

Act II, Scene 1

Sandy is about thirty and is extravagant in every way. She wears a striped rugby shirt belted over brief shorts to exaggerate her generous curves, striped socks and high heels. The shirt has the number sixty-nine on it. She carries a mobile telephone

From the moment Sandy arrives, Toby has eyes only for her

Sandy (as she enters) . . . I was coming as Gareth, d'you see, and he was coming as me—oh and a garden! And who do I see in it but Mister Michael Delicious Himself and looking an absolute dream in his new frock.

Sandy kisses Michael generously and gives him her phone

Put this somewhere for me, will you, cherub? Daren't leave it in the car . . . (She turns her attention immediately to Toby) And who is this divine little pixie?

Michael passes the telephone to Roma who puts down her hat

Roma Oh—yes—of course, you haven't met. This is Toby, Toby Hancock. Toby, this is Sandra—Sandy—Sandy Lloyd-Meredith.

Toby recovers, closing his mouth, pulling off his hat, and dropping his cigarette on the paving—to the horror of Roma and Michael. He extends his hand and crushes the cigarette underfoot at the same time

Toby How d'you do?

Sandy takes his hand and looks at him adoringly

Roma puts down the telephone

Roma Sandy's in property. (She discreetly retrieves the crushed cigarette and puts it in an ashtray as:)

Toby Oh—really? Great!!

Sandy And don't tell me—you're another one of these wonderful medical people.

Toby Anaesthetist, actually.

Sandy (looking deep into his eyes) God, I think you people are wonderful. Wonderful. All that—dedication and blood and everything. (She holds the look and then suddenly shrieks) Oh my god!

Mrs Hinson reacts to the shriek

Michael What's happened?

Sandy For one terrible moment I thought someone was thrusting a large drink into my hand

Mrs Hinson moves to the fence and looks through the peephole as:

Roma—worried about the neighbours—goes to the fence and peeps through the hole

So that for a moment, the two women are eyeball to eyeball

Mrs Hinson goes indoors

Sandy takes Toby's hand and guides him to the drinks table

Now then, what have we here . . . There's red wine and there's white wine which I suspect is Michael's homemade *vin de stinging nettle avec turnip*. Oh no it isn't, bad luck, and there's lemonade and designer shandy and oh look—medium dry cider—*mmmm*.

Toby Actually, I brought a bottle of rather good Chablis.

Sandy Now *that*, would be perfect. *(She proffers a glass)*

There is an irritable blast on a van horn

Toby uncorks the bottle

Michael She didn't bring a bottle.

Roma No.

Michael Well say something.

Roma Mickey . . .

Michael I thought they weren't coming, anyway. *(He has an awful thought)*

Just a minute—where's Gareth?

The Smethurst doorbell rings

Roma More guests!

Toby Great!

Roma makes to hurry to answer the door

Michael *(calling after her)* Hat!

Roma hurries back for the hat and makes to hurry out again, but Sandy takes her to one side

Sandy *(in a dramatic meaningful whisper)* If it's Gareth, I'm not here and it might be advisable not to let him in, all right darling?

Roma looks at Sandy

The Smethurst doorbell rings again

Roma hurries inside

Michael Actually, it was clearly indicated on the invitation . . .

Sandy Sorry, pussycat?

Michael It was on the invitation. N.B.P.B.A.B.

Sandy *(thinking briefly)* Give up.

Michael N.B. *Note Bene*. P.B.A.B. Please Bring A Bottle—N.B.P.B.A.B.

Sandy Well there you are, d'you see, I thought it was some terribly exclusive postcode.

Roma comes out of the house

Roma I wonder if you'd mind moving your car, Toby? Mr McMonagle's son has come back and they can't unload the Dormobile.

Michael Roma, will you please advise him to park that disgusting heap of his a little less flamboyantly.