

Adapted from Frederick Knott's Screenplay *Dial M for Murder*. Students were asked to change the perspective of selected passages. I have kept Knott's outer dialogue intact but the new internalized reactions are mine.

So this is him, Tony thinks as he introduces himself to Max. *The guy that's been shagging my wife*. They shake, Tony careful enough to seem nonchalant, even gallant. He crosses the room to kiss his cheating wife, to make her believe he is still the unsuspecting fool they think he is.

They've been drinking, that much is obvious. Her cheeks are flushed and they both look like they were just about to fuck. There's that anticipatory, guilty look about them. "Hullo darling. We've been drinking ourselves silly waiting for you," Sheila says, with no attempt to offer Tony a drink, not that he would accept it from her traitorous hands. There's a hiccup, two, before she says, "what time does it start?"

The divorce? Tony thinks. *Or revenge?* Of course, he says none of this. That would be too easy on them. Instead, he takes the theatre tickets from his pocket and looks at them. "Seven", he says.

"Well, for heaven's sake," Sheila starts, trying to lift herself from the couch but it's not so easy because she stumbles and sinks back before she is able to gain enough momentum to get erect. Maybe she is leaden with guilt, but Tony doesn't think so. She crosses towards the bedroom door with both Tony and Max watching her, Tony wondering if she was bold enough to have done it there, Max remembering that they did. As quickly as she retreated, she enters again. "Get your coats on, boys."

"Slight alteration in plans," Tony says sullenly, as though he is truly upset to bear the news.

Sheila puts on her best puppy-dog face, making her look old and pathetic rather than cute and coy, which Tony is sure she was going for. "Don't say you can't come," she pouts, her lips protruding into that awful duck face that looks superficial yet semi-attractive on twenty-somethings but makes Sheila look like she's preparing to shit. Sheila the shitter. She will always be immortalized this way to him.

"I'm afraid so. The Old Man's flying to Brussels on Sunday, and he wants my monthly report first thing tomorrow."

"Oh no!" Sheila exclaims a little too boisterously to be believed but she is too drunk to realize it. "Can't you do it when you get back tonight?"

Tony shakes his head. "It will take hours, and I'll have to cook half of it." He hands the tickets to Max, almost wishing there was some transmissible poison on them. Cyanide? Fentanyl? Isn't that what everyone was OD'ing on nowadays? Max could pass for a druggie, he was in showbiz after all. It wouldn't be completely unexpected.

"Can you join us for supper afterwards?" Sheila asks.

"Give me a ring in the interval. If I'm inspired, I might make it", Tony says, although he is already inspired. In fact, he was inspired a year ago when he found out about Max. They are both his inspiration. Max the Druggie and Sheila the Shitter.

Tony the Killer.

