

ADAM. Look, can we please talk about this when we get home. Sheena?

SHEENA (*drinking*). No, we can talk about this now and then you can come home.

ADAM. I can't talk about this now – we're in the middle of Christmas.

SHEENA. Fine, in that case you'd better do your washing overnight because you're going straight back to the hotel tomorrow.

ADAM. What kind of woman makes her husband live in a Travelodge when his father's ill in hospital?

SHEENA. I'm sorry that your father's ill... (*Drinking.*) But that doesn't change anything. I'm not going to welcome you back with open arms just because your dad's had a minor setback.

ADAM (*affecting an accent*). Stop, please, I'm drowning in sympathy.

SHEENA (*drinking*). No, you don't get to paint me as the 'bad guy' here, you're the one using your dad's illness as a 'Get Out of Jail Free' card. D'you know, I really thought this time might be different. But here you go again making excuses.

ADAM. This time *is* different, I've given a lot of thought to what you said.

SHEENA. Did you read the Information Pack?

ADAM. What Information Pack?

SHEENA (*retrieving it from her handbag*). The Information Pack the therapist gave us, the Information Pack which I photocopied and put on top of the suitcase I packed for you. Did you read it?

ADAM. Yes.

SHEENA. You did?

ADAM. Yes.

SHEENA. And?

ADAM. It made a lot of things much clearer.

SHEENA. What things did it make clearer?

ADAM. Just the... mechanism... of the whole... process... I read the first couple of pages.

SHEENA. You read the first couple of pages.

ADAM. And that was enough. Look, with all due respect, it was the biggest load of pseudo-psychological nonsense I'd ever read in my life.

Scene Nine

The following rules are disclosed to the audience for the duration of the scene:

Rule 1: Matthew must sit and eat to tell a lie

Rule 2: Carrie must stand and dance around to tell a joke

Rule 3: Sheena must drink **and interrupt** to contradict

Rule 4. Adam must affect an accent to mock

Rule 5. Edith must clean to keep calm

A slash (/) marks the point where SHEENA interrupts the preceding person's speech.

ADAM (*affecting an accent, mocking the Information Pack*). ← **Start**
 'Robbie's mother never told him she loved him and so now he's addicted to sex with strangers. Selena's sister was always getting better grades / than her so now she feels inadequate –'

SHEENA (*drinking, interrupting*). No, no, don't you dare mock me.

ADAM. I'm not mocking you, I'm mocking the pamphlet / you are wilfully misunderstanding me as usual.

SHEENA (*drinking, interrupting*). Yes, you are, it's implied, it's always implied. This is how we're helping our daughter, Adam – are you saying you don't want our daughter getting help?

ADAM. Of course I want Emma to get whatever help she needs. I'm just saying we don't need to subject ourselves to this as well, when it's really only Emma who's got a problem / we can just –

SHEENA (*drinking, interrupting*). It is *not* just Emma who's got a problem. Our behaviour, our marriage, is affecting our child. And until you're prepared to admit that – until you're prepared to take our marriage seriously – then you can stay in a hotel.

ADAM. Of course I take our marriage seriously, that's why I've got no interest in letting a complete stranger tell us what to do with it, and charge me a hundred pounds an hour for the privilege. / Some of us value our privacy.

SHEENA (*drinking, interrupting*). It's not a hundred pounds an hour, it's not a hundred pounds an hour, it's *eighty* pounds an hour, which I consider pretty good value if it saves your marriage.

ADAM. Therapy isn't going to magically fix everything. / People have therapy all the time and it doesn't change anything.

SHEENA (*drinking, interrupting*). Well it's a start, it's a start, it's a start!

ADAM. Keep your voice down. (*Beat.*) Let me ask you something, do you really think / the two of us being lectured by some bearded –

SHEENA (*drinking, interruption*). No, you need to listen to me –

ADAM. Can I ask you something, / or is nobody else allowed to talk?

SHEENA (*drinking, interrupting*). No, no, you need to listen to me and hear me.

ADAM. I've heard you: you want us to change. And we can change. / We can deal with it ourselves.

SHEENA (*drinking, interrupting*). No, no we can't, we say we will and it changes for two weeks and then it goes back to normal – or worse, you throw away your opportunity at partnership –

ADAM *goes in search of his cigarettes, SHEENA hounds him.*

– all you had to do was wear an ironed shirt and take the right people to dinner, but you didn't, you didn't do it.

ADAM. I told you, I am not a hack.

SHEENA. Yes, I know, you didn't want to be 'a hack', but I don't think that's what it was about. Because it's not just the job, it's our anniversary, it's the tree house that's still in the box in the garage. It's the 5K run you signed up for but never trained for, it's the book on sexual intimacy you claim you read, but clearly haven't, it's everything you say you'll try but never do. Maybe that's your 'rule' – you never see anything through!

← Stop

Scene Ten

The following rules are disclosed to the audience for the duration of the scene:

Rule 1: Matthew must sit and eat to tell a lie

Rule 2: Carrie must stand and dance around to tell a joke

Rule 3: Sheena must drink and interrupt to contradict

Rule 4. Adam must affect an accent and name-call to mock

Rule 5. Edith must clean to keep calm

ADAM. Look... I know you so badly want me to fit your little model, but, honey, / not everybody –