

EXTRACT

MEAT AXE HANGING ON THE KITCHEN DOOR

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MEAT AXE HANGING ON THE KITCHEN DOOR

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NOTE ON THE SCRIPT

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Cast

DAVID resident of Home

MUMPSIE older resident

THE MAN IN THE BLACK CLOAK

VIE the resident's old hippie

Setting

No set scenery, except the 'hanging' image of the meat axe on the kitchen door. This swims and sways – and even comes and goes -- to dramatic effect.

The Home's TV lounge, the corridor, their rooms are intimated by spot illumination.

Meat Axe Hanging on the Kitchen Door

(The meat axe hanging on the kitchen door is highlighted for a long moment on a darkened stage. It is heightened both in space and in illumination.

It starts, seemingly, to detach itself and then to sway back and forwards in mid-air. The light glints from its sharp edges.

DAVID emerges to stand 'before' it. He sways mesmerically with it for a long time. He only stops when MUMPSIE starts to swim into view, at which time he quickly stops and sinks back into the shadows.

MUMPSIE now fully emerges and stands 'before' the slowly swinging meat axe. She too sways with it mesmerically before she stops reluctantly and leaves.

The meat axe dissolves back to hanging on the kitchen door.

DAVID makes himself seen but remains shadowy. He is obviously a skulker, a secretive watcher of others, especially MUMPSIE until she 'departs'.

He does not fully emerge from the shadows even then, because VIE comes wandering absent-mindedly in. She resembles a distracted flower child of the Sixties with her floral flock and her cock-feathered chapeau and her gleaming white Adidas runners.

Around a clock strikes twelve midnight. It seems the signal for:)

VIE: HEY! HEY! THE CHURCH BUS FLOAT BY?

(DAVID steps forward into the light. He obviously enjoys taunting her)

DAVID: Whatareya?

VIE: Hey! Hey! You see the church bus floating by?

DAVID: (nastily) It's in the middle of the night, droopy-drawers. It's Wednesday.

VIE: (dreamily) I never know how the church bus knows that.

DAVID: Sag bum!

VIE: It went floating by?

DAVID: You all doubled up in the cardie, cock-eye.

VIE: Am I floating around with me cardie on going to church?

DAVID: (suddenly conspiratorially) You know what?

VIE: (alarmed) What?

(As THE MAN IN THE BLACK CLOAK half-appears off to one side, loomingly...)

DAVID: He said to me, he said, watchit Davy, it'll all come back.

VIE: (weird hope) The bus, will it?

DAVID: (ignoring her) He said don't muck it up, just think how I did it last time.

VIE: (suddenly, again) HEY! HEY! THE CHURCH BUS FLOAT BY?

DAVID: I said it's Wednesday not Sunday, dipstick.

(In response to that, VIE merely drops to the floor and sits there obstinately.

DAVID wants to taunt her further but has to quickly retreat into the shadows to watch all again, when MUMPSIE, in a greasy old nightie, emerges to help VIE.

MUMPSIE has trouble getting VIE to her feet, as much as she croons to the other old lady. It is not that VIE resists; it is just that she has gone limp.

While this is going on, DAVID, careful to keep to the shadows, approaches the form of THE MAN IN THE BLACK CLOAK as confidante:)

DAVID: She won't move. It's that Mumpsie, eh? She's waiting for me to muck up but I remember I've been through this before, too right. I know how the Americans ruined me last time, don't I?

(THE MAN IN BLACK CLOAK doesn't answer, but perhaps shrugs, perhaps nods. Whatever, it is enough encouragement for DAVID, who nods back conspiratorially and then steps back to watch MUMPSIE finally managing to get VIE to her feet and to lead her back to her room:)

MUMPSIE: Cmon, cmon, old girl.

VIE: Waited for the bus, but it went floating by.

MUMPSIE: (real sympathy) I know, I know.

VIE: You shoulda seen it floating by.

MUMPSIE: You wouldn't read about it.

(As she is led off VIE degenerates in singing 'Little Baby Jesus' with made-up words without meaning.

Sniggering, DAVID separates from THE MAN IN BLACK CLOAK and stands looking after the two women. He makes obviously derogatory motions about their going to the shadowy form, until:

MUMPSIE returns hot under the collar. She does so from the other side of the stage, behind DAVID, and effectively startles him)

MUMPSIE: I'M A MARRIED WOMAN!

(DAVID can only recover by appealing to the form of THE MAN IN THE BLACK CLOAK:)

DAVID: Why's she always yelling abuse at me?

MUMPSIE: (standing ground) I'M A MARRIED WOMAN!

DAVID: (face boiling) NO YOU AIN'T!

MUMPSIE: I AM A MARRIED WOMAN, YOU!

DAVID: YOU'RE NOT MARRIED!

MUMPSIE: I AM!

DAVID: YOU'RE NOT! HE'S DEAD!

MUMPSIE: SO WHAT? I'M STILL MARRIED!

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