

Freddy (Philip)  
Belinda (Flavia)

SIDE # 8

NOISES OFF

141

*dabs hurriedly at the floor with the mop.)*

ROGER. Take the box upstairs, then! Take the bag!

VICKI. Always trying to get me into bathrooms.

ROGER. Bag! Box!

*(VICKI moves to stand outside the airing cupboard.)*

VICKI. Oh, black sheets!

ROGER. *(Runs to the stairs with bucket and mop, and holds them out to VICKI.)* All right, take the... take the... take the...!

VICKI. Oh, you're in a real state!

ROGER. *(Despairingly.)* Oh...!

*(ROGER runs back and abandons the bucket and mop to pick up the bag and box.)*

VICKI. You can't even get the door open.

*(Exit VICKI into the bedroom.)*

*ROGER runs back to collect the bucket and mop, just as the front door opens to reveal PHILIP, carrying a cardboard box.)*

Start PHILIP. No, it's Mrs. Clackett's afternoon off, remember. We've got the place... *(PHILIP freezes, as ROGER flees upstairs with the bag and the box. PHILIP follows ROGER's progress out of the corner of his eye. Enter FLAVIA carrying a flight bag like GARRY's. The bedroom door shuts in ROGER's face. He opens the door again and exits into the bedroom with the bag and box.)* ... entirely to ourselves.

FLAVIA. Home.

PHILIP. Home, sweet home.

FLAVIA. Dear old house!

PHILIP. Just waiting for us to come back!

FLAVIA. *(Producing the remains of the phone.)* But how odd to find the telephone in the garden!

PHILIP. I'll put it back.

*(She hands him the phone — now in a very deteriorated condition — and he attempts to replace it on the telephone table. But it is still connected to its lead, which is too short, since it runs out through the downstairs bathroom door, and back in through the front door.)*

FLAVIA. I thought I'd better bring it in.

PHILIP. Very sensible.

*(He tugs discreetly at the lead.)*

FLAVIA. Someone's bound to want it.

PHILIP. Oh dear. *(He tugs.)*

FLAVIA. Why don't you put it back on the table?

PHILIP. The wire seems to be caught.

FLAVIA. Oh, look, it's caught round the downstairs bathroom.

PHILIP. So it is.

*(PHILIP takes the phone back out of the front room. FLAVIA with discreet violence pulls the lead out of the junction-box where it originates. PHILIP reemerges with the phone through the downstairs bathroom.)*

FLAVIA. I think I've disentangled it.

PHILIP. I climbed through the bathroom window and... oh...  
oh...

*(He takes the parcel of sardines off the telephone table and puts the telephone in its place.)*

FLAVIA. It's rather funny, though, creeping in like this for our wedding anniversary!

PHILIP. It's damned serious! If Inland Revenue find out we're in the...

*(Attempting to fold up the newspaper tidily, he becomes distracted by the contents that come oozing out over his hands. His voice dies away.)*

FLAVIA. ... country, even for one night...

PHILIP. Sorry. *(He puts down the parcel of sardines on the sofa.)* Yes, because if Inland Revenue find out we're in the...

*(He moves towards the champagne, and slides, exactly like GARRY, on the oily patch on the floor. He stops and looks back on it in surprise.)*

FLAVIA. ... country...

PHILIP. *(Distracted.)* ... country...

FLAVIA. ... even for one night.

PHILIP. ... even for one night...

*(PHILIP edges cautiously away from the oily patch.)*

FLAVIA. ... bang goes... *(He bangs into the bucket and mop.)*  
... our claim to be resident abroad...

*(PHILIP fumbles for his handkerchief, and claps it to his nose.)*

PHILIP. Resident abroad. Absolutely. *(He looks into his handkerchief.)*

FLAVIA. Bang goes most of this year's income.

PHILIP. Most of this year's income... *(He puts the handkerchief away.)* So, yes, I think I'd better... *(He picks up bag and box, clutches them to himself for reassurance.)* ... go and have a little lie-down.

*(He starts up the stairs.)*

FLAVIA. *(Surprised, but rallying)* Lie-down, yes, well, why not? No children. No friends dropping in... *(She moves the sofa to cover the oily patch as she speaks.)* We're absolutely on our... Leave those!

PHILIP. Oh, yes.

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*(PHILIP puts the bag and box down, but by this time he is already upstairs.)*