



The Purple Rose Theatre Company

*Bleeding
Red*

by Michael Brian Ogden



The Purple Rose Theatre Company

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The Purple Rose Theatre Company
137 Park Street
Chelsea, Michigan 48118
www.purplerosetheatre.org

Bleeding Red

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Published 2010, First Edition

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Originally produced by The Purple Rose Theatre Company (2009)

Jeff Daniels, Executive Director

Guy Sanville, Artistic Director

Alan Ribant, Managing Director

The production was directed by Guy Sanville.

Bleeding Red premiered at The Purple Rose Theatre Company in Chelsea, Michigan, on April 17, 2009. The play was directed by Guy Sanville; the set design was by Vincent Mountain; the costume design was by Sally L. Converse-Doucette; the lighting design was by Dana White; the sound design was by Quintessa Gallinat; the properties design was by Danna Segrest; and the stage manager was Jessica Garrett. The cast was as follows:

TOMMY	Michael Brian Ogden
VINNIE	Matthew David
BOBBY	Matthew Gwynn
SARAH	Heidi Bennett
LIZ	Stacie Hadgikosti

CHARACTERS

TOMMY

VINNIE

BOBBY

SARAH

LIZ

PLACE

The living area of a flat near Fulham, London

TIME

May 25th, 2005; 6:00 PM

Bleeding Red

ACT 1 **SCENE 1**

May 25th, 2005. 6:00 PM. The living area of a flat near Fulham, London. The room is a mess. TOMMY and VINNIE enter, singing.

TOMMY AND VINNIE *(singing, to the tune of The Hokey Pokey)*

Did the ball go in?
Did the ball stay out?
In, out, in, out?
The kop they had no doubt!
We all went to Istanbul
And Chelsea went out!
That's what it's all about!
We'll be the European Champions
European Champions
European Champions
And that's what it's all about!

VINNIE Oi, Bobbo! The downstairs door was open!

TOMMY Bloody hell. What happened here?

VINNIE Bobbo?

TOMMY Bobby! Looks like Rommel's Panzer division
 came through here.

VINNIE Bobbo? You here, mate?

TOMMY Don't be daft—of course he's here—where else
 would he be? Bobbo! Come off it, yeah? Kickoff's eight
 o'clock!

VINNIE He's not in the bedroom.

TOMMY D'you mean he's not in the bedroom?

VINNIE Well have a look!

TOMMY Oi! He's not in the bedroom.

TOMMY's mobile rings. He answers it.

TOMMY Oi? Yeah, sorry mate, we're just getting him now—oi, don't gimme that—I let my last hour piss off twenty minutes before the bell but I had to wait for Vinnie's tubby arse!

VINNIE I couldn't find my hat—I told you!

TOMMY What's that? Yes, he had to find that ridiculous sodding hat and—

VINNIE That hat is—oi! That hat was made especially—

TOMMY —wear it all about the greater London area and make sure that every Tom, Dick, and sodding Charlie saw—

VINNIE —for me to wear in the cup by—by Mary, alright? Now I told you—

TOMMY Yes, Vincent, we all know the sodding story of a sodding boy and his sodding hat. (*into the phone*) What's that, now?

VINNIE Yeah, well ... just ease off the hat a bit, is all I'm saying. You care to have a go at me, you just—just you don't have a go at—just you leave Mary's hat out of—

TOMMY Oi. Vincent. Do you see me speaking into a phone?

VINNIE Yes ...

TOMMY Yeah, we're right over.

VINNIE Oi, Bobbo!

TOMMY Twenty minutes maybe ... just get the first round—we'll settle up when we get—yeah. Yeah. Cheers. (*hangs up the mobile*) Do you smell that?

VINNIE Yeah, what is that?

TOMMY Smells like ... sour milk.

VINNIE D'you think he's forgot?

TOMMY Who?

VINNIE Bobbo!

TOMMY To put out the rubbish, maybe—that'd certainly explain the smell.

VINNIE Not that—the match! D'you think he's forgot?
TOMMY Vincent, don't be ridiculous. He's not forgot.
VINNIE Maybe ...
TOMMY Not likely.
VINNIE S'been working awfully hard lately—
TOMMY He's not forgot.
VINNIE I'm only saying that maybe—
TOMMY Vincent. He's not. Forgot.
VINNIE Well if you say so, Tommy, but then where is
he?
TOMMY Now d'you see what living with a girlfriend does
to you?
VINNIE Tommy—
TOMMY Devolves you. Makes you savage like. You ask
me there's two kinds of birds in the world worth living
with—a live-in cook and a French maid. And there's no
reason you couldn't find a bloke to do your cooking.
Girlfriend ...
VINNIE Tommy-
TOMMY What a load of bollocks ...
VINNIE Oi, Tommy—if we do find him, please, for my
sake—
TOMMY D'you mean, “if we find him”?
VINNIE I just mean—
TOMMY What, has he been savaged by pikies and buried
under the overpass?
VINNIE Well, no, I'm sure that he hasn't-
TOMMY Then don't be so fatalistic about it then. We'll
find him! Come on you reds!
VINNIE Right. When we find him—could you maybe call
her his fiancée? For my sake?
TOMMY Vincent—
VINNIE Just for today?
TOMMY —I will do nothing of the sort.
VINNIE Please? It'll just make things go so much
softer—
TOMMY Oi, look here: every day from here to them making
it legal might be the day he finally comes to his senses,

and I'm not giving up on him. She's a girlfriend and I don't care what kind of ring she wears, she'll always be a girlfriend.

VINNIE You've been saying that for almost two years now.

TOMMY And?

VINNIE And they're getting married next month.

TOMMY Well maybe if I had a bit more support from certain twats in silly stocking caps—

VINNIE Oi!

TOMMY —that might be a different sodding story, now wouldn't it?

VINNIE Well, if all your carrying on hasn't done the trick then I fail to see what good I could—

TOMMY Alright, that's enough.

VINNIE I'm not saying anything, Tommy, I'm just saying—

TOMMY I hear what you're saying and I'm telling you to stop.

VINNIE Well it'll be a bit awkward, won't it?

TOMMY Oi! Did I just slip into Hungarian or something?

VINNIE No ...

TOMMY Because I have this vague recollection about telling you to shut up about it, and yet your mouth continues to move and noise continues to come out of it.

VINNIE All's I'm saying is that maybe—just maybe—you should start warming up to the idea of Liz as a more ... permanent fixture.

TOMMY Now why d'you want to do that?

VINNIE Do what?

TOMMY D'you have to start in on all that? I'm trying to get on me game face, trying to—to—and you're—

VINNIE I'm just saying, Tommy—sooner or later—

TOMMY You're—I don't know—buggering me mind-set and whatnot with all this talk about whats-her-face—

VINNIE Lizzy.

TOMMY Bite your tongue.

VINNIE Well what d'you want me to call her, Tommy? It's her name!

TOMMY I know what her name is, Vincent, and when I choose not to use it, it is only out of the sincerest fear that it might summon her here from her resting place in the ninth circle of Hell. Look around for a note or something.

VINNIE Why don't we just ring him? Maybe he's already on his way.

TOMMY Oh, bang on.

TOMMY takes out his mobile and calls BOBBY's phone. It goes to voice mail and he hangs up.

TOMMY Fucking voice mail.

VINNIE We don't absolutely need him, do we?

TOMMY Vincent—

VINNIE For the prematch, I mean; we don't absolutely need him, right?

TOMMY I'm not convinced we absolutely need you, yet there you stand.

VINNIE D'you mean by that? Oh God ...

TOMMY What?

VINNIE Oh God!

TOMMY What?

VINNIE What if they know?

TOMMY D'you mean, "what if they know"? What if who know?

VINNIE Chelsea! Arsenal! Even those twats from Tottenham, I wouldn't put it past them!

TOMMY Vincent, what are you going on about?

VINNIE Bobby! What if somebody from another side found out about our—you know, the—thing—what d'you always call it? Ritual?

TOMMY Regimen.

VINNIE What if they found out? What if it's foul play?

TOMMY Vincent—

VINNIE They could have kidnapped him. What do you think?

TOMMY I think you should hold off on fillin' out that MENSA application just yet.

VINNIE Chelsea, that's who I bet it was. Or Arsenal. I'll bet it was Chelsea, though.

TOMMY Vincent—

VINNIE Unless it was a spy! D'you think they've infiltrated us somehow?! Been posing as a scouser all this time just to-

TOMMY VINCENT! Did you see her car outside?

VINNIE Liz? I can't remember, Tommy—I'm trying to root out the mole!

TOMMY Well maybe you could leave your shovel on planet moron and come back down to Earth for a bit.

VINNIE Well, well, well ... look who's so testy all of a sudden. You don't have something to hide ... do you?

VINNIE slips in a puddle of vomit and falls to the ground, thus discovering the origin of the sour-milk smell.

VINNIE I think I found the milk. Only it's not milk ...

TOMMY Car's gone. Her keys are gone. His keys are clearly not gone ...

VINNIE Tommy, please can we—Oh ... oh ... I get it. Liz is from CHELSEA! She probably leaked it to someone about our ritual and the rest of the blue-bells came and got him, and now she's ducked out to throw suspicion off of herself. Bloody brilliant!

BOBBY emerges from a pile of debris.

BOBBY Oh, for God's sake, Vinnie, I'm right here.

VINNIE Bobbo! Oh, I was so worried about you! We thought you'd been kidnapped—

BOBBY Yes, I know. Heard the whole thing as luck would have it.

TOMMY What are you doing under the sofa?

BOBBY Not sure really. Thought I was moping for a bit but I think moping implies a sort of movement.

TOMMY Oi.

BOBBY What?

TOMMY Where is she, then?
BOBBY Liz? Great question. Wish I had an answer.
VINNIE You two have it out?
BOBBY Have it out? Yeah, Vinnie, we had it out alright.
Had it right out the door.
TOMMY Hm. Right, then. Grab your coat; we're late.
BOBBY Excuse me?
TOMMY Match starts at eight.
BOBBY D'you mean, "the match starts at eight"?
TOMMY The match starts at eight. It is now twelve after
six. We've still got two pubs to stop at and you know the
Red Run's going to be jammed—
BOBBY You can't be serious.
TOMMY I'm serious as a heart attack, mate. You'll feel
better with a few pints in you anyway—take your mind
off things for a bit. Frankly, I'd say a few hours off the
leash is well worth a bit of a spat and, considering the
timing, it's a steal at twice the price.
BOBBY I don't want to go.
TOMMY Look, I know you're not in the best of places
right now but this is sort of an important day, yeah?
Maybe the most important day that we have known
in our still-relatively-young-scouser lives. So, while it
grieves me deeply that you and your little girlfriend have
had a falling out, I feel it is my duty as your best mate
to—

BOBBY laughs.

TOMMY Have I said something funny?
VINNIE Bobbo?
BOBBY She's ... she's not my girlfriend, Tommy ...
TOMMY Look, do we have to do this now? You call her
whatever you like, I'll call her whatever I like, but let's do
it at the pub, so—

BOBBY laughs again, louder.

TOMMY Why is this funny?
BOBBY Go—go look—in the—go look in the sink!
VINNIE What is it, Bobbo?

BOBBY In the—the disposal!

VINNIE removes an engagement ring.

BOBBY She's my ex-girlfriend.

VINNIE Bobbo ...

BOBBY Ex-fiance, I suppose I should say ...

VINNIE I'm sorry ...

BOBBY Don't be. My fault, really. How long can you have the same argument before something has to give?

TOMMY Too long for my tastes.

VINNIE Tommy!

TOMMY He's better off without her and he knows it.

BOBBY Piss off.

TOMMY You know it. Come on.

BOBBY I'm not going anywhere.

TOMMY Don't be stupid about this—there's a round of pints at Trolley's right now with your name on each one—we can drown your heartache at the bottom of a Stella. Let's go.

VINNIE Tommy, if he doesn't want to go then maybe—

TOMMY He wants to go. Come on.

BOBBY Tommy, is it absolutely beyond your comprehension that I might not be in the mood just now?

TOMMY I'm afraid I'm past what you're in the mood for, mate, and I'm on to what you need.

BOBBY What I need? I have a bit of a time swallowing the idea that you know even the first thing about what I need.

TOMMY Well, I must know something about it because it occurs to me that if you'd listened to me in the first place we wouldn't be here now. What did I tell you?

VINNIE Tommy, I don't think—

TOMMY Vincent, please—What did I tell you?

BOBBY Tommy, I don't want to have this conversation right now.

TOMMY I didn't want to have this conversation ever, and I told you as much but you wouldn't listen—

BOBBY You sodding prick!

TOMMY —so now we're having it whether you like it or not! What did I tell you?!

BOBBY Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!

TOMMY Poison! Deadly! Man-eater! Every tired analogy on the books, mate! I told you she was a poxy little priss from west London and you'd be better off sticking your John Thomas in a cuisinart!

BOBBY You've said that about every girlfriend I've ever had! Every one! D'you want me to list them off for you?

TOMMY No, I want you to put your coat on—

BOBBY Alice, Lynsey, Samantha, Moira—

TOMMY I'm your best mate—it's practically in my genes to hate your bird and try to get you to do stupid shit she'd never approve of, but what about the others?

BOBBY I've just said; you hated them ALL!

TOMMY Not the other birds, your other mates! Davie, Graeme, Smithy, Keith—

BOBBY What about them?!

TOMMY She hated them! I mean she hated every single one of your friends. Every one! Even Vinnie! I can understand her not liking me—But Vinnie? Everyone likes Vinnie!

VINNIE I'm loved by all.

TOMMY I mean what did you need to convince you exactly, smoke signals? A letter from the Prime Minister? And now there you sit with your heart torn out of your chest and we're left to deal with the aftermath of that. D'you think that's giggles for us? D'you imagine that's our idea of an evening?

VINNIE Least she could have done was wait until tomorrow ...

BOBBY What?

TOMMY Vincent!

BOBBY What did he say? Wait until tomorrow?

VINNIE Nothing.

BOBBY “The least she could have done was wait until tomorrow ...” What difference does it make what day it

is? What happens tomorrow that doesn't—? Ah. I see.
You bastards.

TOMMY Steady on there, Bobbo—

BOBBY SOD OFF! Both of you just sod off!

VINNIE Bobbo, take her easy—

TOMMY He didn't mean nothing by it!

BOBBY Sod off!

VINNIE I didn't mean nothing by it!

BOBBY I know very well what was meant by it, Vinnie—

TOMMY Oi, just take her easy now—

BOBBY TAKE HER EASY?! YOU TAKE HER EASY! YOU
TAKE HER EASY! DOES THIS LOOK LIKE A QUARREL
TO YOU?! DOES THIS LOOK LIKE A LOVERS' SPAT?!
LIZ IS GONE AND YOU TWO ARE ON ABOUT A
FOOTBALL MATCH?!

TOMMY We're just trying to look at the big picture.

BOBBY THE BIG—? Actually, d'you know what? You're
right! I don't know what must have come over me! How
could I even consider inconveniencing either of you with
a little thing like the disintegration of my engagement
when there are other, so much more important, matters
at hand.

VINNIE Uh ... yeah?

BOBBY Liverpool! The reds! The scousers! The lads of
the hour, yeah? Lest we forget, they do play this evening
for the UEFA Champions Cup, do they not? Could be
the first Champions league trophy for them in twenty
years.

TOMMY Bobby—

BOBBY And let's not kid ourselves: THAT is what is
really important! So Bobby's bird shoved off—so
what? She was from Chelsea, after all. I mean, that's
original sin, isn't it? And it wasn't as if she was well-
liked, yeah? (to TOMMY) She thought you were an
arrogant, womanizing, yob! (to VINNIE) She thought you
were retarded—and I mean that; she thought you had
downs-syndrome! Never mind that I loved her, never
mind that I wanted to have children with her for God's

sake, I mean—CHELSEA! They're not even real people, are they? They're more like pod-creatures, so good riddance to bad rubbish and bugger Bobby's broken heart. Oh! But the match! We can't have Bobby running around broken-hearted on the eve of the Cup final! We need him! We need the regimen! That tarty little minx—never mind what she did to me, the real issue here is what she's done to you! So quick, let's slap a bandage on the bloody thing and whisk him off to the pub before he has a chance to think things over good and proper. That about the size of it?

TOMMY Jesus Christ; you want a violin solo or what? How long were you with her?

BOBBY Piss off.

TOMMY You piss off. How long were you with her?

BOBBY Who cares?

TOMMY Answer the question.

BOBBY Two Junes ago. Not quite two years.

TOMMY Right then. When did you start following football?

BOBBY Oh, my God ...

TOMMY Answer the question. When did you start—

BOBBY Eight! I was eight years old.

TOMMY Right, then. Last question: how long have you known us?

BOBBY What, you and retard?

TOMMY Well, yeah, me and retard.

BOBBY Look, I know what you're doing and I think it's a load of bollocks!

TOMMY All your sodding life! We grew up together, for God's sake. Our parents lived round the corner from each other for practically forty years. In Liverpool. I'm sure that it has to seem like we're the two most selfish bastards on the face of the planet right now, but you need to trust me: we're looking out for you. You're spitting in the face of innumerable bonds—some of them dating back to reception—all of them older than whatever commitment you thought you had with whatsherface—

BOBBY Jesus, can we at least use her name?!

TOMMY —by deserting them when they most need you! They are literally poised to win the largest, most important trophy the professional footballing world has to offer, and you're missing it!

BOBBY Who cares?!

TOMMY You do, and you'll realize that in about twelve hours or so but by then it'll be too late! We've got less than two hours to kickoff and a full victory regimen ahead of us so, as the yanks would say, cowboy up.

VINNIE We need you sharp, Bobbo.

BOBBY You want to watch the bloody match? There's the telly—have at.

TOMMY We don't want to watch the match; we want to start the regimen, so grab your coat. We can still make Trolley's.

BOBBY I'm not going.

TOMMY D'you mean you're not going?

BOBBY Just what I said, Tommy. I'm not in the mood—if you can imagine it—and I don't fancy a room full of lads screaming and singing all sodding night to help the old disposition any.

TOMMY You're going.

BOBBY No, I'm not.

TOMMY Oi! We've got a victory regimen to perform, my son! It took us from the qualifiers all the way through the semis and I'll be bugged if it's going to change now.

BOBBY SCREW THE REGIMEN!

BOBBY unleashes a primal scream and catapults himself into a nearby wall, knocking himself out.

TOMMY Come here. *(taking VINNIE aside)* This is worse than I thought.

VINNIE Tommy, listen to me—maybe we should let this go. Maybe—

TOMMY Let it go?! Let it go? Do you have any idea what we have here?

VINNIE I think—

TOMMY We have a legitimate, successful victory regimen! Do you have any idea what other sides would give for that?

VINNIE Anything?

TOMMY Anything. Let it go? Are you taking the piss?

VINNIE Well then what do you suggest, Tommy? We're not making much headway and who's he listen to more than us?

TOMMY Nobody.

VINNIE Nobody.

TOMMY Sod all. I knew that Stamford Bridge cum-dumpster would find a way to mess up my life sooner or later—we should be in the pub right now and—

VINNIE Sarah!

TOMMY What?

VINNIE They're thick as thieves, him and his sis. We get her over here, explain things to her—she's bound to talk some sense into him!

TOMMY No way.

VINNIE Why not?

TOMMY Because.

VINNIE Because, why?

TOMMY You know why!

VINNIE What, just because she thinks you're a philanthropist?

TOMMY Come here. Philanderer, you twat! Philander!

VINNIE does. TOMMY chastises him accordingly for his blunder.

VINNIE Well, then—

TOMMY Shut up. We can do this ourselves.

BOBBY has regained consciousness and is TOMMY's focus once again.

TOMMY Alright. Fine. You're—you're—you're upset and I can understand that. I really can. So let's all just calm down a minute and try to behave rationally.

They do so. During the moments of calm, BOBBY

begins to do something ridiculous. Perhaps he picks up a broken guitar and begins to compose a song about his anguish. After a moment, VINNIE joins in. This is too much for TOMMY.

TOMMY Look, what are you going to do sit here and sulk all night? You shouldn't be alone right now. So why don't you come with us—we'll have a few pints—

BOBBY Jesus—would you take a look around? A few pints are not going to fix this, Tommy! I mean, what exactly do you think has just happened here? This is my life! This is my home! It's fine for you—you walk out the door and it becomes someone else's problem, but I can't do that. I have to sleep in that bed. I have to sit on that sofa. I have to breathe this air and smell this carpet and— and wash these dishes—and—and everything—everything I do is something that I used to do with someone else!

TOMMY You want help doing the dishes?! Done. Vinnie, you dry.

BOBBY No, Tommy, I don't want help with the dishes. I don't want help with the dishes and I'll tell you what else I don't want.

TOMMY What's that?

BOBBY I don't want anything to do with Liverpool.

TOMMY and VINNIE freeze. The gauntlet has been thrown down.

VINNIE Bobbo ...

TOMMY Take that back.

BOBBY No, I don't think I will.

TOMMY How dare you? You traitorous sod. How dare you?

TOMMY lunges at BOBBY, trying to throttle him. BOBBY returns the favor. VINNIE attempts to break them up and ends up taking most of the abuse.

TOMMY You call yourself a scouser?! How can you even look me in the face? How dare you?! After all they've

done for you?!

VINNIE Oi, Tommy, steady on!

BOBBY After all they've done for me? Tommy, you've not the faintest idea what they've done for me! Apart from raise my hopes to unprecedented heights year after year only to have them dashed to pieces! Other than bring mediocrity to new levels of perfection! Other than trade great players for crap ones and tough bosses for French ones—all of which I could forgive, mind. All of which I have forgiven.

TOMMY Gee, real saint, you are.

VINNIE Come on, lads, ease up!

BOBBY You are such an unbelievable twat, you know that?

TOMMY Yeah, a twat that knows where his loyalties lie.

BOBBY Loyalties—? You want to talk about loyalties?!
Alright, Tommy, try this one on; why'd Liz leave?

TOMMY How should I know?

BOBBY You shouldn't, Tommy. Not unless I told you, and I haven't done that. And I haven't done that because you haven't asked me. That strike you as odd behavior from my best mate?

TOMMY is at a loss. BOBBY has him and he knows it.

TOMMY What happened?

BOBBY Football happened.

TOMMY I don't understand.

BOBBY Yeah, shocking.

TOMMY No, I don't under—

BOBBY Of course you don't!

TOMMY What, she broke it off because of Liverpool?

BOBBY Yeah.

TOMMY So screw her. She's from Chelsea, the tart—
'course she hated Liverpool.

BOBBY Jesus, Tommy, I think of you teaching children and I weep for the future.

VINNIE Um ... Bobbo?

BOBBY Yes, Vinnie.

VINNIE What ... um, what did happen?

BOBBY You know, I couldn't rightly say. It had—the day had just been so good, you know? She'd gotten that promotion last month and so—usually—she could get away with knocking off a bit early on Tuesdays. She'd usually run by the market on the way home, pick up some groceries and then I'd cook dinner when I got home from work.

VINNIE I didn't know you cooked.

BOBBY I don't, I just have a couple of things that I can make, but I liked doing it, and she humored me. I brought some flowers I'd picked up in Picadilly and cooked and ... And we made love.

TOMMY Are you serious? She shagged you before she bugged you?

BOBBY Tommy, please—an IOTA of sensitivity from you is all I require—AN IOTA. PLEASE. It was later that night. We were watching some show on the telly—a quiz show, yeah? And there was this question: who scored 346 goals in all competitions for Liverpool only to fall sixteen goals short of Roger Hunt's league record 245? And I knew it. And I wanted to stop myself from saying it, but I couldn't. And then she turned to me and asked me when her birthday was. We fought, I guess, but I was never really in it. Not really. So, yeah, I guess maybe I am a bit traitorous. There's a lot I'm willing to forgive—lost matches, lost derbies, lost championships—over twenty years or so, they've done an awful lot of losing. And now I've lost something and I'm a bit put off. So you'll excuse me if those aren't exactly the lads I care to commiserate with.

BOBBY exits to the bedroom. TOMMY and VINNIE are silent a moment. Then ...

VINNIE Ian Rush?

TOMMY 346 goals? Of course Ian Rush. Don't be daft.

VINNIE I'll get the car, yeah?

TOMMY You'll do no such thing. Sit down.

VINNIE Tommy, for God's sake, you heard him. He's not going. What more do you want?

TOMMY Come on you reds! We've still got some time before kickoff— we are in this! Now just let me think a minute, will you?

VINNIE Tommy, let's be reasonable, yeah? I don't see—

TOMMY Screw the regimen? We perform the regimen and we are a boulder rolling down a mountain—we are an unstoppable force!

VINNIE Right, but—

TOMMY Screw the regimen? Oh, there will be a regimen today, Vincent. There will be a regimen if I have to drag his lifeless carcass to the pub and—

TOMMY's mobile rings.

TOMMY Look, I know—we're having a bit of trouble—what? Already? Bollocks! ... He's not having it. Now how the hell are we supposed to do *Poor Scouser Tommy* with only the few of us? ... Bobby's not coming ... Yeah, you heard me right—stop shouting, will you—oh for God's—

VINNIE Tommy, please, nobody loves the reds more than me—you know that—but, mate—I gotta say, what more can we do here? Let's just pack it in and scam down to the Red Run. Maybe the five of us'll be enough? Maybe someone can fill in?

TOMMY *(to VINNIE)* Wait. What did you just say?

VINNIE Maybe the five of us'll be enough?

TOMMY After that.

VINNIE Maybe someone could fill in for—

TOMMY *(into the phone)* Keith! Shut up and listen a minute! Get the lads together and tell them to start singing, but just give us a minute—I'll let you know when we're set. *(to VINNIE)* You're in.

VINNIE D'you mean, "I'm in"?

TOMMY You're filling in.

VINNIE What? No!
TOMMY Nothing to be done about it.
VINNIE But I don't know any of the moves!
TOMMY You'll do fine. (*into the phone*) Go ahead, then.
VINNIE Tommy, I'm not comfortable with this. What if I bollocks it all up?
TOMMY Oi! Bobby's turned his back on us, now who's side are you on? Do you want to be a party to his sabotage? Do you?
VINNIE No ...
TOMMY Alright then. (*into the phone*) Hang on. (*to VINNIE*) Trousers.
VINNIE Oh, Tommy! Why?!
TOMMY Scouser Tommy was a British Regular. British Regulars stationed in Africa wore shorts. Now give us your trousers.
VINNIE Well why don't you do it?
TOMMY I'm supervising ein't I.

VINNIE removes his trousers. He is wearing ridiculous underwear. They are not boxers.

TOMMY What are those?
VINNIE Me underwear, Tommy.
TOMMY I can see that, Vincent. I meant, what are you doing with those silly things on your bollocks?
VINNIE I like to have a bit of support—
TOMMY Was Scouser Tommy a lifeguard?
VINNIE Tommy, it's not—
TOMMY Was Scouser Tommy a lifeguard, I said?
VINNIE ... No.
TOMMY Then why in the name of God Almighty would you be wearing—
VINNIE Well, it wasn't as if I knew this was gonna happen, Tommy!
TOMMY —a pair of tossy-looking shorts like those?! (*into the phone*) Yeah, we're still here! Go ahead. (*to VINNIE*) If brains were sweets, you'd be bloody cauliflower.

TOMMY sings into the phone as VINNIE acts out

the song.

TOMMY AND VINNIE (*singing, to the tune of Red River Valley*)

Let me tell you of poor Scouser Tommy
Who was sent far away from his home
To fight for his king and his country
And also the old folks back home.
So they put him in a highland division
Shipped him off to a far foreign land
Where the flies swarm around in their thousands
And there's nothing to see but the sand.
In the battle that started next morning
Under the Libyan sun
I remember that poor Scouser Tommy
He was shot by an old Nazi gun.
As he lay on the battlefield dying

VINNIE DYING, DYING!

TOMMY AND VINNIE (*singing*)
With the blood rushing out of his head

VINNIE OF HIS HEAD!

TOMMY AND VINNIE (*singing*)
As he lay on the battlefield crying

VINNIE CRYING, CRYING!

TOMMY AND VINNIE (*singing*)
These are the last words he said
OOOOOOOOOOOOOOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH

VINNIE Oh no, Tommy—I don't know this part!

TOMMY Get it together, mate—it's match day!

TOMMY AND VINNIE (*singing*)
I support a team called Liverpool
I come from a Spion Kop
I like to sing I like to shout
I go there quite a lot
We've won the league we've won the cup
And we've been to Europe too
We played the toffees for a laugh
And we left them feeling blue.
Five nil!

One, two, one two three,
One two three four
Five nil!
Rush scored one! Rush scored two!
Rush scored three and Rush scored four!
(to the tune of All You Need Is Love)
Ladadadadadadadadadaaa!
All you need is Rush! Dadadadada!
All you need is Rush! Dadadadada!
All you need is Rush, Rush,
Rush is all you need!

VINNIE collapses, exhausted.

TOMMY *(on the phone)* I don't know, how do you feel?
D'you think it worked? ... No? ... Sure. Made him take
his trousers off and everything ... Right, well—let's give
it one more try, yeah? He's just one bloke for God's
sake. You do Sami Hyypia, yet? ... No? Alright, let's
do that. *(to VINNIE)* Get up, will you? We're doing Sami
Hyypia.

VINNIE Wh—what? But I just—?

TOMMY We're on a schedule, Vincent.

*TOMMY sings into the phone again. VINNIE performs
an even more ludicrous set of choreography.*

TOMMY AND VINNIE *(singing, to the tune of The Adams
Family)*

In our defensive foursome
He's absolutely awesome
From corners he will score some
It's Sami Hyypia!
Dadadada!
Dadadada!
Dadadadadadadadadadadada!

VINNIE Tommy—

TOMMY AND VINNIE *(singing)*

In our defensive foursome
He's absolutely awesome
From corners he will score some

It's Sami Hyypia!
Dadadada!
Dadadada!
Dadadadadadadadadadadada!

VINNIE Tom—

TOMMY AND VINNIE *(singing)*
In our defensive foursome
He's absolutely awesome
From corners he will score some
It's Sami Hyypia!
Dadadada!

TOMMY *(into the phone)* This isn't working ... I know, I know! Look I'll fix it, alright? Just stay there and—and keep doing what you're doing. No deviation now, yeah?

TOMMY hangs up.

VINNIE I—I miss—Bobbo—already ...

TOMMY I hate to say it, Vincent ... but we need him. None of this—it just doesn't feel right. Something's off. We need Bobby.

VINNIE For—for the match?

TOMMY Vincent, this is not just about the match anymore—

VINNIE D'you mean not about the match? Of course it's about the match!

TOMMY Steady on, Vincent, of course it's about the match but if we let Bobby piss off like this one of two things will happen. Either Liverpool will lose and he'll blame himself—and rightly so—or worse.

VINNIE I don't understand. What's worse than Liverpool losing?

TOMMY They win.

VINNIE Oh ... I still don't understand.

TOMMY If Liverpool wins today and he's moping about here instead of off with the lads, then whatever sense of joy he may feel at their first Champion's Cup in twenty-one years will be completely overshadowed by the fact

that he deserted them in their supreme moment of need—and they came through anyway! He'll not only be shamed and the victory totally tarnished for him but he'll never again be able to hold his head high and scream, with the melodious accompaniment of forty-thousand other kopites, “come on, you reds!”

VINNIE Oh.

TOMMY He'd never be able to look us in the face again.

VINNIE You're right. It'd be the end of his scouser days.

TOMMY The bitter end.

VINNIE We've got to do it, then; for Bobbo!

TOMMY For Bobbo.

VINNIE But how? I think he's made it pretty clear that he's not interested in anything either of us has to say.

TOMMY Look, just you don't panic. There's two of us, yeah?

VINNIE Yeah.

TOMMY We got numbers on our side, yeah?

VINNIE Yeah.

TOMMY You want to tell me that our combined intellect is in some way inadequate to—

VINNIE Tommy.

TOMMY What?

VINNIE We need to call Sarah.

TOMMY Vincent—

VINNIE Well, what choice do we have? You reckon he'll listen to Keith? Or Davie if I get him over here?

TOMMY No, but—

VINNIE Maybe we should ring up Liz!

TOMMY Absolutely not!

VINNIE Sure—get the “Stamford Bridge cum-dumpster” in here. That'll get him moving.

TOMMY Vincent!

VINNIE Well, then it's Sarah or nobody!

TOMMY We'll be going at one another like cats and dogs.

VINNIE Well that's no kind of attitude to take. I'm sure

that if we just explain the situation to her—

TOMMY No. I'm in no place to deal with that right now.

VINNIE Deal with what? Oh ...

TOMMY Her snarky attitude is what. She's a big fancy lawyer who went to school in New-bloody-York and she's an insufferable snob. And that makes her worse than Liz! At least Liz was an elitist bitch because it was the only thing she knew! She thought that if you weren't born with a silver spoon in your mouth you ought to be left on a mountain somewhere but Sarah knows better! We can fix this ourselves. Oi! Bobby!

BOBBY (O.S.) SOD OFF!

TOMMY Just come off it, mate! I know you're upset but—

TOMMY opens the door, and a picture frame crashes against the door. He closes the door.

VINNIE Mate. We need her.

TOMMY We are not calling her. End. Of. Discussion.

VINNIE Well then I'm sorry, Tommy, but we're just gonna have to go on without him. I know you don't want to but—

TOMMY Oh for—

VINNIE We're not calling her so she can chat you up. We're calling her so she can talk some sense into Bobby and we can do our ritual—

TOMMY Regimen.

VINNIE How bad could it be?

TOMMY Do you have any idea what we're going to have to put up with if we ring her?

VINNIE D'you mean, "we"?

TOMMY Vincent—

VINNIE You're the one she hates, not me. I'm loved by all.

TOMMY We are not calling Sarah.

VINNIE You were the one who said this was more than the match now. This is about a war for Bobbo's identity, and in every war there have to be some casualties!

TOMMY Oh, well cheers to you, Winston Churchill.
VINNIE I'm serious. Look, it's an hour to kickoff—if she picks up, if she says yes—it'll take her practically that long to get here from Holborn, so we're looking at a very narrow margin for error. Now for Bobbo's sake—let's call her.
TOMMY You call her.
VINNIE Why me?
TOMMY She'll never agree to come if I call.
VINNIE Well what am I supposed to say?
TOMMY Say whatever you have to. Just get her down here. Fast!
VINNIE But—
TOMMY It was your bloody idea! Now do it!

VINNIE dials his mobile.

VINNIE Oi, Sarah! It's Vinnie. How are you? ... Good ... I'm good, yeah, yeah ... Listen, we're in a bit of a bind ...

SCENE 2

Lights change. Time passes. We have fast forwarded an hour or so to the start of the game, which TOMMY and VINNIE now watch on a television. VINNIE sits watching the game. TOMMY paces behind him.

JOHN MOTSON (V.O.) This is how it should be. The game may have changed but the trophy remains the same, as the teams enter the pitch—Liverpool on the right, four times winners, versus AC Milan on the left, six times winners—and there it is—the very trophy for which they will play—the 2005 UEFA Champions Cup. Both teams well represented by their supporters here in Istanbul, the chosen sight for this Champions League final ...

TOMMY Where is she?
VINNIE She'll be here.

TOMMY When?
VINNIE Soon.
TOMMY You told her it was important?
VINNIE Yeah.
TOMMY You're sure?
VINNIE Yes, Tommy.
TOMMY You properly expressed the urgency of the situation?
VINNIE You were standing right next to me!
TOMMY And what did she say?
VINNIE She said she'd come right over.

This does not satisfy TOMMY.

VINNIE I told her that Bobbo had had a bit of a bust up with Lizzy and that he was in something of a bad way and that I thought she should get down here, and she said she'd come right over.
TOMMY She said that? "Right over"?
VINNIE Yes!
TOMMY Right over as in right now or right over as in when I get around to it?
VINNIE Well I couldn't say, Tommy, but I rather got the impression it was the first one. Now do us a favor and sit down, yeah? I'm nervous enough without the ritual—I don't need you wearing out the floor behind me!
TOMMY Regimen.

The match begins. Seconds into it a Liverpool player, Djimi Traore, commits a foul. AC Milan is awarded a free kick.

TOMMY Bollocks! Traore, you mince!
VINNIE Oh no! COME ON!
TOMMY Couldn't tackle his way out of a paper bag! Well that's just jolly, ain't it? Free kick forty seconds into the match.
VINNIE What's he marking Kaka for, anyway? There's a mismatch. Oh, Christ—here comes Pirlo.
TOMMY Who'd you think was gonna take it?
VINNIE Alright, man up, lads! Come on.

TOMMY Watch Maldini ...

VINNIE Sheva ...

TOMMY Maldini. Backdoor. Backdoor! WATCH MALDINI AT THE BACKDO—!

JOHN MOTSON (V.O.) GOAL! And AC Milan off to a fast start here as Paolo Maldini gets on the other end of Andrea Pirlo's free kick! One-nil to Milan and you have to think this is a poor sign for the Anfield faithful.

TOMMY ... One-nil.

VINNIE The first minute. I don't understand.

TOMMY lunges at the bedroom door, trying to get to BOBBY. VINNIE restrains him, and they struggle throughout the following.

TOMMY I'LL KILL HIM! That sodding git! That traitorous little sod! He's not gonna take this from me—he's not! Bobbo! Bobbo! Get out here, you poncey twat!

VINNIE Oi, Tommy! Tommy, stop it! Steady on—steady on, mate! Get a hold of yourself! We've got to focus now, yeah? Ease up a bit!

The door buzzer goes off. VINNIE goes to the intercom.

VINNIE Hello?

SARAH (O.S.) Hello? Vince?

VINNIE It's Sarah!

TOMMY Of course it's Sarah, you twat—who'd you think it'd be?

SARAH (O.S.) Hello? Are you going to let me up?

VINNIE Oh! Sure!

VINNIE buzzes her in.

VINNIE Right. Now what?

TOMMY Yeah, well to keep things on an even keel I think you should do the talking.

VINNIE Me? You're the—

TOMMY The last thing we need is for her to get bent out of shape and sod off back to Holborn, yeah?

VINNIE Yeah, but—

TOMMY No "buts," Vincent! We're down one-nil. This thing is unraveling before our very eyes and Sarah may be our last shot. Now it was your idea to call her in the first place so you get it together and convince her to get Bobby out here. Can you do that?

VINNIE I don't know—

TOMMY For the reds? For Bobby?

VINNIE For Bobby.

TOMMY There's a good lad. And Vincent.

VINNIE Oi?

TOMMY Don't mention the regimen.

VINNIE What? Why?

TOMMY Sarah hates football! The second she gets a whiff of it she'll be out the door faster than Graeme Souness can get booked, so keep it under your hat!

VINNIE But—

TOMMY Shh!

SARAH enters.

SARAH Alright, Vince, you called me here so this had better—

VINNIE Oi.

SARAH Bloody hell.

VINNIE Thanks for coming.

SARAH What in—? Vince, what happened? Is Bobby alright?

VINNIE I—I don't know.

SARAH Where is he? Is he here?

VINNIE Been in there over an hour now.

SARAH notices TOMMY for the first time.

SARAH Oh my God. What is he doing here?

TOMMY Cheers to you, too.

SARAH Get stuffed. Vince?

VINNIE He came with me.

SARAH Lovely.

VINNIE Look, Sarah, I—we didn't want to bother you but we didn't know what else to do—he was just lying under the sofa when we got here and—

SARAH Right. No, you were right, Vince—thank you. I just—what is that smell?

VINNIE I think Bobby threw up. I fell in it.

SARAH Oh my God!

VINNIE I cleaned it up, mostly, but Bobbo's out of cleaners so I had to use window solvent and it doesn't get the smell out quite as well as I would have liked—

SARAH Look, never mind. What happened?

Silence. TOMMY elbows VINNIE.

VINNIE Oh! Um, they, uh—they had a bust up.

SARAH Yes, thank you, Vince—You told me that over the phone so I was rather hoping for some ... new information.

VINNIE Right. It, uh ... it was ... bad. A bad bust up.

SARAH Let's start over, shall we?

VINNIE OK.

SARAH Now you said on the phone that Bobby and Liz had a bust up; are there any words you would use to describe it, apart from “bad”?

VINNIE ... Complicated.

SARAH Complicated? Lovely, Vincent; well done. Complicated how?

VINNIE Well, just because we—we were supposed to pick him up and go to—out. We were gonna go out. How we sometimes do. But not to a football match.

TOMMY Oh, for the love of God!

VINNIE But Bobby didn't want to go—

TOMMY Three minutes! You couldn't even last three minutes!

SARAH What's going on?

TOMMY She bugged off, that's what's going on.

SARAH Tommy—

TOMMY Bugged off and screwed us all.

SARAH What is he on about?

VINNIE Yeah, that—it's a bit tricky—

TOMMY It's not tricky at all, birdie—your brother's a deserter!

SARAH Tommy, let's play a game where we pretend that you're a person instead of a drooling leech, and in this game you're capable of intelligent speech so that when I ask you questions you can answer them in complete sentences instead of nonsensical fragments. Now what's wrong?

VINNIE produces the engagement ring.

SARAH Oh my God.

VINNIE I know.

SARAH Oh my God.

VINNIE I know. I don't even know when it happened exactly but he looked like he'd been up all night and he smelled like the urinals at O'Neal's.

SARAH What—what happened?

VINNIE She left him, obviously.

SARAH I mean why? Were they having problems or anything?

VINNIE None that I knew of.

SARAH Well what did Bobby say? Was it an argument or something?

VINNIE He—uh, he didn't—didn't say.

SARAH Really? Not a thing?

VINNIE Just told us to look in the disposal and there it was.

SARAH Oh my God. How awful.

VINNIE Yeah ...

SARAH And that's all he said?

VINNIE Yeah. He said they fought and she left and that was it.

SARAH That bitch.

TOMMY Here, here!

SARAH Shut up!

TOMMY What've I said?

SARAH Quite enough, thank you.

TOMMY I was agreeing with you!

SARAH Well don't.

TOMMY Why not?

SARAH Because I don't want you thinking we're on the same side.

TOMMY Same si—D'you mean by that? Wait—what d'you mean “not on the same side”?

SARAH Just what I said. Poor sod. You were right to call me, that's sure.

VINNIE Yeah, I thought as much.

TOMMY Wait, why does he get to be on your side?

SARAH I never said he was.

VINNIE I am though, right?

SARAH Course you are.

TOMMY Well why—?

SARAH Because I like him.

VINNIE I'm loved by all.

SARAH And because he may be a bit of a simpleton but he's also the least self-interested person I know. But mostly because I like him.

TOMMY (to VINNIE) I told you—I told you—

SARAH Look, I know how you felt—how you feel about Liz. Your thoughts on that subject have been well documented and, for the moment at least, it seems that we're in agreement. But just so's we're clear; I'm set off about what she's done to Bobby, not you.

TOMMY Well d'you think I'm set off about?

SARAH I'm not one of your beer hall birds, Tommy. Try selling it down the street.

TOMMY What the hell does that mean?

SARAH It means that I'm not about to provide any more justification for your ridiculously childish hatred for every woman that's ever wandered into Bobby's love-life. It's practically misanthropic, the attitude you've taken, and I will be struck deaf, dumb, and blind—to say nothing of comatose—before I let them wheel me into your ideological encampment. The enemy of my enemy is not my friend; he's just a pathetic, indolent child who's point of view—through tragic error—I happen to share.

VINNIE Sarah, that's not exactly fair—

SARAH Shut up.

VINNIE What've I said?

SARAH Don't defend him! Did you ever give a shit that

he loved her? Did you? Or were you more concerned with the fact that, for whatever reason, their relationship didn't make you happy? You couldn't give a toss about how Bobby feels right now—all you're interested in is that she did it to him, which makes you right, and that she's run off, which makes you happy. You're probably so thrilled right now that it's all you can do to keep it inside. Meanwhile your so-called best mate—

TOMMY Thrilled? Thrilled? Who d'you think you're talking to?

SARAH Yeah, you look real broken up about it—

TOMMY Oi, piss off!

SARAH You piss off!

TOMMY You piss off!

VINNIE Alright, leave it out. Oi! Back to your corners!

SARAH Fine. Look—you obviously, both of you, were concerned enough about it to ring me up—and spot on, too. So let me just go see how he is, yeah?

SARAH starts toward the bedroom door.

VINNIE Wait! Sarah—

SARAH What?

VINNIE We didn't ask you over—exactly—to cheer him up—necessarily.

SARAH What do you mean?

VINNIE We did! I mean, of course we did, but it's—well it's—it's a bit tricky.

SARAH Vince, out with it. What? Is there something else? What's wrong?

VINNIE Well, we've got this ritual—

TOMMY Regimen.

VINNIE (*speaking rapidly*) Regimen, yeah, and it's gone pretty well so far because Liverpool's in the finals and Bobbo's sort of the linchpin of the whole thing but now he's off and we're down one-nil and it's probably not because of him but it might be because of him and he's given up on Liverpool because he thinks they ruined his life or at least his relationship and we tried to talk

him out of it or Tommy tried and he usually listens to Tommy but he didn't listen to Tommy this time and so we thought maybe you could talk some sense into him! Please.

SARAH So ... you called me because you think that I can talk him into loving Liverpool again so you lot can do your little—what was it?

TOMMY Regimen.

SARAH Regimen, yes. And you think that if you do that—your regimen—Liverpool will win?

TOMMY and VINNIE nod.

SARAH But you can't do it without Bobby?

TOMMY and VINNIE shake their heads.

SARAH You're both deranged.

VINNIE I know how it sounds but, actually when Tommy explains it, it makes quite a lot of sense.

SARAH I can't believe you.

VINNIE But—

SARAH Don't—don't speak to me for just a minute please, Vince, will you?

VINNIE Sure.

SARAH I am so ashamed of you that I struggle for the words to express it.

VINNIE Yeah, but—

SARAH I'm actually going to need you to continue your not-speaking just a bit longer, Vince. I would—I would have expected this sort of thing from him, but from you? I like you, Vince; I always have but I don't understand how—how could—from all the various perspectives, where do you stand and see football as the most important element of this equation? From where in the room do the circumstances add up to Liverpool being at the top of the list of priorities? Really, Vince—where? Show me. (*moves to where VINNIE is standing*) Is it here? No? There? Is it over there, Vince? (*moves to a new location*) Where do I stand and see what you see? From what possible vantage may I view this little

conundrum and become enlightened to the fact that if only Liverpool can win everything will be alright? Tell me, Vince—where is this sage wisdom hidden?

VINNIE Sarah—

SARAH One word's all I'm looking for, Vince. Here. There. That sort of thing.

VINNIE It's not just Liverpool, it's—

SARAH I want you to look at me and realize what is happening here—not what you perceive to be happening—but what is really happening here. To me it looks an awful lot like a bloke's mates ignoring him when he needs them most. I mean, Jesus Christ; YOU'RE NOT SEVENTEEN ANYMORE! Things change! Hopefully! Life goes on and I'm sorry for that, I am. I'm sorry you can't stay kids forever, but that's just the way it is. I'm sorry Liz was an awful bitch, but she made him happy. That was good enough for me, as it should have been for you. But I'm a lot more sorry for Bobby that his best mates are so emotionally retarded that they can't even see their way to giving him a bit of support.

VINNIE We've given him support! That's why we called you.

SARAH Vince—you've supported him as far as was convenient! Just like always! We support Bobby up and down, except for when he gets into relationships with birds we don't like, or when he happens to be an emotional wreck on the day of a big match— then we can't be bothered. Look, I'm going to go in and check on my big brother. It would probably be best if you two were not here when I come back.

SARAH again starts toward the bedroom.

TOMMY Apologize first.

SARAH Excuse me?

TOMMY You heard me.

SARAH Do you really want to have this conversation with me?

TOMMY You said more than a few nasty things to Vincent

just now, and I think you should apologize to him—as you've not the first clue what you're talking about.

SARAH Tommy—

TOMMY You're right, as it turns out, about our failure to support his relationship- she made him happy and that should have been enough. I stand by the fact that she was a miserable shit and I don't care if he turns into a werewolf at night and feasts upon the neighborhood children, she was lucky to be with him in the first place.

All the same, we yobbed it up. Sorry.

SARAH Very big of you. Finished?

TOMMY Keep your bloomers on. What I take issue with is this notion you've got about us being the most selfish pricks on the face of the globe.

SARAH If the shoe fits, Tommy.

TOMMY What exactly did she give him that was so good? What did she do for him? And I don't mean sex and companionship and that because that's all gone now, isn't it? I mean what is he left with? At the end of the day, what did she do for him?

SARAH That's not your business, Tommy. It's not my business. It's—

TOMMY Broke his heart and left him! That's how the story ends for our hero, because she's not coming back to write any more chapters, is she? And who really cares how many happy memories she gave him? The last memory she gave him was a miserable memory because it was the memory that there would be no more memories to come where she was concerned. Liverpool isn't like that. They're not going anywhere. They will always be there—ready and willing to make you a part of them and to become a part of you. They may disappoint you—hell, I guarantee it! Invest enough care in anything for long enough and sooner or later it'll disappoint you, and in that way I expect Liverpool's no different. They'll string you along and they'll get your hopes up and they'll infuriate you and abuse you and take you for granted and yeah, they'll break your heart.

They're not perfect. But they will never leave you. They will never tire of you or become bored with you. They will never turn their backs on you, they ... they'll ... they'll never outgrow you. And as long as you've the desire and the will to pull on a shirt and sing a song and lift a glass, then you will have a home and you will be loved. That's why they call it supporting instead of rooting. Leave rooting to the yanks. We haven't deserted him. And if they lose the match then they lose the match. There'll be others, I expect. Waited twenty-one years and I imagine I could stand to wait another twenty-one or so. But if this ends up being the day that he lost the two great loves of his life ... well ... Anyway, I think you owe Vincent an apology.

SARAH *(knocking)* It's Sarah.

SARAH exits to the bedroom.

VINNIE Tommy?

TOMMY Yeah?

VINNIE D'you think—?

TOMMY What?

VINNIE D'you think she might be right?

TOMMY About what?

VINNIE About—I don't know—us being a bit overzealous?

TOMMY Absolutely not! What's the matter with you?

VINNIE I mean it—you don't think there's even the remotest chance that maybe we've gone wrong somewhere?

TOMMY What, you think we're maladjusted or something?

VINNIE Well I doubt very much we'd be the first to say so.

TOMMY Vincent, you need to trust me on this—have I lead us astray before? Did we beat Chelsea?

VINNIE Tommy—

TOMMY Did we beat them? When nobody thought we could? Their billion pound payroll and that smug bloody Russian and didn't we hold them goalless when we had

to? Didn't we?

VINNIE Yes, but—

TOMMY And now we're in the finals, aren't we? Istanbul!

VINNIE Yeah, but we're losing!

TOMMY That's right—one-nil down in the first minute and you're scared. It's only natural. It's only natural that in times like this your faith should want to waver somewhat. And she senses that and she preys upon it.

VINNIE Who, Sarah? Come off it—

TOMMY Don't you underestimate her for a second, mate! You know how Sarah can be—she starts off all swish and smoothie and before you know it she's flashing that smile of hers—you know the one—and then—

VINNIE Wait. What d'you mean?

TOMMY The smile. Her smile she does, when things are going her way. You know the one.

VINNIE I've seen her smile, Tommy, but I can't say I've ever seen anything I'd describe as her smile or the smile—

TOMMY Yes you have! Her mouth goes up a bit higher on the left side and her eyes get all twinkly like. It's actually quite endearing—disarming, I mean. Catches you off guard. Then the next thing you know you've followed the line of her cheekbones up to those perfect eyebrows of hers and then it's just a hop, skip, and a jump to her eyes and then it's all over—

VINNIE Oh my God!

TOMMY What?

VINNIE Oh my God!

TOMMY What've I said?

VINNIE You still fancy her!

TOMMY What?! No!

VINNIE You do, you fancy her!

TOMMY I do no such thing!

VINNIE You fancy the pants off her—I can't believe it!

TOMMY Oh, get knotted, will you? I do no such thing and if you don't shut up she might hear you!

VINNIE Wouldn't want that now, would we?

TOMMY Look, just leave it out! The point is this—it's a crucial time for us, and while we may be tempted to switch it up a bit in these darker moments, we've got to resist.

VINNIE Right.

TOMMY Now the key is, as I said, to stay focused on the match—we're driving the trolley with a missing wheel so even the slightest lapse in concentration might have disastrous—

VINNIE But you do fancy her?

An uproar from the television. More bad news.

JOHN MOTSON (V.O.) He's done it! He's done it! Hernan Crespo has broke through the Liverpool defense and slotted past Jerzy Dudek! Two-nil, AC Milan!

TOMMY Look what you've done.

VINNIE Tommy, I—

TOMMY What did I say? What did I bloody-well say?

VINNIE Tommy—

TOMMY I said focus. Didn't I say focus?

VINNIE Yes—

TOMMY I said we're driving the trolley with a missing wheel. Was that too vague for you? Was my metaphor in some way unclear or obtuse?

VINNIE No—

TOMMY Well let me be completely forthcoming—just so there's no confusion in the future—a future which grows bleaker with every breath you take, you miserable peon— Shut. Up. About. Sodding. Sarah. And. FOCUS. On. The. MATCH!

VINNIE Right.

Another roar from the televised crowd.

JOHN MOTSON (V.O.) GOAL! GOAL! CRESPO AGAIN! Three-nil to AC Milan and surely this must be it for Liverpool.

TOMMY turns and starts to strangle VINNIE.

BLACK OUT