THE FATHER

by
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(Anthony & Anne Beginning Scene)
FADE IN: ANNE ENTERS THE FLAT WHERE ANTHONY IS.

ANNE
Dad? It’s me. Dad? There you are.

ANTHONY
What are you doing here?

ANNE
What do you think?

ANTHONY
Huh?

ANNE
So, what happened?

ANTHONY
Nothing.

ANNE
Oh, tell me.

ANTHONY
I just did. Nothing happened.

ANNE
Nothing happened?

ANTHONY
No.

ANNE
I’ve just had her on the phone.

ANTHONY
So, what does that prove?

ANNE
You can’t go on behaving like this.

ANTHONY
Well, it’s my flat, isn’t it? This is incredible. You burst in on me as if — I’ve no idea who she is, this woman. I never asked her for anything.

ANNE
She’s here to help you.
ANTHONY
To help me do what? I don’t need her. I don’t need anyone.

ANNE
She told me you’d called her a little bitch. I don’t know what else.

ANTHONY
Maybe, I don’t remember.

ANNE
She was in tears.

ANTHONY
Because I called her a little bitch?

ANNE
No. She told me that you’d threatened her physically.

ANTHONY
Me? Physically? Obviously she has no idea what she’s talking about. This woman is raving mad, Anne. Believe me. Best if she does leave, believe me. Especially as, um..

ANNE
As what?

ANTHONY
Hmm? Ah. I didn’t want to tell you this, but since you must know... I suspect she was, um — uh, she...

ANNE
She was what?

ANTHONY
She was stealing from me.

ANNE
Angela? Of course not. What are you talking about?

ANTHONY
I’m telling you, she stole my watch.

ANNE
Your watch?
ANTHONY
Yes.

ANNE
Isn’t it more likely you just lost it?

ANTHONY
No! I already had my suspicion. So I set a trap for her. I left my watch somewhere in the open to see if she’d pinch it or

ANNE
Where?

ANTHONY
Hmmm?

ANNE
Where did you leave it?

ANTHONY
I don’t know and I don’t remember. All I know is it’s nowhere to be found. I can’t find it. There’s your proof. That girl stole my watch. I know she did. Yeah. What’s the matter?

ANNE
I don’t know what to do. We have to talk, Dad.

ANTHONY
Well, that’s what we’re doing, isn’t it?

ANNE
No, I mean, seriously. That’s the third one you’ve...

ANTHONY
I’m telling you, I don’t need her. I don’t need her or anyone else. I can manage very well on my own.

ANNE
It wasn’t easy to find her, you know.

ANTHONY
No.
ANN
This isn’t easy. I thought she looked really good. Lots of great qualities. And now she doesn’t want to work here anymore.

ANTHONY
You are not listening to what I’m telling you. That girl stole my watch. I’m not going to live with a thief, do you understand?

ANN
Have you looked under the bath?

ANTHONY
What?

ANN
Under the bath, by the pipes. Where you hide your valuables.

ANTHONY
How do you know that? And tell me the truth.

ANN
I don’t know, I just know.

ANTHONY
Have you been looking in my hiding place?

ANN
No.

ANTHONY
Then how do you know that sometimes that’s where I keep my valuables.

ANN
I don’t know. I found it by accident.

ANTHONY
You.

[Anthony storms off]

ANN
Dad. Dad. Where are you going? I haven’t touched anything!

[door closes]
[door opens and Anthony returns to living room and turns on the television.]

ANNE
So you found it then?

ANTHONY
What?

ANNE
Your watch?

ANTHONY
Oh, yes.

ANNE
So, you realize Angela had nothing to do with it?

ANTHONY
Only because I hid it, luckily, just in time. Otherwise I’d be sitting here talking to you with no means of knowing what time it was. It’s five o’clock, if you’re interested. Myself, I am interested. Pardon me for breathing.

ANNE
Have you had your pills?

ANTHONY
Yes! Why do you keep looking as me as if there’s something wrong? Everything is fine, Anne. The world is turning. You’ve always been that way. A worrier. Whereas your sister… Where is she, by the way? Have you heard from her? I am asking you a question.

ANNE
Um… I’m going to have to move, Dad. I’m going to have to leave London.

ANTHONY
Really? Why?

ANNE
We talked about this. Do you remember?
ANTHONY
Ah, is that why you’re so keen on this nurse living with me? Obviously it is. The rats are leaving the ship.

ANNE
I won’t be here. I won’t be able to come here every day. You need to understand that, Dad.

ANTHONY
Yeah. So, you’re leaving? When? I mean, why?

ANNE
I’ve met someone.

ANTHONY
You?

ANNE
Yes.

ANTHONY
You mean a man?

ANNE
Yes.

ANTHONY
Really?

ANNE
You don’t have to sound quite so surprised.

ANTHONY
No, no, its just that, I mean… well, you have to admit that since, um…

ANNE
James?

ANTHONY
James. There hasn’t been a lot of, um… What does he do anyway?

ANNE
He lives in Paris.

ANTHONY
Oh.
ANN
So I’m going to go and live there.

ANTHONY
What, you in Paris? You’re not gonna do that, are you, Anne? I mean, wake up. They don’t even speak English. So, if I understand correctly, you’re leaving me. Is that it? You’re abandoning me.

ANN
Dad.

ANTHONY
What’s gonna become of me?

ANN
Obviously this is very important to me, otherwise I wouldn’t be going. I— I really love him. And I can come back and see you often. At the weekends. But I can’t leave you here on your own. It’s not possible. And that’s why if... if you refuse to have a carer, I’m going to have to —

ANTHONY
To what?

ANN
You have to understand, Dad.

ANTHONY
Anne, you’re going to have to what?