

Act 1, Scene 1

The scene opens on a family kitchen, it is decorated in any style you see fit – door to one side is hallway. Other door goes out to garden. Cupboard door also. Ted, Anne and David are talking around the kitchen table – Anne is pottering about making dinner.

Lights go up.

In walks Clara.

Anne: Hear that Ted, this old place is a ‘weekend break in the country’.

Ted: *(Mimicking an advert)*. Well it does offer one the peace and serenity of England’s green and pleasant lands.

Clara: Blessing us with your presence, David – we are so honoured.

David: And good evening to you too, Clara.

Anne: I’d expect you’d like a drink love? Glass of wine?

Ted: Wine? My boy doesn’t want wine. Picked out some nice bottles of real ale specially...

David: Well, in all honesty Dad, I wouldn’t mind a nice glass of red. Not that I don’t enjoy a real ale now and then, just I find it tastes much better pulled off the tap.

Ted: You’re right their son – but until your mother gives me permission to renovate the corner of our living room into a fully-functioning bar, have to make do with the bottles.

Anne: Bar? What bar?

Ted: Oh nothing, love. *(Cheeky)*

David: You see, red wine is the drink of a Friday evening – smooth and mellow; relaxes you after a heavy week of work.

Ted: Oi now, no mentioning of that.

David: Absolutely.

David: What are you up to at the moment, hey Clara?

Clara: I’m working in a book shop. I’m saving up to visit South-east Asia.

David: I see. And what do you plan on doing over there?

Clara: Lots of things, but my main reason for going is to help out in an orphanage in Cambodia.

(She begins turning the pages of the newspaper – the Guardian – it's hers.)

David: How charitable of you.

Anne: Weren't you saying something about a 'moon party' the other day?

Clara: Well yes, there will be some moments of self-indulgence. But I mainly plan to educate myself; the barbaric and inhumane mass-killings of the Khmer Rouge *is* what I plan to do my university thesis on.

David: Already got the thesis worked out?

Clara: Yes; so?

Anne: Here love, you open it. *(She hands Ted bottle of wine)*. I'm too busy with the carrots.

Ted: Here, you do the honours David, still got that nimble touch, haven't you? Could hit the bull more times than I could count.

Clara: *(Sarcastically)*. How extraordinary.

Ted: Lads said he should have gone pro. Just did it for fun, though, hey son?

David: Aye, that I did. Still occasionally sling a few arrows with some of the fellas after work. There's generally always one, after a couple of pints, who reckons he'll have me. Then all the rest start building it up, a bet is wagered, and by the end, I'm ten quid richer *(laughs, along with father)*.

Ted: Ha, ha! That's my lad.

(Tilly enters, wearing a loose fitting dress; she is lively, cheerful and bobbing along to the music she is listening to in her headphones).

Tilly: David! *(Runs over to give him a big hug)*.

David: *(Livened by her enthusiasm)*. Hello Tilly!

Ted: What you got playing on the stereo, hey Tilly?

Tilly: Bit of Bob...

Ted: Ah the old, times they are a changing – hey Clara? *(Nudges her exaggeratedly –her head remains looking at the newspaper)*.

Tilly: Different Bob *(Ted's eyes widen in expectation)*...Bob Marley.

Ted: (*Starts trying to do Jamaican accent – sounds more welsh/Scottish/just not Jamaican*). Ah, the dread-locked Rasta.

Anne: Who are you supposed to be?

Ted: (*Still trying to do it*). I'm from Jamaica, mon.

Anne: Sounds more like you're from Liverpool.

Ted: Ah, no mon, I'm a hailing from the Caribbean (*stresses –BE-AN*).

Anne: (*Laughing*). Oh give over, now you sound like a Geordie.

Ted: Hey, what's wrong with a bit of northern soul? Of course, you know how he liked his donuts, dontcha?

Anne: Who?

Tilly: With Jam in?

(*David sits amused by it all, shaking his head at the terrible joke*).

Clara: Oh again with the funny Bob Marley joke. Every time he's mentioned, you say that joke. There's a man, mind, who stood up to the despots, and fought for what he believed in.

David: Oh please, he was a cannabis-smoking, silly-haired musician. He hardly did much in the way of change.

Clara: I don't know how you can sit there and say that, when he inspired so many millions of people to think for themselves, question authority, and fight...

David: ...Yeah but he had no lasting political influence.

Clara: It's always about politics with you isn't it David?

David: Well, politics covers everything; it is the cornerstone on which civilisation is built.

Clara: Well he *was* involved politically. He was there in Zimbabwe, singing, the day the country gained its independence from Britain.

David: Yes and look how that turned out.

Clara: Independence is a good thing!

David: Even if a corrupt despot takes over and subjects the country to years of poverty and negative economic growth? It's been the same with most

of these former colonies. Corruption, greed, and an inability to manage the economy efficiently, have seen them far worse off than when we...

Clara: ...well perhaps if we hadn't taken over in the first place, in the name of greed, they might never have been left in such a dire state.

Tilly: Wasn't Australia a former colony? Are they not doing alright?

David: Well yes, but Australia is a different case altogether.

Clara: Yes it's the Aborigines who got screwed over there.

(With that, Clara leaves the room).

(Ted; leafing through paper, that Clara is no longer reading – spots an article).

Ted: Hey Till, there's an article here about that playwright you like.

Tilly: Oh really?

Ted: Yeah here, have a look.

(Hear an argument from the living room).

(Offstage)

Clara: Lucy I swear to god, if you don't give me that remote right now, I'll...*(loses her composure)*. Ahhhhh! Give it to me!

Lucy: Get off me, you whale!

Clara: Give it here!

Lucy: Why should I?

Clara: Because I want to see what time this programme is on so I can record it!

Lucy: First tell me what the programme is, then I shall judge whether you deserve the remote or not.

Clara: Are you serious? I'm not playing your little games here Lucy. Just give it to me.

Lucy: 'fraid not, sorry.

Clara: Lucy! Fine it's a documentary about Israel and Palestine.

Lucy: Sounds really boring.

Clara: Well I've told you, so can I have it now please?

Lucy: Hmm.

Clara: Lucy seriously...

Lucy: Hmmm....no.

Clara: Why you...

Lucy: Ahhh help. There's a crazy person attacking me. *(Makes muffled squeal sound)*.

Ted: Do any of you hear that? Like a mouse...laughing? *(Smiles)*.

Anne: Oh Ted, go and sort them out. It's almost time for dinner anyway.

Ted: *(Eyes raised)*. Funny she mentions Israel...

David: Yes it is rather...

(From other room)

Clara: You're a stinking moron, who's going to end up on the dole, with five kids to feed – each from different fathers!

(In storms Clara)

Clara: That little reprobate...*(grabs newspaper section and reads angrily)*

David: Starting world war three are we?

Clara: *(Ignores him)*

David: You know that's how the cold war kicked off – one president wanting the other's remote. Decided to build his own in the end; then years of hostility.

(Lucy comes in followed by her dad, who is marshalling her towards Clara)

Lucy: *(grumpily)* I'm sorry Clara. Here's the remote.

Clara: *(says nothing)*

Lucy: See she's not even grateful when I give it to her.

Clara: That's because you are being forced to hand it over.

Ted: And Clara, you apologise for saying your sister is going to end up with five kids – what was it – each from different fathers? *(Shakes head)*

Clara: Well it's more than likely.

(Lucy looks imploringly at her father, who stares at Clara with a stern look).

Clara: Fine. I am sorry Lucy... *(Lucy turns away, sits at table away from Clara)**(Under breath)* that you will be forced to turn to prostitution.

David: *(Only one who hears Clara's comment – smirks).* Harsh.

Tilly: *(Lifting head up from newspaper).* It says that she spent three years persuading a theatre in London to put on her play. Apparently one theatre director ripped it up *right* in front of her, and told her he wished people would stop wasting his time. She doesn't mention the director's name.

Clara: No, probably because they're now the best of friends.

David: Yeah probably.

Tilly: Jeez, London sounds terrifying.

David: Oh it's not all bad. There are lots of fun things to do – it's a hive of activity – but, there are just too many people for everyone to be a success. It's life.

Ted: Is that the same play, you say won all those big awards?

Tilly: Yeah.

Ted: Strange to think that it may never have even made it.

Clara: That's what determination and self-belief get you.

David: Yeah and the ability to shrug off the criticism.

Tilly: Having her script torn up in front of her, though. That's a bit more than just criticism.

Lucy: She probably sucked a dick...

(Everyone turns to scold her)

Anne: Lucy that is disgusting!

Clara: Vulgar child. *(Aside to David)* see with a mind like that...

David: She's certainly got a way of thinking.

Lucy: Hey, you talking about me!

Ted: I have a nice little job for you after dinner, missy.

Clara: Does it involve soap and Lucy's mouth?

Ted: No but it does involve an ironing board.