

APPENDIX 1

The drama text entitled “Independence Day”

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BRIEF SKETCHES

INDEPENDENCE DAY

A miniature domestic drama by

Peter D. Wilson

Character notes

JOAN an over-solicitous Mum.

ERIC her husband, a harassed minor functionary, with a pedantic manner, inclined to clichés.

BOB their teenage son, at the rebellious stage.

Set

A family sitting room, conventionally furnished with a settee roughly in the centre, otherwise at discretion.

Time

The present

Peter D. Wilson
Seascale, June 1997
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Joan is seated on the settee, half her attention on a holiday brochure. She turns the pages distractedly, anxiously consulting her watch from time to time. She repeatedly returns to a particular page, then with a regretful sigh and a shake of the head, puts it aside as an outer door is heard to open and close. After a pause, Eric enters, carrying a briefcase, and lightly pecks her on the cheek.

ERIC Hello, dear. Sorry I'm late.

JOAN It's all right. There's no hurry.

ERIC How's the day been?

JOAN Not bad.

ERIC Not good, either, by the sound of it.

JOAN I've been worried.

ERIC About Bob?

JOAN Yes. It's the first time he's been away from home overnight.

ERIC About time, too. A lad of his age ...

JOAN Yes, but you never know what these lads get up to. You hear such dreadful stories ...

ERIC Look, dear, you fret too much. He's a sensible chap, as they go, and for goodness' sake, he's only been staying with a friend after the concert. You wouldn't have wanted him trailing right across the town at God knows what hour. Let alone waking us up when he got in - or more likely keeping us up waiting.

JOAN I suppose you're right. But I didn't sleep anyway.

ERIC No, and you made sure I didn't either.

JOAN Get away with you. You were snoring like a grampus.

ERIC (*with dignity*) I do not snore.

JOAN How do you know? You couldn't hear it. Anyway, how about you? Had a busy day?

ERIC As always. Not over yet, either. (*Indicating the briefcase, sighing*) More papers to deal with.

JOAN Oh, really, it's too bad. You let yourself be put upon.

ERIC Well, it's got to be done. At least if I get these out of the way tonight, the weekend should be free.

JOAN It never used to be like this.

ERIC No, but with the "no replacement" policy, everyone's having to cram more in. It can't go on indefinitely, though. We're all getting worn out. No one was really awake this afternoon.

JOAN You need a holiday.

ERIC I know. Just haven't been able to take the time off, with so much going on. Still, there's light at the end of the tunnel. Things should slacken off for the summer in a week or two.

JOAN (*hopefully*) Really? We can get away then?

ERIC Don't see why not. Anywhere you particularly fancy?

JOAN Well, I was just looking at this brochure ... (*Finding the page*) Here - "Special offer during July - two for the price of one. Cruise the coast of Asia Minor from Antalya to Kusadasi ..."

ERIC Bit out of our league, isn't it?

JOAN Don't be such a stick-in-the-mud. Spread your wings a little!

ERIC I don't know. Isn't that the firm that was criticised when one of their cruises had to be taken by coach because the water wasn't deep enough for the boat?

JOAN That was a river trip. No one's going to pull the plug out of the Med.

ERIC I suppose not. Let's have a look. (*He studies the itinerary*) Hm, might be quite interesting. And at that price ... yes, the budget would just about run to it. Two for the price of one. I like that.

JOAN But what about Bob? We'd have to pay full price for him.

ERIC Who said anything about taking Bob?

JOAN (*stating the obvious*) We can't leave him behind, can we?

ERIC I don't see why not.

JOAN But he's always taken his holidays with us.

ERIC You mean we've always taken him on holiday with us.

JOAN That's what I said.

ERIC No it isn't. It's a different thing altogether. You imply that he had a choice in the matter. If he did, I'm not at all sure that he'd have come. Most lads of his age are off with their own pals.

JOAN Yes, and look what they get up to. Drink ... drugs ...you know.

ERIC So that's what it's all about. Look, the longer you keep him on your apron strings, the more violently he's going to react when he gets the chance.

JOAN (*bursting with a hitherto contained anxiety*) Eric, I'm worried.

ERIC (*wearily*) So, what's new?

JOAN I was tidying his room today ...

ERIC Joan! You know how he hates that.

JOAN Yes, but he left the door open ... I couldn't help seeing what a mess it was in.

ERIC You might have just closed the door.

JOAN I suppose I might. But, anyway, I didn't. I found some magazines - horrible magazines.

ERIC What sort?

JOAN You know ...

ERIC No, Joan. I don't know. That's why I asked.

JOAN Vile pictures ...

ERIC I see, I think I can guess.

JOAN I threw them out, of course.

ERIC Joan! Do you really think that was wise?

JOAN Why ever not?

ERIC For a start, they aren't your property ...

JOAN You're not going to let a technicality like that bother you, surely!

ERIC ... and more practically, he'll know you've been snooping.

JOAN Snooping?

ERIC What else could you call it? And another thing, suppose anyone goes rooting in our dustbin, do you want them found?

JOAN (*in disgust*) Oh, really!

The outer door opens and slams shut. Bob, not a picture of elegance, breezes in, obviously just passing with no wish for more than the most perfunctory courtesies.

BOB Hello, Mum ... Dad.

ERIC Hello, son. How was the concert?

BOB Not bad. The amps could have done with pepping up a bit ...

ERIC Yes, I thought it must have been a subdued affair. We couldn't hear it - and we're only six miles away.

JOAN Dinner in a quarter of an hour?

BOB OK. (*He withdraws*)

ERIC What's it to be?

JOAN Irish stew. Oh, how I wish I could get away from all this!

ERIC (*astonished*) You mean, permanently? Doing a Shirley Valentine?

JOAN That's a thought - I rather fancy Tom Conti.

ERIC Some hopes!

JOAN No, I suppose it'll have to be just the usual fortnight in bloody Sidmouth.

ERIC It doesn't have to be bloody Sidmouth. Cornwall's quite nice ...

JOAN (*scornfully*) Cornwall!

Bob bursts in, thunderously and furious.

BOB Mum! You've been messing about with my room again!

JOAN I've tidied it, yes. It was such a pigsty ...

BOB I can't find anything now. How the hell do you expect me to put up with it?

ERIC Bob! That's no way to speak to your mother!

BOB Oh, don't be so bloody pompous. There are some books I borrowed from Tubby Gordon - he wants them back tonight ... or else.

JOAN And what sort of books would they be?

BOB (*a shade embarrassed*) Well ...

ERIC I think you may find them in the dustbin. Oh, don't worry - the liner was changed today.

BOB You've no right! Meddling with my things ...

ERIC (*firmly*) May I remind you that this is a family home. It isn't a hotel - however much like one you may treat it - and your mother and I are responsible for what goes on here. We won't have that sort of muck under our roof! Is that understood?

Bob is about to expostulate, but thinks better of it and goes.

ERIC Pompous!

JOAN (*giggling despite herself*) Well, you were just a shade.

ERIC It's no laughing matter.

JOAN Sorry, dear.

Bob returns, carrying magazines in a plastic bag, still angry but controlled.

BOB Right, that's it. You don't want these under your roof. You won't want me under it, either.

JOAN Bob!

BOB Joe Billings suggested weeks ago I should move in with him.

JOAN Move?

BOB I should have had the sense to take him up on it then. Well, better late than never.

JOAN What about your dinner?

BOB Stuff your ruddy dinner! And I hope it chokes you!

Exit. Stunned silence for a moment, then Joan starts weeping. Eric tries to comfort her.

ERIC Steady on, old girl.

JOAN I've got to stop him.

She moves to follow, but Eric restrains her.

ERIC No, dear. How can you? In any case, try to stop him now and you've lost him for ever. Let him go, and he'll probably come back.

JOAN You think so?

ERIC Probably not to live here. He's got to leave the nest some time. This may be as good as any.

Bob returns with a small bag. His anger has abated.

BOB Sorry I blew my top. I've just packed a few things for the night. I'll be back for the rest later. If you don't mind.

ERIC Of course not.

BOB Oh - *(passing Eric a hand-written card)* and here's the address.

ERIC *(offering his hand)* Good luck, son.

Bob hesitates a moment, then shakes hands, and with some diffidence hugs Joan. He leaves. Joan subsides rather tearfully on to the settee.

ERIC Well ...

JOAN He's gone. They all go sooner or later, don't they? Every family breaks up.

ERIC He's gone, yes. He needs his own space. But he left his address. He wouldn't have done that if he wanted to break with us, would he?

JOAN I suppose not.

ERIC Come on, cheer up. Let's think about that holiday.

JOAN All right. I'll try. What do you think?

ERIC Where's that brochure?

JOAN (*passing it*) Here.

ERIC Let's see. Antalya to Kusadasi. Two for the price of one. We could do it now.

JOAN So we could.

ERIC Yes, after all that, there's something to be said for being independent, isn't there?

APPENDIX 2

The classification of speech acts.

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Speech Act
1.	Eric	Hello, dear. Sorry I'm late.	Expressive
2.	Joan	It's all right. There's no hurry.	Representative Representative
3.	Eric	How's the day been?	Directive
4.	Joan	Not bad.	Representative
5.	Eric	Not good, either, by the sound of it.	Representative
6.	Joan	I've been worried.	Expressive
7.	Eric	About Bob?	Directive
8.	Joan	Yes. It's the first time he's been away from home overnight.	Representative
9.	Eric	About time, too. A lad of his age ...	Representative
10.	Joan	Yes, but you never know what these lads get up to. You hear such dreadful stories ...	Representative
11.	Eric	Look, dear, you fret too much. He's a sensible chap, as they go, and for goodness' sake, he's only been staying with a friend after the concert. You wouldn't have wanted him trailing right across the town at God knows what hour. Let alone waking us up when he got in - or more likely keeping us up waiting.	Directive Representative Directive
12.	Joan	I suppose you're right. But I didn't sleep anyway.	Commissive Representative
13.	Eric	No, and you made sure I didn't either	Representative
14.	Joan	Get away with you. You were snoring like a grampus.	Directive Representative
15.	Eric	I do not snore.	Representative
16.	Joan	How do you know? You couldn't hear it. Anyway, how about you? Had a busy day?	Directive Representative Directive
17.	Eric	As always. Not over yet, either. More papers to	Representative

		deal with.	
18.	Joan	Oh, really, it's too bad. You let yourself be put upon.	Expressive Representative
19.	Eric	Well, it's got to be done. At least if I get these out of the way tonight, the weekend should be free.	Representative
20.	Joan	It never used to be like this.	Representative
21.	Eric	No, but with the "no replacement" policy, everyone's having to cram more in. It can't go on indefinitely, though. We're all getting worn out. No one was really awake this afternoon.	Representative
22.	Joan	You need a holiday.	Representative
23.	Eric	I know. Just haven't been able to take the time off, with so much going on. Still, there's light at the end of the tunnel. Things should slacken off for the summer in a week or two.	Representative Commisive
24.	Joan	Really? We can get away then?	Directive
25.	Eric	Don't see why not. Anywhere you particularly fancy?	Directive
26.	Joan	Well, I was just looking at this brochure ... Here - "Special offer during July - two for the price of one. Cruise the coast of Asia Minor from Antalya to Kusadasi ..."	Representative Commisive
27.	Eric	Bit out of our league, isn't it?	Directive
28.	Joan	Don't be such a stick-in-the-mud. Spread your wings a little!	Directive Expressive
29.	Eric	I don't know. Isn't that the firm that was criticised when one of their cruises had to be taken by coach because the water wasn't deep enough for the boat?	Representative Directive
30.	Joan	That was a river trip. No one's going to pull the plug out of the Med.	Representative
31.	Eric	I suppose not. Let's have a look. Hm, might be quite interesting.	Commisive Directive

		And at that price ... yes, the budget would just about run to it. Two for the price of one. I like that.	Expressive
32.	Joan	But what about Bob? We'd have to pay full price for him.	Directive Representative
33.	Eric	Who said anything about taking Bob?	Directive
34.	Joan	We can't leave him behind, can we?	Directive
35.	Eric	I don't see why not.	Representative
36.	Joan	But he's always taken his holidays with us.	Representative
37.	Eric	You mean we've always taken him on holiday with us.	Representative
38.	Joan	That's what I said.	Representative
39.	Eric	No it isn't. It's a different thing altogether. You imply that he had a choice in the matter. If he did, I'm not at all sure that he'd have come. Most lads of his age are off with their own pals.	Representative
40.	Joan	Yes, and look what they get up to. Drink ... drugs ...you know.	Representative Directive
41.	Eric	So that's what it's all about. Look, the longer you keep him on your apron strings, the more violently he's going to react when he gets the chance.	Representative
42.	Joan	Eric, I'm worried.	Expressive
43.	Eric	So, what's new?	Directive
44.	Joan	I was tidying his room today ...	Representative
45.	Eric	Joan! You know how he hates that.	Directive
46.	Joan	Yes, but he left the door open ... I couldn't help seeing what a mess it was in.	Representative
47.	Eric	You might have just closed the door.	Directive
48.	Joan	I suppose I might. But, anyway, I didn't. I found some magazines - horrible magazines.	Commissive Representative
49.	Eric	What sort?	Directive
50.	Joan	You know ...	Representative
51.	Eric	No, Joan. I don't know. That's why I asked.	Representative Representative
52.	Joan	Vile pictures ...	Representative
53.	Eric	I see, I think I can guess.	Representative

54.	Joan	I threw them out, of course.	Representative
55.	Eric	Joan! Do you really think that was wise?	Directive
56.	Joan	Why ever not?	Directive
57.	Eric	For a start, they aren't your property ...	Representative
58.	Joan	You're not going to let a technicality like that bother you, surely!	Expressive
59.	Eric	...and more practically, he'll know you've been snooping.	Commissive
60.	Joan	<u>Snooping</u> ?	Directive
61.	Eric	What else could you call it? And another thing, suppose anyone goes rooting in our dustbin, do you want them found?	Directive
62.	Joan	Oh, really!	Expressive
63.	Bob	Hello, Mum ... Dad.	Expressive
64.	Eric	Hello, son. How was the concert?	Expressive Directive
65.	Bob	Not bad. The amps could have done with pepping up a bit ...	Representative
66.	Eric	Yes, I thought it must have been a subdued affair. We couldn't hear it - and we're only six miles away.	Representative
67.	Joan	Dinner in a quarter of an hour?	Directive
68.	Bob	OK.	Representative
69.	Eric	What's it to be?	Directive
70.	Joan	Irish stew. Oh, how I wish I could get away from all this!	Expressive
71.	Eric	You mean, permanently? Doing a Shirley Valentine?	Directive
72.	Joan	That's a thought - I rather fancy Tom Conti.	Representative
73.	Eric	Some hopes!	Expressive
74.	Joan	No, I suppose it'll have to be just the usual fortnight in bloody Sidmouth.	Commissive
75.	Eric	It doesn't have to be bloody Sidmouth. Cornwall's quite nice ...	Representative
76.	Joan	Cornwall!	Representative
77.	Bob	Mum! You've been messing about with my room again!	Expressive
78.	Joan	I've tidied it, yes. It was such a pigsty ...	Representative
79.	Bob	I can't find anything now. How the hell do you expect me to put up with it?	Representative Directive

80.	Eric	Bob! That's no way to speak to your mother!	Expressive
81.	Bob	Oh, don't be so bloody pompous. There are some books I borrowed from Tubby Gordon - he wants them back tonight ... or else.	Directive Representative
82.	Joan	And what sort of books would they be?	Directive
83.	Bob	Well ...	Representative
84.	Eric	I think you may find them in the dustbin. Oh, don't worry - the liner was changed today.	Representative Directive
85.	Bob	You've no right! Meddling with my things ...	Representative
86.	Eric	May I remind you that this is a family home. It isn't a hotel - however much like one you may treat it - and your mother and I are responsible for what goes on here. We won't have that sort of muck under our roof! Is that understood?	Representative Expressive Directive
87.	Eric	Pompous!	Expressive
88.	Joan	Well, you were just a shade.	Representative
89.	Eric	It's no laughing matter.	Representative
90.	Joan	Sorry, dear.	Expressive
91.	Bob	Right, that's it. You don't want these under your roof. You won't want me under it, either.	Representative
92.	Joan	Bob!	Expressive
93.	Bob	Joe Billings suggested weeks ago I should move in with him.	Directive
94.	Joan	Move?	Directive
95.	Bob	I should have had the sense to take him up on it then. Well, better late than never.	Representative
96.	Joan	What about your dinner?	Directive
97.	Bob	Stuff your ruddy dinner! And I hope it chokes you!	Expressive
98.	Eric	Steady on, old girl.	Directive
99.	Joan	I've got to stop him.	Commissive
100.	Eric	No, dear. How can you? In any case, try to stop him now and you've lost him for ever. Let him go, and he'll probably come back.	Directive Representative
101.	Joan	You think so?	Directive
102.	Eric	Probably not to live here. He's got to leave the nest some time. This may be as good as any.	Representative

103.	Bob	Sorry I blew my top. I've just packed a few things for the night. I'll be back for the rest later. If you don't mind.	Expressive Commissive
104.	Eric	Of course not.	Representative
105.	Bob	Oh - and here's the address.	Representative
106.	Eric	Good luck, son.	Commissive
107.	Eric	Well ...	Representative
108.	Joan	He's gone. They all go sooner or later, don't they? Every family breaks up.	Directive Representative
109.	Eric	He's gone, yes. He needs his own space. But he left his address. He wouldn't have done that if he wanted to break with us, would he?	Representative Directive
110.	Joan	I suppose not.	Commissive
111.	Eric	Come on, cheer up. Let's think about that holiday.	Directive
112.	Joan	All right. I'll try. What do you think?	Commissive Directive
113.	Eric	Where's that brochure?	Directive
114.	Joan	Here.	Representative
115.	Eric	Let's see. Antalya to Kusadasi. Two for the price of one. We could do it now.	Directive
116.	Joan	So we could.	Representative
117.	Eric	Yes, after all that, there's something to be said for being independent, isn't there?	Directive