

RUN FOR YOUR WIFE

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BARBARA. *(On phone.)* I reported you missing this morning.

JOHN. *(On phone.)* Missing!?

*(Mary's front DOORBELL goes again.)*

JOHN. *(On phone.)* Don't do anything. I'll ring you straight back.

*(In his confusion JOHN lays the phone down on L arm of the settee instead of replacing it.)*

JOHN. *(Calls into kitchen.)* I'll get it!

*(JOHN dashes out into Mary's hall, ULC. MARY comes in from kitchen wiping her hands on a tea towel.)*

BARBARA. *(On phone.)* John? *(Sits on R end of settee.)*

MARY. What's that, darling?

*(STANLEY appears in kitchen doorway as MARY moves up LC looking for John.)*

STANLEY. *(Jokingly.)* Get back into the kitchen, woman!

MARY. Thought I heard John call out. *(Sees phone off hook.)* Oh.

*(To Stanley's dismay SHE lifts the receiver. During the next couple of lines STANLEY moves to Mary's L.)*

MARY. *(On phone.)* Hello?

BARBARA. *(On phone.)* Hello?

MARY. *(On phone.)* Were you talking?

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) Yes, it's all right. I'm hanging on for him.

MARY. (*On phone.*) Hanging on for *Who*?

(*STANLEY takes the phone from Mary.*)

STANLEY. Me!

(*BARBARA, rather annoyed, rises and breaks DR.*)

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) My husband!

STANLEY. (*To Mary.*) Damn nuisance not having my own phone upstairs. John said it would be O.K. It's about a job.

(*STANLEY crosses in front of Mary and moves D.C. MARY follows him, interestedly.*)

MARY. (*Bemused.*) Oh. Good.

STANLEY. (*On phone.*) Hello!

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) Hello?

STANLEY. (*On phone.*) Thanks for holding on. Stanley Gardner here.

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) Are you the farmer?

STANLEY. (*On phone, cheerfully.*) Yes, yes. that's right— (*In West country.*) me dear! (*Smiles at Mary who is now standing beside him on his L. On phone.*) You wanted to talk to me, I believe.

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) No, I don't think so.

STANLEY. (*On phone.*) Yes, well, fire away. I'm open to offers.

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) I beg your pardon?

STANLEY. (*To Mary.*) Don't let the coffee boil over.

MARY. (*Not moving.*) No.

(*STANLEY "edges" Mary, who is rather bemused, toward the kitchen.*)

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) Mr. Gardner?! Hello?

STANLEY. (*Is pushing Mary and smiling at her. On phone.*) Yes—I'm interested—yes—very interested.

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) Interested in what?

STANLEY. In—er—it. (*Mary has gone into the kitchen and STANLEY quickly closes kitchen door. On phone.*) Sorry about that. Can Mr. Smith ring you back?

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) I'd rather hang on, if you don't mind. Mr. Smith is all right, isn't he?

STANLEY. (*On phone.*) Yes. He was a bit concussed, that's all.

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) Concussed?

STANLEY. (*On phone.*) He's fine now. The country air's doing him good.

BARBARA. (*Moves in to R end of settee. On phone.*) What happened? John didn't say he was hurt.

STANLEY. (*On phone.*) Oh, didn't he?

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) He said the taxi broke down.

STANLEY. (*On phone.*) Yes, it did.

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) Well, how did he get concussed?

STANLEY. (*On phone.*) He bumped his head.

BARBARA. (*On phone.*) His head?

STANLEY. (*On phone.*) On one of our low beams.

BARBARA. (*Sits R end of settee. On phone.*) No!

STANLEY. (*On phone.*) Yes. I'm afraid they're solid sixteenth century oak.

JOHN. (*Hurries in from hall ULC. HE moves UR behind settee and DR.*) It's that damn newspaper man! (*Crosses in front of settee to Stanley at LC.*)

STANLEY. (*Holds out phone.*) Will you deal with this?

*(JOHN takes phone from Stanley and pushes him ULC towards Mary's hall.)*

BARBARA. *(On phone. Rising.)* Hello? *(Angrily breaks DR.)*

JOHN. *(To Stanley.)* United Press International. Get rid of him for me, will you?

*(STANLEY hurries into hall ULC. JOHN closes door and moves DLC to below chair at D.)*

BARBARA. *(On phone.)* Hello!?

JOHN. *(On phone, quietly.)* Hello, darling, I thought I'd put you down.

BARBARA. *(On phone.)* John, are you hurt?

JOHN. *(On phone.)* Hurt?

BARBARA. *(On phone.)* Your head.

JOHN. *(On phone.)* Oh, yes.

BARBARA. *(On phone.)* The farmer said you'd banged it on one of his beams.

JOHN. *(On phone, through gritted teeth.)* The farmer should keep his bloody trap shut!

BARBARA. *(On phone.)* Shall I come over to Mr. Gardner's farm and collect you?

JOHN. *(On phone.)* No! No, I'm fine. What were you saying just now about the police?

MARY. *(Comes in from kitchen DL with coffee flask and sandwich box. SHE closes door and stops on John's L.)* There we are!

BARBARA. *(On phone.)* I spoke to Streatham Police.

JOHN. *(Looks at Mary for a second. On phone, pleasantly.)* If you'll hang on I'll get the farmer for you.

BARBARA. *(On phone.)* I don't want the farmer!