

Characters

- Rachel (F)** - House occupier.
- Julian (M)** - A salesman/representative, but this is not obvious until end.
- Postie (M/F)** - Four lines only at beginning. This part could easily be doubled by Julian.

Scene 1 – Front Door

(SFX: Extract from ‘Cat Duet’ by Rossini and Pearson, sung by Chichi Enu and Adrienne Livey. Rachel enters as if just approaching her front door, back from a shopping trip. She is carrying a bag or basket.)

- Postie:** **(Enters with handful of post. Cheerily)** Good morning.
- Rachel:** Good morning; anything exciting?
- Postie:** Let’s have a quick look. **(Quickly assesses post in hand.)** Mostly advertising I think; oh, I was wrong, there’s a letter for you. **(Hands Rachel the mail.)**
- Rachel:** **(Receives handful of mail/junkmail.)** Thank you. I’ve got a love-hate relationship with digital technology – it’s so handy, but it’s killed letter writing. I used to love receiving letters.
- Postie:** A lot of people say that.
- Rachel:** **(Sifts through the mail; extracts the letter, looks at back of envelope for clues.)** Perhaps this is something exciting.
- Postie:** **(Smiles)** Perhaps. **(Exits.)**
- Rachel:** **(Rips open letter. Groans. Reads)** ‘Having trouble with troublesome weeds on your driveway? Call....’ **(Sighs. Holds bundle as if wishing to dispose of leaflets. Looks around as if missing an object. Talks to self. Tetchy.)** Where’s the recycling bin got to? Oh, it’s still on the pavement I wonder if the bin lorry’s been round yet? **(Sighs.)**
- Julian:** **(Enters)** That’s a big sigh if you don’t mind me saying so.
- Rachel:** **(Appraises Julian. Warily.)** If you’re selling something I’m really not in the...
- Julian:** **(Interrupts. Shows he’s not carrying anything.)** Do I look like I’m selling something?
- Rachel:** A survey then – you’re doing a survey?
- Julian:** You’re very suspicious.
- Rachel:** I have reason to be. Nine out of ten callers try to sell me something – double glazing, veggie baskets, tree pruning, gas, electricity, horse manure....**(Temporarily runs out of steam. Deep breath, continues.)**...roof repairs, tarmac laying.... **(Interrupted.)**
- Julian:** **(After surreptitiously checking for house number, interrupts.)** Is this number eighty-eight?
- Rachel:** **(Relaxing.)** Oh, no, it’s not – I’m number sixty-eight. Sorry to be suspicious.
- Julian:** No problem.
- Rachel:** **(Points)** You just need to go up the road a bit for sixty-eight; same side.
- Julian:** **(Casually points as if to a cat in front garden.)** That’s a fine cat – a Siamese?
- Rachel:** Burmese.
- Julian:** Unusual.
- Rachel:** **(Con conversationally.)** Yes, there’s not too many around.

Julian: I get on with cats, we've just been having a nice chat.
Rachel: He likes a fuss. He's a happy bunny.
Julian: Bunny?
Rachel: It's an expression, haven't you heard it?
Julian: Oh, I've heard it. He doesn't like it though.
Rachel: How can you tell?

© **Scripts for Stage**

This script must not be copied, printed or performed without the permission of Scripts for Stage. Copying and performance licences can be obtained from www.scriptsforstage.co.uk/wp/product/interpreter-performance/

Julian: He told me.
Rachel: **(Taken aback.)** He told you?
Julian: Yes, Tin Win told me.
Rachel: You know his name?
Julian: Of course. We had a name exchange. I'm Julian. And your name is?
Rachel: **(Somewhat reluctantly.)** Um, Rachel.
(Julian holds out his hand in friendly but assertive manner, to shake Rachel's hand. Rachel transfers leaflets to her left hand in order to shake Julian's hand. A couple of them flutter to ground.)
Julian: **(Quickly picks them up and hands back to Rachel.)** Continuing with our conversation, yes Tin Win said it's demeaning for him to be compared to a rabbit.
Rachel: **(Laughs.)** You are pulling my leg!
Julian: Not at all. I have this special gift of communicating with cats; call me a feline interpreter. I don't expect you to believe me.
Rachel: I don't believe you.
Julian: Very well. I'll tell you one or two other things that he said.
Rachel: **(Folds arms.)** Go on then.
Julian: He says he doesn't like the cat food you've been giving him.
Rachel: Oh? And what sort is that?
Julian: He says he's really bored with cod and chicken, and why did you buy such a big box? Was it a cut price deal?
Rachel: **(A little taken aback.)** He said that?
Julian: Yes.
Rachel: There's gratitude.
Julian: He suggested you try another flavour, and brand.
Rachel: Did he make any, er, suggestions?

Julian: Well, he did suggest you might try – oh there’s a coincidence – you have the leaflet in your hand. Excuse me. **(Leans forward to extract leaflet from Rachel’s hand; looks at it.)** Here we are, yes, Tin Win did suggest you change to Kitty’s Kitchen. You can order a monthly selection of his top flavours.

Rachel: **(Cynically.)** And what are Tin Win’s top flavours?

Julian: Er, anything from Kitty’s Kitchen he says. And that’s not all.

Rachel: You appear to have had quite a long chat.

Julian: Sufficient. He was obviously bursting to get things off his chest. If you come across someone who speaks the same language, it all comes out in a flood doesn’t it.

Rachel: I wouldn’t know. What else did he say?

Julian: Well, I don’t know if I should repeat it; especially as it was probably spoken in confidence.

Rachel: If Tin Win has a grouse – **(Interrupted.)**

Julian: **(Studying leaflet in his hand. Misinterprets)** No, no, he said definitely no grouse. Salmon and turkey, or tuna and trout, but no grouse – **(Interrupted.)**

Rachel: I mean, if he has a complaint, perhaps I ought to know so that I can try to remedy it.

Julian: Ah, well, you do have a point Rachel. It’s about your settee, it’s uncomfortable.

Rachel: What! The one in our front window?

Julian: **(Points as if to Rachel’s window.)** Yes, that’s the one, Tin Win said.

Rachel: He definitely said the one in the front window was uncomfortable? Not for instance, the one in the conservatory round the back?

Julian: No, no, he doesn’t mind the rattan settee in the conservatory, with the deep floral covered cushions.

Rachel: **(Takes a deep breath.)** He was that specific about it?

Julian: Yes. I mean there’s not much point in saying anything if you’re not going to be specific, he said.

Rachel: **(Looks through leaflets in her hand.)** What sort of settee does Tin Win fancy then?

Julian: Oh, something like, oh, excuse me again, **(Spots an advertising leaflet with a settee on in Rachel’s hand. Leans forward and points.)** something like that one there, he said. **(Admiringly.)** I must say he has very good taste.

Rachel: **(Looks at advertising leaflet and frowns.)** Expensive taste.

Julian: Would you expect anything less? I mean he’s an expensive cat.

Rachel: Yes, with expensive tastes. Did he say anything else?

Julian: Please don’t think that our conversation was all about his grumbles. We discussed other things too.

Rachel: Such as?

Julian: Oh, the weather; same as people really. Nice day for it etc.

Rachel: Anything else.

Julian: Well, he doesn't want to worry you, but –

Rachel: Oh, don't hold back. He's been fairly forthcoming so far.

Julian: **(Looks towards where Tin Win might possibly be.)** Don't be too harsh; it's not every day that he meets someone like me, who can really truly understand him.

Rachel: Once in a blue moon I should think.

Julian: Yes. I surprise people all the time when I tell them what their cats say. It's not always welcome, but then the truth isn't always welcome, is it? Oh, you were asking me what else he said it concerns your garden. He told me that next door's garden has a much better layout.

Rachel: Which side next doors?

Julian: This side **(Points)**. The lawn is immaculate, no weeds infesting the drive; there's that pretty little pergola with climbing clematis, bushes to hide in.

Rachel: Why does he want to hide?

© Scripts for Stage

This script must not be copied, printed or performed without the permission of Scripts for Stage. Copying and performance licences can be obtained from www.scriptsforstage.co.uk/wp/product/interpreter-performance/

Julian: To spy out the land.

Rachel: What for?

Julian: Oh, you know cats or perhaps you don't. They're instinctual hunters.

Rachel: He's not without his faults then?

Julian: He's a cat.

Rachel: Perhaps he's just hungry, what with going off his cod and chicken dinners?

Julian: That would certainly increase his killer instinct. **(Leans forward pointing to a leaflet showing an example of a landscaped garden.)** If you look at the example of landscaping on this leaflet, you'll see that no inch of ground is wasted, unlike yours. There's a raised dais for him to lie on as well. In fact – **(Interrupted.)**

Rachel: **(Thrusts leaflets towards Julian. Warily.)** Take them, you've a few to get through yet. **(Shuffles leaflets, pointing to various examples.)** How about the fitted kitchens leaflet? Or the better bathrooms? Or Merry Maids home cleaning?

Julian: **(Accepts leaflets back.)** Oh, that's such a negative attitude Rachel. Tin Win doesn't like cynicism – look, look at him twitching his tail with displeasure.

Rachel: Well, if Tin Win is cross, he can always go home.

Julian: Pardon?

Rachel: Home! **(Points to house next door with landscaped garden etc.)** He comes here when his owners are at work. He just loves my unruly garden. And if I don't watch him, he'll sneak through the cat flap and gobble up my cat's leftovers – cod and chicken; then he'll have a kip on the front room settee.

(Julian opens mouth, closes it. SFX. Of bin lorry.)

Rachel: **(Airily.)** Sounds like the recycling lorry's on its way to take away the empty cat food tins you've been looking at. Tell you what, you've just time to pop those leaflets in to join them on your way out. And do tuck Tin Win's name tag in again on his collar; it's a bit of a giveaway. Oh, and I do know you were sneaking around the back of the conservatory before I arrived home because you left the gate open. Goodbye Julian.
(Exits.)

Julian: **(Shrugs. Scratches head; looks at house next door. Ever optimistic, addresses invisible cat positively.)** Well Tin Win, time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted. If you prefer this garden, this settee, this food I'll put my skates on and look in next door's recycling bin for clues. **(Looks at his watch.)** Your owners will probably be back from work soon. What do you say?

(SFX. A Meow.)

Julian: Exactly. **(Exits with leaflets whistling cheerily.)**

(Cast enter and take bow. For fun Rachel could have a toy cat tucked under her arm.)

The end