

VICTORIA: Does everybody hate their mothers?

EDWARD: Mind you, I wouldn't live with him.

LIN: Stop snivelling, pigface. Where's your coat? Be quiet now and we'll have doughnuts for tea and if you keep on we'll have dogshit on toast.

[CATHY laughs so much she lies on the floor.]

VICTORIA: Tommy, you've had two last goes. Last last last last go.

LIN: Not that funny, come on, coat on.

EDWARD: Can I have your painting?

CATHY: What for?

EDWARD: For a friend of mine.

CATHY: What's his name?

EDWARD: Gerry.

CATHY: How old is he?

EDWARD: Thirty-two.

CATHY: You can if you like. I don't care. Kiou kiou kiou kiou.

[CATHY goes out. Edward takes the painting and goes out.]

LIN: Will you have sex with me?

VICTORIA: I don't know what Martin would say. Does it count as adultery with a woman?

LIN: You'd enjoy it.

## SCENE TWO

*Spring. Swing, bench, pond nearby. EDWARD is gardening. GERRY sitting on a bench.*

EDWARD: I sometimes pretend we don't know each other. And you've come to the park to eat your sandwiches and look at me.

GERRY: That would be more interesting, yes. Come and sit down.

EDWARD: If the superintendent comes I'll be in trouble. It's not my dinner time yet. Where were you last night? I think you owe me an explanation. We always do tell each other everything.

GERRY: Is that a rule?

EDWARD: It's what we agreed.

GERRY: It's a habit we've got into. Look, I was drunk. I woke up

## ACT TWO SCENE TWO

at 4 o'clock on somebody's floor. I was sick. I hadn't any money for a cab. I went back to sleep.

EDWARD: You could have phoned.

GERRY: There wasn't a phone.

EDWARD: Sorry.

GERRY: There was a phone and I didn't phone you. Leave it alone, Eddy, I'm warning you.

EDWARD: What are you going to do to me, then?

GERRY: I'm going to the pub.

EDWARD: I'll join you in ten minutes.

GERRY: I didn't ask you to come. [EDWARD goes.] Two years I've been with Edward. You have to get away sometimes or you lose sight of yourself. The train from Victoria to Clapham still has those compartments without a corridor. As soon as I got on the platform I saw who I wanted. Slim hips, tense shoulders, trying not to look at anyone. I put my hand on my packet just long enough so that he couldn't miss it. The train came in. You don't want to get in too fast or some straight dumbo might get in with you. I sat by the window. I couldn't see where the fuck he'd got to. Then just as the whistle went he got in. Great. It's a six-minute journey so you can't start anything you can't finish. I stared at him and he unzipped his flies, then he stopped. So I stood up and took my cock out. He took me in his mouth and shut his eyes tight. He was sort of mumbling it about as if he wasn't sure what to do, so I said, 'A bit tighter son' and he said 'Sorry' and then got on with it. He was jerking off with his left hand, and I could see he'd got a fairsized one. I wished he'd keep still so I could see his watch. I was getting really turned on. What if we pulled into Clapham Junction now. Of course by the time we sat down again the train was just slowing up. I felt wonderful. Then he started talking. It's better if nothing is said. Once you find he's a librarian in Walthamstow with a special interest in science fiction and lives with his aunt, then forget it. He said I hope you don't think I do this all the time. I said I hope you will from now on. He said he would if I was on the train, but why don't we go out for a meal? I opened the door before the train stopped. I told him I live with somebody, I don't want to know. He was jogging sideways to keep up. He said

'What's your phone number, you're my ideal physical type, what sign of the zodiac are you? Where do you live? Where are you going now? It's not fair, I saw him at Victoria a couple of months later and I went straight down to the end of the platform and I picked up somebody really great who never said a word, just smiled.

[CATHY is on the swing.]

CATHY: Batman and Robin  
Had a batmobile.  
Robin done a fart  
And paralysed the wheel.  
The wheel couldn't take it,  
The engine fell apart,  
All because of Robin  
And his supersonic fart.

[CATHY goes. MARTIN, VICTORIA and BETTY walking slowly.]

MARTIN: Tom!

BETTY: He'll fall in.

VICTORIA: No he won't.

MARTIN: Don't go too near the edge Tom. Throw the bread from there. The ducks can get it.

BETTY: I'll never be able to manage. If I can't even walk down the street by myself. Everything looks so fierce.

VICTORIA: Just watch Tommy feeding the ducks.

BETTY: He's going to fall in. Make Martin make him move back.

VICTORIA: He's not going to fall in.

BETTY: It's since I left your father.

VICTORIA: Mummy, it really was the right decision.

BETTY: Everything comes at me from all directions. Martin despises me.

VICTORIA: Of course he doesn't, mummy.

BETTY: Of course he does.

MARTIN: Throw the bread. That's the way. The duck can get it. Quack quack quack quack quack.

BETTY: I don't want to take pills. Lin says you can't trust doctors.

VICTORIA: You're not taking pills. You're doing very well.

BETTY: But I'm so frightened.

VICTORIA: What are you frightened of?  
BETTY: Victoria, you always ask that as if there was suddenly going to be an answer.

VICTORIA: Are you all right sitting there?

BETTY: Yes, yes. Go and be with Martin.

[VICTORIA joins MARTIN, BETTY stays sitting on the bench.]

MARTIN: You take the job, you go to Manchester. You turn it down, you stay in London. People are making decisions like this every day of the week. It needn't be for more than a year. You get long vacations. Our relationship might well stand the strain of that, and if it doesn't we're better out of it. I don't want to put any pressure on you. I'd just like to know so we can sell the house. I think we're moving into an entirely different way of life if you go to Manchester because it won't end there. We could keep the house as security for Tommy but he might as well get used to the fact that life nowadays is insecure. You should ask your mother what she thinks and then do the opposite. I could just take that room in Barbara's house, and then we could babysit for each other. You think that means I want to fuck Barbara. I don't. Well, I do, but I won't. And even if I did, what's a fuck between friends? What are we meant to do it with; strangers? Whatever you want to do, I'll be delighted. If you could just let me know what it is I'm to be delighted about. Don't cry again, Vicky, I'm not the sort of man who makes women cry.

[LIN has come in and sat down with BETTY, CATHY joins them. She is wearing a pink dress and carrying a rifle.]

LIN: I've bought her three new frocks. She won't wear jeans to school any more because Tracy and Mandy called her a boy.

CATHY: Tracy's got a perm.

LIN: You should have shot them.

CATHY: They're coming to tea and we've got to have trifle. Not trifle you make, trifle out of a packet. And you've got to wear a skirt. And tights.

LIN: Tracy's mum wears jeans.

CATHY: She does not. She wears velvet.

BETTY: Well I think you look very pretty. And if that gun has caps in it please take it a long way away.

CATHY: It's got red caps. They're louder.

MARTIN: Do you think you're well enough to do this job? You don't have to do it. No one's going to think any the less of you if you stay here with me. There's no point being so liberated you make yourself cry all the time. You stay and we'll get everything sorted out. What it is about sex, when we talk while it's happening I get to feel it's like a driving lesson. Left, right, a little faster, carry on, slow down -

[CATHY shoots VICTORIA.]

VICTORIA: You're dead Vicky.

VICTORIA: Aaaargh.

CATHY: Fall over.

VICTORIA: I'm not falling over, the ground's wet.

CATHY: You're dead.

VICTORIA: Yes, I'm dead.

CATHY: The Dead Hand Gang fall over. They said I had to fall over in the mud or I can't play. That duck's a mandarin.

MARTIN: Which one? Look, Tommy.

CATHY: That's a diver. It's got a yellow eye and it dives. That's a goose. Tommy doesn't know it's a goose, he thinks it's a duck. The babies get eaten by weasels. Kiou kiou.

[CATHY goes.]

MARTIN: So I lost my erection last night not because I'm not prepared to talk, it's just that taking in technical information is a different part of the brain and also I don't like to feel that you do it better to yourself. I have read the Hite report. I do know that women have to learn to get their pleasure despite our clumsy attempts at expressing undying devotion and ecstasy, and that what we spent our adolescence thinking was an animal urge we had to suppress is in fact a fine art we have to acquire. I'm not like whatever percentage of American men have become impotent as a direct result of women's liberation, which I am totally in favour of, more I sometimes think than you are yourself. Nor am I one of your villains who sticks it in, bangs away, and falls asleep. My one aim is to give you pleasure. My one aim is to give you rolling orgasms like I do other women. So

why the hell don't you have them? My analysis for what it's worth is that despite all my efforts you still feel dominated by me. I in fact think it's very sad that you don't feel able to take that job. It makes me feel very guilty. I don't want you to do it just because I encourage you to do it. But don't you think you'd feel better if you did take the job? You're the one who's talked about freedom. You're the one who's experimenting with bisexuality, and I don't stop you, I think women have something to give each other. You seem to need the mutual support. You find me too overwhelming. So follow it through, go away, leave me and Tommy alone for a bit, we can manage perfectly well without you. I'm not putting any pressure on you but I don't think you're being a whole person. God knows I do everything I can to make you stand on your own two feet. Just be yourself. You don't seem to realise how insulting it is to me that you can't get yourself together.

[MARTIN and VICTORIA go.]

BETTY: You must be very lonely yourself with no husband. You don't miss him?

LIN: Not really, no.

BETTY: Maybe you like being on your own.

LIN: I'm seeing quite a lot of Vicky. I don't live alone. I live with Cathy.

BETTY: I would have been frightened when I was your age. I thought, the poor children, their mother all alone.

LIN: I've a lot of friends.

BETTY: I find when I'm making tea I put out two cups. It's strange not having a man in the house. You don't know who to do things for.

LIN: Yourself.

BETTY: Oh, that's very selfish.

LIN: Have you any women friends?

BETTY: I've never been so short of men's company that I've had to bother with women.

LIN: Don't you like women?

BETTY: They don't have such interesting conversations as men. There has never been a woman composer of genius. They don't

have a sense of humour. They spoil things for themselves with their emotions. I can't say I do like women very much, no.

LIN: But you're a woman.

BETTY: There's nothing says you have to like yourself.  
LIN: Do you like me?

BETTY: There's no need to take it personally, Lin.  
[MARTIN and VICTORIA come back.]

MARTIN: Did you know if you put cocaine on your prick you can keep it up all night? The only thing is of course it goes numb so you don't feel anything. But you would, that's the main thing. I just want to make you happy.

BETTY: Vicky, I'd like to go home.

VICTORIA: Yes, mummy, of course.

BETTY: I'm sorry, dear.

VICTORIA: I think Tommy would like to stay out a bit longer.  
LIN: Hello, Martin. We do keep out of each other's way.

MARTIN: I think that's the best thing to do.

BETTY: Perhaps you'd walk home with me, Martin. I do feel safer

with a man. The park is so large the grass seems to tilt.

MARTIN: Yes, I'd like to go home and do some work. I'm writing a novel about women from the women's point of view.

[MARTIN and BETTY go. LIN and VICTORIA are alone.  
They embrace.]

VICTORIA: Why the hell can't he just be a wife and come with me? Why does Martin make me tie myself in knots? No wonder we can't just have a simple fuck. No, not Martin, why do I make myself tie myself in knots. It's got to stop, Lin. I'm not like that with you. Would you love me if I went to Manchester?

LIN: Yes.

VICTORIA: Would you love me if I went on a climbing expedition in the Andes mountains?

LIN: Yes.

VICTORIA: Would you love me if my teeth fell out?

LIN: Yes.

VICTORIA: Would you love me if I loved ten other people?

LIN: And me?

VICTORIA: Yes.

LIN: Yes.

VICTORIA: And I feel apologetic for not being quite so subordinate as I was. I am more intelligent than him. I am brilliant.  
LIN: Leave him Vic. Come and live with me.

VICTORIA: Don't be silly.

LIN: Silly, Christ, don't then. I'm not asking because I need to live with someone. I'd enjoy it, that's all, we'd both enjoy it. Fuck you. Cathy, for fuck's sake stop throwing stones at the ducks. The man's going to get you.

VICTORIA: What man? Do you need a man to frighten your child with?

LIN: My mother said it.

VICTORIA: You're so inconsistent, Lin.

LIN: I've changed who I sleep with, I can't change everything.

VICTORIA: Like when I had to stop you getting a job in a boutique and collaborating with sexist consumerism.

LIN: I should have got that job, Cathy would have liked it. Why shouldn't I have some decent clothes? I'm sick of dressing like a boy, why can't I look sexy, wouldn't you love me?

VICTORIA: Lin, you've no analysis.

LIN: No but I'm good at kissing aren't I? I give Cathy guns, my mum didn't give me guns. I dress her in jeans, she wants to wear dresses. I don't know. I can't work it out, I don't want to. You read too many books, you get at me all the time, you're worse to me than Martin is to you, you piss me off, my brother's been killed. I'm sorry to win the argument that way but there it is.

VICTORIA: What do you mean win the argument?

LIN: I mean be nice to me.

VICTORIA: In Belfast?

LIN: I heard this morning. Don't don't start. I've hardly seem him for two years. I rung my father. You'd think I'd shot himself. He doesn't want me to go the funeral.

[CATHY approaches.]

VICTORIA: What will you do?

LIN: Go of course.

CATHY: What is it? Who's killed? What?

LIN: It's Bill. Your uncle. In the army. Bill that gave you the blue teddy.

CATHY: Can I have his gun?  
 LIN: It's time we went home. Time you went to bed.  
 CATHY: No it's not.  
 LIN: We go home and you have tea and you have a bath and you go to bed.  
 CATHY: Fuck off.  
 LIN: Cathy, shut up.  
 VICTORIA: It's only half past five, why don't we —  
 LIN: I'll tell you why she has to go to bed —  
 VICTORIA: She can come home with me.  
 LIN: Because I want her out the fucking way.  
 VICTORIA: She can come home with me.  
 CATHY: I'm not going to bed.  
 LIN: I want her home with me not home with you, I want her in bed, I want today over.  
 CATHY: I'm not going to bed.  
 [LIN hits CATHY, CATHY cries.]  
 LIN: And shut up or I'll give you something to cry for.  
 CATHY: I'm not going to bed.  
 VICTORIA: Cathy —  
 LIN: You keep out of it.  
 VICTORIA: Lin for God's sake.  
 [They are all shouting. CATHY runs off. LIN and VICTORIA are silent. Then they laugh and embrace.]  
 LIN: Where's Tommy?  
 VICTORIA: What? Didn't he go with Martin?  
 LIN: Did he?  
 VICTORIA: God oh God.  
 LIN: Cathy! Cathy!  
 VICTORIA: I haven't thought about him. How could I not think about him? Tommy!  
 LIN: Cathy! Come on, quick, I want some help.  
 VICTORIA: Tommy! Tommy!  
 [CATHY comes back.]  
 LIN: Where's Tommy? Have you seen him? Did he go with Martin? Do you know where he is?  
 CATHY: I showed him the goose. We went in the bushes.  
 LIN: Then what?

CATHY: I came back on the swing.  
 VICTORIA: And Tommy? Where was Tommy?  
 CATHY: He fed the ducks.  
 LIN: No that was before.  
 CATHY: He did a pee in the bushes. I helped him with his trousers.  
 VICTORIA: And after that?  
 CATHY: He fed the ducks.  
 VICTORIA: No no.  
 CATHY: He liked the ducks. I expect he fell in.  
 LIN: Did you see him fall in?  
 VICTORIA: Tommy! Tommy!  
 LIN: What's the last time you saw him?  
 CATHY: He did a pee.  
 VICTORIA: Mummy said he would fall in. Oh God, Tommy!  
 LIN: We'll go round the pond. We'll go opposite ways round the pond.  
 ALL [Shout]: Tommy!  
 [VICTORIA and LIN go off opposite sides. CATHY climbs the bench.]  
 CATHY: Georgie Best, superstar  
 Walks like a woman and wears a bra.  
 There he is! I see him! Mum! Vicky! There he is! He's in the bushes.  
 [LIN comes back.]  
 LIN: Come on Cathy love, let's go home.  
 CATHY: Vicky's got him.  
 LIN: Come on.  
 CATHY: Is she cross?  
 LIN: No. Come on.  
 CATHY: I found him.  
 LIN: Yes. Come on.  
 [CATHY gets off the bench. CATHY and LIN hug.]  
 CATHY: I'm watching telly.  
 LIN: Ok.  
 CATHY: After the news.  
 LIN: Ok.  
 CATHY: I'm not going to bed.  
 LIN: Yes you are.



CLOUD NINE

CATHY: I'm not going to bed now.  
 LIN: Not now but early.  
 CATHY: How early?  
 LIN: Not late.  
 CATHY: How not late?  
 LIN: Early.  
 CATHY: How early?  
 LIN: Not late.  
 [They go off together. GERRY comes on. He waits. EDWARD comes.]  
 EDWARD: I've got some fish for dinner. I thought I'd make a cheese sauce.  
 GERRY: I won't be in.  
 EDWARD: Where are you going?  
 GERRY: For a start I'm going to a sauna. Then I'll see.  
 EDWARD: All right. What time will you be back? We'll eat then.  
 GERRY: You're getting like a wife.  
 EDWARD: I don't mind that.  
 GERRY: Why don't I do the cooking sometime?  
 EDWARD: You can if you like. You're just not so good at it that's all. Do it tonight.  
 GERRY: I won't be in tonight.  
 EDWARD: Do it tomorrow. If we can't eat it we can always go to a restaurant.  
 GERRY: Stop it.  
 EDWARD: Stop what?  
 GERRY: Just be yourself.  
 EDWARD: I don't know what you mean. Everyone's always tried to stop me being feminine and now you are too.  
 GERRY: You're putting it on.  
 EDWARD: I like doing the cooking. I like being fucked. You do like me like this really.  
 GERRY: I'm bored, Eddy.  
 EDWARD: Go to the sauna.  
 GERRY: And you'll stay home and wait up for me.  
 EDWARD: No, I'll go to bed and read a book.  
 GERRY: Or knit. You could knit me a pair of socks.  
 EDWARD: I might knit. I like knitting.

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GERRY: I don't mind if you knit. I don't want to be married.  
 EDWARD: I do.  
 GERRY: Well I'm divorcing you.  
 EDWARD: I wouldn't want to keep a man who wants his freedom.  
 GERRY: Eddy, do stop playing the injured wife, it's not funny.  
 EDWARD: I'm not playing. It's true.  
 GERRY: I'm not the husband so you can't be the wife.  
 EDWARD: I'll always be here, Gerry, if you want to come back. I know you men like to go off by yourselves. I don't think I could love deeply more than once. But I don't think I can face life on my own so don't leave it too long or it may be too late.  
 GERRY: What are you trying to turn me into?  
 EDWARD: A monster, darling, which is what you are.  
 GERRY: I'll collect my stuff from the flat in the morning.  
 [GERRY goes. EDWARD sits on the bench. It gets darker.]  
 VICTORIA comes.]  
 VICTORIA: Tommy dropped a toy car somewhere, you haven't seen it? It's red. He says it's his best one. Oh the hell with it. Martin's reading him a story. There, isn't it quiet?  
 [They sit on the bench, holding hands.]  
 EDWARD: I like women.  
 VICTORIA: That should please mother.  
 EDWARD: No listen Vicky. I'd rather be a woman. I wish I had breasts like that, I think they're beautiful. Can I touch them?  
 VICTORIA: What, pretending they're yours?  
 EDWARD: No, I know it's you.  
 VICTORIA: I think I should warn you I'm enjoying this.  
 EDWARD: I'm sick of men.  
 VICTORIA: I'm sick of men.  
 EDWARD: I think I'm a lesbian.

SCENE THREE

The park. Summer night. VICTORIA, LIN and EDWARD drunk.  
 LIN: Where are you?  
 VICTORIA: Come on.

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EDWARD: Do we sit in a circle?  
 VICTORIA: Sit in a triangle.  
 EDWARD: You're good at mathematics. She's good at mathematics.  
 VICTORIA: Give me your hand. We all hold hands.  
 EDWARD: Do you know what to do?  
 LIN: She's making it up.  
 VICTORIA: We start off by being quiet.  
 EDWARD: What?  
 LIN: Hush.  
 EDWARD: Will something appear?  
 VICTORIA: It was your idea.  
 EDWARD: It wasn't my idea. It was your book.  
 LIN: You said call up the goddess.  
 EDWARD: I don't remember saying that.  
 LIN: We could have called her on the telephone.  
 EDWARD: Don't be so silly, this is meant to be frightening.  
 LIN: Kiss me.  
 VICTORIA: Are we going to do it?  
 LIN: We're doing it.  
 VICTORIA: A ceremony.  
 LIN: It's very sexy, you said it is. You said the women were priests in the temples and fucked all the time. I'm just helping.  
 VICTORIA: As long as it's sacred.  
 LIN: It's very sacred.  
 VICTORIA: Innin, Innana, Nana, Nut, Anat, Anahita, Istar, Isis.  
 LIN: I can't remember all that.  
 VICTORIA: Lin! Innin, Innana, Nana, Nut, Anat, Anahita, Istar, Isis.  
 [LIN and EDWARD join in and continue the chant under VICTORIA'S speech.]  
 Goddess of many names, oldest of the old, who walked in chaos and created life, hear us calling you back through time, before Jehovah, before Christ, before men drove you out and burnt your temples, hear us, Lady, give us back what we were, give us the history we haven't had, make us the women we can't be.  
 ALL: Innin, Innana, Nana, Nut, Anat, Anahita, Istar, Isis.  
 [Chant continues under other speeches.]

LIN: Come back, goddess.  
 VICTORIA: Goddess of the sun and the moon her brother, little goddess of Crete with snakes in your hands.  
 LIN: Goddess of breasts.  
 VICTORIA: Goddess of cunts.  
 LIN: Goddess of fat bellies and babies. And blood blood blood.  
 [Chant continues.]  
 I see her.  
 EDWARD: What?  
 [They stop chanting.]  
 LIN: I see her. Very tall. Snakes in her hands. Light light light — look out! Did I give you a fright?  
 EDWARD: I was terrified.  
 VICTORIA: Don't spoil it Lin.  
 LIN: It's all out of a book.  
 VICTORIA: Innin Innana — I can't do it now. I was really enjoying myself.  
 LIN: She won't appear with a man here.  
 VICTORIA: They had men, they had sons and lovers.  
 EDWARD: They had eunuchs.  
 LIN: Don't give us ideas.  
 VICTORIA: There's Attis and Tammuz, they're torn to pieces.  
 EDWARD: Tear me to pieces, Lin.  
 VICTORIA: The priestess chose a lover for a year and he was king because she chose him and then he was killed at the end of the year.  
 EDWARD: Hurray.  
 VICTORIA: And the women had the children and nobody knew it was done by fucking so they didn't know about fathers and nobody cared who the father was and the property was passed down through the maternal line —  
 LIN: Don't turn it into a lecture, Vicky, it's meant to be an orgy.  
 VICTORIA: It never hurts to understand the theoretical background. You can't separate fucking and economics.  
 LIN: Give us a kiss.  
 EDWARD: Shut up, listen.  
 LIN: What?  
 EDWARD: There's somebody there.

LIN: Where?  
 EDWARD: There.  
 VICTORIA: The priestesses used to make love to total strangers.  
 LIN: Go on then, I dare you.  
 EDWARD: Go on, Vicky.  
 VICTORIA: He won't know it's a sacred rite in honour of the goddess.  
 EDWARD: We'll know.  
 LIN: We can tell him.  
 EDWARD: It's not what he thinks, it's what we think.  
 LIN: Don't tell him till after, he'll run a mile.  
 VICTORIA: Hello. We're having an orgy. Do you want me to suck your cock?

[*The stranger approaches. It is MARTIN.*]  
 MARTIN: There you are. I've been looking everywhere. What the hell are you doing? Do you know what the time is? You're all pissed out of your minds.

[*They leap on MARTIN, pull him down and start to make love to him.*]

MARTIN: Well that's all right. If all we're talking about is having a lot of sex there's no problem. I was all for the sixties when liberation just meant fucking.

[*Another stranger approaches.*]

LIN: Hey you, come here. Come and have sex with us.  
 VICTORIA: Who is it?

[*The stranger is a soldier.*]

LIN: It's my brother.  
 EDWARD: Lin, don't.  
 LIN: It's my brother.  
 VICTORIA: It's her sense of humour, you get used to it.  
 LIN: Shut up Vicky, it's my brother. Isn't it? Bill?  
 SOLDIER: Yes it's me.  
 LIN: And you are dead.

SOLDIER: Fucking dead all right yeh.  
 LIN: Have you come back to tell us something?  
 SOLDIER: No I've come for a fuck. That was the worst thing in the fucking army. Never fucking let out. Can't fucking talk to Irish girls. Fucking bored out of my fucking head. That or shit

scared. For five minutes I'd be glad I wasn't bored, then I was fucking scared. Then we'd come in and I'd be glad I wasn't scared and then I was fucking bored. Spent the day reading fucking porn and the fucking night wanking. Man's fucking life in the fucking army? No fun when the fucking kids hate you. I got so I fucking wanted to kill someone and I got fucking killed myself and I want a fuck.  
 LIN: I miss you. Bill. Bill.

[*LIN collapses. SOLDIER goes. VICTORIA comforts LIN.*]

EDWARD: Let's go home.

LIN: Victoria, come home with us. Victoria's coming to live with me and Edward.

MARTIN: Tell me about it in the morning.  
 LIN: It's true.

VICTORIA: It is true.

MARTIN: Tell me when you're sober.

[*EDWARD, LIN, VICTORIA go off together. MARTIN goes off alone. GERRY comes on.*]

GERRY: I come here sometimes at night and pick somebody up. Sometimes I come here at night and don't pick anybody up. I do also enjoy walking about at night. There's never any trouble finding someone. I can have sex any time. You might not find the type you most fancy every day of the week, but there's plenty of people about who just enjoy having a good time. I quite like living alone. If I live with someone I get annoyed with them. Edward always put on Capital radio when he got up. The silence gets wasted. I wake up at four o'clock sometimes. Birds. Silence. If I bring somebody home I never let them stay the night. Edward! Edward!

[*EDWARD from Act One comes on.*]

EDWARD: Gerry I love you.

GERRY: Yes, I know. I love you, too.

EDWARD: You know what we did? I want to do it again. I think about it all the time. Don't you want to any more?

GERRY: Yes, of course.



CLOUD NINE

SONG Cloud Nine [ALL.]

It'll be fine when you reach Cloud Nine.

Mist was rising and the night was dark.  
Me and my baby took a walk in the park.  
He said Be mine and you're on Cloud Nine.

Better watch out when you're on Cloud Nine.

Smoked some dope on the playground swings  
Higher and higher on true love's wings  
He said Be mine and you're on Cloud Nine.

Twenty-five years on the same Cloud Nine.

Who did she meet on her first blind date?  
The guys were no surprise but the lady was great  
They were women in love, they were on Cloud Nine.

Two the same, they were on Cloud Nine.

The bride was sixty-five, the groom was seventeen,  
They fucked in the back of the black limousine.  
It was divine in their silver Cloud Nine.

Simply divine in their silver Cloud Nine.

The wife's lover's children and my lover's wife,  
Cooking in my kitchen, confusing my life.  
And it's upside down when you reach Cloud Nine.

Upside down when you reach Cloud Nine.

SCENE FOUR

*The park. Afternoon in late summer. MARTIN, CATHY, EDWARD.*

CATHY: Under the bramble bushes,

Under the sea boom boom boom,

True love for you my darling,

True love for me my darling,

When we are married,

We'll raise a family.

Boy for you, girl for me,

Boom tiddley oom boom

SEXY.

EDWARD: You'll have Tommy and Cathy tonight then ok?  
Tommy's still on antibiotics, do make him finish the bottle, he  
takes it in Ribena. It's no good in orange, he spits it out.  
Remind me to give you Cathy's swimming things.

CATHY: I did six strokes, didn't I Martin? Did I do a width? How  
many strokes is a length? How many miles is a swimming pool?  
I'm going to take my bronze and silver and gold and diamond.

MARTIN: Is Tommy still wetting the bed?

EDWARD: Don't get angry with him about it.

MARTIN: I just need to go to the launderette so I've got a spare  
sheet. Of course I don't get fucking angry, Eddy, for God's sake.

I don't like to say he is my son but he is my son. I'm surprised  
I'm not wetting the bed myself.

CATHY: I don't wet the bed ever. Do you wet the bed Martin?

MARTIN: No.

CATHY: You said you did.

[BETTY comes.]

BETTY: I do miss the sun living in England but today couldn't be  
more beautiful. You appreciate the weekend when you're  
working. Betty's been at work this week, Cathy. It's terrible  
tiring, Martin, I don't know how you've done it all these years.  
And the money, I feel like a child with the money, Clive always  
paid everything but I do understand it perfectly well. Look  
Cathy let me show you my money.

CATHY: I'll count it. Let me count it. What's that?

CLOUD NINE

BETTY: Five pounds, Five and five is —?  
CATHY: One two three —

BETTY: Five and five is ten, and five —

CATHY: If I get it right can I have one?

EDWARD: No you can't.

[CATHY goes on counting the money.]

BETTY: I never like to say anything, Martin, or you'll think I'm being a mother-in-law.

EDWARD: Which you are.

BETTY: Thank you, Edward, I'm not talking to you. Martin, I think you're being wonderful. Vicky will come back. Just let her stay with Lin till she sorts herself out. It's very nice for a girl to have a friend; I had friends at school, that was very nice. But I'm sure Lin and Edward don't want her with them all the time. I'm not at all shocked that Lin and Edward aren't married and she already has a child, we all know first marriages don't always work out. But really Vicky must be in the way. And poor little Tommy. I hear he doesn't sleep properly and he's had a cough.

MARTIN: No, he's fine, Betty, thank you.

CATHY: My bed's horrible. I want to sleep in the big bed with Lin and Vicky and Eddy and I do get in if I've got a bad dream, and my bed's got a bump right in my back. I want to sleep in a tent.

BETTY: Well Tommy has got a nasty cough, Martin, whatever you say.

EDWARD: He's over that. He's got some medicine.

MARTIN: He takes it in Ribena.

BETTY: Well I'm glad to hear it. Look what a lot of money,

Cathy, and I sit behind a desk of my own and I answer the telephone and keep the doctor's appointment book and it really is great fun.

CATHY: Can we go camping, Martin, in a tent? We could take the Dead Hand Gang.

BETTY: Not those big boys, Cathy? They're far too big and rough for you. They climb back into the park after dark. I'm sure mummy doesn't let you play with them, does she Edward? Well I don't know.

[Ice cream bells.]

CATHY: Ice cream. Martin you promised. I'll have a double ninety-

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ACT TWO SCENE FOUR

nine. No I'll have a shandy lolly. Betty, you have a shandy lolly and I'll have a lick. No, you have a double ninety-nine and I'll have the chocolate.

[MARTIN, CATHY and BETTY go, leaving EDWARD. GERRY comes.]

GERRY: Hello, Eddy. Thought I might find you here.  
EDWARD: Gerry.

GERRY: Not working today then?

EDWARD: I don't work here any more.

GERRY: Your mum got you into a dark suit?

EDWARD: No of course not. I'm on the dole. I am working, though, I do housework.

GERRY: Whose wife are you now then?

EDWARD: Nobody's. I don't think like that any more. I'm living with some women.

GERRY: What women?

EDWARD: It's my sister, Vic, and her lover. They go out to work and I look after the kids.

GERRY: I thought for a moment you said you were living with women.

EDWARD: We do sleep together, yes.

GERRY: I was passing the park anyway so I thought I'd look in. I was in the sauna the other night and I saw someone who looked like you but it wasn't. I had sex with him anyway.

EDWARD: I do go to the sauna sometimes.

[CATHY comes, gives EDWARD an ice cream, goes.]

GERRY: I don't think I'd like living with children. They make a lot of noise don't they?

EDWARD: I tell them to shut up and they shut up. I wouldn't want to leave them at the moment.

GERRY: Look why don't we go for a meal sometime?

EDWARD: Yes I'd like that. Where are you living now?

GERRY: Same place.

EDWARD: I'll come round for you tomorrow night about 7.30.

GERRY: Great.  
[EDWARD goes. HARRY comes. HARRY and GERRY pick each other up. They go off. BETTY comes back.]

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## CLOUD NINE

BETTY: No, the ice cream was my treat, Martin. Off you go. I'm going to have a quiet sit in the sun.  
[MAUD comes.]

MAUD: Let Mrs Saunders be a warning to you, Betty. I know what it is to be unprotected.

BETTY: But mother, I have a job. I earn money.

MAUD: I know we have our little differences but I always want what is best for you.

[ELLEN comes.]

ELLEN: Betty, what happens with a man?

BETTY: You just keep still.

ELLEN: And is it enjoyable? Don't forget me, Betty.

[MAUD and ELLEN go.]

BETTY: I used to think Clive was the one who liked sex. But then I found I missed it. I used to touch myself when I was very little, I thought I'd invented something wonderful. I used to do it to go to sleep with or to cheer myself up, and one day it was raining and I was under the kitchen table, and my mother saw me with my hand under my dress rubbing away, and she dragged me out so quickly I hit my head and it bled and I was sick, and nothing was said, and I never did it again till this year. I thought if Clive wasn't looking at me there wasn't a person there. And one night in bed in my flat I was so frightened I started touching myself. I thought my hand might go through space. I touched my face, it was there, my arm, my breast, and my hand went down where I thought it shouldn't, and I thought well there is somebody there. It felt very sweet, it was a feeling from very long ago, it was very soft, just barely touching, and I felt myself gathering together more and more and I felt angry with Clive and angry with my mother and I went on and on defying them, and there was this vast feeling growing in me and all round me and they couldn't stop me and no one could stop me and I was there and coming and coming. Afterwards I thought I'd betrayed Clive. My mother would kill me. But I felt triumphant because I was a separate person from them. And I cried because I didn't want to be. But I don't cry about it any more. Sometimes I do it three times in one night and it really is great fun.  
[VICTORIA and LIN come in.]

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## ACT TWO SCENE FOUR

VICTORIA: So I said to the professor, I don't think this is an occasion for invoking the concept of structural causality — oh hello mummy.

BETTY: I'm going to ask you a question, both of you. I have a little money from your grandmother. And the three of you are living in that tiny flat with two children. I wonder if we could get a house and all live in it together? It would give you more room.

VICTORIA: But I'm going to Manchester anyway.  
LIN: We'd have a garden, Vicky.

BETTY: You do seem to have such fun all of you.

VICTORIA: I don't want to.  
BETTY: I didn't think you would.

LIN: Come on, Vicky, she knows we sleep together, and Eddy.

BETTY: I think I've known for quite a while but I'm not sure. I don't usually think about it, so I don't know if I know about it or not.

VICTORIA: I don't want to live with my mother.  
LIN: Don't think of her as your mother, think of her as Betty.

VICTORIA: But she thinks of herself as my mother.

BETTY: I am your mother.

VICTORIA: But mummy we don't even like each other.  
BETTY: We might begin to.

[CATHY comes on howling with a nosebleed.]  
LIN: Oh Cathy what happened?

BETTY: She's been assaulted.

VICTORIA: It's a nosebleed.

CATHY: Took my ice cream.

LIN: Who did?

CATHY: Took my money.  
[MARTIN comes.]

MARTIN: Is everything all right?  
LIN: I thought you were looking after her.

CATHY: They hit me. I can't play. They said I'm a girl.

BETTY: Those dreadful boys, the gang, the Dead Hand.

MARTIN: What do you mean you thought I was looking after her?

LIN: Last I saw her she was with you getting an ice cream. It's your afternoon.

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CLOUD NINE

MARTIN: Then she went off to play. She goes off to play. You don't keep an eye on her every minute.

LIN: She doesn't get beaten up when I'm looking after her.

CATHY: Took my money.

MARTIN: Why the hell should I look after your child anyway? I just want Tommy. Why should he live with you and Vicky all week?

LIN: I don't mind if you don't want to look after her but don't say you will and then this happens.

VICTORIA: When I get to Manchester everything's going to be different anyway, Lin's staying here, and you're staying here, we're all going to have to sit down and talk it through.

MARTIN: I'd really enjoy that.

CATHY: Hit me on the face.

LIN: You were the one looking after her and look at her now, that's all.

MARTIN: I've had enough of you telling me.

LIN: Yes you know it all.

MARTIN: Now stop it. I work very hard at not being like this, I could do with some credit.

LIN: Ok you're quite nice, try and enjoy it. Don't make me sorry for you, Martin, it's hard for me too. We've better things to do than quarrel. I've got to go and sort those little bastards out for a start. Where are they, Cathy?

CATHY: Don't kill them, mum, hit them. Give them a nosebleed, mum.

[LIN goes.]

VICTORIA: Tommy's asleep in the pushchair. We'd better wake him up or he won't sleep tonight.

MARTIN: Sometimes I keep him up watching television till he falls asleep on the sofa so I can hold him. Come on, Cathy, we'll get another ice cream.

CATHY: Chocolate sauce and nuts.

VICTORIA: Betty, would you like an ice cream?

BETTY: No thank you, the cold hurts my teeth, but what a nice thought, Vicky, thank you.

[VICTORIA goes. BETTY alone. GERRY comes.]

BETTY: I think you used to be Edward's flatmate.

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ACT TWO SCENE FOUR

GERRY: You're his mother. He's talked about you.

BETTY: Well never mind. Children are always wrong about their parents. It's great problem knowing where to live and who to share with. I live by myself just now.

GERRY: Good, So do I. You can do what you like.

BETTY: I don't really know what I like.

GERRY: You'll soon find out.

BETTY: What do you like?

GERRY: Waking up at four in the morning.

BETTY: I like listening to music in bed and sometimes for supper I just have a big piece of bread and dip it in very hot lime pickle.

So you don't get lonely by yourself? Perhaps you have a lot of visitors. I've been thinking I should have some visitors, I could give a little dinner party. Would you come? There wouldn't just be bread and lime pickle.

GERRY: Thank you very much.

BETTY: Or don't wait to be asked to dinner. Just drop in informally. I'll give you the address shall I? I don't usually give strange men my address but then you're not a strange man, you're a friend of Edward's. I suppose I seem a different generation to you but you are older than Edward. I was married for so many years it's quite hard to know how to get acquainted. But if there isn't a right way to do things you have to invent one. I always thought my mother was far too old to be attractive but when you get to an age yourself it feels quite different.

GERRY: I think you could be quite attractive.

BETTY: If what?

GERRY: If you stop worrying.

BETTY: I think when I do more about things I worry about them less. So perhaps you could help me do more.

GERRY: I might be going to live with Edward again.

BETTY: That's nice, but I'm rather surprised if he wants to share a flat. He's rather involved with a young woman he lives with, or two young women, I don't understand Edward but never mind.

GERRY: I'm very involved with him.

BETTY: I think Edward did try to tell me once but I didn't listen. So what I'm being told now is that Edward is 'gay' is that right?

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CLOUD NINE

And you are too. And I've been making rather a fool of myself.  
But Edward does also sleep with women.

GERRY: He does, yes, I don't.

BETTY: Well people always say it's the mother's fault but I don't intend to start blaming myself. He seems perfectly happy.

GERRY: I could still come and see you.

BETTY: So you could, yes. I'd like that. I've never tried to pick up a man before.

GERRY: Not everyone's gay.

BETTY: No, that's lucky isn't it.

[GERRY goes. CLIVE comes.]

CLIVE: You are not that sort of woman, Betty. I can't believe you are. I can't feel the same about you as I did. And Africa is to be communist I suppose. I used to be proud to be British. There was a high ideal. I came out onto the verandah and looked at the stars.

[CLIVE goes. BETTY from *Act One* comes. BETTY and BETTY embrace.]

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