

CAUGHT IN THE ACT
Gerry Sudbury & Phil Lewis

Crime Comedy
Approximately 40 minutes duration (without Interval)

Two inept burglars break into the home of a crime boss. Hampered by stupidity, the entrance of the boss's wife and the arrival of her lover, things get progressively worse. We discover that one of the burglars is not a brainless as he seems and a series of twist and turns see the plot come to a conclusion.

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CAUGHT IN THE ACT

CAST

LANCE: YOUNG MAN OF AROUND 20
BJ (FLETCHER): MIDDLE-AGED TO ELDERLY MAN
FAY: WOMAN AROUND 40
DOUGLAS: SIMILAR AGE TO FAY

SET

THE ROOM IS A STUDY AND HAS A PRACTICAL WINDOW AND DOOR LEADING TO THE REST OF THE HOUSE. IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FLOOR ARE SUITCASES, HOLDALLS AND SOME BOXES OF WHISKY AND CHAMPAGNE. THERE IS A SAFE, A FRIDGE AND A DRINKS TROLLEY AND A STANDARD LAMP. THE ROOM IS IN DARKNESS. THE LIGHT FROM THE MOON, AND/OR STREET LAMPS, CAN BE SEEN SHINING THROUGH THE WINDOW.

TIME - Today

ACT ONE

NIGHT TIME.

INTRO MUSIC. FADE.

A TORCHLIGHT RUNS ROUND THE ROOM, COMING FROM OUTSIDE THE WINDOW, THEN VANISHES. THE WINDOW SLOWLY MOVES UPWARDS. CAREFULLY LANCE CLIMBS INTO THE ROOM, SHUTTING THE WINDOW QUIETLY BEHIND HIM. HE IS DRESSED IN BLACK, WEARING A COMICAL ANIMAL MASK. HE CLOSES THE CURTAINS AND SWITCHES ON HIS TORCH. HE PACES ABOUT FURTIVELY, EXPLORING THE ROOM, COCKING HIS HEAD TO ONE SIDE, LISTENING, BUMPING INTO SUITCASES AND BOXES, LOOKING LUDICROUS IN THE MASK.

BEHIND LANCE, AND UNSEEN BY HIM, THE INTERNAL DOOR SLOWLY OPENS AND IN COMES FLETCHER, HOLDING A TORCH AND A SMALL HOLDALL. HE IS DRESSED IN DARK CLOTHING. HE SLOWLY CREEPS TOWARDS LANCE. LANCE HEARS HIS APPROACH AND SWINGS ROUND. THE MEN FACE EACH OTHER IN A STAND-OFF – LANCE HAS HIS HANDS UP TO DEFEND HIMSELF AND FLETCHER HAS HIS TORCH HELD LIKE A WEAPON AT THE READY. BOTH POINT THEIR TORCHES AT EACH OTHER, HIGHLIGHTING THEIR FACES. BOTH MEN RAISE THEIR HANDS TO THEIR EYES TO AVOID THE LIGHT.

FLETCHER: RECOVERING FIRST.

Oh yes, and what do we have here then eh?

LANCE: IN SHOCK.

Stuff me.

FLETCHER: Stuff you. I'll give you stuff you, what's your game?

LANCE: Stuff Me...

BACKING AWAY, TOWARDS THE WINDOW.

FLETCHER: PRODDING LANCE IN THE CHEST WITH HIS INDEX FINGER WITH EACH QUESTION.

After a bit of burglary are we? Thought no one was in, did we? Up to no good are we?

LANCE: Stuff Me.

TRIPS BACKWARDS OVER BOXES BUT RECOVERS HIS BALANCE.

FLETCHER: I know they say that conversation's a dying art, but can you manage a bit more than just 'stuff me'. Start talking sunshine, and this had better be good, otherwise the only stuffing that's going to go on is me stuffing my fist so far down your throat I'll be able to pull your socks up. So what's the game, eh? eh?

LANCE: Look chief, I just took a chance, I've taken nothing, I'll just leave, you haven't seen me. I've made a terrible mistake. you've got a nice place here. I don't want to cause trouble. I'll just go, now, look, look, I'm going. You go back to bed and forget I was here.

MOVING TOWARDS THE WINDOW.

FLETCHER: FLETCHER FOLLOWS HIM, BACKS HIM UP TO THE WALL AND LOOKS LONG AND HARD AT LANCE.

I'll say you've made a mistake.

MORE THOUGHTS.

You stay right where you are and we'll see what the police have to say about this.

LANCE: No, no, don't do that. No, no, really, I'm off. I'll just leave. No harm done. Please chief, just forget you saw me.

HANDS ON THE WINDOW.

FLETCHER: Hmmnnn. (CONSIDERING)

Take that mask off. (LANCE HESITATES BUT THEN OBLIGES)

I think I like you better with it on. Looks like you fell out of the ugly tree and hit every branch on the way down, blimey. Right then.

SPEAKING SLOWLY.

You bugger off out of this house, back where you came from, and never come back, and we'll say no more about it. Go on, piss off. But remember, I've seen that ugly face of yours, and me, I never forget a face. Now get.

LANCE IS DELIGHTED, CAN'T BELIEVE HIS LUCK. HE'S DESPERATE TO GET BACK OUT OF THE WINDOW. HE REPLACES HIS MASK, STUMBLES OVER HIS OWN FEET, CLIMBS OUT AND IS GONE. FLETCHER, NOW ALONE, SURVEYS THE ROOM WITH HIS TORCH. TAKES OUT FINE RUBBER GLOVES AND APPROACHES THE SAFE, BEHAVING LIKE A SAFE BREAKER, LISTENING AND TURNING THE DIALS FOR A MOMENT OR TWO. LANCE IS BACK AT THE WINDOW. UNSEEN BY FLETCHER LANCE'S HEAD WITH MASK COMES BACK THROUGH THE WINDOW AND HE WATCHES WHAT FLETCHER IS UP TO.

LANCE: Errr... Excuse Me... If this is your house....?

FLETCHER: (STARTLED) Jesus Christ, you bloody toe rag. I thought I told you to piss off.

HE AIMS A BLOW AT LANCE'S HEAD AS IT'S STICKING THROUGH THE WINDOW, LANCE DUCKS BACK OUT. FLETCHER TURNS BACK TO HIS TASK. A MOMENT LATER LANCE'S HEAD IS BACK IN THE WINDOW.

LANCE: I can't help but think....

FLETCHER: STARTLED AGAIN.

Jee-sus you can't help but think, if you could think you'd not be hanging around out there, now get out of it before I really lose it with you.

LANCE DOESN'T GO BUT LOOKS LONG AND HARD AT FLETCHER.

LANCE: I get it..... you're doing a job aren't you? Same as me.

HIS LEG COMES THROUGH THE WINDOW, SLOWLY FOLLOWED BY THE REST OF HIM, HE STANDS THERE WATCHING AND MOVES HIS MASK UP TO THE TOP OF HIS HEAD.

You tell me I'm up to no good, that's the pot calling the kettle black. You think I should go because you've seen my face... well I've seen your face too now haven't I? Ha ha, what a joke....

FLETCHER IS MOMENTARILY LOST FOR WORDS, BACKS AWAY AS LANCE ADVANCES AND THEN FACES HIM NOSE TO NOSE. LETCHER THINKS AND THEN RECOVERS.

FLETCHER: Right then. Now we both know the score. Get yourself over there and keep quiet. Let me get this safe open and we'll see what we can get. We can do a deal. Keep out of my way, keep your stupid mouth shut and let's get in and get out. Got it?

LANCE: Got it. I've got it.

PAUSE WHILE FLETCHER TURNS BACK TO THE SAFE.

I can't help but think....

FLETCHER: IRRITATED.

I don't want you to think. I don't want you to speak. The fact that you're even breathing is a source of bloody irritation to me. Just shut it.

PAUSE AGAIN

LANCE: I don't suppose you want to hear this...

REALLY IRRITATED, APPROACHES LANCE MENACINGLY, WHISPERING WITH VENOM.

FLETCHER: Look sunshine, I thought I'd made myself clear to you, but I'll repeat myself, for those of us doing this robbery here on planet earth, I'll cut you in if you just sit there and shut up. I like to work on my own. I don't like amateurs. God knows I've worked with enough of them, especially ones like you that are wet behind the ears. You come in here, thinking that you own the place, thinking that you can do as you like. This is my job. You're on my patch. But since you're here and we have this situation we can make the best of it, but only if you sit there, shut your trap, watch and learn. If my information is correct then there is plenty in here (TAPPING THE SAFE) to keep you happy. You'll get a night's work out of it, but only if you do as I say. Got it?

LANCE: Got it chief. Got it. Yeah yeah, I-have-got-it, you're the boss. I can see you know what you're doing, you look like a pro.... You're the boss, yes indeedy... Mr. Bossman. (SITS ON A BOX) I'll just sit here and be no trouble... watch and learn, watch and learn...

FLETCHER: (MAKING TO WHACK HIM) Shut it. (FRUSTRATED BY INTRUSION OF THIS AMATEUR) Gawd, this is just my flaming luck.

FLETCHER TURNS BACK TO THE SAFE AND LANCE GETS BORED AND STARTS TO PROWL THE ROOM, THEN STARTS FIDDLING WITH SOMETHING FROM ONE OF THE OPEN BOXES.

FLETCHER: And you can leave that alone. Did nobody ever tell you not to touch things that don't belong to you?

LANCE SHOOTS HIM AN INCREDULOUS, OPEN MOUTHED GLANCE AT THIS RIDICULOUS REMARK.

Where's your gloves? No gloves !! Jeee-sus, bloody amateurs.

LANCE WIPES THE THING HE WAS FIDDLING WITH, WITH THE CUFF OF HIS SWEATER, THEN MOVES OVER TO THE WINDOW AND WIPES THE SILL AWKWARDLY – HE'S LOOKING CLOSELY AT FLETCHER AND THINKING. THE WIND BLOWS THE CURTAIN AT THE OPEN WINDOW, THE INTERNAL DOOR BANGS. THE MEN LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND FREEZE. AFTER A MOMENT OF STILLNESS THERE'S A NOISE FROM WITHIN THE HOUSE – SOMEONE ELSE IS IN THE HOUSE.

LANCE: I was trying to tell you.... I think there's someone else in the house.

FLETCHER: There can't be. I was told they were all away.

LANCE: Well believe me....

A SUDDEN NOISE IN THE HALLWAY MAKES THE TWO MEN DIVE BEHIND THE BOXES, LANCE PUTS ON HIS MASK AGAIN, THEY HUDDLE TOGETHER, FLETCHER LOOKING MOST UNCOMFORTABLE AT THE CLOSE PROXIMITY OF THIS IDIOT. FAY ENTERS THE ROOM WEARING AN OVERCOAT, SWITCHES ON A LIGHT, DROPS A BAG TO JOIN THE OTHERS ALREADY ON THE FLOOR AND CROSSES THE ROOM TO CLOSE THE OPEN WINDOW, LOOKING PUZZLED. SHE'S EDGY. SHE TURNS IN THE DIRECTION OF THE SAFE, BUT A PHONE RINGS AND MAKES HER JUMP. AFTER HUNTING IN HER POCKETS SHE FINDS HER MOBILE.

FAY: Hello. Douglas. I told you not to ring me. (PAUSE) I've still got things to do, I'm still packing. Leave me alone and let me get on with it. I'm so terrified of what I'm doing. What we're both doing. You know that Marco would have me killed, he'd have us both killed if he ever found us. (PAUSE) I know sweedart, but just wait until the morning. I'll see you at the marina, like we said. I'll be there. (PAUSE) No. No, don't come here, you can't come here, promise me you won't come here, it's just too dangerous, please, please, Douglas, I won't be able to do what I have to do if you come here. (PAUSE) No, I haven't, I was just about to open the safe when you rang.

FLETCHER AND LANCE EXCHANGE A GLANCE.

I know it's in there, of course I know it's in there. I was just about to do that. there's no problem sweedart. Just be patient. it's nearly over. what?.....I'm sorry, can't hear you, the battery's going...I can't.....bugger!

PHONE HAS PACKED UP.

WHILE THIS CONVERSATION IS GOING ON LANCE AND FLETCHER KEEP LOOKING AT EACH OTHER. LANCE IS RIDICULOUS IN THE MASK. FAY REPLACES THE PHONE IN HER POCKET AND MOVES TOWARD THE SAFE. FLETCHER SQUIRMS TO GET AWAY FROM THE CLOSENESS OF LANCE, CATCHES HIS FOOT IN A STANDARD LAMP FLEX AND BRINGS THE LAMP TO THE FLOOR WITH A CRASH. FAY SCREAMS AND IS FROZEN IN FEAR. LANCE JUMPS UP, MAKING FOR THE WINDOW. QUICKLY FLETCHER HAULS LANCE BACK FROM THE WINDOW AND HE IS DUMPED ON THE FLOOR IN A HEAP. FLETCHER RUNS TO THE DOOR, PUTS HIS BACK TOWARDS IT, BLOCKING HER EXIT. HE APPROACHES FAY.

FAY: Oh my god, my god! Who are you? What do you want? Did he send you? Did Marco send you?

FLETCHER HAS FAY ROUGHLY BY THE ARM.

Please don't hurt me. I'll do whatever you say. Please don't hurt me. This isn't what you think. I was just clearing out some stuff for the charity shop. Please don't hurt me. What do you want?

FLETCHER: Open the safe.

DESPERATELY TRYING TO FIND A REASON NOT TO.

FAY: But I can't, I don't know the combination.....

FLETCHER: You just told.... Douglas was it?.... that you were going to get 'it' out of the safe. You must know the combination.

FLETCHER SHOOTS LANCE A LOOK. THEN MOVES HIS FACE CLOSE TO FAY'S AND TIGHTENS HIS GRIP ON HER ARM.

FAY: Ok Ok. Oh KAY!!

SHE SHRUGS HIM OFF HER ARM EMPHASISING THE LAST SYLLABLE AS REALISATION DAWNS - HER FEAR OF THE BURGLARS IS NOTHING COMPARED TO HER FEAR OF MARCO.

Marco didn't send you did he? You've come here to do the safe haven't you?

SLIGHTLY MORE RELAXED - CYNICALLY AMUSED AT THE THOUGHT.

Huh. What a bloody joke. I can't believe this. Have you any idea what you are getting into here? I really don't think you have. I think you should get out of my house. I'm ... I'm.... Calling the police.

SHE TAKES HER PHONE OUT OF HER POCKET AND FLETCHER LUNGES AT HER, SHE TURNS HER BACK AND FOILS HIM.

LANCE: SPEAKING SLOWLY FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM.

Would that be on your phone with the flat battery then?

LOOKING AT HIS FINGER NAILS.

Just a casual observation.

FLETCHER NODS AN OH YEAH NOD AT LANCE THEN TAKES THE PHONE FROM HER.

FLETCHER Ok lady. Nobody sent us. Nobody knows we're here. If nobody argues then nobody will be any the wiser and nobody will get hurt. I don't know what's going on here, all I know is that there's a safe over there, you know the combination and I want you to open it.

FLETCHER PUSHES HER IN HARD THE BACK, TOWARDS THE SAFE, SHE RELUCTANTLY WORKS THE DIAL AND TRIES TO OPEN THE SAFE. HER FRUSTRATION INCREASES AS THE DOOR WILL NOT MOVE.

FAY: Bugger! The bastard's changed the combination! It's Marco, he's changed the combination.

LANCE: Looks like he doesn't trust you.

FAY: Trust me, that's a joke, he doesn't trust anybody. (LOOKS AT THE SAFE) I really didn't think he'd do that. Oh shit.

That's something I hadn't planned on. Oh shit, I thought I had it all worked out, oh shit! Shit! Shit!

LANCE: That's an awful lot of shit.

FLETCHER: I'm finding it difficult to believe you lady.

FAY: Look, nobody wants that safe open more than I do. Look, I hate to disappoint you, but there really is nothing of any value to you in there, you're wasting your time here, believe me.

FLETCHER: And what makes you think I should believe you.

MOVING HER ASIDE TO GET TO THE SAFE

Let's have a little look see.

FAY: TRYING TO STOP HIM.

No, no, no. Don't, please don't.

FLETCHER: (TO LANCE) Get her out of here.

FLETCHER GRABS FAY AND PASSES HER OVER TO LANCE AND THEN LOOKS INTO HIS BAG FOR TOOLS.

Earn your share. Tie her up or something. Keep her out of my way. I didn't want to do this but I'm going to blow it.

LANCE: (IMPRESSED) Do you ber ber ber blow safes?

FLETCHER: Well I haven't come here to ber ber ber blow bubbles. Of course I blow safes. Now tie her up and keep quiet.

LANCE: (HUGELY IMPRESSED) Stuff me.

FLETCHER: Do it!! Any more people in the house, lady?

FAY SHAKES HER HEAD. LANCE LOOKS AROUND FOR SOMETHING TO TIE HER UP WITH AND FINDS ONLY THE FLEX FROM THE KNOCKED OVER LAMP. AFTER SEVERAL HESITANT STARTS AND THE FINAL FULL COOPERATION OF FAY, SHE IS TIED UP, BUT SO IS LANCE. HE HAS ONE WRIST TIED TO THE OTHER END OF THE FLEX, NEAR THE STANDARD LAMP BASE. HE HAS TO CARRY THE LAMP WITH HIM. HE NOW LOOKS DOUBLY RIDICULOUS WITH A MASK, A LAMP AND A CAPTIVE. FLETCHER LOOKS UP FROM HIS CONCENTRATED TASK TO SEE THE TWO OF THEM STANDING BEHIND HIM. HIS LOOK ASKS THE QUESTION 'WHY THEY ARE TIED TOGETHER?'

LANCE SHRUGS AND GIGGLES STUPIDLY. FLETCHER'S FRUSTRATED BY THE IDIOT.

FLETCHER: Oh very clever..... It's true what they say, you lead take a horse to water but you can't make it windsurf.

HE SLAMS ABOUT A BIT AND THE OTHER TWO FLINCH AWAY FROM HIM – PROCESSING BACKWARDS.

FAY: LOSING PATIENCE WITH THE TWO OF THEM – SHE HAS LOST HER FEAR.

Right! That's it!

SHE RELEASES HERSELF FROM THE FLEX AND STANDS FACING THE TWO OF THEM WITH HER HANDS ON HER HIPS.

This is crazy. There's nothing of value to you in that safe. Marco's taken everything with him, he's on a.... HESITATES He's on a buying trip. If you blow it you'll set all the alarms off then you'll have all hell descending on you. You want to burgle the place. I want to leave. I've got plans. Now.... I can find you enough stuff here to make this job worth your while. If I do, then will you leave?

LANCE: (QUICKLY) Yeah. Yeah, course, dish the dosh and you'll see my dust, darlin'.

FLETCHER: EXASPERATED WITH LANCE, TURNING BACK TO FAY.

FLETCHER: That depends. What's on offer?

FAY: I've got jewellery. I've got three thousand in cash. (TAKING OFF HER WATCH) What can you get for a Rolex these days?

HOLDING IT OUT.

LANCE: Whistles Yeah, that'll do me.

EXCITED AND MOVING TO TAKE THE WATCH.

FLETCHER: EXTENDING HIS ARM TO HALT LANCE.

Hold on a minute. If there's nothing in the safe then why were you telling your boyfriend that you were going to get it open? Aye, aye?

FAY HAS PUT THE ROLEX ON A TABLE AND WHEN BACKS ARE TURNED LANCE POCKETS IT.

FAY: I did want to get it open, but like I said, there's nothing in there that would be of value to you. It's deeds, papers, business records, stuff that might interest the police, things like that. That's all. No cash. Believe me. Yes, I did want to open the safe but only to take out some papers... for Douglas... Douglas is .. He's oh never mind that, it's not important. Now, let's all calm down and think about it. Come on boys. There's something here for everyone. How about a drink?

INDICATES THE BOXES.

Let's have a drink. Come on, lighten up. (TO LANCE) And take that stupid thing off your face.

LANCE: So - no cops, right?

FAY: Listen my love, the last thing I want is our boys in blue turning up. It's not the cops you need to worry about believe me.

FAY TAKES A BOTTLE FROM ONE OF THE BOXES, SHE CAN'T FIND ANY GLASSES, SO TAKES TWO MORE BOTTLES FROM THE CASE. SHE PASSES ONE EACH TO LANCE AND FLETCHER. LANCE IS GIGGLING, FLETCHER IS WARY. LANCE TRIES TO DRINK THROUGH THE MASK BUT SPILLS IT AND SO MOVES THE MASK ONTO THE TOP OF HIS HEAD. FAY LOOKS LONG AND HARD AT HIM, THEN BACK TO FLETCHER, SHE DOESN'T KNOW IT BUT SHE'S FOUND FLETCHER'S WEAKNESS. HE CAN'T RESIST THE DRINK. SLOWLY EVERYONE RELAXES A LITTLE. FLETCHER TAKES A SWIG.

FLETCHER: That's good stuff, boy that's good. Why all the booze?

FAY: Don't ask me. Stuff comes and goes from this house. Ask no questions, that's my motto. It's probably going to the club. Marco owns clubs. Marco owns a lot of stuff.

FLETCHER: How do you mean, 'there's stuff in the safe that might interest the police'? Before you answer that... Lance tie her up again, she's making me nervous, and this time do it right.

LANCE IS RETYING FAY.

FAY: You know this really is ridiculous, I'm not going anywhere, I'm no threat, there's really no need to do this... (ANGRY)

FLETCHER: I think I'll be the judge of what's needed... now before we go any further I want to know what your game is lady. You running away? Doing a runner? Why's that then? And who's Marco and what're you so worried about? Come on then, I'm all ears.

FAY: Well I don't know what to tell you.... It's not a bedtime story, it's the story of a very stupid woman and a very nasty bastard. I'm the stupid woman and Marco is the nasty bastard. You don't want the details, you just need to know that I've had enough and I want out. That's what I'm doing tonight, I'm getting out. I've got a plan, and it's not easy but I have to go. Marco's my husband.

LAUGHS A RESIGNED LAUGH, DRINKS FROM THE BOTTLE AND DREAMS FOR A MINUTE.

We were married four years ago. He was good to me at the beginning. I'd had a rough time, I saw him as my way out. Yes, I was after a meal ticket, I don't deny it, but I had no idea of how much worse life could be. (SUDDENLY ANGRY) For Christ's sake, I don't want to sit here and tell you two my life story, just untie me, take the watch, take the money.

SHE TAKES MONEY FROM HER HANDBAG AND PULLS A RING OFF HER FINGER AND THROWS IT DOWN.

Take what you want, take all this booze, but untie me and let's get out of here.

LANCE: Bloody hell, I can't think why you'd want to leave a place like this.... Looks to me like you've got it made.

FAY: LAUGHS.

Oh yes, there's plenty of money, yes I can buy whatever I want. But one thing money can't buy is freedom. Money just makes misery more comfortable. But then, when I first met Marco I'd hit rock bottom. You can put up with anything when you've hit rock bottom. I was a dancer at one of Marco's clubs, he was good to me. Then, he wanted to marry me....

LANCE: (LEERING) What kind of dancer?

FAY: Exotic sweetheart. Feathers, snakes, you name it. I was bloody good. Bloody good.

LANCE: APPRAISING HER DIFFERENTLY.

Did you do that pole dancing?

LANCE POLE DANCES WITH THE STANDARD LAMP – REALISES THAT EVERYONE'S WATCHING HIM AND STOPS IN EMBARRASSMENT.

FAY: I did what I had to do. After a while I realised the life I'd got myself into and I needed to get out. Marco is a big player, big money, serious crime, stuff I didn't want to know about. He's not a man that you want to be on the wrong side of. Douglas is Marco's accountant, he doesn't just cook the books, he marinates them in oil and garlic and roasts them on a high shelf. Douglas and I got ... friendly. We both needed to get away. This was our first opportunity. Marco has gone to Amsterdam, on .. On....business. He's taken his boat. He'll be back early in the morning.

LOOKS AT HER WATCH, HASN'T GOT IT ANY MORE – LOOKS TO THE TABLE WHERE SHE LEFT IT, IT'S NOT THERE, SHE LOOKS AT LANCE WHO LOOKS AWAY.

When the boat docks tonight Marco will come straight here. Joseph has gone to collect him.

FLETCHER: Joseph?

FAY: His driver. Look.... This is my only chance. I'm meeting Douglas at the marina. As Marco gets off the boat we will get on. We're going to Spain, then on to Mexico, I know people there, we plan to start a new life. As for what's in the safe, the spare keys to the boat are in there, and some books and papers that have information in them that could put Douglas away for life, it's bad enough running from Marco - we don't want to be running from Interpol as well. I need to destroy those papers. That's all I want, the keys and the papers. Take this (INDICATES MONEY) and leave me to do what I have to do.

WHILE FAY IS SPEAKING LANCE IS MOVING ABOUT THE ROOM FIDDLING WITH EVERYTHING.

FLETCHER: For crying out loud boy, you're giving me the screaming ab dabs. Sit down and have that drink.

LANCE SITS, BUT BEFORE DOING SO HE POURS SOME OF HIS WHISKY INTO A PLANT POT – UNSEEN BY THE REST OF THEM. HE HAS SAT NEXT TO FLETCHER'S BAG AND STARTS TO RUMMAGE IN IT

FAY: One thing you should know. If Marco finds out what's going on here, there's no length that he won't go to. He's not a man you should cross. He has people working for him that will stop at nothing. We need to decide what we are going to do and do it and get out of here. (LOSING IT) Will you please take this stuff, untie me and let's all get on with our lives and forget we ever saw each other.

LANCE HAS FOUND A SPARE PAIR OF RUBBER GLOVES, HE FIDDLES WITH THEM, BLOWS THEM UP, PUTS ONE ON HIS HEAD AND PRETENDS TO BE A CHICKEN.

FLETCHER: (TO FAY, INDICATING LANCE) There's less to him than meets the eye.

LANCE ENDS UP WEARING THE GLOVES AND IS WALKING ABOUT THE ROOM AGAIN, WIPING MORE FINGERPRINTS WITH THE CUFF OF HIS SWEATER

So, let me see if I've got this.... You want the boat keys and the books out of the safe because you want to do a runner with Dougie boy, and your old man will not like that very

much, and from what you say he's not a man to mess with... but how do you think you're gonna get this stuff out of the safe now that Mr. Nice Guy has changed the combination? It seems to me that you've had a spot of luck with me turning up here.

- FAY: (REALISING THAT HE'S GOT A POINT) Well... ok, ok, we can help each other out here... ok (FUMBLING IN ANOTHER BAG) Now if I give you this - it really is all I have in the world, it's another ten grand. So now you blow the safe and the pair of you just get out of here. How's that?
- FLETCHER: (CONSIDERING) Well that's one way of solving this, but like I say, you're lucky I turned up and I think you should be more grateful. Thirteen grand and a few bits of jewellery isn't much between the two of us for something so risky. I think you should up the anti.
- LANCE: EYEBROWS STUCK IN THE 'UP' POSITION.
Th th th thirteen grand....
- FAY: I can't, it's all I have to bargain with.
- FLETCHER: Sorry darlin but I simply don't believe you. Let's blow the safe and we will see what we will see.
- FAY: Ok, ok.... There's more cash in there, and diamonds. (SIGH OF RESIGNATION) Blow the safe then, a three-way split. But for God's sake let's get on with it, time's getting on and I really don't want this to go wrong.
- FLETCHER: TURNING HIS ATTENTION BACK TO HIS BAG OF TOOLS.
Right then, down to the business in hand.
LANCE HAS BEEN PACING THE ROOM, FIDDLING WITH THE SAFE DIALS AND THEN MOVING TO LOOK AT A GADGET ON THE WALL.
- LANCE: What's this?
- FAY: That's the alarm, don't touch it. For Christ's sake don't touch it.
HE JUMPS, STARTLED, AND MOVES AWAY.
THERE IS THE CRUNCH OF GRAVEL AS A CAR PULLS UP OUTSIDE ON THE DRIVEWAY – ALL PANIC
- FLETCHER: Jesus, now what?
- FAY: It can't be Marco, it's impossible.
- LANCE: STICKING HIS HEAD OUT OF THE WINDOW TO LOOK.
It's a black saab. Niiiiice motor... alloy wheels, soft top....
FLETCHER PUSHES HIM AWAY FROM THE WINDOW AND GIVES HIM A 'STUPID BOY' LOOK.
- FLETCHER: Yeah yeah, and who are you now – Jeremy Clarkson?
- FAY: Black Saab? It's Douglas !! I told him not to come. This is getting stupid.
- FLETCHER: What's this, the first day of 'arrod's sale, where is everybody coming from, for Christ's sake!
FLETCHER IS ON HIS FEET AND UNTYING FAY WHILST INSTRUCTING HER.

FLETCHER: Now you open the door to him nice and slow, you get him in here, you don't give the game away. Do you understand me? Nice and slow. Don't forget that I know where you're going... Mexico wasn't it? And I know who you're going with. Marco might do me over but not before I've dropped you right in it lady, understand me, capeesh?

LANCE: Capeesh... I like that... capeesh(MIMICKS GANGSTER ACTIONS)

FAY LEAVES THE ROOM, VOICES ARE HEARD OUTSIDE

FAY: Oh Douglas why did you come?

DOUGLAS: Fay, ... I had to, I had to make sure you got the stuff. I was so worried.

FAY: Come in here then, we'll get the stuff and go.

WHILE THIS CONVERSATION IS TAKING PLACE FLETCHER AND LANCE TAKE POSITIONS EITHER SIDE OF THE CLOSED DOOR. LANCE HAS PUT HIS MASK BACK ON, IT'S FLATTENED BY THE OPENING DOOR, LANCE IS REVEALED HOLDING HIS NOSE. FAY RE-ENTERS THE ROOM FOLLOWED BY DOUGLAS, WHO IS GRABBED BY FLETCHER – LANCE RECOVERS, PICKS UP THE FLEX AND TIES DOUGLAS UP.

DOUGLAS: What the.... What's going on? Fay? Who are these men? What do you want? Is Marco here? Get Marco here, I want to speak to him. Look, whatever Fay has told you it's not true. I just came over to speak to Marco. (NO ONE IS REACTING TO THIS) For god's sake..... I'm not interested in this silly bitch, I don't care what she's told you, it's a pack of lies.... This was all her doing, it was all her idea, I was just going along with it.....let me speak to Marco....

DOUGLAS THEN REALISES THAT THEY ARE TYING FAY UP AS WELL – HE STARES AT HER AND FAY IS STARING AT DOUGLAS IN DISBELIEF AT HIS BETRAYAL.

LANCE: TYING KNOTS.

There you are, isn't that cosy, nice and close so you can have a little chat, see if you can't sort the little hiccup that just seems to have occurred in your loving relationship.

FLETCHER: Bloody hell. Bloody hell. I thought this was a nice easy job. I can't believe this. I really can't believe it. (TO DOUGLAS) What a spot of luck you turned up Douglas, now we can have a game of bridge.

FAY: Please let us ...(LOOKS HARD AT DOUGLAS) Let me go. Please. I've told you what the deal is. You really are just wasting time now. For god's sake man, let's all get out of here.

LANCE HAS RESUMED HIS INTEREST IN THE ALARM ON THE WALL, HE TOUCHES IT, IT BEEPS, HE LEAPS BACK IN SURPRISE. OTHER NOISES OCCUR IN THE REST OF THE HOUSE

Now that just about puts the tin lid on it. You really are a complete fool aren't you. I told you not to touch that. Now we're all bloody doomed.

FLETCHER: What is it? What do you mean?

FAY: He's just alarmed the whole house. The house is so secure now we now can't open any windows, or doors either from the inside or the outside. It's like a fortress this place and we are all trapped inside it.

FLETCHER: So what do we do?

FAY: It has to be disabled by punching in today's code.

FLETCHER: And that is.....

FAY: I don't know, Marco changes it every day and doesn't always tell me. We can only wait for him to get back home and release us.

FLETCHER: So what you're saying is that we are all stuck here, we can't get out. We broke in, there's a safe full of god knows what, and now we can't get out, Jesus, Mary, Mother of God.....and Marco is on his way, and he can get us out, but he's not likely to, in fact he's highly likely to give us all a good beating. Jeeesus. Where's that whiskey?

End of act one.