

SHARON

by Phil Lewis

Comedy - Girl Power in the office
(Suitable for Drama Festivals)

Approx. 55 minutes (including scene changes)

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SHARON

Sharon *IS* the business. Without her 'Southgate, Mornington, Dixon & Greeves' would fall apart. But despite her demands for recognition and promotion, her boss, Duvall, keeps her trapped. Sharon makes a decision and puts Duvall in a predicament where he has to recognise her value. At last he sees the light, but it is all too late. Sharon has bigger ideas.

The action takes place in a small old fashioned office.

CAST

SHARON	20+
ROSEMARY	20+
DUVALL	30+
NICKI	18+ (can be male, although written for a female)
JOHN	30+ (can be female, although written for a male)

SCENES

Scene 1. Mid morning - Friday -	TIME: 10.00
Scene 2. Later the same morning.	TIME: 11.30
Scene 3. During lunch -	TIME: 12.35
Scene 4. Later that afternoon -	TIME: 14.45
Scene 5. Later that afternoon -	TIME: 15.00
Scene 6. Later that afternoon -	TIME: 16.00
Scene 7. Much later that afternoon -	TIME: 17.30

SCENE 1. MID MORNING - FRIDAY - TIME: 10.00

(THE SCENE IS A SMALL OLD FASHIONED OFFICE. SHARON HAS A TABLE AND CHAIR, CENTER STAGE. ON THE TABLE IS A TELEPHONE SWITCHBOARD SYSTEM, A KEYBOARD, COMPUTER (CAN BE UNDER THE TABLE) AND SCREEN. (IF POSSIBLE, SHE WEARS A CORDLESS HEADSET FOR TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS. THIS ALLOWS HER TO FILE AND MOVE AROUND THE OFFICE WHILE TALKING ON THE PHONE. SHE HAS THE USUAL PARAPHERNALIA OF OFFICE SECRETARIES, 'IN' AND 'OUT' TRAY, NOTEPAD, ROLADEX, ETC. IN A VERY VISIBLE PLACE IS A TRAY CLEARLY MARKED 'DUVALL'. THIS IS THE FULLEST TRAY OF ALL. SHE SPEAKS AND PERFORMS HER JOB WITHOUT PAUSING, OR SECOND THOUGHT. SHE IS SUPER EFFICIENT WHICH BELIES HER APPARENT 'ESSEX' BACKGROUND. THERE IS A FILING CABINET IN THE CORNER OF THE OFFICE, STAGE RIGHT. ALSO IN THE OFFICE IS ANOTHER DESK, WITH MISCELLANEOUS OFFICE ARTICLES. SEATED AT THE OTHER DESK, STAGE LEFT, IS ROSEMARY, WHO IS DILIGENTLY WORKING HER WAY THROUGH A PILE OF FINANCIAL REPORTS. SHE HAS A TELEPHONE ON HER DESK, BUT NO COMPUTER. TO STAGE RIGHT IS THE ENTRANCE TO DUVALL'S OFFICE. TO STAGE LEFT THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO THE OFFICE. IF POSSIBLE, SOME SORT OF CLOCK REPRESENTATION (EITHER PROJECTED, OR A PRACTICAL WHICH IS ALTERED DURING SCENE CHANGES))

(OPENING SOUND. CAPITAL RADIO MORNING SHOW. THERE IS THE SOUND OF A TELEPHONE RINGING AS THE LIGHTS COME UP. FADE RADIO EFFECT. SHARON ANSWERS THE TELEPHONE)

SHARON Southgate, Mornington, Dixon an' Greeves. How can I help youu? Bob, hi.... Sure..... Natch. I'll tell him, byeee.

(WITHOUT PAUSING FOR BREATH SHE CONTINUES A CONVERSATION WITH ROSEMARY, WHO IS BARELY LISTENING. WHILE TALKING, SHARON IS DIALING ANOTHER NUMBER)

SHARONweren't going to see 'er at all. So.....I says, 'well, Gillian, well?' (INTO THE PHONE) Bob Dawson says the price is okay and to send 'im the quote officially....No probs, byeee. (TO ROSEMARY).....and she says 'well what, Shas? I tell ya I was gettin' really.....(SHE ANSWERS AN INCOMING CALL) Southgate, Mornington, Dixon an' Greeves. How can I help youuu? Jude, hi.... Nuffin', why?Great, see ya at seven firty..... I dunno. I'll ask.....(TO ROSEMARY) She jus' wouldn't tell me, ya know. (ROSEMARY NODS, ABSTRACTLY). So I asked 'er straight out. I said, Gillian are ya.....(INTO THE PHONE) Mary? Jude and I's going art for a drink Sat'dy. Comin', or what?Great! See you artside ya 'ouse, then. Byeee. (TO ROSEMARY AS THE PHONE RINGS AGAIN).....Are ya seeing Bob, or what? Do ya no what she said?

ROSEMARY No. What?

SHARON (INTO PHONE). Southgate, Mornington, Dixon an' Greeves. How can I help youuu? Triciar, hi.No, what.....never. I say. So what did 'e say.....? Cheeky git! Wait till I see 'im. Tell ya what....I'll give him a fax an' an arf. Leave it wiv me.No prob. Bye. (TO ROSEMARY). What wiv the way e's treated ya, Gills, and the way e's gone bangin' on about ya. (SHE RAPIDLY TYPES AS SHE SPEAKS). Give me a break Gills, I said. Give us all a break. After all, if she were any more stupid, she'd 'ave to be watered twice a week. Do ya Know, she told me one day, that she kept going to the front door. Back 'an forf. Why? I says. 'Cause my computer said I 'ave mail, she says. Daft Ca! So.....Chuck 'im. I told 'er straight. So....the followin' day she calls me at 'ome and says she's only bloody dun it. Great, says I, quite relieved, as ya can imagine. Great, I says. (SHE HITS THE KEYS THAT SENDS THE FAX AND DIALS ANOTHER PHONE NUMBER) Then she 'its me wiv it. She's only goin' art with Darren, aint she? Darren, my ex. Not chuffed. I was not chuffed, I can tell ya. So...I says. (INTO PHONE) Hello, Triciar.Fax gone. That'll keep 'im quiet, eh?No prob. Bye. (TO ROSEMARY) Nice one, Gills, I said. So I get 'er off the fone and gives Darren a bell, don' !! Not for what ya think, na. I weren't gonna 'ave a go at 'im or nuffin. Na, I just want'd to tell 'im that it were all right by me. (INTO THE PHONE) Jude? Yeah that's fine. Mary an' me will see ya at abart seven. Bye. (TO ROSEMARY) Don' get me wrong, Darren 'as 'is bad points, an nat, (PHONE RINGS AGAIN) but 'e's all right is Darren. But I know 'ow sensitive 'e is and fought I'd put 'is mind at rest. (INTO PHONE) Southgate, Mornington, Dixon an' Greeves. How can I help youuu? Bernie!!!Stop that, you're very norty. Oo did ya want?Na, 'e's not busy at the moment. I'll put ya frew..... Stop it, you'll get me the sack you will. 'Ere ya go.

(SHE TRANSFERS THE CALL AND MOVES TO THE FILING CABINET AND GETS OUT A THICK FILE, RETURNS TO THE DESK WHERE SHE PLACES IT IN FULL SIGHT OF THE AUDIENCE. SHE TALKS CONTINUOUSLY)

I knew he'd be feelin' guil'y, Darren ...an 'e was. So after that, 'e was all right too. I just fink she's a little.....well, got the six pack, but lacks the plastic thingy to 'old 'em together. Know what I mean! 'E needs someone a little...brighter. Where was I wiv this?....oh yea. That was over two years ago na, an what I was gonna say was, they've just 'ad their first kiddy. Gel it was, Trixy. Bloody silly name.....

(DUVALL ENTERS IN A SLIGHTLY AGITATED STATE AND INTERRUPTS THE CONVERSATION)

DUVALL Get me the Johnston file.....

(WITHOUT LOOKING UP OR INTERRUPTING HER CONVERSATION SHARON PICKS UP THE FILE SHE HAS JUST RETRIEVED FROM THE

CABINET AND HANDS IT TO DUVALL, WHO TAKES IT WITHOUT A WORD AND EXITS TO HIS OFFICE)

SHARON if you ask me. Trixy! But they're 'appy, I suppose that means a lot.

ROSEMARY And you're all right with that? I mean, your ex-boyfriend and best friend, getting married?

SHARON (DIALING A NUMBER) Na. They ain't married, or nuffin. But I'm fine wiv that, honest. Since I found Don, I couldn't be 'appier. Honest. I tell ya. (INTO PHONE) Hello, Mr. Wilson? Yeah, me, Sharon.Yeah, I know, recognise me voice anywhere. (SHE LAUGHS). How are ya?Great, ta. I expect Mr. Duvall will wanna word wiv ya in a minute. 'Ang on, 'ere we go. (SHE SWITCHES THROUGH TO ANOTHER CALL) Yes, Mr. Duvall, I 'ave 'im on the line for ya..... cos I jus' knew ya would. Ta. Go ahead Mr. Wilson..... Yeah, you too, ta. (TO ROSEMARY) I loved Darren an nat, but he weren't really the right bloke for me, know what I mean? (PHONE RINGS AND SHARON ANSWERS) Southgate, Mornington, Dixon an' Greeves. How can I help youu? Mr. Richards, hi. How are youuu?Great, fanks. How can I help youu?Really? When did ya want it?Yesterday? I'm sure it has gone. Let me check. (SHE PUTS THE CALL ON HOLD).

(WHILE SHE IS TALKING SHE LOOKS FOR AND FINDS THE MISSING DOCUMENT IN THE BOTTOM OF THE 'DUVALL' TRAY AND MAKES A FACE AT ROSEMARY WHO SMILES BACK. SHARON MAKES ANOTHER CALL).

SHARON Roddy, urgent post needs sending. Now please. Prompto mondo..... Ta. (SHE TRANSFERS THE ORIGINAL CALL BACK TO HER HEADSET. MEANWHILE, SHE PLACES A COMPLIMENT SLIP AND THE DOCUMENT INTO THE ENVELOPE AND WRITES THE ADDRESS ON THE FRONT, APPLYING A STAMP. ALL THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED WHILE THE CONVERSATION IS GOING ON)

SHARON 'Ow's the wife, Mr. Richards?Did she?That's all right. Mr. Duvall luvs to send 'is best customers flarrs on the wive's birfdey..... No probs. An' the kids?.....Great. Na, not me. Not yet anyways.....Yeah, while I'm young an' nat. Ta.

(SHARON PLACES THE FINISHED ENVELOPE INTO THE CLEARLY MARKED 'POST' TRAY)

SHARON Yes, the information you wan'ed has definitely bin sent, Mr. Richards..... Look, I tell ya what. If you don' get it first fmg tomorra, I'll bring a copy over meself. Okay?Fine. Bye. (HANGS UP) Sorted.

ROSEMARY He actually sent flowers to a client?

SHARON Naa. I did that. 'E wouldn't remember anyfing.

ROSEMARY Doesn't Duvall ever get anything done in there?

SHARON Rarely. Not while e's got me, eh?

ROSEMARY He doesn't deserve you, Sharon. He takes advantage of you. Too much.

SHARON 'Es alright.

ROSEMARY He's not very well liked in the rest of the company. I suppose you do know that? He's regarded as having a room temperature I.Q. He's holding you back.....promotion wise.

SHARON Ya gotta look on the uvver side too, ya no, Rosey. 'E just lets me get on wiv it. 'E never bovvers me, or nuffin'. I'm kept busy. I never get bored, an' nat. There's a great element of freedom, ya know!

ROSEMARY That's because you do all YOUR work. And HIS! You should be doing his job and getting paid his exorbitant salary too. He just lets all the work pile up, dumps it on to you and thinks you pass it on to someone else to do it. I'm sure he's no real idea that it's you doing all his work for him. You really should make him aware of what you really do!

SHARON Naaa. It's jus' a job, Rosey. I jus' 'ave....a knack, that's all. Jus' a job in it? I 'ate gettin' bored an nat. 'Ere we go. It's 'im again. (Into the phone) Mr. Duvall..... Certainly..... Right away..... Yes I'll be right in.

(THE TWO GIRLS LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND SIMULTANEOUSLY SPEAK).

SHARON AND ROSEMARY

He wants 'is (his) coffee.....(Na!) Now!

(FADE TO BLACKOUT)

SCENE 2. LATER THE SAME MORNING. TIME: 11.30

(LIGHTS COME UP ON THE TWO GIRLS IN THE SAME POSITION. THE 'IN' TRAY IS EMPTIER AND THE 'DUVALL' TRAY IS NOW PILED HIGHER)

SHARON Well, Darren and Gills' daughta, Trixi's Godfather, Arnold, rents this small flat up in Dulwich. 'As dun for years apparently. Well, the landlord, 'Arry somebody or uvver, owns quite of few of these 'ouses. Quite well off, actually. So... 'e knows alota people wiv money, like. Rich nobs, an nat. According to Darren, 'e knows fousands of people what are rich. Na then, one of these blokes owns a little bit of land near the docks. Wapping, is it? I dunno. Anyway, near the docks on the Thames sumwhere. Bought it for peanuts and don't give a monkeys.....So anovver of 'Arry's mates decides to build on it. No 'ouses, na. Not offices, na, but a bleeding gymnasium, don 'e! What's more, you'll larf at this, it only makes 'im a fortune, don it! Didn' you used to go to a gym?

ROSEMARY (STOPS WORKING FOR MOMENT TO TALK) For a while yes. It cost me nearly four-hundred quid and I didn't lose a pound. Apparently you have to show up. My attitude is, no pain, no pain.

SHARON (LAUGHS) I 'ate all that. I 'ave to exercise in the mornin' before me brain figures art what I'm doin'. If God meant us to touch are toes, e'd 'ave put 'em further up are body.

ROSEMARY Now, the only reason I'd take up jogging was to hear heavy breathing again. But, I do need to feel fit.

SHARON You'll find somebody else, Rosey. Another dad for Michael. Soon 'an all.

ROSEMARY (SHRUGGING AWAY HER THOUGHTS AND CONTINUING WITH HER WORK) You were saying?

SHARON Oh, yeah. So 'Arry's mate goes an' builds more and more. Each gettin' bigger than the one before, until 'e's got 'imself a huge bleeding Leisure Centre, norf of Islington. By na, see, 'e's got imself what is called a business empire. Course, the guy's as thick as two short 'uns, but 'e's megga rich and 'is ego won't let 'im stop. So... 'e carries on buying up land, building and selling, and more building, an all that malarkey. Well, 'e only goes and buys up the block of flats what's rented by Gill and Darren, don 'e! So 'eres (here's) Darren talking to this bloke, what owns 'arf of London. Now Darren's a talker, you met 'im once, didn't ya? Yeah. June nineteenf, coupla years ago. Remember? He came 'ere to pick me up and you'd just started. Remember?

ROSEMARY Vaguely.....

SHARON So.....Darren says to, I fink 'is name's Bert, or sumfin', Bert, 'ow do ya manage to run your business empire, mate, on yer own like? Bert says to Darren, na, I've got loads of bods doin' all the work for me. So Darren says, this'll get ya, Rosey, I know a bird that'll run anyone's empire for 'em. Me, Rosey, 'e was talking about me! That's my Darren.....

(DUVALL ENTERS AND SPEAKS ACROSS THE TWO GIRLS CONVERSATION)

DUVALL Sharon, what's the time of my.....

SHARON (BEFORE HE CAN FINISH) 3.30, ya due on the course. Nine 'oles only, mind. 7.30 ya've drinks with Robinson, Taylor and Varney. Dave, Tom and Harry. 9.30 ya expected at HOME! and tomorra ya've a meetin' at 9.30 with the people from Dollards.

DUVALL (SLIGHTLY EFFACED). I know. I meant with regard to Celia.....

SHARON 'Er birfdey's next Tuesdee. I've bought a card and ordered flars. I've also booked ya a table for 7.30 at Romanos. I 'ad to cancel ya poker night. Ya need to read this lot too. (SHE HANDS HIM A PILE OF DISTINCTIVE PAPERWORK WHICH HE TAKES CASUALLY). It's IMPORTANT! Stuff in there ya need ta know!

DUVALL Right. Okay. (HE TURNS AWAY BEMUSED, TRYING TO REMEMBER IT ALL. HE FLICKS THROUGH THE PILE DISINTERESTEDLY. GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT HE ISN'T GOING TO READ IT)

SHARON (CONTINUING AS IF NOT INTERRUPTED) Well, to cut a long story short, an nat, this bloke says to Darren, get 'er to giv me a call'. Bert only givs Darren 'is business card and Darren givs it to me. Tells me to call the bloke, quick as ya like. So I did. (TAKING A CALL) Southgate, Mornington, Dixon an' Greeves. How can I help youu?.....Mr. G. 'Ow the devil are ya?.....Great fanks. 'An the good lady wife? Good.....Really? Common that is. Me Gran's going deaf. At least that's what me Grandad said. 'E told me the ovver day that he stood behind 'er and said, alright, sweet'art? She didn' answer. 'E moved nearer and said it again. Alright sweet'art? Still no reply. An' 'e got right up close behin' her and said it again, alright sweet'art? She turned rand and said, FOR THE FIRD TIME, YES I'M ALRIGHT! (LAUGHS AT HER JOKE)....Do I? Well fanks.....It makes me day

talkin' to you, too. Did ya want to speak wiv 'im? I'll put ya straight frew. Byeeee. (TRANSFERS THE CALL)

ROSEMARY So, what happened?

SHARON Oh, yeah. I went to this enourmus building, Stratford way, for an intavue. I never did meet this bloke Bert, but I met one of 'is secretaries. Janice. Very nice gel. Very posh looking, but comes from near my way. We got on like an 'ouse on fire, we did. I tell ya, I never fought it was an intavue at all. We 'ad a nice chat an' I went 'ome. Well, a week later I get's this letter offerin' me a job as P.A. to a Mr. Davidson and can I start as soon as poss.

ROSEMARY Wow! Well done. You must have impressed them then?

SHARON Well I dunno 'ow! I only met this Janice the once.

ROSEMARY What's the name of this company?

SHARON Oh....Davmark International. I fink.

ROSEMARY That sounds familiar. (ROSEMARY LOOKS THROUGH HER SHEETS OF FINANCIAL FIGURES) Yes. Here it is. Davmark international. Well....they're one of our main branch's largest customers.

SHARON I've never 'erd of them before the uver day!

ROSEMARY Yes.....I see. Davmark is the Group company. Their subsidiaries are.....Williams and Co....

SHARON Oh.....Rebecarr...I speak to 'er often.

ROSEMARYRomulous Limited.....

SHARON Bernie! The cheeky sod.

ROSEMARY Dane and Son.....

SHARON Greta and John. Lovely couple them.

ROSEMARY (LOOKING UP) The list goes on. You seem to know them all. More importantly, they all know you.

SHARON Well....what'd ya know!

ROSEMARY I think you've impressed more people than you realise, Shas. All except one that is. (SHE LOOKS TOWARDS DUVALL'S OFFICE)

SHARON Yeah. Can't win 'em all.

ROSEMARY So?

SHARON So what?

ROSEMARY Have you accepted the offer of the job?

SHARON Naah.

ROSEMARY Why not?

SHARON I dunno. Jus' didn't fancy it. I only did it for a larf. Keep Darren 'appy, an nat. Let 'im fink 'es bein' 'elpful.

ROSEMARY You only went for the interview because you thought it would please Darren?

SHARON Yeah.

ROSEMARY So you're not interested in the job?

SHARON Nah.....(THE PHONE RINGS) Southgate, Mornington, Dixon an' Greeves. How can I help youuu?..... I'm afraid 'es tied up until tamorra. Leave a message?..... I'll tell 'im.....Yes I will. Byee. (STILL TYPING) 'Ere, I bet ya didn't no, the words 'stewardesses' and 'reverberated' are the longes' words typed wiv only the left hand. An' the longest word typed usin' only the right hand is, 'lollipop.' Funny that, i'n it?

ROSEMARY No, I didn't. Seriously, you deserve a better job than this, Sharon. I'd take Bert's offer if I was you.

SHARON Naa. Not interest'd. Must go pee and then off for me lunch. I've got to take a few hours off this afternoon. I 'aven't seen much of ya since ya bin back, 'ave I? I've sumfin' to tell ya later. Sumfin' that'll surprise ya.

(SHE EXITS AS THE LIGHTS FADE TO BLACKOUT)

SCENE 3. DURING LUNCH - TIME: 12.35

(ROSEMARY IS EATING HER LUNCH WHILE WORKING. SHE IS ALONE AS DUVALL COMES IN FROM HIS OFFICE WITH A PILE OF PAPERS. HE THROWS THEM INTO THE 'IN' TRAY AND STOPS AS ROSEMARY SPEAKS)

ROSEMARY Mr. Duvall?

DUVALL Yes?

ROSEMARY Has Sharon been put forward for promotion yet?

DUVALL What? Oh, Sharon, yes.

ROSEMARY She works very hard.

DUVALL Yes. What are YOU working on at the moment?

ROSEMARY Final accounts for year end.

DUVALL Good. Profits up on last year?

ROSEMARY Looks that way, so far.

DUVALL Good. (TURNS TO GO).

ROSEMARY I don't think you realise how much background work Sharon does for you, Mr. Duvall. I think she needs reassurance she's appreciated here.

DUVALL Really? I think you should get on with your work and allow me to get on with mine.

ROSEMARY Yes, Mr. Duvall. I just thought you might like to know that if you're not careful, you may well lose her. That's all.

DUVALL She hasn't complained.

ROSEMARY She's not the type. You know that. That doesn't mean she's not.....

DUVALL Listen, Miss Squires.....

ROSEMARY It's Robins. Robins!

DUVALLSharon has one of the premiere jobs in this building, working for one of the most successful Directors. Me. For what she does, she's extremely well paid. Whereas I appreciate your concern, I'd be grateful if everyone just got on with their own jobs and left me alone to deal with mine.

ROSEMARY I was just trying to help.....

DUVALL You've just had several months on maternity leave and I suggest you've a fair bit of work to catch up. I granted your Department Head permission to use this office space as a favour, but if you're going to be disruptive to my staff and have an adverse effect on my business, you'll be out on your ear. Understood?

ROSEMARY I was only trying to

DUVALL I really don't care what you were trying to do. My business is MY business. I strongly resent outside interference.

ROSEMARY I didn't mean to

DUVALL I remain the most successful Director here because ofWHAT, do you think?

ROSEMARY Sharon.....?

DUVALL Sharon! Miss Squires, (SHE TRIES TO CORRECT HIM ON HER NAME AGAIN, BUT HE CARRIES ON TOO QUICKLY) Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak. Sharon is not the issue here. This department is successful because I know what I'm doing and get on with it. I don't interfere in.....(WAVES A HAND AT THE PILE OF PRINT OUT ON HER DESK) finance, other departments. I sell. I make a fortune for this company.

ROSEMARY I'm sorry. I.....

DUVALL Sharon is my SECRETARY. She does what I tell her. Nothing more, nothing less. Do you have a problem with that, MISS Squires?

ROSEMARY Put that way....no.

DUVALL Good. I don't want to hear about this again. Understood.

ROSEMARY Yes, Mr. Duvall.

DUVALL I don't want Sharon getting ideas above her station.
Especially from junior clerks like you. Get on with your work.

ROSEMARY (STUNNED AND INSULTED) But, I never.....

DUVALL Conversation over.

(HE EXITS. ROSEMARY STIFLES HER ANGER AND IS INTERRUPTED BY NICKY ENTERING THE OFFICE. SHE SMILES GRANDLY AT ROSEMARY AND WALKS TO SHARON'S DESK. SHE PLACES HER MOBILE PHONE CAREFULLY ON THE DESK, HER LARGE CARRIER BAG ON THE FLOOR AND SITS DOWN. SHE TAKES A PERFUNCTORY LOOK AROUND THE OFFICE AND SETTLES BACK IN THE CHAIR)

NICKY Hi. I'm the temp, Nicky.

ROSEMARY Hello, Rosemary. Temp? For whom?

NICKY Well apparently Sharon called downstairs and asked if anyone was free to take over while she was out this afternoon. (WRINKLES HER NOSE AT THE SMELL) Nice perfume, but must she marinate in it? Busy here is it?

ROSEMARY Sharon's busy, yes.

NICKY Right. I'm only here for a few hours. All right?

ROSEMARY I suppose so. I didn't know anything about a temp!

(DUVALL ENTERS AND LOOKS AT THE YOUNG WOMAN SETTling INTO SHARON'S SEAT)

DUVALL Where's Sharon?

NICKY She's out for a few hours.

DUVALL Who are you?

NICKY I'm Nicky. I'm temping for a week in Sales.

DUVALL Why're you here?

NICKY Sharon wanted someone to cover while she was out. I think.

DUVALL Fine. Here are four letters that need an immediate response.

NICKY I don't do typing.

DUVALL Well they're urgent. Perhaps you could give the names on each of these a call and tell them a letter will be forthcoming.

NICKY Do I look like a people person? I don't do receptionist work, either.

DUVALL What ARE you here for then?

NICKY I told you, just to cover for Sharon.

DUVALL (EXASPERATED) Give her these as soon as she gets back, then.

NICKY Sure.

(DUVALL EXITS, MILDLY ANNOYED AND THE TEMP WINKS AT THE OPEN-MOUTHED ROSEMARY)

NICKY You have to lay the ground rules, you see. If they know you're not going to do it from the start, they don't give much to you at all. Works every time.

(SHE SETTLES DOWN AND BEGINS TO READ A MAGAZINE. THE PHONE BEGINS TO RING AND SHE IGNORES IT, UNTIL ROSEMARY FINALLY SPEAKS)

ROSEMARY Aren't you going to answer that?

NICKY Oh, yeah. (SLOWLY SHE PICKS UP THE PHONE). Hello?No it isn't.No she isn't..... I don't know..... I'll tell her. (SHE REPLACES THE RECEIVER AND CONTINUES READING)

ROSEMARY Who was it?

NICKY Some bloke called Morten, or something.

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