

## ACT II

*A Greek island.*

*A secluded section of shore, dotted with rocks and baked by the Mediterranean sun. It is an underdeveloped corner of the bay, a place not yet appropriated by tourists. In the background we see a hint of the village and the taverna. The deep blue of the sky dominates. A white table with some chairs has been placed in this spot.*

*When the curtain rises, the parasol is still folded. There is a piece of rushmatting laid out for sunbathing.*

**SHIRLEY** *enters. She has bare feet and wears Gillian's robe over cut-down denims and a bikini top.*

**SHIRLEY** I'll bet y' didn't recognize me, did y'? I hardly recognize meself these days. D' y' like me tan?

*She opens the robe to display a deep tan.*

It's marvellous, isn't it? I love it here—don't I, rock?

*She points to the rock.*

That's rock. We met the first day I got here, didn't we? Well, I didn't want to go down on to the beach, y' see. I thought I'd get a bit of a tan before I ventured on to the beach because—let's face it—I was so white. If I'd walked on to that beach when I first got here, they would have thought I'd just had a fresh coat of white emulsion. When I first arrived there was more glare comin' off me than there was off the sun. So what I did was I found this little place—I found you, didn't I, rock? I talked to you. Rock. He's got his name written all the way through him. 'Course, I talk



to rock—but he doesn't talk back to me. Well he can't, can he? It's a Greek rock. It doesn't understand a bleedin' word I'm sayin'. I might have risked the beach if I'd been with Jane. But on me own I felt a bit—y' know, conspicuous. Jane met a feller, didn't she? Not here, on the plane—honest to God. An' the state of him. I wouldn't give y' tuppence a ton. Sporty type—y' know, all groin an' Adidas labels. Ooogh. Designer teeth he had. An' bloodshot eyes. Y' know when he smiled with these blazin' white teeth an' the bloodshot eyes, I said to Jane, "Oh, he must be a Liverpool supporter". She didn't like that. But I didn't care. I'd got past carin' to tell y' the truth. I mean, we were gonna do everythin' together. We hadn't even landed an' she's got herself fixed up. She only went to the loo. When she got back she said to me, "Erm, I've just been invited out to dinner. Tonight" Well, I looked at her. "Pardon," I said. "Yeh," she said, "I've just met this chap, sittin' up at the back. He's stayin' at a villa on the other side of the island an' he's invited me over for dinner. Tonight. Oh Shirley, you don't mind, do you?" Well, I didn't say anythin'. There was nothin' I could say, was there? I just stared out the window of the plane an' I thought, "D' y' know, if I had a parachute, I'd get off now." I even considered gettin' off without a parachute actually. 'Course, she was sayin' to me— "It's only for tonight. We'll still do all the things we planned, Shirley." But I knew. Me instinct told me I'd hardly see her again after that. An' I didn't want her to be spendin' time with me when she'd rather be elsewhere. I didn't want her pityin' me. "Listen, Jane," I said, "I think you've probably blown the feminist of the year award—so will y' just leave it out, right? Obviously," I said, "it's been a difficult time for you since your feller ran off with the milkman and now that you've got this opportunity I don't want y' to give even a thought to me. You just go off to his villa an' enjoy yourself an' give his olives a good pressing." D' y' know what she said to me? "Thanks for bein' so understandin'." An' she never came back that night, y' know. Or the next mornin'. She never came back for the first four days. They must've been marvellous olives. I was just left