

REDEMPTION

A play for theatre by James Kelman

never performed

LIGHTS
TIME
PLACE
PROPS

AS DIRECTED
THE RECENT PAST
A RUN-DOWN RECORDING STUDIO
AS DIRECTED

SITUATION: Five members of a six-piece blues band have gathered at JOE'S studio to work on some new songs. JOE is a close friend and former roadie of the band. The missing 6th member is leaving the band and will not be coming [and does not appear in the play]. The bass-player, STEEL, does not appear during the 1st Act. He has gone to the home of the missing 6th member to try to talk him into staying. But he returns empty-handed, and appears at the start of the 2nd ACT.

The band are not successful in economic terms but there is a definite sense of their integrity. However, overall there is also a sense that the band is set for a final break-up

NOTES on MUSIC: This is a blues band and it should become clear that these are highly experienced, fine musicians. But only four songs are actually played live and 1st & 2nd songs may be "acted", where VINCE strums guitar and sings two Hank Williams' songs in Scene 2. VINCE continues strumming when PHIL comes in to lead on this second Hank Williams song.

BOB is lead guitar and plays two numbers, 3rd song is a wild, souped-up version of the "Bonanza" theme, and bears more similarities to the old ska version than it does to the television programme. BOOTS plays drums on "Bonanza". STEEL tinkers on keyboards as directed but this can be "acted". STEEL never plays a proper song.

The 3rd Act of the play is integral. It is one long piece of music, lasting about 7 minutes and featuring BOB, PHIL and VINCE. This is the 4th song. BOB begins on an Albert Collins-style instrumental, and makes the occasional "Albert Collins face". PHIL joins in, second guitar, but bringing the slide in; but BOB develops it into a driving George Thorogood sound then PHIL merges in, and takes it on into Hop Wilson's Dance to it, and BOB plays second guitar to him. On this 4th song VINCE also joins, and he does a sort of Muddy Waters-style skat singing over, but kept very much to the background.

ACT ONE

JOE and BOOTS are in the Sound-room upstage [perhaps sidestage]; the lights are bright, seen through a fractured blacked-out window;

BOB is upstage-left, lying on his back along a wooden bench.

VINCE is downstage-right, near to the side, sitting on a wooden rocking chair almost opposite, in shadows, arms folded on knees, staring at the floor; he could be asleep but a slight rocking movement confirms he is awake

There is silence for a few seconds; then JOE & BOOTS' voices can be heard OFF, but what they say is unintelligible

SOUND a sudden, loud burst of electric guitar.

JOE shout, ironically] Fucking tell ye

VINCE appears not to notice and BOB doesn't stir, although it is a very loud burst; volume is turned down, it can still be heard for a few seconds, then off.

BOOTS and JOE again heard chatting, but unintelligibly discussing the music for a few seconds. Then the door opens and BOOTS steps out, looking back into the interior:

JOE OFF-STAGE calmly) Don't worry about it Bootsie boy

BOOTS: irritation) I'm not gony worry about it.

JOE it's a proof-of-the-pie situation

BOOTS Pointless load of shite [shakes his head. He glances at VINCE, then looks about, his hands into his jeans pockets, looking for a smoke. He can't find the pack, he looks about, but unhurried - he is used to losing stuff and accepts it as a matter of course. But it is taking him longer to find the pack than usual; becoming irritated now, he goes to his drums and looks about, checks out the pockets of his jacket hanging over the back of a chair

BOOTS For fuck sake (sits on drums-stool, rubs his forehead; lifts a pint glass of water from the floor and swallows a mouthful)

PHIL comes from the sound-room, and looks around beneath the bench where BOB is lying

JOE from offstage, sound-room, calls:) They've got a wee white mark on them!

PHIL looks again beneath the bench, then calls back to JOE) They're no there

BOOTS to PHIL] Find my smokes while ye're at it

JOE still offstage) They're fucking there alright (enters and goes past PHIL, and to the other end of the bench; he collects a pair of headphones from nearby BOB, and returns to sound-room, gesturing to PHIL with them as he passes) A wee white mark, see!

PHIL Ye said they were under the bench

JOE pausing by PHIL, raises eyebrows, heavy irony) Sorry

BOOTS Did I leave my fags ben there?

JOE Fucking Ruth Rendell mysteries here, what am I the only cunt with a pair of peepers! Boots, ye've been smoking my fucking roll-ups all night! If ye have got fags I've never seen them! (To VINCE, jerking his thumb at BOOTS) Mister fucking Tap-City...he's been smoking my roll-ups for the past hour! (VINCE gazes across)

BOOTS Two fags I've had off ye and it's an issue. [looking on the floor] A simple question, that's all I asked.

VINCE is pointing to the calorgas fire, in a slow, relaxed way

JOE Nay such thing as a simple question. What dye think it is at all a fucking Beano Book crossword puzzle (now notices VINCE indicating the heater, sees the cigarettes) See, there's yer fags there (BOOTS just looks at JOE who exits into the sound-room, shaking his head and shutting door behind him.)

BOOTS rises, strolls to collect his fags) Christmas is coming. (VINCE is expressionless. BOOTS pauses by the calorgas fire, lights a fag, then to PHIL) Then there's the next millenium, it's fucking coming as well. (He strolls back to the drums. VINCE and PHIL watch him)

PHIL Aye well... (shrugs, smiles uncertainly)

BOOTS gesturing towards the sound-room) Naw but nay kidding ye man I canna go that laid-back thing, it gets on my fucking tits

PHIL grins) Proof-of-the-pie situation...

BOOTS shakes his head, tries for a drag on the fag, hand trembling a little, but fag has gone out; he relights it; none of this is exaggerated. VINCE is still watching him and BOOTS looks to him) The everything's-alright-on-the-night routine, it gets on my fucking nerves man it really does.

VINCE slowly) What...?

BOOTS pause, then gestures owards the sound-room] Fucking Popeye the sailorman

VINCE nods.

BOOTS gets his watch out from his jacket, sees the time and returns it, now adjusts something or other around his kit

sound sudden blast again from the sound-room; the volume decreases slowly

VINCE glances at BOOTS, expecting a comment

BOOTS instead of replying, raises his eyebrows, screws the fag nervously between his lips, examines the edge of his thumbnail

sound Some kind of whining noise from the engineer-room

VINCE Sounds interesting

PHIL It is (smiles)

SOUND noise abruptly switched off

BOB sits up, wiping his mouth, reaches for large bottle of water beneath the bench; he looks for his guitar, propped against the wall, fixes it over his shoulder; now sees BOOTS and waves) Mucker.

BOOTS smiles) Alright my man! (now returns to drums, strolling, and will start rearranging his things and stay generally occupied on minor footering, including biting his nails, rubbing his hands, and much twitching)

VINCE gets up again, strolls a pace, does a couple of stretching and breathing exercises, clears thout etc..

JOE ENTERS from the sound-room, rolling a smoke, carrying a can of beer; sits on the bench next to BOB

BOB to JOE) Cruncher...

JOE gives him a nod] What's the story Bob?

BOB Seven each (JOE grins)

PHIL glances at his watch, and to VINCE) When did Steel phone?

VINCE pause] Earlier.

BOOTS glances at VINCE, and pauses a moment) Earlier? What does that mean, earlier?

VINCE shrugs, puts his hands in his pockets, hunching the shoulders, strolls a couple of paces, staying downstage

BOOTS to PHIL and BOB) So I was the last to know - the rhythm section's fuckt and naybody tells the drummer (gets up from the stool, irritated)

VINCE shakes his head, smiling

PHIL He's away to see Kaz.

BOOTS glances from PHIL to VINCE

VINCE shrugs

JOE glances at his watch

PHIL He's getting him to change his mind

BOOTS from PHIL to VINCE] To change his mind?

VINCE shrugs

BOOTS Ah fuck [shakes head, wearily]

PHIL Steel'll talk him out it

BOOTS Naw he'll no (and to BOB) No this time he willnay.

PHIL He will [and to BOB] eh Bob?

BOB as if holding a fishing rod, and reeling in) A fisher of men

BOOTS What if he doesn't talk him into it? What if Kaz tells him to fuck off? Know what I mean, have we prepared for that scenario

PHIL sniffs) Steel's his mate

BOOTS So what man he's fucking my mate! He's Bob's mate. He's your mate too (glances along at VINCE, then at JOE, and shrugs) He's all our fucking mate.

VINCE Kaz is nobody's mate

OTHERS gaze at VINCE

PHIL I don't agree with that

BOOTS What he means is this is a waste of time. Kaz isn't coming. It doesn't matter that Steel's away round to see him. He's not going to listen to him. (shrugs) It's the usual crap [glances at his watch] I'd have been better at home watching the telly. (calls to Bob) Know what I mean Bob, Kaz isn't going to show, not tonight. It wouldn't surprise me if he didn't show at all

JOE rises from the bench, stretches

VINCE wearily) Is that a truth or a promise?

BOOTS frowning) What?

JOE meanwhile walks to stand by door into sound-room

VINCE looks at BOOTS, shaking his head

BOOTS What are you talking about?

VINCE The cunt's a problem Boots that's what I'm talking about. He's a problem the last two years

BOOTS He's not that bad

VINCE stares at him

BOOTS very defensive] He's not

VINCE Give us a break for fuck sake man if it isn't one thing it's another, fucking problems problems problems. I wish he had never come back that last time

BOOTS pause) Och he's got ower that.

VINCE Has he fuck got ower it. (taps the side of his head) It's always there. When ye leave a band ye leave a band. We shouldnay have took him back

BOOTS He's settled down now.

PHIL glances at Bob] Julie

BOB Juleeee

VINCE Has he fuck settled down

BOOTS He has

VINCE He fucking hasnay.

BOB Juleeee [glances round to JOE

JOE aside to BOB] Julie's the one

BOOTS She's settled him doon

VINCE It's the cunt's personality I'm talking about, no his fucking girlfriend. [to ALL] Yous dont see it the way I do because it's no yous he shows it tae.

VINCE taps himself on the chest). It's me that's got to put up with it, Mister Temperamental, fucking Madam Butterfly. We'd be better off with her, know what I'm talking about Madam bastarn Butterfly

JOE stands at side of door, arms folded) Madam bastarn Butterfly

VINCE Gadding about man, one minute he's here the next he isnay. Ye leave a band ye leave a band

BOOTS irritated] We've all left the band.

VINCE Have we!

BOOTS At one time or another, aye. [wearily, glances at PHIL] It happens to us all Phil. Guys offered him a deal [shrugs] They told him different things

VINCE He fell for it

BOOTS Fell for it, okay

VINCE He left us in the lurch. [shrugs to PHIL] He went with John Ramsay and them

PHIL Aw [interested]. Good band

VINCE shrugs] Aye they're alright

BOOTS They had a tour coming

VINCE heavy sarcasm] A tour...!

BOOTS stares at VINCE and shakes his head

VINCE ironic] Oh when the big time comes

JOE sings] I'm gonna get me some
I'm gonna do the things
my poppa never done.

BOB Cruncher!

JOE winks to Bob

BOOTS shrugs) It happens to us all

VINCE The guy's forty years of age

BOOTS It doesnay matter yer age

VINCE But how many times? When's he gauny learn! Eh? Give us a break man, I've kept fucking telling him.

BOOTS Ye have to find these things out yerself

VINCE Aye well he's found out by now. We've fucking found him out. (turns aside) I have anyway. (makes his wey back to the chair, but strolling, casually as possible)

JOE looks to BOOTS but BOOTS looks away; JOE looks to PHIL and BOB) I'm no expecting any inside information and all that but what the fuck's going on?

PHIL looks to VINCE while BOB gives an elaborate shrugs.

VINCE There's a rumour abroad that Kaz's chucked it, cashed in his chips, Hollywood phoned him up.

BOB A star is born

JOE Again?

VINCE Again, aye, exactly.

JOE glances at his watch] Could he no have waited till the morning?

VINCE points at JOE] Fucking exactly man

BOB Exactimon

PHIL to JOE) Steel's away to talk him out it, to get him to come back

BOOTS Hh! (shakes his head)

VINCE sarcastic] I'm wringing my hands here, oh what're we gauny do!
[shaking head] A veritable turning point for us all Joe we're talking career-wise!
(He is rocking slightly in the chair, amused

JOE A career-wise situation eh!

VINCE You said it. [heavy sarcasm] We're all fuckt. Kaz has tendered the resignation [to PHIL] And you're just in the door too, and now we're fuckt

PHIL smiles] That's what I was thinking

BOOTS staring at VINCE, irritated by him

PHIL Exciting times

VINCE At this point in one's life

JOE Exciting times Bob!

BOB Indeedy doo

BOOTS glances at BOB.

BOB crosses one leg ower the other and lays his elbow on his knee, cups his chin in the palm of his hand. Now he notices BOOTS watching him) Times is tough el Bootseroh

BOOTS We've lost two players in the space of six month Bob know what I mean? (holds his hands palms upwards, then to VINCE)

VINCE shrugs

BOOTS I think I'm missing something here?

VINCE Have faith

BOOTS Two players in six month?

PHIL smile) I'm here now

BOOTS I'm no saying that Phil. It's great your here. It's just... know what I mean, we cannay afford to lose Kaz, no the now.

JOE Steel's gony talk to him

BOOTS to JOE) Ye know what like Kaz is.

VINCE calls] A fucking arsehole aye! (BOOTS stares at him) He's a fucking arsehole man come on, he's put us through hoops

BOOTS He does the business

VINCE Aye fucking show business

BOOTS He does the business

VINCE It's ma heid he does

BOOTS Ye know where ye are with him

VINCE Aye up a beanpole, a fucking gumtree

BOOTS wearily) Christ sake Vince

VINCE The one thing ye dont know is where ye are with him, that's the one thing ye dont know

BOOTS I'm talking about the music man know what I mean, the fucking music

VINCE pause, sniffs)

BOOTS Ye rely on him. [then pointing at VINCE] You rely on him. I fucking rely on him. We fucking rely on him. [pause] So what if Steel doesn't get him

VINCE laconic) Aye what if

BOOTS What if he really has chucked it?

VINCE What if what if

BOOTS Fucking what if! You've just lost a rhythm section, that's what's fucking what if

VINCE sniffs) We'll handle it

BOOTS We'll handle it... (shakes head, glances at BOB, jerking his thumb back in the direction of VINCE)

BOB Times is tough el Bootsie boy (suppresses a yawn, then rises and strolls to get his guitar)

BOOTS after a pause, and to VINCE) So what's the night all about anyway? I mean the now? What are we all here for?

VINCE smiles, still rocking on the chair

JOE Eh, excuse me boys, I know it isn't my place to ask and all that, I'm just the technical apparatus, but are we gonna do any work the night?

VINCE still smiling) Any thoughts Joe we're looking for a sax.

JOE Serious?

VINCE We need musical inspiration of the horn variety.

JOE chuckles] I was aye a horny bastard

VINCE Inspiration Joe no fucking copulation

JOE to BOB] Big words the night

BOOTS irritated] Fucking inspiration! [sits down at drums, finds and lifts an old newspaper from the floor, reads for a moment then drops it to floor again]

PHIL meanwhile. Ironic) The source of all art. Eh? Inspiration. (he glances about but nobody takes him up on it.

BOB returns to the bench and sits, footering with his guitar)

VINCE sits back on the chair, arms behind his head, rocking)

JOE calls to him) See they results the day Vince?

VINCE pause) Naw

JOE Cheltenham.

VINCE vague interest] Cheltenham, was it?

JOE Aye, a good card. But these fucking favourites man? Hoh! Murder polis, a fucking nightmare, ye want to have seen them man, fucking blundered at the first, blundered at the last, unseated the fucking rider in the fucking middle. They jockeys man they cannay sit on a horse! What the fuck do they get paid for!

VINCE Hell mend ye for betting favourites

JOE I wasnay betting favourites, it was all these other poor bastards. I wasnay betting at all

BOB grinning to PHIL and jerking his thumb at JOE] Cruncher.

VINCE So what were ye doing in the bookie ya cunt, keeping out the rain?

JOE Absafuckinglootely. It was pishing down. Honest. I was just out for the messages

VINCE Ha ha

JOE Nay kidding man I just popped the heid in

VINCE Just popped the heid in!

JOE I was just seeing the results. I was picking the weans up.

VINCE pretends to playing the fiddle

JOE Listen to who's talking anywey! (to BOB and BOOTS) Ye've got to laugh at this cunt! (to PHIL) Telling ye son this yin, he was the world's worst. (to BOB and BOOTS) Eh? We're no wanting to dredge up life's fucking also-rans

VINCE Naw, we're no

JOE jerks his thumb at VINCE, aside to PHIL] Fucking horses! The cunt pawned the PA system

VINCE wearily] Shut it man

JOE Shut fuck all man. (now addressing PHIL) I was roadying at the time son. So we're away doing some gig somewhere, fucking outer limits eh (glancing at BOB and BOOTS)

BOB Outer limits

JOE Knocking our pans in, trying to earn a wage. And this cunt, fucking John MacCririck, he's stuck the entire bundle on some stupid fucking nag, a three-legged donkey, some stupid odds-on shot! Cannay get beat!! He's put on the tank, every last penny.

VINCE chuckles

BOOTS to PHIL] Our wages

JOE looks across at VINCE] Nay wonder I chucked it. I spent merr time stealing gear off other bands. [to PHIL] It wasnay a roadie they wanted man it was fucking what do ye call that cunt, fucking Butch Cassidy Man, the Cisco Kid

BOB forms an imitation pistol with his right hand and points it at Joe] Cruncher!

BOOTS laughs to PHIL, taps side of his head

JOE Nay wonder I chucked the roadying man! We'd have been as well setting up the PA in William fucking Hills, daeing a benefit night for A P McCoy. Cat on a fucking hot tin roof man I'm telling ye! [to Phil] Ye're out there trying to earn a wage son know what I mean!

BOOTS Phil

JOE Phil, aye, ye're out there. And he goes and blows it man. On a fucking nag, a nag! Fucking scabby fucking nag!

VINCE absently] It wasnay scabby... [now sitting forward and patting his chest) Anyhow, it was me trying to get yous a wage. I'm still fucking trying!

BOOTS Ha ha

VINCE Fucking right man. I mean how many of you cunts have I got to look after at all! And then the fucking weans. Every cunt's getting a wean these days. Naybody heard of restraint?

JOE Restraint?

VINCE Birth control man, cause ye're in a band, it doesnay mean ye rely on the auld fucking rhythm method, know what I mean, it's a packet of three ye need

BOOTS It's a packet of two nowadays

VINCE How many mouths has a guy to feed. Know what I'm talking about! This is a blues band no a fucking what-dye-call-it, where all the weans go

PHIL pause] A nursery?

VINCE A bastarn fucking nursery, aye. All my life man Fred Astaire, that's me, Daddy bastarn Longlegs.

BOB makes a face] Dahh-day

JOE grins to BOB] The baby's dimple on the baby's knee

VINCE Where does the money go?

BOOTS We know where the fucking monmey goes! [and to PHIL] like that gig we done doon in - wherever the fuck it was (looks to the others) Ye know that scenario? Ye meet the guy promoting the gig and the first thing ye notice is the cunt's got a red face, he's sweating like fuck. (now to PHIL) Know what I mean Phil the promoter, mister moneybags, he's all nervous

JOE chuckles] A bundle of twitches.

BOB Riding along in my automobile

BOOTS to PHIL] Know how? Cause there's fuck all in the kitty man that's how, he's done the fucking dough, he's got nay money, the wages have gone

JOE A fucking disappearing trick.

BOB Magic moments

JOE points at VINCE] Auld Perry Como

VINCE now laughing

BOOTS Aye well that was him [gesturing across at VINCE]. He found a game of blackjack and stuck the lot on black. Up comes red.

VINCE Perjury perjury

JOE to BOOTS] Ye're talking about roulette, no blackjack

BOOTS Whatever the fuck.

JOE to PHIL] He doesnay know the difference

BOOTS to BOB) Nay wonder Chuck Berry was paranoiac man he got my entire sympathy.

BOB Exactimon

BOOTS holds his hand palm upwards, gestures] Put that money there, right there, before the curtain goes up, that's what auld Chuck Berry says. And if they didnay put it there there was nay gig.

JOE Quite right

BOOTS That's the fucking deal man that is the fucking deal. And that is my policy, my fucking policy, from now on

VINCE Fucking funeral policy

BOOTS We'd be better off playing bowling club socials. Fucking pensioner nights. Go-as-ye-please. Line dancers unite, heedirum hodirum, Scottish country dancing. We might earn a few quid

JOE and PHIL chuckling quietly

BOB just watching BOOTS and VINCE

BOOTS turns away, deadly serious] I'm sick of working for nothing

VINCE Aw. I wondered what ye were on about. [calls to BOB and PHIL] Heh, I know what he's talking about now, it's that wedding gig we done for Roger a couple of weeks ago

BOOTS mutters] Gig! That wasnay a gig. Fucking charity shot. Everything we do's for charity nowadays

VINCE It was a wedding

BOOTS Wedding! Kings of the Karaoke!

VINCE Ye know what the score was! (points at BOOTS, calls to PHIL]
He knows what the score was. It was a mate's wedding

BOOTS It wasnay his fucking wedding

VINCE to BOOTS] He was your mate!

BOOTS shakes head

VINCE shrugs] It was for Rodger

BOB calls] Rodgerro

JOE glance at Phil] Some man thon

VINCE to Phil] He played with us years ago.

JOE Rare bass

BOB Rodgerro

PHIL I knew he was a friend

VINCE He was a friend, it was a favour

BOOTS It was his nephew's wedding

JOE I thought it was his son

BOOTS agitated] It was his fucking nephew man he doesnay have a
son he's got three fucking daughters

VINCE to Phil] Mind you, I thought we were getting paid [shrugs]

BOOTS grunts, angrily] Paid! Hoh, fuck! Rodger!

BOB Rodgerrrr the dodgerrrr

JOE Exactimon

VINCE shrugs] Cela vie

BOOTS Cela vie my fucking arse [starts footering more noisily with his equipment. Looks roundabout his kit, can't find something]

VINCE staring at BOOTS. Now turns to PHIL] Rodger played with us for a while son know what I mean, ye're expecting him to know the score.

PHIL shrugs

VINCE He knew we should get paid

PHIL Ach well, he was a mate.

VINCE sighs]

PHIL So we done the gig for a mate

BOOTS suddenly] Fuck mates man

BOB rises from the bench, slow movements) Fuck mates man (walks to where the keyboards are positioned, then turns and calls) Fuck mates man...

JOE raises his eyebrows, glances at Phil then at Vince

VINCE frowns, about to speak, but doesnt, he is tapping his hands on the side of the chair; he continues the tapping, very tense

JOE watches VINCE, then BOB, then BOOTS, and back again

BOB staring at VINCE and BOOTS

PHIL observes them all

VINCE still tense, begins a sort of breathless whistle as if through gritted teeth

BOOTS trying to reign in his tension) We have to stop this Vvince, I cannay handle it. I cannay

VINCE patiently) Handle what?

BOOTS shaking his head) I cannay handle it

JOE though interested is aware this matter doesnt concern him; takes out his tobacco tin, starts rolling a smoke

VINCE It's no that simple

BOOTS Naw,

VINCE It isnay but

BOOTS Naw, it never is.

VINCE That's right

BOOTS heavy irony] It's all complicated int it, everything, it's complicated, life, complicated, all complicated.

NOBODY RESPONDS

JOE looks from one to another] The birds and the bees! [grins at BOB]

NOBODY RESPONDS

BOB staring at VINCE

VINCE starts humming a tune, apropros of nothing, almost absently

PHIL slight irritation) It doesnay have to be that complicated either

VINCE stops humming; looks at him, puzzled.

PHIL holds the look for three or four seconds then looks away

VINCE frowns.

PHIL sniffs

VINCE glances at BOB who shakes his head and gets engrossed in examining his guitar. Now he glances at Phil again

PHIL returns the look then studies the floor.

VINCE to JOE) Know something Joe, I'm beginning to feel threatened (gets up from the rocking chair, hands in pockets)

PHIL Naybody should feel threatened

VINCE Glad to hear it

JOE winks to BOOTS] If we're gony get threatened I'm closing the studio man I'm going hame

BOOTS looks to VINCE, shrugs

VINCE to BOOTS] Know what I mean but?

BOOTS I'm just sick of it Vince. I cannay help it. If that's what I feel that's what I feel [pause] I dont want cunts coming up and singing with us. Fucking Neil Diamond man, I'm no here for all that shite

BOB Tie a yellow ribbon

PHIL guffaws

BOOTS shakes head, also guffaws] Fucking tie a yellow ribbon man. Aye and fucking hang yerself

PHIL grins] From the old oak tree

BOOTS It does yer brains in. Who was that cunt requested it?

PHIL chuckles] The bride's feyther, he was wanting a dance

BOOTS Fucking halfwit bowly bastard

VINCE It's a wedding Boots, people want to dance

BOOTS No to that kind of shite

BOB The Dashing White Serjeant

PHIL laughs, to BOB] You should've done the Elmore James version!

JOE It was a gig but wint it. Okay I mean it's no my place to say, but fuck it, it keeps ye on the straight and narrow

VINCE A wee bit of variety.

JOE If ye dont get a change in life ye'll go crackers man ye'll wind up fucking... [stuck for words]

BOB Insanitee

BOOTS Tell me about it

JOE Naw but ye've got to have variety in life. Especially in a band, otherwise ye're fuckt. Sam and Dave man the knives are flying everywhere (glancing sideways at BOB) Am I right am I wrong?

BOOTS Joe it's no about that

JOE Some bands using this place, they cannay even look at each other man they're like fucking what-dye-call-it, an auld married couple man. Naybody talks. Sam and Dave

BOOTS That's a feud, we're no talking about a feud

VINCE So what are we talking about?

BOOTS stares at him

VINCE Eh? What are we talking about?

BOOTS pause; shakes his head; glances at PHIL

PHIL pause) Life

JOE baffled] Life?

PHIL smiles, then looks at VINCE and shrugs

BOB meanwhile folds his arms

VINCE God save us, here's another yin found religion! Eh Bob? (smiles at BOB

BOB deadpan, frowns at him

VINCE You as well Bob! Fucking mutiny on the Bounty. [looks at BOOTS, then back to PHIL] Et tu Brute. Conspiracies conspiracies

BOOTS irritably) It's no that Vince

VINCE Fucking looks like it to me. Kaz dumps the band and I get the blame, mister fall-guy

BOOTS This isnay about Kaz

VINCE Aye it is.

BOOTS It's more than that

VINCE Whatever.

BOOTS Vince, it's more than that

VINCE stares at him

BOOTS shrugs and looks away

PHIL It's the way things are going [sniffs]

VINCE to PHIL) That's a beauty, ten minutes in the door and he's forming a union!

BOOTS annoyed] He's no ten minutes in the door

VINCE Give us a break eh!

BOB calls] Vince

VINCE What?

BOB You're an awkward person

VINCE Have I got a choice? (looks from BOB to BOOTS) Eh?

PHIL All Boots is saying is there's stuff to talk about

VINCE So what, there's stuff to talk about - there's always stuff to talk about. No the night but, we're here to work

BOOTS ironic grunt

VINCE to all] That's what we're here for. [glances at his watch]

JOE sighs] Aye, well...

PHIL shrugs

VINCE Eh? (pause) Good, that's that settled. (sees BOB watching him)
All right Bob?

BOB folds his arms, purses his lips

VINCE frowns] As soon as Steel gets here we go

BOOTS Huh

VINCE What're you huhhhing at!

BOOTS stares at him

VINCE stares back at him

BOOTS When Steel gets here we'll talk about it. [sits at the drums and maybe touches the cymbal, lifts a brush

VINCE watching him

BOOTS sniffs

VINCE sarcastic) What d'ye mean Steel's in it as well? (to JOE) Sounds serious Joe eh! (returns to the rocking chair and sits, draws one leg over the other; clasps his hands on his knees. He glances from BOOTS to JOE to BOB, PHIL; now back to BOOTS) Take a can of beer Boots, give yer throat a tonic.

BOOTS just looks at him.

VINCE Yes [grins and looks away. Then he smiles and rubs his hands

PHIL elbows resting on his guitar, and to VINCE) There's nay need for that

VINCE For what?

PHIL Ye're no letting anybody talk

VINCE Is that right son?

PHIL It's shite [sniffs]

VINCE mocking] Aw, is that what it is... [begins rocking gently on the chair) Kaz is dead, long live the king. (smiles to himself, then closes his eyes) Ye think life moves on, it doesnay

PHIL It's supposed to be a band

VINCE Is that right, a band? Aw good, tell me about bands? What is it, share and share alike? is that what ye're talking about? (pause) Now we're getting somewhere, as Stan said to Lolly - ice cream lolly I'm talking about. (to PHIL) See if I was you son I'd go back to school, ye'd get more of a learning experience there so ye would. Join the school orchestra or something, the Vienna fucking boys'

choir. Maybe ye should give Kaz a phone, the BBC are looking for fucking jingles. Jingle jingle little star... (pause, breathes in deeply)

BOOTS exasperated rather than angry) Jesus christ Vince that's you going right over the score as usual

VINCE sitting forward) Well nay wonder

BOOTS It's fucking out of order man.

VINCE He knows I dont mean it [smiles to PHIL] Eh son!

PHIL just looks at him

BOB Fuck mates eh, fuck mates

VINCE Bob it was nay me that said that

BOB Fuck mates

VINCE irritated] It's Kaz that's fuckt us. No the other wey about

JOE Ye dont know he's chucked it yet, no for sure.

PHIL Yeh

JOE Steel might talk him round (glances at BOOTS) Eh? Steel's good at that game

BOOTS No this time Joe, I doubt it. We're definitely gony have to talk. Sooner or later...

VINCE Aye right Boots, sooner or later, fair enough, but no the now, no when we're here to work

BOOTS So when?

VINCE It doesnay matter when, no in the long run, cause nothing's gony come out of it. Life moves on and we stey the same, we move on and life steys the same.

BOOTS Without the sax?

VINCE I know without the sax, I know.

BOOTS We're gony miss it

VINCE I know we're gony miss it. But we've got by without it before.
[glances at his watch] One certainty anyway, Kaz isnay gony come the night.

PHIL Steel might bring him

VINCE Naw

PHIL Ye never know

JOE Steel's the man

VINCE No this time

BOOTS suspiciously] How come?

VINCE Cause I fucking telt him, that's how come. [to ALL, shrugs] I telt
Kaz to fuck off. Capital fucking eff. Away and take a running fuck to yerself, that's
what I telt him

BOOTS sighs

PHIL observes ALL

VINCE So Steel's on a wild goose chase. Tweety tweet. (calls to BOB)
Heh, the fisher of men, I hope he's got a rod with him, fucking fly in the sky, it's a
kite he'll need

BOOTS wearily] Och fuck... Vince

VINCE fidgety) I telt him there was nay coming back, no this time

JOE worried] Did ye no tell Steel?

VINCE sniffs

BOOTS ironic) So Steel doesnay know?

VINCE Nope

BOB shakes head] Nopah dopah

VINCE Fucking ropah fucking dopah

PHIL So Steel's away to get Kaz and it's all just... [frowns] It's a load
of shite?

VINCE D'ye like it son? I do too. It's a fucking good yin. It's politics, they call it the dirty tricks department? Never heard of Watergate?

BOOTS Ah you dont change Vince.

JOE rises from the bench] Mm [scratches his head]

BOOTS to BOB) That's a cracker man innit it!

BOB El crackalorro [turns and strolls about]

JOE shakes head and begins whistling. He stoops to lift an empy beer bottle from under the bench, then drifts off to the studio

PHIL to Vince] So what do we do now?

VINCE rubs hands together briskly, paces about] Okay chaps, time to make a start

PHIL incredulity) What?

VINCE We're here to work son.

PHIL glances at BOB

BOB shrugs, and moves towards kitchen/toilet door. EXITS

VINCE to PHIL, but not unkindly) Ye cannay stop the music. What do ye think we're fukt cause we're missing a couple of players? [smiles] That'll be the day [stands a moment then moves to the amps, PA etc.

PHIL shrugs, looks to BOOTS

BOOTS frowns, shakes his head slowly

VINCE doesnt notice then busies about with the equipment, and then speaks while he does it] If it's a learning experience, I'll give ye a learning experience, fucking learning experience, Noddy Goes to Nursery. (busies about with the amps and PA etc)

PHIL puzzled, frowns at BOOTS

BOOTS taps the side of his temple, indicating VINCE has cracked

VINCE busies about with the equipment, mutters to himself) Old MacDonald had a Farm right enough. [pause] Peeeoh peeeoh peeanohhh peeanohhh peeanohhh

BOOTS calls] Heh you

VINCE What

BOOTS You're fucking embarrassing me man!

VINCE absently] Yes Boots

BOOTS Ye're embarrassing me

VINCE You'll get over it

BOOTS Nay kidding man

VINCE sighs] We're here to work old buddy, we need to sort out the new stuff, one way or another, so that's what we'll do.

BOOTS Aw

VINCE frowns, looks about] Where the fuck's Bob?

BOOTS turns to PHIL, shaking his head

VINCE noticing] Honest Boots, I'm no disagreeing with ye, there's things to talk about, fine, it's just now isnay the time.

BOOTS There's never a fucking time

BOB ENTERS, unnoticed, yawns, looking about

VINCE stops, and slowly) Naw, that's right. We've got the new stuff and we're ready to go on it. Eh? I'll say it if nayn of yous will. [glances at PHIL for a moment] We've never sounded better.

PHIL looks to BOOTS

VINCE shrugs] Dont take my word for it. But I wouldnay say it if I didnay mean it. Eh Bob? Ask Bob son, he'll tell ye. (now calls to BOOTS) We're getting fucking tight as fuck Bootsie boy (clenches and brandishes his right fist] We're fucking pushing it

BOOTS sighs

VINCE resumes busying about at the amps etc.] Forget the shite, it's wasted energy. Wasted days and wasted nights. That's what we're talking about. [to PHIL] Know what I mean, ye get angry, we all get angry, doesnay matter who it is, fucking really angry! Good. So save it. (grins) That's an order son.

BOB calls] Phil.

VINCE and to nobody in particular) Who knows, we might end up with a performance

PHIL pause) Ye really do step ower some boundaries

VINCE That's what boundaries are for son, stepping ower.

PHIL Ye cannay just humiliate people

VINCE Is that what I'm doing?

BOOTS It's exactly what ye're doing!

PHIL What if Steel doesnay come back?

VINCE What?

PHIL Once Kaz tells him it was you

VINCE What was me?

PHIL Ye telt him no to come back

VINCE Fucking right I did and I'd do it again

PHIL Aye but then if Steel gets pissed off at you, so he doesnay come back.

VINCE frowns

BOOTS That's too subtle

PHIL He's gony find out it's a set up.

VINCE [pause] Things'll take their course

BOOTS to BOB] Know what I mean man, when's it gony end Sax, bass, keyboards.... Jesus christ

BOB pause) Times is tough

BOOTS Fucking tough alright... (reaches for another fag but can't find the pack, starts looking round the floor

VINCE checking his watch, then the PA and amps) Heh son...!

PHIL What?

VINCE pointing to amp and speakers] A wee minute eh, yer advice

PHIL goes across

NB KEEP THE FOLLOWING DIALOGUE TO THE BACKGROUND. VINCE DISCUSSES TECHNICAL STUFF WITH PHIL UNTIL FURTHER DIRECTION. AUDIENCE SHOULD LOSE INTEREST IN IT. WHAT TRANSPIRES BETWEEN BOB, BOOTS AND JOE IS UPPERMOST.

BOOTS meanwhile, still looks for his fags

BOB Boots...

BOOTS What... (He follows BOB's gaze and sees his cigarettes lying, stoops to get one, and to BOB] Cheers Bob

JOE ENTERS, walking over to VINCE and PHIL) Time is it anyway!

VINCE Yon time

JOE to PHIL) Its always yon time with you bastards (collects something from other side of room, returning to sound-room, pausing and to PHIL) How d'ye spell yon anyway? is it yih aw nn, I've never been sure. (he EXITS into sound-room, leaving the door open wid

JOE OFF STAGE whistling, no recognisable tune.

BOOTS to BOB, points at sound-room] Listen to fucking Jiminy Cricket

JOE ENTERS, still whistling, polybag of beer in hand] Life is ever the proverbial

BOB Cruncherrrr

JOE calls to PHIL) In fact son, often ye find it's the proverbial
proverbial

VINCE The proverbial proverbial... (suddenly) What's the opposite of
an egghead?

JOE taking out a can) You

VINCE It's a joke ya bastard

JOE The opposite of an egghead...! [points to VINCE'S head] Listen
to fucking Barbie doll. Eh what like is he at all (to BOOTS and PHIL). Egghead!
He's got a cheek talking with the heid of hair he's got. Ye could wipe the fucking
flerr with it

VINCE Time it was wiped with something, it's a fucking disgrace. Look,
fucking shite and fucking fuck knows what. The rats are wearing dungarees man.

Joe As long as it isnay polis uniforms

PHIL meanwhile rises, exits by door to kitchen/toilet.

BOOTS watches him leave

VINCE This isnay a bastarn studio man it's annickers fucking midden.
Eh? when ye gony put in a coffee machine ya cunt!

JOE Coffee machine. The money I make affa yous bastards! A jar a
Camp coffee essence man that's what you're fucking due

BOB Chicoridee

JOE Chicoridee, like the man says

VINCE shakes head to JOE) Complicated life innit

JOE It's a karma situation

VINCE Instant Karma

JOE Instant custard

BOOTS laughs.

VINCE Fucking instant sausages!

JOE Aye! Eh Bob, instant sausahgeees

BOB Sausahgeees

PHIL enterst. He goes to behind the keyboards, his guitar is near to
the bass-guitar)

VINCE Mind we were looking for a name? That's what we should've
called ourselves, the Instant Sausahgees.

JOE laughs] Aye, mind that time?

VINCE laughs] The Mantovani Folk Five

JOE laughs, calls to PHIL) The Mantovani Folk Five!

PHIL Pre punk?

VINCE Pre-punk! Cheeky bastard

JOE chuckling) True but. Ahead of our time as usual, eh Boots?

BOOTS The Mantovani Folk Five

JOE Where was that gig again? Outer Winchester or
somefuckingplace, down in England.

VINCE Cannay mind

BOOTS Greater Winchester

JOE It wisnay greater Winchester

VINCE It wisnay even Winchester it was fucking Dorchester or
something, Barchester

BOOTS It wasnay Barchester

JOE Barchester man that's fucking a bottle of plonk man I remember
it well, Barchester Towers, a dandy wee sherry, I drank it regularly at one time.
Mind the auld Barchester Bob?

BOB Barchester Catheedrellll

JOE sings] You're bringing me down

VINCE Well whatever

JOE to PHIL) Barchester Towers

PHIL just looks

JOE The auld sherry. It puts hair on the chest that stuff. Ever try it?

BOOTS to JOE] Heh what was that Bob Dylan story again?

VINCE Chortle Chortle

BOOTS The Malmaison Hotel. First gig in Glasgow, eh?

JOE Aye, Bobby Dee, he's just a boy at the time sittin in a corner wi
nay cunt to talk to, so one of the bellboys and him start a conversation, the bellboy's
just finished his shift, so Bobby Dee drops the bellboy a few quid, away and get us
a couple of bottles of wine

VINCE The good auld plonk

BOB El plonkerooooo

BOOTS guffawing] The fucking Malmaison lobby!

JOE The bellboy doesnay know what he's talking about, wine, he
thinks its like fucking Glasgow wine know what I mean son the old sherry, a bottle
of scud, he doesnay know about Claret or Burgundy or any of that high class cargo,
it's the South African sherry he's looking for

VINCE to Phil] South African sherry son [laughing]

BOB El Plonkerooo

JOE Fucking Eldorado man a glass of the auld Eldee, the old Lon
Channy, that's what he's looking for, a bottle of Lanliq. So that's what he bought
Dylan. So the two of them sat there guzzling it

VINCE The auld scuderooo

BOOTS In the Malmaison lobby! A couple of bottles of Lanliq. Dylan
didnay know how much it cost, he just gied the guy a score or something. The
bellboy stuck the change in his pocket.

JOE Two bottles of scud

VINCE chuckles] Everybody's got a Dylan story

JOE frowns] What was that one he wrote eftir it again [speaks the following but gives it a rhythm] Oh the streets of Rome, are damp and dusty

BOOTS It wasnay that one

JOE occasion Some fucking thing anyway, it was to commemorate the

BOB Paint your masterpiece

VINCE Paint yer fucking wagon man

JOE Fucking Porter fucking Waggoner

VINCE laughs

PHIL smiling, still observing others

BOB Last traiaiainnnnnn

JOE To San Fernando

BOOTS Heh Joe I mind that gig, Barchester or whatever the fuck. Remember it Bob! [gestures at VINCE] Fucking cunt y fucking egghead there, he went off his trolley

VINCE Did I fuck

BOOTS Aye ye did!

BOB looks from one to the other

VINCE Ye're mixing me up with somebody else

BOOTS It was fucking you man

VINCE Naw it wasnay. (pause) Heh, the instant sausahgees but eh! what a name for a band!

JOE It's got a ring to it. Just listen... [puts his hand to his ear] I can hear it I can hear it. Ching ching, ching ching. I'll go as far as to say that it is a veritable eye-catcher of a name (to BOB) The Instant Sausahgees, a veritable eye-catcher. In fact, chaps, it's a fucking ear waggler!

BOOTS guffaws] An ear waggler!

VINCE laughs

BOB An ear wagglerrohh!

BOOTS laughing to PHIL) Fucking folk music man know what I mean, scabby jerseys and aw that! How's it gon Percy, oh hullo there Phillipa

JOE Yes Cecil, hullo Cyril

BOOTS Here's Lord Sudbury ower for his fucking high tea, the rantin rovin sailors oh, get the fucking ploughs out

VINCE to PHIL) Telling ye son they had booked us in for a gig at this place, I dont know, a lawn tennis club or something it was a folk night, they thought we were a fucking folk band, I mean how the fucking hell...! Joe was roadying for us! - a folk band! Look at the cunt!

JOE Heh, steady

BOOTS Rantin rovin sailors oh

VINCE to PHIL] Know what I mean but! Where did they get one frae, a fucking bastarn fucking folk band! Worse than Dylan gon electric man when we walked in, ye want to have heard them

JOE winks to PHIL) The usual!

VINCE I'm talking about the pin drapping, the veritable fucking pin [gestures at JOE] as Joseppi here would put it,

BOOTS James Brown at an English ballet class

JOE Outer Winchester or wherever the fuck. They were looking for hush puppies and hairy fucking pullovers just like Bootsie boy says, ploughs and fucking Clydesdale ponies

all laughing

JOE Collie dugs and kilties. Fucking Tam O'Shanter and pibroch

all laughing

BOB saluting JOE] Cruncherrrr

JOE to PHIL] No kidding ye son

BOOTS grinning to PHIL) A change to the advertised programme, The Mantovani Folk Five - turn up the amp! full throttle

PHIL grins] The Mantovani Folk Five

JOE That's what they called theirs. The guy in charge asked yer man there [pointing at VINCE, assumes upper class English voice] And what is your name?

VINCE Chortle chortle

JOE So he goes we're the Mantovani Folk Five. The Mentovenni Fouk Five he says how cherming. Mind you he had took a shine to egghead here

VINCE laughs] True

all laughing

JOE with relish] The Mantovani Folk Five

BOOTS still to PHIL] Some tittle man a fucking cracker [jerking his thumb at VINCE) Then the cunt went aff his trolly

BOB The flippertigibbet!

JOE laughing, pointing at VINCE) oh fuck Bob dont remind me!

PHIL grins, from one to the other] What is that, flippertigibbet!

BOOTS laughing) The flippertigibbet! I remember!

VINCE Dont listen to these bastards Phil. It's exaggerated crap! (rubs his hands) Who wants some tea/ I'm gony stick on the kettle

PHIL I've stuck it on

VINCE Did ye... [very surprised]

JOE chuckling) The flippertigibbet

BOOTS Where does he dream them up!

all laughing

VINCE eventually to BOOTS) Heh Boots, I didnay think yon gig was as bad as all that I mean we made a few converts. Mind Bob was doing his Albert Collins faces?

BOOTS Oh christ aye!

JOE starts doing Albert Collins faces while mid-air blues picking

VINCE A few wummin started getting into it. It wasnay that bad

JOE Ye kidding?

VINCE Seen worse, played worse

BOOTS What ye talking about Vince, outer Winchester or last week

VINCE sighs)

BOOTS Eh?

VINCE Give us a break man...

BOOTS Aye, that's what we all need

pause

PHIL brightly] Tea... [exits]

VINCE amazed, to Bob] The boy put the tea on!

BOB just looks at him

VINCE sarcastic] What's the world coming tae, know what I mean?

JOE Naybody ever knows what you mean

Nobody else is interested

JOE to VINCE) And what about that last race on the telly there, last Saturday, did ye see it? That so-called hurdle race! Eh? Five fallers? Know what I mean man a ten horse hurdle race, five fallers, it's no a stewards enquiry they need it's fucking Sherlock Holmes, that's who they need man - find out if it was horses they were racing man I think it was a fucking herd of fucking coos, milking coos, jesus christ, trying to jump fences [graphic with hands], big tits all wobbling! A

disgrace so it was. All the poor punters too, know what I mean, a ten horse race and five of them fall?

VINCE doesnt respond

JOE pause, turns to BOOTS) Did ye no see it?

BOOTS Naw

JOE now gazes across at BOB)

BOB raises an arm in salute) Cruncher...!

JOE Did ye no see it but? (pause) Mind you it was predictable

VINCE It's always predictable

JOE Aye but that was really predictable

BOOTS mild irony) What was? (sighs, rubs his eyes)

JOE heavily ironic) The result at Ibrox Park on Saturday!

BOOTS Aw naw [shuts his eyes, shoulders hunched, head drooping)

JOE Seriously but these huns, I mean there's nay question that was a penalty. Just nay question.

VINCE Some things dont change eh!

JOE But ye knew they were never gony get it. It was a compass and set-square situation

VINCE Ah well there ye go

JOE Och I know but fuck sake, ye get sick of all these masonic deals. How long's that it's been happening

VINCE Two hunner years

JOE I'm talking about the land of the Huns man, Ibrox Park?

VINCE shrugs

BOB starts suddenly in on the theme from Bonanza, taking everybody by surprise. He maintains it.

It is expected that BOB will bring it to a close at the bridging section but he keeps it going through this, if anything it's getting stronger. Now he walks a step towards BOOTS.

BOOTS is prepared and now explodes into action on drums

VINCE shouts] Whoopeee!

JOE laughing, begins skelping the sides of his thigh, galloping to and fro

VINCE pretends to shoot at him] Bang bang

JOE makes loud neighing noises

PHIL enters with a tray and cups of tea, and laughs, delighted

JOE does a Chuck Berry duck-walk routine

VINCE laughing, calls] Go for it Joe

The duo are doing a real performance and VINCE is aware of that throughout

BOB and BOOTS now end it

BOOTS glances at PHIL, winks

PHIL grinning) Alright BOB!

BOB in mock English voice] Haow naow braown caow

BOB, PHIL and BOOTS are chuckling

VINCE after a due pause, calls) Fucking bonanza ya bastards!

JOE Yehh!

VINCE Bonanza...!

BOB glancing at JOE) Haow naow braown caow...

JOE What ye looking at me for!

BOB chuckling) Cruncher...!

VINCE onto his feet) A performance boys, see what I mean, channelling yer anger channelling yer emotion channelling yer fucking rage rage rage. Fucking rage Bob know what I mean!

BOB chuckles, looks to BOOTS and jerks his thumb in VINCE's direction

VINCE bares his teeth) If I had fangs I'd bare them, I'd bite yez I'd fucking bite yez ya bastards (clenching his fists)

BOOTS Aye fuck you too man

PHIL I thought you had fangs anyway

VINCE rubbing his hands) It's exactly what I said but. Predictable as fuck! (slaps hands again, looking roundabout) Tea and biscuits, tea and biscuits, the order of the day (genuine excitement)

PHIL Fucking bounty bars! (smiles, glancing at BOB)

VINCE to BOB, pointing at PHIL) The big heid on the young shoodirs eh

BOB gives PHIL a look, gesturing dismissively at VINCE

VINCE Aye BOB thanks a lot... Fucking mutiny on the bounty bars (grins at them) Yous bastards...! (heads to the toilet/kitchen) Away for a piss

JOE What ye telling us for?

VINCE Shut up! [EXITS]

JOE jerking his thumb after him, and to PHIL) That's a compliment he paid ye!

BOB Muffin the Mule

VINCE ENTERS pokes his head back round the door) Please talk about me when I'm gone

BOOTS Dont worry

VINCE chuckling) Bootsie boy, conspiracies have never worried me, no at any time in this long and illustrious career that I choose to call my life. My life, listen to what I'm saying!

BOOTS Away and fall doon the pan ya cunt.

VINCE laughs, EXITS.

BOOTS gazes across to BOB, and sings, the old Chiffons song) One fine day ay...

BOB When I get my pay ay

PHIL That world's gonna chay ayng

BOB To a bright new day ay

THEY LAUGH.

JOE sings] You're gonna want me for your girl, do do do do do

BOOTS What's life without a song but eh! (getting to his feet)

PHIL Nay life at all

BOOTS A fucking instrumental!

PHIL
his shoulder) Naw it's no it's a poem (yawns, stretches, slips guitar strap over

BOOTS I thought a poem could be a song.

JOE preparing to exit) This is getting complicated

BOB Compleee-cay-teddd

JOE EXITS into sound-room, leaving door open)

PHIL picks a couple of notes, sings along)
She taught me to yo-del,
yodellehhee hee,
yodellehhee hee...
yodellehhee hee...
(stops, smiles, He is only slightly self conscious)

BOB and BOOTS hardly notice

PHIL glances at them) She taught me to yo-del,

BOOTS descriptive gestures with hand] The wind in the high mountain
tops.

PHIL Exactly

BOOTS continues the descriptive gestures] Blowing across the peaks

BOB The instant peaks

BOOTS The instant pointed peaks

PHIL Instant pointed sausahgees!

BOOTS Aye...

PHIL Eh Bob...?

BOB stares at PHIL, then at BOOTS, he shrugs and turns his back on them.

LIGHTS dim, then out eventually

end of ACT 1

Act 2

TIME: twenty minutes later

STEEL stands near to the keyboards.

VINCE sits on rocking chair, appears to be asleep

PHIL not too far from him, guitar slung on, fidgets with it.

BOOTS sits on the bench, legs splayed out, arms folded, sticks in his shirt pocket)

JOE in the sound-room

BOB also in the sound-room

STEEL & VINCE have had words, a heated discussion. It has reached the stage where they arent communicating with each other

BOOTS and STEEL chatting

LIGHTS

STEEL matter-of-factly) I'm no bothered. I'll just be helping my brother. If he can pay me he can pay me, if he cannay he cannay [shrugs]

BOOTS The dough would be useful

STEEL Dough's always useful Boots, know what I mean

BOOTS Aye...

STEEL I just cannay be bothered with shit any longer [glances towards VINCE] I need to know what I'm doing man I've got a fucking wean to feed

BOOTS sighs] Same auld story innit

STEEL No for much longer. [glances at VINCE and shakes head] All he had to do was tell me. He aye keeps the information back, if he just came out with it...

BOOTS I know

STEEL looks to keyboard and the amp connection, starts fiddling about, speaks while he does so] Imagine how I feel when Kaz tells me, it's just fucking silly, know what I mean, that's what I feel, a total clown

JOE ENTERS from sound-room

BOOTS Problem solved?

JOE Bob's got it cornered

BOOTS The guy's a genius

JOE He thinks it's something stupid

STEEL It's always something stupid. [to BOOTS] Ever notice that about this fucking band? Everything that happens man, total stupidity

BOOTS grins

STEEL It isnay fucking funny man

BOOTS Naw, but I dont want to commit suicide the night

JOE Too cold eh!

BOOTS Absafuckinglootely

STEEL So Bob's got the problem sorted?

JOE rubs hands] Seems like it [shrugs] just something daft

STEEL ironic] Yep!

JOE So how come I cannay corner it?

STEEL Ye're too brainy Joe

JOE Cheeky bastard! [glances at watch, then along to VINCE, and to BOOTS] What's the story?

BOOTS shrugs

JOE It's the fucking hanging about kills me

BOOTS Ah ye're used to it

JOE Doesnay help matters

BOOTS Ye're getting paid for it ya bastard!

JOE That does help matters

STEEL wearily to JOE) What're we having a can of beer?

BOOTS gesturing to the teapot, crockery and stuff] There's tea in the pot

STEEL That's how I didnay ask you [glances at JOE

BOOTS chuckles

JOE Under the wee table (points to sound-room)

STEEL nods, EXITS to Sound-room.

BOOTS rises from bench, fiddles about with the drum kit

STEEL ENTERS from sound room, can of beer

JOE calls to PHIL, gesturing) Plenty of booze ben there Phil

PHIL Nah, ta... [grins] I'll stick with the tea

STEEL strolls to the keyboards, pulling stopper off can

VINCE meanwhile] Somebody mention tea?

PHIL What ye wanting a cup?

VINCE If there's any left son that'd be wonderful

PHIL I'll see if it's still warm... [lifts VINCE's cup from beside the rocking chair, walks to check it out, pour a cup for VINCE etc.

STEEL meanwhile looks to BOOTS, jerks his thumb to VINCE, then turns it into a thumbs-down sign, shaking his head

BOOTS nods

VINCE sarcastic, to nobody in particular] All good things come to an end right enough!

STEEL sarcastic] That's true (reaches into his jacket; gets his cigarettes out, chips a fag to BOOTS, one for himself, then gestures with the packet to JOE)

JOE Naw

STEEL smiles) Just testing

JOE My wallies cannay handle they tips

BOB ENTERS from sound-room

ALL LOOK TO HIM

BOB matter-of-factly, to nobody in particular] Finito signorro

BOOTS Genius

STEEL No danger Bob

PHIL gives him a thumbs-up, now returns with cup of tea for VINCE

JOE Now we're getting somewhere... [to BOB) Heh man, grab a can
of beer. On the house

BOB grins] Cruncher...

JOE How come you still call me that?

BOB doesnt respond)

JOE Eh?

BOB
room gives a wink and a nod of the head, EXITS back into the sound-

JOE The cunt willnay tell me, I've asked him a thousand times

STEEL It fits but

PHIL Some people are Crunchers, some urnay

BOOTS chuckles, rubs his hands together] Nice one Phil

STEEL thumb up] Exactimon

JOE
at all eh! to PHIL] Dont you start! [to BOOTS] What is it about guitarists

BOB ENTERS with a can of beer, snaps the ring

JOE begins on a roll-up

PHIL passing tea to VINCE

VINCE
information to PHIL] Merci monsieur [VINCE pays attention to the following

STEEL to JOE] Studio busy?

JOE Fucking solid man, booked right out

STEEL The morra as well?

JOE Aye

STEEL The whole day?

JOE You better believe it

VINCE The whole day?

JOE Crack of dawn man some school outfit

VINCE Fucking hell...

JOE An advert or something I dont know. Eh Bob, I was hoping you'd come in and give me a hand?

BOB thumb up] Time and a half, two nights and a Sunday

JOE Thanks man. Their teacher's got to cut a record for the governors - governors... Is that what ye call them? Fucking wardens, I dont know.

BOOTS Wardens!

JOE It's gony be all wee boys and lassies running about. [to Bob] Fucking danger money we'll need, know what I mean, they'll be touching every bastarn thing, grabbing cables and all that. Ye know what like these weans are [shrugs] It's a pey but innit

STEEL Very true

JOE Keeps the wolf from the door

STEEL The auld howler

BOOTS The little red rooster

JOE to PHIL, gesturing at the studio). Got to make it pey for itself Phil know what I mean

PHIL The name of the game eh!

JOE gives PHIL a thumbs-up

VINCE sudden shiver, theatrically) All this caffeine...!

BOOTS ironic] What is it making ye jumpy?

STEEL pause, then to anybody except VINCE) Makes me fucking jumpy man I'll tell ye that - coffee or tea - ye're better off with a large barrel of fucking superlager. If ye need calming down, that's what I'm talking about

VINCE ironic] So that's what ye're talking about?

STEEL You heard

VINCE smiles

BOOTS raises his eyebrows to BOB

BOB shrugs

JOE leaning against wall next to sound-room door] Even Iron Bru's got caffeine. Everywhere ye go, ye cannay avoid it. If it's no that it's fat. Everything's full of fat, so they say anyway. Or else it's cholestorol (holds up his roll-up) This thing's probably full it! (to BOB) Know what I mean Bob they're trying to fucking poison us. Either that or turn us into fat bastards!

BOB Yeh... [reaches for his guitar, slings it on, but keeps it round his back, he continues on towards the calor gasfire, rubs his hands

JOE meanwhile) Even the dope man nowadays, fuck knows where it comes from -

STEEL Woolworth's

BOOTS The wild Woolworths [sits on the bench

BOB stoops and lifts a piece of silver paper off the floor. It isnt a coin, he crumples it, takes a swig out his can.

PHIL yawns, glances round the company.

VINCE notices BOB] Alright Bob?

BOB gives a peace sign

VINCE cup in hand, a bit self conscious; soon he sits forward, rests elbows on his knees

BOB ambling back to sit on the bench, lays the can on the floor by his feet

BOOTS yawns) Mucker...

BOB puts his arm round BOOTS's shoulder

BOOTS I thought ye were gony kiss me there!

BOB kisses him loudly on the cheek

BOOTS Now ye're talking...

JOE To STEEL) So did ye speak to Kaz? The man himself?

STEEL shrugs] Aye

OTHERS are interested in this but dont want to show it

JOE To STEEL) What is he coming over?

STEEL Hardly Joe

JOE gazes at him a further moment then shrugs, glances at the others, not quite sure of the situation.

STEEL Fucking past tense innit

OTHERS look at him, waiting for more

STEEL knows they want to hear but he plays it along, takes another sip from the beer

BOOTS turns and speaks quietly to BOB, inaudible

BOB nods

JOE What yous mumbling about?

BOOTS Heh heh

JOE Fucking heh heh

BOB Heh heh heh heh

STEEL Julie was there Bob!

BOB Juleeeeeee!

PHIL Were ye talking to her?

STEEL Aye but just for a minute, ye know what Kaz is like

VINCE calls] A dirty lying bastard, aye

STEEL Aw, are you in this conversation?

VINCE stares at him

STEEL toPHIL] Kaz gets jealous.

BOB Juleyyy...

BOOTS The beautiful Juleyyy

JOE I dont know what she sees in that cunt anyway man I'll tell ye
that

STEEL Ah Kaz is alright

VINCE guffaws briefly

OTHERS glances at him

VINCE It was a reflex, sorry

STEEL is giving his attention to the keyboard, ignoring VINCE

JOE Aye, a nice looking lassie [shakes head] A cunt like Kaz!

STEEL meanwhile, sees his guitar and moves to it, his case is nearby)
Aye, she's nice... [opens it, peers inside) She was a wee bit embarassed mind you.

JOE shrugs] Lassies, know what I mean?

PHIL laughs] Naw, what do ye mean?

BOOTS You're just a boy

STEEL A growing boy, is that right Phil?

PHIL A mannish boy

JOE Exactly. [to STEEL] So what else? Give us the gossip

OTHERS look to STEEL, waiting for him to continue talking.

VINCE meanwhile lays guitar on his lap, becomes engrossed, tuning, etc.

PHIL Cowboys?

BOOTS Naw it was eh...what the fuck was it again? (glances at STEEL.

STEEL shrugs

BOOTS Eh... (scratches his head)

JOE Was it no a love picture?

BOOTS Naw was it fuck eh...

BOB eventually) Soldiers?

BOOTS Naw...

BOB shrugs.

BOOTS snaps his fingers a couple of time

STEEL Memorees are made of this

PHIL smiles) Age creeps up on us all

JOE jerking his thumb in PHIL's direction) Listen to fucking... [stops]
Who's that cunt again?

STEEL Who ye talking about?

JOE Whatsisface! The auld yin wi the beard, him that went to sleep for a hunner years...

STEEL Rasputin

JOE Laughs] Rasputin!

STEEL That's who ye're talking about

JOE That's the mad monk, Ra ra rasputin

BOB Rasputinnnn

JOE The mad monk Bob know what I mean, it was nay him slept for a hundred years, he was too busy shagging all these Russian kings and queens. Male or female it made nay difference to that cunt! The kings were the queens and the queens were the kings man know what I'm talking about, he just liked his hole!

BOOTS gesturing at JOE and tapping his temple, winks to PHIL

PHIL laughs] Ra ra rasputin!

STEEL He could nay have been that mad, if he went for a hunner year kip...

BOB Perreee Comohhh

JOE bewildered] Perry Como!

STEEL Exactimon, the mad barber [sings] Me-mo-reees are made of this

BOB sings] Sweet sweet!

STEEL continues the line, sings] the memorees you gave me. [thumbs up to Bob, and in rhyme] My man, bee oh bee, sweet sweet the memories you gave me

BOB Sweet Juleyeee, senorita (blows STEEL a kiss) los muchachos hermosas

JOE generally] Naw but tell me this chaps: how does a cunt like Kaz wind up with a lassie like Julie?

BOOTS Takes all sorts

JOE Naw but she's beautiful man she's a beautiful lady, that's what I cannay understand. A guy like Kaz, he's no yer fucking handsome hunk I mean let's be honest. Mind you... (shrugs and to PHIL) Women!

PHIL Nods

JOE What passes through their mind! It's a fucking Sherlock Holmes situation. Then Kaz winds up with a lassie like Julie! Know what I mean. It's a fucking cracker!

BOB El crackerohhh

STEEL It takes all sorts

VINCE has been engrossed in himself and his guitar since the last direction, now he sits hunched over, starts strumming quietly, no one pays the slightest attention

BOOTS Fucking licorice all-sorts

JOE Naw but all I'm saying

BOOTS irritated] Dont go on about it man

JOE Naw but wee Julie, she's a nice lassie

BOOTS annoyance) Some of us get nice lassies

JOE taken aback

VINCE meanwhile, still engrossed, strumming quietly

BOOTS Know what I mean Joe, we're no beyond the pale all the gether. Kaz is good, he's a good fucking player

STEEL Aye

JOE I know he's a good fucking player. [pause] Christ guys, ye're helluva jumpy the night. (JOE looks to BOB.

BOB gives an expansive wave and puts fore finger to mouth, gesture of silence

JOE Fuck, you tae! I think I'll need to take up semaphore or something, get myself a bunch of flags [raises his eyebrows to Phil] Know what I mean son, every time I open ma mooth some cunt's taking a swipe at it!

PHIL chuckling) Heh Joe that's the Boys Brigade! The semaphore and morse code.

JOE Haw dont you start ya hun bastard!

PHIL Ye win badges for it

STEEL What for being a hun!

OTHERS laugh, except VINCE

VINCE strumming guitar, building, about to enter the introduction to the song, still on rocking chair

JOE The Bee Bees eh!

PHIL attention diverted by VINCE

VINCE starts strumming in Hank Williams' style then pauses a little, enough to shift the guitar to hold it in more normal fashion, before progressing, and beginning to sing The lord made me a rambling man.

JOE quietly) The fucking bee bees...

Gradually the others become attentive to VINCE, not in an exaggerated way, each in his own individual fashion. From the moment they became attentive there is no contact exchanged between anybody. BOB has his eyes closed, head lowered

VINCE plays it all the way through

VINCE finishes. He looks across at them and goes straight into Why dont you love me like you used to do. He continues looking at them as he sings

BOB gives him a clenched fist salute.

BOOTS keeps time by slapping the side of the bench.

JOE calls) Now ye're fucking cooking

PHIL guitar at the ready, is looking for a place to come in

VINCE sees PHIL, continues singing

PHIL finds the place to play in to him

BOOTS has his sticks out his pocket and keeps rhythm on the side of the bench

STEEL and BOB both enjoying the song without involvement

JOE roars] Ye're fucking cooking boys! (jerk his thumb at PHIL, excited wink, calls to BOOTS) The auld heid on young shoulders eh!

VINCE brings the song to an end.

BOB gives a piercing whistle

VINCE eventually to PHIL) Where did you learn that!

PHIL winks)

VINCE Eh [indicates PHIL to the others] What's the story with the boy at all!

JOE calls] A dark horse

PHIL I was brought up on Hank Williams

VINCE Since when!

PHIL My grandpa!

VINCE Yer grandpa!

BOOTS laughs] Heh Steel! his fucking grandpa

STEEL guffaws] I fucking know man! [gesturing at VINCE] Grandpa! How did I no think of that!

JOE to STEEL) I thought you said he was a blue-nose! Eh...the Bee Bees and all that man the protestant boys (calls to VINCEr) Hank Williams Vince know what I mean he's our property man. He's a tim, he's one of us. [glances at BOOTS] What is it with you huns at all!

BOOTS laughing

PHIL to VINCE, baffled) What's he talking about?

VINCE smiles, makes him the sign of the cross

JOE to BOOTS] Yez'll be gon to confession shortly, fucking Duke Street man, the apprentice boys, yez'll be marching down to Parkhead Stadium! Heh where's the Derry young team, gieing it big licks with that drum of theirs! [now sings] Kalijahhhhhh! oomba oomba oomba
- right down the Shankhill Road man, along the Gallowgate, Baird's Bar empties, there goes the 67 Bar, gieing it pelters with the auld Hank Williams of blessed innocence

BOB Supremo sanctissimosoh

JOE Know what I mean Bob, what is he converting or something!

BOOTS lifts his stick and uses it like a flute] Doo doo do do do do do do, do do do do dooooo do [to the tune of The Sash]

JOE Gie us a break ya orange bastard

BOOTS Ah I'm just kidding

JOE Yous cunts dont kid, that's the problem

STEEL Heh you!

JOE just looks at him

STEEL wags finger at him] Now now

JOE Naw but Steel know what I'm talking about!

STEEL Enough already

JOE The only unionist we're looking for's a fucking trade unionist

STEEL to JOE] Ye're out of order man

BOOTS Thank you Steel

VINCE to JOE] He's a blaw hard, no a fucking diehard

BOOTS I second that emotion

JOE holds hand up to BOOTS] Pardonez moi brother, forgiveness
sought

BOOTS sign of the cross] Dispensed my son

PHIL Tims and huns but ye get sick of it

STEEL We all get sick of it Phil

BOB Et tu, Ciceroooo

PHIL to VINCE) Never heard that one afore, Hank Williams is for
Catholics

VINCE shrugs] Naw, no for Catholics, it's just how - it's just the
background

STEEL Ye do hear cunts saying that Phil. But as we know, nothing's sacred where music's concerned

VINCE It's the auld Irish connection, traditional ballad and all that

PHIL frowning] Hank Williams was Irish?

OTHERS chuckle

VINCE scoffs] Fucking Irish!

STEEL It's kinda complicated

JOE Ye're fucking right it's complicated. More like a fankle. That's religion for ye. Nay wonder I've passed on it man. I'll take my chances

VINCE pause and to JOE] Joe gauny check the gizmo now

JOE Aye [glances at watch, EXITS to sound room]

BOOTS meanwhile looking under the bench, checking his pockets] I've never understood it myself

VINCE Naw you wouldnay

BOOTS stands staring at VINCE, then strolls to the drums, sees his fags someplace, gets one for himself, walks to pass one to STEEL. Then turns to VINCE] And what the fuck does that mean anyway, I'll no understand? If ye've got something to say then fucking say it, dont fucking... Know what I mean. Shite man. I'm fucking sick of it [returns to drums, fidgets about with the equipment]

VINCE frowns, baffled

STEEL shakes his head

BOB puts his hands behind his head and closes his eyes

VINCE looks to BOB

JOE ENTERS from sound room] Bob, could ye come and look at this? [EXITS]

BOB immediately alert and EXITS

PHIL pause, looks from STEEL to VINCE, defusing the situation] That kind of music was all I ever heard in the house. My uncles were right into it as well

VINCE meanwhile checks his watch and sighs

STEEL shrugs) People say it but Phil, it's the Irish connection

VINCE Here in Glasgow they say it, no anywhere else

BOOTS What about Belfast?

VINCE True

STEEL Derry. [winks at BOOTS] Or is it Londonderry?

VINCE Aye

STEEL to PHIL] Rebel songs and then like Hank Williams, stuff like that, the auld Irish tenors and shit, that country sound, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, early Waylon Jennings, it went the gether [winks] The forty shades of green

PHIL I never knew that [grins] So what is it blues for blue-noses!
(laughs)

VINCE Chortle chortle

STEEL Yer patter's improving Phil

BOOTS chuckling] Blues for blue-noses. Nice one Phil

PHIL Some country music isnay bad

VINCE laughs to the others) Listen to the boy!

PHIL Naw ye know what I mean but!

STEEL Ah well it's like anything Phil ye've got to discriminate. It's no that different frae blues, once ye get to that level.

VINCE suddenly] It is blues, just white man's blues. See Phil when the the auld Scotch Irish were getting burnt out their cottages and starved off the land, then shipped across the ocean, worked to their death man, slaves, fucking plantations...

STEEL irritated] We're no wanting a history lesson

BOOTS chuckles, pretends to playing fiddle

VINCE sniffs, controlling himself. Then he rises from rocking chair, checks watch again, stares to sound room

BOB EXITS sound-room, stays at door, arms folded, yawns

VINCE suddenly to STEEL] Ye cannay ignore the context. [quickly to PHIL] All these cunts ignore the context.

STEEL angrily] Who ignores the context?

VINCE I'm no talking about you

STEEL Who then?

VINCE nervy agitation] Total class bias man ye know it is, elitist bastards man fucking racist fucking... these BBC cunts

PHIL listens closely

VINCE Eh! [agitated, paces about]

STEEL Fucking calm down, BBC cunts, what ye on about? [to BOOTS] What is he on about

VINCE pacing] Fucking radio programmes man with their music, they dont know what music is. They dont know what blues is man fucking upper class fucking racist cunts

STEEL irritated) It's anybody's blues Vince

VINCE Ye know what I'm talking about

STEEL It's anybody's blues

VINCE No a middle class bastard's it isnay [shakes his head, deep sigh]

STEEL What ye talking about?

VINCE turns his back and paces about

STEEL to BOOTS and BOB) Know what I mean, I cannay go that shite, it winds up ye cannay get playing. It takes ye into politics man, fuck politics. As soon as that starts everything else stops

VINCE Ye cannay get away frae politics

BOOTS aside, wearily to BOB) Here we go

STEEL to VINCE directly) I can get away frae politics

VINCE Naw ye cannay, there's nay escape, no for nay cunt. [faces BOOTS and STEEL directly] That's what the fucking blues is. [almost contemptuous] That is the essence of the fucking thing has it never dawned on ye

STEEL What?

VINCE Nay fucking escape. That's the context; that's what the blues are man. And that's how these cunts cannay play it. And never will

BOOTS Nay escape the man says

STEEL pause] Aye there's escape. There's escape alright

VINCE calmly, returning to rocking chair] Ye dont escape. Ye dont escape. [sits, glances at them] Ye just fucking stop. [rocking the chair now, closes his eyes]

STEEL There's an escape for me Vince dont worry about that

VINCE keeps his eyes closed] I wont. But if that's what ye're talking about fair enough, nay escape's necessary, all ye do is walk

STEEL agitated] Aye fucking walk alright

BOOTS and BOB exchange looks.

STEEL sees the can of beer and lifts it, takes a couple of swigs, agitated

BOB EXITS into the sound-room; reappears quickly, carrying another can of beer

PHIL Gony get me one Bob!

BOB turns backs

VINCE eyes open) Well ye might as well get me one as well man I mean if we're gony get pished instead of working...

BOB half turns again)

STEEL Make that a hat-trick!

BOB waggles his shoulders

VINCE Go for it

JOE offstage, from sound-room, calling) What do these cunts think this is at all a boozer! The beer was for eftir the session man we've no even fucking started!

BOB while EXITS into sound-room) Cruncher...!

VINCE to BOOTS) Might as well get pished...

BOOTS Give us a break Vince

VINCE snorts, but wearily

BOB returns with the beers, begins distribution; doesnt give one to
BOOTS.

STEEL opens his immediately, takes a quick slug; he still has his first one, he stands the new one on the floor next to it.

VINCE points to the two beers) The guzzling desperado

STEEL stoops and lifts them both with a flourish

PHIL sings] Despeeeradoh

BOB Los despeerados

STEEL holding up both cans) That's the way I like it, one in each hand

PHIL opens his can, swigs at it, but VINCE lays his by the side of his chair unopened

BOB Bi-ig girls

VINCE sings] They dont cry-yy-y

BOB returns to sit on the bench

STEEL still with the two beer cans, winks to Phil] One in each hand Phil know what I mean

PHIL grins, but isnt quite sure

BOOTS joins BOB on the bench] The mad barber!

STEEL Sweeney Todd

BOB aside to BOOTS] Todd Perry

BOOTS baffled

VINCE The Hank Williams songbook... [to PHIL) That was what me and him grew up with - eh Bob!

BOB The deer and the antelope

VINCE Mind you [generally) I agree with Boots, blues is blues

STEEL What ye talking about

VINCE saying White man or fucking black man, blues is blues, that's all I'm saying

STEEL raps himself on the chest) It was nay Boots said that, it was me

BOOTS I fucking said it as well

STEEL I never heard ye

BOOTS pause) Ye werenay listening

STEEL There was nay difference in the music, no when they were playing. Politics didnay come into it

BOOTS That's what I was saying

VINCE If that's what ye're saying then ye're wrang. The both of ye (to PHIL) Know what I mean son!

BOB Mates

VINCE reaches for the can now and tugs free the stopper) Here's a health unto his majesty (swigs)

BOB ripples the guitar strings in some way, but quietly

VINCE salutes them with the can] Nay work the night Bob

BOB just looks at him

VINCE I mean it

BOB Shiver me timbers (He reaches for his can, takes a swig.

PHIL smiling

VINCE What're you laughing about?

PHIL gets up, still smiling, walks off

STEEL Heart attack corner Phil ye're better getting to fuck [points at VINCE] You shouldna be drinking. I'm telling ye, ye're gony wind up with a heart attack. Just like that man (snapping his fingers) You're gony keel ower

PHIL strolls across to sit by BOB and BOOTS

BOB centre, puts his arm round PHIL's shoulder

VINCE gesturing at BOOTS) Dont mix me up with the man from Drumnadree, the alkie from muskalgi

BOOTS laughs. then to STEEL] Heh man why dont we give his missis a phone and tell her he's back on the piss

VINCE annoyed] Aye you do that ya fucking crackpot

BOOTS guffaws] Porter fell off the Waggoner

STEEL chuckles

VINCE irritated] What's so bastarn funny

STEEL flatly] You, ye're a fucking stormer

VINCE Listen to the mad bastarn monk

BOOTS aside to PHIL] Ye're in the front stalls here Phil

STEEL jerking his thumb at VINCE, calls to BOOTS, BOB and PHIL) Maybe he's wanting to set up a country and western outfit, hit the grand ole opry and all that

VINCE Who knows

STEEL The fucking singing grandfeyther, know what I mean, auld father time and the bar-room cowboys!

BOOTS laughs

VINCE See if Kaz played the banjo...?

STEEL looks at him

VINCE calls to the others] Naw, nay kidding ye, see if Kaz played the banjo...

All look to him

VINCE laughs] I would've still telt him to fuck off! In fact, see if he learns the fiddle

STEEL interrupts] He doesnay need to learn the fiddle man he plays it already, or did ye forget

VINCE pause] What about the ukelele?

STEEL Fuck off

VINCE So he's a one man band. Chortle chortle. He doesnay need us!

OTHERS laugh, except STEEL

STEEL pause) That's what you need to learn

VINCE What?

STEEL To play in a one man band [stares at him, then turns and lifts his jacket, takes out his cigarette packet, closes it again, lifts a beer, sips at it]

VINCE stares at him

LIGHTS dim, and out

[end ACT 2]

ACT 3

[music]

TIME twenty or more minutes later

SOUND PRIOR TO LIGHTS, PHIL is tinkering on the guitar, and this develops into something structured but only for about a minute, then he stops

LIGHTS After a minute or so, very dim downstage left - enough to pick out PHIL and BOB only.

PHIL is seated on the edge of the bench playing

BOB is standing back to the audience, not too far from him, now wearing a jacket; his right foot up on a stool, guitar slung across his back, resting his elbow on the raised knee.

PHIL glances up at BOB, as though asking a question [NB the question is being asked, it's in the music]

BOB nods

PHIL continues gazing at him while playing

NB SEE MUSIC NOTES ON TITLE PAGE

After a minimum period of say 4 minutes, there is a slight movement from the rocking chair, but perceptible. VINCE has always been there. After another few seconds he leans forward; eventually he comes off the chair and gets down on his hunkers, still watching them.

It doesnt matter whether or not BOB and/or PHIL notice what VINCE is doing; either way it means nothing to them, it has no connection to what they are presently engaged in. Unlike the audience, they knew VINCE was sitting in the shadows right from the outset.

VINCE finds the music irresistible. He begins singing at some point or other, but not enough for BOB or PHIL to notice. He gets to his feet, hands in his pockets, keeping the lyric going but barely louder than while on his hunkers. It is closer to scat than an intelligible lyric. But PHIL has noticed him and he gazes at VINCE for a time, playing as violently as before.

BOB eventually shifts his stance, moving a step or so upstage, while PHIL moves a step or so downstage, neither making the slightest break in concentration. But this is enough of an invitation for VINCE; he sings more loudly, yet still restrained, using the voice without taking the lead. Eventually he stops, and the guitars

continue for at least two minutes, bringing the piece to a conclusion in which PHIL will play out the last notes on his own, as a tailing-out process rather than an ending as such

LIGHTS dim, and then out when the echo dies

[end ACT TWO Scene 1]

ACT 4

TIME a few minutes later

LIGHTS normal

The sound-room door is ajar and a conversation is taking place between BOOTS and STEEL, it is audible only to the point before intelligibility.

VINCE, BOB and PHIL standing in the same positions but they have been talking and the shift in mood is obvious; like their heads' have been sorted out by the playing. Their discussion is on music and has been a sort of progression from the last number

VINCE animated] Naw but it's a different ball-game Phil, I'm talking about when that does happen

The conversation between BOOTS and STEEL has stopped.

PHIL I dont think so

VINCE Och it is, I'm telling ye

BOB pause a moment) Doo woppa woppa (backing VINCE's point)

PHIL to BOB, smiling) Get to fuck

VINCE Naw but Bob's right I mean think of something like - what (glancing at BOB who raises his eyebrows) Do you like good music. (VINCE speaks the song title but injects an idea of the music of the opening) It's a real fucking mid-sixties thing man; R & B okay - but at the same time

BOB to PHIL) Bam di di bih bam bam

PHIL taking BOB's point) Right...

VINCE But there's that difference (clenching his fist) that wee difference... (he relaxes and grins at BOB who is smiling) Know what I mean Bob, spot light on Wilson Pickett now.

BOB grins) Holay

VINCE to PHIL) It's great stuff but... (rubbing his hands together)

BOB It's like thun-der

VINCE nodding] But it isnay earth shattering, that's what I'm talking about

BOOTS EXITS from sound-room followed by STEEL; the pair in the middle of conversation which they now continue, and this takes precedence.

BOB glances along at them.

PHIL nods in response to VINCE

VINCE shrugs, walks to footer with amp and PA etc.

STEEL to BOOTS] The guy's aff the booze

BOOTS I know, I heard

VINCE looking back to PHIL) Exciting man but... (makes a gesture with his hands, not quite dismissive, conveying that what he is referring to is not the same thing as something else)

PHIL Aye. But what ye were saying about Sam Cooke and that influence...?

VINCE Exactly aye, that's it exactly I mean that's... Yeh. (nodding, his attention now on the PA)

STEEL still in the other conversation to BOOTS) It's got to be taken into account Boots

BOOTS Fair enough. [goes behind his stool at the drums, and bends to attend to something at the foot of a side-drum

STEEL walks behind the keyboards and checking inside the case of his guitar, and he adds) I'm no saying nothing more than that

PHIL moves to sit on the rocking chair

STEEL But I mean he's my sister's man, so what can ye dae? Ye might want tae batter the bastard...! (shrugs) But ye cannay...

BOOTS matter-of-factly) There's aye some cunt ye want tae batter

STEEL Sure, doesnay mean ye can fucking dae it

BOOTS nods

PHIL Who ye talking about?

STEEL Family Phil know

PHIL Right... (nodding; then with relish) The existential nightmare!

BOOTS with relish) The divided self!

STEEL The divided self!

BOB El Bootseroh

STEEL raises left arm) Viva

VINCE pointing to BOOTS, while busying about at the PA equipment)
I wouldnay like to see two of you ya cunt. (now to BOB) Eh Bob, imagine this yin
as a pair man fucking twins! Jesus christ. Eh?

PHIL A pair of boots!

All laugh

STEEL Nice yin Phil

BOB to PHIL) Mucker!

PHIL grins

VINCE pointing at BOOTS again) Know what I mean but two of him -
hoh!

BOOTS shakes his head at VINCE, and to the others) What's he like at
aw, he doesnay know what we're talking about but he's jumped straight in on the
conversation

BOB smiling) Boldly going (now sits on the bench)

BOOTS Boldly making a cunt of himself, as per fucking usual

STEEL not smiling, and he speaks while checking out his instruments
in some way) Exactimon. Fools rush in

VINCE continues what he is doing, not bothering

STEEL It's an auld story

BOB gazing at VINCE, reaches for a cloth and begins cleaning the strings of the guitar

PHIL is also giving attention to his guitar, slouching back on the rocking chair

STEEL sees something on the keyboards and flicks at it with his finger, then wets the finger and rubs at whatever it is - a new spot of some kind; gets a rag from somewhere and wipes at the spot

VINCE footering with the amp. knobs he sings quietly, then aware he is doing it he stops, continues footering

BOOTS rises from the kneeling position and whatever way he does this feels a sudden pain in his leg) Oh ya bastard... (puts the fag down and starts massaging the his thigh.

VINCE glances at him, anxiously

BOOTS addresses him) My fucking leg...

VINCE absently) The auld war wounds

STEEL attention still on his guitar, to BOOTS) What's up mucker?

BOOTS just gives a look of pain while rubbing at his thigh, then eases himself onto the stool, now looks for his fag; it is burning where he left it.

PHIL to BOOTS) Awright?

BOOTS I'm a fucking pensioner man, I've got to face up to the fact. We've aw got to face up to the fact, we're senior citizens

STEEL Speak for yerself

VINCE sees his old cup of coffee and collects it, and sips) Cauld, just the way I like it (strolls towards rocking chair. PHIL still sits here. VINCE continues across and downstage to the calorgas fire, puts the cup down and rubs his hands, stands for a time, then sits with his back to the wall, looks about, sees his guitar and collects it, returns to chair. VINCE whistles quietly)

Each man is preoccupied in his own affairs.

PAUSE for several seconds.

JOE pokes his head out from the Sound-room) What happens now?
(gazing at VINCE) Eh?

VINCE pause then aside) Party time.

Nobody seems to hear him

JOE The auld tempus fugit (looks at BOB)

BOB Blow me down

JOE Blow me down as well. I'll tell ye what man, the wages I'm
earning, fucking empty studios, waiting for cunts to make use of them, cunts that
dont fucking pey man know what I mean [looking about] Guys that take up studio
time and do fuck all. Because I'm into their music and all that, because they're my
muckers etcetera etcetera, treated like I dont know what etcetera etcetera, all
sitting about doing fuck all etcetera etcetera, know what I mean?

BOB Etceterahhhh

JOE Aye Bob. [sniffs] So the story goes that way. Pancho and Lefty,
know what I'm talking about? (EXITS)

The others, except VINCE, show awareness that JOE was serious

BOOTS generally, nodding in the direction of Sound-room) Whohh! Eh?

STEEL A wee bit strong...

BOOTS That was us getting a row

STEEL to BOB) The auld Cruncher eh, say a prayer for Lefty too

BOB frowns

STEEL D'ye hear him but? He's no come out with that afore

BOOTS Serious stuff

STEEL No unless he's out his brainbox, know what I mean, in one wey
or another

PHIL rocking on the chair) Ye cannay blame the guy

STEEL and BOOTS look to PHIL

STEEL pause] Naybody's blaming him Phil

BOB Fuck mates man [stares down at VINCE]

VINCE his back to them, oblivious; footering with guitar

STEEL puzzled look at BOB.

BOOTS also gazes at BOB

BOB shrugs, then frowns

STEEL and BOOTS exchange looks

PHIL We've aw got to earn int we?

STEEL flatly] I couldnay have put it better myself

PHIL Naw... [sniffs, suddenly emotional]

STEEL glances at PHIL

PHIL Eh... [to BOB, STEEL and BOOTS, nervously] We've all got to earn. What is Kaz a mate? [rising from the chair impatiently]

STEEL now puzzled

PHIL impatiently] Is he a mate? [shakes head, walks to PA and amp.

BOOTS watches him, looks to STEEL

STEEL shrugs

PHIL stares at the wall, self conscious, then sniffs, EXITS
kitchen/toilet

STEEL looking after him) Jumpy...

BOOTS Fucking jumpy alright (glances at each of the others in turn, then runs his hands through his hair. He clasps them behind his head and strains like he's doing a dynamic-tension exercise, now lets loose a prolonged growl) Ohhhhhhhh... (now drops his hands and waggles his shoulders, relaxing himself)

BOB jumps to his feet suddenly, walks with the guitar, like he is about to start playing, his manner is almost aggressive

VINCE turns and calls] Wang dang fucking doodle [then sits around, starts strumming quietly

STEEL sniffs

BOB hits a couple of notes, still aggressive, but controlled, moving while he does

BOOTS starts drumming his hands on the edge of his seat

VINCE turns to face them, and matter-of-factly) Are we talking then what're we doing?

Others gaze at him

VINCE I mean is that what we've to do, have we to talk? D'yez want to talk?

BOOTS Talk...!

STEEL What about?

VINCE shrugs) Anything ye like. I dont care

STEEL looks to BOOTS for a moment, then back to VINCE] What do you want to talk about something?

VINCE smiles

STEEL Eh? (pause) What do you want to talk about? [pause] Eh?

BOB watches them, shaking his head, footers with the strings on his guitar

VINCE Me? I just want to fucking play.

STEEL We all want to play.

VINCE shake of the head

STEEL We all want to play Vince

VINCE Do we?

Both pause when PHIL ENTERS

PHIL hesitant, he realises what he has walked into, and continues to stand near the bench, eventually sits down.

PHIL's presence has made it a little awkward for the others.

STEEL starts gnawing on the edge of his thumbnail.

VINCE still facing them, seated, he stares at the floor

BOOTS looks for his cigarettes, finds them, takes one out but doesn't light it, reaches to settle the cymbal although it probably wasn't moving

BOB shaking his head, gazes at the floor, at the wall

VINCE now looks to STEEL

STEEL sniffs, defensive) We all want to play

VINCE Aye well fine cause I've done enough talking, I'm fucking sick of talking. [pause] It's aw been said already

STEEL What's that supposed to mean?

VINCE getting to his feet, standing the guitar upright. He puts his hands in his pockets then directly but not with aggression) Anything ye fucking like. It means anything ye fucking like. (shakes his head, closes his eyes; opens them, and looks at STEEL, quietly) Steel.. .

STEEL What?

VINCE Ye know what I'm talking about.

STEEL I dont

VINCE about to speak, just stares at him

STEEL slowly) I dont know what ye're talking about [pause] Tell us

BOOTS and PHIL gaze at STEEL

VINCE smiles, ironically

STEEL flatly] Tell us

VINCE When the kissing has to stop. [pause, glances at PHIL] Eh son... [back to STEEL and shrugs] There's nothing to fucking tell Steel, it's done. It's fucking done man it's done already

STEEL frowns, glances at BOOTS who stares at the floor. STEEL now glances at BOB who stares back at him.

PHIL is watching STEEL,

STEEL looks at PHIL

PHIL shrugs,

VINCE hands in pockets, his gaze takes each one in) You carry on... [gesturing at them] Yez're wanting to talk. Go ahead.

nobody moves

VINCE after a moment, turns to PHIL) Are you wanting to talk?

PHIL defensive but stands his ground] Me?

VINCE D'you want to talk?

PHIL What ye asking me for?

VINCE I'm asking everybody

PHIL stands staring at him

VINCE I'm asking everybody

PHIL I want to play... Huh, I suppose (looks from VINCE to STEEL, then shrugs again, but is uncertain, looks to BOOTS and BOB

BOB winks at him, smiles

VINCE suddenly relaxes] Suppose is good enough.

PHIL What d'ye mean?

VINCE It's good enough for me. [glances at the others] Eh? [sings] if it's good enough for Jesus [back to PHIL] Nay bother son. (and to BOOTS) Eh Bootsie boy?

BOOTS Phil... [pointing to PHIL] his name's Phil

VINCE frowns] What did I call him?

BOOTS Nothing. That's the fucking point, ye didnay call him nothing.
Just son.

VINCE baffled, then he shrugs, glances at PHIL]

PHIL embarrassed, shrugs

BOB smiles, and ironic] Fuck mates man

VINCE sighs

STEEL irritated] Fuck mates man... What does that mean?

BOB pause] Something

STEEL irritated] Aye something, everything's something

BOB gives a short whistle, smiles

STEEL irritated] Everything's fucking something Bob

BOB shakes his head, whistles again, walks a few paces

BOOTS gives a loud, exaggerated groan, raises clenched fists, elbows at his side, closes his eyes, and speaks loudly, just controlling himself and no more) I dont fucking give a fuck man who the fuck gives a fuck, no me, no fucking me man (sighs, opens his eyes) Know what I'm talking about, fuck it, that's what I say [glances about] Where's the fucking fags

BOB waves] Ei Bootserroh

BOOTS Exactimon. It's aw in the wrist and I've got the touch... [adjusting his symbols etc]

VINCE pointing at BOOTS) The man with the golden arm

BOOTS The golden fucking arse. (to STEEL) Mind that auld joke, the golden arse? The guy finds the long lost key to fit the belly button?

STEEL puzzled] Naw

BOOTS No mind it? Eh Phil?

PHIL shakes head

VINCE I mind it!

BOOTS Aw I fucking know you mind it

VINCE It's a metaphor

STEEL aside, grunts] Here we go

VINCE appeals to STEEL] It's a learning curve man

BOB sings] Daniel Daniel

VINCE
together winks to BOB] The sacred harp. Chortle chortle [slaps his hands

BOOTS to BOB] You mind it Bob?

BOB frowns

BOOTS An arse falls off or something, the guy finds the long lost key
and sticks it into his belly button (then to VINCE) You tell it

VINCE Ye kidding! Fucking purile pish

BOOTS Fuck off

VINCE laughs

BOOTS No mind that ane? (to PHIL)

PHIL Naw

BOOTS Somefuckingthing anyway (then to STEEL) An arse falls aff or
something (shrugs) Just a joke

STEEL Aye, it sounds a belter (raises his eyebrows)

PHIL guffaws

BOOTS to STEEL) Fuck off you ya bastard, fucking goldilocks ya cunt

STEEL grins, flicking his hair

JOE notices him. ENTERS, stands quietly in the doorway, just observing. Nobody notices him.

BOB waves] Bootsie boy!

BOOTS Dont you start

BOB grins

VINCE to PHIL) Jokes were never his strong point.

STEEL jerks his thumb to BOOTS] I didnt like the way he looked at me there. An arse falling off I mean what's that about? a fucking arse falling off

BOOTS Aw shut up

PHIL Highly suspect

STEEL Nice one (does a ripple on the keyboard)

PHIL twangs a note on the guitar] Insanitee

BOB The decrepit self!

VINCE with relish) The decrepit self!

BOOTS Now ye're fucking talking (reaching for his sticks)

VINCE Chortle chortle

JOE loudly] I've got to fucking listen tae yez!

all look to him

STEEL Muckerrr! [his attention is going to the keyboard]

VINCE Where did you come from?

BOOTS The cunt creeps about! Ye dont see him and then he jumps out at ye man! [looks to STEEL

STEEL attending to the keyboard, oblivious

VINCE A born gaffer

JOE Steady

others smile

STEEL doodles on the keyboard for several seconds

JOE winks to BOOTS) Aye it's time he gied us a song, every other
cunt's played bar him

STEEL Ha ha

JOE to the others] He thinks I'm kidding

STEEL I know ye're kidding

JOE I dont kid about music

STEEL Oh!

JOE The notes dont lie

STEEL Fucking pound notes

JOE seriously, wags his finger] Enough of that

STEEL frowns] Who ye fucking talking to ya cunt!

others look on

STEEL Eh, who ye fucking talking to?

JOE Who does it fucking look like I'm talking to! [looks to the others,
jerks his thumb at STEEL] Mister fucking Bojangles man, I knew a song and I
danced for you

pause

STEEL stands completely still

JOE agitated, shoulders and head twitching

BOB gazing at floor

PHIL observing each

VINCE It isnay Bojangles

All look to him

VINCE It's Bojingles

BOOTS Bojangle-berry

VINCE Bojangle-berry... (chuckling) Back to arses again!

BOOTS What does that mean, back to arses?

PHIL It's a conundrum

BOOTS lascivously] Sounds nice

VINCE Dirty bastard

BOB The sacred harp

VINCE sings] Daniel Daniel of the sacred harp

PHIL states] And the sacred harp. It's and the sacred harp

VINCE frowns] Honest?

PHIL nods

BOOTS I think it is and

VINCE Fucking hell, I aye sing of

PHIL I didnay even know ye sang it

VINCE In the bath!

all laugh

VINCE Best place

STEEL sniffs] The only place

JOE Splish splash

BOB Cruncherrr

JOE How now brown cow

BOB pointing at JOE] The maaannn

STEEL Bee oh bee, ye're dead right, as per fucking you-ess-you-ell

VINCE to PHIL) What the fuck's that, you-ess-you-ell! (to JOE) Any
fucking booze left?

JOE There's nay booze left

VINCE What ye drank it aw!

JOE It was nay me that drank it all! [pause then EXITS sound-room

VINCE to PHIL, indicating STEEL) The cunt cannay spell, he wants to
play in a blues band and he cannay spell, you-ess-you-ell for usual

JOE ENTERS with four cans of beer, muttering) Florence
Nightingale, that's me (walks to pass one to VINCE, one to STEEL and sets other
couple on floor by the bench.

others amused

JOE pause, looks at them all, and gruffly] Aye, on ye go! [he sits
down next to BOB.

BOB puts his arm round him

JOE smiles) Stormy weather mucker

BOB Shiver me timbers

STEEL meanwhile doodling quietly on keyboard

JOE to BOB] Did ye ever get that business sorted out?

BOB Supremely

JOE Good, good [yawns, settles back on bench, folding his arms]

VINCE to PHIL) How's yer ma son, how's she keeping?

PHIL Och aye she's fine

VINCE Handling it?

PHIL No bad, just a new stage. Every time ye see her

VINCE That's the way [shrugs] They never get over it

BOOTS meanwhile coming from behind drums, the few steps to the keyboards, he says something inaudible to STEEL

STEEL nods, continues to ripple the keys.

BOOTS then quietly to STEEL) It happens but

STEEL Aw I know it happens

BOOTS returns behind the drums, stoops and checks out something or other, then EXITS to the toilet.

STEEL moves into playing a number. He stops suddenly

VINCE It can be a worry but at the same time

PHIL shrugging) She batters on

VINCE Aye . Ye just take nothing for granted

PHIL That's right

VINCE shrugs) People get by

JOE calls] Yer bereavement son?

PHIL Aye

JOE How's yer maw?

PHIL Aye... [shrugs] Bearing up

JOE Good, good

BOOTS to PHIL) Heh Phil that was nice earlier, the number yez done... (nods; and now includes BOB) Yous two cunts.

BOB Wang dang

BOOTS winks] Nice but lacking

PHIL Nice but lacking!

others smiling

BOOTS These duets man [winks to others]

PHIL Cheeky bastard

BOOTS rubbing his hands together, and with relish, to STEEL) Nice but lacking. Two guitars dont make a band

STEEL grins) Three do

VINCE amused, to PHIL) Know what the trouble is? The trouble is it wasnay lacking

BOOTS to STEEL) Hohhhhh - fucking nasty man!

VINCE still to PHIL) That's the trouble. (then to others) It's true but, funny thing about this racket man this music carry on, nay cunt's indispensable (to BOOTS) Know what I mean Boots we're all fucking embellishments

STEEL Belly what

VINCE We are

BOOTS Get to fuck man

VINCE It's one of the amazing things about it, eh Bob?

BOB shrugs, but is taking him seriously

PHIL standing his ground) We do our best

VINCE It's no to do with that

STEEL sudden anger) So what is it to do with then you fucking tell us

others stare at him

STEEL Know what I mean, fucking shite man

VINCE It might sound like shite

STEEL It does sound like shite

VINCE Doesnay mean it is shite because it sounds like it. A lot of things sound like shite Steel, then ye look a wee bit closer, what do ye see?

STEEL You tell me

VINCE to PHIL] What do ye see?

PHIL Pearls...

VINCE Pearls [pause, frowns at PHIL] Aye , ye're right

STEEL Fucking pearls... [shaking his head

VINCE shrugs] Pearls of wisdom

STEEL slaps hands over his ears, closes his eyes

VINCE Pearls of wisdom

STEEL still with eyes closed etc.] Pearls of fuck all. [takes hands from his ears and opens eyes, despairing] Give us a break, just give us a break! Honest Vince I'm no into this, I'm really no into it it does my head in I cannay fucking stand it, honest, just stop it, stop it

BOOTS sighs, leans in his chin in his hand

BOB Steeeel

STEEL Naw Bob honest. [pointing at VINCE] It's him. It's him that fucks up. Him (Now hitting himself on the chest) But I get the fucking blame of it. If it isnay me it's Kaz or whoever, anybody, as long as it isnay him. Oh naw, it's never fucking him.

JOE sniffs

STEEL Honest Joe, jesus christ

JOE Dont bring me into it

STEEL sudden anger] I'm supposed to feel guilty! Me! How the fuck's that? I go up to Kaz, talking him into coming over the night, then I finds out it's him [gesturing at VINCE] He's responsible

VINCE impassive

STEEL It was him gave Kaz the heave. He done it! Know what I mean, I'm a right fucking eedjit, eh! how d'ye think I feel! I'm standing there talking to the guy, and Julie's there, she doesnay know what's going on man I'm trying to

persuade Kaz to come for the session, she doesn't know what's happened. [points at VINCE] And it's fucking him...I mean... [speechless] ...fucking...

VINCE I was gony tell ye

STEEL Ye were gony tell me! When were ye gony tell me?

VINCE I was gony tell ye

STEEL When?

VINCE Things just moved, they moved fast man know what I mean, that cunt. He done my nut in. Honest. Just the way he went on and on, moaning and moaning. Nay kidding ye man ye just fucking...honest (breathes in deeply) I would've went for him [clenching right fist], I would've fucking strangled him (eyes closed, clenching his fists. Opens his eyes) You would've strangled him

STEEL pause, clears his throat] Ye could've telt us Vince

VINCE finds this excrutiating) I know. I know

others watching him

STEEL appealing] Just tell us

VINCE eyes closed] I know

STEEL Know what I mean? That's all people ask

VINCE nods, eyes open

STEEL I'm no asking nothing more than that.

VINCE closes eyes] I know

STEEL sniffs, looks away

VINCE eventually) We had to work the night. We cannay make it the morrow and we cannay make it the day eftir

JOE pointing to the floor, to STEEL] This place is occupied... [aside to BOB] You coming in to give me a hand?

BOB aside] Yippee

JOE sniffs] A few quid in it man

BOB Cruncher

VINCE to STEEL] Know what I mean Steel, if it isn't the night, when the fuck is it? that's the weekend

BOOTS Family time

VINCE Family time, exactly, the three ring circus, we're all through fucking hoops and it's back to Monday again.

STEEL I know

VINCE shrugs] And you've took that labouring job with yer brother

STEEL I've got nay option man

VINCE I know

STEEL to BOB, JOE and BOOTS] Nay option there guys, fucking mouths to feed

JOE doing the actions of birds pecking] Peck peck peck, do they never fucking stop!

BOB El quackoh

JOE aside] Fucking Donald Duck man [again doing the actions of birds pecking] Peck peck peck, all the wee mouths staring up at ye

STEEL growls with frustration

VINCE to STEEL] Exactly. Joe with his fucking school choirs and jingle jangles for the bastarn BBC, sponsors and governors and fuck knows what! Studio time! Ye'd be better off doing time! More peace to get on with yer work

JOE closes his eyes] Peace, peace

VINCE to PHIL] Know what I mean son we're fuckt. We've got the new numbers to do but when do we do them! [clenches his fist] We've got it all sitting there, all just waiting. What for? [sighs] What's it waiting for? Kaz? Give us a break. All it takes is that one bastard, no pulling his weight. And that's that. Ach you know the fucking score man [turns from STEEL] We all know it (sighs)

pause

BOB slowly) Jingle jangle.

VINCE smiles, sings] The old soft shoe

JOE sits upright on the bench, and earnestly to all) I'll fucking make space. [taps himself on the chest] I'll make space! Fucking school weans, I'll pap them into the cludgie and lock the door. Dont worry about that. The morrow morning, the morrow eftirnoon, you name it man, the next day, whenever ye fucking want. Just tell me. (glances at PHIL) Know what I mean son it's a prioritise situation

VINCE mumbling to himself) Fucking bastards

JOE to BOOTS) For yous guys. It's a prioritise situation, no danger. Eh Steel? (glances at BOB) School governors Bob know what I mean (jerking his thumb over his shoulder) get them to fuck. Send them back to school, know what I'm saying

BOB Crunch crunch

JOE still in deadly earnest) Aye ye're fucking right crunch crunch, god save the fucking queen, eunuch bastard [punches fist into the palm of his hand]

pause

STEEL to PHIL] What's that all about?

PHIL grins) The houses of parliament, Guy Fawkes

JOE I'll fucking blow the lot up up son, dont worry about that

BOOTS kids on he's firing a gun) Kapow kapow!

STEEL genuflects] In the name of the revolution, the son and the holy ghost

BOB smiling, puts his arm round JOE

VINCE sings) Al Capone's guns dont argue

BOOTS singing it) Do do do do,
do dit dih do do do dooo

VINCE singing] My name is Capone,
Cee ay pee oh en eee

BOOTS singing it) Do do do do,
do dit dih do do do doo

others smiling

JOE to STEEL) Heh man that new one of yours

STEEL What?

JOE Give us it

STEEL mentally drained) Joe...fuck sake..

JOE Naw man gony sing it. [pause] It's a beautiful song [to the
others] innit boys!

PHIL nods

BOB meanwhile gets to his feet, strolls and whispers something to
VINCE, unintelligible

VINCE Okay. [hunches his shoulders and rubs his hands as though to
keep warm

BOB strolls downstage-left, gazes away from the audience

JOE to STEEL] Eh Steel, come on!

STEEL wearily) Naw...

JOE raises his hand] As you wish, as you wish

STEEL I appreciate that [closing his eyes

BOB lowers himself to the floor, sitting on his heels, stares sideways,
above the heads of the audience)

BOOTS starts to footer with something involving his drums

VINCE folds his arms, not shivering now, just staring at the floor

PHIL continues to watch STEEL's reaction to JOE, but in a casual manner

JOE quietly to STEEL) Okay mucker?

STEEL opens his eyes, and speaks slowly) Aye... (smiles to JOE, then
stares at the floor)

JOE glances at the others] Know what I mean boys, if I ever wrote a
song like that...!

BOOTS Aye Joe

JOE shrugs, gets onto his feet, walks to the sound-room

LIGHTS dim

JOE lays his hand on the door handle and stares bac at the band.
Eventually he calls to PHIL) Eh son, what's it all about...

PHIL shrugs

Pause

LIGHTS out

end