

Karaoke Kings

By

Richard Hardwick

Characters

- Honest Dave Fifty year old Publican of 'The Duke' pub in Lambeth. He is a local legend and popular man. A South Londoner, he is strong and wears his hair slicked back. He smokes almost constantly.
- Richie 20's. An unemployed actor new to the area. Good singing voice.
- Jamie 20's. Irish. Richie's best friend.
- Marie 40's. Still glamorous.
- Les 50's. Dave's best mate. Always well dressed, a gentleman who likes Marie.
- Bobby 30's. Regular Karaoke DJ at 'The Duke', bus cleaner and local resident.
- Mick 20's. Suffers from a degenerative mental illness.
- Barbara 50's. Dave's ex-wife. Still attractive and has a contrasting elegance to the others as if she has risen above them.
- David Dave and Barbara's son. 12.

There are two settings:

The Duke

A Lambeth Boozer holding it's own against the tide of chain pubs. It's a part of the community and a 'proper local'. It has a long bar and a stage set up next to Karaoke equipment. A T.V. maintains is mounted on a wall. There is an exit to the beer garden.

The Beer Garden

Tatty and poorly maintained. There is a very large gas powered Barbeque that could have been home made.

Please Note

Some songs have the complete lyrics printed. This is only for practicality, as the length of each song will differ according to the production.

Act One

Scene One

Saturday night at 'The Duke' pub.

The stage is black. The blue screen lights up with "My kind of Town' Intro 19 seconds." The swell of a full orchestra begins and a spotlight illuminates the small stage. We see a man facing upstage holding a microphone. To the applause of thousands, Honest Dave slowly turns and croons the opening verse of 'My kind of town'. He acts as if in a Las Vegas showroom. As verse two begins the orchestral music fades into the karaoke backing and as the lights come up Honest Dave is faded more into the mix. We see that Dave is in 'The Duke' pub. There is very little applause this time.

Honest Dave *"Now this could only happen to a guy like me
And only happen in a town like this
So may I say to each of you most gratefully
As I throw each one of you a kiss*

*This is my kind of town, Chicago is
My kind of town, Chicago is
My kind of people too
People who smile at you*

*And each time I roam, Chicago is
Calling me home, Chicago is
Why I just brim like a clown
It's my kind of town*

*My kind of town, Chicago is
My kind of town, Chicago is
My kind of razzmatazz
And it has, all that jazz*

*And each time I leave, Chicago is
Tuggin my sleeve, Chicago is
The wrigley building, Chicago is
The union stockyard, Chicago is
One town that won't let you down
It's my kind of town"*

Thank you, thank you all. Let me just turn that echo off, lovely. Lovely

song that. Before you get your hopes up I won't be hosting tonight. Ahh, not even an ahh? Tonight we've got a new host, new lad, Richie, he's gonna be running things for me, and I tell you he is terrific, terrific. Great voice on him. Terrible timekeeping but great voice. No singers yet? No? Well the books are out, plenty of songs for ya. *(He fumbles around the PA)*. Right here's some backing music for. Backing music? What am I talking about? You know what I'm talking about, background music. Put one of these CD's on...there we go. *('Automatic High' by the S-Club Juniors comes on; Dave goes to leave the stage but returns)* What the fuck is this shit? *(He forwards it to 'Murder on the dance floor by Sophie Ellis-Bextor,. Chart music underscores the scene)* That's better. *Dave goes over to the bar.* Half a lager Marie. Les?

Les Very kind of you Dave, whiskey and water please Marie.

Dave Whiskey and water Marie. And clean these ashtrays they're filthy. And put the other ones out. *(Marie takes Dave's ashtray and goes to the other end of the bar)*

Les He's late then?

Dave Yeah. *(Dave flicks his ash onto the bar where the ashtray was)* What the fuck? Marie!

Marie What?

Dave Whadja mean what? Look at the bar. Clean that there. Fuckin; hell. Whadja take my ashtray for?

Marie Don't swear at me. You told me to clean the flaming ashtrays.

Dave Whilst I've still got a fag lit? Are you stupid or what? Half a lager and a whiskey and water and then get the ashtrays out, alright?

Marie Yes Dave.

Dave Then wipe the tables. And leave the phone out I'm expecting a call. Attention span of a goldfish. If she was naturally blonde I'd understand.

Les Who's Richie then?

Dave Came in here for the first time last week. He did a bit for me last night, just an hour, but he picked it up well so I've given him tonight.

Les Where's Bobby?

Dave He's up north.

Les Islington

Dave Enfield.

Les *(Could be Iran in Les's mind)* Shame

Dave His dad died didn't he. Funeral's tomorrow.

Les Shame. Give him my regards. Was a good night last night I heard.

Dave Yeah.

Les Was he late?

Dave No, no he was on time. He did well. Just needs a bit more confidence that's all. Lovely voice he's got, went to drama school and all that, actor he is. Ha! Typical actor, he's skint. I even lent him a shirt 'cos he aint got a decent cabaret shirt himself.

Les Public like him?

Dave Public love him. He's a natural.

Les Like Bobby is he?

Dave *(Gives Les a 'What the fuck?' look).* This kid's got personality. That's important. Vital. Bobby's...well/

Les /A tool.

Dave Yeah. All bullshit and bollocks. I'm giving him Mick's charity do next weekend then, well, we'll see.

Les How is Mick?

Dave Gonna have him over tomorrow; take him off his mum's hands for a bit.

Les Very decent of you.

Les I remember you jumping out of a plane for him.

Dave Back in the day.

Les Raised a lot of money

Dave Yeah. Gonna send him to Euro-Disney this time.

Les *(Disgusted)* France.

Dave Got the barbecue and that, all the outside chairs'll be out, even got the London School of Samba coming down to dance and everything. Should be very tasty.

Phwargh those dancers. I tell you, I tell you, very nice. They are the business. The fuckin' business.

Marie *(The ashtrays are out on the bar. She gives them the drinks then goes out into bar)* Here.

Les Thank you very much Marie.

Marie My pleasure Les. You're a gent. It's a bit quiet Dave.

Dave It's early.

Marie Not many singers.

Dave It's early.

Marie Where's Richie?

Dave He's late.

Marie Maybe he's not coming. *(The music stops)*

Dave He's coming.

Les Music's stopped Dave

Dave *(He gets the mic. He pulls out a disc and puts it in as he speaks.)* Sorry about that folks. Right, how about a nice surprise eh? First singer of the night, ladies and Gentleman. 'The hostess with the Mostess' Put your hands together for, Marie! *(The blue screen lights up with "Crazy.")*

Marie What?

Dave Here she comes.

Marie I aint singing.

Dave Come on up Marie.

Marie No! I can't sing.

Les Yes you can. Go on.

Dave Come on Marie. We want to hear Marie don't we? *(Crowd agrees)*

Les Go on. You got a lovely voice. I love this song.

Marie Oh alright then. *(She goes up, takes mic, sings, Les helps her along).*

Dave One way to kick it off.

Les She's good yeah.

Dave What?

Les She's good. *(A real off note from Marie)* What?

Richie *(Entering. Wears a coat)* Dave, I'm really sorry.

Dave So you should be. What time dja call this?

Richie I know, I was at an audition.

Dave What for?

Richie Just a musical.

Dave Go alright?

Richie Nah, I messed up the dance.

Les Dancer are you?

Richie No. Not really.

Les Why did you have to dance then? If you're not a dancer?

Richie Well, you sing first and then dance.

Les Sing, and dance?

Richie Yeah.

Les But you're a singer Dave says.

Richie Yes. You got to do both in musicals. You seen many musicals?

Les Ha! No! Course not.

Richie There's some great ones in town.

Les I work.

Richie They're on in the evenings.

Les I watch T.V., or come here.

Dave The theatre aint Les's cup of tea

Les Full of poofs. No offence.

Richie I'm not gay.

Les Yeah. I went to the theatre once, the girls mind, *(audible recollection of hot girls)* I was surrounded by 'em.

Richie Girls?

Les Poofs. Homos, gaylords. Everywhere.

Richie What was the show?

Les Some French thing. A musical. La Cage of Foal? French and gay. I left at the interval and went to the Bombardier's arms. I felt, dirty.

Richie I'm Richie, by the way. *(They shake hands, tentatively from Les who isn't sure Richie is straight)*

Dave You gonna sing or what? Get ya coat off.

Richie Sorry Dave yeah. *(Takes off coat to reveal horrid cabaret shirt)*

Dave Very Smart.

Richie Yeah?

Dave The business.

Richie You're the boss.

Dave That's right. Now get up there. *(Marie finishes and Richie takes mic)*

Richie Well done Marie!

Marie I was awful.

Richie You were gorgeous. Wasn't Marie Fabulous folks? Give her a round of applause or she wont serve ya. That's better. Now if you look at the bar, Honest Dave's got an empty pint glass. Next singer gets that filled with whatever their tipples is. Pints only. Lager, bitter, Guinness or even a shandy for Les. I'm only joking Les. That's for the next singer. But this is for my boss Honest Dave, I'm late and

he's not happy but sometimes; 'Sorry seems to be the hardest word' appears on the blue screen. The intro begins really, really loud). Bugger. Sorry. Right, well obviously I'm new, so if I'm crap you don't know where I live. I tell you what let's pump it up. 'Let me Entertain you' appears on the screen It's gonna be a great night, so hold tight.

The lights explode into an enormous rock concert as if we're at a Robbie Williams gig, Richie is the ultimate showman.

*Hell is gone and heaven's here
There's nothing left for you to fear
Shake your arse come over here
Now scream
I'm a burning effigy
Of everything I used to be
You're my rock of empathy, my dear*

*So come on let me entertain you
Let me entertain you*

*Life's too short for you to die
So grab yourself an alibi
Heaven knows your mother lied
Mon cher
Separate your right from wrongs
Come and sing a different song
The kettle's on so don't be long
Mon cher*

*So come on let me entertain you
Let me entertain you*

(We return to the pub atmosphere, Music fades down.)

- Dave Blimey, nearly blew your toupee of Les. Only joking.
- Les Where'd you find him?
- Dave Just moved in round the back of Lambeth North tube. That new block. He came in last Friday for the first time. Him and his mate, can't remember his name. What's his name? Fuck. Marie? What's Richie's mate's name? The welsh bloke?
- Marie I dunno Dave
- Dave He was in last week with Richie.
- Marie No.

Dave Well anyway. What is it? Fuck. Never mind. Anyway, Bobby's at the hospital with his Dad so I had to host it myself. Busy night, and there were some cracking birds in from across the road. The Eurostar lot.

Les French?

Dave French, but nice people Les. Busy, but not many singers. So I'm having to do number after fucking number, and these two are sitting there all night, just drinking. Not singing at all, they hadn't even looked at the book. Well, it gets to half eleven, and I must of done twenty songs by now. Cider they were drinking. I thought; right! I'm gonna have you. I'll sort you two out. And I knew they could sing they were joining in 'Come Fly With me',

Les *(Singing)* 'Come fly with me let's fly, let's fly'. *We hear the end of 'Come fly with me' as Dave moves to the stage.*

Scene Two

Transition into the previous Saturday night. It is loud and busy at the Duke. Dave sings onstage as
as
Jamie and Richie (*In coat*) sit at a table singing along. The pub responds to Dave.

Dave 'Pack up let's fly away'. You lucky people. You having a good night? Course you are, course you are. Now it's getting on a bit isn't it? It's half eleven and well, it doesn't seem that none of you wants to sing anymore. So I guess that's last orders at the bar ladies and gentlemen (*boos*). You want me to stay open do you? Risk my license for you lot? I tell you what. You're a nice bunch of people and it's nice to be nice. So this is what we'll do. I'll bolt the doors and if the fuzz should come knocking on that door we'll tell 'em it's choir practice. What'll we tell them (*response*) that's right. I haven't finished yet. If I'm gonna put myself on the line for you people I want something in return, fair? Fair. You (*points to Richie*) master, are going to give us a song.

Richie Me?

Dave Oh yes.

Richie I can't

Dave You will.

Richie No. It's alright thanks.

Dave If you don't sing it'll be last orders at the bar. (*Boos*) Come on. I'll sing with you.

Jamie Go on Richard will ya. Before they lynch us.

Dave Come on give him some encouragement. (*Shout of 'Sing you twat'*)

Richie Bloody hell. (*rises*)

Jamie Wahaay! Go on boy!

Dave You're up after your mate sunshine.

Jamie If I could stand I would.

Dave Right, right. Ladies and Gentlemen, lords and ladies. He has sat on his arse all fucking night but here he is to give us. Fucking hell...hold on (*fiddles with PA*). What's your name?

Richie Richard

Dave Here's Richie and one of my favourites. (*The blue screen shows "Chicago Intro 12 seconds."*) Don't worry master, the words are there and I'm here, it'll be a doddle. (*They both sing 'Chicago'*).

Dave&Richie "*Chicago, Chicago that toddling town
Chicago, Chicago I'll show you around - I love it
Bet your bottom dollar you'll lose the blues in Chicago
The town that Billy's Sunday could not shut down*

Richie *On state street that great street I just want to say
They do things that they don't do on Broadway - say
They have the time the time of their life
I say a man and he danced with his wife
In Chicago, my home town*

Scene Three

Transition back to the present Saturday Night.

Les Nut?

Dave Nah, I'm, alright Les.

Les Marie?

Marie No thank you Les.

Les Busy night.

Dave Yeah, he did very well. I'm thinking of getting him in more regular like.

Les More regular?

Dave Instead of Bobby.

Les *(Surprised)* Yeah?

Dave They'll be alright.

Jamie Well Dave, how are ya?

Dave Very well Master. Pint of cider?

Jamie I wouldn't say no boy.

Dave Les this is Richie's mate.

Jamie Jamie

Les Alright?

Jamie Hey how are ya? Hi Marie, you're looking swell.

Marie You're a charmer aren't ya?

Jamie It's the Irish in me I'm sure.

Les Nut?

Jamie Erm..cheers.

Les All gone. Sorry.

Dave Drink Jamie?

Jamie Cheers. Cider please Dave.

Dave Richie? Pint of cider?

Richie *He gives thumbs up.*

Dave Pint of cider for Richie, Marie.

Marie Sure.

The music swells and Richie sings the end of the song. Lots of applause.

Richie Thankyou! That’s your lot. What a lovely bunch of people. That really is it. Seriously. I don’t know when I’ll be back but make sure you’re here for the karaoke next week with ‘Bobby Dee!’. Way past my bedtime. I’ve been Richie, you’ve been great, see you next week at the Duke, from eight ‘till late. Goodnight! (*Applause. Richie begins to clear away. During the following Richie goes behind the bar several times putting things away and returning*)

Les You missed a good night, Jamie.

Dave Half a lager as well Marie. Les?

Les (*Eating Nuts, so he nods*).

Dave You should have got here earlier and given us a song.

Jamie I’ve been on working.

Les Just finished now did you?

Jamie No. I finished at eleven then went for a drink front of house with a few of the lads.

Dave Front of House?

Jamie I’m an usher over the road at ‘the National’.

Dave Right gotcha, gotcha.

Les Full time work is that?

Jamie Just in the evenings. I’m an actor like Dickie.

Les Good, good. Acting eh? Singing as well?

Jamie Yeah singing as well. But no dancing! (*Pause*)

Dave Richie, said you were doing some show at the moment?

Jamie I’m in rehearsals yeah.

Dave Oh right.

Jamie Yeah, it’s a fringe production at a very small theatre in Sydenham.

Dave Oh yeah?

Jamie It’s called “The Incredible Hunk”. And well, Dr Dorky Banner gets hit by gamma rays protecting this woman, a fellow scientist and from then on

whenever he gets horny he goes green like the 'Hulk' and, but well he's the 'Hunk'...well you know (*indicates a large erection*). It's a musical. I play the hunk.

Dave Horny eh?

Jamie Horny.

Dave Good is it?

Jamie No.

Dave Pays well?

Jamie Just expenses, but the Director's good and you know, its work and it keeps me out of the office so to speak.

Dave No, quite right. Richie tells me you play the Joanna?

Jamie Yeah a bit like.

Les You're Irish.

Marie I love Ireland.

Jamie Yeah, from Waterford.

Les Sure.

Dave I've been looking for someone to do Thursday nights for me. Throw you a bit of cash, come in and play, bring your dots if you need them.

Jamie I dunno Dave. I've never done that sort of thing before.

Dave That don't matter, it's an easy gig, easy crowd, easy money, few drinks and you're laughing. Old mate of mine Cliff Hall used to do Thursdays.

Les Original Keyboard player in "The Shadows"

Jamie Really?

Dave Oh yeah. Quality. It's a bit too much for him now though. Arthritis in his hands.

Marie Poor old Cliff. He's so good as well.

Dave Do you want to start clearing up?

Marie Not really.

Dave Tough.

Marie Fine. (*Exits*)

Dave Thursday's.

Jamie I couldn't Dave. Thanks but/

Dave Give you a nice cabaret shirt. You'd look the business.

Jamie I couldn't Dave, I work as well.

Dave Where was it you said?

Les At 'the National Theatre' Dave. La-de-da.

Dave Acting?

Jamie Front of House. Ushering.

Les On a Thursday night?

Jamie Every night.

Les Sundays?

Jamie Except Sundays.

Les Ushering?

Jamie Yeah.

Les Taking tickets and that?

Jamie Yeah. Matinees as well.

Dave How much do you get for that? If you don't mind me asking?

Jamie No, of course not. Twenty-Eight pounds a shift.

Les Do it for the glamour then do you?

Jamie No, it's just too difficult to change all the shifts around. I really appreciate the offer Dave, I really do but, I wouldn't be able to do it.

Dave Not to worry Jamie. Just trying to help you out that's all.

Jamie Thanks I appreciate that Honest Dave.

Dave Not a problem, Master.

Richie Hey Dave. Sorry, I was just putting the tambourines away. *(To Jamie)* Hey mate alright?

Jamie Good sure. Tambourines?

Richie Yeah Dave's secret weapon. I couldn't believe it! Everyone went mad when they came out. They were out when we were here last week remember?

Jamie I was bolloxed Richard.

Richie Yeah. Did that work alright? That Rock and Roll bit. Everyone seemed to like it didn't they?

Dave Listen to this Les.

Richie What?

Les Oh is this the bit he fucked up?

Jamie You fucked up?

Richie Yeah. I sang 'Rock around the clock' at midnight and forgot to stop the disc so it went straight into 'Great balls of fire'. Well, you know, everyone seemed to be enjoying it so I just threw the tambourines out and kept going.

Dave Four in a row.

Richie Yeah! I let that fat bloke sing 'Peggy Sue' at the end though. It was madness.

Dave No it was good. Keep it. 'Midnight Madness'.

Richie Yeah. I could do, erm, 'Run-around Sue', 'Great Balls of Fire', 'Rock around the Clock',

Dave 'Shake Your Tail Feather'

Richie Yeah.

Les 'Blue Suede Shoes'

Dave and 'Let's twist again'.

Richie But that's six.

Dave Trust me. Six'll be fine. Keep them up dancing.

Les Make them thirsty.

Dave That's right.

Marie *(Enters and retrieves a bucket)* Some idiot's chucked up in the beer garden.

Dave Who?

Marie I dunno. I just gotta clean it up.

Les I'll help you.

Marie It's alright Les, you got your nice coat on.

Dave Yeah, don't worry about it.

Les No, no, getting rid of crap is my speciality. Back in a sec. *(Exits with Marie)*

Richie How was work mate?

Jamie Alright, just taking tickets you know. *(Mimicking Les)* La-De-Da.

Richie You stayed behind for a drink then? You should have got them all to come along here. Dave would have let them in. It was a good night.

Dave Cigarette?

Jamie No thanks Dave.

Richard&Jamie We don't smoke Dave.

Dave You sure you're not gay.

Richie Just mates.

Dave You want ice Richie? I'm out of ice.

Richie Oh don't worry about it Dave.

Dave No, no it's alright. I got some up in my fridge. I'll get some.

Richie You sure Dave?

Dave Yeah, yeah don't worry. *(Dave takes the phone off the bar and exits)*

Jamie What are you telling him I play the piano for?

Richie What?

Jamie He asked me to play on a Thursday.

Richie Great. You gonna do it?

Jamie No Richard I'm not.

Richie Why not? You'd be great.

Jamie Because all I know is Irish songs.

Richie You could bring your music.

Jamie What and sing show tunes? Just don't fucking put my name forward for anything ok? Jesus, I nearly shit myself. That Les on at me.

Richie Deadly Les?

Jamie Deadly Les? He's called 'Deadly Les'?

Richie Yeah. I met him earlier tonight. He's Dave's mate. You know why they call him 'Deadly Les'?

Jamie Go on.

Richie He's a killer.

Jamie What?

Richie Few years ago he strangled a bloke in a bar fight. Choked him to death in this very pub. Bloke twice his size as well. Les is a serious piece of work, I wouldn't like to get on the wrong side of him. I don't think he likes you.

Jamie What? How d'ya know that?

Richie Just an impression.

Jamie You're messing.

Richie You're not very likable when people first meet you. Wouldn't surprise me if you didn't make it out of here alive.

Jamie Go way! *(They laugh and punch each other)* Ya pissed?

Richie A bit yeah. It's just hard work.

Jamie Well you've been going for what? Six hours?

Richie Five and a half. I was late.

Jamie You were late for your first night at work for Honest Dave?

Dave *(Enters behind them with a plonk of the ice into the glass)* There you go. I tell you my wife, ex-wife used to be an usher.

Marie enters to get another brush from behind the bar

Jamie No you didn't Dave.

Dave Yeah at the flicks, cinema, you know, usherette, ice creams and that. That's how we met. 'The News Theatre' over by the station. They closed it in, Seventy-one, no Seventy. Yeah, happy days. She'll be around tomorrow dropping off my son.

Marie You'll know when she gets here. Thunder, lightening, Sky goes dark and the flying monkeys arrive. *(exits)*

Dave Why did I think you were welsh? I've got a horse running tomorrow. Kempton. Called 'Paddy's friend'.

Richard Is it a good bet Dave?

Dave Yeah. Put a fiver on it. Each way. I would have gone to watch but I'm seeing my son. You like the horses Jamie?

Jamie I don't really bet, but if it's a good tip. My father used to breed greyhounds though.

Richie My step dad would take me to the races on Boxing Day at Towcester. Frozen last year though, so we went to the pub.

Dave Right, right. Three-Twenty at Kempton. 'Paddy's friend'. It's a good tip. I don't do a St Patrick's day here anymore. I tell you why. We used to have a crackin one, it was the fuckin' business. I'd get in a keg of Bulmer's and a few extra kegs of Guinness. Knock a few pence off it and decorate the place, few bits, nothing fancy, whatever. And the spread, I tell you, it was the works. The full on works. Soda bread, farls, chicken, spuds and pig's trotters....what are they called? Special name for them...

Jamie Crubeens Dave? That's a Waterford delicacy.

Dave That's it. Well. Anyway it used to be a great night. Really lay it on thick. I even got an Irish Karaoke CD. Honest, I still got it. You believe me don't cha? Don't cha? For real? Right?

Jamie Right Dave.

Dave Right. It's a shame 'cos it used to be the bollocks. I tell you what happened. Must be..oh, six, seven years ago now. We had a load of fellas came in, been working on the Jubilee line, you know up at Waterloo, Irish lot. One of them. Big fella, big red hair, ginger, rough looking. When he walked in I clocked him

and I though, you're trouble you are. Looked like a gypsy, you know what I mean, traveller, well they all did. But I thought I'd give him the benefit of the doubt; well I'd laid on a spread hadn't I? With pigs trotters.

Richie That's right Dave

Dave He's knocking into people. Trouble. So he came over to the bar, big fucker he was, and I said "Happy St. Patrick's day, have yourself a drink and some food, but calm down" He just started spouting off at me about the English and oppression and William Of Fuckin' Orange and all this bollocks. I'd thrown this big fuckin' party and he's telling me I'm a wanker and all this bollocks, and he's pissed, he's pissed on my knock down Guinness. Then, you won't fuckin' believe this, you won't fuckin' believe this. He sees my ensign on the wall. Richie, read that bit out at the bottom of it. What's it say?

Richie "To David Johnson from a loyal Seaman."

Dave That's right, and that ensign there is from the H.M.S Conqueror that is. That is the ensign from the submarine that sunk the Belgrano in the Falklands in 1982, and this arsehole has spotted it and goes up to it and starts trying to pull it off the fucking wall. That ensign was was a gift to me from an old mason mate of mine, whose son was on that sub. We had a few charity bashes and raised a few quid for the British Legion, and he gave it to me. And this cunt is trying to rip it off the wall. Well it's screwed on tight (*goes to it*). Look at that, can't get that off easy. That's pride of place. A gift from a true gentleman. He was in the navy, as well as his son. History of service in the family. Lovely fella. But this ginger, holding it like this, pulling it. Like this. Well, I'm a nice man aren't I? You know I'm a nice bloke don't cha?

Jamie&Richie Yeah, course you are Dave.

Dave That's right. I don't like violence; I'm not a violent man. I used to box a bit when I was younger. London ABA champion when I was a kid, but I'm not a violent man, still, I won't have some pikey arsehole tearing up the pub. So I come up behind him and, crack! Jamie put your drink down. Stand here. Look I'll show ya. (*Jamie is demonstrated upon. Dave relives the fight, showing every move*) Crack! I smacked him, right on his ear with my right. Grabbed him, in a half nelson, 'cos he's a big fella, and chucked him out. Out the door. Well then it all happens don't it? All his fucking mates, all big paddys, you know, travellers, eight, nine of them. Broad, you know? Big chests.

Richie Stocky.

Dave That's right stocky. Well, they all pile out into the street and start givin' out, and I'm there on my own. On my own, standing in the door stopping these cunts coming in, and they're all squaring up around the ginger fella, so I turned to the pub and I shouted, to the pub, busy, you know, forty, fifty people all there, and I said "Let's give it to 'em! Who's with me?" Ha! Like a fucking movie star! Ha! And dja know how many people got up to give 'em a bit? One. One

fuckin' bloke. Black fella who used to be in the army. Sergeant in the Paras. I hadn't even seen him come in so, he couldn't of been there more than five minutes. But he fuckin' stood up and came out to the door. To me. Solid he was. Big black guy. Had a scotch egg on the go, but he put it in his pocket. The rest of 'em sat there as if nothings going on! Carrying on eating!

Jamie Fuck's sake! And no-one would help?

Dave Just this one black bloke. There's nearly a dozen of these Irish out front, and two of us. Two. Now I'm no slouch. I was amateur boxing champion of London when I was a kid. I swear on my son's life Amateur fuckin' champion. Would I lie to ya?

Jamie No Dave

Richie Champion Dave.

Dave And I thought, right. I'm gonna have you. To the Ginger one. I'm gonna have you. Whatever happens here, I'm gonna have him. So I pointed at him. Just as they were all about to dive in. I pointed at him.
Jamie come here (*Jamie stands*). I said "Come on then! Come on" (*Jamie moves too early*) No, wait Jamie. Then he charged at me. Come on Jamie. (*Jamie lamely runs at Dave*) Bosch! I caught him right across the chin. Crack! Sweet as a nut. Right on the button. I broke his fuckin' jaw, and knocked him right back into these paddys. Well! Ha! Well! Mental! They all fuckin' flew into me then. I got another couple of shots of and then they started putting the boot in. Arseholes broke two of my ribs. Biggest kicking I ever got. Look at that scar there (*points to his head*). Well and truly done over, black fella as well, he got it dished out. Head like a balloon by the time they finished kicking him. (*Pause*) After that, well, that was it. Too much trouble. I just do the charity days now. Christmas of course, but not Paddy's day. Shame, it used to be a really good day. What's the name of them things? (*Scratching the scar*).

Jamie Crubeens?

Dave Crubeens. Yeah.

Richie What time tomorrow Dave? The horse?

Dave Three-Twenty at Kempton. Each way.

Scene Four

3.21PM Sunday Afternoon. Dave and Mick are alone in the pub watching the horse racing on TV. Various shouts as 'Paddy's Friend' comes third. Dave is playing with Mick. Bobby enters smoking, carrying a small portable stereo. He's in a cabaret shirt.

Mick That's the way!

Dave That's the way!

Mick That's the way! That's the way! That's the way! That's the way!

Dave That's the way!

Mick That's the way! That's the way!

Bobby *(Sings)* That's the way! Bobby D ladies and gentlemen.

Dave *(pause)?*

Bobby Hey. Alright Mick?

Mick Alright Bobby, alright. Hahahahah. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Good, good, yeah. Winning, winning. Me and Dave. Winning. That's the way!

Bobby Yeah, good. You alright Dave?

Dave Very well master, very well. Get you a drink?

Bobby erm, yeah I'll have a pint please Dave. It's quiet.

Dave *(Indicates Mick who's behaviour would clear a pub)* Put your money away, it's on me.

Bobby Cheers Dave, that's very kind of you.

Mick Next race Dave! Next race! Quick Dave, quick!

Dave Don't get too excited Mick. Alright?

Mick Alright Dave, alright.

Bobby You got some horses running Mick?

Mick Yeah! Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Got a Trixie, patent, patent, patent and a Fourfold, Fourfold.

Bobby Accumulator?

Mick Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Accumulator. Can't lose, aint that right Dave. Dave? Dave? Can't lose can we? Can't lose?

Dave That's right Mick can't lose. We got a system

Mick System! We got the system! Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

Bobby I'll have to get some tips off you then.

Mick Ha! Fuck yourself! No chance! No chance Dave! No chance Bobby! Hahahaha. Me and Dave! Our system, just me and Dave. Don't tell no one do we Dave? Do we Dave?

Dave No, no. We don't tell no one. 'Cept Les. Sorry Bobby.

Mick 'Cept Les. Sorry, sorry, sorry Bobby. Sorry.

Bobby Never mind.

Mick Next race Dave! Next race. Got my Trixie coming! Trixie, trixie and a patent, patent as well.

Dave Few minutes yet Mick. How'd did it go? Alright?

Bobby Fine, you know.

Dave Top?

Bobby This? (*Indicates shirt*) Yeah, long story.

Dave On your pint.

Bobby Oh! No, yeah cheers. (*Pause, indicates stereo*) I didn't want to leave this in the car.

Dave Is the traffic bad?

Bobby Erm..

Dave You drove through town, is the traffic bad?

Bobby No. It's Sunday.

Dave How was it?

Bobby Nice yeah. Proper. Lots of flowers and that. Lots of traders. He used to do Fruit & Veg at the Nag's Head food Market on Seven Sisters Road.

Dave Yeah I know it.

Bobby He moved onto books few years back. He was getting too old for all the shouting and standing around for Fruit & Veg so he did books instead.

Dave Know a lot about books did he?

Bobby Not really. No. He only sold books about Elvis. His hero Elvis. He did it on the same pitch as well, near his mates. *(He pictures the market)* Fruit, Veg, Fruit, Fish, meat, books on Elvis, Fish, veg and then some Indian fella selling nuts. He only sold two, just used lend them out to people instead like an Elvis library. He'd sit there and read all day. Come home smelling of fish. My sister did a reading erm..psalm, , "As I walk through the valley of death" that one.

Dave Psalm 23. Funeral was up North?

Bobby Yeah, Enfield. Strayfield Road cemetery.

Dave *(Bobby goes to put the stereo on the bar)* Don't put that there, it's dirty.

Bobby Sorry Dave. I needed it to play Elvis at the graveside, 'An American Trilogy' he wanted, as we lowered him in, his last wish and that. He had all the arrangements made before he died, all organized. His market mates were the pall bearers, and they're getting on a bit. Carried him out of St Margaret's, on the High Road. Youngest must be Seventy odd. I think they were a bit knackered from that so me and my cousins had to help 'em out a bit at the cemetery, on the grass, it was wet going down the slope. Bit soggy. I dunno why he didn't get me and my cousins to do it in the first place.

Dave Slippery.

Bobby Yeah, we had to help a bit. Still took quite a while to get the coffin there, helping the old boys, dignified, but slow. So we were running a bit behind. They don't like it when you run a bit behind, but it's a funeral aint it and it takes as long as it takes. It's all paid for so what more do they want? Take our time if we want to. We got the coffin up and the priest went to say a few bits. But, do you know Strayfield cemetery?

Dave No I don't, no.

Bobby Well, it turns out that Strayfield Cemetery is subject to flooding and half of the graves have to have water pumped out of them before the ceremony. I never knew this when I bought the grave. Probably why it was only a grand. My dad wanted Tottenham as its closer, but we couldn't afford it, not with all the food for the do afterwards. It's extra for a Sunday burial as well. So we get there to the grave and there's water in it. I said to the priest "what's all this then?" and he says 'cos we're taking so long, the water's started to seep in. If he'd told me that before, I could have hurried things up a bit. So he does a sort of quicker ceremony and then the fellas went to lower the coffin in and I went to turn the stereo on but now the fucking stereo's not working is it? We couldn't get the CD going. I'd put it on the floor while the priest was doing his bit and a load of water got into the batteries. 'Cos it was soggy, the grass and that. Well everyone just stood their waiting for something to happen. The priest was going to say a few more words but I stopped him and said "No. This is what my dad would have wanted" and sang it myself.
(Closes eyes and starts Singing)

*“Oh I wish I was in the land of Cotton,
Old things they are not forgotten,
Look away, look away, look away Dixie lad.
Oh I wish I was in Dixie, away, away,
In Dixieland I take my stand to live and die*

Mick Race Dave! Race! Race!

Dave Alright Mick. With you in a second.

Bobby didn't want to let 'em down did I. *(Singing)*
Glory, glory Hallelujah,
Glory, glory Hallelujah,

Dave Or your Dad.

Bobby Yeah, exactly. So as I'm singing, the coffin's going in, being lowered and that, and just as I get to the bit, "*You know you're Daddy's bound to die*" you know, near the end, well not that near the end. Anyway, next thing I know is, 'cos I had my eyes shut, I was emotional you know, a bit choked up, everyone was. From my singing. I could tell. Next thing I know, Wallop! I'm covered in bloody water!

Dave What?

Bobby Water! One of the blokes lowering my dad in, slipped on the grass and kicked the stereo into his mate lowering the other side, and the front of the coffin, the head end, just dropped in, and all this dirty grave water had splashed up on me. Just me. Nobody else was touched. Can you fucking believe that? Not a drop on 'em. Just me. I was in my best suit. Have to take it into the cleaners on Monday. I was soaked. Well, now there's a right palaver, cos my dad's stuck head first at 45 degrees and we can't bloody budge it. I had to sort of kick the sticking up bit whilst my cousins got some bits of wood and tried to get it flat. Most of my dad's mates left then and my sister got upset and that, I mean, I tried to get it as straight as I could, I kept kicking and kicking it, and kicking it. Stamping, everything. Finally it slipped in a bit more and they said they could fill it in. Still at a bit of an angle, but I was a bit cold, and I had to get the buffet sorted, so I headed back down to my car to change. I always carry a spare shirt with me with my discs in case, you know, a gig might come up or something.

Mick There's our horse Dave! There. It's gonna start Dave. Dave! Dave! The race, race, race.

Dave Mick. I'm talking. You want a bag of crisps?

Mick Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah! Cheese ones Dave? Can I have Cheese ones? Yeah?

Dave Course Mick. Crisps Bobby?

Bobby Er, no thanks I'm stuffed. Ah go on then, yeah. Got any flame grilled steak ones in?

Dave Flame grilled Steak? No all out.

Bobby Oh err, Salt and Vinegar then Dave, cheers.

Dave I'll get Richie to swing by the corner shop and pick some more up.

Bobby (*Very interested*) Richie? That's the new lad isn't it? Richie's coming in later is he? How'd he get on last night? I heard he did alright.

Mick Richie's great aint he Dave? Aint he?

Dave Yeah he did very well. Very well. He's coming in a bit later. I want to show him a few bits on the machine.

Bobby I could show him. I got my radio mic as well. I'll go home and get it, show him how to use it. It's no problem.

Mick Race is starting Dave! Dave!

Dave Well if you want to.

Bobby Yeah, no problem. I've got some discs you haven't got. The ones I got off the internet. I'll get them. Some new ones at home as well, I'll bring them in.

Mick Dave! Dave! Starters orders Dave, starter, starter, starter. Trixie as well. Trixie and a fourfold, fourfold, patent. Which one's our horse Dave, which one's our, horse? Yeah?

Bobby Won't take a while. Change out my shirt and come back. Seeya later. Mick.

Mick Yeah Bobby.

Dave I'll see you later then.

Mick They're off, Dave! Off, off, off. Which one's ours Dave? Dave?

Dave The one in the lead Mick.

Mick Always Dave? The one in the lead Dave?

Dave Yes Mick. Always the one in the lead.

Mick Are we winners Dave? Are we winners? Dave? Dave?

Dave Course we are my son. We're winners.

Mick Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!

Honest Dave and Mick watch the racing, Dave puts his arm up around Mick's shoulders. Lights begin to fade, then burst back up as Bobby slams the door open. He carries a box of crisps and is out of breath. Dave jumps and Mick is very startled.

Dave Jesus!

Mick Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Ahh! Ahh!

Dave It's alright Mick, it's alright mate. Calm down son.

Mick Okay, okay, okay, Jesus! Okay, okay. *(Pause as Mick calms down)*

Bobby I got you them crisps Dave. Flame grilled steak. Save Richie going.

Dave *(Angry)* Cheers.

Bobby No problem. Got your crisps Mick. Right, I better get home, get my disks. See ya later. *(He exits, then returns)* I'll settle up with you later Dave.

Dave Just piss off Bobby.

Bobby Yeah alright. Sorry about that. Bye. *(He exits then pokes his head back round the door.)* Dave?

Dave What is it?

Bobby There's someone here to see you.

Dave *(Excited)* Finally my ray of Sunshine! My Boy! Come here!

Barbara *(Enters)* Hello Dave.

Dave Hello Barbara. Where's David?

Barbara He's in the car.

Dave Well is he coming in?

Barbara I don't know.

Bobby You're looking well Barbara.

Barbara Thank you Bobby. Bright shirt for this time of day.

Bobby I was at a funeral.

Barbara Of course. *(Pause)*

Bobby Well, see you later. *(Exits)*

Barbara Hello Michael. Remember me?

Mick Michael! Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. No, no.

Barbara No?

Mick No.

Barbara I'm Barbara, remember I used to look after you? Remember? You used to play with David? Little David?

Mick Winning the horses, aint we Dave?

Dave That's right Mick. Want some crisps?

Mick No, no, no thanks Dave.

Barbara I know, remember this Mick. *(She pulls a funny face, Mick laughs)* Remember?

Mick *(Laughing)* No, don't remember. *(Offers her a crisp)*

Barbara Thank you.

Dave Check the next race Mick.

Mick Okay Dave, okay, okay.

Barbara He doesn't remember me. No drink?

Dave Whatdja want? Gin and Tonic?

Barbara Sparkling water. Please. *(Dave fixes the drink)*

Dave David?

Barbara He's not coming.

Dave *(deflated but expecting it)* Why?

Barbara That's why I came. To talk.

Dave Talk.

Barbara He's growing up.

Dave *(Exploding)* Why isn't he here? What have you told him?

Barbara He hates it here. He's always hated it here. Stuck at the end of the bar scribbling on beer mats whilst you work like some bar ornament.

Dave That's not true. I take him places.

Barbara When? When have you actually taken him somewhere? Anywhere?

Dave *(Grunts)* You're stopping me.

Barbara Don't be ridiculous.

Mick *(The shouting has shaken Mick, he growls at Barbara)*

Les *(Enters struggling with stacked up boxes of crisps that obscure his view)* Alright Dave? I brought you some of them flame grilled crisps you've run out of. Passing a cash and carry on the old kent, so I thought it'd be good to stock up for Mick's bash. Get sorted early. Save running around. There's three flavours here, three for the price of two, only set me back a monkey and it's charity aint it? I think they're all low fat ones though.

Dave Barbara's here Les. *(About to put the boxes on the bar but stops and keeps the boxes between him and Barbara)*

Les In here?

Dave Yeah

Les Now?

Dave Yeah.

Les Seriously?

Dave Seriously.

Les Nah, you're having a/

Barbara /Hello Les.

Les Hello Barbara. *(Pause)* I best get these round the back then.

Barbara Why don't you put those down Les?

Les Err..no.

Barbara Aren't they heavy Les?

Les No, they're crisps.

Barbara Still.

Les And they're low fat. Light as a feather. I best get them round the back

Dave Cheers.

Les No problem.

Dave Oh Les?

Les I'm not putting them down Dave.

Dave Take Mick with you. You want to go to the garden? Tell Les about the racing? The horses? Mick?

Mick *(Scared from the shouting)* Okay Dave.

Dave That's a good boy.

Mick Good boy. Good boy.

Les Yeah, good boy, come here.

Dave Take a box for him.

Les No! I'm fine. Honest. Nice to see you Barbara. Come on Mick.

(Les exits to the Garden. Mick gets up and as he passes Barbara he spits on her then runs out).

Dave Mick! Whatdja do that for? Mick?

Barbara It doesn't matter. *(She wipes it off with a tissue)* Leave it Dave. He's just scared. It doesn't matter. *(She finishes her water).*

Dave Go and get him.

Barbara For what? So he can sit here all afternoon and bet on horses?

Dave I'll put the gloves on we can go out back and have a box or something.

Barbara He likes football.

Dave Fine I'll go buy a football then. We'll go out back and/

Barbara He doesn't want to play football here!

Dave There's nothing wrong with this place, you liked it enough before you snooty bitch!

Barbara goes to storm off but Dave Catches her by the door and pleads

Dave Please.

Barbara God. Look at this place. You used to be, 'The King of Lambeth'. Now look at you, your kingdom stops at that door.

Dave This is...

Barbara You're life. Some life Dave. *(exits)*

Scene Five

10.30PM That evening. Bobby is showing Richie how to modulate the PA. The TV keeps flashing up "Bad Bad Leroy Brown" as Bobbie repeatedly changes the key. Marie is behind the bar, Les with Dave. Mick sits watching Richie.

Bobby *(Singing) Well the south side of Chicago,
It's the baddest part of town,
And if you go down there,
You better just beware,
Of a man named Leroy Brown.*

Les Drink?

Dave Yeah, cheers. Lager. Marie? Lager. A Half a lager and a Whiskey and water.

Les Brandy please.

Dave Brandy?

Les Yeah. I always drink Brandy on a Sunday.

The TV flashes up "Bad Bad Leroy Brown" Mick cheers as Richie sings.

Richie *(Singing in a higher key) Well the south side of Chicago,
It's the baddest part of town,
And if you go down there,
You better just beware,
Of a man named Leroy Brown.*

Les Good song this Mick.

Mick Yeah, yeah, yeah. Great song Les! Great song!

Bobby Too much echo mate. You got to balance it. Be like a surfer.

Richie Like a surfer?

Bobby Yeah. (*mimes surfing*) Volume, reverb. Echo, pitch. Volume, reverb, echo, pitch. See? Keep you're balance.

Richie (*Copies Bobby*) Volume, reverb. Echo, pitch?

Bobby Exactly.

Richie Aren't reverb and echo the same thing?

Bobby No.

Marie There you go. (*Puts drinks down*) I love Frank Sinatra and that. All crooners. Tony Bennett as well, Dean/

Dave /What's that?/

Marie /Martin. Dean Martin Dave you know. (*Singing*) "Volare, whoa oh aye oh, contare" (*laughs*)

Les Very good. (*To Bobby and Richie*) Watch you're back lads, 'star at the bar'!

Dave I meant what the fuck is that? (*Indicates drinks*).

Marie Lager, Half a lager, whiskey and water, and a brandy for Les.

Dave Les wanted a brandy not a whiskey you fucking Muppet.

Marie Alright! God! Just doing my job Dave.

Dave Not very well. Half a lager not a pint and a fucking half.

Marie Don't be like that with me. Get someone else in then if you're gonna be like that! You don't have to swear at me. I got the drinks you asked for.

Dave I didn't ask for that. When did I ask for that?

Les Calm down Dave. Marie get us a bag of nuts please.

Marie We've only got dry roasted.

Les Good. They're my favourite. (*Marie gets nuts. To Dave*) Wound a bit tight. How was it?

Dave (*Grunts*)

Marie Yeah, well you've always been crap at football.

Dave Yeah, well. (*Downs whiskey, starts dialling on phone*)

Marie Less violent than boxing. What about cricket? He playing cricket? Or rugby? I like rugby players. Bigger than footballers aint they?

Dave Marie? (*Pause*). Go and get the Empties.

Marie I'm just trying to help Dave.

Dave I know Darlin' I know. Empties.

Marie Fine.

Les (*Takes Brandy*) Cheers. How's Uxbridge?

Dave Uxbridge?

Les Yeah. That's where they are isn't it? Uxbridge?

Dave Yeah. I dunno Les, I haven't been there. Bit far out.

Les Right, right.

Dave (*Changing the subject*) I'll have to tell you about Bobby's Dad's funeral later.

Les I'm sure I shall hear it from the donkey's mouth Dave.

Dave I'm sure you will.

Les Richie's mate not with him?

Dave Rehearsing or something. Coming down later. Uxbridge, fuck's sake. Here, could you do us a favour Wednesday?

Les Course.

Dave I not gonna be here for the delivery, I got extra kegs coming for the bash, and it'll just be Marie.

Les Say no more.

Dave Cheers.

Les What are friends for? Big do Sunday, I'm looking forward to it. Richie singing?

Dave Bobby.

Les Oh. Had a chance to chat with him?

Dave No. I better sort him out actually.

The TV flashes up "Bad Bad Leroy Brown"

Richie *(Singing in a higher key) Well the south side of Chicago,
It's the baddest part of town,
And if you go down there,
You better just beware,
Of a man named Leroy Brown.*

Mick Higher! Higher!

Dave Bobby? Come here.

Bobby *(Carrying handheld Mic) Alright Dave? Alright Les? (Into mic) More echo
Richie.*

Les Very well Bobby. My condolences.

Bobby Cheers Les.

Les Nice send off?

Bobby Yeah. Very dignified. I sang.

Les Good, good.

Bobby *"American Trilogy"*

Les Good, good.

Bobby Yeah, my Dad loved Elvis.

Les Great performer. You back to work tomorrow?

Bobby Yeah. I'm showing Richie the ropes, Dave. The faders and key changes and that.

Dave Yeah. Nice one.

Les Back to the depot?

Bobby It's a cleaning station Les. Just for buses. It's important to keep them clean.

Les Course. Important service.

Bobby That's right. They asked me if I wanted to be wash team leader last week, but I said no. I need to concentrate more on the singing you know. Now that I got new discs and that.

Les Course.

Bobby I'm teaching Richie how to use the PA properly He needs to learn all the mixes. Bring things down a key and that. Take 'em up. Gotta make sure the singer's got the right key. Judge it right for 'em. Takes a while though doesn't it?

Dave Yeah. Listen. You want a drink?

Bobby Err, yeah.

Dave Have this pint. Marie just poured it, nothing wrong with it.

Marie *(Enters with empties)* I just poured it, nothing wrong with it.

Bobby Thanks. Judging each song. Putting the right amount of echo and reverb on. Especially when I sing with the discs here. With my new ones, I've already got 'em in my key. Each one you see is in a different key so I can just let it play and don't have to fiddle around with the faders or anything. I'm gonna get some more, they're not cheap but I'll need 'em for the charity do on Sunday and if I get them by Friday I can use them Friday and Saturday night, get the right set.

Les Sounds very clever. Very professional

Bobby Yeah it is. It's almost an art.

Dave *(Pulls out cash and counts some out)* Here Bobby, take this.

Bobby What's this for? Charity do? Or Friday?

Dave Listen Bobby, I'm gonna give Richie Friday.

Bobby Oh right. *(Pause)* Give him a chance to, ermm

Dave And Saturday.

Bobby This Saturday?

Dave Yeah.

Marie Mick must be tired Dave. I'll take him back to his mum's shall I?

Dave Yeah. You tired Mick? Yeah?

Mick Yeah tired now Dave.

Dave Good day though. Eh?

Mick Bobby, Bobby, Bobby, Les, Les. Dave, Dave. Good day today, really good day, really good day.

Bobby You have some luck Mick?

Mick Luck, luck, luck, Bobby! Lucky, Mick! Lucky Mick!

Dave All of them won didn't they Mick?

Mick Yeah! All of them won, all of them!

Dave Apart from one.

Mick Yeah! Grey one won, won, won, one. Grey one beat our horse, didn't it Dave, didn't it?

Dave Yeah.

Bobby That's bad luck.

Mick Still got the accumulator though. Didn't we Dave? Accumulator, Trixie, trixie, and a patent, Patent, patent, all of accumulators and the, the, the patent.

Dave Mick picks winners.

Mick That's right. Mick picks winners! Mick picks winners!

Bobby Nice one.

Mick Winnings Dave? Is that, is that, is that the winnings Dave?

Dave Yeah, that's right Mick, I got it for you now. Save you going to the Bookies. Ok Mick?

Mick Ok, Ok, ok, ok. Yeah! Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dave Ok Mick?

Mick Yeah! Ok Dave, ok, ok, ok, ok.

Dave There you go. (*Hands him notes*)

Mick Winnings! Yeah, yeah, accumulator and all. Can't beat the system, can you Dave? Can you, Dave, Dave, Dave?

Dave That's right Mick. You can't beat the system.

Marie I'll take you home Mick.

Les I'll walk with you.

Marie Very kind of you Les.

Mick One more Richie! One more! One more!

Marie Go on then.

Mick Higher!

Richie This is for my good friend Mick and the lovely Marie. And delicate Les.
*(Singing in a higher key) Well the south side of Chicago,
It's the baddest part of town,
And if you go down there,
You better just beware,
Of a man named Leroy Brown.*

Bobby *(overlapping Richie)* You're going to give Richie Friday and Saturday?
(Pause) Yeah, you're right; I should rest my voice for Sunday. It'll be a big day,
gotta look after my voice.

Dave No. I'm gonna give Richie, Fridays and Saturdays.

Bobby I don't get it.

Dave You've done well Bobby but Richie's going to do the karaoke for me now.

Bobby But I do the Karaoke.

Dave You can still do Sunday for me. I'll pay you for Sunday.

Bobby *(The song finishes, Bobby Shouts)* Fuck Sunday!

Les Right then! We'll take Mick home. Gentlemen. Bobby.

Dave *(To Marie)* You might as well knock off.

Marie Cheers Dave.

Les I'll walk you home as well. Come on then Mick

Marie Night

Mick Night! Night! Bye Richie! Dave! Bye, bye.
They all exit

Dave Now/

Bobby /I do Fridays and Saturdays at the Duke. Look at the fucking Sign Dave. That's my name on there not Richie's. Bobby D. (*leans over bar to retrieve blackboard sign*). I can't believe this. He's only done one night!

Dave The public like him.

Bobby The public like me!

Richie (*Singing in a higher key cutting over following dialogue*) *Well the south side of Chicago,*
It's the baddest part of town,
And if you go down there,
You better just beware,
Of a man named Leroy Brown.

Bobby (*Into Mic*) Shut the fuck up Richie! Where's the board? Fucking hell Dave. (*Pulls out board*) Here look at that. That's what the punters want every Friday and Saturday night. Me.

Richie (*The TV flashes up "You're so Vain"*)
You walked into the party like you were walking onto a yacht
Your hat strategically dipped below one eye
Your scarf it was apricot

Bobby Shut up Richie!/ They see the sign and they come in for Karaoke with Bobby D Dave. You see? There. My name Dave. "Bobby D, Karaoke King". They know it's gonna be a good night if I'm the KDJ. I got followers Dave! I got fucking reviews! I got a review at karaokeinfo.co.uk for fucks sake.

Dave (*Reaches behind bar and pulls out a cloth. Rubs out 'Bobby D' and writes 'Richie'*)

Richie (*The TV flashes up "My Way"*)
And now the end is near and so I face the final curtain,
Regrets, I've had a few, but then again
Too few to mention.

Bobby Richie! You sing one more song and I will fucking rape you!

Richie (*On mic*) That's a bit harsh Bobby.

Bobby Come on Dave. I got loads of new discs and that. I got the whole set up. He's done one night! One fucking night! I went to my dad's funeral! I was sorting out shit. He was dieing whilst Richie was stealing my job!

Richie Oh, I'm on the sign.

Bobby Not for long. *(Pushes Richie)*

Richie What you doing?

Bobby Fuck off. Come on! Let's go. Let's go right now!

Richie Where? Weight Watchers?

Dave Calm down Bobby, calm down. I'm giving you Friday and Saturday nights Richie. You'll be the regular host.

Richie Okay, cool. Thanks.

Bobby And what am I gonna do?

Richie Eat?

Dave Why don't you go to 'The Ship'. They're always trying to get someone down there.

Bobby Sod 'The Ship'. My audience come here to see me. They're regulars.

Dave Bobby. They come here all the time. They're not here just to see you. 'The Duke' is their local.

Bobby Bollocks Dave. I do the Karaoke here.

Richie No. I do the Karaoke here.

Bobby What do you know about it? I got a set, routines, numbers. What have you got? You can't even get the fucking echo right you nob. Sounds like you got your head in a bucket. Look Dave. Listen to my new discs there great. They sound terrific. I got a set. I'll show you. Look. Come on. Look! *(Puts on a disc)* This is great. You see this and tell me you'd prefer, him, to host. Listen.

The TV flashes up "Stay with Me" Bobby adlibs a rehearsed speech as if he had a huge crowd watching him. He then proceeds to sing the number on his radio mic. He has worked out a routine. It is horrifically embarrassing.

Bobby *In the morning
Don't say you love me
Cause I'll only kick you out of the door*

*I know your name is Rita
Cause your perfume smelling sweeter
Since when I saw you down on the floor*

Guitar

*Won't need too much persuading
I don't mean to sound degrading
But with a face like that
You got nothing to laugh about*

*Red lips hair and fingernails
I hear you're a mean old jezebel
Lets go up stairs and read my tarot cards*

Dave Turn it the off Bobby.

Bobby Wait!

Bobby *(Putting new track on) Stay with me
Stay with me
For tonight you better stay with me*

Stay with me

Dave Bobby!

Bobby *(Turning music off) They fucking love me Dave.*

Dave Do they?

Bobby Yeah Course.

Dave *(contemplating, suddenly tired) Richie?*

Richie What?

Dave You want this job?

Richie Yeah, course.

Dave I don't know. Bobby's got all this new gear. But you got.

Richie A life?

Dave Personality

Bobby I got personality. The punters, they/

Dave /The punters, the audience, the public. Shut up Bobby. You think they like you so much. You think so? I tell you what. Let's find out. Richie, you do Friday.

Bobby fucking hell.

Dave You do Saturday Bobby. Then Sunday/

Bobby /I'm doing it.

Dave No.¹You both do it. A competition. Let the public decide eh? Your public Bobby? Let them decide? The punters. Put your money where your mouth is eh? Best man wins and all that.

Bobby Alright. Yeah.

Dave Friday, Bobby. I don't want you here, understand?

Bobby Yeah.

Dave And none of your cousins or mates coming down to cause Richie trouble. You get 'em in on Saturday and Sunday. I don't want any bollocks. Richie? Same goes for you. Friday and Sunday. Alright? None of your actor mates coming down and...

Richie Moaning?

Dave You know what I mean.

Bobby *(Gathering up his discs and mic)* You aint having these. He aint having my discs Dave. I bought them myself. I can't believe I came in and showed you how to work it all. Same day as...you're an arsehole, I ought to kick the shit out of you.

Dave Shut up Bobby.

Bobby I'll see you Sunday. Seeya Dave. *(To Richie)* Arsehole *(exits, then returns and rubs Richie's name off Blackboard. Exits, Dave locks the front door).*

Richie Got a lot of cousins has he?

Dave They wont touch ya. Don't worry about it. Where's your mate?

Richie He's gutted. They all had their stuff nicked. He's doing his final rehearsals tonight in Sydenham in some school hall, and whilst they're on stage someone nicked all their gear. Came in the back and took all their bags, clothes

¹ Could have Dave wiping off Richie's name here.

everything. 'Cos they were rehearsing next door they didn't realise 'till they finished. I think he's still at the police station, but he's coming to get the keys off me.

Dave That's Sydenham for you. Rough.

Richie Yeah.

Dave He didn't see 'em then?

Richie No

Dave Lot of scum about.

Richie Yeah.

Dave You box Richie?

Richie No. I run fast though.

Dave You're a pretty boy Richie. My son's twelve. I been taking him since he was six years old. His mother's never liked it. He's a good featherweight. Very good.

Richie Same club as you used to?

Dave No, no. I used to box out of Blackfriars club. You know the pub down there on the corner, down the cut. What's it called? The Ring. Opposite there used to be the old boxing arena. I mean it was bombed out in the war so I never saw it, but I used to train in the gym above the pub there. Good gym, very busy. Lots of fighters, you know, tough lads like me. That's gone as well now, function room or something. Used to train there every night. Apart from Sundays when I'd just do some road running. My old man used to take me down there used to be a mate of Tony Burns. You heard of Tony Burns? Anyway. First time I came home from training I was black and blue. Ten years old and, honest, head out fucking here, and my eyes! Two big black eyes. Black and purple. My Mum! Ha! Said "When are they gonna teach him to duck?" Taught me a thing or two though. I never went home like that again. I worked my arse off. Hard work Richie. Hard work. You know what I mean?

Richie Yeah, course.

Dave London Junior ABA champion. Fought 'em all and beat 'em all. I fought in Walthamstow, over York Hall, It'd only just been opened back then. Finchley, Crystal Palace. All over. Lewisham. Loved it. Had my nose broken nearly every fight though. Always used to go if I got a good one in the face. Never used to

bother me though. Yeah, I boxed a lot when I was younger. Very tasty. I take my son, well he don't want to go anymore. Footballer now.

Richie Is he any good?

Dave Yeah.

Richie Does he sing as well?

Dave Sing? Sing? Ha! No he don't sing. I'm the singer in the family. Maybe he'll be a late developer. Like his Dad. I gave up the boxing 'cos of Barbara really. She used to cry when she'd come and watch. I stopped her coming and she'd still bloody cry when she saw me. Stupid cow. Singing made her smile though. When I used to sing to her. When a girl like her smiled at you. Well, that's it. I got a gig, can't remember how, I was just singing some swing, Frank Sinatra, in a pub in Southwark. Landlord said, come and sing regular, and I did. He spotted me Richie, like I spotted you. Personality you see. You got to back up talent with personality. You gotta make 'em love ya. And they loved me.

Richie I bet.

Dave Serious. I was on the circuit. Making a lot of money, steady money. singing most nights in clubs, bars, and doing competitions. It was different then, bigger thing than it is now. I got an agent, moving up the ladder, working men's clubs. Then compeering. That's good money. I sang a bit, talked a bit, then fucked off to the bar for an hour. Loved it. I loved it. Barbara did too. She'd be smiling at me singing. Going great. Saved a bit of cash up and got this place, investment, you know, a business. Career, business, top of the world. Then the roof came down. I made a few bad decisions that's all. I hold my hands up. I made some bad decisions, cost me a lot of money, and Barbara, well I guess I'd spoilt her and that. Cos, well, took us a while to have David and that. Treatment like. Had a business, nice house, then, a son.

Richie What sort of decisions?

Dave The roof came down.

Richie Oh.

Dave I knocked the supporting wall down. I was busy getting work done on our house and I had horses as well. Couple of syndicates and that. I was doing the Duke myself. Knocking down between the kitchen and the bedroom. Well, the whole lot came down on me. I was fucked then. No, no. I wasn't fucked then. When they told me I was uninsured. Then I was fucked. I had to sell the house to sort 'The Duke' out. Buy it outright, ah, long story. My fault, I was thinking about the gig I had lined up that night. Turner Morris. Ever hear of him? Famous

agent, did all the top London singers, compeers, comedians, all of 'em. He was gonna be at the gig I was singing at that night. One of his clients compeering, John Cotton. Took a shine to me. Said he'd put a word in, said I had what it took to get on T.V. have a drink with Turner Morris after, sort a contract out, that sort of stuff. T.V. was a big deal, none of this pop idol shit. Set for life. I wasn't concentrating, smashing up the wrong wall with my sledge. Singing, what was I singing? Practicing. I was gonna sing it that night, 'My Way' That's it. Great song. Smash, smash, crash. Too busy singing, already signed the contract in my head. Muppet. Daydreaming. Soon woke up when the whole fucking roof landed on my head. Well, two days later.

Richie Were you alright?

Dave Yeah, big lump on me head, broken arm, leg, couple of ribs. Nothing serious. Missed the gig though. John Cotton wouldn't vouch for me after that. Couldn't blame him. Let him down in front of his agent and that. Too busy to sing after that. Had a kid to raise, pub to run, wife. I was in arrears as well from not working. Life catches up with you.

Richie So the moral is; 'make sure it's the right wall.'

Dave No fucking moral Richie.

Richie Sorry.

Dave You got what it takes. You're like me, good singer, spotted at the right time. We'll see how you do next couple of months, then put you on the circuit, get some gigs and that.

Richie Yeah ok.

Dave Good. *(They shake hands)* There's my hand there's my heart. Master, you're a good man. Let me get you a drink. *(He goes behind the bar)*. Cider?

Richie Cheers. 'Don't do it 'My way''. That's another one.

Dave You're pushing it sunshine.

Richie Sorry. 'Keep you're eye on the wall'?

Dave Did I say you were a good man or an asshole? I can't remember.

Richie Fair enough.

Dave Just be sharp. Always. Or the fucking roof will land on you're head. Understand?

Richie Yeah, it's not as/

Dave They knock you down you get up. You understand? Broken nose? Doesn't matter. Bang. Straight back up. Right?

Richie Right.

Dave Look at Bobby. He's got the drive but not the ability.

Richie He's got the size.

Dave He's not happy about losing the karaoke. This competition'll be the proper whack, so you gotta focus. Come in tomorrow and have a practice. Alright?

Richie Yeah.

Dave His cousins are rough, but they won't come in here on Friday. They won't touch you. You should get your family down on Sunday for Mick's do. Family day in the beer garden. London for the day.

Richie They wouldn't come.

Dave oh?

Richie They're Salvation Army.

Dave Serious?

Richie My Step Dad's a dick, and my Mum, well she works. She..it doesn't matter.

Dave Fair enough. *(Knock on the door)*

Dave opens the door. Jamie stands in the doorway before entering. He is in an incredible Hulk outfit. His face is green despite him trying to wash it. They all stand there staring at each other.

Richie Stand back Dave, the incredible hunk may still be radioactive. And Horny.

Dave You horny there Jamie?

Jamie No Dave. I most definitely am not horny.

Dave Have a drink master. I hear you've had a bad day?

Blackout

End of Act One

Act Two

Scene One

The next day. A spotlight on Richie.. The screen flashes up 'Ain't that a Kick in the Head'. He is getting ready to leave for the Duke

Richie *(Singing) How lucky can one guy be?
I kissed her and she kissed me
Like the fella once said,
Ain't that a kick in the head?*

*The room was completely black,
I hugged her and she hugged back
Like the sailor said, quote,
Ain't that a hole in the boat?*

From the shadows a figure hits Richie in the back of the head, he gets a beating during the final verse.

Bobby *My head keeps spinnin',
I go to sleep and keep grinnin'
If this is just the beginnin',
My life is gonna be bee-yoo-tee-ful*

*I've sunshine enough to spread,
It's just like the fella said
Tell me quick, ain't love a kick in the head?*

Scene Two

Wednesday Morning. Maria is alone at the bar. The clangs of beer kegs in the background. A big clang.

Les *(O/S) Shit! (Pause) Ahhh! Bollocks!*

Marie You alright Les?

Les Shit! What a mother/

Marie /I'm not helping you if you're profanatising.

Les *(Pause) (Meekly) Owww.*

Marie Are you alright?

Les Yes. Thank you. All done. Just give us a second. That was the last one. *(Enters)*
Banged my leg on the door.

Marie Do you want me to rub some ice on it?

Les *(Pause)* I'll be alright. Thanks. Hold on! *(He runs out, runs back in)* Close your
eyes.

Marie Okay. Is it a surprise?

Les *(O/S)* Yeah. *(Enters with clapometer covered by a sheet)*

Marie For me?

Les Er...no..not really.

Marie Oh.

Les OK! Wait for it and, open your eyes.

Marie *(Pause, Les whips off the sheet. Marie is Agog)* oohhh.

Les Oohhh? *(Gestures Marie to wait. Pulls out control button. The machine whirls
into life with lots of lights and noise)*

Marie Ohhhh. *(Pause)* Ahhhh.

Les Ahhhh.

Marie A-Ha.

Les A-Ha!

Marie What is it?

Les A clapometer. For Sunday. *(It whirls again)*

Marie Of course! It's very nice Les.

Les Thank you very much. It's my own design.

Marie What's that on top?

Les It's a crown. For the 'Karaoke King'

Marie Very clever.

Les You'd think so wouldn't ya? Hours of craftsmanship and electronic wizardry gone into this. If it's a hit on Sunday I may well jack it all in and go professional, you know, design 'em for the big boys TV and that. Design like this? Cutting edge light and sound sequencing system integrated into a lightweight durable design. Could make millions.

Marie Seriously?

Les Course not Marie. It's twelve bulbs, some tinsel and a bit of MDF.

Marie Still, it's very...spangly. It's got a boa on it.

Les Yeah. I found that in the cellar. What some people throw away eh?

Marie It's perfect Les. Aren't you a little gem. Doing that, and the delivery.

Les I don't mind.

Marie You must be starving. What do you fancy? On the house.

Les *(Looking at the menu)* Erm...I might go for a Jacket Potato Marie. *(Marie looks at Les)* No? Oh. Any pies left?

Marie Yeah.

Les Good I'll/

Marie But I wouldn't Les.

Les Oh. What would you recommend for lunch Marie?

Marie A pint of Guinness Les. Maybe one with a blackcurrant top for dessert. Chips?

Les I'm trying to be a bit healthy.

Marie Then I wouldn't eat in here.

Les You've twisted my arm. Pint of Guinness it is Marie.

Marie Coming up.

Les Where's Dave then?

Marie Didn't he tell you?

Les No, he never said.

Marie Probably gone to sort Bobby out.

Les You think?

Marie Yeah. Why not? He deserves it.

Les Bobby's a tool, but he aint a mug.

Marie Tell that to Richie.

Les He's alright.

Marie He's Lucky.

Les Or unlucky.

Marie Either way it's not right Les. He's only been here five minutes and he gets beaten up.

Les Alright, calm down.

Marie Les. Last night he came in here to see Dave, but Dave was having his siesta, you know, between five and eight. Anyway Richie, didn't know that, so he comes in and "Dave's asleep" I said. "Oh, okay" he says. Then. Then. Instead of just turning around and bugging off he says "Would you like a drink Marie?" "Course" I said, "I'd love one Richie". So we had a nice chat, and he's telling me all about his family, and I'm...well, it was just nice. A long time since a young man bought me a drink and fancied talking with me that's all. Listening to me.

Les What are you talking about?

Marie All I'm saying is that one minute he's nice to me and I think "What a breath of fresh air in here, to have someone, nice and young and that." Then he steps out the door and Bobby D/

Les /It wasn't Bobby D.

Marie Or whoever, is giving this poor boy a kicking. It aint right Les.

Les It'll be sorted.

Marie Yeah?

Les Yes. I'll have a quiet word with Bobby. (*Marie touches Les's hand*)

Marie Guinness Yeah?

Les That's right. Thank you. So where's Dave then?

Marie I told ya. (*Les is gripping her hand*)

Les No. Where's Dave?

Marie I told ya/

Les /Where's Dave?

Marie I said/

Les /That's three times Marie. Look at me, look at me. I aint gonna hurt ya. Where is he.

Marie He's gone to see David.

Les Thank you. (*Releases her*)

Marie You're welcome. It's Wednesday though.

Les Oh. Maybe he sorted it out with Barbara then.

Marie No. He didn't he's just been, I dunno working himself up.

Les No?

Marie Dave's only allowed to see him on a Sunday. What they agreed. Part of the divorce.

Les And?

Marie And I don't think it's a good idea. It's trouble.

Les Couldn't you stop him?

Marie How could I stop him!?

Les Calm down. I just want to know what's going on that's all.

Marie Les! How should I know? No one tells me anything do they? I'm just told to keep my trap shut all the time! I just put up with it all! Jesus! I can't stand this place. Beatings, Dave, you flipping interrogating me. I'm not a flipping war reporter. At least then I'd be on TV not stuck in this flipping shoe hole. You want to know what's going on? You're his mate, you flipping ask him. (*Exits*)

Les Christ! What the flip did I say?

Bobby *(Entering, sees the Clapometer, Les doesn't see him)* Alright Les

Les *(Leaps at Bobby, Grabbing him violently)* You fucking asshole! You little Cunt! I know exactly what you've done you bastard. Don't I? Don't I know? Don't I?

Bobby Know what Les?

Les Richie! You nailed him didn't ya? Snuck up on him? Clobbered him?

Bobby It wasn't me Les!

Les I expected more from you Bobby. Much, much more.

Bobby It wasn't me Les!

Les You little fucking weasel. I aint in the mood for you lying to me Bobby. *(Pulls out a long piece of metal with a piece of yellow cloth on the end)*

Bobby Fucking hell Les steady on! It wasn't me!

Les Bollocks!

Bobby Honest!

Les Bollocks! You've been around here a long time.

Bobby I know! I know!

Les Maybe *(he presses a button on the metal and it extends to twice the length)* too long.

Bobby Fuck Les! I didn't do it! It wasn't me. Ask Dave! Ask Dave! He knows it wasn't me!

Les Bollocks! Bollocks! Bollocks! Bollocks!! Bollocks!!! You tell me. Right now. You know me Bobby. Don't make me hurt you.

Bobby Les.

Les Sorry Bobby. *(He flips him round onto his belly)*

Bobby NO!!! It was Ralph. I told 'em all what happened on Sunday and Ralph and that. I didn't tell 'em to do nothing. He's a nutter Les! A nutter! I never told him to! That's not me is it Les? Is it? Les? I wouldn't hurt anyone. I do the karaoke that's all! That's all! Fuck! I wouldn't Les, I wouldn't. Please Les, please.

Les Yeah. That's all. *(Releasing him and straightening up)*. Right Bobby. You're a twat. *(Puts 'clapometer' on stage)* Don't keep anything from me again alright? *(It whirls again)* Good luck Sunday. *(Exits, Bobby checks his bum, Marie enters)*

Marie You waiting for someone Bobby?

Bobby It was Ralph. Not me, Ralph. What's Les gonna do?

Marie The usual.

Scene Five

Thursday Night at 'The Duke'. Jamie sits on a stool and sings the end of 'Song on the Sand' on the guitar. Les, Dave, Richie (With a bandaged head) and Marie are at the bar at the end of a very good night.

Jamie *And I'm young
And In Love. (He collapses over the back of the stool)*

Dave Hahahahaha! That's your lot you lucky people! That's your lot! Hahaha! I didn't know that song was so fucking funny! Hahaha! Come on Master I'll getcha a drink. Marie? Marie! Half a lager and a Jack and Coke for the wounded soldier. One for yourself as well.

Marie Ok Dave.

Richie Cheers.

Dave *(To Richie)* Not a scratch on ya. Tough nu.

Les *(Examining Jamie)* I think he's passed out. *(Sound of Jamie puking)* No. My mistake.

Marie Oh great.

Les It's alright it's gone in here. *(He pulls out the guitar. It sloshes with the puke inside it. Les carries it behind the bar)*

Dave Here Richie, have I told you about when I was in Turkey?

Richie No Dave.

Dave Haven't I? Good story this.

Les Great Story

Dave True story. We was on holiday in turkey see. You know I go there a bit dontcha? Course you do. five years ago I'm out there with my son and Les. So we've gone out there and David and me are teaching Les how to swim. 'Cos I promised them I'd teach him how to swim right. All good fun. Now at the hotel there's these two Turkish brothers. Waiters. Real Jack the lads, fancy themselves, right?

Les True story.

Dave They keep joking they're gonna push Les in right? In the deep end. "You do and I'll break your fucking legs" I tell them. Right? Only joking, you know. All week they're joking to Les and winding him up. Then on the Friday, 'cos we're leaving on the Saturday morning. One of these brothers does the dirty and pushes Les in.

Dave So, I have to jump in and help Les out 'cos he's a bit flustered. It's not a nice think to do is it? So I get these, couple of glasses and a plate and that right. Put them right on the edge of the pool and tell Les and Sandra. "Watch this" I said. And I hid behind this wall next to the pool, still in my trunks. Anyway, these brothers come to clean up, and one of 'em bends down to grab these glasses, doesn't see me. Bosch! I'm right up behind him, pick him up and dangle him over the edge of the pool right? (*Demonstrates on Les*) Got him in a bear hug. His brother's like "David, no David, we get in trouble" 'Cos he's got his dickie bow and waistcoat on and that. Evening gear. Get in trouble if he gets it all wet. So I says to him "Do you believe in Jesus". "Do you believe in Jesus?". "No, no Mr David. I am Muslim, Muslim. No Jesus, no Jesus". "Oh dear, dear" I said. "Not Jesus?". "No Muslim, Allah, Allah". "Well I'll have to chuck you in then". And his Brothers like "No Mr David. Please no, big trouble". So I say "Say you love Jesus and I'll put you down. You can love Allah and Jesus, alright? Just say you love Jesus". "Say I love Jesus?". "That's right" I said. Got him over the pool still. All the British have heard all this and are on their balconies right, all of them. Looking down on me and this Turkish boy. And he says. "Ok. I love Jesus, Mr David, I love Jesus". "In that case", I said, "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, I baptise you" And dropped him in the pool.

Richie (*laughing*) Seriously?

Dave No word of a lie. Marie? Weren't that a true story?

Les Funny as hell. David got a stitch from laughing didn't he?

Dave Yeah. Happy days. Brilliant it was.

Les He's a good swimmer.

Dave What?

Les David's a good swimmer.

Dave Yeah, very good.

Richie Thanks for tonight Dave. I better get Jamie home.

Dave Come back when you're done. Knock on the door and I'll let ya in. *(Seriously)*
No more troubles for you. Les?

Les Sorted.

Dave See? It's nice to be nice, you understand me?

Richie Yeah.

Dave You're a good lad Richie. I'll look after you don't you worry. There's my hand,
there's my heart. Alright? Alright.

Richie *(They shake hands. Dave holds the grip).* Course.

Dave I get 'em in the end Richie. People fuck me about and do this and do that and
try and take me for a ride. But I get 'em in the end. My wife's....my wife.

Marie Let him get off Dave.

Dave Nasty piece of work, One day a week. But you put a foot wrong in this game.
Just put a foot wrong. Bosch! It's gone. You get what I'm saying? You put a foot
wrong. Bosch! Gone.

Richie Thanks for letting Jamie do tonight. He really needs the money.

Dave It's nice to be nice. Thursdays are his.*(Releases his hand)*

Richie See you in a minute. *(Exits)*

Marie She phoned again earlier.

Dave That's nice for her.

Marie Sounded worried Dave.

Dave So she should be.

Marie You ain't done anything have ya?

Les Course he aint done nothing. Don't be stupid Marie.

Marie I'm just saying.

Dave What? What've I done?

Marie Nothing. Just you been going to see him and now Barbara's calling all the time and you aint talking to her.

Dave Yeah?

Marie Well no one tells me anything do they Dave? And now I'm answering calls from your wife and telling people you're out and aint here. And Les is all worked up about it, worrying. We're worried Dave.

Dave Les? You worried about me Les?

Les No, course not.

Dave There you go.

Les Concerned that's all.

Dave Listen up. I went to see David. You know, spend some time, it aint right, once a week. Not now. Not now he's growing up. When I got to the house, she said I couldn't. We have a few words, now I'm seeing if Pat the Tash can help me out a bit on the legal so I can see David more often, end of.

Marie Did you?

Dave Did I what?

Marie Well

Dave Did I what? Did I fuckin' What Marie? (*In her face*) Hit her? No! course I didn't.

Marie Just call her back! I keep having to say you're not here all the time and she knows I'm lying, She knows we're together and I mean where else would you be? You know?

There is a pause. Les wasn't meant to hear about their relationship. He hides his surprise. There is an awkward pause.

Dave Give me the phone (*Takes phone*) I'm calling her. Go and do something alright? (*Marie exits*).

Barbara. How nice to hear your voice.

Wowowowo. I know it's late. I've been busy.

Who says I can't?

He's my son too.

No, no, I'll see him when I like, I spoke to my solicitor and/

What you talking about. Course he wants to see me, course he does.

That's you telling him to say that. That's what that is Barbara. No, I didn't, I didn't lay a finger. I didn't. You're making that up!

Charming! Maybe I am an asshole Barbara. You're a bitch so I'm surprised we never worked, aren't you? *(Hangs up)* Bosch.

Les gets up and leaves, he doesn't say a word to Dave.

Scene Three

Sunday at the Duke. The charity day is in full swing.

Dave *(Spotlight on Dave on the stage. He has a wooden wheel on a stand next to him)* Right you lucky people! Have you all had enough to eat? Course you have, 'cos the barbeque is shut now. Finnito, done. I'll put a spread out later though don't you worry. Don't you worry about that. The big Karaoke competition coming up in one hour ladies and gentlemen, so don't go nowhere. *(Marie gives Dave with a piece of paper)* My beautiful assistant by the way. We just counted up and we made £436 quid from the auction which aint bad at all. That's it round of applause. *(On the applause the wheel behind him lights up)* Fucking Hell! Ha! That's Les's 'clapometer' Ha! For the karaoke competition. That's working then. How'd do you turn it off Les? Like that? Is it? Never mind, never mind. Frightened the life out of me. So £436 quid. That's lovely. You happy with that Mick?

Mick Hahahahahaha! Yeah!! Yeah!

Bobby *(Intercepting Dave)* Dave, can I have a word?

Dave Bobby, keep an eye on Mick for me. Let me know if he gets tired.

Bobby Yeah.

Dave Good man

Bobby It's just, I don't think the competitions gonna be fair Dave.

Dave What?

Bobby It's Les you see.

Dave What? Don't you start. Your fucking Ralph got what he got. It's sorted now understand?

Bobby I know, it's something else. Les/

Dave /What's wrong with Les?

Bobby Nothing, nothing.

Dave You got a problem with Les?

Bobby No.

Dave Les got a problem with you?

Bobby No.

Dave So there's no fucking problem is there?

Bobby Well, no. Yes. It's important Dave.

Dave What's important Bobby? What Bobby? What's so fucking important?

Bobby The 'Clapometer' Dave.

Dave The 'Clapometer'? Seriously?

Bobby Yeah. I don't think it's fair. I think we should have got a proper one in.

Dave What?

Bobby A proper 'clapometer'. I mean nothing's wrong with that one and no offence to Les, but this is a professional competition and I think we should have the proper equipment. I don't think it should be decided with Les's 'clapometer'.

Dave You are a prize tit.

Bobby I know you think I'm stupid.

Dave You tit. It's a prop you twonk.

Bobby A prop?

Dave Yes. A prop you Muppet. Look. (*Shows him the 'Clapometer'*) It's got a button here I press and off it goes. For effect. Jesus.

Bobby Alright Dave I didn't know did I?

Dave I got better things to do than explain Les's 'clapometer' to ya.

Bobby Well I've been worried all week about it and, (*Dave presses the button and it lights up again*). So there's not going to be a proper clapometer?

Dave I will judge who gets the loudest applause alright?

Bobby Yeah. Ok.

Dave You don't sound convinced.

Bobby No, I am, I am, it's just that this is my life. I been training for it all week. I been running. Look at me, I'm a new man. I've had chips twice this week Dave, twice! That's commitment. That's sacrifice.

Dave What's my name?

Bobby 'Honest' Dave.

Dave So you're sure it's gonna be a fair contest right?

Bobby Yeah.

Dave Right?

Bobby Yeah. I could of done Friday you know. Saved you doing it, I wouldn't have minded.

Dave Don't push it Bobby.

Les *Enters* All set Dave?

Dave Yeah. Bobby was just saying how much he liked your 'clapometer' Les.

Les Oh yeah?

Bobby Yeah. It's great Les. Best one I've seen.

Les Very kind of you to say so.

Dave I've gotta go and turn the barbeque off.

Bobby I'll do it.

Dave Do you know how to do it?

Bobby Yeah, course. No problem. I better get warmed up as well. (*Exits*).

Les Want me to go out there?

Dave No, no, they'll be fine. I thought he'd shit himself when you came over. Whatdja do to Ralph?

Les Usual. Six weeks.

Dave Harsh but fair.

Les David?

Dave No. Listen Les

Les Dave. It's fine. Whatever you two do, well you two do.

Dave I...I fucked up Les.

Les You what?

Dave Got the wrong end of the stick.

Les Not the sharp end I hope.

Dave Yeah. This time. I...I dunno Les.

Les What?

Dave Me and my...me.

Les You and Marie, it's/

Dave It's not that. Barbara.

Les What have you done?

Dave When? I didn't say anything.

Les To Barbara?

Dave I told her to talk to her solicitor.

Les Oh. I thought.

Dave Yeah, well.

Les And now?

Dave And now, I don't know.

Les I see.

Dave It'll get sorted don't worry. Just need a bit of legal that's all. I better go upstairs and get changed for tonight. Nice 'Clapometer' Les. Very/

Les Spangly.

Dave Yeah.

Scene Four

The Beer Garden. Richie and Jamie are clearing up the barbeque. They are in stupid chef's aprons. They're arsing around throwing food at each other.

Richie The last bap.

Jamie The last burger.

Richie To bap, or not to bap that is the question. Whether 'tis nobler to suffer the ketchup and mustard of outrageous catering.

Jamie Screw your sausage to the sticking post. That's what I say.

Richie I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my baps.

Jamie Any auditions?

Richie No. My agent must be dead.

Jamie Maybe you need a new career path.

Richie What are you talking about?

Jamie Well if tonight goes well, you could be set. A Karaoke star is born.

Richie You're a dick.

Jamie Is Dave alright?

Richie Erm..I dunno. He's a bit, preoccupied.

Jamie Is it me?

Richie Course it's not you, why would it be you?

Jamie I dunno. I was sick on Thursday.

Richie You were sick on no in your guitar. You still don't remember?

Jamie I was ballaxed

Richie Yeah.

Jamie It was Dave's fault. Kept sending me drinks up whilst I was singing. I didn't mind though. I need the money.

Richie You gonna do a regular slot here then?

Jamie On Thursdays? Maybe. Maybe I'll be the only one of us doing a regular slot.

Richie Fuck off.

Jamie He's got a lot of mates in, and Les's 'clapometer' might just swing his way.

Richie He can swing his way back to the buses.

Jamie He's a dick.

Richie He's shit as well.

Jamie Taking it very seriously. Loves the karaoke.

Richie So do I. Free booze and Fifty quid a night. And I don't have my weekend free so I can't go wasting money. I love it.

Jamie How you feeling?

Richie Alright. What's there to be nervous about?

Jamie I meant your head.

Richie Just sore.

Jamie Bastard.

Richie I just get these pains every now and then, like something's swellin' up inside my brain.

Jamie You should get that checked, that's serious.

Richie Ahh! Ahh! Like now it's.

Jamie Jesus! I'll get someone. Don't touch it!

Richie Ahh! *(Richie has a ketchup bottle behind his back. He squirts it as if his head has exploded and laughs).*

Jamie You're a funny man.

Richie And you gobble cock

Jamie Hey, there's some hot chicks in today.

Richie *(Mocks Jamie's accent)* 'There's some hot chicks in today, hello, how are ya?'

Jamie Give us a hand with this. *(They attempt to turn the gas off but the nozzle is stiff).* Jesus.

Richie Hold on.

Bobby *(Entering)* I'll do that.

Richie There's no more food if that's what you're after.

Bobby Dave sent me to do the Barbeque. *(He goes to the barbeque)* There's a knack. *(He tries, then limbers up and removes his shirt.)* You got ketchup on your shirt.

Richie You want mustard on yours?

Bobby Don't! It's expensive! Proper cabaret shirt this. You should be more careful.

Richie Yeah, then next time I'll hear your cousin coming.

Marie *(Enters to get empties)* Alright boys.

Bobby Alright Marie.

Richie&Jamie Hi Marie

Marie You been working out Bobby?

Bobby Yeah, I have actually. I've been jogging.

Marie Good for you. It's never too late. Is the barbeque turned off?

Bobby I'm just doing it. *(He tries)*

Marie Well help him out you two.

Bobby No, no I got it.

Marie Help him. *(She goes to help him but Jamie and Richie do it, they have to go next to Bobby's naked skin)* There you go, all done. Now play nicely boys. Good luck tonight, I'll be watching.

Jamie You smell like dead horse.

Bobby It's 'Aramis' actually. It's a high quality brand. It was my dad's.

Jamie Give it back to him.

Bobby He's died last week. Yeah. I was with him whilst he was dying. Visited him in the hospital all the time. Helping him, being a good son and all that. You stole my career.

Richie You clean buses!

Bobby That's a means to an end. This is my true calling. My vocation.

Jamie A vacation's what you need.

Richie Come on Bobby. I'll fight ya. Or do you want to wait until Ralph's around? *(He takes a pair of BBQ tongs and goes to give Bobby a skewer)*

Bobby What you doing?

Richie Take it. Go on. That's a fair fight isn't it? Come on Bobby.

Bobby I do my fighting on the stage.

Jamie *(Laughing)* Sorry, carry on lads. Deadly.

Richie I can't wait.

Bobby I'm gonna sing you sideways!

Jamie *(Laughing)* Sorry, sorry. Brilliant.

Richie I don't have a comeback for that.

Bobby Yeah. Who's the clever dick now?

Richie Oh, you're definitely a clever, dick. Nothing without your fat friends are you? Come on.

Bobby I'm a singer not a fighter.

Richie You first, then Ralph!

Bobby Enough! It's finished alright? Les did him and it's over alright? Just me and you and Karaoke. It's all finished now understand? Didn't you know? Les paid him a visit, so it's sorted. You don't, you don't mess with Les. I'm here to sing, to fucking sing. That's what I do. Arsehole. *(Exits)*

Jamie It's worth being alive, just to witness that. I can die a happy man.

Richie Bobby said that Les 'paid him a visit'.

Jamie What does that mean?

Richie I dunno, but whatever it is he deserved it.

Jamie Do you think he, like, you know?

Richie I don't know.

Jamie Richard. We've only been living here three weeks and already you've been beaten up and had someone killed.

Richie Shut up. Don't be stupid.

Jamie All over a Karaoke competition.

Richie You don't know he's dead. And Bobby didn't tell Ralph to attack me, he's just a knob.

Jamie Was.

Richie What?

Jamie *Was* a knob. Past tense.

Richie Don't you past tense me. It's fine.

Jamie It's not fucking fine! Jesus Richard! It's serious! This is fucking serious.

Richie Yep, and I'm gonna win it. Honest Dave will look out for us. Trust me.

Jamie Saved you from Ralph didn't he? What about Les?

Richie He's a nice bloke.

Jamie He went and 'saw someone' Richard. Went and 'saw them'. I'm Irish and I know what that means. Sawed.

Richie Jamie. He 'paid him a visit'. 'Paid'. Maybe he paid him. Don't get so worked up about it. Why don't you just ask him?

Jamie Who?

Richie Les?

Jamie Are you mad? What? Say 'Hey Les, how are you, just wondering if you sawed Bobby's cousin in half? Or was it bits?'. Yeah, I'll do that soon as I see him, and take him a cup to put my balls in.

Richie I could take a picture of you, before and after? 'This is Jamie when he went in, and now he has no limbs'. You could do the talk show circuit.

Jamie You're a funny man.

Richie At least you'd be working. Any news on 'The Incredible Hunk'?

Jamie He is right before you. Cancelled. Fuck 'em.

Richie Fuck 'em.

Jamie Keeping the costume though. For the ladies.

Richie Or the lady boys. I better nip home and get changed.

Jamie Before he 'sings you sideways'.

Richie I like it here. It's a proper boozier, there's a community. Like 'East Enders'. Only more interesting.

Jamie And who are you? 'Dot'?

Richie I'm not manly enough to be Dot. Dave says he'll set me up with a few gigs, during the week. Just take some disks and a mic and sing in pubs.

Jamie That what you want to do is it?

Richie What?

Jamie Be a pub singer?

Richie Hahaha! No, but it'd look good on my C.V. It's Bobby's dream.

Jamie Don't give up your day job.

Richie He's not all there. 'I do my fighting on the stage'.

Jamie It's probably a good job for you that he does.

Richie How'd you mean.

Jamie Well, I for one would have given him the tongs, not the skewer.

Scene Five

The Duke. Sound of an answer phone.

Barbara *This is 0208 7684342 sorry we can't get to the phone right now, but leave a message and we'll call you back.*

Dave Barbara? Pick up.

Barbara?

I just want to know that he's alright that's all.

Just wanted to see him.

We played football it was a laugh. We had a laugh.

Marie *(Entering)* Dave?

Dave I'm not here.

Marie The Barbecue's off/

Dave /I said I'm not Fucking here!

He slaps her hard. She runs out.

It's Mick's do today. Why don't you both come down? Even bring that what's his name boyfriend bloke down. I don't mind.

PICK UP THE FUCKING PHONE YOU BITCH!

Oh you bitch, you fucking bitch. Stopping my own son seeing me. Having to surprise him after school, like a fucking stranger. You've made me a stranger to my own Fucking Son!

Scene Six

Sunday. Richie and Jamie sing the end of Mustang Sally.

*All you wanna do is ride around Sally,
Ride Sally Ride
All you wanna do is Ride around Sally,
Ride Sally Ride*

*One of these Early Morning's,
I'm gonna be wiping those weeping eyes, baby.*

*Those weeping eyes
Those weeping eyes*

Richie Yes! There it is. That is Karaoke. Jamie, ladies and gentlemen

Jamie Particularly the ladies.

Richie With all that Irish charm how can you resist him? Play you're cards right girls and he could be yours, just watch out for the chloroform. Now one for the ladies. Ah the village idiot.

Bobby What you doing? You're not meant to be doing that. *(Taking mic)* I'm not an idiot by the way. And I like girls as well. Bobby Dee! Oh yeah!

Richie Time for some backing music. (*Puts music on*) Dave asked me to take over for a second whilst he was looking for you.

Bobby What's he looking for me for? You want more volume on that.

Richie You were meant to be looking after Mick?

Bobby I was looking after him. I took him home.

Richie Tell Dave then.

Bobby He could of asked me to do this. You could of taken Mick home.

Richie I don't know where he lives.

Bobby I could have told ya. You shouldn't be doing it anyway. It's not fair. You gotta wait 'till the competition. Three songs. That's it. Three songs.

Richie Fine. You do it. (*Goes to hand him mic*)

Bobby (*Holds his mic up*) I got my own mic thanks.

Dave What the fuck are you two doing? Turn the volume down. The competition's not for half an hour. Where's Mick?

Bobby I took him home.

Dave Why?

Bobby You told me to look after him.

Dave Not take him the fuck home!

Bobby He wanted me to Dave! He was tired and asked me to take him home. He said goodbye to everyone and I took him home.

Dave Where was I?

Bobby I don't know.

Dave Well you should of found me.

Bobby I couldn't find you. Marie was looking for you.

Dave (*Pause*). He said goodbye to everyone?

Bobby Everyone.

Dave Alright, no harm done.

Bobby He was happy as Larry.

Dave Course. He's a good boy. What about you two planks then? What's all this? Before you start Bobby, I asked Richie to take over for five minutes alright? Now put ya toys back in your pram and go to the bar alright?

Bobby I was just/

Dave Now. Richie, thank you master, Enough of that bollocks. 'Luke and Claire?' 'Lovebirds' is it? You're up next come on, lets be havin' ya! Actually, actually, Sorry let's get the competition started. Luke and Claire? You don't mind waiting a few minutes do ya? Course not. Here he is tonight's first contender, he's young he's mean, he's a singing machine, it's Richie!

Richie *'Gimme Some Lovin'' comes on the Blue screen.*

*Well my temperature is rising got my feet on the floor
Crazy people rocking 'cause they want to go more
Let me in baby I don't know what you got
But you better take it easy 'cause this place is hot
And I'm so glad you made it, so glad you made it
You got to gimme some lovin', gimme gimme some lovin'*

*Well I feel so good, everybody's getting high
You better take it easy 'cause the place is on fire
Been a hard day and I don't know what to do
Wait a minute Baby, this could happen to you*

*Well I feel so good, everybody's getting high
You better take it easy 'cause the place is on fire
Been a hard day nothing went too good
Now we're gonna relax just like everybody should.*

Dave Richie, you lucky people! Alright Bobby's turn with his first song. ready Bobby?

Bobby Yeah. Am I going first in the next round?

Dave What?

Bobby Well, Richie went first in the first round so I should go first in the second round shouldn't I?

Dave Whatever makes you happy Bobby.

Dave Off you go.

The screen flashes up 'The one and only'.

Bobby Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen. Friends and family. I will be singing two classics for you to enjoy. Bit of Chesney and then Robbie Williams.

(Singing)

I am the one and only

I am the one and only, oh yeah

Call me, call me by my name or call me by number

You put me through it

I'll still be doing it the way I do it

And yet, you try to make me forget

Who I really am, don't tell me I know best

I'm not the same as all the rest

I am the one and only

Nobody I'd rather be

I am the one and only

You can't take that away from me

I've been a player in the crowd scene

A flicker on the big screen

My soul embraces one more in a million faces

High hopes and aspirations, and years above my station

Maybe but all this time I've tried to walk with dignity and pride

I am the one and only

Nobody I'd rather be

I am the one and only

You can't take that away from me

(The music fades into background halfway through)

I can't wear this uniform without some compromises

Because you'll find out that we come

In different shapes and sizes

No one can be myself like I can

For this job I'm the best man

And while this may be true

You are the one and only you

I am the one and only

Nobody I'd rather be

I am the one and only

You can't take that away from me

*I am the one and only
Nobody I'd rather be
I am the one and only
You can't take that away from me*

- Dave Alright Les? Look I can't stop I got a missed call. *(Exits)*
- Les Course, course. Well done Richie.
- Richie Cheers, just gonna take a leak quick. *(Exits)*
- Les No problem. Alright Jamie? Are you well?
- Jamie *(Panicked by being left with Les.)*Yes thanks Les. I better see if anything needs doing. Somewhere.
- Les No, no, it's all fine I'm sure. Get you a drink?
- Jamie I'm fine thanks Les.
- Les Oh. Not singing today?
- Jamie No, leave it to the professionals.
- Les I thought you were a professional? Actor and that?
- Jamie Yeah, I am. I meant Karaoke professionals and that. That's what I meant. Nice 'clapometer'.
- Les Thank you. Didn't take long to knock up. Just a gimmick you know? I like doing things with my hands you see. I aint all schooled and all that like you. I'm a practical man. Done a lot of things over the years, all with my hands, they're the tools of my trade. Working with my hands.
- Jamie Yep. You have nice hands Les.
- Les What?
- Jamie Erm, your hands. They're very..strong. Strong hands.
- Les Are you a queer?
- Jamie What? No.
- Les Are you sure?

Jamie Yes, yes I'm sure Les, sure. I was just saying you had nice hands is all, that's all.

Les Right.

Jamie I'm just gonna go and...erm...go.

Les You alright? You look a bit flustered.

Jamie No, no I'm fine. Just, I really need the loo, that's all.

Les You should have said. Go on. I'll get you one while you're in there.

Jamie Oh, deadly.

Les Deadly?

Jamie Deadly Les. That'll be deadly..Les..a cider. Deadly, great.

Les Oh, right. Cider.

Jamie Cheers

Les Deadly.

Jamie Right (*Exits*)

Bobby Bobby Dee! Come on! Come and get it! (*He lifts the mic above his head*) From my cold dead hand!

Scene Seven

Sunday night

Dave (*To Phone*) Pat? I got a missed call from you. Where are you?

Well, why not?

I need to talk to you.

I mean in person

Well I can't wait 'til tomorrow, I need to talk to you now Pat. Now!

This is a bad situation alright? Barbara's acting all weird and I need it sorting out.

Just calling and saying I've broken this, and I've done that.

Well I can deny it all can't I? She'll have to prove it or, whatever.

Listen. You're the legal you sort it out. I aint talking to her no more.

Pat. She's the fucking antichrist.

Alright, alright, alright, alright, alright. I understand.
See what you can do.

Scene Eight

Sunday Night. Bobby is finishing.

Bobby *(Singing) And through it all she offers me protection
A lot of love and affection
Whether I'm right or wrong
And down the waterfall
Wherever it may take me
I know that life won't break me
When I come to call she won't forsake me
I'm loving angels instead*

Thankyou!! Thankyou!! Yes! Eat it! Eat it whole from Bobby Dee!

Dave Well done. Bobby Dee. Alright, two songs left then you the public decide the winner.

Bobby Three Dave. Richie's gotta do his second number.

Dave Three songs left then. Halfway. Here's some backing music for you while you get your drinks.

Bobby Why don't you want me to win Dave? You're not even giving me a chance.

Dave What?

Bobby That wasn't much on the mic was it? Not as much as Richie got. I mean/

Dave /Bobby. The public will decide who they want alright? You got just as much chance as Richie.

Bobby Well when's the next round then and what are/

Dave /I got more important things to be getting on with Bobby. Bigger fish to fry. You know what I'm saying?

Bobby Yeah.

Dave Good. You're a pain in the arse sometimes Bobby. A real pain.

Bobby It's determination Dave, drive.

Richie I'm up next then.

Jamie What're you singing?

Bobby Yeah.

Richie 'Don't let the sun go down on me'

Jamie That's a big sing

Richie I know.

Bobby It's a duet! How you gonna sing a duet?

Richie It's my own arrangement.

Bobby I see.

Jamie Prepare to be annihilated.

Bobby I got my own songs! Big finish. Oh yeah! Bobby Dee!

Richie We've all got a big finish Bobby.

Bobby Yeah?

Richie Yeah.

Bobby Yeah?

Dave Cut it out. Bunch of kids. It's a pub not a playground. This is 'The Duke'. Understand? Now behave. Fucking idiots. Ought to bash your heads together! Next one of these handbagins and I'll slap the shit out of both of you got it? And you.

All Sorry Dave.

Dave Fucking kids (*Exits*).

Bobby Nice one. (*Les goes to follow Dave*) See that Les? Yeah. (*Les stares at him, then exits*) Yeah. This is 'The Duke', understand?

Scene Nine

The beer garden. Dave is having a fag.

Les Dave.

Dave Les.

Les Pat not coming?

Dave No. He's busy.

Les Have you spoken to Barbara?

Dave No.

Les What about David?

Dave No.

Les Maybe he's/

Dave /What?

Les (*Shrugs*)

Dave That's very fucking helpful Les.

Marie (*Enters*) It's going well Dave.

Dave Shut up Marie. Half a lager, when you're done here.

Marie Fine.

Les Dave, you..erm..you don't seem yourself.

Dave Don't I?

Les You're shaking a bit.

Marie I'm sure Pat can sort all this out Dave.

Dave What the fuck would you know?

Marie Nothing.

Dave Exactly nothing.

Marie I'm just trying to help. We know what's going on and we could help.

Dave I don't need your help. Understand?

Marie Fine.

Les She's only looking out for you.

Dave You think I need Marie's help? Do ya? Shoulder to cry on and all that bollocks?

Les I'm just saying.

Dave Yeah. Good for you.

Les Marie?

Marie Yeah?

Les If Dave wants your help he'll ask for it, understand?

Marie What?

Les Understand?

Marie Oh for God's sake. Yeah I understand Les. Sorry Dave, everything's under control sorry I asked there's half a lager isn't the competition going well what a lovely barbeque I'm so full, 467 quid at the auction didn't they do well? Clean the ashtrays get the phone get the empties get the point? What's the point? I don't care anymore Dave, I really don't. *(Barbara enters only Marie sees her)*
Oh fuck.

Dave What did you say?

Barbara Good evening Marie how nice to see you.

Marie Erm..Hello.

Barbara Les. You're looking well.

Les Thankyou.

Barbara You've got more hair. You got a wig on?

Les erm...no.

Barbara I'm pulling your leg you look well.

Les Oh. Thanks.

Barbara Dave.

Dave Barbara.

Barbara How are you?

Dave Terrific.

Marie Oh. It's getting awful cold. Really cold. Chilly.

Les It's a summer's day.

Marie Well something's cold (*Goes to Barbara*) Bitter, really icy cold.

Les Oh, erm.

Marie Nice to see you.

Dave I won't be a minute.

Marie Sure. (*Exits, pause, Les lingers, then exits.*)

Dave (*Calls after him*) Keep the Karaoke going and that.

Les (*Off*) No problem.

Dave This aint the best time.

Barbara It never is Dave. Why haven't you returned my calls?

Dave I am very busy your highness.

Barbara You get my messages? Course you did, look at you.

Dave You get mine?

Barbara What? “You bitch you fucking bitch”? Yeah that was charming.

Dave Drink?

Barbara No. I took your advice and spoke to my solicitor, but you know that anyway, Pat must have told you by now, if he’s sober enough.

Dave He’s fine.

Barbara Good.

Dave Drink?

Barbara No, I don’t need it. He’s scared of you, you scared him, he doesn’t want to see you. Neither do I.

Dave What?

Barbara I don’t want to see you.

Dave You don’t fucking see me. Why is he scared of me? What have you done to him?

Barbara I haven’t done anything to him.

Dave Yes you have, yes you have. You don’t let him come round, you don’t let him call. You’ve twisted him against me. Turned him.

Barbara You hung round his school stalking him.

Dave He’s my son. How can I stalk my own son?

Barbara You hung around the school.

Dave Where else was I gonna see him? You wouldn’t let him come and see me.

Barbara He didn’t want to see you. Don’t you get it? He didn’t want to come here and see you and you couldn’t get off your fat arse and see him outside of this shit hole.

Dave I/

Barbara You think I wanted him to come into this stinking pub and spend his Sundays hanging around with scumbags? Playing in your stinking room. You think I

wanted that? I let it happen Dave. Christ knows why but I let it happen. I gave you a chance. I wanted him to see his Dad, but as usual, like everything you fucked it up.

Dave No I/ didn't.

Barbara /Yes you did.

Dave I would have met him somewhere else.

Barbara When David? When did you ever make the effort to meet him somewhere else? When did you ever make the effort? When did you ever put someone else before this fucking place? Even your own son?

Dave I saw him after school. We played football.

Barbara He didn't want to see you!

Dave I take him boxing.

Barbara Over the road Dave! He had to travel an hour to get here then you walked him over the road then walked him back to the train. Is that a big effort for you is it?

Dave He likes boxing.

Barbara He likes football.

Dave I hate you.

Barbara Why Dave? Why do you hate me?

Dave You've turned him against me.

Barbara Oh listen to yourself! When you call me at home and leave a message, I'm not always the first to get it. When you call me a fucking bitch on my answer phone, I am not the first to hear that message do you understand?

Dave So you've been playing him my messages?

Barbara He heard them himself.

Dave Making me out to be a monster to him? He knows me. He knows I get carried away a bit sometimes.

Barbara Carried away? You called his mother a 'fucking whore'!

Dave Well maybe she is! You play your messages to everyone do you? That wasn't meant for him and if you're letting him hear your messages then what kind of a mother are you? Ay?

Barbara You idiot. I played the message to my solicitor. After I took your advice. *(Pulls out a piece of paper)*. Turns out you have violated your custody rights not me, you.

Dave You stopped him seeing me.

Barbara He didn't want to see you. And then you hung around his bloody school waiting for him. You can't do that.

Dave I know.

Barbara He beat a boy up Dave. Thursday. He hit a boy. Do you know why? Did he tell you why?

Dave No.

Barbara He was scared you were waiting for him again so he got himself detention. Detention! He would rather sit behind in detention for two weeks rather than see you. Two weeks David. Happy? You've turned your boy into a thug and scared him half to death. Happy?

Dave But we had a good time we played football. I aint signing nothing.

Barbara You already have Dave. This is a copy of our divorce settlement it's got all the custody rights and agreements in there. My solicitor says you've broken the agreement. You know that anyway so you'll have to speak to Pat if you want to go to court and drag David through all that again.

Dave No, no course not.

Barbara Has Pat told you all this?

Dave Yeah course.

Barbara So what do you want to do?

Dave Can't I just see him on Sundays?

Barbara Have you been listening to me? Have you? You fucking idiot. No you can't see him on Sundays! He doesn't want to see you! Do you understand! For the last time! Leave him alone!

Dave He's my son!

Barbara It doesn't matter! It does not matter! You know what I could do don't you?

Dave Tell me.

Barbara I could stop you seeing him.

Dave For how long?

Barbara Dave. I could stop you seeing him.

Dave Why would you do that?

Barbara I don't want to.

Dave Then don't. Please

Barbara His birthday.

Dave What?

Barbara You can see him on his birthday.

Dave That's five months away.

Barbara He needs a break.

Dave Then take him on holiday! I'll take him on holiday, we'll go to Turkey.

Barbara His birthday.

Dave This your poncey solicitor's idea is it? Some solicitor going to tell me when I can see my son now? Is he?

Barbara No Dave. *She* could, but I don't want that. This is between me and you.

Dave Can't we/

Barbara /No. No negotiating, no wheeler dealer, you don't barter for your son.

Dave 5 months?

Barbara His birthday. And no going to his school. You don't call him, he calls you, and you can't call me at home, ever. I've changed my mobile number anyway. Thanks for that inconvenience by the way.

Dave My pleasure

Barbara If you contact him, that's it. Understand? You're lucky I'm giving you this much. My solicitor said there's no reason to stop your access to him permanently. But I'm giving you this chance. For both your sakes.

Dave I don't have a choice?

Barbara You don't have a choice.

Dave I don't know if I can do it.

Barbara You'll have to.

Dave Ok.

Barbara Ok?

Dave Ok.

Barbara Tell Pat.

Dave I will.

Barbara I hate this place.

Dave I know.

Barbara Sell it.

Dave No.

Barbara You could still get a good price for it, make it flats or something. Fine. Live here then, and die here if you want as well.

Dave Maybe I will. Just to spite you.

Barbara Yeah. You probably will.

Dave You look well.

Barbara I know. You don't.

Dave Charity do for Mick. We're sending him to Disneyland.

Barbara Is he still here?

Dave No he's gone.

Barbara Send him my love and to his Mum. *(She gets out purse and gives Dave £50)*
Here. For Disneyland. For Mick, I haven't got and more change but, well, there.

Dave Cheers.

Barbara He's young isn't he?

Dave Too young. Cruel world isn't it?

Barbara *(Pause)* I better go.

Dave Yeah. *(Barbara goes to exit)* I love him. He's my son. I love him.

Barbara His birthday. Five months. See ya. *(Exits)*

Dave See ya.

Scene Ten

The screen flashes up 'Father and Son'. Bobby is singing his last song.

Bobby *(Singing)* *It's not time to make a change,
Just sit down, take it slowly.
You're still young, that's your fault,
There's so much you have to go through.
Find a girl, settle down,
If you want you can marry.
Look at me, I am old, but I'm happy.
(son-- away away away, I know I have to
Make this decision alone - no)*
Son
*All the times that I cried, keeping all the things I knew inside,
It's hard, but it's harder to ignore it.
If they were right, I'd agree, but it's them you know not me.
Now there's a way and I know that I have to go away.
I know I have to go.
(father-- stay stay stay, why must you go and
Make this decision alone?)*

Bobby Thank you! Bobby Dee! Oh yes!

Les Thank you Bobby. It's been a long time since I was up here. Dave is otherwise indisposed at the moment so you're stuck with me. I think that's the end of the competition now. So that means *(He tries the 'clapometer' but it's not working)*. Hold on. There should be, Now why's that not working? I think my 'Clapometer's' broke. That's not on. Hold on. No. No joy. I'll have a look at it. Dave! Ah! Here we are the master of ceremonies. Mr David Johnson! *(Les hands Dave Mic)*

Dave *(Distressed)* Erm..I..erm. Right, time, time for the, for the winners. The winner sorry. We're all winners aren't we? Yeah. Ha! We're all winners. All of us. Aren't we? You lucky people.

Les *(whispered)* You alright?

Dave Yeah. No. Yeah. Just taking my time. Is this on? Yeah? Good.

Les *(Whispered)* Who's the winner?

Dave Yes! So who's the winner? Bobby sang, Richie sang. Who is the winner? *(Pulls out £50 note)* Lot of money today. For Mick. Well done. You're all lovely people. Give yourself a round of applause. What? What you looking like that at me for?

Bobby I'm just...nothing. Waiting to be crowned that's all. Crowned the Karaoke King! That's right! Bobby Dee!

Dave Yeah. Course.

Bobby I won then?

Dave Yeah, no, I dunno. It's not up to me is it. Is it?

Bobby I thought the public would decide. That's what you said.

Dave Yeah. You decide. You're all good people. Who's the winner? *(Shouts from pub)* bobby? Richie? Bobby? Richie? Bobby? Richie? Me? You? Barbara? David? David? *(The shouting subsides)* David? David. We're all winners aren't we? Aren't we? £50 for Mick. From Barbara. Ha! To Mick eh? He's fucked. Aint he. Fucked. Lot of that going about. We'll send him to Disney land though. Send him to Disney land. Maybe we should all go? Maybe we should all go. Yeah. Ha! *(Pause)* You're deciding are you? Yeah, course you are. Course you are. *(pause)*

Les *(Goes to Dave and takes mic, pretends Dave whispers to him)* That's right! We have a technical problem with the clapometer, so we're gonna have another song. A duet. Bobby! Sing a song.

Bobby What? What do you mean? I aint doing a duet.

Les You fucking are, right now. *(Grabs a disk and gives it to Bobby)* Put this on right now. Richie? Come on son you're up! Let's see these two in action together alright? Terrific. Hurry up Richie. Bobby you start it off. *(Screen Flashes up 'Everybody needs somebody'. Music begins and Les walks Dave off to the garden)*

Bobby I'll start it then Richie, get up here and get a mic
(Richie and Bobby compete for Stage position)
We're so glad to see so many of you lovely people here tonight, and we would especially like to welcome all the representatives of Illinois' law enforcement community who have chosen to join us in the palace hotel ballroom at this time. we do sincerely hope you'll all enjoy the show, and please remember people, that no matter who you are, and what you do to live, thrive and survive, there's still some things that make us all the same. you, me them, everybody, everybody.

Everybody needs somebody
Everybody needs somebody to love (someone to love)
Sweetheart to miss (sweetheart to miss)
Sugar to kiss (sugar to kiss)
I need you you you
I need you you you
I need you you you in the morning
I need you you you when my soul's on fire

Scene Eleven

As the music fades Les is with Dave in the Garden.

Les What's going on Dave? What's happened to you? What did she say?

Dave I lost. Broken nose, bosch. I'm done.

Les What do you mean?

Dave She got me, my fault, I hold my hands up. My fault. I can't see him again.

Les That's a bit fucking harsh. She can't do that.

Dave Five months.

Les What?

Dave I can't see him for five months. 'till his birthday.

Les Oh. Well that's not as bad as it. At least you can see him. I thought you meant forever. Permanent. I mean it's bad, but not permanent.

Dave Not bad? He don't want to see me. He don't want to see me. He's afraid of me. What am I? A monster?

Les No.

Dave Scare my own kid off?

Les Dave. He's young, impressionable. Maybe Barbara made him scared.

Dave Yeah, maybe. I thought that. But no. I was wrong. It's me. And here.

Les Here?

Dave Yeah. I only got one room. He doesn't like it. Don't blame him. I don't like it. Is that all I got? Fuck. After everything I've ever done? Is that it. One room?

Les You got more than that. You got 'The Duke'.

Dave What? This place? What the fuck is this place? A boozier. Anyone can have 'The Duke'. Anyone can run a pub. Anyone can run 'The Duke'. Anyone can be a washed out landlord with no son, no wife, no life, no fucking anything and live in a room above a pub. One fucking room.

Les There's more than that. You got a beer garden. Lot's of pubs don't have a beer garden.

Dave No, no, no, no, no, no. I don't think so Les. I think we all know what I am. *(begins to shadow box, he is upset, falling apart)* Bosch. Out for the count. Maybe I shouldn't get up this time. Off the canvas. Stay down. Take the count. Let them count me out. Her and her solicitor, even my own son. Too many blows.

Les Just take it easy.

Dave *(Dave's boxing increases in tempo and ferocity)* Too many blows Les. Duck, dive, straight up the middle, quick and tasty. Sharp but hard. Used to move around the outside, then Yes! Straight up the middle, left, right, left. If I needed to go to the body first. Crack. Right, left, right and then up and in. Hook, jab, cross, had 'em all.

Les You were a good boxer.

Dave I was a great boxer. A Champion. My son's a good boxer. My son, good boxer. Football. Ha! He could have been a champion like me. Like his old man. Sweet left hook me! Right, left, hook! Combinations, that's how you win a fight. You keep throwing.

Les Yeah. Definitely.

Dave I could have kept taking him. Maybe I can keep taking him? Call Barbara ask her. No, can't do that. Can't talk to him anymore can I. Can I? Smash! Bitch, fucking bitch. Jab, jab. Keep jabbing. Take a man's son away. Body, body, body, hook and cross. Take away his father.

Marie *(Entering) Dave? What they're all waiting out there for/ (Dave hits Marie hard in the face. She goes down. Pause)*

Dave Shit. Sorry Barbara. I didn't mean to. Barbara you alright? You alright? Les?

Les *(Goes to Marie)* Shit. It's Marie, Dave. Not Barbara. Marie.

Dave I know. It's Marie. Yeah. I know. Shit. Help her Les. Will you? Will you help her? Help her. Help her.

Les She's out cold.

Dave Yeah. Well.

Les Her nose has gone.

Dave I gotta judge the competition. Then that'll be it. Won't it Les?

Les Yeah.

Dave Good. Good. I better do my hair. Freshen up. Look at me.

Les Yeah.

Dave What's wrong with Marie?

Les She... she must of fainted.

Dave Oh. It's hot aint it? Yeah. Busy day as well. Put her in my bed or something. I'll take her up. I gotta do my hair. Put a shirt on. Look at me. Look at me. *(He takes Marie from Les and exits. Leaving his cigarettes. Les realises he has blood on his hands and tries to get it off. During the following he dries his hands on a bar towel covering it in blood).*

Jamie Oh.

Les What?

Jamie Erm..nothing I.

Les Stay there. Come here.

Jamie I didn't see nothing.

Les What?

Jamie I didn't see anything, honest.

Les What you talking about? *(looks at hands)* I cut myself.

Jamie Course.

Les What are you saying?

Jamie Nothing, I'm not saying anything.

Les *(Approaching Jamie)* You fucking with me? Jamie? Are you? Fucking with me?

Jamie No, course not. Don't hurt me Les. Please. Don't hurt me.

Les You drunk then? Pissed up?

Jamie *(Les is in his face)* No. A bit. Yeah. I just, please Les. I know about Ralph. I know you saw him, everyone knows you went to see him, saw him, sawed him whatever Les. Everyone knows. Please Les, please. Don't hurt me. I'm not Ralph Les. I haven't done anything. Don't kill me.

Les *(Pause. Les bursts out laughing)* Hahaha! I aint killed anyone. I aint gonna hurt you Jamie. I don't hurt people. Well I do, but I don't.

Jamie Thank God.

Les What you shitting yourself for? I haven't done anything to you have I? Have I?

Jamie No.

Les Have I?

Jamie No.

Les Then what's the problem?

Jamie I just...Dave's been odd and, well you went to see Ralph and I saw the blood and everyone/

Les /Everyone?

Jamie Yes.

Les Bollocks. Don't lie to me. No ones told you anything have they? Don't lie to me.

Jamie No. No ones told me anything.

Les Sit down. You're a dick.

Jamie Yes. Ok.

Les *(Goes back to washing hands)* I don't hurt people. I do but I don't. Everyone knows that.

Jamie /I don't understand. Ralph, I thought/

Les */(Pulls out his piece of metal and extends it/)* You thought wrong. People are scared of me. Not because I'm gonna break their leg or kill them. No. Far worse. I go and see 'em. And when I go to see someone. They know that they're in the shit. Because I'm going to restore the order. The natural order of things. Put thing back. Understand? Take Ralph. I went to see Ralph. He beat up Richie. I went to see him. With this. *(Indicates metal)* This is an arsehole's worst nightmare.

Jamie I can see.

Les Don't be smart. You aint smart. *(He taps metal on bar)* Tap, tap, tap. Tap, tap, tap. 'Hello Ralph'. You hurt someone. You fuck someone over, someone round here. You get the tap, tap, tap from Les. And that means you're mine. I gave Ralph six weeks for Richie. six weeks. Working for me. *(Les flicks the metal exposing more yellow sponge. It is obviously for cleaning windows).*

Jamie Jesus. I thought you really hurt people.

Les Oh I do. Six weeks working for me. No pay. But you do the work and you do it well. You work off your debt. You work it off to me. Now don't think Ralph got off lightly. Put yourself there Jamie. You gotta quit your job and clean windows and you aint got no income for four weeks. And when you finished you gotta go find a new job, but course your last job was cleaning windows wasn't it? It's

punishment. Everyone sees you as well, remember that. You're exposed. You lose face. Tap, tap, tap. Not a nice sound.

Jamie Fuck.

Les Exactly.

Jamie It's worse in a way.

Les Course.

Jamie So all the window cleaners are/

Les All of 'em.

Jamie How many?

Les Currently Thirteen.

Jamie Jesus.

Les Yeah. There was a crime wave last month. That and I had a lot of work on. Don't jump to conclusions.

Jamie Yeah.

Les And don't you ever fucking lie to me.

Jamie The music's stopped.

Les Get them to sing another one. Same one, another one. Whatever.

Jamie Ok. I don't think Bobby will listen to me.

Les He'll listen to me.

Scene Twelve

The Duke

Bobby&Richie *Everybody needs somebody*
Everybody needs somebody to love (someone to love)
Sweetheart to miss (sweetheart to miss)
Sugar to kiss (sugar to kiss)
I need you you you
I need you you you

*I need you you you in the morning
I need you you you when my soul's on fire*

The recorded music fades away. In a trance Dave goes up to the stage.

Les Dave?

Dave Champion.

Dave I need you, you, you. I need you, you, you. I need you, you, you. I need you, you, you. Thank you all. You, you, you, thank you for coming today.

Who's won? Who's fucking won? That's the question. Who's the Karaoke King? *(He takes the paper crown from the 'clapometer')* Look at that. All that aggro for this. Bobby? Richie? Bobby? Richie? Me? Ha! Maybe it's honest Dave. *(Puts on the crown)* Ha! It'll always be me! You can always find me. In the room upstairs or down here in the bar on my stool. It'll always be me. I'm a champion. *(Pause)* I was a champion. *(Long Pause, in which Dave shadow boxes again)*. It's not who knocks you down. It's who picks you up. Aint that right? Yeah that's right. There's only one, only one winner here today. Not you Bobby. Not you Richie. Mick. Mick picks winners. Mick picks winners; it's always the brown horse you see? That's how we do it. Keeps his pride, man's got to have his pride, otherwise, otherwise, what is he? Good pub this great pub. Wouldn't you say Richie?

Richie Yeah. Definitely.

Bobby Course it is.

Dave We're all winners aren't we? That's right. That's right. *(He takes off the crown)* Man don't need a crown to be a king he needs a castle! This is my castle. 'The Duke'. It's our castle. Ain't it?

All Yeah.

Dave And I'm the king of the castle. The King of the castle. And I need all my soldiers. You're all my soldiers. All of ya. Raise the drawbridge and man the defences, for every Friday night Bobby Dee will be hosting the Karaoke.

Bobby YES!!YES!!!YES!! Bobby Dee!! Come and get some. *(He goes to take the crown but Dave tears it in half. He gives half to Bobby Dee)*

Dave *(He gives other half to Richie)* And every Saturday. Richie, will host the Karaoke. Bollocks you can share it can't you? Both got fans, friends, whatever, you can both do it. It's been a good day, we raised a lot of money for Mick, send him off to Euro Disney. We're a family. And I'm buying the next round. To 'The Duke'! And the Karaoke Kings! *(Cheers as Dave puts on a disc)*

Bobby Unlucky mate.

Richie What? We both won.

Bobby Yeah, but I won first. *(He sticks the crown onto his forehead)* Bobby Dee.
Friday nights.

Jamie And Richie on a Saturday. 'Richie's rock and roll party time'.

Richie 'Party time'?

Jamie I'm making it up as I go.

Les Aint we all.

(The screen flashes up 'My way'. They are all on stage. Masters? For all the pretty boys, and all the pretty girls. You lucky people! (They all take turns in singing)

*And now, the end is here
And so I face the final curtain
My friend, I'll say it clear
I'll state my case, of which I'm certain
I've lived a life that's full
I travelled each and every highway
And more, much more than this, I did it my way*

*Regrets, I've had a few
But then again, too few to mention
I did what I had to do and saw it through without exemption
I planned each charted course, each careful step along the byway
And more, much more than this, I did it my way*

*Yes, there were times, I'm sure you knew
When I bit off more than I could chew
But through it all, when there was doubt
I ate it up and spit it out
I faced it all and I stood tall and did it my way*

*I've loved, I've laughed and cried
I've had my fill, my share of losing
And now, as tears subside, I find it all so amusing
To think I did all that
And may I say, not in a shy way,
"Oh, no, oh, no, not me, I did it my way"*

*For what is a man, what has he got?
If not himself, then he has naught
To say the things he truly feels and not the words of one who kneels
The record shows I took the blows and did it my way!*

*The spotlight closes in on Dave until it disappears amidst the roars of a Vegas audience. The
last
image is the blank blue Karaoke screen before darkness.*

The End