

Dream On

A Radio Drama

By

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Cast

Robert: Late 50's. He is at a low point in his career, having created many successful film scripts; he now finds his inspiration has run dry. His first marriage to Darla ended in a bitter divorce with Darla committing suicide on the day the divorce was finalised. These events occurred 1 year before the play begins. Fiona is his second wife.

Darla: Mid-forties and first wife to Robert for 12 years. They met while she was the lead actor in a TV soap. No children.

Fiona: Early-thirties and second wife to Robert. She is also his literary agent and created a success from Robert's scripts by marketing them correctly, something Robert has no idea how to do. They began an affair that led to his divorce and then their marriage. Now that he is blocked, she is the main income for the household.

Maggie: Girl in Park, late twenties, early thirties. Scottish woman living in London for some time. Likes to take courses on self-improvement, but rarely finishes such courses.

Police Woman

Taxi Driver

SCENE 1.

ROBERT AND DARLA IN THE KITCHEN.
SHE IS COOKING BREAKFAST.

SFX - BACON CAN BE HEARD FRYING
IN A PAN, A COFFEE MACHINE CAN BE
HEARD FAINTLY, AND A WOMAN IS
HUMMING HAPPILY TO HERSELF

ROBERT: (DISORIENTATED) What? What's happening?
Where am I?

DARLA: (OFF) Morning darling, breakfast is
nearly done. Won't be long now. Paper's
on the table.

ROBERT: Darla?

DARLA: Be right there, just getting the eggs
ready now.

ROBERT: But Darla you're... My god, I'm dreaming.
This is a dream.

DARLA: (CLOSER) That's right my little piggy,
it's a dream. Looks like I'm your dream-
girl.

ROBERT: More like a nightmare. And don't call me
that, you know I don't like it.

DARLA: Oh don't be pooey, Robert darling, you know early morning arguments give me a headache.

ROBERT: Darla, you can't have a headache when you're...

DARLA: TADA... Here, I've cooked your favourite; bacon and egg with mushrooms and (BEAT) lashing of toast... You tuck in darling; I'll see how the coffee's coming along.

ROBERT: (LOW) What the hell is going on?

DARLA: It's just a dream darling. It's nothing to worry about.

ROBERT: Having a dream about my ex-wife cooking bacon and egg is nothing to worry about?

DARLA: Course not silly. Not unless you let those eggs go cold.

ROBERT: Even if my ex-wife is dead?

DARLA: Oh darling, don't be so morbid. Shall I butter the toast? Do you want marmalade, or do you want to decide when you've finished your bacon?

ROBERT: This is very disconcerting.

DARLA: Oh, little piggy, you worry too much. I always used to say that.

ROBERT: What you used to say was I worried too much about money.

DARLA: Ooopps. Got it wrong. Silly me. Now where did I put that scoreboard?

ROBERT: Oh for god's sake, don't start all that again.

DARLA: Must find our little scoreboard so I can mark down one more point for piggy. We don't want little piggy to forget how many arguments he's won, now do we.

ROBERT: Do you know, this is exactly how I remembered you. This is exactly how I remembered our life together.

DARLA: Endless Sunday mornings with perfectly cooked breakfasts?

ROBERT: Endless tension, punctuated with angry arguments.

DARLA: No one's angry here darling, although I think I might get a bit miffed if you let that breakfast get cold.

ROBERT: I can't eat this. Not even in a dream.

DARLA. Why ever not?

SFX: CUPBOARD OPENING

Do you know where the mustard is?

ROBERT: Second shelf. It's somewhere at the back. Thing is Darla, I don't eat... that is to say... We're vegans now.

DALRA: Don't vegans eat mustard?

ROBERT: Mustard yes.

SFX – PUSHING PLATE AWAY

Smoked bacon no.

DARLA: Oh poor little piggy, won't she let you eat meat anymore?

ROBERT: Don't call me that. (BEAT)
Look, not that it's any of your dead business, but it was a joint decision, okay?

DARLA: Really?

ROBERT: Yes really. She... Fiona, doesn't stop me from doing anything I want to do.

DARLA: But you can't eat meat.

ROBERT: I don't want to eat meat.

DARLA: Why?

ROBERT: Why what?

DARLA: Why don't you want to eat meat?

ROBERT: Look, this is ridiculous. We aren't married anymore... You're not even alive anymore... I don't have to answer your stupid questions, not ever again. In fact, you're not even supposed to come near me.

DARLA Injunctions don't cover dreams darling.

ROBERT: Well they bloody well should.

SFX: LIQUID PORING

DARLA: Coffee?

ROBERT: No! I don't want coffee, I don't want bacon and eggs, and I don't want to have a dream with you in it. Now if you don't mind I am going to sit here with my eyes closed and wait until I wake up.

DARLA 'With my eyes closed...' (LAUGHS) Oh look at you sitting there with a big pout on those puffy lips.

ROBERT: I am not pouting. And I am not opening my eyes.

DARLA: But if you don't open your eyes darling, you can't see how big my knife is...
SFX: KNIFE BEING DRAGGED OUT OF A METAL KNIFE BLOCK

SFX: CHAIR-SCRAPING - ROBERT JUMPING TO HIS FEET

ROBERT: Get away from me.

DARLA: (LAUGHS) Oh Darling, just a joke.

ROBERT: Not funny.

DARLA: What's the matter little piggy..

ROBERT: Don't call me that.

DARLA: ..won't she even let you have a sense of humour?

ROBERT: I've told you, she doesn't stop me doing anything. Unlike you, Darla, she is not a scheming little control freak. She... Fiona... allows me to have a mind. To use that mind. To enjoy myself and have my own personal freedom.

DARLA: But you're still not allowed to eat meat.

ROBERT: Because I choose not to.

DARLA: I think you're scared of her.

ROBERT: Now you're being ridiculous.

DARLA: I think you are so scared of her that you won't even eat meat in a dream. (LAUGHS)

Poor little piggy (LAUGHS)... Poor scared little piggy.

ROBERT: (ANGRY) I told you not to call me that.

SFX - ROBERT SLAMS FIST ON
TABLE

DARLA (BEAT) Oh just like good old days. The happy threesome; me you and your temper. One happy family.

ROBERT: For god's sake!

DARLA: Some toast?

ROBERT: Why am I having this dream?

DARLA: Unresolved issues?

ROBERT: About being a vegan?

DARLA: Perhaps? Cream?

ROBERT: What?

DARLA: Cream in your coffee?

ROBERT: Yes of course cream, you know I never have milk, it makes the coffee taste... (BEAT) What am I saying? (LAUGHS) Darla, we can't have this conversation. Quite despite the fact that you have long since ceased to be a part of my fantasies, you are dead. You died over a year ago.

DARLA Did I?

ROBERT: Of course they never found the body. But that's the typical drama queen in you, isn't it..

DARLA: Oh don't be a nasty piggy, you know I was unhappy. You made me unhappy Robert.

ROBERT: Clothes on the beach and no suicide note. I often wonder if you wanted it to look like murder?

DARLA Perhaps it was.

ROBERT: And you did it all on the day of our divorce. Theatrical to the last.

DARLA: Well I am an actress darling, and I thought the writer in you would appreciate the sentiment. Assuming there is any writer left in you.

ROBERT: What's that supposed to mean? Ah forget it. I'm done with your mind games. (BEAT) Do you know what that did to me? Being told by the police you were dead?

DARLA Do you know what it did to me?

ROBERT: It was your choice.

DARLA No it wasn't. It was hers. Fiona. Your devoted agent.
A little too devoted as it turns out.

ROBERT: She rescued my career.

DARLA: And then buried it again.

ROBERT: That's not true.

DARLA: Of course it is, you know it is. What are you writing now? Nothing. You haven't written a thing since you married her.

ROBERT: You're very well informed for a dead person.

DARLA: Darling, the truth is she only married you to get her hands on the other half of your royalties.

ROBERT: Fiona married me because she loved me.

DARLA Loved? Something you want to tell me?

ROBERT: Loves me. More than you ever did. Now get out of my head... I can't believe I'm still having dreams about you.

DARLA Perhaps you should never have left me.

ROBERT: It would have been difficult to stay together seeing as you are dead.

DARLA Oh but if we had stayed together I wouldn't be dead. (BEAT) Toast?

ROBERT: And even if you weren't dead... Well after that night.

DARLA Darling?

ROBERT: That night after my birthday... Up at the country cottage. That night when you...

DARLA Darling!

ROBERT: With the knife... when you...

DARLA (CUTS IN LOUDLY) Mustard?

ROBERT: Why am I having this dream?

DARLA: Your mind is hungry. It craves meat to satisfy the withdrawal symptoms associated with being a vegan.

ROBERT: What? (LAUGHS) Odd. I had forgotten that you could make me laugh.

DARLA: And good food too, which is currently getting cold.

ROBERT: How can it get cold in a dream?

DARLA: Because otherwise it wouldn't be right.

ROBERT: Right?

DARLA: In tune with nature, the reality of the real world must always be realised otherwise the dream cannot probably exist.

ROBERT: Where did you read that? The Guardian?

DARLA LAUGHS

And what about flying, that's not in tune with nature? What about those dreams?

DARLA: Those are other dreams. They aren't like this one.

ROBERT: (BEAT) What does that mean?

DARLA It means soon your breakfast will be cold and awful and you will have missed the chance to eat bacon and eggs with garlic mushrooms. Come on darling, what are you afraid of? This is just a dream, why don't you simply enjoy it.

ROBERT: (BEAT) Garlic mushrooms? Now you were always good with them.

DARLA: Thank you darling.

ROBERT: And that bacon does smell good. And...

DARLA: (SFX - DARLA CRUNCHES ON SOME TOAST)
Hmmm?

ROBERT: And if it's only a dream.. I guess it won't really matter. (BEAT) Okay, while I'm here, pass me the mustard.

SFX - CLINK OF GLASS

Thanks. And I think I would like some brown sauce.

DARLA: Brown sauce darling?

ROBERT: Hey, if this is my dream. I'm going have brown sauce.

SFX - SQUIRTING OF SAUCE
FOLLOWED BY CUTTING AND EATING.

Oh god, that tastes so good. More toast please.

DARLA: Already?

ROBERT: Yes, I want to make a bacon sandwich.

DARLA LAUGHS

With mushrooms and sausage and brown sauce. And let's have some more coffee

DARLA LAUGHS LOUDER

ROBERT (Cont'd): And then afterwards I want more
bacon and eggs fried sunny side up..

ROBERT'S DEMANDS AND DARLA'S
LAUGHTER GRADUALLY FADE OUT

SFX PLAYS TO INDICATE HE IS
EXITING FROM THE DREAM AND
ENTERING THE REAL WORLD.

ROBERT: (FADES IN) ... More bacon... Ah yes. God that
tastes good. Another egg please and..

FIONA: ...Robert...

ROBERT: ...and a sausage.

FIONA: Robert. Wake up! (BEAT) Wake up!

ROBERT: What? What's wrong?

FIONA: You were talking in your sleep.

ROBERT: What? Was I? Sorry. I was... dreaming. It
was this really intense dream where...

FIONA: Yes?

ROBERT: Ummm not sure really. You know how dreams
are, they fade so quickly.

FIONA: You were saying you wanted bacon.

ROBERT: What? (LAUGHS NERVOUSLY)
Well let's hope that's not some veiled
reference to liking pigs too much.
(LAUGHS AGAIN - FALSELY)

FIONA: Not funny.

ROBERT: No, obviously not. It was just a dream
Fiona.

FIONA: Hmmmm.

ROBERT: Oh come on. Come for a cuddle and we can
get back to sleep.

SFX: MOVEMENTS ON A BED AS THE
TWO DRAW CLOSER

FIONA: Robert! Your breath! It smells of... It
smells of meat.

ROBERT: Don't be ridiculous.

FIONA: (SNIFFS) It stinks of it and... And... Is
that brown sauce I can smell?

ROBERT: Only if you're some kind of dream
bloodhound.

FIONA: What do you mean?

ROBERT: Nothing, it's just in this stupid dream I
ate bacon with brown sauce, but it was a
dream, I can't possibly smell of it.

FIONA: I thought you said you couldn't remember your dream.

ROBERT: Oh well, you know how it is, bits and pieces come back.

FIONA: Do you think I'm an idiot?

ROBERT: What's that supposed to mean?

FIONA: Your breath stinks of meat. You've obviously sneaked out and had a bacon sandwich from that grubby caravan down the road.

ROBERT: Fiona, I told you I haven't eaten any meat. In fact I haven't done that for a long time.

FIONA: Just like you haven't had a cigarette for a long time?

ROBERT: Oh come on, that's totally different?

FIONA: You know full well, how upsetting meat is to me especially after my mother suffered for years with various stomach problems. All related to the consumption of red meat.

ROBERT: Yes, I know, I know, god knows you've told me often enough.

FIONA: Well I'm sorry to have bored you with my Mothers problems. (BEAT) What I can't understand is why you can't just admit you've eaten meat.

ROBERT: Because you wouldn't speak to me for a week?

FIONA: Is that a confession?

ROBERT: No of course not, I was just trying to make a point that...

FIONA: ...Oh of course. One of Robert's famous points. God forbid that you should lose an argument. Sometimes I wonder if you keep a scoreboard in your head.

ROBERT: What did you say?

FIONA: Forget it.

ROBERT: Okay, let's just calm down a little, come back to bed and we can talk about this like civilised humans.

SFX: ALARM CLOCK GOES OFF -
SOMEONE TURNS IT OFF

FIONA: Too late. I have to get ready for work. We can talk later.

SFX - DOOR OPENING

If you're here.

ROBERT: Now what's that supposed to mean?

SFX - DOOR SLAMMING

Oh great. What a fantastic start to the day.

SCENE 2

SAME DAY IN THE EVENING.

FIONA AND ROBERT ARE IN THE BEDROOM.

FIONA: Oh god I can't wait for my head to hit my beautiful pillow.

ROBERT: Hard day?

FIONA: Awful. I've felt as though I've tried to do a thousand things and failed to accomplish anything. And you my poor husband, how are you?

ROBERT: Me?

FIONA: Yes darling. Am I neglecting you terribly? Straight in from work and then straight up to bed.

SFX: WALKS OVER TO ENSUITE AND OPENS DOOR.

(OFF) Can I steal some of your toothpaste? I've run out again.

ROBERT: Sure go ahead.

FIONA: (OFF) Thanks.

SFX: RUNNING WATER AND
TEETHBRUSHING

ROBERT: And it's not so bad.

FIONA: (OFF) What?

ROBERT: I said I don't feel as though you are neglecting me. I mean, after all if we are only going to see each other twice a day, then I could think of worse places than the bedroom.

SFX - LIGHT CLICKS; BATHROOM
DOOR CLOSES

FIONA: Ever that romantic?

ROBERT: I try. Now come here good wife and show me why else I married you.

SFX - SOUNDS OF TWO PEOPLE
DRAWING CLOSE AND KISSING

FIONA: Wait.

ROBERT: What's wrong?

FIONA BEGINS SNIFFING AROUND
ROBERT

ROBERT: What are you doing? Ah I get it... Listen, I can honestly say that I didn't...

FIONA: ...Shhhhhhhh. Okay. My bloodhound nose detects no more meat smells. So we should forget this morning's little... incident. Okay?

ROBERT: Really I have no idea...

FIONA: Shhhhhh. Let's just forget it.

ROBERT: Okay.

FIONA: And I love you.

ROBERT: And I love you too.

SFX: SOUNDS OF KISSING

FIONA: Sorry about earlier. You know how bad I am in the mornings.

ROBERT: No, no, it was my fault for being snappy.

SFX - KISSING AGAIN - THEN
FIONA PULLS AWAY

ROBERT: What's wrong?

FIONA: Sorry darling, I know this is boring, but I have this mega important meeting in the morning and I need my 8 hours.

ROBERT: Ah.

FIONA: You okay with that?

ROBERT: Yeah, no problem.

FIONA: Sure? I could always...

ROBERT: No, I'm fine, really I am. I didn't marry you just because you're super in bed you know.

FIONA: Oh no? Then why did you marry me?

ROBERT: For your money.

FIONA: (LAUGHING) And the fact that my father owned a brewery pretty much clinched it for you.

ROBERT: Pretty much yeah.

FIONA: Goodnight darling.

ROBERT: Goodnight.

SFX. THEY KISS THEN SOUND OF
SHEETS BEING DRAWN UP -
FOLLOWED BY A MOMENT'S SILENCE.

ROBERT: Why did you marry me?

FIONA: (SLEEPILY) You made me laugh.

ROBERT: Made?

FIONA: Oh don't be picky when I'm sleepy Robert, you know I hate that.

ROBERT: Yes, sorry. I'll... Let's get some sleep.

SFX OF ROBERT KISSING FIONA ON HEAD.

SFX OF ROBERT ENTERING THE DREAM.

SFX OF TWO PEOPLE MAKING LOVE

ROBERT: Fiona... My god I love you so much... so very, very...

DARLA: It's not Fiona little Piggy, it's me.

SFX - ROBERT EXITING DREAM

ROBERT: (GASPS) Oh god...

FIONA: Shhhh it's okay Robert, it's okay, you were having a nightmare.

ROBERT: Christ. For a second there I thought...

FIONA: It's okay. You're all right now, you're ... Robert? What's this on the sheets? What have you...? Ohhhh, now that's disgusting.

ROBERT: What? Let me get the light.

SFX LIGHT CLICK

Ah. I see.

FIONA: Well... One wonders what the nightmare was? Clearly not that horrifying. Getting a bit old for wet dreams aren't you?

ROBERT: It was...

FIONA: About bacon?

ROBERT: I forgot.

FIONA: Oh I think I'm getting Déjà vu? Didn't we do this yesterday?

ROBERT: I'll clear it up.

FIONA: Please do, these sheets cost a fortune and I don't really want Mary seeing that mess when she strips the beds.

ROBERT: I said I'll clear it up.

FIONA: Good, do it quietly. Some of us have work in the morning.

ROBERT: Work! Is that all you think about?

FIONA: One of us has to Robert. Goodnight.

SCENE 3

THE NEXT MORNING. ROBERT IS IN
THE KITCHEN ON HIS OWN DRINKING
COFFEE

ROBERT: Darla, Darla, you can't leave me alone can you? Even when you're dead.

SFX - FIONA WALKS INTO THE
KITCHEN

FIONA: Oh Robert. You made me jump, I didn't expect you to be up this early. That pot of coffee fresh?

ROBERT: Fresh-ish. I made it a couple of hours ago.

FIONA: A couple of hours? That is early for you.

ROBERT: I couldn't sleep after my... Well I just couldn't get back to sleep.

FIONA: Oh poor darling. Why don't you try and have a lay down now.

ROBERT: No! I mean, no thanks, I'm fine.

FIONA: You sure? You look really tired.

ROBERT: Well that's okay because I don't have any work to do. Do I?

FIONA: (BEAT) Why do you do that?

ROBERT: Do what?

FIONA: Save up those pithy little remarks for imaginary slights.

ROBERT: Imaginary? You said...

FIONA: And now you've got your own back, so we're even-Steven. Really Robert, I am going to have to seriously think about buying a scoreboard. More coffee?

ROBERT: Who told you about that?

FIONA: About what?

SFX - MOBILE PHONE RINGS

Oh wait. Have to get this.

(INTO PHONE) Hi, yep, nope I'm up fit and out of bed..

(LAUGHS) Just a minute..

WALKS AWAY SFX CLOSING DOOR

ROBERT: Who told you about that bloody scoreboard?

SFX - Cup being heavily put down

SFX - DOOR OPENING

FIONA: Okay. Ciao.

ROBERT: Who was that?

FIONA: Oh just a client. So what were you saying about a...?

ROBERT: Nothing. It's not important.

FIONA: Okay then, I have to fly anyway..

ROBERT: Already?

FIONA: Yes sorry to be a bore, such a lot to do and if I don't get at least half done before the first telephone conference I'll be totally lost.

ROBERT: Okay. See you later then.

FIONA: (OFF) Probably not.

SFX: FIONA GETTING READY TO GO OUT

ROBERT: What?

FIONA: (OFF) I'm probably going to be very late tonight, got a telephone conference with the bloody Americans at 10 tonight and I've no idea how long I'll be.

ROBERT: Fine. See you when I see you then.

FIONA: Oh don't be grumpy Robert; you know I have to do this.

ROBERT: Because I don't do any work.

FIONA: I didn't say that.

ROBERT: You did last night.

FIONA: Oh I'm sorry, you know how I can be if my sleep gets disturbed.

ROBERT: Yes, you've told me. Touchy in the morning and bad tempered in the evening. Perhaps you can tell me when the optimal time of day to talk would be?

FIONA: (BEAT) Pity you don't write stuff like that anymore. Might actually sell. Well, don't I get a kiss before I go to work?

ROBERT: Yes of course, look I'm sorry; it's just this disturbed sleep thing.

FIONA: Yes, that's really made a grumpy bear out of you hasn't it.

ROBERT: Maybe I'll take a walk in the park; get some air in my head.

FIONA: Okay, but Robert...

ROBERT: Yes.

FIONA: You won't do anything stupid will you?

ROBERT: Stupid?

FIONA: Yes you know, like smoking.

ROBERT: Smoking is the stupidest thing you think I'll do.

FIONA: Well no, it's the most likely stupid thing I think you will do.

ROBERT SIGHS

Oh please Robert, promise me. You've been so good, it's been ages now since you last broke down and had one. Be a shame to go back just because of a couple of sleepless nights.

ROBERT: Okay.

FIONA: Promise?

ROBERT: I said okay.

FIONA: Good... Oh gosh is that the time? I have to go. Phone me if you need anything.

SFX - DOOR OPENING

ROBERT: Such as?

FIONA: See you later darling.

SFX -DOOR CLOSES

ROBERT: Or not, as the case may be.

SCENE 4

ROBERT SITTING ON A PARK BENCH.

SFX - VARIOUS PARK NOISES IN THE BACKGROUND.

SFX- ROBERT STRIKES A MATCH AND
LIGHTS A CIGARETTE. THEN
INHALES DEEPLY

MAGGIE: (OFF). Excuse me?

ROBERT: (COUGHS ON THE SMOKE) Hello?

MAGGIE: It's Mr Johnson isn't it? Robert Johnson?

ROBERT: Sorry, do I know you?

MAGGIE: No, no I'm just Maggie.

ROBERT: Maggie?

MAGGIE: You don't know me, I'm a friend of your wife's.

ROBERT: A friend of Fiona's?

MAGGIE: Oh, sorry I forgot you got married again after... Anyway, I was a friend of..

ROBERT: ...Darla.

MAGGIE: Yes. Well sort of. I mean we were on the same course in the sports centre. Just once. She said hello to me. Actually she said "Hello Maggie", which was so cool because we'd only met the week before and I thought...

ROBERT: Is there something I can do for you Maggie?

MAGGIE: No not really, I just saw you walking in the park and thought I'd say hello. Recognised you from the paper. I was a big fan of your wife. Your ex-dead-wife I mean.

ROBERT: Really?

MAGGIE: Yeah, I collected all the clippings from the paper and had them in a special scrapbook. She always looked so beautiful. It was tragic when she...

ROBERT: (CUTS IN) ...Sorry, I don't mean to be rude, but I was hoping to clear my head and get some air.

MAGGIE: Smoking isn't going to help you is it?

ROBERT: I beg your pardon.

MAGGIE: Sorry. Shouldn't said that I know, it's just that I'm on this self-assertion course and they tell you to say things like that.

ROBERT: Well clearly it's having a positive effect on you, and if you don't mind I'll wish you a good morning.

MAGGIE: Right, sorry to have disturbed you, I'll be off now.

ROBERT: Wait, Maggie?

MAGGIE: Yes.

ROBERT: Did you say you were on a course with my... with Darla? I didn't know she took anything like that.

MAGGIE: Oh ai, she did a few, or at least I saw her on a few. It was hard though, every time she came into a new group they always wanted to take photos, get autographs, be her friend.

ROBERT: (LOW) Oh I can imagine she hated that.

MAGGIE: Sorry?

ROBERT: I said which course did she take? Assertiveness?

MAGGIE: No, that's new this year. Last year I was into herbal therapies, Tai Chi, and other natural ways of becoming at one with your place in the world.

ROBERT: And did it work?

MAGGIE: Not really, but I met some nice people doing it. Meeting Darla was like a dream come true for me, I can remember the day I first saw her, I thought I was dreaming, which was funny really because the class was about dreaming.

ROBERT: What? What did you say? Wait...

SFX - SOUND ROBERT GETTING UP
AND WALKING OVER TO MAGGIE.

SFX - ROBERT GRABBING MAGGIE.

MAGGIE: Ow, Mr Johnson let go of my arm you're hurting me.

ROBERT: What did you say? What course did you say she took?

MAGGIE: Owww. If you don't let go I'll scream.

ROBERT: Tell me about the course.

MAGGIE: It was about dreams and stuff, I don't remember, I only went twice... Let go!

SFX - SOUND OF MAGGIE YANKING
FREE

I don't know what you did that for; it was just a stupid course full of mumbo jumbo. If it wasn't for Darla I wouldn't have even bothered with it.

ROBERT: I'm sorry, look I'm not holding you, now tell me, what was the course called?

MAGGIE: I told you, I don't remember. And there's no need to be like that. If you want to be left on your own, you could just say, you don't have to become all violent.

SFX: STEPS WALKING RAPIDLY AWAY

ROBERT: Maggie. Maggie... I'm sorry I didn't mean to... It's just that...
(LOW) I've not been sleeping very well.

SCENE 5

SFX – SOUND OF ROBERT ENTERING
A DREAM.

DARLA: Darling? Whatever is wrong? You look awful.

ROBERT: Oh god not again.

DARLA: Calm down my sweet. You've just woken up, it's morning and you're down at the summer house, by the lake.

ROBERT: No I'm not. I'm asleep and this is a dream. I know that. I sold this place. I got rid of it for a loss just to get it out of my life.

DARLA: But why Robert, you loved this house.

ROBERT: Loved. Past tense. Everything is past tense with you. Everything was ruined and ransacked by your little mind games.

DARLA: Oh poor little piggy. Still likes to blame everyone else for his own disappointments.

ROBERT: This is a nightmare. You are a nightmare.

DARLA: I am your wife.

ROBERT: Not any more. I divorced you and you're dead. I think that takes degree-nisi to its definitive state, don't you?

DARLA: Robert, you love me, you know you do.

ROBERT: No I don't. What's more, I don't believe I ever did.

DARLA: Now we both know that's a lie. One point to me. Where's the scoreboard?

ROBERT: I wish you'd shut up about that bloody scoreboard.
Every argument, there you are, licking your finger and marking one more point on that bloody imaginary scoreboard of yours.

DARLA: Perhaps I should have bought a real one? A blackboard perhaps?

ROBERT: Perhaps I should have killed you before you had a chance to kill yourself.

DARLA: Perhaps you did.

ROBERT: What's that supposed to mean? (BEAT) Why are you here? Why do you keep haunting me?

DARLA: Guilty conscience?

ROBERT: Yours or mine?

DARLA: (LAUGHS) Yours silly.

ROBERT: You've had enough to feel guilty about.

DARLA: Really?

ROBERT: You know you did. I still have the scars, the marks from all those cuddles you gave me, the ones where you ripped into me with your nails.

DARLA: That was self-defence.

ROBERT: It was because you couldn't get your own way.

DARLA: And this from a man who can't bear to lose an argument?

ROBERT: You know it's true. You know what happened in this house, why I couldn't bear to come back here. You remember that night when ...

DARLA: I terrorised you?
Oh yes, me the 5 foot tall brute of a woman, attacking the 6 foot tall trembling man...
Tell me Robert, what's wrong with this picture?

ROBERT: That's how it happened, you know it. Right here in this living room. You took advantage because I never wanted to hit a woman.

DARLA: But you did.

ROBERT: To stop you.

DARLA: You did hit me, didn't you?

ROBERT: You had a knife

DARLA: Did I?

ROBERT: Yes.

DARLA: Did I really?

ROBERT: Yes, yes, yes. You had a knife, you had a knife, and you tried to kill me.

DARLA: Oh yes, eventually I had a knife, but only after you hit me.

ROBERT: No, no it didn't happen that way. It didn't. I'm telling you it didn't happen like that.

DARLA: I think you should wake up now.

SFX - ROBERT EXITING DREAM

POLICEWOMAN: Excuse me Sir? Sir? I think you should wake up now.

ROBERT: What? What's happening?

POLICEWOMAN: I'd like you to sit up if you could Sir? That's Right. Lovely. Thank you.

ROBERT: Who are you? What's going on?

POLICEWOMAN: My name is Police Constable Scott and I've received a complaint from a woman who says you grabbed her by the arm here in the park.

ROBERT: Maggie?

POILCEMAN: Her name is Maggie yes. Are you saying this allegation is true Sir?

ROBERT: Where am I?

POLICEWOMAN: You're in the park Sir. Have you been drinking?

ROBERT: At this time of day? No of course not.

POLICEWOMAN: No of course not Sir. Then can you explain why you fell asleep on the bench?

ROBERT: I don't remember... I've not been sleeping well.

POLICEWOMAN: You seemed to be doing all right to me Sir.

ROBERT: What did you say?

POLICEWOMAN: About this young lady.

ROBERT: The...? Oh right, that was just a misunderstanding, we were talking about my wife. I mean my ex-wife,.. I mean my dead-wife, and..

POLICEWOMAN: On the subject of your wife Sir, are you aware that in your sleep you were talking about your wife and mentioning a knife. Repeatedly.

ROBERT: Well of course I wasn't aware, I was asleep.

POLCIEMAN: Careful Sir, I'm only following an investigation here.

ROBERT: In to what? Random arm grabbing in the park? Don't you have any real crimes to solve?

POLICEWOMAN: I wonder Sir, if you tell me the whereabouts of your wife?

ROBERT: Look this is rather ridiculous. I've been having some trouble sleeping and then..

POLICEWOMAN: ..you assaulted a young woman in broad daylight?

ROBERT: Oh come on that's a little..

POLICEWOMAN: I think Sir, you had better come along with me.

SCENE 6

FIONA AND ROBERT IN THE HIGH
STREET OUTSIDE A POLICE
STATION.

FIONA: Taxi...

SFX - TAXI DRAWS UP

TAXI DRIVER: Yes love?

FIONA: St Michaels Court please, Hampstead.

TAXI DRIVER: Yep okay, jump in.

FIONA: Come one Robert. Get in.

SFX - ROBERT AND FIONA GET IN
THE TAXI

SFX - DOOR CLOSING, CAR MOVING
AWAY

SFX - SOUND OF ENGINE IN THE
BACKGROUND.

ROBERT: Fiona, I am so dreadfully sorry and...

FIONA: Don't Robert. Don't say a word. I don't even want to talk about it. I don't really want to talk to you at all.

ROBERT: Darling..

FIONA: When you told me you show me the world, I didn't realise that would include our local police station.

ROBERT: Fiona please..

FIONA: I have never, never been so mortally embarrassed in my life. Two uniformed police officers turned up at the office - two! - wanting to know if I'm all right. If I'm all right?
What the bloody hell is going on?

ROBERT: It was that bloody stupid Policewoman; she heard me mumbling something in my sleep and decided to base a murder enquiry on it.

FIONA: Murder?

ROBERT: She heard me..
(LOW) She thought she heard me saying something about knives.

FIONA: And me?

ROBERT: No not you... Look, can we do this later?

FIONA: No we bloody can't. Who were you talking about?

ROBERT: Nobody. It's not important.

FIONA: Nobody?

ROBERT: I was having a dream.

FIONA: In the park?

ROBERT: Yes, I nodded off. I'd just sat down to have a cigarette and...

FIONA: ...a cigarette?

ROBERT: Please Fiona, I think after the events of today, smoking can be placed a poor last in terms of concern.

FIONA: I can't believe you said that.

ROBERT: Darling...

FIONA: You know full well that my father died of smoking related diseases.

ROBERT: He was 82.

FIONA: 82 is hardly old in this day and age.

ROBERT: Yes of course, how can I possibly forget it when you constantly remind me?

FIONA: Well I'm sorry if my father's death is so insignificant to you.

ROBERT: Fiona...

FIONA: ...and what about the ...
(LOW) What about the girl you attacked?

ROBERT: I didn't...
(LOW) I didn't attack her. I just grabbed her arm.

FIONA: Why?

ROBERT: Because... (SIGHS) it's not important.

FIONA: Oh, that's okay then. We'll use that as a defence shall we?
It's okay M'lurd, it wasn't important.
Case dismissed.

ROBERT: We won't have to use anything, you heard the Desk Sergeant, she isn't pressing charges. Apparently something to do with being a fan of my wife's.

FIONA: A fan of mine? What are you talking about?

ROBERT: Sorry I meant...

FIONA: Darla!

ROBERT: Yes, sorry I ... Just a slip of the tongue.

FIONA: A year now. Over a year that woman's been dead and still she interferes with our relationship.
And it didn't sound like you were having any trouble sleeping in the park.

ROBERT: Don't you start. Please, can we stop this now, we're nearly there.
Excuse me; just there on the right please.

TAXI DRIVER: Right oh mate. That's 8 pounds 20.

ROBERT: Fiona have you...

FIONA: Yes Robert, I've got it (LOW) I've always got it.

SCENE 7

SFX: ROBERT ENTERING THE DREAM

DARLA: Darling. Welcome back. Have you had a good day?

ROBERT: Oh god, please not again.

DARLA: Shall I take that as a no?

ROBERT: Why is this happening to me? Two weeks. Two bloody weeks of this. Non-stop. Every night the same bloody thing.

DARLA: Oh poor little piggy. You look so worn out. Is she feeding you properly? You know vegans should take vitamins too.

ROBERT: It's nothing to do with not eating meat. It's because I haven't had a decent night sleep in a fortnight and that's because of you.

DARLA: This is nothing to do with me darling.
It's your dream, not mine.

ROBERT: Please, I don't care any more. Just go.
Just leave me alone.

DARLA: Poor little piggy, come for a cuddle.

ROBERT: Don't touch me.

DARLA: I was just tidying your hair.

ROBERT: Well don't. I don't want you to. I don't
like it.

DARLA: Of course. Silly me, I keep forgetting
the things you don't like me doing.
Silly, silly me, all these faults I have.
Must be like living with a monster.

ROBERT: Oh here we go again.

DARLA: All those things I do wrong. Fiddling
with your hair, talking too much. Crimes
of the century. While the things I don't
like about you are... What did you call
them?
Oh yes.
Neurotic fantasies.

ROBERT: Darla, we had this argument a thousand
times when we were married and then on
the phone after we split up, and then in
the street when we were getting divorced
and then by letter when I put that
injunction on you.

It never ever got resolved then, why would we have a chance of doing that now when you're dead.

DARLA: Oh Robert, I wish you'd stop saying that and yes, I remember that silly judge in court getting high and mighty with me. Handing out injunctions when he should be dealing with real criminals. A little man with big power. Looked the type that liked the crop.

ROBERT: You had to be stopped. You attacked me in the street.

DARLA: After I found out about Fiona. Can you blame me?
'You're screwing that agent of yours', I said.
And you said I was having another neurotic fantasy.
After I found out the truth of course, I started to wonder just how many of my other fantasies were neurotic.

ROBERT: If it wasn't for you I probably wouldn't have gone anywhere near her. The way you acted, you practically threw us tighter.

DARLA: Oh so it's my fault?
My fault you booked all those grubby little weekends away with her? My fault you screwed her?
What's wrong darling, things not going so well now?
Sex a little less exciting outside the boundaries of an office fling?

ROBERT: You should know. You screwed enough directors when we were married.

DARLA: Take that back.

ROBERT: Stay away from me.

DARLA: Or what? You'll hit me?

ROBERT: I don't want to get hurt.

DARLA: By me? Little incy wincy me? What could I do to a big strapping man like you?

ROBERT: You know what you do. Those nails of yours aren't grown to make you look prettier. We both know that.

DARLA: Do we? I thought you liked my nails.

ROBERT: No I don't.

DARLA: In bed you did.

ROBERT: That was different.

DARLA: You still haven't taken it back.

SFX – SOUND OF A SCRATCHING AND
ROBERT YELLS IN PAIN.

ROBERT: My hand... (BEAT)
You bitch.
Look at that, you cut me, just like you used to, just like you always did when you couldn't win an argument, when you couldn't get your own way.
Just like you did when you...

DARLA: ...found out about Fiona?

ROBERT: Yes.

DARLA: You remember what I did Robert, do you remember what you did? What? Nothing to say now? Come on Robert, isn't it time to face the truth?

ROBERT: Which truth?
The one that actually happened or the one you replay in your head so often you think it's real?
Or the one you went on TV to lie your way through.

DARLA: I told only the truth as I remembered it.

ROBERT: But that wasn't how it happened.
Do you know how pathetic you looked?
Prostituting yourself on those chat shows for a bit of petty revenge.

DARLA: You bastard piggy.

SFX – SOUND OF SCRATCHING AND
ROBERT YELLS IN PAIN AGAIN.

ROBERT: My back, you cut me again.

DARLA: Don't you realise? I went on those shows to save our marriage. I did it for us.

ROBERT: For us? You washed all our dirty linen on TV to save our marriage?

DARLA: I wanted you back.

ROBERT: And the best way was to attack me in the press?

DARLA: Do you know how degrading that was. Traipsing from TV studio to TV studio, sitting on stupid coloured sofas talking to stupid people, surrounded by wannabes and has-beens.

ROBERT: (BITTER) Oh poor, poor Darla, wannabes and has-beens, you don't really fit into either of those do you. Never really "a was" so can't really said to be "a been".

DARLA: I have my fans.

ROBERT: Right. A bunch of neurotic housewives that remember you in a radio soap that stopped airing 20 years ago.

DARLA: Are all women neurotic to you? Anyway, at least I have fans. All you have is a bunch of idiots on exam courses reading your back catalogue.

ROBERT: At least I have a back catalogue.

DARLA: Face the truth Robert. You are a failure. You failed as a writer, as a husband, as a man.

ROBERT: Oh please. I've had worse reviews than that in the Guardian, if that's the best you can do, I think it's time for me to wake up out of boredom.

DARLA: You are a brutal, violent man.

ROBERT: That is absolutely ridiculous.

DARLA: You hit me. Can you deny that?

ROBERT: Not this bit again. Must we, must we do this? Again? You've tortured me with this every night for two weeks. I can't stand to hear it anymore.

DARLA: I want you to admit the truth. You beat me. You treated me so badly while I gave you everything.

ROBERT: I can't just admit to something you think is the truth. And even if I did, it still wouldn't make it true. I didn't beat you. One time I pushed you onto the bed. One time.

DARLA: And the bruise on my arm after you pushed me on the bed?

ROBERT: Was where your arm hit the bedside cabinet. It was an accident.

DARLA: You know full well it wasn't. My arm hit that cabinet with enough force to almost have a fracture.

ROBERT: How can you almost have a fracture?

DARLA: You didn't just push me Robert, you threw me.

ROBERT: I had to do something, you were flailing me with your nails. What was I supposed to do? Stand there and be a human target.

DARLA: You are supposed to be a man.

ROBERT: And that gives you the right to scar me for life.

DARLA: You ungrateful little piggy. I earned money so that you could write, worked those horrible acting jobs, slept with god knows who just to keep you in typewriters and notebooks.

ROBERT: You worked for your daddy's production studio, he gave you the least he could get away with and still write you off to taxes.

DARLA: I still had to take any role he offered me. Do you know how humiliating that was?

ROBERT: Of course I know, I listened to you telling me about it for ten years didn't I?

DARLA: And then you repay me by beating me.

ROBERT: I did not beat you. I did not hit you.

DARLA: You need help Robert. Professional help.

ROBERT: I Am Fine.
It's you.
You're the mad one, you were the one with the knife.
You were the one who tried to kill me.

DARLA: I loved you, I had to make you see that Fiona didn't , couldn't love you like I did.

Then you threw it back at me. What could I do?
Watch you take everything I had worked for and then simply walk away?
You must have hated me from the start.
You must have despised the ground I walked on.

ROBERT: That isn't true... That isn't true.. it just isn't..
(BEGINS TO CRY) Oh god, what have I got to do to make this stop. Please someone, make it stop.
I am so tired, I really can't stand any more of this..

DARLA: Oh poor little piggy is crying... Don't cry piggy, don't cry. Come to Darla little piggy. Come to me... That's right come to me... Come into my arms...
Come for a cuddle..

ROBERT: Wait, no, wait, your nails. They're hurting me. Please don't... Please...
Nooooooooo.

SFX ROBERT EXITING DREAM WHILE SCREAMING

ROBERT: Nooooooooo.

FIONA: Robert, for god's sake Robert wake up.

ROBERT: (GASPING) My god where am I?

FIONA: You're at home in bed having another bloody dream. Two weeks of this... It's driving me mad.

ROBERT: It's driving you mad?

FIONA: Sorry. That was insensitive of me. But two weeks of sleepless nights? And you still won't tell me what these dreams are about.

SFX - ROBERT GETS OUT OF BED

ROBERT: I need to use the bathroom.

FIONA: For god's sake. Talk to me... (Low) Talk to me...

SFX - TOILET FLUSHING AND TAP WATER RUNNING. ROBERT THROWS WATER OVER HIS FACE

FIONA: (CLOSE - SOUNDING LIKE DARLA) Darling?

ROBERT: (GASPS LOUDLY) Oh Jesus.

FIONA: Its okay, it's me.

ROBERT: What the hell are you trying to do?

FIONA: I just wanted to see if you were all right. Clearly I'm not needed.

ROBERT: Fiona...

FIONA: I'll leave you to it. Wait a minute. What's that on your back?

ROBERT: What?

FIONA: Is that... Blood... It looks like blood it looks like... Robert are those scratch marks... Where did they...?

ROBERT: She did them.

FIONA: She?

ROBERT: Darla.

FIONA: But Darla's ...

ROBERT: Dead. I know. But every night for the last two weeks she's in my dreams.

FIONA: Oh!

ROBERT: No it's not like that. It's like... It's like she's waiting for me. Waiting to torture me, every single time I close my eyes. I'm beginning to dread the night. I can't even close my eyes without being afraid.

FIONA: Oh Darling. Come here for a cuddle.

ROBERT: What?

FIONA: Its okay, come here.

SFX - TWO MOVE CLOSE TOGETHER

Darling. Robert, I want you to listen to me and I don't want you to take this the

wrong way. I think you need to get some help.

ROBERT: What?

FIONA: I said you need some help.

ROBERT: Professional Help?

FIONA: Yes that's right, you've obviously been thinking about it too.

ROBERT: No I haven't.

FIONA: Then why...?

ROBERT: She said it too. Exactly those words. You need professional help, she said.

FIONA: Who said? You mean Darla?

ROBERT: Yes Darla, she said exactly what you just said. Something you want to tell me?

FIONA: You can't be serious.

ROBERT: Just tell me.

FIONA: Tell you what? That I am conspiring with your dead-ex-wife to drive you mad in your dreams? Are you actually listening to yourself Robert? Can you actually hear how crazy that sounds?

ROBERT: (LETS OUT A GASP) Yes, oh god your right.
I'm sorry. She's...

FIONA: Shhhh, it's okay it's okay.

ROBERT: She is driving me crazy. I mean literally
crazy.

ROBERT: She's dead Robert. It's just a bad dream,
but you really do need some help... Really,
you need to see someone.
Will you do that for me? Please?

ROBERT: Yeah, I'll see some tomorrow. (LOW) I
know just the person.

FIONA: It's for the best, look there's this chap
I know, I have seen him...

ROBERT: You've seen him?

FIONA: For god's sake Robert I had to do
something, two weeks of this screaming in
the night. It's driving me mad too, so I
saw someone. (BEAT) Perhaps you could see
him too.

ROBERT: No, I mean yes I will. But first I need
to see someone else.

SCENE 8

ROBERT IN THE PARK

SFX - SOUND OF A PARK -
CHILDREN PLAYING.

SFX - A MATCH IS STRUCK AND
ROBERT INHALES ON THE
CIGARETTE.

ROBERT: (LOW) Come on, come on, where are you?

SFX APPROACHING FEMALE
FOOTSTEPS

ROBERT: (LOW) Ah at last.

(SHOUTS) Hey you, hey Maggie. Over here.

MAGGIE: Oh it's you. Go away.

SFX - HURRYING FOOTSTEPS FEMALE
SHOES.

ROBERT: No wait, I just want to talk.

MAGGIE: Well I don't want to talk to you. Go away.

ROBERT: Please Maggie, it's about Darla.

SFX - FOOTSTEPS STOP

MAGGIE: What about her? Don't come any closer.

ROBERT: I just need to ask one question and then I'm gone, you won't see me again.

MAGGIE: Okay, but if you come near me,

SFX - RUMMAGES IN BAG

I'll use this.

ROBERT: What is it?

MAGGIE: Rape alarm. 150 decibels in your ear if you so much as...

ROBERT: My god woman, I only want to talk to you.

MAGGIE: That's what you said last time before you attacked me.

ROBERT: Attacked? Oh come on, I just held your arm.

MAGGIE: Hard enough to bruise it.

ROBERT: Really?

MAGGIE: Well not actually bruise, but there was a red mark.

ROBERT: Maggie I am so sorry.

MAGGIE: S'okay, I suppose. Least said soonest mended my mum always said.

ROBERT: Maggie, I need to ask you a very important question. It's about the course you were on.

MAGGIE: With Darla.

ROBERT: Yes with Darla. I need to know what it was about, you said it had something to do with dreaming.

MAGGIE: That's right. Dreaming. It was something to do with meditation during sleep and then some kind of "out of body" thing you were supposed to do. To be honest I couldn't concentrate on what he was saying.

ROBERT: Why not?

MAGGIE: He was just boring.

ROBERT: Right. Okay, listen, Maggie, this is very important. When you say Out of body, what did that mean exactly?

MAGGIE: Don't know. I only went once. The bloke who ran it, he was a bit of a creep. Kept looking down my top, so I pretended not to notice and spent all my time staring at the ceiling. Gave me a neck ache, then I had a headache, ended up having to cancel my hairdresser appointment, which was a shame because the next day was my sister's...

ROBERT: (CUTS IN) ...Maggie, please. You have to remember more than that.

MAGGIE: Get back Mister. You take one more step and I push the magic button.

ROBERT: The what?

MAGGIE: The magic button. On the wailer here?
(BEAT) Did you like the way I said that?
I learnt that last Tuesday in Assertive
Training.

ROBERT: Yes, it was... Very assertive. And I'm
sorry that I came too close, but please,
think carefully, can you remember
anything else about the course.

MAGGIE: Like what?

ROBERT: Like who the teacher was.

MAGGIE: Oh that's easy... Mr Steinberg, which is
German see, and I was taking a German
course at the time too, although I didn't
go back after the second week because it
was on the forth floor and my asthma is
bad.

ROBERT: Steinberg? You're sure?

MAGGIE: Yeah, that's what I'm saying, I looked it
up in my German dictionary and it means
Stoney Hill, which is the name of the
estate I live on. That's how I remembered
it. I thought it was an omen at first,
but it wasn't.

ROBERT: (DISTRACTED) Hmmmm what?

MAGGIE: Wasn't an omen. I mean if it was I would
have liked the class better, wouldn't I?
Unless it was an omen that I would meet
Darla. Never thought of it like that
before to be honest... Hey where you going?
We finished talking then?

ROBERT: Yes thanks, Sorry I have to go.

MAGGIE: Okay fine it's just that... (LOW) most people say goodbye...

SCENE 9

SFX - KEYS IN DOOR - DOOR
OPENING AND CLOSING.

FIONA: Hello. Robert. I'm home.

SFX - STEPS DOWN A PASSAGE WAY.

FIONA: Robert...?

ROBERT: Fiona, you're back good, that's great, that's really great... I've been doing some research and I think I've found the answer.

FIONA: The answer to what?

ROBERT: The answer to what? The answer to my dreams. The reason I get them. THE answer.

FIONA: Oh Robert, I thought we agreed you need professional help.

ROBERT: No darling, you agreed, I just nodded.

FIONA: Don't be flippant Robert, I'm only trying to look after you. (BEAT) What have you found?

ROBERT: Come and see. I've been doing some research, I've looked into Dr Steinberg.

FIONA: Dr who?

ROBERT: Dr Steinberg, the man who ran the course Darla was on.

FIONA: What course? Darling, you're not making much sense.

ROBERT: The one she took with Maggie, you know, the girl from the park.

FIONA: Oh god, tell me you haven't been bothering people in the park again.

ROBERT: Listen to me. Maggie told me Darla took a course with Dr Steinberg, and do you know what the good doctor teaches?

FIONA: Is it important?

ROBERT: It's more than that, it's the key... Look, if you don't believe me, read it for yourself.

FIONA: Let me see... Dream Awareness. What's this got to do with anything?

ROBERT: This bit, read this bit.

FIONA: Okay, okay, keep calm. Dr Steinberg shows how to realise and release the power of

your dreams through trans-meditation techniques. These can be taught by buying one low cost set of tapes for 29.99 a month and...

Darling this is just mumbo jumbo mysticism trying to con a quick buck.

ROBERT: Don't you see? Can't you see? It's the key. Look, here scroll down, yes there, no up, there, read that read it... Read it...

FIONA: God how much coffee have you been drinking?

ROBERT: Enough to stay away. Read it Fiona its important.

FIONA: Okay, okay. We won't solve anything by getting hyper will we. Let's see, the Doctor - Doctor of what we might ask - shows you how to enter the dreams of loved ones ... to be uniquely at one with them in the twilight world of nevermore... Robert you're not suggesting...

ROBERT: I am. Darla learnt how to enter dreams. My dreams and she's been doing it now for the last few weeks. Now we have the proof.

FIONA: This isn't proof, it's an internet page of gobbledygook from a quack trying to separate gullible people from their money.
And quite aside from that, Darla is dead. She's been dead for over a year.

ROBERT: Ah but we don't know that do we. We don't know for sure.

FIONA: You think she faked her own suicide?

ROBERT: It's possible.

FIONA: She was a famous actress. Everyone knew her face. Where would she hide?

ROBERT: Plastic surgery.

FIONA: Oh please Robert, you're being ridiculous.

ROBERT: Then she is doing it from beyond the grave.

FIONA: Okay, that's it, I've heard enough.

ROBERT: It has to be the answer, it has to be? Have you got a better explanation?

FIONA: A better explanation than your ex-wife invading your dreams from beyond the grave? No clearly I couldn't have a better explanation than that, now could I... (BEAT)
Darling, as a matter of fact I have got an explanation. Although you may not like it.

ROBERT: You think I'm going mad.

FIONA: I think you are suffering from stress. Stress caused by writer's block. Somewhere in this situation, your imagination has started working overtime on unresolved issues with Darla.

ROBERT: Who told you that? Your professional man?

FIONA: As a matter of fact, he did. It's really that simple darling, all you need to do is come to terms with it and then you will see all these paranoid illusions for what they are.

ROBERT: Paranoid Illusions? What about the scratches on my back.

FIONA: Self-inflicted. Created by your subconscious mind while you slept.

ROBERT: And the smell of bacon? Did I cook that while I slept? Did I go shopping for it too? Wash up and clear away the evidence before I went back to bed.

FIONA: I am not an expert; I don't have all the answers.

ROBERT: No you don't.

FIONA: Darling listen to me, I went to see him again today and he gave me something. He said it would help you sleep.

SFX - RATTLE OF A PILL
CONTAINER.

ROBERT: Oh no, no way... I'm not going to sleep until we have this solved.

FIONA: But you have to sleep sometime.

ROBERT: Don't you realise, she's waiting for me.

FIONA: No she isn't.

(BEAT) Look this is a strong sedative, that's all, it will help you get a good night's sleep and then you'll be able to see things clearly again.

ROBERT: I don't want to sleep. Don't you get it? Not with her waiting on the other side... Have you any idea what that's like?

FIONA: You have to sleep sometime.

ROBERT: No I don't, at least not yet, I can stay awake long enough to figure out how to fight her. I just need some more coffee.

SFX CHAIR SCRAPING

I'll just get it...oohhhh...

FIONA: Darling?

ROBERT: Its okay, just a bit dizzy, that's all.

FIONA: I'm not surprised, it's because you've not been sleeping and you've drunk enough coffee to kill an elephant. Look, you sit down and let me get the coffee.. okay..

ROBERT: Yes okay...Wait! No Tricks?

FIONA: What? No of course not. Darling, I'm on your side, remember? Look, I'll leave the box of pills here so you can see them, and you can take one when you are ready to. How does that sound?

ROBERT: Okay. Thank you Fiona, thank you. I didn't mean to... I just need some help to

get through this, if I can stay awake long enough...

FIONA: Shhhhh now... Let me just get that coffee.
(OFF) There's not much left in the pot, I'll make you a fresh cup of instant.

ROBERT: Yeah, yeah. Fine. Whatever.

SFX - CLICKING OF MOUSE AND
COMPUTER KEYBOARD

You know the fascinating thing about this dream therapy is the amount of documented cases, there are. Thousands of people claim to have visited the dreams of others. I had no idea...

FIONA: (OFF) Sorry darling I can't hear you. Won't be a moment.

ROBERT: I've even read of aborigines that can enter a dream like state for years on end, surviving by gathering nutrition from other people's dreams.

SFX - FIONA WALKING BACK IN

FIONA: There's your coffee darling. I brought you an aspirin too.

ROBERT: Thanks, I've got a nasty one brewing.

FIONA: Yes I thought I could see it in your face there. I can always tell when you have that wince in your left eye.

ROBERT: It feels like a nail being driven into the back of my... Wait. This is a trick.

FIONA: No of course it isn't, I just want to...

ROBERT: This isn't an aspirin, it's a sedative.

FIONA: Of course it isn't. I promised I wouldn't do that and the pot with the pills in has been sitting on your desk since I came in. How would I have got one out?

ROBERT: (BEAT) No tricks?

FIONA: No tricks.

SFX - ROBERT DRINKING AND
TAKING PILL

ROBERT. Okay, now listen to me this is very important.

FIONA: Okay, let me sit down. You should too.

SFX OF THEM BOTH SITTING

ROBERT: If you look here.

SFX - CLICKING OF MOUSE AND
COMPUTER KEYBOARD

I've made a list of people who have made statements talking about dream sharing.

FIONA: Wow, that's a long list.

ROBERT: Exactly. And here I've listed the names of all those conducting research into this field.

FIONA: Not such a long list.

ROBERT: No, but that's good because I emailed them today..

FIONA: All of them?

ROBERT: Desperate times Fiona, desperate times.

FIONA: Yes of course I suppose you're right.

ROBERT I've not had any response back from them yet but...

FIONA: Early days, perhaps by tomorrow... What's wrong darling? Why are you looking at me like that?

ROBERT: Why aren't you arguing with me?

FIOAN: What?

ROBERT: When you came in you thought I was crazy, now you are nodding your head like a stuffed toy. Why the sudden change of heart?

FIONA: I'm just trying to understand...

ROBERT: Oh no... That pill....

FIONA: Now Robert, don't worry, it's just a sedative..

ROBERT: Just a sedative? Do you know what you've done? Do you have any idea what you are condemning me to?

FIONA: Sit down darling, please.

ROBERT: Don't you realise? A few hours that's all I've been sleeping, but the dreams... They feel like I've been trapped in there for days. How long will it put me out for?

FIONA: I don't know I can't...

ROBERT: (SHOUTS) How long?

FIONA: I don't remember. Something like ten hours. The doctor said it was fast acting, in fact it's probably best if you... Where are you going?

ROBERT: I have to get out of here. Ten hours! That will be weeks in a dream. Weeks!

FIONA: I just want you to be well again. Robert, please don't go out, the doctor said..

ROBERT: I have to get out of here. I have to find a way to stay awake.

SFX - KEYS IN DOOR

FIONA: No Robert. Don't. Robert.

SFX - ROBERT RUNNING OUT

SFX - FIONA RUNNING TO DOOR

Robert. Look out!

SFX - MOTOR ENGINE APPROACHING
FOLLOWED BY CAR HORN BLOWING.

SFX - CAR SKIDDING - BODY
HITTING FRONT OF CAR - FIONA
SCREAMING.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 10

IN A HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM

SFX - HOSPITAL AMBIANCE

DOCTOR: Mrs Palmer-Johnson?

FIONA: Yes Doctor. Robert? How is he? Is he going to be all right?

DOCTOR: I'm afraid I have some bad news.

FIONA: Oh god no.

DOCTOR: Mr Johnson sustained multiple injuries from the accident, including a severe head trauma. I'm afraid your husband has lapsed into a coma, a very deep one. I'm having the results checked but...

FIONA: I gave him a sedative, just before he... He was having this problem with sleep you see and I gave him one of my pills... Do you think it might have...

DOCTOR: No that's unlikely to be the cause. The head injury your husband sustained caused a blood clot to form on the brain. We've been able to remove that but...

FIONA: But the pill I gave him.

DOCTOR: No, it was the accident. I can assure you that a sedative wouldn't cause this level of coma.

FIONA: Sorry I'm babbling.

DOCTOR: It's okay. This must have been quite a shock for you.

FIONA: When will he wake up then? Doctor? What's wrong? Tell me.

DOCTOR: Your husband suffered a significant brain injury. These types of injuries and the resulting coma are very difficult to predict.

FIONA: Are you saying he will never wake up?

DOCTOR: No, but I am saying he may remain in a coma for some significant amount of time. The good news is we have been able to detect brain activity. A surprising amount in fact for a coma patient...

FIONA: I must see him. Can I see him?

DOCTOR: Yes of course, I'll take you up; he's in Intensive Care at the moment.

SFX -DOOR OPENING - FOOTSTEPS
EXITING ROOM

SFX - DOOR OPENING -FOOTSTEPS
ENTERING ROOM - DOOR CLOSING

ROBERT: Who's there? Hello? Why is it so dark here? Where are the lights?

SFX - ROBERT MOVES ON BED

God my head hurts. What the hell happened?

DARLA: Shhhhhhh. It's okay.

ROBERT: Fiona?

SFX - LIGHT CLICK

DARLA: No darling, it's me. It's Darla.

ROBERT: Oh no, I have to wake up.

DARLA: Not this time little piggy. You're not getting away from me again. We're going to spend a long, long time together.

ROBERT: No, get away from me.

DARLA: Lots of uninterrupted quality time for me
and my little piggy.

ROBERT: This can't be happening.

DARLA: Now, why don't you come to me darling.
Come for a cuddle..

ROBERT: No, (begins to scream) no,
nooooooooooooooooooooo.

END

Word count - 10,000 @

Rough performance time of 45 minutes