

# Old Francis

## CAST

FRANCIS: a man in his 40s, given to philosophical musings

1ST BLOKE: 40s, given to the rejection of philosophical musings

BOTTLE BRANDISHER: 30s or 40s, a practical fellow

3RD MAN: 30s or 40s, in a world of his own much of the time

A MALE JOGGER; 50s – 60s, self-conscious

FRANCIS he is dressed like a 'white-collar' worker but has the appearance of a man who lives alone. Fucking shabby! Probably he needs a shower, long past the change of socks and underwear stage. He will be an alcoholic, but in a quiet way, his three or four pints every day of the week on the way home from work. Occasionally he remains in the pub too long. He drinks more at the weekends. He rarely feels 'a need'. There again, he never has to go without.

For whatever reason he has not been for a drink today. Part of his edgy state will have to do with that. There is another factor, unknown, that is never touched upon, It is irrelevant what that might be. Except that it is not good news, and he has been reflecting. What counts is that it is important enough to cause him to change his routine, he is walking in the park as an aid to 'working things out'.

Text Kelvingrove Park route from the Eldon Street entrance

At this opening point in the story the hand-held camera is the eyes, nose and all-sensory perception of the central character, FRANCIS. The camera is moving at an ordinary, slowish walk along the upper track on the Kelvingrove Park route from the Eldon Street entrance. It is a grey evening, late autumn; depressing

His breathing becomes audible, interspersed with sighs, a variety of sigh, impatience then into resignation, then he speaks aloud, to himself

FRANCIS

yes...

continues walking

FRANCIS whispering

*And what else, what else...*

He pauses in the walking. Now FRANCIS enters into vision, stooping to tie his shoelaces. FRANCIS sighs. He straightens, continues walking, but remains in view; the camera still hand-held but surrounding him, going round him, taking in every detail. He is lost in thought, not unaware of his surroundings but he no interest in any passerby. He pauses to scrutinise a tree, its higher reaches, taking time. It is a meaningful experience., but he ne seldom takes himself seriously enough for that sort of experience.

FRANCIS, absently

*One examines the tree. Here is a tree. What can we say of the tree.*

The camera remains while he continues walking.

FRANCIS turns down the slope towards the river, crosses the bridge but goes sharp left, on the route to behind the old bandstand. The camera charts his progress to this point, then he disappears.

2 ext along the track nearest the Kelvin; the one to the rear of the old bandstand

His voice is heard before he re-enters view. Simultaneously we hear the sound of his walking

FRANCIS voice-over

*A veritable plethora of wildlife*

FRANCIS pauses in walking, staring down through the bushes in the direction of the River Kelvin. He leans his elbows on the fence

FRANCIS

*Look at that: water! What might we do with water... We have the animals, what might we do with animals, verily I say unto you, I speak as a beaneater, a vegetarian, one who eschews the taste of the beast... [CHUCKLES] I make myself laugh, what a state...*

FRANCIS is silent for a spell, then he murmurs

FRANCIS

*Mark of the beast*

FRANCIS gazes around, there is a sense of the density of the vegetation. FRANCIS is aware very strongly of this.

FRANCIS absently

*One could shudder*

After a moment FRANCIS continues walking. The camera remains in place. He moves out of view for a few moments

FRANCIS voice-over  
Language trappeth the man

FRANCIS notices a parkbench ahead. He is relieved

FRANCIS  
*The good Lord save us all!*

FRANCIS arrives at the bench. FRANCIS sighs. He takes out a couple of used pieces of kitchenroll-handkerchief and uses them to wipe the bench dry enough to sit down.

FRANCIS sits, thrust his hands into his jacket pockets and hunches his shoulders, his chin coming down onto his chest. He is cold and he shivers. He stops himself shivering. He shakes his head as though giving himself a talking-to. Eventually closes his eyes. Then a couple of moments he shivers again.

FRANCIS sees the JOGGER approaching, a man in a training outfit. JOGGER is approaching at a jog. The noise of his breathing, audible from a long way off.

FRANCIS studies the man. The JOGGER appears to notice that FRANCIS is paying him this close attention and becomes a bit self-conscious in his run, as if he is aware of his elbows rotating.

FRANCIS smiles and murmurs  
*A self conscious jogger..!*

FRANCIS chuckles. The JOGGER is passing and glances at FRANCIS, and calls to him but what he says is unintelligible, but has an 'isk' sound to it

JOGGER  
*...isk...!*

JOGGER continues. FRANCIS baffled, looking after him.

FRANCIS baffled  
*Isk? Sisk?Bisk*

FRANCIS frowns, watching the JOGGER jog up the slope, and vanish round the track across the bridge. He continues staring for a few moments. Now his gaze takes in the trees, the vegetation, the path itself is deep in leaves. He suddenly looks back to where the JOGGER vanished.

FRANCIS  
*Just as I thought. Vanished. Vanished forever! One enters existence ,  
only to vanish [PAUSE] Van...quished. Huh! [SIGHS] Oh well...*

FRANCIS shivers and hunches his shoulders again, evidently chilled. He stares to the sky. Then the sound of laughter. It takes a moment for FRANCIS to register this. He looks to the sky, the river, back to both ends of the track, then settles for the

other direction, coming from the rear of the bandstand, from the same direction the JOGGER had appeared. Three blokes coming along the path, slowly. FRANCIS seems not to notice them. He looks elsewhere, his gaze settling on another tree, and he gazes upwards again to its higher reaches

The three blokes notice FRANCIS. They cannot miss him. They are taking stock of him. One of them carries a bottle by the neck, fortified wine or sherry.

1ST BLOKE strolls on a little ahead. He is wearing a coat that is too large for him, by a couple of sizes. FRANCIS watches him, shakes his head. 1ST BLOKE halts at the bench. FRANCIS frowns at the bloke's outfit.

1ST BLOKE

*You got twenty pence there bud, the busfare home and all that?*

FRANCIS

*Sorry, but that's some coat you're wearing!*

The bloke frowns. FRANCIS is smiling.

1ST BLOKE

*Funny man.*

FRANCIS

*Sorry*

1ST BLOKE stares at FRANCIS

FRANCIS

*I'm no being sarcastic.*

1ST BLOKE ignores him. He calls to his companions, jerking his thumb in FRANCIS' direction

1ST BLOKE

*A funny man! He's cracking funnies about my coat!*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER and 3RD BLOKE walk towards them, but nonchalantly, hardly with any interest

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*Surely no!*

FRANCIS notices the man is holding the bottle by its neck

1ST BLOKE

*Aye.*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*That's cheeky!*

He pays no attention to FRANCIS. Instead he swigs from the bottle and hands it on to 3RD MAN. Then he speaks

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*Maybe he likes its style!*

1ST BLOKE nods, smiles

BOTTLE BRANDISHER *glances at 3RD BLOKE*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*And he wants to buy it! [TO 1ST BLOKE] Heh, maybe he wants to buy it!*

1ST BLOKE to FRANCIS

*Eh?*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER also to FRANCIS

*Ye want to buy the guy's coat?*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER and 3RD BLOKE now come to the bench and surround it.

BOTTLE BRANDISHER to FRANCIS

*Eh, ye want to buy the coat?*

FRANCIS coughs and clears his throat. He stares at the grass by his shoes, studying the image, seeing old footprints

FRANCIS sighs. He raises his head and sees that the 3RD MAN is watching him. FRANCIS closes his eyes, opens them at once, sees 3RD MAN and BOTTLE BRANDISHER watching him. Then FRANCIS to the rear. The 1ST BLOKE is there. FRANCIS strains to see him but without making it too obvious.

FRANCIS to 1ST BLOKE

*Okay?*

1ST BLOKE pauses before replying, and he replies suddenly

1ST BLOKE

*I'm okay are you okay?*

FRANCIS smiles

*Oh yes, yes*

1ST BLOKE

*Good*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*I like a guy that's okay*

3RD BLOKE

*Me too*

1ST BLOKE just shakes his head.

FRANCIS watches them closely, but as surreptitiously as he can. The other three watch him. BOTTLE BRANDISHER is less interested in him than the other two. FRANCIS looks at the other two, then his attention returns to BOTTLE BRANDISHER who appears more interested than before.

In fact BOTTLE BRANDISHER appears all too interested in FRANCIS, and he smiles at him.

FRANCIS nods in response, but is strained.

3RD BLOKE

*I dont think he's okay at all, I think he's - I dont know, something, I think he's something*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER stares at FRANCIS

*Something, yeh*

FRANCIS is very aware that he is in a dangerous situation. He shivers, hunching and relaxing his shoulders, hunching them again. He sees that 1ST BLOKE is standing to the side, but quite close too him. He appears disinterested, preoccupied. FRANCIS speaks to him

FRANCIS

*I didnt mean you to take it badly.*

1ST BLOKE

*What?*

FRANCIS

*Your coat.*

1ST BLOKE stares at him. FRANCIS shrugs, his hands still in his pockets.

FRANCIS

*My comment . . .*

1ST BLOKE

*Your comment?*

FRANCIS

*I made a comment.*

1ST BLOKE stares at him

FRANCIS

*I didnt mean you to take it badly.*

1ST BLOKE

*I never took it badly.*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER laughs suddenly.

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*Heh by the way, when ye come to think about it, the guy's right, your fucking coat man! Fucking comic cuts! Look at it!*

3RD BLOKE does looked at the coat. But now 1ST BLOKE sits down heavily, right next to FRANCIS on the bench. 1ST BLOKE stares straight into his eyes.

FRANCIS is very aware of the man's proximity. There is a physicality about it. 1ST BLOKE is just too close.

BOTTLE BRANDISHER to 1ST BLOKE

*heh man I hope ye're no ponging*

3RD MAN guffaws

BOTTLE BRANDISHER smiling

*We're talking saturation point here*

3RD MAN chuckles

*Saturation point! You're right but, sometimes I am literally fucking smelling. I see people stepping back*

1ST BLOKE glances at him. It is enough to make 3RD MAN stop talking. FRANCIS notes the power of 1ST BLOKE. FRANCIS sighs, smiles wearily

FRANCIS

*I'm skint, he said, I'm out the game. No point looking for dough off of me.*

FRANCIS notes that the three men are watching him, and now he noticed the trousers the 3RD MAN is wearing. The trousers look like they belong to somebody else, and they are too short by four inches and it seems like the back seam has split at the seat. FRANCIS shakes his head and speaks to him

FRANCIS

*Eh look, I'm no being sarcastic but that pair of trousers you're wearing I mean for God sake surely you could do a wee bit better, eh?*

There is a silence. FRANCIS looks to the other two:

FRANCIS

*Eh? surely yous could do a wee bit better than that?*

*1ST BLOKE*  
*What ye talking about?*

*FRANCIS*  
*Your mate's trousers, they're fucking falling to bits. I mean look at his arse, his arse is fucking poking out!*

1ST BLOKE and BOTTLE BRANDISHER look at 3RD MAN'S trousers.

*BOTTLE BRANDISHER*  
*Turn round*

3RD MAN TURNS round, and tries to see his trousers from the rear

*BOTTLE BRANDISHER*  
*The guy's right man*

*3RD MAN*  
*It's my shirt tail'*

*BOTTLE BRANDISHER*  
*What's he looking at yer trousers for anyway! [PAUSE] D'you always look at guys' trousers?*

FRANCIS smiles

*3RD MAN to 1ST MAN*  
*He is a funny man right enough!*

Instead of answering 1ST BLOKE just watches FRANCIS, not showing much emotion at all, just in a very sort of cold manner, passionless. FRANCIS avoids meeting his gaze, looks over the path towards the river.

*FRANCIS mutters, almost as an aside*  
*I'm skint.*

1ST BLOKE stares at him, smiles briefly but in a passionless manner

*1ST BLOKE*  
*That's interesting. [PAUSE] Thanks for telling me.*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER grins. 3RD MAN is not watching this interchange

*BOTTLE BRANDISHER*  
*I didnay think he'd be skint.*

*1ST BLOKE*

*Neither did I*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*I didnt even hear ye asking for money. Maybe I'm deaf.*

1ST BLOKE smiles. FRANCIS sighs

1ST BLOKE to FRANCIS

*That was a big sigh*

FRANCIS looks about to say something, instead he clears his throat

1ST BLOKE

*Say it*

FRANCIS frowns

1ST BLOKE

*Ye were gony say something. Was it something significant?*

FRANCIS smiles

1ST BLOKE

*Oh, irony, I see*

FRANCIS still smiles but it is strained

BOTTLE BRANDISHER raises his bottle in one hand, points upwards at a tree

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*Did ye hear that!*

3RD MAN

*I did, it's wee bird*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*It is a wee bird, wee chookie, wee sowel*

FRANCIS stares at BOTTLE BRANDISHER and notices that 1ST BLOKE is still watching him. 1ST BLOKE smiles briefly

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*Just a poor wee sowel*

3RD MAN gazing up at the higher branches of the tree

3RD MAN

*D d d dooie d d d dooie*

1ST BLOKE to FRANCIS  
*My mate's good at wildlife*

FRANCIS looks at 3RD MAN

1ST BLOKE  
*It's just a couple of bob we're looking for.*

FRANCIS  
*Sorry, I really am skint but.*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER leans closer  
*Snout?*

FRANCIS shakes his head.

BOTTLE BRANDISHER  
Nay snout! That's hard to believe.

BOTTLE BRANDISHER gives an exaggerated look to his mates and strolls to the side

1ST BLOKE to FRANCIS  
*See that, my mate finds it hard to believe*

FRANCIS  
But I dont smoke

FRANCIS is aware that that the BOTTLE BRANDISHER has now walked behind the bench. FRANCIS looks sideways to try and spot him. The BOTTLE BRANDISHER is behind him and swigging a mouthful of booze. FRANCIS now includes him when he speaks

FRANCIS  
*I really dont smoke*

3RD MAN calls  
*What's he up to?*

1ST BLOKE shrugs. BOTTLE BRANDISHER doesnt respond at all. FRANCIS sneaks a look behind again, to keep an eye on BOTTLE BRANDISHER

FRANCIS to 1ST BLOKE  
*It is as if yez dont believe it's possible, because I dont smoke.*

Again FRANCIS tries to see behind the bench

1ST BLOKE addresses BOTTLE BRANDISHER  
*He thinks ye might be sneaking up behind him!*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER  
*ye never know*

3RD MAN  
*Hey, here's a question, how come he was sitting there anyway?*

1ST BLOKE  
*Because he was waiting for us, he knew we were coming*

3RD MAN  
*Honest!*

1ST BLOKE  
*Yeh!*

3RD MAN  
*Oh man, that's a fucking cracker, What is he thirsty?*

1ST BLOKE chuckles

BOTTLE BRANDISHER calls to FRANCIS  
*We're all fucking thirsty mate! It's the name of the game*

FRANCIS quietly  
*Really it's nonsensical. downright nonsensical, it is just...*

FRANCIS shakes head and sighs, not smiling. The others look at him

FRANCIS quietly  
*Yet it's the sort of incident you can credit. You're just sitting there in an attempt to recover a certain inner equilibrium when suddenly there appear certain forces, seemingly arbitrary forces, as if they had been called up by a positive evil.*

1ST BLOKE  
*Oh what is that us? evil forces*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER  
*That isnay nice.*

FRANCIS looks at the two of them, and at 3RD MAN. He shakes his head.

1ST BLOKE  
*Dont shake yer head, ye dont even know what I'm gony say*

FRANCIS nods

1ST BLOKE

*A pound*

FRANCIS

*Look, I'm telling ye the truth, I'm skint.*

1ST BLOKE

*You've got a watch.*

This takes FRANCIS by surprise

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*It's a nice one, I noticed it before. I would say it is the kind of watch that keeps good time*

1ST BLOKE

*Definitely worth its weight in carats*

3RD MAN guffaws

1ST BLOKE

*It's a pun*

3RD MAN

*Show us it!*

FRANCIS makes no attempt, resolutely

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*Show him it*

1ST BLOKE

*He showed you his trousers*

3RD MAN

*That's right!*

FRANCIS stares ahead, sniffs, clears his throat, gazes along the path. 3RD MAN points at FRANCIS'S wrist and claps his hands once

3RD MAN

*I saw it!*

And now the BOTTLE BRANDISHER steps to the bench, and hands the bottle to 1ST BLOKE. FRANCIS clasps his hands over his knees how, gripping them.

BOTTLE BRANDISHER suddenly  
*Did ye miss yer bus?*

3RD MAN chuckles  
*Did ye miss your bus!*

1ST BLOKE does not smile at all, just stares at FRANCIS. But now FRANCIS stares back at him, but not for long. FRANCIS looks at the other two and he frowns as though bewildered. He stares up the tree where the bird was earlier. The 1ST BLOKE follows his stare and he too looks up the tree. FRANCIS places his right hand on top of the watch on his right wrist, but he does it without thinking, and he keeps his hand firmly placed there.

BOTTLE BRANDISHER notes this glances at 3RD MAN

3RD MAN  
*Well well*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER  
*Exactly*

3RD MAN musing, staring at FRANCIS

FRANCIS notices but this stare from 3RD MAN is unsettling and he is unsure what might happen. BOTTLE BRANDISHER grins, glances at 1ST BLOKE and jerks thumb in 3RD MAN'S direction.

1ST BLOKE to FRANCIS  
*Our friend here finds ye interesting*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER points at 3RD MAN  
*He's the interesting man... Hey...*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER places the bottle on his left hand and balances it there, and exhibits this for all to see

BOTTLE BRANDISHER  
*Left hand tae did ye notice!*

3RD MAN  
*You always do that!*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER smiles, keeps it going a few moments longer. 3RD MAN then strolls off a few steps. FRANCIS glances at him go.

1ST BLOKE  
*You're an inquisitive bloke*

FRANCIS snorts. He has been slouching on the bench; he sits up straight, pulling himself together. 3RD MAN is now standing at the fence peering down to the river. FRANCIS notes this, and studies 3RD MAN, then his eyes close

3rd ext the path up near the bridge

Just the long short here, that image of the four men. FRANCIS is at one side of the bench, and 1ST BLOKE sits at the other. 3RD MAN leans his elbows on the fence overlooking the Kelvin. BOTTLE BRANDISHER is balancing the bottle on his left hand. The bottle falls. BOTTLE BRANDISHER calmly retrieves it

4th ext the lower path by the bench again

FRANCIS watches BOTTLE BRANDISHER retrieving the bottle from the ground.

BOTTLE BRANDISHER to FRANCIS

*Did ye think it was full or something!*

FRANCIS half smiles, watching BOTTLE BRANDISHER walk to deposit the bottle in a clum of weeds

1ST BLOKE suddenly

*This is the full one*

FRANCIS glances at him. 1ST BLOKE is holding a bottle. FRANCIS frowns, baffled. 3RD MAN strolls back to stand nearby BOTTLE BRANDISHER and both stand to the front of the bench. 1ST BLOKE is still sitting at one side. So there is a sense that FRANCIS is hemmed in by them. FRANCIS rubs his throat

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*The guy's a magician*

FRANCIS stares down to his hands, and he flexes his fingers, closing and opening his fists, then settles each hand over his knees. FRANCIS is avoiding looking directly at the men. His eyelids close.

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*I dont think he even goes on public transport, this yin, I think he's a car-owner.*

FRANCIS still has his eyes closed. But he smiles.

FRANCIS

*I'm actually a train-owner!*

There is a silence. BOTTLE BRANDISHER and 3RD MAN stare at FRANCIS. FRANCIS sits rigidly, head lowered. 1ST BLOKE points at FRANCIS for the benefit of the other twop; FRANCIS does not notice.

1ST BLOKE ironically  
*Train owner. That's funny*

FRANCIS mutters  
*One of his better witticisms*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER and 3RD MAN are watching the situation but are not especially threatening. They are waiting for 1ST BLOKE to take the lead, 1ST BLOKE bites on one fingernail while watching FRANCIS. 1ST BLOKE now opens the bottle of sherry and swigs a mouthful. BOTTLE BRANDISHER's attention now attracted to the higher-branches of the tree again. 3RD MAN also stares up, smiles. FRANCIS here takes an interest, and now he too stares up at the tree. The four of them now gazing up the tree

3RD MAN to BOTTLE BRANDISHER  
*I hear him. Wee bird...*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER  
*He's got his ayn wee heart and soul tae, that's what's so amazing*

3RD MAN sings  
*Wee chookie birdie toh loh loh*

1ST BLOKE  
*He's looking for a mate, a wee female*

3RD MAN  
*A wee chookie*

1ST BLOKE  
*Yeh*

FRANCIS is staring up the tree. Now he gestures at the bottle

FRANCIS  
*D'you mind?*

1ST BLOKE stares at him. FRANCIS holds the stares. BOTTLE BRANDISHER watches them. Meanwhile 3RD MAN starts whistling tunelessly and strolls back to the fence.

5th ext from the other direction, from the old bandstand side

The scene is peaceful from afar, quite reassuring. The noise of the water, audible yet quiet. 3RD MAN leaning his elbows, gazing through the vegetation. The other three at the bench. 1ST BLOKE passes FRANCIS the bottle.

6th ext the lower path by the bench again

FRANCIS examines the bottle. There is no label

FRANCIS

*What happened to the label?*

1ST BLOKE

*It fell off.*

FRANCIS studying the bottle

*What is it hair lacquer or something?*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER smiles

*Hair lacquer!*

FRANCIS

*It looks like it to me.*

FRANCIS glances at the other two and notes that they are studying him closely. FRANCIS shrugs, studies the bottle

FRANCIS, eloquently

*What is there to tell about a drink by looking at the outside of its bottle?*

1ST BLOKE and BOTTLE BRANDISHER pay attention to this. 3RD MAN returns.

1ST BLOKE to FRANCIS

*You can talk about that*

FRANCIS gestures at the bottle, bringing 3RD MAN into the company

FRANCIS

*It looks fine, as much as is possible to tell*

1ST BLOKE

*What colour is it?*

FRANCIS frowns

*Oh now, you've got me there*

1ST BLOKE

*The glass is brown, but what colour's the liquid?*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER chuckles and winks at 3RD MAN who smiles. The three of them watch FRANCIS.

FRANCIS frowns  
*Let me see now...*

FRANCIS raises the neck of the bottle, tilts his head and tastes a mouthful only. and he just manages to avoid spluttering

FRANCIS  
*Christ! WWhhh!*

The three men watch him. FRANCIS has another go, then returns the bottle to 1ST BLOKE, wipes his mouth. 1ST BLOKE immediately takes a drink.

BOTTLE BRANDISHER  
*Fiery but warming, a good drink.*

FRANCIS TO 1ST BLOKE  
*Ta*

3RD MAN  
*The mccooy*

1ST BLOKE wipes his mouth  
*Pure mccooy [AND TO FRANCIS] I told you.*

FRANCIS  
*Did you?*

1ST BLOKE  
*Aye.*

FRANCIS  
*Hot right enough!*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER  
*Fiery but warming*

1ST BLOKE  
*Know what we call it?*

FRANCIS notes that BOTTLE BRANDFISHER and 3RD MAN await the answer, with suppressed glee. FRANCIS looks to 1ST BLOKE

1ST BLOKE

*Sherry vindaloo!*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER laughs. 3RD MAN smiles, returns to leans his elbows on the fence. FRANCIS smiles.

1ST BLOKE

A good yin that int it, sherry vindaloo.

FRANCIS nods. Then he notices that 1ST BLOKE is staring into his eyes

1ST BLOKE

You'll remember it. Sherry vindaloo.

BOTTLE BRANDISHER chuckles. FRANCIS looks from one to the other. BOTTLE BRANDISHER gestures to 1ST BLOKE who passes him the bottle. BOTTLE BRANDISHER swigs a mouthful, then strolls to pass the bottle onto the 3RD MAN, and returns beside the bench.

3RD MAN takes the bottle and studies it all round before taking a long mouthful. Then he stretches over the fence and drops the bottle into the vegetaion. 3RD MAN turns and stares back at the other three.

FRANCIS glances at 1ST BLOKE but says nothing. Then he shivers, stares up at the overcast sky, hunches his shoulders. He continues staring upwards then he smiles. He sees 1ST BLOKE watching

1ST BLOKE

*I like a bloke with an inner life*

FRANCIS smiles, scratches his head

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*It means ye can have a conversation*

1ST BLOKE

*Exactly*

PAUSE

1ST BLOKE to FRANCIS

*You'll do for me,*

FRANCIS

*What was that?*

1ST BLOKE

*I said you'll do for me.*

FRANCIS

*Thanks. As long as you didn't take offence about the comment I made.*

1ST BLOKE

*What comment?*

FRANCIS

*Some comment, I made a comment... [SHRUGS]*

1ST BLOKE

*Aw don't worry about it*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*We don't worry about that kind of stuff*

FRANCIS nods, sighs

*And thanks for the drink.*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*Ye kidding? It's just a drink.*

FRANCIS

*Aye well thanks anyway...*

FRANCIS looks to 1ST BLOKE

1ST BLOKE

*That's how we were wanting to get a couple of quid, so's we can get a refill.*

FRANCIS is guarded now

BOTTLE BRANDISHER

*Aye.*

1ST BLOKE shrugs

*See your watch, we could get no bad for it.*

BOTTLE BRANDISHER points to the watch

*Folk would buy it*

FRANCIS nods but he makes no movement. The 3RD MAN is now looking at him from his position at the fence. FRANCIS glances briefly, almost imperceptibly, in either direction. He is seeking an escape route.

1ST BLOKE stares at him. BOTTLE BRANDISHER now stands with his hands in his pockets, but he is standing at the bench. FRANCIS is effectively cornered. To rub it in further the 3RD MAN now strolls back to them.

FRANCIS is scared. He shifts on his seat so that when he is looking straight ahead he is looking away from the three men. But now 3RD MAN enters his line of vision. This unsettles FRANCIS. He closes his eyes, sighing. He knows he is trapped.

7 ext the path up near the bridge

FRANCIS and 1ST BLOKE on the bench. BOTTLE BRANDISHER and 3RD MAN to the front of the bench.

FRANCIS sits up straight, his hands on his knees, staring straight ahead

The four men stay fixed in these positions. Then the camera moves and the men have vanished.

END