

Scene #5
Belinda/Flavia
Frederick/Philip
Mrs. Clackett

~~Philip~~ No, it's Mrs Clackett's afternoon off, remember.

Enter Flavia, carrying a flight bag like Roger's.

Philip We've got the place entirely to ourselves.

Philip *closes the door.*

Flavia Home!

Philip Home, sweet home!

Flavia Dear old house!

Philip Just waiting for us to come back!

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

Philip It's damned serious! If Inland Revenue find out we're in the country, even for one night, bang goes our claim to be resident abroad. Bang goes most of this year's income. I feel like an illegal immigrant.

Flavia I'll tell you what I feel like.

Philip Champagne? *(He takes a bottle out of the box.)*

Flavia I wonder if Mrs Clackett's aired the beds.

Philip Darling!

Flavia Well, why not? No children. No friends dropping in. We're absolutely on our own.

Philip True. *(He picks up the bag and box, and ushers Flavia towards the stairs.)* There is something to be said for being a tax exile.

Flavia Leave those!

He drops the bag and box, and kisses her. She flees upstairs, laughing, and he after her.

Philip Sh!

Flavia What?

Philip (*humorously*) Inland Revenue may hear us!

They creep to the bedroom door.

Enter Mrs Clackett from the service quarters, carrying a fresh plate of sardines.

Mrs Clackett (*to herself*) What I did with that first lot of sardines I shall never know.

She puts the sardines on the telephone table and sits on the sofa.

Philip and Flavia (*looking down from the gallery*) Mrs Clackett!

Mrs Clackett *jumps up.*

Mrs Clackett Oh, you give me a turn! My heart jumped right out of my boots!

Philip So did mine!

Flavia We thought you'd gone!

Mrs Clackett I thought you was in Spain!

Philip We are! We are!

Flavia You haven't seen us!

Philip We're not here!

Mrs Clackett Oh, like that, is it? The income tax are after you?

Flavia They would be, if they knew we were here.

Mrs Clackett All right, then, love. You're not here. I haven't seen you. Anybody asks for you, I don't know nothing. Off to bed, are you?

Philip Oh . . .

Flavia Well . . .

Mrs Clackett That's right. Nowhere like bed when they all get on top of you. You'll want your things, look. (*She indicates the bag and box.*)