

*How late it was, how late*

*by James Kelman*

a play for radio based on the novel of the same name

CAST

*Main Characters, in order of appearance*

SAMMY	male 38 years
1st DETECTIVE	male 40s
2nd DETECTIVE	male 30s
1st DSS	male early 20s
2nd DSS	female, mid 30s
ALI	male late 30s
DR LOGAN	male 50s
TAM ROBERTS	male 40s
PETER	male 15 years
KEITH	male 15 years

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*Minor Characters, in order of appearance*

		<u>approximately</u>
1st COP	male late 20s	six lines
2nd COP	male early 30s	six lines
3RD DETECTIVE	male early 20s	five lines
GAOLER	male 40s	two lines
1ST PEDESTRIAN	female 40s,	two lines
2nd PEDESTRIAN	male 40s,	three lines
YOUTH	male late teens	eight lines
OLD WOMAN	female 70s	two lines
NEIGHBOUR	male early 60s	six lines [two scenes]
P.O. WOMAN	female 30s	four lines
MAN-at- BUS	male 50s	four lines
DRIVER	male 40s	four lines
DSS SECURITY	male 60s	five lines

DSS GIRL	female teens	two lines
BLIND MAN	male 60s,	twelve lines
Old Lady	female	three lines
RECEPTIONIST	female	nine lines [two scenes]
TAXI DRIVER	male	two lines
HERB	barman	seven lines

LOCATION      GLASGOW , SCOTLAND

TIME            OPENS SUNDAY MORNING. THE PRESENT, APPROXIMATELY

SOUND    traffic, busy; late morning

SAMMY   BEGIN IN A WHISPER, MOVE INTO A SPEAKING VOICE] Ye wake in a corner and stay there making yer body disappear, the thoughts smothering ye, but ye want to remember and face up to things, just something keeps ye from doing it, why can ye no do it, the words filling yer head: then the other words, there's something wrong; there's something far far wrong, ye're no a good man, ye're just no a good man... And oh christ the back was sore, stiff, and the heid pounding, pounding.... Where in the name of fuck...? Here, I was here, rusty palings, mossy weeds, some auld back lane... FADE

SAMMY   WHISPERS] My shoes, where's my shoes? What are these man an auld pair of trainers, where did they come from? where's my leathers, a new pair of leather shoes. Somebody must've stole them, miserable bastards, left me with the trainers - some fucking deal. Unless they thought I was dead, ye could see that, them thinking Naybody's there naybody's there, take them, the guy's deid, he'll no mind... [GROANS] That light, terrible brightness...eyes, eyes looking, tourists maybe. Or officials, officials... [GROANS. SUDDENLY] Cops, they're cops.

SOUND    TWO MEN WALKING A FEW STEPS

SAMMY   WHISPERS] Fucking plainclothes bastards, ye can smell them a mile away. Oh christ... Bastards... [SAMMY SCRAMBLES TO HIS FEET

SAMMY   AS A GREETING, BUT IRONIC, ALMOST A CHALLENGE] Alright there! Hey I was just wondering... I need a pound, I don't like asking, fuck knows what I've done with my dough. Some bastard's robbed me I think! [CHUCKLES] Ye dont know who's walking the streets these days! If there's any chance of a pound...that would be great. I had the wages when I went into the pub, I was with a couple of mates. Then one thing led to another, I woke up in the outer limits somewhere. That was the early hours this morning and when I looked in the pockets all I had was the fare to here. Christ I need to get home, the wife'll be cracking up

1ST COP   Fuck off

SAMMY   It's the truth! [WHISPERS] Except if ye so much as touch me, if you so much as touch me...

1st COP   Move it ya fucking pest

2ND COP   Ye're an arsehole, move it like the man says.

SOUND OF THE COPS STEPPING TOWARDS SAMMY

SAMMY WHISPERS] Yeh...

1st COP LAYS HIS HAND ON SAMMY'S SHOULDER] Now move it ya fucking pest

SOUND SAMMY PUNCHES HIM HARD.

1ST COP GROANS] Ohh

2ND COP Ya bastard! [2ND COP MOVES TO GRAB SAMMY. SAMMY KICKS HIM N THE LEG

2ND COP GROANS] Bastard...

SOUND SAMMY RUNS. TRAFFIC NOISE.

2ND COP RUNNING, SHOUTS] get the bastard [A CAR BREAKS. SHOUTS] Get him!

SOUND THE COPS RUNNING. ANOTHER CAR BREAKS.

SAMMY CLOSE IN ON HIM BREATHING HARD

1ST COP There he is!

2nd COP SHOUTS] Get the bastard!

SAMMY Aah

SOUND 1ST WOMAN SCREAMS. SAMMY FALLS. COPS RUNNING TO GET HIM. THE TWO COPS BOOT INTO SAMMY

SAMMY GROANING

2nd COP HOARSELY] Again you bastard [THEY CONTINUE BOOTING INTO SAMMY. FADE OUT.

SOUND LATER IN THE CELL. THE DOOR SHUTS AND THE TWO COPS RETURN

SAMMY Keep back ya bastards... [SAMMY TRIES TO DEFEND HIMSELF]

SOUND THE COPS BEATING INTO SAMMY

1ST COP A BIT BREATHLESS] Yeh, he likes to fight...

SOUND CONTINUE BEATING INTO HIM. FADE.

SAMMY NARRATES] Felt like I was dying when I woke up, lying on a freezing cold floor, smelling of piss man it was in my nostrils and like snotters from my nose, or blood, was it blood. [GROANS] And my ribs! Christ... [GROANS]

SAMMY And there in the gloom, at the spyhole, that eye...staring... Next time I woke it was dark, and my body was like it had went completely stiff. And then my eyes, there was something wrong with them, my mind going back to a time I was reading all kinds of weird things, black magic stuff, religious experiences, and the writing started to thicken, each letter filling out till there was no space between it and the next. Then my head was so itchy, that ancient blanket christ what a smell, filthy... And my back [GROANS] killing me, the base of the spine, behind the knees and up my thighs christ and the ribs, they had battered me hard... And I heard movement, maybe the screw back at the spyhole, staring.. But maybe sympathetic; me and you brother, we're comrades... [SPEAKS ALOUD]. Hey what about a couple of pain-killers? [CHUCKLES, THEN COUGHS UNCONTROLLABLY] And a mug of tea. Or a smoke...I'm gasping for a smoke... [SAMMY FUMBLING IN HIS POCKETS. WHISPERS] Nothing. My neckchain...they've took it... Yeh okay I might've strung myself up, I'm a suicide kind of guy. Sounds like a country song! And my belt with the Lone Star belt buckle, jesus, they've took that too. [IRONIC CHUCKLE] Now I'll never get to Texas... [CALLS] Heh is anybody there? Hey, what about my phonecall! I need to make a phone call!

GAOLER QUIET AUTHORITY] Did you say something about rules?

SAMMY What?

GAOLER Did you say something about rules? See a lot of people dont know about the rules. So they ask me about them. You know them but eh! [FADE]

SAMMY WHISPERS] Yeh...clever bastard...

SAMMY LIES DOWN ON THE BUNK. GROANS] Jesus... [TURNS ONTO HIS SIDE. ANOTHER GROAN, THEN NARRATES] And I dozed, and woke, and dozed and woke and... My eyes, my eyes... Like I was blind, like I had gone blind but the darkness had stopped me appreciating the fact. It felt like morning yet it was still pitchblack. I moved around, trying things, but I couldnay see a thing christ, weird, so weird. My hands up at my face, scratching my cheek, the bone beneath my eyes, but nothing, I couldnay see nothing... [SAMMY CLAMBERS OUT OF THE BUNK] Not one solitary chink of light. All I thought was to lie stretched out on the floor. I wasnay panicking. I imagined telling people, my girlfriend Helen, she would just laugh. A joke, then she would see it was real, I was blind christ Helen [WHISPERS] Helen... I needed to see her, to see her...now... Oohh... a spasm of pain, rolling onto my front [BREATHES DEEPLY, RELAXING] Now easing...the small of my back, the pain easing from there into the right buttock, travelling right the way down, out through my toes, the space between the nail and the flesh, out, the pain travelling right the way out and I felt good, this control over my body, willpower, and ye survive [FIERCE WHISPER] These bastards, ye fucking survive. And a whole crash of thoughts now clogging my brain and I couldnay think except what would happen to me now? that was the

truth I had to face if it wasn't temporary, never seeing myself again. Then this ringing noise in my left ear. Two sounds; the ordinary blood sound high up but this other one lower down, ringing... Then it stopped and I was left with the blood roaring into my temples the sound getting more high pitched it was like a fucking scream christ, how late, how late it was. [FADE]

SOUND SAMMY ESCORTED BY TWO COPS. A DOOR OPENS. HE IS PUSHED INSIDE AND STUMBLES AGAINST A CHAIR. NOW THE LAUGHTER OF THREE MEN

1ST DETECT Is he assaulting that chair!

2ND DETECT Drunk and incapable again but he will not confess it like a man, says he's lost his eyesight!

1ST DETECT That's a new one on me!

SOUND LAUGHTER. SAMMY IS ONTO HIS FEET. A CHAIR SCRAPES ON THE FLOOR

1ST INTERROGATOR [SARCASTIC] Aye just sit down Mister Sammuels. [CHUCKLES] He must think we'll pull the chair from under him!

2ND INTERROGATOR Here, your necklace and shoelaces, and yer belt too so pull up your trousers [PASSES SAMMY THE BELT AND NECKLACE]

SAMMY What am I getting out?

1ST DETECT Sit on yer arse

SOUND DOORS OPENS AND CLOSES. A SUDDEN WHOOSHING NOISE, ONE OF THE DETECTIVES HAS SWIPED VERY CLOSE TO HIS EAR

SAMMY [FEAR] What was that!

SOUND UNINTELLIGIBLE MUTTERING. ANOTHER WHOOSHING NOISE

SAMMY What is that!

SOUND UNINTELLIGIBLE MUTTERING AGAIN. FOOTSTEPS APPROACH

1ST DETECT [MOCKING] Look into my eyes...

SOUND MUFFLED LAUGHTER. SUDDEN WHOOSHING NOISE AGAIN

2ND DETECT [SARCASTIC] Maybe he is blind!

SOUND FOOTSTEPS RECEDE. DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES

SAMMY WHISPERS] Bastards... [FADE OUT]

SOUND SAMMY RISES FROM THE CHAIR

3rd DETECT COMMANDS] Sit down.

SAMMY I need to stretch my legs.

3rd DETECT Sit down.

SAMMY Can I no stand for a minute?

3rd DETECT Thirty seconds.

SAMMY Thanks.

3rd DETECT That's twenty of them.

SAMMY Twenty's enough. [HE SITS]

3rd DETECT A tough guy

SOUND A CHAIR DRAGGED ACROSS FLOOR

1ST DETECT Right Sammuels, ye're a lucky man, We're letting ye go now.

SAMMY Who am I talking to?

1ST DETECT Me! Dont be cheeky else ye'll end up in trouble. With your form they'll throw away the key. We didn't realise we had a personality on the premises.

SAMMY Dont give us it, I got jailed and now I'm fucking blind.

2ND DETECT GRIPS SAMMY BY THE WRIST WHISPERS] Sshh

SAMMY Heh steady on man that's my wrist ye're gripping

2ND DETECT QUIETLY, WITH MENACE] Just listen to the man, he's saying you can go, so thank your lucky stars and go...

SAMMY I need to speak to a third party.

SOUND SOMEBODY CHUCKLES

1ST DETECT SARCASTIC] He knows his rights. Listen Sammuels ye're an incorrigible and this time ye've went too far. You are lucky we're letting ye go.

SAMMY I need to see a doctor, I need to report this. I'm blind for christ sake.

SOUND BACKGROUND CONVERSATION, UNINTELLIGBLE.

SAMMY WHISPERS] Speak up ya ignorant bastards

SOUND DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES.

SAMMY LOUDLY] Heh, come on, ye cannay just batter a guy till he winds up blind. This is a free country. Eh! Hullo? Hullo? I'm still in fucking pain, I want a X-ray, my ribs and my back, come on! I want an eye-specialist!

SOUND DOOR OPENS

1st DETECT Give us yer belt

SAMMY Jesus christ... [HE TAKES HIS BELT OUT HIS TROUSERS

1st DETECT And yer shoelaces, and that necklace

SAMMY QUIETLY] Bastards [FADE]

SOUND SAMMY ESCORTED ALONG A CORRIDOR

SAMMY Not so fast, not so fast [FADE]

SOUND HEAVY CELL DOOR SHUTS.

SAMMY STANDS A FEW MOMENTS. FADE IN HIS BREATHING. HESITANT MOVEMENT AS HE STEPS TO THE BUNK BED, LIES DOWN

SAMMY WHISPERS] It's my fault, it's me, nobody else.... Poor auld Helen [FADE. NARRATES] She wouldnay know what was happening. And be worried stiff in case it was something bad. It is something bad! I'm being done for grievous assault, drunk and disorderly. I'm lying in the fucking jail, blind as a bat. I dont even know what day it is... Auld Helen... How come she ever wanted to live with me! I dont want to live with you, she says, it's you wants to live with me. Let's be bloody clear about that at least. Then we'll know what we've got the gether. Yeh... [CHUCKLES] that was what she said. Whenever she got angry her voice got high. It annoyed her. She was 5' 8" and wished she was weer. I told her to straighten up when she walked, it was like she tried to hide herself... It annoyed her when I said stuff like that, but in a lovey-dovey way. If I was skint she would take me out for a drink! I sang her that Kristofferson number: She aint ashamed to be a woman/nor afraid to be a friend. That got her double-annoyed. [CHUCKLES] Dont blame me ye're a woman, I says, it isnay my fucking fault. [PAUSE. WHISPERS] Lying with my face on her tits, her nipple poking me in the eye, wrist between her legs and my hand

cupping her hole. Shielding it from danger. Especially after she's come, christ. [FADE]. I can't think straight... Okay I was out thieving, I was in this store looking at leather jackets and quality sweaters. And then outside on the pavement... [SUDDENLY] Charlie, I met Charlie! Of course! Christ, seeing Charlie after all these years; shared memories, boyhood memories...

SOUND SAMMY ASLEEP

SAMMY WHISPERS] Ye fall by the wayside. Ye try to work things out, ye give it another go. The usual stuff, then ye see all the starts and restarts as part of the same old process. And suddenly ye're hitting 40, there's the physical deterioration. Yer body doesnay stand up to the punishment. Ye dont need the police to give ye a doing man ye perform that job yerself. Better! Except going blind, that was the worst...

SOUND SAMMY ASLEEP. MOANS

SAMMY WHISPERS] No about death, ye cannay think about death, these guys that face it, what happens in prison, it drives ye crazy, ye get on on with yer own stuff, yer exercises, survival operations, ye look after yerself, ye have to, body and soul, body and mind

SOUND HEAVY CELL DOOR OPENING. WEDNESDAY MORNING

SAMMY Who's that?

1ST DETECT Here, tie up yer shoes and yer trousers

SOUND CELL DOOR CLOSES.

SAMMY Heh take it easy, take it easy [HE IS BEING ESCORTED ALONG A CORRIDOR BY TWO MEN] Dont drag me ye're fucking dragging me! [ORDINARY DOOR OPENS ONTO THE STREET OUTSIDE] Heh careful, there's steps here. Where's the steps!

SOUND MUFFLED LAUGHTER. DOOR SHUTS

SAMMY Heh my busfare what about my busfare! I've got nay money! Bastards. Never mind the bus it should be a taxi!

SOUND VARIED TRAFFIC NOISE

SAMMY SCARED] Ohh jesus what do I do now? [PAUSE. WHISPERS] Ye take a deep breath, ye relax, put out yer hand, and yer toe... A wall. [HE PATS THE WALL WITH HIS HANDS, AGAIN, AND CONTINUES. NOW WHISPERS, HESITANTLY, ALMOST SINGING] Down the steps we go, down the steps we go... [CLOSE UP TO HIS BREATHING]

SOUND SUDDEN NOISE OF A TRUCK

SAMMY ALOUD] Fucking hell! [WHISPERS] As long as there's a wall, stay into the wall... [NARRATES] But walls dont cross streets! How many streets did I have to cross! I couldnay remember! All these things ye think ye've committed to memory, but ye havent. I had to ask somebody but how do ye know somebody's coming if ye cannay see them. [WHISPERS] Fucking bastards, they've got ye every way. What d'ye do? Ye plough on man that's what ye do, ye fucking plough on... [NARRATES] A stick would've been useful. I wanted to hold my arms out but couldnt, walking down a street, folk would think I was mad. I kept stopping and starting, moving to the wall, leaning my head against the stone, like another prison cell. I needed a smoke... Jesus... to think, I had to think. It was just a new problem, I had to cope with it. That's what problems are, things ye cope with. Every day's a problem, ye push ahead, there's green fields around the corner, and the headman up there on his cloud, good auld god with the white beard and the white robe [CHUCKLES] leading the children on... My eyes were open but what did they look like? A blind man's eyes roll about and ye know they cannay see anything. People would maybe guess the situation. Or else they'd steer clear. As soon as they spotted me they would keep out my way. Unless I met somebody else that was blind. I would trip over their fucking stick! What happens when two blind bastards meet? [CHUCKLES. PAUSE. WHISPERS] Somebody's there! [SPEAKS ALOUD] Hey, excuse me! sorry to bother ye but I'm blind and I've lost my wallet, can you spare me a little money? My busfare, could you spare... [WHISPERS] Nobody... [SPEAKS ALOUD] Hullo. Sorry to bother ye, it's just I dont know where I am - hullo, sorry to bother ye. Ach, hell... Hullo? Anybody there? it's just I'm blind, somebody stole my wallet. Hullo. [PAUSE] Hullo? [WHISPERS] Bastards...ye'd have to be fucking dying - even then man they'd step over ye. [NOW URGENTLY] Oh christ the wall, where's the wall, I've lost the wall

SAMMY Oh jesus christ! [PANIC. [LOUDLY] Oh...! [HE FALLS TO THE GROUND. GROANS.] Oh jesus. [ALoud] Help! Help! Where's the pavement am I near the pavement! Help!

SOUND A BUS VERY NEAR TO THE PAVEMENT

1ST PEDESTRIAN QUIETLY] Says he's blind

2ND PEDESTRIAN UNCONVINCED] Mmm, dont know...

SAMMY I'm blind, gauny help us onto the pavement?

2ND PEDESTRIAN Ye're on the pavement. Here, give me yer arm [HE HELPS SAMMY ONTO TO HIS FEET] Ye alright?

SAMMY Aye, aye...

1ST PEDESTRIAN He's okay

SAMMY Where's the wall? Is the wall there? Ye see I've got to cross the street... Am I near the wall? [PAUSE] Eh? Are ye there? [PAUSE] Oh fuck they've gone. Hullo? [LOUDLY] Hullo? I'm blind. Hullo.

YOUTH What's up mate?

SAMMY What?

YOUTH Ye alright?

SAMMY I'm blind. I dont know where I am, I've lost my stick. Where is this?

YOUTH You're outside the post office

SAMMY Near Napier Street?

YOUTH Aye. Do ye want to cross the street?

SAMMY Aye

YOUTH Give us yer arm then

SOUND TRAFFIC NOW VERY LOUD. FADE.

SAMMY NARRATES] And he led me straight off the pavement and for an awful minute I wondered if he was leading me in and out moving vehicles, we were going so fast, it was terrible, no knowing where I was going, worried if I would take a tumble for fuck sake iI was getting dragged...! [SHOUTS] Slow down for christ sake slow down

YOUTH That's the pavement

SAMMY Oh jesus

YOUTH Ye're okay, just step up.

SAMMY PANICKING] Take me to the wall, is there a wall!

YOUTH Take it easy

SAMMY Jesus... [FADE. NARRATES] I knew there was a pub nearby. I used to drink in it a while ago. A couple of the old faces still did. But I didnay want to see them, no unless I needed something bad. Ye pay for everything in this life. I was finished with that way of life. Helen didnay believe me, but it was true. Time to let go all that stuff. Relax, that's what ye do. And then ye move. Otherwise the fucking cops would get me. Probably they were watching me right at this moment, tailed me from the jail, making sure I wasnay - wasnay what? Loitering with intent! [IRONIC] intent to bump into a fucking lamppost; dirty bastards...

SOUND A HEAVY TRUCK PASSING

SAMMY WHISPERS] But this wasnay the worst. I had been there, guys dying, getting kicked to death man I had seen it, I knew how it was. I didnay need anybody to tell me the politics, there was only one politics: they beat you for this and they beat ye for that, a working class man, that was the politics. Nay point getting angry, then they really get ye. Ye see these angry bastards walking the street, shouting and bawling for nay reason, they've lost it. I wasnay one of them. I wasnay even a drunk, no really, and them that thought I was were wrong, so wrong. Just a smoke, if I could've got a smoke...

SOUND TRAFFIC. THEN FADE. INSIDE THE HIGH-RISE APARTMENT BLOCK. SAMMY IS ESCORTED BY OLD WOMAN TO THE LIFT DOORS

OLD WOMAN Okay son?

SAMMY Aye, thanks missis.

OLD WOMAN That's the lift coming for you

SAMMY Thanks

SOUND LIFT DOORS OPENING. GOING UP. PAUSE. SAMMY WALKING ALONG AN OPEN CORRIDOR TOWARDS THE DOOR INTO HIS FLAT; A STRONG WIND BLOWING.

SAMMY WHISPERS] Jesus christ what a wind... [FUMBLES FOR KEY INTO DOOR LOCK. OPENS DOOR. STEPS INSIDE AND CLOSES DOOR. CALLS] Ye there Helen! Helen...

SOUND PATS HIS HANDS ALONG THE WALL INTO THE BEDROOM. HE FLOPS ONTO THE BED

SAMMY DEEP SIGH. GROANS] Jees...my back...

SOUND SAMMY SLEEPS. FADE IN NEWS BROADCAST ON RADIO. SAMMY SWITCHES IT OFF, PUTS IN TAPE. BOB DYLAN SINGING, If you see her say hello, she might be in Tangiers

SAMMY WHISPERS] Oh christ that's all we need...

SOUND SONG CONTINUES FOR SEVERAL SECONDS. PAUSE. CLOCK TICKS.

SAMMY GROANS] Oh jees...

SOUND SAMMY SLEEPS

SAMMY WHISPERS] The pain in my back, the spine, and my kidneys and shoulders too like everywhere, down my arms and my neck, christ... Bastards, they always take it too far. So fucking childish, thinking they're untouchable, that they can do what they like. Then expect ye to lie down and die... [PAUSE. NARRATES] How d'ye know it's the middle of the night? Ye've a sixth sense

tells ye. Ye seem to wake acclimatised to everything ye've done. Then ye're alert as fuck and reaching for the nearest weapon to defend yerself against whoever, whoever. Fuck them. [SAMMY GETS OUT OF BED, PATTING THE WALL, MOVING VERY SLOWLY] Nothing in the house. I looked everywhere the best I could, crashing into furniture and doors. Helen kept a wee stash of money in a safe place but she never told me in case I stole it! [CHUCKLES] But how would I know if I found it! Paper money, I couldnt tell the difference. I needed a telephone. Helen had a cell phone and that was all. I didnt have one. I never bothered. Now I needed it, I needed it... [WHISPERS] Just another failure, my life was a series of fucking failures. [NARRATES] A bowl of beans in the fridge. I ate them cold, managed to make a cup of tea, took it back to bed. I couldnay believe how exhausted I was. I slept until 10 o'clock next morning. It was all the time and energy spent navigating about the house! My unemployment cheque didnay come for another day. First I had to visit the Department of Social Security, the old DSS, I had to tell them I was disabled. Maybe they had special jobs for blind people. Christ, there was all these things to do. Where the hell was Helen? How come she wasnt here! And I needed a guide dog and sun glasses, that was what blind people had! And a white stick! I remembered Helen had a mop, I could saw off the fucking head, then I would have a stick! [CHUCKLES] Fucking Einstein! Plus I had a tin of white paint somewhere. But how would I know if it was white! [LAUGHS]

SOUND THURSDAY. STRONG WIND ALONG OUTSIDE CORRIDOR.

SAMMY WHISPERS] Fucking wind could blow ye right over the edge... [SAMMY FLAPS LETTERBOX ON A DOOR, DOOR OPENS] Hullo. I'm yer neighbour, I stay the next door along

NEIGHBOUR Aye, I've seen ye

SAMMY I was just wondering, have you a saw I could borrow? Just for a minute

NEIGHBOUR HESITANT] Eh well okay. But I need it back soon [CLOSES DOOR OVER AND RETURNS INSIDE.

SAMMY WHISPERS] I should've asked him for a cigarette... [FADE]

SOUND GEORGE JONES SINGING "A Good Year for the Roses". SAMMY IS SAWING THE TOP OFF THE MOP

SAMMY SINGS ALONG WITH THE MUSIC:

After three four years of marriage,  
it's the first time you havent made the bed  
And the reason we're not talking

SOUND SAWING THE STICK ONLY ONLY TAKES A FEW SECONDS. HE PRACTISES USING THE STICK TO TAP THE FLOOR.

SAMMY NARRATES] Great. I had electrical tape somewhere in the cupboard and after some searching I found it and taped one end of the stick as a handle. All I needed was the white paint, but that could come later

SOUND SAMMY TAPS HESITANTLY ALONG HALLWAY, INTO THE LOUNGE, FINDING A CHAIR, SITTING DOWN]

SAMMY The stick could be useful in other ways... [CHUCKLES] Self defence is no offence. I used the radio to find out the time. I had to get the DSS office in the morning. But I was tired, so tired, my body still battered and bruised, and I was back in my bed, and I couldn't get comfortable and my head going this way and that, worrying worrying, where the hell was Helen, and I knew also that I had to get out the house. I was dreading it but I had to. Otherwise I would lose my nerve completely. And there was so much I had to do. Then about the lost weekend! What happened! It was like everything had blanked out before I woke up down the lane. No just Friday night but the whole day Saturday. I knew I had been with a couple of friends, Tam Roberts for one, then later on I met Charlie, faces here and there. Crazy. I was supposed to have stopped that behaviour. Acting like a stupid boy. No wonder Helen got so annoyed. When was I gonna grow up, take some responsibility for my life.

SOUND IN THE BATHROOM. CISTERN EMPTYING.

SAMMY A shave, five day's growth - or six! I was filthy, and smelly, sweaty socks, everything. You wonder what women see in men, we are a bunch of manky bastards. Okay, I needed a bath, but later, later. I needed money until my unemployed cheque came. [TAPPING ALONG HALLWAY] I had a pile of the best dress shirts stashed in the cupboard. Tam Roberts would take them, me and him drank in the same bar, we done business together. Tam would give me a fair price.

SOUND EARLY EVENING. OPENING THE FRONT DOOR. STRONG WIND ALONG THE CORRIDOR. THE STICK TAPPING THE GROUND.

SAMMY WHISPERS] Oh Jesus Christ does that wind never stop!

SOUND LIFT DOORS OPENING. HE TAPS HIS WAY INTO THE LIFT. GOING DOWN

SAMMY WHISPERS] Sometimes you wonder if somebody's there, if they're standing beside you. Or staring at you. Do you know them. Who the fuck are they! and you want to lash out with your stick but if they are there you'll hit them, Christ... LIFT STOPS, DOORS OPENING. HE TAPS OUT OF THE LIFT, VERY HESITANTLY. WHISPERS QUIETLY] Anybody there? [HE CONTINUES ACROSS FLOOR. FADE

SAMMY WHISPERS] Thank fuck. At least it's no raining. But that dampness. It would be misty, that way it hangs over the river

SOUND BOYS PLAYING FOOTBALL, THEIR SHOUTS AT ONE ANOTHER. SAMMY TAPPING THE STICK ALONG

SAMMY WHISPERS] That's all I need is them kicking the ball at me. Fucking football! Christ! I'll no be able to watch it... Fucking hell, I was due compensation for that alone. I stopped playing the game years ago but I still enjoyed watching it.

SOUND CLOSER IN ON THE BOYS PLAYING FOOTBALL

SAMMY WHISPERS] Christ maybe I've lost my direction, maybe I'm heading into their game! Oh for fuck sake!

SOUND A BALL KICKED. SHOUTS OF BOYS TO FOREGROUND. NOISE OF THE BALL BOUNCING ALONG THE GROUND

SAMMY PANICKING] Jesus christ! [HARSH BREATHING. WHISPERS] Madness, this is madness, madness, I'm no going naywhere, I cannay see nothing man I cannay see nothing, where the fuck am I! I'm blind, I'm fucking blind, jesus christ! [PAUSE. SAMMY IS NOW WALKING, HIS STICK TAPPING] No panic, no panic, ye take it easy man ye take it easy, ye're just going hame, ye're just going hame, where's the door, oh jesus where's the door...the door...where's the fucking door. [CALLS] Where's the door!

SOUND AFAR, THE BOYS PLAYING FOOTBALL. SAMMY'S STICK TAPPING URGENTLY

SAMMY Oh God. [PAUSE. LIFTS DOORS CLOSING.

SOUND FADE IN CLOCK TICKING. SAMMY IN BED

SAMMY GROANS] I just lost my nerve, like I forgot where I was, and my sense of direction....maybe the boys playing football and the sounds of the ball, I dont know, and then so exhausted, I was so exhausted, how come I was so exhausted? Just finding my way about the house was like a cross country marathon. But it wasa that beating I took, my body was still recovering, felt like it was a mass of fucking bruises. And I needed to eat! A proper meal. I was opening tins and eating what was there, cold beans or peeled tomatoes, fucking tuna fish, terrible. Tomorrow morning would be better, the unemployed cheque would be there. Straight to the Post Office. I would do it, I would have to do it. What choice did I have. None. Where was Helen! Aw jesus. But it was only a ten minute walk and I knew it inside out. None of that panicking, that wouldnay happen again. I had so much to do! Then to the chemist, buy myself a pair of sunglasses, with that and the stick people would know I was blind. [WHISPERS] Plus a packet of smokes, I was gasping for a smoke! Then find a public telephone, one next to the post office, I needed to make a couple of calls... So much to do, I just had so much to do... First the DSS

SOUND SAMMY'S REGULAR BREATHING. CLOCK TICKING. LIFT DOOR OPENS, TAPPING ACROSS FLOOR, HESITANTLY. THEN OUTSIDE. IT IS FRIDAY MORNING

SAMMY SIGHS, WHISPERS] Ye take it easy... [AS IN A SONG] Ye slow down old world, slow down... taking it easy taking it slow... Yeh... [WHISPERS] Anybody there! [CHUCKLES] One cigarette before I go, forget the fucking coffee... [NARRATES] Walking the long way round the building, keeping close in by the wall, it took me three or four as long but who cares, this way led me along and down the steps. Once down the steps I followed the path and it led me to the shops. Yesterday I panicked. This morning no, I had things to do and I would do them, mind over

matter, exercising control man, I done it in prison and now I was doing it here. [PAUSE. FADE IN HIS STICK TAPPING ALONG. CALLS] Hullo, am I near the post office, is this the post office? [CONTINUES TAPPING ALONG] Hullo, is this the Post Office? Hullo?

SOUND INSIDE POST OFFICE. UNINTELLIGIBLE CONVERSATIONS.

P.O. WOMAN Now Mister Sammuels you have to sign there

SAMMY Where?

P.O. WOMAN Just where my finger is

SAMMY Got ye, okay

P.O.WOMAN Fine. Take yer money.

SAMMY [CHUCKLES] How do I know it's the right amount!

P.O. WOMAN Ye'll just have to trust me!

SAMMY Oh I would trust you anywhere

P.O. WOMAN Less of the patter!

SAMMY Now I've got to find the chemist!

P.O.WOMAN [AMUSED] Oh you'll manage

SAMMY I wish I had your confidence... [FADE. OUTSIDE HE TAPS ALONG THE STREET. NARRATES] But she was right. The chemist was easy... the sunglasses. But the very first thing I had to do... [LIGHTS A CIGARETTE. EXHALES SMOKE] Have a smoke! Aahhh [FADE]

SOUND ROAD TRAFFIC. SAMMY IS AT A BUS STOP.

MAN-at- BUS [TO SAMMY] Aye just stand there

SAMMY Okay

MAN-at- BUS Watch it now it's a busy road

SAMMY [IRRITATED] I know it's a busy road

MAN-at- BUS Aye but if ye step too close ye might fall under a bus

SAMMY Give me a fucking break wIll ye!

MAN-at- BUS [IRRITATED] Ye try and do somebody a favour...!

SAMMY Aye but dont treat me like a fucking idiot. [BUS ARRIVES AT STOP. CALLS] Will this bus take me to the DSS Central Medical!

DRIVER Aye, up ye come. [PEOPLE BOARDING THE BUS] Get yet hand on the rail there

SAMMY Thanks mate

DRIVER What you want is a guide dog

SAMMY How much to the DSS central medical office?

DRIVER Have ye not got yer Blind Pass?

SAMMY [HESITATES] I forgot it

DRIVER Ah dont worry about it

SAMMY Thanks mate [FADE]

SOUND BUS MOVING OFF. SAMMY IS ON THE PAVEMENT.

SAMMY [LIGHTS CIGARETTE] Okay, here we go... [HE TAPS HIS WAY ALONG A QUIET STREET]

DSS SECURITY[CALLS] Heh you! You with the sunglasses! Where are you going! Ye're supposed to come in through the gate. And there's nay smoking allowed. Put that out!

SAMMY I'm no in the building yet.

DSS SECURITYYe're in the ground, so put it out.

SAMMY [MUTTERS] Jesus christ

DSS SECURITYWhere is it ye're going?

SAMMY Dysfunctional.

DSS SECURITYWhat section?

SAMMY [IRRITATED] What d'ye think the sunglasses and the stick's all about. [PAUSE] I'm blind

DSS SECURITYSightloss Section. Time's yer appointment? [SARCASTIC] Have ye got an appointment?

SAMMY The police surgeon told me to come.

DSS SECURITY That's Emergencies. Here, fill out this card... What's yer name?

SOUND INSIDE DSS BUILDING. STICK TAPPING THE FLOOR . FADE IN  
BACKGROUND CONVERSATIONS IN LARGE QUEUE.

DSS GIRL Just walk along there

SAMMY Will you point me... [LIFT DOORS OPEN. HE STEPS TO THE LIFT]

DSS GIRL Now as soon as the door opens you step out

SAMMY IRONIC] Oh, that's unusual

SOUND ELEVATOR GOES UP. STOPS, DOORS OPEN.

SAMMY TAPS FORWARD, CALLS] Hullo?

BLIND MAN CLOSE BY] Hullo?

SAMMY Is this the Sightloss Section?

BLIND MAN Aye.

SAMMY Where do I go?

BLIND MAN VERY HESITANT] Eh well ye just eh, there's a corridor

SAMMY Could ye point me

BLIND MAN What?

SAMMY Is this Sightloss?

BLIND MAN IRRITATED] Aye it's Sightloss

SAMMY IRRITATED] Well could ye point me

BLIND MAN IRRITATED] I dont fucking know

SAMMY Ye dont know?

BLIND MAN I'm blind

SAMMY [AMAZED] Aw! Christ! Sorry. [PAUSE] I'm blind as well

BLIND MAN Aye.. There's stairs about somewhere, ye've got to be careful ye dont fall down the fucking things, nay rails nor barriers or nothing

SAMMY I just follow the wall

BLIND MAN Aye so do I

SAMMY Ye got a stick?

BLIND MAN No yet. They've referred me to a charity

SAMMY Aw, good. What one?

BLIND MAN Eh, it's the eh well...it's out by Edmiston Drive. [SNIFFS] Do ye know it?

SAMMY Aw aye, near where Rangers play?

BLIND MAN [SNIFFS] Other folk go out the London Road, nay offence.

SAMMY Aw I'm no a Catholic. I'm no a Protestant either. [AMUSED] Any atheist charities!

BLIND MAN [IRRITATED] What ye asking me for, go and see yer doctor

SAMMY [IRONIC] Heh take it easy, it was a joke

BLIND MAN [IRRITATED] Fucking joke...

SAMMY [AMUSED] Atheists dont get charity [TAPPING HIS WAY ALONG A CORRIDOR] Hullo, I'm looking for Sightloss. Anybody there? Hullo! [CONTINUES TAPPING ALONG THE FLOOR ]

SOUND SAMMY AND DSS OFFICER SEATED, DESK BETWEEN THEM. OCCASIONALLY THE DSS OFFICER TAPS A KEYBOARD

1ST DSS Is yer sightloss congenital or spontaneous?

SAMMY Eh...

1ST DSS Any advance warning?

SAMMY Naw.

1ST DSS [HE WRITES ON KEYBOARD] Have ye a history of eye-trouble?

SAMMY Naw

1ST DSS HITTING THE KEYBOARD] In your opinion has something caused the dysfunction or did it just happen?

SAMMY Well it didnay come out of thin air

1ST DSS Ye said ye were in police custody at the time. Will I write that down?

SAMMY HESITANT] Eh...

1ST DSS You have to answer all the questions. Will I write down "dont know"?

SAMMY Well I was in police custody, they were giving me physical restraints

1ST DSS TAPS INTO KEYBOARD] ...physical restraints. And have ye raised a civil claim for compensation in respect of the alleged dysfunction?

SAMMY Not so far

1ST DSS Has the alleged dysfunction been diagnosed by any medical authority? [FRIENDLY] Hey, I see from yer file you used to play football.

SAMMY FRIENDLY] Yeh.

1ST DSS Did ye stop because of the alleged dysfunction?

SAMMY Naw

1ST DSS I play myself.

SAMMY Great, I wish I still did

1st DSS You're no too auld. Just a pity about yer eyes.

SAMMY Ach it was my own stupidity. I was silly and so were the cops.

1ST DSS TAPS ON THE KEYBOARD] It was yer own stupidity, ye were silly.

SAMMY What? You writing that down?

1st DSS Of course, it's material to the case.

SAMMY But I was only talking. Ye no got a delete button?

1ST DSS Not for this operation. If the customer doesnt want something entered he's supposed

to not say it. Once it's in it the machine it can't come out. Is there anything ye want to add to yer statement?

SAMMY It was a beating they gave me

1ST DSS TAPS KEYBOARD] ...a beating they gave me.

SAMMY WHISPERS] Jesus christ....

SOUND FADE] SAMMY TAPPING HIS WAY ALONG A CORRIDOR. DOOR OPENS.

2ND DSS You'll find a seat to your left. [PAUSE] It's in between the desks.

SAMMY TAPPING THE STICK TO FIND THE DESKS. HIS KNEE BANGS AGAINST A CHAIR. MUTTERS] Oh , christ... [SITS DOWN]

2ND DSS You assert you were subject to a physical beating by members of the police department?

SAMMY SURPRISE] What?

2nd DSS You've been recorded using various terminology to that end both here and at the police station. Do you dispute this?

SAMMY Can I change the statement?

2nd DSS No, but you may add to it.

SAMMY Eh...

2ND DSS You will realise there are two bands of dysfunction; those with a cause that is available to verification, and those which come under the heading pseudo-spontaneous. The former may entitle the customer to Dysfunctional Benefit but those in the latter may not. Both bands entitle the customer to a reassessment of his or her physical criteria in respect of full-function job registration. Now, I understand you have not sought civil compensation?

SAMMY It only happened a couple of days ago

2ND DSS So you have not sought civil compensation?

SAMMY Well...no

2ND DSS But you deny the pseudo-spontaneous nature of the alleged dysfunction?

SAMMY SLIGHT IRRITATION] I got the dysfunction because of the physical restraints. It wasnay spontaneous, I didnay lose it cause of nothing. Whatever it was it was something.

2nd DSS Yes well the police department is empowered to restrain the customer Mister Sammuels

SAMMY I know that. All I'm doing is reregistering my job status like I'm supposed to. If I'm blind I can't do the same jobs as if I'm not blind. If I'm entitled to dysfunctional benefit then I'm entitled to dysfunctional benefit. I'm no being cheeky, i

2nd DSS [PAUSE] You have not raised a civil claim for compensation in respect of the dysfunction. I am empowered to say that customers awarded benefit in respect of a physical dysfunction resulting at the hands of another would, on the balance of probability, take legal recourse against this other for recompence. If the alleged dysfunction is an effect of physical restraints the secondary factor arises in respect of those restraints, and this secondary factor may become primary, why those restraints were being exercised.

SAMMY What do ye want to know?

2ND DSS I dont want to know anything Mister Sammuels. [PAUSE] Do you wish to add something?

SAMMY [IRRITATION] I'm saying there was physical restraints, and the upshot was I went blind, that's what I'm saying. What is there something wrong in that?

2ND DSS It's not a question of wrong

SAMMY You're saying I should make a complaint against the police?

2ND DSS I'm not saying anything of the sort.

SAMMY Well what then? Because I'm no complaining about the police ye wont accept what I say about how I went blind. Is that what ye're saying, that I would be as well not reregistering my job status?

2ND DSS Of course not.

SAMMY Look, I know it wasnay intentional from the police. How did they know what would happen, they didnay, I know that and I'm no blaming them, it wasnay deliberate what they did I mean I admit that christ... [PAUSE. 2ND DSS TAPS IT ALL INTO KEYBOARD] Are ye writing that down?

2ND DSS of course

SAMMY Look miss I didnay know ye were gony write all that down.

2ND DSS Are you asking that I withdraw something?

SAMMY SIGHS.

2ND DSS You will be required to attend the Medical Benefits Office of the Police Department. If you became in receipt of a dysfunction while in their custody then they are obliged to seek a fuller clarification. [SHE PUSHES A PAPER TO HIM TO BE SIGNED] Could you please sign here. This is a statutory disclaimer which says you've explained the situation to the best of your ability in full awareness that any false information can result in the withdrawal of any or all allowances from any or all sections of the Department of Social Security. Any action taken by this department will neither preclude nor negate a further action that may be contemplated by any other Department of State. I must further caution you that the slightest deviation may result in the withdrawal of all insurance entitlements.

SAMMY IRONIC] That sounds ominous! [PAUSE] So where do I sign?

2ND DSS Just here [SAMMY SIGNS, RETURNS FORMS ACROSS DESK] Thank you. [SHE RISES FROM HER CHAIR]

SAMMY So is the interview at an end?

2ND DSS SURPRISED BY THE QUESTION] Yes

SAMMY I was wondering about guide-dogs and eh white sticks, how do I apply for them?

2ND DSS You register at a charity. [PAUSE] If you have a local minister or priest or... eh... if you were of another denomination Mister Sammuels...

SAMMY I dont have a denomination at all

2ND DSS Oh. Try your doctor then he may know of something. Or go on line, the internet should have information. [PAUSE] Good day Mister Sammuels

SAMMY FLATLY] Thanks... [PAUSE. WHISPERS] But I knew this kind of woman, so how come I was surprised. They are fucking deadly. Totally beautiful and sexual but in a weird way. These smart-cut suits and low-cut blouses. Even their voices do ye in, husky and fucking...christ. Ye meet them everywhere in these official capacities. [SIGHS. HE IS TAPPING HIS WAY ALONG A CORRIDOR. ]

SOUND AT HOME THAT EVENING, LATE. IN THE BACKGROUND WILLIE NELSON SINGING A VERSE OF 'Blue eyes crying in the rain.'

Love is like a dying ember,  
we'll stroll hand in hand again  
In the twilight I'll remember  
blue eyes crying in the rain

SAMMY SINGS ALONG ON THE LAST TWO LINES]

...In the twilight I'll remember  
blue eyes crying in the rain...

[PAUSE. LIGHTS CIGARETTE. NARRATES] It was like each time ye hit the bottom it took longer to get back out. Holding on by the skin of yer teeth. Things were bad, so bad... and that sick feeling in the gut like it was smothering me from the inside out, filling my head. I clenched my eyelids tight shut, my hands rubbing at them. It was Helen, her image was in my brain, where the hell was she, how come she hadnay been in touch? Sure we had had a fight, but ye come through these things, we would come through it. But ye think of these guys ye know that arenay around any longer, the ones that didnay make it [QUIET ANGER] Then these posh bastards, like the ones ye hear on the radio and television, making ye think of double-helpings of fucking strawberries and cream, from the minute they're born to the day they drop dead, dirty bastards, hypocritical bastards.

SOUND RADIO NEWS IN BACKGROUND

SAMMY GROANS] Jesus christ my back, it just doesnay get better... [SHIFTS POSITION ON SETTEE.] What the hell time is it... [ RADIO NEWS IN BACKGROUND. SWITCHES OFF RADIO] Fuck you...

SOUND NEXT MORNING. SAMMY IS TAPPING ALONG THE FLOOR INSIDE DOCTOR'S RECEPTION, THEN STOPS

OLD MANYe blind son?

SAMMY Aye.

OLD MANYe wanting the doctor?

SAMMY I'm here to make the appointment

OLD MAN PATS A CHAIR TWICE] Sit down here

SAMMY Thanks. [CHAIR SCRAPES AS SAMMY SITS]

RECEPTIONIST And how long have you been registered at this medical practice? More than a year or less than a year?

SAMMY WEARY WHISPER] Oh for fuck sake

RECEPTIONIST And you wish to see a doctor on Monday morning Mister Sammuels? This is very short notice. How do you expect us too fit you in. It's emergencies only within a three-day period. The DSS said you were to get the appointment without fail? I wonder what they meant by that.

SAMMY It's because the Police Medical Benefit is involved

RECEPTIONIST      BAFFLED] The Police Medical Benefit?

SAMMY    You are to phone them if there is a difficulty

RECEPTIONIST      I have to phone the police?

SAMMY    That is what they said.

RECEPTIONIST      SIGHS] What is your medical complaint?

SAMMY    Sightloss, both eyes

RECEPTIONIST      SIGHS] Doctor Logan may see you tomorrow morning.

SAMMY    IRONIC] Thank you.

SOUND    TRAFFIC FROM AFAR, THE STICK TAPPING. THEN MEN WHISPERING IN THE BACKGROUND

SAMMY    Who's that... [HE STOPS WALKING] Who's that?

SOUND    SOMEONE LAUGHS. THEN WHISPERING IN THE BACKGROUND

SAMMY    QUIETLY] I'm getting paranoiac. [WHISPERS] But which way am I facing. I turned when I heard the voices. Or did I? Maybe I didnay? What way am I facing christ almighty! [PAUSE] The stick was in my left hand, what does that mean? I was the wall, the wall was on the left... when they passed me. Who the hell were they! The fucking cops that's who. [FROM AFAR A DOG BARKS] A dog. If ye were blind from birth, ye wouldnay know what a dog was, all you would hear was this fucking woof woof... Jesus christ... [FADE]

SOUND    TRAFFIC. PAUSE. THEN HIS APARTMENT DOOR CLOSSES.

SAMMY    You there Helen! Helen!

SOUND    HE WALKS INTO KITCHEN, TURNS ON WATER TO FILL A KETTLE. PAUSE. FADE IN RADIO BROADCAST, SCOTTISH FOOTBALL GAME. LOWER VOLUME TO BACKGROUND

SAMMY    Where the hell was she? It was my own fault for not getting a cell phone. I was really regretting it. But how come she hadnay made contact with me? But maybe she had, there were letters had come. I couldnay read them. And if she had left me a direct message how could I find the fucking thing!

SOUND    EVENING. A BATH FILLING WITH WATER. SAMMY SHUFFLING ABOUT IN BATHROOM. IN THE BACKGROUND COUNTRY MUSIC PLAYS. HE UNDRESSES

SAMMY 38 years of age and I knew nothing about women. In prison guys boast about their experience. But how come they know so much when they're stuck behind bars? Eleven years I done. The first four I was only 19. The second for seven years. I was married and had a wee boy. I never saw him or my wife in all the entire time. I never saw her nowadays but I did see my son. He was a good boy and he stuck by me, more than she ever did did. She divorced me! [SIGHS] Who could blame her. But I was finished with all that heavy stuff. Now I was with Helen, things were going to be different. [WHISPERS] Jesus christ what am I talking about of course it was going to be different...I was blind for fuck sake... [ENTERS AND SETTLES INTO THE BATH. SIGHS] Ohh man... [PAUSE THEN SUDDENLY HE SITS UP IN THE BATH. MUSIC HAS STOPPED] Noises, somebody's in the house... [GETS OUT OF BATH RAPIDLY. DRIES HIMSELF. WHISPERS] They've switched off the fucking music... [HE QUIETLY OPENS BATHROOM DOOR AND CALLS] Hullo? Is that you Helen? Who's there? [PAUSE] I've got a fucking blade here! Eh! fucking come near me I'll stick it in ye! [STEPS OUT FROM BATHROOM] Helen!

SOUND RADIO SWITCHED ON LOUDLY. A BURST OF COUNTRY MUSIC. THEN IT IS SWITCHED OFF, AND LAUGHTER FOLLOWS

1st DETECT [CHUCKLES] Hey look, he has got a blade!

2nd DETECT [CALMLY] Ask him to put the knife down

3RD DETECT Put it down

SAMMY I recognise your voice as well. Naybody ever tell ye that self defence is no offence?

3RD DETECT [SARCASTIC] Is that a fact

1st DETECT Give us yer hands [HE GETS SAMMY'S HANDS, APPLIES THE HANDCUFFS]

SAMMY This is out of order; fucking bracelets, d'ye think I'm going to run away

SOUND SOMEBODY CHUCKLES FROM BEHIND

SAMMY Christ how many of yez are there!

SOUND CHINKING NOISE OF HANDCUFFS

SAMMY I need my stick.

1st DETECT [SARCASTIC] Ha ha

SAMMY My fucking stick, and my sunglasses.

1st DETECT Ye're such a tough bastard.

2nd DETECT WEARILY] Get him his stick

SAMMY My money and my cigarettes too. Ye made me walk it hame the last time

LATER THE SAME NIGHT, AND THROUGH SUNDAY.

SOUND QUIET LAUGHTER. PAUSE. INSIDE POLICE STATION. DOOR CLOSING. DETECTROGATION ROOM. A COMPUTER KEYBOARD CAN BE HEARD TAPPING DURING THIS SCENE

1ST DETECT SIGHS] Okay, back to the Friday, we want the whole story, from A to B. Ye say ye won money in the betting shop then ye went to the pub, and that was you.

SAMMY Like I told ye, till I woke up last Sunday morning. I had been off the bevy a couple of weeks, so maybe it hit me worse than usual, then with me and my girlfriend having a bad row...

1ST DETECT I thought it was a wee tiff, now ye're saying it was a bad row.

SAMMY Bad enough. That's how I went on the booze.

1ST DETECT Then till Sunday morning all ye remember is clear patches here and there.

SAMMY That's right.

2nd DETECT So concentrate on them, the clear patches. Ye met a couple of blokes. Billy somebody and Tam Roberts

SAMMY That's right

1ST DETECT So this Tam Roberts, is it the same Tam Roberts that works round the markets?

SAMMY Aye. He was only there an hour, then he went hame

2nd DETECT So he sells stuff, what does he sell?

SAMMY I dont know, bits and pieces.

2nd DETECT Stolen bits and pieces. So does he sell to you or do you sell to him? Eh? Silence is the answer. So did ye meet Mister Roberts today?

SAMMY I didnay meet anybody the day.

1st DETECT Sure about that?

2nd DETECT PAUSE] Speak when spoken to.

SAMMY I dont know when it's me ye're talking to, I just hear voices

1st DETECT Put that down, he's hearing voices.

2nd DETECT Describe this chap Billy.

SAMMY I've only met him a couple of times [PAUSE] He isnay a big guy. I think he has brown hair, and blue eyes.

1st DETECT I thought ye couldnay see!

SAMMY WEARILY] Jesus christ

1ST DETECT Ye've been going on and on about yer sightloss. Then the innuendo about our colleagues. We've been reading a statement ye prepared and it makes a nasty story.

SAMMY The cops and the DSS, have yez got a hot line together?

2ND DETECT You are a funny fellow Sammy

1ST DETECT Ye stated it was our colleagues responsible.

SAMMY I'm no sure what I said. You've got the statement there; even if I had it I couldnay read it.

2nd DETECT Illiterate too! I didnt know

1st DETECT And that story about winning money, it's shite. Ye can't even remember the names of the horses!

SAMMY It was numbers I was backing, I timed the races and wrote down the numbers

1ST DETECT If we back a winner we remember. If we back a few winners we definitely remember. It's only losers we forget.

2nd DETECT Like meeting an old comrade; we might forget his name, but we dont forget we've met him. Especially if we've known this old comrade since boyhood. You met an old comrade? In fact your father and his father were buddies. It's all in the record, they were in the Party together, the old CP, militant socialists from a bygone era

SAMMY What's that got to with me?

1ST DETECT Ye're treating us like we're stupid, do ye think we're stupid?

SOUND SOMEBODY LAUGHS QUIETLY. DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES

SAMMY Can I smoke? [PAUSE] Oh well... [LIGHTS A CIGARETTE. MUFFLED LAUGHTER FROM SOMEBODY] I thought I was alone [PAUSE]

SOUND DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES

1st DETECT We can do ye for theft, for reset, for drunk and disorderly, for attempted grievous bodily harm, assaulting police officers, resisting arrest.

2nd DETECT [PAUSE] No comment is the answer

1st DETECT Ye have a cupboard full of dress-shirts, still in their cellophane wrappers, top quality I might add.

SAMMY I bought them cheap

SOUND SOMEBODY SNIGGERS

1ST DETEC Ye fucking stole them

SAMMY I didnay. It was just a guy I met in a pub. I thought he was a posh English guy but maybe he came from Europe for some foreign businesses convention. He said he got the shirts at a fire-salvage auction.

2nd DETECT What an yarn! [RISES FROM HIS CHAIR ] You're a loose end Mister Sammuels, and getting looser. [HE CLASPS HIS HAND ON SAMMY'S SHOULDER

SAMMY Hey, that's my shoulder ye're gripping!

1st DETECT [WHISPERS] I want you to pay full attention to my colleague here.

2nd DETECT We thought you were an ordinary guy down on his luck, fighting yer way back, three years on the straight and narrow, getting in tow with a new woman... Now we find ye're thieving, petty shit, leather jackets and dress shirts! Except now this other thing which is why ye're talking to us.

1st DETECT I dont know why you're shielding this fellow.

2nd DETECT It's only the three of us here now, we asked the clerk to leave. So what did you and Charlie Barr talk about?

SAMMY [PAUSE] Football...

2nd DETECT No, not football. I meet these people and they dont talk football, they dont talk any of that. They get angry and they get bitter and they talk about other things, politics, so-called. You must have met guys like him in prison?

SAMMY Look I know ye're wanting me to tell ye something and I wish I could, but all I can remember is football, football and horses

2nd DETECT Nonsense.

1ST DETECT You're lying. Why I dont know, protecting people for no reason

SAMMY Sorry mate, I cannay help who I meet.

2nd DETECT You can't help who you meet. I'm beginning to doubt that

SOUND SOMEONE KNOCKS THE DOOR AND ENTERS

1st DETECT Pass me yer shades Sammy

SAMMY What for?

1ST DETECT AMUSED] Just pass me them

SOUND UNINTELLIBLE WHISPERING. DOOR CLOSSES.

1st DETECT SIGHS. THEN MOVES CLOSER TO SAMMY AND TOUCHES HIM ON HIS EYELID.

SAMMY SUDDEN CRY] Ohh! [HIS CHAIR SCRAPING BACK]

1ST DETECT Sorry, was that sore? I just laid my finger on yer eyelid

SAMMY Jesus christ!

2nd DETECT Are you sure you're blind?

1st DETECT That doctor's going to wonder why ye're wasting departmental time. He'll say you are as fit as a fiddle, with a fine pair of eyes. Look at them, brown and sparkling. Ye're no even a druggie!

2nd DETECT SUDDENLY] What about your girlfriend? Do you realise she hasnt shown up for work this week.

SAMMY I'm worried.

2nd DETECT Yes, with good reason.

SAMMY ANGRILY] For christ sake!

2nd DETECT [QUIETLY] You're raising yer voice at me! [CHUCKLES] Who the hell do you think you are you? piece of garbage... Your girlfriend has disappeared without explanation. You realise that?

SAMMY Yeh I realise that of course I realise that.

2nd DETECT So dont waste our fucking time. You met Charles Barr last Friday evening. You were in his company for two hours

SAMMY I've admitted that, I just dont remember much about it

SOUND DOOR OPENS. MUFFLED CONVERSATION. FOOTSTEPS. DOOR CLOSSES

SAMMY [PAUSE. SHIFTS ON HIS CHAIR] Can I smoke?

3rd DETECT No

SAMMY The other two away for their tea-break!

3rd DETECT Probably. [PAUSE] Are ye really blind?

SAMMY Cannay see a thing.

3rd DETECT Fucking hell. Hey, yer girlfriend works in a bar in the centre of the city, doesnt she?

SAMMY Yeh

3rd DETECT Look, dont take this the wrong way but see the guy that owns the bar is he shagging her, yer girlfriend? I heard he was.

SAMMY [CONTEMPT] Dear oh dear.

PAUSE

2nd DETECT We've got no interest in you. But our colleagues dont share that position. The disappearance of your girlfriend Is a serious matter and you are already convicted of very serious crime. That is how they look at it. But we arent so bothered about that. We think your girlfriend's safe and sound. It's yer old friend who interests us, ye see we *knew* you met Charlie Barr even *before* ye got arrested. So what does that tell ye? Think about it. And so far you've offered us nothing, no new information, nothing, which gives us grounds for supposing that you are withholding evidence.

1st DETECT The problem is ye've forgotten how to talk Sammy. I've seen it with guys that've done a lot of time.

SAMMY I just bumped into the man, I hadn't seen him in ages.

2nd DETECT Ten years ago in London, in a cafe off Theobalds Road, You had long hair at the time. Look, see the photograph. Oh I forgot, you can't see. You'll remember the occasion. Shortly after you got gaoled for seven years - interesting coincidence.

1ST DETECT The more we look at you the more there is to see.

SAMMY Ye know what I was gaoled for. Nothing to do with politics.

1st DETECT Since when has armed robbery got nothing to do with politics?

SOUND THERE IS MOVEMENT AND A SUDDEN WHOOSHING NOISE. A DETECTIVE HAS SWIPED VERY CLOSE TO SAMMY'S HEAD, JUST AVOIDING HITTING HIM. SAMMY REACTS TO AVOID IT, AND FALLS OFF HIS CHAIR. MUFFLED LAUGHTER

SAMMY STILL ON THE FLOOR] Bastards...

1st DETECT AMUSED] What're ye sitting on the floor for? Help him up!

3rd DETECT MOVES TO HIM] Here, give me your hand

SAMMY Stay away. [GETS UP AND ONTO THE CHAIR]

1st DETECT He's very independent.

2nd DETECT But he shows signs of anxiety. You find that with people suffering sensory dysfunctions; they're examined by the medical authorities and found to have a history of anxiety. Sometimes they exhibit other tendencies, unhealthy tendencies. Consider last Saturday morning where it was noted that he *sought* a beating. He attacked our colleagues because he knew he would lose and lose severely. [PAUSE] Why are you smiling?

SAMMY Who me?

1st DETECT MOVES CLOSER TO SAMMY] Get word to yer friend. Tell him to watch out for the dark. If he isn't scared of it just now he's got reason to be scared of it in future. [WHISPERS] It's getting a bit late for playing games Sammy, ye've copped for two stretches in the past, the next time down is the third. And ye know what they say about the third time ye go under.

PAUSE

SOUND MONDAY MORNING, EN ROUTE TO THE DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT. TRAFFIC SOUNDS. INSIDE POLICE CAR. CAR ARRIVES AND STOPS.

3RD DETECT UNLOCKING HANDCUFFS] We don't want ye wearing handcuffs in the doctor's waiting room

1st DETECT [MENACING] Now listen to what I'm saying: ye're going into there and ye're going in alone. Ye hear me?

SAMMY I hear ye.

1st DETECT And we'll be waiting right here to take ye back. Okay?

SAMMY Okay

1st DETECT Good. [OPENS CAR DOOR] Now beat it.

3RD DETECT Here's yer stick and sunglasses. We couldnay find yer guide dog!

1st DETECT We'll be waiting!

SAMMY STEPS FORWARD, TAPPING THE GROUND

SOUND INSIDE DOCTOR'S RECEPTION. SOMEONE OPERATES A COMPUTER KEYBOARD

RECEPTIONIST Take a seat please.

SAMMY Thanks [SITS

ALI SITS DOWN ON THE ADJACENT SEAT, QUIETLY] Mister Sammuels, hullo, my name is Ali, pleased to meet ye. Ye need a rep dont ye?

SAMMY Ye've got the wrong guy

ALI You're up at the Police Medical Benefits Office next Friday, did they tell ye? [PAUSE] Yer case isnt straightforward. It's no just the police ye're up against, there's the DSS, ye need somebody to represent yer interests.

SAMMY Thanks for telling me; now fuck off.

ALI Ye're seeing Doctor Logan, he's an awkward buggar. As yer rep I could go in with ye

SAMMY Ye deaf?

ALI Naw I'm no deaf, thanks for asking.

RECEPTIONIST Doctor Logan will see you now. Please come this way.

ALI Here, take my arm

SAMMY QUIETLY] Keep away

ALI Logan will try and grind ye down. But remember, you're blind, dont let him tell ye different.

SAMMY TAP HIS WAY ALONG TO DOCTOR'S ROOM

RECEPTIONIST This way

SAMMY Thanks [DOOR SHUTS BEHIND HIM]

DR LOGAN Just over here eh... [COUGHS] Between the tables there

SAMMY Sorry doctor I'm blind.

DR LOGAN SIGHS] Two steps forward five to your right.

SAMMY WALKS, TAPPING HIS STICK AS HE GOES

DR LOGAN Sit down... Take off your dark glasses. [SAMMY SITS, TAKES OFF GLASSES. DOCTOR LEAFS THROUGH SOME PAPERS] And how do you say you lost your sight: was it over a period of time? Or was it suddenly gone?

SAMMY PAUSE] I woke up and I couldnay see.

DR LOGAN According to the report the onset date is already determined, Saturday before last. Had you experienced deterioration prior to onset?

SAMMY No.

DR LOGAN Have you ever been tested for glasses?

SAMMY No.

DR LOGAN Are you a reader?

SAMMY Sometimes

DR LOGAN Can you make out the fine print to any degree?

SAMMY No.

DR LOGAN Can you see the television?

SAMMY No.

DR LOGAN Is there any record of blindness in your family? Parents or brothers and sisters.

SAMMY My father wore glasses. So did my grannie.

DOCTOR RISES FROM HIS DESK, WALKS TO SAMMY. NOW HE WAVES HIS HAND SHARPLY IN FRONT OF SAMMY'S FACE, CAUSING A SUDDEN WHOOSHING SOUND.

SAMMY Jesus christ!

SOUND ANOTHER WHOOSHING NOISE

SAMMY Oh!

DR LOGAN Try to relax Mister eh... No, please keep your eyes open for the time being. [HE TAPS SAMMY ON THE HEAD

SAMMY Oh. What are ye tapping my head for?

DR LOGAN Mmm.. [STEPS BACK TO HIS DESK] Well Mister eh...in respect of the visual stimuli presented you appeared unable to respond. Do you ever experience headaches?

SAMMY Never.

DR LOGAN Other pains?

SAMMY My back and my ribs, my legs. [SAMMY GETS TO HIS FEET,

DR LOGAN But you dont experience chest problems? [SAMMY TAKES OFF HIS JACKET] What are you doing?

SAMMY i thought you wanted to examine my body?

DR LOGAN SIGHS. MOVES BACK TO SAMMY] Just pull up your shirt and stand still [LOOKS AT HIS UPPER TRUNK]

SAMMY Is the bruising still there?

DR LOGAN Tuck in your clothes please. [SAMMY TUCKS CLOTHES IN AND DOCTOR RETURNS TO HIS SEAT] Are you prone to psychological or nervous disorders? Anxiety or panic attacks?

SAMMY Pardon [SAMMY SITS BACK DOWN]

DR LOGAN You do understand what I mean by a panic attack?

SAMMY I dont understand why ye're asking.

DR LOGAN I have a medical report from five years ago. I have a copy in front of me.

SAMMY That was prison. There were things going on

DR LOGAN Are you disputing the medical findings?

SAMMY I'm saying there were unusual circumstances

DR LOGAN Ah... [LEAFS THROUGH PAPERS]

SAMMY About the blindnessI doctor, do ye think it's temporary?

DR LOGAN I'm afraid I cant answer that. I do advise you to exercise patience. It's in your own interest to adjust to reality. Allow your body to follow its own compensatory process. [LEAFS THROUGH PAPERS]

SAMMY I was wondering about guide dogs and white sticks...

DR LOGAN I'm afraid I dont follow.

SAMMY About getting them I mean, if there is someplace I can apply?

DR LOGAN Well I dare say that if a claim in respect of a found dysfunction is allowed then an application in respect of a customer's wants that may be consistent with the found dysfunction becomes open to discharge by an appropriate charitable agency.

SAMMY So I can approach a charity?

DR LOGAN You can approach a charity at any time

SAMMY Yeh but...

DR LOGAN SIGH] I've prescribed a course of medication that should help relieve your anxiety; also an ointment which you may apply to areas of your trunk as you think fit. Here's your prescription form. [PASSES THE PRESCRIPTION FORM] Good morning.

SAMMY PAUSE] So what happens now?

DR LOGAN In what sense?

SAMMY What do I do?

DR LOGAN That is entirely up to yourself Mister eh... The Department of Social Security will require to determine a judgment. If the alleged dysfunction is verified by their specialist medical officers then your claim in respect of sightloss capacity will be allowed.

SAMMY See when you say 'alleged'? Are ye saying that you dont really think I'm blind?

DR LOGAN Of course not.

SAMMY Well what are ye saying?

DR LOGAN That in respect of the visual stimuli presented you appeared unable to respond.

SAMMY So ye're no saying I'm blind?

DR LOGAN It isnt for me to say.

SAMMY But you're a doctor.

DR LOGAN SIGHS] I have people waiting.

SAMMY Christ sake!

DR LOGAN I find your language offensive.

SAMMY AGGRESIVELY] Aye well fuck ye. [RISES TO HIS FEET AND THROWS THE PRESCRIPTION FORM AT THE DOCTOR] Stick the prescription form up yer arse!

DR LOGAN Yes good morning.

SAMMY VERY ANGRY] Fuck you ya bastard... [TURNS AND BANGS INTO A CHAIR AND FALLS] Oh ya...Ohh [ATTEMPTS TO RISE

SOUND DOOR OPENS AND ALI ENTERS

ALI Here! Give me yer hand!

SAMMY RISING TO HIS FEET] I dont need yer hand

DR LOGAN FROM AFAR] He completely lost control... [FADE

SAMMY WHISPERS] Dirty bastards... [HE SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT BEHIND HIM, TAPPING HIS WAY AS QUICKLY AS HE CAN.

SOUND ANOTHER DOOR CLOSES

ALI WALKS AFTER HIM. CALLS] Hey... Hang on a minute. [SAMMY CONTINUES TAPPING ALONG] Wait a minute... I telt ye he was an awkward buggar. That's how I offered to go in with ye. Stop a minute. [SAMMY STOPS WALKING] Ye're letting yerself get intimidated. That's how ye lost yer temper. He wanted you to lose it and ye lost it. That's why ye needed a rep

SAMMY Look mate there's people waiting for me.

ALI Did ye get a diagnosis? Eh? Did ye get an opinion! [CHUCKLES] I bet ye didnay even get an opinion! [PAUSE] What about a charity referral did ye get one?

SAMMY That's my business, I'm no discussing it with you. [STARTS WALKING

ALI Wait, here: two pieces of paper. One's yer prescription, the other's a referral for a non-denominational charity. I got it after ye charged out the room.

SAMMY Thanks

ALI Two questions: how long after ye got the beating did ye go blind? And what's the latency period for blindness? [PAUSE] Ye dont trust me eh?

SAMMY I dont trust naybody.

ALI That can be a problem.

SAMMY Thanks for yer help but I've got to go. Shake. Where's yer hand?

SOUND THEY SHAKE HANDS. SAMMY GRIPS ALI'S HAND TIGHTLY

ALI Hey ye've got a powerful grip! Ohh

SAMMY IS NOW GRIPPING ALI'S HAND VERY TIGHTLY] I'm no wanting to hurt ye, just stay out my business

ALI IN PAIN] Oh!

SAMMY RELEASES HIS GRIP ON ALI'S HAND

ALI RELAXING HIS HAND] Whohh, nay need for that [RUBBING HIS HANDS]

SAMMY Sorry [RESUMES WALKING]

ALI I know ye're upset

SAMMY Look, whatever yer name is, just fuck off eh. There's people waiting for me.

ALI Ye talking about the police? They're long gone.

SAMMY STOPS WALKING] What?

ALI Why are you not putting a claim in against them? Are ye scared of reprisals? If ye dont put

in a claim it'll go against ye with the DSS.

SAMMY Ye think ye know but ye dont.

ALI One thing I do know, you need a rep.[PAUSE] Are you going for a bus? I'll walk ye along.

SAMMY I can manage

ALI Oh I know ye can. Hey, it looks like rain...

SAMMY STARTS WALKING, TAPPING ALONG

ALI WALKS WITH HIM] As soon as you went into the doctor's the police drove away.  
[PAUSE] That was what they done. Did ye expect anything else?

SAMMY SIGHS. LIGHTS A CIGARETTE

ALI Otherwise, they would've sent somebody in with you.

SAMMY There's things about my life ye dont know.

ALI Ye need a rep

SAMMY In the first place...

ALI We maybe dont need a first place, time's at a premium. If I represent yer claims I take thirty three and a third percent of all lump sums. When I say thirty three and a third I mean thirty three and a third - ye'll no have to sell yer furniture to pay my phone bills and postage stamps, and there'll be nay deals done behind yer back, guaranteed. Needless to say if you lose I lose.

SAMMY If I fucking win I lose.

ALI Not if we work together. One thing I recommend. Use that charity referral at all costs. That's how I got it for you. Logan didnay like it.

SAMMY IRONIC] But you forced him.

ALI It's your right. I know your rights, and he knows I know. So go to that charity tomorrow. People have to see ye're blind. It isnay like ye've lost yer legs. When ye think of a blind man what do ye see? I'll tell ye, white stick, dark glasses and a guide dog. It's empirical evidence. If ye dont use yer charity referral ye'll no get it.

SAMMY Ye know I've done time

ALI I've done time myself.

SOUND RAIN

SAMMY Jesus christ...

ALI Here's the bus shelter

SOUND INSIDE BUS SHELTER. THE RAIN PATTERS DOWN

SAMMY I'll call ye.

ALI I'll call you

SAMMY I've no got a phone. I have to go out the house to do it. But you give me yer number and I'll go out and do it

ALI Ye definitely need a rep. Yer case hinges on incompetence and inefficiency. Winning claims against the police are usually paid from the public purse but incompetence and inefficiency ones comes out their own budget. And that's what ye call an unwritten point of law: dont take money off the police. They'll fight ye tooth and nail.

SAMMY I'll sleep on it

ALI Whether ye sleep on it or not, ye'll still be left with a decision.

SAMMY Ye're a fucking hard man. [PAUSE] Okay

ALI Okay what?

SAMMY It's a deal.

ALI Definite?

SAMMY Aye

ALI Nay going back now, I'm a man of my word, I hope you are too.

SAMMY Just dont fucking con me.

ALI One thing to watch is yer language. It's a good habit to acquire for official purposes. Dont just think the way they think, talk the way they talk. The closer we get to courts and tribunals the more like them we act. A taxi! [GETS MONEY FROM HIS POCKETS] Take it, here, extra money

SAMMY I dont need a taxi

ALI It'll save ye hassle. [CALLS] Taxi! [TAXI ARRIVING] Here's my card, it has my phone number and contact information

SAMMY In braille!

ALI AMUSED] I didnay think of that [FADE

SOUND HEAVY RAIN. TAXI STATIONARY, ENGINE RUNNING

SAMMY CALLS] Thanks driver!

SOUND TAXI DOOR SLAMS SHUT. TAXI MOVES OFF. THEN INSIDE APARTMENT BLOCK SAMMY TAPS ALONG TO THE LIFT, HE STOPS

SAMMY Who's there? [RESUMES WALKING. MUFFLED LAUGHTER. HE STOPS WALKING]Who's there? [LIFT ARRIVES, DOORS OPEN. HE STEPS QUICKLY INSIDE. WHISPERS] Come fucking near me and I'll crack yer skull with the stick. DOORS CLOSE. CLOSE IN ON SAMMY'S BREATHING]

SOUND HEAVY RAIN, ALONG THE CORRIDOR. FUMBLING KEYS IN DOOR LOCKS

SAMMY VERY IRRITATED] Where's the fucking lock I cannay find the fucking lock, have they changed the door man what the hell's going on I cannay find the damn lock [CLOSE TO PANIC, DROPS THE KEYS] Aw jesus christ I've dropped the keys! [SEARCHING FOR KEYS ON THE GROUND] Bastards.... [RAIN FALLS HEAVILY. FADE]

SAMMY MONDAY EVENING. NARRATES] Helen still wasnt home. She would turn up eventually. She came from a big family down south. That was where she went when life got too tough. It was like running away. I told her that. I wish you would run away, she says, if you ran away I wouldnay have to. Yeh...drastic measures...maybe I would have to run away. [SIGHS] One thing I did know, I didnay need Ali to represent my interests. It didnay matter how good he was, naybody could get me out of trouble, naybody except myself. The cops would be back to get me. I knew that. A case of keep my nerve. Or else vamoose immediately. I could be in England tomorrow. No, fuck England... [HALF SINGS/HALF SPEAKS

...Let's go to Luckenback Texas

Willie and Waylon and the boys

AMUSED. THEN SIGHS] Helen had never been to England. Maybe she wouldnay come with me. Aye she would. Maybe she wouldnay.. Then my son Peter, it meant splitting from him again, just when we were getting to know each other. The last time the gap was eight years, eight fucking years, a wee boy of four and the next time I saw him he was twelve. Fucking bastards, bastards... Aw to hell with it [SWITCHES ON HI FI AND IT IS KRIS KRISTOFFERSON SINGING "Sunday Morning Coming Down"

ASTONISHED WHISPER] I dont believe it, it's my song! [SONG CONTINUES AND WHEN IT COMES TO THE FOLLOWING VERSE HE SINGS ALONG, IN A VERY AGRESSIVE MANNER

On a Sunday morning sidewalk

wishing lord that I was stoned  
for there's something in a Sunday  
makes a body feel alone  
and there's nothing short of dying  
half as lonesome as the sound  
of the sleeping city sidewalks  
Sunday morning coming down

PAUSE. FADE IN. WHISPERS] Dirty fucking bastards. [PAUSE] What does it matter, what does it matter

SAMMY FADE IN HE IS DOING PRESS-UPS, HE DOES IT IN A WAY THAT SIGNIFIES A PHYSICALLY FIT MAN

SAMMY NARRATES] I was doing press-ups and a few of the dynamic tension moves. It was a habit I got into in prison. My body still felt battered and bruised but ye never know what's ahead, except life, and life's tough, ye need to be in shape. How much time did I have? Who knows. Except the cops, they always know. I couldnay sit about waiting. These bastards were closing in on me. I knew how they did it . Ye have to prepare, as best ye can. Then when the time comes ye grab what ye can and ye go, right fucking now.

SOUND LATER THAT EVENING. INSIDE THE ELEVATOR, GOING DOWN. DOORS OPENING. HIS STICK TAPPING ACROSS THE FLOOR

SAMMY NARRATES] There was people to see. I was going to Glancy's Bar. I got my neighbour to phone me a taxi. This time I would get there. I lost my nerve the last time. No wonder. I didnay prepare. This time I was ready. I had to see Tam Roberts, me and him did business together. I had a pile of dress shirts stashed in the cupboard. He would give me a fair price.

SOUND WIND BLOWING. TAXI SITS, ENGINE RUNNING.

SAMMY CALLS] Is that the taxi?

TAXI DRIVER CALLS] Sammuels?

SAMMY CALLS] That's me [TAXI DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES. TAXI DRIVES OFF]

SOUND INSIDE GLANCY'S BAR. AN ORDINARY GLASGOW PUB, QUITE BUSY.

SAMMY TAPPING HIS WAY TO THE BAR

HERB Alright Sammy?

SAMMY Is that you Herb?

HERB Aye. Lager?

SAMMY Yeh

HERB I heard what happened with the polis, the eyes and that...

SAMMY Word travels eh

HERB Ah well, ye know how it is

SAMMY TIRED] Yeh...

SOUND USUAL BAR NOISES. NOW CHAIR SCRAPING

HERB That's yer pint. A wee extra whisky. Auld John sent it ower...

SAMMY Aw nice, thanks, tell him hullo. Is there a table I can sit?

HERB Aye, I'll come and show ye [FADE

SOUND USUAL BAR NOISE. SAMMY SEATED AT A TABLE, HE LIGHTS A CIGARETTE

TAMSUDDENLY] Hullo.

SAMMY Tam?

TAMNOT OVERLY FRIENDLY] What ye drinking?

SAMMY Naw I'm alright, thanks.

TAM Herb told me ye were in. [SITS DOWN ON A CHAIR] So is it permanent, the eyes...?

SAMMY Oh christ dont say that

TAMYe spoke to a doctor yet?

SAMMY SARCASTIC] Doctor! Fucking quack quack. [FADE OUT. THEN FADE IN ON SAME CONVERSATION] So I woke up Sunday morning and it was the cops. Disasters everywhere.

TAMYeh

SAMMY Then when I finally get hame Helen isnay there, she's off.

TAMYe mean she's left ye?

SAMMY I dont know. If she has, she hasnay told me.

TAMSTILL NOT FRIENDLY] So they let ye out on Wednesday?

SAMMY Aye, the first time. Then they gaoled me again man I was lying in my fucking bath and they came in and fucking grabbed me. I only got out this morning.

TAMThis morning...

SAMMY PAUSE] What's up Tam

TAMIRRITATED] Nothing's up

SAMMY Ye dont seem too happy!

TAMIRRITATED] Happy, what ye talking about happy, the cops paid me a visit as well. It was the wife answered the door, half five yesterday morning.

SAMMY Bastards. What happened?

TAMANNOYED] What happened? Questions is what happened. [SARCASTIC] I didnay tell them fuck all but so that's okay eh!

SAMMY What?

TAMForget it.

SAMMY What's the sarcasm about?

TAM RISES FROM CHAIR] Okay, cheerio, sorry about yer eyes and all that

SAMMY Tam what's wrong?

TAMWHISPERS] Just leave it

SAMMY Ye're fucking angry

TAMSITS BACK DOWN. WHISPERS] Angry? I'm entitled to be angry. The cops at my door at half five in the morning wanting to know about some guy ye met in the pub, they thought I knew him, they still think I know him, Charlie Barr who the fuck's Charlie Barr? Well I've heard of him but I dont fucking know him.

SAMMY I know ye dont.

TAMURGENT WHISPER] So why fucking involve me? My wife got dragged out of bed at half five in the morning Sammy ye've involved me. Fucking politics! I'm no involved in any politics.

[URGENT WHISPER] Sammy, my house was full of stolen gear. All kinds of stuff. Everywhere. And you didn't prepare me. My wife just opened the door and there's the cops. They could have gaoled her never mind me. She was in her dressing gown for christ sake. And the weans sleeping through the room. And you're telling me no to get angry? You gave the cops my name. You fucking gave them my name. For whatever reason I don't know, and you didn't tell me nothing about it.

SAMMY [PAUSE] I couldn't

TAM You could've phoned me!

SAMMY I've not got a phone

TAM [QUIETLY] Ah you could've got me word

SAMMY [SUDDEN ANGER] Got you word! Heh, you want to know what I've been doing? look beneath these stupid sun glasses [REMOVES SUN GLASSES] See them fucking things. That's eyes Tam, take a fucking look, cause they can't

TAM Okay okay

SAMMY [ANNOYED] Know what I mean!

TAM Okay, sorry, forget it... [RISES FROM CHAIR]

SAMMY Don't go yet

TAM I've got to.

SAMMY So what're you telling me?

TAM [WHISPERS] I thought I knew you but I don't. The cops know more about you than I do. [WALKS OFF]

SAMMY Tam this is bullshit. [PAUSE] Tam...!

SOUND BACKGROUND NOISE OF THE BAR. SAMMY LIGHTS CIGARETTE, EXHALES

SAMMY [WHISPERS] But he was dead right. I gave his name to the cops so I had involved him. Nay wonder he was angry. I should've warned him, I should've fucking warned him. But when? Too much going on, and I was tired, always fucking tired... Oh Jesus...time to leave... [RISES FROM HIS CHAIR, TAPPING HIS WAY SLOWLY ACROSS THE FLOOR] Herb, Herb. Can you phone me a taxi?

HERB Sure

SOUND OUTSIDE RAIN FALLS HEAVILY.

SAMMY WHISPERS] The threat to the family, That's how they get ye.They'll use anything...

SOUND RAIN FALLS HEAVILY. FADE TO INSIDE THE APARTMENT, FILLING A KETTLE WITH WATER, SWITCHES ON

SAMMY NARRATES] They catch ye unawares. That's their secret. They make the first move, so you're always you're on the defensive. Yeh well not this time, not this fucking time.

SOUND EARLY NEXT MORNING. SAMMY IN BED, SLEEPING. SOMEONE FLAPS LETTERBOX AT FRONT DOOR

SAMMY Fuck! [SCRAMBLES OUT OF BED, AGAIN SOMEONE FLAPS LETTERBOX, HE DRESSES QUICKLY. ] Bastard cops...The third time ye go under. This is it. My fucking shoes! [NOW CALMLY] Calm down. Okay. The stick, the money the smokes, the sunglasses. [SOMEONE FLAPS LETTERBOX. WHISPERS] If I could fight, maybe I could fight...[TAPS ALONG HALLWAY. STOPS AT THE DOOR] Who's there?

ALI LOUD WHISPER FROM OTHER SIDE OF DOOR] It's me, Ali. I need to check a couple of points.

SAMMY AMAZED] Jesus christ.

SOUND INSIDE THE SMALL KITCHEN, FIVE MINUTES LATER. BOTH SEATED ON STOOLS

ALI I'd love a cup of tea.

SAMMY There's nay milk.

ALI Any lemon?

SAMMY Is that a joke? What time is it?

ALI Eh, twenty past five. Tea without milk's fine...

SAMMY FILLS KETTLE WITH WATER] Twenty past five!

ALI I figured ye for an early bird and I've got a lot of business this morning. So have you. So I wanted to make sure of catching ye in. The first hearing has been moved forward to Thursday and Friday, I'm talking about the Police Medical Benefits. We're going for an adjournment. But ye'll have to be there in person. Can ye make it okay? I'll come and collect ye.

SAMMY Nay need

ALI I'll have the car. [PAUSE] When ye going to the charity?

SAMMY Eh... this afternoon

ALI Make it this morning.

SAMMY HESITANT] I've got other business.

ALI Oh... What kind?

SAMMY Family

ALI Yer son?

SAMMY What is this, a cross examinations!

ALI Is yer son no at school?

SAMMY It's no him I'm seeing.

ALI Oh is it yer ladyfriend? [RISES FROM CHAIR, STEPS TO SINK]

SAMMY IRRITATED] No

ALI STARTS PILING SOILED CROCKERY IN BASIN

SAMMY STILL IRRITATED] What ye doing?

ALI FILLING THE SINK WITH WATER] Washing yer dishes.

SAMMY I dont want ye washing my dishes.

ALI It helps me think better. What about yer exwife, ever see her?

SAMMY No. My boy lives with her. [LIGHTS CIGARETTE] She divorced me when I was inside. [FADE

ALI SEVERAL MINUTES LATER] But to win that adjournment we have to point to the likelihood of fresh evidence. I'm working on that and I'm confident. Okay?

SAMMY Aye

ALI Good. And there's a couple of things I've got for ye to sign... [CLEARS THROAT] It's a

formality, just to say yer claims for compensation go ahead at all costs. Posthumous claims in the event of...that kind of stuff. [PAUSE] You appreciate straight talking Sammy. Some people dont. They cannay cope with words like “posthumous”, “in the event of”, “dearly departed”, they cannay connect them to their own lives. Weird. So then their nearest and dearest dont get a penny.

SAMMY CONFUSED] What?

ALI Could be yer wife, or yer kids, or a lady-friend. You're a fighter, so ye're no wanting to let the authorities off the hook. Whether you're there or no.

SAMMY LESS CONFUSED] What d'ye mean?

ALI The DSS is like doctors and lawyers, the police and the army, they've got the power to keep the customer ignorant. Ignorance is bliss. They say if they tell the truth the customer is at risk of mental instability. But I say ignorance isnay bliss, it just costs ye dough. I wouldnay let them off with a penny. Dont just fight to the bitter end, fight beyond it. Empty their pockets for the nearest and dearest.

SAMMY QUIETLY] Fucking hell.

ALI RUSTLING OF PAPERS] The other thing to sign is so people know I'm repping for you. If a customer bites the dust afore settlement the nearest and dearest can say “I dont know anything about a rep”, and they're talking about the very guy that's laboured to win them their postumous claim! The very guy that fights the case for years and has to foot all the personal bills! Okay?

SAMMY Okay

ALI Just sign here, where my finger is. [PAUSE] The state buys the best legal and medical brains in the country. And it's all to beat us, the public. You're used to Criminal Law where the criminal is the victim, but here it's Civil Law and the victim gets treated like a criminal. You have to prove the crime. So prepare for mental marathons. They'll stuff yer head full of obscure conundrums and logical formulae. That's how I washed yer dishes, oxygen to the brain, physical activity keeps the blood pumping. But you know all that.

SAMMY I'm listening

ALI I'm glad ye're listening. Ye didnt tell me there was politics involved. [PAUSE] Can we get in touch with the man in question? I have to say about politics, it's what ye might call a variable. Ye're better with matters of substance. Politics make the authorities fling away the rule book.

SAMMY SIGHS, A SIGN OF IRRITATION

ALI Are you prone to paranoia, I'm no being cheeky?

SAMMY Are you prone to getting a punch in the mouth?

ALI It's good ye've got me acting for ye because ye've got a very bad temper.

SAMMY Ali, I think it's time ye went

ALI First, show me what's left of the evidence. [PAUSE] Lift up yer shirt.

SAMMY LIFTS UP HIS SHIRT. ALI STEPS FORWARD TO EXAMINE HIM

ALI People with bad tempers are a hazard to their own breathing, did ye no know that? I'm gauny poke into yer ribs so dont jump. Is that painful?

SAMMY [PAUSE] Sensitive

ALI Has Dr Logan or anybody else ever used the phrase 'severe bruising' or 'moderately severe' bruising'?

SAMMY Are ye joking?

ALI The question must be asked. Did they check if anything was broken? What about X-rays? Yer kidneys? Ye pissing blood? [CHUCKLES] Ye wouldnay know if ye were eh! Did Logan use a stethoscope? How's yer breathing? Any lungs or chest problems? [CHUCKLES] A lot of questions need answered. Okay that's me finished for now. I'm glad to say there's good evidence still available so we need a camera as soon as possible. I'll come by this evening. If I cannay I'll send somebody.

SAMMY FIRMLY] No you'll not

ALI We need the photographic evidence. The person that comes will be a 100 percent trustworthy.

SAMMY Naybody's a 100 percent trustworthy

ALI The trouble with surface evidence is it disappears. That's why the doctor prescribed ye the ointment. It's a vanishing cream. He's destroying the evidence.

SAMMY Come yourself or nobody.

ALI I hear ye [MOVES VERY QUIETLY FROM THE KITCHEN INTO THE FRONT LOBBY. NOW BY THE OUTSIDE DOOR, CALLS] Remember and register at the charity this morning

SAMMY What!

ALI I'm at the door. [OPENS FRONT DOOR] See ye later!

SAMMY Ali!

SOUND THE FRONT DOOR CLICKS SHUT

SAMMY SIGHS] Jesus christ... [PAUSE. CLOCK TICKING. NARRATES] I wasn't registering at any charity and I wasn't going to any Police Medical Benefits office. I just let Ali talk. I was making another decision. It was a question of when. The cops would come for me, I knew that, and they would choose the moment. Well so would I. I would beat them to it. [WHISPERS] Except I was so tired, why was I so tired! I think it was the blindness - it was like mental torture, every step a nightmare, it took a 100 percent energy to leave the building never mind go anyplace...

SOUND SAMMY SLEEPING. A RADIO PLAYS IN BACKGROUND; GENERAL NEWS REPORT, BARELY AUDIBLE. FADE RADIO BUT RETAIN SAMMY'S BREATHING, ASLEEP

SAMMY LIGHTS CIGARETTE. NARRATES] Tam was right, I should have made contact with him. No just him. What about Charlie Barr, I had a number for him. And Helen, I could've contacted Helen... I just had to find a public phone box. I couldn't ask the neighbour, too risky. [WHISPERS] What's so weird about life is how ye fuck things up, backed into a corner with nowhere to go.... So what do ye do... [URGENTLY] Ye move, ye fucking move. [ANGRY] That's what ye do, ye get up and go, decision made, now is the time

SOUND BOB DYLAN'S, "Lily, Rosemary and the Jack of Hearts" QUIETLY. KEEP SONG IN BACKGROUND. EARLY EVENING IN BEDROOM

SAMMY PACKING CLOTHES INTO TWO BAGS, PULLS OPEN DRAWERS, FEELS ABOUT INSIDE. ANNOYANCE] Even packing the bags, I can't pack the fucking bags! I don't know which is which! what fucking clothes I'm lifting... [THROWS HIS BAG TO THE FLOOR IN ANGER, SITS ON BED, THEN WEARILY] Oh God...

SOUND BUMPING OR SCRAPING NOISE FROM AFAR

SAMMY Fuck you [SWITCHES OFF BOB DYLAN SONG. URGENTLY] What's that? [SOMEBODY FLAPS THE LETTERBOX] Christ they've beat me again! [GETS TO HIS FEET. ZIPS UP HIS TWO BAGS. THEN SUDDENLY] Naw, Ali with the camera! [PAUSE.. WHISPERS] Jesus, it'll be Helen... Naw, she would have used her key. [SAMMY GROPE HIS WAY TO THE DOOR AND ALONG TO THE FRONT DOOR. HE STANDS LISTENING]

SAMMY NARRATES] Whoever it was had gone. I got my stick and my shades, my money and identity cards, official papers, anything I could think of, I shoved it all in, zipped up the bags and left them beside the front door. I was starving. Still time for a sandwich and a cup of tea. I got the kitchen knife. It was lying on the chopping board. I liked this knife, a good thick handle and blade. Ye could use it for anything. I would feel better with it. But what if the cops searched the bag? So what. I packed it in. Then added a table knife, a fork and a spoon, to make it look better. Plus with the stick, now I was ready. Let them all come. Bastards.

SOUND WATER BOILS IN AN ELECTRIC KETTLE. SAMMY POURS HOT WATER INTO A CUP. NOW THE SUDDEN FLAP OF LETTERBOX

SAMMY QUIETLY] Yeh... [PATS HIS WAY TO THE FRONT DOOR. PAUSE. ANOTHER FLAP OF LETTERBOX. HE UNLOCKS THE DOOR AND STEPS BACK. THE STRONG WIND IS BLOWING]

NEIGHBOUR HESITANT] Ye alright?

SAMMY Who's that?

NEIGHBOUR Yer neighbour

SAMMY Oh aye, sorry.

NEIGHBOUR It's yer boy.

SAMMY What?

NEIGHBOUR He's here to see ye, him and his pal. They're sitting with me and the wife, wait till I get him

SAMMY WHISPERS] Jesus christ [PAUSE]

PETER NOW THE DOOR IS PUSHED OPEN] Da!

SAMMY Peter! For christ sake! [MOVES A STEP TO THE SIDE]

PETER My pal Keith's with me

SAMMY Bring him in. Hi Keith.

KEITH AWKWARDLY] Hullo

PETER CLOSES DOOR] It's awful windy.

SAMMY Ah it's always windy here. [WALK INTO LOUNGE] Come in come in. So how are ye? how's yer mother?

PETER Da were ye sleeping?

SAMMY Yeh, just a wee lie-down.

PETER I chapped the door loud.

SAMMY Well ye couldnay have chapped it loud enough!

PETER We've got the camera.

SAMMY The camera...

PETER That guy Ali told me to bring it

SAMMY HESITANT] Right...

PETER Okay?

SAMMY Fine, yeh. Does yer mother know ye're here?

PETER FIRMLY] Of course no.

SAMMY Right. So what about a cup of coffee or tea or something? I was just pouring one for myself.

PETER Naw da

SAMMY Ye sure? What about yer pal?

KEITH A cup of tea?

SAMMY Okay son. Ye sure ye dont want one Peter?

PETER Well okay, a cup of tea.

SAMMY Nay milk but that's the problem. Ye're too old for milk anyway! [CHUCKLES] Just as well ye didnay ask for a beer cause I've got none of them either! [FADE OUT]

SEVERAL MINUTES LATER. THEY SIT IN THE LOUNGE, SIPPING TEA.

PETER SUDDENLY] Da are you blind?

SAMMY Blind! Naw! [PAUSE] Well yeh I am...but it's just temporary.

PETER UNCERTAINLY] Oh...

SAMMY What did that guy Ali say?

PETER He said ye had an accident.

SAMMY Yeh, well that's true. [LIGHTS CIGARETTE] So how's school? When d'ye leave?

PETER June. I've to go on a training scheme.

SAMMY What about your pal?

KEITH Me too

PETER I was thinking about joining the navy.

SAMMY QUICKLY] Fuck the navy. Ye're no going in that. [HESITANT] Ye have to sign up for too long, that's how I wouldnay advise it.

PETER Aye but it's good security.

KEITH They put you through a trade as well

PETER Ye make good money. Uncle James was saying. It all mounts up when ye're away at sea. If it's a submarine ye can be away for months.

SAMMY Mmm. What does yer mother say?

PETER I've no telt her yet.

SAMMY Uncle James... Is he a sailor?

PETER Naw.

SAMMY So how does he know?

PETER DEFENSIVELY] He just knows. Ye sign on at 17.

SAMMY It's your decision son but I dont think yer mother'll be too pleased

PETER If ye sign at 16 ye're a cadet, ye have the chance to see if ye like it or no.

KEITH PAUSE] I've got the camera Mister Sammuels.

SAMMY Okay son

PETER Keith

SAMMY AMUSED] Keith, sorry

PETER Da, how did ye go blind?

SAMMY Eh well, what happened, that last job I was on, I tripped and fell down stairs. I was up a scaffold. See it was a plank missing, well no missing, it was damaged. That's how I tripped. It was a high building. Then with the scaffolding, when I took the tumble, I went down amongst it

and the tubes battered my shoulders and my spine. The spine's complicated and really I suppose it controls yer body.

KEITH How high up were ye ?

SAMMY Uch no too high, Mind you I was lucky; if the scaffolding hadnay been there I might've been killed. That's how we need the photographs, it's for the doctors for evidence, then the insurance claim. [SNIFFS] So is yer camera a good yin Keith

KEITH Yeh

PETER It's top range

SAMMY Great stuff, want to get it ready?

KEITH Okay [GETS TO HIS FEET]

PETER Da is it all darkies in prison?

SAMMY Darkies?

PETER Keith's brother said it was.

SAMMY Right...the thing is son ye shouldnay call people names; ye have to watch that... Who's yer real enemies, that's what ye want to know. Because the screws stick ye in with people that hate ye, crazy people, they want to kill ye as soon as ye turn yer back. A lot of guys I know are dead. If ye want to die ye go to prison. Sometimes ye're banged up twenty three hours a day! Nothing to do except lie on yer bed. It's a total nightmare, so who's yer friends and who's yer enemies, that's all you want to know.

KEITH I'm ready to take the pictures Mister Sammuels.

SAMMY STANDS, TAKES OFF HIS SHIRT] Okay son.

PETER Oh da it looks bad

SAMMY Black and blue eh!

PETER It's red too, and yellow and green as well

SAMMY Yellow and green! [AMUSED] It must be gangrene! Naw, seriously, that's how we're getting the pictures, it's evidence for the insurance claim. The trouble with the building industry is ye're aye getting hurt and I'm accident-prone. Better take a couple of photographs.

KEITH We've to take ten.

SAMMY Ten?

KEITH To get all the angles

PETER That was what the guy said

SAMMY Oh, okay. Just say if ye want me to move about.

KEITH Naw you just stand there.

SAMMY Aye but ...

PETER It's cool da Keith knows [FADE

SAMMY PUTTING HIS SHIRT BACK ON] I dont want yer mother knowing about this. A lot of women are worriers, she's one. Yer grannie was the same. [CHUCKLES] You'd have liked her Peter. She aye had something to give ye, an apple or an orange, a bar of chocolate - I mind one time I went her messages; I was a smoker, so I wanted cigarettes, so I stole the messages out the shop and bought the cigarettes with the money. But yer grannie found out. What a doing she gave me! Never mind. Okay Keith?

KEITH PUTTING AWAY HIS EQUIPMENT] Yeh, it was fine

SAMMY So listen. You two keep the negatives. Just give Ali the pictures. Okay? Say ye gave the negatives to me because I telt ye to.

KEITH Okay

SAMMY He'll ask ye clever questions, just stick to yer story. I telt ye to give me them, so ye gave me them. Ye got that? I'll collect them later

KEITH Is he a cop?

SAMMY A cop! Naw. What made ye think that?

KEITH Peter thought he was

PETER It was just a feeling.

SAMMY He's a pal. He's just helping me out, because of my eyes and all that.

PETER Da are you on the run?

SAMMY What! Not at all. Did Ali say something?

PETER Naw.

SAMMY So how come ye thought it!

PETER It's just if ye were da, there's a place up the back of the scheme, all the houses are boarded up. People use it.

SAMMY What for?

PETER DEFENSIVELY] Everything

SAMMY Shooting up? Ye talking about addicts?

PETER No all. A guy we know's dossing there the now.

SAMMY Is he on the run?

KEITH PAUSE] Aye.

PETER I've got a great sleeping bag and stuff, Uncle James got me it. You could use it

SAMMY Yer Uncle James, right

KEITH WALKS TO DOOR] Can I just use yer bathroom Mister Sammuels?

SAMMY Aye son. [DOOR CLOSSES] Does yer mother gets on with him okay, yer Uncle James?

PETER Da, I'm no a wean, I know the score.

SAMMY Right.

PETER You've got a girlfriend as well, so I dont see nothing wrong.

SAMMY Right, naw, fair enough

PETER PAUSE] Will ye tell me what's happening?

SAMMY Nothing. I might just head off.

PETER SADLY] Aw da.

SAMMY Back to England, get a job and that, it's no working here

PETER But da, with yer eyes, how can ye?

SAMMY They'll get fixed. [PAUSE] Ye cannay always do what ye want.

PETER Is it because of yer girlfriend?

SAMMY Not at all, we get on good together.

PETER Is she going with ye?

SAMMY I'm no sure.

PETER Da, can I go with ye. [PAUSE] I can be a good help.

SAMMY It's best ye finish school. Then they'll no be able to touch ye, the authorities. If ye leave too soon they'll nab ye.

PETER Naw they'll no, they'll no even notice

SAMMY Yer mother'll notice. I'm no gauny be away that long. And I'll keep in touch.

PETER Can I no come with ye?

SAMMY It just isnay possible, no the now. Write down yer mobile number, put it with yer address. [PAUSE] Okay?

PETER QUIETLY] Aye

SAMMY So do it now. Ye'll get a pen and a notepad on the mantelpiece. [PETER RISES AND FINDS IT, AND WRITES AS INSTRUCTED, TEARS OFF A SHEET OF PAPER] And dont tell anybody what I'm saying. Nobody. It doesnay matter what they say, ye dont tell them a word. No the cops, no yer maw, no that guy Ali. Nobody. Ye got that? [PAUSE] Eh...

PETER QUIETLY] Okay. Here's the paper with my number. [GIVES SAMMY THE SHEET OF PAPER]

SAMMY Thanks.

PETER Da

SAMMY What?

PETER I've got money [BRINGS MONEY FROM HIS POCKET] You take it.

SAMMY AMUSED] Thanks son but I dont need it

PETER It's eighty quid.

SAMMY Eighty quid? What did ye win the lottery!

PETER It's mine, fair and square

SAMMY AMUSED] Fair and square eh!

PETER Here da, take it

SAMMY Naw

PETER I dont need it

SAMMY Of course ye do

PETER I dont. [PAUSE] Honest

SAMMY PAUSE. SIGHS] Ye sure?

PETER Definitely

SAMMY Okay, thanks [TAKES THE MONEY] Thanks. [SUDDENLY] I'll be ready in ten minutes [RISING TO HIS FEET] I'm leaving with you and yer pal.

PETER EXCITED] Are ye?

SAMMY Ten minutes, okay

PETER GETS TO HIS FEET] Da I've got my mobile, will I phone a taxi?

SAMMY No. There's a loaf and a packet of cheese in the fridge, some cold meat as well. Make it into sandwiches.

PETER Right

SAMMY Check out the bathroom by the way, I think ye're pal's fallen down the toilet

PETER He knew I wanted to speak to ye.

SAMMY AMUSED] Christ! You're more devious than me! Where's the door? Okay son this is what's known as action stations so chop chop. [BUMPS AGAINST DOOR] Fuck!

PETER BRIEF LAUGH

SAMMY IRONIC] Dont laugh at a blind man. [PAUSE] Only kidding... Hey Peter where's the notepad and the pen, I need to leave a message for my girlfriend... [PETER HANDS HIM IT]

PETER Do ye want to phone her?

SAMMY What... No, maybe later. [GROPES HIS WAY OUT THE DOOR.]

SAMMY NARRATES] But I thought it better no to phone, no for a couple of days. I wrote that I was heading to Newcastle for a wee while, that there were a few things I had to sort out. I would write soon. Sorry about what happened last week. It was all my fault but I just wish she hadnt gone away, it was just stupid, I was just stupid. I stopped myself from crumpling up the message ,and I left it on her pillow, love Sammy. Obviously I wasnt going to Newcastle but I thought the cops would read it before she did.

PETER CALLS] The sandwiches are ready... [FADE]

SOUND OUTSIDE DOOR OPENS

SAMMY Dont open it yet!

PETER CLOSSES DOOR] Sorry

SAMMY Check the lights. Make sure the plugs are out all the sockets except the fridge freezer.

PETER Ye told us already

SAMMY Yeh well check it again, and the taps, including the bathroom, and see all the windows are closed. And draw the curtains.

PETER Da we've done it all

SAMMY Brilliant, okay, where's my stick.

PETER BEGINS TO OPEN THE DOOR

SAMMY No yet. I want to go through it again, slowly, just take yer time, ye have to pace yerself. So when we go out and down the lift, if ye see anybody, let me know

PETER Who like?

SAMMY Anybody. [PAUSE] To hell with it, where's the bags, come on...give me yer arm. Keith, you got yer camera stuff?

KEITH Aye

SAMMY Mind about the negatives

PETER OPENS DOOR. WINDY ALONG THE CORRIDOR, SAMMY TAPPING THE STICK.

PETER WHISPERS] There's nobody at all...

SAMMY Ssh.

SOUND LIFT APPROACHING, DOORS OPENING. THEN INSIDE LIFT, GOING DOWN. WHISPERS] Right lads, the front door, we leave like gentlemen. [LIFT STOPS, DOORS OPEN.

PETER WHISPERS] Da, I see guys out in the carpark

SAMMY QUIETLY] What kind of guys?

PETER WHISPERS] Men

SAMMY The sunglasses go in my pocket. Okay Keith you take my stick. Carry it like a pool cue or something, through that front door and push on ahead, dont wait for us. Get to the bus-stop, ye'll see it. But then walk on past it. We'll catch ye up. Dont go too fast and dont wave if ye see us. Take a bag.

KEITH I can take the two

SAMMY Just take one son. Right, on ye go, just keep walking Past the bus-stop, we'll catch ye up [PAUSE. WHISPERS]. Give me yer arm Peter, me and you are going the side door. Just walk normal, and you can talk away, tell me where to walk and where no to walk, okay?

PETER Yeh

SOUND PAUSE. FADE IN REGULAR TRAFFIC NOISE.

SAMMY Okay?

PETER Aye

SAMMY I knew it would be. I just wish I had my stick!

PETER WHISPERS] Da can I ask ye something?

SAMMY No just now, we keep our wits about us. [PAUSE] Is there a path over the righthand side?

PETER Aye.

SAMMY Okay... [PAUSE] Is the bus-stop there?

PETER Aye, and I can see Keith, we'll reach him

SAMMY Is there people at the bus-stop?

PETER A woman with a pram, two other women.

SAMMY Okay now son we're getting a taxi so as soon as ye see one ye grab it. Then we give Keith a shout.

PETER PAUSE] Da can I ask ye something?

SAMMY Wait till we're on the taxi. Christ we're lucky that rain's off eh...

SOUND STATIONARY TAXI, ENGINE RUNNING. DOOR CLOSES

SAMMY Central Station driver! [TAXI MOVES OFF] Okay Keith?

KEITH Aye

SAMMY PAUSE, QUIETLY] So well done yous two.

KEITH EXCITED] I didna see anybody at all

SAMMY Ssh

PETER But da...

SAMMY WHISPERS] Wait till we get off the taxi

SOUND STATIONARY TAXI, ENGINE RUNNING OUTSIDE GLASGOW'S MAIN RAIL STATION. NOW TAXI DOOR SHUTS, TAXI MOVES OFF. VERY BUSY ROAD TRAFFIC THROUGH THIS FINAL SCENE.

SAMMY We've got everything now?

PETER Aye

SAMMY All this dodging about, it's good training for that navy. Ye'll spend most of the time dodging these bampot officer bastards. That's the thing about the armed forces, ye're working class boys so ye've got to like being a servant because that's how they'll treat ye.

PETER Da...

SAMMY My stick? where's the stick? Thanks. Okay, bags?

PETER We can carry them just now

SAMMY Naw just give me them son. [TAKES BOTH BAGS] Let's walk. [THEY WALK, SAMMY TAPPING] Remember now, Ali just gets the photographs. And tell him I said sorry for the hassle. But dont tell him anything more.

PETER Da I was wanting to say something

SAMMY I know, I know, but the thing is...

PETER LAUGHS BRIEFLY] Aw da! Every time I try to talk ye tell me to shut up

SAMMY Aye well nay need to giggle about it, if you start me off giggling we're finished. I'm the world's worst. No kidding ye son dont ever get me started at the giggling games! Heh what time is it?

KEITH Half six.

SAMMY Good. Now as soon as we get to the main entrance to the station I want yous two to walk on by, okay, because I'm gauny walk in

PETER SUDDENLY] Da where ye going?

SAMMY England.

PETER Whereabouts?

SAMMY I dont know, maybe Newcastle, depends. Maybe I'll go back to London. I dont know myself.

PETER Can I see ye off?

SAMMY Nah son it's not on. I might just walk out of here and go the bus station. Who knows. Just whatever's available. It's no a problem son. Okay? So here just now, give me yer hand... [THEY STOP WALKING] Shake hands, come on.

PETER Aw da.

SAMMY THEY SHAKE HANDS] The worst about this is saying cheerio, but what can ye do, ye've got to batter on. Heh ye'll hear from me quite soon, so it's no that big a deal. Where's yer pal...?

KEITH Here Mister Sammuels.

SOUND THEY SHAKE HANDS

SAMMY Nice meeting ye Keith. Good work with the camera. Remember about the negatives, ye keep them and ye give them to Peter

KEITH Okay

SAMMY Great. So Peter...! [CLAPS HIM ON THE SHOULDER] Nay cuddles in the middle of the street now it's bad for the image. Plus I'll be phoning be phoning ye at the end of the week, just as soon as I get sorted. Okay?

PETER QUIETLY] Da...

SAMMY QUIETLY] Ye're some kid. So give us yer hand for another shake. [THEY SHAKE HANDS AGAIN] Okay now let's go... [THEY RESUME WALKING, SAMMY TAPPING ALONG. QUIETLY] Now yous two walk on, just walk on... [PAUSE, WHISPERS] That's right... [HE STOPS WALKING]

end