



FIVE ONE
BY
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Extract

A SMITH SCRIPT

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**A comedy of two halves by
Andrew Hull**

Cast

Ian

Claire

Carrie

Linda

Sue

Tina

First Half

Ian and Claire's flat, early evening,
Saturday 1st Sept 2001

Second Half

Later the same evening

First Half

(A telephone rings)

(The main tabs open to reveal Ian and Claire's flat, in semi darkness. Centre stage is a large, three-seater sofa with a side table beside it. There is also a matching armchair. The back portion of the set is the kitchen, which is separated from the rest of the room by a breakfast bar/counter. Next to this, on the Stage right wall, is the front door. There are two doors set into the stage left wall; one leads to the bedroom and the other to the bathroom. On the stage right wall, near the front door, is the card operated electricity meter and further along that wall is a small table on which sits the telephone. There is a window on the back wall in the kitchen and a couple of wall mounted cupboards. You can also see the side of the fridge-freezer)

(After six rings, the answer phone kicks in Claire's voice: "Hi. I'm sorry but Claire and Ian can't get to the phone at the moment as we are doing something we both really enjoy." Ian's voice: "Claire likes to do it up and down, but I prefer it back and forth." Claire's voice: "So please leave us a message after the tone and we'll get back to you as soon as we've finished brushing our teeth." Beep! Sue's voice: "(Crying) Hello Claire? It's Sue. I really need to speak to you, Claire. It's Barry. He's left me and I don't know what to do. (More crying). I'm sorry to call you on a Saturday night, but ... (More sobbing) Please can you call me when you get this message. I'm sorry, Claire ..." Beep!)

(A few moments later the front door opens and Ian enters. He leaves his keys dangling from the lock. He is carrying a four-pack of beer, which he dumps on the kitchen counter and heads for the bathroom door. Over his shoulder he calls out to Claire)

Ian Stick those in the fridge love, I'm bustin'.

(He exits into the bathroom. Claire enters, struggling to carry four full shopping bags. She puts the bags on the kitchen counter and returns to close the front door and retrieve Ian's keys. She looks at the electricity meter and tuts)

Claire *(Shouting)* You didn't tell me we were out of electricity cards. There's not much left on the meter.

Ian *(Offstage)* What?

Claire *(To herself)* Never mind.

(She notices the light flashing on the answer phone, so presses the button and returns to the kitchen to put away the shopping and Ian's beer. Beep! Answerphone voice: "You have three new messages. Message one, received today at five twenty three pm." Men's voices,

these are Ian's mates who are in Germany: "Ian!! Where are you? Just to let you know that we're here at the stadium and ready to give the Germans a good stuffing. (*Shouts and cheers*) We're behind one of the goals somewhere, so keep a look out for us ... if Claire let's you watch the match (*More shouts and jeers*) See you mate. Eng-er-land, Eng-er-land, Eng-er-land ..." *Answerphone voice:* "Message two, received today at six thirteen pm." *Claire's mum's voice:* "Claire? This is your mother speaking. I'm calling to make sure you haven't forgotten that you're coming for dinner tomorrow.")

Claire (*Rolling her eyes*) Yes mother.

(*Claire's mum's voice:* "And Ian of course.")

Claire Of course.

(*Claire's mum's voice:* "No need to bring anything. Oh and your father says not to bother with wine after the last time. He'll get some decent bottles in. Cheery bye.")

Claire Cheery bye!

Answerphone voice: "Message three, received today at six forty-six pm." *Sue's voice:* "(*Crying*) Hello Claire? It's Sue. I really need to speak to you, Claire. It's Barry. He's left me and I don't know what to do. (*More crying*). I'm sorry to call you on a Saturday night, but ... (*More sobbing*) Please can you call me when you get this message. I'm sorry, Claire ..." *Answerphone voice:* "End of messages." *Claire grabs her handbag and digs out her mobile phone. She punches in Sue's number*)

Claire Sue? It's Claire ... Oh my god, when? Well of course ... just like that? No, no, not at all. You get yourself round here right now and I'll round up the girls ... Of course not. I'll see you soon and Sue, drive carefully.

(*Ian enters from the bathroom*)

Ian Aaah, that's better. Was that the lads I heard?

Claire (*Busily texting*) Yes and mother reminding us about dinner tomorrow.

Ian God, how could I forget! (*He mimes pulling a pin out of a hand grenade and lobbing it*) We've got a bottle of plonk left over from that barbeque we could take. It's in the cupboard somewhere.

(*He wanders over and stands by the entrance to the kitchen*)

Claire That's okay, Daddy's already been and got the wine.

Ian Great, more for us then.

Claire Look Ian, I've been thinking.

Ian There's a first time for everything!

Claire Very funny. I feel a bit mean for stopping you going to Germany with the lads.

Ian And so you should! But you were right, we do have a wedding to save for and it wasn't a cheap trip. Besides, it's too late now.

Claire Too late for Germany maybe, but not too late for the pub. Why don't you nip down to The Crown and watch the match with some of your other friends? I don't mind.

Ian You're joking? They're all in Germany. (*Moving back into the living room and behind the sofa*) The Crown will be full of yuppie city types on their mobiles and one-eyed Nev and I certainly don't want to be stuck with him all night. I never know whether he's looking at me or someone over my shoulder, it's freaky. No, I'm happy to stay at home and save money with you.

Claire (*Following him*) What about The Lion or The Green Man? There's bound to be people you know in one of them. And they'll be much better company than I would. You know I don't like football.

Ian What happened to "we've all got to make sacrifices if we want to get married next year"?

Claire Yes, but ...

Ian It sounds like you're trying to get rid of me! (*Suddenly suspicious*) Hang on, was that Sue on the phone as well? Has something happened?

Claire (*Realising she's been rumbled*) Yes, it was Sue. Barry has walked out on her and she's in pieces.

Ian What again? He's always leaving her. They have more rows than Tom and Jerry!

Claire I know, but I think it's serious this time.

Ian So you thought you'd pack me off to the pub and invite her round for a girly chat?

Claire Well ...

Ian (*Catching on*) You've invited them all, haven't you?

Claire Sue's heartbroken, she needs cheering up.

Ian So my quiet footie night in front of the TV has to make way for snivelling Sue and your man-hating friends!

Claire They're not man-haters. Well, maybe Tina is, but the others are okay. I just thought you'd prefer to be in *The Crown* than at home with us.

Ian Well I'm not spending an evening cheering on our lads with one-eyed Nev staring constantly over my shoulder and the rest of the pub debating which dot com company to invest in. Why don't you all go down the pub?

Claire Because all of the pubs round here will be full of hairy great England fans, shouting and swearing and throwing beer all over anyone in a fifteen foot radius. Besides, Sue needs to be able to let it all out and get a bit of TLC

Ian I thought that's what Barry gives her, Treated Like Crap! I don't know what she sees in him anyway, he's not a proper football supporter. He says he supports United, but he's never been anywhere near Manchester. I mean, what's that all about?

Claire Precisely. That's why she needs us girls to be there for her. (*Turning on the charm*) After all, not everyone is as lucky as me when it comes to men. You understand women, Barry obviously doesn't.

Ian Never trust a man who only supports a team because they win, that's what I say.

Claire So, do we have a deal? You go to the pub and I'll stay here with the girls ... I'll make it worth your while.

(Ian breaks away and moves round to the front of the sofa)

Ian Oh no, I'm not falling for that one again, thank you very much. I think we're up for some bedroom gymnastics and you're talking about making me a lasagne with homemade garlic bread. No, I'll stay right here thanks.

Claire Okay. (*Attempts to call his bluff*) It's a big flat, I'm sure we can all fit in.

Ian As long as I get the sofa and the remote, you can invite whoever you like round.

Claire Oh come on Ian.

Ian No, no, you said it. It's a big flat.

(Ian smiles to himself and exits into the bedroom. Claire lets out an exasperated sigh and heads back to the kitchen)

Claire Men!

(She picks up her phone and dials a number)

Claire Linda? It's Claire ... Oh, you've heard ... Yes, she's on her way over. I think Tina is bringing her ... okay ... would you be able to pick up Carrie? Vodka I guess ... okay, see you soon.

(Claire hangs up and Ian enters wearing shorts and an England shirt. He crosses to the sofa, sits down and picks up the TV remote. The TV is imagined as being between the stage and the audience. Ian points the remote at the audience and presses a button, then sits back, staring at the audience, to watch the TV. Commentator's voice: "... here in Munich. The England fans are in the block away to our left for this must-win match ..." Ian leans forward in his seat, looking for the lads. Claire comes out of the kitchen and sits on the arm of the sofa, next to Ian)

Claire Look, I don't want to cause a row over this.

(Ian doesn't answer, but continues to stare intently at the screen)

Claire I just know what Sue can be like when ...

Ian *(Excitedly)* Look! There's Andy ... and Mark and Carl. Right behind the goal, the jammy buggers!

Claire *(Relenting)* Okay, you can watch the match here. The girls and I will stick to the bedroom and kitchen, but on one condition.

(Still no answer from Ian)

Claire You pop down to the shop before the match starts and get some wine in for us.

Ian But its kick off in twenty minutes.

Claire Ian! The shop is at the end of the road! You can be there and back in ten ... and that includes the five minutes you spend ogling the magazines on the top shelf.

Ian And I can watch the match in peace? You'll stick to the bedroom?

Claire Scout's honour

Ian You weren't a Scout, or a Brownie come to that.

Claire Okay, Guide's honour then. I was a Girl Guide.

Ian I never knew that.

Claire Yep, for three whole weeks.

Ian Three weeks?

Claire Yeah, I got caught smoking behind the Guide hut and flashing my knickers at the Venture Scouts next door.

Ian Hussy!

Claire So, do we have a deal?

Ian Oh, alright then. *(Gets up)* But only if you flash me your knickers while having a fag later.

Claire I can't, *(pecks him on the cheek)* I've given them both up!

(Claire exits into the bedroom. Ian watches her go, smiling and shaking his head)

Ian An answer for everything.

(He turns off the TV with the remote and heads for the front door. As he goes through, Claire shouts from the bedroom)

Claire *(Offstage)* And don't forget to pick up an electricity card!

(The door slams behind Ian and the stage is quiet for a few moments. Claire enters from the bedroom, pulling on a fresh t-shirt. She does a quick tidy round of the flat, fluffing cushions, straightening ornaments and humming to herself. She heads for the kitchen and makes sure everything has been put away properly. She dries up a couple of mugs that have been left on the draining board and puts them in one of the cupboards. The doorbell rings. Claire crosses to the front door and opens it. Tina and Sue enter. Sue bursts into tears and flings herself at Claire the moment the door is opened. Claire does her best to usher them into the flat)

Claire Sue, I'm so sorry. Come in and sit down.

(She leads Sue to the sofa and sits her down)

Claire Thanks for coming Tina.

Tina The least I could do. Us girls need to stick together and not let those bastards walk all over us.

(This brings a fresh bout of sobbing from Sue)

Claire Linda and Carrie are on their way over and Ian has gone to get us some wine.

Tina Ian?

Claire Yes, that's right.

Tina Well, that's a bit insensitive, don't you think? What's he doing here?

Claire Well, he does live here Tina. It's his flat too.

Tina Yes, but he is a man.

Claire Yes, I had noticed. In fact, that was one of the reasons we moved in together.

(Tina says nothing more, but is obviously not impressed)

Claire *(Turning to Sue)* So what happened?

Sue I don't really know. One minute we were talking about where to go this evening and the next he just blew up and started shouting.

Tina Typical!

Claire Something must have kicked it off?

Tina As if men need a reason to do anything. They're king of their own little worlds where everything revolves around them and no-one else matters.

Sue Well, I fancied a nice quiet meal together. You know, just the two of us, a bit of romance and alone time. Barry's been so busy at work recently and I thought it would be nice to be able to spend a bit of time together. But Barry said he fancied a night in the pub and you know what that can be like. Everyone wants to

say hello, no privacy, you have to shout to be heard and you end up with scampi and chips in a basket.