

ACT TWO SCENE ONE

The same. Jane and Nigel are sitting with empty glasses. The atmosphere is rather gloomy.

NIGEL  
You ok?

JANE  
Yeah.

NIGEL  
Thanks for dinner. It was lovely.

JANE  
It wasn't really. The wine helps to take the taste away. I need that refill. Where is he?

She turns to look at the baby monitor. Pause.

JANE  
He used to play for hours. He had all these little toy figures, superheroes and things, and sometimes, when he woke up early, we'd lie in bed listening to him in his room, making up the most elaborate stories. Lost in his own little world. He used to do all the voices and sound effects. Like mini radio plays. (Pause.) I never thought I'd hear it again.

NIGEL  
Do you really think..?

JANE  
What else could it have been?

A pause. They both turn to the monitor. Adrian enters carrying a bottle.

ADRIAN  
Here we go. A cheeky little sauvignon blanc. Shall I be mother?

Jane looks at him with a slightly pained expression.

ADRIAN  
Shall I pour?

He does so. Jane rises and goes to the monitor.

ADRIAN  
Come away from it, love.

Pause.

ADRIAN  
It was our imagination. We imagined it.

JANE

All three of us? At the same time?

ADRIAN

I don't know how, but..

JANE

It was him. You know it was.

ADRIAN

Nige? Back me up, mate.

NIGEL

Don't ask me. It sounded a bit like him.

ADRIAN

(Giving Nigel a filthy look.) Well, alright, if it wasn't our imagination, it must have been picking something else up. A TV signal or something. There's got to be a rational explanation.

Jane laughs.

ADRIAN

(To Nigel.) You must have heard some odd stuff through it before.

NIGEL

No. But then our house isn't old enough to be haun..

Adrian mouths 'Will you shut up?' to Nigel.

NIGEL

Well, I don't mind admitting that it's given me the creeps.

ADRIAN

There's nothing creepy about it. There's something wrong with the monitor.

JANE

Why should Michael give you the creeps?

NIGEL

No, I don't mean..

ADRIAN

It wasn't Michael.

JANE

Why are you so afraid?

ADRIAN

I'm not.

NIGEL

I am.

JANE

So why won't you admit it?

ADRIAN

Alright! Let's assume for a minute that it was Michael. Who the hell was she?

Silence.

ADRIAN

Well?

Suddenly we hear singing. A different tune, not at all like the previous song. Something modern and a bit cheesy.

LIZZY

(OFF.) There we go. Sleep tight. Good boy.

ADRIAN

You haven't answered my question.

JANE

Why does every question have to have an answer?

He throws his hands up in despair.

ADRIAN

Fine.

JANE

We should tell Lizzy.

NIGEL

No. Really. She'll just flap about and insist on moving him and he'll wake up..no. What the ear don't hear, the heart don't grieve over.

An awkward silence. It's clear that they're all quite alarmed. Lizzy bustles on.

LIZZY

There, now. That's him settled. Now we can have some grown-up time. By the way, dinner was lovely, Jane, thank you. Really nice casserole. Wasn't it, Nigel?

NIGEL

What? Oh yes.

LIZZY

Very nice.

ADRIAN

I thought it was a bit salty.

LIZZY

But very nice. Is this switched on? Not sure we'll need it anyway. Never known him so quiet. Something up there must agree with him.

Pause. The other three stare at the monitor, but all is quiet.

LIZZY

Yes. Very nice.

Pause.

LIZZY

So, what now? I know! Let's play a game!

JANE

What?

LIZZY

Well, it might liven things up a bit. I hope you don't mind me saying, but it's a bit like the night of the living dead in here at the moment. I mean..I don't mean..has something happened?

JANE

What do you mean?

LIZZY

Since I came down after my nap, hardly anyone's said a word. We ate our dinner pretty much in silence, and now we're sitting here. Has Nigel done something?

NIGEL

What?

LIZZY

I think we may have an elephant in the room.

NIGEL

Don't worry. It's just baby fat. You'll lose it again.

Lizzy gives him a filthy look.

JANE

There really isn't an elephant in the room.

LIZZY

Jane, I'm very sensitive to these things. It's the godparent thing, isn't it?

JANE

No.

LIZZY

You mustn't brood over it.

ADRIAN

We're not.

LIZZY

Either of you. I've had an idea. I mean, where does it say a child is only allowed three? Why not five?

NIGEL

You what?

LIZZY

We could do that.

JANE

It's not the godparent thing.

LIZZY

I'm sure Stephen and Lesley wouldn't mind. I daresay you wouldn't if the shoe was on the other foot. I think it'll work out fine. (To Nigel.) Your mother will probably complain that we're not doing things correctly, but who cares? Good. Nigel? Have you any objections?

NIGEL

Would it make any difference if I did?

LIZZY

No. That's settled then. Right. OK. Well, what shall we play?

JANE

I'm not really in the mood.

LIZZY

Nonsense. It'll be fun.

NIGEL

Lizzy..

LIZZY

I know. The Rizla game. Nigel?

NIGEL

I haven't got any papers.

LIZZY

Oh, of course, I'd forgotten, you've given up, haven't you?

NIGEL

There.

He takes a packet of cigarette papers from his pocket and gives them to Lizzy.

LIZZY

Now we need pens.

ADRIAN

There's a pot on the table.

JANE

I don't really want to.

Lizzy goes to the table, gets some pens, and starts to distribute them.

LIZZY

You know the rules, don't you? Now we need to make sure that we're not doing our partners, so Adrian does me, I'll do Jane, Jane does Nigel, Nigel does Adrian. Good. Let's rearrange ourselves. And there are no mirrors, so Nigel can't cheat.

NIGEL

I don't cheat.

ADRIAN

You do.

NIGEL

Thanks mate.

LIZZY

Come on, come on. Let's be having you.

They rearrange themselves into the correct order, and start to write on their Rizla papers.

LIZZY

And, Jane, do make it someone Nigel's likely to have heard of. None of your foreign actors or peculiar poets.

Jane ostentatiously screws up her Rizla and holds her hand out to Nigel, who gives her another.

JANE

Name a famous footballer.

NIGEL

Pele.

Jane writes Pele on her Rizla and sticks it on Nigel's forehead.

JANE

Ready.

LIZZY

Jane..

JANE

What? I know for a fact he's heard of him.

LIZZY

OK.

The others write and stick. Nigel writes 'Mickey Mouse' on Adrian's, Adrian writes 'Stalin' on Lizzy's, and Lizzy writes 'Anne Frank' on Jane's.

LIZZY

Right, I'll start. (To Adrian.) Am I a woman?

ADRIAN

No. (To Nigel.) Am I male?

NIGEL

Yes. (To Jane.) Am I a footballer?

JANE

Yes. You're Pele.

LIZZY

Jane. You're not entering into the spirit of it.

JANE

He'd have got it next go anyway.

LIZZY

You'll have to do another one.

JANE

I don't want to.

ADRIAN

Oh, come on, Jane.

JANE

It's a stupid game.

ADRIAN

Shall we just sit here in silence listening to the baby monitor?

JANE

Fine. Give me another paper, Nigel.

NIGEL

I haven't got an infinite supply of these, you know.

JANE

I'm trying to help you give up. You should be grateful.

LIZZY

Speaking of the baby monitor, it's very quiet up there still, isn't it?

JANE

Yes.

Jane, Nigel and Adrian exchange a look.

LIZZY

Are you sure everything's alright? You all look like you're waiting for the end of the world.

NIGEL/JANE

No./Everything's fine.

ADRIAN

We're just worried about what game you've got in store for us next.

Lizzy gives him a filthy look. Jane writes 'Pele' on another Rizla which she sticks on Nigel's head.

LIZZY

Jane, you can't just write the same thing again.

JANE

Well, don't give the game away. You're not entering into the spirit of it. Am I female?

LIZZY

Yes, you are. (To Adrian.) Am I alive?

ADRIAN

No. (To Nigel.) Am I alive?

NIGEL

Er, well, I suppose. In a manner of speaking.

LIZZY

No, he isn't. (To Adrian.) No, you're not.

ADRIAN

Right. So I'm dead.

NIGEL

Well..

LIZZY

It's not your turn. Nigel.

NIGEL

What?

LIZZY

It's your turn.

NIGEL

(To Jane.) Am I Pele?

JANE

Bloody hell. That's amazing.



LIZZY  
(To Nigel.) You just can't help it, can you?

JANE  
Congratulations, Nigel, you win.

LIZZY  
Jane.

JANE  
Mmm?

LIZZY  
It's your go.

JANE  
But Nigel's won.

LIZZY  
But the rest of us are still playing.

JANE  
Are we? Good.

LIZZY  
So?

JANE  
Am I alive?

LIZZY  
No.

JANE  
Not very jolly, this game, is it?

LIZZY  
It would be, if people played it properly. (To Adrian.) Am I English?

ADRIAN  
No. (To Nigel.) Am I English?

NIGEL  
No.

ADRIAN  
Right. Male, dead, not English.

NIGEL  
I didn't say you were dead. Just not alive.

LIZZY  
Don't give him clues.

ADRIAN  
It's not bloody Mickey Mouse again, is it?

It's not your turn. LIZZY

Might be. NIGEL

It's not his turn. LIZZY

ADRIAN  
Every time we play this game, you do Mickey Mouse. What's the matter with you?

My mind goes blank. NIGEL

I don't think it goes blank. Jane? LIZZY

What? JANE

Your go. LIZZY

Can't we just knock it on the head? JANE

LIZZY  
Jane, I am trying to make the best of things. I don't know why there's such an atmosphere, or why you're all ganging up on me..

No one's ganging up on you.. NIGEL

LIZZY  
..but I'd like to carry on, please. We didn't drive all this way to mope around in silence.

Fine. JANE

Nigel? LIZZY

Yes, my dove? NIGEL

I'd like a glass of wine, please. LIZZY

What? What about His Nibs? NIGEL

Nigel. Please, for once, do as I ask. LIZZY

Fine. Anyone else? NIGEL

Yes. JANE

Ade? NIGEL

Too right. ADRIAN

Nigel pours and distributes drinks under the following.

So. Jane. LIZZY

Yes? Oh, right. Am I English? JANE

No. (To Adrian.) Am I American? LIZZY

No, you're not Mickey Mouse. ADRIAN

All right, mate. Give it a rest. NIGEL

Sorry, am I American or aren't I? LIZZY

No. ADRIAN

I was just trying to get the game over with. NIGEL

If you're so bored with our company.. LIZZY

I didn't say that. NIGEL

Am I American? JANE

No. Perhaps you'd like to go and check on Sonny. (To Adrian.) Am I an actor? LIZZY

No. ADRIAN

He's fine. NIGEL

JANE

Am I an actor?

LIZZY

He's unusually quiet. I'd like you to go and check on him. (To Jane.)No.

NIGEL

Exactly. He's not crying, for once. Just enjoy it. It won't last.

LIZZY

Would it kill you to spend two minutes being a father for a change? (To Adrian.)Am I a writer?

NIGEL

Yeah, and I'll go up there, he'll wake up, you'll blame me and that'll be it for the rest of the evening. If you're so worried, why don't you go?

LIZZY

I'm in the middle of a game. (To Adrian.)I said, am I a writer?

ADRIAN

No.

LIZZY

You've never shown the slightest interest in him, have you? Jane!

JANE

Am I a writer?

LIZZY

Jane. You're not playing properly.

JANE

Now what?

LIZZY

You're just repeating my questions.

JANE

Because I'm a great admirer of your strategy. Am I a writer?

LIZZY

Well, yes, you are, as a matter of fact. Nigel!

NIGEL

What?

LIZZY

Are you going or aren't you? (To Adrian.)I'd better not be a sports person. You know I won't have a chance.

NIGEL

Why would I? I have no interest in him.

ADRIAN

No.

LIZZY

If you spent the slightest bit of time trying to bond with him. No, what?

ADRIAN

No, you're not a sports person.

NIGEL

I never get the chance. One of us has to go out and earn a crust. And when I am at home, you're so busy smothering him, I never get a look-in.

LIZZY

And now I'm offering you the chance, and you won't take it.

JANE

So. Dead female writer, not English or American.

LIZZY

Jane, what are you doing?

JANE

It's my go, isn't it?

LIZZY

That wasn't my question. I didn't ask, 'am I a sports person'. I said 'I'd better not be a sports person'. That wasn't a question. It was a statement.

JANE

Fine. I couldn't care less. Have as many goes as you like.

LIZZY

I just want to be allowed to have my rightful turn, that's all.

JANE

Then, for God's sake have it.

LIZZY

I don't know where this hostility is coming from, Jane.

JANE

It's not hostility. It's competitive spirit. I want to win the game.

LIZZY

Right. OK. Am I an artist?

ADRIAN

No.

Nigel is pouring himself some more wine.

LIZZY  
I would have thought you'd had enough of that.

NIGEL  
Well, you'd be wrong.

JANE  
Simone de Beauvoir.

LIZZY  
What?

JANE  
Am I Simone de Beauvoir?

LIZZY  
Who?

JANE  
Obviously not. Am I French, though?

LIZZY  
Jane, it's my turn. (To Adrian.) Am I a politician?

Jane turns to Nigel and mouths 'Am I French?'. He smiles and shakes his head.

ADRIAN  
Yes. Sort of.

LIZZY  
Oh great. A dead foreign politician. I don't know any foreign politicians.

ADRIAN  
This one's quite famous.

LIZZY  
I'd better not be Hitler.

JANE  
It's not your turn.

LIZZY  
I know that. I'm just saying.

ADRIAN  
As if I would make you Hitler.

Nigel laughs.

LIZZY  
(To Nigel.) Are you going or not?

NIGEL  
Oh, for God's sake. Fine.

LIZZY

And don't crash about and wake him up.

Nigel rolls his eyes and goes.

LIZZY

I know you probably think I'm being over-protective, but I'm worried he might be coming down with something.

ADRIAN

Nigel? He's as fit as a fiddle.

LIZZY

Don't you start on me, Adrian. He's almost never this quiet. And on the very rare occasions he is, I just worry that something's wrong. Especially after..I'm sure I'm being very silly, but..I haven't had a proper night's sleep for weeks, and I'm getting to the end of my tether. And Nigel's worse than useless. No help at all. Well, you just saw for yourselves.

ADRIAN

It'll pass.

LIZZY

That's what everybody says.

ADRIAN

(Mutters.) Sorry I spoke.

LIZZY

It's your turn, Jane.

JANE

Oh God. Do we have to?

ADRIAN

No. We could sit here and talk.

JANE

I'm struggling to think of any female writers. Presumably European. That you'd have heard of.

LIZZY

I'll give you a clue. She wasn't a professional writer, but she was made famous by something she wrote.

JANE

What? (A pause, as it dawns on her.) Tell me it's not Anne Frank. (She pulls the Rizla off her face.) Anne bloody Frank?

LIZZY

What?

JANE

I thought this game was supposed to be light-hearted.

LIZZY

It was.

JANE

Is that what you think of me?

LIZZY

No.

JANE

Just some tragic figure to be pitied?

LIZZY

What are you talking about? It's just a game. It was the first thing that came into my head.

Nigel comes back in.

JANE

So you look at me and think victim, is that it?

LIZZY

No. It's just random.

NIGEL

Sonny's fine.

LIZZY

Nigel! Do you mind? It's just random. You're reading too much into it. You didn't look at Nigel, and think world's greatest footballer, I'm sure. And I doubt Nigel looked at Adrian and thought Mickey Mouse.

NIGEL

Well..

LIZZY

Nigel! I know you've had an awful time, but you mustn't use that to prevent everyone else enjoying themselves.

JANE

What?

ADRIAN

Lizzy.

LIZZY

I've tried my best, but you've been trying to provoke me since we arrived. I don't know what I've done to deserve it.

JANE

You haven't done anything. I'm sorry.

LIZZY

Well. I'm sorry I chose Anne Frank. But I think sometimes people are too quick to take offence. So. What did you say, Nigel?



NIGEL  
He's fine. As I said he would be.

LIZZY  
Because you're the expert, of course.

JANE  
Open another bottle, Adrian.

NIGEL  
Seconded.

LIZZY  
What if you need to drive..for some reason.

NIGEL  
I won't be able to.

Adrian goes towards the kitchen.

LIZZY  
Am I Silvio Berlusconi?

ADRIAN  
What?

LIZZY  
Am I Silvio Berlusconi?

ADRIAN  
No. You're dead, remember?

LIZZY  
Oh yes.

Adrian exits.

LIZZY  
Well, I don't know.

JANE  
You're Russian.

LIZZY  
Thank you, Jane. I don't need clues. Let me see, now.

JANE  
No hurry.

LIZZY  
Did you actually go into the room?

NIGEL  
What? No, I just stood on the landing and guessed. Of course I went in.

LIZZY  
Then how come we didn't hear you over the monitor?

NIGEL

What?

JANE

We were making a lot of noise.

LIZZY

Wait a minute.

JANE

Oh God.

Lizzy goes over to the baby monitor.

LIZZY

There must be something wrong with it.

JANE

It's fine. The door's open. We'll hear him.

NIGEL

Little Pavarotti. No problem.

LIZZY

The poor little thing could have been bawling his eyes out, and we'd never have known.

There is silence as they anxiously listen. Adrian eventually enters with an open bottle.

ADRIAN

Guessed it yet?

No answer.

ADRIAN

Is this a new game?

JANE

Lizzy's just discovered that there's something up with the baby monitor.

ADRIAN

Has she?

LIZZY

Luckily, nothing happened.

ADRIAN

That is lucky. So, any idea?

LIZZY

Oh, I don't know. Vladimir Putin.

ADRIAN

Not dead.

LIZZY

I don't know any dead Russian politicians. Except Stalin.

ADRIAN

Bingo!

LIZZY

What?

ADRIAN

You got it.

LIZZY

Stalin?

ADRIAN

Uncle Joe, himself.

She takes the paper off.

LIZZY

I think that's in very poor taste.

ADRIAN

Just a bit of fun, Lizzy.

LIZZY

I know I can be a bit..well, Nigel would never do anything if I wasn't..and..it's always the women who have to make sure that things get done..and then we get told we're Stalin.

ADRIAN

For crying out loud, Lizzy, it's just a game. You're not like Stalin. In any way at all.

NIGEL

Well, except for the moustache.