

CHRIS

(Calls.)

Rod? Ro-d?

(ROD appears behind her with a mug, leans on something and watches her.)

(Unaware of him as yet, calls.)

Dutch lorry's been.

MUSIC 19A: DON'T GO OUT WITH CHRISTINE BUTLER

(Half-heartedly sorts flowers.)

Didn't order enough gypsophila. Or gerberas.

(She notices him finally.)

D'y hear what I said? Don't stand like a lettuce.

ROD

'DON'T GO OUT WITH CHRISTINE BUTLER'
THAT'S WHAT MY MUM SAID -

CHRIS

(Tending flowers.)

What your mother said was 'that girl's got a name for herself.'

ROD

'SHE'S GOT A REPUTATION.'

CHRIS

(Mutters to herself.)

As she sat stirring her cauldron.

ROD

'ROD, GO OUT WITH CHRISTINE BUTLER'
THAT'S WHAT JOHN CLARK SAID
'- IF YOU PULL MATE
LIFE WILL NOT BE DULL, MATE'
SO I ASK FOR A DATE

SHE SAYS SHE'S 'BRINGING A FRIEND.'
JOHN SAYS 'TELL HER THAT'S FINE
TELL HER YOU'LL BRING A MATE AND I'LL COME!
JUST DON'T CANCEL!'
AND IN THE END, EGGED ON BY CLARKE-Y
AND A PINT OF WHAT THEY SAID WAS SAKE
SHE'S UP ON THE TABLE-

CHRIS

Yeah Rod an' we all know what happened next. I dragged Annie up t' dance an' the table collapsed an' right now I don't need reminding, so/ just -

ROD

What 'happened' was John ended up asking his future wife to the cinema.

(Beat.)

Our married life has been a series of bad ideas. 'Let's dance on a table.' 'Let's open a flower shop.' 'You can't get pregnant after a curry.' Not one of 'em hasn't worked out.

(Takes the flowers off her.)

Your son needs to learn that life is all about coping fabulously with terrible mistakes. And while he learns, I'm not having him change my wife.

(Beat.)

I didn't marry you for an easy path, Chris Harper. I married you for crazy paving.

(He kisses her and goes.)

TANNOY

Thank you ladies and welcome to the afternoon session of the Women's Institute National Conference.

(A spotlight falls.)

Scene 6 – Conference Hall

TANNOY

Would all remaining members take their seats.

(MARIE leads JENNY on.)

MARIE

Here we go, just follow me. Mind that step. C2, C3. Ah, this is good. Good view isn't it. You can see the whole conference!

JENNY

Great. When it starts I might run down the front and join the mosh pit.

MARIE

The what?

JENNY

Never mind.

(CELIA, CORA and JESSIE watch from a position of safety.)

TANNOY

The main speeches start at three pm, as per your programme.