

Name of the Game

by

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FADE IN:

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY.

A DEEPLY TANNED MAN IN HIS MID FIFTIES READS THROUGH A SCRIPT AS HIS HAIR AND MAKE UP IS TENDED TO BY A GAGGLE OF MAKE UP LADIES. THIS IS MR. LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT HIMSELF, GENE MARTIN.

BEHIND GENE STAND TWO ANXIOUS LOOKING MEN; ONE IS BRIAN, A BUMPTIOUS LITTLE MAN IN HIS SIXTIES, THE OTHER IS TONY, A RATHER INTENSE YOUNG MAN IN HIS TWENTIES. SUDDENLY GENE SCOWLS AND BOTH BRIAN AND TONY ANXIOUSLY LEAN TOWARDS HIM.

EVERYONE IS DRESSED IN VARIOUS SHADES OF BEIGE, THE TROUSERS FLARED. THIS IS THE LATE 1970S.

GENE
What's this joke in the pets
section of the show?

BRIAN THROWS TONY AN IRRITATED "I TOLD YOU SO' LOOK.

BRIAN
Which one, Gene?

GENE READS THE JOKE ALOUD.

GENE
'What goes "woof woof, bang bang"?
Jeremy Thorpe taking a dog for a
walk.'

TONY
That's satire, Gene.

GENE
I know what it is Tony, I want to
know what it's doing on my game
show?

BEFORE TONY CAN DEFEND HIMSELF, BRIAN STEPS IN.

BRIAN
Tony, against my advice, wanted to
try some new material.

GENE
What else have you got?

BRIAN BEAMS.

BRIAN
What's the difference between my
wife and a Budgie? "Cheap cheap"
isn't in my wife's vocabulary!

GENE

Yes!

TONY ROLLS HIS EYES. GENE SPIES THIS AND TURNS TO THE YOUNG MAN.

GENE (CONT'D)

We're entertaining the great British public, son, not the TUC. What did I ask for last week?

TONY

More gags about women's breasts.

GENE

There you go. Give me bouncing boobies. They're hysterical. Look - hello boys!

GENE, USING HIS REFLECTION IN THE MAKE-UP MIRROR, PRETENDS TO FONDLE THE BREASTS OF ONE OF THE MAKE UP WOMEN. BRIAN NEARLY WETS HIMSELF AT THE VISUAL GAG. THE MAKE UP LADY JUST SMILES. SHE'S USED TO IT. IT'S THE 70S.

BRIAN

You're not wrong Gene, big breasts are funny.

TONY LOOKS AT BRIAN, BITTERLY.

TONY

(sotto voce)

What about little tits?

GENE RETURNS TO THE SCRIPT. HE LOOKS UP AGAIN, CONFUSED.

GENE

I thought you were going to give me some more of those 'Indian, Pakistani and Irishman' jokes, Brian?

BRIAN GRIMACES.

BRIAN

Orders from on high, Gene. Lay off the 'racial' gags.

GENE

What? Oh for crying out loud! Why?

TONY

They were insulting?

GENE IGNORES TONY AND CONSULTS WITH BRIAN.

GENE
Can you explain, Brian?

BRIAN SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS IN A 'I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE WORLD ANY MORE' GESTURE.

TONY
They weren't funny?

GENE
Why!?

TONY
Brian wrote them?

BRIAN'S FINALLY HAD ENOUGH AND HE TURNS ON TONY.

BRIAN
I've been writing comedy for 40 years, my lad! I was writing gags for the war effort!

GENE
He wrote for the Germans!

BOTH GENE AND TONY ERUPT INTO LAUGHTER. BRIAN IS QUIETLY DEVASTATED BY GENE'S 'BETRAYAL'. AN ASSISTANT POKES HIS HEAD ROUND THE DRESSING ROOM DOOR.

ASSISTANT
Ron wants you on set now, Mr. Martin.

GENE STANDS AND LOOKS AT HIMSELF IN THE HUGE MIRROR, STRAIGHTENING HIS GARISH TIE. BRIAN, DESPERATE TO GET BACK INTO GENE'S GOOD BOOKS, HELPFULLY POINTS TO A TIN OF FILM LAYING ON THE MAKE UP COUNTER OPPOSITE. THE TIN HAS THE WORD 'CORTINA' WRITTEN ON IT.

BRIAN
Is that your film there, Gene?

GENE LOOKS DOWN AT THE TIN OF FILM. HE SUDDENLY BECOMES QUITE SERIOUS.

GENE
There's no film there. You have seen no film in this dressing room or with me, is that clear?

BRIAN AND TONY ANSWER LIKE SCOLDED SCHOOLBOYS.

BRIAN
Yes, Gene.

TONY
Yeah.

4.

GENE

Good. I want to hear no more talk
of any 'film', right?

GENE INSTANTLY SWITCHES BACK TO MR. LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT AND
LOOKS ADMIRINGLY AT HIMSELF IN THE MIRROR.

GENE (CONT'D)

Razzle dazzle!

CUT TO:

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO FLOOR - DAY

A STUDIO SHROUDED IN DARKNESS. WE HEAR A CONTINUITY ANNOUNCER
DECLARE...

CONTINUITY ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, it's time for
'Who's Next Door?! So please put
your hands together for everyone's
favorite funny man, the guy with
the tie, Gene Martin!

THE STUDIO LIGHTS FLARE UP TO REVEAL A TACKY, BEIGE COLOURED
SET. GENE STRIDES DOWN THE SET, TOWARDS HIS ADORING STUDIO
AUDIENCE, A WIDE, PHONEY SMILE SPREAD ACROSS HIS RIDICULOUSLY
TANNED FACE.

GENE

Thank you, thank you! Ladies and
gentlemen, welcome to 'Who's Next
Door?', the quiz where neighbours
match wits for big prizes. The
show's a game and I'm...

GENE ENCOURAGES THE AUDIENCE TO COMPLETE HIS PRETTY TERRIBLE
CATCHPHRASE.

GENE AND AUDIENCE

Game for a show!

THE AUDIENCE "OUUUSS" THEN ERUPTS INTO LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE
AS THE STUDIO IS FILLED WITH THE QUIZ SHOW'S JAZZY, RONNIE
HAZLEHURST WORTHY THEME TUNE.

EITHER SIDE OF GENE, BEHIND BEIGE PODIUMS, STAND TWO NERVOUS
COUPLES. ONE COUPLE, THE DUMPY CATHY AND PAUL, HAVE MATCHING
PERMS.

GENE

Let's meet tonight's contestants!

THE MUSIC FADES AS GENE APPROACHES THE COUPLE TO HIS LEFT.

COMPERE V.O.

Tonight's first couple are Cathy and Paul, from number 23 Denison Road.

GENE

Let's hear a nice round of applause for Cathy and Paul, ladies and gentlemen!

CUT TO:

INT. PRODUCTION CONTROL ROOM - DAY

A WALL OF VIDEO MONITORS ILLUMINATE A DARKENED CRAMPED, SMOKY SPACE. A GROUP OF MEN SIT HUNCHED OVER EDITING DESKS, COMMANDEERED BY A BALDING MAN IN HORN RIMMED GLASSES. THIS IS WHO'S NEXT DOOR'S SEASONED DIRECTOR, RON GLAZER.

RON

Okay, cut to Camera 2 and the perm twins.

RON LEANS INTO A MICROPHONE PROTRUDING FROM THE EDITING DESK.

RON (CONT'D)

Don't pull in too close for God's sake, Pete, people will be having their dinner.

THE CENTRAL MONITOR IN THE CONTROL ROOM SWITCHES FROM A CLOSE UP OF GENE TO A MEDIUM SHOT OF A VERY SWEATY, OVERWEIGHT COUPLE WITH HAIR THAT LOOKS KNITTED.

CUT TO:

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO FLOOR - DAY

GENE

And you're just a house wife, is that right, Cathy?

CATHY

That's right, Gene.

GENE

How's her cooking, Paul?

PAUL GRIMACES A LITTLE AND MAKES A 'SO-SO' GESTURE. GENE PULLS A THEATRICALY SHOCKED FACE AND THE AUDIENCE ERUPT INTO LAUGHTER.

GENE (CONT'D)

I think we'd better meet the other couple!

GENE NOW APPROACHES THE OTHER COUPLE. PAT IS A STATUESQUE BLONDE, WHILE NEIL IS OF CHINESE DESCENT.

CONTINUITY ANNOUCER
Tonight's second couple live at
number 25 Denison Road are Neil and
Pat.

GENE IS MOMENTARILY TAKEN ABACK AT THE SIGHT OF A MIXED RACE COUPLE.

GENE
Uh, welcome, Pat and Neil. Pat, it
says here you are a dental nurse?

CATHY
That's right, Gene, I/

GENE
/I went to the dentist recently...

CUT TO:

INT. PRODUCTION CONTROL ROOM - DAY

RON FLICKS THROUGH HIS SCRIPT.

RON
Oh Jesus, he's going off script!

THERE IS AN AUDIBLE GROAN FROM THE CONTROL ROOM. TONY PUTS HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS BUT BRIAN SMILES WITH PRIDE.

BRIAN
I wrote this joke for him 15 years
ago. You could learn a thing or two
from this joke, my boy.

TONY LOOKS UP AT BRIAN.

TONY
Those things being brevity and the
need for a satisfactory punch line?

THE CONTROL ROOM DOOR OPENS AND IN STEPS A YOUNG WOMAN IN HER MID TWENTIES. A PORTLY MIDDLE AGED MAN, NIGEL, STUBS OUT A FAG AND LOOKS OVER AT HER.

NIGEL
Can I help, luv?

KATIE
I'm looking for Ron Glazer? I'm
Katie Fields, his new production
assistant.

NIGEL EYES KATIE UP AND DOWN, HIS GAZE LINGERING IN THE USUAL AREAS. KATIE CLOCKS THE MENTAL UNDRRESSING.

NIGEL
Ron's over there, sweetheart.

KATIE
Thanks. And do feel free to check out my arse when I walk by.

NIGEL IS SOMEWHAT CONFUSED BY THIS. TONY HAS CLOCKED ALL THIS AND SMILES IN ADMIRATION.

NIGEL
Okay?

RON STUBS OUT A CIGARETTE.

RON
Over here, Ms. Fields.

KATIE STROLLS OVER TO RON, NIGEL UNSURE WHETHER TO CHECK OUT HER REAR OR NOT.

CUT TO:

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO FLOOR - DAY

GENE HAS IS ATTEMPTING TO PUT ON AN ORIENTAL ACCENT.

GENE
Ah so, my tooth hurty too!

THERE IS LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE. PAT GRINS NERVOUSLY AS HER HUSBAND LOOKS EVER SO SLIGHTLY APPALLED.

CUT TO:

INT. PRODUCTION CONTROL ROOM - DAY

RON LOOKS OVER AT THE WALL OF MONITORS.

RON
Cut to Camera 3.

KATIE
Mr. Glazer, I'm/

RON
I know who you are. You know who he is?

RON POINTS AT THE MONITOR, WHICH HAS GENE'S CHUCKLING FACE ON IT.

KATIE
That's Gene Martin.

RON

Excellent. You are my go between,
between me and that fragile shell
of a man. Now get yourself down to
the studio floor!

AS RON TURNS BACK TO HIS CONSOLE HE SMACKS KATIE'S BOTTOM AS
IF HE WERE GEEING ON A HORSE. KATIE STOPS DEAD IN HER TRACKS.
SHE COMPOSES HERSELF, TURNS AND LEANS RIGHT IN TO RON'S FACE.

KATIE

Don't do that again!

RON, A LITTLE STUNNED, ATTEMPTS TO SPEAK. KATIE HOLDS HER
FINGER UP TO HIS MOUTH.

KATIE (CONT'D)

I am not some ditsy dolly bird here
to make the tea, Mr. Glazer.

KATIE STANDS UPRIGHT AND LEANS BACK ON THE CONSOLE, NOW ON A
BIT OF A ROLL AND ENJOYING IT.

KATIE (CONT'D)

I am an educated woman, an Oxford
graduate.

KATIE LEANS FURTHER BACK ONTO THE CONSOLE, UNKNOWINGLY
SITTING ON A NUMBER OF LARGE, IMPORTANT LOOKING BUTTONS.
SUDDENLY THE LIGHTS IN THE STUDIO SHUT OFF AND THE MONITORS
POWER DOWN. KATIE REALISES WHAT SHE HAS DONE.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Bollocks.

CUT TO:

INT. PRODUCTION CONTROL ROOM - DAY

KATIE STANDS AT THE DOOR TO THE CONTROL ROOM, A NOTEBOOK IN
HER HAND.

KATIE

So that's three white teas with
sugar, one black coffee and a mug
of cocoa?

NIGEL

Thanks, luv.

KATIE GRIMACES AND TURNS ON HER HEELS.

CUT TO:

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO FLOOR - DAY

GENE STANDS ON SET SIGNING AN AUTOGRAPH FOR AN ELDERLY WOMAN AS CREWMEN MOVE PROPS AND FURNITURE AROUND HIM.

GENE
And who should I make this to?

OLD GROUPIE
Olive.

GENE
That's a lovely name, Olive.

OLD GROUPIE
Nah, Olive's my neighbour but she
couldn't come 'cause of her
shingles.

GENE ADDS A LITTLE MESSAGE TO THE AUTOGRAPH.

GENE
Get...well...soon.

OLD GROUPIE
I never watch your show.

A SLIGHT SIGN OF IRRITATION CROSSES GENE'S FACE.

GENE
Right.

OLD GROUPIE
I think it's rather course.

GENE GRITS HIS TEETH AND PASSES THE AUTOGRAPHED PIECE OF PAPER BACK TO THE OLD DEAR.

GENE
There you go.

OLD GROUPIE
I Prefer 'The Generation Game' and
that Bruce...

THE OLD GROUPIE SEARCHES FOR THE SURNAME. GENE MOUTHS THE WORDS 'FUCK OFF'.

OLD GROUPIE (CONT'D)
Sorry, dear?

GENE
Forsyth.

AS THE OLD DEAR WANDERS BACK TO HER SEAT IN THE AUDIENCE,
KATIE APPEARS AND MAKES HER WAY ACROSS THE SET TOWARDS GENE.

KATIE
Mr. Martin?!

GENE TURNS TOWARDS KATIE AND THROWS HER HIS MILLION DOLLAR
GRIN.

GENE
Gene, please.

KATIE
Gene, I'm your new assistant, Katie
Fields.

GENE
Kiss me, Katie!

GENE LAUGHS AT HIS OWN 'JOKE' BUT HE BECOMES SUDDENLY WORRIED
AS HIS EYES DART TO HIS RIGHT.

GENE (CONT'D)
Hello, luv!

GENE IS PEERING OVER KATIE'S SHOULDER AT HIS WIFE, CYNTHIA.

GENE (CONT'D)
Come and meet my new assistant.
This is Kathy.

KATIE
Katie.

SHE TURNS TO CYNTHIA, PROFFERING HER HAND. THEY SHAKE.

CYNTHIA
Nice to meet you, Katie. I'm/

KATIE
Coral, I know.

CYNTHIA'S HAND DROPS AWAY FROM KATIE'S. GENE SMILES
NERVOUSLY.

CYNTHIA
Coral was Gene's first wife.

KATIE
Yes, you're Cynthia, of course,
silly me.

CYNTHIA
Silly you.

A CONTEMPTUOUS CYNTHIA STRIDES AWAY.

GENE

See you at home, my darling!

CYNTHIA THROWS GENE THE V GESTURE OVER HER SHOULDER AS SHE HEADS TOWARDS THE EXIT. GENE TURNS BACK TO KATIE, WHO IS CRESTFALLEN.

GENE (CONT'D)

How desperate are you to get fired on your first day?

KATIE

I have made better first impressions.

GENE

Do you still want to be my assistant?

KATIE

Yes.

GENE

Do you know where Kingly Street in Soho is?

KATIE

Yes?

GENE

Good. I need you to go to a club called Emmanuel's and deliver something to a man named Don Ciccio.

KATIE'S VOICE DROPS TO A WHISPER.

KATIE

You want me to go to a Soho club and deliver something to a mafia Don?

GENE

His *name* is Donald.

KATIE

Oh, right.

GENE

Though he is admittedly involved in organised crime.

KATIE

Great.

CUT TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

GENE GRABS THE TIN OF FILM FROM HIS DRESSING TABLE AND HANDS IT TO KATIE.

GENE

Guard this with your life.

KATIE

What is it?

GENE

You don't want to know.

KATIE'S FACE LIGHTS UP AT A SALACIOUS THOUGHT.

KATIE

Is it a naughty movie?

GENE

No.

DESPITE HIS ANSWER, GENE NODS HIS HEAD. GENE BEAMS AND THROWS HIS ARMS WIDE OPEN.

GENE (CONT'D)

Welcome to our happy, little family!