

Trip

A Play

By

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“The future’s uncertain and the end is always near”

The Doors, “Roadhouse Blues”

Cast

ALAN EDWARDS – former athlete, now advertising salesman for a small newspaper, 35

GERALDINE (GERRY) ANDERSON – an American tourist, 28

LORNA PETERS – Alan's ex-girlfriend, 27

JOHN MacMASTERS – developer and pub owner, 50s

IVAN – an associate of MacMasters, European, late 30s

ROBERT LANG – a prominent businessman, 50s

ELIZABETH LANG – his wife, 50s

ERIC (SHINEY) – a skinhead, English, 30s

WALTER – an associate of Eric's, New Zealander, 30s

ALICE – a workmate of Alan's, 50s

BILL – a waiter at the Porthole Bar, 30s

POLICEWOMAN – late 20s

POLICEMAN – 30s

LAWYER – 30s

Scene – Various locations around a large city

Time – A few years ago

Act 1: Towards the Darkness

In darkness we hear the sound of footsteps running, heavy breathing.

The lights slowly come up on ALAN, he is running on the spot, panting for breath, a bright light shining behind him. He continues to run, his panting getting heavier, his steps more desperate.

SPOTLIGHT ON LANG.

LANG: In the time I have spent on this earth I have learnt many things, some important, some not so. But above them all one lesson stands out – a simple three word phrase. Life is relative. And what separates men and women is not race or religion, creed or colour, bank accounts or breeding – but values. Something that is absolutely crucial to one person is worthless to the next. We must all run our own race.

SPOTLIGHT FADES ON ALAN.

LANG: For some one human life is more precious than anything on earth. To others it is like a speck of dust on the palm of your hand. (HE WIPES HIS HANDS.) It all depends on perception, where you stand, your own particular point of view. It's all in the judgement.

LIGHTS COME UP ON ALAN, NOW SEATED AT A TABLE, WAITING.

LANG: Hero or villain ? You decide. Angel or devil ? You decide. Life or death ? You decide. The challenge I give to you is the same as the Oracle presented to Oedipus one fine sunny day in Delphi. Find an answer, if there are any.

LANG EXITS.**1. Coffee shop, morning.****LORNA ENTERS.**

ALAN: Didn't think you were coming.

LORNA: Well I'm here.

ALAN: (PULLING OUT CHAIR) Sit down. Nice clothes. Is that fur ?

LORNA: (SITTING) It's new. Unlike yours. Is this going to take long ?

ALAN: You just got here.

LORNA: I'm in a bit of a hurry.

ALAN: Seems like ages.

LORNA: Whose fault is that ?

ALAN: Do you want a coffee ?

LORNA: Alan, I mean it. I'm in a rush.

ALAN: You never use to call me Alan.

LORNA: It's your name isn't it ?

ALAN: Bit formal. You don't seem very happy to see me.

LORNA: (TAKING OUT CIGARETTE) One cigarette. That's all.

SHE LIGHTS IT WITH A GOLD LIGHTER.

ALAN: Nice lighter.

LORNA: It's a present.

ALAN: (GRABBING LIGHTER AND READING) Who's Robert ?

LORNA: A friend.

LORNA HOLDS OUT HER HAND. **ALAN** GIVES HER BACK THE LIGHTER.

LORNA: Well, I'm waiting.

ALAN: What I wanted to say is that it's taken me awhile to realise.

LORNA: Realise what ?

ALAN: (REHEARSED) That I never really appreciated you. That I took you for granted. That I never knew what I had. But I know now. My eyes are

ALAN: (CONT) open and I'm looking at you properly for the first time. I want you back Lorna.

BEAT.

LORNA: Nice speech. Been practising it long ?

ALAN: All week.

LORNA: You want me back ?

ALAN: I made a mistake.

LORNA: Feeling lonely are we ?

ALAN: It's not that. I miss *you*. The flat, it's so ... empty.

LORNA: It was my furniture. You're serious ?

ALAN: I've thought about it and I've realised you're the one for me. I made a mistake.

LORNA: Well that's just great.

ALAN: What ?

LORNA: It's a bit late.

ALAN: Three months. Not that long.

LORNA: People change.

ALAN: I don't.

LORNA BEGINS TO LAUGH.

ALAN: What's so funny ?

LORNA: Remember those words I tried to teach you.

ALAN: "Lorna words".

LORNA: Yeah. Here's one. Irony.

ALAN: I don't get it.

LORNA: How many times did I beg you to come back to me ?

ALAN: The boot's on the other foot.

LORNA: Exactly.

ALAN: Is there someone else ?

LORNA: No.

ALAN PICKS UP THE LIGHTER.

LORNA: Well, kind of.

ALAN: You're seeing somebody else ?

LORNA: And I suppose you're not.

ALAN: No.

LORNA: I wasn't looking, you can be sure of that. After you ... did what you did, I was definitely cured of any desire for a relationship. I met him at ... work.

ALAN: You're fucking your boss ?

LORNA: It's not like that – and keep your voice down. You ready for a shock ? This is hard to say.

ALAN: Just say it. I did.

LORNA: Well, when you shacked up with Rebecca from Lay-down and Design I didn't really cope.

ALAN: I told you - I made a mistake.

LORNA: I'm trying to say something. When all that happened I didn't feel too good about myself. Unattractive, low self-esteem - all that crap. Anyway ... I met someone and they made me an offer.

ALAN: Some guy ?

LORNA: A lady actually. At an agency.

ALAN: Advertising ?

LORNA: Escort. I slept with men for money. A lot of money.

BEAT.

ALAN: Shit.

LORNA: Guess you don't want me back now.

ALAN CONSIDERS.

ALAN: Yes. Yes I do.

LORNA: Alan, you're just saying that.

ALAN: I've done some pretty bad things too, you know that ? We both have. That doesn't matter now. All that matters is you and me.

LORNA: I've never heard you talk like this before.

ALAN: Had a bit of time to think. Let's forget the last three months ever happened. You're not still doing it ... are you ?

LORNA: No.

ALAN: Right. Well then ?

LORNA: One of my ... clients, very wealthy, very powerful. He liked me. We connected.

ALAN: Robert ?

LORNA: It doesn't matter who he is.

ALAN: So you're seeing him ?

LORNA: He's ... looking after me.

ALAN: Well you just tell him you don't want to do it anymore. Or I'll tell him. What's his number ?

LORNA: Who said I don't want to do it anymore ?

BEAT. LORNA PUTS OUT HER CIGARETTE.

ALAN: You've finished your cigarette.

LORNA: Since I've been away from you I've changed. I need to live for me now. I want to do what's best for Lorna.

ALAN: And being a prostitute is what's best for you ?

LORNA: (HUSHING HIM) I'm not a prostitute – Robert's good to me. He treasures me – something you don't know much about. He's got me this beautiful little apartment, overlooking the harbour.

ALAN: He's giving you money to sleep with him.

LORNA: How could I expect you to understand ? (BEAT) Anyway, I won't be doing it for much longer. When I've got enough I'm going to the States. Start again.

ALAN: So it's money ? Is that what you want ? I can get money.

LORNA: How can you get money ? From your "job". You're lucky to even get paid each week. Look, even if you had all the money in the world it wouldn't make any difference. Too much has happened. (BEAT) Five years Al. We had a good run.

ALAN: I've never heard you talk like this before.

LORNA: I'm getting ... stronger. I think it's Roberts' influence. He's very ... tough. (STANDING) I got to go.

LORNA STARTS TO LEAVE.

ALAN: Wait.

ALAN GRABS HER HAND.

LORNA: Let go of my hand.

ALAN: Please.

LORNA: Alan, don't beg. It's pathetic.

ALAN LETS GO OF HER HAND.

LORNA: (POINTING) See the blue Bentley ? That's him. (BEAT) It's crazy isn't it ? All that time we spent together and we never once talked like this. Maybe we should have. Well, too late now. (HOLDING OUT HAND) Goodbye Alan.

ALAN: You said you loved me.

LORNA: I did.

ALAN: What happened ?

LORNA: You.

LORNA EXITS. ALAN WATCHES HER GO. ALICE ENTERS.

ALICE: Where have you been ?

LIGHTS CHANGE TO:

2. Offices of The People's Voice newspaper, noon.

ALAN: Out.

ALICE: Where ?

ALAN: Making a few callbacks.

ALICE: You sell anything ?

ALAN: Ten full pages.

ALICE: Joe's looking for you.

ALAN: So ?

ALICE: He's on the warpath.

ALAN: He's always on the warpath.

ALICE: Alan, what are your figures for this week ?

ALAN: Three million.

ALICE: Come on.

ALAN: Two.

ALICE: Thousand ?

ALAN: Hundred.

ALICE: Alan.

ALAN: She won't come back.

ALICE: Who ?

ALAN: Lorna. I don't even know who she is anymore.

ALICE: Alan, we'll talk about it later. We haven't got time now darling. You've got to get some sales.

ALAN: Fuck the sales.

ALICE: Joe's serious.

ALAN: I want her back Alice. That's all I want. Stuff this fucking paper. Stuff Joe. I just want her back. There I was pouring my heart out in the middle of this coffee shop and people were just sitting there, eating cheesecake and drinking cappuccinos. Didn't they realise what was happening at the very next table ? Didn't they realise my life was falling apart ?

ALICE: It happens every day.

ALAN: I had my dream again the other night.

ALICE: Alan, we haven't got time to talk about your dreams.

ALAN: It was exactly the same. I was in the tunnel. Running. I was tired, my breathing was heavy. I'd obviously been running for a long time. But I'm running the wrong way. The light is behind me. I can feel it on my back. The end of the tunnel is in the other direction and every step takes me further away. I keep telling myself to stop, turn around, go back. But nothing happens. I just keep running, further, into the darkness. Why can't I stop ? Turn around. I don't get it.

ALICE: That makes two of us. Listen to me. I know you're upset but believe me, the best way to mend a broken heart is to throw yourself into your work. Killing birds, stone – and all that.

ALAN: I told you - I don't care.

ALICE: You say that now but you'll regret it tomorrow. This job isn't much but at least it's a job. You're not the only one treading water here.

ALAN: What ?

ALICE: Joe can't keep propping up the paper forever. Noble endeavour or not it still comes down to money. We're right on the edge.

ALAN: Alice, I don't care.

ALICE: Please. For me.

ALICE PULLS OUT A CARD. SHE HANDS IT TO ALAN.

ALICE: I was going to see this man this afternoon. He's interested in taking a half page.

ALAN: I'm not taking your sales.

ALICE: You'd do the same for me. I'm fine for this week. Go and see him. He's a good man. Get Joe off your back. Afterwards we'll have a drink and you can tell me all about Laura.

ALAN: Lorna.

ALICE: Lorna. (HELPING HIM UP) Now put your face on and up you get. Don't want to keep the man waiting. (HANDING HIM BRIEFCASE) There's your briefcase.

ALAN: I can't go.

ALICE: Why not ?

ALAN: I'm drunk.

ALICE: Never stopped anyone selling advertising before. Actually, it's quite appropriate.

ALAN: How's that ?

ALICE: It's a pub.

ALICE LOOKS AT HIM. MacMASTERS ENTERS, DRINKING A BEER AND SUPPORTING HIMSELF ON A WALKING STICK. ALICE EXITS.

MacMASTERS: Can't you read ? We're closed.

LIGHTS CHANGE TO:

3. The Wellington Hotel, that afternoon.

ALAN: The door was open.

MacMASTERS: Well lock it on your way out.

MacMASTERS SITS ON A STOOL.

ALAN: (LOOKING AT THE CARD) I'm here to see Jay Ryan.

MacMASTERS: Not here.

ALAN: He's the Manager isn't he ?

MacMASTERS: Might be the Manager but he's still not here.

ALAN: I had an appointment to see him. Do you work for him ?

MacMASTERS: No. I don't work for him. He works for me.

ALAN: (SCOFFING) Yeah right.

MacMASTERS LOOKS AT HIM.

ALAN: You own this place ?

MacMASTERS NODS.

ALAN: Shit, sorry. Perhaps I could speak to you then. (OPENING BRIEFCASE, TAKING OUT PAPER) My name is Alan Edwards and I represent The People's Voice Newspaper. The People's Voice speaks for the people who can not speak for themselves. With a circulation –

MacMASTERS: (RAISING BEER) Save it. I've got some real work to do.

MacMASTERS TIPS HIS BEER TO ALAN AND DRINKS.

ALAN: (HOLDING OUT PAPER) If I could just acquaint you further with our important and worthy initiative –

MacMASTERS: I said – save it. You're interrupting my daily workout.

MacMASTERS RAISES HIS ELBOW AND DRINKS AGAIN.

ALAN: I'll leave my card.

MacMASTERS: (NOT TURNING) I won't be needing it.

ALAN: (PUTTING CARD ON THE BAR) I'll leave it anyway.

MacMASTERS: And I know straight where it's going.

ALAN TURNS TO LEAVE. MacMASTERS PICKS UP THE CARD AND GOES TO THROW IT IN THE BIN. AS HE DOES HE GLANCES DOWN AT THE CARD.

MacMASTERS: Hey. You're not *the* Alan Edwards are you ?

ALAN: What if I am ?

MacMASTERS: I'd be interested in talking to *him*. Might even shout him a beer or two.

ALAN: Interested enough to buy an ad.

MacMASTERS: I'd make it worth his time.

WE HEAR THE ROAR OF A LARGE CROWD. LIGHTS UP ON A TABLE AND CHAIRS ACROSS STAGE.

MacMASTERS AND ALAN SIT. LANG ENTERS AND PLACES BEERS IN FRONT OF THEM. THE CROWD SOUNDS FADE.

MacMASTERS: (POINTING) And over there is Gus Lloyd. 1967 grand final – Newtown versus Wests. Jets scored a try right on full time smack under the posts. Gus had the conversion to win it. Hit the friggin' post. (POINTING) And there – Willie Ryan. You remember ? "Can't bowl, can't throw." Australia vs the West Indies, SCG. 1983. Windies are nine wickets down needing two runs to win. Their number 11 skies one, straight down Ryan's throat. Absolute sitter. But Ryan grasses it, batsman run two. Windies win. (POINTING) And behind the bar – one of my favourites. Terry Flintoff. 1956 Melbourne Cup. He's on Rhinegold, ahead by two lengths coming down the home stretch. Idiot stands in his stirrups and starts waving to the fans. Foot slips out and he ends up arse up in the mud. No fancy tottie for you. Call it my "Loser's Gallery" – the greatest losers of all time. All personally signed, the real McCoy. And now I've got you – the greatest of them all – "The Tripper".

ALAN: Think you're forgetting something.

MacMASTERS: What's that ?

ALAN: I won. Gold – remember ?

MacMASTERS: Only cause you sent Richie Setter arse over tit.

ALAN: That was never proven.

MacMASTERS: You did it but.

ALAN: I won fair and square.

MacMASTERS: That why you retired six months later ?

ALAN IS SILENT.

MacMASTERS: Commonwealth Games, 1998. Setter's the hot favourite coming in to the eight hundred. All set to win his fourth

MacMASTERS: (CONT) straight gold medal – first man ever to win gold in the same event at four consecutive Commonwealth Games. And you're his training partner. Young kid, rank outsider, first games. Come the final and everything's going perfectly to plan. You're out in front, setting the pace and you and Richie break from the pack two hundred metres from home – just like he planned. Sprinting away from the rest of the field. Then one hundred metres out Richie clicks up a gear – again just as planned - begins to cruise past you – beginning his run to immortality. It'll be gold for Richie and silver for you – not bad in your first games. But that ain't enough for The Tripper. Richie cruises past you – you can't match that, how can you – so you put out your foot and trip him – just a little nudge, nothing more. But enough to put him off balance and send him crashing into the advertising boards. You run on - don't even stop to look back, see if he's okay - get the gold. Not a popular result as I remember it. Gold to "The Tripper". Bruises and scratches for our Richie. That about cover it ?

ALAN: Up to the point where I tripped him. He fell.

MacMASTERS: After you tripped him.

ALAN: No he fell. If I tripped him, why didn't he lodge a protest ?

MacMASTERS: What's the point ? Wouldn't've got him gold. Just taken away yours. And that's not Richie's style. He's a winner – unlike you.

ALAN: I don't have to listen to this.

MacMASTERS: Then don't. Piss off.

ALAN: I will. As soon as you sign for the ad.

LANG ENTERS. HE TAKES THE EMPTY BEERS AND PLACES DOWN TWO FULL ONES.

MacMASTERS: You know, trippin' him wasn't the worse thing you did. Not by a long way. Givin' up afterwards – that was the dog's way out. If you were so adamant about your innocence why didn't you keep runnin'. Prove all the knockers wrong.

ALAN: It wasn't the most supportive environment to run in.

MacMASTERS: So ? You know how I got this ? (HE INDICATES HIS LEG) Walking across a pedestrian bloody crossin'. I was fifteen.

MacMASTERS: (CONT) The driver was pissed as a fart. Got off with a fine. I was gonna play for Australia. Know how much support I got ? Sympathy ? Cripple, peg-leg, handicap. Didn't let it break me. Anything it made me stronger. Now I own ten pubs. That's the difference between me and all of you (POINTING TO WALLS). It's not the losing that kills you, it's how you react to it. Even the greatest champion had a few knock backs.

ALAN: Worse moment of my life.

MacMASTERS: When Richie fell ?

ALAN: Standing on the medal podium an hour later. Accepting the gold. Every single person in that stadium booed me.

MacMASTERS: National anti-hero. They all must've hated your guts. Probably still do.

ALAN: (TAKING OUT CONTRACT) Look, you've had your fun. Little walk down memory lane. Nice old gloat. Now, if you wouldn't mind signing this order form, I wouldn't mind leaving.

MacMASTERS: What for ?

ALAN: The ad.

MacMASTERS: Not gonna buy no ad.

ALAN: But you said you would. That's why I've been sitting here taking your crap for the last hour.

MacMASTERS: I said I'd make it worth your while. And I will.

ALAN: How ?

MacMASTERS: I'm gonna give you a job.

ALAN: If it's got anything to do with your little "gallery", I'm not interested.

MacMASTERS: No, nothin' like that. I want you to do something for me.

ALAN: Run a Trivia night ?

MacMASTERS: There's this ex-associate of mine. Did a bit of a dirty on me. Left me snagged by the short and curlies.

ALAN: How much you lose ?

MacMASTERS: Enough. But it's not so much the money. It's the principal. Bastard ripped me off. And ripped off a lot of other people who couldn't afford to be ripped off.

ALAN: So, what do you want me to do ?

MacMASTERS: I want you to kill him.

PAUSE.

ALAN: What ?

MacMASTERS: You heard.

ALAN: You mean as in dead ?

MacMASTERS: That's the one.

ALAN: You want me to kill somebody ?

MacMASTERS: No, I don't want you to kill him. I want you to blow his fucking head off. Don't worry. I'll pay you. How much you want ? A hundred, two ?

ALAN: Thousand ?

MacMASTERS: Not enough ? Make it three. Stuff it – how about five ?

ALAN: Half a million dollars ?

MacMASTERS: Cash. Small notes. Untraceable.

ALAN: And I was gonna ask you for a half page.

MacMASTERS: Well, what do you say ?

ALAN: Let me get this straight. You want me to kill someone. You're gonna give me half a million bucks to kill someone.

MacMASTERS: Take it or leave it.

ALAN: It's a fuckin' fortune.

MacMASTERS: And no GST. Better than winning lotto. And all you have to do is pull the trigger.

ALAN: But why me ?

MacMASTERS: Why not ? You've always been good at bringing someone down. Try to think of him as Richie Setter.

ALAN: Who is he ?

MacMASTERS: You'll find out. Real low life scum. World'll be better off without him. And you can finally do some good for all the heartache you caused. Make up for your wandering feet. Think of it as doing a public service.

MacMASTERS LAUGHS.

MacMASTERS: Public service. Yeah, I like that.

ALAN: Hold on. You're having me on aren't you ? You're pissed.

MacMASTERS: Course I'm pissed.

THEY BOTH LAUGH.

ALAN: Thank Christ for that. For a second there I thought you were serious.

MacMASTERS STOPS LAUGHING

MacMASTERS: I am.

MacMASTERS STANDS. HE PULLS OUT A SMALL BUNDLE FROM BEHIND THE BAR.

HE WALKS BACK TO ALAN AND PLONKS THE BUNDLE ON THE TABLE. IT SOME LARGE WADS OF CASH.

ALAN: What's this ?

MacMASTERS: Down payment. Need a bag ?

LIGHTS CHANGE. LANG ENTERS, HE COLLECTS THE MONEY AND PLACES IT IN A PLASTIC BAG. MacMASTERS EXITS.

LANG: A public service. Those were the words. A chance to make good - for half a million bucks. Begs the question doesn't it - who is worth killing for five hundred thousand dollars ? Who isn't ?

ALAN STAGGERS TO HIS FEET. LANG PLACES THE BAG IN HIS HAND.

LANG: Is this real ? Or is it a dream ? It couldn't be real but what if it was ? Our little ship has sprung a leak. A leaking ship, sinking slowly to the bottom of the sea.

DEEP BLUE LIGHTS COME UP ON A SHIP THEMED BAR, A TABLE AND TWO STOOLS. WE HEAR THE SOUND OF A CREAKING SHIP.

4. The Porthole Bar, that evening

ALAN SITS ON ONE STOOL AT THE HIGH TABLE, HE PLACES THE PLASTIC BAG ON THE TABLE IN FRONT OF HIM. **LANG** PUTS A STRONGER DRINK IN **ALAN'S** HAND.

LANG: Oh and I'd give the prawn cocktail a miss.

LANG EXITS. **GERRY** ENTERS, CARRYING A BACKPACK AND HOLDING A SMALL FLAG.

GERRY: Hi. Would you like to buy a flag ? See – on one side there's Australia. On the other – the stars and stripes. I call them Friendship Flags. A sign of the bond between our two countries. I made them myself.

ALAN: I can tell.

GERRY: Hey that's not very supportive. I'm a survivor man. Made it down from the 47th floor.

ALAN LOOKS AT HER.

GERRY: The Towers. We lost a lot of good people that day. So, you want one ? (BEAT) Five bucks ? Two bucks ? Come on, for a survivor.

ALAN: I'm voting you off the island.

GERRY: Very funny. One ? Couple of quarters ? Oh shit, take the friggin' thing. (SHE PUTS THE FLAG ON THE TABLE AND SITS.) Don't mind if I sit down do you ? Handing out flags is thirsty work. (LOOKING AT HIM) Woah. Look at that face. What's your problem ?

ALAN: You.

GERRY: I feel your pain. Then I guess you got it tough. You WASH MEs.

ALAN: Wash what ?

GERRY: WASH MEs. White Anglo Saxon Heterosexuals - and I'm guessing you're not gay here - Men born in Australia – or in the States - with English as a first language. I call you that because it's like you have to be washed of your sins.

ALAN: My sins ?

GERRY: You don't fall into any target groups so you don't get no support. You're out there battling away – night and day - all alone. Just like me, battling my way down the stairs, through the smoke and flames.

ALAN: You weren't in the Towers ?

GERRY: Yes I was. (BEAT) Okay I wasn't. But I did go there. Once. Almost.

ALAN: I am at the bottom. The bottom of the sea.

GERRY: And that's a good place to be. It's cool and dark. All the fish and the odd ... shark.

ALAN: Who are you ?

GERRY: I'm Friendly Gerry and you're the man who's going to buy me a drink.

ALAN: No.

BILL ENTERS DRESSED IN PIRATE OUTFIT, HE WIPES ANOTHER TABLE.

GERRY: Come on. I'd love a nice cold beer. Tell you what – you buy me a drink and I'll help solve your problems. Tell me what's eating you. Apart from American tourists.

ALAN: I don't have a problem.

GERRY: Jesus. You mean you always look like this ? Wow.

ALAN: Would you – (fuck off)

GERRY: Order us some drinks. Sure. (CALLS) Hey, sailor. Over here.

BILL: (COMING OVER) I'm actually a Pirate.

GERRY: And don't you just look so cute.

BILL: Thanks. Hi I'm Barnacle Bill and I'll be your Personal Pirate for this evening. (LIKE A PIRATE, BUT WITHOUT ENTHUSIASM) Ah – har ! And what would you like from our Treasure Chest tonight ?

GERRY: I'll have a – what's that big blue one with like the pineapple and the little umbrellas ?

BILL: The Captain's Pleasure Mam.

GERRY: We'll pleasure me up with one of those.

BILL: They're for two shipmates.

GERRY: Oh, how romantic and don't go easy on the pineapple.

BILL: And for our aging cabin boy ?

GERRY: Oh, he'll have a - (TO **ALAN**) What were you drinking ? Smells like gas.

ALAN: Gin Surprise.

GERRY: Gin. Sheesh, you don't want to drink gin – surprised or not. Makes you slit your wrists. He'll have a vodka and ...

BILL: Orange keeps the scurvy away Mam.

GERRY: Orange sounds nice. You keep up the good work Barnacle.

BILL: That's Bill. Aye, aye shipmate.

BILL EXITS.

GERRY: I don't think Barnacle is obtaining full job satisfaction from his current position do you ... What did you say your name was ?

ALAN: I didn't. Trip.

GERRY: Alright Trip and you can call me Gerry, which is actually short for Geraldine. My mother doesn't approve but hey she's a million miles away. So Trip, what's in the bag ?

ALAN: A woman's head.

GERRY: Her head ? Anything missing ? Ears, nose, lips ? Well that's okay. As long as it's still in tact.

ALAN: It's a head. It can't be in tact.

GERRY: I know but as long as there's nothing else missing. The eyebrows ? I mean that would be totally gross – but if it's the whole head that's okay.

ALAN: I'm not gonna be able to get rid of you am I ?

GERRY: Ah ... no. So you might as well kick back and enjoy the company. And while we're at it. Let's make good use of our time. Tell me all your problems. Begin at the beginning. Pour your heart out.

ALAN IS SILENT.

GERRY: I am a complete stranger. So confide in me. No one will ever know. Just open up. Let it all hang out. Problem number one – go.

ALAN IS STILL SILENT.

GERRY: Your wife, is that it ? I bet it's something to do with your wife. You've been having an affair haven't you ? That's it. And now you feel guilty.

ALAN: I'm not married.

GERRY: Then it doesn't matter if you're having an affair. Unless it's the boss's wife. Is that it ? Oh shit. You're having an affair with the boss's wife and you're scared he'll find out.

ALAN: I'm not having an affair.

GERRY: You're not. Come on, everyone's having an affair. Trip, look in the mirror. You're an attractive man. You've got to be having an affair. Is it your secretary ? You're having an affair with your secretary and she's married. That's it ! She's married to your brother. You're having an affair with your brother's wife ! End it now Trip or it'll destroy the whole family. You'll end up on Jerry Springer. "I'm having an affair with my brother's wife."

ALAN: I don't have one.

GERRY: Brother or secretary ?

ALAN: Both.

GERRY: Well you should Trip. Person needs a brother. I've got three. Jimmy, Bobby and little Aaron. Hey, that's sad. You're brotherly deprived.

ALAN LOOKS AT GERRY.

GERRY: Anything wrong Trip ?

ALAN: Where do I start ?

BILL: (ENTERING) Ah-har shipmates. One vodka and orange and one Captain's Pleasure.

GERRY: (LOOKING AT DRINK) Hey that looks nice. Doesn't that look nice. And plenty of pineapple. Thanks Barnacle.

BILL SMILES COLDLY AT GERRY.

BILL: Bill. (PLACING NUTS DOWN) And some of the Cabin Boy's Roasted Nuts.

GERRY: Look at that Trip, The Cabin Boy sent us his Nuts.

ALAN: I don't want the Cabin Boy's nuts.

GERRY: They're free. Compliments of the Captain.

BILL LOOKS AT GERRY. HE HOLDS OUT HIS TRAY.

GERRY: (TO ALAN) Ah Trip, this is your round isn't it ?

BILL: (LOOKING AT ALAN) Did you just call him Trip ?

GERRY: Yeah.

BILL: Trip. That's funny. As in – trip ?

BILL STARTS TO LAUGH. GERRY AND ALAN DO NOT. BILL STOPS SUDDENLY.

BILL: Will that be cash or charge ?

ALAN: Cash.

ALAN REACHES INTO THE BAG. HE PULLS OUT A \$50 NOTE AND GIVES IT TO GERRY.

GERRY: Guess she won't be needing it.

BILL: Who ?

GERRY: The woman whose head he has in that bag.

BILL LOOKS AT ALAN. BEAT.

GERRY: (TO BILL) It's a long story.

GERRY GIVES THE NOTE TO BILL.

BILL: I'll just take this and then I'll get you your change.

BILL CLEARS AWAY ALAN'S EMPTY GLASS.

ALAN: (TO **BILL**) You can't take her too ?

BILL LOOKS AT GERRY. THEN AT THE NOTE.

BILL: I'm afraid it would take a lot more than this.

BILL EXITS.

GERRY: (WATCHING **BILL GO**) Meow. (TO **ALAN**) You know Trip, I know we've just met but I'm having fun. Are you having fun ?

ALAN: (STANDING) I'm going.

GERRY: I'm guessing that's a no. Why do you want to go ? We're just getting started.

ALAN: And now – we're finished.

GERRY: Come on, stay. You haven't even finished your drink ?

ALAN: (PICKING UP GLASS) Take-away. (WAVING) Bye bye.

GERRY: But I don't want to drink alone.

ALAN EXITS.

GERRY: Shit. (BEAT. SEEING BAG, CALLING AFTER HIM) Hey, you forgot your – (STOPS HERSELF) bag.

GERRY STANDS AND PEERS INTO THE BAG.

GERRY: Wow. (BEAT) Don't worry, I'll take care of it.

ALAN RETURNS. GERRY QUICKLY RETRACTS HER HAND.

GERRY: You forgot your –

ALAN: (GRABBING BAG) Bag.

GERRY: I was just gonna come after you.

ALAN: Sure you were.

ALAN EXITS.

GERRY: Hey, that's not fair. (BEAT) Jesus. Wait for me.

GERRY GRABS HER DRINK AND THE NUTS AND FOLLOWS ALAN OUT. LIGHTS DOWN. IN DARKNESS WE HEAR THE SOUND TRACK OF AN OLD HORROR MOVIE. CREEPY MUSIC, DOORS CREAKING, SCREAMS.

5. Alan's apartment, later.

ALAN IS ASLEEP ON A SOFA. ON ONE SIDE OF HIM SITS GERRY GLUED TO THE TELEVISION. ON THE OTHER SIDE SITS LANG. THEY WATCH FOR AWHILE THEN LANG PICKS UP THE REMOTE CONTROL AND CHANGES THE CHANNEL.

WE HEAR THE SOUND TRACK OF A FOOTBALL GAME.

GERRY: Hey !

GERRY GRABS THE REMOTE AND CHANGES THE CHANNEL BACK. THE SOUND TRACK OF THE SCARY MOVIE RETURNS. ALAN WAKES SUDDENLY.

ALAN: What ?

GERRY: At last. You've been asleep for hours. A regular real live Sleeping Beauty. My brother was like that. The middle one – Bobby. He used to sleep and sleep. Not me – I'm wide awake, twenty four hours a day. No mute button on this remote.

ALAN: What's ... ?

GERRY: I'm watching this creepy old film "Revenge of the Gargoyles". See there's these people in this old spooky house, where else ?, and they're being stalked by weird monsters. Now this guy here he's hiding in the study but oh my god – here comes the Gargoyles. Watch out mister, they know you're there.

WE HEAR A SCREAM ON THE SOUND TRACK.

GERRY: He got eat.

ALAN: What time is it ?

GERRY: I don't know. Pretty late. None of your clocks are working. You know Trip, for a guy with a bag full of money – you sure don't have much furniture.

ALAN BEGINS TO LOOK AROUND FOR THE BAG. HE CAN'T FIND IT AND PANICS.

GERRY: Blue cushion. You put it under there before you conked out.

ALAN LIFTS THE CUSHION AND GRABS THE BAG.

GERRY: Don't worry Trip. I didn't touch it.

ALAN: Would you stop calling me that ?

GERRY: Trip ? That's your name isn't it.

ALAN: My name is Alan.

GERRY: Why did you tell me your name was Trip then ?

ALAN: Sick joke.

GERRY: Like telling me you cut your wife's head off and put it in that bag because you found out she was having an affair with your brother's secretary ?

ALAN LOOKS AT HER.

GERRY: Long story.

WE HEAR SCREAMING ON THE SOUNDTRACK.

GERRY: Hey get out of there. Don't you know Gargoyles always look in the bathroom first. Screaming ain't gonna help. Touchdown. Gargoyles 6 – Humans 0.

ALAN: Can you turn that off ?

GERRY: You've got a hangover haven't you ? (LOUD) You're sensitive to loud sounds and bright light. (SHE TURNS THE TV OFF) Gargoyles were winning anyways. You sure it's okay for me to be here ?

ALAN: No.

GERRY: I mean you're not expecting anybody ?

ALAN: Should I be ?

GERRY: There's a lot of stuff in the bathroom. Perfume and ladies' things. I was wondering where your girlfriend was ?

ALAN: She's gone.

GERRY: And she won't be coming back ?

ALAN: Not holding my breath.

GERRY: Oh well that's good. I mean that's bad, but it's good because it means I can stay – that is if I want to stay, which I'm not really sure that I do - and would you stop looking at me like that.

ALAN: What are you ?

GERRY: Would you stop asking that ? I'm Friendly Gerry. The un-survivor who didn't make it down from the 47th floor. But I do come from Manhattan.

ALAN: New York ?

GERRY: Kansas. Manhattan, Kansas. Right on the dirty old Kansas River. But now I'm a citizen of the world. Universal soul traveller. I've heard and seen a lot of weird stuff. Like once I met this Bullfighter in Spain. After the fight, after he'd killed the bull, do you know what he'd do ? He'd cut their eyes out and eat them . The Bull's eyes. It gave him super human strength. Now that's pretty strange. I bet your secret ain't half as strange as that.

ALAN: I haven't got a secret.

GERRY: Yes you have. I can see it in your eyes. Tell me why you have a plastic bag full of money.

ALAN LOOKS AT HER.

GERRY: Okay, so I took a peak. Shoot me.

LANG TAKES A NOTE FROM HIS POCKET AND HANDS IT TO **GERRY**.
GERRY GIVES IT TO **ALAN**.

GERRY: Oh and someone slipped this under the door while you were snoozing. Now he's a man with two secrets. A bag full of money and a note.

ALAN READS.

GERRY: What does it say ? Come on Alan. What does it say ?

ALAN HIDES THE NOTE.

GERRY: Well that's just rude that is. R – u – d – e. (ANGRY) I mean if I wanted to rip you off I could've slit your throat with a kitchen knife like that and taken the money. God knows you made it easy enough. You kept dropping it on the floor every five minutes. I had to keep putting it back in your arms all night. And stop holding that stupid bag so tightly. It's not like I've got a machine gun in my panties.

ALAN: I'm not saying anything.

GERRY: You're thinking it though which is just as bad. That's what my Mom use to say. You know, that really pisses me off. If it wasn't for me you could still be driving around in some cab, zonked out in the back seat, bagless. Why does everybody always think the worse ?

ALAN: Experience.

GERRY: What experience ? I mean next you'll be thinking I'm gonna like steal your DVD.

ALAN: You can't ?

GERRY: Why not ?

ALAN: It got stolen. (BEAT) I've just had a bad week.

GERRY: Mine hasn't been too crash hot either. You try hanging out at The Porthole Bar, dodging Barnacle Bitch and handing out Friendship Flags. And another thing -

ALAN: You know what ?

GERRY: What ?

ALAN: You talk too much.

GERRY: What do you expect ? I'm a fuckin' American.

BEAT. ALAN TAKES OUT THE PIECE OF PAPER. HE GIVES IT TO GERRY. GERRY READS IT.

GERRY: (READING) "Centennial Park. Duck Pond. Ten am."

ALAN: I flog advertising space at this small paper. Yesterday I went to see this man, try to sell an ad. It turns out this guy knew me. We got talking and he made me an offer.

GERRY: What sort of an offer ?

ALAN: He wants me to do something for him. And he's gonna give me half a million dollars to do it.

GERRY: Something illegal ?

ALAN: What do you think ?

GERRY: That must be some something. And the note ?

ALAN: Wants to meet me. Give me the details.

GERRY: Man, this is like Mission Impossible. You're not making this up ?

ALAN: No I'm not.

GERRY: And the bag ?

ALAN: Down payment.

GERRY: You ain't gonna go through with it – are you ?

ALAN: What do you think ?

GERRY: Lot of money.

ALAN: Yes. It is.

GERRY: Money like that can buy a lot of freedom. So why did he ask you ? Because you're the man with no furniture.

ALAN: He's trying to help.

GERRY: Help ?

ALAN: About ten years ago I was accused of doing something.

GERRY: Like the same something ?

ALAN: No, a different something. Ever since then my life's been going all one way. And it isn't up.

GERRY: And this is gonna change that ?

ALAN: He thinks so.

GERRY: And what do you think ?

ALAN IS SILENT.

GERRY: Okay, look. I know it's like a lotta money – and money might seem good. Especially when you haven't got any. Very good. But I've like seen and done a lot of things – you know bulls' eyes and all that – and this doesn't sound good. Actually it sounds really bad. So I say we just march down there tomorrow, give him back the bag and say "Thanks but no thanks."

ALAN: We ?

GERRY: I'd like to come with you. I mean, I've come this far.

ALAN: Thanks but no thanks.

GERRY: You sure ? I could wear my duck disguise. Quack quack.

ALAN LOOKS AT HER.

GERRY: Alright. You go. And tell him to get someone else to do his something. Okay ?

ALAN: What do you think ? (BEAT) The whole thing is insane.

GERRY: This is not insane. This is progress. Well I sure am glad I walked into The Porthole Bar and handed you a Friendship Flag. You're a very interesting person.

ALAN: I'm not sure if that's a compliment.

GERRY: Oh it is. It's the nicest compliment I can ever give.

BEAT. **ALAN** GOES TO KISS **GERRY**. **GERRY** GOES TO KISS HIM BUT STOPS. SHE PUTS HER FINGERS OVER HIS MOUTH.

GERRY: Bad idea.

SHE PUTS A PILLOW IN HER LAP. SHE PATS THE PILLOW. **ALAN** LIES DOWN, RESTING HIS HEAD. **GERRY** GENTLY STROKES HIS HEAD. SHE PUSHES A BUTTON ON THE REMOTE. THE MOVIE SOUND TRACK RETURNS.

GERRY: Sleep now and tomorrow – we start solving your problems. I'll just sit here and keep watch. Protect you from those nasty gargoyles.

WE HEAR A MUTED SCREAM FROM THE TV AS THE LIGHTS FADE.

6. A park, just before Ten A.M.

THE SOUNDTRACK MORPHS TO DUCKS QUACKING IN A POND.

THE LIGHTS COME UP. BRIGHT SUNLIGHT.

IVAN, DRESSED IN THREE PIECE SUIT AND RED TIE, SITS ON A BENCH. ON THE GROUND BENEATH HIM SITS A SHOEBOX FROM AN EXPENSIVE BOUTIQUE.

HE FEEDS THE DUCKS WITH BREAD. WHEN HE SPEAKS HE DOES SO IN A SMOOTH SOUTHERN EUROPEAN ACCENT.

ALAN ENTERS. HE SEES **IVAN**. **IVAN** CONTINUES TO FEED THE DUCKS. BEAT.

IVAN: I often ask myself which was the best. Was it Schillacci or Baggio ?

ALAN: Are you talking to me ?

IVAN: I'm talking about goals, my friend. World Cup, Italia '90 no ?

ALAN: No.

IVAN: Baggio's was a display of pure skill. He took the ball on the half way line. Through the legs of the first man, around another, tricked a third and then boom ! Top corner. Magnifico. But Schillacci, his was the work of the opportunist. The panther. A long ball, out of defence. In a split second Schillacci pounced and from forty metres out – bang ! Goal. Unbelievable.

ALAN: I don't watch soccer.

IVAN: Soccer. This is your word. It is called football, because you play it with the foot. Not like your ruggingby league and Ozzie Rules. This is not football. This is hand ball and fist ball.

ALAN: Whatever. (HOLDING OUT BAG) Listen, give this back to MacMasters and you tell him –

IVAN: I know no one by that name.

ALAN: I'm sorry, I thought you were someone else.

IVAN: I know no one by that name. But I do have one thing for you my friend. It comes free of charge – advice.

IVAN PICKS UP THE BOX AND PLACES IT ON THE BENCH BESIDE HIM.

ALAN: Listen, you tell MacMasters I'm not interested alright ?

IVAN: I am not the referee my friend, but merely a fellow player. The game has begun. I can not blow the whistle to stop it.

ALAN: You tell him this has got nothing to do with me. I'm not touching it you hear me ?

IVAN: You seem confused my friend. Please. Sit down. This is no time for anger. Time for careful consideration. Come, please. We feed the ducks. Please.

ALAN HESITATES. HE SITS. IVAN OFFERS HIM THE PAPER BAG. ALAN SHAKES HIS HEAD.

IVAN: So which are you ? The man of skill, like Baggio, who had all the luck and made it straight to the top ? Or are you like Schillacci, the opportunist ? The man with all the potential who never got a break, but when he sees an opportunity – he makes something from nothing ?

ALAN: I told you – I don't watch soccer.

IVAN: Football can tell us much about life. For mine – Baggio's was the better goal. But then Schillacci went on to win The Golden Boot, for Top Goalscorer in the whole World Cup. The opportunist too does have his rewards.

ALAN: I said I'm not interested.

IVAN: And I am not asking. We are just two friends, chatting about football.

IVAN STANDS.

ALAN: (REFERRING TO BOX) I wouldn't leave that there if I was you. It might fall into the wrong hands. Your friend wouldn't be too happy then.

IVAN: Thank you for your concern but who is my friend ? I do not worry for anybody but you my friend.

ALAN: He'll be in it with me mate, right up to his eyeballs. Don't you worry.

IVAN: The answer to all your questions is right in front of you, why don't you reach out and take it. ? This is your moment. So much reward for just scoring a goal. Like Schillacci. The true opportunist.

ALAN LOOKS AT HIM. HE TURNS AWAY.

IVAN: I can see you are a good man. You have doubts of course. We all would. (HE TAPS THE BOX.) But soon you will not hesitate. Soon all will be clear. Some players do not play by the rules. They must be taken out of the game for all our sakes. And our children's. I know you have a good heart. You will make the right choice. Soon you will know who you are.

ALAN: Who do you think I am ?

IVAN: Only you can answer that. But I do know one thing. You did not trip Richie Setter.

ALAN: (GRABBING **IVAN**) What do you know about Richie Setter ? What has he got to do with this ?

IVAN: Something. Nothing. Everything.

ALAN RELEASES HIS GRIP. IVAN STANDS.

IVAN: Live well, my friend.

IVAN EXITS. ALAN ALONE. HE LOOKS AT THE BOX. LANG ENTERS. HE SITS ON THE BENCH BESIDE ALAN.

LANG: (TO **ALAN**) You could just leave it there. Get up and walk away. Blow the fulltime whistle. But something keeps dragging you back. Curiosity? Stupidity ? Greed. Cold hard cash. Imagine how much more could be inside. A hundred grand. Two hundred. Maybe even the whole lot. You'd be free. You'd never have to go back to that

LANG: (CONT) bloody paper again. Or any other stupid job. Money is freedom and it's sitting in the palm of your hand. You don't even have to go through with it. Just take the bucks and run. Get on the next plane. It's a big planet. They'd never find you. (**LANG LEANS CLOSER.**) Tens, twenties, fifties, orange and green, bundled up with little red rubber bands, wrapped in a box, only inches away, waiting – for you.

BEAT. **ALAN** GRABS THE BOX. HE STANDS AND EXITS. **LANG** SMILES.

LANG: In the end, it's always about the money. These days, I enjoy the simple pleasures.

LANG PICKS UP THE PAPER BAG. HE EXITS, FEEDING THE DUCKS. LIGHTS CHANGE.

7. Alan's apartment, later.

THE BOX IS OPEN AND **ALAN** HAS SPREAD OUT THE DOCUMENTS ON THE FLOOR. HE SITS AMONGST THEM IN DIM LIGHT, READING. HE CRAWLS FROM DOCUMENT TO DOCUMENT.

GERRY: (ENTERING THE APARTMENT) Hello. Anybody home ?

GERRY TURNS ON THE LIGHT.

GERRY: Hi stranger. What are you doing sitting in the dark ? Went for a walk on the beach. It was such a beautiful day I just had to get out. Feel the sun on my face, sand between my toes. (**ALAN IS SILENT**) So, secret agent man. Fill me in. How'd we do ? Did it end with a shootout ?

ALAN LOOKS AT HER. HE DOES NOT RESPOND. **ALAN** TAKES AN OBJECT WRAPPED IN CLOTH FROM THE BOX. HE TUCKS IT INTO HIS JACKET.

ALAN BEGINS TO PUT THE PAPERS AND PHOTOS BACK IN THE BOX. HE TAKES OUT ONE PIECE OF PAPER. HE FOLDS IT AND PUTS IT IN HIS POCKET.

GERRY: Come on. Give me all the gory details. Did the Gargoyles win ?

GERRY SEES THE BAG. SHE GOES TO IT AND PULLS OUT A WAD OF MONEY.

GERRY: Take a look who ended up with all the bananas.

ALAN: Put it down.

GERRY: Why do I think things did not go to plan ?

ALAN: I said put it down.

GERRY: I thought you were going to the park to give the man back the bag and tell him to get somebody else to do his something. But you've still got the bag. And now you've also got a box. The money and the box. I mean a bag was bad enough but when you start talking boxes ...

ALAN: Listen, I'm busy. Why don't you watch the television or something ?

GERRY: The time for watching television is over. You tell me what's going on, (MOVING TO WINDOW) or the bananas go out the window ?

ALAN: Best if you don't know.

GERRY: Alrighty. (OPENING WINDOW) Hey fellas, you want some money. Here you go. (THROWING MONEY) Twenty. How about fifty ? Hell, you can have the whole lot ?

ALAN: (GRABBING HER) Give me the money !

GERRY: Temper, temper. You should watch that. You gonna tell me ?

ALAN: Okay, but just give me the money.

GERRY: Half now, half on completion. (SHE GIVES HIM HALF) Okay, start at the beginning. You went to the park. And you saw the guy ?

ALAN: No. Some other guy.

GERRY: Who ?

ALAN: I don't know his name. The man of skill.

GERRY: And you told him -

ALAN: I wasn't interested.

GERRY: (INDICATING MONEY) This bunch of bananas says you didn't.

ALAN: He wouldn't listen to me. He kept talking about Italian soccer and knowing who you are.

GERRY: That don't mean you had to bring the box home ?

ALAN: The way he put it, he got me thinking.

GERRY: About Italian soccer or the price of bananas ?

ALAN: Look it doesn't mean I have to go through with it. While I have the box I have a choice. That's why I took it.

GERRY: But you don't understand – you've made your choice. You're in now. You can't just opt out when you feel like it. You don't know these people. Once you take money from them there's no escape. You're locked in.

ALAN: What makes you the expert ?

GERRY: I'm American, we invented all this shit. (PICKING UP MONEY) Do you know why I call these bananas ? Because it makes everyone monkeys trying to get it. (LOOKING AT PAPERS) And what's all this ?

ALAN: It's about him.

LANG ENTERS. HE SITS ON THE SOFA.

GERRY: The something ?

ALAN: Yeah.

ALAN HOLDS OUT A PICTURE. **GERRY** TAKES IT.

GERRY: Who is he ?

ALAN: Robert Lang.

GERRY: He looks familiar.

ALAN: He should be. Owns half the fucking country.

GERRY: That's some kind of something. Alright, new plan. We're gonna wrap up the box and the bag and take them somewhere far away from here. Say goodbye to this something. See how your guy likes them bananas. Give me the papers Alan. We gotta do this quick.

ALAN: Just hold on a sec.

GERRY: "Just hold on a sec." I don't like what I'm hearing.

ALAN: Just wait a bit.

GERRY: “Just wait a bit.” This is getting worse Alan – you’re not actually thinking about going through with this ? (NO RESPONSE) Alan. Talk to me.

ALAN: (INDICATING PAPERS) Read this.

GERRY: What is it ?

ALAN: Just read it. There’s photos too.

GERRY SITS ON THE SOFA. SHE STARTS TO READ. SILENCE. ALAN LEANS AGAINST THE WALL. SHE REACHES SOME PHOTOS. LANG LOOKS OVER HER SHOULDER.

GERRY: But they’re just kids.

LIGHTS DOWN. LANG WALKS INTO A SPOTLIGHT.

LANG: I want to tell you a story. About a young businessman from a proud family, just starting to make his own way in the world. He buys a company. Looks like a good investment, strong prospects, even in a developing nation. He wants to prove himself so he pours a lot into it. Maybe a little too much. Maybe a lot. Becomes Chairman of the Board. Then one day, he discovers the truth about the company. The secret of their success. They’ve been pouring tonnes of highly toxic waste into the area’s environment. Hundreds of children are being born with horrible defects. Some deaf, some blind, some ... worse. He flies immediately to the site and charges into the CEO’s office. He demands answers. But he discovers there are no answers. The cost of dumping the toxins elsewhere is more than the company can bear. To admit culpability would bankrupt the company, and now he’s in so deep it would destroy him and cripple the vast empire his family has built up over decades. He was just a man who found himself in a difficult situation. Had to make a tough call. So he grows up. Loses his cherry. He pays off the local officials and journalists and allows the dumping to continue. More children die. Hundreds, maybe ... thousands. (BEAT) Years go by and the company prospers. His investment pays off, eventually he sells out. The man grows rich, very rich. He starts more companies, employs thousands of people. He brings joy. And he has children of his own. Perfectly formed, beautiful children. And as time passes the children of that far away land fade into memory. But he sees them again on cold winter mornings in half remembered dreams. And try as he might he can never ever forget.

LIGHTS UP.

GERRY: Is this true ?

ALAN: I always knew there was something about him.

GERRY: Maybe he didn't know.

ALAN: He had to know. Look at the name on the top of all the memos. It's him.

GERRY: But this is awful. How come it hasn't come out before ?

ALAN: He's a very powerful man. No one would be game to run a story like that. Their career would be over. Or worse.

GERRY: But the Government. Or aid agencies. Somebody must've known.

ALAN: (HOLDING UP A PAGE) An activist from an environment watch group. He put this file together. Then one rainy morning his wife was driving his three children to school. Brakes failed.

LANG: They never proved that.

ALAN: Women and children. This guy is class.

GERRY: Alan, think for a second. "One rainy morning. Wife and children." This guy wants you to kill Lang. He just made all this stuff up.

ALAN: Look at the photos. He didn't make those up. Lang is responsible.

GERRY: You don't know that ?

ALAN: These children are dead.

LANG LOOKS AT HIS WATCH. HE STANDS AND EXITS.

GERRY: And one more death ain't gonna bring them back. Don't judge other people. You know who said that ?

ALAN: Mahatma Ghandi ?

GERRY: Michael Jackson.

ALAN: (SHOVING A PHOTO CLOSE TO **GERRY'S** FACE) He's guilty – he deserves to die.

GERRY: But it's not your job ! You're no avenging angel. If you kill people it comes back on you. It's karma. It balances.

ALAN: I don't believe that.

GERRY: Well you better start believing it and quick. Because believe me – that is real ! It's not your destiny to kill Robert Lang.

ALAN: You know what I used to think ? I used to think it was my destiny to run twice around a track, as fast as I could. I used to think it was my destiny to win. But guess what ? I made a mistake. It wasn't my destiny after all. It was Richie Setters.

GERRY: Who is Richie Setters ?

ALAN: Maybe this is my destiny. All my life has been leading up to this one moment. I was born to kill Robert Lang. I have purpose. I need purpose.

GERRY: You need medication.

ALAN: Destiny, fate, karma. Tell me I'm wrong.

GERRY: You're wrong. Don't elevate this to a spiritual quest. You ain't interested in God. (HOLDING UP MONEY) This is your God.

ALAN: And what if it is ? Lang get what's coming to him and I get what I so richly deserve. Do you know how much money that is ?

GERRY: I have an idea.

ALAN: I'd never have to walk into some dirty little sandwich shop again and say "Please take a ten by two or I won't get paid this week." Or spend all day in the pub getting blind because I hate my life so much I can't stand it for one more second. I could get out of this fuckin' country and go somewhere where people have never heard of "The Tripper".

GERRY: I've never heard of "The Tripper".

ALAN: That's not who I am you hear me ? I am not "The Tripper" !

GERRY: Okay. Okay. Whatever you say. (BEAT) You can change your life without that money. Anytime you want.

ALAN: But if I had five hundred thousand dollars I could fly with Lorna to America – first class.

GERRY: Hey, there you go. There's always some girl. That your ex ? The one who ain't coming back ? Money won't make her love you.

ALAN: You want to make a bet ?

GERRY: And that's the sort of girl you want to be with. And who says your guy will pay ? There's no more money coming.

ALAN: He'll pay. I trust him.

GERRY: Then you're more stupid than I thought.

ALAN: Feel this bag. A lot of people would do it for less.

GERRY: You're not a killer.

ALAN: I'm starting to come around to the idea.

GERRY: You're not a killer. Anyway, how are you going to do it ? Tickle him to death.

ALAN: With this.

ALAN PULLS OUT THE OBJECT WRAPPED IN CLOTH. HE UNWRAPS IT TO REVEAL A REVOLVER.

ALAN HOLDS THE GUN. HE WEIGHS IT IN HIS HANDS, SENSING HOW IT FEELS.

GERRY: Guns mean trouble. That's what my brother always said. Jimmy – the eldest.

ALAN WRAPS THE GUN AGAIN. HE TUCKS IT BACK INTO HIS COAT.

GERRY: But you don't know where he is. He could be overseas. Or under 24 hour armed guard.

ALAN: (TAKING PAPER FROM HIS POCKET) That's why they gave me these schedules of his movements. And a map of the best spot. Outside his club in the city. The Gentlemen's Club. Gentle-men? You like that. He stands there alone while the driver goes to the car park to fetch the car. I've got about a minute.

GERRY: They don't miss a trick, do they ? (SHE GOES TO HIM) Alan, I'm asking you not to do this. It's not like a hangover. It never goes away. You don't know what it means to kill someone. Everything changes. Everything. Not the world, but you. You change.

ALAN: I'm just gonna look at him for awhile, up close. Decide for myself. Choose.

GERRY: Whether somebody lives or dies ? You're not God.

ALAN: Neither's he.

GERRY: He could have a wife and kids.

ALAN: So did that activist.

GERRY: Think about this.

ALAN: Think ? No. That's the last thing I need to do. When you run, your head is the enemy. It'll talk you out of what you're meant to do, how you want to run. Make you lose. So you turn your head off and just let your body rely on instinct. Trust in your technique. What you drilled into your muscle and sinews on endless laps around endless tracks every morning of your life for the last ten years. Don't think, just run. That's why I didn't trip Richie Setter, I couldn't've of. Because my mind was switched off. I was just putting one foot in front of the other, breathing, letting my arms swing, smooth and relaxed. I never had the thought to trip him because I wasn't thinking.

GERRY: You can make yourself believe anything.

ALAN: Maybe you can.

GERRY: Everybody lies. And if they're not lying you can be sure of one thing – they're not telling you the truth.

ALAN: And what about you Friendly Gerry – are you telling the truth?

GERRY: Of course not.

ALAN STARTS TO LEAVE.

ALAN: You'll be here when I come back.

GERRY DOES NOT RESPOND. ALAN EXITS. GERRY ALONE.

LIGHTS CHANGE.

8. A City Street, that night.

LORNA ENTERS, FOLLOWED BY LANG.

LORNA: Thank you Robert, that was lovely.

LANG: I've been going there for thirty years but it's still the best. How was your lobster ?

LORNA: Perfect. That sauce was ... de-lish.

LANG: Other places you can't trust the seafood. But it's always fresh here. Like you.

HE EMBRACES HER. SHE LAUGHS.

ALAN ENTERS. HE SEES LORNA AND LANG AND QUICKLY DROPS BACK, INTO THE SHADOWS.

LORNA: Bit risky though. You sure Elizabeth won't find out ?

LANG: Private Club. Honour. Discretion. All that crap. (LAUGHS) Give us a kiss.

LORNA: (LAUGHING) I did really want to go there. I've heard so much about it. So old and traditional.

LANG: That's what I like about you. You can appreciate the finer things. Brains as well as looks. How do you like your new coat ?

LORNA: I love it.

SHE KISSES HIM, GENTLY.

LANG: The perfect end to the perfect evening with the perfect person.

LORNA: I bet that's what you tell all the girls.

LANG: I don't take all my employees to Italy though do I ?

LORNA: You're taking me to Italy ?

LANG: To the Sistine Chapel.

LORNA: Robert ! How romantic.

LANG: Touch the hand of Michaelangelo. See the face of God.

LORNA: I can't wait.

SHE HUGS HIM.

LORNA: Someone will see us.

LANG: I don't care. Right now I don't care about anything at all. Sugar, do something for me ?

LORNA: Anything.

LANG: Left my hat inside at the coat desk. Run back inside and fetch it.

LORNA: Won't be a sec.

LORNA EXITS.

ALAN STEPS FORWARD INTO THE LIGHT, WATCHING LANG. THEY SEE EACH OTHER.

LANG: Oh - it's you.

ALAN FUMBLES IN HIS COAT, EVENTUALLY HE PULLS OUT THE GUN.

LANG: Pretty hopeless, ain't you ?

ALAN HAS THE GUN OUT. HE AIMS IT AT LANG.

LANG: Well, what are you waiting for ? If you're going to do it then do it.
(BEAT) Well you heard me. Do it.

ALAN TRIES TO SHOOT BUT THE SAFETY CATCH IS ON AND IT JAMS.

LANG BEGINS TO LAUGH.

LANG: Hopeless. Absolutely hopeless.

ALAN FIDDLES WITH THE CATCH. LANG TURNS AWAY. SUDDENLY THE GUNS GOES OFF. LANG FALLS TO HIS KNEES.

LORNA: (ENTERING WITH HAT) Sorry Darling. Got it.

LANG: Sugar ...

LORNA: (SEEING LANG) Robert ... (SHE RUNS TO HIM) My god, what's wrong ?

SHE HOLDS HIM AND SEES BLOOD ON HER HANDS.

LORNA: Blood ... (SCREAMS) Help us !

LANG: ... shot ... right ...

LORNA: Hold on my love. (SCREAMS) Please. Somebody. (SEEING **ALAN**) Alan ? (CONFUSED) Alan, did you Please, help him. Help him !

A SPOTLIGHT COMES UP ON **GERRY**, STANDING NEXT TO **ALAN**.
ALAN, LANG AND LORNA FREEZE.

GERRY TAKES THE GUN FROM ALAN'S HAND.

GERRY: (TO AUDIENCE) Murder is easy. It's a terrible thing to say but murder is easy. The act itself is simple. You point the gun and pull the trigger. Easy. If that doesn't work, you do it again. That is power and the gun gives you that power. Guns are evil. Anything created solely for the purpose of destroying other human beings must be evil. Guns also have no conscience. They do not feel remorse or ask for redemption. And guns can not undo what they have done. You can't pull the trigger and bring somebody back. No matter how much you might want to, the genie can never go back in the bottle. Once the bullet leaves - it's never coming back. (BEAT) Most important of all - guns know who they are. They do not experience existential doubt. Whatever happens the gun is still a gun.

THE LIGHT FADES ON **LANG AND LORNA**. **GERRY PUTS THE GUN BACK IN ALAN'S HAND.**

ALAN BEGINS TO RUN ON THE SPOT. PANTING, BREATHING HEAVY. JUST AS WE SAW HIM AT THE START OF THE PLAY.

GERRY: The light that was behind Alan in his re-occurring nightmare was now well and truly out and he was running in total darkness. The opportunist had become a creature of the night. A gargoyle with the taste of blood on his lips.

GERRY SITS AND TURNS ON THE TV. LIGHTS CHANGE.

9. Alan's apartment, late that night.

GERRY: I was wondering if you were gonna show up. You made the late news.

ALAN DROPS HIS HAND, THE GUN LOOSE IN HIS FINGERS.

GERRY: (GRABBING GUN) Careful. Probably still loaded. (SHE CHECKS THE BARREL AND EXPERTLY TAKES OUT THE MAGAZINE) One shot. Impressive. I was kind of hoping you wouldn't bring this back. Drop it in a lake or something. Never mind. We'll put it in the freezer. I know a good spot. Under the frozen turkey.

GERRY EXITS WITH THE GUN. ALAN ALONE. GERRY RETURNS.

ALAN: I shot him.

GERRY: You sure did.

ALAN: I didn't think it was that bad, then he fell down. He's dead.

GERRY: Not just yet. He's in intensive care. You're probably hoping right that you're gonna wake up soon. But this is your life now and if you want to keep living you have to get through this. You can't stay here. You gotta start moving and keep moving.

ALAN: In the tunnel. Running.

GERRY: And you can't stop for a long time.

ALAN: She was there.

GERRY: His wife ?

ALAN: Lorna.

GERRY: Your ex ? What was she doing there ?

ALAN: With him.

GERRY: Lang ? Fudge.

ALAN: I met her for coffee. She had this gold lighter. "Love from Robert."

GERRY: Chocolate on top. Hey, no this is good. They might take leniency. Crime of passion. You saw them together and in an act of wild rage you pulled out your gun and you shot.

ALAN: I just went to look at him. Then I took out the gun. I just wanted to see what it felt like. Then Lorna came out with him and I wasn't angry, just surprised. He's bigger than I thought. Then she went back in and I saw him standing there, with his clothes, his money, his life - and I wanted to kill him. But the gun got stuck and I tried to fix it. He asked me what I was waiting for.

GERRY: And you showed him.

ALAN: Then the gun went off and I was calm.

GERRY: Okay, maybe you were. But you don't want to say that alright. You'll get locked away forever. You want to say: "Fit of rage, explosion of anger, totally out of character." Stuff like that. Get you off in ten years.

ALAN: I am calm.

HE BEGINS TO SHAKE.

GERRY: As we can see. (WRITING ON A NOTE PAD) I'm gonna write down an address and I want you to go there. It's an old warehouse. I stayed there first couple of nights I was in town. Get the taxi to drop you off a few blocks away. You shot Robert Lang. They're gonna come after you big time. (SHE GRABS SOME CLOTHES) Take this coat and this hat (GRABBING HIS DARK GLASSES) and put these on. And don't talk to nobody you don't have to alright ? You better go. I'll come and find you in a few days. I'm gonna pack up your things, make it look like you've gone away. Send our friends on a wild goose chase. (PUSHING HIM TOWARDS THE DOOR) Now go Alan. Go !

ALAN EXITS. GERRY SEES THE BOX.

GERRY: What am I gonna do with this?

SHE PICKS UP THE BOX. THERE IS A TAP AT THE DOOR.

GERRY: That was quick. Showtime.

SUDDENLY THE DOOR BURSTS OPEN. THE ROOM IS FILLED BY BRIGHT LIGHT. **GERRY RAISES HER ARMS.**

GERRY: (CALLING) Not armed. Not armed.

BLACKOUT.

10. An alley, the next morning.

ERIC, A SKINHEAD ENTERS, HUMMING "JERUSALEM." HE IS FOLLOWED BY **WALTER**, A LARGE MAORI.

WALTER DISCOVERS ALAN, LYING UNDERNEATH SOME NEWSPAPER.

WALTER: Eh Shiney ?

ERIC: What Sir Walter ?

WALTER: Found something.

ERIC: 'Ello, 'ello. What 'ave we 'ere ? Dead or alive ?

WALTER GOES TO SLAP ALAN.

ERIC: Wait a sec.

ERIC GOES THROUGH ALAN'S POCKETS. HE FINDS A WAD OF MONEY.

ERIC: Glory, glory hallelujah. (COUNTING) You may proceed.

WALTER SLAPS ALAN ACROSS THE FACE. ALAN STARTS TO GROAN.

ERIC HIDES MONEY.

ERIC: My god. It's alive. You alright Guv'nor ? We was just walking through here and I saw these kids going through your pockets. We chased 'em off but isn't that right Walter ?

WALTER: It is Shiney.

ERIC: They pinch anything? Alright then, alright? (**ALAN TRIES TO GET TO HIS FEET. ERIC HELPS HIM.**) Must've got a bump on the 'ead. What's your name ? (NO RESPONSE) Name ? (**ALAN GIVES HIM THE NOTE.**) What's this ?

ERIC READS THE NOTE. HE LOOKS UP. ERIC NODS TO WALTER. WALTER SUDDENLY SLAMS ALAN UP AGAINST THE WALL.

ERIC: What are you doing with my residential address on a piece of paper in your pocket ? Well get talking Guv'nor. Quick. Walter is waiting.

ALAN: I ... er ...

ERIC: You shall have to do better than that my friend. Walter.

WALTER WINDS UP FOR A PUNCH.

ERIC: No. Not out here. Take him inside.

WALTER DRAGS ALAN OFF STAGE. ERIC CHECKS AROUND THEN FOLLOWS THEM OFF.

LIGHTS CHANGE.

11. Interrogation room, Police Station, later that day.

GERRY SITS AT A TABLE. STANDING IN FRONT OF IT A POLICEWOMAN AND POLICEMAN.

POLICEWOMAN: So you're his girlfriend ?

GERRY: You already asked me that.

POLICEWOMAN: Well I'm asking you again.

GERRY: Then I'll answer again. No, I'm not his girlfriend.

POLICEWOMAN: So you were just fucking ?

GERRY: I didn't think cops were allowed to use language like that. Isn't this being recorded ?

POLICEWOMAN: Were you fucking him ?

GERRY: Where'd you learn how to be a cop - CSI ?

THE POLICEWOMAN IS ABOUT TO SAY SOMETHING. THE POLICEMAN TAPS HER ON THE SHOULDER. SHE MOVES AWAY.

GERRY: (TO **POLICEWOMAN**) You should do some mediation or something. (TO **POLICEMAN**) Can I get a cup of coffee ?

POLICEMAN: (SITTING) How are you today Gerry ?

GERRY: I thought you guys didn't do this good cop, bad cop stuff anymore.

POLICEMAN: Just asking a few questions.

GERRY: Well here's a question for you. Can I have a cup of coffee ?

POLICEMAN: Maybe later. Now just to re-confirm. You told Edwards to kill Lang?

GERRY: I see. It's bad cop, dumb cop. I do not *re-confirm* because I did not *confirm*. I didn't tell anybody to do anything.

POLICEMAN: (HOLDING UP BOX) Then how do you explain this ? Photos, maps, timetables. And the murder weapon and five thousand dollars hidden, with great originality, under the frozen chook. You set it up Anderson. You organised the hit.

GERRY: Hey, I didn't organise anything. I didn't give that stuff to him. Some guy in a park did. The "Man of skill".

POLICEWOMAN: Are you saying some stranger in a park gave Edwards the intricate plans for a murder ?

GERRY: Exactly.

POLICEWOMAN: You want us to believe that crap?

GERRY: I don't want you to believe anything. That's what happened.

POLICEWOMAN: You are so full of shit.

GERRY: Language. You know, you guys should start up one of those "Cursin' Jars". You have to put in a quarter every time you swear. Make a fortune. (TO **POLICEMAN**) Hey Mr Good cop, you sure I can't have a cup of coffee ? How about watching some TV ?

POLICEWOMAN: Now you listen to me. I am running out of patience.

GERRY: Hey lady, I don't think you had too much to start off with. Look, I met him in at The Porthole Bar. You ever been there ? They've got these big dead fish on the wall - well I guess if they're on the wall they'd have to be dead - and the waiters are dressed as these real cute pirates. Hopefully you won't get Bill but. Man, is he -

POLICEWOMAN: Don't fuck us around Anderson !

GERRY: (TO **POLICEWOMAN**) Ping - another quarter.

THE **POLICEMAN** HOLDS UP HIS HAND. THE **POLICEWOMAN** MOVES AWAY AGAIN.

POLICEMAN: Okay. So the "Man of Skill" gave Edwards the plans for the murder ?

GERRY: Now you're getting it. And he worked for the other guy.

POLICEMAN: Who was ?

GERRY: Alan never said his name. He's the one who gave him the half million.

POLICEMAN: To kill Robert Lang.

GERRY: Man, your good.

POLICEMAN: But why would this "guy" offer Edwards five hundred thousand dollars to kill Robert Lang ?

GERRY: Maybe Lang stole his lunch money.

POLICEWOMAN: Cut the crap Winemiller.

GERRY: Who ?

POLICEWOMAN: Edwina Winemiller. That's your name isn't it ?

GERRY: No it's Anderson. Gerry Anderson.

POLICEMAN: (SHOWING HER FILE) That's your photo isn't it ? (**GERRY IS SILENT.**) Would you please read us the name underneath ?

GERRY: You don't understand, I -

POLICEWOMAN: Read the name.

GERRY: Fuck you.

POLICEWOMAN: Ping. Nice haircut Eddie.

POLICEMAN: (READING) Edwina Marie Winemiller. Born Los Angeles. Wanted: California, Possession. Wanted: Maryland, Trafficking and Possession. Wanted: Utah, Armed Robbery.

POLICEWOMAN: Wanted, wanted, wanted. Shall we go on ? (READING) Oh, here's a nice one. In Texas. Ring a bell ?

GERRY: That was an accident.

POLICEMAN: Why are you using an alias ?

GERRY: Do you blame me ? I mean Winemiller. What kind of a name is that ? Winemaker okay, but *Winemiller*. That don't make sense .

POLICEWOMAN: Always joking. Thirteen states. They all want you for something. We could have you on a plane tomorrow. Might

POLICEWOMAN: (CONT) even accidentally send you to Texas. You know where they'll put you? In a tiny little room, with a man with a very big needle. Won't be laughing too hard then.

GERRY: I never killed no one.

POLICEWOMAN: I'm sure they'll be very understanding. Not like us at all.

BEAT.

GERRY: What do you want me to do ?

POLICEMAN: You could start by telling us the truth.

GERRY: I am.

POLICEWOMAN: Admit you set it up and tell us who paid you to do it.

GERRY: No one paid me to do anything. You think I'd be sitting around in someone's lounge room if I had half a million dollars.

POLICEWOMAN: Get on the phone Pete.

POLICEMAN: (STARTING TO LEAVE) What's the code for Dallas again ?

GERRY: Okay, okay! I'll tell you where he is.

POLICEWOMAN: Wow. That was hard.

POLICEMAN: What if that's not enough ?

GERRY: Come on. Everybody wants the man who shot Robert Lang. I can give him to *you*. Sure looks good when promotion time comes around. Let's make a deal. Edwina's good at deals.

THE **POLICEMAN** LOOKS AT THE **POLICEWOMAN**.

POLICEMAN: We'll think about it.

POLICEWOMAN: Don't run away now Eddie.

GERRY: Boy I wish you hadn't found that out. My record, okay, but Edwina. I thought she was long gone. I'd kind of got use to being Gerry. She was a lot more fun. How about that coffee now?

POLICEMAN: There's a Coke machine in the hall. Detective Ross will accompany you.

THE **POLICEWOMAN** MOVES TO **GERRY**.

GERRY: My very own officer. I must be high priority huh ?

SHE HANDCUFFS ONE OF **GERRY'S** HANDS.

GERRY: Do I get shoes to match ?

THE **POLICEWOMAN** DRAGS **GERRY** AFTER HER. LIGHTS FADE.

12. Eric's squat, a short time later.

IN DARKNESS WE HEAR THE SOUND OF A BLOW BEING LANDED, FOLLOWED BY A GROAN.

LIGHTS UP ON **ALAN** TIED TO A CHAIR. **WALTER** STANDS OVER HIM, GETTING READY TO PUNCH HIM AGAIN. **ERIC** STANDS NEARBY, WATCHING.

ERIC: Alright, now I will ask you one more time. What is my address doing in your pocket ? Who sent you ? Cops, insurance company, DIMIA ?

ALAN GOES TO SPEAK. **WALTER** HITS **ALAN**.

ERIC: Walter, what are you doin' ?

WALTER: Hittin' 'im Shiney.

ERIC: Give him a chance to answer first.

WALTER: But you told me to Shiney.

ERIC: No. I told you to hit him when I say hit 'im, alright ?

WALTER: Sure Shiney.

ERIC: I don't want you to hit him until I say "Walter, hit 'im." Is that understood ?

WALTER: Yes Shiney.

WALTER HITS **ALAN**.

ERIC: What are you doin' ?

WALTER: You said it Shiney.

ERIC: I know I said it. But that wasn't the real thing. That was just clarifying the procedure. Now, don't hit 'im again until I say ... what I'm meant to say. Okay ?

WALTER: Okay Shiney.

WALTER HITS ALAN.

ERIC: No ! What you do that for ?

WALTER: I was just practising. My Uncle Stu said it's always important to practice.

ALAN: (WEAK) Gerry ...

ERIC: What's that ? Did you say somethin' ? (**ALAN IS SILENT.**) Walter –

ALAN: (STRONGER) Gerry.

ERIC: Who the fuck's Gerry ? I don't know Gerry. You don't mean Gary from Greenacre, do you ? Or Reggie from Revesby –

WALTER: Hope it's not Reggie, Shiney. He's scary.

ERIC: Walter, shut it. Is that who you're representing – Reggie from Revesby ?

ALAN: Gerry.

ERIC: I told you I don't know no Gerry. Walter.

ALAN: She's American. Brown hair, never shuts up.

ERIC: Good set of norks too ? Sounds very nice. I wish I knew her – but I don't.

ALAN: She wrote down this address. Told me to come here.

ERIC: This much we know. But we still don't know – WHO THE FUCK SHE IS ?

ALAN: She was handing out Friendship Flags. Never sleeps, watches television, calls herself a "Universal ..."

ERIC: "Soul Traveller." You mean Barbie ? She's got blonde hair, not brown. When I first saw her, I thought she had a striking resemblance to one Pamela Anderson.

ALAN: That's her. She must've dyed her hair.

ERIC: Why would she do that ? Blonde looked good on her.

WALTER: Very good Shiney.

ERIC: And why would Barbie tell you to come here ?

ALAN: I shot Robert Lang.

ERIC: Yeah and my Mum shits gold bricks.

ALAN: I did. I shot Robert Lang. He was standing out side his club, in the city. "What are you waiting for ? Shoot me."

ERIC: Is that what he said ?

WALTER: Why would he say that ?

ALAN: The gun was jammed then it went off. And I shot him.

ERIC: That's all very well but what I am meant to do with you ?

ALAN: Gerry thought I'd be safe here.

ERIC: Not sure about that sunshine. Not sure about that at all. And if you are the geezer what shot Robert Lang half of the friggin' country is out looking for you. And I like to keep a low profile in my particular line of work. Stay outta sight. Know what I mean ?

ALAN: It's only for a little while. Till Gerry – Barbie comes to get me.

ERIC: You mean Barbie's comin' back here ? Now, that is a thought that is not entirely un-enticing. But if I do let you stay, you'd have to earn your keep.

ALAN: Doing what ?

ERIC: Tell him Walter.

WALTER: Re-appropriating.

ALAN: "Re-appropriating ?"

ERIC: Yeah, tricky word ain't it ? You see - I re-appropriate things. Mainly DVD players. Let me explain. Walter, hit it.

WALTER GOES TO HIT ALAN.

ERIC: No Walter. Not him, it.

WALTER SMILES.

WALTER: I know. Just kiddin'.

WALTER STARTS TO MAKE RAPPING SOUNDS.

LIGHTS CHANGE TO BRIGHT, GAUDY, NIGHTCLUB. A MIC IS THROWN IN FROM OFFSTAGE. **SHINEY** CATCHES IT AND BEGINS TO RAP.

ERIC: Tell you 'bout Walter and his mate Shiney
They got nothing 'cept each other's compa – nee
All they got is flowers growin' in their garden
And that ain't much, dirt start to harden
Now tell you 'bout a geezer who's got the stash
Big house, big car, plenty of cash
Got a pretty secretary, her name is Shelley
Sometimes he ejaculates all over her belly
Now we break in to this guy's house and what do we see ?

WALTER: Tell me.

ERIC: White goods, silver goods, all glitter-ry
Tell you the place is a virtual goldmine
Even the door knobs gleam and shine
Wall to wall lavish -nass –
Even a cushion to support my arse
Fridges, microwaves, stereos and TV
Now I ask myself – with all this stuff - is he really going to miss his DVD ?
He won't even know it's missing till late Sunday night
When he goes to put on his blue movies and gets a bit of a fright
Other criminals would take it all

WALTER: Not us !

ERIC: But us re-appropriater's we got class

WALTER: That's us !

ERIC: All we take is the DVD.
And the cords too and the remote.
They aren't much good without the vid are they?
Others, now they make a right botch

ERIC: (CONT) Take the TV and the stereo and the couch.
They even pop upstairs and rifle through the family smalls'
Even run into little Jimmy, hiding in the downstairs halls
Now they disgust me no class you see
"Just the DVD thanks" - that's DJ Shiney.

WALTER: And Walter !

ERIC: And Walter – makes t – t – t – t – two !

THE RAP ENDS WITH A BIG FINISH.

ERIC: Did I mention I was also a DJ ? I guess you worked that out by now.
I have a spot every Thursday at the Platypus Lounge. You should
come and check me out sometime.

WALTER: And me Shiney.

ERIC: And Walter. So, what did you think of our little number ? Think very
carefully before you answer.

ALAN: It was great.

ERIC: Yeah ? Didn't hear you clapping.

ALAN: I would've but my hands are tied.

ERIC: Walter.

WALTER UNTIES ALAN.

ERIC: I'm sorry. We haven't been formally introduced. My name's Eric.
Although my friend's call me Shiney. On account of my shiney
noggin'. Look, you can see your face in it. And this is Walter.

WALTER: How's it Bru ?

ERIC: And you are ?

ALAN: Alan.

ERIC: Alan ... ?

ALAN: Just Alan.

ERIC: Well just Alan, you in ? I can tell you we are quite successful in our
endeavours. Walter, show Just Alan our resume.

WALTER GOES TO THE BACK AND LIFTS A LARGE TARPOLIN. UNDERNEATH, STACKED HIGH ARE HUNDREDS AND HUNDREDS OF DVD PLAYERS.

ERIC: So, what do you think ? Would you like to be in our gang ? Join us in re-appropriating. (BEAT) Just Alan, I'm waiting – and I don't like waiting.

ALAN: How could I say no ?

ERIC: Smart boy. By George Walter, I think he's got it.

LANG ENTERS. HE IS DRESSED IN A HOSPITAL GOWN. HE WHEELS A DRIP ON A STAND.

LIGHTS FADE ON **ERIC, WALTER** AND **ALAN**.

LANG: One little detail we have forgotten to tell you at this stage – the stupid little prick shot me in the arse. (HE WINCES IN PAIN) He could've shot me in the heart, like a hero. Or in the back. Then they could've said I was gunned down by a gutless wonder. But the arse ! The whole country's laughing at me. It's a tragedy. I'm thinking of slipping into a coma.

HE SLOWLY WHEELS THE DRIP OFF.

13. Corridor, police station

THE **POLICEWOMAN** DRAGS **GERRY** IN AND SITS HER ON A BENCH BESIDE THE RED GLOW OF A COKE MACHINE. SHE HANDCUFFS HER HAND TO ONE OF THE LEGS.

GERRY: Could I trouble you for a few quarters ?

POLICEWOMAN: Maybe you can get it from the "cursin' jar." Ping.

AN ATTRACTIVE MIDDLE AGED WOMAN, **ELIZABETH LANG**, ENTERS. SHE STOPS WHEN SHE SEES **GERRY**. SHE SMILES. **GERRY** RETURNS THE SMILE.

ELIZABETH SITS ON THE BENCH ALONGSIDE HER. **GERRY** HIDES HER HANDCUFFS AS BEST SHE CAN.

GERRY: So, what crime have you committed ?

ELIZABETH: Pardon me.

GERRY: We're in a Police Station.

ELIZABETH: Oh, I haven't done anything.

GERRY: I didn't think so. Unless you ripped off the Tennis Club's cake fund.

ELIZABETH: It's my ... husband.

GERRY: He do something wrong.

ELIZABETH: No, he's ... in hospital.

GERRY: He is ? That's terrible. I'm sorry.

ELIZABETH: Wasn't your fault.

GERRY: Car crash ?

ELIZABETH: He was shot. Last night. Outside his club.

GERRY: Oh man. Are you Mrs Lang ?

ELIZABETH: Yes. Elizabeth Lang.

GERRY: Oh, Elizabeth. Nice to meet you. Sorry it's at such a difficult time.

ELIZABETH: I don't know why they're taking so long. I must get back to the hospital.

GERRY: Didn't somebody come with you ? You shouldn't be alone now.

ELIZABETH: My son, Michael. He's gone to try and find me some herbal tea.
Calm me down.

GERRY: That's a good idea. Chamomile is good. They shouldn't have dragged you down here. You should be with your husband.

ELIZABETH: They told me I didn't need to but I wanted to come. I want them to get that little bitch.

GERRY: Excuse me.

ELIZABETH: That whore. The one who was with him. She's the one who did it. She found out he was about to end it.

GERRY: He had a girlfriend ? But you're so attractive.

ELIZABETH: I must look awful. He could never keep anything from me. I always know straight away. He's such a bad liar. But I've never said anything. He has his faults, nobody's perfect, but he is a good man. Thirty-one years we've been married - next Tuesday. And I've never regretted it, not once. All those things they say about him, they're not true. They don't know him like I do. The real Robert. They don't lie in the same bed with him every night. Or at least I did. Until she came along. She did it for the money. That's what she wanted. That's what they all want. Won't be any good to her when she's rotting in jail.

GERRY: No Elizabeth, money ain't much use to anyone. Only confuses things.

ELIZABETH: Anyway, let's try not to talk about it for awhile shall we ? Tell me about you. We haven't been properly introduced.

GERRY: Oh, I'm Betsy. Betsy Ross. That's short for Elizabeth too.

ELIZABETH: Oh. And what brings you here ?

GERRY: Holiday.

ELIZABETH: I meant to the Police Station ?

GERRY: Oh, my dog. I've lost my dog.

ELIZABETH LOOKS DOWN AT THE HANDCUFFS.

GERRY: Oh these. Don't ever lose your dog. That RSPCA is hard core.

LORNA ENTERS.

LORNA: Excuse me. Do you know where I can find Detective Ross ?

GERRY: Is that the bad cop or the dumb cop ?

LORNA: I'm sorry.

GERRY: Is she the nasty bitch or the slow drawler ?

ELIZABETH: (TO **LORNA**) You !

GERRY: Wow Elizabeth. Have you been taking voice classes ?

LORNA: Are you talking to me ?

ELIZABETH: I don't see any other little sluts here.

GERRY: Hey Elizabeth, that's not very nice.

ELIZABETH: It's her.

GERRY: Oh man. Are you Lorna ? Awkward.

LORNA: (TO ELIZABETH) Do I know you ?

GERRY: Lorna, this is Elizabeth. Elizabeth *Lang*. I believe you know her husband, Robert. Elizabeth this is Lorna. I'm sorry, I don't know your last name.

LORNA: Would you please shut up ?

ELIZABETH: Don't you tell her to shut up.

LORNA: I'll do what I like.

ELIZABETH: Yes you'll do exactly what you like and you won't care who you hurt or what lives you destroy in the process.

LORNA: Don't blame me. It's your fault.

ELIZABETH: My fault – that you're sleeping with my husband ?

LORNA: If you took better care of him in the first place he wouldn't come running to me.

ELIZABETH: Don't you tell me about my husband ? I know all about Robert Lang. And his grubby little affairs. You're just the latest in a long line of trashy whores –

LORNA: Don't you dare.

GERRY: Yeah Elizabeth, that's uncalled for.

ELIZABETH AND LORNA: (TO **GERRY**) Would you shut up ?

GERRY: Sorry.

LORNA: And what do you call a woman who forces her husband to find affection somewhere else – a cold bitch ?

ELIZABETH: You think you're something special. But you're not. You're nothing. He always ends them, because deep down he loves me.

LORNA: Funny way of showing it.

ELIZABETH SLAPS LORNA HARD ACROSS THE FACE

GERRY: Okay, that's gotta hurt.

LORNA GRABS ELIZABETH IN A HEADLOCK.

GERRY: Nice move.

LORNA DRAGS ELIZABETH ACROSS STAGE.

GERRY: Oh no, not the wall.

LORNA SLAMS ELIZABETH'S HEAD INTO THE WALL. ELIZABETH REELS AWAY CLUTCHING HER HEAD.

GERRY: Has anybody got some popcorn ?

ELIZABETH GRABS LORNA'S ARM AND TWISTS IT BEHIND HER BACK.

GERRY: Nice come back Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH TWISTS LORNA'S ARM FURTHER BEHIND HER BACK. LORNA SCREAMS IN PAIN.

GERRY: Okay, now that's not natural. (CALLING) Uh, nasty bitch, dumb cop – you better get out here.

THE **POLICEWOMAN** AND THE **POLICEMAN** RUN ON. THEY TRY TO SEPARATE **LORNA** AND **ELIZABETH**.

IN THE RESULTING MELEE – **GERRY** MANAGES TO GRAB THE KEYS FROM THE **POLICEWOMAN'S** BACK POCKET. SHE UNDOES THE HANDCUFFS AND SLIPS OUT – AS THE WRESTLING CONTINUES. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP ON **WALTER**, **ERIC** AND **ALAN**, NOW DRESSED A *LA SHINEY*, CLIMBING THROUGH A WINDOW WITH A STOLEN DVD.

SUDDENLY **ERIC** TRIPS AND WE HEAR AN ALARM. A BRIGHT RED LIGHT BEGINS TO FLASH ABOVE THEM.

THE **DVD** GOES FLYING BUT **ALAN** CATCHES IT EXPERTLY AND PUTTING IT UNDER ONE ARM, HE DRAGS **ERIC** THROUGH THE WINDOW. THEY RUN OFF.

LIGHTS COME UP ON **ERIC'S SQUAT**.

14. Eric's Squat, later that day

ALAN ENTERS, CARRYING THE STOLEN DVD. **WALTER** AND **ERIC** FOLLOW HIM ON. THEY ARE GASPING FOR BREATH.

ALAN PUTS THE DVD ON THE STACK AT THE BACK. **WALTER** AND **ERIC** APPLAUD.

ERIC: My god Alan - you are a superstar. I think you've got a calling for this line of work. Nimble through windows and a nice turn of speed in the getaway. Stick with me and we're going all the way to the top of the DVD mountain. Oi ! I'll even put you in my rap.
(RAPPING) "Just Alan, Just Alan you saved my arse
As a re-appropriator you've got class
When I found you in the garbage I thought you were a zero
Now I discover you're a real live hero
Shiney and Just Alan –

WALTER: And Walter.

ERIC: - are the winning team
Forget the milk, just go for the cream."

WALTER: And Walter.

ERIC: Well smile Just Alan. You done good.

ALAN SMILES SHEEPISHLY

ALAN: Beginner's luck.

WALTER: Shiney. Is this a good time ?

ERIC: Yes Walter. This is a very good time.

BEAT.

WALTER: I mean to get the ...

ERIC: Oh, yes Walter. Good idea. You get it.

WALTER RETRIEVES SOMETHING FROM BEHIND THE DVD STACK.
ERIC PULLS UP SOME CRATES.

ERIC: Now if you would like to take a seat we need to have a business meeting. (**ALAN SITS.**) We have devised the solution to your numerous and varied problems. Now according to the information we have garnered from the streets, you was set up.

WALTER: I was ?

ERIC: Not you Walter – Just Alan.

ALAN: I was ?

ERIC: Yes you was. Now this geezer MacMasters, he told you to do it didn't he ?

ALAN: You know about MacMasters ?

ERIC: We know about it all.

ALAN: Thought you didn't believe me.

ERIC: At first your story did seem a little far-fetched but after some careful investigation we have discovered that you are indeed a man of your word. You shot Robert Lang.

WALTER: In the arse.

ERIC: Thank you Walter.

ALAN: I did ?

WALTER: Yeah. It said in the paper. You shot him in the arse.

ALAN: Painful.

ERIC: Already, steady on, steady on. I concede your aim was a little askew but you had the best of intentions – then MacMasters grassed you out.

ALAN: Why would he do that ?

ERIC: How else would the cops know it was you so fast eh ?

ALAN: Lorna. My old girlfriend. She was there when I shot Lang.

WALTER: Was she your accomplice ?

ALAN: She's Lang's mistress.

- ERIC: That's complicated isn't it ? Right, well that don't matter anyway. You see there's only two people on this entire earth who actually know what went down on that fateful day.
- ALAN: Three if you include Lang.
- ERIC: No. I'm talking about before the incident. There's only two people who actually know what led up to you pulling the trigger.
- ALAN: Actually, there's four.
- ERIC: What do you mean four ? You broadcast it on the radio or somethin'.
- ALAN: I told Gerry – Barbie. And then there was the Man of Skill.
- ERIC: What about the Man of La Mancha ? How about my Mum ? Did you fill her in? Anyway - it don't matter who you told afterwards. That's hearsay. Only you and MacMasters were there when the deal was actually hammered out. Please tell me that is case. (**ALAN NODS**) Excellent - so he is the only one who can disprove your story.
- ALAN: What story ?
- ERIC: The story we are going to concoct about the circumstances that led you to shoot Mr Robert Lang.

ALAN LOOKS AT HIM.

- ERIC: Just Alan - wakey, wakey. Now listen closely. You and me - and a few other people - know MacMasters paid you to kill Lang. But the Bobbies don't know that do they ? They don't know why you did it. So on the off chance you do get nicked you just tell them that MacMasters forced you to shoot Lang. He was threatening to cause Grievous Bodily Harm to you and your family –
- ALAN: I don't have a family.
- ERIC: Alright, to your girlfriend then.
- ALAN: She isn't my girlfriend anymore.
- ERIC: To you then – he was going to cause greivous bodily harm to you and your only option was to kill Lang or die.
- ALAN: But MacMasters will just deny it.

ERIC: And this is where Shiney and Walter's brilliant plan comes into effect. Isn't that right Walter ?

WALTER: Our plan Shiney.

ERIC: Who is the only person who can disprove your story ?

ALAN: You tell me.

ERIC: Tell him Walter.

WALTER: MacMasters.

ALAN: MacMasters.

ERIC: Exactly. So what we do is - we kill MacMasters.

ALAN: What ?

ERIC: Walter and I got it all worked out. Walter even did a diagram in the pub. Walter, if you please.

WALTER OPENS UP THE DIAGRAM. HE STANDS AND HOLDS IT IN FRONT OF HIMSELF.

ERIC: Now MacMasters hangs out in The Arms over in Waterloo right ? So - (HE STOPS) Walter, what is that ?

WALTER: (HE LOOKS) That's us Shiney. I drew in a little Walter and a little Shiney.

ERIC: Right. And what's that ?

WALTER: What Shiney ?

ERIC: That ... orange.

WALTER: Ah ... hair Shiney.

ERIC: In this scribble I have got hair. Do you see hair on my head Walter ?

WALTER: No Shiney.

ERIC: Then why did you draw me with hair ?

WALTER: Thought it would look you know ... nice.

- ERIC: No I don't know. If I thought it would be nice to have hair – then I would have hair. But I don't – so I won't. And even if I did decide one day to have hair – it would not be orange. And look at this ! You've coloured in out of the lines. You failed kindergarten didn't you ?
- WALTER: Sorry Shiney.
- ERIC: (CALMING HIMSELF) Breathe, just breathe. Anyhow, back to business. Walter and I wait just around the corner here (POINTING), till MacMasters comes out here (POINTING) and turns right.
- ALAN: What if he turns left ?
- ERIC: Don't worry about that, he won't turn left.
- ALAN: But what if he does ?
- ERIC: He won't turn left I tell ya. He never turns left. He always turns right.
- ALAN: How do you know ?
- ERIC: I just know alright. Now, if I may continue. Alright, he turns right and he's walking along here. Dum de dum de dum, dum de dum de dum. Not expecting anything.
- ALAN: What about his car ?
- ERIC: What about his car ?
- ALAN: MacMasters has a bad leg. He wouldn't park his car that far away.
- ERIC: Just Alan, stop raining on my parade. We'll check that out alright ? Everything will be checked out. (POINTS) The car will be parked here okay ? Okay ? (**ALAN NODS**) So he's walking along to his car - dum de scrape dum de scrape - which is parked (POINTS) here - dum de scrape dum de scrape - and then we suddenly jump out. I grab him and Walter hits him over the head with a piece of four-be-two. Dead as a doornail. Mission accomplished.
- ALAN: But what if he's got somebody with him ?
- ERIC: He won't have anybody with him.
- ALAN: He might. Jay Ryan, the Manager.

ERIC: He won't and if he does we'll kill them too. Won't we Walter ?

WALTER: With extreme prejudice Shiney.

WALTER STARTS LAUGHING. ERIC LOOKS AT HIM. WALTER STOPS LAUGHING.

ALAN: But what are you gonna do with the body ?

ERIC: Who cares about the body ? He'll be dead won't he ?

ALAN: They have forensic tests. They'll track you down.

ERIC: Well then we'll take it down this alley (POINTS) and we'll put him in the dumpster. In the morning he gets taken away.

ALAN: There might not be a dumpster.

ERIC: Then we'll cut him up in little pieces and feed him to the pigeons. My god Just Alan, I never knew you were such a wet blanket.

ALAN: Just trying to consider all possibilities.

ERIC: Well don't. Leave that to the experts. So - what do you think of our plan ? Again, think very carefully before you answer.

ALAN CONSIDERS.

ALAN: It's brilliant.

ERIC: I thought you'd see it our way. Alright, we do it tonight. Now to discuss the manner of remuneration - we thought a three way split would be fair. I mean if it weren't for us you wouldn't get nothing, isn't that right Walter ?

WALTER: Diddley squat, Shiney.

ALAN: Three way split of what ?

ERIC: The half mill MacMasters paid you to kill Lang. Our investigations turned up that juicy little detail as well.

WALTER: Juicy.

ALAN: I never received the money.

ERIC: What you mean you never received the money ? You did the job.

ALAN: He's not dead.

ERIC: Good as. Didn't you read the paper ? He's in a coma. Bleedin' vegetable.

ALAN: But I shot him in the arse. How could he be in a coma ?

ERIC: I don't know. Magic bullet, like JFK.

WALTER: My Uncle Tana was in a coma once. This hammer fell on him when he was building a garden shed for my Auntie. He was never the same after that. Used to hang around at Church fetes and -

ERIC: Thank you very much Walter for that fascinating piece of family trivia. (**WALTER IS SILENT**) So how much have you actually got then ?

ALAN: Nothing.

ERIC: Nothing ! But that's impossible. You had this big wad.

ALAN: When ?

ERIC: (**FALTERING**) When those kids rolled you. I saw them run off with this big roll.

ALAN: That's all I had. Look, even if I had the money I don't know if I want MacMasters dead.

ERIC: What do you mean ? He's all that's standing between me - I mean us - and a life of untold wealth and luxury.

ALAN: I don't want to be responsible for him being killed.

ERIC: Well, what you want don't really come in to it ? There's others to consider now as well. Ain't that right Walter ?

WALTER NODS.

ALAN: You can't just go around killing people.

ERIC: Why not ? You tried to. Just Alan, I think Walter hittin' you has made your brain go a bit soft. You're talking about your life here. Your future continuance on this planet. This is no time for sappy emotions. What you do or don't think is appropriate behaviour has absolutely nothing to do with it.

ALAN: But I don't even want the money.

ERIC: Well will have it then. We don't mind.

ALAN: Can't we just keep re-appropriating ?

GERRY ENTERS. ERIC SEES HER.

ERIC: Well look who it is. Our very own little Barbie. Back for some more of Shiney's extra special love.

GERRY: Don't flatter yourself, Slimey. (GOING TO **ALAN**) Alan ? Alan is that you ? Why are you dressed like that ?

ERIC: Alan has joined our team. He has become part of our ever expanding business venture.

GERRY: And the bruises ?

ERIC: He got rolled you see, by these local lads. Four or five of 'em. I had to fight 'em off with me bear 'ands, didn't I Walter ?

WALTER: Regular Braveheart Shiney.

ERIC: Quite a struggle but I triumphed. I think they got off with his money but. Might've hit him on the head too. A few times.

GERRY: Come on Alan, we gotta go.

ERIC: Oi, he can't go. We were just in the middle of discussing a very important joint venture.

GERRY: I need to talk to him.

ERIC: We're not stopping you.

GERRY: In private.

ERIC: Well, that's just too bad.

GERRY: (GOING TO **ERIC**) Come on Shiney. Won't take long. Then later I'll let you play me your back catalogue.

ERIC: The deluxe boxed set.

GERRY: All seventeen Cds.

ERIC: Well I guess we wouldn't mind a short interruption. We'll just watch a DVD or something. Keep ourselves amused while you chat. In private.

THEY MOVE TO THE BACK OF THE STAGE TO A SMALL TV.

ERIC: Got one last night. Still in the machine when we picked it up. "Vengeance of the Gargoyles."

GERRY: It's "Revenge of the Gargoyles".

ERIC: Oh, you know it ? Worth a look ?

WALTER: Doesn't have subtitles does it ?

ERIC: Shut up Walter. (TO **GERRY**) Don't mind us. Just pretend we're not here.

ERIC PUTS ON THE DVD. THERE IS A MUFFLED SCREAM FROM THE TV. **ALAN** GOES TO THE STACK OF DVDS.

GERRY: Alan. You've got to listen to me. We haven't got much time.

ALAN: Want to buy a DVD Barbie ?

GERRY: I just escaped from the cops. We gotta work out what we're gonna do.

ALAN: Already got a job. I'm a re-appropriator.

GERRY: Alan, listen to me - you're in big trouble.

ALAN: Guns mean trouble.

GERRY: Do you want to spend the rest of your life in jail ?

ERIC: Oi. Could you keep it down please ? We're trying to watch this. The lady with the long red hair is just about to be garrotted in the bathroom. Here she goes. (A SCREAM FROM THE TELEVISION.) Oh my god, the wonders of technicolour.

GERRY: Come on, let's get outta here. While Slimey's occupied.

ALAN: Everybody lies.

GERRY: We haven't got time for this.

ALAN: And if they're not lying you can be sure of one thing. They're not telling the truth.

GERRY: I'll tell you the truth. We have to leave. Now.

ALAN: (NOT MOVING) Who did you kill Barbie ?

GERRY: I didn't kill nobody. You're the attempted murderer.

ALAN: Who did you kill ?

GERRY: We have to go.

ALAN: I'm not going anywhere till you tell me.

PAUSE.

GERRY: I shot the owner of a Seven-Eleven just outside Dallas. I didn't mean to kill him. I just nicked him on the side but he was old and he was weak and he had a bad heart. He fell down and had a heart attack right in front of me, jerking around at my feet. I was only 17 years old but it's just like yesterday. I can still see the look on his face, the words stuck in his mouth. Dumb staring eyes. I didn't mean to kill him. (BEAT) My name is Edwina Winemiller. Winnie, that's what they used to call me. I'm twenty nine years old. I have one sister and no brothers. I haven't seen my mother for ten years. She drinks a bit. My father left us when I was three. I think he lives in Kentucky now. I changed my name when I came here. Made up the three brothers and Kansas to go with it. I kind of liked being someone else, without so many dark secrets. Someone who was friendly.

ALAN: A murderer. Unpunished.No justice.

GERRY: Sure there's justice. Sometimes it just gets bent around that's all. The bad guys get off and the good guys, get it. (SHE LOOKS AT HIM) Look Alan, I don't know much about anything anymore. All I know is that they're gonna find us and when they do - they ain't gonna muck around. You gotta hand yourself in.

ALAN: I'm getting' out. Going to the states.

GERRY: There's only one problem with running away.

ALAN: What's that ?

GERRY: You take yourself with you.

ALAN: I meant to kill Lang. I wanted him dead.

GERRY: But he's not dead.

ALAN: I've never felt anything like it. A rush through my whole body.

GERRY: Anger consumes.

ALAN: I couldn't control it. Just took me over. It wasn't even me doing it anymore. It was someone else. Raised my hand, aimed the gun and bang.

GERRY: Hey, it happens.

ALAN: (REALISING) No. I have felt it before. That rush taking over my whole body. One other time.

GERRY STANDS. SHE HOLDS OUT HER HAND.

GERRY: Alan, we can talk about this later. For now – please just come with me.

**ALAN LOOKS AT HER. A SCREAM FROM THE TELEVISION.
ALAN TAKES HER HAND. HE STANDS.**

GERRY: Now you're talking.

**ERIC HAS BEEN WATCHING ALL THIS THROUGH A HAND MIRROR.
HE NODS TO WALTER. WALTER STANDS AND BLOCKS THE EXIT.
ERIC MOVES TOWARDS ALAN AND GERRY.**

ERIC: 'Ello, 'ello. Where do you think you are going ? (TO **GERRY**) I told you – Just Alan and I are about to embark on an important business venture. And I would appreciate it if you did not meddle in our affairs. Unless of course ...

GERRY: Stay away from me Slimey.

ERIC: (HE MOVES TOWARDS HER) That's Shiney. (MAKES RAPPING SOUND)

GERRY: Don't look at me.

ERIC: But it's my pleasure ... I like your style. I was wondering if you might like to watch me spin my dicks – I mean discs sometime ?

GERRY: Sure.

ERIC: Lovely. Shall we make a date ?

GERRY: How about when you recover ?

ERIC: Recover from what ?

GERRY: This.

GERRY KNEES ERIC IN THE GROIN. HE DOUBLES OVER IN PAIN.

ERIC: (GASPING) You little bitch. Fuck her up Walter.

WALTER: My pleasure Shiney.

WALTER RUNS TOWARDS GERRY. ALAN LAUNCHES HIMSELF AT WALTER AND BRINGS HIM DOWN IN A CRUNCHING TACKLE.

WALTER: Good tackle cos.

ALAN: (GRIMACING IN PAIN) I fucked my shoulder.

WALTER: My Uncle Aaron says you should always remember to warm up first.

ERIC: Walter, get up. Oh stuff this, let's just hand him in and get the reward.

WALTER: But Shiney, we can't.

ERIC: Why not ?

WALTER: We're both wanted.

ERIC: This could be a slight problem.

GERRY: Ssh. Listen.

ERIC: I can't hear nothing. It's just the TV.

WE HEAR THE SOUND OF DISTANT SIRENS. THEY BUILD.

ERIC: Don't worry. It happens all the time. They're not coming here. (THE SIRENS CONTINUE TO BUILD.) Or maybe - they are. Oh my Godfather - we're nicked. Everyman for himself. Quick Walter, grab the DVDs.

WALTER: All of them Shiney ?

ERIC: My palace hideaway - discovered. And all thanks to you. I knew I should of left you where I found you. My beautiful DVDs, with labels changed an' all. Gone, all gone. Hurry up Walter.

ALAN: Don't worry. It's me they're after - not you. They won't send you to prison.

ERIC: Prison ? I'm don't give a stuff about Prison. I'm worried they might send me back to England.

WALTER HAS STACKED UP TEN DVDS ON HIS ARMS.

WALTER: (OVERLOADED) I'm full Shiney.

ERIC: Then fuck off outta here ! (**WALTER EXITS.**) Well goodbye Just Alan. And don't worry, you won't have such a bad time in the nick. Plenty of time to think. You comin' Barbie ?

GERRY: (BEAT) No, I'm good. Thanks.

ERIC: Suit yourself.

THERE IS A SOUND OFF OF A DOOR BEING SMASHED.

ERIC: Christ. I better piss off. (HE PICKS UP A LOAD OF DVDS. SEEING THE BOX OF REMOTES) Oh no ! (EXITING) Walter, you forgot the remotes. They're no good without the remotes.

GERRY: Quick. Down on the floor. Arms out in front of you. (**ALAN HESITATES**) Do it !

THEY BOTH LIE ON THE GROUND, ARMS SPREAD WIDE.

GERRY: They probably won't shoot us in the back. I hope.

SOUND OF THE DOOR BREAKING. THE STAGE IS FILLED BY BRIGHT WHITE LIGHT.

THE LIGHT BUILDS. THE SOUND OF BOOTS APPROACHING. BLACKOUT.

15. Prison Interview room, several weeks later

A DESK WITH TWO CHAIRS. ON THE DESK SITS A BRIGHT RED BRIEFCASE.

THE LIGHTS COME UP ON THE **LAWYER**, DRESSED IN A SUIT WITH A VERY "LOUD" TIE.

WE HEAR THE SOUND OF AN IRON GATE CLANGING SHUT. A PRISON **WARDER** LEADS **ALAN** IN. HE IS WEARING HANDCUFFS.

THE **WARDER** UNDOES THE HANDCUFFS AND EXITS.

LAWYER: Alan. Fantastic.

ALAN: Where you expecting somebody else ?

LAWYER: Always great to see my number one client.

ALAN: Only because Ivan Milat was taken.

LAWYER: Keep the quips coming. Bit of humour. Punters love it. Shall we ?

THE **LAWYER** SITS. HE OPENS HIS BRIEFCASE.

ALAN: Nice briefcase.

LAWYER: Matches the tie. I've been looking through your file.

ALAN: Am I meant to be impressed ?

LAWYER: You are getting my services for free.

ALAN: Certainly wouldn't want to be paying for them.

LAWYER: Alan - baby. I'm on your side.

ALAN: Sorry. Keep forgetting that.

LAWYER: I've been looking through your file and things look good.

ALAN: They do ?

THE **LAWYER** TAKES OUT A SMALL TAPE RECORDER. HE PLACES IT ON THE DESK.

LAWYER: Just bought it. What do you think ?

ALAN: Very impressive.

LAWYER: Matches my hair. (**ALAN LOOKS AT HIM.**) Anyway, why don't you get me up to speed ? Run me through the details again.

ALAN: I've run you through the details ten times.

LAWYER: Alan, although you are my number one client yours' is not the only high profile case I'm currently working on. (BEAT) Good practice. Get your story straight.

ALAN: It's not a story. (THE **LAWYER** LOOKS AT HIM.) It's not !

LAWYER: I know that. You know that. But the question is will the punters know that. (TAKING OUT PEN AND NOTEPAD) Look, I'll even take notes.

ALAN: Where do you want me to begin ?

LAWYER: From when you met MacMasters.

ALAN: I went to -

LAWYER: Wait. (THE **LAWYER** TURNS ON THE TAPE RECORDER. HE SMILES.) I'm all yours.

ALAN: I went to sell an ad -

LAWYER: You worked in advertising ?

ALAN: I sold space for a newspaper.

LAWYER: That's it. Go on.

ALAN: I went to this pub but the manager wasn't there.

LAWYER: But John MacMasters - "shady property developer" - was. What was this pub like ?

ALAN: I don't know. Just a pub.

LAWYER: We'll come back to it. Please. Go on.

ALAN: He remembered me from when ...

LAWYER: You found international infamy as "The Tripper."

ALAN: Thanks for the reminder. He offered me 500,000 dollars to kill Robert Lang.

LAWYER: Any idea why he would do that ?

ALAN: Maybe he didn't like Lang.

LAWYER: (LAUGHING) No, I don't mean getting you to kill him. Why would he offer you five hundred thousand ? The going rate is twenty five.

ALAN: Maybe he wanted me to do an extra good job.

BEAT. THE **LAWYER** BEGINS TO LAUGH HYSTERICALLY.

LAWYER: That's good. You ... a good job ... you !

ALAN LOOKS AT HIM. THE **LAWYER** STOPS LAUGHING. SUDDENLY

LAWYER: I am sorry. Go on.

ALAN: Next day I met this man in a park, he gave me a parcel containing information about some terrible crimes Lang had committed.

LAWYER: Those are just allegations. We can't use those.

ALAN: But that's why I shot him.

LAWYER: And the half a million didn't have anything to do with it ? Alan - baby.

ALAN: I didn't do it for the money.

LAWYER: Of course not - there was the glamorous ex-girlfriend, who you were about to discover was now Lang's mistress - Lara White.

ALAN: Lorna Williams.

LAWYER: Lara White sounds better. What was he wearing ?

ALAN: Who ?

LAWYER: MacMasters. When you met him ? An old Wests footy jumper ? From the thirties. Tattered and torn.

ALAN: He was wearing a shirt.

LAWYER: We'll workshop it. Now Lara - Lorna - she met Lang when she was working at a high class brothel didn't she ? What was it called again ?

ALAN: I don't know what it was called.

LAWYER: Alan - think. These are the details that are gonna make or break.

ALAN: I don't think the jury cares which brothel Lang met Lorna in ?

LAWYER: Who cares about the jury ? This is for the journo who's ghost writing your book.

ALAN: What book ?

LAWYER: Alan – we gotta strike while the iron is hot. It's time to think about your future. I'm currently negotiating on the movie option. There's a lot of interest out there. Stick with me. Thing's are looking up.

ALAN: But what about my case ?

LAWYER: What about your case ? You're fucked.

LANG ENTERS.

LAWYER: (STANDS) Mr Lang ! May I say what a great honour it is to finally meet you. And great to see you looking so well.

LANG: (TO **ALAN**) Who's this ?

ALAN: My ex-lawyer.

LAWYER: (TO **LANG**) I must of course point out that by law since I am representing Mr Edwards I'm not allowed to speak to you.

LANG: Good.

LAWYER: Unless of course you were interested in acquiring my services ?

LANG: You can do me one service ?

LAWYER: And what might that be ?

LANG: Piss off.

LAWYER: Of course. Would you like my card ? (**LANG LOOKS AT HIM**) I'll email you. (TO **ALAN**) I was just explaining to Mr Edwards that it doesn't matter how much he offers me. I'm not going to lie for him and if he doesn't like it he can get himself a new Lawyer.

LANG: Good idea.

LAWYER: He's done a terrible thing and he's going to jail for a long time. Justice will prevail.

LANG You're still here.

THE **LAWYER** SMILES NERVOUSLY. HE EXITS.

LANG: I can't stand that man's ties.

ALAN: Not too keen on his briefcase either.

LANG: Thought I better pop in and see how you were bearing up. Been catching up on some television ?

ALAN: I would but every time I turn it on there's updates on this poor guy in a coma.

LANG: And he's still in a coma and don't you forget it. You don't mind if I stand will you ? Bit of trouble sitting these days. You see, some dickhead shot me in the arse.

ALAN: How's Lorna ?

LANG: Skedaddled. Bout a week ago.

ALAN: She always wanted to go New York.

LANG: Hope it works out for her. Wife's left me too. Ever since that day she went to the police station. She's never been the same.

ALAN: So, how can I help you ?

LANG: Got someone I'd like you to meet. (CALLS) You can come in.

MacMASTERS ENTERS.

ALAN: You ?

LANG: It's all quite embarrassing really. You see, guilt can be a very powerful force. One day I found I just couldn't forget any longer. So I asked John to ... find me an escape route. Lucky for me he hired someone who was such a bad shot.

ALAN: I didn't mean to shoot you in the arse.

LANG: That's a relief.

ALAN: I meant to shoot you in the head. I wanted to kill you.

MacMASTERS: Gutsy little prick.

LANG: It's okay John. Well Alan, I'm glad you missed. I think. So – we were wondering - what happens next ?

ALAN: I'm going to court. Tell them what happened.

MacMASTERS: All of it ?

ALAN: Every single scrap.

LANG: Got any proof ?

ALAN: Maybe.

MacMASTERS: If you mean the file Ivan gave you, you won't be seeing that again. A very helpful Police Officer stopped it falling into the wrong hands.

ALAN: I know what you did.

MacMASTERS: Listen Edwards, there's over one hundred men in here who'd stick you in a second - if I was to give the word.

ALAN: Probably.

MacMASTERS: (STANDING) Pretty smug aren't you ? Won't be so smug when you're lying in the shower watching your life go down the drain - drop by drop.

**LANG GOES TO MacMASTERS. HE WHISPERS SOMETHING TO HIM.
MacMASTERS exits.**

LANG: I'm not saying I'm perfect. Far from it. I made a mistake, a terrible mistake, and I've been made to pay for it. Have I paid enough ? Well, I guess that's for you to decide. If I listen to what people say, I'd be thinking you too also made a mistake. So let me ask you – have you paid enough ?

BEAT.

ALAN: What are you offering ?

LANG: Right at this moment, the whole country is sitting around talking about my arse. It's not particularly gratifying. And the fact that I was with Lorna. It doesn't look good.

ALAN: So ?

LANG: So I'm saying no trial. I'll drop the charges. Right now.

ALAN: You mean ... ?

LANG: Not quite. Serve a few years for the stolen DVDs. Keep you out of circulation, where I can keep an eye on you.

ALAN: What do I have to do ?

LANG: Agree to never speak about it again. To anyone, anywhere.

ALAN: Does that include the contents of the file ?

LANG: Especially that.

ALAN: There goes the book deal. What if I don't agree ?

LANG: You're not my problem anymore.

ALAN: Meaning ?

LANG: I hand you over to John.

ALAN LOOKS AT LANG.

ALAN: I'm in here because I accepted an offer from a man just like you.

LANG: You're in here because you acted rashly. Let your heart rule your head.

ALAN: How do I know you won't just bump me off anyway ?

LANG: That's a chance you'll have to take. (BEAT) So, do we have a deal ?

PAUSE. **ALAN NODS.**

LANG: Smart boy. Come and see me when you get out. I got a factory that needs looking after.

ALAN: I'll pass.

LANG: Suit yourself.

LANG STARTS TO LEAVE. HE STOPS.

LANG: Before I go – there's something I've always wanted to know.

ALAN: Everybody does. (BEAT) It's gonna cost you.

LANG: How much ?

ALAN: Half a million.

LANG: Pretty steep.

ALAN: Take it or leave it.

BEAT. **LANG SMILES.**

LANG: Alright. Deal.

ALAN: Did I really trip Richie Setter ? What do you think ?

LANG: If it was me – I would of.

ALAN: Half right. I meant to.

LANG: So what happened ?

ALAN: Just as he went pass me, I was getting ready to trip him and then – the stupid bastard fell over. (BEAT) So now you know. Worth half a mill ?

LANG: Every cent.

LANG EXITS. ON THE WAY HE PASSES GERRY, WHO IS LED IN BY A WARDER. HER HANDS ARE ALSO CUFFED. THE WARDER DOES NOT REMOVE THEM.

LANG: (TO **GERRY**) You owe me fifty bucks.

LANG AND THE WARDER EXIT. ALAN LOOKS AT GERRY.

ALAN: You owe him fifty bucks ?

GERRY: I bet him you wouldn't take the deal.

ALAN: I didn't know you two were on speaking terms.

GERRY: There's a lot you don't know. And there's a lot you don't want to know.

ALAN: Try me.

GERRY: Some other time. If you'd listened to me in the first place you wouldn't be in this mess.

ALAN: No, I'd be in a worse one.

BEAT.

GERRY: So, what you been up to ?

ALAN: Not much.

GERRY: They keep moving me around so the press can't find me. Sixty Minutes has been after me for weeks.

ALAN: Maybe I should introduce you to my Lawyer. Get you six figures.

GERRY: And my own talk show ? They're shipping me out Stateside in the morning.

ALAN: Not ...

GERRY: No, not Dallas. Vermont. Doin' five years for armed robbery. Part of the deal.

ALAN: It all could've been so different.

GERRY: Yep.

ALAN: And it only takes a moment. Richie Setter falls, (HE CLICKS HIS FINGERS) Richie Setter doesn't fall. (CLICKS AGAIN) You pull the trigger, (CLICKS AGAIN) you don't pull the trigger. (AND AGAIN) One split second. Your whole life changes.

ALAN: Things happens for a reason.

ALAN: You still believe that ?

GERRY: We don't live in isolated incidents. There is cause and effect. You go through things and it changes you. That's the way it works. (BEAT) The thing about the world is one day it will all turn around. The people at the top will end up at the bottom and the people at the bottom will end up at the top. The trick is hanging around long enough for it to happen.

THE **WARDER** ENTERS.

GERRY: I gotta go. My two minutes is up.

THE **WARDER** TAKES GERRY. THEY START TO EXIT.

ALAN: Hey Gerry.

GERRY: Yeah ?

ALAN: When you get where you're going – send me a postcard.

GERRY: I'd like that.

GERRY SMILES. THE **WARDER** LEADS HER OFF. **ALAN** ALONE.

THE **WARDER** RETURNS. **ALAN** STANDS. THE **WARDER** PUTS THE CUFFS BACK ON **ALAN**. A SMILES SLOWLY GROWS ON **ALAN'S** FACE.

THE **WARDER** LEADS **ALAN** OFF THE STAGE, LEAVING THE STAGE BARE. THE LIGHTS SLOWLY FADE.

END PLAY.