

INVISIBLE EDDIE

A British Comedy

By Becky Kimsey

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A British Comedy

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SYNOPSIS: *Invisible Eddie* is a hilarious new comedy about Eddie a timid introvert still living in his aunt Mary's flat in London. When he loses his job, Mary and her fiancé George decide to have Eddie hypnotized to make him feel invincible around strangers. Unfortunately, the Hypnotist (who has had a few too many) mistakenly convinces Eddie that he is invisible around strangers instead. Throw in a cockney superintendent, a lustful landlady, a blustering boss, a blind Bonny, and a baited barkeep at the Cock and Poppy Pub and you've got yourself a cracking good British Comedy!

DURATION: 90 minutes

SETTING: London, England.

TIME: The present.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 females, 3-5 males, 1 either)

EDDIE BOWERS (m) A repressed introvert. (English) 20-30.
(259 lines)

MARY BOWERS (f) Eddie's anxious aunt. (English) 45-55.
(241 lines)

GEORGE CAREY (m) Mary's mischievous fiancé. (Irish) 45-55.
(182 lines)

MS. DOVER (f) Saucy landlady (Cockney) 50-60. (39 lines)

BONNY CAREY (f) Clever & blind (Irish or English) 20-40.
(133 lines)

*CONRAD (m) Unhandy handyman (Cockney) 50-60.
(11 lines)

*DR. HANS ZOFF (m) Drunken Hypnotherapist (German) 50-60. (55 lines)

*MR. SEXTON (m) Eddie's hot-headed boss (English) 50-60.
(51 lines)

JERRY / GERI (m/f) Naive barkeep (English) 30-60. (37 lines)

**The roles of Conrad, Zoff and Sexton could potentially be played by the same actor if that actor can do all three accents and characters.*

PREMIERE PRODUCTION

INVISIBLE EDDIE premiered at Stage Coach Theatre in Boise, Idaho. The production was directed by Becky Kimsey with the following cast and crew:

EDDIE BOWERS.....	Triston Jackson
MARY BOWERS.....	Jeanna Vickery
GEORGE CAREY	Curtis Ransom
MS. DOVER.....	Becky Kimsey
BONNY CAREY	Erin Jackson
GERI.....	Deanna Hamilton
CONRAD / ZOFF / SEXTON.....	Kevin Kimsey

Stage Manager: Kristen Donovan

Set Designer: Kevin Kimsey

Set Dresser: Ava Goodrich

Lighting Designer: Dan Allers

Stagehands: Ava Goodrich, Ken Goodrich, Virginia Allen, Linda Ode,
Chris LeBlanc

Sound Operator: Lora Volkert

Lighting Operator: Ethan Allen

DEDICATION

A special thanks to The Stage Door Pub & Kitchen 28-30 Webber St London, SE1 8QA UK. *Invisible Eddie* was conjured there over a delicious pint of cloudy apple. Thanks for the inspiration, the meat pies and the memories!

ACT ONE

SETTING: *An inexpensive flat in London. There is a door on the back wall slightly SL and a broom closet on the back wall slightly SR. In the USL corner is a standing coat rack. USR there is a large bookshelf. DSL is a double-swinging door that leads to the kitchen. An opening USR leads to the hallway. There is a fireplace unit DSR and a sofa that sits center stage facing the audience with a coffee table in front of it and a narrow sofa table behind it.*

AT START: *MARY enters the front door USL struggling with a very large paper bag of groceries, a handful of mail in her mouth and a shoulder bag. CONRAD follows closely behind.*

MARY: Eddie? I'm home!

She crosses to the sofa, drops her shoulder bag onto it and attempts to take her coat off. During the following, she is about to set the bag on the sofa but realizes the bottom of the bag is wet so she struggles to take her coat off with one hand while taking the mail out of her mouth. CONRAD closes the door behind them and the doorknob to the broom closet falls off and lands on the floor behind the sofa.

MARY: Listen Conrad, I've been asking you for weeks now. If you cannot have that doorknob repaired, then I shall petition Mrs. Dover to advertise for a new superintendent.

CONRAD: *(Putting doorknob back.)* Now, that's not quite fair miss! I've told you, I can't fix it right now. Mrs. Dover insists I get a doorknob that matches all the others. But they don't make this model anymore so I had to send away to three different places to get all the assembly pieces. I'm still waiting on parts from Australia.

MARY: Oh, for heaven's sake, I don't want to hear about pieces and parts—would you at least pretend to be a gentleman and help me with this? *(Indicating grocery bag. He helps her with her coat instead. Irritated.)* Thank you. *(Calling off.)* Eddie? Are you home?

CONRAD: Eddie? Who's Eddie? I thought your man's name was George.

MARY: It is! George Carey is my fiancé, Eddie is my nephew.

CONRAD: Ah. Visiting from out of town is he? What, is he on holiday?

MARY: He lives here, Conrad. He's been my flat mate for three years.

CONRAD: Really? Funny, I don't believe I've ever seen him.

MARY: Of course you've seen him. He gave you a Christmas card and a plate of macaroons last year.

CONRAD: Ah. I wondered where those came from.

MARY: (*Handing him the bag.*) Just put these in the kitchen for me, will you?

CONRAD: Right-o.

CONRAD exits. MARY puts her coat on the rack. Doorknob falls off.

MARY: (*Calling off to kitchen.*) There! There! You see what I mean? Why can't you do something about that?

CONRAD: (*Offstage.*) I told you, I can't fix it yet!

MARY picks up doorknob and places it back in the hole.

MARY: Someone is going to have a very bad fall, you know! (*Calling off.*) Eddie? Did you get the promotion, dear?

EDDIE: (*Offstage.*) What?

MARY: (*Looking through mail.*) Did you get the promotion?

We hear a door open and close in the hall. EDDIE enters USR behind her wearing nothing but his pants. Not looking.

MARY: Well?

EDDIE: Well—

MARY: (*Turning.*) Yes? (*Looks at EDDIE. Re; his appearance.*) No.

EDDIE: No.

MARY: (*Expletive.*) Balls!

EDDIE: No balls. That's right Mary. I've got no balls.

MARY: Eddie, please don't say that to me when I can see them quite clearly from here. (*Holds mail up to obscure her view.*)

EDDIE: No, I meant—

MARY: I know what you meant. I was only trying to lighten the mood. Do put your trousers on, though. Conrad is in the kitchen and George will be coming home soon. We can't have you standing there posing like an unfortunate art student.

CONRAD enters with bag. EDDIE yelps and hides behind MARY.

CONRAD: Sorry miss, I didn't hear what you were saying.

MARY: (*Shielding EDDIE behind her.*) Conrad, for heaven's sake. Just put the bag on the countertop and leave!

CONRAD: Alright, alright. (*Exits again to kitchen.*)

EDDIE: I'm sorry, Mary. I'm sorry I didn't get the promotion.

MARY: What am I going to do with you? Everything was counting on that promotion! You were going to walk in there and tell that buffoon boss of yours that after sixteen years of being a glorified paperweight you deserve to be a manager!

CONRAD: (*Entering. EDDIE hides.*) You know, you really are confusing me Miss Mary, do you know that? First you threaten to have me replaced and then you tell me I should be the manager? I'm getting mixed signals here, love.

MARY: Conrad. Just get out of here and get those parts!

CONRAD: Hot and cold you are, miss. Hot and cold.

He exits. Doorknob falls off again.

MARY: Balls!! (*Replaces doorknob.*) Why didn't you get the promotion? You'd make a wonderful manager.

EDDIE: I just couldn't manage it, Mary.

MARY: Eddie, dearest. You are my nephew and I love you.

EDDIE: I love you too.

MARY: But if I'm to be married soon, you're going to have to figure out how to get along in this world on your own!

EDDIE: I know.

MARY: Get a flat of your own.

EDDIE: I know.

MARY: Get a wife of your own.

EDDIE: (*Automatically.*) I know—(*Beat.*) N-No.

MARY: That means going out on a date.

EDDIE: Mary—

MARY: And I know you're scared—

EDDIE: Scared? Who's scared? I'm not scared!

MARY: There are some very nice women out there, you know—

There is a knock on the door. EDDIE lets out a yelp and runs into the hall. MARY opens the door. MS. DOVER is standing there. She is an attractive woman in her mid-fifties. Her beauty however is overshadowed by the deliberately distracting neckline, flashy costume jewelry and an excessive application of glossy red lipstick.

MARY: Mrs. Dover! How are you?

DOVER: *(Entering.)* Miz Dover if you please. He's been in Hawaii "on holiday" for four years now.

MARY: Oh, has it been that long?

DOVER: *(Matter of fact.)* It has. I've decided to presume that he's dead.

MARY: Oh dear!

DOVER: *(Anger rising.)* Or more likely, he's shackled up with some Hawaiian tart who feeds him sausages and potted meat from her coconuts all day long while he plucks away at her ukulele. *(Beat. MARY has no words.)* So! I reckon it's time to move on.

MARY: I see. Well... good for you! Ahem. What can I do for you?

DOVER: *(Looking around.)* Just thought you should know that you'll be having a new neighbor soon. I've let the flat opposite. He should be arriving this evening to have a look at the place. *(Primps her hair.)* I hear he's a doctor. *(Pushes up her bosom.)* Single man. *(Beat.)* He's set to move in right away so there may be a lot of activity in the corridor tomorrow, what with the movers and all, so you best try to keep out the way.

MARY: I see. Well, that's very good to know. I appreciate it.

DOVER: *(Snooping about the room.)* Yes well, I like to keep my tenants happy.

MARY: You do indeed.

DOVER: *(Looking around hopefully.)* Talking of, where's that Irishman of yours? Your boyfriend?

MARY: *(Pointedly.)* Fiancé.

DOVER: Ohhh fiancé now, is it? Ooh. Sounds serious.

MARY: We have been dating for four years now, so—

DOVER: I expect that means he's off the market.

MARY: Well he— (*Beat.*) Yes.

DOVER: I have to admit, I'm a tiny bit jealous of you, miss. That double-shot of Irish crème of yours could be just what I need to set my hormones back to rights.

MARY: Perhaps a G & T would do the trick?

DOVER: A little S & M would be better.

MARY: (*Quickly.*) Yes! Well, I'm a very lucky woman. In three months' time, I shall no longer be Miss Bowers, you can call me Mrs. Mary Carey! (*DOVER stares at her for a beat.*) It looks better on paper.

DOVER: If you say so.

MARY: (*Ushering her out.*) Well! Thank you for the warning about the new tenant, Miz Dover. Perhaps we'll spend the day in the country.

DOVER: There's a thought! It'll be fine weather for horseback riding tomorrow. Nothing like a good bareback in the countryside eh?

MARY: Perhaps just a picnic.

DOVER: (*Shrugs.*) Call it what you like.

MARY: Well thanks again for stopping by. (*At door.*) Goodbye Miz Dover!

DOVER: Cheers!

DOVER exits. Doorknob falls off. MARY puts it back as EDDIE enters carefully, looking around like a frightened squirrel.

MARY: That woman. (*Turns to EDDIE.*)

EDDIE: You were saying?

MARY: Ohhh Eddie. They're not all like that you know.

EDDIE: Like what?

MARY: All claws and teeth. Not all women are as savage as Mrs. Dover.

EDDIE: I know.

MARY: Eddie. Tell me once and for all. Are you a homosexual?

EDDIE: No!

MARY: Never mind about father, he would come to terms with you being a homosexual if given the proper allotment of time.

EDDIE: I'm not a—

MARY: Frankly, I'd be relieved if you were a homosexual.

EDDIE: What?

MARY: There are a lot more homosexuals in this city than there are single straight women, you know. Everywhere you go; there's a homosexual.

EDDIE: That's not—

MARY: I'm just saying it would be much easier for me to find you a sexual partner if you—

EDDIE: Mary, will you please stop saying the word sexual? (*Shudders.*) I'm NOT GAY, alright? I'm just—

MARY: Hopeless. That's what you are, hopeless.

EDDIE: Well it's not my fault. You think I'm happy being this way? It's not easy being both timid AND introverted you know. Being around people I'm not familiar with is not only frightening, it's exhausting! I feel like a deflated balloon halfway through every social engagement and then I have to go sneak off to the toilet and blow myself back up again.

MARY: Oh—

EDDIE: I like women! I like women very much. It's just that I have difficulty being myself when I'm around them.

MARY: You have difficulty being yourself when you're around anyone.

EDDIE: I know.

MARY: Eddie... I'm sure there are lots of introverts out there. There might even be just as many of them as there are homosexuals.

EDDIE: Except we don't have parades.

MARY: (*Agreeing.*) That would make them easier to spot, to be sure. (*Beat.*) I'm sorry, Eddie. You're not hopeless. You've just got to find someone of your own kind to settle down with!

EDDIE: Well, it's not like we have organized clubs or online dating sites. There isn't even an Introvert App.

MARY: I know. I checked.

EDDIE: There aren't any established places for introverts to meet other introverts! There are gay bars, straight bars, lesbian bars, furry bars, and drag queen social clubs but I haven't seen any clubs or pubs called "Shy-Town" or "Introverts Unite".

MARY: Oh, Eddie...

EDDIE: And even if there were, we'd never show up! Oh, we'd make plans alright. We'd agree to "Get together" and "Hang out". But when the moment of truth arrives, we panic and cancel at the last minute; pretend to be sick or claim we forgot all about it. And, if we did happen to buck up the courage and actually appear, we'd all be drinking by ourselves in the corner anyway so what would be the point? And there can only BE SO MANY corners in a pub, so once all the corners are occupied everyone else quickly and discreetly pays their own tab and returns home to the company of their cat or parrot or novel of the month.

MARY: Eddie, I'm not suggesting that you—

EDDIE: And! And, I need hardly mention that after having a few pints, I would hardly be in a position to approach a woman.

MARY: Oh, I know...

EDDIE: It wouldn't even occur to me! I'd be too busy entertaining the salt and pepper shaker with a boisterous rendition of John Kanaka. Then the salt shaker would applaud, the pepper shaker would cheer and I'd stand up and take a dramatic bow. Then suddenly everyone in the place would be looking at me with squinched expressions on their faces, I'd go home mortified and lock myself up for a fortnight. Getting pissed at home in front of the telly with a large bowl of crisps watching Downton Abbey reruns is a far more appealing prospect than drinking in public.

MARY: Alright, alright.

EDDIE: You should never have taken me there, Mary.

MARY: It was George's birthday!

EDDIE: I'll never recover.

MARY: Yes you will. You are a bright, funny, intelligent man! You just need to get over this ridiculous fear of being embarrassed!

EDDIE: It's called being English, Mary. Some of us have more English than others.

MARY: Eddie, everyone does stupid things when they're inebriated! That's why we do it! It's... supposed to be fun!

EDDIE: Well it's not. Not for me. I don't like being out of control. I don't like feeling fuzzy when people are around. It's alright when I'm by myself but I don't like people judging me.

MARY: You're afraid of people judging you.

EDDIE: I don't like them thinking poorly of me.

MARY: You're afraid of them thinking poorly of you.

EDDIE: I lost my job, Mary.

MARY: You're afr—WHAT??

EDDIE: I got sacked.

MARY: How could you have been sacked? You've been there for sixteen years!!

EDDIE: Well—

MARY: What could you have possibly done to warrant being fired?

EDDIE: I went into his office this morning with that speech you prepared for me.

MARY: Yes?

EDDIE: And when I arrived he had just eaten a handful of Jaffa Cakes.

MARY: And?

EDDIE: He had an enormous chunk of Jaffa chocolate on his face. It was melting into a shiny wet glob on his chin and, rather than acknowledge the embarrassing smudge or pretend to ignore it, I stood there for a solid ten minutes and stared at it.

MARY: Stared at it?

EDDIE: Yes! I stared at my boss for ten minutes, Mary. And it wasn't a swift ten minutes. It was one of those time-stands-still ten minutes. He could have completed his quarterly taxes while I stood there. I didn't say a word. Not a single word. It was like my lips were stuck together by some invisible force.

MARY: Oh Eddie...

EDDIE: And then I ended up making this horrible guttural sound: "Mmmmrmmmgggghr." It made him so uncomfortable that he fired me. Right then and there.

MARY: Why on earth did you freeze up like that? We'd been rehearsing that speech all week! I even held up that picture of Simon Cowell for you to practice on!

EDDIE: I know! I was too afraid to say what I was supposed to say and I was too afraid to acknowledge the Jaffa Cake Splotch and I was too afraid to disappoint you so yes, Mary. I'm afraid, alright? You keep insisting that I'm afraid so yes, once again you are right and I am wrong. I'm afraid! (*Beat.*) I'm afraid I'm going to be staying in your flat for a very, very long time!

He runs down the hall to his room.

MARY: Eddie no! Now, wait—

We hear a door slam. GEORGE CAREY enters the front door with a newspaper. He's Irish and affable.

GEORGE: Afternoon sweet Mary!

He closes the door. Doorknob falls off. He picks it up and places it gently in the hole. He moves to MARY and kisses her on the cheek.

MARY: Hello George.

GEORGE: *(Off her expression.)* Oh dear. Did he say no to the date, then?

MARY: What? *(Remembers.)* Oh no! Oh, I'm afraid I didn't get that far!

GEORGE: Shite! She'll be here in half an hour.

MARY: Well, you better ring her up and put her off.

GEORGE: I can't do that. She doesn't carry a mobile.

MARY: Why doesn't she carry a mobile?

GEORGE: She's... afraid she'll get brain cancer or something. Anyhow, you better tell him now, so he can prepare himself.

MARY: Nothing can prepare him for that! It's bad enough that we set him up on a blind date; much less not tell him about it.

GEORGE: Well it was your job to tell him!

MARY: I know, but things are swiftly circling the drain, George. He's just lost his job.

GEORGE: Blimey! How'd he do that?

MARY: He was too afraid to ask for the promotion and got sacked instead. He's a complete puddle now. I don't know what to do next!

GEORGE: Hey, you know what? I was reading the paper when I was waiting for my next fare and I saw an advert. *(Opens paper and shows it to MARY.)* It's a bit about some head doctor who just moved into town. He's a certified hypnotherapist.

MARY: *(Irritated.)* George, this isn't the time for one of your barmy ideas...

GEORGE: No! No, read it. Read it!

MARY: (*Takes paper.*) Oh for heaven's sake. (*Reading.*) "Doctor Hans Zoff the world-renowned German hypnotherapist lately arriving in London is accepting new patients seeking immediate and lasting relief from bad habits, addictions, anxiety, eating disorders, depression, irritable bowel syndrome, and phobias." (*Beat.*) Phobias?

GEORGE: There. Do you see?

MARY: No. No, that's too ridiculous George; we're not so very desperate that we require the help of a pretentious witch doctor.

GEORGE: He's not a witch doctor! Look at his credentials, Mary. He's world-renowned. Maybe he can help Eddie get over his fear of being around other people.

MARY: This is ludicrous, George. We are not going to hypnotize my nephew and that's the end of it. Now, when your cousin Bonny arrives, we'll just have to tell her that Eddie has taken ill and she'll have to meet him another time—(*There is a knock. They freeze.*) I thought you told her six thirty!

GEORGE: I did! Definitely! Six thirty!

MARY: Is she always this early?

GEORGE: Mmm, sometimes...

MARY: Well, that's just brilliant. We'll have to come up with an excuse. I doubt Eddie will come out of his room until Boxing Day.

She gives him a look and goes to the door. She opens it and we see BONNY standing there nervously. She is holding a tin of biscuits in one hand and a long stick in the other. She is wearing sunglasses.

MARY: Bonny?

BONNY: Yes.

MARY: Well! It's so very nice to meet you! I'm Mary.

Holds out her hand; BONNY doesn't take it. MARY now sees the stick and connects the dots. Awkwardly.

MARY: Oh! Oh, I see. (*Oops!*) I mean, I seeem to have lost my manners! Come in, come in!

She does. BONNY bumps into the table on the way in. Doorknob falls off.

MARY: Oh dear! Are you alright? I'm so—oh dear—

Picks up doorknob and places it back in the hole.

GEORGE: *(Quickly.)* Good to see you, Bonny! *(Gives BONNY a hug.)*

Glad you found the place alright.

MARY: *(Through her teeth.)* George?

GEORGE: *(Sweetly.)* Mary?

Obviously, GEORGE hasn't told MARY that BONNY was blind.

BONNY: Something the matter?

MARY: *(Brightly.)* Not at all! Not at all! Ahem... You brought us some biscuits, I see! Oh. Sorry. *(She can't stop saying "I see".)*

BONNY: It's alright.

MARY: That was very, very thoughtful of you, Bonny. Let me just take these into the kitchen—

GEORGE: *(Snatching biscuits away.)* Oh! Let me do that for you, Mary. You and Bonny can stay here and get acquainted!

MARY: But I—

GEORGE: I'll put the kettle on too, shall I? *(Exits swiftly.)*

MARY: George wait!—

Pause. Awkwardly MARY turns and smiles at BONNY, then realizes BONNY can't see the smile so she laughs loudly instead.

MARY: AHaha! Haha! Ohhhh dear. Ahem. *(Shouting.)* Would you like to sit down?

BONNY: Thank you.

She moves towards sofa guided by her stick.

MARY: *(Following.)* I'm so glad to finally meet you! George has told me... so much about you.

BONNY: *(Sitting.)* He's told me a lot about you too. You're very pretty.

MARY: Oh! Um. (?) Thank you. (*She sits beside BONNY.*) And you are just as lovely as he described.

BONNY: Thank you. I'm so looking forward to meeting your nephew. Is he here?

MARY: Well, I'm afraid there's been a bit of a mix-up.

BONNY: A mix-up?

MARY: Yes, well... you see—(*Oops!*) Oh! I'm sorry.

BONNY: It's alright. I'm used to it.

MARY: (*Embarrassed.*) Of course. (*Beat.*) Well, we ran into an obstacle.

BONNY: Happens to me all the time.

MARY: We—(*Stops.*) We've hit a snag.

BONNY: That too.

MARY: You can't see him.

BONNY: I know.

MARY: I don't mean to keep you in the dark—

BONNY: Too late.

MARY: Shit!

BONNY: (*Alarmed.*) Where?!

GEORGE: (*Enters w/ plated biscuits.*) Kettle's on!

MARY: George! There you are! I was just trying to explain to your cousin that we—

BONNY: (*Rising.*) May I use your washroom? I'd like to freshen up a bit if I may.

MARY: Oh. Yes of course! It's right through there. (!!) I mean, it's to your right. Your back—right. Um. Five paces to your—no three paces to your right—

GEORGE: (*Mercifully interrupts.*) Down the hall to your right, Bonny. (*Sets biscuits on sofa table.*) It's the first door on the left.

MARY: (*Quickly.*) Right!

GEORGE: RIGHT! First door on the right!

BONNY nods and exits with the aid of her stick, bumping into the wall only once. Doorknob falls off. We hear a door open, close and MARY turns slowly to GEORGE.

GEORGE: Now let me explain—

MARY: (*Shouting.*) What in God's name were you thinking trying to set my nephew up with a blind woman?

GEORGE: Shhh! She can hear, you know!

MARY: How could you possibly think it could work?

GEORGE: I have a perfectly good explanation if you would just listen—

MARY: Oh, I am listening. I am dying to know what made you think this arrangement was even remotely feasible, because for the life of me I cannot.

GEORGE: What? They have similar quirks!

MARY: Quirks?

GEORGE: Yes!

MARY: Eddie is shy and she can't see! How could that possibly be considered a similarity?

GEORGE: It's a very sensible arrangement!

MARY: Sensible!

GEORGE: Yes. Sensible! He's afraid of doing something embarrassing around other people, right? So, if he's to do something awkward in front of Bonny she'd never even notice! It's brilliant! Don't you see!

MARY: Oh, I can see alright. I can see that I may have seriously overestimated my fiancé's level of intelligence. I can see that I am engaged to an irksome Irishman who finds it amusing to set my nephew up on a double-blind date!

GEORGE: (*Pause.*) Triple blind, actually. (*Beat.*) If you think about it.

EDDIE enters unseen behind them. He wanders to the sofa table and takes a biscuit; eating his feelings.

MARY: (*Gritted teeth.*) George.

GEORGE: Mary.

MARY: Get rid of her.

GEORGE: Give her a chance, love. She's a nice girl! And she's lonely too in case you didn't notice.

MARY: No, no George. This won't work. You have to come up with some excuse; as soon as she comes out, you'll have to—

EDDIE: Who brought the biscuits?

MARY and GEORGE: (*Startled.*) AHHHH!!!

EDDIE: They've got nuts in them though. You know I don't like nuts.

MARY: Eddie! Will you please go back to your room and put on some clothes! For heaven's sake!

EDDIE: What's going on? Why are you two whispering?

MARY: (*Urgently.*) Quickly now!

GEORGE: (*Whispering.*) What difference does it make? She can't see him.

MARY: (*Loudly.*) I can see him!

EDDIE: Oh, I see. I'm in the way now aren't I? Now that I've lost my job and have no prospects you're both ready to chuck me out, eh? I'm like a ferret with no future. You two deciding whether to drop me off at the homeless shelter or donate me to the local humane society?

MARY: Eddie, go put your trousers on.

EDDIE: Fine. Fine. They have dog biscuits at the Humane Society; at least they don't have any nuts.

Doorknob falls unexpectedly. They all look at it.

GEORGE: Not anymore.

MARY: George!

EDDIE: I'll leave you to it then.

He exits. There is the sound of a door opening down the hall, followed by a yelp from BONNY and a scream from EDDIE who dashes back in screaming.

EDDIE: Ahhhhhhhhhhhhh! There's a lady!! A lady in the loo!

He trips on the doorknob and falls to the floor behind the sofa.

GEORGE: You see? Quirks.

Blackout.

ACT ONE, SCENE 2

SETTING: *The Same. An hour later.*

AT START: *GEORGE and MARY are hovering over EDDIE who is on the sofa passed out. He is now wearing a silk kimono and MARY is fanning him with the newspaper GEORGE had brought in earlier.*

MARY: So this is what being married to you is going to be like.

GEORGE: Don't get excited, Mary. I can't provide this much adventure for you every day.

MARY: I'm talking about the lies, the deceit!

GEORGE: Mary, the only reason I didn't tell you about Bonny being blind is—

MARY: Yes?

GEORGE: *(Beat.)* I can't recall. It slipped my mind, alright? Anyway it doesn't matter now, she ran off after Eddie barged in on her in the toilet. I doubt she'll be back, so you win, Mary! You may as well forgive me now and get it over with.

MARY: Who says I'm to forgive you? That was a capital offense, George!

GEORGE: I just thought it would be good for your nephew to have a companion who he can be himself with, that's all. I want your nephew to have what I have: A loving, caring, forgiving lass who doesn't mind when I make a mistake now and again because she worships me.

MARY: *(Leaning in.)* You're the devil.

GEORGE: And the horns to prove it. *(They kiss.)* I am sorry, Mary. It was a stupid idea.

MARY: *(Conceding.)* There was a degree of logic to it, I'll give you that. If we could only get Eddie to stop being afraid around other people he could get another job!

GEORGE: And a life!

MARY: And a wife! *(There is a knock at the door.)* Oh lord! Do you think she's changed her mind?

GEORGE: She's been known to!

MARY: Wonderful!

They both rush to the door. MARY opens it with a flourish.

MARY: Bonny! It's good to—

Standing there is a tall fellow with a rather fluffy mustache. He's wearing a tweed suit and hat. He speaks with a German accent.

MARY: Oh! Hello. Can I help you?

ZOFF: *(Slightly inebriated.)* Is this vun vun nine?

MARY: I'm sorry?

ZOFF: Vun vun nine? I'm to meet Miss Dover here. This is vun vun nine isn't it not?

MARY: Oh! No, I'm afraid not, this is one one seven.

ZOFF: *(Oh no!)* Ah, nein!

MARY: *(Correcting.)* No, seven.

ZOFF: Vut?

MARY: Seven.

ZOFF: *(Confused.)* I heard you the first time, fraulein.

GEORGE: Wait a minute... aren't you—

ZOFF: Doctor Zoff. Hans Zoff, at your service. *(Bows and sways a bit.)*

GEORGE: Aha! You're that new Hypnotherapist aren't you? I read about you in the paper.

MARY: Oh! Are you the new tenant?

ZOFF: Yes. Tomorrow though. Not now. Miss Dover said she's letting me in to measure ze space.

MARY: Ze space?

ZOFF: For my furniture. Sofas and susch. *(Slight slur.)*

GEORGE: *(Getting an idea.)* Well, you've got half an hour before nine o'clock, why don't you come on in, doctor... rest up a bit. *(Ushering him in.)* We'll pour you a cup of tea while you wait!

MARY: *(Stage whisper.)* What are you doing?

GEORGE: *(To MARY.)* Follow my lead. *(To ZOFF.)* Here we are then. I'm George Carey and this is my fiancée Mary Bowers. May I take your coat?

ZOFF: Nein, danke.

GEORGE: Very well then. Mary, would you be a dove and fetch Dr. Zoff a nice hot cup of tea?

ZOFF: No sugar!

MARY: Uh—Milk?

ZOFF: Obviously.

MARY: (*Glaring at GEORGE.*) Right away. (*Exits.*)

GEORGE: So! Welcome to London!

ZOFF: Thank you.

GEORGE: Have you been here long?

ZOFF: Nein. I have only just arrived.

GEORGE: Well, if you have any questions about which shops are the best, you've come to the right place. I'm a cabbie, you see. I know this city like the back of my pajamas. Whatever you need, I can get it for you. I can give you a tour of the best pubs in the city as well.

ZOFF: I can find my own way around, danke. I could use a client or two, though. You haven't got any of those in the back of your pajamas have you?

GEORGE: Clients! Of course! You know, now that you mention it; it just so happens that I—

MARY: (*Entering. Loudly.*) I'm terribly sorry but we are out of tea!

ZOFF: Vut?

GEORGE: What?

MARY: Out. We are out of tea.

GEORGE: We are not!

ZOFF: The English are never out of tea!

MARY: Well, I'm terribly sorry but we are. Since we have nothing to offer you—

GEORGE pulls her downstage. During the following, ZOFF dubiously wanders to the biscuits US of sofa.

GEORGE: What are you doing?

MARY: I know what you're up to. We are NOT going to hypnotize my nephew!

GEORGE: Why on earth not? Dr. Hans Zoff is world renowned!

MARY: I don't care! Eddie's very fragile right now; I'll not have that pompous pumpernickel putting his hands on Eddie!

GEORGE: Mary, his very name implies that he won't have to.

MARY is about to protest, then stops. She looks at ZOFF who has just returned, chewing on a biscuit, she smacks GEORGE.

MARY: This is serious. Something could go wrong!

GEORGE: What could possibly go wrong?

MARY: Well—

GEORGE: What? It doesn't work? That's the worst that could happen?

At least then we can say that we tried everything. Well, almost everything... there's still electroshock therapy, you know.

MARY: George!

GEORGE: Listen, all I'm suggesting is we give it a try. We provide Doctor Zoff with a little hospitality and then we ask very nicely if he would hypnotize Eddie and convince him that he has no more fear of people! That he's bold and daring and invincible around them!

MARY: Invincible?

GEORGE: Exactly!

MARY: He won't do it.

GEORGE: Of course, he'll do it!

ZOFF: Of course, I'll do it! (*Beat.*) Mmm. Macadamias?

EDDIE: (*Waking.*) Uhhhhmmnnn...

MARY: (*Rushing to him.*) Oh! He's waking up! Thank heavens! Eddie? Eddie, are you alright dear?

EDDIE: Hhmmmm???

GEORGE: Mary—

MARY: No!

GEORGE: Yes!

MARY: NO!

ZOFF: Vere did you get zese? The shop on the corner?

EDDIE: (*Holding his head.*) Uhhh. What happened? (*Looks down at the kimono he's wearing.*) Oh no. Not again.

MARY: It's alright. You fell and knocked your head on the floor.

EDDIE: I did?

GEORGE: Eddie, there's someone here I'd like you to meet.

MARY: George, it's not fair to ask him now!

EDDIE: Ask me what?

ZOFF comes down to sofa and extends his hand to EDDIE.

ZOFF: Doctor Zoff.

EDDIE: (*Looks at his hand.*) Doctor who?

GEORGE: Doctor Zoff, this is Eddie Bowers. Introvert Extraordinaire.

ZOFF: Ah. *(Beat.)* I can fix this.

EDDIE: Ohhhhh no.

MARY: *(Carefully.)* Now, wait just a minute—

EDDIE: No, no no no. I don't need a doctor. I don't need a doctor! I don't even need a dentist! I'm fine! I'm fine. I'm all fine! See, look! No bruises, no breaks, no fevers. No doctors!

EDDIE bounces up and runs SR to hallway.

GEORGE: *(Grabbing him.)* Come on now Eddie! He's not that kind of doctor!

EDDIE: Well then, unless he's got a big blue Police Box that's bigger on the inside, I'm not interested! *(GEORGE struggles to hold him.)*

MARY: George, you've upset him!

ZOFF: *(Confused.)* Vut is "Police Box"?

EDDIE: Mary, I don't need my head shrunk. I like it this size. It's a good size. *(To GEORGE.)* Size isn't everything you know!

MARY: It's alright, Eddie!

GEORGE: No it's not, Mary! He's a grown man and he needs to start acting like one.

EDDIE: I do fifty-seven push-ups every morning. If that's not man enough for you, I'll do sixty!

MARY: But I'm not convinced that hypnotism is the answer. *(To ZOFF.)* No offense.

ZOFF: *(Sagely.)* Hypnotism is always the answer.

GEORGE: There, you see?

EDDIE: Wait, what? You want to hypnotize me?

GEORGE: It could work!

EDDIE: Not on your limey life!

ZOFF: Vell... if he's not villing to do it, I'll just—*(Turns to leave.)*

GEORGE: *(Urgently to EDDIE.)* Listen to me, mate. Your aunt and I are getting married next month. We got no place to go for our honeymoon but here, you get me? You thought about that yet? Eh? Her room is right next to yours ain't it? And her room is gonna be our room in just a few weeks' time. So unless you were looking forward to listening to your aunt and I knocking boots; all that grunting and grinding and moaning every single night, You need to

figure out a way to get over yourself and get back out into the world.
(*Pointing to ZOFF.*) This guy is gonna help you do it.

ZOFF can't seem to locate the door. He attempts to open the broom closet but the doorknob falls off.

GEORGE: And you are gonna let him do it.

MARY: George, leave him be!

ZOFF: (*Putting knob back in.*) I'll be off then—

GEORGE: You get me?

EDDIE: I get you.

ZOFF: (*Finding the front door.*) I got you! Auf Wiedersehen, everybody.

GEORGE: Wait!

MARY: Doctor Zoff wait!!

ZOFF stops, turns. GEORGE turns to MARY who sighs.

MARY: He better not turn him into a drooler.

Blackout.

ACT ONE, SCENE 3

SETTING: *The Same. Ten minutes later.*

AT START: *GEORGE and MARY are standing SL and EDDIE is back on the sofa, wearing a shirt, trousers, shoes and socks. ZOFF is SR of the sofa.*

MARY: Now, are you sure this is quite safe?

ZOFF: I have hypnotized hundreds of patients. I assure you, it's quite safe.

During the following, he takes a flask out of his pocket and takes a swig on the sly.

EDDIE: I can't believe you're making me do this, Mary. I thought I was your favorite nephew.

MARY: You're my only nephew, Eddie.

GEORGE: And we're not making you do anything.

EDDIE: What if he puts me under and I don't wake up, you ever think of that?

GEORGE: He's not performing a triple bypass, Eddie. You'll be fine.

ZOFF: *(To EDDIE.)* Relax, Freddie.

MARY: Eddie.

ZOFF: Eddie. *(To MARY and GEORGE.)* You two can leave the room now.

MARY: What? No! Why can't we stay?

GEORGE: It's alright, Mary. Let's give him some space.

MARY: Oh. Alright then. We'll just be in the other room, dear.

MARY and GEORGE exit to hallway.

EDDIE: *(Calling sarcastically.)* Don't worry about me, its fine! I'll just... see you in the afterlife, shall I?

ZOFF: Relax, Freddie.

EDDIE: It's Eddie.

ZOFF: *(Crossing SL of EDDIE.)* Relax, Eddie. Now, since I am short on time, I shall be using something called the rapid induction technique. Stand and face me bitte.

EDDIE: *(Dubious.)* Fine. *(He does.)*

EDDIE is now SL of ZOFF.

ZOFF: I do have your permission to hypnotize you, ja?

EDDIE: Yes. Fine, fine. Just—get it over with.

ZOFF: Very well. Take a step back for me if you please? *(EDDIE does.)* Good, good. Now step just a little bit forward. *(EDDIE does.)* There you are. Now put your feet just slightly apart so you are comfortable but stable. *(EDDIE does.)* Sehr good.

EDDIE: This is stupid.

ZOFF: Now, I am going to place my hand on your shoulder and take your other hand, alright? Now. Look directly into mein eyes, Eddie. Come come! Relax and look directly into mein eyes.

With his left hand, ZOFF moves EDDIE'S US hand/arm side to side left to right continuously. Loosening it up, gently.

EDDIE: This isn't going to work.

ZOFF: *(Soothingly.)* Just do what I say, bitte. It vill be alright, Freddie

EDDIE: It's Eddie.

ZOFF: Eddie. This will take no time at all. *(Lower.)* Look directly in my eyes. Concentrate. Relax your arm. Feel it loosening but growing more and more heavy. Growing more and more heavy. Your limbs are relaxing and your eyelids are growing more and more heavy. Growing more and more heavy.

EDDIE: It's not—

ZOFF: —Now SLEEP.

On the word SLEEP, ZOFF tugs EDDIE'S arm and EDDIE'S head falls forward. ZOFF guides him to his shoulder and during the following eases him onto the sofa.

ZOFF: There ve go, nice and easy. Down ve go. There you are.

EDDIE is in a complete trance. During the following, ZOFF sits EDDIE down on the sofa as he speaks smoothly but rapidly.

ZOFF: You are in a nice place, Eddie. A comfortable place. A safe place. You are more relaxed now than you have ever been before. Can you feel that, Eddie?

EDDIE: Yes.

ZOFF: Sehr good. Now I vant you to go back, Eddie. I vant you to go back to a time when you last felt safe and confident. Can you do that for me? Can you find that for me Eddie? Safe and confident. I vant you to see that. I vant you to feel that, Eddie. Ven you last felt safe and confident. Can you see that Eddie? Are you there?

EDDIE: Yes.

ZOFF: *(Beginning to slur.)* Sehr good, Eddie. Very good. Now stay right there, Eddie. Stay in that place where you last felt safe and confident. Now tell me how old are you?

EDDIE: I'm seven.

ZOFF: Seven. Thass good, Eddie. And vere are you?

EDDIE: I'm up in the tree.

ZOFF: (*Beat.*) In the tree?

EDDIE: Yes.

ZOFF: (*Furrows his brow.*) What are you doing up in a tree?

EDDIE: We're playing a game!

ZOFF: Oh, I see. And who are you playing the game with?

EDDIE: Mary. She can't find me. (*He giggles.*) She can't see me. She's looking everywhere but she can't see me! (*Giggles again.*) This is so funny!

ZOFF: Thass good, Eddie. Thass good. (*Sways a bit. Sits next to EDDIE.*) You are feeling safe and strong. But most of all Eddie, you are (*Takes a swig, tries to say "Invincible."*) invisible.

EDDIE: Invisible.

ZOFF: Now hold on to that feeling, Eddie. Hold onto that safe and strong and (*Beat.*) invisible feeling. I vant you to hold onto it because when I count down from five and tell you to open your eyes, you are going to keep that feeling, Eddie. You are going to be invisible to everyone that you don't know. This vill keep you feeling coffident and safe. Do you understand, Eddie? Ven you open your eyes, you will not only feel invisssible but you will BE invisible to everyone that you don't know. Do you understand?

EDDIE: Yes.

ZOFF: Say it for me, Eddie. Say the words: "I am invisible to strangers."

EDDIE: I am invisible to strangers.

ZOFF: "Zey can not hurt me und I am safe."

EDDIE: Zey can not hurt me und I am safe.

ZOFF: Verry good. (*Hiccups.*) Now, as I count back from five you vill open your eyes and feel refreshed and relaxed and coffident and these vords you just spoke vill be true. Absolutely true. Are you ready, Freddie? (*Beat.*) Eddie? (*Giggles a bit.*) Very good. Here vee go. Five...four...three...two...vun. Open your eyes.

EDDIE does. He takes a short breath then he blinks. Slowly, he turns to ZOFF.

EDDIE: Well?

ZOFF stares blankly at EDDIE for a moment then looks as if he's about to be sick. He stands up abruptly and stumbles swiftly out the front door and slams it behind him. Doorknob falls off. EDDIE stares after him in shock. He looks at the audience. To himself:

EDDIE: It WORKED!!!! Mary! George! Get in here quick!!

MARY: *(Offstage.)* Yes dear?

GEORGE: *(Offstage.)* Are you sure?

EDDIE: Quite sure! Quite sure! Quickly now! Ohhh this is brilliant!
Bloody brilliant!

MARY: *(Entering.)* So! How did it go?

GEORGE: Feeling any... different?

EDDIE: As a matter of fact, I am. I am feeling splendid. Stupendous!

GEORGE: *(Replaces doorknob.)* What happened to Doctor Zoff?

EDDIE: Well, he ran off, obviously.

MARY: Oh dear!

GEORGE: Why the hell did he run off? *(Places doorknob back in hole.)*

EDDIE: Well, I imagine it's the standard reaction one would have when
a person DISAPPEARS before your very eyes.

MARY: What?

GEORGE: Disappears?

EDDIE: Yes!

MARY: Eddie, what are you going on about?

EDDIE: *(Leaning in.)* I. Am. Invisible.

MARY: I beg pardon?

EDDIE: I am invisible, Mary!

MARY: *(After a beat.)* Um... I hate to break it to you Eddie, but I can
see you.

GEORGE: Me too. You still look like hell.

EDDIE: No, no no! It only works when I'm around people I don't know!

MARY: People you don't know?

GEORGE: *(Pleased.)* Really?

EDDIE: This is marvelous! I can be myself around strangers and I don't
have to worry because they can't see me anyway! Complete
anonymity! I want to go out! I want to go to a pub! Can we go to a
pub?

MARY: Now, wait just a minute—

GEORGE: (*Pulling MARY aside.*) Shhhh. Mary wait. This might just be the ticket!

MARY: Don't be ridiculous! He'll make a fool of himself!

GEORGE: Not necessarily—

EDDIE: I could push all the buttons in a crowded lift and no one would know it was me.

GEORGE: See? Harmless!

EDDIE: I could eat all the cakes at the pasty shop for free!

MARY: Oh dear.

EDDIE: I could run stark naked through Harrington Station!

GEORGE: That's the ticket!

MARY: Eddie, please!

EDDIE: Wait! Do I even have to wear clothes at all?

GEORGE: No!

MARY: Yes! I insist upon that! Most emphatically!

EDDIE: (*Removing his shirt.*) I don't know, Mary. Clothes aren't invisible to strangers. It might be a bit frightening if my shirt and trousers were seen walking around by themselves.

GEORGE: Perfectly logical!

MARY: Eddie, be realistic!

EDDIE: (*Taking off trousers.*) I am being realistic! I don't want to scare people, Mary. That defeats the whole purpose!

MARY: (*Warningly.*) George!

GEORGE: (*Concedes.*) Alright, alright. Hey, Eddie! Maybe your clothes are invisible on you! Have you thought of that?

EDDIE: (*Oh, come on.*) Oh, now who's being unrealistic?

MARY: That's where you draw the line? You are invisible to strangers, yes that's perfectly reasonable, but the laws of metaphysics cannot extend to the wearing of clothes? George, DO something!

GEORGE: Do what? This is bloody brilliant!

There is a knock on the door.

MARY: Oh dear...

GEORGE: Who on earth could that be?

EDDIE: (*Moving to the door.*) I'll open it, shall I?

MARY: (*Simultaneously with GEORGE.*) NO!

GEORGE: (*Simultaneously with MARY.*) YES!

EDDIE opens the door proudly wearing only his underpants and stands behind the door to reveal BONNY.

GEORGE: Bonny!

GEORGE gives her a hug and discreetly takes her stick and hangs it on the coatrack.

BONNY: Hello, George. I'm sorry, I seem to have misplaced my lip balm. Might I have left it in the loo?

MARY: Um—

GEORGE: Come in! Come in!

BONNY enters but EDDIE remains in front of her walking backward and wagging his bottom back and forth. GEORGE closes the door behind her and the doorknob falls off.

MARY: *(Hushed. To EDDIE.)* Stop it!

BONNY: Beg, pardon?

EDDIE: Why? She can't see me!

MARY: Of course she can't see you! She's—

GEORGE: *(Quickly.)* Mary, don't be rude! Bonny, I'd like you to meet Eddie. Mary's nephew.

EDDIE is now performing a variation of the twerk right in front of BONNY.

BONNY: *(Holds hand out.)* Oh! Um. Hello.

EDDIE is too busy shaking his bum to shake her hand.

EDDIE: Delightful to meet you. Tell me, can you see my pants?

BONNY: What?

EDDIE: *(Bouncing bum in front of her.)* Can you seeeee my paaaants.

BONNY: *(Beat. Embarrassed.)* I can't see you at all.

EDDIE: *(Thrusting fist in the air.)* Yes! Yes!! YES!!!!

MARY: No! No! NO!! Eddie you don't understand—

GEORGE: Bonny, if you'll come with me, I'll help you find your lip balm.

BONNY: Thank you.

GEORGE and BONNY exit to the hall. EDDIE is doing a victory dance.

MARY: Eddie—

EDDIE: This is incredible, Mary! I feel alive, I feel confident! I feel like I could do anything!

MARY: But—

EDDIE: And now, Mary... now you can rest easy, because George was right wasn't he? She didn't see my pants after all! *(Snaps them triumphantly.)* I can wear my clothes and I'm still invisible! There, isn't that better? Doesn't that make you happy, Mary?

MARY: Happy doesn't begin to describe my current emotion.

EDDIE: *(Putting his clothes on.)* It's probably for the best anyway. It would have been brutal, having to go starkers in the snow.

MARY: Yes, well—

EDDIE: Oh, thank you, Mary. Thank you so much for this! That doctor was brilliant, you know? Bloody brilliant!

GEORGE enters with BONNY.

GEORGE: Here we are then! Found it. She must have dropped it when Eddie walked in on her.

EDDIE: Oh, that was you eh? Sorry if I startled you!

BONNY is looking around trying to locate him. EDDIE has moved to pick up the doorknob.

EDDIE: Over here, love. I know you can't see me but that's alright. *(Almost lecherous.)* It's my first time too.

Waves the doorknob in front of her face like a phantom.

EDDIE: Oooooohhhh. *(Beat. No reaction.)* I must say, you're taking this all rather splendidly. This whole "not seeing people" thing must be a trifle disconcerting. But I can assure you that it's only because you don't know me.

MARY: Eddie!

BONNY: It's quite alright. It's nothing I can't handle. I'm rather used to not seeing people.

EDDIE: Ha! (*To GEORGE.*) Ha! She's a funny one.

GEORGE: I was just telling Bonny here that we should all go to the pub and blow the froth off a few. What do you say, Eddie? You up for it?

EDDIE is now dressed. He approaches BONNY and speaks very closely to her.

EDDIE: Up for it? Up for it? Does the flame burn? Does the air breathe?

BONNY: Um—

EDDIE: (*Now very close to BONNY.*) Is the sky blue? You don't see me, but I see you. (*Beat.*) You're rather lovely, you know that?

BONNY: What, me?

EDDIE: Yes, you. Do take off your glasses, Bonny. I want to see your eyes.

GEORGE: No!

MARY: Yes!

EDDIE: Come on, my dear. I promise I won't bite you.

BONNY: I'd prefer to keep them on. My eyes are very sensitive. I have a condition, you see.

GEORGE: Yes! A very serious condition.

EDDIE: Is it really serious?

BONNY: What?

EDDIE: Your serious condition.

BONNY: Well—

GEORGE: Yes.

BONNY: No.

EDDIE: Oh! (*Beat.*) Well, that's a relief.

BONNY: What is?

EDDIE: That your condition is serious but not really.

MARY: George, may I speak with you for a moment? Privately?

GEORGE: I don't think we should—

MARY: In the kitchen! Now.

GEORGE: Ah! Well, alright. (*To BONNY.*) Excuse me.

BONNY: Very well.

GEORGE and MARY exit leaving EDDIE alone with BONNY. He stares at her as he moves about the room.

BONNY: George explained to me what happened to you.

EDDIE: Did he?

BONNY: Yes. It must be quite thrilling. Do you like it?

EDDIE: Like what?

BONNY: Being invisible to strangers.

EDDIE: I most certainly do. It's the most exhilarating and liberating experience I have ever had in my life!

BONNY: That's interesting. I mean, I'm happy that you're enjoying it but I should think it would be rather confining.

EDDIE: Confining?

BONNY: Yes.

EDDIE: What on earth do you mean? I don't have to worry about people staring at me or judging me from afar. I can do what I like in public and no one would ever know it's me. It's not confining at all when you think about it.

BONNY: Of course. I suppose I can see the appeal. I don't like to be judged either. I'm a bit introverted I'm afraid.

EDDIE: Really?

BONNY: Yes. It's terrible walking into a crowded room and you have no idea what opinion is being formed about you. And at the end, you feel like a deflated balloon.

EDDIE: Exactly!

BONNY: On the other hand, if you can't be seen by people who don't know you, how are you to get to know them? How are you to make new friends?

EDDIE: Well—

BONNY: What if you are in a place surrounded by strangers and there across the room is a pretty girl that you want to talk to. You want to catch her eye somehow. Steal a glance, make her smile. But you can't. Because she doesn't see you. She doesn't know you and she never will.

EDDIE: Well, when you put it like that. *(Beat.)* You took it nicely, though. You weren't put off in the least when I was showing you my-my—

BONNY: Showing me your what?

EDDIE: My-my-my face. In your face. Never mind. *(Beat.)* You have a very good point; I give you several marks for that.

BONNY: Thank you.

EDDIE: But I refuse to let anything squash my enthusiasm. I am going to enjoy this. I'm going to go out there into the world and be myself. Once and for all! I will no longer stand in terror at the thought of someone seeing me do something ridiculous!

BONNY: Good for you!

EDDIE: Who knows, perhaps somewhere along the way, I will locate my spine. I may even have enough courage to get my job back!

BONNY: You lost your job?

EDDIE: Yes. Quite recently. This morning, actually. It was incredibly traumatic. I won't go into any details except that it involved several ill-prepared Jaffa Cakes and a glob of chocolate the size and shape of New Zealand. I thought I'd never get over it. But look at me now!

BONNY: I wish I could.

EDDIE: *(Oops! Reflex apology.)* Oh, of course. Ha! Good one!

BONNY laughs and he joins her.

EDDIE: You know what? I believe I'm going to enjoy this evening with you Bonny. Perhaps by the end of the night, you may see me after all.

EDDIE elbows her teasingly and dashes US to coatrack.

EDDIE: I wouldn't bet on that.

BONNY tries to elbow him back but he's not there.

EDDIE: *(Not hearing.)* What if we were to sneak away?

BONNY: Sneak away?

EDDIE: On the sly. You know, just slip out the door and head to the pub? I want to get out there and experience the world unseen without my aunt scrambling about in attempt to avoid a catastrophe!

BONNY: But won't she be worried about you?

EDDIE: Of course she will! It's a day with a vowel in it. Worrying about me is her favorite hobby. The other day, I caught her checking the contents of my wastebasket to confirm I'd used the appropriate length of dental floss.

BONNY: Ah.

EDDIE: Frankly, I wish I could be here to see the look on her face when she realizes I've disappeared! Again! Ha!

He grabs hold of her hand and they exit out the front door. Doorknob falls. Upon hearing the door slam, GEORGE and MARY enter.

MARY: *(Looking around.)* What was that? Eddie?

GEORGE: Bonny?

MARY: Did they just... leave?

GEORGE: Looks like.

MARY: *(Putting on her coat.)* Oh for heaven's sake! This is worse than I thought! Much worse! I blame you for this, George Carey!

GEORGE: Me?

MARY: Yes, you! If you hadn't insisted that we hypnotize him, we wouldn't be in this predicament! And now my poor nephew is off to God-knows-where doing God-knows-what with your poor blind cousin. Who knows what trouble he'll get her into! *(GEORGE is smiling.)* He might do something foolish! He might get her hurt! *(Beat.)* What are you smiling at?

GEORGE: Isn't this exactly what we were hoping for?

MARY: *(Drily.)* No, George, I must contradict you there. I was not hoping my nephew would be hypnotized by a drunkard. Nor that he would be utterly convinced that he was suddenly and inexplicably invisible to strangers. Or that he's now cracked out of that shell of his to which I was very much accustomed to dealing with—

GEORGE: Ohhh. There it is.

MARY: There what is?

GEORGE: This is about you, isn't it? You don't want him to succeed out there.

MARY: Rubbish!

GEORGE: You don't want him to grow a pair. You don't want him to be brave!

MARY: How dare you!

GEORGE: You like keeping him safe and solitary in your flat. You like having him depend on you. It's like having a dog but without all the shit.

MARY: (*Seething.*) Ohhhh. You will pay for that, George.

GEORGE: (*Slyly.*) I truly hope so.

MARY: We don't have time for this. I will deal with your ridiculous insinuations later. After we find my nephew!

They exit out the front door. Blackout.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO, SCENE 1

SETTING: *Interior of The Cock and Poppy; a small English Pub. There is a bar UC with two bar stools in front. There are three small round tables DS each with two chairs. A candle sits on each table along with the usual pub table “accessories”. A vintage music box has replaced the fireplace unit in the DSR corner and the USL bookshelf has been turned around to reveal a dart board and is now DSL concealing the kitchen door. A small table sits against the wall underneath the dart board. On that table sits a box of darts, notepads pencils etc. for scorekeeping. The US doors have been covered by a wall with shelves containing liquor bottles. Where the bookshelf once was USL, there is now an opening to the hall towards the toilet and the store room. The broom closet door is now concealed by a large vertical pub sign that says “Cock and Poppy”. Below that is an image of a rooster fiercely holding a Poppy flower in his impressive talon. The USR opening is now the entrance to the Pub.*

AT START: *There are exactly two people sitting at the bar (SEXTON and DOVER) with their backs to the audience. The man behind the bar is JERRY a practical man with a sprig of gullibility hidden in his back pocket. All tables are unoccupied at present. The light is dim and the mood is less than sanguine.*

SEXTON: *(To DOVER.)* That’s right, my dear. Just like that, and off he went. I’ll be glad if I never see him again. *(Holds up empty glass.)* Jerry, another pint.

JERRY: Same?

SEXTON: Yeah, and another one for you miss, on me. If you’re able?

DOVER: Oh, I’m able alright. I’m only four pints in, let’s have another.

JERRY: Right then. Another ale and a cider for the lady.

SEXTON: *(To DOVER.)* So he got sick on you, did he?

DOVER: Well, not on me exactly. I was on my way to meet him at his new flat. You know, to let him survey the place, when out he shot from the flat across the hall and got sick right in front of me!

SEXTON: Blimey!

DOVER: Conrad’s cleaning it up right now.

SEXTON: Conrad?

DOVER: My super. I hope he gets the stain out. With my luck, I'll probably have to replace the carpeting on the entire floor. *(Beat.)* Why is it so blasted quiet in here, Jerry? It's Friday night. This place is usually crowded on Friday nights.

JERRY: Oh, there's a big boxing match tonight. I expect everyone's found a place with a telly to watch it.

DOVER: I've been telling you, Jerry. I've been telling you for years; you need to get a telly in here.

JERRY: I know, I know.

DOVER: You'd do much better if you did. Might be more business in it for you.

SEXTON: She's right, you know. A telly would do wonders for this place.

JERRY: Now where on earth would I put it? I can't fit it behind the bar. And the walls in this place can barely hold up that dart board much less a television.

SEXTON: Mm. Dry rot?

DOVER: Mold?

JERRY: Management.

DOVER: *(Dismissive.)* Oh, poppycock.

JERRY: Cock and Poppy.

DOVER: What? *(JERRY points to the sign.)* Oh. Right.

JERRY: If you're looking for entertainment, I could bring in a karaoke machine.

SEXTON: Jerry, if I were looking for entertainment, the very last place I would find it, would be in a karaoke machine.

DOVER: *(Cheerfully objecting.)* I like a good sing-along!

SEXTON: So do I. You just proved my point.

They all laugh. EDDIE and BONNY enter from USR.

SEXTON: How about we put something on that music box then, eh?

He rises and moves to the music box DSR. He does not see EDDIE and BONNY who move to the DSL table. BONNY sits in the SR chair and EDDIE sits opposite.

EDDIE: This is smashing! Isn't this just smashing, Bonny?

BONNY: As long as there is no more actual smashing, I think it very well could be.

EDDIE: Oh, no one was hurt. I've always wanted to throw a champagne glass into a fireplace.

BONNY: Yes, it was a spectacular sound. I do hope the waitress didn't cut herself cleaning it up.

EDDIE: Well she was being rather cheeky. You may not have noticed, but she was giving you quite the stink-eye.

BONNY: Well of course she was! Who goes into an Irish pub all alone, orders two champagnes and then throws them into the fire? She must have thought I was a lunatic.

EDDIE: I'm sorry, Bonny. I didn't mean to get you into trouble.

BONNY: It's alright. It has been quite an exciting evening so far. I've never been kicked out of a pub before.

EDDIE: Exhilarating, isn't it?

BONNY: Oh yes!

EDDIE: (*Looking around.*) I like this place. The Cock and Poppy. Ha! Cracking good name for a pub, wouldn't you say?

BONNY: Indeed!

EDDIE: I do wish you would take off those glasses, though. It's rather dark in here.

JERRY comes from behind the bar and moves DSR to EDDIE and BONNY.

BONNY: I better not risk it.

EDDIE: Right then. Would you—

JERRY: What'll it be?

BONNY: Oh! I'll have a Guinness please and a—

Suddenly loud music is playing from the music box.

EDDIE: Make that two.

JERRY: What?

BONNY: (*Shouting over music.*) Make that two!

JERRY: Two Guinness. Right. (*He returns to back of bar.*) Blimey! Turn that down a bit, eh?

SEXTON fiddles with the machine and music a bit. He then gestures to JERRY that he's headed to the loo and exits USL.

EDDIE: This round is on me, Bonny. *(He places a card on table.)*

BONNY: Thank you.

EDDIE: Oh! I just love this song!

BONNY: Do you now?

EDDIE: It really gets to me.

BONNY: How do you mean?

EDDIE: You know, it gets under my skin and makes me want to—hey!
Do you want to dance?

BONNY: Oh, heaven's no. I can't.

EDDIE: Of course, you can. It's a terrific song!

BONNY: You go ahead and dance if you want! Don't let me keep you.

EDDIE: I can't dance by myself. I'd look ridiculous!

BONNY: Have you forgotten already? No one can see you. Besides;
if I dance with you and you're invisible, I'd be the one who looks
ridiculous.

EDDIE: Right. Right! How very sharp you are.

He stands. JERRY has returned and places two beers on the table. He pulls out a card machine.

JERRY: *(Seeing card on table.)* You want to run a tab?

EDDIE: *(Loudly in JERRY'S ear.)* Yes. She. Does.

JERRY turns slowly to EDDIE who thinks he can't see him so he's grinning wickedly. JERRY turns back to BONNY.

JERRY: Is that right, miss?

EDDIE: *(Like a phantom.)* Watch the plastic. Waaaaaatch the
plaaastic! Oooooohhhhhhh!!

EDDIE picks up the card, hovers it in front of JERRY while making ghost-y sounds before he taps it on the card machine. JERRY looks at BONNY who seems nonplussed by the whole thing. JERRY shakes his head and returns to the bar muttering to himself.

JERRY: Nuthouse. I'm in a nuthouse.

EDDIE: Haha!! He thinks he's gone bonkers! Did you see that?

BONNY: No.

EDDIE: HA! Good one! Ohhh, I've just got to dance. There's no stopping me now!

BONNY: Cheers!

She takes another drink as EDDIE moves behind the tables and begins dancing to the music. His dancing is, as we feared, quite terrible. After a bit, he moves to the board and begins throwing darts in time to the music. After a few throws, he looks around and sees DOVER at the bar. He grins and moves about the room, carrying the dart like a cruise missile. He moves behind DOVER and makes whistling noises as the dart stops "in mid-air" right behind DOVER. She turns and starts at the dart in front of her face.

DOVER: Ahh!!

EDDIE chuckles and maneuvers it back around the room. She giggles a bit. EDDIE, now high on his "super-powers" throws the dart at the dartboard and it falls off the wall with a crash. EDDIE instinctively braces for the embarrassment. He turns and looks at JERRY who sighs, comes around the bar, passes EDDIE without looking at him, picks up the dart board and sets it on the small table.

JERRY: Bloody management.

He shakes his head and returns to his place behind the bar. To DOVER.

JERRY: See? Couldn't hold a telly if it tried.

EDDIE begins dancing horribly again. SEXTON returns from the loo, glancing at EDDIE as he passes. He returns to his seat. Stops. Turns. And then.

SEXTON: (Accusing.) Mister Bowers?

EDDIE: (Turns, salutes.) Yes, sir!

SEXTON: What the devil are you doing here?

EDDIE: Oh! Oh dear. Ohhhhh dear. You can see me, can't you?

SEXTON: Of course I can see you.

EDDIE: (*Voice a quiver.*) Of course you can see me! You're not a stranger. You know me. Quite fluently.

DOVER: (*Turning.*) Simon, who are you talking to?

SEXTON: Nobody. It's nobody.

He scowls and returns to the bar. EDDIE rushes to his seat completely mortified.

EDDIE: Good GOD! It's my boss!

BONNY: What?

EDDIE: My boss! Well, my former boss. My Ex-Box. Ex-Boss Mr. Sexton!

BONNY: Sexton?

EDDIE: Sexton! Mr. Sexton's here. At the bar. Don't turn around! Act natural.

BONNY: I'll do my best.

EDDIE: Oh dear GOD! What am I going to do?

BONNY: What do you mean?

DOVER: (*To SEXTON.*) What's the matter, Simon?

SEXTON: Nothing. It's nothing. Just that prat I fired today.

EDDIE: He fired me not twelve hours ago! I can't believe he's HERE! He's a complete sod.

BONNY: Is he?

DOVER: (*Looking over.*) Is he really that bad?

SEXTON: He's a nutter!

EDDIE: He's a pillock!

SEXTON: A tosser!

EDDIE: He's a blistering, blustering, loud-assed mouth-hole!

Takes another swig of Guinness. Off BONNY'S look.

EDDIE: What?

BONNY: Give me a minute; I'm still trying to absorb that last bit of information.

SEXTON: (*Turning her back around.*) Just ignore him. If he doesn't leave, I'll take you somewhere else.

EDDIE: Maybe we should go.

BONNY: Why? Did he see you?

EDDIE: Well of course he saw me! He knows me. I'm only invisible to strangers, Bonny. Do try and keep up.

BONNY: Right. Well, what about the others?

EDDIE: What others?

BONNY: Is there anyone else here who knows you?

EDDIE: (*Looks at the bar.*) No... no I don't think so. I think that's Ms. Dover at the bar with him. He's getting rather friendly with her, I must say!

BONNY: Does she know you too?

EDDIE: Oh heaven's no. She's our landlady, but every time she comes round, I hide in the bathtub. Ohhh if only Mr. Sexton's wife could see this! Dorothy Sexton's a lovely woman but she'd box his ears if she knew what he was doing. She's probably at the W.C. right now knitting jumpers for the poor while he's down here getting friendly with that slopped up slag!

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