

ALICE Are you pleased she's coming back?

BRIAN What's the matter with you now?

ALICE You don't seem pleased, you seem cross.

MAISIE The tube's very quick, she'll be here in no time I'm sure.

BRIAN You're the thing makes me cross, drive me insane with your wittering.

ALICE This should be a lovely day. You spoil everything.

BRIAN You've done it now, it was a lovely day, you've spoilt it.

ALICE All I'm saying is be nice to her.

BRIAN Be nice to her?

ALICE Yes I'm just saying be nice to her.

BRIAN When am I not nice to her? am I not a good father is that what you're going to say? do you want to say that? say it.

ALICE I'm just -

BRIAN Say it say it.

ALICE Just be nice to her that's all.

BRIAN Nice.

ALICE Fine, you're going to be nice that's all I'm saying.

BRIAN I should leave you. I'm the one should have gone to Australia.

ALICE Go back with her I should.

BRIAN Maybe I'll do that.

ALICE Though mind you she wouldn't stay in Australia in that case would she? She'd have

to move on to New Zealand. Or Hawaii, I think she'd move to Tonga probably.

MAISIE I do think waiting is one of the hardest things. Waiting for arrivals and also waiting to say goodbye, that's even worse when you're waiting on a station platform or a quayside or the airport or just at home the day someone's going waiting for the time when they go I think that's far worse than when they've gone though of course when they've gone you think why didn't I make better use of them when they were still there, you can't do right in those situations.

BRIAN It's not that you don't have a sense of occasion. You know exactly what an occasion is and you deliberately set out to ruin it. I've thought for forty years you were a stupid woman, now I know you're simply nasty.

Doorbell rings.

MAISIE That'll be her.

ALICE Do you want to go?

BRIAN *doesn't move.* ALICE *goes out.* *Cries of welcome off.* ALICE and SUSY *enter.*

SUSY Here I am.

BRIAN Here you are.

ALICE Yes here she is.

SUSY Hello aunty.

BRIAN You are my heart's -

Reset to top. BRIAN *enters putting on old cardigan.*

She's taking her time.

End.

- ALICE I'm just -
- BRIAN Say it say it.
- ALICE Just be nice to her that's all.
- BRIAN Nice.
- ALICE Fine, you're going to be nice that's all I'm saying.
- BRIAN I should leave you. I'm the one should have gone to Australia.
- ALICE Go back with her I should.
- BRIAN Maybe I'll do that.
- ALICE Though mind you she wouldn't stay in Australia in that case would she? She'd have to move on to New Zealand. Or Hawaii, I think she'd move to Tonga probably.
- MAISIE I do think waiting is one of the hardest things. Waiting for arrivals and also waiting to say goodbye, that's even worse when you're waiting on a station platform or a quayside or the airport or just at home the day someone's going waiting for the time when they go I think that's far worse than when they've gone though of course when they've gone you think why didn't I make better use of them when they were still there, you can't do right on those occasions.
- Set back to after 'worse than when they've gone'.
Continue at speed.*
- though of course when they've gone you think why didn't I make better use of them when they were still there, you can't do right in those situations.
- BRIAN It's not that you don't have a sense of occasion. You know exactly what an occasion

- is and you deliberately set out to ruin it. I've thought for forty years you were a stupid woman, now I know you're simply nasty.
- Doorbell rings. Return to normal speed.*
- MAISIE That'll be her.
- ALICE Do you want to go?
- BRIAN *goes off. A ten foot tall bird enters.*
- Reset to after 'situations'.*
- BRIAN It's not occasion occasion deliberately ruin it forty years stupid nasty.
- Doorbell rings.*
- MAISIE That'll be her.
- ALICE Do you want to go?
- Silence. They don't answer the door and they wait in silence a longer time than you think you can get away with.*
- Reset to after 'nasty'.*
- Doorbell rings.*
- MAISIE That'll be her.
- ALICE Do you want to go?
- BRIAN *doesn't move. ALICE goes off.*
- MAISIE Do you ever wake up in the night and be frightened of dying? I'm not at all bothered in the daytime. We've all got to do it after all. Think what a lot of people have done it already. Even the young will have to, even the ones who haven't been born yet will have to, it's not a problem theoretically is it, it's the condition of life. I'm not afraid of an afterlife

well maybe a little, I'd rather there wasn't one wouldn't you, imagine finding you were dead that would be frightening but of course maybe it wouldn't we don't know, but really I think we just stop, I think either we're alive or we know nothing so death never really happens to us, but still sometimes in the night there's a chill in my blood and I think what is it what am I frightened of and then I think oh death that's what it is again and I -

Reset to after 'that'll be her'.

ALICE

Do you want to go?

BRIAN *doesn't move.* ALICE *goes out.* *Cries of welcome off.* ALICE and SUSY *enter.*

SUSY

Here I am.

BRIAN

You are my heart's desire.

Reset to top. BRIAN *enters putting on cardigan.*

She's taking her time.

ALICE

Not really.

BRIAN

We should have met the plane.

ALICE

We should not.

BRIAN

She'll be exhausted.

ALICE

She's a woman of thirtyfive.

BRIAN

How can you speak of your daughter?

ALICE

She's a woman of thirtyfive.

BRIAN

You're so right of course.

ALICE

She can travel round the world, she can travel the last few miles.

BRIAN

It's so delightful for you always being so right.

ALICE

She didn't want to be met.

MAISIE

She'll be here in a few minutes.

BRIAN

I'm talking about spontaneity.

ALICE

She doesn't want fuss.

BRIAN

She says that but it wouldn't be if she didn't know she was being met and there we just were or there I was if you insisted on not coming, she'd like it when it happened, the moment she caught sight she'd be delighted.

ALICE

Well we didn't so I don't see the point of worrying about it now.

BRIAN

She'll never come home from Australia again.

ALICE

What do you mean? of course she'll come again.

BRIAN

In the event she goes back of course she'll come again but she'll never come back for the first time again.

MAISIE

It's all this waiting.

ALICE

I hope she does come soon because I'm getting hungry.

BRIAN

You don't have to wait to eat.

ALICE

No it's her special lunch.

BRIAN

I should just go ahead and eat since you've clearly no sense of occasion anyway. She's not going to care if there's lunch, she'll be exhausted, she'll go to bed.

ALICE

That's all right if that's what she wants to do.

BRIAN

You make yourself a doormat to that girl, you always did, she won't be grateful for lunch she'll be on a diet.

- BRIAN Fifteen . . . ? you mean when we were on holiday in Portugal you were already . . . ?
- Reset to after 'spoil it'.*
- ALICE All I'm saying is be nice to her.
- BRIAN Be nice to her?
- ALICE Yes I'm just saying be nice to her.
- BRIAN When am I not nice to her? am I not a good father is that what you're going to say? do you want to say that? say it.
- ALICE I'm just -
- BRIAN Say it say it.
- ALICE Just be nice to her that's all.
- BRIAN Nice.
- ALICE Fine, you're going to be nice that's all I'm saying.
- BRIAN I should leave you. I'm the one should have gone to Australia.
- ALICE Go back with her I should.
- BRIAN Maybe I'll do that.
- ALICE Though mind you she wouldn't stay in Australia in that case would she? She'd have to move on to New Zealand. Or Hawaii, I think she'd move to Tonga probably.
- MAISIE I do think waiting is one of the hardest things.
- BRIAN Waiting isn't the problem.
- MAISIE Is something else?

- BRIAN Of course not.
- ALICE Something is.
- BRIAN I'm terribly hungry.
- MAISIE We're all getting a bit peckish. Why don't I cut up some little cubes of cheese?
- BRIAN No, I'm hungry - I'll tell you.
- ALICE What?
- BRIAN I'm telling you. I have this terrible urge to eat myself.
- ALICE To bite your skin?
- BRIAN Yes to bite but to eat - never mind.
- ALICE No it's all right, you can tell us.
- BRIAN Starting with my fingernails like this -
- MAISIE Yes you always have bitten your fingernails.
- BRIAN But the whole finger, if I hold it with my other hand it won't happen but what I want to do is chew up my finger, I want my whole hand in my mouth. Don't despise me.
- ALICE Of course not, dear. I'm sure plenty of people -
- BRIAN My whole arm, swallow it right up to the shoulder, then the other arm gobble gobble up to the shoulder, and big bite left big bite right that's both the shoulders in.
- MAISIE Is this something you've always wanted to do or -?
- BRIAN And the shoulders bring the rest of my body, eat my heart, eat my lungs, down my ribs I go, munch my belly, crunch my prick, and oh

my whole body's in my mouth now so there's just my legs sticking out, I've eaten it all up.

ALICE Have you thought of seeing someone about —

BRIAN Then snap snap up my legs to the knees the calves the ankles just the feet sticking out of my mouth now gollop gollop I've swallowed my feet, there's only my head and my big mouth wants it, my big mouth turns round and ahh there goes my head into my mouth I've swallowed my head I've swallowed my whole self up I'm all mouth can my mouth swallow my mouth yes yes my mouth's taking a big bite ahh.

Reset to after 'Tonga probably'.

MAISIE I do think waiting is one of the hardest things.

(Sings.) Oh for the wings for the wings of a dove etc.

Reset to after 'just saying be nice to her'.

BRIAN When am I not nice to her? am I not a good father is that what you're going to say? do you want to say that? say it.

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LEWIS comes in, drunk.

LEWIS It's time we had it out. It's time we spoke the truth.

MAISIE Lewis, you're always speaking the truth and where does it get you?

LEWIS I want my life to begin.

ALICE Lewis, there is one little rule in this house and what is it? it is that you don't come into this room when you've been drinking. Do we stop you drinking? no because we can't stop you drinking. Do we throw you out in the street? no because for some reason we are