**GONE FISHING**

(A 40 minute Comedy)

by Claire Booker

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**CHARACTERS**

Tim Raglan: A 21 year old unemployed graduate.

Robert Raglan: 1) His father. A middle aged City solicitor.

2) A salesman in the aquarium shop.

Kate Raglan: 1) Tim's mother. A housewife.

2) Mrs De Silva. A family friend.

Jackie: Tim's girlfriend.

Actress 3: 1) Sharon. A MacDonald's employee.

2) Aquarium shop assistant.

3) Karen. A party guest.

**SET**

An open-plan set where lighting and props convey most of the locations. Stage right there is a table and chairs to denote a kitchen/dining area. Down stage left is a bedroom area, raised slightly to indicate it is on a floor above the kitchen. The bedroom is represented by teenage paraphernalia, plus a door with door frame (real or implied). Front of stage is kept free for a variety of locations.

**PROPS**

An ironing board and breakfast food are needed in the first scene. Drinking glasses and bottles are used during the party scene. A fish tank is needed in some scenes and may be conveyed by lighting, sound and mime, or be literally present. A hands-free phone is required, but doesn’t have to be functional. A duvet, rucksack and electric kettle are required in the final scene.

**SCENE ONE**

The lights rise on Mr Raglan at breakfast reading the Daily Telegraph. He wears a smart jacket and tie, but no trousers. Mrs Raglan is busy sorting out the toast. Tim wears a tracksuit bottom and slouches in his bedroom. The sound of sizzling bacon fades up.

Tim (aside to audience) Parents are so predictable.

Mum We’re running low on bread, darling. Will one slice do?

Dad Isn’t Tim down yet?

Mum Will one slice do?

Dad What?

Mum Bread, darling.

Tim (aside) It’s the same every morning. Mum forgets to take a loaf out of the freezer. Dad never has a second slice anyway. But they still have to discuss it.

Dad (shouting upwards) Tim!

Tim (aside) And now they want an audience.

Dad (shouting upwards) What are you doing up there?

Tim (shouts down) Nothing!

Mum Don’t shout, Robert.

Dad (to Mum) Did you hear that? (shouts up at Tim) It’s 7.45!

Mum Trousers. (rushes over to the ironing board to finish ironing Dad’s trousers)

Dad (angry disbelief) 7.45.

Tim (aside) I’m under siege in this household. Always poking their nose into my things. I’ve had to put a bolt on my door. And a chain. (pulls on a T shirt and starts the journey down to the kitchen) They should treat me with respect now. I‘ve got a BA, Third Class, in Tourism Studies. Not everyone can boast that.

Dad (shouting up) Come down NOW and have some breakfast!

Tim Morning.

Dad (Tim startles Dad by his sudden appearance) What?

Mum Ah, there you are, darling. (hands Tim a pair of boxer shorts) Clean pants.

Dad It’s best gammon. That’ll pump some energy into you.

Tim Not hungry, Dad.

Mum You must be.

Tim (aside) A cooked breakfast is his solution to everything. A nation marches on its stomach, according to Dad.

Dad A nation marches on its stomach, Timothy.

Mum Robert . . .

Dad Families sitting down together, talking to one another . . .

Mum Robert darl . . .

Dad Have you any idea how important good communication is?

Mum Rober . . .

Dad There’s an article on just that point in yesterday’s Telegraph. ‘ASBOs and the decline of the cooked breakfast.’

Mum (thrusts the ironed trousers into his hand) Trousers.

Dad (putting on his trousers) Family values. Does that mean nothing to you?

Tim I’m not interested in politics, Dad.

Dad I’m not talking politics. I’m talking sausages.

Tim (aside) Which is what he always talks, in my opinion. I don’t know how Mum puts up with him. She must be on crystal meth.

Mum (to Tim) Cornflakes?

Tim No thanks, Mum.

Mum I could do you a kipper.

Tim Not hungry.

Mum You must eat something.

Tim Why? Why must I eat something?

Mum (stuck for an answer) Well, I . . .?

Dad Don’t answer him, Kate.

Mum (anxious) Tim, you’re not anorexic, are you?

Dad Don’t be ridiculous. That’s for girls. There’s nothing wrong with him. He’s just bone idle. Aren’t you? Admit it.

Tim Guilty as charged.

Dad What?

Tim I’m bone idle. I’m a no good. I’m a feckless scrounger.

Dad (enraged) What?

Tim (aside) If there's one thing parents can't stand, it's being robbed of a good fight.

Dad How can you look me in the eye and tell me you’re a feckless scrounger?

Tim I’m a feckless scrounger.

Dad (to Mum) Did you hear that?

Tim (aside) All they can do is repeat themselves.

Dad A feckless scrounger!

Tim (aside) Pathetic, isn't it?

Mum (cajoling) Timothy, darling, you know we only want what's best for you.

Tim (aside) And then Mum comes over all ‘social services’.

Mum We were young once, you know. Even your father.

Dad (to Tim) And I suppose you call that a hair cut.

Tim There's nothing wrong with my hair.

Dad Try telling that to an interview panel.

Mum Timmy, darling. We were wondering about your room.

Tim What about it?

Mum Well, it’s locked.

Tim So?

Mum Why don’t you give me the key? I’ll pop in and do a little tidying up.

Tim (aside) A little snooping around, more like.

Dad Why should your mother clean your room? She’s not your skivvy. You do it. (checks his watch) Seven fifty five. Must dash. (hands Tim the paper) I've ringed a few job adverts for you. And while you're at it, take a look at the article on page five. Brilliant young entrepreneur. Just made his first million. And he’s got no legs.

Tim (aside) Some men say it with flowers. Dad says it in newsprint.

Mum (handing Dad his coat) Grey cloud with threat of rain, darling.

Dad (hangs the coat on his arm) Thank you, Kate. (he picks up his brief case) Important hearing this afternoon. Stashcash versus Dosh Duccat and Dubloon. (a quick kiss) Be good.

Mum Coc au vin for dinner.

Dad Any problems leave a message with Angela. (heads towards exit)

Mum Darling? (he leans in to kiss her again) Umbrella. (handing it to him)

Dad Spot on. (he takes the umbrella and exits)

Tim (aside) Cluck, cluck, cluck, cluck, cluck. (aside) Off he goes - the big brave rooster to his battery farm in the city. If they lopped off his head, he’d still run round in circles, clucking on about the Footsie and Dow Jones. Well, this little chicken’s staying free range. (he flaps around the stage, clucking, watched by his bemused mother)

(Black out)

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