

1 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY 1

A large old house set in rolling English countryside. A number of cars are parked outside. We pull back and see the large wrought iron gates which show the number '9'.

TITLE: 'SARDINES'

2 INT. BEDROOM - DAY 2

A double bedroom in a large house in the country. It is a guest bedroom so devoid of any personal belongings, rather like a hotel room.

REBECCA, a smartly-dressed woman in her mid 30s, runs into the room. She looks around thoughtfully before heading into the ensuite bathroom.

3 INT. ENSUITE - DAY 3

REBECCA draws back the shower curtain but there is nobody there. She stops at the sink, picks up the big block of carboric soap and smells it. She smiles to herself wistfully.

4 INT. BEDROOM - DAY 4

REBECCA re-enters the bedroom and looks under the bed: nothing there apart from a couple of old suitcases.

REBECCA gets up and looks at the large old wooden wardrobe. She sees herself in the mirrored door, then reaches for the handle and pulls the door open...

IAN is standing in the middle of the wardrobe. He is a socially-awkward bespectacled IT consultant in a shirt and tie.

IAN
Oh, hello.

REBECCA
Hello!

IAN
That was quick.

REBECCA
Well obviously I know the house,
so...

IAN
You have an...

IAN & REBECCA
...unfair advantage.

REBECCA
Yes!

REBECCA gets into the wardrobe with IAN and closes the door.

5 INT. WARDROBE - DAY

5

The wardrobe is fairly empty, save for a couple of boxes of Christmas decorations and some outdoor coats hung up at one end. REBECCA stands next to IAN.

IAN
We weren't properly introduced, I'm
Ian by the way.

REBECCA
Hello.

They shake hands.

IAN
It's Rachel isn't it?

REBECCA
Rebecca.

IAN
That's right. I work with Jeremy.

REBECCA
Oh!

IAN
Well, I say "work with", I'm more
on the IT side but with Jeremy
being the office manager we
obviously have overlaps. He's
responsible for infrastructure
whereas I take more of a lead in
programme development...

REBECCA
Right, right. What did you say
your name was again?

IAN
Ian.

REBECCA
That's right, yes. Jeremy has
mentioned you.

6 INT. BEDROOM - DAY 6

KEV, a good-looking lad in a trendy t-shirt and jeans runs into the room and pops his head into the ensuite bathroom. He sees that there is nobody there then runs out again.

7 INT. WARDROBE - DAY 7

REBECCA and IAN hear KEV depart.

IAN
Who was that I wonder?

REBECCA
Don't know!

IAN
Could be a long game!

REBECCA
Yes!

Silence.

IAN
So how does it feel to be engaged
Rachel?

REBECCA
Rebecca.

IAN
Sorry. Have you set a date yet...?

REBECCA
9th of November.

IAN
Oh. 9-11. You won't forget that
will you?

REBECCA
No. I hadn't thought of it that
way to be honest...

Suddenly the wardrobe door opens and CARL is standing in front of them. CARL is REBECCA's brother. He wears a smart suit and has a dry sense of humour.

CARL
Boo.

REBECCA
Oh Carl, get in quick.

CARL

I heard you talking. Why are you hiding in here?

REBECCA

I didn't choose it did I?

IAN

Guilty as charged!

REBECCA

Have you met Ian?

CARL

No I don't believe I've had that pleasure. Carl, I'm Rebecca's brother.

IAN

Ah, so you two'll know all the nooks and crannies of the house then!

CARL

Oh yes. I've spent most of my Christmases hiding in various cupboards waiting for my bossy little sister to find me. You never could though, could you?

REBECCA

Get in!

CARL steps into the wardrobe and closes the door.

8

INT. WARDROBE - DAY

8

CARL stands next to REBECCA.

REBECCA

Is Daddy playing?

CARL

He said he would. He's out showing Mark and Elizabeth the stables.

REBECCA

He can do that afterwards, we're meant to playing the game!

CARL

Alright, keep your voice down or you'll give us all away.

IAN

(jokily)
Yeah, chill out bitch!

Silence. REBECCA and CARL are stunned.

IAN (CONT'D)
Sorry, that was misjudged.

CARL
Actually it was quite funny. She
is a bit of a bitch, aren't you
Becks?

9 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

9

The bedroom door opens and STU enters, flamboyantly dressed, camp, 40s. He is carrying a glass and a bottle of champagne.

STU
Lollipops, come and get your
lollipops! And all free today!

STU looks around the room.

STU (CONT'D)
Now then... if were I hiding in
this room where would I go? Not
behind those curtains - they're a
migraine waiting to happen.
Hanging round the toilet perhaps -
it has been known. Or would I
enjoying spending time... in the
closet!

STU opens the wardrobe door to find CARL, REBECCA and IAN.

STU (CONT'D)
Oh! Not interrupting anything am
I?

REBECCA
Come on!

STU steps in the wardrobe and closes the door.

10 INT. WARDROBE - DAY

10

STU joins CARL, REBECCA and IAN.

STU
Oh it's like the back room of
Cinderella's in Wakefield. Anyone
got any poppers or lube?

CARL
(a warning)
Stuart.

IAN

You two know each other do you?

CARL

Unfortunately, yes.

REBECCA

They're partners.

IAN

Oh. In what line?

STU

It used to be straight up and down
but not any more.

IAN

Oh. I'm in IT.

STU

Congratulations. I'm in SH-IT cos
I got in late last night, didn't I?

CARL

Stuart, you can do what you like,
it doesn't bother me.

IAN

Oh I see, so you're... living-
together partners?

STU

Yes, we're queer dear, get used to
it.

CARL

That's it, I can't stay in here...

CARL opens the wardrobe door.

REBECCA

Stuart, behave! This party's not
about you, it's about me and
Jeremy, so butt out! Carl, please.

CARL closes the wardrobe door again. STU looks at REBECCA.

STU

You're much prettier when you're
angry.

(to CARL)

So are you. Anyway, changing the
subject slightly, I'm not being
rude but there's a man downstairs
who absolutely stinks.

REBECCA

Yes, that's Stinky John.

STU

What is it, is it his clothes, his breath...?

REBECCA

I don't know, he was at school with us wasn't he Carl?

CARL

Yes, when he was just John, not Stinky John.

REBECCA

Something must have happened to him, he just stopped washing one day. Maybe we should trace it back?

CARL

Yes. Maybe we should. 'Who Do You Stink You Are?'

STU

And who are all the other people? Who's the really boring one?

REBECCA coughs and STU remembers IAN is with them.

STU (CONT'D)

Oh yes, and what about the old woman that's wandering round?

REBECCA

Oh God that's Geraldine. She's Daddy's cleaner. I asked her to come and serve drinks but she thinks she's a guest.

STU

Oh that's hilair. You've got to tell her.

REBECCA

I can't now, she's all dressed up.

STU

Dressed up? She looks like 'Feed the Birds'.

IAN

We have a sandwich guy a work and he wears a, like a yellow t-shirt thing, like a jersey but made from t-shirt material, and the girls all call him Mustard Mike!

Silence.

STU
Well thank God I brought champagne.
Who wants a swig?

STU drinks from his glass of champagne.

11 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

11

RACHEL, a pretty but dumb girl in her 30s, runs into the room. She looks around, goes over to the bedside cabinet and looks inside. Unsurprisingly there is nobody hiding there.

RACHEL looks around the room, then goes over to the wardrobe and flings the door open to reveal STU, CARL, REBECCA and IAN. RACHEL calls out:

RACHEL
Found them! They're in here!

REBECCA
Sssshhhh!

RACHEL
That's it isn't it? I've won!

REBECCA
No you've got to hide as well.

RACHEL
Oh, OK...

RACHEL hurries over to the window.

REBECCA
No, in here, with us.

RACHEL
Oh. There's not much space.

CARL
That's why it's fun apparently.

RACHEL
But I'm a little bit
claustrophobic.

CARL
Then it's even more fun.

REBECCA
Quick before someone sees you.

REBECCA pulls RACHEL into the wardrobe and closes the door.

REBECCA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Could you just move back a bit Ian.
Have you got space?

IAN (O.S.)JOT
Er, yes, I've just got a Christmas
tree sticking in my bottom.

STU (O.S.)
Memories!

REBECCA (O.S.)
Ssshhhh!

12 INT. WARDROBE - DAY

12

RACHEL is huddled in the wardrobe between IAN and REBECCA.
She whispers.

RACHEL
So what happens now?

REBECCA
We wait for the others to find us.

RACHEL
So how do you win?

REBECCA
Nobody wins, you just wait.

RACHEL
Oh. Right. So when does the game
start?

REBECCA
This is the game Rachel, we're
playing it.

IAN
Oh - so *you're* Rachel.

RACHEL
Yes, hello!

IAN
I've been calling Rebecca "Rachel"
haven't I?

REBECCA
Yes.

IAN
I think I got you mixed up because
Jeremy talks about you all the
time.

Does he?

REBECCA

Does he?

RACHEL

IAN (CONT'D)

Yes.

REBECCA

Who were you talking to?

IAN

Erm, which one are you?

REBECCA

Rebecca.

IAN

Yes.

An awkward silence.

STU

I spy with my little eye something beginning with WD.

CARL

Wardrobe door?

STU

How did you guess? Oh I haven't seen this much wood since...

CARL

Don't!

STU pokes his tongue out at CARL.

REBECCA

(to IAN)

So what does Jeremy say about me?

IAN

Sorry?

REBECCA

At work. You said he talks about me.

IAN

Oh just nice things. The usual boring girlfriend stuff...

REBECCA

Boring girlfriend?

IAN

Not that you're boring but what he said about you was...

REBECCA

Boring.

IAN

Yes.

REBECCA

Well coming from you Ian that's quite something. Thank you.

IAN

You're welcome.

RACHEL fans herself.

RACHEL

Is anyone else hot in here? Can we just open the door a crack, I need to get some air...

CARL

Wait 'til John gets here, you'll need more than a crack.

RACHEL

Is Stinky John playing?

REBECCA

Everybody's playing, it's Sardines.

RACHEL

I might not be able to stay here if he gets in. I do get a bit...

RACHEL fans herself.

STU

Don't worry dear, me and you'll nip through to Narnia, have a snowball fight and a Turkish Delight.

RACHEL opens the door to get some air. She steps out.

RACHEL

I'm sorry I need to breathe...

REBECCA

No - you're not allowed!

CARL

She's allowed to breathe.

RACHEL is in the bedroom.

IAN

I wouldn't mind stretching my legs actually. Been here a while...

IAN steps out of the wardrobe.

REBECCA

What? Oh this is ridiculous!

STU

Well I'm going to have a pee break then. All that champagne has gone straight through me.

STU gets out and nips across to the ensuite. He opens the door to find GERALDINE sitting on the toilet.

GERALDINE

Hang on! Occupied!

STU slams the door shut.

STU

Sorry! Well that's something I'll never unsee.

REBECCA

Who is it?

STU

Feed the birds.

REBECCA

Geraldine?

IAN

Shouldn't she be using the staff toilets?

The toilet flushes and we hear the tap running. REBECCA sees that CARL is looking very preoccupied.

REBECCA

Are you OK? What's the matter with you?

CARL

(acidly)

What do you think Rebecca? Look where we are.

GERALDINE emerges from the ensuite. She is in her 70s and wears her best dress and hat, also '70s.

GERALDINE

There you go lovey. It doesn't have a lock, it's an "on-sweetie".

STU
Well you've warmed the seat for me.

RACHEL
Thought it was a pee break?

STU
Ladies sit.

STUART enters the ensuite and shuts the door.

GERALDINE
I heard you all talking in there
but I didn't want to disturb you.
(to RACHEL)
Hello lovey.

RACHEL
I was just getting some air. I'm a
bit claustrophobic.

GERALDINE
Oh dear. Is that where you can't
bear to touch a snake?

From inside the bathroom, STU pipes up:

STU (V.O.)
You've got that haven't you Carl?

IAN
Right shall we er, assume the
position?

IAN goes to get back into the wardrobe. REBECCA turns to
CARL.

REBECCA
It's just a game.

CARL looks away. RACHEL gets back in followed by GERALDINE.
They close the door.

14 INT. WARDROBE - DAY

14

IAN, RACHEL, GERALDINE, REBECCA and CARL are now in the
wardrobe.

GERALDINE
Room for a little 'un?

IAN
Yes, it's like the Time and
Relative Dimension In Space!
TARDIS...

Nobody responds.

GERALDINE

So Rachel, tell me again how you know Jeremy?

There is an awkward pause.

RACHEL

Erm...

REBECCA

Rachel is Jeremy's ex, Geraldine.

GERALDINE

That's it. I knew it was something I wasn't supposed to mention.

RACHEL

We're just mates now.

GERALDINE

Lovely. Oh it's been ages since I've been in this room. Your dad usually keeps it locked up. You know, after...

REBECCA

We're not going down that road Geraldine. It's a party, remember?

GERALDINE

Oh yes! "Why am I always the bridesmaid, never the blushing bride? Ding dong wedding bells, always ring for other girls, but one fine day - oh let it be soon - I will wake up in the morning on my own honeymoon!"

During this, RACHEL smiles at REBECCA, who smiles back thinly. REBECCA tries to take CARL's hand but he removes it.

STU opens the wardrobe door and steps back in.

STU

Right I'm coming in, nobody fart.

STU closes the wardrobe door. STU places his fingers under CARL's nose.

STU (CONT'D)

Smell that. Carbolic. We should get some for our 'on-sweetie'.

GERALDINE

Well this is fun isn't it?

REBECCA

Thank you Geraldine, yes it is.
Fun.

GERALDINE

Do you have a girlfriend Ian?

IAN

Er - no. Young, free and single at
the moment. It's fine, you get
used to it. I've not been a monk,
I've had some experiences... but
no. Pretty barren at the moment.
A pretty arid patch.

GERALDINE

We'll have to get you fixed up. Do
you like him Rachel?

RACHEL

(too quickly)

No. I mean, no I've got a
boyfriend. Did you meet Kevin
downstairs?

GERALDINE

Yes he gave me his jacket and asked
me to get him a drink.

REBECCA

He's only young.

STU

How young? Is he legal?

RACHEL

He's 21.

GERALDINE

Toy boy!

STU

"If there's grass on the wicket let
play commence!"

CARL

Oh for fuck's sake Stuart, give it
a rest!

STU

What's got into you?

CARL

Can't you just talk like a normal
human being for five minutes?

Suddenly they hear a noise in the bedroom. REBECCA shushes
everyone.

REBECCA peeps through a crack in the wardrobe door to see ELIZABETH come into the room and look around. ELIZABETH whispers loudly.

ELIZABETH
Mark! In here.

15 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

15

MARK enters the bedroom to join his wife ELIZABETH. Both ELIZABETH and MARK are tall, elegant, well-dressed snobs.

ELIZABETH
Have you got rid of him?

MARK
Yes, he's off looking for the others. God I loathe playing other people's family games, it's such a bore.

ELIZABETH
We've done long enough now. You said we'd be out by three.

MARK
Well why didn't you just do the lie about the baby-sitter getting ill?

ELIZABETH
Because that needs to be seeded. You need to seed it.

MARK
You don't need to seed it, you just say it. "Sorry we've got to go now the baby-sitter's ill."

ELIZABETH
Oh Mark you're so naive. What awful curtains.

MARK
Anyway the old man might be tedious but he's our way in to Dickie Lawrence so we have to put a shift in.

ELIZABETH
I thought you hated Dickie Lawrence?

MARK
I do, he's a first class prick. But I need him to smooth over that merger next year.

(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)
 You know what they say: keep your
 friends close and your enemies
 closer.

ELIZABETH
 You're such a horrible shit Mark.

MARK
 That's why you love me.

MARK grabs ELIZABETH and kisses her.

16 INT. WARDROBE - DAY

16

Inside the wardrobe REBECCA and the others can hear MARK and ELIZABETH.

ELIZABETH (O.S.)
 Mark stop it... no, not here...

MARK (O.S.)
 Come on. Just fingers.

ELIZABETH (O.S.)
 No!

RACHEL whispers.

RACHEL
 Do you think we should say
 something?

REBECCA
 We've left it too late now.

RACHEL
 But what if they start...?

REBECCA
 Somebody make a noise.

IAN blows a little breath, hardly registering any sound.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
 That was a bit too subtle Ian.

GERALDINE cries out.

GERALDINE
 Geronimo!

17 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

17

MARK and ELIZABETH break from their embrace. ELIZABETH adjusts her clothes. MARK smooths his hair and goes to open the wardrobe.

Six smiling faces look out at him.

REBECCA
Oh! You found us, well done!

ELIZABETH
What the hell...?

MARK remembers.

MARK
Sardines.

IAN
Hi Mark! Welcome to the wardrobe!

MARK stares blankly.

IAN (CONT'D)
Ian. I work for you. In IT.

MARK
Of course, hi.

REBECCA
We've been hiding here for ages
waiting for someone to find us and
these doors are so thick, we didn't
hear anything did we?

Assorted mumbles of 'No, no' from the others.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Do you want to come in then, before
Daddy finds us?

MARK
Erm...

MARK looks to ELIZABETH.

ELIZABETH
Yes. Though I am a bit worried
about the babysitter, she did say
she was feeling a bit under the
weather...

CARL
Well seeded.

MARK
We'll be alright for a few minutes
won't we?

MARK raises an eyebrow at ELIZABETH. It's an order, we have to do this. She gives him a hard look, then:

ELIZABETH

Yes. Looks like a lot of fun.

ELIZABETH gingerly moves forward as if she's going to walk into a pig sty. She braces herself and steps into the wardrobe.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Right. Please mind the shoes everybody. Maybe I should take them off?

MARK

No just get in Liz. The sooner we start...

MARK and ELIZABETH step into the wardrobe.

MARK (CONT'D)

Stand there next to Rachel.

REBECCA

Rebecca!

MARK

Sorry.

REBECCA

It's my engagement party and nobody seems to know my name!

MARK

It's just that Jeremy always...

REBECCA

What?

IAN

This one's Rachel!

IAN points knowingly to RACHEL.

MARK

Ah. Nice to meet you.

RACHEL

Nice to meet you too.

KEV enters the room.

KEV

There you all are! I've already been in here once!

RACHEL

Kev! Come in, we're having such a laugh. Might be a bit of a squeeze.

KEV climbs into the wardrobe.

ELIZABETH
Oh God...

KEV closes the wardrobe door.

18 INT. WARDROBE - DAY

18

KEV stands next to RACHEL.

KEV
Can't believe I didn't check in the
fucking wardrobe, what a knob!
I thought I heard someone shouting?

GERALDINE
That was me, I said 'Geronimo' -
don't ask me why.

RACHEL
Have you met everyone Kev? This is
Ian, who works with Mark.

MARK
For Mark actually. I own the
company.

KEV
Oh right, if you ever need any
roofing doing...

RACHEL
You know Rebecca obviously. This
is Mark's wife Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH
Hello.

KEV
You alright darling? You look like
you're crying.

ELIZABETH
It's just a bit dusty in here,
that's all.

RACHEL
This is Rebecca's brother Carl, and
Stuart who's his...

CARL
Flat mate. Pleased to meet you.

STU
Flat-mate?

KEV

Alright.

RACHEL

And this is Geraldine.

KEV

Yeah I know. I wouldn't mind a little top-up if you don't mind.

KEV proffers his empty champagne glass to GERALDINE.

GERALDINE

Pardon?

KEV

A little cheeky champers, there's a good girl.

GERALDINE

Why do you keep asking me?

KEV

Rebecca said you were serving drinks?

REBECCA

No...

GERALDINE

No I'm a guest! He's got his wires crossed.

REBECCA

Yes we're all guests here. All equal.

GERALDINE

I used to be their Nanny you know. I've known all three of them since they were so high.

RACHEL

Three of them?

REBECCA

Yes, we've got a sister, Caroline. She moved away.

GERALDINE

Is she not coming Becky? I'd love to see the boys again. They must be getting big now.

REBECCA
No they can't make it. It's a bit
too far to travel.

GERALDINE
Aaaahhh...

REBECCA and CARL exchange looks.

KEV
I'll go and get my own drink then.

KEV opens the wardrobe door.

STU
Here you go Kevin, I've got some
contraband you can have...

19 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

19

STU pushes his way out of the wardrobe and approaches KEV
with his champagne bottle.

STU
Let's form a splinter group under
the bed.

REBECCA
You can't do that.

STU
It's alright, I'm sure my *flat-mate*
won't mind.

STU looks back at CARL then starts to drag KEV over to the
bed.

KEV
Alright, but don't try and bum me!

REBECCA
I'm sorry Stuart but that's against
the rules.

STU
Homophobic!

GERALDINE
Oh you've got that haven't you
lovey?

RACHEL
No I'm claustrophobic.

ELIZABETH
It *is* getting rather crowded in
here.

IAN

Yes, it's almost like we're tin of
"Sardines"!

MARK

Tell you what Colin, why don't you
step out for a bit, make some room.

IAN climbs out of the wardrobe.

IAN

It's Ian...

MARK

Sorry, Ian - you can go under the
bed with those two.

KEV and STU are climbing under the bed.

STU

No, sorry, private party.

REBECCA

Look, you cannot play Sardines
unless everyone is hiding in the
same place together, that's what
makes it fun...

MARK closes the wardrobe door, leaving IAN on the outside.
IAN looks around and heads into the bathroom, closing the
door behind him. We stay on the empty room.

STU (O.S.)

Oh yes, Kevin, that's nice, keep
doing that, what big hands you've
got, oh yes...

RACHEL (O.S.)

Kevin?

KEV (O.S.)

I'm not doing anything!

CARL (O.S.)

Leave him alone Stuart.

STU (O.S.)

Oh, what's the matter Carl, are you
jealous?

CARL (O.S.)

Piss off.

REBECCA (O.S.)

Stop arguing you two, this is
ridiculous!

STU (O.S.)
It's not my fault that you're
afraid of intimacy Carl!

CARL (O.S.)
(emotionally)
And it's not my fault either!
You've got no idea...

A moment of silence in the empty room.

The door opens and in comes STINKY JOHN. He is overweight with long hair and wears an ill-fitting suit. He creeps into the room and looks around.

STINKY JOHN approaches the wardrobe. He throws the wardrobe door open to reveal MARK, GERALDINE, RACHEL, REBECCA, ELIZABETH and CARL. They stare at him with looks of horror on their faces.

STINKY JOHN
Ta dah!

REBECCA
John!

REBECCA instinctively puts her hand over her mouth.

STINKY JOHN
Oh looks like I'm one of the last
to join the party. Can I squeeze
in?

He makes to step into the wardrobe.

RACHEL/REBECCA/ELIZABETH
No!

REBECCA
I just think its a bit too full.

STINKY JOHN
No, there's plenty of room...

STINKY JOHN tries to get in. They all bunch up to stop him.

ELIZABETH
I feel sick.

MARK
Breathe through your mouth.

CARL
Actually John - some people are
hiding under the bed...

STU (O.S.)
Oh no you don't!

RACHEL

Yes, we just thought as I'm claustrophobic...

STINKY JOHN

But that's not the game is it? You're all meant to be squashed in together. That's the rules.

REBECCA

Yes but we thought it doesn't really matter about the rules. As long as we're all in the same room it still counts.

STINKY JOHN

Alright, as you wish.

STINKY JOHN goes towards the bed, and looks under it. STU's face peeps out.

STU

Actually John, there really isn't room under here. There's suitcases and everything, isn't that right Kevin.

KEV (V.O.)

Yeah it packed mate, sorry.

STINKY JOHN

I don't think I'd fit under there anyway to be honest, what with the old 26 pack.

He wobbles his gut.

STU

Yeah, you're far better off going with the wardrobe group.

STINKY JOHN

Alright, pillar to post! I'm back again!

STINKY JOHN heads back to the wardrobe but the door has been pulled to. STINKY JOHN tries to open it but encounters resistance.

STINKY JOHN (CONT'D)

Hang on. What's going on here? Is it caught or something?

Inside the wardrobe everyone is trying to hold the door closed.

REBECCA

It's stuck John. Maybe try going
in the bathroom.

MARK

First time for everything.

21 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

21

STINKY JOHN can see through the crack in the wardrobe door.

STINKY JOHN

I can see what it is. It's
fingers, someone's holding it with
their fingers.

RACHEL (O.S.)

No, we're trying to push it.

GERALDINE (O.S.)

Oh let him in, poor lamb.

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

You can't! Mark tell them.

MARK (O.S.)

Maybe try behind the curtains.

STU (O.S.)

Yeah and open a window while you're
there, it's getting a bit close.

STINKY JOHN shambles over to the window.

STINKY JOHN

Alright. Funniest game of Sardines
I've ever played.

STINKY JOHN arranges himself behind a curtain at the window
just as JEREMY enters the room. JEREMY is REBECCA's fiancée,
fairly handsome, well turned out but a bit wet.

JEREMY

Ah John, have you seen Rebecca
anywhere?

STINKY JOHN

Arggh, caught red-handed! She's
hiding in the wardrobe but you
can't get in, the door's stuck
apparently.

JEREMY

Thanks.

STINKY JOHN

And there's two under the bed -
it's a shambles!

STINKY JOHN hides behind the curtain as JEREMY approaches the wardrobe.

JEREMY

Bex, it's Jeremy.

REBECCA (O.S.)

Hi!

JEREMY

Listen darling, I'm just going to pop down to the station to pick up a chum who's running late and I can't seem to find my keys. You haven't had them have you?

REBECCA (O.S.)

No, they were in your jacket.

JEREMY

I looked, they're not there. If I can't find them I might have to take the Mini, is that OK?

REBECCA (O.S.)

Alright, drive safely though. Love you!

JEREMY

Love you too Rachel!

Instantly JEREMY knows he's said the wrong thing.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Rebecca!

JEREMY listens for a reaction. Silence.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Rebecca? Love you!

Silence. The door opens and in walks ANDREW, CARL and REBECCA's septuagenarian father. He sniffs the air.

ANDREW

What is that awful smell? That is absolutely vile.

JEREMY

Hi Andrew.

ANDREW

Searched this room have you?

JEREMY

Er - yes. I believe there's some people hiding in the wardrobe, some under the bed. And Stinky Jo... John behind the curtains.

ANDREW

No, no, no. This is all wrong. Come out from there boy!

STINKY JOHN steps out from the curtain, head bowed. He seems cowed by ANDREW's presence.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

You've all got to be in the same place! This isn't 'Hide and Go Seek'. You know the rules don't you?

STINKY JOHN

Yes Sir.

ANDREW kicks the bed.

ANDREW

Come on, out! Out, I say!

STU and KEV climb out from under the bed.

STU

It's like 'The Diary of Anne Frank'.

KEV

I've not seen that one. Is it like 'Diary of a Wimpy Kid'?

ANDREW opens the wardrobe door. REBECCA puts on a brave face.

REBECCA

Hi Daddy.

ANDREW

Here. Five more sardines to go in the tin.

JEREMY

Oh, I just need to...

ANDREW

Come on, chop chop. In we go...

JEREMY gets in next to REBECCA but she turns away from him.

STINKY JOHN squeezes in next to ELIZABETH, who blanches and gags.

STINKY JOHN looks over at CARL, who looks down.

KEV and STU climb into the wardrobe, followed by ANDREW who closes the door behind him.

22

INT. WARDROBE - DAY

22

It is now ridiculously packed in the wardrobe with MARK, GERALDINE, STU, KEV, RACHEL, STINKY JOHN, ELIZABETH, JEREMY, ANDREW, REBECCA and CARL all squashed in two deep.

ANDREW

There we go. That's the name of the game. Sardines.

JEREMY

(to REBECCA)

They both start with an 'R'...

MARK

Oh Andrew, Elizabeth was just asking after Dickie Lawrence, how is he these days?

ANDREW

Dickie Lawrence? Haven't spoken to him for two years. Hateful man.

MARK

Oh, I thought...

ANDREW

Thought you could use me as a stepping stone did you? Well tough titty. That bridge was burned a long time ago.

ELIZABETH looks stricken.

ELIZABETH

(weakly)

Babysitter...?

REBECCA

(to JEREMY)

You're still in love with her aren't you?

JEREMY falters, but says nothing. RACHEL looks away, taking KEV's hand.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

We used to love playing Sardines at parties didn't we Daddy?

ANDREW

Oh yes. What we call an ice-breaker. Do you remember the Sardine Song?

REBECCA

Of course.

ANDREW

(sings)

"A baby sardine saw his first submarine..."

CARL

Don't you dare sing that.

ANDREW

My house, I'll do what I bloody well like!

Silence.

GERALDINE

Oh do you remember that year when we had the cub scouts jamboree? Chaos it was, kiddies everywhere...

REBECCA

That was a long time ago.

GERALDINE

We were all having such a laugh and then this one little boy spoiled it, what was his name...

RACHEL

Er, I think we should be making a move now...

GERALDINE

Oh the police were involved and everything, do you remember John?

STINKY JOHN

Philip **Harrison**.

GERALDINE

That was it, Little Pip. Whatever happened to him?

ANDREW

The family moved away as I recall. Spain or some such.

GERALDINE

Well good riddance I say. Accusing you of such horrible things.

CARL

He paid them to go away.

ANDREW

I was teaching the boy how to wash himself. Basic hygiene.

CARL

We weren't all that lucky, were we John?

STINKY JOHN

I can smell Carbolic soap...

STINKY JOHN starts to gag.

ANDREW

Alright, that's enough!

Silence.

STU

Now before I ring Jeremy Kyle, can I just say there's no one actually looking for us any more? We're all here.

KEV

No we're not. That Ian's not here.

JEREMY

Yes, I do have to go and pick him up from the station.

MARK

He's in the bathroom.

JEREMY

What?

MARK

The boring chap with glasses on.

JEREMY

That's not Ian...

23

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

23

A hand is turning the key in the wardrobe door. We hear singing and pull out to see IAN'S reflection in the wardrobe mirror.

IAN

(singing)

"A baby sardine saw his first submarine; he was scared and watched through the peephole..."

