

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  
Ssssshhhh!

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..."

