

*She tickles him and gets the biscuit from him*

*Roma runs into the kitchen*

*Michael chases Roma through the kitchen into the sitting-room and out through the french windows into the garden, then back into the kitchen, and round and out through the french windows again, with Michael crying, "Put that down!"*

*While Roma shrieks "Give, give!" as she is finally caught and tickled*

*The noises travel loud and clear to next door. Mrs Hinson gets up, still holding her cup, and moves to bend at the fence, trying to look through a peephole in it*

*David (grinning) You still use the old peephole, then.*

*Mrs Hinson (waving to him) Ssshhh . . .*

*At the same time, Michael and Roma have become aware of the noise they have been making. Each now has a bit of biscuit in their mouth. They put fingers exaggeratedly to their lips and "creep" to the fence to listen for any reaction from next door*

*For a moment the three of them are bent at the fence, listening*

*Mrs Hinson holding her cup*

*Roma and Michael holding their biscuits*

*Then Roma and Michael exit and tiptoe inside*

*Mrs Hinson (returning to her chair) If you ask me, it's worse than living on the continent.*

*David Tell you what, you make a lovely cuppa tea. (He kisses his fingers and blows her a kiss) Lo mejor, mamita.*

*Mrs Hinson You're just like your father, an old sprucer*

*David (grinning) Yeah. (Smiling at the memory) Good old Dad.*

*Mrs Hinson I always knew when he was after something.*

*David But did he ever get it?*

*Mrs Hinson (pretending to be deaf) Par-don?*

*David gets up and moves to take a peek over the L fence*

*They're having a week's holiday.*

*David Still got the old motorbike I see.*

*Mrs Hinson Never goes anywhere on it. Just takes it apart in the garden and puts it back together again. Drives her mad.*

*David grins and sits*

*There is a pause*

*(She can tell there is something on his mind) So what are you after?*

*David Just thought I'd pop over and see how you are.*

*Mrs Hinson I'm exactly the same as I was when you popped over four weeks ago. Half an hour I think you stayed and glued to your talkie-walkie for most of that.*

David I know and I really have been rushed off my feet, what with Jen being in hospital and opening the new shop—I did tell you we've opened a new shop, didn't I? Hampton Wick. Very high class with a delicatessen counter.

Mrs Hinson (*flatly*) Very nice.

David That's what I like about you, Mum—always in the corner, cheering.

Mrs Hinson Eat your biscuits and don't be so argumentative, I'm your mother.

*David wanders over to the old shed and looks through the window. He smiles to himself at his memories*

David The old shed needs a bit of a clear-out.

Mrs Hinson Don't you dare touch your father's shed.

David Have to give it a go sooner or later.

Mrs Hinson Why?

David (*considering*) Dunno really. Yeah, you're right. (*He moves back*) Any more tea in that pot?

Mrs Hinson (*struggling to her feet and collecting the frame*) It'll be stone-cold, I'll make some fresh, bring the tray, will you? (*She starts to move to the kitchen*) What did you say their name was?

David Bracegirdle. Wayne and Sharon Bracegirdle.

Mrs Hinson Bracegirdle?

David Sharon and Wayne.

*Mrs Hinson gives a derisive jerk of her head*

Mrs Hinson (*using the same tone as if they'd got leprosy*) They've got twins.

David Yeah—he struck me as the sort of bloke who doesn't do things by half.

*David and Mrs Hinson exit into the kitchen as:*

*Michael and Roma come out of the kitchen under the weight of a large package which they bring out into the garden. They move around with the box during the following as Michael decides where he wants to put it, Roma's arms getting heavier and heavier*

Roma What we will have to come to a decision about, Mike, is ashtrays.

Michael Careful of the shrub.

Roma Oh, yes. (*To the shrub*) Sorry Mister Shrub. (*To Michael*) If we put them out we'll only be encouraging people and if we don't those that do will only stub them out wherever they fancy—what d'you think?

Michael Well I certainly intend discouraging smoking in the house.

Roma Absolutely.

Michael People *do* know how we feel.

Roma I wonder then if it might not be an idea to designate the garden as the smoking area and put an ashtray or two but certainly no more—out here.

Michael Out here and well away from the food.

Roma Good idea, Mike—*smashing*.

Michael In fact, I think we should encourage people to stay in the garden as much as possible. They can do less damage out here which reminds me—