrub that 32p then, shall we? Let's enjoy ourselves. There.

Mackintosh Oh, thank you very much.

Mackintosh writes out the cheque. The Major appears from the dining room.

Basil Ah! Major! *(hurries from behind the desk and catches the Major)* Major . . . can I have it now?

The Major What, old boy?

Basil The money . . . the money I gave you last night.

The Major What is all this, Fawlty?

Basil You remember . . . I gave you some money last night. Just before you went to that remembrance service.

The Major Remembrance service?

Basil Yes.

The Major I don't remember **that**, old boy.

Basil It was for . . . a chap you didn't like. Um . . . you know . . . he was one of those.

The Major One of those what?

Basil Well . . .

The Major Pansy?

Basil Yes.

The Major *(indicating the dining room)* Which one?

Basil No, no. Look, you were in your best suit.

The Major Was I? Oh yes, of course – I went to the theatre, of course.

Basil No, no.

The Major Yes, with Winnie Atwell.

Basil Winnie Atwell?

The Major Well, **Marjorie** Atwell, Marjorie . . . I always call her Winnie 'cos she looks like Winnie.

Basil . . . She's not black.

The Major Black? Churchill wasn't black.

Basil Look, look, I gave you seventy-five pounds – you put it in there . . . *(indicates the Major's pocket)*

The dining-room door flies open and Mrs Richards strides out and up to Basil. The Major wanders off upstairs.

Mrs Richards What do you mean by telling me you called the police?

Basil I . . .

Mrs Richards You've done no such thing. Your wife's just told me you're still searching the rooms.

Basil Well, I thought **she'd** called them.

Mrs Richards You lying hound!

Sybil *(coming in)* Mrs Richards . . .

Mrs Richards *(to Basil)* Go and call them now. Immediately.

Basil Yes, but look . . .

Sybil Mrs Richards, we will, the moment we've searched the . . .

Mrs Richards Right. I shall call them myself, then. *(she makes for the reception desk, followed by Sybil)*

Sybil Couldn't we just wait until . . .

Mrs Richards I've never **seen** such a place. *(picks up the phone)*

Sybil *(intercepting her)* All right, Mrs Richards. Would you like to use the office phone?

Mrs Richards What?

Sybil In **here**. Thank you. *(shows her into the office, and calls back to Basil)* Basil. Get the key and check her room. *(goes into the office)*

Basil Right. *(gets the key)*

The Major *(appearing at the foot of the stairs holding a wad of notes)* I've found it, Fawlty!

Basil What?

The Major It was in my pocket.

Basil Ah! *(glances furtively towards the office)*

The Major Yes, in my new suit. In there. *(puts the notes into his inside pocket)* See?

Basil *(trying to regain the money)* That's marvellous, Major.

The Major Stuffed right down.

Basil Yes, can I . . .

The Major I don't know how it got there.

Basil No, can I . . .

The Major I always make a point of keeping my money in my hip pocket.

Basil Please! Please!

The Major What, old boy?

Basil Can I have it.

The Major Oh! Yes, yes, the money . . . yes, of course . . . *(reaches into his back pocket)* Oh! *(pokes about inside the pocket)* Good God, it's gone.

Basil No, no – you put it in there.

Sybil *(appearing at the office door)* Basil!

The Major *(finding it)* Here it is! *(produces the money and holds it out)*

Sybil What's that?

The Major I found it, Mrs Fawlty. The money.

Sybil Oh, that's marvellous. Mrs Richards!!

Basil What?

Sybil We've found your money.

Mrs Richards emerges from the office.

Basil *(frozen with horror)* Er . . . no!

Sybil The Major's found your money.

Basil No dear.

Sybil What? *(takes the money)* Thank you, Major. *(gives it to Mrs Richards)* You see, I knew it'd turn up.

Mrs Richards looks at it suspiciously and starts to count it.

Basil *(whimpering unintelligibly)* Er . . . er . . .

Sybil What is it, Basil?

But he can't think of anything to say. Mrs Richards continues to count.

The Major Bit of luck, eh, Fawlty?

Mrs Richards It's ten pounds short.

Sybil Oh dear.

Basil *(dramatically)* It's not!! Ten pounds! Oh my **God!!** Don't worry, we'll have a whip-round! *(grabs the blind box and shakes it frantically, upside down)*

Sybil Basil!! Stop it!!

Mrs Richards What's he doing **now?**

Basil is still shaking the box. Sybil stares at him for a moment and then throws a cup of coffee in his face. He freezes.

Sybil What on earth do you think you're doing? *(to Mrs Richards)* I'll look for the other ten immediately, Mrs Richards. *(to the Major)* Where exactly did you find it, Major?

The Major In my pocket.

Sybil In your **pocket?**

The Major Yes, yes, not this suit – the new one.

Sybil Would you mind if I just popped up and had a look?

The Major Oh, not at all, not at all.

Sybil *(to Mrs Richards)* I'll see if I can find it. Won't be a moment.

The Major It's in with the . . . er . . . *(he can't remember)*

Sybil disappears up the stairs.

Basil *(to Mrs Richards)* Excuse me . . .

Mrs Richards *(to the Major)* Did you say it was in your pocket?

The Major Yes.

Basil Mrs Richards, can I . . .

Mrs Richards What was it doing in your pocket?

Basil Can I explain . . .

Mrs Richards You're not explaining anything. You're completely loopy. Mad as a March hare.

Basil Yes. Yes, I am. Yes, I am completely loopy. That's why I gave **him** the money to look after.

Mrs Richards What?

Basil You see, there's been a mistake. The money there is in fact mine.

Mrs Richards Yours?

Basil Yes. As the Major will confirm. I've been saving it up for a present for my wife, right, and that's why I couldn't say anything just now but I gave it to the Major last night.

Mrs Richards What rubbish. This is my money.

Basil No, no, well the Major will verify what I've said.

The Major Hmmmm?

Basil Could you verify that, Major?

The Major What, old boy?

Basil The money I gave you last night, you know, for my wife's present . . . You remember I gave it to you just before you went to the theatre.

The Major Theatre!?

Basil Yes. You remember. *(whispering)* That money I won on the horse.

The Major A horse.

Mrs Richards Why are you whispering? What are you saying?

The Major He says he won it on a horse.

Mrs Richards *(loudly)* Won it on a horse!

Basil Ssssh. Doesn't matter. *(to the Major)* Do you remember me **giving** it to you? *(the Major thinks)* Think. Please think.

Pause.

The Major . . . What was the question again?

Basil The money! The money!! Do you remember? . . . *(sees Manuel emerging from the dining room)* Manuel. Manuel. Come here. Manuel . . . you remember I had some money yesterday. *(Manuel look suspicious; Basil whispers)* The money I won on the horse.

Manuel Ah! *Si* . . .

Basil Tell Mrs Richards. Tell her I had the money yesterday.

Manuel *(with pride)* Ahem. I know nothing.

Basil What?

Manuel I know nothing.

Basil No, no.

Manuel **Nothing.**

Basil No, no, forget that.

Manuel I forget **everything**. I know nothing.

Basil No, you can tell her. You can tell her.

Manuel No I cannot.

Basil Yes, yes, tell her, tell her, please, please, tell her, tell her . . . I'll kill you if you don't.

Manuel *(runs his finger along his throat and winks at Basil)* No, I know nothing. *(to Mrs Richards)* I am from Barcelona. *(he leaves)*

Mrs Richards I'm not listening to any more of this rubbish. I'm going to finish my breakfast. When I come back I want the rest of the money. *(she steams off into the dining room)*

Sybil *(coming down the stairs)* Give it to her, Basil.

Basil What?

Sybil I can't find it. Give her ten from the till.

Basil . . . Right. *(he opens the till by banging it with his head and takes ten pounds out)* Ten pounds. *(he slaps it down on the counter and starts taking his shirt off)*

Sybil What are you doing?

Basil I'm going to give her the shirt off my back too.

Manuel *(poking his head out of the kitchen)* You see, I know nothing.

Basil I'm going to sell you to a vivisectionist. *(Manuel disappears; the Major wanders off; Basil finishes folding his shirt)* There. Now . . .

He stands for a moment, then starts to wail. Mr Kerr comes in through the main door, carrying a large ornate vase.

Kerr Good afternoon, Mr Fawlty.

Basil *(in between sobs)* Good afternoon.

Kerr You got a Mrs Richards staying with you?

Basil *(falls out of sight behind the desk; he reappears)* Yes.

Kerr Ah. Only she bought this yesterday, asked us to deliver it. The thing is . . . *(takes a glove out of his pocket)* she left some money behind. Keeps it in this, ninety-five quid . . . look. *(Basil looks)* The cleaner found it this morning, almost threw it in the bin, lucky, eh? *(Basil is transfixed)* . . . Is she around?

Basil . . . Nope. I'll give it to her.

Kerr *(giving it to him)* Oh, thanks, Mr Fawlty. Goodbye.

He goes out, leaving the vase on the desk. Polly enters. Basil looks at the money and blows a kiss to God.

Basil We found her money!

Polly Where?

Basil . . . She left it . . . it doesn't matter . . . I'm ten pounds **up** on the deal.

Polly Ten pounds **up?**

Basil Yes – even if I give her ten – I'm still up . . . Polly . . . for the first time in my life I'm ahead! I'm winning! Ah ha! *(sees Mrs Richards approaching; gleefully)* Hallo, Mrs Richards. How lovely to see you. Your beautiful vase that you bought yesterday has just arrived. Now, remind me, that money you had, was it yours or mine?

Mrs Richards I told you, it's mine.

Basil You're absolutely sure?

Mrs Richards Yes, I am.

Basil But you're still ten pounds short. *(pulls out the wad of notes he has received and peels one off)* Polly, give Mrs Richards this, would you?

Mrs Richards *(sensing something)* What's that?

Basil This is **mine**. *(he flourishes it)*

Mrs Richards stares undecided. Basil beams. Sybil appears behind him and looks at the wad.

Sybil What's that, Basil?

Basil jumps but cannot think of an answer.

Polly It's mine.

Sybil What?

Polly It's the money I won on the horse.

Basil That's right, dear. Polly asked me to put it in the safe for her. So . . . that's all sorted out . . . and this is your money, Polly . . . this is your beautiful vase, Mrs Richards.

Still holding the money in his right hand, he picks up the vase carefully with his left and holds it out to her. The Major sails into view, quite excited.

The Major Fawlty . . . you **did** give me that money! You won it on that horse!

Basil is horrified. Sybil grabs the money; he clutches at it with his left hand, dropping the vase. It shatters. He screams.

Mrs Richards That cost seventy-five pounds.

Sybil Oh, I **am** sorry, Mrs Richards. We **must** pay you back for it.

She counts out the money for Mrs Richards. Basil despairs.

THE PSYCHIATRIST

Basil Fawlty John Cleese
Sybil Fawlty Prunella Scales
Polly Connie Booth
Mr Johnson Nicky Henson
Dr Abbott Basil Henson
Mrs Abbott Elspet Gray
Raylene Miles Luan Peters
Manuel Andrew Sachs
Terry Brian Hall
Miss Tibbs Gilly Flower
Miss Gatsby Renée Roberts
Major Gowen Ballard Berkeley
Mrs Johnson Aimée Delamain
Girlfriend Imogen Bickford-Smith

Second of second series, first broadcast, on 26 February 1979, BBC2.

The hotel lobby. Polly is checking a couple in. Sybil is on the phone. Basil is on the other phone . . . he is waiting.

Sybil Oh dear . . . oh dear . . .
Basil Hallo?
Sybil What a shame.
Polly Oh Manuel . . .
Basil Hallo, operator. What is going on?
Sybil Oh, I know . . .
Polly Number ten.
Basil . . . I've been trying to get through to the speaking clock.
Sybil Oh dear . . .

Manuel leads the guests off.

Basil . . . Well, it's engaged.
Sybil Oh, how awful . . .
Basil . . . Well, it's been engaged for ten minutes. How is this possible, my wife isn't talking to it.
Sybil Well, hold your head right back, that usually stops it.
Basil Right. *(he rings off and re-dials)* The speaking clock has obviously taken the phone off the hook. Either that or there's been a light shower within twenty miles.
Sybil Well, you'd better not go on if it's getting on the bedspread.
Basil Unobtainable. *(he puts the phone down)* The clock's been cut off. Obviously it didn't pay its bill. *(goes into the office)*
Sybil Well, call me back when you've staunched it. *(she puts the phone down)* I don't know why she stays with him. *(looks at a magazine)* Oh, that's pretty.

Mr Johnson walks in through the main doors; he is casually dressed and has his shirt open to the waist.

Polly Oh, hallo. You got the guide? *(he shows it to her)*
Sybil Good evening, Mr Johnson.
Mr Johnson Evening. Any messages?
Polly Three, I think. *(she gets his messages)*
Sybil Three . . . everybody wants you, don't they.
Mr Johnson Oh, I wouldn't say that.
Sybil Oh, well . . . you're only single once.
Basil's voice *(from the office)* Twice can be arranged.
Sybil What, Basil?
Basil Nothing, my dear. *(he comes in and stares at Johnson who is*

on the simian side) Have we got enough bananas this week, dear?

Sybil gives him a look; he goes back into the office, where he sits down. He hears Sybil's grating laugh; it irritates him. She laughs again and he walks mock-casually back into reception and sits at the typewriter. Johnson is telling Sybil a story.

Mr Johnson So Harry says, 'You don't like me any more. Why not?' And he says, 'Because you've got so terribly pretentious.' And Harry says, 'Pretentious? *Moi?' (Sybil laughs; Basil remains straight-faced)* I'll just try that number. *(he goes into the bar)*

Sybil Oh, that's awfully good, isn't it. *'Moi'* . . . did you hear it, Basil?

Basil What, dear?

Sybil The joke.

Basil Oh, a joke. No, I heard you laugh, I thought perhaps he was having a tea party.

Sybil Tea party? Oh, now I understand the banana reference. You mean you think he looks like a monkey.

Basil Only from some angles.

Sybil Well, from this angle he's very attractive.

Basil Attractive?

Sybil You know, easy and amusing and charming.

Basil Charming, eh – well he's certainly covered in charms. I've never seen so many medals round one neck in my life. He must be the bravest orang-utang in Britain. What is the point of decorating yourself like that?

Sybil They're not just there for decoration – they have symbolic meaning.

Basil Sybil, that type would wear a dog turd round its neck if it was made of gold.

Sybil Basil, you're so ignorant sometimes. One of them **happens** to be a rhino's tooth, one's an ancient Egyptian fertility symbol . . .

Basil Well, that must come in handy.

Sybil It's not supposed to be handy, Basil. It goes back to the dawn of civilization.

Basil Well, by the look of his forehead, so does he.

Sybil Tell me, Basil, what is it about the . . . the Mediterranean type that antagonises you so? Is it because women find them attractive?

Basil Sybil . . .

Sybil You seem to think that we girls should be aroused by people like Gladstone and Earl Haig and Baden-Powell . . . don't you.

Basil Well, at least they had a certain dignity. It's hard to imagine Earl Haig wandering round with his shirt open to the waist covered with identity bracelets.

Sybil Well, he didn't mind the medals, did he. The military decorations.

Basil That's not the point.

Sybil I suppose the reason you confuse them with monkeys is that monkeys have fun – they know how to enjoy themselves. That's what makes them sexy, I suppose. *(Dr and Mrs Abbott enter through the main doors)* I'd never thought of that. *(to the Abbotts)* Good evening.

Dr Abbott Good evening. I telephoned earlier, the name is Abbott.

Sybil Oh yes. There **hasn't** been a cancellation, I'm afraid, so it is **still** a room without bath.

Dr Abbott That's fine.

Sybil Good. Would you just fill that in for me please. Yes, we're terribly busy at the moment.

At his end of the desk Basil does a subdued monkey impression. Mrs Abbott looks at him. He sees her.

Basil Just enjoying myself. Good evening.

Mrs Abbott Good evening.

Basil *(to Dr Abbott)* Good evening.

Dr Abbott Good evening.

Basil *(beats his chest a few times, Tarzan style)* Ah . . . that felt better.

Sybil Thank you, Mr Abbott. *(she takes another look at the card)* Oh, **Doctor** Abbott, I'm sorry.

Basil *(freezes for a split second)* Doctor?

Dr Abbott . . . Yes.

Basil I'm terribly sorry, we hadn't been told. *(Dr Abbott looks at him questioningly)* We hadn't been told you were a doctor.

Dr Abbott Oh.

Basil How do you do, doctor. *(he offers his hand; Dr Abbott shakes it briefly)* Very nice to have you with us, doctor.

Dr Abbott Thank you.

Sybil You're in room five, doctor.

Basil And Mrs Abbott, how do you do. *(he shakes hands with her)*

Dr Abbott Dr Abbott, actually.
Basil . . . I'm sorry?
Dr Abbott **Doctor** Abbott.
Mrs Abbott Two doctors.
Basil *(to Dr Abbott)* You're **two** doctors?
Mrs Abbott Yes.
Basil Well, how did you become two doctors? That's most unusual . . . I mean, did you take the exams twice, or . . . ?
Dr Abbott No, my wife's a doctor . . .
Mrs Abbott . . . **I'm** a doctor.
Basil You're a doctor too! So you're **three** doctors.
Dr Abbott No, I'm just one doctor. My wife is another doctor.
Sybil *(ringing the bell pointedly)* Manuel! *(Basil is silenced; to the Abbotts)* Your room is at the top of the stairs along to the left.
Basil Oh I see! You see, I thought, when you said you were two doctors . . . *(Manuel comes running in from the kitchen)* Manuel, would you take the doctors' cases up to number five, please. *(he shows the way, then follows them up the stairs. Manuel comes behind with the cases)* Yes, this way please, doctors . . . Yes, when you said you were two doctors I thought perhaps you were a doctor of **medicine**, perhaps a doctor of archaeology . . .

They have gone. Mr Johnson comes up to the desk.

Sybil Did you get through all right?
Mr Johnson One was busy, I'll try again in a moment. Look, I forgot to ask, any news on that room for my mother?
Sybil Oh yes, number sixteen **has** decided to stay, I'm afraid . . . I tried a couple of other places for you but everywhere's full at the moment.
Mr Johnson Oh well, no hassle . . . she won't mind sharing with me.
Sybil Lucky mum, ha ha ha.
Mr Johnson I'll just go and try that number again.
Sybil Oh, here, use this one.
Mr Johnson Oh, thank you. *(he starts to dial; Sybil looks at the adornments round his neck)*
Sybil May I ask . . . the sign on the chain, **by** the Egyptian fertility symbol . . . what is that . . . ?
Mr Johnson It's a Greek astrological sign.
Sybil Oh, it's beautiful. Where did you get it?
Mr Johnson Er, Colchester, I think.

Sybil Colchester!

Mr Johnson *(to phone)* Oh, hello, can I speak to John Lawson please . . . oh all right, I'll hold on . . .

Sybil So your mother will be arriving tomorrow?

Mr Johnson Yes, first thing. She's getting the overnight train down from Newcastle.

Sybil Newcastle.

Mr Johnson Yes, visiting grandchildren. She's seventy-seven . . .

Sybil Seventy-seven! Isn't that amazing . . . old people are wonderful when they have so much life, aren't they? Gives us all hope, doesn't it.

Mr Johnson Mmmm . . .

Sybil My mother . . . on the other hand . . . is a little bit of a trial really . . . you know, it's all right when they have the life force, but mother, well, she's got more of the death force really . . . she's a worrier . . .

Mr Johnson *(to phone)* No, it's all right, I'll hold.

Sybil She has these, well, morbid fears they are, really . . . vans is one . . . rats, doorknobs, birds, heights, open spaces . . . confined spaces, it's very difficult getting the space right for her really, you know . . .

Mr Johnson *(nodding, not much interested)* Mmmm . . .

Sybil Footballs, bicycles, cows . . . and she's always on about men following her . . . I don't know what she thinks they're going to do to her . . . vomit on her, Basil says . . .

Mr Johnson *(to phone)* Can I leave my number, he can call me back . . .

Sybil And death.

Mr Johnson Oh, I see, right.

Sybil She's frightened of death. On about it the whole time. I told her there's nothing she can do about it, I mean, nature can only take its course . . . the only thing you can hope is that it won't be long drawn out and painful, but she can't accept that . . .

Mr Johnson Excuse me . . . *(to phone)* Hallo, John. How are you . . . fine . . . no, just down for the weekend . . .

Basil appears down the stairs and walks across the lobby towards the desk, seeing Johnson and registering displeasure. Sybil ignores this. He joins her behind the desk.

Basil Charming people.

Sybil Hmmm.

Basil The Abbotts . . . charming couple.

Sybil Yes. All three of them.
Mr Johnson . . . No, I'm all right for tonight . . .
Basil You know, dear, that outfit that Mrs Abbott is wearing, you should get yourself something like that.
Sybil What, for the gardening, you mean?
Mr Johnson . . . No, no, I can't tomorrow night, but how about lunch?
Basil Attractive woman. How old would you say she was, Sybil?
Sybil Forty-eight, fifty.
Basil Oh, no, Sybil.
Sybil I really don't know, Basil. Perhaps she's twelve.
Mr Johnson . . . No, favourite . . . magic . . .
Basil Yes, nice to have that kind of person staying, isn't it. Professional class. Educated, civilized . . . *(he looks at Johnson)* We've got both ends of the evolutionary scale this week, haven't we.

Moving behind Johnson's field of vision he comes out from behind the desk and does a monkey walk. The Abbotts appear at the foot of the stairs. He checks himself, but just a little late.

Basil Good evening.
Dr Abbott We're just going out for a stroll. What time do you serve dinner?
Basil Seven-thirty till nine.
Mr Johnson . . . See you tomorrow, then. *Ciao. (rings off)*
Mrs Abbott Do you have a guide to Torquay?
Basil A guide . . . um . . . oh dear, I think we're out of them again.
Mr Johnson *(to Mrs Abbott)* Do you want to look at this one? I got it in the town.
Mrs Abbott Oh, thanks . . . *What's on in Torquay.*
Mr Johnson Yes, it's one of the world's shortest books. *(they laugh)*
Basil What?
Mr Johnson One of the world's shortest books . . . like 'The Wit of Margaret Thatcher' or 'Great English Lovers'.

They all laugh except you know who.

Sybil *(amused)* Oh, very funny, isn't it, Basil. *(goes into the office)*
Mrs Abbott *(to Johnson)* Thank you.

The Abbotts go out.

Basil *(to Johnson)* Are you taking dinner here tonight?

Mr Johnson Sorry?

Basil Are you dining here tonight? Here in this unfashionable dump.

Mr Johnson . . . Well, I wasn't planning to.

Basil Not really your scene, is it.

Mr Johnson I thought I'd try somewhere in town. Anywhere you'd recommend?

Basil Well, what sort of food were you thinking of – fruit? Or . . .

Mr Johnson Is there anywhere they do French food?

Sybil comes back from the office.

Basil Yes, France, I believe. They seem to like it there. And the swim would certainly sharpen your appetite. You'd better hurry, the tide leaves in six minutes.

Sybil Excuse my husband's sledge-hammer wit, Mr Johnson. There is a very nice place – La Pomme d'Amour.

Mr Johnson La Pomme d'Amour? The apple of love.

Sybil Yes, in Orchard Street.

Basil *(thoughtfully)* Or that Ancient Egyptian place . . . The Golden Dog . . . something . . .

Sybil *(to Johnson)* Do enjoy yourself . . . we'll see you later.

Mr Johnson Thank you. *(he goes out)*

Sybil *(turns and speaks quietly to Basil)* I've had it up to here with you.

Basil What, dear?

Sybil You never get it right, do you. You're either crawling all over them licking their boots, or spitting poison at them like some benzedrine puff-adder. *(she goes into the office)*

Basil *(to himself)* Just trying to enjoy myself.

The dining room, towards the end of dinner. The Abbotts are just finishing their main course. Basil approaches them.

Basil Ah . . . did you enjoy your beef?

Mrs Abbott Oh, yes, thank you.

Basil Oh good. Would you care for a dessert?

Mrs Abbott No, just coffee, thank you.

Dr Abbott Just coffee for me.

Basil Two coffees, Sybil! Two coffees here, please, dear . . . would you care for a little something with us . . . *(the Abbotts look puzzled)* . . . Um . . . a little aperitif, cognac,

brandy . . . on us, with us . . . which we'll pay for, on the house – as it were.

Mrs Abbott Well, thank you. Yes, I'd like a cognac if I may . . .

Basil Dr Abbott?

Dr Abbott A port, thank you.

Basil *Mon plaisir.*

He moves off to the sideboard to get the drinks. Sybil slides up.

Sybil Coffee for you, doctor?

Mrs Abbott Thank you.

Sybil And for you, doctor.

Dr Abbott Thank you.

Sybil Have you been to Torquay before?

Mrs Abbott Well, not for a few years, no – we had a free weekend and we suddenly thought we'd like to get out of London.

Sybil Lovely . . . white or black?

Mrs Abbott Black, thank you.

Sybil *(to Dr Abbott)* Black for you, doctor?

Dr Abbott Thank you.

Basil *(arriving with the drinks)* A cognac for you, doctor. It's rather fascinating your both being doctors – port for you, doctor – because at one point I was contemplating becoming a surgeon.

Sybil A tree surgeon. *(laughs)*

Basil Thank you, Sybil.

Sybil He had to give it up. Couldn't stand the sight of sap. *(laughs)*

Basil That's a bit old, isn't it, dear. My great-grandfather on my mother's side was a doctor, and so it was always felt that I might . . .

Sybil Run a hotel. Are you both in general practice?

Mrs Abbott No, I'm a paediatrician.

Basil Feet?

Mrs Abbott Children.

Sybil Oh, Basil.

Basil Well, children have feet, don't they? That's how they move around, my dear. You must take a look next time, it's most interesting. *(to Dr Abbott)* And you, doctor? Are you a . . .

Dr Abbott I'm a psychiatrist.

Basil Very nice too. Well cheers. *(he sips Dr Abbott's port, then*

realizes) I'll get you another one. *(he hurries off to the sideboard)*

Sybil A psychiatrist, how fascinating. We've never had a psychiatrist staying here before. We had a faith healer the first month we were open.

Dr Abbott Really.

Sybil It's a relatively new profession, psychiatry, isn't it?

Mrs Abbott Well, Freud started about 1880.

Sybil Yes, but it's only now we're seeing them on the television.

Basil *(returning with the port)* There we are. I must just . . . er . . . excuse me . . . *(he retires to the kitchen)*

Dr Abbott *(changing the subject)* How long have you had this hotel?

Sybil Well, my husband and I bought it in 1966 . . .

In the kitchen, Basil is standing by the door peeping back into the dining room.

Basil Keep back, keep back.

Polly . . . What is it?

Basil . . . Abbott . . .

Polly What's the matter with him?

Basil . . . Psychiatrist . . . look at him . . . look . . . look at the way he's listening . . . see . . . ? He's taking it all in. She doesn't realize. Look! Look at the way she's talking! They've got photographic memories. *(looks to Polly but she's gone calls)* Sybil! Sybil! *(he moves back into the dining room)*

Sybil Yes, Basil?

Basil Could I bother you, dear?

Sybil What is it?

Basil Just a little problem. *(Dr Abbott turns towards Basil)* Nothing personal. Nothing of a private nature or anything. Just to do with . . .

Sybil Excuse me, would you?

Basil and Sybil move into the kitchen.

Sybil What is it, Basil?

Basil Just . . . just . . . take it easy . . . OK?

Sybil What?

Basil Just keep your distance. I mean, remember who you are, all right?

Sybil . . . Remember who I . . .

Basil Well, just don't tell him about yourself.

Sybil Basil, I'm perfectly capable . . .

Basil All right, all right . . . what have you told him?

Sybil Nothing. We were talking about Scotland.

Basil Scotland? What does he want to know about Scotland? *(Sybil touches him to calm him; he jumps)*

Sybil Oh Basil . . . why are you so nervous?

Basil I'm not nervous. I'm just saying 'take it easy'. All right? All of us. Just take it easy, right?

Sybil What's got into you?

Basil Nothing's got into me. I just said 'take it easy'. Can't I say 'take it easy' without starting a panic? *(with increasing mania)* I mean, what is going on here?

Sybil Now, Basil, look . . .

Terry Look, Mr Fawlty, take it easy.

Basil Now look – get one thing clear. All right? You don't tell me to take it easy. I don't pay you to tell me to take it easy. I pay **you** to take it easy. No – I pay you to **tell** you to take it easy. So take it easy. All right? *(Sybil puts a hand on his arm; he jumps)*

Sybil *(taking his arm anyway and leading him aside)* Listen – why are you getting so upset?

Basil I'm **not** . . .

Sybil You liked him when he arrived . . .

Basil Look . . .

Sybil . . . and then just because you find out he's a psychiatrist you get all . . .

Basil I'm not bothered by that. I'm not . . . I'm not bothered by that. If he wants to be a psychiatrist that's his own funeral. They're all as mad as bloody March hares anyway but that's not the point. Look. Look! How does he earn his money? . . . He gets paid for sticking his nose . . .

Sybil Oh, Basil . . .

Basil No, I'm going to have my say . . . into people's private . . . um . . . details. Well, just speaking for myself, I don't want a total stranger nosing around in my private parts. Details. That's all I'm saying.

Sybil They're down here on holiday. They're just here to enjoy themselves . . .

Basil He can't.

Sybil Can't what?

Basil He can't tell me anything about myself that I don't know already. All this psychiatry, it's a load of tommy-rot. *(Sybil*

gives him the Abbotts' bill; he takes it and goes muttering towards the dining room) You know what they're all obsessed with, don't you.

Sybil What?

Basil You know what they say it's all about, don't you . . . mmm? Sex. Everything's connected with sex. Choh! What a load of cobblers . . . *(he goes into the dining room)*

In the dining room. Basil approaches the Abbotts' table.

Mrs Abbott Yes, but you see, if they want to do that they'd have to close the hotel, wouldn't they.

Basil *(putting the bill down next to Dr Abbott)* Yes . . . if you would just sign that. Thank you so much. *(he moves away and clears the Major's table, then goes into the kitchen)*

Dr Abbott Yes. *(studying the bill)* We were just speculating how people in your profession arrange their holidays. How often can you get away? *(but Basil has not heard this; he arrives back at the table just before Dr Abbot glances up and asks)* How often do you manage it?

Basil I beg your pardon?

Dr Abbott How often can you and your wife manage it? *(a fairly long pause as various thoughts go through Basil's head)* . . . You don't mind my asking?

Basil Not at all, not at all . . . about average, since you ask.

Mrs Abbott Average?

Basil Uh huh.

Dr Abbott What would be average?

Basil Well, you tell me, ha ha ha.

Mrs Abbott Well . . . a couple of times a year?

Basil . . . What?!

Dr Abbott Once a year?

Basil looks astonished.

Dr Abbott Well, we knew it must be difficult . . . my wife didn't see how you could manage it at all . . . you know . . .

Basil Well, as you've asked . . . two or three times a week, actually. *(the Abbotts stare)*

Dr Abbott A week . . .

Basil Yes. Pretty normal, isn't it? We're quite normal down here in Torquay, you know.

He turns and heads for the kitchen, leaving them puzzled. He enters the kitchen briskly but as soon as the doors have shut behind him reverts to a dazed state. Sybil and Polly are chatting.

Sybil . . . and he says, 'Pretentious? *Moi?*' I always like a man who can make me laugh.

Polly *(noticing Basil's fixed stare)* Are you all right, Mr Fawlty?

Basil Mmmm? Yes, yes . . . thanks . . .

Sybil What's the matter, Basil?

Basil Nothing, dear, just talking to . . . Dr Abbott . . .

Sybil Oh, now, if I had the money to go to a psychiatrist he's just the sort I'd choose, I can't think of anything nicer than having a good old heart-to-heart, I'm sure they understand women . . .

Basil Sybil . . .

Sybil What, darling?

Basil Do you know . . . do you know what he asked me just now . . . out there?

Sybil What?

Basil He asked me . . . *(whispers in her ear)*

Sybil Oh, don't be ridiculous, Basil.

Basil I'm telling you the truth, honestly, as God is my witness.

Sybil What's got into you today?

Basil He turned round and asked me. Just like that.

Sybil Well, what did he say?

Basil He said . . . *(whispers)* . . . Then his wife said . . .

Sybil They're talking about holidays, Basil . . . I was just saying to them about how difficult it is to get any . . .

Basil Twice a year!! Oh my God. . . . What did I say?

Sybil It doesn't matter.

Basil Well, how was I to know?

He exits rapidly into the dining room, but the Abbotts have left. He sprints into the lobby, catching the Abbotts up at the main door.

Basil Hallo! You know, we were at cross purposes just now, there you were talking about sex and I thought you were talking about walks. Not sex!! Holidays. Holidays. Sex! Ha ha ha. No, my wife and I have one about twice a year – I mean holiday, a holiday, whereas so far as a good walk goes, well, we have a jolly good walk about two or three times a week, average . . .

Dr Abbott Well, we're just taking ours now.
Basil Thank you . . . well, enjoy it . . . The walk! The walk!

The Abbotts go out. Basil turns to the reception desk, where Raylene Miles, a very attractive Australian girl, is waiting.

Basil I'm so sorry . . .
Raylene My name is Raylene Miles. I have a reservation.
Basil Ah yes, that's right. Would you be so good as to fill this in . . . *(she takes the card and bends over the desk to write on it; she is wearing a rather low-cut dress and Basil's eyes stray downwards; she glances up at this very moment; he turns away embarrassed and then looks back)* Very nice.
Raylene . . . Oh. Thank you.
Basil Your thing. I mean, your charms! Charm! *(indicating her pendant)* In the middle . . .
Raylene Yes, I know.
Basil May I ask what it is?
Raylene *(writing)* It's a Saint Christopher's medal.
Basil Saint . . . ?
Raylene Saint Christopher. *(she holds it up so that Basil can look at it; he affects great interest, and at this moment Sybil approaches)* Patron saint of travellers.
Basil Oh, hallo dear. St Christopher's medal. *(Sybil gives him a look and moves behind him at the desk)* Protects travellers. *(to Raylene)* Very pretty.
Sybil Yes, isn't she . . . where did you put the order forms, Basil?
Basil Er . . . down there, dear.
Sybil Where?
Basil Down here, dear . . .

They both crouch down to look for them, and thus fail to see Johnson come in very cautiously through the main door. A pretty girl is with him, keeping out of sight. When he sees that both Basil and Sybil are occupied he signals to the girl, and she nips upstairs. He approaches the desk looking nonchalant.

Mr Johnson Hallo. Could I have the key to number six, please.
Sybil Oh, you're back early this evening, Mr Johnson.
Mr Johnson Yes, well I've got to be up early for mother.

Sybil gives him the key, with much smiling. He goes upstairs.

Basil *(to Raylene)* Thank you. We've put you in number seven.

Sybil *(ringing the bell)* Manuel . . .

Basil *(moving round the desk to take Raylene's cases)* It's all right, dear, I'll take them up. *(to Raylene)* We have a Spanish porter – we're training him at the moment . . . be quicker to train an *(loudly, after Johnson)* **ape**!!

He leads off up the stairs, followed by Raylene. Sybil looks after them beadily. Manuel comes out of the bar.

Sybil Never mind, Manuel. *(she spots a small carrier bag Raylene has left)* Oh! *(she picks it up and moves off; Manuel looks perplexed)*

The upstairs corridor. Johnson runs along it, opens the door to his room, letting the girl in. He closes the door behind them just as Basil and Raylene appear. They pass the Abbotts' and Johnson's rooms before coming to Raylene's – all three rooms are on the same side.

Basil I was just wondering – are you in fact Australian, at all, by any chance, may I ask?

Raylene Oh dear, is my accent that strong?

Basil Oh, no, no, no, it's just that you're quite tall, so I thought . . . *(they go into Raylene's room; Basil puts the cases down)* Here we are, this is your room. I hope it's to your liking, view of the English Riviera down there behind the trees. *(she admires the view; he admires her)* This is your bathroom . . . here we are . . . *(he turns the bathroom light switch, which is just outside the door, on and goes in; then comes out again)* Oh . . . light's not working. *(he goes into the bathroom)* I'll just fix it . . . have you had a tiring journey?

Raylene Seven hours in the coach. *(she starts doing some yoga-type relaxing exercises, rotating her head)* Is the dining room still open?

Basil *(from the bathroom)* Well, the chef leaves at nine I'm afraid. We could always do you sandwiches.

Raylene *(moving to the wall by the bathroom door)* I'd like a hot meal, really. Is there a restaurant near here? *(she stands against the wall and does a knees-bend)*

Basil Yes, there's an awfully good little Welsh place, Leek House, about five minutes walk – you'd have to go straight away.

Raylene Oh, that'll do fine. *(she stretches her arms up)*

Basil Just turn left out of the gate and straight on and it's on your right.

Without looking, he reaches out of the bathroom for the switch. His hand engages Raylene's left boob. He tries to switch it on, senses something is wrong, and feels it. Raylene looks down in disbelief just as Sybil enters the room. Basil leans out of the bathroom, sees where his hand is, looks at Raylene and then turns and sees Sybil. He snatches his hand away. There is an embarrassed pause.

Sybil *(to Raylene)* You left this downstairs.

She turns and leaves. Basil stares after her, then turns to Raylene.

Basil I'm sorry . . . I was trying the switch . . . I'm sorry . . . *(he rushes out after Sybil)*

The corridor. Sybil turns as Basil comes out of the room, her hands on her hips.

Basil Sybil, Sybil, Sybil, I'm sorry, I didn't know she was there, I was trying the switch . . .

Sybil It's **pathetic**, Basil.

Basil No, no look, Sybil, I was reaching for the switch . . .

Sybil Don't bother . . .

Basil Look, the lights weren't working in the bathroom, right, OK? So I went in, checked the fitting, which was loose . . .

Sybil I've read about it, Basil. The male menopause it's called. Oh . . . and one word of advice. If you're going to grope a girl, have the gallantry to stay **in** the room with her while you're doing it, mmm?

She turns and leaves. Basil starts after her but gives up. He goes back to Raylene's room.

Basil I'm sorry, I do apologize for . . . I was feeling for the switch.

Raylene Oh, I realize, that's perfectly all right. I hope your wife didn't . . .

Basil Oh, my wife, no, no, she's been on about that switch.

Raylene Where was that restaurant again?

Basil Out of the gate, turn left, five minutes, on your right. Leek House.

Raylene Thank you.
Basil Not at all.

He leaves. As he walks down the corridor he passes Johnson's door.

Mr Johnson's voice . . . 'Pretentious? *Moi?*'

Basil stops. He hears a female laugh. He listens at the door for a moment, then moves back just before the door opens and Johnson comes out.

Basil Yes? Can I help you?
Mr Johnson Um . . . I was wondering if I could get . . . um . . . a drink now.
Basil A drink.
Mr Johnson *(closing the door behind him)* Well . . . a bottle of champagne.
Basil Champagne?
Mr Johnson Yes.
Basil I see . . . you are aware of our rule about visitors, are you?
Mr Johnson *(innocently)* Mmm?
Basil No visitors in guests' rooms after ten o'clock.
Mr Johnson . . . Oh.
Basil . . . Of the opposite . . . um . . . sex.
Mr Johnson No, I wasn't.
Basil Ah.
Mr Johnson But I am now. So you'll send up the champagne, will you?
Basil *(surprised)* What?
Mr Johnson . . . The champagne.
Basil You're drinking it on your own, are you?
Mr Johnson I guess I'll have to.
Basil Very well. One bottle of champagne for one.
Mr Johnson Thank you.
Basil And one glass.
Mr Johnson That's all I need . . . unless you care to join me.
Basil No thank you. Not when I'm on the job.
Mr Johnson Oh, that's when I enjoy it the most.

He goes inside the room. Basil hurries down the stairs and calls.

Basil Manuel! *(Manuel appears)* A bottle of champagne and one glass. Quick!

Basil darts off upstairs again and stands by Johnson's door listening hard. Miss Tibbs and Miss Gatsby come up behind him.

Miss Tibbs Mr Fawlty.
Basil *(jumping slightly)* Mm?
Miss Tibbs Did you know there's a psychiatrist staying?
Basil . . . Yes, yes I did.
Miss Gatsby Has he come for the Major?
Basil What?
Miss Tibbs Has he come for the Major?
Basil No.
Miss Gatsby Oh good!
Miss Tibbs We were rather worried. *(they start to move away)*
Miss Gatsby *(to Miss Tibbs)* I'm sure they have them in Birmingham too.

They go off up the corridor. Basil moves to listen at the door again and as he does so it opens and Johnson is standing there.

Basil Good night, ladies. *(to Johnson)* It's just coming. *(he stands there; Johnson stands looking at him; he has to move off)* Won't be a moment.

He moves away and Johnson closes his door. Basil pauses by the next door, looks around, unlocks it, and slips in. It is the Abbotts' room. In the dark he closes the door behind him and goes over to the wall contiguous with Johnson's room. Putting his ear to the wall he listens intently. The Abbotts walk in and switch the light on. He sees them and starts, reacting a second time when he realizes that the man is the dreaded psychiatrist person. He goes smoothly into a wall-checking routine, tapping it in the manner of a doctor sounding someone's chest.

Basil This wall . . . er, we had some complaints from downstairs . . . I'm just giving it a check, OK? . . . yes, I think that's fine . . . Hang on . . . *(pauses dramatically)* No! No, we're all right. Fine, well, sorry to disturb you. Good night. Good night. *(he slips out of the door)*
The Abbotts *(bemused)* Good night.

In the corridor, Basil sees the coast is clear and puts his ear to Johnson's door. Mrs Abbott comes out of her room. Basil sees her and sounds the door a couple of times, just as he did in the Abbotts' room.

Basil Ah . . . *(turns to Mrs Abbott)* Can I help you?
Mrs Abbott The bathroom?
Basil Yes. Second on the left.

She moves off. The door opens and Johnson is standing there behind Basil.

Mr Johnson Yes?
Basil It's just coming.

Johnson gives him a very meaningful look and closes the door. In his room, he indicates to the girl, who is sitting on his bed, that someone is hovering about in the corridor. He bolts the door. In the corridor, Manuel runs up with a tray with a champagne bottle in an ice bucket and a glass on it. Basil takes it, puts his other hand on the doorknob. Takes a deep breath and turns the knob and hits the door with his shoulder. As it's bolted he bounces back dropping the tray. Manuel neatly catches the ice bucket with the bottle in it; the tray and glass drop noisily. Johnson's door opens. Basil sees Johnson and slaps Manuel on the head. Manuel drops the ice bucket.

Basil *(to Manuel) Stupidissimo!* You continental cretin! *(to Johnson)* I'm sorry. I'll get another. *(to Manuel) Un altero. Pronto! Pronto! Pronto! (he waves Manuel away)*
Dr Abbott *(looking out of his room)* Everything all right?
Basil Yes, fine, thank you. I'm afraid that Spanish ape . . . sorry . . . person . . . bungled it again. Dago bird brain! God knows how they ever got an Armada together. Still, I'll clear this up . . . right, well, if you'd like to go back to your rooms, thank you.

The good Dr Abbott disappears and Johnson also closes his door. Basil steps back for a moment and the Major hurries up to him.

The Major Fawlty!
Basil Yes?
The Major Here, here . . . I thought you ought to know . . .
Basil What?
The Major There's a psychiatrist in the hotel.
Basil Yes, I know.
The Major You know?
Basil Yes.
The Major Oh! Well apparently he's dressed up as a guest.

Basil Well, he **is** a guest, Major. *(the Major wanders off; to himself)* Perhaps he **has** come to get you.

Manuel hurries up with another tray with champagne and a glass on it. Basil takes the tray and knocks on Johnson's door. In Johnson's room, the girl is sitting on the bed. She nips into the bathroom and he lies nonchalantly back on the bed reading a newspaper.

Mr Johnson Come! *(Basil enters; everything looks normal)* Thank you. On the table, please. Thank you.

Basil puts the tray down, having a good look round. He spots an ashtray.

Basil Ah! *(he empties its contents into his hand, glances round once more and goes to the door)* Thank you. *(he goes out; there is a pause, then he suddenly re-opens the door)* Yes?

Failing to catch Johnson doing anything he closes the door. In the corridor, he opens his palm and peers at the ashes. He holds a cigarette butt up close to his eye. Dr Abbott comes out of his room behind Basil. Basil sees him after a moment, puts his hand behind his back suspiciously and then produces it again and opens it to show he is not behaving suspiciously.

Basil Filthy habit. *(dusts the ash off his hands)*

Dr Abbott The bathroom.

Basil Oh, second on the left.

Dr Abbott moves off. Basil creeps up to Raylene's room, opens the door and slips in. It is dark. He makes for the wall. But Raylene is asleep on the bed, and just as he gets there she wakes and screams.

Raylene Aaaaaah! Who is it?!

Basil It's all right. It's all right. It's only me! Please, please, it's only me!

Raylene What are you doing? What do you want?

Dr Abbott comes in and switches on the light.

Dr Abbott What's going on?

Basil Nothing! I didn't know she was in here. Just came in to check the wall. *(to Raylene)* Do you mind? . . . Sorry . . . I thought you'd gone down to the restaurant. *(he sounds the wall)*

Raylene *(puzzled)* I was just so tired.
Basil No, that's fine. Well, sorry to disturb you. *(to Dr Abbott)* Bloody walls. *(he leaves)*
Dr Abbott *(to Raylene)* Are you all right now?

The corridor. Basil comes out. Sybil is hurrying up.

Sybil What was that?
Basil What? Er . . . nothing, dear . . .
Sybil Why was she screaming? What were you doing?
Mr Johnson *(looking out of his room)* What's going on?
Basil Nothing. She thought there was someone in her room.
Mr Johnson Someone in her room?!
Basil Yes, someone in her room!
Mr Johnson Oh . . . you'll have to charge her double then.

He goes back inside. Dr Abbott comes out of Raylene's room.

Sybil *(to Basil)* What were you **doing** in there?
Basil *(to Dr Abbott)* Is she all right?
Dr Abbott She's all right now. *(he goes into his room)*
Sybil *(taking Basil's arm)* What were you **doing** in there?

Raylene comes out of her room.

Raylene Oh, I'm sorry, Mr Fawlty. I didn't realize it was you.
Basil That's all right. That's all right. *(to Sybil)* I'll tell you . . . I'll tell you later. *(he hurries off; Sybil is looking distinctly thoughtful)*
Raylene Silly of me, sorry, I didn't know it was him. He came in to check the walls.
Sybil To check the **walls**?

The lobby. Manuel is standing eating an ice-cream. Basil hurtles down the stairs.

Basil Manuel! Manuel! Quick! Come on!

He flies out through the main door. Manuel puts his ice-cream down and follows. They run outside. Basil picks up a ladder lying on the ground and they position it beneath a lighted window. In Johnson's room, Johnson is pouring champagne into a plastic mug for the girl. Outside, Basil starts to climb the ladder. Manuel follows, until Basil motions him back. He slides down. In Johnson's room he and the girl are drinking their champagne. Outside, Basil reaches the top of the ladder.

He peers in through the window. However, it is the Abbotts' room he is looking into. Mrs Abbott, in her nightdress, is brushing her hair. Dr Abbott is undressing. Just as Basil realizes his mistake they see him. They stare. He smiles wanly and starts sounding the window. He reaches too high and overbalances out of sight. The ladder falls back. Basil lands on his back with the ladder on top of him. He groans.

Manuel Help! Help! *(he rushes back into the hotel)*

In the lobby, Sybil is just coming down the stairs.

Sybil Basil! Basil! *(she goes into the dining room)*
Manuel *(running in)* Mrs Fawlty! Oh, Mrs Fawlty . . . Mr Fawlty!
Sybil What?
Manuel He hurt. He fall off ladder.
Sybil Off a ladder?
Manuel *Si.* Please come, come, come.

They move into the lobby.

Sybil What was he doing up a ladder?
Manuel He try to see girl.
Sybil What!
Manuel He try to see in room to see girl. Come! Come!
Sybil *(setting her mouth)* I see.
Manuel I tell him careful but he got to see girl.
Sybil Right!

They go out of the main doors at a good pace. Basil is on his feet, groggily setting the ladder up again. Sybil comes round the corner at a good speed.

Basil Hallo, dear. I was just going to . . .

He receives the mother of a smackeroo and falls flat on his back. Sybil turns on her heel and strides off. He staggers up to his feet.

Basil What the . . .

He starts after her, furious. Manuel gets out of the way quickly. Basil runs in through the main doors and up the stairs. Sybil has opened the door of her room by the time Basil catches her up.

Basil What in God's name do you think you're doing??! What did you hit me for?

Sybil . . . How dare you!! *(she hits him again)* How **dare** you!
Basil Have you gone mad, what's got into you?
Sybil You really don't know?
Basil No, I don't.
Sybil What were you doing up that ladder? Come on . . .
Basil I was trying to see the girl. Is that so strange? *(Sybil hits him)* Will you stop hitting me!
Sybil Get away from this door. And don't you dare try and come in here tonight.

She slams the door. Basil stares uncomprehendingly. Manuel has come into view. Basil sees him.

Basil Mad. She's gone completely mad.
Manuel Crazy. She go crazy.
Basil I mean, **what** in . . . ?
Manuel Crazy! I say to her, 'You try to see in girl's room' and . . . *(shrugs)* she go crazy.
Basil . . . What?
Manuel I tell her! You got to see girl . . . in bedroom. You crazy about this girl. OK? OK. So you go up to look at her . . . Mrs Fawlty . . . *(shrug)* She go crazy.

Basil imitates the shrug, then advances on Manuel, picks him up, turns him upside down and shakes him furiously.

Basil I am punishing you for being alive. And as long as you go on being alive, I shall go on . . . *(then he notices Mrs Abbott, returning from the bathroom, who is standing watching him; he drops Manuel and pretends to lecture him)* Now that's how an Englishman would do it, you see. Now, a German . . . a German would go . . . *(demonstrates a kick without actually connecting)* No, that's enough for tonight . . . all right, we'll go on with your training in the morning. *(to Mrs Abbott)* We're just training him in the art of hotel management. It's rather interesting, actually . . . *(he puts a casual arm out to rest against the Abbotts' door)* He's from Barcelona . . . *(but Dr Abbott opens the door and Basil falls right into the room, landing heavily; he gets up)* Sorry. I missed the door.
Dr Abbott . . . Oh . . .
Basil Everything all right? Everything er . . . **normal?**
Dr Abbott Yes, thank you.

Mrs Abbott goes into the room past Basil.

Basil Fine. Well . . . I'll leave you to it, then. I mean . . . to go to bed, to sleep . . . perchance to dream. Hah! Have a good night. Good night's sleep. Sleep well.

Mrs Abbott Good night. And you.

Basil Thank you! I will. *(he closes the door and stands in the corridor)* God knows **where** . . . (he looks around, looks at the broom cupboard, opens it, then looks at Johnson's door opposite) I'll get you, you Piltdown ponce.

The upstairs corridor. Early next morning. Basil, unshaven, is sitting at the top of the stairs. Polly appears carrying two tea-trays. She sees Basil and stares.

Polly Are you all right?

Basil Mmmm?

Polly Are you all right?

Basil Yes. Let me have one of those. *(takes one of the trays)* For Sybil. Yes, go on, go on! *(he hurries to Sybil's room and knocks on the door)* Sybil . . . dear . . . ?

Sybil's voice What do you want?

Basil Got your tea for you, dear.

Sybil's voice Just leave it outside the room.

Basil *(putting the tray down)* Yes, all right, dear . . . er, Sybil . . . ?

Sybil's voice I'm not **speaking** to you, Basil.

Basil Could I just have my electric razor, dear . . . just for the guests . . . *(the door opens and Sybil gives it to him; he puts his foot in the door)* Thank you dear . . . look . . .

Sybil *(trying to close the door)* Basil, will you . . .

Basil I just want to explain something, dear.

Sybil Get your foot out of the door.

Basil Let me explain.

Sybil I'm not interested.

Basil Look . . . when I said I wanted to look at that girl last night I wasn't talking about that . . . Raylene . . . something . . . that Australian girl . . . I was talking about the girl in the room next to her . . . in **Johnson**'s room.

Sybil . . . Basil.

Basil Johnson smuggled a girl into his room last night . . . that

was the one I was trying to get a look at, not that . . . Australian hayseed.

Sybil Basil, you've had eight hours to think of something . . . is that really the best you can come up with?

Basil You don't believe me.

Sybil Oh, go away.

Basil Right! I'll get her. I'm going to get her and show her to you.

Sybil Yes, you do that . . .

Basil Right, I will. *(she slams the door)* Right! All right . . . *(he runs off)*

In Johnson's room he and the girl are fully dressed. She is sitting on the bed putting on make-up. There is a knock at the door; she dodges into the bathroom.

Mr Johnson Come in.

Mrs Abbott looks in.

Mrs Abbott Oh, Mr Johnson. Do you want your guide back?

Mr Johnson Oh, thank you, yes . . .

She comes in; the door swings to behind her. In the corridor Basil steams into view. As he approaches Johnson's door he hears female laughter. Basil slips into the broom cupboard, leaving the door ajar. Mrs Abbott comes out of Johnson's room.

Mr Johnson's voice I'll see you later then. Thank you.

Mrs Abbott *(calling towards her room)* OK, darling.

Dr Abbott comes out. Basil leaps out of the cupboard brandishing a broom.

Basil Right! The game's up. *(he sees who he has confronted, then looks at a point high up on the wall)* Up there. Bit of game pie, got stuck up there. *(he jabs at the wall with the broom; the Abbotts stare for a moment)* There we are. Right. Everything back to normal. Enjoy your walk. *(he starts sweeping the floor; the Abbotts move off downstairs)*

Dr Abbott *(quietly, as they reach the foot of the stairs)* There's enough material there for an entire conference.

Upstairs, Basil puts the broom back into the cupboard but in doing so knocks something over. He bends down to sort it out, and picks up a bottle. He realizes that he has got dark sticky

stuff all over his hand. In the corridor, Johnson looks out of his room.

Mr Johnson OK, all clear.

The girl starts to come out but hears something and goes back in. Raylene comes out of her room. As she passes the cupboard Basil leaps out.

Basil Right! That's it!

He grabs her from behind. Unbeknown to him his messy hand clasps Raylene's right boob. She squeals.

Raylene What are you doing?! Jesus, what's going on?

Basil *(releasing her)* Shh! I'm sorry, I thought you were somebody else.

Raylene You scared the hell out of me . . .

Basil Yes, I'm awfully sorry, you see there's a girl in there, the bloke smuggled her in last night . . . *(Sybil appears)* . . . I was just explaining to Miss Miles about . . . our little problem . . . *(Raylene turns towards Sybil, the black handprint on her boob deafeningly apparent; Basil has not noticed it; Sybil has)* . . . with the extra guest . . . Mr Johnson's friend . . . in six . . . last night . . .

Sybil What's that on your hand, Basil?

Basil What? . . . Oh, that's some stuff in the cupboard, dear. Something I knocked over . . . *(he follows Sybil's eye-line and sees Raylene's hand-printed right boob)* Agh! *(instinctively reaches out to hide it, touches Raylene again, then pulls back sharply)* Sorry!! I got confused.

Raylene What?

Basil Sorry . . . I got confused.

Sybil has gone. Basil rushes after her. He catches her at the kitchen door.

Basil Sybil! Sybil! Sybil!!! Look. I'll tell her to go. I'm going to get the other girl just to prove it to you but I'll tell Miss Miles to . . . to leave . . . Out! Out! Right! Out! Out!

He rushes back up to Raylene's room. The door is ajar. He enters the room very cautiously. It is empty.

Basil Um . . . excuse me . . . I do want to apologize but I'm afraid I shall have to ask you to . . .

Raylene comes in from the bathroom, dressed in white trousers and a sexy push-up bra. She doesn't see Basil, who drops out of sight behind the bed. She returns to the bathroom; he is about to get out when there is a knock at the door. He leaps away. Raylene, in the bathroom, hears the knock and turns.

Raylene Come in.

She goes back into the bedroom. Sybil comes in. There is no sign of Basil.

Sybil I'm sorry to bother you, I thought I'd better apologize for my husband's behaviour . . .

Raylene No, please, really Mrs Fawlty . . .

Sybil He's going through rather a disturbed time at the moment . . .

Raylene No please, look really, I don't quite understand, he **does** seem a bit worked up about something but I'm sure there's some quite innocent explanation . . .

But Sybil has noticed Basil's finger sticking out of the wardrobe, holding the door shut.

Sybil Basil.

There is no response. She bangs on the door. The finger disappears rapidly. Basil comes out.

Basil Oh, hallo dear . . . just checking the doors . . .

Sybil looks at Raylene, whose jaw sags.

Sybil *(to Raylene)* All right, what's going on?

Raylene . . . I was in the bathroom!

Basil Yes she was, dear, so I just popped in to have a look at these hinges and . . .

Sybil Do you **really** imagine, even in your **wildest dreams**, that a girl like this could possibly be interested in an ageing brilliantined stick insect like you?

Basil . . . A girl like who, dear?

Sybil **This** one, Basil. The one you've been chasing ever since she arrived.

Basil My dear woman, have you gone out of your mind?

Sybil What are you doing in here?

Basil Look, you know the trouble we've been having with these hinges . . . All right, all right, if you really want to know, I

came to apologize for the incident just now when I thought she was the girl in Johnson's room . . . you know, when I put my hand on . . .

Sybil walks out into the corridor. Basil comes running after her.

Basil Sybil, Sybil, Sybil, look . . .

Sybil If you think I've got time to listen to any more of your hopeless lily-livered jellyfish lies . . .

Basil They are not lies, I am trying . . .

Sybil Why can't you be a man? If you want to grope the guests, why can't you at least be **honest** about it, without making up some pathetic song and dance . . .

Basil *(finally losing his temper)* Shut up!

Sybil . . . Oh, you've done it now.

Basil No I haven't. I'm just going to. I'm fed up with you, you . . . rancorous coiffeured old sow. Why don't you syringe the doughnuts out of your ears and get some sense into that dormant organ you keep hidden in that rat's maze of yours? There is a woman in that room that Johnson smuggled in last night, right? That's the woman I've been trying to get hold of. *(Sybil is clearly unimpressed)* Right! Right! *(he pulls her towards Johnson's room)* Stand there! Stand there! . . . and watch. *(he is so forceful that Sybil is momentarily stunned into submission; he knocks on Johnson's door; Johnson opens it)* Champagne?

Mr Johnson . . . What?

Basil Another bottle of champagne, perhaps? I thought you said you rather enjoyed it when you were on the job.

Mr Johnson Have you got a screw loose?

Basil A screw? No, it's just that I thought that I'd rather formed the impression that there was someone in the room with you. A female person, perhaps, a lady, you know – an opposite person of the contradictory gender.

Mr Johnson **Mrs** Johnson is in here, yes.

Basil *(with heavy irony)* Oh, of course, I should have guessed. Oh yes, of course . . . the little woman, eh. The only thing is . . . I thought you told my wife that you were single.

Mr Johnson I am.

Basil I see. So who's this Mrs Johnson then, eh? The late President's wife? Or . . .

Mr Johnson She's my mother.

Basil . . . Your mother. Oh, I see. This little bit of crumpet's your old mummy, is she? Oh this is rich. Mrs Johnson popped up for a quickie, did she?

Mr Johnson Certainly. *(he goes into the room)*

The Misses Tibbs and Gatsby and the Major have appeared in the background. Basil rubs his hands in sarcastic glee.

Basil Mother Johnson. Mother Johnson. Come out, come out, wherever you are. *(a very nice and very elderly lady appears at the door; Basil switches to charm)* How do you do, are you enjoying yourself? . . .

Mrs Johnson Yes, thank you.

Basil Well, I'll get the champagne, this calls for a celebration.

Mrs Johnson goes back inside. The door shuts. Sybil, Misses Tibbs and Gatsby and the Major move off. Basil buries his face in his hands, then, pulling his jacket right over his head he squats down and hops about in agony. The Abbotts come up the stairs in time to see this performance. Mrs Abbott looks to her husband for professional advice.

Dr Abbott I'm on holiday.

They go into their room. Basil rolls onto his side and assumes the foetal position.

WALDORF SALAD

Sybil Fawlty Prunella Scales
Mr Libson Anthony Dawes
Basil Fawlty John Cleese
Mrs Johnstone June Ellis
Mr Johnstone Terence Conoley
Miss Hare Dorothy Frere
Miss Gurke Beatrice Shaw
Mr Arrad Norman Bird
Mrs Arrad Stella Tanner
Manuel Andrew Sachs
Polly Connie Booth
Mrs Hamilton Claire Nielson
Mr Hamilton Bruce Boa
Major Gowen Ballard Berkeley
Miss Tibbs Gilly Flower
Miss Gatsby Renée Roberts

Third of second series, first broadcast on 5 March 1979, BBC2.

The hotel dining room. It is towards the end of dinner-time. The room is very full and Basil, Polly and Manuel are bustling about frantically. Sybil, however, is standing by a central table, ignoring the confusion. She is talking to Mr Libson, who is sitting by himself at the table. He looks extremely bored.

Sybil Oh, it's a lovely part of the world, isn't it? All those beautiful trees and fields and a variety of birds.

Mr Libson Yes, that's true.

Sybil And you can just go there and get away from it all, away from the helter-skelter of modern life. Because we all do **need** our solitude, don't we.

Mr Libson *(feelingly)* Yes, we do.

Sybil I mean, nowadays it's **not** easy to find the time to . . . I don't know, **enjoy** life because there's always things to do, it's all so hectic, isn't it. All of us just running around letting things get on top of us, and quite honestly what's the point?

Basil rushes by on his way to a table where Mr and Mrs Johnstone sit. Mrs Johnstone has a half-finished prawn cocktail in front of her. Mr Johnstone has a finished melon.

Basil Have you finished?

Mrs Johnstone Er, yes . . .

Basil *(starting to collect the plates)* Thank you.

Mr Johnstone Er, my wife . . .

Basil Yes?

Mrs Johnstone I think those prawns might be a bit off.

Basil Oh, I don't think so.

Mrs Johnstone Well, they do taste rather funny.

Basil Well, no one else has complained.

Mrs Johnstone Well, I really do think they're off.

Basil But you've eaten half of them.

Mrs Johnstone Well, I didn't notice it at the start.

Basil You didn't notice at the start?

Mrs Johnstone Well, it was the sauce, you see. I wasn't sure.

Basil So you ate half to **make** sure?

Mr Johnstone Look, my wife thinks they're off.

Basil Well, what am I supposed to do about it . . . do you want another first course?

Mrs Johnstone No thank you.

Mr Johnstone You're sure?
Mrs Johnstone No, really, I'll just have the main.
Mr Johnstone *(to Basil)* Well, we'll just cancel it.
Basil Cancel it? Oh, deduct it from the bill, is that what you mean?
Mr Johnstone Well, as it's inedible . . .
Basil Well, only **half** of it's inedible apparently.
Mr Johnstone Well, deduct half now, and if my wife brings the other half up during the night, we'll claim the balance in the morning. And now we'd like our lambs, please.

Basil makes off towards the kitchen. Sybil is still boring Mr Libson.

Sybil Well, three we know have passed on this year, all in their early sixties. So I've cut out butter . . .

Manuel comes in with a jug of water. He can't remember who it is for and looks round. Mr Arrad, sitting with his wife, tries to attract Manuel's attention, but Manuel puts the jug down at a table occupied by two middle-aged women, Miss Gurke and Miss Hare.

Miss Hare No, really it's all right.
Miss Gurke But it's all gristle.
Miss Hare No, honestly, there's a nice bit, see?
Miss Gurke Oh, Doris, it's awful.
Miss Hare Oh, no, dear, it's not as bad as that. I've had worse.
Miss Gurke I don't know how they get away with it.
Basil *(checking as he passes, pro forma)* Everything all right?
Miss Gurke Yes, thank you.
Miss Hare Very good, thank you very much . . .

Basil moves away. Miss Gurke looks disapprovingly after him. Sybil finally leaves Mr Libson and goes into the kitchen. Basil comes up to Mr and Mrs Arrad's table.

Basil Everything to your satisfaction?
Mr Arrad Yes, thank you.
Basil Thank you. *(he moves on)*
Mrs Arrad *(to her husband)* Why don't you **say** something?
Mr Arrad There's no point, is there. We just won't come here again.
Mrs Arrad Then I'll say something.
Mr Arrad Look, it won't do any good, we're leaving tomorrow.

Mrs Arrad Well, I'm going to. We've been sitting here waiting for nearly half an hour . . .

But Manuel has at last arrived with their meals – plaice for Mrs Arrad and lamb for Mr Arrad.

Mr Arrad What's this?
Manuel *Si.*
Mr Arrad Look, I ordered the cold meat salad. I've been waiting about half an hour for it.
Manuel Salad?
Mr Arrad Yes.
Manuel You want change?
Mr Arrad . . . No! I don't want to change . . .
Manuel OK. *(starts to leave)*
Mr Arrad Wha . . . where are you **going?** I don't **want** this!
Manuel You say you no want change.
Mr Arrad I want the salad.

Manuel moves off mystified. Basil is in the vicinity.

Mrs Arrad *(nudging her husband)* Go on . . .
Mr Arrad *(to Basil)* Excuse me.
Basil Yes.
Mr Arrad Look, we've been waiting here for about half an hour now, I mean we gave the waiter our order . . .
Basil Oh, him. He's hopeless, isn't he.
Mr Arrad Yes, well, I don't wish to complain, but when he finally does bring something, he's got it wrong.
Basil You think I don't know? I mean, you only have to eat here. We have to live with it. I had to pay his fare all the way from Barcelona. But we can't get the staff, you see. It's a nightmare. *(he moves off feeling better)*
Mrs Arrad *(to her husband)* You were supposed to be complaining to **him.**

Manuel comes running up with a plate of meat salad. He puts it in front of Mr Arrad. Then he looks at it and stares. Mr Arrad takes his first mouthful; Manuel whips the plate away again. Basil sees this. Manuel peers at the plate.

Basil *(taking the plate away from Manuel)* Will you stop that! *(he puts it in front of Mr Arrad)* I'm sorry about that.

Manuel whispers in Basil's ear. Basil peers over Mr Arrad's shoulder.

Basil Excuse me. *(he takes the plate and examines it, puts it back and then removes it again just as Mr Arrad is about to start eating; he consults Manuel)* Where?

Manuel *(pointing)* Look!

Basil Thank you so much. *(he replaces the plate)* Enjoy your meal.

He moves off. The Arrads peer at the plate with suspicion. Manuel mimes whatever it is he has seen by flapping his arms. Basil passes the Johnstones' table.

Mr Johnstone You haven't forgotten our lambs, have you?

Basil No, no, they're coming, they're coming!

Mrs Arrad *(calling Basil)* Excuse me. There is sugar in the salt-cellar.

Basil . . . Anything else?

Mrs Arrad I've just put it all over the plaice.

Basil All over the place? What were you doing with it?

Mrs Arrad All over the **plaice**.

Basil *(catching Polly)* Polly – would you ask Terry not to finish yet – we need another one of these. *(hands her the plaice)* There is sugar on it.

Polly What a sweet plaice.

Basil What?

Polly I'll have it re-placed.

Basil What is sugar doing in this salt-cellar? What do you think we pay you for?

Polly My staying power? *(goes into the kitchen with the offending plaice)*

Mr Johnstone *(calling Basil)* The lamb!

Basil I'm getting them, I'm getting them!

He goes into the kitchen. Sybil comes out; Miss Gurke gestures to her.

Miss Gurke Er . . . excuse me.

Sybil Yes?

Miss Gurke I'm sorry, but do you think we could cancel our fruit salads?

Sybil Well, it's a little tricky, Chef's just opened the tin.

Miss Gurke Oh.

Miss Hare Never mind, I'm sure it'll be very nice.

Sybil goes back to Mr Libson's table with his next course.

Sybil There we are.
Mr Libson Ah, thank you.
Sybil Oh yes, I do like really beautiful places . . .
Basil *(coming by carrying several things)* Busy this evening, isn't it.
Sybil *(to Mr Libson)* I'll tell you a few of my favourites . . .
Basil I said it's busy this evening.
Sybil I'm talking to Mr Libson, Basil.
Basil Good. Well, that's a help.
Sybil I'm sure you can cope.
Basil Oh, yes, I can cope. Coping's easy. Not puréeing your loved ones, that's the difficult part.

He is about to deliver the two plates of lamb to Mr Johnstone, who is relieved that the moment has at last come. However, the reception bell sounds.

Sybil *(to Mr Libson)* Did you know Bideford bridge has all different . . .
Basil There's someone at reception, dear. Shall I get it?
Sybil Yes.
Basil It's my turn is it? Fine. Oh yes! So it is. Funny, it's been my turn for fifteen years. *(he manages to get the door to the lobby open, still holding the plates)* Still, when I'm dead it'll be your turn, dear – you'll be 'it'.
Mr Johnstone *(seeing his lambs disappear)* Excuse me, there are two lambs here.
Basil I'll have them removed if they're bothering you.

He moves into the lobby. Mrs Hamilton is standing by the reception desk.

Basil *(aggressively)* Yes?
Mrs Hamilton Good evening.

Basil realizes she is rather attractive and slows down a bit.

Mr Johnstone *(from the dining room)* Are those lambs ours?
Basil *(over his shoulder)* Not yet. *(to Mrs Hamilton)* Good evening.
Mrs Hamilton I reserved a room, by telephone, this morning . . . Mr and Mrs Hamilton.
Basil Indeed yes. I remember it well. *(he goes behind the desk, putting down the plates)* Ah, excellent, Hamilton? . . .
Mrs Hamilton That's right.

Basil Well, may I welcome you to Fawlty Towers. I trust your stay will be an enjoyable and gracious one.

Mr Johnstone *(appearing in the lobby and pointing at the plates)* Could we have those now?

Basil Oh, by all means.

Mr Johnstone Finished with them, have you?

Basil Absolutely. *(Mr Johnstone takes the plates and turns.) Bon apétitttttttttttt.*

Mr Johnstone turns round. Basil beams.

Mr Johnstone *(to Mrs Hamilton)* I recommend the self-service here. It's excellent.

Basil That'll be all, thank you.

Mr Johnstone What?

Basil Your lambs will be getting cold, Mr Johnstone.

Mr Johnstone Colder.

Basil If you'd like them warmed up?

Mr Johnstone Forget it. *(he exits angrily)*

Basil You could get your wife to sit on 'em. *(to Mrs Hamilton)* I'm so sorry, but the rubbish we get in here. . . . Now, if you'd be so very kind as to fill that form out . . . *(turns to get the key)* Mr and Mrs Hamilton, ah yes, now we've put you in room twelve, which has a charming panoramic view overlooking the lawn.

Mr Hamilton has come in. He is aggressively American. He is also very wet.

Mr Hamilton What a drive, eh? Everything on the wrong side of the road – and the weather, what do you get for living in a climate like this, green stamps? It's terrible.

Basil *(to Mrs Hamilton)* I'm sorry about this.

Mr Hamilton Took five hours from London. . . . Couldn't find the freeway. Had to take a little back street called the M5.

Basil Well, I'm sorry it wasn't wide enough for you. A lot of the English cars have steering wheels.

Mr Hamilton They do, do they? You wouldn't think there was room for them inside.

Basil *(quietly, to Mrs Hamilton)* See what I mean?

Mrs Hamilton What?

Basil *(to himself)* Rub-bish. *(flicks a glance at Mr Hamilton and subtly holds his nose)*

Mrs Hamilton May I introduce my husband?

Basil *(rubs his nose hard, smiles at Mr Hamilton, then looks round)* The rubbish we get in here. *(picks up a sheet of paper)* Look at that. *(rolls it into a ball; Sybil appears at the kitchen door; Basil waves the ball at her)*

Sybil Basil!

Basil More rubbish, dear.

Sybil What?

Basil More of that bloody rubbish. Coh!

Sybil Polly and Manuel are going, Basil.

Basil Yes, just dealing with Mr and Mrs Hamilton, dear.

Sybil Good evening.

Mr & Mrs Hamilton Good evening.

Sybil goes into the dining room. Basil rings the bell.

Basil Manuel! Manuel will bring your bags to your room. I hope you enjoy your stay.

Mr Hamilton Thank you. Do we need to reserve a table for dinner?

Basil Dinner?

Mr Hamilton Yes. *(Basil does a lot of looking at his watch)* Is there a problem?

Basil Well, it **is** after nine o'clock.

Mr Hamilton So?

Basil Well, yes . . . we do actually stop serving at nine.

Mr Hamilton Nine.

Basil Well, look – if you could go straight in I'm sure we could . . .

Mr Hamilton Look, we've taken five hours to get here. We'd like to freshen up, maybe have a drink first, you know.

Basil Yes . . . um . . . you couldn't do that afterwards?

Mrs Hamilton Do **what?**

Basil Well . . .

Mr Hamilton You mean have our drink before dinner, after dinner, freshen up and go to bed?

Basil If you could, it would make things a lot easier for us.

Mr Hamilton Shall we go to bed **now?** Would that make it easier for you?

Basil What?

Mr Hamilton We're a little tired, fella. We want to clean up, relax. We'll be down in a few minutes.

Basil Yes, well, the chef does actually stop at nine.

Mr Hamilton Nine. Nine. Why does your chef stop at nine? Has he got something terminal?

Basil No, no, but that's when he, in fact, stops.

Mr Hamilton Now look, we drove from London to stay here, right? Are you telling me that you can't stay open a few minutes longer so that we can eat properly?

Basil Well, we can do you sandwiches . . . ham, cheese . . .

Mr Hamilton We want something hot.

Basil Toasted sandwiches?

Mr Hamilton You're joking.

Basil Well . . . not really.

Mr Hamilton Not really. *(to Mrs Hamilton)* Can you believe this? *(to Basil)* What the hell's wrong with this country? You can't get a drink after three, you can't eat after nine, is the war still on?

Basil No, no, no, but it's the staff, you see.

Manuel comes from the kitchen to collect the bags.

Mr Hamilton Oh, the staff . . .

Basil We have to get the staff . . .

Mr Hamilton How much?

Basil What?

Mr Hamilton *(pulling out a wad of notes)* How much of this Mickey Mouse money do you need to keep the chef on for half an hour? One . . . two . . . twenty pounds, uh? Is that enough?

Basil *(pauses to think, then)* I'll see what I can do.

Mr Hamilton Thank you.

The Hamiltons start up the stairs. Basil looks at the notes, pockets them and hurries across to the kitchen. Manuel, barging through the Hamiltons, leads them up the stairs.

Manuel Excuse me, pardon, pardon, excuse me please, this way please . . .

The kitchen. Terry is washing his hands as Basil enters, sees a trifle and sniffs it.

Basil Gosh, that does look absolutely marvellous, doesn't it. Um . . . oh, Terry, I almost forgot. Some guests have just arrived, right at the last moment as usual, typical . . . I'm sorry, but this puts us out just as much as it puts you out.

Terry Don't put me out, Mr Fawlty.

Basil Er, no, they want dinner, you see, and they insist first

on scraping off some of the filth that's somehow got caked to them cruising down the M5.

Terry Well, I got my class tonight, Mr Fawlty.

Polly *(looking round the door)* We're ready, Terry.

Terry Right-ho, Poll. *(Polly goes)*

Basil Wait a minute, wait a minute . . . didn't I say? I mean that I will make it up to you, did I? Out of my own pocket.

Terry It's not the money, Mr Fawlty. My karate means a lot to me.

Basil Half an hour's overtime and a taxi home.

Terry If I miss a week, Mr Fawlty, next week I don't get out in one piece.

Basil An hour's overtime.

Terry Sorry, Mr Fawlty.

Basil What am I going to say to them?

Terry . . . Two hours.

Basil What?

Terry Two hours' overtime.

Basil I thought you said it wasn't the money.

Terry It ain't, but I can't think what you're going to say to your guests.

Basil Look, Terry, I'd pay you two hours' overtime if I could **afford** it!

A car horn sounds outside.

Terry *(making to go)* Sorry, Mr Fawlty.

Basil An hour and a half!

Terry Cash?

Basil Cash!

Terry All right, Mr Fawlty, an hour and a half, but I go at half-past nine, then I still get some of my class.

Basil . . . And I do the washing up.

Terry Well, you know how it is, Mr Fawlty.

Basil Yes, I know how it is. I pay you for an hour and a half and you clear off after half an hour, that's how it is. *(gives him some money)* That's socialism.

Terry Oh, no, Mr Fawlty, that's the free market.

Polly *(looking round the door again)* Come on, Terry. Mustn't keep the lady waiting.

Basil The lady!

Polly She's from Finland, Mr Fawlty, and very pretty. Tall,

blonde . . . *(Terry gestures frantically at her from behind Basil)* um . . . *(she stops and exits)*

Basil This Finnish floozie's your karate teacher, is she?

Terry Well, it's a sort of karate, ain't it. . . .

Basil Right, give me that. *(grabs the money back)*

Terry What?

Basil I pay you overtime to miss a class, not to keep some bit of crumpet hanging around.

Terry Yes, but she's . . .

Basil No, it's all right, I'm doing the washing-up, I'll do the cooking too. You go off and enjoy yourself. Don't worry about me, you go and have a good time. I'll be all right. Go and have a bit of fun with a Finn.

Terry exits into the lobby. Polly is waiting.

Polly Come on, Manuel.

Polly and Terry exit throught the main doors. Manuel comes in from the bar.

Manuel Hey, where are you, Polly? Wait for me. *(he chases off after them)*

The dining room, a bit later. Sybil is sitting at a table near the door, reading a Harold Robbins novel. The door opens and Basil ushers in the Hamiltons.

Basil Thank you. If you'd care to sit over there . . .

Sybil Good evening.

Mr & Mrs Hamilton Good evening.

Sybil Is your room to your liking?

Mr Hamilton Yes, it's very nice.

Mrs Hamilton Very nice, thank you.

Sybil Oh good. *(she rises and carries her finished starter back to the kitchen)*

Basil I'll just get you tonight's menu . . . Oh, would you care for a drink before your meal?

Mr Hamilton A scotch and water and screwdriver, please.

Basil Um . . . and for you, madam?

Mrs Hamilton The screwdriver's for me.

Basil I see . . . um . . . would you like it now or after your meal?

Mrs Hamilton Well, now, please.

Basil There's nothing I can put right?
Mrs Hamilton What?
Basil Absolutely. So it's one scotch and one screwdriver.
Mr Hamilton I think I'll join you. *(to Basil)* Make that two screwdrivers, will you?
Basil You'd like a screwdriver as well?
Mr Hamilton You got it.
Basil Fine. So it's one scotch and you each need a screwdriver.
Mr Hamilton No, no, no. Forget the scotch. Two screwdrivers.
Basil I understand. And you'll leave the drinks.
Mr Hamilton What?
Basil Nothing to drink.
Mr Hamilton What do you mean, 'Nothing to drink'?
Basil Well you can't drink your screwdrivers, can you. Ha ha.
Mr Hamilton What else would you suggest that we do with them?
Mrs Hamilton Vodka and orange juice.
Basil Ah, certainly madam.
Mr Hamilton Make that two. And forget about the screwdrivers.
Basil You're sure?
Mr Hamilton We can manage without them.
Basil As you wish, sir. *(he goes into the kitchen)*
Mr Hamilton *(reading from a tourist magazine)* 'Relax in the carefree atmosphere of old English charm . . .' *(he sees Sybil who has just come back in)* I hope we're not intruding on your dinner hour.
Sybil *(sitting at her table)* Not at all, no. You're American?
Mr Hamilton That's right.
Sybil Where are you from?
Mrs Hamilton California.
Sybil How lovely. **You're** English, though?
Mrs Hamilton Yes, but I've been over there ten years now.
Sybil **Ten** years. Do you ever get home-sick?
Mrs Hamilton Oh, yes. But I love it there – the climate's so wonderful. You can swim and sunbathe and then after lunch drive up into the mountains and ski.
Sybil How wonderful. *(Basil enters)*
Mr Hamilton I like England and the English people, but I sure couldn't take this climate.
Mrs Hamilton Harry finds it too gloomy.
Basil *(putting the drinks on the Hamiltons' table)* Oh, I don't

find it too gloomy. Do you, Sybil?

Sybil Yes I do, Basil.

Basil Well, yes, my wife finds it too gloomy. I find it rather bracing.

Sybil What do you find bracing, Basil? . . . the damp, the drizzle, the fog . . .

Basil Well, it's not always like this, dear. It changes.

Sybil My husband's like the climate. **He** changes. This morning he went on for two hours about the 'bloody weather', ha ha ha.

Basil Yes, well, it has been unusually damp this week, in fact, but normally we're rather spoiled down here on the English Riviera.

Sybil Mr and Mrs Hamilton were telling me about California. You can swim in the morning and then in the afternoon you can drive up into the mountains and ski.

Basil It must be rather tiring.

Mr Hamilton Well, one has the choice.

Basil Yes, but I don't think that would suit me. I like it down here. It's very mild all the year round. We have palm trees here in Torquay, you know. Do you have palm trees in California?

Mr Hamilton Burt Lancaster had one, they say. But I don't believe them. *(he tastes his screwdriver)* What the hell is that?

Basil Er . . . Vodka and orange juice . . .

Mr Hamilton Orange juice?

Mrs Hamilton I'm afraid it's not fresh.

Basil Isn't it? *(he takes it and sniffs it)*

Mrs Hamilton No.

Basil We've just opened the bottle.

Mr Hamilton Look, fresh means it comes out of an orange, not out of a bottle.

Basil Ah! You'd like freshly **squeezed** orange juice.

Mr Hamilton As against freshly unscrewed orange juice, yes.

Basil . . . Leave it to me, I mean, I'll get chef on to it straight away *(he bustles off into the kitchen)*

Sybil Sorry about that. A lot of English people are used to the flavour of the bottled . . .

Mrs Hamilton Oh, that's all right. It's just that back home fresh orange juice comes like running water.

Sybil Does it really? 'Course, it's so good for your skin, isn't

it. I'd love to go to California some day. It looks so exciting. *(she indicates her book)*

Mrs Hamilton Oh! *Never Love A Stranger.* Do you like it?

Sybil Oh, I love Harold Robbins. I've read this one three times.

Mrs Hamilton *The Pirate* is his best, I think. I read them when Harry's away. I just don't seem to have the time when he's home.

Sybil Who needs Harold Robbins when you've got the real thing. *(she laughs; Basil enters)*

Mrs Hamilton How long have you been married, Mrs Fawlty?

Sybil Oh, since 1485.

Basil *(putting the screwdrivers down)* There we are, fresh orange juice.

Sybil But seriously though, his men are all so interesting. Ruthless and sexy and . . . powerful.

Basil *(handing out the menus)* Who's this, then, dear? Proust? E. M. Forster?

Sybil Harold Robbins.

Basil Oh, of course, yes. My wife likes Harold Robbins. After a hard day's slaving under the hair-dryer she needs to unwind with a few aimless thrills.

Sybil Basil! *(she exits to the kitchen)*

Basil Have you ever read any? It really is the most awful American . . . well, not America, but trans-Atlantic tripe. A sort of pornographic muzak. Still, it keeps my wife off the streets.

Mr Hamilton We both like him.

Basil *(looks disturbed for a moment)* Oh! **Robbins**!

Mr Hamilton What?

Basil Harold Rob**bins**. I thought you meant that awful man, what's his name, oh, Harold . . . Robinson. Have you read any Harold Robinson? Ah! Painful!

Mr Hamilton How about Waldorf salad.

Basil Was that one? Yes, you're absolutely right. Oh, that was a shocker, wasn't it.

Mr Hamilton . . . Could you make me a Waldorf salad.

Basil Oh . . . a . . . Wa . . . ?

Mr Hamilton Waldorf salad.

Basil . . . I think we're just out of Waldorfs.

Mr Hamilton *(to Mrs Hamilton)* I don't believe this.

Mrs Hamilton It's not very well known here, Harry.

Basil Yes, may I recommend tonight the . . .

Mr Hamilton Look, I'm sure your chef knows how to fix me a Waldorf salad, huh?

Basil I wouldn't be **too** sure.

Mr Hamilton Well, he's a chef, isn't he?

Basil Yes, you wouldn't prefer . . .

Mr Hamilton *(shouting)* Well, find out, will you? Just go out there and see if he knows how to fix me a Waldorf salad!

Basil . . . Of course. *(he goes into the kitchen, but re-appears almost immediately)* He's not **absolutely** positive . . . he's almost got it. It's lettuce and tomatoes, walled in with . . . ?

Mr Hamilton No, no, no, it's celery, apples, walnuts, grapes.

Mrs Hamilton In a mayonnaise sauce.

Basil Right. Incidentally, he did ask me to say that he does specially recommend the pâté tonight.

Mr Hamilton I don't want pâté.

Basil Or the . . . the grapefruit.

Mr Hamilton Grapefruit?

Basil The grapefruit.

Mr Hamilton How's it done?

Basil Well, it's halved, with a cherry in the centre. *(Sybil re-enters)*

Mr Hamilton Look! I haven't paid you twenty pounds to have some guy cut a grapefruit in half and stick a cherry in the centre. *(Sybil reacts to the 'twenty pounds')*

Basil Exactly.

Mr Hamilton I want a Waldorf salad.

Basil Absolutely. One Waldorf salad.

Mrs Hamilton And a green salad for me.

Basil And one green salad. Yes. And if we can't manage the Waldorf salad . . . ?

Mr Hamilton *(loudly)* I want a Waldorf salad! And a couple of *filets mignons. (Basil is flummoxed)*

Mrs Hamilton Steaks.

Mr Hamilton Steaks!!

Basil Steaks!

Mr Hamilton Done rare.

Basil Done rare!

Mr Hamilton Not out of a bottle

Basil Not out of a bottle. Right. *(he disappears into the kitchen)*

Sybil Would you like to see the wine list? *(she gives it to them)*

Mr Hamilton Thank you.

Sybil May I ask, did you say you'd paid twenty pounds . . . ?

Mr Hamilton Yes, but it's not the money, my wife and I, we wanted dinner and your husband said your chef usually leaves at nine o'clock . . .

Sybil Well, this can't be right. There's no reason chef couldn't stay . . .

Basil *(re-appearing from the kitchen)* I'm awfully sorry, he's forgotten already . . . walnuts, cheese . . .

Mr Hamilton No! No cheese! It's celery, apples, walnuts, grapes!

Basil Right!

Mr Hamilton In mayonnaise.

Basil Right! *(shouting into the kitchen)* Now come on! *(goes into the kitchen)*

Sybil Um . . . would you excuse me one moment?

Mr Hamilton Excuse me . . . a bottle of the Volnay, please.

Sybil Of course. Thank you. *(she goes into the kitchen)*

In the kitchen, Basil is rummaging frantically in a large cardboard box.

Sybil What's this about twenty pounds, Basil?

Basil There's no celery. Would you believe it?

Sybil I'll find the celery. What about this twenty pounds?

Basil He gave me twenty pounds to keep the kitchens open, but chef wouldn't . . . I mean, where does he put things?

Sybil If you'd just look . . .

Basil I **have** looked. There's no celery, there's no grapes . . . walnuts! That's a laugh, easier to find a packet of sliced hippopotamus in suitcase sauce than a walnut in this bloody kitchen. *(he looks in the fridge)*

Sybil Now, we've got apples. *(holding up some)*

Basil Oh, terrific! Let's celebrate. We'll have an apple party. Everybody brings his own apple and stuffs it down somebody's throat.

Sybil Basil, I'll find everything. Just go and get a bottle of Volnay.

Basil What's a waldorf, anyway – a walnut that's gone off?

Sybil It's the hotel, Basil. The Waldorf Hotel. In New York.

Basil *(struck with an idea)* Wait, wait.

Sybil *(warningly)* Basil.

Basil *(going into the dining room)* Everything all right?

Mrs Hamilton Yes thank you.

Mr Hamilton Never been better.

Basil Oh good. Um . . . by the way. I wonder . . . have you by any chance ever tried a Ritz salad?

Mr Hamilton A Ritz salad?

Basil Yes – it's a traditional old English . . . thing. It's apples, grapefruit and potatoes in a mayonnaise sauce.

Mr Hamilton No, don't think I ever tried that.

Basil Ah!

Mr Hamilton Don't think I ever will, either.

Basil No, well, that's probably pretty sound. Well, look, um . . . about this Waldorf salad of yours . . .

Mr Hamilton Yes?

Basil Um . . . I've had a bit of a tête-a-tête with chef, and the point is, we're all right on the apples. Absolutely no problem with them at all. Now . . . on the celery front, well, er . . . perhaps I should explain, we normally get our celery delivered on a Wednesday, along with our cabbages, onions, walnuts, grapes . . . that sort of thing, but this week the driver . . .

Mr Hamilton Mr Fawlty.

Basil Yes, he was putting the crate into the van . . .

Mr Hamilton I'm not interested.

Basil . . . and he sort of slipped forward and the van door caught his arm, like that, and he may have fractured it . . .

Mr Hamilton You don't have any.

Basil They did the X-rays and we'll know tomorrow whether they're going to have to operate, and to cut a long story short . . . we don't have any, no. But . . . um . . . still . . . it makes you think how lucky you are, doesn't it. Here we are, with all our limbs functioning. I mean, quite frankly, if you've got your health, what else matters?

Mr Hamilton What a bunch of crap!

Basil *(interested)* Oh, do you think so? I always feel . . .

Mr Hamilton What the hell's going on here!? It says hotel outside – now, is this a hotel or isn't it?

Basil Well . . . within reason.

Mr Hamilton You know something, fella – if this was back in the States I wouldn't board my dog here.

Basil Fussy, is he? Poodle?

Mr Hamilton *(standing up and facing Basil)* Poodle! I'm not getting

through to you, am I. You know, I stay in hotels all over the world and this is the first time I've had to bribe a chef to cook me a meal and then found out he doesn't have the basic goddam ingredients. Holy Cow, can't you see what a **crummy** dump this is?

Basil *(shouting towards the kitchen)* You're listening to this, are you, Terry?

Mr Hamilton I'm talking to **you**!

Basil *(to kitchen)* It's all right, Terry, you can get on with . . .

Mr Hamilton Shut up, will you, and listen to me. Can't you see this ain't good enough?

Basil Yes, I see what you mean.

Mr Hamilton And then you give me some half-assed story about some delivery guy busting his arm. Now look, Fawlty, if your chef couldn't find the ingredients from that guy, why didn't he get them from somebody else, uh?

Basil Exactly. Hopeless.

Mr Hamilton *(amazed)* What?

Basil He's hopeless. Absolutely hopeless.

Mr Hamilton Right. You're the manager, aren't you? **You're** responsible. So what are you going to do about it, uh?

Basil *(confidentially)* . . . I'll have a word with him.

Mr Hamilton Have a word with him? Man, you've got to tell him. Lay it on the line.

Basil Lay it on the line?

Mr Hamilton Tell him, if he doesn't get on the ball you're going to bust his ass.

Basil Bust his . . .

Mr Hamilton **I'll** tell him. *(makes for kitchen)*

Basil *(restraining him)* No, no!! No, I'll tell him. Leave it to me.

Mr Hamilton Tell him!

Basil I will. I've got it. I've got it. I've got it. Bust his . . . ?

Mr Hamilton Ass!!

Basil Oh, that! Right! . . . And two green salads?

He goes into the kitchen. As he does so Sybil comes out with a Waldorf salad and a green salad. She puts them on the table.

Sybil Here we are. One green salad, and one Waldorf salad.

Mr Hamilton *(confused)* But I thought that . . .

Sybil Yes? *(the reception bell rings)* Oh – would you excuse me one moment?

She exits. The Hamiltons peer at the salads. At this moment Basil's voice is heard from the kitchen.

Basil's voice No, it's not good enough, do you hear me, it's not good enough! *(pretending to be Terry)* But Mr Robinson hurt his arm! *(as himself)* That's a bunch of arse, that's what that is!

Mrs Hamilton *(tasting her salad)* It's fine.

Basil's voice Why can't you make a Waldorf salad?

Mr Hamilton *(to Mrs Hamilton)* Waldorf salad?

Mrs Hamilton *(surprised)* Yes.

Basil's voice First thing tomorrow you get the ingredients for a Waldorf salad or I'm going to break your bottom. *(as Terry)* Oh no, no, you can't do that. *(as himself)* No, I mean it. I mean it!

Sybil *(coming back in from the lobby)* Everything all right?

Mrs Hamilton Yes, thank you.

Sybil You're sure there's nothing . . . ?

Mr Hamilton No, really. It's very good.

Sybil Oh, good.

Mr Hamilton Oh . . . your chef?

Sybil Yes?

Mr Hamilton Has he been with you long?

Sybil About six months. He used to work at Dorchester.

Mrs Hamilton At the Dorchester?

Sybil No, **in** Dorchester. About forty miles away . . .

Basil *(entering with two green salads)* Here we are, two green salads.

Sybil Basil!

Basil Yes, dear?

Sybil Mr Hamilton **has** his Waldorf salad, dear.

Basil No, dear, chef couldn't make it. He didn't have the ingredients. I've just smashed his backside about it.

Sybil *(pointing to the salad)* But there it is.

Basil What!?

Sybil There's the Waldorf salad. Chef found the ingredients. *(she takes the two green salads)*

Mr Hamilton It's fine.

Basil *(to Sybil, between his teeth)* Well, if he found the ingredients, why didn't he **tell** me? It would have been

perfectly simple, wouldn't it? Has he been struck dumb? Or has somebody torn his tongue out in the last two minutes?

Sybil Basil.

Mr Hamilton Maybe Robinson's arm got better.

Basil I'm sorry about this.

Mr Hamilton It's all right.

Basil No it isn't.

Mr Hamilton It doesn't matter.

Basil Well, it matters to me.

Mr Hamilton Not to me. I've got my Waldorf salad.

Basil *(snatching it away)* Would you excuse me.

Mr Hamilton For God's sake!

Basil *(screaming)* Chef!! What's the meaning of this? *(he exits into the kitchen)*

Sybil Basil, would you bring that back immediately. *(to Mr Hamilton)* I'm sorry, I'll just get it back for you. *(she goes towards the kitchen)*

Basil's voice *(from the kitchen)* Sorry! I'll give you sorry! Get off your knees! *(Sybil enters the kitchen)* Leave this to me, Sybil, I'll handle it.

Sybil's voice Basil!

Basil's voice I haven't finished with Chef yet, Sybil, I mean, why didn't you tell me, why didn't you tell me, you stupid cow. Eh, Chef? No, no, I haven't finished, I haven't finished, you can have it in a . . . *(there is a loud bonk)* . . . Oooh!

Sybil *(coming back in with the salad)* Sorry about that little confusion, Chef hasn't been with us very long and we've just reorganized the kitchen. *(she gives Mr Hamilton his salad)*

Mr Hamilton Thank you.

Sybil Oh, you haven't got your wine yet. Basil! . . . Won't be a moment. Basil!

The kitchen door opens and Basil, holding a cloth to his forehead, looks wanly out.

Basil *(subdued)* Yes, my sweet?

Sybil Mr and Mrs Hamilton haven't got their wine yet.

Basil Oh.

Sybil And Basil – has Chef put the steaks on yet?

Basil No – I'll tell him. *(he disappears into the kitchen)*

Mrs Hamilton Is your husband all right?
Sybil Oh yes. He's just had rather a long day.
Mr Hamilton There's just the two of you here, right?
Sybil We haven't had a proper holiday for eight years.
Mrs Hamilton Eight years?!
Sybil Yes, I have to get away occasionally, just for a few hours, even if it's down to the hairdresser or a round of golf or a bridge evening with some of the girls, or a drive in the country sometimes, just on my own, pop down to Cornwall for the day, sometimes it's so beautiful down there . . .

Basil appears with a hat pulled down strangely over his temple.

Sybil *(to the Hamiltons)* Yes, you must visit Cornwall while you're here. *(goes to the kitchen)*
Basil Your Volnay, sir.
Mr Hamilton Oh, thank you. *(tastes the wine)*
Basil Oh, incidentally, I've been talking to Chef and we've sorted out what happened. Apparently he thought he'd already got . . .
Mr Hamilton *(approving the wine)* That's very nice, thank you.
Basil . . . Thank you . . . got . . . got two for Waldorf salad you see, and in fact he had the ingredients, but . . .
Mr Hamilton No, that's fine, it doesn't matter.
Basil . . . until he'd made one he didn't realize that he didn't have enough for the second one, you see . . .
Mr Hamilton Look, don't let it bother you.
Basil *(pulling a letter out of his pocket)* Anyway, this will explain everything.
Mr Hamilton What's that?
Basil It's a letter.
Mr Hamilton A letter?
Basil A letter from the chef. It explains everything.
Mr Hamilton A letter from the chef!?
Basil He wanted to apologize personally, but I didn't want him wasting your time, so I thought . . .
Mr Hamilton Oh, just forget about it, will you?
Basil I'll read it for you.
Mr Hamilton I want my steak!
Basil It won't be a moment. *(opens the letter and reads)* 'Dear Mr and Mrs Hamilton, I hope you are well. This is just

a brief note to say I take full responsibility for the dreadful mess-ups tonight. If I'd only listened to Mr Fawlty none of this fiasco would have happened.' *(feigning spontaneity)* Oh! *(smoke starts to pour into the room from the kitchen; not seeing it, Basil goes on reading)* 'I'd just like to tell you that such a cock-up . . . *(the Hamiltons have seen the smoke)* . . . has never occurred in my career before, but now that everything has been sorted out I'll be back to my very best form. Signed, Terry.'

Basil smiles at the Hamiltons, catches their line of vision and sees the smoke. Emitting a strange angry moan, he moves towards the kitchen, looks at the Hamiltons, punches his palm three times meaningfully, and then hurriedly enters the kitchen. Sounds of banging and screaming emerge.

Basil's voice What are you doing? What do you mean, you've burnt it?

Mr Hamilton I've had just about enough of this. *(he rises and goes towards the kitchen)*

Basil's voice How could you forget about it?

Mr Hamilton enters the kitchen and stands behind Basil, who is haranguing empty space.

Basil *(pretending to be Terry)* Well, I was making another Waldorf salad. *(as himself)* Making another Waldorf salad? What are you making another Waldorf salad for? *(he takes his hat off and belabours the fridge; as Terry)* Careful, Mr Fawlty! I'm only a little fellow! *(as himself)* What do you think Mr and Mrs Hamilton must think . . . *(he gestures towards the dining-room door; this brings Mr Hamilton into his field of view; he stops dead, then recovers and smiles welcomingly)* Mr Hamilton, may I introduce Terry, who . . . *(indicates the empty space, then jumps)* Where did he go? *(to Hamilton)* Where's he gone? Did you see him?

Mr Hamilton Maybe he went to get something to eat.

He leaves the kitchen decisively and goes to his wife in the dining room.

Mr Hamilton Come on, honey.

Mrs Hamilton What is it, Harry?

Mr Hamilton We're leaving.
Mrs Hamilton Well, what's happened?
Mr Hamilton I'll tell you later.

They both leave the dining room, go into the lobby and make for the stairs. Basil sticks his head out of the kitchen door.

Basil Your steak will be ready in a moment, Mrs Hamilton . . . *(Hamilton checks but Mrs Hamilton goes on upstairs.)* He must have heard you coming and panicked and slipped out into the yard, you know, after all the problems . . .
Mr Hamilton How big a butterball do you take me for?
Basil . . . Butter . . . ?
Mr Hamilton Do you think I don't know what's been going on out there?
Basil Oh – it's a bit of a débâcle, I'm afraid . . .
Mr Hamilton I'm talking about you taking twenty pounds off me to keep the chef on, letting him go, cooking the meal yourself and then pretending he's still out there.
Basil Oh, that.
Mr Hamilton Yes, that. And I'd be interested to know what you've got to say about it.

By this time some guests have gathered within earshot. They include the Major, Mr Arrad and Misses Tibbs and Gatsby.

Basil *(to them)* Good evening.
Mr Hamilton I asked you a question!
Basil Yes – I'm sorry that your meal has not been fully satisfactory this evening . . .
Mr Hamilton *(addressing the guests)* Hah! What I'm suggesting is that this is the crummiest, shoddiest, worst-run hotel in the whole of Western Europe.
The Major No! No! I won't have that! There's a place in Eastbourne . . . what's its name . . . ?
Mr Hamilton *(to Basil)* And that you are the British Tourist Board's answer to Donald Duck.
Basil No, look, I know things have gone wrong this evening, but you must remember we've had thousands of satisfied customers . . .
Mr Hamilton All right, let's ask them, eh?
Basil What?
Mr Hamilton Let's ask them. *(to the spectators)* Are you all satisfied? *(a*

pause; to Mr Arrad) You – are you satisfied?

Basil *(to the Major)* Yes, Major, are you satisfied? I mean, you've been here seven years, are you satisfied?

The Major Oh, yes, I love it here.

Basil *(to Misses Tibbs and Gatsby)* Ladies, are you satisfied?

Misses Tibbs & Gatsby Oh yes, thank you, Mr Fawlty.

Miss Gatsby And thank you for asking.

Basil Not at all . . . Mr Arrad – are you satisfied?

Mr Arrad Er, well, yes, I . . .

Basil Miss Gurke?

Miss Gurke Oh, very nice, yes . . .

Basil *(to Mr Hamilton)* You see . . . satisfied customers! Of course if this little hotel is not to your taste, then you are free to say so, that is your privilege. And I shall of course refund your money. *(he looks for the £20; unseen by him, Mr Johnstone comes up and stands behind him)* I know how important it is to you Americans. But you must remember *(he hands the money over)* that here in Britain there are things that we value more, things that perhaps in America you've rather forgotten, but which here in Britain are far, far more important . . .

Mr Johnston I'm not satisfied.

Basil . . . in our . . . what?

Mr Johnstone I'm not satisfied.

Mrs Johnstone No, we're not satisfied.

Basil Well, people like you never are, are you.

Mrs Johnstone What?

Basil There is nothing I could do would please a pair like you, short of putting straw in the rooms.

Mrs Johnstone I think you're the rudest man I've ever met.

Basil I haven't started yet . . .

Mr Hamilton *(taking over)* And you're not going to. You're going to stand here nice and quiet while these people say whether or not they're satisfied. And if you move off that spot, Fawlty, I'm going to bust your ass.

Basil Everything's bottoms, isn't it.

Mr Hamilton *(to Johnstone)* Yes, sir?

Mr Johnstone I think this is probably the worst hotel we've ever stayed in.

Mrs Johnstone Yes it is. The service here is an absolute disgrace.

Mrs Arrad I agree.

Mr Hamilton You do?

Mrs Arrad Yes. Do you know that we had to wait nearly half an hour for our main course and when it arrived it was wrong.

Mr Arrad And when I complained he completely fobbed me off with some rubbish about . . .

Mrs Johnstone My prawns were off and when I told him there was an argument.

Miss Gurke And her meat was awfully poor.

Mr Libson And I asked you to fix my radiator three times and nothing's been done.

Mr Hamilton *(grabbing Basil by the tie)* Satisfied customers, huh? Hot dog! *(releases him and goes off upstairs)*

Basil This is typical, absolutely typical . . . of the kind of . . . *(shouting)* ARSE I have to put up with from you people. You ponce in here expecting to be waited on hand and foot, well I'm trying to run a hotel here. Have you **any** idea of how much there is to do? Do you ever think of that? Of course not, you're all too busy sticking your noses into every corner, poking around for things to complain about, aren't you. Well, let me tell you something – this is exactly how Nazi Germany started, you know. A lot of layabouts with nothing better to do than to cause trouble. Well I've had fifteen years of pandering to please the likes of you and I've had enough. I've had it. Come on, pack your bags and get out!

Mr and Mrs Hamilton come back down the stairs.

Mrs Hamilton *(to Basil)* They're packed.

Mr Hamilton And order ten taxis, will you, I'll pay for 'em. *(he and Mrs Hamilton go upstairs)*

Basil Come on! Come on!

Miss Gurke What?

Basil Out, everybody out.

Mrs Arrad Out?

Basil Come on. Upstairs. Pack your bags. *Adios!* Out!

Mr Johnstone It's raining.

Basil Well, you should have thought of that before, shouldn't you. Too late now. Come on, out! *Raus! Raus!*

The guests start to go upstairs. Sybil has appeared in the lobby.

Sybil Basil – what are you **doing?**

The guests stop on the stairs.

Basil Well, let me explain, my little workhorse. The guests and I have been having a bit of an old chin-wag, and the upshot of it all is, they're off.

Sybil *(disbelieving)* Off!?

Basil Well, let me put it this way, dear – either they go or I go. *(Sybil just looks at him)* Right! Come on back everybody. My wife's had a better idea. Come on back. **I'm** going instead. *(the guests come back into the lobby)* Well, goodbye dear. It's been an interesting fifteen years but all good things must come to an end. *(kisses her)* I hope you enjoy your new work here, helping to run a hotel. Goodbye, Major. Goodbye, ladies, give my regards to Polly and Manuel. 'Bye, dear.

He makes to leave. The Hamiltons come downstairs with their bags.

Sybil You've forgotten your keys, Basil.

Basil So I have dear, yes. *(he gives them to her)* Oh, and goodbye to all the rest of you. I hope you enjoy your stay here. Don't forget – any complaints, don't hesitate to tell my wife. Any hour of the day or night – just shout! 'Bye!

He stalks out through the main doors. Outside it is pouring with rain. He keeps going but after a few yards comes to a halt and stands there getting soaked. He looks up and thinks. . . . Back in the lobby Mr Hamilton is on the telephone and the other guests are still clustered around.

Mr Hamilton *(to phone)* Ten minutes, that'll be fine.

He puts the phone down. Basil comes back in.

Basil *(to Sybil)* Hallo dear, I'm back.

Sybil What do you want, Basil?

Basil A room, please. Number twelve is free, I think. I'd like breakfast in bed at half past nine in the morning please, that's eggs, bacon, sausage and tomato, Waldorf salad washed down with lashings of hot screwdrivers . . .

THE KIPPER AND THE CORPSE

Mrs Chase Mavis Pugh
Major Gowen Ballard Berkeley
Basil Fawlty John Cleese
Sybil Fawlty Prunella Scales
Manuel Andrew Sachs
Dr Price Geoffrey Palmer
Guest Len Marten
Mr Leeman Derek Royle
Mr Xerxes Robert McBain
Mr Zebedee Raymond Mason
Miss Young Pamela Buchner
Polly Connie Booth
Terry Brian Hall
Miss Tibbs Gilly Flower
Miss Gatsby Renée Roberts
Mr White Richard Davies
Mrs White Elizabeth Benson
Mr Ingrams Charles McKeown

ourth of second series, first broadcast on 12 March 1979, BBC2.

The hotel bar; evening. Sybil is at the bar, Manuel is serving guests. The Major is sitting at a table with Mrs Chase, who is fondling a little lap dog.

Mrs Chase And he loves pecans and walnuts and he simply adores those little cheese footballs . . . don't you, my darling . . . isn't he beautiful?

The Major *(who is not that interested)* Very attractive little feller . . . what is it?

Mrs Chase He's a little Chitzu.

The Major Is he really? . . . Oh dear, dear, dear. What breed is it?

Mrs Chase Well, they're lap dogs, aren't they.

The Major A Lapp dog? Oh, hard to imagine him stalking a reindeer, what?

Basil *(coming up to the table)* Ah, Major, can I get you another one?

The Major Ah . . . *(looks at watch)* Why not, why not?

Basil For you, Mrs Chase?

Mrs Chase Oh, nothing for me, thank you, but Prince would like a little saucer of warm milk as it's nearly our bed-time . . .

Basil Yes . . . Manuel! *(to Mrs Chase)* Manuel will attend to its heart's desires. I'm afraid I'm lumbered with the people tonight . . . *(he moves off; Manuel hurries up)* Manuel – *por favor, el perro microscópico . . .*

Dr Price comes into the bar.

Sybil Oh, good evening, Dr Price.

Dr Price Good evening.

Sybil What can I get you?

Dr Price Scotch, please . . . and I suppose it's too late to get anything to eat, is it? – I missed dinner.

Sybil What did you have in mind?

Dr Price Well, I rather fancy some sausages.

Sybil Oh, I'm afraid Chef would have locked them away. We could do you sandwiches – ham, cheese, tomato . . .

Dr Price Er . . . ham, thank you.

Sybil I'll just arrange it for you. Basil . . .

Basil *(who is serving drinks)* Yes, dear?

Sybil Would you make some ham sandwiches, please.

Basil Look, I'm trying . . .

Sybil For Dr Price. *(the phone rings in the lobby)*

Basil Oh . . . of course. Yes, one moment, Doctor. *(delivers the drink)* There we are, Major.

Sybil Excuse me . . . the phone. *(she leaves)*

Basil *(to Manuel, who is trying to close the window)* Ah, found another draught, have we?

Mrs Chase We have to be very careful, Mr Fawlty, he's not very strong.

Basil Indeed yes. A rapid movement of air could damage him irreparably. If only one could keep them in air-tight containers.

The Major Wouldn't be able to breathe, would he, Fawlty?

Basil Well, he could try, Major, he could try. *(he sweeps on to the next table, where sit a short balding man and a rather obviously sexy redhead)* Anything else for you?

Man Er, no thank you . . . it's a bit late and we'd better . . . get upstairs.

Basil Quite, quite. *(to himself)* Sorry to have kept you. *(to Dr Price)* Um . . . doctor . . . one round? Two?

Dr Price Oh, just one, please.

Basil My pleasure. *(he leaves for the kitchen)*

In the lobby Sybil is on the reception phone, definitely gossiping.

Sybil No, no, she was the one he had with him the third time, the first time was the dowdy one, then his wife, then her, and now this red . . . *(the man and the redhead approach the desk)* . . . Oh yes, that must have been lovely. *(to man)* Number twelve . . . let's see . . . *(gets the key)*

Man Thank you. *(he and his companion go upstairs)*

Sybil *(to phone)* . . . How very lovely, yes that was them . . . not much, they get less fussy as they get older.

A party comes in through the main doors: Miss Young, Mr Leeman, Mr Xerxes and Mr Zebedee; they are business associates. Mr Leeman is apologetic.

Mr Leeman Sorry about this.

Mr Xerxes Please. It couldn't matter less, we're meeting in the morning anyway.

Mr Zebedee You've had a long journey.

Mr Xerxes You get a good night's sleep.

Miss Young You're sure you're feeling all right?

Mr Leeman Oh, fine, fine, just a little . . .

Miss Young Oh yes, of course.
Mr Xerxes Well, you get straight to bed, and we'll pick you up here at nine-thirty.
Mr Zebedee We'll have a coffee and go in to the MD at ten.
Mr Leeman Fine, thanks, OK.
The Others Goodnight. See you in the morning . . . sleep well . . .
Mr Leeman See you at nine-thirty . . . sorry . . . *(they leave and he turns towards Sybil)*
Sybil *(to phone)* Harris . . . oh no, on his own again . . . oh, no, I wouldn't have thought so, he watches the football. *(to Mr Leeman)* Number eight, isn't it? . . . Where are we . . . *(gives him the key)* Are you feeling all right?
Mr Leeman Er . . . not too good, no . . .
Sybil Oh dear. Would you like a little hot something?
Mr Leeman Oh, no, no . . . I'm fine, thank you.
Sybil Oh, well, if there's anything you need . . .
Mr Leeman *(moving away)* Yes. Thank you.
Sybil *(to phone)* No, that wasn't him, that was a new one.
Basil *(appearing from the kitchen with a plate of sandwiches; to Leeman)* Good night. *(Leeman does not respond, moving past towards the stairs)* I said 'Good night.'
Mr Leeman Oh, good night.
Basil That didn't hurt, did it.
Sybil Basil!

Mr Leeman disappears uncertainly as Basil crosses the lobby.

Basil Good manners cost nothing, dear.
Sybil He's not feeling very well, Basil.
Basil He only had to say 'Good night', dear. It's not the Gettysburg address.
Sybil Basil, when you're not feeling well . . .
Basil *(going into the bar)* Just two little words, dear, to bring a little happiness into the world.
Mr Leeman *(coming down again)* Excuse me.
Sybil Yes, Mr Leeman. What can I do for you?
Mr Leeman Do you think I might have breakfast in bed in the morning?
Basil *(coming back in)* . . . In bed?
Mr Leeman Yes.
Sybil Of course, Mr Leeman.
Basil Yes, we can manage that, can we dear?

Sybil Yes, we can. *(to phone)* I'll call you back. *(puts the phone down)*

Basil Is it your legs?

Mr Leeman . . . I'm sorry?

Basil Well, most of our guests manage to struggle down in the morning.

Sybil A full breakfast or the continental?

Mr Leeman Oh, er . . .

Sybil Our chef does a very good full breakfast, eggs, bacon, sausage, tomato, fried bread . . .

Mr Leeman The continental.

Sybil You wouldn't care for kippers?

Mr Leeman Oh . . . fine, kippers, yes, thank you.

Basil departs resignedly.

Sybil Toast, butter, marmalade . . .

Mr Leeman Yes, thank you.

Sybil Tea or coffee?

Mr Leeman *(not feeling at all well)* Yes, er . . . tea, thank you.

Sybil A newspaper?

Mr Leeman Er . . . *Telegraph.*

Sybil Thank you . . . Good night.

Mr Leeman starts to move off. Sybil goes into the office; Basil comes back in.

Basil Rosewood, mahogany, teak?

Mr Leeman . . . I beg your pardon?

Basil What would you like your breakfast tray made out of?

Mr Leeman I don't really mind.

Basil Are you sure? Fine, well you go along and have a really good night's sleep then – I'm hoping to get a couple of hours later on myself . . . *(shouting after Mr Leeman as he goes up the stairs)* but I'll be up in good time to serve you your breakfast in bed. *(Leeman has now gone)* If you can remember to sleep with your mouth open you won't even have to wake up. I'll just drop in small pieces of lightly buttered kipper when you're breathing in the right direction, if that doesn't put you out. *(imitates Sybil)* Basil! *(slaps his own wrist)*

The dining room at breakfast the next morning. Dr Price is at the centre table; Polly is taking his order.

Dr Price Sausages, please.
Polly Just sausages?
Dr Price Just sausages.
Polly Tea or coffee?
Dr Price Coffee, please.

There are sounds of a minor fracas at Mrs Chase's table. Polly moves over there. The dog is seated on a chair at the table.

Manuel But is . . .
Mrs Chase No, no, not a saucer.
Manuel *Como?*
Mrs Chase I said a bowl.
Manuel . . . a ball?
Mrs Chase Yes. And not cold like this, that's too **cold**. I said tepid, didn't I?
Polly *Mas grande*, Manuel – *de agua caliente.*
Manuel Ah. *(he and Polly move off)*
Mrs Chase He could catch pneumonia from that. And bring another cushion. He's not quite high enough.

Polly and Manuel go into the kitchen. Terry is cooking and Sybil helping.

Polly Sausages on six, Terry.
Terry Coming up
Polly *Mas grande,* Manuel.

She hurries into the lobby, passing Basil as he comes in looking at the paper.

Basil Another car strike. Would you believe it.
Sybil *(handing him a packet)* Put these kippers back, would you, Basil.
Basil They ought to get Butlin's to run our car factories.
Sybil In the fridge.
Basil *(looking at the kippers)* . . . These should have been eaten by . . . when was the sixth?
Sybil Oh, that's all right.
Basil It says on the packet, Sybil.
Terry They're all right, Mr Fawlty.
Basil *(checking with the paper)* The sixth?
Sybil That's just to cover themselves.

Polly hurries in and hands Manuel a cushion. He goes into the dining room with it.

Terry Eggs and sausages, Poll.

The dining room. Manuel approaches Mrs Chase's table with bowl and cushion. He puts the bowl on the floor.

Mrs Chase On the table . . . on the table. *(Manuel puts the cushion on the table)* No! **That!** *(Manuel puts the bowl on the table uncertainly; Mrs Chase picks up the dog)* Now put that under him. *(Manuel puts the bowl on the chair)* The cushion! The cushion!

Manuel puts the cushion under the dog, but the dog snaps at him, scoring a hit.

Manuel He bite me!
Mrs Chase You frightened him.
Manuel *Qué?*
Mrs Chase You make sudden movements like that, of course he's going to bite. Don't you have dogs in Calcutta?
Polly *(coming up)* Excuse me, but I have an order for eggs and sausage for this table.
Mrs Chase Oh, yes. The sausages are for him. *(Polly puts the food down)*
Manuel Ooh!
Polly What's the matter, Manuel?
Manuel He bite me.
Mrs Chase Cut them up. Cut them up into little pieces. *(Polly starts cutting up her eggs)* No, not my eggs, not my eggs. The sausages!
Polly Oh, sorry. *(she goes to cut them up but the dog takes a bite at her, too)*
Manuel He bite Polly, too. You see?
Mrs Chase If dogs are allowed in the dining room at least the staff should know how to handle them.
Polly *(charmingly)* I'll cut them up in the kitchen, Mrs Chase.
Mrs Chase **Little** pieces.

The kitchen. Terry is finishing the kippers.

Terry Kippers ready!

Polly and Manuel enter. She puts the plate down, hard.

Manuel He hurt you, Polly?

Basil is peering at the kippers.

Sybil Basil, what are you doing?

Basil . . . Do you know when the sixth **was**, Sybil?

Sybil Will you just take it upstairs.

Terry They're all right, Mr Fawlty.

Basil Are they supposed to be that colour?

Sybil Basil, will you just take it up. What's the matter, Manuel?

Polly That hairy mosquito just bit us both.

Sybil What?

Manuel Is not right in dining room like that.

Sybil Well, she pays extra for the dog, Manuel, you see . . . Basil, it's **after** eight.

Basil *(still peering at the kippers)* Poisoning is still an offence in this country, you know, Sybil.

Sybil Oh **do** get a move on, we've got a busy day, I've got the laundrymen coming . . .

Basil The laundrymen! My God! A woman's work is never delegated, is it. *(he exits)*

Sybil What are you doing, Polly?

Polly Just preparing some sausages. *(she adds some tabasco sauce to them)* Bangers à la Bang.

The upstairs corridor. Basil comes along with the tray, looking at the paper as he goes. He arrives at Mr Leeman's door and knocks.

Basil Good morning! Breakfast!

Inside the room Mr Leeman is sitting up in bed, his eyes open. He is dead. The room light is on. Outside, Basil knocks again.

Basil Breakfast! *(he opens the door and goes in; he puts the tray down in front of Mr Leeman)* Here we are. *(he picks up a book from the floor; Mr Leeman slumps forward and appears to be staring at the newspaper; Basil puts the book down on the bedside table)* Another car strike. Marvellous, isn't it. *(goes to the window and draws the curtains)* Taxpayers pay 'em millions each year, they get the money, go on strike. It's called Socialism. I mean if they don't like making cars why don't they get themselves another bloody job designing cathedrals or composing viola concertos? The British Leyland Concerto in four movements, all of 'em slow, with a four-hour tea break in between. I'll tell you why, 'cos they're not interested in anything except lounging about on conveyor belts stuffing themselves with

my money. You don't mind if I turn the light off? *(he does so and turns to Mr Leeman as he opens the door)* Well, enjoy your breakfast . . . I'm sorry, I didn't catch that . . . oh, not at all, thank you for mentioning it. *(he exits, closing the door, and starts off down the corridor)* Unbelievable.
Un-be-lievable. Not a single bloody word. You get up at five-thirty so they can lounge around in bed till midday and do you get so much as a word of thanks? *(he gets to the bottom of the stairs as Polly comes out of the kitchen carrying a little silver jug)* What's that?

Polly Forgot the milk.

Basil Well, don't get talking to him, you'll never get away. *(he goes into the kitchen; Polly disappears up the stairs)*

The kitchen. Sybil is working on her laundry list.

Basil Would you believe it? I get him his breakfast, I take it all the way upstairs, I lay it in front of him, hand him his newspaper, I tidy the rom, draw the curtains, guess what he says? *(Sybil is absorbed with her list)* I said, 'Guess what he says?'

Sybil Mmmmm?

Basil Nothing! *(no reaction)* Your friend, the one in eight. Nothing . . . not a word! Are you listening to me? . . . Hello, hello . . . can anyone hear me? Have I ceased to exist? Have I become invisible? Sybil, Sybil, Sybil . . . can you see me?

Sybil *(looking round at him)* No. *(she returns to her list)*

Basil Oh good. Well, I'll go and lie down then. No I won't, I'll go and hit some guests. *(he exits into the dining room)*

The dining room. He is sneaking up behind a guest when there are strange strangled death-rattle noises from Mrs Chase's table.

Mrs Chase Poor little boy . . . poor little toma-woma . . . ah . . . let me see . . .

The kitchen. Terry gives Manuel a plate of sausages.

Terry Dr Price's sausages.

Polly runs into the kitchen, rather upset.

Sybil What is it, Polly?

Polly He's dead.

Sybil . . . Dead? Who?
Polly . . . Number eight.
Sybil Leeman. But Basil just took him his breakfast.
Polly He's cold.
Sybil Oh no.

Sybil and Polly run out into the lobby. Manuel and Terry stare at each other. Basil enters.

Basil What's the matter with that dog?
Manuel . . . He is dead.
Basil Well, he's certainly struggling for life at the moment. A dead dog in the breakfast room, eh? Egon Ronay'd knock off a star for that.
Manuel No, no . . . Mr Leeman is dead.
Basil Well, that would explain a lot.
Terry No, Mr Fawlty, really . . . Poll just said so.
Basil What are you on about? I just took him his kippers. . . . Oh my God! *(he turns and runs out at full speed)*

The lobby. Basil runs upstairs, passing Sybil.

Sybil Leeman's dead. I'm getting Dr Price.
Basil Wait! . . . Wait! *(but she's gone; he runs on up)*

Mr Leeman's room. Polly is there; Basil rushes in. He stares at the body.

Polly I just put the milk down on the tray . . . *(Basil picks up the plate of kippers and looks around feverishly)* . . . What are you doing? *(Basil grabs the kippers and throws the plate under the bed)* . . . What are you doing?
Basil *(running to the window)* I told her. I told her the sixth. We could get twenty years for this. *(he is having trouble opening the window)*
Polly What?
Basil The kippers! The kippers! Oh my God. *(he moves the window up a bit)*
Polly Mr Fawlty, he's been dead for hours. *(Basil is still struggling with the window)* Mr Fawlty! He's cold. He's been dead for hours. He must have died in his sleep. Mr Fawlty!
Basil What, what?
Polly He hasn't touched those kippers. Well, look! Feel him!
Basil What?

Polly Feel him!

Basil *(feeling the body)* He's stone cold.

Polly Yes.

Basil Oh joy!! Oh, **thank** you God! Isn't it wonderful!!! Oh, I'm so happy! Hooray! *(Polly is trying to restrain him)* Hoo . . . *(he turns and sees Dr Price standing there with Sybil)* Sad, isn't it. Tch tch tch. *(he hides the kippers inside his cardigan)*

Dr Price May I ask who . . . *(looks at Basil; he has smelt the kipper)*

Basil Bit stuffy, isn't it. I'll open a window.

Sybil *(prompting Dr Price)* Who . . . ?

Dr Price Who found the body?

Sybil Polly did.

Polly I was bringing him up the milk . . . and . . . we'd forgotten it.

Dr Price You brought the milk with the breakfast?

Sybil No, the breakfast had been brought up.

Dr Price Well, who brought the breakfast? Who found him?

Basil is at the window; he tries to flip one of the kippers out but it hits a pane and falls back. He puts his foot on it. Dr Price looks at him.

Basil Oh, I brought the breakfast.

Dr Price *(seeing the kipper)* What's that?

Basil Er . . . that's a bit of it.

Dr Price Bit of what?

Basil A bit of the breakfast.

Dr Price You brought him his breakfast.

Basil Yes.

Dr Price So you told her he was dead.

Basil Yes.

Dr Price *(to Polly)* Well, then, why did you bring him . . . *(Basil tries to get the other kipper out of his cardigan but Dr Price looks at him; Dr Price returns to Polly)* Why did you bring him the milk, then?

Polly Why?

Dr Price Yes, why?

Polly Well, when he said Mr Leeman was dead, I thought he'd said he's still in bed.

Sybil Well, he didn't actually say he was dead, Dr Price.

Basil Well, I said he was pretty quiet.

Dr Price Quiet?

Basil Exactly.

Sybil What were you talking to him about, Basil, car strikes, was it?

Basil Thank you, Sybil.

Dr Price I don't understand. He's been dead for about ten hours.

Basil Yes, it's so final, isn't it.

Sybil Basil!

Basil Well, wouldn't you say it was final dear, I'd say it was pretty bloody final.

Dr Price Do you mean to tell me you didn't realize this man was dead?

Basil People don't talk that much in the morning . . . well look, I'm just delivering a tray, right? If the guest isn't singing 'Oh What A Beautiful Morning' I don't immediately think, 'Oh there's another one snuffed it in the night.' Another name in the Fawlty Towers Book of Remembrance. I mean, this is a hotel, not the Burma Railway.

Sybil Basil!

Basil Well, I mean it does actually say 'Hotel' outside, you know. Perhaps I should be more specific. 'Hotel for people who have a better than fifty per cent chance of making it through the night' . . . what are you looking at me like that for?

Sybil *(goes over to him; quietly)* Basil, there's a kipper sticking out of your jumper.

Basil Ah, there it is. I've been looking for that. That's the other one.

Sybil We'll be downstairs, doctor. *(starts propelling Basil out of the room)*

Polly Shall I ring the undertaker?

Sybil Would you, Polly.

Basil *(shouting back over his shoulder)* I've been up since five-thirty, you know. *(he is borne out of the room; Dr Price starts his examination)*

The lobby. Sybil, Basil and Polly come downstairs. Basil still has the kipper in his hands.

Sybil He was leaving today. Some people are coming at lunchtime.

Basil Well, we'll put him in another room.

Sybil We're full tonight. Oh do put that away. *(he throws the*

kipper into the kitchen) Get the body into the office until the undertaker comes.

Basil Now?

Sybil When doctor's finished. *(she goes to the reception desk, where Polly is dialling)*

Basil What are you doing?

Sybil Making up his bill.

Basil Who are you going to give it to?

Sybil We'll put it in his wallet, they're bound to look there. Better not charge him for breakfast.

Miss Gatsby appears at the dining-room door.

Polly *(to phone)* Mr Simkins? Fawlty Towers here. I'm afraid somebody's died during the night. . . . When could you collect the body? *(she sees Miss Gatsby coming up)* . . . Somebody . . . anybody, really . . .

Basil *(takes Miss Gatsby's arm gallantly to move her on)* Good morning, good morning!

Miss Gatsby You're very cheerful this morning, Mr Fawlty.

Basil *(cheerfully)* Yes, well one of the guests has just died.

Miss Gatsby Oooh, you are wicked. *(she goes)*

Basil Manuel! Manuel! *(Manuel runs out of the kitchen dusting off the kipper; Basil grabs it)* Manuel, we're going to get the body. *(to Polly)* Polly . . . Polly . . . *(he nods his head towards upstairs)*

Polly *(to phone)* Yes, if you can. *(she puts the phone down)*

Basil *(waves the kipper, then sees Dr Price coming down the stairs)* Would it be all right to . . .

Dr Price nods. Basil, Manuel and Polly hurry upstairs.

Dr Price *(to Sybil)* Could I use the phone please, I have to call the coroner.

Sybil The coroner?!

Dr Price I can't give him his death certificate because I'm not his doctor. I have to report his death to the coroner . . .

Sybil Oh, I see. Of course. Do come this way, doctor. *(she leads him into the office)*

The upstairs corridor. Polly is watching down the stairs. Basil's head appears from Mr Leeman's room.

Basil All clear?

Polly All clear . . .

Basil and Manuel appear carrying the body, covered with a sheet with some folded towels on top.

Manuel Is heavy.
Basil Come on, come on!

Miss Tibbs appears behind them and is about to overtake.

Miss Tibbs Good morning, Manuel.
Manuel Good morning.

Some towels fall off the body.

Miss Tibbs Oh . . . I'll pick it up. *(she picks up the towels and tries to replace them)*
Basil No, it's all right. Leave it. No, leave it. It's heavy.
Miss Tibbs No, it's quite all right, I'll put them like that.
Basil Look, don't bother. We can manage.
Miss Tibbs Oh, it's no bother.
Basil No, no, leave it alone!
Miss Tibbs I know, if I just fold them like this. *(Manuel groans under the weight)*
Basil Go away! Move, Manuel! Move, move, move!
Polly *(taking Miss Tibbs by the arm)* I'll do it, Miss Tibbs.
Miss Tibbs No, it's all right. *(they move off with the body, but she is standing on the sheet; it comes off; Miss Tibbs screams)* Aaahh! He's dead!
Basil Serves you right.
Polly *(trying to calm the screaming Miss Tibbs)* Sshh! Sshh! It's all right, Miss Tibbs.
Miss Tibbs Aaaah! Oh my God!
Basil Shut up!

Polly tries to muffle Miss Tibbs, but fails.

Miss Tibbs Aaaaaagggggghhhh!
Basil Slap her!
Polly What?
Basil She's hysterical. Slap her.

Polly tries to put her hand over Miss Tibbs' mouth but she gets bitten and withdraws the hand very fast. Manuel groans.

Miss Tibbs Murder! Murder!!
Basil Slap her!

Polly does so. Miss Tibbs folds up and falls to the floor. Manuel drops the body.

Basil *(to Polly)* Oh, spiffing! Absolutely spiffing. Well done! Two dead, twenty-five to go. *(he hears a noise from downstairs)* Quick, Polly!

Polly runs to the top of the stairs. Basil drags the body into the nearest room and then gets Manuel to help him carry Miss Tibbs into the same room. Polly is on her knees, stalling Mr and Mrs White, who are coming up.

Polly I just dropped my ring. Oh . . . there it is. *(she hears the door slam)* Oh, sorry, I'm in your way. *(she gets up)*

Mr White That's quite all right. *(they pass her and make for the room into which Basil and Manuel have taken the bodies)*

Polly *(getting between them and the door)* Oh! Is this your room?

Mr White Yes.

Polly It's lovely, isn't it.

Mrs White Yes.

Polly Did you enjoy your breakfast?

Mr White Oh, yes, thank you, yes, yes. Excuse me . . . do you think we could just go inside and get our . . .

Polly Not really.

Mr White Pardon?

Polly Well, it's being cleaned at the moment. Mr Fawlty's doing it . . .

Mrs White But we want to get our things.

Mr White Yes, we're going out, you see.

Polly Oh, well, it'll only take a couple of minutes.

Mrs White I'm sorry, we're a little late. *(she moves to take the door handle)*

Polly Excuse me . . . Mr Fawlty! *(she knocks)* Mr Fawlty!!!

Basil's voice All clear?

Polly Er . . . Mr Fawlty . . .

Basil's voice Anybody about?

Polly Mr and Mrs White want to come into their room.

Basil's voice Ooooh, no! Wait a minute. *(a pause, then the door opens a crack)* Hallo.

Mr White Can we come in?

Basil Er . . .

Polly I was just explaining you were finishing the room.

Basil Yes, won't be five minutes.

Mr White Well, could you finish it later?

From inside, Manuel groans and there is a heavy thump.

Basil *(to Manuel)* Pick up that ashtray, will you Manuel, please. *(to the Whites)* Could we do it later?
Mrs White When we've got our things.
Polly Well, it'll only be a couple of minutes.
Mr White Look, Fawlty, we want our things.
Basil Oh, right, yes, thank you so much. *(he disappears, closes the door and bolts it)*
Mr White He's locked it!
Polly Well, that's just a precaution.
Mr White *(banging on the door)* Have you locked this?
Basil's voice Only slightly.
Mr White *(banging)* Will you let us in.
Basil's voice In a minute.

In the bedroom, Basil and Manuel are putting Miss Tibbs into the wardrobe.

Basil Get the coats . . . get the coats . . .

Outside the room the Whites are waiting.

Mrs White What's going on?
Polly Well, he's a bit of a perfectionist.

In the bedroom, Basil unbolts the door.

Basil Readyyyyy!

The Whites come in. Manuel is holding two coats. Basil is polishing the wardrobe with his handkerchief.

Mr White What's been going on in here?
Basil Well, we tried rearranging the furniture but it didn't really work. Manuel has your coats.

Manuel gives them their coats. They look around suspiciously. They are about to leave when a moan is heard. They stop. Manuel starts singing loudly. Polly joins in. The Whites stare at Manuel.

Basil It's all right. He's from Barcelona.

The moaning is heard again. Polly simulates pain.

Polly Ooooh!
Mrs White What's that noise?
Polly Oh, just my back.

Mrs White No, that moaning.

A loud moan from the wardrobe. Basil goes to the window and looks out.

Basil Oh yes. That's odd.
Mr White No, no, it's coming from the cupboard.

Basil listens. Another moan.

Basil Well, we'll get some oil. *(more noise)* Have a nice day.
Mrs White There's someone in there.
Basil What?
Mr White Yes, listen.
Basil No, no. no. *(shrieking and hammering starts)* Good Lord, so there is!
Mrs White Let them out!!
Basil Good idea. Right . . . well . . . um . . .
Mr White Well, go on.
Basil Yes, we're going to. It's the next thing on the list. If you do get a chance to see the museum it's well . . .
Mr White Open it. Now. Now!
Basil All right, yes, right. Oh, it's locked. Damn.
Mr White Where's the key?
Basil Yes, where is the key? Do you have any idea, Polly, Manuel . . . ?
Polly I expect we've left it downstairs somewhere.
Manuel *Qué?*
Basil Where's the key?
Manuel . . . In your pocket.
Basil No it isn't.
Manuel Yes it is.
Basil No, no, it's not.
Manuel *Si.* Look, look! *(despite Basil's attempts to stop him, he reaches in Basil's pocket and produces the key)* Look!
Basil Oh, well done, Manuel. Thank you very much. Thank you. Right, well, we've got it now.
Mr White Give it to me. I'll do it.
Basil All right, I will, I will! *(he opens the wardrobe door and Miss Tibbs emerges gibbering and crying; Polly comforts her)* Now, I've warned you about this before! You can hide in your own cupboard but not in other people's! *(behind him the wardrobe door opens slightly and an arm flops out; Basil turns to the Whites)* I'm sorry about this, you can't really blame

her. She doesn't have much in her life, she has to make her own entertainment.

Polly *(seeing the arm)* She has trouble with her arm. That's why she goes **in the cupboard**.

Basil Exactly.

Mrs White Are you feeling better?

Polly Her arm gets stuck there!

Basil It's always happening to her.

Miss Tibbs *(crying)* He's dead!

Basil Yes, it's her husband. She hasn't got over it. Died thirty years ago . . .

Polly *(shouting)* She doesn't mean any **arm**!!

Basil glances back and sees the arm.

Miss Tibbs In the cupboard!!

Basil No more today, you've had enough. *(suddenly points to the other side of the room by the door)* Oh my God, look at that!

The Whites look. Basil runs to the door and starts stamping on something. Polly nips across, flings the arm in the wardrobe and shuts the door. She returns to Miss Tibbs. Manuel stares at Basil, thinks he's got the point of what Basil's doing and starts Spanish dancing. Basil picks up an imaginary dead spider and throws it away. Manuel is still dancing.

Basil Thank you, Manuel. That's enough. *(to the Whites)* Anything else we can do for you?

Miss Tibbs' bedroom. Miss Tibbs is on her bed. Sybil is making some tea.

Miss Tibbs Oh, it was so horrible, Mrs Fawlty, you've no idea.

Sybil Oh, I know.

Miss Tibbs It was pitch black in there . . . and that thing . . . with its hand . . .

Sybil Oh, I know. *(gives Miss Tibbs the tea)* Now you have a little rest and try to think of something else.

Miss Tibbs But **anything** could have happened.

Sybil Well, he **was** dead, dear.

Miss Tibbs A man is a man, Mrs Fawlty.

Sybil *(slightly thrown)* Oh, I know . . .

Miss Tibbs I shall speak to him about it.

Sybil **Speak** to him?

Miss Tibbs To Mr Fawlty. We're his oldest residents . . .

Sybil Well, have a little rest first.
Miss Tibbs Frightening me like that. I shall speak to him.
Sybil Have a word with him in a little while when you're feeling better. *(she leaves)*

In the lobby, the Whites are standing by the reception desk. Mr White is on the phone.

Mr White I see; thank you. *(rings off; to Mrs White)* It's all right, dear – they've got rooms at the Seaview.
Mrs White Tonight?
Mr White Yes.
Mrs White Well, let's have a look at it.
Mr White And if that's no good we'll try the one up by the prophylactic emporium.

They leave by the main door. Polly's head appears round the bottom of the stairs.

Polly OK.

Basil and Manuel hurry down the stairs carrying Mr Leeman, and into the office. The Major, coming from the bar, sees them. They put the body on the swivel chair. The Major comes into the office carrying his newspaper.

The Major Morning, Fawlty.
Basil Ah, hello, Major.
The Major Any sign of the papers?
Basil Well, you've got it, Major.
The Major Have I? So I have, yes. Oh, I say, I say Fawlty . . . *(indicating Mr Leeman)* he doesn't look quite the ticket.
Basil Major, don't say anything to anybody, but he's dead.
The Major Ah! . . . Shot, was he?
Basil No, no, no. Died in his sleep.
The Major In his sleep? Ah, well, you're off your guard, you see.
Basil Yes.
The Major Fawlty . . . I shouldn't let him lie around here, you know.
Basil No, no, the undertakers are coming to get him.
The Major Ah! 'Cos they attract the flies, you see. *(he moves off)*

Basil goes out into the lobby. Dr Price has just come out of the dining room.

Dr Price Look, I've been waiting in there.
Basil What?

Dr Price I haven't had any breakfast yet.

Basil Oh, right. Sorry. Coming, coming . . . *(he hurries towards the kitchen)*

Dr Price *(to himself)* It's only sausages. *(he goes into the dining room)*

The kitchen. Basil rushes over to the fridge and gets some sausages out. In the background, Miss Tibbs goes to the reception desk and sounds the bell.

Miss Tibbs Mr Fawlty, I want a word with you, please.

She rings the bell again. Basil closes the door to the lobby and starts frying the sausages. Then he goes into the dining room, where Dr Price is sitting at his table.

Basil Sorry about the delay, doctor. Normal service has been resumed as soon as possible, ha ha ha. *(a scream is heard from the direction of the office)* . . . More coffee? *(another scream)* Tea? Tea? *(Dr Price looks at him, puzzled)* I'll turn the radio down.

He goes into the kitchen, then rushes across the lobby to the office. Miss Tibbs is lying flat out on the floor; Mr Leeman's arm is swinging slightly.

Basil Oh! *(Manuel and Sybil appear at the door)*

Manuel Miss Tibbs.

Sybil Oh no.

Basil Would you believe it?

Sybil What d'you put him **there** for?

Basil Well, he wouldn't fit in the safe and all the drawers were full. Come on, Manuel. *(they start carrying the body out)* Wonderful, isn't it? Our guests. They give us trouble even when they're dead.

Sybil Where are you taking him?

Basil Kitchen.

They hurry off towards the kitchen with the body, but Miss Gatsby appears down the stairs.

Sybil Polly.

Polly *(diverting Miss Gatsby)* Just a moment.

Basil and Manuel swerve out of the main doors to avoid Miss Gatsby. Outside they see the Whites about to drive off. Mrs White sees them and nudges her husband.

Basil Hallo!

Mr White looks at them. Polly appears and waves. They all disappear inside. The Whites drive off and there is the sound of a car crash.

In the lobby, Basil and Manuel hurry back in with the body. Polly picks up the sheets and towels from the floor and waves them towards the kitchen; but the dining-room door opens and Mrs Chase appears carrying a moribund poopie which emits occasional dying noises. She goes upstairs, passing Basil and Manuel who stand there helplessly with the body.

Mrs Chase He's seriously ill.
Basil Oh dear.
Mrs Chase Well don't just stand there. Call a vet!
Basil Right.
Mrs Chase He's been poisoned.

She disappears upstairs. The three stare after her, then jerk into action. They hustle the body into the kitchen, which is filled with smoke.

Basil On the table! On the table! *(they put the body down on the table)* Open the back door.

Manuel does so. Polly dumps the sheets and towels into a large laundry basket which is by the door, then goes into the lobby. Basil grabs the cremated sausages off the stove. Dr Price looks in from the dining room.

Basil *(showing him the sausages)* Sorry about them. Bit overdone, I'm afraid. We'll send 'em down to the crematorium.
Dr Price *(staring at the body)* What in the . . . !!!???
Basil Oh.
Dr Price You can't keep a dead body in here, where there's food.
Basil Can't we?
Dr Price Of course not.
Basil Oh, right, OK. Sorry. Manuel!

They lift the body again.

Manuel Where? Where?
Basil Put it there, in the basket.

They put the body into the laundry basket.

Dr Price Not in here . . . not in the kitchen.
Basil Oh, right.

In the lobby, the Whites are coming in through the main doors. Mrs White is badly shaken. Mr White is holding a handkerchief to his head. They go upstairs as Basil and Manuel carry the basket out and dump it in front of the hatstand, which is against the wall between the kitchen and dining-room doors. Basil does not see the Whites, but notices a new visitor, Mr Ingrams, standing at the reception desk.

Basil Sybil!

In the bar, Sybil is sitting with a very shaky Miss Tibbs.

Sybil *(calling)* I'm looking after Miss Tibbs, Basil. *(to Miss Tibbs)* How are you feeling, dear? *(Miss Tibbs just stares fixedly ahead)*

In the lobby.

Basil *(to Mr Ingrams)* Won't be two minutes. *(he hurries back into the kitchen)*

In the kitchen, Dr Price is waiting for him.

Basil Sorry about that. *(he hurries towards the sausages)*
Dr Price Wash your hands first, please.
Basil Oh, right.
Dr Price And make sure this area is scrubbed before any more food is prepared in here.
Basil Absolutely.
Dr Price Sausages excepted. You may cook them immediately. I'll take the risk.
Basil But of course. *Tout de suite.*

Dr Price goes back into the dining room, where Manuel is clearing away his table. Dr Price puts his hands on the tablecloth just as Manuel tries to remove it.

Dr Price Leave it.
Manuel No, I take it.
Dr Price Leave it.
Manuel No, no, is not time, please. *(Dr Price starts moving salt and pepper from an adjoining table)* No, no, no, please.
Dr Price I'm sitting here.
Manuel Is no lunch till twelve.

Dr Price I'm still having breakfast.
Manuel . . . Is finished . . . all gone . . . breakfast kaput.
Dr Price *(sitting)* I'm having sausages.
Manuel *(confiscating the cruet)* Is not allowed.
Dr Price Put that back. Look, I'm a doctor. I'm a doctor and I want my sausages.
Manuel I tell you, is finished. Bye-bye, please, bye-bye.

Dr Price rises, gets salt and mustard from another table. As he returns, Manuel pinches his knife and fork and darts off. There is no other cutlery around.

Dr Price Now look.
Manuel Is finish.
Dr Price *(getting really angry)* Give those to me. *(pursues Manuel round the room)* Come on, come on.
Manuel No, is no possible.

They circle the table. Basil comes in from the kitchen.

Basil Is everything all right?
Manuel He want to eat now.
Dr Price I've been trying to sit down, he keeps moving things from my table.
Basil I'm so sorry.
Dr Price He doesn't seem to understand that I haven't finished breakfast.
Basil Manuel? Manuel – let me explain. *(he pokes Manuel in the eye)* You understand? Good. *(to Dr Price)* They'll be with you in just a couple of minutes.

In the lobby, Sybil is checking in a guest, an ordinary businessman.

Sybil There we are, Mr Ingrams, number eight. At the top of the stairs on the right. Excuse me not coming with you but one of our guests has been taken ill.
Mr Ingrams *(taking the key)* Thank you.

He goes upstairs and Sybil hurries back into the bar. Miss Young, Mr Xerxes and Mr Zebedee come in through the main doors. Mr Zebedee hangs his hat on the hatstand. Basil and Manuel appear from the dining room and go to the laundry basket, not noticing that it is in a slightly different position.

Mr Xerxes *(to Basil)* Ah, excuse me.

Basil *(lifting the basket with Manuel)* In the office.
Miss Young Excuse me.
Basil Yes?
Miss Young We have an appointment with Mr Leeman. *(Basil and Manuel drop the basket)* Do you know where he is?
Basil *(sitting casually on the basket)* . . . Where he is? Um . . .
Miss Young Would he be in the dining-room? *(Basil indicates a negative)*
Mr Xerxes Might he be in his room?
Basil Now let me think . . . where is he . . .

Manuel puts his foot on the basket and imitates Basil's pose of deep thought.

Miss Young We've come to collect him, as we're taking him to . . .
Basil I'm sorry?
Miss Young We've come to collect him.
Basil Oh – you've come to **collect** him.
Miss Young Yes.
Basil *(standing up)* Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't realize. *(indicating their clothes)* Modern dress.
Miss Young What?
Basil Your dress is very modern. I didn't realize women did it.
Miss Young Did what?
Basil Ssh. *(points down at the basket)*
Mr Zebedee He's downstairs?
Basil *(quietly)* No, no – in the basket.
Mr Xerxes . . . I **beg** your pardon?
Basil He's in the basket.
Miss Young In the **basket?**
Basil Yes. *(to a passing guest)* Hallo.
Mr Zebedee What's . . . what's he doing in the basket?
Basil *(with a minimal shrug)* Well . . . not much.
Mr Xerxes What are you talking about?
Basil Don't you believe me? Look. Look. *(he opens the lid a little; they hesitantly look in; he glances round and opens it more; they look in and look at Basil, mystified; he looks at them, looks in the basket, and reacts with horror. Polly comes downstairs)* Oh my God! He's gone! Where is he?
Polly *(pointing into the basket)* Fresh laundry.
Basil They've taken him!

Basil, Manuel and Polly rush outside. The laundry van is just pulling away.

Basil, Manuel & Polly Stop, stop . . . wait, wait . . .

They manage to stop the van. Meanwhile, in the dining room Dr Price is sitting at his table, his arms folded. He catches the scent of something . . . there is smoke coming through the kitchen doors. In the bar, Sybil is sitting with a staring Miss Tibbs. The reception bell sounds.

Sybil *(calling)* Basil!

In the lobby, Messrs Xerxes, Zebedee and Young are standing there, shaken. Xerxes is ringing the reception bell. Basil and Manuel appear just outside the main door with the basket.

Basil *(calling back to van)* If you could just hang on a couple of minutes. Sorry to keep you. *(he and an increasingly flagging Manuel drag the basket in and park it by the desk)* It's all right. It's all right. We sorted it out. He's in this one.

Xerxes and company stare at him. Polly intervenes.

Polly *(confidentially)* The doctor didn't want him in the kitchen . . . so we put him in the basket.

Basil It's more hygienic.

Mr Xerxes rings the reception bell.

Sybil's voice *(from the bar)* Basil!

Polly *(getting to the reception desk; to Mr Xerxes)* Yes.

Miss Young *(to Polly, warily)* You do **work** here?

Polly Yes.

Miss Young Well, we'd like to speak to the manager. *(Polly looks blank)*

Basil I'm the manager. Is there a problem?

Polly *(in confirmation)* He is . . . really.

Mr Xerxes No, er, there seems to be some kind of misunderstanding here. *(to Polly)* We've come to collect one of your guests, Mr Leeman, to take him into town for a meeting.

Basil A meeting?

Miss Young Yes, a meeting.

Mr Xerxes With our managing director.

Basil *(realizing)* Oh, I see. Oh, Mr **Leeman**!

Miss Young Yes.

Polly We thought you said the **linen**.

Basil *(to himself, but too loudly)* Brilliant! *(out loud)* Sorry! Sorry . . . oh, that's it . . . *(he leans on the basket)*

Sybil *(coming in from the bar)* Sorry to keep you . . .
Basil Oh, hallo, my sweet.
Sybil What are you doing, Basil?
Basil Well, it's a bit involved, dear, but we thought that these gentlemen thought that we thought that they had . . .
Polly *(to Basil)* No, no.
Basil No, that's not it.
Polly *(to Sybil)* Well they were coming for Mr Leeman, and we thought they were coming to collect the **linen.**
Sybil Mr Leeman.
Basil So if you'll just sort that out, dear, I'll take the linen upstairs.
Sybil I see. Thank you, Basil.
Basil Not at all, my sweet. *(he and Manuel carry the basket upstairs; Manuel is sagging badly and groaning with the effort)*
Sybil *(to Xerxes, Young and Zebedee)* Would you mind coming into the office for a moment. *(she goes into the office; they follow her uncertainly)*

In the upstairs corridor, Basil and Manuel appear at the top of the stairs. Manuel is getting the worst of it. They stagger along and put the basket down outside number eight.

Basil Come on, Manuel. One last effort.
The Major *(walking past)* Another one, Fawlty?
Basil No, no, same one, Major.

The Major moves on. Polly has followed them upstairs and she opens the door to number eight as they take the body out of the basket and carry it into the room – where Mr Ingrams is sitting on the bed inflating a life-size rubber sex-aid-type doll. Basil and Manuel turn round and go out again rapidly.

Basil Sorry! Sorry, coming in like that. Sorry.

Ingrams releases the doll and it deflates. Outside in the corridor Basil and Manuel dither. Polly points to the Whites' room.

Polly They've gone into town.
Basil Oh. Yes.

They open the door and carry the body in. Inside the room is dark. They lay the body on one of the two beds just as Polly opens the curtains. The light reveals Mrs White lying on the other bed. As she stirs Polly flips the eiderdown over her and

Basil and Manuel pick the body up again and disappear out of the door. Mr White comes out of the bathroom holding a pad of cotton wool to his head. Mrs White, struggling to escape from the eiderdown, falls off the bed.

Polly Sorry . . . wrong room. *(she exits)*

In the lobby, Basil and Manuel rush down the stairs. Manuel is moaning exhaustedly. They go into the kitchen, but Dr Price is standing by the stove frying himself some sausages. Before he can see them they back out into the lobby. Manuel is totally exhausted.

Basil Back in the basket. *(tries to shove Manuel towards the basket by the dining-room door)* Come on, come on.
Manuel Can't lift.
Basil Come on!
Manuel Too tired.
Basil There's somebody coming!
Manuel Mr Fawlty, I no want to work here any more.
Basil Open the basket.
Manuel No.
Basil Open the basket! *(Manuel opens the basket)* Now inside. *(Manuel starts climbing inside it)* Not you!
Manuel I quit.
Basil Get out.
Manuel I on strike.
Basil I'm warning you . . .
Manuel I stay here. Is nice. *(he climbs in and closes the lid on himself)*
Basil *(nearly berserk)* You see this . . . *(indicating Mr Leeman)* You're next!

He hears a sound from the office and drags the body away. Messrs Zebedee, Xerxes and Young come out of the office with Sybil.

Sybil I really am so sorry.
Miss Young Thank you.
Sybil Goodbye.
All Goodbye.

Sybil moves towards the bar. Zebedee, Xerxes and Young move towards the main door, then see Basil. He has sat Mr Leeman on the umbrella-stand part of the hatrack, and is standing in

front of him, keeping him in place and hiding him from their view. Basil stands nonchalantly with his arms folded. The others are a bit taken aback.

Basil Goodbye.
Mr Xerxes & Miss Young Goodbye.
Basil Goodbye. *(Mr Zebedee moves over to Basil)* Yes?
Mr Zebedee Could I get my hat?
Basil Your hat?
Mr Zebedee Yes. It's just the . . .
Basil Yes, I'll have it sent on. Do you have a card with your address? I'll send it on.
Mr Zebedee Well . . . could I just get it?
Basil Well, do you have to have it now?
Mr Zebedee Yes.
Basil Well, supposing you lose it? It's very windy.
Mr Zebedee I'd like to have it.
Basil *(sighs to the basket)* Oh, right . . . Manuel! Manuel! *(the others look alarmed)* He's in the basket. He is . . . *(Polly comes downstairs)* Polly, would you get Manuel out of the basket, please.
Polly *(looking at the basket)* Manuel?
Basil Yes – come on, girl, come on, what's the matter?
Polly *(opening the lid cautiously)* No, he isn't in there.
Basil Yes he is.
Polly He isn't.
Basil He is . . . look for him!
Polly *(rummaging in the laundry)* . . . Oh . . . sorry.
Manuel *(getting out, to Polly)* You . . . big scab.
Basil *(to the others)* See! *(he unfolds his arms, revealing Mr Leeman's hand on his arm; hurriedly he releases it and refolds his arms)* Manuel, would you get this gentleman his hat please.
Manuel Where?
Mr Zebedee *(pointing)* There! On the rack.
Manuel *(seeing Mr Leeman)* Ugh! *(he stands next to Basil to hide the evidence and, rather awkwardly, passes a hat over)*
Basil What colour was it?
Mr Zebedee Brown. No, that's not it . . . *(Polly reaches over and gets the correct hat)* Thank you.

Miss Tibbs has emerged unsteadily from the bar and now confronts Basil.

Miss Tibbs Mr Fawlty! I want a word with you in your office.
Basil Yes, when would be convenient for you?
Miss Tibbs *(to the others)* I'm seventy-nine!!

The Whites come down the stairs.

Mr White What on earth is going on here?
Basil Oh, sorry about the eiderdown, it got a bit caught.
Mrs Chase *(coming downstairs minus dog)* My baby! My baby's dying! *(general consternation)* They poisoned him!
Miss Young Your **baby?**
Mrs Chase He said he'd gone for a vet.
Miss Young A **vet?**
Basil Sybil!

Dr Price comes in from the dining room holding a plate of sausages.

Dr Price I've just cooked these sausages myself and they're **off**! They should have been eaten by the third. *(goes back into the dining room)*

Miss Gatsby comes down the stairs. Basil sees Sybil behind the reception desk.

Basil Ah, there you are dear. You **do** look nice. Ladies and gentlemen . . . ladies and gentlemen . . . *(calling out through main door)* Laundry's ready . . . *(to his audience)* Ladies and gentlemen, there have been a lot of cock-ups this morning, you all deserve an explanation, and I'm happy to say that my wife will give it to you. Thank you, thank you so much.

He gestures extravagantly towards Sybil. The throng turns towards her; he leaps into the basket and pulls the lid down. Two laundry men come in. Polly and Manuel move away from the still-seated Mr Leeman. The laundrymen pick up the basket and carry it out. Sybil is surrounded by the throng, all complaining noisily. The Major comes downstairs and sees the corpse.

The Major *(to Mr Leeman)* What's going on, old boy?

Miss Tibbs sees the corpse and screams. Miss Gatsby holds her up. Further pandemonium ensues as the others see it.

Sybil Basil! Basil! Basil! Basil!

The basket is loaded on the back of the van, which drives off. Sybil's voice wafts furiously after it.

Sybil's voice Basil! Basil! Basil! . . .

THE ANNIVERSARY

Polly Connie Booth
Terry Brian Hall
Manuel Andrew Sachs
Sybil Fawlty Prunella Scales
Basil Fawlty John Cleese
Roger Ken Campbell
Alice Una Stubbs
Virginia Pat Keen
Arthur Robert Arnold
Reg Roger Hume
Kitty Denyse Alexander
Major Gowen Ballard Berkeley
Audrey Christine Shaw
Miss Tibbs Gilly Flower
Miss Gatsby Renée Roberts

11th of second series, first broadcast on 26 March 1979, BBC2.

The kitchen. Terry is clearing things up; Polly is drying the washing-up.

Polly I mean, it's only a hundred.
Terry Yeah, nothing for them.
Polly And I said I'd pay it back in six weeks.
Terry Well, knock it off your wages.
Polly And she said she thought it would be all right. *(she starts to dry a vase of flowers without looking)*
Terry Poll!
Polly *(realizes and puts it down)* I mean, if he'd said 'No' three weeks ago when I asked him I could have got the money somewhere else.
Terry Ask him this morning.
Polly Well, I've asked him three times, it's embarrassing.
Terry Well, tell him. Say if he won't let you have it you'll go.
Polly I've got to have it this weekend.
Terry Well, **ask** him. I mean, me and you practically run the bleeding place for 'em.

He goes out. Manuel comes in with a couple of carrier bags.

Manuel Ah, Polly. Your paintings brushes.
Polly Thank you, Manuel. *(she examines them)*
Manuel Here. And the change is 44p.
Polly Ah . . . what's all that?
Manuel Oh, I make a paella, a surprise tonight. My mother's recipe. Is . . . *(indicates top-hole)*
Polly But does Terry know?
Manuel Oh . . . perhaps Mr Fawlty say?

Sybil comes in, obviously cross about something. Polly looks at her.

Polly . . . Anything wrong?
Sybil *(heavily martyred)* Nothing you could do anything about, thank you, Polly.
Polly Are you sure?
Sybil Our fifteenth wedding anniversary today . . . guess who's forgotten.
Polly Oh, no.
Sybil I didn't **think** he'd forget this year, not after what happened when he forgot last year . . . I shouldn't be so thin-skinned about it. I'm just cursed with a sensitive

nature, I'm afraid. Still, that's the way I am. I suppose we all have our cross to bear.

Basil *(coming in cheerfully humming the end of Beethoven's Ninth)* Do you know what poem that's based on, Polly?

Polly No.

Basil Ode to Joy. *(to Sybil)* Hallo, dear. *(to Polly)* Oh, Polly, you won't forget to put some more splits in the bar, will you.

Polly No, I'll do it later.

Sybil I don't expect Polly will forget, Basil.

Basil No, just reminding her, dear.

Sybil Oh, were you.

Basil I thought so, yes.

Sybil Really?

Basil Well, it sounded like it to me.

Sybil You don't have to worry about Polly forgetting anything important, Basil.

Basil Don't I?

Sybil No, you don't.

Basil Oh good, how splendid.

Sybil No, **she** doesn't forget things.

Basil . . . Doesn't she?

Sybil Well, can you remember the last time she did?

Basil No, I can't . . . but then my memory isn't very good.

Sybil You can say that again.

Basil Oh, can I dear? Oh, thank you. *(clears his throat)* I've forgotten what it was.

Sybil Well, don't worry, Basil, provided you can remember the things that matter to **you**. *(she leaves in a huff)*

Basil Do I detect the smell of burning martyr?

Polly *(hurrying up to him)* Mr Fawlty, it's your anniversary.

Basil *(nodding)* Mmmm . . . but don't let on.

Polly What?

Basil I'm pretending I've forgotten. . . . Well, I forgot last year and I got flayed alive for it, so we've got some friends arriving in about *(glancing at his watch)* ten minutes for a surprise drinks party. Manuel's making a special paella for tonight, got some champagne . . . but don't tell her I've remembered yet . . . let her have a bit of a fume.

Polly Wouldn't it be simpler to boil her in oil?

Basil Yes, but not as economical.

Manuel *(coming up)* Ah, Mr Fawlty, what time for the paella?

Basil . . . Er . . . nine o'clock . . . but secret, mmm?

Manuel Ah, *si, si.*
Polly Oh Mr Fawlty . . .
Basil Hmmm?
Polly Have you decided about the car?
Basil . . . The car?
Polly The money for the car.
Basil Ah! . . . Um . . .
Polly I spoke to Mrs Fawlty and she said it was all right.
Basil Yes, I don't think she quite understands the cash-flow situation vis-à-vis the frozen assets . . .
Polly But it's only a hundred.
Basil Yes, well . . .
Polly I said I'd pay you back in six weeks.
Basil Let me think about it, hmm?
Polly But I've got to know this weekend – they won't hold it any longer.
Basil **This** weekend? You should have told me.
Polly I told you three weeks ago.
Basil Look, it's my anniversary, right? I've got some friends arriving in a few minutes. We'll discuss it later. Oh, and when they get here, give me a hand with the coats and drinks, will you. *(he goes out)*
Polly I scratch your back, you scratch mine, eh?
Terry *(coming in and seeing Manuel's ingredients)* What's this,then?

The lobby. Basil comes out of the kitchen looking slightly relieved. Miss Tibbs and Miss Gatsby come downstairs.

Miss Tibbs & Miss Gatsby Good morning, Mr Fawlty.
Basil Good morning, ladies.

They exit. Sybil is standing at the door to the office. Basil senses her and looks round.

Sybil Can I have a word with you, Basil?
Basil Er, could it wait just a few minutes, dear?
Sybil No. *(she goes into the office; he follows)*
Basil Is everything all right, dear? You seem just a little bit tense.
Sybil Do you know what day it is today, Basil?
Basil Um . . . it's the sixteenth today, dear.
Sybil It's the seventeenth, Basil.
Basil No, it's the sixteenth today, dear.

Sybil *(quietly, very angry)* It's the seventeenth, Basil.

Basil We'll soon settle this, dear. *(he goes out to the reception desk and picks up the paper; Sybil comes to the office door)* Oh. Yes, you are right. The seventeenth of April. Well, well, well . . .

Sybil Does that stir any memories in you, Basil?

Basil . . . Memories? . . . *(his face lights up)* . . . Agincourt!

Sybil . . . What?

Basil Anniversary of the Battle of Agincourt? *(Sybil slaps him and walks into the office; he is pleased)* . . . Trafalgar? Crécy? Poitiers? Yom Kippur?

The office door slams. Terry is approaching fast from the kitchen.

Terry Mr Fawlty. Manuel says he's cooking a paella for you.

Basil Sssh. It's for Mrs Fawlty. Anniversary . . .

Terry I **can** do paella you know.

Basil Yes, I know.

Terry I have been to catering school.

Basil Oh yes, I know . . . but he **is** Spanish, you know, and I thought it'd be rather nice . . .

Terry Gazpacho, Chicken Andaluse, Eggplant Espagnole, Franco Fritters . . . I **can** do it you know.

Manuel comes up behind Terry.

Basil Yes, of course you can, but he's been wanting to do it ever since he got here, so I thought it would be rather nice, you know, just tonight to give him the chance . . .

Sybil leaves the office by the other door and walks out through the main doors, passing Manuel who looks rather agitated.

Terry I don't want to cause trouble, Mr Fawlty.

Basil Yes you do.

Manuel *(pointing after Sybil)* Mr Fawlty . . .

Basil Now, don't you start. I don't want an argument . . .

Manuel No, no, please.

Basil Be quiet! I've told him I want you to do it.

Manuel No, no – Mrs Fawlty. She go.

Basil . . . What?

Manuel She leave. She leave. She go out.

Basil . . . What? *(he goes out through the main door, breaking into a run as he goes down the steps)* Sybil! Sybil! Sybil! *(he tries to*

stop her as she drives off, fails, and runs after the car as it disappears down the drive) Sybil! No! No no no! You don't understand! I remembered, Sybil! There's a party, Sybil, I've asked people over. Come back, it's our anniversary, you stupid . . . bird-brained . . . *(he runs out of the gate a few paces but Sybil has definitely gone)* Oh my God.

He turns, sinks to the ground, and beats the ground for a moment with both his fists. A car comes up the drive and brakes quite sharply beside him. The occupants are Roger and Alice, one of the couples invited for drinks.

Roger *(leaning out of the window)* Everything all right?

Basil *(getting up and indicating the area he's been hitting)* Bit of a bump. Just smoothing it out. *(he stamps on it)*

Alice Are we too early?

Basil Oh, no, not at all. Come on in. *(the car moves on; he races ahead of them into the lobby)*

In the lobby, Manuel is explaining to Polly as Basil rushes in.

Basil They're here, they're here, what do I say . . . what am I going to say?

Polly Oh . . . say she's er . . . um . . .

Basil She's 'er, um' . . . oh, brilliant! Problem solved, she's 'er, um'.

Manuel Is surprise party.

Basil Yes.

Manuel She not here.

Basil Right.

Manuel That is surprise.

Basil would hit him but Roger and Alice enter at this moment.

Roger Hallo, Bas.

Polly *(to Basil)* Say she's ill.

Basil She's ill!!

Roger What?

Basil She's ill, Sybil, how are you. What would you like to drink.

Roger Syb-ill?

Basil Yes.

Alice Oh dear, what's the matter?

Roger Did you hear that? I said 'Syb-ill'.

Basil Yes.

Roger Got it?

Basil . . . No, no, I'm fine.

Roger No, no, no, I call her 'Syb', right? So, Syb-ill. Bas-well. Ha ha!

Manuel *(joining in)* Man-well! Ha ha! *(he goes into the kitchen)*

Alice What's the matter, Basil?

Roger Yes, what have you done to her, eh, Bas?

Alice Roger?

Roger She knows my name – she's been learning it all night.

Alice What's the matter, Basil?

Basil Nothing . . . *(Alice stares)* Nothing.

Alice With **Sybil.**

Basil Oh, with Sybil. Oh . . . quite a bit actually.

Alice Oh dear.

Basil No, no, she's fine. She's absolutely fine . . . well, I mean she's feeling dreadful, but she'll live and that's what counts in the long run, isn't it. Ha ha.

Alice Well I'll pop up and see her, then.

Basil Oh, you don't want to bother with that. Come on through and have a drink.

He starts moving towards the bar. Alice stays put. He stops.

Alice No, you go on. I'll see you in a moment.

Basil *(hurrying back to her)* No, er, Alice . . .

Alice Yes?

Basil I . . . I wouldn't, actually.

Roger Let 'em have a natter, old boy.

Basil No, no, I mustn't.

Alice Oh, but she's up there on her own, I'm sure she'd like a little company.

Basil Uh-huh.

Alice I know I would.

Basil Well you wouldn't if you looked like her. You know, she's very swollen up . . . you know . . . *(he indicates the eyes)* . . . And she looks fairly . . . you know what Sybil's like about her appearance. *(he grabs Alice's hand)*

Alice Oh, don't be silly, Basil, she won't mind **me** seeing her.

Basil *(restraining her)* Oh she would! I think she would.

Alice But it's her anniversary and she's all on her own.

Basil Aah! *(he grabs his leg)* The old leg . . . bit of gyp. Ooh! Better have a drink. Come on through. *(he tries to guide Alice towards the bar)*

Alice Poor old Basil! Well, look, let me call her, then.
Basil . . . What?
Alice Let me call her from down here and see what she says about it.
Basil Er . . .
Alice *(pointing to phone on reception desk)* There's the phone.
Roger Come on, Bas, let's have a drink.
Basil *(to Alice)* No, no, please.
Roger Come on!
Basil Please.
Alice Why not?
Basil Well, she's having a bit of a sleep . . . you know.
Alice Well, she can sleep all day, Basil, she won't mind me just . . .
Basil No, but she's . . . lost her voice.
Alice . . . Lost her voice?
Basil Poor thing! Gone . . . just like that.
Roger Come on.
Basil Just coming, Roger. After you, Alice . . . in here.

They move into the bar.

Basil Right, Alice . . . What would you . . . what would you like to drink, Alice?
Alice Gin and It, please Basil.
Basil Right.
Alice Has the doctor been?
Basil Er . . . what's yours, Rog?
Roger *(surprised Basil has to ask)* Gin and tonic.
Basil Oh yes of course. Right.
Alice Basil, has the doctor been?
Basil Nuts?
Roger (sotto voce *to Alice)* They've had a row. She's refused to come down.
Basil Um . . . you were just asking about the doctor.
Alice Yes.
Basil You see, he hasn't been yet in fact.
Alice Oh.
Basil I expect we'll get him over this afternoon.
Roger What a shame, eh? Poor old Syb. On your anniversary too.

Polly comes in from the lobby.

Alice Ah! Hallo, Polly.
Polly Oh, hallo, Mrs Tarry.
Alice Isn't it a shame about Mrs Fawlty.
Polly Isn't it – I'm afraid the doctor says she's going to have to be quiet in bed for a couple of days.
Basil Yes, but the doctor hasn't actually been yet Polly . . . I don't know who you were thinking of . . .
Polly But that man this morning . . . he looked like a doctor.
Basil Yes, yes, he did actually, yes, that's true . . . but he wasn't. Unfortunately.
Roger He wasn't a doctor.
Basil No, no. He was a dentist.
Roger A **dentist?**
Basil . . . Yes.
Roger What's a dentist doing here?
Basil Staying in the hotel . . . he's a guest, you see. Dentists do stay at hotels, you know.
Roger Yes, but they don't go around telling other people's wives to stay in bed, do they.
Polly Oh, he must have been talking about **his** wife.
Roger **His** wife.
Basil Well, jolly good luck. Nice to see you both. Cheers!
Alice Cheers.
Roger Up yours, Bas. *(they drink)*
Alice Well, I hope she's better soon.
Basil Oh, yes, yes.
Roger Who, Syb or the dentist's wife?

A pause.

Basil *(gives a forced laugh)* Well, you're both keeping well, are you?
Roger Oh, yes, yes, couldn't be better.
Alice And you, Basil?
Basil Oh, can't complain. Well, I could, but it wouldn't do any good, would it. Ha ha.
Alice No . . . a shame, and on your anniversary as well.
Basil Yes. Still, it all comes out in the wash, doesn't it. We're thinking of having this room done up as a matter of fact.
Alice Really?
Basil Yes. Sort of captain's cabin, you know, put a couple of

charts on the wall, few ropes, wheel in the corner, that sort of thing.

Roger Yes, give it a bit of **class**.

Basil Wasn't **my** idea, Roger.

Alice Poor Sybil.

Arthur and Virginia come in. The others greet them.

Virginia Hallo Basil.

Basil Hallo, Virginia. Hallo, Arthur.

Virginia Happy anniversary!

Basil Oh, thank you, thank you, yes.

Virginia We've brought you a little surprise. *(she takes a cake-tin from Arthur)*

Alice Oh, can I see? *(Virginia lifts the lid)* Oh, a cake! Lovely!

Basil Jolly nice.

Alice Did you make it?

Virginia Lots of extra marzipan.

Basil She's not well.

Virginia Mmm?

Basil Sybil.

Virginia Not well?

Alice She's in bed.

Virginia That's not like Sybil.

Alice She's lost her voice.

Virginia What is it?

Basil Well, we're not absolutely sure.

Roger I bet she'd like a bit of that marzipan.

Basil *(warningly)* Roger.

Roger Cheer her up, Bas.

Virginia Good idea. We'll take her up a slice.

Basil Yes, I don't think we'd better.

Virginia Well, why not?

Basil She really ought not to be disturbed.

Virginia Just for a minute, Basil.

Basil It's not a very good idea. Tomorrow, perhaps.

Virginia What on earth's the matter with her?

Basil Er . . .

Virginia Has the doctor been?

Roger No, but the dentist's had a good look.

Virginia The **dentist?**

Basil No, well, we called the doctor, we described the symptoms to him over the phone and he says she ought to

stay very quiet. *(Polly has appeared)* Ah, Polly. *(to Virginia)* What would you like to drink, Virginia?

Virginia Oh, medium sherry, please.

Virginia and Alice sit down at a table. Manuel appears and tries to attract Basil's attention.

Manuel Mr Fawlty!

Virginia What are the symptoms?

Basil Well, she's lost her voice, and she's very puffed up. *(to Manuel)* Yes, what is it?

Manuel Is Terry, he being very difficult . . .

Virginia Puffed up?

Basil *(to Manuel)* What?

Manuel He move my pot. He put his pot where my pot is . . .

Arthur Beer for me.

Basil Well, put your pot somewhere else.

Manuel I put it somewhere else, he move it again.

Polly *(out of the side of her mouth as she passes Basil with the drinks)* What's puffed up?

Basil *(through clenched teeth)* Th'eyes. *(to Manuel)* Just . . . tell him I said not to do it, all right?

Polly What?

Basil Th'eyes.

Manuel I tell you he want to make trouble, he push mop in my feet . . .

Polly *(to Virginia)* . . . Her thighs.

Virginia Thighs!?

Polly Well, most of her legs, actually. *(to Manuel)* Now just tell him. Go on. *(Manuel exits)*

Virginia Basil – Polly says her legs are puffed up.

Basil *(leans down and looks at Polly's legs)* Are they?

Virginia . . . No, Sybil's.

Basil . . . What?

Virginia Sybil's legs.

Basil Sybil's legs?

Polly Her thighs!

Basil . . . Oh, er, yes, just a bit. A tiny bit . . . but mainly round the face. Round the eyes, you know.

Polly *(realizing her mistake)* Oh!

Virginia Her face is puffed up, she's lost her voice, and her legs are a bit . . .

Basil . . . Expanded. Sad, isn't it. Poor old sow.

Virginia Well, when's the doctor coming?

Basil Later. Soon. Soon.

Virginia When?

Basil Well, I don't know exactly.

Virginia Well, I'd better go up and have a look at her. *(she gets up and makes to go)*

Basil *(amazed)* What?

Virginia She sounds **ill**, Basil.

Basil She **is** ill. That's why we don't want people going up there and talking to her.

Virginia I'm not going to talk to her, Basil. I'm going to look at her.

Basil Look at her? She's ill, isn't she? What's the bloody point of looking at her?

Virginia I am a **nurse**, Basil. *(she moves off past him)*

Basil *(to himself)* Oh, no! *(he rushes after her)* I know, I know. I know that. *(he leads her back)* Did you hear that, everyone, all the years I've known old Virginia and she thinks I've forgotten she's a nurse. You're a marvel, you know that? *(he grasps her and kisses her)*

Virginia Please let me go, Basil.

Basil What?

Virginia I want to look at Sybil.

Basil Well, you can't.

Virginia Why not?

Basil Because . . . because . . . you've lost weight, haven't you . . . isn't that absolutely marvellous.

Polly Mr Fawlty, I think you ought to tell them.

Basil Oh, right . . .

Polly . . . About the doctor coming this morning.

Basil He came this morning. First thing.

Virginia Well, why didn't you **say** so?

Polly . . . He didn't want to worry you.

Basil I didn't want to worry you . . .

Virginia . . . Is it serious?

Basil Well, it might be . . . *(there is a slight gasp from the others)* I mean, not completely serious but slightly serious.

Alice Oh, Basil.

Basil *(bravely)* It's all right, I'd just rather we didn't . . . you know . . . talk about it.

A pause. Suddenly the atmosphere is jarred by the merry entry of Reg and Kitty.

Reg & Kitty Hallo everyone. Hallo, Basil.
Basil *(with dignity)* Hallo, Reg. Hallo, Kitty.
Kitty Sybil's not here, is she?
Basil Er, no, I was just . . .
Kitty *(to Reg)* There you are, you see. I told you. *(to the others)* I just saw her in the town.
Roger What?
Kitty In her car. In the High Street.
Basil . . . Oh, no, no, that's the other woman.
Kitty What other woman?
Basil That woman who looks slightly like Sybil. You know her, don't you? You know?
Virginia Like Sybil?
Basil Well, yes . . . very broad. From the North.
Reg Drives a red Maxi, does she?
Basil Well, her husband does, I think. I expect she's borrowed it.
Roger Perhaps she stole yours, old boy. It's not out there.
Basil It's at the garage, Rog.
Virginia She looks like Sybil?
Basil Yes.
Virginia And she comes from the North?
Basil Well, she has a Northern accent, you know. I assume she's from the North.
Virginia You've spoken to her!
Basil Mmm.
Virginia What's her name?
Basil Well, I don't know her name, I mean, I only met her **once**! At a fête.
Virginia . . . Sorry, Basil, I didn't mean . . .
Reg No, no, no, of course. By the way, Basil, where **is** Sybil?
Basil She's in bed.
Kitty Oh dear.
Basil Yes, she's really not well. She really mustn't see anybody. Now . . .
Reg What, not at all?
Basil No.
Kitty Can't we just put our heads round the corner?
Basil No, I'm afraid not. She mustn't have any excitement.
Reg Oh, **Basil** . . .
Basil What d'you mean, 'Oh, Basil'?
Arthur Well, we are her oldest friends, old man. I mean, it can

only do her good, and we have all come over here to see you both . . .

Basil Well, I'm sorry if you've been put out . . . *(getting worked up)* I mean, you'll have some drinks, plenty of nuts, see your old friends, have a few laughs, but if that isn't good enough, I'll . . . I'll refund your petrol for you.

Arthur No, no.

Reg Steady on, Basil.

Basil *(calming down)* Well, I'm sorry . . . but . . .

Virginia Of course. We understand. You're a bit upset.

Basil Well, you know . . .

Reg Yes, of course. But you know us well enough. You should have called it off. Waited till she's better.

Basil I would have done, Reg, but there just wasn't time, you know.

Roger . . . Wasn't time?

Basil *(a bit fiercely)* She only began to puff up an hour ago.

Roger You said the doctor came first thing this morning.

Basil Yes, yes, that's right. That was for the throat. The puffing up started up after he'd gone, OK?

Virginia After!?

Basil Yes, after. Are you taking notes? *(to Virginia, who is setting off)* Where are **you** going?

Virginia I'm going to see her, Basil. *(he grabs her and leads her back)* But, Basil, there's something very peculiar about this, and I'm not standing here while an old friend like Sybil . . .

Basil Look! Look!!! It's perfectly Sybil! Simple's not well. She lost her throat and her voice hurt. The doctor came and said it was a bit serious, not a lot, a bit. He went away, she started to puff up, he's coming back later this afternoon and it's best for her to be on her own now, what is so peculiar about that?

Roger Her driving round in the town.

Basil . . . What did you say?

Roger Er, no, sorry, just a joke, Bas – can I have another gin, please?

Basil Just a joke? She's down there in the town driving around, is that what you think?

Alice 'Course it isn't, Basil.

Basil No, no, no, no, obviously I've been standing around here making up crackpot stories about my wife being seriously ill upstairs – is that it, Roger?

Roger No, no, no, of course not . . . it was just that it **was** a bit funny, Kitty . . . seeing that Northern woman in the car.

Basil Funny? . . . Oh, I **see**, you mean you think that that was **Sybil** in the car and she's not upstairs, is that it? Oh, I understand. I've got it now. Right, well, what are we all waiting around here for? Come on, everybody upstairs. *(he motions them; nobody moves)* Come on. All of you.

Alice No, Basil.

Reg No, no.

Basil Come on, everyone who thinks I'm a liar, come on up.

Kitty No, of course we don't, Basil.

Basil Come on.

Arthur Hang on, old man.

Virginia *(kindly)* Don't get like that, Basil.

Basil Come and see Sybil.

Reg No, we don't want to.

Arthur No, it'd be best to leave her. We'll see her another time.

Virginia Yes, when she's feeling better.

Basil But Roger wants to **now**.

Roger No, we mustn't disturb her.

Basil No, no, no, no, if Roger wants to . . .

Alice He **doesn't**, Basil. *(they all look to Roger)*

Roger Well, we could just say hello.

Alice *(furious)* Oh, **Roger**!!

Basil Right. All right. Fine! All right, OK then, fine!! No problem. No problem. Suits me. Good idea. I'll just pop upstairs and ask her to stop dying and then you can all come up and identify her.

Alice *(embarrassed)* Basil.

Basil moves off towards the lobby, grabbing Polly by the arm as he goes past her.

Basil Polly, would you give me a hand. *(he draws her out of the bar and shouts over his shoulder to the others)* Help yourself to another drink, please make yourself at home, relax . . .

Roger Any more nuts?

The lobby. Basil pulls Polly along.

Polly What are you doing?

Basil You won't have to say anything.

Polly What? *(they have reached the stairs; as he starts pulling her up them the penny drops)* Oh, no. No. No. No.

Basil Come on. *(he grabs her round the waist and half carries her up the stairs)*
Polly *(resisting)* No!
Basil Come on.
Polly I won't.
Basil Yes you will.
Polly I won't, I won't.
Basil It's easy. You just put on her dark glasses and one of her wigs.
Polly Let me go!

They have got to the top of the stairs. Basil hustles Polly along the corridor.

Basil I'll keep them away from you.
Polly Mr Fawlty, will you listen to me?
Basil We'll draw the curtains.
Polly Oh come on, they'd never believe I was . . .
Basil Seeing is believing.
Polly But I don't **look** like her!
Basil You're a woman, aren't you?
Polly My face is too long.
Basil We'll shorten it. You've lost your voice, all you have to do is wave.
Polly Wave?
Basil *(holding her firmly)* You just put one hand up and jiggle it about. You'll soon get the hang of it. *(he kicks the door to the bedroom open and pushes her in)*

In the bedroom, he runs to the wardrobe, pulls out a wig and throws it to her.

Polly Mr Fawlty, I know you're very excited, you might even be having a nervous breakdown, I don't know, I'm no expert – but you must really try and see that this isn't going to work.
Basil *(throwing her a negligée)* Get that on.
Polly It isn't going to work!
Basil What's the matter, what's the matter?
Polly I'm not **doing** it! You want to be in a Marx Brothers film, that's **your** problem. I'm not interested.
Basil Not interested?
Polly No.
Basil This is all your fault.

Polly My fault?

Basil You said she was ill.

Polly You were the one who invited them to come up here. They didn't want to. **You** pretend to be Sybil. *(throws him the wig)* **You** get into the bed! *(throws him the negligée)*

Basil I'm too big! I've got a moustache! What's this supposed to be, a great hairy bogey?

Polly It's something you get when you're puffed up.

Basil . . . I'll ruin you. You'll never waitress in Torquay again.

Polly Waitress? That's a joke. I help out at receptions, I clean the rooms, I deal with the tradesmen, I change the fuses, I mend the switchboard, and if you think my duties now include impersonating members of your family you have got one more screw loose than I thought. I'm not doing it. Do you understand? You get yourself out of it. It's nothing to do with me.

There is a knock at the door. Basil hears it and mimes a heart attack, clutching his chest, emitting gurgling noises and sinking to the floor.

Polly A hundred for the car.

Basil . . . All right.

Polly Now! *(another knock at the door)*

Basil What?!

Polly **Now!**

Basil Now?

Polly Now.

Outside in the corridor, Manuel is standing by the door bridling. After a moment Basil comes out.

Basil Hallo? *(he sees Manuel)*

Manuel Is not possible.

Basil What?

Manuel Is not possible for me. Please come. *(he takes Basil's sleeve)*

Basil What is it?

Manuel Is Terry, please come.

Basil Look, I'm busy.

Manuel He tell me I not know to make a paella. **He** tell **me.**

Basil You tell him . . .

Manuel I tell him, paella is Spanish, not Cockney stinking eel pie. I make paella like my momma . . .

Basil I'm not interested!

Manuel My momma's recipe is big in Barcelona.
Basil Go away! Go on!
Manuel No, no, you come – he call me ignorant wog motherboy crump.
Basil *(getting loose from Manuel)* Let go of me! Now look!
Reg's voice *(calling up the stairs)* Basil!
Basil Yes? *(to Manuel)* You tell Terry – let you alone.
Reg *(appearing at the top of the stairs)* Basil?
Basil Yes, Reg? *(to Manuel)* Go on . . . go away! Not you, Reg!
Manuel *(going, reluctantly)* Is big in Barcelona, big, big.
Reg Are we supposed to come up now?
Basil Er, yes, in a moment, Reg. No, no, no, come on up now, you know, yes, come on up . . . yes, she's just, you know, touching up the worst bits.

Reg comes forward tentatively, followed by the others straggling behind.

Virginia How is she feeling, Basil?
Basil Well, um, I woke her and told her that you'd come over – she was very very pleased, of course, but she's very weak and her throat, you know, and she has great difficulty expressing herself. *(they all nod and make concerned noises)* Makes a change. Hah! *(an embarrassed pause)* She should be able to see you in a moment. She's pretty quick with the old . . .
Virginia She's not bothering to make up for us, is she?
Basil Oh, no, no, no . . . just . . . you know. *(a pause)* She asked me to thank you and say how much she's looking forward to seeing you all.
Arthur Good.
Virginia She can speak a little then, can she, Basil?
Basil Um . . . not really, no. No, I see what you mean . . . she wrote that down, actually, on one of the . . . um, postcards she keeps by the side of the bed.
Roger Did she stamp it? *(Basil glares)*
Alice Basil – do you have an ashtray anywhere?
Basil Oh, yes, I'll get one, Alice. *(he sets off past them)*
Alice Oh, Basil, there's no need to . . .
Basil No, it's no bother, not at all. I shan't be a second . . .

He hurries down the stairs, across the lobby and into the bar. He grabs a bottle, uncorks it and swings it up to take a swig from it just as Manuel arrives and plucks at his arm.

Manuel Mr Fawlty! Mr Fawlty! *(Basil takes his eye off the bottle, most of which goes over him)* He put mince in it! He put bloody mince in it!!

Basil *(indicating soaking jacket)* Look what you've done!

Manuel Oh, sorry! Sorry! *(he starts trying to wipe Basil dry)* Look, I tell him, paella is a fish dish.

Basil *(pushing him away)* Go away. Go away.

Manuel What I do?

Basil Go away! *Arriba* – vamoose!!

In the upstairs corridor the crowd has started to bicker.

Roger Well, this is fun, isn't it.

Alice Roger!!

Roger No, I mean, who wants to go to the boozer or play golf when you can come to one of Basil's do's.

Virginia Oh, come on, Roger. It can't be easy for him with Sybil lying there ill.

Roger . . . Well, you know what I think about that.

Virginia What?

Alice & Kitty Sssh!

Basil *(coming up with ashtray, nuts and crisps)* Here we are – I brought some nuts.

Alice Oh, Basil, you shouldn't have.

Basil *(to Reg)* If you could just take the ashtray. *(there is a sudden flurry as he drops the nuts)* Sorry.

Alice Oh, never mind.

Basil I'll get some more, shall I?

Reg No, no, we've got the crisps.

Basil Sure? I don't mind . . .

Virginia No, no, crisps will be lovely.

Basil Really? OK, OK. *(he offers them round)* Crisp, Alice?

Alice Thank you.

Basil Arthur?

Arthur Not for me, thank you.

Basil Kitty, would you like a crisp?

Kitty Thank you, lovely, thank you.

Basil Just hold them – I'll just get a brush.

Roger A Basil Brush.

Basil Ha ha, oh very good, Rog. *(he runs off again down the corridor; the others stare after him, surprised)*

Roger Broom broom! *(Basil disappears)*

Virginia Roger? . . . What did you mean?

Roger Well, they've had a row. She refused to come down.
Kitty *(shocked)* Roger.
Roger And he's embarrassed her into seeing us.
Basil's voice *(from downstairs)* I'm not interested!

In the lobby, Basil is being hampered by Manuel.

Basil I'm not interested! *(he throws Manuel into the kitchen, and runs back upstairs)*

In the upstairs corridor Alice and Kitty are trying to pick up the nuts. Basil runs up and starts helping them.

Basil Oh, don't you bother, leave it to me.
Reg Basil. *(Basil continues working)* Basil?
Basil Mmmm?
Reg Perhaps she's ready now?
Basil Oh yes. Er . . . good idea. Yes, I'll just have a look. Right. *(he opens the door and puts his head inside for a moment)* Not quite. Nearly. Anyone care for another crisp?
All No, thank you, no.
Roger Have you got a choc ice?
Basil *(putting the bowl on the floor near them)* Well, I'll put them there . . . just help yourselves . . . *(he looks awkward and flinches at the carpet with his foot)*
Roger Nice carpet, Bas.
Basil Thank you, yes, it's a bit worn now.
Roger Oh, I thought it was part of the pattern.
Alice Nice paper, Basil.
Basil Oh, thank you, Alice. Yes, we got it to go with the carpet, you know . . .
Roger To go with it?
Basil That's right, Roger.
Roger Well, one of 'em'll have to go. My money's on the carpet . . .
Basil You read a lot of Oscar Wilde, do you, Rog? *(pointing up)* I don't know if you've ever seen the moulding up there. *(he treads into the crisp bowl, slips, and sits down abruptly)*
Alice Oh, dear.
Basil It's all right, it's all right, don't worry. I'll clean it up. *(he stands up)*
Roger What time's the main feature?

Basil ignores him. The Major walks by.

The Major Morning, Fawlty. Lovely day for a round of golf.
Basil Oh, morning, Major. Yes.
The Major Anyone care to make up a four?
Basil No, no. We're going to see Sybil, Major.
The Major Playing a match, is she?
Basil No, no, she's ill. Really quite ill.
The Major Oh . . . she should be in bed, you know.
Basil She is. We're going in to see her.
The Major Another lot in with her, is there?
Basil May I introduce Major Gowen, our oldest resident . . . I don't know if you know everyone, Major?
The Major *(shaking hands with everyone)* Good morning . . . delighted to meet you . . . Welcome to Torquay.
All Good morning, Major.
Basil *(peeps inside the bedroom)* Yes, all right. She's ready now, come on in. *(the Major starts to go in; Basil steers him out)* Yes, not you.

They go into Sybil's bedroom. The curtains are drawn and it is very dark.

Alice Sybil?
Virginia Hallo darling, don't try and speak.
Kitty The gang's here.
Alice Sorry you're not well.
Kitty Such a shame.
Virginia So we thought we'd come and visit you. . . . Happy anniversary.
All Yes, happy anniversary.

There is a crash and a cry. Someone has fallen over. Cries of alarm from the women; a moan.

Virginia What's the matter?
Arthur Reg has fallen over. You all right, Reg?
Reg Done my ankle.
Alice Oh dear.
Basil You all right, Reg?
Virginia Careful!
Kitty It's so dark in here.
Roger The bloody light's not working.
Reg I tripped over something.

There's another crash and a cry. General alarm.

Arthur Who's that?
Kitty Me.
Alice It's Kitty.
Virginia Where are you, dear?
Arthur Can't we have some light in here, Basil?
Basil Yes, all right, hang on. *(there is the sound of a metal wastepaper-basket being kicked across the room)* Here we are. OK?

He switches on a small table lamp on the other side of the room. Sybil's bed, on which Polly is lying, is almost surrounded by screens, with a gap at the foot and a small gap near the head.

Roger Well, now the light's on we can see the screen.
Basil Oh dear.
Virginia Are you all right, Kitty?
Kitty I think so.

Reg is getting up gingerly, helped by Arthur.

Roger You shouldn't have gone to all this trouble, Basil.
Alice Roger! *(she elbows him)*
Basil Come on up here. OK? You both all right? Come on round here, you can see her from there. *(to the hidden Polly)* Everything all right, dear? *(to the others)* Here she is!

They move to the foot of the bed and look round it towards 'Sybil'. Basil moves to the gap in the screen at the head of the bed.

All Hallo, Sybil. Hallo.

Polly is wearing a wig and dark glasses, and has stuffed something in her mouth to puff her cheeks up. She is in deep shadow. She waves a beringed hand at them.

Roger There's something there – I can see it moving.
Virginia It's a bit dark, Basil.
Basil Yes, well, her eyes are very sensitive.
Virginia She's got her glasses.
Basil Yes, well, I'll just draw the curtains a bit . . . *(he goes to do so but Polly makes frantic noises and grabs his leg)* Yes, I know they are sensitive, dear . . . it's all right, trust me, dear . . . trust me, trust me. *(he draws the curtains open a little)*

All That's better. Hallo, dear. Happy anniversary. Hallo, Sybil.

Alice You poor dear.

Virginia How are you feeling, dear?

Polly gives the thumbs down.

All Oooh.

Virginia You're very swollen. *(Polly points to her cheeks and then her legs)*

Basil . . . Her thighs! The thighs.

Kitty We've brought you a cake.

All Yes.

Basil takes it and shows it to Polly, who gives the spot-on signal.

Basil Would you like a little bit, dear? *(Polly shakes her head firmly)* Oh, have a little bit? Go on . . . *(Polly points to her cheeks)* Oh, yes! Well . . . fifteen years, eh?

All Fifteen years, yes! Well, well. Happy anniversary.

Arthur Well done, both of you.

Polly does the Royal Wave for a bit.

Basil Thank you. *(a pause; Polly waves again; Basil stares at her, then gets the point)* . . . Ah, yes . . . well, I think she's feeling a little bit tired.

Roger All that waving'd wear anyone out. *(Polly stretches)*

Basil So perhaps we'd better all . . . er . . . *(Polly yawns)*

Virginia What's that in her mouth, dear . . . the white stuff?

Polly indicates 'It's nothing'.

Basil Just foam . . . you know, from the excitement. Fifteen years, eh? Um, well . . . *(he puts the cake down, chancing to look out of the window; to his horror he sees Sybil's car drive up)* Aaaaaaagh!!

Virginia What is it?

Basil *(in panic)* I've just remembered something! Downstairs! You stay here, have a chat with Polly, **Sybil**! Sybil!! And I'll just . . . shan't be a moment. *(he rushes off)*

Roger A chat? Does anyone know semaphore?

The lobby. Basil rushes downstairs just as Sybil walks in.

Basil *(calmly)* Hallo, dear.

Sybil I came back for my clubs, Basil, I'm not staying.
Basil Oh, aren't you? OK.
Sybil What?
Basil Well, I'm sure you know best, dear.
Sybil You don't even want me to, do you.
Basil Um . . . *(picks a bit of thread off his jacket)* Oh, what's that?
Sybil *(slapping him in the face)* Fifteen years I've been with you. When I think what I might have had.
Basil Fifteen years! Coh!
Sybil . . . You want me to go, don't you.
Basil Oh, no! But . . . well, you've obviously made up your mind, so . . .
Sybil I won't forget this, Basil.
Basil Won't you dear?
Sybil No, I won't. *(a little pause; she starts to cry)* I'm going now, Basil. I think it's best, don't you?
Basil All right, dear.
Sybil Goodbye, Basil.
Basil . . . Cheerio, dear. *(she leaves; just outside she turns and looks back)* Drive carefully, dear. *(she goes and Basil rushes back up the stairs)*

In the bedroom the guests are taking their leave.

Arthur Get well soon.
Reg Look after yourself. *(Polly waves)*
Kitty We'll have a little party when you're feeling better.
Virginia You know, I really don't like leaving you like this, dear. *(Polly indicates 'It's all right')* Let me just have a little feel . . . *(she advances with her hands out)* Just to see if . . . *(Polly waves her away)* Now, now don't be frightened, I'm not going to hurt you . . . just feel your glands, dear. *(she comes very close; Polly fends her off)* No, don't be silly Sybil. It's for your own good, now, don't be silly. *(Polly hits her quite hard)* Aagh!

Virginia falls back quite startled. The others are amazed. Basil hurries in.

Basil What's going on?
Virginia *(holding her eye and crying)* She hit me, Basil.
Basil What?
Virginia I was just trying to examine her, she lashed out . . .
Basil *(hitting Polly)* Don't. Don't hit our friends. I know you're

not feeling a hundred per cent, but control yourself! *(to Virginia)* I'm sorry. She's not herself today. Don't worry, the doctor'll be over here soon. I'll give you a call, tell you what he says. So . . . um . . . anyone care for another drink, or . . . ?

All No, no thank you Basil, we ought to be going . . .

Outside in the forecourt, Sybil and Audrey are sitting in the car. Sybil, genuinely upset, is crying. Audrey is comforting her.

Audrey They're all the same, dear. They're all the same, believe me.

Sybil Oh, I know, I know.

Audrey Now, you forget all about it. We're going to have a nice game of golf and go out to dinner. *(Sybil puts the car into gear)* Did you get your clubs?

In the lobby, the gang are coming down the stairs. They are the walking wounded. Reg limps with support from Arthur, Kitty walks unsteadily, and Virginia, still holding her eye, is being helped by Alice. Basil follows them.

Basil Well, awfully nice to have seen you all. Thanks for coming over.

Roger No, not at all. We must do this more often. You know, when they're fit again.

Basil Yes, yes, I'm sorry about all the injuries . . . still, perhaps when Sybil's a bit better . . . you know, perhaps we can all get together and have a . . .

Sybil has come in behind him. The guests are staring past him at her; he turns and sees her. She looks at them, then at him. There is a long moment.

Basil *(to Sybil)* How extraordinary. We were just talking about you. *(offers his hand)* Basil Fawlty. We met once . . . at a fête. *(she stares at him; he starts to lead her into the kitchen)* Let me show you where it is. How's the North, then? Have you been up there at all recently?

The kitchen. Basil leads Sybil, who is too stunned to resist, in. Manuel and Terry are fighting on the floor. He ignores this, steers her past them, opens a cupboard and puts her inside.

Basil I'll explain everything in a moment, dear. *(he closes the door and locks it)*

He goes back, stepping over the fight. In the lobby, the whole gang are utterly stunned. Basil comes back out of the kitchen, from which the noises of the fight continues.

Basil What a coincidence – she's thinking of buying one of our fridges. Well – lovely to have seen you all . . . and sorry about the ankle . . . keep the head right back . . .

The gang, speechless, move off out of the main door, ushered by Basil. Roger is the last to go.

Roger Great fun.

He hands Basil his glass and leaves. Polly has come down the stairs.

Basil *(to Polly)* Piece of cake. *(he braces himself and makes for the kitchen)* Now comes the tricky bit.

BASIL THE RAT

Sybil Fawlty Prunella Scales
Basil Fawlty John Cleese
Mr Carnegie John Quarmby
Polly Connie Booth
Terry Brian Hall
Manuel Andrew Sachs
Miss Tibbs Gilly Flower
Miss Gatsby Renée Roberts
Guest Stuart Sherwin
Major Gowen Ballard Berkeley
Mr Taylor James Taylor
Mrs Taylor Melody Lang
Ronald David Neville
Quentina Sabina Franklyn

Sixth of second series, first broadcast on 25 October 1979, BBC2.

The hotel forecourt. The Fawltys' car drives up. Basil and Sybil get out and walk towards the hotel.

Sybil You said you'd go.

Basil I didn't say I'd go, I said I might. I've got to do the accounts tonight.

Sybil You don't have to do the accounts tonight.

Basil I **do.**

Sybil It's always the same. Whenever I want to go out, you've always got some excuse.

Basil It's not an excuse. It's just that tonight . . .

Sybil It's not just tonight, it's any night I want to go out with any of my friends, anyone at all, any other members of the human race.

Basil Yes, well, I wouldn't call the Sherrins members of the human race, dear.

They enter the lobby.

Sybil I'm cooped up in this hotel all day long, you never take me out, the only bit of life I get is when I get away with some of my friends.

Basil Well, you must get away more often, dear.

Sybil . . . They all think you're peculiar, you know that, don't you. They've all said at one time or another, how on earth did the two of us ever get together. Black magic, my mother says. *(she stalks off into the office)*

Basil Well, she'd know, wouldn't she. Her and that cat. *(he goes into the kitchen)*

In the kitchen, Basil comes in and sees a man kneeling down by the fridge peering at a plate of meat. It is Mr Carnegie, a stranger to Basil.

Basil Shall I get you the wine list?

Carnegie Mr Fawlty?

Basil Mister? Oh, please, call me waiter. Look, I'll go and get a chair and then you can really tuck in – there's some stuff in the bin you might like, you know, potato peelings, cold rice pudding, that sort of thing – not exactly *haute cuisine* but it'll certainly help to fill you up. *(Sybil comes in)* Ah, Sybil, may I introduce you to the gentleman who's just opened the self-service department here . . . Mr . . . ?

Carnegie Carnegie.

Basil Mr Carnegie the scavenger gourmet from . . . ?

Carnegie The Public Health Department. *(he puts the meat back in the fridge and stands up)*

Basil Yes, but where were you born, Scavenger or down here in the West Country . . .

Sybil Public Health Department?

Polly *(entering with an invoice)* Oh . . . here's the invoice for the meat, Mr Carnegie . . . *(to Sybil)* It's the six-monthly check-up.

Sybil Oh yes, the meat was delivered on Wednesday . . .

Carnegie *(having examined the invoice)* Yes . . . that would appear to be satisfactory.

Basil Oh, good. Hope you didn't mind my little joke just now. Thank God we English can laugh at each other, eh?

Mr Carnegie makes a note on his clipboard. Terry walks in, stops, and looks at Polly.

Polly *(to Terry, mouthing silently)* Public Health Department.

Terry leaves. Carnegie sees him.

Basil That's our new chef just left . . . just popped out for a quick prayer, I expect, ha ha ha.

Carnegie *(ignoring this sally)* Mr Fawlty.

Basil *(waving)* Hallo.

Carnegie These premises do not come up to the standard required by this authority. Unless appropriate steps are taken instantly, I shall have no alternative but to prosecute or recommend closure to the appropriate committee of the Council. Specifically, lack of proper cleaning routines, dirty and greasy filters, greasy and encrusted deep fat fryer, dirty cracked and stained food preparation surfaces, dirty cracked and missing wall and floor tiles, dirty marked and stained utensils, dirty and greasy interior surfaces of the ventilator hoods.

Basil Yes, about the fat fryer . . .

Carnegie Inadequate temperature control and storage of dangerous foodstuffs, storage of cooked and raw meat in same trays, storage of raw meat above confectionery with consequent dripping of meat juices on to cream products, refrigerator seals loose and cracked, icebox undefrosted and refrigerator overstocked.

Basil Yes, say no more . . .

Carnegie Food handling routine suspect, evidence of smoking in food preparation area, dirty and grubby food-handling overalls, lack of washhandbasin which you gave us a verbal assurance you'd have installed on our last visit six months ago, and two dead pigeons in the water tank.

Basil . . . Otherwise OK?

Carnegie As I said, I shall refrain from serving a food hygiene notice today, but I shall return tomorrow. If the items on this list have not been rectified I shall take immediate action. I have not had time to inspect the bedrooms and common passageways but I shall be doing so tomorrow.

Sybil *(ushering him out)* Yes, of course.

Carnegie *(as he leaves, to Basil)* The only gourmets you'll find scavenging in this kitchen will be kamikaze ones. *(he and Sybil exit)*

Terry *(opening the back door at which he has been listening)* I thought we was in trouble there for a minute.

Basil . . . We **are** in trouble.

Terry *(glancing at the list)* Piece of cake.

Basil Have you **read** this piece of cake?

Terry Oh, they got to do that, ain't they, it's part of their job.

Basil Terry, this kitchen is filthy.

Terry Filthy Towers, eh?

Basil Now, look . . .

Terry Look, all kitchens are filthy, Mr Fawlty – in fact the better the kitchen the filthier it is. Have you ever read George Orwell's experiences at Maxim's in Paris?

Basil No, do you have a copy? I'll read it out in court!

Sybil *(coming back in)* Don't just stand there gossiping. Go upstairs . . .

Basil I am not gossiping, I am trying to point out to our alleged chef . . .

Sybil Go upstairs and get Manuel, and check the bathrooms for soap and paper and get those pigeons out of the water tank.

Basil Yes, my little commandant.

Sybil And see how many fire extinguishers are missing. Come on, Polly, we'll start in here.

She leaves. Polly spots the cat.

Polly Not in here, puss. *(she puts the cat out of the back door)*

Basil makes his way upstairs. Singing and vague guitar strumming are emerging from Manuel's room. Basil goes in; Manuel is sitting on his bed strumming and singing.

Basil Manuel, I'm sorry, this is an emergency. Important, *si?* The Health Inspector's just been, things wrong with hotel. We put them right by tomorrow, all right? Now, Manuel, go up to the roof . . .

Manuel The roof? *Si* . . . *(makes to go)*

Basil No, no, come back – I haven't **told** you yet! Now, go to the water tank . . .

Manuel Water?

Basil Water **tank**. Water on roof in tank, yes?

Manuel *Si, si.*

Basil Two dead pigeons in tank. Take out. *(Manuel stares suspiciously)* It's not difficult, Manuel. This is not a proposition from Wittgenstein. Listen. Two dead pigeons . . . water tank . . . *(Manuel begins to break up)* What's funny?

Manuel . . . How they get up there?

Basil How . . . they **flew** up there! *(Manuel gets slightly hysterical and flaps his arms)* That's right. That's right.

Manuel *(collapsing with laughter on the bed)* Oink, oink? Oink, oink!

Basil Will you stop . . . will you just pull yourself together . . . Not **pigs! Pig**eons!

Manuel *Qué?*

Basil *(grabbing a Spanish–English dictionary off the shelf)* Pigeon! Pigeon! . . . Like your English! *(he shows Manuel the entry)*

Manuel Pig . . . gy . . . on.

Basil *(noticing a cage containing a rodent, on the bedside cabinet)* What is that?

Manuel Is my hamster. 'Piggy-on'.

Basil . . . Hamster?

Manuel *Si. Si.* No. pidge-**on**.

Basil Manuel, that's a rat.

Manuel Pidgin.

Basil It's a rat!

Manuel No, no, is hamster.

Basil Well, of course it's a rat! You have rats in Spain, don't you? – or did Franco have them all shot?

Manuel No, is hamster.

Basil Is rat.

Manuel No, I think so too.
Basil What?
Manuel I say to man in shop, 'Is rat.' He say, 'No, no, is special kind of hamster. Is Filigree Siberian hamster.' Only one in shop. He make special price, only five pound.
Basil *(calmly)* Have you ever heard of the bubonic plague, Manuel? It was very popular here at one time. A lot of pedigree hamsters came over on ships from Siberia . . . *(he takes the cage)*
Manuel What are you doing?
Basil I'm sorry, Manuel, this is a rat.
Manuel No, no, is hamster.
Basil Is not hamster. Hamsters are small and cuddly. Cuddle this, you'd never play the guitar again.

He walks out of the room with the cage. In the corridor, Manuel comes after him in pursuit.

Manuel *Qué?* Where you go? Where you go? Where you take him?
Basil I'm sorry, Manuel, he's got to go.
Manuel Go? No!
Basil Yes.
Manuel No, no, he mine. He stay with me.
Basil Now, look! This is a hotel! The Health Inspector comes tomorrow. If he finds this, I . . . closed down . . . no warning . . . closed down. *Finito.* You, out of work. Back to Barcelona.
Manuel He do no hurt. He in cage, he safe, please . . .

He hangs on to Basil's leg. Miss Tibbs and Miss Gatsby appear at the top of the stairs.

Basil Good morning, ladies.
Miss Gatsby What's the matter?
Manuel He take my hamster. Please, no, Mr Fawlty.
Miss Tibbs *(reproachfully)* Mr Fawlty!!
Manuel I love him, I love him.
Miss Tibbs How **could** you.
Basil Excuse me.
Manuel He take it from my room.
Miss Tibbs *(comforting Manuel)* Ah, there there . . .
Miss Gatsby Never mind, it'll be all right.
Miss Tibbs You can keep it in our room.
Miss Gatsby Yes. *(to Basil)* That's right – we'll keep it in our room, Mr

Fawlty. We'll look after it.

Basil holds the cage out at them. They scream.

Misses Tibbs & Gatsby Aaah! A rat! A rat! A rat!! *(they scurry off)*

Manuel No, is Siberian hamster . . . filigree . . . *(but Basil has disappeared downstairs)*

The lobby. Basil comes down the stairs with the cage. A couple approaching the stairs see the cage and the woman starts back.

Basil It's all right – it's only a Siberian hamster, just getting rid of it.

He goes into the kitchen. Manuel comes downstairs and sees Polly, dithers, and runs to her at reception.

Manuel Polly, Polly – he take my hamster.

Polly What?

Manuel Mr Fawlty take my hamster. He crazy – he thinks is rat.

Polly . . . Manuel . . . prepare yourself for a shock . . .

In the kitchen, the cage is on the table. Basil and Sybil are discussing it.

Sybil Well, why didn't you check?

Basil What?

Sybil Well, you mean he's had it a whole year and you've only just found out?

Basil Yes.

Sybil Well, supposing the Health Inspector had seen it.

Basil I **know**.

Sybil He could have closed us down. . . . Well, what are you going to do with it, Basil? You can't keep it here.

Basil I know.

Sybil And don't let it loose in the garden, he'll come back in the house.

Basil Can't we get you on 'Mastermind', Sybil? Next contestant Sybil Fawlty from Torquay, special subject the bleeding obvious. I wasn't **going** to let it go in the garden.

Sybil Well, what **are** you going to do with it?

Basil I don't know. I'll take it away, let it go. Give it its freedom.

Sybil You can't do that, Basil – he wouldn't be able to defend himself.

Basil He's a rat, isn't he?

Sybil He's domesticated *(to the rat)*, aren't you.

Basil Well, you're domesticated. You do all right. Look, he's not going to get mugged by a gang of field-mice, is he?

Sybil Basil, he's Manuel's pet. We have a duty to it . . . perhaps we could find a home for him.

Basil All right! I'll put an ad in the papers! Wanted, kind home for enormous savage rodent. Answers to the name of Sybil. Look, I'll take it out into the country, let him go . . .

Sybil No! I cannot abide cruelty to living creatures.

Basil Well, I'm a creature, you can abide it to me.

Sybil You're not living. *(Manuel comes in)* Look Manuel, we were just wondering what we ought to do . . .

Manuel Mrs Fawlty, please understand. If he go, I go.

Basil *(putting out his hand)* Well, goodbye.

Sybil *(to Manuel)* **Please** listen. You know we **really** can't keep him here. The Health Inspector wouldn't . . .

Manuel Mrs Fawlty. He here one year. He do no harm.

Sybil But, Manuel, listen . . . if they see your rat they could close the hotel down. *(to Basil)* Perhaps it would be simplest to have him put to S-L-E-E-P.

Basil Who, him or the rat? We might get a discount if we had 'em both done.

Manuel 'Spleep'?

Polly *(coming in)* Manuel, I've rung my friend – it's all right – she'll take him.

Manuel *Qué?*

Polly She has lots of animals, and it's not far away. You can go and see him whenever you want. So come on, we'll take him over there now.

Manuel But he forget me.

Basil *(giving him the cage)* Well, rats are like that, Manuel. Don't get involved with 'em.

Polly Come on, Manuel.

Sybil I think it's the best solution, Manuel.

Polly Oh, he'll be happy, you'll see. *(she and Manuel leave the kitchen with the cage)*

Sybil Sad, isn't it.

Basil Well . . . look at it from the point of view of the rat.

Sybil What?

Basil Would you want to spend the rest of your life with Manuel waiting on you?

Outside, Polly and Manuel walk down the drive with the cage between them.

The kitchen. General bustling. Terry is at the hoods over the stove, Polly is wiping the walls, Sybil is moving round checking. The cat is in the corner.

Sybil Now, we've been through the cupboards, you're doing the walls, Terry the filters, checked the fridges . . . oh . . . *(she sees the cat)* Come here . . . *(she puts it out of the back door)*

Basil *(coming in from the lobby)* Right, that's done. Now, Sybil, everything done here?

Sybil Have you put the lid on the tank, Basil?

Basil That's why I've been on the roof the last forty minutes, dear, yes.

Sybil And you took the pigeons out?

Basil No, I left them in, they're nearly done. Now, the walls . . .

Sybil I've checked everything.

Basil Terry the hoods . . . have we done the cupboards?

Sybil It's **all** been done, Basil.

Basil The fridge. Have we got it separate?

Sybil Basil, I told you, it's all been done.

Basil The seals on the old fridge . . . the floor . . .

Sybil I've checked it.

Basil . . . Just running over the bleeding obvious, dear. So, all ship-shape and Bristol fashion, eh? All ready for old snoopy-drawers. *(Manuel comes into the kitchen looking terribly depressed; he wears a black armband and walks with a slow droop; Basil watches him go by and into the dining room)* Is this about that rodent?

Sybil Just leave him alone, Basil. He's upset.

Basil Well, he's not going to cheer up moping about like that, is he.

Sybil Just let him be.

Basil It doesn't help him you encouraging it, you know. You've got to get his mind off it. *(to Manuel, who has returned, indicating the kitchen)* Well, Manuel, what do you think? Looks good, doesn't it, eh? All clean and shining bright, eh?

Manuel Is so empty without him.

Basil Yes, yes – those walls look good, too, don't they. And the hoods gleaming like that. Isn't that a marvellous sight.

Manuel Please leave me alone . . . I get over it.

Basil Yes, yes, you'll get over it. No point in letting it get you

down. Plenty more fish in the sea, eh? *(he claps Manuel on the back)*

Manuel Don't!

Basil What?

Manuel Don't hit me. Always you hit me.

Basil I'm not hitting you – I'm trying to cheer you up.

Sybil Let him **be**, Basil.

Basil Look, look, look . . . don't look at me with those awful cow eyes! Why don't you go to the cinema tonight? Why don't you and Polly go to the ice rink tonight. Why . . . why . . . why don't you cheer up, for Christ's sake!

Sybil Basil.

Basil I cannot stand this awful self-indulgence.

Sybil Oh, leave him alone, Basil. He's just depressed.

Basil Manuel . . . my wife informs me that you're . . . depressed. Let me tell you something. Depression is a **very bad thing.** It's like a virus. If you don't stamp on it it spreads throughout the mind, and then one day you wake up in the morning, and you . . . you can't face life any more.

Sybil And then you open a hotel. *(exits)*

Basil We didn't win the war by getting depressed, you know. *(exits)*

Polly Manuel!

Manuel *Como?*

Polly Not so **sad.**

Manuel . . . No?

Polly No, no, it's too much.

Manuel *(cheering up)* Too much?

Polly Much too much. Just a **little** bit sad.

Terry *(handing Manuel a saucer)* There's the food.

Manuel Ah. *Gracias.*

Polly Don't forget the water. *(she fills a bowl at the sink)*

Manuel Oh, Terry, Terry, let me have a bit of that.

Terry That's fillet.

Manuel *Si, si*, he like it. Please.

Terry *(cutting off a bit)* Want some Bearnaise with it?

Manuel No, no, no. Is chostelerol.

He gets the fillet and the water and hurries out of the back door. Outside, he looks round to make sure the coast is clear, and then makes for an outbuilding not far away. As he reaches it he

shoos away the cat, who is nosing round the door. He goes inside, puts the food down, and calls in a whisper . . .

Manuel Basil . . . *(he squeaks)*

In the lobby, Polly is at the desk dealing with a guest. She takes his cheque.

Polly Thank you, Mr Higgins.
Guest Thank you.
Polly *(producing a wrapped picture)* And here's the picture.
Guest What?
Polly The picture. The one in your room. You said you liked it.
Guest Er . . .
Manuel *(coming in)* Polly! Polly!
Polly Sssh.
Manuel Polly.
Polly Wait.
Guest No, I'm sorry, I really don't . . .
Polly Oh, just a fiver. You can have it on approval.
Guest *(moving off)* Sorry . . .
Polly It's for my sister's eye operation . . . *(the guest has gone)* You bastard.
Manuel Polly.
Polly Oh, what?!
Manuel He gone . . . He gone. He escape.
Polly But how did he get out of the cage?
Manuel I leave the door open so he exercise in shed.
Polly *(grabbing him by the lapels)* You dago dodo! *(Basil appears from the dining room; Manuel can't see him but Polly can; she starts brushing his lapels)* You . . . got . . . it all over your front.
Manuel *Qué?*
Polly *Mucho salo.*
Manuel What you do?
Polly Is dirty.
Manuel No matter. What about Basil?
Polly Mr Fawlty to you. *(Basil is watching, rather surprised)*
Manuel No, no, no, no . . . Basil.
Polly *Esta aqui. (Manuel sees Basil)* Now go and clean it.
Manuel *Si, si. (he runs off towards the kitchen)*
Basil Jolly good, Polly. That's the way to snap him out of it.

The Major approaches, carrying a cup of coffee.

The Major Morning, Fawlty.
Basil Hallo, Major. Here are the papers.
Polly That's where I left it . . . *(she makes off towards the kitchen)*
The Major *(taking the paper)* Strike, strike, strike. Why do we bother, Fawlty? *(exits to the bar)*
Basil *(to himself)* I didn't know you did, Major.

The bar is empty. The Major comes in, sits down and stares at his paper.

The Major *(loudly, but to nobody)* Boycott made the century. *(he glances up and sees the rat; it is sitting on the next table eating peanuts out of a bowl; the Major stares at it, then gets up)* Stay where you are, old chap . . . don't move. *(he puts another bowl by the rat and moves slowly out of the bar)*

In the lobby, Basil is looking at some flowers on the centre table. The Major hurries by behind him and goes up the stairs. Basil takes the flowers into the kitchen.

Basil Terry, give these a rinse, will you.
Terry I have.
Basil Well, they're still dirty. Put them in the dishwasher.

He goes back into the lobby. The Major appears at the bottom of the stairs and passes Basil carrying a shot-gun. He goes into the bar. Basil does a double-take and follows him. In the bar, the Major is stalking round the room with the gun. There is of course no sign of the rat.

Basil *(genuinely unsettled)* Do you need any help, Major?
The Major Don't move! *(he points the gun in Basil's direction; Basil puts his hands up)* Vermin!
Basil We haven't got any this week, Major.
The Major Hmmm?
Basil No Germans staying this week, Major . . . may I have the gun?
The Major Going to shoot him, Fawlty.
Basil Yes . . . Major . . .
The Major Mmm?
Basil Not . . . not legal, actually, any more . . . murder . . .
The Major But they're **animals**, Fawlty!
Basil Oh, yes, yes. . . . Still, forgive and forget, eh, Major? *(he takes the gun)*

The Major Forgive 'em?

Basil Well, pretend we do.

The Major But they spread disease, Fawlty . . . he was sitting there on that table, eating the nuts if you please.

Basil *(to himself)* He's really gone this time.

The Major About that size. That with the tail . . .

Basil *(realizing)* Tail . . . what did you say it was?

The Major Vermin. . . . A dirty rat!

Basil *(glares in the direction of the lobby)* . . . How long ago?

The Major Oh, about two minutes ago.

Basil Stay there, Major, stay there. If you see him, give me a shout.

The Major Will do.

Basil strides out of the bar, parking the gun behind the bar itself, and goes into the kitchen, where Terry is looking behind the fridge which he has pulled out from the wall.

Terry I'm just cleaning behind the fridge, Mr Fawlty.

Basil looks at him and pushes the dining-room door open. He looks in, comes out, checks, and goes back in. In the dining room, Polly is kneeling under a table, only her rear and legs visible. Basil walks quietly up behind her.

Polly Basil . . . Basil . . . cheesies . . . Basil . . .

Basil Yes? *(there is a thump and the table jerks upwards, Polly appears)* Here I am!

Polly Oh, hallo, Mr Fawlty . . .

Basil Oh, that's for me, is it? Thank you.

Polly Oh . . . *(he takes the piece of cheese from her hand and eats it)* Shall I get you some more, there's plenty . . .

Basil He's called Basil, is he? . . . Don't play dumb with me, I trusted you, you're responsible for this. 'Oh, I've got a friend who'll look after him, Mr Fawlty'! *(he is about to hit her when he sees Manuel crawling out from under another table; Basil runs after him and Manuel scuttles back under the table)* Come on. Come on out, come on, Basil's here. *(he makes kiss-kiss noises)*

Terry *(coming in from the kitchen)* Have you got him?

Basil . . . He's under there.

Terry Right. I'll get him. *(he goes towards the table and then stops, rather sheepish)*

Basil Cleaning behind the fridge, hmm?

Terry Well, we didn't want to worry you, you've got a lot on your mind Mr Fawlty.

Basil What, you mean a Public Health Inspector coming after a twenty-four-hour warning and a rat loose in the hotel, is that what you mean?

Polly He must have escaped, Mr Fawlty, and come back . . .

Basil Come **back?**

Polly *(desperately)* They home.

Basil Oh, I see, he's a **homing** rat, is he?

Terry . . . Oh yeah, rats are amazing creatures, Mr Fawlty. I read about one once, his owner had gone down to Penzance . . .

Basil Yes, yes, I read about that. When the chef got filleted with his own carving knife . . .

Terry No, honest, Mr Fawlty, scout's honour.

Polly We'll find him, Mr Fawlty!

Basil Well, if you could, that would be lovely. Before they close us down. Super. Well, let's have a little Basil hunt, shall we, and then we'll deal with the sackings later.

Terry I'll do the cellar.

Polly I'll do this floor. Manuel, you check your room.

Basil Start in the bar, Polly, it was there two minutes ago. I'll do the kitchen. *(he goes into the kitchen and starts checking the cupboards)*

Terry I've done all them. *(he goes out of the back door)*

Basil remembers another cupboard, goes and gets rat poison from it, then runs to the fridge where he finds a plate of veal fillets. He takes one, sprinkles some poison on it, puts it on the floor, leaves the poison on top of the fridge and washes his hands. He goes into the lobby, and goes behind the reception desk. Mr Carnegie comes in and Sybil, coming down the stairs, greet him.

Sybil Oh, Mr Carnegie. Good morning.

Carnegie Good morning, Mrs Fawlty.

Basil Oh, hallo. Nice to see you.

Sybil Would you like some coffee before we adjourn to . . .

Carnegie No thank you. If we start upstairs with the water tanks . . .

Basil Ah, good idea.

Carnegie What?

Basil Good thinking. About starting upstairs. Sybil, would you like to show Mr Carnegie upstairs?

Sybil I was just going to, Basil.
Basil Yes, and I'll keep an eye on things down here, shall I, see if I can find something to be getting on with . . .

The gun goes off in the bar. They all jump.

Carnegie Good God, what was that?
Basil Bloody television exploding again. I'll deal with it. You go upstairs. *(he hurries towards the bar)*
Carnegie That was a gun!
Sybil Yes, it did sound like it, didn't it.

Polly runs in carrying a large net. She sees Mr Carnegie; he sees her.

Polly Moths.
Carnegie What is going on here? *(he goes towards the bar)*

In the bar, Basil is trying to get the gun away from the Major. They tussle as Mr Carnegie walks in.

The Major I'll get him! *(Basil gets the gun away from him and sees Mr Carnegie)* He'll come back for the nuts, you know. He was sniffing around here just now . . .
Basil *(kneeing him in the balls)* Sorry, sorry Major. *(to Mr Carnegie)* It wasn't the television, it was just this gun. I'll put it under lock and key straight away.

He goes into the lobby followed by Mr Carnegie.

Carnegie Why was he firing it in the hotel?
Basil Starlings . . . shooting starlings.
Carnegie In the bar?
Basil Through the window. I'll lock it away.
Carnegie Is it licensed?
Basil Oh, yes, oh yes. *(he goes into the office)*
Carnegie *(to Sybil)* You do realize that under the Health and Safety Act it is your responsibility?
Sybil Oh yes, I'm terribly sorry. It's never happened before, Mr Carnegie.
Carnegie Well, I shall have to notify the police, of course. They will take steps.

Manuel comes flying down the stairs in a panic.

Polly It's all right, it's all right, Manuel.
Manuel Is he all right?

Polly Yes, he's all right.
Manuel He not dead?
Polly No, no, no! It was just the Major letting the gun off . . .
Manuel The Major try to kill Basil?
Sybil Kill Basil?
Manuel No, no, not Mr Fawlty, I mean Basil my little . . .
Polly Ratatouille!
Carnegie Basil . . . the little . . .
Polly Ratatouille. The chef calls the ratatouille Basil, because he puts quite a lot of Basil in it.
Manuel *(horrified)* He put Basil in ratatouille?
Polly Yes . . .
Manuel Aaahh! *(he runs towards the kitchen and goes in, followed by Polly, still clutching her net)*
Sybil *(to Mr Carnegie)* He's from Barcelona. You know, typical Latin, really. Would you like to . . . *(she indicates the stairs)*

In the kitchen, Manuel is shouting at Terry.

Manuel Why you do this?
Terry I haven't, I haven't.
Manuel Polly say you put Basil in ratatouille.
Terry I haven't **made** any bleeding ratatouille.
Polly Manuel!
Manuel *(to Polly)* Why you say he put Basil in ratatouille?
Polly I had to say something, that was the Health Inspector. Now will you calm down.
Manuel Where is he?
Polly I don't know.
Manuel Perhaps he dead.
Terry Oh, he's all right. Give us the veal, Poll, I've got to get lunch ready.

Polly gets the veal out of the fridge.

Manuel But how you know he all right? Major fire his gun. Perhaps he hit . . . I must find him. *(he dashes forward, knocking the veal out of Polly's hands onto the floor)* Oh, sorry, Polly! *(he runs out)*
Terry Oh, pick 'em up quick, before he gets in here. *(they start piling the veal back on the plate frantically)*

In the lobby, Basil and the Major are coming in from the bar.

Basil That's right, Major. You've got it. Well, you've nearly got

it. Anyway, the thing is, not a word about rats. You were shooting **starling**. All right?

The Major A starling?

Basil Yes.

The Major Through the window.

Basil Right.

The Major But, Fawlty, how did the starling get in the bar?

Basil No, no, **you** were in the bar.

The Major I was in the bar?

Basil Yes!

The Major So I was!

Basil Yes, and the starling was in the garden and the rat was nowhere at all.

The Major Well, I didn't see him.

Basil *(moving off)* Say goodnight to the folks, Gracie.

He goes into the kitchen. Terry is preparing the veal.

Basil All right, Terry, everything under control?

Terry Yeah . . . is he still . . . ?

Basil No, he's started upstairs. God knows where the rat is . . . *(he sees the cat on the fridge; it has got at the plate of veal)* Oh, puss . . . *(he picks up the cat and the piece of veal it was nibbling and puts it out of the back door)* Come on puss, out you go . . . *(he hides the piece of veal on top of a high cupboard, and rinses his hands)* Oh! And I put some, er . . . *(he looks around the floor but cannot see the poisoned veal)* Terry . . .

Terry Yes?

Basil There was a piece of veal down here.

Terry Yes, we got 'em all up, Mr Fawlty.

Basil What?

Terry We picked 'em all up.

Polly *(coming in)* Got the veals, Terry?

Terry Here we are, Poll. *(he gives her two plates)*

Basil Terry, listen to me. What do you mean you picked them all up?

Terry Well, Manuel knocked 'em over. We picked 'em all up.

Polly goes out with the veal.

Basil . . . Oh my God.

Terry . . . What's the matter?

Basil One of them's got rat poison on it! *(he rushes into the dining room)*

In the dining room, Manuel is taking an order. Polly is returning from Mr and Mrs Taylor's table. Basil flies past her and grabs both plates.

Basil Sorry! Sorry! *(they stare at him)* Veal's off! Sorry.
Mrs Taylor That's veal.
Basil No, no, this is veal substitute – we're giving it a try, and it's a bit of a disappointment, I'm afraid. In fact it's no substitute at all . . . Polly, would you take this order again, please? *(he whispers an explanation in her ear)* Thank you, thank you so much. *(he goes towards the kitchen)*
Polly I'm sorry about that – would you like the lamb or the plaice?
Mrs Taylor Veal substitute?
Polly It's Japanese, actually – soya bean and essence of cow. *(Basil exits)*

In the kitchen, Mr Carnegie is talking to Sybil. Basil enters with the plates, sees Mr Carnegie, and moves back into the dining room.

Carnegie Seals.
Sybil We've moved all the meat into this one and put all the confectionery in the new one over here.

Back in the dining room, Basil dithers, trying to decide where to put the plates.

Taylor *(calling to him)* A bottle of the Beaujolais, please.
Basil Ah, certainly. *(he goes back into the kitchen)*

In the kitchen.

Carnegie And the washhandbasin?
Sybil We ordered it yesterday. Here's the acknowledgement of the order.

Basil comes in and takes a bottle of wine from a rack in the corner.

Carnegie Well, it would now appear that this kitchen is now in a satisfactory condition. I shall be writing to confirm the . . .

Basil sees the box of rat poison on top of the fridge. He grabs at it, dropping the bottle, which smashes.

Basil Sorry. It slipped. *(he hides the poison behind his back)*

Carnegie . . . outstanding points and someone will be dropping in to carry out a future random inspection to make sure these standards are being maintained . . .

Sybil Thank you.

Basil Marvellous. Marvellous. *(he puts the poison out of the back door and gets another bottle of wine)*

Carnegie It's ten to one, I'd like to take lunch here if I may.

Sybil Oh, certainly, Mr Carnegie.

Carnegie I couldn't help noticing you had some veal over here.

Basil *(dropping the bottle)* Veal?

Sybil Yes, it's Dutch.

Basil It's not Dutch, actually. It's Norwegian.

Sybil Norwegian?

Basil Yes – not the absolute apex quite honestly.

Sybil Terry, the veal **is** Dutch, isn't it?

Terry Norwegian, Mrs Fawlty.

Carnegie I've been in this business twenty years, I've never heard of Norwegian veal.

Basil No, they've only just branched into it, you know. I don't think it's a winner, frankly – more of a veal substitute. It's got a lot of air pockets in it, that sort of thing. The lamb is Dutch.

Carnegie Dutch?

Basil Well, English. I mean, we call it Dutch because it's as good as the Dutch veal. It's better, quite honestly.

Carnegie I'd prefer the veal.

Basil Yes . . . how about the lobster? Would you prefer lobster? A couple of lobsters? Oh, it's **frightfully** good at the moment, and it's not expensive this week, we've got so much we're having a lobster sale at the moment to try and shift it all. 75p each. You can't say better than that, can you?

Carnegie Just the veal. *(he moves to the lobby door)*

Basil *(following him)* Well, if you like the veal, perhaps you'd prefer the chicken.

Sybil *(getting in front of Basil)* Basil, he wants the veal.

Carnegie Could I make a phone call?

Sybil Yes, of course. Through here. *(they go out)*

Polly *(coming in from the dining room)* What's all this about rat poison on the veal?

Terry He's put rat poison on one, they've got mixed up and

nobody knows which is which now. What happened to the one the cat had?

Polly The cat?! *(rushes out of back door)*

Basil That's no good. That might have poison on it, too.

Terry Well, where is it?

Basil What?

Terry Where's the cat's slice?

Basil *(gets it)* Up there.

Terry Right now, how's the cat?

Basil . . . How's the cat. How's the **cat?** We're just about to take the life of a Public Health Inspector and you want to know 'how's the cat'. It's gone to London to see the Queen. What are we going to do?

Polly *(bringing the cat in)* He's all right.

Terry Great!

Basil *(leaping about in mock joy)* Hooray! Hooray! The cat lives! The cat lives! Long live the cat! What are we going to **do?**

Terry Mr Fawlty. If the cat is all right . . . that means that slice is all right.

Polly Well . . . how long would it take to work?

Terry That stuff, two minutes. He had this ten minutes ago at least.

They all peer at the veal.

Polly It's a bit chewed there.

Terry I'll give it a trim. *(he does so)*

In the dining room, Mr Carnegie is just sitting down. Sybil is standing by him.

Sybil So you're driving over to Babbacombe this afternoon?

Carnegie Yes, we're . . . *(he realizes he has sat down on something; he gets up slowly holding a plate of veal)* What is a plate of veal doing there?

Sybil I'll just relieve you of it, shall I? *(she takes it and brushes off Mr Carnegie's jacket)*

Basil *(coming in from the kitchen)* Do sit down, Mr Carnegie.

Sybil He just has, Basil.

Carnegie On a plate of veal.

Basil Has it put you off?

Carnegie What?

Basil Has it put you off the veal at all?

Carnegie Well, I'm not eating **that** one if that's what you mean. *(goes to sit at another chair at the same table)*

Basil Stop! Halt! Sorry . . . I think there might be another one there. Excuse me . . . *(he collects it)* Ah, yes. Lucky guess.

Carnegie Well, who's responsible for putting them there?

Basil Er . . . Manuel, our Spanish waiter. *(turns to Manuel, who is just behind him, gives him the plates and slaps his head; to Mr Carnegie)* Now would you like to sit over here . . . please . . . ?

Carnegie Well, does he do it often?

Sybil Oh, no, no.

Basil No, no, no, it's the first time, but he sometimes looks as though he's going to, but we always catch him of course. *(Polly enters carrying the veal)* Ah.

Polly Here's your veal, Mr Carnegie. And one green salad.

Carnegie Thank you.

Basil Ah, good, *bon appétit. (he goes into the kitchen)* Well done, Terry.

He goes to the back door, opens it, and takes a deep relaxing breath. Then he sees the cat; it is throwing up. He turns and rushes back into the dining room and snatches the plate away from under Mr Carnegie's nose as Polly adds the vegetables.

Basil Sorry. Not hot enough. *(the plate burns him)* Aaaagh! Not big enough. Sorry!

Carnegie What . . .

Basil Not big enough. Sorry . . . excuse me. Really, Polly! *(he hurries out with it; Polly, Sybil and Mr Carnegie stare after him)*

In the kitchen, Terry is already putting another veal in the pan. Basil throws his in the bin.

Basil What are you doing?

Terry Well, if that's the one . . . these are OK.

Basil What?

Terry If that's the poisoned one, these are all right.

Basil . . . Brilliant. Great. Right. OK.

Polly and Sybil come in.

Sybil Basil, what is going on?

Basil That was the poisoned one. The cat had it.

Polly The cat! . . . Oh! *(she dashes off towards the back yard)*

Sybil Poisoned?
Basil Yes . . . so that one must be OK. *(goes into dining room)*
Sybil *(confused)* Basil . . .

In the dining room, Basil approaches Mr Carnegie.

Basil Sorry, just getting you a proper sized one.
Carnegie It was big enough. It was all I wanted.
Basil Well, it could have been a bit hotter . . . Well, not much . . . but . . .
Carnegie Look . . . *(he looks at his watch)*

Manuel comes into the room.

Basil Yes, yes, just coming . . . won't be a sec . . . *(a young upper-class couple, Ronald and Quentina, have entered)* Ah, Manuel . . . would you . . . thank you. *(he exits to the kitchen; Manuel shows them to their table)*

In the kitchen, Basil comes in to find Polly holding the cat.

Basil What?
Polly Well, he's all right! Look!
Basil He can't be!
Polly Well, he is.
Terry *(holding out a plate of veal)* Here you are, Poll.
Polly Oh. *(she hands the cat to Basil and takes the plate)*
Basil He can't be!
Sybil What do you mean?
Basil Well, he was vomiting.
Sybil Vomiting? *(Basil demonstrates)* That's just fur balls, Basil.

Polly takes the plate into the dining room.

Basil . . . What?
Sybil That's just fur balls. He does that all the time in the summer. *(she takes the cat out through the back door)*
Basil But . . . if he's all right . . . that one might . . . *(he realizes the plate has gone and flies after Polly)*

In the dining room, Polly is approaching Mr Carnegie with his veal. Basil comes in just as Polly puts the veal down on the table.

Basil Polly . . . too much.
Carnegie What?
Basil Too much. *(he waves her back)* Too much of a good thing

always leaves one wanting less, I always find.

Polly Ohh! *(exits to kitchen with the veal)*

Carnegie What is wrong *now?*

Basil Well, we wouldn't want you to think that because you were one of Her Majesty's Civil Servants, that we were showing you any excess favouritism. I'm sure you wouldn't want that.

The Major *(who is on the table behind, standing up)* Oh! So you're the rat inspector. *(Mr Carnegie stares at him; Basil cringes)* Sorry! Sorry Fawlty! Starling Inspector.

Carnegie Starling Inspector?

Basil indicates the Major is mad. Basil exits and Manuel returns to the young couple's table with the menus. As he waits for them to choose he suddenly sees the rat nosing about by Quentina's feet. He freezes and stares. Ronald sees him and gives him a hard look, thinking Manuel is staring at Quentina's legs.

Ronald Do you mind?

Manuel *Qué?*

Ronald We'll have one Windsor soup, one pâté, please. *(Manuel doesn't move)* One Windsor soup . . .

Manuel Shh! *(he starts backing away slowly; Ronald is amazed)*

In the kitchen, Basil, Sybil, Polly and Terry are standing round the table considering the plate of veal.

Basil No, no, if the cat's slice is all right, that might be the poisoned one.

Sybil No, no.

Polly Yes! Yes, he's right.

Terry And if the cat's one is all right . . .

Polly Which it **is**.

Terry We can give him that, can't we. *(he goes to the bin and takes the cat's veal out)*

Basil Right!

Manuel *(coming in)* Mr Fawlty!

Basil Shut up!!

Sybil But Terry, that's got **things** on it.

Terry Oh, that's all right, Mrs Fawlty. What the eye doesn't see the chef gets away with.

Manuel Mr Fawlty.

Basil What is it?

Manuel Table seven!!
Basil What?
Manuel Basil! *(he pushes Basil through the door into the dining room)*

In the dining room, Ronald is getting annoyed. Basil and Manuel come in.

Basil *(to Mr Carnegie)* Sorry, it's just coming.
Ronald Excuse me.
Basil *(going over to him)* Of course. Good afternoon, sir. Good afternoon, madam.
Ronald Look, I was just trying to give an order to your waiter and he walked away while I was doing it.
Basil *(looking down subtly)* Hmmm?
Ronald Well, he wasn't paying attention at all.
Basil I'm so sorry? What were you saying?
Ronald . . . Your waiter wasn't listening when I was giving him our order. He seemed more interested in my fiancée's legs.
Basil Really? May I? *(he has a look)* No, I don't think so. In fact I think there's a bread roll down there.
Ronald May I give my order?
Basil Oh please, of course.
Ronald We'd like one Windsor soup and one pâté, and then . . .

Polly comes in. Basil is kneeling pretending to do up his shoe lace.

Basil Just doing my shoe lace up.
Ronald Are you going to take my order?
Basil Er, yes . . . Polly, would you take the order here please, on this table . . .
Ronald . . . We'd like one Windsor soup.
Polly One Windsor.
Ronald One pâté . . .
Basil He's there. S'there.
Ronald What?
Basil There, there.
Ronald What do you mean, 'There, there'?
Basil It's all there. There, there, there and there. All there for your enjoyment.
Polly And one pâté?
Basil Manuel, would you get the bread roll, please . . . no, no, no, get the box. *(Ronald stares)* We have a box, a bread-

box . . . for any bread that has gone past its prime.

Polly And you'd both like the . . .

Ronald The veal.

Polly Oh! The veal's off, I'm afraid.

Ronald How **can** it be? You've only just started.

Basil Ssh. Ssh, sssh.

Ronald Don't shush me.

Basil I'm sorry. But the veal is in fact off, well it was never really on, quite honestly, that's a misprint.

Ronald A misprint?

Basil Yes, it should say . . . um . . . 'eel'.

Ronald Eel escalope? *(to Manuel, who has gone under the table)* Stop it, will you. Just leave it. Wait till after the meal.

Basil No, no, we have to get it now, I'm afraid. Health regulations. Before it moulds.

Ronald Well, **I'll** get it, then. *(he starts looking down)*

Basil *(restraining him)* No, no, no, no, please, please, allow us, please, all part of the service.

Polly So that's one pâté and one Windsor . . . *(sees the rat in Quentina's handbag on the floor)* . . . **soup!!!** *(to Manuel)* Psst!

Sybil comes out of the kitchen carrying Mr Carnegie's latest veal.

Sybil Here's your veal, Mr Carnegie. Sorry for the delay.

Ronald He's been given veal!

Basil Er, no, that's veal substitute.

Ronald Veal **substitute?**

Basil Yes, it's not very good, it got held up on the boat on the way over from . . .

Polly Japan . . .

Basil . . . Norway. It's a sort of Jappo-Scandinavian imitation veal substitute, but I'm afraid that's the last slice anyway.

Ronald *(standing up)* We're leaving.

Basil OK. If you insist.

Ronald What?

Basil By all means. Be my guest, thank you.

Ronald I want a taxi.

Basil Polly – would you arrange a taxi, please.

Ronald and Quentina go into the lobby.

Polly *(to Basil)* It's in the bag.

Basil *(nods, puts his finger at the side of his nose and winks, then, to*

Mr Carnegie) Is your veal, er . . .

Polly In **her** bag. *(she goes into the lobby)*

Basil *(to Mr Carnegie)* In **her** bag?

Carnegie What?

Basil Excuse me. *(he exits rapidly into the lobby)*

In the lobby, Ronald and Quentina are standing at reception.

Polly *(hurrying up to them)* Do you know where you're going?

Ronald Can you recommend a restaurant?

Polly *(dialling)* Yes, of course, what sort of a . . .

They both look at Basil who has come up behind them stealthily and is standing just behind Quentina's shoulder looking into the bag.

Basil Yes, where is somewhere that serves really good veal, Polly? Somewhere in the . . .

Polly *(energetically)* Oh, veal, yes! Of course. A really good restaurant . . . just a minute, because I do remember a place where I had some **really** good veal once . . . I just can't think of the name of it . . . it was . . . er . . . oh . . . *(does her Diane Keaton impression)* Lah de dah . . . did you see *Annie Hall*? . . . 'Lah de dah' . . .

Basil is groping very carefully in Quentina's bag.

Ronald Annie **who**?

Quentina turns and sees Basil with his hand in her bag.

Quentina What **are** you doing?

Basil What . . . ?

Quentina *(to Ronald)* He had his hand in my bag.

Ronald *(stepping towards Basil)* What?

Basil Er . . . no . . .

Ronald You know something! You're getting my gander up, you grotty little man. You're asking for a bunch of fives!

Polly Bomb scare!

Ronald What?

Polly There's been a bomb scare.

Ronald A bomb scare?

Basil Yes.

Polly Yes – that's why he was searching in your bag – he didn't want to alarm you.

Basil May I?

Quentina Well, I don't . . .
Basil Just one moment . . . thank you. *(he takes the bag and moves to the other end of the reception desk and rummages in it)*
Polly We had a call, you see.
Ronald Well, shouldn't you get everybody out?
Polly Well, that's why we were looking under your table . . . we just didn't want to draw attention . . .

Basil lets out a howl and pulls his hand out of the bag very fast. He drops the bag, and the rat streaks across the lobby, into the dining room, past Manuel, who sees it, and under a table. Manuel looks round and disappears unnoticed under the table. A moment or two later he emerges, evidently holding the rat in his hands.

Carnegie Waiter. *(Manuel freezes)* Waiter.
Manuel One *momentito. (he moves quickly to the sweet trolley and puts the rat into the biscuit tin, then returns to Mr Carnegie) Si . . . ?*

The Major leans across and takes the tin off the trolley. He opens it and takes a biscuit out without noticing its inhabitant.

Carnegie Some cheese and biscuits and a coffee, please.
Manuel *Si, si.*

He hurries back to the trolley, but is amazed to find the tin missing. He looks round the room without noticing it on the Major's table, then disappears into the kitchen. Basil comes in with his hand wrapped in a handkerchief.

Basil *(to Mr Carnegie)* Anything to follow?
Carnegie I've ordered some cheese and a coffee.
Basil Certainly. *(Sybil comes in from the kitchen)* Coffee please, Sybil.
Basil *(bringing the trolley to Mr Carnegie)* Here we are, Mr Carnegie. *(Polly comes in from the lobby)* Polly, would you get the biscuits, please.
The Major Here they are, Fawlty! *(he hands the tin to Polly)*
Basil Cheddar, Danish Blue, Edam . . . ?
Carnegie A little Danish Blue, please.
Basil Certainly. Edam?
Carnegie No, thank you.
Basil Biscuits?

Basil puts the cheese in front of Mr Carnegie. Sybil comes over with the coffee pot. Polly takes the lid off the biscuit tin and offers it to Mr Carnegie without looking. In the tin sits the rat. Mr Carnegie looks at the rat; the rat looks at Mr Carnegie. Basil notices this first, then Polly and Sybil. They stare at Basil. Mr Carnegie is stunned and continues to stare at the rat.

Basil . . . Would you care for a rat? Or . . . ? Just . . . just the biscuits then please, Polly.

Polly leaves with the tin. Carnegie continues to stare into space.

Sybil . . . Black or white?
Carnegie . . . Hmmm?
Sybil Black or white?
Carnegie . . . Black, please . . . was that a . . . ?
Sybil There we are.
Polly *(coming back)* Here are the biscuits.

She holds the tin out, now minus rat. Mr Carnegie stares at it. He takes a biscuit mechanically and just holds it. In the background Manuel is dragging an unconscious Basil by the heels out of the door into the lobby.

Sybil *(conversationally)* I'm afraid it's started to rain again.

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