

Belinda Blair (Flavia), Frederick Fellows (Phillip)

NOISES OFF

31

Side 4

GARRY. What?

LLOYD. Or maybe just the cue. Brooke! *(Exit DOTTY to the service quarters. Enter BROOKE from the bedroom.)* 'Oh, you're in a real state.'

VICKI. Oh, you're in a real state! You can't even get the door open.

LLOYD. Door closed, love.

(GARRY closes the door.)

VICKI. You can't even get the door open.

(Exeunt ROGER and VICKI into the bedroom. Enter PHILIP through the front door.)

PHILIP. No, it's Mrs. Clackett's afternoon off, remember. *(Enter FLAVIA carrying a flight bag like GARRY's.)* 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 finds 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.

Start //

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 have-

n'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.)*

PHILIP. Oh. Yes. Thanks.

(He comes downstairs, and picks up the bag and box.)

MRS. CLACKETT. *(To FLAVIA.)* Oh, and that bed hasn't been aired, love.

FLAVIA. I'll get a hot water bottle.

(Exit FLAVIA into the mezzanine bathroom.)

MRS. CLACKETT. I've put all your letters in the study, dear.

PHILIP. Letters? What letters? You forward all the mail, don't you?

MRS. CLACKETT. Not the ones from the income tax, dear. I don't want to spoil your holidays.

PHILIP. Oh good heavens! Where are they?

MRS. CLACKETT. I've put them all in the pigeonhouse.

PHILIP. In the pigeonhouse?

MRS. CLACKETT. In the little pigeonhouse in your desk, love.

(Exit MRS. CLACKETT and PHILIP into the study. PHILIP is still holding the bag and box. Only he remains on, and DOTTY remains in the doorway waiting for him.)

Enter ROGER from the bedroom, still dressed, tying his tie.)

ROGER. Yes, but I could hear voices!

(Enter VICKI from the bedroom in her underwear.)

VICKI. Voices? What sort of voices?

Stop