

**David** (*glaring at him*) It says "No Dogs Allowed".

**Rosemary** (*to Jane*) Dr Bonney will see you to the lift.

**David** (*giving Jane her coat and bag*) And no further. You've got to get back to your melodrama.

**Hubert** This way, my dear. (*He opens the door DL*)

**Jane** (*to David*) He'll probably go berserk, you realize that.

**Hubert** Have you ever considered castration?

**David** What a good idea!

*Jane glares at David and storms out, followed by Hubert*

(*Yelling after Hubert*) Just see her to the lift, Hubert! Don't go downstairs. Damn dog's obviously vicious.

**Rosemary** What an extraordinary woman.

**David** Wasn't she just. You'd think she'd be more worried about her sick husband than the wretched dog. Well, let's go and have a word with Sir Willoughby and then I must prepare myself to meet two hundred neurologists.

*Matron enters from the swing doors DR*

**Matron** Excuse me, Dr Mortimore, Sir Willoughby Drake says he wants you to know he's getting very cross.

**David** We're on our way, Matron.

**Rosemary** Oh, Matron, what do you know about a Mr Lesley?

**Matron** Lesley?

**Rosemary** We believe he's in B Ward.

**David** It's nothing to do with us, darling.

**Matron** Lesley — can't say it rings a bell.

**David** (*tersely*) It doesn't matter, Matron.

**Rosemary** We don't want that woman making trouble. She looked as though she could be as neurotic as her dog.

**Matron** Dog?

**David** (*crossly*) Will you go about your business, Matron.

**Rosemary** Could you check, please, Matron. Mr Lesley came in with gout and was operated on for piles.

**Matron** (*surprised*) Came in with —

**David** Gout, yes!

**Matron** And we operated for —

**David** (*shouting*) Piles! Don't tell me you haven't heard of piles, Matron?!

A varicose condition of your rectum!

**Matron** Really!

**Rosemary** David! |

*Rosemary pulls David out DR*

*As Matron starts to move towards doors UL, there is a knock on door DL*

**Matron** Come in.

*Sister enters*

**Sister** Oh. I was looking for Dr Mortimore.

**Matron** Not here, Sister, and I wouldn't bother him now.

**Sister** But he's Father Christmas and he'll need a list for the patient's presents.

**Matron** See him after the Ponsonby Lecture, he's in a foul mood. Oh, what do you know about a Mr Lesley?

**Sister** Lesley?

**Matron** Patient, B Ward.

**Sister** Don't recognize the name.

**Matron** Dr Mortimore wants to see him.

**Sister** What's Mr Lesley in for?

**Matron** Don't really know. Gout or piles, take your pick.

**Sister** I'll see what I can find out.

*Sister exits DL. David returns from DR and goes to collect his jacket*

**David** (*entering*) Forgot my jacket. God, what do I look like?

**Matron** (*coldly*) A varicose condition of your rectum.

*Matron exits UL*

*David reacts and then picks up his speech*

**David** "Poverty, bankruptcy..." (*He starts to move DR as the phone rings.*

*He hesitates and then lifts the receiver*) Dr Mortimore speaking. . . .

Miss Tate, are you still here?! . . . What do you mean, "When you got

down there, Leslie wasn't?" . . . Gone looking for you? How did he manage to get away from the sergeant? . . . Kicked him in the where? . . . Oh, my God! . . . No, he hasn't come up here —

*The door DL opens and Leslie appears. He is wearing jeans, a T-shirt and denim jacket. He also sports a punk hairstyle*

*Leslie stops on seeing David and they look at each other for a moment. Leslie is out of breath and looks somewhat wild*

*(On the phone)* I'd like to rephrase that last remark. *(He replaces the phone and stares at Leslie)*

Leslie Is this the Doctors' Common Room?

David Yes it is, and it's strictly for the use of the doctors.

*Leslie ignores this remark and comes in, closing the door behind him*

Leslie I'm looking for my mum.

David Your mum?

Leslie She's been up here talking to one of the doctors.

David Ah, yes! There was a lady on her way out when I arrived. She probably went down in the lift as you came up the stairs. *(He indicates for Leslie to leave)*

Leslie Are you one of the doctors in this place?

David *(hesitating, politely)* I beg your pardon?

Leslie *(raising his voice)* Are you a doctor here?

David Er — no. No, I'm not a doctor. No. *(Brightly)* I'm one of the patients, actually.

Leslie A patient?

David Yes. I'm recuperating. From gout and piles. Yes. And when you're recuperating they like you to do a little clerical work. Why not go and find your mother.

Leslie Rotten swine! *(He bangs his fist into the palm of his other hand)*

David Take it easy, young man!

Leslie He's a rotten swine!

David Who's a rotten swine?

Leslie My rotten dad.

David *(soothingly)* No he isn't.

Leslie How do you know?!

David Well, I'm sure he isn't. Dads aren't rotten.

Leslie Mine is. I'd like to thump him one.

David *(soothingly)* No, you wouldn't.

Leslie Yes I would! I'm going to stay here until I've seen every doctor in the hospital.

David You discuss it with your mother.

Leslie *(sitting)* I feel sick!

David God! Up you come.

Leslie I feel sick.

David If you feel sick, it'll be much nicer to be with your mother!

Leslie *(suddenly grabbing David)* I want to see my dad first. *(He falls to his knees)*

David I'll take you to the lift. *(He tries to get to the door DL)*

Leslie I didn't mean it, about thumping him.

David Just let go of me!

*Drake enters from DR*

Drake How much longer do you expect me to ... ? *(He stops on seeing Leslie, on his knees, clutching David)*

David *(after a pause)* This is private.

*Drake reacts and then exits dumbly DR*

*(To Leslie.)* Get a grip on yourself, for heaven's sake!

Leslie I feel sick!

*Matron enters from UL*

Matron Excuse me, I just wanted ... *(Seeing Leslie)* Oh.

David He's a bit upset, Matron.

Matron Upset?

David It's all right. His mother's in the hospital.

Matron *(to Leslie)* What ward's she in?

David I'll sort it out.

Leslie It's my dad I'm looking for.

Matron What ward's *he* in?

David I'm dealing with it, Matron! *(To Leslie)* It's all part of my recuperative clerical course.

Matron Recuperative clerical — ?

David Just go on about your business, Matron!

Matron Well, actually, I came back to apologize for my rather offensive remark just now.

David It was nothing.

Matron It was very crude.

David (*taking her to the swing door R*) Most kind. Apologies accepted.

Matron Thank you, Doctor.

*Matron exits R*

*David hesitates and then smiles sweetly at Leslie*

Leslie (*to David*) She called you Doctor.

David Er — yes.

Leslie You said you were a patient.

David I am. I'm a patient who's a doctor. Of Divinity.

Leslie Divinity?

David (*laughing*) You probably don't know what a Doctor of Divinity is?

Leslie A clergyman.

David (*stopping laughing*) That's right. I'm a clergyman — recovering from gout and piles.

Leslie Why aren't you wearing a funny collar?

David I'm unorthodox. Now you go and find your mother.

Leslie I'm not going anywhere until I've seen my dad. (*He sits on the floor again*)

David But you can't stay here. The Doctors' Common Room is strictly private — unless you're a patient recuperating.

Leslie I don't care!

David Don't take that bloody attitude! (*Then sonorously*) My child.

*Hubert enters from the door DL*

Hubert Well, wasn't that nice seeing ... (*Seeing Leslie*) Oh. Who's this?

David He'll be all right. He's just lost his mother.

Hubert Oh dear, what did she die of?

David Never mind!

Hubert (*to Leslie*) The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.

David Never mind! (*To Hubert*) Help me take him downstairs.

Leslie (*to Hubert*) You leave me alone. And tell the vicar to leave me alone.

Hubert (*looking around*) The vicar?

*Hubert looks at David, who also looks around*

Leslie Yeah, get someone to put him back to bed.

Hubert (*to David*) Losing his mother's obviously affected him.

Leslie It's my dad I've lost!

Hubert Oh, not him as well!

David He's mislaid his father, that's all.

Hubert Oh, thank heavens for that. Two parents in one day would be awful.

*Sisters enters from the door DL*

Sister Excuse me, Dr Mortimore, it's about —

David (*cheerfully, calmly*) Dr Mortimore — is not here.

*Sister and Hubert look surprised*

Sister I beg your pardon?

David Dr Mortimore is not here. Dr Mortimore *was* here — but Dr Mortimore is now enjoying his Christmas holidays.

Sister But I only wanted to ask if the patients' Christmas presents —

David Then you'll have to ask Dr Mortimore after the holidays, won't you? Off with you.

Sister And I can't find a Mr Lesley in B Ward.

David Fine. We'll tell Dr Mortimore that when he returns. Off, off, off, off, off!

*Sister backs out in confusion DL*

Hubert Are you feeling all right, David?

David (*for Leslie's benefit*) No, I'm not, Doctor. And the sooner I'm allowed to return to the comfort of my bed in the sanctuary of my ward — the happier I shall be.

Hubert The comfort of —

David My bed!

Hubert In the sanctuary of —

David My ward! (*Growling*) Just help me pick him up.

Hubert (*patting Leslie's shoulder*) The Lord giveth and the Lord —

David Shut up!

*Rosemary enters from the swing doors R*

**Rosemary** David ——!

**David** (*quickly dropping Leslie and going to Rosemary*) Yes, my darling?

**Rosemary** What on earth did you do to upset Sir Willoughby?

**David** Nothing.

**Rosemary** He said you can forget about any assistance from him with your speech and if you make any mistakes in your lecture, God help you.

**David** (*starting to push her out*) That's fair enough. You go and get a seat in the lecture hall.

**Rosemary** It doesn't start for another ... (*Seeing Leslie*) Who's that?

**David** He'll be all right.

*Hubert, who has been comforting Leslie, joins them*

**Hubert** (*to Rosemary, quietly*) His mother's just died.

**David** Hubert!

**Rosemary** Oh, no! (*Going to Leslie*) There, there, the Lord giveth and the ——

**David** Rosemary! (*He pulls Rosemary away*)

**Leslie** I want to see my dad!

**David** Stop that, for God's sake. (*Then sonorously*) For God's sake.

**Leslie** My dad's here somewhere, I know he is.

**Rosemary** Yes, you must be a comfort to your father now.

*Leslie wails*

**David** Rosemary! Leave this to us. Well, leave it to the doctor here. (*He indicates Hubert*)

**Rosemary** Was she a patient?

**David** Who?

**Rosemary** The boy's mother?

**David** No, she was D.O.A.

**Hubert** Oh dear.

**Rosemary** D.O.A.?

**Hubert** "Dead on arrival."

**Rosemary** What a morning! What did the poor woman die of?

**David** (*angrily interrupting*) Hit by a number 34 bus in Camden Town!

**Hubert** Dear oh dear.

**Leslie** (*to David*) I think I feel sick.

**David** Oh God — ! (*then smiling at Leslie*) — be with you.

**Rosemary** That'll be good for him. Into the bathroom.

**Hubert** Yes.

*Hubert starts to lead Leslie to the bathroom. David pulls Rosemary L*

**David** Rosemary, I really must insist you leave these hospital matters to the staff.

*Mike enters from UL, carrying the plate of mince pies, which has now been reduced to one mince pie*

**Mike** Come on, Dr Bonney, we're rehearsing.

**Rosemary** Ssh!

**Mike** He's the villain of my piece.

*Rosemary points at Leslie who is being supported by Hubert*

**Rosemary** His mother's just died.

**Mike** (*to Hubert, consolingly*) Oh, I'm so sorry to hear that, Dr Bonney.

**David** Connolly!

**Mike** (*to Hubert*) Still, she must have had a very good innings, eh, you're pushing on a bit.

**Hubert** (*pointing at Leslie*) His mother.

**Mike** Oh.

**Rosemary** She came C.O.D.

*David, Hubert and Mike consider this*

**Hubert** D.O.A., actually. (*To Mike*) Mike, help me get him into the bathroom, will you?

**David** Take him into one of the wards.

**Rosemary** Don't be silly. Get him into the bathroom.

**Mike** Have a mince pie, old lad.

**Hubert** He wants to be sick.

**Mike** This will bring that on a treat.

**Leslie** (*struggling*) I want to see my mother.

**Rosemary** It's all right. She's in better hands than ours now.