

~~Peter~~ Flannery
10 Main Road
Langley
Macclesfield
Cheshire.

26th October 1981

Dear Mair Hunter,

I'm sending you with this letter a copy of the second draft of my play "Our Friends In The North".

The play goes into rehearsal in Stratford in three weeks time and is set to open on January 13th.

Your old friend Mr Poulson seems to be having some difficulty in disseminating his version of events.

Yours sincerely

Peter Flannery.

DRAFT II
MASTER

OUR FRIENDS IN THE NORTH
A History Play

BY

PETER FLANNERY

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AUTHOR'S AGENTS:

HARVEY UNNA AND STEPHEN DURBRIDGE

14 BEAUMONT MEWS

MARYLEBONE HIGH STREET

LONDON W1N 4HE

CHARACTERS

✓ TOSKER COX

AUSTIN DONOHUE, a politician and public relations expert.

BEDE CONNOR, a politician.

GEORDIE HURST

EDDIE WELLS, a local councillor.

NICKY HUTCHINSON

BILLY HUTCHINSON

ROY JOHNSON, a policeman.

JOSEPH, an African chauffeur, later a guerrilla.

A RHODESIAN CABINET MINISTER

LANCE, his son.

MR. ALLISON, his Secretary.

JOHN BOURNE, a British oil executive.

SIR EDWARD JONES, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

ALAN WHITAKER, a Deputy Assistant Commissioner, later an Assistant Commissioner.

HAROLD CHAPPLE, a Detective Inspector, later a Commander.

CHARLIE, a manager of a dirty book shop.

BENNY BARRATT, a club owner, pimp and pornographer.

SAM, who works for Barratt.

WILLIAMS, who works for Barratt.

RONALD CONRAD, a Detective Sergeant, later an Inspector, later a Detective Chief Superintendent.

BLACK, a Detective Constable, later a Detective Sergeant.

WEIR, a Detective Constable, later a Detective Inspector.

DESMOND, a pianist.

JOHN EDWARDS, a builder.

A WAITER AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

✓ CLAUD SEABROOK, an MP, later Home Secretary.

WALTER SYKES, A Ministerial official.

A GOVERNMENT CHAUFFEUR

DENNIS COCKBURN, a Detective Chief Superintendent.

DUFFY, a Detective Inspector in Leeds CID.

A POLICE CONSTABLE WHO ACCOMPANIES DUFFY.

AN AMERICAN PORNOGRAPHER.

ANDREWS, a Naval rating.

HIGGINS, a Naval rating.

WALTERS, a Naval rating.

O'BRIEN, a Naval rating.

AN OFFICER OF THE ROYAL NAVY.

THREE OFFICERS AT COURT.

TWO PRISON OFFICERS.

AN ASSISTANT TO SEABROOK AT THE HOME OFFICE
FIVE PRESS MEN
A PRESS PHOTOGRAPHER
SAMPSON, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.
ADAMS, a mercenary recruiter.
A YOUNG POLICE CONSTABLE
KRUGER, a mercenary soldier, South African.
LACOMBE, a mercenary soldier, French.
SIX, a mercenary soldier, Belgian.
SMITH, a mercenary soldier, English.
A WAITER IN SOHO.

MARY COX
RUSTY
HENNY
DEBBIE
FLORRIE HUTCHINSON
MRS. KELLY, a British Cabinet Minister.

PASSERS-BY IN NEWCASTLE STREET
POLICEMEN
MEN IN SOHO STREET

VOICES ONLY:
TV NEWS READERS
TWO JUDGES
DAVIES
DANIELS
AFRICAN SINGERS
RADIO NEWSREADERS
RADIO DJ
MRS. CONNOR
MRS EDWARDS.
PAT

PROLOGUE

ENTER THE ACTOR WHO PLAYS ROY JOHNSON

ACTOR:

If we had all night and all day and a cast of thousands, and an army of stage crew to take off Newcastle and bring on London, carry away Mozambique by night and wheel on the Old Bailey one sunny afternoon, and if we had a thousand costumes, and make-up artists who could perform miracles with likenesses, and if you had infinite patience, we still couldn't tell the whole story of our friends in the north. This is partly because the ancient libel laws we enjoy in this country require us to behave respectfully, or else, but mainly because the whole story of who did what and what went where is a secret. Parts of it have been uncovered. And parts of it lie quietly - scattered, unconnected - in the memories of many innocent people whose lives were blighted and sometimes lost for reasons they never understood. These are the people who, throughout history, have lived and died in silence. Some of them lost their innocence in between and were judged harshly by guilty men. Some of them began to understand. How long before such people begin to take revenge? Not long.

But this is a long play and those aren't proper seats so we'd better make a start. We haven't a thousand performers and we're not burdened with the whole truth. But we'll do what we can with what we have, and we dedicate -

oh, by the way, the play's about corruption
- we dedicate this work of fiction to all those who think it really happened - to somebody else.

JOHNSON: There is no beginning. In 1955 I was a bobby on a beat in Newcastle. One day three boys came to me with the remains of a bicycle

ENTER NICKY, TOSKER AND GEORDIE, PLAYING FOOTBALL

which they said had been run over by a car. A Rover, they said. They gave me the number. I traced it to a man I'd known since I was a boy.

ENTER BEDE CONNOR

He'd gone into local politics and our paths hadn't crossed since. We confronted him with the bike. They identified him and his car. There was no doubt about it. I took the evidence to my station sergeant. He wouldn't accept the charge. I knew then why he hadn't been worried. It was a trivial offence. Nothing really. But not to me - or those boys. I saw them again a few days later. There was nothing I could say to them. What can you say? How could they understand? All they could see was the bike. Nine years later. September, 1964.

EXIT JOHNSON. ENTER AUSTIN DONOHUE AND JOHN EDWARDS. DONOHUE INTRODUCES CONNOR TO EDWARDS AND THEY TALK. TOSKER HAS PICKED UP THE BALL AND THE OTHERS ARE TRYING TO TAKE IT FROM HIM. THEY ARE LAUGHING AND ARE OUT OF BREATH. ENTER MARY, CARRYING A BABY.

MARY: Tosker. Come on. My mother wants a photo.

TOSKER TAKES NO NOTICE. SHE TAKES THE BALL FROM HIM AND GIVES HIM THE BABY. TOSKER MAKES TO THROW THE BABY TO GEORDIE.

MARY: Tosker, careful!

TOSKER HOLDS THE BABY ALOFT AND STRUTS AROUND THE STAGE.

TOSKER: Antony Aloysius Cox!

MARY: Tosker.

TOSKER: He's all right, aren't you, son? Look, he's got footballer's legs.

ENTER EDDIE WELLS WITH A PINT OF BEER.

GEORDIE: Hey, Mary, did you have to fill in two books of stamps to call him Antony Aloysius?

MARY: What's he talking about?

NICKY STARTS LAUGHING.

TOSKER: What's funny like?

NICKY: We had this scheme at school for saving the pagans in Africa. You bought stamps for threepence each and stuck them on a card. When you'd filled the card you had two and six and you could fill in a name on it. And somewhere in darkest Africa - the patter went - they baptized a black baby in that name.

MARY: We did. I remember now. I called all mine Mary. There's loads of little Mary Cox's all running around.

NICKY: I called all mine Joseph. Joseph Mwonge. Joseph Ndongo.

THEY LAUGH. ENTER FLORRIE HUTCHINSON, NICKY'S MOTHER.

FLORRIE: Howay, Mary. Your mother wants more photos.

WITH A SIGH, MARY COLLECTS THE BABY.

FLORRIE: Come on, Tosker. Nicky, you as well. Howay, Geordie. Mind with your face you'll break the camera.

EXEUNT FLORRIE, MARY AND TOSKER.

GEORDIE: Howay, Nicky.

NICKY: I'm coming. Shove off, will you?

EXIT GEORDIE. NICKY STANDS NEAR EDDIE, WHO IS WATCHING CONNOR, DONOHUE AND EDWARDS. HE IS ABOUT TO SPEAK TO HIM.

DONOHUE: Eddie.

EDDIE: Austin.

CONNOR: Hello, Eddie.

EDDIE: Bede.

DONOHUE SAYS SOMETHING TO CONNOR AND EDWARDS. NICKY HAS BECOME INTERESTED IN THE THREE MEN.

CONNOR: Got a minute, Eddie?

EDDIE INDICATES OFF STAGE.

DONOHUE: What's going on?

EDDIE: Christening. Godfather.

CONNOR: Won't take a minute.

EDDIE: Plenty of time tonight. That's what we've got committees for.

DONOHUE: OK, Eddie.

CONNOR, EDWARDS AND DONOHUE RESUME THEIR TALK. ENTER BILLY HUTCHINSON.

NICKY: That's Austin Donohue, isn't it? Bede Connor. Who's the other one?

EDDIE: I don't know. A builder most likely.

BILLY: Is this that block of flats for Willow Lane?
 EDDIE: Expect so, Billy. Housing Committee tonight.
 BILLY: Here.

HE GIVES NICKY A PINT OF BEER.

BILLY: Come on. Photos.
 NICKY: Thanks, Dad.

EXIT BILLY.

EDDIE: Come on.
 NICKY: Hey, Eddie. Did I tell you I joined the Party?
 EDDIE: Great stuff, son. Just what we need - new blood.
 NICKY: Go on - introduce me to Donohue, will you?
 EDDIE: You'll meet the great man, don't worry. With the election coming up you'll be seeing plenty of him. What did your Dad say?
 NICKY: Oh. Haven't told him yet.
 EDDIE: Can we not rope Tosker and Geordie in? And Mary?
 NICKY: Not interested.
 EDDIE: Pity.
 NICKY: Hey, Eddie. I wanted to ask you something. It's about Tosker and Mary.
 EDDIE: Yeh?
 NICKY: You know they're still living in with Mary's folks?. It's causing problems, you know. Not enough room. They need a place of their own really.
 EDDIE: Yeh. Lot of young people in the same boat. What can I do?

ENTER FLORRIE.

NICKY: I don't know. I

FLORRIE: Are you two coming or not? And you - don't start him off. Not today.

NICKY: Who?

FLORRIE: You know who. Don't start any arguments.

NICKY: I've never said a word to him.

FLORRIE: Well somebody must've said something - his face is tripping him.

NICKY GROANS. EXEUNT NICKY, FLORRIE AND EDDIE.

EDWARDS: I need to make some calls. I'll go back to my hotel. I'll see you at 7o'clock then.
 DONOHUE: No, I'll see you afterwards.
 EDWARDS: Oh.

DONOHUE: I don't sit on the Housing Committee. Don't worry.
You're in good hands. It's a formality. The price is right.
The time's right. They'd be mad not to take you.

EDWARDS: We can start next month if the Committee agrees.

DONOHUE: I can't see any problems. Can you, Bede?

CONNOR: Why no.

EDWARDS: Well you're the Chairman - you should know. Till tonight then.

THEY SHAKE HANDS. EDWARDS LEAVES.

CONNOR: Where did you come across him?

DONOHUE: At a conference on factory building. Why?

CONNOR: Is he big enough? This is a million pound job.

DONOHUE: If they're good enough, they're big enough. This man's
going places, believe me.

CONNOR: All the same. There's plenty of builders up here. Why him?

DONOHUE: Because he's got the experience of this system building.
It's going to save us thousands. Which means more houses.
Which is what people are crying out for.

CONNOR: Maybe we should put it out to tender. That's what Eddie
Wells'll be saying tonight.

DONOHUE: Well it's your committee, Bede.

SILENCE. CONNOR SIGHS.

CONNOR: I could do with a good holiday. After this election. Say
November. Take the kids somewhere sunny.

DONOHUE: Why don't you talk to Edwards? He might suggest somewhere.

CONNOR: Maybe I'll have a word with him. Want a lift anywhere?

DONOHUE: I'm going to have a word with Eddie. I'll see you tonight.

CONNOR: Righto, Austin.

EXIT CONNOR. ENTER EDDIE.

DONOHUE: Why wouldn't you come over?

EDDIE: I'll say what I have to say tonight.

DONOHUE: Are you going to talk to me about this job?

EDDIE: I've told you, Austin, I'm not interested in public
relations. I've got a job. The rest of my time's for the
Party. I'm happy the way it is.

DONOHUE: This would give you more time for the party.

EDDIE: Take 'no' for an answer, will you?

DONOHUE: OK.

EDDIE: You want to be careful, Austin. I mean it. I'm -

DONOHUE: I don't need advice from you, Eddie.

DONOHUE STARTS TO GO. HE TURNS BACK.

DONOHUE: Hey, Eddie, are we going to win?

EDDIE: I wish we had Nya Bevan. I don't like Wilson.

DONOHUE SHRUGS.

EDDIE: He'll be the next Prime Minister though.

DONOHUE: Yeh?

EDDIE: Why aye - we're going to stuff them this time.

THEY LAUGH AND SHAKE HANDS

DONOHUE: I'll see you, Eddie.

EXIT DONOHUE. ENTER NICKY, FOLLOWED CLOSELY BY BILLY AND FLORRIE.

EDDIE: Have you told him?

NICKY NODS.

BILLY: Have you put him up to this?

EDDIE SHAKES HIS HEAD AND RETREATS.

BILLY: Stupid little shit.

FLORRIE: Billy, don't.

NICKY: What do you know about it anyway?

ENTER TOSKER, MARY AND GEORDIE. MARY CARRYING BABY.

BILLY: More than you'll ever know.

NICKY: You're ignorant.

FLORRIE: Come on, break it up. The party's over. Come on, Mary, your mother wants us all to go back home for a drink.

MARY: Well we don't want to. We don't belong to them, you know.

FLORRIE: Eeesh, I give up. I don't know what's the matter with people. Come on, you two.

NICKY: What for? Let him say it. I mean, let's hear it.

BILLY: What are you? Socialist, are you? Socialist?

NICKY: What you sneering at all the time? I'm only doing what you did,

BILLY: Thirty years ago. We were Socialists then. Shall I tell you what kind of socialists you're in with now?

EDDIE LEAVES QUIETLY. BILLY SHOUTS AFTER HIM.

BILLY: You as well! Him as well! Shall I tell you? Socialists? If this was Bournemouth they'd all be standing as Tories! It's not Socialism they're after - and you're wasting your time looking for it with that lot. If it's Socialism you're expecting, don't hold your breath.

TOSKER GOES TO CALM HIM DOWN.

TOSKER: Howay, Mr Hutchinson, it's supposed to be a christening -
 BILLY: Get your hands off, you big daft bugger. You should have
 more sense - starting a family with nowhere to live!
 NICKY: We wouldn't still be waiting - for Socialism or houses -
 if people like you hadn't kept chickening out!
 BILLY: People like me!? People like me were bought and sold
 before you were born.

SILENCE.

FLORRIE: Come on. That's enough. You've spoiled the day now.

EXEUNT FLORRIE AND BILLY. SILENCE. GEORDIE STARTS PLAYING HIS MOUTH ORGAN.

TOSKER: Did you ask him, Nick?
 NICKY: What?
 TOSKER: Eddie Wells.
 NICKY: No. It's no use asking Eddie. It's the other ones who
 matter. I will. I promise. When I know the right people.
 I'll try and get something sorted out for you.
 MARY: Don't worry, Nick. We'll be all right. Whatever happens.
 Won't we, Tosker? We've just got to be patient.
 TOSKER: Course we'll be all right. This is only temporary.

THEY CHEER UP.

NICKY: I thought you were going to hit him.
 TOSKER: I nearly did.

THEY LAUGH. MARY GIVES THE BABY TO NICKY.

MARY: Hold Antony. While I dance with my husband.

SHE AND TOSKER DANCE FOR A WHILE. NICKY PASSES THE BABY TO GEORDIE, WHO
 NEVERTHELESS CONTINUES TO PLAY. NICKY DANCES WITH MARY. NICKY, MARY AND
 GEORDIE LINK ARMS. GEORDIE STOPS PLAYING AND WATCHES THEM.

MARY: Come on. We better show our faces. Look happy. Look at it
 this way, Tosker - things can only get better.

THEY START TO GO. THEY REMEMBER GEORDIE AND THE BABY. LAUGHING, THEY COLLECT
 THEM. EXEUNT OMNES.

Scene ii

ENTER AUSTIN DONOHUE ONTO A HOTEL BALCONY. NIGHT. A PARTY GOING ON INSIDE.
 A CHEER. ENTER BEDE CONNOR.

DONOHUE: Was that it?

CONNOR: Not yet. We still need one more seat.

THEY LOOK OUT OVER THE CITY LIGHTS. FOGHORNS ON THE RIVER, DISTANT.

CONNOR: I think I might've made a mistake with that new MP we've got in - he's just took his trousers off. I think he's a Liberal at heart. We've had to send out for some more drink.

DONOHUE: Send the bill to Donohue PRS.

CONNOR: Very generous of you. I had thought maybe Edwards was paying.

DONOHUE: Edwards?

HE SHAKES HIS HEAD

DONOHUE: Where is he?

CONNOR: Celebrating. I thought he was a Tory?

DONOHUE: But a Labour victory would suit him. This is going to be the building boom to end them all. Whole new towns. You won't recognize the north in twenty years.

CONNOR: He's started work on those flats already.

DONOHUE: Course he has. He's keen. You picked the right one.

CONNOR: You did.

DONOHUE: The Housing Committee made the choice.

CONNOR: I heard he offered you a partnership?

DONOHUE: No you didn't, Bede. You're just fishing. As a matter of fact he's offered me the contract for his public relations work. Which I'm going to turn down. I've got other plans.

CONNOR: I wonder what they are.

DONOHUE: I expect you do.

CONNOR: I think I know.

DONOHUE: I don't think so.

SILENCE.

CONNOR: Pity there's no garages.

DONOHUE: What?

CONNOR: On those flats. It's an ambition of mine: I'd like to see every man with his own garage to park his car in.

DONOHUE: One day, Bede, one day we'll all live in the workers' paradise.

CONNOR: You think you're clever, don't you?

DONOHUE LAUGHS. A CHEER. DONOHUE AND CONNOR SHAKE HANDS.

DONOHUE: Well done, Bede, son.

CONNOR: Well done, Austin.

ENTER EDDIE WELLS.

EDDIE: That's it - we've won! Well done, Austin. Bede.
 DONOHUE: Well done, Eddie, thanks for everything.
 CONNOR: Good lad, Eddie.
 EDDIE: A famous victory this.
 DONOHUE: You're not kidding. Eddie, tell the management to send up champagne, will you?
 EDDIE: Will do, Austin.

EXIT EDDIE. CONNOR AND DONOHUE BREATHE THE NIGHT AIR. SILENCE.

DONOHUE: We did it. We did it.
 CONNOR: Tweet, tweet, tweet, it went.
 DONOHUE: What?
 CONNOR: Little bird I heard. Do they know where to get hold of you?
 DONOHUE: Who's this?
 CONNOR: If there was a phone call for you, you wouldn't want to miss it. I hear you're after a seat in the Cabinet?
 DONOHUE: Who me?
 CONNOR: Aye, you.
 DONOHUE: How can I have a seat in the Cabinet?
 CONNOR: You've delivered the vote up here. What's to stop you?
 DONOHUE: I'm not an MP for a start.
 CONNOR: Didn't stop Douglas-Home. All I want to know is: is that what you're expecting?
 DONOHUE: I don't know where you get your information from, Bede. But if I was expecting that, I'd be a fool. Now wouldn't I?

SILENCE.

CONNOR: Did you see Harold on Sunday?
 DONOHUE: I was speaking in Scotland on Sunday.
 CONNOR: So you were. I did.

SILENCE. BOTH LOOKING OUT FRONT. INSIDE, A PHONE RINGS AND IS ANSWERED. PAUSE.

MRS. CONNOR: (OFF) Bede? Somebody here looking for you. Roy Johnson.
 CONNOR: Oh, no.
 MRS. CONNOR (OFF): And can we get home shortly?
 CONNOR: In a minute. Tell him to come out here.
 DONOHUE: Who?
 CONNOR: Assistant Chief Constable.
 DONOHUE: Oh. Dixon of Tyne Dock.
 CONNOR: That's another of my ambitions - to get rid of this bugger.

ENTER ROY JOHNSON.

JOHNSON: Mr. Connor. Mr. Donohue.
 CONNOR: Roy. What can I do for you? Would you like a drink to celebrate?
 JOHNSON: I don't, thank you. Nor do I vote in elections, so it's all the same to me who's won. I've come to give you a warning, sir.
 CONNOR: Oh yes?
 JOHNSON: The two patrol cars that were parked outside the hotel.
 CONNOR: Oh yes?
 JOHNSON: I've sent them home. The men'll be charged if I have my way and thrown out of the force. This is the County Constabulary, sir, not a taxi service for politicians - whoever they are and however powerful they might be. I'd be obliged in future, sir, if you wouldn't abuse your position as chairman of the Police Authority.
 CONNOR: I'll have your badge.
 JOHNSON: You'll have my badge? You'll have my bloody fist if it happens again and a night in the cells. Goodnight. Mr. Donohue.

EXIT JOHNSON. DONOHUE BURSTS OUT LAUGHING.

DONOHUE: That was telling him, Bede.
 CONNOR: Aye, well if he wants to be a Chief Constable he'll have to go somewhere else. He'll not get it here. Not while I'm alive.
 DONOHUE: The good a man does dies with him - his patronage lives on after.
 CONNOR: Shut your hole, Austin. I'm bugging off.
 DONOHUE: I'll see you, Bedey.

EXIT CONNOR.

DONOHUE: (Still laughing) "A night in the cells"!

ENTER CONNOR WITH A TELEPHONE. HE HANDS IT TO DONOHUE.

CONNOR: Austin. Prime Minister's secretary.
 DONOHUE: (Taking it) Outgoing or incoming? (Into the phone:) Hello? Austin Donohue. Yes. Oh yes. Thank you. Very kind. Much obliged. Goodnight.

HE GIVES PHONE BACK TO CONNOR. PAUSE.

DONOHUE: Harold's on his way to London. That was a message to say thank you to everybody for all the hard work. Paas it on, will you, Bede?

CONNOR: Is that all? See you, Austin. I'm off on holiday next week.
 DONOHUE: OK, Bede. I'll see you when you get back.
 CONNOR: Party's breaking up.
 DONOHUE: How about another drink? Where's that champagne?

FROM BELOW, THE SOUND OF VOICES SHOUTING AND LAUGHING IN THE STREET.

CONNOR: No, I'm going.
 DONOHUE: Just a quick one.
 CONNOR: What's all the noise?

THEY LOOK DOWN.

DONOHUE: Friend of ours.
 CONNOR: Oh yes.
 DONOHUE: What do you make of him?
 CONNOR: Good lad. Worked hard. Billy Hutchinson's lad.
 DONOHUE: Yeh? I'm going to offer him a job.
 CONNOR: What as?
 DONOHUE: My assistant.
 CONNOR: Thinks the world of you.
 DONOHUE: Does he? Is he a listener? I'll teach him all he wants to know. If he wants to learn. Good.
 CONNOR: Goodnight, Austin.

DONOHUE IS LOOKING OVER THE BALCONY. HE DOESN'T REPLY TO CONNOR WHO LEAVES.

DONOHUE: Hello, down there!

Scene iii

BELOW, BESIDE THE RIVER. DARKNESS. ENTER NICKY, RUNNING, PANTING. HE STOPS. HE TRIES TO CONTROL HIS BREATHING. HE LISTENS KEENLY. HE LOOKS INTO THE SHADOWS. A NOISE TO HIS RIGHT. HE MOVES TO IT. GEORDIE JUMPS ON HIM.

GEORDIE: Harikari! Charlie Chan!
 NICKY: (Laughing) Get off, you bloody idiot!
 GEORDIE: Remember?
 NICKY: What?
 GEORDIE: Harikari! Charlie Chan!

HE IMITATES THE NOISE OF A TOMMY GUN.

GEORDIE: You don't remember, do you?
 NICKY: What? What you talking about? You're pissed.

GEORDIE DOES THE NOISE AGAIN.

GEORDIE: Japs and English! First day we met.

NICKY: Japs and English! Harikari!

GEORDIE: Charlie Chan! Herro, Tommy - Engrish pigdog! Now you die!

THEY BOTH MAKE THE NOISE AND FALL ABOUT LAUGHING.

NICKY: I don't remember any of this. You had a gun.

GEORDIE: You had a gun. No, I had a gun. Yeh - I had a gun. I remember now. I've still got it I think.

NICKY: Where did Tosker go?

GEORDIE: Home.

NICKY: Ah.

GEORDIE: Let's go to a club!

NICKY: No, Geordie, I've got to go as well.

GEORDIE: Where?

NICKY: Up.

GEORDIE: Up where?

NICKY: Up there.

GEORDIE: What for?

NICKY: Because. I said I would. I want to. It's the results.

GEORDIE: What for?

NICKY: Because. They're my friends.

GEORDIE: I'm your friend.

NICKY: Yeh. You're my friend. And they're my friends.

GEORDIE: Who's your best friend?

NICKY: You. But I'm going up there. And you're going back to your digs. And I'm going to see you tomorrow night. Because Friday night -

BOTH: - is music night!

NICKY: OK?

GEORDIE: Yeh.

NICKY: Right. See you.

HE GOES. GEORDIE STAYS. NICKY COMES BACK.

NICKY: What you doing?

GEORDIE: Listen. What is it all? Who are they?

NICKY: They're ... people I've met.

GEORDIE: Through politics.

NICKY: Through politics.

GEORDIE: And now they're your friends.

NICKY: That's right.

GEORDIE: They're not my friends.

NICKY: All right. They can be your friends. Come up. Join the party.

GEORDIE: No.

NICKY: Why not?

GEORDIE: Because you don't want me to.

NICKY: Yes I do.

GEORDIE: No you don't. Anyway

NICKY: Anyway what?

GEORDIE: I don't want to join in politics, me. It's a load of crap. Anyway I don't believe in it. It's nothing to do with me. It's just - them up there. And I'm down here. And I'd rather be down here and let them get on with it because it's nothing to do with me anyway.

NICKY: OK. Righto.

GEORDIE: Righto?

NICKY: Yeh.

GEORDIE: Why aren't you bollocking me?

NICKY: Why should I?

GEORDIE: Can't even have a fucking argument now. I've forgot what I am.

NICKY: What?

GEORDIE: I've forgot what I am. What am I again?

NICKY: Apathetic. An apathetic piss-artist.

GEORDIE: But not only that. I'm also apolitical.

NICKY: A political what?

GEORDIE: A political dunce. I am politically nowhere, me.

NICKY: Right.

THEY NOD THEIR HEADS

GEORDIE: Right. Better than being a crawler like you, though.

NICKY: Right. Couldn't agree more.

THEY NOD THEIR HEADS. SILENCE.

NICKY: I'm going now.

GEORDIE: Tell me again, Nicky.

NICKY: What?

GEORDIE: Why you're doing it?

NICKY: Because. I want to help put things right. Get houses built. And hospitals and schools. And look after the poor and the old people. Take away from the rich people all the money they've robbed us of and take back the power - seize the power! -

GEORDIE: Seize the power!

NICKY: - and put it back where it belongs. And make a society that's fair and caring and not one that's unfair and greedy! And .. whatever else.

GEORDIE: Sounds good. "Seize the power"!
NICKY: Join in then.
GEORDIE: I haven't got the brains.
NICKY GROANS.
GEORDIE: Sssssh!
NICKY: What?
GEORDIE: There's two blokes up there.
NICKY: Christ.
GEORDIE: I know that little fat one.
NICKY: That's Connor. He's the one who runs everything. I didn't realise till I joined. He's chairman of everything. But the other one - he's the great man.
GEORDIE: How's that?
NICKY: He's the thinker, the planner. The talker as well. You want to hear him - he'd even convert you.
GEORDIE: That little fat one though ...
NICKY: Yeh, what about him?
GEORDIE: I knew it! I knew it! I knew I knew the bastard! He's the one who ran his car over Tosker's bike!
NICKY: Sssssh!
GEORDIE: He is!
NICKY: I know he is. Shut up, will you?
GEORDIE: You know he is?
NICKY: Course I do. That was years ago.
GEORDIE: Have you kicked him in the knackers for it?
NICKY: Oh yeh - took it like a man.
GEORDIE: Do you remember, Nicky, when we went round, me and you and Tosker, with that copper, to his house to point him out?

HE IS LAUGHING. NICKY STARTS TO LAUGH.

NICKY: I remember you pointing at your arse.
GEORDIE: And he says to the cop "Do you know who I am?" and the cop says "Desperate Dan?". Tosker didn't know whether to laugh or cry.
NICKY: Cos you kept pointing to your arse and shouting:
BOTH: "This is what I think of you, fatso!"

THEY ARE LAUGHING BUT TRYING NOT TO MAKE TOO MUCH NOISE. THEY CALM DOWN. QUIET.

NICKY: I've got to go. I'll see you, mate.
GEORDIE: Nicky.
NICKY: What?
GEORDIE: Nicky.

NICKY: What?

SILENCE. GEORDIE HOLDS OUT HIS HAND. NICKY SIGHS AND TAKES IT.

GEORDIE: You're my only mate, really.

NICKY: Yeh.

GEORDIE: Do you remember when - ?

NICKY: It won't be worth going if I don't go.

GEORDIE: Sorry, mate.

HE HOLDS ONTO NICKY'S HAND.

NICKY: Is everything OK, Geordie?

GEORDIE: I'm leaving.

NICKY: What?

GEORDIE: I'm leaving.

NICKY: Leaving where?

GEORDIE: Here.

NICKY: Since when?

GEORDIE: I don't know.

NICKY: Go to bed.

GEORDIE: No, I mean it. I'm going. Tomorrow. Today. Really.

NICKY: To go where?

GEORDIE: London.

NICKY: Why?

GEORDIE SHRUGS.

NICKY: You can't go to London.

GEORDIE: Why not? Everything's changing. For you. For Tosker.

NICKY: You're not going to London. Go to bed. I'll see you tomorrow.

GEORDIE: I can't stand the thought of getting up in four hours time and going to that factory. I got paid today. I'm going. You can't live up here. I'll come back when you've built all the houses and schools and everything.

NICKY IS DUMBFUNDED.

GEORDIE: When I get sorted out I'll send you my address and you can come down and stay with me - will you?

NICKY: Yeh. Course I will.

GEORDIE: I couldn't do without my mates, you know?

THEY ARE LOOKING AT EACH OTHER. A VOICE FROM ABOVE.

DONOHUE: (OFF) Hello, down there!

NICKY: Oh, Christ.
 DONOHUE: (OFF) Is that my young friend?
 GEORDIE: It's the one you like. The talker.
 NICKY: Can he see us?
 GEORDIE: He's looking straight at us.

NICKY LOOKS UP.

NICKY: Hello!
 DONOHUE: (OFF) How are you? Celebrating the future?
 NICKY: Have we won yet?
 DONOHUE: (OFF) Yes!

NICKY GRABS GEORDIE AND SWINGS HIM ROUND.

NICKY: We won! We won!
 DONOHUE: (OFF) What a night! What a day!
 NICKY: I knew we'd win!
 DONOHUE: (OFF) You'll remember it all your life! Are you coming up?
 NICKY: Yes - if I can!
 DONOHUE: (OFF) Course you can! What about your friend?

GEORDIE HAS BACKED OFF TO THE SHADOWS. HE SHAKES HIS HEAD TO NICKY.

GEORDIE: I'll see you, Nicky.
 NICKY: I'll see you, Geordie.

GEORDIE GOES.

DONOHUE: (OFF) Come up - we're opening some champagne!

EXIT NICKY.

Scene iv

ABOVE. ENTER NICKY AND DONOHUE. NICKY LOOKS DOWN.

DONOHUE: Talk about yourself, Nick.
 NICKY: Oh. Well, there's nothing to say. There's nothing to say.
 I haven't done anything ..
 DONOHUE: Go on - say it.
 NICKY: Yet.
 DONOHUE: That's better. Outside of politics a reluctance to blow
 your own trumpet is sometimes a virtue. Though never an
 advantage.
 NICKY: I'm sorry.
 DONOHUE: For what?
 NICKY: I heard about your telephone call.

DONOHUE: Don't be. Men are ruined by that kind of ambition. I am ambitious - for this city. For these people. But I haven't got a career. I could've had, but I haven't. I could've had a lot of things I haven't got. That's all right - that's the deal. Instead I have power. Not a lot, mind you, just a little. I'm in harness for these people - free of charge. It's a privilege to serve. It means everything to me. Do you know Mrs Donohue?

NICKY: Yes.

DONOHUE: Tell me if she's still here.

NICKY GOES AND COMES BACK.

NICKY: I couldn't see her.

DONOHUE NODS.

DONOHUE: Now tell me what's on your mind.

NICKY: It's very petty. No. It isn't.

DONOHUE: You want something?

NICKY: Not for myself.

DONOHUE: What?

NICKY: It's about the new flats being built in Willow Lane.

DONOHUE: Yes?

NICKY: If I asked Connor about giving one to a young couple I know? They're just starting out.

DONOHUE: He'd most likely do it.

NICKY: Would it be all right to ask him though?

DONOHUE: It depends. If you use him, he'll use you. That's the way Bede operates. It depends. I thought it wasn't for yourself.

NICKY: It isn't.

DONOHUE SMILES. NICKY LOOKS AWAY.

DONOHUE: Whatever lies you have to tell other people - always tell yourself the truth.

NICKY: Do you?

DONOHUE: I try.

NICKY: He owes them something anyway.

DONOHUE: Fair enough then. I thought for a minute you were going to ask me for a job.

NICKY: What as?

DONOHUE: My assistant at Donohue PRS.

NICKY: I don't know anything about public relations.

DONOHUE: You know how to write letters, don't you? You know how to

speak English? So why don't you ask me?
 NICKY: I've applied to University.
 DONOHUE: To study what?
 NICKY: Politics.
 DONOHUE: Politics? You don't want to go to university to study politics. I could teach you more in five minutes. And you can earn a living. That. That's politics. Getting things done. Changing things. Giving them the basic decencies. It's the only kind of politics that matters and it includes all other kinds. What do you say?
 NICKY: I'm thinking about my old man.
 DONOHUE: He'll object?
 NICKY: No, not that. If you want me there's nothing I'd rather do.

THEY SHAKE HANDS.

DONOHUE: Good.
 NICKY: You knew him didn't you?
 DONOHUE: I've known him most of my life.
 NICKY: Why is he like this? Why did he give up and you didn't?
 DONOHUE: You're being very hard on him, Nick. When we were your age I'm telling you he was red hot. He was one of the best. He was one of the few who understood the theory. I mean people like Connor didn't compare with Billy. I don't know why, Nicky. Have you never asked him?
 NICKY: He just talks about Bournemouth and Tories.

DONOHUE LAUGHS.

NICKY: And the corruption of socialism. I don't know. He gave up. He lost his faith in the future - that's corruption. I better go.
 DONOHUE: No. Stay and talk. I feel like talking and there aren't many who know how to listen. Fewer still who can understand. Anyway, what do you think I'm paying you for?
 NICKY: All right. What shall we talk about?
 DONOHUE: The future.

HE DRINKS FROM THE CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE AND PASSES IT TO NICKY. ENTER EDWARDS.

EDWARDS: I've come to say goodnight, Austin. Congratulations.
 DONOHUE: Thank you, John. My new assistant Dominic Hutchinson. You'll be seeing a lot of Mr Edwards, Nick. Edwards Construction is the company's biggest client.
 EDWARDS: Funny way you have of doing business, Austin. The answer's yes then?
 DONOHUE: Yes. The answer's yes. We'll build the new Jerusalem.

ACT IIScene i

RHODESIA. THE OUTER OFFICE OF A CABINET MINISTER. A DESK AND TWO CHAIRS.
JOSEPH SITS ALONE. BRIGHT LIGHT. ENTER MR ALLISON.

ALLISON: The Minister's finished his lunch. He may want you to drive his guest to the airport or they may take coffee. Then I think he'll want to go to the farm.

JOSEPH: Yes, sir.

ALLISON: You might as well sit down. Are you enjoying your job?

JOSEPH: Yes, sir. Very much.

ALLISON: He's a good man to work for. He's a very kind man, isn't he?

JOSEPH: Yes, sir, he's a very kind man.

ALLISON: You don't have to keep standing up.

ENTER THE MINISTER WITH JOHN BOURNE.

MINISTER: Something none of us can understand over here, John..How the hell did the Conservatives lose that election?

BOURNE: Ah well. Old age perhaps. The scandals didn't help.

MINISTER: Scandals? A man goes to bed with a prostitute - what's the scandal? No really - I don't think you realise how ridiculous it looked from over here.

BOURNE: That may be but there's such a thing as British public opinion to be reckoned with.

MINISTER: Well you should do away with it. Specially if it means the Labour party gets elected. Mr Bourne and I will have some coffee in my room, please.

BOURNE LOOKS AROUND AND SEES JOSEPH. HE SMILES AT HIM.

MINISTER: If we're still talking in half an hour you'd better interrupt us. Mr Bourne has a plane to catch. You don't mind waiting another half an hour, Joseph?

JOSEPH: No, sir.

MINISTER: This young man's going to be the best chauffeur in Rhodesia. Mr. Allison will arrange a cup of coffee for you.

JOSEPH: Thank you, sir.

MINISTER: How's your brother?

JOSEPH: Better now, thank you, sir.

MINISTER: Good. After you, John.

ALLISON: Would you like someone to take notes, sir?

BOURNE: Er...

MINISTER: No, that won't be necessary.

BOURNE GOES IN. THE MINISTER WHISPERS A FEW WORDS TO ALLISON AND GOES IN. ALLISON OPENS A DRAWER AND TAKES OUT SOME HEADPHONES. HE PUTS ON THE HEADPHONES AND LISTENS. HE STARTS A TAPE RECORDER IN THE DRAWER, REPLACES THE HEADPHONES, CLOSES THE DRAWER, AND LOOKS AT JOSEPH.

ALLISON: Do you take sugar?

JOSEPH: Yes, sir.

EXIT ALLISON. JOSEPH SITS FOR A WHILE. HE WALKS INTO THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM AND LOOKS DOWN THE CORRIDOR. HE IS CURIOUS ABOUT WHAT IS IN THE DRAWER. HE GOES TO THE DESK, OPENS THE DRAWER, PUTS ON THE HEADPHONES, STANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM LOOKING DOWN THE CORRIDOR, AND LISTENS TO THE FOLLOWING:

MINISTER: - why you're here? Thinking of pulling out of Britain and bringing your oil to Rhodesia? Life under the socialists not to your liking? No?

THEY ARE LAUGHING.

BOURNE: No. Life under the socialists is pretty much as it was before. So far. No, this is merely a courtesy visit on behalf of the company.

MINISTER: And very nice too. Now what would you like to talk about?

BOURNE: The future. It's an open secret that your government is discussing a unilateral declaration of independence.

MINISTER: Of course we are. We're being left with no choice. Either we go it alone without Britain or else we hand over the country to the blacks. You can imagine how some of us feel. Many of us fought for Britain in the war. Now we're called rebels because we won't hand over the country to a lot of children. That's what they are, you know. Look at Joseph. He's about as bright as they come but, honestly, can you imagine him without somebody to tell him what to do? It's impossible. The blacks will never run this country. Anyway - I'm sorry.

BOURNE: No.

MINISTER: Let's get our cards on the table. If we declare a UDI, your government has two choices. One, a military war. Two, an economic war. Wilson has already ruled out the former. In the case of the latter - economic sanctions, including an oil embargo - what would be the position of your company?

BOURNE: Of course, I can only give you my own opinion.

MINISTER: Naturally.

BOURNE: I think the company would want to take the long view.

MINISTER: I see. What does that mean?

BOURNE: We aren't politicians. We're businessmen.

MINISTER: Yes.

BOURNE: The company would wish to remain neutral.

MINISTER: Neutral. Well that's very good, John. It's just a question of whose side you'd be neutral on. I think the long view is the right one. The white man is your customer in this part of the world and the white man is here to stay. We don't stand entirely alone. You came here via Pretoria.

BOURNE: Yes. Rhodesia has many friends there.

MINISTER: Of course she has. Of course she has. If we fall, the writing on the wall for them too. I don't know how it looks from London, John; but from Salisbury and Pretoria the issue's about as simple as you can get. We're looking for friends. So tell me what you were sent here to tell me.

FOOTSTEPS IN THE CORRIDOR. JOSEPH NERVOUS.

BOURNE: We intend to supply Rhodesia with oil, come what may.

MINISTER: And what if that breaks British law?

BOURNE: We have independent subsidiaries in Mozambique and South Africa. They know our friends in the north.

MINISTER: Good. That's good. Thank you, John.

JOSEPH SEES ALLISON APPROACHING, REPLACES THE HEADPHONES, CLOSES THE DRAWER, AND MOVES AWAY FROM THE DESK. ENTER ALLISON. HE GIVES JOSEPH A CUP OF COFFEE AND TAKES TWO MORE INSIDE. SILENCE. JOSEPH STANDS MOTIONLESS, HOLDING HIS COFFEE. ENTER ALLISON, BOURNE AND THE MINISTER.

MINISTER: My boy Lance is studying in England. I'm hoping he'll take over the farm when he comes back.

BOURNE: Where is your farm?

MINISTER: On the border. Near Umtali. If you ever need a break from the London rain, come and visit.

BOURNE: Thank you. I will.

MINISTER: Joseph?

JOSEPH: Yes, sir?

MINISTER: You haven't drunk your coffee.

JOSEPH NOTICES THIS. HE GULPS IT ALL DOWN.

MINISTER: Well, when you're ready.

JOSEPH: Yes, sir.

THEY START TO GO.

MINISTER: I was telling Mr. Bourne what a beautiful place the farm is.
 JOSEPH: Yes, sir.
 MINISTER: Joseph was born there.
 BOURNE: Really?
 JOSEPH: Yes, sir.
 THEY ARE GONE.

Scene ii

LONDON. SCOTLAND YARD. NIGHT. DULL SOUND OF TRAFFIC IN STREET BELOW. ENTER THE METROPOLITAN POLICE COMMISSIONER. HE PLACES A FILE ON THE DESK, OPENS IT, READS IT BRIEFLY AND WALKS AWAY TO THE WINDOW. A KNOCK. HE DOESN'T RESPOND. ENTER ROY JOHNSON.

JOHNSON: Commissioner?
 JONES: Roy. What are you doing here?
 JOHNSON: Very nice to see you, sir.

JONES GOES TO THE DESK AND CLOSES THE FILE.

JOHNSON: It's a bit late. I'll call in tomorrow if you like. After the conference.
 JONES: No, stay. I was only .. The conference, of course.

HE GOES BACK TOWARDS THE WINDOW THEN TURNS SUDDENLY.

JONES: Of course, I haven't seen you - . Congratulations. Not before time either. And how's your new patch?
 JOHNSON: Becoming shipshape.
 JONES: I bet it is. A pity you couldn't have stayed in Newcastle. The job's up now.
 JOHNSON: I'd never have got it.
 JONES: What next then? Is that why you're here?
 JOHNSON: No thanks. I like the view but mine's greener. Besides which, I'll eat my hat if a provincial bobby ever gets this job.
 JONES: That investigation in Norwich. It was a good job. It didn't make you many friends though.
 JOHNSON: I won't worry about that.
 JONES: Not a pleasant job.
 JOHNSON: If the law didn't apply to coppers it would say so somewhere.
 JONES: You know who you remind me of?
 JOHNSON: My old man.
 JONES: God rest his soul.
 SILENCE.

JOHNSON: What's your problem, Ted?

JONES LOOKS AT HIM AND INDICATES THE FILE ON THE DESK. JOHNSON OPENS IT AND READS.

JONES: The rest is more of the same.

JOHNSON: Cons and pimps complaining about bent coppers? Par for the course, isn't it? There's something wrong if they don't complain.

JONES: It's persistent though. And some of it's staggering. Bribery. Extortion. Falsification of evidence. Participation in robberies even. If a hundredth part was true.

JOHNSON: Do you think it is?

JONES TURNS AWAY.

JOHNSON: What have you done about it?

JONES: What would you do?

JOHNSON: Look for the evidence.

A KNOCK. JOHNSON CLOSES THE FILE.

JONES: Come in.

ENTER DEPUTY ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER WHITAKER AND DETECTIVE INSPECTOR CHAPPLE.

WHITAKER: Commissioner. Roy, I heard you were here.

JOHNSON: Alan.

WHITAKER: How's the new job?

JOHNSON: All right so far.

WHITAKER: Will you stay with us while you're down?

JOHNSON: I'd love to.

WHITAKER: Good. Sorry, Ted, we'll go. Oh, let me just introduce Harold Chapple. Chief Constable Roy Johnson.

JOHNSON: Inspector Chapple.

CHAPPLE: Sir.

JONES: Stay a minute, Alan. I've been showing Roy some of the file. He wants to know if there's evidence. Alan's been handling it.

HE RETURNS TO THE WINDOW.

JOHNSON: Is there?

WHITAKER: Not much that Harold or I can find. (Quietly:) It's a load of balls, Roy. He's not well.

JOHNSON: I know.

WHITAKER: He's getting himself worked up about nothing. I think it's the old story, sir. Eh, Harold?

CHAPPLE: Plenty of allegations, sir, but mainly anonymous or else
blatantly malicious.

JONES: You're still investigating though?

CHAPPLE: Yes, sir.

SILENCE.

WHITAKER: I'll see you later then. I'll be in my office. We'll drive
home. Goodnight, sir.

JONES: Goodnight, Alan.

EXEUNT WHITAKER AND CHAPPLE.

JOHNSON: You're not satisfied, are you?

JONES: People see what they want to see, Roy. Even honest coppers
like Alan. But I keep coming back to it. I see that file in
my dreams. If just a hundredth part is true - then you have
to start asking questions: how long has it been going on?
How long can it go on without the lid coming off? Not forever.
Then what do we do? The people of this country are still
overwhelmingly law-abiding. But what do we say to them if
this came out? Please go on behaving yourselves? Please obey
the law? What do we do? Or rather - what do you do, Roy?
For I shan't be here I think.

JOHNSON: You find the guilty men and put them where they belong.

JONES: Do you, Roy? I wonder.

HE TURNS BACK TO THE WINDOW. EXIT JOHNSON.

Scene iii

A NEWCASTLE STREET, OUTSIDE A TELEVISION RENTAL SHOP. PASSERS-BY STOP AND
WATCH THE SILENT SCREENS. ONE OF THEM IS AUSTIN DONOHUE. ENTER NICKY. HE SEES
HIM, STANDS ON HIS LEFT, TAPS HIM ON THE RIGHT SHOULDER. DONOHUE TURNS.

NICKY: Oh, there you are. We'll be late.

DONOHUE: I was watching Harold.

NICKY: What's he up to now?

DONOHUE: I can't lip read but I expect he's trying to explain why his
Rhodesia policy's such a fiasco. The rebels were supposed to
be on their knees by last Christmas.

NICKY: I would just like to make it clear that when I said this oil
embargo would bite in a matter of weeks not months I didn't
really mean weeks not months - what I really meant was months
not weeks. He's got them interested anyway.

DONOHUE: They're watching the wrestling on the other side.

NICKY: Let's go.

DONOHUE: What do you know about television, Nick?

NICKY: Not much. We'll be late. Why?

DONOHUE: It's about time somebody did some thinking about it. Its cultural possibilities. You know the franchise comes up soon. I've been talking about it. to Connor.

NICKY: What does he know about it?

DONOHUE: Absolutely nothing, but I'm working on him. His union should have a stake in it. The people who watch it should own it - what would be wrong with that for a change? We need to call a few people together. Why should the Geordie watch what other people see fit for him? Why shouldn't his cultural life be reflected on those screens instead of that of Los Angeles or New York or London?

NICKY: No reason at all.

DONOHUE: Yes there is. Money. They've got the money and the know-how. And the know-who. You've got to get local control of a production company. We'll do that tomorrow though. Got your bag packed?

NICKY: What for? We're going to a meeting.

DONOHUE: That's cancelled. We're going on safari instead.

NICKY: Where to?

DONOHUE: South Durham.

NICKY: Why?

DONOHUE: We're going to build a new town. A new town.

NICKY: Who is?

DONOHUE: We are. I've been asked to set up the development corporation. Now your education really starts. You can put some of your grander ideas to the test.

A RAUCOUS VOICE, OFF:

VOICE: Nicky-o!

NICKY TURNS. ENTER TOSKER WEARING A BOILERSUIT.

NICKY: To sker.

TOSKER: Why, mind, I like the suit.

NICKY: Friend of mine.

DONOHUE: Hello, Tosker.

TOSKER: How do? Guess what? We've moved. We got one of those new flats

HE WINKS BROADLY AT NICKY.

NICKY: What's it like?

TOSKER: Superb, man. Come and see it.

NICKY: OK.

TOSKER: What time?

NICKY: Not tonight. I'm busy.

TOSKER: Tomorrow then. We'll go out.

NICKY: Can't. Sorry, mate. I'll get in touch though.

TOSKER: Oh. Righto, then. Well I'll be seeing you.

NICKY: How's Mary?

TOSKER: Full of beans.

NICKY: Tell her I asked.

TOSKER: Righto. OK, then, Nick. Oh, er ...who do I send the money to?

NICKY: Eh?

TOSKER WINKS. THEY LAUGH.

TOSKER: See you then. Heard from Geordie?

NICKY: No. Have you?

TOSKER: Nah, not a word. See you.

EXIT TOSKER.

NICKY: Greta bloke.

—DONOHUE NODS. THEY GO.

Scene iv

SOHO. A PORN SHOP. CHARLIE SITS EATING SANDWICHES AND DRINKING TEA FROM A FLASK. ENTER GEORDIE. HE LOOKS AROUND. HE SHIVERS.

CHARLIE: Cold outside?

GEORDIE: Yeh.

CHARLIE: Yeh, well this isn't a waiting room, you know.

GEORDIE STARTS LOOKING AT MAGAZINES.

CHARLIE: Looking for anything in particular?

GEORDIE SHAKES HIS HEAD. CHARLIE READS HIS NEWSPAPER AND EATS. GEORDIE IS MORE INTERESTED IN THE FOOD THAN THE PORN.

CHARLIE: If you want hard stuff -

HE OPENS A SUITCASE AND OFFERS IT FOR BROWSING. GEORDIE SHAKES HIS HEAD. HE CLOSSES THE SUITCASE. GEORDIE BROWSSES. TELEPHONE RINGS. CHARLIE ANSWERS.

CHARLIE: Yeh?

HE LISTENS FOR A WHILE AND HANGS UP. HE LOOKS AT HIS WATCH.

CHARLIE: Want a cup of tea, pal?

GEORDIE: Eh?
 CHARLIE: Cup of tea?
 GEORDIE: Wouldn't say no, like.
 CHARLIE: What?
 GEORDIE: Wouldn't mind one like.
 CHARLIE: Are you saying yes or no?
 GEORDIE: Yes.
 CHARLIE: Well here you are then.

HE POURS HIM TEA. GEORDIE DRINKS. HE WATCHES HIM.

CHARLIE: Where you from, friend? Pakistan?
 GEORDIE: Eh?
 CHARLIE: Pakistan?
 GEORDIE: Jarrow.
 CHARLIE: Jarra? What's that - West Pakistan or East Pakistan?
 GEORDIE: Tyneside.
 CHARLIE: Tyneside? Christ, here's me thinking you're a Paki and all the time you're a bloody Scotsman!
 GEORDIE: It's in England.
 CHARLIE: What am I thinking of then?

SAM RUSHES IN CARRYING TWO BULGING SUITCASES.

SAM: Here, Charlie, any chance - ?
 CHARLIE: Sorry, Sam.
 SAM: Fucking hell.

SAM RUSHES OUT. CHARLIE LOOKS AT HIS WATCH.

CHARLIE: Here, you are - have a sandwich.

GEORDIE EATS A SANDWICH.

CHARLIE: How long you been down here then?
 GEORDIE: About a year.
 CHARLIE: Can't you find a job - big lad like you?
 GEORDIE: I had a job washing dishes but -

WILLIAMS RUSHES IN CARRYING TWO BULGING SUITCASES.

WILLIAMS: Here, Charlie, can I leave this lot for an hour?
 CHARLIE: I've got the same problem, mate.
 WILLIAMS: Bastards.

HE RUSHES OUT.

CHARLIE: Tell you what - do you want to earn thirty bob?
 GEORDIE: Yeh.

CHARLIE: Just look after the place for an hour. Everything's got the price on it. You can't go wrong. Read anything you want. I'll be back before you know it. All right?

GEORDIE: Yeh.

CHARLIE: Finish the tea. See you later.

EXIT CHARLIE CLUTCHING TWO BULGING SUITCASES. QUIET. GEORDIE LOOKS PLEASED. ENTER RUSTY.

RUSTY: Hello.

GEORDIE: Hello.

RUSTY: You're not Charlie, are you?

GEORDIE: No.

RUSTY: No, I thought not. Where is he? I've got a message from Benny.

GEORDIE: I don't know where he went. What you doing tonight?

RUSTY: What I usually do, I expect. Why?

GEORDIE: I've got thirty bob to spend.

RUSTY: Do you work for Benny?

GEORDIE: I don't know anybody called Benny. I'm just looking after this place for somebody called Charlie.

PAUSE.

RUSTY: Come on. Get out, quick!

GEORDIE: What for?

RUSTY: Just get out.

GEORDIE: I haven't been paid.

ENTER DETECTIVE SONSIBLESBLACK AND WEIR AND DETECTIVE SERGEANT CONRAD.

CONRAD: You're one of Barratt's whores, aren't you?

RUSTY: I don't whore for anybody. I'm a dancer.

CONRAD: You can save me a journey. Give him a message from my guvnor. Tell him the party's over - he's finished. Out.

EXIT RUSTY. GEORDIE STARTS TO FOLLOW.

BLACK: Not you. You're under arrest.

GEORDIE: Eh?

CONRAD SHOWS HIS WARRANT CARD.

GEORDIE: What for?

WEIR: Possessing obscene material.

GEORDIE: I'm only looking after it. The bloke who owns it's coming back.

CONRAD: Did he get a telephone call before he went?

GEORDIE: Yeh.

THE DETECTIVES LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

CONRAD: Who from?

GEORDIE: I don't know.

CONRAD: Well it's tough on you, friend.

BLACK: Let's go.

GEORDIE: What'll happen?

BLACK: You'll get a fine.

GEORDIE: How much?

WEIR: Five hundred.

BLACK: More if you cause us any trouble. Come on.

WEIR: First offence?

GEORDIE: Yeh.

WEIR: Five hundred.

GEORDIE: What happens if you can't pay?

CONRAD: You go to prison. Well, you should stay at home then - not come down here breaking the law, you thick northern bastard.

WEIR: Give him a break, Sarge, he's been set up. It's the owner we want, not you.

GEORDIE: He's coming back.

BLACK: We could give you a break.

GEORDIE: How?

BLACK: We could forget all about it.

PAUSE.

GEORDIE: How much does that cost.

BLACK: Five for me, five for him, ten for my guvnor, ten for his guvnor.

GEORDIE: I haven't got any money.

CONRAD: Wasting our bloody time - come on!

THEY GO TOWARDS HIM. GEORDIE LASHES OUT AT THEM.

CONRAD: Get the cuffs out. You asked for this.

ENTER RUSTY WITH BENNY BARRATT.

BENNY: (To Conrad) Who the fucking hell are you?

CONRAD: Are you Barratt?

BENNY: That's right. Who are you?

CONRAD: Are you the owner of this shop, Barratt?

BENNY: No.

CONRAD: Get out then.

GEORDIE: Christ.

BENNY: What's happening?

CONRAD: We're arresting this man and confiscating this pile of filth. We're closing this place down.

WEIR: Come on, you.

BENNY LOOKS AT THE PORN.

BENNY: What's the charge?

CONRAD: Non-payment of fines.

GEORDIE: I haven't got any money.

BENNY/CONRAD: Shut up.

BENNY: How much?

CONRAD: 250 quid.

BENNY: Would you like me to lend you 250 quid purely as an act of charity? Can I have a receipt?

BENNY HANDS THE MONEY TO CONRAD.

CONRAD: Fuck off.

BENNY: I didn't get your name.

CONRAD: Detective Sergeant Conrad.

BENNY: Who's your guvnor?

CONRAD: You don't know him. He'd like to meet you.

BENNY: You can tell him to stuff it.

CONRAD: I'll tell him.

EXEUNT CONRAD, BLACK AND WEIR.

BENNY: What the fuck's going on? Who are you?

ENTER CHARLIE WITH HIS SUITCASES.

CHARLIE: Oh. Hello. Been some trouble?

BENNY: Where've you been?

CHARLIE: What's happened?

BENNY: Charlie, have our friends in the force been getting their regular drinks?

CHARLIE: Course they have. Why?

BENNY: Who tipped you off?

CHARLIE: They did. The regulars.

BENNY: Then who's Conrad? Who's his guvnor? There was a time you got what you paid for. These days

EXIT BENNY. SILENCE.

RUSTY: Come round the Jack O'Diamonds tonight - I'll ask Benny to give you a job..

GEORDIE: You must be bloody joking.

RUSTY: Howay, man.

GEORDIE: You a Geordie?
 RUSTY: Why aye. Well, I used to be. OK? It's better than starving to death.
 GEORDIE: Yeh. All right.
 EXIT RUSTY. CHARLIE IS FINISHING HIS TEA.
 CHARLIE: Here, come on, you - out!
 GEORDIE: Thirty bob.
 CHARLIE GIVES HIM THIRTY BOB. EXIT GEORDIE.

Scene v

A WHITEHALL STREET. TRAFFIC NOISE. ENTER KELLY, A GOVERNMENT MINISTER, AND SYKES, A SENIOR CIVIL SERVANT. THEY LOOK UP AND DOWN THE STREET.

KELLY: Where's the car?
 SYKES: It ought to be here, Minister. It's quarter to.
 KELLY: I'll be late for Cabinet.
 SYKES: Held up in traffic perhaps. It'll be along in a second.
 THEY WAIT
 KELLY: This isn't good enough, you know.
 KELLY. SIGHS.
 KELLY: Did you talk to Boyne?
 SYKES: Bourne?
 KELLY: Bourne. Did you meet him?
 SYKES: Yes, I'm preparing a report. He was quite categorical. Whatever oil is going into Rhodesia it isn't being supplied by British concerns.
 KELLY: Or their subsidiaries?
 SYKES: Or their subsidiaries.
 KELLY: He was quite clear about that?
 SYKES: Quite clear.
 KELLY: That's something. This is appalling. We'd better take a taxi.
 ENTER GEORDIE, EATING A PIE.
 SYKES: Something must have gone wrong. Excuse me, would you help us by finding a taxi? It's rather urgent.
 GEORDIE: Yeh.
 EXIT GEORDIE.
 KELLY: Who would you say is supplying the oil?
 SYKES: I'd say the Americans and the French. And the Portuguese.

KELLY: Yes. The bastards. They're going to start a war.
 SYKES: Do you think so?
 KELLY: Yes I do. If the white regime isn't brought down soon the Africans will start arming. It's to prevent that happening that we're having to pretend the oil embargo's working. The charade's wearing a bit thin but we have to go on pretending, otherwise - Ah.

ENTER GEORDIE.

GEORDIE: Got you one.
 KELLY: Thank you very much. Walter, have you ... ?

SYKES GIVES GEORDIE A COIN.

SYKES: Thank you very much.
 GEORDIE: Ta. Do you know where the Jack O'Diamonds is, mate?
 SYKES: Er, yes, actually, it's behind Brewer Street.
 GEORDIE: Thanks.

KELLY AND SYKES START TO GO.

KELLY: The Jack O'Diamonds, Walter?
 SYKES: Yes, Minister.
 KELLY: You do surprise me sometimes. Mate.

THEY ARE GONE. ENTER THEIR CHAUFFEUR, LOOKING ABOUT HIM.

GEORDIE: Scuse me, do you know where Brewer Street is?
 CHAUFFEUR: First left. Down to the river. Jump in. Take big breaths.
 GEORDIE: Thanks.

EXEUNT BOTH.

Scene vi

NEWCASTLE. NICKY GETTING READY TO LEAVE HIS OFFICE. PUTTING ON HIS JACKET.
 ENTER EDDIE.

NICKY: Hello, Eddie.
 EDDIE: Hello, Nick. Got a minute?
 NICKY: I haven't actually. We're topping out the new hospital. I'm on my way.
 EDDIE: Won't take a minute. I've brought a ward constituent of mine to see you.
 NICKY: Me?
 EDDIE: I don't suppose Edwards is here?
 NICKY: Edwards? He's with Austin actually. He built the hospital.
 EDDIE: I know. Busy man. Would you like to come in, love?

ENTER MARY.

NICKY: Mary.

MARY: Hello, Nick. Long time no see.

NICKY: What's wrong?

EDDIE: Just describe the problem, Mary.

MARY: Well it's the flat.

NICKY: I heard there was a problem. Christ, has nothing been done about that yet?

MARY: It's just dripping with water all the time, Nicky. It's really wet, you know. I don't know if it's worse for us being on the top, but ...

NICKY: Shit. Look, I'll get on to Connor about it. Can you not do that, Eddie?

EDDIE: Till I'm blue in the face.

NICKY: Oh, this is a disgrace, I'll tell Austin. He'll get it sorted out. I'm sorry, Mary. I don't understand what's going wrong.

EDDIE MOTIONS HER TO CONTINUE.

MARY: The electicity's not right either. Keeps going off. It's bad for Antony, you know?

NICKY: What's going on?

EDDIE: That's what we're asking you.

NICKY: I'll come round.

EDDIE: Take Austin with you. And Edwards and Connor. If you're not too busy.

NICKY: Hey, come on, Eddie.

EDDIE: Come on what? You've not stopped looking at your watch since we came in.

MARY: Anyway. If you can do anything, Nicky, I'll be grateful.

NICKY: Something will be done. I promise. Are you all all right?

ENTER EDWARDS.

EDWARDS: Are you coming, Nick?

NICKY: Yeh, just a minute.

EDWARDS: The car's waiting.

NICKY: I said just a minute. I'll come round.

MARY: Thanks, Nicky.

EDDIE: Do. It's a revelation.

ENTER DONOHUE. EXIT EDWARDS.

DONOHUE: Eddie. Hello, love, Nick?

NICKY: I'll see you.

EXEUNT MARY AND EDDIE.

DONOHUE: Problems?

NICKY: Yeh. I'll talk to you later.

DONOHUE: Big day.

NICKY: Yeh. Excited?

DONOHUE: Yes. Read my speech?

NICKY: (Handing it over) Yeh.

DONOHUE: What do you think?

NICKY: It's very good.

DONOHUE: Is that all?

NICKY: A bit florid. I was a bit sharp with Edwards.

DONOHUE: Ah, he's an old woman. Plenty of time. They can't start without us. What was the problem?

NICKY: Flats at Willow Lane.

DONOHUE: That's being sorted out.

NICKY: Is it?

DONOHUE: What do you mean? Of course it is.

NICKY: What's Eddie playing at then?

DONOHUE: Oh, forget about Eddie Wells - he's going soft in the bloody head.

THEY ARE GONE.

Scene vii

JACK O'DIAMONDS. OFF, A PIANO IS PLAYING WHILE RUSTY WALKS THROUGH A ROUTINE. GEORDIE IS POLISHING A GLASS AND WATCHING HER. SHE STOPS, THINKING. THE PIANO STOPS. ENTER DESMOND, THE PIANIST.

DESMOND: What've you stopped for?

RUSTY: Desmond, could we try something different?

DESMOND: You mean start with no clothes and gradually put them on?

RUSTY: Oh, how funny, Desmond. We could be a bit more subtle.

DESMOND: They don't want subtlety, they want you to flash your fan.

RUSTY: Eventually. But it would be better if -

DESMOND: No it wouldn't.

ENTER BENNY WITH SAM AND WILLIAMS.

BENNY: Stay here. Charlie! (To Rusty:) Are you arguing again? Stop arguing. He knows better than what you do. Charlie! Get yourself down here - I want to talk to you! Do you like working for me, Geordie?

GEORDIE: Sorry, Mr. Barratt.
 BENNY: I'm not bollocking you - I'm asking you.
 GEORDIE: Yeh.
 BENNY: Yeh. Is that all? You don't put yourself about much, do you, Geordie? Just 'yeh' and 'no' and you get on with what you're told. I like you. You're no trouble. Not like some people. Charlie! Go and find him.

EXEUNT SAM AND WILLIAMS.

BENNY: What do you do during the day, Geordie?
 GEORDIE: Nothing.
 BENNY: Apart from balling Rusty. You think I dunno, don't you? But I know everything, see? Would you like another job? Managing a bookshop for me? Think about it. Where is he?

EXIT BENNY. EXIT DESMOND.

RUSTY: Don't.
 GEORDIE: Why not?
 RUSTY: Just don't. It's a mistake. Go back home.
 GEORDIE: No worse than what you do.
 RUSTY: What I do earns me a lot of money. I've got nobody pimping for me - nobody living easy off me. It all goes into my bank. I know exactly how long I'm going to do it. Then I'm out. The quiet life. On my own. Have kids.
 GEORDIE: How you going to manage that?
 RUSTY: I'll pay for it.
 GEORDIE: What if you don't get out of it?
 RUSTY: Do I look like a mug, Geordie? I'll get out. But you won't. So don't get in.
 GEORDIE: Busy tonight?
 RUSTY: Yeh. A busy night tonight. You're a fool.

ENTER CHARLIE WITH WILLIAMS AND SAM.

CHARLIE: What's the matter?

ENTER BENNY.

CHARLIE: You want me?
 BENNY: Yeh. Just wait there a minute. What about it - all right?
 GEORDIE: Yeh.
 BENNY: Good. Rusty, disappear.
 RUSTY: This'll be you next.

EXIT RUSTY. BENNY GOES OVER TO CHARLIE AND SURPRISES HIM WITH A PUNCH IN THE FACE.

BENNY: Get up. Come here. You know what I done that for?

CHARLIE: No.

BENNY RAISES HIS FIST AGAIN.

CHARLIE: Yeh.

BENNY: (Hitting him anywhere he can) You know what I'd like to do to you, you lying, thieving bastard? Eh? You're not even denying it, are you, you fucking worm?

CHARLIE: (Crying) I'm sorry, Benny.

BENNY: Sorry? I'll fucking kill you. You caused me a lot of trouble. You bloody traitor! Give me your keys.

CHARLIE HANDS OVER HIS KEYS.

BENNY: Chuck him out.

SAM AND WILLIAMS TAKE CHARLIE AWAY.

BENNY: Thought he'd go into business on his own. He's been running his own shops. I never even knew about them. There's shops opening everyday - everything's booming - it's fucking chaos. Something's got to be done. Come with me, Geordie, I'll show you the ropes.

EXEUNT BOTH.

Scene viii

RHODESIA. THE MINISTER'S FARM NEAR UMTALI. BRIGHT DAY. ENTER JOSEPH CARRYING THREE RIFLES AND AMMUNITION. HE STANDS WAITING. VOICES, OFF, TALKING CONVERSATIONALLY. ENTER HENNY, THE MINISTER'S WIFE. SHE SITS. JOSEPH TURNS AND LOOKS AT HER.

HENNY: Is my car fixed yet, Joseph?

JOSEPH: Yes, missy.

HENNY: Lance may use it to go into Umtali after lunch.

JOSEPH NODS. HENNY CLOSES HER EYES AND BREATHES DEEPLY.

HENNY: Where were you last night, Joseph?

JOSEPH: I was here, missy.

HENNY: No you weren't. The truck was gone all night. Where were you?

JOSEPH: Missy?

HENNY: There's no point in lying to me. I'm not a fool. I know when a boy's heart isn't on his job. You've got a girl over at the McRae's, haven't you?

JOSEPH: Yes, missy.

HENNY: What's she like?
 JOSEPH: She's beautiful, missy. Like missy.
 HENNY: Ha. Just be good enough to ask permission next time. Or else walk.
 JOSEPH: Yes, missy.
 HENNY: And be careful. Don't get yourselves into any trouble. Do you understand what I mean, Joseph?
 JOSEPH: Yes, missy.

ENTER THE MINISTER WITH LANCE AND JOHN BOURNE.

BOURNE: Did you enjoy your spell in England, Lance? I've forgotten where you said you were.
 LANCE: I was at Luton mainly. Yeh, I did. Though it was strange to be there while this was going on. I mean Rhodesia's my country, you know, I was born here. But I've always thought of Britain as the mother country. So it was strange to go and live there because it just felt like a country that had no real vitality, you know, like in decline. People seemed confused. Nobody to look up to. Nothing to work for. You know, "why work when you can go on the dole?" sort of thing. Blokes my age, you know? It made me feel sad actually. I was glad to leave.
 MINISTER: Lance doesn't mean to be rude, John.
 LANCE: Oh, no, Mr Bourne.
 BOURNE: No, no, not at all. Luton's rather like that.

THEY LAUGH. THEY TAKE A RIFLE EACH FROM JOSEPH.

BOURNE: I'm afraid I won't be much good at this.
 MINISTER: Just aim it in the general direction of the target and pull the trigger. Joseph'll reload for you.

THEY START TO SHOOT, JOSEPH RELOADING FOR THEM.

MINISTER: Lance, you're deaf as a post for the next five minutes.
 LANCE: OK, Dad. If it's politics I probably wouldn't understand it anyway.
 HENNY: Lance, come over here and rub your mother's shoulders.
 LANCE: OK.

HE GOES OVER.

BOURNE: We're hearing stories in England that you've got a war on your hands.
 MINISTER: A war? Christ, no.
 BOURNE: Something though.

MINISTER: They're starting to get a bit more organized. The Russians are swamping them with propoganda. There's the odd raid. Why?

BOURNE: Well. Because if a war does break out, someone is going to be blamed.

MINISTER: You mean the oil companies.

BOURNE: We'd a be a popular choice in certain circles.

MINISTER: Exactly how much have you told your government?

BOURNE: Very little. They'd rather not know. They much prefer to insist that the embargo is working.

MINISTER: So much for your famous public opinion.

BOURNE: The British public ceased to be interested in Rhodesia some time ago, and the government's quite happy to keep it that way. But a war might change all that. Which is why we've decided to tell the government what we've been doing.

MINISTER: What? At what level?

BOURNE: At the highest level we can reach.

MINISTER: Why?

BOURNE: Their embargo policy failed years ago. They went on pretending there was no oil when there obviously was. There's nothing they can do now but admit their own incompetence or go along with us. If we confess now, nothing will change. We'll go on supplying you through another company. They'll go on pretending there's an oil embargo. The British public will go on snoring quietly. And in five years time, if there is a war and if the British governmet is looking for scapegoats to explain its failures, it won't be able to point the finger at us. Its fingerprints will be there next to ours.

THE MINISTER NODS AND SMILES.

MINISTER: I understand. But there isn't going to be a war. The blacks haven't got the organization or the firepower.

HE LOOKS OVER AT HENNY AND LANCE.

MINISTER: There isn't going to be a war here. Let's have lunch.

EXEUNT ALL BUT JOSEPH. HE REMAINS HOLDING THE RIFLES. EXIT JOSEPH.

LONDON. THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. ENTER EDWARDS, DONOHUE AND NICKY.

EDWARDS: So that scheme doesn't include the housing development?
 DONOHUE: No, it's separate.
 EDWARDS: Mm. We still need to put a name up for chairman of the development corporation. And for manager.
 DONOHUE: Jackson.
 EDWARDS: No, the Ministry won't have him. Have a think. Can't Connor do it?
 DONOHUE: He's far too busy.

A WAITER APPROACHES THEM.

WAITER: Would you like to order, sir?
 EDWARDS: No, I'll wait.
 WAITER: Would you like another sherry, sir?
 EDWARDS: Yes, please.

EXIT WAITER.

DONOHUE: There's Bradford. I've arranged a meeting with the leader. There's a letter in the post about that. Bolton - you'll definitely be interviewed for the town centre. Davis is on the committee.

ENTER BOURNE AND SYKES.

EDWARDS: Good.

ENTER THE WAITER.

WAITER: Yes, sir?
 SYKES: We're waiting for Mrs. Kelly.
 WAITER: Yes, sir. Would you like your table now, sir?
 SYKES: Yes? Yes.

EXEUNT WAITER, SYKES AND BOURNE.

EDWARDS: Anything about Warrington yet?
 DONOHUE: Nicky's getting hold of the road plans.

THE WAITER BRINGS THEM SHERRIES. NICKY DOESN'T TAKE ONE.

DONOHUE: Nicky?
 NICKY: Sorry?
 DONOHUE: Did you get the road plan for Warrington?

EXIT THE WAITER.

NICKY: Not yet, no.

EDWARDS: Pity. Well when it arrives we can see what's what. Good. Don't forget two names for the other. We don't want people in that we don't know. Good.

DONOHUE: Whose guests are we, John?

EDWARDS: Haven't I said?

DONOHUE: No you haven't.

EDWARDS: I'm not going to either. You'll see him when he deigns to turn up.

DONOHUE: An honourable member though?

EDWARDS: Obviously. He's also the next chairman of Edwards Internationa. I'm hoping he'll do for me abroad what you've done up north. Or better.

DONOHUE: A man with friends in faraway places.

EDWARDS: I should hope so.

DONOHUE: Who do you think it is, Nick?

NICKY: I don't know.

EDWARDS: What's the matter with you today, young man? We can't shut you up norma-ly.

DONOHUE: Overwork. He's been finding out there's more to politics than making speeches. It's a slog.

ENTER KELLY IN CONVERSATION WITH CLAUD SEABROOK. THEY PART. KELLY GOES INTO THE DINING-ROOM. SEABROOK COMES OVER TO EDWARDS.

SEABROOK: John, I'm so sorry.

EDWARDS: Not at all, Claud. Have you met Austin Donohue?

SEABROOK: I believe we met when I was at the Board of Trade?

DONOHUE: Quite possibly. My assistant Dominic Hutchinson.

SEABROOK: How do you do? Are we a party?

EDWARDS: No, these gentlemen aren't joining us.

SEABROOK: Nice to have met you again.

EDWARDS: Let me just have a moment, Claud, please.

EDWARDS TAKES DONOHUE ASIDE.

SEABROOK: So you work for Mr. Edwards.

NICKY: No, I don't.

SEABROOK: Ah.

EDWARDS: I can't do estimates without that road plan. He should've had it by now.

DONOHUE: It's on its way.

EDWARDS: You sort it out - personally. I've had enough of him. I don't want him working on any Edwards business in future. Understood

DONOHUE: Yes, John.
EDWARDS: You do it. And quick.

DONOHUE HANDS HIM TWO ENVELOPES.

EDWARDS: What's this?
DONOHUE: That's a hospitality list. Christmas is coming.
EDWARDS: Gets longer every year. I'll have to buy a turkey farm at this rate.
DONOHUE: The other is my fees and expenses for the last six months.
EDWARDS: Send it into the office.
DONOHUE: I have. Twice. I'd appreciate it if you could hurry them along, John.
EDWARDS: Yes. all right.

EDWARDS AND SEABROOK GO TOWARDS THE DINING-ROOM.

EDWARDS: Was it a debate?
SEABROOK: The renewal of the Rhodesian sanctions order. I always vote against.

THEY ARE GONE.

DONOHUE: Claud Seabrook. There'll be no stopping him now.
NICKY: Somebody'll stop him.
DONOHUE: Right. Let's have it, shall we?
NICKY: I don't like working for him.
DONOHUE: That problem's already solved. OK?
NICKY: No.
DONOHUE: You're upset, aren't you? You get yourself wound up. Come on - let's have it. I want some lunch.
NICKY: I thought I was joining a crusade. I thought I was working for a future. Instead I find I'm working for a builder.
DONOHUE: You need a break. When we get back stay away from the office. Don't work, don't even think about work till after Christmas.
NICKY: I don't want a break. I want to talk about what we do for a living. What are we doing here drinking glasses of sherry and shaking hands with a slimey bastard like Seabrook?
DONOHUE: All right. Let's talk.
NICKY: It's against everything we're supposed to be for. I've lost track of it all somewhere. What exactly do we do for Edwards? What are we selling him?
DONOHUE: We're selling an organization. We're putting 'a' in touch with 'b'. We're introducing him and his name and his ability and his talent to men who need them. Men with millions of pounds

to spend and not the faintest idea how to spend it wisely. Men who work on factory floors by day and are expected to become businessmen by night. They're blundering about in the dark unless we organize them.

NICKY: What about Connor?
 DONOHUE: Connor's one of the people I've introduced to Edwards.
 NICKY: Does he work for Edwards?
 DONOHUE: Of course he doesn't. He works for me as a matter of fact.
 NICKY: For you? What as?
 DONOHUE: A public relations consultant.

NICKY LAUGHS.

DONOHUE: He knows everybody - it's as simple as that. He can save you weeks, months of effort by picking up the phone and calling the right man. That's all. It's an arrangement, entirely above board, that works a hundred per cent in the public's interest. Really. Really, Nick. OK?

NICKY: No. If Connor works for you and you work for Edwards, then Connor works for Edwards.

DONOHUE: No.

NICKY: Yes. What else? Is this why Edwards gets so much work?
 It is, isn't it?

SILENCE.

DONOHUE: If that's what you think there's nothing more to say.

NICKY: I'm sorry, Austin. I'm sorry.

DONOHUE: Maybe we both need a break.

NICKY: Come and see these flats, will you?

DONOHUE: What flats?

NICKY: In Willow Lane.

DONOHUE: Are they still a problem?

NICKY: Yes.

DONOHUE: Why didn't you say?

NICKY: Those people are friends of mine. I said I'd help and I haven't. And I'm ashamed. They're just stuck there and nobody's helping them.

DONOHUE: Of course I will.

NICKY: They are what it's all about, you know? People like them. Not Claud Seabrook and his big deals abroad.

DONOHUE NODS AND PATS HIM ON THE SHOULDER.

DONOHUE: Come on.

EXEUNT NICKY AND DONOHUE. ENTER KELLY, SYKES AND BOURNE. SILENCE.

KELLY: So. What you're telling me is that you have been - unwittingly - the main supplier of oil to Rhodesia?

SILENCE. SHE THINKS.

KELLY: The Cabinet never underestimated the difficulty of stopping the oil going in. But we did expect to stop British oil going in. We've got a bush war threatening to turn into a civil war. We've got the Royal Navy blockading the oil pipeline at Beira at a cost of millions of pounds a year to the British taxpayer. We're mounting a loud public campaign at the UN to get other countries to tighten their sanctions. Now suddenly you tell me that it's British companies sending the stuff in by rail.

BOURNE: I'm sorry, Minister, but at least we've put a stop to that. We now have an arrangement with the French whereby they supply the Rhodesians and our subsidiaries supply French customers in South Africa.

KELLY: Yes. So I can continue to assure the House of Commons and the British public that no British oil is going into Rhodesia?

BOURNE: Yes.

KELLY: Yes. I think the Cabinet will simply have to accept that. Short of invading South Africa and destroying the refineries - which isn't in anybody's best interest - I don't see what else is possible. I'm only sorry that as a government we have to go on pretending otherwise. But politics, we are learning, is largely a matter of presentation these days. I have to go. Good bye, Mr Bourne. Goodbye, Walter.

BOURNE: Goodbye, Minister.

THEY SHAKE HANDS. EXIT KELLY.

BOURNE: Thank you, Walter, for your extraordinarily patient understanding of the problem.

SYKES: It was a very awkward thing. Very awkward all round. I'm glad if we've managed to find a solution which keeps everyone - if not exactly happy - then at least in business.

THEY START TO GO.

BOURNE: You obviously have a great knowledge of Africa.

SYKES: I love Africa. I'm going to retire there next year. Kenya or Uganda.

BOURNE: I didn't realise you were close to retirement.
SYKES: Oh yes indeed.
BOURNE: Hmm. A man with your experience would be invaluable to us.
I'm speaking off the top of my head, of course, but

THEY ARE GONE. ENTER SEABROOK AND EDWARDS. THEY ARE DRINKING BRANDIES.

EDWARDS: To a thriving collaboration.
SEABROOK: Certainly.
EDWARDS: I feared you might be too busy to take up my offer.
SEABROOK: If we were in government, yes, but not in opposition. You know, I always wanted - it was always my ambition to serve my country in the highest office. Since that became extremely unlikely a year or so ago, I've had another ambition. I would like to be rich. You're obviously thinking big.
EDWARDS: I'm in a position to go after the very big international contracts. In fact my business is at the stage where it needs those big contracts.
SEABROOK: Would you like another brandy?
EDWARDS: Yes.
SEABROOK: I have a great many contacts in the middle East ..

THEY ARE GONE.

Scene x

NEWCASTLE. TOSKER'S AND MARY'S FLAT. UNFURNISHED BUT FOR A TELEVISION SET, WHICH IS SWITCHED ON. TOSKER IS LOOKING OUT OF THE WINDOW.

MARY (OFF): Tosker. Tosker.
TOSKER: What?
MARY (OFF): Come and empty this bucket for me, will you?

HE GOES OFF, COMES BACK WITH A FULL BUCKET, GOES OFF THE OTHER SIDE, COMES BACK WITH THE EMPTY BUCKET, TAKES IT THROUGH TO MARY, COMES BACK AND LOOKS AT THE TV.

TELEVISION: A Government minister has denied in the Commons allegations that British oil companies have been involved in illegally supplying oil to the rebel regime in Rhodesia. Mrs. Kelly said there was no truth in the allegations whatsoever and she was able to assure the house that no British oil had been supplied since sanctions began. The allegations were made in a Sunday newspaper last weekend, causing several MPs to lay down questions -

TOSKER SWITCHES CHANNELS.

MARY (OFF): What was that?
TOSKER: Nothing. Something about Rhodesia.
MARY (OFF): What?
TOSKER: Rhodesia.

HE GOES TO THE WINDOW.

TELEVISION: Officials are still investigating an explosion which killed five people in a block of flats at Ronan Point in East London in the early hours of yesterday morning. Police say the cause of the blast is still a mystery but Gas Board officials are at the scene of the explosion which ripped away one corner of the high-rise block. John Thomson spoke today to a resident of -.

TOSKER SWITCHES IT OFF.

MARY (OFF): Are you still there?
TOSKER: Yeh.
MARY (OFF): Are you going out?
TOSKER: In a minute.
MARY (OFF): Where to?
TOSKER: Labour Club.
MARY (OFF): Who are you waiting for?
TOSKER: I'm not waiting for anybody.
MARY (OFF): Do you not feel like doing something else for a change?
TOSKER: Like what?
MARY (OFF): Like giving me a hand.
TOSKER: I've been at work all day.
MARY (OFF): What do you think I've been doing?
TOSKER: No idea.

ENTER MARY.

MARY: Well I'll tell you, shall I? I've been mopping water off these bloody walls - that's what. So that the wallpaper will stay on. But it won't. As fast as I put it on, it falls off. If it's not the electricity going on and off, we're being flooded by burst pipes, and if it's not that we're being drowned by condensation!

SILENCE.

TOSKER: Yeh. Ok. I'll stay in.
MARY: It's no use just staying in. You've got to do something about it.
TOSKER: Look. We could go on mopping these walls forever. It's not

going to make any difference. You're just chucking money down the drain buying wallpaper. The place just wasn't put together properly.

SILENCE.

MARY: Well it's no use saying that. What are we going to do?

TOSKER: I don't know. I think we're stuck with it. It's the same above and below.

MARY: They'll have to rehouse us then. That's all there is to it.

TOSKER: They're not going to rehouse the whole block.

MARY: Well they'll have to repair it. They'll have to.

TOSKER: I don't see what they can do. If they could do something, they'd have done it.

MARY: Well I'm not staying here anymore. We'll have to move.

TOSKER: Where to? They'll not give us another new house. We've had our chance. The only way we can get out is if somebody does a swop.

MARY: Swop? You mean we're stuck here? Is that what you're saying? It's this or nothing?

TOSKER: (Suddenly losing his temper) Well it isn't my fault! Don't keep on and on!

MARY: I'm only -

TOSKER: Don't!

HE RAISES HIS FIST. SILENCE. DOOR BUZZER SOUNDS. EXIT MARY.

MARY (OFF): Nicky.

ENTER MARY WITH NICKY AND DONOHUE.

MARY: Tosker, it's Nicky. Mr Donohue.

TOSKER: Hello, Nicky. How's it going?

NICKY: Hello, Tosker.

THEY LOOK AROUND THE ROOM.

NICKY: Can we look round?

MARY: Don't go in the little bedroom. Antony'll probably be asleep.

EXEUNT DONOHUE AND NICKY.

MARY: Nicky'll sort it out. Donohue's a top dog.

ENTER EDDIE.

EDDIE: Door was open.

MARY: Hello, Eddie.

EDDIE: Can I talk to you for a minute?

ENTER DONOHUE AND NICKY. DONOHUE GOES TO THE WINDOW. EDDIE NOODS TO THEM.

NICKY: Eddie. This is terrible - you shouldn't be having to put up with this.

TOSKER: Can you do anything, Nicky?

NICKY: Austin?

NO REPLY FROM AUSTIN DONOHUE.

EDDIE: I've got something to say. This Ronan Point business makes this urgent. I've spoken to Bede Connor but he's talking about surveyor's reports. I'm visiting everybody in the block. My personal advice to you all is not to use your gas appliances.

NICKY: What's Ronan Point got to do with it?

EDDIE: It's the same building system.

NICKY: But we don't know what caused Ronan Point.

EDDIE: We know all about this system. If the structure's faulty it wouldn't be the first time. Would it, Austin? You're the expert.

NICKY: Austin?

DONOHUE: There have been problems in a few cases. Eddie's over-reacting as usual. These faults will be put right. If they can't be, or if the place is found to be unsound, everybody will be rehoused. No question of that. The whole block'll be emptied. And not next year. This will be done soon.

EDDIE: That's not what Connor's saying.

DONOHUE: Then I'd better go and talk to Bede Connor. I'll see you Monday, Nick.

EDDIE: Tell Connor. I'm going to get him this time.

EXIT DONOHUE.

EDDIE: I've got other people to see. Goodnight.

EXIT EDDIE.

MARY: Nicky, what should we do?

NICKY: It'll be all right. It'll be sorted out. Everybody's agreed about that.

TOSKER: What about the gas? Should we use it or not?

NICKY: No. I'll see you in a day or two. We'll go for a drink. I thought I was doing you a favour. I'm sorry.

TOSKER NODS. EXIT NICKY. SILENCE. MARY STARTS TO GO.

MARY: If you ever hit me, I'd take Antony and go.

TOSKER NODS.

MARY: I'm going to bed.

EXIT MARY.

Scene xi

RHODESIA. THE MINISTER'S FARM. NIGHT. ENTER THE MINISTER. HE BREATHES IN THE NIGHT AIR. ENTER HENNY.

MINISTER: You needn't have got up.

HENNY: I wanted to make sure you have a good breakfast. Are you driving yourself?

MINISTER: No, one of the guards will drive me.

HENNY: Will you be home for Christmas day?

MINISTER: Of course I will.

HENNY: I hope Lance will get leave to come. Couldn't you fix it?

MINISTER LOOKS AT HER.

MINISTER: It's happened so quickly, hasn't it?

A NOISE.

HENNY: I'll never get used to having armed men around the farm. I never thought I'd see it.

MINISTER: I want you to do something for me while I'm away, Henny. The police in Umtali are giving training in small arms handling for women. I'd like you to go.

HENNY: Are things that bad?

MINISTER: If you went it would encourage the other women on the farms. No. Not that bad yet.

HENNY: I'll go. I'll see if breakfast's ready.

A NOISE. A FIGURE IN THE SHADOWS.

MINISTER: It's Joseph.

HENNY: Run out of money. Come back looking for hot food and his job back.

MINISTER: Joseph? Come out.

JOSEPH STEPS INTO THE LIGHT. THEY SEE HIS UNIFORM.

HENNY: Oh my God.

MINISTER: Joseph, you bloody fool. Guards!

JOSEPH PRODUCES A PISTOL. MORE NOISES OFF, AROUND THEM.

MINISTER: Oh, Christ.

JOSEPH: I'm fighting for Zimbabwe now.

HENNY: There's no such place and there never will be. You'll never get your hands on Rhodesia in a thousand years.

MINISTER: You've been lied to, Joseph. The Russians who supplied your weapons are the same Russians who've kept us going by buying all our chrome.

JOSEPH SHAKES HIS HEAD.

MINISTER: Dying men don't lie, Joseph.

MINISTER AND HENNY HOLDS HANDS. JOSEPH KILLS THEM BOTH.

Scene xii

NEWCASTLE. A PUB. NICKY ALONE, DRINKING. ENTER DONOHUE. HE SITS BESIDE HIM. SILENCE. ENTER CONNOR WITH TWO BEERS. HE SITS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF NICKY. DONOHUE PRODUCES A LETTER AND PUTS IT IN FRONT OF NICKY:

DONOHUE: Tear it up.

NICKY: Means what it says, Austin. I've had enough.

DONOHUE: Tear it up. We've got a contract.

NICKY: Sue me.

DONOHUE: There's just been a meeting of the Labour group. Those flats are now number one housing priority. Whatever the cost. That right, Bede?

CONNOR: That's right, son. The surveyors are going in tomorrow morning. We'll take it from there.

DONOHUE: If they're not a hundred per cent, everybody'll be rehoused.

NICKY: Who's going to pay for all this?

CONNOR: The rates.

NICKY: Edwards should pay.

DONOHUE: Nicky, the problem's solved.

NICKY: No it isn't. It isn't solved till everybody knows how this happened in the first place

DONOHUE: What good would that do? It would finish me. It would finish Bede.

NICKY: It would finish Edwards.

CONNOR: It would finish you as well, bonny lad - don't forget who's been paying your wages.

DONOHUE: Edwards is already finished up here. He'll never work up here again if I have my way. All you would do if you went to

the papers or the police or whatever is you would finish the Party. That would be it. Tories next time. Then what? Houses? Hospitals? Oh yes. But not for the likes of Tosker and Mary. Private houses. Office blocks. The wide boys would move in the next day - the speculators. There's too much still to do, Nicky. We've made mistakes. We won't forget them. But you don't stop. You don't throw in the towel. There's far too much at stake. Not for me - or you. For them out there. You're a good lad, Nicky. You've got a nose for what's right and what isn't. I'll go along with you. If you can look me in the eye and tell me I should be talking to the police, I will do it. Right now.

SILENCE. NICKY LOOKS AT HIM AND SHAKES HIS HEAD.

DONOHUE: Tear it up. There was no need to resign. I'm winding up Donohue PRS. We're all out of a job, son. Merry Christmas.

THEY SHAKE HANDS. THEY DRINK.

CONNOR: We want you in the group, Nick. When I was your age I was chairing my first committees.

DONOHUE: Think about this carefully before you answer. Think about what I've just said. Don't fly off the handle. The Group has expelled Eddie Wells from the Party. Bede wants to nominate you to stand for election. Yes or no. No speeches. You either want it or you don't.

SILENCE.

NICKY: Yes.

DONOHUE: Come on. We'll tell them. You can stand a round of drinks.

EXEUNT OMNES.

Scene xiii

JACK O'DIAMONDS. OFF, NOISE OF A CHRISTMAS PARTY. ENTER GEORDIE. ENTER BENNY.

BENNY: Everything set, Geordie?

GEORDIE: Yeh.

BENNY: That door locked?

GEORDIE: Yeh.

BENNY: Right. Don't let anybody in from now on. Nothing must go wrong.

GEORDIE: Right.

BENNY: Something wrong?

GEORDIE: No.

BENNY: Then get a smile on your face. This is a night club not a funeral parlour. Smile.

GEORDIE SMILES.

BENNY: Better. Did you get those bikes seen to?

GEORDIE: Yeh, they're in the boot of your car.

BENNY: What did you think of them?

GEORDIE: Smart.

BENNY: What would you say if you was twelve years old and you woke up with a racing bike in your Christmas stocking?

GEORDIE: I'd be knocked out.

BENNY: Their eyes'll pop out of their little heads. Seen what I bought the missus?

HE SHOWS HIM A RING.

GEORDIE: Fantastic.

BENNY: Fabulous, isn't it? How much do you think it cost - bearing in mind I bought it off a friend?

GEORDIE: Five hundred quid?

BENNY: Five hundred quid? Five hundred quid? Fuck me, Geordie.

HE GIVES GEORDIE AN ENVELOPE.

BENNY: Happy Christmas. Don't open it till you get home - I don't want you having a stroke.

GEORDIE: Thanks. Thanks very much.

BENNY LAUGHS AND HUGS HIM.

BENNY: You're the straightest bloke I ever come across, Geordie. I love you. I love you. I want you to be my personal assistant. All right? I'm not asking - I'm telling. All right.

GEORDIE: Yeh.

BENNY: Right. Remember what I said.

EXIT BENNY. ENTER RUSTY IN A DRESSING GOWN.

RUSTY: Geordie - hi! Did you see me come out of the cake? Wasn't I sensational?

GEORDIE: Yeh, great.

SHE KISSES HIM.

RUSTY: (Quietly) Merry Christmas, Geordie.

GEORDIE: Merry Christmas, Ruth.

RUSTY: Ruth.

GEORDIE: Come over tonight?

RUSTY: Can't. Private party. Benny's new friends. The ones in the blue macs and the shiny shoes, you know? When you're dancing with them you can feel their truncheons.

GEORDIE: What you on?

RUSTY: Haven't touched a drop.

GEORDIE: What then?

SHE GIVES A KNOWING LOOK.

RUSTY: What's happening?

GEORDIE: Don't know.

RUSTY: I better get some clothes on.

GEORDIE: Why bother?

SHE SLAPS HIM. SILENCE. SHE TOUCHES HIS FACE.

RUSTY: You're never going to grow up, are you, Geordie? Sorry. I wish I could come over.

ENTER BENNY WITH WILLIAMS AND SAM.

BENNY: Rusty. Out.

EXIT RUSTY.

BENNY: All right. Everybody just keep quiet.

THEY LINE UP. ENTER CONRAD, BLACK AND WEIR. CONRAD LOOKS AROUND THE ROOM.

CONRAD: All right, guvnor.

ENTER CHAPPLE, NOW A COMMANDER.

BENNY: Commander Chapple.

CHAPPLE: Mr. Barratt.

BENNY: It's time we came to an arrangement.

CHAPPLE: That's what I've been saying for a long time.

BENNY: What've you got in mind?

CHAPPLE: The laws governing your trade are unpopular with the public and therefore impossible to enforce. My men are run off their feet trying to sort it out. It would be better if we dealt with one man. Then we can get rid of the cowboys and give the place a facelift. The public would be happy. You would be happy. And we would be happy.

BENNY: How happy?

CHAPPLE: £500 a week for Ron. He's the man you'll be dealing with unless you have any serious trouble in which case you can ring me anytime. £500 a week for the squad, payable to him.

Any new shops to be opened at a price negotiable with me.

BENNY: What about you?

CHAPPLE: Two grand a week.

BENNY: And nobody else to pay off?

CHAPPLE: Anything like that happens, just pick up the phone.

THEY SHAKE HANDS.

BENNY: I'll only say one thing: if I ever go, I'll take you with me.

CHAPPLE: Same here.

BENNY GIVES MONEY TO WILLIAMS.

BENNY: Buy some drinks, Dave, mate.

EXEUNT CHAPPLE, CONRAD, BLACK, WEIR, SAM AND WILLIAMS.

BENNY: Just carry on as you are, Geordie. Keep quiet and do what you're told. That's it now. There's no stopping us.

EXIT BENNY. GEORDIE OPENS HIS ENVELOPE. IT CONTAINS A HUGE WAD OF NOTES.
EXIT GEORDIE.

Scene xiv

NEWCASTLE. THE FLAT. DARK. MARY ALONE AT THE WINDOW. ENTER TOSKER.

TOSKER: Mary? You'll freeze to death.

MARY: Looking at the lights. Loads of parties. Happy New Year.

TOSKER: Happy New Year.

MARY: You could jump out of here and float down to the snow.

TOSKER: We will be out soon. Through the front door.

MARY: Where to, though? A house that's only empty because nobody else would have it.

TOSKER: Only for a while.

MARY: No. We'll be there for years. Why? I don't understand. From one lousy place to another. There must be some sense to it. Somebody somewhere is laughing up his sleeve at this. I could go mad thinking about it. Is it true they Kicked Eddie Wells out of the Party because he wouldn't keep quiet?

TOSKER: I don't know. He's the same as the rest of them They're all in it for what they can get. Why else would they bother?

MARY: Nicky as well?

TOSKER: Yeh. Nicky as well. Tell you what, pet. This has been nearly as bad as living with your mother.

MARY: It's not funny, Tosker. Four years we've been stuck here.

HE STARTS TO LAUGH. SO DOES SHE. FROM ABOVE, A CRASHING NOISE. THEN ANOTHER.

MARY: What's happening?

NOISE OF WATER POURING IN. TOSKER RUSHES OUT. HE COMES BACK DRENCHED.

TOSKER: There's water everywhere! The tanks have gone in the roof!

MARY: Get Antony!

SHE RUSHES OUT.

TOSKER: Oh, Christ, I hope you rot in hell for this, you bastards!

HE RUSHES OFF.

THE NOISE SUBSIDES. THE SOUND OF A TAPE RECORDER BEING SWITCHED ON. ON TAPE,
EDWARDS VOICE:

EDWARDS: Claud, this is John Edwards. Claud, you must ring me.
I realise you're busy but you have responsibilities to
Edwards International that are becoming urgent. I must
speak to you. I'll wait for your call. Thank you.

THE TAPE IS SWITCHED OFF.

INTERVAL

ACT III

DARKNESS. A TAPE RECORDER IS SWITCHED ON. JOHN EDWARDS' VOICE ON TAPE:

EDWARDS: Claud, this is John Edwards. Claud, you must ring me. I have to talk about the Abu Dhabi project. They have to be put under more pressure to pay. This is putting me in a very bad position. I understand you're busy with the election but I must insist you act on this. I'll wait to hear from you

PAUSE.

EDWARDS: Claud, this is John Edwards. I got your letter of resignation this morning. We must meet and talk this over. It makes my position very precarious if you resign now while this Abu Dhabi project isn't completed. Can't you do something with your friends over there? Please call me. I'll wait to hear from you.

THE TAPE IS SWITCHED OFF.

Scene i

LONDON. SCOTLAND YARD. ENTER JOHNSON. HE LOOKS ROUND, TAKES OFF HIS COAT, HANGS IT UP AND GOES OUT. ENTER DENNIS COCKBURN. JOHNSON COMES BACK. THEY LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

JOHNSON: Roy Johnson.

COCKBURN: DCS Cockburn.

JOHNSON: (Shaking hands) Pleased to meet you. I was expecting one or two more. Are you expecting me?

COCKBURN NODS.

JOHNSON: Well, well. (Looking at his watch) Did you ever get the feeling

COCKBURN: You're taking over?

JOHNSON: Oh, no, no, no. That was my appointment. But apparently not any longer. I'm just here to advise now.

COCKBURN: Oh.

JOHNSON: That's the way it looks. The question is: who am I advising?

COCKBURN: Me I suppose.

JOHNSON: Been on it since the start?

COCKBURN: Ten days. Since the allegations were published.

JOHNSON: Why you if you don't mind me asking?

COCKBURN: Top of the roster.

JOHNSON: I see. Well?

COCKBURN LOOKS AT HIM.

JOHNSON: You've had a look at the evidence.

COCKBURN: Statements. Tapes. Photographs.

JOHNSON: Genuine?

COCKBURN NODS.

JOHNSON: It's all over then. A few bad apples. You find them in any barrel. Even the Metropolitan Police CID. So we prosecute them, lock them up, and off we go home.

COCKBURN: Is that your advice?

JOHNSON: What advice do you want?

COCKBURN SHRUGS.

JOHNSON: You know me. You must know me.

COCKBURN: You put coppers in jail.

JOHNSON: That's right. That's me. I put villains in jail. So. What have we got?

COCKBURN: Two or three. Maybe four.

JOHNSON: On what?

COCKBURN: Fixing charges. Tampering with evidence. Bribery.

JOHNSON: In connection with what?

COCKBURN: Burglaries.

JOHNSON: Ranks?

COCKBURN: DCs. A Detective Sergeant.

JOHNSON: And? You didn't want this job, did you?

COCKBURN: No.

JOHNSON: How long have you been in the Met?

COCKBURN: Twenty years.

JOHNSON: You've got a few friends here then.

COCKBURN: One or two.

JOHNSON: When I was a Super in Newcastle I had two lads under me - good lads, good coppers - took some cigarettes late one night from a sackful of stolen ones we had in the station. Only a packet of twenty each. They were going to put them back the next morning. When I found out I had them sacked and prosecuted. Shall I tell you why? Because theft is against the law.

ENTER WHITAKER AND CHAPPLE.

WHITAKER: Dennis.

COCKBURN: Sir.

WHITAKER: Roy.

JOHNSON: Hello, Alan.

WHITAKER: Sorry we're late. You know Harold.

JOHNSON: Yes. I'm sorry we had to meet again like this.

CHAPPLE AND JOHNSON SHAKE HANDS.

CHAPPLE: The CID's used to it. The time for enquiries is the day villains stop trying to frame coppers.

WHITAKER: I wanted to make sure you understood, Roy. Your terms of reference are to inquire into these specific allegations. Harold will ensure you get all the co-operation you want.

JOHNSON: I'm not here to enquire into anything, Alan. I'm here to advise.

WHITAKER: Yes, sorry, I meant -

JOHNSON: Not at all. When exactly was it changed, by the way? And who by?

WHITAKER: You'd have to ask the Commissioner that.

JOHNSON: I've tried. He's not as accessible as Ted was.

WHITAKER: I'm sure he'll listen to you.

JOHNSON: Well. How many men on the enquiry at present?

WHITAKER: Six is it?

COCKBURN NODS.

JOHNSON: And how many to come?

WHITAKER: I didn't envisage any more.

CHAPPLE: If we started putting teams of men together everytime a villain commits slander, we'd have none left over.

JOHNSON: These are serious allegations. The enquiry needs to be able to follow wherever they lead.

WHITAKER: You don't know they'll lead anywhere.

JOHNSON: I don't know they won't.

CHAPPLE: They're a pack of lies from known villains. You might start by questioning the journalists. Find out how much they were paid to write their stories and who by.

JOHNSON: I understood that had already happened. The Met's traditional response: when accused, investigate the accusers. What about offices?

WHITAKER: Upstairs.

JOHNSON: Here?

WHITAKER: Why not?

JOHNSON: It's not secure.

WHITAKER: Secure from what?

JOHNSON: Secure from the men we're investigating.

WHITAKER: Very well. I'll see what can be done. Right. Well, I have

things to do.

CHAPPLE: Yes. Good morning.

EXIT CHAPPLE.

JOHNSON: Where do you normally have lunch, Alan?

WHITAKER: I have lunch alone, Roy. At my desk.

JOHNSON: Another time then.

WHITAKER: Yes. Goodbye.

EXIT WHITAKER. SILENCE.

COCKBURN: I didn't know you knew Whitaker.

JOHNSON: We were bobbies on the beat together. He's one of my oldest friends. You know Chapple?

COCKBURN: Not well.

JOHNSON: Good copper?

COCKBURN: As far as I know.

JOHNSON: He's acting like one. I'll ask for you to be taken off it if that's what you want. If your heart's not in it you might as well bugger off now.

SILENCE.

COCKBURN: No. I know a good pub.

JOHNSON: Don't drink.

COCKBURN: Restaurant?

JOHNSON: Don't eat big meals during the day.

COCKBURN: I'll show you the canteen then.

JOHNSON: Good. Let them have a look at me.

COCKBURN: Couple of things I might as well tell you before somebody else does. I've got problems at home.

JOHNSON: Ha. I've heard this before once or twice. Occupational hazard.

COCKBURN: I get depressed because of it. I'm seeing a shrink.

JOHNSON: Good, I'm glad you told me. I wish I could confess something back but I've had such a quiet life.

EXEUNT BOTH.

Scene ii

EDWARDS, IN AN OVERCOAT, WALKING ALONE IN HIS GARDEN. A DOORBELL RINGS. HE STOPS AND LISTENS. HE WALKS ON. A WOMAN'S VOICE, OFF:

WOMAN (OFF): John. Some one to see you.

EDWARDS LOOKS TOWARDS THE HOUSE. ENTER TWO POLICE OFFICERS. EDWARDS STARES AT THEM.

ONE: Mr Edwards? Detective Inspector Duffy, Leeds CID. We'd like to ask you some questions.

EDWARDS STARES AT THEM.

EDWARDS: Here?

ONE: At the station, sir, if you wouldn't mind.

EDWARDS: Am I being arrested?

ONE: Not at this stage, sir. But we have a warrant to remove any documents relevant to our investigation from your offices in Leeds and London.

EDWARDS: I see. I want receipts for everything. You'd better be careful. I'm a friend of some very important people.

ONE: Would you like to come now, sir?

EXEUNT OMNES.

Scene iii

LONDON. A BENCH IN A PARK. A MAN ENTERS AND SITS. A TELEPHONE RINGS AND IS ANSWERED. WE HEAR A CONVERSATION.

CHAPPLE: Barratt?

BARRATT: Yeh. Who's that?

CHAPPLE: Chapple. We've got a problem.

BARRATT: This bloke Johnson?

CHAPPLE: That's right.

BARRATT: Isn't he a friend?

CHAPPLE: Not of mine.

BARRATT: Oh.

CHAPPLE: He's generating a lot of heat. Not much light. But a lot of heat. He's getting people excited. I have to be seen to be doing something.

BARRATT: Or somebody.

CHAPPLE: Somebody who looks important. The public wants porn merchants locking up so I'll have to lock one up.

BARRATT: Oh.

CHAPPLE: This is your problem.

BARRATT: It's no problem.

CHAPPLE: No?

BARRATT: No.

ENTER RUSTY AND GEORDIE. THEY SIT AT THE BENCH. THE MAN PUTS A BRIEFCASE ON THE BENCH. GEORDIE LOOKS INSIDE IT, EXAMINES SOMETHING, TAKES AN ENVELOPE FROM HIS POCKET, AND PASSES IT OVER. THE MAN OPENS THE ENVELOPE, COUNTS THE MONEY AND LEAVES. SILENCE. RUSTY SMILES THEN LAUGHS SILENTLY.

GEORDIE: What?

RUSTY: Nothing. Nothing.

SHE DOES IT AGAIN.

GEORDIE: What?

RUSTY: This bloke I was with last night.

GEORDIE: What?

RUSTY: No, I'm not telling you.

GEORDIE: We better go. You shouldn't be here.

RUSTY: It's nice, isn't it? I feel really happy. You know, when we were doing it -

GEORDIE: Who?

RUSTY: Me and you. We weren't really happy, were we? Better now. Just good friends. It's better. You can get sex anywhere.

SILENCE. GEORDIE LOOKS AROUND.

RUSTY: What's the matter with you?

GEORDIE: Nothing. Let's go.

RUSTY: Stay a while. Let's go to the zoo.

GEORDIE: What?

RUSTY: Let's go to the zoo.

GEORDIE: I've got to take this back.

RUSTY: Yeh, I've got to be back at two anyway.

GEORDIE: Anybody I know?

RUSTY: Mm. Big fat bloke goes on the telly. All about "the government" and "the pound" and we have to "join the Common Market" and "Rhodesia". Think it was all he was interested in. You want to see him at my place on a Saturday afternoon.

THEY START TO LAUGH.

RUSTY: I don't know what I'm laughing for. He's disgusting. He is. Disgusting.

THEY LAUGH.

RUSTY: Can I have a look at it?
 GEORDIE: What for?
 RUSTY: Go on, Geordie, there's nobody looking.

HE HANDS HER A MAGAZINE FROM THE BRIEFCASE.

RUSTY: Oh, God. This would be right up his street. What sort of pervert wants to buy this?
 GEORDIE: Thousands of them.
 RUSTY: It's an American one.
 GEORDIE: He just brought it over.
 RUSTY: That bloke? From America? Where's he off now?
 BOTH: Back to America.
 GEORDIE: Day return.
 RUSTY: How much did you give him?
 GEORDIE: Five grand.
 RUSTY: For this?
 GEORDIE: Barratt'll have ten thousand copies on sale by next week. Fiver each.

SHE TURNS MORE PAGES.

RUSTY: Oh, God.
 GEORDIE: Come on.
 RUSTY: No.

SHE LOOKS THROUGH TO THE END. SHE HANDS IT BACK.

RUSTY: That's what'll happen to me, isn't it? Shoot me in the head if I ever get reduced to that, will you? I mean it.
 GEORDIE: They're on drugs, I expect.
 RUSTY: Oh. Poor things.
 GEORDIE: Like you.
 RUSTY: Who me? I don't take drugs.
 GEORDIE: Yes you do. You shoot heroin.
 RUSTY: I don't, Geordie, honest. A few pills, that's all.
 GEORDIE: Show me your arm.
 RUSTY: I don't, Geordie. OK?
 GEORDIE: Let's go.

THEY GET UP TO GO. ENTER CONRAD, BLACK AND WEIR.

CONRAD: Let's have a look.
 GEORDIE: It's for Barratt.
 CONRAD: Let's have a look.

GEORDIE HANDS IT OVER.

CONRAD: You're under arrest.
 RUSTY: Run, Geordie.
 CONRAD: Shut your mouth, you.
 GEORDIE: Tell Barratt.
 CONRAD: Wake up, you dozy bastard.
 RUSTY: He's sold you, Geordie.
 GEORDIE: Go away, Ruth.

SHE BACKS OFF A LITTLE WAY.

GEORDIE: You'll all come with me. I'll tell everything I know.
 CONRAD: Who to?
 RUSTY: I'll tell the papers. I'll tell everybody.
 CONRAD: Take her to Barratt. Get him to shut her mouth.
 GEORDIE: Go away, Ruth!

EXIT RUSTY. GEORDIE BACKS AWAY. HE LOOKS CAPABLE OF ANYTHING.

CONRAD: Come on. Stop wasting time.

BLACK AND WEIR GRAB HIM. HE STRUGGLES FOR A WHILE, THEN STOPS.

CONRAD: That's a good boy, Geordie. Do you remember the first time we met? Mm?

HE LOOKS AROUND.

CONRAD: Get him in the van.

EXEUNT OMNES.

Scene iv

NEWCASTLE. A STREET OUTSIDE A TELEVISION RENTAL SHOP. ENTER EDDIE WELLS, WHO WATCHES THE SCREENS. ENTER MARY. SHE SEES HIM, BUT PASSES BY. HE SEES HER.

EDDIE: Hello, pet.
 MARY: Hello, Eddie. I didn't see you. What you watching?
 EDDIE: News. This bloody war that's going on in Rhodesia.
 MARY: Rhodesia? That's Africa, isn't it?
 EDDIE: Yeh.
 MARY: I was hopeless at geography. I should buy a map of the world. Is it anywhere near the Indian Ocean?
 EDDIE: Er, well it's a big place the Indian Ocean, I know that much.
 MARY: That's where Tosker is. He went back in the Navy.
 EDDIE: I never knew. Don't blame him, mind.
 MARY: No.
 EDDIE: How's Antony?
 MARY: Oh, he's smashing. Yes. He's fine, thanks. Well. I'll be

seeing you.

EDDIE: Would you like a drink? I was just going for a pie and a pint.

MARY: Well. I suppose I could. All right.

ENTER DONOHUE.

EDDIE: Austin? Austin!

DONOHUE GOES OFF.

MARY: He's in trouble these days, isn't he?

EDDIE: He is that.

THEY GO. EDDIE LOOKS OVER HIS SHOULDER.

EDDIE: Whereabouts in the Indian Ocean - did he say?

MARY: No, just the Indian Ocean.

THEY ARE GONE. ENTER DONOHUE. HE LOOKS AROUND.

DONOHUE: Mine. Mine. My idea. My idea. My work. Houses. Offices. Shops. Schools. Roads. Hospitals. Built. There. That's what I did. That's the answer to your question. This is what I did. The rest is just pieces of paper. Burnt. This is the evidence.

ENTER NICKY. THEY SEE EACH OTHER. NICKY LOOKS AT THE SCREENS. DONOHUE MOVES TOWARDS HIM. NICKY TURNS TO HIM.

DONOHUE: Are you following me?

NICKY: Yes. What are you doing?

DONOHUE: I'm out for a walk.

NICKY: Why?

DONOHUE: There are people waiting for me at home. Have you been questioned?

NICKY: Yes.

DONOHUE: Will you be giving evidence?

NICKY: They seem to think that won't be necessary.

DONOHUE: Good.

NICKY: What'll happen?

DONOHUE: Connor's arrested. Me next. Edwards is washed up. Who knows what he's saying? They'll have to move fast to put him away and others with him. It just depends who your friends are now - and I'm falling into the hands of my enemies. Old scores are going to be settled. Watch closely. This is the last part of your education. First the smokescreen. Then the fall guys. Then the silence. Wish me luck. And don't

believe everything you'll read in the newspapers.

NICKY: Can I help you?

DONOHUE: No. Just forget about me and carry on the struggle.

THEY SHAKE HANDS. EXIT NICKY. ENTER TWO POLICE OFFICERS, WHO EXCHANGE WHISPERS.

DONOHUE: The patter of tiny minds.

THEY APPROACH.

ONE: Austin Donohue?

DONOHUE: Waiting for the pubs to open. Would either of you gentlemen like a glass of beer with me?

ONE: Detective Inspector Duffy, Leeds CID. You're under arrest, Mr Donohue.

TWO PUTS HIS HAND ON DONOHUE'S ARM. THEY MOVE OFF.

DONOHUE: Via the House of Commons I hope? Plenty of room in the car?

EXEUNT OMNES.

Scene v

LONDON. SCOTLAND YARD. ENTER COCKBURN AND JOHNSON, CARRYING CUPS OF TEA. BOTH TIRED AND THOUGHTFUL. JOHNSON STIRS HIS TEA AND HANDS THE SPOON TO COCKBURN. SILENCE. JOHNSON WATCHES COCKBURN PORING OVER A PILE OF PAPERS.

JOHNSON: When we've seen this next fellow, we'll wrap it up - have a night off.

COCKBURN: It's a can of worms, isn't it. Still all we've got are the ones we started with. But the rest. They're too clever. You go for a file - it's gone. You go to question somebody - he's expecting you. The questions are getting bigger and bigger. I think my phone's tapped.

JOHNSON: I saw the Commissioner last night. I told him we were being blocked this way and that. He said he'd see what he could do. He's as thick as two short planks.

COCKBURN: I said I think my phone's tapped. And yours.

JOHNSON: I heard you. Let's see this bloke Hurst.

COCKBURN: There's not much point. He's already in more trouble than he needs. I think this is a blind alley, anyway.

JOHNSON: Let's see, shall we? Unless you've got a better idea?

SILENCE. JOHNSON PICKS UP A PHONE.

JOHNSON: Mr. Hurst, please.

HE REPLACES THE TELEPHONE.

JOHNSON: How's the wife?

COCKBURN: I don't know.

JOHNSON: Take the evening off.

ENTER A CONSTABLE WITH GEORDIE. GEORDIE SITS. EXIT CONSTABLE.

COCKBURN: Mr. Hurst?

GEORDIE: Yeh.

COCKBURN: I'm Detectice Chief Superintendant Cockburn. This is Mr. Johnson. We'd like to ask you a few questions. It's nothing to do with your case. We're investigating allegations about police involvement in criminal activities. We had a phone call from somebody who didn't identify himself - herself, sorry - saying you might have something to say to us. Is that right?

GEORDIE: No.

JOHNSON: What happened to your face?

NO REPLY. A KNOCK. ENTER CONRAD.

CONRAD: Mind if I sit in, sir?

COCKBURN: Why?

CONRAD: Hurst is my prisoner, sir. I'm interested in anything he has to say.

COCKBURN: This has nothing to do with those charges -

CONRAD: Mr. Whitaker OK'd it, sir. I could get him to ring you

SILENCE. COCKBURN NODS. CONRAD GOES TO ONE SIDE.

COCKBURN: Have you any idea who made this phone call to us?

GEORDIE: No.

COCKBURN: Girlfriend, maybe?

NO REPLY.

COCKBURN: The allegations concern police involvement in robberies in North London. Do you know anything about them?

GEORDIE: No.

COCKBURN: Were you involved in them?

GEORDIE: No.

COCKBURN: Do you know the man Crown who made the allegations?

GEORDIE: No.

COCKBURN: Ever had any dealings with policemen - apart from your arrest?

GEORDIE: No.

SILENCE. COCKBURN AND JOHNSON CONFER.

COCKBURN: Have you anything you'd like to say about your arrest or the charges against you?

CONRAD STANDS UP.

JOHNSON: Sit down, Inspector.

CONRAD: Sir -

JOHNSON: Sit down or leave the room.

CONRAD SITS.

COCKBURN: Well?

GEORDIE: No.

COCKBURN: Who arrested you?

GEORDIE: I can't remember.

COCKBURN: How many officers?

GEORDIE: Three.

COCKBURN: Were any of them called Benny or Harry?

GEORDIE: What?

COCKBURN: Were any of them called Benny or Harry? The lady said you should tell us about Benny or Harry. Were any of them called Benny or Harry?

GEORDIE: I don't think so.

COCKBURN: Then who are Benny and Harry?

GEORDIE: I don't know.

COCKBURN: Do you know any policemen called Benny or Harry?

GEORDIE: No.

SILENCE. COCKBURN AND JOHNSON LOOK AT EACH OTHER. JOHNSON PICKS UP THE PHONE.

JOHNSON: Yes, please. (He replaces it) Thank you, Mr. Hurst.

CONSTABLE COLLECTS GEORDIE AND TAKES HIM OFF.

CONRAD: You could've asked me. I arrested him.

JOHNSON: What happened to his face?

CONRAD: He resisted arrest, sir. He's a violent character. He's a villain.

EXIT CONRAD.

COCKBURN: He's right. We're getting nowhere. All we're doing is pissing off good coppers. Everything points to systematic corruption. You can smell it. You can feel it. But you can't get a single thing to fall into place.

JOHNSON: Maybe we should see Hurst again - secretly.

COCKBURN: It's a waste of time.

SILENCE.

JOHNSON: We're trying to do too much. We haven't got the men to follow everything up.

COCKBURN: There's a key to it somewhere. You're right, Roy. I will talk to him again. I asked him the wrong questions.

JOHNSON: Not tonight.

COCKBURN: You know I sometimes feel this goes all the way up. Do you?

JOHNSON: It's evidence we want.

COCKBURN: Which if it were true you have to ask: why have we been appointed? Why us? Well I know why I'm here - because they expect me to cock it up. But what about you? Whitaker's an old pal, you said. Sorry. I'm sorry.

JOHNSON: Go home.

COCKBURN: Not yet.

JOHNSON: I'm ordering you to go home.

COCKBURN: You can't.

JOHNSON: I'm asking then.

COCKBURN: No.

HE TAKES PAPERS AND GOES. PHONE RINGS.

JOHNSON: Hello? You've just missed him. Who wanted him? Oh. Tell her Oh, I don't know. Tell her he's working. He'll be home later How the hell do I know what time?

HE PUTS THE PHONE DOWN, PICKS UP PAPERS AND GOES.

Scene vi

ON THE DECK OF A ROYAL NAVY FRIGATE PATROLLING THE MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL. SIX SAILORS, MOSTLY DOING NOTHING. AMONG THEM TOSKER, APPARENTLY ASLEEP. SOME ARE FLIPPING THROUGH MAGAZINES.

ANDREWS: Harris.

HIGGINS: Harris.

WALTERS: Harris.

HARRIS: What?

HIGGINS: Stop that fucking whistling.

HARRIS: Sorry.

HARRIS IS FLYING A KITE.

ANDREWS: Swoop.

ANDREWS AND WALTERS SWAP MAGAZINES. HARRIS IS WHISTLING AGAIN.

O'BRIEN: Harris, I'll wrap that kite round your neck.

HARRIS: Sorry. You want to get yourself hobbies instead of reading those things all day. It's like living with chimps.

TOSKER: What the fuck are we doing here? I said: what the fuck are we supposed to be doing?

HARRIS: Translation, somebody?

O'BRIEN: I don't know, Tosker. Ask Harris - this is his fourth tour.

TOSKER: Is that right, Harris?

HARRIS: Yeh.

TOSKER: Do we ever stop any ships?

HARRIS: Sorry, what?

TOSKER: Do you want a smack in the mouth?

HARRIS: Yeh, sometimes. Not very often. They never have any oil aboard.

ANDREWS: What's it in aid of anyway?

HARRIS: Stopping oil going into Rhodesia through Beira.

ANDREWS: Oh.

TOSKER: What for?

HARRIS: Oooh, I don't know. Nothing to do with me. The oil doesn't go in through Beira anyway.

O'BRIEN: How do you know?

HARRIS: It goes in through Laurence Marques and Durban.

WALTERS: That's true. That's the truth that is.

TOSKER: What are we here for then?

WALTERS: Cos this is where the pipeline is.

TOSKER: But if they're not using it what are we blockading it for?

WALTERS: I don't know.

TOSKER: Harris.

HARRIS: No idea. I suppose it's part of some plan.

TOSKER: What plan?

HARRIS: I don't know. I'm not the fucking Prime Minister, am I?

TOSKER: Well it's a waste of time then. That's what you're saying.

HARRIS: That's why you need a hobby.

TOSKER: Don't talk shit. We wouldn't be here if there wasn't a reason.

HARRIS: (Laughing) Please yourself.

TOSKER: You're a fucking liar, Harris.

HARRIS: All right, I'm a fucking liar.

TOSKER GETS UP AND WHACKS HARRIS, WHOSE KITE DISAPPEARS.

HARRIS: My kite! You bloody madman!

THEY START FIGHTING. ENTER AN OFFICER.

OFFICER: Stop it, stop it, stop it!

HARRIS: Sorry, sir.

OFFICER: What's going on? What were you fighting about?

HARRIS: Cox knocked my kite out of my hand, sir.

OFFICER: Oh, clear off and don't be so childish. Go below, all of you. If anybody's interested - the Conservatives won.

THEY ALL GO EXCEPT TOSKER.

OFFICER: Go below, Cox. Cox. Do you want me to put you on a charge? Go below.

EXIT TOSKER. EXIT THE OFFICER.

Scene vii

LONDON. POLICE CELLS, BELOW THE OLD BAILEY. GEORDIE SITS WITH A PRISON OFFICER.

OFFICER ONE: Shouldn't be very long. Want some advice? When you get back up there - keep your mouth shut. You've already made it ten times worse for yourself. Judges don't like to hear that kind of thing. Just take what he gives you and keep it shut.

GEORDIE: I'll break his neck if he finds me guilty.

OFFICER ONE: Look -

GEORDIE: Didn't even listen. Waste of time telling the truth. They can make anything sound true. It is true if they say it. That's the truth.

OFFICER: I'm just saying -. Want a fag?

GEORDIE: Work it up your arse.

OFFICER ONE: I don't know.

GEORDIE: What'll I get?

THE OFFICER SHRUGS. GEORDIE STARTS TO PANIC.

OFFICER ONE: Calm down. Calm yourself down.

GEORDIE BREATHES DEEPLY. ENTER OFFICER TWO WITH DONOHUE, EDWARDS AND CONNOR.

OFFICER TWO: Look after these gents for me, will you, Don? When your jury comes back I'll take you up alltogether or one at a time.

EXIT OFFICER TWO. SILENCE.

EDWARDS: Have either of you been given any lunch?

DONOHUE AND CONNOR SHAKE THEIR HEADS.

CONNOR: What do you think it'll be, Austin?

EDWARDS: I hope it's not chicken again.

SILENCE. DONOHUE STARTS TO LAUGH.

EDWARDS: I don't see anything funny. The whole thing's a farce. If this is supposed to be British justice Anyway, I intend to have lunch at the best restaurant in London.

DONOHUE: It'll have to be a take-away.

CONNOR: Pack it in, Austin, will you?

EDWARDS: They wouldn't dare find me guilty.

DONOHUE: They wouldn't have gone to all this trouble if they weren't going to find you guilty, now would they? Apart from which, you are guilty. Why did you keep everything - why didn't you burn it all? By God there's some frightened men in this country now. Your files are worth a king's ransom in Westminster. Where are all your friends now? It's incredible the number of people who've never met you.

EDWARDS: If I'm guilty what are you, Austin?

DONOHUE: Everything I did was above board. They might not have liked it but there it is. There's no evidence against me.

CONNOR AND EDWARDS EXCHANGE GLANCES. ENTER OFFICER TWO.

OFFICER TWO: Mr. Edwards?

EDWARDS: Yes, officer.

EXEUNT EDWARDS AND THE OFFICER.

CONNOR: Do you think they'll convict him?

DONOHUE: Guilty as hell.

CONNOR: What about me?

DONOHUE: You should have stayed on my payroll. It was a mistake to have a private arrangement as well. I'll visit you, if you like.

CONNOR: I don't know who you're trying to kid, Austin.

SILENCE. DONOHUE CHUCKLES.

CONNOR: What's funny now?

DONOHUE: I was thinking about Tuesday, when you were trying to protest and the judge told you to shut up. I'd never seen anybody tell you to shut up, Bede. It was worth being here just to see the look on your face.

HE LAUGHS. SO DOES CONNOR EVENTUALLY.

CONNOR: Taking a long time.

GEORDIE: You used to have a black Rover.

CONNOR: Eh?

GEORDIE: Black Rover.

CONNOR: How do you know?

GEORDIE: I hope they crucify you.

OFFICER ONE: Quiet. Keep it down.

CONNOR: Bloody mental case.

OFFICER ONE: That's enough. Behave yourself, you.

DONOHUE: What they got you for, bonny lad?

OFFICER ONE: Quiet.

GEORDIE: Nothing. Fitted up.

OFFICER ONE: Quiet.

DONOHUE: Snap. You a Geordie?

GEORDIE: Why aye!

OFFICER ONE: Shut it.

DONOHUE: Good lad. They cannot keep the Geordielads down, eh?

GEORDIE: Why aye!

DONOHUE: Howay the Magpies!

OFFICER ONE: I'm warning you!

GEORDIE: Why aye!

DONOHUE: Howay the lads! Howay the Geordies, eh, son?

GEORDIE: Howay the lads!

OFFICER ONE: Quiet!

SILENCE. DONOHUE WATCHES GEORDIE. GEORDIE WATCHES HIM. ENTER OFFICER TWO.

OFFICER TWO: Mr. Connor?

CONNOR: See you, Austin.

DONOHUE: See you, Bedey.

EXEUNT CONNOR AND OFFICER TWO.

OFFICER ONE: Cut it out, you two.

ENTER OFFICER TWO.

OFFICER TWO: Mr. Donohue?

DONOHUE: Good luck, bonny lad.

GEORDIE: Do you see Nicky?

DONOHUE: What?

GEORDIE: Do you still see Nicky?

DONOHUE: That's it!

OFFICER TWO: Come on.

DONOHUE: I knew it.

GEORDIE: Do you?

DONOHUE: Yes. I don't know.

OFFICER TWO: Donohue.

GEORDIE: Never mind. ..
 DONOHUE: (Being led away) Is there a message?

GEORDIE SHAKES HIS HEAD. EXEUNT DONOHUE AND OFFICER TWO. ENTER OFFICER THREE.

OFFICER THREE: Mr. Hurst.

GEORDIE DOESN'T MOVE.

OFFICER ONE: Come on.

GEORDIE: I don't want to goto prison. Oh, God, I don't want to go to prison.

THEY TAKE HOLD OF HIM.

TWO POOLS OF LIGHT. DONOHUE APPEARS IN ONE, GEORDIE IN THE OTHER. THE VOICES OF THEIR JUDGES:

JUDGE ONE: Austin Donohue, you have been found guilty of conspiring to corrupt public officials. Have you anything to say before I pass sentence?

DONOHUE SHAKES HIS HEAD.

JUDGE: I sentence you to a term of five years' imprisonment. Take him down.

DONOHUE'S JAW SAGS. HE IS TAKEN AWAY.

JUDGE TWO: George Hurst, you have been found guilty of possessing obscene material. Have you anything to say before I pass sentence? Evidently not. I have. It is often stated, quite misleadingly, that pornography is a victimless crime. I would direct the public's attention to the people who are used in the production of this filth. To the young women, some of them no more than children, who are exploited and abused by men like Hurst who pursue large profits at their expense. These are the victims, whose minds and bodies are degraded. You Hurst, must know of such hapless victims and yet you plied your vile trade. I sentence you to a term of five years' imprisonment. Take him down.

GEORDIE STANDS MOTIONLESS, HORRIFIED. HE IS TAKEN AWAY.

Scene viii

LONDON. SCOTLAND YARD. NIGHT. ENTER COCKBURN. HE SITS, STARING INTO SPACE. ENTER CHAPPLE. HE WATCHES HIM FOR A WHILE AND TURNS TO GO. COCKBURN SEES HIM.

COCKBURN: Mm?

CHAPPLE: It's all right, Cockburn.

COCKBURN: No, no.

CHAPPLE STAYS. SILENCE.

CHAPPLE: You look worn out.

COCKBURN: No, I'm all right. I'm all right.

CHAPPLE: Want to talk?

COCKBURN: I can't. You know.

CHAPPLE: Yes. I'll go.

COCKBURN: No. Christ's sake, if I can't talk to you

CHAPPLE: That's the whole problem with this way of doing things. You can't run an enquiry as a little firm within a firm. I don't think so anyway.

ENTER CONRAD.

COCKBURN: I can't talk about it.

CHAPPLE: No.

CONRAD: Dennis.

COCKBURN: Ron.

CONRAD: Time for a pint, Harold?

CHAPPLE: Yes, why not? Why don't you come, Dennis?

COCKBURN: No, I've got things to sort out. I don't feel right in the club. People don't know what to say to me.

CONRAD: Balls.

COCKBURN: It's right.

CONRAD: To hell with them then.

COCKBURN: No, they're right. I'd feel the same way.

SILENCE.

CHAPPLE: If there are things you need to talk about you can't talk about to Johnson, you can talk to me. I'm still your guvnor.

SILENCE.

COCKBURN: My psychiatrist thinks I'm off my trolley. "You're clinically depressed" she says. "You're suffering from a paranoid syndrome". I told her. "I'm not suffering from anything, you dozy bitch - I'm telling you the literal truth. It's staring us in the face". I can't have this conversation.

CHAPPLE: Look, forget I'm head of CID. Nothing goes any further than this room.

SILENCE.

COCKBURN: I know there is corruption throughout the force.

SILENCE.

CONRAD: If you know, you must have evidence.

SILENCE.

COCKBURN: I can't talk about that. I shouldn't have said anything. Just forget it.

CONRAD: If you've got evidence -

CHAPPLE: Ron.

CONRAD: No, I'm sorry, Harold, I'm going to say it. If you've got evidence you should put it on the table. If you haven't you should say so cos if you haven't got it by now you never will have. This is what's pissing everybody off. While you're going on like this, we're all guilty. You're completely demoralising the force. We've got good coppers taking their pensions because of this. You know, we can understand it from Johnson - Sir Fucking Lancelot - but not from one of our own.

COCKBURN: Oh, Christ.

SILENCE.

CHAPPLE: It's not your fault, Cockburn. You didn't ask for this. Under the circumstances, you're doing brilliant. You're a good copper. Come on, Ron.

CONRAD: Sorry, Dennis.

COCKBURN SHAKES HIS HEAD.

COCKBURN: Ron. I'm not going to go behind your back. I'm going up to Wakefield next Monday to talk to that fellow Hurst again. I think he knows more than he was letting on.

CONRAD: OK. Thanks for telling me anyway.

CHAPPLE: Goodnight.

COCKBURN: Goodnight, sir. Night, Ron.

EXEUNT CHAPPLE AND CONRAD. ENTER JOHNSON.

JOHNSON: I thought you'd gone. Your wife rang.

COCKBURN: I've had enough of this lousy job for one day.

JOHNSON: Go home then.

COCKBURN: Yeh. That's what I'm doing.

EXIT COCKBURN. EXIT JOHNSON.

PRISON. INTENSE NOISE OF PRISONERS BEING SERVED FOOD ON TRAYS IN HIGH, ECHOING LANDINGS. ENTER AN OFFICER. ENTER GEORDIE, CARRYING A TRAY. THEY PASS. THEIR CONVERSATION IS SHOUTED, THEIR SHOUTS SCREAMED.

OFFICER: Hurst.
 GEORDIE: Sir?
 OFFICER: Where are you off?
 GEORDIE: My cell, sir.
 OFFICER: Why?
 GEORDIE: To eat this, sir.
 OFFICER: Do you always push past an officer like that?
 GEORDIE: I didn't push past -
 OFFICER: What do you call it then?
 GEORDIE: Nothing, sir.
 OFFICER: (Hitting him with the palm of his hand against his shoulder)
 Are you looking for trouble?
 GEORDIE: No, sir.
 OFFICER: What?
 GEORDIE: No, sir!
 OFFICER: (Hitting him again) Are you sure?
 GEORDIE: Yes, sir!
 OFFICER: Cos you can have it if you want it!
 GEORDIE: No thank you, sir!
 OFFICER: What?
 GEORDIE: No, sir!
 OFFICER: Something amusing you, son?
 GEORDIE: No, sir!
 OFFICER: Get back to your cell!
 GEORDIE: Yes, sir!
 EXEUNT BOTH.

Scene x

NIGHT IN SOHO. SHADOWS. DOORWAYS. RUSTY APPEARS IN THE SHADOWS. DEBBIE PASSES BY.

DEBBIE: Hello, Rusty.
 RUSTY: Hello, Debbie.

EXIT DEBBIE. WILLIAMS ENTERS. HE STANDS NEAR RUSTY, BUT IN THE SHADOWS.

WILLIAMS: Hello, love.
 RUSTY: Hello. Looking for someone?
 WILLIAMS: Yeh. Come into the light where I can see you.

SHE STEPS INTO THE LIGHT. SHE LOOKS OLDER AND THINNER.

WILLIAMS: You used to be a dancer, didn't you?

RUSTY: That's right - did you see me?

WILLIAMS: Didn't you work at the Jack O'Diamonds?

RUSTY: Yeh, that's right. I had a difference of opinion with the management.

WILLIAMS: Benny Barratt.

RUSTY: Are you a copper?

WILLIAMS: Rusty, isn't it?

RUSTY: No. If you want Rusty she wo rks in a bar over the road.

HE STEPS INTO THE LIGHT.

RUSTY: I know you.

WILLIAMS: I've got a message for you from Barratt.

RUSTY: I don't know anybody called Barratt. You've got the wrong on.

WILLIAMS: He says in future keep your mouth shut. All right?

RUSTY: Yeh. I will. I'm sorry. Tell him I will.

WILLIAMS: Good. In case you forget I'm going to give you something to remind you.

HE GRABS HER AND PUSHES HER INTO THE SHADOWS.

Scene xi

LONDON. SCOTLAND YARD. ENTER JOHNSON AND COCKBURN. ENTER A SERGEANT.

JOHNSON: Where is he?

SERGEANT: He's coming, sir.

EXIT SERGEANT.

JOHNSON: Don't sit down. I've had enough of this.

ENTER WHITAKER.

WHITAKER: Roy. Cockburn.

JOHNSON: Sorry to barge in, Alan, but I've had no luck making an appointment either with you or his nibs.

WHITAKER: I was going to send for you anyway. What is it?

JOHNSON: I've come to make an official complaint about the utter lack of co-operation -

CHAPPLE APPEARS AT THE DOOR.

JOHNSON: Come in, Commander, I'd like you to hear this. The utter lack of co-operation we've had from CID during this enquiry. We've been baulked and hindered every way we've turned since

day one.

CHAPPLE: What exactly were you expecting?

JOHNSON: I expect you to do what you said you'd do at the beginning. Instead of which we've had evasion, lies, stonewalling -

CHAPPLE: Bollocks.

JOHNSON: Never mind bollocks. I'm telling you. And if you don't know what's been going on, it's time you moved on.

WHITAKER: Roy.

JOHNSON: I'd like some straight answers to some straight questions: one, is it now the official policy of the CID to abort this enquiry? two, when am I going to get the reinforcements I was promised eight months ago? three, who is responsible for constant stream of lies that's being fed to the press about the nature of our work?

SILENCE.

WHITAKER: Sit down, Harold. I'll deal with your complaints later, Roy. First there's something I want to tell you. Would Cockburn like to leave us for a second?

JOHNSON: Just a minute. Is it to do with the enquiry?

WHITAKER: Yes.

JOHNSON: Stay.

WHITAKER: All right. I've got two things to tell you. Firstly, you can expect another four men to join the team as of next week. Secondly, DCS Cockburn is being relieved of his duties on the enquiry as of today.

JOHNSON: What?

WHITAKER: The Commissioner knows all about it. This is no reflection on you, Cockburn.

COCKBURN: What is it then?

WHITAKER: That's enough! You'll get any reasons I care to give in writing. Now go and clear your desk.

COCKBURN: Can I ask where my new duties will be, sir?

WHITAKER: B1.

JOHNSON: Traffic?

WHITAKER: I don't want an argument.

COCKBURN: Who's to replace me, sir?

WHITAKER: That's none of your business.

JOHNSON: I take it it's mine?

WHITAKER: Yes. (Into telephone:) Yes, please.

HE REPLACES TELEPHONE. PAUSE. ENTER CONRAD.

WHITAKER: Detective Chief Superintendant Conrad will take over the enquiry. Go now, Cockburn.

COCKBURN GOES. CONRAD SHAKES HANDS WITH JOHNSON.

CONRAD: I look forward to working with you, sir

SILENCE.

WHITAKER: You can go now, Conrad. Thank you, Harold.

EXEUNT CHAPPLE AND CONRAD.

JOHNSON: You could've consulted me.

WHITAKER: I'm sorry. There it is. The man was having a nervous breakdown.

JOHNSON: Says me. And that's the end of it. Any reason why Conrad shouldn't do the job?

JOHNSON: Any reason why he should? An outsider would've been better. But you've never really wanted the job done, have you, Alan? You just wanted it off your desk. Why don't you take your pension and have done with it if you've lost your bottle?

WHITAKER: I don't know what you expected from me, Roy. I'm a Met copper.

JOHNSON: The Commissioner gets his soon. Fancy your chances?

WHITAKER: I wouldn't want it. I don't envy the man who gets it. Whatever he decides to do, it's an impossible job. I'm sorry I haven't given you the support you felt you should have had.

JOHNSON: Sorry? You gutless bastard. You weren't fit to lick Cockburn's boots.

EXIT JOHNSON. EXIT WHITAKER.

Scene xii

PRISON VISITING ROOM. ENTER NICKY, WHO SITS. ENTER DONOHUE AND AN OFFICER. THE OFFICER NODS TOWARDS NICKY NICKY. DONOHUE COMES OVER AND SITS.

OFFICER: Keep your voices up.

NICKY: Hello.

DONOHUE: Hello.

SILENCE.

NICKY: What's it like?

DONOHUE: You don't get used to it. You get depressed. I expect the papers had a field day.

NICKY: For a while. Then they moved on to something else.

DONOHUE: The waters close over your head.

NICKY: It said you were going to appeal. Why didn't you?

SILENCE. DONOHUE LOOKING AT HIS HANDS. HE DOESN'T REPLY.

NICKY: It was strange to read about it. To see the facts in black and white. It seemed much worse than it seemed at the time. It was only then I realised the truth of what we were doing.

DONOHUE: You haven't learned your lessons, Nicky.

NICKY: I have. I resigned from the Party.

DONOHUE: That was a mistake.

NICKY: Austin, you should face the facts.

DONOHUE: Facts are like numbers. What they mean depends on what order you put them in. Whether you add them together or take some of them away. On who you are. On how much power you have. On whether you're trying to multiply your friends or divide your enemies. What's true depends on what time it is. Facts are events. The fact of my guilt occurred to me only when I heard myself being convicted. I'm temporarily guilty, though I'm feeling that guilt acutely. Men who did much more than I ever did but who had greater power than I did are temporarily innocent and trumpet the fact with all the breath in their outraged bodies. Don't give up, Nick. It's more important than ever now. You're making the same mistake your old man made.

NICKY: What about Tosker and Mary and all the other people who were robbed and cheated? They were in your power. Do you ever think about the people whose lives you've screwed up, Austin?

DONOHUE'S HEAD SINKS TO HIS CHEST. HE GETS UP. HE STRAIGHTENS UP. HE LOOKS AT NICKY.

DONOHUE: Goodbye, Nicky.

EXIT DONOHUE. EXEUNT NICKY AND THE OFFICER.

Scene xiii

LONDON. THE HOME OFFICE. ENTER AN ASSISTANT WITH WHITAKER.

ASSISTANT: The Home Secretary will be with you soon, sir.

WHITAKER: Thank you.

EXIT ASSISTANT. WHITAKER STANDS WAITING. ENTER CLAUD SEABROOK.

SEABROOK: Alan, how are you?

WHITAKER: Very well, thank you, Claud.

SEABROOK: And the family?
 WHITAKER: They're well, thank you.
 SEABROOK: Good. I hope this won't take long. I have to visit a prison.
 WHITAKER: No. As you know, Claud, the Fraud Squad has been investigating the affairs of John Edwards.

SEABROOK: (Sighing) I see. Look, Alan, I made an exhaustive statement at the time of the original hearings. I thought this was all over sometime ago.

WHITAKER: They're considering further charges.

SEABROOK: (Looking at his watch) I see.

WHITAKER: I wonder, sir, if you'd mind reading these statements concerning matters that go back to 1967?

HE HANDS HIM SOME PAPERS.

SEABROOK: What - all of them?

WHITAKER: I've marked the parts that concern you.

SEABROOK: Donohue.

WHITAKER: I believe you knew him?

SEABROOK: I may have met him.

WHITAKER: As you can see, he refers to -

SEABROOK: Yes, I haven't finished reading it yet.

HE FINISHES READING IN SILENCE. HE PUSHES IT AWAY.

SEABROOK: Yes, well, this is all nonsense. How can I help?

WHITAKER: I'd like your comments, sir.

SEABROOK: Why?

WHITAKER: I understand it's a matter of some delicacy, which is why I thought it best to speak to you personally.

SEABROOK: Delicate for whom?

WHITAKER: For you.

SEABROOK: I don't see why.

SILENCE.

WHITAKER: In the case of the first statement, it's a question of dates.

SEABROOK: No, it isn't. With all due respect, Assistant Commissioner, this isn't a question of dates. It's a question of smear and innuendo. It would be highly irresponsible if this were allowed to be dragged up in any further court case. These men have been imprisoned. Their crimes had nothing whatever to do with me, my family, or anybody else connected with me. In the case of Donohue, here is a man who has lost his reputation and is seeking to ruin another man's.

I'm astonished that you come to me with this, Alan.

WHITAKER: It's just a question of what is, I'm sure, a technical point of who exactly had control of these companies at the time we're -

SEABROOK: Is the Fraud Squad investigating a charge against me?

WHITAKER: No.

SEABROOK: Is it considering the framing of a charge against me?

WHITAKER: I think that's extremely unlikely.

SEABROOK: Good. Because in that case I should have to resign this office, shouldn't I? In the case of the other statement it's even more absurd. He says I spoke in the House on matters which may have been of material benefit to Edwards while I was connected with him. In other words, I abused my position as a Member to enrich myself and my associates. Now say that that were true, which it is not, it is in any case not against the law. Unless the law of absolute privilege has been amended without my knowledge?

WHITAKER: No, sir.

SEABROOK: No. Then I take it that you are satisfied and that these statements will not be taken seriously.

WHITAKER: It's simply that it may be necessary to ask you for a complete statement of the facts.

SEABROOK: Are you saying these allegations may at some stage become public?

WHITAKER: It might be unavoidable if further charges are laid.

SEABROOK: I understand. Perhaps I should discuss this further with the Commissioner.

SILENCE.

WHITAKER: I'm sorry about this, Claud. It's better to be forewarned.

SEABROOK: Yes indeed. Thank you, Alan.

SILENCE.

SEABROOK: I've been reading Mr Johnson's report. You know the report I mean.

WHITAKER: Yes.

SEABROOK: Have you read it?

WHITAKER: It hasn't been made available to us, sir.

SEABROOK: Mm. May I ask your opinion of Mr. Johnson?

WHITAKER: My personal opinion?

SEABROOK: Your professional opinion.

WHITAKER: I haven't got one, sir. It's many years since I worked closely with him. I've worked for the CID in the Met for most of my career. He's never worked for either.

SEABROOK: So I understand. It's an interesting document.

SILENCE

SEABROOK: Well. Don't let me keep you any longer.

WHITAKER: Thank you, sir.

SEABROOK: Goodbye, Alan.

WHITAKER: Goodbye, Claud.

EXIT WHITAKER. ENTER ASSISTANT.

ASSISTANT: Your car's waiting, sir.

SEABROOK: Mm?

ASSISTANT: Lancashire, sir. Prison visit.

SEABROOK: Oh yes.

HE GRIMACES AND EXITS. EXIT ASSISTANT. PAUSE. ENTER ASSISTANT FOLLOWED BY JOHNSON. HE TAKES THE REPORT FROM THE DESK AND HANDS IT TO JOHNSON.

ASSISTANT: The Home Secretary asked me to give you this.

JOHNSON: What's this?

ASSISTANT: I believe it's your report.

JOHNSON: I'm not meeting him.

ASSISTANT: No. Did you expect to?

JOHNSON: Of course I did.

HE OPENS THE ENVELOPE.

JOHNSON: There's nothing here. There's no letter, I mean.

ASSISTANT: Then obviously he doesn't wish to comment at this stage.

JOHNSON: He doesn't wish to comment? Look, I sent this across at nine o'clock this morning. It's now only eleven thirty. Are you sure he's read it?

ASSISTANT: Of course he has.

JOHNSON: There isn't a mark on it.

ASSISTANT: What were you expecting?

JOHNSON: I'm sorry. I don't quite get it. I write a report outlining massive corruption in the met and what must be done to combat it - all this after eighteen months work ...Where is

ASSISTANT: On his way to Preston. I'm sure that if the Home Secretary wishes to discuss your report he'll contact you. I'm afraid you'll have to leave now.

EXEUNT BOTH.

Scene xiv

ENTER KELLY WITH A CROWD OF PRESS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS.

KELLY: Gentlemen, I must be brief. I've just come from the House where I announced a few minutes ago the setting up of a completely independent enquiry into allegations which have appeared recently in the press of British oil companies' involvement in illegal supplies of oil to Rhodesia.

PRESS ONE: Do you regard the allegations as serious, Mrs Kelly?

KELLY: I regard them in the gravest possible light. The Prime Minister himself has told the House that if guilty parties are to be found they will be found and dealt with accordingly. And I entirely agree with that.

PRESS TWO: Who will lead the enquiry?

KELLY: I'll be announcing that within a day or two. No more now, please.

PHOTO: Can I have a picture?

KELLY SMILES. EXIT KELLY. ENTER SAMPSON, THE NEW POLICE COMMISSIONER.

PRESS THREE: Can I just ask you, sir, if you were surprised as a provincial policeman to be appointed Metropolitan Police Commissioner?

SAMPSON: Surprised and delighted.

PRESS FOUR: Can I just ask, sir, what -

SAMPSON: No more after this, please.

PRESS FOUR: - what you see as the major task confronting you?

SAMPSON: I think tackling the problem of violence on the streets of the capital - from whatever quarter, be it politically inspired or otherwise - is the main threat to the stability of society.

PRESS FIVE: Can I ask what your attitude will be towards corruption in the force, sir?

SAMPSON: My attitude has been made abundantly clear already. Strenuous efforts will now be made to rid the force of corruption wherever it's found. Corrupt policemen can expect to get the same treatment as any other criminal from now on. Thank you. No more now. Thank you, gentlemen.

EXEUNT OMNES.

ACT IVScene i

A STREET OUTSIDE A PRISON. COLD MORNING. SOUND OF A DOOR OPENING.

VOICE (OFF): Two off, Mr Daniels.

VOICE (OFF): Thank you, Mr Davies.

SOUND OF DOOR CLOSING. ENTER GEORDIE AND DONOHUE, BOTH CARRYING PARCELS. THEY STAND FOR A WHILE SEPARATELY. THEY NOD TO EACH OTHER.

DONOHUE: Hello again. Anybody meeting you?

GEORDIE SHAKES HIS HEAD. SILENCE. A CAR HORN SOUNDS. DONOHUE LOOKS OFF AND WAVES.

DONOHUE: Give you a lift up North?

GEORDIE SHAKES HIS HEAD.

DONOHUE: Good luck then.

EXIT DONOHUE. ENTER ADAMS.

ADAMS: Geordie Hurst?

GEORDIE: Yeh?

ADAMS: I heard you might be looking for a job. Doug Adams.

GEORDIE: No.

ADAMS: Nothing illegal, don't worry. A bit of action though. A lot of money. Overseas.

GEORDIE: Doing what?

ADAMS: Come on - I'll buy you a breakfast.

EXEUNT BOTH.

Scene ii

LONDON. SCOTLAND YARD. WHITAKER AND JOHNSON.

WHITAKER: (Into telephone) Detective Sergeant Black, please.

HE REPLACES PHONE. ENTER BLACK.

BLACK: Sir.

WHITAKER: Sit down, Black. We won't detain you long. You know why you're here?

BLACK: It's what's known as a kangaroo court, isn't it, sir?

WHITAKER: That'll do.

ENTER SAMPSON. ALL STAND. HE SIGNALS THEM TO CONTINUE. HE WATCHES.

WHITAKER: We've got evidence that on at least two occasions - once in

1966 and once in 1973 - you solicited bribes from men who should otherwise have faced criminal proceedings and that on each occasion you arranged for charges to be dropped or reduced. Anything to say?

BLACK: It's a pack of lies.

WHITAKER PASSES HIM SOME PAPERS. BLACK READS.

BLACK: Whoever gave you this is making fools of you.

WHITAKER: A court wouldn't agree with you.

BLACK: I think it would.

JOHNSON: Would you like to try it? We'd be delighted to oblige.

SILENCE.

WHITAKER: Either way. Or else go outside now and type a letter of resignation. Make up your mind.

SILENCE. BLACK GETS UP.

WHITAKER: Let me have it before you leave the building tonight.

EXIT BLACK.

SAMPSON: Cheeky bastard. Is that it for today?

WHITAKER: (Looking at his watch) No. One more. (Into phone) Detective Inspector Weir, please.

HE REPLACES THE PHONE. ENTER WEIR.

WEIR: Sir. Sir. Sir.

WHITAKER: Sit down, Weir. We won't keep you long. You know why you're here?

JOHNSON GETS UP AND WALKS AROUND THE ROOM.

WEIR: Sir, can I make a statement first?

WHITAKER: No, you can't.

WEIR: I'd like to have my solicitor present if any charges are going to be made against me.

JOHNSON: Bugger your solicitor, Weir.

WEIR: Sir.

WHITAKER: We'd like your comments on a series of coathanger robberies in North London. About why they went unsolved for so long while you worked on them, about how the villains got hold of the keys to the premises, and about how they remained successfully one step ahead of all police enquiries.

WEIR: Whatever you've been told somebody's having you on, sir.

WHITAKER PASSES OVER PAPERS.

trying to nail the bastards we're letting off scot free. He took early retirement. I tried to talk him out of it. I should've gone with him.

SILENCE.

WHITAKER: Goodnight, Roy.

JOHNSON: I've been a copper for twenty seven years next September. I started on the beat in Newcastle. Twenty seven years. I never once let a villain go if I had evidence against him. Now we're doing it everyday. We're making a mockery of the law. I never dreamed. I feel as if it's all been a waste of time. We're accepting, aren't we, that there's a level of corruption in the force that's tolerable?

WHITAKER: We're accepting the fact that we can't have a perfect police force.

JOHNSON: I can't. There's no reason why there should be any corruption at all.

WHITAKER: There's a very good reason. We're imperfect people trying to police an imperfect society. How many people out there aren't on the fiddle somewhere or other? Who doesn't fiddle his taxes, or do a bit of moonlighting, or fiddle his expenses, or use the boss's telephone?

JOHNSON: We're not talking about a decline in moral standards - we're talking about crime. I won't accept it.

WHITAKER: You ought to think what you'd be throwing away. I'd expect you to be knighted.

JOHNSON: Knighted? To be honoured by that lot would be the badge of shame. God almighty, I didn't join the force to let villains go. I've had enough. I've had enough.

EXIT JOHNSON. EXIT WHITAKER.

Scene iii

A SOHO STREET. A MAN ENTERS. A CIGARETTE IS LIT IN THE SHADOWS. THE MAN LOOKS BUT DOESN'T STOP. FURTHER UP A WOMAN'S VOICE GREETs HIM FROM ANOTHER DOORWAY.

RUSTY: Hello, love.

THE MAN STEPS BRIEFLY INTO THE DOORWAY AND THEN WALKS AWAY.

RUSTY: Bugger off then.

DEBBIE: That you, Rusty?

RUSTY: Yeh. You haven't seen Sam, have you?

DEBBIE: No. Are you in a bad way?

RUSTY: Yeh. If you see him tell him. I'm going further up for a while.

DEBBIE: Right. See you, love.

EXIT RUSTY. ENTER GEORDIE AND ADAMS.

ADAMS: The thing about it is, Geordie, you're your ownman over there. There's discipline, of course, but you're treated like what you are - a grown man.

GEORDIE: What about the people you're fighting?

ADAMS: Black rubbish. Communists. It's just a rabble. Half of them can't hold a gun straight. They're running about like chicken with their heads off. They've got no proper weapons or transport. It's just a question of protecting the border farms and giving them a reminder every now and then. I mean, it's not like Vietnam or anything. These are Africans - they're too lazy and stupid to organize themselves properly. When you do go after them it's like rounding up Boy Scouts. The thing is you're completely in control and you're only answerable to your mates, who are the same as you are, you know - men.

GEORDIE: Yeh. OK. I'll need a couple of days here.

ADAMS: Oh yeh, three or four days we fly out.

GEORDIE: Right.

A CIGARETTE IS LIT. GEORDIE TURNS.

ADAMS: I forgot. You must want a bit of fun. Come round and see me when you're ready. A couple of days, OK?

GEORDIE: OK.

ADAMS: See you, Geordie.

THEY SHAKE HANDS. EXIT ADAMS.

GEORDIE: Come out into the light.

DEBBIE STEPS OUT.

GEORDIE: No.

DEBBIE: Charming.

SHE GOES. GEORDIE LOOKS UP AND DOWN THE STREET. A NOISE FROM ANOTHER DOORWAY. GEORDIE GOES TOWARDS IT.

GEORDIE: Come out into the light.

NO REPLY.

GEORDIE: Come out. I want to see your face.

WHITAKER: Read that.

WEIR READS. HIS HANDS ARE TREMBLING.

SAMPSON: Take your time, Weir.

WEIR: You can't give me the bums rush because of this kind of rubbish. I've been a cop for nineteen years. For Christ's sake, sir, you don't know what you're doing.

JOHNSON: There's more if you want it. Do you want it?

WEIR: To hell with it then. I'm resigning. I'm not putting up with this kind of thing.

WHITAKER: Put that in writing - before you leave the building tonight.

SILENCE.

WHITAKER: Get out, Weir.

WEIR STANDS, LOOKS ROUND AT THEM, SMILES, SHAKES HIS HEAD AND GOES.

JOHNSON: Jesus wept. The bastard. We should've locked him up and throw away the key.

WHITAKER: If he'd taken his chances in court he'd have got away with it.

JOHNSON: This way he gets a pension. By next week he'll have a cushy job in a security firm.

WHITAKER: At least we're rid of him.

JOHNSON: He should be inside. He's laughing all the way to the bank.

This isn't solving the problem.

WHITAKER AND SAMPSON LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

JOHNSON: This isn't police work. This isn't the way it's done.

SAMPSON: It's the way we're doing it. Alan's right. If we prosecute we'll lose half the cases, completely demoralise the force, a suffer a catastrophic loss of public confidence. It would be a shambles.

JOHNSON: Always the short term answer. Always. What about the others we'd have found out about if these charges had been investigated fully in every case? Eh?

WHITAKER: There's no evidence of that.

JOHNSON: Sooner or later it's going to have to be done. Why not now?

SILENCE.

SAMPSON: Come and see me, Roy. We'll talk it over. Goodnight, Alan.

EXIT SAMPSON. WHITAKER COLLECTS HIS PAPERS.

WHITAKER: I'll see you tomorrow. We'll continue the marathon.

JOHNSON: Do you remember Dennis Cockburn? I think of him while we're sitting here. Driven out of his job, nearly out of his mind,

trying to nail the bastards we're letting off scot free. He took early retirement. I tried to talk him out of it. I should've gone with him.

SILENCE.

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ADAMS: See you, Geordie.

THEY SHAKE HANDS. EXIT ADAMS.

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DEBBIE STEPS OUT.

GEORDIE: No.

DEBBIE: Charming.

SHE GOES. GEORDIE LOOKS UP AND DOWN THE STREET. A NOISE FROM ANOTHER DOORWAY. GEORDIE GOES TOWARDS IT.

GEORDIE: Come out into the light.

NO REPLY.

GEORDIE: Come out. I want to see your face.

RUSTY STEPS OUT INTO THE LIGHT. SHE LOOKS ILL AND HER FACE IS SCARRED.

GEORDIE: Oh Christ.
RUSTY: Do I look that bad?
GEORDIE: What are you on?

SHE IS ABOUT TO DENY IT BUT CHANGES HER MIND.

RUSTY: Whatever I can get.
GEORDIE: Right. Well we'll start by getting you off that.
RUSTY: Oh, Geordie.
GEORDIE: Is this what you do now?
RUSTY: And films. Cheap video flicks. I have to. There's nothing else.
GEORDIE: You can rest up for a while on this.

HE PRODUCES MONEY.

GEORDIE: It's what I had before I was put away. Plus interest.
RUSTY: You'll need it.
GEORDIE: No. I'm going to see to a couple of things then I'll be out of the country for a while. Get yourself registered. Get help. Stay off the game. When I come back we'll get together again.
RUSTY: What things?
GEORDIE: Barratt. Chapple. Conrad. But first the animal who did that to you. Who was it?
RUSTY: Let it all go, Geordie. There's no point. You can't beat them.
GEORDIE: Just give me his name.
RUSTY: You look different as well. Oh, Geordie.
GEORDIE: Wasn't there one person to help you? All the MPs who used to go with you. All the rich men who bought you champagne. All the cops who lived off you. Why is it like this?

SILENCE.

RUSTY: You as well, Geordie. You as well.

SILENCE. THEY STARE AT EACH OTHER. ENTER SAM.

SAM: Hello, love. He giving you trouble? Geordie, how are you, mat
GEORDIE: Pimp.
RUSTY: Geordie.
SAM: Come on, girl, I've got something for you.
GEORDIE: Touch her and I'll kill you.
RUSTY: Geordie, I'll meet you later.
GEORDIE: Touch her once.

SAM GOES.

RUSTY: Sam!

SHE GOES TO FOLLOW HIM. GEORDIE STOPS HER.

RUSTY: No! No! I want to go! Sam!

SHE WRENCHES HERSELF FREE AND STARTS TO GO. SHE TURNS BACK.

RUSTY: You've fucked everything up! Give me some money, Geordie.
Go on. Please.

GEORDIE SHAKES HIS HEAD. SHE RUNS OFF. EXIT GEORDIE IN OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

Scene iv

NEWCASTLE. A CEMETERY. BRIGHT COLD DAY. ENTER MRS. HUTCHINSON WITH MARY.
ENTER TOSKER AND EDDIE.

FLORRIE: Everybody come back to the house for a drink. Eddie?

EDDIE NODS.

MARY: Come on, pet. Let's get you home.

FLORRIE: Where's Nicky?

MARY: He's coming in a minute.

EXEUNT MARY AND MRS. HUTCHINSON. TOSKER FINDS A DEFLATED FOOTBALL WHICH HE
STARTS TO PUSH AROUND ABSENT-MINDEDLY.

MARY (OFF): Tosker.

HE LOOKS UP AND NODS. HE DRIBBLES THE BALL OFF IN THE OTHER DIRECTION.
EDDIE STANDS WAITING FOR NICKY. ENTER DONOHUE BEHIND HIM.

EDDIE: Come on, Nicky, son.

DONOHUE: I'm too late.

EDDIE: Hello, Austin.

DONOHUE: Hello, Eddie. How's things?

EDDIE: Not so bad. How are you?

DONOHUE: Well, thank you. I hear you're back in the swim?

EDDIE: Oh yes. So should you be.

DONOHUE LOOKS AT HIM.

EDDIE: I mean it, Austin. Don't hide yourself away. You're too
valuable a man. There's still plenty of work to be done.

DONOHUE: I've no intention of hiding anywhere, Eddie.

EDDIE: Good. You'll never get that much power again though.

DONOHUE: The world doesn't change without powerful men to change it.

It's all relative of course. The people with real power in this world don't want to change anything. Stands to reason. Lower down you're allowed to tinker with the works. Mind you, when I look at who's running the show up here these days even tinkering's going to be a slow business. Plodders. Honest plodders, I hope.

EDDIE:

DONOHUE: Maybe it's all for the best. They've never liked success up here. They've always resented it if somebody thought big. The Geordie has a natural preference for the second-rate.

EDDIE: Is that why you always despised them?

DONOHUE: I never despised them.

EDDIE: Yes you do, Austin. You thought you knew what was good for people. That was where you went wrong.

DONOHUE: No. People see me in the street now - they're happy to talk to me. Not like before. You know what they say, Eddie? They say "They're all at it, man. You just got caught, that's all".

EDDIE: Yeh. That's right. That's what you've done.

ENTER NICKY. EXIT EDDIE.

DONOHUE: I missed it. Sorry. I was very sorry, Nick.

NICKY: — Not to worry, Austin. The Party sent a floral tribute. I'll see you around.

DONOHUE: I know it's not a good time - I've got a job for you if you want it.

NICKY: I've got a job, thanks.

DONOHUE: Working with me.

NICKY: Doing what this time? Building more flats?

DONOHUE: No. Nobody builds houses anymore. The boom's over. I'm writing a book.

NICKY: What about?

DONOHUE: What do you think? I've had a lot of time to do nothing but think. I've got the television people interested.

NICKY: I thought it was a book.

DONOHUE: A book first. Then a television programme. Then maybe a film. I need somebody to write it with me.

NICKY: What exactly is it about?

DONOHUE: The real story. The truth about the last twenty years.

NICKY: You said there was no such thing.

DONOHUE: That was balls. I was depressed when you saw me. I've been figuring it out. Putting it all together. What happened to me. What happened to Edwards. What didn't happen to other people. What's been going on at the top. Did you see our

friend Claud Seabrook died suddenly?

NICKY:

Yes.

DONOHUE:

Did you read the hypocritical speeches that were made about him? This honourable man, this tireless public servant. He was a gangster. Why have the last two Prime Ministers been dumped?

NICKY:

Dumped?

DONOHUE:

Did they strike you as the kind of men to go quietly?

NICKY:

I don't know what you're talking about.

DONOHUE:

They were pushed.

NICKY:

Who by?

DONOHUE:

The people who really possess the power. You meet a lot of interesting people in prison. I should know. I was in eight in three years. I met the policeman who first arrested me. He'd been framed himself. What happened to all the stuff in Edwards' files? Why were some people prosecuted and not other? Why has there never been a tribunal of enquiry into the affair? What happened to the Johnson report?

NICKY:

Are you asking me?

DONOHUE:

What is it that links the Middle East - where Seabrook and Edwards were active - Texas - whose favourite son became President of the United States when a bullet killed Kennedy in Texas - and the family fortune of the next Tory Prime Minister?

NICKY:

I don't know - what?

DONOHUE:

Maybe you should think about it. Answer me this. What's been the upshot of all this? The Labour Party's been made to look like a bunch of charlies on the take all the time. Who would it suit to have people thinking that? And why is the Rhodesia oil scandal being buried once and for all by yet another enquiry? It goes on and on and on. And like that and like that and like that. There's a big picture.

NICKY STARTS TO GO.

DONOHUE:

You can't walk away from it - it comes after you.

NICKY:

You're mad, Austin. It's called paranoia.

DONOHUE:

There's a war being waged right now, Nicky, right here this minute for control over peoples' perception of the last twenty years. History is being re-written. It had me so fooled that even though I was standing in the middle of it I believed the established version. I believed I was guilty.

NICKY:

You were. You were guilty. And it wasn't anything to do with

great conspiracy theories - you weren't a part of some global jigsaw puzzle of corruption. Edwards filled up a little trough with goodies and you and Connor stuck your noses in it. That's all.

DONOHUE: You can't grasp it, can you? I thought I'd educated you.
 NICKY: You did. I don't want to see you anymore.
 DONOHUE: So be it. I wish you well.

EXIT NICKY. CONNOR RUNS ON.

CONNOR: Hurry up. I have to get home quick.
 DONOHUE: What's the hurry?
 CONNOR: I'll drop you off. I rang home while you were gassing.
 Guess what?
 DONOHUE: What?
 CONNOR: Guess who's coming for his tea to our house?
 DONOHUE: The President of the United States.
 CONNOR: No. The Prime Minister.

HE LAUGHS.

CONNOR: Come on.

HE RUNS OFF. DONOHUE LAUGHS OUT LOUD. ENTER TOSKER DRIBBLING THE BALL. THEY SEE EACH OTHER. DONOHUE STOPS LAUGHING. TOSKER LEAVES THE BALL AND WALKS OFF. DONOHUE STANDS WATCHING.

CONNOR: (OFF): Come on, Austin.
 DONOHUE: I'll walk.

HE STANDS ALONE FOR A FEW SECONDS AND THEN LEAVES.

Scene v

LONDON. EARLY MORNING. QUIET SOUTH LONDON STREET. ENTER WILLIAMS READING A NEWSPAPER AND CARRYING A LOAF OF BREAD. ENTER GEORDIE WHO BLOCKS HIS WAY.

WILLIAMS: Hello, Geordie.
 GEORDIE: I'm looking for Barratt.
 WILLIAMS: What?
 GEORDIE: Tell me where he is.
 WILLIAMS: West End Central I should think. Along with Chapple.

HE SHOWS GEORDIE THE HEADLINE WHICH READS "YARD MAN ARRESTED".

WILLIAMS: They were picked up lastnight.
 GEORDIE: Somebody shopped them?
 WILLIAMS: Barratt thumped somebody too hard. Nearly killed him. The coppers found his accounts. The wrong coppers. They'll go

down for years.

GEORDIE TAKES A PISTOL FROM HIS POCKET.

GEORDIE: Remember a woman you used your knife on?

WILLIAMS: Youv'e got the wrong bloke, Geordie. Honest.

GEORDIE AIMS THE GUN AT HIS CHEST.

WILLIAMS: Don't. Please. You've got the wrong bloke. Honest.

GEORDIE SEEMS UNABLE TO FIRE. EVENTUALLY HE SHOOTS HIM IN THE LEGS.

GEORDIE: You deserve more than that.

ENTER A YOUNG P.C.

WILLIAMS: He's shot me. He's going to kill me.

PC: Put the gun down. You're under arrest.

GEORDIE: Turn around and walk away.

PC: You're under arrest.

GEORDIE: Please.

THEY STARE AT EACH OTHER. THE PC MOVES. GEORDIE SHOOTS HIM DEAD.

GEORDIE: Oh God.

WILLIAMS: I won't tell. Honest, Geordie. Honest.

GEORDIE SHOOTS WILLIAMS DEAD AND LEAVES.

Scene vi

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE SAMPSON DELIVERS A SPEECH TO THE ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATIVE WOMEN.

SAMPSON: The Metropolitan Police force is having remarkable - and increasingly remarkable - success in dealing effectively with serious crime. The Robbery Squad has dealt crushing blows to the organized gangs. The spate of lorry hijacks has been brought to an end by the Regional Crime Squad. The Serious Crime Squad has recently made significant inroads into the problems of violent crime and gangland activities. The price of this vigilance was broyght home only this week by the horrendous murder of a young constable on a South London street. The professional criminal has never been more in danger of arrest and prosecution - though not, I may add, of conviction. Finally, a vigorous and determined cleansing operation has taken place within the ranks of the CID. Disciplinary hearings of a ruthless nature have been

taken against more than four hundred detectives so far. These thorough and impartial hearings have ensured that a policeman who breaks the law will be punished just like anybody else. This is in sharp contrast to the position of only a few years ago. This has been a painful process. More painful for some than others. And it hasn't made me many new friends. But it had to be done and it has been done. Major surgery has been performed. The patient is making a steady recovery. Thank you, ladies.

APPLAUSE. ENTER CONRAD AND WHITAKER. THEY JOIN IN THE APPLAUSE. THEY SHAKE SAMPSON'S HANDS. THEY FACE THE AUDIENCE. THE APPLAUSE CONTINUES. WHITAKER LOOKS ACROSS AT CONRAD.

ACT V.Scene i

MOZAMBIQUE. BUSH COUNTRY. NIGHT, BEFORE DAWN. ENTER A UNIT OF MERCENARIES.
KRUGER, LACOMBE, SIX, SMITH AND GEORDIE.

KRUGER: Wait here. Six.

EXEUNT KRUGER AND SIX. THE OTHERS STAND READY, HOLDING THEIR RIFLES.

LACOMBE: (Quietly) Geordie?

GEORDIE: What?

LACOMBE: Pretty fine down here, eh?

GEORDIE: Yeh. Come on, Kruger - what we waiting for?

LACOMBE: I like this time between night and day. Everything stands out in black and white. There are no colours in the world. Like being on the moon.

SMITH PUTS DOWN HIS RIFLE AND BENDS FORWARD, HANDS ON HIPS.

LACOMBE: Don't let Kruger see you. You still feel bad?

SMITH: (Picking it up) Yeh. It's that tinned meat. Goes through you like hot sawdust.

LACOMBE: You get used to it.

GEORDIE: What's he doing?

SMITH: Good question. He's going to get us our heads blown off. While Lacombe farts on about the landscape.

LACOMBE: The English have no souls.

GEORDIE: We'll have no fucking heads if Kruger doesn't hurry up.

ENTER KRUGER AND SIX.

KRUGER: OK, rest here.

THEY SIT.

KRUGER: We're going in at first light. The ter forward camp is five hundred metres along the river. When we approach the camp watch out for trip wires. When we get in, shoot everything that moves. We'll be attacking in a line so noe of us will be in front of you. You waste everything that moves, all right?

LACOMBE AND SIX MUTTER TO EACH OTHER.

KRUGER: If you've got something to say, say it in English.

LACOMBE: What about women and children?

KRUGER: Them as well, all right?

SIX: Yeh, sure. We just wanted to be sure.

GEORDIE: How long?

KRUGER: We'll start moving up soon. Take the time to concentrate your minds. Think about the next hour, then nothing will surprise you. What's the matter with you?

SMITH: Nothing.

KRUGER: Where the hell they got you from I don't know. No wonder Britain's finished if they're all like you. I thought Lacombe was a useless fairy till you came along. You're going to get your head blown off. That's a certainty.

SIX: Lay off him, Kruger.

KRUGER: There's only one thing that might save you. If you do what I do and whatever I tell you. What's the matter? Scared of those black bastards? Scared of killing their women? You haven't been here long enough, that's all. If you'd seen what I've seen you'd be longing for this. I won't tell you what they do to white people because I don't want you throwing up. I'll tell you what they do to their own kind. Like the African policeman they caught cycling home from his station. They poured petrol over him and set him alight. He lived for twenty four hours. But he'd committed a big crime - he believed in law and order. Or a boy called Matthew who gave evidence against them and was chopped to pieces with an axe while crossing a rugby pitch on his way home. Or another boy -

SMITH: Have you seen any of this, Kruger?

KRUGER: What - you think are just lies I'm making up? This is the bloody official truth. It's not just what I want to believe, it's government-issued truth. Heard enough?

GEORDIE: Yeh, we've all heard enough, Kruger.

KRUGER: What's the matter with you?

GEORDIE: We don't want all this crap - just point us in the right direction.

SILENCE.

SMITH: I need a shit, Kruger.

KRUGER: Do it here.

SMITH: I'll go down to the river.

KRUGER: Hurry up. We're not going without you. Take your gun, you bloody fool.

EXIT SMITH. LACOMBE TAKES A CONTRACEPTIVE FROM HIS PACK AND PLACES IT OVER THE MUZZLE OF HIS RIFLE.

LACOMBE: Keeps it dry.

SIX: I told you Lacombe was a man of letters.

KRUGER GETS UP.

KRUGER: Line up. Where's that bloody fool?

SIX: Let's hope they've gone, eh?

LACOMBE: Watch out for trip wires.

ENTER SMITH. LACOMBE CROSSES HIMSELF. GEORDIE CHECKS HIS RIFLE.

KRUGER: Where's your rifle?

SMITH: It fell in the river.

KRUGER: You bloody coward. Tis his hands.

SMITH STARTS TO SOB. SIX TAKES A CORD FROM HIS PACK AND TIES SMITH'S HANDS IN FRON OF HIM.

KRUGER: You're going first, Smith. Step out of line and I'll kill you. Ready? Single file for four hundred metres. Follow me at five second intervals. Six. Lacombe. You, Geordie.

KRUGER PUSHES SMITH. THEY RUN TO THE BACK OF THE STAGE AND LIE DOWN.

SIX: See you later, Geordie.

HE DOES THE SAME. LACOMBE WINKS AT GEORDIE AND DOES THE SAME. GEORDIE COUNTS. HE IS ABOUT TO FOLLOW. A BURST OF MACHINE GUN FIRE. HE SITS ON THE GROUND. A TARPULINE IS PUT OVER THE BODIES AS NIGHT TURNS TO HOT DAY. SILENCE. ENTER JOSEPH. HE LOOKS AT GEORDIE AND AT THE PILE OF BODIES.

JOSEPH: Does the smell offend you? Does the smell of your friends offend you? Do you want to eat yet?

GEORDIE STARES AT HIM. JOSEPH STARTS TO GO.

GEORDIE: What happened to them?

JOSEPH: They ran into our guns. Why weren't you with them? Are you a coward?

GEORDIE SHRUGS.

JOSEPH: Weren't they your comrades?.

GEORDIE: Not really.

JOSEPH: Then what were you doing along side of them?

GEORDIE: I don't know. I've never had very much idea why I do anything.

JOSEPH IS INTRIGUED. HE WATCHES GEORDIE TO SEE IF HE'S FRIGHTENED.

JOSEPH: Why haven't you asked me what is going to happen to you?

GEORDIE SMILES.

JOSEPH: It hasn't been decided yet.

GEORDIE: Ohyeh?

JOSEPH: No.

JOSEPH STARTS TO GO.

GEORDIE: What are you in it for?

JOSEPH: Me? I'm fighting for my country. And you are fighting for money. Or perhaps because you enjoy killing blacks. What for then? You make me laugh. You make me roar with laughter. Running through the bush with a gun in your hand and you don't even know the first thing about this war. Who is fighting?

GEORDIE: You're fighting the Rhodesians.

JOSEPH: Are you Rhodesian?

GEORDIE: No.

JOSEPH: So who am I fighting? Who pays you?

GEORDIE: I don't know.

JOSEPH: You don't know. I could kill you with my bare hands for being so stupid. I ma a Marxist. I am fighting for a Marxist Zimbabwe. I'm fighting against the combined forces of white western capitalism. Do you understand?

GEORDIE: Yeh.

JOSEPH: Do you understand 'Marxist'?

GEORDIE: Communists. Everybody the same.

JOSEPH: Do you understand what the Smith regime is?

GEORDIE: Democracy.

JOSEPH: White democracy. White people sitting in a parliament. And what's that? What is it? Is it what you have in Britain?

GEORDIE: I suppose so, yeh.

JOSEPH: You suppose so. This is like trying to teach a monkey. So this is democracy you're fighting for, is it? Is this what you risked your neck for? Is this what you would kill me for?

GEORDIE LOOKS AWAY.

JOSEPH: Don't look away. What is this democracy you are willing to die for? Quick.

GEORDIE: It means we vote for who we want.

JOSEPH: You vote.

GEORDIE: Yeh.

JOSEPH: You vote. You are in charge then. You run the country. Answer Your country declared the white regime illegal. Your country is a democracy. So what are you doing here?

NO REPLY.

JOSEPH: Do you understand yet what I am saying? Do you understand yet what this war is for? Why is this war happening to me and you

Why are we here?

GEORDIE: I'm not here because of Britain or anything. It's something I did myself.

JOSEPH: You did it yourself? What are you talking about? Listen. In Zimbabwe there are six million blacks and a quarter of a million whites. So we outnumber them. So why has this war been going on for thirteen years?

GEORDIE: I don't know.

JOSEPH: Because the whites have got tanks, armoured cars, helicopters aeroplanes - and we have not. What do these things need? Are you stupid? I am asking you -

GEORDIE: I don't know what you mean.

JOSEPH: Oil. That is what I mean. These things have to have oil. But there is an oil embargo. No oil can be sold to the whites in Zimbabwe. And therefore there can be no war going on for thirteen years. So how is it? Where does this oil come from?

GEORDIE: Rhodesia.

JOSEPH: There is no oil in Zimbabwe. No oil wells in Zimbabwe.

GEORDIE: South Africa.

JOSEPH: There are no oil wells in South Africa. Do you understand? Who has oil?

GEORDIE: Oil companies.

JOSEPH: Yes. So where does the Rhodesian army get its oil to wage war for thirteen years?

GEORDIE: The oil companies.

JOSEPH: No. Only from one consortium. Petrol is cheaper in Salisbury than in London. There is a certain irony here. Can you guess what this is? That's right. It's British oil. Do you understand now? Do you understand about white democracy now? Do you understand about British style democracy? Do you understand why I am not so keen on it? But surely you knew what was going on? You are a British citizen. Your government wants to help the black man so it supplies the white man with the means to kill him. Surely everybody knows this in Britain? No? Why not? Why didn't you know?

SILENCE.

JOSEPH: When I die like a dog - which I will one day - at least I'll know what I dies for. And I'll tell you one thing for absolutely certain - it won't be a parliamentary democracy

SILENCE.

JOSEPH: Your friends are beginning to smell bad. If you hear the helicopter gunships tonight, think about what I have said. Think about the petrol in their tanks. It will probably be the last thought in your head. If we survive tonight, you'll be taken south tomorrow. We'll show the freedom fighters what a British citizen looks like.

GEORDIE STARES AHEAD OF HIM. FROM OFF, VOICES SINGING:

VOICES (OFF): Oh beautiful Zimbabwe, beautiful Zimbabwe
We never will forget beautiful Zimbabwe.

JOSEPH JOINS IN

Oh beautiful Zimbabwe, beautiful Zimbabwe
We never will forget beautiful Zimbabwe

Oh beautiful Mugabe, beautiful Mugabe
We never will forget beautiful Mugabe

GEORDIE WATCHES JOSEPH. JOSEPH DOES NOT SING THE FINAL VERSE BUT LOOKS OFF AT THE SINGERS AND SMILES TO HIMSELF AS THEY SING:

Oh beautiful NKomo, beautiful NKomo
We never will forget beautiful NKomo.

JOSEPH: You better get into the shade.

GEORDIE STANDS.

JOSEPH: Would you like to eat now?

GEORDIE: Yes, please.

EXEUNT BOTH.

Scene ii

LONDON. A SOHO STREET. DAY. ENTER BENNY. ENTER ROY JOHNSON, WHO STANDS IN HIS WAY. THEY LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

JOHNSON: Hello, Mr. Barratt.

BENNY: Hello.

JOHNSON: I heard you were out. Back on your old patch again?

BENNY: Do I know you?

JOHNSON: No, I don't think you do.

HE SMILES. BENNY MOVES, JOHNSON MOVES WITH HIM.

JOHNSON: They didn't keep your friend Chapple occupied for long either I see. Forgive me, my name's Johnson. I used to be a policeman.

BENNY:

Oh yeh.

JOHNSON:

Yes. I've just been to the Home Office. I begged them - I practically got down on my knees and begged them - not to let the Countryman enquiry go the same way as mine. They were very good. They gave me half an hour. Let me get it off my chest. I told them it was obvious to the trained eye that the same thing was happening again. The Met's taken it over. They listened. You could tell they were listening. But the shutters were down inside. They can't afford to let it penetrate, you see. The problem is so appalling that nobody is prepared to admit how big it still is - even to themselves. The implications of systematic corruption going back thirty years Still I don't have to tell you. Talking to them though was like trying to stir quick-drying cement. I've never had much luck with the Home Office. I just wondered what you were going to do with it?

BENNY:

What?

JOHNSON:

The country. Now that it's being handed over to people like you. The lowest of the low. The scum. The parasites. The blood suckers. When there's a moral vacuum, there's always something nasty waiting to race into it. I just wondered what your plans were?

SILENCE.

BENNY:

Same as before. I only give people what they want.

HE WALKS ROUND JOHNSON AND LEAVES. JOHNSON WALKS OFF SLOWLY. THE STREET GETS DARK. A CIGARETTE IS LIT IN A DOORWAY. FURTHER ALONG, SOMEONE COUGHS.

DEBBIE:

Rusty? That you?

SILENCE.

RUSTY:

Yeh.

DEBBIE:

You all right, love?

RUSTY:

Yeh. Not too bad.

DEBBIE:

Quiet, isn't it? I hear Benny's back. Things might pick up again. I hope so. Do you think? Rusty?

RUSTY:

Yeh.

DEBBIE:

Rusty? What happened to that nice Geordie you was with?

RUSTY:

I don't know.

DEBBIE:

He was nice. You should've got him to marry you.

RUSTY:

Yeh. No. It's better just to be friends really. It was better like that. That was the best of all.

SILENCE.

DEBBIE: I' think I'll try further down for a while. Want to come?
Rusty?

EXIT DEBBIE. THE STREET GETS LIGHT AS MORNING ARRIVES. RUSTY IS SLUMPED IN THE DOORWAY. ENTER GEORDIE. HE FINDS HER. NOISE OF SOMEONE RUNNING TOWARDS US. GEORDIE PICKS RUSTY UP AND CARRIES HER OFF. THE NOISE OF RUNNING CONTINUES.

Scene iii

AS IN I iii, BELOW THE BALCONY, NEAR THE RIVER. FOOTSTEPS RUNNING. DARKNESS. ENTER NICKY, PANTING. GEORDIE STEPS OUT OF THE SHADOWS.

NICKY: Geordie.
GEORDIE: Hello, Nicky.
NICKY: Why here?
GEORDIE: I'm staying up there.

THEY LOOK UP AT THE HOTEL BALCONY. NICKY LAUGHS.

NICKY: Do you remember?
GEORDIE: Yeh.
NICKY: I'm married. I've got a baby daughter five weeks old.
My wife's name's Pat. Are you married?

GEORDIE SHAKES HIS HEAD.

GEORDIE: Ruth?

RUSTY STEPS INTO THE LIGHT.

GEORDIE: This is Nicky.
RUSTY: Hi, Nicky. I've heard all about you.
NICKY: Hello, Ruth.

SILENCE.

NICKY: Why are you staring at me? Have I changed?

GEORDIE SHAKES HIS HEAD.

NICKY: Do you remember that night? Has it happened to you as well?
GEORDIE: I thought you'd be out knocking on doors tonight.
NICKY: No.
GEORDIE: Why not?
NICKY: I'm not involved anymore.
GEORDIE: Why not? I thought I might find you in Parliament by now.
NICKY: Oh, no, no. I went a little way. I saw enough. It's a carve-up.

GEORDIE: All of it?

NICKY: I don't know. Sometimes there's a chink of light but then it goes dark again. If you try to follow where it was you just get swallowed up. Sometimes you come across somebody like Donohue thrashing about but most people seem happy enough just to sit there - it's peaceful, it's the quiet life. And somehow the public interest is being served. And somewhere, somebody is always lining his pockets and holding on tight to the light switch. And the band plays on and nobody knows for sure what's going on where or exactly what kind of a mess we're in.

GEORDIE: What about them in Parliament?

NICKY: It's a farce.

GEORDIE: That's what I thought.

NICKY: Where've you been - what've you been doing?

GEORDIE: Nothing much.

RUSTY: Geordie?

GEORDIE NODS.

NICKY: You're going again, aren't you?

GEORDIE NODS.

NICKY: Where to this time?

GEORDIE: London.

NICKY: Again? Why? To do what?

GEORDIE: There's a lot to do.

RUSTY STARTS TO GIGGLE. HE LOOKS AT HER AND STARTS TO SNIGGER. SHE STARTS TO COUGH.

GEORDIE: I'll see you, Nicky.

NICKY: No. Not yet. Wait a few minutes.

NICKY LOOKS OFF.

RUSTY: Geordie, I really need a fix.

GEORDIE: OK, love.

NICKY: Come home.

GEORDIE SHAKES HIS HEAD.

NICKY: Yes. It's my daughter's christening tomorrow. I want you to be godfather.

GEORDIE SHAKES HIS HEAD.

NICKY: Why not? Why can't you come back, Geordie?

GEORDIE: We've got to go now.

NICKY: Just a few minutes.
 GEORDIE: I just wanted to see you.
 NICKY: Tomorrow at ten thirty then.

FOOTSTERS APPROACHING. GEORDIE SMILES AS HE GOES, TAKING RUSTY WITH HIM.
 ENTER TOSKER AND MARY, RUNNING.

TOSKER: Geordie - o! Geordie!
 MARY: Geordie! It's us!

SILENCE. THEY ALL LOOK OFF.

NICKY: I'll see you tomorrow, Geordie.

Scene iv

NEWCASTLE. NICKY'S GARDEN. BRIGHT, SUNNY MORNING. THE RADIO IS PLAYING A SONG. NICKY, TOSKER, MARY, EDDIE, AND FLORRIE HOLDING A BABY. THEY ARE DRINKING. NICKY IS LOOKING OFF.

FLORRIE: Does some body not think we should get moving to the church?

(To the baby:) You do, don't you? I say you do, don't you?

MARY: I want to see if the request comes on. I said before half past ten.

TOSKER: Any sign of him?

NICKY: No.

TOSKER: I wish I'd seen him last night.

RADIO DJ: The Beatles there from 1966. I wonder if you can remember what you were doing in 1966? I don't know about you, I was at school. Here's one a bit more up to date to take us up to the news at ten thirty.

MARY: Oh.

FLORRIE: Never mind. We better go, Nicky.

NICKY: Plenty of time. Pat's not ready anyway. Have another drink.

MARY: 1966. What were we doing in 1966, Tosker?

TOSKER: Eh?

MARY: How old's Antony? Nearly fifteen. So we'd had him. What were we doing? Tosker?

TOSKER: I was in the Navy, wasn't I?

MARY: Why, no.

FLORRIE: Nicky, do you not think we'll be late?

NICKY: No. Plenty of time.

RADIO NEWS: This is the BBC newsroom at ten thirty. The Queen's birthday honours list was announced this morning. As usual there are a lot of famous names from the worlds of sport and entertain-

THE RADIO IS SWITCHED OFF.

FLORRIE: Come on. Pat's ready.
 NICKY: Just a few minutes.
 FLORRIE: They should be calling you Maggie, shouldn't they, lamb?
 NICKY: Oh yes. Good idea.
 FLORRIE: You can mock but I think she'll win.
 NICKY: I wouldn't be surprised.
 TOSKER: Well something's got to be done. The country's just been allowed to go to the dogs. People are getting greedy - they've been allowed to get away with it for too long.
 NICKY: Who?
 TOSKER: The unions.
 NICKY: You're going to vote Tory this time then?
 TOSKER: I'm thinking about it - yeh.
 MARY: Why not? Let the women have a chance for a change.
 FLORRIE: That's right, isn't it, lamb? Let us have a chance.
 PAT (OFF): Nicky. The car's are here.
 MARY: Right. We're not waiting any longer. Come on.

EXEUNT ALL BUT NICKY AND EDDIE.

NICKY: You didn't argue with them.
 EDDIE: Not today. After. When I've had a drink.
 NICKY: You've been a great friend, Eddie. You keep on going. Why is it never people like you who get the medals?
 EDDIE: It's time you got involved again. There's plenty to do.
 NICKY: I've been thinking. You should put yourself up for leader. of the group.
 EDDIE: Would you rejoin the Party if I was leader?
 NICKY: Yeh. I would, Eddie.
 EDDIE: It's always 'leaders' with you, Nick.
 NICKY: We need good leaders.
 EDDIE: It's nothing to do with leaders. It's to do with power. Leaders are just short cuts. They get you nowhere in the end. The job is to get people to take the long way round, to seek a little bit of power themselves - not hand it over to somebody else and hope for the best. I've spent my whole life trying to get people interested in power. Come back in. Stay this time. Persuade others to do the same. Power goes to those who want it most.

SILENCE.

NICKY: I wish you'd been there last night. Or I wish I'd said those

those things to Geordie.

ENTER FLORRIE.

FLORRIE: Nicky. Eddie. Can we just have the christening, please, and forget the politics for one day.

EXEUNT OMNES.

Scene v

LONDON. A RESTAURANT IN SOHO. GEORDIE AND RUSTY AT A TABLE. AT ANOTHER, SYKES AND KELLY ARE JOINED BY BOURNE. THEY ARE IN HIGH SPIRITS. BENNY BARRATT ENTERS. WHILE THIS IS BEING SET UP AND DURING THE FIRST PART OF THE SCENE, WE HEAR THE FOLLOWING:

VOICE: News is coming in of a series of shootings in Soho. We have no further news yet..... It is now thought that the murder of a government minister and three other people in a Soho restaurant last week may have been politically motivated. The Metropolitan Police Commissioner has issued a statement describing the incident as an abominable act of senseless unmotivated violence whose continued growth was a grievous threat to democratic society..... A government spokesman revealed in the Commons today that no action is to be taken regarding the findings of the independent report into the conduct of the British oil embargo against Rhodesia. The spokesman went on to say that further action was not considered to be in the public interest The Foreign Secretary was praised today in the Commons for what was described as his triumphantly successful solution of the Rhodesian problem. Parliamentary elections will be held later this year in the newly independent Zimbabwe The Home Office announced plans today to give police greater powers to counter urban violence. Under the new provisions, the police will be able to -

A WAITER HAS BROUGHT CHAMPAGNE TO THEIR TABLE.

SYKES: Would you like to join us in a toast to Sir John Bourne?

BENNY: I certainly would. Congratulations, sir.

BOURNE: Thank you.

THEY FILL THEIR GLASSES. GEORDIE AND RUSTY STAND UP. THEY ARE LAUGHING. GEORDIE TAKES A PISTOL FROM A BRIEFCASE AND POINTS IT AT BENNY.

GEORDIE: Benny?

BENNY: Yeh?

HE TURNS AND SEES THEM.

KELLY: To Sir John Bourne.

SYKES/KELLY: Sir John Bourne.

THEY DRINK. GEORDIE SHOOTS BENNY, WHO FALLS TO THE GROUND. THE OTHERS STARE. HE SHOOTS THEM ALL. THEY SLUMP ONTO THE FLOOR, SHOCKED AND GROANING. RUSTY AND GEORDIE STAND LAUGHING QUIETLY.

ENTER ROY JOHNSON.

JOHNSON: The truth about what has happened in this country hasn't been fully told yet. Certainly not here. It may never be fully told. Men die and the truth goes with them. Others write memoirs, which is another kind of burial. These scenes were not a memoir. They were not a documentary. Nor were these people real. But what has happened to us all is real enough. And nothing has changed.

EXEUNT OMNES.

THE END