

*Three More Sleepless Nights* was first staged at the Soho Poly, London on 9 June 1980. The cast was as follows:

MARGARET	Jan Chappell
FRANK	Fred Pearson
PETE	Kevin McNally
DAWN	Harriet Walter

*Directed by* Les Waters

MARGARET. Night after night you're round there, don't bother lying, night after night, you can clear out round and live there, I don't care. Night after night / coming home pissed, what am I for,

FRANK. Shut it.

MARGARET. clean up your mess? Times I've cleaned your sick off the floor, you was sick on the Christmas presents Christmas Eve, time you shat yourself / tell her that, she'd like that, clean up your shit.

FRANK. Shut it.

MARGARET. Give her something to think about. She thinks the sun shines out of your arse, I could tell her different, ten years / of you, let her try ten

FRANK. Shut up will you, five minutes peace, come through my own front door you start rucking. What sort of home's that? Any wonder I don't come home, when I come in you start, any wonder, Christ.

MARGARET. years, she don't know half, spruce yourself up aftershave me mum give you Christmas, she don't know who you are, thinks you walked out the telly, that's what you fancy, someone don't know nothing about you. You can come over big, talk big, big spender, Mr Big, Mr Big Pig coming home night after night / pissed out of your mind, what mind you got to be pissed out of?

FRANK. Shut up will you. I've not been there. I've not been to see her two weeks now, not been round there two weeks, I told you I was stopping seeing her. She come up the garage dinner-time. I says no, I told Margaret I'm not seeing you and it's true I'm not seeing her, ask anyone, ask Charlie. I been up the pub that's all. / I suppose I'm not let go up the pub now is

MARGARET. Ask Charlie.

FRANK. it, sorry mates my wife won't let me. I been up the pub, I been to Charlie's for a few pints after,

ask Charlie / ask anyone, my wife's just checking

MARGARET. Charlie'd say anything.

FRANK. up on me, she don't believe a word I say, don't believe a word I say, don't believe a word I say, do you? / What sort of marriage, what sort of

MARGARET. Ask her, shall I?

FRANK. wife are you? What sort of marriage? What's left? What do I bother for? What I give her up for?

MARGARET. Go round there shall I, ask her, silly cow, she'd tell me too, all smiles, tears in her eyes, can't we be friends, can we fuck, must have been desperate to be friends with her anyone with a pram and a cup of tea, / can't think what

FRANK. Might as well still see her, might as well go round there now. Your fault, you drive me, you drive me round there, don't believe a word, what's the point, you think I'm having it off, come in the door start rucking, might as well enjoy it.

MARGARET. you see in her, her hair's growing out too, looks dreadful, looks cheap, she's cheap, word my mum was fond of, cheap, see the point of it now, cheap. She don't look younger than me, she's five years, what you must think of me if you fancy that. Try to look after myself, / don't

FRANK. I go round there now you know whose fault it is, what sort of marriage is this? What sort of wife are you? Come in my own front door.

MARGARET. look bad, could have been a model, could have been a hairdresser, could have been a shorthand typist easy the grades I had in Commerce, I had good speeds, could have been a temp made a fortune by now, secretary to an executive / gave it up to be a wife to you, could have took the pill

FRANK. Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah.

MARGARET. gone raving, could have had blokes wouldn't look at her, cheap she is, hair growing out, stupid cow, can't type even, can't read, what you must think of me if you fancy that. Puts you in your place, what you must be like, must be desperate, feeling your age a bit, take what's on offer, last chance, think what other blokes she's had / can't hold jobs, weirdos, that's where

FRANK. You fancy Charlie.

MARGARET. you're heading. Weirdos and winos, about it with her, all she can get. There was one looked like a goldfish couldn't shut his mouth come in handy I suppose with the kissing, surprised you can shut yours / all the time you spend round

FRANK. You fancy Charlie.

MARGARET. there, want to watch out you don't end up looking like a goldfish. I do not fancy Charlie /

FRANK. You like him don't you?

MARGARET. so don't start that. I quite like him. He's your friend. You're the one he tells

FRANK. We all know whose friend he is, you like him don't you?

MARGARET. lies for. Your friend. I don't like him / like

FRANK. You fancy him.

MARGARET. that, I quite like him.

FRANK. You quite like him, you quite like what you get, you quite like it, / you like it.

MARGARET. I don't get nothing.

FRANK. You don't get nothing. Not for want of trying. /

MARGARET. I don't try. I don't know what you're talking about

FRANK. Not for want of trying is it. No you don't try, too good aren't you, fancy yourself, he's not pulled that easy, you've no style, no class / he's got them queuing up, Charlie.

MARGARET. I don't want Charlie, I'm not interested, I love you.

FRANK. And you like him.

MARGARET. I don't dislike him / but that don't mean I fancy him.

FRANK. And he don't dislike you. Eh? Has he said that? He don't dislike you? He don't / dislike you.

MARGARET. He's not said nothing.

FRANK. That's a lie, never stops talking to you, / every

MARGARET. He's not said he dislikes me.

FRANK. time I take you up the pub. I'm sure he hasn't said he dislikes you / no, he wouldn't.

MARGARET. He hasn't said he likes me either.

FRANK. Hasn't said he likes you? My heart bleeds. I'm very sorry he hasn't said he likes you. You'll have to make do with him touching you up. /

MARGARET. He don't.

FRANK. You're wasting your time, seems to me. Don't know why you don't get on with it / instead of

MARGARET. Nothing to get on with.

FRANK. making me hang about. Nothing to get on with? He thinks there is / oh yes he does.

MARGARET. How do you know what he thinks?

FRANK. Oh it's only you knows what he thinks is it? / What does he think? I should ask him, phone

MARGARET. I don't know what he thinks.

FRANK. him up, ask him / go on, phone him

MARGARET. Don't be stupid.

FRANK. up, ask him. He might say no he don't fancy you, that would hurt your feelings / that would

MARGARET. No it wouldn't.

FRANK. be a shock. Charlie not fancy you. I don't see why not, it would hurt my feelings if it was me, you ent got no feelings that's your trouble, think you're wonderful, don't care what nobody thinks of you. Just as well / way your skin's going

MARGARET. He's just a friend. He's your friend.

FRANK. nobody's going to want to know. You're putting on weight too. You be friendly, I'm not bothered, you be friendly, you take him to the pictures, don't you stop for me. I'm not bothered. I'd move out if I was you, go on / why don't you move out leave me in peace, come in

MARGARET. I don't want to move out, I love you, why don't you listen to me, what you doing to us, what's it for?

FRANK. my own front door start rucking. You want it both ways don't you, me and him, well I'm not playing that little game. Like him do you, I like him, bet he's got a big one eh? gets big for you eh? you'd like that wouldn't you? get all wet thinking of him eh? / think of him in bed

MARGARET. Night after night you come home pissed, I've had enough of you, serve you right if I did fancy Charlie, what if I did, what about you and her, round there every night, I know you are whatever you say.

FRANK. do you? lying there thinking of him then give me a rucking, thinking of him were you? think of him when you're with me? pretend it's him do you? eh? Wasting your time there because Charlie wouldn't touch you if you was the last woman, he's said that to me, he's said that, only that time he was drunk last Christmas, you couldn't keep your hands off him at the party, I was ashamed to know where to look in front of my friends / if Charlie wasn't my mate

MARGARET. Where were you then, upstairs with her, that's where you were, Christmas party, who was sick on the presents?



FRANK I'd break his neck, he knows that, he apologised to me, he didn't know what he was doing could have been his grandmother under the mistletoe if she come at him the way you did. I didn't know where to look, showing me up in front of my friends, at least what I do I do decent, I don't shame nobody, I take her different places than what I take you / don't go the same pub,

MARGARET. Take her with a different prick do you?

FRANK. nothing, nobody knows, I don't flirt like you do, it's all right between me and her, it's not flirting, it's something special you wouldn't understand, /

MARGARET. All right is it?

FRANK. I go in her door don't get this / don't get

MARGARET. I don't understand, I don't want to understand.

FRANK. rucking, get some peace after a day's work talk, about cheap, you're cheap / anyone

MARGARET. Piss off round there then and I hope it's something special and I hope you get a hot dinner with it and your socks washed -

CHILD (off). Mummy.

FRANK. you can rub up against at a party, nobody's interested are they that's the trouble, you don't want me, that's what it is, you don't want me, you'd have anyone else you could get, you don't want me, you can't get nobody else /

CHILD (off). Mummy.

FRANK. that's all it is / You don't want me.

MARGARET. Shut up, shush, wait.

*Silence.*

FRANK. Go on then go and see him, don't mind me, everyone's more important than me / just has to

MARGARET. He'll go off, sh.

FRANK. call out, drop everything.

*Silence.*

MARGARET. I don't want a row. / Put out the light.

FRANK. I don't want a row. I want a good night's sleep before tomorrow. Set the clock have you? /

MARGARET. 'Course I've set the clock.

FRANK. Didn't go off this morning.

MARGARET. That was yesterday. It went off all right this morning / you didn't wake up, that's all.

FRANK. Whichever day it was. Set it properly have you?

FRANK *puts out the light.*

You don't enjoy it with me, you don't want me that's what it is, you don't / enjoy it with me, you

MARGARET. Oh God.

FRANK. said that I remember every word you say, you said that, don't deny it, you said it, / can't

MARGARET. I said it once, I said I didn't enjoy it that time, I didn't say I don't enjoy it.

FRANK. get out of it now. No man wants a woman don't want him, stands to reason, only human, Christ, you think I'm a fucking machine, you got a washing machine, drying machine, fucking machine / I'm not your fucking fucking machine.

MARGARET. Didn't enjoy it that time my God you was drunk, you just been with her, you said she was better than me, she moved about more, what am I supposed to do? I'd had a day and a half with the kids, Johnny had tonsillitis / you never come

FRANK. You're talking about a year ago.

MARGARET. home till late, you said you'd be in, I'd cooked spaghetti and you never come home, Johnny wouldn't stay in bed till I hit him, not move about, I'm surprised I was conscious, move

about more, hell, what does she do, do it in a track suit does she? / go jogging, do it while she's jogging?

FRANK. Look, I don't think she's better than you, why am I still with you? I think you're the greatest, that's why I stopped seeing her, you're better than she is / I stopped, I give her up, you don't believe me what's the point, I might as well go and see her again, I'll go tomorrow night, don't expect me home because I won't be home tomorrow night.

MARGARET. I'm not going in for this competition, I don't care who's winning your little prize because I'm not going in for it. I don't have to compete because I'm your wife, you're already mine, I won already, some prize / I'm not competing. Why

FRANK *puts the light on.*

FRANK. Is there anything to drink?

MARGARET. should I have to pull my stomach in for you, is my hair all right, you're who I live with, I'm not going in for it, I'm not putting make-up on in bed. / If she's what you want, if that's

FRANK. I've had a hard day.

MARGARET. the sort of person you are, my mistake I ever married you. You've always had a hard day. / You think I don't have a hard day? Lift wasn't

FRANK. Yes I always have a hard day and who's it for? Come back to this any wonder I don't come home? Who has the money off me eh? Who has the money?

MARGARET. working again for three hours, I put off going to the shops then I had to go or they'd have shut, there was no bread left, I carried the whole lot up the stairs and the bag broke / the eggs fell out, there's no eggs for breakfast you

FRANK. It's your job. I don't moan, I get on with it,

what's wrong with this country nothing but moans, country of old women.

MARGARET. can do without, 32p the eggs, you've had your eggs in beer, you've had your kid's dinners and your kid's new shoes and your kid's school journey he can't go on because that would be a luxury / he don't need it like you need six pints.

FRANK. Who earns it? Who earns it? Sooner I'm dead, then you'll see who earns the money, see what's what, see what it's like / managing on your own.

MARGARET. Get a job myself, get a job up the school, school helper, could get that now / think I will,

FRANK. What you get for that? Nothing.

MARGARET. you can't support your family by yourself / better go out to work and help myself, enough of your talk.

FRANK. Don't tell me I don't support my family, don't you say that. If my dad heard you say that, what he'd do if my mum said that, don't you say I don't support my family. Who has the money off me? If you can't make it last that's your lookout, you buy the wrong stuff / you buy

MARGARET. You give her money.

FRANK. frozen food, my mum never let us go hungry, you're no good in the house, rotten housekeeper, you buy rubbish. If I give her money, if I lend her money it's my money to lend. She's a woman on her own bringing up a child, I'd expect to hear more human sympathy from you / always on about feelings, you got no feelings for other people, only got feelings for yourself.

MARGARET. Not enough money for the school journey he could have gone to the sea and you give her money, your own kid, showing him up in front of his mates, your own kid and you give the money to her, give her the whole lot I should, give her the housekeeping and let her cook our



dinner / frozen food, you'll be lucky if she can

FRANK. You got no feelings, I don't want to talk to you. I don't want to listen. I don't like you.

MARGARET. see out past her eyelashes to cook a fishfinger.

*Silence.*

FRANK. I'm not very happy. Are you happy?

MARGARET. No.

FRANK. My fault, is it?

MARGARET. I'm not saying it's your fault / but ...

FRANK. But.

MARGARET. Come on, I don't want a row.

FRANK. Who's starting a row?

MARGARET. I can't even talk to you without you shouting at me because /

FRANK. Who's shouting?

MARGARET. you're too pissed to have /

FRANK. Who's pissed?

MARGARET. a proper talk.

FRANK. Eh, who's pissed?

MARGARET. I'm not for one, I don't get to go out / it's you goes out.

FRANK. You want a drink? Do I stop you having a drink? You can buy drink in the supermarket, is it my fault you don't enjoy yourself / you make yourself a martyr, if I take you down the pub

MARGARET. Drink at home by myself, no thank you, old lady with a gin bottle.

FRANK. you don't enjoy it or you start chatting up Charlie don't you, think I'm stupid, blame me for everything, go on blame me, that's what I'm for / come home at night so you've someone to moan at.

MARGARET. I do have feelings, you wouldn't know, you're never here, you don't know nothing about me, night after night round with her or up the pub or out with Charlie, wherever you are it's not here, that's all I know, what am I doing sitting here waiting for you night after night, never here when you're needed like the time I had the miscarriage where were you? you knew I'd started and you went to the pub and you went to Charlie's / you're here for the fun but that's

FRANK. Didn't know what was happening, did I?

MARGARET. all, here for the beer, you did know what was happening, you're a liar, you always was a liar, you stopped out on purpose / you knew, you did

FRANK. This is five years ago, do us a favour, this is five years ago.

MARGARET. know, could have died all you cared, I don't care if it's ten years ago I'll never forgive you / and every time you go out now I'm not

FRANK. You don't want me. You don't want me.

MARGARET. surprised, I think yeh yeh, that's him, off he goes, selfish bugger / what do you expect what

FRANK. If I could afford it, I'd leave you. If I could get a place.

MARGARET. are you surprised for, haven't you learnt yet that's what he's like, think he loves you stupid / course he don't. Why don't you go

FRANK. If it wasn't for the money and the kids.

MARGARET. and live with her, she's got a nice place. Don't stay with me just to keep yourself in beer, go and live with her, / see how you like it.

FRANK. Don't want to live with her. I don't even like her, don't know why I keep seeing her. I was round there tonight / is it any wonder? First

MARGARET. I knew you was.

FRANK. time for a week, / I don't know.

MARGARET. I'd like to put a brick through her window. I'd like to round with a gun and she opens

FRANK. Stop talking stupid.

MARGARET. the door and I shoot her in the stomach. If it wasn't for the kids I'd get a gun. I'd like to see her bleed. I'd like to stamp

FRANK. Shut it. Shut it.

MARGARET. on her face. She's not that pretty. /What

FRANK. It's not her.

MARGARET. you must think of me.

FRANK. It's not you.

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PETE and DAWN are lying on the bed.  
*A long silence.*

PETE asks DAWN if she's all right:

PETE. Uyuh?

DAWN. Mmm.

PETE. Ah.

DAWN. *(moans)*. Ohhhhh.

*A short silence.*

PETE asks how DAWN is:

PETE. Mm?

Mmm?

DAWN. Uh.

*A long silence.*

PETE puts out the light. He asks if it was all right to put out the light:

PETE. Uh?

*Silence.*

DAWN. Ohhhhhh.

*Silence.*

PETE is comfortable:

PETE. Ah.

*A long silence.*

DAWN wakes with a start:

DAWN. Oh.

PETE. Huh?

DAWN. Ohhhhhh.

PETE. Mmmm?

*A long silence.*

DAWN moans, PETE acknowledges.

DAWN is fed up with the night, PETE sees where things have got to:

DAWN. Ohhhhhh.

PETE. Mmm.

DAWN. Ugh.

PETE. Uh huh.

*A short silence.*

The plot of *Alien* is very simple. You have a group of people and something nasty and one by one the nasty picks them off. If you're not going to see it I'll tell you the story. Mm?

DAWN. Mm.

PETE. There's these people in a spaceship, right, and it's not like *Star Trek* because the women wear dungarees and do proper work and there's a black guy and they talk about their wages. So they get a signal there's something alive out in space and it's one of their rules they have to investigate anything that might be alive, so they go to see what it is, right, and a couple of them go poking about on this planet and it's like a

weird giant fossil and they find some kind of eggs, and go poking about, and then there's a horrible jump and this thing gets on to John Hurt's face. They let him back in the ship and this horrible thing's all over his face and how can they get it off, that's quite unpleasant. Then it gets off itself and disappears and he gets better. And then there's the horrible bit everyone knows about where he's eating his dinner and it comes bursting out of his stomach and there's blood everywhere and it looks like a prick with teeth, a real little monster, but it's worse in the stills than in the movie because it goes so fast you hardly ever see it. That's quite good, I like that, when you think they might have shown it you all the time and they don't.

DAWN *puts the light on*; PETE *protests*:

Errr.

DAWN. I feel completely unreal.

*Silence.*

DAWN *gets up*.

PETE. Uh?

*Silence.*

I like movies where nothing much happens. Long movies, you can just sit there and look at them. *The Tree of Wooden Clogs* is a long movie. I wished they didn't have an interval.

*A long silence.*

DAWN. I don't know if I'm unreal or everything else, but something is.

PETE. Uh huh.

*Silence.*

PETE *gets a book and reads*.

DAWN *dials a number on the phone. There's no reply*.

DAWN. I think I'm dead.

*Silence.*

PETE. We could have something to eat.

*Silence.*

PETE *goes on reading*.

*He asks if she wants something to eat:*

PETE. Mm?

DAWN. Mm.

PETE *goes out*.

DAWN *gets dressed, beautifully, in a dress*.

*She sits on the bed.*

PETE *comes back with tray of food including a loaf and a knife*.

PETE. Ooh?

DAWN. I thought I might go out.

PETE. It is three in the morning.

DAWN. Ah.

PETE. Don't let me stop you.

DAWN. Right.

PETE *eats*.

DAWN *doesn't eat much*.

PETE. Then there's this creature you see loose in the spaceship and it might take any shape and it might get any one of them any time, and of course it does. There's a lot of creeping about in the dark looking for it and wondering when it's going to pounce and what it's going to look like. If you're looking forward to being frightened you can be frightened but a friend of mine went to sleep because it was so dark.

*Silence.*

PETE *eats*.

DAWN *gets undressed*.

PETE *asks if she wants any more food; she says no. He is pleased to eat it:*

Uh?



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DAWN. Uhuh.

PETE. Mmm.

*Silence.*

DAWN. I'm frightened.

*Silence.*

PETE. You'd think from those German movies that Germans were always sitting about not doing too much and staring into space and then whenever you meet Germans they're not like that at all, they're very adult. I suppose the movies seem quite different there.

*Silence.*

I'm thinking of *The Left-handed Woman*. *The Goalkeeper's Fear of the Penalty*. *The American Friend*. No, there's more rushing about in *The American Friend*. I won't tell you the plot, it's quite confusing.

*Silence.*

DAWN. I'm frightened.

*Silence.*

PETE finishes eating.

PETE. The most frightening bit of *Alien* for me was when one of the crew turns out to be a robot and his head comes off.

*Silence.*

PETE asks DAWN if she's all right:

PETE. Uyuh?

PETE puts some music on and goes to bed.

DAWN phones again, again no reply.

PETE. I haven't seen my brother for two years.  
I haven't seen my mother for five years.  
I haven't seen my father for ten years.

*Silence. Music.*

*Redupers*, that's another German movie. It's short

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for the all-round reduced personality. Did I see it with you?

*Silence. Music.*

DAWN plays with the knife.

DAWN.

There's a voice in my head, no there's not a voice in my head, come on. I keep saying to myself in my head, I want to be dead, I want to be dead, and I don't think it's true.

*Silence. Music.*

PETE.

So eventually there's no one left except this girl and she runs away up and down the spaceship a whole lot of times. And she gets away in a little escape space ship and thinks she's safe and of course the thing's in there with her. And she's getting undressed, which I thought was a bit unnecessary but I suppose it makes her more vulnerable is the idea, and in the end she gets the door open and it's sucked out into space. So she gets a good night's sleep which is more than I can say for some people.

DAWN takes the knife and gets into bed.

PETE is getting sleepy. He's glad she has come to bed. He asks if she's all right. She says yes. He settles down more comfortably:

Mmmm. Mmm?

DAWN.

Mm.

PETE.

Ahhhhh.

*Long silence. Music.*

They are lying back to back.

Under the sheet DAWN cuts her wrist.

PETE stirs:

DAWN.

Ah -

PETE.

Uh?

*Silence.*

Blood begins to come through the sheet.

The music ends.

PETE reaches out and puts out the light without seeing.

MARGARET *and* PETE.

MARGARET. I was so insecure that was part of it.

PETE. You had no life of your own.

MARGARET. I was just his wife, I wasn't a person.

PETE. You can't blame him though I mean.

MARGARET. I don't. I don't any more. I'm sorry for him.

PETE. Yes, I'm sorry for him.

MARGARET. He's still drinking. He hasn't changed.

PETE. You're the one who's changed.

MARGARET. I've changed. I was just his wife before. I had no life.

PETE. You can't blame him. It's what you learn to be like.

MARGARET. It's what you learn but you can change yourself. I've changed myself.

PETE. I'm not saying a man can't change.

MARGARET. You've changed, you say you've changed.

PETE. I have yes but I can see, as a man, what the problem is for him.

MARGARET. You're not like a man in some ways not like what I think of a man when I think what's wrong with men.

PETE. I'm still a man. I've just changed.

MARGARET. We've both changed.

PETE. Yes.

MARGARET. It was getting the job made the difference. If I'd met you before I got the job I'd have got in a panic, I'd have thought is he going to marry

me or what, is he going to be a father to my children, I couldn't just be happy. When I decided to go for being a nursery assistant and get some training, that was amazing for me to think I could get trained and do something.

PETE. You can't, though, can you?

MARGARET. No, I can't but that's the cuts.

PETE. At least you know what you want to do.

MARGARET. That's it, I've got some idea of myself. I used not to be a person.

PETE. I think you're wonderful.

MARGARET. When I saw him last week it was like seeing a ghost. It's better when the kids go round to him and I don't see him. It makes me feel like a ghost myself. It used to be so horrible, you can feel it in the air when you meet. I don't want to be like that any more. You wouldn't have liked me.

PETE. I would, I would have known.

MARGARET. I was horrible.

PETE. You were very insecure.

MARGARET. I had no life of my own. I was just his wife.

PETE. I was horrible. I could hardly speak. I couldn't talk to Dawn. You and I just lie here and talk but I'd got with Dawn so I didn't know what to say to her. And she couldn't talk. It was me killing her. If we'd stayed together she'd be dead by now, she'd have done it in the end so it worked, she'd be dead. I was doing that.

MARGARET. She was putting a lot of pressure on you.

PETE. She was asking for help.

MARGARET. You couldn't put the world right for her.

PETE. I could have talked. I was out of touch with my feelings.

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MARGARET. You're not now.

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PETE. No, I'm different now and she's different. If I run into her now she's fine, chats away, we chat away perfectly all right. I didn't want her depending on me like that, I couldn't put the world right for her, I couldn't take the pressure. I hated London, I hated what it was doing to the kids I taught, I could hardly walk down the street let alone sort her out, I couldn't take it.

MA

M/

PE

M.

PI

M

P/

M

P

N

I

1

MARGARET. You needed someone less dependent.

PETE. It was a very destructive relationship.

MARGARET. You were out of touch with your feelings.

PETE. I dream about her with that sheet covered in blood.

MARGARET. We talk about them a lot.

PETE. Of course we do.

MARGARET. We say the same things over and over.

PETE. I suppose we're bound to for a bit.

MARGARET. Of course we are.

PETE. We have learnt.

*Silence.*

MARGARET. If I can't get the nursery training I'll have to do something.

PETE. Of course you will.

MARGARET. You say of course I will but it's not that easy, I can't even be a helper now they've cut the helpers. I don't want to be at home all the time, I'm a bit frightened of that. And I need money.

PETE. You don't have to make a martyr of yourself with the housework.

MARGARET. I don't make a martyr.

PETE. No.

MARGARET. It just makes sense if I'm the one who's here

and you're at work.

PETE. I can't help it. I cook.

MARGARET. Of course you do and the kids are mine, the mess is mine.

PETE. Don't worry so much about money. I'm earning money.

MARGARET. That's your money.

PETE. I want to go to sleep.

MARGARET. Are you unhappy?

PETE. I'm tired.

*PETE puts the light out. Silence.*

The microchip can do a billion thought processes in a second.

MARGARET. You can't get a speck of dust on it.

PETE. When I'm out of work too I'll clean the floor.

MARGARET. You can do it Saturday.

*Silence.*

When did you last see Dawn?

PETE. Last week sometime.

MARGARET. Which day?

PETE. Wednesday, Tuesday.

MARGARET. Where was it?

PETE. She was in the pub dinner-time.

MARGARET. Don't you have to be at school at dinner-time?

PETE. No.

MARGARET. I thought you did special football dinner-play.

*Silence.*

PETE. You see Frank more than I see Dawn.

MARGARET. I don't see Frank.



*Silence.*

MARGARET. Everyone's going to have to have hobbies.

PETE. Everyone's going to be on the dole.

MARGARET. It's the future, you have to go forward.

PETE. Who's going to make money out of it?

MARGARET. Think of robots. Don't you like the thought of robots?

PETE. You're very wide awake.

MARGARET. Sorry.

PETE. Sorry but I do have to get up in the morning.

*A long silence.*

I'm very wide awake now.

MARGARET. Uh?

PETE. Sorry.

MARGARET. What?

PETE. Sh.

MARGARET. Mm.

*Silence.*

Are you asleep?

PETE. No.

MARGARET. What's the matter?

PETE. I'm worrying.

MARGARET. What about?

PETE. Fascists.

MARGARET. What?

*Silence.*

Is it us?

PETE. What?

MARGARET. You keep being unhappy.

PETE. What makes you think it's us?

MARGARET. You used to be happy.

PETE. I'm happy about us.

MARGARET. Then what's the matter?

*Silence.*

What is it?

PETE. I don't know.

MARGARET. What sort of thing?

*Silence.*

It's not surprising I think it's us. If you keep being unhappy and won't tell me. I can't help thinking when I'm on my own. I know I'll be better when I get a job. I don't like being on my own and I know your meetings are important but I get frightened in the evening when the kids are asleep, I think what have I done? You don't like me talking like this, I can't help it, I've no one else to talk to, sometimes I don't talk to anyone all day, I can't help it if I'm frightened.

PETE. I'm going to put the light on.

*PETE puts the light on.*

MARGARET. I don't want to say this but I worry about Dawn. You keep seeing her, you say you run into her, what you keep running into her for? If you're seeing her why not say so, I don't mind, I'm just afraid you might go back to her. I don't mind nothing if you tell me, it's when you don't tell me I think you're hiding something, I think you're seeing her and not telling me, is that true? I don't like lies, I never did like lies, I know I'm insecure and why shouldn't you see her, sleep with her if you want to, you're perfectly free, we're not married, I don't want to be married, never again, I don't want me and Frank, I wasn't a person, and you and Dawn, I

don't want that, so what are you doing? Night after night out at meetings, I know they're important, I get frightened, what have I done, I left him for you, what have I done to the kids, what's happening, and are you always at a meeting or do you see Dawn, is that stupid? I want to make you happy and I can't and I get frightened and you've got to tell me everything. I don't want to be like this, you've got to help me, please say something.

*A long silence.*

PETE. I don't know what to say.

MARGARET. No.

PETE. I'm not doing this deliberately. I've stopped being like this.

MARGARET. Yes.

PETE. Are you definitely not going to see *Apocalypse Now*?

MARGARET. I don't like war films.

PETE. There's this guy who's already a war veteran and he's back in Vietnam, he's a wreck but he can't keep away from it, and he's given a mission to go up the river and find this colonel who's gone mad and kill him, right.

MARGARET. Right.

PETE. So he goes on a boat up the river to find him. And the main thing is these amazing set pieces of destruction, it starts with a sort of still grey shot of the jungle and it bursts into flames and the whole thing looks stunning, planes coming over and things exploding, and there's music. So he's going up the river on this boat to find the mad colonel and kill him, or maybe not kill him, he's sort of attracted by him and we are, of course, because we know it's Marlon Brando. And on the way the Americans are killing everybody and there's a mad officer who gets his

soldiers to go surfing and on the boat they kill a girl and rescue a puppy and the black kid on the boat gets killed and it's a real nightmare and he goes on up the river to find the colonel.